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BUNDEENA HOUSE
Hordens Beach

‘MINDFUL OF THE PAST; FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE.’

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The cover – Bundeena House at Hordens Beach is originally a country residence on the other side of the bay. (see page 6)

The Museum is open on the first Saturday of the month from 10 am to 3 pm and at other times by arrangement with Jim Cutbush, curator. He can be contacted on 9521 3721.

Donations of materials with a local provenance are welcome.

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.

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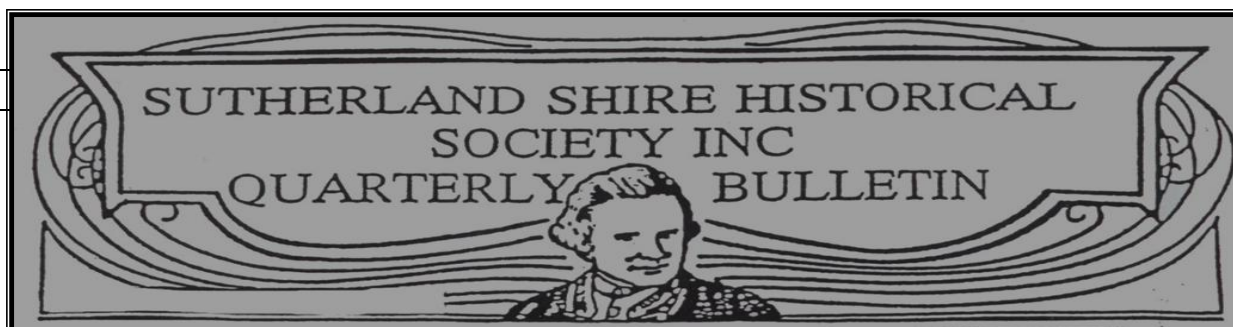
held on the third Saturday of each month at 1.30 pm at the Stapleton Centre, Stapleton Street, Sutherland.

Visitors are welcome.

All correspondence should be addressed to:

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President's Report

As both President and Bulletin editor I'm combining these reports.

Firstly I'd like to acknowledge the fine stewardship of our previous President, Andrew Platfoot in guiding and reinvigorating the Society over the last couple of years. Andrew reluctantly relinquished the position due to work commitments.

I would be considered a long term member as I joined the Society in 1979. However, for many years I was not actively involved. In 1992 I was invited to be a Society representative on the Sutherland Shire Council's Heritage Register Committee. Aileen Griffiths and I made recommendations to consultants preparing the report as to what were considered to be significant Shire buildings. Sadly, inclusion on a register doesn't always guarantee survival. Aileen was, until her death, a long term neighbour and during a conversation in late 2004, I stated that I wouldn't mind becoming a little more involved in the Society. As the position of Bulletin editor had just become vacant, I was quickly seconded and produced my first Bulletin in February 2005. Our writers have produced many ground breaking stories and I'm pleased to say that several new writers are now making their mark. As testimony to the distance that our Bulletin covers, an enquiry from New Zealand has been received by someone writing a PhD on radical movements in Australia and New Zealand during the Great Depression. Apparently they had read Emma Ellis' article on the New Guard!

Looking back over the last 46 years there have been many outstanding Presidents, some of whom held the office for over a decade. I don't intend to contest their records. I believe that official positions should be rotated regularly. Office bearers often achieve their best within 2-3 years when enthusiasm and ideas are fresh. Succession planning is important as none of us are here forever. Sometimes, taking on a new

role may seem daunting. However, we operate in a very supportive manner and new faces are always welcomed. A warm welcome is extended to our new Executive Committee members; Clive Baker Leanne Muir and Bruce Howell.

So what's the plan? Given the depth of talent and enthusiasm within the current Executive, a fair dose of steady as she goes mixed with a liberal dose of collegial decision making is the ethos. A supportive environment encouraging new ideas, initiative and entrepreneurship is a key ingredient. In our first Executive meeting, more time was devoted to general business and a host of inspired ideas were put forward and will be acted upon. Feel confident that your Society is moving ahead.

I'm determined to follow our business plan that focusses on achieving improvements in our day to day operations, in marketing the Society, improving the museum and in communicating with the wider public. A new, informative brochure has been produced. I would encourage every member to ask at least one new member to join. The most pressing need in the immediate future is for our website to be reinvigorated and regularly updated.

By the time that most readers will receive this Bulletin, our final social event for the year, 'back to the 20s' garden party will have been held at Nola Watt's home. Our thanks go to Nola for her generous hospitality. Whilst our focus is on local history, for many active members who attend meetings and other functions the real draw card remains the opportunity to mix socially in a stimulating and supportive environment. Hopefully these events may help dispel a notion that 'history is only about 'old dead things'.

Finally our last Bulletin for the year is packed with a variety of interesting reading. I thank all contributors and wish all our members and supporters all the best for Christmas and the New Year.

Bruce Watt

.....
FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

December No meeting

November 19th Christmas party – ‘back
to the 20s – Nola Watt’s
residence’

Watch out for our exciting 2012 program of events

.....
**Sutherland Shire
Historical Society
Excursions 2011**

Includes bus, cottage entry &
city tour. BYO morning tea
and lunch.

Departs **MPC* 9am.**
(Multi Purpose Centre)

*

**November Saturday 26th
Experimental Farm
Cottage & Parramatta
Tour
Cost_\$20.00**

Bookings Pat Hannan 9528 8294
patricia.hannan@bigpond.com

Friends of Sutherland Shire Historical Society

You can help by

- donating items or whole collections of significant local interest and provenance to our museum
- making a cash donation for our targeted projects*
- remembering the Society when planning your estate.

Donations and other bequests can be directed to:

**The Treasurer
Sutherland Shire Historical Society
PO Box 389
Sutherland NSW 1499**

**purchasing display equipment for the museum*

MEET THE EXECUTIVE

CLIVE BAKER



Born in England in 1941, Clive's family migrated to Australia in 1951. With his father having a farming and army background it was not surprising that Clive's life followed a similar pattern

After school, he took a jackaroo position in the country, working as a farm hand at Yeoval, Trangie and a brief stint in the Capertee Valley. However, there was too much 'city' in his blood and after returning home to the western suburbs in the late 1950s, he took up bushwalking as a placebo for country living.

About the same time, Clive joined a CMF commando unit which gave many opportunities for adventurous activities such as parachuting, kayaking, climbing and pushing one's body to the limit.

After the usual working-holiday overseas, he married and with Marion, hitch-hiked around Europe. Finally returning to 'settle down' and raise a family, he had another stint in CMF, home-making and 'gainful' employment but the lure of the outdoors and adventure still pulled at the subconscious.

His wife was a Miranda girl and the couple moved to The Shire in 1969 and purchased a house in Loftus, where they still reside.

In the mid-1980s he walked the Kokoda Trail and that began a love of Papua New Guinea and trekking. He and friend then began organised tours to Kokoda and later, to other

destinations in Asia. In the 25 years that followed there were treks to such places as:

Annapurna Sanctuary (Nepal) twice
Annapurna Circuit (Nepal)
Base of Everest (Nepal)
Volcano summits (Indonesia)
Mt Wilhelm summit (PNG) twice
Mt Kinabalu summit (Sabah)
Trobriand Islands

He has just returned from the Balikpapan battlefields, Singapore and Sandakan in Sabah.

Exploring battlefields, mixing with villagers, trekking in Asia and writing about them became his way of life. One offshoot from his interest in military history is a co-authored book *BATTLE OF MILNE BAY* and a *KOKODA TREK* walking guide. From that self-publishing grew a book business which, if not proving to be pot of gold, has placed on the public record, over 200 books on Australians at war. Clive is still publishing and also runs his mail-order War Book Shop.

In his 50s, he attended Wollongong University and gained a Master of History – a most rewarding period of study with like-minded people and lecturers.

Other interests include:

Sutherland Shire history
Sutherland Shire Bushcare group
Writing on military history
Photography
Current affairs

He was elected the SSHS committee this year and wants to contribute to the advance and research of local history.

He finds it very rewarding to mix with so many men and women in the SSHS with their combined wealth of local history knowledge.

His major interest in Shire history revolves around its military history from the 1860s through WW1, WW2 and up to the modern day.

THE ORIGINS OF BUNDEENA HOUSE

Robert W Brown

As you travel south across Port Hacking, approaching Bundeena you will notice an attractive large bungalow nestled on the foreshore, west of the wharf.

This is “Bundeena House” a well known local landmark which in 1992 was placed on the Sutherland Shire Heritage list as a property of historical significance “a fine rambling weatherboard example of an interwar bungalow”.

The house is a white painted weatherboard, single story building with a grey corrugated iron roof with prominent gables. Adding to the attraction of the building are the bay windows on the northern front side, and two sets of French doors which open onto the large 3 metre wide verandah that surrounds the northern, eastern and southern sides of the house. Originally comprising 15 rooms, numerous internal changes have been made over the years, but the remaining high ceilings with decorative cornices and spacious rooms with picture railings convey a feel for the simple elegance and quality of the home. Situated at the front of the block it is only a few steps across the lawn onto the sands of Horderns Beach.

The contemporary history of Bundeena House is relatively well documented and its setting would have most believing the house was built where it stands.

However it has had an intriguing past, not only through its variety of uses, name changes and ownership at Bundeena, but through its uncertain origins at another location which was on the western side of the Burraneer Peninsula where the house was formerly known as “Coolangatta”.

The location of “Coolangatta”

The original site of “Coolangatta” was upon a 5 acre lot of land running off Woollooware Road north of the present day Royal Motor Yacht Club. The house was situated on the lower part of the lot facing Gunnamatta Bay, and courtesy of the various aerial photo resources of Sutherland Shire Council Mapping and NSW Land Title Office we can

view the property dating back to 1930. Access was from Woollooware Road via a long driveway down through the bush at the top of the land then looping down around the house. The site was originally part of subdivided holdings owned by the Holt Sutherland Estate Co Ltd which were offered on a leasehold rental basis in the early 1900s with a provision to convert to freehold.



