



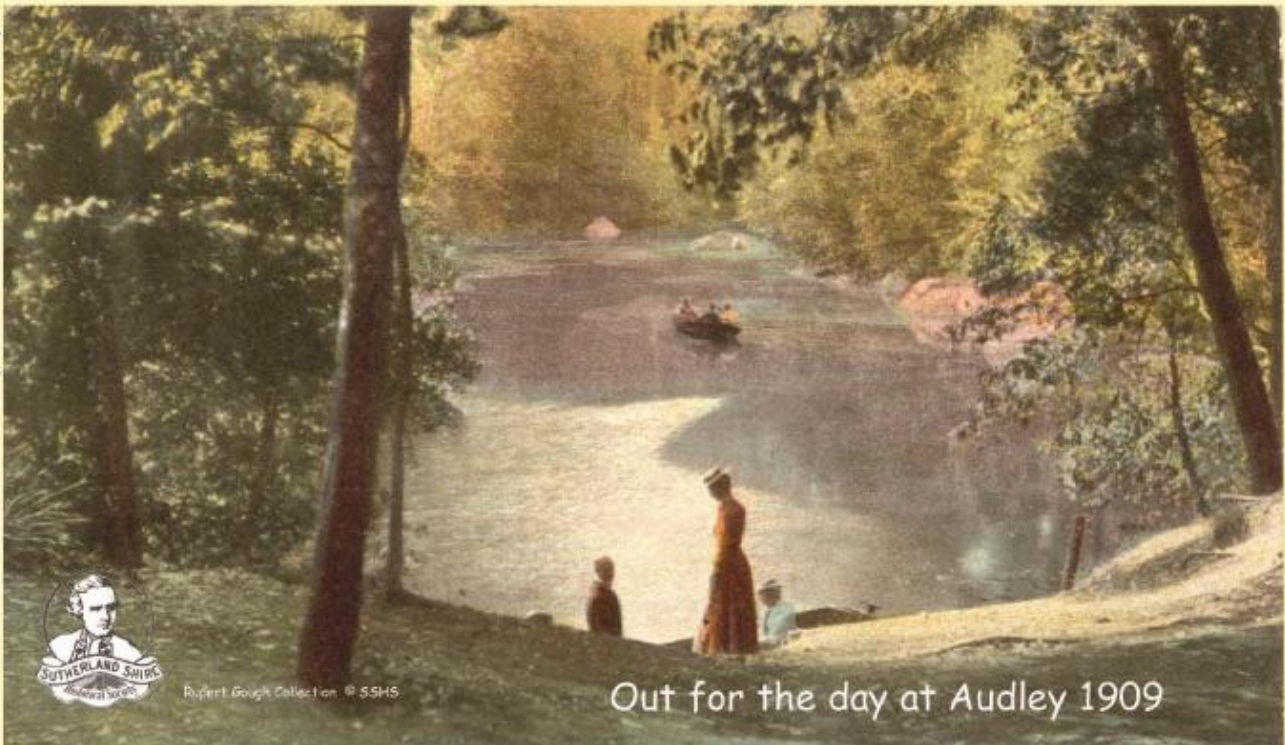
Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc **Bulletin**



VOL. 12 No. 3

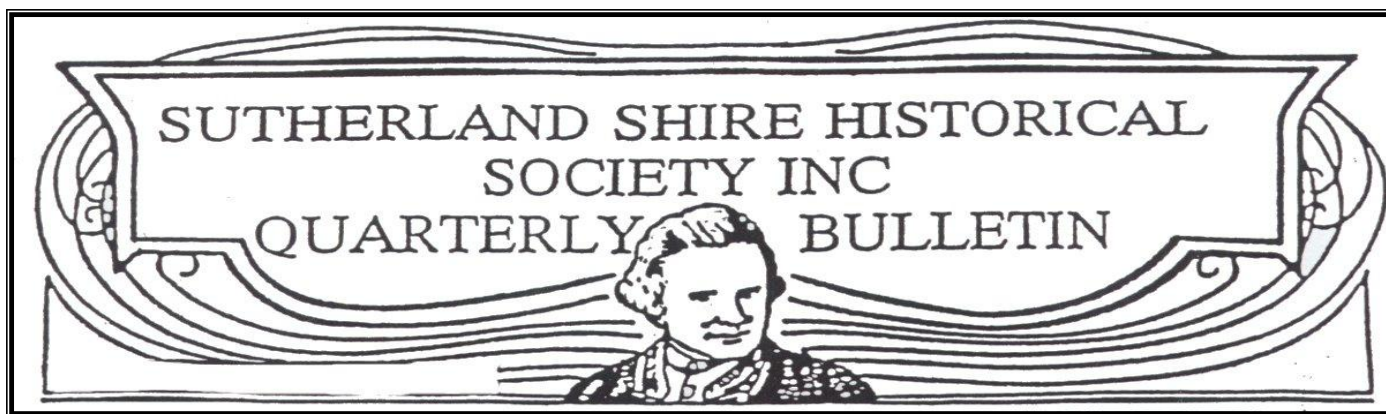
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National Park, Audley 100 years ago

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PRESIDENT:	Mr Jim Cutbush (Acting) 9521 3721
DEPUTY PRESIDENT	Mr Jim Cutbush 9521 3721
PUBLIC OFFICER	Mrs Angela Thomas 9528 6251
VICE PRESIDENT:	Mr Terry McCosker, 9542 1137
SECRETARY:	Mrs Angela Thomas P.O. Box 389, Sutherland, NSW, 1499 - Ph: 9528 6251 Email: a.badger@optusnet.com.au
ASSISTANT SECRETARY:	Mrs Nola Watt.
TREASURER:	Mr Maurie Beaven 9521 6360
RESEARCH OFFICER & ARCHIVIST:	Mrs Merle Kavanagh 9521 1043 Ass. Dip. Local & Applied History Diploma in Family Historical Studies.
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, Angela Thomas, John Risebrow, David Overett, Maurie Beaven, Merle Kavanagh, Norma Jean Taylor
EXCURSION OFFICER:	Mr Terry McCosker. 9542 1137
BOOKING CLERK:	Mrs Pat Hannan 9528 8294
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PATRON:	Clr Lorraine Kelly Mayor of Sutherland Shire
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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, Sutherland Shire High School libraries.

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Meetings of the Society are held monthly on the third Saturday at 1.30 pm 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

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Disclaimer

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

President's Report

Welcome everyone as we approach the 43rd Annual General Meeting of our Society which continues to gain stronger membership since changing to daylight meetings. I hope all who can, will attend the AGM and possibly consider nominating for a position on our Executive or assist on the Museum Committee, which is at an interesting stage after joining "Museums & Galleries NSW", with improvements to our standards and profile. Our first visit by Museums & Galleries representatives Mr. Richard Mulvaney (CEO, NSW Transport Museum) and Mr. Glenn Ferguson (Exhibitions Manager, Public Programmes, Australian Museum) was enjoyed by 6 of our Museum Executive members and proved to be both helpful and positive. Our displays were given favourable comment along with our most recently donated collections yet to be fully attended to. The reviewers comments on this visit will be sent to us soon.



We are still awaiting Council to help clear out the small southern storage area previously mentioned, under the stage at Sutherland Memorial School of Arts to enable exhibition preparations and restoration for the Museum and public displays.

A special event that I attended on behalf of our Society took place on Friday 14th August 2009. It was the official opening of the upgrade of Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Kurnell. The Deputy Premier and Minister for Climate Change and the Environment, incorporating the National Parks and Wildlife Service, opened the landscape and interpretation works recently completed as part of the meeting place project.

In her speech the Minister thanked people and organisations who contributed to this important project. Both Dawn Emerson and myself represented this Society at the 3 precinct meetings held to help this project. Please make time to visit the area and enjoy what has been done.

With regard to new equipment, our digital projector etc. was given its first successful run during the talk on History of the Shire, by Local Studies Librarian, Helen McDonald. Our speaker and the equipment were both first class and it was an enjoyable meeting. Thank you also to David Overett for a great purchase.

Could you all please take note and tell others of the Special Notice with details and change of time for the Annual General Meeting on Saturday 19th September 2009 at 11.30am, at the Stapleton Community Centre, Sutherland. Please join us for a Pizza.

Jim Cutbush

PRESIDENT'S ADDENDUM

It is my pleasure to thank the Executive Committee for all the support they have given me during my many duties, in particular Angela Thomas our hardworking Secretary and Public Officer who has taken on extra duties in helping guide us with paperwork etc., for Museums & Galleries NSW and also for attending the meetings which has helped us greatly.

Angela, Daphne Salt, Pat Hannan and Nola Watt combined for the beautiful Place Mats Project that they have produced for the benefit of the Society. Well done and thank you!

Merle Kavanagh, Research Officer and Archivist, who has represented us on the Sutherland Shire Citizens Heritage Committee and is also our proof reader for the Bulletin is currently indexing / sorting our book collection in the Museum for the Curator. Thank you Merle. Also thank you to Pat Hannan for loaned items and researched material that was difficult to access along with her

assistance with computer backup, booking clerk duties and our afternoon teas set up. Many thanks to Mina Whybourne who has been our Assistant Secretary and helped with Heritage Festival, and our new member, Nola Watt who will take over as new Assistant Secretary. Thank you. And grateful thanks to Pauline Curby for representing us on the Council's Heritage Committee.

The Museum Committee: Assistant Curator Terry McCosker, David Overett, John Risebrow, Maurie Beaven, Merle Kavanagh and Angela Thomas. Thank you for help given at exhibitions outside and in the Museum and also for transport of collections and items to the Museum and the recent clear out and sort of the storage area and listing of items. It continues to be a BIG year. Thank you all.

To Treasurer Maurie Beaven who has handled our accounts for years without a problem. Maurie won't be standing for this position at the AGM and we thank him greatly for a job well done.

Bruce Watt our hardworking and dedicated Bulletin editor who keeps producing the Bulletin with very interesting stories he has researched or been given by members and friends. Also Bruce has just completed "The 50 Years of Port Hacking High School", a big job. Thank you and congratulations on the book.

Terry McCosker our Excursions Officer has taken members to many great places but he would like to see more getting involved to make it even better. Thank you Terry.

