

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC QUARTERLY BULLETIN



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SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Meetings of the Society are held monthly, on the third Friday, at 7.45pm at the Multipurpose Building, Flora Street, Sutherland (next to Council Car Park.)

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

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QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.
Vol. 2. No. 16

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NOVEMBER	MRS. LEFAYRE PALMER
	PLEASANT AND VERY COLONIAL
DECEMBER	CHRISTMAS NIGHT

COVER.

Typical Christmas Day as celebrated by our early Pioneers.

PIONEERS.

BY A. B. PATTERSON.

O ye that sleep in lonely graves by distant ridge and plain, We drink to you in silence
now as Christmas comes again,

To you who fought the wilderness through rough unsettled years, The founders of our
nation's life, the brave old pioneers.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

Here we are preparing the last Bulletin for 1996 just where has the year gone?

It was with much sadness we said farewell to a very long time member in Mr. Frank Butt earlier this month; Frank and Lyle had been regular attenders at meetings, and all our excursions until illness caused them to restrict their outings, and they were greatly respected by us all. Frank was well known in the Sutherland area having been Postmaster for many years.

The Society was represented at the funeral by Mrs. Joyce Barrett and myself. (Joyce is the widow of a postmaster and knew so many in attendance). Again we offer deepest sympathy to the family.

Members are reminded that from the new financial year of the Society, commencing December 1, 1996, fees will be increased by \$2.00, to become \$10.00 each per year. We pay for hire of the Multi-Purpose Building, and with the increased postal, telephone and other items this has become a necessity. Fees received when a member becomes a Life Subscriber are invested so that we may get a return to assist in the yearly running of the expenses.

Quite a number of our members have been on the sick list and I try to keep in touch with them; Allan Mazoudier and Bette Welch are now recuperating at home after hospitalisation, as is Doris Wood following a double by-pass operation. Please let me know of any seriously ill member so that we may contact he or she.

By special request we will not have a guest speaker for the December meeting, but we trust you will enjoy the Christmas atmosphere. Please assist with the supper by bringing along a small plate of "goodies".

January is our "members night", once again -- if you have a subject you would like to speak about, please offer to join the little group who volunteer. About ten to fifteen minutes, please.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Committee and members for their participation in our activities during the year and wish you a joyous and happy Christmas and a Healthy New Year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Aileen Griffiths OAM".

PRESIDENT

Stapleton's The First Butchery

William Stapleton was a farmer in England who married Mary Anne Thimbleby who bore him eight children of whom five survived. He, his wife and children came to Australia in 1853 but his wife Mary Anne died of peritonitis on 17th December 1869 at the age of 58 years. William lived on until the age of 82 years. Two of their daughters married two Bloxam brothers who owned a well known printing firm.

One of William Stapleton's sons was Charles Harvey Stapleton I, who became a drover in N.S.W. He married Elizabeth Thompson on 30th May 1871 at Liverpool. The family moved around from place to place and the first three children were born at Ropers Creek between St Marys and Windsor. Charles Harvey Stapleton II was born at Capertee. Eleven children were born to Charles and Elizabeth. Three died in infancy. As they were getting ready to go to the funeral of one baby, a toddler had a convulsion and died. The remaining family moved to Sutherland about 1880 and built a house where Stapleton Avenue is now. They occupied all the land where Sutherland shopping centre is now down to the back of Stapleton Avenue at Glencoe Street. Elizabeth planted a large orchard with many apple trees and grape vines. Charles became the first and only butcher in the Sutherland district for many years. He had his own slaughter yards along President Avenue, half in Gynea and half in Miranda. The area extended from Manchester Road to the eastern boundary of Wyalla Road and included Sylvania Road, Pines Road and Walker Avenue to Forest Road. The land was leased in 1881 from the Holt Sutherland Estate. This land was later sold to Aaron Walker and the slaughter yards were moved to the southern end of Glencoe Street in 1918.

When the Illawarra Railway was being built 1884-86, Charles went around to all the railway workers with his horse and cart and sold meat to them. In those days the soldiers trained at Artillery Hill which is now the Royal National Park and the butcher also supplied them with meat.

The Stapleton family built a holiday house at Yowie Bay right on the water which they had for many years.

The present butcher shop was opened at Sutherland in 1896 followed by one at Waterfall and Hurstville for Charles' sons to manage. Waltons store at Hurstville was the site of the original shop and the old P.D.F. at Cronulla was the site of the bakery Charles bought for his daughters to manage.

Charles bought the first buggy in the area where only sulkies were used and every weekend he drove his family around for an outing. He wore a grey dustcoat and had a big ginger beard and hair to match. Charles and Elizabeth's daughter Emmeline married Percival Evans on 27 March 1901. Percival was a fitter and turner with the railways and was the youngest of a very large family who wanted to be a minister in the Church of England. However, he could not afford to put himself through Moore College. The family decided to help the young couple by employing Emmeline to manage the bakery at Cronulla so her wages could enable her husband to fulfil his ambition to become a minister. They had four children and adopted a little boy from an orphanage and when Percival died on 17 January

1937 at age 63, his widow moved back home to a house in Stapleton Avenue near her parents.

Another daughter of Charles and Elizabeth, Mabel, married Geoff Walker, a Methodist minister and the uncle of the Reverend Alan Walker of Lifeline Methodist Mission.. The other children of the family were Florence, who married Edward Young, Cissie who married an Avery and the four boys, Frederick James who died on the 20 April 1919 aged 26 at the time of the flu epidemic Thomas who married Dorothy Boyle who inherited Boyles Hotel from her father, Percival who managed the second butcher shop built at Sutherland and Charles Harvey II who was given the Hurstville shop to manage where he moved with his new wife Amy Amelia Tabor after their marriage at St Paul's Church, Kogarah on 15 February 1906.

Amy was the great granddaughter of Thomas Tabor, one of the first school teachers in the Colony who was appointed Parish Clerk and schoolmaster of the government school and came to .N.S.W. in 1797. Charles and Amy had seven children, five boys and two girls. The first three born at Woodville Street, Hurstville. Charles and Amy returned to Sutherland where Charles stayed, managing the two shops at Sutherland with his brother Perce and later with the help of his five sons, Alfred, (Sport) Edward (Ted), George, Ernest (Ernie) and Jack.

