

CAMDEN HISTORY

Journal of the Camden Historical Society



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CAMDEN HISTORY

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Society contact:

P.O. Box 566, Camden, NSW 2570. Online <<http://www.camdenhistory.org.au>>

Meetings

Meetings are held at 7.30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month except in January. They are held in the Museum. Visitors are always welcome.

Museum

The Museum is located at 40 John Street, Camden, phone 4655 3400 or 46559210. It is open Thursday to Sunday 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., except at Christmas. Visits by schools and groups are encouraged. Please contact the Museum to make arrangements. Entry is free.

Camden History, Journal of the Camden Historical Society Inc

The Journal is published in March and September each year. The Editor would be pleased to receive articles broadly covering the history of the Camden district. Correspondence can be sent to the Society's postal address. The views expressed by authors in journal articles are solely those of the authors and not necessarily endorsed by the Camden Historical Society.

Donations

Donations made to the Society are tax deductible. The accredited value of objects donated to the Society are eligible for tax deduction.

Cover Image: A locomotive on the Campelltown-Camden Line pulling out of Elderslie Railway Station (Wayne Bearup, 1962)

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From The President's Desk

Ian Ramsay

May I take this opportunity to welcome you all to this edition of the Journal. Many of you will recall that we had planned to undertake a book launch in 2020 for Janice Johnson's book *Camden Soldiers of King and Queen 1788 to 1913*.

This event was cancelled due to Covid and so at our February meeting Julie Wrigley officially launched the book *Camden's WW1 Diggers 1914 to 1918* and also Janice's second book *Camden's Stories Of Service in World War 11*.



These books are now available from the museum at \$25 per copy.

The museum also has a limited number of books for sale which detail the life of Professor Graham Clark and his quest in regard to the creation of the Cochlear Implant.

In regard to Professor Graeme Clark the society is still in negotiations with Professor Clark about the creation of a display which will be dedicated to his work on the Cochlear Implant.

Our treasurer Fletcher Joss is taking the lead on this project and to date has been successful in obtaining a NSW State Government grant of \$25,000 with the assistance of Mr Peter Sidgreaves the local state member.

It was expected that we would perhaps be given a grant of the maximum \$17,000 however it was with the assistance of our local member that this Grant was raised to the \$25,000 level.

This year also due to Covid the Camden Council cancelled all council sponsored activities for Australia Day.

Despite the fact that Australia Day fell on a Wednesday we opened to the museum without any thought as to how it would work out for us.

It proved to be a positive venture as we had good numbers passing through the door and I would estimate from talking to our visitors that approximately 97% were first time visitors who were locals. Since that time some have returned for second visit.

After a gap of two years the Camden Show will recommence as it has been postponed due to Covid and again this year the Society will be present to promote not only the historical society but also the museum.

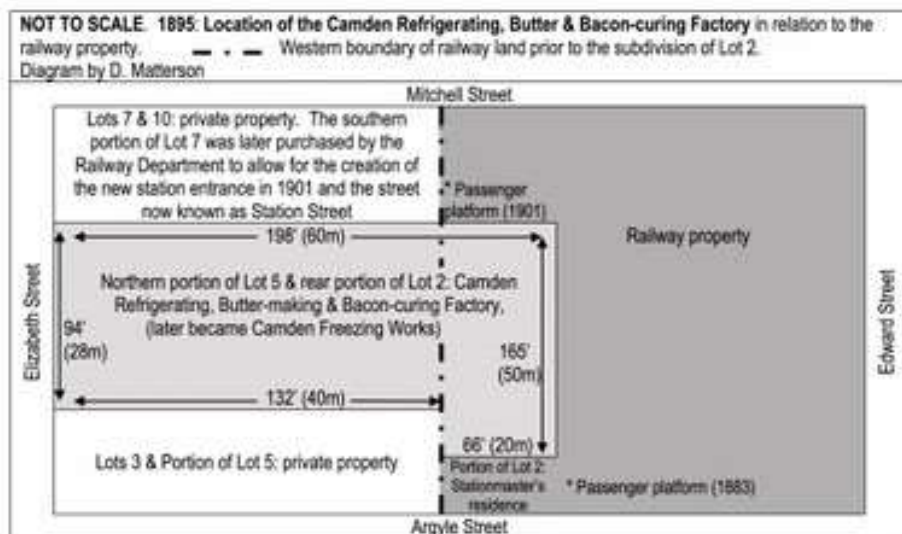
May I take this opportunity to thank the committee members for their valuable input into the management side of the society and museum but more importantly to you our valued members and volunteers who work tirelessly behind the scenes.

Gone in a Flash: Camden Refrigerating, Butter-making and Bacon-curing Works

Dianne Matterson

In April 1895, Camden Park Estate, managed by Astley Onslow-Thompson, decided to erect a factory for the refrigeration and processing of bacon, cream and butter and had asked for plans to be drawn up for land fronting onto Elizabeth Street and adjoining Camden Station. The land was partly purchased from the Railway Department and included the rear portion of the stationmaster's house, creating an L-shaped allotment that still exists today. (See map below) The plans included a loading dock that ran parallel with the tram line. The facility produced four tons of butter daily, while fifty tons could be held in refrigerated storage. All of Camden Park's cream was processed here, as well as cream from local farmers. The factory was fitted with an imported freezing machine, while the refrigerated area could also store meat.¹

In June, tenders were called for the construction of the Refrigerating, Butter-making and Bacon-curing Works and were to be marked, 'Camden Factory Buildings', and sent to the consulting engineer, W. Crawford, in Sydney. Using 50,000 bricks from the brickworks of Mr Cross in Edward Street, James Rankin, a local tradesman, was the builder. The large boiler for the new factory weighed about eight tons and arrived in Camden from Sydney via a horse team. Initially, Mr Rankin's winch could not lift the boiler, but the huge piece of equipment was eventually in place. Pending a decision by the Council about a permanent water supply, Astley Onslow-Thompson



sought permission from Camden Council to place a pump in the river to obtain a temporary water supply for the refrigerating works, resulting in a trench being dug across the farmland between the river and Edward Street. As work on the water supply proceeded, workmen digging a well came across a wooden tank about 6 feet down, which was well preserved and was thought to have been a tanning pit from James Lorimer's tannery works that had occupied the area 40 years earlier.²

Electricity

As construction proceeded, a number of tradesmen approached Astley Onslow-Thompson in October 1895, requesting access to electricity from the new facility for about 200 residences and businesses. Camden Council was keen for the town to avail itself of such an opportunity, as it would involve no capital outlay on the Council's part, but would allow the streets to be well lit by paying a fee to Camden Park as the owners of the refrigerating works. As the machinery at the factory included accumulator cells that stored electricity after it was generated by the dynamo, the lights were less likely to go out without warning. This proposal also had the advantage of not requiring an Act of Parliament to be passed, because as a consumer, the Council would have no responsibility for the generation of the electricity. After initially thinking this was a possibility, Mr Onslow-Thompson ultimately declined to supply electricity to the town as he thought that some aldermen only gave 'lukewarm' approval to the scheme.³

