



THE RHSQ

# Bulletin

FEBRUARY 2013 No. 771

The newsletter of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland

Patron: Her Excellency Ms Penelope Wensley AC, Governor of Queensland

President: Helen McMonagle

Website: [www.queenslandhistory.org.au](http://www.queenslandhistory.org.au)



Photo: Graeme Nicholson

OUR HONORARY MUSEUM CURATOR, JANICE HESS,  
AT THE ITALIAN PRESENCE EXHIBITION OPENING

Insert: Robyn Stephensen Honorary Assistant Museum Curator

## President's Report for January

Although the year is well and truly underway, I would like to wish everyone a very happy and prosperous New Year and I hope that you all had a safe and merry Christmas. The year 2013 promises to be an exciting one with many events planned throughout the year to celebrate our most significant milestone so far : the Society's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I feel very privileged to hold the office of President during this momentous time, and take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of all the previous Presidents, Executives, Councillors, Volunteers and Members who have contributed towards building our Society into the peak history body of Queensland.

The first event for the centenary year is the February Wednesday Talk on 13 February, at which Mick Davies will provide a history of the Queensland Ambulance Service. Due to a number of unforeseen problems, the *President's Conversazioni* has been moved to **Saturday 9 March 2013**. This event will be an opportunity for members to find out what is occurring within the Society this year, with Committee Chairs explaining the many projects they are working on. It is also a chance for members to make positive suggestions to the Council for what they would like to see occur within the Society in the future.

A number of projects are being finalised in the coming months, including the launch of an updated Teacher Pack designed to complement the new Australian Curriculum requirements for Year 5 History, which looks at the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement; we hope that this document will induce more teachers to book the school tours offered at the Commissariat Store Museum. The Queensland State Archives is working with our Honorary Exhibitions Curator Janice Hess and Assistant Exhibitions Curator Robyn Stephensen to develop an exhibition commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the arrival of South Sea Islanders under indentured labour contracts in Queensland. Work continues to progress steadily on completing the repairs to the eastern frontage to William Street and the Department of Public Works anticipate this to be completed shortly. Volunteers Meghan Tait and Ken Sbeghan attended a Wikipedia seminar held by the State Library of Queensland in November ; there was already an entry for the RHSQ listed, and Meghan has written an entry on the Commissariat Store which is now visible on the website

[www.wikipedia.org/wiki/CommissariatStoreBrisbane](http://www.wikipedia.org/wiki/CommissariatStoreBrisbane).

Finally, a project undertaken in partnership with the Brisbane City council will see Heritage Precinct

Signs erected at five sites around the George Street precinct in February, displaying information relating to the history of the individual areas. This project has been running for almost two years and has had significant input from a team of people headed by Bill Elliott including Carolyn Nolan, Denver Beanland, Ruth Kerr, Jean Stewart, Marilyn England, Che Aberdeen, Nick Wall and me.

It was with great sadness that the Society learned of the passing of Past President, Dr Ronald Wood, this month. Dr Wood will be fondly remembered for the many services he rendered to the Society, especially his Sunday afternoon walks and organising the Wednesday talks. An obituary appears on page four of this *Bulletin*.

As this is our Centenary year, I thought it might be interesting to end my monthly reports with a list of Queensland events from *Pugh's Almanac* for the corresponding month in 1913:

**JANUARY 1913:** 3<sup>rd</sup> – a disastrous fire at Pomona saw three shops, a hall and the post office destroyed, with damages equalling £3000; 5<sup>th</sup> – Martin Dobrilla of Maryborough set a new world record by swinging clubs for 120 hours; 10<sup>th</sup> – State Treasurer, Hon. W. H. Barnes, confirms loan of £1m from Commonwealth Government; 19<sup>th</sup> – Wondai's new Roman Catholic Church blessed by Archbishop Duhig; 25<sup>th</sup> - new Presbyterian Church opened in Wellington Point by the Rev J Scott-Macdonald (Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Queensland); 26<sup>th</sup> – St Mary's School and Convent opened in Charleville by Archbishop Duhig; 31<sup>st</sup> – record flood in the Johnstone River at Innisfail causes great damage to the area; 31<sup>st</sup> – steamer *Innamincka* driven ashore on a reef near Port Douglas.

