



# “Nurungi”

Remembered

Official Newsletter of the City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

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**No.200**

**APRIL, 2013**

## *The Origins of North Strathfield Station*

The struggle for a station at North Strathfield was very much a people's struggle. In the early 1900s there had been a general acknowledgment of the need for a station between Strathfield and Concord West by the NSW Railway Commissioners, but an alleged shortage of money - the cost was reckoned to be about £4000 - kept the proposal in limbo for nearly ten years.

A considerable volume of correspondence flowed between Concord Council and the Commissioner on the matter, until there was a promise in 1911 that a station would be built. In fact, as early as 1908 a local Raine and Home real estate map (held by our museum) designated an area on the west side of Queen Street as the 'site for future railway platform'. Subsequent real estate maps of 1912 and 1913 refer to the proposed station at North Strathfield, the earlier one going so far as to name it Waratah Station.

With such a prospect in mind there was a marked increase in building along Queen Street and Wellbank Street (or Alva Street, as the western end of Wellbank was known then). This, of course, had a flow-on effect to the population density of the area, and an increase in the number of people having to walk to Concord West or Homebush Station, until the proposed station was built.

By 1915 the station had still not been started. This led to an ordinary citizen of Concord, Mr. H.J. Jaffray, calling an action meeting at his home to put greater pressure on the authorities. Twelve people attended the initial meeting on 22 September 1915.

As convenor, Mr. Jaffray made a brief statement on the object of the meeting, which was to take immediate action and form a citizens' committee, consisting of residents and other parties, with a view to the earliest possible construction of a station. The committee was to be called the Concord New Station Committee, consisting of all those present, with the power to co-opt further members as it saw fit. Jaffray was elected chairman, Mr. J. Lynch, treasurer, and Mr. A.B. Travers, secretary (replaced by Mr. S.V. Larkin, 6

October 1915). Meetings were to be held once a week for ten weeks, and subsequently once a month, at Jaffray's house ('Ronston') in Nelson Street on account of lack of funds to hire an alternative meeting place.

An early spectacular demonstration of the earnestness of the campaign was a torchlight procession at 7.45 p.m., Monday 29 November 1915. Headed by bands, including the Burwood Kilties Band and the Mortlake Brass Band, the procession marched from Strathfield Station to Waratah Street, where a well-attended public meeting in favour of the proposed station was held. Alderman Charles Savage, the mayor of Concord, presided and addresses were delivered by Mr. G.A. Richards, M.L.A. (who died a few days later), and other prominent local residents.

The publicity succeeded in obtaining the use of the Concord Picture Palace on Parramatta Road for a follow-up meeting open to members and the general public. This meeting was presided over by Mr. Jaffray. Among the items discussed was the support given to the project by a Mr. J.K. Greig 'as a very warm friend and adviser' (at the meeting of 16 November Mr. Greig donated ten guineas to cover expenses related to the demonstration of 29 November).

It was decided that the names of owners of vacant lots in the vicinity of the proposed station be obtained from Concord Council for the purpose of increasing the number of signatures to yet another petition. Signatures were also to be sought from employees in local industries, such as Arnotts, Westinghouse Brake & Signal Co., and James Martin & Co. The final petition was used to show that more than one thousand adults would use the station on a regular basis.

## **DIARY DATES**

**APRIL 6th:** DVD full length movie - "Codgers" (details back page).  
Bookings essential.

**MAY 4th:** Mark St Leon, "Circus: The Australian Story"

**JUNE 1st:** Mark Dunn, "Henri L'Estrange, the Australian Blondin who walked across Middle Harbour"

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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  
or email  
[museum@canadabayheritage.asn.au](mailto:museum@canadabayheritage.asn.au)

### **STEERING COMMITTEE**

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Following this a deputation consisting of the mayor and aldermen of Concord and residents of the district was introduced to the Chief Commissioner for Railways (Mr. Harper) by Mr. G.A. Richards M.L.A. in order to push the claim for the long-promised railway station at North Strathfield.

Before any representations could be made, however, the Chief Commissioner anticipated the request and stated that construction would commence before the end of the current financial year (30 June 1916). In the course of these proceedings a few small doubts were raised about the constitutionality of the Committee. Alderman Cumming, for example, pointed out that the Committee was not working according to a royal charter or an act of Parliament but, like the deputies of the third estate taking the Tennis Court Oath of 1789, was a self-constituted body. Moreover, rather than being elected by a majority of the residents, the Committee was composed, for the most part, of the very residents themselves. Not all residents, of course, had joined but membership remained open to any person who wished to support the cause.

