



NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER 2021

Vol. XXVII, No. 10

OCTOBER MEETING

The bells of St Stephen's

WE were privileged to welcome Sister Anne Hetherington (pictured), an historian and former principal of All Hallows' School, who delivered an eloquent history of the original St Stephen's Church, the present Cathedral and Queensland's first official school, St Stephen's.

Attendees (almost 100) were transported back to 1842 and the closure of the Moreton Penal Settlement.

Despite the majority of convicts being Catholics, no spiritual guidance was provided until 1843 when Archbishop Polding visited from Sydney.

The settlement's first priest, Fr James Hanly, arrived in late 1843. He travelled so widely that he was known as the 'parish priest of Queensland'.

In 1845, St Stephen's School opened with 56 pupils, but it was not until 1892 that the school building, facing 172 Charlotte St, was completed.

When the Sisters of Mercy arrived in 1861, they established All Hallows' Convent and taught at St Stephen's until the school closed in 1965. That building, now heritage-listed, is part of the Archdiocesan Offices.

In 1845, one and a half acres was granted to the Catholic Church in Elizabeth St across from the



original site of the female convict factory and later the jail (site of today's GPO). Church plans were supplied by the architect responsible for the interior design of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster and Big Ben. This was Augustus Pugin, an acquaintance of Liverpool-born Archbishop Polding, and the style of the building was 'Gothic Revival'.

Construction began on St Stephen's Day using sandstone quarried in Goodna at a cost of £1,700. The first Mass was celebrated on 12 May 1850.

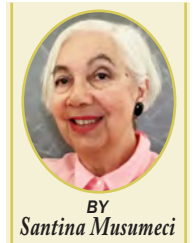
Following Separation in 1859, plans were soon afoot for a large cathedral.

Its foundation stone was laid in 1863, and in 1884, the cathedral facade was completed.

In 1887, the bell arrived and this was housed in a tower overlooking Charlotte St. It came from the same London foundry that cast the Liberty Bell.

There are many more threads to the St Stephen's story, including the role of Archbishop Duhig, the remarkable stained glass windows, the impressive sculptures, the grand organ, and the major restoration which was completed in 1999. Finally, it is worth noting that today's beautiful St Stephen's Chapel is one of the three oldest buildings in Brisbane. Luckily you can view the whole talk via [this link](#).

Many thanks, Sr Anne, for this illuminating insight into one of Brisbane's most venerable landmarks.



BY
Santina Musumeci

NOVEMBER MEETING

Lighting up Brisbane

IN February 2018 when digging up William St in preparation for the Queen's Wharf project, workmen made an amazing discovery, something to set the hearts of historically-minded electrical engineers racing.

"Hey, we've just found an Edison Tube!" could well have been the exultant exclamation.

What is an Edison Tube, and what was



it doing in William St? Did Thomas Edison conceivably visit Brisbane?

Come along and find out when local resident, Stuart Wallace, addresses the November meeting of the

New Farm & Districts Historical Society. The venue is the Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm, and the meeting (to be recorded) is to take place at 2.30pm on Saturday, 27 November. Afternoon tea will be available, and all are welcome. Entry: \$5 (members \$4).

Write kindness in marble and injuries in the dust...

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Desley Garnett

Christmas on the horizon...

WITH Christmas on the horizon, we have one more meeting to interest you. Our own society stalwart, Stuart Wallace, will tell us about a fascinating discovery beneath a street in the Brisbane CBD.

You will recognise Stuart as our invaluable resident AV controller at the meetings. Since Stuart is 'out the front' this month, we need someone 'down the back' doing his job. If you're keen to be that person, Stuart will be delighted to show you beforehand how to run through the slides. Is that person you?

If you were to take a walk in Teneriffe Park, you will see two newly-erected plaques: one at the high point (Little Chester St/Teneriffe Dr. end) and the other down below (near Beeston St). The plaque explains how the park contained an orchard, film set, WWII lookout, children's playground, and a scouts den/musical

theatre. Who would have imagined that all of this activity took place in this local, little patch of rainforest in Teneriffe! Thanks to the group of volunteers who care for the park for everyone's enjoyment.

