



NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2020

Vol. XXVI, No. 9

SEPTEMBER MEETING

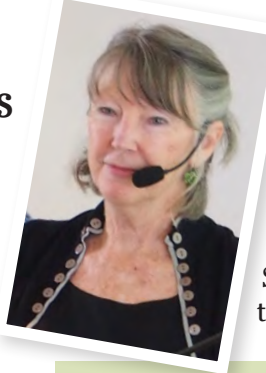
The sweet history of lollies

FOR many of the 50 enthusiastic listeners at our September meeting the talk by Dr Toni Risson (pictured right) on the history of lollies was a sweet reminder of childhood pleasures. We were taken on an enthralling journey through the magic world of the history of confectionery.

Our September meeting was the second conducted under the Covid-19 restrictions limiting us to 50 people based on the size of our meeting room. As with the August meeting, the speaker's presentation was recorded and the link appears at the end of this article. "It was a great show," said one enthusiastic member who could not be present.

Toni, who is author of *Brisbane's Greek Cafés: A Million Malted Milks* (shortlisted for the People's Choice segment of the Queensland Book of The Year Awards for 2019), began our journey at the confectionery counter of the then Comino's Greek café in the town of Emerald. For many children their first independent childhood purchase was of a few pennies' worth of lollies from one of those counters. It was Liquorice Allsorts for me—I loved them! For others it was Bulls Eyes, Marshmallows, Fairy Floss, Jubes or Steamrollers.

In early years, every town had a confectionery shop whose proprietor would have known how to make some of their specialties. Since then we have gone from having lolly makers in every town to one where perhaps three brands dominate: Mars,



Cadbury, Nestlé — although these companies often retained on the packaging the name of the iconic confectionery brand they had purchased.

Baby boomers would remember Griffiths, Smalls, Hoadleys, Allens, Sweetacres and LifeSavers, all with their beguiling packaging. There were many one-product companies. Irish Moss, Monster Braid, Silver Sammies, Moonshine Biffs, Polly Waffle, Milky Poles, Violet Crumble were some.

In each generation there were classic lollies which everyone bought. Minties, dating from 1922, hit upon the longest-running slogan in Australian advertising history: *It's Moments like These you need "MinTies"*.

The young Macpherson

Robertson's story was one of rags to riches.

From lollies made in his bathroom in an old nail can, he expanded to the huge MacRobertson's confectionery line, including Freddo Frogs.

Toni had many other stories to remind us of our mischievous childhood, for instance, rolling Jaffas down the aisles of the matinee theatre was one. To complete the event, each attendee received a small paper bag of lollies, courtesy of the Society.

For those unable to be at Toni's enthralling talk, you can enjoy watching it online here: tinyurl.com/y5t2ohrx. Many thanks, Toni!



BY AUSTIN ADAMS

"Sweets give almost immediate access to childhood memories..."



HISTORY OF LOCAL HOTELS

WHAT DO YOU KNOW about the history of hotels in New Farm and Fortitude Valley? Robert Allen – who spoke briefly at the September meeting – is contemplating a publication about a dozen venerable local pubs, including our locals, the **Brunswick** and the **Queens Arms**. If you would like to make contact with Robert, email him on: rallen3@iinet.net.au or phone: 0437 280 104.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ross Garnett

Great chance to learn new skills...

AFTER a successful hybrid meeting in August, and a recorded meeting in September, the committee has engaged Synergy Video to record the next two meetings and have them loaded onto our website so they can be viewed by anyone at any time.

That means we are looking for at least three people who have an interest in technology to learn from Brett the process of filming, editing and uploading to the website during the next two meetings.

Brett assures us that it is not difficult, so if you have just a little interest in technology and are keen to learn a new skill, while making a valuable contribution to the Society, please contact me.

I am sure that many of us will have special memories about McWhirters in Fortitude Valley. As a child growing up in New Farm, I remember the animated Santa Claus playing the organ high up over the main front entrance – as well as the children's playground on the rooftop followed by lunch at the cafe. Maybe many others of you will have memories about homewares, fashion and hats.

