

# SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## QUARTERLY BULLETIN



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TOM UGLY'S HORSE FERRY

The vehicular ferries which crossed the Georges River at Lugarno, Taren Point and Tom Ugly's played a vital part in the transport history of the Shire. But as the population increased so did the traffic, and with the advent of the motor car the ferries became inadequate and were unable to cope, resulting in irate protests from citizens.

In the issue of March 5, 1910 "The St. George Call", a weekly news-paper from Kogarah, had this to say about the situation of the day:-

"It is getting worse as time goes on and is the ridicule of the State administration; a serious drawback to the district is the general verdict on the ferry service at Tom Ugly's Point. On the matter, the Mayor of Kogarah read the following Minute at Monday's meeting of the Council, and his remarks were heartily endorsed. He said, 'I draw the Council's attention to the very congested state of the traffic at the steam punt, Tom Ugly's Point, every Saturday, Sunday and holiday. Very great inconvenience is caused to the travelling public by the serious delay, often necessitating hours of waiting before crossing is affected. As the present steam punt is wholly unable to cope with the traffic on the occasions mentioned and in view of the fact that the traffic is rapidly increasing, I beg to recommend that the Hon.. Minister for Public Works be asked to duplicate the present steam punt service so that the extra cable and punt may be used when the traffic requires, thus increasing facilities for the crossing and that the co-operation of the Sutherland Council be requested in the matter, and also that of Messrs. Taylor and Downs, MLA."

In more satirical vein the "Bulletin", Sydney, a week previously published the following:-

"In no part of N.S.W. will you identify more blasphemy, vocal and



The drawing, from a photograph of 1910, shows the two ferries at Sylvania with the additional ferry on the left. It must have been a quiet day as a horse-drawn cart and driver wait in front of a car with its occupants of "hard-hatted" gentry to cross to Tom Ugly's Point. On the right, the other ferry is about to unload three motorcars and a horse-drawn bus.

unexpressed, facial, gesticulatory and otherwise, than in the neighbourhood of Tom Uglys Horse-Ferry on any given Sunday or holiday. As the shades of evening start to fall, about 17,000 vehicles ranging from five-horse charabanc to the common horse sulky, and from the largest and wildest breed of motor to the mere bike, approach the National Park side of the ferry. Their occupants are bound for Sydney and the evening meal. They have arrived hastily for the most part and with a cheery disregard for the laws touching on furious driving. Their on-rush is checked by a lank apologetic policeman with pink hair. He motions them into position in the endless line of conveyances.

The voyager is then free to settle down and estimate exactly how many hours, days or weeks—as the case may be — he is going to vegetate in that atmosphere of flying dust and profanity. The calculation is simple. The punt takes 20 minutes to do its trip and accommodates twelve motors, buggies, sulkies or whatnot at a time. Thus, he who is (say) 37th on the line will tarry for an hour on the hither side of the water; while if he is 750th—which he is quite liable to be -- he will board the punt about the same time the following evening. There is no other way bar swimming or flying to Sydney.

“The place where this great block occurs is destitute of any pub. All it provides in the way of sustenance for the human animal is the river oyster; a strange small bivoline which is vended perfunctionally by local residents and its horrible concomitant the 'soft drink'. Those who are held up at this place are always hungry. They have either consumed, jettisoned or thrown at each other during the day every atom of food which they originally brought with them. The alcohol of the morning is numbered with the beers of yesteryear. It is a grisly experience to wander past those vehicles some hundreds of paces from the water's edge. Their owners wear the wolfish glare of the famished. When the policeman passes they eye him hungrily. His is a risky billet. He appears to go unarmed. At any time he may be fallen upon by a famine-maddened party of surf bathers and fried for supper. It would serve the Government dashed well right if they lost their officer in some scandalous way of the sort. For it is rank foolishness this attempt to serve with a slow traffic-smitten road in Australia. The Wade administration deserves even more drastic punishment than the loss of one tall bewildered policeman”.

This was satire indeed. Somehow the Government moved; stung into action by taunts and protests, verbal and literary, into providing an additional ferry before the year was out. But you cannot stop progress and it wasn't long before the cry was out for abridge as even two punts mere not adequate.

- Fred Midgley.

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#### DELAYED ISSUE OF BULLETIN

Owing to circumstances beyond our control, we very much regret that this August issue has been delayed.

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MY SWAN SONG,

It had been murder all night; I was in agony — and it was throbbing like a steam engine. As I trudged unwillingly down the road to President Avenue (Sutherland) I felt I must get rid of it once and for all.

With a feeling of dread I opened the white wooden gate, walked onto the verandah and into the front room. It was dismal and looked mid-Victorian --four chairs, a wicker table with a few dog-eared periodicals on it, and a couch; I sat on the edge of a chair and I felt very weak.

"Yes? and what do you want?" I looked up; he was a big man, quite old and stoutish, with grey hair.

"I've had a bad night", I said. "Come in here and sit down".

He took off his coat and put on a carpenter's white apron. The chair was an old-style barber's chair, with a makeshift headrest. On the table were an assortment of tools in an open black-padded box on my left, a contraption like an old spinning-wheel of the 18th century -- I figures out it was for turning a drill; it had one foot-pedal as on a church organ. A glass jug full of water and a tumbler stood on a palm stand; but the most important furnishing was a large brass jardinière standing on a stool.

He said, 'Open up", and put his hand in my mouth: it smelt of tobacco. He was armed with a small rear-vision mirror and a chrome crowbar. He asked, "Which one? What's your name? -- I've seen you around somewhere. It's a beautiful day... Where do you live? ... Is it still sore?" I endeavoured to reply: "Ug! Ah! Gu ah! — that's it:" As he removed his fat fist I used the brass bowl — it had a big hole in it! "What do you want me to do with it? I suggest it comes out. It will cost you two and six". Trying to appear brave, I replied, "Yes, it had better come out. Will I make an appointment?" "No", he returned, "I can do it for you now."

He proceeded to tinkle tools and fiddle with a large gruesome needle, the brass showing through the chrome with years of use. He suddenly turned, pinned my head down and started to puncture my gums — this hurt much more than the original toothache. He carried on like a bull ant for a while, then put down the implement of torture, looked at me and observed, "That will take a while to settle".

I used the brass ornament again: it was me that needed time to settle — I was sweating with pain and fear, but the worst was yet to come. He was quite unconcerned, reading a copy of Turf Guide and smoking a cigar.

After a time he plunged a spear into my gum: "You can't feel that, can you?" I gasped, "Yes, I can!" He assured me I couldn't, and proceed to pick up what looked like a combination of multi-grips-cum-stiltsons, and went to work. His first action busted the tooth to pieces, leaving the butt and roots firmly implanted in the gum. From then on the agony and noise were unbelievable — I'm sure the cocaine hadn't functioned at all. I roared and he wrestled; I used all the water in the tumbler , and knocked the brass

Jardinière to the floor. As he put it back on the stool he told me it was a tough tooth, and I assured him it was, and so we struggled together — he nearly broke my neck!

I don't know what then happened; he had hold of the tooth firmly, but suddenly with a crunch it gave way — his legs and mine tangled as he sat on the floor, while I proceeded to spit and splutter and make further use of the brass ornament. I got up, paid the 2/6d asked, and he put it in his pocket, wiped his forehead, told me to rinse with salt and water, and then he bade me goodbye.

I walked unsteadily up the road; my mouth, although devoid of the offending tooth, was hurting worse than when I had walked down an hour earlier.... I had visited the local "horror chamber", and I hoped I would never return! Dentist Swan was a particularly nice man to meet socially, but not at all to meet professionally, in my humble opinion!

-- Geo. Heavens

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### THE NEW SOUTH WALES MOUNTED POLICE

The first body of Mounted Police in Australia was formed b Governor Brisbane to assist in controlling the outer areas of the Colony of N.S.W.

Members of the force were recruited mainly from the infantry regiments serving in the Colony, so that it began with a distinctly military character. As pioneers of the advance guard of civilisation the Mounted Police wrote a bright chapter in our early history by bringing law and order to the great Outback, despite the Predatory activities of bushrangers and other major difficulties.

After the amalgamation of the various Police bodies throughout the State in 1862, the headquarters of the Mounted Police were established a t the Belmore Barracks,. now the site of Central Railway Station. Then in 1907 after temporary occupancy of Premises at the Sydney Showground, the barracks were transferred to the Police Depot, now known as the New South Wales Police Academy,. Bourke Street Redfern. Today, the N.S.W. Police Academy i s the only remaining Police Station in N.S.W. containing Mounted Police.

— N.S.W. Police Dept.

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Invitation: Kogarah Historical Society are holding a "birthday celebration" for Carss Cottage, Carss Bush Park, Blakehurst (Gregory's Street Directory, Map 35: K 14). This is now a delightful Museum of the mid-Victorian period, Entrance to the Cottage is 30 cents Adults: during the "birthday celebrations" on Aug. 28, from 1.0 to 5 p.m., Devonshire Teas will be available for 50 cents.

