



# "Nurungi"

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

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#### MEETINGS

##### General Meetings

2nd Wednesday of month  
at 7:30 pm in the  
Concord Citizens' Centre  
9 Wellbank Street, Concord  
Phone: 8765-9155

##### Executive Meetings

4th Wednesday of  
August, October, January,  
March, May and July  
at 7:30 pm in the  
Concord Citizens' Centre

##### Walker Estates Committee

4th Wednesday of  
September, November,  
February, April and June  
at 7:30 pm in the  
Concord Citizens' Centre

Derek Williams, 9746-9649

##### Other Committees

As arranged  
*Watch the newsletter*

##### Museum

Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682

##### Archives/Local History

(Vacant)

##### Heritage

Bob Jones, 8765-9347

##### Oral/Family History

Lola Sharp, 8753-0659

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**CONCORD  
HERITAGE MUSEUM**  
5 Wellbank Street

Open 2:00 - 4:00 pm  
on 1st and 3rd  
Wednesdays & Saturdays

## The Variety Club

**At our meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> May the guest speaker will be Jill Woods, accompanied by Stuart Telfer, the Events Manager, who will tell us of the work of the Variety Club and the Annual Variety Club Bash. Note the date now - and make sure you're there.**

Variety is an extraordinary volunteer-based charity dedicated to improving the lives of children. As an international organisation operating in 14 countries, Variety has raised \$2.4 billion to help children in need throughout the world.

Since its inception in Australia, when actor Paul Hogan was Chairman, Variety has raised more than \$100 million for children. In the last year Variety granted over \$3.2 million to children in New South Wales alone.

Variety helps to improve the quality of life by providing specialised equipment and service. They give to all children – from neonatal to the age of 18 – who are in need. Not only do they give to individuals but are also great supporters of all children's hospitals and paediatric wards in the state, schools, institutions and even other specialist charities.

Wheelchairs, modified tricycles, bathing equipment, breathing ventilators, brail typewriters, wigs, musical equipment, sporting and literacy programmes, computers, specialised beds, seats, walking frames and Sunshine coaches – these are the kinds of requests received daily.

### The Inspiration – Catherine

In 1927 eleven young men from the show business world attended a Christmas Eve party at the Sheridan Theatre in Pittsburgh. It was during this party that an infant girl was found abandoned with this note pinned to her clothing.

Please take care of my baby. Her name is Catherine; she was born on Thanksgiving Day. I can no longer take care of her. I have 8 other children and my husband is unemployed. I have heard of the goodness of Show Business and I pray that you will take care of her. (Signed: A Broken Hearted Mother)

The eleven young men, including Mr. J. Harris the manager of the theatre, rose to the occasion and decided to look after the baby. They found a new interest in life and soon after started asking for food and clothing for

little Catherine, whom they had named Catherine "Variety" Sheridan. Thus the Variety Club was born, with Mr. Harris as the first president. As time passed the men had received so many donations for Catherine that she could not possibly use that they started to give the items to other needy children. At age of five a family was found for Catherine and she was adopted. The Variety Club, as the men were now called, kept going, and grew as the men moved away to different parts of the country. The different branches of the Variety Club were called Tents. There are now over 53 tents in twelve different countries world wide continuing the work that the original eleven men started.

Catherine grew up to marry and have four children of her own, three sons and one daughter. She served in the navy. She passed away in September 1994 at the age of 65.

### Tents and Barkers

The clubs are known as tents and the members as barkers. The names adopted for the clubs and elected officers stems from the first banquet held by the original Variety Club of Pittsburgh in 1928, when it was one year old. Expecting some 35 persons to attend, they rented a small room in the William Penn Hotel. A few days before the event it became evident there would be 75 to 80 in attendance. But the only other room available that day was the three storey high ballroom that held 1,100 people. So that the variety guests would not be lost in their surroundings, the club erected a circus tent in the ballroom and added circus acts and sideshows, peanuts and pink lemonade.



