

NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au





NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2021

Vol. XXVII, No. 8

AUGUST MEETING

Garnetts' store in James St...

HE busy well-attended August meeting featured a chronicle of the Garnett family in New Farm, courtesy of Desley Garnett, ably assisted by husband Ross and daughter Anita.

Daniel and Mary Garnett (Ross' greatgrandparents) and their six children (he was a stonemason and minister of the Primitive Methodist church) arrived in Brisbane from London on Duke of Westminster in December 1884. From the old Kingsholme Estate, Daniel purchased blocks

in James St between Browne and Annie Sts.

In 1888, Daniel established the Kingsholme Cash Store at 152 James St. Five years later the big floods of early 1893 lapped the steps of the store. Daniel may have doing more praying than selling...

By this time members of the family owned the east side of James St between Annie and Browne Sts, sometimes referred to as 'Garnett's Hill'.

Daniel's son Ernest married Emma in 1890 and took over the store. By then it was a larger establishment with marble counters and stables at the rear of the property.

So as to stay close to the business, Ernest and Emma built a large house next door at No. 148-150. When Ernest died suddenly in 1919, Emma took over the store. The enterprising



Garnetts produced their own tea brand

by blending what was on offer. The new label was known as 'XLNT'.

Fast-forward to 1939 when Ernest and Emma's son Bert married May. The couple borrowed £300 to pay Emma for the store which had become run-down. Meanwhile, they lived in the front room at No. 160 where other family members lived.

In 1945, Bert and May welcomed Ross' arrival, followed by Jeffrie three

vears later. The family now lived in a house behind the store. A kitchen attached to the back of the shop enabled them to grab quick meals. After Bert's death in 1972, May kept the store going until it was sold to the Bellino family—a granddaughter of that family being Grace Grace MLA who worked there as a teenager after school.

The shop is long gone, as is the site of the original house at 150 James St, but that spot is now occupied by a development appropriately named "Garnett on James". What a fitting tribute to a family which has become part of the texture of New Farm history.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

Wheels for Queenslanders...



HE Canada Cycle and Motor Agency was established by long-term New Farm resident, Alexander Vaughan Dodwell of Moray St. With branches and agencies throughout Queensland and around 200 employees by 1914, CCM was a major Queensland company during

The business imported early motor cars, trucks and motor cycles (Darracq, Renault, Studebaker, Dodge,

and Indian); manufactured custom-built vehicle

bodies; established Queensland's first taxi company in 1909; and opened a marine motor department which built, repaired and hired out motor boats, as well as provided boat mooring and storage at Newstead.

To tell us about this remarkable enterprise at our September meeting will be Dr Hilary Davies (pictured), author and senior heritage officer with the Queensland Government.

"CCM's rapid ascendency crashed with the Great Depression and subsequently its name was almost erased from memory," she said.

The venue will be the Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm, and the meeting (to be recorded) is to take place at 2.30pm on Saturday, 25 September. Afternoon tea will be available, and all are welcome. Entry: \$5 (members \$4).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Desley Garnett

Getting to know you...

REETINGS from me as your new President, and thank you for your confidence by appointing me at the recent AGM. At that meeting we took the opportunity to thank Ben Wieland and Santina Musumeci for their contribution to the society as committee members and we welcomed two new members — Ben Pritchard and Janetta Douglas. We will take the opportunity to introduce them more carefully at future public meetings.

What an occasion when, at the last meeting, we paid tribute to Ross Garnett for his 17 years as President. I can assure you I will not be in this position for as long as that! We have many plans on the agenda for the ongoing life of the society and for the benefit of members and we always welcome your suggestions.

One of my hopes is to get to know members better so please take the time to say hello to me at the meetings or come to the office on Thursday afternoons for a cuppa and chat. I intend to be there most Thursdays, 2–4pm at the Ron Muir Room next to the New Farm Library.

AFTERWORD

Still a New Farm boy at heart

hat an overwhelming event on 28th August! A triple thank you is due—firstly to everyone for your kind words on the occasion of my retirement from the role of president; secondly for the beautiful gifts; and thirdly to all who generously gave of their time to organise the occasion behind my back!

It has been my pleasure to lead the society over those 17 years. It was a role that I took on unexpectedly but it seemed to be a good fit, so I was happy to continue in that position—however, the time has come when I cannot to give as much to the role as I would like.

I will still attend meetings without the organisational responsibility, so I hope to have some good chats over afternoon tea. I may have moved out of New Farm, but I am still a New Farm boy at heart!

