



'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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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**.

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.au

The "Last True Australian Explorer"

Len Beadell is regarded as the "last true Australian Explorer" for opening up over 2.5 million square kilometers of rugged Australian Outback.

To assist Great Britain and allied European countries develop intercontinental ballistic missiles in the post WWII era, the Australian Government agreed to establish a rocket launch facility in the Australian Outback.

No other Continent in the world could offer Her Majesty's Government the space to launch rockets with the promise that no matter how well or badly the launches went, the experimental rockets were extremely unlikely to cause much damage when they inevitably returned to Earth. A Rocketeer's dream!

Len Beadell, then a Surveyor with the Australian Army, was ordered to find a suitable place to establish this rocket range – and having done so, survey and establish roads across Australia so that instrument stations could be established along the rocket's likely trajectory so that the success (or otherwise) of the tests could be measured.

Thus began Len's great "adventure".

Over the years to come, Len would not only establish the Woomera Rocket Range, 485 kilometers north of Adelaide, but a network of Outback roads which have become legend in the Australian bush.

In his virtually unbreakable Land Rover, Len reconnoitered and plotted the course of his roads alone, then supervised his road-gang of six men – called "The Gunbarrel Road Construction Party" – in the construction of 6,500 kilometers of roads.

He said he tried, whenever possible, to make the road as straight as a gunbarrel.

Following the Gunbarrel Highway, Len built further roads by the same method,

naming most of them after his family. These roads further opened up the inhospitable country for a variety of purposes.

Beadell's sense of humour was well known, and he referred to many of his roads as "highways". The description stuck and maps show the subject roads as highways, despite the reality that they have degraded to single lane unsealed tracks through the remote arid areas of central Australia.

In a time before computerised navigational aids, Len established Woomera and his

roads with the aid of a surveyor's theodolite, fixing his position by the stars.

Today the accuracy of Len's maps and "fixes", when measured with modern GPS systems, are a testament to the man and the brilliance of his mathematical mind.

Len's dry sense of humour matched the land he travelled through – and on retirement, he told of his life's work through video, audio and books and at countless guest appearances at community and service club meetings and at schools. Like his life's work, Len's talks also became "legendary", never failing to raise a laugh and garnishing along the way,

a strong following of his exploits which continues today.

Len passed away in May 1995 aged 72 years.

(Ed: This is the subject from our guest speaker on 2nd July. It sounds like a fascinating talk. Come along and bring your friends and neighbours - everyone welcome.)



DIARY DATES

July 2 - 1:30 for 2:00 pm start. "The Last True Australian Explorer"

August 6 - Ian Small, "The Kurrajongs"

Bungalows, Poets and Small Pox

The forgotten history of Five Dock and Canada Bay

It is hard to imagine Five Dock and the surrounding suburbs of the City of Canada Bay as anything but contemporary and cosmopolitan. Beneath the shiny, renovated surfaces, café strips and bountiful new apartment complexes, any signs of Canada Bay's history have mostly been reduced to easily overlooked memorial plaques in parks and reserves. Trying to avoid painful memories of my third grade local history assignments, I went on a search for the history of an area that so many of us Inner Westies now call home.

It turns out that before colonisation the area of Canada Bay held many of the same attractions as it does today, namely the waterfront and great food.

The Wangal People of the Darug Nation inhabited this area for thousands of years prior to settlement, utilising the mangrove-populated foreshore of the Parramatta River to gather, hunt and even harvest foods. The colonising of Canada Bay was not free of the tragedy that plagued the rest of Sydney's settlement, with half of the local native population dying in a small pox outbreak.

The area of Canada Bay characteristically kept up with the times and advancing colonisation, becoming a pit stop for settlers on the 24km trek between Sydney and Parramatta. Unlike the majority of place names in Australia, Canada Bay was not named by yet another homesick British general or politician, but after 58 French Canadian political exiles who were detained in the area in 1840.

