

RHSQ

The Royal Historical Society of Queensland

THE RHSQ

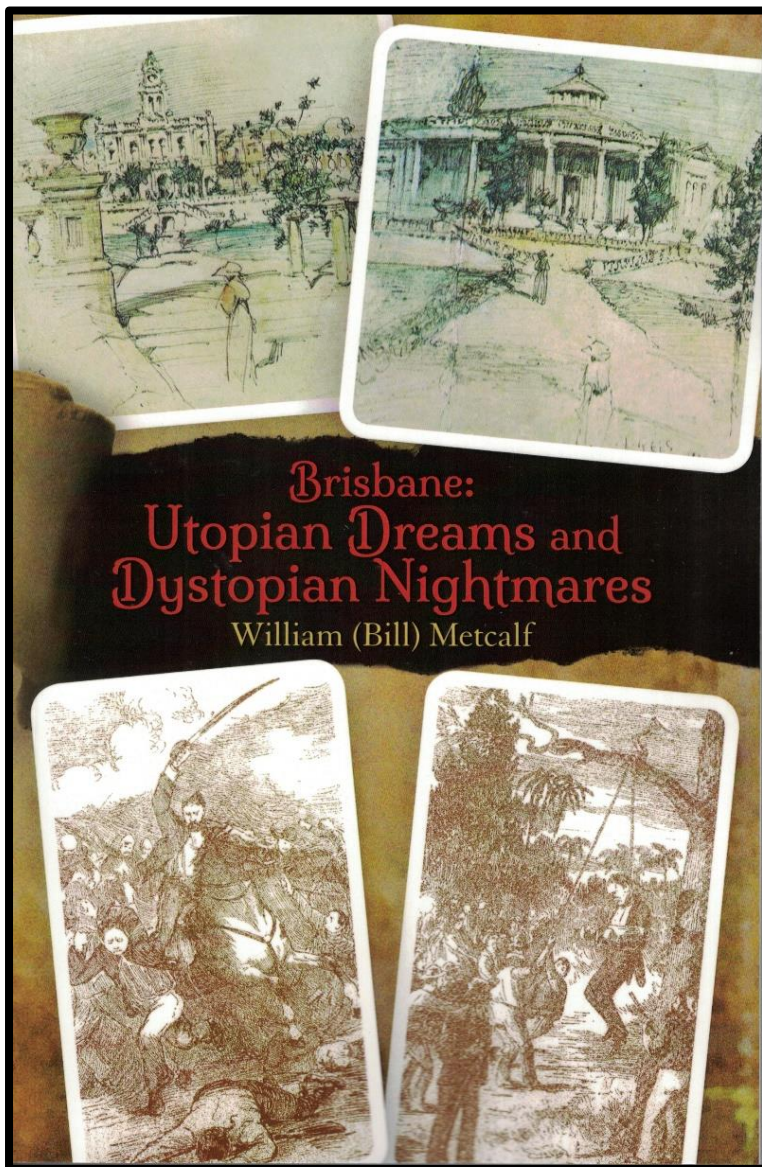
Bulletin

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The newsletter of The Royal Historical Society of Queensland
Patron: Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC
PSM, Governor of Queensland
President: Dr Denver Beanland AM
Website: www.queenslandhistory.org

An Interesting New History Book



Brisbane: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Nightmares

William (Bill) Metcalf

Dr William (Bill) Metcalf, a long-term member of RHSQ, has just had his latest book released. *Brisbane: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Nightmares*. It tells the stories of little-known, peculiar aspects of Brisbane's colourful and highly contested history.

This book reveals eleven authors from the 19th and 20th centuries who wrote about how wonderful, 'utopian', Brisbane could become – or how dreadful, 'dystopian', it could also become.

Some writers imagined a future utopian Brisbane where inequality has been eliminated, where everyone is prosperous, living in the most beautiful city with wide, tree-lined boulevards, wonderful opera-houses and museums, bubbling fountains and grand squares. They saw Brisbane becoming the centre of the civilised world, a model for humanity.

Other writers depicted Brisbane as having been annihilated, violently wiped off the face of the earth except for a few stone ruins overgrown with lantana. These dystopian images saw Brisbane residents enslaved in a racial, civil-war nightmare, beset with poverty and 'ethnic-cleansing' violence, their lives being precarious at best.

What led to these utopian and dystopian visions? Who were the visionaries? What do they tell us about a little-known part of Brisbane's quirky history?

