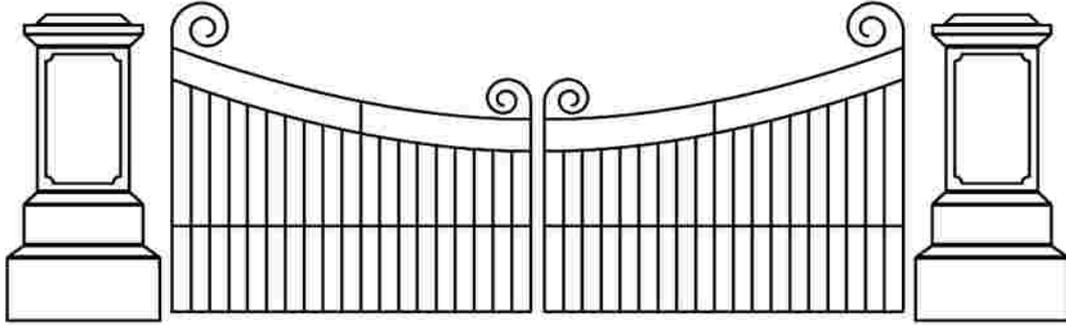


Preserving our past is our future



Chermside & Districts Historical Society Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

Oct-Nov 2011

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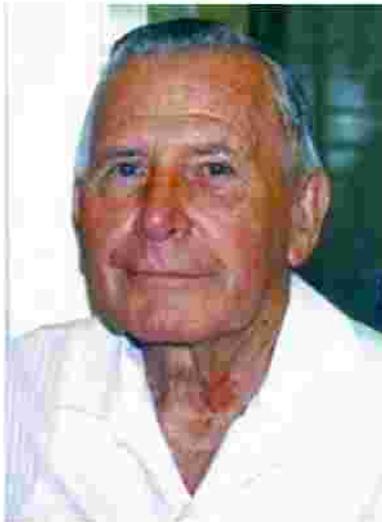
Gay Sparkes

ABN 15 432 826 265

INC. No. IA28320

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 Keith Hibberd



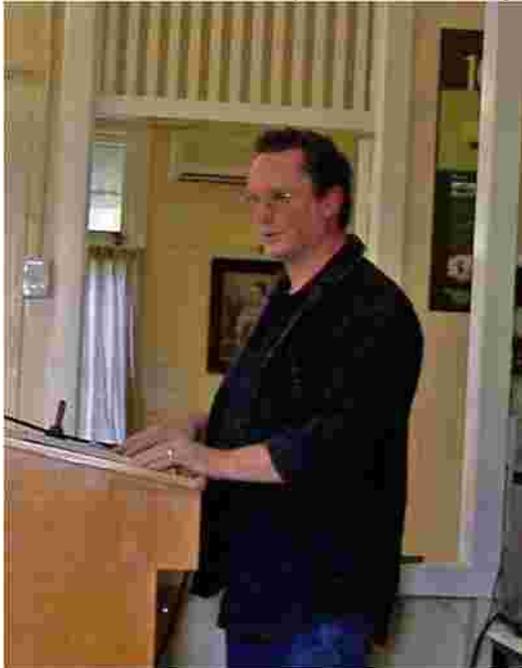
Keith's funeral was held on Tuesday 18-10-2011 at Albany Creek. He was a foundation member of the society and contributed much valuable information on the local pre-WWII Picture Theatres and Bruce Pie Industries. His wife, May, died in April 2010. Keith served in the RAAF in WWII and was a foundation member of the K/W RSL, he was 86 years old.

Our speaker for October was Geoff Harris, assisted by Eileen Kemp, who outlined the history of Samford. Once it was a small farming community and now it is a suburb of Brisbane; sounds much like the history of Chermside et al.

The first white settlement in the area was by squatters when the land was opened for settlement after the closure of the Morton Bay penal colony in 1842. This was the time of graziers of sheep and cattle. In 1845 William Joyner took up a 20mile² run which he named Samsonvale, but settlement was difficult because of the thick forest. Other large land holders followed and in 1861 a property of 20miles² called Samford was transferred from Archibald Young to Clarence Ball with an annual rent of £56. In 1866 William Townley secured the lease but was not very successful. Later he had a very distinguished Public Service career in the colonial government.

A major local industry that appeared in the early days was timber getting and milling, mainly for the Brisbane market; the local settlers cut their own timber for housing.

