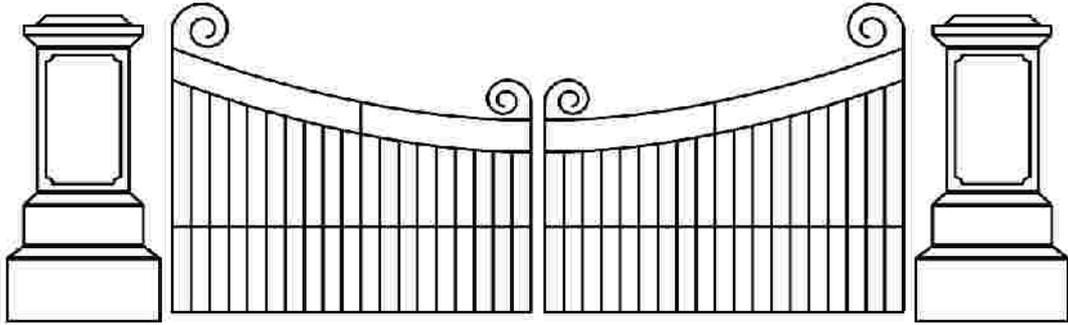


Preserving our past is our future



Chermside & Districts Historical Society Inc.

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

Volume 15.No. 5

NEWSLETTER

Oct-Nov 2012

(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 Enid (nee Mellers) Brunckhorst



Enid joined the CDHS in 2003 and has been a keen member although unable to attend meetings.

The photo was taken earlier this year outside her Compton Gardens Unit.

Her contributions to the Society consisted of a variety of family photos, historical records and stories of her childhood.

Enid died at 82 and her funeral took place on Monday 26-11-2012 to Lutwyche Cemetery. Her ashes were interred in the grave of her husband Noel who died in 2002. She now rests with her husband and ancestors, the Alfredsons and Mellers in her Lutwyche childhood playground.

Our speaker for October was Earl Rawlings who has been prominent in Chermside & District community affairs for many years. Earl worked as a Court Reporter for some 40 years and recorded many criminal trials during that time; he shared some of them with us and drew many questions from the listeners.



The first case was a well know one for the listeners, many of whom knew the victim well and some even went to school with her. Fay Vellnagel married a Dutchman, Plomp, who was a train or tram driver. He used to joke to his workmates that the best way to get rid of a wife was to drown her, but as far as Fay was concerned it wasn't a joke.

The couple went to Southport where Fay, who could not swim, was drowned. The lifesavers who found the body were sceptical that a person could actually drown in such a calm sea. The Coroner gave a verdict of death by drowning but the police charged Plomp with murder

Before he came to trial Plomp was charged with rape which didn't help him in his murder trial. He was eventually convicted of murder and sentenced to life, which at the time was 15 years. On release he was deported to Holland. The two children of the marriage would probably have been raised by the Vellnagel family.

The second case was heard in Bundaberg. It involved a railway fettler named Phillipi who used to ride his push bike some 20 miles to his work on the rail line, stay there for the week and ride home on the Friday. Meanwhile Mrs Phillipi was enjoying the attentions of a male visitor when her husband came home unexpectedly and caught them. The visitor left in a great hurry while the enraged husband took an axe and killed his wife. He then swallowed all the pills he could find in the house, rode his bicycle to the Police Station and confessed to the killing. The police took him to the hospital where his stomach was pumped out and he was later charged with murder.

At the trial his wife's night time visitor gave evidence and the jury found Mr Phillipi guilty of manslaughter and entered a plea for mercy. The following day at the sentencing a letter from the two Phillipi boys was read to the court. The boys, both minors, pleaded for their father because there would be no one to look after them; it was a moving scene. The verdict was guilty of manslaughter with a sentence of seven years.

The boys were fostered out by the state but both finished up with criminal records and one went to jail after assaulting another man.

The third case involved Mr and Mrs Golchert who were found murdered in their bed by person or persons unknown. The police were alerted by the milkman who found his delivery untouched for a couple of days.

The next door neighbours, a Mr and Mrs Pressler, separated by a grassy block of ground, were on holidays. Police interviewed them twice and became suspicious of Pressler, although Mrs Pressler gave him an alibi. After they found the murder weapon in the vacant block they charged him with murder.

