

President: Dorothy Warwick
Treasurer: John McKenna
Secretary: Helen Olde



Minutes of Public Meeting Held on Sunday 12 June 2011 Venue: Linnwood, Byron Road, Guildford

Welcome & Apologies

John McKenna opened the meeting at 2.10pm, welcoming all in attendance. A special welcome was given to our guest speaker Michelle Cavanagh, who is also a Friend of Linnwood.

In Attendance at today's meeting, as per the Attendance Sheet:

Michael Griggs, Sue Evans, Del Donohoe, Margaret McKay Warn, Ann Thomson, Coral Hamilton, Dorothy Thomas, Lawrence Thomas, John Walz, Helen Olde, Michelle Cavanagh, Dorothy Warwick, John McKenna, Pam Richardson.

Apologies:

Irie Olde, Pam Zopf, Audrey Murphy, Adriana de Haas, Pat O'Brien, Christine McKenna, Julie Walz.

Confirmation of Minutes of Public Meeting held on Sunday 10 April 2011

Moved Michael Griggs, seconded by Pam Richardson, that the minutes of the Public Meeting held on Sunday 10 April 2011 were a true and correct record. The motion was carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising from the minutes.

Correspondence

Helen Olde tabled the Correspondence folder and passed it around to members for their information.

President's Report

Good afternoon everyone and thank you for coming out on this winter's afternoon. It seems to be a tradition in recent years that the June long weekend means wet weather.

Once again, I will try and keep my report brief.

- We don't appear to have anything for 'show & tell' this afternoon which must be a first!
- With regard to the 120th Birthday celebrations, the book on the history of Linnwood is progressing steadily – there is quite a lot to try and put together, the property has had such an interesting life, and Helen and I are working to try and put it all together. If you parked in front of or on the southern side of the house, you will have noticed that work is progressing on the re-establishment of the rose or Children's Garden. The recent wet weather hasn't helped, but we think we are still on track time-wise to have it ready for planting in the next few weeks.
- We haven't been able to start the electrical work yet. Holroyd Council, as the Linnwood Estate Trust Managers requested an updated quote for the work to be done, and we have only just received this. Unfortunately, with other ancillary repair work that will need to be done in conjunction with the grant work, and which wasn't covered in the original quote, we are looking at another \$10,000 worth of work to be done. The committee will have to look closely at our current funds and future fundraising events to see if we can afford to do all the work – or whether we may have to cut back on the work in some of the rooms. Council has indicated that they do not have the funds to help with these additional costs. An account at Council has been set up and we now bank all hire fees into the Linnwood Estate Trust at Council.
- The Linnwood Estate was re-gazetted on 13th May and we are not really sure of the implications of this. The Tamplin Road Estate was not re-gazetted, and again we are not sure what is going on. Both Estates were Gazetted on 25th February as Reservations of Crown Land with the Establishment of Reserve Trusts, with the Linnwood Estate Trust being managed by Holroyd City Council, and Tamplin Road Estate Trust being managed by the Lands Administration Ministerial Corporation. The NSW Government Gazette of 13th May shows the 'Proposed Dedication of Crown Land for A Public Purpose' for the property, which is basically the same use listed in the original Gazetted. It's pretty much 'clear as mud' as to what is all means.

- We would like to thank MemberFirst Credit Union for the recent dividend of \$70 we received – we are part of their Community Partnership Program and are very happy with the service and support we have received from them over the years.
- We have applied for another grant – this time for a CDSE Grant from the local clubs, to try and buy a commercial dishwasher and LP Gas stove. We feel that the house would be much more attractive to potential users if these appliances were available. Apart from that, a dishwasher would be extremely useful to the Friends – just ask anyone who has had to do a big wash-up in the pink bowl over the sink! We probably won't find out until about August if we have been successful.
- We have had a couple of very successful tours through recently – with one of them staying for a picnic lunch in the grounds – and it was a perfect Autumn day for them. Other users have been Holroyd Rotary and the Australian Lace Guild – with both organisations having celebration meals for their members at the house. It's really good to see community groups making use of the house – and how much better it would be if we had that dishwasher and stove!
- Our May Open House was quite successful with over 200 people coming through – and a great proportion of them had never been here before, which was really pleasing. Our July Open House is traditionally our BIG one, so we will have to keep our fingers crossed for a fine day.
- We were recently contacted by some McCredie family members and I had the pleasure of showing them through the McCredie Church and Linnwood. We worked out that they were descended from a brother of George's grandfather. A remote link – but a link just the same and they were very pleased to have found it.
- Lastly, Helen represented the Friends at a function at CLAN's new headquarters yesterday and I would like to ask her to give you a brief run-down of the occasion.

