



38 Moreton St



NEW FARM & DISTRICTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

November 2022

Vol XXVII No 10

OCTOBER MEETING

Betty Lee, Commander Eric Feldt, His Life and His Coastwatchers

In the early stages of the Pacific War, the Japanese were desperate to break the supply line between the United States and Australia. The battles of Guadalcanal, Coral Sea, Kokoda Trail, Milne Bay, Wau and the Bismack Sea were all about the breaking or maintaining of that supply line.

Eric Feldt was born in Ingham in 1899 to pioneering Swedish parents and in 1912 won a scholarship to Brisbane Grammar School. In 1913, Eric became the State's first recipient of a Naval Scholarship and began his "sea life" in the temporary headquarters of the Royal Australian Naval College in Geelong. At the end of WW1, the Australian Naval Board established a Coast Watching Organisation around the coast of Australia and in the adjacent island territories so that in the event of war, suspicious sightings could be reported.

In 1939, Australia's Naval Intelligence had the foresight to set up a network of unpaid civilian volunteers called Coastwatchers, who were located on various islands north of Australia to report on suspicious shipping movements near their coast. Eric, as Staff Officer Intelligence at Port Moresby, was their commander.

By November 1941, the Coastwatchers existed like a fence across the islands and could signal sightings of intruders to local forces or a distant higher command. Using tele radio, they saved countless lives and helped change the course of history. Support and loyalty of the indigenous population was an essential part of their success.

In these dark days when the Japanese had the upper hand, the Coastwatchers were vital in helping to swing the power the Allies' way. In 1942 the civilian Coastwatchers became members of the Royal Australian Navy Reserve.

Eric gave his organisation the code name "Ferdinand" from the title of a book by Munro Leaf.

Ferdinand was a bull who did not fight but sat and smelt the flowers. It was a reminder to the men that they were not to fight, physically, but to gather information as inconspicuously as possible.

In 1944, John F. Kennedy and his crew were given up for dead when their PT boat did not return from a nocturnal sortie in the Solomons. They were rescued by the actions of Coastwatcher, Reg Evans who, 17 years later, was warmly welcomed by the President in the White House.

In 1954, US Fleet Admiral Halsey, at a reception for the Australian-American Association, said "I could get on my knees every night and thank God for Commander Eric Feldt". Eric lived in Roseview Apartments, New Farm, with his wife until he died in 1968.

He and his Coastwatchers were 'True Heroes'. Lest We Forget.



October Spring Meeting





Speaker:
Bill Metcalf

Be intrigued by utopian and dystopian stories and images of Brisbane, including New Farm!

Saturday 26th November 2:30 pm
 Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm
www.newfarmhistorical.org.au
 Enquiries: 0409 498 403

Brisbane: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Nightmares tells the stories of little-known, and rather peculiar aspects of Brisbane's colourful history.

Eleven Brisbane authors from the 19th and 20th centuries wrote about how wonderful, 'utopian', Brisbane could become – or how dreadful, 'dystopian', it could also become.

Some writers imagined Brisbane where inequality has been eliminated, other writers depicted Brisbane as having been annihilated.

What led to these utopian and dystopian visions? Who were the visionaries? What do they tell us about this little-known part of Brisbane's quirky history?

These are images of a wonderful or dreadful Brisbane that never eventuated – but could have.


WHAT IS IT?



Q: This heavy kitchen tool was made from cast iron in Philadelphia. The bottom side gives the greatest clue as to its use but its place of origin helps too. This one belongs in a collection in South Australia.

A: An ice shaver. Long before household refrigeration when block ice was delivered, dignitaries enjoyed ice cold drinks in the gardens of Old Government House in Adelaide.

MANY THANKS TO
Grace Grace MP
 Member for McConnel
 (07) 3145 9100
 For printing the news-
 letter




Coles New Farm for the generous supply of afternoon tea at monthly meetings.

President's Message November 2022

We are now counting down to what has been an unforgettable big historic year, starting with floods in Brisbane and ending with the possibility of more flooding! Not forgetting a new Commonwealth Government, the death of Queen Elizabeth, and the accession of King Charles, and the continuing conflict in Ukraine (just to name a few).

The speaker at our November meeting will tell us about some little known and rather peculiar aspects of Brisbane's colourful history. We will hear about visionaries who had diverse images of a wonderful or dreadful Brisbane that never eventuated. Intrigued? You need to come along to the meeting on 26th November.

