

# 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*

*March/April 2012*

*Volume 4 No 1*



*Dog demonstration, Australia Day in Carss Park 1986 – now read about Tess a very special police dog.  
Photo by Claude Williams, late of Carss Park.*

### **Meetings and Speakers**

**Thursday 12 April 2012**

Speaker: John Ives, General Manager, on *The History of Heron Airlines*

**Thursday 10 May 2012**

Harold Dews: Last Editor in Chief of Movietone News, *It all began in 1896*

*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**

**26 March – Kevin Skelsey**

We enjoyed Kevin's talk so much in 2009 that we have asked him back. He is going to tell us about *Current Trends in Antiques*. Join us at 10 am for a delicious morning tea in the courtyard 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 Adele Ryan (our new convenor for Mondays at the Museum) on 9529 6730 to reserve your place.

### **Annual General Meeting**

**8 March 2012**

**All positions are declared vacant. Nominations close at 2 pm on 8 March. A nomination form is included with this newsletter and we would love to have a couple of new members to bring ideas and a new perspective to the committee. Only one meeting a month - the first Monday (not public holidays). Members who wish to, take turns in hosting the meetings. It could be fun!**

#### **Museum Roster**

<b>March 2012</b>		<b>April 2012</b>	
4 <sup>th</sup>	Carole Tier & Ken Grieve	1 <sup>st</sup>	Gill Whan & Deirdre Schroeder
11 <sup>th</sup>	Mavis Ward & Mary Williams	8 <sup>th</sup>	Adele Ryan & Lawrie Corry
18 <sup>th</sup>	Trudy Johns & Elizabeth Emerson	15 <sup>th</sup>	Trudy Johns & Elizabeth Emerson
25 <sup>th</sup>	Betty Goodger & Janette Hollebone	22 <sup>nd</sup>	Betty Goodger & Janette Hollebone
		29 <sup>th</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 2011/2012 (\* denotes Executive)**

<b>President:*</b>	Beverley Earnshaw	Ph: 9546 1091
<b>Vice President (1):*</b>	Janette Hollebone	Ph: 9529 7117
<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>5 Mar, 7.00 pm</b>	<b>Gill Whan, 11 Dewrang St., Carss Park</b>
<b>2 Apr, 7.00 pm</b>	<b>Beryl Butters, 36 Louisa Street, Oatley</b>
<b>7 May, 7.00 pm</b>	<b>Trudy Johns, 2/900 Forest Road, Peakhurst</b>

## GROWING UP IN CARSS PARK - Part 2

By Frances Lillian Milne

During the 1940s everywhere was bushland and Allawah Avenue was a dirt road. Nell and Frances used to trudge across Princes Highway through paspalum with bilycans to get milk from the dairy in West Street. Few people had cars in those days so there was not much traffic on Princes Highway. Later, there was a regular milk run with a horse and cart and we would carry out the bilycans and pay for the milk. There was also a bread cart and the baker would give us a bun each and allow us to ride in the cart while he delivered bread in the street. Also, household supplies were bought from a “Rabbit-O” selling rabbits, a “Fish-O” selling fish and a “Bop-Bop” man selling clothes props. Various hawkers would come with lingerie, clothing, jewellery and other items which could be carried in a big suit case. The little local shopping centre in Carwar Avenue consisted of a general store where school children could buy pies and sandwiches and opposite was a general stationary cum hardware store and a greengrocer. Later, a butcher and other shops were added.



*Left to right – Christine, Frances, Trevor and Barry*

The family's third child, Barry, arrived in February, 1946. By then Allawah Avenue was filling up with new houses and young families and there were plenty of children in the street. The fourth child, Trevor, was born in March 1951. The house in Allawah Avenue was beginning to feel the strain. George extended the sun room to absorb the outside laundry and built another laundry with a concrete deck outside. He also built a garage for his first car, an FJ Holden Ute. In those days there were no seat belt laws and so when the time came for a family outing, George, Nell and baby Trev would travel in the cabin while the 3 older children sat in the back.

