



# 'Nurungi'

(Remembered)

Official Newsletter of the City of Canada Bay Heritage Society

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

[www.canadabayheritage.asn.au](http://www.canadabayheritage.asn.au)

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EDITOR  
**LOIS MICHEL**  
9744-8528

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PRESIDENT  
**ALAN WRIGHT**  
9743-4869

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

#### GENERAL MEETINGS

1st Saturday of month  
(except January)  
**at 12:30 pm in the**  
City of Canada Bay  
Museum

1 Bent Street, Concord  
9743-3034  
followed by  
**our Guest Speaker**  
**at 2:00 pm sharp.**

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**Museum Committee**  
Meets on 3rd Wednesday of month  
at 10:00 am at museum  
(everyone welcome)  
**Chairperson**  
Lorraine Holmes,  
9743-2682

**Walker Estates Committee**  
Meets as required  
**Chairperson**  
(vacant)

#### 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](mailto:museum@canadabayheritage.asn)

## Sydney High is the Head of the River and Brilliantly Wins the Second Fours Yaralla Cup to Newington - Stirring Scenes at GPS. Regatta

Amid excitement almost indescribable Sydney High School convincingly won the rowing championship of the Great Public Schools of NSW, following the example of The King's School and Newington.

Australia's greatest aquatic spectacle is the annual regatta of the Athletic Association of the Great Public Schools. Once it was hedged around with the privacy which the controlling body loved, but after reluctantly yielding to the wishes of parents and old boys and transferring the races to Saturday, the excitement spread like wildfire.

Old boys time their visits to Sydney to coincide with this function, which has now gripped a public wider than the officials dreamed of a few years ago. Many who never owed allegiance to the competing schools join the huge throng on the Parramatta River and make the event exceed the big Henley-on-Yarra carnival, or the thrilling Schools events in the Southern capital, both of which shaded it only a few years back.

Sydney's magnificent waterway provides a setting that other cities lack, and none of them has eight crews fighting for supremacy.

**CRAFT OF ALL KINDS:** Again the estuaries had been combed for every craft that could possibly keep afloat, and what a democracy of boats there was. The cheeky youngster in a well-worn old football jersey and shorts, in a shell much the worse for wear, rubbed shoulders, as it were, with the compleat yachtsman, in his well burnished and luxurious craft; the grimy collier of Friday was now quite presentable as it steamed alongside the latest in big ferry steamers; the antiquated steam-propelled boat was just as proud as the very latest in speed launches.

Excitement smouldered in the city throughout the morning — a bit grey, but not sufficient to check the ardour of these schoolboys — and, as Gilbert said in 'Pinafore': 'their sisters and their cousins whom they reckon up by dozens.'

Colours could be seen everywhere, whilst business was carried on with an eye on the clock. The first outburst came at Fort

Macquarie. Deep sea wharves had been made available to relieve the traffic, and all the extra space was essential.

**INTENSE EXCITEMENT.** It was a day of youth. All the way up the Parramatta the scene was one of intense enthusiasm, whilst car after car hurried over the bridges to vantage points near the finish. At the judges' launch there was a thick cluster of boats, whilst the wharf at Gladesville, and the pretty wooded foreshores, could hardly have accommodated another person. And cars extended back till the last hood met the horizon. And at Cabarita a similar spectacle met the view. Nothing in the history of the old Parramatta rivalled yesterday's scene—and it would take the arrival of an International Fleet in Port Jackson to excel it.

**A CURTAIN RAISER:** A south-easterly wind made the water choppy and boats on the north received its full force. Sydney University eights provided a curtain raiser, but it was a poor sample for the sparkling and most exciting racing that was to follow. No. 2 crew on the south went to the front and stayed there. The work of their opponents was very ragged. When nearing Gladesville a packed ferry boat — the *Kirrulle* — lumbered across the course. The first eight managed to avoid it, but the white crew were compelled to row across to the southern shore entirely out of their course. 'They were beaten easily. Though the inconvenience did not affect the result, it was scandalous. Other boats were on the course, too, and a police officer demanded the name of one

### DIARY DATES

2nd April: Alasdair McGregor, "Francis Greenway"

7th May: Jan Worthington, "Laurence Hynes Halloran - Scholarly Scoundrel"

4th June - Carol Overington, "Last Woman Hanged"

o ending launch. 'It's got no name,' was the correct reply. 'Well, what's your name?' was the next query, so probably more will be heard of it.

