

# WILLOUGHBY HISTORY CHATTERS

MARCH 2011

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## WDHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 37th Annual General Meeting of the society was held at the Dougherty Centre on Saturday 12 February. In presenting his report, the president, Paul Storm, highlighted the efforts of the small team of volunteers who had put in an intensive effort to get the museum and its collection into better shape during the year. Paul felt that much had been achieved in getting into operation the processes identified by the 2009 Standards Program.

The museum curator, Bob McKillop provided details of the work undertaken

during the year. Following the adoption of a collection policy, the focus has been on identifying, sorting and assessing the objects in the collection.

The team has sorted and listed some 3000 objects, around a third of which have been identified for initial disposal. The garden shed was cleaned out; and promptly refilled with stored items. Sales of decommissioned items had netted over \$5700, with a large number of lots to be auctioned over the coming weeks. Bob paid tribute to those who had spent long hours on these tasks, par-

ticularly Chris Lattimore, Judy Baird and Judy Peters.

The election of office bearers followed, with Paul Storm being re-elected as president, Mary Thom and Judy Baird as the two vice-presidents, with Chris Lattimore as secretary. The new treasurer is John Levings. The full committee is listed on page 4. Paul welcomed John Levings, Geoff Sherington and Judy Peters to the committee and invited John and Geoff to introduce themselves.

Paul then made a presentation to Ron and Margaret Cant for their long-term assistance as guides at the museum (see page 4).

## EASTON'S POTTERY



This Easton's Pottery vase in soft green with an incised flower pattern is a recent addition to our museum collection. RF McKillop photo

Easton's Pottery located in a former bakery at 495 Willoughby Road was established by Henrietta ('Etta') Easton in 1952. Following the loss of her husband, she pursued pottery as an extension of her creative ability in cake decorating, to earn an income for her family.

Etta created the trademark look for Easton's Pottery, 'foliage-carved' ware usually in cream and burgundy. Ini-

tially Etta herself did most of the work but from 1954 she was joined by decorators who formerly worked for Martin Boyd Pottery.

The enterprise closed in 1956, but the potter Jan Gluch operated at the premises from 1958 to 1960. Today, Easton's Pottery is highly collectable. We are seeking to expand our collection of these works.

Judy Peters

Membership subscriptions for 2011 are now due. Please complete the attached renewal form and return with your remittance.

The Willoughby Museum is open each Sunday afternoon from 1-4pm

Volunteers are needed at the museum—see p 4.

## UPDATE ON OUR RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS, Part 5

In 1997 a final service was held in the **Chatswood Central Uniting Church** on the corner of Pacific Highway and Help Street. It was subsequently demolished and the land sold. The congregation had decided that it would amalgamate with the congregation of the **Uniting Church** in **Clanwilliam Street, Willoughby**.

Proceeds from the sale of the Pacific Highway site have been used towards building a modern church and church offices on the site of the existing Clanwilliam Street church in expectation that these new buildings will become the Regional Uniting Church for the Lower North Shore.

The new complex had its opening Celebratory Service on Sunday 27 February 2010 when the building was unveiled by the Moderator, Rev. Niall Reid. The invitation to the event said "Forty years of dreams, visions, blood, sweat and tears have come to fruition".

The Clanwilliam Street church was Methodist prior to 1977. There was, and still is, a Heritage Conservation Order on both the existing church (1901) and on the nearby manse (1888). These historic buildings have been incorporated into the new structure. Five small buildings dating from

the 1920s to the 1950s were demolished to make room for building the new church, its associated offices and facilities with on-site parking for 25 cars. Building work commenced in August 2009.

Church services are now mostly held in a carpeted auditorium which can accommodate up to 250 people. It is served by the most sophisticated audio-visual equipment I have so far encountered on this church update project. Music is provided by a piano rather than an organ and there are facilities for other instruments. For special occasions, the large glass windows along the back of the auditorium can be opened and tilted so that people in the large entrance hall at the back can be included in church proceedings, as was necessary at the Celebratory Service. The design and construction of the blond woodwork throughout the auditorium was mostly the work of Bago Woodworks of Wauchope

Small church services may be held in the old church, now called 'The Chapel' which has a second entrance off the main foyer. An important addition to the chapel was a gift in 2007 by Margaret Snodgrass to commemorate her parents. This round window

fronting Clanwilliam Street, originally plain glass, is now an exact replica complementing an original 1901 leadlight window in the opposite wall.