Thank you, one and all, for your support of history in the New Farm Peninsula and nearby districts over the past 12 months. If you have not yet paid your membership for the 2021/2022 year, why not visit the website and download the membership form right now! The details for a bank transfer are all there. We value such support for "Gathering information from the past... Preserving it for the future".

We will have several months' break from activities but will still be happy to hear from you. The office will not be open on Thursday afternoons during December and January but will be back to normal from February.

Lastly, Ross and I wish you a very happy Christmas and New Year and we look forward to meeting up with you in 2022.

**TENERIFFE FESTIVAL****All the fun of the fayre...**

The Society's stand in the main thoroughfare of the 2021 Teneriffe Festival guaranteed a constant stream of visitors who enjoyed browsing through the historical images on display.

Newsletters were distributed, names were added to the database, discounted books were popular, and the author was busy signing copies. Many enquirers had recently made the suburbs-to-apartment transition, and were keen for more local engagement.

Despite prodigious preparation for the bus tours, a shortfall in festival publicity meant low attendees. Note for next year!

Meanwhile, many thanks to the inestimable work of many volunteers who made the NFDHS presence such a success.

To revisit the inaugural Teneriffe Festival for a moment, here is Society member Chris Derrick (pictured right) who perfectly embodied its theme of wool, with his squatter's hat and bespoke, self-styled merino outfit.

CAN YOU HELP?**The Graham house on Bowen Tce**

I am researching the family of William Graham (pictured) who lived at Loch Nell (sometimes Lochneil) on Bowen Tce, New Farm,

in the first couple of decades of the 20th century.

William was a reasonably wealthy grazier from the Darling Downs. He had two sons: William Edward Graham, who became a barrister and died in 1947, and Austin Douglas Graham, who became a solicitor and editor. William Edward had married Jane Wotherspoon Murray in 1911.

When younger, William E. and

Austin D. collaborated, under the *nom de plume* of 'Austin South', in writing fiction, poetry, political tracts, etc. Austin Douglas Graham also worked, for a while, as an assistant to Samuel Griffith, of Merthyr.

Does anyone know anything about this family and their house, Loch Nell (Lochneil)? I would appreciate any information. – Bill Metcalf (B. Metcalf@griffith.edu.au)

CAR QUERY

Mr J's Studebaker in Sherwood

An enquirer from New Farm (MK) has put in a request to our September speaker Dr Hilary Davies for any information regarding the Studebaker which was owned by MK's great-grandfather, Thomas George Johnston (1865-1932), of Thomas St, Sherwood.

"Anecdotal evidence suggests that TG Johnston won the car in a raffle to support the Australian World War I efforts," writes MK.

The authoritative *List of motor owners in Queensland for 1923* (able to be viewed online via the State Library of Qld library catalogue) shows that Mr Johnston was the 1,805th owner of a car in the state.

He was certainly the owner in 1918 since in September that year, he advertised in the newspaper for the return of a "lost petrol tank cap, Studebaker car".

Mr Johnston was a local master builder who for many years was a councillor of the old Sherwood Shire Council. He was also chairman of the Sherwood State School committee and an active member of the Sherwood Progress Association.

In 1918, he was on the building committee for two Anzac cottages constructed as part of a project on behalf of the widows and orphans of WWI soldiers. One of these homes was erected by voluntary labour over just four weekends.

Mr Johnston's son Norman was a carpenter/joiner who worked with his father at the time.



Motoring last century: Top: Behind the wheel of the Studebaker which flies the Australian flag, is TG Johnston's son Norman. Perhaps the homes in the background were the Anzac cottages which he helped his father to build in 1918. Above: Among those on this family outing in the Studebaker, is the enquirer's mother as a baby (born 2 August 1917) with her father Mr Norman Johnston at left. TG Johnston is behind the steering wheel. (Second photo courtesy Helen Dash's book *Brisbane Our Town: A Century of Photographs*)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Wartime wedding at St Stephen's...



Newlyweds: Emerging from St Stephen's Cathedral in February 1942 are newlyweds John McCann and his bride Jean (Walmsley), and their friends including bridesmaid Dorothy White (second from left).