**HIGH DRAWS FIRST BLOOD.** After a glorious race Sydney High School gained the honours in the second fours (third crews). They were on the south with Grammar and Kings next, and Newington on the Putney shore. Early the latter went to the front, but their tactics in keeping well in shore were injudicious. However, they led until Tennyson was almost abreast. Here High, sheltered by Cabarita, went to the front and, rowing splendidly, they had a lead of a length at the wharf. Grammar had now taken second place - with Kings and Newington practically level. As the huge assemblage of craft sighted them, from the comparative quiet the din became deafening, with the high and weird notes of the sirens predominating. Across to Gladesville, High rowing finely, kept off the determined effort of Grammar, who were still about a length behind, as they rushed past the cheering mass at Gladesville wharf. Grammar rowed grittily, but High, answering every question, won a race of thrills by a length, with King's three lengths behind Grammar, and Newington half a length in the rear.

#### **NEWINGTON'S YARALLA CUP:**

The first fours, like the preceding race, kept everyone on tenterhooks. Shore had the southern position, with Newington, St. Joseph's and King's extending across the river. The Parramatta boys moved off quickly, but Newington striking a high rate drew level on the run to Tennyson. Along the Cabarita frontage Newington gained an advantage, but only a slight one. The other crews were on even terms. Shore were working up as the boats passed the wharf, and across to Gladesville King's dropped back. Newington were over a length to the good at Gladesville wharf, and in another good finish they gained the verdict by a length and a half,

with Shore half a length ahead of St Joseph's. The winners' performance was a splendid one. They rowed in a boat named the *Dora Prescott*, after the daughter of the headmaster, Rev. C. J. Prescott.

**THE CHAMPIONSHIP:** Everything was clear now for the event of the day. Grammar had the southerly or sheltered shore with Shore on their right; then St. Joseph's and High, on the north, the less favored position. The tide, which had been against the rowers, was now slack. At Bottle Point Sydney Church of England Grammar School showed out, but High was handy, with Grammar next, and St. Joseph's slightly in the rear. Grammar was sharing second place with High, who, however, were working up, and had a fair lead before Tennyson was reached. High worked across into second station, with St. Joseph's on the outside now. High created a magnificent impression by



their excellent rowing. A mixture of 'All Black and Murray Bridge' it was termed. Nothing short of an accident could deprive them of the supremacy, and they rowed between the yelling boatloads with their grip on the honours tightening. The mystery of Grammar was solved. Each had rowed true to form on Wednesday, and High had just as much in reserve as the subtle wearers of the Black and Gold. Shore beat the latter for second place after a great tussle, honours of the race going to High by three lengths from Shore, who were half a length in front of Grammar, and St. Joseph's, some distance in the rear. It was a moment of great joy for High supporters., Their

first athletic championship, it was gained in the sport most in the public eye. Obtained in their first attempt — as King's and Newington's had been — it was very dramatic — and intensely popular.

**A SPLENDID CREW:** Mr. N. J. McDonald, the old Interstate oarsman, highly praised the rowing of Sydney High School. Their great finish struck him as something far superior to that of the usual school crews. It was like the All Blacks. They brought the stroke right home, right into the body; their leg drive was good, and between strokes the boat ran beautifully. Robinson, the stroke had, splendid judgment, and he was never flurried. He is the makings of a very fine oarsman. The coach, Mr. Hancock, deserves great praise for the way he turned out the crew.

**FELICITATIONS:** From the official launch, the *Lady Hopetoun*, Lord Forster and Sir Dudley de Chair witnessed the race. On the run back to town Rev. C. J. Prescott proposed the health of the Governor-General, and expressed regret at the fact that it would be the last event that His Excellency would witness. Australians had been greatly indebted to Lord and Lady Forster for many kindnesses. His Excellency said it was rather

sad to know that it would be his last regatta, but he would carry the memory of these functions. They had nothing like it at home. It combined the Oxford-Cambridge race with Henley. As a public schoolboy he loved public school sport, and Dr. Rendall, headmaster of one of the greatest of English public schools, and who was with them, would agree that the spectacle that day was a magnificent one. They will let the public schools of England know what the function was like .

*Sunday Times Sunday 3 May 1925 (Trove)*

## The Yaralla Cup

As a matter of interest, St. Joseph's College is currently the custodian of the "Yaralla Cup", a perpetual trophy donated and named by Miss E. Walker (later Dame Eadith) in 1895 for the crew (IV) that won the annual Head of the Parramatta River Regatta.

This trophy later became the trophy for the winning 1st IV at the GPS

Head of the River Regatta.

I am told that it is the second oldest perpetual trophy in Australia (after the Melbourne Cup), and that it is valued at over \$100,000.

It is certainly a substantial piece of silverware. Richard Quinn.

*(This was published in the May/June 2015 issue of Nurungi but bears repeating.)*

*The Yaralla Cup is one of the handsomest trophies in use.*

*It is a large Jug of silverplate about 18 Inches high, standing on a wooden pedestal 5 Inches high.*

*It is made of silverplate, richly chased and embossed with miniature winged human figures and other designs.*

## Found on Trove

LADIES' LETTER

From "Irene" in Melbourne.

