



*Sutherland Shire
Historical Society Inc*
Bulletin



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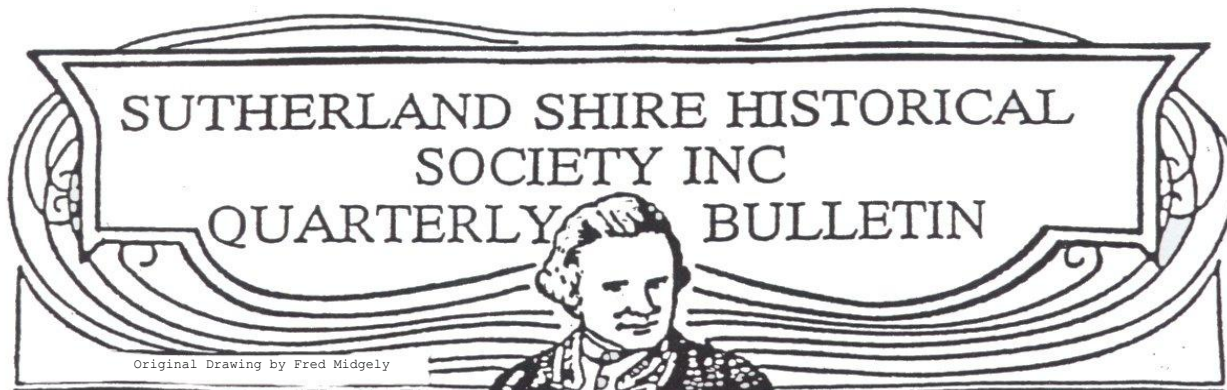
February 2005 \$1.00

*Shire of Sutherland Centenary
24th November - 2006*



A view of Gerale St Cronulla looking north with the Hotel Cecil and Ballroom in the background. Vehicles are late 1920's models and the distinctive Norfolk pines and Canary Island Date palms in the park are young.

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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.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME

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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



Happy New Year to you all!

What a busy year we have had, and what an active Society you have been! We finished our 1900's Owen Jones's Menai Pioneer house display, rebuilding the home from a pen drawing, which we used as a plan, and furnishing it in the 1900-1910 era—with a little artist's licence! The Christmas display completed by our Deputy Curator, Jim Cutbush, with advice from Allan McGrath, our Curator, was delightful, complete with Christmas tree and children's toys and books of the times. It was a real Bush Christmas. Thanks, Jim!

Book launches

Then we had two book launches of books by our members: Merle Kavanagh's "Echoes from the Bay: the Yowie Bay story" and Pauline Curby's "Pictorial History: Sutherland Shire" both to packed houses, and splendidly supported by our own Sutherland Shire Council, with the welcome given by Cllr. Melanie Gibbons and the refreshments supplied by Council. Our members supplied an amazing feast of goodies, actively showed how much they appreciate our own talented members of the Society writing local histories. A prodigious number of copies of each book were sold, and many members came and said how they had enjoyed my review of each book when I spoke at each launch and asked for a reprint in the Bulletin.

Christmas party

To finish off the year in grand style we had a combined Christmas party with the Sutherland Music Club, who provided a lovely musical evening, so the year finished with wonderful camaraderie and good will. Thank you Lyn Buchman and the Sutherland Music Club for your co-operation and support. Truly, can I say how satisfying it has been to work with you all throughout the past year, and I earnestly look forward to an even more illustrious 2005!

The Bulletin

However the year has been fraught with the stirrings of "change" which shows what a vibrant and active organisation we are. At our last Executive Committee meeting, concern was expressed at our marked departure in our Bulletin over the last three years from previous content and format to a totally academic and professional format. Whilst this is welcomed by professional historians and outside clientele, it has been sadly decried by our general membership. Where have the nostalgic articles gone? The poems? The historical snippets that were so enjoyed, -- that provided such a frisson of excitement and enjoyment, and the rush to open one's Bulletin to soak up the little interesting tit-bits? What has happened to them? It is a part of maturity and coming of age that we suffer such "growing pains" and is to be expected no doubt, although this still does not lessen the pain of loss, which many have experienced and then voiced to the Executive Committee. As President I acknowledge that *the Bulletin is the members' Bulletin*; you have to decide what content *you* want, and we will print it accordingly. As I am getting a storm of complaints and only a trickle of congratulations—the Executive has asked for a review of the Bulletin's content and format. As it has been difficult getting most of the busy authors together in one place to discuss the future of the Bulletin, a series of email correspondence has been conducted. It seems rather than squabbling over the content of the Bulletin, it may be better to leave it as it was, or is, *and start a new journal* and then both camps are appeased and *no one* loses out, so honour is satisfied.

Doryanthes A suggestion has been received from Dr. Ed Duyker, and enthusiastically embraced by our academic and professional members that we commence a new journal under the banner of the SSHS. Doryanthes is the botanical name for our own Gynea Lily, and would be an eminently suitable name for a journal emanating from Sutherland Shire. This would be a new professional publication with well-

researched historical articles, and book reviews of notable works. Les Bursill our current Editor of the Bulletin has expressed an interest in the new publication, if we have a member who is interested in taking over the Bulletin. Fortunately when I asked Mr. Bruce Watt, he considered briefly and has taken up the challenge and will be the new Editor of the Bulletin with the members' agreement. Les has sent me his resignation, and I pay tribute to Les, that he has been an excellent Editor, and we are delighted we are not losing him, as he is willing to be the Editor of our new journal, Doryanthes. I have asked the Council if they could support the printing of a new journal, about 20 pages, twice yearly, but Mr. Rayner says unfortunately they can only support our current four issues of the Bulletin and cannot extend further. This means we must apply for a grant, or gain a willing sponsor so we can print our new journal. If you know of anyone who can assist us in this endeavour, please contact me. I have asked Les and Ed to send me a Notice of Motion which we can print in this, or our next Bulletin (May) and then it will be debated at the AGM, so that you, the members decide how we may best advance the interests of the SSHS in the future. This is the current situation; the future of our publications is up to the members to tell us what they want.

Heritage Festival: Friday, 8th April, 2005 to Sunday, 17th April, 2005.

This year the focus of Heritage Festival will be on Como and the SSHS will assist Council in promoting the heritage of the Shire particularly in the Como/Scylla Bay/Oyster Bay area. Dr. Maryanne Larkin, one of our members will give a talk on the History of Como, at the Como Hotel on Friday, 15th April 2005, which is our meeting night.

Anzac Day

As this is our last Bulletin before we commemorate Anzac Day, and I doubt we have any members left from that fateful day, I have included my wartime memory of a plane crash in Petersham, Sydney as the 60th Anniversary of this crash is on 2nd May, 2005, and very close to our commemoration of Anzac Day and pays tribute to our brave airmen, amongst others, who willingly gave their lives for our freedom.

Dawn Emerson

Dawn Emerson,
President

Meeting Dates 2004-2005

Friday, 18th February, 2005: Ms. Christine Yeats, State Archives: Heritage Buildings
Friday, 18th March, 2005: Mrs. Angela Thomas: Birdman of Kings Cross
Friday, 15th April, 2005: Dr. Maryanne Larkin: History of Como and its Hotel
Friday, 20th May, 2005: Mr. Terry McCosker: Sydney Water, from Tankstream to now.
Friday, 17th June, 2005: Ms Bronwyn Hanna
Friday, 15th July, 2005: Dr. Wayne Johnson
Friday, 19th August, 2005: t b a
Friday, 16th September, 2005: t b a
Friday, 21st October, 2005: t b a
Friday, 18th November, 2005: Mr. Tim Narraway: The Boer Wars
Friday, 16th December, 2005: Xmas Party

From The Editor's Desk

As Dawn has reported, there are moves afoot for change to the nature of what this Society publishes through the bulletin. It would be fair to say that some favour a more academically rigorous journal that may include matters of local or broader historical significance whilst others are more comfortable with a less rigorous journal but one that they can relate to, is easily read and leans to local content.

Both viewpoints have merit and perhaps the suggestion of a second journal will satisfy both camps. My main concern with this would be that it could lead to fewer articles being available for the Bulletin. It is up to members to contribute articles. Smaller items can be readily typed up, however, if you have joined the information age, my e mail address is watto51@optusnet.com.au

The Society owes Les Bursill a great deal with respect to his stewardship of the Bulletin over the past five years. Whilst this is the first Bulletin that I have edited, the structure and many of the articles were in place so it has been a relatively smooth transition.

I have taken a look at membership details. As well as Sutherland Shire Councillors and other societies, the Bulletin is distributed to 127 financial members (many are husband and wife) and one institution (Boys Town). Of these members, approximately 60% are female and 40% male. A variety of suburbs are represented with Cronulla and Caringbah the highest at 12% each, Sutherland 9% and Loftus and GyMEA about equal on 6%. It is not a young membership and we need to look at ways of encouraging new and younger members in order to continue to be viable and meaningful. This matter needs to be given priority.

So what is it that we as members are attempting to do? An historical interest is clearly a common denominator. For some, this will mean reliving memories of our childhood and stories and shared cultural understandings of our more distant relatives and locations associated with them. This is often associated with a local history perspective and fits well with some of the aims of a district historical society. Others will have a broader perspective with links to national and international themes across a broad time perspective. These are a couple of perspectives on what is history.

