



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

**Oral History Committee**  
Betty Fletcher, 9713-1384  
Julia Stewart, 8765-9067

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## CITY OF CANADA BAY MUSEUM

1 Bent Street, Concord

**Open Wed & Sat**  
**10am to 4pm**

**No.162**

**October 2009**

## A Slice of Canada in Sydney

by Gregory Blaxell

On 18th May 1970, the then Prime Minister of Canada, Pierre Trudeau, unveiled a monument in Cabarita Park. That monument commemorated the little known transportation of convicted French 'revolutionaries' from Quebec to Sydney. A similar fate had been handed out to the English 'revolutionaries' but instead of landing in Sydney, they were transported to Hobart Town. These men collectively became known as the Canadian Exiles. The monument can no longer to be found in Cabarita Park. In 1980, Concord Council finished the reclamation of Bayview Park in the Canada Bay area of Hen and Chicken Bay and in 1983 the monument was moved there. It now stands on the almost identical spot where the exiles landed *en route* from their transports and ships' boats to the Longbottom Stockade.

So who were these revolutionaries and why were they sent to this part of Sydney?

In 1837, the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec sought constitutional reform and rebelled. The rebellion was quickly and mercilessly put down. Sir George Arthur, a former Governor of Van Diemen's Land, led the British troops. The penal settlement of Port Arthur, Tasmania's notorious convict prison, was named after him. The British took many prisoners of which 29 were executed and 149 sentenced to transportation for life to Australia. Those of British descent were sent to Van Diemen's Land and the French-Canadians were sent to Sydney. In September 1839, they left Canada and 58 arrived in Sydney on 25th February 1840. One of those prisoners was Leon Ducharme who described the arrival in Sydney.

*... Looking down from the deck we saw miserable wretches harnessed to carts, engaged in dragging blocks of stone for Public Buildings; others were breaking stones; the sight of this brought to us many sad thoughts, for we believed that within a few days we too would be employed in exactly the same way.*

Being French, members of this group were Roman Catholics so on their arrival, John Bede Polding, the Roman Catholic Bishop, interceded on their behalf with Governor



*Preparation for the arrival of Pierre Trudeau, Canadian Prime Minister, on 10 May 1970 at Sanders Marina, Cabarita (Photo Provenance unknown, source Canada Bay Local Studies Collection)*

Gipps. Instead of being assigned to public works, the Governor agreed that they would be sent to the almost abandoned Longbottom Farm. They would work and be supervised but they would not be treated as common criminals.

Longbottom is a northern English word that means swampy or boggy ground. At the head of Hen and Chicken Bay was a small freshwater stream and the whole area was swampy marshland. The creek drained to the north from a penneplain of shales and clays that overlaid the sandstone. The result was a large, shallow bay with muddy margins in which the Grey Mangrove grew. Not far from the swampy head of the bay was situated the Longbottom Stockade which was established because it was midway on the road between Sydney and Parramatta and so served as an overnight stopping point for the journey. The stockade housed convicts who were employed either on building the Parramatta Road or cutting and milling timber.

The original Longbottom area consisted of wooded land where Concord Oval, St Luke's



### Bulletin Board

Oct. 14 - Marilyn Collins, Artist - painting around the Hawkesbury

Nov. 11 - Museum Matters & a look through some of our photographic collection (helping identify some).

Park and Cintra Park are now found. The stockade buildings were located near where the present western grandstand at Concord Oval (Waratah Stadium) is now located.

In 1791, a rough bush track from Sydney to Parramatta was cut out of the bush. This became known as The Path. In 1793, Lt Governor Grose sent convicts from Parramatta to establish a timber yard at Longbottom. They built nine huts and cleared 24ha of timber. Eight hectares of land were eventually sown with corn. The Longbottom area covered 379ha with the stockade occupying its south-western corner. In 1794, convicts widened the Parramatta Road to 5.5m but the surface remained unmade.

