



NEWSLETTER

John Oxley Bicentenary

Society member Robert Wheeler has organised with Camden Council to commemorate Oxley's Bicentenary with the erection of a sculpture and information board in John Oxley Reserve at Kirkham. The artwork will be officially opened at 10.00am on 25 October 2012 at the reserve. Attending will be the Institution of Surveyors NSW.

The sculpture is a metal-cut-out silhouette of John Oxley. The Camden Advertiser (20/6/12) reported that Camden Council will commission the one-metre high sculpture and signage.

The artwork will cost \$3500 and council supported spending the funds to erect the sculpture. An interpretive sign would also outline the historical importance of John Oxley's achievement.



Robert Wheeler approached the council with the idea. He will give a public lecture on the story of John Oxley at the October meeting of the society.

There will also be a display at Camden Library in October.

Robert Wheeler has written in *Placenames Australia* (March 2012) that Elderslie was named after Oxley's 1816 land grant of Ellerslie (Elderslie). The locality of Kirkham is named after Oxley's birthplace of

Kirkham Abbey in Yorkshire.

Oxley joined the Royal Navy at 15 years of age and sailed into New South Wales waters in 1802. He came back to Sydney in 1808 on the *Porpoise* and returned to England with Governor Bligh in 1810. Oxley was discharged from the Royal Navy, returned to New South Wales and became the Colony's Surveyor-General in 1812. He was the 3rd surveyor-general of the colony.

The Australian Dictionary of Biography details his explorations into the interior of New South Wales.

Mayor Greg Warren stated in the Camden Advertiser (20/6/12) that John Oxley was a major part of Camden's history.

Inside this issue:

New president	1
Editor's Shorts	2
Camden Red Cross Project	2
Museum visitors	2
CIFA Camden	3
Museum Cocktail Party	3
Website Update	3

Special points of interest:

- Ordinary General Meetings
- 12 September 2012
- 10 October 2012
- 14 November 2012
- 12 December 2012
- 13 February 2013
- 13 March 2013
- Each meeting is held at 7.30pm at the museum, 40 John St, Camden. All welcome

New President

The society membership elected a new president, Bob Lester, at the August annual general meeting. The outgoing president, John Wrigley, gave his annual report and thank the committee for their support. John has been the president for the last year.

Bob Lester has been vice-president since 2008 and joined the committee in 2003 as volunteer co-ordinator. Bob has done a sterling job as volunteer co-ordinator and

has often been the face of the society for new members. He has regularly conducted volunteer training days for new volunteers and refresher courses for older volunteers.

Bob put together the volunteers manual and kept it updated on a regular basis. The manual included the important forms that are used at the front desk. The manual was a first for the society.

Bob has regularly kept track of the number of visitors to the museum. This is important information for grant applications. Bob has completed a Certificate IV in Museum Practice conducted by TAFE NSW. This course covers the latest practices in museum management, display and exhibition organization and collection policies. It is a competency based course to build skills and knowledge.

All correspondence to Secretary, Camden Historical Society, PO Box 566, Camden. 2570 • Museum 4655 3400
 President: Bob Lester 4655 9044 • Vice presidents: Dr Ian Willis 4658 0193; Cathey Shepherd 4655 9963 • Treasurer: Ray Herbert 9606 6075 • Secretary: Doug Barrett 4647 0597 • Immediate Past President John Wrigley OAM 4655 9210 • General Committee: Peter Hayward OAM, Julie Wrigley, Sharon Green, Janice Johnson, Rene Rem, Robert Wheeler • Newsletter Editor: Dr Ian Willis • Webmaster: Steve Robinson



Editor's Shorts

Upcoming speakers

September 2012

Meeting: 'Threads'

History Week

October 2012

Meeting: Robert Wheeler speaks on John Oxley.

November 2012

Meeting: Bob Lester speaks on Pansy

December 2012

Christmas Meeting

Events

The society has a number of events coming up in the next few weeks. This include on Tuesday 16 October working bee for members organising the new clothing display drawers at 10.00 am. Then on 25 October the launch of the new Oxley Memorial at the John Oxley Reserve at

Kirkham. A number of society members will attend the Camden Park Open Weekend on 22 and 23 September 2012.

History Week in 2012 has had a full programme again with joint activities by Camden Council Library Service, Camden Historical Society and Camden Area Family History Society. The theme is Camden Threads.

As part of the **History Week** programme there was a Show & Tell with the theme 'Clothes of the Past' at the September society meeting on Wednesday 12 September 2012. Patricia Johnson organised a fashion parade of her mother's (Mary Burt) weaving. Skirts, suits, capes, dresses, coats and evening wear were modelled by number of local women. The items had been made between 1948 and 1970 and illustrated the changes in fashion during

that period.

