



# "Nurungi"

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

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**MEETINGS**  
**General Meetings**  
2nd Wednesday of month  
(except January)  
at 7:30 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 when required.  
Bob Jones, 8765-9347

**Tours Organiser**  
Sandra Elliott  
9797-1040  
[ttoille@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ttoille@optusnet.com.au)

**Museum Committee**  
meets irregularly at the  
museum  
For details contact  
Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682

**Archives & Oral History**  
Lola Sharp, 8753-0659

**Heritage**  
Bob Jones, 8765-9347  
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**CITY OF CANADA  
BAY MUSEUM**  
1 Bent Street, Concord  
**Open Wed & Sat**  
**10am to 4pm**

**No.160**

**August 2009**

## Walker Chronicles (part 19)

### Melbourne Town and close encounters.

June 5th. *Four days had passed around Port Phillip inspecting the areas such as Gellibrand's spread. (that section being Williamstown) and some fine land towards Geelong.* Thomas visited the township, and dined with such notables as Captain William Lonsdale of the King's Own Regiment who, in 1836, was appointed as Police Magistrate for the district of Port Phillip. Discussing '*well-chosen portions of land, early selected that would soon rise in value*', they awaited County Surveyor's reports. Convinced that it must rise with unprecedented rapidity, Thomas invested in land in the city.

While staying in the town, he purchased four block of land in Bourke Street for £135. Within months he would acquire over 5,140 hectares of prime land for the sum of £32,000, including land in Heidelberg and Will-will-rook, plus more valuable acreage at Richmond and Geelong.

June 10th. Thomas boarded the brig *Siren* out of Melbourne, bound for Van Diemen's land. He travelled to Launceston and explored some of the northern parts of Tasmania. His journal was despatched to his family in Sydney Town, via the revenue cutter *Prince George*, and was read with great interest.

Thomas had been careful to detail certain passages that described dangers along the way, conscious that his sister, Johanna, and other relatives would read it, but Dutton also kept such a journal and verified one such dramatic episode.

'Dutton lifted the fowling-piece out of a gig when it discharged, the cock catching on some part of the rigging. The charge of duck-shot passed over his left shoulder and grazed it severely. The shot did not enter the flesh, though it tore the skin entirely and a few of the fragments pierced his arm. A few inches one way or the other would have lodged the charge in his head or in the shoulder-blade, and death or a very serious wound must have been the consequence. He had therefore a most providential escape.'

Dutton's own journal continued . . . '*My letters may have dispelled any anxiety you may have had on my account. The wound in my shoulder is getting on famously. I expect it will be well before I get to Sydney so that I shall not have occasion for you as a nurse. MacAlister had been remarkably kind to me, always dressing it and being as careful with it as if you had been doing it yourself. I never shall forget his kindness, I often tell him you will be jealous of him.*

(to be continued)

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS

**Wednesday, 12th August is the most important meeting of our Society's year. Please make every effort to come along.**

The various officers and chairpersons will be presenting their report of the year's activities. This is your chance to discover the vast amount of work undertaken by their particular groups in the furtherance of the aims of our Society.

With the physical work in running Open Days at Yaralla and Rivendell, combined with the "on ground" work at Yaralla and the establishment of our new City of Canada Bay Museum, the number of "volunteer hours" put in by members is enormous.

With all this work we are a very active and "hands on" organisation and new volunteers are always welcome, be they members or just "friends of" our groups.

All of this work needs to be co-ordinated and supervised in one way or another and this is where your Executive Committee comes to the fore.



**Bulletin Board**

Aug. 12 - Annual General Meeting,  
Directors' Reports and Election of Office  
Bearers and Executive.

This is a "call to arms" to all our newer members, as well as our longer serving members, to put their hands up to become an active part of the Concord Heritage Society.

We need new members to come onto the Executive to bring in fresh thoughts and ideas. You don't necessarily have to take on a position of Office, just become a member of the team

New blood brings new ideas or new ways of doing things and that is what we need for the coming year.

As well, the two major groups within our society, the Walker Estates Committee and the Museum Committee can always use new volunteers to help with their plans.

The Museum Committee, in particular, has big plans to bring people and money into the museum to help it grow and prosper. To do all this we need people to help us make things happen. Many just need someone to make a few phone calls or do a little research, others may need more input. So, whether you can spare just a little time, or a lot, there will be things you can do to assist.

If nothing else, we can always use help with volunteering at the museum when it is open. With enough volunteers we would only need to call on you about once every second month.

The museum is open every Wednesday and Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. If you haven't already visited, just pop in and see what a wonderful addition to the City of Canada Bay facilities this is. You will be very pleasantly surprised.