ACTOR Mark McCann writes from Sydney: I am really enjoying the online NFDHS talks including the recent 'Bells of St Stephens'.

There is a strong connection between our family and this cathedral: I was baptised there in February 1952, and on 7 February 1942, Mum and Dad were married there.

The lead-up to the wedding was the stuff of a romance novel. Dad proposed to Mum in Sydney a week beforehand, and Mum resigned from the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) there after only two weeks' service.

Dad returned immediately to Brisbane (he'd lived in New Farm in the 1930s) and visited Wynberg to request Archbishop Duhig's permission to marry since Mum was Anglican. Fortunately, the Archbishop gave his consent, adding that the church needed to "do what it could for the RAAF".

Unfortunately, no relative from either side attended the ceremony due to the religious divides of the time – however plenty of friends turned up, and a reception was organised at the Indooroopilly home of the mother of Mum's bridesmaid, Dorothy White.

Anyone who ever visited a Mater Prize Home in Brisbane may recognise the name John McCann, since he was director (1954–82) of the Mater Art Union which raised millions for the Mater hospitals and medical research.

ALL POSITIVE

BEST OF ANY... I just wanted to drop you a line to say how much I enjoy your newsletters. How beautifully you put them together. When it comes to stories, layout and images, it would have to be the best of any I receive, including several from writers' organisations. – TR, Ipswich.

1,000 CHALKED UP... Videos of our monthly talks (which began in August 2020 following the pandemic lockdown) have chalked up more than 1,000 views, with "The Bells of St Stephens" (30 Oct 2021) proving the most popular. Sincere thanks to Austin Adams who captures the presentations via his iPhone mounted on a tripod, then edits as required.



Bus not tram: The Valley to Teneriffe Bus Service appears to have commenced around 1926, running from Teneriffe (possibly Heal St) to Duncan St, the Valley, and was operated by Mr. C. Berndt ("one of Brisbane's prominent 'bus men"). A letter to the editor from "Mother of seven, Teneriffe" pleaded for a tram service for Teneriffe, stating that "The Teneriffe bus is always crowded, runs through a thickly populated district, and is said not to pay." Meanwhile among the young women commuting from Teneriffe were



[Back Row] Edie (Dobbie) Taylor, Prissy Marchant; and [Front Row] Nelly Ives, Otilie (Lather) Bambkin, Dorrie Scott and Hilda Osborne. – Photo courtesy of Gay Carter [Prissy Marchant was the sister of Gay's grandmother (Mary Ellen) Nellie Marchant.]



ARMY MUSEUM

Why not organise a small group for a visit?

According to Society Member, Austin Adams, a visit to the Army Museum and Victoria Barracks precinct on Petrie Terrace, is eminently worthwhile.

"Although it's possible to arrange a group booking," said Austin, "it's really much easier for our members, perhaps in small groups, to book online for their own tour."

Visitors can choose from the shorter tour (1.5 hr) or longer one (3 hr), both of which culminate with refreshments including scones and cream.

Visit the Museum website or phone Beverly Smith, the tour organiser, on 0429 954 663.

Bookings for this year can be made until 8 December. After that, the Museum takes a break and will resume on 1 March 2022.

A thousand words: Shaun Campbell's vibrant design on this traffic signal box at Commercial Rd, Newstead, encapsulates the suburb's past perfectly—with its woolly sheep, the train, commuters, and at the top, just the hint of a gas storage frame. Who came up with the idea of lending art to traffic signal boxes around Brisbane? Why, our very own NFDHS Life Member, artist David Hinchliffe.

ART FEEDS THIS CHRISTMAS



Thumbs up, Trevor: Artist and society member Trevor Downes had ink at the ready following the October meeting so as to secure thumbprints from Ross Garnett and Gerard Benjamin respectively. These would supply the finishing touch to the 'Thumb Print Portraits' that he had prepared beforehand. These two portraits, after being framed, will join 998 others for Anonymous Art Feeds Brisbane (Aafb). This popular initiative involves many artists (David Hinchliffe and Stewart Free are joining in the fun) and aims to have 1,000 artworks ready for sale. The proceeds will help to provide food for those in dire need this Christmas.

