



“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 at Yaralla on the
3rd Saturday of month
at 2:00 pm
Chairperson
Graham Ferguson, 9300-9657
Tours Organiser
Sandra Elliott, 9797-1040
ttoille@optusnet.com.au

Museum Committee
Meets on 2nd Wednesday of
month at 9:30 am at museum
Chairperson
Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682

Oral History Committee
Betty Fletcher, 9713-1384

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CITY OF CANADA BAY MUSEUM

1 Bent Street, Concord

Open Wed & Sat
10am to 4pm

Phone: 9743-3034

No.177

April 2011

Concord's Link with America

Named by war's veteran

Evidence suggests Concord was named by a Major Grose, who fought with the British Army in the American War of Independence. He came to the colony of NSW after the Revolutionary War as Lieutenant Governor.

In 1793 Governor Grose made land grants to six non-commissioned officers in the NSW Corps and four settlers.

He suggested part of Liberty Plains in Sydney, where the grants were located, should be known as Concord.

It is now thought this area bordering the Parramatta River reminded Grose of Concord in Massachusetts, through which the lovely Sylvan Sudbury River flowed under the famous old North Bridge.

The bridge took its place in history on April



The American Minuteman monument in Concord, Massachusetts, symbolized the part the country's citizens played in the American War of Independence.

Daniel Chester French was the sculptor

19, 1775, when British Army regulars approached on their way to Lexington. A group of armed citizens barred the way. They did not want the British to advance any further. The fuse that ignited the Revolutionary War was lit that day.

When the British came towards the bridge, the citizens' leader cried out: "Stand your ground. Don't fire unless fired upon. If there is to be a war, let it begin here."

Someone fired. No one is certain who, but the shot "heard round the world" began America's struggle.

The old North Bridge still stands as a proud reminder of that fateful day when citizens took on the might of Great Britain. Near the bridge is the Minuteman monument with the following inscription by the poet, Emerson:

*By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
their flag to April's breeze unfurled, here
once the embattled farmers stood, and
fired the shot heard round the world.*

It is believed Major Grose was among British Army regulars who took part in the short battle, but this fact is not conclusive, yet.

The British were accustomed to send their convicts to the American Colonies, but now that door was closed. Consideration was given to other areas and Terra Australis became prominent in discussion. Finally, Captain Arthur Phillip led a small fleet to the new colony of NSW.

Several days after the Sydney Cove landing, Captain Hunter and Lieutenant Bradley made excursions around the Parramatta River foreshores to find farmland.

The men and their party had breakfast at a place on the Parramatta River, which they called Breakfast Point, later to become the site of the Australian Gas Light Company



Bulletin Board

Wed. 6th April - 6:30 for 7:00 - The Parramatta River and its influence on the suburbs along its banks.

Wed. 13th April - 7:30 pm, "Show and Tell" on Wartime Memorabilia.

Wed. 11th May - to be advised

and now housing the Breakfast Point Development.

The land explored was reported as very favourable for farming and became known officially as Liberty Plains.

In 1975, on the 200th anniversary of this action, Concord in Sydney and Concord in Massachusetts were named sister towns for the American Bi-centennial year and greetings were exchanged between the two ConCORDs.



The famous old North Bridge at Concord, Massachusetts. In the background is the American Minuteman monument on the spot where a group of armed citizens tried to stop the approach of British Army regulars on April 19, 1775. The brief skirmish began the Revolutionary War.

Museum Committee

Next meeting - Wednesday, 6th April at 9:30 p.m.

We need to get the War Memorabilia display up on that day.

We also need to get on with planning for coming displays and cataloguing the items currently in the museum, ready for Karen to start on the Collection's Significance as per the grant we received.

April General Meeting

April meeting arrangements have been changed. Unfortunately, our guest speaker has been called away unexpectedly. We are trying to arrange another guest speaker but at this time we don't know if this will be possible.

We will now be meeting at the normal time of 7:30 pm.

We are still hoping you will be bringing in any war memorabilia you might have for a **"Show and Tell"** night. Also, please try to encourage others to do the same. The more people participating the more interesting the meeting.