Money was often short because when it rained there was no work and no income. Luckily, George had built a big enclosure for the hens so they had a constant supply of eggs, and a chook at Christmas. George also kept up a constant supply of vegetables from his garden and there was an unlimited supply of chokos that grew along the back fences. The children hated chokos but had to sit at table until they were eaten. No chokos – no sweets. Weeding the garden was another chore done by the children.

There were dances held in the Carss Park Lifesavers' Hall and between dances there were games with prizes for the children. At the dances the two biggest extroverts, George and a very stout Mrs Gwen Austin, would dance outrageously and one time they were so engrossed and noisy that they failed to stand still for the National Anthem and had to apologize.

Fancy Dress Balls were also held at the Lifesavers' Hall and Nell would labour long to make paper outfits for her children. She also made most of their clothes. Chris and Frances would stand on the dining room table so that their mother could get the lengths right. The girls also remembered tedious sessions of getting their freshly washed hair held into curls with thousands of bobby-pins. They looked a very handsome family as they went out, took public transport or attended Sunday School anniversaries together.

There were bush fires very occasionally which burnt through Carss Park. It was very exciting for the older children on one occasion, when Frances and her cousin, Neal, were given water back-packs and allowed to put out the spot fires on the outskirts of the burnt area, after the locals and the fire brigade had the fires under control.

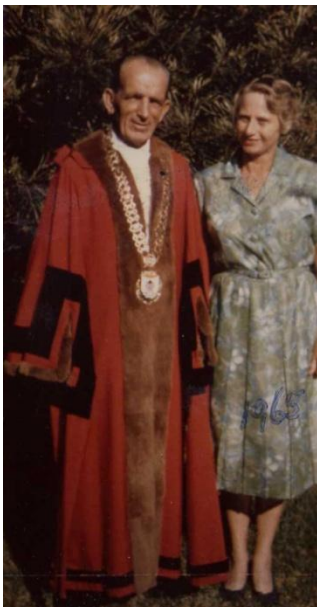
There were cracker nights to celebrate Empire Day on May 24<sup>th</sup>. George would organize a massive bonfire in the vacant block which later became Mrs Hambly's house at 25 Allawah Avenue. One cracker night they built the bonfire too close to a big gum tree which caught alight and the men worked hard to put it out. George stayed on watch all night.

People used to go prawning at Carss Park at low tide. On a moonless night the men would wade out into the water and shine a lantern in the swimming enclosure, then pull a long prawning net around the prawns and everyone would pull the nets in. The prawns were put straight into fresh boiling water and they ate them with bread rolls on the grass.

The 1950s was a time of increased immigration when housing was needed and no special qualifications were needed to start out as a builder. George was a careful builder and had a good reputation as "honest George". That was when he and his brother Ozzie began their building business together.

During this time a new refrigerator replaced the old ice chest and the delivery of ice to their home ceased. The toilet changed from being an outhouse next to the laundry with the weekly visit from the "lavie man" and the weekly nightmare that someone would be caught inside when he came. The inside toilet came as part of the extensions to 19 Allawah Avenue which also included an inside laundry with a washing machine. No longer did Nell have to slave over steaming copper loads of household linen and clothing and manually squeeze them through the wringer before pegging them on the two clothes lines which stretched across the whole block. The new extensions included a Hills Clothes Hoist and a garage for the new Holden.

George was involved with the Carss Park Lifesavers' Club, the Sea Scouts, the School P & C Association and the Carss Park Progress Association. He was elected as a Councillor and served 9 years on Kogarah Council where he was Mayor for a term in 1965. During his period as an Alderman, George successfully supported the establishment of many community facilities (including the Carss Park Swimming Pool) and service improvements for the residents of Carss Park and surrounding areas. One controversial initiative of his was the creation of the rubbish tip in Carwar Avenue opposite the old Bowling Club. This probably led to his defeat at the subsequent Council elections, but in the medium term and to this day, the raising of the land level has proved beneficial for the open space and playing fields which were established on top of the tip when it closed.



