

CAMDEN HISTORY

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Meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month except in January. They are held in the Museum. Visitors are always welcome.

Museum

The Museum is located at 40 John Street, Camden, phone 4655 3400. It is open Thursday to Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., except at Christmas. Visits by schools and groups are encouraged. Please contact the Museum to make arrangements. Entry is free.

Camden History, Journal of the Camden Historical Society Inc

The Journal is published in March and September each year. The Editor would be pleased to receive articles broadly covering the history of the Camden district. Correspondence can be sent to the Society's postal address. The views expressed by authors in journal articles are solely those of the authors and not necessarily endorsed by the Camden Historical Society.

Donations

Donations made to the Society are tax deductible. The accredited value of objects donated to the Society are eligible for tax deduction.

Front Cover:

Graeme Clark Senior Australian of the Year 2001 (The Graeme Clark Collection)

Back Cover

Unlock Camden 2019 special edition of the self-guided Camden Heritage Walking Tour. (CHS/CC)

CAMDEN HISTORY

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Graeme Clark, a world-famous Camden identity

Ian Willis

The life and times of Professor Graeme Clark, the pioneer of the Cochlear Implant, are part of the Camden story. He was a local boy who made good, improved the lives of thousands worldwide, and developed an international career as a researcher, innovator, academic, scientist, pioneer, engineer, and doctor.

Graeme Clark has stated that Camden had ‘a big effect on my life’.¹ According to biographer Mark Worthing, the town ‘moulded’ Clark’s life² and ‘played a vital role in shaping his character’.³ What does this mean? Graeme Clark has partly answered the question in his book *I Want To Fix Ears, Inside the Cochlear Implant Story*.⁴

Here, Graeme writes with feelings about his youth, and in summary, the town provided him freedom and the opportunity to: explore the unsophisticated world of a small town with unmade streets; explore the beauty of nature and



Graeme Clark and the cub pack with Akela (Mrs. Gordon Poppy Butler) outside their Club room- 1945 (The Graeme Clark Collection)

think about the world in a quiet, contemplative environment, for example, just sitting under a tree; experience the rural landscape with its expansive skies, wide-open horizons and the sounds and smells of farms; and allow his imagination to run wild in a safe, caring, and protective environment and explore and push the boundaries of his world.

According to human geographers and social psychologists, childhood experiences are important in constructing a sense of place and forming the meaning of home for individuals.⁵ This process is fundamental to the role of family, culture, and community.⁶ This childhood landscape forms part of an individual's identity and constitutes a key point of comparison for considering subsequent places later in life. As people move around as adults, they tend to think of new locations in relation to this baseline landscape experienced during childhood.⁷ And so it was for Graeme Clark.

Clark was educated at the Camden Public School. His Kindergarten teacher, Patricia Hider (nee Fraser, later Coleman), was a particularly close friend of the Clark family and went to the Camden Methodist Church. Graeme was influenced by Hider, a person of faith who married a Camden 'boy' Robert Hider in 1944. Flying Officer Hider was killed in action in World War II, and Patricia travelled to England after the war.⁸ Hider recognised Graeme's talent and fostered it at the school, and Graeme later met up with her again in 2000.⁹

Clark had a happy Camden childhood where he participated in hiking, swimming, sports, and getting into mischief 'with the Whiteman boys'.¹⁰ His friendship networks were around the Whiteman family, the Sidmans, and the Crookstons.

The Clark family's faith was centred on the Camden Methodist church, part of the family's personal contact and kinship network. Camden's rich social fabric was important for Graeme. Later in life, these networks acted as non-judgemental sources of support in the face of significant scepticism and criticism of his work.

Camden had limited educational opportunities, and the young Graeme was forced to leave to further his schooling, as did other young Camden people. As Clark entered the world, the town, his family, and friends anchored his life. The town has acted as a refuge at various times in his life. Mark Worthing writes that Clark returned to Camden 'for some much-needed relaxation, 'spending long hours walking through the familiar countryside, praying and thinking about what was to come next'. Clark states that visiting his hometown brought back 'wonderful memories' and 'was always refreshing'.¹¹ Camden was Clark's hometown.¹²



Colin Clark in his pharmacy, Argyle Street, Camden (The Graeme Clark Collection)

In Clark's youth, the town and the family home provided sites where he could experiment and take risks without endangering his life. For example, as a young child, Graeme followed his curiosity by experimenting with a homemade syringe in his mother's household laundry in the Camden house tomatoes.¹³ These activities satisfied his curiosity. Clark's parents' library satisfied a natural curiosity about the biographies of Marie Curie and Louis Pasteur and his desire from an early age to follow a 'medical career'.¹⁴

At Camden, Clark was surrounded by an active farming community, the Nepean River's 'natural beauty and serenity' and the surrounding floodplain.¹⁵ The landscape shaped his view of the world. Once in Melbourne, he made his family home at Eltham, where he commissioned Melbourne architect Alistair Knox to design 'a single-storey mud-brick house'. Mark Worthington writes that Eltham was a very different place in the 1970s when the Clarks moved there. It was 'a rural area' reminiscent of Camden's rural landscape. Eltham landscape possessed a 'peace and nearness to nature that Graeme recalled from his childhood'.¹⁶

Clark's identification with Camden's placeness contributed to constructing his identity and emotional attachment to the area. Clark's recollections and memories were part of his subjectivity, and he never really turned his back on

the Camden community and its landscape. The area was his country and spiritual homeland, part of his soul and a fundamental element of this spirit. In terms of Indigenous spirituality, Camden was his country. Clark has always been 'of Camden' even if he is not 'in Camden'.

The Clark family took part in another Camden institution - the South Coast summer holiday - a Kiama holiday cottage that allowed family reunions, swimming, and surfing.¹⁷ Graeme was able to refresh and rebuild after a hectic year. He writes that this was 'a time to be recreated physically and spiritually. I filled notebooks with research ideas and plans for their execution for the following year'.¹⁸ In 1977, Graeme solved an engineering problem with the implant at the beach in Kiama using a blade of grass and seashells shaped like the cochlea in the ear.¹⁹

For some Camden folk, including Clark, travelling back to the English 'homeland' was a pilgrimage of a lifetime and returning to the land of their ancestors. Graeme travelled to the United Kingdom to further his medical training and specialist experience, and it was an important time of his life.²⁰ Going to England captured the hearts of many Camden families from the colonial period of New South Wales to the present.²¹

Graeme and his father, Colin, were part of the Camden area's medical and public health networks.²² These comprised local doctors, Camden District Hospital, pharmacies and other para-medical facilities. Graeme's father, Colin, 'was responsible for his son's desire to study medicine and specialise in the problem of deafness'.²³ Colin Clark was a pharmacist and optometrist, and operated a pharmacy on the town's main street for many years.²⁴ Camden's public health and medical networks provided an opportunity for 'practical experience in clinical medicine through the support and encouragement' of Camden general practitioner and identity Dr Robert Crookston, who provided opportunities for him at Camden Hospital.²⁵

Graeme's networks and links to Camden, and the skills he learned at the Camden Rotary Club, proved useful for his research fundraising in the 1970s in Melbourne. Graeme's parents strongly supported community organisations, local philanthropy, and the associated fundraising that was a fundamental part of the Camden community. Graeme's father was a member of the Camden Rotary Club and the Camden Historical Society, and Colin was instrumental in the foundation of the Camden Museum in 1970.²⁶ Graeme's association with the Camden Rotary Club taught him the value of networking, dinner speeches and fundraising when he needed money for his research in Melbourne in the 1970s.²⁷

Clark's desire to create a display at the Camden Museum can be viewed as

one way he could pay respect to his ancestors, his spiritual country and the community that was part of his early life. Clark credits ‘my forebears’ for influencing his ‘values for life’ and their ‘Christian traditions’²⁸ that have shaped his worldview and work.

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Laureate Professor Graeme Clark AC

Pioneer of the Multi-channel Cochlear Implant /Bionic Ear

Graeme Clark

Graeme Clark AC Laureate Professor at the University of Melbourne led the team that invented Australia's cochlear implant which was developed by Cochlear Limited. And he founded the Bionic Ear Institute which became the Bionics Institute.

Professor Clark and his team achieved an incredible breakthrough with the cochlear implant, which is regarded by many as the greatest advance in the treatment of hearing loss.

The cochlear implant is one of Australia's most important innovations and has given the ability to hear and understand speech to nearly a million children and adults.

By allowing deaf people to hear and understand speech, the cochlear implant created the field of medical bionics - the combination of biology and elec-



Graeme Clark explaining his research goals to the Melbourne *Age* newspaper in 1970. (The Graeme Clark Collection)

tronics for new treatments and diagnostic tools.

Professor Clark's legacy has continued at The University of Melbourne's Graeme Clark Institute for Biomedical Engineering, as well as the Bionics Institute. It is supported by the Graeme Professor of Audiology and Speech Science, and though the Graeme Clark Foundation. His multidisciplinary approach has resulted in world leaders in engineering, research and clinical specialities emerging and their coming together to find innovative solutions to unmet medical needs.

Professor Clark's Initial Journey Developing the Multi-channel Cochlear Implant / Bionic Ear

Professor Graeme Clark AC was born in Camden, New South Wales in 1935 and boarded at Scots College in Sydney.

He graduated in Medicine in 1957 from the University of Sydney with first place in his final year and honours over the course.

Professor Clark was inspired by his father's struggle with deafness and specialised in otolaryngology (ear, nose and throat).

He gained experience at the Royal Prince Alfred and North Shore Hospitals before moving to England to train.

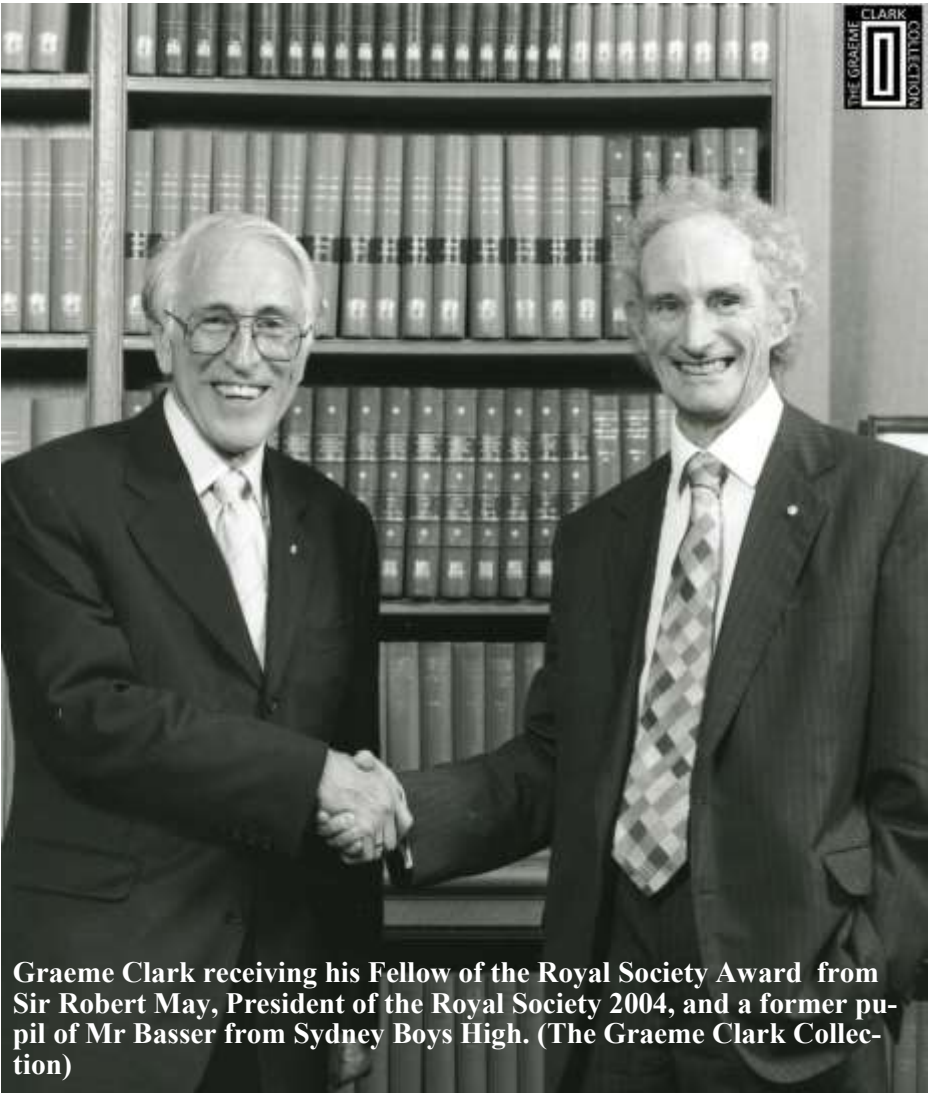
He returned to Melbourne in 1963 to be a consultant at the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear, Alfred, Austin and Repatriation General Hospitals.

