



**NEW FARM & Districts  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC**

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

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2018**

Presented by Ross Garnett

**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 Ronn Altman 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 9<sup>th</sup> **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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|---|--|---|
| <b>August 2017:</b><br><i>Wharfie</i><br>Speaker: Lesley Synge  | <b>September 2017:</b><br><i>Man of Steel</i><br>Speaker: Jane Deakin                            | <b>October 2017:</b><br><i>The Brisbane Hospital:<br/>150 years at Herston</i><br>Speaker: Dr Cliff Pollard |
| <b>November 2017:</b><br><i>Brisbane's Year of<br/>Disaster – 1864</i><br>Speaker: Duncan<br>Richardson | <b>February 2018:</b><br><i>100 Years of Wallace<br/>Bishop Jewellers</i><br>Speaker: Wal Bishop | <b>March 2018:</b><br><i>Talking Shop</i><br>Dr Ellen McArthur  |
| <b>April 2018:</b><br><i>The Rag Trade</i><br>Speaker: George<br>Symons                                 | <b>May 2018:</b><br><i>Home-spun Remedies</i><br>Speaker: Helen Gregory                          | <b>June 2018:</b><br><i>Brisbane: Training<br/>Teaching and Turmoil</i><br>Speaker: Dr Bill Metcalf         |
| <b>July 2018:</b> <i>Sir Manuel Hornibrook and 3 Bridges</i><br>Speaker: Julie Hornibrook               |  |   |

**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

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