## DETENTION IN THE ORIGINAL COUNCIL CHAMBERS

In 1929 compulsory Military Training was in operation. Lads attaining the age of 15 years had to report to the Army Medical Officer at Hurstville Drill Hall for medical examination and to receive their uniforms. We also received a roster card for parades which we had to attend on Wednesday afternoons and Saturday afternoons for one year. I didn't mind Wednesday afternoon when I would leave work at mid-day to attend. Saturday afternoons clashed with my plans, so I never attended.



The training ground was where the present-day private hospital "Kareena" stands, opposite the Sutherland Shire Hospital on the Kingsway. The officer in charge of the training was Billy Bye, whose parents had a poultry farm at Miranda. Bye was a medical student at the time and was later to become Superintendent of Sydney Hospital.

As my card showed many hours A.W.L. I was summoned by the army to appear at Kogarah Court and to bring a towel, soap and toothbrush. When I arrived at the Court there were twenty other chaps there from other Areas. We were charged en-masse and then were asked by the Magistrate how did we plead. There was one loud voice in unison, "Guilty!" The Magistrate gave his verdict — £5 -8-0 (\$10.80) costs each, or 21 days at South Head. We all decided to do the time.

So off we went by train with our officer in charge, to Central Railway and then by tram to Watsons Bay, where we boarded a large barge. On arrival at a small jetty — I think it is now called Watson's, a Naval Barracks --we passed through the gates and had to empty our Dockets and unroll our towels. They cut our soap in half looking for tobacco, as smoking was prohibited.

We slept in three bell tents with feet to centre in a circle. While there someone in the mob must have had a grudge against another man, for he knew where he slept with his head to the side of the tent. The unfortunate man, Stafford, was struck on the head with some heavy instrument which killed him. This occurred in June 1922.

At 6.0 a.m. the bugle would sound for cold showers; 6.30 a.m., exercises; 7.0 a.m. breakfast; 7.30 a.m., on the double up and down Memory Hill, which ran from the water at the entrance to the Heads up to where the Chapel is now. This went on day after day, and tempers were getting a bit strained. On one of our exercises someone threw a piece of blue-metal at the officer and shattered his wrist watch to pieces. He called out, "Step out the ....who threw that!" (No one did). Naturally that only made things worse, for it meant more running and moving faster.

After being there nearly two weeks, bad weather set in one night. A gale blew from the east with rain, and our tents were blown to pieces. We

were told by an officer, whom someone had got out of bed, to take our palliases to along hut in the area which had aboard floor, where everywhere settled L nicely. It was fine weather in the morning, which meant more training and more running. When we had finished our days running most of us were exhausted. Some said they were going straight to bed, but when we got to the hut and opened the door we found that someone had turned on the fin Matt and all the palliases were floating in six inches o f water. Not having anywhere else to place us we were given a chit (note) for our faro home on tram and train.

I was given a note for the officer at Sutherland, where I had to report on the Monday at 9.0a.m. in an old building apposite the tramway office. When I arrived I said "Good morning, sir!" I put the emphasis on the "Sir" in true soldier fashion, trying to create a good impression.

He never answered me, but just said, "Sign the book". I noticed about a dozen band instruments in the room, also guns. The officer said in a gravel voice, "I want them cleaned" handing me a tin of Brasso and a pull-through for the rifles. So off he went -- a blond man with a face/

I thought it strange that he should go off and leave me, so about 3 o'clock, being young and curious, I decided to have a look in the lounge of Boyle's hotel. And there he was, just about to fall off his chair! - his face a lot redder than when I saw him at 10 o'clock. His peak hat with its crown on the floor looked as if everyone who came in used it as a mat. Dorris Boyle saw me and said, "What do you want, Mick?" I pointed to my superior officer in the corner, Dorrie said to wake him up. "No," I replied "let him sleep". So I raced back to the office, signed the book and shut the door as he had directed me. Some of the "trammies" saw me and called out, "Are you in the permanent army, Mick?" I answered, "Yes, permanent for one week:"

Next clay was the same, only my days were getting shorter. I went up to the hots to have a look for my superior at 2 o'clock, and there he was on the chair, his hair down over his eyes, face as red as a beetroot, his hat in the corner. I looked at him and thought, "Here he is A.W.L. off the job and getting paid". I was doing detention for being A.W.L. and not getting paid, so I thought, "What am I doing here?"

It was the same procedure for me until the Saturday -- looking in at the hotel each day at an earlier time. On the Sunday at 12 noon the officer said, "Sign the book and go".

.... So I had served my detention in the old Council Chambers ( opposite the tramway office) on the corner of Princes Highway and Blacksmiths (Boyle) Lane.

— Mick Derrey

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First Australian Motor Accident: Mr. A. Clarke was the first person in Australia to be fatally injured in a motorcar accident. In 1907 he was travelling to Melbourne in a car driven by Peter unit, who was later to be chauffer to eight Premiers of Victoria; and he was seriously injured.

In 1770, when her Captain husband was sailing towards Botany Bay, Elisabeth Cook and all members of her fair sex were subject to a Bill of a somewhat sweeping nature introduced into the English Parliament, it including the following sections-

"... That all women of whatever age, rank, profession or degree, whether virgins, maids or widows that shall from and after such Act impose upon, seduce and betray into matrimony, any of His Majesty's subjects, by the scents, paints, cosmetic washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high-heeled shoes or bolstered hips, shall incur the penalty of the law in force against witchcraft and like misdemeanours and that the marriage on conviction shall stand null and void...."

Whoa there, harassed husbands! Before you charge forth to put the wheels of the law into motion, I must advise that it is not definitely known if the said Bill ever did find its way onto the Statute book, or if it has since been repealed. (The Bill certainly did find its way on to the Statute Book of Pennsylvania U.S.A.).

It cannot now be law here,, otherwise the new Divorce reforms would have been most unnecessary-- and thank heavens! for who amongst us women could claim innocence! Could there be one of us who did not at least contrive with a blush of rouge, a waft of perfume or a suggestion of the rose upon our lips?

Of course, there are those who don't stop at artificial teeth. Madam can now become a completely new woman, if not quite bionic. Beautiful wigs have been a high-fashion accessory for some time; and, for the more adventurous, Madam can purchase lavish, re-useable mink eyelashes to flutter at her intended.

Then there are disposable false fingernails for those of us who suffer from dishpan hands; and the flat-chested may aspire to look ravishing in a décolleté gown with a little help from the corsetiere at milady's favourite department store. And thanks to those big-mouthed television commercials , we All know what every modern women considers basic in undergarments.

So, gentlemen, be positive and consider the advantages of being married to your lovely modern witch -- she may even read the future in your teacup if'n you ask her!

("Inspiring source": H.S. Campbell in "Man" 1937).

— Danna Vale

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Malabar, a Sydney marine suburb, was once known by the same name as the nearby gaol, Long Bay. Local residents objected to being linked with the prison, so in 1933 the area was renamed Malabar, after the Burns Philp liner wrecked off Maroubra Bay two years earlier. The original name of the locality was "The Village of Brand".

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### FAMILY POSTCARDS



Stored in a cabinet in company with various types of literature and paraphernalia are some 250 Post Cards inherited chiefly from the families of my parents — the Midgleys and the Dawsons. The cards vary -- plain, coloured, views, drawings; some humorous, embossed, ornamented, and hand-worked.

They tell dramatic human experiences recorded in similar vein on thousands of post-cards throughout Australia.

The majority have a message written on the back, some with few words, others closely written until space is exhausted save that required for the address. Postmarks, not always clearly defined, record the day, month and year of despatch. Several have the one penny N.S.W. postage stamp affixed -- deep ink with stars on a cross supplanted on a shield surmounted by a crown. Many are postmarked "Sutherland", which covered those carried from Menai Receiving Office (established June 5, 1905) which could not post mark at all.

The great era of postcards was from

1880 to 1918, when countless numbers carried messages to all parts of the world. The idea of conveying a brief message in such form was the creation of Heinrich von Stephan in Germany in 1865. From the viewpoint of recording events and panoramic views those depicting local history are treasures for posterity.

In selecting cards for this nostalgic ramble one is faced with a beautiful floral card on which Grandmother F. (Fanny) Midgley writes to her newly wedded son Arthur and his wife Lily .... "Hoping to see you at Christmas, and we shall all be together again". The card, dated November 1910, is embossed, and in gold and green are the words "Greetings from Menai". A following card raised the same hope, adding .... "that Bert and Dick and Lucy (brothers and sister of Arthur) are coming home and we'll all be together. All our apricots spoilt by rain, but will have some ripe later".

In mid-January 1908 Emma, sister of Lily (Dawson) wrote a note on a card depicting "Defence of Rorke's Drift", stating, "I had the blues and could not come up (to parents' farm at Menai) for a while, I'm so miserable". A postscript added: "I see by the paper that Jones' boy was drowned". (Thomas Jones, aged three, was drowned on January 15, 1908, when he fell into a well on his parents' farm, they being the first permanent settlers in May 1895).

