



"Nurungi"

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

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MEETINGS

General Meetings
2nd Wednesday of month
(except January)
at 7:30 pm in the
City of Canada Bay
Museum
1 Bent Street, Concord
9743-3034

Executive Meetings
4th Wednesday of month
at 7:30 pm in the
Museum
(all members welcome)

Walker Estates Committee
Meets at Yaralla on the
3rd Saturday of month
at 2:00 pm
Chairperson
Graham Ferguson, 9300-9657
Tours Organiser
Sandra Elliott, 9797-1040
ttouille@optusnet.com.au

Museum Committee
Meets on 2nd Wednesday of
month at 9:30 am at museum
Chairperson
Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682

Oral History Committee
Betty Fletcher, 9713-1384

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CITY OF CANADA BAY MUSEUM

1 Bent Street, Concord

Open Wed & Sat
10am to 4pm

No.175

January/February 2011

Australian Traders' Tokens, 1849 – 1874

In the late 1840s there was a small-change crisis in the Colony of New South Wales. It was perhaps most severely felt in Melbourne, the largest town in the Port Phillip district, and at that time still part of the Colony.

In 1848 the Melbourne grocery firm Annand, Smith and Company, arranged for a private mint in Birmingham, England, to make some copper pieces the same size as a penny coin. On one side they placed their name and business and on the other a figure of Britannia like the one on a real penny. When these arrived in 1849 they gave them out in change as pennies from their shop.

There was outrage in the morning papers the next day demanding that the police and law courts take immediate action. However the tokens were not forgeries, they were not copies of real coins and clearly stated what company had issued them. Recently too, in 1811, private tokens had been issued in Britain, so no action was taken.

Over 15,000 Annand Smith tokens had been made and soon shops in the towns of Collingwood and Geelong sought supplies of them for small change. Other firms sent off orders to England for their own token pennies. By 1851, when Victoria had become a separate colony and gold was discovered there were a number of firms in Melbourne and Sydney issuing tokens.



Annand Smith & Company Traders Token. Source: Museum Victoria

Gold Rush

The discovery of gold caused a population explosion. As the same coins were used in Britain and the Australian colonies, people travelling from England could arrive in Melbourne and use the coins in their pockets. These included some copper pennies, half-pennies and farthings – but not many. Imagine setting out for a three-month sea voyage to gold fields at the other end of the world – would you fill your pockets with heavy copper coins? Nor did they.

Australian colonial governments were not

keen to take responsibility for providing coins. Coins were made in England and the British government could make a penny for less than a penny. The Victorian government could only buy one for a penny, then pay the cost of shipping and, once the coins were worn out, they would be responsible for replacing them. Colonial governments argued that the British would make the profit so they should bear the costs.

Made in Australia

The retail trade already had a solution and the issue of tokens blossomed. Local production in Melbourne became possible with the importation of a coining press in 1854 but there remained problems with availability of copper. In New South Wales from 1852, some tokens had been made, the copper blanks being laboriously hand sawn by an apprentice from copper rods. Dropping the dies from a great height impressed the design. In Melbourne a supply of half-penny blanks came with the press so good quality tokens of that denomination could be made, but pennies were still brought from England until the 1860s.

In 1862 Thomas Stokes purchased a mill capable of making copper plate of the desired thickness. This saw tokens issued in such huge numbers that the government felt it had to act.

The end of token circulation

By then many of the early companies that had issued tokens had gone – without removing their tokens from circulation. Archaeological excavations in Melbourne showed that tokens from regional Victoria (particularly Geelong), from other Australian colonies and even Napoleonic era pieces



New South Wales Trade Token made with a "drop hammer". Source: Museum Victoria



Bulletin Board

Wed. 19th January: Executive meeting

Wed. 9th February - Kim, memories of working at Rivendell in 1982.

Wed. 9th March - Bill Little, a long-time employee at Arnotts.

from England were in circulation. In addition, the British changed their copper coins for lighter bronze pieces in 1860 and these were now legal in Australia; tokens mimicked the old fashioned coppers. The Victorian Government therefore ordered the circulation of tokens be stopped. Although some companies refunded and removed their tokens, all could not.