So that's all from me for the moment. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

Thank you again for coming out today and please stay to hear our guest speaker Michelle and then have a nice hot cuppa and a chat afterwards. Thank you.

Report re Official Opening of CLAN's new Headquarters

CLAN's new office is now located at 463 Chapel Road, Bankstown, The official ceremony was held in the front yard of the house, and it was very cold sitting there listening to all the speeches! There were well over 100 guests. CLAN Patrons consisted of members of both sides of Federal politics, and they were all very good speakers. It is definitely a bipartisan support base for CLAN and those children who were in institutional care. During the function, Federal Minister Jenny Macklin (via pre-recorded video) announced that the Federal Government is providing a \$400,000 grant to CLAN – these funds will be of great assistance for CLAN to continue their work, including being able to employ a full-time counsellor.

The Hon Jason Clare MP (Federal Member for Blaxland) launched CLAN's second survey "Struggling to Keep it Together", a survey of 577 CLAN members across Australia; The Hon Richard Marles MP (Federal Member for Corio) officially opened the Orphanage Museum; The Hon Malcolm Turnbull (Federal Member for Wentworth) launched the book "Surviving Care"; Mr Steve Irons MP (Federal Member for Swan and the only Federal Member of Parliament who was a State Ward) launched the book "Journey of Hope" written by CLAN member Dr J Michael Davey. Former Senator Andrew Murray (who played a very large role in the two government Inquiries into institutional care, which were the prelude to the Apology to the Forgotten Australians) unveiled a plaque dedicated to Dr Joanna Penglase (CLAN's co-founder with Leonie Sheedy).

Treasurer's Report

John McKenna presented his report for April and May 2011.

Opening balance at 1 April 2011: \$74,682.72 (this includes the Community Partnership grant money for the electrical works)

	<u>April</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Total</u>
Income	\$912.50	\$3,013.20	\$3,925.70
Expenditure	\$528.00	\$1,906.23	<u>\$2,434.23</u>
Profit/(loss) April/May 2011			\$1,491.47

Bank balance at 31/5/11 \$76,192.84 (this includes the Community Partnership grant money for the electrical works)

Interest Bearing Deposit at 31/5/11 \$18,586.07

Taking into account petty cash and floats (\$773.00) and current liabilities (\$472.98), our total funds as at 31 May 2011 (less the Community Partnership grant money) is \$37,051.91.

Major expenditure for the two months were:

Entry path at the northern end of main verandah	\$ 836.00
Photocopying brochures/leaflets	\$ 300.00
Public Liability insurance RAHS	\$ 528.00

Major income for the two months were:

May Open Day	\$2,513.20
Donation	\$ 500.00
Tours/Functions	\$ 635.00

General Business

The July Open Day (our biggest in the Calendar of Events) is being held on Sunday 10 July, and we are looking for volunteers to help out on the day, particularly on the BBQ. We know we will be short-staffed so if anyone can lend a hand we will be very grateful.

Guest Speaker

John McKenna then introduced Michelle Cavanagh who presented the book she wrote about a relatively unknown Australian woman – *Margaret Holmes – The Life and Times of an Australian Peace Campaigner*.

When Michelle was studying a third year History Unit at Macquarie University, she discovered that Margaret Holmes was one of the women who demonstrated against the Vietnam War. Michelle wanted to know why Australia joined the Vietnam War and what were the consequences. It was of particular interest to her as her husband was having problems with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder – he was a Vietnam veteran.

