



# NEWSLETTER

## Museum Set To Open In February 2007

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**Special points of interest:**

• Meetings: Ordinary Meetings, 14 February 2007, 14 March 2007, 11 April 2007, 9 May 2007, 13 June 2007. 7.30pm, Museum, John Street, Camden.

Committee Meetings for 2007: 3 February 2007, 5 May 2007, 4 August 2007, 3 November 2007. 1.30pm, Museum, John Street, Camden.

With the rapid progress of building works and fit out of the Library and Museum complex it looks like we will be open earlier than expected in 2007. Council is working towards having the Library open on 5 February so we need to be ready by this time at least. There are a number of things that need to be done in the Museum before we open our doors once more.

**Volunteers**

In late January we will be holding an orientation morning for all volunteers to get a feel of the Museum and what changes we need to implement given the different en-



trance arrangements and changes to displays brought about by the installation of the lift. The morning will give people the opportunity to ask questions and walk through opening and closing procedures. We will basically be operating the museum in the same manner as we have in the past with a review to occur after we have been operating for a few months.

Bob Lester will contact you all to advise you of the Orientation Day and confirm

your availability on the roster for February and beyond. We still have a few vacancies brought about by people unable to return as volunteers or opting to volunteer on a different day. If you are available to volunteer on additional days or go onto a reserve volunteer list please let Bob know.

We will be promoting an opportunity for new volunteers in the local press and encouraging any society member who currently does not volunteer at the museum to consider joining in this interesting and rewarding role. For more information contact Bob Lester on 4648 1593 (W) or 4655 9044 (H).

**Meetings**

The first meeting for 2007 will be held on Wednesday 14 February in the Library and Museum Complex. It will be an opportunity for members to have a close look at the changes

that have taken place during the building work.

The guest speaker in February will be Verlie Fowler, local historian, former councillor on Campbelltown City Council and

member of the Campbelltown Historical Society.

The first committee meeting will be on Saturday 3 February 2007 at 1.30pm in the museum.

All correspondence to Secretary, Camden Historical Society, PO Box 566, Camden. 2570 • Museum 4655 3400  
 President: Dr Ian Willis 4658 0193 • Vice presidents: John Wrigley OAM 4655 9210; Peter Hayward OAM 4651 2253 • Treasurer: Ray Herbert 9606 6075 • Secretary: Doug Barrett 4647 0597 • Committee: Julie Wrigley, Len English, Bob Lester, Colin Mills, Milton Ray, Cathey Shepherd, Ros Tildsley, Richard Nixon OAM, Sandra Dodds. Newsletter Editor: Dr Ian Willis.

## President's Message

Welcome again to another newsletter. Much has happened since the last newsletter.

The society has conferred a number of **life memberships** recently. They recipients are John and Julie Wrigley, Peter and Nikki Hayward, Werner Wollinski, Peter Mylrea. Each has made a significant contribution to the society in many ways over many years. Life membership is one way of officially recognising that contribution within the society.

**Some shorts:** the Camden **Draft Heritage Plan** was passed by Camden Council on 11 December 2006; Peter Mylrea's book *Belgenny Farm, 1805-1835* has a 2nd Edition; I presented a 20 minute talk about Camden on **2GB** with Murray Wilton on 17 November 2006; the society was well represented by John, Peter H, Werner and I at the **Camden CBD Visioning Forum** on 5 December 2006; John represented the society at the **Camden High School Presentation Night** on 18

December 2006; Doug Barrett and Peter Hayward have done a sterling job representing the society's interests with the builders on site; library re-opens we think 5 February 2007; **Camden High School** had its 50th anniversary on 25 November 2006, a display of past photos and memorabilia by Christine Parkin and music from the school band; **Camden Family History Society's Workshop** was a great success on 18 November 2006, watch out for the next one. *Thanks All, Ian.*

### *147 Argyle Street*

This building was erected in 1908 by the Ancient Order of Royal Foresters Lodge at a meeting hall. The building was used a movie theatre from the 1920s to the 1950s. After it was used as a drapery shop, furniture shop, electrical shop. In the 1940s the upstairs area was a billiard room.

