



NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



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NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020

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FEBRUARY MEETING

Brisbane's incredible aviator

MAUDE Rose 'Lores' (Rubens) was born in South Africa in 1897 and came to Melbourne in 1903. After marrying Harry Bonney the couple moved north and lived in Jordan Terrace, Bowen Hills.

Speaker Janet Marshall said that she became intrigued about Lores after reading Terry Gwynn-Jones' book about the aviator, and went on to explain to a riveted audience of around 120 something of her fascination with Mrs Bonney's flying exploits.

Lores's first experience in the air was with Bert Hinkler (Mr Bonney's cousin). They flew from Eagle Farm and Lores dropped a bunch of flowers from the plane to a waiting friend at Yeerongpilly.

Those were the times when aeroplanes were made from timber and cloth, and had only rudimentary instruments – facts which magnify the bravery and skill of the pioneering aviators.

Lores couldn't even drive (her husband wouldn't let her) so she learnt to fly secretly so as to obtain her aviation licence. After Harry bought her a Gipsy Moth, she flew to Victoria to have tea with her father. The flight to Wangaratta took 15 hours and required several stops.

Not content with simply mastering the controls, Lores raised eyebrows by also donning mechanics' overalls so as to learn how to maintain her craft.

In 1932, she circumnavigated Australia, taking six weeks. Sir Charles Kingsford Smith offered succinct advice about such a flight: "You might [succeed] if you have the guts." She survived many frightening experiences during the flight, including a compass failure in the north-west due to the influence of the iron ore deposits.



BY
Ann Sargeant

In 1933 Lores was the first woman to fly solo from Australia to England, an achievement which attracted little public recognition, apart from a medal awarded by King George V. Enduring storms, low visibility, high mountains, food poisoning from Raffles in Singapore, and a crash landing on a small island, her flying time was 157 hours.

Harry bought her a new Klemm, and she flew to South Africa. On the way she dropped in to visit her finishing school in Frankfurt! Ever the refined lady, her luggage included a special dress that worked perfectly for afternoon teas or stylish evening receptions.

Lores's many other accomplishments included skill in the Japanese art form of Bonsai, and a strong interest in other cultures (she travelled to the Amazon). She strongly supported other female aviators. After a rich and fulfilling life, she died aged 96 in 1994 on the Gold Coast.

A recipient of the Order of Australia (1991), her pioneering spirit is gaining more recognition, helped by Janet's engrossing address.



Local connection:

Speaker Janet Marshall (right) met Pat Wall who once owned the house in Bowen Hills in which Lores Bonney (insert) lived with her husband Harry when she began flying lessons.

HISTORICAL ENQUIRIES

Nursing home, Gregory Tce?

Among the many historical questions fielded by the Society are queries about maternity or private hospitals in the locality.

A recent inquirer asked about the history of a maternity home on Gregory Terrace opposite the old Queensland Museum. "It seems my oldest sister was born there," said the message.

The building in question was the substantial residence



built by city father John Petrie (1822-1892) in the 1870s which was named Beerwah.

After Petrie's death in 1892, the house had various uses. At one point it received an 'art deco makeover'. In the 1930s, it was a private hotel (pictured)

and during the 1940-50s, it became the Beerwah Private Hospital. The query was satisfied since the hospital included a maternity facility.

The thankful receiver bears a plentiful harvest... — William Blake

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ross Garnett

Pandemic effect: cancelled meetings

CONSIDERING the increasing gravity of the pandemic situation, I am sure that it will come as no surprise to hear that the committee, after carefully considering the implications of holding the cinema event on 28 March, has decided that it would be wiser to cancel the gathering.

Deliberations have been based on news on 13 March from the World Health Organisation and Chief Medical Officer in Australia, especially since the Society has members in an age group which could be more seriously affected by a Covid-19 infection.

The committee apologises for any inconvenience caused to those who have purchased tickets, and hopes that people will understand that the decision has been taken in order to minimise the risks to everyone.

Those who have pre-purchased tickets for the cinema are advised to hold onto them and to use them for entry to the next public society meeting which they attend.

The committee also considered future public meetings on the fourth Saturday of each month. Given that the current thinking is that the peak of the infection in Queensland may not come for several months, the decision has been made to cancel the



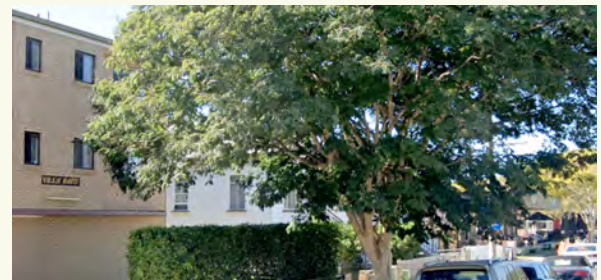
meeting on Anzac Day, 25 April. The committee will keep abreast of the progression of the virus and relevant health warnings and make a decision on future meetings as time goes by and new information comes to hand.

