



Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc **Bulletin**



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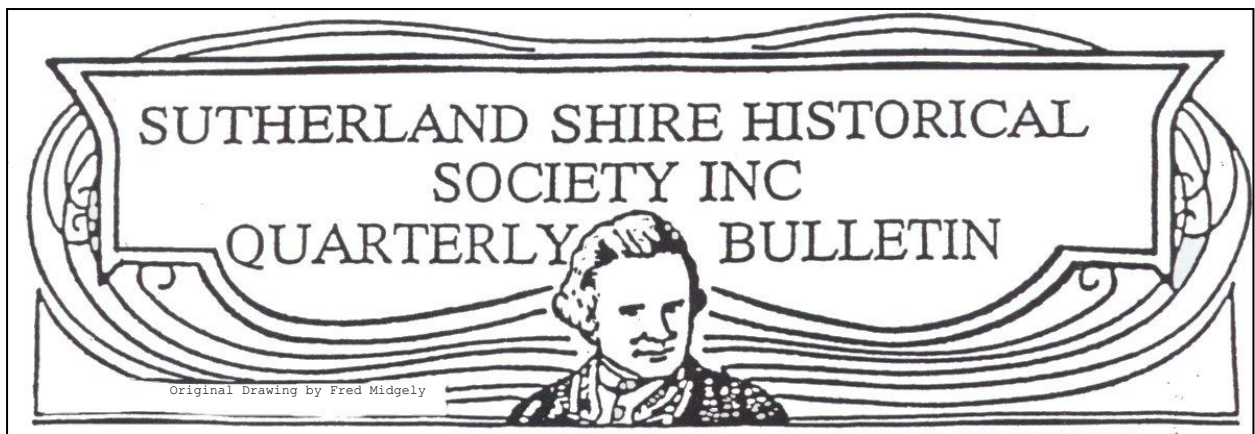
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Painting of Gunnamatta Bay in the late 1940s. The boat, 4 IVY is named after Ivy Alcott who owned the historic sandstone house, 'Fernleigh'. Her husband Erroll owned this boatshed before relocating to Burraneer about 1948.

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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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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

Passing of two of our Esteemed Members

It is with a heavy heart that I record the passing of two of our long-term members, Elva Carmichael and Allan McGrath. Elva was one of our founder members, and Allan was our Curator for many years and presided over many of our displays and exhibitions, always with a cheery smile and a joke or two. Elva was at our last meeting and seemed very fit and able, joining in with questions and comments. Our love, prayers and thoughts go out to Elva's family, and our committee member, Betty McGrath and her family.

Channel Two and Time Team

Winter time is the time to curl up in front of the TV if you don't feel like going out to brave the elements. Do you watch Time Team? On Tuesday 4th July, 2006 the ABC had a programme about the Royal Places at Kew, and the team were intent upon the archeology of the White House there. These digs which are of short duration meet with mixed success, but nevertheless are interesting. I had read somewhere that Genghis Khan had kangaroos at his court brought from Australia, and I think that most of us knew that Josephine had kangaroos at her gardens, at Malmaison, in France, as curiosities. However, I must confess my ignorance that I was unaware that Joseph Banks had brought back kangaroos to George III, and it was here at Kew Gardens that they were permitted to graze. His Majesty frequently bestowed a gift of "a large hopping mouse" upon visiting dignitaries and friends much to their chagrin as they then had to find somewhere for the animal to graze without being worried by dogs! We knew about the spears and shield, and the wonderful botanical specimens that Banks brought back—but did you know about the kangaroos?

Channel Nine and Antique Road Show

Just to show that we do watch commercial stations also, we love watching the Antique Road Show which airs every weekday at 5pm. Here you will see beautiful antique furniture, china which is often centuries old (eat your heart out Doug and Terry!) exquisite sparkling jewellery set with diamonds, rubies and emeralds, old cutlasses (17th century), firearms, clocks, etc. as well as lovely heritage homes where these antique shows are held. Usually there is a quick tour of the home itself with its paintings, gardens etc. and for anyone interested in history or museum pieces this programme is well worth watching.

Opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge

As founder members of the Australian Maritime Museum Cliff and I often attend functions there.

Recently we attended a talk by Peter Lalor on his new book, 'The Bridge'. Of course the usual facts and figures came out: how many people died during its construction; the chap who fell from the Bridge and survived; how many rivets were used during construction etc. My parents, who were keeping company at that time, walked over the bridge on the 19th March, 1932 and we have the certificates they received. However in that procession that walked across the Bridge (apart from de Groot on his horse wielding his sword and slashing the ribbon) did you know there was a young 9-yr old lad, Lennie on his horse also? Lennie lived in the Snowy Mountains, and his Dad had fallen from a horse and broken several ribs and was in hospital. Lennie's mother was distraught as her husband was ill and the crops had to be sown or they would starve through the winter. Lennie told his mother not to worry, harnessed up the old draught horse and ploughed the land and sowed the crops. As a reward Lennie asked if he could ride up to Sydney to see the opening of the Harbour Bridge. Reluctantly his parents agreed, and Lennie became quite a celebrity chatting to people on the way, and he was such a friendly talkative little boy he got free board and lodging wherever he went. Finally the city fathers heard of him and asked him to actually join the parade, which he did. We saw a picture of him in his boxer shorts and old felt hat with a gleeful smile astride his horse. Lennie had such a good time, he wrote to his parents and asked would it be all right if he came home via Melbourne, as he quite enjoyed the travelling, finally arriving home about a six months later. In later years his daughter contacted Peter Lalor and asked could he put her Dad in the book on the bridge, and this is how the story came to be told! What folklore!



Book Launch

Our Society has been asked to combine with the Melbourne University Press, and the Co-op Book Shop in holding a book launch for our member, Dr. Ed Duyker and his forthcoming book on Francois Peron. at the La Perouse Museum, on Friday, 28th July, 2006. Emeritus Professor Ivan Barko FAHA is conducting the launch, and we are proud to be associated with the launch of this well-researched book by one of our own members.

Centenary Guest Speakers

We are pleased this year to have talks at our meetings about the Centenary of Sutherland Shire, and particularly to have past Shire Presidents and Mayors as our guest speakers. We have had some great talks to date and we are looking forward to hearing more. Don't miss these very historical contributions! If you need a lift to the meeting please call me: 9543-1060 and we will arrange for someone to pick you up and return you to your home. I look forward to seeing you at our meetings and you are assured of a warm welcome, even if the night is a bit chilly! .

President's Addendum

My greatest pleasure as we approach our AGM is to thank my officers of the Executive Council for their assistance throughout the year. I couldn't manage without my efficient team of officers and "men" who run the ship. Andrew Platfoot our Deputy President and Public Officer has always been available to give me advice and wise counsel, and although he works long hours always manages to fit in most of our meetings, and committee meetings. My Vice-Presidents Terry McCosker and Daphne Salt, have officiated when I have been unavailable, as has Jim Cutbush and they are a tower of strength to me. I like to think that my job is a bit like a "figure-head" to try and point the way—as long as everyone is there supporting me! Like a well-run ship each of you are all doing your jobs superbly, and as a team I believe we are achieving our aims, as well as enjoying mateship and camaraderie and having a damn good time whilst we do it!

Museum Sub-Committee: This year, like most years has been a very busy year for the Society. Not only is it our Society's Fortieth Anniversary but we are half-way through our Centenary year dating from when our Shire was first proclaimed a distinct local government area. Our Cook Room as we called it, had been on display for 3 years, thanks to the excellent resources of Daphne Salt, an esteemed member of our Executive Council and the late Allan McGrath, our former Curator. Sadly Allan passed away recently, and we will miss him greatly. Thanks to the efforts of Jim Cutbush, our current Museum Curator, and again the efforts of Daphne Salt, the Cook Room has been transformed into our Shire Centenary Room. My grateful thanks to Jim and his Museum sub-committee members: Terry McCosker, John Risebrow, Norma Jean Taylor, Mina Whybourne, Mary Small, Doug Perry, Angela Thomas, and Cliff Emerson. Daphne Salt was of great assistance to Jim in setting up video displays, and helped out, in between giving talks on the history of the Shire and writing books about it. Heritage Festival this year saw us with a new event: a talk on Sydney's Industrial Heritage by Don Godden, which became a glittering cocktail function, the catering being done by our members and people are still talking about the delicious food supplied and the wine as we 'spliced the mainbrace!'. Thankyou all you wonderful members who helped to make it a gala occasion!

Administration: Angela Thomas, our Secretary has shown she is a lady of many talents. Not only does she write exciting novels but she is quietly efficient keeping me organised with agendas and minutes of meetings, as well as notifying our guest speakers of their engagements and ensuring that everything runs smoothly. Mina Whybourne and Marj Blackley have been keeping the papers informed of our coming events, and making sure there are no errors, which is a daunting task, but they have had a lot of success and we are grateful for their efforts. Mina doubles as Secretary at times if Angela is away and they are a very efficient team. Bruce has been keenly labouring away bringing out our Bulletins, and doing a good job with photos of our past to provide interest for our Centenary, and we have been thrilled to have our Centenary issues in colour so far! Keep those stories coming in to Bruce! Our Archivist and Research Officer, Les Bursill has been fielding and answering queries from the public with great efficiency. To Maurie, our Treasurer who is again trying to get us back on track and detailing all our finances, we appreciate you taking on this onerous task once again. Our Book Review Editor, Dr. Ed Duyker has still been able to send us informative and thought-provoking book reviews, whilst engaging in a punishing schedule of lectures in Australia and overseas, meanwhile managing to produce solid works of history. We look forward to his book launch on Peron, later this month. Thankyou everyone, you are a great team!

Excursions: Terry McCosker has been providing interesting venues, and by use of our seniors' cards on the railways, we have had inexpensive tours of great interest. Terry not only helps out on the Museum Sub-Committee, but also reliably brings our microphone and speakers for each meeting night, and collects lecterns, screens and projectors when required. Thankyou Terry, for all you do for us. To our Booking Officers, firstly Frank, who was very enthusiastic but had to give it up due to ill health; and then Betty McGrath coming back again to the job she knows so well after her bout with illness, and doing a splendid job with our functions including our 40th Birthday Dinner which everyone agreed was a great success, thanks to Daphne's films and the wonderful hospitality from Loftus TAFE.

