



"Nurungi"

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

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MEETINGS

General Meetings

1st Saturday of month
(except January)
at 2:00 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
This position is vacant

Tours Organiser

Sandra Elliott, 9797-1040
ttoille@optusnet.com.au

Museum Committee

Meets on 2nd Wednesday of
month at 10:00am at museum

Chairperson

Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682

Oral History Committee

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CITY OF CANADA BAY MUSEUM

1 Bent Street, Concord

Open Wed & Sat
10am to 4pm

Guest Speaker

on 1st Saturday of each
month at 2:00 pm

Phone: 9743-3034
during museum hours

No.192

SEPTEMBER 2012

The Parramatta River Story

Part 6 (final) of a series on the historic Parramatta River
by a long-time resident, A S Mendel

Horsepower to Hovercraft

Courage was often the deciding factor that would bring succeeding generation of schoolboys to their feet, when their mates, their sons or grandsons strove for the coveted Head of the River award.

Balmain was always the home of the eighteen-footers and, indeed, of all models of lesser dimensions.

What watersider would not thrill to see the eighteens with spinnakers flying, or would not coast along behind the blue water crews beginning their long hauls to Hobart Town.

Old timers speak with pride of the classic sculling championships, when men like Jim Paddon or Dick Arnst raced on the river.

But how many in our generation know what the broken column off Henley Point means, and if they do, do they know the inside story of Henry Searle – the Les Darcy of sculling.

Henry Searle was born on the northern rivers in 1866

He died in 1889 – just 23 years old. He rowed in major championships for just one year; but what a year it was!

In 1888 he defeated Stanbury and Wulf easily in his first title race. All previous records were broken.

In the same year he competed against Neilson, Hughes and the world champion, the great Peter Kemp. Again he won convincingly.

Hanlan, the Canadian champion, refused to meet him, but O'Connor, American champion, challenged him on the Thames, England.

Triumph and Tragedy

Once again triumph for the boy from down under. All this in the year 1888. In 1889 he was dead.

Peritonitis, following enteric fever, was his only conqueror.

Finally the saga of the ferries: in 1789, a year after Phillip's landing, the *Rosehill Packet* (commonly called The Lump) made

the first journey up the Parramatta.

She was propelled by oars, using sails if wind assisted.

In 1831 *Sophia Jane* was the first of the paddle wheelers. In 1832 the *Surprise* made a unique journey, four horses turning a windlass, which in turn drove a paddle wheel.

She was then equipped with engines, but before that the *Australia* had completed the course.

In 1836 the *Rapid* superseded these two vessels, followed by the *Ysobel* in 1860.

Then in 1881 the *Pheasant* approached the twentieth century.

Revolution Ahead

In 1900 the Sydney Ferries assumed control and their *Karrabee* maintained the service until, finally, the *Bronzewing* and *Lady Rose* continued on to 1926, when the service was cancelled.

I can foresee that wharves and ramps will be built right into where the bulk of suburban population is housed, thus offsetting the time-wasting double transport, and with craft plying like buses to specific area.

It is to be hoped, also, that local government authorities will continue to reclaim and develop parkland strips along the foreshores when industry moves out, as they have done in many places.

Romantic Setting

Then, if we travel the river or along the new western expressway, we may recapture the romance and setting of this once lovely waterway.

With deep waters offering a highway many chains wide, with speedier facilities, and

DIARY DATES

SEPTEMBER 1: Andrew Tink, "Lord Sydney: the life and times of Tommy Townshend.

OCTOBER 6: To be advised

with great office, hotel and administrative blocks mushrooming all over the inner city, why should the ferries fail.

Remember! No traffic lights, no congestion, no noise and no tension!

In October 1970 the Commonwealth Government released to the State the foreshore reserves of the harbor with the proviso that these areas shall be retained only for public parklands.

The River's future is as exciting as its past.

(This is the last of the series of 6 articles which were printed in the "Advertiser", November/December, 1971.)

Editor's Note:

If you have enjoyed reading this series then we would like you to share your memories of the area. It doesn't have to be a long story, just a paragraph or two, if that's easier for you.

