

# *St. George Historical Society Inc. Bulletin*

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

AUGUST - DECEMBER 2009 EDITION

## *Merry Xmas*



## *Happy New Year*

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**Meetings are held 2:00 PM the third Saturday of the month (except January) in the Meeting Room 1st Floor, Rockdale Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale. Members, please bring a plate. Visitors are welcome.**

## EVENTS AGENDA

Dec 5<sup>th</sup> Christmas Gathering 3:00PM

This year, for a change, we will be having this event at Sizzlers Restaurant, 1st Floor, 124 Princes Highway, and Corner Princes Highway & Jubilee Avenue Kogarah.

We shall all meet in front of the restaurant at 3pm. Hope to see you all there.

For further enquiries please contact Gloria Henke (02) 9587 – 8307



## SKERRICKS



### THE RON RATHBONE LITERARY AWARD

This event was held on Saturday October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 10:30 am at Rockdale City Council in Bryant Street Rockdale. It was well attended.

The winner of the 2009 Ron Rathbone Local History Prize was Dan McAloon for his work on Pemberton's Baths: The Ramsgate Baths, 1924-1970, a short history.

The winner of the 2009 Ron Rathbone Local History Prize "Memories of Rockdale" category was Philip Gregory for his memoir of his involvement with the Rockdale Opera Company: A view from the stalls.

It was extremely disappointing that there was no provision made for a Children's 'Award at this event.



Many thanks Also to Mr Phil Lang for an Interesting talk about Clocks at our November 2009 Meeting

## **THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Dear fellow members,**

**It has been a number of years since I was last in the Presidential role and I note the privileges of the position remain unaltered such as; Job Title, Sitting at the Head of the Table, benevolently encouraging members to speak-up or tone-down at our monthly meetings to name but a few.**

**In all seriousness, I look forward to a productive year in which our society can engage more fully with the wider population in the St. George Municipality and beyond. At this point may I express my thanks to my predecessor Bernard Sharah for both his chairing of the monthly meetings and his involvement in day-to-day issues of interest to people concerned with heritage matters. The Society is also appreciative of the work Bernard has done in organising the roster and often manning Lydham during Sunday openings and last but not least, running local History walks. Our most recent walk from *Dappeto* to *Lydham* was quite well attended and received excellent press in the St. George and Sutherland newspaper.**

**Other members I would particularly like to thank include Jeff and Joan Rankin and Gloria, Heinz and Richard Henke for their unstinting support and organisation of social activities at Lydham; everything from school excursions to seniors' outings and birthdays to weddings. Well done and many thanks for the fund raising and public relations opportunities your dedication to the Society has generated. The Henke family needs especial mention as they tackle the challenging and constant role of being Bulletin Editors. Contributions to the Bulletin are always welcome!**

**Laurice Bondfield has assumed the role of Secretary with gusto and panache. I thank her for the thoughtfulness she brings to her role so that members who are known to be ill are written to or telephoned as a means of keeping in contact.**

**A hearty thank you is extended on behalf of the members to Alan Stahl as the World's greatest Afternoon Tea Officer. Members and visitors in attendance at our monthly meetings are always served with warmth and enthusiasm.**

**I extend my appreciation to all members who bring refreshments to share at the meetings, who volunteer to man Lydham on Sundays or special open days. Finally, to those of you who are unable to attend meetings due to age, illness or distance, thank you for your goodwill in simply renewing your membership as this provides our Society with valuable funds to keep afloat and active in the community.**

**On behalf of your fellow Society members, I wish you and your families a safe, happy and blessed Christmas and good health and opportunities in 2010.**

**Kind regards,**

**Wesley Fairhall**

**President – St. George Historical Society Inc.**



**Photo of Bernard Sarah and Wesley Fairhall and the others who participated in the Dapetto to Lydham History Walk on Christina Stead Day July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

### **THE EDITORS REPORT**

**We the Editors of the Journal would like to extend our best wishes to all members and their families over the Holiday Season.**