Committee Members: Always there is a core of people who are reliable and assist wherever they can, and our committee members do just that: Ruth Tucker has been very supportive and Mary Small, who is another of our talented authors, still found time to attend committee meetings, but had to beg off when her choir night clashed. Thankyou both for your help.

Members: Two of our members perform a very responsible job: Doug and Betty Perry. They bring the urn, and all the trimmings so you can enjoy a nice hot cuppa and a bikkie after each meeting and their dedication is gratefully appreciated. On the very few occasions when they can't attend Bruce brings the equipment, and thanks to Mina and Marj who "fill in" and serve the tea. Other unsung heroes are the drivers who go and collect other members who don't have transport. In particular I would like to mention Maurie, Mina, Les, Norma Jean and Bruce. We are all getting older, and it is no fun battling with trains on these winter nights, although I know a couple of our members bravely do, so if any of you can help out with the offer of a lift, it is highly valued. We are looking forward to receiving a copy of the interviews, purchased from our grant for an Oral History project. which our member Pauline Curby is supervising. Pauline helps the Society as well as writing interesting histories about the Shire. Then there are the members who come to every meeting, rain, hail or shine and are the backbone of the Society. We enjoy your company and your attendance and the officers of your Society don't mind working hard, because we know you appreciate it and your interest makes it all worthwhile.

We also thank our Honorary Solicitor, Mr. Michael Solari, who has held this position for many years. To our Mayor, Kevin Schreiber, one of our esteemed patrons and who acknowledged our contributions at the Faces of the Shire ceremony, we are delighted to assist Council in any way we can. To our Founder Member and patron, Mrs. Aileen Griffiths, whom we recommended for the Shire's greatest honour, Citizen of the Year, and were successful, we thank you for all your hard work, and hope you will soon be on the mend. To our Councillors, our General Manager, Mr. John Rayner and the Council staff who assist us during the year, we say a hearty thankyou for all your support, and can only say how much we enjoy putting on exhibitions and displays for Council to celebrate special events and hope to continue to do so for many years to come. We also look forward to that wonderful day when it is recognised that we need somewhere to store our items of furniture, clothing, china, books, papers, photos, glassware and machinery so that they can all be catalogued and classified and readily available for any display.

Dawn Emerson,
President

Meetings, for 2006: Venue: Stapleton Centre, Stapleton St., Sutherland at 8pm.

Friday, 18 th August:	Clr Ken McDonnell (former Mayor of Sutherland Shire)
Friday, 15 th September:	AGM and Mr. George Heavens' film on Sutherland Shire in the early 1950s. Venue: Multi-Purpose Centre.
Friday, 20 th October:	Mr. Michael Tynan, former Shire President: More history of the Shire.
Friday, 17 th November:	Mr. Don Carter, former Shire President: Further history of the Shire.
Tuesday 21 st November:	Launch of Centenary project, 'Telling it as it is!' Sutherland Memorial School of Arts. 6.30pm \$4
Friday, 15 th December:	Members' 'Show and Tell' party night, (<u>each member</u> to bring along an historical item (yes, in <u>addition</u> to your husband!) with a little note about its origin etc. to place on the table beside it. Please also bring a plate (yes, with food on it!) and we will have a glass of Christmas cheer to say a cheery goodbye to a most successful year!

From The Editor's Desk



It is a pleasure once again to present a bulletin to our members that breaks new ground in terms of content and presentation. In this edition we conclude the series '54 years in the Sutherland Shire'. The time frame of Les Clarke's article covered the formative years of settlement in the Shire and it makes fascinating reading. It is with some sadness that in the same edition that ends this saga, we also mark the passing of the member that first presented a tattered and yellowed copy of Les' story to me, having been written nearly 40 years ago. Elva Carmichael passed away on the 25th June. Elva was a foundation member of the Society and had contributed several articles to the bulletin. Her family has been prominent in Shire history.

Special mention needs to be made of the two coloured illustrations at the front of the bulletin. Thanks to Jim Cutbush, a painting of the head of Gunnamatta Bay has been made available for photographing. It features a boatshed on a bay that appears much more serene than it is today. '4 Ivy' on the side of the boat reveals a special piece of Shire history. The boatshed was owned by Erroll Allcott. His wife's name was Ivy. In the late 1940s the Alcott's purchased 'Fernleigh' on Burraneer Bay and they moved their marina from Gunnamatta Bay to this location. It's ironic that as we go to press, 'Fernleigh' is to be auctioned, ending nearly 60 years of ownership by this family. Ivy was somewhat of an eccentric. She had a private zoo in the grounds of Fernleigh. Older residents recall her driving around in a very small sedan with 2 enormous Great Danes hanging out the windows. Controversy surrounds the age of the building. The year 1821 in Roman numerals is above the front door. It's unlikely that this is its construction date. In the April 1974 edition of the Bulletin, Marjorie Hutton Neve provides some history. The land was sold to Charles York in 1873 by Thomas Holt. A stone cottage was completed by 1875. It was originally known as 'York House'. An article in the May 1977 Bulletin supports this story. Titled 'the old joke – York House' and written by George Heavens, it describes the meeting in 1939 of an old man who had been a stone mason. In his youth he had worked on building a house for Mr York in about 1874 and about the same year, one for Mr Kinsella (The Terraces). The date of 1821 above the front door was incorrect and came about when some stonework brought out from the city with that date on it was put up as a joke. An earlier story (from Bulletin No.6 Jan 1968) had Thomas Laycock junior as the builder (about 1859 to 1860). The land was purchased Dec 16 1858 following the first Crown Land sales in 1856. Laycock had run into financial difficulties after a disastrous fire in the Prince of Wales theatre that he owned that was not insured. Holt had purchased Laycock's mortgages and found that Laycock had omitted to insure the buildings. As this constituted a breach of the mortgage contract, Holt immediately fore-closed wherein Holt acquired legal title to all his properties.(19/12/1861). Holt was not averse to profiteering in this manner. This may be significant if Holt then began an interest in the Shire following this acquisition. Thomas Holt began purchasing land in 1861 and eventually owned virtually all of it. The ongoing puzzle of the date of 1821 over the front door in Roman numerals may be a mistake. MDCCCXXI = 1821, MDCCCLXI = 1861. Could this represent the date that Holt acquired the property?

The other illustration is taken from a very large photograph that hangs in the L J Hooker Real Estate office in Cronulla. The sand hill fore dunes at North Cronulla are still very much visible before they were built on. There is no high rise development and the Burraneer peninsula is very heavily wooded, with little residential development.

May I remind members in our 40th year that we need to keep our Society alive and vibrant. Encourage friends and acquaintances to join and become involved. A reminder that renewals are now due.

Bruce Watt

Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 40th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the

Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc.
will be held on Friday, 15th September, 2006 in the
Multi-purpose Building, Flora Street, Sutherland at 8pm.

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies
3. Confirm and adopt Minutes of the 39th Annual General Meeting held on Friday, 16th September, 2005
4. Submission and adoption of the 39th Annual Report of the Executive Council and the Treasurer's Financial Statement and Balance Sheet for 2005-2006
5. Life membership
6. Election of Officers for 2006-2007
7. General Business: pertaining to the AGM only

On behalf of the Executive Council of
Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc.

Dawn Emerson,
President

Note: The Treasurer's report is unavailable at time of publication. Members will receive a copy at the AGM. The report will be published in the November issue.

ANNUAL MUSEUM REPORT 2006

Attendances at the museum over the past 12 months has been comparable with the last 3 years, however the last 2 museum open days were very cold and attendance was poor, with only 10 visitors overall.

On a brighter note we have had an increase in the number of enquiries for visits from retirement villages and small clubs, which is another area that the museum is well suited for. The involvement of the museum over the past 12 months, which has been well received, is as follows:-

- Australia Day photographic exhibition at North Cronulla Surf Lifesaving Club
- Visit's from 2 primary school's, 2 retirement villages and 1 handicapped group
- Special openings for interstate visitors
- Heritage Festival with the theme "The industrial and commercial heritage of the Shire"
- 100th Anniversary display of the Sutherland Shire Council, 1906-2006

This edition of the Bulletin contains Vales, for two of our very supportive members, Elva Carmichael and Allan McGrath. They will be sadly missed.

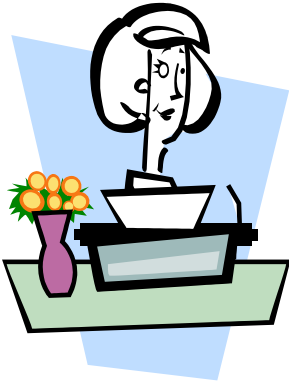
It was my pleasure to be asked by the McGrath Family to have a special opening of the museum on Saturday 8th July, so they could see how far the museum had progressed from Allan's time as curator to mine. A visit for all to remember.

Thank you for the support of the museum goes to the Sutherland Shire Council, Paul Brien and staff of the Sutherland Entertainment Centre, Helen McDonald of the local studies area-Sutherland Library, North Cronulla Surf Lifesaving Club and to my helpers Terry, Dawn & Cliff, Norma-Jean, Daphne, John and Maurie.

A big THANK YOU to all those that donated item's over the past 12 months. Keep them coming!

Jim Cutbush
Curator

Secretary's Report



This year has provided us with the opportunity to celebrate the Shire's Centenary, our own 40th Anniversary and to participate in the Heritage Festival. Guest speakers have addressed our meetings on a variety of interesting topics and we hosted a Cocktail Reception during Heritage Week where Don Godden gave a liberally illustrated talk on Sydney's Industrial Heritage. A luncheon to mark our 40th Anniversary was held and enjoyed by those who attended. We are fortunate in possessing a dedicated core of members who have freely given of their time and expertise in maintaining the high standard of presentations which are the hallmark of our Society. Particularly, with the ever increasing predominance of electronic material, we would be lagging behind in this day and age without the expertise of Daphne Salt, Les Bursill and others.

The election of officers at the AGM saw some new faces on our Committee and we were entertained by watching a film of the Queen's 1970 visit to Kurnell, provided by Daphne Salt and Andrew Platfoot. In the months following we enjoyed a variety of speakers...Bob Walshe, who spoke about the Eureka Stockade, Tim Narraway who gave us a comprehensive view of the Boer War in South Africa and of course our own Members Night which began the year of 2006...Terry McCosker is always an inspiring speaker, and Pauline Curby's knowledge never fails to inspire us.

