

# NEWSLETTER



**Volume 4 No. 5**  
**President 3350 2874**

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

**October / November 2001**  
**Secretary 3359 3022**

## **MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Welcome to this issue and we hope you enjoy the articles – all telling stories of life in this district since World War 11. We hope, one day, to compile a booklet of all these memories so please, send in your contributions.

Our home, the old Chermshire School, is making progress and should be ready for the Society to move in, just before the big opening day. The ramp and stairs are finished and the rails are back on the verandah. It will soon look as if it has always been in the Chermshire Historical Precinct.

The official blessing/opening will be on Remembrance Day, 11<sup>th</sup> November. We invite all members and friends to the Remembrance Day service at 10.50am which will be followed by a short ceremony to launch the Chermshire Historical Precinct.

We have much to do in the next couple of weeks and the function will be a great opportunity for us to raise money to help in furnishing the building. There will be food on sale – sausage sizzle, drinks and afternoon tea and stalls with cakes and other home baking, handcraft, books and plants. The memorabilia on sale will include our popular mugs, post cards, timber souvenirs and calico bags.

Do you have a relative, or were you involved in any part of World War 11 – soldier, nurse, pilot, land army, sailor, and civil construction worker? We need copies of photographs, or photocopies, of any of these personnel to put in a display in the Chermshire Library, 1-17 November. We will move part of the display into the Drill Hall on our opening day.

I urge you to support the fund raising activities over the next two months. Tickets are available for both the Christmas Hamper Raffle (and with your donations it should be well worth winning!) and Westfield Works Wonders – a charity event new to Brisbane. It promises to be a very good fundraiser – see Carol Cunningham for details and tickets.

Beverley Isdale

## *My Residence / My Street Series*

### **THE SIXTIES – A WORLD AWAY**

**Oakey Street, Stafford Heights**  
**Normanton Street, Stafford Heights**

**Written by Juliet Hoey**

One day, a thousand years hence, archaeologists may find a crab claw on the site of the Rode Shopping centre. When they do, they can send it to D and J Hoey, Pearly Gates, Heaven, because that crab claw is OURS!

Married in December 1961 and living well below the poverty line in Oakey Street, Stafford Heights, Denis and I had a ritual of buying a crab for tea on Friday nights. We would drive the short distance to the end of Appleby Road in our creaking, ancient Oldsmobile. There we enjoyed our weekly treat of a crab dinner in a dirt-covered paddock overlooking bushland. There was plenty of space in that huge old car for my rapidly expanding abdomen. The end of Appleby Road, you ask? Oh, yes! The road stopped dead right at Rode Road. Impossible to imagine the scene now, with our romantic paddock sprouting shops and cars instead of gum trees.

Our penurious state was caused by the fact that my husband and I were musicians. Music in Brisbane in 1961 was bad news for anyone who had an inclination to eat properly more than once a week. The situation is vastly different now. But life for us then was extremely spartan. Neither were the Housing Commission homes of the sixties exactly

mansions either. We had an outside toilet until 1963; no hot water system; a gas heater over the bath; hardly any built-in cupboards; and bare floors. The yard was not much better. The Housing Commission in its infinite wisdom had shaved every inch of topsoil off the land in the estate. Grass took years to grow. No rolls of grass in those days. You planted either grass seed, or little squares of turf a foot apart, which you hoped would eventually join up to produce a smooth sward. Yes, well!

My mother was convinced that we lived in the wilds of Siberia. In fact, the estate had once been, not a frozen tundra, but a privately owned abattoir. Ernie Felsman, a butcher friend of the Hoey family, previously owned this land. My husband remembers riding horses on it as a child, some time after it had ceased functioning as an abattoir. The fact that we were now living on this land used to fascinate him.

However, life moves on. Four children and two pianos later, we needed a bigger house, which we found literally around the corner in Normanton Street. House values are a story in themselves. Our first little home cost £3000. We sold it in 1973 for \$18000, and bought this one for \$29000 – quite an extravagant purchase for that time. Now? I have no idea of its worth. In 1995 my husband, a musician not a builder, guttered the inside of the house. The masonite walls were ugly, they creaked in the dead of night, and they did not do justice to the exterior of the home. We replaced the internal walls with plasterboard. Four years later, with a legacy from my late mother's estate, we added a large veranda which overlooks Moreton Bay in the distance. Are we moving again? Only to the cemetery (we hope).