Towards the end of the 18th Century land resumption by the government was breaking up the large holdings for small settlers. This was the day of the small farmer who cleared much of the forest for small crops. It was extremely hard work and few were able to retire; they didn't live long enough.



Geoff Harris addressing the Society

Produce such as bananas, pineapples, vegetables, fruit, dairy products, animals such as pigs and calves were raised for the Brisbane market. Small crops of corn and lucerne were grown for the animals. The cream from the dairies went to the butter factory, the pigs to Huttons at Zillmere, whole milk was picked up at the farm gate for the Brisbane market; the last dairy closed in 2001.

The smaller farms were all family run, consequently the population grew as did the need for a school. The local people built a Provisional school in 1872 and as the population stabilised the government built a permanent school in 1878. Nearby a cemetery was established; the local area was really looking up.

Transport was a problem in that it was slow and the roads were rough. A shopping trip to Brisbane took three days, two of which were travelling and the middle one for shopping.

In 1918 the railway line arrived in the district which revolutionised transport to Brisbane and must have greatly assisted the local farmers and shoppers.

In the 1920's there was a lot of soldier settlement in the area which further increased the population.

The scheme was a mixed blessing as many of the farms were too small on which to make a living and many ex-soldiers had to leave.

In the 1930's the banana industry was devastated by the disease 'bunchy-top' and the government had all plantations destroyed. On the positive side electricity arrived in 1937 and enabled the dairy farmers to install milking machines, increase their herds and expand their production.

In spite of the Great Depression and the Second World War the area grew steadily but times were changing in many ways. The automobile in particular made great changes when Australia entered the age of the car. The versatility that the car gave to transport made it the vehicle of choice for many people. The roads were improved and when the road over the range was reconstructed, motor transport took over. So much use was made of the car and truck that the railway line was closed in 1955.

The 1960's saw the age of the developers who bought up farmland to build houses and streets for the many people who wanted to move into the then semi-rural environment. To see just how much the area has changed a visit to the Samford District Historical Museum is recommended. Fortunately some far sighted people saw the need for this institution before all the old buildings were subsumed by the carpet of housing. Sound familiar?

Plucknett Sulky – Geoff Harris rang to tell me that the Samford Historical Society and Museum had been given an old sulky which they were in the process of restoring. They pulled it apart and were cleaning the different parts when a maker's name plate was found. The maker was J. Plucknett of Chermerside. We are looking forward to being able to photograph the finished sulky. Thanks Geoff.

The Society held its second George Marchant Memorial Lecture on Saturday 5-11-2011 in the Long Tan Room at Kedron-Wavell Social Club. The lecturer was Auntie Ruth Hegarty, a Cherbourg Dormitory girl who became a Queensland Great and a highly respected Aboriginal Elder of the Turrbul People.

She was sent to Cherbourg when she was six and a half months old because her white father left her mother and the state decided that Ruth had to be taken into 'care'. It was a time when too many white men fathered 'half-cast' children and then left them. For the next 21 years Ruth was brought up in the tightly regimented atmosphere of Cherbourg and the only way out for the girls was marriage. She was a child of two cultures, brought up in the white one and having to learn of the black one in her adult life.



Aunty Ruth addresses the meeting

Ruth, an only child, married and raised eight children, all of whom are in responsible positions in today's society and have given her a host of grandchildren. Her husband, Joe, died 25 years ago of cancer. She finally found her father's family and was united with a lot more relatives; they were delighted to have her as part of the extended family. She started as an 'only child' and now is waiting for her 100th descendant to be born. Ruth is a winner who educated herself; she has spent years campaigning on behalf of her people

for social justice and a fair go. She has fought racism, discrimination, rejection and she has come up smiling with her hand held out in friendship to all other people. The title Auntie is one of the proudest titles that an Australian Aboriginal woman can have and she wears it lightly; she is a peaceful woman of great dignity and completely dedicated to helping and understanding all people so 'that all may be one mob'.

Indicative of her energy is the fact that, although in her eighties, she has just completed a speaking tour of Tasmania. In addition she has written three books on the relationship between the black and the white, the latest being "Is that you Ruthie" which is her autobiography.