We commenced our new year with another member's contribution. Les Bursill spoke on Marked Trees & Ceremonial Grounds of the Aboriginal People of New South Wales. Les is an interesting speaker and his delivery was scholarly and well researched. Another scholarly and witty talk in March was by Gordon Marshall, who has researched and written the only Australian study of Ships' Figureheads.

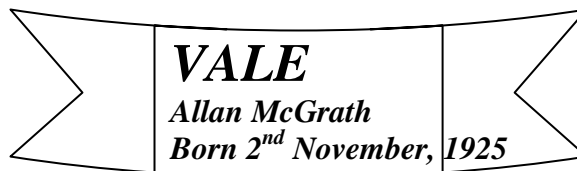
Following that we concentrated upon our Centenary programme of speakers of the Shire and who better to start with than Arthur Gietzelt, Shire President for much of the 1960s, who delivered an enthralling talk on early days of the Shire. Following him were two more eminent Sutherland Shire Council personalities. John Rayner, our present General Manager of Sutherland Shire Council has held this position for 25 years, or the last quarter of its centenary. Doug McNeil, a former Shire President, spoke of his time in office and amused us with many anecdotes. The August meeting featured a talk from Alf Bridges' who has resided in the Shire for 90 years.

We are privileged to have so much living history available and our Society is heavily committed to recording the reminiscences of these 'movers and shakers' who guided the Shire to its present prosperity. We must never forget the many people who have lived here and can recount their early experiences. With that in mind the Society has embarked on an ambitious project of recording the stories and memories of Sutherland Shire's senior citizens. An interview with Aileen Griffiths, a former President of this Society and one of the Faces of the Shire in Council's Centenary celebrations, marked one of the first projects and there are many more to come.

So we look forward to our next year with great anticipation, and give our sincere thanks to those who have donated their time so generously. Without Betty and Doug Perry's constant provision of refreshments our evenings would be very dull and, as mentioned earlier, the expertise of those who set up our talks and presentations is very much appreciated.

Our programme for the next twelve months will be as varied and informative as that of the last year and we hope to see you at our meetings.

Angela Thomas



It is with deep regret that we have lost another of our esteemed local historians, Allan McGrath, from our Society, after battling ill health for some years. Our deepest sympathy goes to Betty and her family. Allan lived in the Sutherland Shire for all of his life with the exception of war service. He was educated at Sutherland Public School. Allan was a third generation National Park employee at Audley, as were his Father and Grandfather before him.

Allan served his country in the Army in the New Guinea-Pacific campaign of the Second World War. On his return he built the family home on the block of land at Loftus Parade, Loftus that was paid for from his Army pay, at his Mothers insistence, so he would have something at Wars end. Allan did many jobs to support the family that he and Betty were raising – 2 sons and a daughter.

Allan's knowledge of the people and local area, particularly the western half of the Shire was remarkable. He always had great respect for all indigenous Australian's.

Right from the start of joining the Society, Allan was always there to help with displays at the Entertainment Centre. After the passing of Harold Ivers, our first Curator, Allan took over his duties in the Sutherland School of Arts. This space was allocated by the Council for our Museum and display's. Allan arranged many wonderful Heritage Week displays. Amongst these were: the replica "Tom Thumb" boat of Bass, Flinders and the boy Martin, Lawrence Hardgrave's box kites and drawings, Allan Russick's racing car, Shire Sports, Australia remembers services display, Sutherland-Cronulla Railway 60th anniversary, 100th anniversary of Federation, and early women's fashion and needle work display. Allan also managed to arrange many Australia Day photographic exhibitions at North Cronulla Surf Lifesaving Club and Menai marketplace. Besides all this he still found time to help with our magazine, "The Bulletin" with pick up, labelling, insertion into envelopes and postage.

Allan was a Life Member of our Society, which was very well deserved and much appreciated by him.

A strong and proud family man, Australian, Historical Society member and good friend.

TRUE BLUE Right down to his old blue heeler dog "Aussie"!
REST IN PEACE We will miss you Allan.

Jim Cutbush



Elva was a foundation member of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society and maintained an abiding interest in historical matters all her life. She grew up in Cronulla in a house on the corner of the Kingsway and Gannon's Road. Her father, Reg Dallimore was a Sutherland Shire Councilor in the 1940s. Last edition featured council minutes of wartime preparations in the Shire initiated by him. Reg was a keen historian and was eager to establish a local historical society. As he died not long before its commencement, Elva joined in his place. 'Jenola', the hockey field opposite their house, is not an aboriginal name but one made up by Reg Dallimore from the first letters of his three daughters.

Elva and her husband Don moved to Tuncurry 16 years ago. She continued her interest in history, becoming an active member of The Great Lakes Historical Society. However, Elva always signed her correspondence, 'a Cronulla girl'.

Elva was typical of her generation. After marriage, she settled down to raise a family. She loved animals and particularly brown kelpies. She was an avid reader and her interest in history provided a focus for her many trips away with her husband Don.

I was fortunate to have met Elva. As editor I sought out potential material and came across several short articles written by Elva. Over time, Elva passed on photographs and materials including the article on Les Clarke featured in the last 3 bulletins. I was glad to have met Elva and through her, to have gained a deeper insight into our local heritage.

Bruce Watt

54 YEARS IN THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE

1912 - 1966

By **Les Clarke.** Serialised in B.B.C. NEWS*

1968 & 1969

*Note: this is the third and last instalment of Les' story. The first 2 parts was published in the February and May editions. The photograph of Les Clarke was taken about 1989. *BBC stands for Miranda Builders and Businessmen's Club. Headings have been added to Les' story.*



End of the trams

The termination of the tram service in 1931 resulted in several fast bus services being started within the Shire; these gave very good service for a number of years until the construction of the Cronulla Railway. The first buses from Sutherland to Cronulla were run by E. Newlyn, who previously had owned the National Park - Audley Bus Service. This run was later taken over by Bardsley's Bus Co., who also owned the Cronulla-Sydney run. Hunters Buses continued their Cronulla-Rockdale service via Taren Point Punt.

Transport is an issue

With the large influx of people into the Shire it was quickly realised that the transport was inadequate and meetings were called to urge the Government to build a railway to Cronulla.

Agitation commenced in Cronulla early in the 1920s and was supported by other parts of the Shire, for the construction of a railway to Cronulla in conjunction with the electrification of the Illawarra Railway System. After much negotiation with the

Railway Commissioners, the Council was informed in 1925 by the Railway Department that it was not in a position to give any information in regard to the construction of an extension from Sutherland to Cronulla.



Cronulla Municipality proposal and electric rail line to St James

At this time there was a movement organised by a group of prominent citizens to propose the establishment of a separate municipality for Cronulla. This prompted renewed agitation by a group headed by Councillor C. O. J. Monro and Mr. E. G. Vincent, the President of the Cronulla Chamber of Commerce to review the failure of their past efforts to get railway transport and this group was supported by citizens throughout the Shire. At a meeting called to discuss the matter, the following resolution was passed:

"We, the taxpayers of the State of New South Wales and residents of Cronulla, view with considerable alarm the ever-increasing annual loss on the obsolete Sutherland-Cronulla Tramline and wish to impress upon the Commissioners, the urgent need of an electric railway direct to St. James, thus bringing about a cheaper, quicker and more comfortable means of transport at the earliest opportunity."

The meeting decided to present the resolution to the Minister and the Railway Commissioners by deputation. The Shire strongly supported the proposal and with the support of the Chamber of Commerce, left the selection of the route to the Authorities. This agitation led to the formation of the Cronulla-St. James Railway League, which actively pursued the proposal. The League was handicapped in its efforts, as the route had not been indicated by the authorities, with the result that estimates of probable costs were not available.

At the official opening ceremony of the Georges River Bridge on 11th May 1929, Councillor C. O. J. Monro when speaking, stated that he had been investigating ways and means of financing the construction of an electric railway from Sutherland to Cronulla and he would shortly bring these proposals forward.

At a Council Meeting held on 19th February, 1930 Councillor Monro submitted that one million pounds should be borrowed by the Council to meet the cost of construction of a railway line with six stations, and acquisition of the land surrounding the new stations to create six model residential centres. The land required to be resumed and designed in accordance with the latest residential development pattern, such as in California, U.S.A. and other progressive American model residential cities; the roads to be of concrete, kerbed and guttered, with grass plots and street gardens.

The Shire would present the most attractive residential area in the State. The Railway would cost about £400,000. The land to be resumed was mostly vacant land, there were very few residences and most of the occupied land was used for poultry farms. The sale of the land after acquisition of the development in a model suburb would be sufficient to meet all costs of the railway, land acquisition, development and compensation. He contended that the Council did not wait for Government finance to build the Georges River Bridge. It could and would be able to undertake the plan outlined.

Necessity for an Act of Parliament for railway proposal

Certain legislation would have to be passed by Parliament. The Council would need an Act to permit it to:-

- A. Extend the railway line to Cronulla,
- B. Erect six stations;
- C. Resume all land required for the six new residential suburbs;
- D. Replan the land resumed, develop it and sell the residential land and apply the proceeds to meeting the cost of the railway construction and land acquisition development. The State Government to guarantee the Council in all financial and other matters.

Councillor Monro had interviewed the Premier, the Hon. B. S. B. Stevens and the Minister for Works, the Hon. R. T. Ball and two members of the State Cabinet who favoured the scheme. The council was to act as an agent for the Government in the same manner as was done in the case of the Georges River Bridge. He had been discussing the matter for over nine months with members of the Cabinet and no precedent could be found similar to the one proposed. The line would run from Sutherland to Cronulla. By his

scheme the railway system to Cronulla would be handed over to the Railway Commissioner free of debt. The State Government would guarantee the Council against any loss in the implementation of the scheme.

On a recent visit to America he had ascertained that there was some three to four million pounds of money awaiting investment. Messrs. Stevens and Ball had agreed to introduce the necessary bills to Parliament. A suitable resolution embracing these conditions was passed by the Council on a 5 to 3 vote.

