



NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au  

NEWSLETTER JUNE 2022 Vol. XXVIII, No. 5

MAY MEETING

Brown, stalwart of timber industry

THE guest speaker at our May meeting was Boyd Brown (pictured), a great-grandson of the late George Brown, founder of Brown and Broad timber merchants who had premises at Breakfast Creek Rd in Newstead.

More than 70 were present to hear Boyd discuss the broad interests of his forebear. As well as being heavily involved in the Queensland timber industry at large, George also had a long association with the Royal Queensland Golf Club, plus he devoted energy to the scouting movement as well as to various other business and political organisations.

George Brown was born in Ipswich in 1872, one of eight children. His father, who worked for the railways as a coach maker, died before his time at the age of 44, leaving the family to face tough circumstances. This meant that George seems to have left school at the age of 12 so as to gain a job to help support the family. Eventually, by 1893, he joined Hancock Brothers, a leading timber business in Ipswich.

This was the start of his life's journey through the timber industry. It culminated much later with the establishment of Brown and Broad who were timber,



hardware and joinery merchants.

One part of this business was 'Newstead Homes' whereby houses were prepackaged in kit form. All the tools were supplied right down to the paint brushes. The kit came with a manual on how to erect the house without the need of an architect or builder. Detailed catalogues permitted the customer to choose from among many styles.

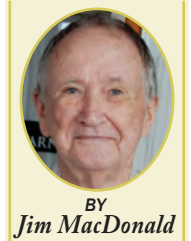
Around 1929-30, Newstead Homes won a contract with Mount Isa Mines to supply over 280 homes and other buildings. They also sold packages into Papua New Guinea and the Solomon islands.

Our members thoroughly enjoyed Boyd's talk and it would appear that he and his sister likewise appreciated the warm reception offered by the society since they both became members on the day. Many thanks, Boyd.

You can enjoy the talk online, since it is now available [here](#).

* * *

QUIZ: As a prelude to a 'right royal platinum' afternoon tea prepared by Natalie, treasurer Denise Buckby as quizmaster, tested the audience's grasp of royal facts right down to the number of corgis the Queen has owned (30)! The afternoon tea crew deserves a regal commendation for the attention to detail, right down to the toothpick Union Jacks and the corgi balloons.



BY Jim MacDonald

JUNE MEETING

Dovercourt, link with NF

HISTORIC *Dovercourt*, on the prime hilltop location at 124 Sherwood Rd, Toowong, was built at the same time (1865) and by the same architect as Teneriffe House.

Author of a book about the house, Harold Peacock, will speak at the June meeting of the New Farm and Districts Historical Society.

"The house has witnessed a political conspiracy, a financial swindle, a disappearance, a sex scandal, and a suspicious death," said Harold. *Dovercourt*



has another local connection, being linked to New Farm's *Merthyr*, once the home of Sir Samuel Griffith.

Come and enjoy Harold's address at the

meeting to be held at the Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm, on Saturday, 25 June at 2.30pm. Afternoon tea is always a highlight. \$10 (members \$5). All are welcome.

When people talk, listen completely... Hemingway

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Desley Garnett

Two events on the same day, wonderful support team...

AFTER several days of wet weather, the sun chased the rain away for the day of the May meeting of the Society and the Teneriffe Festival. The Society team at the festival talked to many people who were attracted by the display of historical photos of Teneriffe, Newstead and New Farm.

Many young people residing in the re-purposed Woolstores were pleased to learn more of the earlier activity in the area. Many thanks to the volunteers at the Festival.

The Society places great importance on being able to inspire others to value local history, and occasions such as the Teneriffe Festival and the Election Day display are opportunities not to be missed.

Whilst having the regular monthly meeting on the same day stretched resources, it also proves what a great support team we have in the society. There were some 20 volunteers involved in the events of the day—WOW!