The 'Works'

Meanwhile, construction of the Refrigerating, Butter-making and Bacon-curing Works continued. In November, eight tons of machinery for the refrigerating works arrived from Sydney via Mr. Cooke's drays and was moved into the building under the supervision of the consulting engineer. George Larkin was appointed as engineer at the factory, before it opened in April 1896.⁴ To ensure products from the factory could be loaded easily onto the train, the main building had a frontage to the railway line of 115', and 100' of this length had a floor raised to the height of railway car floors. This loading platform was protected by a verandah roof and had its own overhead light railway for 'quickly transporting goods received, or delivered, to and from the cars, or the refrigerating stores'. Goods from the factory could be loaded onto rail cars waiting on the tracks between the run-round and the station's goods platform. The Butter Hall was 40' x 30', had a 'lofty' roof and 'ample' ventilation. The walls were white and blue enamel, while the centrifugal butter churns were supplied with chilled cream from tanks, and were fitted with an alarm to prevent any overflow. Packing tables, platform scales, water and steam taps, electric lights and polished fittings all added to the convenience of the area. The used vats and milk cans were washed and steamed to ensure their cleanliness before reuse. The butter store, pork curing room

and the cold store were insulated with pumice stone separated by air spaces. Pig carcasses were hooked onto an overhead trolley in the curing area at the other end of the building and were dried by fans before being moved to the smoke house, which was separate to the main building. In addition to water pumped from the river, the factory also stored 20,000 gallons of rain water in an underground tank, while eight elevated tanks gave sufficient pressure for washing purposes. Filtered rain water was used in the butter-making process. The butter from the factory was marketed under the 'Laurel' name, and was a popular brand, both in Australia and Britain, where it was regarded as being of a good quality that generated the 'the highest market rates'.⁵ In October 1896, the factory advertised that it would receive carcass meat from local butchers for cool storage and ice in small blocks was also available for purchase by the public. The cost of ice varied from 8d. for a 10-pound block to 2s. 4d. for a 50-pound block, while boxes suitable for transporting the ice were lent free of charge. However, the local demand for ice proved to be low, and from December, the ice was no longer available to the public.⁶

The end of a short era

When the Nepean River broke its banks in February during the 1898 flood, it rang the death knell of the factory. The buildings were inundated with 'many feet of water' and it was anticipated that significant damage would be sustained once the water receded. The following month, Camden Park Estate called for tenders for the construction of a butter factory and refrigerating works at Menangle, and with the opening of the new facility in September, the Camden factory closed. The location of the Menangle butter factory was more convenient and accessible for the farmers delivering milk and had the advantage of being on the main rail line so the facility could avoid having to work around the shortcomings of the tram line from Camden. Mr Kilmartin, manager of the Camden facility was transferred to Menangle.⁷

During the next eighteen months, the vacant factory site was considered as an option for a fire brigade building, as rented storage for Camden Council's 'goods', a local produce market, and also drew some interest from the Railway Department as part of a land expansion plan. By June 1900, the former factory site was occupied by the Public Works Department.⁸ When Woodhill & Co., a local general store, demolished their produce shop in Argyle Street in October 1904, they moved their business to the former refrigerating works for a year while they waited for the store to be rebuilt. Within months of Woodhill's departure, the site was advertised for sale, at which time it was described as having an area of about ½ an acre, a frontage of 163' 8" to the railway line, 198' to the railway's road access from Elizabeth Street (now Station Street), and 94' 1" to Elizabeth Street. This L-shaped allotment was occupied by two 'weatherboard and iron' buildings, one of which had cement floors and an insulated chamber, the walls of which were protected by 4-5

thicknesses of ½ inch lining boards. There was also a boiler house with a chimney and two underground tanks.⁹ It was sold at auction when Edwin Small, a local butcher, paid £655 for the property, possibly anticipating he could refrigerate his meat and smallgoods in the former factory. However, after owning the property for less than a year, Edwin Small sold it to an unknown purchaser.¹⁰

Between 10 and 11 p.m. on 13 December 1908, fire broke out at the former factory. A coat with matches in the pocket had been hung on a hook; mice nibbled the matches and caused the coat to ignite before it fell to the floor. The fire quickly ran up the wall to the rafters, but was prevented from becoming a ‘disastrous conflagration’ by the prompt action of the Fire Brigade.¹¹ By December 1911, the Yerranderie Silver Mining Co. owned the former factory and offered to rent a brick shed on the site to Camden Council for storing the sanitary carts.¹²

Camden Freezing Works

After fifteen years of erratic use, in October 1913, Joseph Moore purchased the site with the intention of freezing rabbits in readiness for export. He already had similar businesses in Orange and Mittagong, but planned to make the Camden works the principal facility. A 32 h.p. engine ran the refrigerator, which could make six tons of ice an hour. Rabbits from the Mittagong and Orange works were transported to Camden and packed in ice before being sent to Sydney via rail for export to Britain. He also bought local poultry for freezing and export, and during this time, the former factory became known as the Camden Freezing Works. Just a few months after opening, Joseph Moore’s freezing works were processing 1,500 fresh, local rabbits daily, all of which were brought to Camden by trappers. The Camden Freezing Works also sent donated frozen rabbits to the Red Cross, for distribution to various hospitals, while surplus rabbits were exchanged with the War Office for milk, coffee and milk, and cocoa and milk also for distribution to hospitals.¹³

By August 1923, the freezing works were owned by Walter Dunk, who had purchased it from Yerranderie Silver Mining Co., and despite submitting to Camden Council a ‘rough sketch’ of a blacksmith’s shop he proposed erecting here, the idea never came to fruition. The processing of rabbits and their skins continued at the Camden Freezing Works until at least February 1928.¹⁴

Electricity... again

In the meantime, in September 1924, Mr Eastaway, from the Furnace and Power Plant Construction Co. Ltd. presented Camden Council with an electricity generation scheme, as well as a means of sewerage disposal by burning. The estimated cost to generate 40 kilowatts of electricity was £3,310,



Early 20th century: Former Camden Refrigerizing, Butter-making and Bacon-curing Works
(later known as Camden Freezing Works) [Camden Images]

which would include the switchboard, instruments, cabling, motors and main street fittings. The building to house the machinery would be a galvanised iron building adjacent to Peters and Sons saw mill or in the old ‘Destructor House’ (the former freezing works), which would cost £600. Two boilers would be required, as well as a ‘Wilton Grates digestive’ for sewerage, along with chemicals and discharge chutes. One boiler would burn sewerage after it had been treated and converted into a powder; it would then be used to generate steam for the production of electricity. The system also allowed for the burning of sawdust from the sawmill ‘right across the railway line’. One permanent labourer and an engineer would be required as well as the services of one of Council’s clerical staff. The cost of the clerical work could be offset against the Council’s electric light liability. Not surprisingly, no more was heard of the Furnace and Power Plant Construction Co. Ltd.¹⁵

