



NEWSLETTER

Pansy - the Camden Tram

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Special points of interest:

- Ordinary General Meetings

13 March 2013

10 April 2013

8 May 2013

12 June 2013

10 July 2013

14 August 2013

- Each meeting is held at 7.30pm at the museum, 40 John St, Camden.
All welcome

The recent November 2012 meeting attracted a number of visitors to listen to Bob Lester talk about the last trip of Camden's famous train, Pansy. Bob has a special interest in the history of the train and spoke about the times and tribulations of the last train.

Bob outlined the last day of the train on 1 January 1963 which was organized by the Railway Historical Society of NSW. Camden Historical Society members of the day organised the train's farewell from Camden station. The train left Sydney Central and made its way to Campbelltown, where three locomotives, two at the front and one at the rear were needed to get the train over the grade at Kenny Hill. There were 8 carriages on the last train with lots of enthusiastic passengers getting off and on the train at various stages to take photos.

The last official day the train ran was on 31 December 1962. Railway officials could not understand why anyone would want a big deal of such an occasion or take a ride on the

train for pleasure. After the train made its way to Camden, passengers enjoyed activities organized at the Showground, or took in a picnic at Macarthur Park. True train spotters followed the train from Campbelltown.

Bob told the story of the train with current images to show the last bits of the railway that are still around the area. The keen observer can make out the right of way in quite of number of sections. At Kirkham there are embankments and culverts that are clearly visible from Camden Valley Way and Kirkham Lane. At Narellan the narrow lots in the industrial area indicate where the right of way ran for the train. At Narellan the right of way is indicated by an area of no grass across a vacant paddock opposite Narellan Shopping Centre. At Kenny Hill the track line bench above the road is still there and clearly visible. The right of way was eventually sold off in the early 1970s by railway authorities.

Bob outlined how the train would come up to Maryfield with a number of carriages for the Way

of the Cross at Easter each year. At Narellan the railway crossed the Hume Highway at a level crossing where the swinging warning signs and bells warned of an approaching train. The train ran next to the road between Campbelltown and Camden without any safety fences, hence it being first termed a tramway – a name that stuck right up to the end of the line.

Bob showed photos of the train in Camden coming past the Camden Vale Milk Factory and the siding under the factory awning where milk was loaded for Sydney. Camden Station was originally on the northern side of Argyle Street, but space restriction saw it moved to Edward Street. The keen train spotter can walk along the river downstream of the Cowpasture Bridge and see the original concrete pylons of the railway bridge.

If you would like a copy of Bob's presentation please contact the Society's Secretary.

Celebrate 100 Years of the Camden district Red Cross

On Friday 13 September 2013 a cocktail party will be held at Camden Museum from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m. to celebrate the work of the Camden district Red Cross. All members and friends of the Society are invited to drop in at some stage of the evening. An exhibition is being prepared to tell the stories of

how the Red Cross was started in 1914; the fundraising activities during World War 1 and 2 and afterwards; and how the VADs and the Junior Red Cross contributed in Camden and other branches in the district. The Historical Society has received a federal grant to tell these stories and a book

will be published by Dr Ian Willis.

The development of the exhibition is progressing and an exhibition working party will be set up shortly. Any members who wish to help need to contact Julie Wrigley.

JW

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



Editor's Shorts

Upcoming speakers

March 2013

Terry Goldacre of Harrington Park Estate – Restoration and conservation work on Harrington Park House

April 2013

Gary Baker – artists Alan Baker and his wife. Alan's work is on show in the museum together with Gary's own work which includes the etching of Cobbitty Bridge

May 2013

Members Show and Tell – Milestones

June 2013

Paul Gregson – Furniture restoration and living in Studley Park House

July 2013

Neville Clissold – 100 Years of Cricket Club in Camden

August 2013

AGM

September 2013

Charles Cowell – Photography and preserving old photographs

October 2013

Ian Willis – 100 Years of Red Cross in the Camden district

November 2013

Members Show and Tell – Old Family Photos

December 2013

Christmas function
For further details contact Janice Johnson 4655 3400

Events

Co-ordinator of the **Writer's Group** Sharon Greene reported that several members were busy with research and writing on a number of projects. One past member of the group was **Samantha Pacchiarotta** who has since finished high school and is now at university. She is in her 3rd year of a Business/Law Degree and is currently on exchange at Hertfordshire University, UK. She has done the Grand Tour of Europe and visited the ancient sites of Greece and

Rome which she studied for her HSC. She has toured the historic sites of England including Bath and Stonehenge. She will return home in July this year.