THANKS TO COLES NEW FARM for sponsoring our afternoon teas at the meeting. This is a great example of local business supporting local community organisations. Please remember to say thanks to Store Manager Fiona if you see her when you are shopping at Coles New Farm. Many thanks also to



Posters rescued: Roslyn Rogers (left) with Society President Desley Garnett. When an old house in Hamilton was demolished, Ros' carpenter grandson 'rescued' these posters. Ros dropped into the Ron Muir Room near the NF Library to present them to Desley. Thanks Ros...

Natalie, Emma and new volunteer John for the special "Coronation" afternoon tea and quiz, complete with inflatable corgis!

ANOTHER recent promotion for the society was on 4MBS Classical FM last Saturday morning when Gerard Benjamin was the guest of Gary Thorpe on the program *My Musical Journey*. Gerard spoke about the society, its meetings and its publications, interspersed with a very enjoyable selection of classical music. The event came about because Gary had noticed an article by Gerard about Doggett's Cottage, and Gary has Doggett forebears. The program can be heard (via Dropbox) [here](#).

ELECTION RESULT



A last-minute decision to host an NFDHS presence at the Merthyr Rd election station on 21 May resulted in making contact with a host of people who had just voted.

Many were interested in the display of historical photos, while others wished to become members, sign on for the walking tours, purchase books, put their names down to receive the newsletter, or enquire about local historic homes.

On hand were Santina and Bruna (pictured) who complemented the efforts of the Uniting Church volunteers who distributed 'democracy pikelets and fruit cake'.

TENERIFFE FESTIVAL

All the fun of the fayre...



Stuart Wallace (pictured top right) led the Vintage Bus Tour team which attracted many for an history tour of Teneriffe. The display of photos from yesteryear always proves a magnetic draw to passing crowds, but the winning attraction has to be the Tram Ride video. Many who stopped to talk were new to the area and appreciated the possibility of engagement with a community body.

FROM FAR AWAY**Three cheers for teachers...**

MANY would know that John Clements Wickham of Newstead House (1846, Brisbane's oldest existing home) was second in command of the *Beagle* (under Captain Fitzroy during 1831-36) on the expedition for which Charles Darwin was the naturalist—but few may know that Wickham then commanded the *Beagle* (during 1837-41) while charting the north-western coasts of Australia. This explains location names such as Fitzroy Crossing and the town of Wickham.

While we do not know how much contact Captain Wickham had with the indigenous people, a tiny insight into the area today is offered by Alexandra Sakalidis who has been a teacher for three years in a remote Aboriginal community near Broome (between Wickham and Fitzroy Crossing). Here is her account:



SITTING in front of me at my teaching table, three prep students had their decodable books ready to read along with me. One was a local Aboriginal student, Lenny (not his real name). This was the moment when all the alphabet sounds I had been teaching my class finally came together for Lenny. He first read the title, then turned each page in the right direction and read each word correctly.

There are students who leave high school here and for various reasons are still unable to read. Five languages are spoken in this Aboriginal community. The children come knowing their own language and Aboriginal English. I taught them standard Australian English. Moments like this with Lenny, were what made me feel as if I made a difference towards 'closing the gap', and setting children up with a foundation of the literacy skills they will use for the rest of their lives.

On my last day there, I drove around the few streets that make up the community to say goodbye to the families who had students I taught. Lenny was out fishing when I got to his home. A few hours later, his mother drove him over to my house to say goodbye. I felt deeply touched that his mother thought it worth the effort to bring Lenny, to catch me before I left.

**HISTORICAL WALKS**

The Society is pleased to be offering HISTORICAL WALKS in the local area during July and August. You are invited to book and pay for the walks online via Eventbrite. Should you prefer not to use this method, please either email the Society on info@newfarmhistorical.org.au, or enquire at the next meeting, or phone for further information.

