



"Nurungi"

Remembered

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CONCORD HERITAGE SOCIETY

email: chs@concordheritage.asn.au

EDITOR
LOIS MICHEL
9744-8528

PRESIDENT
MARK DURANCE
9743-0583

PUBLIC RELATIONS
Vacant

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

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

* * * *

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.193

OCTOBER 2012

EDUCATION: The First Twenty Years (Part 1)

During the first twenty years of settlement in NSW it was not the policy of the British Government to accept responsibility for education, either for the children who lived within its own national boundaries or for the sons and daughters of those whom it officially sent abroad. Yet, arising out of its experience in North America, it was prepared to concede that a school was an integral part of any pioneering community and consequently instructed Governor Phillip to set aside 200 acres of land in each new town for the maintenance of the school master. This order was made in 1789; it was repeated to Governor Hunter in 1794.

From its inception, the colonial government was involved in education. The first official chaplain, the Rev. Richard Johnson, was made responsible for the supervision of schools and performed this task alone until the arrival in the colony of the Reverend Samuel Marsden in 1794. Several schools were established quickly. Possibly in 1788, but certainly by 1789, FF Isabella Rosson (Lady Penrhyn) founded a Dame school in Sydney. Mary Johnson began a similar school in Parramatta in 1791. Both of these women were convicts. In 1791, Thomas MacQueen was appointed schoolmaster at Norfolk Island.

Yet no school system could function adequately if its masters were uncertain of their means of livelihood. Equally, no community of free citizens would wish to have their children instructed by convicts if this possibly could be avoided. Grose sought to reconcile these two factors by employing free men and placing them on the payroll of the New South Wales Corps. He also approached the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in London for assistance and it undertook, as from March 1793, to contribute to the educational needs of the colony a maximum sum of £40 per year, being a payment of £10 per year to each recommended

teacher. The Society also offered to supply teaching and religious materials.

Two teachers, each assisted by his wife, were appointed in 1793. FF William Richardson (former convict, Alexander) was placed in charge of the first specially-constructed schoolhouse in Sydney. He had married Isabella Rosson, the first schoolmistress, in September 1789. He joined the New South Wales Corps and, as a teacher, was described by Johnson as 'diligent'.

William Webster, the second appointment, had come from England as a corporal in the Corps. He opened a school for officers' children near the barracks. Both men were granted blocks of land in March 1795, Richardson receiving seventy-five acres and Webster, thirty acres. Both teachers received allocations of £10 each from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel for their first year of service, as did Richardson for his second.

However, the Reverend Johnson saw fit to withhold Webster's grant for that year on the grounds that the master drank too heavily, was too severe on his pupils, left most of the teaching to his wife, who had since died, and had most of his pupils removed from his school. Johnson instead recommended that Webster's allocation be paid to the master of the school which had just been opened



A Dame School, 1780s

DIARY DATES

OCTOBER 6: Robert Curran, "Gunpowder
Magazines of Colonial Sydney"
NOVEMBER 3: to be advised

at Parramatta.

The Reverend Johnson had erected a church during 1793 and William Richardson was put in charge of a school established there. By early 1798 Richardson, together with Isaac Nelson and Thomas Taber, was teaching about one hundred and fifty pupils, the children of members of the Corps, settlers, convicts and others. Parents were expected to make a reasonable payment to the masters but the children of those who were unable to do so were educated without charge.

On 1 October, 1798, this church was destroyed by fire, possibly a deliberate act.

Governor Hunter made the Court House available for the accommodation of the school but this proved unsatisfactory. The frequent interruptions which resulted from the use of this building for legal purposes caused the group to be further removed to a church which had once been a storehouse. It was very cold and damp and, despite the diligence of the masters, children began to leave until, by April 1 1800, there were only one hundred and eleven left. By this stage the Reverend Johnson had little interest left in educational administration in the Colony. He had never recovered from the loss of his church and was in indifferent health; he was about to return to England.

Underlining Hunter's period as Governor of NSW was his exposure and sensitivity to an ever-present deterioration in standards of community morality. From a genesis in illegitimacy, it ranged from neglected children, to the contact of young children with dissolute and corrupt adults, to the moral ruin of girls in adolescence.

Church attendance on the Sabbath was made compulsory for all convicts. Hunter had hoped, as early as 1796, to construct a major school in Sydney, but this project advanced no further than its listing as one of his most wanted buildings, preceded, nevertheless, by other, more urgent works. He did, however, establish an orphan fund, of which the Reverend Johnson was appointed treasurer.