Meanwhile, other moves were afoot that would ultimately involve the freezing works. In 1927, Camden Council ratified an electricity generation contract with Town Lighting Ltd., although a considerable amount of paperwork had to pass between both parties, as well as the Local Government Department, both Houses of Parliament and the Governor of NSW before the electricity scheme could be implemented. By late November, everything was in place. In November 1928, Town Lighting advised the Council that the designs for the power house site would be commenced within ten days. ‘General operations’ would commence within three to four months. The company also advised the Council that they were trying to obtain bulk electricity from the Railway Department or the Public Works Department, which, if successful, would negate the need for a generating system in Camden, giv-

ing power earlier at a potentially lower cost. Council was advised to notify residents to make arrangements to have their premises wired in preparation for the arrival of electricity.¹⁶

However, by March 1929 there was trouble on the horizon. Town Lighting asked Camden Council for an extension of three months beyond their 16 April deadline without attracting the stipulated daily penalty. The company had the required machinery, but owing to 'circumstances not within its control', could not deliver it to Camden, although a smaller machine could be installed temporarily that would supply electricity from noon to midnight. However, this was not the only problem. As part of their agreement with Town Lighting, the Council had accepted a surety of £150 each from two bondsmen, to guarantee the work was carried out, but the company now said the sureties would not honour this unless the Council agreed to accept the temporary installation of the smaller machine and the three-month deferral of the main installation. The whole situation was unsatisfactory. The company had not yet acquired a site for the power plant despite frequent urging from the Council, so it was decided to send Town Lighting's correspondence to the Council's consulting engineers, Julius, Poole & Gibson, and ask for their advice. A postponement was not satisfactory to the Council unless the company could prove its 'bona fides'.

The following month, Town Lighting rented the former freezing works from Walter Dunk, and, in the hope of obtaining bulk supply from the Public Works Department, two engines – 32 and 35 h.p. – were to be installed which, the company assured Camden Council, would be sufficient for a 24-hour supply. If a bulk supply became available, a transfer could be made at a later date.¹⁷ A promising start was made when the Camden News office (now Michael Watts Optometrist) was the first place to be lit by electric light, quickly followed by others. However, by June 1929, Town Lighting had not been able to supply the quantity of electricity for which they were contracted, and had been deferring supply to some potential customers. When interviewed by the consulting engineers, the company's manager, Mr Houston, admitted they were still waiting for an answer about bulk supply from the Public Works Department and so didn't want to spend additional money on upgrading the plant in Camden. After contacting the Public Works Department, the engineers found that bulk supply to Camden would not be available for eight months. The engineers concluded Town Lighting was unlikely to meet Council's expectations without the application of 'considerable pressure', and so instructed Mr Houston to tell them how he would fulfill his contractual obligations. If stand-by equipment was required to ensure that the terms of the contract were fulfilled, he was to take immediate steps to bring this about, including sending Julius, Poole & Gibson a copy of the equipment order. They advised Council to decide whether to enforce the terms of the

contract, or, alternatively, negotiate with Town Lighting to take over the electricity supply. The Council decided to enforce the contract with an extension of three months and invoked the daily £5 penalty clause for every subsequent day the contract was not fully operational. In addition to this, Julius, Poole & Gibson were asked by the Council to try to obtain a bulk electricity supply from Port Kembla.¹⁸ The following month, Town Lighting installed a new 60 h.p. engine, along with other electrical equipment including a generator, which should have enabled them to provide a continuous supply of current. The former brick engine house from the freezing works was being transformed into a power house, but by September, the town was again experiencing ongoing electricity supply issues. Julius, Poole & Gibson sent an adverse report about the Town Lighting to the Council, who now planned to terminate the contract. The Public Works Department refused to supply their bulk electricity from Port Kembla via Town Lighting, but assured Camden Council of a direct supply if they wished to take over from Town Lighting. In September 1931, Camden Council paid Town Lighting £1,000 out of their reserves and borrowed £3,500 from the A.M.P. Society. The town was soon transferred to the bulk supply.¹⁹

Two months later, Camden Freezing Works were demolished after standing for less than four decades. The Oregon and hardwood timber, tanks, corrugated iron, window sashes, doors, flooring, lining and weatherboards were advertised by Walter Dunk for ‘immediate sale’.²⁰ Today, the former factory site is occupied by businesses at 40-42 Elizabeth Street and there remains no visible sign of what went before. Despite this, during its short existence, the building was the location of a diverse array of businesses that each contributed to the economy of Camden.

Notes

- 1 *Ulladulla & Milton Times*, 6 Apr 1895. *Evening News*, 18 Apr 1895
- 2 *Camden News*, 20 Jun 1895; 27 Jun 1895; 22 Aug 1895; 19 Sept 1895; 26 Sept 1895; 9 Nov 1899
- 3 *Camden News*, 10 Oct 1895; 24 Oct 1895; 19 Dec 1895
- 4 *Camden News*, 7 Nov 1895; 28 Nov 1895; 2 Jan 1896; 9 Jan 1896
- 5 *Camden Railway Station: A Reminder of Incessant Government Under-Funding of the NSW Rail System* – Australian Railway Historical Society, p. 17. *Camden News*, 9 Apr 1896; 16 Apr 1896; 30 Apr 1896
- 6 *Camden News*, 15 Oct 1896; 29 Oct 1896, 3 Dec 1896
- 7 *Camden News*, 17 Feb 1898; 3 Mar 1898; 1 Sept 1898; 15 Sept 1898; 29 Sept 1898
- 8 *Camden News*, 23 Mar 1899; 29 Jun 1899; 13 Jul 1899; 9 Nov 1899; 24 May 1900; 28 Jun 1900; 13 Oct 1904
- 9 *Camden News*, 12 Oct 1895
- 10 *Daily Telegraph*, 24 Oct 1905; 2 Aug 1906
- 11 *Camden News*, 17 Dec 1908
- 12 *Camden News*, 14 Dec 1911
- 13 *Camden News*, 30 Oct 1913; 20 Nov 1913; 29 Jan 1914; 7 May 1914; 25 Oct 1917
- 14 *Camden News*, 23 Aug 1923; 6 Sept 1923; 4 Oct 1923; 18 Oct 1923; 16 Feb 1928

- 15 *Camden News*, 4 Sept 1924
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Trooper 2471 Bede William Hennessy From Camden to Cairo

Kalebh Pearson

Bede William Hennessy was born 12 April 1894 to Irish immigrants Michael and Margaret Hennessy (O'Hara).¹ Bede was the eldest son of the Hennessy's five children: Mary, Bede, Kickham, Eugene, and Silvia respectively. Michael owned the Plough and Harrow Inn in Camden and was known for his local homemade brew of "Hennessy's best".² However, by 1897 the Hennessy family moved to The Oaks and Michael was granted his publican's licence in December of that year. Michael owned the Oaks Sanatorium Hotel which was positioned directly on the path to The Peaks Silver Mines and provided accommodation for mine workers.³ The Sanatorium Hotel was advertised in 1899 as a "family hotel" which was "replete with all modern conveniences, handsomely furnished, and the best wines and spirits only kept".⁴ Its location made it a common stop for travellers from the city and those who cycled The Blue Mountains. Michael continued his entrepreneurial pursuits within the local area including the Camden AH&I Society show.⁵ Michael also supported local charities as he donated a case of ginger beer to the local school picnic held at Bob's Range in 1900.⁶ On Coronation Day 1902 he managed the sports for the day's festivities.⁷ Throughout Michael's life in the Oaks, he accumulated several local properties including buildings on John Street.⁸ Michael's business dealings made the hotel a community staple and the Hennessys were a pillar of The Oaks community.

