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Illustrations - A. & F. Midgley

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SUTHERLAND-CRONULLA ELECTRIC RAILWAY

The railway was officially opened on Saturday December 16, 1939, after several years of wrangling and not only being censured as a "political stunt" but also as the greatest "white elephant" of the time.

A statement of ticket sales between Sutherland/Cronulla showed that in the holiday period following the opening (Dec. 1939/Jan. 1940) an amount of £1951 was taken. In the first three months of operation sales returned £3,489, this amount excluding all tickets issued to Cronulla from stations north of Sutherland. The estimated cost of the first year's operations was quoted at £40,000; so "it would appear that the cash receipts this line will greatly exceed £40,000."

To celebrate the official opening a number of special trains were run from both Sydney and Sutherland to Cronulla. The State Governor, Lord Wakehurst, formally declared the line open at Sutherland Station -- after cutting the usual ribbon -- and then took the driver's controls for part of the journey to Cronulla. Here a second ceremony was held when Lt.Col. M.F. Bruxner, DSO, MLA, Deputy Premier of NSW and Minister for Transport, greeted the Governor and then declared the Cronulla Railway Station open.

Both Sutherland and Cronulla townships were gaily decorated with coloured bunting; numerous functions were arranged for the day, with some special activities for scouts, guides and other schoolchildren taking part; a large Water Pageant was held on Gunnamatta Bay, with Life Saving Displays on the beach at Cronulla; and in the evening the "Railway Ball", held in the Cecil Ballroom (now demolished; it was on the beach opposite the Cecil Hotel), was a brilliant success, the limited bookings being quickly sold out.

From the day of inauguration the line has shown an increasing profit, and is the only railway line do so continuously. The Sutherland/Cronulla Steam. Tramway opened up much the adjacent areas between 1911 and about 1925 (closed 1932); World War 2 began in September 1939 and thus minimised developmental planning until about 1950, when the "population boom" began. From about 25,000 in 1940 the Census of 1966 there was an increase of over 100,000 (to approximately 130,000), largely due to fast electric transport allowing the onetime farming lands to be opened up for residential development. From the beginning, too, "through" electric transport from the metropolitan districts to Cronulla Beach brought increasing crowds during the summer months, and this also added to the profitability of the line as well as to Cronulla commercial development.

Thus, instead of being the "white elephant" predicted by pessimistic opponents of the project, the Sutherland/Cronulla electric railway has proved a "transport gold mine".

M.H.N.

Sources: S.C.A.M. issues Dec. 1939 and March 1940 (from Records kept by Gleo.
Heavens: also author's Notes.

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Brumby: a wild horse, descended from escaped domestic animals. It is thought to be a Queensland aboriginal word for "wild".

AN ADVENTURE OF THE 1850s

(This article appeared in the issues of September 8 and 15, 1906, of the "St. George Call", to which grateful acknowledgment is made. The author, Mr. G. Ellis, was living at Hurstville at the time, and was nearing seventy years of age).

In February 1854 I started afoot from Sydney, our destination being Cook's River, in company with two shipwrights. They had taken a contract to repair small, craft engaged in the shell-carrying trade between Weeney Bay and Cook's River, at which place there was a kiln for burning the shell into lime. I carried a caulking box slung over my shoulder, and my attire was as near as an approach to that of a shore lad as we could make it. It was mutually arranged that I was to pass as the son of the elder of the two men, although in reality I was nothing of the kind but simply a deserted midshipman from a large ship then lying in the harbour and from which the whole crew had cleared.

We had thus started early on our journey in order to incur the least possible chance of meeting any of the numerous police agents employed in those stirring days of the gold fever in hunting up deserters from the merchant service. Many a ship had to wait for months before a crew could be got to man it for the homeward voyage.

However, we reached Cook's River without molestation, and Curtis, the owner of the craft, was entrusted with the secret, which he honourably kept. The men proceeded to work on the boat, and was employed in boiling pitch for the canvas. At night I slept in the Curtis slab hut which stood on the slope a hundred yards or so from the kiln and the little pier to which the craft was moored. The job occupied about a week, and while the two men were finishing up on the afternoon of the last day I was away with the axe and a barrow among some big trees getting some firewood for Mrs. Curtis, and was



Old shell lime kiln at Cook's River

and was on the point of starting back with my load when a horse-man rode up and asked my name and occupation. He did not appear satisfied with my replies, and dismounting, accompanied me to the hut. We met Curtis just outside who on being questioned by the constable - -as he proved to be --as to my name antecedents and business in the locality, upheld that my name was Hamilton and that my father was at that moment engaged with another shipwright in effecting repairs to the boat near the kiln. After an examination of some papers which he took from his pocket and suspicious glances at me, he remounted his horse and rode off.



Lime being conveyed to Kiln. Rail bridge at rear. 1886

Before Hamilton and his mate left on their return journey to Sydney it was arranged that I should go over in the vessel with Curtis to Weeny Bay on the following day, so as soon as it was dark I went on board and remained during the night. Curtis came at daybreak, and we at once got under way and were through the channel among the mangrove flats and into the open waters of Botany Bay before the sun was one hour high.

My shipmate, Branch however, decided to remain. On the 28th I crossed the Bay with Curtis, reaching the little wharf at Cook's River the same evening and passing the night with the Curtis family. I was told that the constable who had previously interviewed me lived in a house on Cook's River road and that it would be well to make a detour across the flats at that particular spot to avoid if possible again coming in contact with him.

I started out the following morning accompanied by Curtis' son, who piloted me by a circuitous course over the swampy flats covered with a profusion of wild flowers, coming into the main road again near St. Peter's church where my companion left me. All had so far turned out well, so I set off in high spirits along the road to Sydney.

There was at that time a toll gate somewhere along that road. I cannot now locate the position, although I have occasion to remember it well. There was also a hitching post near it on the edge of the footway, to which in passing, I noticed that a horse was attached by the bridle.

I thought nothing of it at the time, and had gone about fifty yards



past when a hand was laid on my shoulder, and turning round I be-held my interviewer of the Cook's River episode.

He asked me in a jocular manner, as I thought, if my ship had sailed, whereupon I gave him a true account of the whole matter. Then, mounting his horse and bidding me keep to the footway, he escorted me to Sydney and to the Water Police Station, where I was furnished with a ticket for the calaboose.