“History is the lie most commonly agreed upon” (Voltaire)

“A nation which does not know what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do” (Woodrow Wilson)

We have several noted authors amongst us who are writing contemporary historical accounts. The bulletin, in time will become a source document for future historians. So whether it is academically researched material or contemporary accounts from the layman, it's important to make a written contribution. Remember that it's the written account that becomes future history.

I have a few ideas for articles in the forthcoming Bulletins. I was a SSHS representative on the Heritage Register Committee in 1993 and share a keen interest in recording and preserving the built environment. Yet there is very little written about some of our significant local houses. In future issues, I will be writing about some of these, including Moombara, (Lilli Pilli), our second oldest house. Apart from houses, our cars are an integral part of our lives. They helped to open up the Shire when it was a rural outpost. Are there any early motoring stories out there?

Bruce Watt Editor 2005

TALES OF OLD YOWIE BAY

Selections from Echoes from the Bay: the Yowie Bay Story The Ewey/Yowie Name
'By Merle Kavanagh'

In 1827 Assistant Surveyor, Robert Dixon, received a letter dated 17th February from the Surveyor General, John Oxley, instructing him to survey Botany Bay and the Georges River to the 'church at Liverpool' after which he was directed to –

Send your boat round to Port Hacking ... which with all its branches is to be traced round ... (particularly noting) the extent of the sand shoals off Port Hacking and the line of direction of the fairway of the channel.

... The completed survey by Dixon used the local native names of Cronulla, Towra, Gunnamatta, Burranear, Woolloowear and Ewey. This is the first evidence of the naming of Ewey Bay and we can only assume that it was called thus by the local natives as the Monthly Report Forms which the surveyors were required to complete carried the notation 'Native Names of places in all cases to be inserted when ascertained'. ... Regretfully there was no report form in Dixon's file for the Botany Bay/Port Hacking survey.

With no specific details in the records concerning the naming of Ewey, legend tends to fill the gap. One such narrative relates that as Dixon and his party rowed into Yowie Bay around Willarong Point, some natives on the shore there called across to natives on Yowie Point 'Ewe –ey' and it echoed. This oral tale encompasses both the name and the popular interpretation of its meaning as 'place of echoes' but no records have been found to confirm the story.

In 1885 the railway from Sydney was extended to Sutherland and the following year to Waterfall. About this time the name 'Yowie' began appearing as an alternative to 'Ewey' and both names persisted for many years. In 1909 residents of Yowie Bay had complained that letters addressed to Yowie Bay often never arrived there. The Postal Department wanted the office called 'Yowrie'. The name controversy led to much confusion, but nothing was done. In 1934 the Council tried to settle the argument by deciding to use the name Ewey Bay and this was reported in a local area newspaper *The Propeller* –

Yowie Bay, a pretty and popular resort in the Port Hacking River, will in future be known as Ewey Bay. Maps published over 50 years ago designate the place as 'Ewey Bay' and how it became known as 'Yowie' very few seem to know. The original name of Ewey Bay is recognised by the Electoral Office and the Postal Dept. Sutherland Council had decided to address all its future correspondence to Ewey Bay, and to endeavour to get residents to adopt the name. Bus designation boards and shop and road sign posts will now all have to be altered.

Unfortunately, the Council may have decided but the public had a mind of its own and the name 'Yowie' became more widely established. But how this alternate name originated, we can only speculate. Some references suggest that it means 'Place of Echoes'. Perhaps the name Ewey, Yowie, or similar does translate to a simple aboriginal phrase referring to voices which come back, or people talking but there is no record of this in a variety of aboriginal language books.

Mrs. Margery Hutton Neve, a local historian with Sutherland Shire Historical Society for many years, had concluded that the bay was called Ewey because it was where the ewes were kept. She had been told by the daughter of one of the shepherds that the ewes paddock was at Yowie Bay. Although it has been shown that it was not the origin of the Ewey name, there is some merit in acknowledging that the Ewey name may have been corrupted to Yowie if the ewes were kept in the

Yowie paddock. People from the North of England and Scotland would have called the female sheep 'yow' and the lamb 'yowie' (as in Jo) and it is probable that Holt, as a Yorkshireman, would have used this term and he may also have had such people working for him.

There might be another explanation. Rex Gilroy records in his book *Giants from the Dreamtime: The Yowie in Myth and Reality*, that the early settlers heard from the Aborigines of the monsters known as 'Yowee' and 'Yahoo' that inhabited the surrounding forest. He reports that they called a nearby bay 'Yowee' –

Because of the numbers of 'hairy men and women' who roamed its shores; and it was in the vicinity of what is still today 'Yowie Bay' (Miranda district) that, around January 1795, another hunting party of soldiers and convicts are claimed to have spotted a man-sized hairy 'thing' running from them over a tree-covered ridge overlooking the bay.

Gilroy cites many examples of the belief in the existence of the 'Yowie', including an incident submitted by Mrs. June Mullans regarding an experience her father, Frank Bran, had as a schoolboy growing up in the Royal National Park in the early 20th century. Gilroy, a naturalist, was in the shire personally investigating the sightings in the Royal National Park in 1982 prior to producing his book detailing his findings.

There were other legendary 'Yowie' stories involving an early settler on the southern shore of Port Hacking, Charles Gogerly, who lived on the sharp easterly point of the land mass separating South West Arm and the Port Hacking River, just across the port from Ewey Bay, known today as Gogerly's Point. Gogerly had acquired two adjoining parcels of land there in 1854 and was engaged in shell gathering and the oyster trade. ...

Captain William Collin recalls his 'Yowie' encounter with Gogerly when he wrote of a 'curious experience' in the vicinity of Gogerly's Point early in the 1850s. He and a friend Massie were camped in tents and shell gathering, selling them 'to schooners and ketches which carried (the goods) to Sydney'.

One afternoon, whilst we were busy on the beach, at low water, Gogerly sent down two of his boys in an old log canoe, to tell us that their father had seen a Yahoo, or wild man of the woods; It was about 12 feet high, they said, and carrying a staff 20 feet long. He warned us that we were not safe from the creature, as it was seen close to our tents.

Collin recorded that his mate 'knew such things as Yahoos existed; and as there were a number of deep gullies about this was no doubt a likely place for them'. Gogerly's story made Collin suspicious and to placate his friend he suggested 'If we could only trap this Yahoo ... we should not need to trouble any further about gathering shell.' However, Massie refused to camp on the spot another night so they took down the tents and pitched them close to Gogerly's home. Some time was spent looking for the Yahoo, but they only found tracks which were not human. Massie was persuaded to return to the old camping spot and they did, though he would only sleep on the boat. Collin slept in the tent with his gun beside him and claimed he did not believe there was a Yahoo around but that the 'dingoes, or native dogs ... made noise enough for half a dozen Yahoos'. They finally moved to a lonely spot close to a large fig tree, with a beautiful waterhole nearby as Collin felt they were not welcome near the Gogerly home.

Another party who were travelling to the Illawarra by horseback from Sydney in the 1860s, were also made aware of the Yahoo by Gogerly during their time at Port Hacking. The recorder of this ride to the Illawarra recalled an incident near Gogerly's home –

*A peculiarity of the foreshores was a dividing wall which kept the wild animals out.
I noticed a breach in this wall and on enquiring the reason, was informed that the Yahoo
must have kicked it.*

Gogerly had entertained his visitors with a boat tour of the port and in his parting remarks to them he made it clear that –

*His great aim was to engage the attention of a sufficient number of sportmen (sic)
to band together with case hardened bullets (if they could be got) to do away with
their arch enemy – the Yahoo – whom none had positively seen, yet who terrified
the community.*

Perhaps these old settlers' tales have some truth in them? Could such creatures have been more than just the results of a vivid imagination or too much imbibing? Is this story just a legend, lingering on with others from the early days of Yowie or did Gogerly have an ulterior motive in scaring off unwelcome visitors? Was he involved in the distillation and trade in illicit spirits, which found a ready market in the city pubs? It would not have been difficult to transport the goods by clandestine ship to Sydney or by small boat across the port and the Georges River to avoid the Sydney Customs officers. Smuggling was widespread throughout the region and the isolation of Port Hacking made it ideal for such a trade. Whatever your belief, the name Yowie has clung to the bay, eventually eliminating Ewey from general public use.

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Vale: Wallace Richard Bursill

Born at South Hurstville March 1st 1924 Deceased 15th November 2004

The Trials of An Apprentice Historian

Dysentery, malnutrition, 20kg weight loss: not your average historian's field trip. That was the price of Edward Duyker's sharing of the harsh lives of poor villagers over four months in West Bengal in 1979.

Today, with 15 books behind him, the Sydney-based independent historian can look back and laugh - 'I'm not so reckless now' - at the gruelling research which led to his PhD thesis.

Edward received an OAM in the 2004 Australia Day honours list for service to the community through the preservation and documentation of Australian history, particularly that of the early European explorers and Mauritian immigrants.

'I've tried to keep my life as interesting as possible,' he confesses. He has excellent recall of his 1997 research visit to Beirut, with lost luggage and dozens of gun-laden checkpoints. His historian's memory for whimsical local detail recalls a popular Beirut brand of underpants - 'Apocalypse.'

Edward guesses he's racked up the equivalent of almost five years on research trips, including visits to more than 50 countries (not to mention far-flung territories like the Canary Islands, Greenland, the Faroes, the Shetlands and Tahiti) and outback Australia.