I am sure you enjoyed the Halloween-themed afternoon tea at the October meeting. Look forward to a Christmas theme in November. Thanks to Natalie, Emma, Andrew and Marc for delicious afternoon teas.

We will again have an “**Empty Christmas Tree**” at our November meeting. We hope you will be able to contribute to filling it with non-perishable food items that can be used by a local community organisation to support those whose Christmas may not be filled with lots of goodies or even the staples of life. We thank you in anticipation for your generosity. Monetary gifts are also acceptable for supporting others in our community.

Desley Garnett

President



New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc. The office is located at the front of the Ron Muir Meeting Room beside New Farm Library. 135 Sydney St
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president@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Vice President Malcolm Godfrey

Minutes Secretary Virginia Balmain

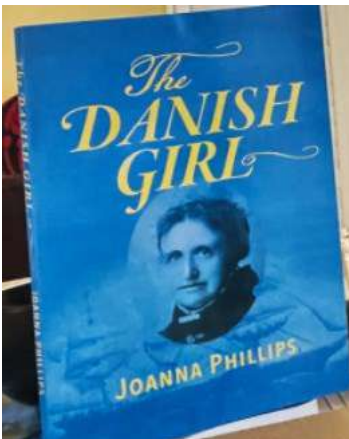
Committee Ben Pritchard, Bruna

Burello-Day, Robert Allen

Treasurer Denise Buckby

Newsletter Editor Emma Golder

goodasgolder@gmail.com



TWENTY-ONE year old Julia from Denmark arrives in Townsville in 1874 with little English, after a gruelling 17-week voyage. She quickly finds work, then moves to bustling Cooktown which is in the grip of gold fever. She eventually travels to remote Maytown on the Palmer Goldfield where she meets and marries Charley Denford. Together the couple run hotels and raise a family. The story moves to Cairns, then Rockhampton, then Queen St in Brisbane, and then Sydney, before ending in West End in Brisbane.

Julia is the great-grandmother of author **Joanna Phillips**, who was intrigued enough with her forebear's intrepid adventuring to track down the details of her life — even if it meant assiduous research, as well as travelling to Denmark and tramping through the bush west of Cooktown. The result is the **Danish Girl**, a well-researched, well-illustrated volume which is to be launched at **Brisbane's Danish Club** on **Saturday**

5 November 2022. Copies will be available at the Danish Club, and also directly from the author. Please email: ezryrider@bigpond.com. Cost: \$25 + P&P.

Living In History

This series has met with owners who have sought out historical buildings, fallen in love with their quirks, and made them their own. The renovations have been thoughtful and sympathetic. Helping us to appreciate the diligence of those people, this month we look at the fate of Monaise, the century old apartment building, one of the oldest in Brisbane, that was introduced in the May 2022 newsletter. Helen Bennett has extensively researched the history of Monaise, an excerpt of which follows from her work 'Interpreting the modern: Flatland in Brisbane 1920-1941_living in multiple-occupancy dwellings in interwar Brisbane',

Monaise Flats were built c.1923 during the first wave of purpose-built residential flat construction in Brisbane. The early 1920s was a period of experimentation in Brisbane with the idea of designing and living in purpose-built self-contained flats – multiple-occupancy dwellings in which each flat was provided with its own kitchen, bathroom and water closet.

This was distinct from the traditional multiple-dwelling building: the boarding house, lodging house or tenement building in which bathrooms and water or earth closets, and often kitchen and dining rooms, were shared by the occupants.

An early-twentieth-century population boom in Brisbane had led to many larger, older homes being converted into self-contained flats and non- self-contained tenements, but to purpose-build multiple-occupancy dwellings was a new concept in Brisbane, more closely associated with higher-density cities in southern Australian states and overseas.

The 'modern flat' of the 1920s offered a new, independent lifestyle free of many of the financial, work and time burdens often associated with maintaining a suburban house and grounds. This was particularly attractive to those who enjoyed spending their leisure time in social activity rather than in property maintenance. From the 1910s, many larger, nineteenth-century estates situated within close proximity of the Brisbane CBD such as at New Farm – were subdivided for closer settlement.

These subdivisions provided the ideal opportunity to build not just new middle-class residences, but good quality, purpose-designed flats. They were located close to places of work, shopping and entertainment, and within easy walking distance of public transport, especially the trams.

From the 1920s, New Farm in particular developed as one of Brisbane's premier flat districts. It was close to the centre of business, retailing and recreational activities in Brisbane and was served by two tram lines and a ferry service.

