



NEW FARM AND DISTRICTS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

AUGUST NEWSLETTER

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au



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July Meeting

QUT Digital Collections: A genuine treasure trove!

A *trove* may be described as a collection of valuable or desired things: a treasure.

Our monthly Society meetings are widely acknowledged for the quality and relevance of guest speakers, for an enthusiastic sharing of historical information, and friendly, inclusive hospitality. Despite grey skies bringing an afternoon thunderstorm, our July meeting was well attended and most certainly testament to this conviction!

Denise Buckby, Society Treasurer, took veritable pleasure in facilitating the meeting. With her usual warmth, eloquence and good humour, she welcomed all, recognised volunteers and committee members, heralded the 1955 movie reel (living history for many), introduced speakers, and hosted a thought-provoking Q&A session.

Guest speakers, Jill Rogers, QUT Digital Collections Librarian, and Dr Lyndal O'Gorman, an academic presenting in a personal capacity, entertained and delighted us with their presentations. They introduced us to a world of digital treasures – a genuine treasure trove of photographs, images, journals, documents, multimedia texts.

An invitation to discover this bounty of cherished items was extended via the promotion of the QUT Digital Collections website digitalcollections.qut.edu.au.

Readers, please do make time to explore the various collections. Freely available to all, you won't be disappointed!

The official website states, "QUT Digital Collections, managed by QUT Library, brings together digitised and born (newly created) digital collections for dissemination to and reuse by the global community".

As we embark on our own Digitisation Project, those in attendance recognised that QUT's ambitious and growing mission, built on EPrints software, offers our Society timely encouragement and valuable insights!

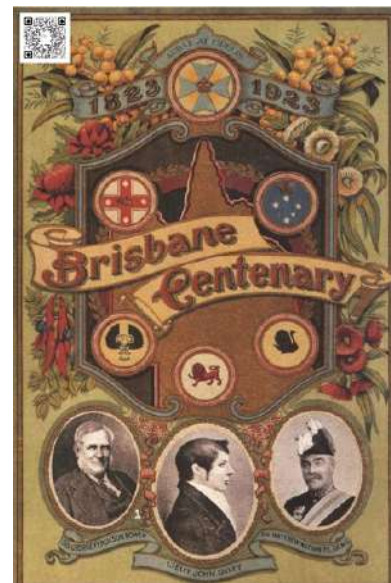
Jill warmly welcomed us to the 16 existing digital collections and Lyndal proudly showcased the **Bain/O'Gorman Collection**. Both speakers expressed their gratitude for their association with the various artefacts and explained that it was an honour to work with the historical material; a privilege to preserve and to promote.

Obviously compelled with a sense of personal responsibility, Jill emphasised that we "must share" the valuable items in the collections. It was inspiring to hear the creative ways that archived information may be shared. Special exhibitions have celebrated unique and original items and have reminded viewers that the past is inextricably linked to the present.

Jill made mention of the exhibitions 'To Sir with Love', featuring the album photography of Dr Wilton W. R. Love (QUT Stories), and 'Traversing the Globe', a photographic legacy of Robert A. H. L'Estrange (QUT Alumni Donations) and 'River City Stories: QUT Digital Collections of Brisbane'. 'Traversing the Globe' and 'River City Stories' can be viewed on P Block CUBE screens at Gardens Point Campus. Before visiting see: thecube.qut.edu.au/whats-on.

Jill revealed that GIFs (graphics interchange formats for animations), calendars, jigsaws, colouring books and genealogical resources are also avenues for the sharing of information. (Continued over page).

Reporter: Connie Hamer



From the 'River City Stories' exhibition:
Brisbane Centenary Celebrations Committee (1924)
Brisbane Centenary Official Historical Souvenir: 1823 - 1923.

July Meeting (cont.)

New Farm related images were very well received by attendees. A 'chunk' of a Brisbane Centenary Official Historical Souvenir: 1823-1923 map, a photograph of Norris Point 1886, a photograph of the T. Lawless' grocery shop on James Street 1893, and Neil Glover's photograph of the Robert Miller oil tanker 1974 caused some excitement. The historical significance of the booklet, 'Brisbane from the Air: Illustrated', F.W. Thiel, 1919, was similarly appreciated.



Anon. (1893). *T. Lawless' grocery shop on James Street, New Farm, during the 1893 Brisbane floods*

Lyndal, admitting that she comes from a family of passionate amateur photographers and happy hoarders, provided us with an intimate account of the Bain/O'Gorman Collection. With 200,000 family items made available for this collection, not all annotated with legible script (Lyndal explained that her mother, Cynthia, did not have neat handwriting), it is an ongoing challenge to archive the gifted materials.



