

Published by Granville Historical Society Inc.



The Granville Guardian

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Volume 18 Issue 8

September 2011

The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 24th September 2011 at our Research Centre
62 Railway Parade Granville
Executive Meeting 1.00 pm

Guest Speaker September
Suzanne Voytas
"Ship Elizabeth" Irish convicts to the Parramatta Female Factory

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 September 2011

A Place where heritage & culture are valued & celebrated

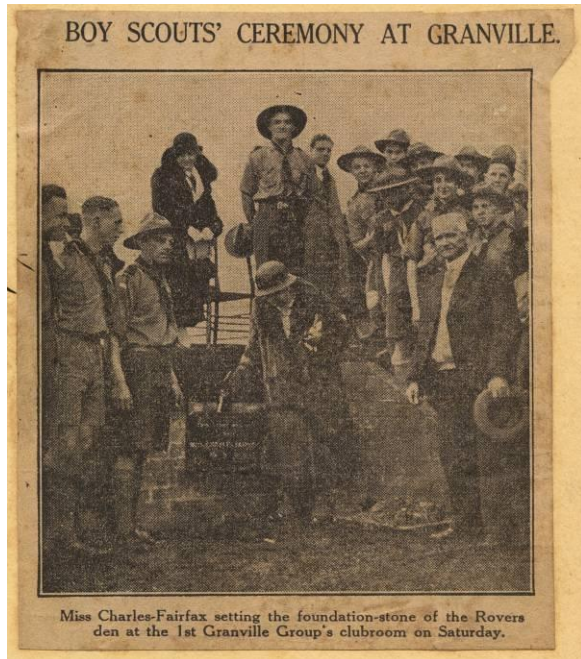
September has seen a huge disruption of our rooms. The builders have ripped up the floor. Mess everywhere, boxes everywhere! Also we have been very busy with three photographic displays, the first at the Rosehill Public School,



their 125th Anniversary, saw the school mount a massive celebration to mark this important milestone. Our part was to mount a display of photographs.

A good day was had by all with a lot of old schoolies attending on the day, thank you to our members who attended for the work and support.

The Holy Family East Granville has asked for our help in collecting the history of the school. This was as hard as could be, but thanks to the work of Karen Garrard we have managed to source the history and will be adding a lot of material to our archives including photographs of the pupils, staff and letters of importance that will add an in-depth history of this important part of Granville history. The holder of the information is David Grahame who is Pete Grahame's brother.



The third display was for the 1st Granville Scouts who celebrated their 100th Birthday on Sunday 11th September 2011. The day was well attended; photographs were nonexistent until a talk to Andrew Snelling uncovered archives that were held by the scouts. The Society has offered to catalogue and store the original copies of the records but making digital copies to distribute them to 1st Granville, This way the records will be in acid-free conditions and also be in digital form for sharing with others. Our research turned up a photo of George Beresford King who was a founder of the troop and many items of interest when Miss Charles-Fairfax laid the foundation stone of the Rovers den in 1932. Also we have obtained photos of the Haigh Family who donated the land which

the 1st Granville Scouts is on, thanks to member David Eglon who obtained these for us to copy. The society congratulates 1st Granville on reaching their 100th birthday and for entrusting us with their precious archives. They will be looked after and stored correctly.

We had an email from Ray Connor who wrote the story on the Granville Train Disaster for the screen play *Day of the Roses*. He has donated all his research notes to the society. Four large boxes from Queensland have been collected by Barry Goabee who is a member of the Granville Memorial Trust and writing a book on the disaster, and who was ten minutes away on holiday, spooky! The Society is mounting a photographic display in the Granville Town Hall on the 18th January 2012 for the 35th Anniversary.

The Granville Historical Society, Di Bartok (Parramatta Advertiser) & Julie Owen (Federal Member for Parramatta) have successfully helped with the formation of a group of interested stakeholders to be called The Heritage Parramatta Association with the aim to turn the Parramatta Riverside precinct comprising the Parramatta Female Factory, The Old Kings School, The Old Catholic Orphanage and the Parramatta Gaol into a Heritage, Arts, Culture, Tourist area for the people of Australia. This group will work with both sides of politics in three levels of Government to achieve this aim. Let us hope that this project will be successful and the people of Australia will come to Parramatta to visit the important buildings of this precinct.

Barry G Bullivant OAM
President

JULIE OWENS COMMENDS SCOUTS IN PARLIAMENT
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The Member for Parramatta, Julie Owens, congratulated the 1st Granville Scouts on their 100 years of continuous scouting in a speech in Federal Parliament last week.

Ms Owens said there were other scout groups that preceded Granville scouts, Parramatta for one, but all of them took a recess during the First World War, the Depression or the Second World War.

‘Granville scouts stuck it out through everything a century threw at them and they are recognised as the oldest continuous scout group in New South Wales,’ she said.

