

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC
QUARTERLY BULLETIN

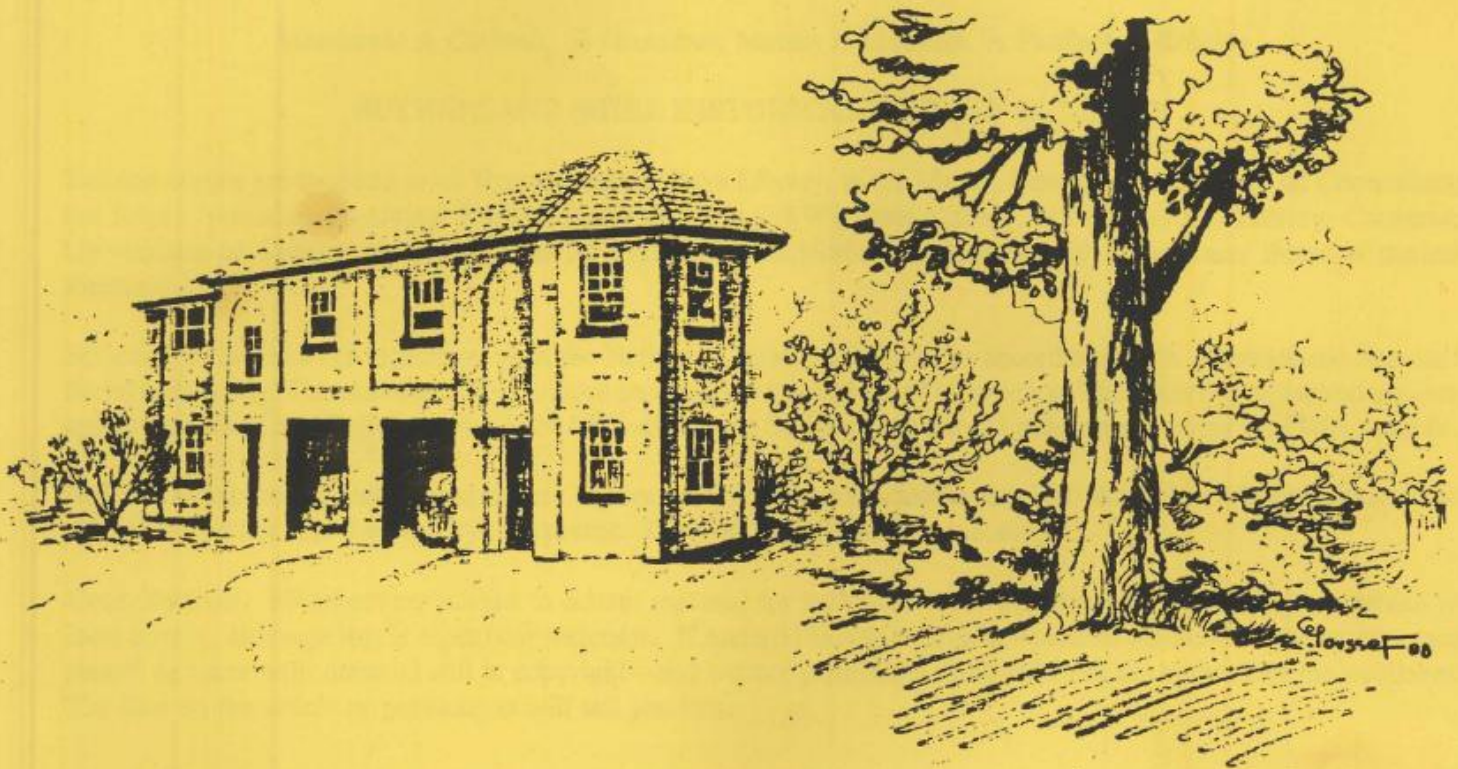
Design by (the late) Fred Midgley



Vol. 2 No. 7

August, 1994

Price: \$1.00



"AMBULANCE STATION"

Old Princes Highway, Sutherland

Sutherland Shire's first ambulance station is now used as a saddlery. The building dates from 1929 and reflected the growth of the district due to the Cronulla tramway.

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SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Meetings of the Society are held monthly, on the second Friday, at 7.45pm at the Council Chambers (2nd Floor, Administration Building), Eton Street Sutherland.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

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SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Renewal of Subscription for 1994

As from .1 January 1994

If you have not already paid in advance, please fill in this form and hand it to the Hon Treasurer, Mr A Hamilton, at the monthly general meeting of the Society; or post it to the Hon Treasurer, Sutherland Shire Historical Society, PO Box 559, Sutherland 2232

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SOCIETY'S OBJECTIVES

1. The study of Australian History in general and of Sutherland Shire History in particular.
2. The collection, acquisition and preservation of all material relevant to the history of the Shire.
3. To encourage and foster an interest in the development of the Shire with particular regard to the natural beauty, character and the preservation of its historic associations, buildings, Aboriginal relics and the like.
4. The dissemination of historical information to members and others by way of lectures, exhibitions, discussions, publications and excursions.

-
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 - RECEIPTS: Please collect your receipt at a meeting. If you wish the receipt to be posted, please include also a stamped, self-addressed envelope.
 - NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS take effect from 1st OCTOBER through till the end of the succeeding year .



QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Vol. 2 No.7

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PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Just when I am settling back into meeting and functions of the Historical Society comes the news that the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. Alwyn Hamilton will be leaving Sutherland Shire to live, very soon and we must therefore look for another member to carry out these duties. Alwyn has carried out his duties most carefully since taking over from Mrs. Sheppard in 1988 and we will miss his detailed statements at our Executive Meetings.

We will be returning to an Excursion Week-end in November, after quite some years of only day excursions. Do think about joining us as these are most enjoyable and the company very happy. The cost covers all your expenses from lunch time Saturday until we leave Oberon on Sunday except for — at this time, Sunday Lunch.

Full details will be in the Excursion Report.

Please keep supporting the Bulletin Editor with stories, or small contributions -- it is your magazine and I can hear Fred Midgley telling us -- without the members articles it becomes shared by only one or two people and then some member won't submit any item in case they offend the "regular writers".



PRESIDENT

GUEST SPEAKERS

August -- Mr. Brian McDowell (Cronulla Resident and member of family of McDowell's Store.

September — To be announced

October -- Subject: South Coast Mine Disasters

November -- Jim Cutbush -- subject to be announced

December -- Christmas Meeting

January, 1995 -- Members Wight

The Brown Saga

Great Grandfather. Jeremiah Brown. was born in Wales.

His birth certificate was never traced, but we know that it was in the early 1800's.

In 1825. he joined the 4th King's Own Regiment as a Private soldier.

After 3 years service, he was selected by lieut. J. Espanasse as his Servant, ie his Batman. He must have been competent. for he served with that Officer for nine years.

In 1831, the 4th and 17th King's Own Regiments were detailed for duty in Australia. So on 18.10.1831, 4 Officers, their wives, 93 NCO's and Privates embarked on S.S. "Eliza", of 506 tons. The contingent included Lieut. Espanasse and his Servant, Jeremiah Brown.

On 10.3.1832, almost five months later, the S.S. "Eliza" arrived in Sydney Harbour.

Jeremiah continued to serve and live with lieut. Espanasse until 1837. His pay was "1/ per diem" (one shilling and one penny = 11 cents per day). During this period. Lieut. Espanasse was appointed Adjutant of the Regiment.

After their arrival in Sydney, Jeremiah apparently met, courted and married a Scottish lass, Mary Burns. Details are in the old Family Bible, but it and the marriage details have been lost.

In 1837, in an effort to better himself in the new land, Jeremiah applied for a position as Overseer in the Town Surveyor's Office. Original References from his C.O.. Major J. England and Lieut. Espanasse are in the Mitchell Library.

Dated 30.7.1837, the C.O.'s reference states that Jeremiah had served in the Regiment for 12 years. He was under the C.O.'s "immediate observation and part of it in my company. He is an honest, sober, industrious young man and I shall be glad to hear of his obtaining respectable employment, to which he is entitled by character".

Lieut Espanasse's reference dated 25.6.1837 said:

"I certify that Jeremiah Brown lived with me as Servant for nine years, during which time he conducted himself perfectly to my satisfaction, being a very sober, honest and well conducted man in every respect. I consider him trustworthy and well calculated to fill a responsible situation".

With such excellent recommendations. Jeremiah obtained the position and served as Overseer, Town Surveyor's Office until January, 1841. His ambition to further improve his station in life then led him to seek employment in the Penal Colony of Norfolk Island. A further original reference in the Mitchell Library is from the Town Surveyor, Felton Matthew. stating:

"Jeremiah Brown has held the situation of Overseer in my Department for the period of 2 years and seven months. His conduct during this period has been most satisfactory. He is a sober. steady and active man and at all times attentive to his duty".

As a result. Jeremiah and his wife. Mary. proceeded to Norfolk Island in 1841.

He was first employed as a Sergeant of Police, under a Sergeant Major. Soon afterwards he was, in the words of the Gaol Governor, A. Machonochie, "in exclusive charge of the whole establishment of English prisoners, both ticket of leave and Government men at Longridge".

The Longridge Post was, as the name suggests, on a high ridge of land on Norfolk Island. some distance from the main Gaol establishment.

The original paper from Machonochie (also in the Mitchell Library) goes on to say:

In this situation. Mr Brown has had very onerous duties to perform, drawing rations on a totally different footing for two different classes of men. He had to keep two different sets of accounts. As changes from time to time took place between them, it required great care on his part to avoid error and confusion."

"I believe that on no occasion has either occurred: and in every other way, Mr Brown has given me equal satisfaction. It gives me great pleasure to recommend him as an excellent. punctual. attentive and intelligent person, extremely well adapted for his situation".

History informs us that conditions for the convicts on Norfolk Island were extremely harsh. A visit to the Island's Cemetery indicates the results.

Despite this and his reputation with the Island Authorities. Jeremiah Brown was apparently a humane Administrator.

Visitors to the Island will have seen the remains of the Mill building. Here the convicts slaved, turning huge Cranks, to grind corn etc, to make flour for bread—extremely hard work.