Jack Bain. (1960). *New Farm Park*

Reporter: Connie Hamer



Cynthia O'Gorman. (1984). *Cnr Bowen Tce and Bowen St.*

The Bain/O'Gorman Collection will consist of thousands of digitised 35mm slides and digitised photographic images from the 1920s to the early 21st century.

It was an absolute pleasure to view photographs of recognised landmarks and endearing family moments. Generously shared, images included: Centenary Pool; the Story Bridge; Bartley's Hill; Kemp Place; the Powerhouse; New Farm Park; Picking Waterlilies; 'Grandma' with a carpet python (mixed reactions to this image!); Trishaws in Singapore.



Jack Bain. (1964). *Isabel Bain with carpet python, Mt Glorious Road*

As we once again thank Jill and Lyndal for their time, expertise and enthusiastic presentations, we look forward to welcoming Ruth Graham to our August meeting, which includes our Annual General Meeting. Ruth, who is actually the CEO of the Society of Australian Genealogists, will share stories of her time living in Amity House, New Farm. Yes! Saturday, August 23, is a date for the diary!

Meeting Photos

The presentation can be viewed online [HERE!](#)



QUT Digital Collections Librarian Jill Rogers and Society Treasurer Denise Buckby



Friendships made through the Society, Jayne Rose and Maureen Fries



Speaker, Jill Rogers, with longtime member, Trevor Downes



Presenters Dr Lyndal O'Gorman and Jill Rogers



Trainee Videographer, Mathew Kirk, with Trainer Austin Adams



Presenters Dr Lyndal O'Gorman and Jill Rogers



New Farm History Facebook page founder Ron Altmann & VP Robert Allen

Acknowledgements

As always, thanks go to our wonderful meeting volunteers as well as:



Grace Grace MP
Member for McConnell
(07) 3145 9100
Newsletter
printing

VILLAGE VOICE
Your Trusted Voice



Brisbane City Council
Use of the Ron Muir
Meeting Room,
New Farm Library



One of our newest members, David Purvis



From the presentation: the first O'Gorman Collection delivery to QUT



Another new member, Chrissy Layton

About the Society

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Membership Fee:

\$20 per year or part thereof
Add \$15 for posted newsletter.
Apply for or renew membership:
www.newfarmhistorical.org.au/membership/

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Meeting Photography:

Maria Shaw, with supplementary images by
respective contributors and others.

August Presentation

Growing up in Amity House

Join Ruth Graham, CEO of the Society of Australian Genealogists, as she shares stories from her time living in Amity House, New Farm. Growing up with her father, who managed the CSR Sugar Refinery, Ruth offers a unique perspective on living in the suburb's industrial heart during the mid-to-late 1970s.

Discover the fascinating impact of having a paddock and a factory as your playground and with the Royal Australian Navy as neighbours and how this influenced her family's daily life and community interactions.

*Watercolour, Amity House
by Gladys Blundell. (NFDHS).*



Speaker:
Ruth Graham



My childhood at Amity

- Living in the suburb's industrial heart
- A paddock and a factory as my playground
- Royal Aust Navy as my neighbour



1936 (Image from Facebook)



2023 (Image from realestate.com.au)

Saturday 23rd August 2:30 pm

Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au
Enquiries: 0409 498 403

Thanks to Grace Grace MP for printing this poster



Date Claimers

Public meetings are held at 2.30pm at the Merthyr Road Uniting Church Centre, 52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm, on the fourth Saturday of each month from February to November.

Entry fee: \$5 for members; \$10 for non-members (cash preferred).

Other events in coming months include:

14 Aug: Monthly Afternoon Tea

23 Aug: Annual General Meeting - 2:30 pm

30 Aug: Queensland Family History Society Open Day

After this month, only three meetings left for 2025 - don't miss them! Mark these dates: 27 Sept, 25 Oct, 22 Nov.

September Presentation

Coming up...

New Farm Deli marks 50 years

The iconic New Farm Deli at Merthyr Village has been trading for 50 years, making it Brisbane's oldest Italian cafe. Owners Maria and Vince Anello and their children have run the deli continuously for almost all of that time, with the ongoing support of countless staff and the loyalty of customers old and new. Maria will join us in conversation at our September meeting to discuss how the family business started and how it has grown and changed over the years.

President's Message



The westerly winds blew in yesterday to remind me that August and the EKKA will soon be here. I was also reminded of the EKKA when I read the State Library Newsletter that mentioned 2025 Royal Qld Show (EKKA) Fellow, Bronwyn Bridgewater. I looked further at the blog on the site – what an amazing collection of information

on the EKKA and all its aspects. You might like to read the blogs **HERE**. We live in an age of information at our fingertips! At the July meeting, Jill Rogers and Dr Lyndall O'Gorman spoke about the information available at the QUT Digital Collections that you will read about elsewhere in this newsletter and I encourage you to **check it out**.

