



Special points of interest:

- NAIDOC History
- History of National Reconciliation Week
- Vale Essie Doris Stokes

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Historical Bayswater

NAIDOC History

NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July (4-11) to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC is celebrated not only in Indigenous communities, but by Australians from all walks of life. The week is a great opportunity to participate in a range of activities and to support your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. Why not research the Wadjuk Noongar history of Bayswater? More information can be found on www.bayswater.wa.gov.au/city-and-council/history-and-heritage/local-history



NAIDOC originally stood for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. This committee was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself.

HISTORY

1920 – 1930

Before the 1920s, Aboriginal rights groups boycotted Australia Day (26 January) in protest against the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians. By the 1920s, they were increasingly aware that the broader Australian public were largely ignorant of the boycotts. If the movement were to make progress, it would need to be active.

Several organisations emerged to fill this role, particularly the Australian Aborigines Progres-

sive Association (AAPA) in 1924 and the Australian Aborigines League (AAL) in 1932. Their efforts were largely overlooked, and due to police harassment, the AAPA abandoned their work in 1927.

In 1935, William Cooper, founder of the AAL, drafted a petition to send to King George V, asking for special Aboriginal electorates in Federal Parliament. The Australian Government believed that the petition fell outside its constitutional responsibilities.

1938

On Australia Day, 1938, protestors marched through the streets of Sydney, followed by a congress attended by over a thousand people. One of the first major civil rights gatherings in the world, it was known as the Day of Mourning. Following the congress, a deputation led by William Cooper presented Prime Minister Joseph Lyons with a proposed national policy for Aboriginal people. This was again rejected because the Government did not hold constitutional powers in relation to Aboriginal people.

After the Day of Mourning, there was a growing feeling that it should be a regular event. In 1939 William Cooper wrote to the National Missionary Council of Australia to seek their assistance in supporting and promoting an annual event.

1940 – 1955

From 1940 until 1955, the Day of Mourning was held annually on the Sunday before Australia Day and was known as Aborigines Day. In 1955 Aborigines Day was shifted to the first Sunday in July after it was decided the day should become not simply a protest day but also a celebration of Aboriginal culture.

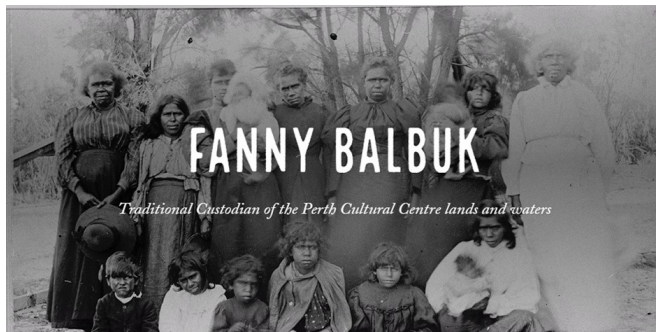
1956 – 1990

Major Aboriginal organisations, state and federal governments, and a number of church

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Notice: The Bayswater Historical Society advises that Issue 41 of *Historical Bayswater* contain images of long-deceased persons that may cause distress to our local Indigenous community, residents and members.

groups all supported the formation of the National Aborigines Day Observance Committee (NADOC). At the same time, the second Sunday in July became a day of remembrance for Aboriginal people and their heritage.



In 1972, the Department of Aboriginal Affairs was formed, as a major outcome of the 1967 referendum.

In 1974, the NADOC committee was composed entirely of Aboriginal members for the first time. The following year, it was decided that the event should cover a week, from the first to second Sunday in July.

In 1984, NADOC asked that National Aborigines Day be made a national public holiday, to help celebrate and

recognise the rich cultural history that makes Australia unique. While this has not happened, other groups have echoed the call.

1991 – Present

With a growing awareness of the distinct cultural histories of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, NADOC was expanded to recognise Torres Strait Islander people and culture. The committee then became known as the National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC). This new name has become the title for the whole week, not just the day. Each year, a theme is chosen to reflect the important issues and events for NAIDOC Week.

During the mid-1990s, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) took over the management of NAIDOC until ATSIC was disbanded on 15 April 2004.

The National NAIDOC Committee has made key decisions on national celebrations each year and has representatives from most Australian states and territories.

www.naidoc.org.au/about/history

History of National Reconciliation Week

National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is marked every year from 27 May – 3 June. It is an opportunity for Australians to learn and reflect upon our shared histories, culture and achievements and our part to play in achieving reconciliation in Australia.

The dates for NRW also commemorate key milestones in reconciliation in Australia, the successful 1967 referendum (27 May) and the 1992 High Court Mabo decision (3 June). National Reconciliation Week started as the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation in 1993 (the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples) and was supported by Australia's major faith communities. In 1996, the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation launched Australia's first NRW. In 2000, Reconciliation Australia was established to continue to provide national leadership on reconciliation. In the same year, approximately 300,000 people walked across Sydney Harbour Bridge as part of NRW, to show their support for reconciliation. Today, NRW is celebrated by businesses, schools and early learning services, organisations, and individuals Australia wide.

NRW 2021 theme

The theme for NRW 2021 is *More than a word. Reconciliation takes action*, which urges the reconciliation movement towards braver and more impactful action.

We are seeing more people speaking up, speaking the truth, asking the hard questions, seeing the hard facts,

and informing themselves about issues affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The 2021 theme calls on others to follow their lead by reflecting on their own contributions and striving to do more.

Moving Forward

For reconciliation to be effective, it must involve truth-telling, and must live in the hearts, minds and actions of all Australians. We can then all be actively creating a nation strengthened by respectful relationships between the wider Australian community, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



The artwork by Jessica Johnson, a descendent of the Warumungu/Wombaya people north of Tennant Creek, reflects our connection and mutual obligation to one another, community and country. Through commonality and difference, we can come together and achieve real change.