Among the papers in the Mitchell Library is the original of a poem "for Mr Brown". Written by one of the convicts on Christmas Day 1842. It reads: "By the request of the gangs working on the Cranks on Friday last. I write you the following lines

Sir,

By the man that worked on the Cranks
 I am requested to return you thanks
 For deigning thus to condescend
 To share our task as a Convict's friend
 On the Mill you did help to grind
 Which plainly showed your generous mind
 And to cheer up our spirits you did try
 By showing a pattern of industry.
 Many will give advice we know
 But a good example you did show
 And may we in this respect
 Follow your example and precept
 And may your pattern teach us to try
 To bear our labour cheerfully
 And may all of us submit
 'to what our superiors think fit.
 I wish to thank you in these lines
 For being our friend at various times
 To do the best you did always try
 Between man and man in equity
 Then since a friend you have been to us
 And always acted true and just
 May we respect you for the same
 While under you we do remain
 And since to us you have been so kind
 We will speak of you as we find
 And all unite with me to say
 And wish you a happy Christmas Day.

Longridge Poet

For Mr Brown"

Although a fair amount of material is available about his official life, this most unusual tribute from the convicts is one of the few references to Jeremiah Brown's personal life.

Jeremiah and Mary Brown had 12 children, some of whom were born on Norfolk Island. These included their son, Albert, born on 2.10.1841, after whom the writer of this saga was named.

Ruins of the cottage in which they resided are still to be seen, at the rear of the place now known as The Stables.

In 1847, the Government decided to close Norfolk Island Gaol. The Island was taken over by the "Bounty" survivors, who migrated there from Pitcairn Island. Most of the Establishment was transferred to Van Dieman's Land (Pawnania).

Jeremiah's position was considered. H. W. Blackford, who had taken over from Machonochie as Superintendent of Convicts on Norfolk Island, said of him:

"This Officer has been upwards of seven years in the Convict Department of the Island. I consider him a zealous, well conducted and careful man and shall be glad to hear that his present appointment is retained by him in Van Dieman's Land".

For some unknown reason, Jeremiah and family did not go to Van Dieman's Land. He was appointed as Overseer at Cockatoo Island Gaol, situated on Sydney Harbour. He was later promoted to the position of Assistant and finally, Deputy Superintendent of the Gaol.

Communication from the Island to the Sydney mainland was, of course, by boat. A number of the Brown's twelve children went to school on the mainland by this means.

The boats were used by all Government and other Officials visiting Cockatoo Island Gaol, including the various Church Chaplains.

In 1857, on complaints laid by Rev Pendrill, the Church of England Chaplain, the N.S.W. Legislative Council ordered a Board of Inquiry into the management of Cockatoo Island. (The Report of the Proceedings and Findings of the Inquiry is on record in the Council's archives.)

Among other things, Rev Pendrill complained that:

- (i) Prisoners were arbitrarily and 'improperly sentenced to the cells for insolence.
- (ii) While in the cells, prisoners were not allowed to attend Divine Service.
- (iii) The boat taking people to and from the Island was improperly used for fishing parties and picnics by Superintendent Ormsby.
- (iv) "mortal sins" to wit, unlawful sex between prisoners had been committed in one of the Gaol Hospital Wards.

Both Superintendent Ormsby and his Deputy, Jeremiah Brown, were examined at great length by the Commission on these matters.

The Board's Report was presented to both Houses of Parliament on 24.3.1858. In their summary, Board members indicated their "confidence in the veracity" of evidence given by Jeremiah Brown. Superintendent Ormsby was cleared of all charges.

The years rolled on and Jeremiah's health began to fail.

On 30.6.1860, he was allowed to retire on a pension of £65-10-0 per annum. He did not live very long to enjoy his retirement. Only six months later, on 19.12.1860, it is recorded that Jeremiah Brown died "from general decay of mental and bodily faculties".

From that date there is little information in the archives. Excepting for one significant document, dated 22.10.1861. It is a Petition presented to the N.S.W. Legislative Assembly by Mrs Mary Brown, which reads:

“That your Petitioner's husband, in consequence of ill health. arising from constant anxiety in carrying out his onerous duties, became incapacitated from further service. and was allowed to retire on a pension on 30.6.1860.

“That on 19th December 1860, your Petitioner's husband expired, from a general decay of mental and bodily faculties. leaving your Petitioner with a family of twelve children. in very straitened circumstances.

“That from the long and faithful services of your Petitioners husband under the Government, extending over a period of 23 years. she very respectfully approaches your Honourable House, praying that. in consideration of her large family and her helpless condition, your Honourable House will be pleased to take her case into favourable consideration. she being at present solely dependent on the exertion of the elder members of her family for means of existence”.

A diligent search of the N.S.W. Parliamentary records over the following five years was made. There is no record of any action being taken on Mary Brown's Petition.

One of the "elder members" of the family was my Grandfather. Albert Brown. Hence my interest.

Albert Brown
(Shire resident)

SOCIETY DISPLAY AT MENAI HIGH SCHOOL

Members of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc. arranged a display of local history at Menai High School on the 30th April, 1994: Known as "Mayfair" the exhibition was open to the public on Saturday from 9am to 3pm

Much interest was shown in the early photographs of the area by the 1,100 'people who viewed the display. It was commendable that over 200 children showed great interest in the past history of people and their way of life in their particular district - what was once a rural area has now become a thriving young township.

