

<i>Month & Year of Topic</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Written & Spoken Presenters</i>
August 2002	Sporting Personalities of Oatley The Racing Fraternity	Speaker Bob Rowles Jean Woodward Cliff Crane Ray Stevens Norma Straney Graham and Carol Smith

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OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP

MEETING DATE: 30 August, 2002

**TOPIC: Sporting Personalities
of Oatley**

PAPERS BY: Jean Woodward)

Cliff Crane (2)

Ray Stevens

Norma Straney

Cliff Crane (2)

Graham & Carol Smith

Oatley Sporting.

①

I wrote a article covering the sporting history of Oatley as a bit of a problem.

For the first thing, the sporting facilities in Oatley hardly exist. There is only one football field, that is at Oatley Park, which is now used for soccer & cricket.

This oval was built in 1930 & was mostly gravel with not much grass.

This oval is now the home ground of All Saints Oatley West Soccer Club. This team was formed by Oatley Swimming Club in 1938 & has operated most of the time to the present day. They have up to 25 ~~year~~ years & won many championships. Earlier Rugby Union was played there.

The only two public areas are Oatley Park Baths & Oatley Pleasure grounds.

A swimming club existed at Oatley Pleasure grounds from 1927 - to 1931 when the club ceased to exist. The other swimming pool at Oatley Park Baths as the home of Oatley ^{Amaru} Swimming Club since 1927 to the present day.

Swimming Club in the St George District has produced many fine swimmers since it was formed in 1927.

One was the best swimmer would name him Jack Mc Dowell, who unfortunately as a fighter pilot was killed during the war in Doreen. Also in this period was a great swimmer was Graham Freeman.

Frank Stevens was our best.

He won District, State & Australian Backstroke champion & competed in the Empire Games in Auckland in 1950. John Stevens was well known for ^{other} his breaststroke a butterfly.

Our best swimmers would be Bob Baufler, Carol Stammers, John ~~Stevens~~, John Coleman & Julie Rhoads.

Rick Johnson was a outstanding Rugby League player in the 1920's & played for Australia.

Emma Pickering also in the 20's was a outstanding sculler racing on the Georges River & beat all comers.

Bruce Baitishull played 1st grade for St George in Rugby Union ^{in Australia}.

Bob Swift was a outstanding cricketer for St George & captained their 2nd grade team for many years.

Edgar Brett was one of Australia's outstanding jockeys for many years both in Australia & Europe.

He ~~found~~ lived for many years in a boat sled a Hacker to

See Belcher won many district & State Championships

7

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During the 1920's & 1930's one of the local characters in Oatley Bay was Slam Sullivan. He had a gymnasium on the waterfront where he trained many boxers, particularly American Negroes, who used to run around the area.

The Jewfish ~~to~~ Point Motor Boat Club operated in Jewfish Bay in the 1920's, 1930's & 1940's. They conducted Motor Boat Races regularly.

Two well known brothers were Cecil Wellington & Cassy Wellington. Cec played for St George Rugby League Club & Cassy was Massuch for them for many years. In his younger days in the 1930's & 1940's he boxed under the name of Albie Bennett & won many championships. He served as a fitness instructor in the AIF FORCE.

I think a man named ^{DOUG} Barnes represented Australia in Soccer.

Our next door neighbour was ~~am~~ Herb Gillaspie. He served in the 1st AIF in France, where he won many boxing championships.

One person not known to many people was Earl Leggett. In the late 30's we marked out 100 yards on the road in Lloyd St. He would then issue a challenge he would race any one on a push bike (No gears) ↘

He served with the AIF & was captured by the Germans in Greece. Apparently, they were ~~for~~ prisoners in a large POW Camp. They had athletic events & he was credited with beating the British Empire champions over 100 yds in running. Unfortunately he never carried on running after his discharge.

Oatley RSL Youth Club have carried out many sports over the years such as gymnastics, swimming, soccer & Rugby League & Union.

Oatley Rugby Union Team has played for many years around the district.

Wrestling
Now this is a sport you would not hear with Oatley. In the 1930's there was a wrestling stadium at Carlton. You can see the building from the railway line on the right hand side.

Oatley had 2 wrestlers, Neil Whittaker, who was later a builder & Rube Wilson. Rube worked for Edwards Bakers & for exercise would pull up bags of flour into the bakehouse.

The show at the stadium was for us children highly exciting, though as you got older you realised they are great actors.

Neil & Rube were the "goodies" & Jo Keates was a "badie".
It was great entertainment.

To write an article covering the sporting history of Oatley is a bit of a problem.

For the first thing, the sporting facilities in Oatley hardly exist. There is only one football field, that is at Oatley Park, which is now used for soccer and cricket.

This oval was built in 1930 and was mostly gravel with very little grass. It is now the home ground for All Saints Oatley West Soccer Club. This team was formed by Oatley Swimming Club in 1938 and has operated most of the time to the present day. There are up to 25 teams and many championships have been won.

Earlier, Rugby Union was played there.

The only two public areas are Oatley Park Baths and Oatley Pleasure Grounds. A swimming club existed at Oatley Pleasure Grounds from 1927 to 1931, when the club ceased to exist. The other swimming pool at Oatley Park Baths is the home of the Oatley Amateur Swimming Club since 1927 to the present day.

Oatley Swimming Club, which is the oldest swimming club in the St George district, produced many fine swimmers since it's formation.

Pre war, the best swimmer would have been Jack McDowell, who unfortunately as a fighter pilot was killed during the war at Darwin. Also in this period, was Cheshire Fuimini. Frank Stevens was our best. He won District, State & Australian Backstroke Championships and competed in the Empire Games in Auckland in 1950. John Stevens was well-known for his Breaststroke and Butterfly.

Our other best swimmers included Bob Bouffler, Carole Stanners, John Coleman, Julie Rohl. Sue and Scott Belcher have been outstanding in later years with Sue winning many District & State Championships.

Rick Johnson was an outstanding Rugby League player in the 1920's and played for Australia. Emma Pickering also in the 20's was an outstanding sculler racing on the Georges River and beat^{ing} allcomers.

Bruce Battishall played first grade Rugby Union for St George and Australia. Bob Swift was an outstanding cricketer for St George and captained their 2nd Grade team for many years.

Edgar Britt was one of Australia's outstanding jockeys for many years and rode in Europe and India with great success. He lived for a number years in a boatshed attached to Oatley Bay baths.

During the 1920's, one of the local characters in Oatley Bay was Slam Sullivan. He had a gymnasium on the waterfront where he trained many boxers particularly American Negroes, who used to run around the area.

The Jewfish Point Motor Boat Club operated in Jewfish Bay in the 1920's, 30's and 40's. They conducted motor boat races regularly.

Two well-known brothers were Cec Wellington and Cussy Wellington. Cec played for St George Rugby League Club and Cussy was masseur for them for many years. In his younger days in the 30's and 40's Cussy boxed under the name of Albie Bennett and won many championships. He served as a fitness instructor in the RAAF.

I think a man named Doug Barnes represented Australia in soccer.

Our next door neighbour, in Ada Street, was Herb Gillespie. He served in the 1st AIF in France, where he won many championships in boxing.

One person not known to many people was Earl Leggatt. In the late 30's, we marked out 100 yards on the road in Lloyd Street. Earl would then issue a challenge that he would race anyone on a push bike (no gears in those days) and he would run.