The Early Owners

The 1902 Holt Sutherland Company memorandum of lease indicates the five acres at Burraneer were leased to William Henry Newton, a fisherman of Port Hacking with the lease formally registered in 1907. However occupation may have occurred before this date.

In trying to identify the Newton named on the land title we need to turn to council and electoral records where the most probable candidate seems to be William Henry Newton and his wife Jane Elizabeth who originally resided at Yanabili Port Hacking and is described variously as being an “inspector of fisheries” or “fisherman”.

In 1907 their address had changed to “Gunnamatta Bay” where he is listed as a “boatman” and on another occasion “launch proprietor” but apart from confirming Newton as the leaseholder of the five acres we have no real evidence that he actually lived in or built a home thereon.

Newspaper articles for the era carry references to a William Newton, or derivations thereof such as W H Newton or W Newton, including his involvement in a boating mishap (1904) where his companion drowned and he epically clung to his stricken launch for 14 hours off Cronulla and a second tragic incident in 1909 whereby along with Frank Giddings, a William Newton, fisherman, assisted in the recovery efforts of 2 young men off the Hatchery at Gunnamatta Bay. A W H Newton also gets regular mention in respect to the early Port Hacking Sailing Club, being named

as the inaugural handicapper. Also a William Henry Newton was charged with breaches of the fisheries act on Gunnamatta Bay in both 1904 and again in 1907 and was fined in the Water Police Court two and five pounds respectively. He is also likely one of the Newtons (section showing first name destroyed for both) who signed the petition submitted by residents of Burraneer circa 1907 for a postal receiving office, suggesting “that the residence of Mr John Hill, Boatbuilder, is the most suitable and convenient position for such an office”.

Whilst the name was relatively common, these articles are on balance likely references to the same William Newton who acquired the five acres. The occupations of fisherman; launch proprietor and boatman consistently associated within the articles found, combined with the locality addresses of Gunnamatta , Gunnamatta Bay or Port Hacking perhaps give us a background perspective to the man behind the initial land ownership.

But did William Newton build “Coolangatta”?

Sutherland Council rate and valuation rolls for 1907-1909 show an unimproved capital value of 310 pounds and improved capital value of 650 pounds for the 5 acres but we can only surmise what the capital improvements would have comprised. Perhaps a jetty boatshed and cottage as it is reasonable to assume that William and Jane did actually build and live on the 5 acres. The only verifiable record of any possible improvements located is an undated parish map with a notation for a permissive occupancy being granted to build a boatshed listed under W Newton, and a subsequent notation of permissive occupancy transfer to the subsequent owner which is also crossed referenced on council rate records in 1912. The construction of this type of facility is again consistent with what we know of William’s various occupations and the general usage of sites around the Gunnamatta waterfront at that time.

In September 1911 William Newton sold the 5 acres for a price of 1000 pounds, suggesting a level of improvement had been made to the property, and moved into Cronulla although

we cannot say with any certainty that the dwelling he left was “Coolangatta”.

The incoming owner of the land was Terrick Alfred Hamilton, of Port Hacking.

Various Electoral, Council and Land Records show that Hamilton resided at Burraneer or Burraneer Bay from at least 1909 and he is consistently described as of “independent means” or simply “Gentleman”. Judging by land dealing records Hamilton invested in numerous Sutherland district properties from 1906-1920 and although council records show plans being submitted by him for a cottage in 1908 at Burraneer, and for transfer of land in 1910, the dates precede by nearly 12 months his ownership of the 5 acre site on which “Coolangatta” was located and the council records fail to clarify any further detail of the properties to which the references pertain.

A comprehensive obituary published in the “Longreach Leader” following his death at Cronulla in 1925, informs that Terrick Alfred Hamilton, son of a peer, was originally from Berkshire England and educated at Eton and Trinity. In 1875 he acquired a large grazing station called “Tambo” in the Blackall district of Queensland.

During his ownership of Tambo there are several newspaper articles in relation to his grazing and community activities suggesting he was a well known and respected local identity. A book published by his daughter Rose in the early 1960’s, primarily reminiscing her early life between 1880 and 1919, also provides a fascinating insight into general life on Tambo Station and indirectly of her father Terrick Hamilton. The descriptions of her trip abroad and meeting with her father’s English relatives such as her Grandfather and Aunties with whom she spent a 12 month period during the 1890’s also conveys a feel for the extended family’s social prominence.

In August 1903, Hamilton gained unwelcome publicity through a divorce case successfully brought by his wife which was reported in explicit detail by the regional papers and during the proceedings it was indicated that Hamilton was living at the Central Hotel in Sydney. He seems to have returned to Tambo during the period 1904-7 until the sale of Tambo station which occurred in September

1907. According to “The Queenslander” the sale was on account of Mr TA Hamilton to the Turnbull Brothers of Baywick, and as described, it was an extensive holding of both freehold and leasehold land.

What ultimately attracted Hamilton to the Port Hacking district is uncertain, and his daughters account does not mention him after the sale of Tambo, although by January 1912, four months after his purchase of the Burraneer 5 acres it can be ascertained from postal records that he was living at an address “Etona, Burraneer Bay, Sutherland”.

Twelve months later, post office correspondence dated January 1913, states him residing at ‘Cooloongatta, Woollooware Rd Burraneer’ which also coincides to his ownership period of the 5 acre parcel. Whether he built the home, or simply renamed or carried on the name of an existing home built by Newton is conjecture, however this is the earliest official record located by the writer linking the name “Cooloongatta” (or any other spelling derivations) to the recorded owners of the 5 acre site.

From what we can ascertain of the background of Hamilton it is easy to imagine that he would have acquired or built a higher standard of accommodation than average and it is probable that ‘Etona’ and ‘Cooloongatta’ were different properties given the number of land dealings listed under his name during this period.

Hamilton sold the property in October 1914 for the sum of 1500 pounds but still remained in the Burraneer area until his death at “Charters”, Church St, Cronulla in 1925.

The new owner of “Cooloongatta” was also a person of means and reputation.

Reginald Mack Gowing, Merchant of Sydney, was the son of John E Gowing co-founder of Gowing retail outfitters, located in George St Sydney.

In 1908 Reginald and his brother inherited an interest in the business and continued to run it in partnership with their uncle as “Gowing Bros” a retailing brand name that was held in

high regard then, and for many generations after that period.

During this period he lived with his wife Elsie at Waverly and later Strathfield. In December 1915 he joined the first AIF serving as a Major in uniform supply until he returned to Australia in July 1919. He received an OBE Military Division in Oct 1919.

The general view is that the property was initially a “weekender” for Reginald’s family as was the case with many other families enjoying the rural and beachside aspects of Port Hacking at this time. His brother also held a “weekend” property at Burraneer which a descendent recalls was sold in the 1930’s however no family recollection is held of “Cooloongatta”.

Following Reginald’s return to Australia it appears that the weekender became the permanent residence, as the 1920 electoral roll shows Reginald and his wife Elsie living at ‘Woollooware Rd’ and the Sands Index shows them in 1921 at “Cooloongatta Woollooware Rd Cronulla”.

We cannot be certain to what extent, but it appears highly probable that Reginald Gowing was responsible for either substantially upgrading “Cooloongatta” or totally re-building the home and retaining its former name. The property was at this time a quality residence. “The Sydney Morning Herald’ in October-November 1920 carried several pre auction advertisements for the home “known as Coolongatta” (note different spelling) with 5 acres of land .Gunnamatta Bay water frontage and frontage to Woollooware Road... with extensive descriptions of land size , number and types of rooms including a ball room , outbuildings, tennis court, baths , lawns , water supply, septic and noting “Holt Sutherland lease which can be converted” . It effusively tells us that “the bungalow residence has been builtunder the supervision of a leading architect ...undoubtedly the finest home in the district ...no expense spared in making it a comfortable high class property”. Yet again there is a paucity of official information confirming whether Reginald rebuilt or upgraded and it is possible the plans

were approved under a yet to be identified architect's name.

The advertisement wording certainly implies that it was recently built or at the very least upgraded to its status as a "comfortable high class property".

By late 1921 a sale had been achieved with official transfer of the property occurring in December 1921 for 3000 pounds and as part of the sale negotiation Reginald extended a vendors loan of 2000 pounds which was repaid within 12 months.

It was during this period that Reginald had resigned from Gowing Bros and moved to the USA following a marriage separation, apparently creating a minor scandal in the process according to Stephanie Gowing in her book "Gone to Gowings" so presumably the sale of "Coolongatta" as it was then spelt, was prompted by this change in personal circumstances. What-ever the case, the transfer documents all show Reginald as a resident of the United States although he ultimately returned to Australia during the 1930s and rejoined Gowing Bros. in a sales position. He passed away at Collaroy in 1948.

During the post WW1 period the Sutherland district had been "discovered" and took on an identity as a tourist destination with the beaches, fishing, boating and National Park attractions within reasonable proximity to the city. The area saw an influx of businessmen and professionals as property purchasers and "Coolongatta" under the Gowing ownership was an excellent example of the wealthy mans "weekender" at a time when several notable families had similarly established residences around Port Hacking, many of which were much more substantial and elaborate.

This type of purchaser was also exemplified with the new owner of "Coolongatta,"

Mrs Mary Jane Speare, the wife of Ernest Loftus Speare who resided at Strathfield.

Ernest's parents owned Speares Brick and Tile works at St Peters and when his father died Ernest left university and assumed the running of the business and by all accounts he was quite successful and consequently both the business and the family prospered. With their family home at Strathfield the Speare's used "Coolongatta" as a holiday home.

