



“Nurungi”

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

email: chs@concordheritage.asn.au

www.concordheritage.asn.au

EDITOR
LOIS MICHEL
9744-8528

PRESIDENT
MARK DURANCE
9743-0583

PUBLIC RELATIONS
TRISH SKEHAN
4369-4172

SECRETARY/TREASURER
LOIS MICHEL
3 Flavelle Street
(P.O. Box 152)
Concord 2137
Phone: 9744-8528
Fax: 9744-7591

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

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.163

November 2009

The Diary of a Journey from Sydney to Bourke in 1871

The following extract has been taken from the diary of a lady who, although her name has not been traced, was apparently the wife of a bank manager transferred to Bourke in 1870. The extract was originally made available to the Bourke Historical Society and is published with their permission.

From Dubbo the route followed by the coach lay to the northeast of the present Mitchell Highway. It followed the route taken by the early explorers (Sturt in 1828-29 and Mitchell in 1835), and adhered to the waterways. Between Dubbo and Warren the route followed the Macquarie River. It proceeded along Duck Creek to its junction with the Bogan River, passing through the then substantial township of Canonba. The Bogan Crossing was by a rough punt and the route proceeded downstream from Gongolgon. From Gongolgon a direct course was taken to Bourke over the Pink Hills and past Mount Oxley. In those days there was some form of settlement, such as an inn or a shanty, approximately every 6 miles along the route. The whole of the old route is still trafficable but has been supplanted by the present Mitchell Highway which follows the route of the railway line in an almost straight line between Nyngan and Bourke. The railway line to Bourke was opened in 1885.

The tedious 3-week journey described in the diary is in contrast with present day conditions. Motorists can now travel on bitumen surfaced highways all the way from Sydney to Bourke and comfortably complete the 450-mile journey in 12 hours travelling time.

Journey to Bourke

15th November, 1870

The train journey to Rydal was very pleasant. Had a fine view of the zig-zag. Stopped at Bowenfells for lunch. Reached Rydal about 3.30. Stayed the night at Meadow Flat, 6 miles further on. Had a jolly fat landlady to wait upon us. Started at 8 o'clock next morning, reached Bathurst about 5. The coach was comfortable when we got used to it.

Orange, 17th November

10 pm. Only just arrived, after a long, rather dreary journey. Left Bathurst at 8 am, roads very bad—had to cross one place in a dray as it was thought the coach might turn over.

11 pm. Had to stay here all day to rest one of the horses, which was lame. I spent the day at the Bank. They are nice people, and made us very welcome.

18th November

Still in Orange. Raining all day, and all night. Just had our luggage brought in, which had been left in the coach, as we were uncertain how soon we should start and the portmanteaus were very heavy. Wise us, we thought, well covered up. But to my



annoyance I find mine has got very wet. I had to take everything out and dry them by the fire. Fortunately nothing is spoilt.

At Bathurst three more passengers got into the coach, two women, a girl and baby, and they have not added much to our comfort.

Saturday morning

Started once more in a smaller coach as the roads are too heavy for the big one



Bulletin Board

Nov. 11 - A slide show of old photographs to jog your memories and perhaps help us identify people and places.

Dec. 9 - End-of-year Christmas Party at the Museum.

Molong 6 pm

Twenty miles from Orange. We stay here the night. The roads are dreadful. I though once or twice the coach would turn over. Raining again. The jolting doesn't tire me so much as I expected.

Black Rock, 21st November

Thirty miles from Molong. The roads are frightful. If you could have seen us yesterday you would have trembled for our safety. I was very frightened. At last the coach turned half over into a creek

We all had to jump out into the water, half way up to our knees. Raining heavily all day. A few miles further on we got bogged and had to walk 5 miles through mud and water. When we got into the coach again it was getting dark and we had a dangerous river to cross, but we got over better than the driver expected.

When we were within 3 miles of our destination for the night the front wheels went into a deep gutter, sending us all tumbling forward, the fat woman and her baby on top of me. Fortunately no one was hurt. The horses had to be taken out and a man with pick and spade dug the wheels out. We all had to pull the coach out backwards. For the next mile Joe and a man had to walk in front of the coach to find the road. We reached our destination at 10 pm, with our clothes nearly knee deep in mud.

