



"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
Bob Jones, 8765-9347

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

CONCORD HERITAGE MUSEUM

5 Wellbank Street
Open 2:00 - 4:00 pm
on 1st and 3rd
Wednesdays & Saturdays

No.130

March 2007

Fortunino Matania - Wartime Artist/Illustrator

Fortunino Matania (1881 - 1963) was Italian by birth. After training in his father's workshop he illustrated his first book at the age of 14 and later worked as illustrator for newsmagazines worldwide. One of the most accomplished realistic illustrators and artists of his time, his wartime work was immensely popular and appeared in nearly every major newsmagazine, Allied, neutral and Central Powers alike. During and after the war, his work adorned many a history book as well.

During the war he mainly worked for the British magazine *'the Sphere'* as their star illustrator, usually producing one full page illustration or more per weekly issue, often for the opening cover page. These illustrations were sold to other magazines and publications worldwide. Literally tens of millions of readers saw war time events through the medium of Matania's weekly illustrations and as such he played an important role in defining people's mental image of what Great War battlefield scenes and soldiers looked like.

He visited the front several times which allowed him to view wartime conditions at first hand and talk with soldiers about their experiences. From sketches and memory he could then finish a painting, often in a few days time. At other times, when his illustrations depicted specific news events he would receive information, photographs or rough sketches and descriptions from on-the-scene reporters or eye-witness reports. Drawing on personal experience and technique as well as on information from archive photographs or prints he would then set to work composing and finishing the required illustration. Rich in detail and carefully composed, his stirring paintings often depicted heroic or romantic scenes.

Matania might best be described as a photographer who used paint and brush. Indeed his illustrations are so realistically executed that at first sight they can be mistaken for photographs, which is probably the reason why his works were so immensely popular at the time: they could show what no photographer ever could, namely scenes of action and battle, replete with danger, stirring and heroically

romantic events which cannot be captured on film, partly because his illustrations are distillations and compilations of many separate instances and events, but yet somehow true and recognizable nonetheless.

http://www.greatwardifferent.com/Great_War/Matania/Matania_01.htm



This is one of Fortunino Matania's most famous war-time illustrations. It was published in countless magazines worldwide during the war and afterwards. A bit melodramatic for present day tastes perhaps, such scenes must nevertheless have been experienced by soldiers countless times during the war, which perhaps goes a long way towards explaining the illustration's popularity.



Bulletin Board

March Wed 14: Gareth Debney, "Yaralla's Wild Side". Gareth will be focusing mainly on the conservation value and significance of the remnant natural bushland on Yaralla and Rivendell.

April Wed 11: Bruce Dale, "The Man Who Died Twice" (you'll just have to come along to find out!).

Industries in Exile Bay

The industrial development of Exile Bay was largely a result of the boom in local industries that followed World War I. All the industries on the northern arm were first established during or immediately after the war.

Wunderlich Limited was the first large company to move to the area. They manufactured pressed metal ceilings and asbestos sheet was developed as a substitute. The company purchased two hectares at the northern end of Phillip Street, then a dirt track, and a factory was constructed to produce Durasbestos. Materials for the building of the factory were brought to the site in horse-drawn wagons.

Production began in 1917 and by the early 1920s the factory employed some fifty people. Asbestos was brought along the river to the company's jetty and cement came by wagon, and later lorry, from the Burwood Railway Station. The finished products were shipped out by barge.

In the 1950s they moved the factory to Rose Hill and the site was purchased by the Southern Can Company, which was later incorporated into Containers Limited.

Wunderlich

The Wunderlich company, founded by Ernest Wunderlich in 1885, created a significant impact on the nature and style of private and public buildings in Australia.

The first decorative panels sold in Sydney were imported from Germany and designed by Mr. F. Peters of Berlin. The initial success of installations in such buildings as the Colonial Secretary's Building in Macquarie Street and the Beale's and Paling's piano showrooms in George Street, Sydney, encouraged Wunderlich to patent this new form of ceiling and look for further contracts.

