



# “Nurungi” (Remembered)

Official Newsletter of the City of Canada Bay Heritage Society  
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[www.canadabayheritage.asn.au](http://www.canadabayheritage.asn.au)

EDITOR  
LOIS MICHEL  
9744-8528

**No.204**

**AUGUST, 2013**

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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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## Memories of my Youth

I was born in 1941 at Carinya Hospital on Concord Road, about a block north of Holy Trinity Church near the then Methodist Church. The hospital is no longer there but the building still exists. My parents lived in Mackenzie Street from the time of their marriage in 1938. The house was originally purchased by my grandmother (a widow) in about 1926 when she moved from Queensland with her teenage sons. She remarried about 8 years later and the house was let until my parents moved in.

During my teenage years I went to ball-room dancing lessons held by Ed and Ol Cootes on Concord Road near Warbrick Park. They had a big shed out the back where these lessons were held. We paid two shillings at the end of the evening, when we would shake Mrs. Cootes' hand and put our money in the box near the door. The shed still appears to be at the back of the property. The music was provided by a record player and the girls would sit around the sides of the hall and the boys would have to ask them for a dance. One thing that the girls hated was the progressive barn dance and we would end up having to dance with Mr. Cootes.

Going back a bit, during the war years there was a little corner shop run by Mrs. Wall on the corner of Hillier and Consett Streets. The front room was like a shopfront – this was later converted back to be a regular house. There was also a lady hairdresser, Cathy Sherwood, working from her home on the corner of Yaralla and Mackenzie Streets.

My grandmother owned a car and it was driven by my father and we would go for a drive over the Ryde Bridge to collect eggs from a chicken farm owned by Mr. Rowley. It was somewhere off Victoria Road past Cuthbert's Nursery. It was from this same farm that our Christmas chicken was bought.

As children we would go to the swamp areas across from the railway lines (western side) and collect tadpoles. There were a couple of radio masts there and nothing much else. The road bridge over the railway line just north of North Strathfield station was known as the cattle bridge,

possibly because the cattle went across there to the abattoirs. Later I was to learn to drive the area we called the Brickworks Road. Mum would take the car across and try to teach me to drive – it was rather good with no other cars around. I eventually got my drivers licence from Five Dock Police Station, though going around that area now I wonder where I was taken for a hill start.

I have a photo from the 1950s of the Fruit Shop on the corner of Clermont Avenue and Concord Road, run by Tony & Joe Milano. The shop next door was a haberdashery store called



“Paulines”. Other memories are of shopping for meat at Paynes Butchery near Wellbank Street, the bootmaker Mr. Pook on Concord Road, near Moran & Cato the grocery store. The Post Office ladies were Mrs. Pook and Mrs. McQuilken in the middle block whilst the Ham and Beef (delicatessen) was in the first block near Mr. Butt the jeweller. There was Thompson's Milk Shop which may have been what I remember as the Ham & Beef Shop. There was home delivery of milk from a horse and cart into billy cans left on the door step, and bread was delivered in the same way. Mr. Jones, the ice-man, delivered large blocks of

## DIARY DATES

**AUGUST 3 - 2:00pm:** Ralph Hawkins, “Black-mailing the Governor: Australia's First Successful Strike”

**AUGUST 3 - 3:30 pm:** Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers

**SEPTEMBER 7 - 2:00 pm:** Leonard Werner, “Scoundrels and Scalliwags of the Colony”

**OCTOBER 5: TO BE ADVISED**

ice for home Ice Chests to keep food from spoiling.

One shouldn't forget Mr. Mitchell, the dentist on the corner of Wellbank Street and Concord Roads, nor Mr. Sam who ran the sports store in the block between Wellbank Street and Clermont Avenue, Mrs. Sam was a teacher at Strathfield North Primary School. Who could forget Miss Brown, an Infants School teacher, who would have butterscotch in a jar and give a piece as a reward. Then there was Miss Chick who ran what is now called a pre-school in the church hall at Holy Trinity, Concord West. She would walk from Wellbank Street collecting 4-year-olds as she went towards Victoria Avenue. (This procession was lovingly known as Miss Chick and her chickens).