Brisbane: Utopian Dreams and Dystopian Nightmares is the history of a wonderful or dreadful Brisbane that never eventuated – but could have. This well-illustrated book reveals all in a witty, sometimes disturbing way.

Copies are available from Boolarong Press or at BHGBooks2022@gmail.com.

President's Report

Congratulations to our Patron, Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM on receiving the Companion (AC) in the General Division of the Order of Australia in the recently announced Queen's Birthday Honours Awards.

Late May and early June have been extremely busy for volunteers of the Society. Since the end of May your Society has had the Joint Chinese Conference with CHiNA Inc; has participated in Open House at Government House promoting the Society, history and selling books; held the RHSQ annual Queensland Day Dinner; held the Wednesday Lecture at the Commissariat Store; and held the RHSQ Council meeting. The Society's appreciation and thanks goes to all those volunteers who worked so hard and effectively on each event to make it a success and our new Manager Katrina Rose for all the effective work that she put into the activities.

Events will now slow a little with the Wednesday Lecture on 13 July at 12.30 pm at the Commissariat Store Museum with the topic *Personal Reflections upon Life in the Burketown Area* by Noel Kennedy. When established, there were great expectations for Burketown. On the following Saturday 16 July 2022, the RHSQ has a half-day conference: *Centenary of the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Queensland*. The conference will commence at 9.25 am with doors opening and registrations from 8.55 am. Queensland was the first Australian colony to abolish the death penalty and was a leader in the Commonwealth countries. Those wishing to attend these should book through the RHSQ website under 'Events' on 'Eventbrite'.

The RHSQ has received a substantial grant from the Brisbane City Council titled Historical Organisations Assistance Grant totalling \$30,000 in total to be expended over 3 years, \$10,000 a year. This will enable the Society to upgrade its exhibition display cases with new lighting while having new exhibitions based on its collection and upgrade parts of the collection.

The painting by Oscar Friström titled 'Embarkation of the first Queensland Contingent leaving Pinkenba, Brisbane for South Africa, Nov 1st 1899' for the Boer War has, after many decades, been returned to the Society from Newstead House. Following conservation work it is now hanging in the Commissariat Store for members and visitors to see. Prior to this the Society's Loo table was returned also from Newstead House. As members may be aware Newstead House is currently closed undergoing restoration work and will reopen in due course, we understand, as an 1880s house.

Members of the Museum Committee particularly Dr Judith McKay and Elizabeth Nunn are cataloguing the RHSQ's collection on E-Hive. You can see the cataloguing build as these volunteers undertake this work. You can see the collection yourself build by going to E-Hive: The Royal Historical Society of Queensland. Over coming months as more volunteers come on board to undertake this work the collection online will grow. A special thanks to all those who are doing work in this area, as the Society has an outstandingly significant library and museum collection.

The RHSQ still has one seat available on the bus for anyone wishing to go to the Burke and Wills Dig Tree Reserve between 7 and 10 October this year. The Society is the Trustee for the Reserve some 320 kilometres west of Thargomindah. Anyone wishing to go and has not yet booked should contact the manager in the first instance.

Our congratulations go to Dr Rod Kirkpatrick and Dr Ian Howie-Willis OAM on being the joint recipients of the John and Ruth Kerr Medal for Distinction in historiography, historical research and writing announced at the Queensland Day Dinner on 6 June.