Meanwhile the suburbs of Five Dock, Rodd Point, Drummoyne and Abbotsford were united in a huge 600-hectare farm – under the catchy title of Five Dock Farm. Samuel Lyons took over the farm in 1838, unfortunately choosing one of areas now most infamously congested roads to take his name. You probably won't be surprised to learn Lyons Road was built at a time when Canada Bay was considered hopelessly rural. Those now trapped in its perpetually sluggish peak

hour traffic crawling towards Victoria Road can be forgiven for thinking it must have been much nicer back then.

Five Dock soon took off, with the founding its very own school in 1861, now Five Dock Primary School, where Peter Dodds McCormick (composer of Advance Australia Fair) served as headmaster for some time.

Five Dock's piece de resistance however, remained its new tramway that could deliver passengers quickly all the way to the docks of Circular Quay. Local politicians take note!

As Five Dock became increasingly metropolitan and land values increased, infrastructure and farming moved away to make room for an abundance of new homes. Free-standing, in the characteristic '20s Californian Bungalow style, Five Dock homes became the epitome of comfortable suburban family living. Few know that amid this transformation from the rugged to domesticated, one of Australia's greatest poets, Henry Lawson, died just up the road in his Abbotsford home.

Lawson's own words presaged the next chapter of Five Dock's story. "There was never a land so great and wide, where the foreign fathers came, that has bred her children so much alike, with their hearts so much the same."

Five Dock soon found itself becoming a nesting ground for many thousands of immigrants in the post-war period. Today one in four residents of Five Dock claim to be of Italian descent.

(Ed: This article, written by Phoebe Moloney, was from an article cut out of some publication, but there was no note about the name or date of the publication.)



Samuel Lyons farm when Five Dock was in the outback!



There are many misconceptions about how the land to build the 113 AGH in Hospital Road was acquired. Here is the true story.

This cutting is from the Daily Advertiser (Wagga Wagga) 30th May, 1940, and was found while searching through "Trove" - a searchable database from the National Library of Australia.

Trove: A Valuable Resource

The site is a free data base of resources, especially newspapers both local and national. including the earliest published Australian newspaper, the "Sydney Gazette" of 1803.

There are over 700 digitised newspapers in the collection.

It is a real treasure for genealogists or anyone wanting to find out about their ancestors. But it is also a great source for gathering information about about people, places, events, etc. from the past.

We have accessed a lot of information about the Walkers and Yaralla through searches on this site, many of which have been published in Nurungi.

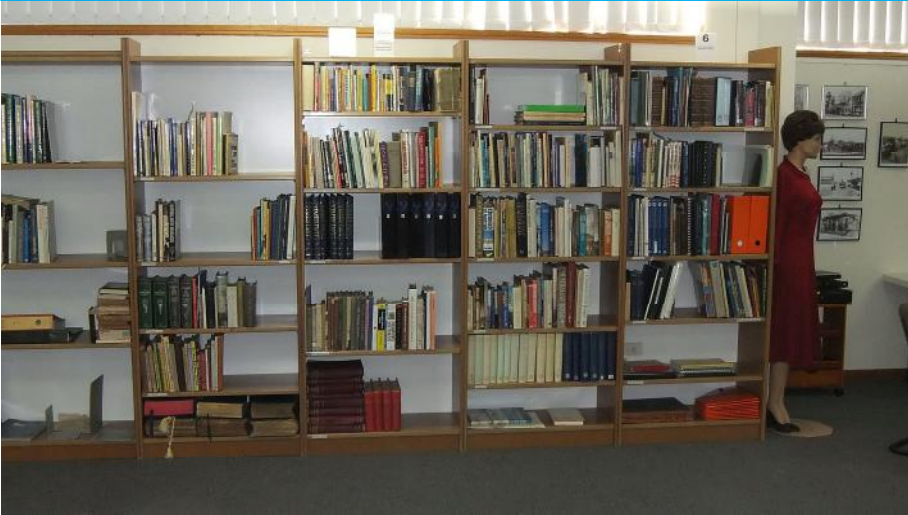
There have been recent announcements by the National Library, Canberra, of funding cuts to the online resource, "Trove", in view of cuts to the Library's general funding. "Trove" is such an invaluable resource, accessible to all, that consideration should be given to funding it adequately.

Indeed, it should be funded to allow it to continue the expansion of its resources online.

