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The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 27 February 2016
At our Research Centre
62 Railway Parade Granville
Guest Speaker
David Rosenberg
"Inside Pine Gap"

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Granville Historical Society

"A Place where heritage & culture are valued & celebrated."

The Granville Historical Society sends a Happy New Year greeting to all our members.

This year has started off very busy: Students from Granville Boys High School visited our centre on 17 February for a PowerPoint about their local area. This is to give the students a sense of place. They have all come from overseas, and want to learn what was in their area. Late last year we had a visit from William Street Public School students, teachers and parents. That school is trying to teach their students, many of whom are from another country, the value of Australian history. In fact they are taking students to places like The Rocks.

This prompted a thought for a grant to make people aware of the history of Parramatta. After a little research into how this can be accomplished, we decided that we would apply to Parramatta City Council to set up a pilot program that would involve a grant to transport students to places of interest. We have obtained quotes and submitted a budget to run approximately 20 students and two teachers to the Female Factory. They will be collected from school, driven to Fleet Street, tour the Factory and then onto Parramatta Lake for lunch. The aim of this project is to give students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) a sense of place, so that their knowledge and experience is shared with the family. Our members at Granville think that this is so important for our history to be understood and survive - from our interesting Indigenous history to current history and beyond.

Later in 2016, we are planning the launch of a publication that our Newsletter editor Colin Humphreys has been

researching and writing. This project is a Roll of Honour of soldiers from the Granville district who sacrificed their lives in the Great War of 1914-1918, and as well recognises those soldiers who were awarded medals for bravery. This will be launched, probably to coincide with Remembrance Day, either before or after that event. We will also present the painting by Tam Cao of the Prince Alfred Square at the same time. We intend to book Granville Diggers for the event, with a light afternoon or morning tea to be provided. This has yet to be decided by our committee.

Our research on the St John's Royal Gate at Parramatta is moving slowly due to other commitments. This is aimed for completion in 2018 so that we have something to commemorate the end of World War One. Enid Turbit who offered to take over the research of Prince Alfred Square has completed her project, and it is ready for printing. Our society will contribute the budgeted amount towards the cost of that.

Member Arthur Naylor has been researching the WW1 Honour Boards in the Parramatta local government area; how we are going to publish this information has still to be determined.

Barry G Bullivant OAM
President.

<p>OUR FEBRUARY GUEST SPEAKER</p>
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Our guest speaker, David Rosenberg, is the author of a book *Inside Pine Gap: the spy who came in from the desert*, an account of his life working for the American intelligence agency in the middle of the Australian desert.

David worked for 23 years with the United States' most secretive intelligence agency, the National Security Agency (NSA), and served as an American representative at the Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap in Alice Springs for 18 years.

He resigned from the NSA in 2008 to join his wife and family in Sydney.

**DOCTOR CHARLES
ALFRED
McDERMOTT**

By Gloria Wallace*

Growing up in Granville, my family's doctor was Dr Charles McDermott of 18 Carlton St.

My own earliest memory of Dr McDermott was when he gave me an anaesthetic for some dental extractions, when I was three years old. I had fallen from a bench on the back verandah of my grandparents' home at 11 Victoria Street, onto the concrete below, landed on my face, and many of my baby teeth were broken. Mr Haines, a dentist, whose practice was also in Carlton St, removed my broken teeth. I recall Dr McDermott putting a little wire cage with a pad in it, over my face, and asking me if I could count to 10, I still remember the strong smell, so he must have used an open ether anaesthetic.

Dr McDermott was a wonderful family doctor. I remember several occasions when he was called out to members of my family during the night and he would arrive in a military overcoat over his striped pyjamas.

My elder sister Lyn left school at 15 and went to work for Dr McDermott as his receptionist. He was very kind to her and we all loved him. I remember once that Lyn was sick during the school holidays and Dr McDermott asked if I could come in and work for him. I was very nervous about answering the telephone; we did not then have one at home. When Dr McDermott went off to play golf, as was his routine on Wednesday afternoon, I was alone at the surgery when the phone rang. I picked it up and said "Hello" and a male voice asked if this was Dr McDermott's surgery. "Yes", said I. "Well this is Dr McDermott", said the voice, "what are you doing this afternoon?" I replied that there was nothing to do, I had filed all of the patients' records from the morning surgery and I was just reading a book and listening for the phone. He told me that he had a little job for me; he would like me to go and cut some flowers from the garden and arrange them for the surgery and the waiting room. When he returned, he took me into his library and showed me his books and lent me a copy of Marcus Clarke's "For the Term of His Natural Life" which I read, avidly. I did not then know of Dr McDermott's ancestry (described later in this paper) and I now wonder of how much he was conscious.

