

## *Oatley heritage group*

### ***Annual General Meeting President's Report 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2006.***

**Presented by Alec Leach.**

Twelve months ago, our Vice President, Rafe Kowron chaired the Annual General Meeting whilst June and I were enjoying our visit to Tasmania. If throughout the meeting I look vaguer than usual you will know I am back in the Apple Isle.

Rafe continued the good work at the meeting by presenting a look at Oatley Churches. The topic was called "Oatley Churches Revisited". To add to the Church information Pat (Holdsworth) McGrath compiled a detailed history of the formation of the Oatley Catholic Church when we celebrated the Centenary of Oatley School of Arts at our November meeting.

To me reliving the adventure of George Kendall's Grandfather being Shipwreck in the late 1890's aroused again in me what an adventure was. "The Kendall Family of Oatley" was our topic. George who worked for Commonwealth Industrial Gases had lent the journal of Grandpa Kendall adventures to the Editor of the CIG House Magazine "Kalori". It was serialised over five editions in 1982. I am the proud owner of these transcripts. We had to condense the transcript.

We covered George's father and lastly George which highlighted the dedicated forty four years he devoted to the Slow Learners Advancement Society (SLAS). He held the position of President for Nineteen years.

We touched on Oatley People who stood for Parliament, State and Federal in August. Dorothy Walker gave a presentation of her father, Hedley Mallard. Rafe Kowron and Cliff Crane gave us an insight into many of our past politicians. I was particularly impressed with the research Cliff compiled into the late Jim Bradfield.

Oatley School of Arts celebrated its Centenary on the 13<sup>th</sup> October. During that week we were privileged to attend a couple of interesting presentations. The first by Roger Morris dealt with the history of Schools of Arts in general. Paul Brunton delivered a talk on the early history of Australia and how the Continent of Australia was mapped by the Dutch. Both presentations were well represented by our group.

At our November meeting, we rounded off the Centenary by documenting the history of our School of Arts. My thanks to the many folk who submitted entertaining documents which are filed with the report. Once again, Peter Orlovich provided us with an insight to his fascinating work of being the Archivist for Kogarah Council. He and Sister Ann Stedman compiled a comprehensive folder containing copies of correspondence between the Oatley School of Arts Committee, Oatley Public School and Council between 1905 and 1969. Thankfully they donated a copy to our group.

It is pleasing that attendance at our meetings has been constantly averaging about forty. To feed and quench your thirst after each meeting my thanks go to the happy threesome of Tea ladies led by Cliff Crane assisted by June Bennett and Nola Davis.

We have been without an official Archivist for the year. It is a position that is important to the Group. Without an Archivist, means our material is not being correctly tabulated after we have discussed a topic. This leaves a lot to be answered for in our organisation.

Tonight, hopefully we have candidates for all of the positions open for election.. Thank you to each member of the past committee for your input throughout the year. With the new committee's approval we have topics mapped out for the next twelve months. The one percent inspiration has been found. All we need now is the ninety nine percent perspiration to present interesting presentations for our quarterly meetings.

Thank you general members for attending the meetings and making contributions along the way. We have a long way to go before we could be satisfied that we have recorded our living history. You may make further contributions by tabulating your family history, early Oatley experiences, and details of your house together with photos for our section "Houses of Oatley". Yes, we have a long way to go before our history is complete.

I hope the incoming Committee will gain the same enjoyment and satisfaction from our Group that I do and that we still maintain the same enthusiasm in the future that we have had since we began over ten years ago.