

WILLOUGHBY HISTORY
CHATTERS

APRIL 2017

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COMING EVENTS

Saturday 8 April WDHS
General Meeting at
Chatswood Library (see
p6).

Sunday 23 April:
Formal opening of the
'Willoughby District
Artistic Voices' exhibi-
tion at the Museum
from 2pm.

ARTISTIC VOICES OF WILLOUGHBY

Our new exhibition at Willoughby Museum for the National Trust Heritage Festival, *Artistic Voices*, will be opened by Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney on Sunday 23 April at 2pm.

Curated by Terry Fogarty, it will showcase some 100 individuals who have contributed to the long and rich heritage of artistic endeavours that reflect the cultural diversity of Willoughby City.

Their contributions cover a variety of artistic fields, as artists, architects, actors, writers, playwrights, poets, singers, dancers, musicians, photographers, sculptors, puppeteers, film producers or radio or television personalities.

The exhibition will tell the stories of these notables through large panels and smaller profiles of their key achievements, backed by artefacts from our museum collection, both in the main exhibition room and elsewhere at the museum.

We look forward to your next visit to the museum to take in this extensive exhibition with the assistance of our guides.

The museum will be open from 1pm to 4pm on Thursdays and Sundays for this exhibition from 23 April to the end of May and Sunday afternoons thereafter.



The official opening of the Willoughby Municipal Council building on 6 May 1967. Portion of Bryrom Mansell's tiled mural dominates the left of the image.

Photo Branagan collection, Willoughby Museum



A performance of Lindy Batterham's play *Marion's Gift* at the Haven Amphitheatre on 14 November 1993.

Bob McKillop photo

MUSEUM UPDATE

Our small team of volunteers at the museum have been engaged in developing our new exhibition for the 2017 National Trust Heritage Festival (see page 1). The event has been listed on the Heritage Festival website and it is included in Willoughby Council's Heritage Festival booklet which lists the local events for the *Having a Voice* events and activities within our area.

On 22 March, Terry and Bob met with Lauren Forsyth-Smith, a final year history student at University of Sydney, at the museum. Lauren is required to undertake activities relating to her course at an organisation outside the University and she identified the Willoughby Museum as a potential venue for her attachment, which will be up to 30 June this year, possibly for two days a week.

We cordially welcome Lauren to our team at the museum and look forward to working with her on various tasks.

On 9 March 2017 we had a visit from Debbie Flynn, who has donated a series of photos and a sporting cup won by her father, Paul Harricks, relating to his time at Mowbray House School during the late 1920s. These are fascinating objects relating to an important local educational institution during the early 20th century. We will place images of these items onto our website in the near future.



Mowbray House School First XI cricket team in 1927. Paul Harricks is the lad sitting in front of the group. Debbie Flynn collection, Willoughby Museum



Mowbray House School First XV Rugby Union Team of 1929. Paul Harricks is second from the left in the front row. Debbie Flynn collection, Willoughby Museum

MEMBERS' CORNER

Members visiting the Willoughby Museum will have noticed the active bees nest in the tree adjacent to the driveway. Don Swonnell and a colleague have been working on addressing this problem over recent weeks. They partly closed off the hive to reduce access to the queen by worker bees, but they came back.

They recently sealed off the hive with thick cling-wrap and the bees have relocated. This will be removed shortly and the space in the tree will be filled with mud.

Don and his colleague have also been tackling a madiera vine that has come into the rear garden from the neighbouring property.

The extreme weather conditions over recent months have caused interior damage to the museum building, notably cracks in the brick walls and plaster as well as some internal water damage. We are seeking professional advice on the extent of the damage and the steps required to address the problem.

NEW BOOK AVAILABLE AT WDHS ONLINE SHOP

Willoughby DHS member Bob Lawrence has published a new book on the life and explorations of the English artist Sir Oswald Brierly (b1817). He trained in his teenage years in the Academy of Henry Saas, among the foremost teaching institutions for young artists in Britain. Brierly subsequently trained in naval art at Plymouth and he became acquainted with the wealthy London stockbroker Benjamin Boyd at this time.

Boyd was proposing investments in new Australian ventures and he offered Brierly free passage on his ship *The Wanderer*, which finally left Plymouth on 14 December 1841 for Melbourne and Sydney. They arrived in Melbourne on 15 June 1842 and moved onto Sydney the following month. Boyd's scheme was to establish a grand new town on Twofold Bay in southern New South Wales and in early December he announced that Brierly would be the manager of the project. Unfortunately, the Australian colonies experienced a major economic depression in the early 1840s and Boyd lost practically all his wealth as a result. By 1849 Boyd was in serious financial trouble and left Sydney in October for San Francisco.

