



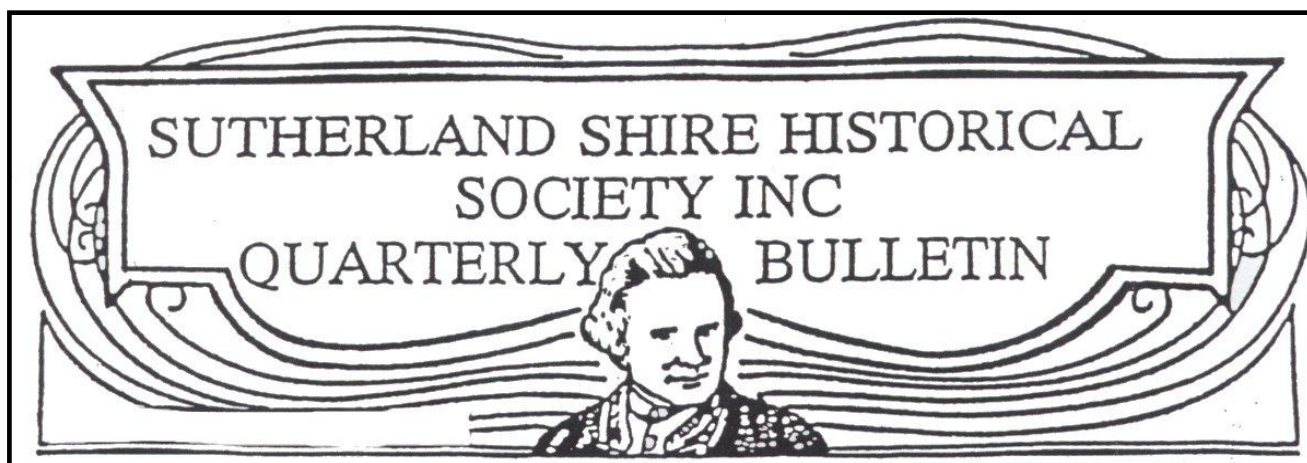
"Boys Town" first Established at Loftus Oval Circa 1940!



This photograph was taken by my father Wallace Bursill when he was a boy of 16 years. The year was 1940. At that time he was living in South Hurstville and had heard about the establishment of Boys Town and came out to Loftus to see for himself.

My father tells me that as a young man he held a rather romantic view of such establishments drawn from the many American movies being made at that time with a theme about bad boys and their eventual redemption in movies like "Boys Town" (Spencer Tracy). *Cont. P. 7*

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SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Bulletin copies are supplied to all branches of the Shire Library; to the Mayor, General Manager and all councillors; the Royal Australian Historical Society; National Trust (NSW); State Library, NSW; National Library, Canberra; University of Sydney and UNSW; State Rail Authority; Australia Post Archives; Sydney Water Board Historical Research Unit.

Bulletin Extracts: Editorial material may be reprinted in other publications provided that acknowledgement is made both to the author and the Society's magazine. Copyright is retained by the author.

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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

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be addressed to*

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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.

President's Remarks

Executive Council Recently our Executive Council has overcome several internal wrangles, but it has been beneficial. A third of the executive resigned, including myself, but are now re-instated. It is understandable that when one has many individuals who care deeply about history and its reporting, one will get differences of opinion. The important outcome is to respect one another's opinions, and to recognize that this is a very healthy process, providing the outcome will advance our Historical Society and its aims. It is rewarding to see this occur with a positive outcome and I am proud of our members and their ability to conquer these challenges,--and still remain friends! I am also grateful to those members who were mediators. Well done, every one! Now let's get on with the job of promoting and advancing our Historical Society!

New Museum Once again the possibility of getting our own Museum has raised its head. Sutherland Shire council have steadfastly continued to support our bid for a new Museum, and now the Kirrawee Chamber of Commerce have asked us to consider being involved in the Brickpit site. We have participated in their Kirrawee Living Centres Forum, and these deliberations are still in the exploratory stages. Several members of the Executive Council have attended meetings to put our point of view, and state our requirements. Be assured that if there is any possibility of obtaining our very own Museum, I will be there to advocate our cause!

Menai Public School Centenary We are aware that this actually occurred in May, 2002 but the School itself has chosen to celebrate it during Education Week. We are indebted to Helen Mc Donald, Local Studies Librarian, for providing a display on the History of Menai at the Menai Library, from our photographs from the Fred Midgley Collection, our former archivist. This display will run from the 1st

August, 2002 until the end of Education Week in September, 2002. Menai Public School Centenary History Competition Les Bursill, our Newsletter Editor and Archivist and I attended a meeting with the Principal, Mr. Chris Peoples, to discuss the running of a History Competition for their Years 5&6 pupils. We will award prizes as follows: 1st \$75, 2nd \$50, 3rd \$25 and perhaps if we get any Highly Commended entries, we will give them a year's free membership to the Society. All award winners will be published in the Bulletin. Entries must be on an two x A4 sheets, and can be part of an illustrated entry with photos on a large sheet of cartridge paper. Mr. Cliff Emerson, retired Asst. Principal of Engadine P.S. has offered to be the judge, with final decisions by historian Dr. Ed Duyker. The topics can be: (1) history of any pupil attending Menai Public School before 1950, and (2) history of any landmark or building in the Menai district.

Heritage Committee Les Bursill and I are members of this council Committee and it gives us great delight to know that after serialising the histories of Sandy Point, Oyster Bay and Engadine these histories have now been authorised to proceed to print, or indeed have now been printed. Our thanks to all those who contributed and gave permission for us to print the fore-runner. We like to think that by doing this we have created a market for the purchase of the books, whetting your appetite to obtain your very own copy.

