# The Oaks Historical Society Inc

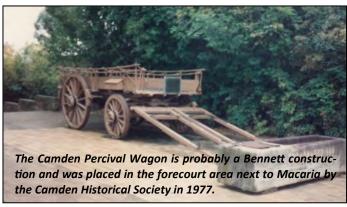
Est. May 1979

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Newsletter **OCTOBER 2017** 

# The Percival Wagon



#### THE CAMDEN HISTORY NOTES—12 JULY 2012

(Thank you Camden Historical Society)

One of the larger items in the collection of the Camden museum is an item that few of the current members are aware of or would know the history. It is the Percival wagon that was located next to *Macaria* for a number of decades, the former headquarters of Camden Council. In 2012 a group of schoolboys got the opportunity to pull it to bits and put it back together again, and now they have finished with it and the wagon is coming home.

The Percival wagon is likely to have been built at the Bennetts Wagon Works at St Marys which started in 1858 and eventually closed down in 1958. The Western Plains Cultural Centre at Dubbo states: Bennett coach and Wagon works were operated by brothers James and George T Bennett. Their tabletop wagons became famous throughout Australia; they were capable of carrying from 10-20 tonnes, and were regarded as the best heavy transport wagons to be bought. They were used in both rural and urban areas.

The Bennett wagon works at St Marys employed around 25 men at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with its wagons selling for between £150 to £250. The wagons were usually painted green and red, or red and blue and some had nick names, like 'The Maxina' (in South Creek Park now), 'King of the ampton Dale which was part of William Broughton 1000 Road', and 'The Pioneer'.

The Penrith City Regional Library states the Bennett wagons were used by teamsters to haul silver from the Burragorang



George T Bennett's Wagon Works, St Marys. The photo, taken in 1910, shows George Bennett's wheelwright and blacksmith's workshop in Queen St, St Marys which was built in about 1875. George's brother James joined him in the business but after a disagreement, James built his own workshop closer to the highway. George closed his business in 1920. (Penrith City Library)

Valley. In 1904 there were 15 teams of horses and bullocks plying the road between Yerranderie and Camden railhead from the silver field which lasted from around 1900 to 1925. The silver ore was originally forwarded to Germany for smelting, and after the First World War it went to Port Pirie in South Australia and then Newcastle. The story of the teamsters who worked out of Burragorang Valley is celebrated in a monument outside Macaria in John St, which was installed in 1977 by the Camden Historical Society.

The historical society's wagon was one of the last in the Macarthur area. It was around 70 years old when the society purchased it from Sydney Percival of Appin in 1977 using a public fundraising appeal organised by society president Owen Blattman and Dick Nixon for \$200. Once the society secured the funds and purchased the wagon it was then restored by retired Camden carpenter Ern Howlett and painted red and blue.

The original wagon owner of the society's wagon was Sydney's father Norm Percival who died in 1942 with the wagon passing to his son. Norm lived on the property called Northacre grant of Lachlan Vale. John Percival purchased Northampton Dale when Broughton's grant was subdivided 1856 and named it after his home in England. Continued .....

Join us on Sunday, 29th October for National Grandparents Day

President: Trish Hill 0432 689034 ■ Editor: Jenny Wood ■ Museum Bookings: Trish Hill or Sue 0414 703204



## **President's Report**

#### Trish Hill

This past month has been a busy one with History Week Glass slide/negative workshop at the Museum is on Wednesevents along with a few bus groups which has pleased our day, 25th October and for volunteers attending we will be Treasurer.

Historical Society to have the Camden Historical Society our Christmas Party so remember to include it on your calen-Wagon moved from Macarthur Anglican School to the dar. 'Come as You Are', is the theme -so come along in a Wollondilly Heritage Centre. The Oaks Historical Society will party mood. cal Society offered their support with the process and for loved mum Pat and our museum volunteer that we are grateful, thank you CHS. We had hoped to have the wagon moved this week but as I compile this report it looks unlikely that will happen before we go to print.

Plans are gearing up for our inaugural Grandparents Day on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> October.

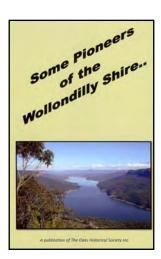
We will be running some of the activities that are done with the school groups education program, eg butter making, apple peeling, bean slicing etc. Bev has a roster for volunteers to oversee the activities from 10am-12.30pm. BBQ sausage on rolls and drinks will be available. For more information see the flyer on last page.