One result of this was a flood of Victorian tokens to New South Wales. Help was then sought from Britain. The Sydney mint gathered a sample of the tokens in circulation and sent them to London for analysis (they are still in the Royal Mint's collection). They were found to be of good quality copper and the British government accepted a request to purchase them at full face value. The tokens were withdrawn from circulation, shipped to London, melted, alloyed into bronze and struck into new pennies, halfpennies and farthings – at a profit.

Some 330,000 tokens were withdrawn from New South Wales; the Victorian number would have been similar. There were 124 Australian firms that issued tokens and they were issued in every colony.

Tokens, many made in Melbourne, were also used in New Zealand until 1881. Collectors seek examples of each firm's penny or halfpenny and even tiny variations in designs that indicate that different dies were used.

Almost no records of token production have survived, so researchers must rely on the tokens themselves to unravel questions about their production, and on archaeology for an understanding of their circulation. The best collection of Australian tokens in the world is in the Museum Victoria Numismatics Collection.

Ref: *Information Sheet from Museum Victoria 2003.*

NOTE: Flavelle Bros & Co carried on business in Sydney as Jewellers. They are the family whose home stood on the site of what is now the new Concord Library and gave their names to Flavelle and Wellbank Streets.

If you haven't already got your 2011 calendar we still have a few of the lovely Wildlife Rescue ones at the museum for a low \$10.00 each. All money goes to help this wonderful cause.



Flavelle Bros. & Co. One Penny. Source: Museum Victoria

We need your help!



Can you help us identify this photograph from our collection? The banner reads: "Welcome Home to our Brave Boy". If you don't know perhaps you could ask around among elderly relatives or neighbours. We would love to have some of idea of when, where and who.

Wellbank

"Wellbank", on the corner of Wellbank & Flavelle Streets, was the residence of the Flavelle family and extended from Wellbank Street to Correys Avenue.

A dividing fence was at the bottom of the home garden. The larger section extended from the dividing fence to Correys Avenue and contained a small house surrounded by an orchard.

There was no water connected to this small house, which was rented from the Flavelle family. A barrel on a wooden sled drawn by a horse was the means of conveying water from the tap at the dividing fence to the house.

Across Correys Avenue are the Concord Golf Links. The links were surrounded by an uncultivated area where wild violets, buttercups and maiden hair fern grew in profusion, also mushrooms.

At the back of the links was "The Folly". The RSL Club is erected on part of this area, which extended far beyond this point.

This section was overgrown with greenery and huge trees, which intertwined and resembled swings, they were called "monkey swings", from which the boys would swing.

It was a sanctuary for small birds such as Diamond Sparrows, Red Heads, Blue Wrens, etc.

Many happy hours were spent in "The Folly" by the locals

Nell Gavin, 1970



Holy Donuts

Bunkered down in their tent near the World War 1 front line in Montiers, France, in August 1917, as fighting raged around them and rain drummed down incessantly for weeks on end, a couple of US Salvation Army lassies hit on the idea of providing hot donuts to the drenched, war-weary soldiers.

And if necessity is the mother of invention, these Salvo women can literally claim to take the cake.

Making the dough with leftover flour, and using a wine bottle as a rolling pin, with a baking powder tin for a cutter and a camphor-ice tube for cutting the holes, they fried donuts seven at a time in soldiers' steel helmets on a 45-cm stove, making 100 donuts on the first day.

When word got around up to 500 soldiers at a time queued for their treat in ankle-deep mud outside the Salvos' tent. The women refined their methods and soon became adept at churning out donuts around the clock, making up to 9,000 in 24 hours.

Although before the war donuts were unknown in the US, repatriated soldiers, having acquired a taste for these kilojoulic cakes, created a demand which bakeries were quick to meet, and today, thanks to the Salvos' innovation, franchises such as Krispie Kreme and Donut King are institutions.

Central Concord Ex-Servicemen's Club

In 1927 a group of returned soldiers from World War I formed the Central Concord Ex-Servicemen's Club. The Women's Auxiliary was established soon after.

By holding dances (in Society's Hall) where the services of an orchestra were gratis, by competitions, carnivals, concerts and all money raising activities, the club purchased land on the corner of Majors Bay Road and Davidson Avenue.

Foundations for the Hall were dug by voluntary labour and Herb Carter and his building committee gave a great deal of their time in supervising the building of the hall by sub-contractors. The total cost of the hall was £2,500 (\$5,000).

