

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC QUARTERLY BULLETIN

Design by (the late) Fred Widgey



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COUNCIL OF THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc.

PRESIDENT: Councillor Dawn Emerson
64 Moreton Rd Illawong NSW 2234
Ph: 9543 1060

HON
SECRETARY: Mr. R. Moore
PO Box 389 Sutherland NSW 2232
Ph: 9542 1660

DEPUTY
PRESIDENT: Mr. D. Archer

VICE
PRESIDENTS: Mr. J. Cutbush
Mrs. A. Griffiths. OAM

HON
TREASURER: Mr. M. Beaven
Ph: 9528 7826

RESEARCH
OFFICER/ARCHIVIST: Ms. H. McDonald
Ph: 9710 0225

MUSEUM
CURATOR: Mr. A. McGrath
Ph: 9521 2227

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Mrs. M. Blackley

EDITOR: Mr. J. Cutbush
Ph: 9521 3721

HON AUDITOR: Mr. R. H. Lavers

HON SOLICITOR: Mr. M. Solari

COMMITTEE

Mesdame: B. Greentree. Messrs. H. Ivers, S. Roberts A. Humphreys. A. Platfoot.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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Meetings of the society are held monthly on the third Friday at 8.00pm at the multi purpose building, Flora Street Sutherland. (Next to Council Car Park)

VISITORS ARE WELCOME.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

The Honorary Secretary
Sutherland Shire Historical Society
PO Box 389
SUTHERLAND NSW 2232

QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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JUNE	---	MR. NORM CHINN TRAMWAYS.
JULY	---	MR. SYD PERCIVAL DAMS OF THE SYDNEY WATER SUPPLY.

President's Remarks

A warm and cheery greeting to all members from your new President!

As our long term President, Mrs. Aileen Griffiths, OAM announced in her previous President's remarks, she chose not to stand again for the position as President. I, who came along to the AGM just to say a few words of thanks to the Committee for their hard work throughout 1996-1997 found myself as the President, when no one else would consent to stand!! (I think it was a plot to get Aileen to stand again, but she resisted, and conned me instead!)

Aileen, I am pleased to say, is staying on as a vice-president so I can lean on her for support, as that diminutive little lady has very large metaphorical shoes to fill! Words are inadequate to express our gratitude to Aileen for the various positions she has filled over the years on the Society executive and the mountain of work she does on our behalf. I am also grateful that all the committee stayed on, as I shall be relying on them and their experience to help me through the year. A hearty "thank you everyone" for all the little things you do that make this Society run so smoothly; I know many of you feel that your contribution is only small (but I know some of you spend many hours in our service), but all this adds up to a friendly Historical Society. It is a pleasure to attend meetings and go on outings with such interesting and dedicated friends, all with a common interest,—history. Whether it is the history of Australia in its many facets, the history of the Shire, or the history that you or your family has added to our Shire and to our nation—this is the history we want to preserve and retain for future generations of Shire residents to see and know.

What a wonderful Heritage Week, 1997 we had! A big thank you to Aileen Griffiths, OAM, Allan McGrath, Ada Cutbush, Helen McDonald and all the quiet workers behind the scenes who made it such a success. We could not continue without the strong support of our Historical Society. Our Treasurer, Mr. Maurie Beaven, (a distant Rudd relative of mine) and I went on the Campbelltown Historical Society Heritage Week Bus Tour. When they stopped at the grave of our convict great great great grandparents, Thomas and Mary Rudd, the first land grantees of Airds, and I revealed they were our ancestors, there was great excitement and we had to pose with the gravestones for the whole busload for photographs!

Members, all I can say, and very humbly, is that as your new President I know I have a lot to learn, not only of history,—but of the history of the Society! And I am relying upon y to teach me, as well as give me the support that you have given Aileen all these years, and which she in turn has generously promised me and I greatly value. I love the Shire with all my heart, and I pledge to do all I can to further the objectives of our Society: to build up our Museum—and dare I say it—try to achieve our own building; and with the strength of our combined efforts, I know we can achieve this goal, however far it may be into the future.



President

Como School.

Parents names of children who wanted
a school.

Robert Dunne	Catholic
Richard Hammond	C of E.
Mrs. Robert Williams	R. C.
Mrs. Gill	Protestant
James Jones	.
Christopher Burke	.
Stapleton	.
Mrs. Bishop	Cath.
W. Cooper	.
John Glennon	Protestant.
Thomas Wallace	C. of E.
Mrs Wade	
W. C. Neill	
Mrs Molloy	
Bernard James	Cath.
George Wick	C of E.
John Stanley	R. C.
Children changed in age from 3 to 13.	

C of E.	21
R. C.	19
Puckly	1.

28/5/1883.

Como
Illawarra Line
7/3/1884

Dear Sir

The new public school here
was finished a week back. As the
parents of the children are anxious
to have it opened as soon as possible
as a great number of children are
ready to start.

C. H. Stapleton.

Public School Como
5/7/1884

I immediately upon receipt of telegram apprising me of appointment to Como I disposed of furniture at great loss.

Accompanied by parents they proceeded to Como. No residence available had to board at Woronora Hotel £2.10.0 per week frequented by navvies

The school ground is enclosed with paling fence and commands a fine view of Georges River.

The teacher was forced to live at pub with his parents.

June 6/1884

Iron lined and floored with pine verandah and two brick chimneys together with two iron 400 gallon tanks and spouting laid to them cost £147.10.00 I agreed to erect cottage six weeks from date accepting tender Borby.

Attendance at school Como
May 30th 1884

May 9th	38
16th	40
23	41
30	42

May 31st 1884

Younger navvies requested Robinson to open night school in school house (permission granted)

School opened 16th April 1884
Teacher John Hakstead

Purchased 2 easels, 2 blackboards.