In the new building there are meeting rooms and a gallery which overlooks the main area and chapel below. Hanging beside the gallery, each suspended by a steel wire, are the five leadlight windows from the front of the demolished Chatswood church.

The old manse has been restored, including replacing the failing front balcony verandah. A lift gives easy access to all floors. The church offices are accommodated here and on the upper floors a home and office for Streetworks, an organisation whose mission is to help get young people's lives back on track. It provides mentoring, helps build skills, provides parent and carer support and is very active in the Chatswood commercial area.

Design and supervision of the work involved in this project was done by architect Andrew Duffin of Noel Bell Ridley Smith. My thanks go to Rev. Michael Thomas and the office manager, Robin Murphy, for the time they spent showing me around and telling me about their church and their hopes for the future.

Mollie Shelley

**RIGHT:** The Clanwilliam Street Uniting church showing the old building (The Chapel) on the right and the new complex on the left.

Mollie Shelley photo



## Vincent Michael EGAN OAM and Mary Georgina EGAN

Two significant Willoughby dignitaries and long-standing members of the society passed away within five weeks of one another in December and January.

Vince Egan was born in Sydney Street in August 1916 and lived in the area all his life. He joined that Australian Gas Light Company in 1936 and then served overseas with the 2/5 Australian General Hospital from October 1940. After a short stint in Palestine the group was sent to Greece, where they were taken as prisoners of war in April 1941. He was sent to Poland as a POW in December. He returned to Willoughby in November 1945 and resumed his career with the Australian Gas Light Company.

Vince joined the Catholic Bushwalking Club in 1947, where he met Georgina Howard (born 1921) from Bondi. They married at Woollahra in November 1947. Georgina was persuaded to live in Willoughby, initially in Sydney Street and then in their first family home in Tulloh Street.

Vince increasingly became involved in community affairs, particularly after his retirement in 1977. He was involved in the Northbridge and then the East Chatswood Progress Associations, served on the Willoughby Bicentennial Committee and the Cultural Events Committee, and was involved with the Symphony Orchestra. He was secretary of the 2/5 Australian General Hospital Association for 43 years and was awarded his OAM for his services in 1991.

Vince was a founding member of the WDHS, serving as vice-president from May 1978 and treasurer from in 1986 to mid-1990. He authored the Bicentennial book on Chatswood published in 1988. Vince's relationships with the then president were at times fiery, but he maintained his involvement and attended meetings until recent times.

Georgina built an equal partnership with Vince. She was the 'boss' of the house while Vince had authority in his 'man cave', the workshop under the house. She was determined that her children received a good education and she provided key support for Vince.



Vince Egan OAM

Vince died on 19 December and a celebration of his life was held at the Willoughby Catholic Church on 23rd. Georgina's funeral was on 28 January. The WDHS was represented.

## SOCIETY NEWS

From the 14 February, our museum volunteers have been working with our museum Consultant, Helen Tierney, each Monday. Our initial focus has been on systematically planning the elements of our new exhibition, *Tales of Flat Rock Creek: Rugged, Ruined and Reclaimed*.

We have developed three key themes for the exhibition, decided on the individual displays, the objects that will be used and are developing the texts and visual graphics. In April and May, Helen will be leading workshops on collection

management, including the assessment of objects, art works and photographs, and the steps and skills required to accession and catalogue the collection.

As part of the collection rationalisation reported at the AGM (p 1), we have enhanced our collection of ceramics made in Willoughby in recent months. As noted in the November newsletter (p 2), Barry Ronson has donated his important collection of Regal Mashman pottery to the museum. We are now pleased to advise that

Kathy Day has donated additional Regal Mashman items to us, while her sister, Judy Peters, has donated a number of Doulton Australia items, including two important studio pottery items made by Derek Smith.

