



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

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. 102

September 2004

COMMITTEE REPORTS, 2003-2004

President's Report

It is with pleasure that I present the 2003-2004 President's Report for Concord Heritage Society.

This last year has seen the culmination of one of our most exciting projects, the restoration of the "Four Winds Fountain". Following a bequest of \$50,000 from Liane Poulton, the society was responsible for managing the restoration of the Four Winds Fountain on the Yaralla Estate. During 2003 Vice-President Graham Packett and other members of the Walker Estates Committee, after liaising with the executor, searched out remnants of the fountain, ascertained the feasibility of the project, and then followed this up by obtaining quotes for the fountain's restoration.

The first challenge was to find an appropriate company to undertake the specialised work. The company involved, Crawford Castings, became very interested in the project, as well as becoming committed to seeing the project to fruition. Among other things, they provided the truck, free of charge, which conveyed the finished fountain to Yaralla

Upon completion, the next challenge involved finding a skilled tradesman who would be able to install the fountain, such that it would be a working fountain, but bearing in mind the potential issues of security and vandalism. Graham, with his usual flair, found local man Con Ioannidis, who took the project on with a dedication and passion second to none.

The third challenge was to decide what should surround the fountain, and we are indebted to Peter Jones and his band of helpers, including Michael Douglas and Bob Jones, for the effective landscaping, including a superb choice of plants.

The visual impact was noted by many at our official dedication on 7th March 2004 when we were able to have as our guests many of Liane's family. The weather on the afternoon of the dedication proved that Liane was keeping an eye on us since the rain stopped, the sun came out and the fountain water flowed. In addition to Liane's family, many local dignitaries and society members and

friends saw Peter Woods and Liane's mother officially dedicate the fountain. We are indebted to all who played a part in ensuring the dedication was a great event.

Our sincere thanks to Graham, who spent many, many hours bringing this project to fruition.

A continuing project is the restoration of the historic Squash Court (the first in Australia) on the Yaralla Estate. Again, we are indebted to Graham Packett for his extensive time and effort in ensuring that this project is being completed with great attention to detail.

Stage 1 has entailed replacing defective timber to the roof interior; removing wire mesh and replacing with glass, as originally fitted; replacing defective or missing timber from around the eaves and gables; scraping back all exterior paintwork and repainting to original specifications; replacing broken or missing tiles and replacing guttering and downpipes

Stage 2, to date, has involved the scraping down of all interior paintwork and patching defects and repainting to original specifications. More work will involve the replacement of electrical wiring and fittings, checking the plumbing and replacing if necessary and repairing the concrete floor. Additional work will continue to be undertaken as funds become available.

We have received a licence (similar to the one we have for the stables) from Central Sydney Area Health Service to use the squash courts for functions.

We are again indebted to Trish Skehan who, in her role as Publicity Officer, en-



Bulletin Board

11th August - Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers

8th September - Kevin Hatton, "The Red Cross Theatre" and photographs. He will be accompanied by Jan Bell from the Hospital Museum.

sured that we have had the opportunity to listen to a wide range of interesting speakers. It is not an easy task to find stimulating speakers for nine months of the year and we commend Trish for her untiring efforts in this regard. Trish has also been a guest speaker at many other clubs and groups, spreading the message of the importance of the Yaralla Estate wherever she goes.

One guest speaker, Gregory Blaxell spoke about "The River - Sydney Cove to Parramatta", Our Society assisted him with photographs for this book.

Our newsletter has again been well received. Continued thanks to editor Lois Michel who, in addition to being our secretary and treasurer, also ensures that the newsletter is stimulating and relevant. Members who are unable to attend meetings have commented to me on how informative and interesting the articles are. Sincere thanks to Lois for all the hard work and dedication she gives year after year.

However, we must remember that we have relied on Lois for so long for so much, and whilst we and the Society have been the beneficiaries, we should not expect Lois to continue at the same gruelling pace, and this has been echoed by her doctors.

Please give consideration as to how we can all ensure that Lois is able to continue to assist our Society, particularly by providing her with assistance.

As I have said in past years, the successful work of our society is dependent on the goodwill, hard work and vision of our members. Some of our members have a higher profile than others, but we are very conscious of those workers who regularly turn up to look after the museum, take groups around the museum, work on tour days, checking tickets, making tea, buttering scones, washing up, cleaning up long before our guests arrive, and working long after they have departed.

