

CHERMSIDE & DISTRICTS



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NEWSLETTER

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Activities - On Queen's Birthday, the society displayed photos of Stafford at the Stafford Hub Fair in Keong Park. All the fun of the fair swirled around our display which was right beside the entrance to the toilets which guaranteed a regular supply of visitors. Many stopped to look, discuss and ask questions. Thanks to Bev, Carol, Norm and Pat.

Good News – Remember we had our fridge stolen? Well we now have a new one courtesy of Councillor Faith Hopkins who recommended it to the Committee for the BCC Livability Grants. It cost \$932 and will service our catering needs very well. Go out and view it on the, now fully enclosed, back veranda.

Bus Trip – This was, both socially and financially, a resounding success. A fully filled bus with 49 passengers directed by Terry Hampson, left at 7.30am to tour a segment of Historic Queensland and returned at 6.00pm. In addition to our own members there were 23 visitors who made up the compliment and helped the Society to make a profit of \$1,129.46. Two people who were unable to come at the last minute donated their \$55 fare to the Society. Thank you all; this money will go a long way in helping us to make up for the expense incurred in securing the back veranda.

Security Doors for the front are being costed by Ian Reid. These will enable us to leave the front doors open when people are working in the school during the week; it

President's Message

The Society has again been involved in community activities. We had a stand at the Keong Karnivale, a function organized by the Stafford Community Hub on 13th June, Queen's Birthday holiday. The highlight of the function was a citizenship ceremony and a carnival afterwards. Our display on the Stafford /Kedron area attracted a lot of interest, particularly from residents who are new to the area.

We are a part of the Mountains to Mangroves festival which is held every two years. This year, we combined with the Voyager Centre and the Milne Bay Memorial Library and Research Centre for an open day on 9th July. The "Canneries and Tanneries" display, and other items from our collections were on display and many of our members saw the displays in the Voyager Centre and the Drill Hall. It was also an opportunity for local people to see "who lived in these buildings"

The Marchant Ward of the BCC has had a Livability Grants Program operating for a few months. We applied for a fridge (to replace the stolen one) and were successful. As soon as the paperwork comes through, we'll have a new fridge.

The bus trip to Jondaryn and the Darling Downs was very successful, socially and financially. It also included a visit to the historic house, Westbrook. It gave me a whole new aspect on collecting – if you love antiques and period furniture, it has to be lovingly maintained – no sloppy housework allowed!

This is my last newsletter as president and I would like to thank all members who helped to make my time as president so enjoyable. Members have been very co-operative and contributed their skills to many aspects of the Society. The new president will value your continuing support.

gets rather lonely, and scary, at times when you are on your own and you don't know who is outside nosing around. Bob Cunningham has just installed a peep-hole low enough for the Editor; the vertically unchallenged will have to bend to help the vertically challenged.

J.C. Hutton & Co. Zillmere Bacon Curing Works

– Some time ago Marion Eaton approached Frank Irons to draw a sketch plan of the old factory from the memory of his 52 years working there. Frank is about 87 and still lives at Geebung. A shorter time ago, John Hopkins was given the plan by Bev Isdale and asked to put it on the computer. John has fine tuned skills in computer designing and did us proud. He produced a plan of the factory to fit on about two A₃ pages and had it printed on heavy plastic type paper.

Not only does this preserve an important part of our history - there's probably no other plan in existence - but it lays the basis of a short History of Hutton's and thus will fill a significant hole in the local history. It is hoped that the plan will form the centrepiece of a display which could be mounted in Zillmere library. This is a good example of a team effort at reconstructing local history.

The cost of the computer work was many hours of slaving over a hot computer while the printing cost \$81 which has been defrayed by Councillor Hopkins.

A copy of the plan was presented to Frank Irons at a morning tea on Thursday 21st July at the old School. About 20 people attended along with Frank and his family.

The School Bell – The Singing Detective, aka Ian Reid, is still relentlessly pursuing the missing bell in the endless corridors of Education Queensland and other equally dark dungeons “where the riches of ages are stowed”. He doesn't give up easily and we are thinking of calling him Bulldog Reid, aka Drummond; if it's there he'll find it. He is presently getting an item in the Sunday Mail – more information later.

