

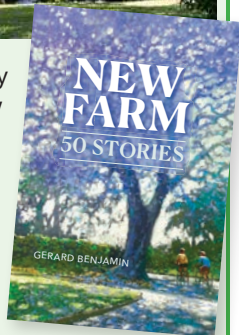
THE SEASON FOR PURPLE



It's JACARANDA TIME down Newstead way, and there is one tree at the top of the drive in Newstead Park (pictured below) which has made history. It was the inspiration, last October, for David Hinchliffe's painting which he kindly offered as the front cover of *New Farm: 50 Stories*. This is a book which can be truly judged by its cover...



According to Garry Butler, who is new to Newstead: "I bought a signed copy after the author gave a talk, but the book sat there for a month unread. After all, history can be boring, can't it? Eventually, I turned the first page, and found myself reading one story after another. Many hours later I had read all 50. History isn't boring after all. I knew that!"



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**NEW FARM & Districts
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
NEWSLETTER
OCTOBER 2024
Vol XXX, No 9**

REPORT ON THE SEPTEMBER MEETING

The passion of Claire Moore (pictured), Chair of the Board of Trustees of Newstead House, and two "Friends of Newstead House", was palpable and uplifting. She expressed delight, gratitude and wonder at the skills, dedication and commitment of the tradespeople, craftspeople, landscapers and volunteers who worked on the project.



They researched every aspect of the \$6.6M transformation. They gave generously of their time as it became a work of love. It was fascinating to hear of the difficult removal of the concrete roof tiles that had replaced the original slate tiles in an earlier renovation. Claire spoke of the challenging search for the Welsh slate roofing tiles as near as possible to the original slate tiles. They found them!

Claire was also excited about the delicate investigation of the original heritage wallpaper and being able to have it manufactured in Melbourne. Professional heritage wallpaper hangers completed the task to perfection.

It was the same with the paintwork. Much research and scraping was

needed—and again a very dedicated heritage painter was found who delighted in the challenge of specialised brushwork. We can now remark on and enjoy the Newstead House unique blue walls.



**REPORTER
Margaret Yeates**

Claire's series of photographs showed the enormous amount of other restoration involved in balustrades, stonework, gardens, lighting, artwork, furniture (some donated), flooring and the fountain.

More can be learnt from the story boards on display in the house. No wonder this marvellous resource merited its own Act of Parliament in 1939.

Newstead House has been the home of many different families since 1846 and, at various stages, was the centre of social life in Brisbane, especially during the 'Harris era'.

The President of the Friends of Newstead House is Patricia Mackie, and the two volunteers with well over 50 years' experience between them are Robyn Morton and Sandy Hughes.

You are welcome to visit Newstead House on Fridays (10am–2pm) and Sundays (10am–4pm).

Enjoy Claire's talk on Vimeo [here](#).



EMPTY CHRISTMAS TREE



As Christmas approaches each year, it reminds me to be so grateful for a safe home and for more than sufficient food. Each time I fill my petrol tank for over \$100, I am reminded that there are many folk for whom that is not an easy thing and it can only happen if there is enough money in the bank that week. That is why, for me, the Empty Christmas Tree is an important part of my Christmas.

It's a simple thing for me to do to help others who are doing it tough, by providing non-perishable food, toiletry items, cleaning products, feminine products that I can add to my shopping trolley, or cash that means the Trinity Pantry in Fortitude Valley can purchase the items needed.

Please bring your practical thankfulness and compassion to our November meeting. I thank you in anticipation for your generosity as we support others in difficult circumstances—and may you find much joy in giving.

— Desley Garnett



TALKING STORIES

SAM REGI, a lecturer in Journalism at UQ, briefly addressed the meeting about his passion for

recording the stories of people's lives. Listeners heard an excerpt from an interview which he had recorded with "Leah and Cash", a poignant conversation which touched on Cash's life in the pop music industry.

Sam's emphasis is not just on recording recollections, but capturing the "giggles and pauses", that is, the nuances that offer a further dimension to the voice of a loved one. It gives one pause to wonder, how many of us have recorded our voice—and our lives for future generations?