During the construction of the Woronora Dam in 1927 meat was supplied to the workers and families living there. During the depression of the 30's and the second world war many friends and customers of the butchery were out of work and fell on hard times but nobody was turned away without meat for the family, and later , two ledgers of unpaid debts were written off by the brothers.

Meanwhile the older Stapletons Charles and Elizabeth had died, Charles on the 11 September 1930 and his wife on the 6 April 1944.

Alfred (Sport) was very popular with the old folk and his death from asthma in 1954 aged 46 was a blow to the family.

When Percy retired, the bottom shop was sold and the four remaining brothers continued to run the top shop opposite the railway station where it now stands..

Charles' eldest daughter Dorothy (Dolly) helped in the shop serving customers and taking money joining Jack's wife Lavina (Tuppy) who had started working for the family as a young girl before she married Jack. The boys continued to work and live in Sutherland with their families and a very close relationship with their parents existed. Christmas was always celebrated at East Parade where Charles and Amy lived . Birthdays and any important occasion were spent together. When the family outgrew the house in the later years a pavilion at National Park was used for the ever increasing grand children and great grandchildren to join in the family celebrations.

Written by Joan Beslich

Researched by the Daughter of Robyn Blamire

GUNNAMATTA TRAGEDY 1900

On 26 January 1900, Australia Day eve of the new century, a typically hot summer's day, Rockdale Fire Brigade's annual picnic was held at Gunnamatta Bay. Around 1.30 p. m., Mr W. Logan, secretary to the brigade, hired a dinghy from O'Neill's boatshed to gather oysters from the rocks around the further shore of Gunnamatta Bay. Accompanying him were Mary Coles, aged fourteen, Mrs Russell and her baby daughter, and a Miss Ridgeway. Mr Logan took the rudder while the three women rowed. Half way across the bay, as Mr Logan tried to change position to the centre of the boat, the others all moved to one side. The dinghy then capsized, Mr Logan being the sole occupant who could swim.

He managed to right the boat, leaving Mrs Russell and Miss Ridgeway clinging to the side. He then rescued the baby and began to swim with the child clinging to his back, and pushing the dinghy towards the shore, about thirty metres distant. Twice the child fell off, but he was again able to rescue her. Meanwhile, Mary Coles was still struggling in the water, managing to keep afloat.

At this point, the tide turned and began to ebb strongly, pulling the dinghy towards Kurnell. Mr Logan realised that to leave the boat in an attempt to reach Mary Coles would result in the other three being drawn out to sea and lost. By the time he pushed the boat into shallow water, he was almost exhausted, and Mary Coles had disappeared. As he staggered ashore he was met by her father who, fearing an accident, had hired a boat to search for his daughter. Some local fishermen and another fireman named Moore dived for the girl, but by the time they found her, an hour and a quarter later, they were far too late. Tragically, this young girl drowned only thirty metres from the shore

Mary Coles, an only daughter, is interred alone in a family plot in Woronora cemetery, her granite headstone being almost indecipherable now. William Coles of Rockdale (later Concord and Lidcombe) who appears to have been her father, died in February 1925, and is interred in Rookwood

These were the days of The Boer War, patent medicines, and proceedings of Sutherland Council, convening at Miranda, reported under "Country News."

Contributed by Rhys Pidgeon.

A SLOW BOAT TO CRONULLA.

On June 20th 1952 someone dropped a bottle overboard from a harbour ferry with a note inside asking that it be returned to an address in Hurstville.

Almost two years to the day Mrs. T. Knight picked it up on the beach in Gunnamatta Bay, Cronulla, and returned it as requested.

Sydney Morning Herald. 1954.

Contributed by Keith Knight.

Mysterious death hits soldier crabs.

The Fisheries Division of the CSIRO, at Cronulla, is probing a major mystery at its own backdoor.

Division officers are trying to find the cause for the death of thousands of soldier crabs which inhabit the sand bars in Gunnamatta Bay.

The Fisheries Division has its offices on Cronulla Point, which forms a promontory of the bay. The soldier crabs regularly each winter form ranks and march along the sands. In recent years they have not been numerous but this year their numbers have increased. Many thousands have died in recent weeks, however. Thousands more crabs appear to be on the verge of death.

Sutherland Shire Council health department was told earlier this month of the mystery. The Council health inspector in turn referred the puzzle to the Fisheries Division. A division official said on Friday that two inspectors had begun an investigation, but their findings would not be known at least until later this week. He said there were "a couple of theories" for the deaths, including the possibility of pollution. "Obviously the crabs have come up against something, but we can't yet say just what" he said. The official said it was not known if other forms of marine life in the bay were affected. Gunnamatta Bay is regarded as almost an aquarium for marine life. The official said by a coincidence a study of the soldier crab's habits had been a project for the division's recent marine science school. When the project was being planned thousands of crabs had been "on the march." But when field research had begun on sandflats at the mouth of Burraneer Bay the crabs had disappeared temporarily. "Part of the reasons for the project's lack of success was our lack of knowledge of the crab's habits," the official said. The crabs apparently go on the march only for short periods each day, related to tidal conditions.

Sydney Morning Herald 22-6-1966.



Contributed by Keith Knight.

SIR ROSS SMITH.

The year was 1920, when at the age of 11 years, one, George Heavens accompanied by his mate Syd Jackson, set out to greet Sir Ross and Sir Keith Smith, and Bennett and Shiers. in their two engined Vickers Vimy aeroplane, the first British Aircraft manned

by Australians to travel from London England to Australia in 28 days. on their arrival at Mascot mud flats at that time a nice level clearing of hard mud land.

To accomplish the boys desire was no mean feat either, as both boys lived at Rockdale, 3 miles away, and as was common with boys in those days, wore no shoes, they were required to walk right across the then snake infested sewerage farm for about one mile to the banks of the Cook's river, here it was necessary to remove all clothing, and with their trousers belt, strap them onto their heads, then carefully without splashing, swim the shark infested filthy river. eventually arriving, drying off as per the singlet, then redressing, then walking over to the hanger where a group of people were already waiting, after a wait of about an hour the plane was heard, and then seen eventually touching down and bouncing along the ground, raising as much dust as a Gilgandra dust storm in mid January. Then four men stumbled out and walked into the shed big brown building that I was told was called a hanger, There was a lot of hand shaking, and that sort of thing, and drinking tea too, so while they were all talking we inspected the plane, and I can assure you, dear reader, I wouldn't have said it was safe to fly around carrying 865 gallons of petrol in the air, it was made of wooden struts and canvas as I could see, anyway have a look at it in the Canberra museum for yourself.