Professor Clark felt that more could be done to treat nerve deafness and for that reason, he left private practice in Melbourne at the end of 1966 to study at the University of Sydney in auditory brain science and obtained a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree on the subject of "Middle Ear and Neural Mechanisms in Hearing and in the Management of Deafness" (1969).

Professor Clark's auditory brain research demonstrated why a single-channel cochlear implant, which was being promoted at the time would not lead to adequate speech understanding. He hypothesized that the place coding of frequency would be required. He also postulated that for meaningful speech it would have to be analysed into its important components and these used for electrical stimulation (Clark 1969).

Professor Clark's Research at the University of Melbourne (1970-)

After completing his PhD Professor Clark's only chance to continue his research occurred when the University of Melbourne appointed him in October 1969 to the first Chair of Otolaryngology in Australasia at the Royal Victori-



Graeme Clark receiving his Fellow of the Royal Society Award from Sir Robert May, President of the Royal Society 2004, and a former pupil of Mr Basser from Sydney Boys High. (The Graeme Clark Collection)

an Eye & Ear Hospital. Although Clark's research was seen by many in the scientific community as high risk and unlikely to be successful the University of Melbourne had carefully reviewed it and found it to be well-grounded.

He created an interdisciplinary team to ensure that multi-channel implants would be safe and effective before implanting his first deaf patients. This also meant collaboration with Dr David Dewhurst and his students from the University of Melbourne's Department of Electrical Engineering. For Professor

Clark to determine whether multi-channel stimulation could achieve speech understanding he had to implant the most complex package of electronics ever inserted in a patient.

But one of the pressing biological/surgical problems that required a solution was creating an electrode bundle that would pass around the tightening spiral of the tiny cochlea so the different speech frequencies could be stimulated on a place coding basis. Inspiration came on Minnamurra beach NSW in the Christmas holidays 1966-67 when Professor Clark saw a shell resembling the cochlea. By inserting grass blades that were flexible at the tip and stiffer at the base they would pass the required distance.

In 1978 on 1st August Professor Clark implanted totally deaf Rod Saunders ably assisted by A/Professor Brian Pyman. Some weeks later Professor Clark had a "Eureka" moment when Rod heard vowels when different frequency sites were simulated. The frequencies corresponded to the formant frequencies of the vowels. This research led to the creation of the first electrical stimulus code to enable a severely deaf person to understand speech in their daily life and without lipreading.

These momentous results were repeated on other patients, and this led to the creation of Cochlear Limited. In 1985 it became the first multi-channel device to be approved by the US Food & Drug Administration (FDA) for adults who had hearing before going deaf.

To provide adequate patient care and with funding from the Victorian Government in 1985 Professor Clark helped establish the first public hospital cochlear implant clinic in the world at the Royal Victorian Eye & Ear Hospital.

Professor Clark also became the first to insert cochlear implants in each ear and an implant in an ear opposite to one with a hearing aid to improve hearing in noise.

However, Professor Clark's greatest passion, one that had driven him through many years of struggle, was the desire to give hearing, and especially speech perception and spoken language, to deaf children.

After an international trial in 1990 it became the first cochlear implant of any type to be approved by the US FDA or any world regulatory bodies for deaf children older than two years of age. It thus became the first device to help severely to profoundly deaf children communicate in the last 250 years since Sign Language of the Deaf was developed at the Paris Deaf School.



**Graeme Clark receiving the Zülch prize in 2007 in Köln.
Graeme Clark, Mrs Zülch, J. Donoghue , 31st August 2007 (The Graeme Clark Collection)**

Cochlear Limited has been the leading cochlear implant company for the last 40 years with the greatest share of the one million deaf people now implanted in over 150 countries.

The Bionic Ear Institute (1986-2008)

Following the success of the University of Melbourne/ Cochlear Limited's Nucleus cochlear implant (1978-1985), Professor Graeme Clark founded the Bionic Ear Institute in 1986 to facilitate the further development of the cochlear implant and to house his university's ARC Special Human Communication Research Centre. He did so as both the Professor of Otolaryngology at the University of Melbourne and Director of the Bionic Ear Institute, two positions he held for the next 20 years.

During that time the integration of the University Department and Bionic Ear Institute was an effective model and allowed the cochlear implant research to expand, other research areas to develop.

The Bionics Program in the ARC Centre of Excellence for Electromaterials Science (2005-2012)

However, in 2005 aged 70 years Professor Clark had to retire and was uncertain how to continue his research. He was fortunate to have been appointed to head the Bionics program of the Australian Research Council's (ARC) Centre of Excellence in Electromaterials Science at the University of Wollongong being led by Professor Gordon Wallace. He was also grateful that St Vincent's Hospital appointed him as a Principal Scientist. Professor Clark and team in the ARC program produced significant advances in understanding how polymers (plastics) which conduct electricity could be used to improve cochlear implants and restore spinal cord function in people who had paraplegia or quadriplegia.

Professor Clark Appointed to the Graeme Clark Hearing and Neurosensory Unit at Latrobe University (2009-2011)

In addition, Professor Clark was able to discover how best to code high fidelity sound so that music could be appreciated, and speech heard in the presence of background noise. He was able to do this with A/Professor Antonio Paolini through the newly created Graeme Clark Hearing and Neurosensory Unit at Latrobe University where he was honoured to be appointed as the University's first Distinguished Professor.

The Bionics Institute (2009-)

In 2009 the Bionic Ear Institute changed its name to the Bionics Institute with the aim of creating a wider discipline than the cochlear implant. At its inception under the leadership of Professor Robert Shepherd the Bionics Institute placed an emphasis on developing a bionic eye.

Now at the Bionics Institute under CEO Mr Robert Klupacs it is expanding its research goals to transform the lives of people with a range of conditions, including, Crohn's disease, Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy, stroke, arthritis, and diabetes. It is undertaking this research with a multidisciplinary team of world-class scientists, engineers and researchers, with laboratories located at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne, close to clinical collaborators.

The University of Melbourne's Graeme Clark Institute for Biomedical Engineering (2017-)

The cochlear implant has especially helped pave the way for many advances in biomedical engineering, now supported through creating the Graeme Clark Institute (GCI) for Biomedical Engineering at the University of Melbourne in 2016.

The Graeme Clark Institute is located centrally in the Melbourne Biomed-



Graeme Clark holding the first Nucleus (Cochlear) implant for clinical trial 1982. (The Graeme Clark Collection)

cal Precinct with over 25 collaborators from health services, research and academic partners. The Institute has unparalleled access to the clinical and research opportunities available across this entire network. By creating a community of engineers, scientists and clinicians in the healthcare system, relevant clinical problems are being identified and strategies for new approaches developed in partnership with industry.

The Institute's research programs involve various disciplines: Neuro-electronics therapy and bionics, Personalized implants; Robotic neuro-prostheses; Computational modelling for cardiovascular disease; Drug-screening technologies and Mechano-pharmacology; Nanomaterials and drug-delivery systems; Polymeric drugs for combating anti-microbial resistance; Fluid dynamic modelling for pharmaceutical manufacturing; Synthetic biology approaches to designer-stem-cell-based therapies; Systems biology; and Biomaterials, bio-fabrication and regenerative medicine.

The GCI was led from 2016 by founding director Professor Mark Cook. His research has led to the creation of Epiminder for the early detection of epileptic seizures and based on the cochlear implant development.

In 2021 David Nisbet was appointed as Professor of Translational engineering at the University of Melbourne and Head of its Graeme Clark Institute for Biomedical Engineering. Professor Nisbet brings to the Institute a passion for developing materials that can be used clinically in patients. They integrate with the body tissues and enable cells to cause regeneration of diseased tissue and organs. It is one of the exciting frontiers of the for the future of health care.

The University of Melbourne's Graeme Clark Chair of Audiology and Speech Science

In November 2013 the University of Melbourne established the Graeme Clark Chair of Audiology and Speech Science. Richard Dowell was appointed as the inaugural Professor as he had contributed greatly to the clinical outcomes of the multi-channel cochlear implant.

Professor Dowell and team showed the importance of cochlear implantation in young children, the perception and production of tone in children who speak Mandarin and Cantonese, and the preservation of hearing in people who have a cochlear implant.

The position is now held by Professor Gary Rance who has made seminal contributions to our understanding of the electrical activity in the brain and how we can use this knowledge to give them normal spoken language.

The Graeme Clark Foundation

The Graeme Clark Foundation grew from the private earnings of Professor Graeme Clark and A/Professor Brian Pyman.

The Foundation has given funds to the University of Melbourne to support the Graeme Clark Chair of Audiology and Speech Science, to Aboriginal agencies to reduce the terrible incidence of middle ear infections, to St Vincent's Hospital for research to repair damaged spinal cords which have led to paraplegia, and to provide assistance to the severely disadvantaged children needing hearing assistance in India, other southeast Asian countries and Africa.

Professor Graeme Clark's Notable Honours

Through his pioneering work, Professor Graeme Clark has had a distinguished career with significant awards to his name. These awards reflect the great variety of disciplines he had to lead to develop the cochlear implant and their success is acknowledged by the prestigious Australian and International bodies listed below.



G. Clark Senior Australian of the year 2001 Canberra 26th September

In 1983, Graeme was made an Officer of the Order of Australia, and in 2004, was elevated to a Companion of the Order of Australia (AC), the country's highest civil honour, for services to medicine and to science through innovative research to further the development of cochlear implant technology for worldwide benefit.

Other significant Australian awards include:

The James Cook Medal from the Royal Society of New South Wales (1991) (for outstanding contributions to science and human welfare in the southern hemisphere);

The Clunies Ross National Science and Technology Award (1992), (for application of science and technology for the benefit of Australia)

Sir William Upjohn Medal from the University of Melbourne (1997) (Awarded every 5 years for outstanding contributions to medicine).

Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science (1998); (for outstanding contri-

butions to science).

Fellow of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (1998); (for outstanding contributions to science and technology).

Victoria Prize (1999) (a celebration of outstanding achievements in science, engineering and technology).

Cavalcade of Science Award from Australian Institute Political Science (2000) (one of eleven most outstanding Australian scientists of the 20th century).

Senior Australian of the Year (2001), (for outstanding contribution to the welfare of Australians and international commitment).

The Prime Minister's Prize for Science (2004); (in recognition of outstanding achievement by Australians in science and technology which promotes human welfare-Australia's premier award in science).

Fellow of the Australian Acoustical Society (2004) (for notable contribution to the science and practice of acoustics).

Excellence in Surgery Award, Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (2005) (recognising the highest level of surgical achievement by world standards, advanced innovation in the field, continued quality and worth of the innovation, and the highest standard of ethics).

Ian Wark Medal and Lecture, Australian Academy of Science (2006) (for contributions to Australian science and industry).

Lifetime Achievement Award, the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences, Monash University (2007) (the highest award made by the faculty).

The CSL-Florey medal (2011) (In recognition of outstanding achievement by Australians in science and technology which promotes human welfare-Australia's premier award in science).

Notable international academic honours include:

Honorary Doctor of Medicine, Medizinische Hochschule, Hannover, Germany (1988).

Honorary Fellow of The Royal Society of Medicine, London (2003) (for exceptional distinction, and recipients drawn from across the world and from a wide range of endeavour, particularly from, the medical sciences – notable



Graeme Clark receiving the Shambaugh prize awarded 2018 for our research along with Professors Ingeborg Hochmair and Claude-Henri Chouard for the development of the multi-channel cochlear implant. (The Graeme Clark Collection)

fellows include Charles Darwin, Louis Pasteur and Sigmund Freud).

Fellow of the Royal Society, London (2004) (founded in 1660 it is the world's oldest national scientific academy- Fellows include Isaac Newton, Charles Darwin, and Albert Einstein).

Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons, England (2004) (The supreme single award of the College for outstanding achievement in medicine).

International Speech Communication Association-ISCA-Medal (2005) (for an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to the field of speech communication science and technology).

Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh Medal, awarded at the Quincen-

tenary Celebrations of the College (2005) (for outstanding contributions to medicine).

A. Charles Holland Foundation International Prize (2005) (for fundamental contribution to the progress of knowledge in the audiological/otological field).

K-J Zulch prize, Max Planck Institute (2007) (Germany's highest award in neuroscience).

Fellow of the American Institute of Medical and Biological Engineering (2007) (for an outstanding achievement in biomedical engineering).

Otto Schmitt Award, from The International Federation of Medical and Biological Engineering (2009) (for exceptional contributions to the advancement of the field of medical and biological engineering presented every three years at the World Congress on Medical Physics and Biomedical Engineering).

Doctor Honoris Causa, University of Zaragoza, Spain (2010) (for the development of the cochlear implant).

