

Peach Trees Gazette

Peachester History Committee Inc. Newsletter
Number 192 ~ January / February 2024

NEWS AND COMING EVENTS

SUNDAY 4th FEBRUARY: First PHC lunch meeting for the new year, from 11.00am at Peachester Community Hall. Please bring lunch to share as usual.

Theme for the meeting: Peachester Cemetery project – PHC role and achievements from 2000 to the present, working with SC Council to care for this significant part of our local history. Photos and memorabilia on display.

SUNDAY 25th FEBRUARY: Regular open day at Peachester Heritage Centre, 10.00am to 2.00pm.

SUNDAY 3rd MARCH: PHC meeting at the hall, from 11.00am, lunch to share as usual. This will be our AGM; more details next *Gazette*.

SATURDAY 9th MARCH: 8.00am to 12 noon at the hall, Peachester Village Markets hosted by local QCWA branch, PHC running the canteen.

MONDAYS AT THE HERITAGE CENTRE: Members are back at work at the Heritage Centre each Monday. Program: regular cleaning and maintenance tasks, adding to current exhibitions, designing new displays, planning for the future. New volunteers always welcome!

REPLACING CEMETERY PLAQUES: In association with SCC Cemetery team and families involved, PHC is arranging to replace the ten stolen plaques. This will be our first major project for 2024, and when the plaques are ready for installation, we will hold an appropriate ceremony at the cemetery – more info later.

MEMBERSHIPS DUE: A reminder that our annual membership fee of \$2 is due. Many members have paid for multiple years, but please check with Treasurer Elaine (54969134) if you are unsure of your membership status.

We look forward to catching up if you are able to attend any of these activities.

Helen Page (54949557), Trudy Long (0421760810)

WELCOME TO 2024. Some of our volunteers ready for action at the Heritage Centre open day on Sunday 28th January.



QUEENSLAND IN JANUARY – HOW IS THE WEATHER??

Living through recent weeks of rain, storms, heat and humidity has reinforced the fact that the weather is always an issue at this time of year; and there have been many "extreme weather events" in January over the years.

Marking the 50th anniversary of the 1974 Brisbane floods, the State Library sets out in the following article the great resources available for anyone who would like to revisit that period. (Shortened for the *Gazette*, but follow the link to see more photos, film footage and information.)

www.slq.qld.gov.au/blog/brisbane-flood-1974-our-collections

Brisbane Flood of 1974 – our collections

By Myles Sinnamon and Tania Schafer, State Library of Queensland, 22 January 2024

On the evening of 24 January 1974, Tropical Cyclone Wanda crossed the Queensland coastline near Maryborough, followed by five days of torrential rain. According to the Bureau of Meteorology, rainfalls in the Brisbane area ranged from 500mm to 900mm during this period. The Bureau also reported that at least 6,700 homes were partially or totally flooded in the Brisbane metropolitan area. Ipswich recorded approximately 1,800 residential or commercial premises partially or totally inundated by floodwaters. Mount Glorious recorded the highest rainfall for the 5 days with 1318mm. Areas around the Gold Coast and northern New South Wales were also affected. Sadly, 16 lives were lost.



Houses in St Lucia flooded to the roofline during the Brisbane flood of January 1974. 32027. John Oxley Library, SLQ. Image: 32027-0001-0003

As custodians of Queensland's documented history through media such as photographs, film footage and old newspapers, State Library holds a number of resources covering the impact of the 1974 Brisbane Floods. Here are some examples from our collection.

Film footage: Eric Gaehler Collection

Initially lost for several decades until its rediscovery, two reels of 35mm colour film footage of the Brisbane 1974 flood along with associated newspaper clippings were donated to State Library's collection by professional cameraman Eric Gaehler in 2003. This footage is significant as it remains the only 35mm colour film of the flood. The nine minutes of footage, filmed around Paddington, Brisbane's CBD and South Brisbane, shows the severity of the floodwater affecting neighbourhoods and iconic Brisbane structures such as Festival Hall and Victoria Bridge. There are also aerial views around the CBD providing a bird's-eye view of the surrounds. [The film can be viewed if you access the online article.]

Oral histories: Washed Away, 1974

First-hand accounts of those who experienced the flood give a very personal perspective on this large-scale disaster. An oral history project, 'Washed Away' was recorded in 1999 and includes 14 interviews. One interview features the reminiscences of Eddie and Maureen Thompson who were living in Tiesdale Street, Corinda. Initially thinking they were safe, the couple and their 6 month-old baby evacuated when floodwater came up to their floorboards. The Thompsons initially relied on the kindness of others, who allowed them stay in their backroom on a mattress on the floor. Eddie and Maureen's parents were also badly affected by the flood, living in Chelmer and Graceville. You can listen to these interviews via our One Search catalogue.

Photographs

You can view hundreds of digitised photographs from the 1974 flood on our One Search catalogue, depicting affected areas such as Graceville, Indooroopilly, Ipswich, Oxley, Fairfield, St Lucia, Toowong, New Farm, Breakfast Creek, Yeronga, Windsor and Brisbane's CBD.



