

# NEWSLETTER



**Volume 4 No. 3**  
**President 3350 2874**

**P.O. Box 416, Chermshire Qld 4032**

**August / September 2001**  
**Secretary 3359 3022**

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## **Message from the President**

Our Society has participated in several community activities in the last two months – displays at the Wavell Heights Neighbourhood Watch Federation Picnic, Zillmere shopping centre and the Mountains to Mangroves Festival.

In early August, we will have a display at the Rode shopping centre, corner of Rode Road and Maundrell Terrace. Displays are always more successful when members are present to chat with visitors – can you donate a few hours to man the display, please? All these functions help to publicise our Society and generate interest in the history of the district.

The Society will move into the Chermshire School building in late October in preparation for the official blessing on 11<sup>th</sup> November and we have much work to do before that day.

The Chermshire Historical Precinct has received \$30,000 from the Gaming Community Benefit Fund and the money will be spent on security, stairs and disability access ramps. We will have to install basic services, electricity and water, and it is most important that our members continue to support the various fund raising activities.

Our lunch at Kedron Wavell Services Club was very enjoyable – it gave us the chance to have long chats with other members and we all enjoyed the food and atmosphere. Thank you to all who attended.

We need your support for the Father's Day raffle. Tickets for the Christmas Hamper raffle will be available in September and we would like members to donate something towards the raffle with a Christmas "flavour".

On the opening day we are planning various stalls, including items that members are busily making. We will also sell souvenir pieces of timber offcuts from one of the Chermshire School buildings – not ours! We need some volunteers to prepare the timber with just a light sanding and general clean.

The official naming ceremony for Joseph Lee Park at Zillmere will be held in the next few weeks. These naming ceremonies are very important events as they allow family and Society members to meet and exchange information.

Bev Isdale

## **My Residence / My Street Series:**

### **18 Barker Street, Wavell Heights**

**Written by Jean Tune (nee Harris) June 2001**

Having lived in Chermshire since I was born in 1924, it was a natural progression that I should want to reside there when I married Norm Tune, an Electrical Contractor, on 25<sup>th</sup> October 1947.

We were able to purchase a block of land at the corner of Barker and Pilba Street for £90 in 1945, what was then semi bushland. The purchase was made through Ray White, Auctioneer, Invicta House, Edward Street, Brisbane, who later became Ray White Real Estate.

However, we soon learnt that the State Housing Commission was to spend £500,000 to build 450 new homes on acreage at the back of our property. At the time we were not very pleased as we imagined it would lower the value of the whole area. Now, many

people are buying the homes to renovate or remove to build new ones as the views from quite a number of allotments overlook the city and the mountains.

Our house was built of fibro cement, being the cheapest form of material and more easily procurable in post-war conditions, but also had brick foundations and a tile roof.

The building of our house in 1947 at No. 18 Barker Street was a family affair. It was built by my family during a time when building products were in limited supply. The builders were my father Sam Harris, brother Ray Harris and Enie Sestero (brother in law). The plans and cabinet making work was carried out by my brother Les Harris and the electrical installation by my husband, Norm.

In 1947, £2,500 was borrowed for the construction of our house, then in 1955 the same amount as the original loan was borrowed to construct an extension, the main bedroom and a study. In 1962 a second garage plus a storeroom was built as a separate building to the house. In later years a carport was added because the boys gained their driver's licences. Payments on the original loan through Protestant Alliance Friendly Society of Australasia of 294 Edward Street, Brisbane, were £39 per quarter.

When we first came here there were dirt roads and a bus route was made from Rode Road into Pilba Street, then to Warril Street, thence to the Chermside Drive In, which was opened in May 1957. Imagine the dust that settled in our house! There were not many homes in Barker Street at the time, although folk across the road from us had bought a military hut and resided in it until a new home could be constructed when building materials became available.

I have lived in the same house for 53 years, although 21 years alone, Norm having passed away in April 1980. We had two sons. Colin born in 1949, Keith in 1953 and although the Wavell Heights State School was quite close, I insisted they attend the Chermside State School because of a strong family connection to this school.

My uncle, Fred Harris, was a foundation pupil in 1900. My father, Sam Harris started six months later followed by his sister, Alice Harris, a few years later. In the following generations, I, my three brothers, sister, husband, niece, nephew and cousins also

attended the Chermside State School. Many folk thought I was crazy sending my sons to Chermside School because the main Gympie Road had to be negotiated without any traffic lights or pedestrian crossings. But they survived!

Approximately 30 years ago, the border of Chermside and Wavell Heights was altered and I no longer live in Chermside. I am very disappointed as I was born in the district and it was my desire to follow in my father's footsteps and spend my remaining days there.