The building was officially opened in 1930 by General F.B. Heritage, District Commandant. Its spacious dance floor – 3,000 square feet – was well equipped. A narrow supper room and kitchen were on the Davidson Avenue side.

The debts of the hall were soon paid off and a more ambitious undertaking was planned with a view to erecting club rooms in front of the existing building.

A Baby Show was organised – the attendance being larger than the committee in their wildest dreams could have hoped for, and gave judges and members alike terrific headaches – but a huge success, nevertheless!

Then Isa Andersen planned an Eisteddfod, which eclipsed even the Sydney Eisteddfod. It continued for days on end and the refreshment committee were worn out trying to cope with competitors and their parents. Great credit was due to the organisers for it proved very successful with a good financial result.

The Annual Ball, organised by Mid Brown, was the highlight of the year with presentation of debutantes. Vic Favelle, who was the Hon. Secretary, deserves special mention.

At last we were ready to add the extra accommodation in front of the existing hall. Downstairs an Auxiliary Room was built, also a new entrance and Retiring Rooms, and upstairs a Library and Club Room. In 1935 the extra addition was declared open.

Great credit is due to the Ex-Servicemen's Club men and their wives and families who worked so hard to accomplish their objective. But what great friendships were formed in those days . . . friendships which have continued through the ensuing years.

The Memorial Hall was handed over to the Concord Council in 1965 and the Council, by their alterations and additions, created one of the best and most popular halls in the suburbs.

For some time it became the home of the Concord Senior Citizens Club until their own building was erected in Wellbank Street.

The hall now operates as the Concord Function Centre.

Barbara Stanton, 1970



Digging the foundations



Laying the concrete

NOTE: Do you recognise the buildings opposite in Majors Bay Road? Several now having disappeared. Do you have any old photographs and stories you can add to our archives? We'd love to hear from you.

e-Waste Collection

Do you want to get rid of all your old computer gear and such?

Council will be holding an e-Waste collection day on . . .

Saturday, 19th February
9:30 am - 3:30 pm

Cintra Park Car Park
Crane Street, Concord

On this day residents will have the opportunity to dispose of their e-Waste in the most environmentally responsible manner.

Council is asking residents to support this event by keeping e-Waste out of your garbage bin or bulk household collection in readiness for this great initiative.

Coming Events at our Museum

Sunday, 23rd January, 4:30-5:30 pm - Children's Show: "Rubbish", Mic Conway (see back page)

Sunday, 30th January, 4:30-5:30 pm - Children's Show: "Aditi and her Rickshaw". (see back page)

23rd & 26th March - Seniors Week: Faces in the Street display (new stories) and slide show of old photographs

2nd to 17th April - Heritage Week: Display "The River of Life" telling the story of how the Parramatta brought life to the suburbs of Concord and Drummoyne.

Wednesday, 6th April, 6:30 for 7:00 pm - Gregory Blaxell talking about the Parramatta River and its heritage and history.

April: Anzac Day - display of war memorabilia and other items. More details later.

Sunday, 15th May at 2:00 pm - Afternoon tea at the Museum to celebrate our 2nd Birthday and honour our wonderful Volunteers. Volunteers, please come along to receive your well deserved recognition. Everyone else, please come along to help show your appreciation of all our fantastic volunteers - both Museum and Walker Estates

September: History Week. The theme is "Eating History". Put your thinking caps on and help us come up with ideas for this display.

Why did you join our society?

Was it because you were interested in history and heritage?

Or was it just to join and receive our newsletter.

Both reasons are quite valid and we appreciate your support.

However, we are desperately in need of volunteers to help with the museum.

The museum committee meets once a month to discuss the needs of the museum and to plan displays for the future. However, we need more members to help make the decisions and to assist with the work.

If you can spare a little time, even if it's only a few hours a month, we would be very grateful,

Currently we meet on a Wednesday morning but are also considering meeting on a Saturday morning or afternoon in the hope of attracting some more of our male members to assist with some of the heavier work.

One of the first jobs we need to tackle is the cleaning up of our storeroom. We recently received a grant of \$2,600 from Museums & Galleries to employ the services of a Museum Consultant to carry out a significance assessment of our collection.