By 1819, the Longbottom Farm was established. Commissioner Bigge noted: . . . *Longbottom on the Parramatta Road, and ten miles from Sydney ... comprises nearly 700 acres of land ... It contains some valuable timber, which is cut and sawn on the spot, and conveyed to Sydney in boats by the Parramatta River, on the southern shore of which part of the farm ... is situated. Charcoal for forges and foundries is likewise prepared here, and as the land is gradually cleared of wood, the cultivation is extended under the direction of an overseer.*

By 1820, there were 110 convicts at Longbottom although it appears they were poorly supervised. This number decreased to 38 in 1825 and to six by 1828. By this time, the buildings were in a state of disrepair and the stockade was mainly used by road gangs working on Parramatta Road. By 1838, part of the area was sold and the area under government control was reduced to 280ha. Most of this land was used for the agistment of police horses. In 1840, Longbottom took on its new role as a detention centre for the French-Canadian political exiles.

On 11 March, the prisoners were taken up the Parramatta River to the head of Hen and Chicken Bay. One of the convicts, Francois Xavier Prieur described their arrival.

*... It was about 2 o'clock in the afternoon when we came alongside the jetty at Longbottom. Then we were conducted, under a military escort, about a mile away from the river's bank. Our luggage, loaded on carts, drawn by oxen, accompanied us on the journey. We were so weak, so worn out, and so shaky on our legs that this short mile walk, taken at a slow pace, made us so tired that it gave us all pains in our limbs ...*

Of the 58 Canadians escorted to Longbottom, none had a previous con-

viction. Several of them were related. Generally, the groups consisted of rural artisans or farmers. Their ages ranged from a 20-year-old blacksmith to a 65-year-old doctor. While the Canadians were 'imprisoned' at Longbottom, they were not subjected to the harsh treatment handed out to most other convicts because of the poor health of the camp Superintendent, Henry Clifford Baddeley. He was an alcoholic with terminal venereal disease.

As a consequence of Baddeley's poor physical condition and the lenient attitude adopted by the Governor, the prisoners enjoyed more freedom than most convicts. The Canadians used this freedom to make goods and collect oysters from Hen and Chicken Bay. These items they traded. They also had the services of a priest, Fr John Brady, who frequently said Mass for them. Fr Brady was the secretary to their champion, Bishop Bede Polding. Here is a letter that Fr Brady sent to a Sydney Catholic paper about the Canadians whom he described as political prisoners.

*The Editor, I have just this minute returned from Long-Bottom (sic) where I spent two days with the political prisoners from Canada. His Grace the Bishop has also visited them. He has given them his blessing, and has encouraged them to endure patiently their exile, and all the misfortunes which are inseparable from it.*

*When I consider the courage of these prisoners, and their spirit of resignation, I cannot conceive how men so gentle, so modest and so good, whose conduct arouses the admiration of all those who are witnesses of it, can have deserved so terrible a punishment.*

*They have had the misfortune to see themselves snatched from the arms of their wives and children; they have seen their homes and their possessions given over to pillage and to destruction by fire and after months of anguish, fear and shattered hopes, spent in the depths of prison cells, they received the terrible sentence which is to separate them from all they held dear in the world, so as to cast them into banishment in a far distant soil, where they are suffering through being deprived of the most necessary things.*

*The food that they receive is so bad that the white Irish slave, accustomed to living on potatoes and salt could scarcely put up with it. In spite of this, the settlement at Long-Bottom (sic) costs the Government nearly a thousand pounds sterling per annum, an*

*expense that could be saved by granting these men permission to seek employment in the colony, or at the least, by assigning them to good masters.*

*If you think these remarks have any importance, will you be good enough to insert them in your useful and excellent newspaper; by so doing you will oblige.*

*Your obedient servant,  
J. Brady Missionary Priest*

Much of the information we have on the Canadian Convicts and the conditions under which they lived comes from the diaries of one of them, Lepaillier, who was placed in charge of the sentry box near the Parramatta Road. This position gave him an opportunity to observe everyday life in the area. He noted that most of the local residents were coarse and brutal and drunkenness and prostitution were common. He also noted that escaped convicts were a problem for travellers using the Parramatta Road.