*Please submit your story for this series to Carol Cunningham.*

## **Golden Hour Chermside Library**

"Laugh with Jim" – great jokes with Jim Iliffe  
Tuesday 14 August 2001

"Fascinating & True.." – by Marion Eaton  
Tuesday 11 September 2001

## **Recollections by Daphne & Keith Postle 1948 – 2001**

Chermside. Why would you buy a block of land at Chermside was a question often thrown at us after we had done just that. The land we had purchased had been owned by an uncle of Keith's and unbeknown to us he had come to Brisbane to dispose of it. As luck would have it we happened upon him prior to his making a sale. It cost us \$160 in 1946.

Keith claimed he had a fair idea where Chermside was for in his early youth he would accompany his mother when she hitched the pony to the sulky to go to Rode Road from Hendra to keep a sister's appointment with a doctor, whose name he thinks was Dr. Meehan. Just where Kelso Street was we did not have a clue, but we did learn that we would have to catch a tram to the Lutwyche Terminus from where we had a hike of a mile or more.

Kelso Street is the first street on the right off Hamilton Road between Gympie Road and the Hamilton/Webster Road Round-about. The street in which we purchased a little bit of Chermside was a couple of hundred metres long, was unsealed and was

bordered by spade gutters. There were only five dwellings in the street.

We located a local builder who, after studying the rough plans we had drawn up, agreed to build our house. Wartime rationing was still in force and delays in obtaining some building materials was inevitable. Our house was eventually completed and we took possession of it on the Queen's birthday weekend in June 1948, becoming the sixth householders in the street.

Our next door neighbours were the Erick Hacker family who welcomed us into their midst, and afforded us with much information relative to the district. Erick was the youngest of three sons of Mr & Mrs William Hacker who owned one of three existing Chermside Grocery and Produce stores.

Looking from our home to the west we had an unobstructed view of the mountain ranges and to the east between Kelso Street and Gympie Road was parkland, with a number of huge gum trees. Unfortunately neither view was to be had for very long since land in the area was being built on at an alarming rate. Most of the arrivals were like us, young marrieds and as the houses grew in numbers so did the children. At one stage there were 43 children of school age residing in Kelso Street. Today we are able to boast only one toddler.

With two young children we felt the need for a telephone service. The only service in the street was a party line from Hamilton Road to the only house on the opposite side of the street from us.

The installation of telephones was subject to long delays but having worked in the Postmaster Generals Department during the war I knew who to approach to have a telephone service installed in Kelso Street. Our phone was connected in June 1950. Rent in advance for six months was Three Pounds Five Shillings.

Initially motor traffic was at a minimum. Sprinkled with some home traffic was a small number of delivery vehicles – the Milkman, Baker, Fruiterer, Iceman, Fishmonger and Grocer all delivered their wares to the householder. The Postman did his rounds on his bicycle, blowing his whistle as he delivered the mail twice a day Monday to Friday and also on Saturday morning.

Kelso Street is now a very busy thoroughfare, one end leading to a busy entrance to the H.M. Wheller Garden Settlement which is used by staff and vehicles supplying goods and services to the residents. In 1996 there were approximately 600 residents and 450 staff at the Settlement.

The vast area of land adjoining the Hamilton Road Farnell Street junction was to have been the site of a new school. The school never did eventuate and in its stead was built the Chermside Chest Hospital which was opened in 1959. The Prince Charles Hospital as it is now called has, since then, undergone many changes. The original hospital was demolished last year (2000) after a new hospital had been erected. During the month of August 2001 the Holy Spirit Private Hospital, adjoining the Prince Charles Hospital, is to be opened.

During the 1960's some important changes took place in and around Kelso Street. The macadamised roadway was sealed and the spade gutters were upgraded to the concrete variety. These two changes were responsible for the elimination of both a dust and a mosquito menace. Sewerage was connected to the southern half of the street and, because of the slope of the land, it was a couple of years before the balance of the street was to be connected. Rezoning of land took place and soon after the first brick flats were erected. There was a time, until quite recently, when, if a house was sold, it would be occupied as is. Today we are seeing homes being sold and removed in the dead of night to be replaced by town houses. When two adjoining homes have been sold they will be replaced by six two storied units.

Probably the most remarkable change we have experienced over the 53 years we have dwelt in Kelso Street is the decline in neighbourliness. Where once everyone in the street knew every other resident, today one is fortunate, or maybe unfortunate, if you know the name of a neighbour living almost next door. A neighbourly chat over the front fence is virtually a thing of the past. And that's a tragedy.

We are pleased we have resided in Chermside and watched it grow into a vibrant suburb. All amenities are close by – Westfield Shopping Centre, cinemas, modern churches, world class facilities at the new Prince Charles Hospital and the soon to be opened Holy Spirit Hospital and all ancillary services, along with an up to date and complete aged care facility in

the H M Wheller Garden Settlement. Even public transport passes our street.