We look forward to hearing Melissa Fagan tell the stories and secrets of her family – the McWhirters – at our meeting on Saturday, 24 October.

Before introducing Melissa, we will devote a short time to our AGM which will involve several brief reports. It will be a chance to list the meetings we conducted in the last 12 months, apart from those from March to July which had to be cancelled. It's good to report that our newsletter mailing list has over 1,100 recipients, and that our membership stands at 188.

Look for another email in coming days with more information about the AGM. It will include a link to the annual reports which will be on the website.

I encourage those who have not yet paid their subscription of \$10 for this current financial year to submit it as soon as possible. Meanwhile, please tell interested friends that the talks about the Japanese House in New Farm and the History of Lollies, are both easily accessed on the Society's website.



Change of address: Of the countless NFDHS meetings held at the Garnett residence in Browne St, the October committee meeting was historic, being the last to take place at that address.

UPDATE FROM DI

More on North Coast Carrying Co.

IN response to the short article about North Coast Carrying Co. (NFDHS News, Sept 2020), a followup was kindly received from Diann Lind-Verkerk (dinkidi39@hotmail.com).

She explained that her father, Hector Lind, who had a trucking run from Beaudesert to Brisbane, met her mother Jean (Mantell) in Beaudesert. They married and moved to Brisbane to link up the firm A. Lind & Sons with North Coast Carrying Co. which ran to Nambour.

Hector oversaw the Brisbane to Nambour run while his brother Owen handled the Brisbane local transport. Di said that her grandfather Andrew was involved in road construction to Southport in some way. After his death, Hector and Owen continued the business, helped by Owen's son Craig.

Di's parents purchased a weatherboard home at 11 Byram Street, just a short walk from the depot. Here the family (including Di's sister Deniece and brother Donald) lived for over 50 years, before the house was sold for \$60,000. Two years ago, Di visited the home when it was renovated — and it sold for \$1.9M.



On your scooter: Thanks again to Society member Stuart Wallace for his skilled compilation of the newsreel, always a popular feature of the monthly meetings. The September edition offered a topical reminder of 'what's old is new again', when UQ students in 1940 proved their scooting skill around the lawn in front of Old Government House at Gardens Point (now QUT).



A LONG TIME AGO

A reverie of re-visiting Grandpa's house

Recently, during a sort of 'waking dream', I went back to *Kingsholm*. I travelled by tram on the Balmoral line to the city and changed to the New Farm Wharf tram. This traversed the Valley and Brunswick St, before turning left to Merthyr Rd then heading along Macquarie St to the terminus. There was a small shop on a corner near the old Australian Estates No. 1 Wool Store, and from there, cement stairs rose in two flights to Hastings St.

From the centre landing, I went through a small gate into the side yard of *Kingsholm*, and around to the back door – so I approached the house in a back-to-front way. The verandah was one step up and led on the left to the bathroom.

Adjacent was a door to what was originally the boys' (Les and Eric) room. It later became a small dining room and held Grandpa's large bookcase.

To the right, the verandah led to the large kitchen which held a fuel stove, a gas stove, a large table and dresser and all the appurtenances. The verandah turned right, past the sewing/ironing room which had a large 'dress' basket containing relics of Eric's war service. It was a play area for me. At the end was the maids' (later housekeeper's) room with its small chest of drawers and mirror.

Entering the back door was the dining room on the right with a fireplace grate (never alight in my time). There was a big table on which Grandma wrote her letters; the sofa, covered in black leatherette under the window; and a glass cabinet holding interesting things, now long gone.

The dining room opened to the front hall and on to the front door. It contained a seat/hall stand which still held Grandpa's collections of walking sticks, and a set of buffalo horns(!) which must have been a fashion of the times.

A door on the right led to the main bedroom and its large iron bed with ornamental knobs, a large wardrobe (from the top of which our birthday presents were presented), and a chair beside the window where Grandma did her 'tattooing'/lace embroidery.

