



NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au



NEWSLETTER

MAY 2021

Vol. XXVII, No. 4

APRIL MEETING

New Farm Anzacs

MORE than 80 attended our Anzac Eve meeting to hear educator and historian Noel Adsett OAM relate details of New Farm citizens who served in WWI.

Noel and team have produced a series of booklets recounting the stories of the 267 individuals appearing on the Honour Boards at St Andrew's Uniting Church in Ann St, Brisbane.

Noel's account began with the brothers **Alric and Lyulph Oxley** of Mossleigh, once on the corner of Bowen Tce and Langshaw St. They were sons of accountant Henry Oxley (after whom Oxley Lane is named), and Alice, sister of Sir Samuel Griffith of Moray St who was twice Premier of Queensland.

Alric was with the Australian Army Medical Corps serving mostly in Egypt, while Lyulph served in England in convalescent camps, field ambulance depots and Australian Medical Corps training camps.

Living close by the Oxleys was the Burns family at Hope Mansel on the upper corner of Villiers and Brunswick Sts. Martha trained first as a nurse then became the first female dentist in Queensland. She was an early Brisbane motorist, driving a 7-hp Oldsmobile. She offered her services to the War Office in London as a nurse, dentist and chauffeur, and soon joined the Australian Voluntary Hospital at St Nazaire. After the war, **Martha Burns** led a committee aiming to cope



with New Farm cases of the Spanish Influenza.

Arthur Carvosso spent much time in hospital with 'trench feet' from the muddy earthworks of France. While awaiting repatriation, he studied at the British Optical Institute in London, becoming a Freeman of the City, a designation which gave him enviable cachet in his optometry practice in Roma.



BY
Austin Adams

Stewart Neil Gow of Gowan Brae (cnr Mark and Mountford Sts) was the son of merchant R.M. Gow whose firm specialised in the wholesaling of foods and household requisites. Stewart was an Army driver.

Lieutenants **Walter and Eric Mactaggart** were sons of merchant Daniel Mactaggart whose wool store was in Teneriffe. They both suffered the effects of gassing on the western front. A famous photograph taken at the Mena Camp in Egypt in 1914 shows Walter with the wallaby he took to war.

Noel also told us about Major **George Willcocks** who was awarded the Military Cross. A medical doctor, he was a son of Wynberg in Brunswick St.

There were five young New Farm men who did not return: **Kenneth Banks** of Annie St; **Donald and Charles Shields** of Sargent Rd (now St); **William Walthall** of Lechmere St; and **Graham Wareham** of Warilda, cnr Brunswick and Moreton Sts.

Thank you Noel, for a sobering yet fascinating insight into the lives of some New Farm Anzacs. Further details of Noel's research can be seen at: heritage.saintandrews.org.au

MAY MEETING

Joshua Jeays made his mark

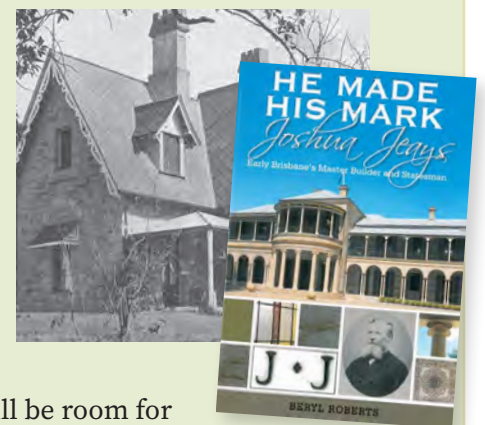
"IT would be a pleasure to share some of my research about Joshua Jeays, an important early resident and builder in Brisbane," says Beryl Roberts, author of the book *He made his Mark*, who is to be the speaker at our meeting in May.

Jeays started work in England as a carpenter, then in Brisbane he worked as a builder, architect and stonemason.

He also contributed to civic life as a member of the first Brisbane Municipal Council, after which he was the fourth Mayor of Brisbane. Jeays Street

in Bowen Hills acknowledges his civic work locally.

The meeting is to be recorded and will take place on Saturday, 22 May, beginning at the later time of 2.30pm. There will be room for 100 attendees, and afternoon tea will be available. All are welcome. \$5 (members \$4).



ADSETT FAMILY**Pioneers from the earliest days...**

IN 1841 the family of John (senior) and Ann Adsett lived in the rural district of East Horsley in Surrey. John was an agricultural labourer.

Of their family of 13 children, eight came to Australia, a land as far from England as one might go on the face of the earth. They did not travel together, but in four groups and over nearly three decades.

The first group included John (jun.) aged 27 and his wife Louisa (21), and his brothers Moses (23) and Aaron (18).