Strong opposition to rail line from ratepayers

This proposal caused wide spread interest in the Shire. People from end to end of the Shire enquired how their property would be affected. Miranda Ratepayers Association, at a meeting held on 7th May, 1930 passed a resolution emphatically protesting against such an unjust project, believing that it would interfere with the rights and liberties of the ratepayers within the resumed areas. They doubted whether sufficient gains would result from the proposal. A large deputation waited on the Council when Messrs. Ibels, Phillips and Fletcher presented a strong case in protest.

The deputation submitted that a most undesirable precedent would be established.

- That the turnover of £70,000 per annum by the Miranda Co-operative Society was an indication of the activities of the rural settlers.
- That it would take five years for a poultry farmer to re-establish himself. Other business would take a year or so.
- Suitable land would not be available in the Shire.
- That the people from whom the land was resumed were entitled to the unearned increment.

The essence of the scheme was to obtain the money for the railway by resuming and using ratepayer's properties, which was wrong. The whole State should meet the cost. A rescission motion to rescind the original resolution was lost 5 to 2.

On the 4th June, 1930, the Council directed that the Minister for Railways be asked to advise the route of the Railway, so that plans could be prepared of the properties to be resumed. The Council would then take a referendum of those persons owning land likely to be affected by the proposed resumptions.

Those opposed to the scheme were most active. A campaign committee was formed, Councillors Tucker and Bingham took every opportunity to have objections voiced. Strong support was given to the committee by residents of Miranda and Caringbah. It was contended that all the facts relating to the scheme had not been given and as usual rumours were circulating in the district about "certain matters".

The "A" Riding Ratepayers' Association convened a public meeting attended by Councillor Monro. The Meeting was chaired by ex-councillor Les Thacker. Councillor Monro dealt exhaustively with the objections and scotched a number of unfounded rumours. Councillor Monro stated that efforts to get an accurate estimate of the cost of the Railway had failed. He had been given the figure of £400,000; he was unable to secure surveys of the route of the line, he therefore was unable to attempt to indicate the possible areas required. Finally Councillor Monro stated that he would work for the railway to Cronulla, that it was impossible to convince the organised opposition of the Shire to compulsory resumption of land. He would withdraw his proposal for this method of finance and the planning and laying out of six suburbs. He would persist with the construction of the railway under the tax principle.

It is interesting to note that in 1933 it was estimated that the line would cost £512,469, exclusive of the cost of land resumption and compensation.

The estimated revenue for the first year was given as £22,635, with an estimated loss of £40,144.

Monro's push for the railway

Councillor Monro in his capacity as State Member for the district, pursued behind the scenes, the agitation for the construction of the railway. He was on particularly good terms with the Premier and the Hon. J. M. Dunningham, Minister for Labour and Industry. [Note – the park at North Cronulla was named

after this Minister] Unemployment was still a problem and the country had not emerged from the depression, which was still existent.

In February, 1936 the State Government approved the introduction of a bill to authorise the Sutherland Cronulla Railway Line. The following is an extract from a report furnished to the Premier by the Commissioner for Railways. Mr. T. J. Hartigan dated 15/6/36.

"Length of line 6 miles 30 chains with five stations. Estimated cost of construction, exclusive of land resumptions and costs, £414,000, of which the sum of £115,000 represents the cost of earthworks carried out under Unemployment Relief Scheme by unemployed relief workers."

Estimated financial position:-

Estimated cost of construction (exclusive of earthworks resumption and compensation) £299,000.

Estimated annual expenditure:

Interest and exchange on £299,000 £13,380

Sinking Fund 748

Working Expenses 35,051

..... 49,179

Estimated annual revenue 27,000

Difference, representing annual loss £22,179

The Bill came before the House in July, 1936. During the debate on the Bill allegations were made which reflected on Councillor Monro. It was stated that a syndicate had bought large areas of land along the proposed route of the railway. The Crown sent inspectors to the Council's office to check land transfers, also for the same purpose to the Registrar General's Office. It was referred to as "Monro's White Elephant" and "The Land Grabbers' Railway".

Possible routes selected

When the Bill was before Parliament the Hon. J. M. Dunningham gave an assurance that some 300 Returned Soldiers would be employed under full award rates, and conditions on the project. Two suggested routes were surveyed for the proposed railway. The first route was to branch off the Illawarra Line between Como and Jannali and proceed to Cronulla. The other route was through Sutherland and thence to Cronulla. This route was finally selected.

Railway to Kurnell - a missed opportunity

The presentation of the Bill to authorise the building of the Cronulla Railway, brought a number of suggestions through the local press from citizens of the Shire, suggesting routes other than those surveyed by the Railway Department. One of the suggestions brought forward during this time was one by ex-councillor Reg Dallimore. He proposed that the railway continue past Cronulla to Kurnell, then by submarine tunnel under Botany Bay entrance to La Perouse and to join up with the existing Botany Goods railway line to Sydenham, thus making a complete circular route. Later, on completion of the Eastern Suburbs Railway, the Cronulla line to be connected to it. This proposal provided for the opening of the Kurnell Peninsula, which at this time was undeveloped and inaccessible by road, and also shortened the distance by rail from Cronulla to Sydney. Of all the suggestions put forward by the public, this one had much to merit further investigation, but it, like all the others was passed over, and the route from Sutherland to Cronulla was approved.

Whilst the Bill was before Parliament, an urgent telegram was sent from the Cronulla Chamber of Commerce to every Member of Parliament, which read, "hold up Sutherland-Cronulla Railway Bill - suggested new route - interest of all concerned. Parliament passed the Bill.

As no official function was held to turn the first sods, the citizens of the Shire tendered Councillor Monro a complimentary dinner at the Hotel Cecil on the 15th August, 1936. In response to the toast of

Parliament, the Hon. J.M. Dunningham stated that by the end of the year 600 men would be working on the railway at full award rates of pay, and at continuous employment.

Councillor Monro was presented with a gold wristlet watch and a canteen of cutlery.

Construction problems

There was a certain amount of dissatisfaction with regard to the men employed, as preference was given to returned soldiers except where horses, drays and motor lorries were engaged at contract rates.

In November, 1936 a Public Meeting was held in the Shire and the following requests were made;

1. That the station at Cronulla be located as far South as possible to meet the convenience of the residents living at the southern end of the peninsular.
2. That stations be provided near Woollooware Road, Caringbah, Miranda, Gymea Bay Road and another near Bath and Oak Roads, Kirrawee.

During the construction of the railway all men were put off at one stage and it was then proposed to extend the period of construction from two to four years. Councillor Monro was instrumental in getting the original programme of two years adhered to. Construction of the railway caused many problems. Private property with houses erected thereon had to be acquired by the Crown and the houses removed or demolished. The whole roadway system along the line of the railway had to be re-arranged; road crossings were made under or over the railway line. The construction of the earthworks caused a dust nuisance, particularly at the Cronulla end, exception was taken to closing roads during the summer season. Considering the magnitude of the work, the number of persons whose homes and properties were disturbed, the complaints were few. There was close collaboration between the officers of the Railway Department and the staff of the council.

A new railway station

The centre of the old original railway station at Sutherland was at a point opposite the present Commonwealth Bank. The station buildings were situated some distance from the boundaries of the Princes Highway. There was a lame Goods Yard which prior to the introduction of road transport was the terminal for loading and unloading heavy materials.

The Council had been agitating for a new railway station for some years. The Railway Department took the opportunity of relocating the station in conjunction with the construction of the Cronulla Railway. The Railway engineers considered that the station should be located further north, so as to avoid too great an embankment to carry the branch traffic line to Cronulla through that section of National Park.

Efforts to obtain plans of the proposals were not successful until May 1938 and when available, strong exception was taken, as it was considered that the roadway crossing would be a danger. The objections were that the bridge would open on to a main road; for the safety of pedestrians it was requested that a pedestrian bridge be erected across the Princes Highway from the vehicular bridge to what is now Woolworth's corner.

The Railway Department considered that it was not its function to protect pedestrians

The outbreak of war

In 1939, prior to the start of World War Two, the population of the Shire of Sutherland was 19,500 and many of those were poultry farmers, orchardists and market gardeners, each owning several acres of land. There were also large areas of undeveloped bush land throughout the Shire.

The residential areas were situated close around the villages; Cronulla, Caringbah, Miranda, Sutherland, Como, Engadine, Heathcote, Waterfall and Kurnell (with access by launch from La Perouse). The population was very sparsely scattered and land was readily available anywhere in the Shire. Building lots were selling at from £1 to 25/- per foot frontage in most parts of the Shire. Cronulla which was then mainly a holiday resort was able to ask more for land and prices ranged from £2 to £5 per foot.

At the outbreak of the war a Patriotic Fund was formed to raise money and make presentations and farewells to all who enlisted from the Shire; men and women. The Patriotic Fund expended £1,657 in presentations and farewells. The first three or four who enlisted were presented with wristlet watches which cost £10 each, but later each man or woman who enlisted was presented with a wallet with 10/- in it. This accounted for about £1,600. It is estimated that between 800 and 1000 presentations were made to enlisted personnel.

During the war, Canteen Orders to the value of £705.10.7 were sent to serving members of the forces and £884 was given to the Australian Comforts Fund for hampers by the Shire Patriotic Fund. An Army Camp was established at Loftus and an Army Detention Barracks was established in Kareena Road on the site of the Sutherland Hospital.

Land sales after the war

There was very little activity in land sales during the War, but with the end of the War in August 1945 and the return of thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen to Australia, and the discharge of all personnel in the armed services at home, there was a demand created for home sites everywhere and the Sutherland Shire attracted many thousands of buyers anxious to build their own homes.

The electric railway to Cronulla, now well established, had brought the area of the Shire within easy travelling distance of Sydney.

Much of the undeveloped bush land and many farm areas were subdivided into building lots to meet the demand. The areas adjacent to the Railway line were quick to develop. Townships such as Jannali, Kirrawee, Gymea and Woollooware, which were little known pre-war, came into being.

The Housing Commission of N.S.W. which was appointed after the war to help alleviate the acute housing shortage, resumed large areas of land in the Shire and erected hundreds of homes for rental, with option of purchase. The tenants could obtain the homes by ballot.

With the increasing demand for home sites, prices of land gradually increased at first and later continued to rise at an accelerated pace until in 1956 over \$4,000 was being paid for a building block and the prices are still rising.