Miss Eadith Walker's offer of her place, "Yaralla" at Concord, in Sydney, as a home for the new Governor General, was a bomb in the social camp. Unlike the suffragists' bombs, this one was packed with love of country-Scotch country-and when it burst everyone was filled with admiration and curiosity.

There was a general rush to find out more about the lady. Because Miss Walker has been, for twenty years or so, in the public eyes a millionaires, the rising generation has an idea that she is on the shady side of time. Well, she is not. She is at high noon-just fifty years on one hundred.

Miss Walker's kindness to young girls in society, who have little means, has for long been a matter of admiring comment. A trip to England or such is a quite usual gift. I do not know if plainness shuts a girl out from such generosity as a jaunt in Europe, but it is a fact that the girls who are known to have gone as Miss Walker's guests were all pretty and most of them are now married.

As for Miss Walker herself, the hearts and titles laid near her shoes must have been legion. A very distinguished diplomat, now in the service of Queen Mary, didn't hide the fact that he was a trier. But she always trod on the offering at her feet, or had it swept out of the way.

If a man had done any of the very magnificent things which Miss Walker has quietly done since she inherited her father's enormous wealth, he would have had a peerage, sure, when next title time comes round.

It will be interesting to see if she does get the offer of a "baronessy," or a "peeressy." Of course, she won't take either, for the good reason that she might have had either long ago - with a man attached.

Miss Walker dresses beautifully, and to her credit, be it said, gets all her gowns and hats confected in Sydney.

*Gippsland Mercury (Sale, Vic.  
Friday 10 July 1914*

Dear Adelaide,

The gentle wife of our Governor-General was recently the guest of Miss Eadith Walker, at her home, "Yaralla", Concord. Lady Forster says that she thoroughly enjoyed her visit to this sylvan retreat on the foreshores of the arramatta River. The garden is one of the finest in Sydney. "Yaralla's" hospitable chatelaine is the nearest Australia has to a millionairess. Since our Governor-General was evicted from his Sydney residence by the Holman Ministry in 1912 she has periodically extended the glad hand to the Federal vice-regals, and any entertainments she gives in connection with their visits are delightfully arranged, though never a word about them appears in the papers. Miss Walker consistently evades the spotlight. She is alike the despair of the interviewer and the social scribe. Only during the war did she desire publicity for the stall she invariably held on the various patriotic days, when she proved such an expert saleswoman that her stall was always the first to sell out.

*Critic (Adelaide, SA :  
Wednesday 22 February 1922*

guest  
speaker

Saturday, 7th May, 2016

1:30 for 2:00 pm sharp.

Jan Worthington

"Laurence Halloran"

Laurence Halloran: sailor, school-teacher, murderer, bigamist, poet, imposter, preacher, bankrupt and convicted forger. He arrived in the Colony in 1819 and was considered by many to be the first Headmaster of Sydney Grammar School.

A sordid story of the self-styled doctor of classical studies who, in England as a Naval recruit, was jailed for knifing a fellow sailor. Who had to flee to South Africa when he enraged colonial authorities.

Who trailed around wives, mistresses and 22 children in a career on four continents and was transported to NSW after authorities found counterfeit print blocks in his flat. A stranger-than-fiction tour through the high society and low life of a bygone world.

### *The Senility Prayer*

*Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway;*

*The good fortune to run into the ones I do;*

*And the Eyesight to tell the difference.*

## Seniors Festival

Saturday, 9th April

1:30 pm for 2 pm prompt start

To celebrate this event we will be presenting a PowerPoint **Virtual Tour** of Yaralla, giving the history of the Nichols and Walker families and a tour of the estate and the house.

This will be followed by afternoon tea. The event is free and everyone is welcome.

Please come along and, if you can, please bring a small plate of food to help with the catering. It would be appreciated.

## Australian Inventions & Discoveries that Changed the World

When people talk about the great discoveries in medicine and the inventions that made life easier for Australians, particularly farmers, they tend to think of the Americans. But this is not the case. We really are the Clever Country.

From everyday objects to life saving medical procedures - we have Australians to thank. They have been responsible for so many that have changed the world in which we live.

Our current display will continue until the end of June to showcase just some of the life-changing ideas produced by our clever Australians.

Our museum is open every Wednesday and Saturday from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm so come along and see for yourself.

We are happy to open for groups on other days, by arrangement.



# For those who can remember . . .

## “Yes, What?”

“Yes, What?” is an Australian radio comedy series, recorded in the late 1930s and early 1940s. It was originally known as “The Fourth Form at St Percy’s”. It is set in a school and features Dr Percy Pym, the school master, who was easily flustered, and incapable of controlling his rowdy students.