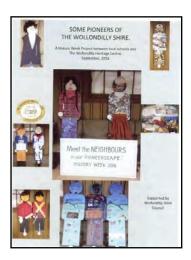
'Some Pioneers of the Wollondilly Shire', the book collated from our Pioneerscape venture last year when the local schools researched pioneers of our district, is available at the museum for \$10. We have donated copies of the book to the participating schools for their library.

providing lunch.

During the past month we have been liaising with Camden Saturday, December 9<sup>th</sup> is the date we have nominated for

be the custodians of the wagon and continue the work and Our thoughts are with the Catt family, Jenny, Neville and have it fully restored and functioning again. Camden Histori- Wendy and their extended family for the loss of their be-







## Family History & Local Archive Research Corner

Sue Davis

This report is written about the first day of the NSW & ACT storyteller and has had a wide range of experiences. He emtory.

where the women were sent such as the Parramatta Female look at portraitdetective.com.au. Factory.

William Yang was the second speaker and was interviewed by ABC presenter, Melanie Pearce. William is a professional

Association of Family History Societies Conference held in phasised the fact that oral history may not always be com-Orange on the weekend of September 22-24. the conference pletely correct and should be validated. In telling family stotheme was, "Your Family Story-Telling, Recording and Pre- ries we should always negotiate with the family members serving". Over 300 participants meant lots of opportunity to who own the story. Gail Davis from the State Archives kept share ideas and learn new ways of participating in family his- us entertained with her stories related to the new exhibition, "Captured", that looks at prisoners of the State.

The Saturday speakers were varied and interesting Dr Christi- Jacqui Newling is the resident gastronomer for Sydney Living na Henri was the keynote speaker and shared her "Roses Museums. She opened our eyes to how food is such a link to from the Heart" project. The project is a global memorial to family history in her talk entitled, "A Tonque on the Table, remember the lives of 25,566 women who were sentenced Telling the family Story Through Food". Margot Riley, from to transportation to Australia from 1788-1853. Their lives are the State Library, has been working on a project to help reremembered by the making of a colonial cloth bonnet that is searchers date their photographs. Her Talk was called, embroidered with the name and a life symbol of an individu- "Cracking the Code: Dating Australian Portraits Through al. These have been grouped and displayed at museums Dress". This is well worth going online and having a closer

> Next month I will share more of the new ideas learned at the conference. ■



## **Acquisitions Corner**

### Allen Seymour

One of the most notable this month was a Bissell floor clamp. had to be shut off and hence the mine would be forced to This is used to clamp floor boards and boy those blokes must close with no water supply. I thought all the mines would have had massive arm muscles if this clamp is anything to go have come off the same supply, but there is no mention of it by. Thanks to Frank Mackie for this one. More additions to affecting any of the other mines. Don't know if he got the exthe Mines and Men display include a large hose nozzle and tra money he was after. This may have had more far reaching signs for Nattai Colliery and Nattai North loading bins. There is effects and may have helped to precipitate the water supply also some paperwork relating to the Juske land at Thirlmere being brought through from Thirlmere. and their water bore, a 1986 centenary Camden Show guide, Relating to the Society's own history is an early copy of our forced to close due to a Water Board worker being on strike. copy of this. Richard Booth was the Principal. ■ He looked after the fluoridation and chlorination of the water

There continues to be a steady stream of objects coming in. supply, and without this happening the supply to the mine

a couple of Water Board Aquarium papers from the 80's with tour guide to The Oaks, Oakdale and Burragorang as well as a articles on Burragorang Valley, and a couple of Wollondilly programme for the 1999 Yerranderie book launch. The Oaks Crier newspapers from the 1970's. Some articles on the mines Public School put out a booklet in 1983 titled, "The Oaks – A in these, and one story says that Oakdale Colliery has been source book for the community" and we've also obtained a



