



*Sutherland Shire  
Historical Society Inc*  
**Bulletin**



**Vol 17 No 2**

[www.suthshirehistsoc.da.ru](http://www.suthshirehistsoc.da.ru)

**May 2004 \$1.00**

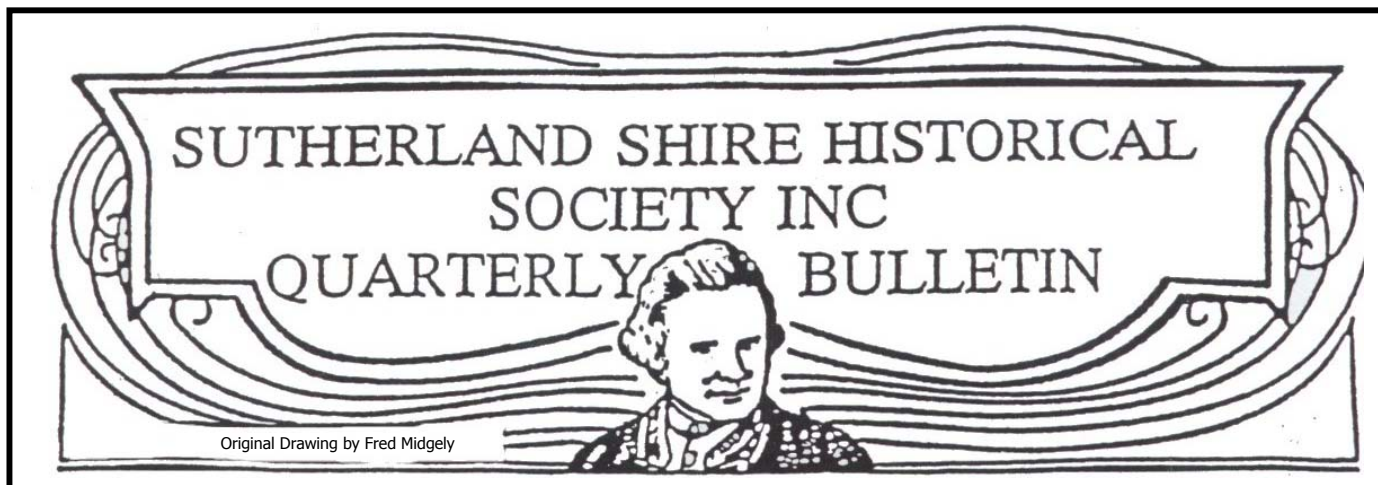
# Shelly Beach, Brass Monkeys & Elsie



**Members of the Shelly Beach "Brass Monkeys & Elsie" Swimmers Club.**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 2004 there was a public meeting at the Cronulla Senior Citizens Centre to discuss proposed development of elements of Shelly Park. In the early stages of the meeting and whilst those present introduced themselves the Editor was introduced to Bruce Heyward. Bruce was presenting a letter to the Council Heritage Committee asking for support in retaining and identifying...*Cont. Page 15*

**REGISTERED AT THE GPO FOR TRANSMISSION THROUGH THE POST  
AS A PERIODICAL (CATEGORY B) NBH 2071 ISSN 1444 - 2930**



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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 Stapleton Centre, Stapleton Street, Sutherland.

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### **Disclaimer**

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

# *President's Report*

**Pioneer House:** Our trusty band of Museum Committee members, led by Tom McMahon and Jim Cutbush have almost finished Owen Jones's replica pioneer Menai House. I get a couple of enquiries a week as to when it will be ready to view. Unfortunately we have had NO offers of Aladdin lamps on chains, a brass double bedstead, wardrobes, dining chairs, or school forms for our pioneer schoolchildren. If you can help, please ring me on: 02/9543-1060. We have to have the doors of the Museum open in three weeks' time, and we have only limited items of furniture. We are getting desperate! Help! Do any of your relatives in the country have any items under their house or in a shed that might furnish our house from the 1900-1910 era? Butterbox furniture welcome!



**President Dawn Emerson**

**Stone Horse Troughs, Tables and Chairs:** Some time ago we were sent a picture of the old horse trough which used to be in Engadine, which has disappeared. Now I have been alerted to the fact that the trough at Scylla Bay Park, also disappeared about a year ago, at Carina Bay, where the Horse Society has their dressage meetings. This horse trough was definitely useful! What has happened to them? I ring the council and nobody knows. SOMEONE must have a record in their work diary SOMEWHERE that they were sent to repair it, or move it. Does anyone know? In 1995, our council magazine "Detour", recorded the fact that some lovely stone tables and chairs were discovered under an overgrowth of vegetation at Hazelhurst. What happened to them? No one knows. They aren't there now. Also growing at Hazelhurst were some most unusual daffodil bulbs; I have never seen varieties such as these. I asked that they be carefully preserved as they could have been used at Parc Menai for the Welsh and Celtic Festivals--they disappeared too. Can everyone in the shire start to look around you and try and keep track of our Heritage? We are losing items which our civic fathers venerated and items like the horse troughs were donated by prominent people and given to the people of the Shire! They were yours, but you didn't look after them, and now our children have been deprived of these items and their memories. Let's be more vigilant, and CARE!

**Northcott Society: Engadine Auxiliary:** We recorded previously how our SSHS Bulletin editor Les Bursill, printed the manuscript of Joan Miles, for the 50th Anniversary of the above organisation, and I proofread it. It is now on sale for \$5, with funds going to help children with disabilities and those in wheelchairs. I am a member of that organisation and today I was given two books for the Sutherland Shire Library: K. Coles & J. Donaldson: The History of the New South Wales Crippled Society for Crippled Children. Sydney, the Society, 1976 and another "The Pirate Omnibus" a children's book with an inscription: "To G.P with best wishes from The Werriwa Auxiliary, 1954". The Werriwa Auxiliary was the name of the Northcott Society at

Engadine which began in 1953 and they gave gifts, to children with disabilities, for Christmas or on their birthday. Joan was then the Treasurer, and her mother Lil Harris was the Secretary and both are recorded in the former book. But what was also interesting was the fact that a Sutherland/Cronulla branch formed in 1933 and the President was Mrs. A. Griffiths! It was disbanded in 1949, but like all these organisations made valuable contributions to the health and well-being of local children with disabilities. Well done Aileen! You are a woman with many interests!

**Hall Noise Level** I had hoped when we transferred to the Stapleton Centre that perhaps the microphone might work better in a smaller hall. Previous guest speakers have commented to me on the fact that members talk through the speakers' presentations, and the speakers find it very difficult to continue their talk. I thought it may be people asking their neighbour: "What did he say?" as they missed a point or two in the talk, and with the smaller hall the acoustics would be better. I also thought it might be that as the guest speaker mentioned a particular place, it is tempting to say to your neighbour: "Yes! I've been there! Do you remember the old produce store that was on the corner?" and so on--we all love to reminisce, but of course, we should wait until after the talk is finished, and then talk to our friends over supper. It is apparently becoming quite bad; the people in the front rows are complaining of the people in the back, as well as the guest speakers complaining to me. They say they sit in the front row so they can hear better, but they still have trouble hearing over the chatter at the back. I know I have done it myself: nudged my neighbour and whispered a comment on something the guest speaker has said. Can we all try and be on our best behaviour at meetings? I know you love to share past experiences with your friends, that's why we belong to the Historical Society but let's be courteous to our guest speakers, and our fellow members.

Don't forget, that if you have a car can you pick up some of our members who don't drive? They love to come to our meetings, but are hesitant to use public transport at night. I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting! Do come and say hello.

*Dawn Emerson,*

**President**

## ***Meetings for 2004:***

Friday, 15th April, 2004: Keith Wrightson: Pigeon force in the War

Friday, 21st May, 2004: Angela Badger Thomas re her new book: Charlotte Badger: "Buccaneer"

Friday, 18th May, 2004 Susan Duyker: Dejima and Hirado: Dutch trading posts in Japan

Friday, 16th July, 2004 Helen Bersten: History of the Jews in Australia

Friday, 20th August, 2004 Dr. Ed. Duyker: Marion Dufresne

Friday, 16th September, 2004: Sutherland Shire Historical Society AGM



# From The Editor's Desk

At a recent meeting of the Societies Executive comments were made on the changing nature of the "Bulletin". As Editor I have been gradually steering the Bulletin towards a presentation style that is professional, interesting and with a high local history content. The comments were that the Bulletin had lost its former rather anecdotal and home grown feel. I hope it has!



Our Bulletin should reflect our local ideas and concerns but should be a repository of historical ideas and elements, not the cut and paste information of others. Rather than using old Women's Weekly cuttings we should be hoping to become Women's Day inclusions.

I am very proud of our Bulletin and very pleased with the responses coming from other localities. I am particularly pleased with our World Wide Web presence that is accessed by more people per year than attend our 12 months of monthly meetings.

In this issue of the Bulletin appears the first of more than 160 pages of "Historical Firsts". These pages of "Firsts" come courtesy of Terry McCosker and are provided for our use by Tucker Seabrook.