Bede enters the historical record with the annual concert performance by St Joseph's Convent School students at the School of Arts on Friday 11 December 1908.⁹ During the concert Bede performed on two separate occasions. The first performance was a rendition of the comical song "Any Rags" which was encored.¹⁰ In the evening Bede performed the song "Beautiful Ireland".¹¹ Bede also displayed an affinity for sport, as he was the third batsman for The Oaks, scoring 20 runs before being bowled out against Camden on 6 January 1912 with The Oaks winning the match by 45 runs.¹²

In October 1913 Michael completed construction of a concrete tennis court and skating rink which garnered attention and fanfare from The Oaks community as well as surrounding towns such as Camden and Picton.¹³ On the following Monday evening a tennis club, named The Sanatorium Club, was formed and Bede was appointed as honorary treasurer.¹⁴ Bede's life up until the outbreak of World War I was one of community, as being the son of a prominent figure in The Oaks greatly informed his childhood and teenage

years.

Answering the call to arms Bede, on 25 November 1915, travelled to the Town Hall Recruitment Depot in Sydney and applied for enlistment into the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), which was approved.¹⁵ Bede recorded his occupation as “home duties” and his postal address as Camden.¹⁶ The following day Bede underwent a preliminary and final medical examination and was deemed fit for active service. Following this, Bede’s application was certified by commanding officer Lieutenant Milay and he was appointed to the 17th reinforcements of the 7th regiment of the Australian Light Horse (ALH).¹⁷ Bede was then ordered to the Casula Light Horse Training Camp. However, this order was later rescinded, and Bede was ordered to the new camp at Menangle.¹⁸

This was due to the Liverpool Riot on 14 February 1916, which began as several thousand men from the Casula camp travelled to the primary camp at Liverpool to protest the addition of 5 hours a week to training exercises, overly strict regulations, obtaining leave passes, and a lack of alcohol.¹⁹ The march progressed into a riot and the men of Casula were joined by their compatriots from the Liverpool camp. The rioting continued in Liverpool and progressed to the city by train.²⁰ On 16 December 1915 Bede’s attestation paper for his enlistment was completed which mirrored his original application form. However, his occupation was altered to “farmer” from “house duties”.²¹ The following day Bede was transported to Casula. He took an oath of loyalty to the King of England which completed his official admittance into the ALH.²² This began Bede’s journey into the AIF which would take him to the other side of the world.

On Saturday 12 February a farewell ceremony for the town’s recruits, including Bede, was held at The Oaks Hall.²³ The chair of the ceremony, Mr C.G Moore presented a shaving kit to the recruits as a parting gift on behalf of the town.²⁴ Bede was additionally presented with a wristwatch by Father Hogan on behalf of the Catholic Federation, as Bede was secretary to The Oaks branch of the Federation prior to volunteering in the AIF.²⁵ The Catholic Federation of NSW was an organisation which was founded in 1913 with the goal of furthering the interest of the predominantly Irish Catholic community within Australia.²⁶ This Federation and Bede’s involvement in its operations highlight his involvement with his local community on a religious level.

On 26 April 1916 Bede, along with the other 32 recruits of the 17th reinforcements, embarked at Sydney on HMAT A30 “Port Macquarie” bound for Egypt.²⁷ On 5 May while enroute to Egypt Bede was fined for disobeying

orders on the Port Macquarie which set a precedent for his relationship with military discipline.²⁸

Bede arrived in Egypt and on 21 June was taken on strength into the 2nd Light Horse Training Regiment located at Tel-el Kebir in Egypt.²⁹ This regiment specified in training reinforcements before further deployment in the ALH.³⁰ Bede was transferred to the 12th company of the Imperial Camel Corps (ICC) in Abbassia on 15 July where he served until July 1918.³¹ The ICC garnered a reputation of less-than-ideal soldiers which stemmed from the Corps being utilised by battalion commanders to remove troublemakers and malcontents from their battalions. Dr Jean Bou states that the men of the ICC were “troublesome”.³²

The degree to which this applied to Bede is unknown. However, Bede’s past and future crimes in the AIF may indicate the reasoning behind his transfer. The ICC primarily performed the functions of patrolling and skirmishing with the tribal Senussi people who were pro-Turkish.³³ The Corps was also in combat against the Turkish Army as they were transferred to the Sinai Desert.³⁴ Despite the success of the ICC when in Egyptian and Syrian deserts, the Corps progressed into the more fertile regions of Palestine. The use of camels became impractical, so the Corps was disbanded, and its members formed the 14th and 15th ALH, and the 12th company were rolled into the 15th ALH.³⁵ Bede was transferred on 16 July 1918. However, six days prior Bede was charged with absent without leave (AWL) and “taking a horse off the line without permission”.³⁶

This was punished with seven days of Field Punishment (FP) No.2. FP No.2 differs from FP No.1 in that the offender would not be tied to a fixed object. However, both punishments entailed labouring.³⁷ Bede committed another offence of being drunk and AWL on 17 February 1919 at Al Riyaq and received a week of FP No.2.³⁸ With the war over, the men of the 15th were in Syria and preparing to return home. However, the Egyptian Revolt of 1919 returned them to active service in Egypt via Baalzak and Beirut.³⁹ The Egyptian Revolt was a student and intellectual led riot which began in the south but rapidly expanded into upper Egypt regarding the autonomy of post-war Egypt from the British Empire.⁴⁰ Within the month of its inception the revolution was quelled. While the 15th was camped at Mit Ghamr train station, Bede’s final and largest crime occurred at Al-Minufiyah on 3 July 1919.⁴¹ This began with him going AWL at 4 pm which was followed by him leaving camp and entering a local town in which he caused a “disturbance in a[n] argument in town”.⁴² This was severely punished with 3 weeks of FP No.2 and he was fined 23 days’ pay.⁴³

By this time the war was over, and Bede embarked on the HT Dongola on 24

July 1919 whilst still having two days of FP No.2 remaining, so he was admitted to the ship as a prisoner.⁴⁴ The Dongola's voyage home commenced from Kantara on the Suez Canal and arrived in Fremantle on 17 August.⁴⁵ The ship arrived in Sydney on 28 August. Bede returned home and was later discharged from the AIF on 21 October 1919 and returned to civilian life.⁴⁶

End of Part 1.

