



PO Box 39, Mosman NSW 2088
mosmanhistoricalsociety@gmail.com
<https://mosmanhistoricalsociety.org.au/>

Patron: Gavin Souter AO
 Affiliate Member: Royal Australian Historical Society

Mosman Historical Society—Committee Members 2022-2023

President: Debbie Higginson	Speakers: Prof. David Carment AM	Other Committee members:
Vice-President: Dr. Perry McIntyre AM	Newsletter: Margaret Szalay	John Dansie
Acting Secretary: Dr. Perry McIntyre AM	Membership: Kay Halstead	Noela Gill
Acting Secretary: Dr. Pam Lofthouse	Library Rep. Donna Braye (Ex officio)	Webmaster: Amanda Gosse
Treasurer: Stephen Palmer	(Mosman Library Local Studies Librarian)	(Ex officio)

MOSMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER- June 2023

The Society's meetings are held on the second Wednesday in March, May, July, September & November

We look forward to seeing you at our next Speaker evening on **Wednesday, 12th July** and afterwards at our social gathering for tea/coffee, biscuits & a chat.

WELCOME TO NEW MHS MEMBERS....

**Kate Branch Clive Craven Marlene Critchley
 Robert Clark Helen Mo Elizabeth Palmer
 Michael Bartok Philippa (Pip) Friedrich
 John & Jill Giles**

Members are encouraged to invite a friend or neighbour to join MHS each year to grow our membership and help preserve our heritage.

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE ON 1 JULY 2023

Effective from 1st July 2023, subscriptions will be \$20.00 for 1 year, or \$50.00 for 3 years. However, members renewing membership **BEFORE 30th JUNE**, can pay at the old rate of \$15.00 for 1 year, or \$40.00 for 3 years.

Members have been contacted if subscriptions are due. Subscriptions can be paid in cash at the MHS Speaker evenings, or by EFT into the Society's account:

BSB: (082 299) A/c: 467 783 344

**(Identify your deposit with
 SUBS and your NAME & INITIAL)**

The membership form (for new members & renewals with altered contact details) is attached & on our website (above)

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday, 12th July, 7.00pm

Speaker: Dr. Perry McIntyre AM
Topic: A Female Immigration Story
(Details in the flyer attached)

Wednesday, 13th September, 7.00pm

Speaker: Professor Paul Ashton will talk about
The History of Planning in Sydney
Details in the next newsletter

Meetings are held at Mosman Library
 605 Military Road, Mosman NSW

If you wish to attend, please contact David by the Monday prior at davidcarment@mac.com
 Or 0418 857 182 (email preferred)

VALE

We remember members, Ann Dooley and John Fitzhardinge, who died earlier this year.

Also, Margery Humphris (née Mosman) who died aged 95 on 9 June. Margery, a local artist, was a great granddaughter of George Mosman.

Annual General Meeting of the Society

The Society's AGM will be held on 13 September. Nominations are invited for the key positions above, and for general membership on the MHS committee. **All members are invited to become involved.**

Positions becoming vacant include

- Secretary
- Speakers coordinator
- Membership secretary

"MOSMAN: Times Gone By"

Our 262-page book of 86 researched articles on early Mosman was successfully launched by the Mayor of Mosman in May (*See Pages 3-6*) and has been enthusiastically received, with sales of over 110 copies to date. Copies of the book will be available at the July meeting for \$30.00 each (cash only). The mail order form is on our website: <https://mosmanhistoricalsociety.org.au/>

LOCAL STUDIES AT BARRY O'KEEFE LIBRARY

(see <https://events.mosman.nsw.gov.au/>)

RESEARCH REQUEST

The Society has been approached by the author of a planned book on Mosman's ex-Mayor, Keith Cowlshaw, seeking information on the Cowlshaw or Rabone families. Any Society members with information, please contact us by email: mosmanhistoricalsociety@gmail.com

PREVIOUS ACTIVITIES

Speaker Presentation on 10th May 2023:
 Stephen Palmer spoke at the May MHS meeting on the history of Mosman's Beauty Point Foreshore Walk & Bicentenary Trail.