Wouldn't it have been wonderful if today I could hear the voice of my forebear Mr Pacey, who bought land in Queen Street in 1848, or that of his son-in-law Daniel Kelly who trained horses at New Farm?

More information about Sam's project can be found at www.talkingstories.au — Margaret Yeates

COMMUNITY NEWS



PROBUS: The location was familiar (Merthyr Road) as were many of the faces when **New Farm Probus** gathered for their September meeting. The presentation was an overview of the History of New Farm and the speaker was Gerard Benjamin. The address was received enthusiastically and there were interesting questions. Sincere thanks to Catherine Allen for organising the event so efficiently, as well as to Bruna for handling enquiries about memberships and book sales.



BEN WALKED THE WATERFRONT

It was hard to pick which was *the* highlight from the many on the NFDHS Walking Tour led by **Ben Pritchard** on Saturday 14 September, when a small but enthusiastic group surveyed the Tenerife waterfront from the Ferry to the Submariners' Base and beyond. Being once part

of Trevor Reddacliff's Urban Renewal Task Force, Ben could offer expert insights about the original intention to scale development in a pleasing proportion to the Woolstores. A coffee break at Kin and Co was most welcome before commencing the return journey. *Keep an eye on your NFDHS newsletters for more of Ben's walks.*

A family saga by Wendy Hart

THIS poignant tale is an emotional journey based on the life of the author's paternal grandmother, a young immigrant girl who overcame a childhood of loss, grief, and death in Northern Ireland.

Her life in the young nation of Australia was shaped by the tumultuous events of the Great War, the Great Depression, and devastating drought, adding a compelling historical dimension to her personal story.

A little over a century ago, where the Riverside Centre in Brisbane now stands among a row of glitzy skyscrapers, a timid thirteen-year-old girl gingerly stepped off a migrant ship onto the dusty wharf of a budding settlement.

Minnie spent two years in the New Farm-Fortitude Valley area before pursuing her dream of putting to work the farming skills she had learned from her beloved father. She eventually settled, along with her husband and six children, on a farm near Dayboro. Being



an hour from Brisbane, the area was then home to farmers and dairy herds.

Wendy explained her motivation for researching Minnie's life and writing the novel. "Minnie was incredibly loving and kind, and was adored by her 24 grandchildren. However, an aura of mystery surrounded this gentle woman and her background," said the author.

"Minnie's repeated sayings, 'Little birds in the nest must agree', and 'Be faithful to the religion you were born to and respect all others', puzzled us, I remember. When, as a teenager, I watched on TV the violent scenes on the streets of Belfast, in the name of religion, it was then that I realised the true meaning of my grandmother's mantras.

"They were clearly a message of tolerance, and they came from the mouth of someone born in Northern Ireland in the midst of 'the troubles'."

Wendy has offered the Society several copies of her book as lucky door prizes in October. *Birds in the Nest* is available from Amazon for \$25.

DATE CLAIMERS

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

SAVE these dates in your diaries.

Date	Event
October 17	President's welcome afternoon tea
October 19	Oxlade Drive Historical Walk
October 19	Princess Theatre Tour
October 26	Public Meeting
November 9	Mainly Moray Historical Walk
November 23	Public Meeting – Final for 2024; Empty Christmas Tree
October-November	New Memberships and Membership Renewals will be accepted for 2025

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

Video recordings (Vimeos) of Monthly Presentations are available on the website. The Vimeo Archive is [here](#).

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Postal Address:

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Every Thursday 2-4pm, Feb to Nov.

Honorary Office Bearers

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0409 498 403

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Vice-President: Robert Allen

Secretary: Tracey Hurren

Treasurer: Denise Buckley

Committee Members:

Immediate Past President:

Ross Garnett.

George Cowin, 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 [here](#).

Newsletter Editor:

Bruna Burello-Day

editor@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Photos taken at meetings can also be viewed on [Instagram](#).



OCTOBER MEETING PRESENTATION

New Farm and Districts Historical Society presents:

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT

– the Emergence of Miss Martha Burns



Speaker:
Miriam King

Martha Burns, a trail-blazing woman, born and bred in New Farm. Hear how the fascinating story her life emerged.