**FEBRUARY 1913:** 3<sup>rd</sup> – schooner *Dancing Wave* goes missing and subsequent searches for the vessel are unsuccessful; 27<sup>th</sup> – Railway Department rewards John Heenan with a gift of £50 and a letter of thanks for preventing a collision between two trains at Torrens Creek on the night of 11<sup>th</sup> February; 28<sup>th</sup> – 44<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Brisbane Grammar School celebrated by a sports contest between present and old boys, and a dinner in the evening.

Helen McMonagle  
President

## Queensland News for January

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

**Augathella** – A round shearing shed with a canvas roof and wooden floor has been moved to Augathella in mid November 2012. It was a touring

Q150 shed in 2009 and has been moved permanently to Augathella. Murweh Shire Council paid for transport of the shed, a slab and cost of re-erection adjacent to Meat Ant Park on Main Street. A bridge is to be built connecting it to the park. (*Warrego Watchman* 22 November 2012 p.6 including photograph)

**Cooktown** – Her Excellency, The Governor General of Australia, Ms Quentin Bryce, AC CVO, visited Cooktown on 3 November 2012 and met with historical groups and the Cook Shire Council at the James Cook Museum. The Mayor, Peter Scott, escorted the Governor General through the museum noting Captain Cook's HMS *Endeavour* anchor. (*Cooktown Local News* 8 November 2012 p.3 including photograph)

**Cooktown** – The *Cooktown Local News* of 1-7 November 2012 on page 5 featured the work of curator, Dr Melanie Piddocke, at James Cook Museum. Melanie provided advice to our Society on its museum too before going to Cooktown.

**Cooktown** – Society member, Dr Judith McKay, has assessed the significance of the Vera Scarth-Johnson collection at Cooktown's Nature's Powerhouse. In November 2012 Dr McKay gave a preview presentation of her research so far. Vera Scarth-Johnson came from Yorkshire and attended a Finishing School in Paris in the 1920s and lived at Cooktown in the 1970s. The botanical significance of the collection is being assessed separately. (*Cooktown Local News* 29 November – 5 December 2012 p.7 including photograph)

**Dalby** – A photograph of part of the Dalby centenary procession on 3 August 1963 appeared in the *Northern Downs News* on 29 November 2012 on page 2. It featured an 1873 harvester being hauled by a tractor. The harvester was approaching the E.S. & A. Bank in the street lined by spectators.

**Gympie** – The Mary Valley Rattler historic tourist train has had two derailments recently and has other financial challenges. The Rail Safety Regulator has inquired into the most recent derailment and recommended extensive maintenance on the railway line. This is estimated to cost \$2 million. The Mary Valley Heritage Rail (MVHR) association has stated that it needs funding of \$100,000 immediately and around \$1 million in the long term. They also state that they attract \$2 million to the region annually and provide 25 jobs in running the operation of which the steam train and carriages are only a small part. The association is in financial difficulties and is considering selling assets. Maintaining the permanent way is a primary and significant investment and required asset to run a railway. Queensland Rail has

donated 240 sleepers to MVHR to assist with repairs. MVHR has provided a vital emergency rail link for people across Deep Creek bridge at Monkland in flood times. (*Gympie Times* 29 September 2012 p.13, 6 October 2012 p.7, 27 October 2012 pp.1,5, 10 November 2012 p.11, 17 November 2012 p.10, 8 December 2012 pp.9 and 10 including photographs; *Sunshine Coast Sunday* 7 October 2012 p.4 and 21 October 2012 p.13.)

