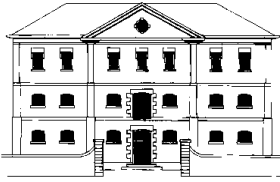


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# Bulletin

JULY 2011 No. 754

The newsletter of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland  
Patron: Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland  
President: Carolyn Nolan  
Website: [www.queenslandhistory.org.au](http://www.queenslandhistory.org.au)



COMMISSARIAT STORE 1829

## RHSQ

Royal Historical Society of Queensland



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Photo: Graeme Nicholson

## The Latest Photo of Repairs to the William Street Retaining Wall

A toothbrush, salad dressing and gin bottles, china plates and a Victorian penny are among the many artifacts uncovered during the recent excavation at the Commissariat Store. These artifacts confirm the location of boarding houses and the telegraph office and contribute to the unfolding story of the historic north bank precinct.

The unfortunate collapse of the convict built retaining wall supporting the footpath on William Street, provided an opportunity for Dr Jon Prangnell from The University of Queensland to carry out archaeological excavations. With ten percent of the site now excavated Dr Prangnell is satisfied that a sufficient sample of the site has been collected and can be interpreted. 'These artifacts offer insights into everyday life in Brisbane during the late nineteenth century and are an important collection' he said.

Following the excavation a meeting was held at The University of Queensland to inspect the artifacts. Carolyn Nolan, RHSQ President and Sasha Broughton, RHSQ Council member, met with representatives from the QLD Museum, State Government Project Services and The University of QLD to discuss conservation and research of the artifacts. Interested members are encouraged to participate in discussions and meetings, to be held at a future date, to assist the QLD Museum and Dr Prangnell with their research.

Sasha Broughton

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## President's Report for June

We celebrate our 30 years at The Commissariat Store this October. So far as post-flood reconstruction goes, Tom Fussell, Chief Architect Project Services expects work on the building itself to take approximately seven weeks and that with the well-being of the Society in mind this will be completed ahead of the reconstruction of the rock retaining wall. When the flood damage occurred we were offered help by the Queensland State Archives and it has been arranged that archivists Annette McNichol and Niles Elvery will assist with a condition report on the RHSQ library collection.

Despite the setback the Society has enjoyed a very full program of events, attended by many members and by a good many non-members. The subject of Burke and Wills was thoroughly explored at the conference with fascinating talks and presentations and music. As an added bonus it was discovered in the last few minutes that the photograph of Edwin Welch (second-in-command of the Howitt relief expedition, who found John King) given to the Society by his son, is the only known likeness of him. Dr Graeme Nicholson had framed the item, and as well the contemporary inscription for display on the day, so his generous contribution was well rewarded.

The Queensland Day Dinner attracted record numbers, including our sponsor Queensland State Archivist Janet Prowse, and good contingents from there and from the John Oxley Library. It was a delight to see Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton receive the John Kerr Medal for 2011 to enthusiastic applause. Dr Owen Harris spoke briefly about the history of the Queensland Club and later on Senior Vice-President Manfred Cross reminded us all that the centenary of RHSQ will be in 2013. Council has started planning for this and welcomes your thoughts about just what the program should include. The first meeting of what was then the Historical Society of Queensland was held on 21 August 1913, and the constitution was adopted on 26 September 1913.

With our return to headquarters we need even more volunteers. In particular if anyone can spare time to be the receptionist on Wednesdays please contact the Manager, Christina Michie. And we are seeking at least two more Special Project Officers: one to help the Membership Secretary; another to assist the Manager prepare material in line with the new national history curriculum, which, with its convict history component, promises a big increase in schools' visits to The Store. This is the only habitable convict structure in Queensland.

Convict history was very much on the agenda recently when a party of us visited the site of the Agricultural Establishment and Women's Prison at

Eagle Farm, with specialist historians in that field Dr Jennifer Harrison and Dr John Steele. We are working on a possible plan for greater public awareness of the site, and that in turn will enable us to add to our displays in William Street.

