



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

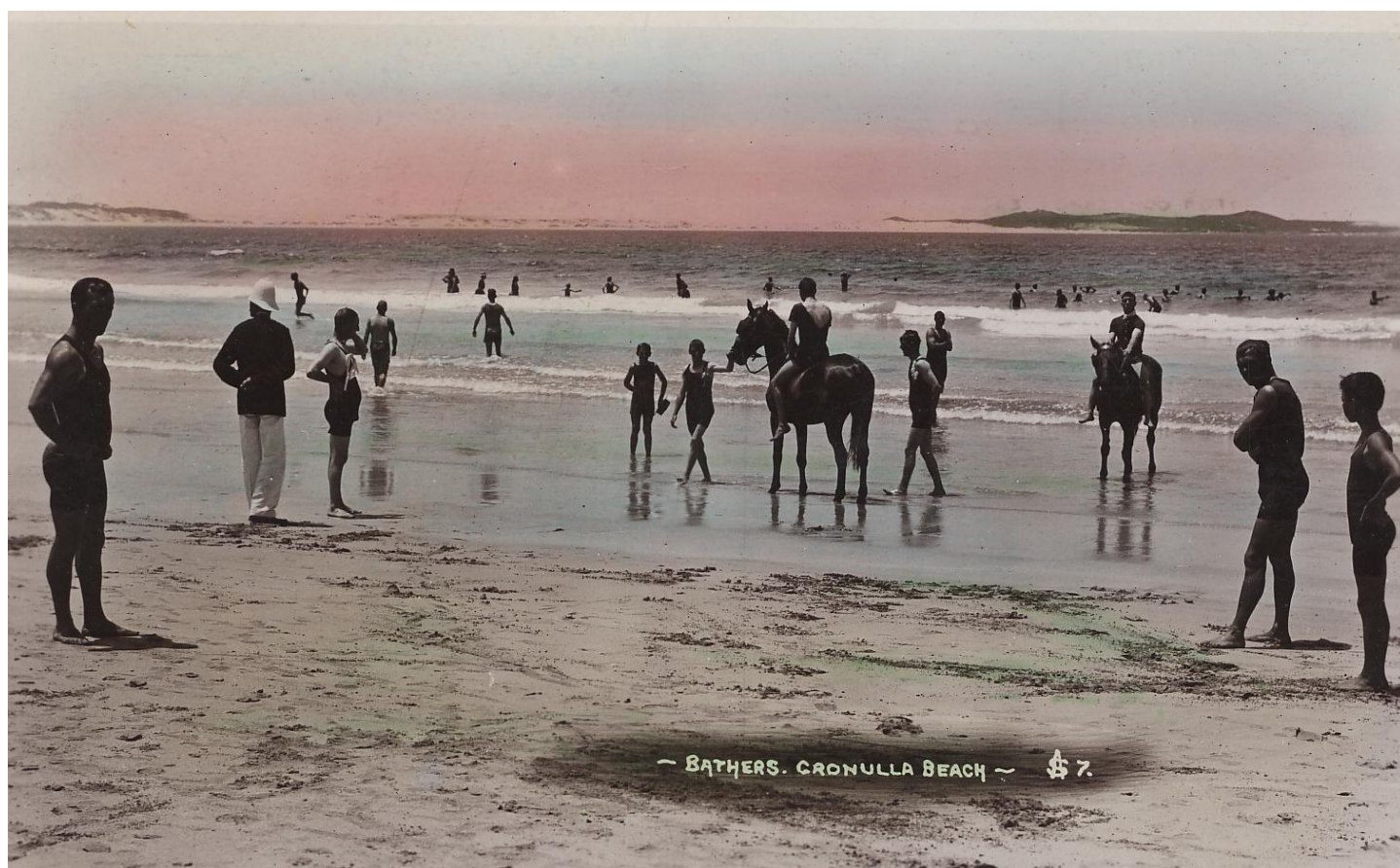


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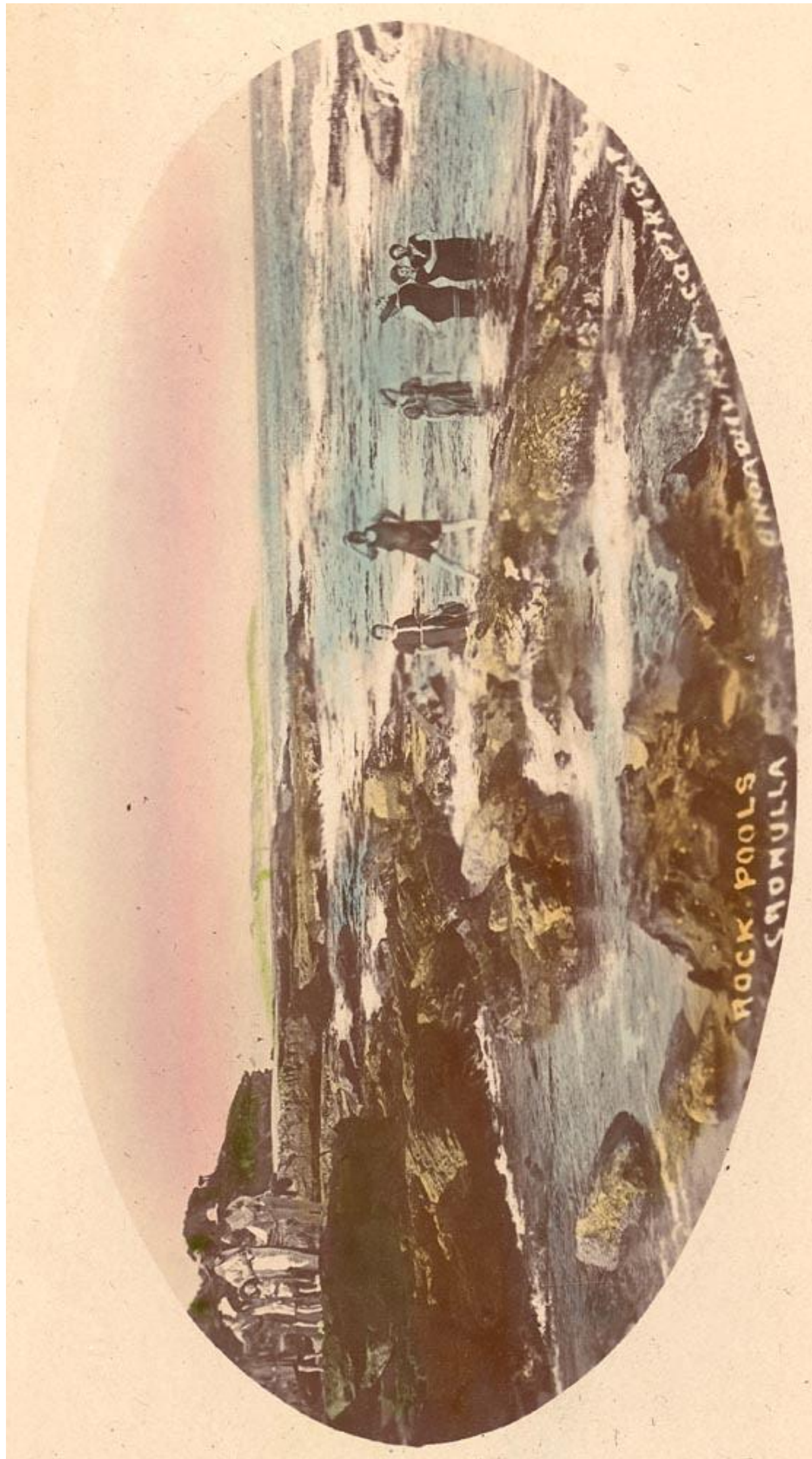
## **CRONULLA BEACH ABOUT 1908**



Second from left; Constable Tugwell, a legendary Cronulla policeman on duty.

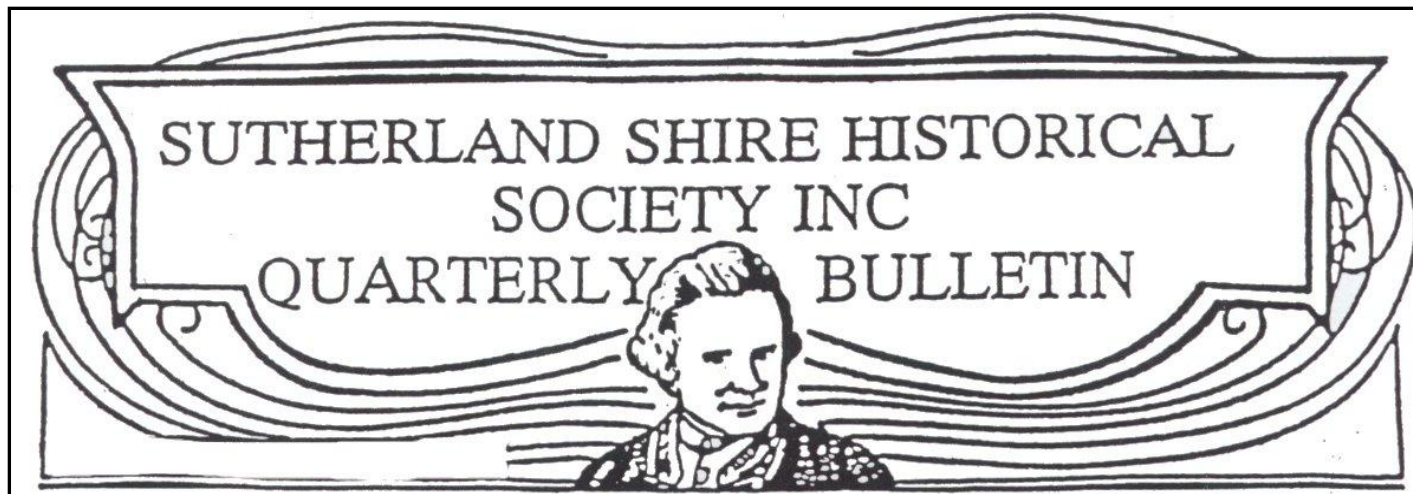
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ROCK POOLS  
CHOMULLA

L. J. COOPER



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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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be addressed to*

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Sutherland NSW 1499**

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## **Disclaimer**

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



# President's Report

Home at last! This report is a little lengthier than usual due to our travels. Even before the tragic events in London, it felt great to be back in Australia, seeing you all at a meeting after 7 weeks of globetrotting: visiting our grandchildren in London, spending a week with them near Malaga in Spain at their other grandparents' villa, and then visiting a cousin in Atlanta for ten days, the Grand Canyon for a few days and then to Oakland, California visiting friends and home. Just as happened last time when we travelled overseas, we had only just got back when terrorists struck New York. This time we had only just got back, when they struck London. People are now asking us our schedule for the next time we are going overseas so they can synchronize and get home safely as we always do!

London: During our time there we attended two plays: "Hedda Gabarer" at the Duke of York, and Lorca's "Blood Wedding" at the Almeida, our son creating the scenery for both. We wangled tickets through our daughter-in-law to a full day at the Chelsea Flower Show and what magnificent blooms there were: varieties and species I have never seen before, and so many types of the one flower, for instance about 150 types of daffodils! What a spectacle! We also went to Churchill's War Rooms underground near the Houses of Parliament, and were amazed at the computer images: for instance you press a button for the date of the Hiroshima bombing—and the whole building shakes, and rumbles, a huge mushroom cloud billows across the computer table and—the atom bomb bursts! Frightening! Don't miss it if you are heading to London. Whilst sitting there I hear: "Dawn! Dawn!" and I think, well, there must be thousands of people in London called Dawn, so it's not me. Uh! Uh! It's my next door neighbour from Moreton Road, Illawong, NSW whom I didn't know was in London, who had seen me at the computer table! Now a little tip for all museum enthusiasts. I have a little fold-up aluminium stool that I now pack and take everywhere, which is ideal for people with bad knees, and you just stop in front of the display and sit and read it, and then move on to the next—and you don't get tired. (Available at K-mart and I don't have shares in the company!)