Busway: On 20-10-2011 Pat attended what will probably be the last meeting of the Community Reference Group which advised the Busway Planners on local community feedback. The Preferred Corridor route from Kedron to Bracken Ridge was released. The only changes which will be made in the future are on details such as bus stops in between stations or if a new form of transport is invented. Another possibility is that another Bill Basnett comes along and takes the Government to Court on a point of Law and wins.

The busway is slated to be built between 2021 and 2026 but the Chermerside Bus Station should be built in about 2015/16 to replace the existing bus interchange on the corner of Hamilton and Gympie Roads.

A full bus replaces forty cars. The alternative to the Busway is to build eight extra traffic lanes each way along Gympie Road. Think how much space would be needed.

Feeder buses will ferry people to the Bus Stations while others will walk or ride bicycles. There may be some park and ride facilities for cars near the outer Bus Stations.

What we are looking at here on the Northside is already operating on the Southside busway.

There will be no resumption of properties for a long time unless people have to sell their house for some reason. The property will be purchased at market price as if there was no busway. That is

properties will not lose any market value because of the busway.



An artist's portrait of the Chermanside Bus Station which is expected to be built in about 2015-16 and will replace the existing Bus Interchange. Ignore the buildings and concentrate on the walkways over the busway and Gympie Road. Lifts will be provided instead of stairs.

PANDORA: We have accepted an invitation to join Australia's Web Archive set up by the National Library of Australia in 1996. This means that all of our extensive website will be permanently placed in the Archives of the National Library, with regular up-dates each couple of years. This is something we have wanted to do ever since we opened our website. It will make our site available to an ever widening readership which is what we want.

Bus Trip to Wyaralong Dam in the Gold Coast hinterland was a great success even though the numbers were down on previous bus excursions. Only 25 went which seems to be a downward trend in recent years; previously we were able to fill a large bus with substantial help from non-members. Due to circumstances beyond our control the venue of the trip had to be changed at very short notice from Hinze Dam to the Wyaralong.

However the smaller bus was brand new and very comfortable.

7th Brigade Park New Pavilion, Shelter, Rest area has been built on the park side of Kittyhawk Drive near the Corporal John French Bridge. It is adjacent to the existing open area which has the map of Downfall Creek showing the Mountains to Mangroves map. This is a major pedestrian crossing of Kittyhawk Drive which is controlled by

traffic lights. While the shelter is on the high side of the park the trees obscure the view but the trees are looking better by the day in spite of the vandals destroying the newly planted ones.

The shelter will feature various displays relating to the history of the park. CDHS will be responsible for writing the history of the park from its origin in Murphy's Paddock in 1864. Alex Morris is looking after the military history. Plaques may be placed at various sites in the park to indicate where various structures stood.

The shelter was completed with the planting of the garden surrounds on Friday 25-11-2011 along with a new bicycle/pedestrian path linking the existing path over the Downfall and Somerset Creeks and the path along Kittyhawk Drive. Council has also made 15/20 more parking spaces available at Kids' Space which is as popular as ever.

Painting of school: As reported in the last issue we have received a grant to paint the school. The Colourbond people examined the roof and then started the preparations which covered a period of ten days. I am not sure what they do but that is standard procedure for a Colourbond roof. They then had to clean off the graffiti on the roof and the paint that had been applied to cover the graffiti.

Who said painting a roof was easy?

We decided to change the colour of the roof and had to consult the Heritage Architect. He was of the opinion that the colour did not matter as in the early days the corrugated iron roofs were often left unpainted while some were painted, but there was no consistent colour. We chose a light grey to simulate the unpainted galvanised iron.

The actual painting only took two days and the weather obliged by being very dry. So far this has been the driest November ever; another record broken!

The painting of the outside walls of the building has commenced with a water blasting to remove all loose paint and grime. It is will be finished in December. The last painting was in 1999 just after it was shifted to its present position. And the vandals broke every pane of glass in the place, that's why we have ugly cages over the windows.

The vandals have had a continuous presence in the Precinct and while the graffiti has been greatly reduced by Police, Council and Government action their destructiveness continues. Their continuing 'achievement' is destroying the plastic downpipes on the three buildings in the Precinct. They slash and smash the soft plastic pipes, we repair them and they slash and smash again. We are currently investigating the use of Zincolume shields over the downpipes.

