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The Granville Guardian

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The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 28 May 2016
At our Research Centre
62 Railway Parade Granville
Guest Speaker
Barbara Bondfield
"Guide Dogs"

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Granville Historical Society

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

I can't believe that we are half way through the year. Much of our work has been with the local schools; it would appear that term two which ends 1 July has been about local history, and what has been very popular is our *Forest to Factory* PowerPoint, which is a shortened version of our usual presentation with the same name. Teachers are trying to give the students a sense of place by teaching them about the local area. We now have five schools that we work with in our region.

The next matter that affects the Society is the council mergers which have been forced through by the NSW government. The government says the amalgamation will lead to better services for ratepayers, but the problems associated with this are huge. Firstly our elected councillors have been removed; they have lost their phones, computers, remuneration, office, and access to any files of the area they represented. There will not be any true local representation for the people of NSW until elections in September 2017.

The NSW government is saying that nothing will change, but it is worrying that the administrators put in charge of the area are from a Liberal background and from the North Shore. This begs the question, "What knowledge will they use to provide for local people?" The Parramatta City Council has made a land grab of all the areas that provide a decent income. The one our Society falls into is the new Cumberland Council, comprising parts of Merrylands, Greystanes, Auburn and South Granville. With the amount of development and with no person to represent the ratepayer the developers will have open slather.

It will be interesting to see if the new councils will scrap the heritage committees and what importance will be placed on

heritage into the future. We will still be providing a service to Parramatta Council as in the past; we have received a communication from the new administration asking us to do this. We have just received a grant for \$4,906.00 to take 20 students from local schools on a tour of the Parramatta Female Factory. For this - and with the cooperation of the schools involved - we might be able to provide the excursion to more than the two tours the funding was provided for. This will take part in the late winter or early spring.

There are massive developments going up in Granville and Parramatta, in huge blocks, higher than ever before. Traffic and movement around the city are even more difficult than before, and you need to be young and able to walk freely to go anywhere in the city. One wonders how the infrastructure will cope, how much water will we need to sustain the growing population, how much green space will be left to get people out of the large glass and concrete structures they will call home.

This Society will continue to document the history of the area, and remain a source of information for students at all levels of learning, family historians and professional consultants, who ring us on a daily basis. Currently we are helping a young university student who is studying the Granville rail disaster, and she is overwhelmed with the information that is available to her.

The Society has always supported the Parramatta Female Factory Friends; we donated \$200 when they first started some time ago. Recently we discovered that the Society, although a member, did not have a vote. Now June and I have joined as members so we will have an input into the organisation. We will support it and the work and research it is doing to protect this extremely important convict built site.

Our Speaker for 28th May is Barbara Bondfield and her guide dog "Sam" - we have been asked please do not pat or handle Sam.

Barry G Bullivant OAM
President

<p>HOW THE MAIL GOT THROUGH IN 1898</p>
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Australia Post now has three speeds for sending letters – Express Post, with guaranteed next day delivery; Priority, with delivery in one to four business days; and Regular, which takes up to two days longer than Priority.

Back in 1898, letter deliveries weren't so well organised. A letter from Guildford resident G.D. Humphrey to the editor of the *Cumberland Argus* published on 8 October 1898 gives an indication of the inefficient mail service of that time:-

A letter addressed to Guildford is taken from Granville Post Office (by a youth on horseback) to Guildford Post Office, a dilapidated shingle-roofed shanty somewhere on the wilds along Woodville Road almost out of the pale of civilisation. This arrangement evidently dates back to the pre-railway days when there was probably something of a "settlement" round about the afore-said shanty, and before the

present flourishing township next to the station was in existence. The letter lies at this place a day or so, and is then sent back to Granville marked “try Merrylands” from which place it is delivered by the local postman, or it may probably be sent to Guildford Post Office, returned to Granville marked “try Guildford Station”. It is then forwarded to the post office at Guildford, and if the owner happens to call and ask for it, well and good, but if not, it is again returned to Granville marked “try Merrylands”, and so eventually gets delivered. To avoid this delay, the people on one side of the line at Guildford have their letters addressed to Merrylands, and the people on the other side have theirs addressed to South Granville.¹

