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NEWSLETTER

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President 3260 7384
Patrick O'Shea

P.O. Box 416, Chermside Qld 4032
Editor: Pat O'Shea 3260 7384
ABN 15 432 826 265

Secretary 3359 0517
Heather Bingham

INC. No. IA28320

Archivist's Column

"People on the Move Display" in the Chermside Library features material on the following families. Descendents of some of them are members of the Society

Argo, Alfredson, Bilsen, Bunkum, Fischle, Hamilton, Harris, Lee, Marquis, Muller, Patterson, Pflingst, Smith, Vellnagel. Also featured are some of the recent arrivals such as the Sudanese people who have settled in our area.

Very large aerial photos of the Cole/Myer shopping complex in 1997 were presented to the Society by Mr Ray Woodward.

Jim & Nola Gibson (nee Maggs) gave the society a very detailed account of the Maggs family and the three tanneries they operated in the area.

David Jones addressed the Society at the April meeting on the "U.S. Submarines Down Under", the title of the book he wrote, in co-operation with Peter Nunan, on the US Submarine base which was in Brisbane from April 1942 to March 1945.

Over that time a total of 79 submarines operated out of Brisbane at various times. Brisbane was chosen because it was beyond range of Japanese bombers; they were based at New Farm wharf along with a tender, the USS Fulton. The present Officeworks at Windsor occupies the site of their supply centre and the old Benedict Stone factory at Bowen Hills was the torpedo depot.

Local firms provided repair and support for the submarines. Evans Deacon supplied a new bow for one submarine which was involved in a collision. They removed the damaged bow in the Dry Dock and fitted a new one made up in their workshops.

The submarines would go on cruise for two months; underwater by day, on the surface at night, weather permitting. The early subs were not air conditioned and had little in the way of washing facilities and the humidity would rise till water was dripping off the metal all the time, in 100° heat; heat rash was a major problem, so were enemy warships; the later model subs were much better.

After two months of this the, mainly 18 year old crew, was ready for fresh air, sunshine and company. One thing they really liked was to be invited into the local homes so they could experience family life for a little while.

The US Navy took over the Canberra Hotel for its sailors, they set up a camp on the Gold Coast which became the National Fitness Camp in later times and they had another place at Toowoomba.

After the 1942 Battle of the Coral Sea, in which four of the subs were engaged, the scene of action moved further north around the north coast of New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Milne Bay. They not only attacked enemy shipping, but when the torpedoes actually worked, sunk some vessels. Later when the torpedoes were better made the toll of shipping rose dramatically. Over the period they sunk

some half a million tons of enemy shipping including one Heavy Cruiser

As the enemy was pushed still further north the subs moved with them until by Oct. 1944 the US navy moved back into its old base at Subic Bay in the Philippines. From then on the Brisbane base was used for repairs only.

Over the three years about 500 young men and seven subs were. On the other hand there were many romances and war brides went to the US after the war; some couples even came back to settle in Brisbane.

When the war in Europe was ending the British Navy moved to the Pacific and midget subs came to Brisbane. The US did not use them and regarded them as suicide subs. They worked well in Norway when they sank the Tirpitz and out here they were used for cutting undersea cables in enemy seas and attaching explosives to ships in enemy ports. They trained their operators at Hervey Bay

History of Chermside – This job is slowly progressing but I need more information from members. The history of any place is made up of the material from the Archives and the stories of the people who live in the area – that's you! Since I only came to this area about 25 years ago, then I personally know little of anything earlier than that. I am like a 25 year old who is trying to find out what happened in this area and why it happened such as the following:

Information Needed On WWII sites:

1. **Radar Hill** which was near the present shopping centre on Rode Road West C'side
2. **Munitions Dump** at the present Prince Charles site.

If you have any personal recollections of, or family connections with, these two sites I would appreciate it if you would jot down some points on paper and let me have same. I will then contact you and talk about the information.

Data Projector – recently we applied for, and obtained a grant from the BCC Community Development Project – Community & Parks Development Fund (Liveability Fund) to purchase one of these items. It is the 21st Cent., version of the old Magic Lantern of the 19th Cent., and the slide projector of the 20th Cent. It works off a computer, usually a lap top, which contains data such as photos, displays, text, emails, maps, diagrams; in fact anything you put on your computer. It will be used when giving talks and presentations to the Society and the

local groups which we address from time to time.