'In recent years the research has been family expeditions with my wife, Susan, and sons Samuel and Pierre. When Sam was eight he filled 383 pages in his logbook for one trip. In 1989 we travelled for five and half months in Polynesia and Europe as a family on the trail of one of my biographical subjects. In 1992, we circled the globe in seven and a half months in pursuit of Daniel Solander, the Swedish naturalist on the Endeavour, making many of his landfalls in the Pacific but also in the Arctic living in tents, youth hostels and university flats, always doing our own cooking.'

In 1994 Gough Whitlam launched *An Officer of the Blue*, Edward's biography of Marc-Joseph Marion Dufresne, the second European explorer to visit Tasmania. His biography of Daniel Solander (*Nature's Argonaut*) was shortlisted for the NSW Premier's General History Prize in 1999. He is a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Historical Society. In 2000 the French Government gave him France's highest academic award, a Chevalier dans L'Ordre des Palmes Academiques. Last year he was the Australia Council resident at the Cit internationale des Arts in Paris. On his return he received the Centenary Medal. His latest book, *Citizen*

Labillardiere, is the first comprehensive study of the French naturalist best known for his pioneering study of the flora of New Holland.

Few historians die rich. Edward had an early lightning bolt of luck which contributed mightily to him daring to become an independent historian, his occasionally precarious life for 21 years. He had collaborated with the late Dr Coralie Younger on the life of Molly Fink, an Australian woman who married the Rajah of Pudukottai in 1915. He published Molly and the Rajah himself - and it attracted years of lucrative film rights. The film is still a dream, but the money launched his career. Later he received Australia Council grants, a private Fellowship and the NSW History Fellowship.

Edward was born in Melbourne. His father was from Holland, his mother from Mauritius. He enjoyed his La Trobe years, and acknowledges a great debt to historians Alan Frost and Don Ferrell. His Honours thesis in Indian history was on the relationship of one of the Santal tribes of West Bengal to the Maoist Naxalite movement. His supervisor's absence meant that he had to cram it into six months, leaving him free to work for six months to fund a trip to Europe and the Middle East. He had travelled widely in 1975 in India (during the Emergency), Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

After his Doctorate - an extension of his Honours thesis - he worked in the Joint Intelligence Organisation for three years as an analyst in South Asian and later Middle East issues. Subsequent difficulty in getting an academic position, combined with the chance to move to Sydney, resulted in him setting up as an independent historian and house husband (and later serving six years as Honorary Consul of the Republic of Mauritius.)

He's done limited cyberspace exploring. His only venture into internet auctions yielded a two-volume treasure - a first edition of Labillardiere's Relation du Voyage la recherche de la Perouse for \$227 from a Queensland source. They're worth 40 times that overseas.

He dislikes books 'pregnant with forbidding terminologies', preferring to write for lay readers as well as scholars. 'I enjoy being a pioneer in a particular area, the lives of lesser known scientists and explorers with Australian links. I try to give a sense of another's life, without trying to play games with academic theories.

'I believe history can be a work of art. I'm still seeking a personal truth - I believe you can aspire to create a sense of what happened. I try to make something as engaging as a novel, yet still a scholarly work.'

Spare time? Working with his hands - his father taught him to weld when he was twelve - bushland regeneration, reading, classical music and planning field trips for his current work on naturalist Francois Piron, a controversial figure from the Baudin expeditions.

Rewind

Some Comments by Pierre Duyker

ABC Television has just finished broadcasting its first series of 'Rewind'.

In the competitive Sunday evening slot, this series has successfully offered a revisionist perspective on some important events and characters in Australian history. So far, engaging programs have covered subjects such as the death of the racehorse Pharlap in the United States, the refusal of the legendary boxer Les Darcy to fight in World War I, disputed claims about the creation of the Australian cartoon character 'Felix the Cat', the pivotal contributions of the aeronautical pioneer Lawrence Hargrave, the double life of anthropologist Daisy Bates, the life and crimes of the

infamous politician and murderer John Thomas Ley and the origins of the song ‘Waltzing Matilda’.

The program is essentially composed of short documentaries presented in a current affairs format. It makes good use of historic photographs, archival footage, re-enactment (in silent costume drama format) and interviews with historians and surviving witnesses and relatives. In its revisionism, there is a detective style with a deliberate emphasis on mystery. The series has sought to dispell myths and to reassess reputations and traditional viewpoints.

Historian Michael Cathcart, the program presenter, involves himself heavily with segments of his own, often involving visits to key historic sites and archives. Cathcart’s presentation style can be likened to that of Britain’s Michael Wood. The skills he brought to bear abridging Manning Clark’s *History of Australia* are evident in his taut popular items. Other Rewind segments are presented by respected investigative journalists such as Peter George, Christopher Zinn and Justin Murphy, with additional contributions by historians, Dr Michelle Arrow and Rebe Taylor and journalist-filmmaker Julie Nimmo. Cartoonist Warren Brown has his own special view of Australian history.

The program soundtrack also helps to link the segments together. Rewind’s main introductory theme, composed by Adrian Van de Veldel, is, I believe, strongly Australian in character with fine piano and guitar features. Warren Brown’s cartoon segment features his own lively banjo playing. The instrumental folk element in Rewind’s soundtrack is undoubtedly well chosen and sympathetic to the program’s historical concerns.

Camera work in the series certainly meets professional standards for documentary. Aside from set-up interviews and follow-on documentary camera angles, several other elements are present. These include the analysis of historic documentation/footage/photography where select areas are highlighted or scrolled to draw attention to textual points. The introductory pastiche of archival footage mixed with contemporary graphics are themes which reoccur several times throughout the program’s duration. These help to set the scene - Australia’s past - and also to introduce the variety of narrative materials which the program’s strong research team has uncovered.

Although somewhat formulaic and fairly restrained, Rewind has offered a refreshing change in Australian television. It has also provided a convenient showcase for other short documentaries funded by Film Australia. Lastly, I took note of the fact that the show intentionally featured a wide range of ethnicities (including indigenous Australians) rather than the usual heavy focus on our Anglo-Celtic culture. Those with a passion for Australian history will no doubt look forward to the next series.



Mile post on Port Hacking Road, Lilli Pilli marking 18 miles to Sydney.

Lilli Pilli has many of the Shires’s oldest homes as it was the original entrance to the Shire via Port Hacking Road before the Cronulla beaches became popular.

New Zealand's Unknown Soldier

By Mary Small

On the 11th November 2004 a significant and very solemn ANZAC ceremony took place in Wellington, New Zealand when the remains of a World War 1 "unknown New Zealand soldier" were re-interred in a specially designed tomb at the city's War Memorial.

Earlier this year my cousin Patricia Smyth, who lives in Wellington, invited me over from Australia for the event knowing that having been inspired to write a children's book following Canberra's Armistice ceremony in November 1993 I would be interested. My fictional story 'The Unknown Australian Soldier' based on factual World War 1 events was published in 2001 by the ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee (Q'land) Inc. It was also significant that Patricia's sculptor son-in-law Kingsley Baird had designed the New Zealand Memorial in Canberra's ANZAC Parade dedicated on the 24th April 2001 and had been awarded the contract to design a fitting memorial tomb for New Zealand's 'Unknown Warrior'. [The appellation 'warrior' represents all army, navy and air force personnel involved in war both Pakeha (European/white man) and Maori.]



The idea for New Zealand to return an unidentified soldier from the battlefields of France or Belgium to his homeland was first considered on the 11th November 1920 following the re-interment ceremony of a British warrior at Westminster Abbey in London. Concerns related to funding prevented the project going ahead until 1999 when the idea resurfaced and the site finally chosen to be the National War Memorial in Wellington.



*Mary and son-in-law
Kingsley*

Kingsley's design, inspired by the Southern Cross constellation possesses a distinctive New Zealand character with bronze and stone the primary materials used in the tomb's construction. Rows of small marble crosses embedded in a night sky of black granite represent not only the warrior's slaughtered companions who remain overseas but also the stars. The tomb's cover of bronze forms a celestial mantle.

The solemn handover ceremony of the soldier's remains to official representatives from New Zealand took place on the 6th November 2004 at Longueval in France. On the 10th November the flag draped casket was escorted from the Royal New Zealand Air Force base at Rongotai with full military honours to Parliament House and placed on a catafalque in the Legislative Council Chamber. The public had the opportunity to pay their respects during the vigil that lasted overnight.

At 11 am the multi-faith memorial service honouring the 'Unknown Warrior' and all New Zealand war dead was held in the Cathedral of St Paul. Addresses by the Prime Minister the Right Honourable Helen Clark, and Her Excellency the Governor General Dame Silvia Cartwright were followed by prayers offered by representatives of Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Hindu faiths with the closing blessing shared by eight heads of churches. Then, placed on a gun carriage flanked by his six member bearer party representing New Zealand's army, navy and air force who had proudly escorted him all the way from France, the flag draped casket was slowly processed through the streets of the city with accompanying fanfare.

At the conclusion of the solemn interment ceremony on the steps of the War Memorial the casket was lowered into the tomb. Samples of soil from the Somme battlefields and soils from various districts of New Zealand were then sprinkled over the coffin by Guests of Honour. Then, while the carillon played an elegy, guests and the public were given the opportunity to throw poppies and other floral tributes into the tomb before it was finally sealed with its bronze mantle.

