

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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EARLY PAPER MILLS

The first Paper Mill in Australia began operating in 1818 near what is now Bourke Street Sydney. This was only fifteen years after mechanical mills had been established in England.

The Sydney plant, owned by Warren & Duncan, operated on water power. According to historical records "The Sydney Gazette" was printed on paper produced by the Mill in July 1820.

Later, a site was selected for a paper mill at Collingwood, close to Liverpool. Here the Australian Paper Company purchased 17 acres of land with a frontage to Georges River. Improvements to the land cost £2530 . The foundation stone was laid on September 16, 1865, and production commenced in January 1868 with imported machinery.

Various kinds of paper were made, including brown, grey and white wrapping paper. Rag-pickers purchased rags, old paper and straw in Sydney and consigned it to the mill, where sixty persons were employed working 15 hours a day.

15,000 gallons of water were pumped hourly from the river for use in the factory, where one brick building had a chimney 150 feet high.

The banks of Georges River were the site of many industries in those days. The river was navigable for vessels of moderate draught as far as Liverpool, where in the early days a dam had been constructed to hold back the fresh water.

This mill was owned by Mr. Mury; after his death it was moved to Botany where it is still turning out good quality paper.

As late as 1948 some traces of the old mill could be seen at Liverpool just across the river from the Holdsworthy Military Camp.

-- Fred Midgley

Source: "World's News" Sydney 1948.



The Paper Mill on Georges River

DOMESTIC PIONEER DAYS

The first settlement in the Shire was an agricultural and timber-cutting industry around the "Village of Bottle Forest" from 1842 to about 1860, but isolation and lack of adequate transport caused it to fade away within about ten years or so. A more organised and definite settlement began in the early 1880s around the Sylvania/Miranda area (which then included the present township of Caringbah); and with the coming of the steam railway more pioneer settlers were attracted.

Settlement was on small blocks of land of a few acres, some of it still scrubby, but most of the arable land had previously been cleared of all big timber and much of the scrub to provide grazing and farming paddocks during the previous era of the (Holt) Sutherland Estate. Most of the incoming settlers between 1880/1900 were "small" people with little finance to develop their blocks or to hire labour, so all capable members of the family were involved.

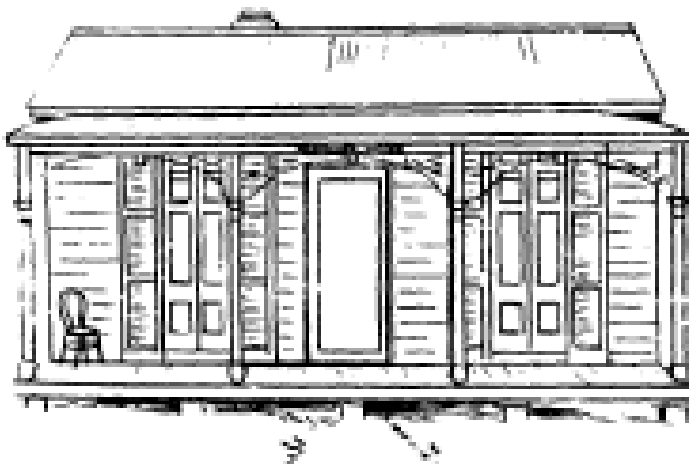
Besides domestic duties the womenfolk shared in the lighter part of agricultural development, helping to tend the vegetable and flower gardens, care for poultry and the like.

Most of the small cottages were of wood; some were lathe and plaster ; at first, some had earthen floors, with ceilings and dividing walls of a type of hessian which would often be whitewashed; on the walls illustrations from magazines and newspapers might be pasted: but, as soon as circumstances allowed, a better type of wooden cottage would be built.

While a family could reasonably "live off the land", farm-produce had to be sold to provide some income for essential needs, especially clothing. The pioneer housewife was both ingenious and money-saving. Flour was usually bought in large calico bags (perhaps sugar and rolled oats also) 28 lbs to 56 lbs. When empty these were thoroughly boiled and bleached, then put to a multitude of uses -- not only as aprons, nightgowns, petticoats and knickers (or "bloomers"), but also perhaps as curtains, tea towels, and table covers and children's sheets; some articles might be dyed, appliquéd, trimmed or embroidered.

Materials of Holland and hair-cord, voile and muslin, made up summer frocks; hopsack and serge provided sturdy winter wear galatea, a hardy cotton material, was used for making boys' shirts.

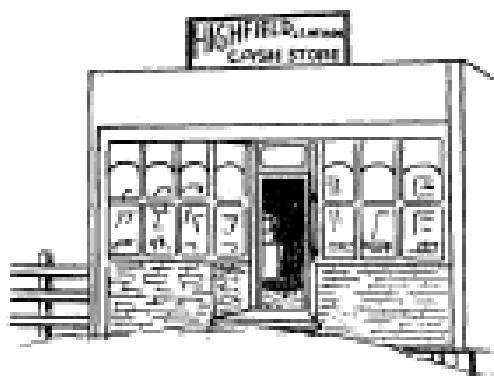
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The original McAlister cottage at Engadine (c.1896) contained 4 rooms, with a detached sandstone kitchen. This not only helped to keep the house cool, but was also a precaution against fire--always a threat to wooden homes.

The Nelson family came to Miranda in 1893, settling first in Lower Port Hacking Road where they opened their first snail store, then moving to Caringbah about 1914, when they opened their "Highfield Cash Store". Miss Edith Nelson talked about aspects of women's life at that time:

"Before World War 1 the usual home wear for women was a plain light coloured blouse with an ankle-length dark skirt, with a white apron over it. Of course, we all had long hair and this was 'put up' with hairpins - perhaps wound round the head if it was very long, or coiled on top. This was usually at about seventeen years of age. 'Putting up' one's hair was a most important event -- one now became a 'young lady'!