Spain: We had the most wonderful lunches on the sea-shore at little cafes, and on a clear day you can see the coast of Africa! The seafood is "almost" as good as in Oz, but ever so much cheaper! We went to Ronda, where Hemingway wrote "Farewell to Arms" and bought lots of cheap shoes and to Granada to see the Alhambra Palace, almost 1,000 years old and the intricate mosaic tile-work is still colourful and so beautiful. In Seville (31 deg C—I even took off my coat!) we noted the orange-trees lining the streets, all laden (bitter marmalade variety) and visited the Santa Maria Cathedral, third largest in the world which seemed to cover acres of ground, with masses of gold, silver and wonderful carved timber panels everywhere, as well as lovely paintings. We also saw Columbus's illegitimate son's grave (no one knows where Columbus's grave is!) of which the Spanish are very proud as he sailed with Columbus, and the tower where all the treasure was stored when they came back from the Americas.

Atlanta, USA: My cousin, Laurie and his wife Doris showed us around and we saw the Robert Burns house which had been re-created exactly like the one in Scotland, (and even had a bottle of Scotch on the table so they are keeping up ancient traditions!). Unfortunately we didn't get to see the Margaret Mitchell house and the Tara museum which Jim enthused about in the last issue (next time!). We went to their Natural History Museum and were enthralled with the stories of the birds, animals, and various types of vegetation there, so different to ours, but they only had one little showcase, a metre wide, about their Indian history with arrowheads, and woven baskets, and no information. We were so disappointed. Yet they had a whole floor devoted to some American traveller and his wife and their trips to China, India, etc. and the jewellery, bowls and clothing they had brought back! My cousin said that Atlanta wasn't really into culture. Shopping was superb. They have co-operatives where once you are introduced you can buy items for 10% of their retail cost! Amazing! And this may seem a childish pleasure, but one of



the highlights of our trip was seeing the fireflies,” lightning bugs”, with their brilliant lights, flitting around the house and lazily fluttering by the windows

Grand Canyon, Arizona: We had a helicopter ride of over an hour at sunset over the canyon, and the only word we could find to describe it, over-used by our teenagers, was “awesome”! We had been flying about 50ft. over treetops and suddenly the ground dropped away to a mile deep to the Colorado River, green and serene below. We gasped. There is row upon row of purple, orange, yellow and all shades of brown chasms and cliff walls, but as the canyon is 30 miles across they merge into a mauve haze in the distance. So many millions of years to carve it out of the landscape, and the eye cannot comprehend it all. When we literally came to earth an hour later, it seemed we had only been airborne for seconds. I spent the next morning in bed, having bronchitis and feeling poorly, (don’t get sick in the USA: visit to Dr. at the hospital and medication and it’s A\$405 before you get out the door!) and then off in the afternoon for a 4 hour bus trip around the rim of the canyon. Superlatives seem inadequate: stupendous, superb, spectacular seem lame. We were so fortunate as the afternoon we flew in the helicopter; there was not a breath of wind: next day they had 60kph winds, and the helicopter had to cancel its trips. The day we went on the bus trip, because it was windy we had perfect vision: the next day due to a grassfire over of 200,000 acres the valley was filled with smoke and visibility was nil, but we were driving back to Flagstaff airport so it did not worry us! We had a warm reception at the airport in Phoenix, Arizona 112 deg F!

California:

Old Sacramento: Here we saw the magnificent Railway Museum and lots of great old locos., and some of the old trains, remnants of days of past glory: dining cars, with silver service and waiters in tuxedos (as no doubt were the clients in evening dress or morning coats!) and sleeping cars, with luxurious compartments and facilities. We also visited the Gold Discovery Museum, and it was so interesting comparing our gold rush days with theirs. Then we came to Roosevelt’s yacht “Potomac” tied up at the wharf, and at first we were refused entry as a group of VIP’s were imminent, but once they heard our Aussie voices, and heard I was President of an Historical Society—we were given a quick tour. We saw where Roosevelt and Churchill chatted and signed documents; what a coincidence after being in the War Rooms where Churchill worked, slept, and ate! We had to hurry off as the VIPs arrived sweating in dark suits and ties, looking at us curiously as we came down the gang-plank in shorts and t-shirts!

Jack London Station: This is a train station stop, and is like a fairground, redolent of a faded past, as many buildings were closed, with restaurants, bookshops, and the pub where Jack London met the wharfies, sailors and rough characters who appear in his books, and re-told their stories as his own. The pub has a slanting floor which has collapsed over the years and literally thousands of name cards on the roof and walls of people who have dropped by, including caps they have autographed. We stopped and had a drink to soak up some of the atmosphere, but as I was still on antibiotics, I was unable to have a wee drap o’ the hard stuff with Cliff and our friends.

We also visited the wine country, but very commercialised. No free tastings! You buy a \$20 ticket and get 4 sips of wine, and a talk on how the wine is made. I notice that they scarify their vineyards, keeping them clear of weeds, whereas we gave that up in this country about 10 years ago, because it allows moisture to escape. They must get more rain than we do! At least our cellar-doors take the cost of the wine-tasting off any bottle you buy, so you don’t feel short-changed.

The Community scene: Everywhere we went, in USA on the east and west coast, there were bumper-stickers saying: “Bring our boys home”, and the month I was there I only saw one bumper with a contrary sign. Mostly people eat out, and we were surprised at how they boil beef and pork, and then smother it with sauce to put some taste back into the meat. We rarely encountered cooked veges, always the ubiquitous salad, and the size of the meals! We ended up pleading to have only one meal a day and a snack for breakfast and dinner, as we could not eat the mountain of food provided. They go out for breakfast, lunch and dinner and every meal is enormous. We began to like the cold sweetened tea they drink as a beverage, but most desserts and cocktail drinks were too sweet for palate, so we kept to beer or wine. In stores or wherever we asked for assistance, people would dash forward to help at the sound of the Aussie accent, and chortled with delight if we greeted them with: “G’day!”

Getting back to business: Our AGM is coming up in September hence this issue. Our July Bulletin was supposed to feature this information but as I wasn’t back in time to put in my reports and agenda you have me to blame for an August edition instead of your usual November one, as we can only put out 4 per

year due to our agreement with Council. I apologise for this anomaly and I will be better organised next year. As sometimes our members stay away in droves from an AGM, this year we will have an interesting film from the archives, so you will miss out on this fillip if you are away.

Tramway Museum: Recently we were invited to check through an old house at Carlton to see if there was anything for the Museum, and scrounged a few items: old tools, books, knick knacks etc. There were photos from the 1950's of all round Australia. Already those on Broken Hill have been given to the Library there, per favour of Norma Jean Taylor, and we will do the same with other towns as we ascertain what is in the collection. Amongst the items were tickets from an old tram conductor and his equipment, as well as his work log and diaries. These were given to Peter Kahn of the Tramways Museum as they were more relevant to their collection than ours.

Centenary Celtic Festival, Menai: I have joined forces with the Sutherland Music Club and the Celtic Council of Australia to put on a dinner and an evening of Celtic singing and dancing at the Sutherland District Trade Union Club, Gympie **on Thursday, 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 6pm for 6.30-pm.** Tickets are \$50 each but you are getting an excellent meal as well as a great night's entertainment and all funds raised go toward's the Centenary Celtic Festival at Menai, February, 2006. We have held an Oyster Dinner at the Como Hotel, and a French Provincial Wine Tasting at La Peniche, and made \$500 in funds. Clr. Richard McLaughlin of Bankstown City Council has given a \$20 donation, as has Mrs. Lyn Buchmann of the Sutherland Music Club, and also Clr. Magdi Mikhail, at Sutherland Shire Council has offered a donation and Clr. Marie Simone has offered to sponsor a function for us. We hope that this year the Celtic Council of Australia will be successful in getting a grant as well.

Centenary of Sutherland Shire Council, 2006: Can you get your thinking caps on and tell me what you would like to see us do to make the coming year a special one? We were disappointed to see that the Council's Centenary Committee has already been abandoned, and no one councillor has responsibility for the coming events. Organizations are encouraged to meet in small groups and plan events for themselves so there is no co-ordination. Grants are available for Council as usual apparently, but no extra funding. Partnerships are well-regarded but difficult to form. I would like to see us join forces with the Sutherland Music Club, the Cemetery, and the Celtic Council of Australia. If you have other partners in mind—tell us about it.

We had a good roll-up at Wayne Johnson's talk on the Rocks of Sydney and Darling Harbour and the Quay. What an interesting speaker, and no notes! We hope to have Wayne again in the future, as his talk was so well-received. I look forward to seeing you all at our next meeting.

Dawn Emerson, President

## **PRESIDENT'S ADDENDUM**

We have had a year fraught with problems, but there is nothing more rewarding than being the leader of an organization in which the members rally and resolve them as a matter of course. That's when you know that you have an efficient team, and you almost feel a supernumerary, except they tell me that they have missed me when I have been away! I have worn my badge with pride overseas, as well as at functions in Australia, and certainly in Sutherland Shire and I try to be a good ambassador for our Society. To all the members of the Committee, please accept my grateful thanks for your firm and unswerving support. You are always there when I need you, and please forgive me if I seem to take it for granted and don't take time during the year to tell each of you how much your friendship and assistance means to me.

I am always grateful to our former President and patron, Mrs. Aileen Griffiths, OAM for her sound advice, and vast experience as she is a great helpmeet to me when I ask for precedents and what did we do on that occasion? Aileen has not been well over the past year, but we hope that if she rests up as the warmer weather approaches she will regain her health and get back on deck. Our Museum Curator, Mr. Allan McGrath is still on our get-well list, as is his wife Betty, but Allan still manages to help Jim with sorting out photographs and publications for the Museum, despite his inability to get around as well as he would wish. I am particularly appreciative to our Deputy President, Mr. Jim Cutbush, who represents me at functions, and ably conducts meetings when I am absent. Jim also obliges with wise counsel, and is a tower of strength, yet he himself has had family health problems and worries, and still manages to run the

Museum in Allan's absence, amassing displays and changing the Museum around so that there is always something new to see. He is ably supported by Terry McCosker, who in addition to his task of Excursion Officer, acts as Assistant Museum Curator, opening up the Museum on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in Jim's absence, and giving talks as required to interested members of the public. We are also indebted to several members for assistance with running the Museum: Messrs. Doug Perry, Doug Archer, Cliff Emerson and Maurie Beaven and Mesdames Norma Jean Taylor, Mina Whybourne, and Nola Tunks. Without these willing workers we would not be able to open the Museum to visiting groups and societies, and your assistance is highly valued. Mrs. Daphne Salt, a long term member, has provided invaluable support to the Museum in providing material for our displays, and we look forward to arranging a new display in the "Cook Room" provided by Daphne, from her copious collection of photographs and material, so it will be renamed the "Centenary of Sutherland Shire Room".

Nola Tunks is a great secretary, and in addition to helping out at the Museum, also inserts the Bulletins in their envelopes so she is a jill-of-all-trades. I always feel we expect too much of her, she helps SSHS out in a variety of ways, yet she has a part-time job, and still looks after the frail tenants in her building and runs messages for them! She has ably represented the SSHS with me on several occasions, yet keeps telling me she is inexperienced. Mina Whybourne, has I know been of great assistance to Nola in teaching her the ropes, and has been on the sick list also. We were so sad to hear of her double calamity when in two separate incidents she fractured and broke both her arms. (That makes two of our members, Mina and Aileen, who are certainly 'armless these days!') Aren't we cruel! They have both been very hardworking members of the society and I know they both love a little joke.

Poor Marj Blackley, our excellent Publicity Officer, has been on our hospital list for a while now, and we hope she is soon on the mend. Marj you have finally subdued those newspapers to the cracking of your whip, and I don't think we have had any errors at all this year, apart from Heritage Week, but that was due to other causes. Well done!