Ernest Wunderlich, now joined by his brother Alfred in the business, was intensely musical and this made them aware of the acoustic advantages of their metal ceilings. They convinced the Sydney City Council to use their product for the projected "Centennial Hall".

Ernest wrote: *"The present Town Hall, at first named the Centennial Hall, was completed about 1889. It was never designed as a concert hall, and the immense organ must have been an afterthought, because the architects had specified an elaborate plaster ceiling with console and pendentives,*

that certainly would have fallen on the audiences as soon as the 64ft lower C pipe sounded. After a long canvass of mayor and aldermen, I induced the City Council to substitute stamped zinc for the ceiling and all its decorations."

The Wunderlich company's work on the Sydney Town Hall was an enormous success and by the time their 1899 catalogue was produced it credited the company with an enormous list of achievements: 15 hospitals and asylums; 14 law courts; 11 public offices and buildings; 5 schools; 8 theatres; 27 insurance offices and other commercial buildings; 35 warehouses and showrooms; 11 municipal buildings; 11 museums and libraries; 10 miscellaneous public buildings and railway stations; 9 churches; 20 banks; 41 hotels and over 150 private residences!

Wunderlich panels were produced until the 1950s when the effect of the two World Wars and changing tastes finally secured the demise of this very special decorative product.



Sydney Can Sleep Safe

During the Crimean War, fears that the Russian Navy might blockade Sydney Harbour led to the urgent construction of a Martello Tower on Pinchgut Island, now known as Fort Denison.

Martello Towers are squat and built of brick or stone, making them immensely strong. The name Martello comes from a circular stone tower built at Mortella Point in Corsica.

When French troops occupied the island in 1794, Corsican patriots pleaded for British help to drive out the French. However, the French occupying the Martello tower beat off the attack of the two British Warships with ease.

After the design's defensive capabilities were thus proven, Martello Towers proliferated along the South Kent coast into Sussex as a line of defensive forts. This was during the time of the Napoleonic Wars, when there was an urgent need to defend the South Coast of England against possible invasion.

The citizens of our fair city can rest assured their new guardian has a brilliant pedigree.

Sydney, 1857

Concord's First Teacher

William Love is credited as being the first teacher in Concord. His school was established at Concord West, south of Braygrove.

In the census of 1828 Love is described as being a 38-year-old convict who had been freed with a conditional pardon. He had arrived in the colony in 1820 on the *Commander* to serve a fourteen-year sentence.

His wife, Susanna, had arrived on the *Elizabeth* in 1816 and was a free woman by 1828.

Three children were living with the family in 1828 but the census does not make clear whether they belonged to Susanna, William or both.

Nine servants are recorded as residents of Lovedale, the Loves' residence, as well as fourteen girls, students 'of Mr. Love's seminary', whose ages ranged from nine to eighteen. Most of these pupils were born in the colony and were presumably the daughters of resident of Concord and neighbouring districts.

The diary of Francois Lepailleur, the Canadian exile, mentions William Love several times, so he was obviously a person of some note in the district.

When Louisa Meredith moved to Homebush in 1840, she could see Love's school and was moved to comment on the distinctively harmonious address of the establishment:

"On one of these (several wooded jutting points) was a school for young ladies, and any one addressing the principal by letter would be somewhat amused by the very alarmingly soft nature of the superscription, which would run thus:

*Mrs Love,
Harmony House,
Concord,
Near Kissing Point" !.*

Some time before 1890 Lovedale was burnt to the ground and was never rebuilt. By this time it was no longer serving as a school but had been, for many years, a private home.

A national or state system of education did not exist in New South Wales until 1848 and the next schools to be set up in Concord were naturally associated with established churches.

NOTE: The school would probably have been situated just north of the Concord Repatriation Hospital and there is a small area near the hospital car park called "Lovedale Place"

Annie Leggett's address to the Rotary Club of Concord - 1983

Annie Elizabeth Leggett was invited to be Guest Speaker to the Rotary Club of Concord N.S.W. when in her 81st year. She was accompanied by her two sons, Donald and Eric, both members of Rotary in Umina and Woy Woy Clubs respectively. The following is a transcript of her notes for the speech.