**This year has been an interesting one, and many thanks must be given to our members who have volunteered their time on Sundays at Lydham Hall and also to attend and assist in other events.**

**Thanks must also go to the Staff at Rockdale City Council's Depot, who over the year, have cared for the gardens and the cleaning of Lydham Hall.**

**Renovations have also been done to Lydham Hall including:**

- **Repairs to Drawing Room and Hallway ceilings**
- **Replacement of Guttering**
- **Replaced window frame in upstairs museum and Blue Room**





## **Beverley Margaret Scott**

Beverley's grandparents settled in the district over 100 years ago, and her father and grandfather were both heavily involved in community activities, so it is no surprise that she has followed in their footsteps. Her grandfather (Alfred Powell) was a Councillor with Rockdale Council and her father (Clive Felton) was an electoral returning officer and a long-serving Treasurer of the Rockdale Bowling Club. Beverley's first venture was helping her grandmother to hand out how-to-vote pamphlets at five years of age.

Beverley was born in Wollongong and spent some of her younger years in the country because of her father's position in the Public Service, however the majority of her young life was spent in Kinsel Grove, Bexley. Amongst other schools, she attended Bexley Primary School and St George Girls High School, graduating as Dux of the school in mathematics. She commenced a Science course at Sydney University but soon transferred to her lifetime passion of Pharmacy. As often happens to young women, she married an (almost) local young man and they set up home in Godwin Street, Bexley, where they still live.

Shortly after her marriage, Beverley established Scott's Pharmacy when the late Bobby Wilson renovated his dental surgery and built a shop fronting Forest Road. She took the first lease, established a chemist shop from scratch and has operated the business ever since.

When she started in business Bexley was a very pleasant and village-like community of shops. The growth of large shopping complexes and increases in heavy traffic from developments such as Port Botany has had a major impact on small shopping strips like Bexley. Recognising that an active Chamber of Commerce is the best vehicle for a small business community to collectively have their opinions heard, it did not take long for Beverley to become an active member.

In time she became a Vice President, a position she held for ten years, and was the President for the past twenty years.

The list of activities and achievements by the Bexley Chamber of Commerce during this time is quite impressive.

- Numerous Spring Fairs, usually associated with a donation to a local organisation and in one instance a large donation to the Fred Hollows Foundation.
- Creation of the Oriental Street Plaza
- Christmas home decoration contests
- Replacement of the toilet block in the Stoney Creek Road car park
- Improvements to the shopping strip, namely:
  - ~ Signalised central pedestrian crossing
  - ~ Increase in on-street parking in Forest Road
  - ~ Under awning lights
  - ~ Improved lighting in car parks
  - ~ Improvements to Forest/Bexley/Harrow Rd intersection in conjunction with an additional pedestrian crossing
  - ~ Street furniture and plantings
- Support for the building of the M5 and probably the most significant accomplishment of all
- The establishment of the Bexley Community Bank

On behalf of the chamber Beverley served on the Bexley Advisory Committee of Rockdale Council, and fostered a close working relationship with Rockdale councillors and parliamentary representatives. She has been recognised for her community achievements by Bexley Rotary with the granting of their Pride of Workmanship Award. In 2008 she received a Mayoral Gold award for outstanding service to the community, and was inducted into the Bexley Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame.

But perhaps Beverley's greatest achievement has been to keep the Bexley Chamber of Commerce alive and active, sometimes under some very difficult circumstances. While other Chambers of Commerce has come and gone, Beverley has managed to hold the Bexley Chamber of Commerce together and deal with the different challenges that have faced the business community over the years.

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With such a busy business life, Beverley also found time to raise three boys, watch over her 13 grandchildren, and become very active in other community affairs.

She was heavily involved with the Bexley Parents and Citizens Association, attending all their meetings and even spending her precious free time working in the school canteen, for which she was awarded a Life Membership.

And it continued when her sons went to Sydney Technical High School. Once again she attended all the P & C meetings and always made time from her business commitments to help in the canteen and other fund-raising activities.

