



"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

Lola Sharp, 8753-0659

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

Thomas Walker of Rhodes

One of the most important and difficult positions in the early years of the colony was that of the commissariat, the office responsible for controlling and distributing the stores of food and supplies upon which the early settlers depended for their livelihood.

It was as an official in the commissariat that Thomas Walker, one of Concord's pioneers, but quite unrelated to the merchant Thomas Walker of Yaralla, came to Australia. Born in 1791 in Yorkshire, England, Thomas Walker was the third son of John Walker, a barrister of Leeds. His maternal grandparents owned large tracts of land in and around Leeds, including the manor house Rhodes Hall.

Thomas Walker joined the army before the age of 18 and served in the commissariat in the Peninsular War, France, the Netherlands and at Waterloo as an officer of the Duke of Wellington's staff. In January 1818 he arrived in Sydney to take up a position as assistant deputy commissary general. Walker worked in the government stores in Sydney until October of that year when he was sent to the settlement of Port Dalrymple in Northern Tasmania to take charge of the stores there.

He was granted 324 hectares in the district which he promptly fenced, improved and stocked. By the middle of 1819 his farm supported 700 sheep and eighty head of cattle.

In October 1819 Thomas Walker sailed back to Sydney where he was appointed deputy assistant commissary general in charge of the stores at Parramatta and Sydney.

As befitted his status as a high-ranking government official and free immigrant to the colony, Thomas Walker mixed with society's 'exclusives' whose social round included a series of balls, dinners and parties.

On 4th January 1823 Walker married into one of the colony's best-known 'exclusive' families. His wife, Anna Elizabeth Blaxland, was the second daughter of John Blaxland of Newington, Silverwater, whose elder brother Gregory Blaxland had gained notice as the leader of the first party to cross the Blue Mountains in 1813.

It was about this time, possibly in 1822, that

Thomas Walker bought land in the north of Concord from the original military grantees. He built there a home which he named 'Rhodes' after his mother's ancestral estate in Yorkshire. It is generally thought that Rhodes was demolished in about 1918.

In 1825 Thomas Walker retired from his position in the commissariat and took his family back to Tasmania where he lived until his death in 1861.

In 1870 his wife brought her family back to New South Wales. They returned to Rhodes in Concord where the family lived until Anna's death on 20th December 1889 at the age of eighty five.

Three of the Walker girls did not marry and continued to live at Rhodes after their mother's death.



*Thomas Walker of Rhodes 1791-1861
and Anna Elizabeth Blaxland,
wife of Thomas Walker and
mother of his 13 children*



Bulletin Board

Wed. 13th September - Gregory Blaxell - "The Life of Gregory Blaxland" and "Brush Farm"

Wed. 11th October - Barbara Hancock, "Concord Post Offices"

Wed. 8th November - Claude Bennie, "Arnotts History"

Wed. 13th December - Our Annual Christmas Barbecue at Rhodes/Rotary Park, Concord West.

Spotlight on Conservation of Photographs - how to keep your photos safe from harm

Photographs have filtered into every aspect of our lives. There can be few people today who have not posed for a family snap shot or reminisced over holiday photos from years ago.

The use of photography spans the recording of important moments in history to the more commonplace tasks of insurance and identification records. So important have they become that it is difficult to conceive of a passport without one.

To ensure that these photographs are around for future generations to enjoy it is very important that they are correctly cared for. This need not be a costly and involved process - a few simple steps can dramatically increase the life of your photographs many-fold.

Photographs deteriorate due to two main factors - their own inherent instability and the environment in which they are stored. Inherent instability is generally the result of the method used to produce the image - e.g. colour transparency, colour print, or black and white print.

Environmental factors causing deterioration have many sources - including packaging, framing materials, pollutants, light, humidity, temperature, and handling.

Each of these factors reacts with the chemical and physical structure of the photograph resulting in numerous forms of damage.

Preventing Damage

1. Labelling your photographs

Labelling and cataloguing your photographs is very important - a collection without provenance provides little pleasure for anyone.

Try to get your grandparents and relatives to write down who is in your family snaps and write down those wonderful vistas you shoot while travelling - you'll regret it if you don't! However, where possible label the album page rather than the photo!

