

No. 19.



**Sutherland Shire Historical Society**

**Quarterly Bulletin**

April, 1971

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SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

QUARTERLY BULLETIN – APRIL 1971

C/o 9 Animbo Street,  
Miranda, 2228  
1st April, 1971

Dear Member,

At the fifth Annual General Meeting, held on Friday 12th March, 1971, the following members were elected to the Council of the Society, for the coming year;-

President -- Mr. C. Law

Vice President -- Mr. H. Ivers  
Mr. J. Walker  
Mr. S. Stedman

( one vacancy to be considered by Council)

Hon. Secretary -- Mr. N. Horwood

Hon. Treasurer -- Mrs. A. Griffiths

Hon. Archivist-- Mr. G. Heavens Hon.

Research Officer-Mr. E. Lukeman

Hon. Publicity officer-(vacancy to be considered by Council)

Committee -- Mrs.I. Mowbray  
Mrs.E. Carmichael  
Mrs . A. Becker  
Mr. E. Jehan  
Mr. J. King

( two vacancies to be considered by Council)

Mr. C. Staples was elected Hon. Auditor.

The formation of a District Council of Historical Societies has been proposed, to comprise Hurstville, Kogarah, St. George and Sutherland Shire Historical Societies. Each Society will function, quite independently and autonomously as at present, but representatives will meet occasionally to discuss matters of mutual interest, and exchange ideas, which could prove of benefit for each Society.

N. Horwood.

Hon. Secretary.

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Programme of Activities for the second quarter 1971.

Meetings :- Our General Meetings are held on the second Friday night of each month, in the Auditorium of the Sydney County Council Showrooms, Eton Street, Sutherland, at 8 p.m.

Friday 16th April--(because Good Friday falls on our usual meeting night, this meeting has been put back one week).

Members night - Mr. C. Law, Mr. G. Heavens,  
Mr. Sherline.

Friday 14th May:- Mr. T.P. Hackett will give an address "The wonderful West Darling".

Friday 11th June:- Mr. Horwood will present a programme of slides with tape commentary on the History of Sutherland Shire.

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Excursions:- Saturday 17th April - an all day bus excursion will be held to Pitt Town, Wilberforce and Ebenezer.

Saturday 12th June - an afternoon visit to "Lydham Hall" - Rockdale.

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This Bulletin has been prepared by an Editorial Board consisting of Messrs. J. Walker, N. Horwood and E. Lukeman.

Members are cordially invited to submit items of Historical interest for inclusion in future Bulletins.

Opinions expressed in the Bulletin are those of the contributor and not necessarily of the Society.

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From the President.

The Sutherland Shire Historical Society has now been functioning for five years. Perhaps it is appropriate in the circumstances of that time, and in the light of its activities over the years, to examine its progress and achievements. When that is done we find material evidence that we have achieved quite some few of the Society's stated objectives. On the other hand, however, we do not seem to have made sufficient progress in the attraction of new members in the volume we might reasonably have expected. It is surely only necessary to contemplate for one moment the enormous population in the vast area of Sutherland Shire to perhaps conclude that a Society's membership of around 200 is hardly a formidable one. This then evokes a question such as "Are we either as a Society or individually as members doing, sufficient to make the organisation and its purposes widely enough known?" In short, are we doing all that could be done in the direction of public relations to bring the Society's activities before the people of the Shire and, in fact, elsewhere? Do other members, as I do, meet citizens, somewhere of note who say they did not know, for example, that membership is open to all without special invitation or such-like? I could wish that by this brief message member's thought may be stimulated to an extent that all may be able to bring ideas and effort to bear in directions which may cause the Society to overcome any disadvantages it may suffer in relation to its progress and development. Perhaps some members may utilise the Bulletin to express thoughts and views on the aspects mentioned in this message?

C . Law.

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The chapter in Mr. Kirkby's book "From Sails to Atoms" about the Fortress Shire cast my thoughts back to 1942 when it seemed almost certain that the Japanese would attack Sydney. At this time I was in the Coast Artillery posted to a battery at Oak Park, Cronulla which was officially known as "Hack" battery (after Port Hacking). Our armament was two Hotchkiss quick firing three-pounders and one Lewis gun! A searchlight was operated by some Engineers and there were thirty gunners divided into three "watches" to allow one third of us to stand down while the others were available for action at any time. The C.O. gave orders by 'phone from a Command post on top of Oak Park Pavilion.

