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Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

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www.concordheritage.asn.au

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MEETINGS

General Meetings
2nd Wednesday of month
at 7:30 pm in the
Concord Citizens' Centre

Executive Meetings
4th Wednesday of month
at 7:45 pm in the
Concord Citizens' Centre

Walker Estates Committee
1st Thursday each month
(please contact to confirm)
Concord Bowling Club
Clermont Ave, North Strathfield
Graham Packett, 9743-3007

Other Committees
As arranged
Watch the newsletter

Museum
Fred Stansfield, 9743-1866

Archives/Local History
Kate Skillman, 9706-7479

Heritage
Bill Barlow, 9743-3662

Oral/Family History
Lola Sharp, 8753-0659

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**CONCORD
HERITAGE MUSEUM**
5 Wellbank Street

Open 2:00 - 4:00 pm
Wednesday & Saturday

No. 95

February/March 2004

THE LEGEND OF VALENTINE'S DAY

Historians believe that Valentine's Day originated from an ancient Roman feast called Lupercalia, an annual festival held on Feb 15, which was celebrated as a spring festival.

The Romans worshipped a god called Lupercus, a protective deity who kept wild wolves from overrunning the city.

On the eve of the festival (Feb 14), the young women of the town would write their names on slips of paper and put them in a jar and every young man would pick out a name at random. The pair would then be partners for the remainder of the festival.

It was 270 B.C. when St. Valentine stood up for love, after Roman Emperor Claudius II forbade Roman soldiers to get engaged or married, believing that married men would rather stay at home than go to war. The priest, named Valentine, in defiance of Claudius' orders, secretly married young couples. He was condemned to death as punishment for his "crime," thereby becoming the patron saint of lovers.

According to one legend, Valentine actually sent the first 'valentine' greeting himself.

While in prison the priest befriended the jailer, Asterius and his blind daughter. Asterius' daughter befriended the kind priest by bringing food and messages to him.

After some time in prison the priest was ordered to appear before the Emperor. Claudius liked the dignity the young priest possessed and even tried to convert the priest from Christianity to save him from execution.

Before his execution, he healed Asterius' daughter from her blindness and converted the two of them to Christianity. Legend also says that on the eve of his execution, Valentine wrote a farewell letter to the jailer's daughter, whom he had fallen in love with. He signed the letter with a phrase that has endured, "from your Valentine."

The Lupercalia celebration went on as before for many years following the death of Valentine. As time passed Christianity became more and more firmly established, and at some point the Romans renamed the

pagan feast of Lupercalia for Valentine, who by that point had been canonized to become St. Valentine.

Beliefs

■ During the Middle Ages, Europeans believed that birds chose their mates each year on Feb 14.

■ Some people used to believe that if a woman saw a robin fly overhead on Valentine's Day, it meant she would marry a sailor; if she saw a sparrow, she'd marry a poor man, and be very happy; if she saw a goldfinch, she'd marry a millionaire.

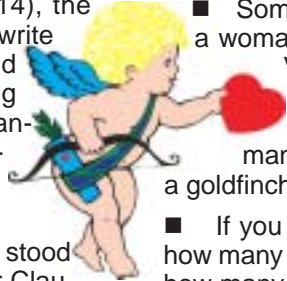
■ If you cut an apple in half and count how many seeds are inside, you will know how many children you will have.

Customs

■ In Wales, wooden love spoons were carved and given as gifts on Feb. 14. Heart, keys and keyholes were favourite decorations, which meant "you unlock my heart!"

■ In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They'd wear these names on their sleeves for one week — hence the term "to wear your heart on your sleeve."

■ Flowers on Valentine's Day appeared in the 17th Century. A daughter of Henry IV of France gave a party in honour of St. Valentine. Each lady received a beautiful bouquet of flowers from the man chosen as her valentine.



Bulletin Board

25th February - Executive Meeting

4th March - Walker Estates Committee - finalise Fountain Dedication

10th March - General Meeting - Gregory Blaxell, speaking on his book, "The River: Sydney Cove to Parramatta".