Montefiore

We have only come a few miles today, as it is still raining, and we have to make an early start in the morning.

Dubbo, 22nd November

Half way over our journey at last. Got along pretty well today, with the exception of having to walk a mile or two through mud and water again. There are some good houses and shops in

Dubbo. We rested there this morning and came 10 miles this afternoon.

Ginging, Thursday night

Came 50 miles today, weather fine, roads better. I have had to leave my portmanteau at Dubbo and to put some of my things into Joe's, and some of his things into mine, as the driver says he does not want to take any baggage that he can't swim a river with and carry on his head.

26th November

We had our first experience of camping out last night, and a miserable time it was. After going 7 miles through bog and water, in some places up to the body of the coach, we got stuck in a hole. One of the horses fell, they couldn't pull us out, so there we had to stay for 18 hours with water for miles round us. The coach is very small. There are six grown up people besides the girl and baby. We could hardly move all night, and were eaten alive by mosquitoes. The poor baby cried most of the time.

At 5 o'clock this morning the driver waded through the water and brought four bullocks and a driver, and a guide on horseback, and they brought the coach back to this Inn, where we are waiting for a day or two until the water goes down.

Warren, 28th November

We came 20 miles today. Roads very bad, but gradually drying.

30th November

We were detained in Warren yesterday for the coach to be repaired, and are staying tonight at a station 20 miles further on. We are disappointed at getting along so slowly. Expected to have done 40 miles today.

Gongolgon, 5th December

Arrived here at 10 o'clock last night, having spent a miserable Sunday, and camped out three nights. After leaving

the Station we passed through Canonba, a small town, where we had dinner. That night we could not reach our destination and had to sleep in an empty hut, ladies in one room and gentlemen in the other. Had it not been for the mosquitoes we would have slept in the open air. They said the hut had just been washed out by the flood, and I think it was clean. The men got bushes and spread our rugs over them, for beds. This was on the bank of the river Bogan, where we hoped to cross in a boat and sleep at a Station on the opposite side, but the boat had sunk.

Next day we drove many miles along the river but could not cross, and slept in an empty house of 7 rooms.

On Saturday, after a tedious journey over plains and through water which, in one place, came into the coach and wetted some of our luggage, we were again disappointed and had to sleep on the plain.

On Sunday morning the horses were tired, and we had to walk through a mile of water above our knees to get to a narrow bridge made of planks fastened together by wire, and a single wire to hold by fastened to a tree on the other side. The middle of the bridge dipped into the river, which was 30 ft deep. The plank would only bear one person at a time. They carried the luggage, and swam the horses over. The coach was drawn across by ropes around the trees, and disappeared for a time. I was very much relieved to see it gradually appear on the other side. We had 22 miles to do after 4 o'clock, and reached Gongolgon at 10 p.m.

Pink Hills, Monday evening

Roads much better. Came 30 miles this afternoon. We expect to do 50 tomorrow and so finish our long and exciting journey, on 7th Dec.

Published in "Main Roads" magazine, c.1971



Oh, How We've Changed!

Streets of Concord (2)

Brays Road – named for our first Mayor Alfred Bray, and his family.

Burwood Road – ran from Burwood Station to Mortlake, originally for the transport of workers to the Gas Works. Earlier the transport had been by water. Later became Majors Bay Road.

Crane Street - after Private Samuel Crane of the NSW Corps, who was granted 35 acres of land in Concord.

Finch Avenue – Roland Finch, who was the manager of Yate's Nursery that occupied the area.

Evelyn Avenue – after Roland Finch's daughter Evelyn.

Archer Street – after William Archer, an early land owner

Brewer Street – Henry Brewer, one of the first landowners in 1793.

Broughton Street – Bishop William Grant Broughton, first Anglican Bishop of Australia

Burton Street – Sir William Westbrooke Burton, Judge of the Supreme Court of NSW.

