



Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc **Bulletin**



VOL. 5 No.1

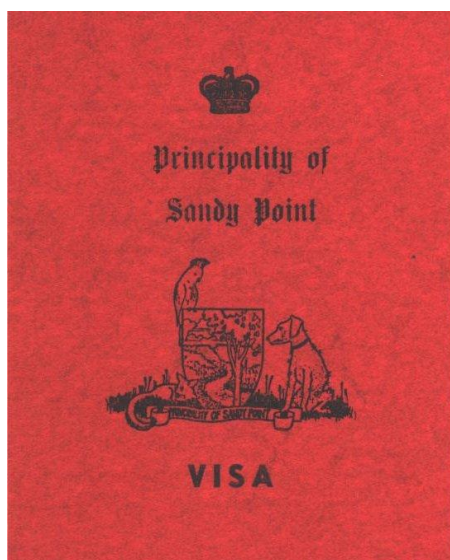
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February 2002 \$1.00

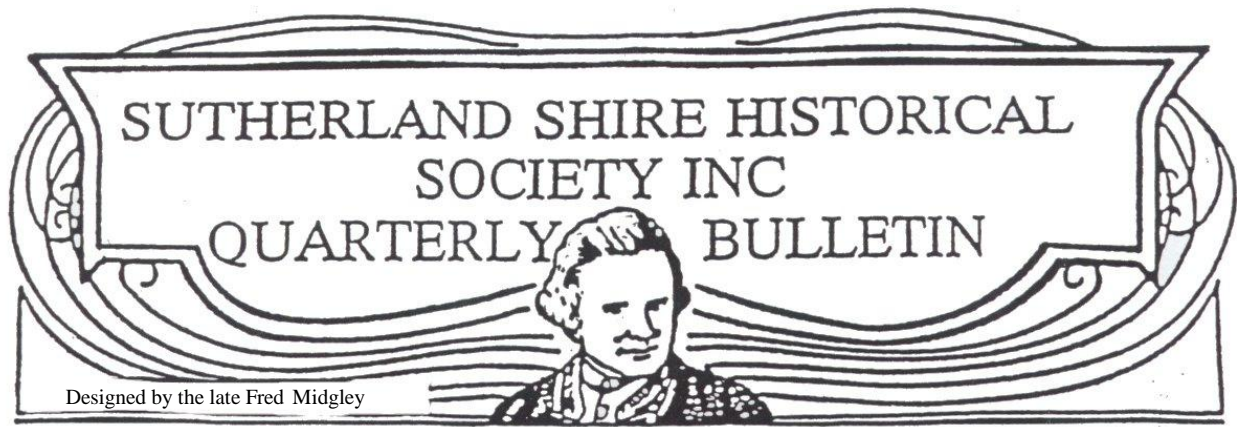
Sandy Point Secedes From “The Shire” (and Australia)

Did you know that in an effort to engender greater support for their village the residents of Sandy Point announced their impending secession from the Commonwealth of Australia.

The community issued Visas and held a ball to celebrate their secession. Below 1 Visa for sandy Point and right 2. The Sandy Point Crest 3. Group of Sand Point Militia. More about this on *page 14*.



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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)

VISITORS ARE WELCOME

*All correspondence should
be addressed to*

**The Honorary Secretary
Sutherland Shire Historical Society
PO Box 389
Sutherland NSW 1499**

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Disclaimer

The individual comment, articles and Office Bearers reports that appear in this Bulletin are the responsibility of the writer and in no way reflect the opinions or beliefs of the members or Executive of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 36TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc. will be held FRIDAY, MARCH 15, 2002, in the Multi-Purpose Building, Flora Street, Sutherland at 8.00 p.m.

AGENDA

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. To confirm and adopt Minutes of the 35th Annual General Meeting.
4. Submission and adoption of the Annual Report of the Executive Council and Hon. Treasurer's Financial Statement and Balance Sheet for 2000.
5. Out-of-pocket expenses.
6. Election of officers for 2002.
7. **GENERAL BUSINESS:** Pertaining to the Annual General Meeting only.



Councillor & Deputy Mayor
Dawn Emerson
PRESIDENT

President's Remarks

Happy New Year to all our readers! This is the time of year for self-examination, and trying to put our lives in order, by resolving to change things for the better. I hope that if you haven't become a member yet--that your New Year resolution was to do so,--and we look forward to greeting you *at our next meeting*! I am concerned that numbers have been down lately at meetings. Yet we have about 200 members!

Why are meetings not as well attended as previously? Is transport a problem? Could all members who come by car make a New Year resolution to call and bring along another member (or three)? This may help as some older members are unwilling to travel alone by train. Would you like to bring someone else along for company--please do so! We love having guests, and delight in acknowledging them by name at the meeting, so we may welcome them.

Are we choosing the right Guest Speakers Is this the problem? Are you tiring of the subjects we choose-- and would like new topics? We have had quite a lot on theatres of war in the last year--perhaps you would prefer more entertaining local history, and not as much blood-letting? Would you like more on general knowledge history? Or social history? If you don't tell us why you aren't attending, I am unable to change anything so we can attract more members along. Are the meetings boring? What parts of the meeting would you like us to dice? Are our meetings too dry? (I do try to think of humorous things to tell you!) Please ring and tell me (I have broad shoulders, and after all I am used to it---I am a councillor!) on 9543-1060.

Is our Bulletin boring? Our editor, Les Bursill, and I have been turning cartwheels, trying to make our journal (a) interesting (b) local (c) tell you about new books worth reading, and (d) make it informative to members from 9+ to 90+. If somehow we left *you* out--what are we doing wrong? What would you like to read about? Have we made TOO MANY changes? Should it be more "folksy"? Les also has broad shoulders (and

a very forgiving nature!)-- so give him a ring on his mobile (0419 298 018) and enthuse over what YOU want in our bulletin (and what you want left out!).

Excursions These too have been down in numbers. Is there somewhere we haven't visited that you would like to see? Perhaps we visited a place a long while ago, but now we have new members it may be time to go again? Would you rather drive yourself and travel in a car convoy, than by bus? (And miss Terry's fascinating running commentary!!!) Would you like to use your annual pensioner's train ticket, and travel somewhere by train for a weekend? Perhaps a day trip by train to a venue, and use your \$1.10 ticket. Would you like to try a sea cruise to somewhere? Perhaps even an air flight? All this depends on *what you are willing to pay for an excursion*. Aileen tries to organise what the members want, and within a sensible price range--but if you don't tell her, or tell the meeting we can't assist you.

If you have any suggestions ring Aileen on 95235801, or, as she is busier than I am at times--if she isn't home, ring me on: 9543-1060 or leave a message on our answering machines and we will ring you back.

Museum What can we do to improve it? Should we open more frequently? If so, who will agree to be there to supervise? When we move into our new building which Sutherland Shire Council is planning, we need to register each item on computer, and label it. We also need to give each item either a good wash, or some "spit and polish", and perhaps some expert or professional running repairs. Can you help? Would you be willing to go on a roster to come down on a Saturday, and help Allan (PH: 95212227& Jim, (9521 3721)and their museum sub-committee, to restore and refresh some of our holdings? I will pledge my help as a "washer-upper" and "vacuum duster".

We can get advice from experts who will guide us if you would like to help with this project, and our Mayor has offered us support in her Mayoral Minute. Perhaps you have a specialised knowledge, and can date and identify some of the items. If so, as they used to say in the war posters---WE NEED YOU! Are you fired up? Are you ready to do battle for the Shire Historical

Society?-- Prove it! Spill all your ideas at the next meeting--- and go and have a look for that apron! I am SO looking forward to the next meeting to hear your suggestions.

Stop Press: Don't Miss the **Champagne & Chicken Cocktail Party at the La Perouse Museum.** Saturday 16th February, 2002 at 6pm. Guest Speaker: Dr. Ed Duyker: "Bruny - d'entrecasteaux : Voyage to Australia & the Pacific 1791-1793"

Dawn Emerson

*President, Sutherland Shire Historical Society
and Deputy Mayor, Sutherland Shire Council*

Meetings for 2002:

15th February, 2002: Daphne Salt:
Kurnell: birthplace of modern Australia

15th March, 2002: Our AGM--all
positions vacant

19th April, 2002: Mrs. Mary Small:
"Simpson and his donkey"

17th May, 2002: Pauline Curby:
History of Manly

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

PRESIDENT'S ADDENDUM

Well, for someone who was only going to stand for a year until you managed to get someone else as president--here we are now, four years down the track!-- Nevertheless I have enjoyed every minute of it, and I hope my leadership has been fruitful. The other Councillors will tell you I never miss an opportunity to push the fortunes of the Society, and I do believe I have done my best to be a loyal member, and I enjoy representing you at functions wearing my badge with pride.

I thank Aileen Griffiths, OAM for her supervision of our excursions, and for representing me at functions as Deputy President when I am unable to attend due to Council engagements. We are delighted when other other Societies' members join us, especially as our own numbers seem to be down a bit on other years, but then none of us are getting any younger or healthier!

My grateful thanks to our Museum Curator, Allan McGrath, ably assisted by Vice-President, Jim Cutbush and Doug Archer who arrange our displays, with such apparent ease that belies the hours put in behind the scenes. Allan tells me that he thinks it's time to hang up his Museum key, after many years of exemplary service and he says he will train and help anyone who wishes to take on the job, so we need a volunteer who would be willing to supervise the openings of the Museum and arrange our exhibitions. Les Bursill, our Research Librarian and Archivist, and Bulletin Editor, despite being the busiest person I have ever known, seems to find time to do all his duties with aplomb, and acquit himself very ably, and is a tower of strength to me with his stalwart assistance and good humoured, sensible advice.

Our Secretary, Mina Whybourne, quiet and self-effacing but eminently competent, takes our minutes, and is an outstanding secretary. She is always ready to assist and equable despite problems that would try the patience of a saint! Our Treasurer, Mr. Maurie Beaven, was "left holding the bag" last year, and has had to cope with our knotty GST problems as well as serious family health problems, and refuses to stand again, as he needs a break. Our finances are in excellent shape, thanks to Maurie's excellent shepherding, and we have been most grateful for his dedication.

Andrew Platfoot has been an able backstop in assisting as Deputy Treasurer, but we desperately need a Treasurer, even if *you* could help us out, just for ONE year! To Betty McGrath, our Booking Officer, who reliably and painstakingly records all the excursion payments, our undying gratitude. She is always cheery, and smiling when the job appears to me to be a constant headache! This is the quality of our Executive Council, who all make my job so easy, because they are so competent and willing to help.

Thanks to our committee members: Vice-President David Overett, Neville Martiensen, Stewart Roberts, and Frank McGill who come along to committee meetings when they can and always provide wise advice and good counsel. To our overworked and underpaid committee members: Betty Perry and Doug Perry, who double up on their duties to provide that welcome cuppa each meeting night, which we love and appreciate, our great debt of thanks!

Our other Committee member, Ms. Marjory Blackley (Publicity Officer and computer expert), who reliably provides our notices painstakingly correct to the local paper, despite them being inevitably reliably reported with wrong date, or wrong venue. (Her hair always looks so well coiffured, yet I am sure she tears half it out every month, when she sees our report in the paper, but to date she has been unable to change their ways!) Marj also ably helped out when our secretary was away--and got lumbered with doing scores of letters to all our high schools, which she handled with equanimity and efficiency (and sadly no replies).

Our thanks to our patron and Mayor, Councillor Tracie Sonda, and General Manager, Mr. John Rayner for their support; and the Local History Librarian Helen McDonald. We thank the Sutherland Shire Council for all their help. It seems that not all our councillors are aware of how seriously we take our role in accepting responsibility for conserving our history and displaying it, without recompense, purely for the love of serving our community and our Council. It is very disappointing that so few Councillors attend our Heritage Festival functions where we showcase our Shire, but we hope to remedy this. We will assist the Council in any local celebration or anniversary, and indeed, regard it as our duty .

We also would like to record the continuing assistance we receive from many staff members of Council, who appreciate the work of the Society, and generously offer support. We hope that recently appointed officers will also come to understand our role, appreciate our dedication, and reciprocate with recognition. It is difficult for our members to comprehend, when they are unswerving in their support for Council, and give unstintingly of their time, to find that the Society has been overlooked, once again, in general

publicity for celebrations, and very embarrassing to have to issue a reminder.

To all the members of the Society, whether you have an interest in history, and like to learn about the past, or whether you are one of our scribes, or photographers, who record it, -- you are the salt of the earth! I think I can speak for ALL our members when I say, -- we are proud to live in Sutherland Shire, and we are proud to be members of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society. Thank you all for a job well done in 2001-2. I believe we contributed to a recording a milestone in the Millennium.

Dawn Emerson
Councillor Dawn Emerson,
President, Sutherland Shire Historical Society
and Deputy Mayor, Sutherland Shire Council

SECRETARY'S REPORT

During 2001 we were privileged to hear a variety of very gifted and interesting speakers at our meetings, held on the third Friday of each month.

JANUARY

Members' Night was, as usual, a very enjoyable evening. Mrs. Aileen Griffiths told us of a 17 spoke umbrella she had inherited - it had belonged to her grandfather. The umbrella had been purchased or had been re-covered at the "Billy" Hughes Umbrella Shop. Mr. Hughes in later years became our Prime Minister.

