



NEWSLETTER

Camden Museum

Progress

The re-adaptation project continues to make progress. The builder has demolished the toilet block at the rear of the building and will now move to the library and fire-station.



John St View of Museum and Library

John Wrigley, Doug Barrett and Ian Willis had a walk around the museum with the builder, the architect, the site foreman and Paul Fairweather from the council on Tuesday 2 May. They explained the time line for the museum and rec-

ommended moving some displays. After the inspection the morning turned into a working bee and the three of us moved a number of displays to safer parts of the museum. Further packing up still needs to be done.

The next part of the project for the museum is the hole in the ground floor and upper level for the lift.

It is anticipated that access to the site will be allowed on a regular basis through the site office and contact with Paul Fairweather on council. The purpose of this is to inspect the security of the collection and allow access to our records.

DVD

Huge success

Peter Mylrea and Steve Robinson are to be congratulated on the huge success of the DVD *A Pictorial History of Camden and the Camden District*.

Following the success of sales at the Camden Show the Society has been unable to meet demand. Another batch of DVDs has arrived.

The DVD resulted in the sales at the Camden Show being the best ever recorded for the Society.

Watch out for their next project.

A review of the DVD is included in this newsletter.

The DVD is available from the Society, Narellan Library, Camden Newsagency and Ace Music in Narellan Town Centre.

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Special points of interest:

* June Ordinary Meeting: , 7.30pm, Presbyterian Church Hall, John St, Camden. 14/6/06

* Speaker June Meeting: Superintendent G Rolph, NSW Police Service

* Camden Historical Society Web Site

* New publication: *A Pictorial History of Camden and the Camden District (DVD)*

Society Internet Web Site

Did you know that the Society has an internet web site. It is looked after and hosted by Steve and Chris Robinson.

The address is <<http://www.zipworld.com.au/~scrob/histsoc.html>>

On the site you will find a

short history of the Society, contact details, how to join the Society, research fees, publications and the museums education programme.

The Robinsons also have other interesting features on their *Camden History Links* web site. These include Camden's

places of historic interest, Camden's district honor rolls, the miners' memorial, a site for the Camden Family History Society and links to other useful sites.

You should visit the site if you are interested in Camden's local or family history.

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 4655 9210; Peter Hayward 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, Dick Nixon. *Newsletter Editor*: Dr Ian Willis.

President's Message

In this *Newsletter* you will find a renewal slip for 2006-2007. Simply fill it in and hand it in with your renewal at any of the Society's meetings or mail to the Society secretary, Doug Barrett.

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at our August meeting. All are welcome.

The Society is currently using the facilities of the Camden Presbyterian Church for our monthly meetings. We would like to thank the church for

allowing the society to use the hall. This is most appreciated during the period of the renovation of the library-museum-fire station complex.

The Society's committee will inspect the museum on a regular basis to ensure the security of the collection and to gain access to our library and files.

While work is being done on the library and the museum is closed, letters and other enquiries will be dealt with as best as we can given the cir-

cumstances. Our research officers have limited access to our files, so there may be some delay in an answer to a question. I am sure that you understand and bear with us during this period.

If you have any concerns raise matters at our ordinary meetings, contact the appropriate committee member or contact the society by email (given in this newsletter).

Ian Willis



The newsletter editor.

Meetings and Speakers

Our June meeting will be on 14 June 2006 at the Presbyterian Hall, John Street, Camden at 7.30pm. Our guest speaker will be the Office in Charge of the Camden Police District Superintendent Greg Rolph. The district takes in Camden, Picton and Southern Highlands. It should be an interesting and informative talk.

At the Society's May meeting Colin Mills showed a number of slides on the work being

completed at Camden Park in the Edmund Burke Garden. Burke was the first gardener at Camden Park. The other garden under restoration is Piccadilly. The work is trying to restore the nursery to some of its glory under the leadership of William Macarthur in the 1850s and 1860s.

The garden beds are being restored, paths gravelled and new plantings. The Stove (hot house) which will be the

propagation shed has been restored. It has a new hardwood timber frame, metal propagation benches and an intricate paved brick floor.

Colin showed a number of slides on the type of plants that were propagated in the nursery under William Macarthur. They included camellias, oxalis, gladiolus, belladonna lilies, African violets, irises, and fuchsias.



John Denis Wrigley OAM

On 4th May 2006 John Wrigley received the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to the Camden community, particularly as a contributor to the preservation of local history. The Investiture Ceremony was conducted by Her Excellency the Governor of NSW at Government House in Sydney.

John has been a member of our Society for over 25 years.

He has worked as a Research Officer for twenty years, served as President of the Camden Historical Society for seven years, and is currently Vice President.

John's work at the Museum includes sorting historical documents, developing new exhibits, computer cataloguing historic items and photos, cleaning and conserving donated items, and answering

inquiries. John writes occasionally for the Camden Advertiser on heritage matters and writes the very popular special feature called "Back Then" for the District Reporter.

John said the day was a memorable one and that the medal was a recognition of the teamwork at the Camden Historical Society. He thanked his friends for their support.

Argyle Street Camden

Many balconies and awnings were removed ordered removed by Council between 1935 and 1938 for public safety reasons

Review by Ian Willis

Camden Heritage Walk, Self Guided Tour of Camden's Historic Buildings

By Camden Council and Camden Historical Society, Camden Visitor Information Centre, 12pp, 2006, Booklet, 10cm x 21cm, Free.