She encouraged and supported her sons in their sporting activities, firstly in soccer and then athletics, being a committee member for many years with the St George Athletics Club and the first woman to be granted their Merit Award. She was one of the foundation members of the St George Little Athletics Centre and served on the committee for many years, again earning a Life Membership award. She was also active at state level, being a State Selector and Team Manager.

Beverley was also a foundation member of the Zonta Club of Botany Bay, a member of Zonta International which is "a worldwide service organisation of executives in business and the professions working together to improve the legal, political, economic, educational, health and professional status of women."

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Beverley Scott

A very active woman of great stamina and fortitude.

We salute you.

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#### Postscript

Evidence of the longevity of the Bexley Chamber of Commerce can be found in the St George Historical Society Journal of February 1972 (p144) where it is recorded that the Bexley Chamber of Commerce erected "white way" lighting in the shopping strip at its own expense about 1934.<sup>(1)</sup> I believe this refers to light globes inside a white spherical cover suspended beneath the shop awnings, similar to the lights in Newtown. Bexley Council is recorded as having congratulated the Chamber of Commerce on its initiative.

Source: Written Mr Fred Scott - Beverly Scott's Husband

1 Reference: Minutes of the Council of the Municipality of Bexley 1907 - 1948



**Dedicated:** Beverley Scott of Scott's Pharmacy, which is celebrating its 50 years' service during the Bexley Village Spring Fair on Saturday.

Picture: Lisa McMahon

# Pharmacist recalls 50 years of changes

By Marianna Papadakis

SCOTT'S Pharmacy in Bexley will celebrate its 50th anniversary during Bexley Village Spring Fair this Saturday.

Beverley Scott, 75, was a young chemist graduate who had gained experience working at three other pharmacies before she opened her own at Bexley, with husband Fred, now 73.

Mrs Scott said it was a big step for a woman in a then male-dominated profession and the support of the Bexley community, where she grew up, had helped her build a successful service.

The first thing she did when she opened was to join the Bexley Chamber of Commerce. She served as its

## FUN OF THE FAIR

**Bexley Village Spring Fair is on this Saturday from 9am-3pm.**

**Details: 0425 811 430**

president for 20 years and vice-president for 10 years.

She said Bexley Village was a viable shopping centre in the 1960s and included tailors and dress shops with clothing designed by people from the area, shoe import stores, a cake shop, hardware store and a greengrocer.

"It was self-sufficient; this was before Hurstville Westfield," she said.

Mrs Scott said the changes in pharmacy during the past

50 years were a "step into modernity".

"I used to mix powders up in a mortar for pills," she said. "I'd also make tonics and ointments for humans and animals because the vets sometimes didn't have access to things."

She said it was always best to use tact when a pharmacist spotted a gentleman or lady looking around nervously.

"We made contraceptive pills; condoms were only available in pharmacies back then and creams were also commonly used," she said.

"It was a very taboo thing and we were always discreet. You knew what they needed and how to help them. That's what counts most."





**Community hero:** Beverley Scotts has served Bexley for 50 years.

**Picture:** Lisa McMahon

## Community service award

A BEXLEY pharmacist who has dedicated 50 years of her life to the community has received an award from the NSW state opposition.

St George-Illawarra based Liberal MLC John Ajaka presented Beverley Scott of Scotts Pharmacy with a community hero award signed by NSW Opposition Leader Barry O'Farrell.

Mr Ajaka said Mrs Scott was an active volunteer who took a "pioneering role in small business in the area".

Mrs Scott has owned Scott's Pharmacy for 50 years and was Bexley Chamber of Commerce president and vice-president for 30 years.

She volunteered for decades with NSW Little Athletics Association, St George Little Athletics Club, Bexley Public School Mothers' Club and Parents and Citizens Association.

She is a founding member of Botany Bay Zonta Club and helped establish Bexley Community Bank.





