



*Sutherland Shire
Historical Society Inc*



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JANNALI - HESSIAN, HOPE, HOLDUPS & MURDER

the Enigma of Jannali's Variable Past.

Beryl Tope B.A.

Beryl Tope is one of this Shire's hidden gems. She is of that rare breed called "Local Historians". Beryl has been published 41 times including "Art Beat Articles", poems, short stories, book reviews and most recently published two books (a biography and a book of short stories and poetry). She is a Writing Fellow of the Fellowship of Australian Writers. In this story Beryl outlines the history of Jannali and some of the more turbulent events of that otherwise peaceful history.

The Shire of Sutherland was first outlined in a survey of the whole of the colony of NSW in 1835.

The Hundred of Woronora came into being at about that time. The elements of the Woronora 100 (10 miles by 10 miles) were Bulgo, Heathcote, Wattamola and Southerland. Compared with other sections of the Sutherland Shire, Jannali is comparatively new. Heathcote was settled as early as 1840, Sutherland opened up in 1885 and people were flocking to the Como Pleasure Grounds about the same time. Miranda, Highfield (now

Caringbah) and Cronulla were operational by 1910. *Hutton-Neve M. (1986).*

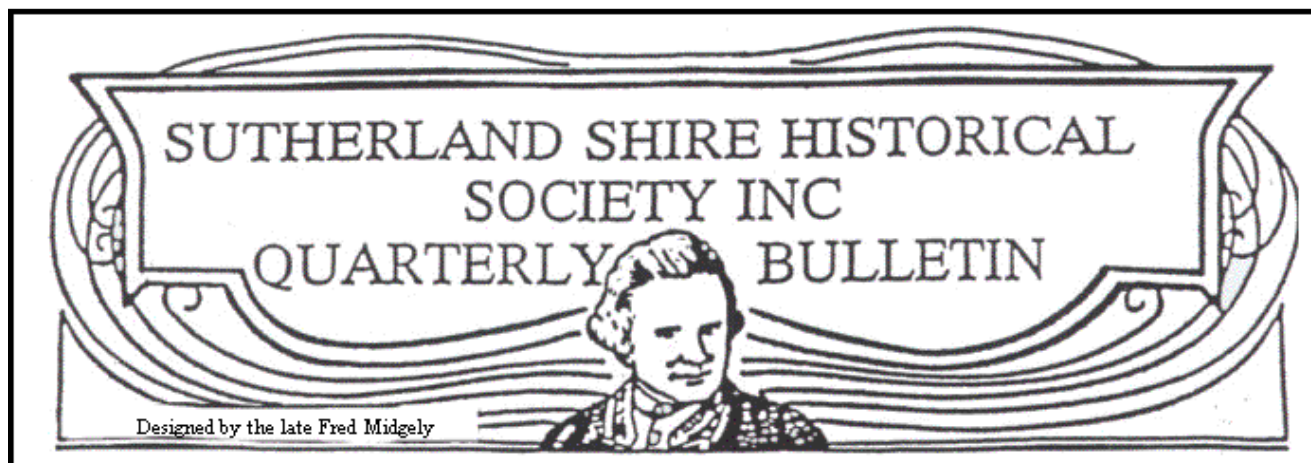
The Inter-colonial Investment Company bought the land and subdivided it in 1886. The area was called Queen's Jubilee after Queen Victoria's sixty-year reign. *Suth Shire Hist. Soc. Bulletin (1976).* Jannali had no railway station as the grade was one of the steepest in New South Wales. *Tierney H. (1992)* The steam trains went from Como to Sutherland labouring up the steep grade.

A land sale was held in 1901 and the company erected a platform for potential buyers at a point where the trains slowed down before the steep climb to Sutherland. After the sale the platform was removed.

The sale of land was mainly on the western side but there was not much to offer future residents. There was no water, railway station, electricity, shops or industries. Residents had to walk one and a half miles either to Sutherland or Como.

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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 Multi Purpose Building, Flora Street, Sutherland. (Next to Council carpark)

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*Como Boat shed Circa 1910
Western side of railway*

President's Report

It seems I am once again holding the reins of the Society for a further year, and I thank the members for their support. I am also very grateful to the members who have lined up yet again to take their places on the committee. This commitment to continuity is greatly appreciated not only by myself, but the Society; with experienced members on the committee, we know the Society is in good hands. In our traditional manner the "work-horses" have taken on more duties, Les Bursill, our Bulletin editor is tripling up, as Research Officer and Archivist, in the place of Helen McDonald who felt she should relinquish her formal designation and Andrew Platfoot is Acting Treasurer until we can appoint someone else in Maurie Beaven's place, who is seeking a well-earned retirement. Maurie took us through the vicissitudes of the GST, and we are eternally grateful. We have also lost Doug Archer from the Committee, and he will be sorely missed as he was my ever-reliable Deputy, always there when I was called away on Council duties. However we have pressed Aileen Griffiths, OAM into service again as our Deputy and despite recent ill-health she is also lining up in harness for the coming year which is much appreciated.

No doubt before this goes to print Heritage Festival will be well under way. The National Trust theme this year is: "Australia is what we make it!" This has given us a lot of scope, as combined with the Centenary of Federation celebrations we are looking at how our particular environment and events shaped Australia and the Australians. Our convict ancestry has no doubt contributed to our rebellious spirit, and sheer determination to succeed, regardless of the cost. Allan McGrath, our Museum Curator and Jim Cutbush, his Deputy and their never-tiring sub-committee, have again assembled an interesting display at the Museum in the Sutherland Shire Memorial School of Arts.

I had a sneak preview yesterday, and Allan has assembled some WWI, and 11 photos of the men and the battles from newspapers and magazines of the day, as well as some flags: the Irish Australian flag, flown at the Battle of Vinegar Hill, the Eureka flag, flown in that memorable goldrush

battle against British bureaucracy, the Centenary of Federation Flag, and a Japanese flag that was captured with the names and addresses of the Japanese unit who served under it. I sent a photocopy of the flag to Sendai, Japan to our Japanese student's father, and he visited several of the addresses, in a bid to talk to their families. Unfortunately all had either moved away, or passed on and in some cases the house itself was gone, and another building had been erected in its stead. In itself, this seemed to be a statement on the futility of war. Jim Cutbush has displayed a 1901 newspaper telling of the Federation celebrations, but bring your magnifying glass with you, as the print is **very small!**

Our Local History Librarian, Helen McDonald has assembled a photographic display, with the assistance of Daphne Salt's photo collection at the Hazelhurst Cottage, so don't miss this trip down memory lane. The finale of our Heritage Festival is the Heritage Festival of the Sails at Kurnell, with the Endeavour replica under full sail, coming into Botany Bay, just as it did 231 years ago! A reception on board has been organised by the Kurnell Progress Association and the Kurnell Tourism Association.

The Council is organising a Heritage Sign to be unveiled later in the year, at Kurnell, entitled: "Our Aboriginal Heritage: the Meeting of Two Cultures". It is being written by Shayne Williams, who has been our guest speaker, on the same subject. A pen and ink drawing by Sydney Parkinson, who accompanied Cook to Botany Bay in 1770, shows graphically how the Gweagal people felt, standing proudly with their spears and shield to repel what they perceived as an imminent invasion.

It is interesting that these same spears and shield depicted in the illustration, the latter still bearing the musket shot fired by Cook's officers embedded in it, were taken on board the Endeavour to England. They were recorded in Cook's Journal, and are currently at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology at the University of Cambridge. We have written urging repatriation of these articles to their spiritual and cultural home, and I

invite anyone interested in adding their voice to ours, to also write requesting their return. I believe they

will be shown briefly at the Australian National Maritime Museum, (to which we have had an excursion, and of which I am a founder member), in July to celebrate the Centenary of Federation. Not everyone in Australia could celebrate Federation and its democratic benefits, because

whilst we had a Parliament and were able to vote as Australians in 1901, our Aboriginal people did not gain that privilege until the 1970's.

We look forward to welcoming you to our meetings in the coming months, and do make yourself known to me and our Committee if you have just joined, as we love to give new members a friendly reception at our meeting.

***President & Deputy Mayor
Sutherland Shire Council***

Meetings for 2001:

18th May: Commander Matchett

15th June: TBA

20th July: Mrs. Noralee Maingard?: Collecting miniatures and their history

17th August: TBA

21 st September: Mr. George Roberts: The Redex Rallies

19th October: Centenary of Federation Trivia Night (BYO drinks & nibbles), Stapleton House, Sutherland. \$10 p.h, Supper provided. Prizes to be won. Organize a table of 8 now!

16th November: Mrs. June Morris: Living on Fort Denison for 25 years.

21 st December: Christmas Entertainment Evening. Bring a plate for supper.

Future Excursion Plans

Tour of Balmain May 26th 2001. Bus pickup leaving Cronulla at 8.30am sharp, Sutherland pickup 9.00 sharp opposite Post Office. Ticket Cost \$25.00.

Please note that morning tea and lunch are not provided for you.

August Excursion

Proposed outing for August has not yet been finalised. Members will be notified of any developments.