Our guns were 1896 vintage but were more modern than the three pounders on Bare Island in Botany Bay which bore the date 1893. These, by the way, were not the muzzle-loaders of the original Bare Island Fort condemned by Lord Kitchener and now part of the Island's Museum, but breech-loaders from Naval Stores installed in February, 1942. We had telescopic sights and could expect to be more accurate than Bare Battery which had open sights. Even so, any target would need to be closer than 2,000 yards. For our shots to take effect as the guns were nearly worn out. In any case action was expected to be confined to the narrow entrance to Port Hacking and from the small quantity of ammunition supplied the army obviously expected a quick result one way or the other.

The Command Post, a concrete room with independent foundations still graces Oak Park Pavilion and does not seem out of place there. In fact the battery was made to appear part of the bathing scene by a rather novel camouflage. The gun emplacements were provided with wooden doors painted in bright candy-stripes to suggest kiosks and, from a distance looked convincing even though to picnickers they must have looked ridiculous.

Originally No. 1 gun was placed on the Esplanade near Shelley Beach outside a house named "Rostrevor", which we occupied for a while. The Army then decided to make the battery more compact and this gun was relocated on a ledge above the rock pool at Oak Park with No. 2 gun fifty yards further south and the searchlight in between. "Look-out bearing" thus became an imaginary line between No. 1 gun and Pt. Hacking Point and any unidentified vessel closing Port would be "brought-to" by a shot across its bows on this line. No such action ever became necessary.

Every evening a launch from the Naval Auxiliary Patrol would emerge from Gunnamatta Bay, flash the code-letter of the day and, after a sweep of Bate Bay it would anchor off Jibbon Beach for the night- a silent sentinel during the hour when action was most likely to occur in which case they would have been "Sitting ducks".

Barbed wire was erected around the foreshores but the sea quickly removed it. You may yet find some rusty remains in rocks about Cronulla but time has almost erased-all trace

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of this rather ineffective measure.

The sea also demolished an incomplete "boom" across the Port from Bundeena to Glashier Point which was being built by the Allied Works Council. For weeks their pile-driver thumped away day and night at the stout wooden pylons until a strong north-easter carried the surf straight into the Port. Afterwards, dozens of Pylons could be seen drifting in the Cronulla surf and in the bays and inlets of Port Hacking. No further attempt was made to build a boom after this fiasco.

As Japan's threat of attack receded the need to fully man Sydney's defences became less important and we were moved north to various areas. Perhaps it is enough to say in conclusion that visitors to Oak Park, as they look at the Command Post and the rock ledge above the pool, can feel thankful that it did not become necessary to fire a shot in anger from our "Fortress Shire".

Eric Lukeman.

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A SUCCESS STORY.

Readers will be interested to learn that the last book of the first edition of "Two hundred Years in Retrospect" has been sold and will join me in extending congratulations to the author, John Walker, one of our most enthusiastic members.

Launched with a bright party at my home, on 5th Dec-ember, 1969, this excellent, Cronulla produced, local history created an instant demand, which was sustained until the final sale was made on 7th February, 1971,-- Truly a noteworthy achievement!

All connected with the production and distribution of the book are proud 'of the fact that the whole of the profits from the venture will be applied to further the causes of charity and education in our district.

Along with twenty four other Organizations and Institutions, our Sutherland Shire Historical Society will participate in this distribution. Our share, (approximately one hundred and eighty seven dollars (\$187), will be accepted with thanks and. used to further our objectives.. With a few more energetic sellers our, funds would, undoubtedly, -have benefitted to a greater extent.

Members interested in local history will be delighted to hear that at the time of writing (February, 1971) a second Edition of the book is in the hands of the Cronulla. Printing Company and will 'be released by the Bicentenary Publishing Syndicate of Cronulla, in the near future.

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Captain Arthur Phillip, " Governor of N.S .W. 1788-- 1792.

Arthur Phillip was the son of Jacob Phillip, native of Frankfort, Germany, who settled in England and became a teacher of languages. His son, Arthur, was born at All Hallows, London, 11th October, 1738. He received his early schooling at Greenwich, where he studied for several years. His Maritime career began at the age of 16 years in 1755, and he learnt the rudiments of his naval profession. When 23 years old he became a Lieutenant in the "Stirling Castle", 7th June 1761 and took part in the Seven Years War 1756-1763. A European conflict between England with Prussia against the French. After the war he married and settled down to a farming life at Lyndhurst. He soon tired of this, however, and Portugal, than at war with Spain, accepted his services until he returned to the Royal Navy. He was then appointed Post Captain of the Frigate "Ariadne" November 1781. In December 1781 he transferred to the Warship "Europe" 74 guns. In January, 1783 he sailed to the East Indies, but soon returned to arrange for his historic journey to this country, for on the 25th October, 1786 he was given command of the "Sirius" to sail to that part. of the eastern coast of Australia described by Capt. James Cook, and to form a settlement at a spot called Botany Bay. His successful work in convoying the First Fleet and the founding and government of the new colony are now matters of history. He wisely governed for nearly five years.