On December 18, 1906, Emma wrote, "Dear Mum and Dad... will be up on Sunday morning train. Leaves here at 20 to eleven. Meet me with sulky". Meeting place was on the Menai side of Woronora River high above Price's boatshed, by whose boat Emma was rowed across for threepence fare after a walk from Sutherland, followed by a steep climb up "Billy-goat Hill" to the sulky.

Early in 1909 Emma wrote to her sister Lily where she was employed by Dr. Rooke at his practice in East Parade Sutherland, saying, ".... went to Sutherland station on Saturday night and did not see you. Am going this Saturday night and will catch that train. Look for me". (Dr. Rooke was Sutherland's first permanent doctor, taking up his practice in Sept. 1906).

On June 2, 1909, on a card showing Middle Harbour, Mosman, Arthur Midgley wrote from Menai to his fiancée Lily, at Dr. Rooke's home, in writing so tiny it almost filled the card: "I got home on Monday night at 20 past 10, so it did not take long, though I had to wait a little while for old Ted. (to be rowed across the river). Old Ted told Mr. Price about some men that were lost on the river, and they said they would give him a few shillings to pull them down to Como .... Bert (a brother) has had his photo taken. I hope he has one to spare.... I hope you have got the right sort of scent you wanted at Carricks (a store in Sutherland) I asked you to get...."

A Postcard, with a troopship on the front, from Lasseter's Universal Providers Sydney, in November 1914, replied to Arthur Midgley for his "valued enquiry" .... "and that Tea, 10 pounds and over, was delivered free to any rail stationer Port in N.S.W."

In October 1911, Daisy and Nellie Fripp from Bankstown, wrote a message to Jessie Midgley (their sister) at Menai, on the back of a splendid photo of the hand-winchd ferry at Lugarno with ferryman 'Dad' Sanders and Packham's horse-drawn bread cart.... "Much unsettled. Have sold out and won't be out to see you before Christmas. Our Sunday School Anniversary is on Nov. 5" .... so wrote Daisy.

Lily Midgley in 1912, then mother of one-year-old Jack, wrote to her friend Alvera Price (nee Wilson), wife of Norman Price at Woronora River.. "Cannot come down tomorrow as Jack has a bad cold and Gwen (daughter of Alvera) may catch it, so will make it another day neat week. Excuse card as am out of writing paper. Your sincere friend Lily". (Jack Thomas Price and family were the first permanent settlers at Woronora River in November 1899. Alvera was married to Norman under a large tree on the property on Sept. 9, 1911).

Inscribed cards tell in many instances of illness.... "Poor little Lilian is so ill" .... "My bad leg has broken out again" .... "our Aunt Emily has been laid up again for a fortnight" .... "Horace has been very

sink, He had to pay the doctor a visit" .... "hope the baby is better .... (the latter on the back of a fine line-colour picture of Sydney G.P.O. 1914 with a shield and crest, "Advance Australia".

Weather was an important topic which concerned Emma when she wrote to Lily, "I'll be up at the end of the week if the weather clears up, but I don't think it will. Don't be running out in the wet. I don't know how my Darl goes to market"....

From Grandma Emily Toyer to grandson Arthur on his wedding eve, Oct. 5, 1909: "Please accept this small present on the eve of your approaching marriage. I would have liked to have been with you on your wedding day... Hope God will keep you both till we meet is the earnest prayer of your loveing Grandma...." (The Toyer family conducted a large plant nursery for many years at Sans Souci).

The conflagration of the 1914-18 War saw thousands answer the call "to the Colours". Many enlisted from Menai, with Fanny Midgley contributing three sons.

A magnificent hand-worked Christmas Card on silk in six colours depicting Allied flags and the Union Jack was sent from France to Arthur and Lily Midgley by Harold, Arthur's brother. A colour postcard of 1916 shows a troopship, S.S. Wyandra .... "similar to what your uncles went on," wrote Grandmother F. Midgley to grandson Jack.

In 1917 pathos and anxiety began to come. Fanny Midgley sent postcards.... "Harold is wounded and in hospital. Have not heard any more of Fred".... In August 1917, on a card depicting a Girls' School — a mansion-like building in the North of France — Harold's brother Dick, wrote ... "Harold has been away six weeks in hospital .... am expecting him back any time.... largely fine last three days, quite a treat" ....

A colour card depicting "Aladdin in his cave" in 1918 had words full of motherly concern on the back .... "Dear Arthur and Lily. Poor Fred is wounded. Dear Arthur, don't worry over me. I will bear up... Love from your loving mother". (The climax came soon after when official word came that Fred "died in action", shot by a German sniper on May 18, 1918.

There are numerous Cartophilic Societies around the world where post-cards are auctioned, traded or swapped, and high prices are asked; in Sydney, for example, for cards depending on their antiquity. Postcards are indeed a part of our heritage. Alas, their modern counterpart, the telephone, records nothing for posterity.

— Alf Midgley

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Como Hotel Classified: The Australian Heritage Commission (under the Act of that name 1975) published in the SMH 31st March a long list of sites and buildings which it proposes to declare as "places that have aesthetic historic, scientific or social significance or other special value for future generations as well as for the present community". The only Shire building thus named is the Como Hotel, built 1882-3 (an old photograph shows that the hotel had been completed by 1883, before the railway works at Como).

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June 2, 1953: Coronation of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

"THE WINDSOR PALACE OF SHELLS"

This Collection was the lifetime hobby of Mrs. A. Windsor of Cronulla, containing over 6,000,000 shells of various varieties almost entirely collected around the Cronulla beaches.

After the death of Mrs. Windsor the Collection was in 1935 acquired by Mrs. C.A. Wright. From July 1935 to mid-January 1936 the Collection travelled throughout the country areas of New South Wales by special train primarily for exhibition to country schoolchildren.

Ada Pitt Ripley (Mrs. Windsor) was born in Campbelltown in 1859, and died at her Cronulla home in 1921. Ada's grandparents were Lord Horatio Nelson (of Trafalgar fame) and Lady Nelson, and it is from this forbear that she acquired her love of the sea and all things maritime, especially seashells.

"And so we find, at an early age (probably about 5 years) this little girl being brought to Cronulla to shell-hunt, and it was here that the famous collection of shells commenced".

This is an extract from the brochure printed (presumably) in 1934, to accompany the Train Exhibition. If this is correct, then Ada Wilshire was visiting Cronulla front about 1864-66 — when there was no access except by rowboat across Georges River and then some type of horse transport over the Holt-Sutherland Estate and through the sandy scrub and bush. As far as I can ascertain at present there was then no private ownership of South Cronulla land, it all being reserved for Government Defence purposes until subdivided in the mid-1890s save for 7 acres at Hungry Point — now the Commonwealth Fisheries. The Wilshire and Windsor families were early land-owners after the sale of most of this Government land; and two adjoining streets bear their names.

Ada Wilshire married -- probably about 1880-85, and in 1900 she moved permanently to Cronulla. Here she continued to build her shell collection from the Shire beaches. Many of the shells (such as cowries) disappeared from the Cronulla beaches years ago. A small collection of shells from the Great Barrier Reef were kept as a separate display. At her death in 1921 the collection of 6,000,000 shells, of some 50,000 varieties, were valued then at £25,000 (\$50,000) -- "the greatest collection the world has known".

After the six months' train tour the Collection apparently returned to Cronulla, where -- according to an elderly onetime visitor -- it was on exhibition for several years in a shop (not in the small shopping centre) somewhere near the waterfront, from approximately 1939. It is thought that the Collection was then again sold.

Mrs. Windsor painstakingly modelled these myriads of shells into all types of fantastic designs. This she did by boring a tiny hole into each shell, after selecting the right type and size, and threading each one to form an intricate pattern. When one realises how brittle most of these small shells were and that she had no machinery to assist her, it was a marvel that she was able to manipulate them.

One design was of a crocheted silk shawl some 45 inches square, into

which were woven approximately 25,000 shells in all their natural colouring. A doll's bedroom suite of the Edwardian period was another delight, the furniture consisting of bed, dressing table, wardrobe, lounge, footstools and curtain drapes, all of these tiny shells, selected to blend with the overall colour scheme. Another display was of & casket showing lamps and lamp-shades in soft and delicate variations s another was a magnificent string of shells, 150 yards in length, variously draped to show the intricate work.

It is hoped that further enquiries say possibly locate this onetime world-famous Collection, not only for the wonderful patience involved in the delicate use of these myriad shells, but also because most of the varieties used by Mrs. Windsor are all long gone from the Cronulla beaches.

The writer is anxious to hear from any elderly resident who may be able to provide further information, especially of the Collection's present location—and if still complete.

— M. Hutton Neve

Source: Souvenir: Windsor Palace of Shells: published in connection with the Train Exhibition Tour, July 1935 to January 1936.

