

**OATLEY HERITAGE GROUP'S**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**President's Report**  
**25<sup>th</sup> February 2011.**

*Compiled by Alec Leach. Presented by Rafe Kowron.*

Whilst this report is being read, June and I will be travelling on the ferry, returning from Kangaroo Island and then heading for Goolwa and the Wooden Boat Festival this weekend. At the last Annual General Meeting, when being re elected as President, I stated our intention to be there and not being at today's meeting.

The past year has been fruitful in many ways. Roger Robertson and Cliff Crane have seen the completion of our records sent electronically to Council. They are now available on disc to be viewed at our Library. It is now up to Council to allow them to be available on the open internet.

Roger Robertson instigated a project with Oatley Public School and was ably assisted by John Whitbread. The aim was to make the children aware of our local history. Initially four walks were undertaken, all to Neverfail Bay, Como Bridge and returning along the Oatley Como Walkway/Cycleway. This was followed by four of our members. Joyce Marks, Glenn Stevens, Dorothy Walker and Jim Nicholson, who separately addressed fourth class students. These talks were warmly received by the students and teachers. Roger came away from the project still full of enthusiasm and says he intends to pursue Oatley St. Joseph's Catholic and Oatley West Public Schools this year. My thanks to everyone involved.

Sadly a year doesn't go by without some of our members passing away, this year is no exception. My lifelong friend George Kendall passed away just prior to our last Annual Meeting. He was an inaugural member of the Group and instigated and kept the photo album. This job has not been passed on. Cliff Crane is the custodian of the album at the moment. Maybe today, a position could be made for a photo recorder.

John Sutton, a newer member, tragedy passed away in May. Charles Small, one of Oatley's true Characters and Gentlemen passed away in July and in August, Rayma Papworth. Rayma had a long association with the Catholic Church and the Oatley RSL Youth Club. Shoes that may be hard to fill. We were shocked to learn of Barbara Drake's death on the 25th January.

Topics throughout the year have been varied and interesting. Cliff Crane presented a detailed resume of Gordon Andrews at our last Annual General Meeting. A fourteen page report was posted on the wall for members to peruse at the end of the meeting.

May, we had the pleasure of being addressed by Ron Sharpe. Ron was the Sydney Opera House Organ Builder. He provided an excellent video, talk and afterwards answered questions. Take a bow Rafe for organising such a wonderful speaker who called a spade a spade.

To begin our August topic "Characters of Oatley", it was only fitting to head the list by presenting "A Profile of Charles Montgomery Small". Charles had written this paper for the "Good Time Together", a Newsletter for the Oatley Uniting Church Adult Fellowship. It gave an interesting account of his life. His family used much of his paper in Charles' eulogy.

Marilyn Chapman, who met with an accident a couple of months previously, was given a eulogy by (you had better say me, Rafe). Marilyn was a person whom, if you had met her you would never forget her. The morning finished on a lighter note, by discussing Sadie Minchin. Mainly known in latter years as a Real Estate Agent, this phase of her life created discussion and laughter from our members.

Cliff Crane and Roger Robertson, in November teamed up again to delve into the history of the Oatley Pleasure Grounds. Between Cliff's oral presentation and Roger's "Power Point", it shed a new light on the way our topic was presented.

Cliff Crane has been responsible as Publicity Officer, to provide material to be included in the St. George and Sutherland Shire Leader supplement "Georges River Magazine". This has been well received by not only our members but a cross section of our community.

It's ten years since I was elected your President. I had no intention of staying on for such a long term. I don't think it is good for any organisation to have people at the helm for long periods. Old Presidents have old ideas.

With the talent available within our group, I have no fears about the **OATLEY HERITAGE GROUPS** future.

My thanks to my Executive Committee, especially to you Rafe, who has been my Vice President for my ten years, standing in for me when we were off to Wooden Boat Festivals in Tasmania etc. Glenn Stevens has had to put up with me as my Secretary. Between us, we have sorted out the day to day issues that arise between meetings. Our original Treasurer could not be forgotten. Ray Stevens. I'm not taking anything away from Bernie Bogan who is following closely in Ray's footsteps, however, Ray had a way of presenting a Treasurer's report. At times when Bernie makes his report, I can't help but reflect on Ray's unusual and in Character way he had. Do you remember when he held our funds in a billy can in his garage? Bernie, you have big shoes to fill and in my opinion you are filling them admirably. To the general Committee who come up with and implement ideas for our topics, my thanks. We have fifteen years under our belt. Don't rest on our laurels, there are still topics that are untouched. To you, the general members of the meeting, thanks for supporting and giving me the encouragement to keep going over the years.

A wholehearted thanks, I think from everyone, is to our tea ladies. Without them we would not have been able to enjoy the camaraderie after our meetings.

Finally, to my number one mate, June, Thanks. She will have seen this, as June proofreads my Newsletters, Correspondence and President's Reports.

I wish the incoming President and Committee my best wishes and on my return at the end of March for a short spell, will be in attendance to stir things along.

*Alfred Rafe*