



# "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 and Tours Organiser

Sandra Elliott  
9797-1040  
[ttoille@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ttoille@optusnet.com.au)  
(See inside for details of  
meetings)

#### Museum Committee

Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682  
Meets on 2nd Wednesday of  
the month at 9:00 am at the  
museum

#### Oral History Committee

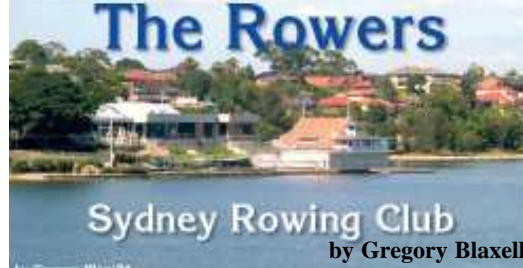
Betty Fletcher, 9713-1384  
Julia Stewart, 8765-9067

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## CITY OF CANADA BAY MUSEUM

1 Bent Street, Concord

Open Wed & Sat  
10am to 4pm



*Sydney Rowing Club remains an important sporting and recreational club. (Photo: G. Blaxell)*

Visitors and locals alike often catch the Rydalmere RiverCat and disembark at Abbotsford Wharf and make the short walk to the famous Sydney Rowing Club, universally known as The Rowers.

There they enjoy the food, hospitality and the stunning views of the Parramatta River and Hen and Chicken Bay. It is also the venue for dedicated rowing athletes who, in the early mornings or in the long summer evenings, are seen honing their skills on the river.

The original clubhouse was situated at East Circular Quay. It was officially opened on 27th August 1870 by the Governor, the Earl of Belmore. To understand how the club was founded, it is necessary to go back to March 1859 when the Australian Subscription Boat Club was established on the eastern side of Woolloomooloo Bay. About the same time, the following announcement appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*. *Gentlemen can, with the payment of a moderate subscription quarterly in advance, obtain at any time Pleasure or Fishing Boats, Skiffs, Gigs, Eightoared Cutters, Funnies &c., &c.; also have the free use of the spacious Club Room to which will be attached Coffee and Dressing Rooms.*



*The 1928 GPS regatta on the Parramatta River with the Head of the River won by Shore. (Photo: City of Canada Bay Library, Local Studies)*

On St Patrick's Day 1859, the new club conducted an amateur rowing event at the Balmain Regatta. It was won by Quarton Levitt Deloitte who was a keen competitor in events run by the Australian Subscription

Boat Club. It is important to know that rowers were categorised into three classes. There were (1) professionals, (2) manual labourers who rowed for money and (3) amateurs. Professional rowing was well established by the time of the establishment of the Australian Subscription Boat Club, but few opportunities existed for competition among amateurs.

In 1859, the Melbourne University Boat Club had been founded by an ex-rower, Professor M. H. Irving who arrived to take up his academic post in Melbourne in 1855. He was also responsible for the founding of the Melbourne Regatta in 1860.

In 1863, an inter-colonial four-oared race for amateurs was held on the Parramatta River and was won by New South Wales. The next year, Quarton Levitt Deloitte won the amateur sculling championship of New South Wales.

On 5 March 1870, the following advertisement appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

**Rowing Association** – *A meeting interested in the advancement of amateur rowing and the formation of a Rowing Association, will be held on Monday next, at half-past 7 p.m., at the Oxford Hotel, King Street. Henry Freeman, Hon. Secretary pro tem.*

On 7 March 1870, the SMH reported that the club had been established. The motion to establish was moved by Q. L. Deloitte. George Thornton was elected President and the Governor, the Earl of Belmore, was invited to become its Patron. Q. L. Deloitte was elected the Club Captain.



*The Sydney Rowing Club's new boatshed at Woolloomooloo Bay shortly after it was erected at the end of 1922. (Photo: City of Canada Bay Library, Local Studies)*



Bulletin Board

Wed. 14th July: To be advised.

Wed. 11th August: Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers and Committee

The Club had premises on the eastern side of Circular Quay and on 29th June the first club day was held. This was mainly a rehearsal of the 'Grand Boat Procession and Demonstration' that was planned for the official opening on 27 August 1870.