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"BLACK HANDS" ABORIGINAL CAVE, Bonnet Bay: several months ago I reported the finding of a large rock overhang, and arranged for an officer from the National Parks & Wildlife Service to inspect the location. His report stated: "Thirteen distinct hand stencils occur on the roof and sides of the overhang: the stencil material is a creamy-yellow clay; the stencils have not been defaced. Occupation material in the base of the cave has been disturbed, but this is of a minor nature. The stencils are well preserved. Visitation to the cave has been minor as it is relatively inaccessible. The site may be of future educational value for scientific research." The site is part of a Shire Council Reserve, and the NPWS acknowledge the helpful co-operation of the Council. The cave is part of a location managed at present by a "527" local committees, who are aware of the cave's existence, as also are two or three nearby residents who, realising its scientific and historical value, are extremely discreet. No age can be given, but it would certainly be pre-settlement (i.e., before 1788) -- at a more or less guess, the occupation of the site could probably be up to 500 years.

-- M. Hutton Neve

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The "swaggie": for the uninitiated "younger set", a swaggie was an itinerant wanderer who tramped the back country while "waltzing Matilda" -- carrying his few worldly possessions rolled in a swag or pack slung across one shoulder. He would work for a few days when necessary for wages, but was always willing to chop firewood for his evening meal. Many preferred this roving life. During the Depression of the 1930s hundreds of men "took to the road" in search of work.

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### JOHN LEES. The Chapel Builder

(An all—day tour of the Castlereagh-district is being arranged for October, so this article is most opportune. The 1847 Chapel and the grave of John Lees and his wife will be visited).

When the "Ganges" arrived in the Colony of New South Wales on June 2, 1797, only 13 of the 203 male prisoners she carried had died, although many of the survivors were suffering from scurvy. Her surgeon was inexperienced in the management of large numbers, so it was fortunate that the vessel of 700 tons was not overloaded, or there may have been more deaths. Apart from her crew and officers, she also carried a guard of men of the N.S.W. Corps, amongst them John Lees, aged about 21. He was a typical soldier of the time, very partial to strong drink, but he was to make a significant contribution to the early Christian activities of the Colony, particularly the Methodist cause.

At the expiration of his service he had the option of returning to England or receiving a grant of land. He chose the latter, and on June 4, 1804, Governor King granted him 90 acres of land in the District of Evan (now Castlereagh), annual rent to commence, 3/— after 5 years. On November 20, 1809, he married Mary Stevens, and over the years a family of four boys and four girls were reared on the land — Richard, John, Hannah, Mary, Esther, Sarah, Timothy and Cornelius.

He planted his land with wheat, adding tobacco much later. Working his land kept him busy for a time but "his strong propensity for drink checked for a time by his industry, again grew on him, till he bore all the marks of a reckless confirmed drunkard". One cold night he went outside his home on the flats of the Nepean River at the foot of the Blue Mountains to get a log of wood for the fire. Bending down for the wood he grasped instead a "deadly snake" which bit him on the wrist. He hurried to Windsor, some 12 miles away, to the home of the Rev. Cartwright, who called medical aid and he survived. This made such an impression on him that he abandoned his past ways and became a fervent Christian.

When Samuel Leigh, the first Methodist missionary to be sent to the Colony, became established in Sydney, he turned his attention to the outer settlements and, having an introduction to a settler at Castlereagh, he included it on his tour. After riding all day he reached the area, but was turned away by the man recommended to him. Eventually he was directed to the farm of John Lees, where he was welcomed with open arms.

John Lees decided he could do more than welcome the missionary. Next to his home he built a chapel 24 ft. x 14 ft., large enough to accommodate those likely to attend public worship. This was the first Methodist chapel in the Southern Hemisphere, and was opened by the Rev. Leigh on Oct. 17, 1817. But even this was not enough, and John Lees gave an acre of land, each year sowing it with wheat, reaping it, having it ground into flour and passing it on to the missionaries.

A few years later John Lees built a second chapel, 28 ft. by 14 ft. on the acre of land he had dedicated to the church, beside the public high-way, and this was used for many years. A Sunday School was opened by him. He was a zealous member of the church and uncommonly strict in his observance of the Sabbath. One Sunday, when he was passing the vineyard of Sir John Jamieson, he saw many of the assigned servants working, and voiced his disapproval. The following week a constable called, requiring his attendance at Court to answer a charge of inciting the convict servants to disobey their master's orders. The case was not proceeded with. Once he took one of his own assigned servants to Court for disobedience of his orders when he found the man had taken a bucket of milk from the cows one Sunday on the instructions of Mrs. Lees. The servant was told he must obey his master!

Not only did he attend church at Castlereagh, but often he would travel to Windsor for services, dressed in very coarse attire which was sometimes tied with a piece of stringy bark.

At the first Missionary meeting held in the Colony John Lees put his name down to donate six guineas (\$12.60). To say the meeting was astonished would not be incorrect. Six guineas was a large amount, especially for a man with a family. The following year he made it nine guineas, adding one guinea each for his wife and two eldest boys. However, the next year was a year of drought and his crops failed. Knowing his obligation he decided to sell one of his horses and, having prepared it for sale for some weeks, he took it to market in Sydney. Unfortunately, he could not sell it and returned to the farm very despondent. He missed paying his subscription for that year, but on the following he gave various subscriptions In Kind, which amounted to £14 (\$28). He continued in this manner, giving one time 20 bushels of wheat; another, 40 bushels and a cow and calf.

He moved to Sydney and became a preacher, though still retaining his Castlereagh farm, and while engaged in this manner was stricken by paralysis. The family brought him home to the farm where he was bedridden for the last seven years of his life. The doctor prescribed brandy for his ailment, and with the enforced inactivity John Lees once again yielded "to the temptation of excessive liquor". However, he still managed to keep up his Sunday School in his room with as many of the neighbours' children as he could get to attend. He died on 28 August 1836, aged 59, and was buried at the Church of England cemetery.

Eleven years later the second chapel built by John Lees was replaced in 1847 with a solidly constructed church built next to it on the dedicated acre.

In 1894 numerous letters were printed in the Christian Advocate and Wesleyan Record on the validity of the claim that the first Methodist Chapel built in the southern world was the one adjoining the home of John Lees; but this was proved by the evidence produced, particularly by his grandson Charles Gorman, and supported by James Rutledge, the man who arrived in the Colony to become the first school teacher at Castlereagh.

The Centenary Celebrations of the opening of the first Methodist

chapel was held in 1917 in the church built in 1947, and the descendants of John Lees arranged to have his remains and those of his wife Mary Lees re-interred there. A marble tablet was erected acknowledging his contribution to the Methodist cause and is on the wall of the chapel.

This year a film crew from the A.B.C. filmed a communion service at the old church, with about 100 people, some of them descendants in the costumes of the period. Scenes appeared on T.V. in the programme on the history of the Uniting Church in Australia.

John Lees, despite his failings "was a man of God, possessing and exhibiting an extraordinary character"; and as his great-great-grand-daughter I am happy to write this brief account of his life in Australia.

— Merle Kavanagh

Sources: "Christian Advocate" & "Wesleyan Record": "Spark of Grace" (Prof. G. Udy): "The Convict Ships" (C. Bateson).

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"I Remember ...."

### AUSTRALIA'S "NATIONAL" FOOD

Around Sutherland district in those far-off early days were some reposing on the roof of nearly everyone's back shed. They seemed to ripen better up there -- and some were so large and heavy that it often took two of us to get them up.

Yes, you're right — I'm referring to pumpkins of course.

At Eric Vallance's store pumpkin could be bought at 10 lbs for 6d, but even at that price Eric found them hard to sell, for everyone grew their own.

Pumpkin was an everyday "must"; there were plenty of them, and the people were poor." You could have it baked or boiled, pumpkin pie or pumpkin scones: boiled and dried this would make pumpkin flour — there were a hundred ways a good Australian housewife could prepare what was Australia's "national" food.

Pumpkins would grow anywhere — in the paddocks, in the garden, and even on the garbage tip you would find them growing wild; cows and goats would eat them, but dogs preferred their pumpkin cooked as did humans. A man could do a full day's work on a good feed of pumpkin — but this of course could be aided by the inclusion of a rabbit. A swaggie never carried pumpkin — it was always freely available at any farmhouse.

Yes, those were the days of the pumpkin — but oh! I'm afraid not so these days.

Last week I saw a nice piece of ironbark pumpkin in the shop. I went in and said "Yes, I'll have that piece of pumpkin. The Italian said, "Okay doke mate, she's \$1.50 theta bit". It weighed exactly 5 lbs.. I took it home and tenderly and reverently put it in the fridge — not on the roof as of yesteryear.

— Geo. Heavens



### A PIONEER CLERGYMAN

During the years of World War I an Anglican, clergymen, the Rev. Isaac Armitage, had almost the tie of Sutherland Shire as his Parish. He was based at The Rectory, Cronulla Beach, and his telephone number was Cronulla 45.