We also have our *River of Life* display as well as Wartime Memorabilia so please encourage others to come, even if they don't have anything to bring and show.

The Shot Heard 'Round the World

At dawn on April 19, 1775, as 700 elite British soldiers marched toward Concord, they fought a brief skirmish with militiamen on Lexington Green, leaving eight colonists dead and nine wounded.

The King's troops marched on, arriving at Concord two hours later. While some troops searched the town for stores of gunpowder and arms, three companies guarded the "North Bridge."

As the British were marching toward Concord, word spread of the fight at Lexington. Alarm bells rang calling out the militia and Minute Men across Middlesex County. Among the units to muster was Colonel James Barrett's Middlesex County Regiment of Minute Men.

Once in formation the regiment moved onto a hill within 500 yards of where the British stood watch at North Bridge. Colonel Barrett, needing to organise additional militia companies, left his command to Major John Buttrick.

When smoke appeared in the sky above Concord the Americans wrongly believed the British were burning the town. In response Buttrick decided to move his men toward the town. As the Americans advanced the British pickets fell back across the bridge. The last British unit to cross, the Light Company of the 4th (King's Own) Foot, stopped to tear up some of the planks to delay the militia advance.

Leading the American column was Captain Isaac Davis's Company of Minute Men from Acton. As they got within 50 yards of the bridge Buttrick shouted at the British to stop tearing up the planks. Suddenly three British shots were fired, killing Davis and another man instantly and wounding a

third. Buttrick shouted "Fire! For God's sake Fire!" and the Minute Men unloosed a ragged but heavy volley.

Four out of eight British officers were hit along with seven enlisted men, two of whom died. The British immediately fell back toward the town where they linked up with other Royal troops.

Buttrick moved his men across the bridge as the British column began marching back down the road toward Boston. Militiamen gathered along their path and soon began firing from behind trees and stone walls, inflicting an ever-increasing number of casualties.

When the exhausted British troops reached Lexington, scene of the fight earlier that morning, they were met by a relief force sent to accompany them back to Boston. However, the Americans did not stop their attacks, inflicting additional losses on the British column before it reached Boston.

In total the British suffered almost 300 dead, wounded or missing. Within days an army of nearly 20,000 militiamen from all over New England surrounded the city, effectively putting it under siege.

In 1875, on the 100th anniversary of the action at Concord, Daniel Chester French's Minuteman statue, the symbol of today's National Guard, was dedicated. As part of the ceremony, Ralph Waldo Emerson's poem *The Concord Hymn* was read honouring the men who *"fired the shot heard round the world"* which began the Revolutionary War.

Today's National Guard is the direct descendent of those militia and Minute Men who stood their ground to protect their homes and freedoms.

by Domenick D'Andrea



Miss Chick and her “chickens”

A long time ago a Miss Chick ran a preschool - held in the hall at Holy Trinity Church, Concord West.

It would seem that she began running it in about the late 1920s because people now in their 80s can remember attending. And, she continued to run it for many years because people now in their 50s can also remember attending *Miss Chick's*.

As far as I can ascertain it was held from Monday to Thursday in normal school term time.

Exactly how many students she took at a time is hard to figure out but possibly 20 - maybe 24. Her students were four-year-olds - attending for the year before they were to start *real* school.

The cost per student was a weekly payment of two shillings (20 cents), plus, every day, each of her students had to bring a threepenny piece (2½ cents) - this usually came tied in the corner of a handkerchief.

This money was for . . .

one penny for a glass of milk for “playlunch” - served in a white enamel mug;

one penny - possibly for an ice cream - (I can't be sure about this); and

one penny for the bus ride home.

Miss Chick lived on the South Western corner of Wellbank Street and Arthur Street in North Strathfield. Each morning she would walk from her home, up Wellbank Street to Concord Road. Crossing Concord Road she would walk along Concord Road (on the Western Side) all the way to Holy Trinity, on the corner of Victoria Av-

enue and Concord Road.

All along her route she would collect her “little chicks” who, in pairs dutifully holding hands, would walk along with her. She started collecting her chicks at her house in Wellbank Street, and mothers would be waiting all along the route to hand over their little chicks.