We look forward to seeing you back there, but not on the ground floor just yet!

Carolyn Nolan  
President

## Winner of the John Kerr Douglas Medal of Distinction 2011

### PROFESSOR GEOFFREY BOLTON

Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton is one of Australia's most eminent historians and can be viewed as the 'father' of historical writing on North Queensland. He is author of thirty books and more than 100 articles, chapters and biographical entries, and his career has spanned Australia, Britain and the former British Empire. One of the earliest researchers to work on North Queensland history, his *A Thousand Miles Away* in 1963, is considered a classic text on Queensland and one of the nation's best Australian regional histories. His other Queensland monograph studies are a photographic memoir of Richard Daintree (1965), *Planters and Pacific Islanders* (1968), and his jointly authored biography of AC Gregory (1972). A number of Professor Bolton's other articles and chapters are also concerned with Queensland's history, including aspects of history of Cairns, Charters Towers and the 1891 Shearers' Strike. To this can be added eighteen *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entries on personalities of great importance to the history of Queensland, including Governor Normanby, HM Chester, John Hamilton, William and Frank Hann, and Christie Palmerston. Professor Bolton has also written studies on Robert Philp and Samuel Griffith and the 1891 shearers' strike leaders, with Queensland also an important feature within his Australia wide writing such as *Spoils and Spoilers* (1981), and, *The Middle Way, 1942-1995* (1996).

Over the last forty years Professor Bolton has consistently demonstrated excellence in writing Queensland regional, biographic and urban history, as well as broader Australian or British histories; and currently, his endeavours continue and see him working on a biography of Paul Hasluck. His use of research materials is appropriate and deep – using a wide range of primary and secondary sources. And of note, his work on Queensland primary sources dates back to the years when the Queensland State Archives was far less organised than is found today;

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newspapers were actually that, newspapers, and not microfilm or digital copies.

For much of his lengthy career, Professor Bolton has been practising as a professional university based historian. For several years he taught in the History Department at The University of Queensland, as well as being a regular visitor to the History Department (later the History and Politics Department) at James Cook University. He is an objective historian of high standing in academia, and his prolific writings have informed and shaped many professional historians' careers, apart from its ongoing influence on university students and the broader historical readership both here in Queensland and elsewhere throughout Australia. Professor Geoffrey Bolton is clearly a most deserving recipient of the 2011 John Douglas Kerr Medal of Distinction.

## Queensland News for June

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

**Goomeri** – The Gympie Regional Council is working with the Department of Environment and Resource Management to have the Goomeri Memorial Clock reinstated and running at the right time. All of the internal workings are original. (*Gympie Times* 30 April 2011 p 15)

**Inskip Point Historical Grave Site** – The grave of Emily Jane Reilly who was tragically killed at age 12 years in 1891 at the former Inskip Light and Signal Station, is in need of restoration. The grave is on state land. The Department of Environment and Resource Management is undertaking restoration and will consider a memorial plaque. (*Gympie Times* 30 April 2011 p 15)

**Ipswich** – More than 200 steam locomotives were constructed at Ipswich Railway Workshops during the steam era. Over 3000 people worked there during its peak in World War II. It is now said to be the oldest operating railway workshops in Australia. (*Queensland Times* 14 June 2011 p 1)

**Mareeba** – The Mareeba Heritage Centre (Phone: 07 4092 5674) is doing further restoration on its rail ambulance. It is believed that it was a London bus and is built on a AEC chassis, and once operated on the Millaa Millaa railway. It began operation in 1950-51. Queensland Health relinquished it as an ambulance in 1975 and the local ambulance board took it over for the next eight years. It was referred to in the article, 'Railway Ambulances of Queensland' by John Pearn and Vincent Little in the Royal Historical Society of Queensland *Journal*, vol. 16

No.5, February 1997, pp.229-236. (*Tablelands Advertiser* 6 May 2011 p 11 including four photos)