Hunter welcomed the opportunity to assist the four members of the London Missionary Society who arrived in the Colony in 1798. They established a preaching circuit linking Kissing Point, Parramatta and Toongabbie and soon wished to establish schools.

At Kissing Point, the Society constructed a building, thirty feet by fourteen feet, with a sideroom for the

master, nine feet by seven feet, at a cost of £40/12/2. Hunter supplied a schoolmaster, Matthew Hughes, with stores and rations, a man whom the society regarded as . . . "a genuine convert and one whom they came to respect". This schoolroom was opened on 16 July, 1800.

Toongabbie was a penal settlement for convicts serving sentences of hard labour. Here a school was established in a room without walls, windows, shutters or floor. It was probably taught by a state-maintained convict.

(to be continued)

(Reprinted with consent from the July-December 2011 issues of *Founders*, the magazine of the Fellowship of First Fleeters.)

(The article was accompanied by the following comment from Ron Withington, Editor.

After the weather, the job and the real estate no topic concerns the modern family more than Education. This article traces the formation and development of the system over the first twenty years in the life of the colony in NSW and Part I takes us through to the year 1800. It was written by Desmond Mulcahy, Research Officer of the Division of Research & Planning In the NSW Department of Education.

Significantly it comes, in the main, from the July 1969 issue of First Fleeters, the forerunner of Founders. It has been my aim to, from time to time, republish such archival gems, particularly when the articles so unearthed are illustrated by that incomparable Fellowship of First Fleeters artist, Arthur S Mendel.

The English Instructor, or the Art of Spelling, by Henry Dixon, was one of the first text books used in NSW. Forty-eight copies were obtained for use in 1789.

Here is an indication of its moralistic tone.

Words of One Syllable,
easy to the apprehension of Children

LESSON I

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Pray to God</i> | <i>Play not with bad Boys</i> |
| <i>Love God</i> | <i>Call no ill Names</i> |
| <i>Fear God</i> | <i>Use no ill Words</i> |
| <i>Serve God</i> | <i>Tell no Lye</i> |
| <i>Trust in God</i> | <i>Hate Lyes</i> |
| <i>Hope in God</i> | <i>Speak the Truth</i> |
| <i>Take not God's Name</i> | <i>Spend your Time well</i> |
| <i>in vain</i> | <i>Love your School</i> |
| <i>Do not swear</i> | <i>Mind your Book</i> |
| <i>Do not steal</i> | <i>Strive to learn</i> |
| <i>Cheat not in your play</i> | <i>Be not a Dunce</i> |

LESSON 2 is a listing of useful proverbs, etc:

*Do not that by yourself which you would
blush to have known*
Tell not all you hear, nor speak all you know.
All Work and no Play makes Jack a dull Boy

Arthur Mendel, The Parramatta River Story

Arthur was an historian/artist who, although not a member of the Fellowship of First Fleeters, was active as an illustrator in the earliest editions of the Fellowship journal - that is around 1969 - the forerunner of *Founders* magazine.

He lived in Henry Street, Five Dock. The sketches included in this 3-part article are by Arthur Mendel.

Unfortunately, that is all the information we have been able to find.

Gunpowder Magazines of Colonial Sydney

On Saturday, 6th October at 1:30 (for 2:00 pm start), Robert Curran will talk about the Gunpowder Magazines of Colonial Sydney, and some of the characters associated with them.

Find out why Abner Brown, the Ordnance Sergeant, had to leave Sydney in a hurry in 1838, and hear about his poetic involvement in the notorious affair of "Blossom", the wandering cow.

This illustrated talk will cover the history of the Dawes Point, Fort Philip, Goat Island, Spectacle Island and Newington Magazines.

Visitors are welcome to attend these events on the 1st Saturday of every month so please spread the word to friends, neighbours, workmates. Everyone welcome.



Newington Armory

Museum Displays

We currently have three separate display at the museum - please come along to see them before they have to be dismantled.

Royal Family - from Queen Victoria to Queen Elizabeth II will be left up a little longer as people are still visiting to see it.

Mortlake Volunteer Fire Brigade will be on display until mid October

Roses from the Heart will be on display until mid November. (see article)

66 Hurt in Rail Crash

Semi-Trailer driver and son uninjured in crossing smash.