Thank you to all who helped to make this display of our society's early photographs into such an interesting exhibition.

(Signed) A.McGrath



Rupert Gerritsen *And Their Ghosts May Be Heard*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, 1994, pp. 336, \$19.95, ISBN 1 86368 063 2.

Reviewed by Edward Duyker

In 1616 the Dutch East India Company adopted a faster southern sailing route to the Indies in order to take advantage of the westerlies. Without accurate chronometers to determine longitude, it is surprising that there were not more ships such as the *Batavia*, *Vergulde Draeck*, *Zuytdorp* and *Zeewijk* which simply crashed into the coast of Western Australia between 1629 and 1727.

In recent years these wrecks have been discovered and a rich trove of artefacts brought to the surface. The story does not end here. There is evidence that some seventy-five shipwrecked Dutch sailors and passengers made it to shore. Unfortunately they left few remnants of their presence beyond the immediate vicinity of the wrecks. There has long been speculation that these Dutch castaways did not perish of thirst and starvation, but melted into the local Aboriginal population. Respected observers such as the explorer A. C. Gregory and the anthropologist Daisy Bates fuelled this speculation with reports that the skin colour of the western Aborigines was suggestive of mixed racial origins.

Rupert Gerritsen has taken up the challenge of this mystery and sought to prove that the Dutch castaways not only survived but engendered a unique local culture. In support of his case he has meticulously reviewed the available archaeological, anthropological, historical and linguistic evidence. The result is an impressive scholarly work, but one which remains unconvincing. The Nanda people may be different from their neighbours, but there are many sharp cultural and linguistic contrasts among neighbours in this world. The continent of Australia is no exception.

Gerritsen makes much of the presence and use of the yam *Dioscorea hastifolia*, suggesting it may have been introduced and cultivated by the Dutch. The portrait of semi-sedentary Nanda hunter gatherers feasting on vast fields of yam reminded me of the riverine seed-collecting economy of the Bagundji along the Darling river (NSW). Early explorers commented on the harvesting, threshing and milling of native millet by the Bagundji almost as if these people were primitive cultivators. None suggested that these proto-agricultural techniques, in sharp contrast with the arid-land economy of the

Bagundji's near neighbours the Wangaaybuwan, were a result of instruction by European castaways! Similarly the low stone-walled Aboriginal huts by Lake Condah in Victoria are a far cry from the popular image of the sparse material culture of the Australian nomads. Skin colour also varied greatly in Australia. In 1772 Marion Dufresne's officers were somewhat surprised to discover that the Tasmanian Aborigines were really reddish-brown and that it was only smoke and dirt that made them look so dark.

Gerritsen is clearly a sensitive and sincere researcher who seeks to avoid ethnocentrism, but I couldn't help thinking (perhaps uncharitably) of the arguments of Erich von Daniken, who, in *Chariots of the Gods?*, sought to explain the cultural achievements of Ancient Egypt and pre-Columbian America as a result of extraterrestrial intervention!

In primary school most of us were taught how the words 'beef' and 'mutton' entered the English language from the Norman French words boeuf and mouton. The argument is compellingly obvious. Gerritsen also focuses on individual words, but it is stretching a point, even a coincidence, to suggest that the Nanda word for wooden bowl bat.tje is the same as the Dutch word for a small bath badje or that a digging stick wippa is the same as a Dutch word for a small plank wipje . Far more appropriate Dutch words for these two objects are respectively kom or beker and stok or staf. They barely need translation for an English reader to realise the tenuous nature of Gerritsen's case.

Despite the author's lack of firm archaeological and documentary evidence, *And Their Ghosts May Be Heard* is a stimulating and thought-provoking work. I was reminded of my first reading of Kenneth McIntyre's equally passionate book *The Secret Discovery of Australia* which sought to prove that the Portuguese were the first Europeans to reach this continent. I was not convinced, but I learned a great deal from the attempted proof. And archaeology may yet give both Gerritsen and McIntyre the last laugh.

THE PARKE DAVIS STORY - PART IV
ONE OF THE SHIRE'S LEADING INDUSTRIES
(Contributed by George Heavens)

The following is an extract from the S.C.A.M. Newspaper of 23rd January 1954.
What a great offer! What a great Council! (G.H.H.)

OFFER BY PARKE DAVIS & CO.

This letter received by Council was discussed at the last meeting of the old Council on 23rd November, when it was considered the offer a good and generous one. As owing to the difficulty of securing loan money this would enable Council to retain its present employees on this class of work.

Referring to Council's letter of 15/9/53 addressed to architects Spencer, Spencer & Bloomfield, and noting with regret the information regarding the impossibility of Council undertaking this work at present in view of the financial position. Feel that Council will agree that this work is essential and that if at all practicable it should be carried out prior to completion of the project, which will cost in excess of £1,000,000, as not only would the present condition of the roads, footways etc. mar the appearance of the works, but would cause great inconvenience and possibly damage to transport. In view of Council's present financial position, making the following offers:

Proposal 1 - offering to loan Council an amount equal to cost of the work provided it does not exceed an amount of £6,000, this amount to be interest free and to be recovered by the Company by crediting assessed amount of rates during period of the next succeeding three years, plus a repayment by Council of the difference between that amount and the amount of one-third of the money loaned. In other words, the Company is prepared to advance an amount up to £6,000 repayable over three years by equal instalments.

