



# "Nurungi"

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

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#### MEETINGS

##### General Meetings

1st Saturday of month  
(except January)  
at 2:00 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  
[ttoille@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ttoille@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

\* \* \* \* \*

## CITY OF CANADA BAY MUSEUM

1 Bent Street, Concord

Open Wed & Sat  
10am to 4pm

Phone: 9743-3034

**No.180**

**August 2011**

## ***Now is the time to have your say about our Society!***

**On Saturday, 6th August at 2:00 pm we will be holding our 17th Annual General Meeting at the Museum, 1 Bent Street, Concord.**

#### **Will you be there?**

After so many years of operation, Societies tend to become a little complacent and settle into a rut.

It is now time to take a good look at our Society and its sub-committees and the work they are doing.

Are we doing as well as we are able? Should we be doing more? In what direction should we be going? Are we doing enough to promote ourselves and the work we are doing? Are we involving our members? Can we do more to encourage new members and new ideas? Are we giving potential volunteers enough encouragement?

This list could go on and on but the answers can only come from you, our members.

These are all hard questions - and they need answers. But these answers need to come from you, our members, not the same old group of people.

You joined the Concord Heritage Society for many different reasons and now is the time for you to let us know if we are fulfilling our obligations to you.

We need new blood and new ideas to rejuvenate our Society and lead it into the future.

The Annual General Meeting gives you a chance to hear from the various officers as they give their reports for the past year - to learn what we, as a Society, have accomplished (or where we have failed).

Won't you please come to this important meeting.

We will start with the usual business such as the Annual Financial Report and the Reports from the President and Committee Chairmen. At that point all offices will be declared vacant.

We will then pause the meeting to serve afternoon tea and sit around in an informal group to discuss the questions posed above.

Hopefully we will receive lots of fresh and positive ideas to lead us into the future.

After what should prove to be a very interesting and informative break, the meeting will resume to deal, in a more formal manner, with the ideas and suggestions put forward and then elect the Officers and Committee for the following year.

However, this won't happen if YOU won't be there. If you are interested in the future of our Society, please attend.

**Saturday, 6th August at 2:00 pm at our Museum.**

## ***No. 1 Ada Street, Concord***

Ada Street in Concord was named after Amy Ada Dransfield during the 1890s.

Amy Ada Dransfield lived at No.1 Ada Street, Concord.

This house had been built around 1870 by an unknown builder. It was originally comprised of four main rooms with 45 cm thick walls. The cook-house was detached and it had an underground water storage tank.

The first extension to the house was made in the late 1890s.

Henry Goddard owned the house at the turn of the century; he used his patented "cammerated concrete method" to extend the house.

In the 1960s to the mid 1970s the third and final extension was carried out by Mr. and Mrs. Nicol over a period of 8 years, by using sandstone blocks acquired from the demolition of an old house next to the Parramatta Gaol.



#### Bulletin Board

Sat. 6th August at 2:00 pm: Annual General Meeting and Election of Office Bearers and Committee

Sat. 3rd September at 2:00 pm. To be advised

## Why do we keep doing it?

Penny Pike, a dedicated volunteer at Eryldene, the historic house and garden at Gordon, posed this rhetorical question to the gathering of 2010 volunteer award recipients. Here is an edited transcript of her answer.

'Simply because it needs to be done. Things that matter need to be cared for, or we just won't have them.

And why do these landscapes, streets, trees, monuments, buildings, archives, photographs, machinery, matter?

Because they are part of our community memory and identity, and we all know that if we lose our memory and do not understand our past, then we cannot make sensible decisions about our future.

And the landscapes and buildings, the artefacts, photographs and machinery tell us as much about our past as do the documents and diaries in libraries. So they all need care.

Conservation simply means 'caring for'. From time to time, large restoration/conservation work might need to be done as fabric wears out or as years of unmitigated neglect make some renewal necessary. But conservation is also about having the skills and the knowledge to know when to stop, when to let things be graciously old, and how to live by the maxim of only doing as much as is necessary and as little as possible.

Real conservation is an ongoing process. It's about dusting and cleaning, checking for borers, and vacuuming up case moths. It's about clearing gutters and putting down rat bait. It's about oiling machinery; continuing research and updating material. It's the continuous weeding in historic cemeteries and the weeding and pruning of gardens and landscapes. It's filing and hunting down silverfish. It's keeping artefacts clean and dry, arresting rust when it appears, and making the history of the place more accessible and understandable to the public.'