E. J. Robinson Teacher.
A teachers residence was erected
at Como 3/9/1884 £56.0.0.
The teacher occupied building
1st inst and is satisfied.
Michael R. Body.

Como Public School
Georges River
Nov. 15th 1884.

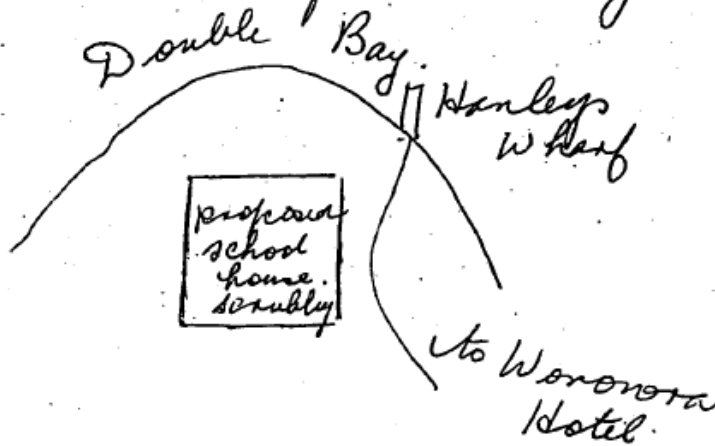
Mr. R. Ingall. Prop
Freemason's Hotel
York Street
Sydney

Arranged to procure two good iron
tanks fitted with taps for £3.17.6
each and will forward them to
Kogarah at an extra cost for carrying
by train.

A great increase in the attendance
a number of pupils being received
from the second cutting and main
camp.

E. J. Robinson
Teacher

One acre of land was leased from the directors of Holt-Sutherland Estate for two years.



Indenture signed 29/4/1884.

Population of school district

About 120 adults and children

Population not permanent.

Population consists of employees on Railway work, a Publican one or two small storekeepers.

Peakhurst nearest school.

20 boys and 20 girls would attend school.

Nominers:-

Thomas Hanley R.C.

John Glenmore Rail employee C.F.

Gerran Smith

Ab Stapleton

At the present time a school tent erected in the temporary site indicated would meet the requirements.

Children from Brick kiln area $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles south of George R would also attend.

THE NAMING OF COMO

Ralph Stilgoe, March 1997

Como is a quiet leafy suburb of Sydney which, being almost surrounded by the waters of the Georges and Woronora Rivers, has many fine water views from its homes. For many years it appears to have been generally accepted that James Murphy, manager of the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company Limited, named the area Como because of its similarity to the appearance of Como in Italy. Both areas are beautiful with a wide expanse of water forming the focus of the view but similar? No.

It is more likely that Murphy, like modern entrepreneurs, saw the name as being a means of promoting the sale of land to those who found the mystique of foreign places difficult to resist. Whatever were his true motives, there is no doubt that the name was first put forward by the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company over the name of James Murphy.'

Some publications, widely distributed, set the timing as "c.1888".^{2 3} However, the Illawarra Railway was opened to traffic to Sutherland on Boxing Day, 1885, and Como was advertised as one of the stopping places.' Thus the name must have been selected earlier.

Many have accepted that the name was given to the railway station when it was opened to the public in 1885⁵, but that was not the case.

In 1882, a workmen's camp had been established on the south bank of the Georges River at the site selected for construction of the bridge to carry the extension of the colony's railway system to the Illawarra District. It was the main camp for that section of the line and, at end March, 1883, contained approximately 200 people.'

The residents found it inconvenient and the source of much lost time that there was no postal service direct to the area. Letters and papers were delivered to the Woniora Post Office, South Hurstville, and transported from there, as a favour, by boatmen from the river who visited the post office for other reasons. Because of its nature the arrangement was unreliable and often delivery delays were extensive. The newly licensed publican of the Woronora Hotel, Thomas Hanley, was interested in operating a postal service, including conveyance of the mail from the Woniora Post Office.'

A petition dated 2 January, 1883, signed (or marks made) by approximately 160 individuals, was addressed to the Post Master General. After some delay, the petition bore fruit and the offer made by Thomas Hanley was accepted on 23 April, 1883.

Obviously James Murphy kept closely in touch with any events affecting his sphere of influence and wrote the following letter.'

HOLT-SUTHERLAND ESTATE LAND COMPANY LIMITED
40 HUNTER STREET
SYDNEY 24 APRIL, 1883

G Unwin Esq,
Postal Inspector,
Sydney.

Dear Sir,

Referring to our interview yesterday with regard to the choice of a name for the new post office at the Railway Crossing, Georges River, I have now to say that we would like to have it named "Como".

If there is any objection to this will you please let me know and we shall substitute another.

Yours faithfully

J Murphy

The proposal was supported by Mr Unwin and the Post Master General approved the name on 26 April, 1883.

1. Letter 24 April, 1883, Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company Limited to G Unwin, Postal Inspector, Australian Archives Office, Series SP32 Accession 1, Post Office Como, 1883-1917.
2. Sutherland Shire Council, *Shire Place Names*, Sutherland Shire Council, 1994, p.2.
3. Kevin Hilferty, *Sutherland: Australia's Birthplace*, Sutherland Shire Council, 1986, p.60.
4. New South Wales Department of Railways advertisement, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 December, 1885, p10.
5. Discussion between author and Jean Manuel (Past Shire President), 26 October, 1995.
6. Report of G Unwin (Postal Inspector) to Post Master General, 5 April, 1883, Australian Archives Office, Series SP32 Accession 1, Post Office Como, 1883-1917.
7. Letter T Hanley to Post Master General, 5 April, 1883, Australian Archives Office, Series SP32 Accession 1, Post Office Como, 1883-1917.
8. Letter James Murphy to G Unwin, Postal Inspector, 24 April, 1883. Australian Archives Office. Series SP32 Accession1. Post Office Como. 1883-1917.