When I was brought before Mr. George Thornton, the presiding magistrate at the

Court next day, he questioned me on my several escapades and then ordered my discharge.

-- Alf Midgley.

Sources: "St. George Call": Drawings from photo-cutting in the "Hurstville Propeller".

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"BOTANY BAY"

This was not only a place but also variously descriptive. Botany Bay Rangers : nickname for the New South Wales ("Rum") Corps:

Botany Bay Rothchild was the convict-emancipist Samuel Terry, whose Will showed Estate of over a million pounds sterling in 1838:

Botany Bay Wool was originally applied to the first bale sent by Macarthur to England; and for many years thereafter this phrase was used to describe all Australian-produced wool:

Botany Bay "Coat of Arms" of "Colonial Livery" was cynically used in noting 'the broken noses and black' eyes of the never ending stream of inebriates appearing daily before the Magistrates:

Botany Bay Swell: a freed convict, i.e. pardoned, as against one who had served his time:

Botany Bay: a general name for the penal colonies of Australia, especially New South Wales -- in use in England until the end of transportation.

Botany Ballads: a collection of good (and bad) songs and ballads of transportations times; probably the best known today is "Farewell to old England"

Source: Australian Folklore: W. Fearn-Wannan: Lansdowne Press, Melbourne 1970

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The Sydney Gazette And New South Wales Advertiser was first published on Saturday, March 5, 1803 under the authority of Governor King.

PORT HACKING PIONEER: William Simpson: d. 1918.

The late Mr. William Simpson, who recently died at Port Hacking, removes from our midst "The Father of Port Hacking". He was born in Sydney seventy-seven years ago (i.e. 1841), and at the age of seven removed with his father to Port Hacking, which was then inhabited by aboriginals. About that time schooners called in at Port Hacking for shells, which they conveyed to Cook's River for lime burning, the principal industry of the locality at that period. The late Mr. Simpson afterwards commenced market gardening, and would sail round in his boat, "The Blink Bonnie", with the produce from his gardens.

After a short period of market gardening he left Port Hacking and resided at Sans Souci for a few years where he became a road contractor.

Returning to the Port in the early 'seventies he engaged in work peculiarly to his liking. As guide for sporting parties on shooting and fishing expeditions, Bill's services were invaluable. He knew all the good spots and was delighted when his patrons returned home with a good 'bag'.

The opening of the accommodation house** by Mr. Simpson dates from this time, and has been a popular resort for tourists and picnic parties ever since. It was here that the greatest part of his life was spent.

In conjunction with Mr.F.S.E. Holt he was active in having a road cleared and formed from Sylvania to Tyreal Point: at that time there were no Councillors, road trusts undertaking the work.

His mother planted one of the Norfolk Island pine trees (in 1845) that now adorn the grounds in front of the Government accommodation house at Kurnell, where Captain Cook first landed in Australia.

No one knew more of the blacks than Mr. Simpson, and many were the interesting tales he could tell of the time when he dined with "King Koomah" the last George's River aboriginal chief.

-- Joan Hatton Extract from "The Propeller", Hurstville: Feb. 1st, 1918.

** "Tyreal House" was originally built about 1887, but was burnt down a few years later and rebuilt, and became known later as "Simpson's Hotel", a popular holiday resort. Simpson had land at Little Turriell Point, and here he built a wharf for his ferry to "Simpson's Hotel". Old maps give the spelling as "Tyreal".

The Propellor stated that Simpson had been one of the first Trustees of the National Park; this is incorrect; he was employed as a Ranger from 1880 to 1886, when he resigned, having obtained a publican's licence to open his "Tyreal House" hotel.

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October 14, 1066: the date which changed English history -- the landing of William of Normandy and the Battle of Hastings.

October 25,1854: "The Charge of the Light Brigade" at Balaklava, Crimean War immortalised by Lord Tennyson in his poem.

Our First POST OFFICES

With the exception of Sylvania, in 1883, the introduction of postal services followed the advent of the extension of the Illawarra Railway across the Georges River at Como — or Woronora as the location was at first named.

Thus postal services came into existence at Como in 1883, to service the Railway Construction Camp; at Sutherland and Waterfall in 1886, and at Heathcote 1889, as railway work progressed southwards, the



postal services being conducted by the Station Master. For the first few years the Como post-master crossed Georges River to collect the mail from Woniora P.O., but in 1894 the office was transferred to Como Railway Station, under the control of the Station Master Mr. Albert Cuneo.

By 1883 there was a handful of scattered settlers in the Shire either as tenants or employees of the Holt-Sutherland Estate, these being in the Sylvania/Miranda area (Miranda at this period included, the unnamed Highfield-Caringbah). There was also the Railway Construction Camp at Como, but in mid-1885 this was transferred to Heathcote/Waterfall. Along both sides of Georges River were a few families engaged mainly in fishing and in timber-cutting for firewood -- to be transported for sale in Sydney.

In May 1883 "residents of Sylvania and landowners in its neighbourhood petitioned for a postal service, complaining at they had to cross Georges River by punt to collect mail at Woniora P.O. and that the fare of the punt controlled by the Works Department, was 1/- (10c) return" -- an expensive charge at that time. Their petition stated also:-

“... The Township of Sylvania is already being built upon and is the key to Port Hacking and the whole of the Southern Shore of Botany Bay; also at present a large number of men are being employed on the Railway Works between Georges River and Port Hacking in the vicinity of the township of Sutherland”.

Mrs. Honoria Rice (wife of Captain William Rice), who had a small grocery store at Sylvania, was appointed Postmistress, holding the position until she resigned in 1909 when she retired from business. On her recommendation Miss Delia Lehane took over -- "Miss Lehane intends to open a grocery store on the

main road (i.e., Princes Highway, but then known as the Illawarra Rd.) in a suitable building about 20 yards from the present office".

In 1886 a vehicular punt crossed Georges River from Woniora Point to Horse-rock Point Sylvania, and in 1887 the first Mail Coach ran from Kogarah P.O. to Sylvania. In 1888 the "Kogarah/Port Hacking Mail Coach" began a daily service to the terminus of Port Hacking Road, conveying both mails and passengers to suit the scattered settlers, running "six times weekly, wagonette, 2 horses, for £100 p.a." (\$200.00). This run continued until about 1908 when it terminated at Sylvania. By 1910 there were several organised postal runs from Sutherland to Miranda and Cronulla by horse vehicles; and in 1912 a "postal receiving office" was opened in the small village then known as Highfield, at the store of Mr. S.E. Mansfield.

