

Published by Granville Historical Society Inc.



The Granville Guardian

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Volume 18 Issue 7

August 2011

The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 27th August 2011 at our Research Centre
62 Railway Parade Granville
Executive Meeting 1.00 pm

Guest Speaker:
Bonney Djuric
Parramatta Female Factory
Precinct (Parragirls)
Topic Parramatta Girls Home

Our Centre is open every Wednesday from 10 am to 4 pm and on the fourth Saturday of the month for personal research. Visitors and members of family history societies are welcome.
A fee applies for non-members

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Granville Historical Society

A Place where heritage & culture are valued & celebrated

Dear Members, Our Parramatta Project has moved up a notch; it was decided to cover the Old Kings School site as well as the Parramatta Jail if it closes. June had a rant online to *The Advertiser*, a copy of which follows.

June Bullivant writes:

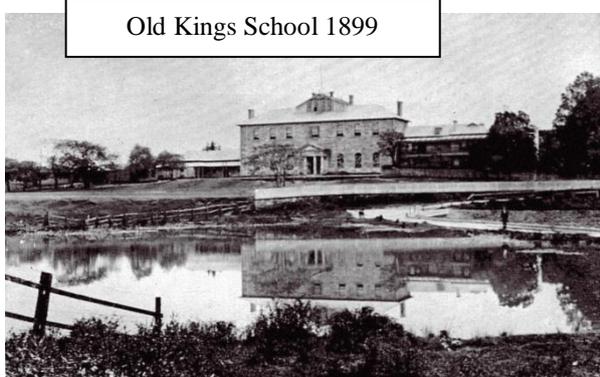
Posted on 11 Aug 11 at 11:58am

Parramatta needs Tourism, Parramatta needs a massive centre which is not locked up by any one group, it needs to be available for all people to enjoy. Join the Old Kings School with the only intact Female Factory in Australia, the old Catholic Orphanage and now Parramatta Jail, you have a massive tourism area within three blocks, all built during the early 1800s and we have history, heritage, the arts, education, tourism, across the road and river from Parramatta Park and Old Government House, a massive education and tourism project from the Aboriginal people to immigrant population of today, we need someone with foresight to drive this, we need local, state and federal governments to work together to achieve this.

The area is suffering demolition by decay, it needs to be tidy, it needs to be clean. Get rid of the garbage bins and the street barrier away from the oldest wall in the Female Factory, remove the staff cars to the enclosed yard, fix the potholes, make decent signs to alert people of the significance and the history of the area and run the Loop bus up and around, make one of the unoccupied buildings an information centre. Use your local tour operators who know the history, put it on the Council website, and put it in Council publications. Ensure that when the Sydney Festival is held, the area is included; it is just across the river over the footbridge to Old Government House and historic Parramatta Park.

To start with, this will not take a lot of money; it is just Council maintenance, but don't spend the money on in-depth studies to see if it is feasible, use your historical societies, the Darug Tribal Aboriginal Corporation, Parragirls Parramatta Female Factory Precinct, Parramatta Female Factory Action Group and the Save the Kings School Group to tell you the history. Use Council staff to draw up a proposal and work like the State Member for Granville, Premier and State Treasurer, who was responsible for the old age pension, the widows pension, the child endowment, a giant of a man who worked to keep his community alive during the Great Depression, standing 6 foot 4 inches plus a giant bowler hat, Jack Lang.

The editor of *The Advertiser* contacted June and asked for a photo and an interview regarding The Old Kings School, this was attended to on Monday 14th August. The society has contacted *The Sydney Magazine* and suggested they feature the Postcode of the 2150 area and has sent photos of the three areas involved to illustrate their history. The society has also sent an article to the *Australian Family Tree Connections* seeking information, images and help to promote the site, inviting people to take a holiday and visit the area when in Sydney. The Society has sent an email to the Granville & Parramatta State members, the Parramatta City Councilors, and the NSW Premier to encourage them to extend the Sydney Festival to include the three sites which are a short walk across the river. The Society has applied for a grant and if successful will be able to have brochures printed, to purchase fabric to make bonnet kits, and to finance a plaque for the Old Catholic Orphanage. There has been no further contact by



the *New Idea*; we can only assume that the interest by the editor was not picked up by the journalists. The Society has decided to contact people of note and community standing and convince them to lend their support and give permission to name them on our website. The Society also resolved to contact Parramatta Council to improve signage to the venues, clean the perimeters and extend the Loop bus to cover the areas of interest.

Holy Family School has asked us to research the history and mount a display for mid September, we are working on that. 1st Granville Scouts have asked for a photographic display for their 100th Birthday, on the 11th September 2011, that is being worked on, and the Rosehill School is having an Open Day on the 3rd September 2011. George Pearce is speaking about his time at the school and we are working on that also. The Darug Tribal Corporation has expressed gratitude for the PowerPoint presentation *The Aboriginal Contribution to Australia* and has posted it on their website.

Barry G Bullivant OAM
President

ROSEHILL SCHOOL'S 125 YEARS

Rosehill Public School is about to celebrate its 125th birthday. Celebrations involving the current school community will be held at the school next Wednesday 31 August,

while on Saturday 3 September all past students and staff have been invited to attend an Open Day.

