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The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00pm on Saturday 25 October 2014
At our Research Centre
62 Railway Parade Granville

Speaker

Frances Bluhdorn

‘Who was Matthew Anderson Esq.?’

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PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Granville Historical Society

“A Place where heritage & culture are valued & celebrated.”

The 100th anniversary of World War 1 in German New Guinea PowerPoint proved popular with the membership of the society; many members had not realised that Australia was involved and to what extent. The society has offered the Granville RSL Sub branch memorial plaques for their 2015 Anzac Dawn service; this will feature photographs of WW1 from the *Cumberland Argus*, and also photos from members who have donated images of their ancestors.

I was fortunate to be asked if I would attend the panel for the selection of four young people to go to Gallipoli in 2015. The eight young ones, who had intimated they would like to go, gave presentations and were asked questions. Some were as young as fourteen, eventually the four were chosen and we look forward to their presentations. They were knowledgeable about WW1 and expressed an affinity with the history of “The Great War”.

The society has worked with many consultants over the period, information is swapped for a copy of their work, and this has resulted in many additions to our archives that are worthwhile. We have just finished another project with ICE where we supplied information for Good Street. It was interesting to see the way in which the young people are engaged in our history and how passionate they are.

We were contacted by the Daily Telegraph for information; the series of stories have not started yet, so we will have to keep an eye on what is to be printed.

We attended the workshops on the future of the Parramatta Female Factory. The amount of high rise development proposed is unbelievable; the Government wants to sell off

the land with no guaranteed plan for the convict buildings and many people are not comfortable with what is proposed.

The society still has not heard if we were successful with the 100th Anniversary ANZAC grants, so some of our intended works may have to be curtailed due to a lack of funding that would have allowed us to publish the results of intended research.

November is our last meeting for 2014 and of course our Christmas Party. A Garden salad and meats will be provided, with members asked to bring a plate of whatever they fancy to add to the festive fair. The time of starting will be 12.30pm. Look forward to seeing you there.

President
Barry G Bullivant OAM

**LOCAL OPTION POLLS
IN THE LATE 19th &
EARLY 20th CENTURIES**

Local option polls giving residents a say on the opening of new hotels in their local area had become part of the democratic process in most Australian colonies by the late 1890s. The measures were introduced following pressure by temperance groups.

Temperance advocates had been active in the Australian colonies since the 1850s, organising public lectures on the evils of alcohol, and lobbying governments to regulate the liquor industry. They flourished after the main international temperance organisations, the Independent Order of Rechabites, Sons of Temperance, and the Order of Good Templars, expanded into Australia. Then in 1881, an inter-colonial convention of temperance groups decided to form alliances to press for local option. Their aim was to secure for all the colonies local option measures giving residents the right to veto new hotel licences in their own local areas. This was where they differed from the American temperance movement whose aim was total prohibition. However there was one colonial group in favour of prohibition - the New South Wales Order of Good Templars.¹

The temperance movement had already gained significant political muscle by then. Some of its leading advocates had been elected to parliament, including the President of the Local Option League, William Henson, the chairman of the New South Wales Temperance Alliance, John Davies, John Roseby from the Sons of Temperance. and William John Foster. Foster was Attorney-General in 1877-78 in the Parkes-Robertson government, and in 1883 would be appointed Justice Minister, responsible for the implementation of new liquor reforms. Mr Davies had told the annual meeting of the Temperance Alliance in February 1881 that a large number of members elected to the

¹ *Alcohol and Temperance in Modern History*, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara California, 2003

new parliament [in November 1880] had pledged support for the proposed reforms. The changes, passed by the incoming government of Sir Henry Parkes, included local option. The local option polls were mandated to be held at the time of the local council election.² The first local option poll in Granville, held on 21 March 1885 in conjunction with the election for the inaugural Granville Borough Council, resulted in a strong vote against the granting of any new hotel licences. The outcome signalled that future applicants for licences in Granville would have a slim chance of success. Despite this, there were still aspiring publicans hopeful of being granted a licence. John Smith, one of the earliest settlers in Parramatta Junction, and the owner of the first cottage built on Dog Trap Road, was involved in one of these applications. Smith – like James Niblett, who built the first house in Granville, and later the Granville Hotel in 1881 - arrived in Sydney in 1853 to work on the construction of the Sydney to Parramatta railway. When the railway was completed, he purchased a large block of land near the railway station and established an orchard. Smith sold most of the estate in 1883 and bought several acres of the former Church and School lands at Guildford. In 1884 he built a two-storey brick building at the intersection of Guildford and Dog Trap Roads for the express purpose of operating it as a hotel. However the Licensing Court rejected the proposal on the ground that there was no need for a hotel in the area.³

After Hudson Brothers moved its large engineering works to Granville from Redfern a number of investors fancied their chances of operating a hotel in the vicinity. In 1887, Thomas Hood put forward a proposal for a 28-room hotel in Factory Street Clyde. Police objected on the grounds that granting the licence was not justified and would also disturb the quiet and good order of the neighbourhood. Hudson Brothers objected on similar grounds and the licence was refused. In 1889 the Licensing Court rejected an application by James Finn for a licence for premises in Clyde Street Clyde, and another by Frederick Penny for a 38-room hotel in the Granville Clyde area, while Charles Henry Curtis unsuccessfully sought approval to transfer a licence from Potts Hill to Clyde.⁴

Clearly the majority of voters and local police were opposed to the granting of new licences. And there was a further victory for temperance groups on this issue after the election of the government led by Joseph Carruthers in the 1904 election. Carruthers, the son of a leading temperance campaigner and the brother of a Methodist clergyman, introduced a local options program that offered the public the opportunity to reduce the number of public houses. The legislation also set up special Licensing Courts to take evidence and consider whether to cut back the number of existing hotel licences in electorates around the State. A court began a hearing in Granville on 12 May 1908 and heard arguments for and against continuing the licences of the town's four hotels – the Royal, the Granville, the Vauxhall Inn and the Royal Exchange. The inquiry resulted in orders to close 292 hotels State-wide, – almost 10 per cent of the total number in NSW. Seven hotels in the Parramatta electorate would be closed and two in the electorate of Granville – the Royal Exchange Hotel on Woodville Road, and the Railway Hotel in Auburn. Temperance groups made further progress when they succeeded in having six

² NSW Parliament, Former Members Biographical Register; M. Rutledge, Foster, William John, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed online, <http://adb.anu.>; NSW Parliament, Former Members Biographical Register;

³ *Cumberland Mercury*, 25 March 1885, p. 2; Fowlie, p. 90; *Evening News*, 25 October 1884

⁴ *SMH*, 22 April 1887, p. 4; *Cumberland Argus and Fruitgrower's Advocate*, 19 October 1889 p. 8, 19 January 1889 p. 6, 19 April 1890 p. 3

o'clock closing introduced in 1916 during World War 1, but prohibition was a step too far.⁵

⁵ *The Premiers of NSW 1856-2005*, eds. Clune and Turner, Federation Press Annandale, 2005; *Cumberland Argus*, 16 May 1908 p. 8; *SMH*, 22 May 1908 p. 11, 17 October 1908 p. 11