JULY MEETING

A Queensland household name…

On Saturday 28 July, well over 100 attendees enjoyed Julie Hornibrook’s input as our guest speaker. Julie is the granddaughter of the late Sir Manuel R. Hornibrook (1893–1970), or ‘MR’ as he was known—a man destined to be at the forefront of building, construction and engineering in Australia for decade upon decade until the late 1960s.

Born at Enoggera, he started his career in Brisbane and eventually expanded his work sphere to cover Australia and portions of the South Pacific. His head office was the fine two-storey 1930s brick building on Breakfast Creek Road at Newstead (now Riverside Marine) which he purpose-built.

Across the river at Bulimba a large spread of land accommodated his plant depot, workshops, and a dry dock constructed principally to service the vessels used to recover gravel from the river.

The years of World War II saw MR’s group greatly involved in completing facilities which were needed to help bring about an allied victory.

MR’s business acumen came to the attention of overseas groups eager to form an alliance with Australia’s number one construction company of the 1950-60s. In 1964, the firm was acquired by the British Wood Hall group, eventually to form Baulderstone Hornibrook.

Julie spoke without written notes using projected images to help us to grasp MR’s lifetime of achievement.

For myself, she offered the challenge of considering how MR’s initiatives helped Queensland better survive the Depression Years when employment was generally declining. During the 1930s, he was involved in the construction of three bridges, each creating employment opportunities for up to 500 workers. Two of the projects were government-funded, while the Hornibrook Highway was privately financed with the promoter MR recovering his outlays by charging a toll for motorists using the bridge.

To grasp the breadth of his remarkable involvement and expertise, W. Brown’s authorised biography, A Man of Achievement, offers instructive reading.

Hume Campbell from Newstead’s Riverside Marine offers an insight in the man who was his first boss. A deputation from Ascot State School asked MR: “Can you build us a swimming pool?”, to which it was easy for him to say yes. “But we need it in six weeks…” came the reply. Needless to say, the deadline was met. Thanks, Julie, for the effort invested in this superb presentation.

AUGUST MEETING

Who and what inspired early novelist?

A YOUNG Englishman arrives to work on an outback sheep station and ends up writing a “fast-paced, suspenseful” novel that has “melodrama, romance and comedy, with many surprising twists and turns.”

“Completed in 1865, it proved to be Queensland’s second novel, though the miraculously-found manuscript was only published in 2010,” said Gerard Benjamin who will be the speaker at the August meeting.

Who was the author?—and who and what inspired him to write this yarn filled with a cavalcade of eccentric characters?

Gerard will present a slide show of the places, people and experiences that likely loomed large in the literary imagination of the author (pictured).

There will be a reading from the novel—and yes, there is a New Farm connection.

All are welcome at the meeting on Saturday 25 August, 2-4pm, at Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre, to be followed by afternoon tea.

To begin is the most important part of any quest and by far the most courageous… Plato
**House with Heritage**

Architect’s grandchildren inspect his handiwork from 1914…

The green and white residence on the corner of Bowen Terrace and Moreton Street, latterly known as Khandallah, was designed by prominent Brisbane architect Thomas Ramsay Hall (1879-1950) in 1914.

The house was recently visited by the architect’s granddaughter, Cleveland artist Robin Matfin, and grandson Stuart Ramsay Hall.

It was the perfect opportunity for them to meet the home’s new owners who are being assisted by Ipswich heritage architect Peter Johnston to restore the house to once more being a family residence.

In the City of Brisbane’s Register of New Buildings for the month of January 1914, the owner of the proposed wooden dwelling was P. Sutton, the nominated building contractors were Dickenson & Henderson of Paddington, and the architect was TR Hall of Queen Street.

With a father and stepbrother also architects, no wonder TR Hall went on to be regarded as one of Brisbane’s most successful architects of the early 20th century. He was aged 35 when he designed this Bowen Terrace home. Later, in 1919, he joined with GG Prentice to form Hall & Prentice. Their New Farm projects included Langshaw Flats (1922) and Avalon (1929). A key achievement was the Brisbane City Hall (1925-30).

**September Meeting**

Hanworth House

September’s meeting of the Society will feature Marisa Vecchio AM telling the story of Hanworth House, the grand residence dating from 1864 which stands at 109 Lytton Road, East Brisbane.

The house was built for retired naval officer Captain George Poynter Heath who had been appointed marine surveyor of Queensland in 1860, and port master two years later.

Marisa acquired the house around 2012 and devoted enormous energy restoring it only to have much of the restoration destroyed by fire weeks from its planned opening. Undaunted, she pressed on and the results are there for all to see.

