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MOSMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER - August 2018

On 11th July, **Dr Lisa Murray**, public historian with the City of Sydney Council, presented a talk which she called **Sydney Cemetery Adventures**.

Lisa does not view cemeteries as sad places to be avoided but as places to visit with one's partner and a picnic basket, to read the inscriptions, consider the stories and history behind them and to admire the monumental artistry. She is the author of a book, *Sydney Cemeteries: a Field Guide* designed to help readers navigate our cemeteries, identify their most interesting aspects and enjoy them more.

NEXT SPEAKER MEETING
Wednesday 13th September at 7pm
Downstairs at Mosman Library

Speaker, **Margaret Szalay** is a former MHS member and published author with a passion for family history. She was one of three Probus members responsible for compiling the 2017 book *I Remember When: Memories and Reflections of Members of Mosman Probus*. It is a book full of anecdotes and observations of a lost Mosman that has changed considerably in the decades since WWII – memories of trams, milk bars, musk sticks, milk delivered by horse and cart etc.
See attached flyer.

The talk will be preceded by the **Annual General Meeting** to commence at 6.45pm. All members are very welcome to attend or nominate to join the committee.
Attached are 4 AGM related files – Agenda and nomination form, Minutes of the 2017 AGM, Proxy form.

Advance notice - keep Wednesday 21st November free for a daylight saving evening walk and sausage sizzle at Rawson Park.

19th Century Entrepreneurs and their Impact on Economic Development in Australia
FREE HISTORY LECTURE
Lane Cove Library
Monday 3rd September 6.15pm to 8pm

Richard Harnett was pre-eminent in the development of Mosman through his extraordinary energy, imagination and entrepreneurship. His son was our very first mayor in 1893. However, Richard Harnett's importance was not confined to Mosman. He holds a similar position in the history of Lane Cove and further afield.

Local historian, **Brian Scott**, will discuss the vital role played by a number of well-known 19th century entrepreneurs in the economic development of Australia through both their general business operations and philanthropical pursuits. They included men such as Thomas Mort, John Fairfax, Charles Cowper, Tom Elder, Alexander Stuart, JC Ludowici and Richard Harnett.

Bookings phone 9911 3634

Local Studies at BARRY O'KEEFE LIBRARY

Lest we Forget: How the Great War changed what we wore in the face of death

Mosman Library Services is hosting a presentation for History Week 2018 on Wednesday 5th September at 7pm, this year's theme being LIFE AND DEATH. The speaker will be fashion historian and designer **Fiona Reilly**.

Australia entered World War One as a country informed by the Victorian and Edwardian eras and all of its clothing practices. In particular, the clothes that were worn for mourning mainly followed the traditions of Britain set during the widowhood of Queen Victoria. However, with so many deaths during World War One, it was no longer possible for people to follow the strictures of mourning, and clothing began to change.

Fiona will examine bygone Australian clothing choices and how we honoured our dead in a changing world. She will also touch on the changing face of mourning rituals and intercultural practices that have been introduced into Australia by successive waves of migrants.

Bookings essential <http://bit.ly/DeathFashions>

Return of the CARROLL COLLECTION

Local Studies librarians are currently examining several boxes of material, held by the Mitchell Library since 1973 and now returned to Mosman. They include early local newspapers, council papers, scrapbooks and 290 nitrate negatives. Jack Carroll was an estate agent and Mayor and Mosman's most important collector of local historical data.

MERCHANT NAVY DAY
11am Monday 3rd September
Mosman War Memorial, near Allan Border Oval

This is the second year that the Merchant Navy RSL sub-branch has conducted this important commemoration and they are anticipating a good attendance following on from last year. As in 2017, representatives from Mosman Historical Society will attend and lay a wreath. All are welcome to attend.

For more info contact Merrill Barker on 0433 934 705 or merchant.navy.rsl@speednet.com.au

GEORGE MOSMAN (twin brother of Archibald)
150th ANNIVERSARY of his death 5th September 1868

As announced in our June newsletter, the commemoration for descendants and friends will be held at 11.30am on Saturday 8th September at the Raymond Terrace Pioneer Hill Historical Cemetery and afterwards in the grounds of Victorian era 'Brandon House'.

Contact Debbie Higginson on 0412 528 451 or Debbie.higginson@me.com

MOSMAN GOLF CLUB

On 15 February 1922 the Sydney "Sun" announced that part of the Military Reserve on Middle Head, recently opened to the public by the Defence Department, was to be leased for a new golf course. A group of Clifton Gardens residents, led by Mosman Alderman Peter Burrows and Col. Robert Sands, instigated the Mosman Golf Club, with membership to be limited to residents of Mosman.