On my return to Sydney I was saddened to learn that there had been little mention if any from the media of this most significant ANZAC event.

Mary Small, Sylvania Heights

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King George the Third and his links with the Shire.

Most have heard the story of the "mad" king, as George III became known as in his later years. It is true that George suffered a particular illness that for the last 10 or so years of his life, rendered him incapable of carrying out his regal duties. His son took over as the Prince Regent until the King's death in 1820. This interim period is referred to as the Regency period.

The times during which George the third reigned though were indeed momentous. His reign extended from 1760 to 1820 and included the American and French revolutions, the start of the Industrial era, Napoleon and indeed the discovery and settlement of Australia.

I am fortunate to have an original copy of the Memoirs of King George the Third, printed after his death in 1821. There are a couple of accounts that are relevant to local historians and to Australians. They are a relatively close account from an historical perspective.

The first has to do with the appointment of Cook to lead the expedition to the South Pacific for scientific reasons in 1769. The following is a quote.

"His majesty had always taken a great interest in the adventurous voyages of Captain Cook, and, it may be with justice affirmed, that it was owing to the high degree of patronage which his majesty bestowed upon Captain Cook and other celebrated circumnavigators, that those most interesting voyages were undertaken, by which, a correct knowledge was obtained of

the hitherto unexplored islands of the Pacific Ocean, and which has been so essentially useful to the commercial interests of the nation. It had long been a problem with geographers and scientific men, whether a north-west passage existed from the Pacific into the North Sea, and his majesty determined to set on foot an expedition for the solution of the problem. The intention of his majesty was no sooner intimated to the Admiralty, than their choice of the individual most proper for such an undertaking fell upon Captain Cook, but so great was the delicacy of his majesty towards that celebrated circumnavigator, that he would not permit the Admiralty to ask him to undertake the command. The intended expedition was, however, no sooner made known to Cook than he offered without the slightest hesitation to comply with his majesty's wishes, and his offer was accepted by the king in the most gracious manner. The result of this expedition is well known, as its renowned captain fell a sacrifice to the fury of the Sandwich islanders, and all that remained for his majesty to perform was, to provide for his widow and sons, which was done in the most liberal manner."

The second account concerns the issue of transportation.

'It was in the beginning of the year 1787 that his majesty directed his attention to the amelioration of prison discipline, to which he was in a great degree actuated by the remonstrances of the philanthropist Howard. A most reprehensible delay had for a long time existed in the transportation of the convicts, by which the gaols were so much crowded that the most infectious maladies prevailed, and moral contamination was imparted to the young and inexperienced offender.

It was at an interview that Howard had with his majesty at Windsor that the state, not only of the metropolitan prisons but also of the country ones, were submitted to his majesty, and a plan was immediately drawn up, by which the evils, so justly complained of could be removed.

His majesty notified this plan to parliament in his speech on the 23rd January, when he says, "A plan has been formed, by my direction, for transporting a number of convicts, in order to remove the inconvenience which arose from the crowded state of the gaols, in different parts of the kingdom." It was subsequently submitted to his majesty that the finances of the country were not able to bear the enormous expense of transporting such a large number of felons, and he immediately ordered that £5,000 should be advanced from his privy purse towards a fund for removing the convicts, which by the exertions of some other philanthropists soon exceeded the sum of £10,000, and his majesty had ultimately the satisfaction of knowing, that every felon had been removed on whom the sentence of transportation had been passed."

The issue of where to send the convicts had arisen much earlier. After the Americans won their independence in 1776, England's convicts were no longer welcome. A committee of the House of Commons was set up as early as 1779 to investigate a suitable place. Joseph Banks had recommended Botany Bay. Cook's original choice of New Zealand was not considered suitable because of the war-like Maoris who were known as cannibals and more ferocious than the aborigines of New South Wales. By 1786 the Government was still undecided as to where the settlement should be – whether in America, Africa or New Holland.

Matters became much more pressing and could no longer be postponed. In August 1786, Lord Sydney forwarded to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury the King's instructions for a penal settlement as contained in the document - *Heads of a Plan for effectually disposing of convicts, by the Establishment of a Colony in New South Wales*. ⁽¹⁾ The First Fleet set sail on the 13th May 1787 from the Spithead carrying a total of 759 convicts and 16 children. The voyage took eight months and one week to complete.

⁽¹⁾ Sydney's First Four Years A reprint of the narrative of the expedition to Botany Bay, and A Complete Account of the Settlement at Port Jackson by Captain Watkins Tench of the Marines. 1961. (pxi)

Bruce Watt

Mosquito Plane Crash on Petersham Public School: by Dawn Emerson

Dawn Emerson, B.A., Litt. B., AALIA, D.U., J.P. is President of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society, and was formerly a Councillor, Sutherland Shire for over twelve years and Deputy Mayor for two of those years. She is a librarian by profession and has served in the fields of school, public, tertiary, and banking librarianship, including working for AusAid establishing a library for the Dept. of Communications in Pretoria, South Africa.

Sixty years ago I was an eye witness to this tragedy, and in attendance at Petersham Public School at the time. I had never met *another person* who remembered it, or even knew anything about it, and I started to believe that I had experienced a nightmare that remained surprisingly vivid. One Sunday, on the ABC's "Australia All Over" Ian McNamara mentioned the plane crash at Petersham, but gave very few details and I rang in to tell of my memories of that day. I was fobbed off by the telephonist, and told that they would ring me back some other day to talk about it. Of course they never did, and one wonders at the accessibility to actually speak on such programmes, and why an eyewitness was excluded. Perhaps they didn't believe that there was anyone left who remembered it! Then recently I was talking to a tennis player we had just met, Ron Lewis of Menai, and asked him in which area he had grown up as a child. When he said Petersham, my next question was: "And do you remember the plane crash on the school?" I nearly fell over when he said he did, and that he was there on that day! At last someone else had verified that it DID happen! I then researched the incident and obtained newspaper clippings on the disaster, as well as looked at Peter Dunn's website, and spoke to Chrys Meader, Historian at Marrickville Council, who alerted me to information she had received from Lu Bell. I now realise that there are many people alive today who remember that tragic day, and were there, as I was.

Wednesday, 2nd May, 1945. Petersham Public School*Footnote: Another plane, a Royal Navy Firefly Fighter, crashed into Lewisham Hospital some eight months later on 31st January, 1946. This is a totally different incident which can be confused with the Petersham crash. Mrs. Val Carter of Bangor, has memories of this crash. There also was the crash of a Grumman Avenger that crashed into a house in Railway St., Petersham, mentioned by Bruce Weekley, but details of this crash may have been suppressed from publication during the security-conscious war years and its date is unknown.

On this day I was a pupil in 2nd class on the top floor of the Infants Department, at Petersham Public School, and seven years of age. I had only enrolled two days previously, my parents living formerly with my maternal grandmother at Fivedock. As I had been there a very short time, I did not even know where my paternal grandmother's home was, in Brighton Street, where my parents, my sister and myself were living at this stage. Mr. Ron Lewis, now of Menai, was a pupil in 5th class, which was on the ground floor of the Primary School. He had been attending the school since he was 6, and remembers the location of the buildings, whereas I have only a slight recollection. The school was a typical war-time school in Sydney with white paper strips taped criss-cross over the windows, and trenches with high muddy banks down at the far end of the playground. Ron remembers that all the teachers were elderly, as most of the young men and women were no doubt in the Armed Forces. He also noted, as did I, that all the teachers were well dressed, the men always wore ties, whilst many of the children who attended the school wore no shoes. Ron recalls that Mr. Allmon (Allman?) was the Principal, and that he lived somewhere in the Hurlstone Park/Ashfield area. Ron's father, Peter Bernard Lewis was the Overseer at the Petersham Council, and the Council depot was just across the road from the school.

The RAF plane and its crew. The de Havilland Mosquito was one of the great aircraft of World War II, and the Mozzie, as it was affectionately known, fulfilled many vital roles as reconnaissance, pathfinder and intercept attack fighter, as well as bomber. Twelve fighter bomber FB VIs were

assembled and flight tested from Mascot. These aircraft were to be used for training and general squadron flying, but the B's were preserved for special missions. This particular aircraft had been assembled on 17th March, and tested on 28th April, but had not as yet been delivered officially to the 618 squadron. Development problems in its construction, relating to timber availability and glue reaction to tropical humidity had had to be overcome. The Mosquito was of a laminated wood construction, and over 200 were built at the Beale piano factory at Annandale. It had twin 1400 to 1600 hp Rolls Royce Merlins which gave the plane exceptional performance and speed. The British Mosquito Squadron 618 was very hush hush, and when there seemed little left to do in the European theatre of war, the squadron was transferred by ship to Australia as it was hoped that their expertise and training could be exploited in the Pacific. Carpenter, E: Not so secret squadron, *Wartime*, 2005. The Mosquito FB VI HR576 plane, PR.XVI NS735 of 618 Squadron RAF (UK), was flying overhead at about 1,000 feet during a test flight at the time, on approach to Mascot Airport. . Two men, the pilot and an observer, were in the plane, and they attempted to steer the aircraft away from houses before it exploded. The pilot was Flight Lieutenant David George Rochford, 106025 618 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve aged 25 of Oxford, England;* Remembered with honour in Sydney War Cemetery, Memorial Avenue, Rookwood: Plot 2W.B.14 : Flight Lieutenant David George Rochford, 106025, 618 Sqdn., Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, died Wednesday, 2nd May, 1945. [His daughter, Wendy Harvey, was only six weeks old when her father was killed in this tragic accident.] ; the observer was LAC Charles Broughton Boydell, aged 24 from Mosman, NSW who was supposed to be off duty that morning, so it is not known how he came to be on the flight. He had recently been transferred from the 1st Australian Armoured Divisional Transport Company in April. website:home.st.net.au/~dunn.nsw20.htm