November Weekend Excursion

Our weekend away is proposed for November but the likelihood of a Federal election around that time makes planning for that date difficult.

Bookings: Betty McGrath Ph: 9521 2227 or Aileen Griffiths Ph: 9523 5801

*Aileen Griffiths OAM
Deputy President &
Excursion Convener.*

From The Editor's Desk



It is with a sense of great excitement and interest that I take up my new roles as Archivist and Researcher for the Historical Society.

My ongoing role as your Editor is also a joy for me. Of course I could not imagine how I would fare in the latter role without the tireless efforts of our President and Deputy Mayor Cllr. Dawn Emerson. Dawn is ever-ready to do the massive job of proof and rewrite for the Bulletin and she often astounds me with her depth of knowledge and ability with the written word.

Now to the Bulletin itself. I have been encouraged by the number of compliments passed along on the new style and content of the Bulletin.

We have, in the last 3 editions, moved almost entirely away from using reprint articles and stories supplied by other Journals. Instead, we have now achieved the wonderful position of having 5 authors from the local area all supplying materials for the Bulletin.

Apart from those persons we are also receiving material in a stream, from expatriate shire residents. Some of this material is of a “first hand knowledge” literally written by those who saw the events themselves. I shall be running these stories over the next 2 or 3 issues.

Another part of my role as editor is that of “Web Master” in that role I am the person who oversees the Bulletin on the Internet. Scott Stanton, our Internet consultant and I work together to edit and update our Bulletin each quarter.

In my role as the Web Master I also control some of the expenses generated by the Bulletins’ web presence. Some of those expenses are 1. Our ISP costs (\$240) each year

that allow the committee to access the web and edit our Bulletin. 2. Actual costs of employing Scott to do the upload and edit/add pages to the site, also about \$240? A year and finally \$220 each second year for our URL (Our web address). That latter cost has now come up for renewal and to reduce costs to the society I have suggested to Dawn that we drop that cost and rely on services offered for free on the internet.

This now means that we have a slightly newer address listed here below, so now type this as [HTTP://suthshirehistsoc.netfirms.com](http://suthshirehistsoc.netfirms.com) I have also set up two other alternative addresses at www.suthshirehistsoc.da.ru and another address located overseas at the location www.suthshirehistsoc.url4life.com all of these services are free but they are sometimes difficult to connect to so by setting up three addresses I guarantee that we will always have access to our online magazine.

Well what does this all mean to you, the reader, it means that any stories that appear in the Bulletin are now published world wide and become part of World History. Only the other day I was contacted by the Fairfax Newspaper about an article published by us on the web. They were keen to reprint the article. Isn’t that great!

Please let the committee, or myself, know of your views so that we can continue to improve the quality of the Bulletin and reduce the impact of our web service on the finances of the Society.

***Les Bursill.
Editor &
Research Officer***

From Page 1.

Hessian, Hope, Holdups and a Murder.

The enigma of Jannali's Variable Past.

In 1901 blocks of land in Jannali sold for as little as sixteen pounds ten shillings (\$33.00). It was not really settled until after the first World War. There were a few hermits living in the gullies but there were only about seven permanent residents by 1921-2. *Suth Shire Hist. Soc. Bulletin* (1976).

In the Plan of Jannali in 1900-1, the area of Jannali was much smaller than it is today being mainly on the western side of the railway line. Jannali was bounded by Sutherland Road in the West, Government Road in the east, the area north of the Boulevard in the south and the Jannali Signal Box in the north. *Suth Shire Hist. Soc. Bulletin* (1976).



Parkesvale Picnic Grounds



Como Boat shed Circa 1910
Western side of railway

Jannali's Beginnings

In the early nineteen twenties there was no such place as Jannali. It did not exist on the maps. There were two railway signal boxes where Jannali Station is now, one at the north end called "Jannali" and one at the south end called "Jubilee". Jannali is an aboriginal word meaning *place of the moon* (Notes Mrs. Celia Tierney, 1983). "Jubilee" was the Council's first choice of name for the proposed railway station. (*Propeller* Nov. 4, 1921).

However, in an article called "When the Moon Comes to Earth" in the evening news paper published by S.C.A.M. in 1926, the Railway Commissioner informed the Sutherland Shire Council that it had decided to name the proposed station soon to be built as "Jannali" after the signal box already named in the area.

The streets were called after members of Queen Victoria's family - Mary, Victoria, Alberta, Louise and Alice. They were streets in name only, for in actual fact they were only cart tracks.

It was not till about 1921 that permanent residents began to settle in the area. In October, 1926 W.H. and E.M. Tanner purchased a block of land 100ft x 466ft which ran from Sutherland Road to the railway line, for fifty five pounds (\$110.00).

In 1926 Mr. Tanner built a general store on the corner of Alberta and Waterford Parade. In 1930, Mrs. Tanner operated a post office in one corner of the shop. Before that residents had to collect their mail from Sutherland. *Suth Shire Hist. Soc. Bulletin* (1976).

Mr. Tierney was a wharf labourer. He was born in 1882 and started on the wharves about 1900. He was about ten years older than Mrs. Tierney. The Tierneys bought their selection on the corner of Waterford Parade, (now Jannali Avenue) from Louise Street, to the Oval. With their six children they lived in a one-room dwelling with an attached humpy, which served as a kitchen.

It would have been about 1926 and in the depression years. Mr. Tierney went to town and got a job at the bag makers down near the wharves. They paid him in bags and he earned eighty corn bags. To bring them home he had to drop them off at Jubilee and walk back from

Sutherland. If he wanted to get them home, he had to throw them off. The children waited down beside the train for him. It was a windy night and he could see the children because they held a candle. When Mr. Tierney threw the bags off, they went underneath the train. So he worked for nothing and didn't get any kitchen.

He made the Humpy, which was used as a kitchen, out of wheat or corn bags. He'd cut them down, whitewash them and used flour, water and newspaper over them to keep the wind out. Inside he lined the humpy with Hessian. Then he'd put the stringy bark on the top. They cut it down and skinned the bark off the trees and flattened it out to make good panelling for the roof. One day, he was using the Primus to cook some fruit and he lit it with Metho. He thought it was out, but it wasn't and by the time he yelled out – "FIRE!" – the kitchen had caught fire and burned to the ground so he had to get another kitchen.

Water

They used to have a barrel where water ran off the roof. The biggest problem in those days was water and fuel. Water had to be carried in kerosene tins from the creek in the gully that ran to Bonnet Bay. Before Mr. Tierney bought a water tank Mrs. Tierney used to do her washing in the creek where Jannali Hotel is now. She used to get 2/6 to 5/- per day for washing clothes. They chopped wood and got coal that fell off the rail trucks going through the Jannali railway cutting. The boys took billy carts and went down to the railway line and waited. They had to be quick collecting the coal as it was quite illegal. (*Harry Tierney, 1992*). It was one of the steepest grades in New South Wales. They were originally going to put the railway across from Jannali, through to Kirrawee and then down to Cronulla, but they branched off through Sutherland instead.

Mrs. Tierney's cousin, Charley Vowles, was a water diviner who lived in the Shire. He used to run the local newspaper "The S.C.A.M" and he had the gift for finding water. The Sutherland Council used to hire him to find well water for them. After failing to find water and in desperation Mr. Tierney hired him to try and find water for them. Charley charged ten shillings. They got seepage water after 16 feet, through rock. Then they had to dynamite it. The kids all hid under the house. Mr. Tierney dug a well. It was about four feet by four feet. It also became an ice chest, when they lowered their dripping and

milk by a rope in a bucket down the well, it kept it cool. (*Harry Tierney, 1992*).

The open well became quite a worry whether little children would fall in. One child did fall in and the mother climbed down and saved him. During the war the well became an air-raid shelter, but when it rained they would have drowned. Eventually it became a septic tank. When Tierney's built their house they borrowed four hundred pounds from Star Bowkett. That house is called "Florenceville" and is the oldest house standing in Jannali to-day.

Bushfires

About once a year they had to put up with bush fires. The fires used to come over from Menai when the farmers would burn off and with a strong westerly, over she would come. There was no water or fire brigade. One year, five or six children saw the smoke. They yelled out to their mother, "Mum, look at the smoke!" Mrs. Tierney threw them over onto the vacant allotment, that was clear. One of them looked back and she was praying. It shot right past. It took the little house, killed a few chooks and went across the cutting and over the other side of the line. There was nothing there at the time and the bush fire finished up at the ocean.

Medical Services

It was quite a problem those days if you needed medical attention. The nearest hospital was across Tom Ugly's by punt to St. George Hospital. There were, however, three midwives including Mrs. Tierney. Mrs. Tierney was a fine Christian lady who helped everyone, no matter who they were. She would wear a white gown and go out whenever there was a need. She would do dressings or if needed by the doctor she would lay someone out.

Mrs. Tierney used to line the children up each morning and give them medicine from sarsaparilla leaves, Epson salts, castor oil or cod liver oil.

Young Harry Tierney held the candle in a glass, which shattered. He threw the glass away but some glass got into his finger. His mother put the old bread poultice on it. In the middle of the night he woke up and called out to his mother that the poultice had come off. He was hemorrhaging and flinging blood everywhere. There was one doctor at Sutherland, the only one this side of Miranda, so they had to get the horse and dray out and

dashed him up to the doctor, who fixed him up. There was one dentist at Sutherland and he used to work by candlelight. But the Tierneys rarely went to a dentist.

