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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 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2014

At our Research Centre  
62 Railway Parade Granville

Guest Speaker

Dorothy Warwick & Pat O'Brien  
"People and Places of  
Parramatta"

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Granville Historical Society**

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

Granville has been extremely busy over the break. Happy New Year to all, and Granville Historical Society wish you a happy and safe 2014.

Members have taken a break. This is the first time in 26 years that June has not been to the centre, Arthur Naylor has been looking after that, and the break has allowed us to do more research and writing. Granville has been working with a number of organisations to research local and family history. We have a circle of people with skills and knowledge of Parramatta and District history. If we have an inquiry from anyone, we do the research that we have the resources for and a group of people with expertise is then emailed for further input. This has been working extremely well.

Granville has been advising the Parramatta City Council on names for unnamed reserves, I believe that Parramatta Historical Society has also been doing the same. Granville attended the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Parramatta Historical Society which was a very well organised, well attended party to celebrate the 100 years of service that the society has provided to Parramatta.

Granville has also attended meetings with Parramatta and Holroyd Councils re plans for the Centenary of Anzac. Granville is working with Enid Turbit from the Parramatta Historical Society on a project for WW1. Enid is researching the Prince Alfred Park Memorial, and Granville is doing the Royal Gate, in front of St John's Church. Most of the research for Granville Soldiers has been done by Members Colin Humphreys and Arthur Naylor, with a bit of assistance from June Bullivant re images, for the past 8 years. This has culminated with a publication called Forgotten Heroes and the Soldiers on the Granville War Memorial. This will be published this year as it is its final stages of proof reading and corrections. We also have a number of soldiers that we

hold information for and images; they will be added prior to publication.

Granville has also discovered a young artist who loves to paint heritage items. We have applied for a grant to have him paint the War Memorial in Prince Alfred Park and also the Royal Gate in front of St John's. Granville will then have the painting hang in a prominent place in Parramatta, if the grant is successful.

Granville is working with ICE (Information and Culture Exchange) again this year, after the successful collaboration with them for the "Pearls of Granville" for Architectural Week. We have been working on an iBook which has PDF put onto a dedicated website that will assist young people, and other members of the community with an interesting way of displaying the work of David Lennox by creating a map and a walk. Later with more funding it will be turned into an interactive map with a type of Geocache that will bring up a story on an app when you reach that site. This is a joint project and will be launched for The National Trust Heritage Festival that will run from 12 April to 26 May. Australians love to travel and this year our theme is 'Journeys', in celebration of our passage, both physical and cultural from our various points of origin to the Australia of today. This project has been so interesting for the young people working on the project they are looking at ways to make an application that can be used on an iPad or Smart phone to have an on the spot experience. Further to this project, the Society has received permission from the RAHS to illustrate the 1920 History of David Lennox, and bring the history up to the present by telling the story of the destruction of the heritage value of the Parramatta Bridge.

We are also working with ICE to deliver two projects on WW1, one that features the WW1 windows of St Mark's Granville and the second one about "Letters home from the Front" from Parramatta and District. So if anyone has access to letters in their family, Granville would appreciate your contribution to this project. I met with the International teacher from Granville Boys High School with 9 boys from different nationalities to discuss Granville and the history of the area; this was to explain that all local history ends up being International due to the fact that everyone had come from overseas.

June and I, as well as Audrey Meisenhelter and Linda Bradley, attended the Archaeological Dig at 180-184 George Street Parramatta, which was the site of the house belonging to John Foreman Staff, an ancestor of Audrey's family. During research for the Undertakers, Stonemasons, Stables and the Funeral Industry, the Staff family came up in the Stonemason's family of Henry Cornish. This publication is to be published by the Friends of Mays Hill Cemetery as part of their fundraising to repair headstones in the Mays Hill Cemetery. It is being researched and written by Granville Historical Society, with the assistance of files from Pat O'Brien, and Judith Dunn who is the very busy photographer and historian for the project. The books published by Judith on the Parramatta cemeteries have been a valuable source of information, and Judith has been photographing samples of the Artisans' work, while Arthur Naylor has been researching articles from Trove. In addition, Enid Turbit and Audrey Meisenhelter have made themselves available for checks of historical facts and their knowledge of Parramatta families and the history of the area. We must also commend the cooperation of people on Flickr, websites, the State Library of NSW, and the National Library of Australia for permission to use images. This is proving to be a most interesting and worthwhile project, the outcome will help the Friends of Mays Hill research.