Explosion Mrs. Ada Boes said she was reading in the garden at the time, when she heard a plane which sounded most unusual. She saw smoke billowing out of the rear of the plane, followed by flames and with a loud explosion the plane blew up. **Campus: Institute Issues*, April 1998 N.B. The date of the crash is wrong in this article, as the year is given as 1947. It was 1945. The two crew members tried to eject from the aircraft, but they were not high enough to give enough time during descent for their parachutes to open. The engine of the plane faltered and then back-fired, and exploded in mid air, killing the pilot and the observer, scattering blazing wreckage from the wooden aircraft over the school ground, and the houses nearby, damaging 18 properties and setting four houses on fire; some wreckage landing in the railway goods yard, and some in Petersham Park. Mrs. I Clifton of Yagoona, said she was 19 at the time and lived two doors away from the Petersham Primary School, and was in her backyard. As she looked up pieces of flaming debris were falling. The engine of the aircraft appeared to be falling straight into the back of the house, and she ran screaming into the house. However it passed over her house and landed on the roof of the house opposite.* “Eyewitness to Mosquito Tragedy”: *Reveille*, July/Aug, 1997.

Petersham Infants’ School To we children on the top floor, in 2nd class, the noise of the explosion was cataclysmic, the loudest noise I had ever heard. (I suffered a trauma for many years, and could not bear to hear even a petrol whipper-snipper operating close by as it reminded me of the incident, making me feel panic-stricken.) Black smoke, burning smells, noise, screaming of the children and yelling of the teacher trying to make herself heard were all part of the confusion in my memory. Brian Nelson and John Shaw were in kindergarten at the time. John remembers that his mate Brian said: “Yippee, here come the Japs!” Fortunately the school had conducted regular drill over the past two days, which included going down the stairs in an orderly manner, and our teacher demanded we fall into line and evacuate the classroom down the stairs as we had been taught, which we did.

Pilot in parachute lands in tree. Meanwhile Ron Lewis, Lu Bell, and their 5A Class classmates on the ground floor facing Gordon Street, say that following a mighty explosion a boot came through the window and landed in the classroom. Mrs. I. Clifton said that she remembered that the top of the pilot’s flying boot was shredded.*Eyewitness to Mosquito Tragedy: *Reveille*, July/Aug., 1997. Ray Littlely, next door in 6th class records: “We ... were about to have a dictation test when there was a terrific crashing sound outside and over the roof, followed by a ‘white out’ through one side of the tree.

Then I saw that the pilot, had crashed through the tree branches with a shredded parachute and struck the ground with such force that he left an imprint in the bitumen.” The dead pilot, suspended from his quarter-opened parachute, and still held fast in the cockpit and main fuselage, had crashed into the fig tree outside their classroom windows, which were very large, with the parachute dangling. John Kavanagh, now retired and living in Queensland was also in 6th class. Some pupils rushed to the windows, to gaze at this shocking spectacle, whilst some ran outside to view it. The 5A pupils were told to wait in the classroom whilst Mrs. Webb went to investigate what was happening. She came back and told them to go home immediately. Joy Smith, nee Anderson, now of Panania, was in Miss Knight’s 5B classroom and Miss Knight told them not to turn around as she had obviously seen the pilot fall through the tree behind their classroom. *”Petersham Air Crash Remembered”: Western Suburbs Courier, Monday, April 29, 1996 Story: Louise Goldsbury; Pictures: Kevin Ruming. Ron Lewis said they went out the side gate and he did not see any of the burning plane or anything else. He said the pilot had been cut down when he came out, and was no longer in the tree. The primary children filed out of the classrooms past the parachute-covered body and were dismissed home. The children were told that they need not come back to school that day as they had the day off. Mr Allman later said that whilst some of the children were upset, they had “behaved grandly”. Ray Littlely says that being a young boy, he hopped on his bike and inspected the suburb, looking for souvenirs. Wistfully he records, that next day the police took a cannon from one enterprising lad, although it was unknown how he managed to remove it or carry it, unless he had a billy-cart to help!

Playground Scene of Horror We ran pell-mell down the stairs, and spilled out on to the playground with all the other Infant’s children. Here horror met our eyes: burning pieces of plane, smoking heaps of rags (the pilot had been cut down and placed in the playground. I knew instinctively that the heap was a person, so it must have been before the Headmaster, Mr. Allman, covered the pilot with his parachute.) Cannons and other equipment from the plane had fallen into the playground, and were almost buried in the asphalt, due to their heaviness as well as the heat from the explosion. Our teacher then instructed us to “Go home!”*I didn’t even know where my home was*, and no one could help me, as I was a new pupil and the other boys and girls did not know me, and were too busy going off to their own homes. Rather than make a bad decision and get lost, I decided to stay where I was, in case I suddenly remembered which way I should go. A little Infants’ girl ran up to me in tears and said she had to go to the toilet and could I come with her as I was an older 2nd class pupil, and she was too scared to go by herself, with all the smoke and confusion. I thought I had better help this small girl, but as soon as she was comfortable again, she threw me a: “Thanks!” and ran off also.

Alone I was now alone in the midst of this devastation. Every time a teacher went past they yelled at me: “GO HOME!” I thought this was very unhelpful, and as no one would point out to me where *my home was*. I set out tentatively for the gate that I thought I had come in, earlier that morning with my mother. I went down the few steps and stepped out on to the street facing Trafalgar Street, looking down towards Petersham station.

Plane Explosion Sets Homes on Fire Here confusion was even worse, with burning houses in the distance, and the sounds of ambulances and fire engines shrieking and screaming in and around the surrounding streets. We know now a total of 18 properties were damaged. The following facts which describe the scene more fully were gleaned from the SMH, Thursday, May 3, 1945 p.3. A wing, the engine and part of the fuselage had crashed at the intersection of The Avenue and Searle Street, Petersham, setting fire to a pair of semi-detached houses, one occupied by Mr. and Mrs. H. Cornish. A baby’s cot was on the verandah and became enveloped in flames, but the mother, Mrs. G. Jones had just taken the 13 months old baby inside before the plane crashed. The other house was occupied by Mrs. A Green and her four year old daughter, and they ran out the rear door and smashed down a fence to escape the inferno. The other wing of the plane, a piece of the fuselage and a piece of the engine crashed a quarter of a mile away between two houses in Railway Street,

crashing through the roof of one house, occupied by Mr. T. Lowe, setting it on fire.* Footnote: Mrs. Lowe, 20 at the time, was on holidays and her mother had decided to go shopping. Mrs. Lowe was forced to move out of the home for 12 months whilst the house was being repaired. Her parents slept in the garage and her two brothers slept in a neighbour's garage. Mrs. Lowe said her mother and father had to take an umbrella to bed if it were raining!* Natalie Davison: "An Act of Bravery: Tributes flow for heroic airmen", The Glebe & Inner Western Weekly, Wednesday, May 7, 1997. The side wall and roof of the two-storied house next door of Mrs. G. Peters, collapsed, burying the furniture in the two bedrooms in bricks and mortar. Part of the windscreen of the plane fell through the roof of the tobacconist's, Mr. F.J. White, in Palace Street, where his mother, Mrs. Amy White, 65, had just left the room, and it tore a hole in her bed. Blazing debris also fell on the homes of Mr. T. Bicknell, and Mrs. A. McMahon, at 100 Palace Street, where the nose section, part of the cockpit and part of the engine of the aircraft had hit the side of the house, lodging between it and No.98, setting both on fire. Miss Crowe's home in Hunter Street was set alight, and severely damaged by fire. Firemen from city and suburban stations, directed by the Chief Officer Mr. Beare, attended all the burning houses and contained the fires, restricting further damage.

Body of Observer and Debris Falls in Railway Yard and homes near the station Leading Aircraftman, Charles Broughton Boydell 444885 Royal Australian Air Force, aged 24, had freed himself from the aircraft, but plunged in flames to his death, falling on to the roof of a shed in the goods yard, across the road near Petersham station, which was about 100 yards away from where the pilot's body fell at the school.*Footnote: LAC Boydell, son of William Guy Boydell and Roi St. George Boydell of Mosman is remembered with honour: Grave Reference Panel No. 2W.B.8 in the Sydney War Cemetery, Memorial Avenue, Rookwood, NSW. A funeral service for both men was held in the Kinsela Chapel, Taylor Square, on Friday, May 4th, 1945, conducted by Padre Johnson of the R.A.A.F., and the Rector from St. Clements, Mosman, Rev. R.L. Hewitt. The two hearses moved off down Oxford Street abreast. Over each casket was draped the Union Jack and on top of each hearse were masses of flowers, and as the cars moved down the street, every man in the street stopped and raised his hat. On reaching Rookwood War Memorial Cemetery, the procession slowed and a guard of honour of about 100 Service personnel comprised of R.A.F., R.A.A.F., and W.A.A.A.F. lined the route then marched each side of the hearses around the memorial on which the flag was flying at half-mast. The two graves are situated on top of a small hill along with hundreds of white crosses marking the resting place of other servicemen who had given their lives for their country. A formation of 8 R.A.A.F. planes flew overhead as a last tribute. The Last Post was sounded by the bugler standing between the two graves and the flag was raised to the top of the flagpole. A poem is appended, which was included in the funeral service, written by Mrs. Kitty Robins of Forest Drive, Keston Park, Kent, "One Woman's Son". Mrs. Roi Boydell met Mrs. Robins while in London, in 1952. (Chrys Meader, Historian, Marrickville Council supplied this information.)