OUR SCHOOL OF ARTS.

The weatherboards are twisted
 The paint looks pretty thin
 Weeds are growing round the stumps
 The roof, more rust, than tin

It has never heard a symphony
 Nor seen Old Masters up on show
 No smash hit plays on the stage
 Those things it wouldn't know

But our faithful School of Arts
 Has served us day and night
 The library books are housed there
 A refuge for those in plight

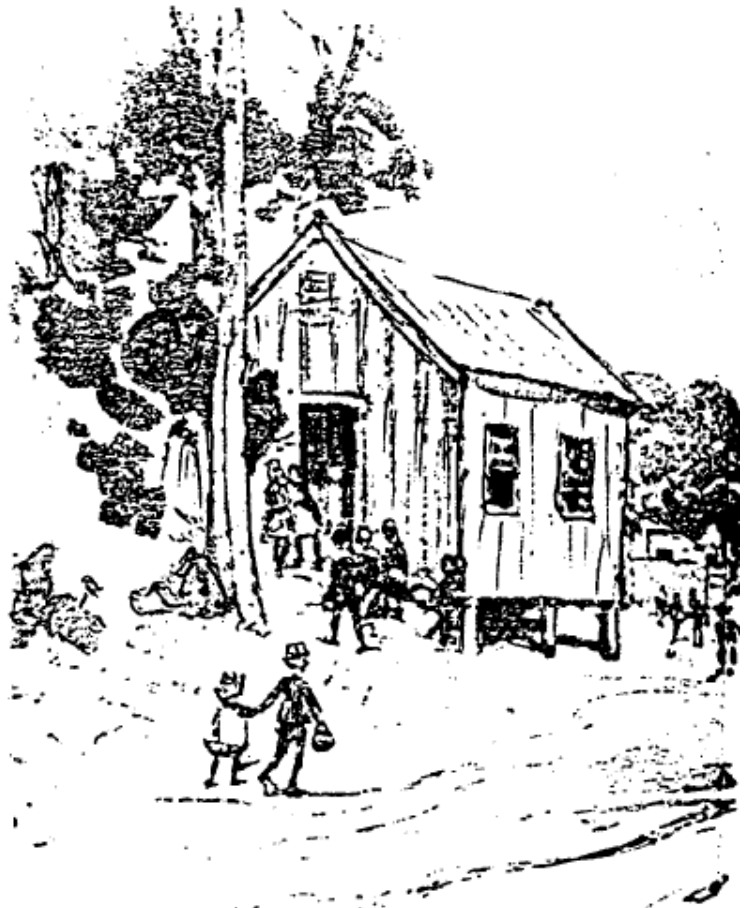
It has seen a lot of baby shows
 And deb balls by the score
 Housed meetings, long and fiery,
 When politicians held the floor

It's the place for local weddings
 Farewells when friends leave town
 We used it when we had no church
 And when the school burned down

Four walls, a roof, a creaking floor
 It holds a warm place in our hearts
 There's our past, present, future
 Enshrined in our School of Arts.

Reproduced from Poetry Book
 "Verandah Verses" by
 Muriel Courtenay.

Contributed by Allan McGrath.



MUSEUM REPORT.

HERITAGE WEEK.

As well as our Museum display and photographic display for Heritage Week held between 20th April and 27th April we also had a wonderful display of Fashion Gowns, Dresses, Lingerie, Hats, Scarves and old embroidery from bygone years. This all came together Thanks to the Power House Museum lending us 10 dress makers forms (we have 7 of our own). A big Thank You to Lynn Bucham and The Sutherland Music Club members also members of The Sutherland Shire Historical Society for their help in assembling this interesting and excellent exhibition. We were fortunate enough to be able to display in our Museum one of the first midget racing cars. The display had the history of the events and photographs of the places that car no. 26 raced at, being the Sydney Showground and Cumberland Raceway. The car was built in Marshall Russack's garage in Sutherland in 1947. Allan Russack, Marshall's son helped build the car, Allan was also the driver , racing under the name of Allan Marshall and won many races with the car. The car is still taken to meetings and shows on exhibition. Allan is a member of the Vintage Midget Car Club. Thank You to Allan Russack for the loan of the car for Heritage Week.

The exhibition of photographers from the Tramway Museum and the photographs of The Sutherland Music Club combined to make an excellent display. Folk dancing demonstrations by the Sutherland Shire Folk Dance Group, folk singing by Margaret Bradford and music by The Etonian Jazz Band were very entertaining. Thank You all.

Thank You to the Society members that helped to assemble the exhibits and to those who helped man the Museum and displays throughout Heritage Week.

In all the combined Heritage Week display had over 500 adults and 60 children through the exhibits.

Thanks to The Sutherland Shire Council we have a very good and well kept School of Arts.

Allan McGrath
Museum Curator.

SYDNEY TO MAITLAND BAR.
OCTOBER 1857.

Extract from a letter from Lucy Ann Marks to her Mother in England October 1857, about their move by dray from Sydney to Maitland Bar near Mudgee.

We started on Thursday it was wet the next day and the next day it was fine above head till evening and the dray got bogged and could not get on. We was there till dark. O Mother it was so dark and then it began to sprinkle of rain and then the dray was almost turned over. Me and the children got out but I do not know how for we could not see each other. I had got baby in my arms. I found the others by there crying and then it came down in torrance. The rain was washing under our feet and me just out of my bed as you would say. The dray got out at last and we got to a public house and stopped there the night. Got to Carriers place the next day. Stopped there till the Wednesday then started again. It was fine fine till Saturday night and we had it again. We slept under the dray and water was running under us and over us. My bedcloths and our clothing were all wet through. I had the children to wash and dress out in the cold and even Baby. I thought I should never get there safe. But thank God we did all get there safe and well. The baby was 1 month 1 day old when they got to Maitland Bar.

