



Minutes of Public Meeting Held on Sunday 14 October 2007 Venue: Linnwood, Byron Road, Guildford

Welcome & Apologies

John McKenna opened the meeting at 2.10pm and welcomed all in attendance our guest speaker, Brian Skingsley from the Australian National Maritime Museum.

Apologies: Irie Olde, Audrey Murphy, Pat O'Brien, Christine McKenna, John Warwick

Confirmation of Minutes of Public Meeting held on Sunday 12 August 2007

The Minutes of the Public Meeting held on Sunday 12 August 2007, which were mailed to members, were accepted by the Meeting.

Business Arising

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

Correspondence

Correspondence inwards and outwards, as per the agenda, was accepted by the Meeting.

President's Report

Good afternoon everyone, and welcome once again to Linnwood for one of our public meetings. I was reminded this afternoon that this weekend is the 5th anniversary of our first Open House here on the 13th October 2002 – what a day that was, with over 700 people coming through on the day!

We have certainly had some local media attention lately and I will try and fill you all in as we go along.

First of all, what would our meeting be without our usual 'show and tell' of donations and acquisitions. First up, I would like to show you some 1943 aerial photos of the property that we have downloaded from the Department of Lands – the detail is so good that you can pick out the gardens and schoolrooms.

Just when the Catalogue Committee thought we had everything under control - we have received a few donations since last meeting and we do thank those members and 'friends' who have very kindly donated the following items:

- Jeanette Parsons has donated various crochet and knitting pattern books.
- Jill Ryan has donated a wedding dress and 'mother-of-the-bride' dress circa 1980's.
- Bill Branighan has donated a set of 10 Children's Encyclopaedias circa 1956 (a gift from his mother for Christmas).
- Barry Wheatley has donated lots of things!! We have his collection of meat mincers – and they're all different! A mantle clock, a kerosene iron, 3 portable record players (in varying degrees of repair), a crystal vase, a bush saw, an old walking stick, and a "White" sewing machine with a lovely lid.
- Peter Warwick found this Singer sewing machine on the side of the road and thought we might like to add it to our collection of sewing machines.
- Adriana de Haas has donated this old wire framed cot – it looks a real 'oldie' doesn't it! Adriana has also donated a car tuner *with* instructions, an old 'push' mower and an old Hoover vacuum cleaner.
- I am very sorry but I do not have the name of the person who donated these lovely photos of Tom Moore and Stan Thomas from our July Open House. They were given to me in September but I failed to write down the donor's name – so if it was you, please let me know.

Since our last meeting we have had to outlay quite a bit of money replacing a couple of items that decided to call it a day! Our photocopier that had been donated by Holroyd Council quite some time ago was not working at all well, so we purchased a second hand desktop photocopier which will hopefully do the job and not take up quite so much room – now all we have to do is get rid of the other one – much easier said than done! The week

before the Wentworth Quilters were to have their exhibition, one of our refrigerators (which had also been donated) also turned up its toes and so we had to go and buy another large fridge as a matter of urgency! Hopefully both these items will now perform for a long time to come!

Speaking of the Wentworth Quilters, their exhibition weekend was very successful and the house looked an absolute picture – with 90-100 quilts and other bits and pieces on display. I went mad with my camera and took lots of photos so will pass the albums around for you to look at – there are also photos of the September Open House in there as well. The Quilters were very pleased with the weekend and have indicated that in 2008 their group would like to move to Linnwood for their monthly meetings, which is just great – another community group making use of the house on a regular basis – that’s what it’s all about! There was also an article in the Australian Patchwork and Quilting magazine about the exhibition being at Linnwood, so it was another avenue of advertising for us.

Since our last meeting we also had a ‘Baileys Fashion Parade’ – a fundraising event held in conjunction with the McCredie Uniting Church. Whilst we didn’t have a huge turnout of people, those who were here had an enjoyable afternoon, spent some money, bought some really nice clothes and enjoyed afternoon tea! We hope to have another of these next year, so will keep you posted as soon as we have a date locked in.