Mrs. Tierney would walk miles way over to Kirrawee and do housework. That's how she'd supplement the income. (H. Tierney, 1992).

Christmas

During the great depression the few settlers in Jannali fared badly, sharing what they grew with each other. I remember one Christmas two families had some tripe put away for Christmas Dinner but it went rotten so the men folk went over the hill to Hummers Point, Woronora River and shot an old wild goat. It had one horn and one eye and it could not be eaten. It was too old and tough - so no Christmas dinner for about seven adults and ten children. To make matters worse the old horse died. (Mrs. Celia Tierney, 1983). But for fun, everybody got the dray the horse used to pull. They pulled and pulled, laughing and had a grand time pulling in loads of wood. That night Father Christmas left the boys some long pants made out of sugar bags. Mr. Harry Tierney said, they were Indian pants; they lasted for years. It was one of the best Christmases I ever spent. It was dreadful for the parents, but we kids had a ball. We had nothing, but we had everything.

Children's Pastimes

The children used to make their own fun. They went down to the Woronora River. It was a pleasure ground but even that was a fair way to go, so mostly they played on their selection.

The children played marbles, cowboys and Indians in the bush, cricket on the bush tracks, swimming in the swimming holes and the Woronora River, fishing, climbing trees, blackberrying to make jam and to eat, building bush houses and tree houses. Children loved to sleep in them overnight. There were great numbers of birds nesting everywhere, rabbits, kookaburras, wallabies, wild goats and many snakes were in the area. (Mrs. Celia Tierney, 1983).

Saturday nights would be bonfire nights with a concert where everyone had to do an item. If you went to Sydney once a year you were lucky. If you went to Cronulla in the steam tram it cost money, so we did not go. The children enjoyed simple things and would play on their own property. (Harry Tierney).

There was a swimming hole near Glendale and Kinsbury Place. It was only used occasionally as there were only about half a dozen children. Later in the fifties and sixties, postie Frank Wilson used to take a crowd of children down to the swimming hole. If their mothers wanted them, they would stand up on a large boulder where Rossford Avenue is now and yell out for them. When the sewer came, the swimming hole all but disappeared. (Connie Wilson, 1992)

Jubilee/Jannali Progress Association

Jannali Progress Association started up in 1924. They held their first meeting under a tree in Jannali Avenue, near Alice Street. Mr. Mitchell was the first President. He was not a local identity, he was the headmaster of Haberfield Primary School. He owned twelve blocks of land on the eastern side of Jannali. He never lived there permanently, although he had a humpy there. Mrs. Tanner was the secretary. At their initial meeting 15th November, 1924, the members, Messrs. Middleton, Parsons, Robinson and Woods decided to petition for a Railway Station and a local Post Office. They hoped that the Railways would grant them a platform, the same as in Engadine. There had been a temporary platform for the sale of land in 1901, which was removed. It was found to be impractical because of the steep grade between Como and Sutherland. The cutting needed to be lowered and an overhead bridge erected.

The Progress Association had also installed a sign, near the proposed station.

WE WANT A STATION HERE

It was there for years. They kept petitioning the Council, the Commissioner for Railways and the Ministry of Works for their station. In the end the Council and the Railways both contributed to the cost. A school for Jannali was refused. The citizens felt that when the railway station was built, the area would open up and more people would justify a school.

Jannali Residents

At first the Progress Association was called "Jubilee/Jannali Progress Association.

The Progress Association was knocked back on many of their requests, but they kept trying. In 1925 they requested electric light from Sutherland Council. They purchased a table for 2/6d. and

held a meeting first, at the home of Mr. Mawson and later at Mr. Tanners. (*JPA 1924-5*). Their request for a Post Office was denied in 1927, with a letter from the Deputy Director of Posts and Telegraphs. The reason being, "Development at Jannali does not warrant a Post Office" (*JPA 1927*).).

The few homes were shacks/leanto or bag humpies. Three houses stood out, Tierney's Bag Humpy, O'Reilley's Kerosene Tin House and Watts Wattle and Daub House. But that's how the pioneers parents battled. They grew their own food. They had to help their families. They would go to Mrs. So and So, borrow a cup of sugar and you'd repay that cup of sugar. (*Mr. Harry Tierney, 1992*).

Charley Parsons was down on the corner of Oxley Avenue and Mitchell Avenue. His house still stands today. It had a big verandah. He used to grow vegetables and even grew a good crop of peanuts. He used to hawk his vegetables around from the back of his truck.

In 1927 Charley Parsons used to hold a Sunday School on the verandah of his home. He used to ring a cow bell for the children to attend. Charley had a lot of trees to plant, donated by the Council and the children helped to plant them after Sunday School in Mitchell Avenue. They are still there today. (*Harry Tierney, 1992*) Then there were the Middletons, Alan Lang, old Harris, old Marcus, O'Reilleys and Charley Mawson. Over on the east side there were the Woods, Kerrs and Watsons (*Mr. Harry Tierney, 1992*). The Kerrs lived on the eastern side of Jannali in Buller Street. Mr. Kerr was a colourful character who played a large organ in his house. The Kerrs lived there before the Tierney's. Mr. Kerr bought his block of land in 1916. He wife was a teacher who used to play the organ in the new Congregational church. *Suth Shire Hist. Society. (1976)*.

Mr. Mitchell, the president of the Progress Association, donated a block of land in Louise Street, for the purpose of erecting a Christian Church Hall of any denomination. Nobody took up the offer, until Mrs. Celia Tierney met a Congregational Minister, Rev. Riley on a train from Sutherland. He accepted the offer and so a church building fund began. (*Suth Shire Historical Society, 1976*). The Deeds of lot 29, Section D, were handed over to the Congregational Church of Jannali. The Jannali Progress Association donated some matting for the aisle at a cost of one pound

thirteen shillings and seven pence. From February 23rd, 1929 the Progress Association held their meetings in the church hall. (*JPA, 1928*).

Electric Light

On Dec. 24th 1929, the first electric light was turned on in Tanner's store, called "The Jannali Store" and on 8th April 1929, streets were lit. Before that the Council had installed "gloria" street lights in 1926. (*JPA 1929*) In June 1930 the first mail bag from Sutherland arrived in Mr. Tanner's Store. Mrs. Tanner took over the duties of postmistress. Mr. Tanner was paid thirteen pounds per annum. He also received a commission on postage stamps of 9d. in the pound. (Postmaster, 1985).

Jannali Railway Station Opens

The opening of the Railway Station took place on 7th February, 1931. The great day had arrived. Councillor Shaw, bought the first ticket to St. James Railway Station. The Shire Clerk invited the company to partake of the afternoon tea which was laid out under a spreading gum tree.



It was the very tree under which the Jannali Progress Association first met as in the Anglo-Saxon days of local government, when the ancient councillors met and discussed their business under the Moot Tree. A toast to the King was made as the chairman presented Mr. Kinsela MLA with a golden key as a memento of the event. (Propeller, 1931). With the opening of the railway the suburb opened up.

Jannali Grows

"In February 1933, it was reported that Jannali was a village comprising a few residences scattered amongst virgin bush and scrub; the streets were only partially formed, but there were quite a number of houses, some being "very nice bungalows." Statistics show that there were thirty five residences comprising 106 adults who were served by the existing Free Bag (Mail) Service. (Postmaster, Jannali, 1985)

The Depression

A lot of men came here in the depression when the banks foreclosed on their homes. Times were still pretty grim. People walked out of their homes when they lost them in the depression, came to Jannali and lived in humpies. Jack Brown came here with his family. He only had the framework up on his house. It had Hessian walls, painted with cement. He sewed the Hessian bags together for the ceiling and painted them with whitewash.

When Bill Waterson first came to Jannali in 1933, there was no water, no electricity and no sanitary facilities. He did not have a water tank, so he had to get water from the little pools around. Bill Waterson paid 35 pounds for his block of land and built his house one room at a time. Bill lived on the eastern side of the railway, in Ninth Avenue. He came here with his mother and sister in 1933. He was out of work for six years. When he could get some relief work and had some spare money he would buy some black iron, otherwise they lived on food coupons. Bill Waterson bought old black iron - what was called envelopes, when the steel comes out - sheets of steel - and they just fold it over. He used to buy scraps of it for 1/6 a sheet. He first built two rooms for his wife and two children. *Waterson, B. (1992)* He didn't earn his living locally, he worked in Chullora.

He had a bike and he would ride it every day and dig stumps out and then ride it home at night. Men would come to Jannali with a wife and kids and buy a block of land for no deposit and five bob a week. The local timber merchant, Arthur Hand, sold them wood and when they paid for it, they could get some more.

