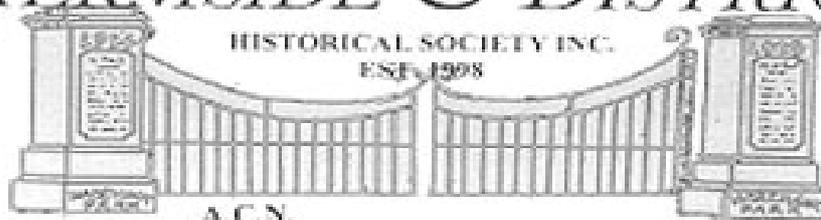


CHERMSIDE & DISTRICTS



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NEWSLETTER

August - Sept 2005

(Issued Nov. Meeting)

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President's Message

Thanks Beverley and Carolyn for the wonderful work you have both done over the last five years; we who are about to follow salute you.

Welcome to our new secretary, Heather, who had been going to join the Society for a long time and has finally jumped; her husband, Bob, joined as well.

Thanks to everybody for giving me the job of Head Teacher; now sit up straight and settle down; we have a history lesson to learn.

The Executive is now meeting during the daytime on each third Monday at 2pm. Members are free to attend.

The Kedron Street Party and the Book Launch will be major activities in October and November and help will be needed.

In future this section will be occupied by a report from the Archivist, Beverley. Since I am the Editor I think you will have enough of me in the rest of the newsletter.

Executive Dinner: Over the last few years we have had a dinner at a local eatery just before the AGM. This year instead of going out we had it in the old school with the dinner delivered and BYOG. It cost each one \$14 which, I am told, is quite reasonable. It was very pleasant and the noise level was low which enabled the people with hearing problems, like me, to be comfortable. We had to do the cleaning up ourselves, which we did, with much chattering. **So if you are looking for a small family, birthday, etc celebration venue**

then you might do worse than consider this venue. Parking is limited at present but hire is reasonable.

Society Activities:

Newspaper cuttings by the hundred are sorted, classified, stored in our cabinets and listed on our computerized data base.

Hundreds of photos are scanned into our computer and carefully classified in the data base.

These are time consuming jobs but if we need to find a specific photo or cutting we have to have a method in place and people to work it.

Research into the local history is constantly being done by interviewing people, getting data from them, recording it, classifying it and storing it in hard copy on the computer data base.

There are some **25 Displays** of selected photocopied and laminated photos. These are kept in large arch binders in a bookcase on the back veranda. Each photo has to be numbered and recorded on the data base. Very time consuming.

About **25 Family Histories** have been compiled and stored – we are presently discussing the possibility of publishing limited editions for families if they are willing to pay the cost. We can do this using black and white or colour printing.

Bus Trips take a great deal of organisation by many people beginning months before the day.

Our New Secretary, Heather Bingham, started at the September meeting and worked so smoothly that it seemed that she had been doing the job for years. She finished up in better form than the new president.

The Father's Day Raffle showed a profit of \$317 and the winners were:

1st Brian Luke – Large travelling port.

2nd Wal Bassnet – Small travelling port.

3rd Marion Eaton – Set of flashlights.

Risk Management was the theme of the address by John Hopkins at the September meeting.

He started by asking the members to note the name of the person on their right and left sides so as to be aware of who was present at the meeting. The idea was for each person to be aware of who was at the meeting and be prepared to help one another if the need arises.

The need soon arose when he proposed that the roomful of people evacuate the building and assemble at a designated spot in the nearby RSL Hockey Field.

The last person to leave made a quick check of the building on the way out and joined the rest of the group at the assembly point where the roll was marked. This was the list of signatures in the attendance book which members and visitors signed on the way in to the meeting an hour earlier. Everybody is required to sign this book when they enter the building at any time.

When everybody was accounted for we made our way back into the meeting room and a debriefing. One suggestion was that we need to find a better assembly point, as crossing the ditch to the Hockey Field was a 'bit too much' for some of the less able folk.

Marking the roll by calling out names revived memories of school days and brought some lively comments.

Terry Hampson recalled a tragedy which occurred during his National Service days. A young 19 year old soldier was drowned in a river because nobody missed him when they were leaving and going back to camp. No roll call, so no alarm was raised until it was too late.

John also told the meeting how to safely preserve photos and avoid the risk of having nameless photos. He discussed the proper labeling techniques needed to avoid this all too common problem. Do **not** use biro or pen on the back of photos; use a very soft pencil or a label.