FEATURE ARTICLE

The feature article (*Page 7*) by Stephen Palmer, tells the story of J.A.L. Gunn, whose daughter, Geraldine Palmer, was President of Mosman Historical Society in the 1980s.

OUR SOCIETY AND ANZAC DAY CEREMONIES IN MOSMAN



Our President, Debbie Higginson, proudly represented Mosman Historical Society at the Anzac Day Dawn Service at Georges Heights on 25 April, with her husband, Philip. She also represented our MP for North Shore, Felicity Wilson.

Debbie made the wreath (above) with foliage including rosemary from her garden, and added a hand-knitted red poppy from the Centenary of WWI and a LEST WE FORGET laminated copy of Amanda Gosse's beautiful artwork for Mosman Historical Society.

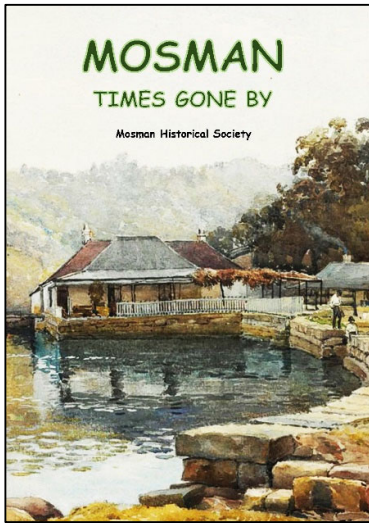
The service was very well attended in fine weather conditions. The SES did a fabulous job guiding hundreds of cars onto Georges Heights Oval.

Debbie proudly wore the medals of her distinguished late father, Bruce Daymond DSO DFC, and also a RAF wings brooch his mother wore during WWII.

Mayor Carolyn Corrigan read the Commemoration of the Fallen.



OUR BOOK LAUNCH ON 3 MAY 2023
Launched by Mosman Mayor, Carolyn Corrigan



The Mayor launching our book



Also a Celebration of our Patron, Gavin Souter's 94th birthday the previous day, with a cake donated by the Mayor.



The successful sales team, Kay Halstead & Margaret Szalay, selling over 60 books on the night, plus many more sold since.



The supporters of our book, Therese & Ross Webb, the Mayor, and our patron, Gavin Souter, with Marlene Reid, a former Mayoress.



Former MHS president, Noela Gill, and the current president, Debbie Higginson, with the Mayor.



... with a large group of enthusiastic attendees (and buyers!!)

Article on the Mosman Collective Local News blog on Friday, 12 May 2023
(following the Society's book launch on 3 May 2023)

Times Gone By: New Mosman history book set to thrill lower north shore readers.



A new book on the early history of Mosman has been released by the Mosman Historical Society. Image: The Carroll Collection.

By KATHRYN BARTON

The early days of Mosman's European settlement have been richly detailed in a new book, *Mosman: Times Gone By*.

The culmination of years of research by Mosman Historical Society members, the book was launched at Mosman Library last week by Mayor Carolyn Corrigan to a large and enthusiastic audience.

The launch also marked the 94th birthday of the society's patron, Gavin Souter, a well-known local historian, author and authority on the area.



The book launch also marked the 94th birthday of Mosman writer Gavin Souter. (Image: Graham Monro)

The death of member Phillipa Morris in 2021 moved the society to pen a book in recognition of her regular input to newsletters and her generous bequest to the society, the mayor said.

Coordinated by society member Margaret Szalay – who described the project as “challenging”- the book creates a fuller picture of life in Mosman, and the changing environment, over two formative centuries. Valuable stories

written by members, as well as articles by history academics, Professor David Carment and Dr Perry McIntyre, saw the book finalised, Ms Szalay said.

At the time Mosman Council was formed in 1893 there were 800-odd people registered to vote from a population of roughly double its voters.