The activities of the day included the play lunch of milk: lunch, which each little chick brought from home: an afternoon “nap” on a mat on the floor: plus the bus ride home.

At about 3pm Miss Chick and all her little chicks would cross Concord Road to the Eastern side and catch the bus up Concord Road. At agreed bus stops along the way mothers would be waiting to collect their chick off the bus.

Exactly what sort of activities we took part in during the day - I cannot remember. Someone remembers playing games like drop the hankie sitting on the floor.

What I do have to assume is that they were not particularly mentally difficult activities because I remember coming home after my first day at *real* school when I was five, and telling my mother that “It was a lot more interesting than Miss Chick's”.

But the amazing thing is that Miss Chick cared for all her little chicks on her own, and that she did it for so many years.

Miss Chick truly was an important character in Concord's history.

Val Steward

(Ed: Another “Faces in the Street” giving a glimpse into the past. Does anyone else remember Miss Chick?)

Our Museum Needs YOU!!

Our museum carries with it a real responsibility.

In order to keep this building we have to prove to Council that we are a viable business - and we are a business!.

To do this we must keep attracting visitors by putting on special displays, exhibits and events on a regular basis.

To do all this we need YOUR help.

Planning and preparing for these events needs the help and input from many people, not just one or two, if they are to be a great success.

If you can give us a little of your precious time - even if it's only a few hours a month - we can make our museum even better than it is.

We need new ideas and suggestions for future events, and some help in researching how to best present the ideas to the public

This is YOUR Society and YOUR Museum - we want YOU to be proud of it.

Currently the Museum Committee meets at the museum on the **second Wednesday of each month at 9:30 am**. Why not drop by and have a chat?

Or call in and see our current display - *The River of Life*. It tells how the Parramatta River was responsible for the development of what was Concord and Drummoyn.

This will give you an idea of what we are trying to accomplish.

Henry Brewer

After whom Brewer Street was named.

Henry, or Harry as he was known, was a carpenter in England, interested in architecture and liked to draw houses. He was not a bad artist.

Harry joined the navy as a clerk and because he could write and draw, Phillip put him in charge of stores. Harry was a rough man, who drank too much and was often in an alcoholic daze. He had to be encouraged by Phillip to change his clothes.

Prior to going to the colony, he was picked by Phillip to be on the voyage as an able sea-man, and was appointed as the peace officer. Whilst he had an odd manner, Phillip considered him to be a most useful person.

When they arrived in the colony, Brewer's job was initially to help the Marine Corps, drawing up plans for huts etc.

In terms of public works, he was the first ‘public architect’. He went to Parramatta and helped design the buildings - on what is now George Street. The street was originally designed to be 205 feet wide.

Whilst Phillip left after 5 years, Brewer decided to stay, but by 1796 the hard life he had lived began to tell, and he decided to ‘take it easy’.

Governor Hunter gave him a grant of 50 acres at Concord, with Brewer Street being the approximate boundary.

You're Invited

The McDonagh Sisters - a Celebration. Isobel and Paulette were local independent film makers in the late 1920s and early 1930s. - **Tues. 5th April at 7:00 pm. Free.** Concord Library

Author Talk: Robin Adair - The Ghost of Waterloo. Frid. 8th April at 1:00 pm. Cost \$7.00 (includes refreshments). Concord Library

The Cheaters (1930) - silent movie by the McDonagh Sisters - **Sat. 9th April at 1:00 pm.** Free. Concord Library.

For further information contact David Sansome, Local Studies Librarian, on 9911-6317.

The Walkers of Yaralla - there is also a display about the Walkers at the Library during April. If you're passing just pop in and have a look

Favourite Fast Food

Someone asked the other day, 'What was your favourite 'fast food' when you were growing up?'

'We didn't have fast food when I was growing up,' I informed him. 'All the food was slow.'

'C'mon, seriously. Where did you eat?'

'It was a place called "home," I explained!

'Mum cooked every day and, when Dad got home from work, we sat down together at the dining room table - and if I didn't like what she put on my plate, I was allowed to sit there until I did like it.'

By this time the lad was laughing so hard I was afraid he was going to suffer serious internal damage, so I didn't tell him the part about how I had to have permission to leave the table.