## **Display Officer's Report**

#### **Doreen Lyon**

we hear what the theme is from the History Council early in arrangements. the year – this week the theme was POP – or popular culture. I have been very active with Debbie and Allen, Trish and Kevin - and it was up to each organisation to choose an appropriate and John in mounting the display about the Nattai-Bulli Lodge event. Following on from the success the previous year in the banner. After spending some time at various archives in the music and fashions of the forties and fifties, the committee city and Wollongong and talking with Fred Moore - I still had thought this could be continued into the sixties (because so much to learn. We have a published history of Nattai-Bulli many people had vinyl records from this era!). To connect it Lodge which finishes in 1982 - but no minutes or mention to local popular culture, the theme of milk shakes and music what happened after that. So it was with great excitement on was chosen and linked to the Magpie Milk Bar which was Saturday that I met Colin and popular in Picton during the sixties and beyond. Margaret Parratt. They popped into Unfortunately, as it turned out last month, a group from the museum to look at the banner! Menangle had also fixed on the theme of Milkshakes to draw Colin was the president of Nattaattention to the heritage of Menangle in a bid to attract Bulli Lodge from the eighties so he sponsorship to their plans to restore their village hall! So we will be able to finish the story - I had two events in Wollondilly, both with the same theme, but hope! We have arranged to meet only ours was in connection to History Week and, as we had again in 2 weeks when he has had already registered our event on their website and advertising, time to reflect on his memories and we had to go ahead. At the same time we had expressed an hopefully track down more photos interest in hosting a guest speaker from the History Council and the Minutes of the Lodge. also for the POP event - and thus we had Dr Marc I look forward to completing this Recertanum come to share his knowledge of the history of story because Nattai-Bulli Lodge cycling clubs in Australia. I decided to raid our collection for was a very significant part of the cycling memorabilia and found a treasure trove from the late push to set in place good safety Jim Preddy. Jack Butler joined in with his collection of standards in the coal mines as well trophies and bike parts, so with all the photos we found on as establishing uniform methods of Camden's online collection and our own archives - we support between the different managed to produce a very unique display!

usual bus trips etc, we were not able to join in with the knowledge of the constraints and difficulties faced by many of Menangle event because of a lack of volunteers to run a stall. these men and it is timely to honour them as we today face This was a pity because it would have been fun. However the increasing pressure on labour from government interventions best way to support this event would have been to attend it and new technologies! ■

History Week is now behind us and I hope everyone enjoyed at buy lots of goods - so I hope lots of you did just that. at least some part of it! The planning for this starts as soon as Unfortunately I could not go because of previous

levels of mining and mechanics as



Colin Parratt Sept. 2017

With all these activities going on at the museum, plus our the industry progressed. Today's miners will have no

# Agriculture in The Oaks 1897 - Part 6

Courtesy of Trove. This is the sixth and final in a series of articles on agriculture in The Oaks. It appeared in the Camden News on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1897. The author is not named. Sourced by Allen Seymour

#### **Agriculture In The Oaks** (Part 6)

The Victoria Park estate, the property of Mr. Edward Dobson, extends from the watershed whence the Werriberri takes its rise eastward almost to The Oaks Road, embracing rolling downs and spacious flats, in its breadth of 1280 acres. A belt of bush serves to break the force of the westerly and southwesterly gales, and of later years much fine timber has been cut and wattle bark stripped from this portion of the estate. Since the advent of the milk industry, agricultural operations have been restricted to the growth of hay and green fodder for home requirements; but formerly wheat was much cultivated, and subsequently great breadths of oaten hay were grown for market purposes, but distance and the state of the roads made this branch of agriculture unremunerative. The soil is fair throughout, on the downs a light loam, but heavier on the flats; with the peculiarity that it takes kindly to the plough immediately after rainfall. Much of the estate has been cleared, and when mixed farming again becomes the rule this property will have great agricultural importance. This season's crops are most luxuriant, but the grass is coming forward tardily, and does not appear to have recovered from the effects of last year's drought. Indeed, throughout the district the native grasses are in a very backward state, the only herbage serviceable to stock being the trefoil of the Abbotsford Flats and the Long Gully. The cultivation of artificial grasses was attempted at Victoria Park some years ago, but unsuccessfully, but with deep culture suitable varieties should succeed in the locality. Mr. Dobson pointed out a field which had produced an enormous crop of potatoes in the past – 40 tons per acre I think. A clergyman who was present

