

THE OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP

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NEWSLETTER February 2011

Meeting Dates and Topics

Friday 25th February 2011. 10.30am Community Hall, Oatley Library, Letitia Street.

Annual General Meeting

Friday 27th May 2011. 10.30am Community Hall, Oatley Library, Letitia Street.

Topic: John (Slam) Sullivan.

What a jammed packed meeting we had on Friday, 26th November. Firstly, Roger Robertson had set up three tables with exhibits which the children from Oatley Public School had compiled as a school project, resulting from our association with the School in early September. He explained how he and John Whitbread had judged the entries. We have given book vouchers to the winners. One that has tickled my fancy was by "Ellie". The model in the foreground, is of Wyong Street with Charles Street at the top and Neverfail Bay at the bottom. This is an excerpt from her entry.



"The reason there are yellow dots on the top right hand corner of Wyong Street is because our guide on the Oatley Historical walk told us that when he was young he used to come to the corner of Wyong Street and pick butter cup flowers:

Guess who the guide was? You whistle and I'll point.
Such fame.

If you look closely at the second picture you will be able to see two entries from Roger's grandchildren. Both are folio entries flat on the table. We saw them because Roger subtly pointed them out to us at the meeting.

As you can see, the children had put a lot of work into the project. All who were involved in the project came away uplifted. My thanks to everyone from our end for your contribution. Next year it is hoped to have St Joseph's Catholic and Oatley West Public Schools on board.



Roger continued to assist Cliff Crane in their presentation of "Oatley Pleasure Grounds". Roger provided the Power Point presentation whilst Cliff delivered the oral. Their research delved way into the past, including the history of families who were involved over the years with the Pleasure Grounds. Together with our past topic dealing with the history of the Oatley Bay Sea Scouts, we now have a comprehensive history of it.

I received a phone call from Christine Talbot from Coolangatta via Nowra, to say that she had completed a journal on the life of John (Slam) Sullivan and would we, The Oatley Heritage Group, be interested in obtaining a copy? It so happened we were passing by her Farm the next day and stopped off to spend a pleasant morning with Christine's husband Laurie. Christine had another appointment, so we were sorry not to have met her. I suggested that we could have Slam Sullivan as our topic for May, subject to the meeting's approval. It was only a formality, I know. The meeting unanimously approved and as you can see it is slotted in for our May meeting. I have since been in touch with Christine and I suggested they come to our May meeting and she deliver the paper. Christine and Laurie spent an enjoyable day with us whilst at Burrill. We discussed her project and she accepted that she would be better able to deliver the paper with feeling, rather than have someone read it. She and Laurie will be in attendance at our meeting on the 27th May. I'm pleased, for only she could deliver the paper with the just enthusiasm it deserves.

It is fourteen pages of excellent reading together with images that Laurie assisted to arrange. I marvel at the amount of research that both Christine and Laurie have done to compile this, the life of John (Slam) Sullivan.

On our return from Burrill, we were notified that Barbara Drake had passed away on the 25th January. We were stunned. June had a long association with Barbara. They played tennis together and in recent years, Barbara organised a group who attended the dress rehearsals of the Australian Ballet four times a year. The Guild theatre was another of their outings as was Tai Chi. We know Bob and the family were devastated by Barbara's sudden passing. Our sympathy is extended to Bob, Maxine, Penny, Bronwyn, Kelly and their families.

This will be the last time I will be presenting the Newsletter. Two years ago, I indicated that it was time I stood down as President. There were no takers for the position and with Roger Robertson coming onboard to offer his services to compile our records onto the computer, I thought it appropriate to help steer the project through Council so that our records are not locked away in our filing cabinet. Between Roger & Cliff Crane, our records are available from our Library, on disc. It won't be long before they will be available on the open internet.

Last year, at the Annual General Meeting when being re elected, I point blankly addressed the meeting, that I would not be standing again at the Annual General Meeting in February 2011 and I would not be attending the meeting. A Wooden Boat Festival at Goolwa, South Australia, is scheduled to be held on the weekend of the 26th & 27th February and we are booked in to be there. These Wooden Boat Festivals are held every two years. Another two years and we may not be still into towing the caravan. Hopefully, we will and if so it will be to Hobart's again.

Thank you for supporting me over the last ten years.

Alec.

