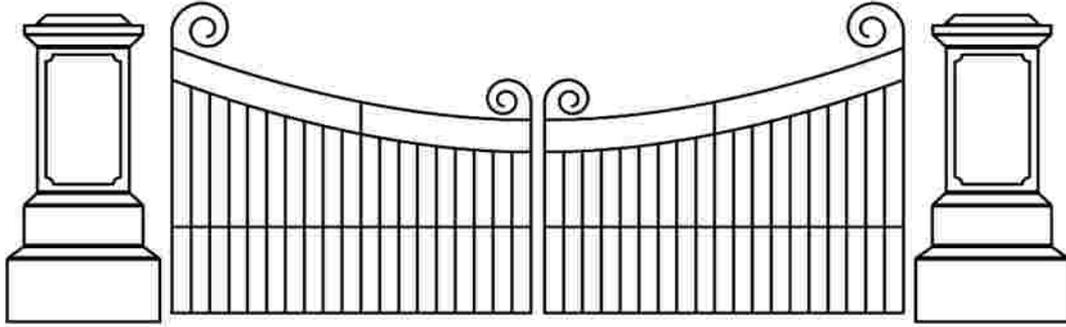


Preserving our past is our future



Chermside & Districts Historical Society Inc.

Website: <http://www.chermsidedistrict.org.au>

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NEWSLETTER

Oct -Nov 2010

(Issued Dec. Meeting)

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

Vale Norman Pfingst



After a long illness, Norm aged 85, died on Friday 19th Nov. at Prince Charles. He was a foundation member of the Society and contributed a great deal to the farming and school history sectors of the local area.

Always smiling, never complaining he took an active part in the meetings and other activities of the Society. The photo was taken

at the launch of our website in Dec. 2009; it was his last appearance at a Society function. Although he was struggling with health problems at the time he managed to ring in the website just like he used to ring in the school in the 1930s. The ever young bell ringer is fondly missed.

Vale Alan Arkinstall

Alan died aged 96, on Friday 22nd October at Symes Grove where he and Doll were living. A private funeral was held and Alan is now resting in Pinnaroo Cemetery along with many of his relatives and friends.

Alan was a lifelong resident of Chermside and District. He and Doll ran the store beside the Dawn Theatre for many years; he also farmed and owned a Taxi Licence.

When World War II broke out he joined the Australian Army in the transport section and served in the Middle East theatre. He was an early member of the Kedron-Wavell RSL, holding Number 4 membership card.

The family requests that any letters or cards be sent to Doll at Symes Grove. Sadly missed by the de Veres and Tilley families.

Nudgee Orphanage

Our speaker for October was Dennis Kennedy from Sandgate Historical Society. Dennis spoke on the early days of Nudgee Orphanage and Bishop Quinn, the first Catholic Bishop of Brisbane Town.

Bishop Quinn and the Reverend John Dunmore Lang, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland, had a lot in common. They both established their respective Churches in Queensland and they both organised the entry of great numbers of immigrants; each one bringing settlers from their own homelands.

Bishop Quinn arrived in 1861 and set about investigating his diocese on horseback, from Brisbane to Cape York Peninsular; it took about two years.

In 1863 the land around the future suburb of Nudgee was surveyed and many small farms were established. Bishop Quinn saw the possibilities of the area and bought up a large amount of land while the price was low. His foresight paid off in that the diocese had land to build schools, churches, the orphanage, the seminary and farms which could be rented out to farmers and provide income for the orphanage.

In 1867 Nudgee Orphanage was established and over the years it grew into a very large, carefully managed institution. Dennis estimates that by 1903 it accommodated some one thousand children. It was staffed by the Sisters of Mercy who accompanied Bishop Quinn from Ireland in 1861.

The orphanage farmed a lot of land, growing much of the produce needed by the residents. It had large kitchens, a bakery, probably a butchery and, by 1873 a very large dairy. It was the first local dairy to have mechanical milking; the machines being powered by a steam engine. They made their own butter and cheese as well as producing copious amounts of whole milk.

Grapes seem to have been a popular local crop in the area and the produce was sent to Toombul Vineyards for crushing and blending. However the vineyards died out by about 1925 probably due to competition from the more productive vineyards in the southern states.

In 1873, Rathborne was built as a house for Bishop Quinn who used it as a country residence. It

was the first all concrete building in the area and contained a very large Roman, walk-in bath, heated by a large double walled stove. The bishop suffered from rheumatism and used hot salt water baths to help ease the pain.

The orphanage children had two brass bands which flourished for many years. In about 1975 the floor in Rathborne collapsed and the band instruments were found where they had been stored and forgotten.