Monaise was built for Mrs Josephine Philomena Power, a widow who had conducted the adjacent 1870s residence, Hawstead, as a boarding or guest house since February 1911. Mrs Power had purchased Hawstead House on over three quarters of an acre of land in 1912 and in 1914 acquired an adjacent block on which Monaise was later built.

In October 1922 Mrs Power gained Brisbane City Council approval to construct a timber building on Bowen Terrace. The architect cited was Richard Gailey (jnr). Although the nature of this building was not recorded, the following month Mrs Power took out a mortgage affecting Hawstead House and grounds, including the site of Monaise Flats, which may have assisted her to build the flats.

The New Farm and Districts Historical Society is committed to the preservation of heritage buildings in the area. Should you need guidance to address council about a heritage site or for research assistance please make contact at president@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Monaise Flats were extant by mid-October 1923, when an early occupant advertised for a general servant for her flat at Monaise. From 1923 to 1933 Monaise appears to have comprised just two self-contained flats, one on each level. Street directories, although imprecise, suggest that prior to 1934, no more than two families occupied Monaise Flats at any one time. Brisbane's early purpose-built flats varied considerably in style, materials and number of flats. However, the concept of just two large flats, one on each level, as at Monaise, was comparatively unusual.

These were middle-class flats of a comfortable scale, which appeared externally to be a single residence. There was a single front entrance with the upper flat accessed internally. At the rear there were stairs from each flat. Mrs Power occupied one of the Monaise flats intermittently. In March 1928, when she advertised her flat for rent, it comprised three bedrooms (or two bedrooms and sleep-out verandah), lounge, dining/sitting room and maid's room and would have had its own kitchen, bathroom and water closet.

Monaise Flats attracted long-term middle-class occupants, including Mr and Mrs Alan Jeffray (1924-c.1933) and Mr and Mrs George Sampson (1926-1928). Alan Jeffray was a grazier, general manager of the Queensland branch of the Australian Estates Pastoral Co. Ltd for over 30 years, and later Chairman of the Queensland State Wool Committee from 1939 until his death in 1941. He and his wife were prominent in Brisbane social circles. George Sampson was the highly respected Brisbane City Organist and conductor of the Brisbane Musical Union Orchestra from 1898.

During the second half of the 1920s, more substantial new brick flat buildings – such as adjacent Hampton Court at 291 Bowen Tce, completed in 1927 – with more modern conveniences, began to compete with early flat buildings such as Monaise.

From January 1934, Monaise was conducted as an 'exclusive' guest house. Mrs Power still owned the property, but she no longer occupied a flat there and the business was run by Mrs Emily Barton and her husband. The Bartons appear to have occupied most of the ground floor but the upper floor was let as 9 bedrooms with tenants sharing the bathroom and water closet.

In September 1935 Mrs Power took out a mortgage from the National Bank of Australasia affecting the land on which Monaise was situated. This may have funded alterations to the building to function more efficiently as a modern boarding house. A later photograph dated January 1993, suggests that a stuccoed or rendered front façade enclosed front verandahs and horizontal window hoods may date from the 1930s. The brick-infill to the entrance and sub-floor appear to have been associated with a later conversion to tenements, probably in the early 1950s.

During the early 1940s (Second World War) the lease of Monaise was transferred several times and the place seems to have lost much of its former middle-class appeal.

In March 1947 Mrs Power and her daughter Josie Power, who had been living in their home in Ascot, returned to Monaise which was still registered as a boarding house. Following Mrs Power's death in November 1947, the property passed to her three children. Her daughter Mrs Mary O'keeffe and Mary's husband John took on the management and in the 1950s converted Monaise into tenements. Each tenement was provided with its own kitchen so Mrs O'Keeffe no longer had to provide 'board', but tenants still shared the bathrooms and water closets. The work to convert to tenements required a number of new partitions, additional windows, and the shifting of door positions. It is understood that Monaise passed out of the Power family in the 1970s.

By 1972 Monaise comprised 5 tenements: 4 on the upper floor, each with its own kitchen, but sharing one bathroom and one toilet; and one larger tenement on the ground floor – this was occupied by the owner and in effect was a self-contained flat. In the subfloor there was a shared laundry and three storerooms. By 1992 the Monaise tenements had been converted into 6 flats: 4 small flats or ‘bed sits’ on the ground floor and two larger flats on the upper floor. The work apparently had been undertaken without Council building or Health Department approvals. In the mid-1990s the building was transformed yet again, this time into 5 small strata-titled home units: three on the ground floor and two on the first floor.