V | news

archives



GERARD BENJAMIN

William Ruddle: a talented New Farm personality

Among notable New Farm residents of more than a century ago was Englishman William Ruddle (1841-1919). He had been well educated at the school of Salisbury Cathedral where his father was groom to a local architect.

The dispensary trade had been marked out for the young Ruddle so he was apprenticed to a Mr Lush of London, but the boy found it distasteful. Because there was much talk of Australia at the time, he decided to chance his luck—and his skill with horses—in the far-flung Antipodes and arrived in Sydney in 1858.

The young man, hardly in his twenties, was indentured to graziers and drove cattle from Sydney to the Roma district. Meanwhile he also relished horse racing. With other drovers along the way, he managed

to win considerable amounts, explained Judith Pritchett, a great-granddaughter.

“He owned racehorses and was often the jockey. He was also interested in pearling in North Queensland, and this yielded a shell collection now in the Queensland Museum,” she said.

Judith has folders of the family history which contain lots of invaluable details—such as William’s prescriptions for horse remedies. Perhaps he showed an early aptitude at Mr Lush’s dispensary. “Some prescriptions are described as ‘for use on animals and humans,’” says Judith.

In 1871 at Fortitude Valley, William married Caroline Laverack. Their home became Harnham, a large riverside residence on the site of current-day Freshwater Apartments in Gray St. Their next-door neighbour was later to be Thomas Welsby at Amity.

At Harnham Ruddle grew vegetables on a large scale, with the surplus being “wheelbarrowed around to the poor”, noted Judith.

William “Billy” Ruddle was best known as the long-time owner of the famous Royal George Hotel on the Ann and Brunswick Sts corner. Patrons would have smiled at another of his enterprises, this one conducted on the premises. viz. raising Muscovy



New Farm schoolchildren gather at Harnham in 1915 to greet a new Governor. The photo was possibly taken by Roland Ruddle from a dinghy on the river. (The Queenslander, 20 March 1915)

ducks, the eggs of which were hatched on the bar by employing the newly-installed gas lights.

In his later years, William Ruddle became a columnist for the Brisbane Courier, penning many compelling reminiscences under the heading “Fifty Years Ago and More.”

His youngest son, Roland, became a well-known Brisbane studio photographer, while another son, Ernest, succeeded his father at the Royal George. Ernest built a six-bedroomed home named Melvic on the riverside corner of Oxlade Dr. and Brunswick St, a spot now occupied by several apartment blocks.

“Every Sunday all the families crossed New Farm Park from Melvic (after Minnie and Ernest, and their daughters Lorna, Vivienne, Irene and

Cleo) over to Harnham to have lunch with William and Caroline,” recorded Roland’s daughter Beryl.

“When William became bedridden, the children had to go in and kiss ‘Puppa’. He kept lollies in his wardrobe for the grandchildren, but the lollies he handed out always reeked of mothballs...”

After William’s death in 1919, the family continued to be a presence in New Farm. “There were eight Ruddle sisters and cousins, all born within two years of each other, who attended Miss Stevenson’s New Farm Private School in Moray St,” says Judith, whose grandfather was Roland Ruddle.

“I am the keeper of the Ruddle family history now. Ours was kept alive by those ladies, all of whom lived to a ripe old age.”

MONTHLY HISTORY COLUMN from
MY VILLAGE NEWS NOVEMBER 2021

Right: Melvic, on the corner of Oxlade Drive and Brunswick Street, pictured in 1950. (BCC-B54-878)





EMPTY CHRISTMAS TREE

A trinity offering...

YOU are invited to make a donation of non-perishable food or cash at our November meeting to assist others in tough circumstances in our community. All donations will go to Trinity Pantry.

Trinity Pantry started out as a small help service for those who



simply didn't have enough to eat or who had met with some temporary crisis and no funds. Over 30 years later, it is now a food assistance service providing for over 1,000 people each year.

The pantry is entirely staffed by volunteers, and with only small amounts of state government funding, it depends predominantly on donations and contributions of food to help others.



