

Invites you to hear

Robert Allen

Speak about “The Princess Theatre. Woolloongabba”

The **Princess** is the jewel in the crown of Woolloongabba's emerging entertainment and lifestyle precinct, located in the burgeoning historic district of Clarence Corner.

The Princess Theatre (1889) in Woolloongabba is Brisbane's oldest standing theatre. After experiencing many lives as a community hall, theatre, clothing warehouse, factory and church, it was bought in 2020 and underwent a multi million dollar renovation to become one of our best live art venues.

Robert Allen was engaged by the new owners to research its history. He is a professional historian who lives in New Farm and undertakes Comm histories of people and places. He was recently awarded a State Library of Queensland Fellowship to study the life of TC Byrne next year.



Come along and listen to Robert speak about the Princess Theatre.
This meeting will also be the group's Christmas Celebration with the usual Christmas raffles.

Where? **Kingsbury Room**
Queen Alexandra Home Community Centre
347 Old Cleveland Rd. Coorparoo
When **6 December 2025 at 2.00 pm**

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



NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Councillors Crista Adams (Holland Park Ward) and Fiona Cunningham (Coorparoo Ward) conducted a Senior's Expo at Weller's Hill Bowls Club 16 October 2025. Our group was invited to have a display table at the Expo and we accepted. Committee members, Angela Hawes, Paul Barry and Ron Baker attended on the day. The display of images of Coorparoo Junction pre 1970 drew considerable interest. Many took away a Membership Form so hopefully we may have attracted some new members.

On 1 October 2025, the Brisbane City Council celebrated its centenary of the forming of the City of Greater Brisbane, when twenty Cities, Towns and Shires ceased to exist and amalgamated as one body. To celebrate this occasion, The Royal Historical Society of Queensland (RHSQ) in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council organised

for the showing of display boards of all the former local authorities. Our group had a display of the former Coorparoo Shire. A special thanks you goes out to committee members, Paul Barry and Angela Hawes who attended the celebration and promoted our group to the numerous attendees of the display. Paul is a member of the coordinating group for the Centenary of the City of Greater Brisbane.

In addition to this display, the Royal Historical Society of Queensland and the Brisbane City Council conducted an all-day seminar about the Centenary of the City of Greater Brisbane. This was attended by over 130 delegates who left well informed. Papers from this seminar, in addition to other papers written by members of the various historical groups around Brisbane about their own City, Town or Shire will be included in a book that will be released next year. A paper is being written about the Coorparoo Shire.

After a trial at using the Alexandra Room, upstairs at the Queen Alexandra Home Community Centre, the committee decided to return to the Kingsbury Room for some logistical reasons such as access to the Eris Jolly Library and better kitchen facilities.

At our December the Eris Jolly Library will be open for book borrowings and book returns. There are several members who have books overdue, possibly owing to the fact that the library was closed. Members with overdue books please return them at the next meeting.

At our October meeting our President Ron Baker OAM gave a talk on how the Coorparoo Shire was formed in 1888, and spoke of some of its achievements up until 1925 when it amalgamated with 19 other municipal authorities to form the City of Greater Brisbane. Ron is also writing a paper on the Coorparoo Shire for inclusion in the proposed book on the Centenary of the City of Greater Brisbane which will include stories about all of the twenty local authorities.

Our December speaker is Robert Allen who will be speaking about the Princess Theatre at Woolloongabba. Robert has taken many tour groups through the theatre and has a great knowledge about the history of this magnificent building. Robert is also the President of the New Farm & Districts Historical Society and has given numerous interesting talks to that group.

Following our article on Vida Lahey in our September Newsletter, Ruth Blair has been able to locate this photograph of Vida Lahey and Daphne Mayo on "Wattle Day". The other woman in the photograph is probably, the "Wattle Queen"



Wattle Queen ?, Daphne Mayo and Vida Lahey

A full listing of library holdings is attached to this Newsletter. This may help you you're your selection. Please ensure that you sign the book out and also on return. Several recent acquisitions include

Saving Lieutenant Kennedy: Brett Mason

The Wizards of Oz: Brett Mason

A Camp Hill Story: John Godfrey

St Mary the Virgin Church, Kangaroo Point: Pat Comben

Memories of Annerley: Annerley Stephens History Group Inc.

The Brisbane I used to Know: James Lergessner

Take a ride around Wynnum Manly: Wynnum Manly Historical Society

A Stroll along the Foreshore: Wynnum Manly Historical Society

Sticks in my Mind: Michael Goodram

The Suffragists: John McCulloch

Visions, Dreams & Plans: Mark Baker

Continuing our articles on prominent Coorparoo identities, in this newsletter we feature the Coorparoo State School's first Head Master, John Towell. The following is an extract from Coorparoo State School Centenary Souvenir History 1876-1976.

