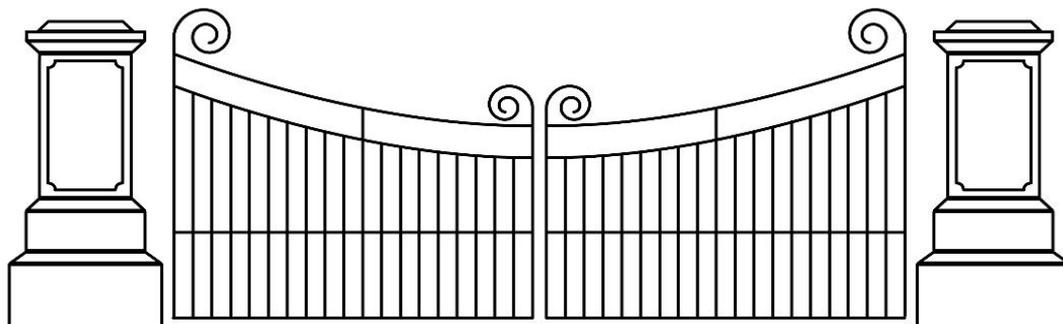


*Preserving our past is our future*



# Chermside & Districts Historical Society Inc.

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

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NEWSLETTER

June - July 2014

(Issued August 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.

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**On 22<sup>nd</sup> May, Ben Davis from 4BC** interviewed Gary Simpson, who is still trucking after chalking up one Million Kilometres in the one vehicle with one owner and one driver. It is a very big, custom built, R model Mack Truck, which he bought in 1977 for \$64,000. Gary is a member of the Society and son of Mick who was Chermside's last sawmiller; Mick retired at 84; Gary is only 68 and Old Mack is just 37.

The 'Old Mack' was built to haul logs to Mick's sawmill which Gary had been doing since he was 17, but in smaller trucks. His biggest load was 21 tons of Iron Bark and Blue Gum from Eskdale Station, Crow's Nest. When the mill closed down in 1997 Gary had the Mack converted into a tip truck and started carrying loads of gravel and sand. Gary and his beloved 'Old Mack' are still 'trucking on'; for another million k's? I could not publish the photo because of copyright rules.

**At our June meeting Steve Gage**, a Viet Veteran and Prison Warder, gave us an illustrated talk on

various aspects of prisons in Queensland. Much of it centred on Boggo Road Gaol (Jail).

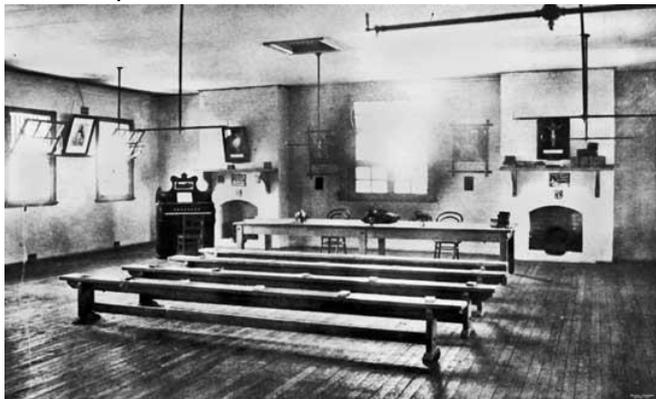
The first Gaol was in the stockade at Humpybong (dead houses) now Redcliffe in 1824-5 but shifted to the stockade in what is now the Brisbane River when the convict settlement moved there.

The Petrie Terrace Gaol, built in 1860, was probably the first real jail in Brisbane Town and was regarded as very modern, indeed a mark of a modern town; it was closed in 1883. Later it became the site of the police barracks.

In 1871 the hulk (pensioned off ship) Proserpine was moored in the river and served as a Reformatory for boys under the age of 18; it closed in 1881. Parents of neglected and convicted inmates were required to contribute financially to the maintenance of their sons whilst in the reformatory.

St. Helena Prison, 1867-1933, was a 'hell hole'

with hard labour, the lash, gags, solitary confinement in underground cells and other forms of what today would be regarded as torture. It was for the worst criminals and was regarded as a modern prison.



