

# Kogarah Historical Society Inc

Carss Cottage Museum – Carss Park  
Postal Address PO Box 367, Kogarah 1485

Patron: The Mayor of Kogarah

President: Beverley Earnshaw (9546 1091)

## *Newsletter*

*July/August 2011*

*Volume 3 No 3*



*Taren Point Punt with Stewart's Sydney-Cronulla bus on board (Photo from the Noel Thorpe Collection) – see story inside*

### **Meetings and Speakers**

#### **Thursday 14 July 2011**

Speaker: Gary Cook, Sydney Harbour Federation Trust on *Rediscovering our Harbour Gems*

#### **Thursday 11 August 2011**

Speaker: Paul Couvret OAM, Former Mayor of Warringah, *Will Nagasaki be the last Atom Bomb?*

*Meetings are held at the School of Arts, Bowns Road Kogarah, at 2pm. Enjoy the speaker, then the opportunity to chat over afternoon tea. A short business meeting follows.*

## **Mondays at the Museum**

**25 July – Yvonne Stewart**

*The Benevolent Society: Australia's oldest charity.* Yvonne will have quite a story to tell, so book early as seating is limited. Join us at 10 am for a delicious morning tea in the courtyard. (Did you know that Gilda Tilia gets up at 6 am on Monday morning to cook the scones) and then adjourn to the Kogarah Room in the Museum for the presentation. Cost is \$5 which also gives you the chance to win a door prize. Stay after the talk and look around the Museum if you wish. Bookings essential. Ring **Mavis Ward** on 9546 5704 to reserve your place.

### **Museum Roster**

<b>July 2011</b>		<b>August 2011</b>	
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Carole Tier & Ken Grieve	7 <sup>th</sup>	Gill Whan & Deirdre Schroeder
10 <sup>th</sup>	Mavis Ward & Mary Williams	14 <sup>th</sup>	Adele Ryan & Lawrie Corry
17 <sup>th</sup>	Trudy Johns & Elizabeth Emerson	21 <sup>st</sup>	Trudy Johns & Elizabeth Emerson
24 <sup>th</sup>	Betty Goodger & Janette Hollebone	28 <sup>th</sup>	Betty Goodger & Janette Hollebone
31 <sup>st</sup>	Cath & Leo Sullivan		

Hours are 1 pm – 5 pm. Any problems, please contact Elizabeth Emerson on 9579 4118  
*We are always looking for members to volunteer for either a regular spot at the Museum or to go on the emergency list. Contact one of the Committee if you are willing to help.*

### **Committee 2011 (\* denotes Executive)**

<b>President:*</b>	Beverley Earnshaw	Ph: 9546 1091
<b>Vice President (1):*</b>	Janette Hollebone	Ph: 9529 7117
<b>Vice President (2):*</b>	Vacant	
<b>Secretary:*</b>	Gill Whan	Ph: 9546 4623
<b>Treasurer:*</b>	Cath Sullivan	Ph: 9579 6149
<b>Committee Members:</b>	Beryl Butters, Mavis Ward, Trudy Johns, Carole Tier, Lawrie Corry	

### **Committee meeting venues**

<b>4 July, 7.00 pm</b>	<b>Gill Whan, 11 Dewrang St., Carss Park</b>
<b>1 Aug, 7.00 pm</b>	<b>Trudy Johns, 2/900 Forest Road, Peakhurst</b>
<b>5 Sept, 7.00 pm</b>	<b>Beverley Earnshaw, 15 Hamer Street, Kogarah Bay</b>

### **Dates for your diary**

**15 September – Bus tour of Sutherland Shire, led by Terry McKosker from Sutherland Historical Society. Tour leaves Mortdale RSL at 9.30 am, back by 3.30 pm. Cost \$15.00 (buy own lunch) Book through Janette Hollebone 9529 7117.**

**29 October – We're 40! Celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Carss Cottage Museum and come to the Open Day from 1pm – 5pm.**

## BUS SERVICES IN ST.GEORGE

By Beverley Earnshaw

In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, the St. George District was a remote outpost of Sydney Town. This land between two rivers, the Cooks and Georges, had been isolated from the start of white settlement until a dam across the Cooks River was completed in 1840 and its causeway opened the way south. Free settlers, many of them newly arrived German immigrants took up land which had been released for sale in the St. George District in the early 1850s. They battled south to their new selections with their possessions loaded precariously on wooden carts. They traversed the rugged bush tracks that passed for roads and later they struggled equally to get their produce to market. For residents of this new district there was no public passenger transport.