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More Aviation Antics

## **Leonard Victor Waters 1924-1993.**

Australia's first and only Aboriginal fighter pilot in WWII began training as an RAAF flight mechanic in 1942.

Aged 18 years, Len improved his education in his spare time and was selected for flight training a year later.

Posted to No 78 Squadron, he had a Kittyhawk fighter, named 'Black Magic', which flew in many attack sorties against the Japanese.

Although discharged after the war with numerous bravery commendations and the rank of Warrant Officer, Len never flew in an official capacity again, instead working as a shearer to support his family.

He died in 1993.

## **Know Your Member: Virginia Walker**

Thomas Walker was well-known for his philanthropic work. Likewise, Dame Eadith supported many charities and institutions, while keeping her generosity secret. Some beneficiaries were Red Cross, RPA, RSL, Kindergarten Association of NSW, Sydney University and the Ashfield Infants' Home

This philanthropic vein still flows in existing Walker relatives. I recently discovered Virginia Walker's passion for aiding refugees.

Virginia Walker is Chairperson of BASF. "Some of my friends and supporters nominated me for a Human Rights Award. In December 2006 the Human Rights and Equal Employment Commission awarded me with a Community Individual Award for co-founding BRIDGE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS FOUNDATION. It is a great honour and it could not have happened without my UNSW Arts Degree."

"All first year psychology students were required to participate in a community program. I chose citizenship issues with George Paxinos, now a professor in psychology.

"By the end of 2002, I started visiting Villawood detainees. I didn't want to go particularly because it reminded me too much of gaols. How I hated the indignity of the entry process, quite horrified about the surrounding razor wire and lack of cover. Not even tap water! It was similar treatment for inmates' families.

"However bad conditions were for visitors, it was much worse for detainees. But visiting Villawood was very important to them. It was an eye-opener listening to their stories, their courage in leaving their home countries.

"Visiting times were limited but it was important to find people who had cases for asylum - those who were likely to be deported to persecution, torture or death. Many were psychologically damaged and suffered depression. What could we do to help?

With a handful of sympathetic friends, "Bridge for Asylum Seekers Foundation" ("BASF") was officially launched at NSW Parliament House on 11<sup>th</sup> June 2003, supported by a broad coalition of churches, human rights groups, union members, political representatives, and individuals. The name denotes a bridge between living on a Bridging Visa in the community and freedom.

"We are still helping some asylum

seekers who came to us in June 2003. Every month the Management Committee meets to determine who fulfils our guidelines before financial support is provided after careful assessment.

"They need to have been provided with pro bono legal support - if they cannot get this, then it is likely their cases will not succeed. It is a difficult decision to make about some cases, but we cannot assist those people who would like to stay but do not have a humanitarian claim for protection.

"Most people come to us via the House of Welcome and the Asylum Seekers Centre. At any time we are helping approximately 100 people - this includes mothers and children. Every quarter we provide at least \$90,000 to these people. This means we need to raise approximately \$1,000 per day. It is not easy. Some nights I have gone to bed wondering where the next dollars will come from to continue the Foundation's work. But somebody generous has heard of the work we do and another cheque comes in to keep funds in our coffers for another day. Maybe these people received a newsletter or saw our website [www.asylumseekersfoundation.com](http://www.asylumseekersfoundation.com).

"It's a happy occasion to discover those whose claims for asylum have been accepted and who no longer need funds from us."

In excerpts from her 2007 speech at university, Virginia thanked Professor Hamilton for the opportunity to speak about her life as a mature UNSW student and the benefits derived.

"It seems strange to be at the lectern instead of scribbling away taking psychology or sociology notes in the third row where I usually sat. Having never written an essay in my life, this was a big step."

In her honours year, Virginia experienced financial difficulties. The Graduate Administrative Trainee Program advertised by the New South Wales Government enabled her to apply for a position in the NSW Public Service.

Accepted into the Department of Housing in a special policy unit she was transferred to the Department of Corrective Services, working for 17 years in Welfare Service, the Parole Board, the Equal Employment Branch of Personnel Services, and Policy Branch. "I was also secretary to the Chaplaincy Committee, and the Women in Prison Task Force.

"During the early 80s I was appointed

to the Board of the Langton Clinic, a drug and alcohol treatment unit, with an education facility and a half-way house for recovering alcoholics. During this time I became the Honorary Treasurer and later the Vice-President

"A friend asked if I could write letters to asylum seekers in detention. June 2002 was the start of my commitment to their cause.