Those of you, who in former days brought a paper each day to perhaps read on the train, may remember these pages. Tucker Seabrook were the original sponsors of the pages and had them bound into a volume that is now in the hands of Terry McCosker. Terry has assisted me in the scanning of these pages and they are now available either as a printed booklet or Electronic Data Base and Overhead ready resource for \$10:00 per copy. The costs of \$10: will pay for paper and production and will return \$4:00 to the Society.

**Many Thanks, Betty!:** *Our long term Booking Clerk Betty McGrath has asked to be released from her duties, due to ill health and caring for Allan, who is also ill with a stint or two in hospital. At the last Executive Council meeting, Nola Tunks, a new committee member generously offered to take on the job of Booking Clerk for our Excursions, and has joined Aileen Griffith's Excursion Committee. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Betty who has looked after our excursion bookings for many years, with never a word of complaint, and done a superb job. We also are very grateful to Nola, for taking on such a big job at such short notice. Well done, Team!*

Les Bursill    Editor 2004

# Letters to the Editor

*February 28, 2004*

*Sutherland Shire Council*

**Re:** *Shelly Beach Brass Monkeys Sunrise Swimming Club,*



For over forty years members of the Shelly Beach Brass Club have used the ocean rock pool at Shelly Beach at sunrise, to swim and meet with fellow members.

Members arrive from 5.00a.m. to 7.00a.m. depending on their individual circumstances, mostly travelling from the various suburbs of the Sutherland Shire. However, one member travels mainly by public transport from Picnic Point, leaving home at 4.00a.m.. both winter and summer.

Members, both male and female range in ages from 30 to our eldest, Elsie McNaughton who recently turned 86 years of age, with several members in their seventies and eighties.

Members swim right through the year, summer and winter and in the colder months, the temperature can drop to as low as 12 degrees Celsius, hence the name 'Brass Monkeys'.

In the 1990's, an official club logo was designed and now adorns t-shirts during summer and sloppy joes during winter.

Club matriarch, Elsie McNaughton holds the highest office within the Club and is assisted by Ted Hourigan, who has organized the Clubs social evenings, at which 50 or more members attend on a regular basis.

Members congregate in the small shed beside the dressing sheds and this has been the unofficial clubhouse for the Shelly Beach Brass Monkeys over the years.

Our submission to the Heritage Committee is as above, however we ask that consideration be given to have our 'unofficial clubhouse' recognized by sign or otherwise as the home of the Shelly Beach Brass Monkeys".

**Yours Faithfully**

*Bruce Heyward*

**Bruce Heyward (JP)  
Club Organiser.**

The Editor

Dear Les

Your note from the Editor's Desk telling us about the new font calls for a response from me.

As an octogenarian I have to wear glasses and I must admit mine will allow me to read the fine print of my bible. I was therefore shocked to have the new size leap out at me from the page.

I know we can't please everyone but in the interests of tree saving let's go back to the 12pt at least if not 10 or even 9 which I think is the average newspaper font.

The Font used on the back of this edition is quite adequate. As for single column type setting or double I'm not overly fussed but would probably prefer the single especially if it's easier to comply with.

However I feel the 14pt is a retrograde step. But whatever it's still a marvellous journal and I go back to the 60s.

Yours sincerely

Harvey Davidson

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*19 Palmway Crescent, Tuncurry,  
2428, NSW. 28th February, 2004.*

Dear Les,

In answer to you asking about "Jenola" Park I am sending all I have on that subject - I only hope it doesn't ramble on too long. I found it interesting as I hadn't read it for a long-time.

But I would like to comment, I type all my letters etc. on size 14 (14pt bold type) and on a bold font. Getting older all the time I have a better chance of reading it.

Of course I am of the "old fashion" type of typist who indents the first word of each paragraph - but then so do books, magazines and papers.

The Bulletin seems to get more interesting all the time.

Elva Carmichael



*Editors Note: I found Elva's information very interesting so I have included it here at the end of this letter.*

## **HISTORY OF LAND AT THE CORNER OF KINGSWAY AND GANNON'S ROAD, CARINGBAH**

On 30th October, 1857, John Connell Laycock was granted 143 acres (Portion 42 of Parish of Sutherland, County of Cumberland).

His grant extended to Burraneer Bay and included the property now called "Fernleigh". Over the years this was split up to become residential blocks. One of the first subdivisions, if not the very first, took place on 8th June, 1909. At this stage the owner was Mr. L.A. Curtis. (D.P.5605)

The whole area between Dolan's Road and Port Hacking Road, Caringbah was given the name 'Village of St. Mervyns at Sutherland'.

This subdivision gave twelve blocks to the section of land bordering Kurranulla Beach Road (now Kingsway), Gannon's Road, Caringbah (on plan for the subdivision Caringbah had a 'W' ) and Coral Road. (*Does this mean it would have been Waringbah?* **Ed.**)

One of the early settlers in this area was Henry David Williams who brought his wife and family of two sons, and five daughters from Waverley in 1917 . He bought land bordered by the now Kingsway, Coral and Caringbah Roads and started market gardening and poultry farming. One of his daughters-in-law still lives on a piece of that land.

On 12th November, 1941 the ownership of Block No. 1 (corner of Gannon's and Kingsway) was changed (Cert. of Title Vol. 5281 Fol. 145) the owners were Auburn stationers, Arthur and Minnie Isabel Hewish. The area of the block was 3 roods, 6 and one quarter perches. Arthur Hewish died in January, 1945 and the corner block was sold to my father, Reg. N. Dallimore on 13th February of that year.

The block, (No.1) which fronted on to the Kingsway and went up Gannon's for a distance was subdivided 3rd August, 1955, into a large block fronting on the Kingsway, which Reg. intended to build six shops, Lots 1 to 5. Behind that a lane was planned and beside the lane a three house block all coming out into Gannon's Road, lots 6,7 and 8.

Five shops were built in 1952-53 instead of the proposed six in the name of a company called "Crestacar". Dad taking the first three letters from each of my sisters' and my married names - Creighton, Carmichael and Stafford -much like he did in the 1930's to name "Jenola" with two letters from each of our Christian names.

A lane is shown at this time (D.P. 26124) behind the shops which was passed by Sutherland Shire Council on 17th January, 1955, but it wasn't until C1984 that a sign was actually erected with the lane name displayed as "Jenola Lane".

Almost exactly 100 years after John Connell Laycock was given the grant the shops opened as "Jenola Centre of Service" The original shopkeepers were, on the corner R.H. Dobson, milkbar, then came Kev West in his grocery shop, Oscar Hayes a butcher, Mr. & Mrs. Flavelle with a clothing store and Harris & Hoffman in a toy shop.

A transfer of ownership of lots 6, 7 & 8 (house blocks in Gannon's road) took place on 18th March, 1955 to Eugene Henry Newman, where three houses were built by a builder named Kelly of Kingsway, Caringbah.

Reg. N. Dallimore passed away on 23rd April, 1965 and the R.G. recorded on 6th September, 1967 his widow, Phyllis of Cronulla took over his quarter share.

On the 16th January, 1972 the shops were sold to H.V. Arnold & Sons P/L. and again on 18th May, 1973 to Roing Investments P/L. and yet again on 7th July 1983 to Leroy Properties P/L. It was the last owner (to this date May 1985) who demolished Reg's five shops relocated and redesigned, them giving off-street parking to seven or eight new shops. The original five shops had plenty of parking in front when originally built but with the widening of the Kingsway this was taken to form the road. Where that parking was, was the location of the steam tram track and on the corner of Gannon's and Kingsway a tram shelter shed stood. I remember the shed in my childhood but not the trams as they were discontinued in August 1931 when I was only four months old.

Elva N. Carmichael,

*nee Dallimore.*

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## **LOCAL HISTORIANS, RICH IN ASSETS; THE SOCIETY AND SCHOOLS – A DISCUSSION PAPER.**

The last edition of the *Bulletin*<sup>1</sup> is a very important one. And I would encourage all members to read again the "President's Report" (pp. 4-5) and the "Editorial" (p. 7). Any solution to the problems mentioned by the President could cause significant changes to the society. These are issues all members should consider and so the purpose of this article is contained in the last three words of the title - "a discussion paper".

Both the President and the Editor comment on the type of material they would like to see in the *Bulletin* and the President also makes a number of comments about the 'health' of the Society, itself. In her second paragraph (p. 4), the President paints a distressing portrait of the Society. There is essentially one problem - an ageing member base. The extent of the problem can be gauged

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. 7. no. 1, February, 2004.

from the description of myself (p. 5) as one of the “younger members”. Yet, I was born in 1948!

The President, also, ties the content of the *Bulletin* to this ageing member base (p. 5). The older members prefer anecdotal articles, heavily emphasising local content. The Editor makes a similar statement (p. 7). Finally, the President suggests a solution to solve all the problems at once - school members<sup>2</sup> .