Lister Medal, awarded by the Royal College of Surgeons of England, and Ireland, the Royal Society and the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow (2010) (One of the world's most prestigious awards in the surgical sciences).

Zotterman Medal, Nobel Institute for Neurophysiology, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm (2011) (Professor Clark in a pioneering effort, has developed cochlear implants, an achievement not thought possible, over several decades it has allowed children born deaf to be able to perceive speech in a practically normal way and for adults to regain hearing).

Lasker-DeBakey Award from the Lasker Foundation (2013) (honours investigators whose contributions have improved the clinical treatment of patients - one of the most prestigious prizes in science in the world).

Fellow National Academy of Inventors (NAI) (2014) (in recognition of exceptional accomplishments in innovation and invention to benefit society).

The Fritz J. and Dolores H. Russ Prize, awarded biennially by the National Academy of Engineering and Ohio University (2015) (Recognizing a bioengineering achievement in widespread use that improves the human condition).

Medal from Paul Sabatier University (2015) (for the development of the mul-

ti-channel cochlear implant).

The Shambaugh Prize, awarded by the Collegium Oto-Rhino-Laryngologicum Amictae Sacrum (2018) (Conferred every second year for a member who has accomplished a remarkable work in the fields of Otology and related basic sciences- the only Australian to have received this award).

Professor Clark and Visiting Dignitaries

Queen Beatrix and Prince Klaus of the Netherlands in 1988.

Prince and Princess Akishino of Japan in 1995.

President of China, Jiang Zemin in 1999.

Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh in 2000.

The Legacy of Professor Graeme Clark

Professor Graeme Clark's legacy is to inspire a multidisciplinary approach to solving challenging medical conditions.

He understood that it required a team of leading clinicians, researchers and engineers to create the cochlear implant, and this multidisciplinary approach continues today.

His vision has been to lead the world in the development and translation of biomedical engineering health care solutions.

His wish is to see organizations working collegially to advance human communication and to use technology to improve disabilities in all peoples.

Yellamundie (the storyteller)

Julianne Figar

As the last decade of 19th century drew to a close, the devastating effects of colonisation with the resulting loss of life through disease, dispossession and violence were drawing the attention of ethnographers, anthropologists and other concerned individuals. Camden had several residents actively ensuring the local languages and culture were recorded throughout the late 1890s. Robert Mathews, Mary Everitt and Jimmy Lowndes began work recording local languages, cultural ceremonies and stories, motivated to preserve a culture that was fast disappearing. The work undertaken was unique as it was a direct collection by Matthews and Everitt, in a systematic and organised way, of information from Jimmy Lowndes and other community members who spoke the languages being recorded.

Due to its location, the Camden area was a traditional gathering and trading place for the bordering clans of the Tharawal (Dharawal), Dharug and Gundungurra language groups (Jones, 2023). Jimmy Lowndes, a local Dharug man, grew up being able to communicate with neighbouring groups in all three languages. Robert Mathews (R.H. Mathews) also grew up in the Camden area and counted the local Aboriginal children amongst his playmates. His familiarity with their customs enabled him to make connections with Indigenous groups throughout his life, initially in his first career as a surveyor and later as an anthropologist. Mary Everitt, who had moved to the Camden area as child, was a school teacher with a keen interest in linguistics and culture and wanted to preserve the local languages and culture.

The importance of the work by these three individuals was not acknowledged as significant during their lives and dismissed by the close-knit community of anthropologists and ethnographers of the time. As a woman, Mary Everitt needed patronage to be published (Organ, 1993). R.H. Mathews found it difficult to have his work taken seriously in spite of his broad body of work as it negated the work of other more well-known anthropologists (Thomas, 2011). Jimmy Lowndes, as a Dharug elder, had knowledge but limited means to ensure a record was kept (Goodall, 2008). During their lifetimes, the collection of publications, diaries, and other notebooks were sidelined but are now being used to reclaim language and customs by Aboriginal communities, contribute to native titles and seen as critically important work.

Jimmy Lowndes (c 1830s – c1900)

Jimmy Lowndes was born sometime in the 1830s near Camden (Goodall,



Jim Brown, Joe Brown, Joey, Bidy Giles and Jimmy Lowndes, Aboriginal workers on the Holt Sutherland Estate 1880 (State Library of New South Wales)

2008). His father was the convict, James Lowndes, who arrived in the colony on *The Recovery* in 1819 (Ford, 2010). James Lowndes served out a 7-year sentence assigned to the Macarthur farms and then, when released, worked for the Macarthur family on Cawdor from sometime before 1825. Like many convicts, he had a relationship with a local Indigenous woman and fathered Jimmy Lowndes. Little is known or recorded about Jimmy's mother however, William Macarthur notes in his letters that Jimmy was living on the Macarthur property under the protection of Budbury, a senior initiated Dharwal (Tharawal) man, and was growing up within the community where he spoke Dharug (Macarthur in Ford 2010). Budbury Street in Harrington Park is named after him. (CAFHS, 2020).

As he grew, Jimmy Lowndes developed his agricultural skills working on properties in the Camden area and became admired for his horsemanship and good character. He is described as very athletic, one of the best horsemen on the Castlereagh, and admired for his ability to operate bullock teams and the lasso (TSGC, 1904 and Goodall, 2008). Rather than being confined by residing in a camp under the control of the Aboriginal Protection Board, Jimmy Lowndes preferred to travel throughout the region providing a means to maintain his connection with country and culture (Goodall, 2008). Jimmy moved from Camden to work on several properties, eventually making his way to work the Holt properties, near what is now Sylvania, and developed



Picture The last of the Dolls Point Aboriginals - From left to right: Biddy Giles, back row Jimmy Lowndes, Joe Brown front row L to R, Jimmy the loafer, Joey (elder brother of Biddy Giles). (SLNSW)

[Dolls Point is located at Sans Souci]

contacts in the area. Jimmy married 'Betsy', an Aboriginal woman of the Georges River, and became a step-father to her children, including a daughter Emma. It is most likely through Emma that Matthews and Everitt were to eventually meet both Maria Lock's children and Sarah Castle from San Souci, who also assisted in documenting language and customs from that area. (Ford, 2010; TSGC 1904 and Goodhall 2008). His ability to maintain his cultural practices was to be critical as it was as a man of traditional knowledge that he was to make his important contribution to the preservation of languages and culture.

In his later years Jimmy was living back in Camden and eventually died in Liverpool in 1900 (TSGC 1904). But it is for his work undertaken with Mary Everitt to document language and culture for which Jimmy is now known and revered. Over several years, Jimmy Lowndes helped build a record of local languages, customs and stories (Jones 2023). Mary Everitt notes in her letters how, with Jimmy's assistance, she was able to record details from conversations with both Jimmy and others and was able to understand how the languages differed and how people from the three different areas could understand each other (Organ, 1993).

Mary Everitt (1854-1937)

Mary (Minnie) Martha Everitt, born 1 December 1854, became interested in recording and preserving local Indigenous languages. Her records were detailed, organised and, most importantly based on her own direct accounts with local Indigenous language speakers. Mary Everitt's father died in 1858, but the family was left independent and financially secure (Simpson, 2020).



Red Hand Cave, NSW , c.1910-1920s, - Presumed Tom Sheritt and Mary Everitt, (Wollondilly Library) [Red Hand Cave is located near Glenbrook, the traditional lands of the Gundungurra people]

Following her father's death, the family moved from Stanmore to the Picton area and by 1892, were farming at Thirlmere. By 1900, the family had moved to *Hilton Park*, Myrtle Creek (Tahmoor). At *Hilton Park*, Mary, now a teacher, opened Miss Everitt Ladies School with her sister Isabel. (MHNSW, 1869-1908; Styles, 2015; Simpson, 2020). By 1885, Mary had become Lady Principal of the Hurlstone Training College in Croydon and in 1897, Mistress of Parramatta South Public School (SMH 1894; MHNSW, 1954). Mary's family home was at *Hilton Park* while working in Parramatta. Mary recounts in her letters how this was difficult, and she often needed to take extended leave due to the number of colds she caught. She took advantage of these breaks, and the time they afforded her to record more information for her dictionary (Everitt in Organ 1993).

Her interest in recording languages came about after reading the work of ethnographer Walter Roth on the Pitta Pitta language. Mary wrote to Walter Roth, and he encouraged her to pursue her interest and championed her work (Roth in Thomas, 2011). In her letters, Mary Everitt recounted how difficult she found it to record the phonetics of the language using the English alphabet and grappled with ways to accurately record the pronunciation and spelling of words, even when adopting Roth's methods (Everitt in Organ 1993).

In the 1890s, Mary Everitt was already working on recording languages by working with Dharawal-speaking people at San Souci camp, as well as Dharug and Gundungurra speakers in the Camden area. Mary Everitt was in a unique position to gather language that was typically excluded by men working in the same field at that time. The elders Mary encountered were gener-

ous and put a great deal of effort into assisting her, recognising their language needed to be recorded so that it would not disappear. The elders taught Mary Everitt through various methods, often translating parables learned in church into their local language so that she was able to understand in context and record it. Other methods involved songs and everyday activities. By building relationships over a long period of time Mary Everitt was also able to record customs and practices such as how a mother would calm an unhappy child. In doing so, Mary recorded a much richer use of language than just a dictionary of grammar and vocabulary. Other locals, such as Mrs Emma Tembery (Jimmy Lowndes step-daughter) along with Jimmy confirming the stories, also recounted the history of colonisation from an Indigenous point of view, such as Cook's arrival at Botany Bay in 1770 (Everitt in Organ). In her letters, Mary Everitt describes Jimmy Lowndes as "her old friend" suggesting that they worked together often over a long period of time.

The work Mary Everitt undertook was published with R.H. Mathews as, *The organisation, language and initiation ceremonies of the Aborigines of the South-east Coast of N. S. Wales*, in a joint paper in 1900 (*Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales [JPRSNSW], 1900*). The paper was presented that year to the Royal Society of NSW (*JPRSNSW, 1900*). At some point in early 1901, the collaboration with Matthews turned sour, and they did not work together again. Simpson has suggested this may be a result of Mathews removing the names of all the Indigenous women who had assisted in recording information (2020).

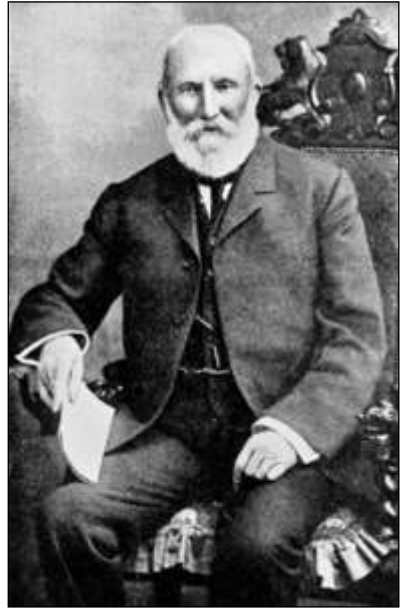
Mary Everitt began a correspondence with Alfred G. Stephens, editor of *The Bulletin*, in mid 1901, urging him to publish more of the Indigenous stories, historical accounts and vocabulary she had gathered but not included in the paper with Matthews. Although the correspondence was ongoing, and the letters indicate that plans and drafts were underway, they were never published, and Mary appears not to have published again. By the 1920s, the family had left *Hilton Park* and moved to *Brockleigh* at 71 Cronulla Street, Hurstville. Mary Everitt died at *Brockleigh* on 23 June 1937.

The diligent and diverse work of Mary Everitt through her interviews with Indigenous language speakers is now one of the main sources for the Gundungurra language description (Steele, 2005). In the last twenty years, the importance of her work in recording languages is becoming acknowledged as critical by Aboriginal communities working on language reclamation.

Robert Hamilton Mathews (1841 – 1918)

Robert Hamilton Mathews, born 21 April 1841 at Narellan, was the son of William Mathews and his wife Jane (McBryde, 1974/2006). William and Jane had emigrated to the colony under the bounty scheme on the *Westmin-*

ster with two children, Jane (fifteen) and William Jr (eight), arriving on 7 January 1840. The bounty scheme offered a way to obtain free passage with an agent who would then be paid by the New South Wales government for providing able bodied labourers (Thomas 2011). The scheme was subject to profiteering, with overcrowding of vessels the norm and was abandoned in 1841, a year after their arrival (Thomas 2011). It can be presumed that the transport was extremely risky and without comforts. At the time of R.H. Mathews' birth in 1841, the family were settled in the Camden area and by 1843, the family were living at *Richlands* [near Taralga] in the employ of James and William Macarthur (sons of John Macarthur). By 1850, the family were settled near Goulburn on land they would later buy in Mutbilly.