No wonder the house has received accolades such as the 2014 Queensland Heritage Council Gold Award and the 2015 Premier’s Sustainability Award.

“I’ll be delighted to tell the story of Hanworth House,” said Marisa. “I promise to be entertaining.”

Come along to meet Marisa on Saturday 22 September, 2-4pm, at Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre. Everyone is welcome, so arrive early. Afternoon tea will be provided.

Saturday 25th August, 2 pm
Speaker: Gerard Benjamin

Queensland’s second novel: Tom Hurstbourne: A squatter’s life

How a young Englishman came to Australia in 1860 and spent some time on a sheep station, little suspecting that he would write Queensland’s second novel.

Mystery: What is the local connection?

New Farm and Districts Historical Society
www.newfarmhistorical.org.au
Enquiries: 0409 498 402

Thanks to Senator Claire Moore for printing this poster
PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Team effort needed for our Society

A NOther Historical Society year is coming to an end and we embark on the 2018/2019 year from September. That brings several things to mind:

• Thanks to the current committee members for their sterling contribution to the Society (that is, to all members and friends);
• We invite new people to volunteer as committee members (two are retiring);
• Annual memberships are now due; and
• We invite and encourage you to attend the Annual General Meeting at the start of the public meeting at 2pm on 25 August.

This meeting is usually very short, but it is essential for the New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc. The committee carries out the business part of the society, thus ensuring not only that decisions are made for the benefit of members but that we are fulfilling our motto “Gathering information from the past, preserving it for the future”. At the meeting we will receive a report from the President (also attached to this newsletter) and one from the Treasurer, then declare all positions vacant before electing the new committee. Please seriously consider volunteering to be on the committee. The commitment is to attend 10 meetings for about 1–1½ hours (February to November) and also general volunteering as you are able. Please contact me if you are willing to be nominated or if you know someone who is keen to be nominated.

Why not choose to be part of the TEAM, whereby…

Together Each Achieves More!

Ross Garnett — 0409 498 402

New plaque: Helping at the unveiling of the historical plaque at the Macedonian Community’s church on James Street on Sunday 5 August were the Hon Grace Grace (second from right), along with (from left) Mrs Nevenka Damevska (Community Vice President), Mrs Slavica Mihajloska (Treasurer), Ross Garnett (President, New Farm & Districts Historical Society) and Mitko Dimitroski (Community Secretary). Originally a Methodist Church opened in July 1927, the building, along with the adjoining community hall, was acquired by the Macedonian Community of Brisbane in 1981. Thanks to Councillor Vicki Howard and the Brisbane City Council for their support.

NEWSTEAD

Meeting at Aveo

NOW that the Aveo Retirement Village at Gasworks is welcoming new residents, the New Farm & Districts Historical Society has been invited to make a presentation about local history. On 31 August, Ross and Gerard will attend the Village so as to provide information about the society plus Gerard’s slide show will feature early photos of Newstead as well as views of the historic homes to be found in New Farm and Teneriffe.

BULIMBA VIEWS

Plume revisited

THE page-7 article in last month’s newsletter (“Bulimba delivered the good oil”), inspired society member Stuart Wallace to submit a photo of a prized ‘Plume’ metallic sign (left). In addition, Norm Love from the Bulimba District Historical Society group kindly supplied the photo of the Gasworks (below left) as a reminder that Bulimba offers unique historical and contemporary views of Newstead and Teneriffe.

Their Society’s website <www.bulimbahistory.org> not only provides an impressive photographic record, but also includes details of their meeting times. “Our ‘I Love Bulimba’ Facebook site is also very popular,” says Norm.

Be kind. Every person you meet is fighting a difficult battle…. Plato
Tour Guides: Sincere thanks to (from left) Ann, Linda, Phil, Diana and Lenore for volunteering their historical expertise which helped to make such a great success of the bus tours during the Teneriffe Festival.

Happiness is the settling of the soul into its most appropriate spot.  Aristotle
Gibbon’s London legacy

By Gerard Benjamin

He was one of Brisbane’s leading citizens and landowners for more than 30 years from the early 1850s. He bought 120 acres of Teneriffe Hill, built Teneriffe House in 1865, gained a reputation for securing corner blocks, and is remembered by the naming of James and Gibbon Streets, New Farm.

When James Gibbon (b. 1819) died in 1888 on a visit to England, his estimated fortune was nearly £500,000.

That might have been the end of the story since he and his wife Emma had no children, however in London, a great family saga had already begun.

After Emma was provided for in JG’s will, each of his three surviving brothers received £100,000 including properties inherited by his three daughters were organised by 1925 into a limited liability company.

The whole venture became the foundation of a lucrative family enterprise known today as GMS Estates Limited.

Shares in the property firm held by the family have been passed down from generation to generation.