The left hand door led to the old sitting room. It contained the piano, a set of chairs with tapestry seats, the silky oak daybed, and the large 'Edison Diamond Disc' gramophone. The vinyl records were ¼ inch thick and unbreakable, and the 'needle' was everlasting.

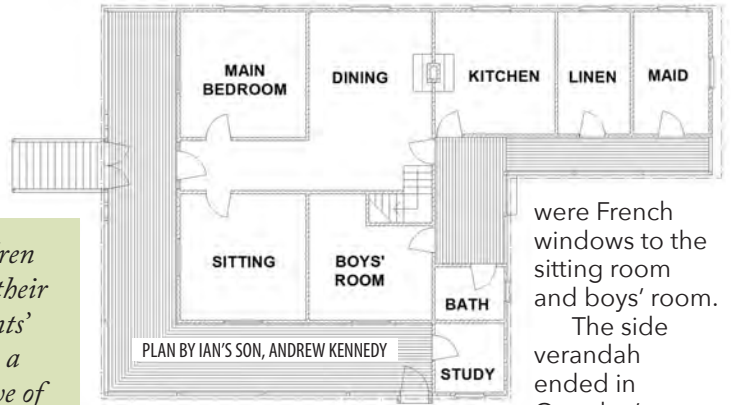
After Grandma died, her bedroom was fully opened to the dining room and became the new combined sitting room. The old sitting room became Auntie Min's bedroom.

All of the rooms had pictures on the walls. I remember a two-dimensional frame of an old cottage kitchen, complete with fire grate and furniture. I wish I had asked for it before the house was sold in 1944.

The front verandah was open with pot plants at one end. The front stairs were long and very steep, with no balustrade, hence the constant use of the back door.

The western side verandah was enclosed by slat blinds and originally held Auntie Min's bed – plus a 'sea-grass' wheelchair on which children enjoyed wild rides! There

Young children usually find their grandparents' home to be a treasure trove of fascinating rooms and objects. That's exactly how Ian Kennedy, now aged 92, regarded 'Kingsholm', the house which once stood beside the Hastings Street stairs from where it overlooked the river and wool stores at Macquarie Street, Teneriffe.



were French windows to the sitting room and boys' room. The side verandah ended in Grandpa's

study, from which hangs a tale of its own. Since there were many women in *Kingsholm* it was his room and it was sacrosanct. I don't remember him, of course, being two years old when he died, but he remains a permanent feature to the background of my early life.*

The study contained his big squatter's chair (I think he might have died in it), his desk complete with pigeonholes, etc., and a large glass bookcase with his collections of shells and corals. On the walls hung quite a collection of weapons including swords, daggers, aboriginal spears, a boomerang, etc. In retrospect, this was rather surprising for a schoolteacher and presumably a man of peace. Don't I still wish I knew him, as an adult. If I was a good boy, I was given the key to the study and left to examine its contents (not too closely) and do my homework on the desk (if I brought any!) The room still seemed to hold the presence of my grandfather. The only things retained from the study were the desk and ink stand, a South African Rhino 'Sjambok' whip, and a Japanese officer's sword, possibly well over a 100 years old.

The old dining room held on its left a staircase to two upstairs bedrooms, originally occupied by Auntie Minnie, Florrie, Ethel, Evie and Doris, but latterly by the two last named. I was not encouraged to go up there, so I cannot remember their contents. I was told that Grandpa's original study was in the adjacent loft space, but the summer heat must have moved him downstairs.

I always wanted to go up there, as the front dormer windows gave a great view to the East with the river, even if obstructed by wool stores, wharves and large oil and petrol tanks.

Under the high front part of the house, in my day, was the washhouse with tubs, but no copper boiler. There was also a small room containing a second lavatory and interesting 'junk'. I once found a muzzle-loading rifle but was not allowed to keep it.

The backyard had the garage, opening to Hastings St. The family car was a 1930 Chevrolet sedan which Doris continued to drive for 35 years.

