



Rosenstengal Workshop.
524 Brunswick Street



NEW FARM & DISTRICTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

March 2023

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FEBRUARY MEETING

Brave New World in New Farm by Ann Sargeant

Kristina Olsson, award winning writer and journalist, gave us a great start to our new year with her presentation, "The Precise Measure of Home", and set us the challenge to try to understand our connection to our childhood memories and our land. 110 people attended our first meeting, and I am sure that many childhood memories about family and home were raised in everyone's mind. Kristina's backyard outdoor childhood lifestyle, marshmallow treats and 'cracker night' all recall the 50s/60s typical childhood times.

Kristina cleverly began her talk by referencing the importance of Brisbane's geography and geological formation. She especially highlighted the effects that the widespread ancient volcanic sediment, Brisbane tuff rock, had on shaping our land, our river, and our perception of our connection to place. The layer of tuff forced the river to twist around in a snake-like way thus creating many secretive corners that offer the chance to hide. This serpentine flow has made New Farm into our much-loved peninsula {yes, I am a New Farmer}.

We were very privileged because Kristina read parts of her next unpublished book that is based on her father's experiences and his sense of loss in leaving his homeland, Sweden, and his son. Kristina explores his reaction to his new home when he arrives in Hamilton after leaving his job as a shipping engineer, and these insights open our eyes to many points that we ignore or overlook.

Her father recalls how the sea between Sweden and Denmark is sometime grey and sometimes "metallic blue". He contrasts the wooden houses with memories of Swedish stone houses and cobbled streets and even though Brisbane is the least European Australian city, he senses that the "limitless sky" will allow him to forget his losses and forge a new life. Such uplifting concepts by Kristina, as we could all benefit by using new eyes to think about our home and our place in our community. Have you experienced exciting neighbours like a 'snake dancer'? Especially when the python snake escapes into the yard.

Finally, big thanks to Emma and Natalie who organise our beautiful afternoon teas {we all loved our 'Ekka' ice cream and strawberry treat in August}.

We had an extra treat on Saturday as Bruna made crostoli and almond bread to celebrate Carnevale. Bellissimi!

Lastly, a fun memory of our meeting. Do you know the meaning of February? All was revealed in our quiz {where you can win lovely lollies/choccies} that the word comes from the Roman/Latin word 'februa' which means "to cleanse".

Guest speaker

Kristina Olsson



February Meeting



New Farm and Districts Historical Society presents:



Speaker:
George Cowin IV

GEORGE COWIN I From Isle of Man to New Farm



Saturday 25th March 2:30 pm

Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au
Enquiries: 0409 498 403

WHAT IS IT?



A German eight tool folding bow—an early multi purpose tool. This piece has a hoof pick, button hook, corkscrew, screw driver, awl, pick, screw tap and leather punch. Likely used by a groom or by a person travelling with horses, it is only 2" wide.

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Gerard Benjamin

Mates for life from Mole St, Teneriffe

A railway line once linked Newstead with the CSR sugar refinery at New Farm, and a remnant is the escarpment beside Macquarie St between Dakota Apartments and Florence St.

Here the hill would have sloped smoothly to the river, but come 1897, a cutting was needed for the railway, later expanded to include the roadway.

Above this escarpment is Mole St (off Walker Ave), one of Teneriffe's shortest thoroughfares and home to but a handful of properties.

An early occupier of this elevated site was the builder John Otto Meise, who apparently had also built at Norris Point (current site of the Powerhouse).

Mole St gained its name by 1906, the inspiration being Frederick William Mole (1865-1946), a former teacher who rose to become one of Queensland's key public servants, as head of the Public Trustee's Department.

Though the gentleman died in 1946, his family continued living in the street since the name is well remembered by Jack who was ten when his parents shifted there in 1949 from West End.

"We moved into the property next door which was owned by the Mole family. It was a large Queenslander named Kenilworth," said Jack.

"We had half the huge house, and the other part was occupied by tenants from country Queensland. Both of my parents worked at the Public Curator's Office."

For a boy, the Mole St locale could not have been more exciting. "There were the woolstores, the New Farm and Dalgety wharves, and the river was in clear view," he said.

"Teneriffe Park was close by, there were steam trains running along Macquarie St, and the vehicular ferry Hetherington could take us across to Bulimba."

