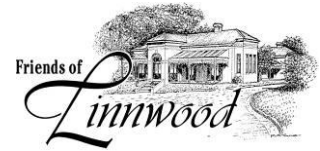


President: Dorothy Warwick
Treasurer: John McKenna
Secretary: Helen Olde



Minutes of Public Meeting Held on Sunday 13 August 2017 Venue: Linnwood, Byron Road, Guildford

Welcome & Apologies

John McKenna opened the meeting at 2.10pm and welcomed all those in attendance, with a special welcome to our guest speaker, Judith Dunn.

In Attendance at today's meeting, as per the Attendance Sheet:

Helen Olde, Dorothy Warwick, John Walz, Michael Griggs, Stan Thomas, Elizabeth Brodie, John Brodie, Olive Wicks, Zareen Nisha, Pamela Richardson, Coral Hamilton, Sue Evans, Margaret McKay Warn, Rodney Skinner, Shemiran Skinner, Ken Morrissey, Cassandra Graham, Catherine Stewart, Diane Jogia, Kevin Horne, Angela Caire, Judith Moller, Beverley Clohessy, John McKenna.

Apologies:

Phil & Lillian Patterson, Leah Armstrong, Beth & Russ Werner, Audrey Murphy, Pam & Roland Zopf, Kaye Weaver, Christine McKenna, Greg Cummings, Peter Warwick, Julie Walz, Tom Jenkins, Jan Thomas.

Confirmation of Minutes of Public Meeting held on Sunday 21 May 2017

Moved by Pam Richardson, seconded by Kevin Horne, that the minutes of the meeting held on Sunday 21 May 2017 were a true and correct record. The motion was carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

Correspondence

The Secretary passed around the Correspondence book. Emails of condolence were received from a number of members on being notified of the passing of Pat O'Brien, a founding member of the Friends of Linnwood, and a long-term Committee member. They will be read out during the President's Report.

Moved by John Walz, seconded by John Brodie, that the correspondence be received. The motion was carried.

President's Report

Good afternoon everyone and welcome to our August general meeting and our 15th Annual General Meeting. We are well and truly in our mid teenage years now.....

We have a few things to report on today but I would first like to acknowledge the passing of our dear friend, colleague and committee member, Pat O'Brien. Pat attended the very first public meeting in late 2001 at the Holroyd Council Chambers when Linnwood was under threat of being sold and developed. She and her husband Gerry volunteered to be part of the Committee for the 'Save Linnwood Hall Action Group' and many meetings were held at their home to work on the strategy for our campaign to save Linnwood. Once the estate was 'saved', Pat became a committee member of the new incorporated group, the "Friends of Linnwood" and held that position until her death on 16th July after a long and courageous fight against cancer. Pat's contribution to preserving Holroyd's history and heritage not only included Linnwood, but also 25 years dedicated to the Friends of Mays Hill Cemetery – again a founding member and the driving force behind the conservation of the cemetery, plus researching the 5,000 plus people buried there. Pat will be sorely missed by all who knew her, and we send our most sincere condolences to her family.

As you know, we have been waiting for a **LONG** time to have the slate roof repaired, and it's finally happened!!! Council had received a grant for the work quite some time ago, but didn't have the funds to do all the work needed and I believe we have the Administrator, Mr Viv May, to thank for pushing forward and instigating the work being completed, using money from Linnwood's 2017/18 Budget. This work hasn't been without its dramas - after all, this is Linnwood we are talking about – and as we all know, nothing is easy when it comes to Linnwood. During the process, the heavy rain in June fell and unfortunately leaked through the roof and into the house and most, if not all, of the ceilings in the front part of the house suffered damage, taking many days to dry out – the place was full of heavy industrial fans for days, trying to dry everything out. The whole project took quite a few weeks to complete, as they also found that the timber around the top of the

skylights had rotted, so they too had to be replaced. The roof looks so much better now and it's just about finished, but the heritage consultant has advised that some repairs need to be made to the verandah roofs and that they should be repainted. So in a few weeks we hope that all the work will have been completed and we won't have to worry every time it rains. The roofers used some of the existing slate tiles and sourced others from elsewhere. I was told that the slates are Welsh slates and last about 200 years, so these should be good for another 74 years! In recent weeks, the damaged ceilings were repainted, so all is looking good.

Unfortunately, the roof has not been the only problem. We advised council after the last open day about some concerns we had about the floor in the drawing room and also some movement and subsidence of the northern end of the front verandah. Investigations followed and we have been informed that the floor in the drawing room has quite an amount of termite damage. A maintenance exemption is needed to do the work and subject to this being approved, and the amount of work required – and **IF** funding is available - then the repair work will be completed.

The subsidence of the front verandah, with further investigations indicating subsidence along the length of the north verandah as well, is not a structural issue, but a result of subsidence of the compacted fill the house was built on. We have not heard as yet when or how this will be fixed.