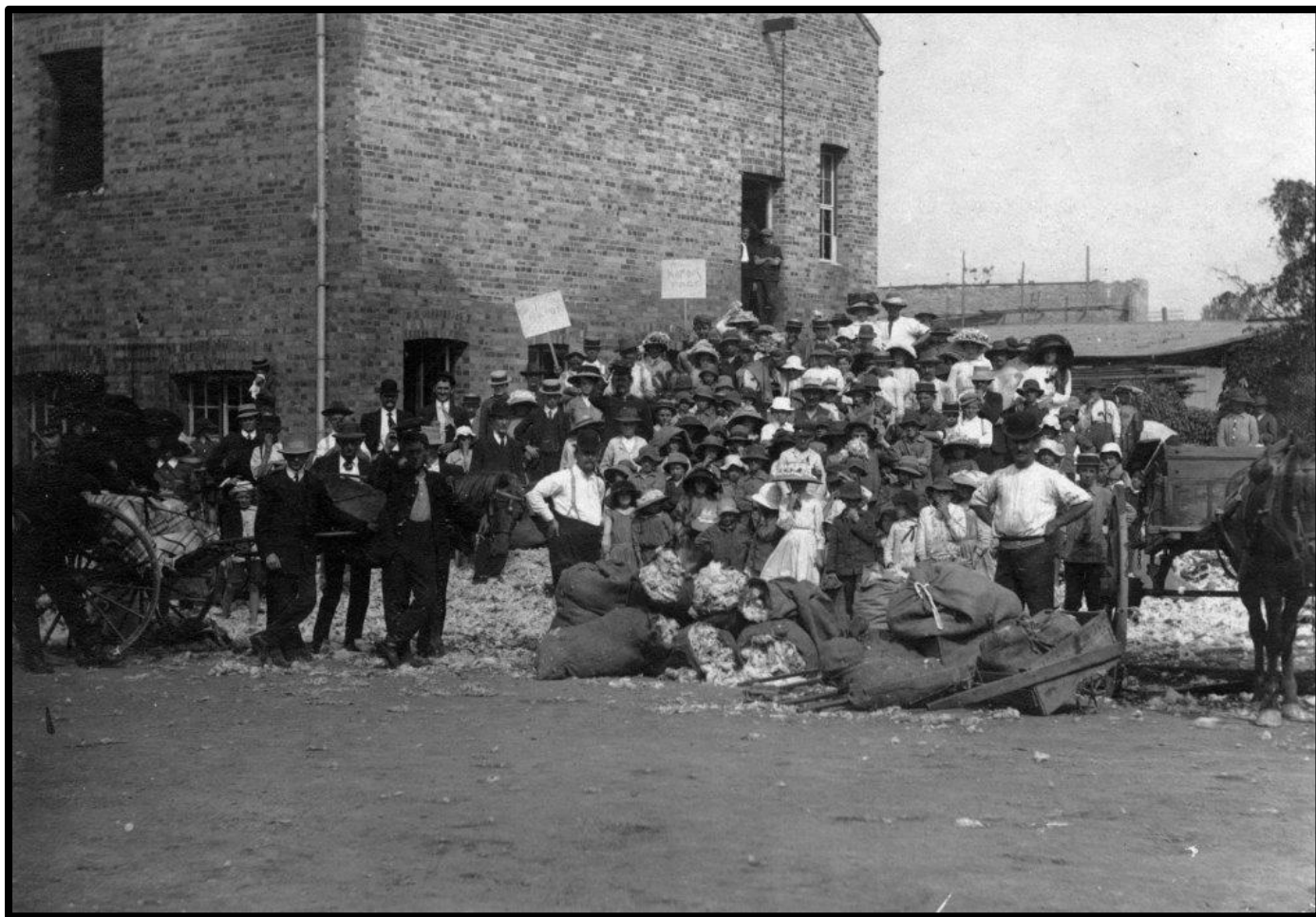
Members are reminded for further information on any of these matters they should go to the RHSQ, the Commissariat Store Museum or thedigtree.com.au websites

I look forward to seeing members and visitors at forthcoming events.

Denver Beanland
President.

The 1912 Brisbane General Strike

This year marks 110 years since the Brisbane General Strike of 1912, a significant event in Queensland's industrial relations history. On 30 January 1912, Brisbane Tramway employees withdrew their labour in protest over being refused the right to wear badges and to join a union. It is estimated that, within a few days, over 25,000 workers joined the strike. A Strike Committee was formed to regulate the many aspects of the strike, and especially to see to the welfare of the strikers' families. When railway workers joined the strike, the Government instituted measures that included arming the police with bayonets and swore in special constables. Apart from helping to maintain order, the special constables drove trams and ensured basic supplies reached Brisbane. On



RHSQ Photo P53059J

Families of the Strikers

Friday, 2nd February, a day that became known as ‘Black Friday’ mounted police ran down crowds of marchers, injuring men, women and children.