We also had some tours through, 2 conducted by Holroyd Council’s Local Studies Librarian for History Week and they went very well. The other was for the Sydney WEA and this group was *very* impressed with both the house and the afternoon tea! We will be more famous for our ‘teas’ than anything else soon – so all credit to Coral for organizing our catering for these events.

Coming events are our November Open House – another one where every square inch (or centimetre) of the house will be filled with exhibitions and displays – and don’t forget, this is the last open house before Christmas, so maybe you should think about starting your shopping early! We will finish the year with a public meeting and annual members’ Christmas dinner in December and then all have a rest until February. We hope to be able to have another talk and display by the Cavalcade of Fashion in April – which will be our CityFest event for 2008. The date also coincides with the National Trust Festival, the theme being “Our Place”, so we are hoping to have fashions from the 1890’s being presented, which should be really interesting.

Now on to more serious things:-

As you may be aware, we have had further articles in the local papers in recent times and you may be wondering what is going on. With the results of our survey indicating that the community is against the sale of the rear of the property for a residential development – in fact the latest figures from survey forms received show 11% favour a residential development, 75% favour a lease for a car park, 7% voted for ‘other’ options and 7% were undecided or had no preference. With these results being overwhelming we wrote to the Heritage Office asking them to reconsider their decision to sell the rear of the property.

The next thing we knew we were informed that the Minister for Planning (and Heritage), Mr Frank Sartor, wanted to come to Linnwood for a meeting. The Saturday morning of the Quilters Exhibition turned out to be *very* interesting – we had Mr Sartor and his aide, Mr Joe Tripodi (our local MP), representatives from Guildford Leagues Club, the Mayor of Holroyd Dr John Brodie, Councillor Pigram, together with the General Manager and a number of senior Council staff, the Director of the NSW Heritage Office and 3 members of the Friends’ committee all there for a meeting. Needless to say, it was very interesting, and to be perfectly honest, I am still not sure what the outcome will be. Mr Sartor had a quick inspection of the property and Linnwood itself, and then stated that he thought the best solution would be to State list the whole estate, thereby making it a quicker and easier process to rezone the site – by cutting out the middle man – the Council. It was also reinforced that if the rear of the property is sold then the state government would take 50% of the proceeds, but it seems to be a grey area as to whether the government would take any money if the property was leased - this is to be further investigated. Again, no-one seems to have any idea what the financial return for either option would be and the meeting ended basically with all parties having to go away to do their sums!

On top of this, we became aware that with an election coming up, the Federal electoral boundaries have been changed as well. Linnwood will now no longer be in Reid, with Mr Laurie Ferguson as its local member, but will now be in Blaxland, with the electoral headquarters based in Bankstown. The current member for Blaxland will not be seeking re-election, and the candidate who it is believed will retain the seat for the Labor Party is Mr Jason Clare who recently visited the Guildford West shopping centre to meet some of his new constituents. I met with him on the day and he expressed an interest in seeing Linnwood and has since been out to visit the house and grounds, and familiarize himself with the current issues. So, all in all, it’s been a bit busy!

We have also sent in a proposal to the Heritage Office to do some work on the southern kitchen and the adjoining small rooms. Basically, we would like to clean them up, get rid of all the unwanted and unused furniture and make the kitchen area especially more presentable and usable. The Heritage Office seems agreeable to what we have proposed – but like all things connected to the house, we need to wait for official approval. If and when it comes, we will probably be asking for volunteers to come and help at a couple of working bees to get the work done. And, speaking of volunteers, if anyone could help at the November open day, especially on the BBQ, we would really appreciate it. A couple of our chefs may be unavailable on the day, so we may need some extra help to keep those sausages cooking. If you can help, please talk to a committee member today or on the day itself. Any help on the day would be appreciated.