John Charles Chaseley Towell

John Charles Chaseley Towell, was born at sea on 2 April 1849, when his parents, Robert and Jan (nee Montgomery) were on their way from England to settle in the Morton Bay District.

He was admitted to the teaching service as a Pupil Teacher on 1 June 1863 at the Normal School under its first head teacher, Mr Rendell. After three years at the Normal School, he served another three years as a Pupil Teacher at South Brisbane. He then returned to the Normal School as an Assistant teacher and later, in the same capacity, served at Petrie Terrace, Fortitude Valley, and South Brisbane.

Mr Towell was appointed Head Teacher at Enoggera in 1871, and came to Coorparoo to open the first school of the district in January 1876. On leaving Coorparoo in 1884, he occupied the position of Head Teacher at Ashgrove until May 1887, and Grandchester from July 1887 until his resignation from the service on April 30 1888.

In the last quarter of the 19th century rapid expansion in Queensland resulted in the lack of experienced teachers for the growing number of schools. To overcome this shortage, teachers from Britain, with the necessary qualifications were encouraged to take up service in the colony. Although there was a good response to this scheme, the increasing school population demanded further imports. Two well qualified men who came to Queensland under the recruitment plan were the next two head teachers of Coorparoo State School.

The above information was extracted from:

COORPAROO STATE SCHOOL CENTENARY Souvenir History 1876-1976

Additional information has been extracted from further research.

John Charles Chaseley Towell was born at sea on 2 April 1849, the son of Robert Towell and Jane Montgomery. As the Towell's sailed on the Immigration ship Chaseley, it is probable that John's third name, Chaseley was probably named after the ship on which he was born.

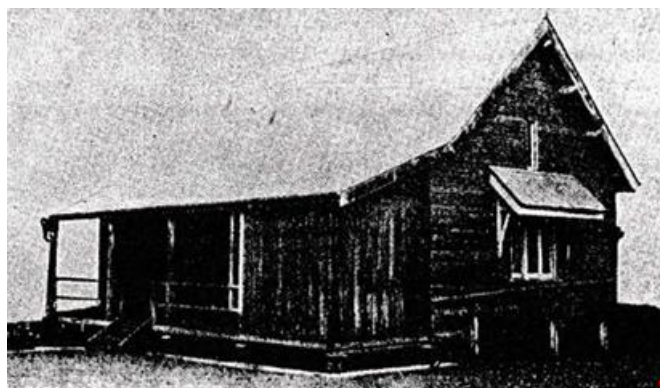
In 1874, John married Margaret Blair Gorton. They had three children. Sadly, all three children died early, none surviving beyond 5 years. Their first child was Margaret Blair Madge Towell, (1882-1887). Margaret was followed by James Wilson Towell, (1886-1891) and Margaret Harrison Towell, (1888-1888).

John had a short life, as he died on 11 March 1889 at the age of 39 years and was buried in the Toowong Cemetery

The Coorparoo School opened on 31 January 1876 with 46 enrolments on the first day, and by 27 November 1876, enrolments had increased to 101 pupils. (Can you imagine 101 pupils and a teacher cramped into the school building, especially on a hot summer day, and no air-conditioning?)

For some time, John Towell bore the entire responsibility of education in the school, with enrolments reaching eighty by April 1876. Relief was obtained by the appointment of one of the older pupils, Harry Sankey, as a Pupil Teacher.

In addition to teaching, John Towell, for several served as Postmaster. The Coorparoo Post Office opened in April 1880, at the Coorparoo State School. The Post Office remained at the school until 1888, when it was relocated to a store at the corner of Old Cleveland Road and Cavendish Road.