It was along this run that milestones were placed -- at least, on this side of Georges River to the terminus at Port Hacking where was No. 18 (it is still there). They probably commenced from the "Central Post Office" (G.P.O.) from where all distances were measured from 1846; from here to Dolan's Bay was approximately 18 miles by road. The Society was able to obtain possession of two other remaining milestones; No. 17 (corner Port Hacking Rd. and Telopea Av) is now in the "Pioneers' Corner" in the Forby Sutherland Park at Sutherland, and No. 16 (corner Banksia St. and Port Hacking Rd. -- now Kingsway) has recently been erected in the small reserve adjacent to the Caringbah Hotel.

The advent of the Illawarra Railway to Sutherland in 1885-6 led to the building of the wooden Oriental Hotel at Cronulla Beach in 1888 by Captain Joseph Springall, and horse transport over the Holt-Sutherland Estate to the beach soon began. As well, the new vehicular punt across Georges River to Sylvania was bringing increasing numbers of visitors to the beach. In 1890 it was stated that there were fifty families settled around Cronulla Beach, mainly fishermen and timber-cutters, but some agriculture was also beginning; and it was becoming a popular resort for selective holidaying.

Miss Clara Springall became Cronulla's postmistress in January 1891, but three months later she resigned to marry, and her father took over the position. By 1900 Albert Giddings was licensee, but shortly after this he left hotel and opened premises a short distance away -- "Giddings' Store" -- where the Post Office continued. From the time of his being appointed postmaster, Giddings also ran a coach between Cronulla Beach and Sutherland Railway, collecting the mail daily at the station and delivering it en route. With the advent of the steam tram in 1911 mailbags were delivered to Miranda, Caringbah ("Highfield" had by now been superseded) and Cronulla. In 1915 Cronulla became an official post office.

In 1892 residents in the (central) Miranda area applied for a postal service, and Mr. John W. Macfarlane was appointed postmaster -- he was in later years to become the first Shire Clerk. When Mr. Macfarlane resigned in 1896 he nominated Miss Hall to succeed him. Romance blossomed (as at Cronulla) and in 1902 Miss Hall became Mrs. J. W. Macfarlane, but continued as post-mistress for another two years.

By the end of 1885 the Illawarra Railway was approaching Heathcote; the

Como construction Camp closed in May 1885; about the middle of 1886 the new site for the "Township of Sutherland" had been surveyed and laid out on the eastern side of the line -e the abortive first Township site had been on the Woronora side. Tents and huts were appearing around the station, with about fifty families, the menfolk engaged in timber cutting, scrub-clearing, brick-clay digging, and railway employees. It was not unusual to place "postal receiving offices" in charge of the station master at small centres and this was Sutherland's initial service, the Stationmaster-cum Postmaster being John Atwell.

"A small iron letter receiver and a set of pigeonholes were provided, when the postmaster reported that he had to keep letters packed together on the counter; and that the public had to pass their letters through the ticket window for posting".

Enquiries as to the fate of these two items, now of unique historical value, are unfortunately unknown.

The Heathcote P.O. was opened in 1889 with Miss Harriet Wellman as the postmistress, but six months later it was transferred to the Railway Station.

As settlement increased so were postal facilities extended; a telephone service was at first connected through Kogarah (Sutherland 1905, and Miranda 1910), but in February 1916 the Sutherland Telephone Exchange was opened, with (at March) "James Toyer, bus prop." the only local subscriber, listed as "Suth. No. 5".

-- M. Hutton Neve

Source: P.M.G. Historical Office Sydney: Author's Notes.

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"The Crocodile King": Aboriginal Legend: about 80 miles from Darwin there is a tribe which claims immunity from crocodile attack. They have a legend that one of the wise men of the tribe was spearing fish in a lagoon when he was seized by a crocodile and dragged far down to a wonderful cave in which lived hundreds of crocodiles. There he was told that the beautiful daughter of the crocodile king was close to death from a mysterious illness and it had been revealed that only a human could save her. The wise man did save the princess, by magic incantations, and her grateful father not only allowed the man to be returned to earth, but also promised that no member of the tribe would ever again be molested by a crocodile but the king insisted that whenever a tribal member was about to enter the water he should slap it three times with a paddle and loudly call a password given by the king. Members of the tribe -- so it is said -- do so to this day and, for those who obey the old tradition, it has not failed.

Governor Fitzroy at a sporting fixture in Sydney in 1847: "The Governor of N.S.W. wore a light coat and a veil of blue silk wrapped around a tall white hat. Its size was admirable. A jacket and waistcoat of black and white check with a coloured shirt and neckerchief completed his attire".

"OLD ALEC OF CRONULLA

While checking through a few personal papers I came across some sculling notes I had transcribed many years ago for an old neighbour -- why he wanted them I do not remember.

This old gentleman was a "character" the type no longer met with in this modern age. His name was Randolph Bishop, and he lived in Hampshire Street not far from my parents' home in South Cronulla. He was a friend of my late father, and must have been round about seventy when I first knew him many years ago. (He did not like "Randolph", so always used his nickname).

"Old Alec", as he was affectionately known throughout Cronulla, was a bachelor, tall, of good physique and well-preserved for his years. He was born in the Manning River district, and it was there that as a young man he engaged in his favourite pastime of sculling; and very good he was, so I have been told.

I think he was lonely at times for he would often wander round to our place to gossip to my father; even after my father's death he would still call, and sit on a chair and read his paper; when finished Old Alec would carefully fold it, arise and say to my mother: "Well, Missus, I must be going now" -- he always called my mother "Missus".

One day he arrived at our home with a lovely young lemon-scented gum tree sapling in a wheelbarrow. "For you, Missus" he told my mother. He planted it, and today, nearly forty years later, this tall and beautiful tree continues to perfume the garden.

Although he had suffered three strokes he still walked everywhere and swam every day throughout the year. He was always barefooted: "I need to feel the earth beneath me feet" was his explanation. But on Sundays neatly dressed with collar and tie, he trotted along to St. Aloysius (the old church on the corner of Nicholson Pde. and Cronulla St.) for Mass. There was a comfortable seat-bench on the grass in front of the church, and here he set to don the pair of large heavy army-type boots which he was carrying. After the service the boots were removed and carried home (to be re-polished) for next Sunday's Mass.