Our Treasurer, George Hurley, who I admit I "dobbed in" for the job, as he had been my Treasurer on the Georges River Combined Councils' Committee has shown the expertise and competence I expected and knew he would bring to this position. He realised that as we had cut down on hiring buses for excursions, we really did not need to be able to collect the GST, and could become a non-profit organisation again. This has made the accounts so much simpler, as really it had become a trial for any voluntary member to conquer, and no one was willing to give it a go. George is also one of my wise counsellors, and exhibits good old-fashioned common-sense when I bring problems to him for consideration. A hearty thank you to Andrew Platfoot who had wrestled with the thorny Treasurer's job previously and was a good mentor to George in taking over the reins. Andrew always steps in as Assistant Treasurer and is one of our most reliable members, and is also a valued Vice-President, as well as being our Public officer. Truly a man of many talents! (Isn't that a biblical term for money—fitting for our Assistant Treasurer.)

Our Booking Officer, Frank McGill, had difficult shoes to fill when taking over from Betty McGrath who had done the job so ably for many years. Many were daunted and would not take it on. Frank has done a superb job in handling the bookings for our dinners and outings, not an easy job, and has managed to balance the books and tickets very well. Thanks, Frank!

When Les Bursill resigned as Bulletin Editor last year after several years of excellent service, it was some months before we enlisted the services of a replacement, and Bruce Watt has shown that he is a very competent editor, and has embraced the job with enthusiasm and skill. He is keen to get our members publishing booklets, and has a few ideas for improving our image. Bruce also helps out when we need a courier for the supper equipment and urn, which brings me to the excellent job that Doug and Betty Perry do in providing supper for us each evening. We really look forward to that cuppa, and it permits informal chatting with people of a like mind, which really makes membership of the SSHS so rewarding.



Dr. Ed Duyker, our Book Review Editor, a prolific author himself, labours away providing interesting reviews about interesting books, and has done so for a few years now. To read a thought-provoking review adds even more interest when reading the book, because you compare and contrast your thoughts on it with Ed's, and I find I examine the book in more detail as a result, and therefore get more from my examination than I might have otherwise achieved. His vast knowledge also gives you insight into many incidents of which you may not have been aware, giving a little extra *frisson* of pleasure, when reading a particular publication. And of course his reviews encourage you to either buy the book reviewed, or certainly obtain it from the library. Thank you Ed, also for your valuable contributions to our Bulletin as author. I know you are much in demand as a guest speaker, and we look forward to hearing you speak about your new books whenever you can fit us in. Ed has also given us suggestions for interesting guest speakers from his learned and interesting group of friends and these have provided so much enjoyment for our members.

We are fortunate in that two of our other Committee members are Pauline Curby and Angela Thomas, both excellent authors in their own right, and both have been guest speakers to our members, thereby fulfilling quite a rounded role on the committee. We appreciate your attendance at Committee meetings helping us with the nitty-gritty of organising the SSHS. Mrs. Betty Greentree has been a Committee member for many years, and we value your knowledge and experience and attendance at Executive Committee meetings, Betty, when you have had such severe health problems, but still manage to get along. Wendy Fyfe has apologised that she has been unable to get to meetings, but we know she has the interests of the Society at heart.

Thank you to our honorary solicitor, Mr Michael Solari, and to our auditors for their support throughout the year. Their job may not be onerous, but it is nice to have their support when required. We had no archivist or research officer in name throughout the year, but I know that Les Bursill who previously held these titles, and who had provided our web page for some time and paid for it himself, had been referring questions to me and Helen McDonald, our Local Studies Librarian when he had been servicing this web page. Thank you Les for your assistance throughout the year, and although you may be unsung, you have provided a valuable service to the Society, and have continued to do so out of the goodness of your heart.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank our other patron, the Mayor of Sutherland Shire, Cllr. Kevin Schreiber and the General Manager, Mr. John Rayner, as well as officers of the Sutherland Shire Council: Tim Fong, Helen McDonald and the printing staff for continuing to provide support to our Society by the publication of our Bulletin, and their willing assistance whenever we need transport or equipment in putting up displays. We are proud to be associated with the Sutherland Shire Council as their Historical Society, and pledge our support whenever required. With the Centenary of Sutherland Shire Council coming up in 2006, we will endeavour to assist in whatever role is required, and would be delighted to help in any way, and thank you all heartily for your splendid assistance in 2004-2005.

*Dawn Emerson,*

Dawn Emerson,  
President

#### **Meetings for 2005.**

Friday, 19 <sup>th</sup> August:	Battle of Vinegar Hill
Friday, 16 <sup>th</sup> September:	AGM plus a Heritage Movie from Library Collection
Friday, 21 <sup>st</sup> October:	Mr. Bob Walshe: Eureka Stockade
Friday, 18 <sup>th</sup> November:	Tim Narraway: The Boer War
Friday, 16 <sup>th</sup> December:	Xmas Party at the Sutherland School of Arts

# From the Editor's Desk



As I write this report, I am mindful of the fact that this is the end of my first year as editor, having joined the list of others who have served in various capacities over time. 2006 will be an auspicious year as it marks not only a century of local government, but also the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of this society in March 1966. The focus of our activities next year will reflect these events. Incidentally, Bulletin No. 1 was published in September 1966 and consisted of 4 foolscap pages. It was edited by M. Hutton Neve.

I notice that in my first report that I had flagged that I would be researching the histories of some of our prominent local houses. To date I have not fulfilled this promise, however it remains firmly on the agenda.

Too little of our local built environment has been saved from the demolisher's hammer or has been recorded. Unlike many suburbs that matured gracefully and maintained some of their previous identity, the Shire has undergone a very rapid transformation in recent times. For nearly 150 years, the Shire was a "sleeper", slumbering away as a quaint rural enclave, an idyllic paradise by the bush and the water, sufficiently isolated to retain its bucolic charm. Older residents recall this Shire with nostalgia. To younger or more recent residents however, the Shire is a pleasant residential area but its links to its rural past are not apparent. In a little over a generation, much of what made the Shire unique has changed.

A focus in the bulletin this year has been to resurrect past stories and give voice to members who have a story to tell. This includes interviews with older residents. I have particularly enjoyed researching aspects of our history that as yet has not been adequately told.

The adage that a picture tells a thousand words is so true. The inclusion of coloured photographs on the cover in the last two editions has added interest. As a result, the Leader ran a story linking one of our featured photographs with a contemporary one to illustrate the change that has occurred over the century. We need to be mindful of our role. We are members because we enjoy reading, writing about and talking about events from the past. Most people have at least a passing interest in this too. We have a duty to preserve what history we can and to make it accessible to present and future citizens.

As an organization, we need to be passionate about collecting and safe keeping oral, written, film and photographic records from our past. In a time and space poor society it is often difficult to hang on to old things and so much is cast aside. The positive thing is that technology now allows us to digitally record photographs, film and documents easily and to reproduce them.

In looking to the future, I think we should reflect on the early aims of the society. This was when members actively became involved in writing about our history and educating residents through talks and publications. The internet is a vital source of information today. We have a membership of about 150 but we could have a readership of thousands. To would be writers, I urge you to put pen to paper. In doing so, you too become a small part of history! Make this a goal in the anniversary year. Finally, we need to actively pursue a museum location that more adequately suits our needs. Where we are is good, but more space would enable us to have a larger display and to store items that are not on active display.

This is the last bulletin for the year. I wish you all well for the rest of the year and I promise you interesting reading in the bulletin in 2006.

Bruce Watt Editor 2005

## **SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc. will be held on Friday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2005 in the Stapleton Community Centre, Stapleton Avenue, Sutherland at 8 p.m.**

### **AGENDA**

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Apologies**
- 3. Confirmation and Adoption of the Minutes of the 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting.**
- 4. Submission and Adoption of the Annual Report of the Executive Council.**
- 5. Hon. Treasurer's Financial Statement and Balance Sheet for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2004 to 30th June 2005**
- 6. Election of Officers for 2006 – 2006**
- 7. GENERAL BUSINESS: Pertaining to the Annual General Meeting.**

**Mrs Nola Tunks  
Hon. Secretary**

# TREASURER'S REPORT

## SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC

### REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING JUNE, 2005

<b>Income</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>
Members Subscriptions	1320.00	1377.60
Donations/Grants	167.90	796.25
Interest – Commonwealth Bank	6.72	306.51
Interest – St George Bank Fixed Deposits	288.74	301.87
Excursion Deposits	2093.18	1024.00
GST Collected	341.32	341.32
GST refund from government	<u>161.00</u>	<u>164.00</u>
	4381.86	3888.05
Miscellaneous income	<u>482.95</u>	
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4864.81</b>	<b>3888.05</b>
Interest – CBA Fixed Deposits	<u>123.55</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Income Total</b>	<b>4988.36</b>	<b>3888.05</b>
	=====	=====
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Bulletin Express	1067.16	485.85
Australian Post PO Box	79.10	89.00
Postage/Phone Calls	12.27	132.75
Miscellaneous	265.45	26.52
Subscriptions	87.64	99.30
Insurance	605.00	662.50
Suppers	79.23	68.65
Hall Rentals	312.50	206.25
Donations	50.00	50.00
Excursion Payments	2364.55	882.00
Museum	2210.10	344.30
GST paid out to other providers	661.62	
Petty Cash on hand	<u>20.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
<b>Expenses Total</b>	<b>7802.43</b>	<b>2996.82</b>
	=====	=====
<b>Surplus Gross for year</b>	<b>-2937.62</b>	<b>891.23</b>
	<b>4864.81</b>	<b>3888.05</b>
	=====	=====
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>	<b>2003/04</b>	<b>2004/05</b>
St George Fixed Term Account		
015-152-672	7000.00	7000.00
CBA Fixed Term Account		
2259-5009-3603	7705.31	8006.14
CBA Savings/Cheque Account		
0090-5269	1123.46	1442.71
GST Benefit	20.18	
Cash on Hand	<u>40.00</u>	<u>117.90</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>15848.95</b>	<b>16566.75</b>
Period Asset Balance	18613.14	15848.95
Add Surplus from Revenue A/c	-2937.62	891.23
Prior Period Balance adjustment	49.88	-173.43
Cash transactions	<u>123.55</u>	<u>0.00</u>
	15848.95	16566.75
	=====	=====



# Membership Renewal 2005/6

*The Society's year commences 1<sup>st</sup> 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> 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.

---

## Sutherland Shire Historical Society

### Application for renewal of membership 2005/6 – tax invoice

TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Ms

Family name: -----

Given name: -----

Postal address:-----

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

### Please find subscription for 2005/6 enclosed

**Annual adult subscription = \$22      Junior member/ full time student = \$11**

Signed ----- Date -----

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

**ABN No.** 17 083 299 572      This becomes a tax invoice on payment of the subscription.

**Note: This organisation is GST exempt.**

---

## Sutherland Shire Historical Society

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**ABN No.** 17 083 299 572      This becomes a tax invoice on payment of the subscription.

**Note: This organisation is GST exempt.**

## **Letters to the editor**

Will you please spare me a little space to reply to the letter from Elva Carmichael in the July issue of the Bulletin, concerning the statement in my article on early Yowie Bay in the February issue that 'The completed survey by Dixon used the local native names of Cronulla etc.' She probably supposes that, during that period, Dixon would have used 'Kurranulla' or similar as this spelling is accepted as being the aboriginal name for the area.

The Local Studies collection at Sutherland Library holds early maps of the Shire area, some labelled 'Parish of Southerland' which indicates their age. Though undated, in the fine print thereon, one shows a written notation that it was prepared from surveys dating from the late 1840s. All of them, except one, has the spelling 'Cronulla' and in the case of the odd one out, (that one labelled 'South Botany Estate'), this uses the spelling 'Kronulla'. This particular map appears on page 11 of Pauline Curby's *Pictorial History of Cronulla*.