Murals I – Have you viewed the new murals on the Voyager Centre yet? The BCC team of young artists has completed two sides, the latest being a magnificent portrait of HMAS Voyager on the wall facing the school. The work is part of the BCC campaign to clean up graffiti and make blank walls look alive with colour; they are succeeding.

Drill Hall – The open day was launched by Cr. Faith Hopkins and the new display from the Australian War Memorial on the Battle of Milne Bay was unveiled by Mr Vaughn Pappin, Managing Director of Smashcare Pty Ltd, at 10am on 9/7/2005.

Get thee thy feet into gear and toddle into the aforesaid establishment and view this wondrous floor to roof display. It is part of the Aircraft Hall display from the AWM, Canberra, and shows the photos and records of seven of the men who flew in the Battle of Milne Bay. The battle itself is covered in a graphic series of five maps which show the stages from start to victory over the Imperial Japanese Army.

But wait! there's more; the medal and uniform display is a stunner. These campaign medals and decorations for bravery belong to men of the 9th Battalion and include a very rare Victoria Cross, the highest decoration that can be awarded by Australia. It was won by Corporal John French who silenced, not one, but two machine gun posts using hand grenades. He had to get close up each time, and machine guns can slice people to pieces; he did it twice.

On the same day the Voyager Centre had an interesting set of craft displays including pottery, wood carving, lead lighting, computer and Majong.

The History Society did likewise in the old school and managed to sign up a couple of new members. We also staffed the BBQ sausage sizzle while a bevy of our brightest girls sat on the ramp of the Drill Hall admiring the young soldiers; they also passed some saucy comments about the editor's legs. Age has not wearied them; the girls, not the legs!

Vale – Jack Thompson died 9th June 2005 aged 94 years. Jack came to Chermside in 1920 and went to the local school to complete his education. He worked in Magg's Tannery for 48 years. Jack acted as a window on the school and Chermside of the 1920-1930s, supplying material which was not otherwise available. The photo of his class of 1923 is a gem; he was able to give us almost all the names. It will appear both in the history and on the front cover. Imagine that Jack - you are in a history book that you helped write. Thank you Jack; we are indebted to you. We offer our sympathy to Hazel Mulcahy and the other members of Jack's family.

Workers' Heritage Centre Barcaldine

In giving a talk on this unique village monument, Terry Hampson delved into the history of the area to show why it was located at Barcaldine. At the conclusion of his presentation he screened a film “History of the Australian Working Women”. It is a tribute to the ‘other half’, indigenous, migrant and currency lasses who, as much as the men, built the land of the Southern Cross.

The Barcaldine Legend begins in the depression of 1890 when the maritime strike tied up the waterfront and profits of the pastoral companies were falling.

When the strife that was building up between pastoral workers and squatters led to the inevitable wage cut, the AWU, or the Shearers' Union, struck on the 24th March. The strikers gathered from the western sheds and met under the shade of what became known as the "Tree of Knowledge" in the main street of Barcaldine.

The shearers set up a tent town on the outskirts of the town and settled down to a long siege. The pastoralists appealed to the government which sent in the militia to face the Barcaldine strikers. Nothing happened, so both sides sat and glared at each other until the strikers ran out of money and the food ran short. The strike was called off in the second week of June, having lasted about 11 weeks, and while the shearers went back to work twelve strike leaders were arrested.

These men were sentenced to terms of from three to twelve years in jail which was served on St. Helena Island in Moreton Bay. How times have changed; from jailing strikers, to guaranteeing workers the right to strike. At least the government had the common sense not to order the militia to attack the strikers as happened to the diggers at Eureka in 1854.

On reflection, the unionists concluded that the only way to get redress was to be represented in State Parliament, so they turned to the newly formed Labor Party. The result was that in 1892 Tommy Ryan, a shearer, the first parliamentary labour representative in the world, was elected in Queensland.

One outcome of all this unrest was that the "Tree of Knowledge" became a sacred icon of the workers movement and in 1987 the Barcaldine Council erected a monument marking its importance. About this time a committee was formed to develop a much larger memorial to the changes of the 1890s and out of this came the idea of the Workers' Heritage Centre.

In 1990, to celebrate the Centenary of the ALP, a large tent was made, filled with displays and sent around Australia to display the history and achievements of the party. The committee found that nobody wanted it so they bought it for the sum of \$1 and re-erected it at Barcaldine as the first stage of the Heritage Centre. It was officially opened by Bob Hawke on 4th May 1991 and when checked by the makers in 2005 it was found to be in excellent condition.