Old Alec was an acquaintance of the late Elias Laycock of Cronulla, who became a World Champion sculler. Alec was always willing to talk about his favourite sport of rowing, recalling many famous races, especially by such men as the English sculler Hanlon in the 1880s, William Beach, Harry Searl, Peter Kemp, and of course our own Elias Laycock.

-- Aileen Griffiths

* * *****

October 12: "Columbus Discovery Day" -- an American commemorative date.

November 5: "Guy Fawkes' Day": recalling the famous "Gunpowder Plot" of 1605, when Sir Guy attempted to blow up the Houses of Parliament (London). -

EBENEZER

"Hitherto the Lord hath helped us"

Among the free passengers on the "Coromandel", which sailed into Sydney Cove on 13th June 1803, were sixteen adults and twenty children, who were the founders of the Presbyterian Church in Australia.

On Saturday, 3rd August 1974, I attended the sesqui-centenary of the first Presbyterian Communion held at Ebenezer in 1824. The service took place at Ebenezer in the same church building, except that the crowd attending

numbered some twelve hundred, and were principally accommodated in the grounds outside the church. This service, commemorating 150 years since the first Presbyterian Communion, is a continuation of religious service since that date.

The original Presbyterians spent a year on Government farms at Toongabbie, after which they selected grants on the Hawkesbury River at Portland Head in 1803. In September 1806 they met with five other families who had settled in the area, in Surgeon Arndell's home and resolved to form "The Society for the Propagation of the Christian Faith and the Instruction of Youth". They contributed £10-0-0 so that work could proceed on the construction of a church and school.

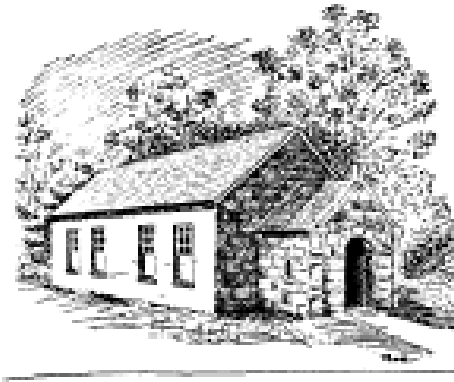
Costing £400, the church was completed in December 1809 without any form of assistance from the Governor.

After his arrival in 1822 Dr. Lang paid several visits to Ebenezer, then on Saturday 31st July 1824, he held a Preparatory Service in the Church; and on Sunday, 1st August, celebrated Holy Communion with 24 communicants.

The church and school were known as Portland Head until 1887, when the Department of Education renamed it "Ebenezer". Sons and daughters of these settlers in turn pioneered the Hunter Vey and north into Queensland.

The Ebenezer pioneers were responsible for the establishment of one of the first -- if not the very first -- denominational boarding schools in Australia in 1810. The church building was originally divided into two rooms one as Church, the other as schoolroom and dormitory for the headmaster and boys. The attic served as dormitory for the headmaster's wife and the girls.

Divine Service has been held at Ebenezer every Sunday morning at 11.0 a.m., conducted by a succession of elders and ministers whose names are recorded in Dr. Reid's "History of Ebenezer"; and the pioneers' names are recorded on a tablet in the porch, erected to their memory in 1925. This porch and the vestry are the only additions to the building as completed in 1809 and which, together with the schoolhouse, were completely renovated by Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Australia in the State of New South Wales during the years 1958-60.



The church remains in one of the most picturesque spots along the bank of the Hawkesbury River, undisturbed by the pressure of modern living. It is a retreat where one can contemplate the meaning of Ebenezer -- "Hitherto the Lord hath helped us".

-- H. S. Ivers (President)

Historical notes from "Service of Holy Communion", prepared by R.N.Ardell. * * * * *
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AN EARLY SYDNEY GRAVE

As was inevitable, many a grass overgrown grave was overlooked when the interments in the cemetery once surrounding St. Andrew's Cathedral in George Street Sydney were removed to the Devonshire Street (Sandhills) Cemetery after it opened in 1820, where Sydney's Central Railway Station now is.

During work in the Cathedral grounds about 1934, a workman's pick split an unsuspected coffin lid and exposed to view the body of a young woman. A curious trick of preservation had saved the face in its life form but on exposure to the air the features fell to dust. There remained only the coil into which her long hair had been twisted more than a century previously. It was found impossible to remove the remains, for when a little pressure was applied both coffin and contents collapsed. Consequently it was cemented beneath the road. And there she lay. Close by the hurrying humanity, motor buses and other vehicles roared and rumbled by; beneath the ground two tiers of electric trains added to the clamour.

Little she cared -- that seeming sweet faced young woman who slipped into the hereafter in Sydney's hazy, mist-clouded long ago.

-- Fred Midgley.

Source: " World's News" 1934.

(It was reported in the July Bulletin that a vault interment of 1804 had been discovered during excavations last April in this same location. This is believed to have been that of James Bloodworth, emancipist masterbuilder of the period. --- Ed.).

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The "Horse Hearse": in the days of horsedrawn traffic a vehicle which created interest on the roads was the "dead-horse cart". With thousands of horses in the city and suburbs, disposal was often difficult. The floor of the dead-horse cart was only a foot or so above ground, and the cart was built so that it could be tilted backwards and the carcass slid on to it. Whether the horse died as the result of a street accident or otherwise collapsed on the road, or died in its stable, the dead-horse cart was essential in those days. The driver stood on the dead animal while he drove his unusual "hearse" to an unsavoury place called "the boiling-down works", a Botany location some fifty years ago.

PIONEER BLACKSMITH

Harold "Sonny" Bennett was born at St. Peters N.S.W. in 1891, and came to Miranda when eight years of age. At St. Peters, Ibbotson's conducted a large coach and buggy building business.

When aged 14 "Sonny" was apprenticed to Mr. Carr to learn the blacksmith's trade at Sylvania. Mr. Carr was there for many years before transferring his business to the Six Ways at Miranda at the turn of the century. Carr sold his business at Sylvania to a Mr. Parker, a Lancastrian by birth, who had lived in New Zealand for several years. Later on Parker acquired Carr's shop at Miranda when Carr went to live in New Zealand where he died in the late 1960s approaching his hundredth birthday.