The Last Journey



Mortuary Station, 1871. Image State Library NSW

Picture this: it's 1869, and you're dead. The funeral's at Rookwood Cemetery at 10am, and you're in Chippendale. It's 9:30am. *You have no money.* What to do? How will you get there in time?

At the time of its construction, the Mortuary Station was adjacent to the original Central Station, then known as Sydney Station.

The sombre design is perfectly suited to the task performed by the station, and the gothic detail is fantastic. Standing before it, you can only imagine how many mourners boarded trains bound for their loved ones' final stop. Funeral trains would depart from Mortuary Station each day for either Rookwood, Woronora or Sandgate cemeteries. By 1927 the cost of a ride was around four shillings (roughly 40c); corpses travelled for free.

Eventually, Sydney's roads got to a standard that corpses could be taken to the cemeteries by car and there became less and less of a need for funeral trains.

The Mortuary Stations

Regent Street

This was a railway station on Sydney's Rookwood Cemetery railway line. Funeral trains departed from the station, being bound for Rookwood Cemetery. The ornate station building is still standing on the western side of Sydney Yard at Chippendale, close to Central railway station and Railway Square



Regent Street Mortuary Station

It opened on 29 June 1869. At some point its name was changed to Regent Street, after the street on which it is located. It has also been referred to by different names, including the Necropolis Receiving Station and the Mortuary Station. It was built as part of the larger Rookwood Cemetery line and was completed in March 1869. It was the start of the service that ran to the Woronora General Cemetery in Sutherland, located south of Sydney, and for trains heading to Sandgate Cemetery in Newcastle.

This and the station at Rookwood Cemetery were designed by colonial architect James Barnet using elements from the Venetian 13th century Gothic style. Principal sculptors Thomas Duckett and Henry Apperly worked on the elaborate carvings that were a feature of the stations, including angels, cherubs, and gargoyles.

Although both buildings were designed to look like churches, both in structure and in the symbolic elements that adorned them, they were never used as places of worship.

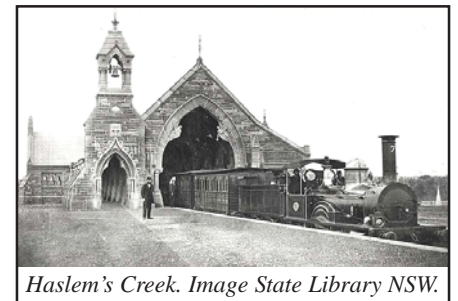
Haslem's Creek

The station at Rookwood was called Haslem's Creek Cemetery Station. Its name was changed to Necropolis prior to 1872 and changed again to Mortuary Terminus before having its name changed to Mortuary General Cemetery in 1897. It was later called Mor-

tuary Terminus until it finally changed to Cemetery Station No 1 in 1908. It closed in December 1948.

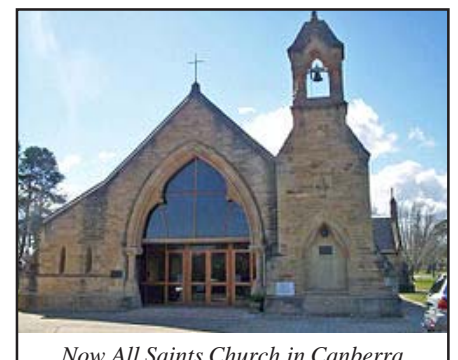
The sandstone station included wide platforms, a ticket office, two vestibules, retiring rooms and a carriage port. It was elaborately decorated in a similar style to the Regent Street station. The work included angels, cherubs, gargoyles and various foliage carvings featuring flowers, pears, sycamores, apples and pomegranates. Black and white floor tiles created by Cumberland pottery were laid in a tessellated pattern on the floors.

The building spanned the terminus of the railway line into the cemetery so it created a tunnel effect. The Northern Arch was decorated with two angels opposite each other on the inner side of the arches. One angel appeared to be holding a scroll (which may have been the Judgement book) and its eyes were closed. The other angel was set to look down the railway line and held a trumpet in its hands, which probably symbolised the Resurrection. The building had a bell-cote for housing a bell that was used during the funeral services. It was tolled to warn passengers of the impending departure time.



Haslem's Creek. Image State Library NSW.