This month we come back to a local topic: the heritage-listed home Amity. According to the **State Government Heritage Register**, "Amity is the last surviving timber riverfront residence at New Farm, and provides evidence that the building's immediate vicinity, now principally industrial in nature, was once a fashionable residential area." That reference was written in 1992 and how things have changed! The area changed from a fashionable residential area into an industrial precinct and back again to a

highly valued residential area mainly of apartments. Magnificent Amity still stands unique as a house amongst the apartments.

It is interesting to read all about the home, but what was it like to spend your childhood there, with CSR and Powerhouse (when it was a working powerhouse) as your neighbours? That is the story we will hear about at the meeting from Ruth Graham who is the Chief Executive Officer of the **Society of Australian Genealogists (SAG)**, on August 23. She is also a family historian with a background in education and research management.

Ruth's presentation will be preceded by the Annual General Meeting at which reports for the 2024-2025 year of the society will be presented and committee members for the following year will be elected. After four years as president, I will not be standing for re-election. We particularly need someone to nominate as secretary so I hope that you will seriously consider if that is a role you could take on – there is plenty of help available to settle into the role. Please contact me if you will nominate. This will be a busy but interesting year with the start of our **Digitisation Project** using the grant funds from the Brisbane City Council – you have the opportunity to be part of making our resources available online!

Desley Garnett



Open Day



Image: State Library of Queensland

Find ancestors
Discover **your**
family history

Saturday
30 August 2025
10am - 3pm

Tours, information,
demonstrations,
giveaways...

46 Delaware Street
Chermside / Geebung
www.qfhs.org.au 07 3355 3369

Getting to know you Afternoon Tea

Thursday 14th August 2025
2:30 pm
Ron Muir Room
New Farm Library
135 Sydney St, New Farm

An opportunity to meet other
members over a cuppa.

Please rsvp to
president@newfarmhistorical.org.au
0409 498 403



I hope to meet you
there
Desley Garnett



Letters to the Editor

Barbershop betting

Reading in the July newsletter about two 'Bill the barbers'. The barber who was two doors from Hawthorne Street, opposite tram shed, was Bill Levershaw, and there was SP betting going on there. Nothing too terrible, just a bit of fun for people during really tough times.

Bev Bergstrum

Membership Matters

Reporter: Bruna Burello-Day
Membership Secretary

Our achievements and future plans, thanks to our members

Thanks to our members, we're able to educate the community about the district's heritage, maintain our archives, produce a monthly newsletter, host engaging speakers, and facilitate historical walking tours.

In 2025, we've already secured a grant, revamped our website, launched a new logo, and introduced new merchandise. Looking ahead, we plan to digitise archival material, add QR codes to historical plaques for enhanced information, and initiate other new projects.

So, your membership does matter!

With the current 2025 membership at 248, including four Life members, we have exceeded our 2024 membership thus far by about 20. 59 of these were new members who joined or rejoined over the past 12 months. Six of our members have also already renewed for 2026. Why not consider renewing your membership early to avoid the rush at the end of the year or at the beginning of next year? Renewal forms for 2026 are available online and will be available at our monthly meetings from August onwards. New membership and renewal fees are staying at \$20 per calendar year or part thereof. We are making good progress towards implementing a new membership platform which will make things much easier for members and administrators alike. Stay tuned for developments.

Please remember to wear your new name badge. If you haven't done so already, please collect your name badge (which doubles as a membership card) at the Members Welcome Table at our meetings. Don't be afraid to ask if you are unsure about your membership. Our friendly volunteers will be only too happy to assist you.

To meet other members in a friendly and relaxed environment, all members and friends are welcome to attend our monthly afternoon tea, the next one being scheduled for August 14. We hope to see you there!



Membership Table super-helpful volunteers, Kris and Rosalinda

Members rewarded, as usual!

Eighty members and one visitor braved the inclement weather to attend the July meeting and were rewarded with an excellent presentation, as reported on Page 1, not to mention the generous afternoon tea that followed. Images of a bygone era are always well received and there were plenty of those on show along with their intriguing origins. While the QUT digital collections are accessible freely online, they also feature from time to time at the Queensland University of Technology's 'The Cube'.

Discovering The Cube: A digital marvel

According to its website,

"The Cube is one of the world's largest digital interactive learning and display spaces consisting of 26 multi-touch screens and soaring across two storeys in QUT's Science and Engineering Centre."

Speaker Jill Rogers later provided additional insights into The Cube. She shared that past exhibitions like "Traversing the Globe" and "River City Stories," both featured in a **WalkaboutwithRob** episode. Skip to the 26.00-minute mark from where QUT and The Cube are specifically showcased. This gives viewers a glimpse into the vast interactive experience and the impressive scale (8m x 3m) of the screens.



