

WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS SHIP?



The Australia-USA alliance is further illustrated by the presence of this ship in Brisbane in late 1947. Find out more on **page 5**.

In this issue, following on from the theme of last month's meeting, we focus on stories of wartime Brisbane - with connections to New Farm - which seems appropriate in the lead up to ANZAC Day.

Local ANZAC services include:
 5.30am Teneriffe Dawn Service
 8.00am Fortitude Valley Service
 9.00am New Farm Service
 Everyone is invited. For further information, see **page 7**.

Find an ANZAC Service near you [here](#).



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NEW FARM & Districts HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC NEWSLETTER APRIL 2024 Vol XXX, No 3



REVIEW OF MARCH MEETING PRESENTATION

Once again, the hall was packed to the rafters, with 105 people counted, all eager to hear what guest presenter Robert (Bob) Tucker, had to say. Here is Diana Downes' impression of that presentation.



PRESENTER:
 Robert Tucker



REPORTER:
 Diana Downes

How fortunate are the members and friends of our Society! The quality of our guest speakers is second to none. And **Bob Tucker** was no exception, widening our knowledge of what lies in our own back yard – albeit across the river [from me] at Eagle Farm.

Bob is directly involved with **TradeCoast Central Heritage Park**. He could have spoken on

- The Interpretive Centre
- Convict Women's Prison and Factory
- Hangar No 7 Wartime Secrets
- Allison Engine Testing Stands (aeroplane buffs will marvel at the information to be found at the Heritage Park.)

Bob barely touched on the role women played in early Brisbane! As always, men cannot do without them. Even though the women were convicts, disrupting and desirable, they had to be removed to Eagle Farm.

No. The focus of Bob's talk was the aspect of military life here in the early '40s and how close were the ties of our Forces with their American counterparts.

BUT – a picture is worth a thousand words and to achieve an overall impression of how closely the US worked with Australia at that time, I urge you to watch the video of Bob's presentation.

Access the recording of Bob's talk on [Vimeo](#)



Nyrambla as it stands today

Built in the 1880s, *Nyrambla*, Henry Street, Ascot, was the Headquarters of Central Bureau. The explanation of the Japanese code breaking that assisted in the Pacific Campaign was an interesting aspect of the talk. Another story was how five crashed Zeros found in New Guinea and the Solomons were re-assembled into one Zero here at Eagle Farm. Bob

was able to get in touch with the son of the Test Pilot and an emotional meeting, here in Brisbane, ensued.

(Continued on page 2)

You may say I'm a dreamer. But I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will live as one.

John Lennon



Bob is to be commended on his “sleuthing” prowess in contacting relatives of those involved in that time of our history ... or finding taped interviews or accessing diaries.

When you visit the Heritage Centre in Schneider Street, Eagle Farm (at the old Brisbane Airport site), you may come across Bob. His knowledge of code breaking by the US, intercepting messages

from Japan by the Aussies ... the list goes on! No, he doesn't live there but I think it could be his second home. See more about the Heritage Park here: <https://tradecoastcentralheritagepark.com.au/>



The Pacific Campaign

I DISCOVERED MORE AT THE LAST MEETING!

Ross Garnett



My Uncle Robert (by marriage to my mother's sister) turned 100 last week and, of course, received a letter from King Charles. Until just a few years ago, the family had heard little about his service during World War II, and they discovered why he had not spoken about it – it was top secret and they had been told not to tell anyone.

We heard he was involved with decoding Japanese communications. Imagine my surprise when the speaker at the March meeting, Bob Tucker, showed a photo of a number of men involved in the deciphering unit in Hut 9 at Ascot, and there on the end of the front row was my uncle, Robert W Brown!

Since then, I have been assisted by **Marion Dunstan**, g-g-granddaughter of George Raff, to find this photo and another including him, along with lots of information about Professor T G Room and Hut 9 at Central Bureau, Ascot Park, Ascot, Brisbane, Qld, during WWII on the Oz at War site <https://www.ozatwar.com/sigint/hut9.htm>.

Robert became a Baptist Minister and kept his secret for about 70 years!



Some of the 105+ patrons at the meeting!



