



www.huntershillmuseum.org.au

“Bunk”

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

Diary Dates 2018

**Museum Open
10am to noon**

Monday to Friday

**Meetings at Museum
22 Alexandra Street
Hunters Hill**

**Thursday 30 August
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
In the Council Chamber
Hunters Hill Town Hall
Commencing 10.30am**

GUEST SPEAKER

Graham Wilcox

***The Struggle for Unity
A story of the federation
of Australia***

NOTIFICATION IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF MEMBERS WILL BE HELD IN HUNTERS HILL COUNCIL CHAMBER ON THURSDAY 30 AUGUST AT 10.30AM.
BUSINESS

1. TO ADOPT THE ANNUAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2018.
 2. TO ELECT OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.
 3. TO CONSIDER AND ADAPT CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION AS REQUIRED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF FAIR TRADING.
 4. TO TRANSACT ANY OTHER BUSINESS.
- NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE CLOSE 7 DAYS BEFORE THE AGM.

TONY SAUNDERS HONORARY SECRETARY

Old time toy story

There is a saying that the toys of today are the tools of tomorrow. In other words, what children play

with will equip them with skills for the future. So it is interesting to look back at the sorts of toys and amusements that children of yesterday had access to.

The Historical Society is currently staging an exhibition of old toys at the Museum, and the display gives an entertaining insight into the past.

Unlike today's children who are exposed to the latest electronic gadgetry, youngsters in Victorian times had access to fewer and much simpler toys.

The economic divide in 19th century Australian society could be seen in the types of toys that were available. Poorer families produced

their own playthings such as dolls made out of clothes pegs, skipping ropes and hobby horses fashioned from a wooden

pole. Children used their pocket money to buy spinning tops and kites. The more affluent were able to afford rocking horses with real horse hair manes. There were china or wax dolls, dolls' houses with miniature furniture and tea sets for the girls while the boys played with tin soldiers

and clockwork model trains.

Instead of video games and computers, earlier children were equipped with only their imagination and often utilised whatever was to hand to create a toy that satisfied their need for entertainment. Victorian children loved to play marbles. Poorer children used marbles made from clay

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Meet our new walks leader

Following the retirement of Graham Percival, long-time Historical Society member Greg Griffiths, husband of committee member Jan, is now leading our guided heritage walks around Hunters Hill. As a native of Hunters Hill and possessing a depth of information about the suburb, Greg has already led several Sunday outings which have proved very popular. In a move designed to attract more participants, the Historical Society has teamed up with Hunters Hill Trust to run occasional joint walks.

With Greg combining his first-hand knowledge with the Trust, those who

participate in future walks are guaranteed an informative and enjoyable experience. After many years of service, Graham Percival has also retired from the position of treasurer of the society. The Historical Society committee thanks Graham for the devoted service he has given over the years. He is succeeded by Judith Butt. Graham will continue as a member of the committee.



HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC

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Hunters Hill Historical Society Inc

Officers for 2017-2018

President Chris Schofield

Vice President Pat Cox

Secretary Tony Saunders

Treasurer and Public Officer

Graham Percival

Committee

Dorothy Cubban

Barbara Gardner

Jan Griffiths

Peter Kelly

Bob Mostyn

Jean Pritchard

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while well-off children had ones carved out of real marble. Religious observance meant that toys were rarely allowed to be brought out on Sundays.

Rather than DVDs and trips to the movies, probably the most popular picture toy of the past was the zootrope, a pre-film animation device that produced the illusion of movement by displaying a sequence of drawings or photo images which blurred together. There was also the kaleidoscope. A child could look through one end and see a brightly coloured design at the other. As the child twisted or shook it, the psychedelic design would change. The exhibition has artefacts which will interest and delight all ages; old games like dominoes and chinese chequers and felt mice created as Christmas decorations as well as an assortment of boys' and girls' books. One object on show is a "Knitting Nancy", a small hand-held device that enables items to be produced out of twisting a strand of fibre wrapped round a peg-like object. ***Pictured: Committee member, Dorothy Cubbin, with some of the toys that she has donated to the exhibition.***

Chris Schofield

Education 19th century style

Despite lacking appropriate qualifications, George Anderson and his wife opened the grandly named *Artisan's Working College and Agricultural Training School* – firstly in Balmain, and later at Hunters Hill and finally in Middle Harbour. His aim was to care for homeless boys and to teach them carpentry, and he was supported by Sydney notables and judges who formed a committee to oversee the institution and to provide some financial support.