Over the years other institutions that were established on land Bishop Quinn bought included:
1867 – Nudgee Cemetery
1887 – Nudgee College
1889 – Sacred Heart Church and School, Sandgate
1941 – Pius XII Seminary, Banyo
21st Century – Catholic University Banyo Campus

Our speaker for November was Keith Boulton who is a volunteer at the Queensland Maritime Museum on the South Bank. Keith, using a Power Point Presentation, took us through the history and a tour of the QMM.

The museum is a voluntary association with about 400 members of which 140 are active volunteers, a paid staff of two and receives some funding from the Brisbane City Council and some industry groups. The remainder has to be raised by admission charges, renting premises for private use and general fund raising.

The QMM began in 1971 with the possession of the steam tug Forceful which they renovated and used for harbour and river cruises. The tug is still in good condition but it is getting more difficult to find qualified people to operate the old ship as the QMM is not qualified to train new operators.

When the South Brisbane Graving Dock closed in 1972 the QMM applied to use it and the following year the site became home for the museum. All went well until the great flood of 1974 completely covered the dock and left behind a great mass of silt and detritus which took months to clear.

QMM opened the old dock workshop in 1979 and the following year the HMAS Diamantina was gifted to the museum. It sailed from Sydney and arrived safely in Brisbane but it could not enter the dock until the following year.

During the Brisbane Expo in 1988 the dock enjoyed centre stage and at the end of the Expo the Pavilion of Promise was given to the museum. The following year a crisis occurred when the Caisson which holds back the Brisbane River began to leak; it had been there since the 1880s. The dock was not dry anymore and the ships inside were floating but undamaged. The Caisson was not replaced until July 2005 with the support of the Qld Government.

In 2006 a new Dock Wall was completed and on 21st November the Dock was officially opened. Work goes on continually maintaining the ships, the machinery, the site and fund raising. On the 30th December 2009 they celebrated the 30th Anniversary of QMM when the Dock Lights were switched on.

Keith showed many photos of the Forceful, Diamantina, Carpentaria, the restored Pearling Lugger Penguin and the replica Sailing Ship Duyfken all of which can be inspected by visitors as well as the displays of Lighthouses, Pearling Industry, Dockyard machinery which is all in working order, especially the pumps.

The Dockyard is an outstanding feature of the Brisbane waterfront and is highly recommended for visitors. Terry Hampson is already thinking of organising one for the CDHS.

World War I – The Great War 1914-1918

Kedron Shire with the modern suburbs superimposed. In 1911 2,400 people lived on farms, in villages and bush today some 120,000 people live in suburbia in the same area.

The War to end all wars had been brewing for a very long time. Germany was the ‘power house’ of Europe, her industry was the best and her army was better than any other. She wanted her place in the sun; it was Germany’s turn to be ‘top’ nation in Europe. And she was on track to achieve her ambition.

But then circumstances got out of control when a student thought he could solve his country’s problems with a revolver. He murdered the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in Sarajevo on 28th June 1914 and he wasn’t much of a shot either. He

aimed at the Archduke Franz and killed his wife the Duchess Sophie; the first of many millions. Most people living in the Kedron Shire probably did not know where Serbia was let alone Sarajevo. And they probably did not care much either, even when they read the news in the paper; it was all so far away. There was no radio or TV in those days.



The telegraph lines ran hot between the Chancelleries of Europe for the next few months. Apart from the fanatics, war was not wanted, but the situation drifted out of control until the great armies of Europe mobilised. Then war was inevitable and it was only a matter of time, a very short time, till the ‘guns of August’ spoke on the 3rd of the month. Then the real killing began but it was all so remote from Chermside; until Prime Minister Fisher pledged to support Great Britain ‘to the last man and the last shilling’.

The people of Kedron Shire in 1911 lived in 540 dwellings which would be a rough approximation of the number of families in the area. Over the next four years about 283 of the young men enlisted and went overseas, so every family either had a son or husband in the army or knew a family with a son or husband in the armed forces. Thus the war soon became a very serious concern to most of the local people.

A large camp was established in Sparkes’ and Marchant’s Paddocks which soon doubled the population of the Shire. That was good for all the local businesses and the local people responded by

helping to entertain the troops when they were on leave. When one lot left the camp, another lot replaced them.

The business of the army was to turn young men into soldiers; from labourers, apprentices, shop assistants, farmers, etc., into men who would fight using deadly weapons and kill the enemy soldiers who previously had been labourers, apprentices and so on who had been trained, and so on.

Each side believed they had God on their side so each side believed that they were right and the opposite side was wrong. Each side produced their own story to justify their actions; it was called the truth, while they accused the other side of spreading lies called propaganda. And since it was war each side discouraged people who asked questions and maybe even locked them up; they had no right to question the 'truth'.

After several weeks training at Chermerside they were on the way to becoming soldiers but they still have to go into battle for the ultimate test.