Pressler then claimed to have had a vivid dream in which he killed the Golcherts claiming that it was done in a dreamlike state.

During the trial someone smuggled razor blades into Pressler's cell and he slashed his wrists but was found before he bled to death. He was found guilty of murder and sentenced to life which at the time was 15 years.

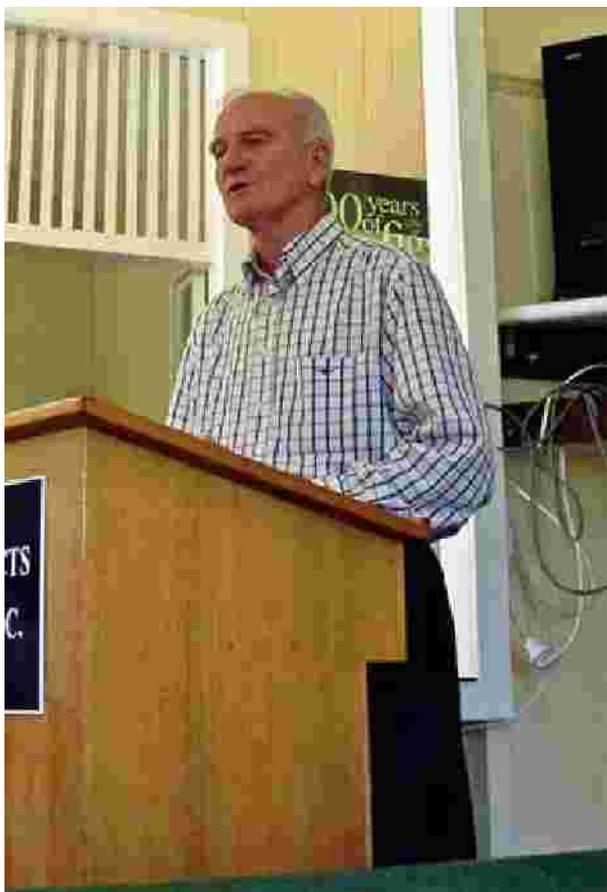
About three weeks after the trial the matter became really bizarre when Pressler's mother found a relative, Henry Pressler, had committed suicide by shooting himself with a rifle the muzzle of which was placed under his chin. He left a note confessing to the murder of the Golcherts.

The police then charged Mrs Pressler with murder because the rifle was so long that it was impossible for Henry to have reached the trigger. Unfortunately, the investigation was jeopardised by the action of one of the young constables who inadvertently removed the rifle before the investigation of the scene was complete.

That case went to trial and Mrs Pressler was acquitted.

The sequel: When Pressler was released he began a successful citrus farm near Emerald, remarried and raised a family. He died only recently.

Bobbie Gleeson spoke at the November meeting on Western Queensland, Barcaldine and the Stockman's Hall of Fame at Longreach. Bob is the CEO of the Worker's Heritage Centre, Barcaldine.



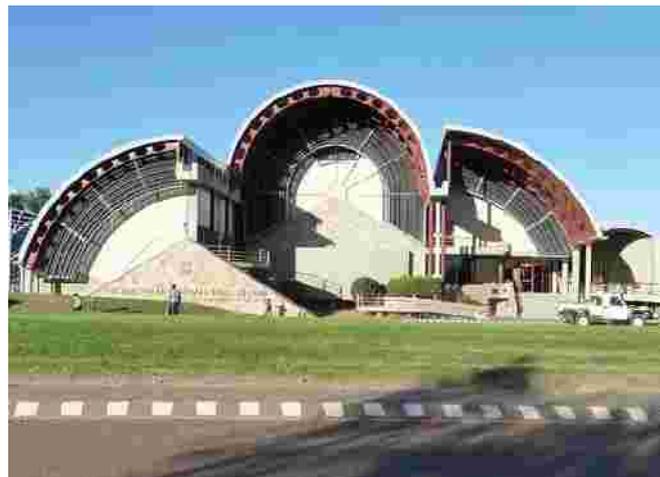
Bobbie grew up in Longreach and is well acquainted with outback Queensland, its people, environment and social problems. As a young man he travelled widely in the bush shearing and bush working with occasional trips to the 'big smokes' including Sydney. While there he flatted near some 'very nice young ladies' who lived nearby and they took him everywhere to see all the sights. Later he found out who they were!