(Ed: I came across this article in *Heritage NSW*, Autumn 2011, Vol.19, No.1 and felt that it was a message that needed to be spread. It is reprinted here with permission. We also have the full transcript of her address if anyone would care to read it.)

Please make a note that our general meetings are now held on the first Saturday of each month at 2:00 pm in the museum

## Lorrae Desmond

### Local girl made good

In 1962, Lorrae Desmond MBE made history by being the first woman to win the Gold Logie. She was born on 2 October 1932 in Mittagong and her name was Beryl Hunt. The name by which she is known and loved by her Australian audiences was taken from a hair-dressing workmate and from her father's first name.

When she was a girl her family settled in Concord, and she took up a hair-dressing apprenticeship, throwing it all in when she was entranced by the idea of show business.

She said herself in 2008 on the ABC: 'I left school, by the way, at 13 years and 9 months. I had already been doing a little bit of cleaning up on a Saturday morning at the local hairdresser's. One of the leading hairdressers picked me to go to his salon. The day they said, "Right, now you are a fully-fledged hairdresser", I thought, "That's it. I'll give it up now. I'll become a singer." So I became a singing cigarette girl...which meant I could also jump up and sing with the band. Which meant I sold a lot of cigarettes and you got tips for selling a packet of cigarettes.'

After this determined but fairly lowly start Lorrae left for England, where she

had a successful career as a singer (she competed to represent the UK in the Eurovision Song Contest in 1957), and her name was linked romantically with that of Terry Thomas, the late character actor. When she returned to her native land, her stars really looked up, and she had her own television variety show, becoming so well known that she was invited to sing for the troops in Vietnam. Like many performers, she found this experience one of the most rewarding of her life.

Lorrae is even today a household name, and this is because of her long-running role as Shirley Gilroy in the enormously popular TV series, *A Country Practice*, which ran from 1981 to 1992.

She took part in an *A Country Practice* reunion special in 2006, as part of the 'television turns 50' celebrations. Lorrae has also had a long career in theatre, and today makes appearances at various reunions and conventions, often appearing at Vietnam veteran reunions with such performers as Normie Rowe and Little Pattie.

(Ed. Another of our *Faces in the Street*. Where's yours?)



## Cabarita Park

- \* Cabarita is an Aboriginal word meaning *by the water*.
- \* Located on the banks of the Parramatta River, the park was dedicated for public use in 1880 and in 1907 the steam tramway between Enfield and Mortlake was extended to Cabarita. The present bus stop was the tram turning area.
- \* In the early 1920s Concord Council netted a shark-proof swimming pool at the northern end of the park. It was a segregated pool with one half for men and boys, the other half for women and girls. On busy days between 400 and 500 people visited the pool.



- \* Federation Pavilion is located within the park. The Pavilion holds a significant place in our Nation's history as it was used for the signing of Federation documents and the proclamation of the Commonwealth of Australia at Centennial Park in 1901. The wooden structure was bought by Concord Council for 60 pounds and re-erected in the park in 1903. Today the Pavilion is a popular venue for wedding ceremonies held in our City.
- \* Cabarita Park is also home to D'Albora Marina, Sanders Restaurant, William Beach monument, Cabarita Wharf and Cabarita Swimming Centre.

(Local Studies Library)

# **66 HURT IN RAIL CRASH - SIDE OF EXPRESS RIPPED**

## **Semi-Trailer driver and son uninjured in crossing smash.**

*So read the headlines of the Daily Telegraph of January 7, 1958.*

Sixty-six people were injured yesterday afternoon when a crowded Newcastle-Sydney express crashed into a loaded semi-trailer at Concord West.

The accident occurred on a level crossing 10 yards from the end of the station platform.

The trailer had stopped under a steel archway over the level crossing when the train, travelling at speed, struck it.

The locomotive hurled the 30 ft trailer, laden with two heavy tractors, high into the air and on to the station platform.

Parts of the trailer which protruded over the line ripped the sides from the first four carriages.

Fragments of the tractors and the trailer and splintered wood from the carriage, flew considerable distances.

The wheels from the back of the trailer rolled along the platform and stopped outside the stationmaster's office.

All windows and woodwork were ripped from the first two carriages and the next two carriages were badly damaged.

Screaming passengers scrambled from the train when it stopped at the station.

The back of the trailer crashed against steel stanchions supporting the overhead footbridge at the station.

The semi-trailer driver received treatment at Western Suburbs Hospital for shock then allowed to leave. His seven-year-old son, who was with him in the cabin, was not injured.