So the spelling 'Cronulla' was in use from the very first maps and continued well into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as all the real estate advertisements for that period use that spelling.

Merle Kavanagh

## **La Perouse enigma gets solved by wreck**

An enduring mystery of early European exploration in Australia, the disappearance of French explorer Jean Francois Galaup de la Perouse, has been solved.

The Soloman Association of Noumea announced last week it had positively identified the wreck of La Boussole, one of La Perouse's two frigates, off Vanikoro in the Soloman Islands.

The association launched an expedition on April 15 to study the wreck.

Comte de la Perouse was on a mission to map the globe, open new marine trade routes and seek a suitable place for a French colony in the south Pacific when he vanished.

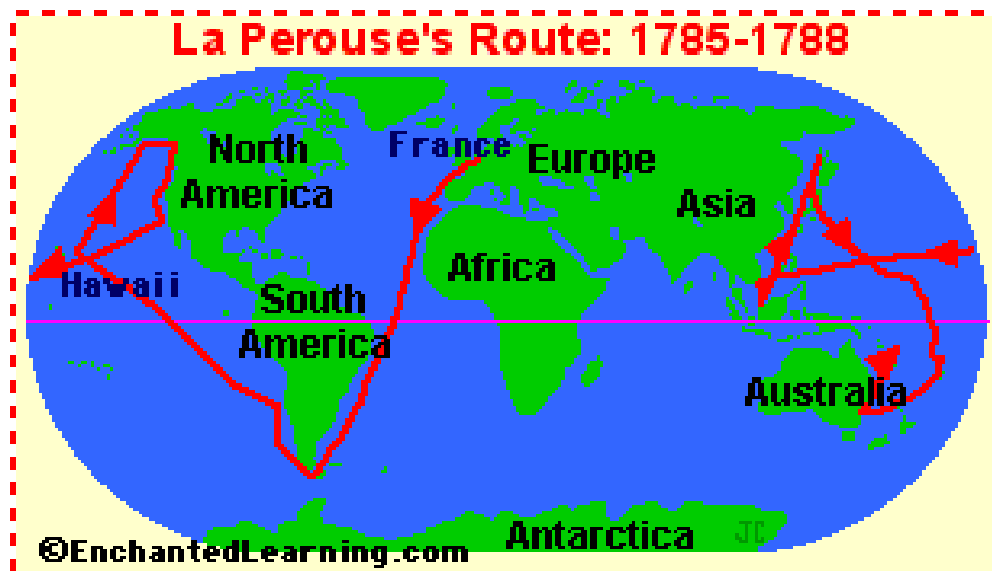
He arrived in Botany Bay on January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1788 in two frigates, La Boussole and L'Australabe, only days after the arrival of the First Fleet. The French and English got along amicably and before he sailed, La Perouse entrusted his journals to Governor Arthur Phillip.

Arthur Phillip sailed on to Port Jackson, where he formally established an English colony. La Perouse sailed from Botany Bay on March 10 and was never seen again.

Thirty nine years later, English captain Peter Dillon found relics from the French vessels at Tucopia Island, between New Hebrides and Santa Cruz group of the Solomons.

It appears the two vessels had been driven ashore at Vanikoro in a gale and some of the crew were massacred. One group managed to build a boat from parts of the wreckage of the Astralabe, and set sail westward, but they were never heard of again.

The wreckage of La Perouse's two vessels was located in 1962 by New Zealand engineer and diver Reece Discombe, resident in Vanuatu.



# A Port Hacking Connection with Cannibalism.

*By Merle Kavanagh*

John Henry Want, a barrister and politician, who served as Attorney General for some periods between 1885 and 1899, had a house on his property in the now Lilli Pilli area during the 1880s and 1890s. He was born in 1846 at Glebe, Sydney, to Randolph Want, a solicitor and his wife Hariette, nee Lister. He attended Rev. W.H. Savigny's Collegiate School at Cooks River before moving on to Sydney Grammar School. Twice married, he divorced his first wife after fourteen years and remarried years later in his early fifties.

Want was a tall man, standing over six feet (about 183 cms.) and said to be 'bluff and unconventional' with a dramatic presence in court. He thought that Federation would take away the independence and liberty of the states and he called it 'Faderation'. Want enjoyed the 'theatre of the courtroom', impressing juries with his full rich voice whilst 'toying with his watch-chain'. He became an authority on shipping matters, which fitted in with the vigorous outdoor life that he enjoyed. He was a member of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, and of the Board of Fisheries and a trustee of the Royal National Park. As such he was instrumental in establishing the fish hatchery at Cabbage Tree Bay, being in charge of it at one time. Sailing to Hobart and fishing on Port Hacking, dressed as a 'pirate bold' was the unconventional style in which he plunged into his hobbies.

In 1884 John Want purchased from England the yacht *Mignonette*, only 52 feet (about 16 metres) long and asked for it to be sailed to Australia. This would be a long and dangerous voyage for such a small vessel but in April of that year an agreement was made with an experienced sailor. Captain Thomas Dudley, who originally came from Tollesbury on the Essex coast near Maldon, may have had the experience but was possibly lacking in navigational skills. He recruited two local men and sailed on 5 May 1884 from Tollesbury. They called in to Southampton and there the two crewmen left, though the reasons for this are not known.

At Southampton the yacht was given a short refit and three new crewmen were hired. Edwin Stephens had the navigation skills needed by Dudley, Edward Brooks served as deckhand and 17 year old Richard Parker was the cabin boy. The long voyage began and the crew settled into their tasks. Things were going smoothly enough aboard the yacht until 5 July when disaster struck. A large wave suddenly descended upon the boat, engulfing her and the crew. As she began to founder, a small dinghy was carried up onto the water-washed deck and launched. Into this Dudley placed some navigation equipment, and somehow two tins of turnips also found their way into the dinghy. Young Parker had attempted to put in a barricoe (small cask) of fresh water, but it fell into the sea and they were unable in their dire situation to recover it. The yacht sank, only a few minutes after the wave struck. The Captain and his crew of three were alone in a small dinghy on the open ocean, but fortunately on an established shipping route. They were hopeful of being picked up by a passing ship.

The tins of turnips lasted only a short while amongst the four of them, but on the fourth day they caught a turtle and this was killed and eaten raw. The days dragged on and the situation was becoming desperate. Young Richard was the weakest as, tormented by thirst in the midst of the endless ocean, he yielded to the temptation and drank sea water. It did him more harm than good and increased his craving. About the 20<sup>th</sup> day they were all feeling the effects of deprivation and each one knew they were being pushed towards a terrible decision. If things continued as they were, none of them would survive, but if they could hold out a bit longer, their hopes of rescue might be fulfilled. To survive until a ship came along, they needed food and liquid. They had had no success with further attempts to catch any sea creatures and, in their weakened condition, there remained only one alternative.

Captain Dudley made a suggestion that they draw lots to decide the victim, but the crew was not keen on this idea. Despite hours of uncertainty and hesitation and against the objections of Brooks, the Captain slit the throat of young Parker with a pocket knife. It was probably an easy matter, as Parker was in no condition to offer any resistance. Having made the decision for them all, the Captain shared the blood around and together, over the following days, the three surviving crew ate the flesh of young Parker.

It was 24 days before a German ship, the *Moctezuma* (*sic*), sighted them, on its homeward voyage from South America. They took on board Captain Dudley, Edward Brooks and Edwin Stephens but all that was left of Parker was a bone with some flesh attached. The rescued party made no attempt to conceal their part in Parker's death and the aftermath, as they believed their desperate plight justified their actions and was in accordance with society's attitude at that time. Although many previous occurrences of cannibalism had been overlooked by the courts, some involving only the eating of a corpse and not the actual killing of a living person, Victorian attitudes were changing. A case for murder was initiated in Singapore in 1874 regarding such a shipwreck incident concerning the *Euxine*, but some doubtful legal moves had prevented the case going ahead. The survivors of the *Mignonette* would not be so lucky.

Captain Dudley, Stephens and Brooks were landed at Falmouth and there they were charged with murder, though supporting evidence was needed to take the matter to court. Brooks was persuaded to testify and the trial was set for Exeter assizes. Public opinion was strongly in favour of an acquittal for Dudley and Stephens and it was widely considered there would be no conviction because of the original suggestion that they draw lots. Financial assistance to help the men now on charge came from supporters, and the accused were given bail.

The trial judge was Baron Huddleston who wanted the charge to be murder rather than manslaughter and pressed the trial jury to decide whether or not a crime had been committed, rather than whether the defendants were guilty or innocent. This was a devious move and ensured that the assizes were adjourned to the High Court in London where the case was heard by five judges only. It was technically impossible to adjourn this way so it was necessary to constitute the court as the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice. The authorities appeared to be determined the two defendants would be found guilty and they were. However, though the presiding judge sentenced them both to death, not wearing a black cap as was then usual, the sentences were soon commuted to six months in jail. By avoiding the penalty of execution, which would have caused uproar in the land, the authorities had set a standard which would affect judgement of such cases in the future. The two prisoners had the sympathy of the public who raised petitions seeking pardons but the sentences remained and they both served their full time.

Although a number of such cases still occurred in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the trial achieved what the authorities had intended – the decline of cannibalism in shipwrecks at sea. It was a landmark case.

On his release Captain Thomas Dudley emigrated to Australia, the intended destination of the ill-fated *Mignonette*, ordered by John Want, the 'pirate bold' of Port Hacking. There Captain Dudley set up a business in Sydney where he died in an outbreak of the plague in 1900. Edwin Stephens returned to the sea and died in 1914 and Edward Brooks died in 1919. The Parker family related to young Richard, still live in Southampton.

#### **Compiled from the following sources:**

*Australian Dictionary of Biography, 1891-1939*, Vol. 12, pp.380/1.

Terry Kass, *History of Gogerlys Point – Final Report*, For Public Works Department of New South Wales, May 1990.

Merle Kavanagh, *Echoes from the Bay: the Yowie Bay Story*, 2004.

David Frost, 'A taste of cannibalism', *Family Tree Magazine*, December 2004, p. 66-68.



# Punts, buses and bridges

Jim Baker

The development of transportation links has had a great influence on the urbanisation of the land south of Georges River. I thought it might be interesting to provide some information I have collected on early transport systems that serviced the Sutherland Shire and also some personal anecdotes on this theme.

## **PUNTS:**

When my wife and I began researching the earliest history of punts operating across Georges River from Tom Ugly's Point to Sylvania we noticed obvious variations in different references. One article in the St. George Leader, celebrating the opening by Barry Unsworth, MLA of the second Georges River bridge at Tom Ugly's Pt, states that the punt service started in 1864 and other publications seem to agree with this date. Beverley Earnshaw, in her excellent book "Between Two Rivers", also states the following: 'On Nov.7 1864 a hand operated punt began running from Tom Ugly's to Horse Rock Point, Sylvania. It was sponsored by the wealthy Thomas Holt and operated by William Harris whose name is acknowledged in Harris St., Sans Souci.'

Imagine our surprise when we came across a letter beautifully written by a fellow in the Surveyor General's Dept., Mr. James Deane, CCL, showing us quite definitely that this earliest punt (hand operated and probably single cable) was doing its job in April 1860, and likely before that date! The letter is addressed to the Surveyor General's office at Surry Hills and the department's stamp in the top left-hand corner of the letter clearly indicates that it was received on 2/May/1860. (see page 18)

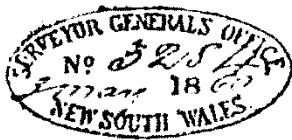
I was very much intrigued by the size of the destructive floods in April, 1860 referred to by Mr. Deane. They were so huge that they were able to wash the punt off its cable downstream, and wash away approach ramps on the Sylvania and Tom Ugly's side of the river as well as destroying a wharf. At the age of 80 I have many years' experience and interest in the Georges River estuary but it is the first time I have seen or heard any reference to such a catastrophe.