One of Kogarah's first coachmen was John Stockdale who arrived in the district in 1858 and was employed by William Rust as coach driver for the Sans Souci Hotel. In 1864 a daily coach service ran from Rocky Point Road to the City and in 1869 a horse bus service was operating from Rust's Hotel at Rocky Point to Sydney.

When the Sydney to Hurstville railway was opened on October 15, 1884 the official party was taken from Kogarah Station by horse omnibus to the Sandringham Hotel, the only venue in the district large enough to hold 200 guests.

Transport by horse bus from Sans Souci was no longer necessary when the Kogarah to Sans Souci Steam Tramway opened in 1887 but other parts of the St. George District were not so fortunate. A horse bus which ran from Kogarah station to Tom Ugly's Point continued to operate until 1910. It was replaced in 1912 by the first motor bus running from Kogarah to Sylvania via the Tom Ugly's Point punt, using a 'toast-rack' or foot board type bus running on solid rubber tyres. Soon after, the proprietor, Victor Lawler, replaced it with a motor bus which carried passengers until the 1920s.



When the Taren Point punt was opened on March 18, 1916, a bus service began operating through Caringbah via Taren Point Road, Rocky Point Road and the Princes Highway to Rockdale. It was using a *Republic* bus with solid rubber tyres, the passengers bumping and jolting over the rough roads facing each other on side seating.

The service may have been operated by Mr J.L.Hunter who later worked the same route using a *Ruggles* and two *Fageol* buses starting from King Street Rockdale. The two *Fageols* were paraded around Cronulla with chassis exposed to advertise these brand new powerful vehicles which were to be introduced on the service in 1923. Mr D.Morris later bought this route and introduced a German built *Durkoff*.

The 1920s saw a great expansion of public transport services. Frank Bardsley commenced running a Blue Bus Service from Cronulla to Sydney in 1922 with American made *White* buses. This service travelled over Georges River on the Tom Ugly's Point punt. But in 1931 the Government passed a regulation prohibiting private bus owners from competing with any form of government transport and Bardsley's service was cut back from Cronulla to Hurstville on October 31, 1931.

The Connells Point service was operated by Messrs Saint & Leech for some time after motor buses were introduced and continued until August 1923 when the partnership was dissolved,



*Peakhurst bus, 1949*

Mr C.A. Leech becoming the sole proprietor. Mr H.T. Saint purchased the Peakhurst Route, which was operated by his family for many years. The same year Mr A.N. Peters opened a service from Hurstville to Lugarno using a sloping bonnet *International*. Mr Saint took over this route (No.108) to Lugarno Ferry but it was shortened

when the ferry was replaced by a road bridge. In 1989 the route passed to the Punchbowl Bus Company.

During the 1920s Messrs Dews & Snape founded the Kogarah to Kogarah Bay service (No.195) and Mr D.Scott began a service from Kogarah to Carss Park (No.121). Mr Scott lived in *Avoca*, the former home of Katherine English, next door to Carlton South School. His bus, painted cream in colour, used to be parked there over night. The Carss Park and Kogarah Bay routes could not be combined at that time because of the mangrove swamp at Carss Park and Kogarah Bay Creek.



*Bus Southtrans at Carss Park*

There were two services operating via the Tom Ugly's Point punt to Sylvania, one from Hurstville run by the Blakesley Bus Company and the other from Kogarah founded by Mr Charlie Collins. The Georges River Bridge at Tom Ugly's Point was opened in 1929 and in 1933 these routes were both extended, the Hurstville service (No.114) continuing on to Yowie Bay and the Kogarah service (No.112) terminating at Miranda.