There was an attempted break-in on the house itself recently – a pair of shutters on the front verandah (you may have seen the boarding covering it up) were kicked in, and the interior French doors were also damaged, with the glass on one of the doors being smashed. The large upright record player that had been standing in front of the doors was pushed over and the small doors on the front were broken off in its fall. It would appear that the vandals did not gain entry to the house luckily, so we hope that it won't happen again. This was the first time since we have been here that the house itself has been targeted – usually Faulds House or McCredie Cottage bear the brunt of any vandalism. We sincerely hope that the funding for the proposed security fencing will be made available sooner rather than later in the hope that these vandals will then find it harder to get onto the property. Regarding other maintenance issues, the roof of the dormitory building will finally be repaired in the near future, which I am sure Pioneers will really appreciate.

On Wednesday night I attended a Community Forum “Holroyd Speaks” and was pleased to see a few FOL members there as well. It was a forum on how the Council will manage the growth and change of Holroyd in the future – a daunting task. It was interesting to see what issues the community members who participated came up with in the 4 workshops on Identity, Urban Landscape, Transport and Getting Around, and Enabling and Managing Development.

On the issue of Development, some of you may or may not be aware that the Heritage Office has received an application from Sydney Water to subdivide 50% of the land at Pipe Head for residential development. A lot of the buildings etc. are State Listed and are therefore protected, but it would appear that again, the state government is going to be selling off part of our heritage sites for development. You may want to keep your eyes open for further notices regarding this proposal.

Seems a bit of a sad note to end my report on, but I think that's just about it. Please come along to the November Open House – it is sure to be an interesting day. We are currently in the early stages of planning our programme for 2008 – what a scary thought, it is coming up much too fast – and hope to have another interesting year ahead for you. But for now, please enjoy the rest of the meeting, our guest speaker and his presentation, and then stay and have a cuppa and a chat.

Thank you.

Treasurer's Report

John McKenna presented his report for the months of August and September 2007.

	<u>August</u>	<u>September</u>
Income	\$ 463.50	\$2,287.90
Expenditure	\$2,537.08	\$1,563.29

The heavy expenditure during the last two months included the purchase of some large items (two as a result of breakdowns). Our photocopier, which had been donated by Holroyd Council, had not been working well for some time so rather than spend funds on repairs we decided to purchase a second-hand desktop copier. Unfortunately one of the fridges (which had also been donated) broke down a week before the Quilters 2-day exhibition and again we felt it was best to purchase (in a hurry!) a new, more reliable model rather than spend money on repairs. With part of our grant money we purchased a laptop computer and printer/scanner.

Funds available at 30 September 2007:

Bank Balance	\$15,209.53
Interest Bearing Deposit	\$15,511.30
Cash on hand	\$ <u>309.45</u>
Total	\$ <u>31,030.28</u>

Guest Speaker

John McKenna then introduced Brian Skingsley from the Australian National Maritime Museum. Brian has been a volunteer at the Museum from the day it opened, 15 years ago.

The Krait (pronounced Krite) was named after a deadly snake. She was formerly the Kofuku Maru, a Japanese wooden coastal vessel owned by Captain Bill Reynolds. A non-descript, flat bottom, narrow coastal vessel, the Kofuku Maru was built in 1934 - 21 metres in length, 3.3 metres wide, capable of up to 8.5 knots, with no navigational aids.

Her famous story started in Singapore in 1941 when northern Malaysia had just fallen to the Japanese. Authorities disregarded all plans to evacuate Singapore - a state of emergency was not considered to exist until the Japanese starting bombing the military installations.