Monaise has stood for close to a century. Throughout this period it has remained in consistent use as a multiple-occupancy dwelling in one form or another: from two modern, spacious, middle-class flats of the early 1920s; to an exclusive guest house in the 1930s; to a less impressive boarding house in the 1940s; to small tenements in the 1950s; to small flats and home units in the 1990s.

Letter written recently to NFDHS with accompanying photos of destruction of Monaise...

Thank you for your email and the information about BCC allowing the destruction of yet another New Farm building of significance. I have never seen a heritage building being taken apart with a chainsaw. The demolition company does not seem to be making any attempt to preserve the wood, doors, etc. I am an artist and educator and am passionate about Community Preservation. I have good research skills and did get a group of people to put in objections to BCC about the redevelopment of 42 Maxwell Street some years ago. Unfortunately, the development went ahead and I recently brought my complaints to BCC that the building now standing at 42 Maxwell Street is essentially a ‘new build’. All of the historical features have been reproduced including all windows and new shoddy brickwork. I am happy to volunteer to gather evidence/images for any future New Farm buildings that are at risk of demolition. I am also happy to start petitions and gather community support. BMF



MORGAN—HASLOFF WEDDING

Ceremony In Brisbane.

White weddings are becoming increasingly popular, and on Saturday evening, in the Albert street Methodist Church, Brisbane, white was the choice of the bride for herself and her attendants. The bride was Mrs. Ivy Margaret Hasloff (daughter of the late A. Levette, of Sydney) and the bridegroom Mr. Arthur C. Morgan (eldest son of the Mr. A. A. Morgan, of Monto). The Rev. H. M. Wheller officiated.

The bride, who was given away by Mr. W. H. Davies, wore white wind-swept velvet, inlet with wool lace, and fashioned with a train. Her halo hat was in silver.

Mrs. W. H. Davies, as matron of honour, wore a trained frock of white matelasse, and the Misses Hazel Gibson and Beryl Raine, as bridesmaids, wore white marlette in trained mode. All three wore white velvet hats. The bride and her attendants all carried bouquets of pink flowers.

Mr. Vivian Morgan attended his brother as best man, and Mr. Arthur Palmer was groomsman.

The reception was held at Monaise, Bowen Terrace, New Farm, the home of the bride's sister, Miss Rose Levette, who, as hostess, wore air force blue satin with sequin trimming, also a grey velvet toque and fur coat.

The honeymoon will be spent in a motor tour of the South, and the bride's travelling costume was a grey tailleur, worn with fox furs and a brown velvet hat.

1934

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1934

To celebrate the coming of age of her son, Mr Robert Raine, Mrs R. Raine (late of Mt Morgan) gave a party at Monaise, Bowen Tce, New Farm, recently.

Elocutionary items were given by Miss Jean Findlay and Mr H R Gelston, and dancing competitions were also enjoyed.

MR. W. H. PARKER IS 93 TO-DAY

Mr. William Henry Parker, oldest ex-banker of Queensland, and originator of world-fame citrus fruits, is 93 years old to-day.

The old gentleman now is living in retirement at Monaise Guest House, Bowen Terrace, New Farm. He was born at Parramatta and entered the service of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney there in 1866. In 1872



MR. PARKER

he was appointed manager of the Brisbane branch of that bank, and in the "eighties" he resigned to take over the general management of the Queensland Deposit Bank.

In 1891, at Glen Retreat, The Gap, in the Enoggera district, Mr Parker commenced the orchardist activities which resulted in his evolving the Beauty of Glen Retreat and Parker's Special mandarins which are regarded as amongst the best of their kind in the world.

For 20 years Mr Parker was a director of the Queensland Fruit Growers Co-operative Association. He also was one of the founders of the Queensland Cricket Association and of the Bankers' Rowing Club. He has been a lifelong Methodist and is the oldest trustee of Albert Street Church.

1941

Mr William Henry Parker, oldest ex-banker of Queensland, and originator of world-fame citrus fruits is 93 years old today.

The old gentleman now is living in retirement in Monaise Guest House New Farm. He was born at Paramatta and entered the service of the Commercial Banking Company in 1866. In 1872 he was appointed manager of the Brisbane Branch and in the "eighties" he resigned to take over the general managership of the Queensland Deposit Bank. At 1893 at Glen retreat The Gap in the Enoggera District, Mr Parker commenced the orchardist activities which resulted in his evolving the Beauty of the Glen Retreat and Parker's Special Mandarins which are regarded as the best of their kind in the world. For 20 years Mr Parker was a director of the Qld Fruit Growers Co-operative Association and the Banker's Rowing Club. He has been a lifelong Methodist and the oldest trustee of Albert Street Church.