The house in Mackenzie Street was sold when my mother entered a nursing home – it had been in the family for over 70 years.

My mother was very protective of the Walker Estate (Yaralla) at the end of The Drive. If ever she noticed anything in the local papers about the possibility of this being sold by the State Government she would be seeking ways of protecting this gem.

I have a couple of books she purchased on the topic. Whilst on the Walker Estate, I attended many a Sunday School picnic from Holy Trinity Church of England. We would walk from the assembled point at the church to the Thomas Walker Hospital wharf at the end of Hospital Road, and board a ferry to picnic at Nielsen Park .

The Concord West shops were also interesting. There was a cake shop run by a family called "Pattinson". Then there was the Odeon Picture Theatre, near where Kentucky Fried is now - they had a Saturday afternoon matinee. The milk bar next to the Odeon was a meeting place coming from the train after High School, where we sometimes went for a milk shake or ice-cream soda. A Jaffa (chocolate and orange) milkshake was really nice.

Miss Yvonne Hayes held elocution lessons in her home in Myall Street. Whilst down Nirranda Street tennis courts called Quondong held Saturday morning lessons for the young people of the area. My sister went to these as my mother had been a keen tennis player. During the war she played at a tennis court on Concord Road near Yaralla Street I am not sure if the courts were called "Six Palms" or if the team was called this. Mum also

played at the Burwood Association Courts near the station where there are lots of flats now.

In the shops near North Strathfield Station Mrs. Lloyd run a dressmaking service, and around the corner in Wellbank Street Neville Smith had the local produce store, selling large bags of sand, coke, coal, chicken feed, vegetable seeds and much more.

I was in primary school the year of the Queen's Coronation, and a group of students were picked to take part in the celebrations by dancing at either the Showground or Cricket Ground (Moore Park). We referred to these dances as Coronation Dances. When the Queen visited Australia I was in High School (Strathfield Girls High) and we assembled in Queen Elizabeth Park for the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh to drive past the rows of assembled school children.

*(Following this morning's visit to your Museum and meeting with others who remember Concord I send my own memories - they are a little disjointed but may be of help to someone putting together a history of the area. Some things I seem to have remembered differently from Alan Wright so mine might not be as accurate as his recollections. Regards, Robyn Batley)*

## ***A Sad Story of Sydney's Statues***

Next time someone tells you vandalism is the modern scourge of youth and "*didn't happen in my day*", tell them about the missing monuments from Sydney's Centennial Park.

The grand 190 hectare Victorian-style parkland in Sydney's east has a long and ignoble history of vandalism.

Of the 31 statues erected in the park between 1889 and 1897, 23 have been damaged and lost since then.

Centennial Park Trust heritage architect Gillian Smart says State Parliament was hearing reports of statues being "*defaced by wanton persons*" in 1890.

The first six statues in the park were paid for by the people of Sydney and made of Italian marble.

*"We believe they were the boxers, the seasons [women representing] spring, autumn winter and summer,"* Ms Smart said.

Many of the others were common to English-style parklands of the time, featuring political figures and classical monuments including one which has partially survived, Diana the huntress. These days Diana is minus her head



and weapons, and her animal companion is headless too.

By 1959 only 10 statues were left, with newspapers reporting that a dozen had "*passed away*" since World War Two.

The Sydney Morning Herald bemoaned larrikinism across Sydney but said "*mortality is heaviest among the plaster population inhabiting Centennial Park*".

*"Their passing has been hastened by vandalism and learner motorists' steering difficulties on the park's roads,"* the paper said.

Ms Smart says the park was created because of concern about rapid industrialisation, and for the pleasure and health of the new working class.

However the park's roads were designed for horse and carriage rather than that other product of industrialisation, the car.