The building was used as a chapel until 1958 when a fire gutted its interior. The Gothic-style building was then dismantled and re-erected stone by stone in Canberra in 1958 as All Saints Anglican Church in the parish of Ainslie. The rebuilt church contains some modifications, the most obvious of which is the change of position of the bell tower to the opposite side.



Now All Saints Church in Canberra

From your Museum Committee

This committee meets regularly on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 10:00 am at the Museum.

The current Royal Family display will stay at the museum until the end of September. If you haven't visited yet, please try to make it as a lot of effort has gone into it and we're very proud of the result.

We are currently finalising plans for our next special display on "The Secret History of Nursery Rhymes", which will be at the museum from December to February.

We are also starting to plan for next year. Some of the suggestions put forward are:

"Fun & Games for Young and Old" - a display of old board and other games, many of which the visitors will be able to play;

"Symbols of Australia: Meat Pies, Kangaroos and Holden Cars".

"Australian Inventions" - needs some research for this;

"Circuses - How things have Changed" - another one that needs research.

As you can see a lot of work goes into planning these events and we could use as much help as we can get, whether it be physical work, research or just your ideas.

If you would like to become a part of this dedicated group please feel free to come along to any of our meetings - we'd love to see you.

City of Canada Bay Community Grants

We were fortunate to receive \$1,000 in the recent grants. This will enable us to build a special wall-mounted 5-board display unit, which means that we can mount bigger displays of photographs and documents in a much smaller space.

It will allow us to showcase our heritage in a much better manner.

Thank you to the Council for supporting the many not-for-profit groups in the area. They are all run by volunteers who give their time, and often their own money, to support what they believe in.

How did they find out?

Banging your head against a wall uses 150 calories an hour.

NSW History Week - 2012

To coincide with this the **Concord Library** will have a display of historic photographs, "Rhodes, the past in pictures" from 4th September to 30th September.

A special feature of the display will be photographs of the Rhodes Fire Station which have recently been lent to City of Canada Bay Library Service for copying and adding to the digital library, "Canada Bay Connections". The photographs were lent by local resident Greg McIlwaine, the Captain.

Greg's family has been associated with the Rhodes Fire Station for three generations, having been established by his grandfather, Charles McIlwaine.

Greg McIlwaine will be sharing the story of Rhodes Fire Station and the service his family has given to our community in a talk at Concord Library on Saturday, 15th September at 2:00 pm.

Currently Rhodes is being transformed as a residential area, so it is appropriate to look back at the history of the suburb.



Firemen on No.87 "Willy's Knight" fire engine, Rhodes Fire Brigade. This was the station's first motorised fire engine. It was transferred from Grafton on 14th April, 1930.

NSW History Week - 2012

In conjunction with the Concord Library display (above) we will be showing information on the Mortlake Volunteer Fire Brigade and early fire fighting in the colony.

The display will also be on from the 5th to 29th September. Please try to get along to both displays to learn more about our history.

Unfortunately, we don't have any photographs of the Station, Staff or Vehicles.

It is known that in 1901 Charlie Sanders (Sanders Boatshed) was the first Captain and he was relieved by a Mr. Solomon, a constructional engineer, who was captain when the Brigade moved into the completed Fire station in 1903. In 1912 a permanent officer, Mr. Jamieson, was attached to the Station and a red brick cottage next door was built for his residential use.

The Mortlake property was purchased by St. Patrick's RC Church, the fire station becoming a classroom (since demolished) and the Station Officer's residence became the Presbytery.

Does anyone know if there are any relatives of these three people still around who might have photographs?

Working Bees

A very special thank you to those members who turned up for the last working bee - although we were a little disappointed with the number.

A great deal was accomplished but there is more that needs to be done.

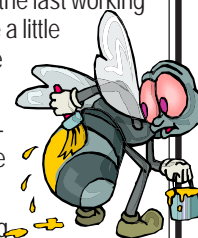
Currently we are sorting through all the boxes and listing the contents on the outside. This will make it much easier to retrieve items we need for displays.

We will be scheduling another one for **Saturday, 25th August commencing at 10:00 am.**

If you can't manage the whole day, then please come and spend what time you can manage.