Mr. Doug Archer showed some of his exquisite pieces - a beautiful vase of Royal Copenhagen and a set of inside Bottles & P aintings painted by Mr. Wu Sing Ling -64 years old. He also had a beautiful set of enamelled Pill and Snuff boxes depicting various historical scenes - Battle of Trafalgar, etc.

Our President, Dawn Emerson, then told us of her visit to South Africa to set up a Library at Pretoria - under AUSAID. It proved to be a very interesting project, with some delays, but eventually all fell into place after her second visit.

She met some wonderful South African people. Dawn and her husband were able to visit two museums and some of the National Parks. Cliff Emerson showed an interesting video of wild animals, lions, elephants, giraffes - wonderful photography.

FEBRUARY

Mr. Shayne Williams, an elder of the Gweagal Clan and a descendant of the aboriginal people who had met James Cook and his party at Kurnell on April 29 1770, spoke to us on "A Clash of Two Cultures" (Mr. Williams lectures at University on Aboriginal culture.)

There is a competing difference between the lifestyles and world views of aboriginal societies and European societies. It is important to have a sound understanding of the stresses that exist between both cultures in order to gain an understanding of contemporary aboriginal issues. We appreciated Mr. Williams' address very much and knew we had benefited from his expert knowledge.

MARCH

The Annual General Meeting was held and we were very sorry to receive the resignations of Mr. Doug Archer, Deputy President, and two Executive Committee members - Mrs. Betty Greentree and Mrs. Ishbel Caddell. The President thanked them all very much for their many years of service on the Committee and a motion of appreciation was recorded. Mr. Beaven also tendered his resignation as Treasurer but agreed to continue until a replacement was found. He was thanked for his dedicated work as Treasurer. Councillor Dawn Emerson graciously agreed to continue as President. Mrs. Aileen Griffiths was elected to the position of Deputy President. Mr. Neville Martiensen and Mr. Frank McGill were elected to the Executive Committee.

Mr. Les Bursill, Bulletin Editor, also accepted the position of Hon. Research Officer and Archivist. Dr. Ed Duyker indicated that he would be happy to review Books for the Bulletin.

APRIL

Mr. Reg Davis was our speaker - he had been a Commando in New Guinea on the Kokoda Track. He wore his Commando uniform - khaki with a smart beret -and he demonstrated all the gear that

had to be carded through the slush and mud of the jungle. He had some interesting photographs, including some of the Japanese surrender and copies of the actual surrender documents. It was a very difficult campaign and he spoke highly of the "Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels"

Lt. Commander Bob Matchett gave us a marvellous address on the merits of the National Maritime Museum. He spoke of history regarding Henry Hacking who was a Quarter Master on the "Sirius". He also spoke of Bass and Flinders, the "Batavia" and the "Endeavour".

The Museum has many sections and he mentioned the importance of the "Welcome Wall" where one could record the names of our forefathers who had migrated to Australia. A very interesting and vibrant speaker.

JUNE

Mrs. Lefayre Palmer (a member of the Society) spoke to us on a "deadly serious but sometimes hilarious" topic - English, American and Australian wills from the time of Queen Elizabeth 1 to King Edward VII and their value to historians, family historians and those researching the customs of the period . She had become interested whilst researching the history of her husband's family. Many questions were asked - a very fascinating subject.

JULY

Mr. Mort Edson intrigued us with his talk on the "Battle of Cronulia". In 1942 we were particularly vulnerable as a nation with an enormous coastline open to invasion - the coast, including Cronulla, was covered with barbed wire as a deterrent. A well known gentleman, who was an officer in the Australian Army, felt that the security arrangements should be tested and set up an exercise, which was quite dramatic, and his fears were actually proven correct. (We could have been invaded quite easily). It is hoped that Mr. Edson will record all the information he has for posterity.

AUGUST

Mr. Edgar Penzig, author-historian and a leading conference speaker on our early days of colonisation, spoke to us of the "wild colonial days", of bushrangers, and ladies carrying small pistols in their voluminous gowns for protection.

He was a most entertaining speaker with many tales to tell.

SEPTEMBER

One of our favourite speakers, Mr. George Roberts, entertained us with his experiences in the Redex Car Thais in 1953-4-5. He explained that "Redex" was an additive to fuel and the round Australia race a proving trial for fuel, cars and drivers. He spoke in particular of the 1954 trial negotiated through rivers and tracks full of sand, fallen trees, wild life and other daunting obstacles - the humorous side of the adventure with such larrikins as "Gelignite" Jack Murray.

OCTOBER

Mrs. Nora Lees Mainguard entertained us with an exquisite exhibition of miniature houses - a typical farmer's house with superb detail, roses around the door - and a Canadian ranch house (Mrs. Mainguard is Canadian), and some pieces of miniature pottery - such detailed and painstaking work. She told us of Queen Mary's Doll's House and had a book on the subject.

Our members were fascinated by the beautifully knitted and stitched garments worn by the "men and women" in the display. There are over 600 members of the Miniatures Club and they meet regularly.

NOVEMBER

Mrs. Estelle Geering (a fellow member of the Society) addressed us on the "Early British Settlement in the Northern Territory". Mrs. Geering's research was most interesting - five

settlements in all, spaced over many years until, finally, a settlement was established in Darwin.

Many questions were asked and we all felt better informed regarding this important part of our vast continent.

DECEMBER

Our last meeting for the year was held in the School of Arts and we again had the pleasure of being entertained by "The District Singers". They gave us a most enjoyable programme in two sections - singing old favourites from operettas and then traditional Christmas carols and some of the newer Australian carols. We then all enjoyed a splendid festive supper.

We are so fortunate to have Councillor Dawn Emerson as our President. This year, she is Deputy Mayor and has been called on many occasions to represent the Mayor. We have appreciated her leadership and the interesting speakers she has arranged for us.

Our Executive Committee works well and I have been most grateful to Mrs. Marj. Blackley for taking over as Secretary during my absence on holidays.

Our special thanks are due to Mr. Doug and Mrs. Betty Perry for attending to supper arrangements during the year, with Mr. and Mrs. Giles helping on occasions.

Mina Whybourne

Hon. Secretary



Above – Sorting the catch.

Left - Netting fish at Kurnell.

*Photos courtesy Daphne Salt – Kurnell,
Birthplace of Modern Australia pp79-80*

Treasurer's Report

Accumulated Funds 2000

2001

8,000.00	St George Fixed Term Acc 015-152-672	7,000.00
6,721.42	Commonwealth Bank Fixed Term Acc 2259-5009-3603	7,227.72
1,205.39	Commonwealth Bank Savings/Cheque Acc 0090-5269	2,301.10
<u>15,926.81</u>	Total	<u>16,528.82</u>
15,319.68	Period Asset Balance	15,926.81
607.13	Add Suplus from Revenue Account	767.47
	Less GST Liability	-165.46
<u>15,926.81</u>	TOTAL	<u>16,528.82</u>

Cash Book Balance As At 30-11-2001

Balance Bought Forward	1,205.39
Less Previously Unpresented Cheques	<u>0.00</u>
	1,205.39
Add Income	<u>14,035.11</u>
	15,240.50
Less expenditure	<u>12,939.40</u>
	<u>2,301.10</u>

Bank reconcilliation As At 30-11-2002

Bank balance as at 30-11-2001	8,561.12
Less Unpresented Cheques	
710515	92.42
900408	520.00
900409	3172.60
900410	2475.00
	Subtotal 6,260.02
Balance As Per Cash Book	<u>6260.02</u>
	<u>2,301.10</u>

GST Liability

GST Previous Year	-230.04
GST Collected for Period	1097.97
Less GST paid on goods	<u>989.34</u>
Liability to ATO	<u>108.58</u>
Since Paid	319.00
less Refunds	<u>275.00</u>
	<u>44.00</u>
Liability to ATO less balance of since paid & refunds.	64.58
	<u>-230.04</u>
	<u>-165.46</u>

M.J. Beaven

M.J. Beaven
Hon. Treasurer

Treasurer Page 2

Sutherland Shire Historical Society Revenue Account for the period ending November 2001

2000	Income	2001
2,116.00	Members Subscriptions	1,738.18
1,476.05	Donations/Grants	719.50
NIL	Sales	NIL
4.07	Interest Commonwealth Bank	10.44
356.11	Interest St George Bank Fixed Deposit	452.17
168.70	Interest Commonwealth Bank Fixed Deposit	506.30
6,840.00	Excursion Deposits	8,741.85
<u>10,960.93</u>		<u>12,168.44</u>
2000	Expenditure	2001
415.09	Bulletin Expenses	856.16
77.40	Australia Post PO Box	72.00
108.28	Postage/Phone Calls	10.09
500.00	Website Maintenance	480.00
64.00	Purchases	60.07
155.00	Miscellaneous	285.78
NIL	Subscription to R.A.H.S. etc.	110.00
286.42	Insurance R.A.H.S.	364.55
133.45	Suppers	117.33
651.00	Hall Rentals	546.00
310.00	Out of pocket Expenses Pres. Sec. Treas. Curator	NIL
32.86	FID GDT Operating Account Commonwealth Bank	31.49
NIL	FID St George Step-up Account	NIL
NIL	FID Commonwealth Bank Fixed Deposit	NIL
NIL	Account Keeping Fee St George Step-up Account	NIL
NIL	Donations	801.82
6,942.91	Excursion Payments	7,328.09
447.35	Museum	567.63
230.04	GST	-230.04
<u>10,353.80</u>	Expenses Total	<u>11,400.97</u>
607.13	Surplus/Deficiency for year transferred to Accum Funds	767.47
<u>10,960.93</u>		<u>12,168.44</u>

From The Editors Desk

Les Bursill

Editor

Sutherland Shire Historical Society Bulletin

Here it is February 2002, who would have believed a year can go so fast.

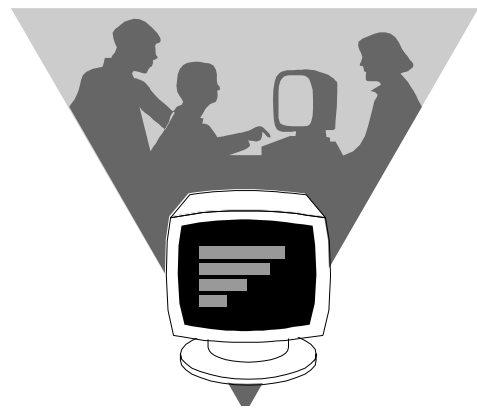
I also find it astounding that this is the 3rd year that I have been involved in the editing of our Bulletin. I believe that David Overett and I produced the February 2000 edition and I took over completely in the May 2000 issue.

That's eight issues of the Bulletin. Well I hope it's improving, I certainly believe that it is becoming a worthwhile contributor to the recording of our Shire's history.

In this issue we have contributions from the Sandy Point community courtesy of Louise Singleman, an article on "Schools of Art" in the Shire from Helen McDonald, a glimpse of activities in Bundeena by Miriam Verbeek, and of course our ever reliable book reviews by Ed Duyker and a review by Pauline Curby.

It is a wonderful thing that we have such talent at our disposal within the Shire and that those talented people are prepared to add to our Bulletin. Others, Daphne Salt and Pauline Curby, are also regular contributors and also offer our Society free lectures on the subjects they are interested in at times throughout the year. In the next three months I note that Daphne, Pauline and Ed are all presenting original material in and around the Shire.

It is important to remember, as so few of our Politicians do, happenings, outcomes, decisions and actions all become our history. What is done and said today is the history of tomorrow. An example of this is the recent fire storms around



Helensburgh, Waterfall, Heathcote, the Royal National Park, Engadine and Loftus. These fires were not a surprise to any of us with a reasonable history of Shire residence.

Since I came to the Shire to set up residence in early 1969 there have been at least four, even five, fires of the intensity of this last one. No surprise for those who remember the past. We spend millions of dollars when thousands of proactive and remedial dollars would have averted these catastrophic occurrences.

In the past (pre 69 anyway) I am led to believe that the fires were never of the intensity of these recent ones as people took care to prepare and keep properties clear of ground fuel and took time to hazard reduce. I am presently working on a paper comparing differences between areas where hazards were reduced and places where nature was allowed to flourish unchecked

Our recent treatment of refugees, our failure to secure the rights of our citizens overseas (on at least 3 occasions) our denial of human rights and our rebuttal of the UNHCR, the refusal of our Government to acknowledge the International Criminal Jurists claims made against us will all become grist for the mill of history. Perhaps our grandchildren will look with horror at the actions done by our politicians in the name of Australia (us).

It is journals like ours that record snippets of this history and become the source material in future history books. It is therefore crucial that we do have input from locals, especially those who have an ability to critically examine vents. I hope you all find time in the future to complete an article and offer it for publication.

Les Bursill Editor.

Annual Excursion Report for 2001

FEBRUARY: a trip visiting sites between Liverpool and Penrith, places the Society has not visited together, including the Olympic lakes specially prepared for the Games. After a luncheon in Penrith we visited the Fire Museum which is of special interest for us because for so many years we had Bush Fire Brigades in most Shire suburbs.