G G Grandparents of Flo Declauzel.

Contributed by Flo Declauzel.

For the meeting of June 20th, 1997, commencing at 8.00p.m.

NOTICE OF MOTION.

"Where it becomes necessary to appoint a Member to two positions another person shall be elected to the Executive Committee for such period."

(Subject to confirmation by the Members.)

EXCURSION REPORT

Following the selection of Sub-Committee Conveners by President Dawn Emerson, at her request, I am pleased to remain "Excursion Convener".

By the time you read this report the trip to Willoughby will be over and we will report in the next Bulletin.

For the July outing, an inspection of Queen Victoria Building, with luncheon in the Old Vienna Coffee Shop has been accepted by the General Meeting, to be followed by a short visit on the way home, to Annandale.

As July days are very short and the weather may be inclement, not to travel too far - not to leave home too early - and to arrive home again before dark would be most appropriate.

We leave Cronulla at 9 a.m., Sutherland 9.30 a.m; cost of tickets is \$10.00 members and \$15.00 visitors, with the luncheon at your expense.

It is expected the September outing will be September 13, but no venue has yet been considered.

As mentioned in the Newsletter prepared for the Willoughby Trip, will you let me know if you would prefer a week-end tour for November, or do you only wish a day tour?

Also, if it be the week-end, could you be available to leave early afternoon on the Friday? We were asked last year if this arrangement could be made to prevent late night arrival, but it would only be considered if it did not prevent any regulars coming with us.

Please let me know:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aileen Griffiths O.A.M.".

EXCURSION CONVENER;

The Secretary and President.
 Sutherland Historical Society
 P O Box 389, SUTHERLAND 2232

31 March 1997

Dear Mr Moore and Mrs Griffith

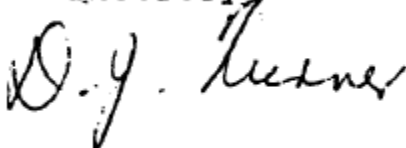
Re: Thomas Ernest Rofe 1869-1945

I am a Sydney University Honours Graduate writing the biography of my grandfather, Thomas Ernest Rofe. I was also the executrix of my mother's estate and in November 1982 sold the property purchased in 1906 by my grandfather on which are the two heritage cottages, "Hilltop" and "Gogerly's Cottage". My mother was Mr & Mrs Rofe's second eldest daughter. I am the second eldest in the Thompson family. I was born October 1926. As children we spent all our time and school holidays at "Port" from the time we were born. Our grandparents were always with us during the six weeks of the Christmas break. My memories are absolutely wonderful as a consequence. From the moment both my sons were born they were also taken to "Port" for the school holidays. My eldest son was 33 and my youngest son 31 when "Hilltop" was sold. My mother died in 1981 but prior to that when she became too elderly to go to "Port" my youngest son and I went every week-end to keep the two homes and the back area behind the four car garage clear of undergrowth. During my sons' school days at Barker College Hornsby I took these young boys every week-end as well as during the school holidays. Their memories are as wonderful as my own, though their own memories are specific to their generation.

Recently I have spent considerable time researching at the Sutherland Library in order to understand the environment and the day to day existence of people like Gogerly and his family from the early days of 1854. It is an interesting comparison with my grandfather's residence at "Port" from 1912, about the time "Hilltop" was built, in the early years before he had his own car and chauffeur. Mr Rofe being wealthy he was able to maintain the whole area owned by him in perfect condition.

His caretakers were his wife's (my grandmother's) brother and his wife. . All of their 8 children were not born at Gogerly's Point but lived in the sandstone cottage from the moment Mrs Hilder returned with the new babies. They went to school across the river then by horsedrawn bus to Caringbah. I have thoroughly perused the Sutherland Shire Historical Society Quarterly Bulletins and found them a wonderful source of information. Congratulations. However, what was surprising .was the lack of historical information concerning Mr Rofe, his immediate family, his grandchildren, and his great-grandchildren who in total spent 76 wonderful and privileged years in that particular area. My grandson, Mr Rofe's great-great-grandson also came to "Port". He was aged six when the property was sold in 1982. I enclose a brief historical record which may be of interest to the Society. The particular information therein will also comprise memories which will be included in the biography. It will be some time however before the biography on the life of Mr Rofe is complete.

Sincerely



Thomas Ernest Rofo 1869-1945

Thomas Ernest Rofo, a young 37 year old financier from Wahroonga, in 1906 purchased seven acres, two roods and six perches of National Parkland at Gogerly's Point, Port Hacking, designated Lot 2 in the Shire of Sutherland, Parish of Wattamolla, and County of Cumberland. The only dwelling on the property was a sandstone cottage known as Gogerly's Cottage. Later Mr Rofo purchased Lot 7, a small rainforest gulley area on the southern side of Gogerly's Cottage adjoining the property purchased by a Mr Sullivan and later a

Mr Selwyn. This property, after purchase by the Park, was known as Lamont's place, after the last owner. This wonderful bow-fronted sandstone heritage home is now lost to the area forever.

About 1912 Mr Rofo had built for his family of four children a federation style holiday home of classic simplicity, named "Hilltop", with a magnificent view of the river. Mrs Rofo's brother and his wife, Bert and Daisy Hilder, then became the resident caretakers living in Gogerly's Cottage. Their children grew up in the area going to school, in all weathers, across the river to Lilli Pilli then by horsedrawn bus to Caringbah. The young boys used to fill their pockets with rocks and throw them onto the roof of a particular house as the bus went by to the great annoyance of the owner. One day the horse dropped dead outside this house and the owner came out with a shotgun. This put an end to the children's prank.