Notes

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3. *Camden News*, Thu 20th Oct, 1898, The Peaks (Burraborang) Silver Mines, p.2.
4. *Camden News*, Thu 28th Sep, 1899, Advertising, p.3.
5. *Camden News*, Thu 10th Mar, 1898, Local News, p.4.
6. *Camden News*, Thu 18th Jan, 1900, Bob's Range, p.2.
7. *Camden News*, Thu 14th Aug, 1902. Local News, p. 4.
8. Will and Testimony of Michael Hennessy. NSW State Archives,
9. *Picton Post*, Wed 16th Dec, 1908, Local News, p.4.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. *Picton Post*, Wed 10th Jan, 1912, Cricket, p.4.
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President's Report 2020 – 2021

Ian Ramsay

It is with pleasure that I present the annual report of the Camden Historical Society. It has been a challenging year for the society. The COVID -19 virus of the 2020 - 21 years have been traumatic ones for the nation. Government and Council lockdowns have curtailed the activities of the Society.

Our core function remains the same and that is to ensure our continuation as a centre of excellence in providing a true and accurate history of Camden and the continuation of promoting the history and heritage of Camden.

50th Anniversary

As there was no president's report in 2020, I have not had the opportunity to write of a milestone in the history of the museum - 20 June 2020 marked its 50th anniversary. Due to Covid restrictions, sadly only 10 members of the committee were able to commemorate the occasion.

Community

The Society as in the past continues to promote and support local heritage by participation in:

- Camden Council Heritage Advisory Committee.
- Involvement in public submissions to Council and creating public awareness via media outlets.

Assistant secretary Jo O'Brien; a big thank you for her sterling work in writing council submission. Regrettably our involvement in Camden activities have been put on hold. No Australia Day Parade, Antique Fair, History Week, Heritage Week and Camden Show.

Re-Opening Of The Museum

The museum has been in lockdown for much of 2020 -21. It is anticipated that we will soon be allowed to re-open and that the museum will operate with a full program from early 2022 Be assured that you will all be notified once council provide us with some clear and concise directive.

Janice Johnson Bequest

The committee has achieved the completion of former secretary and treasurer Janice Johnson's bequest to place plaques on six graves at St John's Cemetery.

Treasurer Fletcher Joss is working on publishing two more of Janice's books with publication in 2022.

Professor Graeme Clark AC

The Society was contacted by Graeme Clark's sister Robin Simpson and his niece Kathryn Taylor who presented the museum with a copy of his new book titled *I Want To Fix Ears*.

Graeme Clark occupies an important role in the history of medicine. His involvement with deaf children and adults resulted in his unparalleled work on the Cochlea Implant (Bionic Ear). Graeme Clark was born and raised in Camden and his father Colin was a well known chemist, who was deaf hence his son's strong desire to assist people afflicted with this problem. Colin Clark was a foundation member of the Camden Historical Society and a past president. As a result of this contact with Professor Clark's family, we are in an extremely fortunate position where we are now in the process of a display dedicated to the work of Professor Clark.

On behalf of the society our life member, Dr Ian Willis OAM is now in the process of writing a discussion paper of 5,000 words on Graeme Clark's life and work. As part of this, the museum will be given from the Graeme Clark Foundation artefacts and displays of the Cochlear Implant (Bionic Ear). As well as childhood memorabilia. Treasurer Fletcher Joss is involved with applications for grants needed to fund this project.

Guest Speakers

Once again this year our list of guest speakers was greatly reduced, however we were given an excellent presentation by one of our members Diane Materson who spoke of her intense research into the history of the shops in Argyle Street. We also enjoyed a wonderful evening with author Sue Williams who presented an insight into her book *Elizabeth & Elizabeth*. Sue is an interesting writer who delighted us with her presentation and we were indeed very fortunate that Sue offered to conduct a book signing.

Volunteers

I extend a huge thank you to our volunteers for their dedication and hard work that they inject into the daily operations of the Museum, with special thanks to:

- Margaret Wheeler and her small group of volunteers for cleaning textiles and objects in the museum.
- Vice president John Wrigley OAM for negotiating with Graham Miranda on repatriating two Aboriginal axe heads from South Australian Museum to Camden Museum
- Roslyn Tildsley for cataloguing the books in the Research Room Li-

brary

- Anne McIntosh for continuing to photograph objects in the museum

Early this year I called and to meet the volunteers as individuals and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of meeting them and hearing their story. I look forward to seeing all our volunteers in 2022 and as I did this year I will visit them to ensure that all their expectations of us and requirements are satisfactory to their needs.

Membership

To date our membership renewal rate has been slow, due to the current restrictions.

Museum

With Covid protocols in place the museum has been operating on an ad hoc basis which had the overall impact of fewer visitors. With the easing of the Covid restrictions being imminent Camden Council conducted a deep cleaning of the museum and indeed all council owned buildings. Therefore we can be assured that all appropriate action has been taken to remedy and reduce the risk of any possible Covid infection to either members or visitors.

Communication

The society published a journal twice a year and a newsletter three times a year. Secretary Lee Stratton looks after the newsletter and Ian Willis OAM is the journal editor.

The society has a strong online presence particularly through its website, *Camden History*, managed by vice president Warren Sims. Committee member Rene Rem is in charge of our Face book page.

The Society has feature stories published on the back page of The District Reporter appropriately named: BACK THEN. We are extremely grateful to Editor Lee Abrahams for her generous support in the publication of this feature.

Conclusion

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members, volunteers and committee for your support throughout the year and I look forward to seeing and working with you in 2022.

RAAF De Havilland Dragon A34-47

An Enduring Mystery and an Unexplained Loss

Jo O'Brien

There is a solitary sandstone block and plinth in open space in the grounds of St John's Anglican church in Camden, near the corner of Broughton Street and Menangle Road. This simple but moving memorial is dedicated to the memory of 5 servicemen (3 RAAF pilots and 2 US marines) who were aboard a RAAF plane – De Havilland Dragon A34-47 - which went missing on the 17th of April 1943.

The plane was on a return flight after delivering radio equipment from Essendon to Sydney, under the command of pilot Sgt Douglas Doyle and co-pilot Sgt Frank Doyle (no relation). F/O Lester and the two US Marines Teague



[https://www.warmemorialsregister.nsw.gov.au/content/st-johns-anglican-church-
raaf-a34-47-memorial-cairn](https://www.warmemorialsregister.nsw.gov.au/content/st-johns-anglican-church-raaf-a34-47-memorial-cairn)

and Umstead were passengers for the return trip to Melbourne. Somewhere along the first stage of the flight from Mascot to Forest Hill airbase in Wagga, the plane went missing and is presumed to have crashed, But, despite many searches at the time and over subsequent years, no trace has ever been found of the aircraft. The mystery of the missing plane and the fate of the five young men aboard has intrigued many but remains unsolved.

