



Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc **Bulletin**



VOL. 10 No. 3

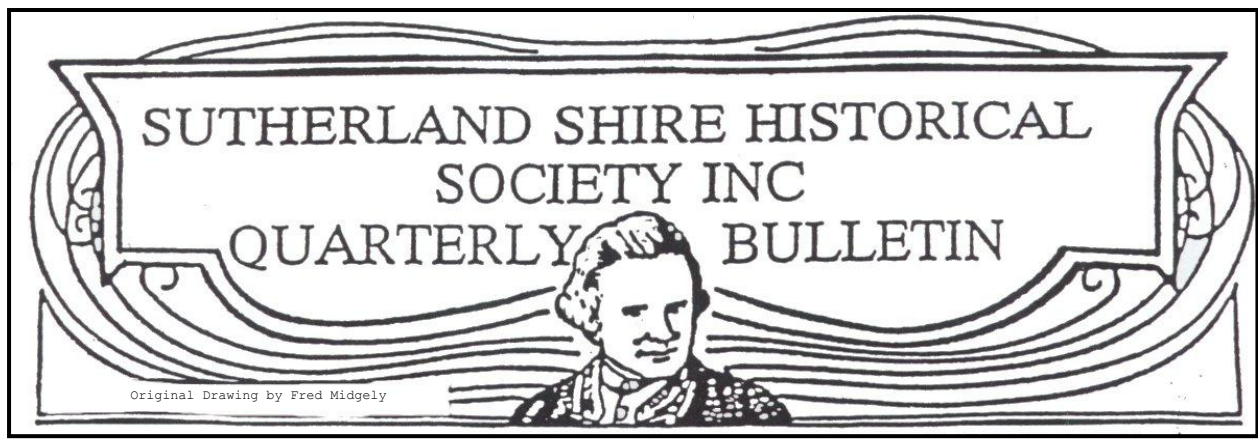
www.suthshirehistsoc.da.ru

November 2007 \$3.00



The war memorial – Munro Park, Cronulla

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



PRESIDENT:	Mrs Dawn Emerson, B.A. (Lib Sci), Litt. B.(Soc), AALIA., D.Ua, JP . Ph: 95431060 Fax: 9543 0191
DEPUTY PRESIDENT PUBLIC OFFICER	Mr Jim Cutbush Mr Andrew Platfoot
VICE PRESIDENTS:	Mr Terry McCosker, Mrs Daphne Salt
SECRETARY:	Mrs Angela Thomas P.O. Box 389, Sutherland, NSW, 1499 - Ph: 9528 6251
ASSISTANT SECRETARY:	Mrs Mina Whybourne Ph 9521 5752
TREASURER:	Mr Maurie Beaven 9521 6360
RESEARCH OFFICER & ARCHIVIST:	Mr. Les Bursill, AIM. J.P. B.A. (Arch) M.Litt, (Anth). FACBMS Bus 92891457 a.h. ph 9520-7394 Mob 0419 298 018
BULLETIN EDITOR:	Mr Bruce Watt, B Com. Dip Ed. Dip Ed Stud. (UNSW) Ph 9523 5294, fax 9527 5294 email watto51@optusnet.com.au
MUSEUM CURATOR:	Mr Jim Cutbush 9521 3721
MUSEUM COMMITTEE:	Mr Terry McCosker, Cliff Emerson, Angela Thomas, Dawn Emmerson, John Risebrow, Maurie Beavan, Mina Whybourne
EXCURSION OFFICER:	Mr David Overett.
BOOKING CLERK:	Mrs Pat Hannan
PUBLICITY OFFICER:	Mrs Marj Blackley 9521 1343
PATRON:	Clr David Redmond Mayor of Sutherland Shire
BOOK REVIEW EDITOR:	Dr Edward Duyker O.A.M., B.A. (Hons), Ph.D. (Melb), FLS, FRGS, FRHistS, J.P.
COMMITTEE:	Mr John Risebrow, Mr Cliff Emerson, Mrs Merle Kavanagh , David Overett
SOLICITOR:	Mr. Michael Solari

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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

: ©.Copyright of material printed in this Bulletin is held by the respective authors whose written permission must be obtained for use or reproduction of their work

Contributions: Members are invited to submit material for inclusion in the Bulletin which need not be confined to local history, although this is especially welcome. If material is extracted or re-written, please state the source. Care should be taken with material still in copyright and written permission should be obtained from the author and the publisher. Please submit A4 typed pages of text, preferably word processed and include your name, address and phone number. Legible hand written articles may be accepted in some circumstances.

Meetings of the Society are held monthly on the third Friday at 7.45pm at the Stapleton Centre, Stapleton Street, Sutherland.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME

*All correspondence should
be addressed to*

**The Honorary Secretary
Sutherland Shire Historical Society
PO Box 389
Sutherland NSW 1499**

Society Publications are registered with the National Library, Canberra, in accordance with International Standard Serial Numbering. The Society's occasional publications carry an ISBN number.

Index:

	Page
War Memorial Munro Park	1
Office bearers	3
Disclaimers and index	4
President's report	5
Editorial	7
 Christmas in the Shire	 8
Sutherland Shire Christmas celebrations	10
Meet the Executive	12
High School Highlights	14
 Sir Charles Rosenthal and the Cronulla War Memorial	 17
Some Reminiscences	20
The divisive effects of the Great War in the Sutherland Shire	22
Teaching history in High Schools	27
Vale – Aileen Griffiths	28
Farewell Rupert Gough	29
 Beyond the sea	 30
 Book review	 31

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

AGM Unfortunately our AGM was unable to be held because we were ONE member short, and did not have a quorum. Was it YOU? It just shows how important it is for every member to try and attend every meeting. We have quite a large membership but they seem loathe to come out at night to meetings. However before you start feeling guilty, I must admit that Cliff and I were unable to attend because it was Engadine Primary School's 75th Anniversary Celebration, Jim had family obligations, some members were ill, others were on holiday etc. so a few of us were guilty, but life has to go on---Historical Society AGM's notwithstanding! Terry McCosker, our Deputy President, who was chairing the meeting in my absence, quite correctly postponed the AGM, but then took the advice of our councillor guest speaker, holding it over to the next monthly meeting, though his is not exactly according to our constitution. Hurstville Historical Society. Mindful of how easily an historical society can falter if the members do not attend, despite an executive eager to fulfill their obligations, we were sad to learn that Hurstville Historical Society has finally wound up. I have been a guest speaker at one of their meetings, talking on the history of Menai, and only a handful attended, although admittedly they were a very responsive audience. This could be the fate which awaits us if we cannot get more members to our meetings. As a result of their demise, we have been most fortunate in gaining some of their collection for our museum, and in addition they have allocated over \$6,000 of their funds to our society. Our grateful thanks to the members of Hurstville Historical Society for thinking of us, and we are always pleased to see members of other historical societies at our meetings and functions, as we all have the same ideals and principles. These funds will assist in the re-organisation of our Museum.



Farewell Ceremony to our Founding Patron Several of our members, including myself, were proud to be invited to Mrs. Aileen Griffith's ceremonial scattering of her ashes, by her daughter Mrs. Janelle Scott and family at the North Cronulla Surf Club on Sunday, 14th October, 2007. Aileen had been one of the first female members of the club, and the Ladies' Auxiliary. She was honoured by an all-woman team of lifesavers taking her ashes out in a boat and scattering them in the ocean she loved so much. As we watched from the clubhouse, these women raised their oars in a silent tribute of veneration for this talented woman who did so much for her community in so many ways. Farewell, Aileen, from us all.

Vale Rupert Gough I guess as the Society has been operating for 41 years that we must accept that we are now losing some of our members, but it is always a sad day for us. Many of you will know Rupert who attended most of our excursions, and came to the meetings, always very quiet and did not say much. It came as a shock that he had passed away and a few of us attended his funeral at the Woronora Crematorium. It was there, during the eulogy we learnt of Rupert's remarkable craftsmanship, building model houses, perfect to the smallest detail! We have asked his nephew to come along on our members' night in January to tell us about the painstaking work that Rupert executed, and talk about these models.

Vale Elizabeth Narduzzo We were so sad to hear of Elizabeth's passing, and I am sorry I did not know early enough so we could pay our last respects. She came to most meetings, and thoroughly enjoyed hearing our guest speakers, and especially loved a chat with other members after the meeting. She was always cheery and friendly and interested in other people. We forward our condolences to her family and friends.

Museum Mr. Jim Cutbush, our Museum Curator and I have discussed with the Council's General manager, Mr. John Rayner, the possibility of permanently obtaining the use of the foyer at the School of Arts for the two weeks of the year that the National Trust's Heritage Festival is held, for our annual historical photographic display and also some more space for

storage. This display is held in conjunction with our Museum exhibitions, which are currently The Centenary of Surf Lifesaving in Sutherland Shire, and our Menai Home in the World War 1 era. In recent times we have been told that the School of Arts has been booked by a theatre group, and we cannot have the use of this area, unless we pay for it, which would amount to over \$6,000. We have to fit in with times when the School of Arts is not booked by a theatrical or musical group, and this does not correspond with the National Trust dates. Consequently we lose out on gaining the free publicity afforded by the National Trust in its statewide publicity booklet! This was a most invidious position for our Historical Society, keen to display its wares, and eager to inform the world of the Shire's proud role in the Birthplace of Modern Australia. Mrs. Aileen Griffiths, OAM our patron and foundation member had always asserted that the School of Arts building had been given to the community for a Museum, in the care and control of Council, by the Dept. of Dormant Affairs. Consequently I decided to go to the Land Titles office and check the title. It does indeed state that the School of Arts is to be used for the purposes of a museum, so we should be able to use the foyer for this purpose during at least two weeks of the year and perhaps we should be able to have a little more space for storage for our valuable artifacts. The General Manager is looking into the problem for us, and we hope to have some good news soon.

Bathurst Historical Society In September Cliff and I were the guests of a member of this Society for the weekend and they took us to Miss Traill's house. This cottage reminded us of our Menai Pioneer Home, furnished just as Miss Traill had left it. It has been well looked after by the BHS, and is a lovely glimpse into the past. On the Sunday we were taken to Abercrombie House. This magnificent home built of local blue basalt with purple slate roof tiles from Bangor, Wales is a must. The family are restoring the silk wallpapers, the gilt mirrors, and beautiful furniture to their former glory. There are many stairs in this huge home, but it was a real treat going from room to room. Our thanks to Dick and Val Hart for their hospitality.