The caretakers had the full use of Gogerly's Cottage but the bedroom fronting onto the verandah was always occupied by Mr Rofo's chauffeur and his wife when the family came out. When Mr Rofo was in residence the Union Jack was hoisted every morning at sun-up and lowered every evening at sundown. During the Christmas holidays large hessian bags of flour and sugar, tins of powdered milk, drums of kerosene, bottles of methylated spirits and other non perishable groceries were delivered from Sutherland. Crates of softdrink, fruit and vegetables were brought by a young man known to everyone in the area as Tarzan from Yowie Bay each week. He made many trips carrying these items up the hill from the wharf to the house in the dreadful summer heat. Each morning Mr Rofo's son-in-law, with the grandchildren, would row across the river to Lilli Pilli to the store at the top of the hill run by a Mr and Mrs Daisley. There the daily paper for Mr Rofo was purchased with other vegetables and fruit items as required.

Bait and fishing tackle were naturally available. The grandchildren, who were always given one penny each day, obtained a bar of Nestles chocolate from the machine outside the shop which contained a collectable card.

King tides during the Christmas vacation were at their best and completely covered and flowed over the top stone level of the baths which fortunately had a picket fence all around.

There was also a wooden diving board, from which a male member of the family one morning overbalanced falling onto the rocks and oysters on the shoreline. The area was a paradise for children on school holidays. Swimming before breakfast, swimming after breakfast, playing billiards on the north verandah after lunch when the tide was frustratingly out. Mr Rofe had provided a small sized billiard table which children and adults used. Strictly christian Mr and Mrs Rofe observed very Victorian rules regarding Sundays. On Saturday evenings after the evening meal Mrs Rofe removed the cues, billiard balls and scoring board. These items never made their appearance until Monday morning. It was a strictly observed "children are to be seen and not heard" regime and grandparents, parents and children lived in complete harmony for the whole of the holidays. Mrs Rofe each morning provided a concentrated raspberry or sarsaparilla cordial for the children which was kept in a large decanter on the corner of the dining room table.

The area surrounding both cottages were kept mown by the herds of deer which frequented the area. July was the rutting season and the family would sit on the verandah watching the stags fighting on the front lawn after having rubbed the soft down from their antlers on an unfortunate fir tree near a stone wall. In October the new born fawns made their appearance and in the afternoons would sit with the does in the shade under the Illawarra flame tree and the jacaranda tree directly opposite the front steps on the northern side of the house. In December the deer shed their antlers and everyone scoured the surrounding park area for a matching pair. Mr Rofe's great grandson was fortunate to find a perfect pair from a baby stag's first horn growth. Every generation hand fed the bravest of the deer with bread from the verandah steps.

The weather was totally predictable in those early years. One could watch early in the morning as a ball of fire rose out of the water behind Gibbon Point, the heat of the day increasing, the water vividly blue and clear with dazzling flashes of silver. The humidity and heat was dreadful but right on cue each afternoon about 4.30 a southerly blew up from the South West Arm furiously churning the water, lashing against the baths and Lilli Pilli Point making the water very choppy for craft caught on the river. There was an absolute abundance of fish in the river and the afternoons were always spent fishing. None of the fish were ever cleaned near the house. This was a rule insisted upon. There was always an abundance of fish for the evening meal. The river naturally was alive with sharks. The grandchildren always brought the family pet with them. One morning Mr Rofe's son-in-law with all the children left the wharf leaving the dog behind. Wanting to be with the family he jumped into the channel and within minutes was taken by a shark.

The Audley weir could be very dangerous with flooding when the water rushed down into the fresh water area from Waterfall. The children with their parents were on the Sutherland side of the Audley dam when their parents noticed a woman on the other side weeping. Their parents were concerned and parking the car went over to speak to her. She advised that her seven children had been boating on the freshwater side early that morning when they were swept over the weir and drowned.

During the war (Mr Rofe was to die in May 1945) the launch and rowing boat were taken around to Audley and held there, because of fear of the Japanese. The grandchildren and their parents during the school holidays often boated for day-long picnics up the South West Arm. This was in the days when the family would be the only people in the South West Arm area. With no boats the whole family went anyway, walking all the way from "Hilltop" through the bush in the early morning and returning after sunset. The area was a magical place with its King tides and nights when the moon was full. Like the sun it arose a full yellow ball behind Gibbon Point throwing a beam of light directly across the water straight for "Hilltop" where it seemed to settle directly above the house bathing the whole area in the most wonderful light.

Dulcie Jean Turner

P.S. I have written to Peter Stevens the Head Ranger and reminded him that each day, each week, each year brings "Hilltop" and the Park nearer to the next bushfire. We have lived through so many! "Hilltop" was almost lost in the last fire. It is so important to keep the area totally clear, as we did which lessens the danger. The undergrowth & young trees grow quickly, & take over the area if one is not alert all the time. It would be dreadful if this historical area is lost to the Park.

Dulcie Turner

SUTHERLAND INTERMEDIATE HIGH SCHOOL.

In the twenties local secondary schooling was only available at Hurstville (technical school for boys and a domestic science school for girls) and Kogarah (a high school for boys and another one for girls). With the growth of the southern St George area it was obvious that more secondary schools were needed. Sutherland Shire was still mainly a farming area of orchards, poultry farms, dairies and market gardens.

A decision was made to place a new three year high school at Sutherland so that students would not be crowding the trains carrying workers to Sydney, but would be able to use those same trains returning empty after their trip to Sydney. They would be travelling against the traffic. Sutherland was also the junction of the Cronulla steam tram and the Illawarra train line so it could cater for any Sutherland Shire and South Coast students. Another bold move was to make the school co-ed, a big change as other secondary schools were for either boys or girls.