Saturday 26th October 2:30 pm

Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm

Hiding in Plain Sight: THE EMERGENCE OF MISS MARTHA BURNS

Hear **MIRIAM KING** tell the fascinating story of trail-blazing Martha Burns from Villiers St, New Farm. Her inclusion on a WWI Honour Board in Saint Andrew's Uniting Church in Brisbane prompted a fascinating journey of research.

Who was she? Why was her name on the Honour Board? Where did she fit into Brisbane society? What did her qualification 'LDQ' mean? So many unanswered questions... Enjoy this chance to learn more about the remarkable **MISS MARTHA BURNS**.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NOVEMBER MEETING

WHO remembers the Christmas window displays at McWhirter's, Waltons and T. C. Beirne—or the end-of-year workplace and children's parties in New Farm Park?

At our November meeting, **Robert Allen** will guide us through some holiday images from Brisbane Christmases past, with a particular emphasis on Fortitude Valley and New Farm.

Join us at 2:30pm on Saturday,
23 November 2024



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE — OCTOBER 2024

Desley Garnett



day, and decided to train in dentistry. What a trailblazer she proved to be, and we'll hear all about her life at the meeting.

OUR penultimate newsletter for 2024! How is that possible? What an amazing line-up of speakers and great historical information we have enjoyed. Last month's topic – Newstead House Renovations – might have inspired you to visit the house to see for yourself. Several of our members are also "Friends of Newstead House" and we have flagged the idea of an "extra" in our program for 2025 to have a personal tour of the house. Are you interested?

It is always good to hear stories of women who challenged the status quo of their time to create better pathways in society for women. This month we will hear about a young woman who grew up in Villiers Street, New Farm, and branched out from the conventions of the

This is the time to remind you that we will again have our "Empty Christmas Tree" at our November meeting. We can fill that tree figuratively with gifts of non-perishable foods, toiletries, feminine products and cash for distribution by Trinity Pantry in Fortitude Valley for the benefit of families and individuals needing support.

Lastly, I was reminded of the notion that "social connectedness is also good for your health", when I recently received this appreciative note from a new member: "The Society is everything I was hoping it to be. Thank you for being so welcoming."

While Bruna takes a well-deserved holiday break, our thanks go to Gerard for standing-in as editor for this issue.

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Bruna Burello-Day

ROSALINDA was kept very busy at the Membership Table at the last meeting managing the influx of membership applications – 21 in all – bringing the current membership to 250. There were many new faces, and it seems many were so impressed with the proceedings that they decided to join up immediately. Current members are encouraged to renew their memberships before the end of the year. New membership applications accepted from now on will be current until 31 December 2025.

PLEASE NOTE: Election Day — As our October meeting will be held on the same day as the Queensland State Elections (26th) for which the Hall at the Merthyr Uniting Church Centre will be used as a polling booth, we will be using the Church for the meeting and sharing the courtyard.

This means that we will have very limited space for welcoming attendees. *For October only, we will not have a Membership Table set up and therefore cannot process any applications.*

Anyone wishing to apply for, or renew, their membership is encouraged to download and print the relevant form from the [website](#), and preferably make payment by bank transfer as per the instructions on the form, and email the form to membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au.

Alternatively, POST the form to the Society, OR bring the form in an envelope to be handed to the volunteers at the welcome tables.

Another alternative is to place CASH with your form in an envelope and hand it in on the day. Please ensure that you print your full name on the envelope. We will endeavour to process the applications as soon as possible after the meeting.

WORKING on your Genealogy? GSQ may be of assistance... The Genealogical Society of Queensland Inc offers some GREAT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES.

Find out more at: <https://www.gsq.org.au>

Getting to know you Afternoon Tea

Thursday 17th October
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



I hope to meet you there

Desley Garnett



THE PRESIDENT'S "GETTING TO KNOW YOU" AFTERNOON TEA — Desley Garnett

AT the recent Welcome Afternoon Tea in September, I am happy to report that it was yet another opportunity for a lively conversation. Present were two new members, Kalyi and Connie, along with Belinda Deakin (of the Deakins of Evans Deakin), as well as Bruna, Ann, Sue, Rosalinda and myself.