R.H. Mathews c1910 (John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland)

R.H. Mathews grew up isolated from other colonists and convict families in the region as his father took a sectarian stance against the predominantly Catholic community around them. Instead, R.H. Mathews and his siblings played with local Indigenous children (Mathews, 1905). Contrasting with the impoverished way the family arrived in the colony, the Mathews children were taught by their father, who had been educated in the classics. There are suggestions that William and Jane Mathews fled Ireland, with William suspected of being involved in the murder of an excise officer (Thomas 2011).

Mathews went on to study surveying, graduating in July 1870 and held licences to undertake projects for the colony. He worked on the Arwon, Namoi, Castlereagh and inland rivers (Mathews 1905; McBryde 1974/2006). Mathews quickly amassed a considerable amount of income, and becoming financially independent, he retired in the early 1890s before he turned fifty (McBryde, 1974/2006; Thomas 2011). R.H. Mathews attributes his knowledge of Indigenous customs learned in his youth to how well he was received by the elders in many of the places he travelled to and their willingness to allow access for surveying and to disclose stories, language, and discuss customs (Mathews, 1905). Mathews explains that he had always had an ear for language and linguistics and often documented the languages he encountered, and on his retirement, he had time to follow his passion (Mathews,

1905).

In the nineteenth century, it was not seen as critical to have personal contact with the object of study through on-the-ground fieldwork to collect and record information. It was not until well into the twentieth century that this became essential (Thomas 2011). Unlike other members of the academy, Mathews gathered his information while working around the colony when surveying, he also called on the contacts he had made to question and gather specific information from local Indigenous groups. But for the most part, he travelled to locations himself to gather the information needed. Mathews' views on the social structure, descent systems and marriage laws in Aboriginal society differed from those accepted by Alfred Howitt, Lorimer Fison and Baldwin Spencer, who were evolutionists and dominated the field at that time. They questioned his field methods and his interpretation of data and constantly blocked his acceptance amongst the fraternity of amateur ethnologists, linguists and anthropologists that made up the academy in Australia. Mathews, although feeling the slight, persevered and continued to publish abroad. By his death on 22 May 1918, he had over 200 articles published and a considerable portfolio of unpublished work (McBryde, 1974/2006; Thomas 2011; Mathews, 1905).

The work undertaken to record languages and customs in the late nineteenth century originated from a belief that Indigenous cultures were about to disappear, eradicated under the weight of colonial expansion, missionary activities, and loss of connection to country. In two generations, most languages were already dangerously close to disappearing. It is through the work of the keen individuals who undertook the tasks of recording not only language but customs and cultural practices that a record exists. The combined publication by Mathews and Everitt and their own individual records have provided a valuable resource for the descendants of Jimmy Lowndes and other Indigenous contributors to reclaim language and preserve the world's oldest continuous culture.

Julianne Figar was a CHS public history intern in 2023 from Macquarie University.

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Local Girl Wins RAS Showgirl Competition

Aidan Whittard

For almost 50 years, Camden has never reached that seemingly elusive goal of winning the entire showgirl competition and entering the history books. Until 2011 rolled around. In 2011, Hilary Scott, a 22-year-old horse enthusiast and university student from The Oaks, was crowned as Camden's first Sydney Royal Showgirl, receiving a cash prize of \$10,000.¹ To this day, Hilary remains Camden's first and only winner. However, this rejuvenated success for Camden has strengthened the potential for newer contestants in Camden to step forward and demonstrate that this rural community is capable of producing grand results. At 34 and living in the Netherlands, Hilary has found many successes over the years.² From training a team of horses for her family business (Oaks Sport Horses) in which she and one horse, *Milky Way*, represented Australia as part of the Nations Cup Jumping Team (2020), to competing at her first World Championship in Herning, Denmark in 2022, Hilary has come a long way since winning in 2011.³



So, what has been the continuing appeal of the competition? One would say it is a bit of an anachronism, defying the pressures of feminism, postmodernism, globalisation and urbanisation. It is conservative in nature, with show balls, festivals and overall presentation, yet has never faltered in depicting and promoting Camden's rurality, heritage and nostalgia.⁴ It broadens parochialistic mindsets, revealing the tough, hard-working nature of young like-minded women who simply want to engage with the community and become role models for

The 2011 Camden Show Girl and Camden's first Sydney Royal Showgirl, Hilary Scott (The *District Reporter*, 3 October 2011)

women in the future.

In 1962, the Royal Agricultural Society (RAS) of NSW held its first Showgirl competition.⁵ Proposed by chief RAS public relations officer Gilbert Palmer Mant (1956 – 1969) and assisted by the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW, the concept gained popularity with local communities and continues to grow to this day.⁶ The competition was never designed to be a beauty pageant. Instead, annual winners will represent the RAS, Agshows NSW (trading name for Agricultural Societies of NSW), their local Show Society and the rest of rural NSW as a young female ambassador, performing duties of both an official and informal nature, travelling interstate and possibly overseas.⁷ She may open the Sydney Royal Easter Show or other Shows, act as a steward, assist the committee, present prizes and ribbons, and give public speeches throughout the year.⁸

The first Miss Showgirl competition only had 20 contestants, judged by the wife of RAS president Edmund Strathmore Playfair (1960 – 1965), journalist from the *Daily Mirror* Jim MacDougall, and American actress Jane Russell. The title went to horse exhibitor Margaret Pennefather (Mackay), who won £250, a sash and a silver tray. Serving as the second woman on the RAS Council, Margaret travelled around the state and spoke at events on behalf of agricultural societies. Sponsorship support soon followed, such as the *Daily Telegraph* (1970 – 1972), the *Daily Mirror* (1962-1965), *Australian Women's Weekly* (1973 – 1978) and *The Land* (1979 – present).⁹ Current sponsors aside from *The Land* include AgShows NSW, Gow Gates, Akubra and Birdsnest, with over \$40,000 worth in cash and prizes.¹⁰

The prize list and its supplementary incentives have been updated throughout the years to better reflect the competition and its worth towards the dedicated young women of NSW. All state finalists receive a sash, one-year complimentary RAS membership and one week of all expenses paid Showgirls Program during the Sydney Royal Easter Show, covering the cost of accommodation, meals and travel. The first runner-up will receive \$3,500 courtesy of the Agricultural Societies Council of NSW Ltd and the RAS and an extra three days to the weeklong Showgirls Program. The State Winner will receive \$7,500 courtesy of the RAS and *The Land* newspaper, the extra three days as well and a place in the newspaper and the history books.¹¹

To clarify, up until 2022, the competition was originally known as the Miss Showgirl Competition, shortly dropping the 'Miss' to become The Land Sydney Royal Showgirl Competition from 1979 – 2001. In recent years there have been expressed concerns towards using the word 'Showgirl' and whether this was appropriate for what the competition represents. When searching for this word, images are more exotic, depicting female performers as op-

posed to female ambassadors. Debate between the ASC and RAS in 2019 led to the retention of the name, combating negative perceptions of those who believe it is outdated. “Why change what’s not broken? It’s tradition and means so much to the show”, said ASC showgirl committee spokesperson Peter Gooch. Lauren Elkins, Camden’s 2009 finalist who placed third, preferred not to change the name, suggesting that local show societies should have improved marketing for the competition; “We need to look at how it is marketed and tell the stories of the girls of where they are and how they are developing”. Another supporter of this traditional notion, 2016 winner Grace Eppelstun believed in sentimental reasoning that “changing the name will change what the future competition will be”, as her mother was also a Showgirl participant in the 1980s. However, the following winner a year later, Maisie Morrow, expressed that a name change could encourage “youthful enthusiasm”, with alternatives such as ‘rural achiever’, ‘rural woman’ or ‘rural ambassador’ being discussed.¹²

In June of 2021, it was announced by the RAS that, from 2022 onwards the show would be called ‘The Sydney Royal Young Woman of the Year’. A progressive alteration to the title reflected contemporary times, resonating better for young women and reevaluating the importance of the role. Agshows NSW director and intermediate past President Tim Capp (2009 – present) has stated that the title will be adopted for the “seven zone finals from 2022” however, for the “local shows and their own competitions, it will be recommended, not mandated”.¹³ The recently appointed President Michael Millner also stated that the change was a priority for the posterity of rural women and community leaders, which has had a “profound impact...for over half a century” and that “AgShows NSW is focused on relevance, evolution and growth so it can continue for another 60 years”.¹⁴

Although the grounds for judging have remained virtually unchanged since the inception of the competition, with 250-300 candidates entering each year, making it to the state final is no easy feat. With a total score of 100 points, they are assessed by a panel of three judges according to their personality, confidence, ambitions and life goals, general knowledge (local/Australia/international), rural knowledge (general, local, show), personal presentation (grooming, diction, speech), volunteering and community participation, and a 20-minute on-stage interview. Finalists are also required to talk about the rural and current affairs of their local community, and their experiences and possible involvements in the matter.¹⁵

Out of the 192 local shows, entrants aged between 18 and 25 must win their local title before proceeding to the zone and state finals. There are seven zones for the 2024 Young Woman Competition they are: (1) Grafton Show Society, (2) Penrith Show Society (Camden Show Society Inc. is part of this



The 2013 Camden Show Ball at the Camden AH&I Hall (Camden Show Ball Facebook)

zone), (3) Adelong Show Society, (4) Tamworth Show Society, (5) Lithgow Show Society, (6) Narromine Show Society and (7) Temora Show Society.¹⁶ Zone final judging is conducted over six weeks between February and March, which will consist of between 14 and 18 entrants proceeding to the state final. The Land Sydney Royal AgShows NSW Young Woman Presentation for the state final winner (1st Place) and first runner-up (2nd Place) is held on the 9 April at the Sydney Royal Easter Show.¹⁷ This year, the title went to Florance McGufficke from Cooma. A true test of passion and ambition. All the best to her and her ambassadorial roles throughout the year.

At a localised level, the Camden Show Young Woman Competition has honoured this tradition since its beginnings in 1962, looking for young women in Camden to become an ambassador for the Camden Show Society and the Camden Community. This gives them a chance to brush up on their public speaking skills and interpersonal skills, engage with the local people, and learn about Camden's agricultural sector and the efforts to organize the Camden Show.¹⁸ Individuals who are interested must submit an entry form (entries close at the end of September) and are invited to the Camden Show Ball at the Camden AH & I Hall (Saturday, end of October) where the winner is announced for the following year.¹⁹ To support the endeavours of the Ball and the individual showgirls, they have obtained a range of sponsors over the



Entrants for Camden's 2013 Showgirl Competition (Camden Show Ball Facebook)

years. Some of the sponsors (for the 2013 show ball) include, but are not limited to: NAB, Jetset Camden, The Shed Shop, Self-Indulgence Boutique, Marsden's Law Group, South Coast & Country Engraving, Togs Swimwear and Alliance Motor Auctions.²⁰

The ball has served Camden for almost 90 years, first held in 1936 by the Mayoress Mrs. W. Larkin, which occurred at irregular intervals for 30 years, generally when the society was short of finance.²¹ Consistency picked up following the Miss Camden Show Girl contest, adding extra promotional material, bolstering the appearance of the ball, garnering attraction, and profiting the society greatly. From 1986 – 1987, president of the show ball committee Jim Davies decided that the hall was too small to hold patrons, opting for a circus tent for \$10,000 erected at Camden Showground. Other venues included the Camden Rugby League ground at Kirkham, Gledswood, and Menangle. Today, the Show Ball resides in the AH&I Hall.²²

In the early days of the contest, there was a shortage of participants and encouragement was needed. Camden solicitor Paul Bowring and historian, author, and committee member (resigned 2020) Neville Clissold approached those that appeared suitable.²³ In the end, there would be several young women each year who would try their hand to achieve the title. The first person to

achieve this was Helen Crace, named “Miss Camden” in the *Daily Mirror*. She would be followed by a string of names, with numerous show girls progressing to Zone and State finals. Those that received or did not receive a placing throughout the years have brought honour to the Camden Show Society and credit to themselves, as there have been no ill-fated mannerisms, holding one another in the highest regard.

Michelle Dounan (Chambers), former committee member and honorary vice president of the society (1991 – 2016) contributed an extract in Neville Clisold’s *Camden Show (1886 – 2011) After 125 Years... ‘Still a Country Show’: The People and The Stories* recalling her time as Miss Camden Show Girl 1969. Going off memory, Michelle couldn’t remember how her entering the contest came about, yet knew that judging occurred at the residence of Mr and Dick and Mrs Lorna Inglis and not at the Camden Show. Dick was president of the society and a well-known auctioneer who gave Michele a cut-glass dressing table set as a prize for winning. She then proceeded to zone finals at Richmond, where the overall winner would receive a round-the-world-trip; an enticing prize, particularly when gender expectations avowed that rural women were confined to the home. This was also an incentive in 2004, when today’s young women want a career and to travel. Danielle Haack from Camden certainly believed that “a world trip would be a lovely end-of-year treat for me once I finish my degree”.²⁴ Spending a couple of days at the Show, Michelle was unfortunately unsuccessful and returned home. Having been a Miss Show Girl, Michelle became more involved in the Camden Show, joining the committee as the third female member in 1992 after Elizabeth Thompson in 1976 and Liz Kernohan in 1983. During this time, she worked as a steward in the hall and later as chairperson of the Show Ball, operating between Menangle and the hall. It was also the small things that Michelle enjoyed, such as organising lunches for the judges in Ted’s Shed, who held the Excellence in Agriculture and Rural Business Awards Presentation.²⁵ A true act of selflessness and community spirit.