I look forward to seeing you all at our meetings, and if anyone needs a lift, can you ring me and we will find someone who has a car and lives nearby, to bring you along.

Dawn Emerson,

President

Meetings: 3rd Friday of the month

21/12/07: Sutherland School of Arts: "Show and Tell" Xmas Party. Bring an item for display.

18/1/08: Stapleton Centre.: Members' Night: D.Archer, J.Risebrow, R. Gough's nephew.

15/02/08: : Dr. Ed. Duyker: Francois Peron

14/03/08: Norm Chin OAM: The Rail Disasters: Como, Waterfall

18/04/08 : Allan Cameron: WWII

From The Editor's Desk

It is satisfying to have steered the Bulletin through another year in which there have been so many interesting articles published. We've covered several major stories including a history of recorded music, several articles on sailing ships and maritime disasters, the Sutherland – Cronulla tramway, the historic residence, 'Moombara' some book reviews and several reminiscences from early residents.

We start a new tradition in this edition. 'Meet the Executive' introduces the general reader to a snapshot of the lives of our serving Executive. We start with our hard working Secretary, Angela Thomas who has led an interesting life and continues today amongst other roles, as a successful writer.



It is fitting at this time of the year to reflect on the traditions associated with Christmas. As November 11, 'Remembrance Day' passes by it is also fitting to reflect on two articles in this edition. One deals with the Cronulla War memorial. Practically every country town had one. It is perhaps hard for us to imagine now just what impact the Great War had on the lives of small, isolated communities. Our last guest speaker told of the several recruitment marches that left country towns gathering young men for to join the army in 1915-16. Of the 300,000 or so that fought, 60,000 were killed and a greater number were wounded.

The other article is on the divisive affects of the Great War on the Sutherland Shire. This is an area as yet unexplored in our studies and I thank Elizabeth Craig for this story.

The bulletin is a local journal and so it covers issues pertinent to the Sutherland Shire. But who says that history is confined within discrete boundaries. Recall your own family's journey over the last 150 years. How many shores and events has it touched upon? How interwoven are the experiences? Globalisation brings us all closer together and makes us interdependent. History that happened in far off places in by gone times has a way of impacting on us in ways that we may not immediately foresee. I'm reminded of the speculation expressed in the observance: 'Does the flap of a butterfly's wing in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas' or can a relatively minor, remote event lead to a much larger impact elsewhere. Who knows what impact a far away event may have on us? It is invigorating to learn of some far off event and through circumstances, feel its impact through some obscure occurrence.

At this point I make the usual call for papers. The role of the editor is to gather materials, make necessary changes and assemble it in a manner that suits its readership. I thank all those who have and continue to contribute to the Bulletin. I would also like to say that my task would be easier if more articles were forthcoming.

If you have stories to tell or historical items to pass on, contact the editor or museum curator.

Members are reminded that annual membership extends from July 1 to June 30. If you have not renewed at this stage, your membership is now well overdue.

Avoid missing out on future bulletins. Ensure you pay your fees now.

On behalf of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society I wish everyone all the best for the Christmas season and the start of 2008.

Bruce Watt

Christmas in the Shire

Garriock Duncan



Members of the SSHS have, it seems, long thought of the December meeting as a proxy Christmas meeting. In this context, the evening is often shared with other Shire based groups. Additionally, the November edition of the Bulletin is, of course, the Christmas issue. And, I guess, the April edition of the Bulletin is the Easter issue. I shall keep this in mind for later.

The August (2007) edition of the Bulletin has recently appeared and the editor in his regular column, "From the Editor's Desk" (p. 7), has called for submissions for the November edition. I have decided to respond in Christmas mode in two ways: firstly by a survey of "Christmas" in recent editions, i.e. November, of the Bulletin; and secondly by recounting some family Christmas traditions.

1. Christmas in the Bulletin.

In order to keep my "research" within manageable limits, I only surveyed the holding of the Local Studies Collection at the Central Library, Sutherland. The Library holds, on open access, 1994-2007. As it turned out, this was a good range, as it marked the last few years of Aileen Griffith's presidency of the SSHS and that of Dawn Emerson. Obviously, the November, 2007, edition is yet to appear, but with the exception of 2004, there was a November edition each year, i.e. 1994-2003, and 2005-2006. Christmas good wishes were an intermittent feature, occurring in the "President's Remarks" for the following years, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2002. However, I was looking for something more substantial, i.e. real Christmas content.

There was a short lived tradition of displaying on the cover of the November edition, an Australian Christmas theme. This occurred three times. In 1994, a reproduction of the first Australian Christmas card, produced by John Sands Ltd, in 1881. was printed. The "picture" was entitled, "Little Girl Offering a Christmas Pudding to a Swagman" Some brief details, most of which I have stated, appeared on the reverse of the cover. The same edition (p. 178) carried a copy of the David Martin poem, "Bush Christmas". On p. 179, was an artwork, which, I think, represented a gumnut creature, presumably maintaining the Australian Christmas theme. Again, in 1996, the November edition carried an "Aussie" Christmas theme on the front cover, "A Settlers' Christmas, 1880". The last theme appeared in 1997, "Pioneer Family Celebrates a Warm Christmas on the Front Verandah, 1889". The 1997 edition also carried, on the back of the front cover some additional information, i.e. from what was printed in 1994, about the origin of Christmas cards. The very first Christmas cards were "invented" by Henry Cole, a stationer, in London, in 1843. These were major examples of the printer's art and were quite expensive. Unfortunately, Henry was a visionary before his time. For Henry had not considered how his patrons might distribute their cards, since, you see, in 1843 the Royal Mail was not, yet doing this.

Apart from these brief items, there were only two other Christmas offerings in the Bulletin. However, if you are reading this in the November, 2007, edition, make that three! The first of the two already published items was an article on Christmas cards by a Graham Sands ("Christmas Cards", Bulletin, 2.[24], November, 1998, pp. 585-594). This was clearly a response to the printing of the image from the card of 1881 in the November, 1994, edition and the brief comment about the same card in the November, 1998, editions of the Bulletin. Sands was clearly a descendant of the eponymous John Sands, already mentioned, and he was able to supply material from company archives on this development. Of considerable interest is his quotation of contemporary media articles, i.e. of 1881. I do not know how widely disseminated the cards were, but all the articles derive from Sydney publications. All were positively effusive in their praise of this new commercial venture.

The only other extended Christmas content is to be found in Dawn Emerson's "President's Remarks" (November, 2002). Dawn, at first, provided information about Christmas trees (p. 4) and then went on to discuss traditional, i.e. English, Christmas fare. Dawn was much impressed that the decoration of trees was a custom of the Druids. Along with mistletoe, we have adopted this custom, i.e. our decorated Christmas trees. The worship of trees is not really surprising when you consider that, in antiquity, much of northern Europe was covered by a vast forest, which stretched unbroken into modern Russia. This Druidic habit of tree decoration caused Dawn to muse that the Druids cannot have been as bad as often made out. However, these Druids are not the same romantic figures, who now prance around at Welsh eisteddfods and the decorations were not baubles and tinsel.

In A.D. 9, a Roman army of three legions (17th, 18th and 19th), along with auxiliary units and camp followers (perhaps as many as 40,000 men and women) were wiped out in a section of this vast forest, the so called Teutoberg Wald, east of the Rhine River. The story is told by the Roman historian, Tacitus, in *Annals*, 1.61. Six years later, another Roman force visited the site. They, too, found decorated trees. I quote Michael Grant's Penguin Classics translation (p. 67): "On the open ground were whitening bones, scattered where men had fled, heaped where they had stood and fought back. Fragments of spears and horses' limbs lay there – also human heads, fastened to tree trunks".

Our customs do not always betray their origins.

2. Family Christmases in the Shire

Australians have always celebrated two types of Christmases. The first is the "traditional", with, at lunch, its excessively large baked dinner, cooked by the women of the house, with virtually no input by the men of the house. The second, I shall call the "Aussie" lunch, perhaps a barbecue, or a salad even better, seafood – a much less formal affair. With this lunch, the men do make an input. As a child, I experienced both Christmases.

The dominant memory is of the traditional Christmas, most frequently held in my parents' house at Caringbah. It was, as I remember, a gathering of the entire family, both sets of grandparents and my mother's brother and his family. My father was an only child so there was no sibling rivalry over where to hold Christmas. We must have on occasions, had Christmas at my uncle's house at Marrickville – though this is a very dim memory and occasionally my uncle's family must have celebrated Christmas with his in-laws, who lived at Woy Woy. However, most times we crammed into my parents' dining room, not large enough to hold twelve people. There was a larger room, a sunroom, just off the dining room, which would have been more comfortable, but no. It was never used, always the dining room.

The meal was always the same – three meats (chicken [then in the '60's a real treat,] ham and roast pork), accompanied by a variety of baked vegetables. The meal was always prepared by my mother and her mother. My father's stepmother did not really cook, and fortunately, judging by when she did she was never asked to contribute. So, my mother and grandmother - stripped down to their underwear, often, I guess because of the heat - would literally slave away in my mother's tiny kitchen preparing this gargantuan meal. When lunch came, we were never hungry. Not only would we have snacked on chocolates, lollies and nuts all morning but for some perverse reason, my grandmother insisted on a huge breakfast of ham and eggs – her family Christmas tradition.

My maternal grandmother was the holder of the secret family recipes, i.e. that of both the Christmas cake and the Christmas pudding. When mention is made of the Christmas pudding, this always raises the question –cloth or bowl. The answer was bowl. Both my grandmother and mother are now deceased. My sister was not interested in inheriting the family recipes and this mantle passed to my wife. But wait – a compromise: my grandmother's fruit cake but her mother's Christmas pudding, cooked in a cloth.

I cannot remember if there was Christmas tea. We probably just kept on eating all day.

As for that other Christmas, the “Aussie”, my family only ever celebrated it once. As such I can remember the date precisely, December 25, 1963 - I had just finished my Intermediate Year at Caringbah High. We celebrated, without my uncle’s family (and by then most of my grandparents were dead), but rather with a school friend of mine and his family. I can remember the location – the old picnic shed, which used to stand alongside South Cronulla Surf Club – but not what we had for lunch, except that it was cold, with salad. The consensus – the worst Christmas ever. It was a “one-off” never repeated. Today, when it’s my family’s turn to host Christmas, we still do the hot lunch and I maintain my father’s Christmas tradition!