News clippings from the 1920-30 era indicate that Mary Speare occasionally entertained at the property for social or charitable events and also held their daughter's wedding reception at the house "where coloured lights decorated the ballroom and a marquee was set out on the tennis court". It is during this era that the spelling of the house name appears to have again changed to what it is recognized as today. Mrs Speare passed away prematurely in Sept 1938 and "Coolangatta" as it was then spelt, transferred to Ernest who continued to own it until his death in 1956.

A family acquaintance who as a teenager visited "the charming old house Coolangatta," recalled the home was "beautifully furnished" and "on a large acreage running down from Woollooware Rd to Gunamatta Bay". By all accounts the home was above the average standards of the day with its extensive grounds, lovely lawn tennis court, sea baths and boatshed facilities.

Following Ernest's death his executors, on behalf of the estate lodged a subdivision application with Sutherland Shire Council in January 1957, within which it was proposed that "the buildings at present erected on the land will be demolished".

The town planner initially recommended refusal on basis of access, size and shape issues but it was subsequently approved subject to further conditions and variations to mitigate the concerns raised.

In the meantime, while this approval was being finalized Bundeena property owners P & W Manias submitted in July 1957 an application to council for a proposed guest house at Lots 17/18 Bundeena Drive Bundeena, within which it was advised that they "wish to remove a weatherboard dwelling .. to the above location to be used as a guest house... this is a proposal to remove the old Speare's house from Woollooware Rd to Bundeena".

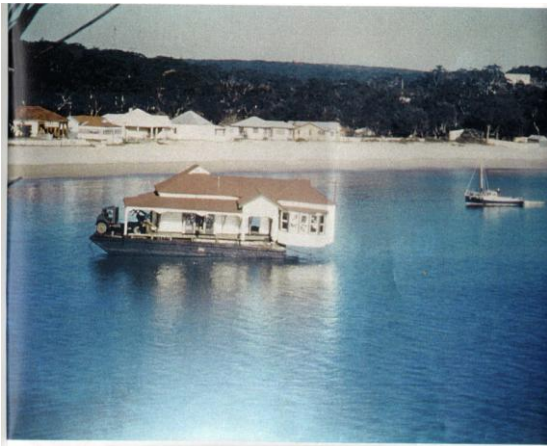
The request was approved.

Bundeena Bound

So "Coolangatta" was to move from its long held location, but in doing so it was to be saved for future generations to admire and enjoy as the alternative was undeniably demolition.

Contractors cut the home into at least three sections and after determining that the road to Bundeena was too narrow to transport by truck decided to barge the sections across to Bundeena towed by ferry. .

In August 1957 “Coolangatta” made the journey across Port Hacking to its present location. The Daily Telegraph reported on 13th August 1957 “Big Haul – by land and water – 15 room house puts to sea” and carried an article beneath a large photograph of the ferry hauling part of the house by barge.



On arrival at Bundeena the house sections were unloaded from the barge onto the beach and manouvered into position upon the block where it currently sits. This was the new beginning for the house not only in locality, but also in usage and name.

Kalyan and Bundeena House

Information provided by the current owners advises that the Manias’s commenced a guesthouse named the “Kalyan” which their advertising literature informed was an indigenous word meaning “you stay here”. The tariff for adults was ten pounds 10 shillings per week and allowed families to enjoy the diversity of the local natural attractions of Bundeena and the National Park. By 1961 Manias had ceased the business.

Two successive tenants then operated “Kalyan” as a nursing home until 1969 when the operators sought to move to another locality rather than undertake a specialised upgrade of the property so the home once again passed into private ownership until 1972 when it was transferred into the ownership of

the Bundeena Christian Training School and Fellowship Limited.



The fellowship still own the property today, known familiarly as “Bundeena House” and through their upkeep the home retains its picturesque charm whilst providing practical accommodation for their ongoing community works.

Meanwhile the Burraneer land on which Coolangatta had stood for so long went the way of many similar large holdings and was subdivided. It became the “Coolangatta Estate” marketed by Richardson and Wrench for auction in November 1957 as “27 choice homes sites including 4 magnificent deep water frontage blocks” .

Who built the house and when?

There is still no definitive answer to either of these questions; however we can positively link the name “Cooloongatta” as part of Terrick Hamilton’s residential address during his ownership of the land as early as January 1913. This does not prove he either built the home that survives today, or even named it although he certainly appears to have had the financial resources to build a similar quality home for the era, and may have expanded upon a home built by Newton.

Hamilton engaged in property dealings frequently enough to be suggestive of property investment and development and the name itself (said to be of indigenous origins meaning splendid view) is perhaps a tenuous link with his Queensland past or even a rural connection with the Berry estate of the same name on the NSW south coast.

It is then likely that Reginald Gowing substantially renovated the home or totally rebuilt, retaining the name “Cooloongatta”, with a simultaneous upgrade of the grounds. This was likely to have occurred in the latter part of 1919 or early 1920 upon his return from military service and a comment in council building minutes on 6/10/20 under Woollooware Road, notes that “Mr Gowing is asking for crossing, willing to supply pipes”. The overseer reported that “this work had been carried out”.

He, like Hamilton was of solid financial means and social background and the property status when sold by him reflected that standing. The architecture, being a simple bungalow style supports the assumption that it was built between 1910 -1920 and although it has been described as inter-war this is not conclusive as examples of this uncomplicated style can be placed pre 1914. Matching the architecture to known architects “style” of the era is also inconclusive at this point. Either way, the house that has survived gives us an excellent example of the quality and simple beauty of what was used primarily as a bayside weekender or possibly earlier as a country gentleman’s residence. It stands as a property of both historical and architectural significance to the Sutherland Shire and owes its survival to the initiative of a prospective guest house

COUNCIL WOWSERS

PS: There is a rumour going around that the Cronulla Council is thinking of putting electric lights all along the promenades at Cronulla. That will sure put an end, to what Elsie calls, the “squeeze-a-toriums” that exist in those nooks and crannies along the promenade.

operator who recognised its potential for his intended use.

As for the name “Coolangatta” – it still survives in the original location courtesy of the avenue that was cut through the subdivided Burraneer land.

Research into the origins of Bundeena House formerly known as “Kalyan” and “Coolangatta” remains an ongoing project of the writer, and is being undertaken with the support of the current owners, Bundeena Christian Training School and Fellowship Limited and the Yarmouth Historical Society.

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Sharpe T&M
State Library NSW
Sutherland Shire Council (Local Studies and on line mapping services)
Sydney Morning Herald
Yarmouth Historical Society
White J
Photographs courtesy of: T&M Sharpe; Bundeena Christian Training School and Fellowship Limited; Yarmouth Historical Society

Editor’s note

In a twist of irony I have an item from the original Coolangatta house. Several years ago a waterfront house on Gunnamatta Bay (Colangatta Avenue) was sold at a televised auction for a record \$5million. The new owners renovated and an old cast iron gas light (Lithgow Gas Works) in the yard was not wanted and I was able to acquire it. At the time I was unaware of its historical significance.

Extract from a letter
from a young lady
writing to her fiancée
in France in WW1 –
c 1917.

COASTAL

SHIPWRECKS

Off Sutherland Shire

1870 – 1890

Merle Kavanagh

1870 *Dauntless*

On the night of 26th April, 1870, the ketch *Dauntless*, a two-masted sailing ship, struck the south head of Port Hacking. In the panic that followed one seaman was washed overboard and drowned in the high seas that were running that night. Despite the ship being wrecked, the rest of those on board reached safety.

1874 *Alice Jane*

The schooner, *Alice Jane* sailed from Maryborough Qld. loaded with timber for New Caledonia and then vanished. Almost three months later on 15 January 1874 she was discovered bottom up at Port Hacking. It seemed that she had capsized and been carried south by strong currents.

1874 *Peri*

This ship was on her way from Wollongong to Sydney when disaster struck off Botany Bay on 21st June. She missed stays and began taking water but before she foundered, the Customs boat rescued the crew.

1877 *James Affleck*

This sailing ship, a cutter, traded between Port Hacking and Botany and met her end near Port Hacking on 11th July, going ashore and becoming a total wreck.

1878 *Clara*

Collisions at sea are a nautical hazard and can mean disaster for at least one of the ships involved. This was the fate of the schooner *Clara*, 67 tons, south bound for the Clyde River. When about 16 miles south of Botany Bay she was struck on the port side by the S.S. *Macedon* and cut in two. Boats from the *Macedon* rescued the crew, although one was badly injured.

1878 *Sea Spray*

The brig, *Sea Spray*, a vessel of 196 tons, built in

1876, left Newcastle for Melbourne, carrying 500 tons of coal. She was south of Botany Bay and began to leak so badly that the pumps could not control the flow and she had to be abandoned. The crew took to the boats and eventually reached Sydney.

1879 *Adelphoi*

In the week leading up to Christmas 1879 the barque, *Adelphoi*, a sailing ship with three masts, built in Scotland in 1865, was heading up the east coast to Newcastle. She had departed some time earlier from Adelaide carrying ballast. On 21st December conditions were light, but the wind dropped and the vessel drifted close to the shore. Captain Gregory endeavoured to bring her round but she struck a reef south of Port Hacking and began to thump heavily. She was obviously holed below the waterline as she began taking water fast. When there were seven or eight feet in the hold, the Captain ordered 'abandon ship' and at 9 a.m. the crew took to the boats with a few personal belongings. They landed at Port Hacking and were cared for by Mrs. York, wife of Charles York, then living at York House, Burraneer Bay, now known as "Fernleigh". She arranged for the sailors to be driven to the punt at Georges River from where they walked to Cooks River. A bus then took them to Sydney where they stayed at the Sailors' Home. The *Adelphoi* was jointly owned by Captain Gregory and A.A. Farthing and was insured for £2000.

1881 *Ombar*

This barque of 879 tons, 15 years old, disappeared on the south coast in November 1881. Pieces of wreckage were washed up on the shore, some in Botany Bay showing the ship's name.