The gatekeeper at the level crossing, Mr. Henry Hinz, said the trailer load was too high to clear a steel archway carrying signal wires over the crossing gate.

Mr. Hinz added: "The driver stopped when he found the load was too high.

"About 10 feet of the trailer was over the line, with the back wheels on the train lines.

"I was watching to see what the trailer driver would do, when I saw the warning light flash, indicating that a train was approaching.

"I shouted a warning to the truck driver and grabbed a red flag. I ran up the line waving the red flag and shouting.

"The train driver saw me and applied his brakes.

"The truck driver tried desperately to get

the trailer off the lines, but the back wheels spun on the lines. He couldn't move.

"There was a terrific crash as the train struck the trailer, which went sideways; the train then seemed to hit it a second time, lifting it four or five feet.

"The trailer crashed against the overhead bridge supports and bounced onto the platform. The bridge wobbled, I thought it was going to come down"

Michael Griffiths, 15, of Wunda Road, Concord West, who was standing on the overhead bridge, said: "It happened in a few seconds.

"I saw the train crash into the trailer and it swung around towards the bridge. The bridge rose in the air and I thought it was going to knock me off it. Then it crashed into the supports.

"I was hurled across the bridge. I hit a tin fence on one side and then landed on my back.

"Two electric trains went through, then a man opened the gates and waved me through.

"As I went ahead I was checking more or less to see whether the load would clear the gantry with overhead signal lines.

"As I did so I saw the railwayman racing madly down the line waving a red flag. I forged ahead as quickly as I could but there was not enough time to clear the line."

Rod Fabian, 18, of Bangalla Road, Concord West, said he was standing in Victoria Road, just outside the gates, when the crash occurred.

He added: "The trailer driver was trying to get the semi through the archway but he didn't seem to be able to move.

"Then I heard a train whistle and next thing, a terrific crash. The train just seemed to sweep the trailer aside.

"When it struck the steel projections there was a crunching noise and the sound of splintering glass.

"I ran onto the platform.

"As the train stopped women and children were screaming and leaping from the carriage.

"A few mates and I helped some of them out.

"Some local residents brought across rugs and bandages and brandy. There were helpers everywhere within a few minutes."

The railway platform resembled a casu-

alty clearing station after the crash.

"Six ambulances from Western Suburbs arrived at the station."

Private cars also took injured people to hospital.

Passengers with blood streaming from cuts wandered around dazed while ambulance officers tried to help them.

Crying children were searching for their parents whom they had lost in the confusion.

Police from Burwood and Strathfield cordoned off the station area and controlled hundreds of sightseers.

Passengers from the train sat among luggage waiting for emergency transport.

Many passengers caught taxis from the station, while Government Transport Department buses took other passengers to the city.

The last passenger did not leave Concord West until 9:20 p.m.

The express train had been due in Sydney at 5:58 p.m.

Mr. Sydney Nichols of Croydon, who was in the first carriage of the train, said: "I heard a terrific crash and was half covered with glass. For a moment I thought the train had been derailed."

Mr. Nichols said he did not know how he escaped serious injury. The side of the carriage where he was sitting was torn away in the collision.

He suffered slight shock and a slight bump on a knee. The flying glass cut his shirt in only a few places.

Seven teenagers were unlucky to be involved in the crash.

One youth said they were going home from Ocean Beach when their car broke down and they had to leave it.

Another said he would always remember the time of the accident because it smashed his watch and stopped it at 10 minutes to six.

He commented: "I was just remarking on how the train was going. Just then the driver hit the brakes, the train seemed to take off again and then there was a crash."

Another said everyone in her carriage seemed to be all right straight after the crash but suddenly people started screaming and there was blood all over the place.

Another commented: "I heard a thud and I looked over at the carriage and saw all this glass coming at me. I got

down on the floor and lay across the chap who was sitting next to me. He had already got down, but by the time I got down I was hit by some glass and got cuts about the face.

"One woman in the carriage, just out of hospital, was suffering from bad nerves. She was not badly hurt but she was badly shaken up."

Another passenger said the first he knew of the accident was a bump.

"I saw all this glass coming at us and I got down on the floor," he said.

"When I got up I looked around to see where my wife was. A window frame was around her neck."

Ambulance Officer Lloyd Smith of Western Suburbs Ambulance was in the first ambulance on the scene.