MAY: A return trip to Balmain. This early settled suburb has so much of interest to members of historical societies, a tour can be repeated every few years. We were fortunate to have a member of the Balmain Association as our guide and we saw other areas to those looked at previously,

AUGUST: To Windsor and Richmond areas; having fractured my wrist three days previously I was unable to be with you. Reports were that it was an excellent outing with a very close inspection of historic sites.

NOVEMBER: The Bathurst Week-end. Included an inspection of Hill End and Sofala on the Saturday. The facilities that are now available at Hill End makes this a place all folk should visit. We were taken on a tour of the town on arrival as they now have a purpose built Museum and facilities including luncheons. This was much appreciated. Following luncheon, the able bodied were able to "go down the mine", which was representing a typical gold mine.

On the way home we stopped in Sofala so we were able to look at this famous place too.

We are much indebted to our regular Coach Captain Terry, for being our guide for the February. August and November Tours -- his knowledge of the areas visited is supreme and it is because of his help our outings are so interesting. To have a driver like him makes us feel very safe on the road.

Terry. Thank you again -- that seems very little to say but I'm sure you know how much I appreciated all the advice and help you gave me on all our outings.

Thanks too are due to Mr. Ron Wood of Tiger Tours Coaches, for help and assistance at all times and a special thank you to Dennis Batchelor who attends to the costing of our outings. Thank you to the members of the Excursion Committee. without whom I could not be your Excursion Officer - Doug Archer. Doug and Betty Perry, Ishbell Caddell (who is my right hand on day of the outings) and again. Terry, as he is so important to the Committee.

Finally. thank you to the members who support the outings. and most importantly to Betty McGrath who takes those bookings for you.

EXCURSION REPORT 2002

There was no outing for February, some felt the heat of that month made it uncomfortable.

On 25th May we will be repeating a tour of Berrima; it is a long time since our Society visited and there are many places to see. Terry will drive around all the sites on arrival and then it is our plan to allow you time to visit any you wish to investigate.

Take your morning tea with you. We will be having the usual comfort stop at Mittagong -- you may take your luncheon with you or you may prefer to buy your luncheon in Berrima. There are so many cafes etc, there now and we thought you may prefer this.

After leaving Berrima we will go `cross country to Sutton Forest and return home through Moss Vale. Bowral etc. down the "New" Hume Highway and return via the "Old" Hume Highway."

The outing will be on Saturday May 25; cost will be \$29.00 for Members and \$34.00 for visitors. leaving Cronulla 8 a.m. and Sutherland 8.30 a.m. Plans for the rest of the year will be announced in the May Bulletin.

Aileen Griffiths OAM
Excursion officer

Museum Report

Allan McGrath – Museum Curator

The Museum continues to open on the first Saturday of the month from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the School of Arts, East Street, Sutherland.

Attendances have been rather disappointing - special openings may be arranged during the week by contacting the Curator, Allan McGrath, 9521 2227

On Australia Day, 2001, a Display of photographs of the Shire suburbs down the years was held in the Menai Market Place - this proved of great interest to those who passed by and many encouraging remarks made.

In Heritage Week, the Display in the Museum centred on the Centenary of Federation with appropriate flags and fascinating memorabilia, newspapers etc. from Federation Day 1901.

Over 1000 people attended the displays and commented on the excellence of the Exhibits.

Special thanks are due to Mr Jim Cutbush, Deputy Curator, for his assistance in arranging the displays for Australia Day and Heritage Week as well as to the many members who helped in setting up and being present to answer questions from interested viewers. Ms Helen McDonald from Local Studies at the Central Library is also very helpful in supplying relevant information when required.

We are hopeful that a new location may be found in the near future for the Museum as we have many interesting items in store which we are anxious to exhibit and prevented because of lack of space.

*Allan McGrath January 2002
Museum Curator*

Continued from P 1.

SANDY POINT SECRETS.

A HISTORY OF SANDY POINT.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

This book owes much to Colin Burns for taking the initiative to commence writing the History of Sandy Point and passing on his research to the Sandy Point Progress Association.

To the Sandy Point Progress Association's Secretaries both past and present for their extensive and accurate records which have proven a wealth of information.

To Hardy Jahnes for taking photographs of Sandy Point and the environs. To all residents past and present who have contributed to this publication by sharing their memoirs. To Sutherland Shire Council Library Local Studies Section. To Jean Perram for suggesting the Title "Sandy Point Secrets."

DEDICATION.

This book is dedicated to all Sandy Point residents past and present who have contributed to the "uniqueness" of this sylvan suburb and who have given freely of their time and energy to improve the facilities and lifestyle of the community.

FOREWARD.

It has been a privilege to continue writing the History of Sandy Point, which was so capably commenced by former resident, Colin Burns who left Sandy Point to take up residency in Gunnedah, a small country town north west of Sydney.

Colin's research on the early land grants to subdivision has proved invaluable in producing this document. Similarly, his liaising with the Sandy Point's Progress Association former Secretary of 40 years, Mr. Reg Nichols and access to the Association's records had added authenticity to this publication.

I trust that Colin will be pleased that finally his efforts have been continued to this point in time and hopefully others may continue to add to this

vital record of such a wonderful Sydney suburb- Sandy Point.

Sandy Point continues to be aptly coined as “unique” and truly so, for unlike other suburbs of Sydney it has no adjoining suburbs and it is bordered on three sides by water, the Georges River and Deadman’s Creek while the fourth boundary to the south is Crown Land.

The Georges River offers residents an aquatic playground as well as unsurpassed views from almost all of its waterfront properties while Deadman’s Creek proffers accessibility to the Georges River and a peaceful verdant outlook.

The uniqueness is also true of its topography ranging from gentle slopes to steep precipitous cliffs of Hawkesbury sandstone to low lying floodplains. Eucalypts and angophoras tower above the skyline interspersed with native wattles, bottlebrush, grevillea and banksias, a constant reminder to residents of its vulnerability to bushfires.

The diversity of its wildlife is evident with the sulphur-crested cockatoo dispelling the need for an alarm clock. The brush tailed possum and their friendly cousin the ring tail seek the haven of the Sandy Point bushland while venturing close to the homes at night in search of handouts.

No other suburb of the Sutherland Shire or in fact Sydney can boast the camaraderie among its residents as does Sandy Point and if for no other reason this does surely make Sandy Point unique. It is hoped that this publication will assist Sandy Point students when asked to research their local area and residents to realise the dedication and commitment the early pioneers contributed to making Sandy Point “the jewel in the crown”

CHAPTER 1.

AN ABORIGINAL REFLECTION.

The Dharawal Tribe also known as the Tharawal originally inhabited Sandy Point. They occupied a tract of land south of Botany Bay and the Georges River perhaps as far as Jervis Bay in the south and south west to Appin, Cordeaux and Cataract Water Catchment area. Dharawal territory possibly ran inland as far as Campbelltown and Camden. Where their country began and ended only the Tribal elders would have known but it seems certain the Dharawal

people occupied the area of Sandy Point and the Holsworthy Firing Range.



The people belonged to the land throughout which were sacred sites, rocks, caves, rock shelters ancient trees, and water-holes entwined with the Dreamtime. Living in complete harmony with the land the Dharawal people had a strong empathy with their

environment taking only what was needed for their survival. The land remained the same for countless generations.

The communal lifestyle of the tribe was governed by the Law which was administered and enforced by the elders who were custodians of the oral traditions which were handed down to the young men. Women’s business consisted of songs, stories and dances and ceremonies to maintain traditions. The education of the children included the ancient rules of the tribe and once puberty was reached the youths were initiated into adulthood.

An abundant food supply from the rivers, streams, creeks and swamps offered the Dharawal people a healthy lifestyle while large native animals such as the kangaroo and wallaby provided them with red meat. Emus, pigeons, ducks, pelicans added variety to an already diverse diet. Fruits and vegetable such as the figs, bush currants and lillipilli were plentiful.

The men hunted with spears and fished the rivers and creeks while the women collected nuts, yams and bulbs and made cakes and roasted the flower heads of the Banksia, Bottle Brush and Honeybush.

Warm cloaks worn in winter were fashioned from wallaby and possum skins decorated with parrot feathers and red ochre often adorned their bodies and the yellow crest of the white cockatoo decorated their beards.

Grease and red ochre gave the bodies of the women a glow and the incisor teeth of the kangaroo and the tails of the possum decorated

their hair. Both men and women considered raised cicatrices over the breast, arms and back an adornment.

The many examples of the red hand stencils in the rock shelters are evidence that the Dharawal people were in the area for many thousands of years. Forty thousand years – four hundred centuries and still the land remained the same.

A virtually free-from-disease, happy, healthy people possessing all that was needed, then came the “superior culture” of the white man. A people and a culture destroyed in one brief century.

Thorough in their genocide the white settlers took over the traditional lands of the original inhabitants. Not by violence but in an insidious manner of exposing the Dharawal people to European diseases such as small pox, diphtheria, measles and influenza to which they had no resistance. Gonorrhea and syphilis were responsible for thousands of deaths.

The demise of the Dharawal people was accelerated by the influenza epidemic of 1846 – 47 as well as the clearing and cultivation of the traditional tribal lands. Birds and animals were driven off as their habitat was stripped and the Dharawal people were unable to follow them beyond their tribal boundaries.

Now dependant upon the handouts from the white man's diet which consisted of flour, sugar and tea as well as tobacco and alcohol, this starchy, sugary diet devoid of proteins and vitamins had disastrous consequences. Obese, inactive, clothed in dirty cast off rags the Dharawal people stripped of their dignity were robbed of their traditional land and culture.

Four hundred centuries of tradition wiped out by one century of “civilisation.”

CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST EUROPEAN SITING OF SANDY POINT.

In the beginning of 1795, Captain Hunter sailed for the second time to New South Wales, to succeed Governor Arthur Phillip in the Government of the new colony.

Lieutenant Waterhouse was in command of “*H.M.S. Reliance*” to which Matthew Flinders was appointed as master's mate and sailed once again to the South Seas. He and George Bass, the ship's surgeon, discovered a common interest in exploration.

Mr. George Bass, surgeon of the “*Reliance*” wrote of Flinders later, “I had the happiness to find a man whose ardour for discovery was not to be repressed by any obstacle nor deterred by danger,” and they found that in New South Wales there was still plenty of room for discovery.

In the seven years since the foundation of the Colony little had been done to fill in the details of the Colony particularly along the coast. Botany Bay, Port Jackson and Broken Bay had been surveyed by Governor Hunter. Lieutenant Bowen had put in at Jervis Bay and Surveyor Grimes and Captain Broughton at Port Stephens.

But that was all, and even the coast between Botany Bay and Jervis Bay was known only by what Captain Cook had seen from the “*Endeavour*”

Less than two months after reaching Sydney Matthew Flinders and George Bass began, in a modest way, their exploring careers. Taking a young boy named Martin with them in a small boat the “*Tom Thumb*” which Bass had brought out from England, they sailed round to Botany Bay and explored the Georges River following its winding course for about twenty miles beyond the limit of Hunter's survey.

Flinders in his journal reported that the “*Tom Thumb*” had a keel of eight feet making the vessel approximately twelve foot in length, a very small craft for such a perilous voyage.

It has been said by some that Matthew Flinders referred, in his diary, to an area which was the only sandy point on the Georges River, between Tom Ugly's and Liverpool. However, the first official mention of the name “Sandy Point” was not until 1920.

The sketch made of the river and presented to the Governor with the favourable report of the land on its borders, induced His Excellency to examine them himself shortly afterwards; and was followed by establishing there a new branch of the colony under the name of “Bank's Town”.

CHAPTER 3

ORIGINAL LAND GRANT.

1821 – 1925.

In 1821 Governor Lachlan Macquarie promised John Alford a grant of 60 acres. This grant is described in the Government notices of 14th September 1831 (Fig 3:1) as being in the area of HOLDSWORTHY bounded on the south by a line west of ten chains, on the west by Deadman's Creek and on the north and east by Georges River. This promise was fulfilled and commenced on 1st January 1827. The Parish of Holdsworthy maps drawn by John Dixon 1827, (Fig 3:2) 1830 (Fig 3:3) and 1835 (Fig 3:4) all show J. Alford as the original grantee.

Subsequent maps, notably the "Wells" map of 1842 and the Parish map of Holdsworthy 1889 (Fig 3:6) all show J. Alford as the original grantee

John Alford was a transported convict who received a conditional pardon from Governor Macquarie in 1810, five years after his marriage to Jane Camm on 7th March, 1805 at St. Phillip's Church, Sydney.

During the period between his marriage and pardon, Alford was employed as a farm labourer by a successful merchant named Robert Campbell on his Canterbury Farm. Campbell only employed convicts and held a tight rein over them, even insisting that they attended regular Sunday Church Services along with his family.

Alford rose to the position of farm superintendent in 1809. This may have led to his pardon, after which he, his wife and their four children moved to Botany in 1810.

Alford's eldest child, Mary, was employed in 1818 by John Clegg as a domestic, in his inn the "Weaver's Arms" at Liverpool. She later married John Verge the architect who designed Denham Court and other notable buildings throughout the Colony.