JULY**NEW FARM – OXLADE DRIVE & BEYOND:**

9am, Saturday 9 July 2022

GERARD BENJAMIN will be your guide as you half-circle the New Farm peninsular (via Oxlade Dr, Maxwell & Moreton Sts, and Merthyr Rd) in order to view locations of note for their architecture and social history. Tickets: \$30 (members \$20). Book via NFDHS or online at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

JULY**TENERIFFE WOOLSTORES: 9am, Saturday 30 July 2022**

BEN PRITCHARD will lead a leisurely walk around Teneriffe to discover the story and the secrets of the woolstores that have dominated the suburb for over 100 years – and it's not just about wool. There are also tales of disease, geology, industry and warfare. Tickets: \$30 (members \$20). Book via NFDHS or online at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

AUGUST**DISCOVER NEW FARM'S ART DECO GEMS:**

8am, Saturday 20 August 2022

SANTINA MUSUMECI has a passion for the Art Deco style, and she will conduct you past a selection of the suburb's 'in vogue' homes and flat complexes, many designed by leading architects of the day. Tickets: \$30 (members \$20). Book via NFDHS or online at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com).

CATHEDRAL SCHOOL**Search for pupils ahead of reunion**

The search for the last pupils who attended St Stephen's Cathedral School, Brisbane's oldest school, has begun ahead of the Reunion to be held at the Cathedral on Sunday, 24 July 2022, followed by a reception.

The program for the day includes hearing from one of the School's last teachers, Sr Ann Hetherington RMS OAM.

St Stephen's School, adjacent to the Cathedral in Elizabeth St, opened with 56 co-ed pupils in 1845. In 1892 a significant three-storey stone building, facing Charlotte St, proclaimed 'St Stephens Girls School' over its front entrance.

As more schools opened in Brisbane's inner city suburbs, the Girls School continued to provide for boys until Grade 3, after which those students transferred either to St James or to Gregory Terrace, Spring Hill. The Cathedral School closed in 1965.

For enquiries and bookings for the reunion, please contact Santina Musumeci on 0419 412 502.



POSITION VACANT**Wanted: A new Newsletter Editor**

I WONDER if you ever give much thought about how this attractive newsletter comes to you each month. I have heard many comments about what a compelling read our newsletter is and we know that many other societies appreciate receiving it each month.

Gerard Benjamin has been the editor of the newsletter for around 110 issues and we cannot adequately express our gratitude to him in words. Now is the time to pass that role onto new hands, just as has happened in the past. Indeed, previous editors have included Bruna Day, Christopher Derrick, and even myself! We have enormous talent amongst our members and friends, and we are sure that there is someone who will be interested in slipping into this role.

What do you need to be the editor of our newsletter?—an interest in history, a flair for writing/editing, as well as some computer skills to put it all together.

Does the result have to be the same as it is now? No! As we know with all publications, new editors bring changes and new ways of conveying information.

In fact, all members and friends are encouraged to contribute stories to the newsletter, but we do need one person (or a team of people sharing the role), so as to do the final editing.

August will be Gerard's last newsletter, so please contact me ASAP if you can assist or if you can refer us to someone who could be interested.

— Desley

HISTORICAL QUERIES**Wellington House, Bowen Tce**

SANDRA HIDDINS from Townsville forwarded this remarkable photograph of her great-grandparents Alexander Joseph Terry 1849-1931 (pictured right), and his wife Rose, taken before 1916. On the back is written "Wellington House, New Farm".

Sandra's request was for the address of the house, if it still exists. The editor was able to direct her to Chapter 19 of *Reflections on New Farm* which offers details about the grand residence (once at 368 Bowen Tce), courtesy of New Farm long-timer, Ron Grant, who grew up there.

Sandra responded: "It's a marvellous 'find' and I'll distribute the information on to my many Terry cousins who are all as interested in family history as I am."

Fairview Lodge, 27 Jordan Tce

JOHN is searching for any old photos or images, sketches, etc., of Fairview Reception Lounge, 27 Jordan Tce, Bowen Hills, prior to its being subdivided into four apartments around 15 to 20 years ago.

Unfortunately, the Society was not able to help John. If you can assist with photos or information, please [email the Society](#).

MEMOIRS

Henry Desmond Boyle (1897-1991), a grazier of Western Queensland and later Warwick, had his memoirs typed up but they were never published. Among the interesting stories is this one about goings-on down at the wool shed.

Fleecing the good wool...

MY old boss, Frank Humphreys, was a great friend and asked me to stay in town a week or more longer before returning out west.

