



NEWSLETTER

Collectors' Night

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Camden Historical Society held its own **Collectors' Night** at our meeting on Wednesday 9th July 2008. Members were asked to talk briefly about their collections. **Werner Wollinski** showed a variety of treasures – a pocket-sized Buddhist prayer wheel, some musical Bohemian green wine glasses, and a toy replica red Massey Harris tractor. **Bob Lester** spoke about his twenty-year collection of Phantom comics and Phantom memorabilia and some of the history of the illustrations.

Sandra Dodds said she was not really a collector, but was fascinated by 'paper engineering'. She displayed twelve examples of children's pop-up books, including a spectacular facsimile 19th century circus

book. **Shirley Rorke** admitted she was a collector, and showed photographs of the many collections she has in her unit of art, ornaments, chinaware and furniture.

Warren Hicks showed a phonograph cylinder, and demonstrated a morse-code transmitter, telling of his two years in the army signals section in Vietnam.

Bob Grey played his quiet practice bagpipe horn, and showed a richly decorated hand-made silver and steel Scottish dirk, and maps of Scottish clans.

Sid Long showed a historic hand-made metal trug, or open fruit-harvesting basket, which had belonged to Martin Thurn of Elderslie.

Brad Sutcliffe spoke of his interest in children's toys and demonstrated an old-fashioned table-top racing set, where horsemen moved along stretched material by the turning of a han-

dle.

Pauline Downing showed her collection of items she had gained while travelling – including a coolamon cradle from Central Australia, carved wooden spoon from Sweden, a seed pod necklace from Fiji, and her backpack with souvenir patches from 24 countries. Pauline showed Powerpoint images of the different countries she had visited and the people she had met along the way.

Peter Hayward unpacked a bag of fascinating toys, tools, books and scientific devices which summed up aspects of his life, including the Jaguar 'Leaping Cat' car mascot.

Sharon Greene showed just part of her collection of thimbles from her travels including souvenir thimbles from England and Europe. JW

Special points of interest:

- **Ordinary General Meetings:**
Wednesday, 7.30pm,
Camden Museum,
40 John St,
Camden.
10 September 2008
8 October 2008
12 November 2008
10 December 2008
11 February 2009
11 March 2009
8 April 2009
13 May 2009
10 June 2009
8 July 2009
12 August 2009
9 September 2009

2008 Annual General Meeting

The annual general meeting of the society was held on Wednesday night 13 August. The retiring president Ian Willis gave his final report on the theme of volunteering. Ray Herbert gave an account of the society's finances. The new management was elected under the

direction of the returning officer, Peter Hayward.

A new president, Cathey Shepherd, was elected and new members of the committee include Jenny Akers and Sharon Greene. Retiring committee members were Colin Mills and Sandra Dodds.

A variety of other jobs were filled by keen volunteers. The AGM was followed by an ordinary meeting, chaired by the new president.

A sumptuous supper was supplied by volunteers. Amongst lots of lovely goodies was one of Helen Grey's famous sponge cakes.

All correspondence to Secretary, Camden Historical Society, PO Box 566, Camden. 2570 • Museum 4655 3400

President: Cathey Shepherd 4655 9963 • Vice presidents: John Wrigley OAM 4655 9210; Bob Lester 4655 9044 • Treasurer: Ray Herbert 9606 6075 • Secretary: Doug Barrett 4647 0597 • Immediate past president: Dr Ian Willis, General committee: Peter Hayward OAM, Julie Wrigley, Len English, Roslyn Tildsley, Dr Karen Farmer, Jenny Akers, Sharon Green. *Newsletter Editor:* Dr Ian Willis. *Webmaster:* Steve Robinson

Editor's Shorts

Upcoming speakers

September Janice Johnston, History of St John's Cemetery

October Dr Gabrielle Gwyther UWS Bankstown

December Roslyn Tildsley, Games and Activities

Events

There was a visit by four members of the **Blue Mountains Historical Society** and museum consultant Shar Jones on the afternoon of Friday 7 August 2008. The group was on an investigatory visit to see how the society manages the museum and our archives. They also vis-

ited The Oaks Historical Society in the morning to see how they do things at The Oaks.

Duke of Edinburgh student Samantha Pacchiarotta has been collaborating with Camden Library local studies librarian Jo Oliver and the society to conduct an oral history interview with Beryl Woodhead.

The society organized the **Celebrate the Museum** cocktail party on June 28. 90 people attended, including a number of local councillors and our local state member of parliament, Geoff Corrigan. It was organised by John and Julie Wrigley.

A number of **groups of museum visitors** have recently visited. Amongst them have

been the Glenfield Masonic Home, on 12 July with 18 people. A visit by pilgrims from Camden, USA, on 14 July. Illawarra Car Club on 10 August with 40 visitors. On 21 August about 45 members of Peakhurst Probus Club visited the museum.