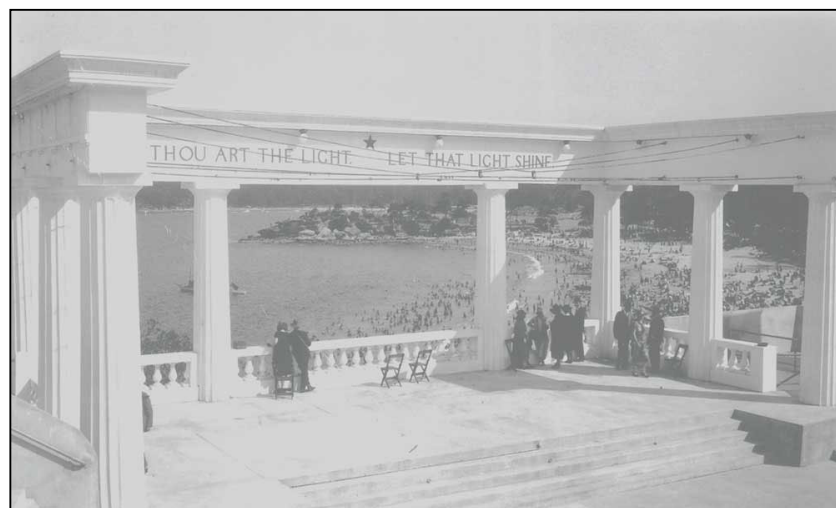


Mosman's population – around 28,000 – has remained relatively unchanged for many years.

Over the years, Mosman's population boomed, and higher-density living was the solution to the influx. Interestingly, steady at 28,000 today, Mosman's resident numbers closely resemble those of long ago.

The suburb had hit saturation by mid last century; aided earlier by the arrival of better roads and amenities enjoyed by throngs of weekend visitors, some of whom stayed put.

The public's mood had unmistakably soured surrounding 'progress', evident in a Sun editorial dated 16 March 1930 about the ethics of courting. The writer warned against one party giving chase, as "she" risked "a pursuit as relentless as that of a Mosman alderman on the trail of a bag of cement."



The new book reveals more detail on the Balmoral Amphitheatre, demolished in in 1950s. (Image: Mosman Library)

Within a single book, disparate strands of Mosman life have been intertwined to show all that's been gained and lost over the period, including historic landmarks sadly erased.

Emeritus professor of history at Northern Territory's Charles Darwin University, David Carment, was on the editorial team. Professor Carment contributed several articles detailing some of the beautiful buildings that were razed and the land sold to developers of (arguably) ugly blocks of flats, slabs of business premises, car yards, petrol stations

and high-street shops.

Apart from additions to the book, Dr Carment's blog, lostmosman.com, reveals more details of Mosman's lost heritage – including the eye-popping Balmoral Amphitheatre built in 1924 and flattened in the 1950s for an unimaginative block of flats above Edwards Beach. The march of the bland, blond, or red brick piles continued to distort the low, level skyline.

But the pace of growth plummeted as potential development sites had all but evaporated by mid last century. Besides the scarcity of square meterage, and the difficulties of compliance with strict regulations – the populace had, over two or so generations, become enlightened.



While Mosman has retained many of its original shop fronts, some local landmarks have been erased, the book reveals.

Seems the wider the gap between modern residents and the suburb's forebears, the more people were rankled by the wanton obliteration of the cultural and heritage value of the buildings that made Mosman.

For now, time and space have preserved the remaining monuments to a crucial period.

Visitors to the society's website may also add their details so news, newsletters and more can be accessed via their [WEBSITE](#).

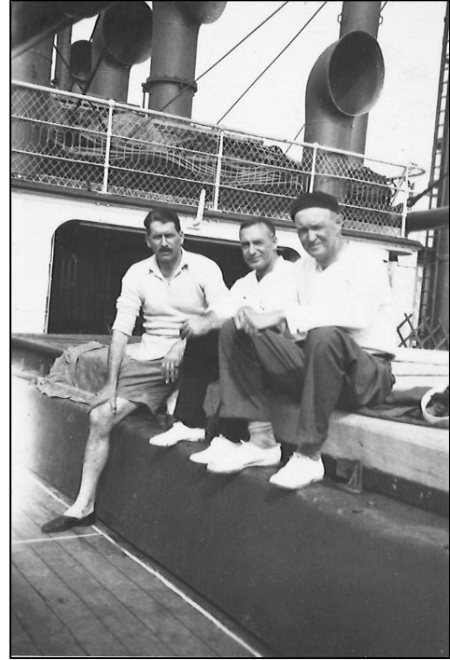
The book is available online at mosmanhistoricalsociety.org.au or at The Barn (near Mosman ferry terminal) this Saturday (13/5) from 9 am to 12 noon¹.

