



Volume 12 No. 1

NEWSLETTER

Feb -Mar 2009

(Issued Apr. Meeting)

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Located in the Chermside Historical Precinct at 61 Kittyhawk Drive, Chermside but DO NOT send post to this address. Printed courtesy of Cr. Fiona King.

Website Grant – news arrived on the 19th February that the Society had been granted \$27,219 from the Queensland Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund to set up a website. This will be a History website which will take us on to the world via the internet.

Over the past 10 years the Society has been working steadily to accumulate a vast amount of data on the history of the local area and it is stored at the old school. About five years ago we invested in a computer and began storing our archives on disk. This computer also enabled us to index the material, easily retrieve it and print it.

About a year ago we bought a Maxtor external drive on which we store all the data from the Society computer and members' computers. This is kept off site so that if disaster hits the school most of our data will be preserved. We have taken precautions to make sure the school is secured from disasters such as break in and fire.

Our main contact with the outside world is through our newsletter, occasional items in the local newspaper, books published, exhibitions and supplying researchers with data they need. This is mostly printed material with some on disk, some by word of mouth.

Terry Hampson, who helped set up the website for Mountains to Mangroves, set up an initial meeting with Mark Crocker from BCC who introduced us to Robbie White of ToadShow, a professional website designing firm.

Robbie gave us a detailed outline of the work his firm does and worked out a detailed quote of what would be involved in setting up the website. This was the proposal we submitted to the Fund and they approved the grant on the second round of the 2008 grants.

The website is the gateway to the new 21st Century media. This is the one that is expanding at incredible speed because it travels throughout the world and directly into people's homes and offices. It is a crowded world but easily accessible to the skilled operator of which there are increasing numbers. And they include all ages; this is not just a young person's world.

Many of our members can remember when the automobile was taking over from the horse; this is a similar changeover in society.

Setting up the Website – Bev Isdale and Carol Cunningham have been working for several months on preparing the data for the website. There is still a lot of work to be done in this area and we will be busy for quite some time yet.

The ToadShow people will put the data on the website and show us how to do this when it is up and running.

Robert Whyte attended our March management committee meeting and took away the material

February Meeting – We were entertained and instructed by several members:

Lyn Currie told us about her Irish forebears and how some of the family emigrated

to the USA in the 19th Century when millions of Europeans left for the New World and, they hoped, a better life. It would have included freedom from hunger, a regular job and even a home of their own.

Some of Lyn's ancestors fought in the Civil War of 1860-6 and then emigrated again, this time to Australia. One settled in Bundaberg and is buried there. Some years ago a group of US Civil War Aficionados (Enthusiasts) came to Bundaberg to commemorate his death and honour his memory. There was a big write up in the local paper with photos of the US contingent in Civil War uniforms and maintaining Army customs.

Herb Carr drew a sketch on the whiteboard to show how farmers used to construct gates using the moulded bottom of a sparkling wine bottle. The hinge stile of the gate was pointed and fitted into the glass bottom allowing the gate to swing easily. Glass is very hard and wears indefinitely as long as it is not hit with a sharp object. He then went on to give a demonstration of how to use a brush hook, a dangerous looking implement which can cut you off at the knees if you are not careful.

Pat O'Shea showed the meeting a bill hook which is also dangerous but being short can only cut one off at the ankles. Use of it involved a lot of bending while the brush hook did not and so it was easier on the back. But the brush hook could be more easily carried around.

Another exhibit was a cast iron multi-purpose shoe last, the very latest model from the Victorian age. And still useful today as the owner uses it when doing shoe repairs although he doesn't wear shoes much these days.

In the pre-factory age when shoes were all hand made, the local cobbler would have wooden lasts carved to the shape of the customer's feet. He would then sew the soft leather of the uppers around the individual last. They even allowed for deformities, such as bunions or six toes, in the last. When the uppers were completed the tougher leather of the sole and heel would be attached.

These shoes were expensive and many of the poorer had to make do with whatever they could find. Hence the widespread use of thongs over thousands of years. In the cold winters of many places they used to wrap animal skins around their feet. Factory made shoes were a great advance for most people.

Brian Tilley who is a lifelong apiarist and is skilled in the art of apiculture gave the March meeting a run down on the life of bees in Chermside. He started by explaining that bees date back some 30 million years to the time when flowering plants first appeared on earth. He then asked the question 'where did Noah keep the bees on the Ark?' Answer – in the ark hives. That is a Bee/History joke.

In the very old days honey was found by robbing wild bee hives in trees, often destroying the hive in the process. Today bees are kept in boxes called hives with special frames set inside on which the bees deposit their honey. These frames make it easy for the apiarist to rob the honey without harming the bees.