Routes 112 & 114 were purchased in 1940 by the Kogarah Bus Company which purchased Dews & Snape's Kogarah Bay service (195) in December 1942 and D.Scott's Carss Park route (121) in August, 1943. The latter two services were combined following the completion of dredging at Carss Park and the building of a bridge over Kogarah Bay Creek

In the 1920s Edward James Jamieson ran two bus services from Hurstville, one to Kogarah via the suburbs west of the railway line and one to Carss Park. His blue and white vehicles were fondly known to the locals as "Pop's bus". His business premises were in Blakesley Road but in 1958 he purchased as his private residence St.Kilda House in Vista Street Sans Souci.



*Foley's Bus Kogarah*

In 1946 Mr Foley moved to Kogarah from Orange and opened a bus company operating between Kogarah and the beachfront suburbs of Botany Bay such as Ramsgate, Monterey and Brighton. It was a family business which launched successfully into the local tourist industry.

In 1925 Mr Walker commenced running a *Vulcan* bus from Hurstville to Cronulla via the Taren Point punt and on February 24, 1935 a Cronulla to City Government bus service (No.61) commenced running over the Tom Ugly's Bridge using two *Leyland* buses

The first entry by Government buses into the local area was on December 8, 1934 when the South Sydney Bus Company's route (No.237), Ramsgate to Doncaster Avenue Kensington via Brighton was taken over by the Government and extended in both directions to run from Central Railway to Dolls Point. This extension to the City reinstated a service that had operated from 1929, going from Brighton to Central Railway using *Leyland* double deckers. The route was extended to Sans Souci in 1953 and reached Caringbah on some peak hour trips on May 31, 1965 over the newly opened Taren Point Bridge.

Many of the old bus routes have either disappeared or undergone name changes when taken over by companies such as Connex and Southtrans. Government buses still operate from Sans Souci, but most of the buses now running in the district are marked with the logo of *Veolia*. Veolia Transport is a French company founded in 1876. Since then its operations have spread world wide. In Sydney it took over the Connex/Southtrans commuter services and small privately owned bus services have all but disappeared. Veolia's extensive bus network operates under contract to the NSW Government.

On April 10, 2011 a new bus interchange at Hurstville was opened, serving commuters travelling to Bankstown, Burwood, Kogarah, Macquarie Park, Parramatta and Strathfield on buses operated by companies which include Sydney Buses, Punchbowl Bus Company and Veolia Transport.

*References: This article was compiled by Beverley Earnshaw from records including the Historic Commercial Vehicles Association and the collection of Fred Midgley.*

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## VANISHING

### SYDNEY'S EARLY SLAB BUILDINGS

#### Drawings and Paintings by Daphne Kingston

On the evening of 31<sup>st</sup> March, a group from KHS gathered at the Mint in Macquarie Street, to enjoy the exhibition of 43 of Daphne Kingston's works. Our pleasure was threefold, to look at a beautiful work of art, to enjoy the simple architecture displayed in exquisite detail and to nostalgically muse on our early history and the men and women who lived and worked in these buildings in days not so very long ago.

An interesting feature was a continuous slide show showing photographs of the buildings, often as they crumbled into ruin. It was fascinating to contrast Daphne's sensitive interpretation with a modern coloured photograph.

Our old friend, Lesley Muir, opened the exhibition with a thoughtful speech and before the evening closed, red dots were appearing on the frames! Some lucky people would take home a lovely reminder of a most enjoyable evening.

*B. Goodger*

*KHS - not only meetings and Mondays at the Museum, but interesting outings such as the evening at the Mint described by Betty! Why not invite your friends to come along to a meeting and hear what we do, listen to our excellent speakers, enjoy some company. Only \$10 pa membership (\$15 for a couple) and you get our newsletters every 2<sup>nd</sup> month, invitations, free entry to the Museum on a Sunday and more....*

## THE MULLARKEY FAMILY

By Betty Goodger

A recent visitor from Melbourne came to Carss Cottage to research her family history and was delighted to find four of her family listed on the Carlton Honour Roll that hangs in the vestibule of Carss Cottage – but mystified that a fifth member was not there!

The Carlton Honour Roll shows

- MULLARKEY, C.
- MULLARKEY, J. C.
- MULLARKEY, K. V.
- MULLARKEY, N. J.