If you feel this venture should continue to be funded, write to Hon. Mitch Fifield, Minister for Communications & The Arts, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT, 2600.

(Ed: One day, while searching the site I typed in my maiden name, not expecting to find anything. Lo and behold up came a short article about an accident between a horse and buggy carrying my father, mother and myself (age 2) and a small lorry. Luckily, it reoriented we were not injured. You never know what you might find.)

A Great Big Thank You



A very big thank you to the **Concord Men's (Harry's) Shed** for building us this beautiful book case. Doesn't it look great! At last we can actually find any book we are looking for, and we've got plenty of space to house more books as we get them.

Members and visitors are welcome to come along any time we're open to check out our diverse collection. They are welcome to peruse them at the museum but we don't lend them out.

Also a very big thank you to those members who did the hard work of removing books from the old shelves and sorting them into their different categories, under the watchful eye of our Librarian, Janice Millard, who made sure they were sorted correctly and placed in order on our new shelves.

If you want to learn more about the Canadian Exiles we have three books on the subject in our library.

Thank you all , , , especially the Men's Shed

Council Community Grants 2016

Thanks to City of Canada Council for the second grant of \$1,000 received to complete the restoration of the historic 1890 map of Concord we found in our archives.

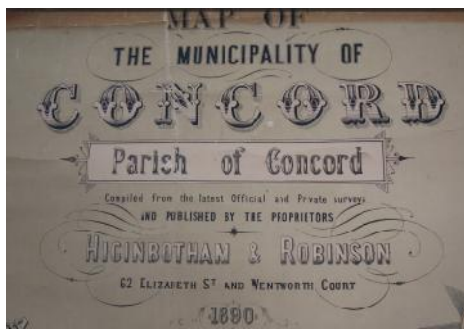
The map had suffered a bit of damage over its lifetime but thanks to Karen, our wonderful Museum Advisor, it has now be restored and mounted and will be on display at our museum in the near future.

We are grateful to the Council for this community support over the years with these grants, which have allowed us to turn out museum into one of the best local museums in the state.

If you haven't yet visited, please come soon. You won't be disappointed. We regularly change displays so there is always something new to see.

Our resident comedian, Patricio, thought we deserved more so he appropriated the Council's cheque. Unfortunately the bank wouldn't cash it for him.

(Ed: You can take him anywhere but out !!!)



Ode to the Eighties

The first 80 years are the hardest – life really begins at 80.

I have good news for you. The first 80 years are the hardest. The second 80 are a succession of birthday parties.

Once you reach 80 everyone wants to carry your baggage and help you up the steps.

If you forget your name, or anyone else's, or an appointment, or your own telephone number, or promise to be in three places at the one time, or can't remember how many grandchildren you have, you need only to explain that you are 80!

Being 80 is a lot better than being 70. At 70 people are mad at you for everything. At 80 you have a perfect excuse, no matter what you do. If you act foolishly it's your second (or third) childhood. Everybody is looking for symptoms of softening of the brain.

Being 70 is no fun at all. At that age they expect you to retire to a house on the central coast and complain about your arthritis (they used to call it lumbago), and ask everybody to stop mumbling because you can't understand them. (Actually your hearing is about 50% gone).

If you survive until you are 80 everybody is surprised that you are still alive. They treat you with respect just for living so long. Actually they seem surprised that you can walk and talk sensibly.

So, please folks, try to make it to 80. It's the best time of your life. People forgive you for anything.

If you ask me, LIFE BEGINS AT 80!



Our Betty's made it to 90 . . . and still having the time of her life.

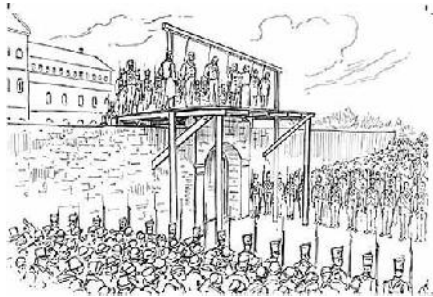
Here's to the next 10 years!