A number of members attended the first meeting of the **Southern Highlands and Illawarra Chapter of Museums Australia (NSW)** at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre on Sunday 17 February. The guest speaker was **Michael Rolfe, CEO Museums & Galleries NSW**. He spoke about a report undertaken by Professor Amanda Lawson, University of Wollongong. Arts NSW engaged Professor Lawson to undertake strategic research, needs analysis and external consultation, and to provide preliminary recommendations about how the sector can best be supported. Professor Lawson produced the **Future Frameworks: Towards a Strategic Plan for the Visual Arts and Museum Sector in NSW** report along with an experienced project team that included Amanda Reynolds,

Deborah Ely and Professor Shirley Leitch. One priority area identified through this research was support for the small to medium museums sector. To address this issue the Minister for the Arts recently established new funding programs. Three new Arts NSW devolved funding programs will be administered by Museums & Galleries NSW on behalf of the NSW Government. The aim of these programs is to improve the capacity of small to medium museums to interpret, promote and provide access to collections; build the skills of volunteers; and encourage regions of excellence to operate as leaders within the sector.

Camden Museum

The museum finished 2012 with a total of 5616 visitors. March had the highest monthly visits for the year with 704, followed by August, 696, and November 652. The **museum visitor numbers** were down slightly from 2011. The five year average of visitor number was 5619.

Two new life members

Joyce Marjorie Thorn OAM and Victor Maxwell (Vic) Boardman

At the February meeting two long-term members were created life members. Cathy Shepherd presented Joy with her certificate and spoke of the long-term service of Joy to the society and a host other community organizations. Joy replied that she was honoured and she considered that she did not do anything special. John Wrigley presented Vic Boardman with his certificate and spoke of his lifelong connection to the Camden Show Society. Vic replied he was delighted with the award.

Joyce Marjorie Thorn OAM

Mrs. Joyce Thorn, nee Bradford, received the OAM in January 2005 for service to the community.

Joyce has been an active member of the Camden

Historical Society. She has regularly volunteered for museum duties and other activities. She has been chronicling news items to do with Cobbitty for many years.

Joyce arrived in Cobbitty in 1948 with her husband Keith to run the general store, which they ran for over 20 years.

Joyce has been involved in a host of community organizations including St Paul's Anglican Church Cobbitty as Treasurer and Warden; St Paul's Women's Guild as secretary; and written a booklet on the history of St Paul's Cobbitty, in conjunction with the Rev. Franklyn Pain. She was a member of the Camden branch of Red Cross for more than 30 years and undertaken a considerable amount of fundraising,

especially organising bus trips. She has worked with 'Meals on Wheels' since the 1970s, and in 1995 she established the Cobbitty Community Craft Group for women who have been through major illnesses.

Victor Maxwell (Vic) Boardman

Vic Boardman, a retired dairy farmer, is a 'local living legend'.

Vic has been a member of the Camden Historical Society for over 40 years. He generously makes his vintage motor cars available for various events, particularly the annual Australia Day Procession, to promote the work of the Society and its historical Museum. Members of the historical society and community members have enjoyed convoys of car tours to

visit local historic homes, thanks to Vic's generosity.

Vic has successfully exhibited honey, corn, pumpkins, cereal crops and cattle at the Camden Show since 1933, and won a number of prizes in 1936. Since 1986 he has conducted the very popular 'Drover's Camp' at the Show, cooking damper and serving billy tea with 'Cocky's Joy', homespun wisdom and musical entertainment, helped by his family and friends. He is now a life member of the Show Society and is by far the longest-serving member of the Show Society Committee, having been appointed in 1956. In 2006 he was presented with the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW Award for his contribution to the Camden Show Society over fifty years.

JW



David Funnell

'Camden as I remember it'

Public lecture, Camden Museum, 13 February 2013

Camden businessman, former councillor and deputy mayor, local identity and raconteur David Funnell attracted a large and attentive crowd at the monthly meeting of the Camden Historical Society.

The museum was full to overflowing when a record crowd of 82 members and visitors were entertained by a lively and interesting presentation of memories of local characters.

Mr Funnell, a member of a pioneer local family, recalled interesting stories from his younger days when Camden was just a country town.

He said that he has lived through many changes that have dramatically altered the town over the years.

He said he was born, like a lot of local folk, at Matron Heise's Private Hospital in Murray Street in 1945.

He recalled his father and grandfather working on the family dairy farm at Molles

Main, near Narellan.

The Nepean River was important in the life of young boys in the town. His younger days were occupied with swimming and fishing at Little Sandy. Eating the efforts of a day's catch and making a canoe filled in his free time.

The rhythm of the town revolved around floods, which disrupted daily life. The floods covered the lower parts of the town, some bigger than others.