The baton has passed to Desley who has been my partner in the role of President over the years, so I know that she and the rest of the committee will lead the society to continued success and maybe some new activities in the coming year. – *Ross Garnett*

NICELY NOSTALGIC

Jim MacDonald

Fill her up... and 36 all around?

OST and not yet found" might well be the name of this offering from Chief Investigations Correspondent, J. Alexander MacDonald III, who declares: "Lost: A Shell Service Station—its last known site being adjacent to the shops at 693 Brunswick Street, New Farm".

It's hard to believe that a Shell service station once existed on this confined spot. It had petrol bowsers (no diesel for SUVs, since the like had not yet arrived); it served motorists—including member Fay Rayner (driving a Valiant), and dispensed fuel and oil, plus air into the tyres (tubed tyres; tubeless had not yet arrived).

Not overlooked was a check of the oil dip stick (SAE 30 for synthetics had not yet arrived). There was also a glance at the water level in the top tank of the radiator—as well as, of course, a check of the water in the battery (gel-filled batteries were yet to become the norm).

The establishment offered mechanical repairs, but because of the limited space available from the Brunswick St level, these were carried out in a workshop on a floor built above the lower level. The vehicle needing service entered this workshop floor from Oxley Lane, down beside the present-day Continental Cafe.

Ron Altmann who also grew up in New Farm recalls: "I worked at New Farm Shell on Saturday



New Farm Tram-ride film: (Above) Two parked cars on the far RHS mark the spot relevant to this article. In the background is the Village Twin Cinema on the Barker St corner. (Right) Behind the plaster in 2013 was this sign in the bar at 697 Brunswick St, which shared a wall with the former service station.

mornings in the early 60s, attending to customers' petrol, and checking oil, water and battery levels, and tyre pressures.

"The Saturday morning fill was a ritual for many people who only used the car on weekends. The last fill was at 12 o'clock when all service stations closed, after which only people in the know were able to find some at Barnes Auto and at the taxi companies."

• Now a question for you to think about—and you can send your answer to the newsletter editor:

A service station once functioned at the corner of Bowen Tce and Merthyr Rd. Since there are four corners, which was it? Also what brand of petrol did it sell... Shell, BP, or perhaps Ampol?



AUGUST TRIBUTE

Great turnout to honour Ross

he main aim of the NFDHS meeting on 28 August was to pay tribute to Ross Garnett's sterling contribution as president for 17 of the society's 27 years.

The event unfolded with informal precision to the delight of the 100 attendees. Life Member and renowned artist David Hinchliffe conducted the AGM in his inimitable style, describing NFDHS as "the best community-based historical society in Australia,"-or was that in the world?!

Next it was time to welcome the new president, Desley Garnett. Ross, who enjoys his cuppa, was presented with a Wedgwood teapot and gourmet tea selection, a silver photo frame ready for a group photo, a caricature of him and Desley painted by David H, and a certificate of Life Membership-while a floral bouquet was presented to Desley.
The audience viewed a video

of Ross being interviewed about the highlights of his presidency, as well as a slideshow which paid tribute to the dozens upon dozens of volunteers over many years who have been the mainstay of society activities.

Local dignitaries adding their plaudits for Ross's achievement

included Grace Grace MLA. Councillor Vicki Howard, retired Senator Claire Moore, retired Councillor David Hinchliffe, and Past NFDHS President Maida Lilley.

Vice President Malcolm Godfrey was MC for the proceedings in the courtyard where all enjoyed a sitdown celebratory afternoon tea which included the cutting of the cake.

Treasurer Denise Buckby helped organise the group photo which managed to include just about every person present.

Playing the key role in planning this event was secretary Santina Musumeci, ably assisted by Austin Adams, Gerard Benjamin, Jim MacDonald, Stuart Wallace and Ben Weiland, as well as other committee members.

The afternoon was a fitting farewell to Ross's presidency, and a warm welcome to Desley's. The icing on the cake was that many of Ross and Desley's family were able to be present.

Feedback from attendees has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic. You can sample the spirit of the event by viewing several videos at: https:// vimeo.com/showcase/8785400



TRUDY'S STORY

Friendly face at Café Europe

A FTER their first daughter, Dolores, was born, Trudy and Erwin decided it was time to buy themselves a house. It was 1953. They found the modest home they wanted in Mark St, New Farm, an area that at the time was less than desirable to

most folk, but for Trudy and Erwin was somewhere they could finally call home.

Erwin, being 13 years older than Trudy, was penalised by the bank due to his age, and their application for a loan was denied.