Details about future monthly meetings will be conveyed by email or posted mail.

Thank you in anticipation of your understanding, plus special thanks to Peter Sourris from New Farm Cinemas for his cooperation and consideration.

MYSTERY SOLVED: In last month's article from *My Village News*, the reader was left wondering where in Brunswick Street, J.G. Smith may have built the house in 1917 for his son and daughter-in-law.

An email from Ronald Vun cast useful light on the puzzle. Ronald matched aerial photos of the street with the plan of the house, and suggested that the 1917 house was built just across Brunswick St from J.G. Smith's own house at No. 925—in other words, at 926 Brunswick St. The spot is now occupied by Villa Raiti, a 1970s block of flats (below on the left), a few doors from Cafe 63 and the start of New Farm Park. Many thanks, Ronald!



APRIL MEETING

New Farm Anzac

WHILE there are many ways to honour the men and women who served in the Gallipoli campaign (the Limbless Club, the Limbless Club, the Limbless Club, one of which resource is offered by the honour boards now displayed in St Andrew's Uniting Church, on the corner of Creek and Ann Street, Brisbane.

They include the names of soldiers, doctors and nurses, many of whom lived in New Farm.

Noel Adsett OAM has researched the lives of most of them, and has discovered interesting facts about their schooling, military service and later life in Australia.

Noel is to be guest speaker at the



Anzac Day meeting of the New Farm and Districts Historical Society for 2020.

"There are remarkable stories to be told," said Noel, "covering some of their wartime experiences, their lives back at home and the impact of the Great War on their homes and families."

On this 105th anniversary of the first landing at Gallipoli, please mark your diaries to come to hear Noel's talk—which will be well illustrated by historic photographs.

All are most welcome on Saturday, 25 April, 2-4pm, at Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre. Afternoon tea will be provided.



FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

A rough ride for the Armours...

From The Brisbane Courier, 28 March 1870:

ON Saturday afternoon a buggy accident occurred to Mr Robert L. Armour. While driving down Wharf St, the horse bolted, from some inexplicable cause, as the animal is usually docile and quiet enough.

Mr and Mrs. Armour were sitting on the front seat; Miss Bell, who is a relative, was on the back seat, and was nursing Mr Armour's eldest child, a boy two or three years of age. The horse started off a little below Leichhardt St, and on reaching the turning at Ann St, made a sudden rush round the corner, by which Mr and Mrs Armour were thrown out.

Miss Bell and the child, strange to say, kept their places, while the horse dashed on at a furious pace down the hill at the rear of Dr Hobbs' residence into Wickham St.

After Mr. Armour was thrown out, the reins fell about the horse's heels, rendering it utterly impossible for Miss Bell to bring the animal under control.

A gentleman, Mr Augustus Hopkins [a coach builder], riding along Petrie's Bight, saw the accident, and galloped after the runaways. He overtook them at the open space between the "Little T Mart," as it is called, and the Queen's Arms Hotel, and made a snatch at the reins, which he caught. For the moment his own horse became unmanageable, and he was unable to prevent the runaway brute from sheering off the road down the embankment on to the green below. It seems little short of miraculous that the buggy was not upset, as the bank is very steep in places.

Mr Hopkins' consummate horsemanship stood him in

ROBERT LANGLANDS ARMOUR (1840-1898) was born in Scotland, and became a Queen Street importer of general drapery and fancy goods. He married Elizabeth, a daughter of the Presbyterian minister, Rev. M. McGavin, who established the early congregation that became St Paul's, Spring Hill.

In 1889, Mr Armour marketed 56 building allotments (for villas or mansions) called Thrush Bush Estate in New Farm. The area was bounded by Bowen Terrace, and Langshaw, Moray and Moreton Streets.

In 1892, architect Claude William Chambers designed *Dalgarven* for the family at 443 Bowen Terrace. In the late 1890s, Mr Armour hoped that returning to Scotland would restore his health but he died there in 1898.

In 1905, four of his unmarried daughters were living at "Thrush Bush", Charles Street, New Farm.

good stead, and enabled him to direct the horse up the bank again, and finally pulled it up as the animal reached the road.

A crowd had gathered, and Miss Bell and the child were taken out of the vehicle, none the worse for their perilous ride, although they were terribly alarmed and agitated. Mr Armour was rendered insensible for a time by his fall. He has not sustained any dangerous injury, although he has received some severe cuts and bruises about the head, which will probably confine him to the house for a few days. Mrs Armour fared better, and escaped with some painful, but unimportant abrasions of the face. The horse and buggy are unhurt.