As is stated on p. 5, this is a solution which I support<sup>3</sup> . And, in the vein of the anecdotal report, I remember the possibility of “school members” (whatever this entails) being mentioned at a number of meetings I have attended. Yet, it will not be a case of the spruiker at the circus tent door asking patrons to roll up. This has already been tried. At the first meeting I attended (November, 2002), I was told a complimentary copy of the *Bulletin* had been sent (recently) to every school in the shire. Unfortunately, the Society did not receive a single reply. If we wish to achieve penetration into the school market, we will have to offer something schools want and need. I have begun the process of consultation with schools, already. I have sent another complimentary copy of the *Bulletin* plus some notes on how the Society and schools may interact to senior History teachers at five shire high schools - Caringbah, Engadine, Kirrawee, Menai and Woollooware. A second stage will be to contact a number of primary schools.

The discussion mentioned in the title shall be divided into two sections. The first will look at the “local history” issue and the second will examine the notion of the Society being “rich in assets”.

## I

### Local History

The Society obviously has a focus on local history and its objectives very clearly state this:

- (a) The collection and acquisition and preservation of all material relevant to the history of the Sutherland Shire.
- (b) The study of Australian History in general and of the Sutherland Shire in particular.
- (c) To encourage and foster an interest in the Sutherland Shire and the preservation of its historic associations, buildings and artifacts.

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<sup>2</sup> The *Bulletin* in the past has published work by school students. See: P Duyker, “Sir Henry Parkes: the Father of Federation”, *SSHS Bulletin*, 4(3), 2001, pp. 1, 20-22.; S Duyker, “An Aboriginal Rock Shelter at Sylvania”, *SSHS Bulletin*, 3 (4), 2000, pp. 16-17.

<sup>3</sup> And if the approach to schools is successful, I would be prepared to be the “School Liaison Co-ordinator”.

(d) The dissemination of historical information to members and others by way of lectures, exhibitions, discussions, publications, excursions and events.

How do these objectives align with history in NSW schools? "History" is covered by five separate syllabuses<sup>4</sup> :

(i) HSIE K-6 Syllabus (i.e. "History" in the primary School).

The remaining four all deal with Secondary schooling:

(ii) History Syllabus Stages 4 and 5 (i.e. Yrs. 7 - 10);

(iii) Ancient History Stage 6 Syllabus (Yrs. 11 - 12);

(iv) Modern History Stage 6 Syllabus.

(v) History Extension Syllabus (equivalent to 3 Unit).

Unfortunately, there are very few points of contact between the Society's objectives and the various syllabuses. However, creative teachers, students and the Society can find opportunities. I will go through the syllabuses in the above order.

(i) HSIE stands for "Human Societies in their Environments". So, any History is illustrative of some sort of social commentary. This syllabus covers very young children (Kindergarten) to pre-teens (Yr. 6) and the content reflects this. In Stage 1(K-2), "(students') immediate environment", "places in local area" are mentioned. Stage 2 (Yrs. 3 - 4) looks at "British colonisation of Australia" and includes the voyages of Captain Cook<sup>5</sup> and Aboriginal resistance. In Stage 3 (Yrs. 5 - 6), the emphasis is on the development of Australian democracy; the illustrative topic is "Gold"<sup>6</sup>.

(ii) "The History Syllabus Stages 4 and 5" offers most scope. Local History is definitely mentioned as is Aboriginal History. However, there is an even more solid point of contact with both the Stage 4 (Yrs. 7-8) and Stage 5 (Yrs. 9-10) courses. They both mandate a site study. In Stage 4, it is expected that the students will visit the site and so a local site would be encouraged by most teachers. In Stage 5, the actual visit is not deemed so important and students

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<sup>4</sup> They can be found on the Board of Studies web site: [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au). Hard copies are available at Sutherland Library.

<sup>5</sup> In this context, Ron Scobie, presenter (*Endeavour* Paintings) at the Society's meeting, March 19, would be an asset. See more on this idea in section II.

<sup>6</sup> The *Bulletin* has published on this topic. See: E Duyker, "Precious as Gold: the Story of Women on the Goldfields", *SSHS Bulletin*, 5(2), 2002, pp. 10-13.

can do a ‘virtual’ site study. In both cases, the resources of the Society should be valuable.

(iv) The two HSC Syllabuses are divided into two courses; the Preliminary (Terms 1-3, Yr. 11) and the HSC Course (Term 4, Yr. 11, and Terms 1-3, Yr. 12). Only the Preliminary Courses offer any opportunities. Aboriginal archaeology is a bona fide part of the Ancient History Syllabus. Both use the “Case Study” approach and teachers are free to develop their own. These could relate to the local area, but most teachers will concentrate on the areas they intend studying in the HSC Course.

(v) A major part of the History Extension Course is an individual project. Students are free to choose their own topic and it could relate to the local area. However, this would, I think, not be likely to happen. 2001 was my last year of teaching and the first time History Extension was examined. The History Extension students at Port Hacking High chose these topics: Cleopatra; the Change in the Australian Icon - Bushman to Lifesaver; Joan of Arc; Medieval Witchcraft; Robin Hood; William Wallace!

So, there are opportunities. However, to maximise them, I would like to suggest a broadening of the meaning of “local history”. A traditional definition of ‘local history’ would be “history about the local area” (Objectives [a]-[c]). This is the sort of “local history” (with very few exceptions<sup>7</sup>) published in the Bulletin. Yet, there is another definition - “history produced in the local area”. This is the definition apparent in meetings of the Society (Objective [d]). Of the meetings I have attended, when I can remember the topic of the guest lecturer, the only time the “talk” has met the first definition of “local history” is the January meeting - the so called “Members’ meeting”. Otherwise, topics have been - “I K Brunel”; “Citizen Labillardiere”; “*Endeavour* Paintings”; “the History of Manly”; “Pezz”.

This second and extended definition of “local history” would allow more opportunities for the Society to react with schools.

## II

### “Rich in Assets”

I must admit that I have not fully considered the ramifications of this concept. However, I did raise it in my notes I sent to my former colleagues. Let us admit it - the Society is rich in assets. The monthly meeting is one; the *Bulletin* published four times a year is another. Also, the Museum.

I have not visited the Museum and do not wish to offend those who have helped develop it. But how to use the Museum?. Recent press publicity, concerning both Australian Museum and the National Museum of Australia,

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<sup>7</sup> See: W Abbot, “Foundation of Perth”, *SSHS Bulletin*, 4(4), 2001, pp.10-11; E Duyker (n.6 above); P Duyker (n.2 above).



has shown that the nature of Museums has changed. They are no longer a collection of exhibits in glass cages but better function as “history laboratories”.

I am unaware of the relationship between the Museum and the 1900-1920's house<sup>8</sup>. My following comments would apply to both. Most schools, i.e. secondary schools, would probably need to send between seventy five and ninety students to visit either at a single time. The students would be broken up into three groups. So, the Society would have to provide three simultaneous activities, each catering for about twenty five students.

Yet, there is another approach. Regard both as a “history laboratory” where students come in small groups to learn the application of historical skills but in a shire context. This is an approach that has been followed by the Australian National Maritime Museum for many years<sup>9</sup> - and it has proven to be very successful, particularly financially.

However, the Society has other assets - personnel assets. The Society could assemble a register of those members with special skills and knowledge's which schools could access<sup>10</sup>. These assets might not necessarily be members of the Society but would be known to the society.

At this point I should admit that I have not mentioned this to those whose names appear. No doubt for those who work full time, there would be problems with access and, of course, a financial arrangement would need to be worked out. The Society boasts at least two practising historians - Ed Duyker and Pauline Curby. The Editor of the *Bulletin* - Les Bursill - is a well known anthropologist. The Society could also call upon “assets” such as the maritime artist, Ron Scobie (see n.5), or the oral historian, Rob Mitchell<sup>11</sup>. No doubt, there are others.

### III

#### Final Thoughts

I do not think that current members want an influx of new members who will attend the monthly meetings. This would no doubt eventually cause major changes to the meetings and the nature of the Society. What I think is needed is a “new class” of member whose only contact with the Society is that they receive their copy of the *Bulletin* and contribute to it.

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<sup>8</sup> The “house” would be very useful. It would fit into the very first topic in the Yr. 9 course. Most schools use the TV series, “1900's House” (screened on ABC / SBS? in 2001) with its spin off book (M McCrum, *1900 House*, Channel 4 Bks, 1990). How more relevant would a shire example be?

<sup>9</sup> See: G Duncan, “Students gain insight into Sydney tragedy”, *Engadine District News*, March 28, 1995, p.4.

<sup>10</sup> I am unaware of the full extent of these assets. So, I apologise to those I leave out in ignorance.

<sup>11</sup> For a description of Rob Mitchell's work, see: “ ‘Family Chronicles’ - Everyone has a story to tell”, *Engadine District News*, June 18, 2002, p.9; A Carlin, “Family History by Word of Mouth”, *The Leader*, November 26, 2003, p.21. Contact Rob at: bob@familychronicles.com.au.