They started their journey of 11,500 miles on the 12th of November 1919 and 28 days later on the 10th of December 1919 arrived in Darwin. from London to Darwin in 28 days it was really an extra-ordinary feat one of the landmarks in Australian aviation.

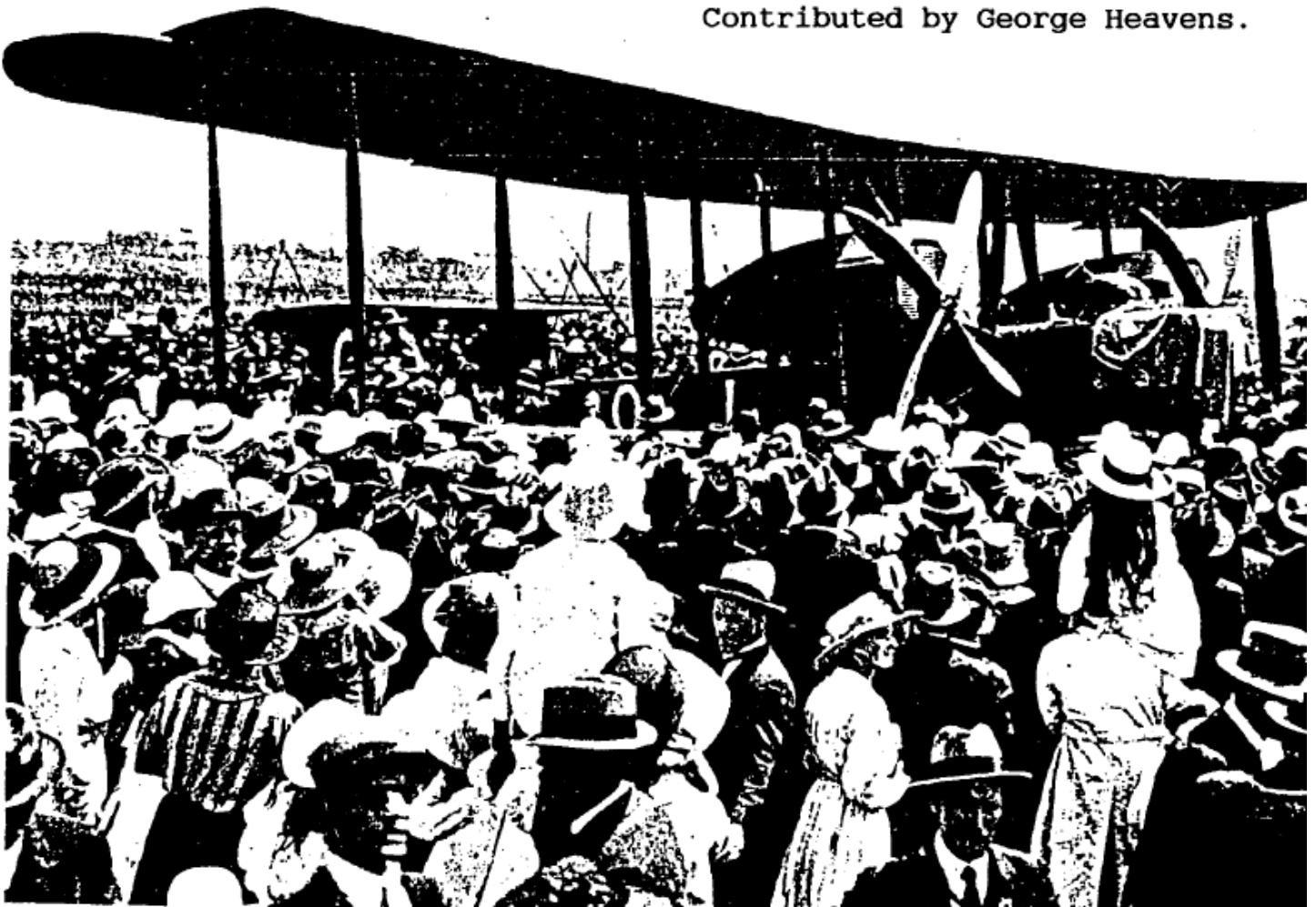
They then continued the journey to Brisbane, Sydney, and on to Melbourne where they recieved a cheque for ten thousand pounds as a reward for their adventurous journey. and were hailed as heros. Meanwhile our two boys arrived home via a swim, a walk, and a good belting, as a reward for being too adventurous again and were hailed as a pair of idiots. Such was the Generation gap in those days

In 1922 they had planned to make a flight around the world, but on giving the plane a test flight it got into a spin and crashed killing Sir Ross Smith and Bennett .

Sir Ross Smith published a book "The first Aeroplane Voyage from England to Australia, and then later on a book titled "14,000 miles through the air" this one was not published until just after his death. Sir Ross Smith should be placed alongside Bourke and Wills as truely Australian Adventurers.

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Contributed by George Heavens.

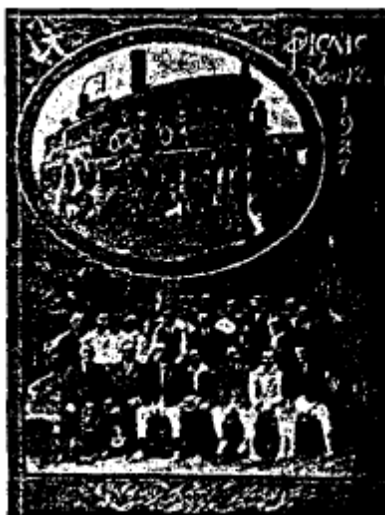


PICNIC DAY

Printers' Picnic began as industrial protest

Picnic Day was once more than just a special holiday every year. Along with other trades, printers used to celebrate their special day each year with a big social outing.

Thousands of members and their families would be entertained by musicians, comedy acts, competitions and dances, while a few public speakers would add to the seriousness of the occasion.



Printers Picnic 1927.

The last PKIU Picnic was held on February 28, 1981. It was succeeded by the union's BBQ and Fun Run, which after several years was also discontinued.