*"I think one of the last lots of vandalism that we know about was in 1971 when there were bomb explosions, reportedly the work of an extremist group,"* Ms Smart said.

One blast damaged the statue of Charles Dickens, which was eventually found again in 1993 and only this year restored to the park.

As the statue was being put back in place Ms Smart met a jogger who remembers the blast and seeing the damage.

But memories don't seem to have been jogged about Mr Dickens' 23 missing companions.

(continued over)

(Sydney Statues continued)

Changing priorities and a lack of administrative oversight compounded the vandalism and poor driving.

Many statues were dismantled for restoration but temporary removal turned into permanent losses.

Gillian Smart says all of the Italian marble statues from the 1890s are gone, although one of them was supposedly secure 40 years ago.

*"We don't have those at all but interestingly there was a boxer, one of the last ones in storage in the 70s and we have photos showing that,"* she said.

The trail is cold on some statues which disappeared from a masonry workshop in inner Sydney after the company shut down. Some were unwanted.

*"A couple were, I believe, given to a high school and Gladstone City Council, but I am yet to confirm that they were preserved,"* Ms Smart said.

There are stories of statues being buried. A hand has been dug up and a marble head was found in the bird sanctuary.

Gillian Smart says there's even a story around that a ute was backed up one night and broken statues just loaded up and driven off.

It a pretty big ask, but Ms Smart is still hopeful that memories might be sparked about the fate of the statues which vanished over the decades

*"It's wonderful to have Dickens back in there, it is lovely, glorious. It would be good to have more back in the public park for all to enjoy in the future,"* she said

So to any aged vandals or remiss bureaucrats, the statute of limitations on charges is well past. It is never too late to tidy up, if you played a role in the saga of Centennial Park's missing statues

Nonee Walsh.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-06-20/a-sad-story-of-sydneys-statues/2764852>

## Sincere Sympathy

*is extended to Betty Robertson and her family on the sudden loss of her daughter Jane.*

*Our thoughts and prayers are with you, Betty.*



## Nonsense Museum is Fun

A toothpick with fur, for winter use; a poisoned bullet the size of a basketball; a sample of Berlin air in a bottle; a glass nail; a container of cold steam; and a burning wax candle (with electric plug). These bits of nonsense, and others, await the unsuspecting tourist who wanders into what may be the goofiest museum on the face of the earth, here in the Bavarian capital.

Housed in the south tower of Munich's 14th century Isar Gate, the Karl Valentin Museum is perhaps the world's only public array of unabashed, rib-tickling tomfoolery.

Before his untimely death in 1948, Herr Valentin was a well-known itinerant music-hall comedian, a laughing philosopher revered and adored by Germans during his heyday.



Affectionately known as "K.V.", Karl Valentin spent a lifetime (with his sidekick, Liesl Karlstadt) demonstrating through his unique brand of humour "how ridiculous and unimportant man becomes when fate starts throwing tiny pebbles into the works."

A visitor entering the museum wends his way upwards along an enclosed spiral staircase to the first of three landings.

On the first landing you are confronted with the Karl Valentin solution to the parking problem - a baby carriage.

Overhead hangs a ghost drum for a midnight closing signal to the museum's public. But the drum is never used since the museum shuts its doors at 6:00 pm.

The "Nonsense Museum" also features a plain brick, described as the tuffet that Little Miss Muffet sat on (petrified), the apple that Adam bit, a chamber pot with chain and handle for flushing, a rope to hang yourself with (which for lack of funds has only been painted on the wall), a genuine bed-bug (lent by a private zoo), and a beautifully framed solid black portrait depicting a chimney sweep at night.

"Funnybone" exhibits also include a model of the Vesuvius volcano with a "No Smoking" sign attached.

Nearby there's a doll with a huge mous-

tache, representing a man who's been over-rejuvenated by doctors.