Mother's Day Raffle – netted \$415 which was great, and the winners are:

1st Prize – Hand Painted China Plate - Joan Doherty; 2nd Prize – Plate Set - Heather Bingham; 3rd Prize – Clock & Calculator - Sue Brooking

Speaker for May was Noel Stapelton, a member of C'side Probus Club who has lived in the local area for the last 50 years. His talk, "On Your Bike", was accompanied by a video history of the bicycle, loaned by Brett Richardson, one time owner of the C'side bicycle shop, Action Bicycles, who was also present. He now makes penny farthing cycles to order.

Noel recounted an early biking experience which was, when being doubled by his older brother down a hill; he got his heel caught in the front wheel. They went head over heels, his brother got some broken teeth and Noel, a very sore ankle; Mum was not pleased.

Another experience was at the age of 11 years he rode with his brother, aged 15, from Paddington to Marburg. It was a 9 hour journey with Noel grizzling while older brother growled at him to get a move on. This was in 1940 when there were few cars or trucks on the roads. Their main problem was to find a succession of taps to slake their thirst.

Noel traced the evolution of the cycle from the Hobby Horse with iron wheels which the rider kicked along by pushing one foot at a time on the ground. The name bicycle came from the Velocipede of 1869 which had iron wheels and was propelled by pedals on the front wheel. The penny farthing had a front wheel 1.5 m (Five feet) in diameter and was rather unsafe, to say the least.

In 1885 the Safety bicycle appeared with the now familiar triangular frame. This was succeeded by the Victor in 1887 with two equal wheels and a chain drive and by 1895 there were 2 million in the USA alone.

In 1902 Henry Ford, a bicycle mechanic, developed the Tin Lizzie and sounded the end of the great bicycle era. But by 1960 a resurgence of the bicycle began; today there are about 1 billion bicycles worldwide with 9 million in Beijing alone.

Get fit by riding a bicycle is the current theme song in Australia with a million being sold in the last year and for the last 4 years bicycles have outsold automobiles. You can have a road

racer, a mountain bike, a hybrid (half way between the previous two), a BMX, a Triathlon cycle, you can have alloy frames or carbon Fibre or Titanium frames. You can pay a few hundred dollars or up to \$10,000 for your bike.

The TV monitor and VCR were lent by Faith Hopkins and the video by Bret Richardson. The monitor was placed on two bakers crates on top of the official table in the meeting room so everybody could see it. The video traced in graphic detail the different types of cycles, how they were ridden and the type of people who rode them; the shameless hussies and the moustachioed young bloods showing their skills and even the modern old & young buffers on penny farthings in the cycling clubs.

The trouble with the penny farthings was the rider sat atop the big front wheel and if you braked at speed you went one way, over and down, a long way. The tricycle appeared with the rider sitting between the two wheels and a third gave perfect stability; this was much safer but did not go as fast.

In 1888 Dr Dunlop, Ireland, saw that his son was having difficulty steering his iron wheeled cycle over the cobbles so he made an inflatable tyre and glued it on the iron wheel. The inflatable tyre was invented and in 1891 M. Michelin, in France, modified it to make it detachable; the modern tyre had arrived.

At the afternoon tea which followed the talk it appeared that a couple of members of the Society still have their Argo cycles which they bought to ride to work a long time ago. And for some of our members that was a very long time ago. Maybe the Society will sponsor a track race along the bike tracks on the old 'grids' some day; dream on!

A New Publishing Venture was recently undertaken by Caroline Bowser with the assistance of Carol Cunningham and the resources of the Society. She wrote the story of her mother, complete with pictures, for May's birthday on the 20th May. May, of course, knew nothing about this and was completely surprised and delighted with the result. Of course it took a lot of research, writing, laying out, printing, and binding but the end product was worth it all. Caroline has presented a copy for the Society's archives where it can be seen.

We are very pleased with the result and offer our services to other members who would like to do something similar for a loved one; costs are kept to a minimum doing it our way.

The Annual Clean Up of the old school took place on Saturday 13th May. A labour force of enthusiastic volunteers worked and talked for three hours in the morning. The floors were washed, including the front veranda, the walls, furniture, doors and windows dusted, the cobwebs cleared, the weeds removed and the ants deposits eliminated.

Added to this, a clean up of much accumulated material such as cardboard boxes, display paper, various objects which had been lying around for years were recycled or dumped.

Several objects such as documents, books, materials and artefacts were examined, classified and stored in appropriate places where they can be found. Some were put on display for the first time and may be seen if you look around the place. We should do this more often ere we are inundated with the creeping piles of history.

Change of Address – we used to be on Banfield St but changed the bottom part of it to Early St in commemoration of Early's shop at the top.

