



Newsletter

Camden District Red Cross Book Launch

On Saturday afternoon 30 August the society hosted the book launch of member Dr Ian Willis's *Ministering Angels, The Camden District Red Cross, 1914-1945*.



Russell Matheson, Ian Willis, Judy Wilson, Lola Beck (L&B Stratton)

The assembled gathering, numbering 78, listened to MC John Wrigley introduce Lola Beck, past Camden Red Cross president, who recited the Red Cross pledge and the Red Cross principles. The book was then launched by Judy Wilson the liaison officer with the Red Cross Club in Camden. She noted that the group will shortly be presented with a certificate celebrating 100 years of presence of Red Cross in Camden.

title and the main aims of the book and the story of the Red Cross in the district between 1914 and 1945.

Special mention was made of long term Camden Red Cross member, fundraiser and former president Joyce Thorn. Joyce has been acknowledge for her tireless fundraising efforts conducting bus trips.

catered for by the women of the Camden CWA. The afternoon was a team effort and particular thanks should go to Joy Aitken, Jo Booth, Michael Booth, Rene Rem, Stephanie Trenfield, Cathey Shepherd, Lee Stratton, John Wrigley and Julie Wrigley, and other members for their help.

Ian Willis responded and outlined the source of the

The afternoon closed with a scrumptious afternoon tea

The book is for sale @ the Camden Museum for \$30.

Liz Kernohan Drive

A number of society members attended the opening of Liz Kernohan Drive at Spring Farm on Friday 29 August. John Wrigley dug out the Liz MP number plate from the museum archives. Society representatives included Lee and Brian Stratton OAM and Maggie Cole.



Barry O'Farrell, Maggie Cole, Lara Symkowiak, Chris Patterson. (L&B Stratton)

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Special points of interest:

- Ordinary General Meetings
- **8 October 2014**
- **12 November 2014**
- **10 December 2014**
- **11 February 2015**
- 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 • Vice presidents: Dr Ian Willis 4658 0193; Rene Rem 0424 847 492 • Treasurer: Dawn Williams.
 Secretary: Lee Stratton 4655 3400 • Minutes Secretary: Sharon Greene • Immediate Past President John Wrigley OAM 4655 9210 • General Committee: Cathey Shepherd, Robert Wheeler, Julie Wrigley, Roslyn Tildsley, Sharon Greene, Stephanie Trenfield • *Newsletter Editor*: Dr Ian Willis. *Webmaster*: Steve Robinson

Editor's Notes

Upcoming speakers

8 October 2014

Brian Stewart: 'Life Skills'

12 November 2014

Donald Howard: 'Camden in the 1940s'

10 December 2014

Christmas meeting

11 February 2015

Events

The recent AGM was topped out with the showing of some super 8 movie film that had recently been converted to a DVD. It showed some of the highlights of the Camden Show filmed in

the 1960s by Milton Ray, a long time society member. The memories of Vic Boardman were then played from a pre-recorded interview.

The society has agreed to join with Kingsclear Books in a project to publish a new book - Camden Pictorial History. The society has agreed to supply the images from its extensive photographic collection. The text is being written by Ian Willis. The book is due for publication in late 2015.

Society member and author Janice Johnson was recently honoured with the

awarding of a Heritage Volunteer Award from the NSW Environment and Heritage Department. The award recognises the outstanding performance of individuals and organisations in promoting the profile of heritage in their community. The award recognises Janice's volunteer efforts in the Camden community and the promotion of local history.

The society, through its advocacy role of local heritage and history, is making a contribution to the Camden Town Centre Enhancement Strategy. Camden Council has

actively sought the views of the society, along with many other community groups, on a number of the issues relating to the strategy. Some members of the society have appeared in the local press on the strategy. The society has made a submission to the Camden Town Centre Enhancement Strategy after discussion at the September meeting. Topics covered were street paving, street furniture, footpath widening and community art. The society feels that improvements should not be hurried for short term gains. It needs to be considered in terms of the whole township for the long term.