This action brought widespread condemnation at the national level and in conservative political ranks. A Federal Arbitration Court ruling paved the way for the official end of the strike on 6 March 1912, with the understanding that strikers would not be victimised. Striking tramway workers were indeed sacked but were reinstated when a Labor government bought the tramway network in 1922. (For more detailed information, see for example, DJ Murphy (ed) *The Big strikes: Queensland 1889-1965*, UQP, 1983)

Queensland Report

(Collected by Ruth Kerr from personal Queensland contacts, Affiliated Societies, Newspapers and Department of Environment and Heritage Protection official notifications)

Chillagoe – Mareeba Shire Council has awarded Chillagoe Alliance \$1,270 for the Chillagoe Railway Interpretive Centre from its Regional Arts Development Fund. Ms Mary Bolam (recipient of one our Society’s Centenary Medals in 2018) and friends are working on the interpretative signage. (Mareeba Shire Council Meeting, 18 May 2022)

Dimbulah - Mareeba Shire Council has awarded Dimbulah Railway Museum \$2,295 for a Display Cabinet, from its Regional Arts Development Fund. (Mareeba Shire Council Meeting, 18 May 2022)

Rockhampton - The Friends of Archer Park will celebrate their 30th anniversary on 20 October and are seeking out past members. The volunteer group has changed its name several times over the years, starting as Capricorn Historical Steam Train Association (1992-1995), then the Capricorn Heritage Rail Association (1995-2004) and finally the Friends of Archer Park Station & Steam Tram Museum Inc.

Rockhampton is the only place in Australia that had Purrey Steam Trams, from 1909 to 1939, and Archer Park’s tram is the only one still operational in the world.



Qld. Gov. Photo

Archer Park Railway Station

Built in 1899, Archer Park was Rockhampton's main railway station until the 1970s and remained a Queensland Rail facility until it was donated to the Rockhampton City Council in the 1990s. The council operated the facility in Denison Street as a museum until 2014 when they approached the Friends of Archer Park volunteer group to take over its operation.

Kate Jones has volunteered in the office at Archer Park for four years. She has worked on cataloguing the collection of papers. Former Queensland Rail employee John Cole, who has volunteered at Archer Park for more than 15 years, said he enjoyed driving the station's Purrey Steam Tram, having been too young to have worked on steam locomotives during his career. Alex Limkin has volunteered at Archer Park since he retired in 2011 after 47 years in the railway. He had had five years of experience on steam engines locomotives. He said, "Out of my 47 years on the job, I feel that when we had the steam engines we were a real railway, it was fantastic." The group's oldest current member is former railway worker Bill Head, who will be 93 in September and was still hosting tours prior to Covid.



Tram passengers wait patiently while the Purrey steam tram is refuelled outside the Archer Park station on Sunday June 7 2009. Andy Plunkett photographer.

Facts about the Purrey Steam Tram

- Built in Bordeaux, France
- Operated from 5 June 1909 to 24 June 1939
- Nine tramcars and six trailers in the fleet
- Unluckiest was No15, involved with three separate fatalities
- Last to operate was No6
- Carried more than 40 million passengers
- Collected more than \$350,000 pounds in fares
- Travelled more than 4.5 million miles (7.24 million km)
- Ticket Prices in 1920: Child 1 Penny per journey, Adult 1 Penny per section

Archer Park coordinator Janice Bobart stated that there are about 65 current ‘Friends’, including three volunteers who had been with the group since 1992. In the past, the Friends notched up 1000 volunteer hours a month and while the Covid-19 pandemic saw that number drop, it’s risen back to 700 hours.

(Notes by Matthew Pearce in *Central Queensland Today*, 19 May 2022 including photograph; Contact details of the Friends of Archer Park: Phone (07) 4922 2774 or email archerpark@bigpond.com.)

Library and Research Report

This month’s research queries were as follows: Availability of RHSQ photo collection catalogue; access to hi-res photos of Dig Tree Interpretative Signage; dates associated with Grosmont state school and Peek-a-doo state school; exact opening day of the Redbrick Hotel, Woolloongabba; reference material re impact on Commissariat Store of 1844 (1841 correctly) and 1893 floods; Eidsvold station *Rawbelle* and family research; arrival of German missionaries at Zion Hill/Nundah and location of Zilman family Bible; stone used in Commissariat Store foundations and wall.

Donation: our thanks to Ted Duhs for the latest edition of his riveting book *I Know Who Killed Betty Shanks*. Her murder in the Brisbane suburb of Grange in 1952 remains the longest officially unsolved murder case in Queensland police history.

Work on our on-going Library projects has been slow in the past weeks as volunteers join the wider community in experiencing the effects of Covid and influenza. We hope the situation will improve in coming weeks.

Kay Cohen

Brisbane City Archives

Brisbane City Archives is located off Ipswich Road in the Skyline Business Centre, 15/107-123 Muriel Avenue, Moorooka.

Car parking

Available onsite. Visit [Translink](#) for public transport options.

Opening hours

Brisbane City Archives is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9am to 2pm. Other times are available by appointment.