Mr. President and members of the Concord Rotary Club, may I thank you for inviting me to your evening and to give a little talk about Concord. I don't profess to be a speaker like my sons Donald and Eric but will just be myself and hope I don't bore you.

I don't think I could talk about Concord without reference to my parents. I feel they were the pioneers and early settlers in Concord, briefly to say they settled in Emily Street, Mortlake on arrival from England in 1886. All the Lee family except the eldest, Harry, was born in Mortlake. There were six boys and me. My brother Edward and I were the youngest and were twins and I guess we would have been the first twins in Mortlake.

I will not go into my dad's or the Lee family history, but when I was two years old my parents moved to No.1 Wellbank Street Concord. So my memories of Concord will be around this area (but first Mortlake) sic.

Wellbank Street then was mostly bush, the only house on the right hand side going up was the stately home of the Misses Flavelle, now our Council Chambers. On the other side was mostly bush. This side of Ludgate Street was three weatherboard cottages, and a house and shop on the corner of Ludgate Street. Then up to Concord Road was all bush. As children, we played 'Bobbies and Bushies' opposite my home in the bush and every night we would watch for the lamp lighter to come.

The (*southern*) area from Majors Bay Road to Flavelle Street was known as 'Hillcrest', which included Smith's Dairy, the stable and home of the Bolton's and to mention some of the old families would include the Gavin's. It is interesting to note the Miss Gavin's still live in the area. The bottom end of Wellbank Street was part of the Parramatta River, and the Christmas tides would come right up to the Water Board (*pumping station*). A creek ran right up to the area of the Soldiers Memorial Hall and you had to cross a footbridge to get across to Brewer Street from Spring Street.

I can remember the Steam Trams and although I began school at Mortlake, when I was eight I went to Burwood School and traveled in the old steam tram.

One of the first businesses to develop in the area was the Hygienic Dairy, facing Correy Avenue that caused quite a lot of curiosity and interest when it was being built on the fringe of the bush.

I must tell you about Granny Page who had a little grocery store in one of the weatherboard cottages I mentioned near Ludgate Street. My brother and I used to get mother's shopping from her and at Christmas time, if we had been good, she would give us a blower with a feather on the end and we thought that was just wonderful.

(Annie has in her notes 'Percival's Bakery', but no detail.)

I can also remember when the ground was cut up and sold from Major Bay Road to Ludgate Street via Wellbank Street and the corner block in the shopping area was sold for two pounds and 10 shillings a foot, which was a high price then.

I have talked mostly of the area where I lived, but Concord is a very historical and important place on the map of Sydney, as amongst the important people and events we can take pride in (are) the first Post Master of Sydney, Isaac Nichols, (who) was a resident of Concord (Yaralla), Thomas Walker and Dame Edith Walker who became a millionairess. Also in history we have the area of Longbottom (St. Lukes Park) where convicts and prisoners were housed overnight and the Canadian Exiles were housed there.

Concord Centenary Year, this year (1983), recognized the importance of Isaac Nichols and Longbottom Stockade and issued First Day Envelopes, bearing the history. A few are still available at our Museum \$4.00 the set and well worth keeping.

There is so much more I could talk about but 10 minutes is the limit. Though I could mention the old brick pit (*Sandstone Quarry*) in Brewer Street, the Foxcroft Quarry, where Massey Park now stands. I can also remember when I was a pupil of Miss Basford (Music Teacher); we took part in a war time concert at Correys Gardens. I expect Ron will remember that too (?).

Annie had the following notes as an addenda: Mortlake Solomon's Hall, Palace Hotel, Ferrier's, also Albert's story of how to spend 2/6 for a days outing. I do not recall her using these in her talk.

Eric K. Leggett, Umina 2007.