At *Kingsholm* I was never put to bed while the adults talked or played cards, but would be carried out, still sleeping, at the end of the evening. I never did spend a complete night in the house. Nevertheless, strong memories remain, and I wish I could make another visit in a waking state – but alas the house has long gone.

* The teaching career of Ian's grandfather, Andrew Samuel Kennedy (1857-1930), began when, at the age of 13, he was appointed a pupil teacher at the Brisbane Normal School. He retired with the rank of Acting Under-Secretary of Education in Queensland (the equivalent of the current Director General).



The view from the Kennedy house 'Kingsholm': (Top) Around 1901, the Kennedy children, gazing from the front steps or from the dormer windows of *Kingsholm* (arrowed in top photo; pictured below) would have watched the horse and cart at the shop on Macquarie Street, and looked out for trains which ran beside the roadway from Newstead towards the sugar refinery. (Bottom) By the 1940s, *Kingsholm* was still visible (arrowed), but the shop had been converted to the office of Commonwealth Oil Refineries (COR), the products of which were conveyed all over the city by the vehicles of Russell Transport. Meanwhile (pictured right), workers pose with wool bales in transit from the nearby Australian Estates Woolstore built in 1926.





Gas and spirit: Brenda Koster generously contributed this wonderful snap from a family album. Dating from 1955, it shows the substantial Newstead gas plant, which once stood close to the current site of Malt Cafe, at the end of Newstead Terrace. The photo was labelled 'Shell Newstead'. Truck buffs may be able to tell us more about the stylish, aerodynamically-shaped road tanker which transported Plume Motor Spirit. The Plume brand was introduced by Vacuum Oil which later became Mobil.

OCTOBER MEETING

McWhirters, sure to stock it...

IS there anyone on New Farm who did not shop at McWhirters in its heyday? Here's your chance to revisit that era via the talk to be given at the October meeting of the New Farm and Districts Historical Society.

The speaker is to be writer Melissa Fagan, a great-great-granddaughter of the enterprising Scottish draper, James McWhirter, who founded this retailing icon of Fortitude Valley in 1898.

"I will be delighted to relate some of the discoveries I made while researching and writing my book, *What Will Be Worn: A McWhirters Story*," said Melissa. The book is an account of the five generations of women in her mother's family, and weaves together stories that take in fashion, clothing and identity.

The meeting will take place on Saturday 24 October 2-4pm at the Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre, and will be open to 50 attendees. All Covid precautions will apply. Entry is \$5 (\$4 for members).

To book your seat, please ring Desley on 0409 498 403 or email dr_garn@bigpond.net.au.

The meeting will be videoed and will be available online 48 hours later.



HAPPY ENQUIRER

Jane Thomas

Puzzle posed by portrait solved...

AMILITARY man in a photo frame with a cross on the upper arm of his jacket has been gracing my sideboard since my mother's death 15 years ago.

Quite often I wondered, who was he? Among my mother's papers I found a birth certificate (extracted in 1916) for 'Lyluph Griffith Oxley' born on 27/6/1888 at Mossleigh, New Farm.

That's when NFDHS came into my life and helped me to identify this special man by sending me a photo — and yes, it was the same man!



His parents were accountant Henry James Oxley (1848-1916) and Alice Griffith (1851-1925), the sister of Sir Samuel Griffith of Moray Street.

Mossleigh was a large residence which once stood on the northern corner of Bowen Tce and Langshaw St. It backed onto Oxley Lane and looked across to the Japanese house on the other side of Bowen Tce.

Lyluph was known as Jack, and my Aunt Maud Hopes (1898-1963) who was from Central Queensland, married him in 1922. Sadly Jack died in 1932 from war injuries and was buried at Toowong Cemetery. We visited his widow Maud in Stanthorpe from our home in Toowoomba in the 1950-60s.

Sincere thanks to NFDHS — as well as to Noel Adsett who compiled Lyluph's war history which is held at St Andrews Uniting Church, Brisbane.