Born in 1878, Isaac Armitage entered the Anglican Church as minister at the turn of the century, serving in many parishes throughout the State during more than fifty years' ministry. He was keenly interested in music, and while in the Berry district in the mid-1940s he was Patron of the Berry District Band.

To cover distances in remote settlements of the Shire over unformed roads and but tracks, Armitage travelled mainly by horse and sulky, although the steam tram plying between Cronulla and Sutherland was used to cover long tiresome journeys more quickly. Church services, public school scripture lessons and visitation to home was spread from Cronulla to Miranda; Sylvania to Sutherland and Audley. At Audley services were held in the Ambulance room on Wednesday evenings at 7.45 p.m., and Scripture instruction was given at Audley Public School. Worship services were held at Mrs. Simpson's house at Port Hacking on Friday evenings at 7.45 p.m.; and Scripture instruction was held at Menai School whenever Armitage was able to arrange times to get there. In September 1918 a Sunday School commenced in the home of Mrs. Taylor at Como, followed soon after by worship services at which Armitage presided.

Isaac Armitage edited a Parish magazine, "Sutherland Church News"; it embraced the whole Shire and listed local servicemen from enlistment to wounded and killed in action. It was priced at one penny. In July 1917 he listed a challenge to his parishioners for the need of a greater call to prayer as the war neared its fourth year.

Armitage believed that the message of Christianity should be propagated at an times and in any place. Pursuing this policy he made application to Sutherland Shire Council to hold open-air services on Cronulla Beach in 1917, but the Council were not in agreement with his enthusiasm.

A typical example of being called upon to bring condolences to bereaved families of Shire men killed in World War I is told in a letter extract from Rev. Armitage in September 1966, to Alf Midgley relating an experience of fifty years before.

'I well remember the crossing from Sutherland to Menai. My introduction was during the war. The Government always asked me to go and console with people who were bereaved by the death of some member of the family in the War. I recall quite well going to Menai to convey such a message to a family living on the top of Menai (Just west from the school). I had some travelling to do in crossing the river and climbing the hill leading my horse. The

children of the house were gathered together with the trinkets etc. which the father had sent them. They greeted me with "Look what father has sent me!" I said to myself, "How can I tell them he has passed over?" However, a neighbour came to my aid and took the children to her home so I could tell the mother her husband had been called Home in the service of his country. By the Grace of God I was enabled somewhat to console the widow and thank the Lord how some of those brave women stood up to their bereavement and with trust in God given strength were able to face the task ahead of them".

When the Rev. Armitage retired he lived quietly with his wife until her death, when he went to live during advancing years at Mowell Retirement Village, Castle Hill, Where his Home call came, aged 92, on July 22nd 1970.

— Alf Midgley

Sources: "Sutherland Church News"; The Propeller"; Rev. Armitage letter; Author's notes.

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### GLIMPSES OF EARLY MIRANDA

From shortly before the turn of the century Miranda was the centre of active settlement until around World War 1. As land became available for settlement under the Holt-Sutherland Estate from about the mid 1880s, people from some of the crowded city environments began to migrate to Miranda (which then included Caringbah) to take up leases of small blocks of land. These were developed as farmlets, growing poultry, vegetables, fruit and flowers, with one or two small vineyards. One family who had a mixed farmlet with a vineyard were the Mondells, Austrian migrants who came from Camden in 1892. Mr. Mondell and his sons built the family cottage with supplies from Burns' Timber Yard; the cottage is still standing (only Just!) on the corner of Kingsway and Carrington Street opposite the Shire Hospital and the last of the family, miss Annie Mondell, lives there.

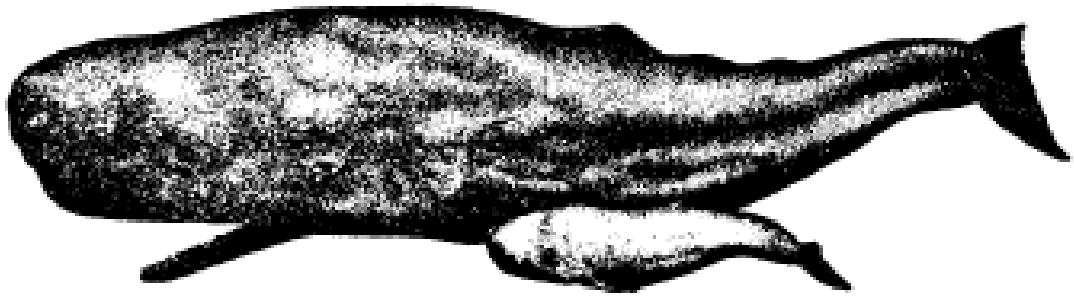
A family named Berger had a fine orchard nearby; and Sam Mayman worked his block at the corner of Taren Point Road and Kingsway, as an orchard and potato farm. The Maymans were amongst early Miranda settlers to took up a homestead block at Bangor (Menai) when Crown Land was released there in the 1890s; and the Midgley family was another.

The Nelson family settled in Port Hacking Road (north) Where they opened a small store in 1893, later moving the store to Caringbah at "Beach Road" (Kingsway) opposite the junction of Port Hacking Road. Another who opened a small store, at the corner of Kiora Road and Kingsway, was Mr. J. Macfarlane, who later became the first Shire Clerk in 1906. And not far away, a teeny named Lye had a flower farm at the turn of the century, where now the huge complex of Miranda Fair is.

— M.H.N.

Compiled from Notes by the late Joe Monro in the Sutherland Shire Library.

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### THE LAST OF THE GREAT WHALES

About twenty-five years ago one soaring morning I stood at the bottom of the Kingsway with three or four other locals, watching in fascination two large cow whales and their calves about 500 yards off the North Cronulla beach. The huge mammals rolled and plunged, the water cascading off their shimmering backs as they played "chasings" with their clumsy calves - the calves seemingly about half the length of their mothers. These may have been Sperms, the adult females averaging about 35 feet. They played thus for some half-hour and then headed out to sea to rejoin the herd migrating from North Pacific summer waters to the Antarctic.

As far as I know, whales have not since been seen off the NSW coast --where once they were plentiful, for indiscriminate hunting has practically exterminated them all along the eastern Australian coast.

Although the Aborigine had neither boats nor weapons to hunt the whale, he was well acquainted with them. On a waterfront property in Woollooware Road South is a large flat rock topping a cliff, and on this there is carved the outline of a whale, possibly with a calf alongside it. The large outlined carving or "pecking", 9 or 10 feet in length, would definitely be pre-settlement (before 1788) for the indented lines are now very faint and can be identified only in the early morning or late afternoon sun when the peckings create their own shadows. At Jibbon, too, there are carvings of whales: but, like the dark people themselves, the whales have disappeared — both driven from their ancient haunts by European man.

The convict transports 'Britannia' and the 'William and Mary' arrived at the penal settlement of Port Jackson in October 1791, both being whaling ships chartered for the job. The Master of the 'Britannia', Thomas Melville, on arrival wrote to his London owners Samuel Enderby & Sons:-

"Within about 15 leagues of the latitude of Port Jackson and within 3 leagues of the shore we saw sperm whales in great plenty: we sailed thro' different shoals of them from 12 o'clock in the day until after sunset, all around the horizon as far as I could see from the masthead; in fact, I saw a very great prospect in making our fishery upon this coast and establishing a fishery here."

In November 1791 Governor Phillip forwarded from Sydney a Despatch to the Colonial Secretary in London:-

".... the great wisher of spermaceti tales seen on this coast give reason to hope that a fishery may be established here .... "

Captain Eber Bunker, the Master of the 'William and Mary', From a Nantucket (North American) whaling family, also supported these opinions. Already several American whalers had penetrated into the South Pacific via Cape Horn, for they were not bound by the restrictive conditions imposed by the East India Company which forbade the new-found Colony from competitive trading. Bunker, who settled in Sydney with his family in 1806, was to become very much involved in whale-fishing in New Zealand waters.

For the next 50 years—and more — the whale-fishing industry flourished in the "southern seas" around N.Z. and Van Diemen's Land, with Sydney becoming the major port for shipment to London of whale-Oil. Enderby & Sons established a Colonial branch of the firm in Sydney, becoming one of the leading commercial trading houses. Whales were taken indiscriminately, the herds being hunted and slaughtered in thousands during their annual migration from Antarctic waters to the North Pacific: or in smaller herds, up the West Australian coast to the Indian Ocean. This is the route which the West Australian whaling station hunts. Today there is only one whaling station in Australia, near Albany--Cheynes Beach Holdings Ltd.. In 1974 this firm killed 1147 sperm whales, but in 1975 the catch was below its quota of 1100. Japan and Russia today take about 87% of the world's annual catch. No true estimate of the numbers slaughtered each year seem to be available — as understandably the Soviet and Japanese desire to play down their numbers, but it is known that the overall total runs into thousands annually.

