



**NEW FARM & Districts
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC**

*Gathering information from the past
Preserving it for the future.*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2015

Presented by Ross Garnett

It gives me much pleasure to present my eleventh annual report as President of the New Farm and Districts Historical Society. This is the opportunity to reflect on the year from September 2014 to August 2015.

This has been another successful year for the Society with consistently high numbers of people attending our monthly public meetings. Our office has been open for 2 hours every Thursday afternoon when people have the opportunity to talk to Society members and search in the archives for information. Often these people want to find out some specific information that may fit in the puzzle that they are completing about their family or their home. We are grateful to those members who continue to work on making the material in our archives easily retrievable when we have such enquiries. Our newsletter editor Gerard Benjamin has also been able to help these enquirers. Often our newsletter readers respond to requests for information about people or places when our enquirer's stories find their way into the newsletter.

2015 started with a flurry of activity and excitement as Gerard worked long hours to complete writing the third book to be published by the Society – ***Homes with History on the New Farm Peninsula***. Several members provided valuable editing and proof reading and we were able to get the manuscript to the printers just in time for the printed books to be delivered the day before launch date. Former Governor of Queensland, the Honourable Penelope Wensley AC, eloquently officially launched the book and named it as an important addition to the library of books on the history of New Farm. Her prediction that *"I have little doubt it will enjoy similar success to its predecessors"* certainly proved true as the book was on the top ten best selling books list at the Mary Ryan New Farm Bookshop for about 18 weeks, many of those as number one. We congratulate Gerard on this fine book that enhances the recording of history on this peninsula. Thanks also to David Hinchliffe for providing his painting of *"Kingsholme"* to be used on the front cover of the book and to others who contributed paintings, photos or stories.

Much of the activity that surrounded the launch day involved the **Art Exhibition** featuring homes of the peninsula painted by 6 artists with a strong connection to New Farm. Thanks to Judi Khan and the team of artists and other volunteers for a fabulous and very successful exhibition.

Committee: I acknowledge the commitment of members of the committee over the past year.

President: Ross Garnett

Vice President: Phil Evans

Secretary: Phil Evans

Treasurer: Denise Buckby

Committee Members: Lois Kennedy, (archives responsibility), Barry Martin (membership responsibility) and Judi Khan.

Special mention must be made of the commitment of Lois Kennedy as a committee member for seven years and secretary for six of those years. Thank you Lois for your dedication to the society. We also thank Judi Khan for being part of the committee over the past 12 months and in particular for organising the very successful Art Exhibition in February. Both Lois and Judi are leaving the committee this year.

Other volunteer roles:

All members of the society are indebted to the small group of volunteers who undertake a variety of tasks:

- ensuring the office is open every Thursday afternoon so that members of the public can seek out information about history in the area
- welcoming members and visitors to our monthly meetings
- editing the newsletter
- assisting enquirers with their historical research
- ensuring membership badges are available for the meetings
- collecting the newsletters from the office of Teresa Gambaro MP
- folding and distributing newsletters each month
- organising the lucky door prizes each month
- hand delivering newsletters in the local area
- preparation, serving and cleaning up afternoon tea at our monthly meetings so everyone can enjoy fellowship in the courtyard after the meetings - a valuable part of the meetings
- providing musical entertainment prior to our meetings
- managing the Audio-visual system

- preparing advertising posters and announcement slides for our monthly meetings
- volunteering at the Society stand at the Teneriffe Festival
- ensuring our meetings are pictorially recorded
- manning the book sales and membership desk
- cataloguing the historical information in the archives.

Membership and attendances:

Our membership and email contacts have continued to grow during the year. Attendance at meetings has ranged from 75 to 150 people. Membership stands at about 175. We currently distribute about 460 email and 150 hard copies of the monthly newsletter. We are grateful to all of the speakers for freely giving of their time to prepare and present the talks on their topics of interest for our enjoyment. I particularly want to thank Isaac Harding for the assistance he has given for several years in looking after the IT at the meetings which has been invaluable to the smooth running of the day.

Advertising, Marketing and promotional support:

We are thankful for the support of the following people in promoting the Society:

- Michael Hawke, editor of Village News for promoting our meetings
- Federal MP Teresa Gambaro's office staff for colour printing the monthly newsletter at no cost to the Society.

Other projects:

- The Society had an important presence at the 6th **Teneriffe Festival** in July this year sharing the history of the area with the thousands of people attending the Festival. Our thanks to Phil Evans and his team of tour guides for the bus tours of historical Teneriffe.
- **Book Sales** of *Reflections on New Farm*, *Tides of Teneriffe* and *Homes with History* continue through local bookshops, the State Library Bookshop and at the monthly meetings.
- The **Historical Plaques** Project has continued with plaques erected at Cannery Apartments, Teneriffe Apartments and Wilson's Outlook.

Christmas Donation: Member donations to the Empty Christmas Tree at our November 2014 meeting were given to the *Multicultural Development Association Qld* to support their work with migrants in Brisbane.

Monthly meetings: Meetings have attracted from 70 to 150 people and have covered an interesting variety of topics as follows:

August 2014: <i>Placenames: Beryl Roberts</i>	September 2014: <i>History Heads: David Hinchliffe in conversation with long-time New Farm residents</i>	October 2014: <i>SS Pearl river ferry disaster: Paul Seto</i>
November 2014: <i>Stories of Mowbraytown and East Brisbane: Geraint and Justeen Gregory</i>	February 2015: <i>Launch of Homes with History: Hon Penelope Wensley, and Art Exhibition</i>	March 2015: <i>Brunswick Hotel: Angelina and Bettina Martinez</i>
April 2015: <i>Australian Heroines of World War One: Susanna De Vries</i>	May 2015: <i>150 years of River Housing: Patrick Dizon</i>	June 2015: <i>Angelo's fesh pasta products: Donna Cazzolata</i>
July 2015: <i>Lost Brisbane: Dr Kay Cohen</i>		

New Farm and Districts Historical Society continues to be one of the biggest Historical Societies in Queensland, and I want to take this opportunity to thank all members for their interest in, and commitment to ensuring the history of New Farm and its surrounding districts is gathered, preserved and made accessible for future generations. The past couple of decades have seen major changes in the demographics of New Farm. As the back cover of *Homes with History* states: “*The New Farm locality was once a semi rural retreat for a few well-heeled families on well chosen sites. Gradually, the large estates gave way to gentlemen’s villas and worker’s cottages.*” It also became an industrial area until “*In the early 1990’s, the Newstead-Teneriffe area was synonymous with derelict riverfront industrial land, disused wharves, and mostly vacated warehouses and woolstores.*” (p 109, *Homes with History*). Since then we have witnessed *Urban Renewal* and we who are residents in the area are participants in the next phase of the history of New Farm and the surrounding districts.

Ross Garnett
September 2015