**Hungerford** – An extensive collection of historic machinery was sold at auction on *Boorara* on 8 September 2012. It included historic steam engines. (*Warrego Watchman* 13 September 2012 p.1 including photograph)

**Mareeba** – The Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries' research station, *Southedge* contains the historic Tinaroo Dam State School building which also served as the administration building at the nearby *Parada* research station from the late 1950s until 1969. It was also used for administration and the library at *Southedge* from 1969 until its closure. (*Tablelands Advertiser* 2 November 2012 p.12 including photographs and a plan of the site)

**Mareeba** – The Mareeba Historical Society has received a Tablelands Regional Council Regional Arts Development Fund grant of \$5280 for a significance assessment of its collection. The strengths of the collection include the World Wars, glass plate negatives and mining related material. (*Tablelands Advertiser* 26 October 2012 p.7)

**Maryborough** – Former member for Hinkler, Brian Courtice, has applied for heritage listing of his whole farm to protect graves of South Sea Islanders buried there. The farm was selected originally by an Edward Turner. Mr Courtice believes there are 50 known South Sea Islander graves on the property. (*Maryborough Chronicle* 26 November 2012 p.9)

**Mutchilba** – The Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the Honorable Andrew Cripps MLA, has reinstated the name, Mutchilba, to the town under the *Place Names Act 1984*. It had been known as that for many decades. Townspeople campaigned for the return of their historic name after it was removed in early 2012. (*Tablelands Advertiser* 14 December 2012 p.3)

## Suburban History

**Indooroopilly** – Test holes for the foundations of the Walter Taylor Bridge in 1932 revealed evidence of gold in the area. Further drilling produced one sample assayed at 70 grams per tonne. Society member and Oxley Chelmer History Group Secretary, Dr Marion Mackenzie, confirmed the research findings to the *Westside News* local newspaper. (*Westside News* 10 October 2012 p.3)

## Obituary

**Dr Ronald Francis James Wood** (born 30 November 1921) became a member of the Royal Historical Society of Queensland in 1954 and a Life Member in 1972. He became a Fellow of the Society in 1983, was awarded the Macgregor Medal in 1998 and presented the Clem Lack Oration in 1992 on Canon Morris of 'Churchie'. Ron died on Saturday 5 January 2013. His funeral was held in the Anglican Church Grammar School ('Churchie') Chapel on Friday 11 January 2013.

He was President of the Society from 1989 to 1992 during which he was known for his geniality and creativeness. He and his wife Marnie organised the Wednesday lunch-time talks for many years and provided refreshments for each lecture. Ron also did Sunday afternoon walks in Brisbane's CBD. He and another medical specialist, Grahame Readshaw, wrote a book on the decorations on Brisbane CBD buildings. Its title is *Looking Up; Looking Back at Old Brisbane* - published by Boolarong in 1987.

Ron also wrote *Australian Dictionary of Biography* entries on Peter Bede English (ophthalmologist and army medical officer) and John Lockhart Gibson (ophthalmologist) and a Jubilee History book on the South Brisbane Hospital (since 1960 The Princess Alexandra Hospital).

He will be sadly missed.