There was a man up in Seventh Avenue who had a little tank and let Bill have some water as long as he left him some. Everyone helped each other those days. When he got a bit of relief work, he managed to buy himself a tank, but he didn't have a tank stand. He couldn't put water into it until it had a stand on level ground. So he bought 14ft. of hardwood from Sutherland and he carried it all the way home. It nearly killed him. He got as far as Georges River Road and had to have a rest. He was given an old stove from Mrs. Brown, but it fell to pieces getting it down to his place. She lent him an old wheel barrow so he put it together and plastered it up with clay. He didn't have a chimney so they sat there in the winter, and when the smoke got too bad, they would open both doors and let the smoke out.

Bill didn't work for two years after he came here. Jack Brown worked for Metters - and got Bill a discount and he bought a Reuger Fuel Stove off them when the other one petered out. He used to set the fire at night and in the morning everything used to go well. He also had a Primus and later he had an electric stove, just a cheap one.

He eventually obtained work in 1935 in the railways. He worked there for sixteen months and then was put off. He made samples for the ticket department. He was a leather worker. He also made Bowls Bags. Eventually he was put on permanently, in 1936, became foreman in 1955 and retired in 1975.

Bill used to play cricket with Tom and Harry Tierney. Their sister was Matron at Chesalon. Most of Bill's friends were over the other side because there was hardly any one on the eastern side of Jannali.

Jannali Picnic Ground

In the mid nineteen twenties the Jannali Progress Association and friends cleared the land between Soldiers Road and Sutherland Road for a picnic ground. They played cricket and had wood-chopping contests. Alf Dwyer, a local identity, beat an American named Garn, who boasted he could beat anyone. There were stalls and a fancy dress ball was held in a large room at the back of Tanner's shop *Suth Shire Hist. Society (1924)*.

Fisher's General Store

In 1934 Tanners left their shop in Jannali Avenue and a Victor Jones took over. When he left George Fisher took over the store and was appointed Post Master in July 1935. He built a general store on the eastern side of the station in Railway Parade.

Al Cary built a butcher's shop. Billy Waterson said that at Christmas time, when he paid his bill, George Fisher would give his customers a little bag of sweets and a bottle of wine. One Christmas, Bill said "Jesus George, that was good wine you gave me. I've been lighting the primus with it ever since". "Get out! George said". I used to have a lot of fun with them. said Bill. "Mrs. Fisher was a nice lady and so was her sister" (*Bill Waterson, 1992*).

Slowly but surely houses started to spring up along Box Road. Houses were pulled down to make way for the shopping centre in the late

1940's. Before that there was only the one store and Cary's Butcher Shop on the other side. The General Store was where the Newsagency is now. It was pulled down. All the new shops were built, but that was much later.

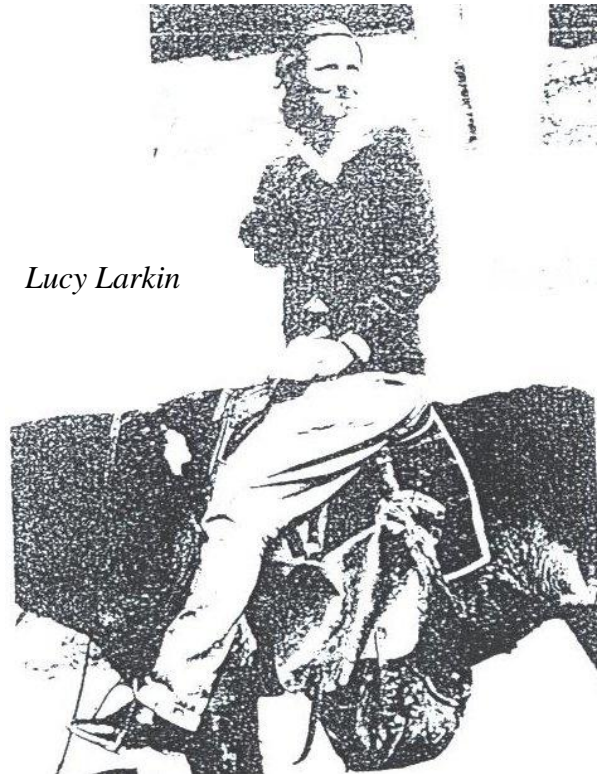
Anne and Jim Dee

Mrs. Anne Dee of Ninth Avenue came to Jannali in 1937. She said that you'd would put your order in during the week and Mr. Fisher would deliver your groceries on Friday. He also ran the Post Office. If you had a telephone call, you could only get it through him, because nobody else had a phone and he'd take the message down. When Mr. Fisher first started delivering the mail down here, he used to walk around although there were only about half a dozen houses. Later Mrs. Fisher used to ride a horse delivering the mail. When she gave it up, Anne Dee got the job. Anne helped Mr. Fisher for a week or two delivering the mail on her bike. She worked for the Post Office for thirty four years after her husband died. Daisy and Lucy Larkin used to deliver the mail on horseback all over Oyster Bay and Jannali. They used to sit up so straight in the saddle. Anne would always go into the store whenever she was up the street. When she and her husband Jim, came back from church on a Sunday they would go into the Post Office, do some shopping and pick up any mail. That was during the war years (Mrs. A. Dee, 1992)

Arthur Hyde used to manage the shop for Mr. Fisher. He went to the war and died in Changi Prison Camp.

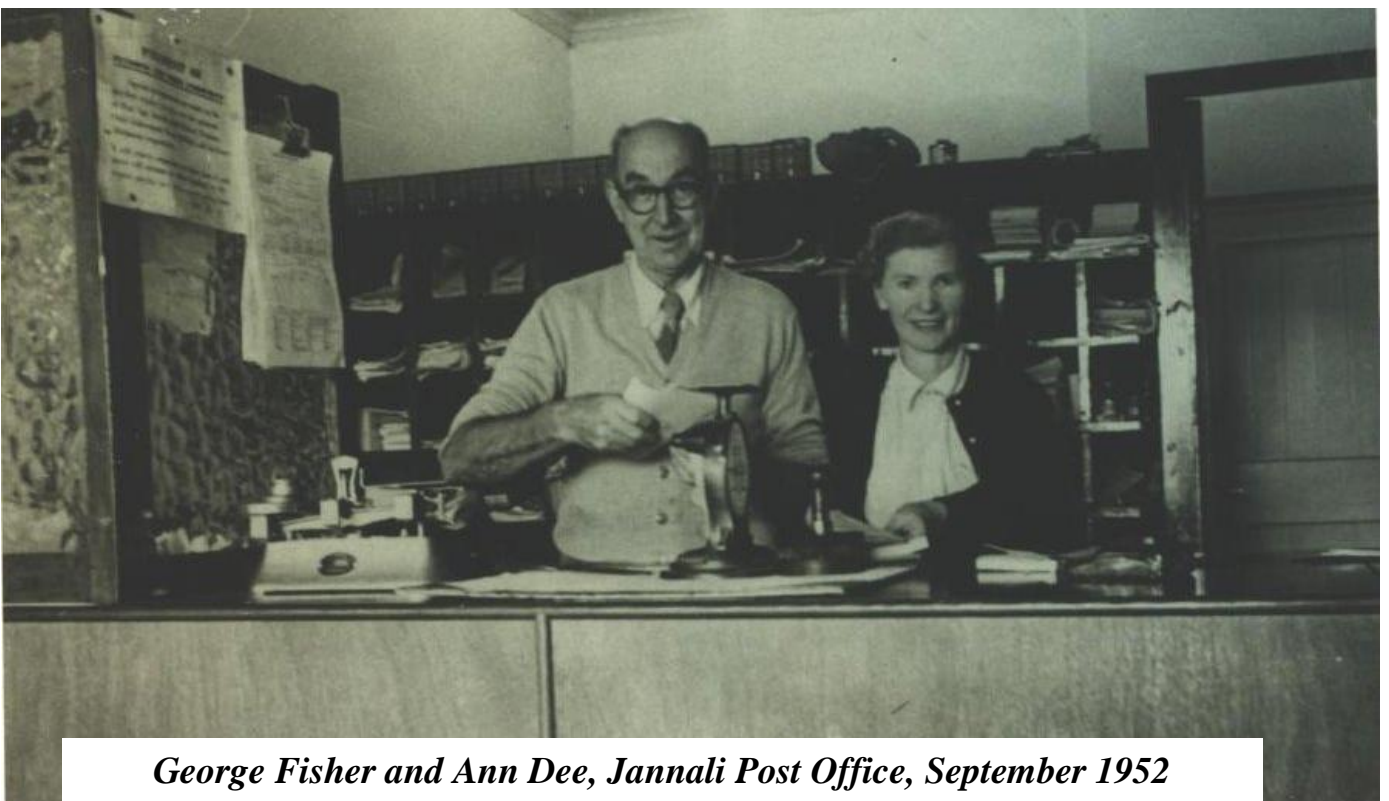
Everyone was very friendly. They'd come in and

have a cup of tea and talk. They used to play cards. They held dances at the Scout Hall, which was there before Anne came in 1938.