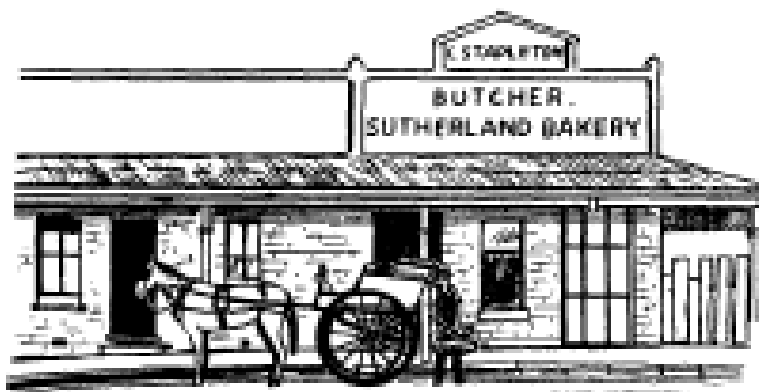


THE FIRST STORE IN PORT HACKING ROAD CARINGBAH, J. T. NELSON & SONS

"Laundry day was really strenuous. All cottons were soaked overnight in wooden tubs with Sunlight soap shredded in. Next day, after rinsing, bar soap was cut into the copper of water; first the white articles were boiled up, and then the coloureds. Soiled clothing was rubbed on a scrub board and thoroughly rinsed before boiling -- men's and boys' trousers were often very hard to get clean. A lot of the whites had to be starched --- and we mixed our own starch. Next day the ironing was done. At first we used Mrs. Potts' irons heated on the fuel stove, later the charcoal- box iron --and when electricity became available we thought ironing was marvellous:"

The Samways family came to Sylvania in 1890, leasing 13 acres from the Holt-Sutherland Estate. This was later purchased for £1 (\$2) an acre the family living there until Mrs. Rose Samways died 1958 (her husband William died 1938), and the property was subdivided and sold.

Their first home was of wood, three rooms, kitchen and verandah, but after a few years it became riddled with white ants, and Mr. Samways built a stone house for his growing family. Mrs. Nettie Nethercote (nee Samways) of Kogarah recalled that picnics to Cronulla Beach were a joyous event, when



STAPLETONS, BUTCHER AND BAKER IN 1898. STAPLETON SUPPLIED THE CONSTRUCTION WORKERS ON THE RAILWAY IN 1885.

Mr. Samways would pack the family into a horse-drawn dray. Mixed bathing was growing popular by the beginning of the century; small girls wore a cotton singlet tucked into white knickers, and boys wore old shorts,

"We older girls would look freaks nowadays!" laughed Mrs. Nethercote. "we wore bathing-suits made of cotton material, with bloomer-type knickers fastening in a band well below the knees; over this was a long tunic with elbow-length sleeves and tied around the waist. Some of us wore a cotton mop-cap, others just tied back their hair. We mainly bathed and splashed it wasn't ladylike to emulate the menfolk in vigorous over-arm beyond the breakers. We had wonderful days on the beach -- there was plenty of lovely golden sand then".

Mrs. Lily Midgley has been over 75 years in the Shire, and so quite literally recalls the "horse and buggy days"-- the only other transport was one's feet. Menai (Bangor) settlers, as was Mrs. Midgley, also relied on rowboats to cross the Woronora River and then walk up the hill to the small shopping centre of Sutherland township. All goods purchased had of course to be carried back to the river, where on the other side the family horse and cart or sulky would be patiently waiting for the long pull up the bush road to home. In summer, recalled Mrs. Midgley, flies and a heated kitchen were most trying -- all cooking was by wood-burning stoves. The flies and neat brought on attacks of gastro-enteritis in children: nursing and the treatment of minor casualties were part of the housewife's duties; severe accident cases, as broken limbs and sometimes snakebite, were taken to the doctor's surgery at Sutherland. Practically the only work available for unmarried women was domestic employment, living in, at about 12/6d (\$1.25) per week. The average workman's wage about 1906 was between £3-£4 (\$6 to \$8) weekly, but outdoor labourers lost pay in bad weather.

By the time World War 1 broke out in 1914 the struggling "pioneer days" were passing, but the Shire in general remained a small rural close-knit community, but as local transport facilities improved first by horse coaches, then the steam tram, and by clumsy motorbuses, so did community living and thus greater opportunity for social intercourse for the women.



A SCENE IN SUTHERLAND LOOKING SOUTH AT THE CLOSE OF THE LAST CENTURY. THE PRESENT RAILWAY BRIDGE IS IN THE SAME POSITION AS THE FENCE SHOWN ON THE RIGHT FOREGROUND. THE SECOND LAST BUILDING IN THE LEFT BACKGROUND WAS THE FIRST COUNCIL CHAMBERS.

Even so, feminine opportunities of employment were restricted, and wages were low; and advanced education was still considered unnecessary for girls; most professional avenues, except teaching and nursing, were male-dominated. Although all Australian women had been granted electoral suffrage in 1902, and NSW State suffrage in the same year, it meant very little to the average woman in the early days of the century: again it was World War 1 which saw the beginning of "women's liberation". Given the opportunity, women's "war work" showed that in many unforeseen avenues of employment they were at least as capable as men.

"Home is the girl's prison and the woman's workhouse", quipped that famous English writer George Bernard Shaw, many years ago. That was a truism of Victorian times and into the Edwardian period of this century, when "nice" girls of working-class families left home only to marry or to go into domestic service. The life of the average married woman revolved around her family and her home, lightened mainly with local community gatherings and entertainment. The husband was both the head of the family and the participant in all local government affairs -- to them "female-Shire Councillors" would have been an undreamt horror not to be contemplated! -- and as for "Women's International Year" -- it would have been enough to drive any respectable (male) Councillor to drink:

-- M. Hutton Neve

Source: Interviews & Notes

"Ladies of Sydney Town"

The belief of certain females in early Sydney Town that they could ex.-press their feelings in a manner proclaiming the liberation of the female from the legal domination of the male was not appreciated by the keepers of law and order:

Margaret Williams, for being groggy, and it was strongly suspected all was not right in the upper stories, was ordered to be returned to government and in future to be assigned only to the Arcadian plains of the interior.

Catherine Kinsella, for obstructing the waters in the gutters and reposing in them, was sentenced for one month to the 3rd class in the factory.

Honora Higgins, for being so stultified with her libations to the rosy God, as to require a wheelbarrow to convey her to the watchhouse, was sentenced to one month in the 3rd class in the factory.

Mary Irving and William Morris were sentenced each to two hours in the stocks for being found the previous night in a loving embrace in the centre of the street, labouring under the fumes of rum.

Margaret Hill, for attending the races instead of her mistress' work, was dismissed, on expressing contrition, with the advice: "Go, and sin no more".

(The "factory" was the Parramatta Female Factory for obstreperous females of the convict population; while providing incarceration, it also provided advanced education in all known vices).

