



"Bunk"

"History is more or less bunk"-
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

Diary Dates 2015

**Museum Open
10am to noon**

Monday to Friday

Meetings at Museum

**22 Alexandra Street
Hunters Hill**

Thursday 27 August

10am for 10:30

**ANNUAL GENERAL
MEETING**

and afterwards

Speaker: Dr Kay Leiper

Early Days of Lane Cove

A Short History

*'We share a river with
our close neighbour,
and there are many
historical connections'*

Dr Leiper is a member of
Lane Cove Historical Society

Thursday 22 October

**Lunch at Parliament
House as guests of
Anthony Roberts MP**

Details in October **BUNK**

**Our Xmas Function
will be held at**

**Il Bolognese
Italian Restaurant
Boronia Park on
Monday 7 December**

Details in October **BUNK**

**KEEP THIS DATE
FREE!**

Dynasty was a complex blend of royalty, politics and power

The Walker family of Yaralla was the subject of a talk given to the society by Trish Skehan of the City of Canada Bay Heritage Society.

Yaralla is situated on the banks of the Parramatta River at Concord. It is a magnificent mansion classified by the National Trust as "the most significant, suburban, Edwardian estate in NSW". The historic home was the hub of Sydney's social scene. It played host to Royal visitors and dignitaries, the famous and infamous and all social classes. This unique legacy was left for public use by Thomas Walker (1804-1886), a noted financier, philanthropist and pastoralist, and his one child, Eadith (1861-1937).

Thomas arrived in Australia in 1822, acting as a courier for his father, a British MP. He carried a promissory note for one million pounds with instructions for the colonial secretary to buy one million acres of land for the British Crown. That is how our crown land came about. He came with an impeccable pedigree, being related to six kings and 22 baronets from his English lineage. He started the Bank of Australasia which was robbed weeks later when thieves tunneled into the basement by way of the Tank Stream which had been covered over. He joined Campbell's Bank, later the Bank of NSW (now Westpac), as a director, and was the bank's president for the last 17

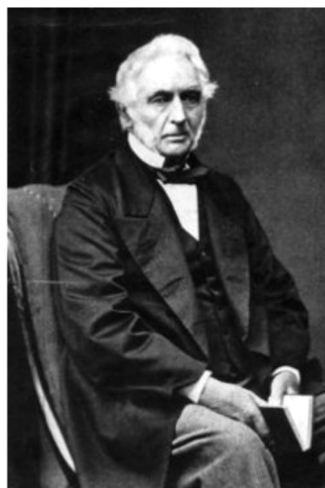
years of his life. Through the bank, he acquired vast acreage in the Tenterfield area and much more land up north.

As a member of the Pastoral Association,

Thomas explored the southern regions of NSW. Realising the vastness of our eastern state, he became the MP for Port Melbourne and petitioned Queen Victoria to make a new state named in her honour. In later years, he worked with Henry Parkes when the northernmost region became Queensland. Thomas acquired the old Nichols orchard estate of Woodbine in Concord but would not build his Yaralla mansion until the late 1860s after marrying Jane Steel-Hart. Ill with TB,

Jane gave birth to Eadith (note the Scottish spelling of her name). They moved into Yaralla in 1870 but Jane died on Boxing Day of that year. Eadith was one of the most highly decorated women, in terms of civilian honours, in Australian history. She became a Dame of the British Empire in 1928. Her personal memories record her encounters with Queens Victoria, Mary and Elizabeth, the Queen Mother. She was godmother to John Verney, son of Sir Ralph Verney, secretary to the Speaker of the House of Commons

(Continued on page 2)



HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

**NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
THURSDAY 27 AUGUST 2015**

10:30am at the Museum

22 Alexandra Street Hunters Hill

Agenda, Reports And Election of Officers

Tony Saunders, Honorary Secretary

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SOCIETY INC

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Vice President Pat Cox

Treasurer & Public Officer

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Secretary Tony Saunders

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Ian Adair

June Beck

Dorothy Cubban

Eunice Farram

Jan Griffiths

Bob Mostyn

Jean Pritchard

Paula Ramsay Southcombe

Honorary Auditor Bob Love

(Continued from page 1)

in London for over 30 years. She supported many charities for which she received honours but she attempted to keep the information quiet. Thomas left his estate not to her but to a "child or children of her marriage". Eadith never married or produced issue so the estate is held in trust for the People of NSW. It has been revealed that Eadith had a long standing relationship with her chauffeur but this was also kept quiet. She never sought to marry him as permission would have had to have been granted by Queen Victoria.