With my appetite whetted for more information about the disastrous floods, I visited the State and Mitchell Libraries in Sydney. I found an article in the Sydney Morning Herald of Tuesday, 1<sup>st</sup> May, 1860 at Mitchell Library which I will quote verbatim:-

'The year 1860 threatens to become memorable in the annals of the colony as The Year of Great Floods. The valley of the Shoalhaven has already been desolated, and the subscriptions raised to alleviate the distress of the sufferers had barely been expended before we were visited by another flood of a wider range and we fear more devastating effects.' The article goes on to mention that these storm events came from the south and west, drenching South Australia and creating a three-day flood in Victoria in one single downpour of 3 ¼ inches falling in a short period.

William A. Bayley's 1978 publication of "Behind Broulee – Central South Coast NSW" states on Page 29:

'The floods of 1860, however, overshadowed all in their magnitude. Long detailed reports appeared in Sydney and Wollongong newspapers. Loss of life and property were serious. Heavy rain fell for nearly a week, the lower lands were flooded and people sheltered in the hills. Sandbanks, formed from material washed down from Araluen diggings, blocked the river at Moruya slowing the escape of floodwaters and shortening navigation..... several bodies were seen floating down the Moruya River.....the wheat and potato crops were ruined and the sea beaches from Congo Point to Broulee were piled with broken furniture, casks, dead horses and cattle, some bearing evidence of having come from Araluen..... At Nelligen the Clyde River was ten feet above high water mark, and swamped houses and the I.S.N.Co's stores. The gale blew with such fury that the Hunter steamer dragged anchors for upwards of two miles down river. All bridges on the Braidwood road were destroyed and landslides made the road impassable.'



N<sup>o</sup> 74

Surry Hills  
2 May 1860

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that on the 1<sup>st</sup> instant I crossed the ferry at Georges River, and found that the Ferryman in order to save the Punt from being swept down the river by the flood on Saturday <sup>last</sup> succeeded in hauling it on the flat on one side the river, where it lay in safety, no accident having occurred to either Punt or ferryboat. but, the road on both sides of the ferry is greatly torn up, a small bridge on this side is carried away altogether.

From a memorandum given to me by the Puntman it appears that the number of foot passengers, Horses, cattle &c that crossed the ferry during the month

from 1<sup>st</sup> December to ending 30<sup>th</sup> of April is as follows 41 men 12 horses  
and 1 draught horse and dray  
buffing a fully  
loading 2 or 3  
which is whether the day of  
the punt was not  
of the month 2 day

whether there a ferry should continue  
to be supported by the public in  
operation so that the use will  
be of no use at all.

The Acting Surveyor General

I have the honor to be Sir  
Your most obed<sup>t</sup> Servant  
James Deane C. E. L.

65/4289

According to Jack Loney's publication, Australian Shipwrecks [1851-1871] the stormy weather of April 1860 took 3 ships, adding to the destruction by flooding which brought disaster on the land in S.A., Victoria and NSW:-

- 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 1860 - "Jane and Ellen", wrecked on Babel Island, Tasmania and  
"Margaret Russell", wrecked on Rabbit Island, Wilson's Promontory.
- 23<sup>rd</sup> April, 1860 - "Elizabeth" lost on the Lonsdale reef at the Rip, Port Phillip Heads.

There may be other records of the 1860 floods around. If floods could do so much damage at Sylvania and Tom Ugly's Point imagine the damage upstream at Cabramatta Creek and Milperra as well as the Upper Georges River. Parramatta River, Sydney and Hunter River at Newcastle probably also suffered. How wonderful if nowadays we could have that volume of water reaching the dams around Sydney – without the damaging effects along the river banks, of course!

Another hand written letter that I found at Sutherland Library is addressed to the Under Secretary for Lands dated October, 1860 suggesting that Kangaroo Point *as well as* Tom Ugly's Point could be suitable for a punt due to increasing traffic. I am assuming the letter is proposing an additional punt across the much shorter distance from Baldface Pt. on the northern side to Kangaroo Pt. on the southern side. As far as I am aware this second punt was never put into operation and punts continued on the original cable line between Tom Ugly's Pt. and Horse Rock Point until the opening of the first bridge at that location.

### **BUSES:**

Buses were great assets during the transitional period before cars became common- place. For people living in the expanding outer suburbs of Sydney they were indispensable. In those days there was usually a conductor on board as well as the driver. The conductor was there to help the old folk up and down the steps as well as the mums with their babies and strollers.



As a child living at Blakehurst I became aware of the buses regularly passing by but along with other kids attending Sylvania Public School in the early thirties I enjoyed the walk instead. One of our pupils, Shirley Jamieson, however, always rode to school in the familiar green and cream bus simply because her father owned the service. A hand-pumped petrol bowser stood on a vacant block of land about half a kilometre down Blakesley Road from its intersection with King Georges Road. These Hurstville to Miranda buses used this bowser to replenish their tanks. It was always of great interest to the kids to see

the fuel being hand pumped up to fill the glass container at the top of the bowser and then see a lever pulled to discharge the fuel by gravity into the tank.

The red and cream buses of the Kogarah bus service were also prominent in the early days. I can remember marvelling at the number of instruments on the dashboard. I think these buses were mid 1920s American Whites.

The modern age came to the southern districts with the introduction of a blue and white double-decker bus service that ran from Hurstville to Cronulla. These buses had no cover over the back stairs leading to the upper deck. The kids liked to hitch a ride on the back platform then hop off before the bus gained speed. The proprietor, Mr. T. Bardsley, lived at Hurstville at the time and tried to extend the service to Strathfield but this had to end because the Railway Dept. did not look kindly at competition.

For further information I enquired with Mr. David Wilson, Curator of the Bus and Truck Museum at Tempe and his response stated in part: 'Bardsley took over from the government-owned Cronulla-Sutherland steam tram service in 1932. When the railway was extended to Cronulla in 1939 Bardsleys went out of business and the assets were sold. I don't know a lot about the bus fleet but at the end there were 3 Leyland double deckers (all 1929 models) and at least one Leyland single decker.'

This letter for which I am most grateful goes on to tell us that two of these buses went to the government depot at Burwood, operating till 1946-47. The other double-decker went to Rover Motors of Cessnock in 1946. The Leyland single-decker went to Ruttys bus service in Wollongong. It was then sold to Campbelltown bus Service and was still running in the mid 1960s.

I also made enquiries with Hurstville City Council's "Gladwyn" History and Heritage section. Senior librarian, Niall Pettit Young, kindly sent me information and a photo of the Leyland double-decker bus with a gentleman in a white dustcoat in the front (who may have been Mr. Bardsley himself).

A life-long friend, Mrs. Betty Quill, who was part of the Willards family that lived in the Maritime cottages near the entrance to Belgrave Esplanade, Sylvania, often rode her pushbike to Cronulla during the 1930s. She told me she was always apprehensive at the turbulence created by the passing of the blue and white double-deckers on the narrow roads.

I recall a humorous incident as a 5 year old, in regard to the Kogarah-Sans Souci steam tram service. My mother used to visit the Smith and Garnum families who lived in Rocky Point Road (just down from Kendall St.). The road at that time consisted of a tram line with rails on timber sleepers ballasted by blue metal (just like a train line) with single-lane concrete roadways on each side. Bobby Smith was the same age as me and had the habit of placing small pieces of blue metal on the tram rails and then noting the crushed stones when the tram passed over them. We became more ambitious and placed a long row of larger stones on the rails. Fortunately the driver noticed the stones and pulled up just short of them. We were hiding under a bed on Mrs. Garnum's front veranda but were soon discovered by our mothers and an angry tram driver. We were frog-marched out to the tram with passengers looking on while we were given a spanking by our mothers.

I remember feeling more concerned about the embarrassment of the incident rather than the mild spanking but Bobby and I thought it better to cry very loudly to placate the tram crew and passengers. Several ladies on the tram pleaded for us to be let off because we were so small and young. Needless to say we never tried that activity again!

## **BRIDGES:**

I intend to keep this section as brief as possible because it has already been covered many times in the past.

The concept of the Georges River Bridge and its development is concisely covered in the following extract from "Sutherland Shire Studies No. 1" by H. Hutton Neve:

'By 1923 motor traffic proved too much for these ferries (punts). Through the efforts of [Sutherland Shire] Councillor Monro the Georges River Bridge Act 1923 was passed. This authorised the Council to raise a loan of 225,000 pounds in London to construct the bridge and charge tolls. The bridge was



opened in April, 1929. The Dept. of Main Roads took over control of the bridge from the Council in 1947. Council however continued to collect toll charges until the loan had been discharged. The toll ceased on May 31<sup>st</sup> 1952. A new duplicate bridge to the east of the older bridge was opened in October, 1987.'

These bridges proved to be a great aid to fisher folk. I remember tying up to the T3 pier of the old bridge on many occasions for night bream fishing. These fish seemed to be abundant from June to August, but the cold weather made it most uncomfortable during the night. The Jewfish boys liked to anchor up near the S3 pier and fish towards it with the tide. They stuck to their task although nearly frozen

To us boys of Sylvania Public School the bridge became a challenge to improve our climbing skills. Here is a poem that illustrates this point.....



### THE BRIDGE

Three bold boys were Jack, Ken and Jim,  
School days together close by Sydney's rim.  
Sylvania school had two class-rooms in all,  
Three classes in each, and it boasted a hall.  
From farms and bush houses came kids mainly poor,  
It was time for expansion, in old 'twenty-four.

"The steam punt's too slow", the elders would crow,  
"What we need is a bridge so the Shire can grow".  
But the river was wide at Tom Ugly's Point,  
So a steel bridge was built that was strong in the joint.  
Council's money all gone, now their finances grim,  
But boundless the joy of Jack, Ken and Jim!

They climbed all its girders with each challenge met  
And were dry underneath when rain made it wet.  
On school-days they'd dream of the coming week-end,  
Of their paradise playground, their new grey-steel friend.  
They would sit on the piers, and dangle their toes  
And catch bream and tailor right under one's nose.

The blubbers swam by in the grip of the tide,  
Sunray reflections danced on bridge underside.  
Fisher folk on the Point watched the boys' climbing skill,  
Norfolk Pines and the quarry they could scale with a will.  
The three Bettys warned, "If you fall you can't swim!"  
For they were the loves of Jack, Ken and Jim.

Oysterman Bill chugged by in the “Pearl”,  
With a terrible temper his threats he would hurl.  
“So keep out of sight, we mustn’t be seen,  
Or school-teacher Brown will be told where we’ve been”.  
The boys with their daring thus learned to be wary  
Of Brown’s thumping cane and punishment scary.

Fellows like these practiced well their survival,  
They would fight hard and win, upon “Tojo’s” arrival.  
Now the world builds its bridges of concrete pre-stressed,  
They never need painting and stand up to the test,  
New Captain Cook Bridge climbing chances are slim,  
It would never have suited our Jack, Ken and Jim.

Jim Baker

.....

## Thomas Holt

The Holt name is synonymous with the early development of Sutherland. (he owned virtually all of the present Sutherland Shire from the 1860s onwards). He called his landholding the Sutherland Estate after Forby Sutherland, a member of Cook’s crew who was buried at Kurnell. Sutherland was born in the Parish of Olbrig, County of Caithness, Scotland.

In 1870, on the centenary of Cook’s landing, Holt erected a sandstone monument at Kurnell in honour of Cook’s achievement. He was also instrumental in the erection of another monument in Hyde Park. His interest in Cook is understandable. Thomas Holt was born in 1811 in Horbury in Yorkshire which is not far from Cook’s birthplace. To Australians, Cook is an important figure. His achievements go well beyond Australia however and he is highly revered in his local area for explorations that changed the course of world history. To a person born only 32 years after Cook’s death in close proximity to where Cook grew up and achieved fame, it is little wonder that he took such an interest in honouring his memory.