Perhaps, the simplest approach would be to contact schools and ask them to contribute outstanding work for publication. Apart from students involved in sport or performing and creative arts, there are very few opportunities for other students to gain recognition for their work. No doubt the parents of published students would be keen to buy the issue of the *Bulletin* for their family memorabilia.

Garriock Duncan

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## The Shelly Beach Brass Monkeys & Elsie

**From Page 1** .... the unofficial Club House of the “*Shelly Beach Brass Monkeys*” Bruce Heyward explained to me that for the last 40 some years, since 1963, this group of about 50 people have met each morning at Shelly Beach and have swum each day in the enclosed rock pool for 40 years.



Bruce tells me that the water temperature in the pool has fallen as low as 12 degrees. He explained that there is little or no formal membership of the Brass Monkeys and if you wish to join all you have to do is turn up, rain, hail, shine or snow, and swim.

When I asked Bruce to explain to me why it was the “*Brass Monkeys and Elsie*” he explained that until the turn of the millennium no one had named the group of swimmers. He took up the challenge of naming the group and came up with the idea of “*The Brass Monkeys*”. (There is one on display at Bare Island, at La Perouse ED.)

I asked him wasn't that a bit risqué and he explained that a *Brass Monkey* is a triangular piece of 18<sup>th</sup> century Naval equipment upon which is stored cannon balls ready to be fired. The Brass Monkey is a tray with upturned edges and the cannon balls were piled up into a pyramid on this tray. On particularly frigid days in the Atlantic the brass trays often shrank from the cold and balls fell off the tray. Hence “Freeze the Balls off a Brass monkey”

Then I asked why the “Brass Monkeys and Elsie” he explained that some members of the club felt that even with the Naval explanation for “Brass Monkeys” the name implied a certain maleness. As about 25% of the members of the club were female, in fact the oldest and senior member was female, the name needed revision. It was then decided to acknowledge the feminine element of the club by including Elsie's name in the club name thus signifying the important role women play in the club. Elsie McNaughton is one of the founding members of the “Brass Monkeys” and has been coming to Shelly Beach for about 40 years.

Elsie is the matriarch of the group and at 86 is still swimming. Their unofficial club house is the open brick shed next to Shelly Beach dressing sheds. In a letter to the Heritage Committee of council (this issue) the Brass Monkeys have asked that their open shed (at right) be recognized as the unofficial club house by council.

The membership of the “Brass Monkeys” is fairly fluid with no real restrictions. People



just turn up, up to 7 days a week. Whilst a dozen or more were women, of the 50 odd members when the name was chosen, it was decided to recognize Elsie as the representative woman by virtue of her seniority. Whilst most members are locals, a member, Owen Waterhouse travels by public transport from as far a field as Picnic Point, arriving at the beach by 5.30 am most days.

The history of Shelly Beach is a very interesting subject. The Beach and Park area have been a favourite for local residents for thousands of years. Yes thousands of years!

Before the beach was modernised and drained it was a focus for aboriginal people to gather and live. The area above the present walkway, in the park itself, was a camping ground with two creeks running through and a pool or pond of water with reeds and just a little swampish. There was a natural spring, that according to some residents, ran even in times of drought and was a local source for household water.

The park eventually became the locus for the Sutherland – Cronulla Tram and our past President Aileen Griffiths told the editor that there was a large shed at the Ewos Parade end of the park and trams were turned around at that point.

Another interesting fact came to light when research on the park was being conducted and old photographs taken before the rock pool was installed were examined. Those photos indicate that there was a small but sandy beach where there is now a rock shelf.

This leads the Editor to the conclusion that the installation of the rock pool lead to a change in the ocean current that in turn quickly denuded the beach of its sand and shell covering. Hence the now poignant name “Shelly Beach” where there is no beach at all.



*Les Bursill.*

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## Diving Deeper into *Shipwreck Detectives*

The Sutherland Shire Historical Society is a local history society. However, I have often thought that the meaning of local history should be redefined to include “history you experience locally”. The February, 2004, meeting of the Society proved this point. I heard two members talking about the Japanese attack on Roebuck Bay, WA, on March 3, 1942. They had obviously watched the third episode of a three part series, *Shipwreck Detectives*, screened on the ABC, in January, 2004. The subjects of the episodes were: (i) the wreck of the *Batavia* off the coast of WA; (ii) the US attack on Truk Lagoon in 1944; and, (iii) the Japanese attack on Roebuck Bay (January 19).

“Shipwreck detectives” are, in fact, “maritime archaeologists”. Their brief is anything “on the water”, “under the water”, or “in any way connected to water” including the wrecks of seaplanes in Roebuck Bay. The series had strong Australian connections. While two of the episodes were about Australia, the series was an Australian production made with the co-operation of the Western Australian Maritime Museum. In many ways, maritime archaeology is an Australian “invention”.

Hopefully, other members of the Society would find the series as entertaining as did the two gentlemen I overheard.

(i) The *Batavia* (January, 1).

The context of the *Batavia* story is the Dutch East Indies trade controlled by the Dutch East Indies Company (the VOC). Ships plied the roaring 40's on their way from the Cape of Good Hope to Batavia, in Java. A sharp right hand turn was required at WA if the ship was not to run aground.

In 1629, the *Batavia*, on its maiden voyage for the VOC, failed to make the turn and was wrecked on the Abrolhos Islands about forty miles off the mainland, near Geraldton, WA<sup>12</sup>. The majority of the passengers and crew made it safely to land. But, the real nightmare was just about to begin. The story has been told a number of times:

M Dash, *Batavia's Graveyard*, Phoenix, 2003.

H Drake-Brockman, *Voyage to Disaster*, Angus & Robertson, 1964.

J H Edwards, *Islands of Hungry Ghosts*, Angus and Robertson, 1966.

There was a shortage of water and after a brief search, the senior officer, Pelsaert, decide to make for Batavia to get help. He left the survivors to the mercies of the psychopathic, Jerome Cornelius. By the time Pelsaert had returned 125 of the survivors had died in an orgy of rape and murder.

Cornelius and his accomplices were executed, the first known executions in Australian history, and two of the Cornelius' accomplices, deemed to be less guilty than the others, were marooned on the mainland. In spite of later attempts to find them, nothing of them was ever heard again.

The story of the *Batavia* makes a welcome addition to a narrative which is often dominated by the voyage of Cook, in 1770, particularly for those Australians resident on the eastern coast. What survives of the *Batavia* has been raised from its resting place and has been reconstructed. You can inspect it at the Western Australian Maritime Museum's Shipwreck Galleries in Fremantle<sup>13</sup>. Even more exciting is that a replica of the *Batavia* has been built.

P Godard, *The First and Last Voyage of the Batavia*, Abrolhos Publications, 1993 (in particular pp. 247-273).

The replica visited Sydney in 2000.<sup>14</sup> Remarkably, moored alongside the *Batavia*, was the replica *Duyfken*<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> See: G Sauercracker, "The Abrolhos Islands", *Geo*, 12(4), 1990-1991, pp.18-25.

<sup>13</sup> You can also access the story of the ship through the WAMM web site - [www.mm.wa.gov.au](http://www.mm.wa.gov.au) - and follow the prompts.

<sup>14</sup> W Richards, "Welcome *Batavia*", *Signals*, 49, December 1999 - February 2000, pp.4-6.

<sup>15</sup> In November, 1605, the "Duyfken", skippered by Willem Jansz, left Indonesian waters on a voyage that would culminate in 1606 with the first European landing on the Australian mainland on the western coast of Cape York Peninsula in the Gulf of Carpentaria. See: N Burningham, "The *Duyfken* project", *Bulletin of the Australian Institute of Maritime Archaeology*, 21(1 & 2), 1977, pp.19-22.; M van Huyster, "Brief history of the Dutch yacht the *Duyfken*", *Bulletin of the Australian Institute of Maritime Archaeology*, 21(1 & 2), 1977, pp.23-24



Unlike other replicas, i.e. the *Bounty* or the *Endeavour*, which are in essence, modern ships beneath the waterline, the *Batavia* is such a faithful replica that it could not be sailed to Australia but had to be brought out on the decks of a ship.

(ii) Truk (January, 12).

The US attack on Truk Lagoon, "Operation Hailstone", in February, 1944, is sometimes called Japan's Pearl Harbour. Truk Lagoon was a major naval base and the Japanese had expected an attack from the sea. So, appropriate defences had been put in place. The attack, when it came, came from the air and caught the Japanese by surprise.

Virtually all the ships in the harbour were sunk. The submarine, I-59, which had participated on the attack on Pearl Harbour, was not sunk by aircraft. It submerged to avoid the air attack. However, a mechanical malfunction doomed its crew to slow death.

Truk Lagoon is now both an archaeological site and a major location for sports diving<sup>16</sup>.

(iii) Roebuck Bay (January, 19).