The first Printers' Picnic Day was organised by the Amalgamated Printing Trades' Employees Union (APTEU) on Saturday November 25, 1922, at Lane Cove River. Tickets sold for one shilling (ten cents) and ferries were organised to transport members and their families to the picnic spot.

Milk and hot water were provided, and lollies and toys given, to the children. In total, 1,600 adults and 800 children attended. The day finished with social dancing and racing competitions, including the Amalgamated Union Championship, which under various names remained a Picnic Day institution to the very end.

"The social life of our organisation has been too much neglected in the past," the APTEU Review of November 1922 commented, "for it is only by members attending such a gathering that they learn to know and therefore understand each other much better."

Back then, Australia was the only country with industrial laws stipulating that every industry provide a special holiday for its workforce.

In 1922, Saturday mornings were part of the normal working week, which until recently had included the whole of Saturday. Employers and conservative Governments around Australia were campaigning to restore the 48-hour week, while the trade union movement was fighting to keep Saturday afternoons free.

For this reason, it wasn't just social life that the first Printers' Picnic was concerned with. The APTEU Review made clear that the Picnic was also a demonstration of members' determination to keep the 44-hour week.

(It's interesting to see how long working weeks were in those days, as well as to note that employers were as determined then as they are now to resist extensions of leisure time. It's also worthwhile noting that the Australian economy has managed often enough to absorb massive cuts in working hours without any lasting damage.)

The second Annual Picnic was held on December 8, 1923, at Clifton Gardens, which was the Picnic's venue for the next 35 years. The following years' Picnics saw a steady expansion of activities, such as a Married Ladies' Race and an Old Buffers' Race. These days, most members would be put off by such titles' sexist or ageist connotations, but it must be remembered that such terms were not considered offensive in the 1920s.

The admission price stayed at one shilling for many years. But despite the fairly successful outings on Picnic Day, the union worried about members' attendance. The APTEU Review often lamented the low turn-outs, which rarely exceeded 3,000, and called on members to attend the next year's function.

However, after the eighth Annual Picnic in 1929, the event was cancelled for the next nine years. The Great Depression struck that year, depleting the printing industry and the union's finances. Throughout the 1930s, members were instead urged to show their solidarity by attending May Day and Eight-Hour Day picnics.

The Printers' Picnic re-appeared on February 19, 1938 and was celebrated in much the same way as those before. Free sweets, milk, toys as well as Punch and Judy and magic shows, were provided for the children.

By 1941, many members and their relatives were on active war service. That year's Annual Picnic had become, in part, a rally in support of the war effort.

Children's toys given out that year could only be Australian-, British- or American-made. Picnickers also participated in a game where hooded competitors attempted to hit an effigy of Adolf Hitler - labelled "Public Enemy Number One".

No more Picnics were held during the war years, owing to shortages and other war-related expenses.

The Annual Picnic re-emerged on February 12, 1949. Over the next 20 years it increased in popularity.

However, holding the Picnic Day on a Saturday was causing problems. Picnic Day was originally selected as a special industry holiday, but Saturday had ceased to be a working day, even a partial one, since the introduction of the 40-hour week in 1947.

This meant that the Annual Picnic inevitably clashed with other weekend activities, discouraging many members from attending. Picnic grounds were also likely to be crowded on a weekend because other people would be using them.

In 1948, the APTEU applied to the Arbitration Commission for the holding of the Annual Picnic on a week day, but this was refused. A further attempt in 1956 was also knocked back. Attempts were still being made to shift Picnic Day when the APTEU amalgamated with the

Printing Industry Employees Union (PIEU) in 1966 to form the PKIU.

As the Printers' Picnic was celebrated year after year, more entertainers and activities were introduced, such as a piano accordion, bands, mad hatters' parades and clowns.

Picnic Day was shifted in 1958, from the long-used venue of Clifton Gardens to Parsley Bay. It was chosen as the alter-native site because it had concrete tables, other facilities suit-able for picnics, and a beach with a shark-proof fence.

The Annual Picnic continued to be held at Parsley Bay until 1962. It was celebrated one last time at Clifton Gardens in 1963, and the following year, the first joint APTEU-PIEU Annual Picnic was held at Gunnamatta Park in Cronulla. This remained the Picnic Day venue until the end.

In 1965, the unions organised three special trains to transport members and their families to Gunnamatta Park. Eight thousand attended that year's Picnic - a record turn-out.

In 1966, another record attendance was achieved with 12,000 attending what turned out to be the last joint union picnic. They amalgamated several months later to become the PKIU.

In 1969, 13,000 attended the Printers' Picnic. As well as the familiar singing hands, social dances, races, games and miniature train rides, there were pony rides and - appropriately for a printing union - children's art



Picnic Day 1968.



...as were pony rides.



Miniature train rides were a particular delight on Picnic Day...

competitions.

Guest speakers, who often included Labor MPs, were invited to address Picnic Day, re-emphasising the political and industrial aspects of the tradition. It continued to be a fun-filled experience, but by the early 1970s, reports of falling attendance "featured in almost every story about it.

Echoing some of the appeals from 1920s issues of the APTEU 'Review', PKIU State 'News usually' concluded its report on each year's Picnic with a call to members to attend the next one.

In an attempt to boost attendance, the union moved the 1979 Picnic Day from the usual post-Christmas holiday February dates to March 3.

Unfortunately, this didn't halt the decline as only half the usual number of people showed up.

Still the times moved on. In 1981, for the first time, men and women raced against each other in the Printing Trades Championship. New games were also introduced.

But there was little else to note about the Picnic that year because that was its final celebration. The PKIU decided that with such low turn-outs, the function was too expensive to maintain.

Picnic Day itself, however, did not disappear. In 1982, the union finally succeeded in having it moved to a week day - Tuesday, April 27. Picnic Day could now be treated as an annual award holiday. For the next several years the union organised a Fun Run and BBQ every August at Prospect Reservoir. But for much the same reasons as those affecting Picnic Day, it too came to an end.

Printers Picnic was a special event in the union's history. It began in part as a protest in favour of a shorter working week, and ended by ensuring that members had an extra holiday each year. Although Picnic Day has passed into history, its purpose has not. ■

AMWU Printing Division.

Contributed by Jim Cutbush

End of a landmark.