Although Margaret was 91 years old when Michelle met her, she still had a razor sharp mind and a wonderful memory. She was 100 years old when she died. After five years of research, Michelle wrote her book. Through the Freedom of Information Act, Michelle was able to obtain a copy of the file which ASIO held on Margaret.

Michelle has kindly provided a copy of her talk, and following are some extracts:

Born in 1909, Margaret lived for the greater part of the twentieth century. Some of the century's most defining moments helped to mould her character, together with the people she met during her lifetime. Hers was a privileged childhood. Brought up in Sydney's North Shore suburb of Wahroonga with paternal grandparents who were millionaires, she also had convicts on her mother's side of the family and a tenuous link to Royalty through the indiscretions of James V of Scotland.

When she began her university studies in 1927 - having been educated at Abbotsleigh, a private school in Sydney's North Shore - Margaret was an ultra patriotic mirror of her parents' pro-Empire views. By the time she was into her second year at Sydney University, she had settled into university life, begun to join different organisations and started to re-assess her thinking. What her studies were teaching her about the wider world was a factor in this transformation, as was membership of the SCM - Student Christian Movement, and her work with the university Settlement - the benevolent society based on the concept of reciprocal learning with premises in the inner city suburb of Chippendale.

Margaret's volunteer work with the Settlement brought her into close contact with many of the poor families who lived in the suburbs surrounding the university, experiences which led her to become an anti-capitalist. She joined the Settlement committee and took on a part time Friday evening job at the Grace Bros Broadway store, donating her wages to the Settlement. It was also through SCM that she met Thomas Arthur Glennie Holmes (known as Tag) her future husband. Margaret and Tag married in 1933, settling in Mosman where Tag opened a medical practice following a honeymoon in England undertaken so that he could further his medical studies and where their first child was born. While they were in England, Margaret saw first-hand how the Depression was affecting people in Europe, while at the same time she saw many refugees from fascism being driven from their homelands.

She was a great joiner of organisations, in 1936 joining the Left Book Club begun by Victor Gollancz and two colleagues John Strachey & Harold Laski both of whom became prominent members of the British Labour Party. And she told me that when her house was raided by the NSW Special Branch in about 1948 it was the Left Book Club's books which the two Special Branch members were interested in although they didn't take any.

Margaret attended conferences such as the first Australian Congress of Peace and Friendship with Soviet Russia held in 1937. So it's easy to see why, once ASIO was formed in 1949 Margaret became a person of interest.

The end of the Second World War saw the resurgence of Peace Movements - many of the conferences during that period Margaret helped to organise. She also attended lectures given by the prominent thinkers of the time, both Australian and International. But it wasn't until Margaret & Tag's six children had grown up that her major years of activism began.

In 1960, Margaret founded the NSW branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) in her Mosman home. Through WILPF she worked on targeted peace and justice campaigns including Aboriginal reconciliation, Apartheid in South Africa, demonstrations against WMD – chemical, biological & atomic, and she lobbied for the closure of American bases in Australia. Not long after forming WILPF NSW, Margaret began provoking the ire of some of Australia's politicians beginning with the fervent anti-communist William Charles Wentworth, who stated in parliament that WILPF was a communist organisation. Margaret wrote to him proving otherwise, gaining a retraction in parliament.

Unlike the Iraqi war, when 500,000 Australians marched in anti-war protests, Australian involvement in the Vietnam War began with the approval of 56% of Australians. This meant that any activism in which Margaret was involved received a lot of condemnation from a majority of the general public. At the same time of course women were not expected to be interested in politics. But together with a band of dedicated women who joined WILPF, she enthusiastically worked on targeted issues.

Margaret tackled issues head on, challenging Prime Minister Robert Menzies at his first public meeting following the re-introduction of compulsory military service. Together with others, once Menzies began talking about conscription, she donned a black veil, stood up and slowly and silently walked out of the room handing out anti-conscription leaflets which stopped Menzies dead in his tracks.

