



# NEWSLETTER

## A Few Favourite Things

The society's meeting on 8 April 2009 was a 'show & tell' of old time favourites.

Vic Boardman showed a book rules and regulations of the Camden Temperance Society which his father joined him up in 1935. He also drove his 1931 Chevrolet to the meeting.

John Wrigley displayed his grandfathers gold watch which was 100 years old. It was presented to him by the members of the McLean Methodist circuit in 1909.

Frances Warner, a favourite bear, called Elvis, given to her by her guardian, Mrs Fisher. She got it from Germany. Frances has had it for 47 years

Olive McAleer showed a painting by Harry Hankie. It belonged to Rita Bloomfield a fellow painter who had painted with Olive for over 18 years. Rita left the painting to Olive on her death. Olive started painting over 39 years ago.

Karen Farmer displayed a cross stitch of John Street Camden that she completed in 2003. She also showed some framed cards of Camden that she purchased at the

Camden markets.

Julie Wrigley demonstrated her bird watching binoculars. They had been stolen from her car, recovered, damaged in a fall then repaired and taken on New Zealand holiday. She says that she 'highly values them'.

Sid Long related how he came to a society meeting 30 years ago at Camden High School. He was prompted by the article about Harry Hawkey in the District Reporter. Harry has a dispute with Camden Park over a fence.

Shirley Rorke displayed some vases. A blue one from England, and a French blue and white piece and an unusual tulip vase.

Peter Hayward talked about a number of items around the theme of measurement. They included scales, a 1936 Art Deco aluminum electric clock, a thermometer, carpenters folding ruler, compass, string level, a 1891 physics book, a 1919 fob watch, and an amp meter.

Jos Ferguson showed a bronze memorial plaque of a grandparent killed in World War One (1918) who was in the 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion. The medallion was issued by the British

Government for soldiers killed in action. They were sometimes called 'Dead Man's Penny' or 'Death Plaque'.

Roslyn Tildsley displayed off a crochet child's jacket she had made for her niece.

Pauline Downing demonstrated the group a favorite soft toy Garfield, her favorite woolen slippers that are 'good to wear', and a wooden spoon used for making jam which she purchased at the antique shop at Fitroy Falls.

Ray Herbert showed a poster of new pre-decimal stamps from 1966 which were displayed at the Miranda post office where he worked at the time. Ray then distributed Easter eggs to all present.

Bob Gray displayed a variety of book on Scotland, the birthplace of Helen, his wife. He told the story of Waltzing Matilda which came from a Scottish folk ballad and showed off 1797 nail buffer, silver thimble and a button hook for shoes.

JW

## Volunteering at the Museum

Camden Museum has 54 volunteers working 40 shifts each month to keep the doors of the Museum open for the public. Some come in for one regular two and a half hours each month whilst others do multiple days or even a whole day. Whatever, the time they give is very appreciated by both the visitors who come to the Museum and the Society management.

Volunteering at the Museum is very rewarding where you can meet the most interesting people from right here in Camden or from right

around the world. You never know who will pop into the Camden Museum to have a look. Volunteers are also able to spend time researching the wealth of material that the Museum holds on local history and the many characters that have made up districts colourful past.

Helping visitors enjoy their time at the Museum is important and our volunteers are keen to share their own knowledge of the area or special interest.

With a few people deciding to "retire" we need a few more volunteers to fill up our monthly roster. Two new volunteers will start in June but we are always seeking more to ensure we can spread the work load and cover people for illness and holidays.

So come and join the volunteers at the Museum – it's much better than the movie.

Contact the Society's Secretary on how to become a volunteer.

BL

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### Special points of interest:

- **Ordinary General Meetings**  
 13 May 09  
 10 June 09  
 8 July 09  
 12 August 09  
 9 September 09  
 14 October 09  
 11 November 09  
 9 December 09
- **Each meeting is held at 7.30pm at the museum, 40 John St, Camden. All welcome**

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

**June:** Sister Mary, Sisters of the Good Samaritan, Wivenhoe.

**July:** Andrew Markerink, Master Clockmaker.

**August:** AGM

**September:** Liz Stephenson, Gemmissima, Individually designed beadware.

Any member who has suggestions for speakers see **Pauline Downing** 4655 3622

### Events

The society's **guest speaker** in February was Allen Powell from the Mt Annan Botanic Gardens. He spoke about several containers of fossilised ferns from northern NSW and a living specimen of Wollemi Pine. He described the conditions in which the ancient pine thrived and survived in.

In March Peter Cuneo, the manager of Natural Heritage at Mt Annan Botanic Gardens presented 'Jumping the Garden Fence'. He spoke on how feral olives have spread across the Camden district, and attempts to control it. He outlined the types of vegetation that make up the Cumberland Plain Region.

