



Nepean District Historical Society

Formed in 1947

March 2024 Bulletin 67



HAPPY
EASTER

When Bumper Farrell Nabbed a Prince

John Staats

In the mid 20th century when Sydney was still a thriving port city, King's Cross - with its booze, prostitution, gambling and a burgeoning bohemian night life - was a magnet for hundreds of seamen on shore-leave seeking a 'good time'. The Cross, with its own homegrown, larger-than-life gangsters, was also the heartland of the Sydney crime-scene, and testosterone-pumped, drunken sailors were fuel that fed its seedy reputation as a place of crime, violence and disorder. Not surprisingly, King's Cross was a tough police beat that bred a particular ilk of cop, epitomised by the notorious Frank 'Bumper' Farrell.

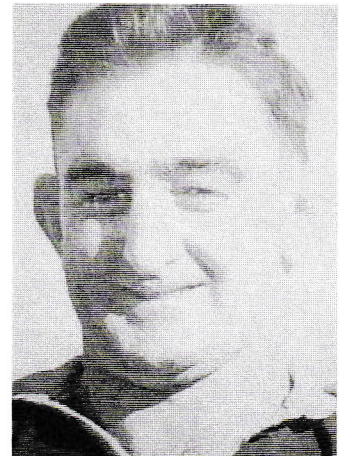
This story is about how, the 'rough-as-guts' and 'hard-as-nails' Farrell one night unexpectedly nabbed himself a prince on the streets of The Cross in 1940.

Australia's Meanest Copper and Football Legend

Larry Writer's book on the life and times of Bumper Farrell paints a colourful picture of Farrell as the 'roughest, toughest street cop and vice-squad leader Australia has ever seen' and is well worth the read to flesh out the biographical sketch of Farrell provided here. A descendant of an Irish convict, Frank Farrell was born to hard working Catholic parents in 1916. His formative stamping grounds were the larrikin infested streets of inner Sydney. He earned the moniker, 'bumper' in his high school days when he was regularly caught smoking cigarette stubs (or bumpers). After finishing school, he was apprenticed as a boilermaker at Garden Island before making a startling career change to join the police force in 1938.

Bumper's real passion was for Rugby League; as a youth, he played for Marrickville and by 1938, he made his first grade debut for Newtown, a team he would captain and play for as a front row prop for an astounding 250+ first-class games. His prowess on the footy field, selection for the Kangaroos and test matches against Britain and New Zealand won the big, beefy, cauliflower-eared front rower godlike legendary status in Sydney's inner suburbs. In the days before professional football, players needed a 'day-job' and, for Farrell, policing gave him the flexibility to earn a living and play first grade footy.

[Right: Frank 'Bumper' Farrell]



Farrell approached policing in much the same way as he played football. There were rules (the law), a referee (the judge) but the game was played and won on the field with relentless toughness, intimidation of the other side and, when necessary, the use of 'biffo' to settle scores and assert dominance. Furthermore, the *auctoritas* and *dignitas* Bumper won on the football field found ready translation as 'respect' and 'street-cred' on the police beat.

Bumper's footy reputation, along with his huge frame, hamlike fists and readiness to get physical (he loved to fight) were essential assets when working the toughest beat in Sydney - Kings Cross, a patch Farrell 'owned' throughout his policing career (1938-1976). Farrell's philosophy was that rules were there to be bent and, if necessary, broken or ignored. His policing style was deeply personal, vindictive and *physical*. A 'rough up' and a 'kick up the backside' were shortcuts he applied liberally to would-be crims to terrify them out of pursuing a life of crime. Bumper's 'off-the record' and very physical 'quiet-chats' was his go-to terror stratagem that got results and avoided a lot of unnecessary paperwork. It also left Farrell open to allegations of corruption as well as the occasional unexpected 'result' from his policing encounters. One such surprise came early in his police career when he encountered 'The Prince'.

The Handsome Prince

The contrast between the backgrounds of Bumper Farrell and the prince could not be starker. Our prince was born to the purple, the heir to the throne of Greece with an impeccable German royal heritage that connected him to the throne of England. Tall, blonde and handsome, the prince's sporty physique, talent



for dancing and penchant for the ladies went effortlessly hand in glove with privilege, education and pedigree. After school, the prince attended Britannia Royal Naval college, graduated as 'best officer cadet' in 1939, and was appointed as a midshipman on HMS *Ramillies* in 1940 which saw active service protecting the convoys transporting the Second AIF across the Indian Ocean. His four-months on the *Ramillies* brought our eighteen-year old Greek and Danish prince to the port of Sydney, and the delights of shore leave in March of 1940.