By the time the grant commenced in 1827 John Alford was either dead or near the end of his life, as the census of 1828 shows his wife, Jane, as a farmer of 45 years on a block of 50 acres of which 8 acres were cleared and of those 6 were cultivated. Her farm was in the Parish of Holdsworthy, part of which now forms portion of the Sutherland Shire. It seems certain that her farm was that portion of land which was the

subject of the grant, the area now known as Sandy Point.

The grant, the answer to any ex-convict's dream on the surface, may have been a very difficult proposition and appeared short lived. Nearby Deadman's Creek was the only source of fresh water for irrigation and domestic use. Aboriginals would have been plentiful in the area and would have been an ever present threat, especially to a family without a father.

The portion did not prove to be a farmer's delight with poor soil and a proliferation of trees and stumps.

TRANSFER OF THE GRANT.

A further promise in December, 1821, by Governor Ralph Darling of the same area was made to Solomon Levey. It is unclear whether Jane Alford had been unable to fulfill the conditions of the grant or had decided that the work involved was too much for the family resulting in the transfer of the grant on 1st January, 1827. A copy of the title deed (Fig 3:5) dated 19th October 1831 granted the area to Solomon Levey with the condition that he pay 1 shilling yearly to His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors. It was not until 1905 that the name Solomon Levey appears as the "original" grantee on any parish maps.

Solomon Levey was the son of a respectable Jewish family in London until his involvement as an accessory to the theft of a large quantity of tea (90 pounds). Levey strongly denied this charge throughout his life, but was, however, sentenced to seven years transportation, arriving in Sydney on the ship "Marquis of Wellington" in early 1815.

Levey then commenced what was to prove a relatively short but highly successful career as a merchant in the new colony. He received an absolute pardon in 1819 and immediately wed the daughter of a rich emancipist, William Roberts. Unfortunately the marriage to Ann Roberts proved to be a failure, ending with her death in 1824 after a scandalous affair with the lover she ran away with and who then mistreated her.

However, the marriage did produce a son, John Levey Roberts and unfortunately a still-born daughter.

Levey prospered as a storekeeper; shipbroker and agent and by 1825 claimed a turnover of 60 000 pounds a year. He had a sealing interest, a base in Tahiti, imported island products in his own ships, owned a water-mill at Liverpool, a rope factory, grazing properties and land grants in the Counties of Argyle and Cumberland.

He became a proprietor of the Bank of N.S.W. In December, 1824, he joined other respectable citizens in a request to be admitted to jury duties. He was a generous supporter of benevolent and religious institutions and acted as a trustee for the Sydney Grammar Public School.

In June, 1825, Levey joined forces with a Daniel Cooper. As importers; exporters; wool buyers; ship owners and ship builders; shipping agents; whalers and sealers and with their general store at the Waterloo Warehouse in George St. Sydney they had a large share of the Colony's business. In 1818 Cooper and Levy were amongst the largest owners of stock. The partners later acquired, by grant or purchase, most of the land in Waterloo; Alexandria; Redfern; Randwick and Neutral Bay.

In 1826 Levey went to London to establish a buying office for Cooper and Levey. In London he chartered several ships to take his merchandise to Sydney.

Levey's rise to a position of power in the Colony led to the promises of substantial land grants. Levey also received another large grant of land quite close to that acquired from John Alford's widow.

Solomon Levey died on 10th October, 1833, in London after a short illness. Levey's will took more than ten years to liquidate and dispense his many real estate holdings – among them the area defined as Portion 17, Parish of Holsworthy, County of Cumberland i.e. Sandy Point.

His son John Levy Roberts, who lived a life of leisure in Paris, settled the affairs of the partnership with Daniel Cooper and the land known as Sandy Point became the property of Daniel Cooper (3rd owner) at least until his death in 1853.

Earlier, in 1842, another Daniel Cooper (a nephew of Levy's partner who later became Sir

Daniel Cooper) joined the London office of Cooper and Levy. (Sir) Daniel Cooper moved to Sydney in 1843 and was an immediate success in the mercantile world. He prospered in partnership with a James Holt and later his elder brother until in 1852 he was the sole owner of perhaps the Australian Colony's most extensive mercantile house.

After the death of his uncle, Daniel Cooper, in 1853, Sir Daniel Cooper acquired more wealth among it a piece of real estate in the Parish of Holsworthy (Sandy Point) becoming the 4th owner.

Sir Daniel Cooper returned to London in the 1860's and remained there, but retained close ties with the Colony, particularly business ties.

He held the land in company with others but it was considered of little significance and perhaps sold at the instigation of the buyers more than any real desire by the owners.

Sir Daniel Cooper retained possession of the land until 28th March, 1907, when it was sold to Lewis Daniel Bull. (5th Owner). Bull held the grant for only 4 years when it was sold to a man named Edward Porter (6th Owner) on 29th September, 1911. Porter made arrangements for the first subdivision of the property by the submission of an application dated 4th August, 1920.

While Porter owned the property at the time of the original subdivision, it was apparent that the new owners had some interest in the property noted by the entry on the Primary Application referring to an agreement between William Johnston, James Gibb and Henry James Mark.

Porter retained title to the land until 14th April, 1925 when it was sold to William David Johnston, a draftsman of Manly; James Gibb, a gentleman of Drummoyne and Joseph Leonard Bourne, a plumber of Rozelle. These three men became the 7th Owners of the land known as Sandy Point.

This story will continue in future issues.
Editor.

Schools of Art in the Sutherland Shire

By *Helen McDonald*

Local Studies Librarian, Sutherland Shire Libraries

In the early days of the Sutherland Shire when the population was smaller and clustered in close-knit communities, the School of Arts was an important focal point in the lives of the locals. There were many schools of art in the area serving several functions throughout the year, as a centre for public meetings, or as a venue for socials and card nights.

Sutherland, Miranda, Cronulla and Como, to name but a few local Schools of Art were set up by the early 1900s. Miranda, was one of the earliest, starting life in 1898. Originally located in a room of the Congregational Church, it moved to a location near The Boulevarde and Kiora Road where “five roads met midway between Sutherland and Cronulla”.

In 1904 the foundation stone of the Miranda School of Arts building was laid by the then premier of New South Wales, the Hon. J.H Carruthers. A line of flags was raised at the junction of the roads to celebrate the event.

At the time Miranda was described as mainly dairy, poultry farms and orchards and the laying of the foundation stone for the new school of arts was seen as “marking a great advance in the social and public life of the neighbourhood.” This sentiment would also be true when Schools of Arts in other parts of the Sutherland Shire were established.

Indeed the Miranda building was used for a very public function in 1906 when the Sutherland Shire was incorporated. Appointed members of the provisional council met for the very first time in the Miranda School of Arts at which time Clr Judd was elected chairman.

In 1920 consideration was given to moving the Miranda School of Arts to a site in Kiora Road, opposite the original Miranda Public School. The new building was completed in 1923 at a cost of 2000 to 3000 pounds. Sutherland School of Arts had also just been opened the year before (1922). It had at one time occupied a building in Linden Street, Sutherland (c.1890s) and at one time been located in Lobbs Hall.

Before a large audience the then Minister for Education, A Bruntnell assisted by the Minister for Justice, Thomas Ley officially opened the Sutherland School of Arts. It was built as a memorial to the men of “C” riding who had volunteered for the war. The speeches at the opening emphasised the memorial aspect of the hall and an honour roll made of panelled Queensland maple, bearing the names of men who had volunteered from “C” riding was unveiled. Como Schools of Arts was also opened in 1922 after lobbying and fund raising by the community in 1921. School of Arts’ building funds were commonly established with funds raised by the community by the organisation of activities such as competitions and gala days.

Schools of Art went on to serve the local community throughout the years, often used by local cultural groups such as amateur musical and dramatic societies. At one time the Miranda Branch Library occupied a room in the Miranda School of Arts in order to conduct a local library service. By 1913, Cronulla School of Arts was also offering an “up-to-date” library. In 1955 the Council opened a branch library service in the Cronulla School of Arts which remained in use until it was relocated to the old church site across the road. The Sutherland School of Arts featured a well appointed library, where the Minister at the opening suggested “much knowledge could be gained”. A librarian was paid from 1922 to look after the 400 plus books and in the 30s, more books were added to this popular service.

From the 1920’s billiards were very popular and Schools of Art buildings provided a venue for tournaments. There were regular tournaments in the Sutherland School of Arts right through to the 1940s. A member of the School of Arts, Les Manglesdorf of Cronulla was the state champion for both billiards and snooker. The world champion, Horace Lindum, played an exhibition at the School of Arts in 1944.

As well as cultural groups the Sutherland School of Arts was also used by local resident action groups to plan and organise civic events and improvements for the community. For example various patriotic meetings were held during the war years and meetings lobbying for the Sutherland Hospital were also held here.

All Shire Schools of Art were important institutions in the lives of the early residents, however as the Shire grew and other public and church halls were built the need for general purpose halls on the whole declined. Cronulla, Sutherland and Como School of Arts however, after a few years of uncertainty, are still going strong. The wooden building (constructed in 1907) which housed the original School of Arts at Cronulla has long since gone (1955) however the brick building which had originally served as the extension (completed 1913) continues to be used, although extensively modified. Cronulla Arts Theatre was the first permanent live theatre in the St George and Sutherland Shire. Their aim was to provide “cultivated theatre produced by craftsmen and presented by experience men and women” which continues to the present day.

Although the Sutherland School of Arts fell into disuse in the late 60s and early 70s, the Council took over and restored the building deciding to once again provide it for use by the community. When it was reopened in 1986, the original purpose of the building was “to be for the people”. That was re-established. It now most importantly provides a home for the Sutherland Shire Historical Society’s museum.

The original School of Arts at Como built in 1922 had to be demolished in 1992 due to white ant damage, however it was replaced by a new building in 1994. Renamed the Peisley Community Centre, it retained the name Como School of Arts on the facade of the building due to the insistence of the community. It is used today by local community groups such as the Como Learning Centre.

The local “School of Arts” has always played an important part in the history and development of the Sutherland Shire.

The Bundeena-Maianbar Heritage Walk: Exploring the past to understand today.

Miriam Verbeek

When I tell people my address is *Bundeena* they either say: “Where is that?” or “We used to go on holidays to Bundeena.”

Those who fall into the latter category will go on to reminisce about the shack their relative had on the beach and the days they spent in sun and sand, water and bush.

Sun and sand, water and bush are still the jewels of the area. If you go to Bundeena today you’ll be stunned by the lovely clearness of the sea, you’ll enjoy the clean, safe, sandy beaches, you’ll be charmed by the magnificent angophoras. And there’s still a little bit of a feel of a place where people go to get away from the city and just “be”.

Bundeena and its sister village Maianbar are on the southern shore of Port Hacking, south of Sydney and bordering Australia’s oldest national park, the Royal. I’ve lived in Bundeena for more than a decade. In that time, I’ve watched: modest fibro and weatherboard homes tumble to make way for larger modern homes; many potholed, unguttered streets realigned and kerbed; ancient trees emasculated or felled in the bid to remove their dangerous limbs; natural watercourses tamed by pipes; and more and more grass instead of bush.

I’ve also watched: our bushland being increasingly overtaken by lantana, green cestrum, morning glory and asparagus grass; erosion scaring foreshore areas; rubbish littering the ends of drains into Port Hacking and the Royal National Park. I’ve noted the bitter disputes between groups of people who think that “progress” is ensuring that Bundeena and Maianbar become just the same as any other Sydney suburb, and those who think that Bundeena and Maianbar should always be special.

But what is special about Bundeena and Maianbar? Some of us realised that we knew we liked to live where we do but we didn’t really know why. And not knowing “why” makes looking after it properly very difficult.

Every place has a story. The story provides the link between the past and the present and determines how we care for our surroundings. Many people who now live in Bundeena and Maianbar bring stories from other places. Like me, they are relatively new residents, or residents who might have owned property in the area for some time but have not lived as part of the community or derived their living in the area.

We bring stories and aspirations from other places and stamp the consequences of those realities onto the current landscape. Houses built as chalets suitable for climates with snow and not bushfire prone areas, gardens with lawn and neat flower beds unsuitable for sandy loam soils that hold little water, demands for kerbing and guttering that obliterate the historical, sometimes chaotic way transport routes worked for people who had no access to cars till the 1960s are all examples of the mixing of stories that have seen an old story dying and being replaced by another.

When the Federal Government offered funding for Federation Projects (under its Federation Fund Program) the local historical society: the Yarmouth Historical Society, decided to apply. We decided that it was time to reveal the story of Bundeena and Maianbar and tell it as widely as possible, to make people feel excited and proud to be part of the story and enthusiastic about keeping those essential elements that drew us all to live in this special place. We decided that exploring the past would be a good start to learning about today.

Our project is called the *Bundeena-Maianbar Heritage Walk*. The most visible element of the project is the self-guided walk which loops around and through the two villages and the national park, highlighting special bushland areas, heritage homes, special vistas and Aboriginal sites. Vandalism is a problem in the villages so we decided against information plaques and opted instead for modest markers identified by stick-on numbers and logos. Attractive information brochures are widely available from many retail outlets.