Karen Coote, who helped us in the final days of getting the museum ready for opening will again be coming to help us but we will need to have the storeroom area tidied up and work tables in place for her to be able to do this. Some of this cleaning up will involve heavy lifting and other physical work.

Other work on the agenda is

- * Scan photographs and negatives into our computer
- * Sort through our archive boxes and catalogue the contents
- * Transfer Oral History tapes onto our computer
- * Put identification tags onto our painting/photograph collections to make access easier.

Although some of this work involves computers there is no need for any specific computer skills - more a case of pushing the odd buttons, so don't let that hold you back.

If you feel you can help with any of this please contact the secretary on 9744-8528 or email chs@concordheritage.asn.au

Why not come along and see if what we offer is what you need. Just drop in to the museum any Wednesday or Saturday to have a chat.

Children's Show at our Museum

If you have children or grandchildren or know anyone with young children please note the following dates.

Sunday, 23rd Jan, 4:30 - 5:30pm

"Rubbish" by Mic Conway.

"Rubbish" is an innovative performance about the 3Rs - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. Multi-award winning "Magic Mic" Conway gets the message across with a circus of comedy, magic and mayhem. He puts the fun into *Recycling* with all kinds of junk musical instruments. Mic *Reuses* the garbage out of the bin to make magic and *Reduces* his audience to tears of laughter with his songs and serious silliness.

Sunday, 30th Jan, 4:30 - 5:30 pm

Aditi and her Rickshaw

Aditi and her Rickshaw performance - great fun, she rides a rickshaw around as part of the performance. The show depicts the life of Aditi, a rickshaw driver, who shares with the audience stories from her own experience and those told to her by her passengers and the people she meets on the road. People like Chang, who tells the story of "The Yellow Thunder Dragon"; Ravi, the Snake Charmer and his adorable cobra; Pavarti and the old Nepalese woman who shares her story of "The Silk Brocade".

While Aditi's life is harsh and poor, her imaginative world is rich and this is expressed in the fantastic, traditional children's stories she tells from India. The rickshaw is a treasure trove which reveals, throughout the performance, a wealth of fabulous and amazing props, costumes, puppets and musical instruments. As always, the performance by Bronwyn Vaughan is a thrilling and inspiring experience for an audience. Bronwyn's highly theatrical story-telling style and her gripping stories filled with drama, action, humour and wit will please children of all ages.

Sponsored by Chilli Jam Thai Restaurant, Concord.

Places are limited to 60 children per session. Cost for each performance is \$8 per child, including a free lucky dip. Adults accompanying children are free.

Two fun shows designed to entertain children aged 4 - 12 years;

Book on line at

www.majorsbayroad.com.au and click on "events" **or phone** Lois on 9744-8528. Bookings are essential.

From the Secretary's Desk

Faces in the Street: We still need more personal stories or information about well known people who have been connected with our area. Each month there will be a revolving display of our stories so why not pop in and see what we mean. Perhaps it will encourage you to contribute your own story or seek other people - relatives, friends or neighbours - to let us have their stories.

A Pictorial History City of Canada Bay, written by Gregory Blaxell and containing many, many beautiful old photographs of the area organised by Catherine Warne, is now available for purchase at our museum for the small cost of \$24.95. If you're interested in our history you won't want to miss out and it makes a wonderful present for others.

The River, Sydney Cove to Parramatta, by Gregory Blaxell, is also for sale at our museum.

Speaking of historic photographs, if you have access to a computer visit www.canadabay.nsw.gov.au/your_local_library/for_adults_and_seniors/local_studies_pg.html. There are now 2000 images on the "Canada Bay Connections" the Library's digitisation project.

Volunteers Needed: As you can see from the Museum Committee article and the also the list of activities coming to the museum we are in desperate need of more volunteers to lend a hand. Please, if you can spare some time, get in touch with us. Your museum needs you!

VALE FRED STANSFIELD

On 11th December a very dear friend of our Society passed away.

Fred was a very down-to-earth member of our society and of our Executive for many years.

He would constantly tell us he had nothing to offer but you just had to get him started talking and you couldn't stop him.

Tales of his and his brother's shearing days, life and hard times living in in the bush, or any other subject.

He was always there if help was needed and he didn't have to be asked.

Although, due to ill health, he had not been able to take an active part for some time he was always in our thoughts.

Gone, but certainly not forgotten.