Now we can add names to initials and the story of the family and the price they paid in the First World War

The Mullarkey family had sent five brothers to World War 1914-1919. Two lie in France and another died of his wounds after his return to Australia and rests in the Woronora cemetery.

The mother of these five young Australians was Elizabeth Agnes English, born on 24<sup>th</sup> May 1861 near Tipperary in Ireland. Her parents were James English and Mary Furlong. She was a kinswoman of Edmond English, whose name is commemorated in English Street. He emigrated to New South Wales in 1850 with his wife Elizabeth, followed a few months later by his brother James. Edmond's parents were James and Mary also, but I do not know of what degree Edmond and Elizabeth Agnes were cousins.

Elizabeth Agnes migrated to New South Wales c.1883. Her brother, James and a sister also emigrated, for they attended her funeral after she died on 6 September 1935, aged 74 years.

Frederick Mullarkey was born in Clifden on the Bay of Galway in 1859 and emigrated to New South Wales in 1883. He married Elizabeth on 12<sup>th</sup> October 1884 at Pyrmont. The witnesses at their wedding were Johanna and Patrick English, children of Edmond English. Frederick died on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1911.

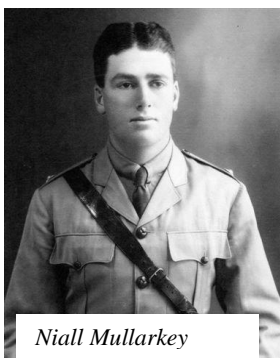


*Elizabeth Mullarkey*



*Left to right, Herbert, Jim, Clarence and Kevin Mullarkey*

Elizabeth and Frederick had nine children: Mary born 21 July 1885, died 3 February 1968; Herbert born 25 April 1887, died in France 18 August 1916, yet his name is not recorded on the Carlton Honour Roll; James Charles born 18 August 1889, died 19 October 1964; Clarence Paul born 7 June 1890, died 5 January 1964; Frederick born 30 July 1893 but died the same year on 18 December; Niall Joseph born 28 March 1895. He missed going to Gallipoli with his brothers, as he was selected to attend an officers' training course in Egypt.



He graduated as a second-lieutenant, but was killed in France on 5 November 1916; Kevin Vincent born 19 June 1895, wounded in France and died in the Randwick Military Hospital on 30 March 1918; Desmond born 17 September 1899, died 30 July 1975; Henrietta born 9 October 1901, died 31 December 1973.

The family came to live in the St George district in 1893 in the house "Avoca" in Station Street, Kogarah in 1907. In the Council's Jubilee year of 1935, Station Street became Jubilee Street.

The house, "Avoca", was by Edmond English for his daughter, Catherine, but she never lived in it. Catherine, (1867-1957), was always known as Kate or Kit. The house had 2 acres of land and a tennis court was built beside the house, fronting Kogarah Road. Daphne Kingston



made a sketch of the house which is reproduced here. I do not know when the house was demolished, but it was still standing in 1975. Albert N. Clarke drew the cottage for his St George Sketchbook in 1969.

Desmond, the youngest son, was only fifteen when his brothers enlisted to fight in World War 1914-1919. He tried to enlist but his mother sent his uncle to reveal his true age and bring him home. So he survived until 30 July 1975, to become a famous sportsman. His cricket career spanned the years 1921 to 1928. He was the first from the St George district to be chosen to tour overseas, in New Zealand in 1924. In Rugby League and Rugby Union, he played first grade from 1922 to 1926. He also played Aussie rules and baseball, was a member of the St George Motor Boat Club and, in later years, Taren Point Bowling Club.



*Desmond Mullarkey*

In 1929 he married a local girl, Ethel Florence Chapman, and they continued to live in the Kogarah area. They had two children, a daughter, Nialla, named after Desmond's favourite brother, Niall, who died in France in the World War and a son, Desmond.

This year we remembered the landing at Gallipoli, the 96<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Four of the Mullarkey brothers saw duty there and went on to serve in France.

The Mullarkey family contributed much to the St George district during wartime and in peace.