Another History Week activity was one of Janice Johnson's ever popular walking tours. This one called Wool Growers, Shepherds and Tanners took place at St Paul's Cemetery at Cobbitty on Saturday 8 September and Thursday 13 September 2012 at 11.00am.

There is a **Grand Afternoon Tea** planned for Saturday 17 November at 2.00pm in the museum. It will celebrate the contribution of volunteers and say thank you. Upcoming events will be highlighted especially the Red Cross project.

A number of members attended the '**Pioneers and Petticoats**' Cavalcade of Fashion Parade at Narellan Library on Tuesday 11 September at 2.00pm.

A number of members attended the Family History Society's workshop 'Threads of Family History' on Saturday 8 September. This activity looked at the resources available for family historians.

Society member Ian Willis attended a workshop called '**Making Your Museum Heard**' in July 2012. The workshop was sponsored by the Southern Highlands and Illawarra Chapter of Museums Australia. It was facilitated by John Hatton and hosted by Berrima Archives and Research Centre at Mittagong. The workshop outlined practical ways of publicizing the work of local historical societies. Sessions were called: 'The Real World Out Here!', 'Relating', 'Who's Gunna Do All This Stuff?' 'Local Government' and 'A Financial Evaluation'. There was some lively discussion led by John Hatton.

Camden Red Cross Project

The society has received a grant for a project called 'The story of the Camden Red Cross in war and peace'. The project has four parts: an exhibition; a printed history; a public lecture; and website publication.

The exhibition part of the project is making early progress. The society has bought 3 new display cabinets. Proposed purchases include a number of mannequins for displaying historic garments.

The printed history is in its early stages and will involve the re-writing of Ian Willis's MA (Hons) thesis called 'War and Community, the Red Cross in Camden, 1939-1945'. The thesis needs to be updated and edited.

Ian Willis has done early research and presented it in a conference paper at the University of Adelaide in July. The research paper was called 'Prayer, Patriotism and Place, volunteering, church committees and the New South Wales country Red Cross'. A

number of Back Then articles have been written and published in the District Reporter.

A promotional display banner was put together and it has been used to publicise the project. The banner uses a poster from the First World War for the Australian Red Cross.

The society has to account for all volunteer hours towards the project as an in-kind contribution to the project. There is also a financial contribution.

Museum visitors

Doug Barrett reports that museum visitors have included: in June Parramatta Historical Society 30 visitors; Leura Combined Probus 45; Mater Dei School 60 students; Mygunyah Camden Aboriginal Residents Group 10; Macarthur Anglican

School 45 students; Carrington Care 17; St Pauls Primary School 90 students; Past Times Tour of Museum 50; Camden High School 15 students; St Benedicts Catholic School 70 students. Upcoming visit by Macarthur Anglican School for Year 7.

Rene Rem reports that there were 696 visitors in August, up from 434 in July, and June with 434. March had the highest visitor numbers with 704 people. The total for the year to date is 4,064 and compares favorably with 2011 which had 4253.

Rustic Camden

Sometimes it's amazing who you meet in our community. Recently I spoke to 3 women doing a photo-shoot outside Macaria from 'Sally Walsh' fashions based in the Sutherland Shire. They came to Camden because of the town's rustic picturesque nature.

New Costume Cabinet

The society has recently purchased a dedicated display cabinet with self-closing drawers for the costume collection. The grant from Camden Council of \$4450 was organised by Bob Lester. Doug Barrett organised the removal and storage of the old glass topped cabinet. A working bee for those interesting in helping with the collection is on Tuesday 16 October.

CIFA Camden

Camden International Friendship Association

Address by Ken Newton to the July meeting of the Camden Historical Society

Ken Newtown from CIFA (Camden International Friendship Association) spoke on the work of this local community organisation.

Ken and his wife, Noreen, have been on a number of trips to Japan with folk from Camden.

Ken described how CIFA was formed in 1993 when Camden mayor Theresa Testoni established friendship links between Camden and Shona/Kashiwa in Japan.

Ken talked about some interesting stories of cultural differences between Australia and Japan.

He detailed how the friendship link was formalised in 1997 when local government authorities in both centre's signed an agreement. It declared a desire by both communities 'for friendship and mutual co-operation with each other'. It agreed to mutual exchange programs in education, cultural studies and other activities. The aim of the agreement was contribute to 'world peace resulting in prosperity and long lasting friendship for all'.

CIFA is sponsored by a committee of Camden Council under s355 of the Local

Government Act (NSW).