Guest speaker, Bob Tucker, and daughter

More photos on page 8



DATE CLAIMERS

Public meetings are normally held at 2.30pm at the Merthyr Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Road, New Farm, on the fourth Saturday of each month from February to November. Entry fee is \$5 for members and \$10 for non-members.

Please save these dates in your diaries.

Date	Event
April 13	Historical Walk - Oxlade Drive and Beyond
April 18	New members' welcome a/tea
April 20	Historical Walk - A Wander down Wickham Street
April 25	ANZAC Day commemorations - Submariners' Walk, Teneriffe - Holy Trinity Anglican Church, FV - Sandakan Memorial, NF Park
April 27	Public Meeting
May 25*	Public Meeting
June 8	Teneriffe Festival
June 22	Public Meeting - 30 th anniversary celebration
July 27	Public Meeting
August 24	Public Meeting
September 28	Public Meeting
October 26	Public Meeting
November 23	Public Meeting - Final for 2024
October-November	Membership Renewals will be accepted for 2025

*Please note the date of the May meeting. Previously it had been changed to 18 May. However, the meeting is now back to the regular fourth Saturday of the month, ie 25 May.

Further events and information will be supplied in subsequent newsletters and notifications.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Postal Address:

PO Box 1141, New Farm Qld 4005

Email: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Website: www.newfarmhistorical.org.au

Office: Ron Muir Room, next to New Farm Library, 135 Sydney Street

Office Opening Hours:

Every Thursday 2-4pm, February to November

Honorary Office Bearers

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0409 498 403

president@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Vice-President: Malcolm Godfrey

Secretary: Tracey Hurren

Treasurer: Denise Buckby

Committee Members:

Immediate Past President Ross Garnett,
Robert Allen, Rosalinda Pike, Ben Pritchard, and
Membership Secretary Bruna Burello-Day
membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au

2024 Membership Fee:

\$20 per year or part thereof.

Apply for or renew membership:

<https://newfarmhistorical.org.au/membership/>

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APRIL MEETING PRESENTATION

New Farm and Districts Historical Society presents:

2024 marks the Bicentennial of the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement.
But how was the *Centennial* milestone marked in 1924?

'UNPROFITIOUS BEGINNINGS':
THE BRISBANE CENTENARY
'CELEBRATIONS' OF 1923-1924.



Speaker:
Tamsin O'Connor

Saturday 27th April 2:30 pm

Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au

Enquiries: 0409 498 403

2024 marks the Bicentennial of Moreton Bay, a notorious penal station established on the northern fringes of the vast territory the British had claimed as New South Wales. By extension it is also the foundational moment for Brisbane Town, the future capital of Queensland. My presentation explores how the people of Brisbane marked the centenary milestone in 1924. The Melbourne press was predictably quick to remind Brisbane of its "Unpropitious" penal beginnings, but the city's centenary organising committee were determined and resourceful in their efforts to rise to their historical occasion. It will likely come as no surprise that convicts did not feature on the program or that the participation of indigenous Australians was coerced and controlled. The opening event was staged at our very own Newstead Park, the putative site of Oxley's landing in 1823. As a social historian I am chiefly interested in how the tone and emphasis of the various celebrations reflected wider cultural and political life in the 1920s. And as the curator and co-convenor of a special Bicentennial Conference, to be held at Griffith University later this year, I cannot help but observe how the themes and trajectories that preoccupy us in 2024 would have been inconceivable to the men and women of 1924. The past really is another country.

Looking ahead to next month – Saturday, 25 May, 2.30pm

The River City and its Bridges by Mark (Brizzypix) Coleman

Mark Coleman is a freelance photographer specialising in low light and night photography and is founder of *Brizzypix*. He will showcase his work focussing on the city's bridges, as he explains here:

Brisbane, colloquially and fondly referred to by visitors and locals as the River City, has enjoyed a period in recent years of new river crossings being built.

My presentation will in some part briefly describe the timeline and history of the city's bridges; however, it will focus primarily on the bridges that have been built in more recent years, and how they have improved the liveability and beauty of our wonderful city.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE APRIL 2024

Desley Garnett
President



So far this year we have been pleased to welcome twenty-four new members to our society – including twelve at the February and two at the March meeting, with the remainder joining by other means including by visiting our office.