He did not lose many races, I can tell you.

He served with the AIF and was captured by the Germans in Greece. Apparently they were imprisoned in a large POW camp. There were athletic events and he was credited with beating the British Empire Games champions over 100yards. Unfortunately, he did not carry on running after his discharge.

Oatley RSL Youth Club have carried out many sports over the years such as gymnastics, swimming, soccer, Rugby League and Union.

Oatley Rugby Union Team has played for many years around the district.

WRESTLING.

Now this is a sport you would not link with Oatley. In the 1930's, there was a wrestling stadium at Carlton. You can see the building from the railway line on the right hand side. (Railway Parade.)

Oatley had two wrestlers, Neil Whitaker, who later became a builder and Rube Wilson. Rube worked for Edwards Bakery and for exercise, would pull up bags of flour into the bakehouse.

The show at the stadium was, for we children, highly exciting, though as you grew older, you realized they were great actors.

Neil and Rube were the "goodies" and Jo Keatos was a "baddie".

It was great entertainment!

Brad Smith was born in 1971, went to Oatley Primary & Hurstville Boys High Schools. He was School Captain at both his schools. He played soccer for Oatley RSL from the Under 7's and became interested in Athletics when he was in Year 7 (Under 12's). Brad joined St. George Little Athletics where he was encouraged by his hurdle coach (Bruce Lindwell) to train and concentrate on hurdles. He held a state record and up until a few years ago had not been broken, we don't know whether this record still stands or not. Over the following years he competed at local, regional, state and national levels, Brad was chosen to go to the Pacific Games in Melbourne during this time and came second by 0.02 of a second. He later joined Canterbury/Bankstown Athletics Club and had a brilliant coach (Doug Buchman) He has won gold, silver and bronze medals over the years of competition including a relay race and at that time he didn't have running shoes and ran in bear feet on a very hot track, but they won gold. At 16 years of age he developed Post Viral Syndrome and was a very sick lad and had to postpone his sport. We were told he would not compete again. He proved the Specialist wrong, finishing High School and becoming an Optician and is also a qualified Massage Therapist. Brad now competes in another sport where he holds state, national and world titles and also holds a licence to instruct anywhere in the world. He has always been very dedicated to his chosen sports.

From Graham & Carol Smith

Kitchener Street, Oatley.

31 August, 2002 - Sporting Personalities.

Grand Smith was born in 1971, went to Oatley Primary & then to the High School. He was school captain in both the schools. He played soccer for Oatley RSL from Year 7 and became interested in Athletics when he was in Year 7 (under 12's). Grand joined the Oatley Athletics where he was encouraged by his uncle Grand (Brian) (now deceased) to train and concentrate on hurdles. He held a state record and represented a few years ago and had not been broken. He had a chance to represent Oatley at the following year he compared at level 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100.

31st AUGUST, 2002.

Because Oatley is a riverside suburb, it is only natural that fishing, boating and swimming would be of paramount interest, particularly in the early 1920's. People came from inner Sydney to get some good clean air and enjoy themselves at picnics, dances and sport.

Many Sunday Schools enjoyed a day at Oatley Pleasure Grounds, where the children could have many different sporting activities.

A swimming club was formed by Frank Dunning, but as Sandy Beach became popular, the swimming club appears to have been transferred to Oatley West.

Barber's Rock at Oatley Point, having been used by the Aborigines, continued to be a great fishing spot for the men and boys of Oatley. POP STEVENS used to take his boys there and when he lost several hooks and line avered that the barber, Mr Prescott, had been throwing cocky cages in the water. Mr.Prescott apparently sold the fish hooks andline.

One day, when John and I were fishing at the point, a young lass fell in and was being taken by the tide just in front of him. He reached down and yanked her up on to the rock, scolded her for not being careful.

Glenn Stevens

N.Z. HERALD 10TH. NOV. 1973

'LITTLE' NOYES A 'BIG' NOISE IN N.Z.



Lifetime Scrapper

The standard of the martial arts—in particular jiu-jitsu—could improve dramatically with the visit of the highly rated exponent and judge, Len Noyes.

Mr Noyes, a 71-year-old Australian, as well as being a past master, holds the credentials to grade exponents in the arts and that is one of the main reasons for the two-week-long visit here.

He will grade members

of the South Pacific Jiu-Jitsu Society and as well give demonstrations and lectures in jiu-jitsu, karate and aikido.

A one-time boxer and wrestler, Mr Noyes admits to having—in the old days—boxed for six rounds at a pound a round and then getting "thirty bob." But at the same time admitting that wrestling was the first of his real loves—that was until he switched to the martial arts.

"I am a second dan at judo, fifth dan at jiu-jitsu

and a fourth dan at karate," said Mr Noyes, "and I still keep at it."

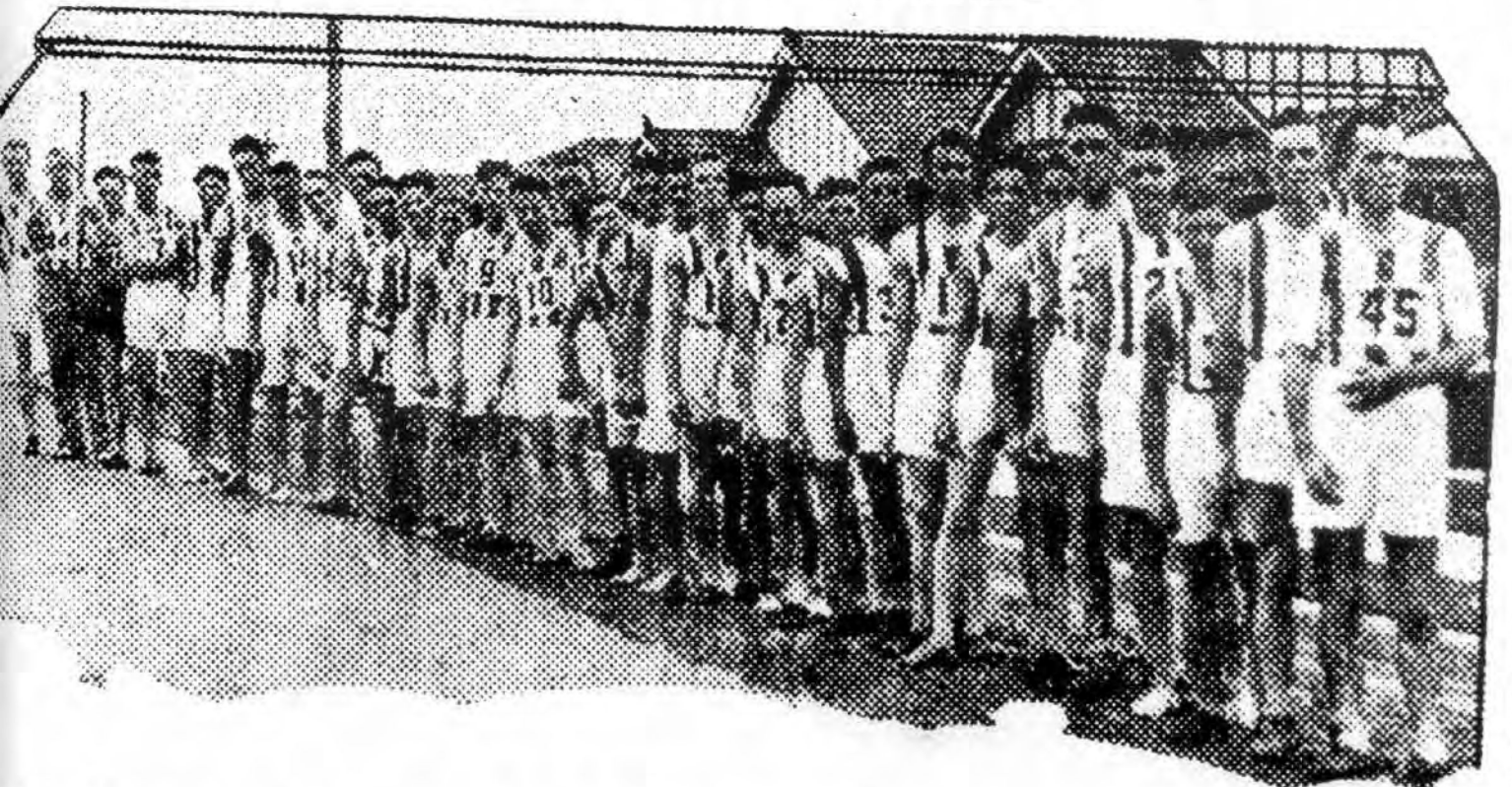
Mr Noyes said that he felt the standard in Australia was only fair. "There is too much for them to do now," he said. "But the standard, from what I have seen, appears to be very good here."