The family outgrew 19 Allawah Avenue and moved into a bigger three bedroom house which George built at 14 Erang Street, Carss Park in about 1956/57.

The tidal canal backed on to the Erang Street home and beyond that lay a vast area of market gardens stretching from the back of Tasker's Caravan Park on the Highway, all the way to Carlton Crescent. The boys used to ride their home made billy-carts down the steep hill that was Mayor Street. *To be continued.....*

# Nothing to do!

## *Here are some events you may like to think about*

**Bus Tour** –Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2012. KH Society is doing a tour of the Nursing Museum of the former Prince Henry Hospital, then lunching at the Coast Golf Club. Cost \$15 for bus, the Society will cover your Museum entry, \$2.00 for morning tea, lunch at own expense. It is hoped to call in at Pioneer Park, Botany Cemetery on the way back. *Bookings through Betty Goodger Ph: 9570 1101 or Mavis Ward Ph: 9546 5704*

**Seniors Week 2012 – 18-31 March** (yes I know, that's more than a week) Lots of events planned for Kogarah residents from Social Media Workshops to trips to the Picasso Exhibition, Taronga Zoo, Open Day at Kogarah Seniors Computer Club, Lunches, Local History Tour (including visit to Carss Cottage), Senior Drivers Workshops and more. You can check on the Council website [www.kogarah.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kogarah.nsw.gov.au) or pick up a leaflet from Seniors Groups, Library, Customer Service etc.

**Music at Twilight** concerts for 2012 start again on Wednesday 28 March at 7 pm. If you haven't been to these you've missed a treat. They take place at the St George Auditorium in Montgomery Street and only cost \$20 which includes supper afterwards. Tickets through Council's Customer Service Centre on 9330 9400. First concert features the *Guitar Genius of Slava and Leonard Grigoryan*.

## *Dates for the diary*

**National Trust Heritage Festival – 14-26 April 2012.** Theme: *Amazing Stories: Innovation and Invention*. Events across metropolitan and regional NSW including free tours from Kamay Botany Bay National Park Visitor Centre, visit Green Point Observatory at Oyster Bay on Sat 14 April, *Inventions* at Hurstville Museum on Sat 21 April or tour the graveyard at St Peters Cooks River on Sat 21 April. Details [www.nationaltrust.com.au](http://www.nationaltrust.com.au) or ask for the booklet (we will have it at the meeting).

**Family History Expo and Conference – 14-16 September 2012,** at Tradies Gynea. Hosted by Botany Bay Family History Society. You can register your interest online at [www.conference2012.org.au](http://www.conference2012.org.au) or send for information through Conference 2012, PO Box 250, Caringbah NSW 1495.

**Royal Australian Historical Society Annual Conference – October 20/21 2012,** at Rowers on Cooks River, Wollie Creek. RAHS conference is often too far away for us to attend but this year – no excuses. More details as they become available.

**Talking of Innovation and Invention – here are a few Australian World Firsts** (my thanks to Canterbury Historical Society)

1838 James Raymond, Postmaster General, **Pre-paid postage**

1876 Richard & Clarence Bowyer Smith, **Stump-jump plough** to cultivate new-cleared land;

1901 William Farrer, **Federation wheat strain** – resistant to rust and fungus and drought;

1917 George Nicholas and Henry Woolf Smith, **Aspro**

1934 **Ford Utility** (Geelong Farmer's wife's idea – church Sunday, pigs to market Monday)

1945 Gilbert Toyne, **Rotary clothes hoist** (taken over by Hills Hoists when patent expired)

1952 Mervyn Victor Richardson, **Victa lawnmower**

1958 Dr David Warren, **Black box flight recorder**



KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC  
RECONCILIATION STATEMENT

Balance at Bank as at 1 February 2011	9284.08
Add Income to 31 January 2012	13,208.62
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>22,492.70</u></b>
Less Expenditure from 31 Jan 2011 – 31 Jan 2012	19,199.89
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>3,292.81</u></b>
Bank Balance as per statement 31 January 2012	3,292.81
Fixed Deposits at St George Bank	60,000.00
	12,000.00
Power Saver at St George Bank (interest rolls over)	3,170.51

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I have audited the records of Kogarah Historical Society Inc. and in my opinion the records are well kept and the financial statements drawn up for the period 01 - 02 -2011 to 31 - 01 -2012 reflect fairly the position of the organisation.