The blacksmith's shop at Miranda was erected from the materials of Sylvania's first school -- conducted by Miss Rice. It was enlarged to accommodate a repair, and painting shop for the number of horse coaches prevalent in the Shire for many years, until the advent of steam trams thinned out the enterprise.

"Sonny" Bennett was paid six shillings a week during his first year of apprenticeship, eight shillings during the second year, with increases to £3-6-0 (\$7.20) per week on becoming a qualified tradesman.

In 1918 he came to Sutherland to commence his own shop in a lane running off Railway Parade (Princes Highway) this was later widened to become Flora Street. A "smithy" named Hallett had conducted his business there for some years. The lane was called "Leather Lane", as a large quantity of leather was dumped there. The "slab hut" used as the blacksmith's shop was also used by the Salvation Army for occasional Sunday night meetings.

When the brothers Charlie and Bill Phillips relinquished their long-standing business "Sonny" acquired the premises, remaining there until his retirement in 1959. The shop was of slab sides and situated in Blacksmith's Lane or Phillips Lane, now Boyle Lane. The Phillips brothers were also wood cutters, blazing a trail to Northwest Arm off Acacia Road, to cut wood for the railway, often working late into the night.

Charge for shoeing a horse was six shillings a set (ie: four) while 2/6 (25c) was the fee for removing old shoes and trimming down the hooves.



Bennett's blacksmith shop

During the early years he contracted to work one day a month at Miranda at Parkers, shoeing horses; and also at the sanitary depot then located along Woollooware Road, where he carried out work for the contractor Bill Hayes.

One day a month was also worked at the stables above "Allambie House" shoeing horses and repairing vehicles for the National Park Trust. What was originally contracted for a year at one day a month turned out to be one of twenty years' duration with the stables at Waterfall Sanatorium. For many years "Sonny" repaired the mattocks, picks and assorted tools for Sutherland Shire Council workmen and also the Woronora Cemetery Trust.

The best iron came from Germany at 16/— a cwt -- the Australian iron was inferior, and iron from England split when subject to forge heat. All axles for vehicles came in two halves, the smithy cutting and welding together to the requirements of the vehicles. Bars of iron for wheel tyres came in long lengths, being cut to size to suit requirements.

"Sonny" suffered many a kick from temperamental horses, as well a sore feet when a horse stamped a leg unexpectedly — evidence of which he still carries, affecting in particular the big toe of each foot.

Tradespeople of Sutherland became regular customers. Amongst them was Henry Avery, who had a greengrocer's run which culminated in a carrier business. The most vicious and temperamental horse of "Sonny's" acquaintance was a splendid animal, a white "coacher" owned by Henry Avery.

Mr. Brown, who lived at Cronulla and conducted a wood, coal and coke yard adjacent to the old building which housed Sutherland Shire Council for the first eight years of administration, had his horses and vehicles under "Sonny's" professional care, as well as the horses of Crosby's and Brewster's dairies; the latter owned a cattle run in the Wollongong district.

The blacksmith's "striker" (who wielded the heavy hammer) at the shoe for many years was Herbert Peters, who died in 1969. (Peters' father was an expert in the art of procuring honey from the native bees).

A vehicle of unusual character at the time was when resident Doctor Sanbrook of Sutherland brought his "T" Ford car to the blacksmith's to be repaired -- to straighten out the front axle which had met with an accident. The unusual job was satisfactorily accomplished.

A cheerful man was "Sonny" Bennett; he has been known as "Sonny" almost all his life and insists on being so addressed; with almost a lifelong association in the Shire, and with a wealth of reminiscences, "Sonny" is indeed a worthy Shire Pioneer.

("Sonny" Harold Bennett interviewed) -- Alf Midgley.

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The "Lancashire Quilt" was introduced to Australia by early English settlers. Commonly called "lankies", they were made of several thicknesses of worn and mostly threadbare blankets stitched together and covered with gay cretonne, and they made an attractive, cosy and inexpensive bed covering.

Great-grandfather WILLIAM EDGAR SHORTER

Shipping Master of Sydney Harbour 1867—1880

Many of you will have read and enjoyed that very interesting book, "Cadman's Cottage" by J.S.Provis and K.A.Johnson. In the very thorough researching which went into the preparation of this book many names of people who were well-known at the time but have now slipped back into obscurity, are mentioned. You may be interested to read about one of them.

On page 108 the Anniversary Regatta of 1841 is recalled in an extract from the newspaper "Australian", announcing that two steamers would be available for those who wished to have a good view of the proceedings, one the "Kangaroo", and the other the "Rapid' W. Shorter Commander".

William Shorter was born in 1810 at Greenwich, son of a merchant and his wife Maria (nee Kimble). Living in an area close to the centre of shipping, it is not surprising that a seaman's life appealed to the boy, and he was sent to the Royal Naval Asylum, where most boys aspiring to be officers of either the Royal Navy or the Merchant Navy were educated at that time.

From thence he was indentured as an apprentice officer (or cadet) to Captain Thomas Oldfield. He was fourteen years old and his apprenticeship was for seven years. His indentures, still in the possession of one of his grand daughters, show that he commenced with the good captain April. 3, 1824 and was duly certified to be a competent ship's officer in July 1831.

In 1835 as an officer on the "Patriot" barque, he first visited Sydney, the captain and owner of the ship being Captain Eastmure. The following year, 1836, he again came to Sydney, but this time as Master,. Captain Eastmure being a passenger on this trip. The arrival of the "Patriot" is reported March 4, 1836 in both the Archives and in the "Sydney Herald".

On his previous visit William had met and fallen in love with Miss Emma Zeller Ashton, daughter of Thomas Ashton of Hunter Street Sydney, and on March 21, 1836 they were married in St. Andrew's Scots Church by the Rev. John McGarvie. It is intriguing to note that on June 27, 1836, the best man, Peter Christopher Abbott, married the bride's sister Helen Maria. (reported in the "Herald").