Mr Noyes, who will be in New Zealand for about 10 or 12 days, will first appear at the South Pacific clubrooms at 83 Lorne St at 2.30 this afternoon.



St. George athletes dashing off the mark in their tussle for five mile novice honors at Kensington racecourse yesterday. And they like it too. 1931.

Before the Battle



Lined up for the start—St George men Pose for a camera 1931

OATLEY BAY SWIMMING CLUB.

Race results, 28/1/'32:—

100 yds. Championship: N. Roux, 1; J. Phipps, 2; N. Coupland, 3. Time, 1m 8s.

200 yds. Championship: L. Keane, 1; A. Straney, 2; J. Phipps, 3. Time, 2m 47s.

Boys' Championship (50 yds.): T. Dodd, 1; N. Coupland, 2; W. Dodd, 3. Time, 30s.

Ladies' Race (50 yds.): E. Moon, 1; M. Gregg, 2; E. Ford, 3. Time, 50s.

St. George A.A.C.

ST. GEORGE DEFEATED IN
TEAMS TITLE
(By "Spike.")
1935

St. George were surprisingly beaten out of a place in the teams title held in conjunction with the Western Suburbs annual four-miles open handicap held at Canterbury Racecourse last Saturday afternoon, but had the pleasure of seeing one of their men win the race. Ron

C3: Reutama were the superior team to defeat Walworth. Miss Sharpe-B. Hosking and Miss B. Costella-K. Howland broke even in sets for the winners.

Primrose had the edge on Lorado, and by winning 3 sets for the loss of 3 games, made their task much easier. Mrs. Wasson and A. Straney played exceedingly well to take 4 sets for Primrose.

Dragons had a close win, defeating Bernborough by 1 game. Miss B. Allen and M. Lynch by winning the last set 6-2, saved their side from defeat.

Woodville were much too strong for Bexley Congs and went on to an easy win. Mr. and Mrs. Miller annexed four sets, with M. and Ms. Phillips also playing well.

after having looked beaten at the turn came again to just win on the post. It was certainly a great effort, Ron, and each and every one of us congratulate you on what appears the best race of your athletic career.

Allan Straney, in finishing sixth, ran a remarkable race, and seems certain to be a strong candidate in the St. George team.

Harry Gibbons ran a fair race, but not anywhere near his best. I think that party must have upset calculations **HARRY**

SHEPHERD WON

1931

FIVE MILES ROAD RACE

BATEMAN FASTEST

Parramatta-road this afternoon, roaders raced over a five-miles course for Banner Hosiery Cup.

B. Shepherd, of Western Suburbs, finishing with a good sprint, won handily. W. Stoddart. The fastest time, n. 12sec., was easily established by R. man, of the promoting club, South ey.

Results:—
Shepherd, W.S. (all. 4min. 10sec.), 1
nin. 3sec. 2
Stoddart, S.S. (3.5), 27.2 3
Williams (4.25) 28.26 3

secs.. What a fine team Saints should have for the teams championship in August with men like G. Keep, J. Townsend, H. Gibbons, A. Straney, A. Gainsford, R. Sleigh, R. Young, R. Kelleher, R. Diffen, with several other young runners coming on. Result:—

R. Kelleher (2.55) 24.21, 1; J. Townsend (1.25) 23.0, 2; R. Sleigh (1.40) 23.29, 3; A. Straney (1.10) 23.9, 4; C. Coe (3.40) 25.47, 5; H. Gibbons (50) 23.4, 6; A. Gainsford (50) 23.13, 7; R. Diffen (2.25) 24.52, 8; E. Giles (2.35) 25.3, 9; R. Young (1.30) 24.20, 10. Fastest, G. Keep, J. Townsend (23.0) 1; H. Gibbons (23.4) 3; A. Straney (23.9) 4; A. Gainsford (23.13) 5; R. Sleigh

E MILES ROAD RACE

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Stoddart, S.S. (3.5), 27.2	2
Williams, S.S. (4.25), 28.26	3
Straney, St.G. (3.0), 27.14	4
Walker, St.G. (3.45), 28.3	5
Bailey, B. (4.25), 28.45	6

ATHLETICS. 1929

ST. GEORGE A.A.C.

By Kelleher, of the St. George Club, who home a good winner in the three-mile 'Trolley' open cross-country handicap field of 74 starters, held at Hurstville last Saturday. Club mates thought that Kelleher was certain to win on such a liberal chance of two minutes fifteen seconds. He looked like losing, and appeared to have race won at any stage. Kelleher finished an exceptionally fine burst of speed to L. Mobbs (of Western Suburbs) by 15 s, with J. Cramsie (Kensington) in third place. Norm. Young (St. George) did well to secure fifth place, it being his first open race.

Results:—
 St. George Open Cross-country Handicap.—R. Kelleher (St. George), all. 2 min. 15 sec., actual time 17 min. 9sec., 1; L. Mobbs (Western Suburbs), 2.0, 16.56, 2; C. Cramsie (Kensington), 1.45, 16.52, 3; N. Young (St. George) 2.25, 17.36, 5; B. Butler (St. George), 1.35, 16.56, 8; R. Chadwick (St. George), 1.25, 17.1, 16; A. Lavis (St. George), 1.55, 17.37, 20.
 Fastest time was secured by F. Bailey (Western Suburbs), 15m 53s.

GRAND HOTEL TROPHY.

Rockdale to-morrow members will contest a four-mile road handicap for the Grand Hotel trophy, commencing at 3.15 p.m.

OATLEY BAY SWIMMING CLUB.

The main feature of the day was the two exhibition swims by Bruce, Wilson and Bert Gallard of Bondi.

Wilson gave a great solo swim over 100 yds., and clipped eight seconds off the baths record, his time being 59 secs.

Gallard sprinted over 200 yds., and also broke the baths record.

The two swam a 50 yds. back-stroke.