Less visible are the project's initiatives that target the rehabilitation of areas through Bushcare, and to greater cooperative efforts between National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS), Sutherland Shire Council (SSC) and the townspeople. The project is also aimed at revealing the wonderful knowledge of local people and out-of-town experts, cataloguing the knowledge and making it public in forms that will help people to understand the nature of the geography and natural surroundings, and who we, the residents and visitors of Bundeena and Maianbar, are. We are very explicit in acknowledging that who we are can only be told in the context of the people of the past who

helped form our environment, both Aboriginal and Post Settlement people.

The project is amazingly difficult! Difficult in ways that none of us foresaw. We are all volunteers and dedication to the task gets sandwiched between busy working lives, children and health issues. Keeping such a team together and focused has its challenges. More challenging though is the dead hand of bureaucracy that we must deal with. Both NPWS and SSC have shown welcome support for the project, but both are large bureaucracies with many agendas which easily divert them. More critically, the project covers the work of a number of departments, and cross-departmental works consistently cause anxiety for such organisations and inevitably push delay and frustration onto the project team.

How to work with the population of the villages has also been an instructive exercise. There is a joke amongst some members of the Bundeena and Maianbar community that people should not be allowed into the villages unless they have been granted a visa. Change and "outsiders" are viewed with suspicion. The Walk project has been criticised as bringing about both unwelcome "change" and "outsiders". The Walk is opening up publicly owned areas that private landholders have come to use as their own. The project team have contested developments that would compromise important characteristics. The challenge for the project team is how to deal with these issues without alienating residents and visitors. It has meant that the development of the Walk, its routing and its research has been over a much longer time-scale than originally planned!

The rewards of persistence, however, are beginning to be reaped. Our research has begun to unravel a story about our place. If you choose to do the Walk, you will discover a part of that story. We will invite you to stand on the headland at Bundeena Reserve and imagine how the Aboriginal People of the area, hundreds of years ago, would have done the same to watch out for the fish runs or other marine life to hunt. We tell you about plants and animal Aboriginals ate, how they lived, where they walked and what they did.

We tell you about the Bundeena volcano that exploded and cooked the sandstone at the time when dinosaurs dominated the Earth, about the

volcanic dykes that underpin the formation of features such Port Hacking and Spring Gully, and that link the Bundeena and Maianbar area with suburbs as far away as Kareela. We tell you about the rock that was quarried from Bundeena to make tram tracks in Sydney, about the ferry run, the pedestrian tracks used in “the olden days”, the colourful characters who made their mark in the villages, the growth of the shopping centre, the birds you might see and features on the horizon.

There was, some older residents told us, a dairy at Horderns Beach in Bundeena. Mr Bell owned the dairy. He used to let his cows roam all over the place. One of the early newsletters we turned up in our research complained that one night a person tripped over a cow which had strayed onto the Hill (as the headland on the west of Horderns Beach was called) and lain down across a pedestrian route.

We have a training film, made in WWI recording the rescue of men from a large Norfolk Palm that still stands on Bonnie Vale Beach today. In the background of the film we can see the old Simpson’s Hotel in its original form – not the large, rambling fibro building of today.

Ted, who lived in Bundeena when Bundeena was not yet, told us how his mother, sixty years or so years ago, managed to trick Council into building two sets of steps to give access to the Hill at both ends of the headland when Council had agreed to only one. Ted also told us about the chest that used to be near the ferry wharf with the slot cut at the top for people to drop coins in for charity. Children would stick chewing gum at the end of rods and fish the coins out.

Neil told us how, in a bid to save the giant angophoras that grace Bundeena Park, from bulldozes, locals surrounded them with cars. Captain Ryall, who ran the first ferry service from Cronulla to Bundeena, used to anchor off Gibbon Beach, row fishermen ashore and pick them up in the late afternoon. Bill pointed out where the old Bonnie Vale Dance Hall used to be. Only the steps remain among a tangle of lantana and wattle.

Over the months of this project, we have amassed a wealth of information. More than could be put into brochures. Rather than losing it to the space restrictions of brochures and books, we have started the construction of a

website (www.bundeenamaianbar.org.au). Our intent is to grow the website with contributions from school heritage projects, interested individuals and information accumulated by the committee. It will be possible for people to conduct a “virtual” Walk of the villages.

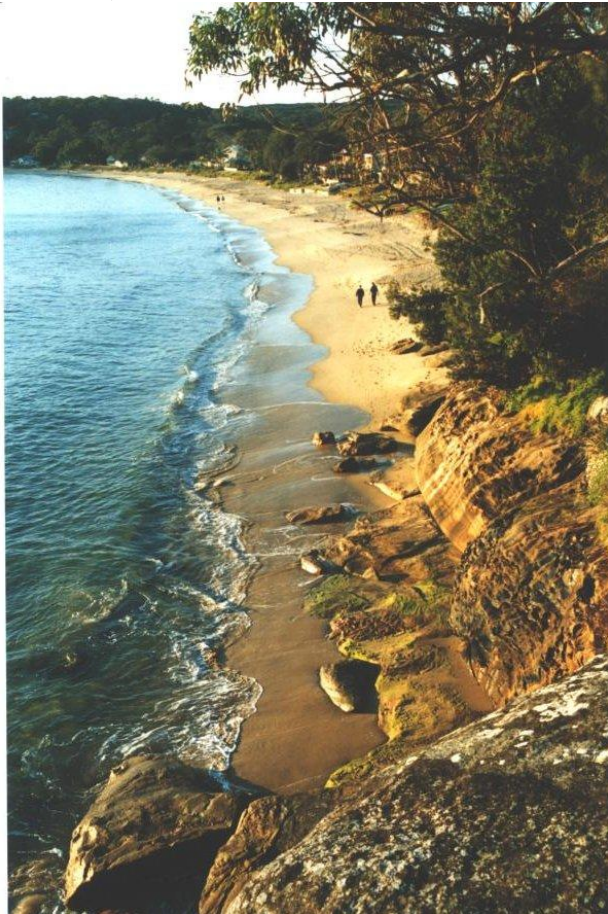
The project has been the catalyst for a number of activities. Bushcare groups have started or been revitalised in the villages and engage in the long process of reclaiming land overrun by weeds. People have also begun to view trees, rocks, houses, watercourses, and the like with another eye. These features of the land are beginning to have meaning – are beginning to have a story. The house, the tree the rock are not simply that – house, tree, rock. They are now – “that’s the house that old Tom used to live in and in 1992 he finally did what he’d been saying he wanted to do for years: paint “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” on the side of his garage”; or “that rock’s got Aboriginal axe grinding grooves on it”; or “that tree was planted in memory of Max”.

In putting together the Heritage Walk I am often reminded of the claim by Aboriginal people of their connection to the land. Their belonging to the land is in part their knowledge of its bounty and its limitations. Their knowledge is passed down from generation to generation in stories that are woven into myths and laws and art. I don’t think we should underestimate the importance of such a heritage to the Aboriginal people. I don’t think we should underestimate the importance of a similar need for ourselves. In new countries like Australia, in places with a population turnover and influx that characterises Bundeena and Maianbar, indeed the greater Sydney, such stories can mean the difference between retaining the special features of an area and facing degradation in attempts to remould a reluctant landscape to give effect to an inappropriate vision and set of values.

The Commonwealth Government’s Federation Fund initiative enabled a project we hope will make a significant difference to the maintenance of sustainable and sympathetic recreation, lifestyles and development in Bundeena and Maianbar. It is both a community building exercise and a rehabilitation exercise. It seeks to build community by connecting people with their place of living. It seeks to rehabilitate the area always that will increase our enjoyment at living here and welcoming others to come and visit.

*A selection of photos
showings points of interest
along the Heritage Walks
of Bundeena.*

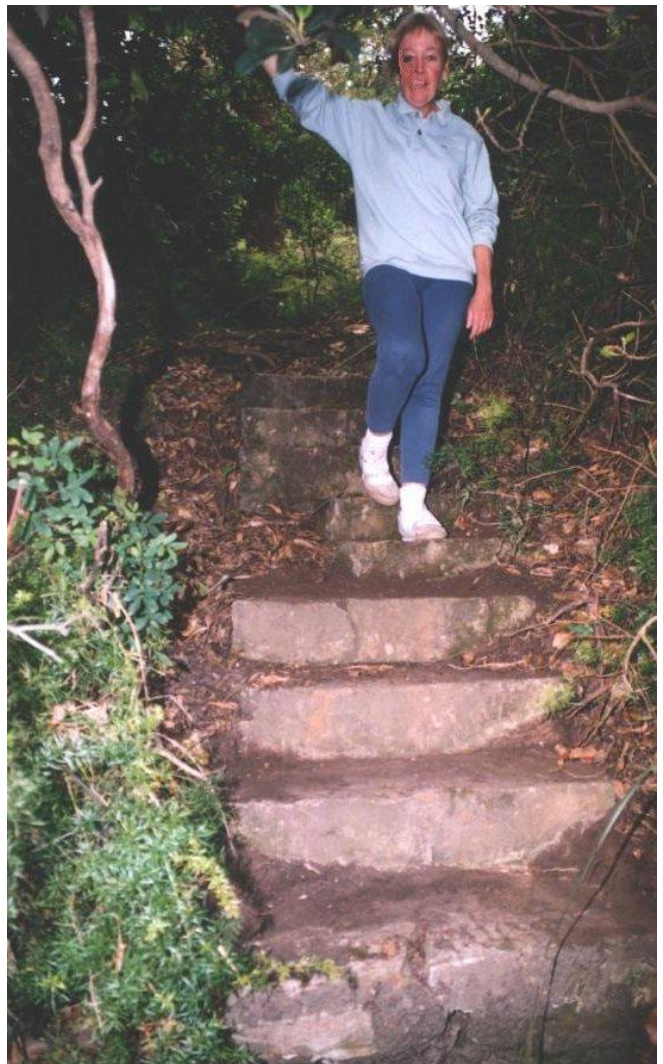
Below: A view of Horderns Beach Bundeena. It was near here that the first general store was opened by the Bell Family in the early 30's. (photo courtesy of A Carrick).



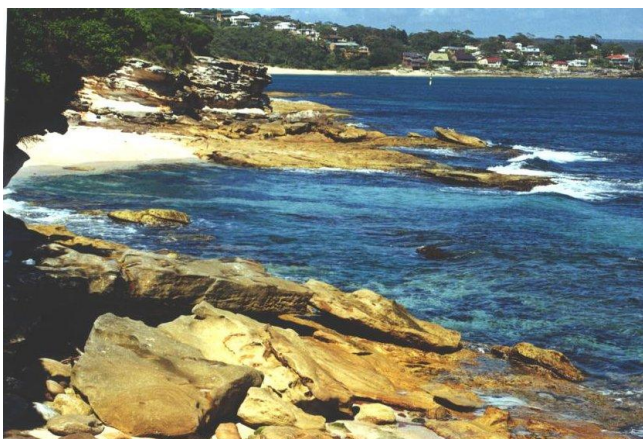
Below: members of the Heritage Walk Team installing an information pedestal on the "Bundeena Volcano"



Below: Helen Vogt descends the steps that are all that remains of "Bundeena Hall" (photo courtesy of A Carrick).



Below: The view from Cabbage Tree Point. This is a lookout point along the walk. This is the view looking back to Maianbar (photo A Carrick)



THE ORIGINS OF LOFTUS AND LOFTUS VILLAGE

Compiled by George Hutchinson & Marj Blackley

LOFTUS is named after Augustus William Frederick Spencer, Baron Loftus, who was governor of NSW from August 1879 to November 1885. The arrival of the new governor had coincided with the dedication of the National Park by the NSW Parliament in 1879, the second National Park to be dedicated in the world. As it was the custom in those imperial times for new places to be named after governors and others who held similar elevated positions, the most important central northern area in the new National Park was named "Loftus."

From the beginning Loftus was closely associated with the National Park. Loftus was the name applied to the whole general area of the park, extending from its present suburban location to what is now the Royal National Park railway station. Strange as it may seem, the present Royal National Park railway station was called Loftus station and the present Loftus railway station, then actually situated some short distance south of the present station, was known as Loftus Junction.

The present suburb of Loftus was originally part of the National Park which at that time extended north to Sutherland and west to the Woronora River. The railway line which was extended from Sutherland to Waterfall in 1886 (making this year Loftus railway station's centenary year) ran through the National Park.

Most of Loftus's early development took place on the eastern side of the railway line. By 1893 two thousand acres of land had been cleared and planted with grass and some exotic ornamental trees while only those native trees and shrubs that were considered to be of ornamental value were retained. This area extended from the present Royal National Park railway station to Sutherland. A highly regarded shady carriage drive was built to run through this area from Sutherland.

The early Loftus area was also closely associated with the NSW colony's military forces. Annual Easter encampments were held from 1886 to 1914. The first encampment in 1886 attracted thirty thousand visitors who came to picnic and be entertained by the military display - quite a feat when it is realised that Sydney's total population was little more than 300,000. On Easter Monday 1886 so many people wanted to travel to Loftus for the display, the railway department was forced to use some cattle trucks to cope with the overflow of passengers.

LOFTUS AS A SETTLEMENT TO 1945

We are fortunate in Loftus in that we have some senior people still living in Loftus who have been here since the beginning of the 20th century. As there seems little of this history recorded in any of the archives we have invited some of these early Loftus residents to tell us about Loftus in the 'good old days.'