My family has another peculiar (i.e. in the original sense of the word) Christmas tradition - death. I have lost three of four grandparents, both parents and a mother in law at Christmas. All have died within a few days of Christmas, usually before. My mother was the exception. She died a few days later. Hopefully, the count will not be added to for quite a few more years, yet.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Remembered by early residents *Compiled from oral history interviews.*

Merle Kavanagh

Food was a major element of Christmas, as it is now. Laurie Moxey, whose family had a poultry farm, recalls there was ‘plenty of chook’ and Molly Elliott, nee Bridges remembers that ‘grandma’ would come and sit at the head of the table and carve the chicken and boiled ham. Families who had pigs often had a sucking pig, according to Dawn Mitchell, nee Hall, though turkey was the usual specialty at the Perry home, as Joyce Gee recalled.

Big family gatherings were held at the Wood home at Sutherland and on one occasion in the mid 1930s Bill Wood declared there were 250 people who were fed under their big coral tree. For smaller gatherings a table about 15 feet long was built within the home and just fitted in the room with a chair each end. Everyone always knew when Bill’s wife Lucy set the table, as she was left-handed and set the cutlery according to her preference!

At Engadine the father of Anita Arnold nee Lovering used to build a big bushhouse with bush timber and cover it with ti-tree to keep out the sun and let in the breezes. There they would eat their Christmas dinner cooked on the fuel stove. Sylvia Emmett, nee Sparkes’ ‘grandma’ had the families of her nine children for Christmas dinner, cooking every vegetable in season and roasting a sucking pig with an apple in its mouth. Her apron pocket held lots of threepences to be slipped into the plum pudding when serving.

Alice McHugh, nee Hill, the daughter of John Hill, boat builder of Cronulla, remembered that her sisters made big Christmas puddings and everybody who didn’t have a place to go, came to their home. Adjoining the large room where everyone gathered was the Billiard room with a ‘big open fire’ where the ‘big black fountain’ boiled on the hob.

Gifts were not a priority though May Frater, nee Coulthard once received a celluloid doll; but there were also gifts of potatoes and onions in their Christmas bags, as a joke, on one occasion. Albert Hutchinson also remembered the joke gifts, including horse manure from the garden. Val Osmond, nee Fenton remembered receiving a small violin which she took outside her home with a little money tin and ‘played’. She did not say if she was successful in her busking. Laurie Moxey recalled that gifts were not usually given, though the grandparents and aunts of six boys and one girl, often favoured the girl with something.

During the depression Molly Bridges sometimes received a piece of fruit not usually available, a bag of lollies or a little doll and Alice Linquist, nee Jarratt remembered years when she received nothing for Christmas though she loved helping Grandma Jarratt prepare the cakes and goodies. Dawn Mitchell, nee Hall, recalled very few toys though she once received a celluloid doll which had its nose bitten off!

Outings were not usual, Bill Wood maintains they 'had them in the back yard'. Bill Moss recalled his wife and daughter looking for a suitable Christmas tree at Taren Pt. and Kangaroo Pt. Road. Jill Dodds, nee Fletcher remembered the home made decorations and gumtips in her home and her older brother taking her for walks round Yowie Bay to mark where waratahs would be ready for Christmas picking.

May Frater remembered trips to the city for the Christmas shows and later playing on the roof of Mark Foys while her mother shopped. Gus Jeff also thought it a treat to see Santa in town and attend the pantomimes. Bruce Ballantyne enjoyed carol singing in harmony with friends Ron Williams, Angus McFarlane and brother Don.

At Menai Edward Berry usually attended the Christmas church service held at the Arnold home and conducted by the minister, Mr. Uden.

Parties were popular, especially at the Woronora River. Jean Welch, nee Clark made sure she had her piano moved into their home on the river as there was much singing round the piano and also dancing. Violet Cole, nee Avery remembered the parties at the Avery home at Bath Road, the singalongs and the dish of warm raisins – rum poured over them and lit! The children had to pick up the raisins very quickly and eat them.

Flo Bullman, nee Stockman recalled the Jergins having big open-air concerts on the lawn outside their house near Forbes Creek, generally on Christmas or New Years Eve. Flo, whose family ran a shop on the Woronora River, also admitted that 'Christmas was slavery' in the shop. For the Christmas rush they needed to collect drinks from Tom Ugly's as the carters did not deliver past the pub there. This entailed much loading of the boat and unloading and carrying up the steep bank at the end of the journey.

So how does our Christmas experience compare with these earlier 20th Century experiences? Food, gifts, outings and parties feature for them and for us but I think our credit cards might reveal a startling difference.

Meet the Executive

This is a new segment for the bulletin. Our Executive are a hard working group brought together by an interest in local and broader history. However everyone has a wealth of life experiences that are not always apparent. We begin this segment with Angela Thomas who has been Secretary for the past 2 years. We hope to inspire more readers to come forward with their stories.

Angela Thomas



I was born and brought up in the New Forest, in the South of England, a huge tract of heath and woodland which had been William the Conqueror's hunting ground. Those who lived in the Forest had strict obligations which still apply...no trees could be chopped down and you could only collect firewood 'by hook or by crook' and every householder could have one pig and allow it to forage. So I grew up with a deep respect for history.

I was a keen reader and always wanted to write but my family had other ideas. They were all doctors and I was destined to follow in their footsteps.

Medicine was a benign profession. Doctors were respected, not rich, and many had their own schemes for the poorer patients. I remember one of my aunts laughing when she came home, because she'd just delivered a baby but had not yet been paid for delivering its mother.

I completed my first medical exams but knew I did not want that life and rebelled. In those days parents had a lot of power and when I expressed the wish to continue my education on the arts side, I was packed off to a relative in Kenya, with a one-way ticket. What an adventure at 19, all on my own and with the world at my feet. I was told I'd better learn how to earn a living, and was sent to Nairobi Commercial College. I got my first job and earned the fare home. I had loved my time in Kenya but had other plans.

I married shortly after that. John and I shared a great interest in antiques, history and books. Together we collected old furniture and pictures and raised three children.

But it was only when we migrated to Sydney in 1970 that events focused me in the direction of finally writing. When the official at New South Wales House waxed enthusiastic over the life ahead of us - new houses, swimming pools and everything up to date - my heart sank. How would I cope with it all? But I still remember the thrill on our first night walking down the Botany Road in Waterloo, peering through the windows of Winn's Department Store and seeing those strings up high where money was passed across to the cashier in little cylinders. That system had long ago disappeared in England. This was the past come alive again! I felt I was back in a world I knew and never looked back.

It was when peering in another window in the Botany Road that I met Owen Lloyd who had been a travelling showman and was busking up at the El Alemein Fountain. He was "The Birdman of Kings Cross"...Owen had an antique shop nearby and must have realised I was fascinated as he asked me to work with him. I looked after the shop and banked the mass of coins he always brought back from the Fountain, but most importantly I learnt his life, and, realising it must be recorded, wrote his life story which was later published.

Bert Newton asked me on to his programme. He remembered Owen when he himself was starting up at the Melbourne Show before the war. Bert used to spruik for The Human Vampire...he'd call out "Step Up! Step Up! Come and see the Human Vampire, refused his mother's milk at one day old and called for a Bucket of Blood!"

So I discovered a wonderful Australia quite unlike the one I'd been promised and wrote Owen's life story. History was no longer a part of the dim, distant past...in Australia it happened yesterday and needed to be cherished.

My first short story was runner up in the South Pacific Language & Literary Awards and others taken by the Sydney Morning Herald and Women's Weekly. But I was very unsure of myself.

Sadly we lost John to mesothelioma (asbestos) at only 52, then of course work and keeping the family together was my main aim and writing again took a back seat. When they were off my hands I became very restless, I'd only been here 10 years and those old roots remained powerful so I went back to London and had a wonderful year at the Science Museum in Kensington, helping set up their new Museum of Photography. I had to make up my mind where I wanted to spend the rest of my life. Well after 6 months I could think of nothing but Sydney so I came back.

A while later I remarried, again with the happy sharing of interests – books and music...Dennis was a fund of stories, he quoted whole poems and sang songs which his Irish mother had sung and I doubt anyone else remembered...a great companion, . We moved to Albury and so I found another area to explore and continued writing with a junior fiction set on the goldfields. This was only rejected once! I might say some things were rejected 40 times...finding the right publisher is not easy.

Another junior fiction followed and only then did I feel confident enough to try adult fiction, two novels followed and a third is with a publisher now but last year only 100 novels were published here...we are swamped with overseas material. Many biographies, 'how to do it' books, travel etc., make the grade but our own fiction is often published overseas. Many writers resort to self publishing but I feel one needs the expertise of professional editing and advice.

The sad loss of Dennis seven years ago left a great emptiness but I can only be grateful for the support and inspiration I found with him and it pinpointed the necessity to continue with my interests.

Australia has a magic of its own for me. There is a brooding quality which I always feel D.H.Lawrence caught perfectly in 'Kangaroo'. From Dot and the Kangaroo to Picnic at Hanging Rock there is this vein of mystery running through our literature and I continually search for a way to express that elusive quality.

We all make our own way through life, I have grandchildren and step and foster children and just hope one day I can inspire them. I am sure I'd be a great disappointment from my parents point of view but from my own there is much satisfaction in having 'done it my way' and can only hope there are more stories to be written and also be thankful for the people I have met on the way and continue to meet.

Angela was re-elected unopposed as Secretary at the last AGM. She is an active member of the Museum committee

HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

By Merle Kavanagh

In 1941 there were three changes which affected the lives of myself and my Beecroft family. The first occurred when I began secondary studies at Newtown Domestic Science School even though I had passed the examination for Sydney Girls' High School and been top of my class. Brown uniforms cost money and we had very little.

The second occurred when my brother, Harry, was born in June that year. After four daughters and a 12 year break, a son had been born, the apple of my father's eye. The third event was to change not only our lives but the lives and fortunes of many. It was the Japanese advance down through the islands towards Australia. We lived in St. Peters, an industrial suburb of Sydney and a probable target during air raids, and readily identified by the rail line and the water-filled tip by which we lived. After the birth of his only son and heir, and a few months later the issuing of buckets of sand to be used on incendiary bombs, my father decided we would move. Fate directed us to my dad's brother, Fred who was renting part of a large house, 'Bayview', at Yowie Bay and there we moved in the summer holidays of 1941/2.