-- The Sydney Herald 1830

PIONEER SHIRE PHOTOGRAPHERS

Charles Kerry

Written history always holds a fascination, yet despite all manner of descriptions aided by contemporary artists of the particular times, the camera for the past 130 years has recorded visual history of people, places and events that provide a n unique calendar of history.



John Begley

Postcards of pre-Shire areas bear such names as "M.E. Davies", "Harding & Pillinger", "Star Plate Coy." and "Government Printer". Many of these cards were printed in England and Germany and coloured here. The professional photographers who recorded the Sutherland Shire's beauty spots and events were pioneers who

have left an indelible record for all generations, and their achievements need to be acknowledged and preserved.

One of Australia's finest photographers was Charles Kerry, who was born in NSW in 1858. He was versatile in his work, employing and training men to record history through the camera. It was Kerry who developed the popular postcard craze, and by the 1890s had the largest photographic establishment in Australia.

When the cumbersome wet-plate process was replaced by the dry plate Kerry exhibited displays of topical events in his studio windows in Sydney.

His camera recorded much of Sutherland Shire's beauty spots some years before the Shire was proclaimed in 1906. In early March 1906 a photographer from Kerry & Co. spent the day in this district taking a series of views for an issue of postcards. Sutherland Progress Association was behind the move.

In September 1908 Sutherland Shire Council contracted with o n e o f Kerry's photographers to record fine views of Woronora River, Port Hacking Cronulla, Sylvania, Miranda, Como and other areas of the Shire. Many of the postcard views taken by Kerry & Co. embracing the Shire and the Royal National Park are still in existence. The promotion was extended for displays in the NSW steam train carriages as well as interstate to promote the "exquisite beauty of the Shire",

A prominent photographer from the beginning of this century to the 193)s was John Begley, who had his first photographic studio at 27 Oxford Street Sydney, known as "Begley Studios".

During these early years Mr. Begley roamed around Cronulla always with his camera, staying weekends with his sister Mrs. McClenahan, who had a holiday home in Nicholson Parade. Several years later another business was

opened in George Street Sydney, opposite the Lyric Theatre, named "The Railway Studios". It was during this period in 1915 that John Begley came to live at Cronulla.

In 1923 a sister-in-law, Mrs. Munro, took over management of "The Railway Studios", and the enterprising Mr. Begley opened up another business in King Street under the name of "Squires Ltd.", proclaiming a "same-day" service with films left before 10.0 a.m. to be ready by 5.0 p.m..

The photographic studios flourished until the great economic depression years made itself felt and the business folded up. John Begley then commenced a studio in Cronulla in a smaller way under his own name, but his eyesight was deteriorating and the effects of the depression were still grimly influencing business activities.

Mr. M. A. Broadhurst was a professional photographer who travelled extensively in NSW, producing a splendid variety of scenic views and events in Sutherland Shire in the period preceding World War 1 to the mid-1920s, being a contemporary of Mr. Begley at this period.

Broadhurst had his headquarters at his home; he stamped the back of his postcards "Made in Australia by Broadhurst Post Card Publishers 51 Alt Street, Ashfield". A large number of photographs were taken on glass plates in addition to thousands of negatives 5¼ x 3¼ inches.

One of his daughters, Catherine, remained in the original home, "Austral", resplendent with a beautiful garden and picturesque drive-way, following the deaths of her father and mother. Catherine was employed by her father in photo-tinting postcards and studio portraits.

Mr. Broadhurst focussed his camera in many Sutherland Shire areas with particular concentration on Cronulla and the Royal National Park.

Large portions of Broadhurst's collections were bought by researchers before their value was fully realised, and the remainder were then handed to the Archives at the Mitchell Library Sydney.

Alf Midgley

Sources: "St. George Call": Mrs. Leila Brown: Miss Catherine Broadhurst.

* * * * *

Oct. 12 : Columbus discovered the West Indies.-- 1492.

Nov. 11. 1918: "Armistice Day" ended hostilities in World War 1.

Dec. 14, 1861: Death of Prince Albert, Consort of Queen Victoria.

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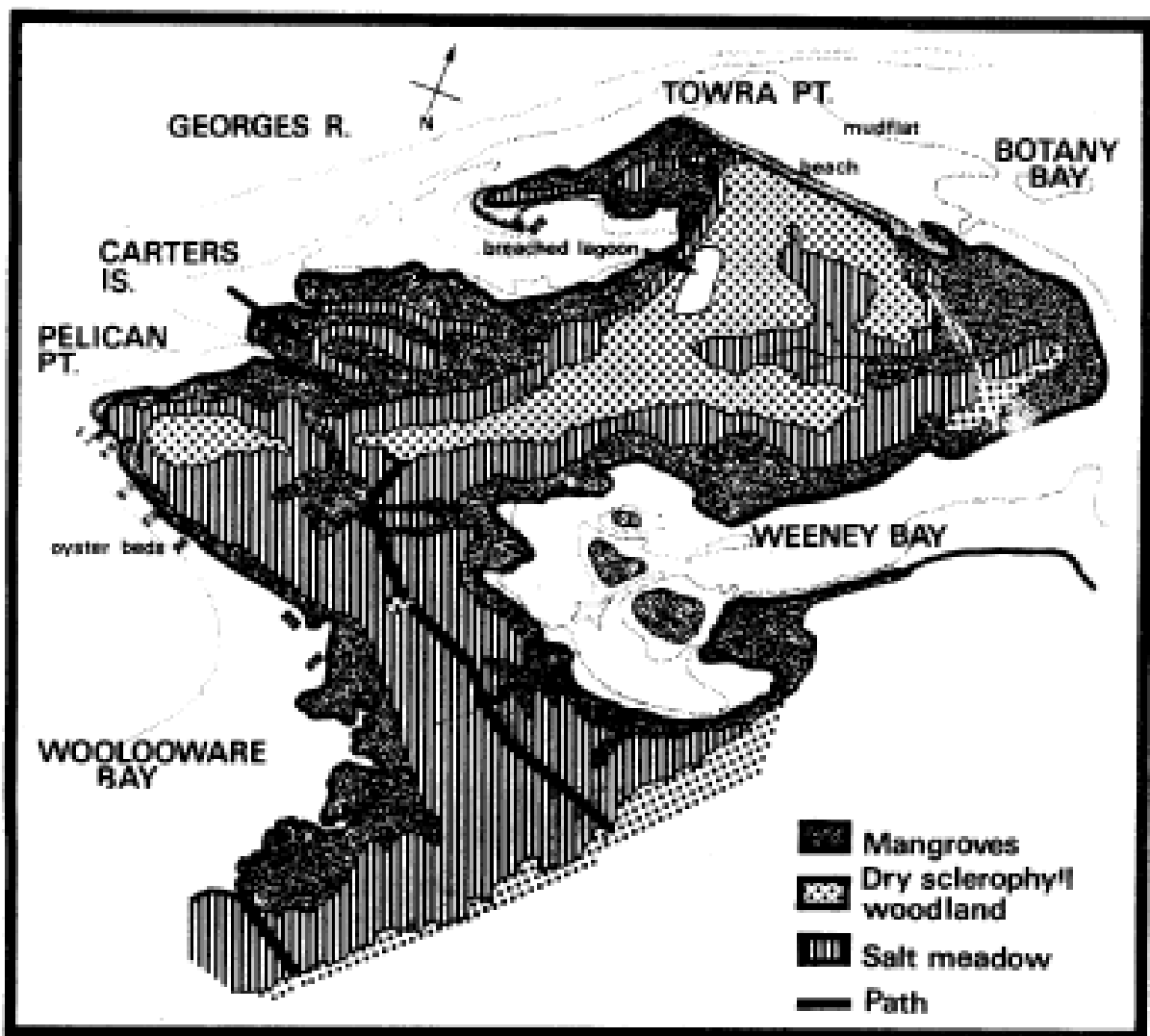
Our Sympathies: It is with deep, regret that we record the sudden death of Mr. George F. Griffiths, who passed away on Aug. 14. Several members were able to attend the funeral service, and a sheath of flowers was sent on behalf of the Society. We extend our sincere sympathy to our Hon. Secretary, Mrs. Aileen Griffiths, in the sad loss of her husband.