Gweagal Spears taken by Cook, April, 1770 I received a 'phone call from Wendy Frew, journalist on the Sydney Morning Herald, asking if she could do a story on the spears. I gave her all the information, and the offer of a photo, but heard nothing more, and I don't believe it went to print, so I gather "it didn't get a guernsey". Wendy was keen to try again to get them back for our Gweagal people, but obviously we have stern opposition in some rank of government, as no one is willing to assist us. The only good thing about it is that the spears are being conserved well, so may last another couple of hundred years before we get them back. I suppose that I may be one of the only people in Sutherland Shire to have actually held them in my hands, an honour I

would dearly have loved to bestow on our Gweagal elders!

Wollongong Teachers' College Fortieth Anniversary The Wollongong Teachers' College, no longer functioning, being subsumed by the Wollongong University some time ago, would have celebrated its fortieth anniversary this year. Students who attended in 1962-1963 are invited to call me: 9543-1060 as we are arranging an anniversary weekend from 5th-7th October, 2002. My husband Cliff was First President of the Trainee Teachers' Association, and first vice-President of the SRC. I was their first library assistant, later became a librarian. A dinner on the Saturday night, Remembrance Church Service on Sunday morning for staff and students who have passed away, morning tea and Nostalgia Stroll through the grounds, followed by lunch at the University Cafe have all been organised.-

- All we need is students and staff to contact us. A special issue of "Grano Salis" our College Newspaper is to be published with the assistance of Les Bursill, - -so we need stories sent to Les or me for printing-- we stop short of libel!

Les on Pez What a great talk Les gave us on Pez containers. This was real education, as NO ONE in the room had EVER heard of them before. If you weren't there --you missed a great talk.

Dawn Emerson

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

Meetings and Speakers, 2002

Fri. 16th August, 2002 : Daphne Salt: Cook: His childhood and his youth.

Fri. 20th September, 2002: History of Botany Bay National Park (Geoff Ross, NP&WS).

Fri. 18th October, 2002 Edgar Penzig: Colonial women and their weapons.

Fri. 1st November, 2002 Christmas Lunch at Loftus Tafe: 12 for 12.30 \$25ph Only ten places left!! Book with Mina NOW!!! Contact M. Whybourne 9525 4339.

Fri. 15th November, 2002: Decision needed whether to have meeting as usual, as it is so close to the lunch outing.

Fri. 20th December, 2002: Decision needed whether to have meeting as usual, as we are unable to have a concert due to insurance problems.

Fri. 17th January, 2002: Members' Night-- volunteers required.

Fri. 21st February, 2002: Brian Madden (Canterbury Hist Soc.) on his book "Hernia Bay" (copies available)

From The Editors Desk

Each quarter as I complete the Bulletin I wonder what I am going to write as an Editorial. I am always on the lookout for something informative or educational

In this quarters editorial I would like to talk about being Aboriginal. I was aware, as a child, that some of my relatives were dark skinned, it did not occur to me that they were otherwise different from everyone else.

One of my relatives was particularly dark skinned and when I enquired (as a child) why that was so, I was told that he was very sun tanned. That was good enough for me and I didn't query that response until I was told in 1978 that my family was descended from Aboriginal people in Kangaroo Valley.

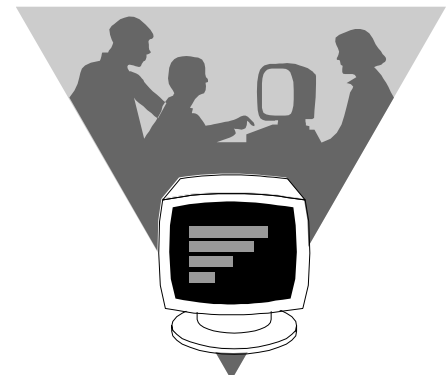
These days I believe that being Aboriginal has far more to do with how you see the world rather than how the world sees you. Skin colour is a very poor way to define anyone.

Now all of this brings me to the next problem. Once you are identified as an "Aboriginal" it is assumed that you know everything there is to know about being Aboriginal.

Well just like the rest of the world Aboriginal people have to study and learn about their culture. Many Aboriginal people are regularly asked to tell about the significance of events or the meanings of activities or happenings.

Sometimes the answers they give are more about being seen as ignorant of the issue rather than an accurate version. In a society (European) where a university level education is limited to about 6 people in a hundred, in Aboriginal society the level is 6 in a thousand.

But even then, education in one field, say teaching, vary rarely equips the person to be an expert in their own culture, they are probably just reasonable expert in their chosen field.



To be an expert in anything one must undergo education focused entirely upon that area. Lets say that to be an expert on Aboriginal people of Sydney one must have spent substantial time (years) just studying that segment of the Aboriginal community.

So being Aboriginal and knowing about the events surrounding Captain Cook's arrival would be a very rare dual occurrence. I believe it would be the equivalent of being American and having a detailed knowledge of the 1860-65 war, or being English and Knowing about the maneuvers of Napoleon and Wellington at Waterloo.

So the next time you ask an Aboriginal person to tell you about their culture or some significant event think, can I tell them about the Eureka stockade or the Gold Fields at Gympie or perhaps Australia's involvement in the Great War.

If you wish to know something about Aboriginal people of the Sydney Basin, particularly the local community of Tharawal speaking clans, I would be most happy to oblige. You see I am one of those very rare people who have spent the last 17 years studying this community and actually physically going out from my desk and into the environment to see and touch the rocks.