Lucy Larkin

When Anne and her husband Jim first came to Jannali, they met Mr. Hand at Sutherland. He sold timber and material for building houses. He provided timber for all the homes around Jannali. A resident started to build their house and they went away and left, owing Mr. Hand the money. So Anne and jim bought it for twenty five pounds with the foundation already laid. Anne's husband built it with a couple of friends. Everybody helped each other those days. A friend of theirs



George Fisher and Ann Dee, Jannali Post Office, September 1952

from Como used to come up. He was the main builder and Jim helped him - not that Jim was much of a builder, he was a book-worm. He was a school teacher. They didn't owe any money on it, they paid for the material as they used it. Before they came out from Ireland they lived in Springwood for a year. That was where Jim got his first job. Anne and Jim came at the end of the Depression. Things were picking up a bit and then the war came. Their son David was born the day war was declared. Anne and Jim already had their daughter Anna Maria and later there was another daughter Oona.

There was not much in Jannali in those days. Anne and Jim used to go to Sutherland to church. Father Dunlea was in Sutherland and he built Boys' Town. They walked up to the station and caught a train. They were young then and didn't notice the distance.

Mr. Hitchinson, who was stationmaster at the new Jannali Railway Station was quite an identity in Jannali. He came to Jannali about 1932-33, before he was stationmaster. He originally came from Bourke where he worked on a paddle steamer on the Darling River as a fireman. When he came to Jannali he was on "short time"; He would work one week on and one week off. They had a horse, cart and sulky and used to load up the sulky and go down to Wattamolla, fishing and swimming for a couple of days.

Before they came home they would cut a load of wood and sell it for 3d. or 6d. a load. They were always an industrious family. They sold flowers at the cemetery from baskets. The Hitchinsons had five sons, and one daughter. They originally rented a house in Sutherland from Mr. Tanner for 30/- per week. Later Mr. Hitchinson paid off a block from the Holt Sutherland Co. for sixty pounds. His son Ken bought two adjoining blocks also for fifty pounds each. No deposit and five bob a week.

It was in 1936 that Mr. Hitchinson built a garage at 497 Box Road and the family moved in a furniture truck, with Mr. Hitchinson walking in front clearing the saplings for the furniture truck as there was no made road in Box Road, then. A couple of years later he built a house. They built their own houses, couldn't afford to do anything else. It was the days before hire purchase, everything was cash. (Ken Hitchinson, 1992).

When Mr. Hitchinson, senior was the stationmaster, he had a cow and would take her to

the railway station every morning so that she could get the best grass. He bought her for 10/-. She would be tethered with a ball and chain and they would let her go where she wanted to dragging the chain. When she found a good spot, they would secure the cow.

There were no industries in the area, except for Kidd's Orchard down near Carvers Road, but everybody had their own fowls and grew vegetables. They used to look across to the railway station and see Mr. Hitchinson's cow grazing opposite their house eating the lovely grass. Jannali was covered in Calliopsis and beautiful yellow daisies (capeweed).

Mr. Ken Hitchinson who lives with his wife Mavis next door, also worked on the railways like his father. He worked for forty three years on the railways. Jannali has changed a lot, he said. "You couldn't come up Box Road, there were great big boulders there so you had to come around Roberts Street. It was all blocked off. You had to go down Georges River Road and up Davies Street. Box Road was only a bush track"

Before he worked on the railways, Ken used to deliver milk from a horse and cart at twelve years of age. When they were growing up, they did not have T.V. so played cards. The father said the boys had to be in bed by midnight, and they were not allowed to smoke. He would come home from work at 1.30 a.m., the cow would Moo, the lights would go off, boys would jump over the fence and Mr. Hitchinson would come in and smell smoke everywhere! The residents of Jannali prided themselves on their community spirit, helping one another and their closeness in times of need.

Murder

In 1940 a rent collector, Mr. Lampshire, came round to collect the money on a Saturday. Someone hid behind a fence with a gun and murdered him for the money he carried. The people of Jannali were shocked. Nothing like that ever happened in their village. The murderer was caught and charged. *Hitchinson, A (1992)*

The Melvins and the Browns lived in Eighth Avenue and the Hawkins lived in Seventh Avenue. Jannali was pretty small then, only dirt roads. There were very few houses and Box Road was a dirt road with no footpaths. Mr. and Mrs. Wood lived up on the hill behind where the hotel is now. They owned all the land in Charles Place. There were no houses between the French's and Fisher's Post Office and general store. They had

the only store and the only phone in Jannali at the time. It was the hub of activity in Jannali. (Nola Fisher, 1992) Within a few years houses were springing up everywhere but before the war ended, there were no materials and everything was on rationing, no cement and bricks were unobtainable. There were no paths, no cars or utilities.

The French's came from Bexley where Nola French only had to walk to work. When she came to Jannali she had to catch a train and a bus. They knew few people, because there weren't very many people around. There were the Morrison's in Seventh Avenue, which was just a dirt track, Prestons in Box Road end of Jannali and the Days of Seventh Avenue.

When the French's came to Jannali in 1942, they said it was like a country town. The residents no longer lived in humpies. Mr. French bought a block of land right near the station, and built a house with water and electricity so that it would be convenient for the family to go to work.

There were the Parsons across the line, old identities of Jannali and the Millington girls who were great friends of Nola's brothers. The French's always had lots of friends, Nola and the boys would always bring their friends home. They had a piano and there was always singing - then they got a pianola, it wasn't as much fun, but twice the noise. There was nothing in Jannali although in Sutherland there was the Picture Show. There was a dear little lady who was an usherette, who was Bill Collins' aunty. Bill Collins was always at the pictures. *[Ed: he later lived at Illawong for a few years].*

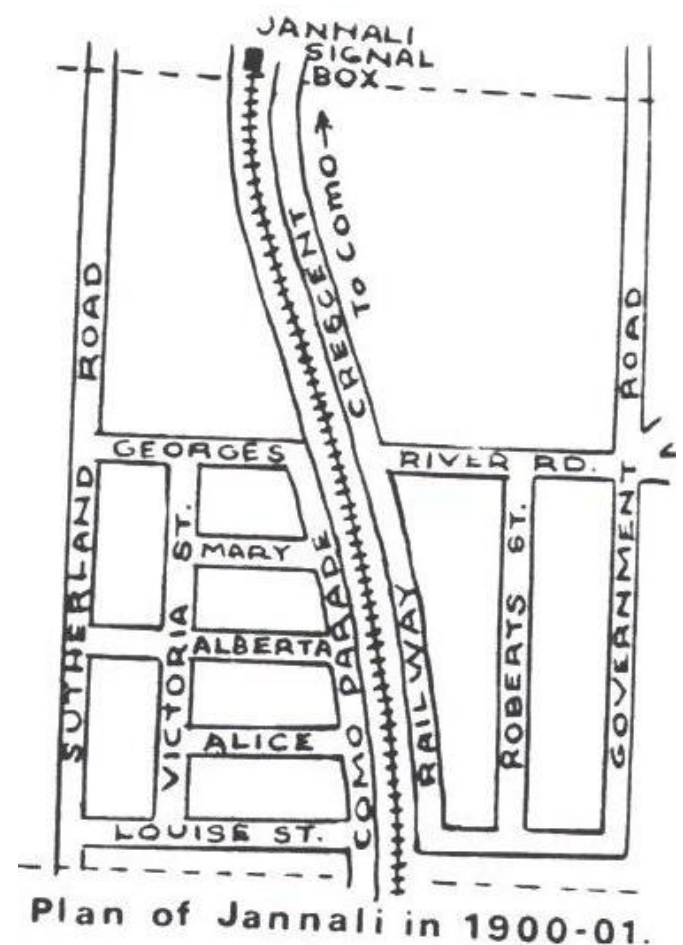
Mr. and Mrs. French died in 1979 and 1981. She'd been through the Depression and she loved a bargain. She would swap chutney for tomatoes and bargain for apples. She was a wonderful cook and could make a meal out of anything. She even bargained with the local solicitor to arrange her will in exchange for her tomato relish!

The French's were the first people in Jannali to get television. Everyone came to watch it as far as Seventh Avenue and they'd all had goggle eyes. After the war Jannali really came ahead. The Progress Association had been agitating for a school for many years.

Finally, the Education Department gave permission to build a primary school, which opened in 1944, with Miss Gwen Rowley as the

first principal. The school was allocated some Water Board Cottages on the block of land the cottages were adapted for use as classrooms. The Jannali Progress Association then worked hard for amenities for the school. (JPA, 1944)

The Housing Commission built 1,000 houses in Jannali and War Service homes in Rossford Avenue. In 1953 and 1959 Jannali Girls' and Jannali Boys' High Schools were built in Sutherland Road. In 1992 they became Co-ed in keeping with other High Schools in the Shire. Jannali East Primary School was opened in 1959.



Eventually roads and drains were built, playgrounds and a Community Hall and Baby Health Centre were opened. Then came the Banks and Building Societies, Chemists, Supermarkets, Doctors, Dentists, Service Stations, a Men's Store, Ladies' Fashions, Newsagents, Hairdressers, a Squash Court and a New Post Office.

The other side of progress, as reporter Peter Mahoney wrote in the Sun-Herald in 1985, would find Henry Lawson, who loved the tranquility of the Como/Jannali area, turning in his grave as Jannali had four or five bank hold-ups in one year. A woman passer-by, who was well known and liked, was shot by a ricocheting bullet.