1882 *Woniora*

This was a collier, built at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1863 for the Bulli Coal Mining Company. She was a three-masted schooner of 226 tons with 90 horse power engines. Carrying 242 tons of coal, she left Bulli late in the afternoon of 28th October 1882 with a heavy south-easterly sea running and more dirty weather expected. Heavy rain was falling and seas were breaking over the ship, but she had weathered such extremes before. The crew had taken in some sails (used as auxiliaries to the engines at that time) when a heavy sea struck about five miles southeast of Botany Heads. Heinrich Frederickson, the sole survivor, told of going into the galley and then below

into the forecastle where water poured down on the sailors. He had said to his mates "I think she's done, let's get up!" As he scrambled onto the deck he saw Captain Lauridsen on the bridge and heard him give orders to the man at the wheel. But the ship could not answer as she was shipping water badly which threw her onto her beam end. She foundered within minutes taking 17 seamen with her.

Frederickson was thrown into the sea and grabbed a plank; then he chanced upon an upturned lifeboat which he managed to right. He lashed the plank across the gunwale to prevent it turning over again and with an oar he plucked from the sea, steered an erratic course for the shore. He landed on a beach at Kurnell on Botany Bay and lay down exhausted, waking at daybreak. He crawled to the home of Mr. Beaker, a Kurnell fisherman, who informed the Customs House Office at La Perouse. Wreckage was picked up along the beach and the coast but no bodies were ever recovered. The Marine Board enquiry found that the *Woniora* was lost in consequence of having been deeply laden and from having been driven too fast for the weather conditions. A grandchild of the Captain lived at one time at Caringbah and held a painting of the ship. In May 1979 local skin divers located the wreck off the coast near Kurnell.

1882 Merchantman

Another ship employed in the coal trade for some years was the *Merchantman*. She departed Wollongong with 250 tons of coal and the Master gave a course to the man at the wheel before doing below and leaving the Mate in charge of the ship. The Captain was awoken by the shock of the vessel striking the Bombora Rock near Hacking Point where she was battered by heavy seas. After trying in vain to make Port Hacking, the crew took to the boats and reached Botany Bay. The S.S. *Phoebe* was at anchor there and went to the site of the disaster only to find the *Merchantman* had disappeared. The Mate, John Greenlees advised the enquiry that the course given had been followed but the weather was thick and hazy and he thought they were a few miles off land. John Johnson was at the wheel and gave similar evidence. Both the Master, Mahler, and the Mate, Greenlees were found responsible, Mahler by steering a course too close to land and Greenlees by not keeping a proper lookout. Their Certificates were suspended for some months. The ship was insured for £1000.

1886 Malua

Built in 1885 the S.S. *Malua* left Jervis Bay laden with fish for Sydney early in June 1886. However she went on the rocks south of Port Hacking on 6th in a thick fog but without loss of life. There were hopes that she could be salvaged but efforts to tow the steamer off some days later were not successful. She was lying on her port side on rocks under the cliffs on the south head of Wattamolla Creek. Her hull was bilged and her engines and boiler had shifted. Heavy weather would easily break her up. After several attempts by her builder, Mr. Dent she was sold for £85 and dismantled.

1889 Inflexible

The S.S. *Inflexible*, a tug of 175 tons was well known as a Sydney Harbour steamer. She was built in 1833 in London with a steel hull and engines of 95 horsepower.

In 1889 James Halstead, boat builder of McMahon's Pt., was the owner and she was insured for £6000 but valued at £9000. On Sunday night 25 August 1889 she sailed south out of the Harbour in search of inward-bound sailing ships. About 3 a.m. in a 'lumpy' sea heading for Coalcliff, she pitched heavily and a sudden bump was felt by those on board. Captain Goard went quickly up on deck as did the Engineer, William Langstone, but nothing could be seen. A fireman was sent below to see if the ship was making water, but it appeared not. They lay to for an hour or so, a lookout watching for approaching ships. Suddenly there was a tremendous rush of steam, with hissing coming from the engine room. Water began rushing in and the firemen were hurriedly dispatched to rake out the fires. By the time the last man had finished, the water was up to his waist, despite the pumps working hard at their job. They were about 9 miles off The Sisters near Port Hacking, too far to run her aground in time, so the boat was launched and the Captain, Engineer, two deck hands and two firemen boarded the dinghy and moved away to watch their ship sink below the waters. Nothing was saved, It all happened so quickly. The *Inflexible* was gone within the hour. Whilst in the boat they came upon some floating debris which they thought might be the source of the disaster. It was a massive piece of floating timber or wreckage, possibly a ship's gunwale, but they did not risk getting too close to it. The men pulled for shore, drenched with salt water and rain and after seven hours landed on the rocks at Port Hacking. Captain Springall of the Oriental Hotel

rendered them every assistance. It is thought they walked seven miles to Sutherland and caught a train to Sydney. The Board of Enquiry considered the sinking quite mysterious but it was found that the ship had sunk through springing a leak. There was no evidence with which the Captain could be charged but there were several suggestions made regarding a conspiracy which was not proved.

When I was Ten (Bruce Howell)

I turned ten in January of 1963. One of my errands was to walk to the corner shop to pick up a few things for my mother. She would send me with a beautifully written note, “1lb devon, ¼ pint of cream...” and so on. I would always return with exactly the right change, otherwise there was trouble. The corner shop (on Ewos Parade where a liquor store now stands) was run by the Rich Family, Mr and Mrs Rich and their two sons. Mr Rich was a very kind and patient man – I would regularly visit him with a shopping trolley full of empty soft drink bottles for which I was able to redeem the threepence deposit that was included in the purchase price. I earned a lot of pocket-money that way, and Mr Rich never showed any sign of irritation when I showed up. I would offload them at the side door, so he would have to leave the shop for as long as it took him to transfer the bottles into crates, but he did it cheerfully and unhurriedly. Perhaps he was aware that I would very likely spend the money in his shop anyway – a threepenny bar of Nestle’s chocolate was my favourite item – a little smaller than a playing card and 2 or 3 millimetres thick, in a dark blue wrapper. I liked the chocolate, but I was more interested in the collectors’ cards that they contained – they featured photos of jets and planes in flight, usually with a deep blue background, that you could collect and paste into a special book, “Adventure in the Sky”, that Nestle’s produced. To this day I love the image of a jet in mid-air with open blue sky behind. I must’ve bought a lot of chocolate to collect those cards, because I no longer drool over things made of chocolate the way many of my friends do. Threepence bought many things that a ten year old

Ref.

Loney, Jack *Wrecks on the New South Wales Coast*, Oceans Enterprises, Yarram Vic. 1993.

Sydney Morning Herald, various issues.

The Bulletin (SSHS), various issues.

would love to buy – a small bottle of Coca Cola, a Paddle Pop, and I remember that you could buy 24 “bullets” (chocolate covered liquorice about 2 cm long and 2 mm wide) for threepence back then (they were eight for a penny). I think “Choo-Choo Bars” were threepence too.

The opportunity to trade in the empty drink bottles was a bi-product of the building boom that occurred in the early 1960’s in Cronulla. One house after the other was demolished to make way for large blocks of home units. The workmen would leave their soft-drink bottles behind at the end of the day, and every afternoon after school, my brother and I would scour the worksite in search of the bottles. In fact, playing in the half built home unit blocks was a real adventure and we’d get up to a lot of mischief. One day we were playing inside an almost finished unit, in what was to become “North Reef” on the Esplanade, and we had crawled inside the kitchen cupboards just for fun. It was at exactly that time that we heard voices, and we could recognise the voice of the builder, Mr Pardy, a man who had built several blocks in the area and whom we had come to know – in fact his daughter went to our primary school at South Cronulla. He was showing some people through the units. We froze inside the cupboards hoping they’d pass but instead they came into the kitchen – I think we both lost our nerve at the same time because we decided to run for it, bursting through the cupboard doors straight out of the unit. I can’t imagine what Mr Pardy and his guests would have thought, but we had made our escape before they had a chance to do or say anything.

I was very fortunate to have grown up in Cronulla. My family moved from Greenacre in 1959 when it became apparent that we would need to care for an “elderly” uncle (he was almost 70), whose wife had

just passed away. It would have taken a lot of courage to do that, because my parents had moved into a new home in Greenacre in 1954 and it would have been much easier to stay put. Anyway my brother and I were the beneficiaries – our playground was the Esplanade near where the “Rugby” tower now stands with its row of Norfolk pines still standing proudly. The small beach in front of the pines, called Blackwood’s Beach, was where I spent a huge amount of my time, exploring the rocks and rock pools. I had an enormous amount of freedom to do whatever I wanted, as long as I was home by dark. Now that’s something from the past, because my children now are rarely out of my sight – it’s a shame really, but I can’t imagine allowing my own children the same freedom that I had – I think things were different then – maybe it was safer for children to wander about as my brother and I did.

Prior to the early 60’s, many of the homes in Cronulla went back to the earliest days of the township, in the early 1900’s. Where the “Rugby” units are now, there was a grand home surrounded by a driveway and an expansive, landscaped garden. Mr Harold Judd, whose father had been William George Judd, the first Shire President, lived there. Mr Judd was quite a sportsman. He had been a very good cricketer in his day, but he had also

represented Australia in rugby union from 1903 to 1905.

This explains the name of the current unit tower. – Mr Judd’s stately home on the Esplanade was called “Rugby”.

Mr Judd was also a big fan of the St George Rugby League Team, and since my uncle, a former cricketer and rugby league player himself, made no secret of the fact that he followed the South Sydney Rugby League Team, he and Harold would engage in a friendly rivalry revolving around the two teams. Of course it was in 1965 that a young and up-and-coming Souths team was beaten by St George in the Grand Final, the second last of eleven straight Grand Finals that St George would win. The Sydney Cricket Ground was so full that day, that spectators actually climbed up onto the roof of one of the main stands to watch the game – imagine that happening today!