■ In Britain and Italy, some unmarried women get up before sunrise on Valentine's Day. They stand by the window watching for a man to pass. They believe that the first man they see, or someone who looks like him, will marry them within a year. William Shakespeare, the English playwright, mentions this belief in Hamlet (1603).

■ A young girl was supposed to marry, eventually, the first eligible male she met on this day. If a girl was curious and brave enough she could conjure up the appearance of her future spouse by going to the graveyard on St. Valentine's Eve at midnight. She would then sing a prescribed chant and run around the church twelve times.

Greeting Cards

The oldest known valentine still in existence today is a poem, written by a young Frenchman, Charles, Duke of Orleans. From his confinement in the Tower of London after the Battle of Agincourt in 1415, he sent several poems or rhymed love letters (called "poetical or amorous addresses" or "valentines" to his wife in France.

The greeting, which was written in 1415, is part of the manuscript collection of the British Library in London, England.

Several years later, it is believed that King Henry V hired a writer named John Lydgate to compose a valentine note to Catherine of Valois.

During the fifteenth century, one valentine showed a drawing of a knight and a lady, with Cupid in the act of sending an arrow to pierce the knight's heart.

During the seventeenth century people made their own valentines using original verse or poems copied from booklets with appropriate verse.

It was thought that birds chose their mate for the year on February 14, and as doves and pigeons mate for life these were used as a symbol of "fidelity."

The first commercial valentines appeared circa 1800 and were rather simplistic. But by the 1830's and 1840's Valentines contained delicate and artistic messages. Valentines made of fine papers and decorated with satin, ribbon, or lace commanded high prices. They had pictures of turtledoves, lovers' knots in gold or silver, bow and arrows, cupids, and bleeding hearts. All of these symbols have become associated with love and lovers.

In our century we've seen a change from the heavy sentimentality of earlier days to what can best be described as a light touch. Nowadays a valentine usually accompanies a more elaborate gift of candy, flowers, perfume, etc.

City of Canada Bay Seniors' Week 2004

A number of activities, stretching over a month, have been planned by the Council and all seniors are invited to take part.

Wednesday, 10th March - Veteran & Community Day. - Concord Community Centre - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Designed to make older residents aware of services available to them, both private and non-profit. Guests speakers. Morning tea and lunch provided.

Sponsored by Concord RSL - Sub Branch, Council and Dept. of Veteran Affairs.

Monday, 15th March - "Afternoon of Music". Afternoon tea provided. Limited transport available. Staged musical, "Poor Wand'ring Ones". **BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL.**

Wednesday, 24th March - "Walk in the Park" - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm - Rhodes Park. A day which focuses on healthy lifestyle activities. Barbecue lunch provided. Sponsored by Encompass Credit Union and Concord Community Food Services. **BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL.**

Tuesday, 30th March - "Memory Expo" - 10:00 am to 1:00 pm - Concord Senior Citizens' Centre.

An event to encourage older people to keep their minds active through an array of activities. Dr. James Wright will be the guest speaker.

The day will provide information to people who feel they (or a family member) may have a problem with memory.

Organised in conjunction with the Dementia Advisory Service at Concord Hospital. **PLEASE BOOK.**

Also, in conjunction with this there is a

Creative Story Writing - submissions due by 1st March. Residents (over 50 years) living in Canada Bay local government area are invited to write a story, which relates to their experiences with growing up in the area.

Residents from other countries and cultures are encouraged to submit their story. For more information call 9911-6580 or 6581.

All bookings can be made through Council on 9911-6580 or 9911-6581.

Members are cordially invited to join us at the

Dedication of the Replica of the Four Winds Fountain

on the

Yaralla Estate

by

Councillor Peter Woods, OAM

on

Sunday, 7th March, 2004

at 2:00 p.m.

Following the dedication, light refreshments will be served in the stables complex

This replica has been made possible through a bequest from the late Liane Poulton. Her dedication to the Yaralla Estate through her work with The Friends of the Walker Estates and in making this bequest is greatly appreciated.

Rsvp: 22nd February

This function is fully catered and if you would care to make a donation towards the costs it would be greatly appreciated.

Heritage

It is a remark frequently made by persons who have immigrated to New South Wales, that this colony is not only devoid of any venerable remains of antiquity, but that it is also deficient in those interesting scenes which contribute so much to enliven and dignify the history of other countries.