In an era when 'free-range' children made their own fun as long

as they were home by dark, Jack made the most of the opportunities on offer.

"In the woolstores we would ride down the bale chutes between floors. This was at weekends—and also sometimes during the week when the friendly workers were loading the trains. It was a dangerous game."

"We rode our bikes down Chermiside St at breakneck speed, past Kent St and the police station where Sergeant Keene lived. Luckily, he was a good bloke but occasionally he'd have to have that friendly chat with our bike group about road rules."

"We'd also ride through Teneriffe Park on a narrow dirt track, as well as salute the ghost house on Teneriffe Drive."

For ship-watchers, vessels from far and wide provided constant fascination. One name stays in Jack's mind: MV Bulolo, later HMS Bulolo.

"It used to dock at Dalgety's after doing great work during World War II, after which it resumed as a tourist liner," recalled Jack.

* * *

Despite the public service fame of Mr Mole senior, it was his son Wilfred who looms large in Jack's

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memory, since the crew which took Queensland to rowing's pinnacle was led by Wilfred Mole.

A report from the day spells it out: "Much of the credit for Queensland's win in the King's Cup, held on the Brisbane River, must be given to Wilfred Mole, their stroke. His judgment helped considerably towards the victory."

"Wilfred's oar from 1939 was on the wall of my bedroom, since it didn't fit properly into the modern brick home," said Jack. "What a great inspiration—since years later, I had the pleasure of rowing in my college eight."

"My years at Mole St ensured that I had some great mates for life."



Mole St overlooks woolstores and the river, and once, wharves and the railway.

President's Message March 2023

It was almost standing room only at the first meeting for 2023. One hundred and ten people gathered, keen to hear Kristina Olsson's experience of connection to New Farm from her childhood days. No matter what your connection to this inner-city suburb, you will know that the New Farm of the 1960s/1970s is very different from the New Farm of 2023. Thank you, Kristina, for sharing your reflections on New Farm. We apologise that the sound system was not working well on the day – an issue we continue to work on at the venue. However, you can listen again to the presentation at <https://vimeo.com/802210612>.

You will understand that having 110 people at a meeting does not happen without the help of quite a lot of volunteers. That particular meeting, with several key dedicated volunteers away, was a good example of how we need a few more people to put up their hands to be part of the team. Are you able to take photos on the day? (with your phone is quite adequate) Can you 'drive' the computer for the PowerPoint presentations? Can you assist with filming the presentation? These tasks are each currently reliant on just one person so there is not a regular back-up volunteer – maybe that new volunteer is you?

We welcome those who became members at the last meeting and hope that you will find the activities of the society are interesting and informative. At the March meeting, George Cowin will connect us to early days of New Farm when his great grandfather settled here and established the family transport company.

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 Office hours Thursday 2-4pm.

Postal Address: PO Box 1141 NEW FARM 4005.

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Great Houses of Ipswich

Ipswich National Trust Community Group is excited to announce the return of the award winning program, Great Houses of Ipswich Open Day on Saturday, May 13, 2023.

Three stunning Ipswich historic homes will be open to the public from 10am—4pm.

Claremont is a rare example of a Georgian villa built in 1857 for John Panton, a local merchant.

Karragaroo, 1884, has a history interwoven with that of two early Ipswich families, the Footes and the Whiteheads.

The most recently constructed is Ballachulish, a timber Federation Queenslander. Turned into flats in the 1940's, its current owners have spent 23 years restoring it into a comfortable family home.



Some Milestones in the Life of an Elegant New Farm House 1880-2023



Some long-term residents of New Farm were born there and some moved here later in life.

That's also the story of some houses, specifically a lovely old house of timber and tin called Dalefsyda in Charles Street.

This once small two bedroom cottage started life in Gympie in the early 1880's. Although modest, totaling 4 rooms, the house was well built with lovely features made from quality wood, a broomstick dowel verandah and curved fretwork gable.

Inside there is an elegant hallway arch skillfully crafted from timber rather than plaster, probably testimony to the builder using materials at hand instead of employing a plasterer.

It was moved here by horse and dray in 1911 and settled in the heart of New farm. Early residents include Leslie Arundell and family, at least a second generation resident who grew up in Sydney Street and flatted in Fortitude Valley before moving into the house around 1913.