I attended Newtown Domestic Science School in 1941, quite often bored, though I did enjoy biology when I would make the class of girls laugh as I put my finger into the pulmonary artery of a sheep's heart (purchased for a few pence from one of the King Street butchers) and waggle it around. I found that when I was in trouble for disrupting the class, I would be sent to the small typewriting room and I fell in love with the typewriter. That year the government had extended the school leaving age from 14 years to 14 years and 3 months. My sister, Dorothy, had just left the school at the end of the previous year, thoroughly delighted to do so and had a job at John Vicars' Woollen Mills at Marrickville. I managed to type up a letter to my Mum stating that as Dorothy had only turned 14 in January of 1942, she had to return for three months. I alerted Mum to the real facts of the letter's origin, but, as the youngest of four girls, I enjoyed Dorothy's performance for the short period when she thought she had to return to school. I don't think she's ever forgiven me for that.

Vivid memories remain with me of the cookery class under the teacher, Miss St. Smith. She wore a wig under her cooking cap and on one occasion had it on back to front, which sent a burst of giggles round the room. We made such gourmet dishes as Suet and Jam boiled Roly Poly and learned the sequence for washing up which has been stencilled on my mind forever – Glass, silver, china, knives, enamel, aluminium, woodwork. Note the absence of plastic in 1941. One of my friends was Betty Philpott whose father was a local publican 'For a full pot see Philpott' and we kept in touch, even when her family bought an hotel at Milson's Pt.

I finished the year at Newtown top of the class and don't recall any regrets when we moved to Yowie Bay. I was more than thrilled to be moving to a waterfront house with a tidal pool, tennis court, rowing boat, blackberries, loquats and even a cow which belonged to the owners. The nearest High School was Sutherland, and the Domestic school was at Hurstville much further away. We decided to try for Sutherland even though this school taught many subjects I had not studied.

Mr. Hunt, a solemn but very fair headmaster, asked where I had come in my class, and on the basis of that he thought I should not repeat first year but be included in 2B. At that time the A classes took Latin, the B classes French and the C classes Geography, but all classes mostly studied the rest of the curriculum. However, it was also agreed that I would not take French (it would be a free time for me, which proved rather a nuisance to the French teacher, Mr. Cohen). I would also have to 'pick up' algebra and science, which had not been taught at Newtown.

The mixed sex classes were a little surprise to me, but I enjoyed competing against the boys. The students were in either the House of Endeavour, this being the school motto, or Excelsior, which was my House. The Endeavourites used to chant 'Endeavour Forever', while my group used to reply 'Excelsior higher, Endeavour the dier'. Literally suspect, but a taunt at least.

Mr. Lewis was the Maths teacher, a grey-haired gentleman who did not easily suffer dunces. He taught me algebra and would spend time with me so that I understood it. I was very grateful to him for this. He once wrote on my report 'Can think and concentrate'.

During French classes I was supposed to study in the classroom while the lesson was on. It was not easy to concentrate and I did pick up a little bit of French when I listened to the lesson. If got bored I tended to disrupt things. On one occasion I was a bit peckish and needed something to eat. I tore off a piece of my lunch cheese sandwich and threw it up in the air, trying to catch it in my mouth. When the resulting titters alerted Mr. Cohen, I was told to go to Mr. Hunt when I cheekily said 'Doesn't he know how to do it', which really made the class snigger and snort and Mr. Cohen became crosser. So I was on the mat outside Mr. Hunt's office and when asked, told him what I had been doing, but omitted my cheeky comment. He cautioned me about disrupting classes but felt sure I would not do it again! He probably knew I was bored silly.

English was one of my best subjects and also history, when Mr. Hunt taught it. There was a lady teacher who also took over history at times and my marks would plummet with her examinations. Science was a delight, although I did not really understand a lot of it, having missed one year. The war was on and in one year we had four different male science teachers, each one being called up for service and replaced by another. I enjoyed such experiments as the Cartesian diver but learned most of the science equations by rote.

The war did not touch us at school very much. We had the usual trenches and instructions in what to do in case of an air raid. At one time there was a competition for an essay in 'Why you should subscribe to the first Liberty Loan (or whatever)' and my essay won a War Savings Certificate. These could be purchased for about 16/- (sixteen shillings) and in a few years time would have been worth £1. With money very short in my family, it wasn't long before I cashed in my winnings and received 16/-.

Across the street from the school, on the south west corner of Boyle and Eton Streets was an old brick home, run by two ladies as a 'Tuck Shop' for the school. On the few occasions I used it (money was the problem) it was 3 deep at the counter and I feel that the owners must have gone to an early demise, enduring that every school day.

I always loved the concerts when skits would be performed in the hall. I especially remember the 'boiled lollies' one when small boys asked for one penny's worth and each time the shopkeeper would climb the stepladder, get the jar down, deal them out, return the jar up the ladder, and then to have the next small boy ask for one penny's worth, etc. The crunch came at the end when he asked the 4th or 5th child did he want a penny's worth before returning the jar to the top shelf. The child replied 'No.' so the shopkeeper climbed the ladder and returned the jar. Back on the ground he asked 'What do you want', to which the child replied 'Two penny's worth.'

Miss Marion Dallison was the English teacher, and as I have always loved English and words, we had a great relationship. I can still see in my mind Miss D. standing on the wooden forms against the back wall of the building when it was time to call us all together in our lines to go into classes. Together with the then music teacher, Phyllis Earnshaw, Miss Dallison proposed to present public performances by the students of a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta at the end of 1943. With two of my close friends then, Joan Downey and Carol Collier, I was sent to the music room to audition for a part in *The Gondoliers*. I emerged with the part of the Duchess of Plaza-Toro, though they did cut my solo. Jack Bowker was the Duke and he did a great job. Martin O'Brien and another male whose name eludes me, were the Gondoliers and had a duet in the show which began "Oh, philosophers may sing of the troubles of a king". With Phyllis Earnshaw as the musical director, in rehearsals for this song the pair would pointedly sing "Oh, Phil...." looking at Phyllis Earnshaw.

On the evening of the first performance at Sutherland Theatre in December 1943 (the year of my Intermediate Examination) the cast were all agog. We had hired the most magnificent (to us) costumes and as Duchess I was wearing a lacy crinoline. Phyllis Earnshaw was at the piano and Marion Dallison at the side of the stage as prompt. As the Duke and I made our entrance, the lace on my skirt, caught on the music stand being used by Miss Dallison for her prompt libretto. The piano played 'From the sunny Spanish shore, the noble Duke of Plaza-Tor' ... and his gracious Duchess

true' and I was slowly dragging the music stand on stage. However, it was caught in time and unhooked and a minor catastrophe averted. The show was a huge success and my own family became 'hooked' on Gilbert and Sullivan, attending many shows at the old Theatre Royal, always up in 'the Gods'.

It was the age for first attractions and I was no different to anyone else. I even wrote my own words to popular songs of the time for the object of my affection, though I kept them to myself. Of course, he never even noticed me, but I enjoyed the writing.

After the Intermediate examination the results were published in the Sydney Morning Herald with male competitors one day and female the following day. I had not expected to see my results the first day, but as a mixed sex school, they were included. My sisters arrived home to tell me I had 2 As and 5 Bs, the As being for Maths I and History. A few nights after the results were out I went to the Theatre Royal to see a show from 'the Gods' and who should be there but Miss Dallison. Her first words to me were 'What happened to you', meaning why did you not get an A in English. I felt I had done my best and said so, but it was a disappointment to me as well. I blame it on Shakespeare. It was years before I really understood him and appreciated his work. We had studied Twelfth Night but I had mostly spent my spare time reading exciting novels from the school library such as Baroness Orkzy's Scarlet Pimpernel series. Shakespeare didn't stand a chance.

Some years later when I read of a shotgun murder at Lithgow, I realised that the offender had been the brother of one of my class mates, Betty Harvey. It must have been devastating for her and the family.

When Sutherland School celebrated its Centenary in 1987, I attended, hoping to meet some of those I recalled from my schooldays there. Strangely, the only two class members who attended, besides myself were my good friends from those days, Joan Downey and Carol Collier, all of us since married. We toured around the class rooms of the old High School, now part of the Primary School, and pretended we were working at the desk for the Leader photographer, who published our photograph in the 9 July 1987 issue.

I am sure there are many ex-pupils who have come to appreciate the encouragement given to them during their time at S.I.H.S. Over the years I have noted names of fellow pupils achieving recognition for works and duties well done. I feel happy that I, too, have been able to contribute my talents, nurtured by those dedicated teachers at Sutherland Intermediate High School, and have successes in the promotion of local history, Guiding and other pursuits in the Shire.

Sir Charles Rosenthal and the Cronulla War Memorial.

David Overett

It was brought to my attention by a sub-branch member at Cronulla RSL that the War Memorial, in Monro Park at Cronulla includes the name of Major General Sir Charles Rosenthal. This is indeed a good name for a roll of honour as Rosenthal was one of Australia's most distinguished soldiers during World War I leading his troops at Gallipoli and on the Western Front.

As his name was on the Cronulla Memorial, my informant understandably assumed that Sir Charles was therefore a former resident of this fair suburb. But was he?

This prompted me to search for the connection and to find out what I could.



My first action was to visit the memorial and confirm what I had been told. Sure enough, there it was. His name also appears on the memorial at Sutherland¹ which, I was led to believe, is made up of names from the whole of Sutherland Shire. This is why many of the names at Sutherland appear on other memorials throughout Sutherland Shire. This memorial was unveiled on May 28, 1921.

Next thing was to check his biographies. Born and raised in Berrima, New South Wales, Charles Rosenthal was initially educated by his father. Later articulated to architects in Geelong, Victoria, Rosenthal also joined the local Militia. Moving to Melbourne where he completed his articles, he qualified as an architect. Working for a while in Western Australia, he later returned to Melbourne in 1899. Now married, Rosenthal joined a firm of architects and transferred to their Sydney Office. I won't go into his military career as it is well documented elsewhere.