The Club became a registered Company in December 1922, with plans to lease 59 acres from the Defence Department on which a nine-hole links would be constructed. By July 1923 the details had been settled and a 21 year lease, at a rent of £200 per annum, was signed. Conditions assured that public access to the cliff tops, foreshores and beaches was guaranteed and, should the site be required for military use, it could be resumed at short notice without compensation. The remaining 114 acres was leased to Mosman Council at a peppercorn rental.

Membership was initially limited to 150 full members and 100 associates, and was quickly filled. Concerns were raised that the Club was monopolised by the exclusive Clifton Gardens elite. Ald. Burrows maintained this was not so, and if applications exceeded places, selection would be by ballot. Others objected to the alienation of such a large area from the general public, and the destruction of trees for the fairways.

By February 1923 an initial sum of £2000 had been raised to begin construction of fencing, a temporary clubhouse, and for laying out the course under the supervision of professional golfer D.G. Soutar. Soutar wrote that, though the course was short, some exciting, challenging holes were being created, with several long enough to satisfy the big hitters.

By December 1923 trees and scrub had been removed, and seven of the greens were formed and turfed. Dry weather however prevented grass on the fairways taking root, delaying the opening for several months. Meanwhile plans for the clubhouse were drawn up by Mosman architect, Alderman W. De Putron, who offered his services free of charge. Estimated to cost £3000, including furniture and fittings, debentures were offered to members to raise the necessary funds.

The Club, with seven holes in play, opened on 5th April 1924 with Peter Burrows, now Mosman Mayor and Club president, driving the first ball. T. Popplewell, formerly of the Cammeray Club, was the first professional.

Controversy arose when members of the public discovered that the promised access to the area was blocked by a gate and guard at the entrance to the links on Middle Head Road. This effectively closed the thoroughfares to the public beaches and foreshores. The Club maintained this was for safety reasons, and that there were other access points, but criticism steadily grew. After many months the Club reneged, removing the gate and allowing the public to cross the links at their own risk.



Mosman Golf Links in 1930s viewed from the west
(State Library of NSW)



Mosman Golf Links in 1930s viewed from the east
(State Library of NSW)

In December 1924 tenders were called for construction of the clubhouse, a two storey bungalow style building set on the slope of a hill. By February 1925 it was well under way, and was finished in time for the Club's first dance in early March that year.

By this time all nine holes were completed, and 25 regular competitions were being played. The Mosman Club became the venue for the annual AIF and Architects v. Builders Cups, and many inter-club matches.

The clubhouse quickly became a popular entertainment venue amongst members for parties, engagement celebrations, wedding receptions etc. Their annual ball, first held in 1927, was held at the Wentworth Hotel. It became an important event on the Sydney social calendar, held to coincide with spring racing events, with many country and interstate visitors. Decor had a golfing theme, featuring the Club colours of gold and brown, and a mini putting course was always a feature.



Golfers in front of the clubhouse at Mosman Golf Club
(*Mosman Local Studies Collection*)



Golfers on the course at Mosman Golf Links
(*Mosman Local Studies Collection*)

Things carried on in much this way until November 1933, when the Golf Club was quietly granted an extension of its lease until 1954. Shortly after, plans were made for alterations and additions to the clubhouse, which were completed in early 1935. By this time the Club had 343 members, though no more than 50 could play at one time. As a result it was revealed that the Club wished to gain more acreage and had plans to extend the golf links.

This engulfed it in controversy once again. Despite assurances that no trees would be removed, protesters pointed to the swathes made through the bush for the original fairways and foresaw more of the same. Environmentalists complained that the ground staff had degraded the remaining bush by removing topsoil from around the bases of trees, using it to dress the greens. Club officials countered that, before the links were created, the land was an expanse of tea tree swamp, but with their improvements it was now picturesque parkland. However in July 1935 the Mosman Golf Club withdrew its application for additional space, claiming it would derive little benefit from the extension.

The Club's lease stipulated that it was "to be terminable without compensation if the land is required for national purposes". That prospect began to look possible when war broke out in September 1939. By March 1940 play was being disrupted by military equipment stored on the course, and on 4th July the news broke. The links and clubhouse had been resumed by the Defence Department, at four days notice. The premises were vacated, with many Sydney clubs offering honorary membership to Mosman's members and associates. At a special meeting at the Mosman Town Hall on 30th December 1940, the Mosman Golf Club Ltd was voluntarily wound up.

Despite being often described as the prettiest golf course in Sydney, players had their share of hazards. Several snake bites, as well as broken limbs from falls on uneven slopes were reported, plus rabbit warrens, ticks and aggressive crows. Obstacles included gullies, and a moat. A wayward shot on the 5th or 8th hole could end up in the ocean or on Obelisk Beach (M.D, 1/6/1995). In 1934 a trainee pilot made a forced landing on the course, narrowly missing the horse drawn lawn mower.

Little evidence remains apart from the clubhouse, which is now the Burnt Orange cafe.