



**NEW FARM & Districts  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC**



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

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2019**

Presented by Ross Garnett

**I present to you the annual report of the New Farm and Districts Historical Society for the 2018-2019 year. This is my fifteenth report as President of the Society. It is also 25 years since the inauguration of the Society, which came about following a walk around historic New Farm instigated by then Councillor, David Hinchliffe.**

Much has changed in 25 years, but what has not changed is the passion people have for learning about the history of this New Farm "peninsula" and of greater Brisbane. One of the quotes in the July newsletter reminded us: *If you want the present to be different from the past, study the past*" (Baruch Spinoza) and that is what we are doing.

**Committee:** The dedicated committee has met monthly (February – November) and I wish to thank each person for their support. Special thanks to Phil Evans who has retired from the committee after more than 10 years.

*President:* Ross Garnett

*Vice President:* Phil Evans (To July)

*Secretary:* Bernadette Driessen

*Treasurer:* Denise Buckby

*Committee Members:* Ben Wieland, Austin Adams and Malcolm Godfrey.

The committee is responsible for ensuring the society is financially sound and continues to promote an interest in history in the local area.

**Public meetings:** Ten monthly public meetings were held at the Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre on a variety of topics. These quality speakers are all passionate about their topics of interest and we thank them for sharing their knowledge and passion with us at no charge to the society. This year we had three meetings with more than 140 attendees – that is capacity for the venue!

**Society office:** Volunteers have staffed the Society office each Thursday afternoon from 2 pm to 4 pm for 10 months of the year. We often have members of the public come in to share information or to seek information. Margaret King has been very faithful in that role for many years and unfortunately is not able to continue coming to the office every Thursday. Margaret is very knowledgeable about New Farm and is very familiar with the archives, so her contribution to the society and to the public in this way will be

greatly missed. Thank you Margaret! We are looking for more volunteers to assist in this way. We are grateful to the Brisbane City Council and the New Farm Library staff for assisting the society with the provision of an office and space to meet with the public. Thanks also to Stuart Wallace for his support in this area.

Senator Claire Moore's office staff have printed our newsletters and posters for many years. Since Claire has now retired from her role as Senator for Queensland, we thank her and the very helpful staff for assisting the Society in this way. Grace Grace MP has generously agreed to do the printing in her office and we thank her and her staff for this contribution. We are grateful to all of the politicians who represent this area in Local, State and Federal Governments for their active interest in our Historical Society.

We keep in touch with our members (over 200) and friends (over 900 on the email list) through our monthly newsletter. Thank you, Gerard Benjamin, for your interest in, and knowledge of, the history of the area and the time and skill you freely give to produce such an interesting newsletter each month. Gayle Martin and Chris Derrick contribute photos from our meetings and other events to our newsletter. A number of our members write reports of the meetings for the newsletter.

We receive a number of enquiries about historical information relating to New Farm and nearby suburbs. Our aim is to empower people to do their own research and we do this by giving what information we know 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 assistance with helping enquirers.

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.

Facebook and Twitter are effective tools for people to share historical information. Ron Altmann moderates the Facebook page that receives postings from many people who share their photos and memories. It is an effective way of gathering and sharing historical information. Thank you Ron, for managing this social media platform.

### **Volunteer roles:**

We have some thirty volunteers who contribute to the society in a variety of ways to keep the Society running smoothly. You will have seen many of the faces regularly at the meetings, but others work in valuable ways behind the scenes. I hesitate to mention names in case I omit some, but each volunteer must take this as my thank you for the way you assist – it takes a team working together to have an effective society. **Together Everyone Achieves More!**

Our volunteers assist:

- at our monthly meetings (welcoming, AV, music, memberships and book sales, lucky door prizes, photography, preparing announcement slides)
- at the office on Thursdays (being available to the public who drop into the office, accessing archives, assisting enquirers)
- with the newsletter (writing meeting reports and other articles, editing, folding and delivering newsletters)
- promoting the society at public events e.g. Teneriffe Festival
- maintaining a social media presence.