In 1928 there was the first intake of some fifty students. About a dozen students who had been held at Sutherland Primary after completing sixth class and treated as a seventh class were adopted and became the high schools second year. The following year 1929 saw an intake of about ninety. All classes were held in the primary school buildings stretching accommodation to the limit. A new building was being built on adjoining land but did not become available until 1930.

The only water was tank water caught from the school roof. There was no sewer so pans were used. There was no gas so heating of experiments in the science lab was carried out on methylated spirit lamps. It was the same in the new school building.

In the primary school building the staff had a primus stove to boil water for their tea. and this was in an attached wooden building. The primus was always causing trouble. The women never seemed to get the knack of properly heating the metal column with methylated spirits so that the kerosene when pressurised would turn to vapour which ignited and provided the heat. The practice was a very dangerous one. The new building provided electricity to the headmaster's office and the staff room so the danger was overcome.

Mr William E. Hunt was appointed headmaster. A few men teachers were appointed but most teachers were ladies who had not taught boys before. Mr Hunt, was a quietly spoken man and a perfect gentleman. With the support of the teachers he engendered an harmonious attitude within the school. We were taught to respect each other and to act as young adults. Being a small school we all got to know each other well. The teachers also became well known and respected. Mr Hunt taught my class English in my final year and I well remember him at the end saying "If, in your three years at this school, we have done nothing but make you interested in education we have done well." There was no intense swatting required of us. It was a leisurely learning atmosphere. I appreciated this years later in a prisoner of war camp in Germany when connected with education I found that other soldiers who had left school after me had already forgotten much of what

they were taught. I think our leisurely learning was the key.

Australia was still in the grip of the "Great Depression". No doubt many students had to make do with what was available. The school was a great leveller. There was no suggestion of class distinction. All were equal. A local shop sold mugs of hot soup at each lunch-hour which must have helped many.

Sport was once a week. Tennis, football cricket and hockey were all played. In summer the emphasis was on swimming. We caught the steam tram to Cronulla and used Gunnamatta Baths, old wooden baths long since demolished. Life saving instruction was the norm and many gained Royal Lifesaving certificates of proficiency. The trip by steam tram was always an event before trams were replaced by buses. Often boys would jump off the tram as it tried to make the steep hill at Miranda and race it up the hill.

At school we ceased classes at 3.25pm to enable us to rush and catch a train about 3.30. The next train was at 4pm, the funeral train. This was a steam train, the last carriage of which was specially designed to take coffins. It came from Sydney Mortuary station earlier in the afternoon, picking up coffins and mourners on the way and ran to a siding just past Sutherland Station to Woronora Cemetery Station. After the burials the mourners returned by the train. If we missed the 3.30 we would join that train at Sutherland, all under strict instructions to be quiet and respect the mourners' feelings. I remember just one complaint of school children laughing and talking. mourning was taken very seriously in those days. There was no station or village at present-day Jannali. The train left Sutherland at 4pm and the next stop was Como, some three and a half miles away. Regularly I and others interested in athletics would hand our cases to others, usually the girls. and we would then run for exercise through the bush to Como Station and catch the train there. I do not remember ever missing it but I do know some days there had to be a terrific spurt towards the end as the train's whistle was heard as the train approached Como level crossing.

After leaving Sutherland school the old students kept in touch with each other. The girls formed an Old Girls' Union' and a little later the boys formed an Old Boys' Union. These two soon amalgamated into the Old Students' Union. We held hikes and picnics but by far the most outstanding success was with monthly dances. Originally they were held in Boyles Hall but after raising sufficient money we were able to finance the installation of electricity to the school assembly hall and future dances were held there. Mr Hunt usually attended and sometimes a parent would look in for a while. No drinking, no smoking, on our best behaviour at all times. How different we were to today's teenagers. I think the secret was the respect we had for each other engendered by Mr Hunt while we were at school. Naturally marriages eventually occurred between some ex-students.

Some thirty years later. after the war years, the early student held a reunion. It was at a club but no-one wanted to drink or eat it was just talk. talk and talk. No one wanted to go home. The staff had to keep turning off the lights as a reminder. Altogether an amazing night. Altogether an amazing school.

- Cyril Staples M.B.E.

WHO WERE THE WARATAHS?

DAY 14 THIRROUL TO SCARBOROUGH

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1915

For those who had been on the road for a fortnight, the march from Thirroul to Scarborough proved to be one of the most pleasant. Following an enthusiastic send-off, the Waratahs travelled this road which ran along the cliff's edge adjacent to the sea, the north-easterly breeze keeping conditions most pleasant.

On the approach to the seaside resort of Austinmer, the Waratahs were met on Kennedy's Hill by school children who escorted them to the kiosk where soft drinks and cigarettes were handed out. Cr. Wallace again took the opportunity to welcome the contingent.

About a mile further on, it was the turn of the Coledale Recruiting Association. The miners' cottages had been decorated to indicate the warmth of the welcome which was extended by the women and children.

Other speakers during that afternoon were Cr. John Kirton, and Messrs W. T. Fowles, J. S. Selby and H. Cleer of the Clifton and Scarborough Recruiting Association, who all welcomed the men. They were subsequently entertained at dinner by the local community.

Opportunity was taken to praise the organising secretary, Inspector William Anderson, who had left no stone unturned in his efforts to see that all aspects of the march had gone smoothly. The contingent spent the night at Scarborough.

WHO WERE THE WARATAHS?

According to The Illawarra Mercury, Tuesday, December 14, 1915: Four recruits were gained at Scarborough. The Sydney Morning Herald, Wednesday, December 15 reported that ten men "of good stamp" had enlisted from Coledale. Scarborough and -Clifton.