The Walker Estates Committee has welcomed new members, willing to give of both their time and expertise. As well as coordinating the official dedication of the fountain, the committee is looking forward. Steps are being taken to develop an appropriate plan of management for the estate.

Thank you to our willing band of helpers: Lorna and Alan Wright,

Margot and Graham Packett, Terry Robinson, Beryl and Michael Douglas. Margaret and Errol Grace, Betty Robertson, Diana Mitchell, Laraine Pendreigh, Jeanette O'Hara, Mary Allison, Mary Anderson, Meg Bean, John Harding, Bob and Jennifer Jones, Derek and Kim Williams, Graham Ferguson, Glenn and Tina Casey, Francis Davis, Lorraine and Vita Holmes, Steve Ivory, Robyn Terry, Vince and Mary Scerri, Kate Skillman, Margaret Donnelly, June Kelsey, Julia Stewart, Jill Hodder, Peter Jones, Mike Curtis, Fred & Frank Stansfield, Carole Twist and several other non-members who turn up to help at our open days. If I have missed someone, please accept my apologies, you are still important to us.

Other committee members and sub committee chairs play their part in ensuring that our affairs are conducted in a professional manner: Vice-President, Errol Grace; Chair of the Walker Estates, Graham Packett; Oral History, Lola Sharp; Museum, Fred and Frank Stansfield.

During the year, we were saddened to hear of the death of Susan Walmsley, wife of John, following a long illness. John is a keen historian, and has given many valuable hours to the Society over many years, particularly as Chair of the Archives Committee in our formative years. Our sympathies are with the family.

On the other side of the life ledger, Tina and Glenn Casey welcomed the birth of son Ben on 3rd March this year.

Throughout the year, we have expanded both the type and timing of our tours. In addition to our now "usual big days" of tours of both Yaralla and Rivendell, we have been conducting specialised tours during the week for many and varied groups. In the coming months, we will host the following organizations - Wanderers Club; South Strathfield Probus, St Marks Church Ermington, Australian Garden History Society and Pennant Hills Ladies' Probus.

In May we hosted the Walker family reunion, with over 90 relatives and friends enjoying a great day of catching up and meeting long lost relatives. Society members felt privileged to show the estate to the family descendants of Thomas and Eadith. The family were very appreciative of our members giving of their time.

During our last Open Day at Rivendell, local family, Paul and Niki Keeble (Vandervideo) made a marvellous video for us, which can be used to publicise the Estate as well as to educate, and will be a great boon for Trish Skehan to use when she gives her talks.

On Sunday 17th October we will be hosting up to 200 members of the Australian Garden History Society at Yaralla, and this will be followed by our usual Open Day on 7th November. Your support will be greatly appreciated for both these major events..

Our Annual Christmas Gathering and Barbecue will be on Wed 8th December at Rhodes Rotary Park.

Thank you all very much for your continued support.

Trish Harrington

Walker Estates Committee

As members would know there is a heavy emphasis placed on the Walker Estates by this Society in all our endeavours and that is for very good and very obvious reasons. We are all aware that the significance of these estates goes well beyond our municipal boundaries and, whilst some acknowledgement of their national importance is proscribed by all tiers of government, we continue to find that there is a lack of any sense of urgency for the preservation of these national assets. Yaralla and Rivendell continue to be loved by everyone who has come into contact with them, however cared for by no one as far as overall management is concerned.

It has been apparent to this committee for some time now that we must work toward a submission to the NSW State Government of a comprehensive Plan of Management for Yaralla that encompasses the entire fabric of this estate. We are committed to ensuring that it remains accessible to the public, that it retains its historical integrity, that it is retained in public ownership in its entirety and, most importantly, that any management plan will not place a heavy financial burden on the State purse.

This is a major task for an organisation of our stature to undertake. However it is imperative that we set our course in this direction and complete this massive task in a thorough and professional manner. It will be an expensive and time consuming exercise if it is to be done properly and we will be heavily reliant upon the support of all our members in order to raise the funds to finance this project.

We are grateful for the support of a number of people with expertise in matters of this nature including Derek Williams, Stephen Davies and Stuart Read.

Meanwhile, with the successful completion of our project to restore the Four Winds Fountain now a

matter of history we have moved on to the lengthy task of restoration of the squash court at Yaralla. At the completion of this project we hope to obtain an occupancy licence for that building which, on present thinking, we may utilise as an exhibition gallery.