David Overett, our Publicity Officer has done a wonderful job with our profile and is still finding ways to get us more exposure – also for donations to the Museum. Thank you David.

To all the Executive Committee: Pat Hannan, Mina Whybourne, Pauline Curby, John Risebrow, Andrew Platfoot and Nola Watt -...Thank you all for your dedication and help. To those I may have overlooked, I apologise. But thank you for any help given.

We gratefully acknowledge our Auditor, Carol Draper, for her expertise and time spent in auditing our accounts. Mr Michael Solari, our honorary solicitor who has always given generously of his time and advice in assisting us when we need it, we do thank him.

We thank our Patron Cllr Lorraine Kelly, Mayor of Sutherland Shire Council. We also thank Council's General Manager, Mr John Rayner, for his assistance over the past year in trying to help solve our storage problem and also correcting the booking for Heritage Festivals that has been a major problem in the past. Thank you.

Thank you to all our loyal and dedicated members and also the many new members who have joined us recently. I do hope you continue to enjoy the benefits and friendship of this Society.

Jim Cutbush. Acting President

Please Note:

Our new meeting time is 1:30 pm

The AGM meeting time has had to be moved forward to 11.30 am.

Due to the early start could members please bring a plate for lunch.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS 2009

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 19th September |Annual General Meeting 11.30 am. Stapleton Street Community Centre.
Election of Officers followed by informal pizza and General Discussion on Society matters and also members interests in Collectibles. We would like to hear of YOUR interests and views. |
| 17th October |Carol Baxter will speak to us about her latest book, "Scandals & Skulduggery"...shady dealings in Sydney's not so distant past. |
| 21st November | The launch of member Mary Small's latest book. |
| 19th December |Christmas Meeting at the School of Arts, 1.30 pm
'Show and Tell', bring your treasures to share with us. |

From The Editor's Desk

This edition of the bulletin foreshadows the Annual General Meeting of the Society. It contains the reports of the various committees and officers and signals the fact that another year has passed by. It has been a very eventful year with some setbacks but overall, some real progress has been made. A perusal of the many activities indicates the vitality of the Society.

The cover features an image from the Rupert Gough collection of photographs held by the Society. Due to the initiative and efforts of our Secretary, Angela Thomas and to Daphne Salt and Nola Watt, a series of placemats has been produced that feature historical images of Sutherland Shire houses and the Royal National Park. These are available for sale and are priced at \$20 for a set of six. Other themes will be added over time.



As reported elsewhere, the Society has joined a program run by Museums and Galleries. The aim is to improve the standard of the museum and the methods of recording and cataloguing items and developing a business plan. This is to be applauded and the Society's special thanks go the Angela Thomas for driving this worthwhile but time consuming initiative. Well done.

This year we have seen some challenges that have caused the Executive and members to think hard about future directions for the Society. Fortunately, I believe that we are now much stronger as a result of facing these challenges. There is a growing sense of resolve to become more proactive and to take on new challenges and to forge new projects in new directions. Continuing the theme of regeneration and renewal, it is important that we encourage members to take up Executive positions and to contribute to the running of the Society. The AGM is a perfect time to put your hand up and be counted. The workload is not onerous and the pleasures and benefits are many. Our meet the executive series continues. It is fascinating to hear the life stories of those that we work with. Thank you Merle for your interesting insight.

The one major article featured in the bulletin concerns the 50th anniversary of Port Hacking High School. This article is a précis of the book that was produced to mark the occasion of the 50th anniversary held in August of this year. It was the first High School in the Shire to enable students to complete their schooling to the matriculation level. It opened in 1959. The account of the school's history also includes some historical themes, especially in the Miranda area. My thanks to Merle Kavanagh for her careful proofreading of the draft bulletin.

Reminders:

- annual membership subscriptions are due by the end of June. (see last page) (Perhaps you could invite a friend to join or indeed give a membership as a present.)
- our web address is www.suthshirehistsoc.org.au or simply Google Sutherland Shire Historical Society
- Our AGM in September has an earlier starting time

Bruce Watt

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

P.O. Box 389, Sutherland 2232

INCOME and EXPENDITURE STATEMENT as at

30th June 2009.

INCOME

Member subscriptions	\$1474.00	
Donations	\$615.50	
Sales	\$74.00	
Excursions/outings/functions	\$1550.00	
Grants	\$2090.00	
Interest received.		
CBA - Cheque account	\$2.97.	
- Term Deposit	\$277.38.	
St.George - Term deposit	\$273.21	\$550.59
		<hr/>
		\$6354.09

EXPENDITURE

Museum Expenses	\$643.16	
Bank fees	\$7.05	
Excursions/functions	\$1491.32	
Rent	\$376.00	
Postages	\$555.45	
Printing & Stationary	\$1031.32	
Licences & Fees	\$150.00	
Badges	\$98.00	
Insurance- Personal Accident/Public Liab	\$500.50	
Web site	\$110.00	
		<hr/>
		\$4962.80
		<hr/>
	Net Profit	\$1391.29.
		<hr/> <hr/>

M. Beaven
.....
M. Beaven.
Hon. Treasurer

I Caroline Draper, certify that I have audited the above accounts and books and find they are a true and accurate position of the Society as at 30th June, 2009.

Caroline Draper
.....

29.7.09
.....

SECRETARY'S REPORT

If we could add another month to the year then I'd like to have it, for this has been 12 months packed full of events, and time has been of the essence.

In addition to usual secretarial duties there have been two major projects to complete. Normally one would like to space such tasks out but neither could be postponed.

Firstly, the Museums & Galleries of NSW invited us to join their Standards Program for 2009. This entails a year long session of questionnaires, workshops and de-briefings aimed at assisting museums such as ours to attain a uniform standard. I attach our profile as it is now shown Australia wide.

Pages and pages of questions were asked. Details ranged from whether there is a ramp to our toilets to the state of our finances. At the time of writing I'm nearing the final stages, but it has meant a series of deadlines. Museums & Galleries stated 2009 was the year for metropolitan museums. We could not do it any other time. 30 others museums including the Tramway Museum, The Museum of Fire, May Gibb's Nutcote are in the program. - We are gaining much assistance and advice.

We will shortly be also on a par with Hunter's Hill, La Perouse, Manly Art Gallery & Museum and many more and hope that this step forward will encourage further support from within the Shire and from Sutherland Council.

Arising from that, one of the questions concerned a business plan and I recalled mention of producing tablemats from our collection of historical photos having been made in the past. The time seemed ripe!

Fortunately Daphne Salt, who had recorded the Rupert Gough Collection of photographs and many others, was back from her travels round Australia for a short time and immediately came to my aid with the vast collection of images she accessed from our archives, her expertise and advice. Again there was a deadline, as she is off again shortly for at least another year.

All is now under way and hopefully next year will be less stressful. Mina Whybourne has continued to support me completely as Assistant Secretary but next year wishes to resign so we have been very lucky that Nola Watt has stepped into the position, we are most fortunate to have her calm presence. I'd like to thank Mina for her assistance. Having been secretary for so many years she gave invaluable advice. I now look forward to working with Nola.

We have been very lucky with our speakers and a great range of topics were presented to us. Very sadly David Campbell, Convenor of the Scottish Heritage Society, who was going to speak on Governor Macquarie, passed away. We had looked forward so much to hearing him and our condolences go to his family.

As usual our speakers were a mix of society members and outside visitors and, as I have said before, we are very lucky to have so many interesting people in our Society.

Commencing the year with a Show & Tell Session, Ken Humbley brought fossilised oysters while Valmai Pearse displayed an opalised fossil shell and John Risebrow showed us a 250,000,000 year old crinoid. Bruce had a 300 yr old pewter plate and Merle brought some very interesting old prints of Sydney. The range of people's interests is most stimulating for the Society and in the years to come we hope to expand into the collectible field, providing a platform for local collectors.

Subsequently in January our members kept us entertained when David Overett, myself and Terry McCosker each spoke for about 20 minutes on a variety of subjects.

Ken Humbley once more took the spotlight in February with a talk on Laurieston Park, a long-gone suburb of Mascot, now mostly beneath the Virgin Terminal. Les Bursill and Mary Jacobs gave a most informative talk on their collaboration in the writing of their book on the Dharawal at the next meeting and then Mary Small told us about Lenni's Ride at our April gathering, the story of a 9 year old boy who rode from near Wilson's Promontory to the Harbour Bridge for its opening. Over the following months Gordon Marshall talked to us on Marine Archaeology, illustrating his text with 54 Powerpoint images of vessels and underwater research. Due to the sad loss of David Campbell we

had a bit of an emergency but luckily I had a talk on Melba which could be used to fill in, then we had Beverley Earnshaw, President of Kogarah Historical Society, who delighted members with her story of the Fanny Letters, the letters of Colonial Secretary McLeay's daughter to her brother. Helen McDonald, curator of Local Studies at Sutherland Library, gave a most interesting talk on Shire History.

So, we now anticipate a new year of speakers, starting with Carol Baxter in October talking about her latest book 'Scandals & Skulduggery' and in November we hope to launch Mary Small's recent publication.

We have changed our committee meetings to an hour and a half prior to the general, Saturday, meeting. We find this an efficient use of time, with a deadline we can pace our business and achieve more. Each month Maurie brings the lectern and the tea making gear, whilst Terry carries in all the other necessary items – microphones, projectors, stands etc. Maybe it seems we take them for granted, but we are deeply indebted to their efforts and know our meetings only run so smoothly because they have set everything up for us.

I would also like to thank everyone else who has helped me. Too numerous to mention all of you but particularly Mary Small, who has always been available for advice, Dawn Emerson who keeps me advised of many matters, Pat Hannan, Merle, Mina and of course Jim – who I feel probably shrinks behind the blinds whenever he sees me pull up and put another envelope in his letterbox.

Let's hope we have another successful year ahead.

Yours...

Angela Thomas

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 19TH SEPTEMBER AT 11.30AM

Come and join us for a pizza lunch following our Annual General Meeting on Saturday the 19th of September.

The Committee would like to take this opportunity to spend time with our new members, exchange ideas and learn more about your views on the future of the Society. What are your personal interests? Are there any particular subjects you would like raised at our meetings? Or perhaps you are a collector and would care to share that passion with others?

Several members have promised to speak briefly about their different collections....come and join us in this informal lunch and let's get together for the start of our new year.