Another letter writer, W.S. Forbes, of ‘Springfield’, Guildford was critical of the rail service, and telegram deliveries:

The train service is bad, our railway stations are mere sheds, tickets cannot be purchased after 6 pm and one official acts as Station Master/Postmaster, Porter, Sweeper, Ticket Collector, Lamp gleaner, Signaller etc. at each station. Why, Dead-Dog Gulch couldn't get much less attention from the authorities than we do.

It is quite possible for anyone of us to receive a telegram from Sydney or elsewhere if we happen to visit the station, but this promptness is not probable. I actually reached my home at Guildford several hours in advance of a telegram which I once despatched from Newcastle, though I paid a special fee of three shillings for a messenger, and I left Newcastle by steamer eight hours after sending the telegram².

AUSSIE TOWNS

Here's a website of interest to history lovers and people who like to travel throughout Australia. It's "Aussie Towns" compiled by well-known journalist and travel writer Bruce Elder. I became aware of the site after I deviated from the Hume Freeway and



Lutheran Church at Walla Walla

drove through the Riverina for an overnight stopover at Wagga Wagga, while returning from a visit to family at Geelong. The trip took us past a couple of historic villages I had never heard of – Jindera, 16 kilometres out of Albury, and Walla Walla, a further 23 kilometres to the north. Back in Sydney, I consulted Google and was directed to the Aussie Towns website, www.aussietowns.com.au.

Jindera and Walla Walla were established by families of German Lutherans who had travelled a thousand kilometres overland from the Barossa Valley in South Australia. German migrants, fleeing religious persecution in their homeland, began arriving in South Australia in 1838 and had a considerable

¹ *Cumberland Argus*, 1 October 1898, p. 8

² *Cumberland Argus*, 8 October 1898, p. 7

impact on the new colony. Most were farmers and farm workers, or blacksmiths and carpenters. After 1850, German settlers began to spread into Victoria and New South Wales. In 1868, a group of 56 people from eight families started out from Ebenezer near Nuriootpa, travelling in 14 waggons, and followed the Murray River up to Albury. They found suitable land for a new settlement that they named Ebenezer after their South Australian home, but this was later changed to Walla Walla, a Wiradjuri word.

Other members of German families in the Barossa followed, and by 1872 there German settlements near Albury at Jindera, Walla Walla, Bethel and Gerogery. Today, Walla Walla has a population of about 600, and its Lutheran Church, built in 1924, is said to be the largest Lutheran place of worship in New South Wales.



Howlong's Court House Hotel (1902)

Twenty-nine kilometres west of Albury, Howlong is an attractive border town on the Murray River that is notable for its well-preserved 19th century buildings. The name is another Wiradjuri Aboriginal word. Brothers John and Joseph Hawdon were the first European settlers on a 25,900 hectare property they named Howlong Station in 1837. "Aussie Towns" lists 13 interesting historic buildings in the town.

Lockhart, an hour's drive west of Albury, is known as the verandah town, after the restoration of its historic town verandahs in the 1990s. It's noted for its remarkable main street's shady verandahs, decorative iron work and beautifully restored facades. It's classified by the National Trust as a fine example of typical turn-of-the-century architecture.



Junee Railway Station

Junee was established as a railway town and its main attraction is the huge Roundhouse and Museum and Railway Station that dominates the centre of the town. The railway complex, together with a number of Victorian period buildings, gives the centre of town a charming old-fashioned ambience. The State Heritage

Office says collectively, the pubs (and former hotels) the three quarter century old shops and the Broadway Stores, the former Athenium Theatre, the railway station, the banks, the post office, the engine roundhouse and other old buildings all provide a social history of a town that is unique in New South Wales.

Colin Humphreys