I think we need to break away from the stranglehold the events of 1915 have on the historical imagination of Australians. 1915 represents our imperial past. Before I am howled down, however, I accept that Gallipoli will always be a special place for Australians and I have done my duty. I visited Gallipoli during the recent war in Iraq (2003).

In 1914, there was no threat to mainland Australia. The few German possessions in the Pacific region were overwhelmed by the end of 1914 and, of course, the *Emden* was sunk by the *Sydney*. In 1942, to paraphrase Tom Clancy, Australia was in clear and present danger". Apart from the submarine attack on Sydney, in 1942, most Australians are unawares of Japan's other attacks on mainland Australia.

By March, 1942, Singapore had fallen and the Dutch East Indies were about to fall to the Japanese. An air armada was ferrying refugees from the Indies to safety in Australia. Many of these aircraft were seaplanes and Roebuck Bay<sup>17</sup> was a staging post on the flight to safety. Aircraft would land, refuel and depart for the south as soon as possible.

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<sup>16</sup> See: S Earle, "Life Springs from Death in Truk Lagoon", *National Geographic*, 149(5), May, 1976, pp. 578-603; W H Stewart, *Ghost Fleet of the Truk Lagoon*, Pictorial Histories Publications Co., 1986. There also a number of web sites. Just enter "Truk Lagoon" into your search engine.

<sup>17</sup> You can check out Roebuck Bay on the Broome Visitor Centre web page: [www.broomevisitorcentre.com.au](http://www.broomevisitorcentre.com.au). Click on the "History link". You can also access information on Roebuck Bay on the WAMM web site (n.2).

In spite of attacks on Darwin, an air of complacency gripped Roebuck Bay. While the Japanese were known to have long range (and unarmed) reconnaissance aircraft<sup>18</sup>, Roebuck Bay was beyond the range of strike aircraft operating out of Kupang in West Timor. Unfortunately, the Japanese had been experimenting with auxiliary fuel tanks. Roebuck Bay was now within range.

The one attack on Roebuck Bay occurred on March 3, 1942<sup>19</sup>. Reconnaissance aircraft had overflown the site and had noticed the motley collection of civil and military aircraft using both the bay (i.e. the flyingboats) and the airstrip. The bay has huge tides and the flyingboats necessarily were moored about a kilometre from the wharf. Refueling was a slow process. Only one aircraft of the previous day's arrivals had refueled and left before the attack.

That morning there were fifteen flyingboats moored in Roebuck Bay - 8 American built two engined Consolidated PBY Catalinas; 5 Dutch built three engined Dornier Do 24's<sup>20</sup>; and 2 British built four engined Short Empire Class Flyingboats. The airstrip housed an equally varied collection of aircraft, all US built - 1 Lockheed "Lodestar"; some Lockheed "Hudsons"; 2 Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortresses". A Consolidated B 24 "Liberator" with thirty one service personnel on board had taken off about half an hour before the attack<sup>21</sup>.

None of the aircraft stood any chance and all were destroyed in the attack<sup>22</sup>. Many of the refugees, including women and children, had spent the night on the moored flyingboats and were still on board when the attack happened. They would have had little chance of survival.

The "Liberator" did not escape either. Found by the attacking aircraft, it was shot down. There was only one survivor - it had been ferrying wounded service personnel south. There was another casualty. A Dutch civilian DC 3 was also flying to Roebuck Bay that morning. It was caught by the returning Japanese aircraft and shot down near Beagle Bay. The pilot, though wounded, managed to land the aircraft without its breaking up, though it was strafed on the ground. The majority of its passengers and crew survived, though they had to

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<sup>18</sup> E. g. the Mitsubishi "Dinah"; see: K Munson, *Fighters and Bombers of World War II*, Peerage Books, 1987, pl. 41 and pp. 290-291.

<sup>19</sup> For an account of the attack, see: T Hall, *Darwin, 1942*, Methuen (Aust), 1980, pp. 206-209.

<sup>20</sup> The Dornier Do 24 was a graceful looking flyingboat specifically built for the naval aviation service of the Dutch East Indies. I accessed information via the Warbirds Resource Group web site ([www.warbirdsresourcegroup.org](http://www.warbirdsresourcegroup.org)) and clicked on the Luftwaffe link.

<sup>21</sup> You should be able to find information on most of the aircraft in standard aviation histories of World War II (e.g. Munson [n.6]). There are also web sites on each of the aircraft.

<sup>22</sup> Sometimes aircraft did escape. "Camilla" was a Short Empire Class flyingboat that survived the attack on Darwin in February, 1942. It was obscured by smoke from sinking ships. See: D Lockwood, *Australia's Pearl Harbour: Darwin, 1942*, Penguin, 1999 reprint, pp. 80-83.

experience several hard days before rescue. This latter incident acquired a certain notoriety, since the aircraft was carrying a package of diamonds which were mislaid when the aircraft crashed. Even after an intensive search, not all the diamonds were recovered.

The Broome Visitor Centre web site (see n.5) states that the flyingboat wrecks are still visible in Roebuck Bay at extremely low tide. In fact, this episode of the series concerned a survey of the wreck site in Roebuck Bay with a view to plotting all the aircraft sites and identifying the types. This task would be made slightly more manageable because the aircraft type had differing number of engines and different marques of the same type had variant features<sup>23</sup>.

There were no more attacks on Roebuck Bay.

By early 1942, the Australia was in grave danger. The Government imposed a policy of censorship which has meant that even today most Australians are unaware of the events of 1942. We are familiar with the Kokoda Track (1942) but how many of us know about the Battle of Milne Bay (also 1942)? Even the beach at Cronulla was dug up and an anti tank ditch was built<sup>24</sup>. By March, 1943, the crisis was passed and there were more urgent things to worry about. Television shows, such as *Shipwreck Detectives* (ep. 3), now play an important role in dispelling that ignorance.



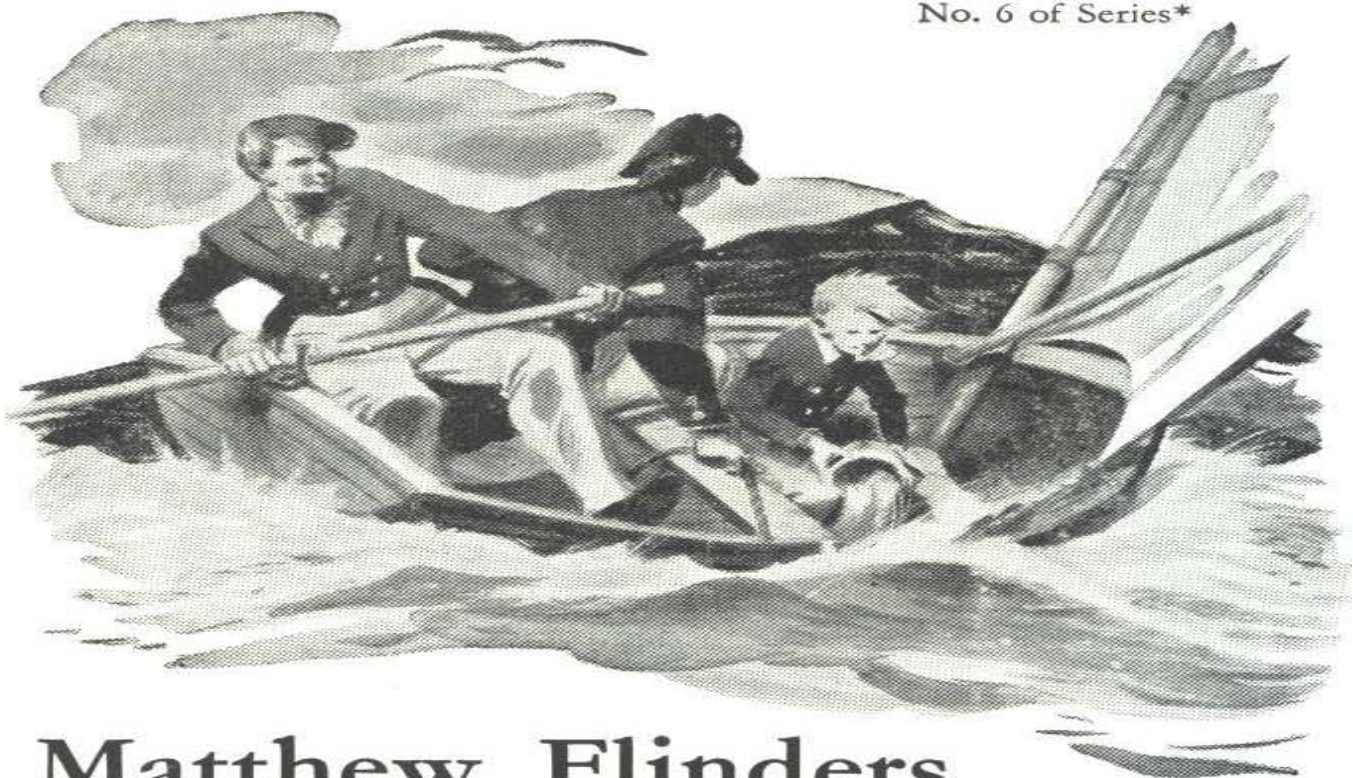
*Garriock Duncan*

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<sup>23</sup> A similar survey has been made of the Catalina wrecks in East Arm, Darwin Harbour. See; S Jung, "Archaeological Investigation of the Catalina Wrecks in East Arm, Darwin Harbour", *Bulletin of the Australian Institute of Maritime Archaeology*, 20(2), 1996, pp.23-40

<sup>24</sup> For the Shire at war (principally Cronulla). see: D Kirkby, *From Sails to Atoms*, Sutherland Shire Council, 1970, pp. 91-98; P Curby, *A Pictorial History of Cronulla*, Kingsclear Books, 1998, pp. 72-79. In 1983, the first three paragraphs of Kirkby's description of the shire at war was republished (without citation): "The Fortress Shire", *The Voice*, August 4, 1983, p. 29. This was, then, republished (sourced to *The Voice*) as: "The Fortress Shire", *SSHS Bulletin*, 2(12), 1995, p. 26.