Arthur Phillip was admirably adapted both by nature and education for the important duties with which he was entrusted. By nature he was kind and confiding almost to a fault, but where firmness and decision were required when duty was neglected, deceit practised, or the public interest jeopardised, he regarded leniency as a most culpable weakness. His punishments were not frequent, but were prompt and severe. Under his rule public rule was never for a moment endangered and considering the circumstances attending the young settlement offences were few. He left the Colony loaded with the blessings of those over whom he had rules, followed by earnest wishes for a safe return and speedy restoration to health.

After his retirement (he left Sydney 10th Dec. 1792) he still took a great interest in the young settlement, and his advice to Macquarie's Architect Francis Greenway in his various undertakings, was helpful and appreciated.

Captain Arthur Phillip was a great man, quite unselfish, he never complained of, the inconvenience and shortages he had to suffer in a task which required personal hardship and great mental and physical activity. He was always optimistic and was gifted with imagination and commonsense. He died on the 31st August, 1814 in his 76th year. He was buried privately in the little church of St. Nicholas, Bathampton, England, as set out in Mrs. Carmichael's interesting article in our journal dated July, 1970.

Three hundred bricks from the Lyndhurst farm arrived in Sydney on 14.10.70 to be. used in the construction of a building on the site of Rev. Richard Johnson's first church.

Eric Jehan.

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EARLY AUSTRALIAN FINANCE.

By N. Horwood.

The First Fleet was sent from England containing most essentials to establish a gaol in the Colony of New South Wales.

As this was to be a penal Colony, and of course no money is needed in a gaol, then no money was sent by the English Government With the fleet. The only money which came to New South Wales with the fleet, was that carried by the soldiers, sailors and perhaps even by some of the convicts, brought out by them personally.

Governor Phillip had authority to draw bills, on the English Treasury, to pay for purchases of livestock, wine, grain etc. made on the way out to New South Wales, He could also draw bills on England for purchases made by the Colony. This procedure covered only payments by the colonial administration in New South Wales and did not cover transactions between individuals. Even for the local government the procedure was very cumbersome, the payment of bills drawn, being in England 13,000 miles, and many months away.

Even the Military and civil Officers received their salaries not in money, but by paymasters notes or bills, payable usually on presentation in England. Each person therefore had to make arrangements for someone in England to act as his agent and collect the money and either keep it for him or send it out by ship to New South Wales, a most troublesome and costly business. After about 1800 these paymaster notes were drawn in New South Wales and given to the men here. As many officers were trading in goods they very often gave goods in lieu of money, issuing payments notes for any balance due. Obviously, the officers did quite well out of this arrangement, as they could charge very high prices for the goods they "sold".

Visiting ships' Captains would exchange goods, at very inflated prices, for paymasters bills from the militia and often . also at a discount. In this way also some small amounts of money entered the Colony.

Because of the lack of money it is not surprising that a system of barter and private promissory notes was established.

One of the more important items of barter, was rum, or more correctly spirits. Although the importance of rum has been exaggerated, it did form a very significant form of barter.

Spirits were obtained from the casual visit to Sydney by ships coming out to the whaling and sealing waters, bringing a cargo of saleable items to the Colony and then going on to catch whales or seals for the return cargo to Europe. It soon became known tha spirits were a very profitable cargo and so plentiful supplies reached Sydney, some also being brought in by immigrants.

As no persons had money to pay for the cargo, the ships captains were obliged to accept the most favoured form of payment,



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i.e. the paymaster's notes of the military and civil officers drawn on the British Treasury. Private promissory notes were very risky and not as acceptable, so that when they were accepted it was at a substantial discount. This of course gave the military a privileged position in purchasing supplies from the visiting ships and gave them a virtual monopoly of trade. The soldiers and marines, and particularly the officers used this advantage to gain considerable wealth, for besides charging exorbitant prices for their spirits, they also watered down the rum, gin etc. thus making a doubly high profit.