Firefighters fight a desperate but futile battle to save the hotel early yesterday Picture: BILL COUNSELL

COMO HOTEL

The elegant old Como Hotel has been a landmark of the Shire since 1880's. Located originally on the banks of Scylla Bay on the Georges River, it is thought that the building was first used as a social club for the German Consul. At this time it appears that there were a large number of Germans living in the area and the hotel catered for them as well as regular picnickers.

According to existing records, the earliest known licensee was Sidney Staples followed by Paul Buchholz. The Hotel shared its popularity with the nearby Pleasure Grounds built in 1886 by James Murphy.

In the 1930s Scylla Bay was reclaimed and turned into football grounds which explains the now rather incongruous location of the Hotel.

The Hotel is listed in the register of the National Trust of N.S.W.

(The above are extracts from various publications held in the Local Studies Collection, Central Library, Sutherland. If you would like additional information, please contact the Local Studies Librarian, Helen McDonald, Ph 9710 0225).

Residents rescued as fire destroys favourite haunt of Henry Lawson

By STEPHEN GIBBS
and PETER TRUTE.

SYDNEY lost one of its most elegant and historic hotels when the Victorian Como Hotel was gutted by fire yesterday.

The National Trust - listed pub, once a drinking hole of Henry Lawson, was reported ablaze by neighbours about 3.15am.

Dozens of nearby residents watched flames engulf the building, which stood in Cremona Rd and overlooked the Georges River for 116 years. Two women and a five-year-old boy inside were rescued and taken to hospital suffering smoke inhalation and burns.

Two firefighters were also taken to hospital after being burned rescuing one of the women, manager Vicky Shepherd, 41.

Licensee Debra Mead, whose sister and nephew were the first to be rescued, was in tears when she arrived.

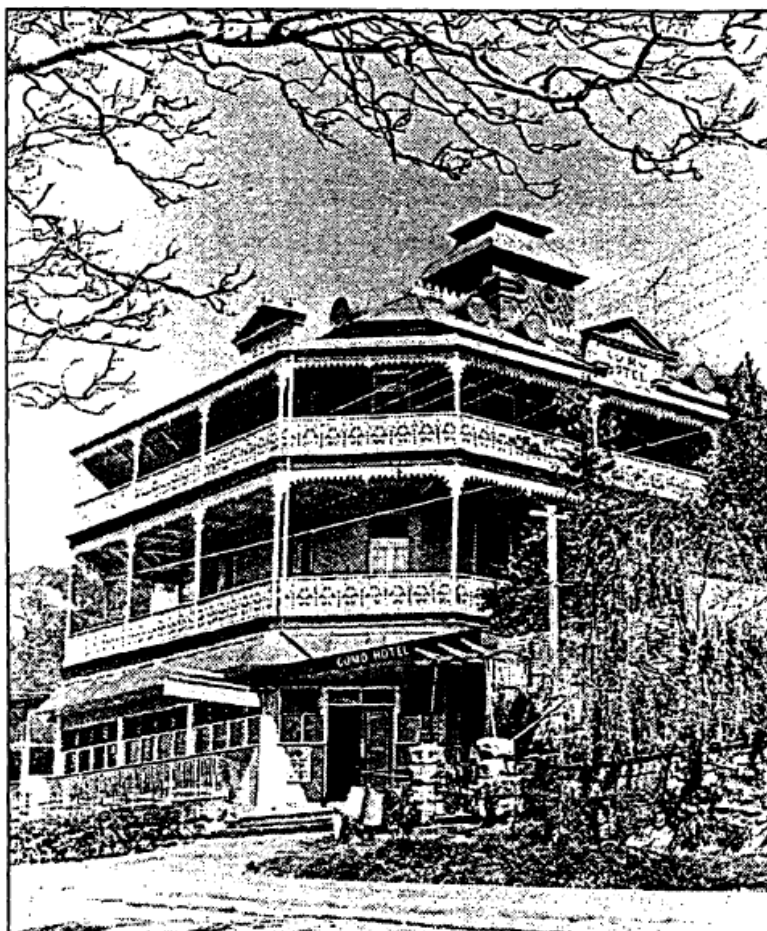
By then the three-storey building's ornate verandahs had collapsed and all its interior timber was gone or still burning.

All that was left standing was a scorched brick shell.

A Fire Brigade spokesman said it appeared the blaze started in the first floor Waterview Restaurant.

Police crime scene officers were examining the building yesterday with Fire Brigade investigators.

One hotel regular said a new sprinkler system had



The Como Hotel ... long and glorious history

been due to be installed in the building soon.

Mrs Mead recently gained an entertainment licence for the venue which had been extensively renovated about 12 months ago.

The Como Hotel was built between 1880 and 1882, originally to house immigrant workers building the Illawarra rail line.

With its timber verandahs, lace balustrades and porthole windows it had often been compared with an English seaside pleasure palace.

It was once owned by rugby league great Arthur Beetson.

Last night both women taken from the burning hotel remained in hospital, Ms Shepherd in intensive care.

The five-year-old boy was allowed to go home.

The two firemen injured were taken to Sutherland hospital

One of the officers was released later in the day but the other remained in hospital overnight for observation.

Sutherland Shire councillor and local history teacher Paul Smith said the loss of the hotel, the Sutherland Shire's oldest, was a tragedy.

EXCURSION REPORT

Since the last Bulletin we have had a very enjoyable visit to Newcastle -- the guide Mrs. Marjory Cramp, President of that Society was so very informative and an excellent speaker too, telling us about so many points of interest, old and new.

As indicated in the Newsletter given out, we have been trying to make arrangement for a very special outing; that is to the Naval Museum at Spectacle Island. Unfortunately, Saturday is Lieutenant Thurston's time off and we could not be accommodated at the week-end.

It has always been by personal rule that we don't go out on a week day, because some members are still in the work force and it would prevent them attending; however, if I could get an expression of interest from you all, and it is your wish, perhaps we could have an "extra" outing on a week day to be arranged, so that we may visit this Island. 'Tis fabulous!

Bearing in mind February weather could be very hot, we will make an effort to find an outing of interest where we may get a North-east breeze. Unfortunately, time does not permit this being done in time for this Bulletin going to print. The date will be either 8th or 15th February, 1997.

The Excursion Week-end to Orange is being well supported and final arrangements are being completed with Hotel Canoblas for our accommodation and with Miss Eileen Griffin, President of Orange Historical Society to guide us on the Saturday.