And of course the Greater Western Sydney Heritage Action Group's new interest after the finish of the Lennox project is the Sandstone Quarry at Northmead, which they want to fill in and create another housing estate. This is tied up with the funeral industry, as the Moxham family mined for sandstone for headstones. The Development of the Parramatta Mall is also in the sights of this committee, due to the fact that the D/A wants to pull down the old oak tree that was an old oak tree in c1900, so they are not entirely sure when it was planted, and the proposed upgrade has Stainless Steel kiosks in a State heritage listed St John's Church and The Parramatta Town Hall.

Get Well soon to Stephanie Humphreys who had a fall over Christmas, no more holidays for her!

Barry G Bullivant OAM  
President.

## OBITUARIES



Compiled by June Bullivant OAM

It has been a very sad time over the past few months - with the passing of three members of the Granville community who have spent many years serving our community, helping others less fortunate. They are Granville Historical Society member, Betty Higginson, the former M.L.A. for Granville, James Patrick Flaherty, and the Catholic parish priest at East Granville Father James Anthony Stack.

### **Betty Higginson (née Dawes)**

Betty was born to a proud Granville family, the Dawes Family. Her father Louis (Bert) Dawes purchased the block of land at 17 Bowden Street, Granville in 1927, and a builder, Arthur Brown of Parramatta, began erecting their home the same year.

In May 1928, Bert & Lily Dawes moved into the house where they raised their family. Bert worked for the Harris Park Bakery, delivering bread in the local area. Bert passed away in 1979, and the home remained in the family until Lily passed away in 1989.

Betty was born on 1 December 1928. She had one step-brother, Alfred and one step-sister, Annie. Betty attended the Rosehill Public School starting in 1934. She was working as a telegram delivery girl in 1948 where she met her future husband, Edward Higginson in 1949. Edward died in 1984. Betty and Edward had one child Dennis Higginson.

Betty came to the Granville Historical Society to research her family history, and liked it so much she joined.

The Society will miss Betty terribly, and not just for her knowledge of the history of the Granville area and its people. She bought cakes and cards for members' birthdays, get well cards when members were ill ( but refused reimbursement), she bought history books for the society and the same condition applied, she bought scarves for me, custard tarts for Barry, she got my morning and afternoon tea and my lunch, and washed up after everyone. Her organisation of afternoon teas for the monthly meetings was always efficient and with careful attention to detail, Betty also organised the ordering for the kitchen and bathroom, and kept the kitchen spotless. Her local knowledge was helpful when visitors called for information on their family, and she was always willing to lend a hand in anything the Society was involved in.

The world will be poorer for her passing. She was a proud member of the society and a proud ex-Granville resident. Her organisation for the Metcalfe and Morris Funeral plans, every Wednesday, was so good we now have four large cabinets of files completed, all in date order by the firms involved, each with a number and an alphabetical list in the front. This list was given to John Scarborough who then put it into a spreadsheet which in turn was turned into a PDF file to mount on our website. This has helped us answer queries from Guardian Funerals who receive many family history inquiries due to their now owning the business.

She was also an accomplished operator of the photo-copier - most of the information that was loaned to us was copied by Betty. I didn't know her as a young woman, but at 84 she was a force to be

reckoned with, a power of energy, knowledge and fire. She attended many of the events we were involved in, always by public transport. Betty also contributed to the society as a member of the committee that formulated the plans the society uses in its forward planning.

Betty passed away at 12.30pm on Saturday 7 December 2013.



### **James Patrick Flaherty**

James Patrick Flaherty was born in Granville on 12 December 1923, to David John Flaherty and his wife Bridget Carroll. An English migrant, David Flaherty worked as a filler at the Shell Oil Company at Clyde. James Patrick (Pat) married Joyce Archer on 18 February 1947, and the couple had three sons.

Growing up in Granville, Pat attended the Blaxcell Street Public School and then the Marist Brothers High School, Parramatta. His occupation was a carpenter and joiner, and he was a member of the Building Workers Industrial Union. In his spare time he would go fishing and shooting.

Pat was a long time member of the Australian Labor Party. He joined the Party in 1948, serving as President of the East Granville Branch and Vice President of the Granville State Electorate Council. In World War Two, he was a member of 2/7 Commando Squadron in New Guinea.