The club's races being well contested, made the day a very enjoyable one for the big crowd present.

Results:—

Boys' Junior Handicap (50 yds.): D. Gillespie, 1; N. Coupland, 2; W. Dodd, 3. Time, 45 secs.

Gent's Senior Handicap (100 yds.).—1st heat: C. Hatchman, 1; L. Keane, 2; W. Gregg, 3. Time, 1m 30s. 2nd heat: J. Phipps, 1; A. Straney, 2; L. Shepperd, 3. Time, 1m 9 2-5s. 3rd heat: H. Howes, 1; E. Wonderley, 2; T. Dodd, 3. Time, 1m 20s. Final: J. Phipps, 1; H. Howes, 2; L. Keane, 3. Time, 1m 9s.

Ladies' Handicap (50 yds.).—1st heat: M. Burton, 1; M. Birchnoff, 2; Ester Bates, 3. Time, 41s. 2nd heat: Ethel Bates, 1; M. Gregg, 2; M. Butters, 3. Time, 55s. Final: Ethel Bates, 1; M. Burton, 2; M. Gregg and M. Birchnoff (dead heat), 3. Time, 54s.

Juvenile Handicap (33 yds.).—1st heat: S. Moon, 1; D. Dodd, 2; S. Milne, 3. Time, 31s. 2nd heat: R. Stevens, 1; P. Wootton, 2; Ethel Bates, 3. Time, 42s. Final: S. Moon, 1; P. Wootton, 2; D. Dodd, 3. Time, 32s.

Relay Team Race: Bruce Wilson, T. Hartland, T. Dodd, E. Wonderley, 1; Bert Gallard, L. Shepperd, J. Kent, N. Coupland, 2. Time, 2m 8s.

Allen Straney - Athlete

LADIES' CLUB.

page 16

welcome return to the Oval of the girls as noticed last Tuesday. Old members and F. Gould turned out for some training. Miss L. Dent and Miss M. Cope also had a few runs. Under Miss N. Gould's care, the club should improve steadily, we hope, produce some excellent runners in the next inter-club competition. New members roll up next Tuesday evening.

OATLEY BAY SWIMMING CLUB.

OATLEY BAY v. LEICHHARDT AT LEICHHARDT.—SUNDAY, 17th JANUARY.

100 yds. Handicap (50 yds.).—1st heat: Straney, 1; W. Dodd, 2; G. Prescott, 3. Time, 33 1-5s. 2nd heat: N. Roun, 1; F. Mathews, 2; D. Gillespie, 3. Time, 26 1-5s. 3rd heat: J. Stevens, 1; T. Dodd, 2; N. Roun, 3. Time, 35 2-5s. 4th heat: W. Dodd, 1; A. Straney, 2; E. Wonderley, 3. Time, 31 2-5s. Final: W. Gregg, 1; H. Burton, 2; N. Roun, 3. Time, 32 4-5s.

50 yds. Club Handicap (50 yds.).—1st heat: Straney (L), 1; H. Burton (O), 2; T. Dodd (L), 3. Time, 35 3-5s. 2nd heat: Straney (L), 1; H. Platte (L), 2; D. Dodd (O), 3. Time, 33 2-5s. 3rd heat: W. Dodd (O), 1; C. Johanson (L), 2; W. Roun (L), 3. Time, 31s. 4th heat: G. Mathews (L), 1; F. Mathews (L), 2; N. Roun (O), 3. Time, 34 1-5s. Final: A. Straney (L), 1; G. Mathews (L), 2; T. Dodd (O), 3. Time, 34 1-5s.

Relay Contest.—Group 1: C. Johanson, 92 pts; S. Mathews, 85 pts, 2; D. Mathews, 80 pts, 3. Group 2: N. Roun, 75 pts, 1; H. Burton, 74 pts, 2; E. Wonderley, 71 pts, 3.

Relay Race (Leichhardt v. Oatley Bay, 500 yds.).—Oatley Bay, 1 (N. Roun, capt.), J. Stevens, E. Wonderley, A. Straney, J. Kent, T. Dodd, T. Winn, T. Hartland, T. Ball, N. Roun, and Leichhardt, 2 (J. Foster, H. Burton, W. Ashton, C. Johanson, J. Bloomfield, F. and T. Mathews, H. Clews, H. Burton, N. Brown).

Oatley Bay are now holders of Challenge Cup and will defend their title on 7th January against Leichhardt at Oatley Bay (Leichhardt's Baths).

OATLEY BAY SWIMMING CLUB.

Results:—100 yds. Handicap (50 yds.).—1st heat: D. Dodd, 1; J. Gray, 2; S. Milne, 3. Time, 33 1-5s. 2nd heat: E. Ball, 1; W. Dodd, 2; S. Milne, 3. Time, 34s. Final: D. Gillespie, 1; W. Dodd, 2; J. Gray, 3. Time, 48s.

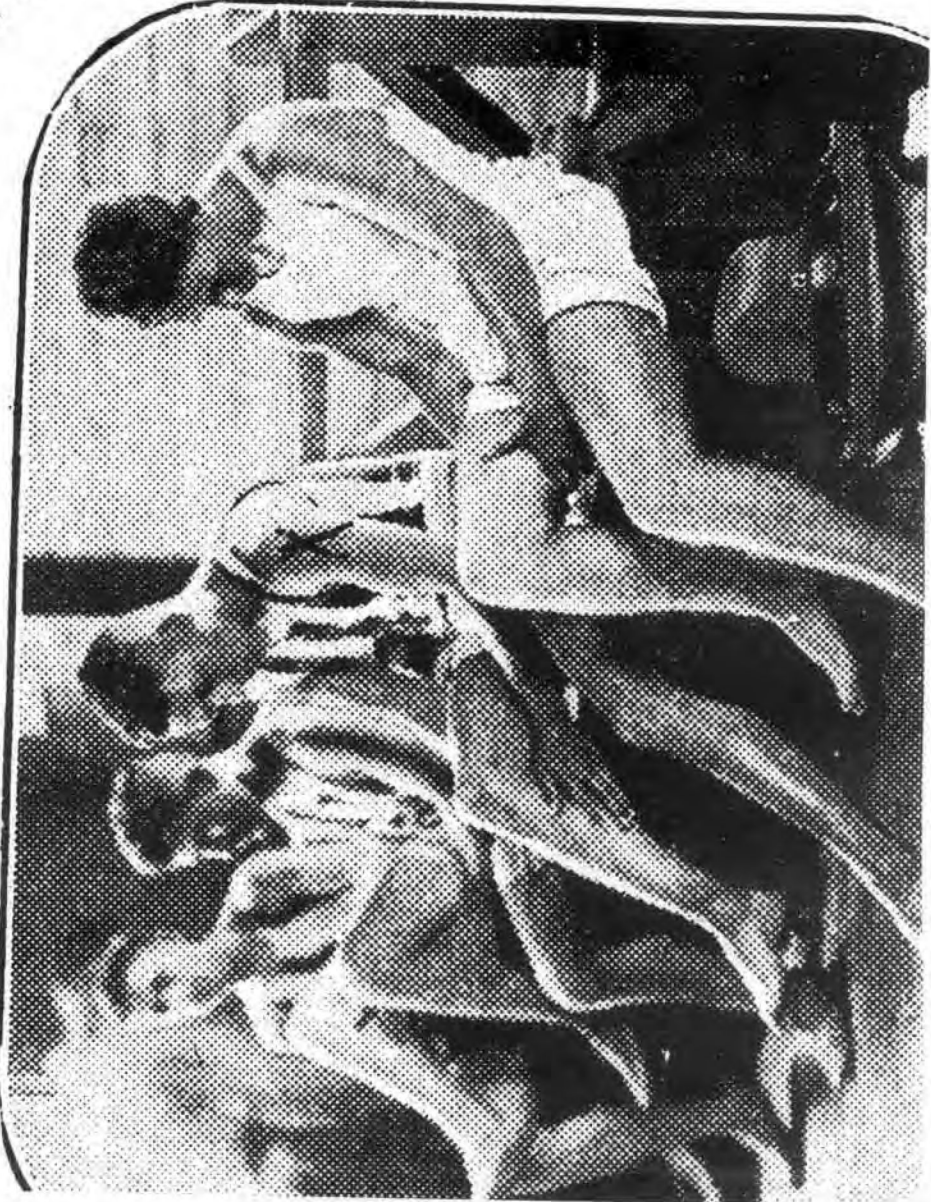
50 yds. Handicap (50 yds.): D. Dodd, 1; W. Roun, 2; M. Butters, 3. Time, 46 2-5s.