Following his illustrious war service, he was placed in command of the 2nd Division from 1921, whilst resuming his architectural career in Sydney and the Blue Mountains. He was elected to the Sydney City Council then entering state politics as the member for Bathurst. He held various positions in the community and was also appointed Administrator of Norfolk Island between 1937 and 1945.

Rosenthal died at Green Point on the Central Coast on May 11, 1954, with a State funeral service being held at St Andrew's Cathedral before cremation at The Northern Suburbs Crematorium. Looking through these biographies there is no mention of Cronulla. But one thing did interest me and that was the fact that as an architect he designed some war memorials and because of his status officiated in opening others.

Among those he designed were:-
Blackheath War Memorial Arch (1929)

¹ The sandstone used in the Sutherland memorial was taken from Sutherland House built 75 years previously. ie 1846

Kiama Memorial Arch (1925)
 Lawson War Memorial Stone Arch (and laid foundation stone) (1922)
 Among those he opened were;-
 Corowa (1922)
 Granville (1922)
 Ingleburn (1931)
 St Marys (1922)
 Rockdale, (turned the first sod for the first Memorial Hall) (1922).



All of these activities seem to have taken place between 1922 and 1931.

In 1922 Sir Charles was also a judge in a competition to design a national war memorial for the new capital in Canberra. There were sixty nine entries all of which were disqualified. However, a compromise was eventually reached and a design agreed upon.

None of the above however explains why Sir Charles Rosenthal is honoured on the Cronulla War Memorial.

In my quest for further information I contacted the prominent military historian, Major General Gordon Maitland, who gave his own theory of what may have passed. As commander of the 2nd Division, Rosenthal had

command of several brigades, including the 5th which was raised in the south of Sydney and Illawarra. Major General Maitland seemed to be of the opinion that Rosenthal's name was possibly included on the memorial as a tribute by his men who lived in this area.

This also seemed to me to be the logical answer but I thought that I would visit Sutherland Library to check through back editions of both *The Propeller* and *The St. George Call*.

After a few hours I was about to call it quits when I found in *The St George Call* and *Cronulla & Sutherland Argus* of June 3, 1921, an article headed *The Governor's Visit to Sutherland*. This visit by the Governor was to unveil the War Memorial². The list of dignitaries included not only Governor Sir Walter Davidson but also the Shire President, Clr. Ainsworth, Mr Cann, MLA (Minister for Labour & Industry), Messrs. Molesworth, Carr, Ley & Walker, MLAs, Mr J. McGowan MLC, Mr Hector Lamond, MHR, Mr Frank Farnell, (National Park Trust) and Major General Sir Charles Rosenthal. The article states that "...Rosenthal drew attention to the fact that he enlisted from the Sutherland district in 1914.". He went on to say:-

"The great privileges of the Empire have come to us through sacrifices. The last great test was probably the biggest ever known and without egotism we can safely be very proud of Australia's part in it."

² The Governor on the same day laid the foundation stone for the Sutherland Memorial School of Arts.

So whether Rosenthal lived in Sutherland Shire we cannot be absolutely certain, but we do know that he enlisted here and that is why his name is commemorated on two of the district's memorials.

Biographical details on Sir Charles Rosenthal were taken from various websites, mainly, 1. The Register of War Memorials NSW. 2. Australian Dictionary of Biography and 3. Wikipedia.



The editor attended the memorial service at Munro Park Cronulla on the 11th November.

The photo is of Mr Alf Catts, a long time Shire resident and recent speaker at our monthly meeting.

Alf saw service in New Guinea during the Second World War.

Some Reminiscences

Will Newton

Will is an author, map maker and former editor of this bulletin. The following are some short takes on people he has met

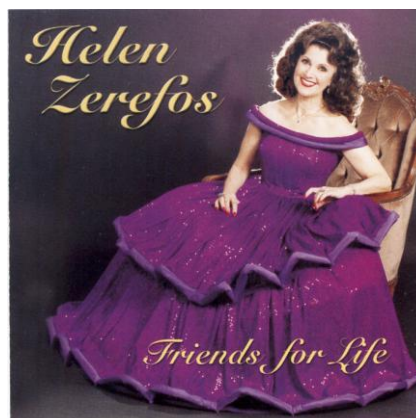
Some people that I have known.

Norman Lindsay

I first met Norman Lindsay many years ago at his home in Springwood (Faulkinbridge) on the advice of Rosaleen Norton (popularly known as 'the witch of King's Cross'). Norman's wife, Rose claimed that she had never posed for him – but just have a look at the faces of the model in the book by Lindsay's mate, Doug Stewart called a 'grubby little girl with excellent draughting ability but who would not discipline herself'. It was Rosaleen Norton.

Helen Zerefos

I first met the beautiful Helen Zerefos back in the days when I first did radio programs for 2RES at the Paddington Town Hall.



The Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore, used to call in and give her point of view. Helen, whom I called 'La Belle Helene' called in one day to do an interview with me. One of the blokes in the studio asked me how I got on to that one and I replied; 'I have known her for years'. One bloke in the studio tried to walk through the wall when he saw Helen. His head seemed to be on a swivel at the time. She came into the studio and gave me a copy of a recording by herself. It is one of my treasured possessions.

Jim Russell

I first met Jim Russell many years ago when he was doing some free-lance cartoons for one of our newspapers. But Jim was a man who never put his hand in his pocket for anything. He was always coming up with some new idea – but he always waited for someone else to make it work. He caught me on one occasion when he had some bright idea about the old Water- Board property which he never did pay for.



Johnny Wade

I first met my old friend Johnny Wade at the Prince Edward where he was playing 'Red Cross Nurse', his favourite song. Johnny is pictured here with another old friend, the great Joy Nichols. That's when they appeared together in 'Australia's hour of song'. Another friend was the beautiful Valda Bagnall. Imagine my surprise when I discovered her voice on a tape singing a duet with Johnny's recording of an Hawaiian song.



Alan Light

I first met Alan Light (who was a principal baritone with Australian Opera Company) after he had completed a performance of Mozart's 'Don Giovanni' at the Sydney Town Hall. He asked me to tell my friend Rosalind Keene that, and I quote: 'She has the best legs in opera'. I later told Rosalind what he had said. She blushed and said that he always said that. At that time she was making a weekly appearance in Bobby Limb's 'Sound of Music'.

Neil Warren-Smith

I first heard of Neil Warren-Smith many years ago. He was at the time principal baritone with the Australian Opera Company. He had been sitting in the back row with baritone John Pringle watching a rehearsal of Wagner's opera 'Tannhauser' at the Sydney Opera House. On the small screen above the stage they saw what was going through Tannhauser's mind – a naked lady with a lot of pubic hair. 'If I saw that in the corridor I'd hit it with a broom'.

Nancy Bird

Nancy Bird (Mrs Walton) was the first Australasian woman to hold a pilot's licence. I first met her at the annual dinner of the 'Early Birds' to which I accompanied the late Mrs Ada Cutbush. Nancy signed the program for me.

Don Smith

Don Smith found a performing level for himself. Perhaps the greatest of Australian tenors, he was playing 'Count Almeida' in 'The Barber of Seville' when we were performing in a theatre in Bairsdale in Victoria. At the beginning of the second act he was disguised as a singing teacher so that he can woo Rosine. Neil Warren-Smith said to me as he always did, 'Heaven bless you now and always', to which I say 'thank you for the compliment'. Smithy's smile became bigger and broader and he surprised me somewhat by taking my elbow and walking me downstage. Without slurring a syllable, instead of delivering his usual line, 'Heaven bless you ever after,' he said 'I think this bloody joint's on fire', and led me into the auditorium as smoke started to seep onto the stage from the wings. One of the lamps apparently had been left too close to one of the dusty curtains offstage which had started to smoulder. The hall was, after all a picture theatre and not often used for live performances. A couple of the men from the audience helped put out the fire which wasn't a fire at all, yet while we singers waited around for the smoke to clear before picking up where we left off with The Barber.

Ken G Hall

The great movie maker, Ken G Hall gave me an interview at one time before he died. He would have been about 92 years of age at the time. He told me of the early days in his film making career. I asked him if he remembered Joy Nichols and he replied 'yes', she played 'Kay' for me in 'Smithy' many years ago.

Sir Harry Secombe to Bobby Limb: 'Psst: I think your fly is undone'

The Divisive Effects of the Great War in Sutherland Shire³

Elizabeth Craig

When the Great War broke out in 1914, most Australians welcomed it wholeheartedly as a chance to show their mettle on the battlefield, and thus prove their worth as a nation. But as the pressures of war - casualty lists, rising prices and low wages, censorship and conscription - took effect, latent schisms emerged. Class, political, religious and ethnic tensions which had been suppressed before the war, erupted and began tearing the nation apart.⁴ While this divisiveness was felt across the country, it manifested itself in different ways in local communities, depending on local influences.

Sutherland Shire, located on the southern outskirts of Sydney, was a generally affluent, strongly conservative, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, semi-rural community of around 5000 during the Great War. Its demographic make-up, local personalities and reporting of the local press added a parochial skew to the local sense of major issues consuming the nation. This account reveals the divisive effect of the Great War as it was experienced by the Sutherland Shire community.

Few manufacturing industries existed in the Sutherland Shire in the early twentieth century, accounting for a very small working class. Most people were farmers, businessmen or in tourism. Despite being a non-Labor voting community, the district was represented by Labor MPs at both federal and state levels from 1913 to 1917. The federal seat of Illawarra, held by George Burns, included suburban St George district to the north and the Labor stronghold of the mining district on the south coast. The state seat of Hurstville, which included St George, had been narrowly won by Labor MP, Captain Samuel Toombs, in the general swing to Labor in 1913.⁵ The local newspapers - the St George Call and the Hurstville Propeller, which also served the St George district - were strongly conservative.

Catholics formed only 12.5 percent of the Sutherland Shire population – about half the New South Wales average,⁶ and most were similar in outlook to their Protestant neighbours. They were affluent business people and farmers, and because there was no Catholic school in the district until 1924, their children attended school with Protestant children. Nevertheless, the most influential group – which also dominated the local Council - was non-Catholic, non-Labor businessmen.⁷

As a community, the Sutherland Shire enthusiastically endorsed the commitment to the Empire, pledged by both sides of politics in 1914. A high proportion of men and a few women enlisted and soldiers were honoured with rousing send-offs, often attended by local clergy and politicians.⁸ Women, who could only enlist if they were nurses and could afford to pay their own expenses, demonstrated their patriotism in other ways.⁹ Some nursed wounded returned soldiers at a convalescent home in Cronulla on the Sutherland Shire's seaboard. Those who could afford the time and money volunteered for charities run by the Australian Comforts Fund (ACF) and the Australian branch of the British Red Cross. But these were overtly middle class organisations, which could subtly exclude working class

³ This work was first produced by the author as the major essay for History 359 ('War & Twentieth Century Australian Society') in May 2007, as part of her Graduate Diploma in Local, Family and Applied History at the University of New England.

