



# NEWSLETTER

## Back in Business The Museum Re-opens

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### Special points of interest:

- 50th Anniversary Celebrations: Civic Reception, Friday, 20 July, Museum. Dinner, Wednesday, 15 August, 7.00pm. Impassion Restaurant
- Committee Meetings: Sat 4 August, Sat 3 November, 1.30pm, Camden Museum.
- Ordinary Meetings: Wed 13 June, 11 July, 8 August, 12 September, 10 October, 14 November, 12 December, 7.30pm, Camden Museum, John St, Camden.

The museum has recently re-opened for visitors after being closed for 11 months. The building work has finally finished and the society has



been allowed to re-occupy the museum. The museum is now part of the redeveloped Camden Library and Museum Complex.

The museum, fire station and Camden library have been combined in a single building. What used to be the for-

mer laneway is now the galleria. It is an impressive entry. It is fully air-conditioned and has comfortable lounge chairs for the visitor to the museum and library.

The museum has been upgraded to comply with fire regulations. There is now a fire escape, but in the process we have lost much of our on-site storage. New fire rated carpet has been laid and new fire rated cladding has been put in the store rooms. The council has provided the museum with additional



off-site storage to compensate



for our losses in this area. A lift has also been installed to allow easier access to the upper level. Many of our older visitors find this to be a great addition.

The re-introduction of the volunteer's roster was organised by Bob Lester. Well done!

The redevelopment has received many positive comments.

## 50th Anniversary Celebrations

There are a series of events planned over the next few months to celebrate the 50th birthday of the society.

The first event is a book launch on May 18 in the Galleria. (see p.2).

Our July meeting will have

an address by Ian Willis, '50 Years of Local History, The Camden Historical Society, 1957-2007'.

The council is hosting a civic reception for the society on Friday 20 July in the Galleria between 5.30pm -

7.30pm. The theme is 'A Night at the Museum'.

There will be a dinner on Wednesday 15 August, Impassion Restaurant, Argyle Street, Camden, 7.00pm. Cost: \$30pp paid in advance. 2 course fixed menu, drinks extra. (see Ian)

All correspondence to Secretary, Camden Historical Society, PO Box 566, Camden. 2570 • Museum 4655 3400

President: Dr Ian Willis 4658 0193 • Vice presidents: John Wrigley OAM 4655 9210; Peter Hayward OAM 4651 2253 • Treasurer: Ray Herbert 9606 6075 • Secretary: Doug Barrett 4647 0597 • Committee: Julie Wrigley, Len English, Bob Lester, Colin Mills, Milton Ray, Cathey Shepherd, Ros Tildsley, Richard Nixon OAM, Sandra Dodds. Newsletter Editor: Dr Ian Willis.



## President's Shorts

The library and museum had a very successful **first day** on 5 February, 2007.

Bob Lester organised the re-introduction of the **volunteer roster** in his usual efficient and seamless fashion. Thanks Bob and volunteers.

This was followed on 3 March 2007 with the **official opening of the Camden Library and Museum Complex** by Mayor Chris Patterson. Other speakers included Kathleen Bresnahan from the State Library of NSW, Greg Wright from Camden Council, Virginia Ghezzi, Camden Library and Ian Willis from the society.

Since the museum has reopened the number of **visitors** continues to grow. During February the museum had 564 visitors and in March this rose to 845. In April the museum recorded 932 visitors. On Saturday 21 April the Library had an **Open Day and Street Fair**. It attracted around 3000 people and there were 480 visitors through the museum.

Dick Nixon has received an award in March from the Camden Show Society of Appreciation for 60 service to agricultural shows. Great job!

On March 29 Doug Barrett, Bob Grey and John Shanks

acted as guides for 175 students and teachers from **Magdaline College** at Narellan. Well done!

The society had a successful stall in the arts and crafts pavilion at **Camden Show**. The stall was organised by John Wrigley. Thanks to all who helped.

The **museum overflow** has been accommodated in a storage unit at Narellan provided by Camden Council. The shelving organised by Peter Hayward. The shifting and packing was supervised by John and dutifully recorded by Julie Wrigley, all helped by council workers.

Thanks to Cathey Shepherd for organising the **March journal** which has been mailed out to members.

The society was well represented at the launch of a **new book on Narellan** by Pam Browne and Marion Starr at Wivenhoe on 23 March 2007.

Warren Hicks **addressed** the March meeting on his family's First Fleeter. Doug Barrett spoke on occupational health and safety in April, Angela Pasqua, Cultural Affairs Officer, Camden Council spoke at the May meeting. In June Adele Lubriana, Aged Care and Rehabilitation, Camden Hospital will speak to us. *ICW*

## Book Launch

### *The Best of Back Then* by John Wrigley

The book *The Best of Back Then* by John Wrigley" was launched on the evening of Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at the Museum and attended by Camden Historical Society members and friends.