Most returned servicemen were able to finance the building of their own homes through the War Service Homes Department; others raised their finance through banks, Starr Bowkett Societies and Co-Operative Building Societies. The Port Hacking and Sutherland District Co-Operative Society was formed in 1949 and assisted hundreds of home seekers in the Shire to build, and is still carrying on.

With the large influx of new residents to the Shire, the business centres grew quickly to cater for the needs of the community. Caringbah was first to move in this regard and soon became a large shopping centre, Cronulla, which had a fairly big shopping centre previously, quickly developed to what it is today. Kirrawee and Gymea became new shopping centres very quickly and a small centre was built at Woollooware. Miranda, the oldest settlement was last to move, some shops were built, old business premises were modernised, but it was not until the advent of Farmer's Fair [Westfields] that Miranda became the largest shopping centre in the Shire.

Sutherland was slow to develop, but gradually increased over the years until today it is well catered for. Jannali and Engadine are two other centres which have developed good shopping centres.

Health

Pre-war, the health of the residents was looked after by three Doctors at Cronulla, Dr. Sproul, Dr. Broome and Dr. R. Miller and the Doctors at Sutherland, D. E. Miles, Dr. T. Miles and Dr. Sanbrook. Also there were three Midwives; Nurse Lobb, Nurse Kensett and Nurse Dray. Most Mothers had their babies at home and were visited by these Nurses.

There was a private Hospital at Woollooware, but no public Hospital in the Shire. St. George's Cottage Hospital at Kogarah was the nearest Public Hospital.

Sutherland Hospital

Agitation for a District Hospital had been going on for many years and it was not until 1944 that the Sutherland District Hospital was incorporated, largely through the efforts of Mr. Andy Gray with his Hospital Auxiliaries.

The site selected in 1944 was "Lehane's Paddock", on the corner of The Kingsway and Kareena Road, Miranda. It was not until 14 years later that the Hospital was completed.

After years of work and constant pressure on the Government by Mr. Gray and his band of helpers who raised a considerable amount of money towards the costs of the Hospital, their reward came when the Government signed a contract with Messrs. F. C. W. Powell & Son to build a 288 bed Hospital at Miranda on the site previously selected.

The first sod was turned by the Local Member of Parliament, Hon. A. J. Williams, MLA in April 1950.

There was considerable delay in getting the job started owing to shortage of steel and it was not until early 1952 that the foundations were commenced.

Erection of the steelwork for the Hospital was commenced in June 1953 and from then on continuous progress was made with the construction. The foundation stone was laid by the Premier Hon. J. J. Cahill on 3rd September 1955. The building was completed in 1958 and was designed to accommodate 288 beds. It was then the largest completely new hospital ever constructed by the Hospital Commission of NSW. (Bankstown Hospital was built about the same time and similar in design and size).

The cost of The Sutherland District Hospital was £1,550,000, plus £9,500 For furnishing the first 100 beds, plus £16,000 for x-ray equipment.

Australian Oil Refinery at Kurnell donated £500 towards the cost of the x-ray.

The first President of the Sutherland District Hospital Board was Mr. A. Gray. The Board appointed Mr. K. J. N. Tuck as Secretary, and Matron Bonfeld was first appointed in that position.

The Sutherland District Hospital was opened to the public on 29th March 1958 by the Minister for Health, the Hon. W. Sheen, who was introduced and welcomed by the Shire President Mr. J. Dwyer, in the presence of over 10,000 people who attended the opening ceremony.

The combined district Hospital Auxiliaries conducted a Fair in the hospital grounds during the day and raised over £1,000. An added attraction to the festivities of this historic gala day was the organisation of two processions to march on the hospital for the opening ceremony.

One started from Miranda and the other from Caringbah. They consisted of Returned Servicemen, Surf Lifesavers, Boy Scouts, local Lodges and representatives from all Sutherland district organisations. The procession was led by the Sutherland Shire Band and the 55th Infantry Band.

The building of the hospital created a special problem regarding sewage disposal but this was overcome by the Metropolitan Water Board extending the main from Cronulla to the hospital prior to the reticulation of the sewer in the Caringbah – Miranda area.

Kurnell

In 1953 the road to Kurnell was constructed to give access to the oil refinery being built there for Australian Oil Refineries. This new road made Kurnell easily accessible and thousands of visitors were able to make the trip to the historic landing place of Captain Cook.

It was estimated that the initial cost of the refinery and works such as tanks, jetty, wharves and dredging would be £25,000,000. The refinery commenced operations in 1955 and since then, many more millions of pounds have been spent on increasing the size of the refinery and building auxiliary plants. Other big industrial plants have also been built at Kurnell, including carbon black and chemical industries.

The Australian Gas Light Company provided the gas mains in the Shire in 1955.

Many areas within the Shire were zoned for industrial use and hundreds of factories were built and provided employment for many local residents and encouraged many more to take up residence in the Shire. Industry is now taking an important role in the district.

More bridges required

Within the large influx of people and transport to the Shire, it soon became apparent that the Georges River Bridge and the Taren Point punt could not cope with the volume of traffic and that another bridge was an urgent necessity. In 1966 the Captain Cook bridge at Taren Point was opened for traffic and relieved the congestion considerably, but still more bridges are required. Another bridge is proposed at Lugarno in the near future and moves have been made to have the old railway bridge at Como converted for road traffic when the new railway bridge is completed.

Shire Presidents have been:

1906 – 10	W G Judd	1945	L J Sandow
1911 – 15	E W Hyndman	1946	J W Lawrence
1916	R W Cook	1947	J Skillcorn
1917 – 18	C O J Monro	1948	W E Priestley
1919 – 21	W R Ainsworth	1949 – 51	C O J Monro
1922 – 27	C O J Monro	1952	R H Donesthy
1928	R W Cook	1953	D J Welch
1929	A J Hand	1954	A G Harper
1930 – 33	E S Shaw	1955 -56	R J O'Brien
1934	R Bingham	1957 -58	J J Cartledge
1935 – 38	E S Shaw	1959	J A Dwyer
1939	C O J Monro	1960	A T G ietzelt
1940 – 42	R Bingham	1961 – 63	K Bates
1943	A H Tucker	1964 -68	A T Gietzelt
1944	E S Shaw		

Conclusion

In bringing this article to a close I would like to pay tribute to Trevor McDonald, the first editor of B B C. News, who first suggested that I put my knowledge of the Shire on paper.

I would also like to thank all the readers who have shown interest in my story and who have encouraged me to write very much more than I originally intended.

Writing this article has given me a great deal of pleasure and refreshed many old memories. I hope that you, the readers have gained some knowledge of the Sutherland Shire in which you have made your home.

Les Clarke

The B.B.C. News

January 1969

This is the end of the final part of Les Clarke's story. Les lived in Jannali for many years and passed away in about 1990.

COOK'S LANDING PLACE

ANNOUNCEMENT BY MAYOR KEVIN SCHREIBER AT A MEETING OF TWO CULTURES CEREMONY AT COOK'S LANDING PLACE, SATURDAY 29TH APRIL 2006, 10.30AM

"Sutherland Shire is a great place to live and work. It is the second biggest local government area in New South Wales and is blessed with an abundance of natural beauty in our waterways, beaches, parks and bushland.

"Across the shire, and in particular in Kurnell, we are proud of the important place that this area holds in our nation's history. Many other places claim to other events and traditions, but nowhere else in the country has the honour of being the site of Cook's historic first landing on the eastern coast of Australia.

"This week we were again reminded of our area's great importance to the nation with the announcement of the Federal Government, today represented by the Federal Member for Cook, the Honourable Bruce Baird MP. I am delighted that the government will fund a one million dollar design competition for a monument to properly commemorate Cook's Landing Place here at Kurnell.

"Also part of the announcement is a project that is set to restore the area where botanist Sir Joseph Banks gathered his original samples during the Endeavour expedition and return it to its original condition. In addition an essay competition for Primary and Secondary school children will also begin in July with the aim of encouraging a greater understanding of Australia's history. These projects will provide the recognition that our rich heritage truly deserves."



Errata. John Risebrow

The May issue contained an account of the opening of the Sea Bridge in which I said that Her Majesty had bypassed the Royal National Park on her tour in 1954. I was WRONG. Doubts were cast by a friend who thought that Her Majesty had travelled by train.

The Governor General's Office has given me a resume of the relevant portion of the itinerary for February 11th 1954. Mt Kiera, Victoria Lookout, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Mt Keira Road, Princes Highway, north to the Bulli Pass, thence to Lawrence Hargrave Drive. From there the route was to Otford Road and via Lady Wakehurst Drive and Lady Carrington Drive to Allambie House at Audley. The route then continued via Farnell Avenue back to Princes Highway and on to Government House. So my apologies; the Park is well and truly ROYAL.

The timber slide on page 29 was 150 feet high, not 15 feet.

Aboriginal Marked Trees in NSW

Marked trees and sacred ceremonial grounds (Bora Grounds) are an area of study that is rarely undertaken in Australia. One of the reasons for that limited attention by Anthropologists may be because the trees themselves often have been cut down by pastoralists, or harvested by museums, leaving very few to study.

Bora Grounds or occasionally stone circles, have also been destroyed by farming and property development activities. It is hard to imagine that literally hundreds of ceremonial grounds and probably several thousand marked trees graced the plains and woodlands of NSW in the 19th century.

My first contact with the study of Trees and Bora Grounds came after I was given a book “Dendroglyphs and marked trees of NSW” published in 1916. In that book were photographs and drawings of many of these trees and grounds. The book also held a record of the number of trees harvested and stored for later study. This study, to my knowledge, has never taken place. The book records some 1000's of trees from NSW harvested and lost forever.

There is some small compensation to be found in the amount and quality of the written material in the book, alongside the high quality lithographs and photographs taken at the time that those trees were collected/harvested.



A Bora ground with Tumulus and Marked Trees on the Macquarie River near Wellington.

My interest in this subject became pronounced after hearing our Prime minister (John Howard) say that he believed Aboriginal people did not have religious beliefs. The statement itself was outstanding for it's implication for the author. For me these trees and sacred grounds made me wonder what the Aboriginal people were doing? What was the purpose of the marked trees?

