



# Bulletin

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Newsletter of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, No.707 April 2007  
[www.queenslandhistory.org.au](http://www.queenslandhistory.org.au)  
[info@queenslandhistory.org.au](mailto:info@queenslandhistory.org.au)  
Ph: 07 3221 4198

**Patron: Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor of Queensland**  
**President: Jean Stewart**



The William Jolly or Grey Street Bridge  
photo by Central photographic Bureau 1953  
(RHSQ collection) see story page 5

## President's Report April 2007

Much of the Council's time at its last meeting was taken up with discussion about the proposed development of North Bank by the Multiplex Corporation. Discussion centred on the issue of proper recognition of the heritage precinct of William Street - I am sure you will all remember the Society's publication *Brisbane's Historic North Bank* which gives a wonderful pictorial account of the area from Parliament House to the Treasury Casino. The relationship of the Commissariat Store and National Trust House - the former Immigration Depot - to the river is an extremely important one and it is disastrous that the view of these buildings will be obscured from the river if this plan is implemented. Other concerns considered were continued and possibly louder noise from the Expressway and increased traffic along an enlarged Queens Wharf

Road which will become one of the major thoroughfares to any new buildings erected over the river. Further discussion included the risks occasioned by any future major flooding. A submission expressing these and other concerns has been forwarded to the Minister responsible for Infrastructure. I attended a session held by a member of Multiplex to explain details of the proposal as he tried to allay fears about concerns such as those outlined above. Significant members of the heritage community were at that meeting and all voiced concerns.

Discussions have been held recently with the management of Kidman Company, now the sub-lessees of Nappamerri Station on which lies the Dig Tree Reserve on Cooper Creek. The company is willing to carry on the good work long undertaken by

Stanbroke Pastoral Company and will continue to maintain the reserve and the nearby camping area. One of the long standing responsibilities of the Society as Trustees is to ensure that the Dig Tree is protected and accessible.

It is with sadness that we record the death of Doris Rollason who died in March aged 90 at the Symes Grove Hostel where she had lived for a number of years. She joined the Society in 1959 and became a Life Member. She was elected to a Fellowship of the Society on 26 July 1984 in recognition of her Museum activities. She was often commended in early *Bulletins* for her care of the museum artefacts and her value as a guide for the collection. She was born in 1916 in a house that still stands on the corner of Kelvin Grove Road and Bancroft Street named after her grandmother's step-brother, Dr Joseph Bancroft. She left school at 14 and went to work as a finisher in the workshop behind Greddens Women's Store in Queen Street, a ladies' dress shop where she learned great skills with sewing and dressmaking – skills which she put to use for the Society when historical pageants were held at Newstead House in the days when the Society occupied it. On one memorable occasion the Queen visited Newstead House when a Pageant was held and Doris was introduced to her – a great milestone in her life. She was a kindly person, a hard worker and a stalwart of the Society. She was instrumental in developing and expanding the collection. When she retired to the nursing home, her family donated many of the books she had collected during her long life to the Society and these formed the nucleus of the very successful Book Auction held in 2005. The Society was represented at her funeral on 9 March at St Mark's Anglican Church in Newmarket where she had been baptised and where she was married.

In March, as a Queensland delegate on the Federation of Australian Historical Societies, I travelled to Armidale in New South Wales, to attend the presentation of a Fellowship of the Federation to Dr Lionel Gilbert, a great historian and well remembered by many of the students he taught at the Armidale Teachers' College, later at the College of Advanced Education and in the many postgraduate local history courses run by the University of New England.

For those of us who write and wish to publish local history, the Federation of Australian Historical Societies has recently published *Publishing history: A guide for historical societies*, by Helen Doyle and Katya Johanson. It is a practical and very useful little book guiding the reader through the myriad steps in preparing material for publication.