The book was launched by Edwina Macarthur-Stanham who said that the articles in the 'Back Then' section of *The District Reporter* had been of

interest to local residents.

John Wrigley said, "A number of readers have suggested that a book should be published of the best of my 'Back Then' articles and so I have put together this publication.

My thanks go to the District Reporter for permission to republish these stories. The stimulus to produce the book

this year has come from the fact that 2007 marks fifty years since the formation of the Camden Historical Society."

The book contains 78 of the newspaper articles written by John.

It is available from the Camden Museum for \$25.

### *17 August 1939*

The Camden Methodist Christian Endeavour Society held their annual meeting. The president was Rev AE Putland, vice-president, Mr F Stuckey, secretary, Mr A Stuckey, treasurer, Miss Vera Doust, organist, Miss V Whiteman, and committee, Miss Mavis Southwell, Mr F Thornton, Miss Bessie Putland, Mrs R White.

*Camden News 18 August 1939*

## History Week

### 15-23 September 2007

To celebrate History Week there will be guided tours of the Museum on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> and Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September at 11 am and 2 pm.

This is an opportunity for visitors to learn about the history of the Museum and its treasures, and to find out about the heritage of Camden and its district.

The recent building extensions have added a lift to make the Museum more accessible.

First-time visitors are often surprised to find what a fascinating place the Museum is. One interesting section of the Museum is the exhibition on Camden's part in World War I and II.

Visit your Museum during

History Week!

On Saturday September 22 there will be 2 history workshops (historical research and family history) provided by the Camden Historical Society and the Camden District Family History Society at Camden Library.

JW

### **Nattai-Bulli Colliery**

*It is reported that Clinton's Colliery at Nattai River lost no coal during the war period. Since 1939 only 1½ days production were lost due to mechanical breakdown. The mine employed 100 men on a payroll of £1200 per week, with production of 450-500 tons of coal daily. Coal was carted by motor lorry to Narellan railway siding.*

Camden Advertiser 1 February 1945



## Review by Ian Willis

### Camden Slide Show, Still My Country Home.

*Tibor and Nora Szopory, Camden Photo Centre, DVD. 13m31s, \$15.*

Camden has been called the best preserved country town on the Cumberland Plain. There are many picturesque scenes in the local area that confirm that view.

This DVD certainly confirms that claim. The DVD has over 160 images of Camden, Cobbitty, Elderslie and the surrounding rural landscape.

The concept for the DVD, according to Tibor, started out as a family photo album to be sent the relatives overseas as a Christmas present. The DVD

achieves that aim and more.

The DVD takes the viewer out and about contemporary Camden. It includes visiting the Camden Show, the produce markets as well as autumn and spring scenes. It provides a visual historical statement of contemporary Camden.

Photographs were taken by Tibor and collation done by Nora.

The images have a musical backing track written by

Jessie Fairweather. Jessie's lyrics provide the viewer with a narrative of their journey through the countryside. She also provides vocals and acoustic guitar. Electric guitar is by Stewart Peters, who mastered and produced the music. Disappointingly there is not a full list of credits on the DVD.

Interested purchasers can present this newsletter at Camden Photo Centre and receive a 10% off the RRP.

#### Sale Day in Camden

Camden's weekly stock sales were started by William Inglis in 1867 in saleyards located in Larkin Place. They moved to present site in 1940, which were adjacent to the Camden railyards. Sale days were Tuesdays and the town was always busy. Farmers came to town to sell their stock, catch up on rural news and then retreat for lunch and refreshments at the hotel. Their wives attended the monthly meeting of the Red Cross or CWA and caught up on gossip over afternoon tea and scones.

## Review by Ian Willis

### Narellan Hidden Treasures

*Pam Browne and Marion Starr, Wilson Crescent Richardson Road Area Resident's Group Inc, 2007, pp. 76. \$25. ISBN 978-0-9803508-0-7*

Narellan (1827) is one the oldest villages in the local area. It predates Camden and has a number of important heritage buildings.

This is the first book specifically related to the Narellan area, and in that respect it has broken new ground.

It follows in the tradition of William Hardy Wilson, George Sayers and others who have sought to record

the local area through illustrations.

The book provides 37 illustrations all drawn by Marion Starr and the text has been written by Pam Browne. There is a profile of both.