At the English port of Plymouth, they boarded the barque, *Duchess of Northumberland*, of 504 tons on 27 September 1850, and sailed to the tiny settlement of Moreton Bay in the Colony of New South Wales.

The vessel anchored in Moreton Bay on 31 January 1851 but the four Adsett immigrants did not set foot in Brisbane until 9 February. The newspaper reported, "The whole of the immigrants by the *Duchess of Northumberland* were landed at Brisbane yesterday, and have been lodged in the former military barrack, tents having been erected in the square for the use of the single men. The people are now open to engagement, through the immigration agent. Their appearance and demeanour speak well for the care and judicious discipline of the surgeon-superintendent Dr Ayre." (*Moreton Bay Courier*, 10 February 1851, p 3)

Employment would have been available for willing workers in the infant colony, and the brothers John, Moses and Aaron quickly acquired funds to purchase land in Breakfast Creek, Milton, Redbank, Enoggera, Downfall Creek (now Chermside) and the Dayboro area.

Henry Payne, another passenger on the *Duchess of*

Northumberland and Moses Adsett attempted to grow cotton on their 12 acres at Milton. Both later owned large portions in the area now known as The Gap.

In 1855 the second group of Adsetts arrived in Melbourne on the royal mail ship *Donald McKay*. In this group were John Adsett (senior), his daughters Matilda and Emma and the youngest surviving member of the family, Charles aged 12.

John and Ann's third son, Isaac and his wife Jane and their two daughters formed the third group of assisted migrants. They embarked on the *Alfred* from Liverpool in June 1858 and settled in Breakfast Creek at first, later Goodna.

It was not until 1878 that the fourth group arrived at Brisbane on the clipper *Southesk*. They were remittance immigrants – no

doubt assisted with fares readily given by family members already in the colony.

The group included the eldest child in the family of John and Ann Adsett, Mrs Mary Rackley (then aged 55) and her husband William. Mary's mother Ann aged 77 who accompanied them depended on her daughter's constant care.

By the close of the 19th century, the descendants of the family of

John and Ann Adsett were well established in the colony.

Many followed family tradition by farming in various Queensland districts. Some undertook professions such as teaching, banking, medical work, architecture and the law. Many served in times of war. Many have contributed to voluntary community pursuits. Most have remained in South East Queensland but many have moved to other parts of Australia and the world.

In 2021, 170 years after the initial migration, Adsett family descendants number in the thousands.



Happy Birthday, Noel: Members of Noel's family gather for the joyous occasion of his 85th birthday. They are just some of the thousands of descendants of the original Adsett immigrants, the first of whom arrived in Moreton Bay from England 170 years ago.

The name Adsett seems remarkably familiar to Brisbane-ites — at the very least because of thoroughfares in Taringa and Burpengary bearing the name. Thanks to Noel for this succinct account of how successive Adsett families were early emigrants from Surrey to Queensland.



Teneriffe in the 1890s: Back when both sides of the river were called Bulimba, here's how the waterfront on the city side looked in 1894. The old brewery with its chimney once stood beside Florence St. – *The Queenslander*, 1 March 1919.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Bulimba: both sides now

SIR,—Several correspondents have now poured forth their lamentations anent the nomenclature involved herein, but it is doubtful if any of them have more reason to grumble than I.

Indeed, my tale of woe has passed the chronic stage, and it is born of the wicked pranks of several families living t'other side of the river – Dath-street, Wyandra-street, Florence-street, Commercial-road, etc.

Not only have those folk a hazy kind of notion that they belong to Mr. Wright's electorate, but evidently they find little trouble in convincing easygoing, won't-be-heckled-or-worried officials that such is the case.

So after every State election I have an armful of absent votes, unopened, of course, to post back to Merthyr or the Valley! What does this mean? Loss of time, loss of stamps, probable loss of votes, feverish hunting through the big roll, the little roll, the quarterly,

the supplementary, last year's roll, my neighbours' rolls—Toombul, Logan, Merthyr, and four others—searching for a name which the P.O. should have known was not there. It means also delaying the final count, not to mention a quantum of "sulfurious langwidge" fired off at P.O.'s generally.

I'm not a wet blanket, but I do believe that when Gabriel sounds his final blast, some of these two guinea gleaners will reap a harvest of a different kind!

It must be explained, however, that in days of old, "when knights were bold and aldermen terrible easy," the name Bulimba was given to all that part of the Valley.

Indeed, from the Waterloo Hotel to the ferry there was little mention of Teneriffe or Newstead. Thus we lads spoke of the Bulimba "push" and the Bulimba pitch, the Bulimba bus, the Bulimba saw mill.