OUR TABLEMAT PROJECT

Perhaps you will already have seen the Society's range of tablemats.

If not, come to the AGM and view the display. Our Society is very fortunate to have collected an extensive archive of photographs. Now we can share them with the public.

This is a new venture and aimed at raising funds to equip our Museum and prepare it for the future.

The original idea was mooted about eighteen months ago by Dawn during her Presidency. Our Committee was interested but for a while, time and resources remained limited. After several months, whilst working on the Museums & Galleries project, the question came up about a 'business plan' and it seemed the time was ripe to go ahead so, when Daphne returned for a short while from her travels we asked her to help us proceed.

Daphne's expertise with the retrieval and presentation of these images has been pivotal to the project, Pat Hannan and I have sat in and given some opinions and with the help of Nola Watt, the project is going ahead.

This is a combined effort and we hope you will agree, a great step forward for our Society.

The project has also highlighted the importance of ‘squirrelling’ away the family photographs. For the images in our collection we have to be extremely grateful to everyone who has donated their historic photographs to the society and are particularly fortunate to have the carefully preserved work of Rupert Gough’s forbears and Daphne Salt’s great grandparents. What lucky people they were to have descendants like Rupert and Daphne who cherished their work.

These wonderful photographs are always available for public exhibitions and also in the Museum, but normally do not reach the general public. For instance the cover of this Bulletin, ‘Summertime in Audley’, is from the collection of Rupert Gough and was possibly taken by his father. This photo would have been coloured by hand as, at that time, photography was merely black and white. I think you will agree it is a beautiful, classic shot. It would have been safe in our archives. But now everyone can enjoy the artistry.

When we lost Rupert we lost a most loyal and learned member but we also gained his collection. He was born in South Australia, the year the First World War began. He was 93 when he put his camera away for the last time.

Rupert was an optician and a self taught cabinet maker specializing in wooden toys, doll’s houses and clocks, and importantly, for us, he was also a keen photographer, developing and enlarging his photographs, researching his subjects and returning over the years to note changes. In the 1940’s this handyman pre fabricated a house in his Bexley back yard then dismantled it, shipped it by coastal steamer to Bateman’s Bay then by road to his Durras South block of land. Every weekend Rupert caught the train to Bomaderry and coach to the Durras turn off then carried his tools to his block where he spent the weekend building his house.

He didn’t just keep a scrap book of places that interested him, Rupert fully researched the history of the region. He went into the local and State libraries and archives and compiled an independent history of data and photographs for his own reference! Then he made and bound albums and built the bookcases to house them.

Such a quiet and reserved gentleman was Rupert – no one knew anything of his amazing talents nor the depth of his interests until after he was gone.

We must be eternally grateful to those early photographers. Daphne Salt is another whose collection began with the work of her family. Both of her parents took photos. Her mother’s great grandparents were Honoria and William Rice who had the first shop and post office in Sylvania and they actually owned a camera and had the finances to process and develop films, a rarity early in the 20th century.

Her maternal great-grandfather owned a photographic laboratory in Wollongong at one stage and his son also took photographs which Daphne has inherited along with the negatives and glass plates of William Lock, the Shire’s first professional photographer.

Daphne’s expertise in reproducing the images has been vital. Her artistry, dedication and amazing computer skills have made the project viable. Hundreds of photos have been viewed, some then selected and enhanced and reproduced to perfection.

Many hours of work have gone into the culmination of this idea. We have 15 series now. National Park (1 & 2), People in the Park, Audley, Significant Shire Homes, Summer in the Shire, A Day at the Beach, Steam Trams, Getting Around, Punts (1 & 2) Early Como (1 & 2), Woronora, Shire Streets, Stroll through our Shire, Cronulla and Historic Kurnell.

Never having attempted such a project before, we are approaching it cautiously with the first release of two series, National Park 1 and Shire Homes of Significance. Already we need to replenish our stock. Before too long it is hoped we can produce the rest of the range and will have them on view. So if you have not already seen the tablemats, come to the AGM and give us your opinion...we need everyone’s input for the future.

Angela Thomas

EXCURSION REPORT FOR 2009.

Due to the poor attendance at the outings in 2008 only two were planned for this year.

The first and most successful outing we have had for some time was a day trip to Mt. Kembla historic village on March 18 and a guided tour of the area with, as our guide, Russel Viles, a local with extensive mining experience. As well as the bus tour the members were shown through the museum, the historic church and cemetery and walked for a couple of hundred metres along the old coal mine rail line. The 25 people who attended this outing all agreed that it was a great day.

The second excursion on May 23 was a guided tour of Cockatoo Island. Our guide on this occasion was a member, Noel Elliott. It was disappointing to have only 9 turn up. Those who did attend were very happy with the day which involved a fairly easy walk around the island. It was amazing just how many large buildings existed, most of them empty and unused. When the island was in full production as a ship building facility it would have employed thousands of workers and been extremely busy and noisy. A most enjoyable day was had with a very competent guide. Thanks Noel.

Terry McCosker .

Museum Report

- FRANK VICKERY VILLAGE SYLVANIA - ANTIQUES FAIR 2008. The Fair most successfully featured a bridal theme.
We had in excess of 600 view our photos and memorabilia.
- AUSTRALIA DAY 2009 – Cronulla Community Hall, Surf Road.
This display was well attended and featured a large variety of photos of all areas of the Shire which created much interest along with our DVD presentations of “100 Years of Surfing” and George Heavens films - “A History of the Shire,” All were much appreciated.
- HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2009 – SUTHERLAND MEMORIAL SCHOOL OF ARTS.
“Mariners of the Pacific and their Charts” was a great success and the (replica) of Owen Jones home was changed to Depression years. The main foyer featured a display of photos and information to help support this year’s theme of “Our Place in Space.” Green Point Observatory also displayed photos and space charts in the foyer.
Another display from FM Radio 2SSR and its history was popular.
- We had special openings during the year: 2 schools, 3 retirement villages, 1 over 50’s ladies group, 1 cub group. 138 visitors in total.
- 3 special broadcasts on the Museum and history of the Shire with announcer Brian Rose of local 99.7 FM Station 2SSR (Sound of the Shire) enjoyed by all.

Thank you to my Museum Committee: Terry McCosker, Angela Thomas, John Risebrow, David Overett, Maurie Beaven, Merle Kavanagh, Norma Jean Taylor and our casual helpers...Marj Blackley, Mina Whybourne...Thank you all for your assistance.

Jim Cutbush

Acting President and Museum Curator

MEET THE EXECUTIVE

Merle Kavanagh



In my youth my father was often heard to say ‘Merle! You’re in everything bar a bath!’ That was not literally true, of course, but it does give an idea of my approach to life. I was born the youngest of four girls at Petersham in 1928 on Halloween - that should have warned my parents Harry and Doll Beecroft.. We moved to Glebe and finally settled in St. Peters, next to the water-filled tip. My sisters and I performed in community concerts – we were a great singing family. I joined 1st Enmore Girl Guides which was ten minutes walk away, over the dark railway bridge, up Edgeware Road and through the ill-lit Park. I used $\frac{3}{4}$ of my pocket money to have piano lessons each week and practiced on my teacher’s piano. I was the only child at St. Peters School to pass for the top school of Sydney Girls High School but we had money problems so I attended first year of Newtown Domestic Science School while my sisters found work at Vicars Woollen Mills. Then our lives changed! The Second World War began and my young brother, Albert Henry Beecroft III was born in June 1941. With the industrial areas a prime target, Dad decided his son and heir (and the rest of us) should move out of Sydney.

As fate would have it, Dad’s brother was renting part of a sandstone home with waterfront at Yowie Bay and we moved in, taking over the rental and living there for 7 years. Absolute Heaven! Tidal pool, tennis court, row boat, fish and oysters! I didn’t know then that it was the old Yowie Bay Hotel building. I joined Miranda Guides and attended St. Luke’s Church of England, teaching Kindergarten with Ada Swatridge, the Guide leader, who became my Godmother. I attended Sutherland Intermediate High School and as I had come top of my class at Newtown I was not obliged to repeat first year but I had to catch up two subjects but allowed to drop French. I helped out with casual work at week-ends at the General Store at Yowie Bay and Tarzan’s store opposite. In 1943 I completed the Intermediate Certificate with a creditable pass, and although I wanted to continue my education and become a teacher, I was expected to find a job. I started work at my first job in the Map Room of the Lands Department on 4.4. 1944. They suggested I learn shorthand and typing so I attended night Tech at Sydney and later at Crystal Street, Petersham. When the war ended nobody wanted to move closer to the city, so my parents bought land in Attunga Road for 180 pounds and built the standard fibro cottage.

I took my stenographic skills to the Typing Pool at the Lands Dept. where the lady in charge had no qualms about throwing unsatisfactory work across her desk and onto the floor. It made me a very good typist very quickly. There were other drawbacks so I left that job after six months when a position became available for a stenographer at Girl Guide Headquarters. During that period I became a Sea Ranger at Manly, staying overnight with a fellow worker and managed to lose a front tooth when playing duster hockey with the Rovers with a bean bag, broom sticks and an empty butter box. I was also asked to join 1st Sydney Cadets, a group of teenagers learning to become leaders and after sixty years their reunions are still held annually with the remaining half dozen of over 20 guiding people who originally met at a special camp in Canberra in 1945/6. I have kept the Log Book of these events for many years.

I opened 1A Sutherland Guides in 1946, who met in the Scout hall, close to the present one on the west side of the railway. My sisters and I enjoyed Sam Annabel’s dancing classes and we also attended rehearsals of the Rockdale Musical Society which was producing ‘Showboat’, but night outings were difficult with transport. We called it G.I. – Geographically Impossible. Overseas travel was popular then but with limited finance I chose to go to New Zealand for a year and work my way round. To raise extra money I left Guide Headquarters and worked at Whitford Theatre Ads, as secretary to young David W. who was the Film manager. I also commenced an evening job as waitress at the Journalists Club in Sydney where the likes of John Dease (Radio) and Chips Rafferty (Films) dined. It was quite heady at that time for this young 20 year old. I celebrated my 21st birthday then five months later I was on the *Wanganella* with ten pounds in my pocket and 4 nights booked at the Y.W.C.A. in Wellington. My old aunts shook their heads, saying ‘Doll, you’re not going to let her go there alone, are you?!?!’