Other notable mentions in recent years go to Kate Boardman, who came a close second at the Sydney Royal Show; Nicole Duran, who represented Camden in 2019; and Rubey Williams, who was this year’s state finalist. Those who attended the Camden Show Parade on Friday 24 March or the Grand Parade the following day may have had the opportunity to spot Rubey.²⁶ Although she did not receive a placing this year, Rubey is Camden’s first Young Woman of the Year following the Showgirl rebranding, which was announced at the Camden Civic Centre last year on 22 October. She was also Junior Rural Ambassador at the Camden Show back in 2015. Currently studying a Bachelor of Agricultural Business Management, the 22-year-old aims to become “a role model in the community” and encourage other young women to pursue agricultural careers and shape the future of ru-

CAMDEN SHOW BALL



2023 Camden Young Woman Competition
 Saturday 22nd October 2022
 Doors Open 5.45pm for 6.00pm start till 12.00am
 Camden Civic Centre
 Dress: Black Tie/Formal
 Tickets \$140 each or Tables of 10 for \$1,350
 Includes: Beer, Wine and Soft Drink
 Admission by pre-purchased ticket only. Tickets available online from
<https://www.ticketcity.com.au/camden> or at the Show Office (Tuesdays Only) from 9.30am until 4.30pm

www.camdenshow.com

ral Australia. Focusing on a sustainable alpaca fleece industry, qualifying as the youngest ever Australian Alpaca Association Halter and Fleece Judge, her family owns and operates the largest alpaca breeding property in the state, located at Berrima (next to Bowral), as well as sheep breeding property at Pheasants Nest makes for impressive agricultural credentials. It is safe to say that Camden is in good hands for another year.²⁷

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Camden Showgirl/Young Woman Winners

1962 Helen Crace, 1963 Helen Crace, 1964 Sue Mason, 1965 Barbara Duck, 1966 Dawn Dowle, 1967 Jenny Rock, 1968 Heather Mills, 1969 Michelle Chambers,* 1970 Joyce Boardman, 1971 Anne Macarthur-Stanham,* 1972 Kerri Webb,* 1973 Anne Fahey,* 1974 Sue Faber, 1975 Janelle Hore, 1976 Jenny Barnaby,* 1977 Patsy Anne Daley, 1978 Julie Wallace,* 1979 Sandra Olieric, 1980 Fiona Wilson,* 1981 Louise Longley,* 1982 Melissa Clowes, 1983 Illa Eagles, 1984 Leanne Reily, 1985 Rebecca Py, 1986 Jenny Rawlinson,* 1987 Jayne Manns, 1988 Monique Mate, 1989 Linda Drinnan, 1990 Tai Green, 1991 Toni Leemen, 1992* Susan Lees, 1993 Belinda Bettington,* 1994 Miffy Haynes, 1995 Danielle Halfpenny, 1996 Jenianne Garvin, 1997 Michelle Dries, 1998 Belinda Holyoake, 1999 Lyndall Reeves,* 2000 Katie Rogers, 2001 Kristy Stewart, 2002 Margaret Roser,* 2003 Sally Watson, 2004 Danielle Haack,* 2005 Arna Daley, 2006 Victoria Travers, 2007 Sarah Myers, 2008 Fiona Boardman,* 2009 Lauren Elkins,* 2010 Adrianna Mihajlovic, 2011 Hilary Scott,* 2012 April Browne, 2013 Isabel Head, 2014 Jacinda Webster, 2015 Kate Boardman,* 2016 Danielle Rodney, 2017 Tess Madeley, 2018 Corinne Fulford, 2019 Nicole Sandrone, 2020 Tiarna Scerri, 2021 Tiarna Scerri, 2022 Brooke Baker, 2023 Rubey Williams.*

* indicates those that went onto state final

Private Frederick Oscar Kelloway

Kellee Cordina

Kellee Cordina writes about her great-great uncle, Frederick Oscar Kelloway, who was killed in the First World War.

Frederick Oscar Kelloway was born on 17 March 1893 in Camden, New South Wales, to parents Stephen Kelloway Jr. and Prudence Kelloway. Stephen Kelloway Jr. and Prudence Dabinett were married by Rev. John Fleming Moran on 8 August 1877 at St John's Anglican Church Camden. They commenced married life, living on a property at Mount Hunter. They had a large family of nine children, with the eldest daughter Mary Anne born on 16 November 1878. Sadly, she died at three months of age. Their first son John Stephen was born on 8 January 1880, followed by Selina Emma on 18 May 1882; George William was born on 29 October 1884; Arthur Henry 6 June 1887; Ernest Vivian 26 April 1890; Frederick Oscar 17 March 1893; Ivy Mildred 3 August 1896; and Melville Laurie Oswald on 26 November 1898.



Prudence Kelloway with Ivy Mildred (K Cordina)



Home of Stephen and Prudence Kelloway at Oaks Road, Mt Hunter - Late 1910s (K Cordina)

In 1912, they relocated to a property on the corner of Fosters Lane and Burragorang Road, at the time known as Oaks Road, Mount Hunter.

There was a significant age gap of 20 years between the eldest and youngest siblings. However, Frederick and Ivy (known as Millie) were only three years apart and thus formed a special bond.

Frederick and his siblings attended primary school at Mount Hunter Public School and senior classes at Camden Public School. Upon completing his education, Frederick commenced his occupation as a labourer.



**Frederick Oscar Kelloway
(K Cordina)**

Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force

To the Recruiting Officer
at VICTORIA BARRACKS, N.S.W.

PERSONAL PARTICULARS

PRELIMINARY MEDICAL EXAMINATION

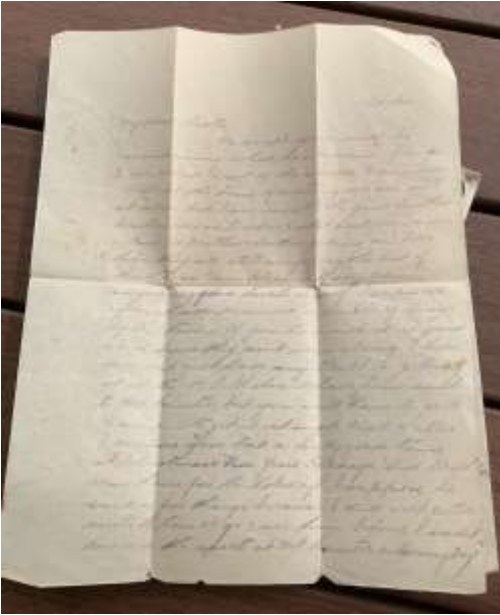
CERTIFICATE OF RECRUITING OFFICER

VICTORIA BARRACKS, N.S.W.

In 1914, after the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria, World War I, also known as the Great War, began. Australia was drawn into the conflict as a dominion of the British Empire. Australian men were ‘called to arms’ to enlist and join the fight overseas. The prospect of adventure and excitement enticed the young men of Camden. Frederick Oscar Kelloway enlisted on 10 October 1915, to serve in the 19th Battalion A.I.F. At 22, Frederick was among more than 330,000 Australians who volunteered to serve overseas in World War I between 1914 and 1918.

As with all recruits, Frederick underwent a thorough medical examination. On his ‘Application to Enlist in the Australian Imperial Force’, the Examining Medical

Frederick’s Application to Enlist in the A.I.F. (NAA)



Officer stated that Frederick was 'Fit for active service', noting 'conditional teeth', implying some dental issues. Further details stated on his application include his height of 6 feet, weight of 156 lbs, 37.5-inch chest, 'fair' complexion, 'brown - good' eyes and 'brown' hair.

Frederick commenced training in Australia before departing Sydney on the troopship 'His Majesty's Australian Transport' (HMAT) *Berrima* on 12th December 1915. HMAT *Berrima* was one of many ships requisitioned by the government for transporting troops for wartime service.

**Frederick's letter to Ivy Millie'
(K Cordina)**

loway. Unbeknownst at the time, this would be his final letter:

During his journey at sea, Frederick wrote the following letter to his younger sister Ivy 'Millie' Kel-

At Sea

My Dear Sister,

No doubt you will be wondering what has become of me and in what part of the world I am. Well, at the time of writing we are still at sea, but I am unable to give further particulars, as to where and what part we are in.

How is Mother and Father getting on? I do hope they are still enjoying the best of health, as I am pleased to say I am enjoying good health myself. I suppose you have received a couple of pays by this time. If you have not, it is just about time they sent some along. I hope you did not have any trouble in getting it at the P.O. [post office]. It should have been sent to Mt Hunter, but you will have to go to Camden to get it changed.

Well Millie I suppose you had a fairly good time at Christmas and New Years holidays. Did Will come home for the holidays? I suppose he said a few things because I did not either write to him or go and see him before I sailed.

How did the sports at Mt Hunter on Boxing Day come off? I suppose they

was as dry as usual, and the crowd was as big as they usually are.

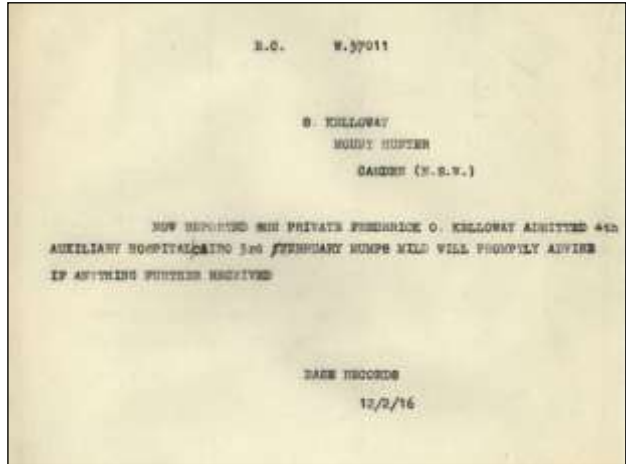
My word Millie I could do with a few papers now and again as I have not had any news from home since we sailed and I can tell you, anything in the way of newspapers or magazines will come in very handy.

How are the boys around Camden enlisting? Are they still rolling up as good as they were when I left? Has Jim

Fisher [surname unconfirmed] sailed yet? I suppose Will has not got over his complaint yet? I am not allowed to say anything about the trip, so I think I shall have to bring this to a close as time is very scarce. We had a fairly good time in W.A. while we were there.



Frederick's grave (K Cordina)



**Telegram dated 12th February 1916
(K Cordina)**

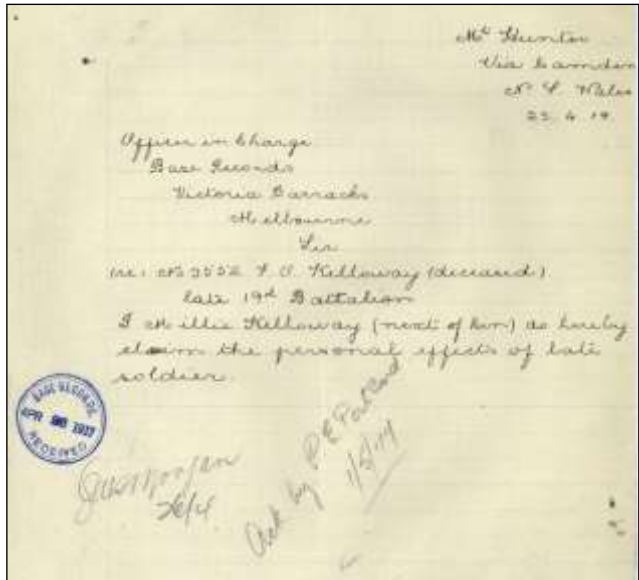
Well dear sister I must say goodbye for the present. Please remember me to all the people around there and do not forget to write at least twice per month.

*With best love to all at home from your loving brother,
Fred*

The HMAT *Berrima* completed the four-week journey to Egypt, where the men undertook further training in preparation for the front line. In early 1916, Frederick's family received word home, in the form of a telegram dated 6 February 1916 advising 'Regret reported son Private Frederick O. Kelloway admitted Third Auxiliary Hospital Cairo 27 January Dental mild will promptly advise if anything further received.'