## Volunteering and Helping Others: Good For You

It has been recently reported in the press that a study conducted by the University of Michigan in the USA, who followed 423 older couples for five years, reported in 2003 that those who helped others were half as likely to die as those who gave no support. A second study of more than 2000 American Presbyterians found that those who helped others had better mental health than those who received the help.

Why is this so?

Reasons put forward suggest that helping others keeps us more physically active, distracts us from our own problems, makes us feel good about ourselves and, by reducing stress, helps our immune systems to work better. Being kind may also produce pleasurable changes in brain chemistry—a phenomenon called 'helper's high' - according to a study of 3000 volunteers who reported feelings of euphoria after helping others.

According to clinical psychologist Dr Sarah Edelman, a lecturer at the University of Technology Sydney, 'If you look at behaviours that ensure human survival—such as eating and finding a mate—they involve experiences that give us pleasure,' she says. 'Human beings are more likely to survive if they do things for each other, and we're more likely to help each other if it gives us pleasure'.

*Sunday Life 17/12/06.*

### *Camden Municipal Council*

The first meeting of the council took place on 24 April 1889. Aldermen were: CT Whiteman, C Furner, G Furner, J Hayter, WJ Cranfield, J Doust, TH Wasson, S Ellis and mayor, F Burne. The town clerk was F Campbell.

## Web Site Huge Success

The society's website <camdenhistory.org.au> is a huge success. In the five months that the site has been up it has received 11,536 hits or views of individual pages from 950 unique visitors. These visitors have also been interested in looking at the Family History Society pages as well. Visitors to the website have been from all over the world.

The aim of the website is promote the activities of the his-

torical society, the family history society and Camden in general. The historical society continues to present the story of Camden in a contemporary context.

Additions to the website since it has been up include all of our newsletters. If you have missed something in one of the newsletters they are very easy to find and look up. Just a click of the mouse.

Another addition to the website has been the Camden Fel-

lowship. This is the community partnership between the University of Wollongong and the historical society. All the details of the fellowship are on the website.

There will continue to the changes on the site that will publicise the activities of the historical society and family history society.

Additional items from both organisations will be added to the website as they become available.

### **Camden Tramway**

The Camden tramway was opened in 1882. It connected Camden Station to the Southern Railway Line at Campbelltown Station. The tanker locomotive was known as *Pansy*. The line closed in 1963.

**Review** by Ian Willis**From the Skies, Aerial Photographs of Sydney in 1943**

RTA NSW, Surry Hills, 2006, CD-ROM. ISBN 19220907297

Aerial photographs are a valuable tool for the historian. They provide a snapshot of a moment in time.

The CD-ROM produced by the RTA is one of these. It provides a snapshot of wartime Sydney in 1943.

The aerial photographs are taken from 2600 metres and were used to aid road planning. The aerial photographs are part of the larger project that photographed the main roads out of

Sydney, including the Hume Highway and the Great Western Highway.

The aerial photographs have combined in a digital format and allow the observer to zoom in and out on particular houses and other buildings.

The CD-ROM covers an area from the beaches to Liverpool, Blacktown and the Hills.

The cover of the CD-ROM is a photograph of Warwick

Farm with hundreds of four-man tents in the centre of the racecourse. It was used as a staging camp for thousands of American troops in 1943.

The CD-ROM is relatively easy to navigate once the user has mastered the various symbols. The user simply puts in an area of Sydney and the appropriate photographs come up on the screen.

It is a wonderful resource for all those interested in wartime Sydney.

**Camden Police Barracks**

Camden Police Barracks were built in 1878. There had previously been a wooden building for the Chief Constable adjoining the Court House.

The police officers would be seen riding around the district on their horses carrying out their various duties. The horses were stabled at the rear of the police station.

**63 Hilder Street, Elderslie**

Heritage Item, Draft Heritage Plan., Camden

This is a vernacular timber farm cottage in Hilder Street, Elderslie. It is a rudimentary structure that reflects the simple life of Camden's pioneers and the hardships that they endured in their lifetimes

It is a single storey, timber framed and externally clad with weatherboards. A verandah extends across the front (facing the street) and returns down one side. There are two chimneys of masonry construction. The front section has a hipped corrugated iron roof, with projecting bell cast roof

to verandahs located on the south-west (street frontage) and north-western sides.

The original dwelling features three rooms, two smaller bedrooms to the rear and a larger open plan living area to the front, which contains a fireplace on the eastern wall. The building currently needs conservation and restoration.