The Prison chapel in the female division of Boggo Road Gaol, Dutton Park, 1913; even the Chapel looks forbidding. (Thanks to Lost Brisbane Website)

Boggo Road (Brisbane Gaol) was opened in 1883 and closed 1992. During that time 42 prisoners were hanged, the last one in 1913 after which Queensland abolished capital punishment. The prisoner was hanged from the hanging beam which is now in the Commissariat building in William Street, Brisbane. It was one of two which were imported from England; the other one went to Melbourne Goal and served for Ned Kelly. Ellen Thompson was the only woman hanged; with her, John Harrison was also hanged, both for the murder of Ellen's husband, William.

The 1970s was a turbulent time with prisoners rioting over poor conditions; some even got onto the roof to protest and attracted media attention. The toilets in the cells were buckets, in which the prisoners relieved themselves during the night. Each morning they had to 'slop out' i.e. line up to empty the buckets into the sewer.

Punishment followed protests and the worst 'offenders' might be locked in the "black hole" or "Black Peter" which was solitary confinement in completely dark cells which were soundproofed, with only a water jug, a bucket for a toilet and a fibre mat to sleep on; the prisoner was completely isolated. The maximum confinement was seven days then out for two days and possibly back in

for another seven days. This was continued until the late 1980s.

Steve examined several escapes that took place, the most daring being when four prisoners hijacked the garbage truck and drove it through the inner and outer doors of the main gate of Boggo Road. They got clean away for a while but were quickly found in their hide out and returned to prison.

The most dismal section of his presentation was dealing with Westbrook Boys Home which he described as 'the most sadistic place in Queensland for boys'. He described a cycle of violence that existed there which made many of them worse than when they came into the place. The worst, including several murderers, progressed to 'the Big House' (Boggo Road).

Steve examined the Whisky a Go Go fire and the two perpetrators, Stuart and Finch. One of whom used to swallow sharpened wire 'crosses' which opened and cut into the lining of his stomach causing severe pain. He would be put in hospital and thus avoid having to face court; for a while. The talk was made more interesting, because Steve was recounting his own experiences and was able to describe the events in great detail. His photos were also very good; unfortunately I was not able to get any of them.

**Personal Stories about the Trams:** I am appealing to readers for stories they can recall from the long distant past, aka pre 1969. I want to put them on our website where I am developing a section on Trams to Chermside.

*The following is a note from Carolyn Bowser:*

My Dad always said they should bring back the trams but of course he travelled on them. My memories are that they were not great. I remember going to work at the Treasury Building (1964) on the trams. Of course at that age, we all had to be up to date with the fashion. The problem was that the fashion was pencil skirts down to the calf and 3 inch stiletto shoes. The only way

to get on the tram was to do a sort of sideways step upwards. And if it was one of the old trams, they had wooden slats on the floor (presumably to allow the water to run out of the tram) so your stilettos would get stuck between the boards. And why did the water need to run out? Because the sides were fairly open (even in the new trams) and the rain blew in.

Of course there are a lot of thoughts here. I had about half a mile to walk to the tram so why was I wearing stilettos? Needless to say, when the trams start running at the Gold Coast, I'm going to go down for a ride. Carolyn 8-6-14

**The following extract is from:** My Service in the Australian Imperial Forces 29-4-1916 To 8-6-1919 by E. W. Robinson (May 1987)

From there I went to the Chermshire Camp in Sparkes Paddock which was on Murphy Road opposite Marchant Park and ran for some distance along Ellison Road. Here I attended a Signal School. When on leave one had the choice of taking a train from Zillmere with a very infrequent service or taking a "taxi" from the Murphy Road gate to the Kedron Park tram terminus or walking. The "taxi" was a T model Ford with hood folded back, and into which, and on to which, any number would climb (sometimes up to 10 or 12) for a fare of one shilling (10c today). This service operated only on weekends. (He doesn't explain how he got back to camp from the other side of Kedron Brook.)

(Courtesy of Nundah Historical Society Bulletin and Australian Defence Force Magazine)

## Blast From The Past

Chermshire News Jun & Jul 1914

The news of 100 years ago was dominated by the construction of the new Church of England building at Hamilton Road then known as Hermann Road.

Having raised enough money to take out a loan on the proposed building, a stump capping ceremony was carried out on the 25<sup>th</sup> of July. This

contributed another £24 to the overall cost of £200. Construction of the wooden structure took about two months, and it survived several renovations and expansions until being demolished in 1996.

Of course, 2014 marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pat O'Shea's book: "All Saints' Anglican Church Chermshire".

Despite the construction of the new church, Chermshire as a town was still quite inconsequential. It is interesting to note that for this period of time, the amount of articles (including advertising) about the town only amounted to about 15% of the total.