Signed



David Shaw  
CPA 1443198

KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC  
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR 2011 - 2012

EXPENDITURE:	\$
Energy Australia	296.86
Telstra and Australia Post Box	713.93
Insurance and Affiliations	4772.74
Museum Cleaning	1220.08
Museum Expenses & book purchases	1599.62
Donations and Catering	1220.00
Petty Cash	583.87
Newsletters and Postage	1433.25
Administration and Publications	7359.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,199.89</b>

INCOME:	\$
Annual Subscriptions	946.00
Museum Admission	671.50
Groups and Mondays at the Museum	1194.70
Outings, Raffles, Pens etc	1101.28
Publications and Book Sales	2973.50
All Interest	6381.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,208.62</b>

Signed



David Shaw  
CPA 1443198

# TESS, THE FIRST POLICE DOG IN NSW

By Beverley Earnshaw

The NSW Police Dog Unit was formed in 1932 under Constable Scotty Denholm and it became an invaluable crime fighting asset to the NSW Police Force.

The state's first Police Dog was an Alsatian called *Tess*, born at the Olympian Kennels, Cairo Street at Rockdale NSW. Tess, as a three month old pup, was bought by Constable Denholm for seven guineas. Her official name was Olympian Bonanza, by Claus of Bramar, out of Suzanne of the Meadows, and she was the granddaughter of the famous imported Brutus of Numershall. On the maternal side she was a granddaughter of Pinkerton Rhoda (Imp), said to be at the time the best bitch ever brought to Australia<sup>1</sup>.

The site for the first NSW Police Dog Kennels was at Alexandria in an area which then included much swampy wasteland which was useful in training the dogs. The kennel area doubled as a holding yard for exhibits and the NSW Police Commissioner of the day thought the dogs could guard the exhibits in their downtime after training, thus serving a dual purpose<sup>2</sup>.

Tess went on to have a distinguished career at the hands of her talented trainer, Scotty Denholm who became widely regarded as Australia's top animal trainer and Tess took part in many search and rescue operations, tracking criminals and finding lost children in the bush.

In 1938 she was involved in searching for an armed man in the Cronulla sandhills. At this crime scene there was a shoot out.

The same year she found a missing boy who was lost in the bush in the dead of winter. Tess tracked him to a cave at Peakhurst where he was found suffering from exposure<sup>3</sup>. Likewise she found an 80 year old man who had been lost in the scrub at Riverstone for 24 hours and was suffering exposure.

Her most famous achievement was the search for 6 year old Marcia Hayes who disappeared from her home at Windsor on Christmas Day 1937. A team of 20 police and 100 residents searched for the child throughout the night, and when she had not been found after 34 hours, the Windsor Police asked for Tess, the police dog, to be brought from Sydney.

The dog's handler, Constable Denholm, took a frock which the child had worn and holding it near her said "Find her Tess". The dog sniffed it for a few seconds and led the police to a house in Macquarie Street where the child was last seen. Then she turned back into the street, and straining at the leash set off across the paddocks in a direct line towards South Creek. With nose close to the ground, Tess followed the scent to the bank of the creek, then plunged into the water. She began tugging at a bran sack, barking and whining as if trying to tell the police something. When pulled from the creek the sack was found to contain the child's body, violated and strangled.

The murderer was an old man who lived in the Macquarie Street house to which Tess had first led the searchers. He was arrested, convicted and sentenced to death<sup>4</sup>.