Do not label your photographs directly, but if unavoidable, write in soft graphite or chinagraph pencil using light pressure on the back. Never use pen, as the ink can bleed and cause stains.

2. Storage

Many museums store their collections in controlled atmospheres of very low temperature and low relative humidity. This is not easy to achieve in a normal household, but there are ways of prolonging the life of your precious

photographs at home. Find a place in your home that maintains a stable, cool, dry, clean environment.

Do not choose rooms or cupboards that have external walls as these are less stable and can have condensation problems. Centrally located, well-insulated rooms with good ventilation are the best.

If possible keep the temperature below 20°C and the relative humidity between 35-55%.

3. Albums, frames and enclosures

Albums and enclosures are very good for preventing handling damage as you can look at your photographs without actually touching them.

Good quality frames provide some protection if you want to hang some photographs around your home. A better option would be to use copies for display and keep your originals in good storage.

The best photographic albums will have passed what is known as the Photographic Activity Test (P.A.T), meaning that they are manufactured from materials safe for photographic storage and display.

Photographic albums should not contain sulphur or acidic materials, and it is best that they are not coloured as the dyes can migrate into your photographs.

Plastic enclosures should be polyester, polyethylene or polypropylene, not polyvinyl acetate (PVC) - the manufacturer should be able to tell you what type of plastic it is.

Photographs should be spaced away from frame glazing to prevent the photograph sticking permanently to the glass or acrylic. Acrylic glazing will protect your photographs from ultraviolet light more than glass, but glass is better than having nothing at all.

Ask your framer to use non-buffered acid-free cotton rag board to mount your photographs.

Photo-corners are the best method of attaching your photographs in their frames or albums (unless you are using a slip-in album).

Never use so called "magnetic" or self-adhesive albums as the adhesive yellows, becomes brittle and will stain and degrade your photographs.

4. Preserving your conventional photographs digitally?

Digital copies of your photographs can be useful to pass around the family or to put in frames around the house so

that you can put your originals away safely reducing their risk of damage.

Once you have that digital file you can make as many copies as you like!

Some manufacturers of digital technology advocate using it as a means of "preserving" old photos - that is, they advocate replacing your originals.

While it is true that you can copy the image to a certain resolution using digital technology, the tangible qualities of the photograph as a piece of technological and social history are not copied.

We recommend keeping your original photographs as well as making a digital copy.

Age

Age is a quality of mind.

If you have left

all your dreams behind,

If hope is cold,

If you no longer plan ahead,

If your ambitions are all dead -

Then you are old

But if you make the best of life

And in your life you still have zest,

If love you hold

No matter how the birthdays fly -

You are not old

Interesting snippets.

After a Yaralla visit by Canada Bay council staff last month, a group of bicycle riders appeared at the stables area. Trish spoke to them and discovered that they were a group of Principals from Sydney schools, such as St John's at Auburn and St Joseph's at Lewisham. These intrepid riders came to Yaralla to see what facilities we have for students. They were impressed with the onsite museum and will arrange for student tours later this year.

Another group have contacted the City of Canada Bay council about the possibility of using part of the dairy as a Men's Shed. This movement is funded by Rotary and Probus clubs, who equip willing craftsmen to teach crafts to younger members of society. They only need suitable, secure spaces to house the equipment. Councillor Jeanette O'Hara is visiting some established Sheds, and will report back to council on the suitability of the project for our site.

Glimpses of the Past

The advertisements announcing the intention to conduct an auction sale of property in early Concord, drew attractive pictures of the advantages to be gained by an intending purchaser.

The following notice, issued in 1840, was no doubt designed to make the colonists' mouths water – and open their purses.

"Mr. Stubbs has been instructed by the proprietor, J. D. Nichols, Esq., (Previous to that Gentleman's departure for England) to sell by public auction, at his new auction mart, King Street, next door to T. & M. Wooley's, corner of George Street, on Thursday, the 1st October, 1840, to commence at twelve o'clock precisely:-

"The whole of that beautiful plantation and extensive property, known as Nichol's Orchard, at Concord.

"To gentlemen who have recently arrived in the Colony, either as merchants, retired naval and military officers, barristers and capitalists, with or without families, Mr. Stubbs would more particularly address himself in relation to this property, especially as such gentlemen may not, probably, be aware of the extraordinary profits and advantages which are realised from the cultivation and produce of an orchard in New South Wales.

