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NEWSLETTER

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Christmas Meeting

The main event of this meeting was the presentation of the Society's production of the Hamilton Diaries to Joan Hamilton and the family. There were 13 members present ranging in age from Joe Carseldine at 93 years to Nathan Alexander Schache at 8 months. Many photographs were taken and Alan Carr made a video of the proceedings.

The original diaries, covering a period from 1890 to 1951, are the work of Thomas Andrew Hamilton (1860-1951) and they cover a large part of the history of the local area.

The Diaries have been photographed, over 4,000 pages, put on disk and are being steadily transcribed, which takes a lot of time.

Carol Cunningham outlined the process to the assembled meeting and presented the first printings to Joan Hamilton.

Joan replied by thanking the Society for its efforts and thereby helping to preserve the work of her grandfather, Thomas Andrew. She told us that during the 14 years he lived with Joan's family he would write up his diary every night right up till his death at 91.

Joan told me sometime ago that Thomas, towards the end of his life, sometimes asked "Who would look after the diaries?" His daughter-in-law, Mary Elizabeth, Joan's mother, told him that she would look after them. Then when Mary Elizabeth was getting on she asked the same question and Joan became 'the keeper of the flame'. Now it is Joan's turn to hand on the task to the younger members of the family and also to the Society; thus the records, and the

memories, are preserved.

The eldest grandchild, Joe Carseldine, then replied on behalf of the very large Clan Hamilton. He mentioned Thomas' love of fishing and how he used to range between the Brisbane and South Pine Rivers. Also there was the time that Joe and Vern made a crystal set which was the wireless (radio) receiver of the time. All they needed was a crystal of Galena (Lead Oxide) a very thin piece of wire, a pair of headphones, a wire aerial about 100 ft long and an earth to a water pipe. And it worked. They then presented it to Thomas for his birthday and enabled him to listen to the cricket matches. Imagine two young boys building a radio today; where would they start?

After the presentation came the party out the back of the school on the lawn and under a cloudy sky which shaded the participants from the summer sun. In the end they had to be hunted home or they would still be there, yarning.

Joe and Verna made a substantial donation to help defray the cost of the work on the Diaries.

The drawing of the **Christmas Raffle** resulted in:

- 1st Prize a hamper to Ian Rye.
- 2nd Prize another hamper to Sterling Hinchliffe
- 3rd Prize of stubbies and glasses to Norm Pfingst

Actually Norm won second prize but because he felt that it was too much for him to deal with, he took the third one and we re-raffled the second one; solved that one easily. Total income from the raffle was \$314. Jolly Bon.

**Ave et Vale – Colin Briggs
19/12/2006**

All who were at the September meeting will remember, with pleasure, the very lively one-man show that Colin put on. For those who missed out then you were able to read the resume in the subsequent newsletter.

Colin was a movie connoisseur and an actor in his own right. When he combined the two talents, as he did for us, then one would witness a classic entertainment event. So it was when he performed for us even though he was very ill at the time, but like a real trooper, he made sure that the show went on.

The curtain came down for Colin on the 19th December. So we remember him, for we were the richer for his visit.

Rest in Peace

Carol Reports – I have forwarded a donation to the Prostate Cancer Foundation of \$50.00 instead of sending flowers for the funeral of Ken Ryley. We would have spent that amount on flowers and the family requested that donations be made in place of flowers.

The Oki Colour Laser Printer is installed and working – Very impressive too – It cost us \$598.99 and we get 5% off ink cartridges for the life of the machine from Pencraft in Chermside.

Norm Pfindst – at the request of Rob Isdale Norm sketched the outline of his father, Peter's farm of 20 acres on what is now Pfindst Road. He also added a sketch of his grandfather, Herman's three blocks of 10 acres each.

These sketches are of great importance to the history of Chermside because they are authentic reproductions of real farms as they existed from 1865 till the area was built out by housing. Incidentally Norm still lives in one of the houses.

I intend to use the sketches in the History of Chermside. If anybody reading this has any photos of farms or anything else in the local area we would be pleased if we could copy them for our archives.

Sketches are great too: the only view of the old School of Arts is the sketch done by Ian Rye. Herb Carr did a very detailed colour sketch of Hutton's at Zillmere. Often a sketch is better than a photograph because you get exactly what you need.

**Ave et Vale – Kenneth Russell Ryley
19/1/1940 – 30/11/2006**

Ken was a builder who worked with the men who were renovating the old school after it had been relocated to the present site.

Ken had been in the regular army for many years, serving in Australia and Overseas. He had retired from the army and gone back to his old trade to help his son start in business.