**DAY 15:
SCARBOROUGH TO
HELENSBURGH**

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 1915

Leaving Scarborough, the Waratahs proceeded firstly to Stanwell Park, described as another link in the chain of beauty spots along the coast. Lunch was enjoyed in bush surroundings, after welcome had been extended by the Rev. Smee, and Messrs J. S. Robertson, Wardell and Foster.

The Waratahs then freshened up in the surf before resuming the march to Helensburgh. It was a steep climb up the mountain to Bald Hill. but on reaching the summit, they were given light refreshments by the residents of Otford. Spokesmen there were Messrs James and Turner.

Enlistments at Stanwell Park had included two miners, Charles McGoldrick (25) and Augustus Hendrickes (31). They were joined by Ernest Trevethan (24) who was employed as a labourer,

but he also had a mining background for he was born in the Shoalhaven goldmining town of Yalwal.

Helensburgh was abuzz with excitement with the arrival of the marchers, and miners from the Metropolitan Colliery were out in force to greet the men. Half a mile out of town, the Waratahs were greeted by Dr. Cox, chairman of Helensburgh Recruiting Association, and local school children with their headmaster, Mr B. R. Denning.

The procession had a police escort, and was led by members of the Helensburgh Town Band. Strings of flags were suspended over the main street, while two arches had been erected, carrying the messages "Welcome to Waratahs" and "Welcome Waratahs, God-speed and Good Luck". Meals were provided by Mrs W. Gill at the Paragon Hall, and the Waratahs stayed overnight at the Drill Hall.

There was an added incentive for local men to enlist, for a guinea (£1/1/-) had been promised to each member of the Workmen's Club who volunteered, and the recruiting association was offering a wristlet watch. With the climax of the march just a few days away, it was announced that 12 mounted police officers would escort the marchers into the city.

**DAY 16:
HELENSBURGH TO
SUTHERLAND**

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1915

Rain was pelting down when the Waratahs left Helensburgh, and a strong southerly gale made conditions difficult, but the men made light of the weather as they proceeded to Waterfall. A break was had there with the matron and staff of the sanatorium serving light refreshments, while the patients gave a cheer to the marchers. As they passed the railway, they were greeted with tooting from half a dozen locomotives in the shunting yards, and railwaymen cheered the marchers, encouraging them as they trudged through the rain and mud.

Although Heathcote was only a small township, it provided a warm welcome, which was a credit to the committee comprising Messrs J. C. Woodward (secretary), R. L. Brown, P. Bryant, .I. Hall, P. Hanlon. C. McAlister, C. Trevenor, and C. Woodward. It had been planned to serve lunch under the trees, but when the boisterous weather eventuated, Mr Brown made his Heathcote Hall available for the meal. Despite the rain, a collection of £16 was made during the journey from Waterfall to Heathcote.

On the road to Loftus, Mrs Hanlon, of Yarrawonga, presented the Waratahs with a puppy,

which became the third animal mascot. The kitten had been with the marchers since the start, while the other was a possum. When they reached Loftus, the Waratahs were met by the Sutherland Shire councillors, and welcomed by the President, Cr. E. W. Hyndman. Speakers at that centre also included the organising secretary, Inspector William Anderson, parliamentarians George Burns and Mark Morton, and the Rev. I. D. Armitage.

Sutherland township had been decorated for the occasion, and when the contingent arrived, the locals provided an enthusiastic welcome. The Waratahs were praised by Cr. Hyndman for arriving punctually at 4.30 p.m., despite having encountered bad weather for perhaps the longest day's march, a distance of some 16 miles. All costs of the stay had been met by the council, which had allocated £50 for the purpose.

A reception banquet was served at Boyle's Hall, and this was followed by a recruiting meeting during the evening. Cr. Hyndman acted as chairman, and he mentioned in passing that he had volunteered for active service, only to be rejected. Mr Burns said that indirectly, these marches did much good. Without reinforcements, the Australians at Gallipoli would have to retreat, and a retreat would mean the demolition of the Australian Army, he added.

Captain Samuel Toombs, M.L.A. gave a rousing speech, as did Corporal Galkie who had been involved in the April 25 landing at Gallipoli, and after they had spoken, several recruits came forward.

WHO WERE THE WARATAHS?

According to The Sydney Morning Herald, Thursday, December 16, 1915, and The St. George Call, Saturday, December 18, 1915: Three recruits stepped forward at Sutherland. The Hurstville Propeller, Friday, December 17, 1915 put the number at four, with several others promised.

DAY 17: SUTHERLAND TO HURSTVILLE AND KOGARAH

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1915

After camping the night at Lobb's Hall, the 117 Waratahs enjoyed breakfast and a further snack before they left Sutherland at 10.30 a.m. Cr. Hyndman farewelled them, and a quarter of a mile out, each of the men was presented with a bag of fruit from the orchard of Mr W. Gilmore. The goodwill continued, when Miss Munro handed a half sovereign to Captain Blow, for the purchase of cigarettes.

The first break was at Tom Ugly's Point, around noon, where the marchers were met by Kogarah Mayor, Ald. J. Crawley, and other leading citizens. A feature of the decorations at this point was a boomerang on a white background, stretched across the roadway. It contained lettering which formed "Maroomba", an aboriginal word meaning "good luck".

The ladies of Sylvania and Tom Ugly's Point—Mesdames R. Cook, H. Hayward and J. W. Reed—served refreshments, after which the pupils of Blakehurst Public School, under teacher Mr T. Dunlop,

sang a bracket of patriotic songs.

The gathering cheered the Waratahs as they headed along Woniara Road, towards Hurstville. At Butler's Road, they became part of a procession which included the Hurstville Band, cadets and boy scouts, under Lieut. W. I. Donald and Warrant-Officer Chidgey, and decorated motor vehicles. It was a colourful arrival through the business section of Hurstville which was dressed up with bunting and flags as never before seen in the town.

