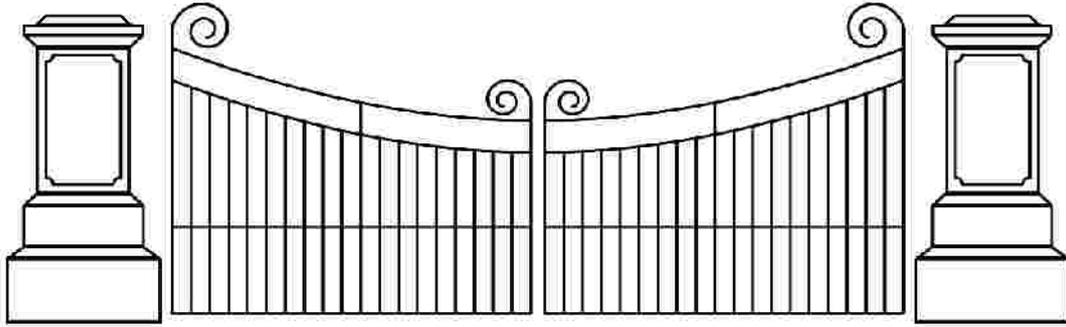


*Preserving our past is our future*



# Chermside & Districts Historical Society Inc.

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

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NEWSLETTER

Jun -July 2012

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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.

Speaker for June Meeting: The speaker did not materialise so Terry Hampson used a DVD on the Mountains to Mangroves organisation. It explained the work being done to preserve the unique wild life corridor centred on Downfall and Cabbage Tree Creeks, both of which lead from the hilly country of the west to the sea at Moreton Bay. The corridor is an attempt to enable the natural wild life, both plant and animal, to move back and forth along, and in the creeks, and prosper in the way nature intended.

The M2M Corridor stretches 32 km. across the north side of Brisbane from Camp Mountain in Brisbane Forest Park to Boondall Wetlands on the fringes of Moreton Bay. In an increasingly urbanised environment, it provides a corridor of green spaces using a network of natural bushland, sports fields, backyards, parks and waterways.

Protecting and enhancing the connections between this mosaic of green is vital to allow wildlife to move safely in search of food, homes and mates.

The M2M corridor incorporates parts of the South Pine River, Kedron Brook, Cabbage Tree Creek

and Nundah/Downfall Creek catchments. It passes through a range of native vegetation and habitat types, from tall open forests and eucalypt woodlands, to streamside rainforests and heaths, ending at salt marshes and coastal mangroves.



*Four local creeks form part of the M2M Corridor; Cabbage Tree, Little Cabbage Tree, Downfall and Nundah Creeks.*

The corridor also provides homes for wildlife trying to survive in urban areas. Swamp wallabies shelter in the gullies of Chermside Hills Reserve, while Boondall Wetlands provides nesting and hunting sites for birds of prey such as osprey and

white-bellied sea eagles. Careful observers can still spot platypus in parts of Cabbage Tree Creek. The corridor is also an important recreation resource for local residents, with key sites such as Boondall Wetlands, 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade Park and Brisbane Forest Park.



*Stirling engaged the meeting in a wide discussion ranging from Regional Planning to Anecdotes*

The speaker for the July meeting was Stirling Hinchliffe who was a foundation member and the first Chair of the Society. He played a large and important part in setting up the society by overseeing the formation of the constitution and the structure of the society involving the ABN and the Incorporation.

Stirling served two terms as the State Member for Stafford, the second one as a Minister, but was a casualty of the 2012 election which illustrates the uncertainty of politicians' employment.

Stirling gave an account of the wide range of people with whom he had to deal. In one day he may be in close contact with Clive Palmer and a few hours later with a family facing eviction from their home; this calls for great versatility.

When he accompanied Gina Rinehart to witness the first coal produced at the Alpha mine he was the only ALP man amongst a bevy of LNP politicians. They spent three hours cooped up together

in a helicopter; at least in Parliament you have some friends. It sounds like trial by ordeal

A more pleasant incident occurred when he visited Barcaldine at the time when Peter Beattie was amalgamating the local councils of Queensland which caused great controversy. He was accompanied by the mayor of Barcaldine and Vaughn Johnson, the local LNP member, both of whom were opposed to the amalgamation. They were examining the local caravan park to see how it could be upgraded to cater for the Grey Nomads who were very important to Barcaldine as tourists.

It was 6.30am and they met a man out early walking his dog. The walker, who came from Victoria, got into conversation with the inspection group and remarked that the best thing Jeff Kennett ever did was amalgamate the local councils in Victoria. Stirling was hard put to conceal his pleasure.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Estate – Politicians and Journalists have a symbiotic relationship i.e. they need each other. The polities need to get the message out and the Journos need to get the paper out – your scratch my back I'll scratch yours. But not always, there is the little matter of spin; they may not spin together.



*Front page of the Courier Mail in September 2011 sometime before the 2012 election*

This cartoon, which appeared on the front page, suggested that the government was off on a jolly junket to the international holiday resorts in the wide blue yonder. Stirling is in the background

and this was the first he heard that he was going overseas. It appears that a journalist had been talking to a public servant and misinterpreted the message and, the editor, instead of checking the journalist's sources went ahead and published. This must have been the biggest beat up of the year. Stirling never did get to go overseas.

But the relationship persisted; up at 5am each morning the politician checks the media reports, contacts the local radio station and offers to do interviews – 30minutes for a 10second news grab; still going late at night preparing releases for tomorrow.