Proposal 2 - Company would loan Council an amount not exceeding £6,000 subject to interest at rate of £4/15/- per cent (4.3/4%), the amount of the loan to be repaid in 20 instalments at six monthly intervals, over a period of 10 years, such payment to include principal and interest. Should either of these offers be acceptable to Council the loan would be subject to agreement that it was to be used for the particular purpose for which it is offered and would be subject to the usual security offered by Shire Councils, the legal costs involved would, it is suggested, be a charge against Council. Requesting early advice if either of these offers are acceptable; Company would prefer the first proposal but is realised that this might cause an undue strain on Council finances over the next three years, and for that reason the second alternative is offered. It is felt that Council will accept the offer in the spirit it is made; that is, they wish the necessary work carried out to synchronise with their building project, but realising that Council's financial position will not permit of this the Company has endeavoured to assist Council in its financial difficulties and at the same time achieve their objective.

(MEMO - SHIRE CLERK): The offer to lend £6,000 free of interest for three years is a good one. If £6,000 was borrowed and repaid over 10 years at \$4/15/- per cent interest, the interest payment over this term would be £1,607, or an average of £160/14/- per annum for ten years. It is recommended that the loan for three years, free of interest, be accepted subject to the issue of the statutory approvals .

After discussion it was resolved on the motion of Crs. Cartledge and Fitzpatrick (representing Caringbah):- That this matter be referred to the incoming Council with a recommendation that the offer of £6,000 free of interest for three years be accepted.

The three Councillors representing Caringbah Riding in the new Council opposes Council accepting this offer, giving as their reason that many roads and footpaths in Caringbah have been wanting attention for many years and for which the ratepayers have been paying rates.

At the Council Meeting on Monday, 11th January, "A" Riding representatives put forward an alternative proposal:

1. That the Company should meet the entire cost, OR
2. That the Company meet half the cost of paving, kerbing and guttering and road, and loan Council the other £3,000 free of interest for three years.

The second suggestion was adopted by Council on the motion of Crs. Farthing and Munro.

PARK DAVIS & CO'S GENEROUS OFFER

The S.C.A.M. Newspaper

At Council meeting on Monday night a letter was received from Parke Davis & Co., which stated that further to recent correspondence with regard to road, pavement, kerbing and guttering in front of the property in Cawarra Road, Caringbah, we are pleased to advise that the Directors have approved of the interest-free loan of £6,000 for a period of five years as against three years in the first offer made. This means a saving to the ratepayers of £1,600. This offer was accepted by Council.

Caringbah Councillors asked that their names be recorded in the Minutes as voting against the acceptance of the offer.

PARKE DAVIS FACTORY OFFICIALLY OPENED

The S.C.A.M. Saturday, 11th December, 1954

The new and spacious factory of Parke Davis & Company at Cawarra Road, Caringbah was officially opened by the Premier, the Hon. J.J. Cahill, on Friday, 26th November, 1954.

Amongst the large gathering were many distinguished visitors, including Mr W.R. Jeeves (Detroit, Vice-President of the Company in U.S.A.), the Federal Minister for Health, Sir Earl Page, the State Minister for Health, the Hon. M. O'Sullivan, and Messrs T. Dalton, M.L.A. AND F. O'Neill, M.L.A.

Council was represented by the President (Cr A.G. Harper) and other Councillors. Mr Jeeves stated that the project was 100% Australian from top to bottom. The Premier, in the course of his address, referred to the number of employees who would be permanently employed reaching a total of 1,000. Already 2,000 applications have been received and the majority from local residents.

He also referred to the revenue established to Council and said the project was an opportunity for the decentralisation of industry.

Some 500 guests were shown over the huge undertaking and afterwards provided with buffet luncheon at the Cecil Restaurant and given a special souvenir to mark the occasion

By mid-September 1954, the new offices and laboratories had been erected and equipped in record time. -The gigantic removal of equipment had been carried out without the loss of a single day's production.

On 26th November 1954 the modern plant and offices were officially opened by the Hon. J.J. Cahill, Premier and Colonial Treasurer of N.S.W. He was supported by many prominent citizens and officials of both State and Local Government, whilst Mr W.R. Jeeves (Vice-President and Director of Overseas Operations of Parke Davis & Company, Detroit) represent the parent organisation.

The company of Parke Davis came into this area in 1884 when arrangements were entered into with sales agents in Sydney. From these beginnings, more than a century ago, there has grown the world-wide network of Parke Davis research, manufacturing, distributing, sales and administrative centres, serving the health needs of millions of people all over the world.

Parke Davis provides employment at good wages for many people in every area where it

has an installation and, insofar as is practicable, these people are citizens of the country in which they live.

I have tried to tell you the story of Parke Davis' past, now let me look to the future to the year 2000 - not far off. What kind of history will it be making in the future?