In 100 years hundreds of people have lived in the five flats at 299 Bowen Tce. Here are a few.

The third and last installment of the recollections of Edna May Steele of daily life in and around New Farm takes us to 18 Bowen Street and a Tennis Club in Moreton Street...

18 Bowen Street

The Johnson house in Bowen St, New Farm, was a little low house built well back from the street with two big Camphor Laurel Trees in front, with a detached kitchen and a washhouse/bathroom and earth closet further up the yard. Kids were bathed in a big tub in the middle of the kitchen where water was heated on the wood stove and buckets of hot water were drawn from the wood copper for baths in the washhouse/bathroom. Needless to say daily baths were not on. A basin and jug in the bedroom catered for daily ablutions. These jugs and basins are collector's items these days, likewise the bedroom chambers which sat under every bed.

Jane Johnson always wanted a bigger and more modern house. Joe promised her that when she had saved £100 he would pull down the old house and build her a bigger house. She accomplished this and I remember it was during the First World War years, when I was about 7/8 years old, he applied and got a loan from the Oddfellows Lodge and the new house was built. This house was built closer to the street (as was the custom in those days) had four bedrooms, sitting room, dining room and kitchen and a verandah right across the front and down one side. The bathroom was under the house next to the washhouse. Still a wood copper,



but luxury of luxuries a gas geyser to supply hot water for baths – a set in bath, plug shower and all. The walls were corrugated iron and cement floor. While this house was being built the Johnson's lived in the storeroom dairy etc. under the house at 522 Lower Bowen Terrace. The dairy was now non-est. G'father had retired and sold the milk round to Bell Bros. Tom Shiels had married Ciss Johnson and lived in a house built in Brunswick Street and Hugh had gone off to China on a cattle ship. Julia had married Bill Rutherford, a Commonwealth Bank Clerk and Kit had married Dick Herd (a soldier) whilst working as a cook at Mitchell.

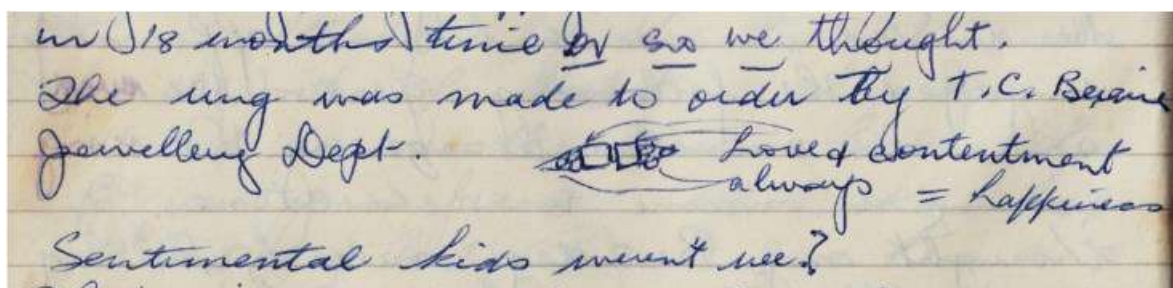


MYORA TENNIS CLUB

My first boyfriend was Ken Mossop. He was a very jealous type. He used to walk from Kingsholme to work in Eagle Street, (James Campbell and Sons) and would wait for my Dad on the corner of Bowen Street every morning to walk with him. Ken and I, and of course others (the Bates and Foxs'), formed a Tennis Club in Moreton Street, New Farm, when we were about 17. Later transferred to Hillcoat's residence in Teneriffe Drive, Teneriffe. A lovely position overlooking Bulimba Reach of the river. The court was not too good but had lots of space and very private and cheap. 5/- a weekend. Boys paid 1/- week fees and girls 6d. Girls also supplied afternoon tea. Ours was a very social club. Ken was Captain, I was Secretary, Don Mossop was Treasurer. As I say, we were a social club and used to hold dances to cover extra expenses and for the fun of it too. Am afraid I was a bit of a flirt and not prepared to settle for one admirer. I went on bush walks with a crowd from work and to Balls in parties.

