



"Nurungi"

(Remembered)

Official Newsletter of the City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

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www.canadabayheritage.asn.au

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GENERAL MEETINGS and Guest Speakers

1st Saturday of month
(except January)
at 2:00 pm in the
City of Canada Bay
Museum
1 Bent Street, Concord
9743-3034

Museum Committee

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

(everyone welcome)

Chairperson

Lorraine Holmes, 9743-2682

Walker Estates Committee

Meets as required

Chairperson

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

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

No.207

NOVEMBER, 2013

Convicts Rowed Sydney's First Ferries

The ferries of Sydney date back to Australia's earliest days. Ferry services began in Sydney as soon as Governor Phillip in 1788 formed a settlement at Rose Hill, which became Parramatta.

At first, ships' boats transported people and supplies to the settlement, but by October 1879, a ship intended for the Parramatta service was launched.

The convicts called the ship the *Rose Hill Packet* but because of the great quantity of wood used in her construction she was more appropriately known as *The Lump*.

Operating under combined sail and oar she usually took a week to complete a round trip.

Other boats operated by convicts who had served their terms of transportation began services on the river, charging 10c for each passenger and 10c for each hundred-weight of baggage.

When control of the services became desirable licenses were issued to boatmen who had to put up bonds - \$50 To perform the service and \$50 for each employee.

Sydney's first steam ferry, the *Surprise*, was built in 1831, but did not fulfill expectations on the Parramatta River.

Surprise was 80ft long, steamed at 4.5 mph and made her first Sydney-Parramatta trip in three-and-a-half hours.

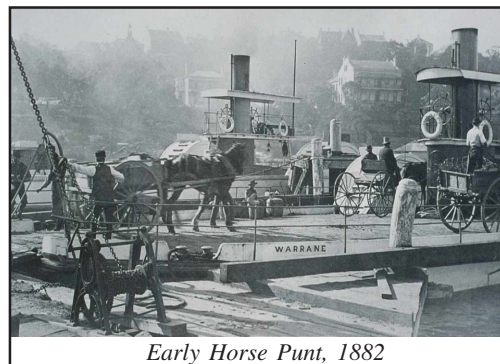
She was sent to Hobart in 1832 to become that outpost's first ferry boat.

After the *Surprise* was taken off the Parramatta service the passenger boats were so small, slow and uncomfortable that public demand for something better resulted in the building of a unique craft, aptly named *Experiment*.

Experiment was a paddle-wheeler of about 60 tons, motive power for the paddles being provided by horses harnessed to a shaft geared in turn to the paddles.

On its first trip to Parramatta in 1832 *Experiment*'s motive power was nervous and the start had to be delayed until the horses were quietened. The vessel made the trip in three hours at six miles per hour.

Experiment could carry 100 passengers



Early Horse Punt, 1882

as well as 20 tons of cargo but was not a success until the horses were displaced by a steam engine. It went to Brisbane in 1846.

The *Kangaroo*, built in Sydney in 1840, started Melbourne's ferry services and finished 64 years' service in 1904, thus establishing Sydney ferries' tradition of longevity.

If ever Australian history repeated itself it has done so with the transfer of Sydney Harbour ferries to Hobart to ease the traffic problems caused by the collapse of the Derwent River Bridge.

Sydney arranged for the transfer of three ferries to Hobart - the *Lady Wakehurst*, and the old-timers, *Kosciusko* and *Lady Ferguson*.

The *Kosciusko* and *Lady Ferguson* were retired from service recently because expensive refits would have been necessary to keep them in service.

The *Kosciusko* was built in 1911 and the *Lady Ferguson* in 1914. The *Kosciusko* has, therefore, been in service for 64 of the 144 years which have elapsed since the *Surprise* was built, and the *Lady Ferguson* for 61 years.

The survival of these wooden old-timers for so long must be a tribute to the workmanship of Sydney's shipwrights and their victory

DIARY DATES

**NOVEMBER 2 - 2:00 pm: Michael Fahey,
"The Baggy Green"**

**DECEMBER 7 - Christmas Party at
Museum at 2:00 pm.**

over the depredations of Sydney Harbour's marine pests.

Both ferries had the affection of generations of Sydney Harbour travelers – those fortunate commuters who escape the frustrations of train, bus and car travel, who can almost always get a seat, can breathe relatively unpolluted air and can contemplate the placid waters of the Harbour or the ships that evoke imaginings of fabulous voyages to distant shores.

The **Kosciusko** and the **Lady Ferguson** were of the style that distinguished Sydney ferries, with indoor and outdoor seating, and, when they were steamers, tall smoke stacks that gave them an appearance of elegance to accompany their smooth, silent and stately progress on the Harbour.