Just to make things a bit more interesting, at the end of June we were informed that a Report would be presented at a Council meeting on 5th July which would include recommendations for the future of Linnwood. This would include the preparation of a Business and Management Plan for the Linnwood Estate. We did have a couple of meetings with Council officers in the week leading up to the Council meeting, but were not able to view the Report until it went on-line on Friday 30th June. Whilst, in principle, we were in agreement that a Business and Management Plan such as this was well overdue, there were a number of items within the report that we were not happy with and we then applied to speak at the Council meeting to address those items and make it clear that we would not endorse the report unconditionally.

The Report originally made three recommendations, but at the end of our presentation to the Administrator, at the council meeting, he added another two recommendations before passing the Report.

The five recommendations, moved and declared carried by the Administrator, are as follows:

1. Delegate to the General Manager to undertake the relevant studies and reviews to provide a roadmap for the Estate's future, subject to confirmation of the future land ownership process.
2. Allocate \$300,000 in 2017/18 to fund these studies and reviews, noting if subdivision or sale occurs, restitution of these funds to Council's General Revenue is expected.
3. Notify the Office of Environment and Heritage of Council's approach and agree to accept their \$30,000 grant to support this process.
4. In preparation of the studies for the site, Council state a preference for the demolition of McCredie House with the land being returned as open space to improve the curtilage of the Linnwood Estate, Council being of the view that Linnwood House is the major item of state heritage significance; in the event that McCredie House is recommended to be demolished, the study outline an appropriate and significant interpretive feature to recognise the cultural heritage of the site and recommended costings.
5. That in preparation of a specification for the studies and reviews, Council consult with the Friends of Linnwood.

We will keep you up to date as more information comes to hand.

On a much brighter note..... Selling Houses Australia TV programme supposedly did some filming of the outside of Linnwood for one of their programmes showing a Guildford house being renovated. We're not sure when it will go to air, so will have keep watching!

Our Open Days continue to attract good numbers of visitors with approximately 250–300 people at each day. The September Open Day will see cars from the Mustang Owners Club together with cars from other American Car Clubs. November will once again see a LARGE variety of vintage vehicles on display. The Rolls Royce and Bentley Owners Car Clubs together with a number of other British Car Clubs have asked to be included in this day, so we will be able to see a mixture of vehicles from the rough and tumble of speedway cars and bikes to the luxury of Rolls Royce and Bentleys on the day. The Holroyd Brass Band will be at both open days to entertain our visitors, and both days will see a variety of stalls and displays inside the house.

Recently, we were made aware that the Guildford Bowling Club was disposing of many of its Honour Boards showing past pennant winners, together with a board showing past members of their executive committee and patrons, dating back to the 1930's. The boards were basically going to be sent to the tip so, through social media (Facebook), we found out about it and were asked to 'save' these important pieces of our local history – which we did. The boards show many well-known names of the local area, so we are pleased that we were able to save them.

Over the years we have received some financial donations from some of our members and we decided that it was time to put some of this money to good use. In the early days of receiving donations of local artefacts, we received 3 Cradle Rolls from what used to be the George McCredie Memorial Presbyterian Church (now the Holroyd Uniting Church). Two of these have been hanging in the hall for quite some time and the third (and oldest) has been kept away as it has some significant damage. We thought it would be fitting to have these restored if possible and have recently had a very well qualified conservator give us a quote to 'conserve' these rolls. Susan McCredie Miles, a granddaughter of George McCredie, has been very supportive of the Friends, so we think it fitting that we use some of the money Susan has donated for this project, as there are some McCredie descendants named on the early rolls.

As this report forms part of our Annual Report, there are many people to thank for their help and support over the past 12 months and we would like to take this opportunity to thank:

- Cumberland Council for their continued support of the Linnwood Estate by looking after the grounds and attending to any maintenance issues that arise – and there always seems to be something that needs attention!
- We would like to thank the Holroyd Art & Craft Society for their continued support, together with all individual stall holders who attend most, if not all of our Open Days. The variety of stalls we have is amazing and I know many visitors come back time and again just to buy products from particular stalls due to their quality.
- Our members – some of whom have been with us from day one. Your continued support is much appreciated, especially during the 'quiet' times when, quite often, membership dwindles because of no perceived threat, but as can be seen from the news in this report, you just never know when things might change. We know that if there is a threat, you will be there with us to continue the fight for the best outcome for Linnwood. To those members who volunteer their time on Open Days either on the BBQ, in the kitchen, on the raffle table, welcome visitors at the front door, assist with parking, or give someone a break – thank you, we couldn't do it without you.
- The Committee – my sincere thanks to Helen, Coral, Pam Richardson, Pam Zopf, John McKenna and the late Pat O'Brien who, even when not well, attended meetings and open days to show her support. An amazing group of people, who work tirelessly behind the scenes to keep the Friends going and are the reason our Open Days are such a success – thank you all.

That just about wraps up our year, I think. Many thanks to you all for your support and I hope you enjoy the talk by our guest speaker, Judith Dunn, and stay for a cuppa and a chat afterwards.

Thank you.

Treasurer's Report

John McKenna gave a brief report on income and expenditure since the May public meeting.