Les Bursill Editor.

EXCURSION REPORT

All arrangements have been completed for the week-end tour on the week-end of Friday November 29. Saturday November 30, and Sunday December 1, 2002; leaving Cronulla at 8 a.m., Sutherland 8.30 a.m.

We are to travel to Nowra on Princes Highway, turning from there on "The old wool road" to our luncheon stop at the well known Nerriga Pub. (officially the Bark Tree Hotel) for a country cooked two course dinner and viewing of their museum.

Leaving there, Terry will be taking us to our evening destination at the Post House Motor Inn, 1 lagoon Street, Goulburn. via what he calls the back roads; we will have dinner, bed and breakfast at this City venue.

After breakfast on Saturday we will visit Crookwel, followed by Taralga before returning to Goulburn -- these are places that the Society has not previously visited as a group and will be of much interest to our people. If time permits, Terry could add another surprise too!!!

Sunday morning we hope we may be able to see the church and also the Memorial at the Police Academy, before going on to the Bungonia look Out.

Then we intend to travel through Tallong, Wingello, Penrose, Bundanoon, Exeter, to Sutton Forest where those who were disappointed at not visiting the Scottish and Re-cycling shops on the trip to Berrima recently, will have time to "look";

then we will continue to Moss Vale R.S.L. for luncheon.

From there Terry will decide whether to return via Macquarie Pass or the Expressway, home.

The cost of the Week-end is \$299.00 for members and \$304.00 for Visitors and includes Coach travel, Saturday Luncheon, Dinner, Bed and breakfast for two nights in Goulburn and any entrance fees we may be asked to pay.

As always, please let us have an envelope containing a list of any medications you may be taking, and your Doctors name and telephone number; seal the envelope and it will only be passed on should it (unfortunately) be required. Otherwise it will be returned when you leave the coach on arrival home. This is a most necessary part of travel. (This was once used and we trust will not be again.)

Also, please let us have an up-date of Next of Kin on a separate card -- I carry this information all the time and Terry has access to it too.

Please come and join with us on this very special week-end.

Aileen Griffiths, O.A.M.

EXCURSION OFFICER.

Bookings: - Betty McGrath - 141 Loftus Ave., Loftus. (9521-2227)

Information: Aileen Griffiths - (9523-5801)

“Boys Town” At Loftus Circa 1940

Photos like the one on our cover are a very important and significant means of realizing History. We are often confronted with potted versions of historical events.

Experts tell us what “really” happened. People who write history often make their own history. It is their view that becomes the event rather than the event itself.

Photo evidence is one way of confirming or sometimes denying what is written. Evidence quite often shows us the reality of the event.

ROME – **Fact vs Subjective Selected memory:** As an example of this we could take note of recent archaeological evidence that tells us that Rome, far from being the rich and elegant place as it is presented, by people like Julius Caesar, Mark Antony, Cicero or Crassus, was really a place of poverty and struggle.

Evidence shows us that the population of Rome circa 50 BCE was 40% slaves; and that the common people struggled just to get enough to eat.

One very interesting fact came to light, that pasta and sauces, so much presented as Italian/Roman food, was not really available in Rome until well into the 15th century AD. Tomatoes, the basis of many sauces being a product of South America and were not introduced till that time.

After I had been given the front page photo I was very interested to see an excerpt of the Boys Town story that was featured briefly on the Foxtel History Channel in late July.

The 5 minute news item from late 1940’s gave me an insight to the nature of Boys Town and indeed I was able to identify one of the figures that are visible in the original photograph.

Unfortunately the reproduction of our print is not of sufficient quality to allow us to see those figures at the right of the front page picture.

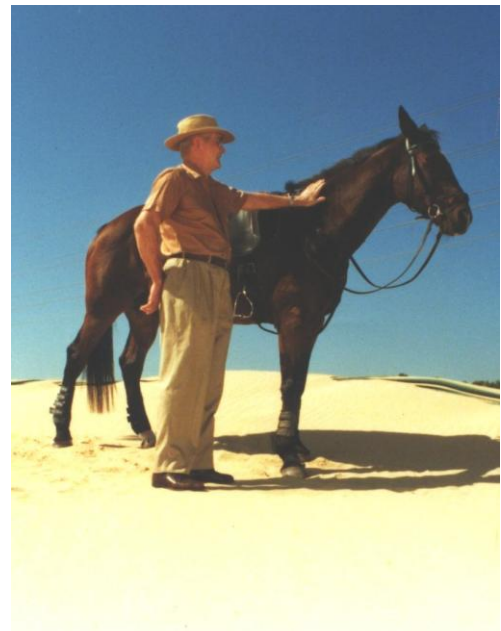
Originally I had believed that the figure may have been that of Father Dunlea, but scrutiny of the film on Foxtel revealed that it was one of Father Dunlea’s acolytes rather than the Father himself.

I was also able to identify 3 boys peering out of the tents and discovered my fathers bicycle laying in the long grass at the feet of the figure in the foreground.

Grays Point History

During the last Society Executive meeting a letter was passed to me from our Secretary Mina. The letter was from the Grays Point Progress Association. They were enquiring about information on Grays Point and were asking if we could offer any support.

Contact was made with Bill Barton of Grays Point and after some discussion further contact was made with Grays Point Primary school. Headmistress and with the Librarian at the school.



Edward Lawes in a re-staging of 40,000 Horsemen.