Mrs. Foster came to Loftus when she was one year old in 1904. She has lived here for 82 years! She has a remarkable memory.

Mrs. Foster's father had a poultry run on 21-2 acres of what is now Orchid Street and National Avenue.

She attended school at Sutherland and walked to and fro each day. Sometimes she 'hitched' a ride on the horse bus travelling to its depot near the turn off to the National Park. The driver would never stop to pick them up or stop to let them down but they could hop on and off while it was travelling. In later years when she went to work she had to walk to Sutherland each day to catch the train - the 6.15 am from Loftus was too early and the 7.40 am too late. It was nearly always a run to Sutherland.

Her brothers, who were older than she, attended school at National Park. With the schoolmaster who lived in Loftus, they crossed the railway line over home-made steps then walked through the bush to a school fronting the water at National Park..

Delivery of goods was difficult. Delivery carts avoided the western side of the railway line - produce was left on the eastern side of the railway line and had to be collected and lifted

manually over the line to the farm. Bread was delivered twice a week.

The road to Loftus village from Sutherland ran parallel to the railway line roughly along the route of Loftus Avenue. It was constructed in 1910 at a cost of £20 (\$40).

There were no fears of robbery in those days - Mrs. Foster left the insurance money on the back door step with the book to be collected if they were away from home.

Loftus station was located in those days near the crossing - a politician, Jeffrey Dodd built a beautiful brick home where the BP garage now stands and was glad when the station was moved to its present site ~ not so the Fosters. This house became the property of the Gilham family who have a long history of enterprise and goodwill in this area.

Mrs. Foster was married in the Catholic church in Sutherland which was then located on the western side of the railway line.

Mr. Foster had purchased 16 acres of land around Logan Street for an orchard - he bought the land at auction and could not buy less than 16 acres.

Changed as she sees Loftus today with fast trains, convenient shops and good roads and footpaths, Mrs. Foster would rather have it as it was back in the 'good old days.'

Early residents in Loftus were the O'Sullivans and the Gerreds who were railway workers, Mr. Lobb the coachman, the Pearces who had the gate house and the McGraths who had the poultry run. Mrs. Foster was a Miss McGrath - her nephew and his family also still reside in Loftus.

The Gilham family managed the fibro plaster works which were on the Corner of Tenth and National Avenues. "Cracker night" at Gilhams, when all were invited, was a memorable night - no one seemed to want to go home.

For Mrs. Gilham it was not an unusual sight for her to see up to a dozen pairs of shoes on her verandah each morning. People traversing the

rough roads to the station would swap shoes to go to town. They would leave the old pair on Gilham's veranda and step into their bgood ones. They would of course retrieve the old ones on the way home.

Mrs. McLennan (sister of Mrs.. Gilham) came to live in a little weatherboard house in Loftus Avenue opposite the signal box -one of three little cottages. The rent was 5/- per week until the electricity was put on then it went up to 7/6d per week. These were hard times - there were a lot of shanty type dwellings around Loftus made from hessian and poles and corrugated iron.

Rumours still persist about residents who used to stand near the railway line enticing the drivers of the steam trains to shovel a bit of coal onto the side of the railway line to be taken home for the fireplace.

In 1937 Sutherland Shire Council proposed the establishment of a sanitary dump in Loftus. This, of course, was in the not-so-far distant times before, first the septic tank, and more recently sewerage, made Loftus an easier and more fragrant place in which to live. So it is understandable that the Loftus residents of 1937, few as they were, became alarmed at the prospect of having other peoples problems in the form of nightsoil (the official euphemism for human excrement) liberally distributed on their doorsteps. The result was the formation of the Loftus Progress Association to oppose this project. In the end Loftus Progress Association won and the project was stopped, but it is interesting to speculate on how different the development of Loftus might have been if Loftus residents had not organised, fought and won.

Following this success the Loftus Progress Association continued to work for the betterment of Loftus and its people until the outbreak of war in 1939 drastically changed the situation. The war took the majority of mature male residents into the armed services. This placed additional work and pressures on the women of Loftus and this, combined with the severe limitations imposed on local government works by the war economy, led to the Loftus Progress Association going into recess from December, 1941 until October, 1944.

THE POST WAR BOOM 1945-1965.

Soon after the war ended in 1945 Loftus became involved in Sydney's post war expansion. Large areas of formerly semi-rural Loftus land were subdivided into building blocks that were soon being sold for as much as £50 to a breathtaking £200 each a lot of money in those days. In no time the gullies around Loftus were echoing and Re-echoing hammer blows from daylight to dark, seven days a week, as the new residents, many of them owner-builders, moved in and erected their mostly timber framed houses.

Of course many friends and relatives of those new post war Loftus residents told them that they were crazy for moving into an area almost completely without any services or amenities and always vulnerable to the periodic bush fires of the time. And maybe they were right, for in the immediate period after the war Loftus had only one 'made' road, Loftus Avenue, which had an unsealed gravel surface that very often turned a car journey to Sutherland into a challenging, dusty, bone jarring expedition. In addition to this there were no shops, no schools, no sewerage, restricted mail deliveries, and for some no water (other than rain water) and no electricity. The railway station was built from sleepers and had oil lamps for lighting. However, despite all these disadvantages and the discouraging comments of others, people just kept on coming and Loftus grew and the new residents, mostly from the older better-endowed parental suburbs of Sydney, began to agitate for improvements and as a result the still young Loftus Progress Association entered a new phase.

THE LOFTUS PROGRESS ASSOCIATION CO-OPERATIVE LTD.

On the 18th December, 1947 the Loftus Progress Association Co-operative Ltd., was formed from the Loftus Progress Association. It became the first organisation of its kind in the Sutherland Shire - a community advancement organisation in the form of a registered cooperative society. The first chairman of directors was Mr. P. Wolfenden, and Messrs. J. Ferrett, G. Williams, P. Cusack, R. Orr, J. Cusack and J. Duggan were the first board members, with Mr. B. Assenheim as the first secretary. One of the top priorities of the new community organisation was the building of a Loftus Community Hall, but there were many other more pressing problems facing

the new organisation and it was not until 1953 that the Loftus Community Hall seemed more than a pleasant but remote possibility.

In April 1953 the Co-op board consisted of Chairman J. Back and directors Mrs. McAlister, R. Black, A. Suleau, J. Ferrett, J. Hutchings and J. Cusack with B. Assenheim as secretary. This board sought to raise the necessary money to buy suitably situated land and build the hall. Residents of Loftus were invited to take shares in the Co-op (£1 shares obtained through paying a 2/- deposit and paying off the balance at call) in order to finance the proposed hall project and to enable the Co-op to fund the work of its various committees: The Progress Committee (which functioned as the Progress Association); The Fire Prevention Committee (which functioned as the Bush Fire Brigade); The Editorial Committee (which produced the Co-op paper The Loftus Page; The Social Committee (which organised fund raising social events); The Tree Planting Committee (which planted much needed trees in Loftus streets and other public areas - Loftus was a much more treeless place in those days) and the Lending Library.

The result of all of this is that for Loftus the years 1953 to 1960 were an amazing whirl of community activity involving fetes, socials, tennis days, picture nights, raffles, drama nights, dances, cake stalls, balls and bottle collections as the Co-op struggled to raise funds to buy land and build the hall as well as finance the very necessary work of its committees much was achieved in those early years, 1953 was a good example. The Loftus school, long fought for by the Progress Committee.

It was opened at the beginning of the school year in 1953. In August 1953 Loftus Post Office was opened and the first telegram sent from there was sent to the local federal member, Mr. E. G. Whitlam thanking him for his help in obtaining the Post Office. On the 10th October, 1953 the first Loftus fete was opened by Mrs. Margaret Whitlam and £154.3.10 was raised - a considerable sum in those days - for local amenities.

Probably the most significant development in 1953 was the publication of the first edition of The Loftus Page in March of that year. The

Loftus Page was the journal of the Loftus Progress Association Co-operative Limited and its aim was stated to be:- "to bring to the attention of all the citizens of Loftus the objectives, activities and calls for assistance of the various community advancement organisations in the district."

As stated above the first issue of The Loftus Page was in March 1953 while the regretted final issue was in August 1960. This unique community monthly paper was written by volunteers, printed by volunteers and delivered to every home in Loftus by volunteers. The first issue consisted of only four pages but in its hey-day in 1958, it consisted of twenty pages. The 'Page' reported everything of interest that happened in Loftus for eight years, month by month, including reports from the various committees of the Co-op as well as births, deaths engagements, marriages and all of the various social activities and dates of meetings for the current month. To-day the few remaining copies of The Loftus Page exist as a valuable social document of historical significance for they reflect the lives of ordinary Australians in a turbulent decade of a rapidly expanding society. Copies of The Loftus Page are held by the Sutherland Shire Council Library.

THE COMMUNITY HALL STAGE1 1953 - 1960

From early 1953 The Loftus Page reveals a determination on the part of Loftus residents to build a Community Hall. It seemed that there was a great deal of hope and expectation that once The Hall was built life would be better in Loftus.

In March 1953, the Co-op Board started to negotiate with the Lands Department with the intention of obtaining a grant of land on which to build the hall. While these negotiations were proceeding estimates were obtained for the costs of the materials to build a hall with voluntary labour. Estimates were submitted for both a timber framed and a steel framed building -both estimates were close to £1000, a formidable sum to raise at that time for a small community of perhaps 500 residents, most of whom were financially and physically battling to build or complete their own homes. However, the Co-op Board initiated the Hall Building Fund and by

June 1953 £ 9.1.3d had been raised which quickly rose to a miraculous .£242.13.4d in August 1953.

In August, 1953 firstly the 'Co-op' Board, then all of Loftus was astounded and elated when a resident, Mr. W. Beard, offered the Co-op an interest-free loan of £1000 to build the hall. Mr. Beard's offer was gratefully accepted and this money became the substantial basis of the funds from which the land was purchased and the hall finally built. Sadly Mr. Beard died tragically before the hall was completed and the beneficiaries of his estate generously waived the loan to the benefit of the residents of Loftus.

In October, 1953 the Co-op Board applied to the Crown Lands Department for the land on which the old community hall now stands. After a seven months delay the Department advised the Co-op Board that the price of the two blocks of land required for the Hall would be £540 - something of a setback, for a free grant had been hoped for. However, despite this setback,, the Co-op Board accepted the Department's offer and in December, 1954 the purchase of the land was gazetted - the way was open for a hall to be built.

From December 1954 much work was done preparing possible plans for the Hall and investigating the suitability and availability of various building materials for the project. Sutherland Shire Council provided much helpful advice in many areas, and numerous residents who worked in the building, engineering and architectural industries freely gave their time and labour in preparing plans and specifications. Calls were also made for volunteers to ultimately build the hall. However despite all this effort progress was slow. The 'fifties' were a period of high inflation and material shortages and many problems faced the Co-op and so many months and then years slipped away before the Loftus Community Centre Hall was officially opened on the 14th November, 1959, by the man who most deserved to do so - Mr. Ben Assenheim, the Co-op's long-serving, incredibly hard working and generous secretary. Only those who were residents of Loftus at that time can realise the debt Loftus owes to Ben Assenheim.

The official opening of the hall was a great social event. The November 1959 Loftus Page announcing the opening said that the official opening would be followed by "An outdoor barbecue tea - chops, steak, sausages - all the food you need. Cups of tea available, Soft drinks for the kiddies. Bring the whole family for tea. Community singing and dancing in THE LOFTUS HALL afterwards." Life was much simpler in those days!

THE COMMUNITY HALL STAGE 2.

So Loftus residents ventured into the 1960's with their brand new Community Hall. What did they do with it? Well, one thing they didn't do with it was what had been proposed in October, 1956. In The Loftus Page of October 1956 exactly thirty years ago this month, the thirtieth anniversary of Australian television, it was suggested that as T.V. sets were so costly and obviously beyond the means of most Loftus residents, a community T.V. set be purchased and set up in the hall, when it was completed for the use of the community.

One thing that did happen however, was the Community Games Night which was held every Friday night for some years. Loftus residents of all ages attended to play table-tennis, carpet bowls and card games such as euchre. 'The~ were great nights of warm, simple pleasure.

Throughout the sixties and early seventies the Hall was fully used by Loftus residents and organisations but community events in the Hall, after the initial few years, were never quite achieved in the manner so long hoped for. Why? Well I suppose, everyone became independent and 'sophisticated!'

Or was it that once that great goal - the Community Hall was achieved, we all sat back and waited for the rest of it to happen. It never did. Maybe it was a mixture of all these things.

THE COMMUNITY HALL STAGE 3.

In the late 1960's and early 1970's the Loftus Community Hall moved into a new phase. The hall was in constant use but its size and facilities were becoming increasingly inadequate for the demands placed upon it. 'In June 1969, the "Co-op~' now a shadow of its former self, applied to the Sutherland Shire Council for

assistance to extend the Hall. In July 1969 Sutherland Council agreed to do this but for reasons unknown the extensions were not proceeded with.

In September 1972 Sutherland Shire Council proposed to resume the Hall. The Co-op lodged an unsuccessful objection in November 1972 and the Hall and its related assets were resumed by the council on the 23rd June, 1973. As a result the Co-op was put into liquidation and the liquidator subsequently submitted a claim for \$30,000 for compensation on behalf of the members of the Co-op.