Of course Thomas Holt owned most of the present Sutherland Shire at one time (about 20 square miles). However, this was a tiny fraction of his total landholdings which were at least 1500 square miles stretching from Queensland to Victoria.

Holt was an active politician, businessman, entrepreneur and philanthropist. He was on the Board of Directors of the Sydney Railway Company (1848 – 1855), a founder of the AMP Society, a gold trader, was the first Colonial Treasurer, a trustee in the Bank of New South Wales and was a member of the Council of Education responsible for establishing public education in NSW. He was indeed “an energetic colonist”!

# **AN INTERVIEW WITH THELMA GREEN**

**nee WILLIAMS - 1st March, 1984.** Submitted by Elva Carmichael.

Note: The last bulletin contained an interview with Joe Green.

Thelma's family, the Williams, came to the district from Waverley in 1917 for the father, Henry David, called Dave, to manage a farm in Caringbah Road for Mr. Mansfield. Dave managed a bakery for a German named Cubular. Cubular became unpopular during W.W.1 because of his nationality, so to avoid trouble he had Dave manage the business. Dave also baked and delivered the bread. But Dave, because of his position in working for a German, also became unpopular. Dave left Waverley because of the trouble and came to Caringbah to manage a farm for Mr. Mansfield.

Dave bought land backing onto Mansfield's and after about three or four years he began to build his own farm and house in Coral Road. Thelma was born in Waverley. Dave named his farm "Waverley Farm".

The Williams family consisted of:

Henry Thomas "Harry", married to ?

Maisie, who married Sam Green,

Thelma, who married Joe Green,

Jean, who married Fred Green,

Frederick "Fred" married Marjorie Springall and

Jean, "Ethel" married David Cox.

Harry died in 1983, in Queensland. He was a New Guinea Missionary for thirteen years prior to W.W. 2. He and his family had a dreadful experience leaving N. G. due to the war and coming back to Townsville, Queensland, in a very small launch.

Thelma told how her family left Waverley in 1917 and came over the George's River in the punt at Tom Ugly's. The tide had to be reasonably high. Their belongings were brought in a horse drawn pantehnicon. There were five horses, one lead and two pairs following. The pantehnicon was about as high as the current motor ones and three William's children and the family dog sat on top for the journey. Thelma was about six years of age. The children were hungry and tempted to sample the dog's biscuits. They only tasted them and left them for the dog. Thelma remembered the thrill when the van went onto and came off the punt as the slope made them hold on tightly. The reason why the tide had to be fairly high was that at low time the stone approaches to the punt were slippery and the horses hooves would slip - would not grip and slide backwards when coming off the exit.

Thelma worked in the Miranda Co-Op doing clerical, cashier and book keeping work. The Co-Op was very lucrative then (in 1928-34).

Mr. Cartridge was the manager at the time. He would be remembered by many folk who used the Miranda Co-Op. His son was killed in Cronulla surf by lightning and he and his wife never got over it. They lived in Cronulla and then moved to Sutherland.

The Co-Op was thriving the six years Thelma worked there. It was a genuine Co-Operative, run by the local farmers. The staff consisted of six carters including Fletcher & Lyle's (the cartage contractors), Jack Fletcher and Arthur Lyle. Their trucks would come down from Sutherland by a special siding and would unload into the store. From there they would deliver to the farmers. Their trucks were firstly horse-drawn then motorised vehicles later.

Thelma started as a typist and mail girl and was promoted to bookkeeper. Ruby Eavery also worked there and Lizzie Bennett from Sylvania. The Eavery family lived somewhere near where the present Dutch homes stand. Mr. Eavery was a poultry farmer. With the growth of the Co-Op another girl was employed in the office.

"Progress" of the day meant sub-divisions, Egg Board, Milk Board and farmers going further away from Sydney and a new system evolved for selling the products and the Miranda Co-Operative Pty. Ltd. gradually lost its purpose and starting selling general items to the public.

At Cronulla a bakery was always on the corner where it is today (remember this was 1984). The street is now called Purley Place. Thelma recalled she would walk across the land from where the tennis courts were, corner Kingsway & Wilbar Avenue, to the bakery corner as there were no buildings to avoid, until the P.O. was built. A tram shed stood on the corner near where Penprase was and where the Women's Rest Rooms are now.

The tram had to take a left hand sweep at this section of the Kingsway to turn into Kurranurra Street to allow the three tram cars to follow. Thelma remembered the tram ride costing 1d.

Thelma said waiting for trams and later buses at night was a nerving experience because the electric street lighting was very poor with the long distance between light poles. A small generator fed the streetlights when one left the town one left the lights behind. Later the lights were put in as far as Woollooware Road. The generator was situated at Gunnamatta Park. My dad told me after the Rail Service was put through from Sutherland to Cronulla we received our power from the sub station at Caringbah in Banksia Road.

The Ice Works had their own generator and that was in Elouera Road. A continual chugging noise was heard from the ice Works.

The Greens remembered only one horse trough and that was at the bottom of Gosford Street near the Kingsway on the left hand side of Gosport Street, twenty yards from the corner.

The first motors Thelma can remember belonged to Mr. Joe Monro and Mr. J.T. Austin of Gannon's Road. Joe Monroe's car would come down the Kingsway at "breakneck" speed of 25 mph. It was a long, sleek, black vehicle. Joe said when he was a little boy he touched it and Monro told him to take his hands off it.

J.T. Austin was a cake and pastry cook in Sydney and very successful apparently. He came to Gannon's Road south to retire. He owned the property around Port Hacking Women's Bowls Club. The house was called "Austerlight".

Homers bought the property from Austins. Thelma was friendly with Austin's grand daughter, Marjorie, who later became matron of the Scottish Hospital in Sydney.

Austin had a Studebaker with a canvas-type hood held down by straps, everything shook when the motor started including the passengers. The car held about six people.

Mr. Austin was a very large gentleman and would drive to Caringbah Methodist church. He belonged to the Cricket Club that played on the now Hockey Field at Jenola Park, corner of Gannon's Road and Kingsway. In my young days I can remember the cricket pitch was covered by the train line in the late 1930's. Jim Austin was one of the club's main players. This park was a playing field as far back as Thelma could remember. Part of it was taken for the train line.

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## **The first speeding offence**

The first recorded speeding offence in Sutherland took place on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1912 when Kogarah Court was told by Senior Constable Lewis that, while he was on duty in Railway Parade, Sutherland a Mr William McKay had 'scorched past in his car so quickly that I was just able to get his number'.

Mr McKay was alleged to have overtaken two cars at more than 20 miles per hour. He was fined £3. (from an old SSSH bulletin)



# THE GOLD COIN

By Tony Platfoot

There is nothing quite as full of life and energy as a fully rigged sailing ship running before the breeze. In 1873 a Glasgow ship owner Thomas Dunlop placed an order on Sunderland ship builders, Robert Bartram and George Haswell for a new sailing ship. Little did they know this ship, the Clan Macleod would outlast them all to become a wonderful sight of such beauty in a port on the far side of the world.

Clan MacLeod was 180 feet in length with a beam of 31 feet. Unlike her forbears, the lower masts, bowsprit, yard arms and rigging fittings were made with the “modern” ship building material of iron and not wood. The only exception was the mizzen mast which was made of pine.

She was launched on 18 February 1874, a thoroughly modern young lady, ready to travel the world. However it wasn't until her fourth voyage in 1879 that she reached the waters of her final home in distant Australia, when she visited the port of Brisbane. Always well kept and looking smart, she became a constant visitor to these shores.

In December 1905 the Clan Macleod was renamed the James Craig and for a while she continued to be an elegant and efficient cargo ship travelling the oceans of the world. But her days were coming to an end as steam vessels began to make their mark on world shipping. In mid 1911 she was sold and became a cargo hulk in Port Moresby. It could have been a tragic end for such a fine ship, but for the urgent need for ships to replace those lost in World War 1.

Sadly the respite was short lived. In early 1922 she was towed to Recherché Bay to become a coastal trader. But she was never to put to sea again. James Craig lay there virtually abandoned until 1925 when she was sold again to act as a coal bunker for the very steam ships which had brought about her demise. But the proud old lady would not accept this fate. In the early 1930's a storm broke her cable and she ran aground. To avoid her becoming a floating hazard a hole was blown in the stern and she settled on the soft muddy bottom of the bay. There she rested for over 40 years ignoring the ravages of time, tide, sea birds and vandals

Then in March 1972 a band of enthusiasts woke the old lady from her deep sleep. With loving care they repaired the damage, refloated her and towed her to Hobart. From there she was taken to Sydney to begin the long process of restoration to her former glory.

A major event in the rebuilding of James Craig was the stepping (that is the re-installing) of the foremast on 28 November 1987.

In days gone by when they built sailing ships, it was the custom to place a gold coin under the foremast so if the ship ever foundered it would pay the sailors' fares to Heaven. How true this was I do not know. When we were rebuilding the James Craig I was a volunteer. At the time I heard that they were bringing an old chap up from Hobart who had sailed in the James Craig to re-act the procedure.

At the foot of the foremast there are two pieces of angle iron which sit back to back. They fit into a slot in the base of the mast to help stop the mast from turning when under sail. In between the two angle irons, is where they placed the gold coin.

The day before this all happened I had hard-stamped my two granddaughters names, Tammy and Lauren Platfoot, onto a piece of copper plate and placed it between the pieces of iron at one end where it would be tight, so when they placed the gold coin between the angles the copper plate would not fall out.

After the mast had been placed into position, I told the “power that be”.

So now as long as the James Craig sails the seven seas my granddaughters' names will go with her.

# 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Eureka Stockade

Eureka's Great Gains - and Unfinished Business -

**Eureka 1854-2004: Reappraising an Australian Legend.** Public Symposium organised by the Cultural Heritage Unit Department of History, the University of Melbourne Wednesday 1 December 2004

**Address by R.D.Walshe, Secretary, Sydney Eureka Centenary Committee 1954**

Mr Chairman, thank you for inviting me. You know, when I recently picked up a book to get my head back to where it was 50 years ago, the first page told me of Melbournians wildly celebrating - at last! the separation of Port Phillip District from the *tyranny of New South Wales* - so, yes, thank you for inviting me.

I want to fill a metaphorical glass and 'toast the days of gold' with Henry Lawson and the many Australians since who've known that the 1850s was the most exciting decade in Australian history; truly 'the Roaring Days' - and Eureka its finest hour!

Ali, then their hearts were bolder,  
And if Dame Fortune frowned  
Their swags they'd lightly shoulder  
And tramp to other ground.  
O they were lion-hearted  
Who gave our country birth:  
O they were of the stoutest sons  
From all the lands on earth.

I want to reflect on three themes that have jelled in my mind across the 50 years since I was Secretary of Sydney's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee. I'll call these the Dynamics, the Democracy, the Drama of Eureka - so, here's a 3-D offering. Please realise that to fit into 20 minutes, I've cut what I'd like to say to half.

Have you thought, as I have, that the very word *eureka* is intriguing? I've asked myself, Why did this incredible event happen on Ballarat's Eureka lead and not on another - say, Black Hill, Canadian Gully or the Gravel Pits? Nothing comes to the tongue more trippingly than *Eureka* Stockade. Could you imagine for even a moment that we'd be here today celebrating the Gravel Pits Stockade? Or even the Bakery Hill Stockade?

And why, for that matter, did it happen at Ballarat and not at another of a dozen goldfields - Bendigo most obviously, with its long militant record? And these questions have kept me going back to an older puzzlement, back to the land that gave us *eureka*, to ask, Why Athens? Why did *that* incredible event, Athenian democracy, blaze up in the Athenian city-state when there were hundreds of other city states?

Why Greece's Athens, why Victoria's Ballarat, why Ballarat's Eureka?... And how curious that the common denominator in all three is DEMOCRACY... as we shall see.

## **Dynamic that lies behind the Eureka story**

Merely to list the events leading up to Eureka and call them 'Causes of Eureka' is no explanation at all.