No doubt a fearful experience for the

family receiving a telegram from war; thankfully, the news was not too serious. A second telegram, dated 12 February 1916, was to follow, advising, 'Now reported son Private Frederick O. Kelloway admitted 4th Auxiliary Hospital Cairo 3rd February Mumps mild will promptly advise if anything further received.' Frederick recovered and was sent back to camp to continue with his duties.



On departing Egypt, the 19th Battalion proceeded to France. On 23

Millie's letter sent to the Victoria Barracks claiming Frederick's personal effect (K Cordina)

July 1916, Frederick signed a copy of his Will: In the event of my death, I give the whole of my property and effects to my father, S. Kelloway. This



was certified to be a true copy of Will extracted from A B 64 of No 3552 Private Kelloway F.O. 19th Battalion and co-signed at the time by the 19th Battalion A.I.F. Senior Sergeant and 17th Battalion A.I.F. Sergeant. In France, they took part in their first major offensive around Pozières between late July and the end of August 1916.

The Dead Man's Penny (K Cordina)

In later months, the 19th Battalion attacked near Flers between the 14 and 16 November in terrible conditions. Tragically for Frederick, he was wounded in this battle on 14 November 1916. He suffered a



**Tin containing Frederick Kelloway's personal effects and war medals
(K Cordina)**

gunshot wound to the right thigh and a fractured femur. He was transferred by ambulance train to Rouen, which, as you could appreciate in those days, was a very long and slow journey. Sadly, at 8.15 pm on 29 November 1916, Frederick died from his wounds in the No 3 Stationary Hospital, Rouen, Normandy, France, at the age of 23 years.

Frederick Oscar Kelloway was laid to rest in Block O, Plot III, Row Q, Grave No. 2 at the St. Sever Cemetery Extension, Rouen, France. The family received photos of the cross erected at his burial site, which has been updated to a headstone in later years. His headstone reads the words 'HE GIVETH HIS BELOVED SLEEP' from Psalm 127.2.

On 23 April 1917, Frederick's sister Millie sent the following letter to the Officer in Charge, Base Records, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne, Victoria:

*(re) No 3552 F.O. Kelloway (deceased) late 19^h Battalion,
I Millie Kelloway (next of kin) do hereby claim the personal effects of late soldier.*



Frederick Kelloway's service certificate (K Cordina)

His personal effects on him at the time of death, and his belongings back at base camp, were returned to the family in various packages. On 13 August 1917, one package of personal effects of the late No 3552 Private Kelloway F.O. 19th Battalion were received and signed by Frederick's father, Stephen Kelloway. The package included items listed as follows; a disc, photos, cards, Testament, receipt, pen knife (damaged), Wallet, scissors with protector, fountain pen, draymen's metal badge, cotton bag, purse, metal wristwatch (damaged) and strap, brooch and comb. A second package arrived on 19 September 1917, which contained the personal effects carried on Frederick at his time of death, which included a handkerchief and his

identification tags, more commonly known as dog tags.

In May 1922, Frederick's family received a parcel from the Office in Charge, Base Records, Army Headquarters in Melbourne, Victoria, which contained the Memorial Plaque, Bronze Medallion and King's Message in Honour of the late Private Frederick Oscar Kelloway. Known as 'The Dead Man's Penny', the large commemorative medallion was presented to the next-of-kin of the men and women who died during World War I. The medallion features an image of Lady Britannia surrounded by two dolphins (representing Britain's sea power) and a lion (representing Britain) standing over a defeated eagle (symbolising Germany). Around the outer edge of the medallion are the words 'He died for freedom and honour'. Next to Lady Britannia is the deceased soldier's name, Frederick Oscar Kelloway, with no rank provided to show equality in their sacrifice. The Dead Man's Penny was accompanied by a letter from King George V, stating, 'I join with my grateful people in sending you this memorial of a brave life given for others in the Great War'.

Frederick Kelloway's parents, Stephen and Prudence, passed away in 1930, aged in their 70s. Their home at Mount Hunter remains in the family today.

At present, owned and occupied by their great-grandson Earl Biffin and wife Helen.

Frederick Oscar Kelloway's memory continues to live on even today in the home of his nephew Frederick Sharpe. Ivy 'Millie' married Cecil Sharpe in 1923, and Millie and her husband purchased the property beside her parent's home in Mt Hunter. Millie named their son Frederick, born in 1925, in honour of her beloved brother.

Frederick Sharpe (now 98 years old) lives in his parent's home today. On entering the lounge room, you will see a large, framed photo of Frederick Oscar Kelloway and nearby the framed service certificate. His personal belongings are kept in a tin for safekeeping in honour of a brave young soldier who gave his life for his country.



Frederick's medals of service (K Cordina)

Federation Store – the other Whiteman shop

Dianne Matterson

The building in Argyle Street, known as ‘Whiteman’s,’ has been a familiar and dignified sight for generations of Camden residents who regarded the business as an integral part of the economic and social cohesion of the town. However, between the late 19th century and mid 20th century, and almost directly opposite, was another Whiteman’s business that became known as the ‘Federation Store’ and was owned by Nelson Alfred Whiteman (brother of Charles Thomas Whiteman and son of Nelson Whiteman Snr), and later, his son, Frank. The stores at 81-87 Argyle Street were built in the 1850s as single-storey shops separated by a laneway that would ultimately connect the saleyards at the rear of this allotment and the Plough and Harrow Hotel with Argyle Street. The first known business on this site was run by Charles Cross and his sons, Thomas and Charles Jnr; Charles New also had a business here prior to the establishment of Nelson Whiteman’s store. By the early 20th century, a second-storey residence had been added that connected the two shops while the lane passed underneath the central section of the new structure. This site is now occupied by the Capitol Arcade.

In the 1890s, Nelson Whiteman opened a general store at 81-83 Argyle Street and, by July 1895, was advertising his business as the Federation Store.

*The premises were splendidly built on solid foundations. The interior walls measure 10½ inches, while the original lathe and plaster ceilings are still in excellent condition. The doors and fittings are of solid cedar.*¹

With strong competition from his brother’s shop – Cumberland Stores/House – just across the road, Nelson’s shop sold items as disparate as groceries, drapery, millinery, wallpaper, toys, seed potatoes and hosiery. By 1898, the goods for sale had expanded to include footwear, ironmongery, maize, chaff, bran and pollard.² The *Camden News* benefited greatly from the competitive advertising of Nelson and Charles, as each matched the promotions of the other in style, scale and frequency.

In October 1896, Nelson and his wife, Eliza, hosted a qualified dressmaker, Miss Bellingham, upon her arrival in Camden:

*DRESSMAKING ON THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES,
MISS E. BELLINGHAM*

(Diploma from Madame De Fell, Sydney.)

*will on Monday next the 19th instant, be in attendance
at Mrs N. A. Whiteman's Federation Stores, Camden.³*

Perhaps encouraged by the response to Miss Bellingham's demonstration, an on-site dressmaking service, probably in the downstairs 'front room' of the Federation Store, was providing the latest in fashion under the watchful eye of Eliza Whiteman and a 'first class Sydney dressmaker'.⁴ 1903 brought change for the Whitemans. Nelson advertised a 'Great Sale' at his store, wanting to reduce his stock as he prepared for extensive 'alterations' to the premises. Customers buying during the sale would be offered a 10% discount if they paid cash. At around this same time, John Thompson sold the shop's freehold to Charles Arnold, the owner of the Plough & Harrow Hotel next door.⁵ The decade concluded dramatically for the Whitemans when a fire broke out in a large quantity of boxes stored at the rear of the property.

The Camden Fire Brigade was called to work on Saturday afternoon last to combat with a fire at the rear of Mr N A Whiteman's grocery stores. A large quantity of boxes etc, were well ablaze and the adjoining property was in immediate danger, however the efforts of the firemen quickly dispelled all fears, and prevented any serious loss.⁶

Despite the euphoria amongst the public at the conclusion of World War I, these were difficult years for those in business. In 1920, Nelson Whiteman and six other storekeepers advised the public that purchases would be conducted on a 'Spot Cash or Strictly Monthly' basis due to the 'phenomenal high prices ruling throughout the trade and the recent advance in wages'.⁷

Nelson Whiteman purchased the property's freehold from the Arnold family in 1924 before retiring in 1926 and selling his business to Norman Small (Small Brothers).⁸ Nelson retained the freehold of the property and over the next 30 years, the shop and its 'front room' were occupied by:

Downstairs 'front room': 'Margot' Salon (Miss Manken) 1931-1932, 1933-1937 (Mrs Davies), 1937-1942 (Gwen Taplin); Bernard Owens (solicitor) 1932. He moved to a room above Frank Whiteman's shop in 1933; Mr Winton (foot specialist) 1937 – in conjunction with 'Margot' Salon; Aird Brothers (tailors & mercers) 1944-1950; Gordon Cameron (tailor & mercer) 1950-1966.

Shop: E Robins 1928-1930; William Lock 1930-1933; Hiram Booth (Home Self-service Store) 1933-1936; W Middleton 1936-1937; S Buttle Pty. Ltd. 1937-1955+. When William Lock purchased the business from Mr Robins,

his business model focussed on the sale of groceries rather than the ‘general goods’ of his predecessors.

The retirement of Nelson Whiteman also brought about change for his son, Frank, who, after having worked for his father for some time, purchased the stationery, photographic and music business of Keith Smart that was located across the laneway in the premises at 85-87 Argyle Street.⁹ Although he was still the legal owner of the shops at 81-87 Argyle Street, it seems Nelson had handed effective control of the properties to Frank by June 1934, as much of the advertising by the occupying businesses consistently referred to the ‘F N Whiteman building’ from this point onwards. When Nelson Whiteman died in 1940, the shops at 81-87 Argyle Street were inherited by Frank.¹⁰

By the time Frank left his father’s store and took over the business of Keith Smart, the shop at 85-87 Argyle Street already had a history dating from at least 1895:

Shop: Sam Proctor (music instruments, stationery, fancy and plated goods, books, hairdressing) 1895-1903; James Dally (took over from Sam Proctor) 1903-1913; J Taylor (agent for Palings pianos and piano accordions, and the gramophones, records and pianos of the British Pianoforte Depot) 1913-1915.



The Whiteman’s building before the 1933 upgrade (Camden Images)

Roy Dowle (photographer), used the Taylor ‘studio’ weekly for those wanting their portrait taken. Harry Chapman (tobacco, stationery, music and ‘fancy goods’, Camden Estate Agency, agent for: Paling’s pianos, organs and musical instruments, Norwich Union Insurance Society) 1915-1922; Walter Pike (boot repairs) 1922-1924; Keith Smart (‘Keith Smart’s Photo Supply House’: stationery, fancy goods, instruments, music scores) 1924-1926.

Ground Floor office at the rear of shop: Frank le Levy (hairdresser) 1919; unnamed hairdresser 1922-1924 (part of Walter Pike’s business located in the main shop).

By 1927, Frank Whiteman’s shop stocked stationery, tobacco, sporting goods, ‘fancy goods’, toys, tennis shoes, musical instruments, and gramophones and provided a photo-developing service. By the 1940s, the photographic dark room was being used by Eric Pinkerton, who ran a local photography business.¹¹

However, Frank was not the only occupant of the building during the 1930s. In mid-1932, Arthur Johnson, a solicitor, opened his business in the office – accessed through the shop – at the rear of Frank’s store. For more than 20 years, he occupied these premises and undertook a variety of legal work for the people of Camden, as well as providing legal services for Camden Council. At around the same time, Miss Manken’s ‘Margot’ Salon moved from the ‘front room’ across the laneway into an upstairs room above Frank Whiteman’s stationery shop. Customers accessed the salon from the shop via internal stairs. This relocation gave the salon customers greater privacy and better facilities, but the arrangement was, however, short-lived, as the business was back in the original premises adjacent to the Home Self-Service Store at 81-83 Argyle Street by November. From October, the monthly CWA meetings were held upstairs in the Whiteman’s building, having previously leased rest rooms in Mrs Gaudry’s cottage adjoining Henderson’s bakery.¹²

In 1933, Mrs Ashwell, who up to now had conducted a ‘Private Dress Salon’ in View Street, moved her business to one of the upstairs rooms in the former residence of the Whiteman building. As well as having a range of ready-made dresses and tennis coats available for her customers, she also gave dressmaking classes, did hemstitching and covered buttons.¹³

FREE SERVICE.

BUTTERICK PATTERN AGENCY.

Buy your Material and Butterick Pattern here and the material will be cut free.