**Bulletin Board**

**Wed. 10th May:** Jill Woods and  
Stuart Telfer from the Variety Club  
of NSW

A Pittsburgh newspaper artist, designing the front cover of the menu, made a sketch depicting a typical moustached circus barker wearing a frock coat, plaid vest and high silk hat. The drawing became the official insignia of the club and the circus appellations were officially adopted by the membership.

## The Variety Bash

This started as a drive in the outback with a few mates. In 1985 adventurer Dick Smit took a group of intrepid motorists from Bourke in far west New South Wales to Burketown in northern Queensland in their old cars. Dick wanted to take a few mates for a drive in the outback in old cars and at the same time raise money for charity so he charged everyone to enter, and entrants were able to bribe the officials or be fined. This first event raised \$250,000 for Variety and was known as the Bourke to Burketown Bash. All the money raised went to the Variety Club of Australia to further its support of the sick, disabled and disadvantaged children.

Since 1986 the B to B Bash has been organised by the Variety Club, retaining the spirit of the original idea.

Every entrant has to raise a sum of money for Variety and all vehicles must have been built prior to June 1970 and be non-performance modified. The Bash is not a race, rally or speed trial. The single most significant rule of the Bash is to relax and enjoy the event away from everyday pressures, while seeing and experiencing the splendour of the Australian Outback.

The B to B Bash has raised over \$79 million since its inception.

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Variety NSW NRMA Insurance Brookvale to Bundaberg Bash is to be held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July to 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2006.

If you want to learn more log on to [www.varietynsw.com.au](http://www.varietynsw.com.au) or, better still, come along to our May meeting to hear the speakers.



## Rosemary for Remembrance

Contrary to a widely-held belief, Shakespeare's line from Hamlet "There's rosemary, that's for remembrance" (Ophelia to Laertes) was not responsible for the modern tradition of wearing a sprig of rosemary in memory of departed friends.

Nor can the credit be given to the Virgin Mary who, according to legend, spread her blue cloak over the white flowers of a rosemary bush, which then took on the hue of the cloak and became known as the Rose of Mary to be worn in her memory.

Long before the Christian era, rosemary was associated with remembering.

In ancient Greece scholars wore garlands of rosemary, or braided it into their hair, to improve their memory of the lessons they were learning. The Barbarians burned rosemary as incense at funerals and other commemorative events as a symbol of fidelity and remembrance.

Rosemary is still believed by many, supported by some scientific evidence, to combat memory-loss in the elderly; possibly because of the antioxidants (also found in tea and red wine). It is wisely used to flavour foods. It also has been, from ancient to modern times, a popular herbal remedy for a variety of ailments.

Rosemary (*rosemarinus officinalis*) is native to the Mediterranean region but has migrated happily to most countries with a temperate climate and has become woven into the folklore of many lands. It is usually associated with remembrance or healing, though in some parts of Britain there is a very old saying that "where rosemary thrives the mistress is master", which has no obvious connection with remembrance, except insofar as it might have been necessary for the husband to remember – or to be reminded – of his proper place in the hierarchy.

Our well-established custom of wearing a sprig of rosemary on ANZAC Day in memory of the fallen of all wars is believed to have been instituted in 1915, soon after the landing at Gallipoli.

On April 25 this year, as in past years, in cities, towns and villages throughout the land, rosemary was handed out to participants in marches and memorial services and was worn as a symbol of our remembrance, our sorrow and our gratitude.

**We will remember them.**

(Legacy Torchlight, Autumn 2006)

## Newspaper items from around the world and through the ages.

### Huge Crowds Gather for Great Exhibition.

The World's largest exhibition was opened by Queen Victoria in Hyde Park. It is being staged in a giant iron and glass "conservatory" dubbed the Crystal Palace, specially designed and built for the occasion.

Prince Albert, the Queen's consort, was the driving force behind this exhibition of "The Works of Industry of All Nations". Millions of visitors are expected to flock to see the more than one hundred thousand exhibits.

The Times reported that the triumphant opening was the first morning since the creation of the world that people have assembled from all parts of the world and joined in such a ceremony.

