



# APRIL NEWSLETTER

NEW FARM AND DISTRICTS  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

www.newfarmhistorical.org.au

Est. 1994 APRIL 2026 Vol. XXXII, No. 3

## March Meeting

Contributor: Rita Cleveland

### Jan Power's community legacy remembered

Robert Allen, our Society President, opened the March meeting and introduced the guest speaker Ms Astrid Gates, daughter of Jan Power. We were there to celebrate Jan's enduring legacy, the Jan Powers Farmers Markets.

As well, Robert highlighted upcoming events including district walks with Gerard Benjamin, a collaborative social project with New Farm State School to mark their 125th anniversary, and the process for renewal of memberships. Connie Hamer then spoke about the school project and alerted us to her upcoming newsletter article.

The Movietone segment followed, offering a sobering return to 1931 and the Great Depression.

The newsreel footage featured the impact of bank failures, high tariffs, and a total collapse of international trade. In Australia, widespread unemployment and falling prices caused great hardship and despite record wheat yields, economic stagnation could not be stopped. A highlight of this period however was the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932. It must have been such a joyous occasion after years of watching its soaring arches under construction.

It was then to warm applause that Robert welcomed our guest speaker, Astrid Gates, and our committee member, Linda Whatman, who led the conversation with Astrid.

For nearly 35 years, fine food markets have been a vibrant feature across Brisbane. Astrid joined us to honour the memory of her mother, Jan Power (1939-2024), to reflect on Jan's memory, and to acknowledge her remarkable contribution to the city's social and cultural life.

Jan was a well-known radio and TV personality. Film clips, thoughtfully assembled so well by Jan's granddaughter,



India Gates, revealed Jan's adventurous spirit. Her indomitable sense of humour and deep passion for fine food and community were some of the qualities that defined the legend we celebrate.

*Jan made a big contribution to the community.*

Astrid shared insights into the experiences that shaped her mother's legacy. Jan's bold approach to the needs of a community was a feature of her life's journey. Raised on a farm among sheep and cherry trees, she later attended Stuartholme College, and after school became an intensive care nurse. Jan had a number of successful business ventures but most noteworthy was her response to the call of a farming community wanting to sell their hard-won produce: "Leave it with me!"



A humorous film clip captured Jan saying, (as she held up a huge green lettuce), "You might want to save the planet, but what about the lettuce!" What began as a practical response to the call of farmers, soon evolved. It not only provided a place for marketing fresh produce but also became a vibrant hub for community connection and culinary experience. Astrid spoke of her mother's meticulous attention to detail and her unwavering commitment to quality.

As the conversation unfolded, it became clear that Jan was far more than a successful entrepreneur. Astrid spoke movingly of her mother's compassion and generosity, always attentive to the needs of others in less fortunate circumstances. When Jan chose to teach food management at the women's prison, her daughters were enlisted to spend hours chopping vegetables. They had to review the gesture after discovering the participants in her new class of aspiring chefs were not allowed to use knives.

Jan received many awards and accolades throughout her life. With Astrid's storytelling, our NF&DHS meeting shared in something intimate and inspiring. We shared the photos, the anecdotes, Jan's achievements and most of all, how the story continues...

Jan Powers Farmers Markets, born from that "call" of the farmers so many years ago, continue to flourish. A new market at the Eagle Farm Racecourse will further extend access for Brisbane's enthusiastic weekend community. Jan can rest peacefully. This beloved enterprise remains in capable hands, guided by her enduring commitment to the health and wellbeing of the Brisbane community.

**REST IN POWER.**

Watch the meeting recording [HERE](#).

**Meeting Photos**

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



**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



Community News

Contributor: Connie Hamer

New Farm State School: Celebrating the Past, the Present and the Future

As our Society wishes New Farm State School a very happy 125th birthday (New Farm State School was officially opened on Monday, 21 January, 1901), it is appropriate to celebrate the school's past, its present-day activities, and its future.

Our Society is currently supporting a number of projects that strengthen our historical ties with New Farm State School.

Last year, our Society and New Farm State School remembered and honoured the late James (Jim) Alexander MacDonald through the establishment of a student award: the Jim MacDonald History Encouragement Award.

The recipient of this award is a Year 6 graduating student who has displayed: a genuine interest in history; a deep curiosity 'for things of the past'; an enthusiasm for the history of New Farm State School and local area; and sustained effort in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Ally Hold was the proud recipient of the 2025 award.