The family shareholders now number 80, and Thomas Gibbon (descended from James’s brother Septimus) is managing director.

The firm operates from 32 Great James Street where Henry Gibbon began in 1841.

It is a Georgian house not dissimilar from the one, five minutes’ walk away, in which Charles Dickens wrote Oliver Twist in 1837.

... Your columnist accepted an invitation from Thomas Gibbon to visit the Great James Street office earlier this year.

It was an uncanny feeling climbing the narrow carpeted staircase, hearing the creak of ancient floorboards, and grasping the wooden handrail as James Gibbon possibly did on several return visits to London.

The first floor boardroom, giving a marvellous view of the street, is dominated by a Henry Gibbon portrait. It was like stepping onto the set of the Forsythe Saga.

The contact with Thomas Gibbon began several years ago when his initial email asked if anything was known about James Gibbon’s life in Brisbane.

Besides, he wanted to encourage his teenage son, then holidaying in Australia, to have his photo taken under the Gibbon Street sign.

The continuing exchange of emails yielded a photo of JG plus five of his letters from Australia spanning 1848-52.

This invaluable correspondence was reproduced in the book Homes with History.

The conversation between your columnist and Thomas Gibbon continues, since he is keen to receive a copy of an 1861 plan of what has become Brisbane’s CBD, because on it, 30 allotments are marked “J. Gibbon” and yes, seven are corner blocks.

“J. Gibbon” also appeared on many allotments in Fortitude Valley, Eagle Farm and Sandgate, as well as in South Brisbane and Ipswich (where each has a Gibbon Street).

For his part, Thomas was able to show me an old plan covering a dozen streets in London’s Bayswater.

Many coloured-in allotments represented the firm’s original property holdings.

When Thomas visits Australia again in a couple of years, I’ll be happy to take him on a walking tour of the Teneriffe streets so familiar to his great-great-great-granduncle.
Membership Form
Annual Membership – 1 September 2018 to 31st August 2019

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Photographs taken at public meetings may be published in newsletters and on social media.

I can volunteer in the following ways:
- Welcoming at meetings
- Set up / clear up of room
- IT support at meetings
- Assist with afternoon tea
- Advise on new technology
- Collect Oral Histories
- Assist with archives
- Write short historical items for website
- Other – please specify

Membership Cost: $10

Signed:.......................... Date:..........................

Payment method:
- Bank Transfer: to New Farm and Districts Historical Society Inc.
  BSB 034065 - Account Number 146217 – Reference: MEMB and your surname. Please post or email completed form
- Cheque or money order payable to: New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc.
- Cash at public meeting or Society Office

Post to: PO Box 1141
         New Farm QLD 4005

Email to: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au

Office Use Only:

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<th>Receipt No:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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<td>Secretary:</td>
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Membership year is September to August. We invite you to pay your $10 now for the 2018-2019 year.
It gives me much pleasure to present my fourteenth annual report as President of the New Farm and Districts Historical Society. This is the opportunity to reflect on the year from September 2017 to August 2018.

The main activity of the Society is the monthly public meetings held at the Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre. The speakers at our monthly meetings freely give of their time to prepare and present the talks on their topics of interest and we thank them for this. Attendances at meetings ranged from 92 to 124 members and visitors over the past 12 months.

Our thanks to the Brisbane City Council for the provision of our small office in the building next to the New Farm Library in Sydney Street to house the Society’s archival information. Volunteers have opened the office every Thursday afternoon between 2 pm and 4 pm and have been available for members of the public to check the archives for information they are seeking.

The Society’s interesting newsletter is our major method of communication and we regularly receive positive feedback about it. Thanks to Gerard Benjamin for his commitment to this very regular volunteer role. Articles often spark memories and comments from the readers and can lead to new information and connections.

We continue to receive a number of enquiries through the website and these are responded to with as much information as we can give as well as some guidance on how to research further for themselves. Several members of the society assist with sharing relevant information. I wish to particularly thank Gerard Benjamin for his knowledge in assisting our enquirers with information and with suggestions of how to extend their searching for information.

The Society was again represented at several Anzac Celebrations – New Farm State School, Submariners Dawn Service at the Teneriffe Boardwalk and the Sandakan Memorial in New Farm Park.

This year we have become more active in social media which it seems if the way of the future of communications. Gerard Benjamin is managing the website and Ron Altmann looks after the FaceBook updates.
Committee: I acknowledge the commitment of members of the committee over the past year.