RuhKer

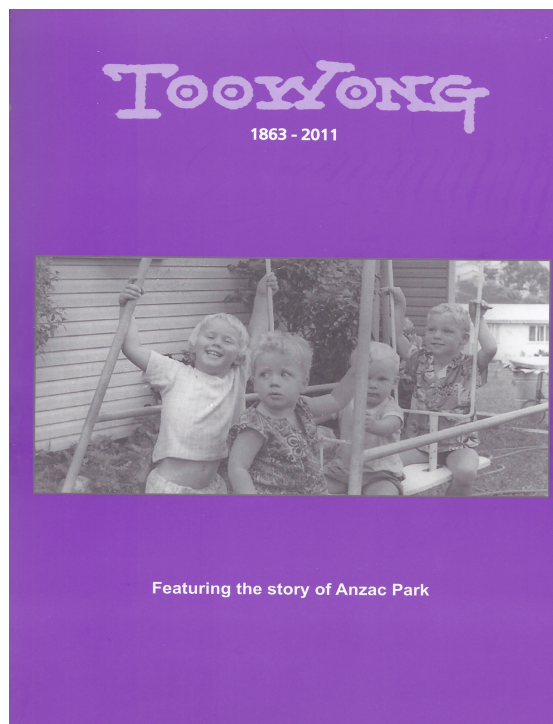
## Research Report for January

The last queries for 2012 included: Newstead House (two separate enquiries); early surveyors of Queensland; indigenous use of plants for medicinal purposes; the Meszaros bronze relief in the crypt in Anzac Square; examples of conversion and up cycling of old buildings such as churches and warehouses to homes; family history of Lucy Elliott Milfull and her husband Herbert Byth; and Scottish settlers in Rockhampton; and photos of the MacArthur Chambers and interiors of other buildings in the CBD. Photo images were sold to various clients: the Albert Bridge Indooroopilly, the Victoria Bridge and the Game Fishing Association at Bulimba to the Museum of Brisbane; and early images of the Women's College and St John's College when they were at Kangaroo Point; and a photo of Sir Matthew Nathan. A query related to the identity of people in a photo taken from a Kodachrome transparency of a group of people at the Dig Tree at Cooper Creek c.1961 before the Society became Trustees of the Reserve. We could not identify them.

Already this year we have had a request for the death date of author Joan Starr (2009); and the birth date of George Thorn Junior of Ipswich. On the first Thursday of opening for 2013 we were delighted to receive a collection of laminated maps relating to Aboriginal Languages in Australia from the National Native Title Tribunal which is downsizing its Library.

Jean Stewart  
Honorary Research Officer

## A New History Book



**The front cover of 'TOOWONG 1863 – 2011' showing Suzanne Wickenden, aged 4, with her cousin, Ross McWatters, aged 2, brother Steven, aged 2 and cousin Richard Wickenden, aged 5.**

Dedicated to Suzanne Wickenden, a founder of Toowong History Group who died in 2011, this book begins with a story written by John O'Neill Brenan, born in 1856, who lived in Toowong and wrote about the houses and its people as he travelled through it in 1872. Another story by Olwyn Watkins, born in 1902, describes Brisbane and Toowong as it was when she was growing up. Other stories from local historians feature the undertakers who used Toowong Cemetery and ten successful Toowong identities from the 1800s including images of the fine houses they built.

Three historians have written about growing up in Toowong in the 1950s, '60s and '70s; and last,

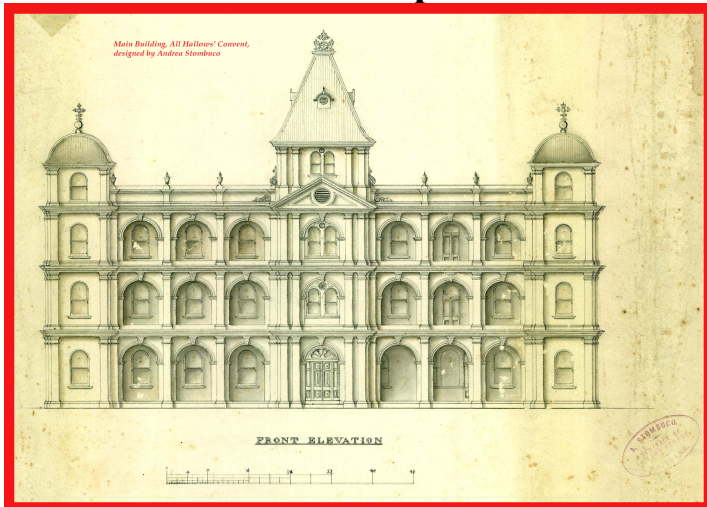
but not least, there are stories about Toowong's two memorial parks from World War I which were born from the successful fight staged by the people of Toowong to save Anzac Park in West Toowong from becoming a car park for the building of the new Legacy Way tunnel.

This book is the third book in a trilogy on the history of Toowong published by Toowong History Group.

Marilyn England

**The Toowong History Group is selling the Trilogy of Toowong History Books for \$50.00 plus postage**

## Museum Curator's Report



**Main Building, All Hallows' Convent  
Designed by Andrea Stombuco**

The Italian Presence exhibition, which opened in November 2012, has been very successful with many visitors viewing the display. The above plans that are on display are a copy of the original plans by Andrea Stombuco. These plans were given to the museum by the Mercy Heritage Centre and show the distinguished architectural style of Andrea Stombuco. The exhibition covers his interesting life and other buildings that he designed in Brisbane.

The following exhibitions are also on display for your viewing:

The Penal Settlement of Moreton Bay, HM Penal Settlement St. Helena Island,

Gympie Gold, Post Office in Queensland and the Floods Exhibition.