As a result of this award, the school proposed an intergenerational research project. This project invites older past students of New Farm State School and local residents to be interviewed, and for their recollections to be documented.

During May and June of this year, seven or eight citizens will meet with a group of Year 6 students, in a Year 6

classroom, at New Farm State School. Interviewees will meet with a small group of students over three sessions. Led by teacher, Mrs Sue Cuthbertson, the students will enjoy conversations with an interviewee, make notes and publish some their memories and stories.

Local historian, writer and Society Life Member, Gerard Benjamin, visited New Farm State School on Tuesday, 24 March, and explained some of his research methods and processes to the project group. His 'story' publications offer inspiration and a model for this project's inception and unique journey.

This intergenerational research project, "Tell Me More", will be enriching to many as it celebrates New Farm State School's past, present and future. Importantly, the project will cherish, link and celebrate people and places.

On Saturday, 25 July, our Society meeting has been dedicated to New Farm State School's past, present and future years. We will invite past students and staff members to speak at the meeting. The intergenerational research project will feature.

We also plan to have the current school captains, and a teacher, offer their reflections on school life today. The Acting Principal, Mrs Kay Bradley, has agreed to provide a future perspective.

So, please save the date – Saturday, 25 July, to help celebrate New Farm State School's 125 years and beyond.

Quick Quiz

New Farm State School: True or False?

- 1. New Farm State School opened on Monday, 21 January 1901.
2. Enrolments on the first day totalled 582 students.
3. The first principal, or head teacher, was Mr Arthur Outridge.
4. The official opening of New Farm State School was conducted by Sir Samuel Griffith.
5. In the 1920s, a class could have 70 (or more) students.
6. During World War II, New Farm State School was an emergency casualty station for the New Farm district.

Answers: All True!

Source: Benjamin, G. & Grant, G. (2008) Reflections on New Farm. Brisbane: New Farm and Districts Historical Society Inc.



New Farm State School ca.1930. Photo: State Library of Queensland



The industrial suburb of New Farm attracted many young working families in the early 20th C., leading to overcrowding at the school.

## About the Society

### Contact Details:

Postal Address: PO Box 1141,  
New Farm, QLD, 4005

Email: [info@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:info@newfarmhistorical.org.au)

Website: [www.newfarmhistorical.org.au](http://www.newfarmhistorical.org.au)

Office: Ron Muir Room, next to  
New Farm Library, 135 Sydney Street

### Office Opening Hours:

Every Thursday 2-4pm, February to November

### Office Bearers:

**President:** Robert Allen

0437 280 104

[president@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:president@newfarmhistorical.org.au)

**Secretary:** Tracey Hurren

[secretary@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:secretary@newfarmhistorical.org.au)

**Treasurer:** Denise Buckby

**Membership Secretary:** Bruna Burello-Day

[membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au)

### Committee Members:

Immediate Past President Desley Garnett,  
Ben Pritchard, George Cowin, Judi Jabour and  
Linda Whatman.

### Membership Fee:

\$22 per calendar year or part thereof.

Add \$17 for posted newsletter.

Apply for or renew membership:

[www.newfarmhistorical.org.au/membership/](http://www.newfarmhistorical.org.au/membership/)

### Newsletter Editor:

Kate Lockyer

[editor@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:editor@newfarmhistorical.org.au)

### Meeting Photography:

Maria Shaw and Lorraine Nothling, with  
supplementary images by other contributors.



YOU'RE INVITED TO A

MEMBERS'  
AFTERNOON TEA

Thursday 16 April 2026

2:30pm

Ron Muir Room  
New Farm Library  
135 Sydney Street, New Farm

This is an opportunity to meet other members  
over a cuppa. I hope to meet you there!

Robert Allen  
President

RSVP to [membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au)  
Text or leave message: 0417 190 675

## April Presentation

### Silent Sentinels:

### War memorials of New Farm and Districts



*The WWI Honour Board at the  
Booroodabin Bowls Club, Newstead*

Our April meeting falls on Anzac Day this year. In honour of this important commemorative occasion, Society President Robert Allen will focus on some stories of New Farm residents' experiences and sacrifices during wartime.

