



“Nurungi”

Remembered

Official Newsletter of the City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

email: heritage@canadabayheritage.asn.au

www.canadabayheritage.asn.au

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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

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Growing up in Concord West

Memories of Graeme Senior by his mate John Watson

Graeme and I met by accident some time in 1950. I would like to think it was an accident: he hit me across the back of the head with a baseball, or softball, bat in the school grounds. From that moment on we became firm friends, inseparable for many, many years.

That meeting was at Concord West primary School in Sydney. We were both born in 1945. We would have both been five years old. Graeme liked to remind me that he was older than me. He was born in March, I think the 17th, while I was born much later on May 27. Seniority is important, especially to a Senior!

We played cricket and football together in the school's teams that played other schools. Graeme was a natural sportsman despite wearing those horrible round glasses that were common in the 1950s. I should say he "didn't wear" those glasses. I think his Mum and Dad (Alf and Jean, always called Mr and Mrs Senior by me as was done in those days) thought he was wearing them but they only came out on rare occasions. His natural ability was all the better when you think he must have seen oncoming cricket balls as blurs until the last moment when he made the decision as to which way to hit it ... and he certainly could hit the ball.

My best memories of school days are of Graeme playing rugby league at St Luke's oval, or the playing field nearby. Our 4th class teacher Mr O'Brien was the coach, a teacher who rode on the bus with us to these games. We used to get changed in the open using bench seats meant for spectators. We pulled on Green footy jerseys with a deep, gold vee, the same as the Australian players wore. We had green and gold socks and black, polished boots with long white laces. There is nothing like the feeling of walking to the playing field in an outfit like this with the metal sprigs on your boots crunching on the concrete.

Graeme was fullback and probably captain. He had a football brain, as they are called today. I was five-eighth and Graeme would appear suddenly behind

the scrum passing out to me and moments later he would be in the back line taking the ball from the inside centre and heading off for a run calling for back-up. As I write I can see him as clearly now as he was on the field. The goal posts are behind him; he moves quickly to the back of the scrum as I wave my right arm telling the backs to line out to the right. I can see him pounce on the ball and whip it to me. He still looks like a footballer.

When we were nine or 10 we decided one school holiday to ride our scooters from Concord West, where we both lived (Graeme in Harrison Avenue, 17, I think, and me at 22 Killoola Street) to Parramatta, about 10 miles away (that's 16km in today's measure.) Looking back it was a hell of a feat. I had a pump-up tired Speedwell scooter and Graeme rode a red Cyclops solid-tyre scooter. We had to scooter along Concord Road to Ryde Bridge through a suburb called Rhodes then up Ryde Hill (that was tough for cars in those days) then turn left along Victoria Road to the main street of Parramatta. We did not have a haversack with any supplies. We did not carry water and I can't remember either of us ever wearing hats.

Aunty Ned greeted us at the front door and gave us soft drinks and moist, dark chocolate cake, her specialty. Then we rode home, only this time via Carlingford, although I don't remember seeing Mrs Senior at her shop. We did pass The King's School grounds. We rode home and no one made even the slightest fuss about it. That was how life was in the 1950s. Kids were naturally fit. We rode scooters, walked, graduated to bicycles, walked some more and ran everywhere.

DIARY DATES

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

MAY 11th: Power Point Presentation of photographs through the ages at Concord Library at 2:00 pm.

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

When we were 11, going on 12, we decided to earn a quid mowing lawns. Graeme pushed his father's electric blue cylinder mower with front grass catcher and I pushed a red and green Lawn King rotary mower (no, not a Victa, they hadn't yet been invented by fellow Concord resident Victor Richardson but he would have been close to becoming a household name.) We charged 10 bob a lawn. Graeme mowed the backyard and I mowed the front and out into the street. The first lawn we did was for an older couple about three houses from our school on Concord Road. We picked up the ten bob (a dollar today), pushed our mowers to the Shell garage nearly opposite the school, filled our mower tins with two stroke fuel then called in at Mrs Janus' delicatessen (with the word Delicattessen misspelled on the front window in blue) where we had chocolate milk shakes ... and we still had money in our pockets.

We spent that Christmas holidays mowing and getting our prices up to 15 bob in some of the bigger yards. In those days it wasn't summer holidays or vacation; it was the Christmas holidays, right through until near the end of January when we went back to school. I don't recall any Australia Day, either.

Probably the same holiday we went to Massey Park Golf Club for our first game. We hired clubs, bought balls and tees (see what you can do when you mow lawns) and hit off at the first. We both broke 100 for the 18 holes and wondered what was the fuss about the game. Years later, Graeme came to visit and we went out to the Iwasaki Resort for the weekend. We played 36 holes on two international standard courses and hardly lost a ball. I was not invited to play in the U.S. Masters but I would not have been surprised if Graeme was!