My studies quickly revealed that the marked trees represented a number of activities. 1. to mark out the boundaries of sacred areas. 2. to mark the locations of burials of persons of note. 3. To commemorate an event or battle. 4. to show the totemic signs of individuals and 5. to represent boundary markers for tribal areas.

The Bora grounds also came in a variety of types.

1. A circle with tumulus (mound) burial. 2. A circle with tumulus (no burial). 3. A circle without tumulus (no mound or burial). 4. A circle joined by a path to another circle, the smaller circle being a sacred circle and the larger being a public circle. And finally. 5. a circle with an area marked out for an audience/participants.

What happened at these Bora grounds? Many of them were for public ceremonies celebrating the world and thanking the spirits. Many were for singing and dancing for fun. Some were for sacred ceremonies and initiations, or for increase ceremonies (increasing the availability of rain or food - Increase ceremonies).

Some Bora grounds were for male use and some were for women and their ceremonies. What is clear is that Aboriginal people had a rich spiritual life and recognized life after death and a spirit world. In fact many of the ceremonies practiced by Aboriginal people had a close analogue to Christian beliefs and values and some tell stories of the creation that mirror elements of creationist philosophy.

The one thing that has become clear to me is the absolutely abysmal level of teaching in Aboriginal culture both at schools and in Universities. This is reflected in our own Prime Ministers ignorance of the subjects raised here.

Plate 11



*Les Bursill
30th December 2005*

Typical Clan markings on trees

Wanted:- Our historical society is seeking books, maps and printed matter for display in its museum. Local history or period books for a bookcase display would be appreciated. Editor

FACES OF THE SHIRE

A PUBLIC LAUNCH OF ONE OF SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCIL'S KEY INITIATIVES FOR THE CENTENARY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT. - HAZELHURST - FRIDAY 28TH APRIL 2006

Attended by Mina Whybourne, Daphne Salt, Doug Archer, Bruce Watt, Pauline Curby

In his address, Mayor Kevin Schreiber acknowledged and thanked SSHS for the impressive Centenary of Council and the Shire's Industrial Heritage displays in the Museum in Sutherland School of Arts.

'Good evening fellow councilors, former Shire Presidents and Mayors, Parliamentarians, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome you to the official launch of Sutherland Shire's Centenary Celebrations. It is wonderful to see so many familiar faces here this evening, in particular our large contingent of former Shire Presidents and Mayors and many distinguished members of our community.

Tonight we're all part of a very special group that has been brought together by our common link – the Sutherland Shire. The reason for this gathering is to celebrate the Shire's one hundredth birthday. That's right, 100 years of the great lifestyle that we all know and love.

Of course, celebrating a birthday of any kind is important, however, when it is your 100th birthday, it is a cause for a very special celebration. That is exactly what we have in store for you tonight and throughout the year.

A century ago, the shire was a very different place, the great community that we're all part of today owes much to the people that lived all those years ago and helped build the place we now call 'The Shire'.

Tomorrow we celebrate the 236th anniversary of Lieutenant James Cook landing in Kurnell. Cook and his crew were amazed at the botany of the area, the meadows and the bushland. And Cook was confident that Australia would one day be a flourishing civilisation.

That civilisation began right here in Sutherland Shire where we're all still blessed with the vast areas of untouched bushland, beautiful beaches and waterways. In fact, half of our local area is the National Park of bushland.

Tomorrow we also celebrate the rich indigenous heritage of the area. The Shire and it's people epitomise the progress and success of our nation and the understanding between the cultures that came together in 1770.

Today Sutherland Shire is home to almost 220,000 people. In 1906 when the council and the shire were proclaimed there were just 1500 people living here. Apart from our natural attributes, we are a community that is recognised for our high participation rates for volunteering and for helping others. Our facilities are first class, be they council provided, such as our parks and playing fields, community facilities, leisure centres, libraries and our magnificent art gallery and art centre that we're enjoying right now, and the shopping and dining and other facilities provided by the private sector.

From humble beginnings our business sector and local community centres have grown in leaps and bounds. In the early days, most local workers were employed as fruit and vegetable or poultry farmers. Others were employed on the railway, and once council came into being, there was demand for scrub clearing and construction gangs. Fishing was also a popular occupation; and oyster farming, which is again coming back to Woollooware Bay, was a huge local industry. But significant growth over the years has seen many things change in our local business and industrial areas. Today we have thriving retail centres, a huge number of successful small businesses spread across the shire, and a business support network that is second to none.

The Council of today strongly supports economic development, and our flagship being 'The SSHED' business incubator in Loftus. With most things council has done over the past 100 years, we've had a strong support from the community. That support continues today, and I would like to make special mention of some specific groups and organisations that have made such a wonderful contribution to our centenary celebrations. To our official sponsors of 'Faces of the Shire' project – Cliff Lewis Printing, thank you for the generosity enabling us to document the story of our fellow Shire Presidents. I would

also like to mention the Centenary Committee which was formed in 2004, which helped build the foundations for our Centenary Celebrations. Also deserving a recognition are other groups for taking up the challenge to host centenary events, such as the great events and activities included in the Sutherland Shire Historical Society's Centenary Display and the Telling Like it Was oral History project; The Lives that Built our Shire, a project from the local radio station 2SSR; and the Anything Goes Contemporary Arts Group and Mural. Other events include the Botany Bay Family History Society project; the Maianbar Progress Association's Festival and display; and the Sutherland Shire Choral Society in concert.

I would also like to thank the St George and Sutherland Shire Leader for agreeing to produce the special wrap-around feature to commemorate the Centenary of the Shire, and also for publishing pictures of some of our Faces of the Shire. The Centenary Feature will be published on the 13th of June, and will be a stand-alone collectors' item for all shire residents. An individual who also deserves our thanks and congratulations for her considerable local history knowledge which has helped guide our centenary publications and events is Helen McDonald, Council's Local Studies Librarian. Thank you Helen, thank you very much*applause* ...

Most importantly, it is also fitting, as Mayor in our centenary year, I recognise and acknowledge the contributions made over the years by ordinary citizens, past Shire Presidents and Mayors and councilors, members of parliament, indigenous leaders, sporting and surf-lifesaving heroes, emergency service volunteers, artists and the many others who protected our values and contributed to the lifestyle and opportunities we enjoy today. Thank you all for your dedication to the place we call home, otherwise 'God's country'.

I am delighted that so many of you have been able to join us this evening. Amongst all the community events and activities celebrating the centenary, council has also been working hard to make this a special occasion. We have a number of programs that have been created to help the whole community get into the spirit of our birthday celebrations. Firstly council's website, we have a special centenary section that will profile events and activities, historical facts and project material to download; as well as the Faces of the Shire project, we have produced a centenary education pack which has been sent to every primary and high school in the shire as a wonderful resource for our children to learn about the history of our local area. A range of centenary give-aways are also being produced and will be distributed to each household to remind every family about this important time in our history.

A centenary issue of 'Our Shire', council's official newsletter, has been published and sent to every household. It profiles the change that has taken place in the shire over the last century, and extra copies are available here this evening. We are producing a commemorative book that will document the history of the shire. This will be a significant publication and a collector's item for many. It is due to be launched later in the year.

Currently there is a wonderful exhibition on here in Hazelhurst called 'Southern Exposure Five, Sutherland Shire Then and Now'. It combines historical pictures with modern day photographs to look at the way some of the areas in the shire have changed over the years.

Throughout the year, some of the council's annual events will also be 'century' themed; such as the Centenary Mayoral Ball, which we are looking forward to in June. National Tree Day when we are planting 100 trees for 100 years; and the ever popular Seniors' Arts and Crafts Festival, a long running community event. Details on these events and others can be found on the council's website.

Council has also given a number of community grants to groups working on centenary projects such as the Sutherland Shire Song which will be performed by the Georgian Singers later this evening. And finally, one of our most significant centenary activities – the magnificent 'Faces of the Shire' project, one of the reasons so many of you are joining us this evening. As John [Raynor] has already explained, Faces of the Shire is a special project that has involved the community before selecting 100 people who have best represented the spirit and the achievements of the shire and the people over the past 100 years.

I know that I speak for the entire committee, when I saw that selecting only 100 from the many entries we had was a very difficult task mainly because there are just so many admirable and worthy people in our community deserving of this honour. We did manage though. Today you are all about to witness the marvellous results.

To provide a fitting tribute to the people that were chosen and a lasting memory of this honour, it is my pleasure to announce that as you view the exhibition this evening, a copy of the special produced 'Faces of the Shire' commemorative booklet will be made available to each of you. This is a collectors' item, where limited numbers will be produced. This is what it will look like this is what you will get here tonight, and it will have 100 faces of the shire and a history about that person. Thank you *applause* ...

Inside you will find inspiring stories about the 100 Faces along with their photographs. We've even included a special page in the back for you to record any message from other Faces you might meet here tonight. I hope you will keep this booklet as a reminder of the wonderful honour that the community has bestowed on you or your family member. But that is not the only part of this wonderful project, something that I am equally excited to unveil this evening, will also be a lasting tribute and one that will travel. Throughout the year the specially produced bill-boards that you will shortly see, will tour the shire and will truly become the Faces of the Shire.

So ladies and gentlemen, I hope that throughout the year you join us in celebrating the centenary of Sutherland Shire. I thank you for being here for this special occasion. I hope that you will enjoy the rest of the evening.

So now without further ado, I ask you to turn your attention to the windows and look out at the Hazelhurst gardens where you will see the Faces of the Shire as they are lit up for the first time. Thank you.'

Aileen Griffiths OAM

Aileen, as well as her grandfather, John Atkinson, were honoured as two of the 100 Faces of the Shire over the last 100 years. John Atkinson was a member of the Provisional Council established in 1906.

Aileen received her nomination for 'Service to the Community'.

Aileen Griffiths is a diligent community worker whose efforts are best recognized for her work with the Sutherland Shire Historical Society.

Since 1937 Aileen has also contributed her time and energy to several organizations including North Cronulla Surf Club, Sutherland Hospital. Cronulla Women's Bowling Club and the Meals on Wheels service.

During her 40 years of involvement in the Sutherland Shire Historical Society, Aileen has held every position including President. Her work has assisted the Society in gaining access to, and operating from the Sutherland Memorial School of Arts building. Her commitment and the value she has added to the Society has been acknowledged by the awards she has received from the Royal Australian Historical Society. She is a great historian and a Shire enthusiast who has become somewhat of an icon for the Shire.