KURNELL PENINSULA of Historical. Geological & Botanical Value

In 1973 at a public meeting in Gymea the "Save Kurnell Committee" was formally established to protect the Kurnell/Towra Point area against its development by commercial interests --- including the threat of an airport. Since then this Committee has acted as an active "watchdog", supported in particular by the National Trust NSW, NSW Conservation Society, National Parks & Wildlife Service and the Shire Council. Last year, because of additional proposals to commercialise other areas, this Committee sponsored the "527 Boat Harbour C'tee" -- formed under a special provision of the Local Government Act Section 527; and again fully supported by all the above authorities. Earlier this year the 527 Boat Harbour C'tee received a n initial Federal grant of \$6,000 to provide essential preparatory protection, including fencing, to allow basic work on stabilisation of the dunes and

Map showing the vegetation zones of Towra Point.

after A. M. Fox.



and some regeneration of native flora -- much of which is being damaged or destroyed by illegal "bikie" riding. This work is being undertaken by the Shire Council on behalf of the 527 C'tee.

The following information has been extracted from a long article by A. Mr. Fox, Chief Wildlife Officer NPWS, writing in "Parks & Wildlife" magazine August 1973.

-- M.H.N.

An Estuarine System — Towra Point

An estuary is the body of water associated with the mouth of a river and which is subject to both fresh water and marine influences. Thus, an "estuarine system" embraces a zone of interaction between freshwater, sea and land.

Towra Point is an estuarine system of considerable complexity, and comprises a mixture of sandspits, bars, mudflats, dunes and beaches. The history of this area was probably thus:-

1. During the Wianamatta upheaval (probably about 1 million years ago) the area including the later Botany Bay remained relatively stationary while the surrounding Hawkesbury, Blue Mountains and Illawarra areas were uplifted.
2. The major Ice Age recessions and transgressions of the sea incised stream channels to lower base levels, flooded, drained and then flooded them over and over. The mouth of Georges River may have reached to the ocean somewhere near Cronulla, or most probably by a deeply cut bed which is now the entrance to Botany Bay.
3. Sometime before 5,000 years B.C. sea levels more or less settled at their present level. Early in this period, or perhaps at an earlier minor glacial movement, the south flowing ocean current and the onshore south-easterly swell delivered quantities of sand into the area of Bate Bay. Sediments were supplied to the same general area from the westerly Georges River. Assuming that the estuary of the river lay north of "Kurnell Island" the Kurnell sandstone deposits would have been joined to the Cronulla area by a ridge approximately underlying the Cronulla dunes. This ridge was flooded as the sea level rose, causing a reduction in the force of the on-shore ocean swell and providing conditions for the formation of sandbars. This resulted in the depositing of a coarse sandgrain at the Kurnell end and very fine grain at the Cronulla end (see Fig. 4).
4. The saltness of the enclosed waters is maintained because the bay has been and is, continually, tidally flushed. The relatively still waters of Botany Bay have allowed beds of mud to be deposited, probably as a "deltaic fan" (see Figs. A & B). This process was interrupted at irregular intervals over the past 6,000 years or so, indicating minor changes in the Towra shoreline near Carter's Island where peat outcrops in the white beach sands form a kind of upper layer. The variations of sea levels and their deposits, and the growth of allied vegetation, are main causes of the present pattern at Towra Point and in the formation of the sand dune on the Point (Fig. C),

The Towra Point landform is still an active one -- in fact, due

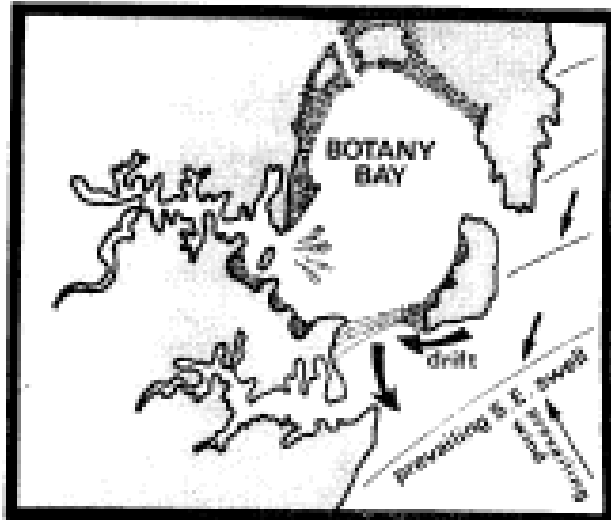
to human agencies, the process of deposit appears to be hastened; and studies of aerial photographs since 1936 show that all mangrove areas of the Georges River estuary have been considerably enlarged, due mainly to the heavier load of sediments carried down the river from freshly cleared and subdivided land in the headwaters.