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
May	\$ 45.06	\$ 111.89
June	\$ 1.99	\$ 0.00
July	\$3,836.96	\$1,941.04
Profit/(Loss)	\$1,829.99	

Opening balances May 2017

General account	\$48,432.06
Investment account	\$22,225.70
Total	\$71,740.88

Closing balances July 2017

General account	\$50,829.07
Investment account	\$22,337.75

Total	\$74,262.87
Outstanding	\$ 555.03
Net Position	\$73,707.84

Moved by John Walz, seconded by Margaret Warn, that the Treasurer's report be accepted. The motion was carried.

The Public Meeting was suspended at 2.40pm.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Refer to separate minutes.

The Public Meeting recommenced at 2.52pm.

General Business

Diane Jogia moved a vote of thanks to the people who have been on the Committee for so long. Linnwood has been a very long and arduous road, and the Committee should be thanked for the wonderful job they have done in respect to the stewardship of the property, and of the funds.

Dorothy advised that Rookwood Cemetery is holding an open day on Sunday 24 September, and from 26 August to 24 September there will be an outdoor sculpture exhibition, with many artworks inspired by the cemetery's 150th anniversary this year.

Parramatta & District Historical Society is launching a new book written by Judith Dunn - "Saint Paul's Carlingford including Private and Demolished Cemeteries of the Parramatta Area" – on Saturday 9 September 2017 at 2.00pm, at All Saints Anglican Church, 29 Elizabeth Street, Parramatta.

Guest Speaker

John McKenna welcomed Judith Dunn as our guest speaker, who gave a pictorial presentation on what's been happening at historic St John's Cemetery at Parramatta.

Judith said that cross-pollination between local historical groups is great. History is being disrespected by politicians of all persuasions – we collectively need to uphold Australia's history.

St John's Cemetery is the oldest cemetery remaining in Australia – the first burial was on 31 January 1790. It is older than Rookwood (1868), older than the cemetery under Sydney Town Hall, and older than the cemetery under Central Station. It was the general cemetery for the area in those days, and that area included Guildford.

Residents include members of the Blaxland, Wentworth and MacArthur families, and the Reverend Samuel Marsden is buried there. It is a roadmap of early Australian development.

The cemetery went into the stewardship of the Anglican church in the 1850s and is exclusively Anglican. Unfortunately it got out of control. The trustee over many years was not inclusive so the cemetery became overgrown with blackberry, lantana, mulberry trees, long grasses, and figs lodged in the walls. The trustee received a lot of angst about the state of the cemetery from people all over Sydney and from descendants of relatives buried there.

Before the big clean-up, people would come to visit relatives but could not get through the gate due to the overgrown environment. Judith showed 'before and after' photos of the cemetery.

This time last year, the Friends of St John's Cemetery was formed. The first thing that was done, after getting the lawn mowers in, was to hold a tour which was very well attended by descendants and others who valued the site. Twilight tours are now held there as well.

A heritage landscape architect very generously gave up a morning to make notes of things that needed to be addressed, and to work up a management plan – which needs a lot of funding.

There are so many things that should not have been allowed. For instance, a building overhanging one of the historic walls surrounding the cemetery – with Council approval. This is illegal. The walls have the same ranking on the Heritage Register as Elizabeth Farm House and other historic icons – the walls were built by convicts in the 1820s.

The Friends have been fortunate to have the support of the Men's Shed – they are building new gates which are copied from the originals. They are making this a special project, for the cost of materials only.

The former trustee put old bricks at the base of the walls, but unfortunately they covered up the weep holes which would have allowed water to drain away. Hence there is quite a lot of water build-up in some areas which is affecting some of the graves and headstones.

Blocks of residential units which were built years ago are applying pressure on the walls – carparks using them as retaining walls. Residents of these units also climb over the walls, doing considerable damage, and walk through the cemetery as a short-cut to Parramatta Station or Westfield shopping centre.

In addition, although the Friends have sympathy for the homeless, they have had to arrange for these people to be moved to more appropriate accommodation as their meagre belongings are dirty and untidy, and food scraps etc attract vermin.

Families have also been doing inappropriate plaque installations on their descendants' headstones – this is not allowed under the Heritage Act. The Friends now have a very stringent Plaques Policy which families have to abide by and seek approval before they can affix anything to a grave or headstone. Some of the plaques already affixed actually have incorrect information on them. The Friends now have the right, under the Heritage Act, to remove any plaque that is incorrect or inappropriate.

The Corrective Services teams are doing an incredible job keeping the cemetery clean and tidy, and the grass mown.

The cemetery needs constant watchfulness – 17 First Fleeters with memorials, 65 First Fleeters without memorials, and hundreds of convicts are buried in St John's Cemetery. We need to protect and preserve this very historic site.

Next Public Meeting

The next Public Meeting will be held in February 2018 – date and guest speaker to be advised. We will distribute the 2018 Calendar of Events with our October newsletter.

Raffle Draw

The raffle was drawn by Judith Dunn and won by Zareen Nisha.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm.

Confirmed:

_____ Date: _____

<p><u>Membership Renewals</u></p> <p>We are still accepting membership renewals for the 2017/18 year for those members who need to renew.</p> <p>Payment by mail, or at the Friends table at September Open House.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
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