The book includes the modest, the vernacular, the grand and the utilitarian. The illustrations tell the story of the area's European pioneers and their struggles. The text is

informative and not overburdened in detail. The book is published in landscape, giving the text and illustrations room to make their mark.

Disappointingly there is no map to locate the buildings in the local area or index.

Overall, an excellent addition to local studies and a welcome addition that records some overlooked gems of local architecture.

#### Camden Park Open Weekend

**22-23 September 07**

This is the one chance each year for visitors to walk through the gardens and the eighty room Georgian mansion, built in 1835.

Enquiries phone 46 558466.

Hrs: Sat 12-4, Sun 10-4.

Cost: House and Garden:

Ad \$10, Conc \$8, Fam \$30;

Garden only: Ad \$5, Con

\$3.

## Museum Volunteers

### Matters of Concern

We have many volunteers who give their valuable time to the museum. Our increased number of visitors to the museum means that volunteers need to be vigilant of some issues.

#### Insurance Coverage

**The legal requirements of the society's insurance coverage for volunteers** means that **ALL** our volunteers must be members of the society. To be covered by insurance while volunteering for the society you must be a current financial member of the society.

#### Security

It is recommended that when volunteers come on duty at the museum they do not open the front doors until they have signed on, turned the lights on, counted the money, and are happy that everything is in order.

#### Retravisson Store

**147 Argyle Street.**

The building was built by a branch of the Ancient Order of Royal Foresters Lodge in 1908. The building has functioned as the Empire Movie Picture Theatre in the 1930s and the in 1960s as Downe's Store.



## CAMDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

PO Box 566  
Camden NSW 2570

### Camden Museum Camden Library and Museum Complex

40 John St, Camden.  
General Admission Free  
Opening Times  
Thursday– Sunday 11.00am – 4.00 pm  
Phone: Museum 02 4655 3400  
<http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>  
Email: [info@camdenhistory.org.au](mailto:info@camdenhistory.org.au)

ABN 84 182 869 026

### MEMBERSHIP

Individual \$10  
Family \$15  
For Year Ending 30 June

## The Camden Historical Society

The society was founded in 1957. Its aim is to promote Camden's history in a contemporary context. It primarily does this through managing the Camden Museum (1970). General admission to the museum is free, although visitors are encouraged to leave a donation. The museum is conducted entirely by volunteers. It also receives substantial and continuing assistance from Camden Council.

### Historic Precinct

The museum is located in Camden's historic precinct. It is part of the Camden Library and Museum Complex. It provides an ideal start for a walking tour of the town area. The visitor can take in the charm of the many 19th and early 20th century buildings.

### Research

The Society's archives are open to the public. General enquiries are free. Specific research by our volunteers attracts a \$15 fee plus photocopying. Extensive use of the Society's records is by negotiation.

*All donations to the Camden Historical Society Inc over \$2 are tax deductible  
The accredited value of objects donated to the society are eligible*

## CAMDEN RETROSPECTIVE

### *No. 32 Squadron RAAF*

Members of 32 Squadron arrived at Camden Airfield in September 1942, after seven months of hazardous operational duties supporting Allied Forces in New Guinea and the surrounding area of New Britain.

During eight months of operational duties the squadron flew over 400 missions and lost 10 aircraft, with 54 killed in action.

One member of base maintenance group recalls they 'were a much battered band of men' on their arrival at Camden Airfield.

They were equipped with Lockheed Hudsons which had a 5 man crew. They were the main Australian bomber in New Guinea in 1943. It was considered a relatively easy tar-

get for the Japanese gunners with a top speed of 246mph.

On their arrival the squadron was under the command of Wing Commander Deryck Kingwell.

In early 1943 the squadron was re-equipped with Bristol Beauforts.

While at Camden the squadron's operational duties included reconnaissance and sea patrols off the east coast of Australia. The squadron did night patrols from Bundaberg to Mallacoota, Queensland.

In May 1943 one crew made contact with a Japanese submarine five miles off the coast from Coffs Harbour.

Accommodation for the squadron

consisted of eight huts that were located on the rise on the eastern side of the current carpark, which was then the parade ground. The officers' mess was located in *Macquarie Grove* house, while the sergeants' mess was located in a building on the rise east of the officers' mess. Not all the men lived on base, and one airmen recalls that he and his wife lived in a flat in John Street opposite Dr Crookston's house.

Airmen recall the peaceful surroundings contrasted with the grim days of aerial combat in New Guinea. But flying out of Camden had its own risks. Three crews were lost in accidents while on operations at Camden and ten airmen from the squadron are buried in Camden war cemetery. *Ian Willis, 2007.*

*The Camden Historical Society would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Hon Pat Farmer MP in the printing of this newsletter.*