Their houses are gone now. Mr Judd died in 1965 at the age of 85, and my uncle who seemed so elderly in 1959, died in 1990, only a few months shy of his 100th birthday. As my uncle himself would have said, “They had a good innings.”

Did you know ?

The world's most unusual courthouse and execution chamber were located in caves at Wiseman's Ferry on the Hawkesbury River. Seats were cut into a sandstone cave and Solomon Wiseman, Superintendent of convicts, presided. Prisoners sentenced to death were taken across the river, were, hanged from the branch of a tree, they dropped into a hole in the roof of another cave!

For over 30 years Sydney's Bea Miles terrorized taxidivers and the Department of Transport. She believed all public transport should be free and appeared in court on charges of fare evasion 195 times. A stanch patriot, she took taxis between Sydney, Perth, Melbourne and Broken Hill 'to

view the countryside'. And, on those occasions, she paid!.

Sir Sydney Kidman, who owned between 85000 and 105,000 square miles of grazing land in Central Australia, New South Wales and Queensland, began work in 1870 aged 13, with a one eyed horse and five shillings capital. He was the biggest landowner in the British Empire.

When Captain Philip Gidley King became the third Governor of New South Wales, he commented that the colony comprised of only two classes. Those who sold rum and those who drank it!

Sydney showgirl Pansy Montague, who loved to appear nude, got around the law by coating her

body with bismuth powder and striking classic poses impersonating Greek nymphs and goddesses!

Sydney's popular ferry services grew from a venture begun in the early 1800s by an eccentric Jamaican, Blue Billy, alias the 'Old Commodore'. He operated a one-man racket carrying passengers and produce

GEMS FROM THE TREASURE TROVE

by Merle Kavanagh.

The National Library of Australia has a website (trove.nla.gov.au) which includes a section on Australian newspapers where one can search by key words and discover a wealth of material. This is the first of some interesting local reports, this one giving details of an outing by the Sydney Bicycle Club to Stanwell Park on 16/17 June 1894. It is particularly interesting given the current discussion on bicycle paths.

CYCLING

(Sydney Morning Herald 18 June 1894, p.3)

The members left Sydney at 2 p.m., and journeyed to Tom Ugly's Point, thence to Sutherland and Waterfall, reaching their destination, Stanwell Park, shortly after dark. This being a pioneer club run to the locality, and in order to ensure a successful outing, the captain and Mr. Mark Long rode down on Wednesday and made all preliminary arrangements, so that the team on arrival found an excellent tea ready. The roads were in excellent condition with the exception of a few rough patches

Our youth now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority and have no respect for their elders. Children nowadays are tyrants.
Socrates (400 BC)

Common sense is not so common. Voltaire

across the harbour and when he finally left the business to his sons it expanded into a small fleet while, he, dressed in an old naval officer's uniform, roamed the streets of Sydney muttering 'Still alive, never die' until his death in 1834!

Mary Small

between Sutherland and Waterfall, but this was more than compensated for by the splendid riding from the latter place to Stanwell Park, the road through that distance being as smooth as a billiard table. There is a lagoon at the Park, and it was liberally patronized by the cyclists next morning. After dinner a return was made, and on reaching Waterfall the order was given for the team to branch off and go down the Lady Carrington Drive to National Park. The scenery there, as is generally known, is remarkably fine, and as few of the cyclists had been that way the ride through there was greatly appreciated by them. Audley was reached at 6 o'clock, and the moon being very bright the run thence to Tom Ugly's Point was a pleasant one. George's River was crossed by the punt, and at the other side the riders expressed a desire to have tea and ride on to town afterwards. Mrs. Bennett, of the Sea Breeze Hotel, provided for them in a most satisfactory manner, and the excursionists reached Sydney again at 12 o'clock last night, riding through by moonlight. All were delighted with the outing, and voted it the best run of the season.

There's only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that's not being talked about.
Oscar Wilde

When I have to decide between two evils, I always choose the one I haven't tried before.
Mae West

ON THE WALLABY TRAIL –

Address given by Daphne Salt to SSHS 17/9/11

During the Great Depression, George was on the wallaby trail for the best part of a decade. The majority of this article is written in the first person because it is reproduced verbatim; it is George speaking to straight from his journal.

I was born at Swindon, England in 1909. When I was two years old, my parents decided to carve out a new life with these Australian Colonials far away from all of those whinging Pommies. We arrived in Australia with only our clothes in a couple of ports and £20 [\$40] in cash.

World War 1 broke out during my first year at Rockdale school.

In 1919 the war ended and the soldiers came home, and with them came the Flu - thousands of people died - all public buildings were closed, and we had to wear face masks in the streets and shops. Our family all caught it, my mother nearly died.

I left school in 1922 and found myself a job at 15 bob a week [15 shillings = \$1.50] then had a variety of other jobs until 1930 when the Depression *really* hit – there was no work of any kind anywhere. Pubs couldn't even sell beer.

There was a rush on the Bank, until the bank ran out of money and the government ordered it to cease trading. The Manager of the Sutherland Tile works shot himself, he was in such financial trouble.

People were turned out of their houses when they fell behind in the rent or mortgage—kero tin and sugar-bag shacks sprang up in 'Happy Valleys' throughout the bush.

On my 21st birthday in March 1930, I sailed for New Zealand looking for work but there was none there either. I was desperate so I talked myself into a job with no wages, food only, on a Greek cargo packet carrying bulk super phosphate from the islands. My bed was a coil of rope, 'tween decks; there was no ventilation, it smelled like a fowl house.

When I eventually got back to Sydney I didn't get the prodigal son welcome I had expected. I was eating too much food, they wanted my board in advance, I had no money at all. I had come home to worse than I had left. I was 22 years old, and being

a single male I couldn't qualify for the dole so I sold the few things that I had, registered to collect track rations, took to His Majesties Highways and went on the wallaby.

You had to roll up a Swag, get a Billy, a Sugar bag, a quota of Flies and travel 50 miles [80.5 kilometres] each week to draw track rations to the value of seven and nine pence [79 cents]. Tuesday was the only day the Police gave out the ration tickets. The voucher was for 3 loaves of bread; chops **or** sausages; ¼lb. Butter; a box of matches, ¼ lb tea, ½lb Porridge, ½ lb Sugar, ¼ lb Cheese, ½lb Bacon, 1 tin jam, ½lb Rice. [1lb = 0.45 kilograms] No fruit or vegetables. You could not spend half or part of your voucher—it all had to be spent on the one day, so the last of the bread did not need to be toasted, it was dry enough already.

I travelled thousands of miles [1 mile = 1.6 kilometres] on foot, push bike, trucks and railways. I was supposed to be looking for work; it would be easier if they had said look for gold. The run of the mill men would have been aged between 20 and 40.

The Salvos opened soup kitchens in the towns, dropped in for a chat in camps and most people on the land gave us something to eat in return for a bit of work.

I was always clean and shaved each day. If possible I'd wear a tie, it made all the difference. I always called the men 'Sir' and the ladies 'Mother' and I always mentioned my mother. It brought out the mother in women.

I had a file and saw-set and sharpened their saws in return for food. Bread came easily, seldom butter, but they generously gave fat and even curry powder. Fat and curry powder on bread makes a good meal.

Swagmen hawked concoctions door-to-door – metal cleaners and silverfish repellent made of sand mixed with toilet crystals (taken from a railway toilet).

One of George's best sellers was fresh peas – shelled by orphans in a boys' home for sixpence [5cents] a jam tin full – housewives couldn't resist them. We always supplied mint, which grew profusely by any creek. In truth they were dried peas, which we bought for four pence halfpenny [4½ cents] a 7lb. Bag [3.2 Kilograms], soaked in a 4 gallon [15 litre] kerosene tin of water for a couple

of days and then, presto, fresh shelled orphans peas. One Bag gave us two kerosene tins full to sell. When you boiled our peas they turned to mush and empty hulls. But by the time news of the naughty salesmen got out we had well and truly gone.

We used fruit tins for a billy, half gallon pineapple tins for cooking in and half a kerosene tin made an excellent bucket. We got most items from garbage dumps; it is like shopping, if it is not obtainable here, try the next town tip.

Railways provided clothes lines, grillers, poker and toasters. A belt was made of fence wire with a hook at each end for a buckle. Newspapers mentioned vandalism to fences caused by swagmen, but the Swaggie only ever took a little piece of wire from the bottom strand.

To signal that a house was generous, you put a stone on the gate post pointing at the property; but if the place was a dead loss turning the stone sideways means don't waste your time, keep going.

A Swaggie has a well defined timetable – up at daylight (the birds are your alarm clock) breakfast of rolled oats and sugar, Dripping on Toast and a cuppa; pack up and keep walking until about 10 am or when it gets too hot, stop for lunch of bread and cheese, and a slice of bread and sugar for dessert, followed up with several cups of tea and a siesta until the heat got out of the sun, have a cup of tea, walk until we found a camping spot just before dark, where we had the big cooked meal of the day. Often it was a Rabbit stewed with vegies – Turnip tops and Beet tops, perhaps the outside leaves off Cabbage or Cauliflower.

We often got a good supply of half rotten spuds and onions; we'd score limp Rhubarb, spotty apples and pears. Over-ripe tomatoes are very tasty when fried. A sharp knife and a bucket of water will do wonders to rotten food if you are really hungry. Station cooks loaded me up when I said it doesn't matter if it is half rotten; a mutton chop, a squelchy onion, turnip tops and beetroot leaves with soggy carrots, partly decayed spuds a lump of squashy hairy pumpkin and a heap of fresh-from-the creek watercress or saltbush allstew up pretty well with crusts of bread, or the washings from a Marmite jar.