Our thanks go to all our members who have worked so hard at our Open Days to make them the success that they always are. Without your help we would cease to exist. It would be a huge help if, on these days, you could convince other family members or friends to help share the work load.

The Walker Estates Committee meets on the first Thursday of every month at Concord Bowling Club, Clermont Ave. North Strathfield at 7.30pm. Please feel free to come along and contribute to this very worthwhile project.

Graham Packett

Oral History Report

Apologies for non-attendance. Sharp family is trying to squeeze June, July and August birthdays into tonight – traditional baked dinner which will really impress vegetarian June birthday daughter in law!

Oral History interviews. My record is not good this year. But I did have a great interview with the Stansfield Boys – not Concord, so to speak, but an insight into two of the most caring people this Society has on its books! It really was my pleasure to interview them.

Recently I conducted a delightful interview with Mrs. Lorraine Noyes, a long-term resident of Myall Street, Concord West, who was able to add considerably to local geographic knowledge – and I suspect Lorraine was a closet feminist!

A bonus two weeks ago for me, as a resident of Battersea Street, Abbotsford, was discovering two couples, who used to live in the street, discoursing outside my home. I had them seated at my dining table drinking coffee 10 minutes later with recording machine turned on!. Literally 'got the goods' on my section of the street. One of the ladies celebrated her 12th birthday at 1 Battersea Street, Abbotsford, the night World War 2 was declared and she couldn't understand why everyone was crying at her birthday party! Anyway, interesting material for Canada Bay generally.

I attended an Oral History Seminar at State Library on Saturday, 31st July 2004. One of the topics revolved around the book "Steppin' Up and Speakin' Out" which represented the

oral history of fifteen women (thirteen Aboriginal women and two gubbarigines). I interviewed several of these women and it provides another insight into our Australian history.

From the point of view of Concord Heritage Society, I was reassured by Rosie Block, the Oral History Co-ordinator of the State Library, that 60 minute cassette tapes still provide the most convenient and accurate form of recording oral history. This was a great relief to me – because I have spent literally hundreds of hours re-playing all the tapes submitted to me to make sure they are in good working order. It is probably something that should be followed up with the local libraries that hold any of the copy tapes. Someone remind me later in the year!

I submitted a paper I had written on Mortlake to Evelyn Uyloan, our Local History Librarian, for her history week exhibition on 10th September 2004. Unfortunately, I will be overseas at that stage but I understand Trish Skehan will be speaking at the opening.

As a result of discussions with Evelyn Uyloan, and having perused what is actually available, it is very obvious that there is not much Concord material held regarding Local History, at our Libraries. I intend to pursue this later in the year, with the support of the Heritage Society and City of Canada Bay Council. I would like to organise a newspaper appeal for memorabilia, people who are willing to be interviewed, etc.

So, intentions are good! Let's see what eventuates!!

I am happy to stand again on Executive Committee as Oral Historian - with an emphasis in the coming twelve months on Local Concord History generally.

Lola Sharp

Archives/Local History

There is very little for me to report this year during my time in this position. All files from the former Friends of Yaralla Group were handed over last year and are bundled according to events. These files have only been called upon once during the year to be perused for any additional names to add to the guest list for the dedication of the Four Winds Fountain.

Kate Skillman

Museum

Fred did not give a written report as his only call was: **WE NEED MORE VISITORS!**

Public Relations

The past 12 months have flown. We have had another interesting range of speakers.

Gregory Blaxell and Michael Duffy told us of their research and publishing of their books on the Parramatta River history and the life of Bligh, A Man of Honour.

Bill Barlow told of his life and his work in the music industry and of the many well-known people he had worked with.

A representative from the Make A Wish Foundation explained the process of granting wishes to very ill children and we forwarded a suitable donation.

Marion Smith told us about the struggles of Australian women in gaining their right to vote. I attended a luncheon at Parliament House where the daughter of one of the early women pioneers told of her mother's struggle for equal pay and opportunities.

Thank you to all who have attended as speakers and as listeners.

We have more interesting talks lined up for the rest of the year so please come along to support them and our society.

Although I am not certain where we will be living for most of the coming year, I am happy to continue in this position.

Trish Skehan

Yaralla Tours

We have the following bookings and need your help. Please give us a call.

Wednesday, 22nd September - St Mark's Church, Ermington - 10:00 am - 12-15 visitors. 1 guide plus Devonshire Teas helpers needed.

Sunday, 17th October - Australian Garden History Society - 9:30 - this is a large group of up to 200 people so we'll need about 8 grounds guides - plus many, many hands ready to work from 8:30 on for the Devonshire Teas. Please ring and volunteer NOW!