It emerged that the School was preparing for it’s 50th Anniversary. Helen McDonald, Bill Barton, the Headmistress, the Librarian and myself met at the school and devised a plan for developing

a 50th anniversary project supplement for the school and also to commence collecting historical material for the Grays Point Association.

Since that meeting Beryl Tope, a local writer and Historian has agreed to develop a history of Grays point. Beryl along with myself and Bill Barton have interviewed a number of long standing residents of Grays Point.

Those interviews have been collected as video clips and some of the clips will appear in the School Anniversary project.

Two of the most notable interviews were with Harvey Nation who has lived and worked in Grays Point for more than 50 years, and Edward Lawes who has lived in Grays Point for 82 years.

Harvey told us of the shark attack in Mansion Bay in 1927 (*ex Bream Bay*) Harvey also told us of the visit of another large shark some years later.

Edward Lawes told us about the school at Audley and how it was moved to National Park Station. He also told us how the wooden building eventually ended up at Sutherland High School.

Mr Lawes appears in the school records as being the first child to be punished at the Audley school (loud talking 2 hours detention).

He also told us about appearing in Charles Chavell's 40,000 Horsement in 1939 at the Cronulla Sands Hills (now the Cronulla Sand Hole). Edward gave us a photo of himself in a re-staging of the event for the Leader Newspaper some years ago.

Edward told us how he and his two brothers rode as extras in the original movie. He also went on to tell us some fascinating stories about early Grays Point and told us of the hardship poverty and struggles of the early residents.

He told us about the struggle to get the water connected to Grays Point and about some of the characters of those days.



One of the characters of Grays point – Harry Batterham – cheekily divining for water at the Point.



PIONEER GUIDE

By Merle Kavanagh

Sutherland Shire can be justifiably proud of Ada Swatridge, a woman who, through church and Girl Guides, devoted her life to the children of this area, fostering their faith and encouraging their confidence and citizenship in many ways.

Her grandfather, Edward (Ned) Scribbins left his native Wales in the last decade of the 19th Century and settled at Miranda where he operated a poultry farm on The Boulevarde near Sylvania Road. This little village would come to be well known for the many poultry farms in the area. He must have written home to Wales telling them of his good life in Australia and perhaps encouraging his daughter,

Mary to make the long sea journey out, as Mary and George Swattridge arrived in 1918 with their family of four children, George, Bill, May and Ada. Ned had already built a house for them further up the rise and the family settled into their modest home. Ada Swattridge, the youngest child, was eight years old when she arrived, having been born in 1910. In the first few years she would lose her father (1919) and her newly found grandfather Ned (1920).

When a Girl Guide company was formed at Sutherland and the first meeting was held in the old St. John's church hall in Boyle Street, Sutherland, Ada was there. The move to open a company was initiated by a teacher on the staff of Sutherland Public School, Miss L. Porter, who had previously been a Commissioner in the Blue Mountains.

A news item appeared in a local paper on 2nd April 1927 seeking girls of eleven years of age or over to become Guides and two older girls to train as "officers". The appeal of Guiding to the girl of that period was very strong. Guiding was camping, and hiking and cooking outdoors. It was learning knots and laying trails. It was making a promise to do your best and doing things that were different and fun!

The Guide company finally opened on 21 November 1927 with Helen (Bonnie) McGregor-Robertson as leader. She lived with her mother at "Struan" on the Boulevarde at Miranda. Her father had been Major James McGregor-Robertson of the Rhodesian Field Forces who came from Perthshire, Scotland and he, too, ran a poultry farm until he died in 1916.

The week after the first meeting of the Guides the Patrol Leaders were chosen – girls who would be in charge of the groups called patrols comprising up to eight girls. Ada was chosen as the Patrol Leader of the Blue Wren Patrol. It was the beginning of her life's great adventure. She had found her niche.

1st Sutherland Guides went hiking and swimming and held a display of woodcraft, tents, camp cooking and other equipment at St. John's hall. On 26th April 1928 the Guides were enrolled and made their Guide Promise to Miss Dorothy Jones, Captain of 1st Mortdale Guides. Ada was the second Guide to make her Promise in the first Guide company in the Sutherland Shire. Wen (Peg) Fenton, another Patrol Leader, was the first to do so. Ada had also made and iced a celebration cake for the occasion with a

silk Union Jack in the centre. It was cut and eaten with relish!

With their seconds (assistants), the four Patrol Leaders attended trainings at the Guide Headquarters in Sydney. But with the illness and subsequent death of her mother, Bonnie McGregor-Robertson had to resign and the company had its final meeting on 28th July 1928. The Guides had continued to function prior to this date with some adult supervision and one of these people was Mrs. Shaw, wife of the Rev. A. Rutherford Shaw, father of Seymour Shaw who was elected President of Sutherland Shire Council nine times and was a member of Council for 26 years.

The keen Guides, including Ada, were able to attend Mortdale company until it, too, closed and then the Patrol Leaders carried it on for a while. During the Easter holidays of 1929 the Guides went to camp, although out of uniform. They had acquired ridge tents but no tent poles. However the camp was to be held on the property of the Swattridge family so the sons of that family were able to prepare rustic poles from the thinner boughs and trunks of the bush trees on their land. When special occasions occurred in the shire, the Guides were there and during 1929 and 1930, other camps were held at National Park, Thirroul and Miranda.

Ada worked with 2nd Hurstville as a lieutenant (2nd in Charge) in 1930 and then attended Leaders' Training Classes at Headquarters. In 1932 at the age of 21 she formed the 1st Miranda Guide Company, registered on 12 July that year and this company is still operating. Ada tackled this new challenge with keenness and a sense of fun. She had a strong Christian background, her family being active members of St. Luke's C. of E. at Miranda. Late in the following year, 1933, her mother died at the age of 59 and two years later her brother Bill died aged 32.