Pat represented Granville on Parramatta Council from 1957 until 1962; he was Deputy Mayor in 1960 and Mayor in 1962. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1962 and held the seat

for 22 years. He served as Parliamentary Whip from 1973 until 1984 when he and his wife moved to North Queensland to be closer to family. In recent time he suffered recurring health problems and was admitted to hospital. He died on Monday 9 December 2013.



### **Father James Stack**

Father James Anthony Stack, parish priest at the Holy Family Catholic Church at East Granville, died on Monday 6 January, just four days before his 84th birthday.

Father Stack was born in County Kerry, Ireland, and was ordained to the priesthood at All Hallows College Dublin in June 1954. He came to Australia in December 1954 and after serving many parishes of Sydney, was appointed Parish Priest of East Granville in April, 1976.

It was Father Stack's usual practice to play golf on a Monday, but on the day he passed away, he decided to go for a swim at Malabar Rock Pool instead. It was here that he had a heart attack and was pulled from the water, but could not be resuscitated. He had parked his car some distance away and had no identification on him, so identification was difficult, and it was not until the next day that he was identified. Eight

hundred people attended the Funeral Mass in Holy Family Church in East Granville at 10.30 am on Tuesday 14 January. Granville Historical Society member Susan Russell attended the Mass and says she got there at 9.30 am so had her choice of seats, but the church was full at 10 am, and even then some had trouble finding standing room.

Father Stack was a member of the committee that formed the Granville Multicultural Centre that was opened by Bishop Murphy in Clyde Street, Granville in November 1977. It was set up to assist the new arrivals in Granville with language skills, legal obligation, social skills, parenting, and other issues that affected new arrivals from several countries. Father Stack and his group of volunteers worked tirelessly to help new residents in the Granville area.

Barry and June Bullivant tell their story from a personal angle; they knew Father Stack from personal experience. When their daughter Lisa was to marry Pat Farmer in Granville in March 1992, Lisa went for instruction with Father Stack, and was told she should be aware that he was a serious man and did not tolerate anything that was not done his way. However that proved not to be the case. Father Jim was the most kind and caring individual, interested in family history and knowledgeable about his home country, Ireland. He chatted about what the couple would like to include in their wedding, what songs they would like and decided to prepare for them a full Mass.

When Lisa passed away in May of 1998, Father Stack prepared a Mass for Lisa - again a kind and gentle man who loved and served his community. Many Granville residents attended the Holy Family Church. In 2013 Father Stack gave the Granville Historical Society permission to copy the old photos and documents that were held in his office. They are now archived at the Society.

Father James Stack will be sadly missed by the people of Granville.

June M Bullivant OAM

## **MITCHELL LIBRARY ROW**

A protest against a re-furbishment plan at the State Library of New South Wales and the Mitchell Library has attracted more than 3,000 signatures and is steadily growing.

The Library's proposal has aroused the ire of authors, historians, researchers and other library users. The petition says they are deeply concerned by what is happening at the State Library, especially the conversion of the Mitchell Reading Room, and shocked that it has all gone ahead so quickly, without public consultation

Under the \$25-million plan, the Mitchell Reading Room will become a Wi-Fi connected space for the public to work in with their own lap-tops and reading materials, and on-line collections. There will also be new exhibition galleries in areas previously used for staff or storage, a 500-seat auditorium and a roof-top restaurant.

Find out more, and sign the petition if you wish at:

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/735/923/180/save-mitchell-library/>

## **HISTORICAL PLAY TO VISIT SCHOOLS**

Wendy Blaxland, the great-great-great-great grand daughter of Gregory Blaxland, will be presenting her play *Crossing* in schools in the Parramatta district later this year.

Produced by Wendy with her daughter Jessica Blaxland Ashby, the play was performed for the bicentenary of Blaxland, Wentworth and Lawson's crossing of the Blue Mountains in May 2013, and is being re-mounted for a return performance in theatres and schools as a theatre-in education production.

Wendy Blaxland says they're particularly focusing on Parramatta as both Blaxland and Wentworth owned land there and the area was so important in early colonial history.

She says the play makes a lasting impression about local history on students, teaching more effectively than they would usually learn in the classroom in a short space of time.

Further details can be seen at

[www.blaxlandanddaughter.com](http://www.blaxlandanddaughter.com)