The highlight of CIFA activities is the annual student exchange between Camden and Kashiwa led by local school teachers. Japanese students come to Camden in August and Camden students travel to Japan in Term 3 school holidays.

One of the first student tours occurred in 1994 when 42 students from Camden High School band and parents visited Japan.

Ken Newton was the foundation secretary of CIFA.

Glenalvon Visit

On the afternoon of Saturday 8th September thirteen of our members visited "Glenalvon", at 8 Lithgow Street, Campbelltown. "Glenalvon" is a two-storeyed sandstone home of colonial Georgian design, and a good example of a residence and garden of its period. It was built by Michael Byrne, about 1841, and consists of the main house, the earlier Servants' Quarters, and a Victorian Coach House and Stables. The Campbelltown and Airs Historical Society hosted our visit, and gave us a tour of the house. We sat in the sun listening to a talk about the history of the house, had a delicious afternoon tea - which included an orange cake made by Cathey Shepherd - and thoroughly enjoyed the visit.
JW

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

Society webmaster Steve Robertson has recently relaunched a new website design. The new colours are bright and breezy and the new layout is a lot less cluttered and easier to get around.

These changes are reflected in the statistics for the website. In August there are over 15,000 hits compared to 11,200 in July and up from January 10,900. March was a highlight with over 19,600

hits.

The busiest day of the week is Thursday with around 600 hits per day followed by Monday with an average of 580 hits.

The key search phrase that attracts the most hits is Camden history followed by Camden Historical Society.

The most popular pages on the website is Oran Park, followed by Studley Park and then Camden. These are the

individual pages under suburbs and localities.

The page with the largest number of downloads is Camden Bibliography where there is an extensive list of references and reading about all aspects of Camden History.

Steve does a great job looking after the website and put a great effort re-launching the new website design. Many thanks Steve.

Pat Farmer Sled

The society is hosting a sled that local identity Pat Farmer used on his 'Pole to Pole' as a fundraising effort for the Red Cross. The sled is currently on loan at the museum from Narellan Rotary Club. John Wrigley spoke at the Rotary Club meeting in July.

'Celebrate-the-Museum' Cocktail Party

A 'Celebrate-the-Museum' Cocktail Party was held on Friday 20 July at the museum. People were invited to drop in from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m. to view a number of interesting recent donations to the Camden Museum and catch up with friends. Over 60 people gathered to have a glass of wine, and some delicious nibbles provided by members of the Historical Society.

People enjoyed the opportunity to see some of the museum collection, including Liz Kernohan's Olympic torch and Dick Stringer's Paralympics Torch, and the current display of nineteenth century christening dresses. Recently-donated items included a framed lithograph with an original signature of Lord Camden, after whom John Macarthur named his property; and an original letter from Sir Evan Nepean, after whom the

Nepean River was named. There were no speeches but John Wrigley said afterwards that he appreciated the community support from friends and members of the Society.

Members had worked well as a team to provide and serve the drinks and food, and make the evening so enjoyable.
JW

Wagon

Keen observers of town activities may have noticed that the wagon is missing from outside the council chambers. Someone has not hitched a horse to it and made off with it. It currently resides at Macarthur Anglican School where the construction students are giving it a make-over. It left John Street on 19 June.



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

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 Museum Complex. It provides an ideal start for a walking tour of the town area where the visitor can observe the charm and character of the town centre.

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

Cobbitty memories

In October 1995 Fred Small of Cobbitty spoke to the society about his memories of Cobbitty and Camden.

He recalled the drays that gathered wood and delivered it to the Narellan tramway.

Cobbitty had three rabbiters and they would bring their catch into the freezing works in Camden before Second World War.

He went to school without shoes and boys worked around the dairies. Swagmen would come around and would want a meal and sleep for the night in the

1930s. They would cut wood for a meal.

In his young days Fred would do seasonal work which included picking fruit, peas, beans.

The Nepean River at Cobbitty ran crystal clear. There were black fish, platypus and bird life including robins, wrens, kingfisher, grass parrots.

Polo was played for 6 months of the year. On a big day there were international players and 400-500 cars. They would park on site at Ashtons.

There were three picnic

grounds and 200 cars would turn up at Kathleen Haven on a Sunday. The sand beach on the river was 100 yards long and called Little Coogee.

Some local families ran trotting horses and did well at Harold Park. There was horse trade with the Indian Army and polo ponies to India, Egypt, South Africa and the US. Fred had polo ponies in UK in the late 1930s. The trip took 6 weeks by boat. He had to keep the horses on their feet and work them out in a sandpit. They were about half fit when Fred got to his destination.

Ian Willis 2012

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