After an extended holiday in England and Europe recently, Stephen Sheaffe has resigned as editor of the Society's *Journal*, a task which he undertook on the death of our previous long-serving editor, John Kerr. The Council expressed their thanks for Stephen's contribution during the last three years. A new editor will be appointed as soon as possible.

The new exhibition at the Museum of Brisbane, 'Adelaide and Ann: from humble beginnings', was launched on 7 March by the Lord Mayor and many of the images used came from our collection. It is wonderful to see the remarkable collection of photographs built up by the Society over many years being used in this way. On 25 February I was a guest of the Queensland Women's Historical Association at the opening at *Miegunyah* of the FanFair Exhibition and the re-opening of the partly restored Dining Room, a great event for the association in the demanding business of maintaining a grand house of this age. My one speaking engagement for the month was to be the guest speaker at the first history dinner for the year at the Queensland Club. All these are important activities which help to raise the profile of the Society in the community.

Jean Stewart  
President

## New Members

Gordon and Diana Dredge	Camp Hill
Yvonne Evans	Ferny Hills
Michael Marendy	Toowong
Elizabeth Revell	Clayfield
Mary-Ellen Ryan	West End

## Research report

It was interesting to meet a young medical student from England who had arrived in Australia the day before. The first stop on her research trip in Brisbane was the Welsby Library. She was researching Dr Clarkson, the Dunwich Benevolent Asylum and aspects of Queensland Public Health. There were little snippets we could show her and we could point her to various sources in other places in Brisbane. The gathering of material on Dr V McDowall and TM Elliott and their experiments with television has continued. George Elphinstone Dalrymple and John Kent of Maryborough were two separate enquiries while a very interesting time was had by a researcher looking into early pearl cultivation in the Torres Straits and Cape York areas. This involved looking at some of the Jardine collection and the reports of Saville-Kent who was responsible for fisheries. Another visitor sought information on Aboriginal breastplates, particularly of Woondy who rescued people from the wrecked *Sovereign*, while another

visitor searched through the voluminous cutting book of Captain Wood.

Jean Stewart  
Hon Researcher

## Country News

(Collected by Ruth Kerr from personal Queensland contacts, Affiliated Societies and Newspapers)

**Biggenden** - Long standing stalwart of the Historical Society, Elsie Campbell, has retired to the Sunshine Coast. Their new resident historian is Eddie Brockway. The speaker at their recent AGM was Jim Stewart of Monto. (Woocoo Historical Society *News Bulletin*, vol.20 no.3 September 2006 p.3)

**Boondooma Homestead** - The annual heritage weekend and Balladeers' Muster will be on again at the historic Boondooma Homestead on the Durong-Mundubbera Road from Wednesday 25 April to Sunday 29 April, phone (07) 4168 0159. Tours of the homestead buildings will be available on Saturday and Sunday.

**Brooweena** - Woocoo Historical Society has obtained a government grant to upgrade catering facilities and improve working conditions at the museum. They also won \$5,000 cash in the Bushell's Tea Competition, sufficient to assist greatly in bringing their photo collection and cataloguing of records up to date. (Woocoo Historical Society *News Bulletins*, vol.20 no.3 September 2006 p.1 and vol.21 no.4, March 2007, p.7)

**Caboonbah Homestead near Esk** has been the focus of a study by archaeologists from University of Queensland. The homestead was constructed around 1890 as the home of Henry Plantagenet Somerset, pastoralist and Member of Parliament. SEQ Water owns the building and it is managed by the Brisbane Valley Historical Society and is heritage listed. The domestic dump has been excavated on field excursions in 2006-2007. (Australian Society of Historical Archaeology *Newsletter*, vol.37 no.1, March 2007 pp.9-10)

**Gympie** - Noted historian Dr David Day, now of Tokyo University, visited Gympie to undertake further research for his biography of Andrew Fisher, first Prime Minister elected from Queensland. (*Gympie Times* 1 March 2007 p.3 including photo)