And God bless the Pick Me Up Sauce that we always carried in case the food we scrounged tasted too bad. It looked like bright green slime you

wouldn't have fed to the enemy, but there was nothing else, so we ate it. It didn't taste too bad in the dark and we finished it off with a billy of smoky tea.

When I first hit the road, I didn't even have a blanket, only an old World War One greatcoat – I buttoned it up, put a sugar bag in the neck hole and crawled in clothes and all, less boots, these were my pillow. I also had a corn sack I found on a fence, where someone could have stolen it and I didn't want that to happen, it was quite safe with me. This Corn sack covered me where my coat ended, I eventually made myself a Wagga.

A Wagga is a sort of rag sandwich, two slices of unbleached calico with old socks and jumpers, anything Wool, for the filling. It is sewn up like a quilt and the edges are bound. We had oilskins of tarred, thin canvas which was always sticky – they were our raincoats and groundsheets.

One stormy winter night George and a mate sheltered in a derelict barn with a hay loft. It had a fireplace, but we couldn't use that before dark because the smoke would show, so we cleaned it up a bit then sat on the floor and ate. This was good till it started to get really cold, so we lit a fire. It took a long time to get the place warm and we kept adding all sorts of wood and junk to raise the temperature. We thawed out in an hour or so. My mate said "I can hear someone upstairs, and they have a light on," we heard a thumping noise, like a drunk falling over.

I climbed the ladder only to discover that the whole loft was well alight. We packed our gear to make a quick exit, but we were too late, several men attracted by the fire met us at the door. The Boss asked "what do you mean by burning my barn down?" we explained we only lit a fire in the fireplace as we were so cold. He replied, "well I'm glad to see the last of it anyway," and he put a 10/— note [\$1] in my hand, saying "the insurance will build me a new one son, but don't go round making this sort of thing a habit, you can stick around till morning and the cook will give you some breakfast then get going."

George and his trail mate came upon a solitary swagman boiling his billy. In the tradition of the road we joined him and shared toast and tea. He was not very talkative.

The stranger, Jack, had an extra big swag and a nasty brown dog. We talked as we trudged along. He told us the bank took his house when his wife died, so he sold all his belongings and took to the road.

We made camp about a mile from Quirindi, had a bit to eat and then bedded down for the night. Jack didn't, he walked about and sat by a tree quite a distance from the fire praying and crying and holding a teddy bear in his hands. He didn't sleep at all, just wept and prayed and stroked his lousy dog which whimpered and moaned in concert with its master.

We were preparing to move on after breakfast and Jack was taking a long time fixing his Swag. I went to see if I could help him, when I saw the Teddy bear.

Intending to pull his leg, I said, "Hey, what have you got there." His answer knocked me flat. "It's my little boy, two years old, he died of pneumonia yesterday." He said he was taking the child's body to the police station at Quirindi. He rolled him up again in his swag and we walked on in a silent group to the police station.

Walking for 10 miles [16 km] with that unfortunate man carrying his little dead boy wrapped in his swag was the most horrible day of my life!

There were whole families on the roads. Dad pushing a barrow, Mum pushing a pram over hot bumpy tracks and four or five kids dejectedly wandering along, going nowhere, anywhere. There was the occasional horse and sulky; carts made into makeshift caravans with four sticks and a bit of hessian. They weren't waterproof but it was better than sitting in the sun. Then there were hand carts made from two bike wheels with a golden syrup box on top and a flattened kerosene tin lid to keep the water out. All the family's possessions were carried in these. Many a wife carried a baby in her arms while the husband carried a double swag. Pregnant wives and young husbands were a common sight.

Heading from Gunnedah to Coonabarabran to collect our week's rations we planned to camp in the glen for a few days before walking the last 20 miles [32km.]

Sitting by the crackling fire, hands wrapped around a cup of hot tea, I looked around the glen, it was so

quiet I shivered. George, Greg, Bill and Big Bill chatted and the fire began dimming. "I'll get some wood" Big Bill offered, disappearing into the bush.

Seconds later he was back empty-handed – "I'm g-getting the hell out of here f-first thing in the m-morning." He stuttered "there's a b-bloody g-ghost round there!"

We all laughed. Greg and I got up to fetch the fire wood. Under a big, old gumtree there was a misty form wrapped in a thin spider-web of light. I could see right through it. I shuddered as the apparition moved about, glowing then fading.

When Greg picked up a stick and threw it at the ghost, it went straight through it. Suddenly the apparition became more solid, swaying. I turned to run, glancing back for a last look. It was a woman, she was dressed in white and quite solid now and as I stared she seemed to stretch her arms out pleading. We fled, terrified back to the fire.

"Let's wait till the morning," I suggested with bravado. "We'll have a look at the tree again in the daylight". That night the woman, imploring me for help, haunted my dreams. Next morning we found nothing to explain what we'd seen.

In Coonabarabran a few days later I told a policeman our story. He nodded. "Years ago, a young couple were running away to marry" he said. "They camped in the glen under a big gumtree. During the night a branch fell, pinning the girl to the ground. The man ran 20 miles [32km] for help, but when he returned she'd died all alone in the bush; she has haunted the glen ever since."

Bicycles were often used to carry swags and kit, rather than lug it yourself. But a bike was only handy if you didn't want a lift and certainly you couldn't 'jump a rattler' and Truckies wouldn't stop for you if you had a bike and there were other problems too.

Wheeling a bike with a flat tyre is no fun. If your tube was gone the best way to fix it was with rope – push it through the valve hole, wind it round the rim until the groove was full of rope, threading the end out again through the valve hole. Most important was to keep the rope wet to keep it tight and hard. Tyres treated like this would go hundreds of miles and never go flat.

We did whatever work that was on offer. The

'sparrow starvers' collected horse dropping's off the streets in little carts and emptied the muck into kerbside boxes. This was a great place for a bumper shooter (cigarette butt scrounger) to sort through the harvest.

Sometimes we ran out of tea, instant coffee had not yet been invented. We had the choice of hot water or sometimes used Mint to make a reasonable hot drink, but it wasn't until we came across this old timer that we learned the secret of a cup of hot coffee, well almost. You take a slice of bread and over-toast it until it is black then scrape the black into your Billy add boiling water and 'hey presto' you have a good cup of Coffee. Spread a bit of butter on the remaining Bread and you then have coffee and toast fit for the King.

George was in a country post office writing home to Mother. 'She worries about me'. A conversation began with another swaggie who was asked if George was Catholic. He replied that he wasn't, his mother taught him that Catholics were no good and not to be trusted. However he was strongly advised to meet the local priest because the rewards would outweigh his misgivings.

That Father just oozed God's blessings. He invited me in and after a long discussion he sent me to Mrs Murphy's Guest House where I received dinner, bed and breakfast, had a hot bath while she washed, dried and ironed everything I had; she even gave me a couple of Mr Murphy's singlets. She was a good woman. I had a bed with clean sheets, breakfast of hot bacon and eggs and to top it all, a packed lunch including cake and fruit.

A couple of days later I tried the same thing at the Church of England rectory where the vicar's wife told me the rector was far too busy to talk to tramps. I felt a bit disillusioned after all my mother had told me about Catholics.

Homesteads were usually fenced off from the rest of the property with the dogs in the home paddock. You always threw 'Matilda' on the ground outside the gate, then opened the gate wide. The dogs would run straight to your swag, sniffing all around it, sometimes they would bless it too.

While this ceremony was taking place you'd step inside the gate and close it. When you opened the gate to leave the dogs rushed back in barking and tails wagging, pleased to note that you were going

but they would give you no trouble. You never pat them or carry a stick, only talk to them.

We were heading for Queensland, we were always heading for the State in whatever direction we were going, so today it was Queensland. We wandered into the butchers in Gloucester, 'sorry out of free cuts', so at the greengrocer's we picked up a few turnip tops and a lot of Beetroot leaves, some partly decayed carrots and spuds as well as some specked soft fruit, all that was left to find was bread, so to the Baker I went. But the Baker did not have any left, stale or fresh. I thanked him and was leaving when he called, "what about cake?" Was I hearing right, cake, naturally I said "yes please", the Baker said "it's in the pig tin, it should be O.K. though, take as much as you like," he threw me an old shoe box. I filled it with about three dozen cup cakes. After due thanks we moved off and we camped at Krambach.

One of the blokes had the call to retreat behind a large rock and on his return displayed a couple of the largest Mushrooms I have ever seen, up to 9" inches [22.86 cm] diameter, there were thousands of them, we picked the choicest and boiled these by the bucketful and drank the liquid instead of tea, they were delicious, this was followed by cake and a large helping of stewed apple and rhubarb, completing a really beautiful meal. Had my Mother been with us she could not have done any better.

In his eight years on the Wallaby, George was only handed over to the police three times. Near Taree he and a mate were given a three days hard labour for trying to jump a rattler. They cleaned up the police station garden and the station in general, cutting grass and burning rubbish. The officer's wife cooked them meals and they enjoyed themselves – they even had hot showers at night. "I can assure you we made no attempt to escape." They offered themselves for further detention but were sent on their way and told to keep off the trains. They immediately jumped the next train out of town.

One Christmas at the height of the Depression, George and two mates decided to see their families. They were camping at Parkes from where large numbers of wheat trains left for Sydney. They climbed on one of the trucks and lay under the tarpaulin on top of the grain. They soon found it was infested with weevils – it was wheat destined for poultry feed. The jolting of the train saw their

clothes and boots filled with wheat; if they removed a handkerchief from a pocket, the pocket immediately filled with wheat. The ride wasn't too bad but we kept having to swim to the top. We had had nothing to eat or drink, as only a fool would open his Dilly bag on a train in case you had to make a run for it but needing the toilet could be a problem.