Burwood Road – formerly Wharf Road - changed to Burwood Road about 1916. Captain Thomas, an officer in the NSW Corps, was granted 250 acres in 1799 which he named Burwood after his family property in Cornwall.

Correys Avenue – Thomas Correy, Alderman on Concord Council. His former residence was preserved by Dulux and is listed as permanent Heritage. Correy's Pleasure

Grounds were situated nearby. The area is now occupied by high-rise development.

Crane Street – Samuel Crane, Private in the NSW Corps, granted 35 acres at Concord

Bits & Pieces

The Australian Gas Light Co., Mortlake, featured prominently in the making of and surfacing of the first roads and streets in Concord.

In 1884 the company decided to build a very modern works at Mortlake, then in 1916 the original works in Kent Street, near the southern end of the harbour bridge, were closed and all operations transferred to Mortlake. Most of our roads were founded on stone from Foxcrofts' Quarry, where Massey Park clubhouse now stands, and tar coating from Mortlake.

The first native-born Concord resident, in the late 1850s, was Mr. James Casey. This gentleman was appointed overseer of works to the Concord Municipality on 22nd May, 1884 and remained with the Council until his retirement in 1930

Brays Park. This was the originally name of the reserve immediately after you come off Ryde Bridge. It's name was changed to King George V when Queen Elizabeth visited Concord. Due to roadworks, etc., this area has been considerably reduced.

Registry Office: In Majors Bay Road (cnr. Wellbank Street) where Westpac had a branch (now occupied by a pharmacy). At one time the Registrar, we believe, was a Miss Nicholls. It ceased to operate somewhere between 1949 and 1954.

Bring back memories

Please come to our **General Meeting on the 11th November at 7:30 in the Museum.**

We will be putting on a power point presentation of old photographs from our collection. Come and see what Concord looked like many years ago.

Bring any of your friends and neighbours, particularly if they have lived here for a long time - everyone is welcome - the more the merrier.

We need people who can help us identify many of these snaps of places, people and events in Concord.

If anyone needs transport to here and then home, please let us know and we will arrange something.

Seniors Week Project

We are planning a project for Seniors Week next year in conjunction with Council. We intend to invite visitors to come to our museum to see the displays and watch slide shows of old photographs. Our hope is that these will bring back memories for our visitors and we can then capture, on tape, their reminiscing. Hopefully, it will also lead to our obtaining more Oral Histories to add to our collection.

We will open for the two weekends and the Wednesday covered by this event. More details later, but we will need additional help.

Change of Name for our Society

The proposal to change our name to **City of Canada Bay Heritage Society** is again coming up for discussion.

We need to include the Drummoyne people in our Society and the Museum and this is probably the only way we will start to gather items, photographs, documents and other things pertaining to that area.

At the moment, although the Museum is called City of Canada Bay Museum it really only represents the Concord area.

Drummoyne has a rich heritage and we need to start gathering it now while there are people around who remember.

Please give this some serious thought and let us know how you feel.

Working Bees

The response to this call has not been as good as we had hoped. We still have several jobs on our Notice Board that need to be done.

Please drop in any Wednesday or Saturday if you can spare a little time. It's not hard work and doesn't require a university degree to do, just simple commonsense.

Photographs - Helpers wanted!

Council has received a grant to digitise their photographic collection and are happy to include our collection in this.

However, we need help to get them off the shelves and pack them to send out.

We need a couple of fellows who can spare some time to do this. It's a great opportunity to have some of our larger photographs and paintings scanned at no charge to us so please spare a little time if you can.

YOU'RE INVITED

Greg Blaxell from the **Brush Farm Historical Society** has invited our members to join them for their **Christmas Party on 3rd December**. It will be held on the Parramatta River and parts of Sydney Harbour aboard the MV Proclaim, one of Rosman's heritage ferries. It will pick up and disembark from the new Ryde Wharf.

Cost is \$30 per head and will include cost of the ferry and dinner (catered by Kokoda Cafe's Kay Holmes), tea and coffee. BYO refreshments.