Now neither street exists; Banfield St disappeared by being dug out for the Westfield extension and Early St vanished into the extended Kittyhawk Drive. So that is our new address but we will need a number as there will be four tower blocks of units right beside us.

Playfield Street Changes – We are constantly monitoring the evolution of the new Playfield Street. The following table shows the changes in accommodation since the street was first formed in the 1950s.

By about 2000 the number of houses had declined slightly but the number of cars had quadrupled. **Note** these numbers are based on a full occupancy of all the houses and units in the street.

If the present building trends continue as estimated on the table then in a few years the changes will be dramatic. By 2008 the number of people could double while the cars would increase two and a half times.

Meanwhile Westfield is proposing to build four towers of units with 8,8,12 and 15 floors above ground in the extended Kittyhawk Drive. If this plan is carried out the numbers of both people and cars in the immediate vicinity of the Historic Precinct will rise to even greater heights than the tallest tower.

More people are moving into units because they do not have a yard to maintain, they

are growing older and the children have left home so they do not need a large house. The units are generally near to shopping, entertainment, public transport, parks, sporting venues, they have off street parking for tenants and visitors, and they are easy to air condition. Some people living in units are not driving anymore but rely on public transport, bicycles and taxis; what a radical move!

Volunteers Needed for the many jobs in the Society such as: Cleaning inside and outside the school, helping with filing and indexing such things as newspapers and other items, letter drop at new units in Playfield Street, laminating, learning to use the computer for various tasks.

Changes to the Precinct – the parking area has a new entrance which is only temporary and will be changed later. The area has been enlarged and allowance for a three point turn in the parking area has been made to avoid having to back out on to the new road if the car park is full.

The concrete paths from the RSL parking lot are being laid and our precinct is becoming more accessible; it won't be long before Kittyhawk Drive is sealed. A high fence is going up separating the hockey fields from Kittyhawk Drive so that motorists will be protected from the stray hockey ball bouncing on the cars.

The wild garden section to the west of the school is now fully under control of the mowers and is looking much better. The gardener is being consulted about when to spray the weeds and generally clean up the area.

Somebody lit a fire in the western side bushland and burnt a sizeable area but did no damage to any of the property. In fact the fire cleaned out a lot of rubbishy undergrowth. But it is not a method of clean up that we encourage.

possible to drive from Hamilton Road to Murphy Road over the new four lane, three span bridge crossing Downfall Creek; but not for the general public yet. A system of traffic lights has been installed on the bridge and there will be more on the new road at Murphy Road.

A footbridge has been installed over Downfall Creek near the new traffic bridge to connect the area around Kid Space and concrete paths are almost completed linking the whole area to Westfield.

The Gympie Road bridge over Downfall Creek is being widened but it is not clear if there will be a new traffic lane or just a general widening of the road.

Reunion of Ex Pupils was not well attended but the ones that did come were enthusiastic. Personally I enjoyed it more than the larger reunions that we have held as I had more time to talk to people' both teachers and ex-pupils.

The Executive will discuss the possibility of future reunions with the idea of maybe making any future ones open to all years. We would like your ideas on how best to serve the ex-pupils of the old school.

History in the Making – the Society is living in what is one of the most dramatic periods of change in the history of Chermside. History charts the course of change over time and it is important that we be aware of this so that we keep a record of what changes take place now. Tomorrow will be too late as another lot of changes will be operating; we are experiencing Future Shock.; Cheers, get used to it, and enjoy watching the passing parade.

Year	Dwelling	Houses	Units	People	Cars	
1950s	Houses	53 – 5/house		265	25	
2000	Houses	53 – 3/house		160	53	
2005	Houses C'side Central	50 – 3/house	41 – 2/unit	150 82	50 62	
2005	Total			232	112	
2006	Houses Central Park Carbone Unnamed	30 – 3/house	51 – 2/unit 22 – 2/unit 62 – 2/unit	90 102 44 124	30 75 30 90	
2008	Total		135 Units	442	287	
200?	Westfield in Kittyhawk Drive		360 – 2/unit	720	540	

NB: 5/House = Estimated 5 persons per house – 2/unit = Est.2 persons per unit



The Tree of Knowledge at Barcaldine is dying, poisoned by vandals



The disappearance of Banfield St., under the new shopping complex - once called Short St is now a very short street.



Left - the new face of Chermside in Playfield St. The 41unit, 7 floor building replaces 3 houses. There are three more blocks with about 136 units to be built on the other side of Playfield St replacing about 9 houses.

Below – the 4 lane bridge over Downfall Ck - find the creek – The structure on the extreme right is the beginning of the foot bridge.