The **archive room** continues to attract attention from researchers and visitors. In the last few months there have been family history enquiries for: Harloff; Fuller/Sheather; Gittoes; Hilder; Adamson; Menz/Pallier; Bugden; Hawes. Other general research has included: Pansy; HC Wallace the last station master; Ben Linden, Narellan; Burragorang Valley; Camden Gasworks; Camden Floods; Macaria; Aboriginal history; Mt Hunter Public School; Museum's statement of significance.

**Visitor numbers** to the museum between January and May have been 2,075, in April there 1,008.

The society has recently purchased **computer software** for the management of the museum collections. It is called Mosaic Plus. Julie Wrigley and Cathey Shepherd attended a 3 day training course in January 09.

**School visits** to the museum are supervised by Doug Barrett and he continues to do a sterling job. There were the following school visits: February, Sherwood Hills Christian School, 15 students; April, Macarthur Anglican, Year 7, 40 students; April, Magdalene College, Year 7, 130 students; May, Macarthur Anglican, Year 3, 85 students. Other groups included: May, Hawkesford Coaches, 25 visitor; June, Hawkesford Coaches, 20; Kiama Historical

Society, 20 visitors.

**Grants:** The society has purchased a digital projector and screen with a successful grant application from the 2008 Volunteers Grants Program from the Federal Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. The society has also received a grant from the 2008-09 Grant to Voluntary Environment and Heritage Organisations from the Federal Department of the Environment, Water Heritage and the Arts. Both were organised by Ian Willis.

Society member, Ian Willis, has had an article published in the current issue of the **Journal of the Royal Australian Society**. It is called *Stories and Things: the role of the local historical society, Campbelltown, Camden and The Oaks*. It analyses the history and community role of each of the societies.

## Upcoming Events

The society is having the **Marvellous Museum Cocktail Party** to view a number of recent donations and catch up with old friends. All members are invited to attend on Friday 26 June 2009 between 5.30-7.30pm. Just drop in any time. Members are asked to bring something savory in the form of finger food. For more information contact John on 4655 9210.

**History Week** is again with us from 5-13 September 2009. The theme is 'Scandals, Crime and Corruption'. **Author Marion Starr** will be at Camden Museum as part of History Week on Saturday 5 September at 2.00pm. This event is in conjunction with Camden Library. Marion will talk about her book and read an extract or two about Camden crime. There will be an opportunity for questions and a chance to talk

with Marion at afternoon tea. Marion's books will be for sale. Another History Week event is **Janice Johnson's cemetery tours** of St John's between 11.00-12.00pm on 10 & 12 September. Gold coin donation to cemetery restoration. Meet at St John's lynch gate. **The Family Society** will conduct a workshop, 'Did you have a convict in your family'. 12 Sept 09 between 1.00-4.00pm.

## RESEARCH AND WRITING GROUP

Group members are actively pursuing a range of personal research projects; over 20 in all. Amongst the projects are a number on Camden identities, as well as projects on Camden street names and organisations. Some of these efforts have been published in the Back Page of the *District Reporter*.

The Dictionary of Sydney Project and the history of

localities is nearing finalisation by group members. The project site will be launched shortly. Group members have written up 21 localities in the Camden LGA.

The aim of the group is to foster the research and writing of local history of the Camden area. The group meets on the 3rd Saturday morning of each month, 9.30am, Camden Museum. All welcome.

## WEBSITE

**Camdenhistory.org.au**

The website continues to be busy. In the 5 months to May 2009 there have been over 55,000 hits. The busiest month was April with over 12,400 hits. There have been around 7,000 unique visitors, with 8,500 separate visits, sampling over 37,000 pages. One of the busiest pages on the website is the Camden Bibliography, which contains a large list of references about Camden.

### 2009 Museums

#### Australia Conference, Newcastle

*In May society member Ian Willis presented a research paper at the conference called Community Partnerships, Are they all that they are cracked up to be. He outlined the very successful community partnership between the society and Camden library.*

### Camden Remembers

In April 2009 society members Ray Herbert, Steve & Chris Robertson launched a new website called 'Camden Remembers' for ANZAC Day. The website commemorates the sacrifice of local men and women in times of war. The website covers all conflicts although it concentrates on the First and Second World Wars.



## Reviews by Ian Willis

### The History of Mt Hunter Public School, 1859-2009

By Mark Latham, Mt Hunter Public School, Mt Hunter, 2009. 68pp. RRP \$15.00

### The Oaks Horse & Pony Club, 1958-1966, 1970-2009

By Lisa Vale, Lisa Vale, The Oaks, 2009. 137pp. RRP \$30.00

The local history scene is the field of the keen amateur historian and these two books fit that mould. They both reflect the enthusiasm of their authors and the people that they are represented by the stories they tell.

The school history of Mt Hunter places the village and the school in the wider context of the district history. The history of the school is the history of the village and the many families that have lived in the area and sent their children to the school. The memoirs of past staff and students provide

access to an earlier social history of the village

The history of the pony club illustrates the importance of the horse in the wider context of the area. The horse has moved from an economic resource to lifestyle and recreation. This in turn represents the changes in the area from working farms to hobby farms.