But that question Why at *Ballarat*? can carry us to the heart of explanation. So, fortified by William James' advice that 'The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook', I suggest we need look no earlier than September 13, 1854.

That's when the authoritarian British Governor Sir Charles Hotham spurned *three years* of non-violent appeals for reform of the harsh gold licence tax and the corrupt goldfields policing of the tax and invoked institutionalised *violence* by ordering twice-a-week instead of once-a-month licence checks 'digger hunts'! To that point *all* the goldfields had simmered with resentment. But then, within a month

of the harsh new regime, *a quite random event* focused the discontent on Ballarat - and for the first time brought that word *eureka* to public notice. I refer of course to the murder of the Scottish digger James Scobie outside the Eureka Hotel on October 7.

In the aftermath, the Government Camp was seen by the Ballarat community to be covering up for the murderer. There followed a big and angry *protest meeting*; the hotel was burnt down by an individual act of arson; all the diggers were blamed for the fire; three arbitrary arrests were made -scapegoats; and Commissioner Rede wrote to Melbourne suggesting he should be permitted to teach the diggers' radical movement 'a frightful lesson'. Hotham was secretly in sympathy with Rede's view because as was only revealed after Hotham's death by his secretary - the British Government had intimated to him when appointing him that *drastic* enforcement of the licence tax might well be needed.

That mass meeting of 10,000 on October 17 was to be followed by many similar Ballarat meetings from 5-15,000 diggers at each - an astonishing proportion of Ballarat's population.

*Now, these meetings were democracy in action, direct democracy* of the kind practised by Athenian citizens at *their* open-air meetings. And notice that the hard-fought decisions of these many 'monster meetings', as they were called, were all on the side of non-violence, of moral force rather than physical force, *right up to the last of the meetings*, on November 30.

But notice too that while the diggers were publicly and democratically formulating their policies, the authorities were operating quite differently. They - the Governor, Executive Council, Ballarat Goldfields Commission and Military Command, with ample funds, troops, police, weapons and ammunition - they were operating secretly, furtively. They instituted a *secret code* between Melbourne and Ballarat, they had *shorthand writers* take notes at digger meetings, they sent *spies* to mingle with the diggers and on December 1 and 2 they plumbed the depths of the contemptible by sending *agents provocateurs* among the diggers inciting them to attack the Government Camp so that the diggers would be wrong footed as initiators of violence. All this is evidence that the authorities were intent on a powerful attack on the diggers' movement and as if that weren't enough, Hotham would write soon after the Stockade asking the British Colonial Office for special funds to set up a *secret police network* to enter community organisations in search of sedition (a request London to its credit turned down).

An act of *official provocation* was what pushed the diggers to move from years of non-violent protest to armed defence and defiance ... A big public meeting on Bakery Hill, November 29, 10-15,000 present, with the Southern Cross flag flying for the first time, heard the report of a diggers' deputation that two days before had urged Governor Hotham to release the three diggers who'd been scapegoated. When the meeting heard that Hotham had again said NO, anger rose to fury. Little wonder a radical motion of the meeting received strong support -*Let's burn the hated licences!* Defiant that, but not illegal, and a number of licences were publicly burnt. The police and the shorthand writers around the meeting retired to their camp without finding cause to make an arrest. BUT their superiors at the Camp were now irritated, perplexed *frustrated by the diggers' non-violence!*

At that point of a tension-filled stand-off on the night of November 29, if Hotham had taken no provocative action, just as previous Governor Charles La Trobe had not reacted violently a year before to a powerful protest by the Bendigo diggers, the Bakery Hill protest movement - as yet, remember, adhering scrupulously to non-violence - would likely have scattered without incident.

*Now, I want to observe that everything that had happened at Ballarat to this point (the afternoon of November- 29) was not different in kind from the protest-and-response happenings on other goldfields.*

The difference came in a decision made *that evening* at the Government Camp - by Commissioner Rede and two military officers, Thomas and Pasley, all three knowing they had Hotham's backing - a decision to stage a military-style sweep of the goldfield next day by soldiers and cavalry, foot and mounted police, the biggest digger-hunt ever, no doubt to catch diggers who had burnt their licences, BUT, more importantly, to show *who was in charge...* which was what duly happened next morning, at 11 o'clock, Thursday November 30.

The aggressiveness of the operation outraged Ballarat. On many lips was that other Greek word 'tyranny' (from *tyrannikos*), and quite spontaneously hundreds of diggers began moving to the customary meeting place on Bakery Hill.

For all the spontaneity, they were certainly not a rabble. They were men who'd been well-informed by the many mass meetings of the previous seven weeks, democratic meetings, Athens-style, where every man had equal power to attend, speak, vote - *direct democracy*. And it had sunk in that the new chum Governor was a British autocrat, that his local officials were corrupt, that his unjust licence system was staying, and that now he had refused to release the three scapegoated diggers.

The mass meetings had made Ballarat a remarkably well-informed community with, I suggest, a higher rate of active *participation* than has been seen in any protracted Victorian campaign since - seven weeks of meetings when *Ballarat was Athens in the Antipodes!*

Think of the mind-set as those diggers streamed in their hundreds to Bakery Hill. They were now keenly aware that the years of law-abiding protest had been trampled. They'd followed 'moral force' non-violent leaders and *there was nothing to show - things had got worse*. In the angry meeting that afternoon, the mood was overwhelmingly for taking up arms *in defence* and building a barricade *in defence* behind which they could take refuge from the intensified digger-hunts - in other words they felt they'd been forced *to threaten force against official force which was being asserted unjustly, tyrannically*. How else were they to cope with digger-hunts of this accelerated kind?

What a moment *that was!* Here was an extreme decision, made at an open meeting. It was a critical moment in history like others before it when great events impend and attention rivets on *a leadership*, as we need to do in trying to answer the questions, *Why Ballarat?* and *Why the Stockade at Eureka?*

- As to Eureka, the leaders decided that because Bakery Hill was within view of the Government Camp, the barricade should be sited on safer ground; so from Ballarat's thousands of acres a single acre of high ground was chosen *oil the Eureka lead* - not far, by the way, from the charred ruins of the hotel. The move was made and thus *Eureka just made it*, by three days, before the clinching event, and by doing so the Eureka lead narrowly avoided being remembered only for a murder, an arson, and three arbitrary arrests!
- As to the larger question, *Why Ballarat?* let's keep in mind the *specific* Ballarat relevance of the morning's provocative digger-hunt and the specific relevance too of Ballarat's seven intense weeks of mass meetings. Now let's add the specific relevance of the leaders of the Ballarat diggers. Some were remarkable men. They'd been sorted out by the long period of public meetings - so different from leaders of later times imposed from above by party machines. These leaders were all independents!

They shared many convictions, but they could also differ sharply, as about 'moral force' versus 'physical force'. When the moral force men who'd led till then were at last brushed aside on that angry afternoon, they remained sympathetic as observers only or they helped at the margins. Overall, this had been a leadership that generated creativity and flair - think of the flag, the oath, the stockade and, back of those, the democratic program of the Ballarat Reform League. Even so, the leaders, with the Stockade in construction, turned first to *negotiation*; they appointed a deputation of three on that crowded evening of November 30 in a bid to get talks going with Commissioner Rede - and he totally rebuffed them, just as Hotham had rebuffed a similar deputation four days earlier!

Well, as we know, the clincher came with the dawn of Sunday, December 3 in that furtive assault on the Stockade by some 300 fully equipped soldiers and police. They were of course victorious over the Stockade's 150 sleeping men who'd scratched together perhaps eighty assorted muskets and pistols, a few rounds of ammunition for each, and pike-heads tied to poles.

Mr Chairman, in summary, I've sought the answer to the question, *Why Ballarat?* in four Ballarat specific acts of Governor-instigated aggression and four Ballarat-specific digger responses to that aggression.

*The four aggressions that rode roughshod over the diggers' non-violent protests were:*

1. The 8 fold acceleration of digger-hunts, September 13.
2. The scapegoating arrests of the three diggers, October 21.
3. The provocative military-style digger-hunt, November 30.
4. The full-scale military assault on the Stockade, December 3.

*Contrast that with at least four responses to those aggressions:*

1. The 7-weeks of frequent, democratic public meetings.
2. A leadership able to refine the values of the diggers with a program of non-violent resistance.
3. Respect won by leaders that brought Lalor unchallenged to that stump on November 30.
4. The final near-consensus that defensive arming had been thrust upon them.

### **Democracy that surrounds the Eureka story**

Turning from the *DYNAMICS* behind the Eureka story to the *DEMOCRACY* that surrounds it - we're dealing with the most carelessly used word in the English language. Without a definition, how can you or I decide whether what we call democracy was 'born at Eureka', was 'on its way before Eureka', 'was delivered later by a Eureka-initiated movement', or 'was something significantly less than Athens' direct democracy'?

I've found that no one who's spoken of 'Australian democracy' has troubled to say, 'Here's the date - the occasion - on which Australia has achieved it'. Not a single school curriculum tells the young.

In my written paper, I'll start with a definition - drawn from Athenian *direct democracy*: its essence was the EQUAL VOTING POWER of all free citizens, the power to attend, speak and vote entirely equally with other citizens at large open-air meetings.

I'll trace the scattered and ineffectual state of the radical/liberal/democratic elements in Victoria and New South Wales right up to the 1850s - which enabled Governor, squatters and the urban wealthy to rule the roost. BUT when shiploads of gold-seekers began flooding in, this elite became deeply afraid, and what they were afraid of was DEMOCRACY!

So they rushed a *calculatedly* anti-democratic Constitution to Britain for assent.

They were conforming to Britain's strategy of *responsible-self-government-within-the-Empire*, devised after the 1837 Canadian Rebellion to prevent loss of another North American colony ... Essentially how? By 'securing the collaboration of a colonial elite in the perpetuation of imperial rule' (Phillip A.Bruckner). Such an Australian elite was acceptable to Britain by 1852 in the form not only of the squatters but also of a now rapidly growing urban upper class of merchants, bankers and other wealthy elements.

Eureka spoiled the party! It erupted midway between the sending off of the draft Constitution (March 1854) and receiving it back (October 1855). Eureka precipitated a movement that would clamour for drastic liberal and democratic changes to the new Constitution. You'll know that the two big Melbourne meetings two and three days after the Stockade *really*, historically speaking, turned the Eureka defeat into a victory. As Geoffrey Serle says of the meeting on the December 6: it "marked the emergence at last and in strength of the popular democratic movement, and in the long run made capitulation to the diggers' movement almost certain".

I will show that the shift of epicentre of Victorian dissidence from Ballarat to Melbourne was a shift from the *direct democracy* of the diggers' open-air meetings to the need to devise a system of *representative parliamentarism* for all Victoria that (*might be* worthy of the name 'democracy'. The problem of *representation* would be at the forefront of issues in the decades ahead. And it hasn't gone away. How could something like Athens' **EQUAL VOTING POWER OF ALL CITIZENS** be

achieved by a *representative parliament*? That question is a caution, a challenge, to anyone who would speak glibly of '*Australian democracy*'. Better we speak of a system of *representative parliamentarism* because, from Eureka to today, there have been voices of dissent calling attention to *limits on a citizen's equality of voting power*, limits such as

- Politicians, once elected, tend to serve personal or party interests;
- Economic inequality puts unequal power in the hands of the wealthy;
- The opinion-forming media are in the hands of the very wealthy;
- The major parties, not the people, run the political agenda;
- Developers enjoy privileged influence on parties through donations.

You will, I'm sure, think of others.