He said that they were very busy and he had a job for me. He wanted me to go over to the packing plant and do some classing. The packing plant was an enormous shed where two or three wool buyers sent all these sheepskins over to be classed.

When you buy cheap skins, they're all done up in lots. There might be 200 skins in one lot and they haven't time to go through them thoroughly. They just pick up one or two and they open them up and you can feel the fibre and know whether it is three-quarter, or two-thirds, or a full-wool, and we never bought less than half-wool. Every bale of wool that Segard Masurel (wool brokers) handled had to be re-classed and shipped home and anything less than a good half-wool would be offered for sale.

I began working for Frank again. I found that it was my job to find the dishonesty—because hidden away in certain lots there would be a whole lot of much better skins. This was money for the hip pocket. The storekeeper at Dalgety's or any one of them had a storeman and they would collect three or four times what they were paid, for doing that. The buyers would know which lots. I was never told of course. I just found out. The storemen at various firms were very well paid for it.





Photos: Gerard Benjamin, Santina Musumeci, Jack Wheeler

Design and Layout: G. Benjamin



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

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What sculpture is to a block of marble, education is to a human soul... —Addison

archives



GERARD BENJAMIN

Connections, connections — from New Farm to Cairns and back

When it comes to degrees of separation, they say that worldwide there are six, in Brisbane only two, and in New Farm increments of one. Perhaps the following connections qualify as a case study?

In Brisbane in the 1880s, Paul Cole Atkinson was a ‘chief musician’ of the city, being a conductor and sometime organist at The Cathedral of St Stephen. A son was christened George Frederick Handel Atkinson, and two of his daughters became leading sopranos.

Equally prominent was Richard Thomas Jefferies, considered Queensland’s “father of music”. Three daughters studied in London under a famous violin teacher, while his eldest Arena (Enie) married Valley store owner George Muller and they lived at 595 Lower Bowen Tce (the gracious home is still there).

Paul Atkinson owned property on Merthyr Rd (cnr Bowen Tce) and in 1890, he sold it to Mrs Mary Ann Willcocks (nee Craig), wife of railway contractor G.C. Willcocks. That couple had just bought the grand residence at 790 Brunswick St, renaming it Wynberg.

On the Merthyr Rd property, Mr Willcocks built three handsome identical villas (today Nos. 51-55). If this had taken place before the 1893 floods, that may have been why in 1895, he had the four larger villas built on higher ground in Moreton St (today Nos. 28-44).

The year 1893 was when Paul

Atkinson again became a widower. Seven years earlier he had married Mary Ann Craig, herself a widow with three young children, and they had two daughters. Mary Ann had lost her husband in tragic circumstances almost a decade earlier.

It was in Brisbane in the 1860s that Mary Ann Cochrane and Robert Craig, both Scots, had married. The couple moved to the far north where he became one of the earliest merchants. Craig’s Store in Smithfield was soon a household name amongst hundreds travelling to the Hodgkinson Goldfields west of Cairns.

At Christmas 1877, it was lucky that Mrs Craig (she was pregnant) and the children had travelled to be with family in Brisbane, and so were far away from what happened on Boxing Day.

That was when Robert Craig asked to have a chat with Old Bill Smith from the pub across the road (Smithfield bore his name) about

settling some accounts. It was possibly a mixture of ill health, depression and alcohol that led Smith to produce a revolver and shoot the young storekeeper several times. Aghast at what he had done, Smith turned the weapon on himself. Though Dr Edward Myers from Cairns (18km away) was sent for, he could do nothing for either man. Details of the “appalling murder and suicide at Smithfield” appeared in newspapers across the country.

This is where our story might end, except for a further detail. The far north of those gold rush days was something of the wild west, including in matters of medical registration. Dr Myers may not have survived the scrutiny of a medical board, though this did not stop him from being influential in establishing the first hospital in Cairns. The community appreciated his doctoring skill, as well as his talent for music, languages, and with words, but few might have suspected that years before he had been twice a convict owing to a flair for forgery.