(London, May 1851)

### Monet's Impressions Fail to Impress.

A group of artists, 39 in all, most of them regularly rejected by the Paris Salon, has staged its own exhibition in the Boulevard de Capuchins.

One of them, Monet, has exhibited a painting of Le Havre with the title "Impression: Sunrise" which he says aims to capture light from objects as it is directly perceived by the eye. This painting, as well as many others in the exhibition, has attracted incomprehension and ridicule.

One prominent critic, Louis Leroy, wrote an absolutely scathing review: It was he who contemptuously dubbed the group "the impressionists" because he thought the name typified what he called the "half finished" look of all the painting on show.

Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, Degas and Cezanne and their associated have definitely not received the critical acclaim they were hoping for.

(Paris, April 1874)

### New Australian Colony Designated

Her Majesty is pleased to declare the formation of a new Australian state (formerly the southern part of New South Wales) carrying her own name.

She has remarked that the name is most appropriate as the capital of the new state is the town of Melbourne, which was named in the year of her coronation after her first Prime Minister, Viscount Melbourne, who passed away three years ago.

(London, 1851)

These articles were taken from "The Century Sentinel", a memento of the Sydney USA Saturday Seminar "Portrait of an Era - 1850-1899" at Macquarie University, 21st May, 2005.

### Newspaper Cuttings

We still have a small bundle of newspapers to be sorted through looking for anything to do with Concord so that they can be cut out, photocopied and stored in our archives.

Can you help?

# YOU'RE INVITED

**13-14th May - The Australian Garden History Society** is organising the Hawkesbury Heritage Landscape Seminar. The event will be centred at the Hawkesbury Campus of the University of Western Sydney at Richmond. Talks will be presented in the mornings of both days and there will be private garden visits in the afternoons. On Saturday the open gardens will be in Windsor and the Grose Valley area, while on Sunday the open gardens will be in Kurrajong Heights.

Illustrated talks on maintaining old trees, Hawkesbury history, medieval gardens, Hardy Wilson, and early Hawkesbury landscape artists. Day and weekend tickets available but bookings are essential.

For information telephone the Seminar Convenor on (02) 9569-3417 or go to [www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au](http://www.gardenhistorysociety.org.au)

**Saturday, 20th May - Parramatta & District Historical Society's** 19th Annual James Jervis Memorial Lecture. The speaker will be Lynette Ramsay Silver, speaking about Marcel Caux: A Life Unravelling - historical sleuthing at its intriguing best. The lecture is free and will be followed by afternoon tea. For more details and bookings telephone 9635-6924.

**Wednesday, 24th May - State Records.** On 22nd May, 2006 New South Wales will celebrate the Sesquicentenary of Responsible Government - the shifting of responsibility from the Imperial Parliament and its colonial representatives to local decision making. To mark this significant anniversary in the State's history State Records will be holding a seminar aimed at increasing the awareness of the various publications and projects centering on the sesquicentenary. Free and afternoon tea provided. For further information and bookings contact Lindsay Allen on 8247-8513 or email [accinfo2@records.nsw.gov.au](mailto:accinfo2@records.nsw.gov.au)

**Thursday, 25th May - Legal Lucky-Dip: Real Property Packets** - presented by historian Terry Kass at State Records NSW (Kingswood). Real Property Packets will soon be available for historical research. They are a vital documentary resource for the local historian. Though created by the Registrar-General (now Department of Lands, Queens Square) to prove title to land, they contain a wide range of documents illustrating the history of the particular piece of land involved. They can provide insights into the people,

families and companies who owned the land. They can often give information about the use of the land itself. You might find a significant birth, death or marriage certificate, a worthwhile plan of the land, or even an early unregistered deed. Previous residents might give evidence about the use of the land or details of its buildings. There may be evidence of family relationships affecting the land. Feeling lucky? Dip into the Real Property Packets and see what you might find.