The heart of the hive is the Queen bee whose job it is to provide an endless supply of eggs to produce more bees. She is located on the lowest level at the entrance to the hive with some attendant bees. This is also the entry and exit for the worker bees as they come and go in their endless search for nectar.

This section is separated from the rest of the hive by a perforated plastic shield which allows the workers to crawl through to the frames above but prevents the much larger Queen from so doing. However she can, and sometimes does, leave the hive.

The section above has nine frames hung from the top of the box and each frame holds a sheet of wax on which the workers build the honeycomb cells in which the workers store the honey.

To rob the hive the apiarist first 'smokes' the bees using a little fire box with burning hessian, which is related to marijuana, as a fuel. This makes the bees groggy and gives them 'a little trip' which keeps them happy and docile. The frames are removed one by one and using a hot knife the cells containing the honey are cleaved from the frame. There are no eggs or larvae, only honey in them, so no damage is done to the bees. The comb is then placed in a centrifuge and the honey is spun out.

The frame is returned to the hive and the bees go back to work building new honeycomb. And they do not ask for payment as they do not have a Bee Union.

The apiarist has to wear protective clothing as bee stings hurt and several can kill a person. Brian says that to rob a hive without getting stung is unusual

Until the discovery of sugar, honey was the only source of sweetness and was greatly prized. It can preserve foods, is used as an antiseptic, it heals skin burns and was used in one of the first alcoholic drinks, mead. It lasts well; some of the honey stored in ancient Egyptian tombs dating back 3,000 years is still fit to eat. A remarkable product and it is produced by an insect.

Australia has native bees and the Indigenous people used to rob the hives. Thomas Hamilton records that he used to give one of the local men a billy can and it would come back filled with native bee honey. These bees are stingless and are now protected by law.

Two hives of European Brown bees were brought with the First Fleet but they immediately vanished into the bush. Still later Italian bees were introduced and most bees today are a mixture of these two types.

In a good year a hive can produce 18kg of honey from five million flowers. In the process the bees cross pollinate the flowers and enable them to grow and reproduce.

Brian showed us all the paraphernalia associated with apiculture but he refused to light up his little smoker and give as 'a little trip'.

Glenys Bolland gave the meeting a short description of the path she followed to find the identity of Lieutenant Solomon Stanley Scherr, US Army Air Force who died on 13th November 1943. His death was in the Thunderbolt which crashed near what is now the intersection of Ballantine & Neilson Streets, Chermerside.

All Glenys had to start with was the exact date of the crash, the type of plane, it was a US pilot and little else. He was one of millions of US servicemen in World War II. She knew that the body would have been returned to the USA as was, and is, the US custom, but when and how?

First clue came with an article in the Courier Mail of 2008 which mentioned the name of the ship, wrongly spelt, which transported the remains of 1400 US service men and women back to USA. Google searches followed on the internet and she discovered Manson Park which is the present name of the US wartime cemetery at Ipswich.

With the help of Beverley Isdale they found two names of men who died on the 13/11/1943, one of them was Lieut. Sol S Scherr.

The next step was to find who he was; it proved difficult and time consuming. More searches followed, in lists of US war dead, Jewish people who served in the war, the 1930 US Census. She contacted the family of Rose Manson, after whom the park is named but Rose's records were lost. Rose cared for the graves and contacted the families of men buried there.

Emails went to several US agencies that may have been able to help but did not because Glenys was not Sol's next of kin. But finally this method paid off as she found one agency which agreed to release information about Sol after she explained about the Society's connection with and interest in his death.

As Glenys said we regard Sol in the same way that Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey, regarded the dead Anzacs buried at Anzac Cove, "they have become our sons". Sol Scherr died in the defence of Australia, and he died at Chermerside, so he is one of our sons now.

Addendum: The Society is working towards inscribing and erecting a plaque in Chermerside in memory of Sol S Scherr.

Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's speech to the mothers of the ANZACs in 1934:

*Those heroes that shed their blood
And lost their lives...*

*You are now lying in the soil of a friendly
country.*

Therefore, rest in peace.

*There is no difference between the Johnnies
And the Mehments to us where they lie side by
side,*

Here in this country of ours.

*You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far
away countries...*

Wipe away your tears.

*Your sons are now lying in our bosom
And are in peace.*

*After having lost their lives on this land, they
have*

Become our sons as well.

With thanks to Marika Pythagoras of Sydney who posted the above on the web.