It was not until the introduction of modern technology (fast motorised ships, electrically fired harpoon guns, sonar soundings to track the underwater herds, radio to report areas of location to the "mother Ship" and her fleet) that the decimation of the stocks of the "Great Whale" occurred.

"A harpoon weighing as much as an averaged-sized person is fired into a great whale. Plunging through up to 6 feet of flesh its soft metal head will flatten to tear a gaping tunnel in the giant body. Within seconds a time-delayed grenade will explode, sending metal fragments piercing through the animal's organs. Rolling in foamy bloody water, blowing crimson spume from its shredded lungs, the leviathan will suffer agonising pain and die. Death sometimes takes several minutes and a second 'killer' shot is needed to end the whale's agony.

"The mammal which has met this ghastly death has the largest brain of any creature that has lived on earth. The neo-cortical regions of this brain are massively convoluted, and many researchers have concluded that sperm whales are intelligent, perhaps more intelligent than some would like us to believe. This slaughter happens today in the coastal water of Australia. Cheynes Ltd. Use three catcher vessels which have been equipped with sonar



since 1970. Even if a whale dives several hundred feet the whalers can trace its movements as it twists and turns, frantically trying to escape. When, short of breath, the whale surfaces it is at the mercy of the master gunner, dispenser of a 140 lb harpoon with an explosive head."

In 1946 the International Whaling Commission was formed to manage whale harvesting in order to protect the species from overfishing. It has been unable to do this, the interest of whaling companies taking priority. The Commission met this year in Canberra in June, the main objective being to come to some general agreement to reduce national quotas to prevent over-fishing. Some minimal verbal agreement was reached — but no agreement on how any practical protection or supervision of quotas was to be effected.

And so the indiscriminate and callous massacre continues; many species have already been exterminated, and others are dangerously threatened, for both bulls and cows are indiscriminately hunted. "Project Jonah" was this year launched here, with the principal Objects of — having a 10-year moratorium declared on whale-hunting; having Australian coastal waters closed and declared a sanctuary; and the closing of the Cheyne Ltd. Station, with the suggestion it be converted to whale-biology research. In 1973 Canada closed its three whaling stations, as also New Zealand; and both N.Z. and the U.S.A. have placed total bans on the import of whale products. Cheyne catches are processed into feed for chickens and Digs and some dog foods, and for fertilizer.

The fading Aboriginal whale carvings provide a rather poignant memory of these harmless and defenceless mammals which once swam and frolicked in our coastal waters on their annual migrations: and I believe I saw the last of the Great Whales passing "Curranulla" — the Aboriginal name for "the beach of the myriad tiny pink shells" — and these too have gone.

-- M. Hutton Neve

Sources: Historical Records of NSW, Vol. I: "Project Jonah" 399 Pitt Street Sydney.

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The Pig That Nearly Got Away: on March 16, 1901, on a pleasant Saturday afternoon, a well-attended Sports Meeting was held at Sutherland on the cricket ground in Robertson Street ("West Sutherland"). Mr. A. Dwyer had the honour of winning the "Old Buffers" race. Mr. G. Russack was official Recorder.

The Obstacle race was won by A. McLeod with Glenn Dwyer second. C. Harris won the Potato race. Unfortunately, the popular "race for the pig" created some unpleasantness. The starter's pistol failed to go off — but the pig got off to a good start with half the competitors after him whilst the rest remained surprisedly looking on. A big Scotsman, one of the Cameron clan, caught the pig, put it in a bag and marched off with it. He defied the murmurings of the crowd and the competitors; and bad language resulted in a hearing set for Newtown Court the following week. Next day, the pig again escaped but, following an exciting chase, it came to an untimely end.

A.M.

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The shack where I was born faced the creek which came down from where the new Private Hospital now stands (corner Hotham Rd.) and crossed Woronora Road (now President Av.) where it emptied into Dent's Creek. Both sides of the creek were thickly timbered with oak trees and Gynea lilies in abundance. The creek was our main water supply, as there was no pollution, the area being unspoilt by man.

Our home had and wails with a thatched roof, an earthen floor and was obscured from the view of travellers on Woronora Road.

Bushfires were the biggest worry. When we saw smoke coming from the Sutherland direction my dad would tell my brothers and sisters to fill all available tins and pots — or, anything that would hold water. My mother would put her iron poster-bed outside and stack all the bed clothes on it, covering all with wet bags and not forgetting to place her rosary beads on the top. My father was kept busy throwing water on the thatched roof, while the youngsters kept up the supply from the creek. This was the procedure on many occasions.

In the creek we would catch crayfish half as big as lobsters, with a piece of red rag tied to a string. All night the bullfrogs were very noisy, while scores of bandicoots would come out to fossick for food in the reeds which were thick along the creek going towards Sutherland. Our nearest neighbours were Goughs and Averys at Bath Road.

About 1912 or 1913 a single man, Bob Dashwood, a New Zealander, took up approximately three acres of land at North West Arm and was the first man up build in what is now the Gray's Point area. He blazed a trail past our place to North West Arm from Woronora Road (President Av.) and made his own road, the route of which is followed by today's road.

Dashwood had a horse called Dick which he would talk to like a human being. He would go to Sydney with the horse and cart, sometimes twice a week, and would arrive back often at 11 o'clock at night, his cart loaded with timber, iron and horse feed. I have seen him coming from Sydney after heavy rain. He would leave his horse and cart at our place and walk to Saville Creek to see if the water was too deep to cross. If it was too deep, he would come back to our place, take the horse out of the cart, and sleep on the floor on some bags in the kitchen, which was away from the house. In the morning he would take another walk to see how high the water was. If it was not higher than three feet he would cross.

There were times when Bob Dashwood would get bogged at night. He would come back for my dad to give him a hand on the wheel to get out. On weekends he would be found repairing his road, especially after heavy rain, digging out stone and filling in holes to make it passable for the next trip.

The next man to come to North Vest Arm was named Con. Gerhig, who was the pioneer of the boatshed at Gray's Point. He lived in a bag humpy

halfway down the hill between the present road and the boatshed. Con Gerhig, I understand, was one of a family of German piano-makers who was fed up with piano-making and wanted a quiet life.

Being single, he couldn't have had it easier. His neighbours were the Gray family across the bay at Gundamain, and his only company were foxes by night, and goannas by day — five feet long — which climbed the nearby trees. Con Gerhig would walk to Sutherland twice a week for provisions. He would usually have two sugar bags full slung over his shoulder, one front and one back. His track to Sutherland from the boatshed was through Dashwood's property to Saville Creek. From the creek he would go in a north-westerly direction and come out onto Woronora Road (President Av.) at Glencoe Street.

Dashwood and Con Gerhig became close friends, so much so that they would celebrate four birthdays a year! I remember on one occasion when they called in to our place after being in the city all day, their cart loaded with bags of chaff. It was late at night but they insisted on my father having a birthday drink of rum, after which they set off to their abodes at North West Arm. My mother, of the worrying type, said to my father, "Harry, those men are not in a fit state to drive that horse down the track. You had better go and see that they get through". So off my dad went, not needing much persuasion after he had had a taste of rum. He eventually arrived home in the early hours of the morning, singing — he said he had to have a birthday too!

— Mick Derrey.

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### Items of Interests

City Council Archives: The Council of the City of Sydney has appointed an Archivist, and will permit use of the archives subject to potential users submitting proof of their bona fides and on the condition that the research is conducted under the direct control of the Archivist.

Pioneer Park, Gosford: Following the recent official opening of the Park, Gosford Shire Council, in association with the Apex and Rotary Clubs of Gosford, has published a booklet which contains a list of people interred in the Point Frederick Cemetery between 1840 and 1953, together with relevant maps and plans. Enquiries about copies should be addressed to the Gosford Shire Council (no prices stated).

"One Hundred & Fifty Years of Law" is the title of an interesting booklet published by Minter, Simpson & Co. to celebrate the sesqui-centenary of the firm, one of the oldest in Australia. Since its formation in 1827 it has been known by various names, and by its present one since 1899. Copies of the booklet may be had by calling at the Minter, Simpson & Co. office, A.N.Z. Building, 68 Pitt Street Sydney.

St. Alban's Church, Epping: A short history of St. Alban's Church has been published under the title "Fourscore". Written by Nigel Hubbard, with photography by Bruce Martin and Douglas McKenzie, it adds one more to the growing number of useful accounts of church progress. Copies, \$2.50 post free, are available from the Rev. G. H. Feltham, 3 Pembroke Street, Epping 2121.

"REFLECTIONS": Local History With a Difference:

The Uniting Church of Australia came into being in June, amalgamating Congregational, Methodist and most Presbyterian congregations.

With this union some 70-odd years (1901-1977) of Congregationalism in the Menai area came to a regretful end.

The Midgley brothers have recorded the story in "Reflections" -- the text by Alf and the illustrations by Fred. The cover is of unusual design, featuring an overlay of the original Agreement of Foundation of Fellowship dated 13/1904 at Bangor — now Menai.