[Left, the prince, 1945 in Melbourne, Australia]

The bright lights of Kings Cross beckoned. Offerings of booze, girls and clubs called. The prince could not resist. After a night on the tiles the now-intoxicated prince was compelled, by the call of nature, to wander up a side alley and relieve himself against a wall.

The Encounter

Bumper Farrell spotted the drunken (princely) sailor, committing an act of indecency (urinating in public) and flew into action. The burly cop apprehended the prince, lifted him off the ground and pinned him, with appropriate force, against the wall. The prince had the wherewithal to give Bumper a false name; a prudent decision given that an announcement of his title of 'Prince' and a surname Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderberg-Glücksburg might have been taken as an attempt to 'take the piss' out of the young policeman. Bumper applied his unique brand of physical policing and, having terrified the bejesus out of the young English officer and (figuratively and literally) given him a 'kick up the rear', let him go without formally laying charges. Job done, lesson given; Farrell moved on and thought no more about another commonplace street encounter with a drunken sailor.

Anagnorisis

Anagnorisis is a delightful literary term of Greek origin that gets little everyday usage from ordinary folk. It refers to that moment when someone realises something of great importance about themselves or their past that has not been hitherto apparent.

In 1947 Bumper Farrell experienced anagnorisis when the following image hit the media in Australia:



[Left: 1947, Official Royal Portrait Photograph announcing the engagement of Princess Elizabeth to Prince Philip]

One never to forget a face, Farrell recognised the bloke in the photo as the very same tall, handsome, blonde, boozed-up sailor he had pulled up in The Cross some seven years earlier for public indecency. It was none other than Prince Philip, the soon-to-be husband and consort of the future Queen of England. One can only imagine Bumper's reaction to this anagnorisis.

The larrikin copper, and football legend who had roughed-up every manner of pimp, spiv, crook and vagrant could also claim to have laid his mitts on, and provided a 'right royal' 'kick up the backside' to, an eminent prince.

Now that was a story Bumper would dine out on for many a year.

Select References:

Carr, Andy, 'A Bite on the Ear and a Kick up the Rear: Bumper Farrell, Man and Myth', academia.edu

Carr, Andy, Francis Michael (Frank) Farrell (1916–1985) Australian Dictionary of Biography, 2007

Writer, Larry. *Bumper*. Hachette Australia, 2011.

http://whale.to/c/royal_philanderer.html

<https://the81stminute.com/2018/05/oddball-footy-history-prince-philips-kings-cross-encounter-jeff-fenech-pat-jarvis-uses-car-to-straighten-injured-leg-and-more-brad-fittler/>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-04-10/prince-philip-visits-to-australia/13206732>

OUT OF THE PAST

Volunteer Corps

The Nepean Times of Saturday 25th October 1924, in an article by Mr Arthur Judges states that "Penrith in the early days possessed a fine Volunteer Corps and I can distinctly recollect a sham fight at Lemongrove, in which volunteers from Parramatta, Windsor and Penrith took place, and a Silver Bugle was presented by Mrs Lethbridge, on behalf of the ladies of Penrith.

It is still in existence in the safe keeping of the Bank of NSW.

The first Captain was J. J. Riley and the officers were Robert Jamieson (First Lieutenant) and Richard Brooks (Second Lieutenant).

In later years Mr J. P. Robbens was appointed Captain and continued so until his death on 28th June 1875.

It was a fine Company and continued to be such until it disbanded.

Many of the Members benefitted by the Volunteer Land Grants."

REFERENCE: PENRITH & THEREABOUTS SEPTEMBER 1991

The Silver Bugle referred to in the above article now sits in the Safe in the Archive Room of the Nepean District Historical Society

Agents for the "Nepean Times"

The distribution of the Nepean Times stretched far and wide

Apart from the availability of the Newspaper in Penrith, St Marys, Kingswood, Rooty Hill, Emu Plains, Springwood, Prospect, Mulgoa and Katoomba this publication had Agents in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney

The Newspaper could also be found in the faraway cities of London, Manchester, Paris, New York San Francisco

All this before the electronic subscriptions that we have today

Newspapers & Gazettes Nepean Times (Penrith, NSW : 1882 - 1962)

Sat 6 Jan 1900 Page 3

NEPEAN DISTRICT SONG

This poem was given to Beth Moore by Josephine Rossetto that was written by her late husband Ronald Rossetto in 1989

Nepean River, the place I love to roam
In Nepean District, the place that I call home
From Warragamba, with the dam that is well known
Flows the water to the towns that all have grown
Land of the Panthers, with its mighty club
Fans are all cheering , from hill-top to the pub
Boats on the river, what a sight to see
Nepean District, is the place for me
At the foot of the mountain, with the river by its side
There's Emu Plains, a bit of paradise
Nepean District, I'll never stray away
For my heart's in the district, and here I want to stay



Sue under instruction from Jurgen on the Ride On Mower

MARCH GUEST SPEAKER

Our Guest Speaker for our next meeting on Saturday the 23rd of March 2024 will be author and historian Wal Walker.