Relay 50 yds.: Ester Bates, 1; M. Gregg, 2; L. Butters, 3. Time, 45s.

Photo below:
Harry Linmark,
boat builder,
and his wife
Louisa Straney.

Charlton, 2; J. Prescott, 3. Time, 33 1-5s. 3rd heat: N. Rouse, 1; L. Keane, 2; L. Stenhouse, 3. Time, 28 1-5s. 4th heat: A. Straney, 1; C. Hatchman, 2; O. Harding, 3. Time, 28 3-5s. Final: N. Rouse, 1; A. Straney, 2; H. Howes, T. Dodd, (dead heat), 3. Time, 28s.

Relay Race (200 yds): J. Phipps, T. Dodd, A. Straney, W. Gregg, 1; E. Wonderley, A. Straney, C. Hatchman, W. Dodd, 2. Time, 2m 18s.



From 5 miles novice cross country run
From Kennington 1930
Allen Straney
From 5 miles novice cross country run
From Kennington 1930
Allen Straney



OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP

Meeting 30 August 2002

Sporting Personalities of Oatley

The Wrights - Arthur, Chris and David: men of calibre!

**Target Rifle Shooting Champions – State & National
and State and Australian representatives**

Arthur Wright, and his sons Chris and David deserve the title 'Men of Calibre' – that is born out by their target rifle shooting record. In addition to the 'Queens' titles won by Arthur and Chris, the many other championships, and state and national team representations by all three of them (listed on final page) points to their remarkable standing in that sport.

ARTHUR WRIGHT

Arthur and Kit Wright with their two small sons – Chris (b. 1958) and David (b. 1963) came to live at 41 Annette Street, Oatley in 1966. Arthur (born 7 August 1924 at Granville) died on 14 July 2002 but Kit still lives there, albeit not enjoying the best of health.

Arthur, Chris and David have a remarkable list of achievements in the sport of target rifle shooting.

Arthur was a member of Randwick Rifle club (now the Holsworthy Rifle Club) for over 50 years. He was a handy bush shooter who had a crack at Anzac at Liverpool in 1947 and was hooked ever since, enjoying great success, winning several Queens Badges including the NSWRA No.1 badge in 1981 and representing NSW in 1982. Although a hard task master (!!) he was known for encouraging new shooters and offering a great deal of assistance to those looking for help – if "Plan A" didn't work then "Plan B" should be employed "Pull good shots!". He assisted his sons greatly in their shooting endeavours, seeing Chris also win the NSWRA No.1 badge in 1991 and lasting long enough to see David go off to the world championships in Finland in July 2002, something he was very proud of.

At the time of his death Arthur was the remaining member of the old Randwick Rifle Club with longest membership - The large gathering for Arthur's funeral included, in addition to local area friends and work and professional associates, a large contingent of friends from his many years of participation as a popular, respected and successful marksman in the sport of target rifle shooting. The next longest remaining member of the old Randwick Club, Pat Northey, fired the traditional last shot at Anzac Range Malabar on 20 July.

THE OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE N.S.W. RIFLE ASSOCIATION

THE MARKSMAN



**Arthur Wright
(Randwick Club)
WINNER N.S.W.R.A.
1981 QUEEN'S
AGGREGATE**



the Marksman

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From left: Arthur, David, Chris and Kit Wright.

Among Queen's Badges won by him, Arthur Wright won the N.S.W.R.A. 1981 Queen's Aggregate with a record of 396 out of 400 - '*The Marksman*', the official organ of the N.S.W. Rifle Association, in the editorial to its August 1981 issue reporting Randwick Rifle Club member Arthur's Queens Aggregate success, spoke of Arthur's consistent improvement and considerable successes since he had "*.. commenced shooting with the Randwick Club as a young man of 22 in 1947 ..*"

Arthur, prior to his 1981 N.S.W.R.A. "Queens" win had been Randwick Rifle Club Champion in 1954/55, and in 1979/80; he subsequently again achieved that title in 1993/94 and 1994/95.

Apart from his target rifle shooting success we know that Arthur started work as an apprentice toolmaker and eventually became a respected refrigeration engineer and an expert in capillary tube technology that is the physical basis for how refrigeration works. A very bright man, he invented or "trouble-shooted" many machines with refrigeration applications as diverse as commercial icemakers and cool rooms, and organ storage cabinets and equipment to stabilize blood temperature for the first heart bypass procedures at RPA back in the 'fifties.

He even worked with the CSIRO cloud seeding project by dropping dry ice into clouds to try to make rain, something which large areas of Australia could do with right now.

All the early medical related projects stirred a lifelong interest in medical science issues and he always kept a note pad by his side to write down any new ideas or solutions.

Arthur was a long-time member of the Freemasons.

In his youth he was a keen motorcyclist as many of his generation were - only really wealthy people owned cars. He had a couple of machines which were built up from parts from several makes before getting keen on Triumphs. He owned two of these on which he travelled far and wide, a '48 Triumph Tiger 100 and then a '52 Triumph Thunderbird, but Kit wouldn't get married unless they had a car so the Triumphs had to go.

Arthur was known for his strength of will and fighting spirit that was evident until his last hours. This had been demonstrated earlier though - in 1989 he was seriously injured, tragically losing the sight of his right eye through an accident at the 'range, the result of human error. Quite coincidentally, he had been using "outriggers" to aim with his left eye in

smallbore for some time beforehand, and simply had these copied for his big bore rifles. It was this strength and fighting spirit that allowed him to come back and win the Club Championship again with a reconstructed cheek and one eye, and eventually become a Life Member, when others might have given it away.

CHRIS WRIGHT

Although not having been successful in winning a Club championship, Arthur's eldest son Chris - according to the July 1991 issue of *The Marksman* - '*quietly eased his way through the field to win the 1991 N.S.W. Queens..*' and '*..now joins his father Arthur Wright to form the only father/son winning combination in the history of the N.S.W. Queens aggregate ..*'; the cover of the magazine featured a wonderful photo of an obviously pleased Chris and just as obviously proud parents Arthur and Kit with younger son David.