In introducing the story Alf writes: " 'Reflections' is a history with a difference in that it contains a selected number of activities of diverse natures, during certain periods of the life of the Church in 'report form', thus giving a picture of events as they happened at the particular time. Gleaned from hundreds of reports on social evenings, anniversaries, picnics, meetings and so on, are included 'samples' of such events, its organisations, and -- of much importance, the people."

Fred's attractive sketches and Alfs carefully selected reading make this truly a "history with a difference", telling a fascinating story of a small community of pioneer settlers in a sparsely peopled corner of the wide-spreading Shire. The booklet is another worthwhile contribution to a particular facet of our Shire history. Only those who undertake research into local history can really appreciate the mammoth task undertaken to produce so selective and so balanced a record of seventy-six years of this Congregational history — a story quite literally "gleaned from hundreds of reports" of every type of Church activity.

The booklet is quarto size (approx. 10" x 8"), with 42 pages of text and illustrations, clearly printed and easy to read. It sells at \$1.00 , all proceeds going to the Menai Church Pioneer Fund. Copies are available from the Midgleys at the monthly meetings of the Society.

M.H.N.

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Correction-- Numbers: the October 1976 issue was No. 18, but inadvertently the January 1977 was also marked No. 18; January 1977 should be No. 19; and the following May 1977 should therefore have been No. 20.

Hitler's Death: in the May issue (No. 20 as above) was correctly given as May 1, but the year 1945 was omitted.

Pollution an Old Problem: within a few years of the initial settlement of the Colony the public water supply from the Tank Stream was an increasing problem for the authorities. In 1803 an elderly woman was convicted of washing a blanket in water feeding into "the Tank" (an excavated basin at the south of the Tank Stream She was reprimanded and warned not to repeat the offence and was discharged because of her infinity.

— Sydney Gazette 18/12/1803.



## AGRICULTURAL, HORTICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL SHOWS

The leading agricultural area of the Shire before its formation in 1906 was Miranda. The soil was good and had been turned to the plough and pasture by industrious settlers. The original villagers and farmers were also people of vision. A village was built, with shops, a church and a School of Arts with a library. The public school later became a Central school in 1906 with 185 pupils. The Miranda Progress Association, the first in the Shire and one of the few in Sydney at that time, was very active. It was from this farming community that the idea of holding a show came into being.

The first organisation formed in Miranda was the Holt-Sutherland Horticultural Society in the spring of 1892. Mr. E. Thacker was elected President; Mr. W. Douglas, Secretary; and Mr. J. W. Macfarlane the Treasurer. The first show was held on that was known as the "Old Farm" paddock on Saturday January 24, 1894. This site was later taken over for the public school, the school at that time being where part of the Port Hacking High School stands today.

Records for later Shows are more complete, and show that the name was changed to the Holt Sutherland Horticultural, Poultry and Progress Society, the former merging with the latter. On Queen's Birthday May 24, 1898, the Society held their quarterly Exhibition in the Miranda Congregational Church and grounds, kindly loaned for the occasion. In the evening a Grand Concert was held, directed by Mr. R. Hillsdon, of Hillsdon Bros. Florists of Miranda. The Show opened from 2 p.m. to 5p.m. and from 7 to 10 pm.. Admission was by a silver coin but members of the Society were admitted free.

On Eight-hour Day October 2, 1899, the Society held their Spring Exhibition in the same venues, the times being the same as the preceding Shows, concluding with a Grand Concert. The Rom. Vice Presidents of this Society were F.S. Holt Esq., Charles Westmacott Esq. and Thomas Scholefield Esq. Mr. B. Thacker, one of Miranda's leading citizens and a former President, was Secretary.

On Monday evening, September 23, 1901, a meeting of the Poultry Show Committee was held at Miranda; and such men as Wise, Walker, Want, and P. Simpson gave their support to endeavour to hold a Poultry Show at Sutherland.

At a meeting of the Horticultural Progress Society on November 11, 1902, Mr. W. Samways, the well-known pioneer settler of Sylvania, read a paper on Potato Culture — and could speak with some authority, as having had some 22 years' experience in growing such crops.

On December 11, 12 and 13, 1902, an Industrial Exhibition was conducted by the Sutherland Industrial Society on the Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Mr. T. F. Smith, who had a dairy on the corner of Hotham Road and the Kings-way, was the treasurer, with Miss A. Cummings and Mr. Ralph Nicholas as joint secretaries. All the exhibits remained the property of the owners.

Section I was Cookery; Section 2. Plain Sewing; Section 3 Fancy Work; Section 4 Writing etc.; Section 5 Flowers etc.; Section 6 Competitions. "Competitions" included women's Nail. Driving, gents' Hat Trimming, and Table Tennis, all in the evenings. Prizes in this Section were donated by W. Carrick & Co. of Sutherland. Others who donated prizes were Mrs. W.A. Marsh, wife of the Congregational Minister; Mrs. H. Raid, wife of the schoolmaster at Miranda; Mrs. Stapleton of Sutherland; Mrs. Dilling of Miranda; Mrs. Job of Sutherland; Mrs. C. R. Powell, Mr. F.S. Holt of Sylvania and Mr. J. R. Smith.

In 1904 thirty settlers clubbed together and bought excursion tickets to the Government Educational Farm at Richmond. When they arrived at Richmond at 11 o'clock they found drays (four-horsed coach vehicles) waiting for them, and in 10 minutes they were at the Farm. After a lengthy tour of the Farm the party felt they had gained a lot of extensive information which they could apply in some way to their own farms. Tired but happy, they arrived home in time for supper.

The Sutherland Flower Show, held on Saturday September 28, 1903, must have created a wide interest, for Robert Cook (Coach Prop.) had to put on extra coaches which ran during the afternoon and evening, with a coach which left Miranda for Sutherland at 10 o'clock in the evening.

Perhaps the longest running Show of this kind is the Annual Spring Flower Show and Fete sponsored by the Sutherland Methodist Church and held in the Church grounds in Flora Street. This Show had its beginning in 1929 and has continued up to the present day.

After some of these early Shows interest in this type of public function seemed to wane, and attempts were made in 1937 to form a Sutherland Shire Show, and in the years following World War II.

In 1962 the Sutherland Shire Agricultural, Horticultural and Industrial Society held their inaugural Show at the Jannali Showground in Soldiers Rd.. It was held on Friday and Saturday, 23 and 24 November, and was open from 9.0 am. to 10 p.m.: admission for adults was 4/- and children sixpence. This very successful Show was opened by the Minister for Agriculture, Mr. A. G. Enticknap, M.L.A.. The Society has a list of twenty enthusiastic foundation office-bearers, with G. F. Mulholland as secretary. This Society continues to present their annual Show, held in recent years at Waratah Park Sutherland..

— Fred Midgley.

Sources; "St. George Advocate"; G. Heavens; W.A. Nelson; Author's Notes.

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#### A Rival to "Fisher's Ghost" ?

At a place called Mick's Mount, about 20 miles out from Bathurst on the road to Oberon, old-timers claimed that this site was haunted by a ghost which appeared at a bend in the road — a fearsome apparition, looking like a man with a bullock's head, with fire coming from the nostrils. The local country folk were too terrified to go near the place after dark, and horses bolted after having seen the ghost. It was not altogether a figment of the imagination — the "ghost" was actually a tree-trunk shaped like a man, and on top of this was a large piece of luminous fungus whose shape resembled a bullock's head.

THE PRESIDENT COMMENTS ....

The winter of 1977 has produced some particularly distasteful days and nights which seem worse than previous years; and the night of June 10, planned for our guest Speaker in expectation of a good "roll up", proved to be one of these and preceding a long weekend, the outlook for holiday makers also seemed bleak. Our guest Speaker, who lives at Enmore, was given the option of deferring his evening to a later date, and this he wisely accepted. Mr. Leon Rosenthal will now be Guest Speaker at our August meeting.

The emergency then arose of filling the gap in the evening programme, and it is the effectiveness of this activity which causes me to write these notes for the Bulletin. Mrs. Hutton Neve, Hon. Research Officer, and Colin Ivers, junior member, provided material which proved of special interest to those who braved the cold and the rain. Miss Jenness Ivers also had material available as a reserve.

In the meantime another member, Mr. Basil Griffin, is arranging to give the Society a night on "Architecture of the Colonies" in October.

This participation by members is very encouraging, and I invite further participation in this way by any member who has material which would be of interest. The subject-matter which one member may have and which may seem commonplace to that member, is very likely strange and therefore of interest to others, so do not hesitate in coming forward with your ideas, so that we can extend the range of topics to present to members in the time ahead.