at the digging of the crop, ascertained the yield by superintending the weighing of the tubers taken from a given plot of ground. The most admirable feature of the estate, however, is a small orchard of magnificent apple trees, on the banks of the Werriberri. Here, years ago, the proprietor of Victoria Park selected a well-sheltered, fertile little flat, as a suitable site for an orchard, and after trenching to a depth of two spits, planted apples and other fruit trees. Most of the smaller fruits have now disappeared, but the apple trees have attained an enormous size, and are generally free from blight. They comprise the Five-crown Pippin, Winter Pear main, Gloria Mundi and Poor Man's Profit, all excellent varieties; and the trunk of the largest measures over five feet in circumference, a tribute to this deep cultivation, without which no orchard can approach permanence. From the uplands of the estate, a splendid view can be obtained of the rolling country towards the coast, and on clear dark nights the South Head light is clearly visible. The homestead is spacious, compact and comfortable, to whose cosy aspect magnificent cypresses and lovely camellias lend stateliness and beauty. Mr. Edward Dobson, who has the honour of being an Australian by birth, is a very old identity, for he has resided in this district for over forty years, and has seen in his time changes in the aspect of the country and the manners of the people – the alternations of prosperity and depression – the advance of civilisation and the downfall of progress. He is on the Commission of Peace, and has served as a member of the school board. His sons, stalwart, sensible men, have identified themselves with the agriculture of the district, and the household of Victoria Park is presided over by his accomplished daughter, a lady greatly esteemed in the neighbourhood.

(This report should have appeared in our agricultural series some time since, but owing to the dismal aspect of the country at that time it was held over until the present. – Editor)



The first hay bailed in Appin in 1910 belonged to Joe D'Arcy, it is shown here on a wagon owned by Edward Percival, in Queen St. Campbelltown (Deidre D'Arcy)

The Percival property was used for horse breeding, then beef cattle and later as a dairy farm. During the First World War 1977 (Camden Museum) tennis. (Anne-Maree Whitaker, Appin, story of a Macquarie Town) Typical of Bennett wagons the society's Percival wagon was tion project for the school boys. Cartwright, who had reused to cart wheat at Junee in 1913 while around 1900 it had previously been used to cart chaff from Campbelltown Railway Station to the Cataract Dam construction site. The wagon school later in that year and is about to move to the Wollonwas also used to cart coal in Wollongong and then around the dilly Heritage Centre & Museum. ■

Percival Appin farm of 'Northampton Dale' and the Appin district. The Percival wagon had been restored by the Percivals in 1905 and was fitted with new front wheels, and plied for business around with Appin area. The signage along the side of wagon was 'EN Percival, Appin'.

The Percival wagon was placed adjacent to Macaria in John Street in 1977 and by 1992 was a little the worse for wear. A team of society members took to the task with gusto and contributed over 200 hours to the restoration, with Camden Council contributing \$600 to the total cost of \$1200. Another decade passed and the weather and the elements again took their toll on the wagon. Repainting was needed in 2001.

The Percival wagon in Argyle Street Camden driven by Mr Biffin before being located next to Macaria in John Street in

the farm was a popular venue with local people for playing In 2012 the Dean of Students at Macarthur Anglican School Tim Cartwright suggested that the wagon become a restoratrained as a teacher, had been a master carpenter in Europe before coming to Australia. The wagon was taken out to the

#### An overview

Marlane Fairfax spent many years researching the material for this book and the proof, as they say, is in the reading. From a small convict camp at Myrtle Creek in the 1820s, this is the story of early settlers trying to farm in a harsh environment to a village that evolved into a thriving town.

The title of this book is intriguing. 'Tahmoor—it has no definite name' - the name of Tahmoor came about one hundred years after white settlement and was decided, after lengthy and sometimes acrimonious debates, in 1916. Prior to this it had been known by a variety of names.

The naming of this town was momentous as it coincided with the formation of a post office and in 1919, the opening of the railway station. The railway for many years was the lifeblood of this community. Few families had cars so commuters and school children travelled by train as well as farm products and stock carted to market. But there was more to this sleepy station with its passengers and a fettlers' garden. On one occasion the station master was bailed up and robbed. Then there was the arsonist who set the building alight only to return later with a home-made bomb.