Ken organised the big garage sale in the Drill Hall a couple of years ago to raise funds for the Leukaemia Foundation.

He assisted the Society by finding 'things' that would be useful for us. The large corner bench in the Archives Room was one of his 'things'. He got it when he was renovating a kitchen somewhere.

He was always laughing and had a fund of interesting stories. Just a week before he died he was telling me about how he used to raid the tips in Chermside when he was a child. He could always find 'things' there. He died of Prostate Cancer.

Keep laughing Ken and keep finding 'things'

Adrian Turner writes on an incident from the early period of white settlement in Australia.

1869 witnessed one of the most gruesome events in our history when "King Billy", one of the last full-blooded Tasmanian Aborigines, died of cholera. (Possibly brought by the white settlers) Prior to his burial some person unknown stole the head and removed the facial skin. Another skull was exchanged and the skin pulled over the face in a crude attempt to disguise the crime. Anthropologists were always keen to examine aboriginal skulls, intending to establish human or sub-human identity. Such an atrocity would, in our day, be punishable to the limit of the law.

As far as I am able to ascertain, no one was apprehended for this inhuman act. We have not treated the original inhabitants of this country in a kindly way, and even in this century their inability or unwillingness to be absorbed into the different culture of the 98% majority is a difficult social problem.

Editor comment: The 20th Century has seen the rise of new generations of Aboriginal leaders who are offering real hope to their people. So may it continue; so may we help.

Len King

In 2001, Allan Currie, husband of Lyn, wrote his memoirs of the RACQ while Lyn typed the manuscript and encouraged him.

Allan worked at the RACQ for 35 years from 1947 till he retired in 1981 rising from a Junior Executive to Assistant General Manager.

He describes Len King, the General Manager from 1939 till 1963:

On the rare occasions that I come across the unusual word “stooling” I vividly remember Len King.

It was the late forties and I was in my early twenties, a relatively new staff member of the Royal Automobile Club of Queensland. The General Manager, Len King, was a colourful, larger than life character who stamped his personal imprint on every aspect of the Club’s life. A man of commanding appearance, he had tremendous presence. His over six foot height, large frame, booming voice, Grenadier Guards bearing and slow measured tread all contributed to ensuring that he held centre stage wherever he went.

Hollywood would have cast him as a Major General.

Just as a bishop never walks (he proceeds), Len King never said anything. He declaimed. He pontificated. He preached homilies. With lordly air, he acted always as if he were in fact a Major General, and all around him were Lance Corporals.

His pomposity had an olde worlde quality to it that belonged in the time of Dickens. His word was law. The mildest staff suggestion was likely to be met with a withering “are you trying to tell me how to run the RACQ?” Disagreement with his view at any time was a heinous crime, and would bring from, at best, a genuinely puzzled look indicating that he was having serious doubts about one’s sanity.

I was in the General Manager’s office attending my very first senior staff conference. It was the first time I had ever had the opportunity to see The Great Man Len King in action, and I was fascinated.

We arrived at the subject of toilets. This was a real problem. The then RACQ building, opposite the Customs House, had been constructed before World War II to cater for a handful of staff. Toilet facilities were minimal. Now the staff had quadrupled, and cubicles were so constantly occupied that it was embarrassing.

Boomed Len King in an offended tone “Yesterday, I had to go upstairs to use the Yacht Club toilets.”

Aha, thought I! This will bring things to a head. He will go on to say something like “We really must find a way to put in some additional toilets.”

But no, he boomed on “If you executives find anyone regularly using those toilets, you make an example of him. Staff must understand that those cubicles are for emergency use only. Normally, staff are expected to do their stooling at home in their own time.”

Greencross Veterinary Clinic has been in Chermerside for 50 years and since 1973 Dr Tony Thelander has been in charge.

He commented that when they first opened the main focus was on livestock, (horses and cattle) and vets would travel as far as Gympie to see sick or injured animals.

Their main work today is with household pets, dogs and cats, but also birds and other animals are cared for.

Has anybody got any information about any earlier Vets in the local Area?

