



The Kernel

Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society

"Love and Cherish the City in which you live"

Newsletter

May, 2016

President's Report

by Kay Hayes



Welcome to another edition of The Kernel and I hope you will all enjoy the stories which keep you up to date with many of our activities. As you will read many of our committee and members have represented the Society at various functions, taking in restorations, proposed cemeteries, celebrations and unveilings! John White, Clarice Stretch and Dennis Roach attended the unveiling of the new memorial to the fallen in Mawson Park. This was in time for the Anzac Day commemorations.

Visits to St, David's Presbyterian Cemetery and the Congregational Cemetery with talks by Andrew Allen were of great interest, featuring many past prominent citizens of Campbelltown.

The Walker Corporation, who are developing part of Appin, are going to restore the Appin Inn, and recently a meeting was held to explain their plans not only for the Inn, but also other areas of Appin. At the meeting I was asked to speak about the importance of saving our heritage, particularly the buildings and I would like to share with you a small part of that talk, with a quote from a letter written by Dr Ivor G Thomas to Prime Minister Robert Menzies on the occasion of the Jubilee celebration in 1950

'WE COURTEOUSLY SOLICIT YOUR AID AS CUSTODIAN OF THE PUBLIC PURSE, IN URGING THE WISDOM, THE VALUE AND THE NEED OF PRESERVING REMAINING STRUCTURES AND BUILDINGS TYPICAL OF EACH PERIOD OF OUR NATIONS HISTORY, AND EACH PHASE OF THE NATIONAL WAY OF LIFE.

These words written in a style not seen today, 66 years ago, sum up a large part of what this Society is about and expresses the concerns we have today with the threat to our lovely buildings.

We have made some changes to how the General Meetings are presented, with power point photographic presentations of some of the activities of the Society and at Glenalvon. We welcome all to these meeting to hear our news and also the interesting guest speakers

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Macarthur Memorial Park to Restore Historic Buildings at Varroville

Catholic Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust (CMCT) plans to make a multi-million dollar investment in the much needed restoration of historic buildings in the Varroville Estate west of Campbelltown.

Clarice, Kevin and Kay accepted the invitation to view these buildings and hear their plans for restoration. This will include the site's dilapidated and partly collapsed buildings as well as the former vineyards, landscape and lakes. First established by Dr Robert Townson, these date back to 1812 and Chief Executive Officer of CMCT, Mr Peter O'Meara, said "We are very keen to restore the buildings and landscape in what is an important part of NSW's pastoral history. Our development of memorial parklands will have no impact on these important heritage works, which on completion will be open for the whole community to enjoy and appreciate."



Mr O'Meara recently briefed and showed the buildings to members of the Campbelltown Historical Society and president, Kay Hayes said "we are happy that the CMCT is sympathetic and respectful of this historic area."

The CMCT restoration is part of its plans to create cemetery parklands on land that was once in the sights of home builders and commercial developers, with 35 per cent of the area proposed to be used as public parkland.



Pig feels right at home

Tim Pickles from the popular Tim's Garden Centre came to visit on the first open day in May. Naturally, Pig came along to explore. He seemed very much at home both upstairs and down and was keen to stay near the front door to greet our visitors. However he took special notice of the Dr Smyth photo in the display room (find out more in the article following) but one can't help thinking he is punching a little above his weight!!

Mawson Park photos

At present we are working towards a presentation including Mawson Park and St Peter's Church. Much of it will be video but we are hoping to include some still photos of Mawson Park. If any member has photos of bygone days at the Fisher's Ghost carnival or family snaps taken in the park and are willing to share, please contact us. We can scan the photos at Glenalvon or bring a portable scanner and laptop to you.

Talking Books

We are grateful to Ted Baker for recording our last Grist Mills: *Moving in and other stories* so it is available in an audio format. If you know anyone who would be interested in this, or a number of previous Grist Mills, please contact us.

Dates to Remember

Monday 6th and 20th June, Saturday 11th June. Open Days at Glenalvon 10 am to 1 pm.

Saturday 18th June Visit to Cockatoo Island by train and ferry. If interested contact Kay on 0418493676

Saturday 25th June. Members Meeting. Time: 1.30 pm at Glenalvon

Speaker: Trish Hill, The Oaks Historical Society Topic: 'Yerranderie'

Saturday 26th July. Members Meeting. Time: 1.30 pm at Glenalvon.

Speaker: Ron Ringer Topic: The Industrial Revolution

Launch of the Grist Mills: *Letters from Campbelltown : The Gamble Family*, by John White

Afternoon Tea will be provided.

Saturday 26th November Campbelltown Public School 140th Anniversary. Open Day at the school

Percival Reunion at Appin

On Sunday a May 2016, descendants of John Percival gathered at the grave of the Percival Family at St Marks Church at Appin to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of John Percival's birth. Following a short ceremony they moved to the *Northampton Dale* for further celebrations.