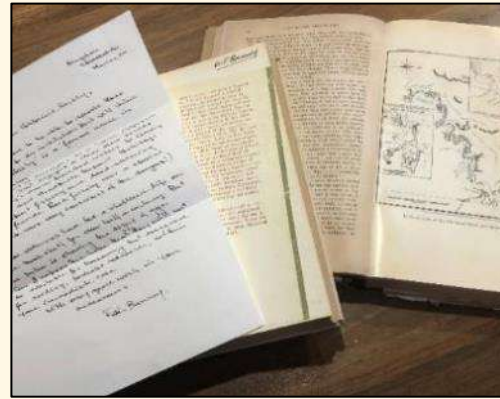
On 14 March we held a *Welcome to new members* afternoon tea at the Ron Muir Room during our usual opening hours. What a convivial group of new members, committee members and long-time members enjoying a cuppa, some goodies, and stories of connection to New Farm! We even gained three new members that afternoon – if only we had remembered to take a photo! We hope to have such events regularly as it is a great opportunity to meet others in the society. The next one will be on 18 April (see p 7 for invitation). Everyone is welcome to come to the office any Thursday afternoon; sometimes we have small tasks to do, and sometimes it is just friendly chatter. In time, there will be more to be done with our digitisation project. Do come and be part of this friendly afternoon at the Society office.

Thanks to Bruna for very efficiently producing membership cards and name tags for members. Please remember to wear your name tag – it makes it so much easier for everyone to have a friendly chat.

Gift to the Society

Recently the society was gifted two very special books for our library – *The Collected Works of Thomas Welsby*

Volumes One and Two, first published in 1967. They are covered in brown paper as was the practice to preserve the books.



The books came from the library of **Peter Banney** who lives in Kingston, Tasmania, and who, in his beautifully handwritten note, said “I am pleased to be able to donate these

volumes to an institution that will value them. ‘Welsby’ is a famous name is New Farm.”

Thomas Welsby was, among many other business responsibilities too numerous to mention here, the Chairman of the New Farm State School Committee to establish the school which opened in 1901. He was also member of the Legislative Assembly in Qld representing Merthyr. He was the resident of the beautiful home *Amity* in New Farm – right at the river end of Welsby Street. Welsby was a lover of history, so these volumes written by him are invaluable. They are available for reading on Thursday afternoons at the society office.



Thank you, Peter Banney, for this valuable gift.

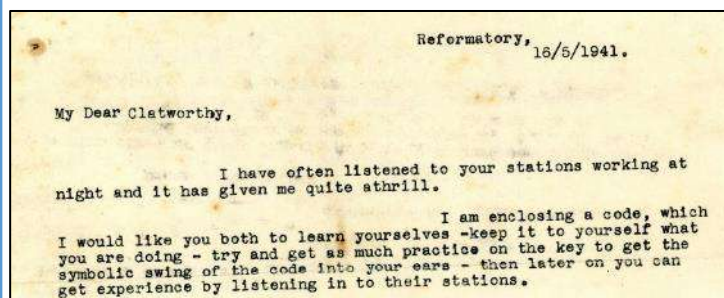
Z SPECIAL UNIT – AND JAPANESE MORSE CODE

Gerard Benjamin

Bob Tucker’s talk about the Central Bureau naturally raised the question of “Z Special Unit”, a commando force established in 1942. The uncle of audience member **Marion Dunstan**, John Hope Clatworthy (1916-52), was in the unit. “While on Fraser Island, he trained people going to Asia in radio and Japanese Morse code, and he was also active in New Guinea,” she said.