About the time the local Odeon picture theatre closed because of television, we were maybe 14 or 15. Graeme and I used to look at a small billboard at the bus stop in Hospital Road opposite the Repat Hospital to see what shows were going to be on. The billboard stayed there, with its final posters still on display, for ages, years even, after the theatre closed. The building was empty and a sad reminder of fun times.

Then it was reopened as a squash centre with seven or eight courts. Graeme and I took to squash from the start. We joined the club and used to take over one court on Saturday mornings for two and a half hours, not stopping even for water. It was game

after game after game and we usually ended the session level pegging in wins and losses. They were hard-fought games often making it to eight-all and then going on to a score of 10. One day one of us clipped the other's ear starting a constant blood flow we didn't think was worthwhile stopping for. The owner of the courts was less impressed with spatters of blood up the white walls and over the polished timber floors. We got rags and helped clean up! By the way, both of us had sticky-outy ears as was, or seemed to be, normal in the '50s and that's why I can't remember who got clipped.

When we left the courts each Saturday in summer we went our different ways. Graeme went first to VJ (Vaucluse Junior) sailing, then Skates and I went to cricket. Graeme, as usual, was good at sailing, as with every sport. He would have been among the first to sail Skates at Concord-Rhodes Sailing Club, as it was then called, from the clubhouse next to Ryde Bridge, across the Parramatta River from Halvorsen's boat shed. He sailed in the NSW Championships and later the Australia Championships.

One Saturday night we met after our respective sports outings with news of something fantastic. I was an opening bowler and just as I was running in to bowl at St Luke's I felt a huge gust of wind carry me along and as I let go of the ball it screamed down the pitch, bounced, flew over the batsman and the wicket keeper, bounced once then crossed the boundary for four byes. Nothing could top that story!

Graeme could! He and the rest of the CRSC fleet had been racing on the river when obviously this same gust drove one sailing boat under a pier bringing down its mast and sails; the rest of the fleet was knocked over and one turned turtle with its mast sticking in the bottom of the river until the skipper swam down, put his feet on the river bottom and pulled the mast out of the mud. I think Graeme was one whose boat was knocked down. His storytelling was detailed but there was no heroic role for Graeme. He did not exaggerate anything to put himself above others. He just told about the wind and compared it with what happened to me at cricket.

Graeme was a NSW representative in the Australian Skate championships in Western Australia, sailed at Nedlands Sailing Club. His for'ard hand was "Dutchy" Holland (every Holland was "Dutchy" in those days) and I drove there with them in Graeme's new 1964 Morris Major Elite. How cool was that? A Morris Major Elite. It had a 1600cc

crossflow head, the same as the MGA of the day. No one knew what a crossflow head was but it sounded good. I drove us off the road at Daretown near the NSW- Victoria-South Australian border and Graeme, asleep across the back seat, reached up and pulled the door shut as we clipped a guide post. He was not amused at the damage but we drove on. I remember we came to a sign post that said Adelaide was, I think, 75 miles at right angles to where we were heading. We all decided we should see Adelaide and I drove there, arriving about 7pm on a Sunday. Nothing was alive, awake, stirring. If a few newspaper pages had been blowing in the gutter it would have been a film set for some end-of-world movie. We backtracked to the turn-off without even getting a cup of tea or a Coke. We reached Ceduna, filled up and remarked to the garage bloke that the NRMA said we faced 75 miles of dirt road on the Nullarbor but we heard it could be less because it was being sealed. He laughed and told us there was 1700 miles of dirt road ahead. There was! I remember driving looking into the sun as it sunk in the west and seeing the sun come up in the rear vision mirror the next morning!

In Perth, after two days and three nights on the road driving non-stop, Graeme was billeted with the Court family. Richard later became W.A. Premier. We had a great time. Graeme lost his rudder in the Invitation, or the first race that did not count for points, then lost various bits of gear as the titles progressed. I think he had a fourth. We found fish shops there served "chicken and chips" as well as fish and chips. We came home partly on the train. The car had been repaired at Winterbottom Motors in Perth and Graeme's father paid our fares on the train and for the car to be shipped across the Nullarbor. We drove to Kalgoorlie, put the car on the train and forgot to get our wallets out of the glovebox! The pub stood us for meals and accommodation until we picked up the car at Ceduna.

(to be continued)

Congratulations to the winners of our Nursery Rhyme Raffle -

- 1st prize - a cot quilt donated by Stitching Hearts - Graham Packett
- 2nd prize - two framed sketches of Yaralla estate donated by Terry Robinson - John & Suzy Watson
- 3rd prize - an embroidered cushion donated by Beryl Robinson - D. Hatter

In the Beginning - the Circus in Australia

In June 1829 Governor Darling proclaimed the swampy ground between the southern ends of George and Castlereagh Streets as Sydney's cattle market. Other produce was traded and the area was soon dubbed the Haymarket.