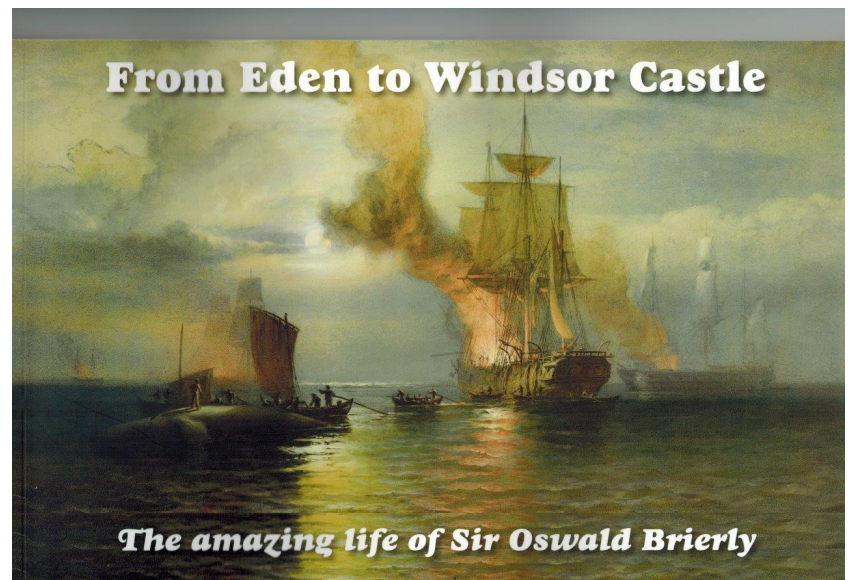
Brierly met an old colleague, Captain Owen Stanley and joined him as an artist on *HMS Rattlesnake* on two trips to New Guinea. He

returned to Britain in 1851, where he resumed his artistic career, before meeting Prince Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh. From 1863 Oswald Brierly travelled with Prince Alfred as his official artist travelling to Norway, before setting off on *HMS Galatea* or another journey to Adelaide, Hobart, Melbourne and Sydney, where there was an attempted assassination of the Duke. Brierly arrived back in London in the summer of 1868 and was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1885.

The book is profusely illustrated with colour plates of Brierly's art

works with maritime subjects a dominant feature.

Copies are now available at the Willoughby Museum. Further details regarding price and ordering copies will be posted onto our website shortly.



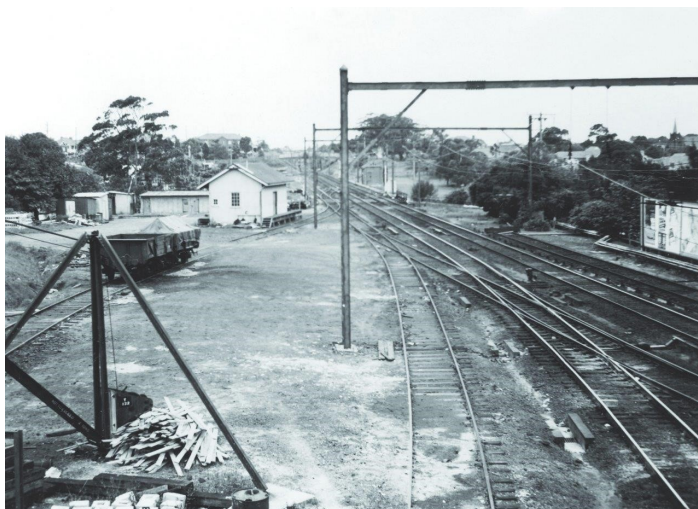
GOODS BY NIGHT ON THE NORTH SHORE LINE

Today the North Shire railway line is one of Sydney's busiest suburban passenger railways, but for many years it also served by a goods train that ran from Hornsby to St Leonards to deliver and pick-up goods at sidings serving industries at Chatswood and St Leonards.

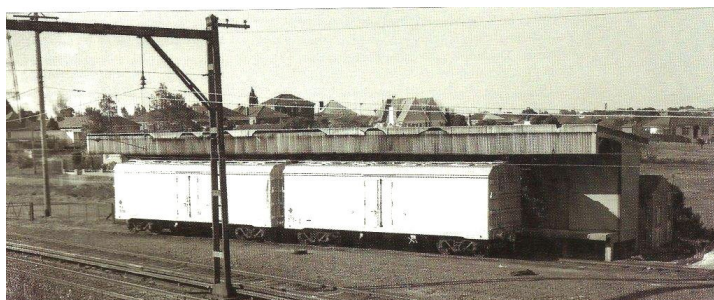
In the late 19th and early 20th century the Goods yard at Chatswood offered a busy scene as goods wagons were unloaded at the goods shed and in Willoughby Council's siding to receive blue metal for road building. An important inward commodities were cattle hides and wattle bark for the various tanneries in Willoughby, while their leather products were carried out by train. These items were carried from and to the station by horse-drawn wagons, before motor lorries took over the role by the 1920s.

Wayne Dempsey's grandfather, Harry Leslie Jubilee Dempsey, was the station master at Chatswood in the 1950s and also had responsibility for Artarmon and St Leonards stations. In the late 1950s Harry Dempsey arranged for Wayne to travel on the footplate of a Standard Goods steam locomotive that hauled the evening goods train from Hornsby to Chatswood, St Leonards and onto the North Sydney Car Sidings at Lavender Bay. Wayne joined the train at Chatswood Station and he clearly remembers the trip during which four-wheel wagons were dropped off at industrial sidings at St Leonards, and then proceeding to the terminus at Milsons Point, where a wagon on new brake blocks for electric trains was dropped off and a full one of worn brake blocks was picked up. It would have been around midnight when the train got back to Chatswood and Wayne made his journey home.