So after two terms in government then out, Stirling feels that it was well worth while even with the criticism that goes with the job. "If you take things personally then you don't last long in public life. Try again? No decision till next year."

**Speaker at the September Meeting** is Jim Lesigner and he has asked for members to bring along photos relating to Cloudland in its heyday.

So far one of our members has given us a photo which would have been taken about 50 years ago.



Remember when we all looked like this? Maybe we were not so snazzy in Tux and Evening Dress but we managed. They look like professional dancers, don't they?

Can you guess who they are? She still looks

good but he has lost some hair. Both are still very active and recently went for a trip along a couple of very big rivers.

**Have you ever wondered why Chermiside was founded in this location and not in Aspley or Kedron?** There is not much difference between the three locations. Have you ever wondered why Chermiside was chosen as a Growth Centre for the Northside of Brisbane and not Kedron or Aspley?

Well maybe you have not but some people have been asking these questions and a couple of us started searching for answers. After all that is what history is all about, asking the question **WHY** is it So?

The result is that a new page has appeared on our website; right at the bottom of the table of contents. It is entitled "**Chermiside – Foundation and Growth**" and attempts to tell the story.

It all started with a track, dusty in the dry season and muddy in the wet season, going nowhere in particular but in the general direction of North from Brisbane Town. It crossed several creeks but there were no bridges.

Then along came a chap called John Patterson with his family, an ex-policeman looking for a place to open a shop. Why would anybody in their right mind open a shop in the bush where hardly anybody lived? Crazy! But in about 1870 he did just that where the Green Motel now stands. And the shop was still there in about 1965; 95 years and doing well in spite of being right beside the Drive-In Shopping Centre.



John looks like a formidable fellow; maybe he could have scared Ned Kelly.

So even when there were hardly any settlers in the local area the commercial centre of the future Chermiside

was being formed.

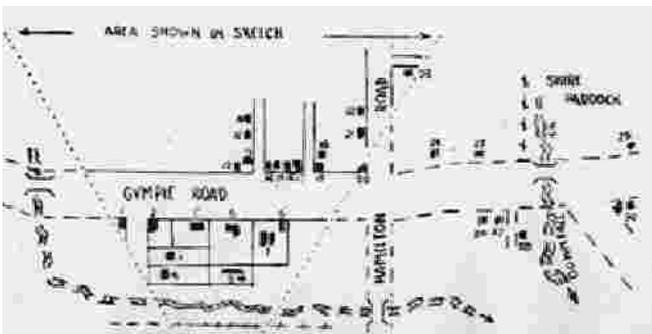
Then another settler arrived on the scene who wanted to be a farmer. He was crazy; why would a highly skilled joiner, carpenter and wheelwright want to be a farmer? But common sense prevailed and he founded the first blacksmith's forge in the tiny little huddle of huts which didn't even have a

name. And he wasn't a blacksmith either! But could he make carts? Yes he could! And the small acreage farmers needed carts. So even when the place didn't have a name the manufacturing centre of the future Chermside was being formed.



*The Hamilton complex included a forge, a carriage building workshop and, under the little skillion roof on the left, a post office.*

The growth of the small settlement was slow and by the turn of the century Downfall Creek was still only a small hamlet. In the 1970s Stan Eddowes drew a map of the place from a photo taken in 1902 and provided the first map of soon to be named Chermside.



*The first map of Chermside drawn by Stan Eddowes shows the settlement from Dead Man's Gully (Somerset Creek) crossing Gympie Road near Kuran Street to Vellnagels Forge on the other side of Downfall Creek.*

Now you can't see much of this map so you will have to look at it on our website. Stan numbered each building and gave the name of the owner.

Other industries such as slaughter yards, tanneries, wool scouring, bone mills, saw mills appeared, and in due time, disappeared. Only one tannery survived and it moved to Narangba. Why was this all happening here and why did they leave?

Several other later maps show the growth of Chermside District over the years and it was quite slow, only reaching one thousand one hundred people by 1921; after World War II the population expanded rapidly. What caused that expansion?

The farmers were selling their properties so more houses could be built, streets of them. How was this possible? Where was the money coming from?

Then one farmer, Bill Bassinet, made the Brisbane City Council, the largest council in Australia to stop in its tracks and revise its town planning scheme. Why and how did he, a dairy farmer, do it?

Why did Chermside kick up such a fuss to get the trams to come to here? And then after a mere 21 years tear up the tracks and consign the trams to history or somewhere?

Why on earth would an old, successful and respected department store in Queen Street move its business out to Chermside in 1957? Other similar stores predicted that the move was madness but in a few years they were following suit. And in 1959 the whole kit and caboodle was sold to Myers from Melbourne. The shop has grown like the eggplant that ate Chicago; at present in 2012 it wants to expand again; when will it stop?

Amid this proliferation of horizontal growth of houses and, since 2005 vertical growth of high rise apartment blocks, Chermside has, not one but two of the largest parks in Brisbane. I call it Murphy's gift to Chermside although he died in about 1870. Did it all just happen? Was it planned?

And you know what? The people living here don't want to leave while other people are moving in as fast as units can be built. The population is rising and employment is rising even faster. Could it be we are in a spiral of self-sustaining growth?

Only four pages this time as I have been too busy trying to answer these questions and do the paper work.

I have been up since 4am and I have to get this done so it can be printed. And I have to get out on my bike to make sure Chermside is still there; somebody may steal it and take it away!