There were big lessons to be learned on board about early gambling machines and offers to tour the crew's quarters, but I survived them all, arriving with nine pounds in my pocket. I worked at an importing firm and joined the Hutt Valley Trampers, then moved on to Guide H.Q. at Hastings and the Heretaunga Trampers. I did three months waitressing at the Chateau Tongariro at Mt. Ruapehu, climbing to the crater lake and saving hard for six weeks holiday – Rotorua, Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Timaru. In the South Island I worked for Young Bros., motor repairs/batteries recharged and was shunted to Christchurch some days to work and transferred to Nelson Office, where I boarded with a family of Mum and Dad, 4 children and several cats. It was to be for a week until I found other accommodation, but I stayed six months. Before returning home I had trips to Mt. Cook and Stewart Island.

Back in Australia I joined the Coast and Mountain Walkers, serving as Secretary for a few years and participating for ten years. I also joined the Caringbah Camera Club for a couple of years. I worked locally at the Colony Club and Sutherland Shire Council before my itchy feet saw me Pioneer touring to Queensland for six months in 1956. In Brisbane I took a live-in job at Cromwell College, part of the University of Queensland. I moved on to Townsville, boarding with the theatre projectionist and his wife and this made for lots of film viewing during my stay. The previous sleeper in my bed had been Dawn Fraser as the Olympic swimmers were training locally. The wife thought 'our Dawn' was a bit unladylike and was pleased when she found I did not stand out the front and yell across the street to strangers, which apparently was Dawn's downfall. I worked as secretary to a solicitor for three months but unfortunately an infected pilonidal cyst landed me in Townsville Hospital and sent me home for Christmas. It was the wet season and I endured a dreadfully memorable trip by train to Brisbane, creeping slowly across the Burdekin River's rickety old bridge and eating 'dinner' at Rockhampton at midnight!

Early in 1957 I joined Parke Davis as Secretary to the Sales Office Manager. During one period we raised money for Sutherland Handicapped Children's Centre by various activities. There was a football game played by the workers in the two-storey office building – The Tops versus the Bottoms – where I was mercilessly tackled by the Medical Service Manager. There was also a great concert where I, fairly well padded, and my skinny friend, Margaret epitomized the advantages of vitamins and laxatives.

After a month's holiday back in New Zealand I took my slides along to the home of a friend from Bexley, whom I'd met in N.Z. on my first trip. There I met my future husband, Alan Kavanagh who insulted my slides and had us in fits of laughter. He continued to make me laugh for the next 27 years after I married him in 1961. We lived at the home he had built at Sutherland where I still live. He was keen on photography and especially making movies. One with an Arab theme was made partly in the Kurnell sandhills. Alan was the official photographer for the first Shire Show in the 1960s and for a short time we operated our own studio called The Boulevarde Studio. In the 1960s I did service with the Royal Blind Society, visiting local blind people and I also joined the Fellowship of Australian Writers and though my membership lapsed when family commitments made life very busy, I continued to write, mainly lots of poetry, winning some awards. I have since re-joined and have been a member now for over ten years.

In 1964 we had a daughter, Jillian Lee, and I almost died, receiving 21 pints of blood and an operation which prevented me from having any more children. When she attended school I became Secretary of the Ladies Auxiliary and at High School I was Asst. Treasurer for a year. Jillian followed in my Guiding footsteps, serving as Brownie leader at Jannali for 13 years and eventually married a cub leader. They now have two daughters, both in Guiding.

My own Guiding experience continued when my daughter turned 7 and joined Brownies at Jannali. I served as helper then leader of the Guides and later as District Leader, finishing my 5 year term by restoring the hall after the damage done in the 1994 bushfires. Last year I wrote their 50 year history. For some years I was Archivist of Sutherland Shire Region Guides, finishing the huge task of organizing

their Archives. I also joined Shortland Trefoil Guild (ex-Guides), becoming their historian and in 1995 I was Secretary for the Kirrawee Scout Gang Show. From 1994 to 2004 I was joint leader with my daughter of a Lone Guide Unit – girls who cannot get to a regular meeting and receive meetings by mail, tape and email.

In 1975 Alan and I joined the Sutherland Shire Historical Society and I have served as Secretary, Publicity Officer and, at present, Research Officer/Archivist and sometime speaker. That same year I began tracing my family tree (and yes, I am connected by several generations to Beecroft Peninsula, it being named for my great, great grandfather, Robert who did the first hydrographic survey of Jervis Bay). I was a foundation member of the Botany Bay Family History Society in 1984, and have been Minute Secretary, Secretary, Publicity Officer and co-author of its 25 year history. I assisted people with research at the local library for some years, helped create indexes and ran a series of lectures for the Adult Leisure Learning Centre.

In 1988 Alan died of a sudden heart attack while in Canberra filming the new Parliament House. He was 62 years old. Jillian continued with her Early Childhood training. In 1992 I commenced the Associate Diploma in Local and Applied History at the University of New England, receiving this in 1995. A few years later I completed the Diploma in Family Historical Studies with the Society of Australian Genealogists. There I gave service as a library assistant for several years and typed computer indexes at home.

When I was single I had several short stories published next to the comics in the Daily Sun in Sydney. I also had two articles in magazines and over the last twenty years I have written five history books. These included one on Yowie Bay, 2 on Leichhardt Rowing Club, the Story of John Lees who built the first Methodist Chapel in Australia and some short histories of his descendants. I have also won three awards for historical essays, 2 with Sutherland Shire Council and one with Marrickville Heritage Society. After winning both essay competitions with the Council I worked casually interviewing older residents of the Shire and this I did for seven years in the 1990s, hearing wonderful memories of our Shire in the pre-World War II days.

I have holidayed in New Zealand, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, Hawaii and Bangkok and spent five months in Britain, Ireland and Europe, including the Eastern countries of Russia and Poland. So I guess my Dad was right. I have been in a lot of 'everything'! But to give my dear old Mum a chance to say her piece I'll quote her - 'Opportunity knocks but once; It's temptation that keeps up a steady rat-tat-tat.' So... I hope to continue using my talents and energy for some years to come, grasping opportunities with both hands and checking out the occasional temptation in my spare time!



PORT HACKING HIGH SCHOOL TURNS 50!

A story of a school and the community that it serves.

Bruce Watt

In 2009, Port Hacking High School celebrated its 50th anniversary. The school will be known to some as the one nearest to Westfields at Miranda. The following is a précis of a book that was written to celebrate the event. Copies are available for sale through the school.

Port Hacking High School was the first High School in the Shire that catered for students to matriculation level. Until 1958, secondary students completed their schooling up to the Intermediate Certificate level at Sutherland Intermediate High School. The rapidly expanding population growth in the post war period led to the demand for more schools. Port Hacking was the first to open and several others followed in quick succession. Firstly though, here is some historical background.

In the beginning ***European and Aboriginal context***

Many of the school's traditions, symbols and names reveal an understanding by the school founders, of the connection of these to the natural history of the area and to Aboriginal heritage.

Port Hacking is a river that borders the Sutherland Shire to the south with The Royal National Park. The river was named after Henry Hacking (1750-1831), who was a quartermaster on Governor Phillip's HMS Sirius, which was part of the First Fleet. Hacking became a skilled, adventurous bushman, who led many hunting expeditions to supplement meat rations for Australia's first settlers. He was amongst the party that found the lost government cattle at Cowpastures in 1795. Hacking discovered the Port Hacking River during one of his hunts and later, the river was named after him by Matthew Flinders and George Bass when they explored there in late March, and early April 1796.

However, the notion of Port Hacking extends beyond that of the river. Port Hacking is a small suburb that borders the river to the north and is surrounded by the suburbs of Lilli Pilli, Caringbah and Dolan's Bay. In 2008, the Geographical Names Board planned to remove the name of Port Hacking as an area from local maps. After strong opposition from local residents, the decision was reversed and the name of the district of Port Hacking was retained.

The settlement pattern of the Shire reflected the importance of the Port Hacking district. The Georges River formed a barrier to entry. Originally, the entrance to the Sutherland district was via a punt across the Georges River at Horse Rock (later named Sylvania). From here, visitors followed a track or roadway, now called Port Hacking Road that ended at Lilli Pilli. In 1879, the area to the south of Port Hacking was declared a National Park. This was only the second in the world after Yellowstone in the USA. Access to the park was via boat from Lilli Pilli. Many of the early houses in the Shire fronted Port Hacking. Later, as sea bathing became popular, Cronulla developed and in time became the focal point of the Shire.

Prior custodians of the land

The indigenous inhabitants of this area were the Gweagal people whose language was spoken by the mobs / bands that inhabited and ranged over the area from Kurnell and throughout the Shire and well to the west. The Dharawal people occupied land to the south of Port Hacking River, west to Appin and down as far as Nowra.



Aboriginal groups associated with totems or symbols from nature. The whale was the main totem of the Dharawal people and seven rock carvings of these can be found within the National Park.

Within the clan, bands would have important animals such as kangaroo.

Port Hacking's logo incorporates the kangaroo superimposed on the silver waters of the Port Hacking River.