Following a lunch a beautiful cake was cut by Diana Percival. The cake was decorated with the coat of arms of the Northampton Shire in England and its emblem the Northampton Rose.

John Percival was born in 1816 at Northampton, Northamptonshire, England. In 1833 he was tried at the Northampton Assizes and sentenced to transportation to Australia. He arrived in the Colony in November the same year on the ship *Aurora I*. In March 1842 he was granted a Ticket of Leave for the Campbelltown area and five years later was granted a Conditional Pardon.

In 1856 when William

Broughton's property *Lachlan Vale* was subdivided, John Percival purchased a portion that he renamed *Northampton Dale* for his English birthplace. He built the present house soon after. This property has been used to breed thoroughbred horses, ponies, polo ponies and beef and dairy cattle. Today it remains in the Percival family with fourth generation descendant, Deidre Darcy (nee Percival).

John Percival was married twice. He married Isabella McInnes on the Isle of Skye, Scotland in 1848 and following her death in 1861 he married local teacher, Mary Anne Simons in 1865. In all John was the father of nine children. John Percival died on 19 February 1881 at *Northampton Dale*, Appin.



Campbelltown Court House

It was not a summons or jury service that took seventeen society members to Campbelltown Court House last Thursday, it was a privileged tour of the Heritage Court.

Our guide Steve Maxwell, who is Registrar of the Local Court, opened this beautiful room for us and related some of the history of this room and the Court.



There has been a court House on this site since 1827, the first of which was built above the gaol and apparently this was in such an unpleasant state that the smells in the hot weather caused the Supreme Court to move out!

The current Court House was built in 1888-89 to commemorate the centenary of the arrival of the first fleet. Colonial architect James Barnet designed it in the Victorian classic Revival style, and at that time it was convenient to the stocks and gallows across the road in the public reserve (now Mawson Park).

The Heritage Court Room, known as Court 1, retains its former glory of glowing dark wood and carved rails, as well as the stairs down to the cells. Upstairs is a fine public gallery. Modern day technology has crept in with computer and microphones. Courts 2 and 3 are District Courts presided over by a judge, and courts 4 to 6 are the Local Courts in which a Magistrate sits.

From the Collection

Dr Smyth with his wife, Emily C.1895

report written by Julie Crowley

Wow, that is just perfect!

Many photos pass through our hands in the course of the week, each important as we try to build the collection and document Campbelltown's history. Occasionally however there is one photo that causes us to stop and say 'Wow that really works!' This is usually followed by interrupting all around to show the new prize. These photos are usually clear and focused, well composed but will also tell a story in that one single frame.

The photo of Dr Smyth is such a photo. It was unearthed while sifting through the Gore collection.

This is very much Dr Smyth's (definitely with a 'y') photo. Although he is not the largest nor the centre of the image, he seems to dominate. The gentleman with his possessions; beautifully groomed horse, huge loyal hound but in the middle of that is the almost whimsical placement of his bride, Emily, looking through the stable door. It is a wonderful composition.

It has also been a valuable addition to our collection for several reasons. Emily 'Doody' Gore was the daughter of A J Gore manager of the Commercial Bank from 1876, and part of a very well connected family in the town.

It is well documented that from 1891 through until 1913 Glenalvon was tenanted by a series of doctors renting from the Fieldhouse family. Dr Smyth was the second of these doctors, living in Glenalvon from March, 1892 until September, 1896. So this photo is actually in front of our stables.

We have many wonderful photos courtesy of the Bursill family who lived at Glenalvon from 1913 onwards but this now becomes the oldest photo we own of a family in Glenalvon, along with its companion photo of Doody and Dr Smyth on the front verandah having tea with Doody's mother Mrs A J Gore and the German Consul.



All who saw it agreed it needed pride of place in the house and is now commanding the attention of our visitors from the mantelpiece in the Display Room. Kevin Rixon yet again worked his magic, choosing a perfect coloured mat to compliment the photo, framing it and making a sturdy stand for it, so it is secure for the long term.

And what do we know about the story of Doody and Dr Smyth?

Doody was the eldest daughter of A J Gore; born in Orange in 1874, launched into society at 18 with her debut aboard the yacht *St George*, on Sydney Harbour, amid brocaded silk hung walls and potted palms. She married Surgeon – Lieut Dr Thomas Edward McMahon Smyth of Dublin, Ireland in April, 1894 at St John's Church, Darlinghurst with Rev T Alkin assisting the minister, Rev Pain. Dr Smyth was ten years her senior and at this time would already have been practicing at Glenalvon.

The couple moved from Australia and settled in Tavistock, Devon where Doody gave birth to a son, George, in 1897.

Dr Smyth passed away in 1910.

George went on to serve during WWI in the British Army, King's Liverpool Regiment, being awarded the Military Cross for exemplary gallantry during active operations. Sadly, then Captain, George Richard Gore Smyth was accidentally killed in Tunis, North Africa in 1925. He was 28 years old.

We have records of Doody travelling between England and Australia for much of her life.