Possible Society Website: The Executive is investigating the possibility of the Society setting up its own website on the BCC Brisbane Stories site. There are about 20 community organisations each with their own sub-site. It enables a group to publish their work, advertise their activities, tell stories, publish photos, newsletters and other material. A problem is the cost of setting up the site but this may be covered by a grant from one or other of several agencies. Once the site is established we would be able to access it and add to it, or delete from it, as we so decide.

Borrower's Pass-Book for the State Advances Corporation – Workers' Dwellings. (See photo on p.4)

On 31st August 1928, Alexander George Mellers paid the first installment of £2/17/9 (\$162.75) on his mortgage of £640 (\$35,940 in 2003 values). This was the cost of the house and land at Wallin Street, Kedron which is on the city side of Lutwyche Cemetery.

All the payments to the Corporation, which was set up by the State government, are listed in the little book; the final one being on the 21st June 1938. He repaid the loan in monthly installments of £5/10/0 (\$308.85) with two much larger payments added.

Since interest of 5% was payable the final total paid came to £874/14/6 (\$49,123.60)

It would appear that Mr Mellers was continually employed over the life of the mortgage which was fortunate, as this was the time of the Great Depression. Up to 30% unemployment was reached during that time and if a person lost their job they could not afford to service such a large debt. In such a case the house would be sold to pay the debt and whatever was left over would be given to the debtor. He, and it was only men, as back then women could not borrow money for mortgages, could then rent the house if he wished **and could afford it.**

New Road – Robert Mackay from the BCC has notified us by mail that work on the new road joining Murphy and Hamilton Roads will commence in the week beginning 26th September 2005. It will start from the Murphy Road end and will take approximately 8 months. Look out for big changes in addition to the ones already taking place around about us.

C'side Historic Precinct – The Committee met on Friday 23/9/2005 for the AGM and adopted the Constitution that has been under discussion for some time. The Treasurer, Carol Cunningham, presented the financial statements showing a surplus of \$2,546.73 which is available for work on the precinct. It was decided to seek a grant for a new toilet block for the Precinct and a kitchen for the Drill Hall. At present Kedron Wavell pays the lease on the Precinct to BCC, the electricity used by the three organisations and the insurance on the buildings.

The Co-chair, Terry Sullivan, commented on how much the Precinct had developed over the last five years as a community centre. It was gratifying to see it being used more and more by the public.

The Curtin falls on the Dawn - On Friday night, 10th August 2005, the Dawn Theatre on Gympie Road Cherm-side finally closed its doors after a run of 75 years. (Photos P.4)

In 2004 Joan Hamilton wrote about her memories of the old Dawn. She commenced:

In 1927 Maurice Tilley, a building contractor, built a picture theatre in Cherm-side on a site on the western side of Gympie Road. It was later named "DAWN", a name Maurice fancied.

The cheaper seats were wooden garden seats and they were on the front half of the right hand side. The more expensive were canvas seats made for two behind the cheap seats and taking up the whole of the other side. Because of the upward slope of the land from Gympie Road the screen was, and still is, located at the front of the building. Hence the soldiers from the Southern states referred to the Dawn as the 'back to front' theatre.

Pictures were screened only on Saturday nights; later Wednesday night screenings were added and then a Saturday matinee was started in the late 1930s. Buses would bring people in from as far as Bald Hills.

When Maurice died in 1942, son Ken, his sister Mavis and Mrs Tilley carried on the business until the early 1950s. The theatre was then sold to the Fardoulys Brothers and the family still pop the corn, rip the tickets and usher customers into the DAWN theatre.

As a primary school child I was only allowed to see the Shirley Temple pictures; money was scarce and it was a treat for me. I was accompanied by a neighbour. One Saturday night we walked the length of the passage way looking for a seat. Finally we found an empty garden seat and on it in white chalk was written WET PAINT. We stood for a while and then one of the rowdy boys from my class, in a loud voice said "Its old skew-wiff, she can sit here." How embarrassing, but at least we got a seat.

During the 1940s there would be two films shown at a session. A supporting film and the advertisements would be shown before interval. After there would be a cartoon and the main film of the session would be shown.

Our families formed a tennis club at the Cherm-side School court, mainly for the soldiers on leave from Cherm-side Camp. We would play tennis till dark, take the soldiers home for eats, then we would meet outside the theatre at interval and get in for half price.