**Mount Morgan** - Rockhampton & District Historical Society has gained a collection of photos of Mount Morgan and Rockhampton buildings taken in the 1970s by Roger Wilson. (Rockhampton & District Historical Society *Newsletter*, March 2007, p.2)

## FAHS Advocacy submissions

As a member of FAHS, the Royal Historical Society of Queensland has accepted the task of gathering submissions from Queensland history societies and groups. RHSQ will distribute a *pro forma* and a covering letter to each of our affiliated

societies and to other groups on our mailing list with this issue of the Bulletin or under separate cover. The completed *pro forma*, one for each issue or concern, would be returned to RHSQ by September. We will collate submissions and forward them to FAHS. The Federation will consider these submissions and get back to each society with a proposal for action.

FAHS hopes that by initiating this program the Federation will better serve the historical society sector. RHSQ supports the program and encourages all history societies and related organisations to consider relevant issues of concern. More details can be obtained by contacting the Society on 3221 4198 Tuesday to Friday. If you are a member of a non-affiliated organisation, please bring this new advocacy service to their attention.

## CALENDAR

### April 2007

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Wednesday 11 April</b> | 12.30 pm 'Fiji in the time of Governor Gordon' by Loretta de Plevitz |
| <b>Monday 16 April</b>    | <b>Bulletin deadline</b>   |
| <b>Thursday 19 April</b>  | 6.00 pm 'Ian Fairweather – Bribie Island Years' by Jim Lergessner    |

### May 2007

- |                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <b>Wednesday 9 May</b> | 12.30 pm 'Elizabeth Brentnall' by John McCulloch |
| <b>Tuesday 15 May</b>  | <b>Bulletin deadline</b>                         |
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## Library report

A task I started some time ago finally has been completed; all the 54 Queensland State Archives plans relating to the Moreton Bay Penal colony as a convict settlement have been added to the catalogue.

Arthur Burke has donated *Artillery units at Kelvin Grove: A tribute to their guns and gunners* to the Welsby Library while the booklet mentioned in Jean Stewart's report, *Publishing history: A guide for historical societies* has been added as well.

Judy Rechner  
Hon Librarian

## UQ Alumni Book Fair

Brisbane's 'original book fair' will be held at the UQ Centre, Union Road St Lucia from Saturday 21 April to Wednesday 25 April. For further information email [alumni@uq.edu.au](mailto:alumni@uq.edu.au)

A **Rare Book Auction** will be held at The Women's College Playhouse, Sir William MacGregor Drive, UQ at Lucia on Friday 20 April at 6:30pm. For further information phone 3365 1562.

## Queensland State Archives

The State Archives, 435 Compton Road Runcorn, are open Monday to Friday from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm and on the second Saturday of each month from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm.

## National Archives of Australia

The opening hours for The National Archives of Australia at 16 Corporate Drive, Cannon Hill are now every Wednesday to Friday from 9.00 am to 4.30 pm and on the third Saturday of each month from 9.00 am to 1.00 pm. Records must be pre-ordered. Phone 3249 4226.

## State Library of Queensland

Nominations for the **2007 John Oxley Library Fellowship** close on Wednesday 18 April. An original and creative concept to document Queensland's history could provide the successful applicant with **\$20,000** plus access to the extensive resources of the State Library. Further information and application form at [www.slq.qld.gov.au/whatson/competitions/awards](http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/whatson/competitions/awards)

## Events and functions of interest

**Planes, Trains and Automobiles - Transport Records in Archives** on Wednesday 18 April and Saturday 21 April at National Archives of Australia, 16 Corporate Drive, Cannon Hill from 9.00 am to 10.00 am

**A Roof Over Queensland: Building Plans** on Wednesday 16 May and Saturday 19 May at National Archives of Australia, 16 Corporate Drive, Cannon Hill from 9.00 am to 10.00 am