We had just climbed off at Enfield when one of the meanest railway detectives caught us. He said "gotcha!" I said "what for?" he replied, "you're just got out of that truck", I said "You're wrong mate, we were just going to get in but you were too smart for us, anyway its full of wheat". His reply was, "well get to Hell out of this yard," We thanked him and left. Wheat was falling off me at every step and I had about two inches of wheat at the bottom of each boot.

Another time, George and three other chaps collected their rations and walked down just beyond Brinsleys Joinery to the cutting between Sutherland and Jannali to wait for the eleven o'clock goods train. She was heavily loaded and doing about 15 m.p.h. [24 kph] We missed the first truck but we all managed to throw Matilda into the second then we jumped in and got under the tarp out of sight before the train went through Sutherland Station. We went through the station and then we stopped, and after a great deal of bumping and shunting we were horrified to hear the train blow its whistle and head off down the Coast leaving us stranded in a truck consigned for Sutherland, then who should look under the tarp but Dan Dignam, the goods porter. Dan spoke harsh words, even making threats on our rear ends if he caught us, but he didn't stop us picking up a two thirty ride to Nowra.

Pretty late in my Swagging career I had a Dee-Luxe swag, a good thick blanket, an almost new ground sheet, good boots, in fact all my gear was top shape; the only thing missing was money for the wallet. Anyway, my mate and I were walking along the Great Western Highway when a big black Buick full of well dressed men pulled up, the driver said to me, "are you going to Penrith?" so I said 'yes', he said "hop in". Well, the car had three men in the back and three in the front and there was no room for my mate and no room for my swag either, so the driver tied it onto the spare tyre on the back. I wriggled my bum in between the other passengers

and remarked, "gee, its good of you to give me a lift, it's very hot walking in the sun", to my surprise I got the reply, " don't thank us too much we only gave you a ride for luck, we are going to the races at Penrith and we thought it might be lucky to give a Swaggie a ride, anyway you are getting out pretty soon, you don't smell too good." Arriving at the race course we all got out, but to my horror my swag was gone, the driver hadn't tied it on securely, he said, "I'd give you a lift to look for it but the first race is about to start."

I walked back about two miles [3.2 km], meeting up with my disgruntled mate struggling under the load of two swags. I'm sure he was sorry to see me because he could have updated his own swag if my lift had taken me further. I don't know how the races went, I hope their luck was no better than mine, the lousy Bastards.

[George moved to Dubbo in 1983] I supplied several of my experiences on His Majesties Highways to Allan Nixon to include in his book 'SWAGMEN, Survivors of the Great Depression' back in 1986.

I was interviewed on the T.V, on the Midday show. Yes, by Ray Martin the highest paid interviewer in AUSTRALIA in September 1987. So I flew to Sydney then we were whisked off to the Studios of Channel 9. Here we met up with Allan.

Ray asked me why did I go on the road in the first place? Well, I explained I was broke, I had no money so I had no choice. I would have taken any sort of a job, but there were none, so I hit the road and started walking.

I was enjoying the publicity or was it notoriety. This interview business was new to me I quite enjoyed being a Celebrity.

My friends made Video tapes of the great event to be kept for posterity [sic] as I very much doubt if It will happen again.

In one of his Journals George wrote:- *In 1965 Dave Kirkby, Dick Harrison, Reg Dallimore and Myself had a couple of inaugural [sic] meetings in my barber shop about starting an Historical Society That came into being in March 1966.*

About the time of our 25th Anniversary, Merle Kavanagh entered her poem based on George's experiences in the Traditional Poem section of the Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival -she was awarded a 'Very Highly Commended'

Merle travelled to Grenfell to receive her certificate at the Civic Reception. There was everything from a parade with floats, an impressive reading of Henry's poems at the monument where he was born, to a fun afternoon at the guinea pig races ...

George was delighted with Merle's poem and insisted that we publish it in our Bulletin. It appeared in November 1992.

DEPRESSION DAYS

Dedicated to and based on the experiences of George Heavens – by Merle Kavanagh (1991)

In a clearing by the rutted road that heads out Bimbi way

By the first soft dark of evening on the plain,
A group of mismatched fellows - they had only met that day were boiling up the billy yet again.

There were four of them that evening - tired faces of the road—

It was "hit the track or starve" as times were bleak,
For you had to walk your fifty miles and carry all your load,
Before you drew your rations for the week.

The joker in the party had a funny tale to tell,
How he made a bob by selling "farm fresh peas",
Freshly shelled by needy orphans - he did very, very well!

With a sprig of creek-grown mint, they sold with ease.

He laughed as he related what the housewife never knew,

The trade secret that he thought it best to hide;
How he soaked the peas for two days till they looked as good as new,
For the peas came from a packet and were dried!

As the laughter filled their circle and the firelight caught their smiles,

A thin-faced bloke began another yarn.

He recalled one winter evening when he'd walked a dozen miles

And with his mate he'd holed up in a barn.

'Twas an old one, with a hay loft, and no one was around,

So they settled in and ate, then went to bed,
But the cold of early morning seemed to creep up from the ground

And they lit a fire to warm up the old shed,

After they had thawed out and the embers had burnt low,

They could hear a noise upstairs - there was a light!
A thump like someone falling and still the lantern glow ...?

He climbed the steps - the whole loft was alight!

They left in quite a scramble but, too late, the boss was there?

He raved and ranted in the fire's glow,

Then he pushed ten shillings in his hand and told the startled pair

To see the cook at breakfast and then go!

Insurance saved the day and it preserved their hides as well,

Dame Fortune sure had smiled on them that day.

Then the freckled tubby fellow said he had a tale to tell –

How they hopped a loaded wheat truck out near Hay.

They had settled in the cushion of the tons of moving grain

They were heading for the city on that run.

As the miles crept by the steady rocking motion of the train

Would slowly seek to swallow up each one!

They spent the whole long journey flailing arms and legs to stay

Atop the hungry quicksand of the wheat,

And they heaved a sigh of thankfulness when by the light of day

They saw the city traffic on the street.

At the goods yard, out they leapt, with their clothing full of grain

But were spotted by a railway D. "Hey, wait!"

"You were on that train!!" but each denied it time and time again Saying earnestly "We just came in the gate".

So he let them off and awkwardly they tried to walk away,

Their shoes and clothing with the grain were lined,
And the city flocks of pigeons all would have a feast that day

Of the tell-tale wheat that trickled out behind!

The listeners chuckled softly at the tale that had been told

And someone stirred the fire to a blaze.

The shadows had crept closer in and brought a breath of cold,

And their threadbare coats had seen much better days,

On that still and chilly evening by the flickering fire's gleam,

The last man's story started to unfold,
He began "mates, I assure you - things aren't always what they seem" And here's the touching story that he told.

"My mate and I met Jack - he had a big swag and a hound.

We walked and talked along our weary way;
His wife had died, he'd lost his home and he was Grenfell bound.

We made our camp together on that day."

"We bedded down but Jack walked off and sat against a tree;

We worried so my mate went over there.
He found that Jack was weeping, sometimes praying, he told me
But strange to say he had a teddy bear!

"Jack spent the night just patting that lousy dog of his,

And breakfast over, packed without a word.
I chaffed him on the teddy bear - 'Hey, what have you got there?'
I can't forget the answer that I heard!"

He said 'It is my little boy - no more than two years old, pneumonia killed him just two days ago.'
It knocked me flat, I tell you, and my blood went fairly cold.

Jack wrapped him in his swag and breathed .. 'Let's go.'

"We silently accompanied Jack - police were really kind –
And stayed with him throughout that long sad day,
But many a night, around the fire, old Jack comes to my mind ..."

He whispered then ".. That's all that I can say."

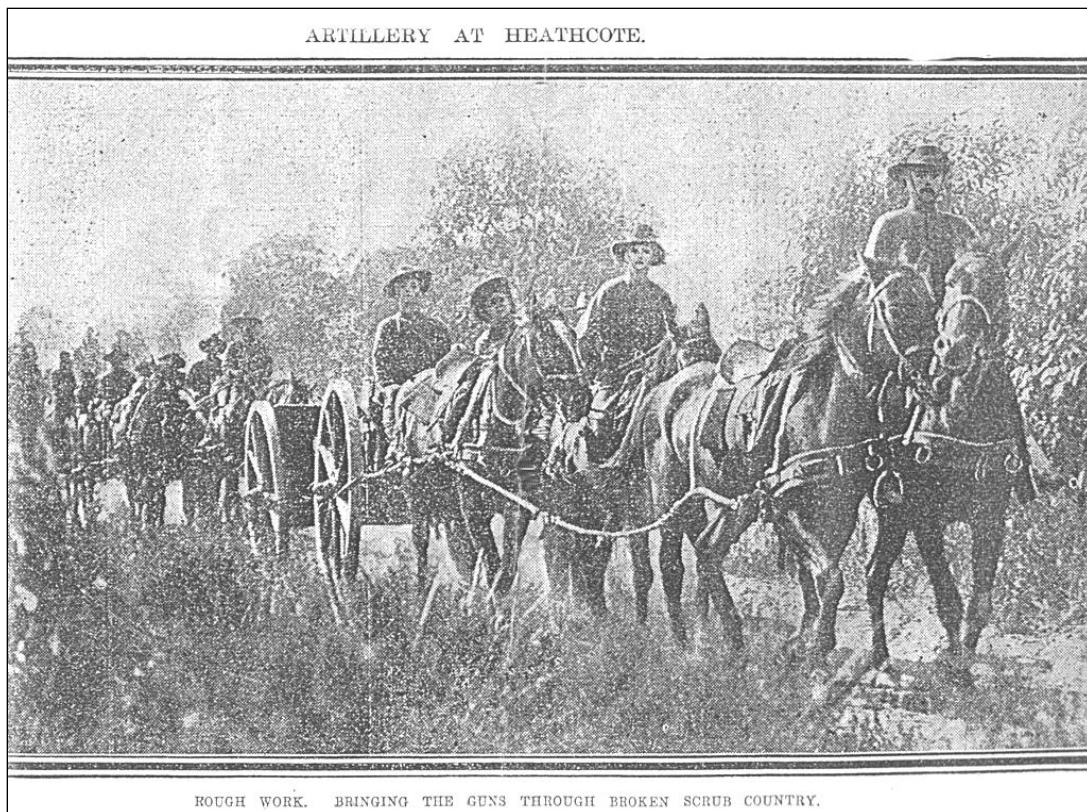
The clear cold gleam of starlight barely showed that silent band,

The fire's embers blinked a last goodbye.
And each man counted blessings, for who knows what fate has planned,
And wiped a salty teardrop from his eye.