Plan your Day Out at QUT's Gardens Point Precinct

You can discover more about The Cube **HERE**. While you're there, explore other interesting nearby sites, including the QUT Art Museum and Old Government House, which houses the William Robinson Gallery.

Exploring the entire precinct makes for a wonderful day out. Consider playing tourist in your own city! Board a CityCat from your nearest stop for a leisurely cruise directly to Gardens Point. You can visit the historical buildings and explore the grounds with a break for lunch at one of the many eateries in the precinct. If time permits, don't forget the beautiful neighbouring City Botanical Gardens (also featured in the **WalkaboutwithRob** episode mentioned above).

Meet the Member

Anita Garnett

Anita Garnett has been a member of the Historical Society for about 20 years and never likes to miss a meeting. She assists with putting out the printed newsletters and copies of the Village Voice for you to collect at the meeting.

If you have ever bought one of these multi-pack chips, chances are that Anita made the box and counted the chips packets at her work at Eagle Farm. For many years Anita was our youngest member, but now she is turning 50 this week and there are a few younger members – Happy 50th Birthday Anita!



Anita at a Society meeting

Community News

The passing of an era

“I wonder who lived in this house?” is the question asked on the back cover of the publication *Homes with History* by Gerard Benjamin. The house was built in the 1890s, and this painting (right) by Gladys Blundell of 3 Mark St, New Farm, shows the cottage as it looked when the Gilmour family moved in.

The ‘Gilmour girls’, Florence and Margaret, attended New Farm State School and the Valley Presbyterian Sunday School. Over the years, the cottage was extended and a side verandah added to accommodate the family so that it looks a little different today. The house was recently sold at auction after some 135 years in the same family.



Florence, better known to Queenslanders as Lady Flo, left from this house to be married to Joh Bjelke-Petersen who would later become Premier of Queensland. Margaret was a member of this historical society for many years and lived in this house for most of her life before moving into aged care in Kingaroy. She passed away earlier this year a few weeks after celebrating her 101st birthday.

July 2025 marks the end of an era when the house was sold for the first time since 1890. We know one family who lived in the house. Who will be next and what changes will be made to this house in the years to come?

EVENT: The Aboriginal man who stood up to Hitler – William Cooper

Join Queensland Holocaust Museum for a powerful and illuminating presentation by Abe Schwarz, founder of the William Cooper Legacy Project, as he brings to life the extraordinary story of one of Australia’s most courageous and visionary civil rights leaders. The presentation will focus on Uncle William Cooper’s historic protest following

Kristallnacht, a bold and compassionate act led by the Australian Aborigines’ League in 1938.

The event will be held August 24, 4.30pm at the Queensland Holocaust Museum – tickets are \$10 (\$8 concession) and can be purchased [HERE](#).

Members' Stories

WWII air raid rules of action

During the War we had an air raid shelter in the backyard well away from the houses. It was only a trench dug a couple of feet deep and sandbags around the top edge. Not all that safe but something to retreat to if needed. You would say it was a bit of a laugh but that was the times.

So it was taken to the limit and my father (George Cowin) came up with 10 rules of what to do in an air raid :

1. As soon as the bombs begin to drop, run like hell – it doesn't matter where as long as you run. Wear spiked shoes so that if the other people running ahead of you are too slow or fall down, you won't have any trouble in passing them or jumping over them.
2. If a bomb drops near you, yell "murder". It won't prevent you from getting blasted out of your shoes next time, but it adds to the noise and will scare the very devil out of the kids.
3. If you find an unexploded bomb, rap it smartly on the nose comb. Perhaps the firing pin has stuck.
4. If an incendiary bomb is found burning in a building, pour gasoline on it – you can't remove the bomb, so you may as well remove the building.
5. Take advantage of opportunities when sirens sound, or in a black-out; e.g. in a bakery grab a pie; in a hotel grab a beer; in a theatre grab a blonde.
6. Keep garlic, onions and Limburger cheese handy as a snack. It will not add to your popularity, but it will get you a lot of room.
7. If any air raid warden tries to tell you what to do, wrap a basket of sand around his neck. These wardens always save the best seats for themselves anyway.
8. If you should be the victim of a direct hit, don't go to pieces, just lie still and the sanitation squad will attend to you.
9. After reaching the shelter, rush back into the street and take a good look for planes. Maybe one of the mugs in the Air Force just punched the wrong button or it may be a couple of seagulls.
10. To test for gas, remove your mask and take several deep breaths. If the next thing you hear is the "all clear" signal it wasn't gas. If you hear harp music, it was.

George Cowin

More Meeting Photos

