
Swan Guildford Historical Society (Inc.) founded 1962

Patrons: Ken Wyatt, AM. MP Donna Faragher, MLC
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Newsletter July – August 2015

EVENT

GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY 13th JULY

Mechanics Institute
20 Meadow St. Guildford
Commencing 7 00pm for 7 30pm
All members and friends welcome

Speaker: Elizabeth Connors

Background and excerpts from the Demasson book "All My Dear People"
Letters sent home to his family in WWI

MONDAY 10th AUGUST

Mechanics Institute
20 Meadow St
Commencing 7 00pm for 7 30pm
All members and friends welcome

Speaker: Sue Hobson B Comm. FCA

Cast Iron Letterboxes of WA
and the J & E Ledger Foundry

ROYAL WESTERN AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

49 Broadway Nedlands
(Corner of Clarke St)

A WWI commemorative exhibition
Open day Sun 19 July 1pm – 4pm
At 2pm there will be a floor talk
by exhibition curator Wendy Lugg,
featuring an historic Red Cross flag from
the Gallipoli landing

VOLUNTEER TOUR GUIDES REQUIRED

For Guildford Museum Precinct

Do you have 5 hours a week to spare?

Do you enjoy meeting people?

We would love to have you on board

Full training given

Please contact Fay Tel: 9279 5509

New Committee Members

Ann-Marie Meredith vice president

Caterina Johnson junior vice president

Wendy Davidson tourism/web rep

We welcome Janet and Warren Harvey
back on the committee as our social
convenors

New Tourism Sub Committee

Chair Wendy Davidson

Clem Mulcahy

Celia Miller

Gaye Sweeney

Faye Stockdale

Assisted by Paul Bridges

The committee's focus is to

*activate the Guildford Heritage
Precinct as an outstanding
community asset and visitor
attraction; and*

*to help preserve the City of Swan's herit-
age assets.*

GEMS FROM OUR COLLECTION

A beautiful little enamel teapot sits unobtrusively in Taylor's cottage. It was an item sold by grocers, Hughes and Doheny. For all their competitive marketing (see below) it didn't promise longevity, the shop only operated in James St. Guildford from 1900 – 1904. The Sunday Times, April 1903 records,

"We cannot help drawing attention to the enterprise of Messrs. Hughes and Doheny... who are offering a nice handy enamel teapot at the low price of 6d., as an attraction to their business.

This progressive firm is alive to the occasion and recognises the necessity of defeating all competitors, and are therefore offering fresh groceries at startling prices".



WHO'S BEEN SLEEPING IN MY HOUSE

The Headquarters of the Swan Guildford Historical Society, Hamersley House, 119 Swan St. is the former No. 2 Police Quarters at Guildford. In 1913 the house was constructed by Mr. M. Marksey at a cost of £716.9.6. Constable James Hess was the first police officer to take up residence.

By 1925 Constable J. A. Lyons was occupying 119. In that year he reported that a day-well had been discovered in the yard of the No. 2 Quarters. The discovery was made after a horse broke through the cover of the well which was subsequently covered.

In 1930 Constable Lyons, then aged 60, was involved in another accident involving a well. The Sunday Times 5th October reports:-



Death of a Mother and Her Three Children-Bodies Recovered From a Well at WWI Residence.

"A soldier settler's home at Caversham was the scene of a shocking tragedy on Friday night, in which a woman and her three children met their deaths. Edgar Charles Francis (38), who conducts a vineyard on the Pyrton Estate, left his home at 8 pm. to attend a lecture on pruning at Midland Junction, and returned two hours later to find that his wife, Mrs. Fanny Annette Francis (25), had apparently drowned herself and their three children. Charles Edgar (7), Barbara Marie (6), and Clare Annette (4), in a well a few yards from the house.

A sad little note, placed in a conspicuous place, was the first intimation the father had that something was amiss. This, written in the deceased woman's handwriting, and addressed to her husband, stated that she could not go on, and that she intended to do away with herself and her three children....Constables J. A. Lyons and D. Murphy, arrived about midnight, and Constable Lyons, despite his 60 years, descended the well by means of a rope to the water 40ft below. Feeling for the body of the woman with his feet (he could not see in the dark) He managed to get her to the surface. The bodies of the three children with that of their mother, were removed to the West Midland Morgue to await identification.

Mr. Francis himself has been a resident of Hamersley road, Caversham, for the past six years, where he had settled when the Pyrton Estate was subdivided for returned soldiers. He suffers from the effects of war wounds, sustained on Gallipoli and in France, where he served with the 11th Battalion, and the tragedy came as a frightful blow to him. To his step-father and his step-sisters, too, who live in Guildford, it has been a terrible shock, and when seen yesterday they were greatly distressed.

"Tragedy knocks at other doors and you hardly notice it," remarked the step-father, pathetically, "but you never know when it is going to stop at your own door."

Leo Tolstoy said:-

Historians are like deaf people who go on answering questions that no one has asked them.