From this start the Centre grew with the addition of many previously used poster displays, buildings transported in and donations of all sorts. However, they failed to keep the statue of T. J. Ryan which was moved there for storage while the Treasury Casino was being renovated.

Today, situated in a landscaped parkland, there are, amongst other activities, a museum, an art gallery, a working school which takes groups of scholars

from all over Queensland for a week or so and "shows them the bush" and a Community Cultural and Research Centre. The next project is to acquire the corner pub, a substantial building, and develop it as a back packer's hostel.

No matter what one's political outlook may be the Centre commemorates an important step forward in the formation of the present Australian two party political system of representative democracy. With all its faults the democratic system is far better than any other political system that preceded it. Although it grew out of bitterness and strife it did not resort to bloodshed to settle the differences and so today debate and review are the hallmarks of our system.

Sited on the Matilda Highway it forms a western complex along with the Stockman's Hall of Fame and the Qantas Museum at Longreach, the Blackall Wool Scour and the Waltzing Matilda Centre at Winton. And, the inevitable modern touch, the Spirit of the Outback takes you there in air conditioned comfort.

Local Scene Demolition of the Banfield Street Telstra buildings has proceeded apace, only a shell is left, and that won't be there much longer. A great deal of soil is being dug out on Westfield land for the new buildings to extend the shopping centre towards Murphy Road. They have cleared all the land between the Tax Office and Murphy road and fenced it off from Gympie Road. I have been told that this area is to be a car park and later, shops. (All rather vague at present)

Work on the new road is underway with earth being moved and piled up. It seems that Somerset Creek may be rerouted somewhat, but that is not clear as yet.

Playfield Street Units The top floor has been reached and the roof is under construction. The crane that has operated on the units was briefly replaced on Friday 22nd by a much bigger one with a 100 ton lift capacity. The boom towered high above the building and could reach over to the back wall; it was lifting the heavy beams that will support the roof. It cost \$350 per hour so they did not keep it for long. The old crane has a 25 ton lift.

For a small donation Remember the term at the last meeting? You will be glad to hear that one member gave the Society \$20 for the two suitcases we had left over from the Isobel Robinson donation of books.

Murals II Now that you have seen the Voyager Centre, take time to stroll around the back of the Drill Hall and see just what these talented people can do. Remember they are young people on Community Service Orders under the direction of an artist and financed by the Brisbane City Council.



Frank Irons and family with John Hopkins who drew the plans of Hutton's factory



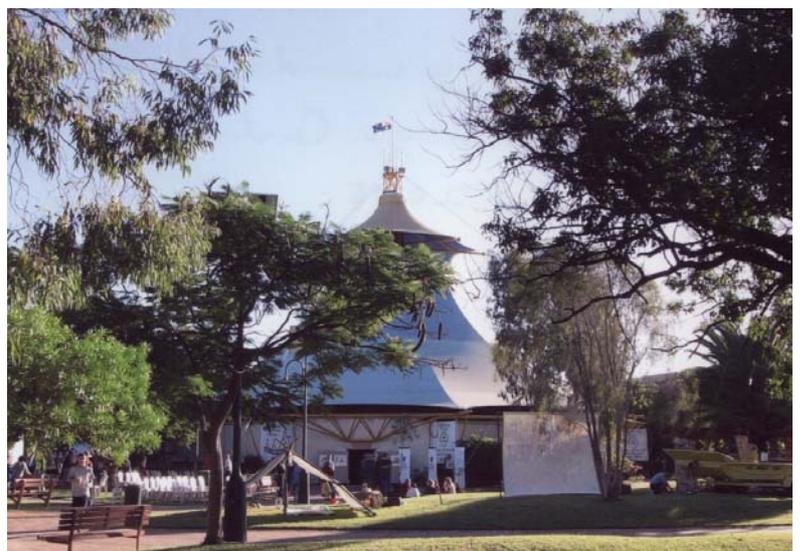
Westbrook homestead visited on the tour.



They tried to photograph the whole lot on the bus tour but this was all they could get together. They needed a teacher to bring this unruly class into order.



The Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine



The Bi-centennial Tent at Barcaldine which the committee bought for \$1