# Matthew Flinders

— *"the First Circumnavigator"*

Born on the 16th March, 1774, Matthew Flinders entered the Royal Navy of His Majesty King George III, at the early age of fifteen and when Governor John Hunter sailed from Plymouth in the "Reliance" on February 15th, 1795, young Flinders accompanied him as a Midshipman. He was destined to leave his name for all time in the annals of Australian History.

Notable amongst his triumphs was that of being the first to establish the fact that Tasmania was an island. His close friend, George Bass, and others including Governor Hunter, had suspected that a strait existed, but it was not until 1798 that Flinders, in command of the 25-ton sloop "Norfolk" made "our long-wished-for discovery of a passage into the Southern Indian Ocean." Bass accompanied him on that journey, during which they circumnavigated Van Dieman's Land for the first time.

Both Flinders and Bass were born in Lincolnshire and were together on the "Reliance" on the voyage to Australia. Bass, the ship's surgeon had brought with him an 8 ft. boat which he named "Tom Thumb"; in this tiny craft and in a second "Tom Thumb" built to Bass's order in Sydney, the friends, together with a lad named Martin, explored the coast south of Botany Bay,

entered beautiful Port Hacking, coasted fertile Illawarra, and met thrilling adventures by sea and land.

Between 1801 and 1803, Flinders had command of the "Investigator" and in her made the first coastal circumnavigation of Australia, naming many features of the coast and charting with great thoroughness and persistence.

After many triumphs, a series of setbacks began for him in 1803. These culminated when, bound for England in the 29-ton schooner "Cumberland," the pumps failed in the Indian Ocean and he made for Ile-de-France (Mauritius). War had broken out between France and England, and Flinders was imprisoned on the island for 6½ years. Sick in body and poor of purse, he died on the 19th July, 1814, four years after his return to England.

Flinders played an important part in securing official adoption of the name 'Australia' for New Holland. His epitaph could well be the words he wrote about Bass—  
*"A man whose ardour for discovery was not to be suppressed by any obstacles, nor deterred by danger."*



# *Lucas' Mill*

Recently I have been doing a little detective work researching Lucas' mill at the Needles on the Woronora River. Initially I did not know much about this except that the suburb of Lucas Heights was named after the owner of the mill. I went to my well-thumbed copy of Frank Cridland's *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and Sutherland Shire*, first published in 1924 and found that Cridland was - as many of us are today - amazed that anyone would build a mill in such a remote location as the Woronora River in the 1820s, especially when there were no farms in the district at this time producing grain. Cridland - like many since - searched the bushland at the Needles looking in vain for the remains of Lucas' mill. Indeed I began to wonder if there was ever a mill there at all. Yes, everyone I asked agreed that there had been a mill, but no one knew a great deal about it. So the hunt began.

When I located a copy of Surveyor General John Oxley's instructions to Surveyor Robert Dixon I found that Cridland had slightly misquoted these - easy to do in the days before photocopying. In fact when Dixon was dispatched to chart the Georges River and Port Hacking in February 1827 Oxley stated that on the south side of the Georges River there were 'several deep inlets or creeks ... that must be traced to their source'. He continued:

At the extremis of the S. Arm or Creek you will have a conspicuous mark. A few miles up one of those creeks you will find a watermill the property of Mr Lucas. He will show you the order he holds for the land which is to be marked for him.<sup>25</sup>

Oxley's reference to his 'order' refers to the fact that although Lucas had been promised land it had not been registered because of a backlog in land title registration, as the colony was emerging from what has been referred to as the 'muddled pre-history of land title registration' at this time.<sup>26</sup>

Oxley also told Dixon that 'Mr Duncombe's farm of 700 acres' was to be marked. A quick look at an early Parish of Holsworthy map shows that David Duncomb's 700-acre 'Little Forest' was located west of the Woronora River, probably in what is now Holsworthy Military Reserve.

So Dixon completed his work and produced several maps, but no report of this survey survives that I am aware of. His Georges River map shows two land

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<sup>25</sup> SRNSW, Surveyor General, Copies of Letters sent to private person and officials, 1822-53; CGS 13762; 2/1949, Reel 2820, pp. 62-65.

<sup>26</sup> R. Crundwell, H. Golder, & R. Wood, *From Parchments to Passwords, a History of the Land Titles Office of NSW*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1995, pp. 6-9.



grants: Alford's 60 acres in the location of present day Sandy Point and Lucas' 150 acres on the eastern bank of Williams Creek in what is now Holsworthy Military Reserve. Williams Creek is not named but I ascertained its identity by following the course of the river using a street directory. A mill is marked on this map on the western side of the creek. The area around the Needles on the Woronora River is included but nothing is named in that location and no mill is marked.<sup>27</sup>

Cridland must have confused Williams Creek with the Woronora River, as he believed that the Woronora mill was marked on Dixon's map. Or did Dixon mark the mill in the wrong spot? Was Lucas established on the Woronora River prior to 1827 or was Oxley referring to the mill on Williams Creek when he instructed Dixon?

Native-born John Lucas of Liverpool was certainly granted 150-acres on the Woronora River, but this was not his only land grant. He also had 150 acres on Harris Creek near Liverpool where he had a watermill. In fact in 1824 he petitioned for an additional grant of land, so he could expand his business. He had discovered, he wrote '(contiguous to his present mill) a stream of water which is not dry at any time and would afford sufficient water to grind 1000 bushels of grain weekly'.<sup>28</sup> Lucas was undoubtedly referring to Williams Creek, which flows parallel to Harris Creek before the two streams meet at Hammondville.

Although Lucas' first petition was rejected he was eventually successful, and his name appears on a list of those receiving grants from Sir Thomas Brisbane on 25 November 1825. He had been granted an additional 150 acres but the location of this grant was not stated.<sup>29</sup> While this is presumably the Woronora land it raises the intriguing question of whether this was a consolation prize because the land on Williams Creek was not available. Was this the grant intended or did Lucas perhaps end up with this land as the result of a mix up?

In any event Governor Sir Thomas Brisbane formally granted 150 acres on the Woronora River to Lucas on 19 October 1831 and it was entered on the register of grants of land on 1 January 1837.<sup>30</sup> But before either of these things happened Lucas had written to the Colonial Secretary on 10 October 1831 asking that the grant be 'made out to Mr Solomon Levey he having become the purchaser from me'. It appears Lucas was looking into land at Bateman's Bay at this time as the next letter in the Colonial Secretary series reveals.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Georges River, R. Dixon, 1827, SRNSW, AO map 2733.

<sup>28</sup> SRNSW, Col. Sec. Index, 1788-1825, Fiche 3098; 4/1838A, No. 595, pp.479-82.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. 25 November 1825. Fiche 3269; 9/2740, p. 18.

<sup>30</sup> LTO, Old System Grants of Land, Serial No. 31, p. 15, Appn, 9152.

<sup>31</sup> SRNSW, Col. Sec. Letters received re land, 2/7910, Reel 1154.

So from the end of 1825 to 1831 Lucas held an order for the land on the Woronora and even though it was not the grant he had applied for he seems to have made the best of the situation and built a mill there. We know this because of an auction notice that appeared in the *Sydney Morning Herald* in 1843 for the 'Woronora Mill Estate'. The 'new Illawarra line of road', this newspaper promised, 'is expected to pass near this property'. This was considered an opportune time to sell. The land was a grant by Sir Thomas Brisbane for

the express purpose of a water mill which was aptly placed near the junction of the salt and fresh water on a natural dam (but which was burned down some years ago) ... vessels of light burden have discharged grain at the Mill, - returning with flour to Sydney.<sup>32</sup>

Then when Surveyor General Sir Thomas Mitchell issued instructions for the survey of the route of the new Illawarra road he wrote on 3 July 1843 that the road party were to 'fix their huts ... on the small ledge just over the old mill reach'.<sup>33</sup>

How could a mill operate in this location when there were so few land grants in the whole of what is now Sutherland Shire and certainly no settlement in the vicinity of the mill? When was it built? If this had occurred prior to 1827 it should have been marked on Dixon's map. What was the source of the grain that Lucas was presumably grinding in his mill? Did David Duncomb's 'Little Forest' provide him with grain (this would have come by land and not in 'vessels of light burden') or does the answer lie in the first volume of David Day's history of the Australian Customs Service.