On April 11, 1836 the "Herald" reported the "Patriot" with Captain Shorter in charge as taking Wesleyan Missionaries to the Bay of Islands in New Zealand and returning to Sydney July 5. According to the Archives, a voyage was made to Batavia on August 6, 1836 -- although according to the "Herald" the ship was visiting in Sydney for a cargo for London. By the end of the year William had decided to settle in Sydney; and Captain Eastmure, having secured a cargo, soon departed for London.

William is next heard of as Master of the "Rapid", launched in 1836 and the first double-ended steamer to sail in Sydney waters. In the Australian Encyclopaedia the "Rapid", together with another steam ferry, launched in 1834 the "Australia", is said to have run a very efficient service up the Parramatta River.

From the Blue Books of the Colony we learn that William next joined

the Shipping Master's Department and was appointed Inspector and Examiner of Seamen, with a salary of £200 per annum. He was promoted to Acting Shipping Master February 1, 1856, with an annual allowance of £50, and held both positions concurrently. Gradually his position improved, until he was appointed Shipping Master of Sydney Harbour in 1867, a position he was to hold until his death in 1880. He was also appointed Commissioner for Affidavits and deputed to administer the Oaths required by persons obtaining Certificates of Naturalisation.

William and Emma had seventeen children, of whom five sons and six daughters survived; all married and had fine families of their own. Strangely enough, he discouraged his sons from a sea-going life, and all became members of various branches of the legal profession. Only his youngest son, Arthur, had a short time on a whaling expedition, but eventually was persuaded to become a solicitor and was articles to his eldest brother Tom, who was by that time a member of a well-known legal firm.

On February 28, 1880, William died at his home, on the corner of Forbes and Liverpool Streets, a site now occupied by a Church. A small lane nearby is named after him. Emma had died in 1873, and both were buried in the old Balmain Cemetery, which some years ago was converted into a Pioneer Memorial Park, the headstones forming the surrounding wall.

Emma and William's seventh son and seventeenth child, Arthur, married Elizabeth Morris Weedon and had eight daughters, five of whom are still living in Sydney. Perhaps, if there are any lady members who attended the Penshurst Girls' High School, they would remember the first Principal, Miss Sylvia Shorter. She was a well-known singer and organiser of Church Choirs. Her interests, though now restricted by passing years, are still wide.

Down in the Rocks area one may still see, on the side of the Metcalf Bond, the name Upwood. Jack Upward, who married one of William and Emma's daughters, was an importer, but whether the family still owns the building I cannot say.

For many years a photograph of "The Late Capt. Shorter" hung on the wall of the Seamen's Mission, but has long disappeared. From a copy which I have seen, he was very much the martinet; and, with such a big family to keep in order, who would wonder?

His descendants include lawyers, doctors, nurses, teachers, bankers, engineers of all kinds -- and during the two last World Wars, also several servicemen And this year, 150 years since William Edgar Shorter became a Cadet Officer, one of his great-grandsons followed suit by joining the Australian National Line. Let us hope that as interesting and useful life lies ahead of him as lay before William in 1824.

— Margaret Booth.

* * * * *

The many names for "Matilda": the swag or pack of the old-time "swaggie" had many names other than "Matilda". It has been called The Bluey, The Curse, The National Debt, Kathleen Mavoureen, The Curse of Cain, The Bundle, Drum, Shiralee, Parcel, Turkey and Donkey -- depending on the temperament of the swaggie: others had a pet name for their swag, usually the name of a woman.

Kendall Cottage

Henry Kendall Street,
WEST GOSFORD



Gosford is very fortunate in possessing such a historical building, built by the Fagan family in 1838 and used as an Inn until it was de-licensed in 1868.

The walls are about 20" thick and built from rubble. The hand hewn sand-stone blocks of various sizes

were held together with a rough type of mortar. These have been refilled on the outside by the Brisbane Water Historical Society. The floor area is about 850 sq. ft.. The roof was made of wooden shingles, but this has been covered by corrugated iron. The shingles can be seen from inside the storeroom.

The Fagans bred cattle and horses, and in 1850 had 5 acres of seedling oranges, being amongst the first to grow oranges in the district. Members of the Fagan family lived there until 1920-21 when Colonel Garnet Adcock bought it from Mr. Joe Fagan, the last surviving brother.

The cottage was used as a residence continually until the Society purchased it... and spent about three years repairing the premises.

The Society has stocked the cottage with historic relics in the way of tools, furniture, household appliances, crockery, pictures, etc., of pioneering days. The grounds have been planted with mostly Australian flowering trees and shrubs, which make a splendid park setting for the building.

In the little room which the poet Henry Kendall occupied may be seen the colonial sofa on which he slept and on which he carved his initials -- also a large framed picture of scenes and events described in his poem "The Last of His Tribe".

Kendall arrived in Gosford late in 1873 in very poor health and was befriended by the Fagan brothers. He lived on their farm in 1874-75 and helped with odd jobs. His health improved and in 1875 he started to write poems again. The following year he and his wife and children moved to Camden Haven (now known as Kendall) and was employed by the Fagan Bros. in their store. In 1881, through the influence of Sir Henry Parkes, he was

appointed to the position of Inspector of Forests, However, the long journeys on horseback and coach, in all kinds of weather, were too strenuous for him and he fell ill, at Wagga Wagga and was brought back to Sydney, where his wife nursed him at the Fagan's' home in Redfern.

He died on 1st August 1882 at the age of 23. He was buried in the Waverley Cemetery, and in 1886 a monument to his memory was erected by public subscription.

Extract leaflet --- Brisbane Water Historical Society.

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MUSEUM COLLECTION

Although we have no Local History Museum as yet, we are always on the lookout for donations -- some day we will be in a position to display our acquisitions.

The latest donation is a portable food safe from Mrs. D. Vale. These were usually about 18 inches to 2 ft. square, and were hung in a cool spot -- a south-facing back porch; or stood on a table with a wet cloth covering it, the ends dipping into a tin of water on either side.

Typewriter: an old-model machine was given to me during the Pioneer Exhibition last November. It is not in working condition. An enquiry was made to the Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences at Broadway concerning this Remington type-writer and its manufacture. They reported: "The firm of Wychoff, Seamans & Benedict bought the typewriter manufacturing interests of Remington and set up at Ilion. (U.S.A.) in 1886. From then until 1908 the firm produced a number of Remington Standard machines, all of which were blind writers, i.e. the type struck upwards from beneath the platen so that the typed words were not visible to the typist. In 1908 the first of a series of visible writing machines, also called Remington Standard, was marketed. These have the type arranged to strike the front of the platen as in modern machines ... The first visible writer of 1908 was model number 10...." The donated typewriter is a "blind" one, and therefore prior to 1908.