Transactions between individuals were hampered by the lack of money, and so private promissory notes began circulating. Under these circumstances it became very easy for unscrupulous persons (even some convicts) to sign promissory notes which they knew they could not honour.

So it became the practice to refer to the notes and bills drawn locally by the inhabitants as "currency" notes, and they were worth less than their face value because of the risk involved in accepting them, whereas bills drawn on the British Treasury and paymasters notes, were sound and were readily accepted at their face value and were known as "sterling" notes. Thus there came into existence the two standards of exchange known as "CURRENCY" and "STERLING".

Many of the convicts were sent out to New South Wales for forgery and this was a great advantage in forging or altering the bills, of others, which of course added to the general confusion and unreliability of the local monetary system.

The Government controlled, in general, all the stores for the infant colony under the supervision of a Commissary.

The Government Store, or Commiserate, was responsible for the receipt, safe keeping, and issue of all supplies on behalf of the Government and included the control of foodstuffs.

The Commissary was authorised, subject to the control of the Governor, to draw bills on the English Treasury for purchases made for stores received by the Commiserate. Those Bills were regarded as sound and were readily accepted by visiting ships' Captains and others. They were of course payable in England, usually about 90 days after presentation.

Having no cash to pay for food and supplies grown by the increasing number of settlers, and bought by the Commissariat for the maintenance of convicts and troops, and the issue of Treasury Bills being cumbersome for small amounts a system of store receipts was adopted about 1792. These store receipts were issued, expressed in £.S.D. and given to persons selling goods to the Commissariat, who could, when a number were collected, take them back to the Store and have them consolidated, by the issue of a Treasury Bill for them.

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Later it became the practice to "consolidate" store receipts every three months, and later still, these were consolidated each month. Because of the backing of the Government, Stores Receipts were considered sound and were regarded as "Sterling". Store receipts were still in use in the 1820's and the Treasury Bill even later.

Many of the early merchants and traders in Sydney started a form of banking in conjunction with their normal business activities, by allowing well known customers to obtain goods on credit and at a later date of setting off against the amount, the value of meat, wheat, etc brought in by the customer at harvest time etc.

The issue of private promissory notes was complicated, because, they were usually given for an exact amount, i.e. £5.9.4, and the holder of the note therefore had difficulty in exchanging such notes for goods of the exact amount of the note.

To overcome this obstacle, many traders and some private persons had promissory notes printed for amounts, ranging from 3d to £5, and only needed to be signed and the correct denomination issued to cover the transaction, giving the holder a more negotiable form of exchange for later transactions, something similar to Bank notes, although not nearly so reliable.

The "Rum Rebellion" and the overthrow of Governor Bligh made very little change in the methods of finance just describes, but it did give the Military personnel a tighter grip on the trade and finance of the Colony, which was not broken until the troops were replaced.

Governor Macquarie assumed office from 1st January, 1810, and within three months, after realising the caustic state of the Colony's finance, on 12th March 1810, he wrote to England recommending that a government Bank be established in New South Wales and asked for a shipment of coins. This recommendation was refused by the Colonial Office in England, without giving reasons, but they did agree to send a supply of coins, which had arrived by November, 1812.

These coins were Spanish dollars to the value of £10,000, Macquarie considering that they would be insufficient, arranged for the centre to be cut out thereby making two coins out of one and increasing the total value to £12,5000 and the "Holey" dollar valued at 5/- and the centre or dump, valued at 1/3, came into circulation. This measure did relieve the situation somewhat, but not nearly enough.

By November 1816, Governor Macquarie, realised the absolute necessity of establishing a local bank, and in that month a meeting was called for 20th November for "a friendly consultation-on a subject of much interest and importance in -a commercial point of view", to be held in the Judge Advocate's rooms.

Out of this meeting, the proposal to establish the Bank of N.S.W. came. The Bank of N.S.W. was a private bank, owned by shareholders who were resident of the Colony, and was established contrary to the wishes of the English Government. However, by the time Gov. Macquarie advised the Colonial Office and they replied almost 2 years had elapsed and as the bank was by then established and operating, it was too late to undo what had been done.

Although the establishment of Banking facilities, did not immediately improve the methods of finance operating in the Colony and it was many years before stable and reliable means of exchange was established, the importance of establishment of the Bank of N.S.W. cannot be overstressed, because it provided the framework, and means whereby gradual order was brought into the chaos.