"Nichols' Orange Orchard has obtained its celebrity from the scientific system and extent under which it has been founded and from the quality and delicious flavour of its fruits.

"Great care has been taken that the soil is suitable to the growth of the trees planted in it, and which have been selected from a soil nearly of the same kind. The situation is unexceptionable and the trees have been arranged in rows alternately agreeable to the plan introduced by the celebrated horticulturist, Mr. Miller.

"The Orchard is now in full bearing, at a cost to the proprietor, of \$5,000 and upwards, and it is the opinion of one of the most scientific horticulturists residing near Kissing Point and Penant Hills that from the present healthy and vigorous state of the trees no better fruit can be produced in the Colony, and that the orchard alone, with proper care and labour of one man, would yield a bona fide income of \$500 per annum; in addition to this, the cultivation of barley (or a few acres of wheat and vegetables) could be carried on between the trees to advantage.

"The plantation produces every description of fruits known in the Colony,

more especially those of the citrus tribe.

"The buildings comprise: viz:- A small family cottage with four rooms, a six stall stable with coach house and granary, a garden's house with store-room attached, labourer's dwelling and granary, also a hot-house with one thousand nine hundred square feet of glass, furnace and flue complete; several tropical fruits, especially the pineapple, grow therein, in great perfection.

"The Orchard is situated immediately opposite to Kissing Point Church, and within the neighbourhood of highly respectable and genteel society.

It is skirted by the Concord Road, and joins the celebrated and very extensive estate of G. R. Nichols, Esq., Attorney-at-Law, being approachable by either land or water.

"The climate partakes of the same genial character as that of Gipps Town, and is free from any humidity injurious to the constitution; with regard to the scenery, no tourist can visit this very interesting part of New South Wales without being struck with the many enchanting views, as they present themselves on every side. They are seen, however, to most advantage from the Steam Packets as they glide through the romantic waters of the Parramatta River, and their beautify may be more easily perceived and felt than described in words.

"The Title is a Grant from the Crown. Terms: twenty per cent cash deposit, and the residue payable by approved bills at three and six months.

"The purchaser will be put in possession after the sale and he will thenceforth enjoy all the benefits of the early crops."

The enticing language of the Auction Notice had its desired effect, and the property was transferred to Mr. Thos. Walker, father of Dame Eadith Walker, before the end of 1840.

To be continued

NOTE: *The above is an extract from the Concord Recorder of 15th August 1963, pages 1 and 4 (no acknowledged author and the article was to have been continued but it was probably the second in a series of articles covering the history of the inner west courtesy of Glen Coleman. Lola Sharp*

Cutlery Evolution

Knives: The first knife, a simple narrow blade shaped from flint, was used as a tool and a weapon over 25,000 years ago.

After the axe, it is the oldest known man-made implement. Through the Bronze and Iron Ages metal knives were made and for the first time they had handles at the end of the blades. They could withstand violent use on the battlefield and remain sharp. The first steel blades were made by the Romans. Special knives were evolved for particular purposes: hunting, shoemaking and shoeing horses, for example. The first folding knives were made by the Romans about the 1st century AD.

In domestic use the knife was at first used mainly in preparing food. By the 14th century it was common when eating to cut up and spear meat with pointed knives. When the fork came into use, the knife tip gradually became rounded.

Steel knives needed regular polishing to prevent rusting, but in 1921 stainless steel cutlery was introduced by the International Silver Company of Meriden, Connecticut, U.S.A.

Forks: In the 11th century, forks were first used in Italian households for eating fruit which would otherwise stain the fingers. By the late 1450s forks were beginning to replace the sharp-pointed knife for lifting meat from the plate. It took until the 1620s for the fork to reach the eating tables of Britain.

Most early forks were two-pronged until the beginning of the 19th century, when three prongs became fashionable, to be followed by four about 1880.

Until about 1900, British sailors were not allowed to eat with forks; to do so was considered unmanly.

Spoons Primitive man used a shell as a spoon, and the ancient Greeks used wooden spoons for eating eggs. Otherwise the spoon was used almost exclusively for stirring and ladling during cooking until the mid-17th century, when it joined the knife and fork on the dining table.