There were lots of local identities that stood out in his memory. There was the local policeman, Bernie Slattery, local businessmen including Furners, Whitemans, Kelloways, Hennings, Cliftons, Maloneys, Cricks, Leaches, and a host of others. One colourful character was Toby Taplin the local street sweeper.

Mr Funnell started his electrical business in 1969 and has trained a host of apprentices. In 2003 Funnell's Electrical Contracting won the

NSW Group Training Award for Excellence. Mr Funnell's firm trained its 50th apprentice in 2006. The first apprentice was taken on in 1971.

Camden has kept many of its small town features. It used to have general stores, hardware shops and independent grocery stores. It still has banks on the street corners, chemists and the Capital Arcade.

The rural atmosphere of the town is important for Mr Funnell. He followed the example of Sir Fred Sutton who planted liquid amber trees on the outskirts of Camden. Mr Funnell's firm was responsible for planting trees along Sheathers Lane, Burrarorang Road and the Bicentennial Park.

'We are lucky to have the floodplain here, because it has kept Camden's rural feeling,' he said. He encouraged those present to take their visitors around the district and have a look at the 'pristine idyllic' countryside.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The society is in urgent need of volunteers, particularly to man the front desk of the museum.

There are gaps in the volunteer roster due to the recent passing away of some of our members and the ill-health of others. Do you know anyone with an interest in the history of the local area? They only have to give 2 1/2 hours of their time per month.

Please contact the museum leaving your name and phone number. Rene will contact you back.

Rene Rem
Volunteer Co-ordinator

Life Members

Camden Historical Society

BEN HODGE (1978) was a major donor of early photos of Camden and optical instruments.

ERNEST HOWLETT (1978) restored the horse-drawn wagon in the 1970s.

ERIC HENDERSON (1978) conceived and built the pioneer wheel memorial.

JACK ROBERTS (1981) was Treasurer of the society in the 1970s and 1980s.

LLEWELLA DAVIES OAM (1994) was a major donor and advocate for the society.

COLIN CLARK (1996) was

President from 1960 to 1970, and established the museum in 1970.

OWEN BLATTMAN OAM & NAN BLATTMAN (1996) Owen was President from 1970 to 1991, and Nan was Secretary during that period.

RICHARD NIXON OAM (1997) was President from 1991 until 1995 and was museum and tours director for many years.

RICHARD STRINGER (1999) was the Honorary Architect of the museum extensions in 1999.

LEONARD KERKIN (2000) was CHS Treasurer in the 1990s.

MILTON RAY (2001) was a long-serving Vice President and tours director.

PIETER WYBENGA (2001) restored and built many museum items.

PETER HAYWARD OAM & NIKKI HAYWARD (2006) From 1997 to 1999 Peter was the project director of the museum extension and was President from 2000 to 2003, supported by Nikki.

JOHN WRIGLEY OAM & JULIE WRIGLEY (2006) John was President for three different terms, 1995-99, 2002-2005, 2011, and Julie was Assistant

Secretary and catalogue recorder. PETER MYLREA OAM (2006) established the Society Journal and developed the computer catalogue and digitization of the photo collection.

WERNER WOLLINSKI (2006) was guest speaker coordinator and publicist.

VICTOR BOARDMAN (2013) has supported the society in various ways for over 50 years.

JOYCE THORN OAM (2013) has made generous donations to the museum and has been chronicling news items to do with Cobbitty for many years.



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

Line Opened March 1882

In 22 October 1980 the Camden News reported (in part):

Many people will remember the old tram that ran between Campbelltown and Camden and many will have travelled on it at some time.

On April 28, 1882, 18 months after the establishment of the Camden News a Bill was passed which provided for the construction of a steam tramway on fourteen different routes and, with the idea of reducing costs of construction of tramways to places up to 50 miles from railway stations.

One such route - Campbelltown to Camden - was mentioned.

The line was surveyed and a contract let to Topham and Angus and Co August 5 1881, for the construction of the line, which was to be completed by January 31, 1882.

At that time the Camden Bridge, which had been built in 1860, was a light three-span timber structure located slightly upstream and at an angle to the present structure.

The 'tram' tracks were laid flush with the road along the centre of the bridge.

The first terminus at Camden was in the Cowpastures Road, just short of Edward Street, but in January 1883, it was extended to the present site.

The line was opened at 3pm on Friday, March 10, 1882, on the arrival at Camden of the Ministerial party which had left Sydney at 12.30pm. The party left at 4.30pm and arrived at Campbelltown forty minutes later.

The service was started with two 'tramway' motors and three trailer cars. The cars were of the saloon type with a longitudinal aisle and end platform and seated 40 passengers with space for a guard and luggage.

The old bridge over Nepean at Camden showed signs of failing and in 1901 a new structure with an independent track on the downstream side was built.

From then on heavier locomotives could be used.

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