1st Coorparoo State School building



John Charles Chasley Towell

**COORPAROO & DISTRICTS HERITAGE GROUP
ERIS JOLLY LIBRARY HOLDINGS**

Alpha Author

Title	Author
Twentieth Century Architecture 1900-1960	Adams K.M.
East Boys Forever (2 copies)	Anderson, Graham
Stephens at War	Annerley Stephens History Group Inc.
Women of Stephens	Annerley Stephens History Group Inc.
	Annerley Stephens History Group Inc.
Stories from Brisbane's Victoria Barracks	Army Museum South Queensland
The History of the Department of Transport	Brisbane City Council
Law to War	Bond, Catherine
Brisbane ablaze	Calthorpe, KD & K. Capell
Brisbane on fire	Calthorpe, KD & K. Capell
A history of the local people: a collection of Short stories by the local people, vol.2	Cannon Hill History Group Inc. Annette Wilson ed.
The Carmelites in Australia; a brief history	Chandler, Paul (O. Carmelite)
Brisbane Tramways The Last Decade (3copies)	Clark, Howard & David Keenan
First in Australia - History of St. Nicholas Cathedral in Brisbane	Cmojmha B. & Smolin V.
Siberian Cossacks & Cadets St. Nicholas Day Brisbane Australia	
St. Mary the Virgin Church Kangaroo Point Faith, Hope, Music 3 copies	Comben Pat
A River with a City Problem	Cook. Dr. Margaret
Absolute fairyland: heady days in Dutton Park	Dawson, Christopher
Reflections of Cannon Hill	Day, Keith
Architecture in Brisbane	De Gruchy, Graham
Slow as frog: a short history of the Brisbane trolley-bus system	Deskins, P. & Hyde, C. Styrrubbe
A history of Kuraby & Eight Mile Plains	Donovan, Ron
Our Liverpool Boys (2 copies)	Dredge Sue & Senior Julie For Liverpool City Council
Striving for Success 1900-1990: A History of Thompson Estate	Eastern Suburbs Athletic Club
Title	Author
Coorparoo Stones Corner respect (3 copies)	Endicott, Michael A OSA

A Roos' Tale	Findlay, Evan
Moreton Bay in the news 1841-1860 - a select subject index	Fisher, Rod & Schiavo, John
After the fire	Friends of Balmoral Cemetery
Into the fire	Friends of Balmoral Cemetery
Australia - The first hundred years: Being A Facsimile of Volumes I & II of The Picturesque Atlas of Australasia - 1888	Garran, Andrew
In the beginning was the ibis and the Whizzer: a historical and social commentary on early Sandgate motorised buses, from 1919 to mid 1950's	Gillingham, John
The Aesthetics of Townscape	Goakes, Robert J.
The paddock & the pen	Godfrey, Marjorie and her family
A Camp Hill Story A South East Brisbane district's 30 year cycle of Tragedy	Godfrey John
Grave tales, stories not laid to rest - vol 1 Brisbane	Goltz, Helen & Adams, Chris
Grave tales, The Great Ocean Road country - Geelong to Port Fairy	Goltz, Helen & Adams, Chris
Chasing our history	Gregory, Justeen & Geraint
Stone of Stones Corner	Grimley, Merle D.
The timetables of history: a horizontal linkage of people and events	Grun, Bernard
Ships on slips 1873-1992	Hacker, Diane & Spinaze, M.P.
A century of care, Royal Children's Hospital Brisbane 1878- 1978	Hall, Peter
The fell tyrant or the suffering convict	Harrison, Jennifer & Steele J.G.
Historic homes of Brisbane	Hogan, Janet
Living history of Brisbane	Hogan, Janet
In memory of Sam Houselander	Houselander, Wendy
Bremer Echo Vol. 34. No. 3 Title	Ipswich Genealogical Society Inc.
Birth, Death and Marriage extracts 1858-1865: Pre 1914 Vol.1	Ipswich Genealogical Society Inc

Citizens of Ipswich 1904	Ipswich Genealogical Society Inc
Ipswich & District, Pioneer Register: Pre 1914 Vol.2	Ipswich Genealogical Society Inc
Under the Lino	Jeffrey, Caylie
	Author
Aboriginal Camp Sites of Greater Brisbane: An Historical Guide (2 copies)	Kerkhof, Ray
Seven Hills of Brisbane	Jolly, Eris
One man's family, a history of the Klumpps 1855-1983	Jordan, Lorraine
Volunteers at Heart; The Queensland Defence Forces 1860-1901	Johnson, D.H.
The Early German Presence in the South-East Brisbane area	Kleinschmidt, Robin OAM
Brisbane in the 1880's	Lawson, Ronald
Right Man, Right Place, Worst Time	Lee,Betty
We who are left to grow old.	Legacy Club of Queensland
I, Thomas Welsby	Lergessner, James
The Brisbane I used to know	Lergessner, James
World City Growth	Lowry, J.H.
Dieu et Devoir the Story of All Hallows School Brisbane 1861-1981	Mahoney, Sr. Jean Marie R.S.M.
Queensland Airfields WWII - 50 Years on	Marks, Roger R.
A Hill in the Valley: Dara and the Holy Name Cathedral	Martin, Fr. Denis
Saving Lieutenant Kennedy	Mason, Brett
Wizards of Oz	Mason, Brett
The Legislators, Women in State and Federal Parliaments	McCulloch, John
The Suffragists 100 Years of Women's Suffrage in Queensland	McCulloch, John
The Overlanders	McEwan, Marcia. Ed.
William Charles Wentworth	Melbourne ACV (Alexander Clifford Vernon), 1888 -1943
Australia's First Century 1788-1888 The Facsimile of Cassell's Picturesque Australasia	Morris, E.E. Ed