Ms Owens said:

‘In 1911 it all started when a couple of young Granville boys joined 1st Parramatta scouts for a few months to see what scouting was about. Not surprisingly they liked it and they managed to convince a young patrol leader George King to defect and come down to Granville to start a new scout troop. He did and they picked well.

‘George King led the group for 44 years. The group has been in continuous existence since that day in 1911 sometimes growing, sometimes going through more difficult times—but always there for the young boys and, more recently, girls in the area.

‘The troop did not go into recess during the First World War, even though all of its scout leaders went to war, leaving 16-year-old Roy Black to keep the troop going under the guidance of an adult helper. The troop made it through the Depression too, and kept going through the Second World War, although it was reduced to just one leader, the founding leader, George King, who had been with the troop by that stage for nearly 30 years. The members of 1st Granville were dedicated to scouting, a quality evident in the lifelong commitment of its members, many of whom went on to found other groups from Fairfield to Castle Hill, Merrylands, Auburn and Lidcombe.

‘The scouts in Granville are part of over 68,000 scouts in Australia which makes it the largest youth movement in the nation. They provide young Aussies with fun and challenging opportunities to grow through adventure. Within that movement, the Granville scouts have pioneered many developments in scouting. They were the first to register a Rover crew of 18 to 26-year-olds in NSW, and they pioneered senior scouting, now called Venturers for 15 to 18-year-olds for 20 years before it became an official section of the scout movement.’

Ms Owens told Parliament the 1st Granville scouts are enjoying a period of growth in both numbers and in community recognition of the contribution they make and have made.

‘I congratulate them on 100 years. I commend the contribution that 1st Granville scouts have made and wish them a fabulous second century. Well done 1st Granville.’

<p style="text-align: center;">COLONIAL JUDGE F.W. MEYMOTT</p>
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Judge F.W. Meymott was a controversial member of the Judiciary from 1863 until he was sacked from his position as a judge of the New South Wales District Court in 1880.

His dismissal followed a Royal Commission into his treatment of jurors, witnesses and lawyers in his courts. He was a resident of Parramatta Junction (Granville) for five of the 17 years he served as a judge.

Frederick William Meymott was born at Richmond in the English county of Surrey on 21 May 1808, the son of John Gilbert Meymott, a London solicitor, and his wife Sarah. He studied law from the age of 18, and practised as a special pleader until he was admitted to the English Bar in 1847. He was an accomplished musician with a fine singing voice, and regularly attended musical functions held by the Duke of Wellington. He was a close friend of Charles Dickens and William Thackeray, and was acknowledged as an expert in eighteenth century literature. But he decided to give up this life to come to Australia. His reasons are not known, but his brother, Charles, a surgeon, made several visits to the Australian colonies from 1848 and was granted medical registration in New South Wales in 1858.

Frederick Meymott was admitted to the New South Wales Bar four weeks after his arrival in Sydney on the *General Hewitt* on 11 September 1850. He soon took an active role in the colony's courts, and was prominent in Sydney's social life, achieving a reputation as Sydney's most eligible bachelor.¹

Meymott continued his interest in music, had two of his own compositions, ballads, published in 1851 and 1854, and became a supporter of struggling artists and singers. He was appointed Joint Parliamentary Draftsman in 1856 and Crown Prosecutor for Cumberland and the Southern District in 1859, but was suspended from this position after a complaint about him by a judge. He moved from Sydney to Picton and lived in a landmark property, Abbotsford House, at times travelling to the Circuit Court in Wollongong by horseback across the mountains.²

Meymott was elevated to the Bench as District Court Judge for the Southern Division in December 1863, and two years later was transferred to the Northern Division in a similar position. On 31 January 1866, he married Blanche Abercrombie Wild, a member of a pioneering Camden district family. He was 57 and she was a beautiful young woman of 21, an accomplished poet and talented musician. They had met when she attended her first ball at Goulburn. Her father, John Benton Wild, was a Member of the Legislative Council from 1845 to 1848, and was the son of Lieutenant John Wild of the

¹ H.T.H Holt, *A court rises: the lives and times of the judges of the District Court of New South Wales (1859-1959)*, Law Foundation of NSW, 1976, pp. 73-74; Australian Medical Pioneers Index, <http://www.medicalpioneers.com>, accessed 13 September 2011; *Sydney Morning Herald (SMH)*, 8 October 1850, p. 2; State Records NSW, Index to Unassisted Arrivals NSW 1842-1855; Obituary, *SMH*, 24 December 1883, p. 5

² *SMH*, 12 July 1851, p. 3, 6 October 1854, p. 1, *SMH* 19 September 1856, p. 8; Holt, p. 73; *SMH*, 21 June 1859, 11 October 1860, p. 3