Next to this a pan full of water. According to the caption, this is a "liquid snow sculpture, a rare thing of beauty when still in its solid state".

The museum also has dried sunbeams locked up in a safe, spectacles for people who are hard of hearing, and a picture of the only man who ever filled out his income-tax form properly (he died very young of premature exhaustion of the brain).

"K.V.'s" curious collection of calculated comedy, however, overlooks one deft touch that could be considered his "masterpiece of ironic humour".

The German boffo merchant had the last laugh on the world when he passed away in 1948. As might have been expected, and to the surprise of no one, he died on April Fools' Day!

### Valentin-Karlstadt-Museum

The Nonsense Museum is only a small part of this museum, housed in the tower of Munich's 14th century fortification and dedicated to Karl Valentin (1882-1948), Germany's Charlie Chaplin, and his partner Liesl Karlstadt (1892-1960).

The full-as-your-grandma's-salon spaces are packed with props, posters and curiosities from the days the

couple were the toast of the town. Exhibitions range from the profound to the downright silly. There's satirical quotes on the wall, masks, a crazy mirror, photos galore and a mini-cinema

screening Valentin films.

The museum is dedicated to the life and times of the man who was Munich's zaniest music-hall artist, stand-up comic and author of several hundred plays, films and sketches.

If you don't understand his brand of humour, it's still worth a visit if you like medieval architecture.

Free admission for "over-99-years-olds accompanied by their parents' and, indeed, anybody, so long as they view the museum "from the outside" are two of the distinctive signs.



*Included in this newsletter is a questionnaire which we would ask you to please complete and return to us as soon as possible.*

*You can post it, email it, drop it in to the green letterbox at the museum door or bring to the museum - but, please complete it.*

*This information is needed to update our records*



## From the Secretary's Desk

**MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS:** To those who have still not renewed their membership there is a reminder included in this newsletter. Under our new constitution, members who are unfinancial can not vote at the AGM, nor can they stand for office.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** will be held on Saturday, 3rd August following our guest speaker. Please come along and get our new combined society off to a good start.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** We need members to put their hands up - by being nominated, or nominating themselves - to become part of the Executive. If you are unable to attend the meeting but would still like to nominate for office, please notify me at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

**ROYAL FAMILY DISPLAY:** We still have some items to be returned. If not collected we will presume they become part of our collection.

Also, did I lend us a small bible of the type given to servicemen? If so, would you please check the inscription as you have taken one that is not yours.

## YOU'RE Invited

**Author Talk - Richard Glover - at Concord Library** on Wednesday, 31st July, 6:30 for 7:00 pm. Free. Bookings: 9911-6210.

Laugh off the winter blues at this fun-filled evening as Richard Glover shares his latest book George Clooney's Haircut and Other Cries for Help.

**NSW Mounted Police Open Day on Sunday, 8th September - 10:00am to 2:00pm.** Police Stables, 7 Baptist Street, Redfern. Free entry. Lots to see.

## Rivendell Open Day

*Calling all tour guides and potential guides.*

So far we only know of two people who will be acting as guides at the next Rivendell Open Day on Sunday, 8th September.

If you have been a guide in the past and are able to help again, please let us know.

If you are considering becoming a guide, please let us know.

We also need to know who can help with the Devonshire Teas and with other duties on the day.

**PLEASE PHONE 9744-8528**

## Report from your Museum Committee

We are still working with Karen every Monday and Tuesday from 10:00 am to complete our assessment of our whole collection. This will be continuing for some time as it is a major project but one most necessary for future displays.

At the end of this process we will know exactly what we have in our collection, where it is stored and a complete description of where it came from, how and where it was used and its relationship for social history.

If you would like to become part of this process just turn up on any Monday or Tuesday. You'll be rewarded by the joy of working with a great group and a delicious lunch.

Thank you to all the wonderful volunteers who have been turning up for the past month or so - it's true what they say . . . "Many hands make light work".



*As you can see - we work hard and take our work seriously*