Wal will talk to us about his latest book. *The Squatters Grab*

The Squatter in Australia is a person of European background that could occupy crown land he did not own, and raise sheep or cattle and farmland, in the process he dispossessed the original Indigenous people who made use of the country to hunt and gather their food

The government sometimes had little to say as it was outside their jurisdiction

So this is where everything went wrong, with violent and tragic results.

Wal in his talk will give us an insight into events that we are still reminded of today.



LIFE MEMBERSHIP

At the recent February 2024 AGM Life Membership was bestowed on Craig Werner

Craig has been a Member of the Society since 2001 in this time he has been a dedicated Volunteer giving his time and energy to making our Society function as well as it does. He became our President in 2006 and was continually returned every year since, his loyalty to the Society and its Members has never wavered. Also his organizational ability and personal support over a long period of time has put us in a good place. In other words his contributions have been much appreciated.

Unfortunately, Craig was unable to be present at the Meeting due to personal reasons



The Allure of Lace



*A Cavalcade of History and Fashion
Presentation*



**Sunday, 24th March 2024
2pm**

Penrith Regional Gallery
86 River Road, Emu Plains
Cost: \$40 Includes afternoon tea
There will be a door prize

Bookings and payment essential by Friday, 15th March
Pay by cash or credit card
Ph 4735 1100 10am-3.30pm weekdays only
or online www.penrithregionalgallery.com.au

MOVIE NIGHT

	<p>In 2014, Bernard Jordan staged a "great escape" from his care home to join fellow war veterans on a beach in Normandy, commemorating the D-Day Landings 70th anniversary.</p> <p>This story embodies the defiant "can-do" spirit of a generation.</p>
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Sunday 10th March 2024

Glenbrook Theatre

6.00 pm for light supper, Movie starts at 7.00 pm

A great movie so contact all your family and friends as soon as possible!

RSVP before 3rd March to Paula Ewings

Email: zontanepEANvalleyfrc@gmail.com

or phone 0407 860 258

\$25 by cash or card on the night



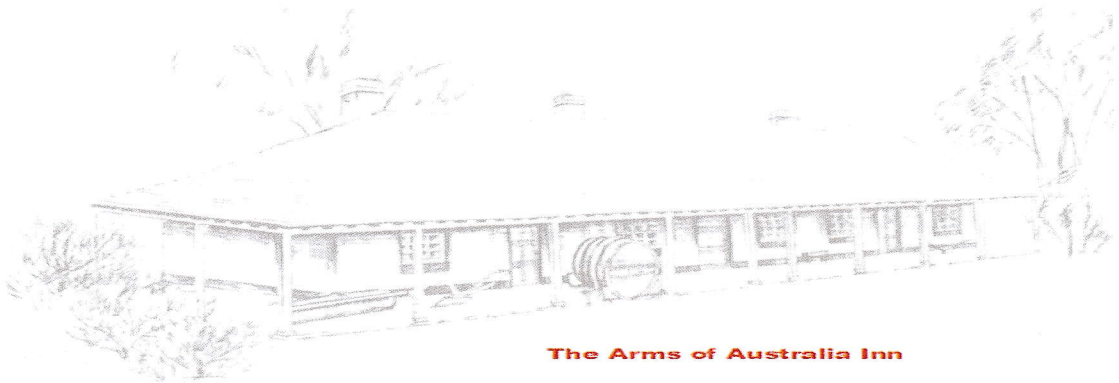
ZONTA
CLUB OF
NEPEAN VALLEY INC

All funds raised to go to Zonta Clubs of Nepean Valley to support women locally and internationally

The Nepean District Historical Society

invites you to the

Annual Lunch



Saturday 15th June 2024 at 10.00am

for 10.30am

Penrith Museum of Printing

Located within the grounds of the Penrith Paceway

Which is bounded by Station Street, Ransley Street and Mulgoa Road, Penrith, NSW

The Society will be treated to a Group Tour and a Letterpress Workshop

And then afterwards at Club Paceway for Lunch

To book call the Inn on 02 4735 4394 on opening days

or email info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au

Cost \$5.00 plus the cost of your Lunch at Club Paceway

RSVP: by June 3rd 2024

Bank details for a direct deposit are: Account Name - NDHS BSB - 032 271 Account Number - 683 727

By cheque: NDHS PO Box 441 Penrith NSW 2751

Cash: On any Wednesday between 10.00am to 12.00pm at the Museum



MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Membership ends on the
31st December 2023.