Although Chris's 392 out of possible 400 was not enough to beat his father's N.S.W. record of 396 in 1981, his connection with the Queens went right back to 1961 when the title had been taken out by his Godfather, Don Watson.

Chris also was selected as a member of the Australian team to compete the Oceania Shooting Championships held in New Zealand in 1993.

Chris and Maree Wright have recently returned to live in Oatley;

DAVID WRIGHT

Although not yet successful in the NSW Queens, David, the younger of Arthur Wright's sons, has managed more than his share of success in target rifle shooting - he certainly contributed his share to the Wright results of the Randwick Rifle Club (and of the Wright family in Australian and International rifle shooting) .. interspersed among his father's four Randwick Rifle Club championships David captured three Club championships, in 1985/86, 1990/91 and 1997/98 - so the father/son combination of Arthur and David between them took out four of the six championships from 1992 to 1998.

David, with rank of Senior Constable in the N.S.W. Police Force, in recent years has been a Weapons / Tactics Instructor at the N.S.W. Police Academy at Goulburn; he was one of the three person team chosen to represent Australia in the 2002 International Sports Shooting Federation World Championships in Finland, having achieved highest average score in the selection trials. The trip involved initial travel to Finland to have ammunition tailored to their



rifles (and overcoming jet-lag), then to a seven day period of training with the Swiss national team before returning to Finland for the opening ceremony and competition matches.

David and Jacquie (on the academic staff at the Police College campus at Goulburn), and baby Ehlana recently moved into their new home on a five acre block on the outskirts of Goulburn.

A listing of the Championship/Representative Teams Records of the Wright family in addition to their Queens successes, is on following page - :



Cliff Crane

Committee Member,

Oatley Heritage Group

22 August 2002



From left: Arthur Wright with sons, Chris and David.

Representative Teams Record

ARTHUR WRIGHT

1982 NSW State Team (to Melbourne)

CHRIS WRIGHT

1983 NSW Under-25 State Team (to Hobart)

1992 NSW State Team (to Wellington NZ, NZRA Centenary Championships)

1993 Australian Team (to Auckland NZ, Oceania Regional Championships)

DAVID WRIGHT

1982 NSW Under-25 State Team (to Melbourne)

1985 NSW Under-25 State Team (to Perth)

1986 NSW Under-25 State Team (to Adelaide)

1986 NSW Under-25 State Team (to Wellington NZ)

1988 NSW Under-25 State Team (Sydney, Bicentennial Championships)

1988 Australian Under-25 Team (Sydney, Bicentennial Championships)

1995 Australian Team (to Auckland NZ, Oceania Regional Championships)

2002 Australian Team (to Finland, ISSF World Shooting Championships)

DAVID WRIGHT 300m Results –

1994 NSW Champion, ISSF 300m 60 Shot Prone, Sydney

1994 QLD Champion, ISSF 300m 60 Shot Prone, Brisbane

1999 National Champion, ISSF 300m 60 Shot Prone, Canberra

2001 NSW Champion, ISSF 300m 60 Shot Prone, Sydney.

OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP

Meeting 30 August 2002

Sporting personalities of Oatley

- **EDGAR BRITT, OAM** -

PAPER PRESENTED BY JEAN WOODWARD, HERITAGE GROUP MEMBER

Edgar Britt's connection with Oatley is somewhat slight as he lived in Oatley only about four years, but it was during this time that his career as a jockey began, and he went on to become much more famous overseas in England, India and America than at home.

Edgar was born in Rozelle in 1914 and the family came to Oatley in 1923 intending to have an extended holiday of four months, but stayed four years. His mother had been ill and the holiday was to enable her to recuperate.

The family rented the two storey boatshed which was then on the waterfront of my present home at No. 10 Russell Street (hence my interest in Edgar Britt). This boatshed at an earlier time was also the home of Emma Pickering the champion sculler.

The Britt family settled in and decided to stay permanently, whereupon Mr Edgar Williams who owned the property built an additional room on the boatshed.

Before Edgar Britt was 12 years old he firmly decided he wanted to be a jockey. So persistent was he that his father bought him a horse which he saw grazing in a paddock nearby, and which he rode to and from Oatley school and around Oatley. He showed some promise, so at thirteen his father took him to see a Mr. Mick Polson, a trainer who lived at Carlton and had stables there and at Moorefield racecourse. Mr. Polson was impressed with him and agreed to having him work at the stables before and after school, to which he rode his horse. When he was fourteen he left school and became an apprenticed jockey. He still keeps a letter from a Mr. Fitzgerald who was the headmaster at Oatley School, wishing him well in his new career.

He rode his first winner at Canterbury in 1930 and then moved to stables at Randwick. Much success followed. He went to America with Mr. Polson and rode in the States. He went to England later and had much success there. In 1948 he was the stable jockey for H.M. King George VI. He also rode for the Princess Royal. His contemporaries at that time were Sir Gordon Richards and Lester Piggott.

He spent some time in India riding for two Maharajas. His brother Jack also became a jockey, but sadly was killed in an accident in India when only nineteen.

At the height of his success Edgar always returned to Australia for a short time each year.

Now 88 he lives at Avalon. Many books have been written of his career.

Jean Woodward
Member,
Oatley Heritage Group
22 August 2002

OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP
Meeting 30 August 2002
Sporting personalities of Oatley
- **EDGAR BRITT, OAM** -
INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED JOCKEY 1930s - 1959

Edgar Britt, after being one of Australia's most successful jockeys in the 1930's / 1940's, went on to enjoy acclaim in the United States of America, the Indian sub-continent, the United Kingdom, and Europe.

While still riding in England he decided in 1959 to retire – his autobiography tells the story of that decision quite simply – ‘An incident at Lincoln, where I was left at the barrier on an odds-on favourite in a two-horse race, made me determined that I would not re-apply for my licence in 1960. ... I was forty-six and of course I had regrets, but they vanished when I thought of owners and punters whose money might be lost because of ill-judgement on my part. I had a good innings and looked back over the years to find with some pride that I had about 10,000 rides in my career for 2,000 winners.’

In 1967, Edgar's autobiography was published – subsequently in 2000 a new edition was published, unchanged from the original edition except for ‘ ... the epilogue and a small selection of new anecdotes ... ’

The back cover of the autobiography gives the skeletal details of Edgar's ‘... colourful thirty-year career as one of Australia's most successful jockeys. Winning his first race in 1930 at the age of sixteen, Britt never looked back, wearing the colours of many great owners, including King George VI, and the Maharajahs of Kolhapur, Baroda and KashmirThe man who won the St. Leger, Oaks, One Thousand and Two Thousand Guineas, Irish Derby and a host of other important events was also one of the most honest and impartial jockeys ever to grace a saddle’

The epilogue to the 2000 edition of Edgar's autobiography reveals ‘.. It was a very hard decision for me to retire. There were many factors to be taken into consideration: I wanted to spend the rest of my life in Australia; I loved England but the climate was very testing and I hated cold weather.’

After he retired - in Australia - Edgar Britt wrote a racing column for the Sunday Telegraph for 16 years.

Also, for some time from about 1977 Edgar was among many notables in the thoroughbred industry, including Percy Sykes, Bart Cummings, Bert Wicks, Jennifer Churchill, and Johnny Tapp who wrote for the Racehorse Syndicator magazine – later known as *The Australian Racehorse*.