**Starting Research at QSA** on Wednesday 24 April: find out about the services and resources available to new researchers, in Lecture Room 1 at Queensland State Archives, 435 Compton Road, Runcorn from 10.00 am to 11.00 am. Bookings on 3131 7777

**Green spaces**, a guided history and heritage tour of the Brisbane Botanic Gardens on Saturday 14 April from 10.00 am to 11.30 am starting at the Rotunda, for Brisbane's Living Heritage Network members \$5.00, non members \$10.00 contact 3215 0843 for details

**Museum Zoo** on Level 3 at the Queensland Museum, daily 9.30 am to 5.00 pm

**Dandiri Maiwar and Burarra Gathering** on Level 4 at the Queensland Museum, daily 9.30 am to 5.00 pm

**History in Motion: 100 years of the Peel Island Lazaret** presented by The Friends of Peel Island and Dr Jon Pragnell, and Doris and Ruth Gabriel at the Queensland Museum on Wednesday 2 May from 12.30 pm

**Gold Coast heritage: love it or lose it** by Judy Austin, Heritage Officer for Gold Coast City Council, at Queensland Museum level 2 at 12.30 pm on Wednesday 3 May

**Rail and River Tour** with Sunshine Express Rail Tours – steam train plus river cruise on *MV Brisbane Star* on Saturday 12 May. Information and bookings phone 3252 1759

**Wine and Cheese Tour** with Sunshine Express Rail Tours on Saturday 12 May. Information and bookings phone 3252 1759

**City Sights Hop-on, Hop-off bus tour** operates daily with informative commentary. Phone Transinfo 13 12 30. Concession fares available

**Universal Inspirations**, an exhibition of interpretive paintings and sculptures by Basil Gay and Wendy Gay at Pine Rivers Regional Art Gallery from Wednesday 28 March to Saturday 28 April features Australia's Light Horse regiments of World War I

**History Alive: a journey through time** at the Fort Lytton National Park on Saturday 9 June and Sunday 10 June from 10.00 am to 4.00 pm. The Queensland Living History Federation Inc presents re-enactment events by groups from around Australia. For further information see [www.historyalive.org.au](http://www.historyalive.org.au)

## BUS TRIP

### Settlement on the Stanley and Brisbane rivers

Our bus trip this year will be on the weekend of 19 and 20 May. It will visit historic properties and sites on the Stanley and Upper Brisbane rivers explored by Cunningham, Lockyer, Logan. This area was first settled in 1841.

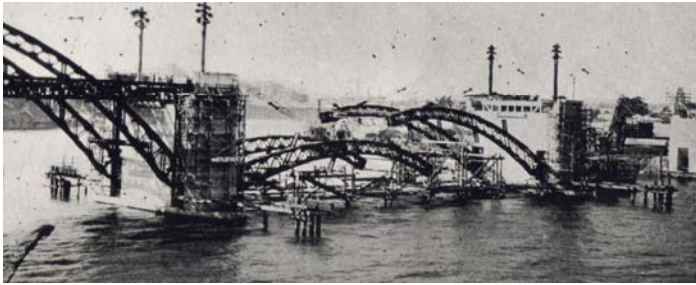
We travel via Caboolture visit historic stations Durundur (Woodford), Kilcoy (Monta Cassino), Clifton and overnight in Nanango. Dinner will be at the Nanango RSL Club. On Sunday we pass by Cressbrook Station and visit historic sites at Toogoolawah, Caboonbah and Esk. We complete a fantastic weekend by returning to the Commissariat Store via Ipswich. It is expected that costs will be similar to previous trips. Details and a booking form will be included in this issue of the *RHSQ Bulletin*.



## The Grey Street Bridge – 75 years old

Officially opened on 30 March 1932 by the Governor, Sir John Goodwin, the Grey Street Bridge was at the time the largest vehicular traffic bridge in the Southern Hemisphere constructed in steel and concrete. Its construction was of the ‘through arch’ type, being 1634 feet in length with three main arches.