Many topics are covered. The post office, the Hume Highway, business enterprises, historic buildings, orchardists and the poultry industry are small samples. The section on education is enlightening with Tahmoor School celebrating its centenary last week. But Marlane has unearthed the haphazard, earlier attempts to instill knowledge into local children. At times there was no school or, in 1890, according to a report by a local journalist, there was a less than desirable learning environment.

".... Clambering through a fence—for we failed to detect any other form of entrance into the school ground—we enquired for the schoolmistress, Mrs Fox, ... the school room is lined, and evidently planned with a beautiful disregard for all ventilation, the one thing so much desired in buildings of this nature. The result is that the room, becomes too heated in hot weather to interfere with the studies of the scholars ...."

And then there are the people. Sam Emmett cannily bought up the land in the vicinity of the proposed rail station for development; there is the story of the tragic Gorrick family; the bushrangers who were a menace to settlers and travellers alike; Arthur and Colin Miller, father and son builders; Johanna Van Draght and her Picnic Grounds at Myrtle Creek as well as many families who did so much to make Tahmoor a desirable place to live.

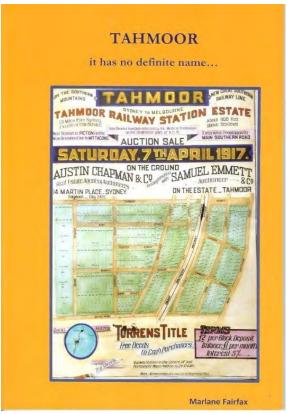
One of the delights of this book is the array of some 200 photos and maps. The former reveal a world that has vanished and many are from Marlane's archives while others are from the extensive Frank Baker Collection.

'Tahmoor—it has no definite name...' is a wonderful read and is of interest not only to local readers but those interested in history. It has 130 pages, a section of coloured prints, full referencing and index. It is available at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum, The Oaks.

Betty Villy

## TAHMOOR

## - it has no definite name



Clearing the land for subdivision—1917 sales brochure courtesy PDHFHS



Butcher shop Remembrance Driveway licence applied for by R E Whitfield

Myrtle Creek Sawmill & Timber Yard D French



John Ellis (light shirt) and Basil Dymond (on rail track) loading poles at Tahmoor siding (PDHFHS)

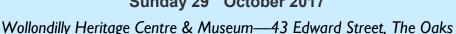


## NATIONAL GRANDPARENTS' DAY

## Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2017



COMMUNITY PARTNER





Our Grandparents' Day is fast approaching. The purpose of the day is to promote the centre and give children (and parents/grandparents) the opportunity to experience activities like they were in the "olden days". On the day people will move on at their leisure to try the activities and look at the many other items on display at the centre. We have received a grant from the Department of Family and Community Services to assist us with any costs on the day. Thanks to our Treasurer Debbie Seymour for this successful application.







Date: Sunday 29th October

Time: Activities run from 10am until 12.30pm. The centre is open all day. Activities: Using the egg washing machine and apple grader, washing in the laundry, trying slate pencils and ink in the school, experimenting with Aboriginal Art, beating cream in the kitchen and using old machinery.

Cost: Entry is free Food: BBQ, drinks and morning tea available

The museum will close at 4.00pm

There are no Eftpos facilities

**Enquiries call** 

#### Volunteers

The day will be run by volunteers whose role it will be to explain how to do the activity and supervise it. There will be two shifts. The first will be from 10 until 11.15 and the second from 11.15 until 12.30 so there is still time to lend a hand then enjoy the activities with your family.

More volunteers are sought so please contact Bev on 4655 7209 or 0409 913679 if you can help

# The Art of Apiary or the Beezneez of Bee Keeping

European bees were introduced into the Colonies of Australia in 1822. For the next 152 years our honey was pure and the bees healthy. Came 1974 and American Foul Brood arrived via American bees imported to boost our already strong hives.

Prior to this the apiarist saw that his bees were well-sited in orchards or eucalypt forests, within five or six kilometres of water so their little gauzy wings did not tire. He fed them syrup of sugar and water in drought time to sustain them against robber bee or ant attack and generally left them to get on with their God-given task of producing honey.

Every six or seven weeks during spring and summer the beekeeper donned a veil and overalls, filled his smoker with stringy-bark or pine needles and took the golden combs dripping honey to his extracting house. Here he uncapped wax from the frames with his steaming knife, popped them into the extractor and Viola! Pure honey flowed from the machine into a stainless steel vat and from there was strained into buckets or jars as required.