**Date:** Saturday, April 25, 2:30pm

**Location:** Uniting Church Centre,  
52 Merthyr Rd, New Farm

**Enquiries:** 0437 280 104



*The Australian - American Memorial in  
Lyndon B. Johnson Place, Newstead Park.*



*The HMAS Moreton  
memorial in New Farm.*

## May Presentation

### Coming up: If these seven houses could talk...

What's your favourite house in New Farm? Maybe Wynberg or Coronet Court? Too many from which to choose? Architect Emma and historian Gerard have come up with their seven choices, and they'd love to tell you their 'hows and whys' at the May meeting of the Society.

Emma asks, "What's it like living in this house, made of these materials, with this layout?"

Gerard asks, "Who were the people who lived there, why and for how long?"

Their discussion will offer lots of interesting images of the seven dwellings. At the end of it, you might have your favourite, or maybe you'll still prefer Wynberg or Coronet Court!



*"Edenglassie" by Gladys Blundell.*

## President's Message



Hello all,

Welcome to another packed society newsletter, expertly put together by our editor Kate Lockyer.

I hope you had a peaceful Easter. We're already more a quarter of the way through the year and there's a lot more events planned for the remainder of 2026.

This month's newsletter includes a focus on the New Farm State School, which recently launched their 125th anniversary celebrations. My thanks to Connie Hamer, Gerard Benjamin and other society volunteers who are helping the school develop and deliver an exciting legacy project. We'll be exploring the anniversary in further detail and welcoming school representatives at our July meeting.

There was great feedback about the March meeting with our special guest Astrid Gates, daughter of the late Jan Power. I think the 'in conversation' Q&A format worked well.

## 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 each month from February to November.

Entry fee: \$5 for members; \$10 for non-members.

Other events include:

- 16 Apr:** Members' Afternoon Tea
- 18 Apr:** Walking Tour: Heart of New Farm. Join us for a fun walk around a dozen locations in New Farm. Book [HERE](#).
- 25 Apr:** Monthly Society Meeting
- 27 Apr:** Annastacia Palaszczuk at Brisbane Powerhouse. Book [HERE](#).
- 8-30 May:** *Caravan* by Nash Theatre. Book [HERE](#).

## Useful Links

### Brisbane Living Heritage:

[www.brisbanelivingheritage.org](http://www.brisbanelivingheritage.org)

### State Library of Queensland:

[www.slq.qld.gov.au](http://www.slq.qld.gov.au)

### Royal Historical Society of Queensland:

[www.queenslandhistory.org](http://www.queenslandhistory.org)

### Queensland Women's Historical Association:

[www.miegunyah.org](http://www.miegunyah.org)

I thank Linda Whatman for her relaxed and thoughtful interviewing style and direct you to Rita Cleveland's excellent meeting report.

A reminder that you can watch all of our monthly presentations on our Vimeo channel [HERE](#).

Our April meeting falls on Anzac Day, perhaps our most solemn day of wartime remembrance.

To acknowledge this fact, I will be presenting on the topic 'Silent Sentinels: War memorials of New Farm and Districts'. I hope to see you there.

Finally, a reminder that our resident New Farm writer/historian Gerard is leading three different local history walks on April 18, May 16 and June 20.

You can book and our find out more information about our society's walks [HERE](#).

Until next month,

*Robert Allen*  
President NF&DHS

## Community News

### Heritage Hands exhibition open now

Heritage Hands is a documentary photography and storytelling project by Melissa Hoedel, preserving traditional craft practices through portraiture, process documentation and oral histories.

Presented at the Thomas Dixon Centre, this exhibition brings together a series of large-scale photographic works alongside objects created by the featured artisans, including a whip maker, chocolatier, wig maker, umbrella maker and antique furniture restorers. Together, these works offer a rare insight into the skill, dedication and cultural knowledge embedded in handmade practice.

The exhibition is accompanied by the Heritage Hands publication, a limited-edition photographic book that extends the project's storytelling through in-depth artisan profiles and imagery, creating a lasting record of these practices.

The exhibition is on until April 27 at the Thomas Dixon Centre, 406 Montague Rd, West End – more info [HERE](#).



*Kate Fletcher in the process of natural dyeing*  
Photography: Melissa Hoedel

## Membership Matters

Contributor: Bruna Burello-Day  
Membership Secretary

### Attendance numbers

The March meeting hit a century again – plus or minus one or two! It is very difficult to get accurate numbers because it seems many members bypass our “Checkpoint Charlie”, aka Phil, and go direct to the Members Welcome Table to pay their entry fee and therefore are missed for counting purposes. Those arriving very early can also be missed. With such large attendances, it is very important that we get an accurate number at each of our meetings for statistical and reporting purposes.