Day tells how both Botany Bay and Broken Bay and their associated river systems and settlements were 'havens for smugglers for decades' prior to the appointment of customs officials at both places in 1832. In June 1831, for example, spirits and tobacco sized in Miller's Point were said to have been transhipped from the 21-ton cutter *Dart* and brought overland from 'Port Aiken', as Port Hacking was called at this time. Thomas Oliver, landing waiter and tide surveyor, sailed south to 'Port Aiken' to apprehend the smugglers but when he arrived they scrambled overboard into a boat, and headed for the bush. The *Dart* was seized and taken back to Sydney.<sup>34</sup> Was Lucas involved in some illegal activity at the Woronora River while using the mill as a front – a common occurrence in isolated places in the colony at this time.<sup>35</sup> Did the Williams Creek mill continue to operate?

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<sup>32</sup> *SMH*, 14 March 1843.

<sup>33</sup> SRNSW, Copies of Letters Sent to Surveyors, 5/11/1841 to 20/7/1843, 4/5430, Reel 2828.

<sup>34</sup> D. Day, *Smugglers and Sailors: the Customs History of Australia, 1788-1901*, Canberra, AGPS Press, c. 1992, pp. 182-4.

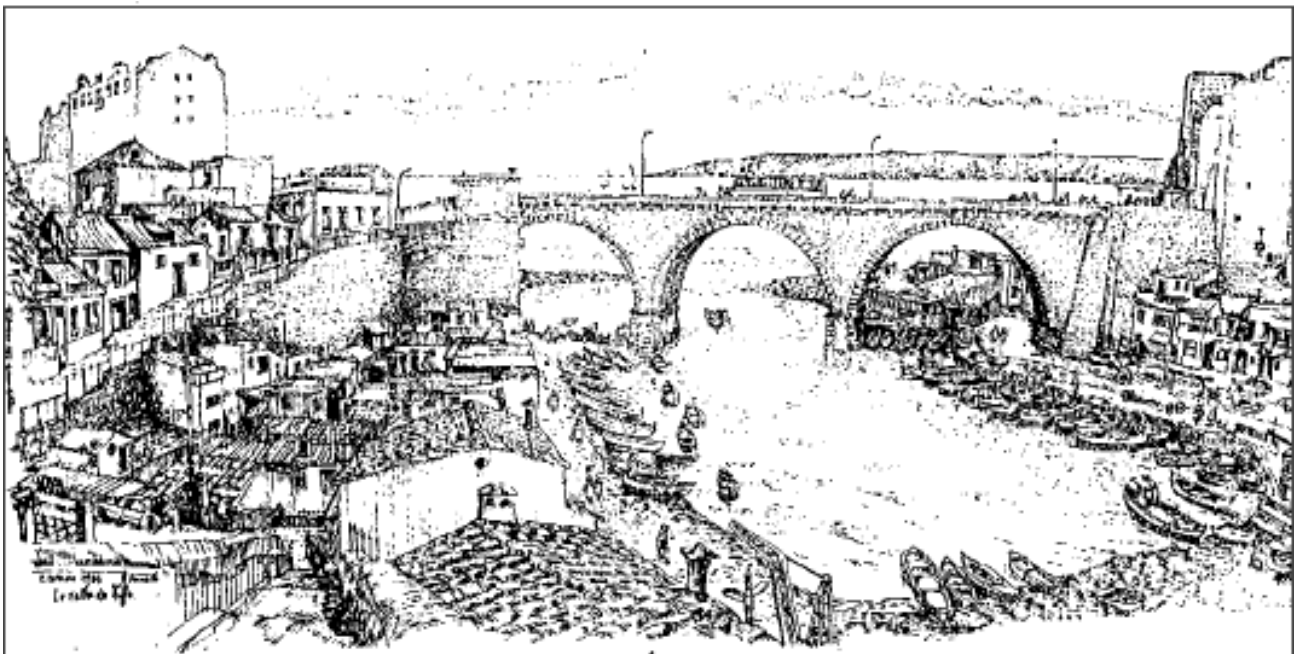
<sup>35</sup> See an example of this at Manly in P. Curby, *Seven Miles from Sydney, a History of Manly*, Manly Council, 2001, p. 40.

We have much better research aids now than researchers had in the 1920s when Frank Cridland trawled through land records in the Department of Lands building in Bridge Street. Nevertheless his comment that Dixon's 'first map showing the river' named it the 'Wooloonora River' suggests that he had access to a map that I have not been able to locate in either State Records NSW or the Mitchell Library.<sup>36</sup> There is much more research that could be done into Lucas' mill. If anyone has any additional evidence from primary sources I would love to hear from them.

Note: Thanks to Les Bursill for referring me to Frank Purvis and to Frank for the 1843 *Sydney Morning Herald* reference.

**Addendum:** I was interested to learn while researching Lucas' mill that Thomas Mitchell acquired 190 acres adjoining this land in September 1843 just as the road was under construction, and that this land changed hands twice over a two-week period. Mitchell also later acquired Lucas' 150 acres.<sup>37</sup> I'm not sure if this puts him in the same category as the land speculators of the 1880s when the Illawarra railway line was under construction but further research would undoubtedly reveal more.

Pauline Curby



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<sup>36</sup> Frank Cridland, *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and Sutherland Shire*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1924, p. 131. This map may still be at the Department of Lands.

<sup>37</sup> LTO, PA, 9152.

# *The Sutherland Shire Environment Centre.*

**"Beyond any doubt, Sutherland Shire is the most remarkable local government area in Australia. Nowhere else will you find such a concentration of significant features. Just look at the natural features we are blessed with:**

- Two great bays - Port Hacking and the southern third of Botany Bay;
- Three of Sydney's six rivers - the Georges, Woronora and Hacking;
- Four national parks - the Royal, Heathcote, Botany Bay and Georges River parks;
- Many of Sydney's best beaches;
- Kurnell Peninsula, where Lieutenant Cook and Gov. Phillip first landed."



Ask most Shire residents, he says, and they'll tell you they like the greenness of the Shire - and that you can't go far without getting a view of water. Council has estimated that, apart from perhaps 30 million trees in the four national parks, there are well over a hundred 'urban bushland' areas where a million large and five million small trees grow.

On top of these green facts, the Shire has 50 per cent of Sydney's mangroves and 90 per cent of its salt marshes - both vital to wetlands and littoral (shoreline) biodiversity.

You can say the Shire's identity is defined by water and trees, for our boundaries are set by Georges River, Botany Bay, the coastline, and the Royal, Heathcote and Georges River National Parks. Apart from all the Shire's beaches, parks-for-picnics, and river or coastal fishing, here is a range of special attractions... Worth Visiting

- Hazelhurst Arts Centre, Gympie (enq. 9542 8580)
- Sydney Tramway Museum, Loftus (enq. 9542 3646)
- Esplanade Walk, Cronulla (around Cronulla peninsula)
- Bundeena Ferry Trip, from Cronulla (enq. 9523 2990)
- Camellia Garden, Caringbah, on President Ave
- Gunnamatta Park, Cronulla, near the station · Oak Park and Shelly Park, off Ewos Pde, Cronulla
- Sutherland Shire Environment Centre (enq. 9545 3077)
- Sutherland Shire Historical Society Museum, Sutherland (9525 4339)

- Beekeepers' Centre, Sutherland (enq. 9542 3251)
- Cronulla Plaza, near railway and beach; while there, call in at the Tourism Association's office and pick up brochures (9544 2144) Trips, picnics and explorations.

At the Central Library you'll find an incredible Notice Board plastered with hundreds of *opportunities* - the leaflets of community groups offering events, courses, clubs that testify to the Shire's vigorous social life.

This is the CCC of the Shire, its Core Cultural Centre, which caters to all ages and tastes - certainly to some interest of every member of the family. Books galore, of course, but also magazines, newspapers, maps, cassettes, CDs, information videos, and large-print books. And there are photocopiers, fax machines, personal computers and internet services. Oh, and abundant games, toys, activities and story-telling for children.

One of those groups mentioned will of course be the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre which came into being in 1991. The Centre offices are located at 2-4 Merton Street, Sutherland and has completed a number of projects in its 14 year history.

How did the Environment Centre get started? In the early 1990s a group of friends bemoaned the loss of the Shire's environment under rampant development. They decided the Shire would benefit from an organisation that speaks up for the Shire's environment.