Nowadays the apiarist has to be ever vigilant against many diseases and keeps a close eye on his hives.

Many households kept a hive or two in their backyard near the

veggie garden and fruit trees, where bees, vegetables and fruit flourished.

As well as a sweet treat, honey was used to soften harsh coughs and colds. The housewife dipped her rose cuttings in honey to ensure a good strike rate and bound ulcers and skin irritations with honey bandages to clear them up.

Early in 2002 Australia was the fourth largest exporter of honey in the world, behind China, Argentina and Mexico. Sadly because of bushfires and droughts, in 2004 we were forced to import honey. Even with good seasons the bush will take seven years or more to regenerate to its former flowering glory. Considering that one hive holds about 40,000 bees and there are 673,000 hives registered in Australia, it takes a lot of trees to nourish these honey bees.

Today there is a far greater emphasis put on crop pollination. The Department of Agriculture has proved that with good bee pollination in orchards, fruit will conform to a uniform shape and size and will mature at a more consistent rate.

With the bushfires of 2003 and the continuous drought, apiarists may be reluctant to lease their bees for pollination purposes, preferring to maintain and strengthen their depleted hives, thus ensuring better honey production when good seasons return for our little striped friends, the honey bees.

Extract from **My Australia** by Clare Bell in 2014 clare.a.bell.1930@gmail.com

#### **WEEKEND ROSTER**

OCTOBER	
Sept. Sat, 30	Louisa & Doreen
Sunday, 1st	Bev & David
Long Weekend- Monday, 2	Jim & Kay Cuthel with the support of Kevin & Betty
Saturday, 7	Robyn & Ray
Sunday, 8	Kevin & Trish
Saturday, 14	WORKING BEE
Sunday, 15	Bob & Vivian
Saturday, 21	Sue & Tina
Sunday, 22	Ben & Doreen
Saturday, 28	Jan & Jenny
Sunday, 29	Maria & Betty

## Reminders, News & Info

## WEDNESDAY, II OCTOBER

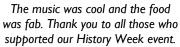
### **VISIT TO ELIZABETH FARM, PARRAMATTA**

Bus leaves centre at 8.30am Cost: \$20.00 Bring own picnic lunch and a bottle of water



## 60s Music at the Magpie Café









#### **MONTHLY SUPPER ROSTER**

October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	All bring a plate

#### **GUEST SPEAKERS**

## 2nd October—Lorraine Neate

(Illawarra Historical Society) Misbehaviours by early Illawarra residents from her publication, Scandal, Slander and Interfering with our Neighbours

### 6th November—Robyn Collier

Paintings from Burragorang -The Lost Valley

**Olympic sprinter** Miss Marlene Matthews with Mrs Elsie & Mr Jim Preddy and Mayor Sweet opening Picton Cycling Carnival 1957.

This photo didn't fit in last months issue.

Marlene Matthews opens Picton Show 28 August 1957—Olympic medallist, who Jim Preddy brought in to open his cycling carnivals of 1957 and 1959 (dressed up on the back of a flat bed truck)



We usually have three excursions a year but this year, in line with our tours to Belgenny and Elizabeth Farm, we have an extra special one to the gardens at Camden Park. Pauline Downing is a volunteer there and will be our guide.

Edwina Macarthur-Stanham has kindly waived the entrance fee for us as, 1. We are a volunteer organisation and, 2. The visit is a fundraiser for our building fund. **Visit to Camden Park Gardens** 

DATE: Wednesday, 1st November 2017

TIME: 10pm at Camden Park COST: \$5

Please make your own way to the venue but for those without transport a car pool will be available.

There is a sheet on the desk for your name as we need an idea of numbers, or ring please ring Trish.

**MONTHLY MEETINGS:** The Oaks Historical Society Inc. holds its meetings on the first Monday of each month (except January) at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum, 43 Edward St. The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. <u>Upcoming meetings are 2 October & 6 November 2017</u>. Patrons are Luke Johnson and Richard Booth. The Oaks Historical Society Inc. takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the articles, papers or reviews that appear in this newsletter. The statements made or opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Oaks Historical Society Inc. Copies of the minutes are available.

## 60s Music at the Magpie Cafe





If undelivered, please return to:The Oaks Historical Society Inc.
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