Writers Group *Back Then* Workshops

The society's writers group has held a series of two workshops for those who were interested in writing for the *Back Then* page of The District Reporter.

The first workshop was held on Saturday 21 June, when 16 keen writers attended. The workshop was introduced by Ian Willis. He outlined that there is still a place for storytellers in society today. He maintained that everyone has an interesting story to tell. A number of

Back Then contributors described why they write for the page.

The District Reporter editor Lee Abrahams then described how the *Back Then* page was like having a conversation with someone. The page tells interesting stories about people, places and events.

There were lots of interesting questions and comments.

A follow up workshop was held on Saturday 16 August attended by 12 budding

writers. Ian Willis talked through a suggested outline for a *Back Then* article and the importance of editing.

Sharon Greene explained the wonders of Trove as a source of material for articles. Julie Wrigley then explained how she used Trove for an article that she was preparing for *Back Then*.

This was followed by a cup of tea and a biscuit.

Volunteers Needed

The society is always on the look out for those who would like to lend a hand. It does not matter how small the contribution every little bit makes a difference. If helping out at the museum appeals to you then see Rene. He will be able to fit you into the society's programme to suit your interests.

Boy Scouts in Camden

In July the society was addressed by Kent Palmer on the 100th anniversary of scouting in the Camden area. Camden scouts were formed in 1914 and have had a strong presence in the Camden community ever since.

Camden and the Great War

Society member Ian Willis gave a talk at the September meeting on the topic Camden and the Great War. He spoke about the effects of the war on the Camden, the men and women who volunteered for service overseas, those killed in action and patriotic

activities on the homefront, including the Red Cross.

He noted that Camden has been part of the memory boom in recent decades. This process has prompted collective memory, which is how people engage in acts of remembrance. Ian

detailed the types of memorialization that have been taken part in the memory of the Great War. These include war memorials, books, websites, newspaper articles, community events and others.

Our Volunteers

The historical society survives on its volunteers and their contribution to activities. The editor has borrowed an idea from The Oaks HS newsletter and will profile some of the reasons folk volunteer for our society.

Volunteer Julie Wrigley

What do you like about local history?

I love the beauty and the history of Camden, and am particularly interested in the stories of women in the past and how they lived. I like the way a significant object can open up and reveal so much about the past, and I like the sense of community which Camden has always had.

How long have you been in Camden?

I came to live here when I was lucky enough to be appointed to Camden High School in 1965 as my first appointment as a teacher. I did not know then that I had a great-great-grandfather buried at St John's, and another one buried at Cawdor cemetery. My great-grandparents were married in Camden in 1867, so I feel connected to Camden in past times.

What do you do as a volunteer for the society?

My main work is being on the committee, and helping with exhibitions. Also I type the records of the Museum

catalogue using Mosaic software, and write Back Then articles for the District Reporter from time to time. I publicise Society meetings in the local papers, and John and I are on the volunteer roster the first Saturday of each month.

Why do you volunteer?

I think the work is interesting and I like working as part of an enthusiastic team.

Volunteering is part-time work which leaves me time to do other things. I like to feel that I am carrying on a tradition of working for the community in Camden.

Volunteer John Wrigley

What do you like about local history?

I enjoy gathering information, photos and objects for the Camden Museum. I like the feeling of having saved an interesting or significant item that might otherwise have been lost to history. Similarly I like bringing unknown stories to light through newspaper articles, journal articles and books.

How long have you been in Camden?

Julie and I came to live in Camden 43 years ago in 1971, after a two-year working holiday in Europe and Canada. I trained originally as a forestry officer and was a manager of the Sydney Water Board

catchment areas for many years.

What do you do as a volunteer for the society?

I am a past president of the Society and am a committee member and museum volunteer. I concentrate on collection management for the museum and have a public advocacy role on heritage issues, representing the Society.

Why do you volunteer?