To a certain extent, we must admit the truth of this assertion. It is true that we cannot boast of the massive structures which have been raised by the piety of our forefathers, and which are now the sacred storehouses of our predecessors, and guardians of their bones: we cannot pride ourselves upon the triumphal arch, the high-raised battlement, the moated tower, and the mouldered grandeur of days gone by; nor can we lead the traveller to the contemplation of those glorious fields on which tyranny and oppression fell beneath the sword of patriotism.

We are not famous for the gigantic pyramids which were reared by kings whose names are now unknown. The lofty column and the lengthened aisle do not grace our shores. We have no plains of Marathon, no pass of Thermopylae, on which we may feel an honest pride; nor are our towns decorated with trophies of ancient victories, and the headless busts of heroes long forgotten.

But, nevertheless, Australia is not uninteresting to the lover of antiquity, for we may truly say that many of its scenes are calculated to awaken the most pleasing recollections. Can the

admirer of classic lore survey the numerous flocks, which are now seen sporting over our plains, and be forgetful of those primitive ages when kings and queens tended their flocks, and valued them as their chief possessions? Can he behold the vine and fig spreading luxuriantly over the land, and be unmindful of the beautiful passages in ancient writings which speak of them as the attendants of peace and plenty?

And can he traverse the wide-spreading plain, climb the summit of the lofty range, or wander by gushing fount, wild wood and shadowy dell, without calling to mind the inimitable descriptions of ancient poets?

In Australia, indeed, he may ponder with increased interest and delight on the wandering lives of the patriarchs, and the sublime language of the prophets.

William Woolls,
Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, 1838

It must be granted then, that we are quite debarred from all the interest to be extracted from any kind of archaeological accessories. No storied windows, richly lit, cast a dim, religious light over any Australian premises. There are no ruins for that rare old plant, the ivy green, to creep over and make his dainty meal of. No Australian author can hope to extricate his hero or heroine, however pressing the emergency may be, by means of a spring panel and a subterranean passage.

Frederick Sinnett,
The Fiction Fields of Australia, 1856

Never allow the thoughtless to declare
That we have no tradition here!...
Australia's wells are deep and full,
But every shallow thinker looks afar,
And says, 'There is no water here;
The windlasses are new'.
And yet tradition ranges through our land!

Dame Mary Gilmore,
'The Ringer', *Battlefields*, 1939

The dead are not merely the dead.
They are our fathers, mothers, grand-
fathers, grandmothers. We are their
heredity.

Brian Elliott,
Singing to the Cattle, 1947

What we owe the heroes who bequeath
Their sages to us, their battles, their
books,
Is that we emulate them in what makes
A spirit above ordinary death.
We are the reinforcement going up
Toward the mighty battlefield of Time,
And the famous fallen, as we pass
them,
Are signalling to hurry, not to stop.

Peter Kocan,
'The Pilgrimage',
Freedom to Breathe, 1985

Australia has many parking lots but few ruins. When Australians see the ruin of an old building, our impulse is to finish tearing it down, or to bring in the architects and restore it as a cultural centre, if large, or a restaurant, if small.

Robert Hughes,
The Fatal Shore, 1987

Bondi Junction is part of Australia's film making heritage

Bondi Junction played a role in Australia's film making history which is highlighted in Bondi Junction Centenary of Federation Walk which features the building where Australasian films, later Cinesound Studios, operated in Ebley Street for more than twenty years.

The former film studio, 65 Ebley Street is now Spotlight, a retail store. On that site The Centennial Roller Skating Rink opened in 1912. From about 1926 Australasian Film made silent films here by day while the skating rink continued to operate at night.

With the development of the "talkies" the company became Cinesound Studios, and at this time the roller skating rink ceased operating altogether. During his association with 65 Ebley Street the famous Australian director, Ken Hall made a number of classic films including "On our Selection" and "Forty Thousand Horsemen". It is an important part of Australia's film making heritage.

Canada Dry purchased the building. From 1951-56 the site was Canada Dry, a soft drink factory. Television came to NSW in 1956 and the building again became a studio, this time for various television production companies, including Ajax Films, from 1956-73.