The familiar style lost something when the steamers were converted to diesel power and their stacks were truncated.

The style was temporarily discarded in 1956 when a completely different design of ferry with fully enclosed seating was introduced with that misbegotten, ugly duckling, the **Kooleen**. The outrage of the ferry traveler, the **Lady Cutler**, was much more in the traditional style.

David Drake built the **Kosciusko** at Balmain in 1911. She was 116ft 5in long, had a beam of 28ft 5in and was of 163 tons gross. She cost \$25,234. Her speed was 11-1/2 knots and she carried 792 passengers.

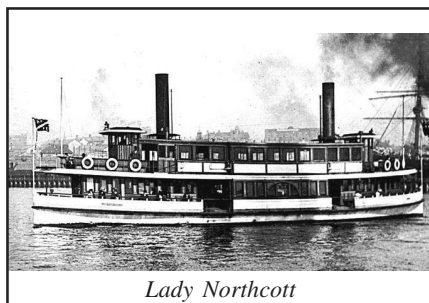
Kosciusko remained in service for 36 years until 1947 when her boilers were condemned. Because of difficulty in getting replacement she was out of service until 1952. Six years later she was converted to diesel operation, with a crew of three instead of five and capacity for 41 additional passengers.

Of 80 vessels built for Sydney Ferries Ltd. the names of 37 have started with the letter K, from **Kangaroo** in 1891 to **Kooleen** in 1956. Many of the K names were Aboriginal.

David Drake also built the **Lady Ferguson** at Balmain at a cost of \$14,922. She was 110ft 4in long, had a beam of 24ft 3in, drew 10ft, was of 95 tons gross, carried 346 passengers and had a speed of 11 to 11-1/2 knots. She was converted from steam to diesel operation in 1937.

Lady Ferguson was one of four Lady boats, as they were called, built between 1910 and 1914. Lady names among Sydney ferries go back to 1892 – mostly the names of wives of Governors, a tradition which continues

with the latest ferries, such as **Lady Cutler**, **Lady Wakehurst**, **Lady McKell** and **Lady Northcott**.



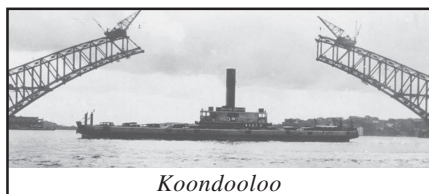
Lady Northcott

Both **Kosciusko** and **Ferguson** were products of the great days of ferry building in Sydney. Between 1900 and 1914 a total of 37 ferries was built for the Sydney Harbour service.

Four of the old K ferries with Aboriginal names are still in service – **Kanangra** (beautiful view) built in 1912, **Kameruka** (wait till I come), **Karringal** (happy home) and **Karabee** (cockatoo), all built in 1913 – and two of the Lady boats – **Lady Edeline** built in 1913 and **Lady Denman** from 1921.

After World War I the imminence of a harbour bridge slowed down ferry-building so much that only six ferries were built for the Sydney Harbour service between the end of the war and the opening of the Bridge in 1932.

They included two behemoths, the **Kuttabul** and **Koondooloo**, each capable of carrying 2,500 passengers.



Koondooloo

After the opening of the bridge the **Kuttabul** became a naval depot ship and was sunk at Garden Island in the Japanese submarine attack in 1942. The **Koondooloo** became a barge and went to Tasmania in 1966.

Another big vessel of this period was the 535 ton vehicular ferry **Kalang**, which became the Showboat engaged in entertainment Harbour cruises.

Harbour ferry traffic reached its peak at the end of the 1920s when Sydney Harbour Ferries Ltd. operated 50 boats and carried 44 million passengers in a year. Now they carry fewer than seven million and the efforts that have been made to get commuters back on the water and so ease pressure on road and rail services have not been successful.

(This was an article printed in The Sun in 1975. The ferries are so much an important part of our history and heritage it would be a shame to see them disappear.)

These photograph were taken from the "Save Our Ferries" site, www.saveoursydneyferries.org.au/

Please pay them a visit to see more of the wonderful photographs and to help support them in this endeavour.

"Sydney Ferries have served our community for more than 150 years and much has been written about them. Childhood memories of crossing the Heads in a swell; a trip to Taronga Zoo; the experience of war; the daily commute.

The Ferries are an important part of the life of Sydney. These pictures from the collection of John Darroch (cjd) may serve to remind us just how important they are and that they must stay 'Safe in Public Hands'."



Yaralla Park Fair

This was a very successful day which was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

Our two wonderful guides, Trish Skehan and Jenny Crosbie, took quite a few people on mini-tours of the estate - but encouraged them to come back to our next Open Day for the full day. Thank you both for your hard work.