Kemal Ataturk (1881-1938) was one of the most successful generals of the First World War. As a Colonel he frustrated the ANZAC invasion

of Turkey at Anzac Cove showing great bravery and leadership of his, at first, small defending force, which he was personally leading from the front. They almost ran out of ammunition but they held the line, and the heights, long enough for reinforcements to arrive and begin the siege.

He went on to lead the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire after WWI and become the founder of the Turkish Republic and its first President.

My father, Walter, who fought at Anzac Cove for the full period of the siege always had a good word for the Turkish soldier. One of the highlights of his life was at an Anzac Day sometime in the 1950s when he “shook the hand of an Old Turk”. A group of Mehmeds came to Australia to march with the Johnnies and Dad met some of them at the Anzac Club in Newcastle.

This is war from the point of view of one of the foot-sloggers.

Bus Trip – Gympie Rattler – Sunday 19th April 2009. The bus is almost filled and we need the money for the fares. So if you are coming and have not paid please cough up pronto.

A Women's Personal Safety Seminar will be held at Chermide Library on Wednesday 6 May from 6.30pm - 9pm

BSOL – Are you interested in learning how to use a computer or to improve your computer skills? Then BSOL – Brisbane Seniors on Line is for you. This is a group of volunteers who go to your home and give personal training. They also hold classes at Chermide, Zillmere and Nundah.

For information contact the local Ward Office on 3407 0707 or ring BSOL on 3210 6983. At least one of our members has already benefited from such training.

Correction: In the last issue I mentioned that we had a birthday cake for Keith Tune's 50th only to find out that he was five years older!

Comment from Brian Luke: In the story of Jack who slept in class (Previous Newsletter) Brian identified Jack Basnett whose father William ran a warm milk dairy near the Webster and Hamilton Roads intersection. Brian noted that the story must have been before 1940 when the Bassinets started to use milking machines and deliver the milk in a truck. Thanks Brian.

Elaine Campbell returned to teaching as a supply teacher after being away for five years. She was sent to Chermide State School for a short stint and stayed 13 years. She recalls a sad time in the old school's history:

At the end of 1973 the Principal, Mr Meldrum, left the school, I'm sure he and his wife weren't sorry to depart the old school house, which, though charming was in a sorry state of repair and the traffic noise must have been horrendous.

In 1974 Mr George Box became the Principal. He was a pleasant, chubby man who would have been a good subject for a Toby Mug! (JUG?) I remember he took Year Seven, as Chermide had declined, so that we were no longer entitled to have a non-teaching Principal. I had Year Five but when the Sevens attended a camp at Alexandra Headlands Mr Box told me he wasn't well enough to go so I was conscripted. I well recall a very tough Physical Education teacher in charge of the camp, which combined kids from several schools.

The first morning five boys were up making a noise before it suited the boss - he took them down to the beach and gave them such a work out there wasn't another problem for the rest of the week.

Chermide participated in cricket, Aussie Rules, softball and netball fixtures but found it a challenge against larger schools. Each August our annual sports day was always fun, with lots of parents there to support their kids.

One of the strengths of the school was an enthusiastic P & C and a wonderful group of tuck shop ladies.

I can't remember how far through 1975 it was, maybe August, that I had a call one weekend from Julie Peake to say Mr Box had died of a massive heart attack. We had all grown very fond of this happy man, and the school was plunged into deep mourning, with most of the staff attending the funeral service. For the rest of the year Len James was the acting Principal.

The G. A. Box Memorial Dedication Award board hangs in the Society's Archives room. It records outstanding students for the years from 1975 to 1985 and, although there was still room for more, none were added.

Late last year, Irene Bartlett, whose name is first on the board came to the school and saw her name. She was so delighted she bought a copy of the school history!

Changing Face of Chermside

It is not only in the high rise apartment area of Playfield Street that houses are giving way to new development of up to 10 levels. Below, the same is happening in the surrounding area of medium rise residential where only up to three levels can be built.



No. 18 Kidson Terrace, previously Victor Drive, the above three level brick and tile structure is only one of the many such sets of units found in the area. It replaces the 'timber and tin' home of the Smith family which was built in 1927 and the photo was taken in about 1943.



Lamont, No. 34 Kingsmill (Margaret) Street was built about 1915 as the family home of Hugh & May Hamilton and their 3 children. It was replaced by Kingsmill Court of seven units and about 20+ persons.



No. 8 Kingsmill Street. Sublime Residential Apartments, 10 units and about 30 people, replaced these two houses; probably built in the early post-War II era and holding between 4 and 8 persons when they were sold. One house possibly had an asbestos roof while the second seems to have had concrete tiles.