Mr Bill Kelso, one time M.L.A. for the Nundah area, would, I am sure, have approved of his name being given to this street for perpetuity.

Daphne & Keith Postle

## **Chermside Shoppingtown First in Australia**

Hands up those who still refer to the Westfield Shoppingtown at Chermside as the Drive-in Shopping Centre. Imagine how old Bill Hacker must have pondered the viability of such a business venture back in 1955 when the idea was first mooted. Bill owned Hacker's Produce Store across the road and most of his customers did not even own a car and here was a shopping centre opening up with parking for 700 cars.

Times were certainly changing by the time the Chermside Drive-in Shopping Centre opened in May 1957.

The complex was developed by Mr T G Weedman then general manager of Allan & Stark. Not only was it the first shopping centre of its kind to be developed in Australia, it was the first outside the U.S.A. It cost \$1,200,000 and Allan & Stark's turnover alone for the opening day was \$20,000 – an extraordinary amount for the times. The Myer Emporium was to take over Allan & Stark's within two years.

The other main store was the B.C.C. Supermarket (Brisbane Cash & Carry) which had already been established on the Hamilton Road corner in the early 1950's plus the 22 specialty stores which included Fulchers Shoe Store, still operating in 2001.

By 1965 the centre was so successful that extensions costing \$2,500,000 were added including modern amenities like escalators, air conditioning and a restaurant. Woolworths opened a \$500,000 store the following year.

1972 was a dramatic year with Target opening in September. This was followed by a devastating fire in December which virtually destroyed Woolworths and caused extensive damage to Myer and Clark

Rubber as well as a number of specialty stores Finlayson Menswear, Chermside Drive-in News, Choice Paks Self Service Meats, Fulchers Shoes, Nurseryland Toy Shop, Bradman Shoes and Katies Vogue. The damage bill at the time was estimated at \$1.5 million.

Another rebuilding program was embarked upon and for the next 15 years the complex was in a fairly constant state of upgrading as changes in tenancy, more fire and even hailstorms and flooding were contended with.

1987 saw the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations attract the top personalities of the day appear on centre stage. Many a local lad will remember seeing international cricket star, Ian Botham, in the lineup.

The 1990's saw more fires and flooding and in 1996 the Westfield Trust purchased the shopping centre with the official name of Westfield Shoppingtown Chermside being established.

In 1999 work began on the Shoppingtown's proposed \$225 million redevelopment including its doubling in size, another 100 specialty shops and a 16 cinema megaplex.

During all this change, the old Chermside Police Station disappeared from the Hamilton Road corner to be replaced by the Chermside Bus Exchange and the small line of shops that was once there was also swallowed up by the redevelopment.

If any of the readers were present at the opening of the Drive In in 1957 we would like to hear from them, also if anyone has memories of attending any of the early day promotions, please contact Marion on 3865 1021.

Article by Marion Eaton with details from Westfield Centre Management.

## **The Phantom Landlady of Chermside**

*Marion Eaton interviewed Merle Berg*

Newly weds Merle and Fred Berg like many other post war couples had plans to buy a block of land and build their own home. But first they must rent a house whilst they both worked to finance their plan.

Fred Berg had grown up on a farm in Zillmere and knew the surrounding district well.

They heard of an old house for rent at Chermside and went to have look at it. It was obviously an old farm house as there were acres of land behind it rising up to a hill. The house itself was up past the top end of Rainey Street. There was no water or electricity connected, however the rent was 13 shillings (\$1.30) per week and they figured they would not be there for too long. They made themselves reasonably comfortable and an old lady called at the house each week to collect the rent.

Merle and Fred were glad to see their savings growing enough to look at blocks of land. They eventually found the perfect block in Gillies Street at Zillmere.

One day in 1952 a well dressed stranger came to the door of the farm house. He was obviously surprised to see that the old house was occupied. *He asked Merle if they were squatters.* She quickly went to the drawer to get the bundle of rent receipts she had carefully kept. The man then introduced himself as a representative of the owner - The Queensland Government. He added that they intended to build a hospital on the site and the old farm house had to be demolished. He also added that no one had any authority to collect rent on behalf of the Government. Who could this so called landlady be?

After some discussion the couple offered to buy the farm house and rebuild it on their block of land at Zillmere to be used as a temporary dwelling until their new house was built. It was eventually demolished altogether in the back yard of 72 Gillies Street Zillmere.

In retrospect, the house was a very significant one in the history of Chermside. It had belonged to the Beneke family who arrived in the district in 1865 on the vessel *Susanne Godeffroy* from Germany. They owned a large area of land and made a living by selling the timber cut from their own site. Their house would have been about 80 years old when it was finally dismantled at Zillmere.