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VILLAGE NEWS

MANY THANKS TO
Grace Grace MP
Member for McConnell (07) 3145 9100
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If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help somebody...

V | news

archives



GERARD BENJAMIN

From the 1920s, many New Farm children were born in local private maternity homes.

Matron Austin's in Bowen Tce (cnr Barker St), The Laurels in Brunswick St (near Harcourt St) and Craigneish in Moray St made frequent appearances on birth notices from this era.

More than a decade earlier Nurse Sarah Jane Williams was advertising her "Lying-in Home" at Stratford in Brunswick St (near Harcourt St).

As a young woman in her early 20s, Miss Thomas had arrived in Brisbane from Wales and soon married Richard Iorwerth Williams. When he died eight years later, she was left to raise their daughter and son.

Perhaps she had begun nursing by then. After her marriage in 1902 to Irishman George Hussey, a widower with children, she continued as "Nurse Williams".

By 1907, she was established in the big old Queenslander named St

Aubrey's at 81 Kent St, just doors from the Brunswick Hotel corner.

Though many midwives consider it a black mark to have to call on a doctor, Mrs Williams could depend upon Dr Kerr Scott (1872-1953), the Edinburgh-trained son of a missionary, who practised close by in Brunswick St.

Some babies needed new families hence this advertisement in 1909: "WANTED: adoption of extra well built baby boy; superior parentage. Mrs Williams, St Aubrey's."

By 1915 Nurse Williams was seeking a probationer. This was possibly forward planning as her 24-year-old daughter Gwen was to be married the following year.

Meanwhile, that October, the local politician Thomas Glassey officiated at a gathering at the house. This was to farewell Nurse Williams' son William who was embarking for war service.

Two months later, Mrs Williams' husband George enlisted even though aged 45. His own son Arthur was already overseas with the Australian Imperial Force.

Come April 1917 and extraordinary news filtered through. Both George Hussey and his son (Nurse Williams' stepson) were dead, the tragic events separated by only 12 days.

George, attached to a medical unit at Abbeville, died of heart disease on April 21, while his son Arthur,



Though St Aubrey's at 81 Kent St has gone, its neighbouring houses bear witness to that era.

apparently in a unit which undertook especially dangerous missions, was killed in action in France on April 9.

A year later came the worst blow. Nurse Williams' only son, Corporal William Morgan Williams, died on June 9, 1918 after being gassed, and was buried at Vignacourt on the Somme. Previously an electrician, the young man had served for almost three years with an Artillery Brigade in Egypt, Flanders and France.

Despite her losses, assuaged no doubt in coming years by the arrival of more grandchildren, the maternity work continued with pregnant women still seeking the benefit of Nurse Williams' experience until 1922.

If this well-regarded friend of expectant mothers were ever to be interviewed, the enquirer may have been surprised by her humble origins.

"I come from Cwmsymlog

in Ceredigion, a tiny mining community," she might have answered in her lilting accent.

"At 15, I was a 'lead ore dresser' (a miner), as were my brother and cousin. Many of my siblings died very young. My mother was head of the house because two years earlier, my father had been killed in a mining accident in Sardinia."

Unfortunately, no photo of Nurse Williams has yet been found. Patricia Burroughs, who has enquired into her genealogy, at least managed a visit to Cwmsymlog.

"I was able to take a photo of the headstone where her mother and siblings were buried," she said.

When the Kent Street house ceased its maternity work, it became St Aubrey's Flats. Nurse Williams was still there in 1949, and died in 1955.

MONTHLY HISTORY COLUMN
from MY VILLAGE NEWS
OCTOBER 2020

Right: The graveyard at the Tabernacle Baptist Chapel in Cwmsymlog, Wales, where members of Nurse Williams' family (nee Thomas) were buried. (Photos courtesy of the Welsh Mines Preservation Trust).





NEW FARM & *Districts* HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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Photo permission	Photographs taken at public meetings may be published in newsletters and on social media		

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Membership Cost: \$10

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