The name, Miranda was chosen by Thomas Holt's overseer

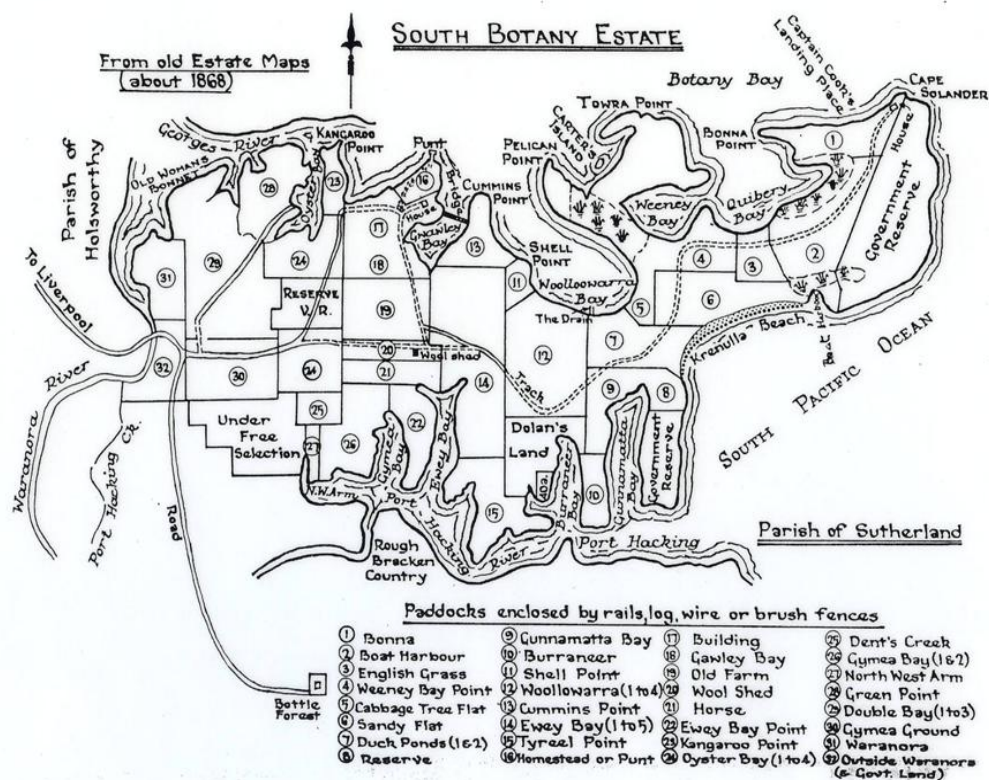
'The name 'Miranda' was given to the locality by me in 1881. It is the name of one of the female characters in Shakespeare's play, 'The Tempest'. She is the daughter of Prospero, so it has a high aristocratic and literary origin. I thought it a soft, euphonious, musical and appropriate name for a beautiful place, a name easily pronounced and remembered, and above all, with a pleasurable and understanding meaning – the name of a good woman

A rural community

In 1959, the first Secondary school in the Sutherland Shire to cater for students up to the Leaving Certificate was opened. Students were transferred from Sutherland Intermediate High School to Port Hacking High School which was to offer education up to Fifth Form. At that time, the majority of students left school after the Intermediate Certificate in 3rd Form (Year 9). Students could complete an additional two years leading to the Leaving Certificate at the end of Fifth Form. (Year 11) Shire students at this time seeking more schooling had to travel to Hurstville.

However, education on its present site goes back much further. There was little development in the district for the first 100 years of European occupation. Gregory Blaxland, who achieved fame for his part in pioneering a crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813, was granted 1000 acres of land around the area where the 5 ways at Miranda is now, but he didn't occupy it. Most of the area now occupied by the Sutherland Shire had been acquired from 1861 onwards by Thomas Holt who was a very wealthy politician, pastoralist and businessman. He tried many ventures including sheep and cattle grazing, timber cutting and oyster farming, mostly with little success. He ran thousands of sheep between Miranda and Yowie Bay but the venture failed because of disease and the unsuitability of the land.

In 1881 he formed the Holt – Sutherland Estate Land Co. Ltd. which took out a lease for 56 years. He intended to maintain control over his land by granting 99 year leases to farmers. By the late 1880s, Sydney was experiencing hard economic times and many people, unable to find work moved to the area. However, poor soils in much of the area and difficult access meant that relatively few settlers took up an option to lease.



The Miranda district with its rich farming soils did however attract settlers from the 1990s onwards and the area prospered. Miranda was centrally located and was the hub of a busy agricultural area that specialised in poultry farming, orchards, market gardens and bee keeping. The particularly rich soil and proximity to the punt at Tom Ugly's helped establish Miranda as a vital community and at that time, it was the most prosperous location in the district. Settlement centred around the 'six ways'.

A long history of schooling on this site

As the area expanded, there was a need for schooling facilities. The Public Education Act of 1880 had made education compulsory for children up to the end of 6th class. The district was then called 'Homewood'.

Parents applied for a school in October 1892. To avoid confusion with an existing school of that name, the name 'Miranda' was applied to the new school by the Education Department.

The first school began on the 10th July 1893 in a privately owned tin shed on a site in Wandella Road now occupied by the Port Hacking High School Auditorium. Rent was 10 shillings per week (\$1). Enrolments began at 18 and finished at 48 by the end of the year.

In 1893, a two acre site on the corner of Kiora Road and Kingsway (or Malvern Road as it was called then) was purchased for £105 (\$210) and a building erected in 1897. The Miranda school was expanded in 1906. Coaches were used to bring children from Cronulla, Gunnamatta Bay, Burraneer and Lilli Pilli. In 1952 a new site was opened on the corner of Wandella Road and Kingsway (the site of the present Miranda Public School). Land maps from that time show the site that the High School now occupies had been gazetted as the site for Miranda Secondary School.

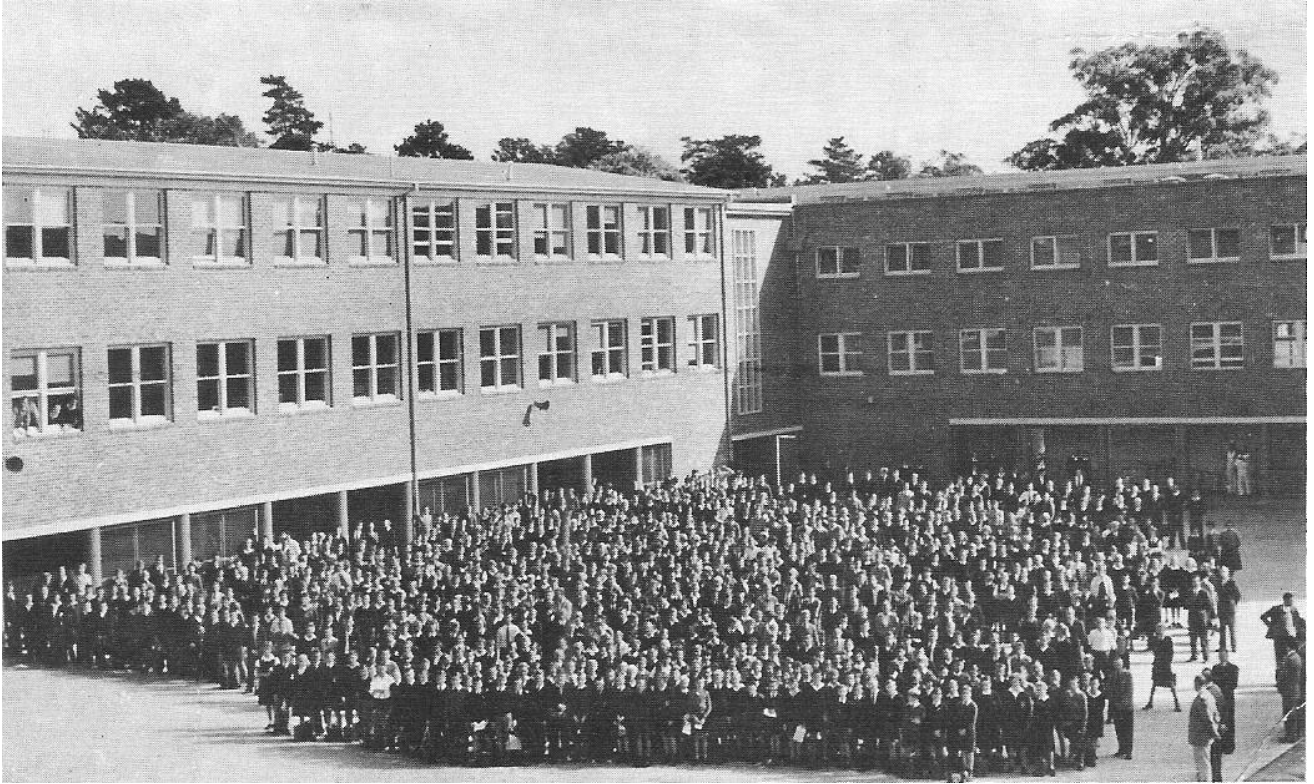


Australia Day 1927- corner Kingsway and Wandella Roads looking north-west. Tram tracks in the foreground. The future school is behind the vehicles.

1959 – A proud start

Most schools start small and grow. Not so Port Hacking. The spectacular population growth in the Shire in the post war years coupled with the 'baby boom' meant that demand for schools was very strong. Port Hacking High School opened in January 1959 with 57 teachers and 1238 students. In 2009, its enrolment is 1067 with 80 teaching staff.

Port Hacking High School opening reflected the concurrent closure of Sutherland Intermediate High School. With the changing demographics of the Sutherland Shire, Sutherland High School had been unable to meet the increasing demands for secondary education in the district. It had been anticipated for a number of years that another secondary school would have to be provided. Port Hacking High School has thus the distinction of being the first comprehensive co-educational secondary school in the Sutherland Shire that enabled students to complete an education to the Leaving Certificate level.



An early scene in the quadrangle

An aerial view of the school about 1960

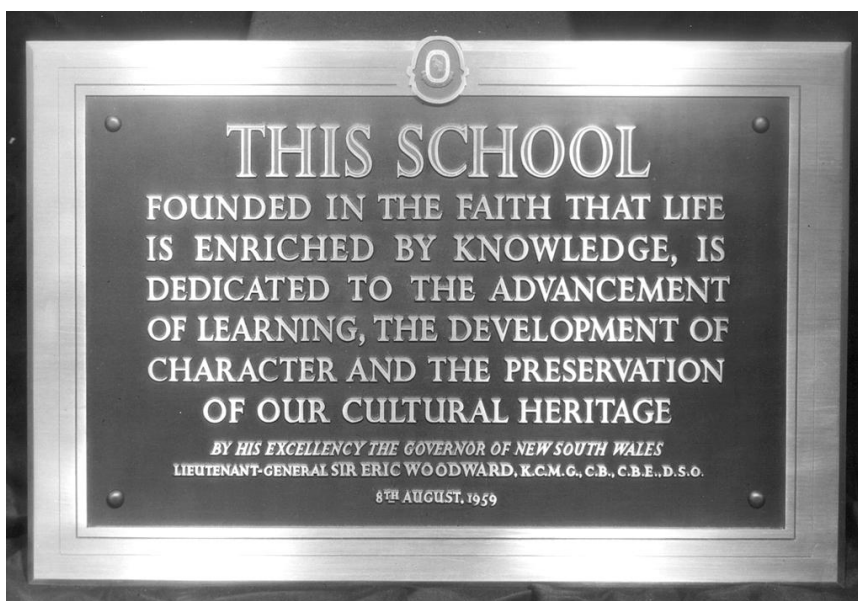


Dedication

The lofty tone of the ideals for the school is reflected in the dedication tablet laid when the school was officially opened by His Excellency, the Governor of NSW, Sir Eric Woodward and his wife in August 1959.