Leslie Arundell was an engineer who was married to Olive in 1913 and welcomed baby Joyce to Charles St in 1914. Two more children followed, Sybil and Leslie Jnr and the family remained living there for their married life.

Older daughter Joyce married a local soldier from "Repton" flats in the Holy spirit Church in 1943 and continued to live in the area as did her brother who became a carter.

Accidents ran in the family with grandfather, also Leslie, falling 20 feet from the roof of Websters' Warehouse in Mary St and being taken to hospital with a fractured skull and thigh. Further articles the next day report him as still unconscious and in a very serious condition.

Leslie himself made the papers for falling off a tram, splitting the back of his head and being taken to hospital. Leslie Jnr was taken to the children's hospital for falling over and cutting his face underneath the eye on a tin can.

Leslie died in 1949, Olive in 1974 and are buried at Toowong Cemetery.



Some Milestones in the Life of an Elegant New Farm House 1880-2023 continued...

Nothing more had been done to the house by way of extension when local investors bought it in 1989 and rented it to another family.

By then New Farm was a colourful place. The then owner recalls a bank of public telephones in Brunswick Street and a group of concrete benches outside the now IGA building where professional women conducted business and cars regularly drew in.



Some of the other houses in Charles Street had been converted to flats and halfway houses years earlier and remained so, but never number 26.

It remained an elevated one storey home for the duration of its life. It wasn't until 1990 when the home was sold that an owner occupier bought the house and moved in. The house was overdue for renovation and extension to accommodate a young family. An extension was added to the back of the house and underneath was enclosed after some excavation work. Bathrooms were added, a lovely brick fireplace was built and the ironwork balustrade was added to the front in place of the broomstick handrail.



The stairwell gained a lovely Victorian leadlight window to complement the now six bedroom, two bathroom house.

The interior of the original part of the house remained exactly as it always was due to the owner's love and respect for the old walls and her mindfulness that change wasn't necessarily an improvement.

In the 1990's the streetscape obviously hadn't changed much either. Police stopped the young mother walking her baby in a pram at 7am and suggested she might want to wait until later in the day to walk around the streets, giving the nightlife time to go to bed. More amused than cautioned, the family stayed living in the house until 2021, eventually selling at a sum wholly unimaginable to the men who dragged her down on the dray 110 years earlier.



FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Bruna Burello-Day

It was most gratifying to see so many people attend our first meeting for 2023. It was also pleasing to see so many renewing their memberships or joining the Society. This, however, created a bit of a traffic jam at our entry gate and membership tables. To make the procedure for both entry to the meetings and the processing of membership transactions run more smoothly and quickly, may I request that, whenever possible, you

- 1 Pay your entry fees in cash.** \$10 for non-members and \$5.00 for members.
We have currently only one eftpos machine which we would prefer to use for membership transactions and book sales. This would speed up proceedings considerably. We are currently working on using an additional payment device at future meetings.
- 2 If you are joining the Society, or renewing your membership at our public meetings, please have your form completed beforehand** so that this may be checked and payment made without delay. Download and print the form from here: [NFDHS MemForm 10Nov22.pdf](https://newfarmhistorical.org.au/NFDHS_MemForm_10Nov22.pdf) (newfarmhistorical.org.au)
We ask that you complete the new form (2 pages) even if your details haven't changed. This will help make our records as accurate as possible.
- 3 We have begun issuing membership cards** for current financial members. If you have yet to receive yours, you may collect it
 - at the next public meeting, or
 - at our Office at the Ron Muir Room next to New Farm Library during office hours 2-4 pm Thursdays. If you have only recently become financial, please allow some time for the card to be produced.
 - By sending your request to me at PO Box 1141, New Farm, with a stamped self-addressed envelope enclosed. A card will be sent as soon as practicable.



You will find instructions on the back of the form for all methods of payment, including by bank transfer which is also a preferred option and can be done at your convenience. If paying by bank transfer and you would like to have a membership card mailed to you, please post your form to me and include a stamped self-addressed envelope as above.

Thank you for your consideration and observance of these guidelines.

MANY THANKS TO

Grace Grace MP

Member for McConnel

(07) 3145 9100

For printing the news-
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MY VILLAGE
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Coles New Farm for the generous supply of afternoon tea at monthly meetings.