### **Advertising, Marketing and promotional support:**

Most marketing is done via the website, the newsletter, social media and advertising posters both at venues and online. My Village News assists with publishing the topic for the up-coming meeting each month. It seems that information about the society is disseminated well as there are often different people at the public meetings.

### **Other projects:**

- Once again, the Society had a stand at the 10<sup>th</sup> **Teneriffe Festival** in July this year. Unfortunately it was not good weather, so crowds were down, but the volunteers spoke to many folk and we collected some 30 new names of people interested in receiving the newsletter each month. I want to particularly thank Tammy Sneddon and Paul Sneddon for their help to set up and to man the stand all day. Our thanks to Stuart Wallace, the Queensland Omnibus and Coach Society and the 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 Mary Ryan Bookshop (New Farm), New Farm Editions, the State Library Bookshop and at the monthly meetings.
- The **Historical Plaques** Project has continued. During the past 12 months, plaques have been placed at the residence of the Roman Catholic Archbishop, Wynberg which is a significant historical building in Brunswick Street, and at St Michael's and All Angels Anglican Church.
- **New Sheep Sculpture on Teneriffe Boardwalk.** The society has had an interest in ensuring the erection of the second sheep sculpture was not delayed any longer. "Gloria", the ewe, has been insitu near the Woolstores since 2012 and it has taken until July 2019 for "Gerard" the ram, to join her as originally envisioned by David Hinchliffe when he was Councillor for the area. I am grateful that the Teneriffe Festival Board took up the challenge of raising sufficient funds for the sculptor Mark Andrews to complete the project. The Historical Society was responsible for researching and designing the new plaque to explain their significance and to explain that the pet names of the duo acknowledge Gloria Grant and Gerard Benjamin, the authors of the society's first published book "*Reflections on New Farm*".
- **Corner Stores in 4005 Research Project:** Our project for our 25<sup>th</sup> year is being led by Stuart Wallace, attempting to map out and gather information about the many corner stores in New Farm in days gone by when they were within

walking distance of the home – grocer, fruiterers, butchers, pharmacies .... and the list could go on! Stuart is gathering oral histories to capture the memories within the society on this topic as well as doing further research. This is an ongoing project and Stuart is keen to talk with people or receive their recorded memories.

- **Newsreel snippets at meeting:** A new fun part of our public meetings is viewing short selections of Cinetone and Movietone Newsreels. Thanks to Stuart Wallace for preparing these interesting few minutes as a glimpse into history.

**Monthly meetings:** Meetings have attracted from 90 to 150 people and have covered an interesting variety of topics as follows:

<b>August 2018:</b> <i>Tom Hurstbourne: Queensland's first novel - Gerard Benjamin</i>	<b>September 2018:</b> <i>Hanworth House – Marisa Vecchio</i>	<b>October 2018:</b> <i>ANFE: Assisting Italian Migrants - Maria Maruca</i>
<b>November 2018:</b> <i>New Farm Private School – Stuart Wallace</i>	<b>February 2019:</b> <i>Under the Lino – Caylie Jeffery</i>	<b>March 2019:</b> <i>Renovating my Historic House - Emma Golder</i>
<b>April 2019:</b> <i>Returning Home from War – Prof Martin Crotty</i>	<b>May 2019:</b> <i>The Hill in the Valley - Dara and Holy Name Cathedral – Fr Denis Martin</i>	<b>June 2010:</b> <i>Crimes in New Farm – Matt Condon</i>
<b>July 2019:</b> <i>From my Grandfather's Greek Taverna to my Greek Café – George Symons</i>		

**Christmas Donations:** At the November meeting, members donated non-perishable foods and cash to the Holy Spirit Society of St Vincent de Paul Chapter which supports disadvantaged and vulnerable people in New Farm.

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 2019*



**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.  
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