¹ There was much interest in the open day at The Barn and in its history, old and recent, as told by MHS member, Colleen Godsell. The Committee is delighted to report that many copies of our book were sold on the day.

AN UNEXPECTED FIND IN THE MOSMAN LOCAL STUDIES COLLECTION

by Stephen Palmer, 2023

While researching the Mosman Historical Society Archives held at Mosman Library, I came across the following photograph, evidently donated by my mother Geraldine, owing to her father's connection with Mosman. I identified it as one of a series taken on the S.S. *Jervis Bay* in 1933, and wrote the following article to accompany the photograph in the Local Studies Collection. A version of this article with full source citations is available from Mosman Historical Society on request.



(Left to right:) I. Macintyre, R.V. Richardson (skipper) and J.A.L. Gunn on S.S. Jervis Bay, June 1933. Unknown photographer. Mosman Historical Society Archives (1953-1994) donated 1994. (Mosman Local Studies Collection, Mosman Library Service.)

JOHN ANGUS LANCASTER GUNN

The above photograph was taken on the S.S. *Jervis Bay* of the Aberdeen and Commonwealth Line in June 1933, and includes on the right, John Angus Lancaster Gunn (1892-1962), a former Mosman resident and a leading authority on taxation throughout the English-speaking world. He was commissioned in 1948 to design the taxation laws of Malta following its return to self-government, and was appointed a Commander of the British Empire in 1955 for his services to the Commonwealth Government in the reform and simplification of taxation laws in Australia.

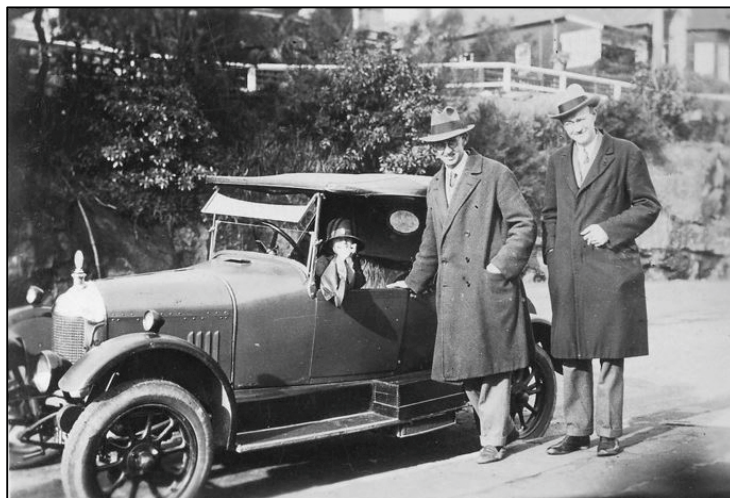
Born in Brisbane, John Gunn later lived in Roma, Queensland, until moving to Sydney circa 1912 to seek employment. In January 1913, his mother Elon (Ellen) Sarah Gunn (1858-1943) and brother Donald Scott Gunn (1898-1978) joined him in Sydney. Elon Gunn's father, John Lancaster, had emigrated from England to Australia as a missionary, and was later a pioneer in the commercial cultivation of pineapples in Queensland. On the suggestion of friends 'that they should live on the northern side of Sydney Harbour', Mrs Gunn and her sons settled in Mosman. Ellen and John Gunn are listed in the 1913 electoral roll as residing at 63 Belmont Road, and the *Sands' Directories* from 1914 to 1921 list Mrs E.S. Gunn at the same address.