Original Illustrations	
The Productive Years of the Creek of Gold	Murphy, Peter
Keep it for the Future	National Archives of Australia
The National Library magazine. June 2009, Sept 2009, Dec. 2009, March 2010, Dec. 2012, March 2013	National Library of Australia
Sesserae - The Legend of the Willy Wagtail Bird	Nona, Dennis
Beauesert Centenary 1874-1974	Nutty, Kathleen
A History of Wellers Hill, Tarragindi & Ekibin	O'Brien, Juliet & Dean, George
Fortitude: Dr. Lang's Vision of Queensland and the United Evangelical Church	Parker, David & Edmonds, Angus
In the Capacity of a Surgeon	Pearn, John
Pioneer Medicine in Australia	Pearn, John
Tom Petrie's Reminiscences of Early Queensland	Petrie, Constance Campbell
From Newstead to Norman Park	Pick, Yvonne
The Brisbane Line	Powell, Judith P.
Time & Place, issue 33 2018	Queensland Heritage Council
Grand Old Lady of Lace (2copies)	Rechner, Judy Gale
Where have all the creeks gone? Camp Hill heritage drive tour (3 copies)	Rechner, Judy Gale
The Old Coorparoo Shire, a heritage drive tour (2copies)	Rechner, Judy Gale; Brisbane History Group 1991
Lennie the Legend: Solo to Sydney by pony	Reeder, Stephanie Owen
Australia Remembers: Women, their role in World War II 1945-1995	Rees, Betty
Flinders in Moreton Bay: A Bicentennial Review 1799-1999	Royal Historical Society of Queensland
Lost Brisbane and Surrounding Areas 1860-1960	Royal Historical Society of Queensland
Lost Brisbane 2	Royal Historical Society of Queensland
Queensland's Sunshine Coast 1880's-1890's; Then & Now The past and present in pictures	Robinson, Bill

Brisbane's Albert Hall	Roennfeldt, Peter
Madame Mallalieu	Roennfeldt, Peter
Stones Corner Library	Ryan, Patricia L.
Verona, The Bell Family & other people	Ryan, Patricia L.
Word Press for Dummies	Sabin-Wilson, Lisa
Queensland Centenary: The First 100 Years 1859-1959	Smout, Arthur Henry (ed)
The Great Brisbane Flood	Spinaz, Murray & Hacker Diana, Diana; Johnson, Paul
Growing up in Archerfield. The life and achievements of Ray Spring	Spring, Ray
The Brisbane River	Steele J.G.
Cannon Hill School of Arts 1923-1988	Veltmeyer, Rene, Neilsen, Dwayne & Cochrane, Tony
Catholic Brisbane: A Profile of the Archdiocese of Brisbane 1859-1989	Tremble, Carmel
Brisbane Welsh: A history of the St. David Welsh Society of Brisbane 1918-2008	Wallis, Noel W
General MacArthur in Queensland	Wallis, Noel W
Mowbraytown: The times of Thomas Mowbray and his successors	Wallis, Noel W
Serving time with the Department of Public Works Ipswich Road Workshop 1949-1957	Wallis, Noel W
Suffer as a Suffragette	Wallis, Noel W
The Doctor of Woogaroo Station	Wallis, Noel W
The Story of a Naval Nasho who became skipper of the motor vessel Krait	Wallis, Noel W
A Story of Things	Wallis, Noel W
My Childhood Memories	Wallis, Val
My Childhood Memories of Living in the Suburb of Coorparoo (2 Copies)	Wallis, Val (Nee Arcus)
Alien Son	Waten, Judah
Voyage of the "Fortitude" from England to Brisbane, Queensland 1848-1849	Welsby, Diary of Samuel Pearson Welsby

A Street Walker's Guide to West End No.1: A neighbourhood walk-through the streets of West End	West End History Group
A Street Walkers Guide to West End No.2 Beyond the Boundary: Aboriginal, Greek and activist history.	West End History Group
A Street Walker's Guide to West End No.3: Walking with Water Rats	West End History Group
Life by the River in the 19th Century	Wise, Vic
Petrie-Terrace Brisbane 1858-1988	Woolcock Steve & Fisher Rod
A Stroll along the Foreshore	Wynnum Manly Historical Society
Take a Ride around Wynnum, Manly and Lota	Wynnum Manly Historical Society

22 October 2025