He clearly differentiated between the convicts who were common criminals and his compatriots.

About one year after the Canadians had arrived at Longbottom, they petitioned Governor Gipps to grant them a ticket-of-leave and the Governor supported their request.

By 1842, many were assigned to respectable citizens who fed, clothed and accommodated them in return for their labour. Not long after this, tickets-of-leave were granted to all of them which meant that they could work for wages but were not permitted to leave the Colony or travel without notifying the authorities. Finally, between November 1843 and February 1844, free pardons were awarded to all. However, the Colony was undergoing a depression and only 38 of them sailed out of Sydney on the *Achilles* on 10th July 1844. Of the 20 who were left, private funds helped them eventually to return to Canada with the exception of two who died and one, Joseph Marceau who married a Dapto woman and settled on the South Coast. Marceau died at Dapto in 1883 but his name is commemorated with a street named after him at Concord near Canada Bay.

So the Canadian exiles offer an explanation for some of the names held by smaller bays within Hen and Chicken Bay. The three most prominent are Canada Bay, Exile Bay and France Bay.

*\*Gregory Blaxell is an historian and author. He has been boating offshore and in the harbour for more than 25 years. His latest book is The River: Sydney Cove to Parramatta. Dec 2009*

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# Speaking of the French Canadian Exiles . . .

. . . our museum has had its first International Visitor. Just after we opened Daniel Coupal, a descendant of Antoine Coupal, one of the exiles, made a special visit while on a holiday in Sydney with his wife. He was delighted to meet our members and see our display on the Exiles. He was also taken around Concord to see the monument in Bayview Park as well as the bays named for the Exiles.

Daniel's Uncle Bernard writes: "Antoine Coupal was my great great grandfather. He was sentenced to death by hanging for treason but his sentence was changed to deportation for life by Queen Victoria. He left Montreal for Quebec on board of the British America on September 26 1839 and arrived in Quebec City on September 28 1839. He then embarked on board of the Buffalo on the same day, arriving in Sydney on February 12, 1840. Three weeks later on March 11 he was allowed to leave the ship for Long Bottom Camp.

Antoine Coupal was 5 feet tall and suffered from epilepsy. While at Long Bottom he started a business of picking up oysters and selling them. This is probably how he was able to get money to ultimately pay for his trip back to Quebec.

He obtained his pardon in June 1844 and left Sydney for London on July 9, 1845 on board of the Achille. Once back in Quebec he went back to his village, namely Lacadie."



## From Your Museum

The Museum Committee has now decided to hold working bees on Wednesdays and Saturdays during opening hours.

We will place a list of jobs that need to be done on a board at the museum and you can pick which ones you would be prepared to do. You could then come in when it suits you. The work to be done is varied so there is something for all skills.

Jobs currently on offer are:

Packing films, tapes, etc. into boxes to be sent

to the Sound & Film Archives in Canberra

Old newspapers to be gone through to cut out any items pertaining to City of Canada Bay.

Other old newspapers to be sorted and catalogued.

Photographs to be sorted into various categories and stored in their appropriate file, together with any information we have about them.

Negatives to be scanned to the computer. No skill required, just being able to push buttons.

Library books to be catalogued and placed in some order on the shelves for easy access.

Sorting and filing newspaper cuttings and other documents.

Binding copies of the Yaralla and Rivendell Tour Books.

Walker photographs (originals) to be catalogued and stored.

New volunteers always welcome - just drop in and have a chat.

**GET INVOLVED!**

## Volunteers Barbecue

We decided that as well as being a "thank you" to all our hard working volunteers, we would make it a "welcome" to all the people who had joined during the previous 12 months.