Both publications have reproduced a number of original document on the history these institutions. They provide a voice from the past, which speaks to the present.

Both histories provide a plethora of photographs that provide a snapshot of a past time. Photographs assist story telling and provide a prompt to memories of the past. Disappointingly many are not captioned in the school history.

The local family historians will be grateful for the vast lists of names of these localities, especially in the pony club history. Unfortunately both lack an index which would greatly help the reader.

Both are great assets to the library of local publications.

### 2009 ABC RADIO NATIONAL REGIONAL MUSEUMS AWARD

*The society entered the museum in this award for the first time this year. The application was put together by John & Julie Wrigley, and Ian Willis. Information had to be supplied on: a significant artefact; the museum's contribution to local tourism and development; the museum's contribution to community capacity; and how the museum works with the local community to ensure its future success. The national winners were announced at the 2009 Museums Australia Conference in Newcastle. The contribution can be viewed at <<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/museums>>*

## Museum and Library Partnership

The Museum/Library partnership is in a very healthy state.

In April the Camden Memories of Your Suburb Weblog was launched by Cindy Cagney at Narellan Library. Check out the site at <http://camdenmemoriesofyoursuburb.blogspot.com>.

Donations of photos and information about veterans were forthcoming for the Camden Remembers project

(mentioned elsewhere in newsletter).

In History Week the theme is Scandals, Crime and Corruption and there a number of events already listed in this newsletter.

Jo Morris Local Studies Librarian at Liverpool is getting a quote for microfilming of Nepean Shire Minute Books. Camden Council holds 1896-1948. The society has written to council support the microfilming of these records, as well as early Camden

Council minutes.

On oral history workshop was held in February and 40 people were identified and invited to register as interviewees. An information morning was held on May 16 as the next stage of the project.

HistoryPix now has another assistant, Amanda Foxley, who is in charge of administration. Online credit card facilities are now available.

JO

## UPDATES TO HISTORYPIX

Peter Mylrea keeps doing a sterling job on organising HistoryPix. There are currently around 2500 images on the website.

HistoryPix is used by members of the public, local and Sydney media, local businesses and community organisations.

In the last 3 months of 2008 there were 23,600 hist and

23,700 searches, while in the seven months from April 2008 and January 2009 there were 43,000 hits and 55,000 searches.

The HistoryPix website is accessible through the websites of Camden Historical Society and the Camden Library. Also Picture Australia.

The society provides the photographs, the images are

digitised by Searchtech, the council provides the IT and online support the library staff handle the sale of photographs and set the charges.

Camden Library has produced postcards, posters and other uses of HistoryPix.

Have a look at the website you will be surprised what you can find.

### Camden Voices Oral History Project

The society and the library have been conducting a joint project called 'Camden Voices Online'. The aim is to interview people in the Camden area. The library has purchased a recorder and there has been a number of training workshops. The workshops covered simple recording procedures, protocols for interviews and suggested questions. Over 25 people attended a workshop led by Jo Oliver, Local Studies Librarian, that was facilitated through the society's Research and Writing Group.

### 2009 Heritage Festival In Camden

The society has an active partnership with Camden library during heritage week in April 2009. The library launched a website called 'Memories of Your Suburb Weblog'. Most of the information comes from society resources.



## 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

Thursday– Sunday 11.00am – 4.00 pm

Phone: Museum 02 4655 3400

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

email: [secretary@camdenhistory.org.au](mailto:secretary@camdenhistory.org.au)

ABN 84 182 869 026

### MEMBERSHIP

Individual \$10

Family \$15

Corporate/Assocn \$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

### *Mr George Sidman*

Mr George Sidman was given life membership of the NSW Country Press Association in 1947. The president said that 'Mr Sidman is a Past President, a gentleman who has rendered signal service to the Association, a foundation member of the Association and a jolly good fellow in every respect'.

Mr Sidman stated in reply that he had 'not done so much'. He further stated, 'It is characteristic of all pressmen to exercise their privileges and duties of citizenship, and in these times of controls, registration, regimentation, if not nationalism, we have big duties beyond those

which are within our own office. One of our duties of citizenship is the education of our youth... I look upon the education of our children as the most paramount interest in national circles. I am of the opinion that none of us will be satisfied until the boys and girls of our remote country districts have equal opportunity of participating in the educational facilities that are afforded to the boys and girls of the city, and other large centres of population. I look upon the education system as one of the greatest matters that confronts us, as it affects boys and girls in

the remote country districts, and is long overdue for revision. I think we have to ask ourselves as citizens to give very serious thought to that phase of a healthy educated mind in a healthy body and may we all work for that. May we see... the culmination of which would give us confidence and assurance in a full realisation that our country, our empire, and the peace of the world would be safe in the hands of our rising generation...'

*1947 Press Progress, NSW Country Press Association, Sydney*

*GV Sidman, President, NSWCPA, 1942-44. Owner of the Camden News.*

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