

&
Chris Seymour



**To come and hear Chris Speak about
Lord Kitchener's visit to Wynnum in 1910**

Chris is a Mining Engineer with experience in Sierra Leone, Zambia, South Africa, Chile and the United States. He was manager of the San Juan Mine in New Mexico when it was recognised in 1992 as the safest surface coal mine in the whole of the US. As a result, he came to Australia in 1994 to investigate the Moura Mine Disaster of that year. The original two-year assignment with BHP has turned out much longer. He has a keen interest in history, especially World War 1, and has compiled the Wynnum Manly Historical Society's website at www.wmhs.org.au.

Lord Kitchener was well for his command of British during the Boer War in South Africa in 1900. There is a plaque in Kitchener Park to commemorate the occasion of Lord Kitchener, when he was invited he reviewed troops from Fort Lytton in 1910. Chris will tell us a little of the life of lord Kitchener and how he came to visit Wynnum.

Come along and learn more about Lord Kitchener's visit to Wynnum. **Please note that is the 2nd Saturday owing to Easter falling on the 1st weekend this year.** The presentation will include vintage film footage of Kitchener saluting troops returning to Wynnum after repelling an invading force in Capalaba.

Where? **Kingsbury Room
Queen Alexandra Home Community Centre
347 Old Cleveland Rd. Coorparoo**
When **11 April 2026 at 2.00 pm**

Non-members are welcome, but why not join our group? A small donation to offset hiring charges would be appreciated.

Members who bring a small plate for afternoon tea are greatly appreciated..

Contact President Ron Baker OAM 0412 944 095 Vice President Richard Jeffreys OAM 0411 511 369
Mail: Hon. Secretary. P.O. Box 1555 Carindale Q. 4152



MARCH 2026 NEWSLETTER

At the Annual General Meeting, held before our 7 February meeting, all committee members, apart from Barbara Carloss, who stood down, were re-elected.

The committee consists of the following

President: Ron Baker OAM

Vice President: Richard Jeffreys OAM

Secretary: Paul Barry

Treasurer: Angela Hawes

Committee: Lesley Brandis, Pat Skytte, Ruth Blair

The position of Membership Secretary was not filled and there is room on the committee for additional members. Committee membership is not onerous and can be informative and joyous.

Members are also reminded that the Annual Membership fees are due on 1 March 2026. Membership renewal of \$20 can be paid by bank transfer or cash at our next meeting.

Banking details;

Bank of Queensland

BSB 124062

Account No. 90258888

If paying by bank transfer please make sure that your name appears on the payment so that we are sure of who paid.

As 2025 was the centenary of the forming of the City of Greater Brisbane, when 20 cities, towns and shires amalgamated. Our own Coorparoo Shire was one of the shires that ceased to exist. At our February meeting, Jeff Brunne, who was on the Coordinating Committee for the Greater Brisbane Centenary and led the project which organised the successful Brisbane, 100 event, at City Hall, spoke about *Brisbane 1925 to 2025 Changes and Continuity*. Jeff gave an overview of how Brisbane has changed over the century, and how it has grown to be the great city that it is today.

Did you know that Lord Kitchener visited Wynnum in January 1910? Did you also know that there is a Memorial plaque erected to commemorate his visit? Lord Kitchener will be remembered as the face on Britain's **Britain Wants You** posters. An extract from this poster is used on our flyer, Chris Seymour is a member of the Wynnum Manly Historical Society and has a strong knowledge on Lord Kitchener and will provide an interesting talk about Kitchener and his visit to Wynnum on Saturday 11 April 2026. **Please note that is the second Saturday owing to the first Saturday falling on Easter Saturday.**

This year the Coorparoo State School is 150 years old. The School commenced on 31 January 1876 in a school house that only contained two classrooms. There were 31 enrolments on the first day, with enrolments on the next day reaching 46 pupils. By the end of the year enrolments had increased to 101. Can you imagine all those students and a teacher cramped into that small building, especially in summer? The school has arranged for a number of activities throughout the year, with the major celebrations taking place between 12 to 17 October. The 150th Celebration Day will be on 17th October 2026, with activities from 1.00 to 7:00 pm. The school will provide further details at a later date. It should also be noted that the Wellers Hill State School celebrates its centenary this year. Further details will be provided as they become available.

The Royal National Association (Ekka) is also celebrating its 150th Anniversary. Your committee is arranging for a speaker from the RNA to speak to us at our June meeting. We are sure that this talk will bring back memories of your visits to the Ekka.