A large crowd of children (estimated at 1000 by the St. George Call and 2000 by the Hurstville Propeller) from various district schools paraded at Railway Square, in front of the railway station. The men were presented with cigars and cigarettes, after which Hurstville Public School student Amy Griffin, speaking on behalf of the children, welcomed the Waratahs to Hurstville.

The procession continued on to the Masonic Hall where the whole company sat down to a meal prepared by the ladies of the district. In his welcoming speech, the Hurstville Mayor, Ald. A. Grant said he appreciated the actions of the men in voluntarily enlisting.

The mud-stained Waratahs also made an appearance at a recruiting gathering held in the Hurstville Picture Palace where they were well received by a "full house". Speakers included Sergeant-Major Walsh, Corporal McQueen, the Mayor and Mr Pugh. In what was described as a forcible speech, Mr Burns praised the marchers, and also mentioned that Hurstville could be well proud of the fact that Private John Hamilton, of Penshurst, had won the Victorian Cross for "conspicuous bravery at Lone Pine".

Two or three hands were said to have been held up at the conclusion of this gathering, but the Mayor explained that most of the young men were at work, and there had already been more than 100 enlistments from the district. Kogarah and Rockdale councils had made the initial arrangements for hosting this section of the march, and despite the fact that Hurstville was included at the last minute, all were well pleased with the result.

The Waratahs resumed their trek at 2.30 p.m., down Durham Street, and at Bexley they were greeted by another local government leader, Mayor W. J. Berryman. At Carlton, on the Kogarah boundary, they again met Ald. J. Crawley (the Kogarah Mayor), and also the Mayor of Rockdale, Ald. W. W. Monahan.

The 1st Battalion Band had come from Liverpool, and it led the marchers to the Kogarah Superior Public School grounds, for the official welcome. The roadway was lined with children carrying flags, and they were not deterred by the rain which fell at the time of the arrival.

Contributed by Allan McGrath.

The Unwrapped Chocolate Soldier

You saw him in your town strolling down the street
 You saw him in his uniform that always looked so neat
 You saw him in the service hall, with your hand upon his shoulder
 Cursing fate and his bad luck, The Unwrapped Chocolate Soldier.

You labelled him a "Choco" because he did not tight
 You thought he didn't have the guts to stick up for the right
 You heard him in the bar and if you felt a little bolder
 You didn't hesitate to say "Another Chocolate Soldier".

But now your tone is different when war is at your door
 You rarely hear the saying "Chocolate Soldier" any more
 By God you'll thank your Maker before you are much older
 For the man who kept the Japs away, The Unwrapped Chocolate Soldier.

You don't know how he cursed the flies and swore at dirt and heat
 He's put away the uniform that always looked so neat
 He wears a ragged pair of pants. a shirt when it is colder
 He's putting up with pests and flies, The Unwrapped Chocolate Soldier.

He's living in a leaky tent, his rations often short
 He thinks of all the steak and eggs, the beer that once he bought
 But when the Zeros fill the skies. his rage begins to smoulder
 When he sees his cobber fall and dies, The Unwrapped Chocolate Soldier.

His ack-ack guns and small arms too were shields for your defence
 His body first to take the blow and if you're not too dense
 You'll take your hat off to the man before you are much older
 The man you used to spurn and name ...
 The Unwrapped Chocolate Soldier.



EDITORS DESK.

A big Thank You for a job well done goes to our now past President Aileen Griffiths who has made a large contribution to the progress of this Society. Aileen I am sure will continue to help wherever she can. Congratulations and well done Aileen. Heritage Week was nothing short of a great success, as you can tell from Allan McGrath's report. If you didn't see it you missed out on something special. Allan's hard work and planning all came together very successfully. Another good one Allan.

Welcome to the President's position goes to Dawn Emerson, who I am sure will continue the good work of our past President's with support of our Executive and Members.

Contributions of stories etc. to the Bulletin have more recently improved, please continue to keep sending them into me so we can all enjoy them.

The cover of this issue, I hope may remind some of our members, like Phyllis Rugless, how they got to school in the good old days

Thank You to Muriel Courtenay, Queensland Poet, for her special permission to reproduce her poem "Our School of Arts" that comes from her poetry book Verandah Verses.

Thank You to Dulcie Turner for her most interesting letter to the Society that I have included in its entirety with her permission.

Thank You to all who have contributed and helped with this issue of the Bulletin.

How many Members have noticed the pulling down of the Cronulla Theatre. It would appear that attempts are being made to preserve the facade for the new refurbishment or will it become another Joe's Milk Bar (Whitby refreshment rooms.)?

JIM CUTBUSH.

EDITOR



SHIP WRECKED CREW

CATASTROPHE

Records of these ship-wrecked sailors were lost in the Customs House fire fifty years ago. These mariners were cast up on the rocks when their vessel foundered at Boat Harbour about 1889-90. They were succoured at the Oriental (Cronulla) Hotel. Note the ship's parrot, compass and lamp. Here's a picture that should stir the hearts of all sailormen.



The boilers of another ship . . . the Maitland . . . that was wrecked near Boat Harbour

Early whalers used the Shire coast as temporary camping grounds during the "repairs to boats" season.



Sir Joseph Sir Joseph (1743 1820)



Official Botanist aboard
Captain Cook's
"Endeavour".

His name is perpetuated
in Australian plants such
as the Banksia and
Grevillea banksii.

"... found also several trees which bore fruit of the
Jambosa kind [Lilly Pilly], much in colour and
shape resembling cherries .. . which we eat with
much pleasure ..."

May 1770—Banks's "Endeavour" Journal.

Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc.

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