By 1852 a 10-acre section on the south side of the Haymarket, known as the Police Paddock, was designated "a reserve for public recreation", the Haymarket Reserve.

The Reserve was occupied on Saturdays by merry-go-roundsmen, swing boats, corn-curiers, organ-grinders and "hurly-burly" tent Showmen.

In 1865 a meeting of local residents urged the Sydney City Council to expedite "long promised improvements" to the area. As a result, the original Belmore Markets were opened in 1869 on the eastern portion of the Haymarket, the area bounded by Pitt, Hay, Castlereagh and Campbell Streets. The Reserve was officially designated "Belmore Park" but known by its former soubriquet for some time to come. A "dwarf" stone wall with iron rails was erected around its perimeter as were massive stone gates but little else was done to improve the "park", which remained messy, poorly drained and dimly lit.

The Haymarket area had served as one of Sydney's major locations for circus entertainments as far back as 1849 when the equestrian Golding Ashton (1820-89), the founder of Ashton's Circus, gave open-air exhibitions in a ring "where Sydney Central Station now stands". By 1873 the Haymarket Reserve was Sydney's principal circus location.

But it was not Sydney's first.



To hear more of the history of the Circus come to our meeting on Saturday, 4th May when Mark St Leon will be talking about "Circus: The Australian Story".

*Do not dwell in the past,
do not dream of the
future, concentrate the
mind on the present
moment.* **Buddha**

John Flavelle

Although he trained as an optician, John Flavelle apparently had the aptitude to earn his living as a photographer, watchmaker, jeweller and general importer. Flavelle appears to have continued working until well into his seventies in his jewellery business, which survived him in the care of his nephews.

A professional photographer, optician and jeweller, he came from Dublin to New South Wales apparently as a trained optician. He accompanied **George Baron Goodman** to Van Diemen's Land in 1842-44 as photographic assistant. Purchasing a camera and photographic chemicals from Goodman, Flavelle opened his own daguerreotype portrait studio in St John Street, Launceston, after Goodman left the island, but this seems to have ceased operations a few weeks later when he ran out of chemicals and/or plates.

Flavelle returned to Sydney, arriving in the brig *William* on 17 May 1844. By 1846, in partnership with Samuel Brush, he was an optician at King Street, transferring to George Street about the middle of 1848. The partnership was dissolved in 1850 and Flavelle set up as Flavelle Brothers at George Street, the other half of the partnership being his elder brother Henry, who became the firm's London supplier.

John Flavelle was now primarily a jeweller, but he also worked as a watchmaker and general supplier, importing photographic apparatus, dental equipment and mathematical instruments, as well as watches, jewellery and silver. Both imported and local stereoscopic views (with viewers) were sold in the shop, but Flavelle is not known to have continued to practise photography himself. Instead, the firm occasionally made its own plate, presentation silver and jewellery: a few locally-made pieces survive.

Flavelle retired from the business in 1891. He died in June 1899 at his home, Wellbank (site of the Concord Library), in the Sydney suburb of Concord. Continued by his nephews Henry and William, the Flavelle jewellery firm survived (with various branches and name variations) until after the first World War.

When the first elections for the new Concord Municipality were held in 1883 John Flavelle was the returning officer.

The site of the Flavelle home on Wellbank Street was part of the land

(continued over)

Oh! How Things Have Changed

A Tale of Two Cities Suburbs

Our Society will be putting on a **PowerPoint Presentation of Photographs Through the Ages**

showing some of the changes that have occurred in Concord and Drummoyne over the years.

This will be held at

Concord Library

on

Saturday, 11th May at 2:00 pm

The suburbs of Concord and Drummoyne were amongst the earliest areas settled and over the years both have seen many changes - some for better, some debatable. Changes are inevitable but sometimes it means the loss of something that is precious to our heritage. Come and judge for yourself.

If you have any old photographs you would allow us to copy, please bring them with you. This will help us preserve some of our history at the museum, even if it's only on paper.



*Cabarita Baths
from 1923, through 1937 to 2009*

Concord Library Author Talks

Who Killed Dr Bogle and Mrs. Chandler

On New Year's Day, 1963, the half-naked bodies of physicist Dr Gilbert Bogle and his lover, Mrs. Margaret Chandler, were found beside the Lane Cove River, with no clue as to how they died. In his book **Peter Butt** gives the most up-to-date, detailed account of the case so far, which he presented on ABC TV in the highest-rating documentary in the broadcaster's 50-year history.

His ground-breaking revelations include details such as:

- * Why the original investigation and Coronial Inquest failed the victims
- * The suppression of evidence concerning the private lives of Dr Bogle and Mrs. Chandler
- * The mysterious contents of an FBI file on the case.