In stepped Tony (Polish friend of Erwin) who came up with the plan that he would help them out with the money for the house—and for his kindness they would let him move in, and Trudy would not only take care of her husband and their child, but also Tony.

On top of cooking and cleaning for Tony she was given the task of finding him a wife. Trudy's friend in Germany named Erica was looking for a husband at the time, so, masquerading as an Australian Romeo, Trudy would pen the most romantic love letters to Erica (as Tony's German was very limited), trying to persuade her to come Down Under.

In 1956 Erica finally arrived in Australia in anticipation of meeting this romantic man with whom she had fallen in love through his pen—only to discover that all of the letters had been written by Trudy—and Tony wasn't the Romeo she was expecting but a Polish immigrant... It all worked out happily. Erica and Tony married and had a daughter.

IN between her role as Cupid, mother, and wife (to two men, as if one isn't enough), Trudy found a new job. It was 1955. Someone had told her that there was a new establishment opening in Brunswick St called Café Europe. She went to see them and was employed there and then.

Trudy was a casual waitress at Café Europe during 1955–1962. In this time she managed to have two more girls, Veronika and Linda, and to visit her parents and six siblings in Germany.

Erwin had found his dream job in his trained

profession as a land surveyor with South-East Electric Authority of Queensland (SEAQ). This kept him away during the weekdays, so Trudy had the run of the house with three children as well as a casual job to help make ends meet. Erwin would return home to New Farm on Friday evenings only to take up his second job as an inserter at Sun Newspapers in

Brunswick St. He did this every Friday and Saturday night for many years. At times he and Trudy were like ships passing in the night.

CAFÉ Europe was ahead of its time, serving European-style meals, from homemade chicken noodle soup, Hungarian Goulash, Schnitzel, sauerkraut with csabai sausage, pigs trotters and shanks, and in time added more Aussie favourites including fish and chips, T-bone steak, rissoles, roasts with vegetables, then hamburgers and BBQ chicken (using the first rotisserie of its kind in the Valley). They also originally sold continental smallgoods such as

salami, cheese and Vienna bread.

Trudy was the friendly face that greeted you when you walked in the door. From 1962 she was head waitress and worked the late shift (5–11.30pm, Monday to Saturday) until she retired in 1992.

Both the New Farm Park and New Farm Wharf tram/bus stops were just outside the cafe, and more often than not the rooms in the local boarding houses did not have their own kitchens, so many men would stop in and have meals on their way from work. A lot were unemployed, and many were newly-arrived immigrants, so money was always an issue. If someone came into the café without money, Trudy's response was "there was always soup I could give them".

She loved everything about working at Café Europe and fondly recalls so many of the regulars. She memorised their orders so well that many would just walk in the door, give her the thumbs up and she would know exactly what they wanted.

Even after all these years, Trudy (at 93) will sometimes see an old customer around New Farm, and though the name might have escaped her, the face remains familiar enough for her to recall exactly what meal the person had on certain days of the week or what he liked on his hamburger or sandwich... *That's special!*



HAPPY ENQUIRER

Her father found...

An enquiry from RL came in response to an article on the Society website: "The Wool Industry in Qld", seeking any information about her father, Gordon Lewis, who was appointed as the first teacher of Sheep and Wool-classing at the Central Technical College in Brisbane, during 1917-58. It seems he was an excellent teacher and specialist at wool-classing. RL was collecting historical information about him for her children and grandchildren.

AFTER the Society responded by suggesting that the enquirer search through newspapers on Trove, RL replied most appreciatively for the tip: "The newspaper article on Trove you suggested is written by Dad! Oh my goodness, I didn't even know he could write like that, and, typically humble of him, he didn't name himself as the Instructor referred to in the article, simply signing his name at the bottom with no title.

"Oh what a treasure. Thank you so much for getting me started!"

If you can help further with this query, please email: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au.

CONDOLENCES — VALE

The Society extends condolences to Lorraine and Philip Tomlinson and family on the death of Lorraine's mother Florence O'Brien (nee Charles) who passed away in early August.

In April this year, 30 people gathered to celebrate Florence's 99th birthday. She attended New Farm State School and made a significant contribution to the chapter in *Reflections on New Farm* about Terrace St, since she lived in New Farm for almost 95 years.

We also extend belated condolences to Michael Zalewski and family on the passing of his wife Lorraine in June.

SEMINARS

RHSQ: Queensland's Earliest Surveyors: Who, What & Where

The President & Council of The Royal Historical Society of Queensland invite you to this conference to commemorate some of Queensland's most significant early surveyors.