Training days for museum volunteers were held in July 2008. This covered a range of issues including use of the computers, lift, archives and library. Bob Lester conducts these days and is responsible for the development of the manual that outlines help for museum volunteers.

The society had a successful stall at the **antique fair** in August. Ably organised by

John Wrigley.

The society has recently purchased a **MP3 recorder** that is to be used for oral history interviews. The use of the recorder is co-ordinated by society secretary Doug Barrett.

The website **www.camdenhistory.org.au** continues to be successful beyond expectations. In June 2008 the site had 14,300 hits, up from May with 13,000 hits, and well up from 8,800 in January. Well done Steve.

Museum visitors in 2008 have been over 3,400 so far. Visitors in April were 1,008, May 493 and June 539. Well done all.

Research and Writing Group

This is a group of people who enjoy researching and writing local history of the Camden area.

The major project of the group members so far has been writing entries for the Dictionary of Sydney project. There are 15 entries that have been finalised. The writers include Jenny Akers, Chris Robinson, Ian Willis, Steve Robinson, Ray Herbert, Sharon Greene and

Samantha Pacchiarotta. The entry for Camden has been published in the *Sydney Journal* and *Australian Quarterly*. There are 8 other entries that are in various stages of preparation.

Group members are also working on the biographies for Ina Cameron and Geoff and Olive McAleer, an honor roll for the First and Second World Wars, statements of significance for

museum objects and other oral history projects.

Each member of the group pursues their own research at their own pace. Each person keeps the rest of the group informed of their progress. The group members use the society's archives and resources.

The group meets on the 3rd Saturday of the month, at the museum, 9.30am. All welcome.

'An Engine Called 'Pansy'

She's so old no one remembers when they christened her. But the locals on the toy train route will fight to keep her. The stout little engine has been in service for 50 years, but retirement still seems far off.

Everybody's 1 August 1962

'The Cow-Pastures 1824'

The Cow-Pastures are situated on the north-east side of the county of Camden; they are about thirty miles distant from Sydney, and, extending northward from the River Bargo to the confluence of the Warragamba with the Nepean, are bounded to the west by some of the branches of the former River and hills of the Nattai. This tract of land... is computed to contain sixty thousand acres.

Views in Australia 1824

Camden Library Partnership

Katherine Baget gave a presentation at the last partnership meeting that outlined the future of local studies. The aim of the library is enhance the local history collection, the preservation of Camden's history, promote local culture through the library webpage, increase access to collections, and attract new audiences.

The local studies webpage will include links to the commu-

nity profile for research.

History Pix will continue a unique collection of over 2000 images. The library will call for community photos on the various community activities.

The library will encourage the Flickr Group Project called the 'Faces of Camden'.

There will be 'Oral Histories Online' in 2009 providing

access to the libraries oral history collection.

The local studies weblog will promote 'Memories of your suburb project'. It will offer a unique view of the living history of our area.

Vertical files will be scanned and be available online.

The library will enhance its existing partnerships.

KB

Camden Retrospective

Tramway Demonstration [1882]

Last Friday proved to be the grandest and most eventful in the history of the Camden district, on which occasion the Tramway was opened to Camden. Between two and three thousand people were present...

Early in the morning of the day in question a glance towards the main street of our important and fast-rising town showed that Camden was decorated, and flags of every description were flying in the gentle breeze from all the principal houses. ...all the business places were closed, and people with smiling countenances were pacing the streets of 'Sleepy Hollow' - at

least Camden - evidently anticipating something good in store for them during the day. Later on visitors were gradually coming in from all directions, gaily attired in their best clothes.

In strolling towards the tramway we noticed a very pretty archway over the gate leading to the banquet room, the evergreens being tastefully arranged. Passing through the gate, we entered Mrs Thompson's Mill, where the banquet was to be held, and found a large, commodious room splendidly decorated with shrubs, ferns and flowers. The employees of the City Cater-

ing Company were then busily engaged in preparing the tables for the banquet in a most tempting style.

The Sports Ground was the next object of attraction, and we found it in excellent order, and everything ready for the sports. Messrs T Cummings, Brunson, and Huntley had refreshment booths.

At about 10 o'clock the first tram arrived, when a regular rush was made by the people on the temporary platform. The tram had brought passengers, but *no Band*.

Extract: The Camden Times 10 March 1882

'Quaint Railway Line'

On January 1, 1963, the State railways closed one of its most interesting branch lines, the eight miles of track from Campbelltown to Camden.

Wandering up and down hills and running almost alongside roads, this quaint railway was popular with residents, visitors and photographers, but not so popular with the railway administration, to whom the sight of a locomotive hauling one empty carriage was something less than picturesque.

South Coast and Southern Tablelands Magazine, 27 March 1978

Locating Objects in the Museum Collection

Have you ever wondered how you would find one of the three thousand items in the Camden Museum? Until now this was a difficult task, and depended on the knowledge of our long-standing members who remembered where things were. Recent changes have been made to help locate items by improving the catalogue. The objects in the museum are catalogued on our re-

search room computer with a number, description, donor's name if known, the year acquired, and a category name. Some items have interesting addition notes with stories about the objects.