In the late 1880s oyster cultivation began around here, and several methods were employed, one of which was to lay down beds of heavy timber logs on the mud flats, on which rows of stones were laid. A 1902 Act of Parliament required every oyster farmer to use one of the set methods. Also, numerous stout wooden posts were imbedded in the mud to act as spat collectors. ("spat" is the elementary form of oyster growth). This laying out of acres of wood and stone slabs and posts on the mudflats between high and low water levels reduced the water movement and created a greatly increased area to which mud could adhere. As well, the number of large Casuarina tree stumps that are scattered about the area south of Towra Point probably indicate that the early harvest of timber for the oyster industry caused the area to become unstable. In at least one case a deforested sandbank has retreated inland. Tidal waters have breached it at its weakest point, flooding a freshwater swamp behind the bank.

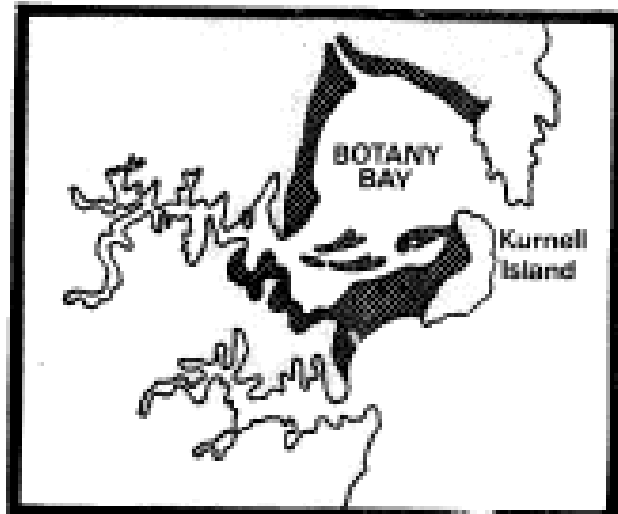
As was pointed out in the April issue, these estuaries form a vital link in the survival of many thousands of migratory birds. As well, this area is of unique geological and botanical value, providing a "living scientific classroom".

Similarly, the Boat Harbour

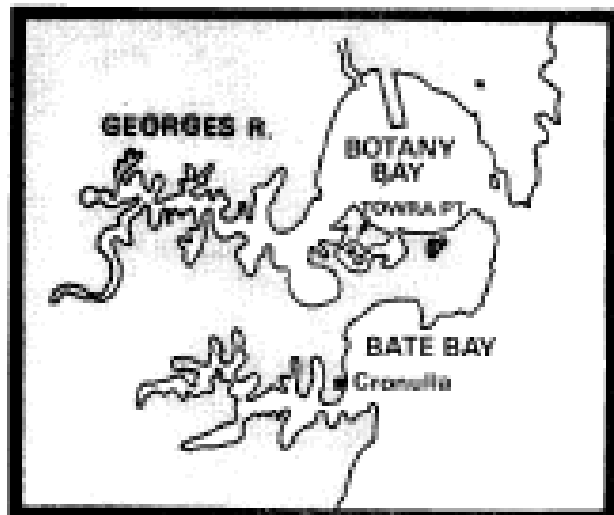
Diag. 1. The development of Botany Bay.



A. Post glacial flooding of the lower Georges River and the Botany still-stand depression.



B. Kurnell Is. linked to Cronulla by a sand bar. A delta has developed at the mouth of Georges River.



C. Botany Bay today.

after A. M. Fox.

area and its background rising to Endeavour Heights, are other uniquely valuable scientific locations, with the old "Botany Cone" -- estimated to be at least 10,000 years old -- another strange geological structure; but this, sad to say, is "moving", because of the damage already done to it by the intruding "bikies". Some 15 to 20 feet have already been denuded from the one, and the natural vegetation binding the sand is slowly being destroyed. Once this area is fenced in and these destructive motorbike riders kept out, then the 527 Committee will start initial revegetation; and the historically valuable geological structures may be preserved for future generations.

-- M.H.N.

THE PRESIDENT WRITES

In between the August and September general meetings my family and self have had the opportunity of visiting parts of Australia not seen by us before --- and probably not seen by many Society members. Our principle purpose was to retrace a path taken by my wife and myself in November 1953, to Adelaide across the north-western portion of Victoria, noting the changes and anything else of interest, and returning via Broken Hill.

We were not disappointed. The path proved to be as picturesque as ever, with new young wheat on every side, and the usual flocks of pink and white cockatoos. The area proved to be more than simply picturesque, because the various little towns all showed their historic past -- with a main street of post-supported awnings; and each had its own local history museum. Bendigo -- by no means a "little" town -- overflowed with history, and transporting the tourists on its old electric trams.

Port Pirie in South Australia has a magnificent historical museum, the building decorated in exquisite "iron lace".

The road east from Port Augusta was travelled to Broken Hill (also well seeped in history); past hundreds of miles of saltbush and grass to Forbes, which is the location of an extensively laid out pioneer village, containing many old buildings and machines. For anyone visiting either Adelaide or NW Victoria, an hour or two spent wandering around the Forbes Pioneer Village is to be highly commended.

Naturally we took many photographs, and hope to be able to show members the best of these at a future meeting.

-- Harold Ivers.

Shire approaches Seventy years of age: On Wednesday March 7, 1906, "Shire No. 133" was proclaimed the "Shire of Sutherland". The January issue of the Bulletin will contain special articles to commemorate this.

“I Remember”

THE GIANT’S MARBLE

My mother bought about 5 acres of land on the western side of Price' Avenue Woronora in the early 1920s for £25 (\$50). It could hardly have been described as a good building lot for instead of being horizontally flat it was almost vertically flat! -- like a huge sloping wall with a small flat piece at the base; the edge faced the road and what was left was over the top towards Menai. My father thought he would build a small cottage on it for renting, not only to show a profit on the outlay but also to prevent trespassers.

My brother and I explored the land, and up on the top pushed over many loose stones and rocks to ensure they would not fall on the proposed cottage. There was one rock like a "giants' marble", about 8 feet high, a perfect sphere and could have weighed up to about 6 tons, and it stood encrusted in small loose-looking rock not far from the precipice edge. Dad decided the only thing to do was to blow it to pieces with gelignite, but the project was shelved until he could see Joe Cotton (who lived at Menai) who knew all about blasting rock.