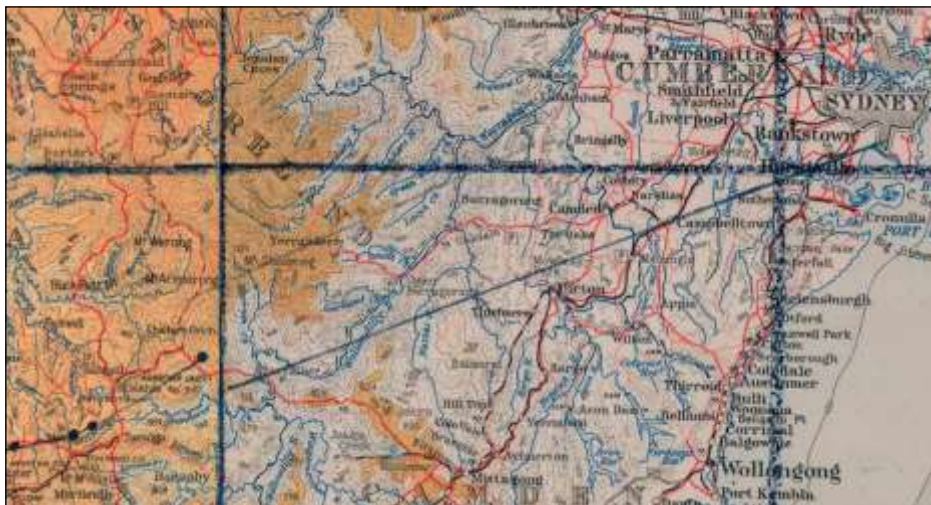
After take-off from Mascot just before 10am, the plane travelled west to Prospect before turning southwest. Usually, the path followed would have been directly towards the southwest from Mascot, heading towards Goulburn to follow the road to Wagga, but it has been suggested the plane may have been taking in a view of Sydney for the benefit of the passengers. Taking this slight detour brought the plane over the mountainous terrain surrounding the Burratorang Valley (“tiger country”) when it turned southwest on its way to Goulburn.

There was no radio on the plane, and so no way of communicating with those aboard. Planes were generally tracked along their flight paths by spotters on the ground. An air sentry at Chester Hill spotted the plane near Prospect Reservoir at 10:15am, and Catherine Adams, the postmistress at Werombi and a spotter for the Volunteer Air Observer Corp, heard a plane and saw it travelling south towards the Burratorang Valley at 10:25am - it was almost certainly A34-47.

When the flight was reported overdue at Forest Hill in the mid-afternoon, sighting records were sought from the spotter's posts along the flight path. Initially it was reported that the aircraft had passed through Goulburn, but this was found to be a misreading of the previous day's log, and unfortunately the initial search was misdirected. The correct information was not received until late on the 18th of April. As the plane had not been spotted at Mittagong or Wombeyan Caves, it was thought to have come down south of Werombi in the Burratorang Valley.

The weather worsened the next day and searching of the area was difficult. A number of air searches were conducted over the following days, but with no success. It appears that the general public and the families of the men knew little in those early days about the search efforts.

Ten days later Hilda Donohue of Central Burratorang Valley reported hearing an aircraft in difficulties, and then possibly hearing a crash and seeing a cloud of dust. She thought it was about 1pm on the day the plane went missing. This new information led to a ground search in late April led by locals Laurie Carlon and Ron Hinds, and further air searches. Newspaper reports at



Part of the map (Attachment 1) from the Court of Inquiry – showing the usual flight path as a straight line from Mascot, the path from Prospect over the Burragorang Valley as a faint line. The dots may be the plotted path of sightings mistakenly believed to be the missing plane. <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8852798> National Archives of Australia - Series A705, 32/15/898 ATTACHMENT 1, Item 8852798

the time described the search effort. But no trace of a crash site, the aircraft or her crew were found.

The conclusion of the official court of inquiry into the loss of Aircraft DH 84A (A34-47) made no official finding as to the cause, but there was a suggestion that the airscrew bolts may have been overtightened while warm, leading to their failure. Pilot Sgt D. Doyle had reported magneto trouble on the previous flight, and had asked for this, the control wires, and the airscrews to be checked. The aircraft was checked at Mascot and found to be serviceable before departure.

Many people spent much time over subsequent years searching for the missing plane, both physically on the ground, and by combing through the available information. Searchers have included locals from the Burragorang Valley, Dick Smith, an RAAF air squadron in 1980, and the military aviation, historian, and writer Robert (Bob) Piper, who appears to have been part of the driving force behind the erection of the memorial at St John's. His articles in RAAF news and other publications brought attention to the plane's disappearance over the years, including in 1979 and 1999. Some regular searchers returned to the area year after year in the quest to solve the mystery and provide answers for the families of the missing men.

The construction of Warragamba Dam resulted in much of the low-lying part of the Burragorang Valley now being under the waters of Lake Burragorang, and there are some that think that the plane may lie there. However, this is unlikely to be the case, as the wreckage would have been seen by farmers, and the valley floor was stripped of vegetation before the area was flooded, so any trace would have been spotted at that time.

The lack of any trace of the plane has led to rumours and speculation. Why were the US marines on the flight? What was the plane carrying? Was it part of a secret mission, and was there a cover-up? Was the search thorough enough, was it delayed? Were they looking in the right place? Why has no wreckage, no trace, ever been found?

Though those questions raise fascinating possibilities, it is likely that there were no mysterious circumstances or conspiracy. The flight was a return trip, and there was space for passengers. The terrain where it disappeared consisted of steep cliffs and valleys with heavy vegetation, where the aircraft could have been lost. A simple mistake, a malfunction, or a faulty piece of equipment could have caused the plane to crash.

If the plane had been found the cause and circumstances could have been confirmed. But the first searches were in the wrong place, and the correct information and potential eyewitness reports were received belatedly. After the initial signs of a crash were gone, such as fire or smoke, the dense vegetation, rugged country, and steep gullies could well have hidden any sign of the wreckage of a small wooden plane. In such a large wilderness area, with much of it inaccessible, it would be easy to miss the fragments that would have survived the initial crash. Over the many decades that followed, the gradual deterioration of any artefacts would have decreased the chance of them being found. And now, if there had been any small items that has still survived, the severe Green Wattle Creek fire in 2019-2020 would have destroyed what was left.

While there may never be an explanation of where and why the plane crashed, the story of the missing plane - De Havilland Dragon A34-47 – is a story of personal loss. Three very young Australian men and two US marines never returned home to their families. The young Australian servicemen aboard were only 24, 19 and 20 years old, the marines in their early thirties. They were much loved brothers and sons. The pilot Douglas Doyle was also a husband and father - married with a young child. As the days, weeks and years went by without news, the uncertainty would have made it difficult for their families to grieve and heal from their loss. They have never known what happened that day.



