



NEWSLETTER

Visit to Harrington Park House

At the March general meeting of the historical society Mr. Terry Goldacre gave a very interesting presentation on the restoration of Harrington Park House. Members expressed a great interest in seeing the restored property before it was returned to the Fairfax family. Terry explained there was a brief opportunity for a visit, but that it would be arranged at short notice. Doug Barrett collected names of those interested, and John Wrigley made the arrangements for the visit.

Thirty members of the society gathered at 10.30 a.m. on Monday 6 May 2013 at the Hickson Circuit gate to

Harrington Park House. Luckily the weather was fine and mild. The group walked up the drive to admire the vista approaching the house, and Terry Goldacre gave a short talk on the history of the house and the restoration work.

Members explored the rooms including the original 1830s part of the house, and the historic part of the house owned for 20 years by the Davey family from the 1850s. A fascinating part of the tour of the house was the wing added by the Fairfax family. It was in 1944 that Sir Warwick Fairfax (at that time Director of John Fairfax Ltd) bought Harrington Park and carried out renovations and additions to the homestead and set up a nursery

in the 1950s specialising in camellias, roses and imported flowers. Sir Warwick spent much time at Harrington Park with his family and dogs. It was a place where he enjoyed writing, country walks, picnics and devoting time to his family.

The group thoroughly enjoyed the visit to the rooms of the house, cellars and garden. Members and friends were very appreciative of the time that Terry Goldacre gave to showing the house and explaining the extensive conservation works which have been carried out.

JW

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New E-book

Janice Johnson & Brian Burnett, *Camden Unlocking the Past, Pioneer and Federation Index 1800-1930*

At times it can be quite frustrating when undertaking research to find the dates convict and immigration ships arrived in Sydney. Or identify who was the governor in a certain year. Or who the mayor of Camden was in a particular year. Locating appropriate websites is another frustrating experience.

An e-book prepared by Brian Burnett and Janice Johnson aims at resolving some of these frustrations. In addition it has included a Pioneer and Federation Index which includes

many families and men and women frequently referred to in our history; people who have not previously been included in any pioneer register.

All that is required is a computer with a PDF Reader program (e.g. Adobe) and you can search to your heart's content. Whether you are searching for a maiden name or a surname; a property; an occupation – the search can be quickly accomplished. All you need to do is use the advanced

search tool in Adobe then type the surname or maiden name in capitals and tick "whole words" and "case sensitive" and your PDF reader will quickly list all the options and you then just need to click on the appropriate selection.

The website page allows you to double click on the website address and as long as you have an internet connection the website will open for you.

The e-Book is available from Camden Museum for \$25.

JJ

Society Meetings

- Ordinary General Meetings

14 August 2013

11 September 2013

9 October 2013

13 November 2013

11 December 2013

- 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: 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

August 2013

AGM

September 2013

Charles Cowell – Photography and preserving old photographs

October 2013

Ian Willis – Red Cross in the Camden district 1914-1945

November 2013

Members Show and Tell – Old Family Photos

December 2013

Christmas function

For further details contact Janice Johnson 4655 3400

Events

Doug Barrett gave a talk to the Carrington Computer club at Carrington in April on how computers are used in the Historical Society.

The quarterly partnership meeting of the historical society, family history society and Camden Library took place in May at the library. Matters discussed included an evaluation of the heritage festival in April-May. It was felt that the longer festival was of benefit to all. Activities included St Johns tour (18 people), CAFHS talk on postcards (25 people), CHS talk on Camelot (70 people), and a life writing workshop (10 people). Planning for History Week (7-15 Sept) is proceeding and the theme is 'Picture This: driving humanity, reflecting change and imaging reality'.