*The 'Grand Boat Procession and Demonstration' was the highlight – rain fell and a cold wind blew – 21 boats were in the parade that lined up in two rows across the cove – all carried the club flag – white with a blue cross – and all crews wore club uniform of white straw hat with a blue and white ribbon and white shirt and trousers – boatshed bedecked with flags. Governor and President on board the steam yacht Fairy which steamed slowly between the rows of lined-up boats. Deloitte, from a small steam barge, directed the flotilla that followed the Fairy and then pulled away and rowed up to Fort Denison then back to Milsons Point, around another government steamer, Thetis back into Circular Quay and back to the boat club.*

The club competed in several regattas during 1870 including the Balmain Regatta and the Anniversary Regatta of 1871. In February, the Sydney Rowing Club imported the first eight-oared gig into Australia. The new boat cost £95/14/10. By the end of the 1874/75 season, the club had a fleet of twenty-one boats.

Q. L. Deloitte (1843-1929) was vitally important in the formation and functioning of the new club. QL, as he is always referred to, was one of a family of seven boys and six girls. Originally the family was from pre-revolution France, where his grandfather (Jean De Loitte) was King Louis XVI's official Treasurer.

His grandfather took refuge in England during the reign of terror. One of De Loitte's sons, William Salmon Deloitte, QL's father, finally settled in Australia in 1837. The family lived at Birchgrove House in Balmain. The boys rowed their father to town and then went to school, so rowing and sailing were an integral part of their life.

Quarton Levitt Deloitte joined the staff of the Colonial Sugar Refining Company in 1859 and stayed there for 52 years, the last 33 of which were as Company Secretary. QL was elected as the first Captain of the Sydney Rowing Club when it was established in 1870. He was Vice-President 1878-1902 and President until his death on 7th April 1929 at the age of eighty-five. He was also President of the New South Wales Rowing Association 1902-20.

In preparation for the opening of the first punt capable of carrying vehicles, livestock and travellers in 1832, the Great North Road was completed down to the river. Situated at Abbotsford Point was a residence known as the Red House. In 1832, the inn expanded in order to cater for a much larger clientele of agricultural workers from the Field of Mars, the Hawkesbury River and Pittwater areas. All these workers used the punt to take their produce to market and did so until a punt was commissioned then a bridge built at Gladesville. The bridge was completed by 1881.

By 1837, the Red House had been renamed the Kings Arms and continued to offer hospitality to both river travellers and those using the Bedlam punt.

In 1873, Deloitte and some colleagues conceived the idea of purchasing the inn for use as a river clubhouse. It would become a Branch of the Sydney-based club. In February 1874, Sydney Rowing Club resolved to purchase the inn for £460. The inn was retained and a boathouse was erected at a cost of £183 and additional furnishings were purchased which added £62 to the establishment costs. The Sydney Rowing Club retained the liquor licence.

The Branch opened 11th July 1874 and Deloitte arranged for another cavalcade of boats, this time rowing from Circular Quay to Abbotsford. The procession was led by the club's new eight, *Alpha*.

Until 1888, Sydney Rowing Club maintained both the east Circular Quay and the Abbotsford premises. However, the Government gave the club notice to quit its city headquarters because the area was to be developed as additional wharf space. A road had also been built around the eastern rim of the Quay and these works required the club to make structural changes to the clubhouse.

The reparation for these changes became a matter of dispute between the government and the club. The club applied for a lease of waterfront land in Woolloomooloo Bay at a site that was between Mrs Macquarie's Chair and the Domain Baths. Permission was granted and the new shed was ready by August, 1889.

It was described by members of the SRC Committee as:

*... one of the best boating pavilions to be found in any part of Australia and quite equal in appearance to the best to be found either on the Thames or on the Cam.*

Both the new premises at

Woolloomooloo Bay and Abbotsford functioned well and members enjoyed the facilities that were offered at Abbotsford Point. Disaster struck Woolloomooloo Bay in March 1922 when a fire swept through the shed destroying nineteen boats and most of the records. The premises and boats were fully insured so a new clubhouse was built and officially opened in November the same year.