He said: "The first message we received was that a truck was hit by a train and the driver was hurt, but as we approached we saw it was a different story, and we radioed for more vehicles. It was the worst crash scene in my experience."

Ambulance Officer Smith said a big crowd had gathered only seven minutes after the crash.

Two of the 66 smash victims were taken to hospital with serious injuries

## Solomon Family Reunion

In 1818 the first Solomons (Emanuel and Vaiben) to arrive in Sydney, Australia, were convicts. They eventually set up business as merchants and auctioneers in George Street and later acquired land around Sydney and Bathurst.

By 1835 Emanuel Solomon ended up in South Australia, where he ran an extremely lucrative enterprise gaining his wealth through shipping merchandise from Sydney (through his brother Vaiben) to Adelaide, he purchased large sways of land in South Australia, Western Australia and in and around Darwin (then known as Palmerston).

Emanuel became a great, philanthropist and benefactor to the arts, the theatre he built in Adelaide still stands. He assisted the beatified Mary Mckillop by providing free accommodation for her nuns.

Having educated his many children Emanuel then encouraged them to live the life that would benefit all Australians – many including Emanuel were Members of Parliaments, his children held positions such as Premier of South Australia (albeit for 7 days and hence receiving the nickname of Sudden Solomon).

"Blackie Solomon", who was one of the founders of Darwin, earned his nickname by betting the gents of Adelaide that he could walk down the main street of Darwin (Palmerston) naked and that no one would notice. He won his bet by blacking his body with boot polish and walking down the street with the local indigenous people.

A nephew saw action in the Boer War, another helped write the Constitution of Australia and in fact the Solomon family are one of only two families to have two representatives in the first Australian Parliament. The Federal Electorate of Solomon is of course named after another family member, V L Solomon.

Emanuel's son, Joseph Samuel Solomon, enlisted in the South Australian Militia and is reputed to have joined the famous explorer, Stuart on his inland journey of South Australia.

The Solomons have their fair share of war heroes too. We know of at least four young men, who were at Gallipoli, one paid the ultimate price. They also lay claim to the first Jewish Lieutenant Colonel (Benjamin Solomon) and the only person to have served in the Boer War and both World Wars (Brigadier Walter Samuel Solomon – Salvation Army).

Then there is the relative who together with his wife sailed on the Titanic. Unfortunately he did not survive.

A Solomon and associated families reunion will be held on Sunday 11 to Monday 12 March 2012 (9.00 am to 5.00 pm both days) at the Alma Sports Club, Wilkes Street, North Caulfield, Melbourne Australia.

If you, or someone you know, is connected with these families they can contact [katrina.jenny@bigpond.com](mailto:katrina.jenny@bigpond.com) for further information.

## From the Secretary's Desk

**REMINDER:** Another financial year has now gone and it's time to renew your subscriptions. These can be posted, paid at a meeting or at the museum or can be left in the green letterbox at the museum entrance.

**ANNUAL REPORTS:** A reminder to the various office bearers . . . your annual reports need to be prepared for our AGM on Saturday, 6th August. Please supply the secretary with a digital copy if possible.

**MUSEUM WORKING BEE** - Saturday, 23rd July. We've previously sent a list of jobs that need to be done so you can come any time and make your choice. However, if we can have some handymen (or women) to come in the afternoon for some minor carpentry work that would be much appreciated.

**SOLOMON REUNION:** Although not in our history, when I received a request to publicise this, I thought there were some remarkable similarities between Emanuel and our own Thomas, which might interest you.

**SOCIETY KEYS:** We are currently updating our Key Register. If you are holding any keys for the Society or for Yaralla will you please advise me.

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:** Would you like to share your opinions, good or bad, and any comments on Society matters or any newsletter articles, or just observations on local issues? Please just write or email us.

We would welcome articles and memoirs, particularly those relating to the City of Canada Bay. We want to hear from you.

**VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED:** We require additional volunteers at the museum for a range of tasks, including museum guiding, assessing and cataloguing objects in the collection, scanning images and setting up displays. If you or any friends are able to assist, please contact us.

**TERRACOTTA WARRIORS:** This was a great success with over 50 people, members and visitors, who joined us for the occasion. We had some very good publicity and it worked well.

**GUEST SPEAKERS:** Have you attended any meetings recently where there has been a very good speaker? Why not get their details and pass them on so we can make contact and ask them to come to one of our meetings.

*This space could be yours!*

*Do you have a short story or anecdote that we could use in our newsletter?*

*Please forward to the Editor.*