Treadle Sewing Machine: some months ago I was given this machine -- believed to be about 100 years old. The machine "table" is inlaid with a design of mother-of-pearl. It seems still to be in working order. The manufacturers plate carried the name of Beale & Company, but enquiries from the Museum of Applied Arts & Sciences has failed to provide any information.

-- M. Hutton Neve.

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Corkwood tree uses: one species grows to a height of about 70 feet and has a bright blue berry, a favourite food with the "fruit pigeons". Both tree and pigeons are now a rarity along the eastern coast. The aborigines used to bore holes in the trunk of a tree, fill the holes with water and then plug the end. After giving the fluid time to "brew" they would drain it off and drink it; sometimes it stimulated them, sometimes made them sleepy. They also used the tree's drug content to help in fishing. Branches of the trees were thrown into pools, and soon after the fish surfaced drunkenly and so were easily caught.

GRASS TREE GUM

The Yacca Gum industry which began about ninety years ago is unique in that it was con-fined to Australia entirely.

The "Black-boy" was merely a popular name in use in Australia for the Grass Tree. The name "Black-boy" is suggested by the rounded trunks which retain the charred remains of the leaf bases for years after bush fires, and the flowering stem resembles a blackfellow carrying a spear.

Although commonly called a grass tree , from a botanical point of view it is no relation to the grass family. It belongs to the lily family, of which there are several species yielding a balsamic resin known as grass-tree gum. In South Australia the Grass Trees are known as The Yaccas or Yuccas.



The chief use of the gum was in the production of varnishes, stains and lacquers and in the manufacture of linoleums and munitions. Old-time shipwrights in Australia mixed tallow with this gum and used it as a sealing agent in the seams of planking.

Even in wet weather the "Black-boy" tree could always be relied upon to start a fire. In the wintertime they burnt well on the open log fires. Before the advent of electricity in 1949 and other modern heating appliances the residents of Menai used Black-boys to augment the wood supply. When burning they gave off a peculiar smell which could be detected a mile or more away.

The early residents of Menai first turned to gum-cutting on 21st of February 1902. The summer of 1901-02 was one of severe drought and high temperatures, forcing farmers off the land when crops failed and the creeks dried up.

The men travelled considerable distances from their homes. Because of the time and work involved in getting the gum, they preferred to camp out in the Eckersley Ranges and Darke's Forest in the south to the area around Mill Creek and westwards towards Liverpool. The women in horsedrawn vans brought out provisions for the men of the family -- and of course news of home.

Two of the men who often worked together were Fred Bentley and Sam Innes, a Scotsman. A remarkable coolness and self-preservation were displayed by Sam Innes while sitting on a log having a rest with others. He was leaning back on his arm with his hand on the lower part of the log when he was bitten on a finger by a snake. Too far from immediate assistance, he applied a tourniquet, then placed the bitten finger hard against the log and

chopped it off with the tomahawk he used for cutting the grass trees. It was an anxious and trying journey getting lanes back to Menai, from where he was taken for medical treatment.

For the cutting and removal of grass-tree gum it was necessary to obtain a fuel license. This gave authority for the removal of dead wood and green timber for the purpose of fuel from Crown Lands. A license was issued for one month for a fee of 2/6d (25c). If issued from Helensburgh it was operative in the Parish of Heathcote in the County of Cumberland in the locality of Woronora.

The gum in its flake-like form was bagged, weighed and delivered to an agent, W. Mofflin & Co. of Kent Street Sydney. This firm was an Australia wide organisation with agencies in Brisbane, Townsville and Rockhampton in Queensland; they also had agencies in Melbourne, Adelaide, Fremantle and Albany in West Australia, and in London.

In March 1903 Charles Bentley forwarded 20 bags of gum weighing just over 12 hundredweight. At that time the grass tree was bringing £9-10-0 per ton (\$19), so the value of Charles Bentley's consignment realised £5-14-3.

Some residents of Menai were still gathering gum as an addition to their incomes until the beginning of the second World War.

-- Fred Midgley

Sources: Mss N. Bentley; Mr. Bray; Author's notes.

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In Memorium

Miss Nellie McArthur, one of our early members, died in August at the age of 84½ years.

She came to Cronulla from Waverley about 1920, building a home in Boronia Street South Cronulla, where she lived until her death.

She took an active interest in Shire affairs for many years until her health began to fail: she was Hon. Secretary of the Cronulla Auxiliary of the Sutherland Shire Hospital for 26 years; was also Hon. Treasurer of the Presbyterian Women's Guild for many years; and having a very pleasant voice was a member of her Church Choir and also of the Cronulla Choral Society.

Nellie was an excellent water-colour artist; a capable milliner and dress-maker, an accomplished needleworker and potter, and a good cook --- her favourite local charities benefitted by the large donations of jams and cakes.

Nellie seldom missed a Society evening meeting, and whenever possible she joined in all our excursions until about two years ago when failing health curtailed her activities.

It was a privilege to have been associated with Nellie McArthur. She was truly a wonderful friend.

-- Aileen Griffiths.

The North Coast Steam Navigation Company advised the Shire Council in January 1933 that they regretfully could not see their way to resume the excursions to Port Hacking, as apart from losses sustained in the past, the bridge at Tom Ugly's and motor facilities available all tended to make a marine excursion unattractive and unprofitable.

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Aerobatics at Cronulla: the second annual combined carnival of the Cronulla and North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Clubs was held on Cronulla Beach on Sat. Dec. 31, 1932, when "a thrilling display of aerobatics by a trio of daring airmen from the Adastra Airways Ltd. Mascot, under Captain F. Follett, held the spectators spellbound in their daring stunts".

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Cronulla Water Supply: at a Shire Council meeting in January 1933, Clr. E.S. Shaw, President, in reviewing some of Council's past efforts stated: "It was not until late in December 1931 that the Metropolitan Water Sewerage & Drain-age Board made available to the residents of this Shire, the reticulated water service. Notwithstanding the high water rates the fact that some 820 properties were now connected to the service was an indication that the residents appreciated this essential service."