We also raised people's awareness of our Museum and our work with Yaralla and Rivendell - even signed up some new members.

So, all in all, it was a success for us.



Museum News

We will be closing the museum from Sunday, 15th December to allow us to give the place a good spring clean and to organise our next display, "Fun & Games for Young & Old".

If you can help during this time, please let us know.

We will re-open on Wednesday, 15th January.

You May Have the Clues to History

Trying to fit together the jig-saw fragments of a district's history reveals how many facts are missing. Some may never be found, but many must be lurking in people's memories and in written or pictorial record.

This is so true and we'd like to urge you and your family to write down what you know about your homes, family and district. Draw up a questionnaire that suggests further facts that can be recorded, especially by senior citizens.

What sport(s) did you play years ago? When and where was the sport played? What clothes did you wear for it? How popular was it? Is it still popular? Has it passed away, like girls bowling hoops? About the end of the 19th century Competition Lacrosse was a popular game for young men. How many would recognise it now?

What games did you play? Did you go to any early movie theatres (often held in local halls or even tents)? Where? Do you recall any of the old films? How much did they cost you?

Did you hear any local musicians or singers, or any more famous artists visiting your locality? What instruments did you play; what songs did you sing? Who taught you? Did any famous actors play in your district? Did you perform in a play?

What types of hobbies did you have? Mercifully, collecting birds' eggs has long been against protection laws – it was nearly as dangerous to the collectors! But sea shell and insect collections remain popular. Dried plants and glass cases of coral grottoes have disappeared from lounge rooms. Did you build model ships in bottles or embroider "samplers" (to prove your needlework skill)? Have you tapestries you wove? Perhaps you tatted collars, beaded pincushions or made patchwork quilts.

Churches usually have comparatively rich records of their history, personnel and ceremonies, but you may have mementoes and memories of other activities in the community – their work for the poor, clubs for young people, even gatherings held before the church was built, picnics, etc.

Who were the doctors in your district? Were there any cottage hospitals? How far did you have to travel for medical help? Who acted as midwives or district nurses? Were they qualified to do this or just kindly, conscientious ladies disposed to helping others when there was no one else to do so?

What sort of cures were prescribed? Who were the pharmacists and dentists? What home medicines did your family use? What illnesses were common in your district? Did you experience any epidemics? Were any of these fatal in your district? Were there poisonous snakes or other dangers? Was there any ambulance service? Was it horse-drawn or a motor vehicle, or even a hand litter? What were the funeral customs?

Was there any local defence corps? With what weapons did they train? Where did they practice or camp? Have you pictures of the uniforms? Who were members?

Have you been at the scene of any accidents or disasters such as earthquakes, fires, floods? What damage was done? Who were killed, injured, rescued; who were the rescuers? Did you have a local Fire Brigade? Was it run by volunteers? Where was it? Was it horse-drawn or a motor vehicle, or even drawn by hand.

Did you attend the opening of any train services, bridges, schools, churches, parks, baths and other public places, or launching of ships? Were you present at any historic events – arrival of an aerial pioneer, royal visit, victory celebration? Have you personally met any famous personage – a sovereign, statesman, great actress, artist?

Where was your nearest school? How did you get there – by foot, horse, bike? History of schools in a state system is usually documented, some a century or more, but you, being a child then, will recall some incidents as more exciting than others. What games did you play in the school grounds?

What clothes did pupils wear? How did you begin the day – a prayer or hymn, saluting the flag, with a show of washed hands? Do you still have any of your readers or other books? Did you pay a small fee, sixpence a week, for instance? What did you have for school lunch? What type desks did you use? What did you learn to sing? The teacher's hat was always handy for drawing lessons and handwriting had to be perfect. Did you become strong and graceful through drill, callisthenics and eurhythmics? What clothes did you wear for these?

Above all, when you have set down these and many more memories, keep them safely for your descendants **and give a copy to your local history museum.**

(This article is from a North Shore local newspaper, date unknown – but is just a relevant today as then.)

We still need to gather more stories for our "Faces in the Street" collection and hopefully, this article will stimulate you into putting together your piece of history. Even if you are not from this area, your story would be of interest to the local historical society in the area where you grew up.

Please consider putting pen to paper now to start preparing your story for posterity.

Faces in the Street

We are still anxious to add to our collection of "Faces in the Street" stories. And we're still waiting for yours. We've given you the ideas, the rest is up to you.

Hopefully this article will give you some ideas to start writing your own story - not just for us, but to hand on to your own children and grandchildren so they can learn more about the time you were growing up.



Just jot down these headings - and others you can think of - and keep it handy where you can add more memories as they come to mind. Don't forget to add photos, clippings or anything else you think will make your story more interesting.