This sensational achievement by Tess, who in one hour had located a child who had been searched for for two days led to a decision by the Police Force to breed and train police dogs and send them all over the state.

In 1938, Constable Denholm had 8 police dogs under his care. They had all proved that their sense of smell, direction, and powers of observation were so uncanny that they had replaced Aborigines as trackers. These were to form the nucleus of the expanded dog squad.

Tess and Kaspar could reach and rescue anyone in difficulties in water more quickly than any human being. They had been taught to swim out in the surf to any person in difficulties. A dog called Harris could leap across amazing distances, and Zoe, the only white police dog, could not only clamber up a brick wall in search of a quarry but could turn a tap on or off, fill and carry billycans of water, and in an instant could transform from a docile friendly dog to a “man-eater” on the command of Constable Denholm<sup>5</sup>.

On one occasion at Wentworth Falls, Tess nearly lost her life. While searching for a missing woman she lost her footing on some loose rubble and tumbled over a cliff down a steep ravine. Soon afterwards Tess gave birth to 11 pups, six of whom were dead.

As well as the 8 senior dogs, Constable Denholm had 6 puppies, 4 of whom were from a litter from Tess and it was planned to send these out as the first draft of Police Dogs into country areas.



Tess died suddenly at the police kennels at Alexandria on December 3, 1940, aged 9 years and the public grieved. An autopsy showed she had a telescopic bowel, a condition not uncommon in old dogs. She was embalmed and her remains placed in the foyer of the Australian Museum where they remained for many years. Later she was moved to a display case at the Police Horse Stables at Redfern.

Today she proudly rests in a new display case at the Justice and Police Museum at Circular Quay.

The first dog squad was disbanded in 1954 and did not recommence until 1979. NSW Police Dogs are regarded as the best trained in the world. The unit’s aim is to provide specialist canine services such as general purpose, drug, firearms/explosive detection and human remains dogs.

And Tess, born at Rockdale, was at the vanguard of all these brave dogs.

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1. Marjorie Burnett: The First Police Dog in NSW
  2. History: NSW Police on Line
  3. Adelaide Advertiser Tues. 7.8.1934 p.16
  4. Sydney Morning Herald 27.12.19937 p.7
  5. Sydney Morning Herald 3.1.1938 p.7

On April 2, 1939 the following article appeared in the Propeller Newspaper:-

### ***Dredge sinks in bay***

*During last Sunday's rough weather the dredge used to pump out the water at the head of Kogarah Bay sank. The engineer, Mr A.H. Brewer, reported at this week's council meeting that the heavy southerly weather was responsible for sinking the dredge, and it would be several weeks before it could be salvaged and set in operation. It had a lot of valuable equipment on it, and it would cost hundreds of pounds to get it in proper working condition again. The Mayor, Alderman S.R. Bell, said it had been estimated that the dredging contractor, Mr Kierle, would have to meet an expenditure of at least £400 to salvage the dredge and get it working again. Special equipment would be necessary to do the salvage work. This would mean a delay in the dredging work at the head of the bay. The council is having the bay dredged for the formation of the new Beverley Park suburb, the dredged portion being used for a golf course.*

**Apparently, a worker named Jimmy Smith was injured during the salvage operation and the Society received an enquiry asking if anyone had information on this man. We were unable to help. Can you?**

***B. Earnshaw***

## **Historical Teasers**

1. Is it true or false that Australia is the driest continent?
2. What do the letters in QANTAS stand for?
3. In what year did Queen Elizabeth II first visit Australia?
4. What recipe was made famous by Flo Bjelke-Petersen?
5. What is the floral emblem of Tasmania?
6. What was Don Bradman's score in his final test innings?
7. The first settlers—now considered indigenous Australians—are estimated to arrive on the continent how many years ago?

Answers:

(1) True; (2) Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services; (3) 1954; (4) Pumpkin scones; (5) Southern Blue Gum; (6) A duck; (7) 50,000 years ago.