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Housekeeping Notes: Penprase Bros. Cash & Carry Store at Miranda listed some "reduced prices":- 2 lb S/R flour 4½d: Loose Rolled Oats, per lb 2½d: Large Plum Jam 9d, Large Fig & Apricot Jam 10d: Bushells Tea, Blue 1/10½d: Butter 1/3½d lb: Bacon Rashers 1/1d lb: Large Tomato Sauce 11½d: Large Salmon (tin) 9½d.

Cotton Goods at Williams' Store Sutherland: White Crepe-8d per yard: Prints 7½d: Cretonne 9½d.

To Let: unfurnished cottage, 2 bedrooms, large verandahs , garage, 17/6d per week. F.R. Shaw, Estate Agent, Cronulla.

To Let: Cottage at Sutherland Station, £1 per week, 7 rooms, garage, water, light. Apply W. Batty, Fruit Shop, Sutherland.

The Farming Shire: "At the Harvest Festival at St. Mark's Church of England Sylvania, an excellent display of locally produced fruit and vegetables, eggs sheaves of hay and flowers resulted from the donations of parishioners. All gifts were afterwards sent to the Carlingford Children's Homes".

Poultry Farmers: "... the local branch of the Poultry Farmers' Assn. at Miranda discussed the merits of 'Black v. White', with various types of hens and cocks being displayed by admiring breeders".

Wanted: Sulky & Harness, suit Pony, must be cheap and good. -Apply S.C.A.M.

Extracts from S.C.A.M. newspaper, from Shire Records kept by Geo. Heavens.

We suggest you detach this page for reference: Fixtures are overleaf.

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Publications Committee (1974-5): Mr. Geo. Heavens (Convenor), Mrs.M.Hutton Neve (Editor), Messrs. R. Hall, F. Midgley, B. Sargeant, The President (ex officio).

Contributions: members are asked to submit material for the Bulletin --- any items of interest having a historical background; they need not be entirely confined to Shire material. Please state source if extracted or rewritten material is used; interviews with elderly residents, and personal reminiscences are always welcome. If hand-written, please print names in B L O C K letters. Hand to President, Convenor or Editor. Contributions for Jan.1975 are wanted by Nov. 8 (Friday meeting) if possible, as the magazine must go to Dress earlier than usual because of the Christmas/New Year holidays.

Bulletin copies are supplied to all branches of the Shire Library, and also to the Shire President and Shire Clerk, as well as to all Councillors.

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This Society is affiliated to the Royal Australian Historical Society and to the National Trust of Australia, New South Wales Branch.

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The opinions expressed in this Bulletin are not necessarily those of t h e Society.

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Monthly Meetings are held on the 2nd Friday, commencing at 8.0 p.m., in the Auditorium of the County Council (Electricity) Building, Eton Street, in Sutherland. Visitors are welcome.

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<u>President:</u>	<u>Hon. Sec.:</u>	<u>Publications Convenor:</u>
Mr. H. Ivers,, B.E. 620 Princes H'way; Sutherland: 2232 Ph. 521.1407	Mrs. G.F. Griffiths, 34 Richmount St., Cronulla: 2230 Ph. 523.5801	Mr. Geo. Heavens, 78 Toronto Parade, Sutherland: 2232 Ph. 521.6190

Editor may be contacted at --- 26 First Av. Loftus 2232: Ph. 521.2578.

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The first Treasury in Sydney was a military prison, cells in the basement providing a safe lodging for the country's gold. The stone walls of the building were 3 ft. thick and all windows had iron bars. In the early days the place was a landmark for all ships sailing up the harbour. Situated at the corner of Bent and O'Connell Streets, it was close to the water and was distinguished by a huge Norfolk pine in its grounds.

Oak Trees for Posterity ?? "A quantity of very fine Acorns being saved from the Oaks in the Government Garden at Sydney, Individuals desirous of Cultivating that valuable timber will send their Names to the Secretary's Office; when the Gardener will have instructions to surely those who may be approved".

-- Sydney Gazette: 16/3/1806

FROM THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Members' attention is drawn to the Souvenir Spoons, etc., with the Society Badge thereon, available for purchase at all meetings. These would make an attractive gift for your friends, and also be of use to members who collect items of this nature.

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GUEST SPEAKERS

OCTOBER 11.: Mr. R. Warner, -- "New Guinea". (We thank him for filling in at short notice, Paddington Representative being unable to accept).

NOVEMBER 8: Dr. Peter Reynolds-- "Old Balmain". DECEMBER 13.: Christmas Meeting Night: Rural Bank Films.

JANUARY 10: MEMBERS' NIGHT: Members are invited to present a paper of approximately 15 minutes. We would appreciate your letting us know if you are able to take part in talks.

EXCURSIONS

OCTOBER 26: Full day to GOSFORD: Saturday.

Members \$2.50 - Juniors \$1.25 (Visitors 50 cents extra). Leaving Cronulla 8.0 a.m., Sutherland 8.30 a.m..

NOVEMBER 16: Balmain: Members \$1.75, Juniors \$0.85 (Visitors 50 cents extra). Leaving Cronulla 10.30 a.m., Sutherland 11.0 a.m.. Luncheon will be at Elkington Park, Balmain, on arrival, to allow inspection to commence by 12.30 p.m..

FEBRUARY: Arrangements are in hand for another visit to FORT DENISON.. We are awaiting confirmation from Maritime Services Board of date and time, but it is hoped to be either 1st or 8th of that month.

MARCH: WEEKEND EXCURSION, Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd March 1975, visiting Shoalhaven district, Kangaroo Valley, Kangaloon etc..

Leaving Cronulla 8.0 a.m., Sutherland 8.30 a.m. Saturday, and expecting to return to Sutherland Shire by 5.30 p.m. Sunday/

Cost of weekend will be £25.00; take Saturday luncheon with you as usual on day outings, and we will provide Saturday night Dinner, Bed, Sunday Breakfast and Luncheon, and Coach travel for the fee stated.

We ask that a \$5.00 booking fee be made to confirm your booking. Also, if you wish to pay the balance off at \$5.00 each month your full cost will be met by February meeting, and this may assist you budgeting for the trip. Payment must be finalised by February Meeting Night.

Should you wish any further details about the trip, please do not hesitate to contact me by letter or telephone.

Aileen Griffiths,

Honorary Secretary.