"The first person who responded was a 35 year-old Iranian Christian convert in Curtin Detention Centre in Western Australia. He was very concerned about what would happen if he were to be returned to Iran. He did not have legal representation at his Full Federal Court hearing. Following his court case I received a phone call telling me that he had failed, and was later transferred to Port Hedland. I was able to ring him twice a week and spoke to him at length. At the same time I started corresponding with several Iranians, Afghanis and a Palestinian family in Port Hedland. Each time I rang, another person came to the phone with a request for help.

"Many refugees from overseas who settled in Australia had not become citizens. Should they have to return to their homeland, it would not be easy to re-enter without Australian passports, so George set up a group to help Italians and Greeks complete applications for citizenship.

"People living outside detention on Habeas Corpus orders and Bridging Visa "E"s needed help and our group needed support from an organisation that had tax deductibility. Our aim was to provide asylum seekers with the equivalent of Centrelink benefits. Without tax deductibility we knew that fundraising would be difficult.

"Representatives of the Uniting Church based in Balmain (operating as Balmain for Refugees) suggested we talk to the Church about coming under their umbrella. They already had a policy of supporting asylum seekers but not a group as such doing this work. So Uniting Care NSW. ACT took us under their wing. We became a Board Committee of Uniting Care with tax deductibility privileges, a bank account, stationery and support.

"Every week we provide a small amount of money to people living in the community. Most of those we support are living with friends or relations, or in charitable institutions while they await finalisation of their cases."

Trish Skehan

## TWCH (Rivendell) Open Day

What a day!

What a success!

Thanks to all volunteers those at the forefront and those behind the scenes without whose help the day could not even begin.

Thanks to our tour guides who shuffled their tour times to help make the day run smoothly and especially to those who undertook a second tour at little notice.

Thanks to those guides taking their inaugural tour, undertaken with enthusiasm and pizzazz.

Thanks to that intrepid band of caterers providing wonderful tea & bittyscones.

Thanks to everyone for promoting heritage, the society and the new museum.

Thank you,

Sandra Elliott  
Tours Organiser

### The question is . . .

### What do retired people do all day?

Working people frequently ask retired people what they do to make their days interesting.

Well, for example, the other day my wife and I went into town and went into a shop. We were only in there for about 5 minutes. When we came out, there was a cop writing out a parking ticket.

We went up to him and said, 'Come on man, how about giving a senior citizen a break?'

He ignored us and continued writing the ticket. I called him a Nazi turd.

He glared at me and started writing another ticket for having worn tires.

So my wife called him a @%&\$@ head. He finished the second ticket and put it on the windshield with the first.

Then he started writing a third ticket.

This went on for about 20 minutes. The more we abused him, the more tickets he wrote.

Personally, we didn't care. We came into town by bus.

We try to have a little fun each day now that we're retired. It's important at our age.

## To achieve your dreams remember you're A B C's

A - Avoid negative sources, people, places, things and habits

B - Believe in yourself

C - Consider things from every angle

D - Don't give up, and don't give in

E - Enjoy life today, yesterday is gone and tomorrow may never come

F - Family and friends are hidden treasures. Seek them and enjoy their riches

G - Give more than you planned to give

H - Hang on to your dreams

I - Ignore those who try to discourage you

J - Just do it

K - Keep on trying. No matter how hard it seems, it will get easier

L - Love yourself first and most

M - Make it happen

N - Never lie, cheat or steal. Always strike a fair deal

O - Open your eyes, and see things as they really are

P - Practice makes perfect

Q - Quitters never win and winners never quit

R - Read, study and learn about everything important in your life

S - Stop procrastinating

T - Take control of your own destiny

U - Understand yourself in order to understand others

V - Visualise it

W - Want it more than anything

X - Xcellerate your efforts

Y - You are unique of all of God's creations. Nothing can replace you

Z - Zero in on your target, and go for it.

### Can you remember?

**On either the day before our museum opened or on the actual opening day Jeanette or Harry O'Hara brought down some papers and photographs for our archives. If you know anything about these would you please contact the secretary as soon as possible.**

# The Sydney G.P.O. Carvings

When plans were prepared for the Pitt Street extensions of the Sydney General Post Office the architect, James Barnet, decided that ornamental panels would be placed in the spandrels of the four arches. Later on he had second thoughts and was permitted to substitute a series of carvings representing various aspects of contemporary life.

Before the work was completed attempts were made to have these "grotesque carvings" replaced but Barnet successfully managed to avoid a direction that he should remove them. The question was frequently raised in the press and in Parliament, and in 1890 Daniel O'Connor opposed a motion that they should remain "until the approval of Parliament be obtained for the removal of the same".