1st Miranda Guides began with two girls and gradually grew. Meetings were held at the rear of the fruit shop on the west side of Kiora Road, Miranda, between the lane and the Kingsway. The Guides later met in the Methodist Church grounds, sheltering in the small room at the rear when it rained. The Guides were encouraged to help with war work during World War II and some older Guides were Despatch Riders who rode pushbikes to carry messages between the Air Raid Wardens' posts.

In the late 1940s Ada worked with 1st Cronulla Brownies and eventually she opened 1st Miranda Brownies in 1950. At that time the Guides met at the R.S.L. and in a different period they used the double garage of Mr. R.L. Stevenson who was Rates Recovery Clerk at Sutherland Shire Council. There was one time when meetings were held by the side of the road leading to Yowie Bay and “if it rained, all scattered helter-skelter to the nearest tree”.

Ada continued with her leadership of both the Guide and Brownie companies at Miranda and in 1957 she received from the Chief Guide, Lady Baden-Powell, a Certificate of Appreciation for 20 years continuous service in uniform. Two years later in 1959 she received the Award of the Oak Leaf for distinguished service in a local area and was the first Guide Leader in N.S.W. to receive this Award. On 8th October 1965 Matron Bonfield of Sutherland Hospital, who was a Guide Commissioner at the time, presented

Ada with an Award for 35 years’ continuous service to Guiding, making her at that time one of only three people in Australia to hold such an Award.

But Guiding was not her only association with children. For many years Ada taught a Sunday School class at St. Lukes when it was held in a small room at the rear of the first church. She was a great example to the children, encouraging them to sing and have fun, but also to do the right thing, to help others and to have faith.

Ada always had a smile for everyone and was very fair, especially to those who had transgressed in any way. She was a fine example of a leader, not only to the many Guides and Brownies of the Miranda district but also to their parents and the community. She has left a legacy of commitment, challenge and service in the hearts of many of these children to whom she gave her time and her life.

SCHOOL OF ARTS

By
Merle Kavanagh

A hundred years ago you were a simple little room,

A place to meet and talk, perhaps to read
Of milking cows and fresh-laid eggs, of market
doom and gloom,
Of orchards and the price of poultry feed.

Your book collection grew in time, though
shelves weren’t choc-a-bloc,
Your borrowers could burn their midnight oil,
And though the service varied, it was not “around
the clock”,
But no one minded – they were men of toil.

And if a stray musician passed and chanced to
give a show,
A politician with a pretty speech,
You’d open doors and borrow chairs as **everyone**
would go,
What didn’t entertain perhaps might teach.

You blossomed in the twenties, billiard tables
were the draw,
Though pubs were not deserted in the rush,
And local stage shows kept the ladies coming
through the door,
But dramas that would never make them blush!

Then movies broke upon the scene and some of
you kowtowed,

The locals loved the “flickers” on the wall
But in the forties when the air raid sirens
screamed aloud,

In blackouts movie-goers left the hall.
Despite the movie inroads, still you
catered for us all,

And concerts, parties, socials, fetes and shows
Were held whenever needed in your large or
smaller hall, You filled a need as everybody
knows.

Girl Guides and Scouts held socials under strict
security
And many bonds were made in “Spin the Plate”,
Within your halls I’m sure that others met their
spouse to be
At dances or at meetings – it was fate!

The passing years revealed the changing face of
Monarchy,
As kings have come then vanished from your
walls,
We’ve watched the queen mature and it is now
her Jubilee,
Will Charlie hang in your historic halls?

Though some of you remain in use, restored to
former glory
Theatre here, a Museum there, in town.
Still one I heard was knocked down and is buried,
goes the story,
Beside a monumental Shoppingtown!!

R.I.P

Menai Public School

100 Years of History

SCHOOL AND THE GOLDEN RULE,

Miss Clara Agnes Huggart was the school mistress at Menai Public School from June 1918 to March 1928, following the departure of her predecessor Miss Gillespie. She resided in Sutherland between Linden and Vermont Streets in Grande Parade, where she travelled to and from Menai each day in her horse and sulky, although for some time during the years of her teaching she lived in the school where she had a bed.

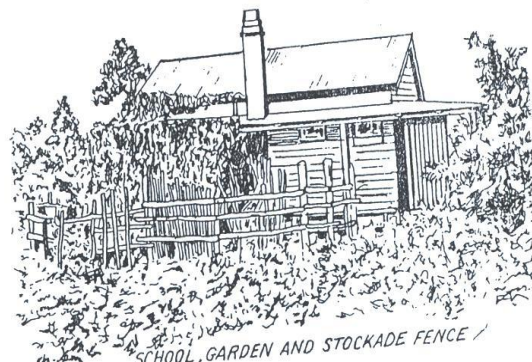
Born in 1869, she was an average-built woman about 5 foot 8 (170cm) inches and wore spectacles. She had a reputation for being strict while lessons were in progress. this being appreciated by the headmaster of Sutherland School who would comment on the high standard-of the pupils who came from Menai.

Miss Huggart took her pupils on nature study outings, including Mill Creek. Sometimes she would take them to Shelly Beach Cronulla travelling from Sutherland by steam tram. She also encouraged gardening, getting the children to erect a "stockade" fence around the area near the school building.

Sometimes straying horses would knock the saplings off the stockade and then they would enjoy a meal of fresh vegetables.