Watering the Horses

The enormous contribution that horses have made throughout our history is quietly recognised by 500 drinking troughs in towns scattered around Australia.

These were mostly built in the 1930s with money left by a wealthy businessman, George Bills.

Bills was born in England in 1859 and migrated, with his parents and siblings, first to New Zealand and then, in 1873, to Victoria, settling in Echuca. At the age of 23 he set up a bird dealership in Brisbane, and then went into business with his brother Harry, making inner-spring mattresses. He met and married Annis Swan in Brisbane, before moving to Sydney, where the mattress factory was based. The business was extremely successful and the Bills family became wealthy.

George and Annis, who had no children, shared a concern for those less well-off than themselves, and were known for their generosity in giving money to the poor. They also both had a great love of animals.

When he retired in 1908, George began installing horse troughs around Melbourne and he ensured that the work would continue after his death in 1928 by leaving part of his estate as a trust fund for the purpose.

In 1930, more than 500 concrete horse troughs were made by the Rocla Pipe Company at a cost of £13 (\$26) each, and were distributed to towns, mostly in Victoria and New South Wales, which requested them.

Many still stand today, identified by an inscription which remembers the generosity of Annis and George Bills.

(Printed in Australian Heritage, Summer 2006)

Ed: We have one of these which, due to lack of space, is still outside the Joanna Walker building at the Thomas Walker Convalescent Hospital)

Absolutely Useless Information

The largest and most recognisable signature on the American Declaration of Independence is that of John Hancock. In 1776 the British had issued a decree promising a reward for the capture of leaders of the Revolution. Hancock, the president of the Continental Congress, was the first to sign the document proclaiming Americas's independence from British rule. He signed with a flouring and was said to have uttered: "The British ministry can read that name without spectacles; let them double their reward."

To this day, people place their "John Hancock" on documents of all kinds.

YOU'RE INVITED

City of Canada Bay celebrates National Trust Heritage Festival

March, 3-18: A photographic display, *Ebb and flow: life on the Parramatta River*, will be on view at Five Dock Library, 4-12 Garfield Street, Fivedock.

March 13 (Tuesday), 6-8:00 pm: Stories of People and Places. Come and hear stories that have helped to shape the life of our community.

Rosie Block, Oral Historian from the State Library of NSW will explore how personal stories can deepen our understanding of local history.

Giorgio Moiso will share his story of migration from Italy in 1951. Giorgio has contributed to our local community for over 30 years.

Bill Allen has spent over 40 years on the Parramatta River and will focus on the part ferries have played in the lives of people in our community.

Venue: Five Dock Library. For further information and for catering purposes contact Margaret Roberts on 9911-6317.

March 16 (Friday), 1-4:00 pm: Parramatta River, Indigenous and European Perspectives. Three hour river cruise on the *Reliance*, a restored 1919 mail ferry. Chris Tobin and Gregory Blaxell will be our guides to explore the Indigenous and European landscapes of the Parramatta River. Afternoon tea included.

Meet at the Bayview Park Wharf, Burwood Road, Concord. Cost: \$50 per person.

Bookings essential, phone Merrilyn Durrance on 9911-6555.

Invitations to other events . . .

Friends of Rookwood continue with their regular guided tours of the cemetery on the 1st Sunday of every month. They also conduct tours for groups (minimum 20 people) by arrangement.

For information and bookings phone Robyn Hawes on 9499-2415.

Bridging Sydney - to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the opening of this much loved icon, the *Bridging Sydney* exhibition and publication bring together dramatic photographs and paintings with rare and previously unseen bridge and tunnel proposals, plans and sketches.

It will be on display at the Museum of Sydney until 29th April. The museum is open 9:30 am to 5:00 pm daily. www.hht.net.au

Radio 2RRR 88.5 FM

They broadcast a diverse range of programmes, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including jazz, blues, reggae, orchestral/classical, gothic, heavy metal, foreign languages and information programmes. If you would like a 2RRR programme guide, please call the office on 9816-2988 or visit www.2rrr.org.au.