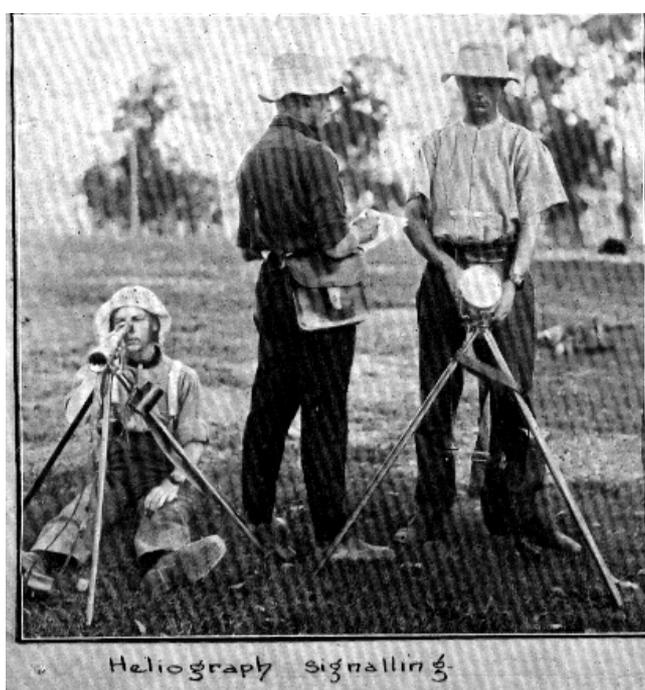
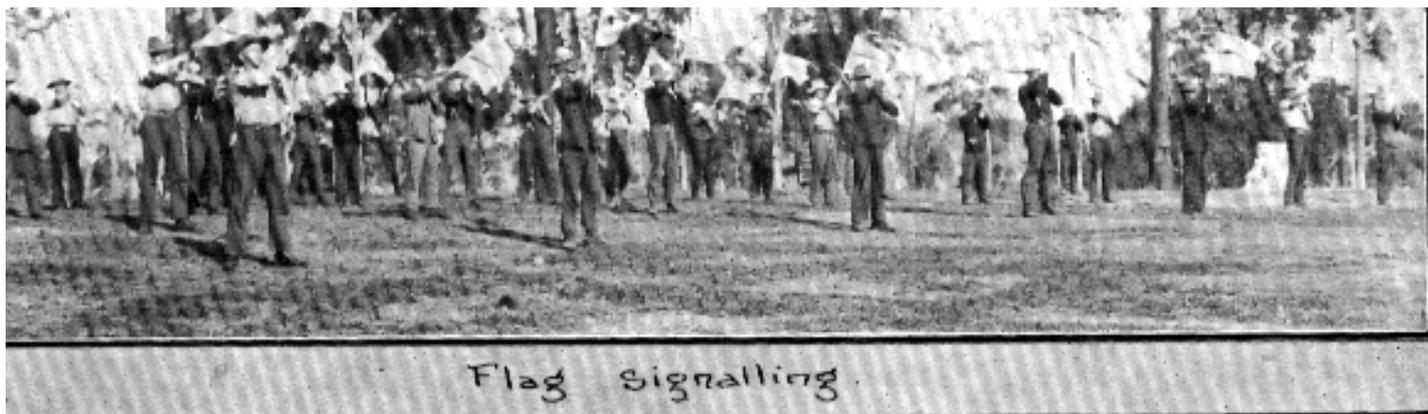
Do you know that a Bird Vet has recently opened on the corner of Hamilton & Pflingst?

Westfield sold their vacant land beside the Historic Precinct for \$20m and the buyer is Australian Affordable Housing Association Inc. It would appear that they intend to build units, perhaps on the scale that Westfield first proposed. More information as it comes to hand.

Recently we made two applications for grants: For video equipment the Commonwealth Gov – we missed out on the first round but a second round is coming up. For a new computer & postage from the State Gov – we missed out.

Did you know that the present drought is not as bad as the Federation Drought of 1894-1902? Historian Geoffrey Blainey has been examining them and says that NSW lost half its sheep flock while Qld lost two thirds of its cattle. And there was not much Govt drought relief money in those days. So if we are going to have a record drought we have a couple more years to go. And we will not drink sewage; recycled water yes; there is a large difference.

Photographs, taken from a 1916 issue of the old weekly pictorial the “Queenslander”, which show something of life in the Signallers Training Camp at Chermside.



The Flag Signalling or Semaphore above was used widely by ships at sea but was being superseded by the blinking electric Aldis lamp using Morse code.

Likewise the Heliograph was being replaced by the new technology of the Aldis lamp. The Heliograph reflected the rays of the sun towards a distant observer and transmitted signals by shading and exposing the mirror. The man with the telescope is to read signals from another, distant, heliograph.

Both of these methods are simple technology and can be used in an emergency when there is no supply of electricity; which happens in battle.

Below is the telephone which was cutting edge technology in the Great War. A major problem with the telephone was that it required wires and they were continually being blown up by shellfire. So the

linesman had to go out, under fire, find the break and repair it; the casualty rate was high. Later wireless or radio was used to transmit Morse code, but then the enemy found our how to jam the signal.