In those days the one-room school building had two small windows facing Old Illawarra Road. On one occasion when attempting to punish a pupil he fled out of her presence scaling the wall and climbing through one of the windows to escape, much to the amazement of the other pupils who could not understand how the culprit squeezed through the narrow opening.

During the time of Miss Huggart the children spent lunch times playing "Jacks" on the school



veranda, several young hands getting splinters from the hardwood flooring.

Another popular game was "Buttons"* The winner of this game was the one who could throw their number of buttons the farthest. Mrs. Davis would remind her daughters they were not to touch any buttons at home!

On two occasions when she was ill for a few months Miss Huggart was relieved by Mr. Davy and Mr. Norton, When Norton came he "cleaned up" the school inside and out. Many texts on the walls including a set of "Golden Rules" introduced by Miss Huggart, were destroyed. One text, "God Cares" he turned to face the wall. He announced to local residents that he was "an atheist".

He arrived in the settlement "on foot" from Sutherland to "look the place over" having left his bags at Sutherland Railway station. During his period at the school he boarded at Mayman's residence.

Miss Huggart had the distinction of having a hymn from her prose included in the Methodist Hymn Book for Australia and New Zealand. Containing three verses in the category., "Morning Hymns". it is number 1004 in the Additional Hymn section:

*"I thank Thee Lord for morning light.
 For rest and comfort through the night,
 For life and health and home and friends,
 And the good Thy bounty sends.
 "Give me today a willing mind,
 A cheerful heart, obedient. kind.
 Thoughtful for all, forgiving wrong
 Seeking to please Thee all day long.
 "I thank Thee for the wondrous love
 That streams upon me from above;
 Teach me Thy truth, and cleanse from Bin,
 That I may know the Christ within.,"*

The hymn has no copyright and is sung to other hymn tunes in the book -- Morning Hymn No. 1931 and Eignbrook No. 665. Each morning Miss Huggart had her pupils sing the hymn to the tune of the "Old Hundred". When she did not have her pony and sulky Misa Huggart used to seek transport with others. On one occasions she had obtained a lift with Mr. Les Muston, the baker from Sutherland.

Unfortunately. both were thrown from the conveyance to the road when the horse stumbled descending a steep hill half a mile from the school. Miss Huggart struck the road first, cushioning the fall of Mr. Muston, who was thrown on top of her.

When Miss Huggart arrived at the school the horse Dolly was unhitched from the sulky and taken by two children, appointed each morning and afternoon, to Allison's paddock (now Menai Park). On most occasions Dorothy Davis and Gladys Midgley rode Dolly back to school, the horse having a reputation of being very Docile.

However one afternoon, with the two girls on her back Dolly "buck-jumped" and threw them off going down the hill near the water reserve. Dot Davis came off worst wearing a small scar all her life when a tooth cut through her bottom lip.

During the mid 1920s Arthur Midgley bought a horse by the name of "Chance," for use on the farm and to draw the sulky or light dray. The first time the horse was harnessed to the cart it suddenly commenced kicking violently and in a matter of minutes the cart was smashed to pieces Chance racing madly off with the broken shafts. It transpired that Chance had been a racehorse and had never been in the shafts of a cart before.

Clara Huggart offered to ride the horse. claiming she was an experienced horsewoman, as indeed she must have been on her way to begin school she left her horse and sulky at Midgley's. Determined to ride Chance. she led the long legged bay down the drive and out onto the road where she mounted off the embankment.

Miss Huggart gave Chance a hard pull on the reins and the horse was off like a shot. The harder she pulled on the reins the faster went Chance, A good mile was covered in record time with Clara Huggart clinging on grimly when she realised that she should let the reins go. Immediately she did Chance stopped "dead" – in the manner to which it had been trained. Clara Huggart was the last woman in charge of the school. A succession of male teachers following on to the present day. On her retirement she lived quietly with her sister in the Grande Parade residence

The Story of Camp Coutts and the Scouting Movement

The Boy Scout movement was founded in 1908 perhaps unwittingly by a senior Army Officer, Lt. General Baden-Powell. Apparently all he had intended to do was to write and publish a small booklet on his experiences for use as guidance to prospective young Army Officers. The book was called 'Aids to Scouting'.

The people who it did attract were the youth of the day (1907) in their thousands. Eventually Baden-Powell had to rewrite the book naming it 'Scouting for Boys'. Many millions of young people all over the world took up the books activities.

In Sydney in June 1908, when the story of this little book became a feature story in the SUNDAY TIMES newspaper, groups of boys and young men began immediately to form themselves into patrols just as the book described.

One aspect of the book was to go out into the bush and learn about it and how to survive. In 1908 the outer Sydney suburbs were Balmain, Leichhardt, Summer Hill, Botany, Paddington etc. so the radius of the city was small.

The Leichhardt boys simply marched to the shores of Iron Cove, just down the road and into Ramsays Bush. There was so much bush near these suburbs there was only little travel to reach it.

However, as it is today but on a smaller scale, there was another process that upset their camps and activity locations. That process was the "urban sprawl" and it did not take long for Ramsays Bush to become the suburb of Haberfeld. Many other camp areas also soon became suburbs.

In 1909 the boys and leaders got the idea of making hand carts, a version of the sulky, on which to load all their gear and food. This device was then to be pulled by up to 20 boys. The Leichhardt groups now found new camp areas at Cooks River, Como, Miranda, Gladesville and numerous other places pulling their loaded trek carts along with them. They got more adventurous by pulling the loaded carts from Leichhardt right into Central Railway, loading everyone as well as the loaded cart on to a steam train. The two most popular country stations were Stanwell Park and Campbelltown.