Marion has a letter dated 16/5/1941 [note: seven months before Pearl Harbour] which reads,

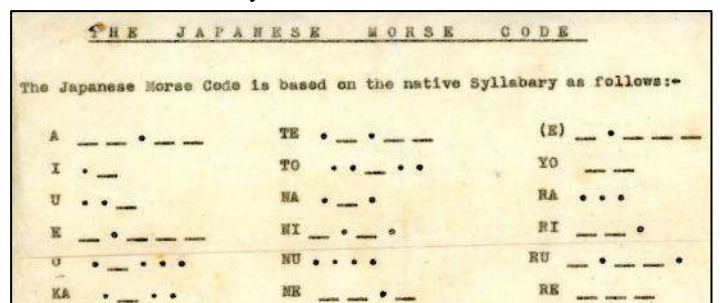
“My dear Clatworthy,....I am enclosing a code which I would like you both to learn yourselves. Keep it to yourself what you are doing. Try to get as much practice on the key to get the symbolic swing of the code into your ears, then later on you can get experience by listening in to their stations.I cannot tell you much except that I have started a class of my qualified operators here for a special work, which I hope will not have to be undertaken.”



Incidentally, Marion’s connection with New Farm goes back to early days. She is a g-g-granddaughter of merchant and politician, George Raff, whose residence *Moraybank* once stood (possibly from the 1850s) near today’s Moray Café (cnr with Merthyr Rd).

Z Special also features in the family tree of society member Gerard Benjamin. A first cousin of his mother’s, James Joseph O’Dwyer (a former teacher from Muttaborra), lost his life on the Platypus VII mission to Borneo in 1945. Years later, his son Michael O’Dwyer did his best to find out what happened. As his sister (Maggie Stahnke) explained: “He was lucky to find an elderly gentleman in Japan (in his 80s) who had been at the exact jungle depot where our commandos had been dropped on 30 June 1945. This gentleman was even there when our Dad was killed and was able to draw a map and tell the interpreter what happened.” As a result, Michael O’Dwyer was finally able to identify their Dad’s remains. Previously marked ‘Unknown’ they are in Grave 5D5 at the Labuan War Cemetery in Malaysia.

Pictured below is a portion of the Japanese morse code that Clatworthy received.



REMEMBERING THE SS GOUCHER VICTORY

Gerard Benjamin



In late December 1947, passers-by on Newstead Terrace paused to witness a guard of honour and a melancholy procession at the Maud Street entrance to Newstead Wharf. This was to mark the departure of 1,864 US war dead for reburial in national war cemeteries aboard the Victory ship *USAT Goucher Victory*.

Among those who have campaigned for over a year for this milestone to be remembered is Society member, **John Gates**.

Happily, John can report that in late 2023, a plaque was installed in a garden setting on the Newstead Riverwalk adjacent to Maud Street. Why not pause to inspect the plaque on your next riverside amble.



Photo by John Gates

More information about the SS Goucher Victory can be found [here](#):



The photos shown below (taken by *Courier Mail* photographers) and supplied by John Gates* show the Goucher Victory ceremonials. First is the US Unknown Soldier cortege passing down Queen Street with big crowds in attendance and wreaths piled on the flat-bed tray and trailer of the second truck.



The following two are of the final departure onto Newstead Wharf, and the other (at left) shows a Brisbane mother laying a hibiscus flower on one of the coffins.



*A note from John Gates: *The above four photos are from David Jones, a remarkable historian. [I believe he sourced them] from Trove. The major force for the USAT Goucher Victory effort with Brisbane City Council was the work of Peter Rasey.* (Ed)

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Bruna Burello-Day

Membership renewals and new applications have been trickling in steadily. The Membership Table volunteers at our meetings are kept very busy but their efforts have been rewarded. At time of writing, there are 183 current financial members, some of whom have subscribed until 2026! Four Life Members are included in this number.

Just a reminder that there are several ways to apply for, or renew, your membership, but please remember that the fee is **\$20 per applicant per year** or part thereof:

- Bank Transfer: to New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc. BSB 034065 - Account Number 146217 – Reference: MEMB plus your surname and first name.
- cheque or money order payable to: New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc. Please post or email

your completed form (which can be downloaded from the sidebar on p 3 of this newsletter).

- Cash or cheque at public meetings or Society Office
- EFT at public meetings or Society Office

2024 Membership cards and name badges will be available for collection at the Members' Welcome Desk.

When arriving at our meetings, **please make sure you register with Phil** who will confirm whether you are a current member or whether you need to renew and what you will need to pay. An easy option (after checking with Phil) is to pay \$25 at the Membership Table to cover membership fee and entry. Forms will be available from the Non-Members' Welcome Table and can be completed at a nearby table before going to the Membership Table for processing.