Meanwhile, at Abbotsford, the club added a new billiard room, dining room, and lounge room and new crew dormitories. Tennis courts, a new boathouse and pontoon were also added. They obtained an alcohol and a tobacco licence to increase their earnings and also invited other clubs to use the facility for dining and accommodation.

Further additions were made until another disastrous fire on 25th August 1934 destroyed the main portion of the old inn, leaving only the domestic quarters standing. In 1946, the club decided to discontinue all its activities at Woolloomooloo Bay because of the increase in commercial traffic on the harbour. The focus of attention therefore switched to Abbotsford and it was decided that the future development of the club would be centred there.



*Club officers pose for a photograph in the aftermath of the fire in August 1934.. (Photo: City of Canada Bay Library, Local Studies)*

The Woolloomooloo boathouse was dismantled and re-erected at Abbotsford on the site of the former boathouse. The Governor, Sir John Northcott, officially opened the Memorial Boathouse, dedicated to club members who served in the armed forces in both World Wars, on 15th March 1947.

*(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.*

*This article was printed in Afloat: March 2007 and is reprinted here with permission of the author.)*

*There's no present.  
There's only the  
immediate future  
and the recent past.*

# Faces in the Street

An initiative of the History Council of NSW  
History Week 2010: 4-12 September

Everyone has a story to tell . . .  
please tell us yours!

- ☛ Your fifteen minutes of fame
- ☛ Something that has had a profound influence on your life
- ☛ A setback you have overcome
- ☛ A holiday experience
- ☛ A life-changing event in your life
- ☛ The worst moment of your life
- ☛ Working in times long past
- ☛ How technology has changed your life
- ☛ How I met . . .
- ☛ Sporting achievement
- ☛ An interesting incident in your life
- ☛ A chance encounter
- ☛ Your brush with fame
- ☛ About someone important in your life
- ☛ About a relative - alive or dead
- ☛ School days
- ☛ A . . . well, the list is endless - the subject is up to you.



Characters abound in our streets - now and in the past. Let us get to know the faces of those who have shaped our local community. Tell us your stories.

This event is to celebrate not only the famous people in our area, but the everyday people who make up the greater part of this great City of Canada Bay area.

The story you submit can be about yourself, a relative, an ancestor, a friend, a neighbour. However, if the person is still alive you must have a signed release from them allowing us to display the story and photograph at our museum during September 2010.

It should be approximately 450 words (an A4 page) or less and accompanied by a photograph (if possible) of the person - current or at the time the incident took place. In exceptional circumstances we may accept longer stories, but we reserve the right to edit copy, or to not display it if we feel it is necessary.

These stories will be displayed at our museum during the month of September 2010.

Stories should be sent to the Concord Heritage Society, P.O. Box 152, Concord, 2137 or they can be left at the City of Canada Bay Museum, 1 Bent Street, Concord. Entries must be received no later than 20th August, 2010.

## A message to all members

This is our contribution in support of History Week - but we need your help!

All our members are invited to submit something to this event. We don't need your life history, just an interesting snippet from your life. Also, please feel free to invite others to contribute.

We'd like to keep the story and photograph to a size to fit on an A4 sheet of paper. We would prefer to have the story submitted as a word document if possible and we would be happy to scan the photograph.. The photograph can either be a current photo or one around the same time as the story.

It can be about someone living in the area or someone who may have moved on.

## Executive Committee

Have you given any thought to putting your name forward for one of the positions on our Executive or just to become a floor member?

This is an invitation, particularly to our many new members, to take an active part in the running of our society. This is a great opportunity to learn more about our aims and activities, and also to bring your expertise and knowledge to our endeavours.

### SKINT! MAKING DO in the Great Depression.

This exhibition is now on at the Museum of Sydney (on the site of first Government House), Cnr. Bridge & Phillip Streets. It is open daily from 9:30 am to 5:00 pm.

Cost: \$5 per person.

If you would like to make up a group to visit, probably on a weekend, please phone 9744-8528.

## Hints for Husbands

Do not jest with your wife upon a subject in which there is danger in wounding her feelings. Remember that she treasures every word you utter, though you never think of it again.