Wed., 8th May at 6:30 for 7:00

Woollarawarre Bennelong

This year marks the 200th anniversary of the death of Woollarawarre Bennelong. He was of the Wangal clan, whose lands included present-day Canada Bay.

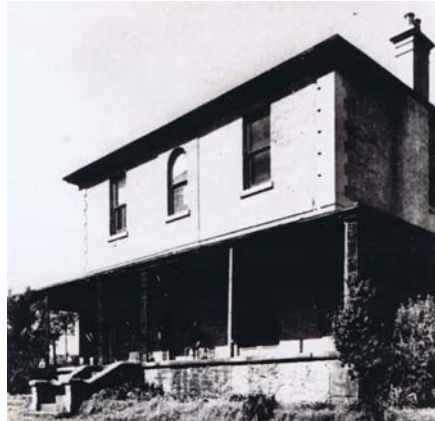
Dr. Keith Vincent Smith, will be giving a talk on Woollarawarre Bennelong, charting his tumultuous life from his birth in 1764 in our area to his death at Walumetta (Kissing Point) in 1813. There is much to tell in between; his friendship with Governor Arthur Phillip, his voyage to England to meet King George III and the controversy of his life after his return.

Wed. 10th July at 7:00 pm

Both these talks will be at the Concord Library and are FREE.

Booking are essential - 8811-6200

which had earlier been resumed by the NSW Housing Commission. A section had been reserved to be used by Council for public purposes and they decided to use it for the new Council Chambers. When it resumed the land, the Housing Commission had agreed not to demolish Wellbank, the Flavelle's old home, as long as two elderly sisters, the Misses Flavelle, resided there. After their death the Council took over the land, demolished the home and built the Council Chambers.



"Wellbank" the home of the Flavells

Ed: We are trying to find out more information on the Flavells. Do you know anyone who might be able to help us? Do you have any memories of the Flavelle sisters or the home. Do you have any photographs?

Volunteers Week

To our wonderful volunteers and new members

you are invited to attend a

Special Afternoon Tea

on

Saturday, 18th May at 2:00 pm

at our Museum

This is to welcome you to our Society and to show our appreciation for all you do.

RSVP 9744-8528,
15th May

From the Secretary's Desk

RAFFLE TICKETS: Thank you to all our members who supported our raffle. It was a great success and helped to cover the costs of putting on the Nursery Rhyme display.

CODGERS, the movie: This movie was a great success - over 50 people attending. Some have asked if we would put it on again as they enjoyed it so much. Watch for a date.

MEMBER RECORD / SKILLS AUDIT. So far we have received very few of these forms back. Even if you have no skills to offer to our Society we would still like the section asking for your details so we can make sure all our records are up to date.

MUSEUMS & GALLERIES NSW: Recently Phoebe Arthur, together with Catherine and Tamara, visited us to see our Nursery Rhyme display and were *"really impressed by the fabulous job you have done in putting together the displays to tell Concord's unique stories. Definitely a great example for other volunteer museums to follow"*.

Our special thanks to our wonderful volunteers who worked hard on this project.

MODEL OF THE MORTLAKE PUNT: We have heard from Council that this is well on its way to being fully restored and, on completion, will be presented to our museum. What a wonderful exhibit for the children!

HOW THINGS HAVE CHANGED: We recently presented this at the Five Dock Library and, although we didn't have as many people as we had hoped, those who came thoroughly enjoyed it. Thanks to those who came along to assist: Betty R, Lorraine, Bethany, Harry, Betty F and Trish.

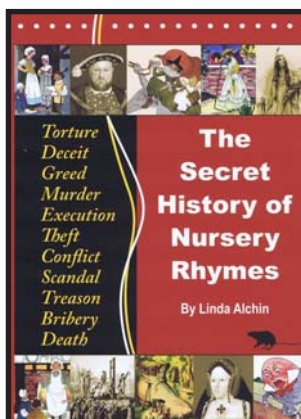
We are now putting this on again at the Concord Library and if you can come along to assist us we would be most grateful. Just give me a call.

OUR NEW DISPLAY is called "Getting Ready for the Ball". Please drop by and have a look.

Welcome

to the following new members:

Yvonne Davidson, Rodd Point; Frances Sharman, Concord West; Shirley Gibbs, Croydon Park, Anne Coates, Glebe; and Sally Gunn, Concord West. We look forward to getting to know you in the coming month.



This book, on which we based our Secret History of Nursery Rhymes display, proved a great seller during that time.

However, we are still getting calls from people wanting to buy it so we have ordered another 20 of them and these will be at the museum.

We all know the story behind *Ring-a-ring a Rosie*, but how many others do we know?

People could be punished severely for talking about some of the events of the times so the stories were put together as simple, innocent seeming rhymes.

COST: \$20.00 + postage; or pick up at Museum