⁴ Michael McKernan, *The Australian People and the Great War*, William Collins, Sydney, 1984, pp.3-4.

⁵ Maryanne Larkin, *Sutherland Shire: a history to 1939*, Sutherland History Press, Jannali, NSW, 1998, p.109.

⁶ *Ibid*, p.85.

⁷ *Ibid*, p.91.

⁸ *St George Call*, March 31, 1917, p.3.

⁹ Bruce Skates and Raelene Frances, 'Work in the Battle Zones: nursing the troops', *Women and the Great War*, Melbourne, 1997, p.6

women who did not 'fit in'.¹⁰ Very few branches of these Funds were located in working class districts and the middle class interpreted this as working class apathy and disloyalty.¹¹

Being middle class didn't give women freedom to encroach on the male domain of big business. Unpaid women raised hundreds of thousands of pounds, and organised the manufacture, collection and dispatch of thousands of tons of knitted socks, garments and other 'comforts' for soldiers and victims of war. So large was this 'almost new sector of the economy' as Michael McKernan puts it, it was deemed necessary to put men in the Funds' executive positions.¹² Frank Cridland, a Sutherland Shire businessman, became Assistant Commissioner of the ACF and was posted to Europe. He was made an honorary captain of the AIF and later awarded an OBE for the 'gratuitous and good work he did during the war'.¹³ Unlike British women who took over men's roles in the workforce, only 'women's work' was available for most Australian women. Their unpaid work went unrecognised.¹⁴

Anti-German sentiment became rife as the war dragged on. Germans had to register or were interned, and mail addressed to people with German sounding names was censored. Australians supported Germans in their community initially. But support changed to suspicion and hostility of anyone with a German sounding name when rumours spread of German atrocities against Belgian women, and the unarmed passenger ship, the Lusitania was sunk in May 1915.¹⁵ Felix von Kilmansegg of the St George District suicided after he was dismissed from his job and unable to find another.¹⁶ Joseph Mondel, a Sutherland Shire farmer born in Australia and an active member of the community, had to prove his ancestry was Austrian rather than German, under threat of resignations by fellow members of the Miranda School of Arts. Even so, his children were harassed at school. German street names and even food names were anglicised. When asking the butcher for Pork Fritz one time, Mrs Mondel was corrected. It was now called Commonwealth Sausage.¹⁷

Loyalty issues arose over sport. The middle class valued team sports like cricket and Rugby Union for the team spirit and sense of responsibility they taught. Accordingly, players and young male supporters were expected to do their patriotic duty and enlist for war service. As in most districts, competitions in Sutherland Shire were therefore suspended for the war years. Rugby League, the preferred code of the working class, was seen as entertainment, and in most districts continued throughout the war despite criticism for being unpatriotic.¹⁸ Reflecting the largely middle class population, the sole Rugby League team in Sutherland was disbanded when most of the players enlisted.¹⁹

The community's sense that spectator sports and gambling were immoral and unpatriotic in a time of war is evident from the St George Call's report of an address by Illawarra's federal MP, Hector Lamond, elected in 1917:

"Australia did not yet realise that it was at war. ... only last week there was held in Melbourne such a carnival that perhaps no other nation now at war would have tolerated." He [continued the reporter] referred to the Melbourne Cup, with its hundreds of thousands revelling in luxury.²⁰

¹⁰ McKernan, *Australian People*, p.67.

¹¹ *Ibid*, p.70.

¹² *Ibid*, p.65.

¹³ Phillip Rennie, *100 Years on the Move: The Frank Cridland Story*, Frank Cridland Ray Katte Customs Agencies, Alexandria, NSW, 1992, p.13.

¹⁴ McKernan, *Australian People*, p.129.

¹⁵ R.J.W. Selleck, "'The trouble with my looking glass': a study of the attitude of Australians to Germans during the Great War", *Journal of Australian Studies*, No. 6, June, 1980, pp.4-5.

¹⁶ R.W. Rathbone, *A History of Bexley*, Forest Press, Carlton, NSW, 1980, p.2.

¹⁷ Maree McKinley and Sue Hewitt (compilers), *Sutherland Shire: some early residents*, Botany Bay Family History Society, Sutherland, 2007, p.93.

¹⁸ McKernan, *Australian People*, p. 99; Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.63.

¹⁹ Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.63.

²⁰ *St George Call*, 17 November, 1917, p.4.

Protestants were strong supporters of the Temperance movement, and this was especially true in Sutherland Shire. It had half the number of hotel licences to residents compared to the state average.²¹ In a state referendum on early closing of hotels, following a series of reports of drunken soldiers rioting in Egypt and similar incidents at home, Sutherland Shire joined most of the State in voting for the earliest option of six o'clock closing. Only inner city, working class electorates voted for the later closing time of 9.00 pm.²² Tension over the patriotic war effort versus Protestant convictions, is illustrated in a heated debate published in the *St George Call* over whether the local Volunteer Workers Association was 'violating the moral law of God' by building homes for war widows on the Sabbath.²³

Conscription was undoubtedly the most divisive issue in Australia in the Great War. While Protestants and non-Labor voters supported it, most of the Labor movement was against it, as were most Catholics – especially after the British brutally suppressed the 1916 Easter Rebellion over Irish home rule. When voluntary enlistments could no longer meet British demands for reinforcements, Labor Prime Minister Hughes called a referendum on conscription for October 1916. The Labor movement was outraged. The New South Wales Political Labor League expelled Hughes, prompting a letter published in the *St George Call*, referring to the Labor League executive as: '... lieutenants of the Kaiser ... who believe in diminishing the difficulties of the Huns by keeping our own lines as weak as possible.'²⁴ Anti- and pro-conscription groups formed, with both sides using vitriolic campaigns to discredit the other side. The Anti-Conscription League believed that capitalists were using the war to exploit wage earners.²⁵ The pro-conscription camp accused its opponents of disloyalty and 'shirking'.

Soon after the referendum (which returned a narrow 'No' vote), Hughes was forced out of the Labor Party. But in a coalition with some Liberal MPs, he formed a new party, which became the Nationalist Party – and remained as Prime Minister.²⁶ Despite the 'No' vote on conscription, the federal election the following May decisively returned the Nationalist Party, campaigning as the 'Win the War' party, with Hughes as its leader. Illawarra became a Nationalist seat.²⁷ After renewed requests from Britain for more troops, in late November 1917 Hughes announced another referendum for the following month. The campaigning, though short, was even more vitriolic than for the first referendum.

All the national daily press supported conscription, as did Sutherland Shire's local newspapers. They published enthusiastic reports of pro-conscription meetings but barely mentioned those for anti-conscription. After a pro-conscription rally at the local Masonic Town Hall, the *Hurstville Propeller* reported the loud applause received by the speaker when he argued that if Australia didn't do her duty, honour would be lost and never regained. Just a brief reference was made to an anti-conscription meeting held outside the hall, 'which was largely attended'. One young man was fined for interrupting the meeting inside the hall.²⁸

There was dissension over loyalty in the local community, too. One man wrote that he knew of families which were 'having a royal time at the races and picture shows, and not doing a hand's turn for the Empire.'²⁹ Another man took a neighbour to court for calling him 'a shirker and a coward and other unwelcome epithets'. Finding for the plaintiff, the Magistrate

²¹ Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.94.

²² McKernan, *The Australian People*, p.86.

²³ *St George Call*, September 30, 1916, p.3.

²⁴ *St George Call*, 30 September, 1916, p.3

²⁵ J.M. Main (ed), *Conscription: The Australian debate, 1901-1970*, Cassell, North Melbourne, 1974, pp.49-59, 83-4, 87-92.

²⁶ McKernan, *Australian People*, p.7.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p.69.

²⁸ *Hurstville Propeller*, 20 October, 1917, p.3.

²⁹ *St George Call*, 8 December, 1917, p.3.

commented that the war had so inflamed people's minds that 'such expressions were liable to cause serious trouble and must be put a stop to.'³⁰

Both referenda returned a narrow victory for the anti-conscriptionists. The Illawarra electorate voted 'No' in both, although the Sutherland Shire community voted 'Yes' by a margin of 60 per cent in 1916.³¹ Socio-economic divisions across the Shire were reflected in the results from polling booths. Affluent Cronulla residents voted 2:1 'Yes', while those in Sutherland returned 2:1 'No'. Surprisingly, given women's peace-loving image and the high profile of female anti-war activist, the women's vote for conscription was quite strong.³² Since voting was voluntary, the answer may lie in apathy in voting amongst working class women. Lilian Locke, the suffragist champion of working class women, urged Illawarra women during the 1918 federal election campaign to 'take more interest in politics, ignorance being one of the chief causes of poverty.'³³

The NSW Premier, William Holman, who also defected from the Labor Party to the new Nationalist coalition, won an election against Labor in March, 1917 with 59 per cent of the vote.³⁴ Whereas Labor had campaigned on the referendum result rather than issues of governance, the Nationalists fought on who could best win the war, as the St George Call demonstrates in this editorial after the election.

'The Empire, or the PLL-cum-IWW was the question to put to electors ... honestly and fairly put ... [yet] the Hurstville contest ... was characterised by a tirade of abuse on the part of the PLL party... Arguments they had none – abuse was their only weapon.'³⁵

Thomas Ley won Sutherland Shire's seat of Hurstville for the Nationalists with 83 per cent.³⁶ He added a new dimension to the divisiveness in the Hurstville electorate by using the issue of loyalty to his own advantage. Ley had waged a long and malicious smear campaign to unseat Labor's Captain Toombs, who had remained with the Labor Party. He ran a series of advertisements and letters in the St George Call suggesting Toombs was disloyal or pro-German.³⁷ Although Toombs denied the allegations, the damage was done. Ley had also courted the women's vote in Sutherland Shire by regular church attendances, making pious injunctions about temperance (he was known as Lemonade Ley) and taking on high profile positions in the community – such as president of the Sutherland School's parents and citizens association.³⁸

The General Strike, which erupted in August 1917 after a year of industrial unrest over cuts to wages and conditions, rising prices and loss of trust in the Labor Party, was the other hugely divisive outcome of the war. Railway and tramway workers in Sydney walked out over the introduction of 'job cards' - an American system of recording productivity which the New South Wales government refused to withdraw.³⁹ When other transport workers and miners walked out in sympathy, the Governor-General was given the power to deregister

³⁰ *Hurstville Propeller*, 27 October, 1917.