A bumper sticker seen on a Sydney car: "Avenge yourself – live long enough to be a problem for your children"

Colonial Canadian Exiles

Colonel George Arthur, after 12 years a Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's Land, was appointed to a similar position in Upper Canada (now Ontario). His first task on arrival, in early 1838, was to clean up the remnants of a rebellion against the British rule which had been going on for some time in both Upper and Lower Canada (now Quebec).

Arthur did the job with typical thoroughness and efficiency. Some rebels were killed and others fled to the United States. Of those captured, 29 were executed and a few deported to Bermuda, which left 149 to be dealt with.



Sketch: The execution of Patriots in front of Montreal Prison

In view of Arthur's long experience in charge of a convict colony, it is not surprising that he ordered them to be sent to Australia. Those from Upper Canada were to be sent to Van Diemen's Land and those from Lower Canada, who were French speakers, to New South Wales.

The first ones from Upper Canada reached Hobart Town in July 1839, so debilitated by their voyage that three died soon afterwards. Four more arrived in January 1840 and 58 from Lower Canada came in February on the ship Bu alo.

All the Lower Canadians were men of good background and education and looked upon themselves as exiles. In fact they were regarded and treated as common convicts. In Van Diemen's Land, particularly, they were so harshly treated that many tried to escape. Three took to sea in an open boat and were picked up

by a passenger ship and eventually reached the United States. Others, no so fortunate, spent extra terms in Port Arthur for attempting escape.

Eventually most of the exiles in Van Diemen's Land were pardoned, but many had to stay on until they could earn enough for the passages. By the time the last man reached Canada he had been away for 22 years.

The French-Canadian group in Sydney was treated much better. Governor Gipps first intention had been to send them to Norfolk Island, but Bishop Polding, head of the Roman Catholic Church in Australia was able to prevent this. Instead they were sent to a stockade in what is now the Sydney suburb of Canada Bay. Most worked quarrying stone for a new road from Sydney to Parramatta. Then came a period when they were assigned to various government officials, and soon afterwards they all received ticket-of-leave.

Through the efforts of Bishop Polding and others, 29 received free pardons in 1844 and the rest at a later date. As in Van Diemen's Land, many had trouble raising their fares home but eventually all but three returned to Canada. Of those that failed, two died in the colony and one, Joseph Marceau, married an Australian girl and elected to stay.

(Reprinted, with permission, from the Heron Flyer, May 2016.



French-Canadian Monument in Bayview Park, Concord

From the Secretary's Desk



RIVENDELL OPEN DAY - Sunday, 31st July. Please tell all you friends and workmates. If you'd like to come along to help with Devonshire Teas and other jobs, please let me know. We always welcome extra hands.

OUR NEXT DISPLAY - Neighbours.

We will be introducing you to our suburban neighbours within the City of Canada Bay. A chance to learn a little more about this area we live in.

As part of the display - a part of History Week - on 3rd September we will be showing a PowerPoint presentation with lots of old photos from both our collection and the Local Studies section of the libraries.

YARALLA SPRING FAIR - organised by the Yaralla Advisory Committee - Sunday, 11th September. Last year's event was a huge success with hundreds of locals stopping by for food, music, dancing, health information and mini-tours of the estate. Come along - and bring your dog - 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

We will have a stall there and will be conducting the mini-tours as an introduction to our upcoming Yaralla Open Day

A Smile is a Funny Thing

A smile is quite a funny thing
It wrinkles up your face
And when it's gone, you'll never find
Its secret hiding place
But far more wonderful it is
To see what smiles can do
You smile at one, she smiles at you
And so one smile makes two

He smiles at someone, since you smile
And then that one smiles back
And that one smile smiles until in truth
You fail in keeping track
And since a smile can do great good
By cheering hearts of care
Let's smile and not forget the fact
That smiles go everywhere



Two elderly retired army colonels were sitting in their club one evening. After a long silence one said to the other, "I say, Fotheringill, old boy, how long is it since you had a really active love affair?"

After thinking for a while, Fotheringill replied, "If I remember correctly, old chap, it was about 1945."

"My word," said his friend, "That's quite a long time ago isn't it?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Fotheringill, looking at his watch,

"After all, it's only 21.35 now."