Many of these new members were able to attend and get to know other members in a less formal atmosphere. It also gave them a chance to see the work that the many Yaralla volunteers do and chat with them informally.



It is hoped to build on this by having an informal "afternoon tea" at the museum so they can get to know the other side of our "work" in the community.

From all reports the afternoon was most successful with a large crowd enjoying one another's company.

We have had reports back from some on the new members saying how good it felt to be personally invited to attend as they sometimes felt awkward about just turning up to meetings and events.

We hope this has now broken the ice and we will see more of them in the months to come.

*"I decided to take an aerobics class. I bent, twisted, gyrated and jumped up and down for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotard on, the class was over."*

*Ed. This was sent in by Lola, not sure if it was from personal experience.*

More Aviation Antics

## Dr Kenyon St Vincent Welch, first 'Flying Doctor'

On Christmas Eve 1927, an advertisement appeared in the Medical Journal of Australia, asking for applicants to be appointed as flying doctors. From 23 responses, Dr Welch, a well-established Sydney professional, was selected.

Kenyon declared his intention to leave his family and successful practice to spend 12 months in Queensland, mainly because the job presented such a challenge and was a really worthwhile project.

He met his pilot, Arthur Affleck, in May 1928 at Longreach, and they took off on their first mission from Cloncurry to Julia Creek.

During the following year they flew over 28,000 kms together. Although they did not always see eye-to-eye about their jobs, the men were eager to respond to every call for help, no matter how bad the weather conditions were.

Arthur sometimes refused to fly if weather conditions were unsafe, and Kenyon came to respect his decisions.

Naturally, outback life was very different from Sydney, and the doctor lamented that the Cloncurry area was dismal and dreary, describing life as 'pretty dreadful, but there is no regret in my mind.' He returned to Sydney after his appointed time.

NB: The first record of a doctor being flown to attend a patient was recorded in a WA newspaper in 1922, when Charles Kingsford Smith flew Dr Trethowan of Geraldton to Carnarvon to attend an injured young girl.

## Oral History

Can the member who borrowed our Oral History Handbook and the book "A Thousand Questions" let me know if they have finished with them. Our new Oral History Co-Directors are looking for them.

# Oh, How We've Changed!

## Streets of Concord

Allan Road running north from Parramatta Road, 1884. Name changed to George Street in 1885.

Bourke Street, near Ada Street – now Coles Street.

Bay Street (Mortlake) off Burwood Road (now changed to Majors Bay Road). In 1890 it was called Bray Street, in 1891 Bray Road, now Brays Road.

Bray Street (Hanover Parade) near Concord Railway Station – now King Street  
Majors Bay Road to Mortlake Road (1887) now Crane Street to Majors Bay Road.

Brunswick Parade – Concord Road to Railway – now Queen Street.

Burwood Road consisted of part of present Majors Bay Road – Brays Road – Gale Street to Tennyson Road.

Cabarita Point Road – now Cabarita Road.

Concord Street, off Cabarita Road, east side near Phillips Street – no longer exists.

Concord Street – running east from Concord Road (1884) - no longer exists.

Hanover Parade – now King Street

Hubert Street (Mortlake) – now Herbert Street.

Lake Street (Mortlake) – off Mort Street. This street became part of the AGL work site.

Major Road – Burwood Road – now Tennyson Road to Majors Bay – now Bertram Street, Mortlake.

Melville Street – Parramatta Road north to Park – now Melbourne Street.

Mermaid Street – off Broughton Street – now Park Avenue.

Mort Street (Mortlake) – off Tennyson Road – became part of AGL work site.

Mortlake Road – Crane Street to Majors Bay Road (1886-7) – now Majors Bay Road.

No.3 Street – Wharf Road (now Burwood Road) to Bay 1884 – name changed to Stanley Street. (Farleigh Nettheim, now Concord High School, was No.3 in street.)