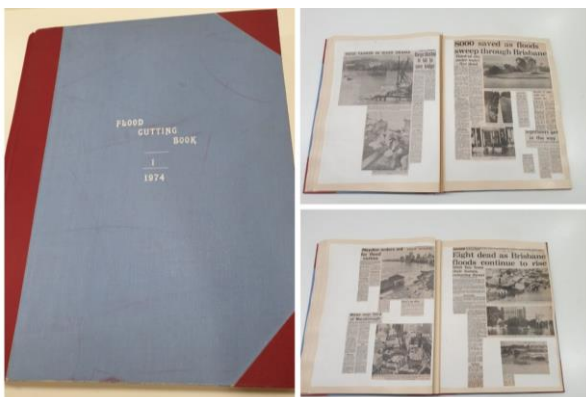
Port Office Hotel in Edward Street during the Brisbane floods of 1974. John Oxley Library, SLQ. Image number: lbp00082

Digitised map

Flood map of Brisbane and suburbs delineating the extent of the January, 1974, Brisbane River flood. This Brisbane flood map, produced by the Queensland Survey Office covers an area north to Windsor, south to Corinda, west to Toowong and east to Greenslopes. The digitised map can be viewed via our One Search catalogue.

Newspaper clippings

State Library holds 2 volumes of newspaper clippings documenting the flood, starting from the wake of Cyclone Wanda through to the aftermath and clean up, with articles sourced from newspapers such as The Courier Mail, Telegraph, Sunday Mail, Sunday Sun and The Australian. These volumes provide a dramatic insight into events as they unfolded in the media. The 1974 Flood Newspaper Clippings can be viewed onsite at State Library of Queensland.



Trove newspapers online provide many dramatic stories of weather in the news. Here is one from January 1940: *Morning Bulletin Rockhampton*, 27 January 1940, p 7.

GREATEST HEAT WAVE IN STATE'S HISTORY EIGHT DEATHS BRISBANE, January 26.

Eight people died in Queensland to-day at a result of the greatest heat the State has ever known. Three cases occurred in Brisbane and five in the country. Forty-three people collapsed in Brisbane and many more in the country. Brisbane experienced the highest temperature in its history, 109.8 degrees (43.2C) at 2.35 p.m.

Nothing like this figure has been recorded during the 85 years that the Meteorological Bureau has been operating. The nearest was 108.9 in January, 1902. To make matters worse, today's heat was accompanied by a record relative humidity of 29 per cent. The record day was followed by the hottest January night since 1922. The temperature at 9 p.m. was 83.3 (28.5C).

The Queensland Meteorologist (Mr Richards) described the day as one of the hottest the State had ever experienced. He said that local storms tonight in south-eastern Queensland and Northern New South Wales were likely to modify the temperatures tomorrow, but the end of the heat wave was not yet in sight.

The needle of the thermograph at the Weather Bureau, which records the story of the city's discomfiture, reached within .2 degrees of the space available for it. Had the temperature risen above 110 degrees, the whole heat scale would have to be readjusted. The metropolitan Fire Brigade received 12 false alarms during the morning, the heat operating patent devices in city buildings.

The loss of stock in country due to the heat were heavy and poultry farmers in some instances suffered badly. Thousands of their birds collapsed and hundreds died.

At Casino 1500 cattle mustered for sale became maddened by the heat when the thermometer reached 119 degrees (48.3C). They stampeded through fences in a mad rush to the Clarence River and 46 were killed. The sale was abandoned.

NEW RECORDS SET

Over two-thirds of Queensland's high temperature records were exceeded. Southport had a record reading of 109 degrees, .7 degrees above the previous highest. Other records were: Clermont 115, Mitchell 113, and Emerald 110. Ipswich recorded 111.5, Gympie 112. Cloncurry and Charleville 109, and Goondiwindi 106. Winton, however, topped the list with 118.

A whirlwind at Mitchell unroofed part of the Mitchell power house and cut off the town's power supply.

FIERCE STORM AT LAIDLEY

Following one of the hottest days on record, with a maximum reading of 105 degrees, a storm with a wind of 60 miles an hour struck Laidley this afternoon. Tanks were blown down and trees hurled through the air. Many out-buildings were damaged. A tank was blown from one allotment across the railway yards, narrowly missing the guard of a train. A woman was thrown to the floor and received lacerations to the face when she was adjusting veranda blinds at her home.

