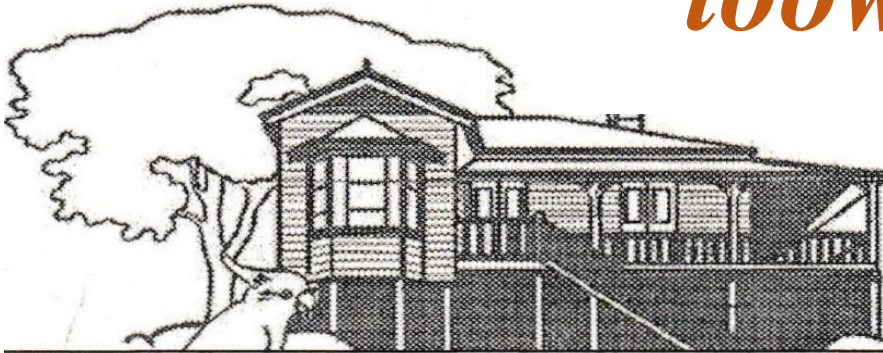


Wednesday Night News

A newsletter for those members who can attend the Wednesday night meetings with

toowong history group



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In September Margaret Prowse and members from the Nundah & District Historical Society gave us a very interesting talk about Nundah and the early missionaries who settled in the district. For those who were able to come along some of that talk has been set out in this newsletter



August Rode, one of the people who settled at Nundah with the missionaries.

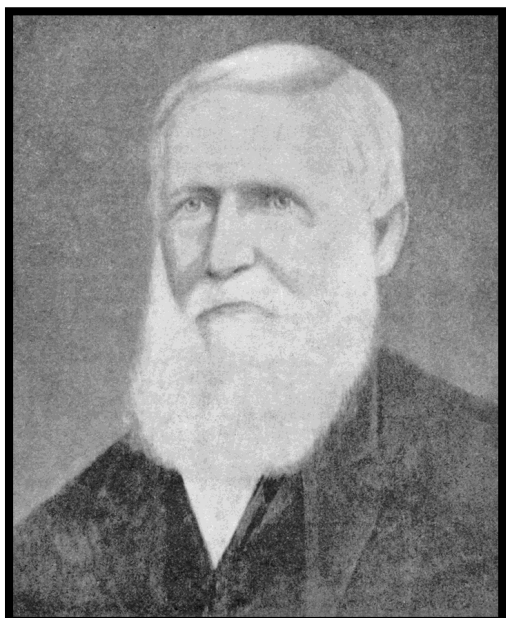
Rode Road is named after him.

THE MISSIONARIES OF ZION HILL WHO BECAME QUEENSLAND'S FIRST FREE WHITE SETTLERS

In 1837 Dr John Dunmore Lang, the controversial pioneer Presbyterian minister of the newly established colony of New South Wales, was in Great Britain in search of missionaries to evangelise the Aborigines in the Moreton Bay area of what is now Queensland. He was about to return to Australia without having any success when he heard of Pastor Johannes Evangelista Gossner and his lay-missionary training centre at the Bethlehem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Berlin. Dr Lang travelled to Berlin and enthusiastically outlined his plans to Pastor Gossner and his students, saying he felt Moreton Bay was ideally suited for a mission station, and if successful it was hoped to establish a number of additional stations along the coast. Lang's representations met with a great response in spite of the difficult conditions under which the missionaries would have to live, and ten laymen expressed willingness to undertake the journey.

They were:

Gottfried Haussmann, married, farmer, and wife Louise Wilhelmina
Johann Gottfried Wagner, single, shoemaker
Peter Niquet, married, bricklayer, and his wife Marie Sophia
Ambrosius Theophilus Wilhelm Hartenstein, married, weaver, and his wife Wilhelmine Christina
Johann Leopold Zillmann, married, blacksmith, wife Clara Louise
Friedrich Theodor Franz, single, tailor
Ludwig Doege, single, gardener
August Rode, married, cabinetmaker, and his wife Julia Emilia
August Olbrecht, single, shoemaker
Moritz Schneider, married, medical student, and his wife Caroline



Friedrich Theodor Franz,

The party was joined by two clergymen, Carl Wilhelm Schmidt and Christoph Eipper and their wives Louise and Harriet. Without these two clergymen the English parliament refused to provide financial assistance for the undertaking. The missionaries left Berlin in July 1837 and travelled via Scotland, arriving in Sydney in January 1838 aboard the *Minerva*. Unfortunately, Moritz Schneider died at the quarantine station from typhus which had broken out on the ship during the voyage. He was buried at Spring Cove Cemetery in Sydney. Some members left for Moreton Bay in March, the remainder in June, and on arrival were granted the use of 640 acres [259 hectares] of land just north of Brisbane. The missionaries named their settlement Zion and the stream dividing the property Kedron (now known as Kedron Brook). The area later was known as German Station and then Nundah. (The original settlement was on the elevated land behind Toombul Shoppingtown and through which winds the street Walkers Way.)

In 1844 four more laymen arrived from Berlin to join the mission—August Richter, Wilhelm Gericke, Carl Gerler and Johann Herrman—but by that time it was realised how difficult was the task to teach Christianity to the Aborigines, even though the Europeans had become accepted. So the mission station was closed.