A petrol tank and plane pieces were distributed along the rails, causing a cessation of train traffic for some time. A blazing petrol tank fell on to the roof of a house near the railway station, and burning petrol trickled down to the ground floor enveloping a bedroom in flames where a railway signalman, Mr. William Wilson, 40, home from night shift, was in bed; the fire badly burning his face, arms and body. A relative, Mrs. Amy Herbert came to his aid, and both were taken by Western Suburbs ambulance to Lewisham Hospital. A two-story house on the corner of Gordon and Trafalgar Street was set ablaze when a petrol tank from the plane fell on the roof. The fire brigade raced to the scene and firemen saved the house from destruction.

Wreckage strewn across Petersham At Petersham Park children playing on the grass had a narrow escape as four machine-guns crashed to the ground. Children of St. Fiacre's School in Catherine St., (pronounced locally "Cather-rine" St, with the emphasis on the last syllable!) Leichhardt had just vacated the yard and returned to their lessons when smouldering wreckage fell into the yard. Other streets where wreckage fell were: Ley Street, Leichhardt and Wardell Street, Petersham, and the roof of the Imperial Hotel at the corner of Norton Street and Parramatta Road. Over 50 firemen helped fight the fires.

Reunion Hopefully I peered up Trafalgar Street, just in case my mother was coming to find me. I wasn't game to cross the busy intersection by myself. I had faith that eventually my mother would come, so I waited. Again teachers ran past yelling at me to: "Go HOME!", but gave me no further information to assist in this task. Suddenly in the distance I see my mother, wearing clothes she

would never have been seen dead in, and which she only used when washing, running madly down the street with soap suds up her arms and with my little sister in the stroller. Then, and only then, did I burst into tears....of relief. My mother nearly strangled me, hugging me to death, until I finally had to beg her to stop. Then she burst into tears, and my little sister who was less than a year old, decided she had better join in and make it a family affair. We all traipsed home, back through the subway to Palace Street, and then the back lane into 55 Brighton Street, with me recounting what had happened. Mum told me that she had been hanging the clothes on the line, and saw the plane explode and scooped up my sister into the stroller and ran out the back gate. When we got home we met a furious and indignant grandmother in the laundry, berating my mother for being so thoughtless as to leave the taps running, flooding the whole backyard, which was now a quagmire. Again my mother and we two children burst into tears, and Grandma was mollified when we told her what had happened.

What caused the Crash? Officers of the RAAF collected the parts, and took them to No.2 Central Recovery room at the Richmond RAAF base, but they were not laid out in any logical sequence as they arrived, to be later examined by experts. Unfortunately the Court of Inquiry convened on the 4th of May, 1945 was hampered by the fact that many pieces of the wreckage were recovered by civilians and souvenired, so their actual landing position could not be mapped accurately, including the vital wing fragments. Two more Mosquitoes were lost in the ensuing months. The first crew crash landed at Dubbo and escaped. The second crew of two, were killed near Violet Town, northern Victoria and again a subsequent court of enquiry could not ascertain the cause for the crash of the Mosquito. Carpenter, E.: Not so Secret Squadron, Wartime, 2005. RAAF Association State Treasurer, Bewick Hack stated that the cause of the crash remained a mystery. *Murray Nicholls: "Recalling a Wartime Air Crash", Memorial Service, 2nd May, 1996.. Glebe & Inner City News, Wednesday, May 8, 1966 . It is suspected that a violent pull out from a swooping power dive, with its associated high 'g' forces may have led to the structural failure of the aircraft, as it flew south west toward Petersham railway station. Either the steel tube mounting frames holding the two engines broke away from the timber superstructure or the upper sheets of the wings delaminated, effectively pulling the plane apart. The fuel tanks were positioned between the engine nacelles or cowlings, and the fuselage, and they too were split open, causing the aircraft to burst into flames. The 618 Squadron were not involved in any further military action. A further four aircraft crashed and six crew were lost to accidents in Australia both before and even after final disbandment of 618 Squadron on 14th July, 1945. Carpenter, E.: Not so secret squadron, Wartime, 2005. Sadly the surviving Mosquitoes were unwanted by either the RAF or the RAAF, due to their chequered history and the ending of hostilities, so they were broken up and sold locally for parts and scrap. The shell with engines cost £35 and without,-- a beggarly £15. *Vincent, David: Mosquito Monograph, quoted by E. Carpenter in Wartime, 2005.

Compensation Another Court of Inquiry was held a week later on the 9th May, 1945 to address the issue of compensation. As the day before had been Tuesday, 8th May, 1945, VE Day, possibly full significance was not given to the situation, but some 30 instances of damage were recorded, and 18 properties received compensation: some as little as £1/19/8d, (c.\$100) others up to £685/14/10d (c. \$34,275 in today's value) Carpenter, E.: Not So Secret Squadron, Wartime, 2005.

Peter Bernard Lewis Ron's father, Peter Bernard Lewis received a letter on the 16th May 1945 from Petersham Council Town Clerk, W. Hastie, thanking him for his services during this plane crash crisis. The letter is appended for perusal. Mr. Peter Lewis was in charge of the National Emergency Service rescue in demolition squads at the time. It notes that unfortunately two airmen lost their lives in the incident and damage was sustained to several properties, and the Petersham Council was grateful for his assistance. Mr. Lewis had risen from a ganger on 2nd January 1930 and eventually became Overseer of Works on 31st July, 1931. He did an engineering course as the Council did not have an engineer at the time. He received commendation by the Mayor J.F. Laxton, and Town Clerk, W. Hastie for his services, and Ron is justly proud of him. Footnote: Petersham Council

amalgamated with Marrickville Municipal Council on 1/1/1949 and the inaugural Mayor was also a J.F. Laxton, who was the son of Mayor J.F. Laxton, of the former Petersham Council.

Closure after Sixty Years I stayed on at Petersham Public School for another month or so, before going to live at Wedderburn where I continued my education by correspondence lessons, as the nearest school was at Campbelltown, seven miles away. Ron Lewis finished the year there at Petersham, and began employment, as many young people did in those days. Ron remembers that later that year, they planted two silky oak (*Grevillea Robusta*) trees, in the school grounds in memory of the pilot and observer who had lost their lives on that fateful day. On Wednesday, 5th January 2005 Ron and I drove to Petersham School to see if we could remember any other details. Unfortunately the school, now a TAFE, was locked and we could not gain entry to the schoolyard or the playground, or any of the buildings. Whereas Ron could point out the building I had been in, and the area he had been in, and the gate he left by and the gate I left by, we could not jog our memories any further. Ron could not identify which were the two silky oak trees were planted, (we were unaware then that they had died) but noted that the figtree in which the pilot had been suspended had been taken out, and another planted a few yards further along from the Primary section.

Memorial Services: 1945 Mr. Allman, the Headmaster must have been replaced by a Miss Knight, as Principal, as another eyewitness, Mr. Bill Fitch, records that Miss Knight, and some of the students planted, in memory of the airmen, some silky oak trees which have now perished. LAC Boydell's sister, Justine Tweed, attended this 1945 ceremony at the school. *Campus: Institute Issues, April 1998. Lu Bell says that the site where one of the bodies landed is marked by a round concrete block enclosing a four point red star upon a four point black star. Nearby an attractive garden plot contains a flagpole, and there are two small metal plaques, formed from part of the wreckage, erected by Petersham Public School recording the deaths of the airmen, and only a few metres from where Flt-Lt Rochford's body was found.

In 1966 a Memorial Garden Dedication Ceremony was held by the Petersham RSL, with Rev. Champion rendering a prayer of dedication, and the Petersham Girls' high school Choir singing one of the dedication hymns.

In 1990 the families of the two airmen came and a memorial ceremony was held at the school.

In 1995 remembrance and wreath laying ceremony was conducted by the NSW Branch and the Petersham Branch of the RSL, to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the deaths of the two airmen, with Mr. Rusty Priest, NSW President of the RSL, Squadron Leader Clive Coombes, RAF, from the British High Commission, Canberra and the Hon. Gary Punch MP, Minister for Defence, Science & Personnel. It was only after this event that Anna Newton, the niece of David Rochford read reports on it in the Sydney press. She then contacted one of the organisers Florence Bell, who then began organising the memorial service for the following year. *Recalling a wartime air crash" by Murray Nicholls. Glebe & Inner City News, Wednesday, May 8, 1996. In 1995 /96 the Department of Public Works restored the heritage buildings, and the West Street campus was landscaped. *Campus: Institute Issues, April, 1998 .

