

NEWSLETTER



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President 3350 2874

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Secretary 3359 3022

Message from the President

By Beverley Isdale

Our official opening on 11th November was a very successful event and I would like to thank all members who worked so hard to make it such a memorable occasion. The Management Committee members seemed to be everywhere, doing any job, and other members were busy all over the Precinct – thank you all.

By the time you read this, the Community Jobs Program will have finished. The Society has been asked to provide afternoon tea for all those involved, on 30th November. We are grateful to the State Government for assistance with the Project which will allow us to move into such a splendid building.

The Management Committee is working on details for next year's programme and if you have any ideas, please let us know. We're planning a bus trip next year to visit the first car brought to the Chermshire district. Our programme will also include some fund raising events, as we need electricity, water, and floor coverings to make our building habitable. AND we also need storage facilities for our records, at present scattered among our members. As well as all that, we really do need someone to organise these functions. Can you help?

We are already receiving requests for historical information – the latest one wanted details on the Rode Road roundabout/overpass at McDowell.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to wish you all a very happy Christmas and safe New Year. Our first meeting next year will be on 3rd February, in our “new” building.

World War II Years 1942-1945

By Joan Hamilton

The then Sparkes' 400 acre paddock was a large military army camp. The Civil Construction Corp (C.C.C.) camp was near Ellison Road and the Australian Woman's Army Service (A.W.A.S.) was in the bush now Burnie Brae Park.

Many from these camps attended the Methodist Church services in Hamilton Road where my family attended. My parents would invite them home and our home was made their 'home away from home' as most of these boys and girls came from other States. By the end of the war, 72 boys and 3 girls had passed through our home. I wonder how my Mother managed to find enough food when 3 or 4 or more would call in at meal time, food was rationed and money was not plentiful. But there always seemed to be enough. Sometimes the boys would be able to offer food coupons.

We had some happy times, my sister played the piano and I played the violin. We would all gather around the piano for a sing song and lots of fun thrown in. Sometimes my sister and I and the Smith family would be invited to the camp on a Sunday afternoon where we would practice for a forthcoming concert

and help make costumes. They had formed a concert party and we would travel around with them as we were included on the programme.

My mother's sister and her husband, Ethel and Vic Boot, lived at Kedron and every Wednesday night was 'open house'. You did not have to say 'can I come' – just come and bring others. Some nights there would be thirty or more. The house was set up with a large billiard table, pianola in the lounge, darts in the kitchen, cards in the back room, a tennis table on the front verandah and another on the side verandah. The neighbours would join in so noise was not a great worry.

I will always remember the suppers she served. The timber top would be put on the billiard table and it was well covered with delicious home made cakes, biscuits and savouries. All made by my Auntie and she was a good cook. Her parents supplied her with home made butter and eggs, that saved her food coupons. What was left was given to the boys to take back to camp.

Saturdays we would hire the school tennis court. We often spent Saturday mornings rolling and marking the court ready for play. We did see the Kittyhawk plane on a training flight crash into the camp near Hamilton Road. The soldiers rushed off to investigate. We would play tennis until dark then the soldiers would go to various homes for tea after which we would all meet at the Dawn Theatre for the evening picture showing.

During summer and daylight saving, we would get to the pictures near interval and the boys would barter and get us all in half price. When our boys were transferred, we would correspond, postage stamps to servicemen cost one penny. To this present day, every Christmas, cards have been exchanged from many of those same boys who still appreciate what was done for them during those war years away from their home and loved ones.

The Cinnamon Cake

By Val Ross (Fullwood)

In 1935 my brother and myself had spent almost 12 months in Melbourne. My mother, who had been devoted to us and indulged us as much as

circumstances permitted, had been ill with a heart condition; she needed rest. Her elderly parents had agreed to care for us, in order to help my mother recover.

Sadly, my mother did not recover, and we returned to Chermside. Being in Melbourne during the cold winter weather, my clothes were warm and thick, with thick lyle stockings my wardrobe was complete. This clothing was very much out of place in the warm Brisbane climate. My Grandmother did not seem to understand or could not help. I had to wear these unsuitable clothes.

Now, in reflection, I suppose there was a real shortage of funds within our family, considering the expense of my Mother's illness, death, and our travelling expenses back to Chermside. There were no luxuries for us. It had been a long time since I had eaten a piece of cake, or fruit. Breakfast consisted of white bread cut into cubes, sprinkled with sugar and milk. Never during my short life had I tasted Cornflakes or Weetbix. These were luxuries.

One day at lunchtime, I remember being in the back of the school grounds. I was feeling so dejected, alone, and also so ugly in my thick hot clothes, when unexpectedly a teacher approached me. She had a cinnamon cake, which she said she could not eat and would I like it. Suddenly I felt like the ugly duckling, the moment it found out it was a beautiful swan.

Me! The teacher had noticed me, of all the other children, the teacher had gone out of her way, singling me out, to offer me this cake. I gratefully accepted it.

No cake had ever tasted so good. How long was it since I had eaten home made cake? I could not remember.

The cinnamon flavour was so unique and delicious, it created its own memorial. Today, whenever I have cinnamon, I am compelled to remember that teacher and the occasion.

The teacher in her kindness, unknowingly, created her own permanent memorial in my psyche.

***Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year
Our first meeting for 2002 will be
Sunday 3rd February 2002***