We also welcomed two visitors whose mother had attended the New Farm Private School (once of Moray Street). These joined in with the conversation, and purchased several books. They were visiting from Victoria, and had no personal connection with the New Farm area except for their mother's childhood here. They liked what they saw of the society.

Kalyi later sent a text of appreciation: "Thank you for inviting me to the lovely meeting. It was hard to leave in the end because of all the interesting conversations. See you at the next meeting". Kalyi explained that she had been on one of Robert's historical walks, and had met member Deb Baker, so she attended several of our meetings. She said that she was impressed that the speakers were of such a high quality and the society was so well run, that she has become a member—even though she lives in Paddington, and has no particular connection to New Farm except for visiting friends who have lived here over the years. What a happy endorsement of the Society's activity!

YACHT-BUILDING IN OXLADE DRIVE

In the September newsletter, Steve Glanville (pictured) wrote about growing up at 80 Oxlade Drive. Here he continues the story, and describes his father's yacht-building endeavours...



WE moved to 80 Oxlade Drive in the summer of 1953/54 and my father lived there until his death almost exactly 50 years later in January 2004. The house backed onto the river, and when we arrived there, Merthyr Park was overgrown and not well managed by the City Council.

My father built and launched three, yes, three cruising catamarans from our property. He was an amateur builder and constructed the boats in our small back yard. They were launched by sliding or rolling them down the hill through Merthyr Park. In those days, there were no trees near the water to block access. In fact, Dad planted several of the trees which are still growing in the park adjacent to 80 Oxlade Dr.

The catamarans were really substantial vessels. The first was built in 1956 and was 24' long (pictured above). The second was 43 feet in length and could sleep six people. It was launched in 1965. The third was a 32-foot 'day sailer' and was built in 1985. The first two boats were co-designed, built and sailed with Dad's friend, Don Peverill. Don later became an office bearer in the Queensland Multihull Yacht Club.

All of the boats were named *Conda-Vista*. The word is supposedly a contraction of our names: Connie (Mum), Douglas (Dad), Vivienne (my sister) and me (Stephen). My father joked that the final "a" was for Viv's friend, Alison Turner, who lived at 76 Oxlade Drive.

In other words, Evans Deakin was not the only boat builder in the district in the last 50 years! It was my Dad's dream to compete in the Brisbane to Gladstone yacht

race—but it was not to be. His first boat won a few Bay races but was too small and not suitable for ocean racing. *Conda-Vista II* could have comfortably sailed to Gladstone but, being amateur-built, it was heavy, lacked sufficient sails and was not competitive against the light-weight, purpose-built racing yachts.

Mooring at New Farm was a problem as well. At low tide, the boats were inaccessible because of the mud flats. This meant that outings had to coincide with the tides both for departing and returning. This rarely seemed to happen. Unfortunately, too, Dad earned the nickname, 'Captain Sandbank'. In spite of attending night school to learn how to navigate Moreton Bay, *Conda-Vista* spent much of her time stuck aground on sand bars waiting for the tide to come in.

While sailing to Bishop Island, Peel Island or Moreton Island sounds like an idyllic pastime, Dad usually expected guests to help him scrape barnacles and weed off the bottom of the big catamaran in return for a cruise on the bay.

When *Conda-Vista I* was built in 1956, it was the first cruising catamaran in Brisbane. Dad had seen the double-hulled lakatois in New Guinea before the Second World War and realised their design would be ideal in the shallow waters of Moreton Bay.