We, Myora T. Club, held a dance at the Crystal Palace, Windsor, half movies, half dancing. I had invited the crowd from work and a Club from the Milton Tennis Courts, and I danced several times with a boy named Roy and that night finished the Mossop/Johnson romance (if there ever was one). Ken vowed he wouldn't marry me (we were still kids really) if I was the last woman on earth. I bet his mum was pleased, she was always very friendly, but had her own ideas and most times when we went out, we were accompanied by his Aunt Eileen or Uncle Jerry (?). Whenever Roy and Ken met (we used to gather outside Church and talk etc.) it was as though a block of ice fell between them, although by this time Ken was friendly with Flo Herbert and she and Jim Herbert were in the Tennis Club and she and I were good friends. When Ken had a 21st Birthday Party, Roy and I gave him a gold cigarette lighter. Ken rang to thank me and asked me to thank Roy too. I told him I thought he should ring him and thank him personally.

Roy said that night he thought it was very decent of Ken to ring him and from then on they were the best of friends. In fact, Ken and Flo, Roy and I went everywhere together. Dances, Balls, picnics etc. In fact, Ken was Roy's best man at our wedding. The friendship lasted until Ken died suddenly at Northcliffe on September 18, 1975. Just shows you what a difference a word at the right time can make. Ken was a good friend and would do a good turn for anybody.



in 18 months time by so we thought.
The ring was made to order by T.C. Bessie
Jewellery Dept. ~~as I~~ loved contentment
always = happiness
Sentimental kids must see?

Phillip Ross: Quaint little school sparks memories

archives



Gerard Benjamin

For Phillip Ross of Townsville, an online story about Miss Stevenson's New Farm Private School sparked a pleasant trip down memory lane, since this was where Phillip's education began 87 years ago.

This little school 'that time forgot' once stood on the block bounded by Moray, Reginald and Herbert Sts. It was begun ca1900 by 23-year-old Jeanette Stevenson in a schoolhouse built by her father behind the family home.

For more than 60 years, the modest establishment inculcated values epitomised by the olden-day verse: "It's what you have in you, not what you have on, that makes you a gentleman, John..."

Since the article had appeared on the website of the New Farm & Districts Historical Society, Philip

phoned the president, Desley Garnett, to express his appreciation for the spur to recollection about his start at NFPS.

"Off we went down to TCs (T.C. Beirne) to fit me out for the big day. Back home, my mother dressed me in the new purchases and took me down to the front door with her camera in hand. There I was with a new pale-blue shirt, navy-blue shorts, "noo shoes", new school bag and a blue-grey hat bearing the NFPS badge," wrote Phillip.

"Miss Stevenson impressed me as a courteous, efficient and self-disciplined lady who would be unlikely to suffer adult fools gladly," he continued.

"Her viewpoints were made clearly, her walk was brisk and purposeful, and she quickly earned my respect." After a year at NFPS, Phillip moved to New Farm State School.

This was a period when the Ross family moved house several times. These included "Bertholme" at 75 Moray St, cnr Barker St. The residence, which had been designed ca1882-3 by Andrea Stombuco, is now home to The Moreton Club. "The memory of that house is still greatly treasured by my

sister Julia and me," says Phillip.

The family next moved to the two-storied "Fern" on Oxlade Dr. ("very temporary, but crummy"). At least for Phillip it had the virtue of being just two doors down from the home of the WWI veteran, Lt Colonel Harry Glencross-Smith, MC.

Next, the Ross family resided in the gracious Queenslander at 579 Lower Bowen Tce which offered the advantage that the neighbouring kids were also schoolmates at NFSS.

"In 1939, my parents had a weatherboard house built on the lower waterfront terraces of Bertholme's land and it was dubbed 'Little Bertholme'," wrote Philip.

The Bertholme property had been subdivided into two lots and when "Little Bertholme" was finished, the Ross family moved in, making it their New Farm Home #5. That house is now also part of The Moreton Club.

The family's No. 1 home in New Farm was No. 1 Merthyr Rd, a charming 'chocolate box' dwelling in the Old English style, dating from 1934. "My mother Dorothy did the initial design and the young architect Mervyn Rylance took it from there. My mother was the one who suggested the name,

'The Moorings'," explained Phillip.

Readers will recall that "The Moorings" featured in a recent column, the subject of which was Phillip's father, Dr Arthur John Ross ("The 'derring-do' doctor of Merthyr Road", August 2022).

For Phillip, the New Farm Private School was but a first step on the educational road which eventually led to a career in manufacturing and engineering—but that's another story worthy of several volumes.



Phillip Ross, all kitted out for his first day at New Farm Private School, on the front steps of "The Moorings", 1 Merthyr Rd.