A television series replayed in recent years on Sky Channel, by John Tapp 'revived memories of one of our best jockeys' - Edgar Britt ... such was the demand from viewers to learn more about Britt's amazing career.

Edgar received an OAM. In the Australian Honours List in 2002 for his contribution to racing, and journalism.

He has four daughters from his marriage of 47 years to his first wife Tibby who died of a heart attack in 1979 and four stepchildren of the 18 year marriage to his second wife Hermoine who died in 1999 from motor neurone disease. He lives with his son Peter in Avalon, Sydney. A niece of Edgar's - Dianne Buckland - lives in Oatley.

A video 'An Evening With Edgar Britt' is available from the Library of the Australian Thoroughbred Breeders Club – the loan period for videos is seven days. Reservations can be made by e-mail library@atbc.com

But – his early life – when he 'fixed' on the idea of being "a jockey" ... ??

On page 11 of his autobiography, 'Post Haste', Edgar Britt, in talking of his early decision that he wanted to be a jockey, refers to '.. our home at Oatley – a Sydney suburb..' and tells us of his father buying, for five pounds, 'a horse to hack around for some months, after which if I was still of the same mind, he would try to get me into a stable as an apprentice' and '... we stabled him in a cave behind our house ... and with great pride I rode him after school each day ...'.

That period when Edgar lived with his family in Oatley? Where did he live? Did he remember his time in Oatley? Did he remember people from those days as a lad in our cherished suburb?

The best person to fill in that period seemed to be Edgar himself.

I located him and spoke to him on the telephone. I found him an alert and - despite his long period of international fame – unpretentious, and gracious 89 year old with a clear memory of his teen years in Oatley.

From Edgar I learned that

- his family came from England to re-establish in Australia in 1911 (and, according to Edgar, his father became the greatest fan ever of living in Australia!)

- the Britt family had come to stay in Oatley only for five weeks - - but they had stayed for five years!
- where he had lived in Oatley? - the family lived in a two storeyed wooden boatshed in Oatley Bay, close to the Oatley Bay Pleasure Grounds, below a home then occupied by the Williams family (later occupied by Mr and Mrs Ron & Jean Woodward, and where Jean Woodward still lives in 2002 - *CliffCrane*)
- the 'cave' in which he had stabled ' *Old Bill* ' (his first horse) was at the rear of the boatshed in which the Britt family lived, below the (then) Williams home.
- In another boatshed next door - ' *to our left - as we looked out to the water* ' (I assume next door to their north - *CliffCrane*) lived a family called Yates
- to get to the boatshed where the Britts lived they had used the road that lead off to the Williams residence from the intersection of Russell Street and (what is now) Annette Street (there is still, in 2002, evidence of this road in Oatley Pleasure Ground, lthough much overgrown)
- he remembered the boatshed/wine bar in Oatley Pleasure Ground, and how it would be cleared out for parties and dances - in fact he is pretty sure a party for his father's 40th birthday was held there.

- According to Edgar - " *We did not have much money, but we lived reasonably well, and some of the happiest days of my earlier life were spent in Oatley. My father was an electrician and we had the first radio set in Oatley, set up with earphones; the aerial was hung from a big gum tree nearby - when the wind blew the aerial flailed against the trunk of the tree and created static in the radio!* "

- He had returned to Oatley for the Oatley Clock celebrations in 1983 and has retained the commemorative bottle of port given him by Mr. Robert Oatley on that occasion

- names of people he went to school with (and ! didn't ask Edgar to check the spelling) ..

Siddy Strainey
Tubby Hartland
Charlie Moore
The Dunn(e)'s
Mervyn Stenberg
Peter Sellens
Melvin Matthews
Arthur & Dollie Wenman
'the Derwents

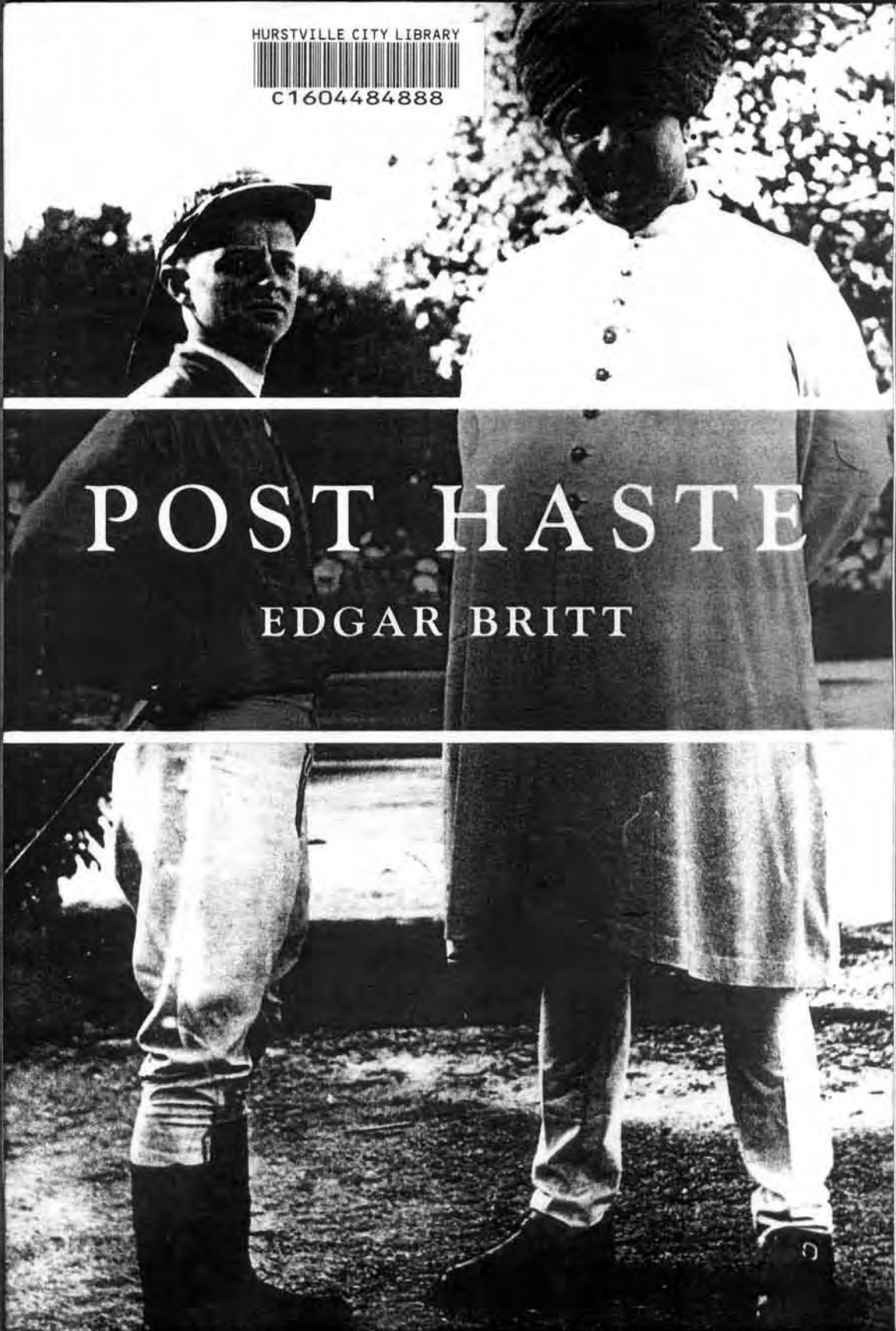
Edgar said Dollie Geary (nee Wenman), a lifelong resident of Oatley had stayed in touch with him over the years.