Of Mr Hopkins' conduct we can hardly speak in terms sufficiently warm. Courage he displayed in no small degree in exposing himself to a very serious personal risk, while his presence of mind and coolness at such an exciting moment were beyond all praise.

To him is the credit due of having saved the occupants of the vehicle from serious injury, if not loss of life.

New Farm and Districts Historical Society presents:
A nostalgic afternoon at the movies

Have a laugh with the 1940 classic comedy
DAD RUDD, M.P.
A little nostalgia ...
A little history ...
A little comedy ...
Lots of fun ...

CANCELLED

Includes many familiar themes:
• Dams and water rights
• A by-election
• Dirty tricks in politics
• Complications of romance
• A fierce storm
• Unlikely liaisons in politics

Ticket prices including afternoon tea after the movie.
Purchase on-line or at theatre
<http://newfarmcinemas.com.au>
3358 4444

Saturday 28th March 2020 2 pm
New Farm Cinemas, 701 Brunswick St
www.newfarmhistorical.org.au
Enquiries: 0409 498 402

From Harnham to Freshwater, via the Maloneys and HMAS Moreton...

The built history of this splendid site reflects the shifting fortunes of New Farm and the different ways that we've lived and worked on the river for more than a century.

In 1892, hotelier and racehorse owner William Ruddle (1841-1919) chose this location for his family home Harnham, named after the spot near Salisbury in England where he grew up. The educated son of a groom, Ruddle gravitated to horse-racing and owned the Royal George hotel in Fortitude Valley. Like that other New Farm identity, the "Sheep King" James Clark, Ruddle ran peering luggers, in the course of which he accumulated a world-class collection of shells. Of

The Ruddle house stands tall at 100-102 Grey Street, just above the corner of Bowen Terrace. It was built in 1892, when Ruddle had just returned from England. The house was designed by architect Claude William Chambers and is a fine example of the Queen Anne style. It was one of the first houses built on the site of the current New Farm Cinemas.

Major Ruddle's house was replaced by the current New Farm Cinemas building in 1940. The building was designed by architect Claude William Chambers and is a fine example of the Queen Anne style. It was one of the first houses built on the site of the current New Farm Cinemas.

In 1933, this spot at the northern end of Merthyr Road was described as "one of the finest blocks on the Brisbane River". Those with an eye to naval history will remember it as the site of HMAS Moreton. Be sure to enjoy both the street frontage (on Gray Street), as well as the view from the Riverwalk, so as to appreciate this magnificent spot. Not far upstream you'll glimpse Amity, another of New Farm's venerable residences.

PLAQUE TOUR

#11 — Freshwater

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VILLAGE NEWS

MANY THANKS TO
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V | news

archives



GERARD BENJAMIN

Back in the days when you sipped your coffee at Vue Lounge (soon to be reopened as Savour), little could you have suspected that this spot was once a mecca for depositing and withdrawing savings, negotiating overdrafts and taking out mortgages.

Long-time residents will remember, this was a bank. The Commonwealth opened a handsome branch here in 1965 and it operated until 1991.

After a stint as a fruit and vegetable shop, the switch to dining occurred in 1997 when entrepreneur Mitch Thompson added a street frontage to the original premises to form Aix Bistro (pronounced X).

Named after the city in Provence, the Gallic flavour was accentuated by two original 1932 art deco French posters, and the colourful theme was carried through in the ceramic column at the front, in a style reminiscent of the Austrian-New Zealand artist,

Friedensreich Hundertwasser.

“Making three portholes on the eastern side would bring more light into the interior, but I wasn’t bargaining on a strongroom wall,” Mitch said.

“I used up many diamond drill bits, and the noise could be heard as far away as the Village Twin Cinema.”

According to the marketing of the day, Aix Bistro was the place to “Drink in the Trendy New Farm.”

In 2004, there was a new name (Vue) and a new owner, coffee king Phillip Di Bella. Along with others from the Di Bella family, two brothers became key members of the Vue team. These were Matthew and Daniel Jefferis — originally from Cairns. Eventually they owned the cafe outright.

“We’d had no contact with New Farm before coming into Vue,” Matt said.

“In the 16 years we’ve been here, many of those early customers have been with us from the start.”

Best Wishes

Good luck to Matt and Dan as they enter this new phase of the life of their establishment which is regarded with such affection by regulars and visitors alike.

P.S. Wordplay devotees are sure to point out that the new name cleverly incorporates the building’s banking past (saver)...



The Commonwealth Bank at 83 Merthyr Road in 1991 shortly before it relocated (CBA Archives).

Brighton Flats

From the 1920s a house known as Brighton Flats stood on this site, though in April 1930 it was almost destroyed by an early morning fire. A woman who

escaped the flames, when asked her occupation by police, reportedly replied, “I’d prefer not to say.”