In August 1974 Sutherland Shire Council forwarded \$30,000 to the Co-op liquidator. The problem then became one of determining how the money should be used. Meetings of Co-op members were held in February and May 1975. From these meetings a committee was set up to ensure that the money was used for the betterment of the Loftus Community. Subsequently this committee negotiated with Sutherland Council for the money, now \$32,923, to be deposited in the Council's Trust Fund and increased every year by an amount equivalent to the interest that would be earned from its investment. It was further agreed that the total funds would be used at a future date for either the renovation and expansion of the existing Community Hall or for the construction of a new Loftus Community Centre. This, of course', brings us almost to the present.

After 1975 meetings were held to involve the community in managing the hall but it was always difficult to come up with a sound proposition acceptable to residents, management and council. At this point some members o~ the Loftus Apex Club became interested in the hall, The Apex Club had become involved in building a hall near the existing hall for the Girl Guides.

Several members of the Apex Club joined the committee of the Loftus Community Hall after they attended a public meeting on the 18th November, 1980. Mr. Cliff Mason was elected chairman of the newly formed committee which was comprised of Apex members and members of the community interested in effective management of the Hall.

The inadequacies of the existing hall were apparent when the new committee circularised the whole of Loftus to find out what the hirers and residents wanted in the way of hall facilities. Results of this survey showed the people wanted a larger main hall, a fenced area, Change rooms, a better kitchen, better soundproofing, exterior beautification, a separate meeting room, a stage, storerooms and an entry foyer.

After consultation with Council Engineers and Councillors it was found to be an uneconomical proposition to refurbish the old hall. It was proposed that a better site for the hall would be in Loftus Avenue facing the railway line.

Mr. Jeff Farr, an architect and resident of Loftus had drawn plans for renovating the hall and then, inspired by the possibilities, he produced plans for a new building incorporating all the features which the survey showed. In addition his new plans included a sprung floor ideal for gymnastics, judo, dancing etc., a high ceiling for gymnastics, excellent natural lighting and an ideal area for child minding complete with fence and sandpit. All of this encompassed in an aesthetically pleasing building that blends perfectly with its typically Loftus setting including the drive past entrance and adequate parking area.

None of this achievement came easily. The earlier committees had worked hard to involve

Council and residents in renovating the original hall but it was not until 1980 when the present committee came into office that advances began to be made.

Persistence in the part of the President - Cliff Mason-over a period of three years finally brought a grant from the Department of Sports and Recreation, this with good management of the money invested with Council from the sale of the original building (this had now grown to \$84,000) and a very generous building grant from Council, culminated in the realisation of the Committee's dream and the dream of so many past committees – a superb community centre for the Loftus residents.

Looking back on the past thirty to forty years it is obvious that anything of value that was achieved in Loftus was done so through the co-operation and hard work of the residents of Loftus. Nothing was given to us. it all had to be fought for. There is a lesson there somewhere.

Well, now we have a new hall, a new community centre, and we have to face a new future to the rapidly-nearing end of this century and beyond. If we work together in that future and make this new Loftus Community Centre both a symbol and inspiration for what can be achieved, it is still not too late to make Loftus one of the most desirable suburbs of Sydney in which to live. That was one of the old aims. The rest is up to us.



Book Reviews

Editor Dr. Ed Duyker

Charles Dickens: Australian Connections

Edward Duyker

Most Australians will have read at least one of Charles Dickens' novels by the time they have left school. Henry Lawson discovered *The Old Curiosity Shop* at the School of Arts in Mudgee; in his poem 'With Dickens' he wrote:

'Some seek religion in their grief
And some for friendship yearn;
Some fly to liquor for relief,
But I to Dickens turn.
I find him ever fresh and new,
His lesson ever plain;
And every line that Dickens wrote
I've read and read again.'

Marcus Clark, Louis Stone, Henry Kingsley and Joseph Furphy were all steeped in Dickens' prose. William Wills, in his final journal entry before perishing with Robert O'Hara Burke in Central Australia in 1861, made reference to Dickens when he wrote: 'my legs and arms are nearly skin and bone. I can only look out, like Mr Micawber, 'for something to turn up'. In the nineteenth-century those Australians who read Dickens' books were just as likely to have enjoyed popular plays based on his novels. Similarly, this century, films based on Dickens' work have become classics in their own right. Who can forget the young John Howard Davies in David Lean's 1948 masterpiece *Oliver Twist* boldly asking, 'Please, sir, I want some more', or Ronald Colman as Sidney Carton about to meet the guillotine in *A Tale of Two Cities* (MGM, 1936)?

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born in Portsmouth on 7 February 1812, the son of a naval pay clerk. When he was twelve years old his father was imprisoned in London's Marshalsea Prison (later immortalised in *Little Dorrit*) for debt and he himself was put to work in a Hungerford factory packing shoe polish. He would later write of these five months of mind-numbing toil that 'no words can express the secret agony of my soul'. So painful were his memories that he could not bear to return to Hungerford until the old markets were demolished. Yet these bitter experiences enriched his art with a moral force which helped to change the world. We have only to use the word 'Dickensian' to provoke images of the industrial revolution, slums, pollution, poverty, injustice and alienation. In 1911, William Morris Hughes, soon to become Prime Minister of Australia, declared:

'Australia, no doubt, was leavened largely by men who knew and loved Dickens, men who imbibed his hatred of shams and humbugs of all sorts, and who wanted freer and better conditions - who wanted to help the poor to live in some other fashion than on the edge of destitution, and to have some other place to look than the workhouse. Dickens, in this way, did more than a little towards making Australian democracy what it is.'

At first destined for a legal career, Dickens began to publish unpaid stories under the nom de plume 'Boz' in popular magazines and journals. These were eventually collected in two volumes and published as *Sketches by 'Boz'* in 1836. *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club* followed in 1837 and was an international success. In Australia, Pickwick parties were even reported from far-flung Kangaroo Island and the book was pirated by Henry Dowling in

Launceston, Tasmania, in 1838. A copy of this pirated edition of the *Pickwick Papers*, the first of any Dickens novel, is held by the National Library and is described in some detail by John Ferguson in his *Bibliography of Australia*.

Most of the Dickens treasures in the National Library's Rare Book Collection are part of the Jamieson Collection presented by Dr Mildred Green of Melbourne, in 1970, from the library of her grandfather Dr James Jamieson. Among the Dickens works in the 360 volume Jamieson Collection are precious first editions of *Hard Times* (Bradbury & Evans, 1853) and *A Tale of Two Cities* (Chapman & Hall, 1859). There are also editions of *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Bleak House* which, if not first impressions, were released in the same year as the first editions. The two volume 1844 edition of *Martin Chuzzlewit* is noteworthy for its illustrations by 'Phiz' - Hablot Knight Browne (1815-1882) - arguably the most significant artistic interpreter of Dickens' characters. Another important Dickens first edition in the national collection, which was not originally part of Dr Jamieson's library, is *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. This unfinished, profoundly psychological, novel was published shortly after Dickens was laid to rest in Westminster Abbey in 1870. The great English novelist was only fifty-eight years old when he died of a stroke at his home at Gad's Hill near Chatham and *Edwin Drood's* mystery remains a mystery.

Had Dickens not died so young, it seems likely he would have visited Australia. Of his longing to do so, there is ample evidence. In 1850, depressed after the death of Robert Peel, he wrote: 'I think of flying to Australia and taking to the bush'. He had planned a lecture tour and a travel book on Australia. Having three times visited the United States, he was no stranger to long distance travel. Coral Lansbury has convincingly shown in her article 'Charles Dickens and his Australia' (*JRAHS*, 52, 1966), that Dickens had a protective (albeit racist) utopian vision for Australia. In the journal he edited, *Household Words*, he supported Caroline Chisholm's immigration scheme and Robert Torrens' reform of land conveyancing in South Australia. In his historical articles Dickens showed he admired John Macarthur and Lachlan Macquarie, and despised Samuel Marsden and

Governor William Bligh. Despite his humane compassion and progressive outlook he was vitriolic and bigoted in his attacks on the Chinese in an article entitled 'John Chinaman in Australia'. He was also naïve enough to support the introduction of rabbits and other exotic species suitable for 'acclimatisation'. All of Dickens' observations on Australia can be read at the National Library just as Dickens printed them, for here in Canberra we have complete holdings of his weekly *Household Words* and its successor (from 1859 onwards), *All the Year Round*. But rather than as a political journalist, we remember Dickens as an inventive literary genius and master of characterization. Pickwick, Fagin, Scrooge, Pip, Martin Chuzzlewit, and Little Nel, are the product of one man's awesome creative intellect and all have an enduring place in the popular imagination.

Significantly, a number of Dickens' characters have Australian connections. In *David Copperfield* (1850) Mr Littimer and Uriah Heep are transported as convicts to Australia; and Wilkins Micawber ultimately emigrates to 'Port Middlebay' (Melbourne) and becomes an affluent magistrate. In *Great Expectations* (1861) the convict Abel Magwitch redeems himself not only by raising sheep in New South Wales, but by secretly raising Pip as a gentlemen in England. (In the mid-1980s Magwitch's 'untold story' in Australia inspired rival scripts for an ABC mini-series and a court battle!)

To my mind, the most tantalising Australian Dickens connection is the possibility that Miss Havisham, the aging jilted bride in *Great Expectations*, may have been inspired by a real person. Coral Lansbury makes no mention of this in her study, but J. S. Ryan explored this possibility in a fascinating paper in *Australian Literary Studies* in December 1963. Eliza Emily Donnithorn (c.1826-1886) was to have married in 1856. When the groom failed to show on the appointed morning, she appears to have suffered a nervous breakdown. Not only was the wedding breakfast left to moulder away in a long dining room, but for the next thirty years Eliza never left her home, 'Cambridge Hall' in Sydney's King Street Newtown, and only ever admitted her physician, solicitor and local minister. Donnithorn's thwarted nuptials took place five years before the publication of *Great*

Expectations in 1861, so there was certainly time for Dickens to learn of her eccentric behaviour - if not to savour her full tragedy. (She outlived Dickens by sixteen years and is buried with her father in St Stephen's Churchyard, Camperdown.)

Two of Dickens' sons emigrated to Australia. Both arrived after the publication of *Great Expectations* - so they could not have sown the seeds of Havisham's character by sending details of Eliza Donnithorn's story. Alfred Dickens, who arrived in 1865, became a stock and station agent in Hamilton, Victoria, then moved to Melbourne in 1882. He died in the United States in 1912. Dickens' youngest son, Edward, arrived in 1869 and settled in Wilcannia which he represented as an MLA between 1889-94. He died in Moree in 1902. The National Library holds a number of documents relating to Edward Dickens among the papers of the journalist and author W. Farmer Whyte (1877-1958).

The National Library is also rich in critical studies associated with Charles Dickens' work and in published collections of his correspondence and miscellaneous writings. These include *The Letters of Charles Dickens* edited by the novelist's sister-in-law Georgina Howarth and his eldest daughter Mary, published in two volumes (1880); the three volume collection of letters edited by Walter Dexter in the 'Nonesuch Dickens' edition of the *Collected Works* (1938) held in the Rare Book Collection; *The Speeches of Charles Dickens*, edited by K. J. Fielding (1960); and *The Uncollected Writings of Charles Dickens: Household Words 1850-1859*, edited with an introduction and notes by Harry Stone (1968). In addition, the National Library holds microfilm copies of original correspondence between Dickens and his sister-in-law and his publishers Bradbury and Evans [Mfm G659]. There are also several editions of his friend John Forster's three volume biography, *The Life of Charles Dickens* (1872-4), together with acclaimed and more detached modern biographies by Jack Lindsay (1950), Edgar Johnson (1953) and most recently Peter Ackroyd (1990).

This article was first published as 'What the Dickens?', in the *National Library of Australia News*, vol. VII, no. 5, February 1997, pp. 6-8.

Book Review by Pauline Curby

Faye M. Young, *Building Strong Traditions, a History of the Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club, 1908-1957*,

Fox-Young Consultancy, Sylvania, 2000.

Faye Young's *Building Strong Traditions, a History of the Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club, 1908-1957* is a very readable and well-researched history of the first fifty years of Cronulla's oldest surf club. This is no mere 'club' history but a story, set in the context of the growth and development of Cronulla and Sutherland Shire over a 50-year period, that should appeal to all those interested in the history of surf life saving in Australia. Throughout this work there are references to the wider development of surf life saving and to the role that the Cronulla club played in the Surf Life Saving Association.

The story begins with introductory remarks on Cronulla's early history; tells of the formation of the club in January 1908 and traces its struggle to establish a viable organisation. An important drama of these early years (played out on many of Sydney's beaches) was the club's efforts to win the 'hearts and minds' of local government officials. Members needed to prove that they could offer a reliable service to the public, and this earned the club the right to occupy part of the public space of the beach.

During the years of the Great War as many of its members enlisted for military service, the club almost completely collapsed. It was firmly re-established in the 1920s, and this re-birth was followed by the 'golden years' of the 1930s. The impact of World War II on the club and on the beach itself is described and Faye Young completes her story by telling of the club's resurgence in the 1950s.