At Stanwell Park they would pull the trek cart around to what is now known as Coalcliffe and there they would camp. At Campbelltown they would pull the cart out to the Georges River to camp.

It was from this camp they did their most adventurous treks. Out along the Appin Road, down Bulli Pass and around the Coast Road to Stanwell Park railway station. The longest camp trek was recorded as 21 days with 8-10 day treks being common.

Como was another very popular camp ground and they all pulled their loaded trek carts from their suburban Scout meeting places to Como. They would camp for days and then pull the carts back to their halls.

All this activity took organisation and responsibility which meant adults, many of whom were attracted to the movement where they could offer help. One such man was freelance photographer, James Xavier Coutts.



Following are his own words of how he became involved in this new movement and stayed with it the rest of his life, 1908-1969, gaining all the highest scouting awards plus the most excellent ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE such was his activity, motivation and devotion.

"It was on a Sunday afternoon during December 1908 whilst walking in Ramsey's Bush I came across a strange sight. A number of boys, half in some sort of uniform, like cowboys, camped out in a bush hut of their own construction. Having a camera with me I lined them up and took snaps".

After the first world war the urban sprawl moved into their campsites and the motor car really gained popularity making trekking too dangerous. Then the worst blow, the Como camp site was withdrawn for camping. By 1919 a new site had to be found. Perhaps a camp halfway between Sutherland and Bulli seemed to be the answer. They had trekked this area many times but never seemed to find 'That Site'.

One weekend in August 1920 James X Coutts was trekking with 25 scouts through the steam

train railhead of Waterfall when they noticed a coal truck suddenly turn off the highway into the bush and down the side of Waterfall Valley. The track was steep, very rough and overgrown. They followed only to reach a small dam and pumping station.

There was no camping here so patrols were sent up and down the valley to search. A patrol from upstream came back excited. Their report indicated that;

“The creek flows over a large rock area and cascades into the top end of the dam, the water backup giving ideal swimming. Many large flat areas, ideal for camping and were protected by rock ridges. The scrub was light with plenty of firewood.”

The whole group moved up and camped. It was perfect and hopefully they had found a campsite forever.

Except for the east side of the railway line, which was National Park, everything was Crown Land and it seemed to be alright to just move in and camp. By 1921 all troops in the Scout West Sydney District had established campsites and for their Annual District Camp in 1921, 500 scouts and leaders came to Waterfall. A special steam train was put on and this was the forerunner of an annual Scouts event. The overall annual numbers using the Camp rose steadily to 9000 by the 1960's.

In 1924 the first hint that something legal would have to be done to secure the site arose but it was not till 1928 when a small lease of 3 acres 1 rood, 34 perches for the purpose of a training depot and erection of buildings was obtained. This was a strange area size as Scouts were using most of the valley.

The original lease was enlarged twice more, in 1933 & 1948, to the present size of 201 acres, 2 roods, 34 perches. The area is approx 1km square. The west boundary is close to 200 metres beyond the west power lines, the east boundary being the Princes Highway.

In the thirties and forties the whole area from the Princes Highway to Woronora River was very popular with bushwalkers. The Sydney

Bushwalkers Club had taken up 100 acres of Myuna Creek. During the great depression there were numerous humpies at the junction of Myuna Creek and Ripple Rill.

It was all Crown Land and it appeared everyone could do as they pleased. But one group of walkers were working to change the whole area. Suddenly in 1940 a map was produced covering the whole area, Helensburgh and well to the north of Engadine, and from the railway line down to the Woronora River. It was titled in part, “National Parks and Primitive Council Area 1940, Miles J Dunphy.”