We will supply lunch and morning and afternoon tea.

Please let us know if you are coming so that we can organise the catering.



Royal Family Display

(to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee)

from

Queen Victoria to Queen Elizabeth



the only two Monarchs in the history of the UK to celebrate their Diamond Jubilee

Read about . . .

- * Attempted assassination of the Duke of Edinburgh at Clontarf
- * Diary of a Royal Bridesmaid (Queen Victoria)
- * Bountiful Banquets fit for a King or a Queen
- * Extracts from Queen Victoria's Diary
- * and much, much more.

See pictures of . . .

- * Royal Weddings
- * Royal Visits
- * Coronations
- * Family Photograph Album

as well as Memorabilia, Objects and Souvenirs.

Stories to tell and photographs to see
Browse Books and Magazines
Watch the slide show of photographs

Lord Sydney

Just who was the man behind the first European settlement of Australia?

His name was Tommy Townsend, better known as Lord Sydney, who also chose Arthur Phillip to be the penal colony's first governor. Phillip's naming of Sydney Cove after his mentor has meant that Sydney is now synonymous with Australia's largest city.

Long regarded by most historians as a mediocrity, Sydney was anything but that.

To learn more come along to our Museum on Saturday, 1st September (1:30 for 2:00 pm sharp) to hear Andrew Tink tell us more of this interesting person.

NOTE: Make a note in your diary NOW, that we have a guest speaker on the first Saturday of every month.

Perks of Being Over 50

1. Kidnappers are not very interested in you.
2. In a hostage situation you are likely to be released first.
3. No one expects you to run - anywhere.
4. People call at 9 pm and ask, "Did I wake you ?????"
5. People no longer view you as a hypochondriac.
- 6 There is nothing left to learn the hard way.
7. Things you buy now won't wear out.
8. You can eat dinner at 4 pm.
9. You can live without sex but not your glasses.
10. You get into heated arguments about pension plans.
11. You no longer think of speed limits as challenge.
12. You quit trying to hold your stomach in no matter who walks into the room.
13. You sing along with elevator music.
14. Your eyes won't get much worse.
15. Your investment in health insurance is finally beginning to pay off.
16. Your joints are more accurate meteorologists than the national weather service.
17. Your secrets are safe with your friends because they can't remember them either.
18. Your supply of brain cells is finally down to manageable size.

Annual General Meeting

Our delayed AGM will now be held on Saturday, 1st September, following our guest speaker.

The main business for the meeting is the acceptance of the Annual Financial Reports and Auditors Report.

This will then be followed by the normal general meeting.

From the Secretary's Desk

WORKING BEES: The next one is on Saturday, 25th August. Please make a note in your diary now.

RAG DOLLS FOR NURSERY RHYME DISPLAY: A big thank you to Trish Skehan who has been working hard and producing some lovely dolls for the display.

Also, I still haven't heard from the member who was making the "Jack and Jill" pair.

ADVERTISING OUR MUSEUM: We regularly prepare leaflets to advertise our speakers and any special displays. Would you be prepared to take some of these to letterbox drop around your area to let more people know about what is happening?

WELCOME to three new volunteers for our museum. Kay Dawson, Kara Grimsley and Margaret Rooney - we thank you so much for your interest and look forward to getting to know you better.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to Colin Richardson of Radio 2RDJ who has offered to transfer the tapes mentioned last month into digital format. This offer is very much appreciated.

Colin has also asked if some of our members would like to do a 10 minute talk now an then on some aspect of our history. He would be happy to come to the museum to tape these. If you'd like to take part, please give me a call.

Two Irishmen and a Blonde

Two Irishmen were standing at the base of a flagpole, looking up.

A blonde walks by and asks them what they were doing.

Paddy replied, 'We're supposed to be finding the height of dis flagpole, but we don't have a ladder.'

The blonde took out an adjustable spanner from her bag, loosened a few bolts and laid the flag pole down.

She got a tape measure out of her pocket, took a few measurements and announced that it was 6.5 metres.

Then, she walked off.

Mick said to Paddy, 'Isn't that just like a blonde! We need the height and she gives us the length.'

Moral: Not all blondes are dizzy