### **Drama that lights up the Eureka story**

Finally, on the DRAMA that lights up the Eureka story ... Eureka is remarkable for its abundant colourful elements - a major reason why it grows unstoppably as an Australian legend precious to Australians who know there is *always* a need to defend and enhance freedoms. Among its elements of high drama:

- ✱ **A flag...** stunningly beautiful: *Eureka's* most graphic symbol, Australia's most enduring symbol.
- ✱ **A bonfire** ... not Bentley's Hotel, but the ceremonial burning of the hated licences.
- ✱ **A stockade...** Not just a barrier or barricade, but a stockade - which captures the imagination.
- ✱ **An oath...** brilliantly chosen words that express the historic resolve of all oppressed peoples.
- ✱ **A battle...** one-sided, yet dramatic: uniformed imperial power against men in working clothes.
- ✱ **A victory...** amazingly, a defeat which within days turned into a victory as a popular movement took up the diggers' cause.

Can you think of any other event in Australian history that rivals the drama and symbolism of Eureka?

*In conclusion.* I hope you'll judge my three themes well-chosen:

1. The DYNAMIC that lies behind the Eureka story shows that institutional arrogance and repeated violence were on the Government side, while the majority of the diggers' leaders were 'moral force' men right up to the calculated provocation by Government on November 30.
2. The DEMOCRACY that surrounds the Eureka story shows the democratic ideal through the direct democracy of the diggers' mass meetings, and shows the Stockade served to launch the democratic *movement* aimed at improvement of *representative parliamentarism* which continues to this day.
3. The DRAMA that lights up the Eureka story claims more dramatic elements than any other single event in Australian history.

### **150 th Anniversary of Eureka Stockade: Nation-wide Celebrations**

- \* 'Starry blue-and-white banners were flown. Songs of freedom were sung. Wreaths of remembrance were laid and old arguments were reactivated as academics and anarchists, unionists and bosses, conservatives and radicals, the righteous and the ratbags all gathered to have their say.  
'Indeed, for a people who are said to display little interest in their history, Australians yesterday commemorated the 150' anniversary of the Eureka Stockade in considerable numbers and with surprising passion.  
'The Southern Cross flag under which some 30 diggers and six soldiers fought and died on the morning of December 3, 1854, was raised above parliaments and town halls across the nation.' - John Huxley, 'New generation raises rebels' starry banner', *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 4 - 5, 2004.
- \* 'The magnificent Eureka flag flew everywhere yesterday, even in Canberra, the political citadel of our monarchist Prime Minister. It marched in blue and white twin lines of 50 and 60 down the two great avenues, Commonwealth and Kings, that radiate north across Lake Burley Griffin from the nation's Parliament. All over our federal capital, it seemed, Eureka fluttered, on a hot, inland Australian day.' - Alan Ramsey, *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 4-5, 2004.



**Peter Cuffley (ed.) *Send the Boy to Sea: The Memoirs of a Sailor on the Goldfields* by James Montague Smith, Five Mile Press, Noble Park (Victoria), 2001, pp. 322, notes, glossary, conversion tables, bibliography, index, ISBN 1 86503 566 1, paperback, \$24.95.**

**Reviewed by Edward Duyker**

I read every word of these wonderful memoirs in less than twenty-four hours—an indication of how engrossing and compelling I found them. Smith touched me in many ways. For all his improvidence and short temper, I found him immensely likeable as a person. His well-written account is intelligent, warm, honest and compassionate. These are the memoirs of a fair-minded democrat who loved Australia for its natural beauty, climate and emerging egalitarian society. They are of considerable historical significance. Firstly they contain accounts of three voyages from Britain to Australia (and back) in varying circumstances: among the crew; in 1st class and finally in steerage. In addition there are accounts of several Australian coastal and inter-island voyages. This is valuable maritime history. Smith's voyage on the *Sir Robert Seppings* is particularly noteworthy because this ship was one of the very last convict transports to Van Diemens Land. His own account of ill-treatment, violence, conviction and imprisonment in Hobart for insubordination is also a moving testament. Furthermore, we have his account of an attempted mutiny during the transport of hardened convicts from Norfolk Island to Van Diemen's Land.

These memoirs are a treasure trove of fascinating vignettes and observations on human nature and mid-nineteenth-century British and colonial society. Smith later ranged widely on the Victorian and New South Wales diggings (Forest Creek, Castlemaine, Avoca, Maryborough, Bendigo, Ballarat, Mudgee etc.) and endured extraordinary privations and destitution. One feels his wet clothes, the caked mud on his body, the mosquitoes, the blistered feet, the hunger and the near suicidal despair. The full spectrum of human frailty and generosity is in these pages. I was often reminded of Mark Twain, George Orwell and Bert Facey as I read. There is a reference to Eureka (though Smith was not a participant observer), rich detail on mining techniques and day to day life on the diggings as well as mention of Dutch, Scots, Cornish, Irish and German diggers. There are kind words of praise and admiration for the Aborigines and only mild tones of racism 'Jews and rogues' and 'I'd sooner starve than work like a nigger'. Though the swearing is muted (damned appears as 'd—d' throughout), there is some delicate erotic prose which reveals the author is not entirely constrained by Victorian prudishness.

Peter Cuffley has provided a fine introduction and meticulously researched textual notes for these wonderful memoirs. He has done a great deal of research on James Montague Smith and his family. Smith died on 15 May 1888, not yet 52 years of age. According to his obituary, he left his diseased heart to science in the hope that humanity might benefit. It sums up, so poignantly, the fundamental generosity and decency of this man.

## **Community announcements**

The Sutherland Shire Arts Society is holding an art show at the Waratah Park PCYC hall from 10 am to 4 pm on the last Saturday and Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of August. Entry is free and all are welcome. Paintings are for sale.

Como Pioneer's Picnic Day will be held at the Como Pleasure Ground on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> of August at 11 am. BYO everything and join in the reminiscing! All former and present residents of Como are invited to greet and meet their friends and former neighbours to talk about old times. Bring photos and nostalgic memories of times past. A great day is assured!

## **THE GOGERLYS from Port Hacking to Great Lakes.**

From information compiled by Coral E. Hutchison of Great Lakes district.

"The family history as far as research indicates, goes back to London, England, where Jacob Gogerly married Mary. The original family may have descended from the Huguenots of Protestant France.

"In 1817 Charles Gogerly, son of Jacob, with his brother, William, were working as "Alley" clerks (messenger boys) when, just before Christmas of that year they committed "larceny in a shop". On 3rd December 1817 they were tried at the Old Bailey and sentenced to death. This was later commuted to transportation for life. Charles and William were bound for Sydney, Australia.

"Thus the story of the Gogerly family in Australia goes back to the arrival of young Charles James Gogerly and his brother, William, at Port Jackson on 11<sup>th</sup> December, 1819 aboard the transport ship the "Lord Sidmouth".

"On that fateful day, with mixed emotions, I paid farewell forever to my yesterdays, and Old England. With understandable forebodings I saluted my tomorrows to be sent in a new strange land."

"It is recorded that the two young men were similar in appearance, both had dark to ruddy complexions with hazel eyes. Charles had black hair and was 5 feet 5 inches in height while William had dark brown hair and was 5 feet ¼ inches in height. Both young men were assigned as labourers, Charles was sent to what is now known as Campbelltown, and William to Port Stephens, there to work for the Australian Agricultural Company. They were literate and followed the Protestant faith. In November 1831 Charles was granted a "Ticket of Leave".

"During the year 1833, Charles met Charlotte Fowler, newly arrived from Sussex, England. The couple were married that same year and their first child, Mary was born at Liverpool. Then they moved to Dapto where another daughter, Elizabeth was born. Meanwhile in 1834 William Gogerly arrived in Wollongong. On 21st November, 1836 William married Eliza Kelly. The couple moved to Dapto where they had a daughter in 1839, but sadly that year William died.

"Charles' family continued to thrive and after a third daughter had been born, a son William Henry arrived in 1839. A fourth daughter was born in 1841 at Dapto. Charles now entered into the publishing scene with the newspaper "The Satirist and Sydney Spectator". Unfortunately he found himself in difficulties when he was accused of libel. He was arrested and sentenced to gaol for twelve months. During this time Charlotte gave birth to a second son, John Frederick, 21st September, 1843, at Redfern, Sydney. After Charles' release from prison, the family moved to Chippendale where their fifth daughter, Charlotte was born, 1845. Then in 1854 Charles bought for £85, two parcels of 22 acres lots of land at Port Hacking. Four more children were born, Caroline 1847, Jacob 1849, Madeline 1851, and Louise Maude 1853.

"It was then that Charles built a sandstone cottage on the southern shores of Port Hacking and the family moved there in 1854. The last two children were born there, Sarah 1855 and Charles James 1858 who died in infancy.

"And so Charles James Gogerly, a Sydney businessman, and his wife, Charlotte, officially moved from Sydney to Port Hacking in 1854. Before this time Charles had merely squatted on the land in the Port Hacking region. But now owning the land he had found some relief from the turmoil of city life. Here the couple continued to raise their growing family, and their two sons, John Frederick and William quickly learnt how to harvest the waters for fish and crabs. They also collected discarded oyster shells from Aboriginal middens found on the coast of Eastern Australia. These shells were burnt to provide lime for

mortar used in building stone structures. The hard mortar they made, when mixed with sand and fired earth, can still be seen even today in some very old stone and brick buildings in the Sydney area.

"In a home-made boat the young Gogerly men ventured out to sea then to Milson's Point in Sydney Harbour where the shell they collected was burnt to produce the lime.

" In this way Charles Gogerly, their father, had the run of the shell collection industry in Port Hacking, and he built his own small cottage on a dramatic sandstone point now just outside the Royal National Park. The ruins of which can still be seen today.

"Both the Gogerly lads grew up to be superb mariners, they sailed timber trading vessels along the eastern Australian coast and sometimes, even to islands in the Pacific.

"It was in 1881 on one of these trips, that William was lost at sea.

"in the 1880's the supply of shell near these areas was running out. This may account for the fact it was shell gathering that first brought John F. Gogerly to Wallis Lake.

"A family story suggests that links were made with Yahoo Island in Wallis Lake, Forster with Yowie Bay in Port Hacking, both were Gogerly shell digging areas. "Yowie" is the name for "bigfoot", the mythical being created to scare away opponents in the shell gathering trade.

"Then in 1883 came the death of his father, John Frederick Gogerly. He was a man held in high esteem by those who knew him intimately. He was a pioneer settler who founded a worthy family and his descendant have made and are still making appreciable contribution to Australia's growth, welfare and prosperity.

The Gogerly,s at Wallis Lake when John Frederick Gogerly left Sydney and came north to Wallis Lake, he brought with him his young wife, Mary Ann (Alderton). They settled on land within the shadows of Booti Booti Hill between Wallis Lake and Elizabeth Beach. However John Frederick continued his sea faring profession. He was a brave, rugged mariner with the utmost confidence in his own ability to cope with any situation.

"His wife and young family had to bear with isolation when her husband went to sea. There was fear of the Aborigines who came to camp and fish in the area, but later this was replaced by trust as these gentle people proved helpful rather than aggressive.

"On one of John Frederick's voyages his boat the "Venture" fully laden, was moored off Elizabeth Beach when the weather suddenly deteriorated. The only course of action was to slip the moorings and run bear-poled before the storm. The weather worsened, so on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1898 Captain Gogerly sent his deckhand into the hold while he wrapped himself in oilskins, tied himself to the tiller and fought the storm for three days. When all hope for his survival seemed lost, two weeks later he was suddenly sighted sailing back to the coast. He made port at Coffs Harbour, eventually returning home with his full cargo intact and safely aboard.

"There's not enough water in the Pacific Ocean to drown me"-- he boasted.

"However sadly, in August 1995, the Captain's boat was found adrift in Wallis Lake. His body was recovered a week later still clad in seamen's boots and oilskin coat, and it was surmised that he had apparently suffered a heart attach and fallen unconscience [sic] into the water and drowned. As John was an experienced and strong swimmer he would have undoubtedly shed the wet weather gear if he had accidentally fallen overboard while in good health. Thus death came through sea faring accidents to both sons of Charles and Charlotte although as lads they had learnt to love and conquer the ocean when they lived on the shores of Port Hacking at Gogerly Point."