John Gunn initially found work as a porter with the N.S.W. Government Railways at Darling Harbour Goods Yard, but after studying shorthand, typing and elementary bookkeeping at night in a business college, he became a shorthand-typist and clerk in the Goods Manager's office. He enlisted with the Army Service Corps (A.I.F.) in February 1915 and, following initial training at Liverpool, served in Egypt until 1920, attaining the rank of Captain. His brother Donald presumably continued living with their mother in Mosman while training as a commercial artist, until he joined the Merchant Marines, circa 1917. John Gunn met his future wife Dorothy Ruth Bodell (1895-1981) while visiting England in 1920. She followed John to Australia upon his discharge from service in Egypt, and they were married in the Mosman Presbyterian Church on 19 February 1921 by the Reverend Jamieson Williams.

The *Sands' Directories* for 1922 and 1923 list Mrs E.S. Gunn at 87 Belmont Road, Mosman; however, a letter written by John Gunn to his fiancée dated 1 September 1920 indicates that the family resided at this address from an earlier date. The *Sands' Directory* for 1923 also lists Elon Gunn at 33 Cowles Road, Mosman, where, according to family anecdote, she ran a boarding house. Elon subsequently lived in various suburbs of Sydney and Melbourne, but later returned to Mosman, where she is listed in the 1943 electoral roll at 14 Gladstone Avenue. Elon Gunn died in Mosman on 4 May 1943.

After their marriage, John and Dorothy Ruth Gunn resided at 112 Kurraba Road, Neutral Bay. They later moved to *Wonga Flats*, 72 Milson Road, Cremorne, where in 1928 they were introduced to the Australian poet Christopher Brennan by a mutual friend, Richard Pennington. Brennan dined often with the Gunns that year, and he became a significant influence upon John's wide-ranging interests in literature.

For around four months in the first half of 1933, John Gunn was in England with Dorothy Ruth and their daughter Geraldine (1922-2021). During this period, John researched British income tax law and practice for subsequent reporting to the Australian Royal Commission on Taxation. He returned to Australia on the *Jervis Bay*, departing from Southampton on 10 May, and arriving in Sydney on 19 June 1933. The photograph on the previous page was taken during this voyage, and the subjects are (left) Captain Ian Macintyre, descendent of an early settler family in Muswellbrook, returning to Australia after living in Ceylon and England for many years; (middle) Captain R.V. Richardson, master of the *Jervis Bay*, and (right) John Gunn. Dorothy Ruth and Geraldine Gunn remained in England for a further six months to stay with family. Many years later, Geraldine and her husband Addison Gordon Palmer (1919-2008) resided at 8 Harston Avenue, Mosman, from late 1970 until 1997.



(Left to right:) Geraldine Gunn seated in "bullnose" Morris, D.S. Gunn and J.A.L. Gunn at Wonga, circa 1927-1928, photographer Richard Pennington, original in author's possession.



Mrs Elon S. Gunn, Melbourne, circa 1936, photographer D.S. Gunn [attributed], original in author's possession



J.A.L. Gunn, circa November 1960, unknown photographer, original in author's possession



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Affiliate Member: Royal Australian Historical Society

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL and APPLICATION FORM

Membership Year is July to June – Subscriptions are due 1 July

I/We

Name/s:

Address:

.....Phone/s:

Email Address

*(Email is our preferred method of contacting members to send out meeting notices and newsletters.
Printed newsletters will only be posted to members who do not have email)*

(No information collected about members will be provided to any third party)

I/We agree to be bound by the rules of the society:

.....(Signature/s required).

NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS – EFFECTIVE 1 JULY 2023

1 YEAR MEMBERSHIP: **\$20.00 per person**

3 YEAR MEMBERSHIP: **\$50.00 per person**

President: Debbie Higginson
Vice President: Dr Perry McIntyre
Acting Secretaries: Perry McIntyre & Pam Lofthouse
Hon Treasurer: Stephen Palmer
Membership: Kay Halstead

<u>PAYMENT OPTIONS</u>
Payment can be made <u>by cheque</u> , posted to <u>PO Box 39, Mosman 2088</u> with this completed form
<u>OR</u>
By <u>EFT deposit</u> to this NAB account: <u>BSB: (082 299)</u> <u>A/c: 467 783 344</u> (Identify your deposit with the words <u>SUBS & SURNAME & INITIAL</u>)
<u>OR</u>
<u>Pay CASH</u> at the next MHS meeting

ABN 46 401 446 847