Side of Express Ripped

Sixty-six people were injured yesterday afternoon when a crowded Newcastle-Sydney express crashed into a loaded semi-trailer at Concord West.

The accident occurred on a level crossing 10 yards from the end of the station platform. The trailer had stopped under a steel archway over the level crossing when the train, travelling at high speed, struck it.

The locomotive hurled the 30 ft trailer, laden with two heavy tractors, high into the air and onto the station platform.

Parts of the trailer which protruded over the line ripped the sides from the first four carriages. Fragments of the tractors and the trailer and splintered wood from the carriage flew considerable distances. The wheels from the back of the trailer rolled along the platform and stopped outside the stationmaster's office.

All windows and woodwork were ripped from the first two carriages and the next two carriages were badly damaged. Screaming passengers scrambled from the train when it stopped at the station.

The back of the trailer crashed against steel stanchions supporting the overhead footbridge at the station.

The driver of the semi-trailer had treatment at Western Suburbs Hospital for shock, but was allowed to leave. His seven-year-old son, who was with him in the cabin, was not injured.

The gatekeeper at the level crossing said the trailer load was too high to clear a steel archway carrying signal wires over the crossing gate. He added: "The driver stopped when he found the load was too high. About 10 feet of the trailer was over the line, with the back wheels on the train lines.

"I was watching to see what the trailer driver would do when I saw the warning light in the box flash, indicating that a train was approaching. I shouted a warning to the truck driver and grabbed a flag and ran up the line waving the red flag and shouting. The train driver saw me and applied his brakes.

"The truck driver tried desperately to get the trailer off the lines, but the back wheels spun on the lines. He could not move. There was a terrific crash as the train struck the trailer, which went sideways. The train then seemed to hit it a second time, lifting it four or five feet.

"The trailer crashed against the overhead bridge supports and bounced onto the platform. The bridge wobbled. I thought it was going to come down"

A bystander on the bridge said: "It happened in a few seconds. I saw the train crash into the trailer and the trailer swung around towards the bridge, which rose in the air and I thought it was going to knock me off the bridge.

"Then it crashed into the supports of the bridge. I was hurled across the bridge and hit a tin fence on one side and then landed on my back. As I lay there the part of the bridge where I had been standing started to cave in and I thought it was all going. I jumped up and ran like mad for the stairs."

The trailer driver said: "I waited five minutes at the level crossing. Two electric trains went through. A man opened the gates and waved me through. As I went ahead I was checking more or less to see whether the load would clear the gantry with overhead signal lines. As I did so I saw the railwayman racing madly down the line waving a red flag. I forged ahead as quickly as I could but there was not enough time to clear the line."

A bystander who was standing in Victoria Road, just outside the gates, when the crash occurred, added: "The trailer driver was trying to get the semi through the archway but he didn't seem to be able to move. Then I heard a train whistle and next thing, a terrific crash. The train just seemed to sweep the trailer aside. When it struck the steel projections from the wreckage there was a crunching noise and the sound of splintering glass. I ran onto the platform.

"As the train stopped women and children were screaming and leaping from the carriage. A few mates and I helped some of them out. Some local residents brought across rugs and bandages and brandy. There were helpers everywhere within a few minutes."

The railway platform resembled a casualty clearing station after the crash. Six ambulances from Western Suburbs arrived at the station. Private cars also took injured people to hospital.

Passengers with blood streaming from cuts wandered around dazed while ambulance officers tried to help them. Crying children were searching for their parents whom they had lost in the confusion.

Police from Burwood and Strathfield cordoned off the station area and controlled hundreds of sightseers.

Passengers from the train sat among luggage waiting for emergency transport. Many passengers caught taxis from the station. Government Transport Department buses brought other passengers to the city. The last passenger did not leave Concord West until 9:20 p.m.

The express train had been due in Sydney at 5:58 p.m.

A passenger who was in the first carriage of the train, said: "I heard a terrific crash and was half covered with glass. For a moment I thought the train had been derailed."

He said he did not know how he escaped serious injury. The side of the carriage where he was sitting was torn away in the collision. He suffered slight shock and a slight bump on a knee. The flying glass cut his shirt in only a few places.

Seven teenagers were unlucky to be involved in the crash. One said he had driven to Ocean Beach in his car on Friday night with three other youths and three girls.

"The car was going real good up there," he said. "We were going to go home last night, but it broke down. I had to leave it at a garage there to be fixed."