Photograph over memorial towards Burratorang Valley (Rebecca Mangion)

There are other memorials to the missing servicemen, but there was a campaign in 1999 for a memorial place in Camden, in the grounds of St John's Anglican church. On the 11th of November 2000, this memorial plaque was unveiled at a ceremony attended by family, searchers, and Camden locals. This at least helped provide closure and a place to mourn and remember. It is also a tribute to the many people who spent so much time searching in an attempt to find an answer to this enduring mystery.

The memorial at St John's Camden, placed so that when viewers raise their eyes from the plaque, they look towards the Burratorang Valley, is a lasting tribute to these men from "relatives, friends, searchers, RSL and the people of Camden".

With thanks to Rebecca Mangion for her moving photographs of the A34-47 memorial which inspired the author to research this story.

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‘WWII Missing Airforce Plane over Burraborang’ – Information CD – Camden Historical Society



1Lt Cecil Joseph Umstead, b. 1910 Kensington, Maryland

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/56774276/cecil-joseph-umstead>



1LT Horace Albert Teague, b. 1910 Baltimore, Maryland

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/92751500/horace-albert-teague>



Pictures from *Air Force News* 1 Jul 1999



F/O Lester - *Air Force News* 1 Jul 1999



Memorial in foreground in the grounds of St John's Church (Rebecca Mangion)

A Local Family and Carrington Centennial Hospital

Frances Warner

Frances and Harry Warner have been members of the Camden Historical Society for many years. They are well-known and much-loved local identities, and colourful characters.

All local families face changes in life over time and the Warners are no exception. As families grow there are challenges, some the family can control and others over which the family has little control. Local families deal with these changes and challenges in different ways.

The Warners are one local family that have had a long-term involvement with Carrington Hospital. This a short story of the Warner family and some of their changes and challenges.

The Warner family and Carrington Centennial Hospital

Frances's involvement with Carrington started when she was employed as Assistant in Nursing (AIN) between 1969-1970. At the time she described the hospital this way.

Carrington House was the nursing home with no long-term patients. Friday was intake/outgoing of patients. There was a bus from Sydney, bringing approximately 20 new patients. They needed general health screening, medication review, regular healthy meals and clean air.

Accommodation was dormitory style with male quarters, both upstairs and downstairs. Some men were happier sleeping on covered verandah. There was a pool-snooker table in the entertainment room for the males.

Female patients were at the opposite end of the building both upstairs and downstairs.

The dining room was in the middle of the building where all meals were served as well as morning and afternoon tea. The dining room was used for entertainment, singing around the piano, and visiting musicians.

On Sunday evenings there were raffle prizes to raise money for cat protection organised by one of the RNs (registered nurses). It was a little cash for a chance to win a prize and have a laugh.

Guides and Cub Scouts

Frances was involved with the Camden-Oakdale Girl Guides for many years. The Guides visited the hospital on many occasions.

Frances said, 'The Guides entertained residents in Paling Court, Mary McKil-



Harry Warner (Jnr), Bradley Warner (Cub), Harry Warner (Snr) at Mount Kiera Scout Camp (Frances Warner)

lop facility and Grasmere Terrace. The girls sang Christmas Carols and did gift-giving with items made by the Guides. The girls sang campfire songs. The ladies love looking at the Guides in uniform, badges bring up happy memories.'

Harry was out at Carrington between 1980 and 1990 as a cub leader then Hume District Cub Leader. Frances said, 'The cubs scouts entertained in Parry Ward. There was singing and skits.'

Frances's son Bradley went out to Carrington for work experience in Year 11 for one week. Frances said, 'Bradley did nursing duties and now is involved in Aged Care Management in Nursing.'

Frances's daughter Penny-Anne was involved with Carrington while a member of the Girl Guides. Frances recalled, 'She did work experience as outside



Harry, Paling Court, Carrington, 2021 (Frances Warner)

garden staff and helped lay a brick pathway outside Masonic House.’ Daughter Amy is in the Girl Guides

How things change

‘Wow. 2020 and 2021 were a big change for both of us after living at Camden Park for so long. Harry had health issues. The onset of dementia was a big concern. Brick work paths, cobblestones, sandstone verandahs made walking difficult. We were always worried about him falling’, she said. Things were about to change for the Warner family.

Frances said, ‘After many years living and working for the Macarthur Stanham family at Camden Park.’

‘We held a family conference and we agreed to arrange full care for Harry and Independent living unit for me. Carrington was the choice, so we would be close to each other.’

Frances said, ‘So after being at Camden Park for 62 years for Harry and 55 years for myself, we said farewell to the Macarthur Stanham family and Camden Park. We have an open invitation to visit for a cuppa when we like.’ ‘Both of us have settled into our new lifestyle. Covid lockdowns have been difficult at times, but rules are changing, most for the good.’

‘Harry Senior had a single room at Carrington Hospital. He was an artist, and enjoyed walking around the gardens, the company and organised outings, Camden Show, dinner dances. Harry’s greatest love was oil painting, mainly landscapes. He did many paintings of Carrington House. They were always good for a raffle prize.

Carrington’s Occupational Therapist organised art lessons for Harry. He does enjoy learning new styles. Carrington even had an art room in Parry Ward,’ recalls Frances.

Frances says that she is a hoarder and ‘watches her pennies’. She had labels from Carrington Hospital from many years ago.

She said, ‘Carrington Hospital ordered clothing labels from Cash’s supplies in April 1994. Now we are using the labels for my Harry’s clothing, especially his Bronco football shirts.’



Pansy Memories

Wayne Bearup

Wayne Bearup writes:

I took an interest in the Campbelltown-Camden Line after the success of steam trams around Sydney. It was decided to build the experimental tram line to Camden using steam tram motors. It opened as a steam tramway on 10 March 1882. The ruling grade was 1-in-19, many curves. Steepest adhesion line in Australia Kenny Hill using two Baldwin 0-4-0 steam tram motors. These provided motive power until two 0-6-0 took over in 1884 with the railways on 1 January 1889. The last tram running on 18 June 1901 E10 2-6-4 tank engine. Z20 Class took over to be replaced by C30 Class tank engines until the end.

Letter to CHS 7 February 2022



Locomotive leaving Narellan Railway Station 1962 (Wayne Bearup)

Mural: Operation Diggers March Camden RSL Club

Annette Clissold, Dave Thomas, Ian Ramsay and Ian Willis

A stark brick wall has greeted patrons and visitors for many years as they entered the carpark of the Camden RSL. In more recent times, however, Annette Clissold and Penny Claxton, members of the RSL Sub-Branch, decided to take ownership of the wall and have attempted to create a mural dedicated to honoring all service personnel.

The Camden RSL Sub-Branch president Iain Richard Evan encouraged director Annette Clissold to apply for the Camden Council Cultural Activation Seed Grant. The sub-branch duly applied for grant funding for a mural with the theme 'Diggers March'. The application was successful and the council awarded \$3000 towards the project, which was gratefully accepted by the sub-branch.