**Quilpie** – In the past the area has been a predominantly grazing and Boulder Opal mining area. The name, 'Quilpie' means 'stone curlew' in the local Aboriginal language. The town's Anglican church has an opal altar, lectern and font. The railway still operates and the Council is seeking to have more residential land opened up. Quilpie has a strong focus on tourism and the stories of the Tully, Durack, Costello and Watts families are told in the Museum and Visitor Centre Information. (*Queensland Country Life* 31 March 2011 p 66)

**Rockhampton** – The Rockhampton and District Historical Society has developed a new exhibition on water – entitled 'Search for a Clean, Safe and Bountiful Rockhampton Water Source 1858 – 1975'. It was opened in Heritage Week. It was mounted by Sylvia Conaghan, Margaret MacNevin, Erica Knox, Beth Jepson, Sue Palmer-Garde, John Fletcher and Fay Griffiths. From 1858 to 1924 water came from the local lagoons and household tanks. From 1925 to 1975 water was extracted from the Fitzroy River at Yaamba. After 1975 water has come from the Barrage and the Glenmore Water Treatment Works. (Rockhampton and District Historical Society *Newsletter* May 2011)

**Warwick – Glengallen Homestead** – The Family History Centre at Glengallen Homestead was opened by Mr Brian Randall, Manager of Collections at John Oxley Library, Brisbane, on 29 May 2011. One of the attendees, Mrs Bev Browne, is a descendent of George and Sarah Maria Willett, a family boasting three generations who worked at Glengallen. Mr Joe Browne is a member of the Hemmings family who also worked on Glengallen. (*Warwick Daily News* 30 May 2011 p 5 including three photographs)

## New Queensland History Books

*The Herbert River Story* by Bianka Vidonja Balanzategui, launched on 4 June 2011 at the Hinchinbrook Shire Library in the Tyto Cultural Precinct, was funded by the Hinchinbrook Shire Council and grants from the Q150 Community Funding Program and RADF Fund. The book uses as its framework the research and publications of local identity, Bob Shepherd. (*Herbert River Express* 28 May 2011 p 5 including photo of book cover)

## Research Report for June

It seems that we will be able to restore some of the services, including the Research Service, of the RHSQ towards the end of this month. We are looking forward to it. During the last few months much valuable work has been carried out in the Society's off-site storage and now it is time to go back to dealing with our clients face to face instead of relying on emails and limited research facilities.

However we have kept things going as well as we could and in the past month the following requests have been made for material on: Margaret B Winterford and the National Council of Women; eyewitness descriptions, diary entries of Brisbane deaths, funerals and burials; photos of James Douglas Ogilvy; naming of the Leslie Harrison Dam; article by Paul Foelsche to the Royal Society of South Australia in 1881 for research on the Cairns area of the Yirrganydjii Aboriginal People; Middenbury House in Toowong; Beaulieu Estate, South Brisbane; chimney at Newmarket Brickworks; places in Montville; Dr William Ashley Beet of Beaudesert; Collins Place/Greys Court/ Grey Street/ South Bank; photos of taxis in Rockhampton in 1917; the Coungeau family of Bribie island; and Dr J Thompson CBE LLD one time secretary of the Royal geographical Society of Queensland. There has also been an enquiry for help in getting a book published on the Sunshine Plantation (Big Pineapple), but the author, when contacted, had already had some offers. Just a reminder – the research service is available on Thursdays between 10 am and 4 pm.

Jean Stewart  
Honorary Research Officer

## Queensland State Archives

The State Archives, 435 Compton Road Runcorn, is 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.

## Library Report for June

Not many changes to the updating of the catalogue, however, all of Doug Lochhead's 298 photos/digital images from the *Annual Review of Queensland for the year ended June 30th 1902* have been added. These include images of people, places, agriculture, ships, railways and other objects from all over Queensland.

An excellent resource for future researchers using the Welsby Library.