Subject	Articles Jun – Jul 1914
Chermshire Estate	23
Lord Chermshire (dog)	9
Chermshire	8
Lady Chermshire	7
Chermshire Rd, Ipswich	5
Chermshire St, Highgate Hill	2
Chermshire Hotel	1



1914 The original All Saints' Church

**Stump Capping Ceremony:** If you look under the church you can see the stumps, round timber posts on which the building sits. Each one has a metal ant cap on it to deter termites. When the stumps were in place the parishioners would quietly stroll around the site lift up a cap and place money underneath.

**Email from a website reader:**

Thank you for your wonderful stories, Alfred Phipps was my great uncle, he was one of five children, his brother Josiah George Phipps was my grandfather and it is wonderful to discover these stories of the past and how they lived, many thanks. (Signed)

**Website Record**

25 Oct to 24 Nov 2013

Hits: 2,257

New: 1,935

Returning: 322

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1 March to 28 March 2014

Hits: 2,872

New: 2,407 83.84%

Returns: 465 16.2%

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20 May to 20 June 2014

Hits: 3,355

New: 3,310 85.9%

Returns: 545 14.1%

The Success of our Website:  
Our membership has fallen from 70 to 50 over the last five or six years while the website has grown from 2000 hits to some 2,800 per month. The advent of our page on Facebook saw a rise in Website hits to 3,600 per month. This means that while membership of the Society has been declining our presence on the World Wide Web has risen steadily and even suddenly.

**Society Facebook:** Just Google Chermshire & Districts Historical Society Facebook; you don't have to be a subscriber, just go and have a look, lots of photos and lots of comments by readers.

**Book Launch:** "A Magnificent Anzac" by Peter Holmes, will be launched at Chermshire Library on Wednesday 20th August 2014. The book tells the story of Maurice Weilder Neligan.

Neligan, an Englishman, was working as a policeman in North Queensland when war broke out. He enlisted in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion as a Private and rose to become a Lieutenant Colonel and, in the process, almost became the most decorated soldier in the first A.I.F; he lacked only the Victoria Cross.

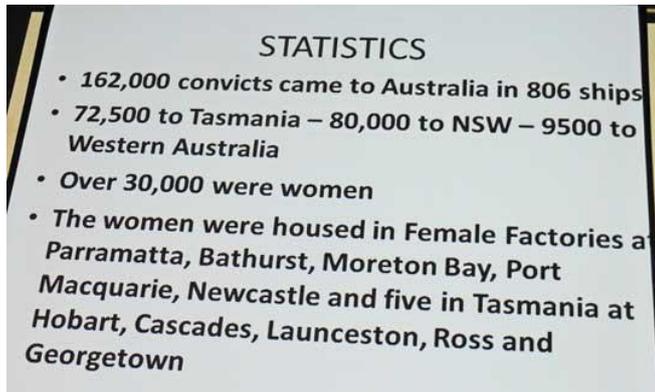
**Trams to Chermshire**



Tramcar 410 to Chermshire amid the red roses lining the tram tracks in the middle of Gympie Road. It was a sight to see and savour, sadly it only lasted for about 20 years. (Courtesy of Lost Brisbane Website on Facebook and N. F. Reed – The Photo is dated 1952)

Phyllis Austin's Beauty Salon is on upper left; does any reader remember anything about her?  
Can any reader identify the property on the right?

## Female Convicts in Australia



Ray Clarke, author of 'Out of Darkness' was the speaker at our July meeting. In the book Ray traces some of the history of the female convicts sent to the Colonies of Australia over the 80 years of transportation.

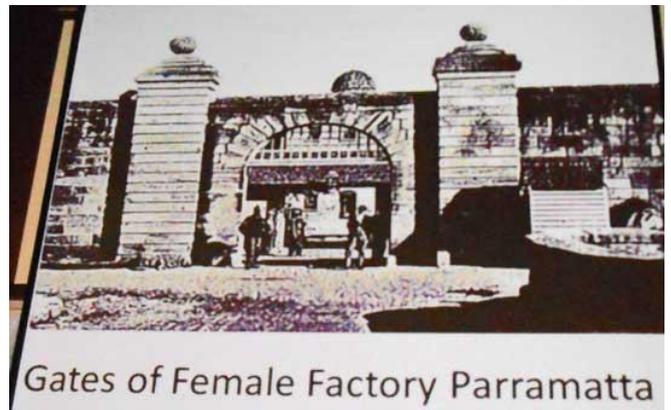
The English convicts came from Portsmouth and the Irish from Cork in south east Ireland. The voyage took as much as six months depending on the speed of the slowest ship in the convoy. They came via Teneriffe, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Verde Islands, Cape of Good Hope and then across the Great Southern Ocean through Bass Strait to Port Jackson and Sydney Town.