Visit the NRW website on www.reconciliation.org.au

Vale Essie Doris Stokes 1919-2021

It is with sadness that we say farewell to our Life Member Essie Stokes. At 102 years old, she was a real elder and inspiration to our Society. Essie was a remarkable Bayswater resident who was a role model and selfless volunteer community member. Her legacy will live on for decades to come and Bayswater a richer community as a result of a life lived for her family and neighbours. Her son Kim Stokes delivered an outstanding and fitting eulogy at her funeral service at her local Murray Street church on Friday, 14 May 2021. An edited version of Kim's eulogy follows:

102 golden years... a remarkable journey! I know Mum would be humbled at this gathering and the outpouring of love for her.

Essie Doris was born a McGilvray to parents Albert and Daisy at Cottesloe on 8 April 1919 and moved with them at age five years along with elder sister Edna to Bayswater; Whatley Crescent at first and then on to the home- stead, newly built by Albert and Daisy at 4 Short Street. It was to be her home for life - the next 94 years. It was quite the residence and now heritage listed with the City of Bayswater. Its history is described by them as follows:

"The house of Albert McGilvray, a prominent local identity who was a new resident in 1921. As an Industrialist, he quickly became a well-known member of the Bayswater community and of the Roads Board. He was a long-standing Chairman of the Board and founder of the Parents and Citizens Association. As far as can be ascer- tained from the planning application, this was one of the

most significant houses built in the district during the 1920s." Essie became so much a part of that house and that house became a part of Essie.

Geraldton was where a young Essie McGilvray met a young and excitable Tom Stokes. She had been visiting relatives and found herself at a dance at the salubrious



Geraldton Yacht Club. After meeting him that night she went home to her Aunt May's and told her that a certain Tom Stokes had asked her out – what did she think? Aunt May knew of young Tom at the time and said yes, you'll be OK, he's harmless! Their courtship resulted in a wartime marriage in June 1943. It was to be a partnership for the ages, lasting almost 62 years.

Mum was Ginger Rogers to Dad's Fred Astaire. Dad, ever the entrepreneur, dabbling in assorted projects; Mum very much in support but when needed ready to



set Dad straight and give "her Tom" sound words of advice. As a family, we had a wonderful upbringing at Short Street. So much centred around Mum's role; as mother, nurturer, and community contributor. Mum was highly regarded in

the neighbourhood, being like a mother to all the kids.

In time, family marriages took place and "grandies" started to arrive. They soon numbered ten; then great grandchildren - nine thus far. And there's an Essie amongst them ... who would have thought! How lovely. There's a Tom amongst them too. Tom and Essie live on!



The question most posed in our minds of Essie: "how do you reach the grand age of 102 years still living at home?" We'd all like to know the secret. A heart of gold, an ever-generous spirit and a loving and caring nature. The family genes have played their part, with Mum's sister Edna attaining the age of 101 years and their mother Daisy McGilvray making it to 98 years. Being able to remain at Short Street has no doubt contributed to her longevity. (My sister) Helen was determined that Mum would see out her time living at home.

Mum has provided a wonderful legacy for the family and I believe for all of us. She has set a great example and a wonderful set of values to live by. We've been given the opportunity to live these values and pass them on to our children.

But now we say goodbye. Mum ... Nan ... your song is ended but your melody lingers on. You go to a higher place; God is now your comfort. Farewell you'll remain in our hearts forever.

By Kim Stokes

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Photography by C Middleton

The Bayswater Historical Society Inc. was formed in 1991. It is a non-profit organisation which aims to preserve the history of Bayswater district; protect the records and objects relating to the area; promote public interest in and support for the preservation of historic records, buildings and sites.

Halliday House is Bayswater's historic home and is used as the Society's base and museum. COVID-19 safety measures and mandatory contact registration using the SafeWA app must be adhered to by all visitors during the Open House.

Historical Bayswater is the society's newsletter and welcomes contributions such as stories and photographs relating to the history of Bayswater to be included in future issues. Please forward all enquiries addressed to the Secretary.

Acknowledgements: We wish to thank to the Hon. Lisa Baker MLA, Member for Maylands for printing this newsletter. We also would like to thank our contributors for their items included in this issue.

Website www.bayswaterhistoricalsociety.org.au

Connect with us on Facebook and Instagram @bayswaterhistoricalsociety



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What's Happening at the BHS?

Our Open House in April was cancelled due to the WA government's snap lockdown. For our May open house, the first of our Hidden Histories of Bayswater series was well received when our secretary Glen Cookson presented with a, well, hidden history of Bayswater, about the International Latitude Station. We managed to hold an



open house in June, with our committee members and volunteers scrambling to have face-masks at the ready due to new restrictions being announced literally a few minutes before our opening time. Our lecture series on the day focused on researching your piece of Baysie history, a

guide on finding out the history of your house, presented by Prue Griffin, historian and heritage consultant, local Baysie resident and BHS member.

Exciting times ahead at the BHS: our Strategic Plan 2021-2024 will be released at our AGM, the date of which will be announced in the coming weeks. We managed to acquire some much-needed funding to purchase new items for Halliday House, one of which a beautiful teaset and a carefully curated collection of beautiful China teacups. From now, our members and visitors to Halliday House during our members mornings and open house will be able to partake in tea using these items.

Our next open house will be on Sunday, 25 July 2021. Come along and attend our July lecture series *History of the Ribbons Grants*; stay for some afternoon tea and a catch up with fellow members and guests.

Visit our website www.bayswaterhistoricalsociety.org.au for our schedule of events in 2021.