Just as it would have been beyond the wildest dreams that conservative Hervey Parke or imaginative George Davis to have visualised the Parke Davis of today; so it is beyond the realm of today's wildest imagination to fathom what the company may achieve in the next century.

Finally, we people in the Shire of Sutherland must be very grateful to have in our midst Parke Davis. They have been with us now for nigh on forty years, situated right in the heart of Caringbah. This company has served us through providing the means for the improvement of the health of people, not only in New South Wales and Australia, but all over the world.

It is easy to see that this is not a professionally produced article. However, with the information I have on hand I think it covers the requirements of our Bulletin. My information is spot on and, with the research that I have put in, I feel I am in a position to say **ANY QUESTIONS?**

FOR ALL THOSE BORN BEFORE 1945

We are survivors: Consider the changes we have witnessed -

We were before television, before penicillin, before polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, frisbees and The Pill. We were before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens, before pantyhose, dishwashers, clothes dryers, electric blankets, air-conditioners, drip-dry clothing - and - before man walked on the moon.

We got married first and then lived together. How quaint can you be? We thought fast food was what people ate during Lent, and outer space was the back of the local theatre.

We were before house-husbands, gay rights, computer dating, dual careers and commuter marriages. We never heard of electric typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors, Hardware meant hardware; and software wasn't even a word.

In 1940 "made in Japan" meant junk and the term "making out" referred to how you did on the exam. Pizzas, Macdonalds and instant coffee were unheard of in our days, cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mowed, coke was a cold drink and pot was something you cooked in. Rock music was a Grandma's lullaby and Aids were helpers in the Principal's office.

We were certainly not before the difference between the sexes were discovered but we were surely before the sex change.

We made do with what we had. We were the last generation that was so dumb as to think you needed a husband to have a baby!

No wonder we are so confused and there is such a generation gap. And so much more.

BUT WE SURVIVED

Noreen Jones . . . Gymea

SUTHERLAND
Sutherland Shire Council 2232

Woronora Crematorium

Linden street

Owner: Woronora General Cemetery & Crematorium Trust Linden Street
Sutherland NSW 2232

Author: I Hayes ...NATIONAL TRUST
5/1993 8/1993

APPROVED: 28/9/1993 Date:

HISTORY:

The Woronora Crematorium was officially opened on April 21, 1934 by the Chief Secretary of NSW, the Honourable Captain F. Chaffey MLA. It was designed by the architectural firm of Louis S. Robertson and Son. The firm was also responsible for the design of the Crematoria at Botany and Beresfield Cemeteries. Built for the Woronora General Cemetery Trust and erected by Norman R. Smith, the crematorium was sited such that it would be highly visible when people entered the cemetery grounds, and this would encourage cremation.

Upon opening, the crematorium was considered the most modern facility of its type in the Southern Hemisphere and was praised for its beauty. The motto on the booklet describing the building published in the 1930s was: "Where beauty softens grief".

DESCRIPTION:

The Woronora Crematorium is an example of the Inter-War Art Deco style. The building is constructed of reinforced concrete with a brick veneer and granosite finish. The building is sited on elevated ground and surrounded by gently undulating slopes. The strong horizontal lines of the parapets, featuring Art Deco motifs, are contrasted by the vertical emphasis of the campanile-like tower.

The complex comprises two chapels; the Eastern Chapel (no.1 on the plan) which can accommodate 300 mourners, and the Western Chapel (no.2 on the plan) which can accommodate 200 mourners. The two chapels were separated by an open and sunlit Court of Remembrance which featured a cloister and lotus pool - a symbol of rebirth, so the location of the pool at the centre of the complex was appropriate. The Court of Remembrance remains but the lotus pool has been removed.