Reminding you to take a "cuppa" and snack for our comfort stop on the way; after that we will provide Breakfast Saturday and Sunday, luncheon both days and Saturday evening Dinner.

The address of the Hotel is Cnr Summer Street and Lords Place, Orange and the telephone number is (063) 62-2444. We leave Cronulla 5.30 p.m. on Friday evening November 29; Sutherland at 6 p.m. We quicker we board the coach the earlier you will be in bed! I am being sent room numbers so we distribute them to you on the coach and save so much more time on arrival.

On behalf of the Excursion Committee and especially myself, thank you for attending our outings; and now may I wish all members a very happy Christmas Season and hope you will travel with us again next year.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eileen Griffin OAM".

EXCURSION CONVENER

Christian Socialist

Written by Hazel Wilson

Climbing on the garden gate was a child's way to view the outside world, otherwise hidden from view by the neatly capped privet hedge. That world, at the age of 4, was the passing of the steam trains which rattled along beside Toronto Parade, Sutherland.

The priest who rode the magnificent white horse past my gate, was to a child's eye, the Knight in all his splendour. But there was no breastplate, no shield, only the twinkling Irish eyes and warm greeting of Father Tom Dunlea. He would wave to me, although not one of his flock, as he dismounted to talk to the weary workers. On the back of his horse was a pack which was filled from the Presbytery cupboards to feed the families in the depression shacks at the bottom of the Boulevard.

I instinctively knew that he was a good man. This was confirmed 10 years later when I watched him care for the children of the poverty stricken and defeated Boys Town. Thirty years later when I was involved in Crossroads Community Care Centre I understood the importance of his pioneering work in establishing Alcoholics Anonymous. In 1967 when a number of Christian Clerics warned me against becoming involved in building a hostel for Aboriginal students I sought his wisdom. I told him that they had said I was being used by the communists and that they (the communists) preyed on innocent housewives with charitable inclinations.

He understood completely. He told me that there were too many Christians out there intent on flooding the narrow pathway that they believe leads to heaven. He said, in that delightful Irish brogue that they had been taught to keep it narrow so that only the selected few can take the journey.

" They're in such a bloody rush and so many are crowding on to the path " he said with his eyes twinkling more than ever, " that they push people aside."

" Some fall to the right " he said, " and spend their time praying that they can get back on to the path. Others fall to the left and grab a shovel, digging and working tirelessly to build a wider path so that everyone can travel the road ".

This was indeed the wisdom that I needed. I repeated his words to those theologians who had some sympathy with our causes. They told me Father Tom was a Christian Socialist.

My mind went back to when the outside world was one of poverty, unemployment and despair. I remembered the man on the white horse who came back from his visit to shanty town without his shoes. He never questioned that those people had lost their faith. They literally walked in his shoes. The barefoot knight, or was he a Saint? Father Tom was born just 100 years ago in 1894 to poor Irish parents.

When the inevitable form asks me to state my religion I want to write Christian Socialist, but I know that I am not worthy of the title. I'm sure that Father Tom would say "Keep digging the path, no labels required for fellow travellers - just love ".

Contributed by Doug Archer.

I REMEMBER MR. OLIVER.

Around this time of the year when the cicadas start to sing, brings back memories of an old identity of the area that I was brought up in. My first of many visits was when I was six years old (1947) when I was invited to go with our neighbours (The Taylors) children to visit Mr. Oliver, who lived two streets away on the corner of Church Street and Castlewood Avenue, Woollooware (now 19 Church Street, his old house has gone.) Mr. Oliver's home was a modest weatherboard dwelling with a tin roof, one bedroom, kitchen, living and lounge room all combined with a long narrow enclosed front verandah. Alongside this, on the Castlewood Avenue side was a watertank, small workshed, laundry and toilet (pan type).

Mr. Oliver was of a wirery build, medium height, white hair and trim beard. He wore small silver rimmed glasses and most times wore a vest. Mr. Oliver was always interested in nature. Children from around the area used to take all sorts of insects, reptiles, birds and frogs for him to identify. He would sit and tell you all about them, what Mr. Oliver didn't know wasn't worth knowing. As well as this he would fix birds wings and limbs of all sorts of animals that came his way. The front verandah was cluttered with all sorts of things - books, bottles and jars filled with snakes, spiders, scorpions, and frogs all preserved in alcohol, birds eggs of many kinds in small cotton wool lined boxes set into draws also framed butterfly, moth and insect collections. He had a stuffed crocodile on the wall, a saw sharks saw, sharks jaws, plus sets of wild boars tusks. A large part of Mr. Oliver's collection finished up on permanent loan at the private Museum on the waterfront at Kurnell, I often wonder what became of it?

Another interest Mr. Oliver had was polishing opal and making jewellery pieces from silver florins which he would beat and shape, then gold dip and set an opal into the setting after polishing. The opals, he told us, were from Lightning Ridge where he and a friend had a claim and which they would work from time to time.

On most Sundays Mr. Oliver was invited by some of his neighbours to lunch or afternoon tea. My wife's parents Marjorie and Jim Tetley being one of them. My wife Marjorie and her twin sister Margaret were given a ring and brooch each as children, my wife still has her brooch which is of a boomerang and spear with a bower birds claw holding a small opal.

Mr. Oliver was the only name this Gentleman was ever called by Adults and Children alike. Mr. Oliver passed on in the mid 1950's, with no family that was known of.

Written by Jim Cutbush.



Christmas Dinner

Dropped the pudding, burnt the chook,
 Never been a blasted cook.
 Flies keep swarmin' in the door
 Babies crawlin' round the floor.
 Try Dad's home brew, great this time.
 You're not game? Then have some wine.
 Watch those nuts, don't break your teeth –
 Gawd, me bunions hurt a treat ...
 Carve the turkey, cut the cake
 How many glasses did Fred break?
 Who let in that flamin' dog?
 Grandpa - you're a bloomin' hog !
 Christmas dinner's such a treat
 But not the best in all this heat
 Open your presents ! Aren't things dear?
 Merry Christmas; Happy New Year!