Over the coming months we will be upgrading the presentation of our Willoughby pottery objects as the feature exhibit at the museum with background information on the various enterprises and stories of the people who worked there.

Bob Crosbie and Mike Williams from the Traditional Trade Tools Group have been

assisting us with technical advice on our large trade tools collection at the museum. They have kindly offered us a table at their Trade Tools Sale at Asquith High School on Sunday 13 March where we will be selling de-accessioned items from the collection.

We have several bookings from groups who wish to visit the museum over the coming months. The first of these is from the Marrickville Heritage Association who will visit us in the afternoon of 30th March for a guided tour of the museum and afternoon tea in the garden.

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**Willoughby Museum**

Our museum is located at *Boronia*,  
58 Johnson Street, Chatswood.

**Opening hours:** 1-4pm each Sunday. Admis-  
sion \$4 adults; \$3 concession; \$2 child,  
\$10 family.

**Patron:** Pat Reilly, Mayor of Willoughby

**Management Committee:**

**President:** Paul Storm (9419 7354)

**Vice-Presidents** Mary Thom and Judy  
Baird

**Secretary:** Chris Lattimore

**Treasurer:** John Levings

**Museum Curator** Bob McKillop

**Committee Members:** Joan Antarakis,  
Betty Doggett, Harry Fox, Judy Peters,  
Geoffrey Sherington.

Official opening, Saturday  
2 April at 2pm.

**Volunteers required**

We require additional  
volunteers at the mu-  
seum for a range of tasks,  
including guiding, assess-  
ing and cataloguing ob-  
jects in the collection,  
scanning images and

setting up displays. If you  
volunteer by the end of  
March, you will have the  
opportunity to participate in  
workshops conducted by  
our museum consultant. If  
you or any friends are able  
to assist, please contact us  
as shown above.



Ron and Margaret Cant with Certificates of Appreciation and gift presented to them by Paul Storm at the WDHS AGM on 12 February 2011. Judy Day photo.

**Y O U R C O M M U N I T Y M U S E U M**

**COMING EVENTS**

**Members' Meetings**

**NOTE: Meetings are held  
on second Saturday of the  
month at the Dougherty  
Centre, commencing at  
2.30pm.**

**12 March, 'Willoughby's  
Response to the Depres-  
sion':** Bob McKillop will  
give an illustrated presen-  
tation on work relief pro-  
jects in Willoughby during  
the 1930s.

**9 April, 'Aspects of the  
History of Northbridge':**  
Pam Clifford will present  
historical films on the de-  
velopment of Northbridge  
over the years.

**Tours & Events**

**Wednesday 16 March  
2011:** Tour of *Carisbrook  
House* museum, 334  
Burns Bay Road, Lane  
Cove (adjacent to Linley  
Point Reserve). From  
11am. \$10 per head.  
Travel: bus 536 from  
Stand J, Chatswood station  
at 10.30am or by car.  
Bookings, Paul or Robin  
9419 7354.

**Wednesday 18 May 2011:**

Bob McKillop will lead a  
walking tour of the Griffin  
Conservation Area in Castle-  
crag. The tour will com-  
mence at the Walter Burley  
Griffin statue outside the  
Griffin Centre shops at  
10.15am and will take 2-2½  
hours, ending up back at the  
shops for lunch at one of the  
local food outlets. 267 or  
275 bus from Chatswood,  
207 from City/North Sydney  
or Lindfield, 203 from City/  
North Sydney. **Bookings:**  
Bob or Kerry on 9958 4516;  
cost \$5 per head (\$3 for  
members) - maximum 20 so  
book early.

**Willoughby Museum**

**Opening times:** each **Sun-  
day** 1.00-4.00pm. Admis-  
sion: \$4 adults, \$3 conces-  
sion and \$2 children, Family  
\$10.

**'Tales of Flat Rock Creek':**

Our new exhibition explores  
the impact of urban develop-  
ment on a pristine natural  
environment since the Euro-  
pean settlement, through the  
eyes of Willoughby residents.