## REFERENCES

*With grateful thanks to Mrs Margaret Brown for sharing her family research*  
*Obituary of Mrs Mullarkey in St George Call 13 September 1935 and Propeller 12 September 1935*  
*Obituary of Des Mullarkey in Leader 13 August 1975*  
*St George League's Club Journal September 1969 pp30-31*  
*The English Family of Kogarah, by Joan Hatton 1976 pp38-39*

### **Get well soon**

Beverley Earnshaw, our President, has been in hospital to have a knee replacement. She is still convalescing but improving slowly and hopes to be involved in Society activities again soon.

## Cliff Crane meets Cliff Crane

Mondays at the Museum was the setting for our Cliff Crane from Oatley to meet his cousin Cliff Crane from GyMEA for the first time! They had never met even though they had been living within a few kilometers of each other for many years and at one stage their bank accounts had been confused. They were born in the same hospital in Gundagai, descendants of convict John Crane, transported in 1831. He had 17 children and the Cliff Cranes worked out that their grandfathers were first cousins. When Oatley Cliff joined the library at Sutherland he heard about another subscriber, his namesake. They found each other, talked by phone and arranged to meet at MAM.



Speaker Cliff was back by popular demand to give the second part of his talk on Banjo Paterson - *The Banjo is not Dead*. It was a fine sunny morning (albeit with a winter chill in the air) which was just as well as there were more people than could comfortably fit into our Kogarah room inside the Museum and we



sat outside. Cliff was his usual informative and entertaining self, assisted at one stage by a member of the audience (pictured) in a double act reciting *The Geebung Polo Club*. Morning tea was as always, excellent – The Leader came and took photos of the two Cliffs, and all in all we had a splendid morning.

G. Whan

## BOOK REVIEW

*A history of Kogarah's Senior Citizens Associations. Allawah, Oatley and Kogarah-Carlton Senior Citizens Associations by Arabella Lee. Kogarah, the Council April 2011.*

Miss Lee previously compiled the book on Kogarah's Volunteer Heroes. This is very different in appearance, being a small, colourful, well illustrated booklet of 40 pages.

At the book launch at Oatley Senior Citizens Hall on 19 April, a small display was mounted, showing minute book, scrapbooks of newscuttings and photographs of activities. This was, for me, a delightful touch, showing the research Miss Lee had done, and the source of much of the illustrations. The page design intersperses the text with examples of these archives.

Tribute is paid to the efforts of the Mayor, Ken Cavanaugh and many workers in the foundation years of 1970 and 1985. I was gratified to find among them, members of our KHS – Beryl Butters, May Grieve, Trudy and Ken Johns and Betty Reynolds. The booklet achieves its aim in a most attractive and readable form.

B. Goodger



# **BARTON**

## **THE ELECTORATE – Part VI**

**By Betty Goodger**

The eleventh, and sitting member, for Barton in the Commonwealth Parliament is ROBERT BRUCE MCCLELLAND. He has represented us since 1996 and is currently the Attorney-General in the Labor government

He was born in Sydney on 26 January 1958, the son of the Hon. Douglas McClelland and Lorna McClelland.

His father began his career as a court reporter, but finally served as a senator from 1962 being President of the Senate from 1983 to 1987, then as Australian High Commissioner from 1987 to 1991. His distinguished career has seen him awarded the Silver Jubilee Medal in 1977 and the Centenary Medal in 2003. He became a Companion of the Order of Australia in 1987. It has obviously been an inspiration to his son.

Robert was educated at Blakehurst High School and took his first degrees, BA and LLB at the University of NSW and his Master in Law at the University of Sydney.

He married in 1983 and has 3 sons and one daughter. He is a local boy, living in the electorate.

After experience with a firm of solicitors he chose to stand as a candidate for the Labor Party in the seat of Barton and was elected to the Federal Parliament. While in Opposition, he gained experience as Shadow Minister for Defense and Attorney-General and when a Labor Government was elected in November 2008, he was appointed Attorney-General, a position he still holds in 2011.

His hobbies are given as sport, rugby league and surfing, but I doubt his parliamentary duties leave much time for these.

We are proud that his mother and father, Lorna and Doug McClelland, are members of KHS.