Valerie J. Day

Death of Mr. A. E. Vowles. 9-7-38

With the deepest regret we have to record the passing of Mr. Arthur E. Vowles, which took place at his residence, Hotham Road, Sutherland, about 9.30 on Wednesday night, 6th July. For several months Mr. Vowles had not enjoyed the best of health, and about six weeks ago had a slight stroke, but did not take to his bed till three weeks ago. Notwithstanding every attention, however, he gradually became worse, and for several days previous to his death- laid in a state of unconsciousness, and passed away as stated above.

Mr. Vowles served his apprenticeship in the Government Printing Office, and in 1915, -while still working there, took up land in Hotham Road, Sutherland, and commenced poultry farming. He later left the Printing Office to give more time to his poultry, but the call to print was still with him, and he purchased a small Platen machine and filled in time by obtaining and executing small orders. About fifteen years ago he conceived the idea of starting a newspaper in the Shire, and, as a result of the response in his canvass for advertisements, the "S.C.A.M." was started and continued to grow in popularity. Other machinery was later added, and to-day any class of printing is turned out from the office. Owing to ill-health, Mr. Vowles was compelled to relinquish for a time the strain of business, and in 1930 sold out to the present proprietors.

To the widow and sister of the de-ceased we extend our deepest sympathy.

Sutherland Racing Pigeon Society 3-5-41

The following are the clubs now affiliated with the National Racine Pigeon Federation.

Parramatta. Merrylands. Auburn, Northmead. Windsor. Blacktown. Kuringhai. Annandale. Leichhardt. Burwood. Ryde. Fivedock. Sutherland. Illawarra. Lakemba. Punchbowl, Belmore. Botany. Botany Dist., Mascot, Willoughby. North Sydney. Sydney, Western Suburbs.

The above membership surpasses that of any other Federation in N.S.W.- Our Federation delegates. Messrs. Whitehead. Hunter and Street, had the further good news to report, that the Western Federation had unanimously decided to link up with the National in this year's derby.

The objective of the National Federation in this race is 1st prize of £1000. and as things are progressing at present, it appears to be quite a possibility.

All interested are cordially invited to attend our next meeting at Convoy's barber's shop. Prince's highway. Sutherland, Wednesday night. 1st instant.

St. John's Church of England, Sutherland 4-12-37**SUNSHINE FAIR -**

The Fair, held in the School of Arts, Thursday, November 13th, 1937, was in-deed all that could be desired, Each stall looked gay with colour; the prize being allotted to the drink stall, this being determined by penny votes.

Lady Riddle, who was accompanied by her daughter, graciously, opened the Fair. She paid tribute to the various stall holders for their decorative colour ' scheme and after a short address wished the Fair a financial success.

The Rector,- Rev. A. Smith, called on Mr. Young to sieve a vote of thanks to Lady Riddle; this was supported by Rev. W. Touchell.

A beautiful basket of flowers, made and donated by Mrs. Richardson, was presented to Her Ladyship by Shirley Bennet. The judges were presented with flowers by Marie Foldner.

Mrs. Elliott and Mrs. Thompson both received baskets of flowers for their loyal y co-operation.. tor' wife, Mrs. Smith.

During the evening a very fine physical culture display was delivered by members of the Red Cross Younger Set, under the direction of Miss Ann Toovey.

Miss Toovey will be remembered here some few years ago when she conducted a class of young ladies.

The Rector and Ladies' Church Guild desire to extend thanks to all who donated money, goods or service. Special thanks to Mr. Rent and to Mr. Horton for their yeomen service. The following were the winners in the various sections:

Sponge sandwich, Miss Lorna Marshall; scones, Mrs. Thompson; chocolate cake, Miss I. Kent; date roll, Mrs. W. Shaw; - assorted tarts, Miss Nicholls; worked tea towel, Ann Elliott; apricot jam, Miss Valentine; heaviest eggs, Mrs. Young; penny polishing, Miss A. Wyse; decorated cycle, girls, Margaret Elliott: boys, John Wyse; best decorated stall, drinks, Mesdames Riley, Greaves and Hand.

Yowie Bay Sailing and Motor Boat Club. 3-5-41

A handicap race, was held for the Vee-Jays in Sunday's south-westerly gale. Four boats started, being High Jinks. Beryl, Davela and Masonite. High Jinks lost her rudder, and Beryl retired. while Masonite and Davela were the only boats to complete the course.

It was a hard task to keep these two boats up against the weather, but the crew of each handled their crafts splendidly..

The race resulted in a win for Me vela. J. Shields. 4mins., with Mason-t. scratch boat, A. Randolph. in scored place.

Another handicap race will be held on Sunday at 2.15. The club is also looking forward to Sunday 18th. when a combined race with the beats f'om Gunnamatta Bay will take place at Yowie Bay.

Cycling News.**SUTHERLAND AMATEUR CYCLE****CLUB. ' 19-8-39 "****By Speed Gear."**

The 15-mile road race, held last Saturday from the power house to the 25-mile peg and return, provided a thrilling finish, Jumping for the sprint a little late, Fred. Messiter failed by a bare half wheel to catch Fred Benn, who crossed the finishing line to register both 1st and fastest prizes. Mick Noonan was close behind in third place. F. Benn's time was 37mins. 5secs.

Next month the club Is running a point score comp. for all races in September. Three beautiful cups will constitute the prizes for 1st 2nd and 3rd respectively. These cups will be on view in Luxford's window in a 'few weeks' time.

On Saturday, 19th, a 15-miler over the same course is scheduled, and on Sunday the usual outing will be held, this time to Darke's Forest.

During the last few weeks the club has had dozens of inquiries re the cost of this trip. We would again remind you that it is absolutely free to all. so just equip yourself with something for the mid-day meal and bring all your cycling friends for a good day's outing.

See you Sunday at Heaven's Cycle Shop, 9 a.m.