He described them as "a travesty and a desecration of one of the finest buildings in Australasia" and assured the House that given the opportunity he would have "these tedious abortions" removed within twenty-four hours. However, he did not have the support of the House and when the vote was taken could only muster five supporters.

The following description of the carvings, prepared by Barnet, is of interest

## No. 1—Telegraphy, Literature and the Press

**Telegraphy** is represented by an operator at work, with his right hand on the instrument, while reading a telegram. On the lower part of the spandrel is a little boy trying to prepare a battery. At a counter a young woman with a pleasant look, writing a message, and, in the distance, a mounted messenger, conveying telegrams.

**Literature and the Press.**—The former is represented by a writer or author, in deep thought, seated at a table, writing. The latter by a young printer at a printing machine, who for a moment has stopped work, to notice with amazement a little boy who is reading aloud. In the background compositors are seen, employed at their several occupations.

## No. 2—Professions, Commerce and Mining

**Professions** are represented by a Judge upon the Bench, reading over his notes; and by a Professor demonstrating some experiment he is engaged upon, while he is noting the

time with an hour-glass in his hand, a retort, still, and furnace near him; a little boy is also seen in the lower part of the spandrel, admiring and examining a butterfly he has caught. In the background is a student in deep study.

**Commerce and Mining.**—Commerce is shown by a business man making entries in a note-book; near him are bales of merchandise; a small boy offering fruit for sale; and shipping in the background. Mining is represented by an experienced digger, pointing with satisfaction to the gold in a lump of quartz, which his son is looking at with pleasure and astonishment.

## No. 3—Agriculture and Pastoral Pursuits, Science and Art

**Agriculture and Pastoral Pursuits.**—Agriculture is represented by a ploughman with his plough. The day being nearly over, as shown by the setting sun, he has relaxed work for a few minutes, while with much eagerness he reads a letter. In the lower part of the spandrel is a little girl with flowers. Pastoral pursuits are illustrated by a shearer at work, and by the introduction of cattle and sheep.

**Science and Art.**—Science is represented by an astronomer, who having taken an observation, marks a position on the globe, at the same time pointing to Sydney, shown on a chart, and, in the lower part of the spandrel, by a little boy with a telephone to his ear, listening with astonishment to the sounds produced by this recent application of science. Art is illustrated by a young architect, making a drawing of a building, seen in the distance, intended for the reception of fine arts. A statue is also shown.

## No. 4—Banking, Post Office Business

**Banking** is illustrated by a Bank clerk paying money over a counter to a young woman who is presenting a draft. In the lower corner of the spandrel is a little boy with money in a bag, and crying because he has lost some of it while bringing it to the Bank.

**Post Office Business.**—This is represented by a letter-carrier, heavily laden, as on a mail day, giving to a young woman a letter which she gladly receives. Below is a little girl reading a letter.

D. I. McDONALD.

RAHS Newsletter – September 1969  
(reprinted with permission)

## From the Secretary's Desk

**Membership Renewals:** Have you sent in your membership renewal yet? And what about the questionnaire?

**AGM & Elections:** Calling all our newer members - please come along and see just what a vibrant and active group we are. We want you to become an active part, to bring us your ideas and expertise. We have vacancies on our Executive which we would like you to consider filling. Please!

**Yaralla Open Day - Sunday, 25th October.** Please make a note of this date in your diary now. We still have no definite news of what is happening with Yaralla so we need to make use of all the occasions we can to be able to take people through this wonderful building.

A note for all guides to make sure you have your paperwork available to brush up on the history as it has been a long break.

To would-be guides, please contact Sandra (phone and email address on front cover) so she can get the necessary paperwork to you.

**Rotary Club of Concord:** A special thank you to this wonderful organisation. Not only have they helped us with a lot of the heavy moving at the museum by they recently donated 50 new chairs for use in our meeting room area. It now looks much more professional and in keeping with the museum.

**Museum Income:** We now need to look at ways of bringing in money to help fund our museum. The best way we can see to do this is to make full use of the meeting/function area, whether it be for groups to hold meetings, groups to put on special displays, organising talks by interesting people, or whatever else we can think of. What are your suggestions?

**Thanks** to those members who send in fillers for the newsletter. Keep them coming, they're much appreciated. Also, don't forget, if you come across any interesting articles you think would interest members, please send them in with a note of where you obtained them.

## For Your Diary

Wed. Aug 12 - AGM & Elections

Wed. Aug 26 - Executive Meeting and welcome to new member of the team