Saturday 9 October @ 9am-1pm, \$25-35, at the Commissariat Store Museum,115 William St, Brisbane.

Speakers include: Bill Kitson, Brad Dalton, Darryl Low Choy, Peter Wade, Graham Jensen, Stephen Sheaffe, Janet Spillman, John Pearn, Greg Manning and Kaye Nardella.

Booking is essential. Ticket price includes the conference and morning tea. 9am registration for 9.30am start. Book online here.

GSQ: Finding your English or Welsh ancestors

If you have English or Welsh ancestors, then this virtual seminar is for you. The Genealogical Society of Queensland (GSQ) is finalising a program of speakers that will provide information and tips about searching the England and Wales records to find your family.

The seminar, titled 'Finding Family in England and Wales Records', is on **Saturday 23 October** at 12:30pm AEST. The seminar has an Early Bird discounted offer ending on 30 September 2021.

All bookings may be made through our website Events page: https://www.gsq.org.au/event/findingfamily-in-england-wales-records/



BIG MOVE

From Bowen Tce, New Farm to Dewar Tce, Corinda

THIS beautiful home known as "Clinton" once stood at 376 Bowen Tce, New Farm (site of present-day Binkin-Ba Flats). In 1920, its owner, W.L. Fowles, the Commissioner of the Qld Govt Savings Bank, advertised it for sale, one of its merits being that it was... "situated in absolutely the best part of New Farm, facing delightful Bowen Tce, which is without doubt the cleanest street in the city of Brisbane, having tarred roadway and asphalted footpaths, thereby making it an almost dustless situation..."

After the death of Mr Fowles in 1927, it was sold, a subsequent owner being the politician and later Chief Justice, Hugh Macrossan (1881-1940).

From at least the late 1930s, the house became Clinton Private Hospital under matron Miss A. Fechnay. Later, it was run by Miss Donoghue, but she put it on the market in 1942 after enlisting as a nurse in the A.I.F.

During WWII it was used as Bachelor Officers Quarters (BOQ) for US Navy Officers who were likely connected with the nearby Submarine Base.

In the 1990s, the house was relocated by a Western Suburbs' GP to its present hilltop position at 152 Dewar Tce, Corinda, as pictured. (Photo courtesy of Peter Dunn's website: www.ozatwar.com)



Stellar Gathering: (Clockwise): Austin Adams, our iPhone cameraman; Early arrivals; Maida Lilley, a former NFDHS president; Ross with three daughters and two grandchildren; and Margaret King, member from Day One and mine of local information.



TENERIFFE FESTIVAL

October meeting: new date

he 2021 Teneriffe Festival has been set for Saturday, 23 October. The Board is keen to hold a covid-safe event for all, so there are likely to be some changes in format from previous years.

What will not change is the commitment of the TF Board to recognise the wonderful history of the area, so the Historical Society has again been invited to participate. We have accepted that invitation and the committee will begin to plan our display.

HOWEVER, the date chosen for the festival falls on our regular public meeting day of the fourth Saturday of the month. **Please note that our Public Meeting will be held on 30 October at 2:30 pm at the Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre,** and hence your diary can be marked accordingly.

We will be looking for volunteers to assist with our display, taking the opportunity to talk with people about the history of the area and informing them about our Society. I hope that the change of date will mean that you already have 23 October blocked out in your diary, so you will be able to help at the festival. – *Desley*

WALKING TOUR

Walking Tour that passes the three churches of New Farm – and lots of interesting



spots in between – is planned for Saturday 9 October, commencing at 9am and finishing at 11am. Here's your chance to learn more about the locality's fascinating social history, from society member Gerard Benjamin.

The cost is \$22 (\$20 members). At our coming monthly meeting on 25 September, book your spot or email: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Photos: Gayle Martin, with additional pics from AA, GB, AG, BM & CD

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

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President: Desley Garnett • 0409 498 403 • drgarn@bigpond.net.au

Vice President: Malcolm Godfrey

Secretary: VACANT **Treasurer:** Denise Buckby

Committee: Austin Adams, Virginia Balmain, Janetta Douglas and Ben Pritchard **Newsletter Editor:** Gerard Benjamin

• ggerardb@bigpond.net.au

I am the happiest creature in the world. I am happier even than Jane; she only smiles, I laugh... — Jane Austen

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FARM

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We



Record service at the history helm

After 17 years in the top job at the New Farm & Districts Historical Society, Ross Garnett stepped down at the recent AGM, having been the society's longest-serving president in its 27 years' history.