In 1976 Norman Ross opened and the building has since continued as a retail store.

"This site, 65 Ebley Street, is interesting not only because of the link with the film industry – it also shows over time that many and varied activities can take place in the one spot, particularly in a commercial or industrial area," said Mayor Paul Pearce.

Invitation

The Concord Senior Citizens' Welfare Association - Ladies Auxiliary invites you to their 45th Annual Luncheon on Wednesday, 10th March at the Concord Function Centre, commencing at 12:30 pm sharp.

Guest speaker will be Barbara Holborow, OAM, former children's magistrate, who is now a high profile media commentator on all aspects of children's justice.

A musical programme has also been arranged.

Admission to the Luncheon is \$25.00, all proceeds going to the beautiful Rhodod Community Hostel at Rhodes, where the new wing for 12 extra special care residents has been opened.

Please book by Friday, 27th February so that catering arrangements can be finalised.

Contact Lorna Wright on 9743-4869

Help Wanted

With three major functions coming up in the early part of this year (see below) there will be quite a call for volunteers.

We will need the usual helpers and guides for these.

Sunday, 4th April - Open Day at Yaralla. Guides, Devonshire Teas and other helpers required.

Sunday, 2nd May - Walker Family Reunion. Two guides each for grounds and mansion are needed as well as helpers for the Devonshire Teas

Sunday, 23rd May - Rivendell Open Day. Usual guides, Devonshire teas and general helpers

Would you please make a note in your diaries now and let the secretary know, as soon as possible, if you will be available for any of these days.

Please contact the secretary as soon as possible to let her know where you can assist us.

Dates for your Diary . . .

- ☛ **Wed. 25th February - Executive Meeting**
- ☛ **Thurs. 4th March - Walker Estate Committee**
- ☛ **Wed. 10th March - General Meeting**
- ☛ **Wed. 24th March - Executive Meeting**

Walker Estates Sub-Committee

This committee meets regularly on the first Thursday of each month at Concord Bowling Club at 7:30 p.m.

If you would like to become part of this committee please feel free to come along a join us.

It is not an elected committee but just a group of members interested in the preservation of the Walker Estates, particularly Yaralla.

Come along and learn about our work and offer any suggestions you might have for our continued involvement.

We want you - we need you!!

Yaralla/Rivendell Waiting Lists

Do you know of anyone who had their names on this list. Unfortunately, due to a computer glitch the old list was lost.

March Guest Speaker

Our speaker for this night is Gregory Blaxell, who has just written a book, *The River: Sydney Cove to Parramatta*.

This will be a most interesting illustrated talk so make a note of the date and come along.

Visitors most welcome so bring your friends and neighbours and learn some of the history that follows the course of this river.

Our society supplied quite a few photographs for this book which follows the Parramatta River from beginning to end, showing us places of historical interest along the way.

The book has 304 pages, including numerous photographs and, hopefully, will be available for sale at this meeting.

Cost: Soft cover, \$39.95; Cased, \$49.95.

From the Secretary's Desk

Group Visits to Yaralla.

We are getting calls from various social groups who would like to visit Yaralla during the week, and some on the weekend.

Some only want a guide, others want a guide and also Devonshire teas.

If you can help out on an irregular basis for these visits, please add your name to our list of volunteers for these functions.

There is no access to the mansion on these days.

Newspaper Cuttings

We still have some of the old newspapers on hand so helpers are still needed. The work's not hard but can be a time waster, as it can be very interesting looking through the old local papers. This work can be done at your own home.

Filing Newspaper Cuttings

Helpers are still needed if you can spare a couple of hours here and there.

Assistant Secretary

I am desperately in need of an assistant on a regular basis to help sort through papers and files here and other general work.

Typing would also be a help.

Any offers??

Some Special Dates to Remember . . .

Four Winds Fountain Dedication - Sunday, 7th March

Yaralla Open Day - Sunday, 4th April

Walker Family Reunion - Sunday, 2nd May

Rivendell Open Day - Sunday, 23rd May

Put them in your diary or calendar now so you won't double book the dates.

And please give some thought to becoming a tour guide - we need you.