³¹ Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.112.

³² Withers, Glen, 'The 1916-1917 Conscription Referenda: a Cliometric re-appraisal', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 78, 1982, p.36; Bobbie Oliver, *Peacemongers: Conscientious objectors to military service in Australia, 1911-1945*, Fremantle Arts Centre Press, Fremantle, 1997, p.48.

³³ Betty Searle, 'Lilian Locke: the working woman's champion', *Silk & Calico: Class, Gender & the Vote*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, 1988, pp.41-57; *Hurstville Propeller*, 18 April, 1918.

³⁴ Frank Farrell, *The Fractured Society: Australia during the Great War*, CCH Australia, North Ryde, NSW, 1985 pp.66, 69; Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.113.

³⁵ *St George Call*, 31 March, 1917. [Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) was a radical left wing group.]

³⁶ Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.113.

³⁷ *Ibid*, p.112; *St George's Call*, 7 October, 1916, pp. 3,6; 14 October, 1916, p.8.

³⁸ Dan Morgan, *The Minister for Murder*, Hutchinson of Australia, Richmond, Victoria, 1979, p.51.

³⁹ Farrell, *Fractured Society*, pp.49, 76-77.

striking unions - and he did so. As Coward observes, strikes, which are merely a nuisance in peace time, outrage the community in times of war because they are seen to undermine the 'cohesive values of patriotism, unity, sacrifice and discipline' prevailing in war time.⁴⁰ Unions were denounced by the press, which blamed the influence of the Industrial Workers Union (IWW). 'Such is the "tooth and claw" system of social progress advocated by the wild men of the IWW school', read one letter, typifying many to the *St George Call*.⁴¹ Hurstville man, Robert Todd, president of the Railway Traffic Association, was praised by the newspaper for his courage in offering to return to work after concluding that 'loyalty to country, in the present stressful times, should be paramount ...'.⁴² The Sutherland Shire branch of the Political Labor League was refused permission to meet at a local school to discuss the strike because the hall was used for Liberal Association meetings.⁴³

Many loyalists volunteered to keep the transport systems running, among them members of the Australian Women's Corp, who were refused entry into the AIF because of their gender.⁴⁴ Cronulla businessman, Frank Cridland, was appointed chairman of the NSW Government Emergency Transport Committee, formed to recruit volunteers to operate the 5000 carriers lying idle when the transport industry drivers joined the strike. Hostile strikers pelted the volunteer drivers with stones, and one was shot dead in retaliation.⁴⁵

The strikers did have their sympathisers amongst the working class. 400 striking miners and 200 women who had marched to Sydney from the South Coast were cheered at a large meeting in Sutherland. Similar meetings were held at other communities as the marchers passed through. Beds were found in Hurstville for all at a week's notice. As Lucy Taksa notes, such involvement by communities from different areas, reflects the shared sense of oppression working class people felt.⁴⁶

The divisiveness which tore apart the country did not end with the war in 1918. The physical, mental and social adjustment of the often brutalised returned soldiers took time, and many of them brought the virulent Spanish Flu with them from Europe. Schools and public entertainment centres were closed and wearing masks on public transport was mandatory.⁴⁷ Building in southern Sydney had halved since 1913,⁴⁸ and many Sutherland Shire veterans were still out of work in 1921, when unemployment passed ten per cent.⁴⁹ Sport took some years to return to normal because of the number of casualties. Women reverted to their roles as housewives and mothers, and Germans continued to be excluded from working in the public service for years.⁵⁰

The pro-conscription/anti-strike stance of the local press both reflected and influenced its readership in Sutherland Shire, but pockets of dissent triggered by the war do emerge in the outwardly homogeneous community. Differences on conscription are evident from the polls, and there was sympathy in Sutherland for strikers. Amongst neighbourhoods, there was anti-German sentiment and angst over what constituted loyalty. Local personal agendas also influenced the Sutherland Shire community's experience of the war.

⁴⁰ Dan Coward, 'Crime & Punishment', in Iremonger, John, Merritt, John and Osborne, Graeme, *Strikes: Studies in Twentieth Century Australian Social History*, Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1973, p.51.

⁴¹ *St George Call*, 1 September, 1917, p.7.

⁴² *St George Call*, 18 August, 1917, p.3.

⁴³ Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.130.

⁴⁴ McKernan, *Australian People*, p.81.

⁴⁵ Rennie, *Cridland*, pp.13-14.

⁴⁶ Lucy Taksa, 'The 1917 strike: a case study in working class community networks', *Oral History Association of Australia Journal*, No. 10, 1988, p.22; Larkin, *Sutherland Shire*, p.129.

⁴⁷ Paul Ashton, Jennifer Cornwall and Annette Salt, *Sutherland Shire: a history*, Sydney, 2006, p.79.

⁴⁸ *St George Call*, 5 January, 1918.

⁴⁹ David Kirkby, *From Sails to Atoms: First fifty years of Sutherland Shire, 1906-1956*, Sutherland, NSW, 1970, p.38.

⁵⁰ McKernan, *Australian People*, pp.222-224.

So what do they teach about history in school?

Marie Hlavac is a History teacher at Port Hacking High School

Teaching History to High School students is an interesting, rewarding and multi-dimensional challenge. A History teacher in a Comprehensive Government High School is likely to teach from Year 7 to Year 12, (12 to 18 year olds) and cater for a wide variety of levels and abilities and student interests which range from extremely motivated and interested, to those who have to be persuaded that History has any value whatsoever!

Schools are administered by the NSW Department of School Education but the Board of Studies decides what will be taught and how it should be assessed. The syllabus is written to cover Stage 4 (Years 7 and 8), Stage 5 (Years 9 and 10) and Stage 6 (Years 11 and 12). Stages 4 and 5 are compulsory courses. All NSW students have to complete 100 hours of classes per Stage. Stage 5 is examined on a State wide basis in the School Certificate. Some schools may also offer an elective History course for those students with a special interest in history.

Stage 4 History allows for some variation but it is common in Yr 7, to cover an introduction to history and historical method and to examine some ancient societies. In Yr 8, Medieval society, Aboriginal society and indigenous peoples are usually the main topics. For most students these are popular and interesting topics and the teacher has a lot of scope to make the course interesting by setting assignments which stimulate the students to do their own research, use their imagination and to be creative. Most Year 8 students are fascinated by Medieval history and gain an understanding of the past by reading, writing, viewing, comparing to today, asking questions and discussion.

Stage 5, covered in Years 9 and 10, is arguably the most challenging course to teach. This is because many students need to be persuaded that it is valuable to study Australia's 20th century history, and also because, arguably, this age group is the most difficult to connect with. Of course, a 'good' Australian knows his/her nation's recent history. However, many students think it 'boring'.. Ways to involve students are to spark their interest in their own family history, to tell them some of your own, to compare past and present, use analogies, documentaries, websites, powerpoint presentations, emphasise social rather than political history, and to say how useful all this information will be when they are backpacking around the world and people ask them about Australia!

Teaching Yr 9 and 10 Elective History is a delight, as the students have chosen it because they like history. Also, the course allows great freedom in terms of content, and so can be a wondrous road to travel. In the last two years my elective class and I have swum across the lake of history, mostly on the surface, but sometimes staying in one spot or diving deep into the past. Topics we have looked at include film as history (Pearl Harbour), the Vikings in Greenland and Vinland, King Arthur, medieval Japan, local history, (yes the history of the Sutherland Shire, but sadly, this was the least popular topic, probably because it was not grand or romantic or exciting), heroes and villains, crime and punishment and Byzantium and the Ottomans. It was a privilege to teach this course.

Stage 6 comprises the Senior HSC elective History subjects of Modern History, Ancient History (240 hours of classes in Years 11 and 12) and Extension History (60 hours in Yr 12 only). Modern History has WWI; the Western Front as its core topic. Students must also complete a National Study (Germany from 1918 to 1939 is the most popular); a Personality Study (Albert Speer is a popular choice although the writer favours Yasser Arafat); and an International Study (the Arab-Israeli Conflict, the Cold War and Conflict in Europe 1935-45 are all popular). Extension History is a course for those students who are performing well in either or both Modern and Ancient History. Its focus is historiography: exploring ideas from across time about what history is and how it should be recorded. The student's own research project of 2,500 words is the main assessment task.

The Ancient History course begins in year 11 (Preliminary course) with foundation studies in archaeology and historical method. For the HSC (year 12), topics include Ancient Rome, Greece and Egypt and the Near East and include in depth studies of ancient societies, individuals and historical periods.

Arguably, changing technologies are the issue of the moment. We are in a time of great change where we are just starting to take advantage of the benefits of teaching via computer links, websites and programs. It is a challenge as often the students' computer skills are far better than the teacher's! However, the internet remains, to a large extent, full of dubious sources, and it is the teacher that has the skill to navigate through them. In fact, I have learnt that it is preferable to give the students certain websites to use, rather than allow them to find their own.

History teachers, like people everywhere, are adapting to constantly changing ideas and expectations, changing technology and changing teaching methods. It is a demanding, rewarding, and exciting time to be one of them.



Vale Aileen Griffiths

It was a fitting tribute to a past president of Sutherland Shire Historical Society and a long-term worker for North Cronulla SLSC that Aileen Griffiths' ashes should have been committed to the ocean in a ceremony at the Club on Sunday 14 October 2007.

Club president Brian Fergusson welcomed us to the ceremony on behalf of Aileen's daughter Janelle Scot, who was present with her husband John and sons Patrick and Brendan. Monsignor Kerry Bayada conducted a short commemorative service and senior club member Alan Cameron BEM spoke about Aileen's contributions to

a range of community organisations. In a poignant tribute to her mother Janelle sang the Lord's Prayer.