Christopher Eipper, one of the clergyman who lead the mission.

In 1848 when the Government decided to survey the reserve and sell blocks of land, some of the families bought a number of these blocks. They included the Zillmann, Franz, Gerler, Rode and Wagner families.

Peter Niquet went to Sydney in the latter years of the mission to study theology at Dr Lang's Australian College. After his ordination he served as a Lutheran minister at Ballarat, then at Light Pass, South Australia, and finally in Adelaide. He died at Mt Gambier in 1903.

Gottfried Haussmann also studied theology at Dr Lang's College. He worked among the Aborigines and settlers of southern Queensland, then served at German Town (now Grovedale) and Bendigo in Victoria before returning to Queensland in 1861. Travelling from place to place, he realized the lack of pastors to administer to the spiritual needs of German migrants and appealed to the Gossner Mission Society for assistance. As a result, a number of missionaries came to Queensland including Langbecker, Burghardt, Guhr, Copas, Hampe and Gaustadt all working in numerous areas in southern Queensland. Haussmann himself established a congregation on the south side of the Brisbane River and it exists today as Nazareth Church, South Brisbane.

In 1866 he began a new mission near Beenleigh (Bethesda) but was forced to close in 1883. Haussmann carried on his ministrations to the German migrants who were settling in the district in great numbers. At the time of his death in his 91st year (1901) he was the pastor of the Beenleigh congregation, one of several such churches he established in the district.

Johann Gottfried Wagner. In 1850 he was ordained in Sydney and became the first Presbyterian minister of Tumut, returning to Brisbane with his wife (formerly Anna Katherina Weiss) in December 1851. He and Anna had four sons, Andrew, Julius, John and David, Anna dying in 1859 following the birth of David. Gottfried then married Margaret Brown and they had eight children, six of whom grew to adulthood—Jane, Joseph, Benjamin, Eliza, Samuel and Charlotte. By 1862 the family had established a mixed farm where they grew crops, kept bees and reared poultry, cattle and horses. As early as 1843 Gottfried acquired pineapples from Pastor Handt who probably introduced the fruit from Samoa a few years earlier. The plantation flourished and his pineapples were to be the first grown commercially in Queensland. In 1862 the Wagners acquired 100 acres [40.5 ha] of land and established a dairy to supply milk to residents of the Nundah/Clayfield area. Gottfried Wagner died on 28 September 1893 and was buried in the Nundah Historic Cemetery.

Ambrosius Theophilus Wilhelm Hartenstein and his wife Wilhelmine Christina (Semple or Hemple) had two daughters, Caroline Williamina (Ida) and Christiana Augusta Selma. Following the death of Wilhelmine in 1858 he married Ester Wright of Sandgate. In 1861 Hartenstein died at the age of 50, his first son dying just 5 days later. His second son, born after his death, survived only a few months. Records show that his estate consisted of a paddock of 30 acres [12.2 ha] of land situated at German Station; a farm of 3 acres [1.22 ha] also at German Station under cultivation;

a paddock of 3 acres [1.22 ha] fenced in; 200 head of mixed cattle running at German Station, 2 horses, dray, plough and farming implements. Hartenstein and his first wife are buried in Nundah Historic Cemetery and on their headstone are the words “They both arrived in the year 1838 to assist in the mission work among the aborigines here”.

Franz Joseph August Rode and his wife Julia Emilia bought 30 acres [12.2 ha] of land in the Nundah area, building their home on the highest point of what is now Nundah. History states that Julia was a warm-hearted, generous woman sending no-one away empty handed, their home always open to travellers and friends. Rode died at the age of 91 years in 1903. In 1988 the Nundah Historic Cemetery Preservation Association found that the Rodes were buried in an unmarked grave in the Nundah Historic Cemetery, and in May of that year a service was held as a mark of respect for two of Queensland’s first free settlers. Their grave is marked with a boulder on which is placed a memorial plaque.

Carl Frederick Gerler married Sarah Thompson in Sydney prior to setting out for Moreton Bay. They had fifteen children, twelve growing to adulthood. On the closure of the mission Gerler purchased 193 acres [78.2 ha] of land on which he built a house and planted a vineyard, orchard and pineapples. The property in Nudgee Road was known as ‘Carlsburg’. For many years he made and sold his own wine, and with knowledge of machinery from his early training in Germany, he invented machines for the wine making process and for farm cultivation. He was also interested in drawing and drew maps and pictures of the early colony and the mission, but few of these have survived. He later moved from ‘Carlsburg’ to another home in Nudgee Road, ‘Badminton’, where he died in 1894, eight months after he and Sarah had celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. The Gerlers are buried in Nundah Historic Cemetery.

The **Zillmann** and **Franz** families also bought land after the mission closed, as well as land in the Caboolture area. Zillmann raised bullocks, training them for team work, some being sold to be used on the Darling Downs. It is believed the Zillmanns built their home ‘Woodville’ in what is now Zillman Road, Hendra, near where it joins Junction Road. The Franz family home at Hendra still stands in Best Street.