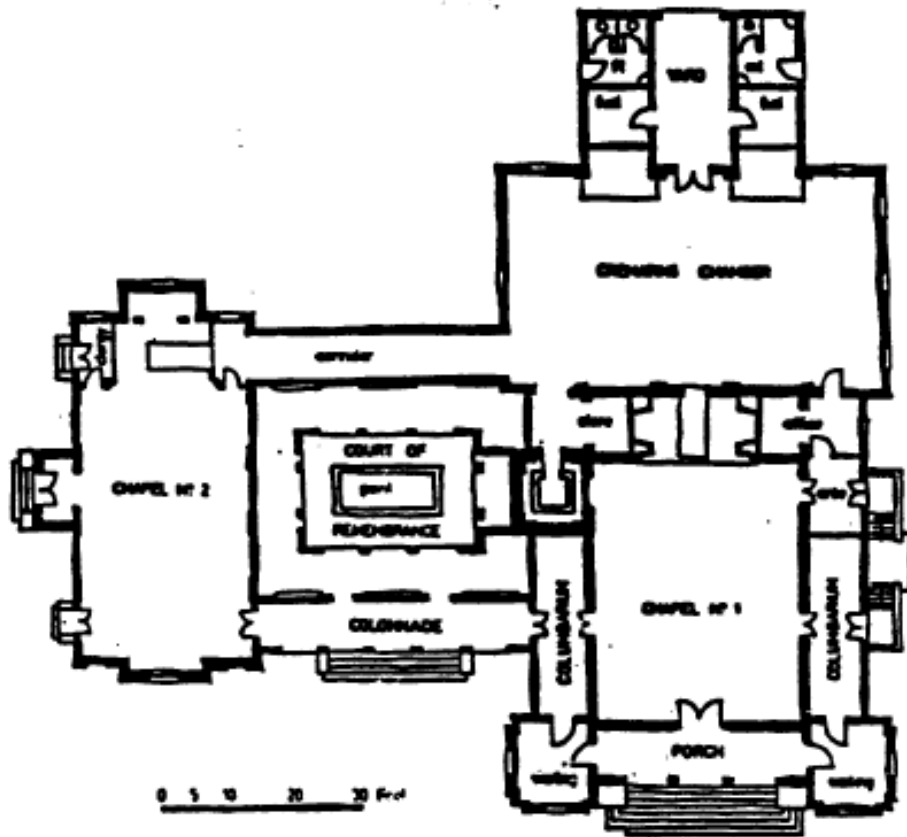
Within the court and in the Columbaria flanking the Eastern Chapel, niches are located to house the ashes of the departed. In each chapel catafalques are framed in a recessed apse. The apse in the Eastern Chapel is stepped. Other internal features include a coffered ceiling, hanging pendant light fittings and a stepped dado around the chapel and windows at a high level to prevent mourners being distracted by events outside. The Western Chapel has lower ceilings and windows, a stepped ceiling and pendant lights. Both chapels feature polished Jarrah flooring, now concealed by carpet. The original steel framed windows are now aluminium framed. Several of the windows include amber glass to provide a warm glow to the interiors. The internal walls are cement-rendered. Porte cocheres were sympathetically added to the chapels in the 1940s and 1950s. There is also a very recent addition as well c1991-92.

The remainder of the building is used for the processes of cremation. Three new furnaces were installed in 1988, with the flues concealed in the tall campanile-like tower.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

The Woronora Crematorium, located in the Woronora Cemetery, Linden Street, Sutherland, has aesthetic significance as a fine and intact example of the Inter-war Art Deco style. The building is situated on elevated ground, establishing its visual dominance. The building's compositional massing is functionally derived and distinctive; a union of unambiguous horizontal banding, in contrast to the vertical emphasis of the campanile-like tower. The conventional Art Deco motifs featured on the horizontal parapets serve to soften the massing of the building.

Internally, the building features coffered ceilings, stepped dados, and pendant lights to one chapel.



Plan of the Crematorium as originally constructed.



The Interior of the Eastern Chapel in 1934.

Alexander Massov and Lena Govor Rossiiskie moryaki i puteshestvenniki v Avstralii
[Russian Sailors and Travellers in Australia],
Nauka, Moscow, 1993, ISBN 5 02 017384 3.

Reviewed by Edward Duyker (from translated extracts).

Rossiiskie moryaki i puteshestvenniki v Avstralii [Russian Sailors and Travellers in Australia] is a major work on a subject which has been largely ignored in Australia. The coverage is extensive from the early 19th century to the early 20th century. It is essentially an anthology of primary sources - both published and unpublished - with a general introduction and short sectional introductions. It was published in Russia in 1993 with the financial assistance of the Australian embassy in Moscow.

The collection provides a very valuable background for our understanding of the history of relations between Russia and Australia. When one considers how much of our 19th century military architecture resulted from fear of Czarist Russian ambitions in the region, it is amazing that it has taken so long for scholars to assemble a collection which for the first time documents the actual nature of Russian contact with this continent. The account of the forged Russian orders which were published by the Melbourne Age in February 1882 and which alleged that the Russians intended to capture the city, is a particularly interesting example of the hysteria associated with Australian colonial perceptions. Significantly a French-born chemist named Henri de Beaumont (born 1831) was the prime instigator of this farce.

Apparently a fugitive convict from New Caledonia, Henri de Beaumont, passing himself off as the 'Comte' de Beaumont, arrived in Melbourne in 1880 on the steamship City of Melbourne. He initially gained ready acceptance in polite Melbourne Society, but was arrested for jewellery theft and received a sentence of hard labour in Pentridge. On his release from gaol on 28 January 1882 he posed as a certain Mr Bryant and attempted to sell Admiral Aslanbegov of the visiting Russian cruiser Afrika plans for a new torpedo for 5000 roubles. He also requested that he might be allowed to enter the Okhrana (the Russian Secret Service) to spy on nihilists! Unhappy at being spurned by Aslanbegov (who quickly suspected him of being French rather than English and telegraphed his superiors over the matter), de Beaumont determined on revenge by presenting the Age

with a forged secret dispatch implicating the Russians in a planned act of war.

Although the document was treated as a clumsy forgery by other newspapers, Aslanbegov wrote to the Governor of Victoria, the Marquess of Normandy, demanding action be taken over the slander. But unwilling to remain in Victoria if the matter was prosecuted in the courts, Aslanbegov eventually accepted official apologies for the incident and departed Victoria. No doubt to the acute embarrassment of the Age, the Argus thoroughly investigated the incident and published details of de Beaumont's record on 30 March, 1882.