The class was improbably small, with only three students, aged fourteen: Bottomly, Standforth, and Greenbottle. Later in the series, after Greenbottle left, de Pledge joined the series. Later still, when Greenbottle returned, there were four students for a while.

The show received its name from the habit of Greenbottle to frequently say, “Yes,” to which Dr Pym would reply, “Yes, What?” from which Greenbottle would launch into some long explanation about something.

The class never seemed to learn anything. There was always some distraction. Greenbottle was more often than not late. Just as Dr Pym was starting to get the class under control, Greenbottle would arrive with some lengthy excuse to delay the proceedings even further.

Guests featured occasionally, such as Bottomly’s girlfriend Daphne, Mr Snootles the caretaker, a policeman, a charity worker, a school inspector, and various others.

The show was produced in the studios of radio station 5AD in Adelaide. The first thirty to fifty episodes were broadcast live to air, and were never recorded. Journalist Ray Polkinghorne once wrote that Rex Dawe had written 786 episodes, and Ralph Peterson (who played Bottomly) was quoted in 1974 as saying that there were about a thousand episodes made. But recent research puts the number at 520. Radio syndication company, Grace Gibson Productions has 260 episodes in circulation, and another 50 or so are known to exist. In August 1985, the Australian Film And Sound Archives announced that they “received several hundred 16 inch recordings of the schoolroom comedy series, Yes, What?...” “... Mortein Mosquito and Insect Sprays of Ermington NSW (owned by the firm Samuel Taylor) discovered the lost issues of Yes What when they recently moved premises.” But there are some episodes that seem to be lost forever.

The actors were paid two shillings per episode. Rex Dawe, who played the part of Dr Pym, also wrote most of the scripts and produced the show, receiving ten additional shillings per episode. These were the days before residuals. So although “Yes What” has been repeated hundreds of times on radio stations all over the world through all the decades right up to the present, the actors received only their original fees.

Some of the early scripts were written by Maurice Chapman, and Ralph Peterson (who played Bottomly), wrote six of the later episodes.

Recording techniques were primitive. In an interview with the Australian newspaper in 1966, Ralph Peterson said, “We used to stand in front of a huge microphone and bellow our lines into it. We had a total of about three sound effects, too.”

The series is very Australian in style and content, and many of the jokes would go over the head of a non-Australian. For an Australian, however, much of the humour is timeless.

Although it was never mentioned in any interviews I’ve heard or read, the “Yes, What?” series was based on an English record series from around 1934, featuring Will Hay as a school master called Dr Twist, and called, “The Fourth Form At St Michael’s”. It even opens with the “Yes, What?” catch-cry, “Good morning boys - Good morning sir.” And in 1937, the cast of “The Fourth Form At St Michael’s” made a few feature films, the best known being “Good Morning Boys”.

The first episode of “Yes, What?” was broadcast on either Sunday June 30, or Sunday July 7, 1936. The series finished in 1940 when most of the cast joined the armed forces in World War Two. But there has not been a week since then when an episode hasn’t been heard somewhere on Australian radio and indeed around the world.

*Article from “Radio Pictorial of Australia”, late 1930s.*



## From the Secretary's Desk

**A very big “thank you” to Kay Dawson’s son Scott**, who recently spent a long day at our museum photographing our Arnotts Tins collection.

It was quite a job as we have almost 100 different tins.

**General Meetings:** A reminder that these are held on the first Saturday of the month at 12 noon - followed by our guest speaker.

These meetings are your chance to contribute your knowledge to our Society.

If you would like to receive a copy of the minutes please let me know and I will see they are sent to you.

## Milk and other Home Deliveries

My dad told me about my grandfather, who had a dairy farm. When dad was a schoolboy he helped delivering milk first thing in the morning and then after school, as the cows had to be milked twice a day.

After the war dad borrowed money to buy his own milk run. He kept the horse and cart in the backyard of our home and picked up milk from the milk depot. It was loaded into tanks which had taps at the rear to pour the milk into 2-gallon cans on dad’s cart.

Dad visited the houses on his milk run, where he then measured out the 2 or 4 pint measures of milk as required.

Delivery was in the early hours of the morning each day of the week and milk was usually poured into jugs or billy cans left on the front verandah of the customers’ houses. The money for payment was usually left in the empty container for the “milko”.

In those old days ice and bread were delivered daily to homes by local vendors as well as fresh vegetables, fruit, clothes props, coal, etc.

The “bottle” would come regularly to buy empty bottles.

The local “corner shop” supplied most of the rest of our daily needs.

The reason for daily ice delivery was that most homes had what was called “ice chests”, which kept food cool.

Home refrigerators did not come in until the 1950s.

Those were the days! ( Anon)