Selby Jenkins commented that this marks the point from which the advantages of secondary education availability is far beyond that which was available to (students') parents.

From the beginning, institutions and practices were established that were to be an important part of school tradition. The Cadet Unit was an important part of school life from 1959 to 1972. Interschool Christian Fellowship (ISCF) was established in 1959 and remains a strong fellowship group in 2009.



The 1960s

The Jenkins Years



The early days presented many challenges. In 1959, the school commenced with nearly 1300 students and in the beginning, there was insufficient furniture to accommodate the students. The tireless activities of the P & C Association were instrumental in raising money for many of the needs of the school. Even before the school opened the P&C had been active in developing a school uniform, selecting a logo and readying the school for its opening. From the start, they operated the canteen. Its purpose was to provide good quality food at reasonable prices. It also provided funds to buy school equipment and it served as a meeting place for mothers and to give them a feeling of personal contact with the school. In this time, very few married women were in the workforce. As a sign of changing times, the school canteen was privatised in 2007 as staffing it by mothers was becoming difficult due to other commitments.

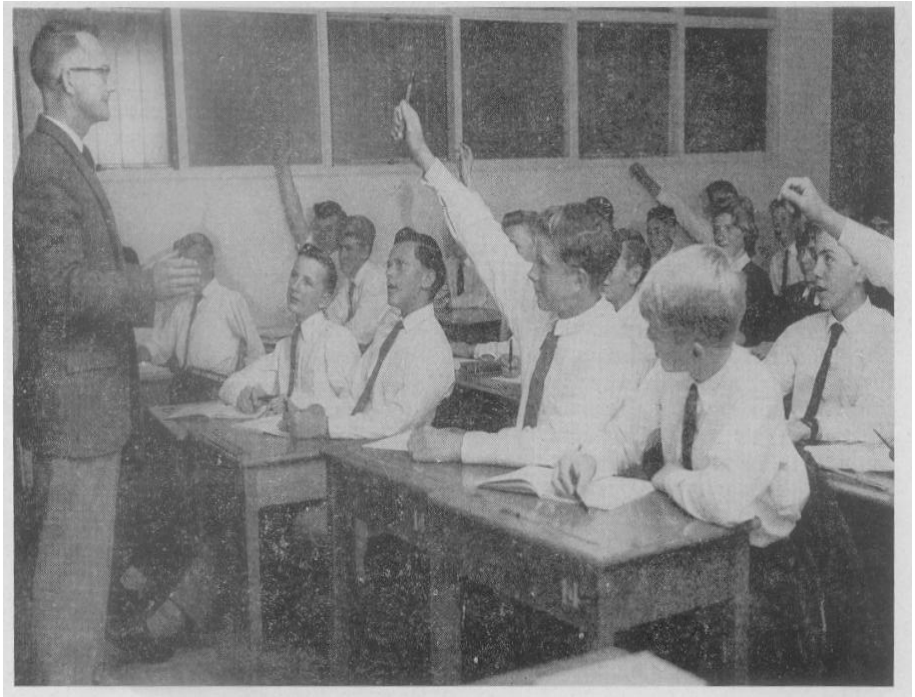
School fetes were regular features and helped to raise money for projects within the school. The 1961 fete was held in conjunction with the Cadet's passing out parade and featured P.E. displays, a pet show, mannequin parade, stalls, ghost train, fortune telling, shooting gallery and much more.

School banking was available to students to encourage regular savings habits and the Commonwealth Savings Bank provided awards to students who assisted in the service.

English classes rehearsed class plays which were performed at the annual 'Play day'.

A report in 'Gilliana' in 1960 outlined efforts of a few to beautify the school grounds through tree planting and a site plan outlined further beautification plans.

'Now can you tell me? Our school's most typical scene, a classroom in action. 2B responds to a question on French from Mr C Soles.'



The founding Principal, Mr Selby Jenkins, had been Head Master in several schools prior to this appointment and he had very sound academic qualifications, especially in Latin and other languages. His vision included establishing school traditions, building school spirit and academic tone throughout the school as well as establishing extra-curricular activities in sport, social and cultural activities and international student exchange.

An important landmark established from the beginning was the annual inter-school visit with Goulburn. This created much rivalry and was to help develop team spirit and morale for many years.

Cultural exchange programs

Jenkins' educational philosophy and connections with Rotary International through the Caringbah branch, led to the establishment of three programs that were to shape the school for some time.

In 1962 he pioneered the annual student exchange with Mount Roskill Grammar School in Auckland, New Zealand.

This year was also the beginning of the Japanese student exchange program with Nagoya Kita Senior High School which helped to put the school into the educational spotlight. Both of these programs were designed to create international understanding and goodwill and to advance the cause of world peace.



The Cadets

The Port Hacking Cadets, who were originally formed at Sutherland, were trained in basic manoeuvres while at the same time having the formation of a drum band

The cadets took part in field exercises where they put into action various tactics they had learned on home parade ground. Also there were overnight camps where patrolling sentry duty, field cooking,

hygiene and field craft were incorporated into a tactical attack and withdrawal movement. There was range firing, compass reading and allied exercises; also, the field craft included camouflage, concealment, stalking and scouting.

The cadets were in strong force at Port Hacking from 1959 to the mid-70s and many boys were encouraged to join its ranks.



Figure 1 Drum Major Shapter with members of the Port Hacking cadet band, rehearse for the passing out parade.



Highlights from the 60s

When the school opened in 1959, the area where Miranda Fair, (now Westfields), stands, was a large clay quarry. Students would regularly take a short cut through the quarry on the way school.

The 1950s and early 1960s were relatively conservative times. Education was conducted along formal lines and students' dress and behaviour was also conservative. Boys wore school ties and girls wore a beret. Boys' hair styles reflected the short back and sides fashion and 'Brylcreme' and 'Californian Poppy' were popular hair creams. The evolution of the concept of the 'teenager' was beginning, influenced by television and popular music.

School spirit was fostered through events including the Goulbourn visits, fetes, athletics and swimming carnivals, - often held out of the Shire as no facilities existed - the trans-Tasman exchanges and school socials or dances. Socials were popular and held regularly. There were separate Socials for juniors (7 – 10) and for seniors. Local bands, 'Autumn' and 'Black Feather' played regularly.



At the school Social

'The Limbo' dance and the latest dance craze called the 'Stomp' had the Auditorium 'rocking'.

In 1963, the first Leaving Certificate class from the original intake graduated. As a mark of the special status that they enjoyed, prefects at this time had their own room.

In the later 1960s and the 1970s, long hair became very fashionable for boys and this led to clashes with teachers and parents who saw it as a sign of rebellion.

Whilst the cane was liberally used as a form of discipline and punishment for the boys, former pupils considered that 'you could still get away with a fair bit'. Students recall, with some fondness, stories involving the cane. If asked if they wanted the cane or detention, many would opt for the cane, because 'you got it over with'. Punishment was meted out fairly liberally, often at assemblies so that the school population witnessed the discipline. 'Six of the best' was a common punishment for more serious offences. The methods of delivery varied. Ex students remarked that 'Nobby', Les Grant, the Deputy would stand on a chair to get more leverage. Mr Cosgrove didn't just have one cane but an assortment that could be used for different circumstances. Part of the theatrics that preceded the caning was a bending and flexing the cane, no doubt to add suspense to the moment. Another staff

member had a particularly long cane. An incident, remembered with some mirth by ex students was the occasion in D Block, when the teacher reached back for the big swing, and the tip of the cane became caught in the insulation tiles on the ceiling.

Ties for senior boys were compulsory. The 'mini' skirt became a very fashionable item and girls strove to wear their skirts as short as possible. They were often required to kneel down and have the length of their skirts measured to see if they complied.

1967 was the first year of the new Wyndham Scheme in which students completed an additional year of schooling to 6th Form (now Year 12). The 10th anniversary of the opening of the school occurred in the following year. The first Maori student to attend the school under the New Zealand exchange program was Waaka Tetai. A walk-a-thon in association with the school fete broke all records. The Ladies Auxiliary established a 'meet the teachers' luncheon and also established a uniform exchange pool. An ex-students union was formed with an initial membership of 100.

In May 1967, the inaugural Headmaster, Mr Selby Jenkins, retired and was replaced by Harold Goodwin who was seen as 'progressive'.



The 1970s: The Harold Goodwin years

Harold Goodwin had had a distinguished educational career and was known for his progressive views on curriculum. He had been Director of Education on Nauru for 6 months prior to their independence and was Headmaster at Grenfell High School for 10 years prior to that. He was able to link Grenfell with Henry Lawson's birthplace and to develop strong community ownership and involvement. This led to the establishment of the Henry Lawson festival and to the renaming of the school as Henry Lawson High School. His educational philosophy was that 'the school should be a warm hearted place.....which is attuned to the needs of the community which it serves.'

The philosophy was demonstrated by the strong links that the school built up with Miranda Fair, (Westfields) and the Miranda business community. Sporting bodies, especially Miranda Magpies were encouraged to use school grounds and facilities. The park and pond near the school gate were established with local environment groups.

Social education and the Core Curriculum

Harold Goodwin introduced a curriculum pattern that would have far reaching impacts on the school. At its heart, it involved an across the school program of social education units designed to focus on attitudes and values to social issues including sex education, relationships, work and careers, health

and safety, guidance, comparative religions, law and society, pet care, driver education and environmental studies.

As well as the usual subjects such as English and Maths, students experienced 4 periods of Social Education per week. The philosophy was that the involvement of students, teachers and the community in close consultation and discussion, led to better outcomes.