After some months had passed, I happened to be up on top where the huge "marble" was-- and just happened to have a small crowbar with me, an axe, a large wood wedge -- and a couple of mates. It occurred to us that if we cleared the base of the rock and then used the wedge and crowbar -- well, after about an hour or so she started to move --and then over the edge she went, dropping sheer about 40 feet, when we expected it to stop. The ground shook, quantities of loose rocks followed the huge boulder, and the trees swayed and trembled — there was truly a hell of a noise!

Instead of the boulder stopping, it took off like a startled rabbit, creating a tremendous noise. Clouds of dust arose; it gathered speed, grinding and knocking down several large trees, then cut a sward through the bush like a road, hit a big outcrop of rock and lifted it into the air, then jumped clean across the road and landed on Barclay's vegetable garden which vanished immediately. It missed Barclay's house by about 20 feet, but there followed another crash as it bounced off again on its journey to the bottom and smashing a big red gum. It then took a final leap into the air, landing in the swamp and lifting the water about 50 feet into the air. We could see rainbows in the spray. Smaller rocks were now rolling down the hill; the scrub was battered and bent over and there were big holes gouged out where the boulder had bounced. It really made a terrible mess!

I remember Old Barclay rushed out of his front door yelling: "It's an avalanche). Run for your lives)." and Mumma Barclay and the two small kids racing after him down the road.

We took off across the top and headed for home hiding the tools in the bush on the way, so that we wouldn't be suspected, as the noise must have been heard for miles around (in those days it was a sleepy valley) -- and I guessed we were unlikely to be Highly commended for our day's work.

This may not be history, but the "giants marble" is still in the

swamp; if it had hit Barclay's house that most certainly would have been history).

Mr. Barclay made a tour of the locals telling them of his narrow escape. I remember laughing to myself when he told my father that he had been hearing rumblings on several nights before the avalanche, and my father giving me a peculiar look and later enquiring if I knew anything about the boulder rolling down the hill.

But of course I didn't! — I was at a mate's place around the corner when I heard the noise myself !!

-- Geo. Heavens

"Once in Sylvania"

One of the early settlers on Holt land in the vicinity of Horse Rock Point and the Government punt, was Mrs. Honoria Rice, widow of naval Capt. William Rice. Mrs. Rice had a small general store and a "postal receiving office" in her home. Her daughter, Claire or Clara, conducted a "Dame's School" in a side room off the verandah for a few months in 1883, until a Government school was opened nearby.

In May 1909 Mrs. Rice, whose address was then given as Belgrave Street Sylvania, lodged complaint with one Inspector Sparkes.

It seems that Mrs. Rice objected to a fowlyard and a stable closet (presumably a horse shed) being built on land adjoining her cottage. Not only that, but the stable was erected alongside one of the bedrooms, one of the bedroom walls apparently forming the wall of the stable! Seemingly this in itself was not so much the complaint but the fact that the snores of the horse had "rendered the bedroom useable"! Apparently there was no complaint concerning the varied odours which must have arisen from the combined living of horse and fowls in the proximity of the cottage!

-- Alf Midgley

Source: -"St. George Call".

* * * * *

Tourists' Aboriginal Sites: at Mootwingee Historical Site, about 85 miles north-east of Broken Hill, the National Parks & Wildlife Service has been forced temporarily to close the major Aboriginal rock-engraving area because of deliberate vandalism not only have fragments of rock been taken but the carvings themselves have also been defaced. The rock area will be re-opened later this year after a walkway and viewing platforms have been built above the engravings.

"The Open Road", NRMA: June 1975

Mr. Bernard Sargeant, Shire Librarian and the Society's chief Archives Officer, returned at the end of September after 3 months' leave of absence in England and on the Continent.

CHAMPION LADY SCULLER

The first settlers in the area now known as Peakhurst were the Pickerings; they arrived in the Colony from Yorkshire, England, in 1810 and settled in the Cowpastures, whence they came to Peakhurst in September 1824.

A son, George, was born on August 15, 1824, and was only a few weeks old when his parents decided to leave the Cowpastures. In 1847 George married Miss Mary Ann Ibbotson, descendent of a member of the household of Governor Macquarie, and in 1848 a son, the first white child, was born in Peakhurst. He too was named George; he married and resided in Mortdale, raising a family often children.

A second son to the Pickerings from the Cowpastures was born on the Estate at Peakhurst. His name was William ("Jim"), and he married on Jany. 7, 1853: nine sons and three daughters were reared --William, George, Oswald, Lloyd, Frank, Amy, Emily, Clifton, Richmond, Harry, Stanley, Vera.

Jim Pickering worked with a brother for the Fowler Pottery Co., and laid out the gardens around "Cranbrook", the "country residence" of Mr. Fowler, in the area now known as Illawong; later, one of Jim's sons, Will, lived next door to "Cranbrook" as caretaker of that property.

Emily ("Emmie") Pickering was born in 1889 and, as she grew up in the natural environment around Peakhurst she developed, a love of the outdoors. Her ability and keenness in rowing was to lead her to a great achievement. She was also a fine horsewoman, owning a lovely horse which she would often ride into the forests where her brothers were cutting wood to heat the ovens of Hurstville's first baker, Fred Mumford. Emmie would often take the crosscut saw with her brothers as they sawed up the logs.

Miss Pickering's brothers, Will and Harry, were also keen on roving, and helped her in her training on Georges River. In addition, there were ladies' and gents.' rowing races from Kangaroo Point to Como, under the auspices of the St. George Sculling Club. Emmie would sometimes race with her two sisters.

With the challenge of the Ladies Sculling Championships of Australia in view Emmie continued her training, which included jogging with brother Harry from 'Peakhurst to Kogarah.

The course for the Ladies Sculling Championship was scheduled for the Parramatta River over a three-mile course for £50 (\$100) a side on 16th March 1912. The defending champion was Miss Gertie Lewis from Taree; she had done most of her rowing in northern waters and having won the champion-ship five times, very confidently met her challenger on the starting line.

Large crowds watched the event in many types of water craft and from the riverside. Crowded ferries followed the contestants to cheer them on. Amongst the ferry passengers urging Emmie were members of her family and Peter Kemp, a champion sculler of world class in Australia's golden age of sculling at the latter end of last century.