***Please tell us if you know of anyone ill or in hospital so that we can acknowledge it and send a card. We also like to know if there is a special occasion coming up – birthdays etc. Mavis Ward is our 'caring officer' (9546 5704) or let anyone on the committee know. Apologies for non-attendance at meetings should go to the Secretary, Gill Whan (9546 4623).***



## Member Profile

**Anne Field** will be a familiar name to most members. She was a Local Government Councillor for 17 years, serving Rockdale Council for 8 years and Kogarah Council for nine years and taught at St George Girls school for 35 years, retiring officially in January this year.

Her period on Kogarah Council from 1999 to 2008 was a colourful one. She represented the Kogarah Bay Progress Association and gained a reputation for examining both sides of an argument carefully, standing her ground and putting her point of view, sometimes forcefully. She had a long term commitment to heritage issues. In 2006 she was awarded an “Edna” by WEL (Women’s Electoral Lobby) in recognition of her contribution to Women and Local Government and in the same year learned that she was an inaugural entry of 4,500 women in the Who’s Who of Australian Women. She was awarded two Mayoral Minutes during 2006.

Highlights of her time at St George Girls High School where she taught Economics, Commerce, Geography and Legal Studies were noted during the many farewells on her retirement late last year. She was renowned as a snappy dresser (rare among teachers these days) with reminiscences from students of the purple leather pants (bought in the Netherlands), high heels, scarves and ‘bling’! General consensus was that any earthquake in Kogarah would have its epicenter at Anne’s desk with its undulating piles accumulated over 35 years. The desk was finally cleaned on her last day and photographed for posterity.

Anne is a member of our Society but also of many other history related community organisations including St George Historical Society, the National Trust, Historic Houses Trust, Australian Conservation Foundation, Australian Society of Genealogists and the Australian Turf Club. The last club may be a surprise but Anne has had a long standing interest in racing following her father’s love of horse racing history. Now that she has retired she intends to continue writing a history of Moorefield Racecourse Kogarah 1888 – 1951. After that she will celebrate the arrival of her Scottish grandmother in Sydney 100 years ago this year, by replicating her journey from Glasgow to Sydney. Grandmother arrived on an immigrant ship on 23 April 1912 and married on 24 April in Balmain, Sydney!

The Fields originally came from Wakefield in Yorkshire, England and first came to Australia in the 1850s during the gold rush. Anne’s political ancestry originated in Victoria in the 1880s, where her great grandfather was a Councillor. Her father grew up in Kurri Kurri, the Hunter Valley, and mother in West Wallsend, Newcastle. Ron Field served in WW2, spending time in Darwin and marrying Elizabeth Cochrane during the war. The family settled in Wallsend where Anne was born and educated. She first came to Sydney in 1972 to go to Macquarie University where she gained a BA, a Dip Ed and later a Diploma of Urban Studies which aroused her interest in the environment and politics. And the rest is history as we say.

We look forward to reading the history of Moorefield Racecourse in due course and hope that retirement will give Anne time to pursue her many interests and to come to an occasional KHS meeting as well.

*G. Whan*



*Carss Cottage Museum run by the Society and open every Sunday from 1pm to 5pm and other times by appointment.*

It is now time to renew your annual subscription to Kogarah Historical Society. A form for renewal is enclosed with this newsletter. Please return it with your payment or pay our Treasurer at the next meeting. Still only \$10 per annum for a single subscription and \$15 for a couple.

Membership entitles you to receive a newsletter every two months, invitations to all our events and free entry to Carss Cottage Museum on a Sunday.

We have excellent speakers organized for 2012 for both the general meetings and for Mondays at the Museum. Your calendar of events/speakers is enclosed. Visitors are always welcome.

March is our Annual General Meeting and we hope you will all attend. Please note that in accordance with the Constitution, you must be financial to nominate for a position and to vote at the AGM.

Don't forget that it is **Show and Tell** at the March meeting – bring along a 'treasure', something with a history, or a photo that is significant for you – talk about it for between 1 and 5 minutes. (Beverley will gong you out after 5 minutes)