Hopefully, we will all be back in the Store soon, and members and the public will again be able to use the Society's Welsby Library collection.

Judy Gale Rechner  
Honorary Librarian

## Museum Curator's Report

A new exhibition entitled *Commissariat Store Floods 2011* is underway for when the museum reopens later this year. Photos, text and objects are being gathered and research has begun. This exhibition focuses on the Commissariat building and how it was affected by the damage from a burst water main in William Street on 13 January 2011.

The force of the gushing water caused the collapse of the retaining wall, which was built by convict stonemasons in 1829. The wall and parts of the footpath fell into the Store puncturing the external wall. Repairs by the Department of Public Works and archaeological work have been carried out and many valuable artifacts have been uncovered which we hope to display.

More information on this exhibition will follow in future *Bulletins*.

Janice Hess  
Honorary Museum Curator  
Robyn Stephensen  
Honorary Assistant Museum Curator

## 12.30pm Wednesday 13 July Lecture

Ruth Kerr 'Life at Lady Musgrave Lodge, Astor Terrace, Spring Hill in the 1960s'

Lady Musgrave Lodge began as an hostel for immigrant girls in 1885 and the building in Astor Terrace was opened in 1892. The name is in honour of Lady Lucinda Musgrave whose husband was the Governor of Queensland. She was the patron of the Lady Musgrave Trust which managed the Lodge. By the 1960s the Lodge was a hostel for University students, Teachers College students, business women and some retired women. There was a marvellous woman, Mabel Cole as Matron of the Lodge in the 1960s and she encouraged the young women to join cultural organisations and the church. It was a well managed hostel but growing maintenance issues of the historic building together with dwindling numbers of residents forced its closure in December 1973.

## Sherlock Holmes at The Mansions

A recent visit to the temporary home of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland provided a reminder of the superior quality of that building and its prominence in early Brisbane. The Society has been fortunate to have been able to move there whilst its own home in the Commissariat Store is having its flood damage repaired.

There must be very few people who have not heard of Sherlock Holmes. However, some may not be aware of the book entitled ‘Sherlock Holmes in Australia, The Adventure of the Kidnapped Kanakas’ written by Australian author Ken Methold and published by Pan Macmillan in Sydney in 1991.

In this well written story, begins at the time of a visit of an Australian Aboriginal cricket team to London in the late 1800s. One of the members of this team delivered a letter to Holmes from a former client, Mrs Irene Norton, then living in Brisbane at 14 The Mansions, George Street. Apparently the lady’s husband, Godfrey, a prominent lawyer in the colony, had been murdered because of his opposition to the Kanaka trade. Holmes decided to investigate, so the pair travelled to Queensland.

Upon investigation, Holmes uncovered a conspiracy to preserve that traffic, which was supported by some state parliamentarians and a group of prominent, wealthy landowners and businessmen. There were, however, some members of the Legislature who, with the support of the premier, Sir Samuel Griffith and the fledgling Queensland Worker’s Union, favoured abolition of the Kanaka traffic. Godfrey Norton’s minority report to an official enquiry strongly condemning the practice was mysteriously lost and never reached Parliament; it might well have resulted in a change of policy.

Holmes and Watson feloniously entered The Mansions one night, disguised as an ostler and a butcher respectively, to look for further evidence. Surprised by the housekeeper, who was armed with a shotgun, Holmes attempted to convince her that he and Watson were not thieves, but their argument was interrupted by the sudden appearance of the Aboriginal brother of the cricketer who had delivered Mrs Norton’s letter to Holmes in London, and inadvertently the housekeeper let off a shot and wounded the newcomer who ran off into a nearby street. However, he did murmur something that Holmes correctly interpreted as the name of a ship, ‘Hopeful’, based in Mackay and used in the Kanaka traffic. This ship was under the command of Captain Warren, well known as a skillful sailor, but a villainous rogue who often illegally recruited

Kanakas for work on the sugar plantations .