He grew up in Longreach and remembers when it had five pubs which catered for the hordes of very thirsty shearers when they came to town. Then there were the Billiard Rooms, gambling in the big transport shed where they played odds and evens among other games, while the SP bookies operated at local venues. He remembered the quiet Chinese gardeners who carefully watered each plant individually and produced abundant crops of vegetables.

Bob left school at 14 and went shearing, which he learned on the job in the big sheds of the west. He achieved success and became a contractor with his own crew of shearers.

He has always been interested in history; everyone and everything has a story which link up to form a

seamless story of past, present and looking into the future. This interest led him to become one of the founders of the Stockman's Hall of Fame, which had its origins in the Australian Workers Union hall in Longreach which originally came from Blackall.



Stockman's Hall of Fame at Longreach (Isdale)

When the idea of building a Stockman's Hall was first mooted by Hugh Sawrey in 1974 it was derided as a waste of money and the sponsors were labelled insane; it was all pie in the sky! And when the idea of attracting tourists to Longreach was broached some ridiculed it asking what did Longreach have that people would come to see? However there were some locals who persevered and when R.M. Williams came on board things looked much rosier. Williams, at one time a stonemason, restored a sandstone cottage on the site which now houses the Library. The present Hall was finally opened by Queen Elizabeth in 1988.

Today, the tourists are coming in large numbers, a tribute to those who worked so hard. A special type of tourist is the education tourist; school children who come in the course of their normal curriculum from all over Queensland. The children are introduced to all aspects of bush life which is a great contrast to their normal town or city life.

Today Longreach is firmly on the central western tourist circuit along with Barcaldine (Tree of Knowledge), Winton (Waltzing Matilda), Blackall (Bore baths), Carnarvon Gorge National Park, Emerald (Gem Fields), etc.

Bob worked for Bob Hawke enquiring into the Aboriginal wages, conditions and discrimination.

He is proud of the work they did in giving the Aboriginal people a better deal and setting them on the path of managing their own affairs, especially in helping the Aboriginal women to take leadership positions in their communities.

New Floor Covering in Meeting Room – we have been talking about it for a couple of years. On Thursday 8th Nov. the job was done with help from Kedron-Wavell Services Club who covered the \$3,075 cost with a grant. The old vinyl and hardboard underlay came with the school so we have no information how old it was but it was getting rather tattered. The joints were a worry with fear that some members might trip on them, and a couple of sections were missing where cupboards had once stood.



L-R Tony Axelsen (Pres. KWSC) Terry Hampson, Glenys Bolland, Lyndon Broom (Sec/Mgr KWSC) at the presentation of the \$5,000 grant.

The new vinyl is Mystique Classic Silver Mist and is light coloured in keeping with the wall colours. The joins are ‘welded’ together which is done by applying heat to a mixture of vinyl which is put in between the sheets of vinyl after they are laid. It looks good.

The room had to be cleared of furniture by us so at the November meeting we decided that while there was an abundance of labour present it would be a good time to move the heavy bits. The large desk and the old church pew were, by far the heaviest and had to be lifted out of the room through the large opening in the hall wall. The desk went on to the back veranda and the pew sat in the hall. The chairs and smaller furniture went into the Archives Room, and it was cluttered.

The 70th Anniversary of Milne Bay Memorial

One of the prominent figures in the commemoration was Bruce Fraser who piped the Lament. Bruce is a Vietnam veteran and the son of a Milne Bay veteran



Bruce supplied the following information about the Lament:

The meaning of the word Lament - "To express sorrow or regret, a feeling or an expression of grief." A Pipers Lament can be any number of Slow Air's or Slow Marches. Mine for the service was "The Dark Island"; music is an important part of any Service. The Bagpipes have been commemorating the loss of loved ones with music at services for hundreds of years. Many people associate bagpipes with Military services, this is because they powerfully touch our deepest emotions; the haunting music of the bagpipe expresses feelings that words alone may fail to convey.