The race was a thrilling one with Miss Pickering becoming the new Australian champion. Elias Laycock, the Australian and onetime world champion sculler, presented Emmie with a medal which she later made into a brooch.

During a practice run nearly two years later on February 13, 1914, Emmie and her brother Stan were rowing out of Oatley Bay into Georges River when to their dismay the fin of a shark appeared and glided between the two sculling craft. It was an unnerving experience, as a miss-stroke with the oars or a slight bump from the shark would have caused a capsize. As the shark pursued them they raced for a sandy beach in Neverfail Bay, opposite Como. A local newspaper reported that the shark was approximately 15 feet in length.

Shortly after the Woronora Bridge was opened in October 1912, road construction began up the hill towards Menai. The contract for the work was let to Samuel Lawrence; Emmie's father, Jim, being the foreman. Two of her brothers and an uncle, George Pickering, were engaged on road building. Amongst others employed was Peter Kemp the former champion sculler.

Once a week Emmie would carry supplies in a big hamper from her home at Peakhurst to Holland's Boatshed near the mouth of Salt Pan Creek. Here she hired a boat and with the supplies for the Pickering menfolk and youngest sister Vera for company, rowed to the Woronora Bridge where the men were camped in tents; as the work advanced up the hill the tents were moved this meaning a longer journey for Emmie with her hamper.

The suburb of Peakhurst takes its name from Isaac Peaks, the second settler in the area. Isaac Street of today runs through the centre of the old Pickering Estate of 34 acres. The second half of the name of Peakhurst was named after a friend Mr. Hurst. A small park known as Pickering Park in Isaac Street Peakhurst, is named after the pioneer family. A fig tree in the Park has a strong link with the past; it was a gift from Mrs. Macquarie, wife of the Governor, to the Pickering, who planted it in the early 1820s. A plaque was promised by Hurstville Council to be placed in the Park indicating how it was so named but it has never eventuated.

Emily Pickering died in 1971 at the age of 83 years.

Fred Midgley. Source: interview with Mrs. Vera Coleborne, sister of Emily.

Queen Victoria's Wedding Ring: the Queen did not follow the English tradition of wearing the ring on the left hand, but on the right. When she married the German Prince Albert the marriage was according to the German style wherein the bride has the ring placed on the 3rd right hand finger.

NSW Steam Preservation Co-op. Society Ltd.: the 2nd Steam Rally will be held Oct. (Sat.) and Oct. 6 (Mon.) at Ingleburn Park, Ingleburn. To be seen in action --Steam Rollers & Steam Traction Engines; Portable and Stationary Engines: Parking and Refreshments: Adults 60c, Children 40c.

"COLLINGWOOD",HistoricLiverpoolHome

Official Opening

Sept, 6, 1975



From 1931 until 1969 this was the clubhouse of the Liverpool Golf Club, when the house and the course were sold to developers for a housing estate. A condition of subdivision was that the developers Stocks & Holdings dedicated the house and certain ground to the Liverpool City Council as a fore-runner to eventual reconstruction. Stock & Holdings also generously donated \$10,000 towards the restoration together with actual work to the value of \$3,000; a grant of \$35,000 through the National Estate Programme of the Commonwealth Government was also received.

For many years this building was known -- at least to the older generations of the district -- as "Bunker's Cottage". Eben Bunker was an American whaler who went to England and married Margaret Thompson, whose father was personal pilot to King George III and whose mother was a cousin of Admiral Lord Collingwood. Eben Bunker sailed with the Third Fleet in command of the "William & Mary", a whaling ship turned transport, arriving in Sydney Aug. 1791. After making several other voyages he returned to England and brought out his wife and family in 1806.

He has a passing connection with the earliest days of this pre-Shire, in that one of his daughters married Thomas Laycock jun. of "Kelvin" at Bringelly, she dying in childbirth after her fifth child; Laycock then married Margaret Connell (whose brother John was to become owner of some 3,000 acres in the pre-Shire). When Laycock died in 1833 Margaret's brother John and Capt. Eben Winker were made guardians of the children and the Laycock Estate (long before married women had any legal rights).

Eben lived at "Collingwood" (named after his wife's relative) until he died there in 1836 and was buried in the Old Liverpool Cemetery (now the Liverpool Pioneers' Memorial Park).

The actual date of construction of the home is not clear, but it is thought to have been around 1810. Only three rooms remain of the original house -- the front bedroom, front entrance hallway and the sitting-room. The remaining front room on the southern side was added in the 1840s and the gabled section about 1850. The service block, at the rear, appears to have been rebuilt about 1865.

"Collingwood" has been restored to what it was around 1875, when it was considered to be in its prime. This was able to be done because some elderly citizen has in her possession a well-preserved photograph of the home taken in the 1870s, and from this the architects reconstructed.

Naturally it will take some time to be able to present the house as

it may have been about 1875. Some of the rooms are partially furnished, but period furniture is not easily obtained; some has already been donated and other donations are anticipated. The Liverpool & District Historical Society has opened a most interesting display of documents, photographs and varied odds and ends in the gabled front room. In due course the City Council will landscape the surrounding garden with "period" planting; the three-foot cream wooden picket fence surrounding the property creates a most attractive approach.

"Collingwood" is about 1½ miles southward along the Hume Highway, near to the Technical College; no details are known as yet with regard to viewing the property. A flatette is being provided for a member of the Liverpool & District Historical Society to act as Curator.

-- M. Hutton Neve

Source: Brochure issued at Official Opening.

* * * * *

SPORTS DAY AT SUTHERLAND

At a public meeting at the end of January 1901 held in Kitt's Federal Hall (now the Royal Hotel, East Parade), following the operations of a working committee to organise a Sports Day at Sutherland. From this meeting a strong committee was formed, and the date fixed for the big day was on Saturday March 2nd, on the Sutherland Cricket Ground adjoining Lobbs' Hall in East Parade (Lobbs' Hall is now occupied by Opt's Pharmacy and adjoining Bookshop). An attractive programme was drawn up, including a tug-o-war -- for this event it was expected that four teams representing Port Hacking Miranda, National Park and Sutherland would compete.

It was a "perfect summer's day" when some 500 people arrived to enjoy themselves, coming from all parts of the district and beyond. The Helensburgh Model Band played all day, and numerous dances of the green were enjoyed by the young folk; while two Highlanders with their bagpipes played and danced to the delight of the Scottish folk as well as other visitors. The sun had set before the programme was finished, and as a result it was hoped to have another sunny afternoon of events.