She later led a delegation to lobby the Minister for the Army, Malcolm Fraser, in an effort to stop conscripts being sent to Vietnam once it became clear Australia was to join America in the war. She protested at Sydney airport when the Anglican Archbishop of Sydney left bound for Malaysia and Vietnam.

She was a regular demonstrator when conscription ballots were conducted; demonstrating outside army barracks when new recruits arrived together with members of Save Our Sons which she helped to organise.

As a committee member of 'Project Vietnam' she helped organise numerous campaigns in the weeks before 22 April 1966. As *HMAS Sydney* ship sailed out of Sydney Harbour she was amongst WILPF members who went to North Head to unfurl a large banner over the cliff proclaiming 'YOU GO TO AN UNJUST WAR'. The following day, Margaret retrieved it, changed the wording to read THEY WENT TO AN UNJUST WAR, positioning it at The Spit. In May 1966 she demonstrated at the Sydney Cenotaph after the death of the second conscript.

In 1968 work to ban the use of chemical weapons became another one of Margaret's projects. The use of napalm and defoliants in Vietnam prompted WILPF to form a committee against chemical and biological warfare – convened by Margaret. She was a member of the Sydney Vietnam Moratorium committee – the first one taking place in May 1970 when over 200,000 people demonstrated Australia wide.

Over the years she worked on numerous campaigns. By 1975 when the International Women's Year celebrations took place, Margaret was as active as ever, her thoughts appearing in a book entitled *Listen to the Women for a Change – Fifty World Feminists on Equality, Development and Peace*.

Following Tag's death in 1984, Margaret continued her activism joining new organisations such as the People for Nuclear Disarmament. By 1987 she was working alongside those who were lobbying for the bushland military reserve at Balmoral to be kept in public hands.

Margaret was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2001, agreeing to the nomination in the hope of gaining WILPF further publicity. She has certainly paid her debt to society and lived a life well worth celebrating. Looking back, the years working flat out against the Vietnam War were for Margaret a time when she devoted her all to the cause:

"It was one of the most exciting and happiest times of my life. The work was productive, there were many excited helpers, and it was very satisfying. We had a purpose and you don't often have that in your life... We were always trying to think of new things to do and at one time I withheld some of my income tax... the proportion of GDP expenditure that was going to the Defence Budget. But in the end as they were going to garnishee my wages from the practice it was too much trouble and I had to give up on the idea. But we did some really important things and had a real sense of purpose."

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2.00pm on Sunday 14 August 2011. Guest speakers will be Dorothy Warwick and Pat O'Brien, who will show an updated and expanded version of their postcard presentation "Reminiscing – Old Postcards and Photographs of Days Gone By".

A reminder that this meeting will also include the 9th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Linnwood, where the current committee will step down and a new committee elected. Membership fees will also be due by this date and a Renewal Notice is enclosed with these minutes for those members who are eligible to renew. Perpetual and Honorary members, and those who have paid some years in advance, do not need to renew and hence will not receive a Renewal Notice.

Raffle

The raffle was drawn by Michelle Cavanagh and won by Helen Olde.

Meeting Closed

The meeting closed at 3.20pm.

Confirmed:

_____ Date: _____

Open House – Sunday 10 July 2011

If you can spare an hour or so, we would love to welcome you to our team of volunteers.

We will be a little short-staffed on this day, so if you can relieve someone on the front door, raffle table, BBQ, hot dog stand, refreshment room, or even at the washing up dish, we would be very grateful.

Thank you.

Membership Renewals

For those members who need to renew, enclosed with these Minutes is your Membership Renewal form for the year 2011/2012.

If you are a Perpetual or Honorary Member, or if you have paid some years in advance, you do not need to renew.

If you joined or renewed in May or June 2011 you do not need to renew your membership – your recent payment is valid through to July 2012.

Membership renewals are due and payable in time for the Annual General Meeting on Sunday 14 August 2011 when a new Committee will be formed, so you will need to be a paid-up member in order to vote.

Otherwise, we'll be happy to receive your payment at any time.