Edward Myers was one of the more colourful characters in the recent family history book *William and Leonora Monk*, written by your columnist, since the good doctor was married to the sister of the author’s great-grandfather.

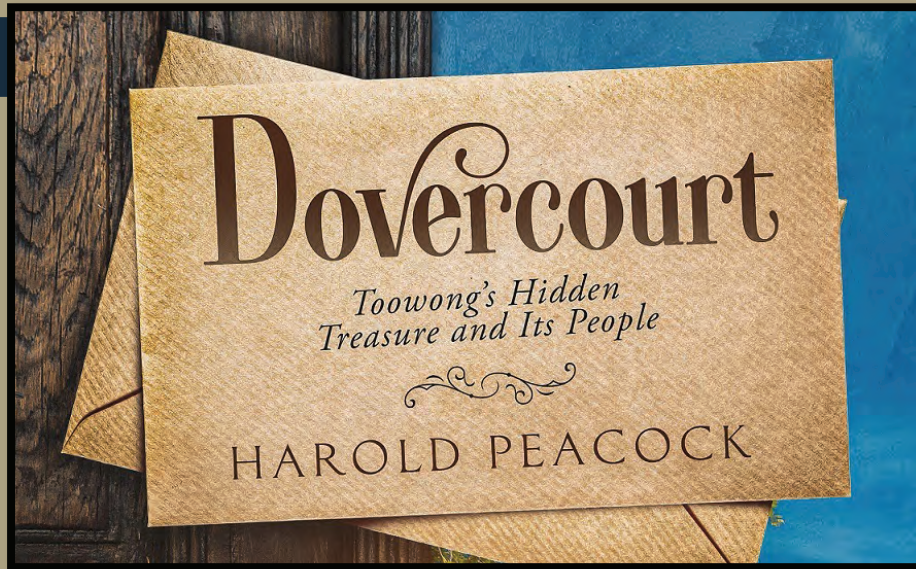
Now, how many degrees of separation is that?



In 1890 property on the corner of Merthyr Rd and Lower Bowen Tce was sold by Paul Cole Atkinson to Mrs Mary Ann Willcocks (of Wynberg) so that three villas could be built.

MONTHLY HISTORY
COLUMN from
MY VILLAGE NEWS
JUNE 2022

New Farm and Districts Historical Society presents:



What's the New Farm connection?



Speaker:
Harold Peacock



Saturday 25th June 2:30 pm

Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au

Enquiries: 0409 498 403

Thanks to Grace Grace MP for printing this poster

This is our new society flyer for distribution. You are welcome to pick up a handful at the meeting in case you would like to distribute some to your friends, to your neighbours, or to your street...

NEW FARM and DISTRICTS **HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Gathering information from the past ... Preserving it for the future.



"KINELLAN" by Gladys Blundell



"MERTHYR" by Gladys Blundell

CONTACT:

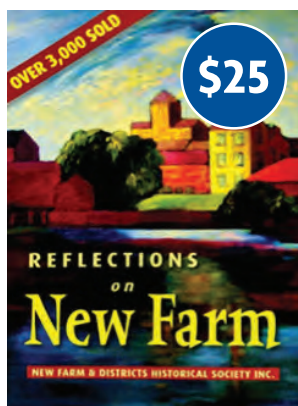
info@newfarmhistorical.org.au
PO Box 1141, New Farm Q 4005
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PUBLIC MEETINGS:

Uniting Church Centre
52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm
2:30 pm, 4th Saturday each month

OFFICE:

Ron Muir Room next to New Farm Library, 135 Sydney St, New Farm
Office open Thursday 2-4 pm



"NEW FARM PARK" by David Hinchliffe



NEW FARM and DISTRICTS **HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

We are a community-based organisation preserving the rich history of New Farm, Teneriffe, Newstead and nearby suburbs. We hold a collection of material (images, articles and oral histories) relating to our local suburbs.

Guest presenters speak on a variety of topics at the monthly public meetings. New members and volunteers are welcome at our monthly meetings.

The **FREE** monthly Newsletter is a wealth of information about our area. Scan the QR Code to subscribe.