Sunday, 7th November - our own Open Day at Yaralla - **all hands on deck!**

... and we've already got a booking for next year.

If you can help with any of these, please contact the Secretary as soon as possible. We need to make sure that we have sufficient helpers for both these days.

Officers & Committee for 2004-05

| | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| President | Trish Harrington |
| Vice-President | Errol Grace |
| Secretary/Treasurer | Lois Michel |
| Assistant Secretary | |
| Public Relations Officer | Trish Skehan |
| Editor of Newsletter | Lois Michel |
| Committee Chairpersons: | |
| Museum | Fred Stansfield |
| Archives/Local History | Kate Skillman |
| Walker Estates | Graham Packett |
| Heritage | Bob Jones |
| Oral/Family History | Lola Sharp |
| Committee Members | |
| | Frank Stansfield |
| | Glenn Casey |
| | Michael Douglas |
| | Beryl Douglas |
| | Graham Ferguson |
| | Jill Hodder |
| | Peter Jones |
| | Jann Ogden |
| | Brian Ogden |

We welcome any newcomers and look forward to a long and happy association.

From the Secretary's Desk

Annual Subscriptions are now due. If you have not yet paid would you please do so as soon as possible.

Children's Games: Did this article in our last Nurungi bring back any memories for you? We haven't heard from anyone yet but there must be dozens of stories out there just waiting to be put down on paper.

Group Visits: Please don't assume that we'll know you will turn up to help. We need to know ahead of time that we will have sufficient helpers.

Australian Garden History Tour: This October 17 visit will need 8 grounds guides and many, many helpers for the Devonshire teas.

This group will only be with us for about 2 hours so everything will have to be ready before they arrive at 9:30. Devonshire Teas helpers will be needed to be on hand no later than 8:30 a.m. so that the scones can all be prepared and ready.

Out of the Mouths of Babes

We have had a very interesting email from our youngest and newest member, Johanna Davidson with a very good idea for continuing the work of our society in preserving the Yaralla estate..

She states that, because we are all getting older, we should try to interest the children of the area. She suggests a pamphlet along the following lines should be distributed in the area.

Help us!

Hey, kids, there's a really cool place called Yaralla!

The people who look after it are getting too old for the job!

They need kids to help them.

Us kids will take over for them!

Johanna has thrown down the gauntlet, what can we do to make the plan work?

Come on all you teachers and youth workers - let's have some suggestions.

It's very important that there will be others to carry on our work when we can no longer do it. We owe it to Yaralla.

Why do we Say That?

Put a Sock in it: It's possible it means just what it says - to put a sock in someone's mouth to stop them talking. But another explanation says it dates back to the days of wind-up gramophones. The sound came out of a horn and there was no volume control, so articles of clothing were used to stuff into the horn to regulate the sound.

Chew the Fat: This is what you do when you talk for a long time, particularly when you're grumbling about something.

Chew the fat is exactly what sailors did in the days when meat was preserved by salting - storing it in barrels of brine. Salted beef was one of the few staples that could last a long voyage. But salt curing made beef very tough and sailors had to chew endlessly before swallowing it.

Mind Your P's and Q's: People who mind their P's and Q's are careful about their behaviour - a far cry from those in unruly waterfront bars where the saying originated.

Some innkeepers would give sailors credit until pay day and chalk up on a slate, marked P and Q, how many pints and quarts they drank. Sailors had to mind their P's and Q's to keep the record straight.

By the 19th century schoolchildren were being told to mind their P's and Q's - but teachers did not mention the saying's lowly origin.

Dates for your Diary . . .

- ☛ **Thurs. 2nd September - Walker Estates Committee Meeting**
- ☛ **Wed. 8th September - Kevin Hatton, "Red Cross Theatre" (at Concord Hospital), assisted by Jan Bell from the Hospital Museum**
- ☛ **Wed. 22nd September - Executive Meeting.**
- ☛ **Thurs. 7th October - Walker Estates Committee Meeting**
- ☛ **Wed. 13th October - General Meeting - speaker to be advised**
- ☛ **Sun. 17th October - Yaralla Tour - Australian Garden History Group**
- ☛ **Wed. 27th October - Executive Meeting**
- ☛ **Thurs. 4th November - Walker Estates Committee Meeting**
- ☛ **Sun. 7th November - Our special Open Day at Yaralla**