A train was derailed on the Como bridge and so instead of peace and tranquility (except on the football field), we had bullet- proof glass in the banks.

Throughout the years Jannali has tried to keep its village atmosphere. It is the central shopping centre for surrounding areas such as Bonnet Bay, Como, Oyster Bay, Caravan Head and Kareela.

Today Jannali is pre-paring to have a face lift. The local shop keepers feel it is looking a bit tired and run down. Mrs. Stewart, one of the shop keepers said, "We are not a Miranda Fair, we don't try to be". We like our shopping centre to be a caring village and we do care for our customers.

They plan to plant some trees and buy some pot plants. (St. George & Sutherland Shire Leader, 1992) Even after seventy years Jannali still prides itself on its friendly atmosphere.

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Young Bill Lang, Bert Walker, W. Harry Tanner, H.G. Walker.

BOOK REVIEWS

Editor Dr. Ed. Duyker.

Bruny d'Entrecasteaux: Voyage to Australia and the Pacific 1791-1793

**Reprinted Address by Dr Edward
Duyker**

***Mayoral Heritage Festival Reception and
Book Launching 'Hazelhurst' 24 April 2001***

Distinguished guests and dear friends, I am very honored to be here with you all this evening. Thank you Cr Sonda and Cr Emerson for your kind words. To begin with I should pass on my co-editor's and co-translator's apologies; my mother Maryse lives in Melbourne and was not able to be with us this evening because of family commitments. I am very grateful to Sutherland Shire Council for offering to host this book launching. It is particularly fitting that proceeds from the sale of books this evening will go to our wonderful Sutherland Shire Library Service which was such an important resource for researching the background to d'Entrecasteaux's voyage. I am very grateful for the assistance of library staff this evening. There are so many familiar faces here this evening, that I can't do justice in the time allotted to thank you all, personally, for coming.

Clarence Darrow (1857-1938), the great American radical lawyer immortalized by Spencer Tracy in one of my favourite films *Inherit the Wind* (1960), once quipped that 'History repeats itself. That's one of the things wrong with history'. And yet here we are again! Last time it was Daniel Solander; this time it is Bruny d'Entrecasteaux. Many of you will be wondering who Bruny d'Entrecasteaux was and what relevance he has to Heritage Week here in Sutherland. I've never dared quote Oscar Wilde on historians before, but in the 'Critic as Artist' (1891) he declared that

'Anyone can make history. Only a great man can write it.' But before I am accused of vanity, I would like to point out that the book we are launching this evening is the translation of someone else's history.

This book is essentially a personal account of an attempt to solve a mystery which began a few kilometres from here 213 years ago. In March 1788, after a five week sojourn, La Pérouse's expedition had sailed out of Botany Bay and was never seen again by Europeans. D'Entrecasteaux had been involved in the planning of La Pérouse's expedition, but his career as a senior naval staff officer was cut short when his nephew strangled his wife. Shocked and dishonoured, he attempted to resign, but instead was sent to command French naval forces in the Indian Ocean and was then made Governor of Mauritius. Indeed it was in the context of the history of Mauritius (my mother's native island) that I first encountered d'Entrecasteaux's name. I am particularly pleased that my friend and colleague, Patrice Curé, High Commissioner for the Republic of Mauritius is here with us this evening. (I must assure you, however, that his nephew did nothing terrible in Mauritius for him to be sent here. I am sure the same can be said for another of our distinguished guests this evening the very hard working French cultural attaché, M. Alain Monteil.)

La Pérouse's disappearance was a matter of great national concern in France. (Just before going to the guillotine, Louis XVI is said to have asked: 'Is there any news of M. de La Pérouse?'.) When the French government decided to send a rescue expedition, probably the first humanitarian mission on a global scale in world history, d'Entrecasteaux was the natural choice as the commander of its two ships: *Recherche* and *Esperance* ['Search' and 'Hope'].

Although d'Entrecasteaux failed to discover the fate of *La Pérouse* and perished in the attempt,

his expedition made a number of significant geographical discoveries (represented in charts, which Matthew Flinders declared, contained 'some of the finest specimens of marine surveying, perhaps ever made in a new country'). In Tasmania these discoveries included Recherche Bay, the D'Entrecasteaux Channel (between the mainland and Bruny Island) and the estuaries of the Huon and Derwent Rivers. In Western Australia they discovered Esperance Bay and surveyed the Archipelago of the Recherche. They also discovered islands in the d'Entrecasteaux group off New Guinea and named and surveyed the Huon Peninsula.

The voyage also yielded significant natural history collections and ethnographic observations--including some of the earliest recorded observations of the Aboriginal people of Tasmania. I am particularly pleased with the cover of the book. It is very much a celebration of the friendly relations which persisted between the French and the Aborigines. As we strive for reconciliation with indigenous Australians, d'Entrecasteaux's expedition offers an important historical example of peaceful even joyful intercultural relations in our history. One of the naturalists of the expedition, Jacques-Julien Houtou de Labillardière (1755---1834), would produce what in practical terms was the first published flora of New Holland and later New Caledonia. Indeed Labillardière has the distinction of having named the floral emblems of Tasmania (*Eucalyptus globulus*) and Victoria (*Epacris impressa*), as well as the genus *Anigozanthus* or kangaroo paw to which the floral emblem of Western Australia belongs. Furthermore, he published the first description of our beautiful flannel flower (*Actinotus helianthi*), the recent floral emblem of the centenary of Australian Federation. D'Entrecasteaux's expedition was also of considerable significance in the history of geophysics, for it returned with the first survey of global magnetic intensity, proving that it strengthens away from the equator to both north and south.

Every work of history (even translation) is an adventure in itself. My wife Susan and my sons Samuel and Pierre have all shared in the adventure of following d'Entrecasteaux's trail

in various parts of the world. We have twice visited d'Entrecasteaux's birthplace, the Château d'Entrecasteaux, not far from Aix en Provence in the south of France, and were very surprised to find it was owned by an expatriate Scottish family. As you can imagine, we thought we had stumbled into Brigadoon!

D'Entrecasteaux was no Celt, but most of his men were - for the expedition sailed from the Breton port of Brest where some of my own ancestors were working at that time in naval victualling. D'Entrecasteaux's second in command, Jean Michel Huon de Kermadec, was one of these Breton mariners and I was very pleased to track down members of his family in Brittany. Just before Christmas last year three generations of my own family were camped in pilgrimage under a magnificent fig tree at Balade in the north of New Caledonia opposite the island of Poudioué (Cook's observatory island) where Huon de Kermadec is buried. We could not help but be reminded that the Huon River, Huonville and our majestic Huon pine still honour his name. As a family we have several times explored d'Entrecasteaux's landfalls in Tasmania and crossed the Nullarbor to visit his landfall at Esperance in Western Australia. My sons will tell you that it is not always easy to be part of the family of an obsessive historian. On the return journey we blew two head gaskets and seized the gear box in 44° centigrade temperatures. None of us will forget the ten days we spent waiting for our Land Rover to be repaired, stranded in the Kalgoorlie Youth Hostel, located among the corrugated-iron brothels of Hay Street. (Many of the establishments on Hay Street had signs indicating that they took credit cards; one had EFTPOS. My youngest son Pierre was only 11 years old at the time and was full of questions. I explained that EFTPOS was an acronym for Electronic Funds Transfer Point of Sale. 'Oh' Pierre responded, 'Virtual Sex!')

Shakespeare tells us 'There is a history in all men's lives' (*Henry IV part II*). But not all men are what they seem. One of d'Entrecasteaux's crew members, Louis Girardin, was not a man at all, but the daughter of a former royal gardener turned wine merchant at Versailles. This was Marie Louise

Victoire Girardin (1754---94), who had been widowed in 1781 and in the early days of the Revolution had fled disgrace and paternal wrath after giving birth to an illegitimate child by a disloyal lover. She had disguised herself as a man and journeyed to Brest with a letter of introduction to Huon de Kermadec's widowed sister. Eventually she found a place on the *Recherche* (almost certainly with d'Entrecasteaux's knowledge of her true gender). As a steward she had been exempt from medical examination and enjoyed a small but separate cabin. Although the truth was soon suspected by her crewmates, Marie Louise maintained her assumed identity with dogged determination. With operatic dash, she was even slashed on the arm in a duel with an impertinent assistant pilot whom she had challenged. There is evidence that she may eventually have formed a relationship with Mérite, the young *enseigne* on the *Recherche*. Sadly, the two died of dysentery, within a day of each other, in December 1794, Mérite in Batavia and Marie Louise on the Dutch transport *Dordrecht*. Another enigmatic, but fascinating character among the ranks of the expedition was Dominicus Dorlong who stowed away at the Cape of Good Hope. D'Entrecasteaux, who came to hold him in great esteem as an instrument maker, thought he was English. In fact he was a German who had been sentenced in Bristol and had escaped from the convict transport *Pitt* while bound for New South Wales. It is ironic that he would make several Australian landfalls as part of d'Entrecasteaux's expedition! Unfortunately, I have not been able to discover his fate after the expedition disintegrated on royalist and republican lines in the Dutch East Indies when it was learned that Louis XVI had been guillotined during their absence (in fact, during their second sojourn in Tasmania). The same can be said for the expedition's artist Piron. I lost track of him in Manila in 1799. Now I am starting to sound like Dr Who! But time has been strictly rationed this evening and I must conclude before I incur the wrath of the timelords.