Young men, freshly arrived in Chermerside Camp, learn to line up for their food. The large dishes on the ground seem to indicate that each one is from a separate tent and collects the food for their tent mates. First lesson was - you belong to a designated group and you will look after each other; this is your family for the duration. And they had not even been issued with uniforms.

As the war dragged on and the casualties mounted local people scanned the casualty lists printed in the newspapers looking for news of the local men. When a digger was wounded or killed his next of kin was notified by telegram so they found out officially and before the public was notified. Of the 283 local men who went overseas 53 were killed, either in action (KIA), died of wounds

(DOW) or died from other causes while at least another 50 would have been wounded. This means that a lot of grief would have been shared among the families and friends. Today when a service person is killed, the body is brought home and a service is held and large numbers attend the service. This was not the custom in the great wars but the sorrow was just as real.



Soldiers marching in full kit, armed and with flag flying, to Zillmere railway station where they entrained. Where were they going? That would be a military secret but everybody knew they were going overseas to the front. When would they be back? Would they be back? There were anxious hearts left behind.

For more information on this part of our history see our website page on World War I.

US Civil War Veteran in Lutwyche Cemetery

An email arrived from James M. Gray, Commander Sons of Confederate Veterans, Inc. Australia. James said he had found that a Confederate veteran of the 1860-65 war was buried in Lutwyche. He asked for our assistance in finding the grave of Alexander Fergus Ross and photographing it. If needs be he was prepared to erect a headstone or repair an existing one.

At first I was unable to locate the grave but Beverley, using lateral thinking, found the location, went and photographed it and forwarded the data to me. We have informed James who was delighted and is going to clean the headstone. He is also thinking about attaching a small Confederate emblem to the headstone.



The headstone of Alexander, died in 1935 at age 93 and Mary Ross, died in 1942 at age 82 years.



LEFT: Alexander and Mary Ross RIGHT: Beside them in the same plot are three of their five children – Murdoch, Isabella and Mackay buried in the same grave.

James Grey was able to contact the Society through our website which emphasises the importance of this medium to advertise our activities. For more details go to our website and look at the Lutwyche Cemetery pages, which are currently being reorganised.

Marchant Lecture

The inaugural George Marchant Lecture was held in the Chermside Library on Saturday 20th November at 10am and was attended by 55 people.

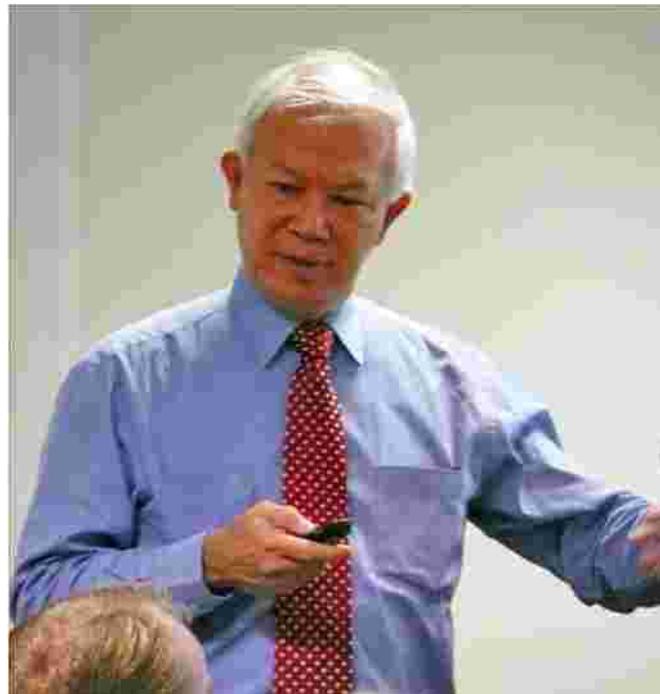
The President, Terry Hampson commenced by welcoming the visitors and outlining the life and times of George and Mary Marchant. He then welcomed the speaker Major General Darryl Low Choy (Ret) Commander of 7th Brigade, now Associate Professor at Griffith University in Environmental Science.

Prof. Choy, using a power point display, explored

the Honourable Tradition of the part-time soldier who, in time of war, would become a full-time soldier. Some joined to use their trade or profession in the Militia while others joined to learn new trades and professions; they all became soldiers. They trained in Chermside and in 1915 they went to Gallipoli and then on to the Western Front in France and Belgium; then back to civilian life.

In the interwar period the Militia was reformed and went to war when World War II began in 1939. Again they trained at Chermside as the 7th Brigade and went to Milne Bay where they inflicted the first defeat that the Japanese Army suffered in WWII. Then on to the islands of the Pacific to clear the Japanese out which involved very heavy fighting. Then in 1945 they were demobilised and went back to civilian life.

