



# Lane Cove Historical Society Noticeboard: September 2023

## Scenes from the AGM 2023



August was a busy month and the Annual General Meeting, held 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2023 in the Lane Cove library, brought together a convivial group of members who came in good form and in good spirits. The President Dr. Frances Christie, welcomed all to the meeting and noted in her opening remarks that the last year had been in many ways one of consolidation for the LCHS. While Covid had not disappeared, its impact had diminished a little and the pattern of life for the Society had stabilised. Carisbrook Historic House had been opened regularly to welcome visitors, both to the monthly Open Days and to the many group tours arranged for Probus and other groups. The House was thus quite busy, and numbers of volunteers worked hard to make visits to the House rewarding. Numbers of people had passed on messages of thanks and appreciation after their visits. Dr Christie thanked all those members who had given generously of their time and their energies in and around Carisbrook House. (See below for some positive comments from visitors.)

In other ways the LCHS had remained busy. At the monthly general meetings, we had welcomed a range of interesting Speakers at the Podium, though sadly one speaker, Professor Paula Hamilton, had been obliged to withdraw because she had caught Covid. She had agreed to return in the new year. The Lane Cove History Prize had been awarded in late 2021 to Ruth Benfield, while entries for the 2023 Prize would close at the end of August.

Dr Christie vacated the chair while Councillor David Roenfeldt conducted the election for the office bearers for the new year August 2023-24. The following office bearers were elected:

President: Dr. Frances Christie

Vice Presidents: Dr Kay Leiper; Mrs Margaret Bergomi

Secretary: Mrs Pat Madson

Treasurer: Mr. Ajaya Jayarao

Committee members: Mrs Clio Wallace; Mrs Jenny Quirke; Ms Catherine Briggs; Mr Denis Smith; Mr Mark Vilo.

Mr Bill McLaughlin agreed to serve again as immediate Past President.

On resuming the chair, Dr. Frances Christie again thanked all those who had helped over the year, including Councillor David Roenfeldt. She then declared the meeting closed and invited the Speaker at the Podium to speak.

Councillor Bridget Kennedy is an active member of the Lane Cove community, having been declared the *2018 Lane Cove Citizen of the Year* in recognition of her community service. She maintains a successful career as a designer of jewellery and is very active in all matters to do with conservation, including effective waste management. Her chosen topic was “Rubbish, it’s not what you think it is”, and she spoke with considerable authority about the substantial costs associated with waste management and the constructive ways we can deal with it effectively. Bridget was one of the instigators of the Sydney Library of Things and the Sydney Edible Garden Trail. She was also a founding member of the Repair Café Sydney North. Bridget is passionate about zero-waste and the share economy, and she sees waste as a resource that can be used as a conduit to reconnect and build resilient communities. Her talk proved enlightening and it provoked a great deal of discussion.



# Thornleigh Probus Aug 17th



## A very positive review from Jeannine after their group tour

I would like to thank you and all your wonderful volunteers for making our 2 visits to Carisbrook House so rewarding. Please pass on our thanks to everyone involved. Today(Thursday) was especially pleasant, as the weather was so nice. In fact it was quite hard to get people to stand up and leave after sitting in the warm sunshine enjoying their lunch.

We will heartily recommend a visit to Carisbrook House to our friends and family.

Best Wishes,  
Jeannine Moorhouse  
Thornleigh Probus Group

## Open Day at Carisbrook House on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> August



### All (or small) hands to the pump!

Imogen and Jack took turns pumping water from the cistern at Carisbrook, at our August Open Weekend. And now that we have reconstructed the Scullery, we were able to show Imogen how the bucket would have been emptied into the copper to boil up the laundry and then rinsed and put through the large mangle that we now have on display. Hard work for the ladies in the 1880s, as you will see on your next visit!



*A group of expectant young mums had gathered for a catch-up. They had met while pregnant with their first babies & and were now convening while expecting their second babies.*



*New member Tina de Klerk and a welcome Devonshire Tea on Sunday 20 August from volunteer for the day, Carmen Wong.*



# Review of a visit to Carisbrook on Google ~ August 2023 by Sally Pod. ★★★★★

“Loved it. The volunteers who meet & greet. Then the volunteers who prepare Devonshire tea. Then the volunteers take you on the tour of the house; not a Grand House but a middle-class home which was deserted for many yrs & needed massive restoration and done so well. The knowledge that these ladies shared was brilliant. And? Ted our carpark attendant. Such a team & such a house!

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## Forthcoming Events at Carisbrook House.