When we were adults and had moved away from Granville, I was aware that Dr McDermott had retired and moved to the eastern suburbs. My sister, Lyn, kept in touch with him, for a while.

In thinking back on the time my family lived in Granville, I realised what an important part of our lives he was, always prepared to make home calls when we were ill out of surgery hours, always ready with little jokes and many kindnesses. I recently decided to see what I could find out about him.

Dr Charles Alfred McDermott was born at Glebe, Sydney, in 1905, son of Mr. Charles Alfred McDermott, a senior public servant in the Government Printing Office, and his wife Victoria (nee Steele). He had one brother, Darcy Robert and two sisters, Grace Victoria (b. 1903) and Kathleen J. (b. 1904). There must have been an early association with Granville because his mother died in 1910 at Granville, when Charles was only 5 years old. I have not yet discovered the circumstances of her death. Charles' father was remarried in 1916 to Miss Ida S. Fisher, when Charles was 11. Sister, Kathleen J., died at the Sacred Heart Hospice aged 14 years in 1918, when Charles would have been aged 13.

Mr McDermott Senior made a home for his family at 53 Brookes St, Coogee. His obituary at his death in 1936 describes him as a keen sportsman, an oarsman at the Glebe Rowing Club, a noted amateur boxer and a committed Catholic

Education:

It is not surprising, therefore, that Charles McDermott Junior was schooled at the Catholic College, St Ignatius, at Riverview, where he had both a fine sporting career and an excellent academic record. *The Sunday Times*, 15 October 1922, carried an article entitled Charles McDermott, a Riverview Cricketer, Footballer, Oarsman and Runner, and goes on to describe his all round sporting prowess in each of these fields. The same article states that, "on the scholastic side, he is even more brilliant. He won the Aggregate Merit Prize last year and also topped the list in Greek, Mechanics and Mathematics".

Charles was one of three students singled out for newspaper recognition at the completion of his Leaving Certificate in December 1922, gaining Honours (1st Class) in Mathematics, and Honours (2nd Class) in Latin and Greek, and an A pass in French. As Mathematics embraced two sections, his record counted as four Honours, a very high distinction. He was acclaimed the dux of the school, winning the Darcy Cobcroft Prize, for this, as well as the Roger Forrest Hughes Prize for Ancient Classics, the Dr McDonagh Gold Medal for greatest all-round proficiency in studies and sport, and the Bob Macken Prize for Leaving Certificate Mathematics. On 1 March 1923, the Catholic Press announced that Charles would be the recipient of a Bursary of £110 per annum, from the Bursary Endowment Board, to assist him through university.

Charles enrolled in the medical program, at the University of Sydney, successfully completing his academic degree in 1928. Presumably he undertook his clinical residency in Sydney hospitals, because in the 1931 and 1933 electoral rolls, he was still residing at the family home in Coogee.

The young Dr McDermott seems to have been very involved in medical politics and in the various associations of both the Catholic Church and the University of Sydney. In 1929 he was the President of the University Medical Society. His name is mentioned in relation to events such as balls and fund-raisers in the newspapers of that time. In 1930, he chaired a meeting of the Medical Society at which honorary life membership of the Society was conferred on Mr George Bosch, who had made a very large financial donation to the University for the establishment of Professorial Chairs, and Charles was quoted in the press as stressing the importance of both the donation and the Chairs for the development of the Medical Faculty at the University. Dr McDermott was elected Vice President of the Newman Society of the University of Sydney in 1932, a Catholic

association that promoted the interests of those of the Catholic faith within the University.

By 1934, Dr McDermott had left Sydney and was listed on the electoral roll as a doctor, living at Airlie, Kite St, Orange, in the electorate of Calare. His father's newspaper obituary advised that he was originally from Orange, so there may have been an ongoing family association with the town. A dentist, Kevin McDermott, was also registered and practicing in Orange around the same time, who may be related.