After morning tea a SRNSW staff member will explain how the system works to enable you to get the most out of the day. (RAHS event)

Time: 10:30 am to 1:30 pm

Cost: \$12.00. Morning tea included, but bring your own lunch if you are staying on to work through the afternoon on your own research.

Venue: Meet at Reception at the WSRC, 143 O'Connell Street, Kingswood.

Getting there: There is ample parking for cars.

**Sunday, 4th June - The Garden Palace Walk.** Heather Branch has been a volunteer guide for the Royal Botanic Gardens for five years. As well as being passionate about the living collection, she is also very passionate about the history of the Gardens and Domain. A detailed study of the Garden Palace and the Sydney International Exhibition of 1879 was undertaken by Heather in 2005 and a wonderful presentation and walk to complement it was developed. The presentation includes details of the work by James Barnet and the building of the Garden Palace, an insight into the collection of maps and images of the exhibition and the impact the Garden Palace had on the Gardens. There will be a soup and damper lunch at History House before Heather's illustrated talk. Following her talk she will lead a walk in the Garden Palace section of the Gardens.

Time: 12 noon to approx. 4:30 pm

Cost: \$27 members, \$30 non-mem.

Venue: Reception Rooms, History House.

There is a limit on numbers so please book early (RAHS event)

**Sunday, 18th June - The Concord Senior Citizens' Club** is holding their Charity Lunch and Auction for Westmead Children's Hospital Oncology Unit. Tickets \$18 (roast dinner, sweets, tea or coffee), BYO drinks. Admission by ticket only. Phone Jan Bedingfield on 9743-5793 no later than Wed. 7th June.

## Religiously Inspired Suicidal Attacks

Religiously inspired suicidal attacks against the West are not new. One of the first occurred in Australia nearly 100 years ago.

On New Year's day 1915 a group of miners and their families from Broken Hill NSW were on their way to a picnic at Silverton in open railway cars fitted with seats when they were fired upon.

Two ex-cameleer Afghans - one a 60-year-old Mullah the other a younger ice cream vendor - who had lived in Australia for nearly two decades, decided to support their Muslim counterparts in Turkey who were at war with Britain on the side of Germany.

They stitched together a copy of the Turkish flag, which they hung from the ice cream cart, armed themselves with high powered rifles and set forth to kill as many infidels as they could. They killed and wounded many people before being hunted down and shot to death by the local police and militia men.

As today, the law-abiding members of the local Muslim community were terrified and would have nothing to do with the corpses, which were buried by the police in a secret grave.

## The Afghan Myth

The so-called Afghans were really from British West India and the area around the Indus river valleys. They had been living under British rule for almost 20 years before they came to Australia in the 1860s and most spoke some English. In fact, most did not know where Afghanistan was.

They were very dedicated camel men and strict Moslems who came to our shores to access the marginal sheep country of the outback. No females were allowed to accompany them but many married white or Aboriginal women.

The white men who used bullocks or horses to haul their huge drays could not compete at first, but it did not take long before they were using camels and the competition for freight was fierce.

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These are just two snippets from the book *Camels of Australia, the friendly ferals*, written by our member Bill Barlow.

If you want to read more the book can be purchased from us for \$15.00 or we have a copy in our library.

## The Kokoda Experience

On Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 Mayor Angelo Tsirekas, then Council's general manager Michael McMahon and seven others set off on a once in a lifetime journey. Little did they know that this nine-day trek that they were about to undertake in the depths of Papua New Guinea would be an emotionally challenging and completely life-changing experience.

Angelo will be our guest speaker at either our June or July meeting so make a note to come along and share this experience with him.

## Did You Know?

**"OUGH"** can be pronounced eight different ways. The following sentence contains them all: "A rough-coated dough-faced ploughman strode through the streets of Scarborough, coughing and hiccoughing thoughtfully.

**"RHYTHM"** is the longest English word without the normal vowels - a, e, i, o or u.

**COMPUTER BUGS:** In 1945 a computer at Harvard malfunctioned and Grace Hopper, who was working on the computer, investigated and found a moth in one of the circuits, so she removed it. Ever since, when something goes wrong with a computer it is said to "have a bug in it".