MEET OUR MEMBERS

A photo which did not make it into last month's Newsletter provided the impetus to enquire a little further into the life of one of our longtime members, **James Delahunty**, whose family name is very familiar in the district. James was so impressed with the [HeartFIT](#) demonstration last month that he immediately signed up and enthusiastically attends two sessions per week at different venues. Here's what James had to say:

At 80, I am still just a two-finger typist and dead slow on computers. When studying for a B Pharm at UQ back in 1963 we simply hand-wrote into a large Prescription Book!

I was very taken with Bruce's HeartFIT presentation at the Society meeting in February. His talk was what we needed after a lazy Christmas. It outlined the value of exercising. Besides, Bruce offers many sessions in convenient halls on each side of the river. As a result, my wife, Carmel, and I were motivated. We've made a positive decision to exercise. "Yes. Must do and do it Now!!!"

We take great interest in our family trees. My original Delahunty relatives arrived in Brisbane in the 1860s. Some could not read or write, simply making a "mark" as a signature.

My father, James Joseph Delahunty, was born in the Queen's Arms Hotel in James Street in June 1906. I have a photocard of the family when Dad was one month old on the then veranda of the QA!

We met up with about 60+ of our Irish cousins in Eire in the 1990s when on a Rugby trip and have had many of them visit us over time.

My thanks to that NFDHS talk, because it, together with my new exercise sessions, will bring new zest to my life!
'Dela' (James Delahunty)

The photo is of Dr John Ryan (Newstead), myself in long support socks and my wife, Carmel [at right], who also attends HeartFIT.



Vote -1- New Farm & Districts Historical Society!

The long queues awaiting voting in the recent Council Elections worked in the Society's favour as many people stopped to look at the displays and engage with the volunteers who staffed the Society's exhibit at the Merthyri Uniting Church Centre Polling Booth.

There was a lot of interest in the photos and posters, as well as the Society's publications. Several books were sold, and the purchasers were delighted that Gerard Benjamin was on hand to sign those he authored (which was most of them!), including his latest work, *New Farm: 50 Stories*.



UPCOMING EVENTS

**President's
"Welcome to new
members Afternoon Tea"**

Thursday 18th April, 2:30 pm
Ron Muir Room
New Farm Library
135 Sydney St, New Farm

An opportunity to meet other
members over a cuppa

Please rsvp to
president@newfarmhistorical.org.au
0409 498 403

**We want to
meet you**



I hope to meet you
there
Desley Garnett



Walking Tours



Oxlade Drive and Beyond

Saturday, 13 April 2024, 8.30-10.30am

1042 Brunswick Street, New Farm

Tour Guide: Gerard Benjamin - 0409 582 830

Meet at **New Farm Park adjacent to the Ferry Terminal** to complete a 'half-circle of the peninsula', ending with a debriefing morning tea at *Savour Café* at Merthyr Village. For more information and bookings, see [EventBrite](#).



A Wander Down Wickham Street

Saturday, 20 April 2024, 2.00-4.00pm

Centenary Place, 85 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley

Tour Guide: Robert Allen – 0437 280 104

Meet at the **steps and iron archway at the southern entrance of the park**. The tour will focus on the Valley's social and retail history, comparing the past with what survives today. It will finish at the Holy Trinity Anglican Church. For more details and bookings, and bookings, see [here](#).

Anzac Day, Thursday, 25 April

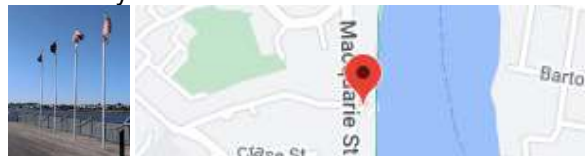
Three local services are scheduled. Everyone is welcome.