To discuss your research needs in advance or to make an appointment, you can:

- phone 07 3403 8888 or 07 3403 1711 during opening hours
- [email Brisbane City Archives](#).

Records

You can search for archive holdings using [eLibCat](#) (Council’s library catalogue).

Records held by the Brisbane City Archives include:

- Council and local studies publications
- Council minutes: from 1859 to 1925 for the original Brisbane City Council area, from 1925 onwards for the greater Brisbane area. Minutes are printed and indexed from 1908
- Council annual reports from 1940
- street naming records
- photographs taken by Council photographers from 1940 through 2000
- Brisbane statistics from 1925 to 1989
- Council staff leave cards since the 1930s
- Councillor information – details of service for elected Aldermen and Councillors
- park history files.

Call for articles for the *Qld History Journal*

After the positive response to the November 2021 issue of the *QHJ* on the ‘Visual Arts of Queensland’, I thought I might ‘test the water’ by suggesting an issue focussed on ‘The Home and the Domestic World’. There could be members (perhaps you?) whose research interests cover topics such as: Making a home in the bush; Whatever happened to domestic skills?; Banishing the sunroom and the development of the family room; Creativity and the growth of hobbies; Collecting interests; Social gatherings: Patio to the fire pit; Musical interludes; Singing around the piano to media rooms; Developing a sense of the individual and privacy in the home; Revival of the veggie garden; Shifts in interior decoration, style and colour in the home; and Rise of the ‘man cave’ and ‘men’s sheds’. The topics are endless.

You could email me at racoontoo@gmail.com with your ideas and we can arrange a chat!

Glenn R Cooke: Curator at the Qld Art Gallery, 1981-2013; RHSQ member; and convenor of authors for the November 2021 *QHJ*.

Beenleigh Historical Village and Museum

Open · 9 am closes 3 pm

beenleighhistoricalvillage.com.au

205 Main Street, Beenleigh Queensland 4207

07 3382 0608

<u>IMPORTANT EVENTS AND FUNCTIONS</u>	<u>NEW MEMBERS</u>
<u>JULY</u>	
<p>Wednesday 13 July, Talk 12.30-1.30, <i>Personal Reflections upon Life in the Burketown Area</i> by Noel Kennedy.</p> <p>Thursday 14 July, Council Meeting.</p> <p>Friday 15 July, <i>Bulletin</i> deadline.</p> <p>Saturday 16 July, Half-day conference: <i>Centenary of the Abolition of the Death Penalty in Queensland.</i></p>	<p>Dianne Dwyer (Kearney’s Spring QLD)</p> <p>Dianne Heenan (The Gap QLD)</p> <p>Dominic Katter (Brisbane QLD)</p> <p>Timna Green (Corinda QLD)</p> <p>Jenny Wright (Greenslopes QLD)</p> <p>James Burgess (Auchenflower QLD)</p> <p>Robert Ball (Murarrie QLD)</p> <p>Malcom & Alison Philpot (Bardon QLD)</p> <p>Mavie Trigger (Seventeen Mile Rocks QLD)</p> <p>Anne Rodgers (Brisbane CBD QLD)</p>

Contact Details	Bulletin Articles Only	Subscriptions
Manager: Katrina Rose	Editor: Dr Graeme Nicholson OAM	Ordinary Member: \$ 75.00
ABN: 34 217 251 028	A/Editor: Gloria Nicholson	Partner of Member: \$ 25.00
Phone: 07 3221 4198	Phone: 07 3221 4198	Junior Member (U18): \$ 13.00
Fax: 07 3221 4698	Fax: 07 3221 4698	Full-time Student (U25): \$ 38.00
email: info@queenslandhistory.org.au	email: info@queenslandhistory.org.au	Affiliated Society: \$ 63.00
website: www.queenslandhistory.org	The Society acknowledges financial assistance from: Commonwealth Government Heritage Grants; Qld Government Gambling Community Benefit Fund; Lord Mayor Adrian Shrinner, The Lord Mayor’s Suburban Initiative Fund; Brisbane City Council; Our Honorary Auditor, Grant Thornton Audit Pty Ltd.	Library Member: \$ 75.00
Address: 115 William Street, Brisbane Postal: The Royal Historical Society of Queensland, PO Box 12057, Brisbane, George Street, 4003		Corporate member: \$ 315.00
		Life Membership - Purchased after 10 Years as a Member \$ 5,500.00