Marion Eaton

## The Way We Were

Chermside, Aspley, Nundah, Zillmere and Geebung were all known by other names 100 years ago and later when the suburb of Wavell Heights was being established it was to be called Inala.

Chermside was known as Downfall Creek until 1903 when it had a name change to honour the new Governor of Queensland. The original name for the Aspley area was Soldiers Flat which was followed by "Litte Cabbage Tree Creek" until the Morris family used the name Aspley in association with their family properties and the name became accepted. Nearby Albany Creek was known in its early days as Chinaman's Creek.

Nundah had been known as German Station since it was established by missionaries in the 1840's until it had a name change. One of the early German settlers stumbled across the string of waterholes just north of his farm one day and from then on, the area became known as Zillman's Waterholes. The name change to Zillmere came years later when the railway went through. Geebung was the new name for Geebung which was named after trees that grew there.

There was also an area at Chermside known as the German Quarter. This was around the intersection of Hamilton Road and Webster Road where the Herrmann Place roundabout is and not too far from there was Chummytown settled by new arrivals from the United Kingdom.

Those on the land were engaged in dairying, pig raising, small crops and pineapple farms. Allied occupations were slaughter yards and tanneries who were supplied by the local farms for the Brisbane Markets.

Other businesses were the blacksmiths, ironmongers, saddlers and coach builders. As the population increased the produce stores, bootmakers, carpenters and haberdashers were established.

Two of the businesses set up over 100 years ago are still flourishing and run by descendants of the original owners. These are Gerns Continental Smallgoods at Geebung and Vellnagel Blacksmiths opposite the Marchant Park Memorial Gates on Gympie Road.

Another long standing business at Zillmere was the nationally famous Huttons Ham and Bacon Factory which was established on a 200 acre pineapple farm in 1888. Hundreds of locals were employed there over the years until 1965 when Huttons relocated to Oxley.

Marion Eaton

## **Donations from Businesses, Clubs, etc**

Allkind Joinery & Glasses,  
594 Rode Road, Chermside

Arbutus Picture Framing,  
293 Ellison Road, Geebung

Edinburgh Castle Hotel, Pastime Fishing Club  
36 Sydney Street, Kedron

Gillards Health Company  
17B Bald Hills Road, Bald Hills

Hi-Vita Organics  
17B Bald Hills Road, Bald Hills

Asply Acupuncture Clinic  
Aspley Village Shopping Centre  
591 Robinson Road, Aspley

Kirkfare Pty Ltd  
153A Robinson Road, Aspley

Mirrors Galore  
293 Ellison Road, Aspley

Polynesian Kahuna Massage, S & V Singh  
113 Trouts Road, Stafford Heights

Pradella's Mens Hairdressers, R & V Pradella  
736 Gympie Road, Chermside

Qld Country Women's Assn, Chermside Branch  
4 Reisling Street, Carseldine

W & S Autocraft, Accident Repair Centre  
535 Zillmere Road, Aspley

***Special thanks for a generous donation:***  
Chermside Nextra News, Westfield Shoppingtown,  
Chermside (Dennis & Peter Hickey)

**Vouchers received from:**  
Aspley Tenpin Bowl, 149 Albany Creek Road,  
Aspley

**Donations to the School Building appeal  
from Businesses, Clubs, etc amount to  
\$955.00**

## **Donations from Members and Friends of the Society:**

Margaret Argo, Carolyn Bowser  
Alan Carr, Herb Carr  
Jessie Clegg, Lyn Currie, C Cunningham  
Louise Day, Julie Denaro  
C & D Fletcher, Dulcie Gardiner  
E Garraway, Joan Hamilton  
Terry Hampson, Janelle Hamwood  
J Hand, Kevin & Thelma Hayward  
Gwen & Ian Jackson  
Betty James, Paul Kirby  
Harold Lawson, Tom Packer  
Keith & Daphne Postle  
Coral Rance, S Rowland  
Muriel Scott, Alan & Pat Smith  
Zoe Smith, Lindsay Staib  
Terry Sullivan, Jean Tune  
Keith Tune, Adrian Turner  
Margaret Turner, E Twining  
Betty Van Woensel  
Keith & Dulcie Watson

Letterhead Printing  
Cartridge World, Chermside  
Jem Printing, Alderley

Dinner for Two Raffle Prize  
Donated by Café Verde  
949 Gympie Road, Chermside

**Donations from Members and Friends of  
the Chermside & Districts Historical  
Society amount to \$1330.00**

## **Building Opening on Sunday 11 November 2001**

Historical Precinct behind the  
Kedron-Wavell RSL  
Please come along on the day  
Look for more advertising  
about this day.