The school became known as a 'lighthouse school' and was frequently visited by national and international educationalists. Students from teaching colleges were given demonstration lessons on the social education program which was seen as 'progressive'. An example of this more liberal approach was the establishment of a smoker's room for students in room 226 (now a computer room) As a mark of privilege, Prefects had their own room nearby.

The Home unit

In 1971, another innovative program attracted very wide media exposure. This was the establishment of the Home Unit, an area established to service the needs of girls in the Home Science department. In the area now occupied by the PD/H/PE faculty was a home unit or 'flat', consisting of a bedroom, living room/dining room, kitchen and bathroom. Here the girls could 'set up house' and learn all aspects of home-making. They could select floor coverings, paint and wall paper and choose colour schemes and furnishings. The course included household management, interior decorating, land purchase procedures as well as cooking and laundry.

Furniture was loaned by local manufacturers and leading department stores loaned accessories and decorative pieces. The flat opened onto a furnished concrete patio with a bar-b-que area.

It was noted that this project was likely to become a model for other schools to follow. This innovation was widely publicised in local and Daily newspapers at the time.



The Home unit was more than a demonstration area. Visitors to the school actually stayed in the unit from time to time.



1974

‘Continuing the policy of helping, Finnie Ford Pty Ltd of Miranda has given us a new car to be used by senior students in the Driver Education programme’

Our new cricket nets opened by renowned international cricketer, Mr Tony Greig were described by him as the best he'd seen in any school. Sports such as cycling, volleyball, canoeing, sailing, surf lifesaving, ice skating, continue to attract better performances, and these alongside the already strong football codes, hockey and cricket.



Tony Greig opens the new cricket net facilities.

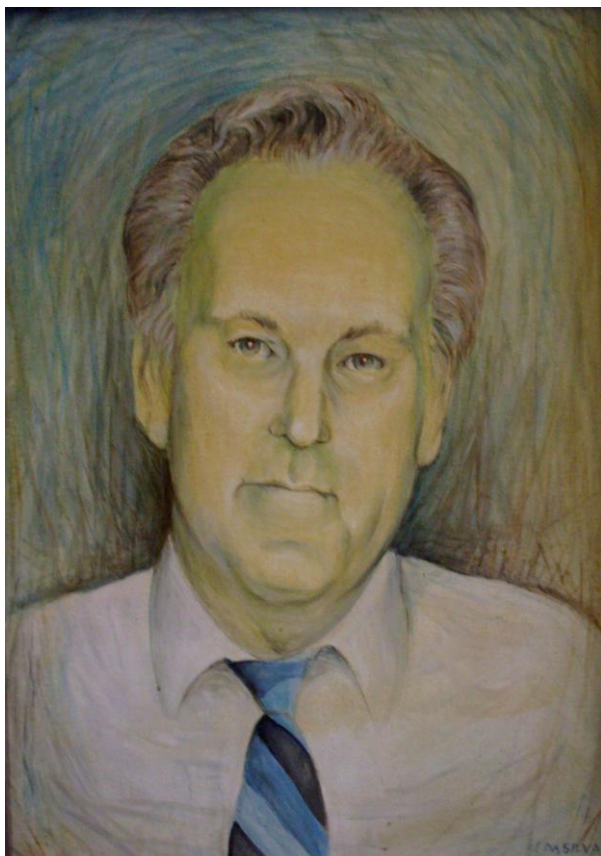
Construction of units in the background.

1980s

The Hughes / Nolan years

In 1979, S. G (Gwyn) Hughes replaced Harold Goodwin as Principal. The Core Curriculum, (Social Education) program was quickly replaced.

Principal's report from 1981



Port Hacking High School has experienced a very successful year and has continued to lead the way in many areas of education. The school, against the trend of many Government schools, continues to grow in numbers and it attracts many enquiries from students not able to join it legally under present conditions. This growth may soon decline as far as our normal drawing area is concerned but never in terms of its status in the community.

The Student Representative Council (SRC) replaced the long standing prefect system. The SRC was more representative of the whole school population than the senior prefect system. Barry Collier, (current State member for Miranda and a former PHHS teacher) was responsible for initiating the SRC. Port Hacking retained its pre-eminence in debating and sport during the following years. In 1983 it was the Zone Champion School in athletics and cross country

and the following year in athletics and swimming as well as State finalists in volleyball, tennis and cricket.

New courses were added in 1984 in Computer Education, Marine Studies and Dramatic Arts and the following year in Society and Culture and Keyboard Skills. Twelve 'Micro computers' were purchased, marking the beginning of computer technology at the school.



Despite growing student numbers which reached 1100 by 1985, the Principal referred to schools as: *'wandering in an educational quagmire regarding changes to the HSC and the Future Directions document that was confusing students, staff, parents and schools'*.

In 1985, John Nolan replaced S Hughes as Principal.

John Nolan

School Councils

In 1987, a significant event was the establishment of School Councils which would act as advisory and decision making bodies that represented the wider school community.

In the same year, corporal punishment involving the use of the cane was discontinued in schools and the following year, a new School Welfare Policy based on 'Student Rights and Responsibilities' was introduced.

Community relations

A wide variety of contacts including Rotary, Lions, business and sporting organisations, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Senior Citizens groups and Westfields helped support the school. A number of community groups made use of the school facilities including Evening College, Migrant English classes, Musical Society, Marching Girls, many sporting groups and Sutherland Shire Orchestra. The school also served as a Sutherland Council Vacation Activities Centre during school holidays.

Regrowth and regeneration

Towards the end of the 1980s, through a combination of factors, including the establishment of Caringbah High School as a Selective High School, student numbers declined to around 830. Inevitably, this led to a loss in curriculum offerings and put some faculties under review.

A Centre of Excellence

In 1989, a significant boost to Port Hacking High School's status and reputation was achieved when it was designated as a 'Centre of Excellence in Music'. This was one of the first such awards to any school in NSW. It was to establish Port Hacking as a premier local High School. In 1989, the school band won the State Junior Band title and competed in the National titles.



An extensive refurbishment of the school was completed, including painting and carpet, carpentry, roofing, drainage and repairs to cricket nets and resurfacing of playing fields.

Significant changes were taking place in education. In 1989, the Board of Studies was established. This was a separate body established to administer curriculum and to conduct testing through the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate.

John Nolan retired as Principal in 1989.

1990s

The Twigg / McKenzie years:

Educational change

The 1989 Scott Report, called 'School Renewal,' flagged the great changes that were about to occur in education. The Minister for Education, Dr Metherell, announced a new policy of decentralisation. Under this school centred approach, parents and the local community were asked to provide more active support and to become financial managers of the school. The Department would pay wages and essential maintenance. Schools would receive a 'global' budget. However, all other funds were to be raised by the school.

The announcement by the Minister of Education that school fees were not compulsory had an adverse affect generally on fees collection. As a result of this, from 1992, the school began to investigate the sale of surplus land on the northern side of the playing fields. It would take twelve years for this process to be completed.

Other changes included the diversification of the curriculum. The Board of Studies had been established in 1989 and it was actively developing senior syllabuses to meet the changing needs of students. Many senior courses were added to the curriculum over the 1990s. TAFE VET, (Vocational Education and Training) courses were added to attract students who had less academic requirements.

The decision by the State Government to de-zone schools was designed so as to allow parents in State schools to select the school that they would like their child to attend. By 1992, enrolments had declined to 758. Competition from Caringbah High School, which had been designated a Selective High School, and the threat of a Senior campus being established somewhere in the Shire, possibly even on the Port Hacking site, were reasons to establish a strategic plan to ensure a successful future.

Marketing the school: A Prospectus

Student enrolments had declined to 803 in February 1990 by the time that Ross Twigg succeeded John Nolan as Principal. The annual school report noted that a demographic projection for Port Hacking High School was a 31% decline in enrolments between 1989 and 1994 though this could be offset by enrolments from out of area students. Ross Twigg commenced a program of marketing the school and developing a prospectus outlining the strengths of the school, especially for performance and study of music. At the time, this was a novel concept for State schools which had up until this time, not felt the need for aggressive marketing.

The prospectus promoted the personal qualities of consideration for others, self discipline, autonomous thinking and adherence to the motto; 'to strive is to achieve'. It also noted the magnificent setting, academic performance, curriculum, uniform, parental involvement, centre of excellence status, sport, and extra curricular activities. Despite enrolments falling to 761 at the start of 1992, in time, the initiative proved to be highly successful, and student numbers as well as the quality of students accepted began to improve.

Land sale

To fund expansion and to provide capital for much needed upgrades, the school community began to investigate the sale of surplus land. By 1995 the school had been granted approval for the land sale,

though the process was marred by bureaucratic delays for some years. The sale of the land and the subsequent building program was not concluded until 2006.

Centre of Excellence

The school had been designated as a 'School of Excellence in Music' in 1989 and again in 1994, 'Performing Arts and Drama' (theatrical productions and in the fields of music, singing, drama, dance, public speaking and debating), was added. This provided the school with a marketing edge and many parents sought to have their students enrolled. Changing demographics amongst other factors also resulted in many enrolments coming from areas on the northern side of the Georges River. Competition for the limited number of out of area places led to a selection criteria and as a result of the high quality of applicants, elements of a semi selective school clientele began to develop.



In 1994, the inaugural Port Hacking High School Council was elected and became part of the decision making policy group within the school and the wider community. The group were particularly active in promoting the sale of the surplus school land.

A new, full colour, quality prospectus was written, setting out the major features and main priorities of the school. By 1995, applications for available spaces far exceeded the positions available and student enrolments had climbed to 950. The selection process resulted not only in extra enrolments but in a high quality of student seeking enrolment. One outcome was that the selection criteria and the nature of the candidate that was attracted resulted in a gender imbalance in favour of females by about 2:1. A positive affect that this had was a calming affect on the tone of the school.

By 1997 when Ross Twigg retired, enrolments had reached 1134 students and 77 staff. School priorities included the development of a coordinated literacy program, extra curricular activities, technology for teaching, addressing gender equity issues and improving school community links.

1998

Kate MacKenzie



In 1998, Kate MacKenzie replaced Ross Twigg as Principal.

Traditionally the school day comprised 8, 40 minute periods. There were 3 periods before recess, 2 before lunch and 3 in the afternoon. There were 3 term years and staff and students became very unsettled at the end of a 14 week term. In 1998, the number of periods was reduced to five 1 hour periods per day and the time table changed to a 10 day cycle. A positive outcome of this practice was that there was much less movement around the school and less disruption to learning.