Northamptonshire Regiment, who had arrived in the colony in 1817. After his discharge in 1822, Lieutenant Wild was granted two thousand acres near The Oaks, which he named Vanderville. Blanche's mother, Emmeline Ann Gaudry, was a descendant of Diane Kable, who was born at Sydney Cove in 1788, and who was the first white child born in Australia who survived to maturity.³

Frederick and Blanche Meymott had their first child, Frederick, at Abbotsford, Picton, on 22 March 1867. In the following year they rented *Woodside*, a house on a 27 acre estate at Parramatta Junction (Granville). [The property was known as *Carhullen* in the 1880s] Charles Hall, a merino wool expert with the Australian Agricultural Company for many years, had purchased *Woodside* in 1861 and held it for 13 years. He was also the owner of a pastoral property near Yass. It seems likely that Hall and Meymott were not strangers. Both were well known in the colony's northern district where Hall had his base at the Australian Agricultural Company's vast property at Goonoo Goonoo near Tamworth. He was also a magistrate at Tamworth and later at Parramatta. Blanche Meymott gave birth to a baby boy at *Woodside* on 21 July 1868, but he survived only a few hours. She had another son, Henry, on 9 April 1870, and a daughter, Ethel Caroline, on 30 January 1873 – both born at *Woodside*. Ten months later the family had moved again to an address in South Head Road in the eastern suburbs. Thomas Fowlie (in *History of Granville*) says the judge also lived 'for a time' at the Old Vauxhall Inn at Parramatta Junction when it was a private residence.⁴

Judge Meymott was said to have had great social charm, but some who appeared before him in court had a different view. In 1870, two prominent Grafton residents complained he had insulted them after they gave evidence in separate cases before him. The Colonial Secretary, Sir Charles Cowper, after considering the complaints, told Meymott he occasionally lacked patience and courtesy towards jurors, witnesses and advocates, and warned that his position might be in jeopardy if there were similar complaints in future. In March 1873, a public meeting at Grafton drew up a petition stating that the judge's attitude towards witnesses, jurors and lawyers was unbecoming the dignity of the Bench and calculated to undermine confidence in the administration of justice. Then in 1880, Judge Meymott was dismissed from office after a Royal Commission upheld charges that he was habitually rude and discourteous, put pressure on juries to reach the verdict he desired, and conducted the business of the court to suit his own convenience.⁵

Frederick and Blanche had moved from Sydney to Murrurundi south of Tamworth in 1876. They settled into a new home they called *Ethelstone*, after purchasing land at an auction of the insolvent estate of Murrurundi storekeeper, Alexander Brodie. Blanche gave birth to a daughter, Ruby Clara at *Ethelstone* on 15 January 1877, but the child died two months after her first birthday on 15 March 1878. Another pregnancy ended in a stillborn son on 31 July 1880. Meymott continued to practise as a barrister in the northern towns of Gunnedah, Narrabri and Murrurundi after his sacking but his wife's poor health restricted his legal

³Holt, p. 74; NSW Marriage Register 2988/1866; J. Jervis, 'Settlement in the Picton and the Oakes district', *Royal Australian Historical Society Journal*, vol. 27 part 4, 1941, pp. 296-297; Gaudry Kable Family History, <http://members.optusnet.com.au/ggaudry>, accessed 6 September 2011

⁴Birth Notice, *SMH*, 27 March 1867, p. 2; NSW Land Titles, Old System Records, Book 75 No. 482; Birth Notices *SMH*, 12 August 1868, p. 8, 13 April 1870, p. 1, 4 February 1873, p.1; *SMH*, 29 October 1873, p.2; T. Fowlie, *The History of Granville 1919*, Granville Historical Society, 2001, p. 46

⁵*SMH*, 11 October 1870, p. 2; *Clarence and Richmond Examiner*, 4 March 1873, p. 6; *Maitland Mercury*, 9 November 1880, p. 3

activities. Blanche passed away at their home on 1 October 1883, aged 38. He did not survive for long alone, and died on 22 November 1883. He was 75.

Their three surviving children, Frederick, aged 16, Henry, 13, and Ethel Caroline, 10, were cared for by family members, including Blanche's mother, Emmeline Wild, who was one of the trustees of the judge's estate.

A local doctor, Rufus Bell, purchased the Meymotts' home, *Ethelstone*, with its five acres of land overlooking the Page Valley, for £700 at an auction in September 1884.⁶

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⁶ NSW Land Titles, Old System Records, Book 156 No. 576; *SMH*, Birth Notice 20 January 1877, p. 1; Death Notice 19 March 1878, p. 1; *Maitland Mercury*, Birth Notice 3 August 1880; *SMH* Death Notice, 3 October 1883, p. 1; Holt p. 78; NSW Land Titles, Old System Records, Book 298 No. 733