Payment can be made by direct deposit, cheque or cash.

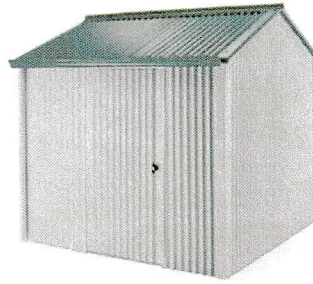
Bank details for a direct deposit are:

Account Name – NDHS BSB – 032 271 Account Number – 683 727

By cheque
NDHS P O BOX 441 PENRITH NSW 2751

Cash
On any Wednesday between 10am to 12pm at the Museum

*The
Green
Shed*



Working Bee

*What is behind
that Green door?*

The next Working Bee will be
Thursday 18th April and Friday 19th April 2024 at 10am

There will be a BBQ Lunch and Refreshments provided.

Please do not pass up this fabulous opportunity to be a part of
uncovering the Society's artefacts from yesteryear.

Just let Trish know if you are coming.

WHAT'S ON

Sunday 10th March

ZONTA Movie Night

Monday 20th March

Nepean Christian School

Thursday 21st March

REWired Morning Tea and Tour

Saturday 23rd March

NDHS Meeting

Sunday 24th March

Friends of the Gallery Calvalcade

Easter Holidays

**Good Friday 29th March & Easter Saturday 30th March &
Easter Sunday 31st March**

Monday 1st April Easter Monday (Arms of Australia Inn Museum Closed)

Saturday 6th April & Sunday 7th April Orchid Show

Thursday 18th April 2024 & Friday 19th April 2024 NDHS Working Bee at 10am

Riddle

There was an old lady who lived in a one story house.
EVERYTHING in it was pink.
The lamp was pink.
The T.V. was pink.
The floor was pink.
The table was pink.
Even the lounge was pink.
So what colour was the stairs ?

Answer to Last Month's Riddle : It's a one story house. There are no stairs.

Inspirational Quotes

LIFE IS SHORT	LIVE IT	
LOVE IS RARE	GRAB IT	
ANGER IS BAD	DUMP IT	
FEAR IS AWFUL	FACE IT	
MEMORIES ARE SWEET		CHERISH THEM

On a Lighter Note

DORMITORY:
When you rearrange the letters:
DIRTY ROOM

PRESBYTERIAN:
When you rearrange the letters:
BEST IN PRAYER

ASTRONOMER:
When you rearrange the letters:
MOON STARER

THE EYES:
When you rearrange the letters:
THEY SEE

THE MORSE CODE:
When you rearrange the letters:
HERE COME DOTS

ELEVEN PLUS TWO:
When you rearrange the letters:
TWELVE PLUS ONE

Contacts

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Phone	During opening hours	02 4735 4394
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Vice President		
Secretary / Editor	Trish Montgomery	0402 086 088
Treasurer / Public Officer	Harry May	02 4732 1520
Museum Manager	Jenny Hotop	02 4735 1654
Business Manager	Jenny Hotop	02 4735 1654
Site Manager	Tony Grainge	02 4731 2303
Ordinary Committee Member	Richard Nutt	0407 014 157
Lantern Tours	Craig Werner	0417 271 328
	Or email	craigj10@bigpond.com
Heritage Advisory Rep.	Beth Moore	02 4735 1734
Speakers	Richard Nutt	0407 014 157
Books, Photography	Tony Grainge	02 4731 2303

Museum Opening Hours

Monday and Wednesday 10am to 1pm

Other days by Appointment

Meetings

The NDHS meets on the 4th Saturday of each month with a Guest Speaker at 1pm.
Cnr of Great Western Highway & Gardenia St Emu Plains,

Birthday Wishes

John Vivani Harry Paul Wheeldon Allison Norma Juergen

Disclaimer: Views and opinions expressed in articles in this Bulletin are those of the contributor and not the views of the Nepean District Historical Society

Contributions for the next Bulletin to – trishmontgomery1970@gmail.com