Holmes and Watson travelled on Warren’s ship and saw firsthand the worst practices of the system. In one fight with a large group of natives several of the ship’s crew, including Captain Warren, and many of the attacking natives were killed. Holmes and Watson were captured, but later escaped on a visiting missionary ship and were able to return to Mackay. There they unearthed all the evidence Holmes needed concerning the worst practices of the Kanaka trade, and one of the ring leaders then took his own life. Following this moderate voices in the government reassessed the programme and local opposition to the existing system grew.

Holmes and Watson sailed back to England where Holmes presented his findings to Queen Victoria and regulations were instituted to modify the system and to arrange a time frame for its discontinuation. The travellers were both decorated by the Queen. Holmes was awarded a GCVO and Watson an MBE. It is of interest that this latter award really uses poetic licence because the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire was not instituted by King George until 1917.

Despite this minor inaccuracy the whole tale is well constructed, the book makes a very good read and the author deserves congratulations. It seems a proper time to describe the book whilst our Society has also shared an intimate connection with The Mansions of George Street.

Sam Mellick

### QUEENSLAND FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

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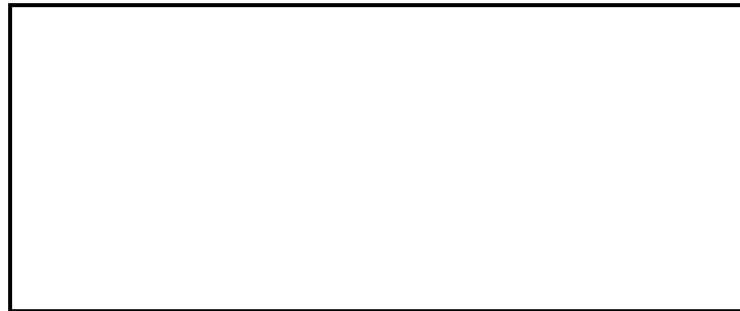
## RHSQ Volunteers Required

Volunteers are required in several different areas of the Society’s functions. In particular we are looking for a receptionist for Wednesdays. If you have time to spare and would like to help out please contact Chris Michie on 3221 4198, Wednesday to Friday 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Royal Historical Society of Queensland  
 PO Box 12057  
 Brisbane, George Street QLD 4003  
 RHSQ Journal: PP424022/00020  
 RHSQ Bulletin: PP424022/00019

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### **IMPORTANT EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS**

#### **JULY 2011**

**Wednesday 13 July 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm**  
**'Life at Lady Musgrave Lodge, Astor Terrace,  
 Spring Hill in the 1960s'**

**Ruth Kerr**

**Friday 15 July *Bulletin* Deadline**

**Sunday 24 July 10.00 am - 3.00 pm**

**Commemoration of Toowong Cemetery 140th  
 anniversary (see flyer included with this *Bulletin*)**

#### **AUGUST 2011**

**Tuesday 16 August *Bulletin* Deadline**

### **IMPORTANT NOTICES**

Please note the insert in this issue. It details the agenda for the Annual General Meeting to be held on Thursday 8 September at 6.00 pm at the Commissariat Store and a nomination form for the election of members of the Council that will be held during the AGM

We urge you to receive your *Bulletin* by email, as this will significantly reduce our printing and mailing costs. Please contact Chris on (07) 3221 4198 to submit your email address.

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<b>Open:</b>	Tuesday to Friday 10.00 am - 4.00 pm, Closed Saturday Sunday Monday as well as Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Easter

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#### **Subscriptions (with GST):**

<b>Ordinary Member</b>	\$60.00
<b>Partner of Member</b>	\$20.00
<b>Junior Member (U18)</b>	\$10.00
<b>Full-time Student (U25)</b>	\$30.00
<b>Affiliated Society</b>	\$48.00
<b>Subscription fee for libraries</b>	\$60.00
<b>Corporate/Institutions</b>	\$250.00
<b>Life membership – purchased after 10 years</b>	\$5,000

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