Charles' father died in 1936 and his obituary says that two sons, Charles and Darcy, and a daughter, Grace, survived him. Grace is mentioned early in her life in the press, in relation to her excellent achievements as a school student. She appears to have ultimately become a schoolteacher, married a farmer when she was on country service in the Moree area, and lived her life around Moree and Wee Waa. I have found little in records relating to Darcy, unless he is the Darcy McDermott who became a Sydney detective of police; this Darcy McDermott is the right age and vintage, but I have not found any definitive evidence that this Darcy is Charles' brother.

Marriage:

In 1936, still practicing in Orange, Dr McDermott became engaged to Miss Frances Dorothy Stephen. Frances had studied and graduated as a pharmacist at the University of Sydney, so they may have originally met through their health service or university connections. The engagement, with a large photo showing a very beautiful bride-to-be, was announced in the *Sydney Morning Herald* social pages, on 2 October, 1936.

Frances was the twin daughter of Mr and Mrs Alfred Stephen of Weeroona, Orange, and the great great granddaughter of Sir Alfred Stephen. A range of well-publicised social activities surrounded the wedding preparations.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported that Frances and her sister were holidaying with their parents in Sydney on 4 March, 1937, presumably in preparation for the forthcoming wedding.

The wedding took place at St Joseph's Church, Orange, on 31 March, 1937. Frances wore a bridal gown of silver embossed suede satin, with a silver girdle and shoes. It was a simple gown, on medieval lines, with wide, bishop sleeves and a full flowing train cut in one with the skirt. Her veil, which sat on a chaplet of silver leaves, was of cut tulle and was lent to her by her twin sister, Mrs Jim Crawford. Her bouquet was a simple sheaf of water lilies.

Frances was preceded into the church by five bridesmaids wearing white; her sisters, Misses Gwyneth and Miss Alison Stephen, Miss Shellagh Dalton, Miss Suzanne Lyons and Miss Kath Brennan.

Dr McDermott was attended by Mr Cecil O'Dea of Sydney (best man) and Mr Pat Hardy (Sydney), Mr Ross van Breda, Mr H. B. Healey and Dr Clifford Colvin.

Over three hundred guests were received at the reception at the Strand Palais and the bride left in a saunter suit of oatmeal tweed with brown accessories, to travel on the honeymoon.

Overseas travel:

A year later, in April 1938, the Catholic Press announced that Dr C. A. McDermott of Orange, had resigned his role as Secretary/Treasurer of the Goulburn/Bathurst Branch of the Guild of St Luke, due to his "early departure" for England. Other newspaper articles mention that Dr McDermott intended to pursue further studies overseas. The

McDermotts travelled to England through June and July, 1938, aboard the ship *Almkerk*.

They do not appear to have stayed long in England. On 23 May, 1940, *The Dubbo Liberal and Macquarie Advocate* announced that Dr Charles McDermott would be taking the place of Dr Carlyle Hudson at Dubbo, while Dr Hudson was on RAAF service, and that Mrs McDermott would be joining him on the weekend.

World War 2

It is unclear how long Dr McDermott was at Dubbo, but the 1943 Electoral Roll has Dr McDermott living and practicing at Carlton Street, Granville at that time. His initial enlistment, with the rank of Captain, in the Australian Army Medical Corps was 31 December, 1941, at Moore Park, Sydney. However, at the time of his attestation he gave a history of previous military experience in the 14th Australian Field Ambulance, from 1932. Much of his service during the war was within Australia (1,222 days), presumably in the treatment of military personnel returning from the front with wounds. He transferred into active service and served in Papua New Guinea later in the war, attaining the rank of Major. Dr McDermott was discharged from the army on 5 June 1946.

In December 1944, the marriage of Miss Gwyneth Stephen (Australian Army Nursing Service) to Major Robert Melville, Australian Army Medical Corps, AIF, was celebrated at the home of Dr and Mrs C. A. McDermott of Granville (*The Molong Express and Western District Advertiser*, 1 December, 1944. p. 2).