Before moving the College from Hunters Hill in 1880, Anderson made repeated requests for a grant or lease of land out of the 200 acres of Crown Land overlooking one of the arms of Middle Harbour. The requests were refused but Anderson, expecting a positive response, had cleared about 6 acres of undeveloped bushland which were accessible only by water at the time. Buildings were constructed, an access road was cleared, and fruit trees and flowers were planted. In the 1880s "Middle Harbour" meant anywhere from Long Bay to Roseville Chase, but the only large portion of Crown Land with 200 acres was at Northbridge Park, the site of the present Northbridge Golf Club.

The boys walked to a local school, which was probably at North Willoughby or North Sydney, and the bus which passed within "about a mile and a half from the place" may have been the horse-drawn bus service in Willoughby Road. Bread for the College was obtained from a shop in Mount Street, North Sydney "six miles away" and the butcher, Mr Hammond, whose shop was near the Great Northern Hotel, delivered meat every second day. As well, there were many market gardens around Alpha Road where the boys may have been sent for vegetables. All this strengthens the premise that the College was in Northbridge Park.

The College had some success, because in 1881 *The Illustrated Sydney News* reported that the College sent to the Bathurst Juvenile Industrial Ex-

hibition, "a box-ottoman and a sofa which would have done credit to any cabinetmaker in the colony."

Unfavourable Publicity

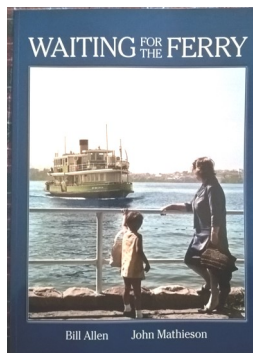
Hoping to raise additional funds, in October 1882 Mrs Anderson invited a reporter from the *Sydney Morning Herald* to visit the College, but the article in the *Herald* was far from favourable. The reporter stated that most of the seven boys had an itchy skin condition; that the school books looked as if they had rarely, if ever, been used, and that some names in the college's visitors book were not genuine. The boys told him they received little trade training, were not well fed, and were frequently flogged. Following the *Herald* story, the college was visited by a doctor who recommended that the boys be removed. They were transferred to the Benevolent Society where their skin complaints were treated.

At a meeting after the newspaper article, subscribers heard conflicting reports about Anderson's College, some glowing, some negative, but the College did not survive. In March 1883 the hapless Mr Anderson was convicted of unlawfully occupying Crown Land and was evicted from the site. In September 1883 the buildings and effects were sold at auction, and the buildings removed. George Anderson sued the *Sydney Morning Herald* for defamation and in 1883 a jury found he had been defamed and Judge Innes awarded him 450 pounds in damages. This victory was little consolation for George, whose dreams of running a college for destitute boys was ruined. Afterwards there were numerous reports of Mrs Anderson being intoxicated after drinking at the Great Northern Hotel. Whether or not the College was located at Northbridge, it is an interesting episode in the history of this area in the 1880s.

From Northbridge: Building a New Suburb, by Pam Clifford

The story of Sydney's ferries

The Historical Society has copies of a wonderful new book, ***Waiting For The Ferry***, for \$55, a saving of \$14.95 off the retail price. The book is co-authored by Bill Allen and John Mathieson. Bill is 'Mr Ferries', he knows everything there is to know about Sydney ferries and ferry services, from the first steam-powered ferries of the 1830s right up to the latest Emerald Class additions to the fleet. He has thousands of photographs in his archives, many of



which are in the book.

Bill's co-author is John Mathieson, who worked for forty-seven years in the shipping industry, including ten years in Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand. As well as all the ferry services around Sydney Harbour, the book gives us a look behind the scenes at the work of the captains and crews and the enormous job of maintenance that keeps the ferries moving. This book and the photographs in it will bring back many memories to everyone who has lived around the harbour and enjoyed the wonderful part Sydney ferries have played in it. ***Copies from the museum, cash or cheque. No credit cards please.***