Soapbox on 2RRR 88.5 FM:

What is Soapbox? It is an hour of radio that is available every week for community members to come along and have your say. You don't have to have experience in radio, nor do you need to know how to use the equipment. We help out with that side of things.

What can I talk about or play on Soapbox? An issue that you feel passionate about. A community group (must be not-for-profit) explaining what they do and how someone could get involved. Read poetry or stories you have written. Play your favourite music that you don't normally hear on radio.

When is it on? Soapbox is broadcast 3-4:00 pm Saturday. We can pre-record your session if required.

How do I find out more Phone Natalia at 2RRR, Monday, Wednesday or Friday on 9816-2988

A SPECIAL INVITATION

Calling all Tour Guides, potential tour guides and those interested in the Walker Estates Committee.

We will be meeting on Saturday, 14th April, commencing at 10:00 am, in the stables complex. The main purpose of this meeting is to allow our guides to share many of the "little extras" they include in their talks to their groups.

Many guides also use special displays of photographs, etc. which they use to illustrate their talks. They will be bringing these along to share and allow you to copy these ideas.

The meeting will also introduce potential guides to how our regulars conduct their tours, thus inspiring them to take on the challenge of becoming guides

Time permitting we will also be discussing how to promote our activities, our plans for future projects, and just to let you know what we are doing.

If you have even only harboured a slight thought that you might like to become one of our guides, but thought it would be too difficult, why not come along and see how easy it all is.

Our Open Days are the best way of making sure the general public becomes more aware of this magnificent estate and which will, in the long run, help to preserve it well into the future.

From the Secretary's Desk

Yaralla Open Day: Our next Open Day at Yaralla will be on Sunday, 29th April. Please mark it in your diary now! **If you are going to be able to help on the day please contact the secretary as soon as possible so we can organise.**

Calling Garden Lovers: The Concord Garden Club, in conjunction with the Council, will be holding their Concord Autumn Flower and Floral Art Show on Saturday, 24th March (10:30 am to 4:00 pm) and Sunday, 24th March (11:00 am to 3:00 pm) in the Concord Community Centre in Gipps Street. Show entries close at 5:00 pm on Thursday, 22nd March, 2007 with Show Secretary, Mrs. Pat Allport, phone 9558-1209.

Minutes of General Meetings: To save time these are no longer read out at meetings. If you would like to receive a copy please let us know. If you are on the internet these can be emailed to you. If you prefer a printed copy, we would ask you to supply us with 6 stamped addressed envelopes to cover till the end of our financial year.

East Concord Bowling Club: Margaret Roberts, our Local History Librarian, is seeking any information on this club. Are there any ex-members out there who can help, or does anyone know what happened to the records when the club was closed?

Free Publicity: Do you, or any organisation you belong to, have something you'd like to say, or an event you'd like to publicise. Why not try out 2RRR 88.56 FM.

Greg Blaxell gave a very interesting talk at our last meeting on the subject of Gregory Blaxland and Brush Farm. He also presented us with the book *A Short History of the Life of Gregory Blaxland* for our library.

Our Library: Why not drop in to our museum when it is open to see what books and publications we have in our collection. These are available for members to borrow.

More on our Saving Amiens article: Margaret Hughes wrote to thank us for publishing her article and the lithograph "Saving Amiens". She wondered if the artist did more than one, or a series. A search of the internet produced the article on the front page. Hope you find it interesting.

Calling all Members: We need more guides for our Open Days. It's not a difficult job and can be very satisfying and rewarding. You don't need any special talents, other than an ability to interact with people. Why not come along to our meeting on Saturday, 14th April at Yaralla and find out just how easy it is. Even if you don't think you can do it, if you come along you might just find out that you CAN DO IT.

For Your Diary

Wed. 14th March - General Meeting

Wed. 28th March - Executive Meeting

Wed. 11th April - General Meeting

Wed. 25th April - Walker Estates

Sun. 29th April - Open Day, Yaralla