The Camden Historical Society has always been a happy group to belong to. I have met many interesting people through my volunteer work. I have made oral history recorded interviews with some lovely elderly people over the years and most of these people have since died. I find it very satisfying that their memoirs have been retained through this process. Someone suggested that I should warn people that my interview subjects usually die within 5 years of my interviewing them! Seriously though, it has been a pleasure and a privilege to spend time with them and get their stories.

mix in NSW between 1788 and 1980. A major theme is social class and dwelling hierarchy. She explained that land was cheap in country towns and there was no economic reason to build them, but they did. She is also looking at why semis were used at Belgenny which had 3 about 1805 to house convict labourers.

Museum Visitors

The total number of museum visitors for 2013 were 6,851, which was up on 2012 with 6,086 people visiting the museum. This is a 12% increase between 2012 and 2013. This confirms a trend from 2011 which had an increase of 13% over 2010. Between 2011 and 2012 there was an increase of 6% in the number of people visiting the museum.

The monthly figure reveal some interesting trends. The most popular months for visiting the museum in 2013 were August, then March, followed by April and September. In 2012 the most popular month for visiting was March, followed by August and November. For 2011 the most popular month was again March followed by February and May.

The most popular season for visiting the museum from 2007 is Autumn. The largest single monthly figure for visitors between 2007 and 2012 was 1,008 people in April 2008.

The breakdown for 2014 so far has June with the highest number of visitors followed by May. The total number of visitors this year has been 3,303, which is slightly down on 2013 for the same period with 4,202 visitors.

Research Enquiry

Sydney University PhD student Pam Lofthouse, who is researching the history and heritage of semi-detached houses in NSW, was in Camden recently. She took a number of photographs of houses and sought out additional information on the builders, construction dates and tenants. The houses she was interested in are at 30 and 32 Hill Street (Brookfield House) and 29

and 31 Mitchell Street (Mitchell House) and Bransby's Cottage at 17 Mitchell Street.

Society member Janice Johnson was able to outline information on the Hill St property.

Pam stated that the aim of her research is the use of semi-detached houses (not terrace houses) as part of the housing

RAHS

Society member Ian Willis has written an article about the Interwar history of Camden for the RAHS History Magazine. The article is called 'Interwar Journey's to a Country Town' and details the Interwar buildings in the main street.



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 \$15

Family \$20

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

Camden Red Cross 1915 Annual Report

The 1915 Annual Report of the Camden Red Cross stated in part:

'Whatever has been done in the past we know more will be done in the future for we realise the need of it'. These were words uttered by Mrs Street, hon, treasurer...and clearly emphasised the spirit of the lady workers in this grand and noble movement. It was the first annual meeting of the Society on Tuesday, but prior to holding same the ladies gathered together to work as they do every Tuesday, and it was until three hours of such work that they invited the Mayor of Camden, Ald GF Furner, to preside and with him several gentlemen took seats at the already large gathering.

He called on Miss Macarthur

Onslow to read the first annual report...

'Our branch of the Red Cross Society has to enter on another year of work, for even should the war end sooner than we think possible and as soon as we hope it may, there will be still much to do for those who have suffered, and for the large numbers of men who must necessarily remain under arms.

'Owing to the goodwill of our members, our work has been accomplished without a hitch, and our output amounts to about 4000 garments, amongst which must be taken the shirts, pyjamas, and socks included in the Soldier Bags of which 87 were despatched during August and September of last year....

'The sewing meetings every Tuesday are very well attended from 80 to 100 workers coming in during the afternoon and evening. The cutting and preparation of material for so many people entails a great deal of labour... [and so on]

Mrs Macarthur Onslow addressed the meeting and congratulated the Camden Red Cross ladies on the very vital work done, and about all, the good feeling that exhibited doing that work. It was good feeling amongst the women that made the Red Cross such a huge success. From the very start the workers had pulled together and worked together, realising the Red Cross movement was not charity nor for praise for themselves... [Camden News, 9 September 1915]

The Camden Historical Society would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Russell Matheson MP, Federal Member for Macarthur, in the printing of this newsletter.