Painting of Operations Diggers March by Bowral artist Dave Thomas over the bar at the Camden RSL Bowling Club 2022 (I Willis)

The mural theme of the 'Diggers March' has been inspired by the iconic World War One photographs of Frank Hurley. There are two in particular: 'Troops of the 1st Australian Division walk a duckboard track near Hooge, Belgium, on Oct. 5, 1917'; and the 1917 photograph of 'The Morning After the First Battle of the Passchendaele'.

The next step was finding an artist and Annette approached curator Roger Percy from the Alan Baker Art Gallery. Roger got his contact network going, and in the end, Bowral artist Dave Thomas was commissioned to do the mural. He first completed a mock-up painting of the mural, currently hanging over the Camden RSL Bowling Club bar.

Artist Dave Thomas specialises in commissioned portraits of sportsmen and others, and he relished the challenge presented by a mural. Mr Thomas's website thomaseliteart.com states:

Dave's profile is well known across the sporting entities of the country's east coast but his true critical acclaim lies in the portrait world.

Once funding for the mural had been raised artist David Thomas was presented with a blank canvas (brick wall). He was given a brief to utilize the wall to its full length and create a moving dedication to the ANZAC's.

Dave purchased his paint from his local Inspirational Paints store at BOWRAL and straight away the owner Alfie came on board and donated the primer paint for our greatly flawed wall. As work progressed a quote for a protective coating was sought and two days later Alfie came for a look at the mural and advised Dave that Dulux Paints had also come on board and would donate product; "Surface Shield FP", Anti Graffiti Clearcoat and arrange its application.

Dave Thomas has received help from fellow artists Bob Gurney and Barry Clarke to assist him with the project.

The mural project is still a work-in-progress with much yet to be completed. So far there has been about four weeks of activity to get the mural to its current state.

Work yet to be completed includes: the mural is to be extended to the end of the club-end of the brick wall; the last few lines of the Ode of Remembrance and more poppies are to be added to the artwork.

Ode of Remembrance

They shall grow not old,
as we that are left grow old; Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

Response:

We will remember them Lest we forget

There has been a strong response to the unfinished mural, with passing motorists stopping and asking for selfies with artist David.

'The mural is magnificent', said Annette Clissold. 'Visitors are blown away'.

When the work is done the mural will be handed over to the Camden RSL Sub-Branch as the custodians.



Mural Operation Diggers March by Dave Thomas on a wall adjacent to Camden RSL Bowling Club (Ian Ramsay)

Camden's Early Schoolteachers, The Misses Nethery

Julie Wrigley

Miss Frances Letitia Nethery (1878-1949) and Miss Martha Violet Nethery (1880-1968) were sisters who were local schoolteachers. They were two of the ten children of John Nethery who came as a young man from Ireland to the south coast of Australia in 1863, and married Margaret Soper in 1875. The girls were both born in Kiama. Martha had a twin sister who sadly lived only 4 days. The Nethery family moved from Kiama to Camden about 1884.

The girls' father, John Nethery, was a lessee farmer at Camden Park for a time, and a tenant farmer on land owned by William Henry Paling, of Paling's music fame. In Camden John and Margaret Nethery first lived in John Street. They later moved across the Nepean River to Luker Street Elderslie. John Nethery did well as a dairy farmer and had successful entries in the Camden Show. He was one of the first dairy producers in Camden to send milk by train to Sydney. Unfortunately he died of pneumonia in 1901, aged 54. Frances (Fanny), Martha (Daisy) and their brother, Christopher, lived in the family home in Luker Street at Elderslie for most of their lives.



Camden resident, Mr Frank Stuckey, wrote in 1999, "As

The Nethery sisters (Nethery family)



*Rear: Frances (Fannie), Robert and Thomas.
Front: William, Christopher, father John, Edward, Sidney, mother Margaret, Walter and Martha (Daisy).*

I remember it there were two of the Miss Netherys. The elder one was Fanny and the younger one Martha and both were school teachers. Miss Fanny was employed by Camden Park Estate to teach at the school there. She lived at Elderslie and I can see a picture of her riding the bike with her straw hat and a scarf tied around to keep her hat on. I have no memory of her teaching at Camden school but her sister Martha was at Camden for quite some years and I was one of her pupils."

Other residents recall seeing Miss Nethery ride her pushbike from her home in Elderslie, down across the Cowpasture Bridge, through the main street of Camden, past Camden Hospital and past Belgenny Farm house to her tiny school at Camden Park. Her bicycle had a 'milk-crate' style rack on the back and a basket on the front. She sat up very straight and wore long beige suits with a white blouse and a straw hat. Miss Nethery's old rusty bike was at Camden Park for many years but that was several years ago. The Camden Museum has a copy of a book, 'Missionary Heroines in Many Lands' by E. C. Dawson, London, inscribed 'To Miss Nethery - with all good wishes for Xmas and New Year, from Sibella Macarthur-Onslow, 1923'. Miss Frances Nethery died in 1949.

The girls' eldest brother, Robert, fought in the Boer War and two brothers, William and Walter, fought in World War I. During World War I and II, Frances and Martha contributed to the Red Cross with regular fundraising and sewing. Christopher Nethery stayed living at Elderslie but the other brothers moved away, two of them becoming teachers. Their stories have been told in a new book *From Netherby to Yeronga- a Family History* by William Nethery (2021).

Miss Martha Nethery taught at Camden Central School in the 1920s and later in the 1940s. For her teaching career beyond Camden, Martha walked to Camden station, caught 'Pansy' to Campbelltown and went by train to schools including Mount Kembla, Thirlmere, Homebush Girls, Walcha, and Granville Girls. She was quite strict as a teacher but was well liked and respected. She retired in the late 1940s.

Christopher died in 1963 so Martha was the last of the family living at Elderslie. Camden Museum has a collection of 25 items, mainly homewares and farm tools, donated from the estate of Martha Nethery, including a scythe, three-pronged hoe, pitch fork, branding iron, hurricane lamps, blacksmith's tongs, and 5 and 10 gallon milk cans marked 'J. Nethery, Camden'. The collection of items shows the sort of pioneer life the Nethery family lived on their farm in Elderslie. Relatives who visited the farm with its cows, dog and cat, and the vacant lot next door, remember the little old family home was 'a bit run down, had low ceilings and doorways and no electricity'. Young visitors remember that Martha walked down to the river and picked wildflowers for them. Eventually Martha built a home next door in Luker Street.

Martha Violet Nethery did not marry and died in 1968, aged 87. She is buried with her parents, sister Frances and brother Christopher in an almost unmarked Grave (C128) at St John's Cemetery, Camden. I was pleased to have the site confirmed on a recent visit to the cemetery by finding a small stainless steel plaque at the head of the grave, almost hidden by the leaf litter, with the words "The Nethery Family".



