

A visit to the Sinnamon Farm Heritage Precinct – August 2012



On Wednesday 8 August 2012, a group of CSHSoc members assembled outside the remains of *Glen Ross* homestead (built in 1887 by James Sinnamon) to meet the new owner/developer, Brad Jamieson of Jamieson Projects, Brisbane. The house was severely damaged by fire on 15 July 2007. Once the protective wire fence was unlocked we were able to wander around the burnt out shell of the house. We could not enter the building as it was far too unsafe. The tin roof had collapsed but some walls were still standing. An old wardrobe stood forlornly against

one wall. Around the back, the outhouses were still standing with laundry tubs and taps! We found a large, broken jardinière by the front steps and maidenhair fern has seeded nearby. From our records we know that the front steps had two vases of ferns placed on the steps when Sir Hercules Sinnamon lived there. We were heartened to hear that the renovation of *Glen Ross* will be overseen by heritage architects before being sold privately. The beautiful iron tracery panels of the verandah have been stored safely to be cleaned and reinstated. Most of the existing trees will also be retained, many of the pines having reached imposing heights.



We moved on to the first house built by the Sinnamons called *Beechwood*. This house was in poor repair, white ants having eaten through a lot of the woodwork. The verandahs were well rotted and by peeping in the side windows we could see the wooden panelled walls. The original cedar doors had been replaced or covered over. It was interesting to see the original stump work topped with tin plates, or ant caps, to prevent termites.

Our next visit was to the old Seventeen Mile Rocks State School, an 1877-8 building that had been relocated from Goggs Road, Jindalee by Hercules Sinnamon and mounted securely on Besser blocks. One of our members, Meg Gordon, remembers attending the school from the ages of 4 to 8. A few of us braved the rotten steps and verandah to peep inside. The one large classroom still had a few old desks and bench seats stacked to the side. On the wall was a 17 times table and an old tattered Australian flag hung above the doorway. The original shelter shed and storeroom were still in situ.



Thanking Brad for the opportunity to closer inspect the three heritage listed buildings, we next visited the little church by prior arrangement, organised by Claire. This 1888 building was formerly the Seventeen Mile Rocks Methodist (and later Uniting) Church, now known as the Rocks Road Sinnamon Memorial Uniting Church. We all sat in the pews and drank in the atmosphere of the tiny hall, still being used by a small congregation every second Sunday of each month at 2.00 pm. There was room for an altar, organ and pews said to be able to seat 60 people and little else! Outside in the sun, a beautiful red *Grevillea* was in full bloom.

The group then walked down to *Avondale*, built by Benjamin Sinnamon and also part of the Heritage Precinct, for our final building to inspect. The house is privately owned and occupied by a tenant. We took photos of the smart exterior with its white, aluminium patterned railings, corrugated roof and original chimney. Inside the house has been sadly neglected with broken fretwork above the doors, old worn carpet, ragged curtains and patched up walls. A modern oven sat in the fire alcove and the original room layout had been changed to suit modern living.



As the Centenary Suburbs Historical Society has been supporting Hercules Sinnamon's vision for retaining the history of the area for many years, it is satisfying that at last something is happening to the area which has been left to decay for many years. Meeting later for lunch, the group agreed that the day had been very enjoyable and instructive.

Plans for the development of the Sinnamon Farm Heritage Precinct can be seen on this website under the heading Sinnamon Farm Heritage Development.

[Photos by Lynda Young] See more photos from this visit on our Image Galleries page - <http://cshsoc.org.au/visit-to-sinnamon-farm-heritage-precinct-8-august-2012/> .