A social gathering was held in the evening and was very pleasant for all, with Mr. Croft presiding and presenting the prizes. One competitor, a prolific winner, quipped that he would come round on the Monday with a spring cart to collect his trophies. The evening produced some excellent singing contributed by Messrs. McCulloch, Toovey, Dodd and his friend as well as others.

-- Alf Midgley

Source: "St. George Advocate": March 1901.

SOCIETY'S FIRST TEN YEARS; Special Supplement to be published in April 1976 Bulletin. In 1966 a public meeting was called by the Shire President at the request of a group of residents to discuss the formation of a local Historical Society, this being held in the Council Chambers on March 23rd, when it was formally resolved to do so, and the first General Meeting was called for April 15, 1966. At this meeting 59 members were enrolled according to No. 1 Receipt Book, and they are therefore the Founders of the Society, and their names will be published in this Supplement.

SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

Cronulla Public School celebrated its "Jubilee in the 'New School Building'" of 1925 -- and its 65th year of foundation -- on September 27, with an all-day carnival. The Society organised a "mini exhibition" at which some members wore historical frocking. An illustrated booklet "History of the Cronulla Public School & District" (by M. Hutton Neve) was on sale. The booklet will be available (a limited number only) at the October meeting, priced 50 cents.

Taren Point Public School: earlier this year a "Jubilee" was also celebrated, but it was a quiet function amongst the children. A most attractive booklet was published, "Golden Jubilee 1925-1975", the cover carrying a by-line "Including early history of Taren Point" -this "early history" started at with the auction of "Taren Point Estate"! The early history of this area goes back to the days of timbercutting etc. by John Connell jun. from the 1820s onward; here he had his homestead and timber-mill until he sold out to Thomas Holt c, 1860. The whole of Taren Point was part of the Holt-Sutherland Estate, whereon lived Mr. Frederick Holt in "Sutherland House" from 1881 until his death in 1902. Frederick Street and Holt Road are both named after him. The old name for Taren Point was "Comyns Point" spelt on a Holt Estate map as "Cummons" (1868) and until quite recent years known as "Commons Point".

Frederick Holt is interred in Woronora Cemetery. The Hon.

Thos. Holt died in 1888 whilst on a visit to England and is buried at Horbury in Yorkshire.

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Lt. Brian Woodward and his wife (Cronulla), both members since their arrival here about 2 years ago, returned to England with their infant daughter at the end of August. During this time Dr. Woodward, who worked as a physicist at the Atomic Energy Commission at Lucas Heights, spent most of his lunch hours exploring the surrounding rugged and virgin bushland of Lucas Heights where he discovered several unknown aboriginal sites depicting rock carvings and implement-making grooves. These he has photographed, measured and drawn to scale. This valuable information of aboriginal Shire history will be collated after Dr. Woodward's return to England, and will then be made available to the Society and archaeological authorities.

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"Slush Lamps" were amongst the worst domestic afflictions suffered by the early NSW pioneers. They were made by half-filling a small tin with earth covered by a layer of fat. There were several types of wicks, a common one being a piece of pine wrapped around with moleskin (usually in NSW a type of cotton fustian cloth) and stuck into the earth. The lamp gave a poor flickering light and filled the cottage with ill-smelling fumes. If the flame was snuffed out by pouring molten fat on it instead of blowing, there were less resulting fumes: if blown out, the fumes from the night before would still be in the cottage when the occupants awoke next morning. Only the poorest used these slush lamps: candles, and lamps burning whale oil, provided early illumination, to be followed later by the extraction of kerosene from local shale mining.

Please keep this page for reference: Fixtures overleaf.

Publications Committee: Mr. G. Heavens (Convenor), Mrs. M. Hutton Neve (Editor), Mrs..P. Garland, Messrs. R. Hall and F. Midgley, 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 history. Please state source if extracted or re-written material is used. Interviews with elderly residents or personal reminiscences are always welcome. If hand-written, please print names, in BLOCK (= capital) letters. Hand to President, Convenor or Editor. Contributions for January 1976 issue should be handed in at the November meeting.

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

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

Monthly Meetings of the Society are held on the 2nd Friday, commencing at 8.0 p.m., in the Presbyterian Church Hall, cnr. Glencoe & Flora Streets Sutherland. Visitors are welcome.

Publications of Local History are on sale at each monthly meeting; proceeds are paid to the Society.... Illustrated History of Sutherland Shire, 50c (F. Midgley): Bygone Days of Sutherland, \$1.00: Thomas Holt, 50c: and Kurnell, 50c: all these are illustrated: Martha Matilda (Mrs, Jas. Birnie) leaflet, 20c: the last four are by M. Hutton Neve,

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The opinions expressed in this Bulletin are not necessarily those of the Society.

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Please keep this page for reference:
From THE HONORARY SECRETARY

Dear Members,

A very interesting programme is promised for the last three months of 1975:

- OCTOBER: Mr. Brian Rogers (of Wollongong Institute of Education) will speak about Coalcliff.
- NOVEMBER: Alf and Fred Midgley will talk about Menai, and its early associations as Bangor.
- DECEMBER: It has been requested that members be invited to show slides taken on some of the Society's outings. If you have even one or two which could be added to those of other folk, this should make a most interesting evening.

Also, we hope to have a "special supper", being our "Christmas" night.

JANUARY 1976: Members' Night: If you could "read a paper" or speak about an historical subject of special appeal to yourself -- say about 15 minutes— will you please contact either the President or Hon. Secretary so that a programme may be arranged.

EXCURSIONS: for all details regarding Excursions please contact Mrs. A. Becker, 18 Tamar Street Sutherland (phone 521.1240).

Saturday. 29th November: All day to Windsor.

Fares: Members \$2.00 Visitors \$2.50

Leave Cronulla 8.0 a.m.: Sutherland 8.30 a.m..

WEEKEND TO GULGONG: March 20 and 21, 1976: Cost of Tour, inclusive of Lunch Saturday, Dinner & Bed: and Sunday, Breakfast and Lunch, \$40.00. Tickets available now.

As on previous weekend excursions, the cost of the trip will be taken by instalments, but final payment is requested by February meeting, to enable all commitments to be met.

Yours sincerely,

AILEEN GRIFFITHS,

Hon. Secretary.