One of the soldiers got friendly with a girl and escorted her home on the 'picture' bus to Bald Hills. Then he learned that there was no bus back

to Cherm-side so he had to walk and hitch back to camp; that girl was never seen again.

In the days before sewage came to Cherm-side the toilet at the theatre was serviced by pans or steel drums, which were collected by the Night-soil Cart. (It had other names!) To access the pan there was a small hinged flap which the carter would open on each service, take out the used pan and replace it with a fresh one. This meant that the carter did not have to go into the building at all. Some of the local boys used the little flaps as a means of access to see free shows. Mavis Rye remembers that they opened the flap, pushed the pan aside, scrambled inside and replaced the pan.

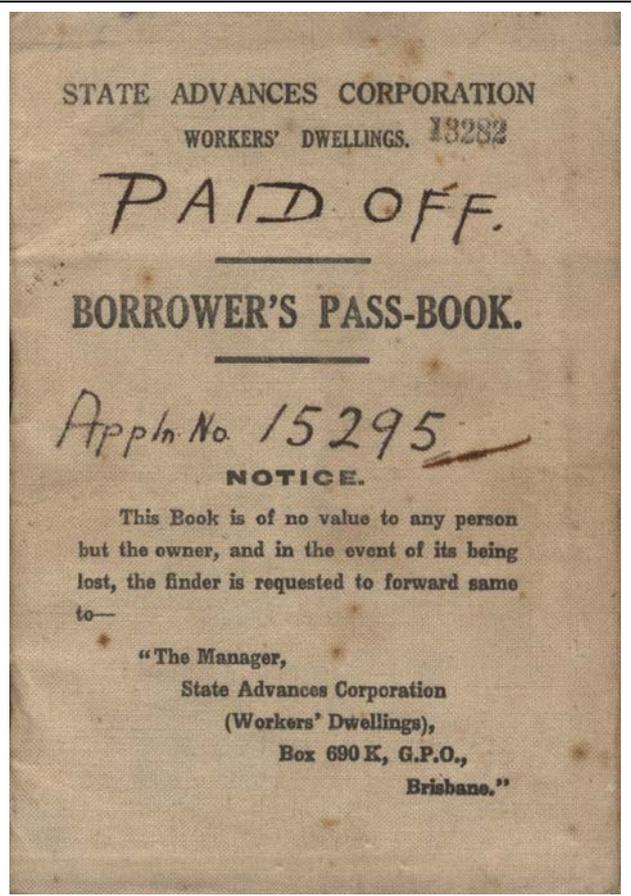
The old Dawn carried on for as long as possible and was the last small theatre left on the North Side. It managed to weather the onslaught of TV in the 1960/70s, possibly because it was a family run theatre. But the opening of the Megaplex, only about 300 metres along Gympie Road in Westfield Shopping Centre, took its toll.

The site and buildings were sold to an undisclosed buyer and it will probably be developed to fit the changing face of Cherm-side business district. Many people expressed their disappointment at the closure and stories were published in the Northside Chronicle about their memories. But this is just part of the continuing story of Cherm-side; other old building will no doubt go the same way. We have just seen the demolition of the much newer Telstra building for the extension of Westfield Shopping Centre and it was only a few decades old.

Kedron Street Party – will be held on Sunday 9th October from 11am to 4pm and we will be running a stall. An exhibition of photos has been prepared – now we need volunteers to staff the stall and talk about the Society does.

The History of CSS – It has been decided that the launch of the book will take place at Cherm-side library on Saturday 12th November 2005 from 10am to 12noon. David Gibson will speak at the function and many people are being invited. We are still waiting on BCC to decide if they will give us a grant to help with the cost of publication but all the paperwork is with the BCC Cabinet and we await their final decision.

We will need as many of our members as possible to come on the day as there will be a lot to do in welcoming visitors, attending to sales, handing out brochures, and other activities. We will be inviting all those who have ordered a book to come to the launch and pay for the book of which 109 copies have been ordered.



Alexander Mellers' Pass Book which recorded his payments for his house in Kedron



The Café at the Dawn during interval when patrons came out for a smoke in earlier times but a milk shake and some pop corn in the later times.



Dawn Theatre from a different angle – the back view would have been seldom seen by the public



The projection room at the Dawn with the dream machine on display. What a huge amount of entertainment was generated over 75 years of shows.



Inside the Dawn – the modern seating is in stark contrast to the earlier garden seats and deck chairs but the entertainment was the important thing.



The Fardoulys Brothers being interviewed at the sale. The show was over.