### **REFERENCES**

*Who's Who in Australia*



## **Historical Teasers**

1. Who won our first Olympic gold medal and which year did it happen?
2. How many stars are in the Australian flag?
3. What colour is the kangaroo on the Qantas aircraft?
4. Our largest monolith has two names. What are they?
5. In which state are the Twelve Apostles?
6. What was the first European building put up in Central Australia?
7. How many levels of government does Australia have?

Answers

1 Edwin Flack, athletics, Athens 1896; 2 Six; 3 White; 4 Ayers Rock and Uluru; 5 Victoria; 6 Alice Springs Telegraph Station; 7 Three—federal, state and local.

## New Statue for Sydney



The Lands Department Building has a new statue, installed in November 2010. It is the first statue to be commissioned since 1890.

James Meehan, (1774–1826) is the person given this honour. He was an emancipated convict who became an eminent colonial surveyor. He was born in Ireland and sentenced to transportation for his (very minor) part in the Irish Rebellion of 1798, arriving in Sydney on the *Friendship* in February 1800. A teacher and surveyor by profession, he was first assigned as a servant to Charles Grimes who was then the Acting Surveyor and accompanied him on trips to explore the Hunter River, King Island and Port Philip. When Grimes went on leave he performed most of the departmental duties,

measuring the farms of grantees and exploring parts of the Derwent and Shoalhaven rivers during this time.

**In 1806 he received an absolute pardon.** When Grimes went to England in 1808 James Meehan was appointed acting surveyor of lands with a salary of £182.10s. He was confirmed in the position by Governor Macquarie when Grimes did not return to NSW (due to his involvement in the overthrow of Bligh) and in 1812 became deputy-surveyor of lands and then collector of quitrents (rents paid by freeholders in lieu of services that may have been required of them) and superintendent of roads, bridges and streets as well.

The then Surveyor-General Oxley was occupied with exploration and Macquarie, who thought highly of Meehan, took him on his many tours of inspection in NSW and in Van Diemen's land during 1812-13. During other exploration he discovered Lake Bathurst and the Goulburn Plains and once told Commissioner Bigge that "I have measured every farm that has been measured since 1803." Apart from fixing the boundaries of land grants he made many contributions to the mapping of the colony, drawing a map of Sydney in 1807 and surveying the townships of Richmond, Castlereagh, Windsor, Pitt Town, Wilberforce, Liverpool and Bathurst as well as Hobart Town.

He received three grants of land, finally settling at Ingleburn where he named his farm Macquarie Field and built a house that Governor Macquarie called Meehan's Castle.

In 1821 in declining health, put down to the deprivations of early life in the colony, he tendered his resignation and sought a pension. Acceptance was delayed until he finished some outstanding work but then Macquarie and Oxley sent glowing testimonies to England in support of his request and this was granted. He spent his remaining years on his farm and died in April 1826.

He was an emancipist who justified Macquarie's belief that convicts should be able to regain their place in society if they had demonstrated good conduct and reformation and was one of the people invited to Government House. Macquarie paid him a tribute in a letter to London referring to his "indefatigable assiduity in the fulfillment of his arduous duties.... a man who had suffered privation and fatigue in the service of the colony and whose integrity had never been impeached."

Many of the statues on the Department of Lands building were designed by Macintosh, our local sculptor of some fame, and all the statues are identified and described in the KHS book by Beverley Earnshaw, *An Australian Sculptor, William Priestly MacIntosh*. The Meehan statue was designed and sculpted by a team of talented stone masons from NSW Public Works, pictured below, (left to right)- Katie Hicks, Paul Thurloe, Ruben Varfi, Mark Adamson, Greg Paul, and Garry Rimmer.



The team had no images of James Meehan and based the statue on the clothing styles of the time and an image of James' son Thomas.

The statue is made of Appin sandstone and Meehan is depicted as 'the surveyor' with a field book, plan and compass. The figure is flanked by a blazed tree and waratahs and at his feet there is a satchel adorned with a shamrock in recognition of his Irish heritage.

Of the 48 niches on the famous facade of the Lands Department Building in the Sydney CBD, only 24 contained statuary. James Meehan who literally 'put NSW on the map' makes 25 and can be located on the corner of Loftus and Bent Streets.