**Community contribution:** Beverley and Fred Scott with Cherie Burton and Nathan Rees.

# Pioneer chemist honoured

By **Murray Trembath**

PHARMACIST Beverley Scott has been honoured for 50 years of service to the Bexley community.

Premier Nathan Rees presented Mrs Scott with a Community Service Award in his office at State Parliament House.

After a lunch hosted by Kogarah MP Cherie Burton, Mrs Scott and her husband Fred attended Question Time where Speaker Richard Torbay welcomed them and also congratulated her on her achievement.

Ms Burton said Mrs Scott had earned a wonderful reputation as a very caring pharmacist.

The award gives recognition to people in NSW who have helped improve the quality of life of

members of their community beyond that expected in their usual occupation.

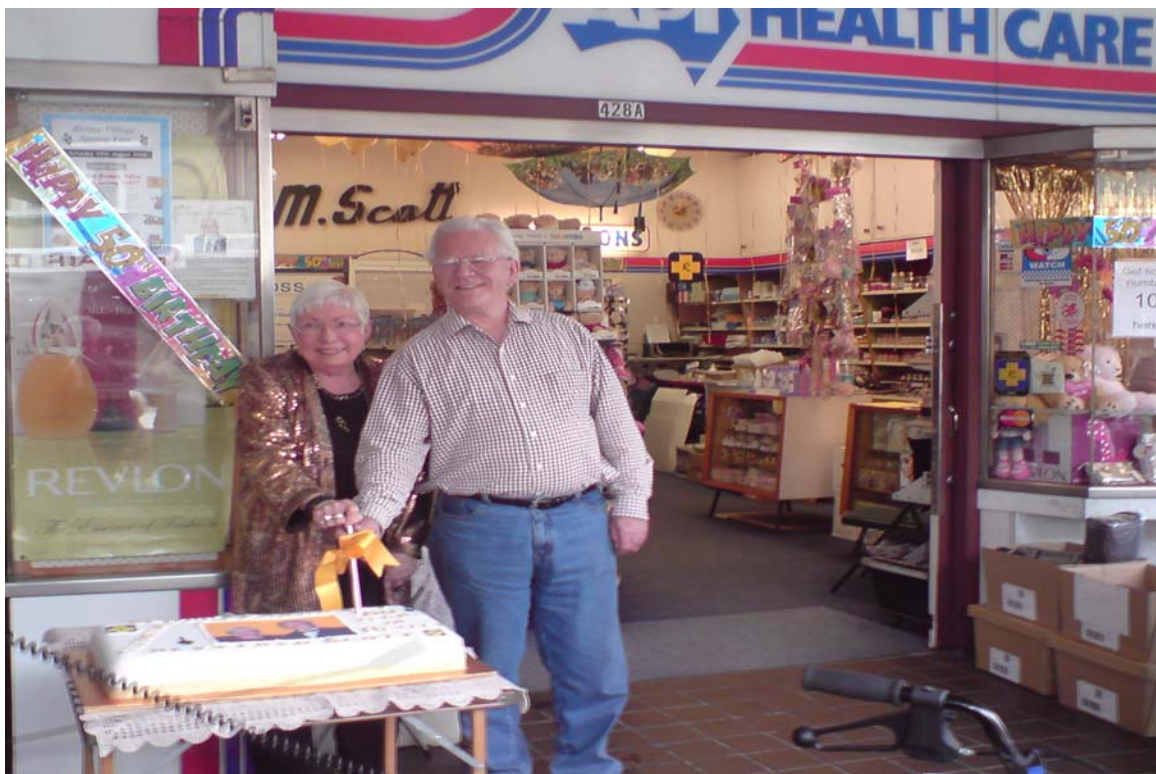
Scott's Pharmacy celebrated its 50th anniversary during the Bexley Village Spring Fair last August.

Mrs Scott, 75, told the *Leader* at the time she was a young graduate, with experience working in three other pharmacies, when she and her husband started the business in the area in which she had grown up.

It had been a big step for a woman in what was at that time a male-dominated profession, but with the support of the Bexley community, it had proved successful.