The cruise will be from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm. If you would like to make up a group to attend please contact Lois on 9744-8528

St Peter's Church, Cooks River (187 Princes Highway, St Peters, opposite McDonalds) will celebrate the 170th anniversary of the licensing of the church on **Sunday, 22nd November at 10:00 am**. The Sunday gathering will be followed by an historical presentation on the history of the local area and church by the St Peters Cooks River History Group. Community lunch to be held afterwards.

Contact: history@cooksriver.net or 9558-7504 if attending.

Here and About - Australian Tales:

Newtown (NSW)

This Sydney suburb was once owned by just one man. A second Fleeter, Nicholas Devine, served the government for 25 years as Superintendent of Convicts. The area around Newtown was granted to him in recognition of his services. In his old age he became enfeebled in body and mind. But he had a faithful servant and guardian Bernard Rockford who was an ex-convict. When Devine died he left his huge estate to Rockford.

When the servant inherited the estate in 1827, Newtown was already becoming very valuable property and a fashionable area. Devine's relatives in Ireland heard about the will—they challenged it, maintaining that Devine was in his dotage, and in any case as an ex-convict Rockford could not inherit whilst still a ticket-of-leave man.

The claimants lost the case but, threatening further litigation, they were rewarded with a tidy sum of "hush" money.

*Heron Flyer, November 2008
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Christmas

End-of-Year Function

Wed, 9th December from 6:30 pm

This year we thought we'd try something new. Instead of the usual BBQ at Rhodes Rotary Park we will be holding the party in our new museum.

For those who haven't visited yet, this would be a good time to come and visit and meet up with other members in a social atmosphere.

This invitation is especially extended to our newer members.

This is a family occasion and friends are also welcome.

If you will be joining us please let Lois know by 2nd December for catering purposes.

Errol Grace will be organising the finger food - or, should I say, the people bringing the finger food. If you can help with this please contact Errol on 9743-4301 so he can arrange to have a variety of nibbles and finger food

For liquid refreshments, please BYO. We will have glasses available.

Would you like to receive your copy of Nurungi before everyone else? Easy. Ask the Editor (Lois) to send your Nurungi by email so you are not waiting on Australia Post.

Changing Displays:

Two being planned at the moment are **Bushells Factory** and **Lodges & Friendly Societies**. Do you have any objects, photographs, regalia, documents, etc. which could support these displays that you would be prepared to loan the Society for a couple of months? Please phone Harry Kimble on 9716-7102

For Your Diary

Wed. Oct 28 - Executive Meeting

Wed. Nov. 11 - General Meeting

Wed. Nov. 25 - Executive Meeting

Wed. Dec. 9 - Xmas End-of-Year Celebration at our Museum

From the Secretary's Desk

Concord Street Fair: Special thanks to Alan Wright, Harry Kimble and Terry Robinson who opened the museum on that Sunday. We had about 30 very interested visitors.

Membership Renewals: We still have a few outstanding. We hope that you will be staying with us. If you don't intend renewing could you please let the Secretary know and we won't bother you again.

Museum Roster: We still need more volunteers. This is not a hard job, mostly just "meet and greet" our visitors. Can you spare a half day, or even a day (10:00 am to 4:00 pm) to help us? Just call Lois.

Standards Programme: This programme, which some of our members have undertaken over the past 12 months, has now concluded and we have received a glowing report from Museums & Galleries. The reviewers classed our museum as "one of the best they have seen" which was glowing praise considering who was doing the reviewing. We now have to keep up the good work.

Documentation: Out of this programme we now have a lot of Policies and Procedures documents to be prepared. These need to be available for volunteers and others coming after us to know and understand how the museum should be run so that it will continue to flourish after many of us have moved on. We will be calling for volunteers soon to start on these and the more we have the better the documents will be.

Museum Logo: Council has finally given their approval for this so hopefully we will see signage up in the very near future so that people become more aware of the museum.

Photographs left on the desk at the museum - including Ashton's Baths. Could you please let us know where these came from?

Oral History Books - we are still waiting to hear from the member who borrowed these two books from the museum. We need them for our two Oral History co-chairs. If this was you, could we please have them back as soon as possible!

Christmas Party: Put the date in your diary now so you won't forget - Wednesday, 9th December from 6:30 pm at the Museum.