The worst voyage, for the convicts, was that of the Barque Neptune in the Second Fleet. Leaving England with 421 male and 78 female convicts she arrived in Port Jackson after 160 days at sea. During the voyage 158 convicts died and 269 were sick, a total of 81% of the convicts. This was probably the worst 'hell ship' that sailed on the convict run.

Female Factories: The women were sent to these places where they were made to work at different tasks such as sewing, knitting, washing clothes, making rope, mats, quilts and other material items. From time to time some were lined up for inspection by male residents who wanted servants or wives. Many went on to live with a partner or marry and raise a

family; others may have ended up earning a living as prostitutes. Like the male convicts some managed to set themselves up in stores or other businesses and did quite well. In fact for some convicts transportation was a second chance to live a better life than was possible for them in the 'old' country.



### Some Personal Records

Mary Bryant came from Cornwall and was transported for Highway Robbery. She had a daughter born on the ship and married a fisherman, William Bryant, in Sydney Town with whom she had a son. Bryant organised an escape plan which involved stealing Governor Phillip's six oared cutter. With Mary, the children and six convicts, one of whom was an experienced navigator, they steered and rowed 5,000km to Timor in the present Indonesia. A voyage equal to that of Captain Bligh of Bounty fame. They were imprisoned by the Dutch and finally sent back to England and jail.

While the penalty of death was usual for escapees they were allowed to be released on serving their original seven years. Mary is thought to have been reunited with her family.

Barbara Thompson (1831-1916) a 12 year old servant transported and living with a sailor who was drowned when his cutter was wrecked near Horn Island, Cape York. Barbara was taken in by the local Aboriginal clan and lived with them for five years until she made contact with HMS Rattlesnake which took her back to Sydney Town. She married twice and died in 1916 aged 85.

## The Schlieffen Plan

In 1905 General Count Alfred von Schlieffen designed the plan that was tailored to defeat France in 40 days. It was a brilliant, high risk plan and it almost succeeded in August - September 1914.

Germany faced a two front war, with France on the west and Russia on the East which she could not win. So the idea was to take out France in 40 days before the Russians could mobilise and then demolish the Russian 'steamroller'.

The plan was for five German armies to sweep eastward over Belgium to the Channel, wheel to the south and encircle Paris and then head east to the German border. It was to encircle most of France, all in 40 days. Another two German armies attacked southern France in a separate movement to neutralise the French in the Alsace - Lorraine area.

Holger H. Herwig summarised the mobilisation of the German armies. "By means of telegrams the German General Staff mobilised 3,822,450 men, 119,754 officers and 600,000 horses." This gigantic force was transported to the front in 13 days by 11,000 trains. Over 2,150 - 54 carriage trains crossed the Rhine at Cologne in 10 minute intervals. The English born Evelyn Princess Blucher noted in her diary that "the Germans take to war as a duck takes to water."

But the High Command couldn't effectively co-ordinate the seven armies; communications were too slow.

The Belgian army put up a stiff

resistance and destroyed their transport infrastructure which further slowed the Germans.

Another factor was the German soldiers were required to march, 30 to 40km per day carrying their heavy packs and fighting. This was an infantry and artillery war, there was no mechanisation as in WWII; tanks did not appear till much later. The men were often exhausted when they marched into battle.

The French and British forces fought furiously, slowing, but not stopping German invaders.

However the Germans were winning battles, still advancing and so sure of victory that they detached two army corps and sent them to the Eastern front to fight the Russians.

But the French and British armies were stiffening their resistance and halted the German second army near Paris. This was the first major victory for the French in the war.

The German first army wheeled to the east to rescue the second army and instead of encircling Paris they passed to the north of the city. The exhausted Germans reached the river Marne and hesitated.

The Governor of Paris, General Gallieni, recognised a 'golden opportunity' to strike at the exposed flank of the German first army and mobilised 600 Paris taxi cabs to transport 3,000 fresh soldiers to the Marne front. The French sixth army arrived, the Schlieffen Plan failed, the war of movement was over and the trench war began. The Battle of the Marne is sometimes called the 'taxi cab war'.