2000s

The new Millennium

2000, the last year of the Millennium, was educationally eventful. The Wyndham Scheme, introduced in 1967, was superseded by major curriculum changes involving the School Certificate and the Higher School Certificate. Most 3 Unit subjects were removed from the curriculum.. Subject curricula were re written and exam specifications changed. This led to further changes in assessment and outcomes reporting.

The Sydney Olympic Games and the Paralympics mesmerised the world. 30 Port Hacking students performed in the Opening Ceremony and 70 in the Closing Ceremony and others were escort runners for the local section of the torch relay. Students also participated in the Pan Pacific Games, Art Express and Young Achievers. The 15 year Girls Rugby team were State champions. The Girls Open touch players, coached by Tony Rowland, had their fifth consecutive win with more successes to come in future years.

French students participated in a student exchange with the school.

40 kilometre speed zones outside the school on Wandella Road and Kingsway were introduced in 2001 to assist in road safety for students.

In August 2002, the land sale eventually went ahead, raising \$3.96 million.

Destination surveys of HSC Students revealed a steady trend of about 60% of students entering Tertiary study through universities, TAFE or private colleges. Many Port Hacking students attended Wollongong University as a result of a preferential arrangement, advocated by the University.

A reading program during morning roll call called RAGE – Read and Get Engaged was introduced.

In 2004, to attract year 6 students and their parents, an Open Day was initiated. This successful program has remained an important part of the school calendar and a showpiece for staff commitment and to demonstrate school facilities. It has helped to raise the profile of the school and to showcase its features and attractions.



2004 marked the official end to Year 12 muck-up day activities.

Normal aspects of the school calendar continued - the Year 7 Peer Support camp, the Year 10 ski trip, the Year 11 Jindabyne trip, debating, dance, drama, sporting and academic competitions, swimming and athletics carnivals.

In August, the first school website was established.

At the end of 2005, Kate McKenzie retired as Principal.

Greg McGrath

2006

Renewal

Greg McGrath replaced Kate McKenzie as Principal in 2006. The school developed a renewed focus on uniform, attendance, and reward and recognition for students and staff. His arrival coincided with the building program following the land sale. By the end of the year, the refurbished Library and new Gym and Performing Arts areas had been completed and a \$40,000 grant for refurbishing the kitchens was awarded.

Extension classes in years for talented students in years 7 and 8 were initiated based on an entrance exam. Once again, the waiting list for out of area applicants grew to 300 which improved the chances of selecting the best quality students.

Due to difficulty attracting volunteer workers the canteen was privatised.

By the end of 2007, 6 Science labs as well as 3 kitchens had been refurbished.

Perimeter fencing had also been erected to reduced unauthorised access.

2008

In September, the P&C hosted an inaugural Portfest celebration as a showcase for school talent and as a fundraiser. This was repeated in 2009 and the 50th year celebrations incorporated. Students participated in a Sorry Day ceremony to commemorate the Act of Aboriginal Reconciliation legislation enacted by the Federal Government.

A major upgrade of sound and lighting in the Auditorium was undertaken.

2009

Further changes mark the 50th anniversary year. The old drama rooms, (117 and 118) were refurbished and converted to a computer room and a connected classroom for 'Smartboards'. Some staff were issued laptop computers in preparation for the roll out of laptops to Year 9 students under the Federal Government's 'Education Revolution' program. It is planned that all students from years 9 – 12 will be supplied with a laptop computer over time.

On reflection, or, how we've changed

Some of these comments relate to Port Hacking and others are simply broad observations of the times.

Schools are complex social organisms and how people see them and value them depends on a lot of factors. As a Comprehensive High School, its makeup is determined by the nature of the students and the core values that their family groups hold.

That Port Hacking High School has enjoyed such a place in the hearts of Shire residents for so long is a testament to the notion that it must have been '*getting it right*'. Along the way however there have been many challenges.

Over the past 50 years, society itself has changed a great deal. The 1950s and 1960s were relatively conservative. The authority of parents and schools was a given and students largely '*toed the line*'. Family life was stable. Few mothers worked outside the home. This began to change in the 1960s and continues today. The traditional nuclear family is now only one possible group.

Television and the media also introduced new ideas and even changed the way in which families interacted. Meal times were taken less often together in a formal setting. For economic and social reasons, the average family size began to shrink after the 'baby boom' years that lasted until 1961. Increasing prosperity allowed 'teenagers', a relatively new demographic, to become more independent. 30 - 40% of senior students now work considerable hours to support lifestyles that include socialisation and communication. An issue associated with teenage affluence is drug and alcohol abuse which has become an endemic feature of youth culture in the Shire and elsewhere.

The later 1960s and 1970s led to some rebellious student behaviour. Long hair for boys became a fashion. Schools often resisted this trend and imposed strict sanctions. Similarly, the fashion for mini skirts for girls led to confrontation. From this, gradual, on-going changes to uniform occurred.

The 1970s ushered in further social changes. The Vietnam War divided society. For many, it was an unpopular engagement and it gave voice to some youth who saw it as unjust. Nightly television footage of the war, for the first time, brought home the immediacy of the situation. Protest marches and media coverage introduced many to the notion that mass protest could change government and popular opinion and that authority itself could be resisted.

The Whitlam Labor government years from 1972 – 1975 were a contrast to the more conservative Liberal / National party rule of the previous twenty years. For some, exciting and for others disturbing, the changes in policies and attitudes changed society.

Legislation recognising the rights of women, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, of ethnic groups and those of alternative sexual preferences had their impact in schools. Over time, teaching has become a profession that is more attractive to women, yet the number of men in promotions positions revealed an imbalance. In 1987, Affirmative Action legislation was enacted that had the affect of 'fast tracking' the promotion of females. Girl's education strategies raised the awareness of girl's educational opportunities. At Port Hacking, there has been for some time, an imbalance in gender intake that has favoured girls by about two to one. Currently, girls fill a slightly higher number of university entrants across the State.

The incidence of intervention for disciplinary reasons is higher with boys. Further steps to develop boy's education strategies are needed and to counteract the unofficial 'cool to be a fool' attitude displayed by some boys, especially in the middle years.

The 1970s was also a period when Australia began to realise the reality of changing world geopolitics. England had joined Europe in what was to become the European Union (EU). This left Australia searching for new trade opportunities and a new identity. No longer was Australia viewed as a sibling of '*the mother country*'. Australia spent the next twenty years in an uneasy struggle to find its true character.

The emergence of Asia proved to be Australia's salvation. Growing trade links with Japan and south east Asian countries and more recently, China has enabled it to maintain an enviable lifestyle.

Globalisation became the buzz word and legislators and educational administrators introduced changes to Australian institutions and practices aimed at promoting efficiency and preparedness for integration with the global economy. Many new syllabi were introduced and, as a result, student subject choice was widened considerably.

Schools became much more accountable for their actions and their performance. In the early days there was no formal internal assessment for external examinations. Today there is additional pressure on students and staff to adequately conduct assessment tasks that comply with syllabus outcomes and

to electronically record and report on them. Excursions which would have once required a hand written parental permission note, now require risk assessments and other formal procedures. Students at Port Hacking now carry swipe cards to electronically record their movements in and out of school and parents are notified of student absences via SMS messages. Teachers are monitored formally through an annual performance review. School's performances are recorded and are open to public scrutiny through an annual school report. Parent's expectations, along with general community expectations, are higher.

Additional social legislation has impacted schools. There is concern over homophobic bullying and schools educate students regarding alternative sexual preferences and have an officer whose role it is to investigate allegations of sexual bullying. Students' rights regarding ethnic discrimination are also protected. Whilst Port Hacking's enrolment reflects the general composition of the Sutherland Shire, which has a much lower percentage of non Anglo-Saxon background, efforts are made to ensure that students experiences are widened.

One of the largest changes to society has been the rapid introduction of new technology. Schools have struggled to capture resources that can be applied to computer hardware and software. In 2009, the school has six rooms dedicated to computers. Teaching and learning has changed dramatically, as has society in general, since computers have become more widely integrated. The introduction of the internet from the mid 90s has had a profound affect on society including its obvious research benefits. The standard of research and presentation has improved. The Federal government's '*education revolution*', entails the roll-out of many thousands of lap top computers to students and the extension of wireless internet connection. This will have profound affects on teaching and learning. New technologies bring new challenges. Cyber-bullying and misuse of cameras on mobile phones pose challenges for educators.

One of the greatest changes in teaching over the life of the school has been in the teaching workload. There is less emphasis on text book learning and much more computerised administration including storage of marks and student reports. Teachers have a high level of accountability and increased bureaucratic duties. Communication is increasingly electronic.

During the McGrath years, there has been a refocus on school uniform as an outward reflection of school values. Promotion of the school through open nights, recognition and rewards for student achievements and improvements to physical amenities has raised the profile of the school within the wider school community.

As we look forward, challenges include the further integration of technology into teaching, managing in a diverse workplace and time management, especially in some subject areas where information requirements are in real time.

At the time of its 50th Anniversary, Port Hacking High School enjoys the respect of the school community and proudly upholds the best of the traditions established over its proud history.

Sutherland Shire Historical Society

Membership application or Renewal 2009/10

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

TO ASSIST WITH ACCURATE RECORD KEEPING EACH MEMBER IS REQUESTED TO COMPLETE AN INDIVIDUAL RENEWAL FORM EACH YEAR

Applications should be completed and handed to the Honorary Treasurer at the monthly general meeting or posted to the Society using the address shown on the renewal form. The new / renewal application should also contain the appropriate subscription fee.

It should be noted that a failure to pay the membership fee within three months from the end of the financial year will result in a lapse of membership.

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

(1) This membership application is a -Renewal () New Membership ()
(please tick)

TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Ms

Family name: -----

Given name: -----

Postal address: -----

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

(2) This membership application is a -Renewal () New Membership ()
(please tick)

TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Ms

Family name: -----

Given name: -----

Postal address: -----

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

Please find subscription (s) for 2009/10 enclosed

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

(1) Signed ----- Date -----

(2) Signed ----- Date -----

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

ABN No. 17 083 299 572

Note: This organisation is GST exempt.