Did You Know

- * Honey is the only food that does not spoil. Honey found in the tombs of Egyptian pharaohs has been tasted by archaeologist and found edible.
- * It took three years of constant printing to complete Johann Gutenberg's famous Bible, which appeared in 1455 in two volumes, and had 1,284 pages. He reportedly printed 200 Bibles, of which 47 still exist.

Where the Blue Wattle Grows

You are invited to attend the launch of this new book

by our own Patricia Skehan

on Sunday, 27th August, 2006

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Concord RSL Auditorium

Nullawarra Avenue, Concord West

Ample car parking. Light refreshments provided.

RSVP 23/8/2006 to 0414-434-172 or

email yaralla2137@yahoo.com.au

From the Secretary's Desk

Friends of Rookwood: If any of our members are free to give them a hand on their Mini Open Day on 24th September, please give Robyn a call on 9499-2415. They'd love to have your help.

Workers wanted: The timber shed at Yaralla which Vince Scerri and Michael Douglas recently repaired is now in need of sanding down and an application of oil to preserve the timber. Vince would like a couple of volunteers to help with this. Can you spare some time? If so, give him a call on 9736-1003

The Walkers of Yaralla

Due to regular requests for copies we have now reprinted the book. We did not include the colour supplement this time to help keep the cost down. The book will sell for \$22. If you know of anyone who wants a copy let them know to contact us.

Newspaper clippings: The last of our old newspapers are now in the hands of the "clippers" - and we thank all who helped us in preserving this valuable information for our archives.

Photocopying: We now need some volunteers to photocopy these cuttings and then to file them in their appropriate context. Can you spare a little time, now and again, to see this important work through to the end?

Books for Sale: As well as Trish's books, *The Walkers of Yaralla*, *Eadith*, *Concord's Royal Kin*, and *Where the Blue Wattle Grows*, we have two books by member Bill Barlow, *Voyage of the City of Brisbane* and *Camels of Australia*. We also have Greg Blaxell's book, *The River, Sydney Cove to Parramatta*. These are all available from the museum or from the secretary.

Executive Ins and Outs

We were sorry to see that Jann Ogden chose not to stand for re-election as President. She has done a sterling job for our Society over the last 12 months. However, we're happy to know that she will continue with us as a member of the Executive.

In her place we welcome Alan Wright as our new President. He will be able to bring a wealth of experience to our happy group.

We are also pleased to welcome back Michael Douglas, who has now found time to work with us again.

We also welcome a newcomer, Pat Corbitt, and look forward to getting to know her better in the coming year.

Welcome all.

Local Studies Section at Five Dock Library

Margaret Roberts, our Local Studies Librarian, is working on a display and activities for History Week, which is to be held from 15-24th September.

If you are interested in our local history mark the date in your diary and drop in.

What is Local Studies?

Local Studies is a special collection of both historical and contemporary material relating to all aspects of City of Canada Bay Local Government Area.

The collection is located at the Five Dock Branch, 4-12 Garfield Street, Five Dock. It includes resources which provide information about the original Indigenous inhabitants, post European occupation, the natural and built environments as well as the contemporary life of the area, including census data.

The collection also offers a selection of resources for people researching their family history. Family history information is not restricted to the local area and includes births, deaths and marriages for all states of Australia. Sands Directories and some cemetery records are also held.

The collection includes: books; reports and environmental studies; local newspapers and newspaper clippings files; photographs; family history resources.

A group of our members are intending to visit during History Week and if you'd like to join us, please give the secretary a call.

For further information or to make an appointment, please contact Margaret Roberts, Local Studies Librarian at Five Dock Library, 4-12 Garfield Street, Five Dock, 2046.

Telephone: 9911-6310 or email margaret.roberts@canadabay.nsw.gov.au

Yaralla Open Day

Sunday, 29th October

If you are available to help on this day please let Lois know as soon as possible so that rosters can be organised.

We also need more tour guides - if you would like to learn, please come along on the day and accompany one of our regular guides to see how easy it is.

We need guides for house tours and/or ground tours.

Just for a Laugh

I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors. I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over.

For your Diary

Wed. 23rd August - Executive Committee Meeting

Wed. 13th September - General Meeting

Wed. 27th September - Walker Estates Committee Meeting

Wed. 11th October - General Meeting

Wed. 25th October, Executive Committee Meeting