Over a period of nearly two years d'Entrecasteaux held his ideologically divided expedition together, in often dangerous and unknown waters, with

patience, discipline and exemplary skill as a mariner. Without these skills they might all have shared the fate of La Pérouse or played out the destructive fury of the Revolution on the quarterdeck, long before they reached the Dutch East Indies. More than two centuries later, d'Entrecasteaux's account of his voyage remains a profound affirmation of his achievements. I sincerely hope many of you will enjoy his narrative and recognize its significance as an Australian historical source. Thank you.

“Wherever I Go: Myles Lalor's Oral History”

Reviewed by Cliff Emerson, March 2001.

First Published – 2000. Melbourne University Press. Lalor & Beckett. This is an unusual, even unique book. It presents with a rare opportunity to hear from an “ordinary bloke”, a part Aboriginal and therefore a man typical, in many ways of the urban Aboriginal with whom we city folk might come into contact in our own communities.

Myles Lalor emerges from the pages of this account of his life, as a man determined not to allow prejudice to dominate his life, be it from white society or from within his own family, for some of whom, he was “too black”.

Although he deals with issues such as family displacement, loss of cultural identity, institutional brutality, Police harassment etc. Lalor was no pessimist. He speaks to us, in the vernacular, which can be confronting, about the injustices heaped upon Aboriginal people, but he does so without bitterness, for the most part and in fact his reflections, more often than not, are interspersed with laughter.

Throughout his narrative Myles displays a wry sense of humour which enabled him to deal with many of life's injustices.

Eg “.....one time I chucked Alice in a bloody old Chev ute I had grabbed Makudij and Doolan Had tucker in the

bloody ute , away we went. Just drove up and down Ivanhoe road, lamb marking. We had plenty of tucker, we had money, we had this old ute, we was right."

The book is full of irony and irony was one of Lalor's favourite words one he uses frequently when he speaks of one of those issues which continue to impede the progress of reconciliation.

Cliff Emerson, retired in 1994 after 30 years of teaching in Primary schools in NSW. Travel has always been a part of Cliff's life.

In 1976 he undertook a four month round Australia trip with his wife and two young children. At that time the roads were almost entirely corrugated dirt and bulldust. Much the same as Myles Lalor experienced in his wanderings in the far west of NSW & Sth Australia.

The places Lalor mentions, Kinchela, Wilcannia, Tibooburra, Menindee, Flinders Ranges, Ivanhoe, etc. are all familiar to cliff and Dawn who have since, cliff's retirement, travelled extensively in the desert country of the outback.

Australia and the Atomic Empire Australia's bid for the atomic bomb

By Wayne Reynolds

Melbourne University Press, 2000. 218 pp., \$32.95 (pb)

Review by Jim Green, May 2001

"Australia's bid for the atomic bomb² is a useful and original book by Wayne Reynolds, a history lecturer at Newcastle University, based on archival material in Australia, the United States, South Africa, Canada and London.

It has been known for many years that Australian governments were considering, and to some extent pursuing, the development of nuclear weapons from the 1950s to the early 1970s. Several books and articles published in the 1990s have shed considerable light on this history. Reynolds reveals that the planning and pursuit of nuclear weapons in Australia stretches back to World War II, and that the project was monumental in scale and bound up with post-war projects such as the development of the Snowy Mountains hydroelectric scheme and the Australian National University in Canberra.

Reynolds focuses on the period from World War II to 1957, during which the US was closely guarding its nuclear weapons expertise. The UK also wanted nuclear weapons. Failing to cement a 'special relationship' with the US, with Canada hitching its military fortunes not to the Commonwealth but to the US, and with a sense of urgency engendered by the Soviet Union's rapid development the wherewithal to produce nuclear weapons, the fall-back plan was to use the resources and real-estate of the Commonwealth to develop nuclear weapons.

One of several historical misconceptions undermined by Reynold's research is that the post-war history of the British empire was one of steady decline. The impasse in Anglo-American relations led to a rejuvenation of the empire, motivated largely by military, and in particular nuclear, matters.

Commonwealth countries, especially Australia and South Africa, were associated with many facets of the empire bomb project, providing uranium, real estate for weapons and rocket tests, and a degree of scientific and engineering expertise.

Beyond the direct involvement of the dominions in weapons production, they featured prominently in strategic planning in which trusted (i.e. predominantly white, English-speaking) dominions would form the nodal points of regional zones; for example Australia and New Zealand would form the nucleus in Asia and the Pacific, South Africa was the base for most of Africa, and so on.

Australia's 'Manhattan Project'

Washington saw nuclear weapons as the ideal counter to the superior manpower of the Communist bloc. They had a similar appeal to Australia, Reynolds argues: "The possession of atomic weapons for a small white population in a troubled area, a situation that was to be replicated in southern Africa, provided the ideal solution."

Canberra tried to use its empire links to get nuclear weapons: "The empire provided Canberra with its only access to atomic weapons and the global war planning that would determine their use."

"Many of the great national projects", Reynolds writes, "such as the Snowy Mountains Scheme, the Woomera Rocket Range and the Australian National University, were in large measure based on the assumption that Australia would one day be a nuclear weapons state."

Of course, there were multiple agendas for these projects, and the extent to which they owed their existence to the empire bomb project is open for endless debate. Nevertheless, Reynolds provides irrefutable evidence – much of it previously unpublished – linking them to the empire bomb project.

A number of universities established nuclear science and engineering departments after World War II. Mark Oliphant asked for – and got – 500,000 pounds sterling to establish the Research School of Physical Sciences at the ANU and to begin construction of a research cyclotron, even though initial projections had the budget for the entire university at less than twice that amount.

Reynolds contests the view that Canberra's post-war relations with Britain were marginal to the main game of cementing an alliance with the US. Events such as Menzies' willingness to host British weapons tests have been seen as relics of a fading empire. In the longer stretch, they were just that, but at the time the weapons tests were an integral part of the empire bomb project.

Snowy Mountains

Beginning with the post-war Curtin government, the Manhattan Project provided the obvious (and the only) model for large-scale nuclear development: the development of atomic reactors adjacent to hydroelectric facilities. Canada pursued a similar path after the war.

The site for reactors would need to be isolated, but accessible to research facilities at laboratories and universities, and a great deal of electricity and water would need to be accessible.

Hence the attraction of the Snowy Mountains hydroelectricity scheme. Nelson Lemmon, the minister for works and housing, said in 1949 that the Snowy Mountains scheme was "an endeavour to ensure that Australia does not lag in the race to develop atomic power", and that the "power will be used for defence purposes".

"Nuclear scientists would conduct experiments on the ANU cyclotron", Reynolds writes, "and the Snowy Mountains Scheme would provide the plutonium that would one day go into the rockets developed at Woomera."

Lucas Heights

The Australian Atomic Energy Corporation (AAEC) was established in the early 1950s to build and operate research facilities at Lucas Heights in the southern Sydney suburb of Lucas Heights. "[I]t is clear that Lucas Heights owed its existence to a considerable degree to the need for Australia to preserve the atomic weapons option", Reynolds notes.

Part of the bargaining surrounding the weapons tests in South Australia included an agreement for Britain to sell Australia a research reactor; thus a contract was signed in June 1955 for a British company to build the Hi-Flux Australian Reactor (HIFAR), which is still in operation at Lucas Heights. HIFAR was, in the minds of those Australians and Brits in the know, a first step towards the construction of larger reactors capable of producing substantial volumes of plutonium for weapons.

Exactly what weapons-related research was carried out at Lucas Heights has always been something of a mystery. Reynolds sheds a little light on this question. The major research project in the early years of the AAEC concerned beryllium, and this research is likely to have been pursued, at least in part, because of British interest in developing thermonuclear weapons. Publicly, however, the beryllium research was justified with reference to its potential use as a neutron moderator in power reactors.

The end of the atomic empire

In 1957, the US renewed close atomic co-operation with the UK, motivated by Soviet success in developing thermonuclear weapons and long-range missiles. Third parties such as Australia were excluded from this cooperation.

"Every aspect of the empire deterrent weapons programme was served up on the altar of the Anglo-American special relationship", Reynolds writes. British weapons tests moved to Nevada. Australia's nuclear research programme had to be reined in to ensure compliance with non-proliferation protocols agreed with Soviet Union. Testing of delivery vehicles was gradually wound down.

According to Reynolds, "At no stage did we envisage a separate bomb. The idea was that we would have an Australian bomb as part of a joint project." This changed as the empire bomb project came to an end. Ongoing efforts were made to acquire nuclear weapons from Britain and the US, and parallel efforts were made to bring Australia closer to an indigenous capability to develop nuclear weapons.

In 1962, the federal Cabinet approved an increase in the staff of the AAEC from 950 to 1050 because, in the words of the minister of national development, "a body of nuclear scientists and engineer skilled in nuclear energy represents a positive asset which would be available at any time if the government decided to develop a nuclear defence potential."