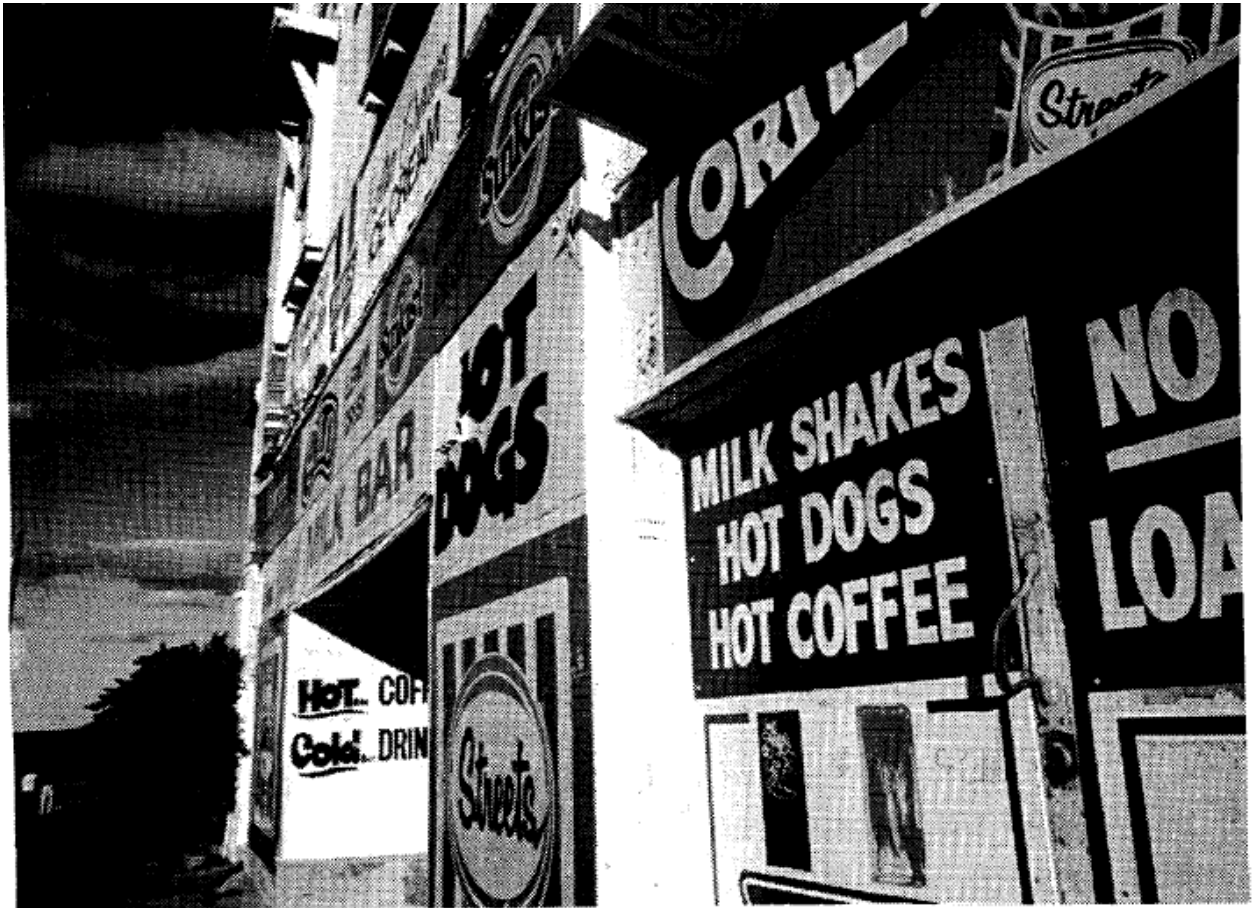
Sutherland Chess Club. 11-S-44

The club tourney is to commence Monday night next. The draw for first round is as follows, the first-named player having the white pieces:—McGrath v Thomas, Young v Hodges, Howarth v Morris, Eagles v Gormly, Bedford Black. Players are requested to complete their matches as early as possible.

The State championship ended with Lajos Steiner retaining the title with Koshnitsky, Purdy and Goldstein filling the next three places In that order. A feature of the match was the fact that no other" competitor succeeded in obtaining 50 per cent. points-The 'major open tourney was won by G: Ireland, with the Cronulla 'player Don. McCulla, filling Second- place. Congratulations to him for his fine effort.

The. Sutherland Chess Club meets at the Sutherland School of Arts each Monday night. and players from any portion of the Shire will be welcomed as members. Intending members kindly communicate with the secretary. V. Bedford. care School of Arts. Sutherland, who will be pleased to supply particulars. Remember the big Shire championship is to be played at the termination of the present tourney.

Contributed by George Heavens



Top photo - The now demolished Joe's Milk - originally• Whitby Cliffs Tea Rooms.

Bottom photo - Taken on the Ocean side of what was Whitby - Cliffs Tea Rooms before the promenade was built.

CRONULLA BEACH

ROMANCE ON THE ROCKS.

To-day a concrete promenade has altered the setting. The spot is under the shadow of the home of the late John Dodson, Whitby Cliffs.



EDITORS DESK.

Is this really the last Bulletin for 1996, where has the year gone?.

I hope you all enjoyed the stories in various editions and many thanks go to all who have been kind enough to contribute, especially the regulars.

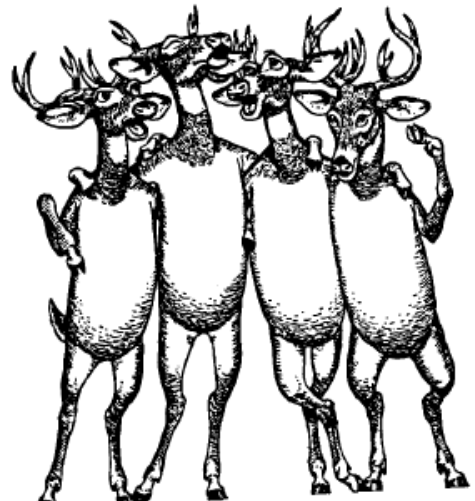
Well now you have the Christmas Season to get those old memories onto paper for next year's editions of the Bulletin. I hope all of you who have been in poor health will soon be feeling fit and well again.

It was with shock that I found out that the fire I was watching at 3.30a.m. Sunday 3rd November, 1996 from my front balcony, after hearing the first of many sirens, was Como Hotel burning down. What a pitiful sight next morning for one of the few buildings of note in this shire.

I would like to Thank Allan McGrath for his help over the last 12 months with the Bulletin also Andrew Platfoot for his help with the address labels. To my wife Marjorie, thanks for the typing and hours of patience while I get the Bulletin into place.

To Everyone I wish a Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year.

Jim Cutbush.
Editor.



MERRY CHRISTMAS



AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc.

FOUNDED
1966



VISITORS AND
INTENDING MEMBERS WELCOME