Camden's heritage precinct is the most important part of the town. It attracts many visitors to Camden who walk and drive around the local streets.

The visitors guide is a very informative way for the tourists to gain an appreciation of the town's heritage.

The 'now' and 'then' photographs provide an interesting contrast. They give the visitor and local resident alike a glimpse of the changes in the town area. The accompanying text is clear and informative. It

provides a capsule of knowledge that would be useful for the visitor or school student's project.

The historical photographs and text are accompanied by an easy to follow map. Unfortunately there is no information to tell the reader that the numbers refer to the heritage item inside the booklet. The map would have been assisted by the location of north and some guide to the visitor of the approximate distance and time to complete the 'walk'.

The booklet provides clear details for the location of, and contact details for, the Visitor Information Centre. Disappointingly there is no indication on the accompanying map of its location.

Overall the Council and the Camden Historical Society are to be complimented on a new publication that deserves to receive wide distribution throughout the country and overseas.

9. Camden AH&I Hall

189 Argyle Street.

Built in 1894 as a military drill hall, the brick front was added by the Camden AH&I Society in 1936 together with the Entrance to Onslow Park. (p5)

25. Bransby's Cottage

17 Mitchell Street. (p11)

Review by Ian Willis

A Pictorial History of Camden and the Camden District

By Peter Mylrea and Steven Robinson, Camden Historical Society, 2006, DVD, \$24.95.

The Camden Historical Society has an important and varied photographic collection of the Camden district. Many can be accessed on History Pix and Picture Australia.

This DVD provides another way to access this valuable historical collection. Mylrea and Robinson have done a superb job of compiling and editing this collection of images. This project has put together 393 photographs under


12 locations and plays for 79 minutes. The images are well supported by concise commentary with each photograph. This is complemented by pleasant music supplied by the Campbelltown Camden District Band.

The disc is easy to use and each section is clearly identified from the main menu. The keen observer can pause the disc and search each image for important historical clues.

Although the rolling titles for each section can be a little distracting.

Old Camden residents will reminisce about the 'glorious past' and new arrivals to the area will see what parts of the district used to be like. There are interesting before and after images of some of the new housing areas, like Mt Annan.

Anyone interested in Camden's past will find this DVD a valuable addition to their library on local history.



The are many images of Argyle Street, John Street, local buildings, floods, processions, special events and various aspects of local transport including Pansy, the horse and cart and the car.

Activities Report

Ros Tildsley has organised a number of outings for members while the museum is closed.

The first outing took place at Wollondilly Heritage Centre at The Oaks. We watched a video on the Burratorang Valley made by the Department of Information in the

1950s. It showed the Valley before it was flooded and interviewed local people. Our members inspected the new Estonian exhibit and other recent changes.

We were provided with a fine morning tea and we stayed and had a picnic lunch in the grounds of the centre.

Other outings are planned on 17 September 2006 and 8 October 2006. The October outing will be a picnic in Macarthur Park, Camden.

More outings may be organised if the opportunity presents itself. So listen for developments at our meetings and read the newsletters.

Macarthur Park Camden

On 20 September 2006 Macarthur Park is 100 years old. The Park was granted to the town by Elizabeth Macarthur Onslow. It is one of the finest Victorian urban parks in Australia and a great asset to the town.



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.zipworld.com.au/~scrob/historical.html>

Email: camdenmuseum@yahoo.com

The museum will be closed for the library re-adaptation project from March to November 2006.

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 was to tell the story of Camden. It did this by establishing a museum in 1970.

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, which is outlined in a new booklet reviewed in this newsletter. The visitor can take in the charm and character of the buildings that are part of early 20th century Camden.

Volunteers

The museum is conducted entirely by volunteers. It also receives substantial and continuing assistance from Camden Council.

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.

CAMDEN RETROSPECTIVE

Voluntary Aid Detachments

Voluntary Aid Detachments (VAD) were established in Australia in 1914 based on a British precedent. They were jointly administered by the Red Cross and St John Ambulance. Camden's first VAD was founded during the First World War in 1917. The women helped out at Waley, at Mowbray Park. The women who volunteered their time mainly did domestic chores. The detachment went into recess in 1924

The Camden VAD was recommenced in 1940 by the Red Cross and the Women's Voluntary Services. The commandant was Grace Moore, with Jacqueline Crookston as quartermaster and had 23 members.

The women who volunteered for the

VAD were between 16 and 24 years of age and had to supply their own uniforms. The women had to train and pass a Home Nursing Certificate and First Aid Certificate. The Home Nursing Certificate was examined by Matron Norman of Camden Hospital. The First Aid course was examined by Dr Jefferis. The women did drill in the agricultural hall on Monday nights under the instruction of Lt Wheatley, and Sgt Major O'Shea from the Eastern Command Training School at *Studley Park*, Narellan. The women practiced their marching around central Camden. In 1940 and 1941 the women attended a number of parades held in Sydney where hundreds of other Vas attended from throughout New South Wales.

The Camden Vas did voluntary service at Camden Hospital one day a week as nursing orderlies. They also volunteered at the First Aid Station at the RAAF Base at Camden aerodrome, where they were fondly remembered by the airmen. The Vas staffed the Camden ambulance station in Argyle St and attended calls with the ambulance officers. The women volunteered at *Gilbulla*, which was a rehabilitation centre for returned soldiers. The Camden detachment had 38 women who served between 1939 and 1945.

In 1942 the Vas were given the opportunity to serve in the Australian Army Medical Women's Army Service and five Camden women joined up.

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.