The property owner was Mrs Fanny Bennett. She and her husband Harry (a builder who could neither read nor write) were originally from Manchester, and they were something of a rags-to-riches sensation.

Through canny buying and selling — which included a Sydney hotel, a restaurant in George Street in Brisbane, a Charters Towers cafe, and hotels in Mareeba, Townsville, Cairns and South Brisbane — the couple’s holdings accumulated to the point where Fanny could pick up 15 building allotments in Merthyr Road.

Mrs Bennett had the title deeds in her name since she managed the transactions, accounting, banking and investments.

The next step was for Harry to build the 15 houses on Merthyr Road, one of which appears to have been Brighton Flats.

At her death in 1933, Mrs Fanny Bennett, late of Gertrude Street, New Farm, had accumulated £65,000 gross (around \$6.7M today).



Matt and Dan Jefferis preparing for the mid-March re-opening of Savour. (Photo: MW)

MONTHLY HISTORY COLUMN from
MY VILLAGE NEWS March 2020

It’s much better to do good in a way that no one knows anything about it... — Tolstoy

BOOKS published by the New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc.

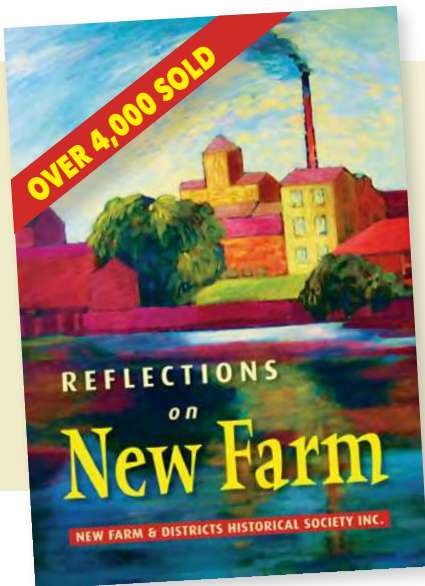
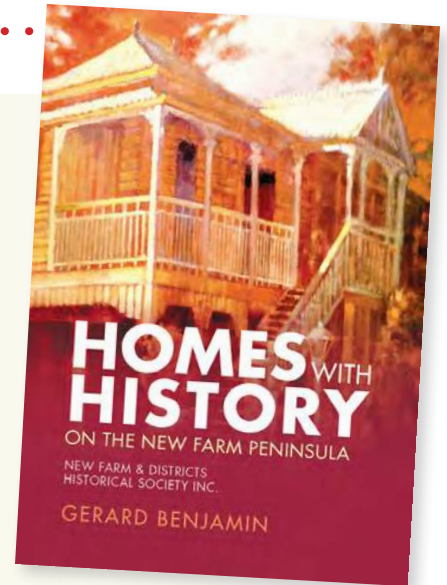
Homes with History — on the New Farm Peninsula

by Gerard Benjamin

This enthralling snapshot of more than 20 local homes notes architectural details, but its main focus is on *people*—those who built the houses, the architects who designed them, and the successive residents and families who occupied and adapted them.

When launching the book, the former Governor of Queensland Penelope Wensley said, “The individual stories are absorbing... All who take the time to read the book will enjoy the parade of personalities that passes through its pages...”

160pp, illustrated in colour; includes five letters (1848-52) of James Gibbon
PAPERBACK, \$35; HARDBACK, \$59.50.



Reflections on New Farm

compiled by Gerard Benjamin & Gloria Grant

This book has sold more than 3,000 copies, and is an indispensable reference about New Farm’s past, with enlightening insights about the suburb’s notable places, people, landmarks and events — particularly through the eyes of long-time residents who remember how it used to be... With 35 chapters and over 150 photos or graphics, you’ll relish these valuable personal recollections and wonderful stories.

PAPERBACK, 2008, 176pp. ISBN: 9780980586800 — \$25

Tides of Teneriffe

by Vicki Bridgstock

How Teneriffe has changed—from being a colonial outpost, when its wool and sugar wharves were the centre of Queensland’s economic boom, to being a bustling inner city suburb in its own right.

Vicki’s book puts you in the flow of Teneriffe’s past and local memories, and features historic images and never-before published photos of life in Teneriffe. Hear the hidden voices and stories behind this choice spot in Brisbane’s heartland.

PAPERBACK, 2009, 72pp. • ISBN: 9780980586817 — \$20



The three books are available from local bookshops in New Farm, as well as from the State Library of Queensland Library Shop. Alternatively, the books may be purchased from the New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc. Phone (07) 3254 1449 or email: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au • www.newfarmhistorical.org.au

A mind needs books as a sword needs a whetstone, if it is to keep its edge... — Martin