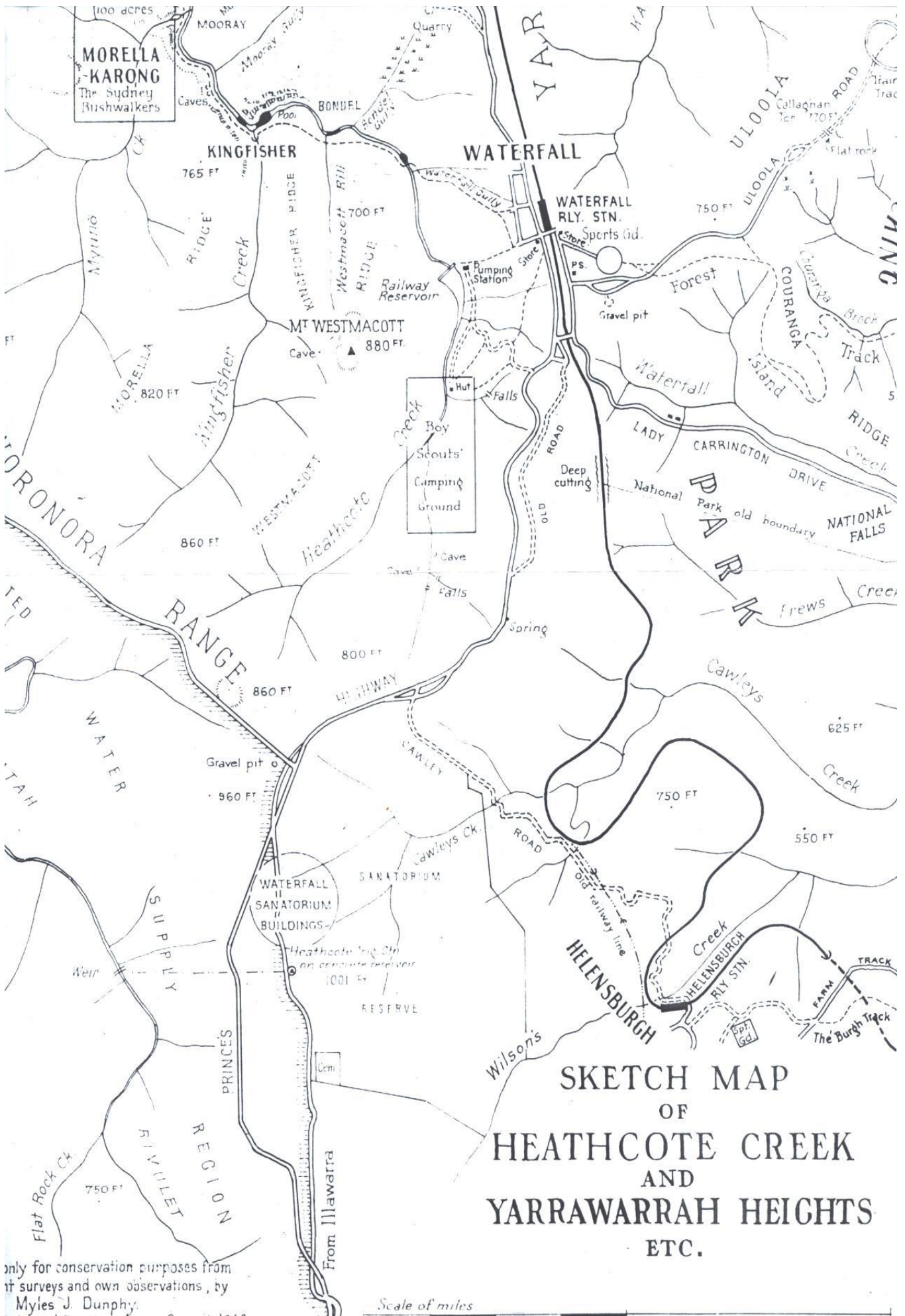
The whole area was obviously going to be set aside as a park. The Scout Camp would be isolated with no road access, so there was a necessity for the 1948 lease extension which gave the camp area road access. The bureaucratic system was working at a slow pace for the map was completed in 1940 yet the first meeting of the Primitive Trust is not until 1944, the trustees were appointed in 1945. It was they who then lodged application for a Heathcote Primitive Area of 1760 Acres.

It was 8 years from the M.J. Dunphy map to the Scout Camp final lease area which meant that the Primitive Area took a long time to occupy all available land. In 1978, to protect the buildings area of Camp Coutts, a reserve area of 2.075ha within the lease area was gazetted, the Scout Association being appointed trustees.

From 1926 a Camp Headquarters at the Annual October Scout Camp was set up, a large fancy marquee was pitched but this became a burden and so the idea of a stone hut came up when the lease was arranged. It was started on the October weekend in 1930. It was organised and mostly built by one Harry Mathews and by October 1931 had a temporary canvas roof and was used as Headquarters and Canteen.

St Johns Ambulance also had a smaller marquee as their First Aid Post so they also had a need of a hut. Their hut started in 1934 but took till 1940 to complete. So buildings were built as needed and all built by volunteers.

All building ceased in 1977, but additions, alterations and modernisation are still continuing in 2002, again all by need and all paid for by camp fees. The quality of our of the



camp site relies heavily on volunteer organisations. These groups provide direction and purpose for many and enhance our society.

The sad situation is that over the years volunteer numbers have plummeted and hence so has society's standards. At Camp Coutts the staff considers that this Camp plays a very special roll. To be always there and continually improved so future young people and adults can have somewhere to go. To learn about nature and the environment and to camp, perhaps light a fire to cook their own meals and most important to look at a pristine, unpolluted creek environment.

James Xavier Coutts did well to find and establish this site. Thousands of people have patronized the camp since 1920, estimates indicate that there would have been 160,000 people so far through the Camp.

James X Coutts was the driving force in establishing this wonderful camp site. He was recognized for his efforts in 1947 by having the camp named in his honour.

In 1966 the National Parks Service also gave recognition of his efforts by naming the branch creek off Heathcote Creek, (within the Camp) 'Coutts Creek'.

The original article was written by Allan Songberg (April 2002). This version was edited by Les Bursill for the Sutherland Historical Society Bulletin in August 2002.

The picture to the right is of an early Scouters Uniform

The picture below is of the Scouts and their cart.

Both pictures supplied with the article by A. Songberg and are from a trek completed in 1921



RULES For TEACHERS

DUTIES

(Before or After School Session)

- ★ Wash windows & clean classroom with soap and water once a week.
- ★ Check outhouses daily. *(Plenty of old catalogues are available at School Board office.)*

APPAREL


(Forbidden Wear in Public at All Times)

- ★ WOMEN: (1) A bathing costume
(2) Bloomers for cycling
(3) Skirts slit to expose ankles
(4) Bustle extension over 10 inches
- ★ MEN: (1) Detachable collar & neck tie removed from shirt
(2) Shirt sleeves unlinked & rolled
(3) Hair closely cropped *(unless bald or have disease of the scalp)*

CONDUCT

(Cause for Immediate Dismissal)

- ★ Smoking of cigarettes, use of spirits, frequenting of pool or public dance halls.
- ★ Marriage or other unseemly behavior by women teachers.
- ★ Joining of any Feminist Movement, such as the Suffragettes.


Superintendent—Sept 15 1886