**RULE OF THUMB:** The phrase "rule of thumb" is derived from an old English law which stated that you couldn't beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.

**ROYAL FLUSH:** Each king in a deck of playing cards represents a great king from history: Spades, King David; Clubs, Alexander the Great; Hearts, Charlemagne; Diamonds, Julius Caesar.

**BLUE MOON:** A "blue moon" is the second full moon in a calendar month. It is rarely blue.

## For your Diary

Wed. 10th May - General Meeting  
Wed. 24th May - Executive Meeting  
Wed. 14th June - General Meeting  
Wed. 28th June - Walker Estates  
Sun. 30th July - Rivendell Open Day

## From the Secretary's Desk

**Our Photographic Collection:** We still haven't had any response for our call for help. Isn't there someone out there brave enough to give it a go. Computers don't bite and they certainly won't blow up if you press the wrong button?

**Yaralla:** Our open day was a great success and the surrounding grounds were impressive, thanks to our hard working members who undertook the cleaning. Also, the old dilapidated shed near the squash court has been repaired, thanks to Vince Scerri and Michael Douglas, and now looks quite presentable.

Thank you to all our willing guides, Devonshire tea workers and others who helped to make the day such a success.

We must also thank the Friends of Rookwood who manned the barbecue on the day.

Although these days need a large number of helpers it is well worth while to make these historic estates better known to the general public.

**Open Day at Rivendell:** The date for this has been set for Sunday, 30th July. Please let us know if you will be available to help out for this.

**Time Capsule at Breakfast Point:** While working on our Archives we have come across and programme for a ceremony of burying a time capsule at Breakfast Point (AGL) on

27th August, 1988. This was part of the bicentennial celebrations.

Does anyone know the exact location of this (it was apparently marked by a plaque and was supposed to be on the point)? If so, could you have a look and see if it is still there.

**Real Property Packets information day** at Kingswood on 25th May. This might be a good opportunity to access the Yaralla papers so if you would like to take part, please let me know.

**Membership Fees are due** by 1st July. A notice will be enclosed with this issue of Nurungi. If you don't receive one you will know that your membership is paid in advance.

If there is a notice enclosed would you please arrange to pay prior to the end of June. Our rules state that if you are unfinancial you are not eligible to stand for office or to vote at our Annual General Meeting in August.

**Tour Guides for Yaralla and Rivendell:** We urgently need more guides to help with our open days. It's not hard work and we supply you with all the knowledge you will need and you will receive training by our regular guides. Please, won't you offer your services. If we are to continue our work we need your help.

**Devonshire Tea helpers** are also needed - for open days and group tours. Please let us hear from you.

## I Shall Remember

*I shall remember long after this madness has passed away,*

*The lonely call of bugles by night and day*

*The sentry's ringing challenge born on midnight blast,*

*These things I will remember long after war has passed*

*I shall remember a landscape in the mist of early dawn*

*Tree by tree emerging as the winter day is born*

*I shall always remember the silence and the stars,*

*And the beauty that outlasts the storm of a thousand wars.*

*But the heartache that knows no balm, the fear and the fret,*

*And the sorrow of taking in these things, pray God, I'll forget*

*Unknown Author*

## Group Visits to Yaralla:

**Friday, 26th May, 10:30 am** - Going Places Tours will be bringing a bus load of 25. Devonshire teas not required.

**Friday, 9th June, 10:30 am** - Going Places Tours will be bringing another bus load of 25. Devonshire teas not required.

**Wednesday, 28th June, 10:00 am** - Blacktown View Club will be bringing 19 members.. Devonshire teas to be advised.

*Can you help with any of these tours. Please contact secretary.*

*We usually have one group visit each month and they're a good source of revenue for our work at Yaralla. However, need to have a roster of volunteers who can be called on to assist, particularly with Devonshire teas and setting up and putting away tables and chairs. If you would like to add your name to this roster we'd like to hear from you.*