A Memorial near Sandgate Road to the Missionaries who settled at Nundah. Photo taken in 1838 when it was unveiled.

Courtesy UQ Library



Missionary Families

Hausmann
Wagner
Niquet
Hartenstein
Zillmann
Franz
Doege
Rode
Olbrecht
Schneider
Gerler
Richter
Gericke
Hermann
Rev. Eipper
Rev. Schmidt

QUEENSLAND’S FIRST FREE SETTLERS MONUMENT Sandgate Road, Nundah

German missionaries arrived in 1838 and established a mission on land behind the present day Toombul Shoppingtown. They called their settlement Zion, and as the area began to expand the name was changed to German Station, and then to Nundah. In 1926 George Joy Walker wrote a letter to the *Brisbane Courier* suggesting that a memorial be erected to mark the beginnings of Nundah, and in memory of the founders of the community. Mr Walker’s father had been a tutor to the children of the missionaries.

Although interest was shown in the letter, it was not until 1938 that the memorial was erected on the site suggested by Mr Walker. The memorial cairn is an octagonal shaft of granite rising from the turf. Four bronze tablets grace the monument. On one, the continuity of British ideals, law and loyalty is inferred by the names of the sovereigns who ruled the British Empire in 1838 and 1938, together

with the names of the two Governors of Queensland in those years. The second tablet recognises the contributions of Dr John Dunmore Lang and Rev. Johannes Gossner. The third records that the cairn was erected by the people of Queensland; and the fourth displays the names of the missionaries, simply and without comment.

On Saturday, 23 April 1938, just 100 years after the arrival of the German missionaries, the monument was unveiled by the Governor of Queensland, Sir Leslie Wilson. Unfortunately Mr Walker had died in 1933, five years before his suggestion became a reality. The monument is listed on the Queensland Heritage Register.



**Nundah Historic Cemetery Hedley Avenue, Nundah
The gates commemorate the German Missionaries**

A drawing of the Zion Hill mission in 1846 by missionary Carl Gerler clearly shows that the cemetery existed at that time as the tiny burial site in Queensland's first free settlement established by the German missionaries in 1838. This cemetery is the final resting place of some of these missionaries and their families.

The earliest burials were merely marked with wooden crosses. These are now lost as no records prior to the 1870s are available. The oldest headstone is that of a young migrant, William Bulcock, who drowned in March 1855 while carting water for his family.

Among the many dependable, industrious and responsible founders of our community buried at the cemetery are Sir James Dickson, a Premier of Queensland, who later became Australia's first Minister of Defence, and John McMaster, Mayor of Brisbane five times and an Alderman for fifty years.

The earliest known sexton was Mr Hobson who, at the turn of the twentieth century, lived with his daughter in a cottage on the site. In 1902 William Darben with his wife and small son took up residence, remaining there until his retirement in 1945. Sid Brodie, William Darben's son-in-law, became the next sexton and worked there for thirty years, retiring in 1975. Brian Stegmann was the last sexton until his transfer to Lutwyche in the late 1970s, after which the cottage was demolished.

With no sexton, graves and headstones were vandalised and the cemetery began to look neglected, even though there were periodic visits by the Lutwyche Cemetery staff to carry out maintenance on the grounds. In 1981 there was talk that the Council might resume the land for recreational purposes, so prompt action was required to preserve this historic site. Following a newspaper appeal seeking expressions of interest, a meeting was held in April 1982 at which about 20 people attended. All were emphatic that nothing be done to disturb the site, and so an association was formed, to be known as the Nundah Historic Cemetery Preservation Association. It was incorporated in 1986.

Successful grant applications allowed concrete paths to be laid between the centre graves and along the eastern border to prevent further erosion. The area previously occupied by the sexton's cottage was filled and turfed and many trees were planted around the perimeter. Members of the Association formed working parties to weed and clean, and to repair graves and headstones, with permission where possible from descendants. Stone masonry students from the Brisbane Institute of TAFE Gateway Campus carried out repairs too difficult for members to attempt.

In 1984 Emil Nasarenko, a local businessman, donated memorial gates, and the Council erected on the footpath a sign 'Nundah Historic Cemetery'. The following year a 9 m aluminium flagpole was erected in front of the rotunda. The Council also erected a ninety-nine niche columbarium behind the rotunda enabling pioneer families to retain links with the cemetery.

An important task undertaken by the Association was placing historic plaques on important graves. These plaques provide details not shown on headstones, such as country of birth, year of arrival in Australia, the ship and occupation.

The Association worked hard to have the cemetery looking its best for the Bicentenary year 1988. However, a small group of young vandals wrecked 120 headstones and memorials—a sad blow, as very little vandalism had occurred since the formation of the Association. Where possible repairs were carried out, but many headstones were beyond repair.

With thanks to
Nundah & Districts Historical Society Inc.
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For this report..

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The next meeting of Toowong History Group will be:

Date	Wednesday 17 th October
Time	7.00 pm
Place	Toowong Rowing Club, 37 Keith Street, St Lucia.
Speaker	Terry Mulligan
Subject	History of the Toowong Rowing Club