In 2003 Aileen was honoured with a Medal of the Order of Australia and is the 2006 Sutherland Shire Council Citizen of the Year.

Contribution towards the cost of printing the two colour pages of this edition of the Bulletin by L J Hooker, Cronulla is gratefully acknowledged. It promotes public interest in local heritage.

COMPARING HISTORIES

By Elizabeth Craig

Cridland, Frank *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and Sutherland Shire*, 2nd edition, Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1950 (reprint of 1924 edition with footnoted updates).

Kirkby, David *From Sails to Atoms: First Fifty Years of Sutherland Shire 1906 to 1956*, Sutherland, Sutherland Shire Council, 1970.

Larkin, Maryanne *Sutherland Shire: A History to 1939*, Jannali, Sutherland History Press, 1998.

Three authors from three different generations have each written a history of the Sutherland Shire. All were local residents. All acknowledge the Shire's significance as the birthplace of modern Australia, through evocative descriptions of Captain Cook's arrival on its north-eastern shore in 1770. But there the similarities stop. The purpose in writing each history, the values arising from the authors' own era and the selection and interpretation of 'facts', have produced three very different histories. One is a nostalgic history, another is a chronicle of the area's progress under the management of the local Council, and the third explores the social history.

Frank Cridland, whose book was published in 1924, was a self-made successful businessman, amateur historian, naturalist and writer. His book is a compilation of local history articles, most of which he had already published in local magazines. His stated objective was not to provide a "complete history", but to inspire someone else to do so given the historic significance of the district to Australia.¹ The result is an informally written, nostalgic history celebrating the Sutherland Shire's environmental, Aboriginal and European heritage. His engaging writing style attracts the casual reader and his vision of the district's past and observations of the present (in 1924) have made his book a primary local history source in itself. In contrast, David Kirkby was commissioned by the Council to write an official history of the district to coincide with the 200th anniversary of Captain Cook's landing at Kurnell. Kirkby, who had held the position of Shire Clerk for 35 years, began compiling the history from Council minutes and records shortly after his retirement.² It is a narrowly focused chronicle outlining the development of the Sutherland Shire since the formation of the Council in 1906. Apart from some catchy titles and quite lyrical opening paragraphs to some chapters, the language is formal and impersonal. The focus is on the council's activities, its challenges and achievements rather than on the people responsible for them. It relates details and statistics which appear to come directly from Council records. Kirkby's history is, not surprisingly, presented to show the district's development under Sutherland Shire Council management in a favourable light.

¹ Cridland, Frank *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and the Sutherland Shire*, 2nd edition, Sydney, 1950, p.v.

² Kirkby, David *From Sails to Atoms: First Fifty Years of Sutherland Shire 1906 to 1956*, Sutherland, 1970, foreword.

Maryanne Larkin published and distributed her 1998 local history herself. She explains in the preface that her book is in response to Frank Cridland's 1924 lament, repeated in 1950, that someone needed to fill a gap in Australian literature to produce an extensive history of the Sutherland Shire district.³ This scholarly, easy to read social history is based on the research for her PhD thesis.⁴ She sought to investigate why people came to live in the Sutherland Shire and the kind of society they created. She does so through careful analysis of a wide range of thoroughly referenced source material, subtly revealing the intricately interwoven forces that shaped the community. She looks at the micro as well as the macro, so that we can see how individuals related to the rest of the community and outside it. The popularity of this book (now out of print) is evident by the queue of names on the Sutherland Shire Library's waiting list to borrow it!

All three writers recognise Sutherland Shire's claim of national significance as the birthplace of modern Australia, but they perceive it differently. Cridland and Kirkby both celebrate it as the start of a wonderful new era, with Kirkby uncharacteristically waxing lyrical about the promise the misty-eyed Captain Cook read into "the waving grasses, ... enchantment of sunshine and blossom ..." which represented "the maternal earth of Australian civilisation, the pledge of a new nation's progress and prosperity."⁵ Larkin, on the other hand, reflecting the values of today, was more circumspect. Using an Aboriginal boy's eye-witness account handed down to his descendants, she recreates the landing as he and his friends saw it, a moment that would ultimately change their lives, and "usher in a new era in the history of the Australian continent".⁶

The Sutherland Shire is isolated from the rest of Sydney by the system of waterways bordering it. With its lack of arable land, it took nearly one hundred years before settlers began to arrive in earnest.⁷ Each author saw this isolation differently. Cridland saw it as a major benefit, describing the area as a wild frontier where the battle between man and nature still raged and whose unspoiled beauty was an attraction to the nature-loving residents and tourists alike. Kirkby focuses on the problems it presented to the Council in providing amenities. He describes the primitive living conditions in 1906 of the residents "entrusted to the care of local government [and who] lacked electricity and running water."⁸ Larkin takes a step back and sees its isolation as a contributing factor to the character of the Sutherland Shire. It maintained "a sense of separation from Sydney for Sydney and district residents alike".⁹ And she notes that while the Hawkesbury sandstone produced soil of little economic value, its physical beauty led to long term economic benefits (in attracting residents and tourists).

Each author conveyed a different sense of place through their choice of source material and writing style. Cridland does so through his own knowledge of the district in 1924. As historian George Seddon notes,

³ Larkin, Maryanne *Sutherland Shire: A History to 1939*, Jannali, 1998, p.2.

⁴ Larkin, Maryanne *The Sutherland District, 1880-1930: Sydney or the Bush?*, PhD thesis, Sydney University, 1995.

⁵ Kirkby, *Sails*, p.13.

⁶ Larkin, *History*, p.5.

⁷ Cridland, *Sutherland Shire*, p.2; Kirkby, *Sails*, pp.13-14; Larkin, *History*, p.10.

⁸ Kirkby, *Sails*, p.17.

⁹ Larkin, *History*, p.10.

the "tone of voice" conveyed by people who write about the landscape they live in can bring it to life in a way an outsider cannot.¹⁰ This is especially true of Cridland's detailed, beautifully expressed observations and obvious familiarity with the physical features. He writes of the "peculiar charm or characteristics" of various bays along the Port Hacking River: those with the best fishing and boating opportunities; the location of the shifting sand bars; and the best spots to pitch a tent.¹¹ The reader also learns what it felt like to commute to the district in the early twentieth century. He describes how after dark horse-drawn buggies could be turned over in the dangerous culverts and watercourses on the road from the Georges River punt to the Port Hacking River.¹²

It is difficult to get a sense of place about the Sutherland Shire from Kirkby's book. It is mostly about local politics, and accounts of political battles seem censored as they are filtered through Council's records. Its dry language seems to shield the reader from any emotional response, too. His assertion that preservation of the foreshores was the Council's longstanding policy so that "Nature would not be despoiled" seems more like a mission statement than a feeling for the landscape.¹³ He does portray an active citizenry, although it is in a political sense, as he describes the actions of organised lobby groups. He tells of the petition for mail deliveries, the formation of the volunteer Cronulla Surf Life-Saving Club, and the Miranda Progress Association that kept a "close watch on the doings of the Sutherland Council".¹⁴ His account of the separatist ambitions of Cronulla residents who felt that Council was giving them a rough deal financially lacks the context that would make sense of what was driving these people.¹⁵

Larkin conveys a very strong sense of place, but in contrast to Cridland's her history is more scholarly than sensual, contributing in a major way to historical knowledge. She employs a thematic exploration of the forces shaping settlement and the social consequences. She describes the rivalry that developed between small close-knit communities, separated by geography and function (tourism, farming, railway settlement).¹⁶ Differences in lifestyles, socio-economic and political circumstances engendered a struggle for dominance between Cronulla and Sutherland¹⁷, and we can see immediately what led to the Cronulla separatist movement referred to, but not really explained, by Kirkby. Larkin's sources, referenced by endnotes, included company papers, official documents, media reports, recorded personal accounts and secondary sources such as Cridland's and Kirkby's books.

One account of a sailor's wife and three children, who were part of a wave of new arrivals in the 1890s to the Sutherland district, is particularly telling for its detail in Larkin's book. Driven by poverty to respond to an advertisement for leasehold land, we learn what Marie Derrey felt and what she saw as she hiked through the bush with a rough map searching for a block with a water supply. She found a good spot by a

¹⁰ Seddon, George: A Snowy River Reader', *Landprints: Reflections on Place and Landscape*, Cambridge, 1997, chap.5, History 330 Resource Booklet, Armidale, 2005, p.116

¹¹ Cridland, *Sutherland Shire*, pp.52-53.

¹² *Ibid*, pp.148-149.

¹³ Kirkby, *Sails*, p.15.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.25.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, pp.39-40.

¹⁶ Larkin, *History*, p.117.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, pp.123-126.

creek in Gynea and paid six months rent in advance. We can picture the three-roomed shelter her husband built on his return from sea. It had a dirt floor, bag walls and a bark roof. She kept poultry and did domestic work locally to help support her family.¹⁸ This kind of detail, missing in the other two histories, adds great depth to our sense of the place and time. Maps, illustrations and photos judiciously placed add a further dimension to Larkin's history.

The concept of power is treated quite differently by each author. Cridland likes to philosophise about the role of chance and Nature in outcomes of decisions, but here I will use Anthony Giddens' definition, that power is "the ability of individuals or groups to make their own concerns or interests count, even where others resist."¹⁹ In simple terms, the Holt family, which owned just about all the land in the Sutherland district, and the Holt-Sutherland Company, which leased and managed the land, had almost total control of the pattern of development until the formation of the Sutherland Shire Council in 1906. But it is about the influences behind company and Council decisions where the authors differ in their approach.

Cridland, who acknowledges that he was friends with the company manager, paints a paternalistic picture of a benevolent owner who took "a paternal interest in the affairs of the sub-lessees"²⁰, and of a management which never evicted a tenant because he could not pay his rent. It was this attitude, asserts Cridland, that was responsible for Cronulla leaping ahead in the early twentieth century.