Salisbury Road – from Parramatta Road to Cooper Street – now Manson Road, Strathfield.

Short Street – Majors Bay Road to Cabarita Point Road (1888-1897) off Brewer Street – now Frederick Street.

Swamp Street – end of Broughton Street – now Ian Parade.

Victoria Street – Concord Road to Gipps Street – Now Alexandra Street.

Victoria Street – Parramatta Road to Carrington Street – no longer exists.

Walker Street – Concord Road to Majors Bay Road – now Correys Avenue.

Walker Street – continuation of Cavendish Street – now Cavendish Street.

Wellbank Road – Concord Road to Cabarita Road – now Wellbank Street.

Wharf Road – Parramatta Road north to wharf – now Burwood Road.

Wharf Street, off Burwood Road – now Northcote Street, Mortlake.

(to be continued)

## Why do we say that

What a rigmarole! First you do this, then you do that, then you do another thing, then . . . what a rigmarole! That's what we call a long, complicated way of doing things. The 700-year-old expression originated as the Ragman Roll, which was given to King Edward I by noblemen. Each signed a deed pledging loyalty and affixed his seal. The deeds were then joined together to form a document 10 metres long. The Ragman Roll is kept at the Public Records Office in London.

## For Your Diary

**Wed. Oct 14 - General Meeting**

**Sun. Oct 25 - Open Day at Yaralla**

**Wed. Oct 28 - Executive Meeting**

**Wed. Nov. 11 - General Meeting**

**Wed. Nov. 25 - Executive Meeting**

**Wed. Dec. 9 - Xmas Barbecue**

*This will be the final event for the year. The first General Meeting for 2010 will be in February*

## From the Secretary's Desk

**Welcome New Members:** We would like to officially welcome the following new members: Gary Weale (Concord), Pam Regan (Concord West), Marlene Bracks (Cabarita), Iain Stuart (Concord), Rhonda Baldock and Lucia Nowicki (Canada Bay), Judy Love (Concord West), Betty Fletcher (Five Dock), Anne Griffin (Concord), Ron & Maureen Pollard (Balmain), David & Diane Goodwin (Concord West) and Claire Bailey (Ashfield).

We hope to be able to meet you personally in the coming months, either at meetings or functions. You are always welcome.

**November General Meeting (11th):** We will not have a guest speaker on this occasion. Instead we will be presenting a slide show of many old photographs of Concord which we have in our collection. Some of these we have been unable to identify - so bring your sleuthing skills with you.

Do you have any old photographs you would like to either donate or allow us to copy? If we get them early enough we will be able to scan and include them in the show. We would particularly like to get photographs of some of the older cottages in the area.

Time permitting, we can also put on a slide show of old Yaralla, Rivendell and Walker photographs. If we don't have time, we'll keep it for another occasion.

Also, as part of the evening, four of our members, who will be attending an intensive weekend workshop on the many facets of museum and collections management in mid-October, will give short talks on what they have learned and how we can go about making our museum and its management more professional.

**Christmas Barbecue:** This will be the last big function for the year and all our members, new and old, are invited to come and join us. It will be on Wednesday, 9th December. Full details in the next issue of Nurangi.

**Coming up at Concord Library . . .**

**"Treasures from the Archives of St. Luke's Church"** - 7th to 31st October - Level 3 - to celebrate the 150th anniversary. This will include their founding document (1861), the first Baptismal Register, three beautiful Illuminated Addresses from the nineteenth century, paintings and other historical items. It will be officially opened by the Mayor on Wednesday, 7th October at 6:00 pm in the Multifunction Room. Following the opening St Luke's Archivist, Elaine Peterson, will conduct a tour of the exhibition.

**Artist of the Month, our own Terry Robinson,** will be mounting a display in the Foyer from 12th October to 1st November. He will display watercolours and sketchbooks of historical buildings, including images of local interest. Terry has also agreed to be present at the library on several afternoons to discuss his work with students and the general public