Work began in 1916 and progressed with very few interruptions throughout 1917. The principal one was the delay caused by the need to remove a 30-inch water main, over which there seems to have been a certain lack of communication between the Railways Commission and the Water and Sewerage Board.

Towards the middle of 1918 there remained the problem of choosing a permanent name for the new station and the form of celebration to take place on its completion. As to the choice of names - Concord, Strathfield North, North Strathfield, and Wellbank - North Strathfield was preferred on the grounds that it described most accurately the locality. The main objection to this name came from both the Railway Commissioner and Strathfield Council because of the possibility of confusion

with the main station (Evening News, 11.9.16). What seems more strange is that the more colourful 'Waratah Station' proposal of 1912 seems to have been abandoned altogether.

The Ladies' Committee, which had for some time been involved in raising money for the cause, decided to hold a bazaar, whose profits would go to the Concord Soldiers Aid Association. The site of the bazaar was to be the vacant land at the corner of Queen and Waratah Streets, where the first demonstration in 1915 had been held.

The Commissioner was consulted on the probable date of completion of works, Mr. Bridekirke, the headmaster of Yaralla Public School (now North Strathfield Public School) gave permission for meetings to be held on the school premises, and the Repatriation Department gave permission to hold the bazaar for the Soldiers Aid provided that there were no raffles, 'chocolate wheels' or other gambling devices.

At last the station was opened 15 June 1918. Mr. R.B. Orchard, M.P., was invited to open the bazaar, but declined. The Committee's second nomination was Miss Eadith Walker, who consented and not only made a donation of £25 but also 'spent money generously' at the Bazaar (Burwood Courier, 22 June 1918). The 33rd and final meeting of the now renamed North Strathfield New Station Committee was held at Yaralla Public School 18 July 1918, its job well done, in order to wind up its affairs. Sadly the minutes of this final meeting did not make it to the minute book.

*[This account is based primarily on notes prepared by Ron Ferguson for the former Concord Historical Society. Our thanks are extended to Ron for this contribution to the history of Concord. The Concord Heritage Society also possesses the Minute Books of the New Station Committee, together with a number of press clippings, financial accounts relating to its operation, and a souvenir postcard commemorating the opening of the station 15 June 1918.]*

John Walmsley,  
(former Chair Archives & Local History Committee)

## Oh for the Good Old Days??

Years ago an Alabama grandmother gave the new bride the following recipe: This is an exact copy as written and found in an old scrapbook - with spelling errors and all . . .

### WASHING CLOTHES

Build fire in backyard to heat kettle of rain water.

Set tubs so smoke wont blow in eyes if wind is pert.

Shave one hole cake of lie soap in boilin water.

Sort things, make 3 piles - 1 pile white, 1 pile colored, 1 pile work britches and rags.

To make starch, stir flour in cool water to smooth, then thin down with boiling water.

Take white things, rub dirty spots on board, scrub hard, and boil, then rub colored don't boil just wrench\* and starch.

Take things out of kettle with broom stick handle, then wrench, and starch.

Hang old rags on fence

Spread tea towels on grass.

Pore wrench water in flower bed.

Scrub porch with hot soapy water.

Turn tubs upside down.

Go put on clean dress, smooth hair with hair combs.

Brew cup of tea, sit and rock a spell and count your blessings.

*\*For non-Southerners, "wrench" means "rinse".*

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Next time when you think things are bleak, read it again, kiss that washing machine and dryer, and give thanks.

First thing each morning you should run and hug your washer and dryer, also your toilet - those two-holers used to get mighty cold!

## Do You Know?

The most prized symbol of democracy, the secret ballot box, was pioneered in Victoria in 1856.

Ayers Rock is almost at the centre of the Australian continent.

The highest Australian recorded temperature was at Cloncurry, in Queensland, on January 16, 1889. It was 53.1 deg.C.

Australia is the world's largest inhabited island and the smallest continent. But it is the largest continent occupied by one nation.

Australia is one of the more ancient land masses in the world. It has been free of major mountain building activities for the past 80-90 million years. This makes it the most stable land mass in the world.