But here are some other things I would have told him about my childhood if I'd figured his system could have handled it:

Some parents NEVER owned their own house, wore jeans, set foot on a golf course, travelled out of the country or had a credit card.

My parents never drove me to school. I had a bicycle that weighed probably 50 pounds, and only had one speed, (slow).

We didn't have a television in our house until I was 10.

It was, of course, black and white, and the station went off the air at 10 pm, after playing the national anthem and epilogue; it came back on the air at about 6 a.m. and there was usually a locally produced news and farm show on, featuring local people....

I never had a telephone in my room. The only phone was on a party line. Before you could dial, you had to listen and make sure some people you didn't know weren't already using the line.

Pizzas were not delivered to our home... but milk was.

All newspapers were delivered by boys and all boys delivered newspapers — my brother delivered a newspaper, seven days a week. He had to get up at 6 a.m. every morning.

Film stars kissed with their mouths shut. At least, they did in the films. There were no movie ratings because all movies were responsibly produced for everyone to enjoy viewing, without profanity or violence or almost anything offensive.

If you grew up in a generation before there was fast food, you may want to share some of these memories with your children or grandchildren. Just don't blame me if they bust a gut laughing.

Growing up isn't what it used to be, is it?

What's so funny about April?

Only the Yanks would have so many subjects and days to celebrate!

It starts off with April Fools' Day, which is also Reading is Funny Day, National Fun Day and National Fun at Work Day.

That extends to Laugh at Work Week and then someone decided, what the heck - let's make a whole month of it! Which makes April National Humour Month.

But, why April?

Some people date All (or April) Fools' Day as starting from when the Gregorian Calendar took effect in 1582, changing New Year's Day from April 1 to January 1.

People who forgot about the new date

were mocked and called April Fools.

But Chaucer had already referred to foolishness on what people thought was the 32nd day of March (or April 1) in his 14th-century masterpiece, Canterbury Tales.

And other cultures have recorded even earlier traditions of April pranks, jokes and gags. Whatever the reason, the time is always right for jokes, humour and laughter.

As W.C. Fields suggested: "Start every day off with a smile - and get it over with!"

Quote: "*Analysing humour is like dissecting a frog. Few people are interested and the frog dies of it.*" - E.B. White

Some things you probably didn't need to know!

- ★ Feb 1865 is the only month in recorded history to not have a full moon.
- ★ The strongest muscle in the body is the TONGUE
- ★ The electric chair was invented by a dentist
- ★ The youngest pope was 11 years old..

From the Secretary's Desk

Cleaning up the Storeroom: Thank you to all who turned up for this working bee. In one afternoon we managed to get all the unwanted items out for Council clean-up and then tidied up the storeroom and parking bay. Well done and many thanks.

Faces in the Street: This is an ongoing project. It has been so popular with visitors that we will be displaying a small group of stories each month in an endeavour to persuade others to contribute their stories. We still have a lot of our own members who haven't yet contributed anything. Please share your stories with us - personal or memories of the area.

Wartime Display: We are appealing to members to bring along to our April general meeting, any special mementoes they have for a "Show and Tell" segment. We would also ask that you speak to your friends, neighbours, anyone - to encourage them to take part in the evening.

Anything to do with any of the wars in which Australians were involved would be greatly appreciated. We would also be interested in anything to do with the war at home, including civilian participation

We are particularly anxious to locate any items that we can use next year when we have the Travelling Exhibition "The War at Home"

Greg Blaxell will be our special speaker next **Wednesday, 6th April, 6:30 for 7:00 pm**, as part of our "River of Life" Display. Greg is the author of The River: Sydney Cove to Parramatta.

Light supper will be served. Cost is \$10, or \$7 for concessions. Please invite others to come along, too. The evening is open to all.

Change of Name for our Society. At the last meeting it was agreed that we would change our name to City of Canada Bay Heritage Society to better reflect the wider community with which we are now involved, and to match up with the name of our museum. However, this will not take effect until some time later this year as there are various considerations to be taken into account.

Information Sought: Does anyone have any information on a Harold Warman who operated a grocery store in Concord in the 1920s-1930s before his early death from a heart attack in 1939.