Fast forward to 2024 and catamarans are now found everywhere in all shapes and sizes. Fortunately, Dad lived long enough to witness the sailing revolution which he helped to pioneer—from his home in Oxlade Drive—nearly 70 years ago.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oxlade Drive and Beyond — Walking Tour

Saturday 19 October, 8.30-10.00am
Meet at the bus stop adjacent to the New Farm Park Ferry Terminal, for an 8:30 start.
Tour Guide: Gerard Benjamin



WITH ITS BEAUTIFUL HOMES AND GARDENS, Oxlade Drive is considered one of New Farm's most attractive avenues. • Along with notable homes of the past, are sites relating to wartime and industry, as well as one of Brisbane's earliest hi-rise apartment blocks. • By the time we arrive at Merthyr Village, having completed a 'half-circle of the peninsula', morning tea will have been well-earned.
Book on [Eventbrite](#).

Princess Theatre Tour + Ginger Beer Tasting

Saturday 19 October, 8.30-11.00am
Meet at the Princess Theatre, 8 Annerley Road, Woolloongabba, for an 8.30am start.
Tour Guide: Robert Allen



HISTORIAN ROBERT ALLEN is offering something new with his heritage tours, by combining two activities to tantalise the senses. On Saturday 19 October, you are invited on a tour of the Princess Theatre at Woolloongabba, followed by a ginger beer tasting at the nearby award-winning Brisbane Brewing Co. The \$35 ticket price includes a pre-tour tea or coffee, the theatre tour, the ginger beer tasting, and a 10% discount food voucher toward an optional lunch at the hotel. **Book here on [Eventbrite](#).**

ADVANCE NOTICE

Mainly Moray — Walking Tour

Saturday 9 November, 8.30-10.00am
MEET at the bus stop adjacent to **To Be Thai Restaurant, 92 Merthyr Road** for an 8:30 start.
Tour Guide: Gerard Benjamin
MORAY STREET offers an embarrassment of riches when it comes to history. Join us for an informative wander through the social history of New Farm. **Book on [Eventbrite](#).**

OLD POLICE STATION SITE ON BREAKFAST CREEK ROAD TO BE REDEVELOPED



This house on Breakfast Creek Road served as a Police Station from 1926 until 1995. In 2021, the building was badly damaged by fire and languished in this state until recently. The site is currently being cleared for a new development.

ELECTION DAY DISPLAY STAND Saturday, 26th October from 8 am **Can you assist?**

THE Merthyr Polling booth at the Uniting Church is a great location for us to be able to showcase the society and interest the voters in the history of the New Farm peninsula.

George and Desley will be there early to set up a display of old photos that will catch the interest of folk as they come to vote from 8 am.

Are you able to spare an hour or two to engage in conversation with the

people of New Farm? It is an opportunity to share your experience of being part of the historical society community, chat about the old photos, showcase the books for sale; in short, to show the gathering voters what an effective and welcoming community we are.

Please contact Desley (president@newfarmhistorical.org.au) if you can be part of this publicity team.

Since it is our meeting day, you could 'work' for an hour or two in the morning, have lunch at a spot nearby, and then enjoy the presentation in the afternoon.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MELISSA, OUR VOICE ON THE BOARD

THE Society congratulates Melissa Hoedel (pictured) on being elected as our representative to the Board of the Brisbane Living Heritage (BLH).

Melissa, whom many will know from her close involvement with the Society as Executive Director of Brisbane Open House, is one of several new Board members appointed at the recent AGM of BLH.

Brisbane Living Heritage promotes Brisbane's cultural heritage and is the peak group representing more than 90 museums, galleries, historic sites and history societies.

Melissa is the only Board representative from a local history group and we look forward to working closely with her to promote the aims of the BLH and be our voice on the Board.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

AS always, thanks go to our wonderful volunteers at our monthly meeting as well as to the following:



Grace Grace MP
MLA for McConnell
(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 a
\$50 gift card towards
afternoon tea purchases.



VILLAGE
VOICE

USAT GOUCHER VICTORY, COMMEMORATED ON THE RIVERWALK AT NEWSTEAD



READERS will remember that earlier this year, a plaque was unveiled on the Newstead Riverwalk to commemorate the *USAT Goucher Victory*, a ship which, in 1947, returned the remains of US servicemen, who died in WWII, from Australia to the United States.

Society member John Gates, who strongly supported the project to erect this plaque, points out that while 1,406 American caskets were exhumed from Ipswich Cemetery,



the ship also took on board the caskets of 467 American servicemen who died in or near Australia during WWII. These had been interred at Rookwood Cemetery in Sydney, and were brought to Brisbane by rail so as to join the ship.