Though Mr Garnett and wife Desley have lived in New Farm for most of their lives, it was only in 1999 that he first had contact with the NFDHS.

"I was asked to give a talk about the Garnett Family Store which had operated at 152 James St for around 84 years," Mr Garnett said.

"It was a small meeting held in the New Farm Library among the book shelves."

Later, the Ron Muir Room was built beside the library, thereby providing the society with an office and meeting space. Come the AGM in 2004, Mr Garnett found himself

volunteering to head the committee.

One of his initiatives in those early vears was to commission a book about the suburb's history. Does such a book enhance a locality's sense of identity? Perhaps... At any rate, the outcome was Reflections on New Farm.

A local history book would normally warrant a print run of 300, so there was dismay in some circles when Mr Garnett's shopkeeper's instinct had him ordering 2000 copies. It proved sagacious since, after nine months, the first of several reprints was needed.

The launch of the book corresponded with another "brave" measure by Mr Garnett, viz. moving the meetings from the Ron Muir Room (capacity 30) to the Uniting Church Centre at 52 Merthyr Rd. Would attendance justify the enlarged space?

The numbers at the monthly meetings steadily grew... then 100 was reached. Come June 2019, when author Matthew Condon spoke about how New Farm featured in the bad old days of police corruption leading to the Fitzgerald Enquiry, the bumper attendance nudged 150.

Mr Garnett's knack of choosing popular subjects, while also providing a sumptuous afternoon tea, has succeeded in making the fourth Saturday afternoon of each month

a well-anticipated social occasion. No wonder NFDHS is the envy of similar societies around the state.

Of course, Mr Garnett would say that it is the small army of willing volunteers who makes it all possible - yet as anyone in human resources knows, it takes deft leadership to inspire people to lend their skill and energy to the kind of team effort that successfully produces 10 meetings a year.

Other milestones under Mr Garnett's aegis have included two more books (Tides of Teneriffe and Homes with History), the installation of numerous historical plaques, as well as support for the annual Teneriffe Festival via the history exhibit and bus tours.

The arrival of the epidemic proved to be but a minor bump on the NFDHS road. Five meetings in 2020 had to be cancelled but the society continued communicating via the newsletter - and when the meetings restarted (with reduced numbers) they were videoed, thereby enabling a wide audience to enjoy them online.

Artist David Hinchliffe, a life member of NFDHS which he established in 1994, put it pithily about Ross's contribution: "Any successful organisation is a reflection of its leadership. The NFDHS has



New Farm & Districts Historical Society former president Ross Garnett.

not only a solid body of willing volunteers and supporters but it has also had at its head for 17 years a savvy and sensible leader who knows the community intimately and makes sure that a good idea is always followed through.

"In my 25 years as a councillor I met many selfless and untiring community leaders. Few if any have had the staying power of Ross, ably assisted by his wife Desley. New Farm owes much to both of them."

MONTHLY HISTORY COLUMN from MY VILLAGE NEWS SEPTEMBER 2021



$m{ESSENTIAL}$ $m{BOOKS}$ published by the New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc.

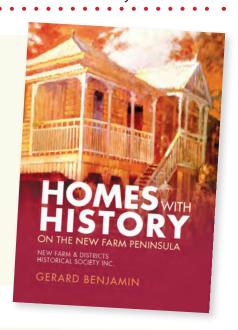
Homes with History — on the New Farm Peninsula

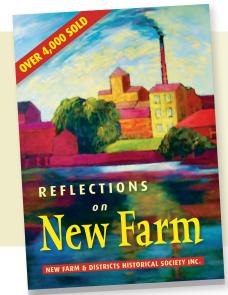
by Gerard Benjamin

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 4,000 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

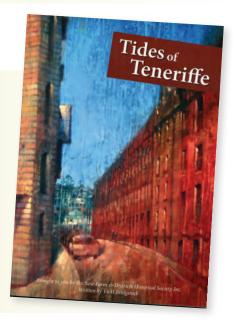
Tides of Teneriffe

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 0409 498 403 or email: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au • www.newfarmhistorical.org.au



NEW FARM & Districts **HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC**

Membership Form

Annual Membership – 1 September 2021 to 31st August 2022

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Type of Membership	New	Renewal		contact info unchanged updated info below	
Name:					
Residential Address:					
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 □ Welcoming at meetings □ Set up / clear up of room □ IT support at meetings □ Assist with afternoon tea □ Advise on new technology Membership Cost: \$10 			Ass Wr	lect Oral Histories sist with archives ite short historical items for website ner – please specify	
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