Work commenced on 11 June 1928 with the Datum Block being laid by the Mayor, Alderman W A Jolly. Work was completed in 3½ years by the Queensland firm MR Hornibrook Ltd at a cost of £420,000.



The foundations of the river spans were unique in Australia. Two reinforced concrete piers about 28 feet in diameter at the toe were sunk to a depth of 107 feet below water level, partly under compressed air operations. The compressed air phase of the construction took exactly six months with workers operating 24 hours a day, a noisy inconvenience to local residents.

The south abutment pier was built on two reinforced concrete caissons at a depth of 83ft below high water. The cylinders and caissons were built on artificial sand islands constructed on site – a method, devised by Mr Hornibrook, which was used for the first time, and was later used overseas. The cylinders were sunk by dredging through the sand islands and river bed until they were within a few feet of rock. Airlocks were then fitted to allow workers to go down and manually embed the cylinders before they were filled with concrete. A medical officer was employed by the contractors, and despite the great depths and air pressure at which work was done, no fatal cases of caisson disease occurred nor was any man permanently disabled.

The arch-ribs for each span were made of structural steel with Evans, Deakin & Company Ltd carrying out all the steel work. The spans weighed up to 100 tons each and they were completely encased in reinforced concrete.

The width of the bridge varies from 66 to 80 feet with special provision for tram tracks when required.

At the centre it stands 56 feet 6 inches above low water level, compared to the Victoria Bridge which stands at 38 feet 9 inches. The height of the arches above the deepest foundation is 191 feet.

(Material for this article has been taken from the souvenir booklet of the official opening of the Grey Street Bridge, a copy of which is held in the Welsby Library.)

## Tell me more



This is obviously is the top of a gate post and is currently located in our store in National Trust House. The question is ‘Where did it come from?’ At some time it has had a label hanging from it but this has suffered from the weather and is now blank.

I am sure one of our members knows the story behind this item and I would very much like to hear it. Please contact me at the Commissariat Store if you can help.

Allan Bell

Royal Historical Society of Qld  
 PO Box 12057  
 Brisbane George Street  
 Qld 4003  
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**SURFACE  
 MAIL**

POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 AUSTRALIA



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**RHSQ Infobox**

The Society is represented on the National Trust of Queensland and the Board of Trustees of Newstead House  
 The Society acknowledges the financial assistance of the Queensland State Government, and rate remission from the Brisbane City Council

**Contact details:**

<b>Location:</b>	Historical Museum and Welsby Library at the Commissariat Store, 115 William Street, Brisbane
<b>Phone:</b>	07 3221 4198
<b>Fax:</b>	07 3221 4698
<b>E-mail:</b>	info@queenslandhistory.org.au
<b>Website:</b>	www.queenslandhistory.org.au
<b>ABN:</b>	34 217 251 028
<b>Postal:</b>	The Royal Historical Society of Queensland, PO Box 12057, Brisbane George Street, 4003
<b>Open:</b>	Tuesday to Friday and most Sundays 10.00 am - 4.00 pm, Closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Easter.

**Bulletin articles only:**

<b>Editor</b>	Allan Bell
<b>E-mail:</b>	info@queenslandhistory.org.au
<b>Phone:</b>	07 3221 4198
<b>Fax:</b>	07 3221 4698.
<b>Postal:</b>	RHSQ, PO Box 12057, Brisbane George Street, 4003

**Subscriptions (with GST):**

<b>Ordinary Member</b>	\$45.00
<b>Partner of Member</b>	\$15.00
<b>Junior Member (18)</b>	\$10.00
<b>Full-time Student (25)</b>	\$25.00
<b>Affiliated Society</b>	\$40.00
<b>Libraries Subscription</b>	\$50.00
<b>Corporate/Institutions</b>	\$75.00
<b>Life membership – purchased after 15 years</b>	\$1,000.00