People Profiled

John Bunyan retired to Campbelltown in 2001 after a varied and interesting career. With his interest in history it is not surprising that he joined the Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society shortly after he arrived. He has attended Monthly meetings and open days, been good company on outings, taken part in member's talks and donated to the house. It is an honour for us to claim him as one of our Patrons.

John's Story

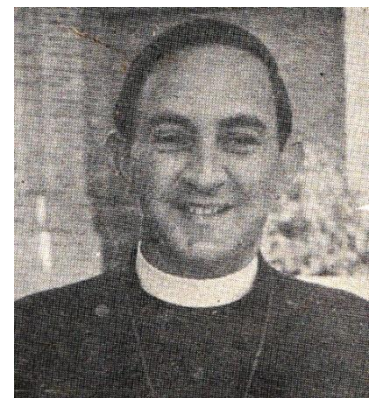
On Australia Day 2016 John turned 80 and a few days later celebrated with an informal lunch at St Stephen's Uniting Church in Sydney and a cheerful afternoon programme featuring some of the 50 of his hymns and some of the 68 poems from his latest book, *Four Score Deodatus*, launched that day. Much of the story of his life and ponderings is told in this unusual anthology. (\$17 !)

Since 2001 he has lived at "Colenso Corner" (named after one of his heroes), surrounded by the deciduous trees that he loves and with open reserve beside and behind. From his arrival he has been a member of Campbelltown Men's Probus, U3A, and our society. The latter he has especially valued, not mainly because of a tiny family link with the town (his paternal grandfather born here and baptised at St Peter's in 1860) but because CAHS he has found both welcoming and well-organised; increasingly flourishing over those years, and a defender of Campbelltown's heritage in the face of over-development and poor town-planning. One of his many book collections has about 400 works on historic architecture, and he is a member both of the National Trust and of Sustainable Population Australia.

Before retirement and since, he has been the volunteer Church of England Chaplain of Bankstown Hospital, usually spending a day there each week, in an ecumenical team, with a long list of patients to meet, not seeking to save souls or to convert them, but simply to be a listener. His somewhat agnostic faith is a very simple one, concerned, he hopes, simply with the service of "neighbours" and the care of creation.

Tolerant and ecumenical, he is a priest of Sydney Diocese and parishioner of St John's, Canberra, but also an adherent of that St Stephen's Uniting, and a member of the historic unitarian Christian church, King's Chapel, in Boston, MA, the Presbyterian Fellowship, and Australian Reforming Catholics !

Back in 1954 he enjoyed National Service training at Ingleburn's Balikpapan (now Bardia) Barracks and then joined the Intelligence Corps. Now, because of that background he is Hon.Chaplain of the Macarthur/Ingleburn National Servicemen and Hon.Chaplain of the Australian Intelligence Corps Association.



For 22 years before arriving in Campbelltown he was parish priest and rector of St John Mark's, Chester Hill, at a time before the great changes that have now taken place in that suburb. With the help of good-hearted people, the heavy debts on this new church were paid off, a new rectory built, and a beautiful century-old Conacher pipe organ brought from Huddersfield and restored.

John was baptised at St Paul's, Wahroonga, near where his mother's family originally had their orchard but he was born in Hornsby where he attended the Public School, going on to Homebush High and then to Sydney University at the all too early age of 17. His first job was as an English teacher wet behind the ears at Hurlstone Agricultural High when the most notable of fellow teachers was the Australian cricketer, Brian Booth. It was here that he encountered cross-country running, that he took up, when he moved in 1959 to become History Master at Canberra Grammar. All boys were expected to run a 5 mile up and down hill cross country course twice a week, and as the coach he had to set an example.

A Lucas Tooth Scholarship took him to London University in 1963. Running was not possible there but was resumed as relaxation when he went on to St Chad's College at Durham University. He later received the Archbishop of Canterbury's Lambeth Diploma and degrees from San Francisco Theological Seminary and (a second) from Sydney.

He has luckily travelled many times to Britain and the US, with an increasing love of the outdoors – and the beautiful open spaces especially of the Yorkshire Dales and the West Country, Scotland and the American mid-west (with its magnificent national parks), as well as of the Victorian and Tasmanian countryside, New Zealand's South Island, and, not least, the Flinders Ranges.

19th century research about his 17th century Puritan namesake, with whom he shares a common ancestry from 1199, has made family tracing easy. "Deodatus" in his book's title, meaning "gift of God", comes from Deodatus Bunyan, born about 1580. The son of Deodatus married a girl who was the daughter and granddaughter of country parsons, but John's family has somewhat slid down in the world since then, being mostly thatchers in the 18th century and railway workers or small farmers here in Australia in the 19th century.

However, though only one quarter Scot, he has taken after his Scottish forebears (lowland Beatties) in both features and character. From early childhood he felt a great fascination with England, but a great love of Scotland has grown and perhaps there he is most at home. This year, in addition to completing two more unorthodox books, if not too arthritic in mind and body, he hopes to be able to see the UK and America for one last time.