1997 another Remembrance and Wreath laying Ceremony was held at the site. More than 150 residents, 200 former students and relatives of the dead men gathered to remember the event. Memories of the crash came flooding back for many, as low-flying jets repeatedly drowned out the words of prayer and sorrow from many resident and former pupils who came to pay their respects to the two men. * Natalie Davidson : "An Act of Bravery: Tributes flow for heroic airmen": The Glebe & Inner Weekly, Wednesday, May 7, 1997. Rochford's daughter, Wendy Harvey and her mother Margaret Skinner travelled from Oxford England to celebrate the lives of David Rochford and Charles Boydell. On March 2nd , 1998 Mr. David Harvey, grandson of the late Lt. Rochford visited the memorial. His mother, Wendy Harvey had been only a few weeks old when her father died.

1998 David Rochford's sister, Maud Pain and Charles Boydell's sister, Justine Tweed, from Bendigo attended the 1998 service. Mrs. Tweed said that her elder brother as a young man was determined to serve his country, joining up as soon as the war was declared. All he wanted to do was see action. He was an outstanding young man with a quiet sense of humour.* Phillippa Walsh: "The day the War hit Petersham", Daily Telegraph, Saturday, May 3, 1997: 17. For the ceremony Petersham Primary sang their school song, and the airmen's families planted new trees, and received from the SIT Property Manager, Mr. Graham Bellenger, plaques on pieces of the former silky oak trees.* "West Street Remembers" Campus: Institute Issues, April, 1998.

2005 Despite it being the Sixtieth Anniversary, I have been informed that there is no Memorial Service being planned for this year. My husband Cliff took a photo of Ron and myself outside the school, just for the record. It was a hot summer's day, about 33C and even the traffic seemed sleepy and unhurried as we stood outside the school. What a contrast to that cool chaotic May day almost sixty years ago. May Day indeed.

References:

Conversation with Chris Meader, Historian, Marrickville Municipal Council, Box 14, Petersham P.O., 2049, NSW., Australia and documents supplied by her regarding eyewitness accounts given by ex-pupils of the school, and residents of Petersham..

Penglase, Joanna & Horner, David: When the War came to Australia: p188 Interview with Ken Haylings by David Horner. First Pub. London, Allen & Unwin, 1992. Marrickville, Southwood Press.

Personal Communication: W. Hastie, Town Clerk, Petersham Council to Mr. P.B. Lewis, Overseer of Works, dated 16th May, 1945.

Personal Communication: Mayor J.F. Laxton (Snr) & W. Hastie, Town Clerk to Mr. P.B. Lewis, Overseer of Works dated 16/10/48.

Public Records Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, Surrey www.pro.gov.uk

Sydney Morning Herald, Thursday, May 3, 1945: p3

Website: home.st.net.au/~dunn.nsw20.htm

Personal Accounts: Mrs. Y. Cobby, now of Gosford; Mr. Bill Fitch 6th class pupil; Mr. V. Rochfort who was working at AWA, Ashfield on that date and recorded by his son; Mr. Bruce Weekley who was at Ashfield Primary School; Mr. Peter McMahon, playing as a child at 100 Palace St., Petersham; Mr. Peter Devers, Towoomba, who was in the Science Room as a student, on the second floor at Christian Brothers School, Lewisham, and saw it from the window.

Audit 2003 – 2004

Financial accounts as published in the November issue have been audited as per the statement. A letter of compliance is with the Secretary. Auditor – Adrian Jackson.

George Hurley

Out Back

Henry Lawson

1893

The old year went, and the new returned, in the withering weeks of drought,
The cheque was spent that the shearer earned, and the sheds were all cut out;
The publican's words were short and few, and the publican's looks were black –
And the time had come, as the shearer knew, to carry his swag Out Back.

*For time means tucker, and tramp you must, where the scrubs and plains are wide,
With seldom a track that a man can trust, or a mountain peak to guide;
All day long in the dust and heat – when summer is on the track –
With stinted stomachs and blistered feet, they carry their swags Out Back.*

He tramped away from the shanty there, where the days were long and hot,
With never a soul to know or care if he died on the track or not.
The poor of the city have friends in woe, no matter how much they lack,
But only God and the swagmen know how a poor man fares Out Back.

He begged his way on the parched Paroo and the Warrego tracks once more,
And lived like a dog, as the swagmen do, till the Western stations shore;
But men were many, and sheds were full, for work in the town was slack –
The traveller never got hands in wool, though he tramped for a year Out Back.

In stifling noons when his back was wrung by its load, and the air seemed dead,
And the water warmed in the bag that hung to his aching arm like lead,
Or in times of flood, when plains were seas, and the scrubs were cold and black,
He ploughed in mud to his trembling knees, and paid for his sins Out Back.

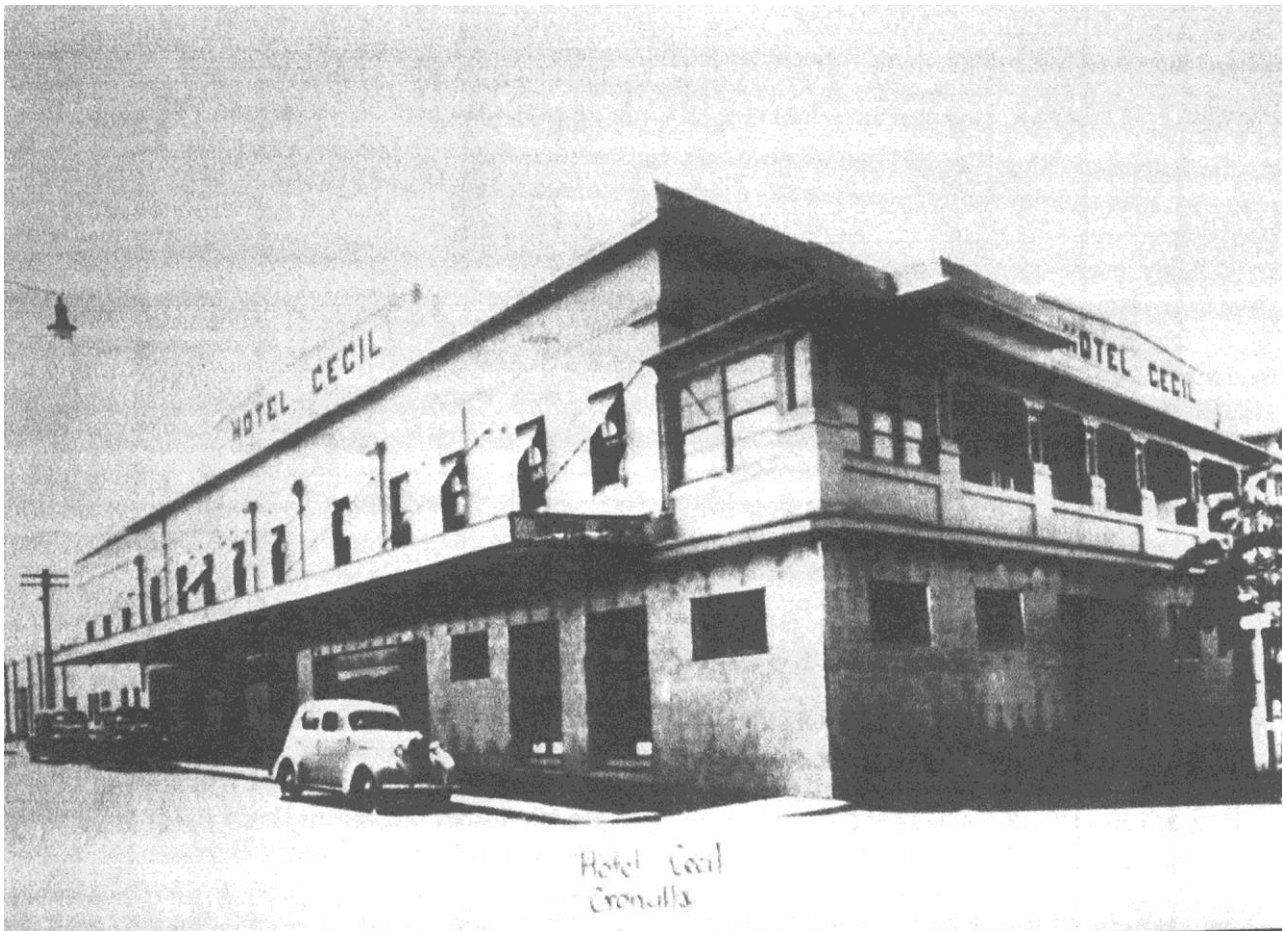
He blamed himself in the year "Too Late" – in the heaviest hours of life –
'Twas little he dreamed that a shearing-mate had care of his home and wife;
There are times when wrongs from your kindred come, and treacherous tongues attack –
When a man is better away from home, and dead to the world, Out Back.

And dirty and careless and old he wore, as his lamp of hope grew dim;
He tramped for years till the swag he bore seemed part of himself to him.
As a bullock drags in the sandy ruts, he followed the dreary track,
With never a thought but to reach the huts when the sun went down Out Back.

It chanced one day, when the north wind blew in his face like a furnace-breath,
He left the track for a tank he knew – 'twas a short-cut to his death;
For the bed of the tank was hard and dry, and crossed with many a crack,
And, oh! it's a terrible thing to die of thirst in the scrub Out Back.