All this is a far cry from our frugal crab dinners in an ancient, rusting car in the middle of a paddock. One can make a reasonable living now from music – though real riches are earned only by the Joan Sutherlands of this world. However, we live a comfortable and a happy life. The suburb is green, and filled with early morning birdsong. We are blessed with wonderful neighbours. Who would ever go back to the bare, inconvenient days of the sixties? Not this family.

**Juliet Hoey**  
**Stafford Heights**

## **The Shop at the corner of Rode and Gympie Road opposite the Chermside State Primary School**

**Written by Margaret (Peg) Keast.**

When my family came to Chermside in 1946, there was a grocery store (as they called them then) on the corner of Rode & Gympie Roads. It was owned by the Green family (I can't remember their Christian names as I was a 10-year old girl and called them Mr & Mrs Green). They had a son named Ron and a daughter named Lola who were very young. They lived in the back of the shop actually in a house built onto the shop. There were steps up into the shop and mothers used to leave their prams outside with their babies still in them (which you could do in those days). We did all our shopping there. Through the eyes of a ten-year-old they seemed to sell everything.

In 1947, my brother, Ted Brewer, started work there along with our next door neighbour, Yvonne Kavanagh and there was another man about 21 working there named Bill McNamara, who used to deliver our groceries to the door. My mother used to send our order up with my brother and they would make up the order, including fruit and vegetables, and then Bill would deliver them free of charge (quite different from today).

We continued shopping there for quite a while and became good friends with the Green family. My brother and Bill left after about 6 months and Yvonne left some time later.

I am not sure what year it was but eventually the shop was sold to a Mr Daybell and a Mr Kettle. Mr and Mrs Daybell and their daughter Judith lived in the back of the shop and after a while Mr Kettle left and a Mrs Nutley came to work there - she lived in Pilba Street.

It was about that time that I lost contact with the shop as I started work in the city and only got off the tram opposite the shop and only rarely did I go in, but some years later it came into my life again.

Some years later I was to meet a young soldier at a tram stop. We had met briefly with some of his and my friends and he had rung me at work. I had no idea who he was or what he looked like as it was one of my friends who had given him my phone number,

because he couldn't ring her at work and so I didn't know him and he thought he was meeting the other girl. I told him I would meet him at the tram stop opposite the shop and I did, and to cut a long story short we were married 10 months later and have now been married 42 years.

Eventually corner stores were a thing of the past and now on that site, like a lot of sites around here, stands a car yard.

**Margaret (Peg) Keast.**

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

**9 Eastleigh Street, Chermside  
Written by Lyn Currie July 2001**

24 perches of land were purchased in 1947 at a cost of £87 and a receipt of £40 was given by the Vendor (a woman in Townsville). There were price restrictions at the time.

Built by a Scotsman Jack Dobson who had already built his own home near the end of Miller Street where it joins Kingsmill Street. There have been units on this site for many years now.

Jack's brother-in-law, Spencer Garden was his partner. Spencer had built his own house near the bottom of Greenbank Street where it joins Hamilton Road. This is also now units.

Materials for No. 9 Eastleigh Street were hard to come by in 1947. The roof was to have been corrugated fibro, but that was unavailable, so a concrete tiled roof was substituted. Also, an enamel bath was not available when needed, so a concrete one was installed instead. (Very cold on the rear end when the bath water started to cool down.) The children were always told to "sit on the washer".

No hot water system of course. An electric bath heater was installed at the end of the plunge bath, and water for washing up in the kitchen a few steps away was carried out from the bath heater.

Jack Dobson was a real craftsman. He built all the kitchen cupboards himself and they are still going strong. Pine was used for the shelving – no pre-made fixtures at all.

An excellent floor was laid. This was polished professionally and used that way for many years; just a few scatter rugs.

The original plan was drawn by Theo Hutton of Ford, Hutton and Newell. It started off as a two bedroom home, with an extra long second bedroom, part of which would become a hallway leading to the third bedroom when it was built on.

When the land was bought it was covered in native timbers, which were cleared by axe by my husband, on weekends. We had a motor bike, and were able to travel along Hamilton Road (me riding pillion) to the bottom of Eastleigh Street, where I had to dismount and walk the rest of the way, as the street was just a bush track.

However, the Housing Commission bought up most of the remaining land around us (with a few exceptions), and came out and bulldozed all the trees in about one week. We could not believe our eyes when we came out the following weekend. Looked like the surface of the moon!