Cliff Crane
Committee Member,
Oatley Heritage Group
22 August 2002

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POST HASTE

EDGAR BRITT

Edgar Britt – internationally acclaimed jockey - a postscript

Edgar Britt, after being one of Australia's most successful jockeys in the 1930's, went on to enjoy acclaim in the United States of America, the Indian sub-continent, the United Kingdom, and Europe

In 2003, his 90th year, Edgar Britt, was inducted into the Champions Australian Racing Museum and Hall of Fame, located at Federation Square in Melbourne. Edgar's stellar career as an internationally acclaimed jockey had its genesis when, as a young teenager, he rode a hack called '*Old Bill*' to school and around the streets of Oatley. '*Old Bill*' had to endure being "stabled" in a cave at the rear of the Britt's leased boatshed home off Russell Street, Oatley on the waterfront of Oatley Bay.

Britt's citation for his induction follows, with the photograph of him on the day he rode *Winooka* to win the 1933 Baltimore Handicap in the United States -

Edgar Britt 1913 - ; New South Wales



Edgar Britt began his international travels at an early stage of his career. Apprenticed to trainer Mick Polson, he visited the United States with him in 1933 where he won the Baltimore Handicap on *Winooka*.

After returning to Australia and winning the 1934 Sydney Cup, he accepted a retainer to ride in India. During his ten years there riding for various Maharajas, he headed the jockeys' premiership 8 times and won every race of importance in India.

In 1945 the Maharaja of Baroda invited him to ride in England where he remained until his retirement in 1959. During that time he rode the winners of some 1,200 races, including the Irish Derby and seven English classics: two Oaks, two St. Legers, two One Thousand Guineas, and a Thousand Guineas.

Between 1947 and 1956 he was always among the top half dozen jockeys on the premiership list, with his best year being 145 winners in 1948.

Cliff Crane, OHG Archivist
14 May 2005



CHAMPION LADY SCULLER

The first settlers in the area now known as Peakhurst were the Pickerings; they arrived in the Colony from Yorkshire, England, in 1810 and settled in the Cowpastures, whence they came to Peakhurst in September 1824.

A son, George, was born on August 15, 1824, and was only a few weeks old when his parents decided to leave the Cowpastures. In 1847 George married Miss Mary Ann Ibbotson, descendent of a member of the household of Governor Macquarie, and in 1848 a son, the first white child, was

born in Peakhurst. He too was named George; he married and resided in Mortdale, raising a family of ten children.

A second son to the Pickerings from the Cowpastures was born on the Estate at Peakhurst. His name was William ("Jim"), and he married on January 7, 1853: nine sons and three daughters were reared — William, George, Oswald, Lloyd, Frank, Amy, Emily, Clifton, Richmond, Harry, Stanley, Vera.

Jim Pickering worked with a brother for the Fowler Pottery Co., and laid out the gardens around "Cranbrook", the "country residence" of Mr. Fowler, in the area now known as Illawong; later, one of Jim's sons, Will, lived next door to "Cranbrook" as caretaker of that property.

Emily ("Emmie") Pickering was born in 1839 and, as she grew up in the natural environment around Peakhurst she developed a love of the outdoors. Her ability and keenness in rowing was to lead her to a great achievement. She was also a fine horsewoman, owning a lovely horse which she would often ride into the forests where her brothers were cutting wood to heat the ovens of Hurstville's first baker, Fred Mumford. Emmie would often take the crosscut saw with her brothers as they sawed up the logs.

Miss Pickering's brothers, Will and Harry, were also keen on rowing, and helped her in her training on Georges River. In addition, there were ladies' and gents' rowing races from Kangaroo Point to Como, under the auspices of the St. George Sculling Club. Emmie would sometimes race with her two sisters.

With the challenge of the Ladies Sculling Championships of Australia in view Emmie continued her training, which included jogging with brother Harry from Peakhurst to Kogarah.

The course for the Ladies Sculling Championship was scheduled for the Parramatta River over a three-mile course for £50 (400) a side on 16th March 1912. The defending champion was Miss Gertie Lewis from Taree; she had done most of her rowing in northern waters and having won the championship five times, very confidently met her challenger on the starting line.

Large crowds watched the event in many types of water craft and from the riverside. Crowded ferries followed the contestants to cheer them on. Amongst the ferry passengers urging Emmie were members of her family and Peter Kemp, a champion sculler of world class in Australia's golden age of sculling at the latter end of last century.

The race was a thrilling one with Miss Pickering becoming the new Australian champion. Elias Laycock, the Australian and onetime world champion sculler, presented Emmie with a medal which she later made into a brooch.

During a practice run nearly two years later on February 13, 1914, Emmie and her brother Stan were rowing out of Oatley Bay into Georges River when to their dismay the fin of a shark appeared and glided between the two sculling craft. It was an unnerving experience, as a mis-stroke with the oars or a slight bump from the shark would have caused a capsized. As the shark pursued them they raced for a sandy beach in Neverfail Bay, opposite Como. A local newspaper reported that the shark was approximately 15 feet in length.

Shortly after the Woronora Bridge was opened in October 1912, road construction began up the hill towards Menai. The contract for the work was let to Samuel Lawrence; Emmie's father, Jim, being the foreman. Two of her brothers and an uncle, George Pickering, were engaged on roadbuilding. Amongst others employed was Peter Kemp the former champion sculler.

Once a week Emmie would carry supplies in a big hamper from her home at Peakhurst to Holland's Boatshed near the mouth of Salt Pan Creek. Here she hired a boat and with the supplies for the Pickering menfolk and youngest sister Vera for company, rowed to the Woronora Bridge where the men were camped in tents; as the work advanced up the hill the tents were moved this meaning a longer journey for Emmie with her hamper.

The suburb of Peakhurst takes its name from Isaac Peake, the second settler in the area. Isaac Street of today runs through the centre of the old Pickering Estate of 34 acres. The second half of the name of Peakhurst was named after a friend Mr. Hurst. A small park known as Pickering Park in Isaac Street Peakhurst, is named after the pioneer family. A fig tree in the Park has a strong link with the past; it was a gift from Mrs. Macquarie, wife of the Governor, to the Pickerings, who planted it in the early 1820s. A plaque was promised by Hurstville Council to be placed in the Park indicating how it was so named but it has never eventuated.

Emily Pickering died in 1971 at the age of 83 years.

— Fred Midgley.

Source: interview with Mrs. Vera Coleborne, sister of Emily.

Queen Victoria's Wedding Ring: the Queen did not follow the English tradition of wearing the ring on the left hand, but on the right. When she married the German Prince Albert the marriage was according to the German style wherein the bride has the ring placed on the 3rd righthand finger.

NSW Steam Preservation Co-op. Society Ltd.: the 2nd Steam Rally will be held Oct. 4 (Sat.) and Oct. 6 (Mon.) at Ingleburn Park, Ingleburn. To be seen in action — Steam Rollers & Steam Traction Engines; Portable and Stationary Engines; Parking and Refreshments: Adults 60c, Children 40c.