MRS. ASHWELL

FRANK N. WHITEMAN'S BUILDING, CAMDEN. Telephone Camden 57.¹⁴



The Whiteman's building after the 1933 upgrade (Camden Images)

In 1933, Camden Council gave approval for alterations to the Whiteman building to be undertaken by H Willis & Sons, a firm of local builders. The work involved the addition of a brick frontage, new display windows for both shops (81-83 and 85-87 Argyle Street), and the 'front room', and increased the depth of the premises. The 'front room' was converted into a self-contained office. A cantilever 'awning' was built across the front of the shops, office and laneway.¹⁵

Mrs Lutas had a lady's clothing showroom upstairs in Room 5 of Frank's building and was the agent for Smith's Styles of Sydney. The entrance to the showroom was through the newsagency or via the 'side passage'. Soon after, in another room above the newsagency, the 'Smart Set Salon' opened for business, also selling ladies' clothing. It appears this later business was short-lived, however, as its advertising ceased after June 1936. Another tenant of the building, Carl Lorenz, a Sydney optician, had previously consulted his patients every Tuesday in a room above Fred Whiteman's building on the other side of Argyle Street. However, in early 1936, he moved his consultancy to one of the rooms above Frank Whiteman's newsagency. His room could be accessed either via the newsagency or the lane.¹⁶

In June 1944, Frank Whiteman was managing some health issues, so he sold his newsagency and fancy goods store to James and Myrita Munroe, the former proprietors of the Camden Newsagency at 69-73 Argyle Street. He started a Real Estate, Stock and Farm business in one of the back rooms and gained an auctioneer's license. However, after finding the work as an estate agent less than fulfilling, Frank bought the Monroe business back from them in 1947 but continued to run the estate agency from the office at the rear.¹⁷ The business of Miss M Rixon, a dressmaker, occupied one of the rooms upstairs in the former residence from early 1946. This business was soon replaced with that of another dressmaker, Norma Gall. Also occupying one of the rooms on the 1st Floor by 1950 was Vernon Baldwin, an accountant who also served the people of Camden as a JP.¹⁸

On 16 July 1951, thieves targeted Frank Whiteman's shop and left him with a substantial loss:

*A robbery took place at Mr. F. N. Whiteman's business premises in Argyle Street early on Monday. The plate glass window in front of the shop was smashed with a large steel hook. From this window half a dozen watches were stolen, valued approximately £40. It is understood the robbery took place at about 3 a.m. The hook with which the window was smashed was left behind, but no trace of the robber has been made.*¹⁹

In mid-1954, John Watson & Co opened a farm machinery and farmers' supply business on the Whiteman premises. It is likely that a portion of the former saleyard area was used by Mr Watson to display and store the machinery for sale in what he referred to as his 'implement yard'. He also offered a repair service – either in his workshop or on the farm.²⁰

In August 1954, Frank Whiteman sold his stationery and fancy goods business to Mrs Barlow but continued his Real Estate and Business Agency in the office at the rear of the building. He retained the freehold of the building until 1959/1960, when he sold the entire property to James, Maria, Manoel and Sophia Cassimatis, proprietors of a nearby café.²¹ After the 1933 upgrade of the property, few alterations were seemingly made until the building was replaced by the current arcade in the late 1960s. The location of the original lane was approximately where today's pedestrian 'walk through' gives access to and from the Larkin Place Carpark.

Author's note: the spelling, punctuation and word usage in the extracts in this article have been reproduced as they appear in the original.

Notes

- 1 *Picton Post*, 28 June 1933
- 2 *Camden News*, 11 July 1895; 27 August 1896; 3 September 1896; 9 December 1897; 23 December 1897; 19 July 1898; 6 June 1940
- 3 *Camden News*, 15 October 1896
- 4 *Camden News*, 8 April 1897; 4 November 1897; 22 December 1898
- 5 *Camden News*, 30 July 1903; 13 August 1903. Land Registry Services: HLRV – Torrens Purchasers Index 1863-1971, Vol. 1486 Folio 29
- 6 *Camden News*, 16 December 1909
- 7 *Camden News*, 5 February 1920
- 8 *Camden News*, 3.6.1926; 6.6.1940. Land Registry Services: HLRV – Torrens Purchasers Index 1863-1971, Vol. 3499 Folio 192
- 9 Recollection of Ida Whiteman [née Hearne]. *Camden News*, 3 June 1926; 10 June 1926; 6 June 1940
- 10 NSW Will Books, 1800-1952 – Will #250321 [Find My Past]. Sydney Morning Herald, 31.5.1940
- 11 *Camden News*, 23 June 1927. Recollection of Ida Whiteman [née Hearne]
- 12 *Camden News*, 2 October 1930; 5 May 1932; 8 June 1932; 20 October 1932; 23 November 1933; 7 June 1934
- 13 *Picton Post*, 25 January 1933; 26. April 1933
- 14 *Camden News*, 1 February 1934
- 15 *Camden News*, 29 June 1933. *Picton Post*, 5 July 1933. Recollection of Ida Whiteman [née Hearne]
- 16 *Camden News*, 1 August 1935; 30. January 1936; 20 February 1936
- 17 *Camden News*, 15 June 1944; 22 June 1944; 13 July 1944; 30 January 1947. Recollection of Ida Whiteman [née Hearne]
- 18 *Camden News*, 14 February 1946; 4 September 1947. *Picton Post*, 31 August 1950
- 19 *Camden News*, 19 July 1951
- 20 *Camden News*, 1 July 1954; 22 July 1954; 29. July 1954
- 21 *Camden News*, 12 August 1954. 1947-1959 Valuer General's Assessment Books.

President's Report for 2022-23

Ian Ramsay

I want to welcome everyone to our annual general meeting of 2023.

My three-year tenure is about to end, so I wanted to reflect on where we have been and what we have achieved. When I do so, I realise just how far we have come and the great things that we as a collective have achieved.

Without a doubt, the largest and most ambitious project that we have undertaken is the Professor Graeme Clark Display. Renowned son of Camden, inventor of the Cochlear Ear Implant. This ongoing task will be officially opened on the 4 November 2023 with Professor Clark AC in attendance.

I extend a huge thank you to treasurer Fletcher Joss, who has more than capably managed this project.

Some other highlights of momentous times.

The honour of installing the NSW Government Blue Plaque on the front of the Camden Library building commemorating the Red Cross Sewing Circles. This was a result of Dr Ian Willis's submission, which was based on his 2014 book *Ministering Angels*.

In April this year, the Janice Johnson Bequest of 2017 was completed. This has been a significant undertaking by Life Member Julie Wrigley and Treasurer Fletcher Joss, with the publication of six books relating to Camden together with gravesite plaques at St John's Church Camden and St Mark's Church Picton.

Volunteer Coordinator Rene Rem reported that as of last week, we have had a total of 6,464 visitors to the museum. This indicates that attendances have now recovered since the Covid-19 bans were lifted.

The great advance in our accounting for sales of merchandise and subscriptions has been installing the Tyro EFTPOS machine. This has been a great treasurer's initiative, for the simplification of our handling of money and can be taken off-site for various events we attend.

As a community observation, it was gratifying to see that after decades of neglect, the historic house *Orielton* has been restored. The committee, at short notice, had the opportunity to inspect the building before it was sold.

A small but dedicated group led by Margaret Wheeler meet on the 3rd Monday of each month. They spend considerable time cleaning the displays and know best how to preserve artefacts in our collection.

May I take this opportunity to thank the committee for their input over the past three years and be assured that your support and assistance have been gratefully accepted.

Whilst we do not object to development in Camden, we do, however carefully inspect DAs as they come to council for approval. Once again, this year, as in previous ones, we have continued to monitor DAs, and where it has been deemed inappropriate, we have submitted written objections and spoken at meetings to voice our opposition.

It is a hard, tedious, and thankless task for those involved. Vice-president Jo O'Brien has led our objections where there is a conflict between development proposals and the preservation of Camden's history.

This year we will see a changing of the guard and one of those who will be stepping down will be our very hard-working and dedicated Secretary, Lee Stratton. She has been Secretary to four presidents and has been in the position for nearly ten years. We wish her well in her future endeavours.

Now we come to our annual elections. There will be vacancies on the committee, and I am confident that once again people will consider supporting the Society by considering taking on a role.

Again, I thank the retiring committee. I would also like to express the appreciation of all members to our many dedicated volunteers that allow us as a society to play an important role in the cultural life of Camden.

It has been a great honour to be your president.

9 August 2023

Elizabeth Yewen, a girl with a tale to tell

Betty Yewen

Elizabeth Arlow had just recently migrated from Belfast on board the liner *Esperance Bay* along with several other Irish girls from the Spinning Mills. All were leaving their jobs and beloved families for a land of opportunity, Australia, and knowing not a living soul there.

The Salvation Army had advertised throughout the United Kingdom an immigration scheme founded by William Booth. His wonderful dream of the 'Landless Man and the Manless Land' and his great plan for home building in the 'Outposts of the Empire', as reported in the *Homeland Brightview Club Review*. This opportunity offered and provided a passage on board a liner, accommodation in Australia, along with work.

Conditions were a struggle through troubled times of poverty and world wars. Elizabeth had sadly been dealt a blow with the loss of her twin brother Alexander on 22 October 1917 aged nine, from tubercular meningitis. Later, at the age of 15 years, her mother died. Elizabeth was a member of a family of 11, the younger children being taken in by the older family members, a common practice at that time.

The following years were very difficult for the families, Elizabeth found that life without a mother was extremely hard. Her father was one of many who worked on the Belfast and Scottish docks as a furnace builder. Shipbuilding was a big industry with a great many ships being built and with the thousands of rivets needed, it is possible that her father worked on the unforgeable Titanic.

Elizabeth at the age of 21 years was given permission by her father to leave their homeland and go to Australia. This must have been a very sad farewell.



On board the *Esperance Bay* are Elizabeth Arlow and her Irish friend (LHS) (B Yewen)

At the time of Alexander's death, Elizabeth made a most powerful affirmation that she felt the strength and energies flow from him into her body. This affirmation would certainly have been a great benefit to equip her on her journey as a lonesome young 21-year-old in a country so far from home.

The entire voyage via the Suez Canal took many weeks. Actually, three months.

On arriving in Australia, the girls were accommodated at a Salvation Army Hostel at 471 Dowling Street Sydney.

Back in 1928, a young man working as one of the many gardeners at Carrington Convalescent Hospital in Camden, New South Wales, came across a photo that had been taken of three young women at a picnic party at Fairyland on the Lane Cove River. The snapshot was later reproduced in *The War Cry* (the Salvation Army magazine). Something about the woman in the photo had John (Jack) Yewen mesmerised. So much so that he felt compelled to make a clipping of the photo and frame it. But before framing, he wrote along the bottom of the picture, 'If I ever meet that girl in the centre, I will marry her.'

In a fairy-tale-like story you'd expect to find in a romantic novel, Jack Yewen's wish would come true when the Salvation Army sent Elizabeth to work at the Carrington Convalescent Hospital as a housemaid.

Jack had also not long arrived on board the *Esperance Bay* from Woodgreen, London, England in 1923. He was a young man coming to a country seeking another life and adventure, arriving in the depression years, and finding work was difficult. Unfortunately, not much of Jack's early history was known on his arrival, except that he may have found work with a travelling circus, which in the 1930s was certainly popular. Suffering from acute appendicitis



Jack dressed in RAAF uniform and Elizabeth Yewen in Sydney in the 1940s (B Yewen)



Elizabeth at Carrington in 1930 (B Yewen)

and after the operation in a Sydney hospital, it was normal for patients to be sent to the country area for fresh air and recovery at the Carrington Convalescent Hospital, to get strong and well.

With time and in good health, Jack sought work and was given both work and accommodation as a gardener. Becoming one of many workers at Carrington.

Jack and Elizabeth met, courted, and married, and it was very fortunate for them that a Carrington cottage was offered to them. It was located on the corner of Werombi and the Oaks-Burraborang Roads. Later known as “Yewen’s Corner”.

Their wedding was held at The Salvation Army Hostel, 471 Dowling Street, Moore Park, Sydney on the 9 April 1930.