5.30am Dawn Service

Submariners' Walk Heritage Trail

71 Macquarie Street, Teneriffe

Hosted by Submariners Association Australia

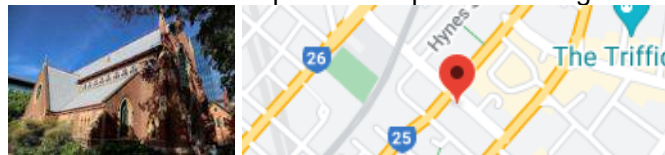


8.00am Commemoration with Last Post and Rouse

Holy Trinity Anglican Church

141 Brookes Street, Fortitude Valley

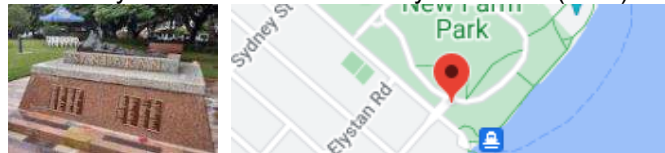
The war memorial chapel will be open for viewing.



9.00 Sandakan-Ranau Memorial Commemoration

Sandakan Memorial, New Farm Park

Hosted by Sandakan POWs Family & Friends (QLD) Inc



AROUND THE TRAPS

For activities and events further afield, see:

March Historical Happenings, the Newsletter of Qld Women's Historical Association at *Miegunyah*.
[HistHaps March2024 draft \(mcusercontent.com\)](#)

Friends of BLH April Newsletter

[What's On In Brisbane | Brisbane Living Heritage](#)

State Library of Queensland

<https://www.slq.qld.gov.au/whats-on>

The Enoggera & District Historical Society invites our members and friends to their History Day Conference Sunday, 26 May 2024, 9.00am to 3.30pm Memorial Hall, 36 Trundle St Enoggera.

A programme of interesting, informative & amusing speakers. \$20 incl. lunch.

Information and bookings online via [Humanitix](#).

Another Italian Nonna makes a Century!

From the [Dante Alighieri Society of Brisbane](#) we hear that another Italian Nonna, Mrs Maria Castellano, has recently celebrated her 100th birthday. Congratulations, Mrs Castellano! The *Signora's* late husband, Dr Francesco Castellano (1899-1976), was a very well-known GP in New Farm, with a practice in Bowen Terrace. I'd venture to say that most of the Italian residents of New Farm would have been his patients (including me and my family after arriving from Italy in 1959). Does anyone remember them? (Ed)

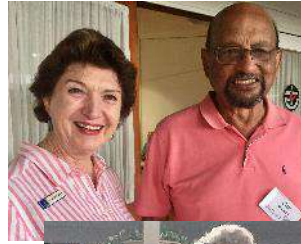


And here's what a happy customer had to say about Gerard's recent Heart of New Farm Walk: *Thanks for your weekend tour of New Farm. It was terrific with a great tour guide and an*



enthusiastic entourage. The tour guide was ably supported by Society committee member, Rosalinda Pike, who ensured that none of the 25+ participants got left behind.

That is the kind of reaction we get to all our walks and tours, including Robert Allen's recent and very popular Princess Theatre Tour. If you missed out, there will be others. Stay tuned!



MYSTERY PHOTO



Observant member, **Gillian McManus**, correctly identified the mystery photo as being from the notice board facing Merthyr Road at Merthyr Village Shopping Centre. Gillian received a double pass to any of the five cinemas of the

Five Star Cinemas group, courtesy of Peter Sourris. There is sure to be something of interest at our very own New Farm Six Cinemas on Brunswick St, formerly the Village Twin and Astor Theatre, both of which are fondly remembered by many of us.

There will be another mystery photo at the April meeting. You must be present to be in the draw.



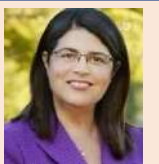
The busyness of our monthly meetings is shown in the photos on page 2 and at right, all taken by Maria Shaw.

As always, there was plenty of activity and engagement before and after the presentation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our sincere thanks go to

Grace Grace MP
Member for McConnel
(07) 3145 9100
for printing the newsletter



Brisbane City Council for the use of the Ron Muir Meeting Room, New Farm Library



Coles, New Farm for \$50 gift card towards afternoon tea purchases