President: Ross Garnett  
Vice President: Phil Evans  
Secretary: Bernadette Driessen  
Treasurer: Denise Buckby  
Committee Members: Ann Sargeant, Ben Wieland and James MacDonald

Your committee:  
• organises monthly meeting speakers,  
• manages all financial matters,  
• manages membership details,  
• arranges for historical plaques to be erected, and  
• sets strategic directions of the Society

Other volunteer roles:  
We are all indebted to the small group of volunteers who have undertaken a variety of tasks which keep the Society running smoothly:

• opening the office every Thursday afternoon  
• welcoming members and visitors to our monthly meetings  
• editing the newsletter  
• writing reports on the meetings for the newsletter  
• assisting enquirers with their historical research  
• folding and distributing newsletters each month  
• organising the lucky door prizes each month – a fun time at every meeting  
• hand delivering newsletters in the local area  
• providing and cleaning up afternoon tea - a valuable part of the meetings  
• providing musical entertainment prior to our meetings  
• managing the audio-visual system  
• preparing advertising posters and announcement slides  
• volunteering at the Society stand at the Teneriffe Festival and New Farm Library renovations celebration  
• taking photos at the meetings  
• manning the book sales and membership desk  
• cataloguing the historical information in the archives  
• maintaining a social media presence.

Membership:  
Our membership and email contacts have continued to grow during the year. Membership stands at about 240 (not all are up to date financially). We currently distribute about 850 email and 80 hard copies of the monthly newsletter, an indication of the connection people feel to New Farm.
Advertising, Marketing and promotional support:

We are thankful for the support of the following people in promoting the Society during the 2017-2018 year:

• Michael Hawke, editor of My Village News, for promoting our meetings
• Senator Claire Moore’s office for colour printing the posters that advertise our monthly meetings.
• A small group of people who electronically forward or display the advertising poster.

Other projects:

• The Society had an important presence at the 9th Teneriffe Festival in July this year. As always, the screening of the 1956 tram ride film proved popular in the “Merthyr Picture Palace” tent. Our thanks to Phil Evans, the Queensland Omnibus and Coach Society and the team of tour guides for the bus tours of historical Teneriffe enjoyed by 82 people.
• Book Sales of Reflections on New Farm, Tides of Teneriffe and Homes with History continue through Mary Ryan (New Farm), New Farm Editions, the State Library Bookshop and at the monthly meetings. A new short print run of Tides of Teneriffe has just been ordered due to very low stock on hand.
• The Historical Plaques Project has continued. We received a Grant of $6000 from Brisbane City Council to produce 3 plaques. The plaque at the Macedonian Orthodox Church in James St was unveiled in early August at the Macedonian Festival and the one at Wynberg in Brunswick St is currently being manufactured. A plaque to be placed at St Michael’s and All Angels Anglican Church is in the research phase.

Monthly meetings: Meetings have attracted from 92 to 124 people and have covered an interesting variety of topics as follows:

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<thead>
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<th>Month</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Speaker</th>
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<tr>
<td>August 2017</td>
<td>Wharfie</td>
<td>Lesley Synge</td>
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<td>December 2017</td>
<td>Brisbane’s Year of Disaster – 1864</td>
<td>Duncan Richardson</td>
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<td>April 2018</td>
<td>The Rag Trade</td>
<td>George Symons</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2018</td>
<td>Home-spun Remedies</td>
<td>Helen Gregory</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 2018</td>
<td>Brisbane: Training</td>
<td>Dr Bill Metcalf</td>
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Christmas Donations: At the November meeting, members donated non-perishable foods and cash to the Trinity Pantry in Fortitude Valley which distributes food to people in need of assistance all throughout the year, and particularly at Christmas time.

What of the future?

After another successful year, I am thinking about how the Historical Society could be more effective. I see some areas where we could use volunteers more effectively:

• A ‘volunteer coordinator’ could be a new helpful role to follow up on the offers of help we receive from new and existing members. Currently we are not doing this well!
• History is being made every day. What happens today might be the information that people are looking for in another decade. How are we adding to our archives with information about our present day? This is an area where we could do better and I am wondering what ideas you might have for this.
• Could we have some individuals or a little sub-group who could be invited to assist our enquirers with their research or undertake some research about our suburbs?

I want to take this opportunity to thank all members for their interest in the tasks of gathering and preserving history – what a wealth of knowledge amongst our members! We just need to get it all written down before the memories are lost.

Ross Garnett
August 2018

New Farm & Districts Historical Society Inc

The Office is located at the front of the Ron Muir Meeting Room, New Farm Library, right behind the green bench @ 135 Sydney Street.
Office Open Hours: Every Thursday 2-4pm
Postal Address: PO Box 1141 NEW FARM 4005
Website: www.newfarmhistorical.org.au
Email: info@newfarmhistorical.org.au
FaceBook: https://www.facebook.com/newfarmhistorical/