The tune "The Dark Island" was composed by a Scottish gentleman by the name of Iain McLachlan (1927-1995) in 1958. Though he played the bagpipes, fiddle and melodeon, Iain was best known for his musical expertise on the three row Shand Morino button accordion, on which he was regarded as Scotland's finest exponent.

. "The Dark Island" was composed in 1958 as a pipe lament for a local doctor, and originally called "Dr Mackay's Farewell to Creagorry". It achieved widespread popularity after it was used as the theme music for the BBC TV series The Dark Island filmed on Uist in 1963.

Soldiers' Identity Tags from World War 11

Donated by Peter Hill -

Researched by Beverley Isdale

The Hill family lived in Meemar Street in early 1950s. It was a new estate but during the war, soldiers must have accessed the site from the nearby Chermside Military Camp.

Peter's father had a large fowl run where chooks constantly scratched earth and these tags were found during that time.

The tags are arranged in an album according to type; that is, round and oval and some soldiers had one of each type.

Over time some of the tags have corroded and the details are very difficult to read.

The information on the tags gives name, number, blood group and religion.

There is no indication that tags belonged to local men. I have looked at World War II nominal roll on the website and have found most of the soldiers who mainly came from the south. The website notes the rank the soldier had at the end of the war and for this collection, the ranks range from private to major. The men also came from many parts of the Army.



Photos by Robert Isdale

We have several mysteries to solve – why were the tags left there? Were any others left near the site? Did some incident occur that they had to abandon their tags? (Soldiers never usually get rid of their tags).

CDHS has the full list of names on the tags and will follow up to find out more about the individuals. The tags will be given to the Drill Hall as it is a museum and can appropriately display them.

The Chermside Academy of Music was founded and managed by Mike Tyler who grew up in Chermside, the youngest of 3 children living in Farnell Street. He later established (and owned) the Chermside Academy of Music in Kidston Tce.

This information was emailed by his son, also Mike Tyler, to the Society during the previous week. His father, now 86, is living in Carina Heights and we are arranging to go and interview him. He has a large collection of photographs which may be of interest to the Society.

Beverley Isdale did a quick Google search and in a few minutes came up with an excellent photo of the End of Year Concert of the Academy in 1966 by Greg Richards.

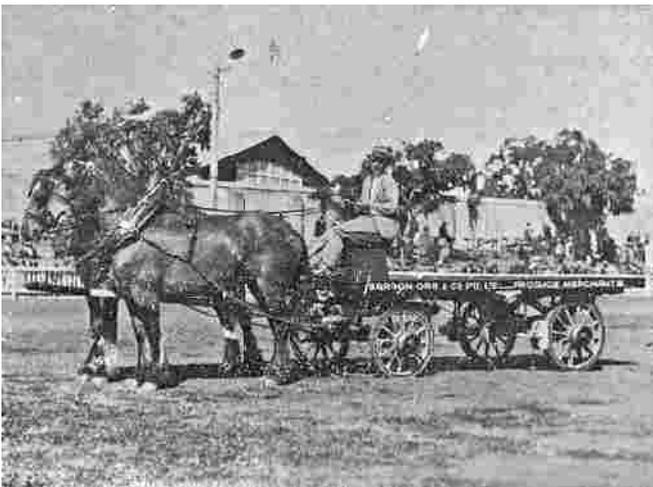
Do any members know anything about Mike Tyler and the Academy? Please share with us.



The earliest form of wheeled transport in the Chermshire District was the bullock wagon. It was slow, about 4km an hour in level country and if a road was available. The bullock could graze on the grass growing along the road but took a lot of time harnessing up and down each day.



The omnibus was common in the 19th and early 20th Century. This one was fully restored by the Hamilton men in the 1960s.



The horse was a about three times as fast as the bullocks but they had to be fed on grain or chaff which had to be carried on the wagon.



Horse drawn trams were used in Brisbane in the 1880s but were confined to the city. The electric tram replaced them in the 1890s and serviced the suburbs.



The family transport was the sulky with one horse or the buggy with two or more. This was the Staib family using a sulky in the 1930s. Sulkies were still around until the 1940s especially when petrol rationing was in force till 1949.



30-3-1947 was a great day for Chermshire; cheap public transport was then available on the doorstep. Previously it was a mile walk to Lutwyche Cemetery. But it all ended on 13-4-1969 when the car won the transport race.