We ask that you kindly adhere to the following entry procedures to make the process easier and more efficient and to help us keep track of our numbers. Above all, **please arrive early** to ensure you get a good seat in the hall. And, please fill up the far side of the hall to allow later arrivals to sit on the near side without having to cross in front of the video camera.

### Current members:

1. Please wear your name badge. If you are a member and do not have a badge, please request one from me by emailing [membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au](mailto:membership@newfarmhistorical.org.au). I will make it available at the next monthly meeting.
2. Register your attendance with Phil who will mark you off the “roll” before you proceed to the Members’ Welcome Table to pay your entry fee of \$5 and receive a ticket for the lucky draw prize.
3. Have correct cash. It is unlikely that we will have change for a \$50 note. While we have an Eftpos facility available, it can be a lengthy process which depends on often unreliable internet reception. Having the correct cash (\$5) makes the process so much simpler and quicker.
4. While at the Members’ Welcome Table, if you do not yet have a name badge, check to see if yours is available.

### Non-members and visitors:

1. **Please check in with Phil.** If your membership has lapsed in the last few years, your name could be on the “roll” and can be marked off. This will help enormously with our attendance count.
2. Phil will direct you to the Non-Members’ Welcome Table. Note that **if your membership has lapsed, you will be required to pay \$10 entry** unless you wish to renew your membership. (Correct cash is preferred. See above regarding change.)
3. **Whether you are a lapsed member or visitor, please sign the register at the Non-Member Welcome Table.** If applicable, while there ask for directions about applying for a new membership or renewing your membership.

In the interests of fairness, we respectfully request that all non-current members pay the entry fee of \$10 which we think is very reasonable given that it includes afternoon tea. You will also receive a ticket for the lucky draw prize.

### Applying for new membership and renewals

1. Once you have signed in, you may proceed to the Memberships Table where you will be assisted by our volunteers. **If you are renewing your membership and your details have not changed, you do not need to complete a form.** Just give your name and \$22 by cash (preferred) or card. We have endeavoured to have enough coins and small denomination notes in our float to allow for a small amount of change, e.g. for \$25 or \$30. Again, we may not have enough change for \$50 or higher notes.
2. **For new applications, please complete and submit the relevant form** along with \$22 fee and your application will be processed. Please note that new applications need to be tabled for approval at the next Committee meeting (usually on the first Monday of the following month) and applicants will be notified as soon as practical after the meeting. Until your application is formally approved, you will be considered a pending member and may be eligible for discounts.

It is indeed gratifying to see so many people attending our meetings and it is quite a thrill to be able to report such high attendances which are the envy of similar societies. We understand that there are sometimes bottlenecks and problems arising from unreliable technology. We are actively addressing these issues and appreciate your patience and understanding during these times. Ultimately, our aim is to make your experience at our meetings informative, engaging and enjoyable and we would welcome your feedback, both positive and negative, as we strive to achieve our goals.



*Smiles with the welcome team at our March meeting.*

## Community News

### Start of the walking season

Almost a dozen participants joined Gerard Benjamin on Saturday, 14 March, for the start of the program of Historical Walks conducted by the Society.

Beginning at New Farm Park, the party took in around 10 locations which had been featured in Gerard's latest book, *New Farm: Another 50 Stories*. The group happened to include an architect, so it was icing on the cake to have some expert comment on the variety of housing styles we viewed.

A big thank you to Ann Sargeant for coming up with the idea for this walk — viz. using the map in the front of the new book as a basis for starting to 'tick off' some of its 50 locations/stories.

Gerard's next walk, Heart of New Farm, takes place on Saturday 18 April. All welcome. Book [HERE](#).



The camphor laurel trees in Abbott Street provided a cool backdrop beside the spot where the grand home "Tullibardine" (ch. 12) once stood. Photo: Mark White

### Thank you, Coles New Farm!

Once again, it is with gratitude that the New Farm and Districts Historical Society acknowledges and thanks Coles New Farm for a gift card donation. We will purchase tea and coffee items to assist with our monthly meeting catering. We appreciate that the Coles organisation is restricted in the allocation of gift card donations and that there are many worthy charity and group recipients. So, to our local Coles managers, Tristan, Oli and Laurence, we thank you sincerely for supporting our Society.



Some of the lovely meeting catering enabled by the gift card donation.