Post War:

After the war, Dr McDermott returned to his practice in Granville. When the British Medical Association's (BMA) Australian Branch opposed the introduction of free medicines in Australia in 1949, Dr McDermott became embroiled in this issue, chairing the BMA's first public consultation at Parramatta Town Hall. The meeting was very volatile, and politically based. It appears that the doctors were not opposed to the introduction of free medicine, they were opposed to the introduction of a pharmaceutical benefit scheme that contained an authorised pharmaceutical schedule, i.e. they did not want there to be any restriction on the medicines that they could prescribe. This battle was lost and the legislation was enacted, with the scheme commencing on 1 July, 1949.

This seems to have been Dr McDermott's final foray into medical politics; after this his only appearance in the newspaper records that I have found has been the published thanks of appreciative patients or his golf scores.

He seems to have devoted the remainder of his working life to his patients, balanced with recreational golf. Unlike his wife...

Frances Mc Dermott led a very active social and sporting life, particularly centred on the ski fields of Australia and Europe. She climbed the Matterhorn, Switzerland, in 1950, and in 1953 headed off for a year-long trip with her sister, travelling in Yugoslavia, Austria, Italy, France, Spain and Turkey. She then commenced guiding overseas ski tours and trips to exotic places for wealthy Sydney patrons. Her "Globetrot" tour, mentioned in the *Women's Weekly* in 1962, tells of the tour she was escorting along the Dalmatian Coast, also taking in Southern Russia, Afghanistan, the Khyber Pass, Pakistan, and India with a highlight being the walk to the Annapurna Base Camp (Frances' third Himalayan trip).

Ultimately, Charles and Frances retired to 2/2f Greenoaks Ave, Darling Point, and the surgery in Carlton St was sold. The Municipal Library has replaced the beautiful house and gardens, now long gone.

Dr Charles Alfred McDermott died in 1991, with Frances' death following in 1995.

Family history:

Some interesting ancestors of Dr Charles McDermott

Dr McDermott was descended from William Tunks, first fleet *Sirius* marine and his wife, Sarah Lyons, a convict per 2nd fleet *Lady Juliana*. Sarah Lyons had been convicted at The Old Bailey on 25 June 1788, for the theft of a piece of handkerchief silk. This couple was Dr McDermott's gr. gr grandparents on his mother's side, via her mother, Susannah Tunks (1844-1916), via her father, John Tunks (1795-1848 son of William and Sarah) and his wife Phoebe nee Tomlinson.

Phoebe Tomlinson was the daughter of Robert Tomlinson, a Parramatta blacksmith, who was a convict per the ship *Canada* and his wife Sarah Lester, a convict per ship *Glatton*. Robert had been convicted of stealing a watch, 3 June 1796, in Digby, Cheshire, while Sarah was convicted 23 November 1801, of stealing a piece of printed cotton from a shop.

Some interesting ancestors of Frances Stephen

Dr McDermott's wife, Frances' third gr. grandfather was William Cox, soldier, explorer and builder of the first road across the Blue Mountains, and his wife Rebecca Upjohn. Frances' descent comes via their son George Cox who married Elizabeth Bell, daughter of Archibald Bell and Maria Kitching.

Archibald Bell, a soldier/magistrate of the Hawkesbury, and ultimately a member of Legislative Council was Frances' 3rd gr. grandfather, and he was heavily implicated in the deposing of Governor William Bligh, being that night in charge of the guard at Government House.

George Cox and Elizabeth (nee Bell) had a daughter, Rebecca Maria Cox. She married the Reverend Alfred Hamilton Stephen (Frances' gr. grandfather) who in turn, was the son of the Right Honorable Sir Alfred Stephen (Frances' 2nd gr. grandfather), Attorney General of Tasmania and later Chief Justice and Legislator, architect of the NSW Parliament, member of the Legislative Council, Chairman of the Law Reform Commission and holder of numerous civil appointments. When Sir Alfred died in 1894, with an estate registered for probate of £12,000, his funeral was one of the largest Sydney had ever seen.

The Biscuit King. – Frances' twin sister married Jim Crawford of Mayfield Station, Orange. In 1946, Jim inherited £417,393, an enormous amount of money for the time, from Britain's "Biscuit King", his uncle, the late Mr A. H. Crawford.

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*Gloria Wallace is a member of the Granville Historical Society