Mrs Scott supported the Bexley Chamber of Commerce, and served as president for 20 years and vice-president for 10 years.

## Photos of Cake for the 50th Birthday of Scott's Pharmacy



Taken by Richard Henke at the Bexley Village Fair.  
Saturday, August 29 2009



# Christmas Fruitcake: Fruit of the Spirit

*Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind.  
To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy,  
is to have the real spirit of Christmas."*

*Calvin Coolidge*

*I never cared for the taste of fruitcake, but I've been saving one for years.*

*It's the last of those I used to get every Christmas from Elizabeth, my friend Paul's mom. She always cooked up what seemed like hundreds for family and friends, wrapping them in plastic, and tying them with red and green ribbons.*

*Fruitcakes are known to take on lives of their own, passing from one person to the next, sometimes lingering long enough to carbon-date. Cut one open, if you dare, and divine its age like you'd count the rings of some ancient tree.*

*Though we pretended to like them, Elizabeth never pressed us for reports on their flavour, probably sensing that many simply became souvenirs—if not albatrosses—not that it seemed to matter. Still, everybody got one, delivered with a proud smile and wrapped in love, a present from this woman who used her recipes to nourish our souls as much as our bodies.*

*The tradition was passed down by Elizabeth's mom, who had learned it from her own aunt. With nobody sure how many generations back it goes, I wouldn't be surprised to learn an early version of the recipe, scripted on papyrus and stored in an urn, has been unearthed during some distant archaeological dig.*

*Paul's father lost his hearing some years back, and got to where he couldn't see very well. Then Elizabeth's diabetes eventually put her in a wheelchair and robbed her of sight, so Paul moved back home that fall to help care for them.*

*As Christmas approached, Elizabeth kept mentioning how much she wished she could hand out those fruitcakes again. Saddened by having to break the tradition, she reminisced about helping Grandma when she was a little girl. Tears welled in her eyes as she talked about her fruitcakes, admitting that eating them isn't what matters, that it's cooking up some love and sharing it with people who mean the most to her.*

*During her nap that afternoon, Paul searched through two boxes stuffed with hundreds of recipes filed in no particular order. He finally found it, flour-crusting, yellow with age, and difficult to read. He went out and bought the ingredients, then set about mixing, determined to make her a batch to give away. Paul's not known for his culinary finesse, and most family recipes require a dollop of magic beyond what's actually written down, so he finally had to wake her, confessing his plan and asking her to help.*

*They spent the rest of the afternoon making fruitcakes. She took charge, while Paul served as her eyes and hands. They didn't need that old recipe card; Elizabeth knew this one by heart.*



*She glowed with pride as she handed them out, accepting kisses and thanks, hugging back with newfound strength despite her frail condition. She'd probably felt that way every year, but this marked the first time we really noticed.*

*Several days after Christmas, Elizabeth required hospitalization, but there was little that could be done, and she took a turn for the worse. In a stark, antiseptic room far from the familiar aromas of her kitchen, Paul lost his mother, and we all lost a friend.*

*Gathered at the house after the funeral, Paul and his siblings carefully copied her fruitcake recipe, all vowing to carry on the custom. Several of them did, too, for a couple of years. Busy with their own lives and still discovering their own unique ways to celebrate, they gradually let the fruitcake tradition slip away.*

*Some things will never leave us, though. Elizabeth's children, like all of us she touched, will always carry on with a more important tradition: living the way she taught. Devotion to our families, integrity, loyalty, and love for each other... These are what I see being passed on to the next generation. These are truly Elizabeth's recipe for life.*

*I still have that fruitcake somewhere, the one she and my friend made together. When I look at it, I can see her face lighting up as she presented it to me.*

*It is, after all, just a fruitcake. I still don't care for the taste. And I can't say how long I'll manage to hang on to this odd thing, a souvenir wrapped in plastic and tied with red and green ribbons...*

*A family recipe, the reminder of those last precious moments my friend spent with his mom, a Christmas gift from the heart.*

*Author Unknown*