They pooled their talents, rented a second-floor office in Eton arcade, Sutherland and the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre was born. That is why the Sutherland Shire Environment Centre (SSEC) focuses directly onto the shire rather than looking at wider issues or broader regions of Sydney or Australia. The motto they work under is ***"Think globally, work locally"***

***Some of the projects the centre have completed or are presently involved in are;***

**1991-2** They ran a campaign in partnership with Sutherland Shire Council on the mega tip, the mega tip proposal was withdrawn in 1992.

**1993-4** The SSEC was involved in resisting offshore mining of sand along our coast. The community was successful in stopping that proposal.

**1996-7** The SSEC opposed the further development of Helensburgh. The centre argued that Helensburgh lies at the head of the Hacking river and development would lead inevitably to the degradation of Sutherland Shire and Port Hacking's beautiful waterways.

**1996-7** The SSEC also were active in opposition to the development of a Holsworthy airport (See picture below).

**1996-8** The centre opposed a Kurnell business plan for the co-generation of



shared energy. The SSEC argued that such a proposal would increase hotwater inflow into Botany Bay and have a significant impact on the Bay, generally.



**1999-2000** The centre was involved in getting rehabilitation work done on the Lucas Heights tip

– This activity contributed to the development of playing fields and open space agreements and the environment levy on tip use.

**2002-4** The SSEC has increased protection for endangered ecological communities of plants and animals in the shire.

The environment centre has won some grant money for projects in and around the Shire but needs more regular contributions to develop and maintain a staff of full time workers in order to be active on pressing environmental issues within the Shire.

The most successful recent and ongoing project is ***The Great Kai'mia Way*** project. The Kai'Mia way is a 220 km long network of routes along the Georges and Woronora rivers. The project has a long term objective to extend the routes around Pt Hacking and Botany Bay.

***The SSEC is in urgent need of the financial support of local residents. The centre operates on a veritable shoe string and has no local Government support at all. The centre relies almost entirely on individual contributions***

There are two ways to support the work of the SSEC, one is to join and **become a member for just \$27.50** per annum. The other way to support the centre is to make a **financial commitment**. This commitment can be through the trust fund run by Prudential Trust, or you could make a tax deductible donation to the centre at 2-4 Merton St., Sutherland. You can also find more information at their website [www.ssec.org.au](http://www.ssec.org.au)

The Environment Centre has a policy commitment to a working partnership with Sutherland Shire Council. The centre also has a commitment to shire residents and local shire business.

Les Bursill  
**V/Chair SSEC**

## Some Pictures from Early Cronulla and Port Hacking. *Courtesy of Jim Cutbush.*



*Looking South to Bundeena from Bass and Flinders Point - circa November 1936*



Audley House and Grounds prior to the building of the Audley Boatshed probably circa 1932

# Membership Renewal 2004/5

The Society's financial year commences 1<sup>st</sup> of July each year and concludes on the 30<sup>th</sup> June of the following year.

In accordance with the above, membership renewals are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July each year. Renewal forms on this page (below) should be completed and handed to the Honorary Treasurer at the monthly general meeting or posted to the Society using the address shown on the renewal form. The renewal application should also contain the appropriate subscription fee.

To assist with accurate record keeping each member is required to complete an individual renewal form. It should be noted that a failure to pay the membership fee within the three months from the end of the Financial Year will result in a lapse of membership.

**RECEIPTS** Receipts may be collected from the Treasurer at monthly meetings. If you wish to have your receipt posted to you a stamped self addressed envelope must be included with your renewal form and payment.

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## Sutherland Shire Historical Society

### Application for Renewal of Membership 2003/4

TITLE: Mr.Mrs.Ms.

Family Name.....

Given Name.....

Postal Address.....

.....Postcode.....Tel. No.....

**Please find my Subscription for 2003/4 enclosed herewith**  
**Annual Adult Subscription - \$20.00 + \$2.00 GST = \$22.00**  
**Junior member / Fulltime Student - \$10.00 + \$1.00 GST = \$11.00**

Signed .....Date.....

**Post to** -Treasurer, Sutherland Shire Historical Society, PO Box 389, Sutherland NSW 1499

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Signed .....Date.....

**Post to** -Treasurer, Sutherland Shire Historical Society, PO Box 389, Sutherland NSW 1499

# Excursion Report

Aileen Griffiths is ill and unable to provide her usual typewritten report, she has asked me to present this document on her behalf. Any errors or omissions are therefore mine.

The excursion for May 2004 is a trip through Port Hacking and up the Hacking River. There are only 20-25 places available. The time for the trip is 3 hours. The boat departs Cronulla Wharf at 10.30 am. Arriving back at 1.30 pm The date is set for Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2004. Costs for the trip are \$12.50 plus the costs to you of getting to Cronulla.

There will be tea, coffee, juices or water and some biscuits available during the trip. Aileen has indicated that there will be a luncheon provided at the conclusion of the trip. The location for the luncheon is yet to be decided, though Cronulla RSL or Bowling Club smorgasbord are strong contenders at this point.

The simplest method of transport to Cronulla is by train from Sutherland. The Cronulla wharf is situated below and behind the Cronulla station. You may get to the wharf by turning left as you leave the station and proceed to the tunnel under the railway line. The tunnel is some 80-100 metres downhill from the station entrance. The tunnel emerges in Tonkin Street and the wharf is directly ahead of you as you emerge.

If you choose to come to the wharf by car there is usually some parking nearby, though on weekends it can become very crowded.

To confirm your place please contact Nola Tunks at 6/101 Loftus Avenue, Loftus. 2232 or by phone on 95212473

## HISTORY OF PORT HACKING



'Was employed in the examination of the port ...

The shores of the port are mostly rocky; particularly on the north side; but there is no want of grass or wood ... streams which descend, apparently from the inland mountains, into the uppermost branch ... After sounding the entrance of Port Hacking in going out, and finding 3 1/2 fathoms of water, we steered NE by E for Cape Solander ... '



- Matthew Flinders in *Terra Australis*, 1 Apr 1796

## *Book Reviews*

Bruny d'Entrecasteaux, *Voyage to Australia and the Pacific, 1791-1793*, edited and translated by Edward Duyker and Maryse Duyker, The Miegunyah Press at Melbourne University Press, South Carlton, 2001. ISBN 0 522 84932 6

When my wife and I visited Esperance in May 2002, we did the usual touristy things, such as going on a four-wheel drive tour of Cape Le Grand National Park, flying over the Recherche Archipelago and carrying on to look at Baxter's Cliffs along the Great Australian Bight. One of the last things we did was to visit the Esperance Historical Museum which had a variety of publications and items, ranging from a steam locomotive to large pieces of space junk that fell to earth on the Nullabor Plain some years ago. What disappointed me was that though they knew a lot about the visit of Flinders in 1802, their knowledge of the French visit to their area, from which they derived their name, was virtually nil.

The major reason for this ignorance was that both Bruny (who captained the *Recherche*) and Huon de Kermadec (who captained the *Esperance*) died in 1793 whilst on the Expedition; Huon had consumptive tendencies and died on 6 May during their visit to New Caledonia. He was buried on the island of Poudioue. Bruny's death was unexpected. He died ten weeks later, off the north-east tip of New Guinea on 20 July.

These deaths, lack of leadership, and divisions on the two ships between those who supported the King and those who supported the Revolution, scurvy, dysentery and eventual capture by the British Navy, led to the total disintegration of the Expedition. The journal of the Expedition was eventually published by E.P.E. de Rossel in two volumes in 1808. The present publication comprises 439 pages of d'Entrecasteaux's journal supplemented by M.de Rossel's journal from New Guinea onwards.

The real value of the Expedition lay in the heavy volumes of Rossel and the naturalist, Labillardiere, with their descriptions of natives, plants and sea currents. And in the careful and delicate charts of Beautemps-Beaupre, both in Australia and in the South West Pacific.

The main purpose of the Expedition was to find out what happened to La Perouse's ships after they left Sydney in 1788. Bruny's ships bypassed Botany Bay on both sweeps that they took around Australia. (There was a suspicion Governor Phillip had sabotaged La Perouse). They made a valiant attempt to discover the truth from clues picked up in Cape Town, but the inhabitants of the islands where they were lost (the Vanicoro Group in the Santa Cruz Islands) had no wish to incriminate themselves; they'd almost certainly killed and eaten the survivors of the two wrecks.

The Expedition called into Van Diemen's Land on two separate occasions, and did some good original research charting around south east Tasmania. They also spent a month coasting some 1500 miles along Australia's southern coast, from Cape Leetwin to almost as far as Francois Thijssen had in the *Gulden Zeepardt* in 1627. Both expeditions did this run in the heat of summer.

The work involved in producing this volume has been extraordinary, and the attention to detail quite remarkable. Dr Duyker and his mother, Maryse Duyker and Edward's wife, Susan, are to be heartily congratulated on their labourious undertaking in filling a gaping void of ignorance.

Dr Duyker is a prominent member of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society. This Society is fortunate in having Captain Cook's Landing Place at Kurnell, it is doubly fortunate in having such an accomplished scholar as Dr Duyker as a member.

*Kelvin Grose*