Think of a caption... What about: 'Sailing along Breakfast Creek Road'?... (1893 flood)

Photos: Gerard Benjamin, Gayle Martin

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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NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

Membership Form

Annual Membership – 1 September 2021 to 31st August 2022

Type of Membership	New	Renewal	<input type="checkbox"/> contact info unchanged
			<input type="checkbox"/> updated info below
Name:			
Residential Address:			P/Code:
Postal Address:			P/Code:
Telephone:	Work/Mobile:	Home:	
Email:			
Photo permission	Photographs taken at public meetings may be published in newsletters and on social media		

I can volunteer in the following ways:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welcoming at meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Collect Oral Histories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Set up / clear up of room | <input type="checkbox"/> Assist with archives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> IT support at meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Write short historical items for website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assist with afternoon tea | <input type="checkbox"/> Other – please specify |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Advise on new technology | |

Membership Cost: \$10

Signed:..... Date:.....

Payment method:

- Bank Transfer: to New Farm and Districts Historical Society Inc.
BSB 034065 - Account Number 146217 – Reference: MEMB and your surname. Please post or email completed form
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Post to: PO Box 1141
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Buy Now for Christmas!
Discounted until the end of November

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

Homes with History — on the New Farm Peninsula

by Gerard Benjamin

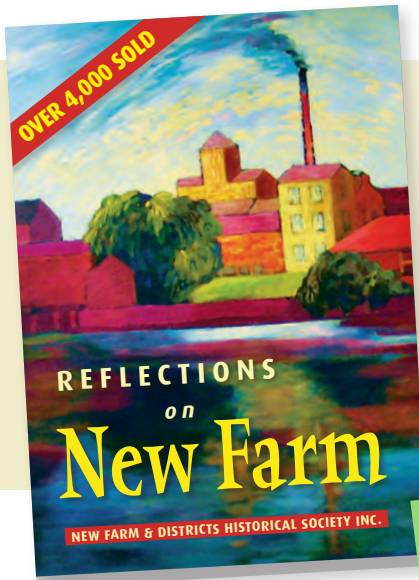
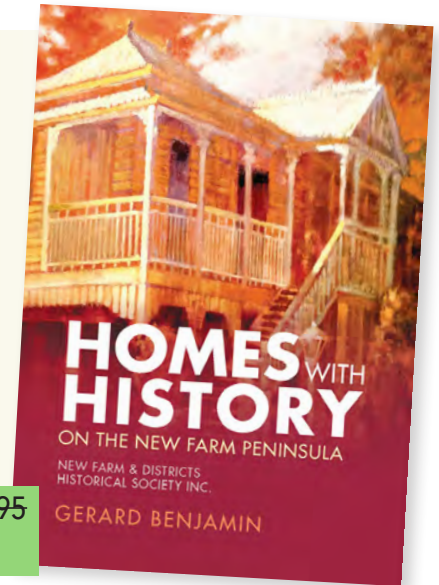
This enthralling snapshot of more than 20 local homes notes architectural details, but its main focus is on *people*—those who built the houses, the architects who designed them, and the successive residents and families who occupied and adapted them.

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.

Soft Cover \$35
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NOW \$30



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

\$25
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Tides of Teneriffe

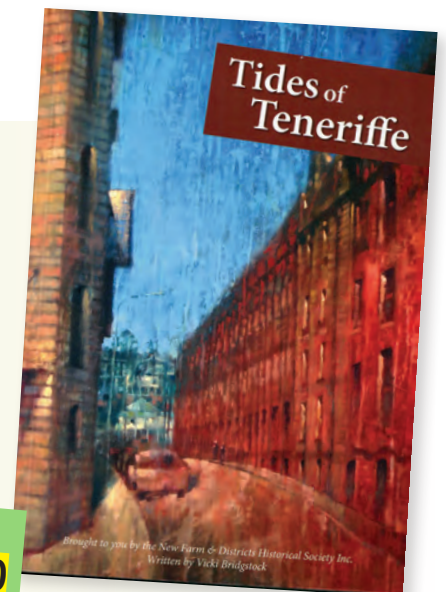
by Vicki Bridgstock

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

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