There is a full programme planned including an exhibition of Camden Images (CHS), an exhibition of Jeff Carter photographs (CL), Mini discoverers (CHS/CL), bring in photos and have digital copies made (CL/CFHS), Charles Cowell lecture (CHS). There was a report from Lisa, the Camden Council heritage officer. She reported that CHS and CL had been asked to identify appropriate street names. The CL/CHS had provide information on a number of local properties. Heritage statements have been lodged with the CL collection. The CL reported that a CD with Camden Council minutes from 1896-1902 had been added to the collection. The Camden News between 1896 and 1902 is currently being digitised. CL

volunteer Dianne has been transcribing oral histories and some of CHS histories have been added to the list. An inventory of John Burge's local studies collection has been undertaken. council's cultural development officer, Cheryle, has been working with Doug on the development of a 'Streetscape' app which may have images and audio data. Camden Apex Club has donated a number of photo albums which will be held by CL/CHS. The Society reported that a new street names book is in preparation. CFHS reported that Cathey is investigating the possibility of producing a pictorial history book on different suburbs in the Camden LGA. Ray reported on preparations for ANZAC Day 2014. The next meeting is in July 2013.

Camden High School Foundation Stone

On 24th May the Managing Director of A.E.H Development, Mr. Nicholas Playoust, and Ms Melissa Brown Hughey, also from the firm and a past student of the school, brought the foundation stone from the former Camden High School site to the museum. The

stone is a temporary loan and is to be stored at the museum for safekeeping until the site is developed by the firm.

The stone was originally laid at Camden High School by The Hon. R J Heffron, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, on 18 February 1955. It measures 72 x 42 x 10

cm and is made of sandstone. Mr. Playoust said the firm intends to use the stone in a historical feature as part of the future development of the site, and plans for the redevelopment have been approved by Camden Council. JW

Museum Visitors

Doug Barrett guided a number of groups through the museum in recent months. They have included :

Chester Hill Neighbourhood Centre in February 2013 with 15 people

The Rail Transport Visit was with Jennifer Edmunds, Senior Curator and her assistant on February 2013.

Queensland School for Travelling Show Children

was in March 2013

Seniors tour of the museum on March 2013 with 10 people.

Magdalene College came with all Year 7 in March 2013.

Padstow RSL Sunshine Club arrived in April 2013 for a town tour and a museum visit.

Mini Discoverers in partnership with the library pre-schoolers came through in May 2013.

Working Bee

On 31st May a working bee was held at the Museum to plan for the Red Cross exhibition which will open in September. Janice Johnson, Cathey Shepherd, Margaret Wheeler, Marilyn and Ian Willis, and Julie Wrigley discussed arrangements for the exhibition, including planned storyboards and the cocktail party to be held at the museum on Friday 13 September from 5.30 to 7.30 pm. It is intended to invite lots of local residents, to celebrate the way the community has supported the Red Cross since the Camden branch started in 1914. JW

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? Volunteers 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

A Brief History of the Society

John Wrigley OAM

Public Lecture, Camden Museum, 8 August 2012

I would like to use this opportunity to give a brief outline of the history of the society's collection. The museum started in 1970 in the room which is now the research room. The members, led by president Colin Clark and research officer, Miss Llewella Davies, actively sought donations for the new museum, and many pioneer families responded. These early donations are some of the most interesting items on display in the museum.

Owen Blattman and later Dick Nixon, with their agricultural and dairying backgrounds, continued collecting for the museum. At the beginning the group was high on enthusiasm but short on paperwork, until retired school principal, Frank Hammond, and society secretary, Reg Cole, established a card system for the collection, which at that stage numbered about 900 items.

Archivist Peter Mylrea initiated the move to a computer-based catalogue, and designed a Microsoft Word Database for

cataloguing the collection. The extensive keyboard operation was largely carried out by society secretary Rhonda Reynolds and assistant secretary, Julie Wrigley. Later the catalogue was transferred to an Excel spreadsheet. In 2009 the society purchased 'Mosaic', a software program specifically designed for small museums and transferred the entire catalogue to 'Mosaic' which provided much more room and flexibility than the spreadsheet.

The museum catalogue has grown to some 3,500 items. The need now is to maintain and extend the collection, while reviewing some items and assessing whether or not they should be in the collection. Considerations including relevance to telling Camden's story, provenance, possible duplication, condition and significance, should be used to decide whether some items should be deaccessioned, using the guidelines from Museums Australia. The Society does not accept all the 'very old' items which are offered to the museum, because of the need for space and the

responsibility of looking after items into the future.