At times the Russians were amused by the misconceptions of their Australian hosts and played up to them with entertaining results. The story of a colonial miss (who believed the Russians ate tallow candles and went hungry at a ball given by them) is a good example. The Russians had their own misconceptions too. I could not help laughing at the Russian who complained of being unarmed in the bush except for a stick to protect him from the kangaroos!

The extract from A. L. Yashchenko's book *A Journey Around Australia*. provides interesting references to yet another Frenchman with aristocratic pretensions.: Georges de Pienes, station manager at Hergott Springs, represented himself to Yashchenko as the 'Vicomte de Pierre'. He was found to be no savant and uncomfortable with the democratic ways of South Australia, but nevertheless a useful informant on the local Aborigines.

This is an important new work which will be 'mined' by Australian scholars in many different ways.

EXCURSION REPORT.

As this report is being prepared for the Bulletin we are about to make our visit to Liverpool Area. I'm sure it will be a most enjoyable day, but a report will need to be held over.

On Saturday September 17, our visit will be to the Rail Museum at Thirlmere, Leaving Cronulla Et 8,30 a.m., Sutherland 9, a.m. the cost will be \$17.00 for members and \$20.00 for visitors --which includes coach and entrance fees.

Take your Morning tea and luncheon with you as is usual -On day trips.

Then for November, we are planning, at your request, a -week-end tour to Oberon, but to ease the cost, we will leave on Saturday morning instead, of the Friday night, as we did for so many years. The cost will be \$110.00 for members and \$115.00 for visitors, which will be inclusive of Dinner, Bed and Breakfast at the Big Trout Motor Inn, Luncheon supplied by the Oberon Society on Saturday and any entrance fees.

You may care to take a thermos for a quick "cuppa" when we stop for a comfort stop on Saturday morning, possibly at Katoomba. Being day light saving time we will leave Cronulla at 7 a.m. and Sutherland 7.30 a.m. to allow us to arrive in Oberon about 11 a.m. to 11.30 and thereby have plenty of Saturday time for our visit.

The Oberon President, Mrs. Laurie McMahon said the members of Oberon Society are delighted we are coming to visit and promises an enjoyable week-end; full details are not yet available, but having -.ane a trip to Oberon to see what it offered before making a recommendation I'm sure you will be delighted at what it has for the historian and traveller.

Bookings to Mrs. Betty McGrath on 521-2227; for the Oberon tour you may pay it off each month until final payment in October, if so desired.

If Betty is unavailable and you are seeking information, please call me on 523-5801 -- leave a message on my machine if I'm not available when you call and I'll get back to you.



EXCURSION CONVENER

HERITAGE WEEK - APRIL 1994.

For the first time the Sutherland Shire Historical Society's display Heritage memorabilia and relics was held in conjunction with the Caltex Heritage Week Photographic competition in the Sutherland Memorial School of Arts East Parade Sutherland.

The Heritage week Mayoral reception was officially opened by the Mayor, Councillor Ian Swords on Tuesday 19th April.'

Throughout Heritage week the museum. was open to the public were 814 visitors including 168 schoolchildren inspecting the display. One roan contained many articles used by our grandparents and clothing and furnishings of yesteryear. Of particular interest was the second showroom which featured memorabilia and relics of World war 1.

Many memories were stirred by the 1914-1918 'Sydney Mail' journals - still in very readable condition after all these years.' Photographs showing the uniforms and weapons - the guns being dragged by horses were wondered at by the younger generation and remembered by many of the older people. People were surprised that so many aboriginals served in that war - The photographs' of a V.C. winner, Capt. Hamilton with replicas of his medals were of particular interest.

The museum is a permanent display area for our Heritage and the society and friends were pleased that the organisers and helpers efforts were so well received.

Thanks are due to those that planned the display and those that assembled it and the volunteer workers who served tea and looked after the exhibits. .

(Signed) A. McGrath. .



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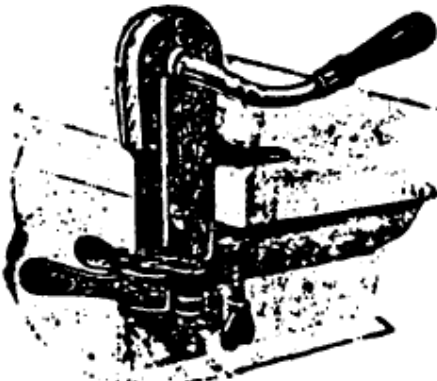
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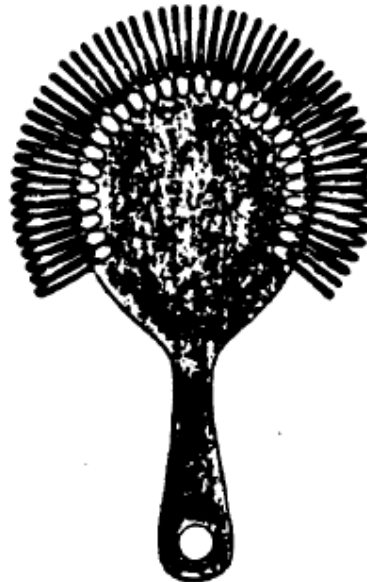


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