There are also wonderful scale models, which represent the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement in the 1830s, on the ground floor.

Janice Hess

Honorary Museum Curator

Robyn Stephensen

Honorary Assistant Museum Curator

## A NEW NOVEMBER QUEENSLAND HISTORY JOURNAL



**THE NOVEMBER 2012 QUEENSLAND HISTORY JOURNAL (Volume 21, No 11) HAS HAD TO BE REPRINTED DUE TO SOME PHOTOS NOT BEING INCLUDED WITH THE CORRECT ARTICLE. THE REPRINTED NOVEMBER JOURNAL WILL BE SENT TO YOU IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. OUR APOLOGIES FOR ANY INCONVENIENCE THIS MAY HAVE CAUSED.**

### New Members

Ludwig Alexander Deglmann

Julia Volkmar

Catherine Dewhirst

Margaret Bell

Sharon Harrison

Anoma Kumarasuriyar

Germany

Edge Hill

Toowoomba

McDowall

South Brisbane

QUT Brisbane

### Library Report for January

The Society received a grant of \$11,000 from the National Library of Australia for the purchase of an appropriate plan drawer to house the Society's Panoramas of Brisbane area which date from the nineteenth century. The order has been placed for the plan drawers and a location selected for its placement in the Society's rooms. The Society appreciates the preservation opportunity that the grant provides.

The library team has been surveying the library collection identifying and listing items for conservation. Quotations are being obtained for the conservation work.

Ruth Kerr

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

SURFACE  
 MAIL

POSTAGE  
 PAID  
 AUSTRALIA



<p><b><u>IMPORTANT EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS</u></b>  <b><u>FEBRUARY 2013</u></b>  <b>Wednesday 13 February 12.30 pm</b>                  The First 100 Years of the Queensland Ambulance’                  Mick Davis  <b>Thursday 14 February</b> Council Meeting  <b>Friday 15 February</b> <i>Bulletin</i> Deadline  <b><u>MARCH 2013</u></b>  <b>Saturday 9 March 9.00 am - 3.00 pm</b>                  RHSQ President’s Conversazioni</p>	<p><b><u>YOUR SPEAKER FOR FEBRUARY</u></b>                  Mick Davis AM is currently Queensland Ambulance Service Manager of Workplace Health &amp; Safety and Heritage &amp; History. He has been an important contributor to the Ambulance Museum at Cleveland. His talk on the history of the Queensland Ambulance Service will be accompanied by a marvellous collection of photographs depicting the changes in ambulance work over the last hundred years.</p>
---	--

**Contact details:**

<b>Location:</b>	Historical Museum and Welsby Library at the Commissariat Store, 115 William Street, Brisbane
<b>Manager:</b>	Christina Michie
<b>Phone:</b>	07 3221 4198
<b>Fax:</b>	07 3221 4698
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@queenslandhistory.org.au">info@queenslandhistory.org.au</a>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.queenslandhistory.org.au">www.queenslandhistory.org.au</a>
<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 10.00 am - 4.00 pm, Closed Saturday Sunday Monday as well as Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Easter

**Bulletin articles only:**

<b>Editor A/editor</b>	Dr Graeme Nicholson Marjorie Shackleton
<b>E-mail:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@queenslandhistory.org.au">info@queenslandhistory.org.au</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	07 3221 4198
<b>Fax:</b>	07 3221 4698.
<b>Postal:</b>	RHSQ, PO Box 12057, Brisbane George Street, 4003

The Society acknowledges financial assistance from: The Department of Multicultural Affairs; Queensland Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund; Lord Mayor Graham Quirk, The Lord Mayor’s Suburban Initiative Fund, Brisbane City Council; Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund; Queensland State Archives; Blocksidge and Ferguson Real Estate.

**Subscriptions:**

<b>Ordinary Member</b>	\$66.00
<b>Partner of Member</b>	\$22.00
<b>Junior Member (U18)</b>	\$11.00
<b>Full-time Student (U25)</b>	\$33.00
<b>Affiliated Society</b>	\$55.00
<b>Subscription fee for libraries</b>	\$66.00
<b>Corporate/Institutions</b>	\$275.00
<b>Life membership – purchased after 10 years</b>	\$5,500.00