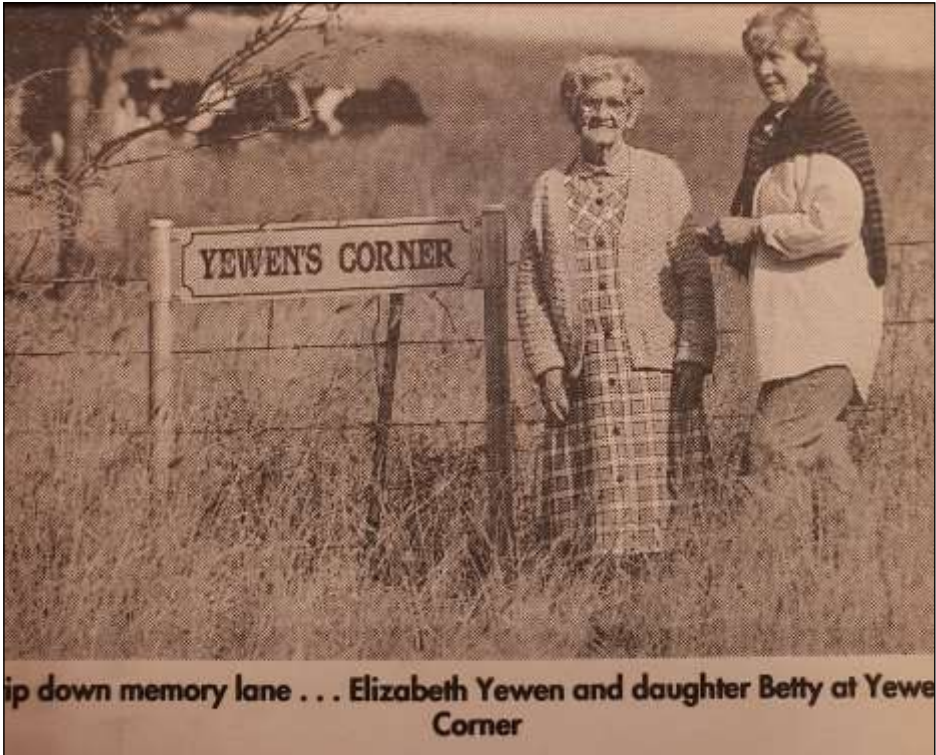
Jack and Elizabeth, known then as Lily, had a family of six children, three girls and three boys.

Jack enlisted in the Royal Australia Air Force in 1942, becoming a Leading Aircraftman Class 1 spending time stationed in Darwin during World War Two. He was discharged in November 1945.

He returned safely to family and Camden to work at Carrington for a short time before becoming employed with the Department Of Main Roads.

Jack and Elizabeth’s eldest daughter Theresa married Cecil Tayt (1948). Their wedding was held in the Presbyterian Church, John Street Camden, with a small wedding reception being held at the police station opposite.

In May 1954, tragedy seriously struck the family when Jack was employed with the Department of Main Roads. He unexpectedly died at the age of 49, and then seven months later, the same year, their eldest son John, was killed in a car accident. The families and town residents were grieving and broken.



ip down memory lane . . . Elizabeth Yewen and daughter Betty at Yewen
Corner

**Yewens Corner Elizabeth and daughter Betty
Macarthur Chronicle 8 July 1997 (B Yewen)**

Elizabeth had little choice but to carry on the best she could, taking in ironing and babysitting for many local businesspeople. The family purchased a home and relocated to live at 74 Hume Highway, Narellan, in the 1950s. In 1972 Elizabeth sold her family home at Narellan and bought a little brick cottage at 4 Dobroyd Ave Camden before returning to Carrington on the 10 February 1994.

Elizabeth had great memories of her early days at Carrington, riding in the sulky owned by the matron, early Christmases in the large old dining room with Jack and their family, along with many friends and staff, with regular picnic parties enjoyed by the lake.

In 1997, the corner of The Oaks and Werombi Roads, where the little weatherboard cottage, car shed and large fig tree stood for over 24 years, was named Yewen's Corner. Elizabeth felt honoured by this. The intersection became known by the many coal truck drivers spilling coal from their loads



A very happy Elizabeth at 4 Dobroyd Ave South Camden. October 1992 (B Yewen)

as they were negotiating the very sharp bend. They travelled down the hill and around Pepper Tree Corner and along Sheather's Lane before driving through Camden's main street and onto the weighbridge at Narellan. In past years, coal had been a major industry for Camden and surrounding areas, transporting from the Burragorang Valley to Campbelltown and the South Coast for exporting overseas.

Elizabeth Yewen (Arlow), born 26 March 1907, had a unique association with Carrington, spanning almost a century. This occasion was celebrated with the planting of an ash tree with a plaque on a granite plinth at its base in proud remembrance of Elizabeth.

After reaching her goal of turning 100 years old, a mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother passed away peacefully on Tuesday, 24 April, in Parry Ward at Carrington. The funeral service was held at the Camden Baptist Church and attended by family and many friends. The service was conducted by her friend and minister Brian Stewart.



Ash Tree Planting to celebrate Elizabeth's 100 years March 2007 (B Yewen)

During her lifetime, she experienced the loss of her twin brother Alexander, her mother, father, sisters and brothers, a husband, and a son. Despite the sadness in her lifetime, Elizabeth remained strong in her faith and was baptised on 8 December 1985 as a declaration at the Camden Baptist Church. She often said, with a smile and a twinkle in her blue eyes, "Don't look down. Always look up."

This tale began with a photograph in Salvation Army The War Cry magazine in an article by Julia Roper.

Elizabeth Yewen 1996 (B Yewen)



Red Poppy Project

Frances Warner

Presentation by Frances Warner at the Garden Club held at the Camden RSL Club on 14 April 2023 at 10.00am.

Frances introduced herself and thanked the audience of about 75 people for the opportunity to tell her story.

Frances recalled that her involvement in knitting red poppies started when she found the 5000 Poppies Project website and became interested in contributing to the project.

5000 Poppies Project

The 5000 Poppies Project was initiated by two Melbourne women, Lyn Berry and Margaret Knight, who wanted to pay tribute to the military service of their fathers in World War Two.

The women set out to knitting around 120 poppies to ‘plant’ at Melbourne’s Shrine of Remembrance in 2013 to honour their fathers’ memory. Wal Beasley (14/32nd Battalion – Australian Imperial Forces) and Stan Knight (Queen’s Own West Kent Regiment – British Army).
(<https://5000poppies.wordpress.com/about/>)

The organisers of the project were overwhelmed and inundated with poppies and told contributors to concentrate on similar local projects, and that is what Frances has done.

The 5000 Poppies project has become an international tribute of respect and remembrance to those who have served in all wars, conflicts and peacekeeping operations, their families and their communities.
(<https://5000poppies.wordpress.com/about/>)

Around 50,000 people have contributed to the project across Australia and New Zealand, with hundreds of smaller local projects, and one of those is Frances’ Red Poppy project. There have been over 1,000,000 poppies contributed from all over the world.
(<https://5000poppies.wordpress.com/about/>)

In March 2015, 5000 Poppies teamed up with Australia’s premier landscape designer Phillip Johnson to create a stunning tribute garden at the Melbourne Flower and Garden Show. (<https://5000poppies.wordpress.com/about/>)

The women teamed up with Johnson again for the Anzac Day in 2015 and created an art installation at Melbourne's Federation Square and Princess Bridge as a backdrop for the beginning of the city's Centenary of Anzac Commemoration.

In 2016 a poppy installation was the highlight of the RHS Chelsea Garden Show in London with over 2,000 square metres on handmade red poppies contributed by a UK knitting group 'Knitting for Victory'. (<https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-chelsea-flower-show/2016/articles/a-field-of-poppies-at-chelsea>)

In 2017 there was another poppy installation at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance for Remembrance Day in November. There were two similar installations at the Australian War Memorial and Parliament House in Canberra.

In 2018 the 5000 Poppy organisers created 50,000 poppies for the Victorian RSL for their 2018 Poppy Appeal.

In 2019 saw the installation of poppies for the artwork 'A Nation Weeps' at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance reflecting the depth of loss and grief. These are only some of the installations that the 5000 Poppy Project has been involved with between 2013 and 2019 involving over 2 million hours of voluntary labour. The group continues to meet and work on the project. (<https://5000poppies.wordpress.com/about/>)

Poppies

Red poppies were among the first plants to spring up in the battlefields of the northern France and Belgium. Soldiers' folklore said that the vivid red came



Display at home during 1st Covid lockdown (F Warner)

from the blood of their fallen comrades.

The poppy has a symbolism in many cultural mythologies from remembrance, to sacrifice, dreams, regeneration, and imagination. In Christianity, the red of the poppy symbolizes the blood of Christ and his sacrifice on the cross. The Roman poet Virgil used poppies as a metaphor to describe fallen warriors in his epic tale the *Aeneid*, written around 25 BC. (<https://www.uniguide.com/poppy-flower-meaning-symbolism>)

The Anzac Portal website states that Canadian medic John McCrae recalled the red poppies on soldiers' graves who died on the Western Front and wrote the poem *In Flanders Field*. He wrote:

*In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly.*

(<https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/commemoration/symbols/red-poppies>)

Poppies are used in remembrance all over the world. In the United Kingdom the white poppy represents an international symbol of remembrance for all casualties of war, civilians and armed forces personnel and of peace. The purple poppy is a symbol of remembrance in United Kingdom for animals that served during wartime and was created in 2006.

In France the French paid tribute on remembrance by wearing a blue cornflower which is like a poppy. Like poppies cornflowers grew on land devastated by the First World War.

Frances Warner Red Poppy project

Frances was inspired to take up knitting Red Poppies. She has worked with a host of local organisations since 2013 with her poppy project and raised hundreds of dollars for the NSW RSL and its charities.

Frances' Red Poppy project have included:

1. A poppy display at Narellan Library where she was knitting her red poppies. The library was acting as a collection point for Anzac Day poppies in 2015 and gave her the red poppies that they collected to look after.
2. Frances sold her knitted poppies through the Camden Museum and donated \$400 to NSW RSL.
3. Knitted poppies were made by Frances for the Camden Red Cross and the Big Yellow Umbrella, and while travelling on the train on her regular visits to Concord Hospital.

Vicki Caton from the Camden Red Cross stated in the letter to

the Camden press and said:

If you knitted, sewed, donated wool, money or time to the Poppy Project – thank you. The aim of the project was to have the poppies in Camden on Anzac Day [2016] so we could stop, look and reflect on those men and women who have gone before us to make this country a wonderful and peaceful country to live in. Camden you achieved this.

If you are wondering what is to happen to the poppies, they will be display for the next three years on Anzac Day until the commemoration of the centenary of World War One. There will also be some on display on Remembrance Day. Well done, Camden.



Iris Britten, with one of seven knitted wreaths for Camden Red Cross (F Warner)

4. In 2015 Frances close friend, retired florist Iris Britten, made seven wreaths for the Camden Red Cross. The Camden Red Cross collected knitted and crocheted poppies and attached them to mesh shade cloths. These were placed at the flagpole in John Street and fences at Onslow Oval and Camden Sports Club for Anzac Day services. These cloths were on then put on display at the Camden Museum after the Anzac Day service.
5. Frances worked with the knitters at the Camden Girl Guides, the Camden Museum and the Narellan Library handmaking poppies. The poppies were given to the Camden Red Cross. Frances's grandson, Aaron, collected the knitted poppies from the lady knitters and everyone thought it was very cute. Paling Court at Carrington Aged Care were given 70 poppies for staff and residents made by Frances.
6. There was a display of Frances's poppies at Campbelltown Hospital on the centenary of the end of World War One. This involved her

- son Bradley, who was a staff member, and a live-stream to Camden Hospital.
7. The 'Can you knit 86 poppies' project for the Women in War: Nurses project. She did 90 red poppies, 2 purple poppies and 3 white poppies. Frances ended up making more purple poppies and then taking orders!
 8. One of Frances' poppies was placed on the grave of Lachlan John McDonald from Ardmona Victoria. Lachlan was killed in a flying accident on 19 January 1918. He was a member of the British Army's 91st Squadron Royal Flying Corps. He was buried in the Stockbridge Cemetery, Stockbridge, Hampshire, UK. Frances' poppies were featured in a book by Clare Canty.
 9. Frances volunteered for poppy knitting for the Bowral Hospital 2023 Anzac display. Her son Bradley works at the hospital, and he asked her to fill a 10-shelf display cabinet with red poppies. She had help from the Craft and Garden Club at Carrington.
 10. Frances' current project is to knit poppies for the 2023 Remembrance Day and 2024 Camden Anzac Day service.

Frances said that one red poppy takes around 45 minutes to knit, and she estimates that she has knitted over 650 so far. She has voluntarily contributed around 480 hours of her time and she is not finished yet by a long way.

Frances says she is very ordinary, yet she has done an extra-ordinary job. Frances joins a long list of local women who have volunteered thousands of hours of their time and effort to honour the service of local men and women who have served in conflict and peacekeeping.

Unlock Camden 2023



Unlock Camden 2023 was held on 2 September 2023 in the historic John Street precinct and at the Camden Town Farm. This was the fifth year of the history festival and had stalls, historic walks, displays, games, vintage cars, and lots more. Some soaked up the vibe and even dressed for the occasion. These two damsels from the Camden Musical Society were dressed for a day out of motoring in style around the Camden town centre. They were seated in ‘Clem’ a French 1911 Clement Bayard Roadster, 4 cylinder, 8.6 litre motor, with a 4 speed manual transmission. This car was for time displayed at the Greens Motorcade Museum, at Leppington (1974-1982). **Unlock Camden 2023** was held at the beginning of History Week, and was initiated in 2019 by the Camden Council Heritage Advisory Committee. (I Willis, 2023)