There is a brief reference to tensions, already evident in the 1950s, between the 'disciplined' surf club members and the more hedonistic board riders. The full impact of this would be felt

on the beaches in the 1960s. This is another story, however, outside the scope of this book.

Well written and referenced with endnotes this history is also indexed. Extensive use has been made of a wide range of primary as well as secondary sources. The appendices unobtrusively provide information that all old 'clubbies' love, such as lists of club champions, executive members and such. Judicious use of oral history and a selection of well-chosen illustrations enhance the story. I particularly liked the cartoons on pages 15 and 60, from the *St George Call* and the *Daily Telegraph* respectively.

Amongst the wealth of detail (that incidentally never becomes bogged down) are several aspects of the club's history that takes the reader to the world beyond drills, march pasts and rescues. One of these is the account of the crowning of Phyllis Stroud as surf queen in 1927. This event, a memorable spectacle, was significant, not just as a hospital fundraiser but also for the role of the Council (Shire president, Joe Monro, in particular) in promoting Cronulla as a tourist destination (pp. 36-38). The role of Cronulla club members in establishing an AIF surf club in Palestine during World War II is another of those unexpected details that add to the interest of the book. (Surf carnivals were held in Palestine during these years and servicemen were trained and examined for their bronze medallion.)

While the overall tone of the book is positive towards surf life saving, Faye Young does not skirt round one of the less creditable aspects of the movement - the exclusion of women from full club membership. She tells of their relegation to a 'supportive role as organisers of social events and as fundraisers' (p. 47). Particularly sad is the story of the 'Ladies' Surf Club', an enthusiastic group of young women, who applied to Sutherland Shire Council to be allowed to patrol the new rock pool built in 1932 at Cronulla. When the opinion of Cronulla and North Cronulla Surf Life Saving Clubs was sought, the Council was informed that the women were not 'capable' of undertaking this task. Young comments that 'no offer was made to train the women so that they would be capable'. It is poignantly noted that an unhelpful communication to the Council from the

Women's Christian Temperance Union of NSW probably also contributed to the decision to reject the 'Ladies' Surf Club's' proposal.

One very small part of the work that could be criticised is the reference to the lifting of regulations that forbade bathing (swimming) in daylight hours (p. 9). Perhaps it should be noted that restrictions on daylight bathing in the 19th century did not apply to Cronulla. As an unincorporated area there was no local government body to make by-laws restricting hours of bathing. Neither did any part of the district that became Sutherland Shire in 1906, as far as I know, come under the Towns Police Act that also restricted hours of bathing. Further research is needed to ascertain if the Police Offences Act of 1901 (that restated the old regulations) was enforced at Cronulla. In addition, as the result of my research into the history of Manly, I can categorically state that William Gocher had no role in the lifting of these bans.¹

There are a few other minor quibbles such as the frequent use of the term 'social space' (with reference to the beach), suggesting the book's genesis as a thesis, but a little grating in a work of this nature. In addition, although the claim that this club 'lacked evidence of divisions of class, race or religion' (p. 75) may be true, perhaps it should also be noted that, according to old timers, North Cronulla Life Saving Surf Club had a working class membership while Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club tended to attract a more 'silvertail' membership.

But this is only the carping of a hardened old cynic. *Building Strong Traditions* is a fine work of which the author can justifiably be proud. If Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club wants to complete the story, from the late 1950s to the present day, to celebrate its centenary in 2008 they would be well advised to ask Faye Young to undertake the task. Here is a historian well qualified to write the complete history of the club.

Pauline Curby

¹ This yarn, one of Sydney's favourite urban myths, repeated in most books on beach culture, will be formerly laid to rest in my forthcoming history of Manly.

Anthony J. Brown, *Ill-starred Captains: Flinders and Baudin, Crawford House, Adelaide, 2000, \$49.95 (including GST), Hardback, 34 colour and 24 b&w illustrations, 13 charts, pp.512 pages, notes, appendices, index, ISBN 1 86333 192 1.*

Reviewed by Edward Duyker

This is an unusual historical work in that it weaves accounts of two major voyages of exploration on the Australian coast into one coherent narrative. In his preface Anthony Brown informs his readers that the inspiration for this approach came from Penelope Lively's complex novel *City of the Mind*. It is a brave historical approach, but Brown succeeds in his endeavour. The result is an engrossing work, which recounts and analyses the achievements of the British explorer Matthew Flinders and his French rival Nicolas-Thomas Baudin. Although Flinders' cartographic achievements were greater, Baudin made important contributions on the south-east coast of Van Diemen's Land and on the Western Australian coast. Both expeditions were launched during a time of global conflict and both sailed with safe conducts from each other's governments respecting their peaceful scientific efforts. Both expeditions made important botanical and zoological collections, and priceless ethnographic observations. They met twice, the first time at Encounter Bay on the South Australian coast in April 1802 and the second time at Port Jackson later in the same year.

Mauritius, then the Isle de France, also figures prominently in the narrative. Baudin, whose lungs were eaten away by what was almost certainly tuberculosis, died a painful death on the island in September 1803. He was on the homeward leg of his voyage. The ships under his command were brimming with scientific riches. While others might have gained posthumous glory, Baudin gained ignominy. His great misfortune was to die before his expedition returned to France and thus before he had an

opportunity to do battle with his detractors. The zoologist François Péron, who chronicled the achievements of the expedition soon after its return, despised its leader and vented outright calumny against him. As is so often the case, these distortions and lies found their way into later biographies and studies. Baudin was in fact a cultured man with a passion for botany. His personal library on the *Géographe* (exclusive of official geographical and scientific tomes supplied by the government) amounted to some 1200 volumes. Anthony Brown, like Frank Horner before him, has helped vindicate Baudin without glossing over his faults and weaknesses.

There is no doubt that Baudin's earlier sojourn in Mauritius was also fateful. The difficulties he encountered there altered the entire course of the voyage. There were many defections from the expedition on the island. Because the island was isolated from sources of supply in the middle of the Indian Ocean and its men were waging a corsair war against British shipping to sustain themselves, Baudin had to compete for meagre victuals and limited manpower. His delay in Mauritius meant that he eventually reached the coast of Australia in winter - when heavy seas made effective hydrographic and scientific work difficult. Baudin decided to postpone further surveying of the Tasmanian and south coast, and sail north. If he had not done so, he would have pre-empted Flinders.

Flinders, in turn, would also suffer in Mauritius: detained there for some six years after the collapse of the Peace of Amiens. It is easy to sympathize with him: in French hands, separated from his family and delayed in publishing the results of his discoveries. Nevertheless, there was a war on.

French prisoners-of-war, held on stinking hulks in the Thames estuary, incarcerated in steamy Calcutta or even on parole in Lichfield and Salisbury did not enjoy the kind of privileges Flinders enjoyed. (I must admit a personal bias: my own great-great-great-grandfather, a French naval officer repatriated to Mauritius as a prisoner of war by the British on 9 December 1809, was one of the very prisoners finally exchanged for Flinders.) Brown aptly quotes Professor Ernest Scott who in 1914 wrote:

‘with agreeable society, amid sympathetic friends, in a charming situation, well and profitably employed upon his own work, Flinders spent over five years of his captivity. He never ceased to chafe under the restraint, and to move every available influence to secure his liberty, but it cannot be said that the chains were oppressively heavy.

The position of the French colonists on Mauritius was precarious, indeed ultimately hopeless. Furthermore, the island’s governor, Captain-General Decaen (who was only 34 years old in 1803), had a lot to lose in terms of his own prestige and career by allowing a security risk such as a skilled British cartographer to leave the island. In addition Flinders needlessly aggravated Decaen with his haughty manner and refusal to accept a dinner invitation shortly after his arrest. While military intelligence may have been a low priority for Flinders, his formal instructions (and the despatches he carried) ultimately betrayed him when they were read by the French. Decaen, it must be said, was guilty of a similar breach of Baudin’s expedition’s passport when he substituted the hydrographer Pierre Faure with his brother-in-law Barois and sent him back to France with secret dispatches. The stakes were high and few military commanders would have acted differently to Decaen - including reviewing intelligence, such as that gathered by Péron, to destroy British bases like Port Jackson. Even an honorable man such as Flinders broke his parole after his release by Decaen and briefed Admiral Bertie, in detail, on the island’s defences. We still do not know if Decaen finally released Flinders because he had seen the writing on the wall, as far as French control of the island was concerned, and was thinking of his own fate in British hands. Like the Mauritian historian Huguette Ly-Tio-Fane Pineo, Brown seems to think this was the case. There is a certain irony that Decaen and Flinders came to share what Brown calls a ‘not dissimilar fate’ on a small island in the middle of the Indian Ocean. Indeed it was Flinders himself who observed that Decaen

‘saw his former companions becoming counts, dukes and marshals of the Empire, whilst he remained an untitled general of division; he and his officers, one of them told me, felt themselves little better circumstanced than myself –

prisoners in an almost forgotten speck of the globe with their promotions suspended’.

In August 1810 the French defeated the British at the Battle of Grand Port - the only naval victory commemorated by Napoleon on the Arc de Triomphe. However, when the British came again, in December 1810, they came with seventy ships and ten thousand men. Mauritius fell.

One of the great strengths of Anthony Brown’s book is the manner in which he has reviewed and utilized important research by a number of recent scholars including Frank Horner (on Baudin in Australian waters) and Huguette Ly-Tio-Fane Pineo (on Flinders in Mauritius). The result is an admirably balanced and informed account. Not only is this book well-researched and well-written, it also bears the mark of a particularly mature and sensitive historian.

This review was first published in the Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society, volume 87, part 2, December 2001.

Libby Robin, The Flight of the Emu: A Hundred Years of Australian Ornithology 1901-2001, Melbourne University Press, 2001, \$69.95, HB pp. xi, + 492, 255 x 184mm, colour and b & w illustrations, appendices, notes, bibliography & index, ISBN: 0-522-84987-3.

Reviewed by Edward Duyker

The Flight of the Emu takes its name from Emu, the journal of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists’ Union, now Birds Australia. In this impressive book Libby Robin gives her readers a richly rendered history of ornithology in Australia during the twentieth century. All over the continent, ornithologists have collected and identified hundreds of bird species during the past century. While amateurs can make remarkable discoveries, they are not always

equipped with the taxonomic and other skills to publish their findings according to internationally accepted scientific standards. The quality of reportage in the *Emu* inevitably became a source of tension between amateur and professional ornithologists. Robin discusses these tensions and also those that arose with politicians and vested interests when the RAOU became involved in conservation and environmental management issues, bird protection and anti-smuggling campaigns.

While the pages of the *Emu* are clearly a rich documentary source for this book, Robin has also surveyed private correspondence, archives and oral history to provide her readers with a balanced account of both amateur and professional ornithology in this country. There are marvelous vignettes of the lives of individuals such as Gregory Mathews (1876-1949), Tom Iredale (1880-1972), H. L. White (1860-1927), A. H. Chisholm (1890-1977), Norman Wettenhall (1915-2000), 'Jock' Marshall (1911-1967), Dom Serventy (1904-1988) John Calaby (1922-1998) and many others. Robin takes us on the search for the 'night parrot', and the 'noisy scrub-bird': both feared extinct, but saved through the impassioned efforts of ornithologists. She examines the history of Australian attitudes to iconic birds such as the emu and the lyrebird. And she goes beyond the work of the RAOU to explore the heritage of ornithological research undertaken by museums, universities, government departments and the CSIRO, as well as small community groups and clubs. Robin's account also covers bird-banding and data-collection by the community at large and Australia's international ornithological links through expeditions and congresses. I found the account of the International Ornithological Congress in 1974 particularly interesting. Some 800 scientists, from all over the world, descended on Canberra in the midst of a transport strike and in the wake of arguments about which official languages should be used. Jean Dorst, the Congress president, favoured only French, English and German and objected to the use of Japanese and Indonesian (and presumably Russian and Spanish). To add to the woes of the Australian organizers, blockage of supply in the Senate the following year impeded

publication of the Congress papers!

This is yet another beautifully produced Melbourne University Press book. Robin has clearly mined both the pictorial collections of Birds Australia and other major institutions, but also the private albums of many others, including her own. The results are decidedly engaging. Residents of Sutherland Shire will find a number of interesting local historical connections in this book. There are, for example, numerous exquisite colour reproductions of the work of Cronulla resident Neville W. Cayley (1886-1950) among its pages (plates 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15). These are drawn from *Emu* nos. 21, 23, 24, 33, 35. Cayley's remarkable book *What Bird is That?* (1931) is still in print and I was particularly interested to read of the artist's role in furthering the career of the writer, scientist and one-armed soldier Jock Marshall (p. 186). The book also includes a photograph by Keith Alfred Hindwood (1904-1971) of North Cronulla Beach patrolled by enthusiastic ornithologists (p. 296). Robin informs her readers that: 'The Cronulla group in New South Wales, under the leadership of Keith Hindwood, was responsible for picking up many of the birds banded by Dom Serventy in the Bass Strait islands from the 1940s to the 1960s; they were paid a small amount by the CSIRO for the service'. Finally, *The Flight of the Emu* contains some very useful biographical and bibliographical appendices compiled by Rosanne Walker. These include entries for Neville W. Cayley and his father Neville Henry Pennington Cayley (1853-1903).