The house was ready for moving into by August 1948. There had been lots of delays for lack of materials.

The lawn was started by taking a push-cart up to what is now Burnie Brae Park and bringing back little clumps of grass which were planted then rolled with a tennis court roller, and watered regularly. Hard Work!

The builders had no trench-diggers of any sort. Everything was done by pick and shovel – manually. Also no nail guns - hammers would go all day hammering in nails. Saws were manual – no electric ones.

Mixing concrete was done without even an electric mixer. No such thing as a truck of liquid concrete for a pour. All done on a slab on the ground, with the hose going for added liquid when needed.

In the 1950's there were lovely polyanthus roses grown on both sides of the tramline – which ended at the Uniting Church, Chermside. Every year the bushes were trimmed by the City Council gardeners, and any branches cut off were allowed to be taken by the public for planting in their own gardens. We had very nice roses growing in our garden after striking

them from the offcuts. This went on for a number of years.

Sewerage was connected in 1965.

Now, in the year 2001, our house has been surrounded by units/townhouses on all sides. Luckily our house is air-conditioned and the constant noise associated with months of continuous building has been dampened inside the house. We are placed within easy walking distance of the Westfield Shoppingtown Complex, Kedron Wavell RSL, Library, Chermside Pool and public transport. Our position is ideal for our retired lifestyle today. We have no wish to move, regardless of the massive building activity and changing character of the surrounding streets.

**Lyn Currie**

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

#### **62 Bramcote Street, West Chermside**

**Written by Beverley Isdale**

We came to West Chermside by accident – the real estate agent brought us to a house that met all our needs – high-set, timber, 3 bedrooms, fenced yard, nearby schools. We also wanted a house on the north side of Brisbane – my parents lived at Wavell Heights and this house was only a suburb away from them.

The house cost us \$17,500 in 1972 and we bought it from the original owners, the Raymer family. David Masters built our house as well as the house next door. Because our land is a slightly unusual shape, we have 28.2 perches.

We soon felt at home and happily grew into the house which was about 8 years old in 1972. Most of the houses in the street were timber and there was a corner store, public phone and post box at the top end of the street. An easement gave access to Webster Road and we occasionally caught the bus into town.

The neighbours were friendly and helpful and had children of a similar age. The yard was big enough to take all our interests – children's play, my husband's machinery hobby and my gardening. Our children's activities and interests introduced us to a wider community – schools, scouts, clubs and music.

Huxtable Park is around the corner and we joined a group of people interested in its beautification and maintenance. From the top of the street, we have a clear view of the Taylor Range and on brisk winter mornings, the view is marvellous. Some of the sunsets, viewed from our back

stairs, are truly spectacular. We appreciate the shade from the large trees at the back of the house, especially in summer. Sadly, new neighbours are cutting down their mature trees.

We gradually learned more about the neighbourhood. The son of the original farmer on this land told us that his father, Bill Barker, kept a piggery here for about 40 years. The origins of the street names in this area are supposedly London street names but there are villages in Nottinghamshire and Warwickshire (England) with the name of Bramcote. Probably a developer had close ties with one of those places.

The Prince Charles Hospital is one street away and the smoke from the laundry was a problem for a few years. Times have changed and the hospital now has a modern state-of-the-art laundry. From our kitchen window, we saw the large cranes working on new buildings at the hospital.

We could never have predicted the choice of shopping centres that we now have, some within walking distance – Rode, Aspley, Toombul, Stafford in addition to the large complex at Chermside.

There have been other changes. Old neighbours have moved and we rarely manage to see, let alone speak, to the new ones. Tall timber fences have sprouted in front of many houses and there are few children in the street. However, a new young couple has bought a house and they want their children to enjoy simple things – they now have hens and we occasionally hear the hens laying their eggs – no roosters, thankfully. Our newest resident is James, born last month and the son of a man who grew up in this street.

**Beverley Isdale**

## **Historical Precinct Opening Sunday 11 November 2001**

Historical Precinct behind the  
Kedron-Wavell RSL  
**Commencing at 10.30 am**  
**Opening Ceremony at 11.00 am**  
Sausage Sizzle, Cold Drinks, Tea & Coffee  
Craft, Books, Plants, Memorabilia  
Cakes & Biscuits  
Displays inside the buildings