He is remembered too through the James Meehan High School at Macquarie Fields in South Western Sydney and if you are interested you can find more information through books and biographies.

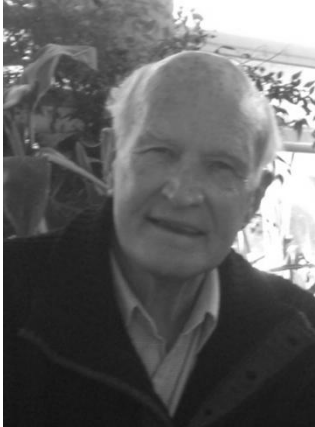
*Gill Whan*

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While you are visiting the City (and having checked out the statue), you might like to go to the Museum of Sydney for the Historic Houses Trust latest exhibition called *The Enemy at Home*.

It tells a previously untold story of nearly 7000 people of German and Austrian descents who were interned in Australia during WW1. One of the internees was a Bavarian photographer, Paul Dubotzki and his photographs provide a rare and intimate snapshot of the lives of the inmates – unlikely prisoners of war who kept up their spirits with theatrical and musical events, small business activities and sport. It is showing until 11 September 2011. The Museum is on the corner of Bridge and Philip Streets and open daily from 9.30 am – 5pm.

## Member Profile



**Bob Whan** is becoming quite well known at the Society as he has been a speaker twice this year, the second time telling us stories from King Island where he did part of his growing up. He will probably admit that he used to be ‘dragged along’ to meetings, but he now comes willingly!

Bob was born in Wodonga, the eldest of three brothers. His father John Whan who married Violet Ruth Havigal Henry, was then working in the family grocery store. The Whans had originally come from Northern Ireland in 1855 and were strong Presbyterians. John Whan was one of six children. His mother was the eldest of 11 children, all named for missionaries, hymn writers, explorers and generals – they were Methodists, originally from the north of England. When the family store could no longer support all the sons, Bob’s family moved to Melbourne where his father worked in an aircraft factory and Bob started his education first at East Kew then Richmond Technical College and after that King Island where his father had been offered a share farm. He left school at 15 years so that he could help on the family farm but his first real job was when he went back to Wodonga and worked in Dalgety’s wool store. He did a wool classing course, ‘got a run’ (a season in shearing sheds) and earned enough money to pay for a year at Sydney Tech to get his matriculation and gain entrance to the University of NSW. The degree, funded by winning scholarships, also required practical experience and he spent several months as a jackaroo at Godooga and in New Zealand. After graduating in Wool Technology, he received a scholarship from the International Wool Secretariat to do a post-graduate degree in the United Kingdom. It gave him a first class passage on a ship, where he suddenly found that not everyone ate chops for breakfast and that other young people were in the back of the ship and inaccessible to first class passengers! In UK he went to Leeds Uni. It was November 1959, bitterly cold and thick smog. He spent half his month’s allowance on one night’s accommodation in a hotel on arrival but soon learned, and found a shared flat with other students and started to enjoy life. It was an exciting time to be there at the start of the 60s.

He met and married Gill and they returned to Australia in 1962, to Canberra where Bob started work at the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. He published around 60 papers on wool marketing during his time there and introduced objective measurement into the wool industry. Two children were born in Canberra, Steven and Susan.

He made a significant decision to join the Labor Party in the late sixties and stood unsuccessfully as a candidate in 1969, but in 1972 was elected in the seat of Eden Monaro and served in the Whitlam government until 1975 when he was defeated. It was a difficult time for a while. He formed an organization called Jobless Action which tendered for jobs and was quite successful, then became Director of ACFOA, the Australian Council for Overseas Aid. When that finished he went to Sydney as a press secretary but was then appointed as General Manager of the NSW Dairy Corporation. His last position before retirement was in his words, the most enjoyable job he had had, working for eight years as Chief of Staff for the Minister for Primary Industries and Corrective Services in the NSW Labor Government. In retirement he is writing a book on the wool industry, plus his biography and enjoys reading (he has a library of 6000 books), walking, model trains and cars and his four beautiful grandchildren, not necessarily in that order.