A drover came, but the fringe of law was eastward many a mile;
He never reported the thing he saw, for it was not worth his while.
The tanks are full and the grass is high in the mulga off the track,
Where the bleaching bones of a white man lie by his mouldering swag Out Back.

*For time means tucker, and tramp they must, where the plains and scrubs are wide,
With seldom a track that a man can trust, or a mountain peak to guide;
All day long in the flies and heat the men of the outside track
With stinted stomachs and blistered feet must carry their swags Out Back.*



The Hotel Cecil.

The vehicle in the foreground is a 1936 Chevrolet. The Cecil was a very popular hotel, built by Cecil Munro who served on Council for 34 years, twelve of these as President..

The hotel was built in the mid 1920's and was soon followed by the Cecil Ballroom that could accommodate 1000 dancers. Below the ballroom on Cronulla beach was the Cecil cafe.

Munro was a prominent businessman and politician who pressed strenuously for development and progress in the Shire. He was one of the strongest advocates for the building of Tom Ugly's bridge which was completed in 1929.

The Sydney Mail of May 15 1929 covered the opening of the bridge and contained a pictorial spread extolling the virtues of the Shire. A large advertisement for the Hotel Cecil proclaimed:

70 bedrooms with hot and cold water service, spacious lounges, smoke room, all luxuriously finished, garages, tennis court, handy to golf links, bowling green and croquet courts.

Cronulla is noted for its wonderful winter climate and the Hotel Cecil, with its carpeted floors and open fires offers special inducements.

Winter tariff Best rooms £1/1/- per day or ,£6/6/- per week

Oysters, Grills and Table d Hole

Phone Cronulla 129 and 188

"Rich in scenery, ideal as a residential area and now linked closely to the city, Sutherland Shire has a promising future"

The Sydney Mail article proclaimed that "a new era has dawned upon the Sutherland Shire by the opening of the Georges River bridge, a magnificent steel structure erected at a cost of £305,000." Up until then, the punt was the main access across the Georges River. In 1928 it carried 435,803 vehicles but with the new bridge, traffic was expected to double. Waiting time for the punt was approximately 2 hours. As the Sutherland Shire Council had proposed the construction of the bridge, it was their responsibility to repay the loan and pay for maintenance. As a result, motorists were charged one a shilling toll each way. Real estate.

P. U. Alley, estate agent and auctioneer, operating from the School of Arts, Cronulla tel. 193 had the following properties for sale.

Water frontage: Right in Cronulla. Cottage, well furnished, garage, boatshed and baths £1300

Water frontage: 7 roomed cottage, 205 feet to ESPLANADE. A gift at £1850 Ocean frontage blocks: 44 x 190. Only £8 per foot. Terms. Will be double soon.

Water frontage: Burraneer Bay. Two room and verandah. Boat. £500

Week end blocks: From 20/- per foot Tip top home sites: at £4 and £5 per foot.

Bruce Watt

The following poem was written by Mrs. Kitty Robins of Forest Drive, Keston Park, Kent. She wrote: "I am sure I have voiced the feelings of all the hundreds of bereaved mothers in the world today. Perhaps if they could see in print what they feel in their hearts it might bring a tiny shred of comfort to them". It was printed in the Funeral Service held in 1945 for the two airmen: Flight Lieutenant David Rochford, and LAC Charles Boydell. Mrs. Roi Boydell, mother of LAC Charles Boydell, met Mrs. Robins on a trip to London. in 1952.

ONE WOMAN'S SON

Oh, Son! That you should die in vain,
And leave behind such anguished pain,
The agony that never again
Shall I see you—My Son!

Oh, Fate! That you could so define
So cruel a blow as this of thine,
To bereave me of my boy so fine,
As you—My Son!

Twixt pain and joy were you born to me,
I thought—for all eternity;
But now my pain no one must see
But you—My Son!

You lie in Australian fields to rest,
God in His wisdom should know best;
But would to God you had died at my breast,
An innocent babe—My Son!

My love remains in constancy,
Death cannot dim your memory,
You'll comfort me in my Gethsemane,
Won't you-- My Son?

Echoes from the Bay: The story of Yowie Bay

by Merle Kavanagh.

Book launch and review by Dawn Emerson.

This year we are celebrating the 200th Anniversary of the naming of Australia, and a map drawn by Flinders, with the name on it: "Australia" used for the very first time to describe Terra Australia. This was presented to His Excellency, the Governor General, Major General Michael Jeffries, at Government House, on Sunday 14th November 2004. Several of our Sutherland Shire Historical Society members, including myself were there to witness the ceremony and a copy of the map of Australia is on display in the museum. You may perhaps have seen some of the presentation on television news.

It is fitting that we should launch Merle Kavanagh's book this week, because Merle's book is about Yowie Bay and what more Australian name can we have than "Yowie". What is even more fitting is that Flinders himself actually made his way into Yowie Bay and may have been as far up the Hacking as Audley, according to Merle's research citing Cridland, although Cridland's source has not been located. Of course there is a wonderful Yowie story in the book of a terrible creature that terrorized the residents, but I leave you to discover this for yourself.

Now one of the perks of doing a book launch is that you get the book in advance to read, and what a good read this book is! The book is titled: "Echoes from the Bay" and what an evocative title this is, for a book which is actually living history. It isn't written from research notes about a place which was only visited once or twice. Yes Merle has researched her topic thoroughly, but Merle had lived in Yowie Bay for many years. She knew every street and the houses along each one, and every nook and cranny of the bay and its bushland, and you realize when you read the book, she also knew most of the people living in Yowie Bay. Many of these people are still around today, happy to talk with nostalgia of their lives in that idyllic setting.

When Merle speaks of the red-tipped gum leaves that people put in their houses, mostly in lieu of flowers, but also to give that lovely eucalyptus smell that every Australian sniffs with delight, my mind goes back to both my grandparents who had left the farms to go back to the city. How thrilled they were if I visited, bringing a bunch of gum tips, freshly picked that morning from the bushland on our property. She talks of cutting out designs from the mantelshelf from newspapers, rather like we would cut paper dolls, and this reminded me of my grandmother's mantelshelves. Sometimes they would use coloured paper to add a bit of brightness to the mantelshelf, but usually it was ordinary newspaper. So much of Merle's book takes me back to my childhood; no I didn't live in Yowie Bay, but the life and times in most country areas were very similar, and we too had a tin church, made of galvanized iron, just as Merle records in her book.

Of course many authors sprinkle some good lascivious or salacious pages throughout their book. Where do you ask are the purple passages? This is the moment that I lean forward to the microphone, lower my voice and tell you! However, I am delighted to say there are none! You can quite happily give this book to your maiden aunt, or your mother-in-law for Christmas! It is so disgustingly proper that you can even leave it on the coffee table when the vicar comes to tea and he won't be at all offended when he leafs through it, and he will probably ask if he can borrow it! Now before we all start to leave the hall in disappointed droves, can I tell you that this book has some wonderfully humorous passages that made me laugh out loud on the train and everyone turned to see what on earth I was reading. I am sure that when you read this book, you too will have some good belly laughs!

Merle has captured that amazing sense of Australian humour, such as the house with the lovely title of "Thisledome". I pondered this briefly, wondering at its Scottish ancestry perhaps, -- and then realized I had to break up the words -- it was actually the laconic Australian words: "This'll do me!"

There are lots of funny episodes in the book, but I won't spoil it for you by revealing them as it's much better if you read them for yourself.

In typical style Merle talks of how they lived through the war. Yes there were privations and suffering, but throughout was the indomitable Aussie spirit, and they just laughed at their own fears and got on with the war. There was the air-raid shelter which no one entered; preferring to face any bombing by the Japanese planes, because cats inhabited the shelter and the stench was vile. There was the relinquishing of all their boats, their livelihood and their only leisure craft, because the Japanese might use them to invade the country. The boats were all stored for many years under dreadful conditions until they had dried out and were completely unseaworthy, and then returned to their owners, totally useless.

Of course every Aussie history book worth its salt has to have a ghost story and I love the section in Merle's book where some local boys decided that a deserted old house in the bush was haunted and to show their manly courage, made arrangements to visit the house at night. The setting is magnificent, with clouds scudding across the moon. So the moonlight was intermittent and not as clear as usual as the boys slowly advance on the house. And then – they shriek in terror as they see a "body" hanging from the roof of the verandah, eerily moving in the breeze. The lad relating the story tells how he screamed the loudest and ran the fastest – and he had manufactured the so-called body and hung it there himself earlier in the day.

I have not given details of the many colorful identities in "Echoes from the Bay", the people who make history come alive, such as Tarzan, or talked about the really solid historical background that Merle has painstakingly given. The book is eminently readable and Merle has achieved a balance of detailing the history, without making it uninteresting. Every page is a delight as a new scene unfolds depicting another episode in the fascinating history of Yowie Bay.

It is some time since we have done a book launch on behalf of one of our Historical Society members and I can record how proud we are of our authors! In particular, can I say how pleased I am to have had the honour of personally launching "Echoes from the Bay: the Yowie Bay Story". Congratulations Merle on a job well done!

Next page: Mile post at the corner of the Princes Highway and Yeran Street, Sylvania. The reverse side records that it is 8 miles to Port Hacking.

Another milepost, formerly from Sutherland is located in the Historical Society museum.