-- Harold Ivers

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Early Cricket Matches: The fervour for sporting contests, many being for "wagers", began in earnest in the Parish of Sutherland in the mid 1890s to about 1908. Miranda fielded a cricket team as far back as 1896, when they played Competition Matches in the St. George Electorate eight years before the St. George Junior Cricket Association was formed. Their home wicket was situated at the junction of the present Gynea Bay Road and the Kingsway on the western side. A highlight at the end of the 1900-01 season was a grand social occasion sponsored by Mr. Frederick Holt on Easter Monday April 8, when a team from the Deaf Mute Society were entertained. The Miranda team outplayed their visitors, winning by an innings and 18 runs. Edward Lye with 53 n.o. starred with the bat for Miranda; and Joseph Mondel took a two innings' total of 10 wickets for 32 runs of the Deaf Mute team. Mr. Holt, Patron of Miranda Club, was host to both teams at dinner, which was abundantly catered for by Miss Lye. As the match concluded at 3.45 pm the remainder of the afternoon was spent playing rounders and other sports, with most of the spectators joining in. The visitors left for home about 6.0 pm to catch the steam train from Sutherland, being transported there in buggies and carts by Miranda friends.

-- A.M.

Source: "St. George Call".

## BUSH FIRES

Forty years ago the Shire was still largely rural, with a total population, well scattered except for Cronulla and the central areas of Miranda. . Probably one of the worst was that which occurred in January 1939, when between 40 and 50 residences were destroyed, many people losing all their belongings. At that time there was a good deal of poultry farming in the Shire. Reporting to Council at a following meeting, the President Clr. "Joe" Monro, stated: "Poultry farmers lost heavily owing to the excessive heat, some of them losing up to half their flock. Fully 33% of the poultry in the Shire died and the balance have been so effected that there will be a large falling off of egg production. Suitable action is being taken by the Government to meet necessitous cases amongst poultry farmers, and I as introducing a deputation to the Minister next week ... The Council has power to appoint Bush Fire Brigades and to supply them with the necessary appliances, and no doubt in a large area like the Sutherland Shire, Brigades of this nature would be a great assistance in cases of emergency, and also of assistance to the local Fire Brigades in their work."

In a community of small farms, where-on the settler struggles to make a reasonable living, the loss of most of his stock, as well as the destruction of sheds and fenced runs, is calamitous, for most of these properties would not have carried any insurance.

In 1957 another raging bushfire occurred. Some homes at the little settlement of Waterfall were destroyed, and the fire swept along and across Princes Highway, closing the road to traffic.

Gusting at same 60 miles an hour, a change of wind brought the fire roaring down on the small village at Gray's Point, where ten homes were destroyed in a few minutes. Most of the menfolk were away at work when the fire raced up suddenly from the southwest. Most of the trained fire fighters in the district were trying to save properties threatened in other parts of the Shire and help did not reach Gray's Point until it was too late. The women and older children tried to battle the flames, but with the gusting wind the fire roared on, and they knew there was nothing they could do to check them.

"Four women yesterday saved nine children, including four babies, by plunging into the Port Hacking River", reported the Daily Telegraph 11/10/1957. "Ten homes were destroyed and (including Waterfall) left more than 50 people homeless.... One of the women who helped save the children was Mrs. Annabella Laughton, a 47-year-old grandmother and mother of 12 children. When the fire swept down she was in the house with her daughter-in-law Mrs. Norma Laughton, and eight children aged 3 months to 10 years. She later said 'Norma and I did our best to save the house, but with the flames roaring on we knew we could only save ourselves and the children. Mrs. Phyllis Lawes came running up with her daughter Kathleen, 5, and helped us. Someone was calling out -- I don't know who, I just heard the voice -- 'Run for the water! Run for the water!' I grabbed one of the babies, Norma grabbed another, and my other daughter Margaret, 10, also picked up a baby. Mrs. Lawes grabbed another baby. We all started running downhill towards the

water, the older children running with us. We prayed as we ran with the babies, with the ever-present fear that we might stumble with a baby in our arms -- the smoke was thick and choking. The fire was right behind us, and I suppose terror made us seem to run even faster; and then there was the river, and we fell into it, splashing the water over ourselves and the children. But we were all safe, even though our homes were now only a heap of ashes, and all we had were the clothes we had on."

-- M.H.N.

Sources: Notes of the late Clr. Monro: Daily Telegraph 1740/1957.

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"MOOMBARA"

Moombarah Crescent, Turriell Point (Caringbah): there has been some local discussion as to the history of this two-storeyed stone home, it having been stated it was "convict built about 1862 as the first Vice-regal 'weekender' ". None of this is correct.

"Moombara" was built by Richard Cornelius Critchett Walker, C.N.G., J.P., Principal Under Secretary in the NSW Government. A record in the Mitchell Library indicates that a lease, dated 1/7/1881, was granted to him by the Holt Sutherland Estate, for a period of 99 years, taking in much of Turriell Point to the waterfront. It is presumed that the construction of the residence would have started soon after the lease was executed. The stone would have been quarried on the property, and local timber used. When built, the only access was from the waterfront; in later years this was made into an "avenue", flanked by a number of phoenix palms -- one or two still exist.

On the death of Critchett Walker in 1903, the residence was sold, together with the existing lease. Since this original sale, "MOOMBARA" has had various owners; the lease has long since been converted to freehold and the property subdivided.

On checking with the State Governor's private secretary it was ascertained that there had never been any vice-regal "holiday home" in the pre-Shire. It is possible that, when the sale of "Moombara" came forward in 1903, it may have been suggested as a possibility, but because of its remoteness and lack of road access it would not have been considered.

The only convicts employed in the early days were the "chained gangs" building the old Illawarra Road in 1842-45, under the direction of Major Sir Thomas Mitchell: while Capt. James Birnie employed two convicts as farm labourers at "Alpha Farm" Kurnell between 1815 and 1828. The last convict transport to enter Sydney Harbour was the "Hashemy" in 1849. For some years previous to this there had been increasing protests concerning the continuation of transportation; and, bowing to public pressure, the State Government refused to accept the 212 male convicts, and they were sent to Moreton Bay where, I think, most of them were granted ticket-of-leave, while the few incorrigibles on board were sent to Tasmania.

-- N. Hutton Neve

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This page may be detached and kept for reference:

Publications Committee 1977-8: Mr. G. Heavens (Convener), Mrs. M. Hutton Neve (Editor), Mrs. P. Garland, Mrs. D. Vale; Messrs. F. Midgley and B. Griffiths; the President ex officio.

Contributions: Members are asked to submit material for the Bulletin — it need not be confined entirely to local history interest, but such is especially welcome. If material is extracted or re-written, Please quote source. If hand-written, please print names in BLOCK (= capital) letters; and hand to Convener or Editor; or post to Editor's address. Copy for the November issue should be handed in by Sept. 9 (Friday 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 with the Royal Australian Historical Society and The National Trust of Australia, NSW Branch.

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Bulletin extracts: any editorial material may be reprinted in other publications provided that acknowledgment is made both to the writer and to this Society's magazine.

Monthly Meetings of the Society: held on the 2nd Friday of each month, commencing at 8.0pm in the Presbyterian Church Hall, corner Glencoe & Flora Streets Sutherland. Visitors are welcome.

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

PUBLICATIONS OF LOCAL HISTORY: on sale at each monthly meeting; proceeds are paid to the Society.... Illustrated History of Sutherland Shire (F. Midgley) 50 cents . Thos. Holt, 50 cents: Kurnell , 50 cents: Martha Matilda (Mrs. James Birnie), leaflet, 20 cents: Bygone Days of Sutherland Shire, \$1.00. The last four are by M. Hutton Neve (illustrated, except for Martha Matilda). Also on sale is Reflections, illustrated, by A. & F. Midgley, \$1.00; the proceeds of these are paid to the Menai Church Pioneer Fund.

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FIXTURES

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SPEAKERS;

Sept. 9:	Mrs. Wendy Goldstein:	Towra Point & Preservations <u>Illustrated by Slides)</u>
Oct. 11:	Mr. Basil Griffin:	<u>19th Century Colonial Architecture:</u> (Illustrated by Slides)
Nov. 11:	Lt.-Commander Peter Churchill:	<u>Naval Customs.</u>

EXCURSION:

Oct. 22:	Castlereagh & District.	(Please note change of date)
	Leave Cronulla 8.30am.	
	Sutherland 9.0 a.m.	
	Return Sutherland appx. 5.0 p.m.	
	Cronulla appx. 5.30 pm	

Fare (Adults): \$1.00: Schoolchildren: Half Fare.

(Visitors 50 cents extra).

New Members since publication of the last Bulletin:

Mr. D. Archer, Engadine: Mrs. E. Butler, Oyster Bay: Mr. J.A. Crown, Miranda: Mr./Mrs. J.A. Collins, Miranda: Miss S. Eatah, Caringbah: Mrs. J. Kirkman, Caringbah: Mr./Mrs. J. Mitchell, Cronulla: Mr./Mrs. E.B. Pirchan: Mr. and Mrs. N.Prestcott, Sutherland: Mrs. A.T. Woodham, Dolan's Bay.

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MERRELL TAPLIN:

Hon. Secretary.