Parking Problems: The parking lot at Kedron Wavell has been fenced in and security people have been stationed at the entrance. This is to prevent people parking all day and catching a bus or going to shop at nearby Westfield. Meanwhile outsiders have been using our little parking lot at the Precinct and causing some confrontations. To remedy this Kedron Wavell have installed a boom gate to keep the peace.



The Precinct parking lot boom gate set in the open position. It will become operational soon and will allow vehicles to go into the park but will have to be opened by someone operating the mechanism. We will still be able to open the big steel boom gate nearby to allow parking behind the Voyager Centre and the Drill Hall.

Story of 7th Bdg Park

In 1864 Edgar Huxtable surveyed the site of the future Chermside area. This survey marked the final takeover of the land from the Aboriginal owners by establishing English legal title to the land.

Most of the local paddocks were between 4ha and 12ha, and one huge paddock around Downfall Creek of 203ha was bought by William Murphy in 1868. The short cut to Zillmere across the paddock later became Murphy Road.

In about 1882 the paddock was bought by Michael Ballinger, a dairy farmer, who gave the North West section of 41ha to his son. In about 1900 this paddock was purchased by George Marchant who eventually gave it to Kedron Shire in 1921 for use as a public park; it was named after Marchant and is now Brisbane's premier cricket ground.

The main paddock of 162ha passed through several owners and, in 1909, was finally bought by Alonzo Sparkes who set up his slaughter yard to supply his six butcher shops in Brisbane. It became known as Sparkes' Paddock.

Both of these paddocks were used by the Colony of Queensland military and, during World War I (1914-1918), by the Australian Imperial Forces (AIF) as training camps.

In 1941 just after World War II broke out, the Commonwealth Government bought Sparkes' Paddock and set up the 7th Brigade training camp with a fuel dump in the adjacent Marchant Park. Thousands of young men trained here before moving on to the battle grounds of New Guinea and the Pacific Islands; some 560 of them never returned and twice that number were wounded. They were all traumatised.

After the end of the war on 15th August 1945 the camp was rapidly emptied and much of it was used to house homeless people. There was a very serious shortage of housing as very few houses were built during the war years.

The Downsizing of Sparkes' Paddock

Despite the severe shortages of building materials thousands of new houses were built in and around Chermside after the war; some 850 were built in

Sparkes' Paddock. In about 1950, the area between Banfield Street, Downfall Creek and Gympie Road was used by the Commonwealth Government to build a Technical Training school. This was to train telephone technicians and linesmen for the expanding phone network. In 2006 Westfield Shopping Town expanded into this area and Kittyhawk Drive was extended to Murphy Road.

In 1963 Brisbane City Council acquired the remaining 71 hectares of Sparkes' Paddock from the Australian Government and renamed it the Hamilton Road Reserve.

This was followed by the building of the Chermside Pool in 1964, the Kedron-Wavell RSL Complex beginning in 1970, the Chermside Library in 1997 and the Chermside Historical Precinct in 2000.

In March 1996, the area was renamed 7th Brigade Park in memory of the men who trained here and fought so courageously at Milne Bay where they inflicted the first ever defeat of the Imperial Japanese Army.



This small map shows the original grant of land which became known as Murphy's Paddock in the 1860s. It was bounded on the north by Ellison Road, on the east by Newman Road, on the south by Hamilton Road, on the west by Playfield Street, Banfield Street and Gympie Road.

A Life Membership was presented to Beverley Isdale at the Marchant Memorial Lecture on the 5-11-2011.

Beverley is a foundation member of the Society and has served as Secretary, Chairperson, Archivist and Executive Member for the past 13 years. In that time she has systematically organised the archives by indexing some thousands of historical items including documents, photos and pictures

digitally on disk and as hard copy in filing cabinets. The Society Library has been properly indexed using the Dewey System and is stored on library shelving.



Beverley holds her certificate while she recovers from the surprise, it was a complete secret. However she suspected something was afoot when she saw her father and daughter sitting and smiling at the back of the room.

She has developed a series of some twenty photographic displays with each one stored in a separate Arch folder. These are listed under various headings and are used to set up visual displays in the district libraries on special occasions.

Beverley is renowned for her highly developed research skills which she constantly uses to find information on various topics and persons. This is especially valuable when she is helping someone who is researching their family history.

Beverley is the fifth member to be awarded a Life Membership. The others are Joan Hamilton, Marian Eaton, Adrian Turner and Pat O'Shea.

**A Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year
to all our readers.**