The 1963 decision to buy F-111 bombers from the US was partly motivated by the capacity to

modify them to carry nuclear bombs if required.

The AAEC's beryllium research was wound down in the mid-1960s, but research into uranium enrichment was pursued from 1965 for both civil and military purposes - initially in secret in the basement of a building at Lucas Heights.

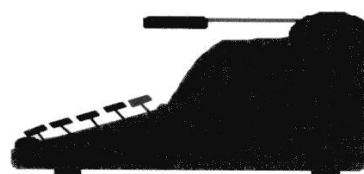
The plan to build a nuclear power plant at Jervis Bay, announced in 1969 by Prime Minister John Gorton but abandoned in the early 1970s by his successors MacMahon and Whitlam, had a military subtext as Gorton later admitted.

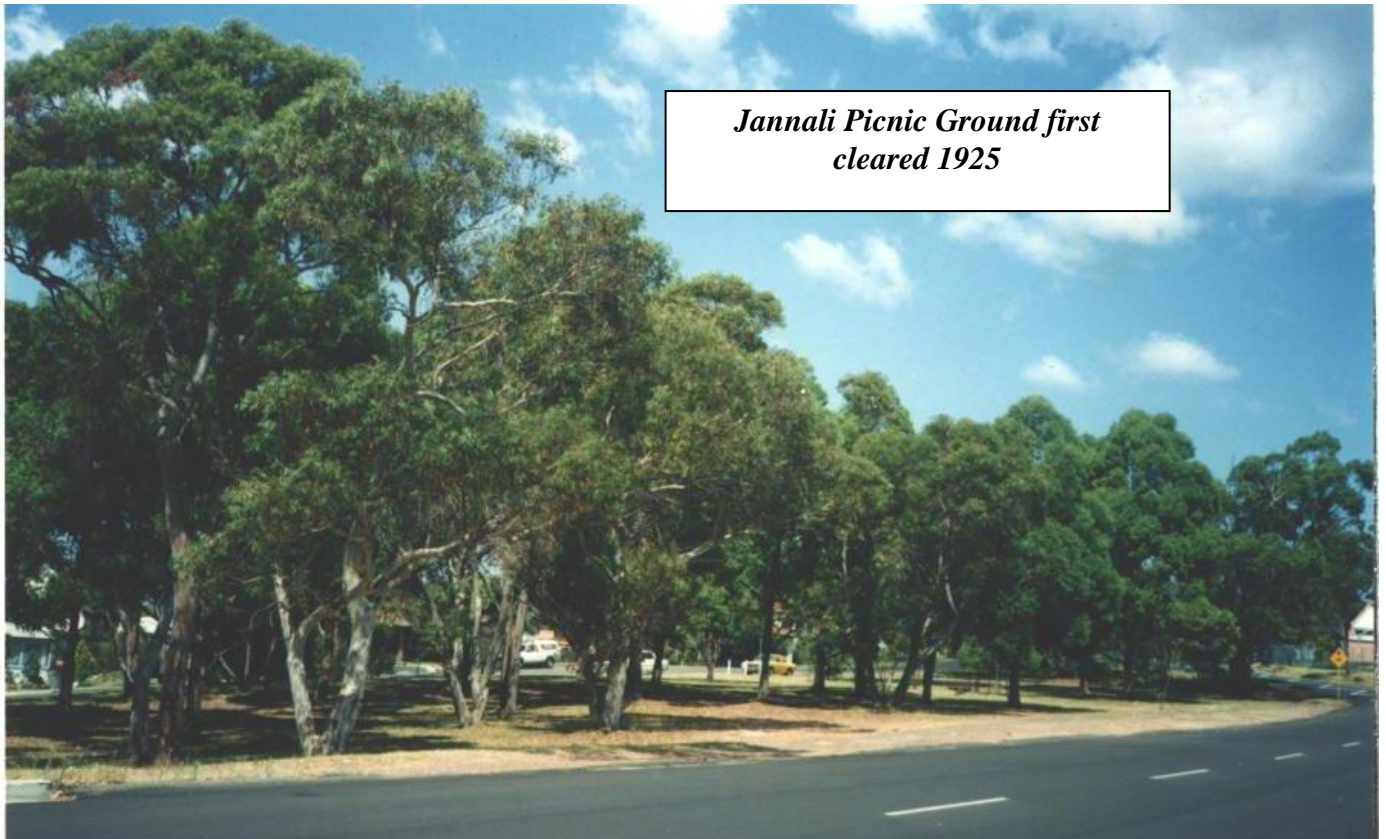
US alliance

Two recent analyses of Australia's historical pursuit of nuclear weapons are those of Jim Walsh, in the Fall (Spring) 1997 Nonproliferation Review, and Jacques Hymans, in the March 2000 Nonproliferation Review. Both Walsh and Hymans offer a sinners-to-saints history, in which Australia renounces nuclear weapons and becomes an active participant in international disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives.

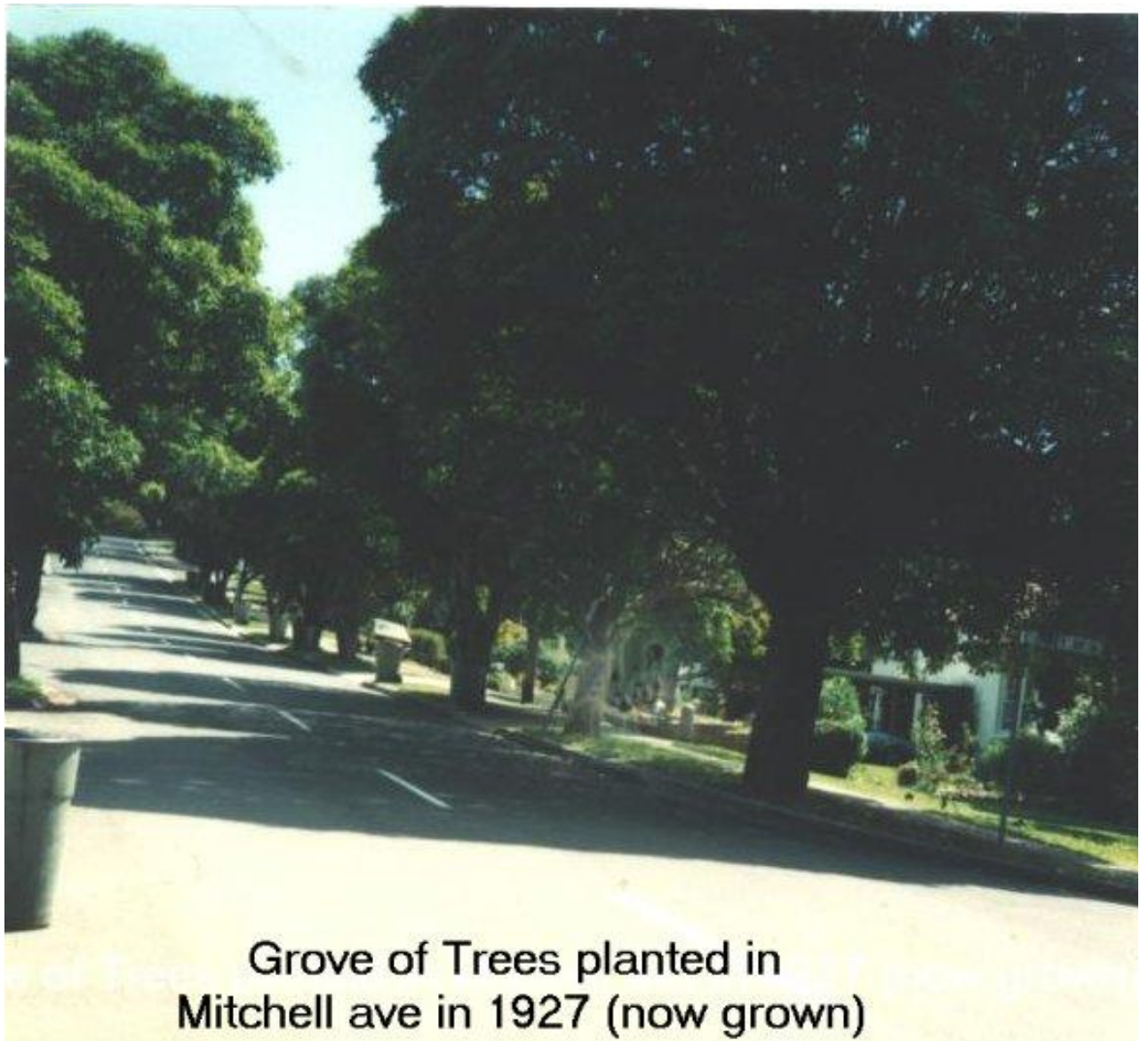
However, as Reynolds notes, it was only the cementing of the military-nuclear alliance between the US and Australia in the 1970s that signalled the end of any serious pursuit of nuclear weapons in Australia. And Australian governments in the past generation have been active participants in international nuclear fora - but they have invariably attempted to block serious disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives at the behest of the US.

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*Jannali Picnic Ground first
cleared 1925*



Grove of Trees planted in
Mitchell ave in 1927 (now grown)