The Coorparoo Bowls Club has been receiving some publicity lately. When our group first heard that the Coorparoo Bowls Club could be sold off for future redevelopment on the site our group decided to try and give the bowls club more protection against re-development. The bowls club is registered on the Council's Heritage Register but this does not provide adequate protection from redevelopment. Our committee resolved to apply to the Queensland Heritage Council to place the complete site, buildings and all bowling greens on the register. After numerous correspondence between the applicant and the Department of Environment and Sciences, the submission has reached the advertising stage where anyone can make a submission either supporting or against the application, Submissions must address the Cultural and Heritage aspects of the site. Applications must be submitted before Easter.

The committee continues to pursue the Education Department about providing accommodation in the Queen Alexandra Home Community Centre. If accommodation could be provided in the home it would relieve the burden of having to carry all our equipment to the home and taking it away again. At present all the group's equipment and records are stored in the home of President Ron.

The committee is also pursuing grants to purchase advertising material such as Pull-up banners, business cards etc to promote the group, especially to younger generations.

Following our stories on notable Coorparoo identities, this newsletter features the man after whom Whites Hill Reserve was named after Robert White. The following information was extracted from the White Hill recreation Santa borough

ROBERT WHITE

The Whites Hill Reserve owes its name to one Robert White who, with his wife Lisa, in 1863 emigrated from England on the SS Indus arriving in Maryborough and then moving on to Red Hill in Brisbane. White was keen to secure a hilltop property but by this time, most of the Brisbane hilltops were occupied. He looked to the south side where already the Hollands had Holland Park and the Galloways occupied Galloway's Hill. As such he was forced to look further from the city and in November 1873 purchased for £5/7/6p, 43 acres surrounding the 120 metres elevation at Camp Hill. The hilltop that would bear his name was the last remaining hill in the South of Brisbane probably because it was too steep for grazing and too poor for farming. Though it lacked water and the soil was rocky, White was impressed by the view it afforded, but more importantly its potential for his ambitious plans...

After purchasing the property that would become Whites Hill, Robert White took a job working as a joiner for Andrew Petrie at Petrie Bight north of the river – a daily round trip of some 14 miles! In his spare time, White built the first family home: a slab hut about halfway up the north slope of the hill facing Coorparoo. By 1879 he had built a slab hut and was growing maize plus a piggery and a milking yard for his cows. He erected a small steam driven sawmill in what is now Eric Sivell Park, now located on Boundary Rd across from Indus Street (named after the ship on which he travelled to Australia).

But White had 'grander plans' for the Hill. By hand, he next built a road to the top of the Hill, where he constructed a much more substantial house that had spectacular views of Ipswich, the city and of Moreton Island. Once he had finished, the dining room had seating for 50 to 60 people and had in it a large stove imported from England.

On the Northern side of the house, with views to the city, White built a two-storey circular tower with a wide verandah, offering panoramic views on three sides. Sightseers began to visit the house and so the White family began providing refreshments.

There was a telescope with which it was said one could "pick out the crews of sailing yachts in the bay". The big drawcard, however, was the Camera Obscura. This was installed in the tower at the northern end of

the building and the camera obscura 'periscope' through the roof. The camera ranged through 360 degrees and projected views in natural colour of the surrounding countryside onto a circular viewing table on the lower level. The projected view could be viewed from a circular mezzanine viewing platform within the tower reached by a narrow spiral stairway. Through this relatively new technology, visitors could marvel at the surroundings while indoors in relative comfort – no air-conditioning though.

By the 1920s Robert White's venture on the Hill had become the most popular excursion destination in Brisbane. It was a great picnic location and hosted school trips and wedding celebrations. Some visitors walked up carrying their baskets, rode or came by horse drawn vehicles. Others would take the Belmont Tramway to City View station (near the present Camp Hill state school) and walk from there.

White's clever combination of entertainment, scenic views and tea rooms had evolved into a most profitable enterprise. At its height, he was able to generate an income of £500 from the visitors, charging children a penny and adults sixpence to visit.

As the 1920s unfolded, changes were afoot. William A. Jolly, Brisbane's 1st Lord Mayor, announced his program to 'obtain for the citizens of Brisbane some of the significant scenic viewpoints' and naturally, Whites Hill was on that list. Robert White declined an offer of £22,000 in 1924, but his death in 1927 gave Brisbane City Council the chance to acquire the land and all its 'improvements and chattels', the following year, for just over a third of the initial offer. The era of Mr. White's 'grand enterprise on the Hill' had ended with his passing.



Whites Hill camera obscura with guests on verandah (Robert & Lisa White) insert



Whites Hill camera obscura and residence behind