Julie Wrigley has added a new field to the catalogue to indicate the location of each item. Location areas have been given a reference number, with a key to explain where the areas can be

found. In the research room there is a folder with a list of the items in each of the locations throughout the museum.

Museum volunteers can click on the icon "Objects Catalogue" on the desktop of the computer in the research room and search the catalogue using 'Find'. Members are encouraged to explore the catalogue and become more familiar with the museum collection. JW

HistoryPix Photos of Camden

The Camden Museum holds a collection of about 2400 photos in HistoryPix. Geographically these cover Camden and surrounding districts and in time range from the 1870s up to the present day. These have been digitized and can be accessed by anyone with a computer and Internet connection.

ACCESS

Go to Google and type *his-*

torypix camden photosearcher. Click Australia. Click this term on the list which appears on the screen. A screen will appear. In the Keyword Search box type in one or two words to cover the desired topic e.g. Cawdor or John Street. A list of photos will appear. Click Thumbnails in the left column and small images of the photos will appear. Scroll through these. To see details click the image and a larger

copy of the image will appear along with information about the photo. If a copy is desired click File at the top of the screen and then click Print. To continue, click Thumbnails in the left column and proceed as above.

HistoryPix is a joint venture of Camden Historical Society and Camden Library Service.

PM

'For Sale'

Commercial and Industrial Land by State Rail Authority of NSW

Site of Narellan Railway Station, Lot 1 Camden Valley Way, Narellan

Cnr Argyle and Edward St, Camden

Cnr Edward St and Mitchell Street, Camden

Graham Hill Rd, Narellan

September 1989

Advertising Brochures

All former sites of the Camden Tramway, .

'Pansy Lives On'

In 2007 over 350 people visited a replica display of the Camden Tramway. It was on display at the home of Ern and Sue Clinton. It was part of the 180th anniversary of Narellan. Almost \$800 was raised for the Narellan scout group.

Camden Advertiser 4 April 2007



**CAMDEN
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC**

PO Box 566
Camden NSW 2570

**Camden Museum
Camden Library and Museum
Complex**

40 John St, Camden.

General Admission Free

Opening Times

Thurs– Sunday 11.00am – 4.00 pm

Phone: Museum 02 4655 3400

<http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>

E: secretary@camdenhistory.org.au

ABN 84 182 869 026

MEMBERSHIP

Individual \$10

Family \$15

Corporate/Assoen \$75

For Year Ending 30 June

The Camden Historical Society

The society was founded in 1957. Its aim is to promote the local history and heritage of Camden. It primarily does this through managing the Camden Museum which opened in 1970. General admission to the museum is free, although visitors are encouraged to leave a donation. The museum is conducted entirely by volunteers. It also receives substantial and continuing assistance from Camden Council.

Historic Precinct

The museum is located in Camden's historic precinct. It is part of the Camden Library and Museum Complex. It provides an ideal start for a walking tour of the town area. The visitor can take in the charm of the many 19th and early 20th century buildings.

Research

The Society's archives are open to the public. General enquiries are free. Specific research by our volunteers attracts a \$15 fee plus photocopying. Extensive use of the Society's records is by negotiation.

**All donations to the Camden Historical Society Inc over \$2 are tax deductible
The accredited value of objects donated to the society are eligible for tax deduction**

Camden Retrospective

Camden Train Service

Harold Lowe wrote in the late 1950s (in part):

At first it crossed the Nepean on a low level bridge running in the middle of the roadway until the present bridge was built in 1901. In 1903 a proposal was made and approved by the Government to extend the line to The Oaks and a survey was ordered to be made by the then Minister of Works, Mr EW O'Sullivan. Shortly afterwards he was put out of office and the chances of a railway to The Oaks vanished. In 1906 requests were made to improve the rail service but these were

refused at the time. It was pointed out that the capital cost of the line was £48,884, working expenses £3,206, interest on capital £1,751, making a total expenditure for the year of £4,957. The total earnings were £3,912. Compared with the previous year fares and freights increased by £774, while working expenses were reduced by £113.

The first station was below the present Milk Depot but later land was resumed where the present site is situated. The first Presbyterian Church was

one of the properties resumed.

Early train drivers in the present century were Messrs Hodges, Munday and Kitching. While the Yerrandarie silver mine was operating the amount of goods traffic was very great but the impact of lorries greatly diminished its use. At the present time its main support came from coal and milk.

Harold Lowe was an alderman on Camden Council 1921-1941, captain Camden Rifle Club 1915-1928, rode in the Goulburn-Sydney Cycle Classic, Rector's Warden of St Mark's at Elderslie, vice-president and research-secretary of the Camden Historical Society, amongst other roles.

The Camden Historical Society would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Hon Pat Farmer MP in the printing of this newsletter.