Stuart & Lloyds Limited established a warehouse in the Artarmon Industrial Area beside the railway line in 1938 from where their steel pipes were distributed to Sydney retailers. These were manufactured at the Tubemakers Australia rolling mills within the BHP steelworks at Newcastle. The trains continued to serve the Stuart & Lloyds siding into the late 1960s. A more significant operation in relation to freight on the North Shore Line was the North Sydney Brick & Tile Company complex at Gore Hill. Established by John Magney and Herbert Weynton in 1880, the works were claimed to be the largest in New South Wales in 1890. Their works failed during the 1890s depression, but Lancelly, Magney and Weynton established the North Sydney Brick & Tile Company in 1894, which expanded its operations under the guidance of Lancelly and his sons, Edward D and Herbert G Lancelly.



View of the St Leonards goods yard in 1956. ARHSnsw Railway Resource Centre, 013479



Among the commodities delivered by goods train to St Leonards was chilled meat. Here two TRC refrigerated wagons stand in the 'Meat Siding' adjacent to the Meat Storage Facility in the railway yard in 1970. John Beckhaus photo

The North Sydney Brick & Tile Company and other brickworks in the area were significant customers for the goods trains that served the North Shore Railway, receiving coal and coke for the brickworks furnaces and sending out manufactured bricks to customers across the State. On reaching St Leonards, the goods train shunted the required wagons into the company's No. 2 yard, where they were uncoupled for unloading or transfer to the No. 1 yard, which was connected by lighter track through a tunnel under Reserve Road that required this section to be worked by horses.

Like many other industries, the company ceased brick-making during World War II and switched to manufacturing items for the war effort. When the company established new brickworks at Baulkham Hills, the Gore Hill complex was closed in 1958–1959.

New facilities, primarily storage facilities and the Artarmon waste disposal facility have been established on the site, while the former railway tunnel has received a new lease of life as a wine storage facility.

The transport firm of Rudders established a large receiving depot in the St Leonards yard in 1960. It became Cargo Distributors in August 1962, but was de-listed on the Stock Exchange the following year. This facility subsequently became the St Leonards Track Fast Centre, serving as a distribution centre for small freight consignments. It remained a busy centre until 1987, but the demands for additional space to handle passenger traffic brought about the end of goods traffic around this time.

The former station was demolished in 1989 and a temporary station was established to the south while the large St Leonards Forum building, which incorporates the new station complex was constructed.

Bob McKillop



55 Class 2-8-0 steam locomotive 5593 shunts wagons loaded with pipes into



Wagons loaded with pipes from the Tubemakers Australia works at Newcastle are shunted into the Stewart & Lloyd warehouse siding at St Leonards in 1965. This was a regular weekday activity as the pipes were distributed from this warehouse across the Sydney Metropolitan area. Steven Buck photo



Albert Avenue in 1978 with the then Chatswood Police Station on the left and tennis court to its right. Can any reader provide additional information regarding the buildings in the background?

Martin O'Donoghue collection, Willoughby Museum

CONTACTS

WDHS Management Committee:

President: Paul Storm (9419 7354)

Vice-President: Mary Thom

Secretary: Terry Fogarty

Museum Curator: Bob McKillop

Committee Members: Joan Antarakis, Don Swonnell, Rob Wilson

Patron: Gail Giles-Gidney, Mayor of Willoughby City

Newsletter Editor: Bob McKillop

Willoughby Museum

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

Opening hours: 1-4pm each Sunday.

Admission \$6 adults; \$5 concession; \$3 child, \$10 family [Note: latter under review].

COMING EVENTS

Members' Meetings

Held at the Willoughby Room, Willoughby City Library at The Concourse, commencing at 2pm on the second Saturday of even months (except December).

Saturday 8 April 2017: Members' meeting, with Parramatta historian John Brock. John has delivered talks on a wide range of subjects to groups such as ours over the years and his topic will be William Dawes who arrived in the colony with the First Fleet. A skilled surveyor and astronomer, Dawes was surveying the new buildings and roads for the expanding settlement. It is a story that encompasses many aspects of our early history.

Tours & Events

Artistic Voices of Willoughby District: This new exhibition exploring the artistic talent of individuals in the Willoughby District will be formally opened by our Patron and Mayor, Gail Giles-Gidney, on Sunday 23 April for the 2017 National Trust Herit-

age Festival. It features around 100 artistic individuals who have made significant contributions to the cultural life of Willoughby City over the years. The exhibition will be open from 1.00 to 4.00 pm on Thursdays and Sundays from 23 April until the end of May, and will continue to be open on Sunday afternoon or by appointment until the end of August.

WILLOUGHBY DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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FROM THE EDITOR