### Toastmasters accolade for Society member

*NF&DHS member Denise Buckby is an active part of our community, between our Society, the Rotary Club of New Farm and nine Toastmasters clubs. A version of this article first published in the March edition of the Peninsula Village Voice.*

By Lucia Jimenez

What began as a curious visit to a Toastmasters meeting at the New Farm Library eight years ago has led Denise Buckby to become a nominated candidate for the Toastmasters International Board for 2026–2028.

"Wherever you meet a Toastmaster you meet a friend," the New Farm local said.

Through the practice of public speaking, the group focuses on developing individuals' self confidence and communication skills.

"It's in that lovely safe environment where people thrive," Ms Buckby said.

Having accomplished many different achievements through the program, such as the Distinguished District Award (pictured), Ms Buckby has so much passion for the community and opportunities the Toastmasters have given her.

She especially loves watching everyone give public speaking a go and achieve their own goals.

Ms Buckby is a part of nine Toastmasters groups, and she said each of them give her a different reason to attend.

"It's about being a part of something bigger than yourself," she said.

The group consists of people of all different backgrounds and goals: while some are practicing for presentations at work, others are learning English.

The Toastmasters are a global group and this year Ms Buckby is very excited to attend their annual conference in Vancouver.

To learn more about Toastmasters, visit [toastmastersd69.org](http://toastmastersd69.org).



Ms Buckby proudly holding her Distinguished District Award (2023-2024). Photo: Lucia Jimenez

## Community News

Contributor: Bruna Burello-Day  
Membership Secretary

### New Farm State School's special school assembly

On Wednesday 25 March I was privileged to represent the Society at a special school assembly to launch the school's 125th anniversary year. Present were the Minister for Education and the Arts, The Honorable John-Paul Langbroek MP, local state member, Grace Grace MP (a former Minister for Education), other Education Department representatives, the President and Treasurer of the School's P&C, teachers past and present, parents and, of course, students. Mrs Kay Bradley, Acting School Principal, led the proceedings.

The first thing that struck me as a past parent was the venue for the assembly itself, being held in a magnificent, air-conditioned hall whose facilities were state of the art and included many technological advancements. Many of the formalities were conducted by the senior (Year 6) students who wore special polo shirts and demonstrated their leadership qualities by performing their duties with confidence and efficiency. It was a far cry from the assemblies held when my two daughters attended between 1996 and 2005 when students were obliged to sit outdoors on the hard asphalt surface in the quadrangle shaped by the original school buildings. Mrs Bradley addressed the attendees from a generous stage assisted by up-to-date audio-visual equipment – a marked improvement from when the principal stood on the veranda or the steps to address the pupils.

Another great difference was the enrolment numbers. Currently the enrolment stands at around 570. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the enrolment was a mere 150 or so and the school was in grave danger of being permanently closed. The re-emergence of young families moving to the district as a result of urban renewal initiatives certainly helped boost enrolment numbers.



The school has undergone a transformation since it opened over a century ago



P&C President Rachael Frizzo, NF&DHS Membership Secretary Bruna Burello-Day, Acting School Principal Kay Bradley, Grace Grace MP and P&C Treasurer Baden Marino-Hall

I learned that on the previous day, Harmony Day was celebrated as part of Harmony Week. Students were involved in many activities, including documenting the many nationalities and making a “harmony tree” whose leaves represented the nationalities of the students and staff – more than 80 to date – and the performance of ethnic dances led by teachers who come from multicultural backgrounds. During my daughters' attendance there were about 53 nationalities represented, which was significant at the time. The ever-growing multicultural nature of our district is evident by the composition of this school's enrolment.

Having been present for the School's centenary in 2001, I was genuinely amazed at the range of improvements that have occurred over the past 25 years. The school has been markedly extended with new buildings added, including undercover staff carparking, a modern library, new tuckshop and the generously-sized hall. It is beautifully landscaped with many spaces for pupils and teachers to enjoy and there is a vegetable garden tended by the school community. Yet it still retains the original building and historical features. It is a lovely blend of old and new and I'm sure it makes a wonderful place of learning for current pupils and will certainly cater well for future pupils.

I note that the commemorative limited edition Centenary Book is now digitised and available on the School's website [HERE](#). Past pupils would enjoy browsing and checking enrolment lists to see if they are included!

I was especially pleased to have attended this 125th anniversary launch and to have been given the opportunity to further the connection between the School and the New Farm and Districts Historical Society, which will play a big part in the School's 125th anniversary celebrations as explained by our member, Connie Hamer, on page 3 of this newsletter.