North Cronulla SLSC's all-girl boat crew was given the honour of rowing the ashes out past the break for the committal ceremony. An announcement was made on the loud speaker system and a hush swept over the assembled family and friends as the girls' raised their oars vertically in a salute to Aileen. As their coach/sweep committed her ashes to the ocean we clapped and a cheer rang out as this was a celebration of a life well lived.

Afterwards those attending reminisced over refreshments in the surf club. It was interesting to meet some of those from organisations with which Aileen was involved, such as Cronulla Bowling Club. For many years Aileen worked for an impressive number of local community groups. One of the most important of these would have to be Sutherland Hospital.

When I interviewed Aileen some years ago she told me how she had worked for this important local facility since 31 March 1944 when it was decided that Sutherland would have a hospital. A carnival to raise money included a queen competition and local identity Joe Monro persuaded Aileen to enter representing the sporting clubs. The winner was announced at a ball in the Cecil Ballroom. When Dorothy Smoothy, the Bundeena candidate, won Aileen was not perturbed as the aim was to raise as much money as possible for the hospital. These were, 'wonderful times', she commented.

Aileen had many 'wonderful times' during her life and will be fondly remembered by members of Sutherland Shire Historical Society especially for her passion for the history of the local area.

Pauline Curby



Farewell Rupert Gough.

(18 Dec 1914 – 31 Aug 2007)

Rupert James Gough was born on the 18th of December 1914 at Norwood, South Australia where he spent his childhood. In the 1920's the family moved to Bexley and Rupert lived there until he moved to Bangor some 20 years ago.

During his teens he developed a keen interest in sport, particularly in cricket and tennis.



Rupert's profession was in the optical field and he worked for Gibb and Beeman in Sydney. This occupation was classified as essential during the Second World War which prevented Rupert from joining the armed forces but he was touched by the war as he lost his brother to it. He was also a self taught cabinet maker specializing in wooden toys, doll's houses and clocks. In the late 1940's he used his expertise with timber to build a pre fabricated house in the back yard at Bexley. When it was completed he dismantled it, shipped it by coastal steamer to Bateman's Bay and then by road to Durras South where he owned a block of land. Then came the long process of reassembly. Rupert would travel by train at the end of each week to Bomaderry, then by coach to the Durras turn off and then by foot, carrying his tools, to spend the weekend building his house. Sunday evening the trip would be reversed for him to report for work on Monday morning. The house is no longer in the family but no doubt Rupert spent many happy days in his weekender.

Rupert was a member of The national Trust, The Mississippi Historical Society U.S.A, The St.George Historical Society and the Sutherland Shire Historical Society. He was a keen collector of historical books and memorabilia and wrote the history of The St.George Baseball Team and the Preddy family who lived in the Bexley area.

He was a keen photographer, developing and enlarging his own black and white photographs. In later years he turned to colour, using professional processing. In the last 12 months he commenced using a digital camera which was a gift from a family member, and while he was determined to master it, he was much happier with his trusty Canon 35mm.

Several years ago, Rupert joined the happy family at Menai Neighbour Aid taking part in many of the activities there. Two years ago, he became one of the two foundation members of the Menai Neighbour Aid Men's Group which has an outing twice a month. He never missed an outing in those two years and produced a good collection of photographs of those events. He saw the group grow from the original two to twelve men. As a result of his association with this group, he once again became an active member of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society, regularly attending meetings and outings.

Rupert will be sadly missed by all who knew and loved him.

Reminder

If you are a member, reading this and have not renewed your subscription then you are no longer a financial member.

Membership extends from July 1 to June 30 each year

Beyond the sea

By Lauren Smelcher
29 August 2007

It's little wonder that Ed Duyker, author of *A Dictionary of Sea Quotations* (The Miegunyah Press, \$65), has never been seasick.

Duyker's family history is deeply entrenched in the ocean. He names naval officers, French East India sailors, and Dutch privateers among his ancestors - one of whom was a guest at the wedding of Jeanne Baret, the first woman to circumnavigate the globe.

His father worked as a stevedore for close to forty years, after a brief stint in shipbuilding. Duyker's very name translates literally to 'diver.'

Duyker, an honorary senior lecturer in the Department of French Studies, has never shied away from the sea in his research. In fact, much of his previous work has centred on Australian coastal exploration. His new book, however, is very much the product of "an obsessive private passion".

'Obsessive' certainly seems an apt description - in just less than 400 pages, Duyker trawls through over four thousand years of maritime quotes.

Not content to remain in the confines of traditional seafaring literature, such as Herman Melville's *Moby Dick* or Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "The rime of the ancient mariner," Duyker has canvassed quotes from politicians, economists, poets, playwrights, among others.

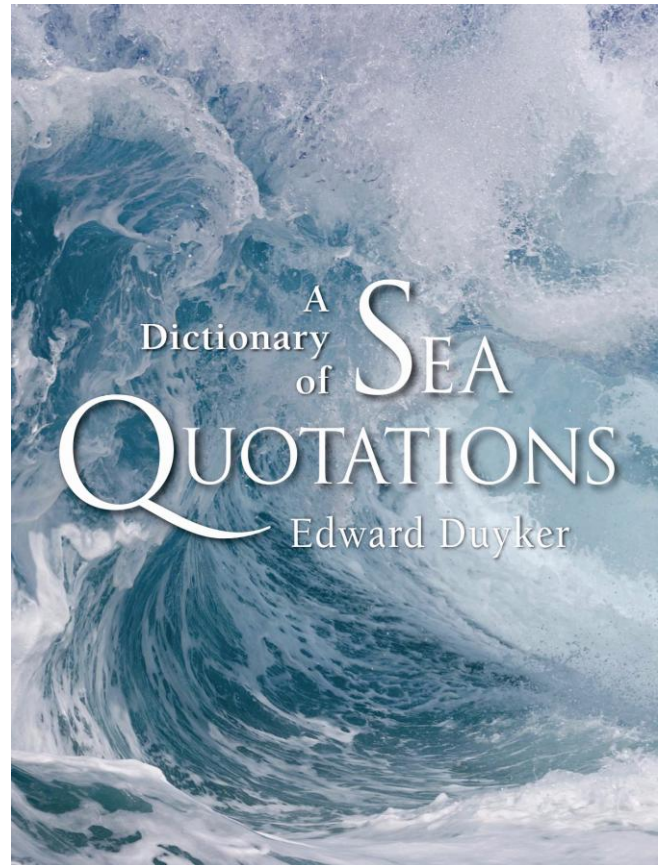
While there is no shortage of nods to the canon of English literature (Dryden, Woolfe, Austen, Dickens, and Shakespeare are all mentioned) the most captivating quotes are from the least likely suspects.

Oscar Wilde declared he was "not exactly pleased with the Atlantic", and Bob Dylan yearned to be "back in the land of Coca Cola", rather than sailing the world in a "dirty gondola".

Karl Marx wrote rather dryly of the benefits of a seaside holiday for German socialist Ernst Dronke, suggesting that the "sea air will have a beneficial effect on his thinking organ".

But the most poignant of the quotes is from former US President John F Kennedy, who spoke of the bond between humans and the sea.

"We all come from the sea...it is an interesting biological fact that all of us have, in our veins the exact same percentage of salt in our blood that exists in the ocean...When we go back to the sea, we are going back from whence we came."



The Astrolabe: Adventure on the Southern Seas,

Susan Arnott, Lothian Books, South Melbourne, 2005, ISBN 0 7344 0818 8, pp. 176, Paperback, \$14.95.

Reviewed by Edward Duyker

This novel for children is set during Jules Sébastien César Dumont d'Urville's voyage of 1826—29 which confirmed the tragic fate of La Pérouse, shipwrecked on Vanikoro in the Solomons. The hero of the novel is ten year old Lucien Cannac. A cabin boy on the *Astrolabe*, Lucien is under the protective wing of the firm, but kind, expedition leader, yet also under constant threat from the malevolent and distrustful sailor Simonet. Lucien's fictional tribulations and adventures are engagingly told within the context of actual historical events.

Susan Arnott sets the scene with La Pérouse's visit to Botany Bay in 1788 and then with the high drama of the French Revolution. Arnott, has apparently taught French for many years at Primary, Secondary and Tertiary level in New South Wales. She does a good job subtly weaving French expressions (even expletives!) and short sentences into the dialogue of her characters. Nevertheless, I did have some quibbles over some historical details. For Arnott, La Pérouse is the 'count' of popular repute, despite the fact that his family domain, 'La Pérouse', was little more than a tenanted farm near Albi. I suspect the French explorer would have been surprised to be addressed as the 'Count of La Pérouse' during his sojourn at Botany Bay. All the principal officers of the First Fleet referred to him simply as 'Monsieur de La Pérouse' in their published accounts. Furthermore this 'count' was not likely to have used the name 'Sydney Town' in correspondence with his wife Eléonore, in the first few days of the British colony in New South Wales, though he might have mentioned a nascent settlement at 'Sydney Cove'.

In all the accounts I have read (and in all the contemporary images I have seen) of the execution of Louis XVI, he did not 'look straight into a basket of heads, cut from their bodies' as Arnott tells her young readers. Kids love macabre detail. So for good measure Arnott has Louis contemplating: 'Hacked flesh, splintered bones and oozing blood' and 'Lifeless, staring eyes.' And when Louis addressed the crowd before the blade dropped, he did not cry out: 'Je meurs innocent!'. Rather, according to one royalist witness, while his hands were being tied and his hair was being cut, he declared: 'I forgive my enemies; I trust that my death will be for the happiness of my people, but I grieve for France and I fear that she may suffer the anger of the Lord'.

One other minor detail jarred. On page 64 the reader encounters reference to a nun named 'Sister Bernardette'. A novice might have kept the name Bernardette, for a time, if she was perhaps French and if it was her real name. But nuns then took the names of saints when they made their vows and I suspect that this name had little currency—particularly among English-speaking Catholics—until the visions of Bernadette of Lourdes (1844—1879) and particularly after she was formally canonized by the Vatican in 1933. For the average young reader these historical inconsistencies will not grate. In the final analysis a novelist has freedoms an historian can only dream of and (as I keep telling myself) art and history are not bound by the same rules—although they are by no means mutually exclusive. Ultimately I was delighted to encounter this juvenile fiction based on a major French voyage to Australian waters.