Do not speak of some virtue in another man's wife to remind your wife of a fault. Do not reproach your wife with personal defects, for, if she has sensibility, you inflict a wound difficult to heal. Do not treat your wife with inattention in company.

Do not upbraid her in the presence of a third person, nor entertain her with praising beauty and accomplishments of other women.

Do not be stern and silent in your house, and remarkable for sociability elsewhere. Remember that your wife has as much need of recreation as yourself and devote a portion, at least, of your leisure hours to such society and amusement as she may join.

By doing so you will secure her smiles and increase her affection.

*(From "The Dawn", 1889. The Australian Women's Diary. (Doubleday, 1987) Printed in the June 2010 issue of Willoughby History Chatter)*

*There are four basic food groups: milk chocolate, dark chocolate, white chocolate, and chocolate truffles. — Anonymous*

# YOU'RE INVITED

Bring your children or grandchildren to our museum on  
**Wednesday 7th and Saturday 17th July**  
10:00 am to 12 noon  
**to meet Beth Georgellis,**  
Children's Author and Illustrator.



Join her in an adventure with  
**Zeus the Koala**  
and the other characters from her two books.



The children can chat with Beth about how she brought to life the characters in her books and her inspiration for the many delightful illustrations that accompany these tales.

The beautiful illustrations will also be on display at the museum during the month of July.



Does anyone recognise this sepia photographs of the Retort House at AGL? This, together with other photographs of Gas Holders, Congregational Church, etc. were left at the museum some time ago. They are labelled M.A.B. Photo. If you were the one who left them there can you get in touch with us as we would like to find out where the originals are held.

## Museum Committee

As you can see we are starting to make plans for events to bring visitors to our museum. But we need to plan many more! Preferably to be able to set a programme for the entire 12 months to give us more time to get organised.

To do this we need more help. The Museum Committee at the moment is a small, dedicated group but we need more people, more ideas, more expertise.

This committee meets at the Museum on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 am. Why don't you pop in and see what we are doing.

We need more people with a diverse set of skills or just people who don't have particular skills but are happy to do what they can to bring our plans to fruition.

There are also many jobs that need to be done such as packing and sorting our many objects and cataloguing them so that we know what is where when we want it for a planned display.

## From the Secretary's Desk

**Group Visits to Yaralla.** We are regularly asked by various groups such as a Probus, Bus groups, etc. to be given tours of Yaralla grounds on week days or weekends.

These are a good source of income but we need helpers to organise the Devonshire teas. This work only involves an hour or so on these occasions.

If you can help with this please contact Sandra Elliott (details on front page) to let her know what day(s) you could be available.

**Annual General Meeting** will be held at the Museum at 7:30 pm on Wednesday, 11th August. This is a very important meeting as the various office bearers will present their annual reports, including the annual balance sheet.

At this meeting nominations are called for members to fill the various positions. We urge you to give serious consideration as to people you might like to nominate for these positions or, indeed, to nominate yourself. New blood is needed to bring new ideas to the new Society year. Why shouldn't it be you!

**Assistant Secretary:** One position that needs to be filled is that of Assistant Secretary. This is not an onerous position - I desperately need someone who can write letters, make phone calls, etc. on my behalf as well as to learn how the Society operates so that some of the load can be taken off my shoulders. If you've had some experience with office work it would be most helpful but, if not, just a willingness to learn the simple duties. Won't you please put your hand up when nominations are called?

## Walker Estates Meetings

Sandra is keen to re-establish these meetings, especially to involve those people who regularly work on the estate - to discuss what needs to be done and how to go about it.

This meeting is for all volunteers, not just society members, but all those who already help, or are keen to start helping.

The current suggestion is either the 2nd or 3rd Saturday in the month - to meet in the stables at 2:00 p.m.

If you are keen, please telephone Sandra on 9797-1040 or email her at [ttoille@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ttoille@optusnet.com.au)

## For Your Diary

Wed. July 14 - General Meeting  
Wed. July 28 - Executive Meeting  
Wed. Aug 11 - AGM and Elections  
Wed. Aug.25 - Executive Meeting  
(introducing newly elected)