And who doesn't remember the Bulimba brewery—that balmy haven of rest, lying snug and cosy below the gentle slope of a hill, surrounded by

fragrant lantana, alive with bull finches, silver-eyes, mickies (or soldier birds), "droleens," and other dickey birds too numerous to remember?

And the quiet calm Sabbath eve, when we drifted "on the inside" just to see if each cask was properly tilted, and if the froth was behaving itself, and rising up like the balm of Gilead, as respectable froth ought to rise, whether visitors were present or not?

When we got put on "the road for 'ome" we were doubtless too happy to worry about who was taking care of the caretaker's daughter whilst the caretaker was taking us around. Ah! Those were the good old days!

But, as Mrs. Parvenu says, you can write "Knickerbocker" over them, for their glory is departed! Meanwhile, let us hope that those pore, simple folk hereinbefore referred to will learn to know themselves and Bulimba, and cease from pulling the presiding officer's leg, and making him look like an amateur. – J.M. Broe, Returning Officer for Bulimba. (*Daily Standard*, 1 March 1927, p. 6)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ross Garnett

Conversation leads to an invitation

WE were delighted to meet up with an acquaintance from several years back when we moved to our new home in a retirement village late last year. Bobbie was telling us about her husband's forefather Joshua Jeays who had been a Mayor of Brisbane and builder of several prominent Brisbane landmarks including old Government House in what is now the QUT precinct.

We learned that he was an advocate for the separation of Queensland from New South Wales, and that his civic contribution has been recognised by the naming of streets in Bowen Hills and Sandgate.

That led to making contact with Beryl Roberts (a previous speaker at NFDHS) who had written a book

about Mr Jeays. The result was an invitation to Beryl to tell us Joshua Jeays' story at NFDHS. I hope you will enjoy hearing the account of this remarkable man at the meeting on 22 May.

At the April meeting of the committee, there were two nominations for new committee members: Virginia Balmain and Desley Garnett. Virginia was President of the Society in its infancy and is passionate about history and New Farm so her experience will be a real asset to the committee.



Archiving with an iPhone: Among Stuart Wallace's many contributions to the Society is his archiving work. Instead of using a conventional scanner, an appropriately mounted iPhone makes the work easier and faster. If you are an 'archivist-at-heart' and like the idea of helping

to establish order with documents, then please have a word with Santina about contributing. It's fun—plus it is a great way of getting to know other interesting people in the Society.



Spot the resemblance:

Distant cousins Doug (left) and Gerard have ancestors in common born ca 1796.

Photos: Austin Adams, Gerard Benjamin, Lorraine Nothing

Design and Layout: G. Benjamin



MANY THANKS TO
Grace Grace MP
Member for McConnel (07) 3145 9100
for photocopying the newsletter

New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc • The Office is located at the front of the Ron Muir Meeting Room, New Farm Library, right behind the green bench @ 135 Sydney Street. • *Office Open Hours:* Every Thursday 2-4pm
Postal Address: PO Box 1141 NEW FARM 4005 • **Email:** info@newfarmhistorical.org.au

President: Ross Garnett • 0409 498 402 • drgarn@bigpond.net.au
Vice President: Malcolm Godfrey
Secretary: Santina Musumeci
Treasurer: Denise Buckby

Committee: Austin Adams, Virginia Balmain, Terry Beer, Desley Garnett and Ben Wieland
Newsletter Editor: Gerard Benjamin
• ggerardb@bigpond.net.au

There are some things so serious you have to laugh at them... — Niels Bohr

archives



GERARD BENJAMIN

Powerhouse architect Roy Rusden Ogg made lasting impression.

On Wednesday, June 27, 1928, at the opening ceremony for the new powerhouse at New Farm, one speaker expressed his heartfelt relief “... at seeing the consummation of our hopes of 20 months ago, when the critics described our objective as a wasteful, extravagant dream”.

Architect Roy Rusden Ogg possibly thought that he couldn't have received a better birthday present for his 40th a month earlier.

Though a spot at Hamilton (near present-day Brett's Wharf) was originally sought, in late 1926 came the announcement that Brisbane City Council would go ahead with the building at New Farm.

As it transpired, this site's advantages were several: access

to railway and wharfage, space for expansion, and a central location for distributing power.

Mr Ogg was undoubtedly on the spot for every milestone: the start of pile-driving in January 1927; the laying of the first brick in April 1927 (more than two million were to follow); then in January 1928, steam being raised to test the turbines. No wonder many wondered: had Australia seen another powerhouse built in such a short period?

Others were happy to remind the architect what had happened here during the 1893 flood.

“I remember watching a large, two-storey house... lifted from its foundations... being finally swept on its unpiloted course seawards,” recalled one observer.

Unsurprisingly, Mr Ogg had done his hydrological homework. He was offered the chance for a further study in April 1928, two months before opening day, when a serious flood saw many low-lying city suburbs inundated.