The cottage was built in 1927-28 by Fred Pinson, carpenter, Narellan. The original building was a slab construction and burnt down in the mid 1920s.

The present cottage was occupied by members of the Scott family. In the mid 1930s Albert Ernest Scott and Maurice Tom Scott, farm hands, lived at this address. Farming activities on the site included a small vineyard, some fruit trees and chickens. Evidence from aerial photographs (1943) suggests some cropping as well.

*Heritage Impact Statement; L English.*

**Partnership with the University of Wollongong**

The Camden Historical Society has established a community partnership with the University of Wollongong.

The partnership involves the university hosting the **Camden Fellowship**.

The aim of the fellowship is to increase the historical knowledge of the Camden area and

encourage the use of the archives of the society.

It is proposed that the fellowship commence in Semester 2 2007.

There is a grant of \$500 to a student from the School of History and Politics at the University. The student will be required to write a scholarly

research paper of approximately 2500-3000 words.

The paper will be published in **Camden History** (the society's journal) and presented as the **Camden Lecture**. It is anticipated that the 1st **Camden Lecture** will be held at the society's meeting in June 2008.

**Camden School of Arts**

The Camden School of Arts was opened in 1866 at 40 John Street. It held the meetings of the Camden Municipal Council in 1889. During the 1940s it was used as the Camden Town Hall and a lending library. In 1963 the front façade was pulled down and a single storey addition erected. It was office space and is now Camden Library.



## CAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PO Box 566  
Camden NSW 2570

Camden Museum  
40 John St, Camden.  
General Admission Free  
Opening Times  
Thursday– Sunday 11.00am – 4.00 pm  
Phone: Museum 02 4655 3400  
<http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>  
Email: [info@camdenhistory.org.au](mailto:info@camdenhistory.org.au)  
The museum will be closed for the library re-adaptation project from March 2006 to February 2007.

ABN 84 182 869 026

### MEMBERSHIP

Individual \$10

Family \$15

For Year Ending 30 June

The **Camden Historical Society** was founded in 1957. Its aim is to promote Camden's history in a contemporary context. It primarily does this through managing the Camden Museum, which was opened in 1970. The museum is conducted entirely by volunteers. It also receives substantial and continuing assistance from Camden Council.

### Historic Precinct

The museum is located in a two storey building adjacent to Camden Library. It is in the centre of Camden's historic precinct and provides an ideal start for a walking tour of the town. The visitor can take in the charm and character of the buildings that are part of the late 19th and early 20th century Camden.

### Research

During the close down period limited research is being done by our volunteer research officers as access to the museum permits. General enquiries are free. Specific research by our volunteers attracts a \$15 fee plus photocopying.

*All donations to the Camden Historical Society Inc over \$2 are tax deductible*

## CAMDEN RETROSPECTIVE

### *Camden: Still A Country Town?*

Camden promotes itself as a 'working country town'. But what does that really mean?

People have images of Camden based on nostalgic memories of what Camden used to be like when they grew up. They are memories of their childhood, when things were less complicated. Or so we think.

The country town imagery that people refer to is the form and character of Argyle Street, the structure of the central business district, the character of existing buildings, especially the colonial buildings, the setting of the town on the floodplain, and the landscape and vistas of the town and surrounding area.

In my view the time period that best typifies this imagery is the Inter-war

Period. That is, the period between 1919-1939.

The economic base of the town was the dairying industry. The town had a population of around 2300.

Other similar towns are Kiama and Berry. They were dairy towns as well.

The extent of the town has been identified in the **Draft Heritage Report**.

After the Second World War coal mining changed the economic base of the town. The town started to grow as the mining industry expanded.

Recent growth of the town is due to the ever growing expansion of Sydney coming out to meet us.

The dairying town of the Inter-war Period is the image that attracts visitors to the area. This is the charm and character that gives Camden its special qualities today. It is what makes Camden different from other areas around it.

The key features of the current urban landscape are:

1. The colonial buildings;
2. The existing height and setback of buildings in Argyle Street;
3. Strip shopping in Argyle Street;
4. Mixed land use in adjacent streets; and
5. The timber and brick Federation cottages and Californian bungalows.

*Ian Willis, 2006.*

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