An Open Weekend, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> September, 10.00am-4.00pm each day.  
A Christmas Party, 31<sup>st</sup> November, 3.00-5.00pm

Our speaker at the Podium on Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> September is an old friend. He is Ian Burnet, who will talk about Charles Darwin in Australia. Darwin sailed round the world in 1831-1836 on the *HMS Beagle*, and in the course of the voyage, he called at Australia, where, with Joseph Banks, he made many important discoveries. We hope to see you there to hear Ian Burnet!.

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## The Lane Cove Historical Society Archives Frances Christie

Carisbrook House is one of the relatively few house museums found in Sydney, and Lane Cove can be proud of that. Who invented the notion of a museum, and why did people decide to collect the archives kept in them? The word “museum” had its origins in ancient Greece, when a “mouseion” was a place of study and of worship of the nine Muses, or goddesses, of the arts and sciences. Over the centuries the word “museum” was adopted in English to refer to scholarly institutions for the display and study of the arts, literature or science. Museums today remain places for the display and study of great artistic and scientific pieces. One thinks, for example, of the British Museum in London, the Guggenheim Museum in New York or the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, though there are many others. They remain magnificent repositories, reminding us of much that is great in human endeavour.

But museums can often also be repositories of the apparently commonplace, serving as reminders of the lifestyles of ordinary folk over the centuries. Carisbrook Historic House, dating as it does from the early 1880s, is a reminder of the lifestyle available to successful colonial middle-class families such as the Brooks family who built it. Indeed, the House and its collection provide a glimpse of the life enjoyed by those who lived in Lane Cove in the latter years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The furniture and the table settings, the curtains, the bedding, the ornaments, the bric-a-brac and the considerable collection of items in the kitchen and scullery, serve to remind us of many

aspects of the relatively recent past. They are important evidence of the lives of a community and its people, and as such they help to preserve an understanding of the past.

A Heritage study of the House was conducted in 1998, and in 2003 the Lane Cove Council commissioned the preparation of a Collection Policy for the House. From that time a policy has been followed of restoring and maintaining the house much as it would have been in the 1880s. Hence it is that the Lane Cove Historical Society has been carefully collecting items relevant to the house and its period. The Collection of items is by now quite large and, while many of the items are on display in the house, many others are held in storage. Interested members may make an appointment to examine the archives, the records of which are held at Carisbrook House.

Apart from the archive of items relating to Carisbrook, the Society's Collection includes items not of the Victorian period, but drawn from Lane Cove history more generally. They include for example, old aerograms, bank books, army uniforms and other clothing and household appliances, most given by local people, thinking they might have an enduring historical interest. All such items are looked at carefully and some are kept while others are given away. We encourage our members to take an interest in our Archives. It is always open to members to view the Archives for their own research. Readers will find an item by Pat Madson below:

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**From our Collection**  
**Our Glass EPERGNE**  
**Pat Madson**

What is an epergne you may ask? Pronounced *ei/PERN/ay*, it is a type of table centrepiece that is usually made of silver, but can be made of any metal, glass or porcelain with several small dishes or trays emerging from the central stem. It was used to hold flowers or fruit. The word is thought to come from the French *epargne* which means *saving*, as it saved people from having to pass dishes around the table. The early Victorian dining table was beautifully adorned and spread out with place settings of serviettes and name cards, as well as the shiniest cutlery and sparkling crockery. Food was put on the table all at once, often over dishes of hot water to keep them warm. By the mid 1800's dessert of fruit and nuts would be on the table at the start of the meal, frequently in the epergne. There was a central bowl with radiating arms holding smaller bowls which could be filled with a variety of fruit, nuts or sweetmeats. The late Victorian era epergne was usually made of glass, and used to display flowers. We had long wanted an epergne for the Carisbrook dining room, and when in 2019 an appropriate one appeared on an auction site, we made our successful bid.



*The epergne at Carisbrook is made of gilt metal with a female figure holding the cranberry edged fluted glass central bowl, and there are 3 cranberry edged fluted glass trumpets radiating around the bowl. It is an elegant piece.*

# THE LANE COVE FESTIVAL



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SEPTEMBER  
16TH & 17TH  
10AM-4PM



WWW.CARISBROOKHOUSE.COM

## THE LANE COVE HISTORY PRIZE

KEEP THE DATE!

THE WINNER OF THE LANE COVE HISTORY  
PRIZE

TO BE ANNOUNCED

TUESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER AT 7.00PM

IN THE LANE COVE LIBRARY

WILL IT BE AN ORAL HISTORY, A VIDEO



OR AN ESSAY?



**NEW MEMBERS**



Welcome!  
Gail Neeson  
Neville & Ros Rubinstein



7pm Tuesday  
Sept 26  
Lane Cove Library

At the Podium  
**Ian Burnet**  
**Darwin in Australia**



*Louise, Matthew and their son Ben, made their first visit to Carisbrook. Tim said he will “go anywhere for a Devonshire tea”.*