Another of the youths said he would always remember the time of the accident. "It smashed my watch and stopped it at 10 minutes to six," he said. "I was just remarking on how the train was going. Just then the driver hit the brakes, the train seemed to take off again and then there was a crash."

An Ambulance Officer with Western Suburbs Ambulance, who was in the first ambulance on the scene said: "The first message we received was that a truck was hit by a train and the driver was hurt. But as we approached we saw it was a different story, and we radioed for more vehicles. It was the worst crash scene in my experience."

Daily Telegraph: January 7, 1958



Reminder

If you have not yet paid your dues, would you please do so now. The Society needs your subscriptions to keep our newsletter and other works going.

Guided Tours of Yaralla

Although we are unable to hold our usual Open Day at Yaralla at present, the Walker Committee has decided to hold a Mini Day.

It will consist of the usual tours around the grounds and the opportunity to purchase morning or afternoon tea. No other food will be available.

This is just to keep our presence on the estate.

Grounds will be open from 10:00 am. There will be no need to book, just assemble in front of the house and pay your entry there. Tours will leave as they are filled.

If you can help with this - tours or refreshments - please contact Sandra Elliott (details on front of newsletter).

Guided Tours of Historic Yaralla

(DEW Convalescent Hospital)

Nullawarra Avenue
Concord West
(entrance opposite The Drive)

on

Sat, 3rd November
10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Guided tours of the squash court, dairy, stables and gardens

Photographic exhibition 'Yaralla 1870-1970'

Cost: \$10.00

Light refreshments available in the dairy for a small charge



Roses from the Heart

For crimes that required pity more than punishment convict women were forcibly migrated around the world.

Until 1776, when the War of Independence halted their offloading in America, these 'unfortunates' were pawns of the slave trade.

From 1788 to 1853 - 25,266 women were transported to Australia. Keeping them company was British Middle Class ideology that became embedded in Australian society. Penal conditions exacerbated the oppression of women. Convict women were treated as slaves, just stock to barter.

Convict women must have required enormous depths of self assurance not to be crushed by the condemnation hurled at them. Language of the day confirmed a convict woman's degradation. How hard to erase the prevailing belief in their whorishness and worthlessness. Until recently historians perpetuated the 'immorality' of convict women and did not look beyond the stigma of moral condemnation.

Tasmanian artist Christina Henri took a unique approach towards honouring these women with "Roses from the Heart".

She conceived the idea of a cloth bonnet symbol - one for every female convict - as a signifier of the convict women's worth - their economic value to Australia's prosperity. She invited people throughout the world to make a bonnet tribute to commemorate the value of a convict woman's life and to decorate it in any way they wished.

Christina deliberately chose to invite personal tributes to be made rather than mass orders so that each bonnet is a testament to the individuality of the lass for whom it is created. Each bonnet will carry the name of one of the women convicts.

She chose to use a servant's bonnet for the template bonnet as many convict women were assigned to work amongst the community in private residences as domestic help. The choice of white or cream cloth is also important. From a distance the bonnet Memorial will give the impression that all the bonnets are identical. On closer inspection every bonnet will be different.

Trish Skehan has been working to produce bonnets as well as encouraging others to do so. These bonnets will be on display at the museum, together with the personal stories of some of the women. For a gold coin donation you can sponsor one of these bonnets and have your name added to the cloth.

Please come and see the display.

From the Secretary's Desk

WELCOME to our two newest members - Josef Oktalowicz from Croydon and John Watson from Great Keppel Island.

WORKING BEES: The next one is on **Saturday, 13th October** Please make a note in your diary now.

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?

POSSIBLE DISPLAYS FOR 2013:

"Fun and Games for Young and Old" - old fashioned games. Some that children, or adults, can play.

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

"Circuses: How things have changed"

"Australian Inventions"

Do you have any ideas for other displays? Please come along to our Museum Committee Meetings or just phone or send an email.

Some of the above displays will need research. We know that many of our members are unable to help with physical work but perhaps some of you may be able to volunteer to carry out some research for these if these go ahead.

MUSEUM COMMITTEE: The next meeting of this Committee will be on Wednesday, 3rd October at 10:00 am. Everyone welcome. The business for the day will be final planning of our Nursery Rhyme display.

Working Bees

There are still many boxes of artefacts to be gone through.

We particularly need to see what we have in our collection to support our Nursery Rhyme Display which will be on from December to February.

The next working bee will be on **Saturday, 13th October, 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.