Captain Reynolds stayed back to help with construction activities to head off the Japanese, and naval staff discounted his suggestion to get a small group of fishing vessels together to evacuate people. On 10th February the decision was finally made to leave Singapore as the Japanese were advancing rapidly. The local Malays and Chinese had no hope of boarding any ships out of Singapore - only the Europeans were able to produce documents and were able to leave. However, as the Singapore authorities were destroying as much as possible before leaving the city, on the night of Friday 13 February, Captain Reynolds evacuated 50 refugees and set off for Pompong. As other boats were leaving Singapore they were unaware of the Japanese lurking offshore and many people were killed. Reynolds set about rescuing as many survivors as possible and taking them to safety (in all, over 1500).

On a return trip he met Ivan Lyon, who had been sent to Singapore to set up escape routes, and Reynolds set off in search of more survivors. On his 10th and last trip he rescued 120 Chinese women and children.

Lions had a plan to sneak troops back into Singapore to destroy Japanese vessels. General Wavell agreed to the plan as long as the operation originated from Australia. On Reynolds' arrival in Sydney (The Krait was returning separately), lack of interest by the Americans and the Australian Army almost saw the mission discarded. However eventually it was given the go-ahead and in September 1942 members of Operation Jaywick trained at a secret camp at Refuge Bay. The Krait was very late in arriving back into Australia due to numerous repairs, and when she finally arrived RAN engineers took over her maintenance to get her ready for her next mission. Japanese activity off the coast of Australia caused further delays, and allied headquarters were starting to have second thoughts about the plan. So Reynolds and his team decided to carry out a secret dummy raid on Cairns which frightened everyone but convinced authorities to approve the plan.

The important mission they were planning to carry out was to send The Krait and members of Operation Jaywick (comprising four British and 11 AIF and RAN personnel) into Singapore Harbour and, using three 2-man collapsible canoes, the raiding parties placed limpet mines on Japanese vessels anchored there. The mission was a huge success, destroying 39,000 tons of Japanese shipping, however hundreds of Chinese, Malays and Europeans were tortured and killed by the Japanese trying to find out who was responsible.

Over the next few years The Krait was plagued by engine problems and at one stage declared useless, however she persevered and worked in Borneo in the 1950's. By this time many organisations were trying to get support to bring her back to Australia, however the army, navy, RSL, museums etc were not interested. In June 1963 an appeal was launched through "The Sun" newspaper. Public support changed the government's mind, and P&O brought her home, free of charge, as she was so badly deteriorated. She sailed into Sydney Harbour the day before ANZAC Day 1964. Hopes of getting her to Canberra were thwarted, and tours and inspections were organised to raise funds. The ABC used her in an episode of "Patrol Boat". \$100,000 was needed for repairs and restoration. The ABC came to the rescue with a massive appeal, and State and Federal Governments finally contributed.

Her first public appearance was at the Commonwealth Games in 1982. She went to the Australian National Maritime Museum in 1991 as a floating memorial.

Brian said there is a book on The Krait available from the Museum, titled "The Krait - The Fishing Boat that Went to War", written by Lynette Ramsey Silver.

For information about the Australian National Maritime Museum visit their website - www.anmm.gov.au.

You can also find more information through your favourite search engine, or go to the Australian War Memorial's website www.awm.gov.au

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Friends of Linnwood will be held on Sunday 9 December 2007 at 2.00pm, and our Guest Speaker will be from Youth Off The Streets. The meeting will be followed by our Annual Members' Christmas Dinner.

Raffle

Brian Skingsley drew the raffle, which was won by Pam Zopf.

Meeting Close

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 3.30pm.

Confirmed:

_____ Date: _____

Next Public Meeting

**Sunday 9 December 2007
2.00pm**

**Guest Speaker from
Youth Off The Streets**

Stay on after the meeting for our

***Members' Christmas Dinner
(5.00pm)***

***featuring our usual and very tasty
BBQ chicken, salads and desserts***

Members: \$10; Non Members: \$12

***You can book by phoning Dorothy Warwick on
9632 9203 or Helen Olde on 9807 3224,
or just let us know when you come to Open House
on Sunday 11 November (Remembrance Day)***