As the talk demonstrated, the history of the Walker dynasty and Yaralla is a complex blend of kinship, royalty, exploration, politics, power and tragedy in the years spanning 1822-1937 and beyond.

Books by Trish Skehan about the Walkers can be obtained from City of Canada Bay Heritage Society.

Chris Schofield

Pictures of Eadith Campbell Walker and Thomas Walker from Herald and Weekly Times Portrait Collection.



Facts About The Hunters Hill WW1 Gun

The gun is a 15cm calibre heavy field howitzer 1913 model with a 17 calibre length barrel, manufactured by Friedrich Krupp of Essen, Germany. This particular gun was manufactured in 1915, and was fitted with a replacement barrel in 1918. Replacement wheels were fitted in 1917.

When It Was Captured

Records held by the Australian War Memorial indicate the gun was captured by the 20th Battalion AIF at La Motte Farm, near Estrees in northern France on 3 October 1918, during the battle of the Beaurevoir Line.

How It Got To Hunters Hill

It was the practice for 'trophy' guns to be allocated to municipalities after the war, and on 15 August 1922 the New South Wales War Trophies Committee agreed to a request from Hunters Hill Council for the Krupp howitzer. Hunters Hill had previously been allocated a heavy machine gun, but this was not deemed sufficient to reflect the efforts of the citizens, led by Mr W.A. Windeyer, in support of the war effort.

The Journey Of The Gun In Hunters Hill 1922— given to Hunters Hill Municipality by the NSW War Trophies Committee in recognition of support for the war effort by its citizens. Mounted at Hunters Hill Town Hall in late 1922.

1974 (23 January) - moved from the Town Hall to Woolwich Lookout to accommodate the relocation of the war memorial from Woolwich Road and Ferry Street to the Town Hall.

October 1987 to February 1988 - after several attempts in previous years, restoration begins. Dismantled and transferred to Granville College of TAFE for restoration as a Bicentennial project.

1990 (14 July) - mounted at Hunters Hill RSL.

2014 (May) - sent to Vintage Motor Garage, Central Mangrove, for further restoration.

2015 (24 April) - the restored gun was unveiled at Hunters Hill Town Hall by His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), and the Mayor of Hunters Hill, Councillor Richard Quinn.

Information from History of Our World War1 Trophy Gun, available from Hunters Hill Council, price \$10.

Colourful captain had local links



A colourful Sydney character of the 19th century – Captain Joseph Horatio Amora – was the subject of a talk given by our honorary secretary **Tony Saunders** to a lunchtime meeting of the society held at the Woolwich Pier Hotel on 23 July.

Captain Amora was born in Chile in 1845. He died in Lewisham Hospital in 1902 aged 57. He was the son of a master mariner and English mother. Even though he was a junior ship's officer, he came to Australia as a listed passenger, not as crew, on the barque "Gravina" from Valparaiso in 1864. He married a local girl Annie Gaffney in Waverley in 1869.

Tony's interest stemmed from his membership of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club and Captain Amora was the founding commodore of the club from 1872 to 1875. According to numerous newspaper articles, he also started and finished races for the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. He was mentioned regularly as Vice President and spokesman for the Ship Masters and Officers Association.

In 1882 Captain Amora was appointed honorary Chilean Consul in Sydney. Eventually he was appointed Vice Consul for the Netherlands, Consul for Nicaragua and other states.

A local connection was that by the mid-1880s he worked for Charles Jeanneret's Parramatta River and Hunters Hill Steam Ferry Company as a ferry master. Jeanneret, an entrepreneur, was Mayor of Hunters Hill, an MLC, magistrate and ferry fleet owner.

In early 1897, Captain Amora was charged in the Water Police Court in Sydney. It involved the misappropriation of 290 pounds, part of a sum entrusted to him to purchase the schooner "Oscar Robinson" on behalf of a New Hebrides client. He was found guilty and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. After he came out of prison, Captain Amora fell on hard times and it was reported in 1899 that he had not paid his rent for a house in Paddington and was evicted. Tony said that Captain Amora was still with us in that the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club's starter boat is named in his memory.

Captain Amora had a daughter Anita who married a Dr. John McDonagh at St Joseph's Church Woollahra in 1898. **Catherine Dorman, the great, great, granddaughter of Captain Amora and daughter of Gladesville Chamber of Commerce President, Yvonne Dorman, was at the meeting (see picture above with Tony Saunders)** **Chris Schofield**