The world's longest straight stretch of railway (478.4 km) is between the towns of Nurina and Ooldia in Western Australia.

The longest coral reef in the world (extending over 2012 km) is the Great Barrier Reef

There isn't any part of Australia more than 1000 km from the sea



## The Mayonnaise Jar

When things in your life seem almost too much to handle; when twenty-four hours in a day is not enough; remember the mayonnaise jar and two cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous "Yes".

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar, effectively filling the space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now", said the professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognise that this jar represents your life.

The golf balls are the important things – God, family, Church, children, health, friends and favourite possessions—things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, house and car. The sand is everything else — the small stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. So, pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Take care of the golf balls first — the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."

Contributed by John Eppel

(From Epping RSL Sub-Branch  
(Returned and Services League of Australia) - January-March 2013 issue

## To Honour Seniors' Week

### My Favourite Things

Botox and nose drops and needles  
for knitting,  
Walkers and handrails and new  
dental fittings,  
Bundles of magazines tied up in  
string,  
These are a few of my favourite  
things.

Cadillacs and cataracts, hearing  
aids and glasses,  
Polident, Fixodent and false teeth in  
glasses,  
Pacemakers, golf carts and porches  
with swings,  
These are a few of my favourite  
things.

When the pipes leak, When the  
bones creak,  
When the knees go bad,  
I simply remember my favourite  
things,  
And then I don't feel so bad.

Hot tea and crumpets and corn pads  
for bunions,  
No spicy hot food or food cooked  
with onions,  
Bathrobes and heating pads and hot  
meals they bring,  
These are a few of my favourite  
things.

Back pain, confused brains and no  
need for sinnin',  
Thin bones and fractures and hair  
that is thinnin',  
And we won't mention our short  
shrunken frames,  
When we remember our favourite  
things.

When the joints ache, When the  
hips break,  
When the eyes grow dim,  
Then I remember the great life I've  
had,  
And then I don't feel so bad.

## In Loving Memory of Bill Enright

Bill Enright, known as "Old Bill", and his brother Mick lived in Bent Street, Concord and every day they would walk to their paddock at the top of Ellis Street, Concord, where they kept their horses. One of their foals was delivered by Dr. Macarthy and was subsequently named "Dr Mac". They also took care of all the horses from the dairy in North Strathfield.

They were well known in the area for the many race horses and trotters they owned. One of their most famous horses was "Hondo Grattan"

In Flemington there were Horse Sales, I don't know how often they were on, but I do remember going to them. Bill would ride his horse up Correys Ave to go there.

From when I was a very little girl I would love to watch Bill ride up Correy's Avenue and past our house. Whenever I heard horses going up the street I would rush to the gate and wave to him. I did this from when I was very small. He usually had a few dogs with him.

The brothers were the local Blacksmiths and made the horse shoes from scratch. I remember turning the handle to keep the fire going to heat the metal. My favourite pastime was to watch Bill shoe the horses.

Bill was a wonderful, patient, very gentle man who taught me to ride horses when I was very young. I was told that during the Depression and war years the brothers often gave food parcels to needy people

When I was about 14 years old I was able to have my own horse and Bill came with me when I bought him.

A lot of my friends from Concord also had horses in those days, the 1940's and 50's. We all met at Bill's and we'd then ride all around Concord, Mortlake, Burwood Road down towards the water and Cabarita. Also to Five Dock and Abbotsford. Sometimes we caught the punt across to Putney with our horses and rode in the park there. We would ride after school and every weekend

There was lots of open space in those days in Concord, I remember when the housing commission came to Concord.

I have wonderful memories and adored Bill - he was so kind and gentle.

Janette Mitchell

(Ed: This is one of the entries we received for our current "Faces in the Street". He sounds such an interesting man I wonder if anyone can add to this story.)



Hondo Grattan



## The Electorate formerly known as Lowe

*Electorate's namesake stirred political pot on both sides of the world.*

Robert Lowe, the man who gave his name to the electorate, was a notorious political renegade.

But it didn't stop him having a successful political career both in Australia and in England.

Born in England in 1811 the son of a country cleric, he studied law and was admitted to the Bar in 1842.

Doctors told Lowe, an albino, he faced blindness within a few years because of his genetic disorder.