Some of the interesting items which have been acquired by the Society in recent times include: (1) the Sydney 2000 Olympics Torch carried by Liz Kernohan, (2) the Sydney 2000 Paralympics Torch carried by Dick Stringer, (3) a 1953 Queen Elizabeth II Coronation Medal awarded to Ben Hodge, (4) a framed 1846 lithograph and signature of Lord Camden, (5) a framed portrait and signature of Sir Evan Nepean, (6) Pat Farmer's Polar sled, on loan from the Rotary Club of Narellan, (7) a wooden greeting presentation-box from Pat Farmer's Race Across Australia in 2001.

We are fortunate to have such a fascinating collection, and I urge members to become involved in working with the collection and researching items of interest to them. It can be fun and sometimes like detective work.

John Wrigley
Retiring President

2013 Camden Show Report

On Friday 14th and Saturday 15th March, Historical Society volunteers sold books and DVDs at the Camden Show. It was our best year to date in terms of encouraging new, or renewed, memberships; promoting the museum; and raising funds. The hard-working volunteers were Joy Aitken, Gordon Bird, Jo Booth,

Trish Clark, Peter and Nikki Hayward, Ray Herbert, Janice Johnson, Bob Lester, Olive McAleer, René Rem, Bettie Small, Elizabeth Villy, Frances Warner, John and Julie Wrigley, and Betty Yewen.

Special mention to the 'crack team' of Joy Aitken, Jo Booth and Bob Lester who were in the hall on Saturday afternoon

during the hottest part of the day and sold the most! Thanks to Doug Barrett for arranging the television with the screening of the DVD on Pansy. Thanks also to the Show Society for once again allowing us to set up our stall – originally arranged for the Society by Miss Llewella Davies in the 1970s. JW

Cocktail Party

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 Branch of the 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 branch 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. Contact John Wrigley if you wish to attend. JW

Museum Attendance

The museum has had over 3092 visitors to the end of May. This is 317 up from the same period in 2012, and 430 up from the same period in 2011. The average number of visitors each month in 2013 is 618. The average number of visitors each year taken over the last 6 years is 5697.

It is important that the museum keep track of visitor numbers. This is so that the society can use these numbers in grant applications which require evidence of community support for the museum.

This information is tallied on a monthly basis by volunteer co-ordinator Rene Rem. Museum volunteers carefully record the number of visitors while the museum is open.



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

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

Dick Inglis

In August 1998 the society's meeting was addressed by Dick Inglis, auctioneer.

Dick was a very affable fellow who was a good story teller. He had a sound grasp of a good yarn and could hold the attention of a crowd while he spun his tale. His story telling was laced with nostalgia of a time that was very different. He felt that people were not in a rush and everyone seemed to be able to reflect on things in a more contemplative way. He had fond memories of growing up of 'a time past'.

He recalled Willie Larkin, who was a remarkable man, an auctioneer and manager of Camden Park. He was a wonderful horseman, mayor of Camden and vice-president of the Show Society. He could be 'terribly charming' and also quite sarcastic and cynical. He married Dot Vickery of Westwood in Cut Hill Road. He would conduct sales behind the Plough and Harrow Hotel, where he was a good judge of livestock and a competent auctioneer. Sale Day was always Tuesday and it was a big day in town. Willie's

offsider was Toby Taplin who was quite a character as well and very larconic. Taplin was a good runner, cyclist who was 3rd in the Goulburn to Sydney one year, a footballer, philanderer and a bit of a poet. He was very fit, had great strength and very energetic.

Bill Lysaght he recalled was a WW1 war veteran who was into buck jumping. He was a dog dealer 'to earn a few extra bob'.

Dick recalled the many characters he dealt with at the sale yards. Folk like Arthur Dunk, Dargin Roots, Roy Wheatley and others.

Ian Willis, 2013

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