Kirkby's approach is similar to Cridland's, in that he portrays a Council which had the full support of its ratepayers. It lent a sympathetic ear to lobby groups like the progress associations and negotiated decisions which were in the best interests of the Shire. Larkin digs deeper. She reveals the powerful connections and vested interests of company managers and Councilors. Most of the Councillors were either large property owners or real estate agents and their friends were other businessmen both inside the district (like Cridland) and outside. Holt had also been an MP, and had state political connections. Larkin describes the battle the Council had to wrest control from Holt-Sutherland Company when it took over management, in part she says because of the Councillors' private property interests. The Council also fought to win the confidence of existing activist groups such as the Miranda Progress Association. Interestingly, Kirkby doesn't refer to any ongoing friction the Council had with local organisations or the various business interests of the Councillors.

The Sutherland Shire was (and still is) a fairly heterogeneous society of predominantly white, Anglo Saxon Protestants and apart from our Aboriginal heritage, Larkin says (in 1998) that ethnicity was not a divisive issue. Cridland and Kirkby don't refer to the subject at all. But it is interesting to compare their attitudes on the indigenous issue. Cridland strongly believes that along with our European and environmental heritage, the "priceless records of the blacks" are something we should celebrate and preserve. He despairs of people who take shovels full of shell from kitchen middens to make a garden path, yet envy the Egyptians their archaeological treasures.²¹ But the paternalistic attitude of his period

¹⁸ *Ibid*, p.50.

¹⁹ Giddens, A. : *Sociology*, Cambridge, 1989, History 330 Study Guide, Armidale, 2005, p.84.

²⁰ Cridland, *Sutherland Shire*, pp.108-109.

²¹ *Ibid*, pp.130-131.

shines through when referring to the Aboriginal people. He believes the design and execution of the drawings show that Aborigines had evolved "far beyond animals" to the stage "our own ancestors passed through thousands of years ago, and the preservation of these relics will help the ethnologist to build up the story of our own civilization and mental progression." ²²

Kirkby's history, written a few years after Aborigines had won the right to vote, seems careful not to draw criticism about his handling of what had become a sensitive issue. He says nothing at all about Aborigines, but acknowledges them as the first inhabitants by reprinting, without comment, a drawing and excerpt about the appearance and behaviour of local tribes from a published journal of a member of Governor Phillip's expedition to Botany Bay.²³ Larkin too reflects changed attitudes in her 1998 publication. Her recreation of Captain Cook's arrival in 1770 as seen from the Aborigines' point of view, marks the event not as the beginning of a new era in European civilization, but one "which changed forever their [the Aborigines'] old way of life".²⁴ She related what little is known about Aboriginal history in the district and how they interacted with Europeans.

The concept of class is dealt with rather gingerly by Cridland and he avoids reference to conflict altogether. He writes of the poverty stricken who flocked to the district to take up leaseholds in the drought of the 1880s as "sturdy artisans who ...were prepared to work early and late to make a living for themselves and their families."²⁵ This paternalistic attitude – and the list of prominent businessmen he lists as friends – makes it clear which social class Cridland belonged to. Interestingly, Cridland doesn't mention the general strike in 1917 which polarised the community. Yet, according to Larkin, Cridland was vocal in his opposition, while the working class in Sutherland supported the strikers. Their wives helped organize beds to accommodate striking miners who marched to Sydney from the south coast.²⁶ Kirkby doesn't mention the general strike either. In fact, like Cridland, he doesn't deal with class divisions at all except in terms of "employed" and "unemployed". Many of the workless sold wild flowers at railway stations during the 1930s depression, and the growing number of flower sellers was a measure to the workers of the mounting levels of unemployment. Increasing competition for sales and fights amongst rival sellers led to complaints from the commuters, and Council confined flower selling to private property. ²⁷ The unemployed are seen as a problem the Council had to deal with. "Rags and poverty there were, but the Sutherland Council did what it could to counter forces beyond its control."²⁸

Larkin's book is a social history and she links the socioeconomic groupings revealed in Census data to factors revealing the causes of the demographic profile. She explains how the Sutherland Shire District became a conservative Protestant constituency through the policies of the district's managers: to discourage industry and promote the area's tourism potential. This discouraged working class Roman

²² *Ibid*, p.141.

²³ 'The Inhabitants', *An Authentic Journal of the Expedition Under CommodorePhillips to Botany Bay* (no publication details provided), Kirkby, *Sails*, p.12.

²⁴ Larkin, *History*, p.7.

²⁵ Cridland, *Sutherland Shire*, p.110.

²⁶ Larkin, *History*, p.129.

²⁷ Kirkby, *Sails*, p.66.

²⁸ *Ibid*, p.69.

Catholics who would normally vote Labor.²⁹ She also explains the opportunities available to various classes. The Miranda Progress Society whose members were better educated and better connected farmers, used their influence to improve local facilities. Residents of Cronulla, where property was expensive, could support more private schools than anywhere else in the district. Working class residents tended to work in domestic service for the local well-to-do. Because they were usually lessees, they did not have voting rights in the local electorate, reducing the Labor vote further.

Cridland's book is telling in the social concepts it does not address - especially gender. Written before the influence of feminism, women are invisible in his book, except in a passive role. Cridland features one woman because of his interest in preserving the past. She was "the oldest pioneer in the district left to us" and he related her memories of the landscape before "man started to interfere with Nature's scheme."³⁰ In the only other acknowledgement of the existence of females, he relates how two young women asked him to find them a snake, and he gallantly did.³¹

In Kirkby's account women are also treated as peripheral to history. He is quite amused by the prudery of the early Councillors in not allowing women to wear swimming costumes briefer than "neck to knees", and indeed the media at the time had a field day. But women are not portrayed as having a role in the fight for liberalisation on Cronulla beaches.³² Where reference to women can't be avoided, he presents them as robots who get things done without debate or politicking. For instance, in 1933 a public meeting formed a committee, presided over by a Mrs F.J. Sambrook, to establish a baby health centre. Mothers and babies were bussed from Cronulla to the centre at Sutherland for free. We don't hear of any lobbying, or why the free bus was only from Cronulla. In fact, we don't hear Mrs Sambrook's voice at all.³³

Larkin includes women's experiences and the active role they played in the community. For instance, she describes how appeals for women's votes became a campaign feature in the early twentieth century. In 1917, Liberal candidate, Thomas Ley, courted women's votes through regular church attendance and support for temperance and child care.³⁴

Each of these books has something unique to contribute to the collection of historical knowledge about Sutherland Shire. The authors selected the 'facts' they deemed pertinent to their story and interpreted them according to their own values and motivations for writing the history. The strength of Cridland's book lies in the vivid sense of place he conveys through his intimate knowledge of the district and his delightful writing style. Its weakness for the local history researcher is that it doesn't tell us very much about the social history.

While Kirkby's history is a good reference for Council's activities, its great weakness is its lack of interpretation of Council decisions. It doesn't reveal any of the behind-the-scene maneuverings which would give depth to the book, and so comes across as a "white-washed" history, a public relations

²⁹ Larkin, *History*, p.107.

³⁰ Cridland, *Sutherland Shire*, p.16.

³¹ *Ibid*, p.67.

³² Kirkby, *Sails*, p.53.

³³ *Ibid*, p.77.

³⁴ Larkin, *History*, p.113.

exercise. The paternalistic attitude displayed in both these books is a reflection of the values of their time, and the reader needs to bear that in mind.

I find it hard to fault Larkin's book. It is scholarly and broad in its use of source material. It is like a three-dimensional jigsaw puzzle and she has studied each piece and worked out how it fits with its surrounding neighbours, to form a complex social picture of the district at each stage of development. The individual stories she has chosen to include add colour and depth of understanding of what it was like then. This book is the result of ten years research, and it shows.

Book Review

Douglas Robertson, *The Last Voyage of the Lucette*,

**Seafarer Books (102 Redwald Road, Rendlesham, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP 12 2TE), 2005,
maps, plates, appendices, pp. 372, ISBN 095427 508 X, £13.95, paperback.**

Reviewed by Edward Duyker

In 1973 Dougal Robertson published *Survive The Savage Sea*, his classic account of his family's 38-day ordeal adrift in the Pacific in a life raft and subsequently a 9-foot dinghy. This was after his 43-foot schooner *Lucette* was rammed and sunk by killer whales in January 1971. The *Lucette* sank so quickly that the four adults and two children aboard had to survive on the barest emergency rations in the raft and on captured turtles and rainwater. Dougal Robertson's stubborn leadership and remarkable seamanship, combined with the medical knowledge of his wife Lyn (a trained nurse), undoubtedly saved the lives of the family.

Survive the Savage Sea became an international best seller and was translated into some 20 languages. But it only told half the story. The Robertson family did sail half-way around the world before disaster befell them. They weathered financial difficulties, fierce storms and reefs, family differences and Dougal's fierce temper. They also had the satisfaction of a remarkable family adventure under sail.

Now, fourteen years after Dougal's death his son Douglas has used his father's manuscripts and original book, together with his own reminiscences to tell the full story. *The Last Voyage of the Lucette*, however, is written in Dougal's voice. To use a cinematic analogy, this book is like a director's cut thanks to the director's son. While Douglas' name appears on the title page, as a prologue it also contains Dougal's moving account of the sinking of the *Sagaing* off Ceylon in 1942 in which he lost his wife and child. To my mind it helps explain his single-minded determination not to lose another family. This is a frank and sensitive book that contains some of the finest writing I have ever read on the sea.

<p>Members are reminded that membership renewals are due as of 1/7/2006 Refer to the application form on page 33.</p>

Sutherland Shire Historical Society

Membership application –New and / or Renewal - 2006/7

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

In accordance with the above, new and renewal memberships are due on the 1st July each year.

Applications 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 new / renewal application should also contain the appropriate subscription fee.

General enquiries regarding the Society to: The Secretary, Mrs Angela Thomas ph 95286251

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 three months from the end of the financial year will result in a lapse of membership.

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.

This membership application is a **-Renewal** †
(please tick)

or **-New Membership** †

TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Ms

Family name: -----

Given name: -----

Postal address:-----

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

Please find subscription for 2006/7 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
This becomes a tax invoice on payment of the subscription.

ABN No. 17 083 299 57 Note: This organisation is GST exempt.

This membership application is a **-Renewal** †
(please tick)

or **-New Membership** †

TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Ms

Family name: -----

Given name: -----

Postal address:-----

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

Please find subscription for 2006/7 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
This becomes a tax invoice on payment of the subscription.

ABN No. 17 083 299 572 Note: This organisation is GST exempt.