Mr Ogg took daily records of the maximum heights of the river. He reported that the highest level reached was 6 inches (15.24cm) above the maximum high-tide level, and that there was never any water on the grounds surrounding the building.

“The river would have to rise about 18ft (5.4m) higher at the powerhouse site before it would enter the turbine room and cause any interruption to the operation of the plant,” the assessment concluded.

Only a week before this particular river rise, a test current had been successfully sent by cable under the river to the Logan Rd substation which enabled trams to be driven for a few hours.

The peer review which would have meant the most to Mr Ogg was that of Alfred Darker, an engineer and manager of a large works in London who had inspected powerhouses throughout the world. “I have never seen a site, building or plant which gives me greater pleasure,” he reportedly said.

No wonder one of the opening day speeches called the new installation, “this grand institution”.

The tramway network also required strategically-located substations. During the 1920-'30s, Ogg designed eight around Brisbane, seven of which remain, including at Newstead House. All are heritage-listed.

While these are solidly-built utility buildings, they are notable for their elegant proportions and finely crafted reddish-brown brickwork.



The pleasing proportions of Substation No 5, designed by R.R. Ogg, located near Newstead House.

Mr Ogg was the son of a Charters Towers bank manager who later served in the Boer War. He began with Brisbane Tramways in 1914, becoming first an architect and then also an engineer.

If asked whether he were related to the Ogg family, once of Brunswick St (the Presbyterian minister; his son, the long-range weather forecaster; and his daughter, the electoral reformer), Mr Ogg was likely to have replied: “Distantly. Both families hailed from Arbroath in Scotland.”

Mr Ogg died at home in Misken St, Toowong, in 1949, aged 61. He was survived by his wife Gertrude, and a daughter and son.

MONTHLY HISTORY COLUMN
from MY VILLAGE NEWS
MAY 2021



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

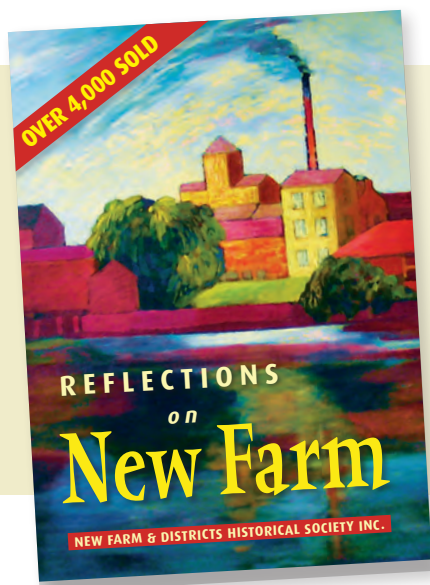
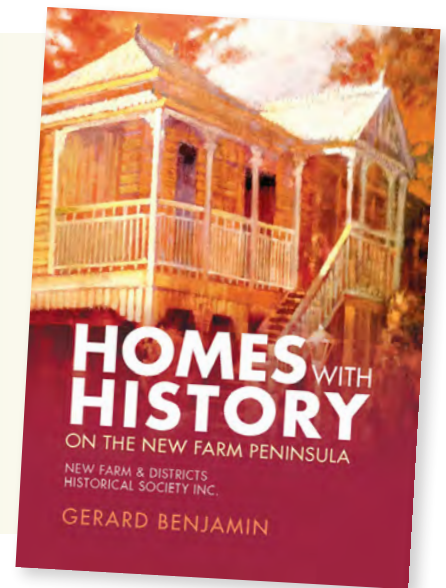
Homes with History — on the New Farm Peninsula

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

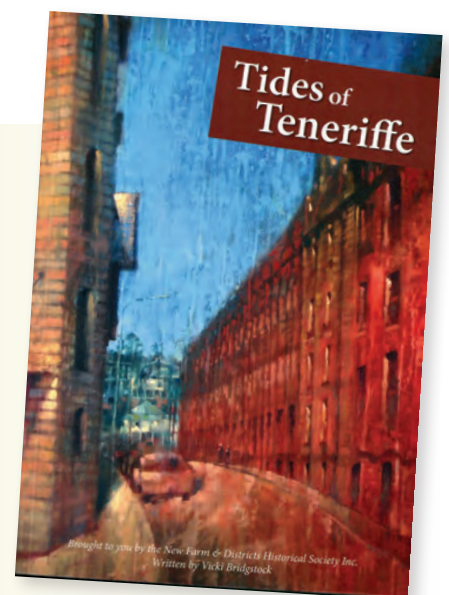
Tides of Teneriffe

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 and Newstead, 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

Reading one book is like eating one potato chip... Make sure you have all three...