Rosehill Public School was built in 1886 on land that was part of the Elizabeth Farm estate owned by the Macarthur family until 1880 when the estate was sold to leading Sydney solicitor, Septimus Alfred Stephen.

In 1883, Stephen subdivided 140 acres (56 hectares) of the estate into 383 allotments that were sold at auction in two stages. The first, on 17 February, comprised 183 blocks between A'Beckett's Creek and Hassall Street, including Elizabeth Farm House and its surrounds, and Macarthur Cottage, built by John Macarthur in 1824 as a second house on the estate, and now known as Hambledon Cottage. The second auction, on 26 May 1883, sold off 90 of the 200 allotments offered in River Road, Grand Avenue, and George, Hassall, Weston, Oak, Hope, Aston, Alfred and Arthur Streets.

Industrial progress in Granville was starting to gain momentum in 1883. Bergan's woollen mill, Marsh Brothers tannery, and the engineering works of Hudson Brothers and William Ritchie were well established. There were new Roman Catholic, Church of England and Wesleyan churches, and a School of Arts building had just been completed. The town consisted of about 460 houses but regular land auctions were bringing home seekers into the area, and now a new housing area at Elizabeth Farm had attracted 250 buyers in three months. This had unleashed pressure on the education department to build a new school to prevent overcrowding at the Granville Public School, opened in 1880, and Parramatta, established in 1873.

Communities at Harris Park and Elizabeth Farm both felt they had the best claim to any new school. In April 1885, more than a hundred Harris Park residents petitioned for a school to be built on the western side of Harris Park railway station. Two months later, property agents Mills and Pile, which had handled the successful Elizabeth Farm auctions, offered the education department a choice of two suitably large blocks at Elizabeth Farm, near the intersection of Weston and Prospect Streets. This was followed by a petition, signed by several hundred supporters of the Elizabeth Farm proposal. The department was not convinced of the need for a school at Harris Park, and gave the green light for the acquisition of a 2½ acre (one hectare) site in Prospect Street Elizabeth Farm. Two hundred Harris Park residents then lodged a petition objecting to this proposal, but the department stood firm on its decision, and drew up plans for a school to accommodate about 150 pupils. Deciding on an appropriate name presented it with a quandary. 'Harris Park Public School' was out of the question because of the local residents' opposition to the location. The names Rosehill and Elizabeth Farm had no departmental support, and so it was decided the school should be named Parramatta East.

Parramatta and Granville councils then joined the controversy. Parramatta sent a deputation to the minister protesting against erecting the school on an "unsuitable site" on the Elizabeth Farm estate. It had a long-standing view that a school should be built at or near Church Street. Granville council responded with a resolution declaring the site most suitable, and stating its opposition to any move to erect the school elsewhere. The department carried out another review that found that very few children at Harris Park had to travel more than half a mile to school, and that the establishment of the school at Elizabeth Farm would remove the need for a school at Harris Park. This persuaded the minister to reject the Harris Park claims and reaffirm the plan for a school at Elizabeth

Farm. Builder William Taylor signed a contract to erect the school building, and it opened on Monday 13 September 1886.

Enrolments at the new school proved that the government had made a sound decision. Headmaster John Cole wrote 64 names on the school roll in the first week and 127 in the first month. At the end of the year, the number of enrolments stood at 183. Year's end also brought a change in name; the contentious Parramatta East was changed to Granville North.

New pupils continued to arrive at a steady rate in 1887 and when the number had reached 250 by May, the school had to use a newly-built outdoor weather shed as an additional classroom. The rapid growth in the school population forced the government to approve the erection of a new two-classroom building in the middle of 1888, which when occupied in 1889, allowed the school to open an infants department. Also in 1888, a headmaster's residence was built on the western end of the Prospect Street frontage. This building was demolished in the 1960s. There was a further change in 1896 when the 1886 building was enlarged, increasing capacity to about 350 pupils.

The name of the school changed again in 1912, at the request of parents, to Rosehill Public School. The original 1886 and 1889 buildings were re-modelled in 1914 to provide additional classrooms, and in 1918 a new two-storey building containing four classrooms was built. This raised the number of classrooms to 12 for an enrolment of 510. But the growth in pupil numbers continued and reached crisis point in 1925 with a total of nearly 650 children enrolled. Three portable classrooms were brought in as planning went ahead for new accommodation. In 1926, the Education Department agreed to purchase a two acre (0.8 hectare) block on the east side of Arthur Street to enlarge the playground area, and in 1929 a new infants building was erected, giving the school 17 classrooms, and ending the overcrowding.

Enrolment reached a peak of 674 in 1935 but then declined until the school became Rosehill Girls Junior High in 1966, but five years later it reverted to a mixed primary and infants school. The pre-school opened in 1977 and Arthur Street between Prospect and Virginia Streets was closed in 1978, giving the school an undivided playground.

[Sources: Rosehill School Centenary Booklet, 1986

T. Fowle, *History of Granville 1919*

Sydney Morning Herald, 15 February 1883, p. 13, 19 February 1883, p. 7, 22 May 1883, p. 11, 28 May 1883, p. 4

Heritage Database, NSW Heritage Branch, accessed 8 August 2011

http://www.heritage.nsw.gov.au/07_subnav_04_2.cfm?itemid=2241027]

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