Put your thinking caps on now and get started.

The Race that Stops a Nation

Are the Yanks getting their own back??

*Really? A public holiday dedicated to a horse race? **Only in Australia!** Tuesday, 5th November is Melbourne Cup Day, a legal holiday in the state of Victoria and observed by Australians all over. New Zealanders also stop to watch the race, but usually wait till after work to do so.*

The first Melbourne Cup race took place in 1861; some 4,000 attendees watched thoroughbred Archer beat 16 other horses for the £7 10 prize. Three of the starters fell during the race, and two of them died from their injuries. Archer returned to compete the next year. He won again, this time in front of a crowd of nearly twice that many people.

Quote: "Horse sense is the thing a horse has which keeps it from betting on people" -- W.C. Fields

(from Answers.com)

November Speaker

Michael Fahey, "The Baggy Green"

Just to make it easy for any of our visitors who don't know about cricket here is a simple explanation of the game..

- * You have two sides, one out in the field and one in.
- * Each man that's in the side that's in the field goes out and when he's out comes in and the next man goes in until he's out.
- * When a man goes out to go in, the men who are out try to get him out, and when he is out he goes in and the next man in goes out and goes in.
- * When they are all out, the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in, out.
- * Sometimes there are men still in and not out.
- * There are men called umpires who stay out all the time, and they decide when the men who are in are out.
- * Depending on the weather and the light, the umpires can also send everybody in, no matter whether they're in or out.
- * When both sides have been in and all the men are out, and both sides have been out twice after all the men have been in, including those who are not out, **that is the end of the game.**

Why Worry

There are only two things to worry about;

Either you are well or you are sick.

If you are well, then there is nothing to worry about;

If you are sick there are only two things to worry about,

Whether you will get well, or whether you will die.

If you get well, there is nothing to worry about;

But if you die, there are only two things to worry about,

Whether you go to heaven or hell.

If you go to heaven, there's nothing to worry about,

And if you go to hell, you'll be so busy Shaking hands with old friends

You won't have time to worry.

So, why worry?



Our Christmas Party

Members, family and friends are invited to our Christmas Party which will be held at the Museum on Saturday, 7th December at 2:00 p.m.

Please bring a small plate of "goodies" for afternoon tea as well as your own liquid refreshments.

and

Speaking of Christmas . . .

If you are looking for gifts for family and friends, why not check out our museum. We still have supplies of all three of Trish's books as well as Lerryn Mutton's "Lest I Forget" and "The Secret History of Nursery Rhymes". There are also pens and our note'n'pen book. These would all make wonderful gifts as well as helping our Society.



Opera Night at Rivendell

Enjoy an evening of stunning vocal and instrumental music in a magical setting. Featuring some of the most beautiful music ever written; such as Mozart's Queen of the Night, Tchaikovsky's String Serenade and Piazzolla's Oblivious. Spectacular fireworks will conclude what will be a night to remember!

Starring: Soprano - Kathryn Zerk; Tenor - Warren Fisher; Clarinet - Frank Celata; Oboe - Shefali Pryor

String Orchestra - members of Sydney Symphony Orchestra and Australian Opera and Ballet Orchestra.

Supporting Performance - NSW Ambulance Swing Band

6:30 pm on Sat., 2nd November
Thomas Walker Estate
Hospital Road, Concord

All funds raised go towards Concord Cancer Centre with a focus on Bowel Cancer



Can you help with any of these?

- * Organising publicity for our guest speakers or other events. We can supply list of contacts.
- * Taking over our Oral History section. Organising recording sessions. Transferring tapes to digital.
- * Distributing letterbox drops and posters advertising our speakers.
- * Sorting and organising archives - papers, photographs, etc.
- * Researching information on various subjects/people/places.
- * Learning to enter information into Mosaic, the data programme for recording our collection.
- * Organising our presence on Facebook or other social area on the internet.
- * Becoming part of the Museum Committee to organise displays and programmes.
- * Becoming part of the Walker Estates Committee to organise our Open Days at Yaralla and Rivendell
- * Becoming a Museum guide

Significance Project



We're still working hard on this project - every Monday and Tuesday - won't you come and join in the fun?



Outside of a dog, a book is man's best friend. Inside of a dog, it's too dark to read. — Groucho Marx

Old age is always 15 years older than I am. — Bernard Baruch

There are four basic food groups: milk chocolate, dark chocolate, white chocolate, and chocolate truffles. — Anonymous

A smile is a curve that sets a lot of things straight.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to go out and buy a replacement.

Yesterday's history; tomorrow's a mystery; today is a gift. That's why they call it the present.

When life gives you questions, Google has answers.

A positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but it will annoy enough people to make it worth the effort.