• Pictured (above left): The plaque on the Riverwalk at Newstead; (above right) The entrance to Newstead Wharves, on Newstead Terrace adjacent to Maud Street, showing the guard of honour in 1947, saluting the departure of US war dead.

September Meeting

WHAT AN AMAZING TURNOUT for our meeting on 28 September! Despite the blustery conditions and that football match in Melbourne, around 105 people attended and were rewarded with an outstanding presentation by Claire Moore about the restoration of Newstead House, along with other highlights.

The afternoon tea was also much appreciated, especially the nod to the famous Devonshire Teas once served at Newstead House with the inclusion of scones with jam and cream. We hope that this tradition will be reinstated soon.

Credit must be given to Desley for the special "Lions" cake she created in acknowledgement of the above-mentioned footy match.

Many attendees stayed on to chat and enjoy the convivial atmosphere while partaking of the many sumptuous treats on offer.



Photography: Bruna Burello-Day

Recollections of “Wuthering Heights” in Brunswick St, 1942

archives



Gerard Benjamin

In late 1942, Phillip Ross, aged 12, along with his mother and his younger sister, visited Brisbane and lodged for a week at the three-level block of flats that still stands at 517-521 Brunswick St, and which was known as “Wuthering Heights”.

Looking back over 80 years, the cast of characters for Phillip is still vivid. Occupying the ‘penthouse’ was Mrs Iris Vicars, a talented pianist often on radio, and her son John. Also there were Mr Petrie, a young AIF fellow they called “New Guinea” who was due to return to the war zone, and an American Lieut-Colonel who

had a US Army car and driver at his disposal. His name was Murphy, but the New York accent meant that it came out as ‘Moiphy’—and that’s how all at the flats spoke his name.

With card-playing, yarns, jokes, and the odd drink, “everyone had a whale of a time,” recalls Phillip. He already knew Eric Petrie, a businessman, since his companion Edna was one of the lad’s mother’s best friends. Of course, the name Petrie goes back to pioneering days.

Looming largest was Moiphy. “Do you like chewing gum?” he asked the lad. “What about Coca-Cola?” Accordingly, Moiphy’s driver delivered them to the PX store on the corner of Creek and Adelaide Streets where they were loaded up with American chocolates and cakes for everyone.

“You’re pretty keen on aeroplanes?” observed Moiphy—this to a lad who had subscriptions to two aircraft magazines! He drove them to Amberley RAAF Base. “Everyone seemed to know who this bloke was,”

reflected Phillip. There were enough P-38s and P-40s to delight any junior aviation enthusiast.

One day Moiphy’s driver pulled up outside Lennon’s Hotel in George St. “Moiphy and I went in,” said Phillip. “He said he had to see ‘the Chief’. The foyer was enormous. It seemed as if there were hundreds of people there.”

“Moiphy says, ‘General, I’d like you to meet Phillip Ross’. I was tall for my age, but this man seemed to be 10 feet tall. He was immaculately dressed. MacArthur looked down at me for one moment, nodded, and said, ‘Humph’.”

Phillip reported that his mother was absolutely aghast, and said he was lucky he wasn’t arrested. It was years later that Phillip discovered the two mystery characters at Wuthering Heights. ‘New Guinea’ was the scion of a prosperous family and later owned a large business. Moiphy was Lt-Col Sidney L. Huff (1893-1962), long-time aide to ‘the Chief’. In 1951, he wrote, “My Fifteen Years with

General MacArthur”. Phillip’s sister spotted a copy at an airport bookshop and brought it home for him.

“I marvelled that I’d known this man simply as ‘Moiphy’ – but then again, in wartime, one did not ask questions. I enjoyed his book – and, no, the author did not mention me!” ■



In late 1942, Phillip Ross, and his sister and mother, holidayed at these flats on the corner of Brunswick and Harcourt Sts, New Farm

HISTORY COLUMN from MY VILLAGE VOICE – JULY 2024