The news prompted him to travel to Australia, renowned for its good light.

In the beginning, the harsh Australian light hurt his sensitive eyes so badly he could hardly open them.

Gradually his eyes adapted. Before long he could see better than ever, although he needed to wear dark glasses outdoors. The Governor at the time, Sir George Gipps, appointed Lowe, then a practising lawyer, to a seat on the colony's Legislative Council.

Within months of his appointment, Lowe started attacking every measure proposed by Gipps and his government.

Whatever Gipps wanted, Lowe found some way of defeating it.

Frustrated by his former ally, Gipps forced Lowe's resignation.

Lowe, however, was soon back in Parliament, this time in the Lower House as the member for a south coast seat and an ally of the pastoralists.

The pastoralists and squatters soon learned Lowe was not a steadfast ally - before long he turned against them too.

When he saw squatters were gradually winning control of the vast wastelands, he attacked them, likening them to vultures waiting to feast on public land.

Later, Lowe was invited by citizens to stand for the City of Sydney on a platform opposing British Government plans to reintroduce convict transportation.

Lowe nearly defeated long standing member William Charles Wentworth in an election in 1948.

When the British Government announced a plan to resume transportation would not proceed, Lowe's popularity soared.

In 1848, a convict ship dropped anchor outside the heads.

Lowe addressed a rally of protestors which had gathered at Circular Quay and damned the British Government for "polluting our beautiful waters" and attempting to impose a "degrading system of slavery on this colony".

The public protest forced the prison ship to return to England.

A few months later, Lowe also returned to England and launched a career in British politics.

His opposition to universal suffrage brought down the Liberal Government of which he was a member.

In 1868, he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer, elevated to the peerage as Viscount Sherbrooke in 1880, and died 1892.

*A birth certificate shows you were born.*

*A death certificate shows you have died.*

*A photo album shows you have lived.*



Information is wanted about the property at 19 Gallipoli Street, Concord - particularly Previous Owners, Notable Events, Previous Land Use. Can anyone help? If so, contact 9744-8528.

## YOU'RE Invited

The Embroiderers Guild of NSW invites you to Devonshire & Talk at the Concord Community Centre, 1a Gipps Street, Concord on Thursday, 18th April, 1:30 to 4:00 pm.

Devonshire Tea - bottomless cups of freshly brewed tea or coffee.

Talk: The History of Afternoon Tea - "Australiana" embroidered Tea Textiles and the Bushells Tea Factory. Display of vintage linen items, etc.

Cost: \$25 a head. Lucky door prizes RSVP by 14th March to 9743-2501

Please bring any of your embroidered heirlooms along to find out about their origin and care if you wish.

## From the Secretary's Desk

**WELCOME** to our newest members: Robyn Conroy and Katina Gallen from Concord and Margaret Barbalet from Drummoyne. We look forward to getting to know you better soon.

**RAFFLE TICKETS:** We had to postpone the drawing of our raffle as many of the books had not been returned. We will now draw it on the 1st Saturday in April.

All money, butts or unsold tickets need to be returned to the Society **IMMEDIATELY**. As a registered charity we are required to account for all tickets.

**CODGERS:** This movie will be our "Guest Speaker" for the month of April. There has been a lot of interest in it and we are almost booked out. If you haven't booked, please get in touch as soon as possible or risk missing out.

**SINCERE THANKS** to Trish Skehan for stepping in as our guest speaker last month when our expected speaker could not attend.

### MEMBER RECORD / SKILLS AUDIT.

These were sent to you in the last Nurungi. If you have not yet done so could you please complete and return the form as soon as possible so that we can make sure all our records are up to date.

## I Shall Remember

*I shall remember long after this madness  
has passed away,  
The lonely call of bugles by night and day;  
The sentry's ringing challenge born on  
midnight blast,  
These things I will remember long after  
war has passed.  
I shall remember a landscape in the mist  
of early dawn  
Tree by tree emerging as the winter day is  
born.  
I shall always remember the silence and  
the stars,  
And the beauty that outlasts the storm of a  
thousand wars.  
But the heartache that knows no balm, the  
fear and the fret,  
and the sorrow of taking in these things -  
pray God, I'll forget (Unknown Author)*

## Raffle Tickets

**Have you returned your book of tickets?**

**We need all butts, money or unsold tickets back urgently.**