The tradition continued in the form of the National Service training, the Citizens Military Force and the Army Reserve. It was not until the 1980s that the 7th Brigade was reformed as part of the Army Reserve and took part in such large scale manoeuvres as Operation Kangaroo when the entire Australian Army was deployed across Northern Australia. By that time women were in the fighting units as soldiers.



Associate Professor Darryl Low Choy answers a question in the course of his lecture. He is holding a remote control for his power point illustration. The 7th Brigade has been in overseas missions such as Cambodia, Afghanistan, Namibia, Western Sahara, Ruanda and other places as part of the United Nations Peacekeeping forces. The Honour-

able Tradition of the Citizen Soldier continues. For more on the relationship between Chermside District and the Australian Army visit our website sections on World War I and World War II.



Part of the crowd listening to Dr Darryl Low Choy in the meeting room at Chermside Library.

Report on the Kedron – Bracken Ridge Busway

The Management Committee Meeting on 15-11-2010 started early at 1pm and concluded the business by 2pm. Other members of the Society joined the executive to discuss the Busway officials, Toni Nardi and Glen Warner. The meeting went till after 3pm when Toni had to go to another meeting.

Questions by the members were answered and the difficulties of trying to accommodate diverse points of view were soon apparent. Both men emphasised that they were still gathering information and they were trying to find the best possible solutions to problems raised. It soon became apparent that there were few, if any simple solutions.

The following points were emailed to the Busway Authority outlining the Society's views.

Vellnagel's Blacksmith's forge and workshop now located on the western side of Gympie Road opposite Murphy Road. It is presently part of the Dixon Homes sales unit. We want the forge and workshop preserved even if it has to be moved. It was moved in 1921 from its original position on the opposite side of Gympie Road.

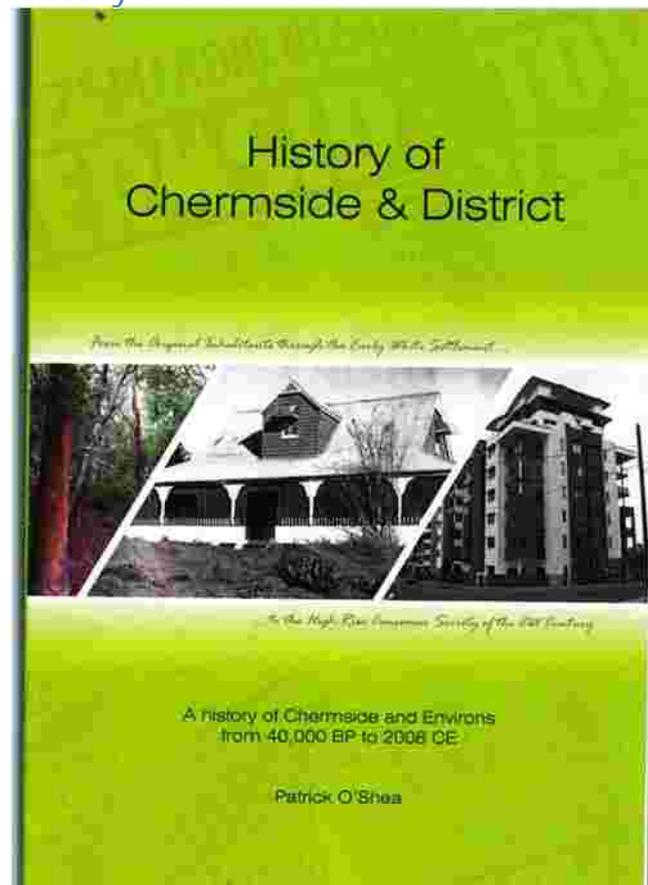
The World War I Memorial Gates on Marchant Park: The Gates are important not the site – the gates have already been changed when the main roadway section was widened from 10 foot wide to 20foot wide, possibly in the 1970s. The iron gates are not the original but were probably installed when the widening took place. We think that if the entrance to Marchant Park is to be

changed, and we hope it will be as the present one is a traffic hazard, then the gates should go to the new entrance where it will be seen by as many people as possible. The gates are meant to remind the present generations of the cost of that long ago war which cost the local district so much loss and sorrow.

Lutwyche Cemetery: We feel the tunnel option is the best, geology allowing. It will not interfere with the graves, the Sexton's House, the Tram Shelter and will not hold up Gympie Road while it is being built. The thought of Gympie Road being more congested than at present beggars belief. This was accepted as a submission by the Busway Authority.

There will be another meeting of the Community Reference Group will be held soon at which the Busway Authority will present a summary of the information gathered in the local consultations held recently. A report will be given in the next Newsletter.

History of Chermside and District



The proofs have been read, 280 photos annotated, the index done and the sources recorded. All you have to do is collect your copy and read it. The 248 page history costs \$25 plus \$11 if posted.

Note: The history will be constantly updated on our website as new material becomes available.