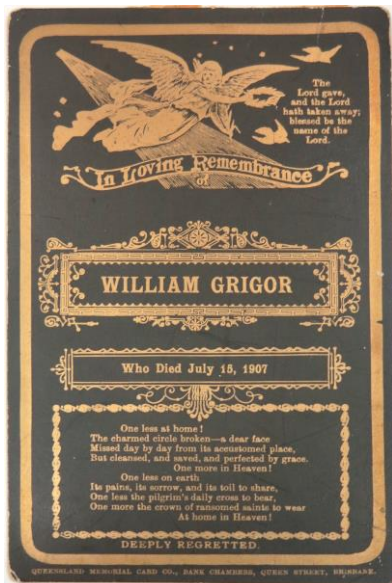
A cyclonic wind struck Helidon early this afternoon and left a trail of destruction on the southern outskirts. Practically every farm in the narrow path of the storm suffered. Windmills were blown down. The main damage was to the Lutheran Church, which was wrecked after the walls collapsed. A horse in a baker's cart was electrocuted by a fallen wire. The driver narrowly escaped.

BEYOND THE GRAVE – SEARCHING FOR FUNERARY EPHEMERA

It is not only the stories of the people buried in cemeteries which are interesting. The funerals, mourning culture and forms of remembrance are significant religious and community rituals. Historian Dr Lisa Murray is seeking stories, memorial cards, funerary ephemera and photographs connected with graves in Sunshine Coast's cemeteries.

Lisa is a current participant in the Historian-in-Residence program run by the Sunshine Coast Council. Her focus is on the general cemeteries located at Beerburum, Beerwah, Buderim, Caloundra, Diddillibah, Eumundi, Kenilworth (Gheerulla), Kulangoor, Landsborough, Mapleton, Mooloolah, Nambour, Peachester, Witta, Woombye, and Yandina. She is looking at the evolution of these cemeteries, the monumental masons who produced gravestones and funerary culture. She is interested in the cemetery landscapes, gates and entrances, unique memorials, grave furniture and floral displays. Memorial cards, photographs of funerals and newly produced graves can all provide a valuable window into the mourning culture of the Sunshine Coast.

Memorial cards were produced after a funeral to send to family and friends. They were a token of remembrance and as English historian Trevor May explains 'had their origin in much older reminders to pray for the soul of the departed'. The cards, often just the size of a business card or small greeting card, noted the name and death date and sometimes the locality of death or where the person was buried. The memorial cards were decorated with symbols of religion, remembrance and death, such as a Christian cross, angels, ivy, lilies, or doves. By the late 19th century, the cards were often produced by specialist firms, such as the Queensland Memorial Card Company.



Memorial Card for William Grigor, died 15 July 1907. Produced by the Queensland Memorial Card Company. (Bankfoot House Collection, BH3260)

Memorial cards were an important part of mourning culture in the 19th and early 20th centuries, but are often ephemeral in nature. Kept by families for one or two generations, these items of material culture rarely find their way into major cultural collections and, when they do, are often disconnected from their family stories and associations. There are possibly many memorial cards in historical society collections, but they are generally not individually catalogued making them difficult for

cultural historians to identify. You often need to know a family name to even begin to find these items. There is an important group of memorial cards in the Bankfoot House Collection. But what else is out there?

Have you come across a memorial card in a local historical society collection? Do you have a memorial card in your personal family history papers? Or a historical photograph of a funeral or grave visitation?

If so, Lisa would love to hear from you. She can be contacted at sydneyhistory@gmail.com

Lisa will be researching for the next six months and will be presenting her findings to the public in mid-May 2024.



Mary Hartfiel tending the grave of Carl Wilhelm Ferdinand Hartfiel. c.1920s. (Kulangoor Cemetery Office)

Reference

Trevor May, *The Victorian Undertaker*, Shire Album 330, Shire Publications Ltd, 1996.

NOTE: In the course of her research, Lisa is coming to visit us at the Heritage Centre on Monday 5th February.

GOOD NEWS FOR FAMILY HISTORIANS



It is always good to hear progress reports from Qld BDM, as this is an excellent resource for Queensland research.

It is free to search the historical records online, and then you can buy a registration or source image (online PDF) for \$24.70, or printed A4 certificate (posted) for \$34.70.

Periods now available are: Births 1829 – 1924
Marriages 1829 – 1949 Deaths 1829 – 1994

Website: www.familyhistory.bdm.qld.gov.au

"NEW" DISPLAY CASE



This beautiful display case was made for PHC in 2001 by the late Doug Wrayford. It has been in storage for many years, but now has a new role at the Heritage Centre as a focus for changing displays on topical themes.

The case was designed to be placed on a table, however we have been concerned about its stability with traffic through the Heritage Centre presenting possible hazards.

Bill Morgan once again came to the rescue and constructed a base which holds the case firmly in place. So now we can use it for quick displays of photos, memorabilia and documents to illustrate topics in the news or of special interest to members and visitors.

Hence for back-to-school week we have on display some familiar items from our school days plus early group photos of students and teachers at Peachester State School.



CAN YOU RELATE?



"Rumor has it this house has never had WiFi, and sometimes at night you can hear the sounds of two old people just talking."

OUT AND ABOUT



Above: Festive season – Hall Committee, PHC and community Christmas party



Dehumidifiers for the Heritage Centre – thanks to SC Council Collections Care grant