ARTILLERY AGAIN ACTIVE - THE CAMP AT HEATHCOTE

GOOD WORK WITH THE GUNS

CLIVE BAKER



The Australian Field Artillery camp at Heathcote was early astir yesterday. Major Christian, the Chief Instructor of the AFA, who is supervising the training operations, had mapped out another extensive day's operations.

Prior to 9am, the camp lines presented a scene of great animation ... The tests, which are now nearing a conclusion, were yesterday particularly severe.

The three batteries, which are in camp, the whole under the command of Major R. Lonehan, all engaged in gun practice ... The day's operations were carried through with credit to all, the many manoeuvres being executed with scarcely a hitch.

The special scheme for the day was that the Blues, a mythical enemy, were supposed to be advancing from the south on Heathcote. The outposts were sighted at Stanwell Park. A position of the Reds' No 2 Battery, in command of Major Pearce, moved out of camp early and took up a position under cover in observation of the "Island" and fronting Eckersley Ridges. They made a rendezvous on the slope of a hill about 400 yards from McAlister's and were ready to open fire at 9.15am.

They overlooked the Woronora River and their first duty, that of silencing the hostile advancing guns on the Eckersley Ridges, was successfully accomplished at a long range, 4,300 yards.

Then, following orders, the battery pushed

Source: *Daily Telegraph*, 17.4.1912.

forward and took up a position fronting Red Bluff Ridge and the Island, to repel an attempt by the attacking force to turn the defender's flank by pushing their infantry to the front of the Red Bluff Ridge. After an observation lasting close on an hour, a column was discovered approaching and a gun fire of shrapnel was opened by the reds at about 2,300 yards.

It was not, however, particularly effective and the enemy, strengthened by reinforcements, pushed up gradually to within a range of 1200 yards. In the meantime, No.1 Battery, commanded by Captain Lucas, had a hot engagement with the Blue infantry, which was in a position on Eckersley Ridges, working to the right in an attempt to attack the Reds on the left flank. The movement was eventually frustrated, Captain Lucas getting his guns into a concealed position about 200 yards south of the junction of the new and old Illawarra roads, commanding an outlook on the Eckersley hills and the Island ... No 3 Battery, in charge of Major Heath, continued the engagement from a position behind Heathcote Church and the enemy were eventually routed.

Though the men have been kept busy throughout their stay in Heathcote, all are unanimous in expressing approval at the conditions generally at the camp ... an elevated position just east of the railway line in National Park. There are upwards of 300 men [there].

(Material supplied by: Lawrie Daly of Engadine)

Keep a diary and one day it'll keep you.

Mae West

The harder you work the luckier you get.

Gary Player

Dream as if you'll live forever. Live as if you'll die today.

James Dean

If you focus on results you will never change. If you focus on change you will get results.

Jack Dixon

The Road South to the Illawarra

Georges River to Bottle Forest

Greg Jackson

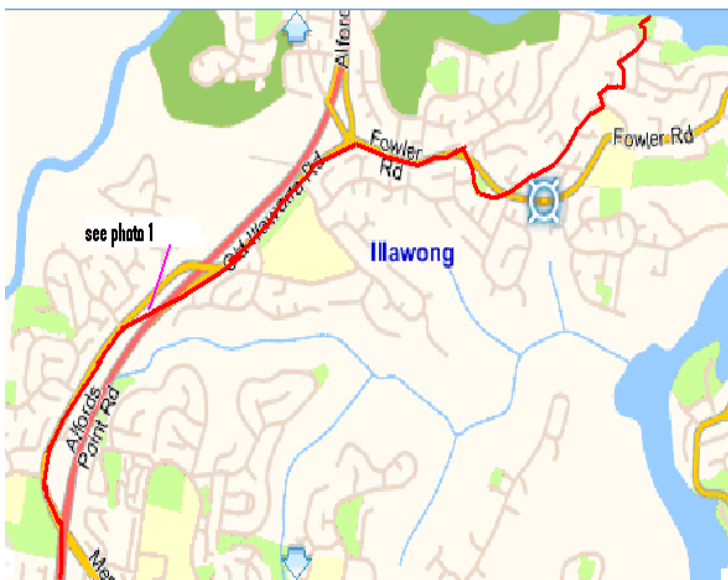
In the last three bulletins we have traced the road south from its beginnings at the Cooks River Dam to the south bank of the Georges River. Mitchell's survey SR5276¹ which took us from the Cooks River Dam to the Georges River crossing continues on the southern side of the river as far as Bardon Ridge. Laying this part of Mitchell's survey over a modern road map we can see that much of the road had disappeared under houses and modern roads but here and there traces and echoes of the old road remain. The map below shows the convict road winding up the considerable hill from the waters edge to where it then joins Fowler Road near Old Ferry Road following part of Thompson Avenue and then Hobart Place. From here it follows Old Illawarra Road through Menai to Bardon Ridge where survey SR5276 finishes.



The photos over show remnants of the old road



Photo 1: The walking/bike track from Illawong to Menai: this old fence marks the line of the old road. This photo is taken on the track opposite Rosewall Drive Menai.



— Part of a survey by Major Sir Thomas Mitchell 1843 showing the road south from the old Lugarno Ferry. Photo 1 shows the old road as it is now.

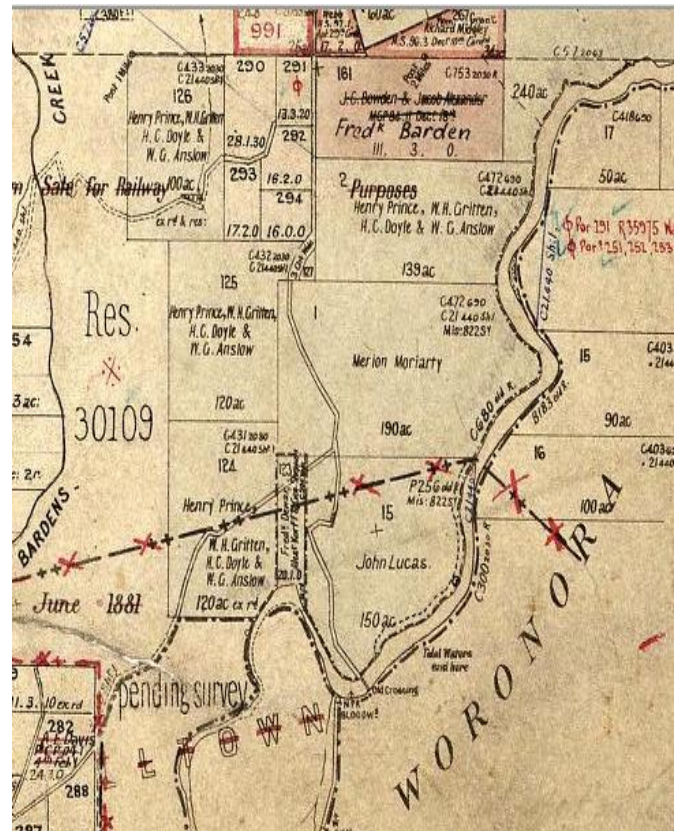
Under the high voltage power easement (beside 23 – 27 Hobart Place Illawong) the old road is visible as a depression in the grass about 5 meters east of the modern road.



...the importance of effecting a good passage of the River Woronora at that point (A) will also therefore be obvious; and it fortunately happens, that although the banks are in general rocky and rise to a considerable height, ravines descend from each side to this point and lead in the very same direction at the line I have just marked, in continuation, to the Illawarra. This favorable direction of the line of ascent and descent having in fact, mainly encouraged me to ascertain positively the practicability of the whole line...

The Parish Map below² shows Mitchell's Illawarra Road continuing through what is now Bardon Ridge and down to the Woronora River and a causeway at the Pass of Sabugal³ then up the other bank of the Woronora to what is now Engadine.

The photo above shows the route of Mitchell's road through the park fronting Fowler Road near Batavia Street. This area has since been much disturbed by council works



This lane connecting Black Close to the park in the photo above is an echo of the old road.

The NSW State Archives are unable to supply Mitchell's survey from Bardon Ridge to Bottle Forest; it is missing so we are forced to rely on Parish Maps and some documentary evidence for that section of the road.

On the 18th May 1843 Mitchell wrote to his Excellency the Governor¹ that:

As anyone who has walked this section of road will testify the gradients on both sides of the river are very steep and it would have been a very difficult journey on the tracks of 1843. Mitchell was obviously well aware of these difficulties.

On the 15 October 1851 he wrote again to the Governor General:

...A serviceable punt being now ready or nearly so for the ferry at Georges River, I have the honor for consideration of his Excellency the Governor General the expediency of clearing a line of road along a ridge that has been found to be continuous from the punt to Maddens Plains, thus affording a line of route from the punt to Illawarra which is no longer than that which crosses the Woronora, the difficulty of which pass may thus be avoided. Along this range (which was first explored by Mr Dark) there is a tract of land resembling that of Illawarra and a very small party of men employed to clear the line of trees ought to render it passable in a few weeks, the whole range being very level...

Thus the Pass of Sabugal was doomed almost before it started. A 'new' Illawarra Road continues straight ahead where it meets Heathcote Road, through what was later to become, for a short while the wine growing area of Eckersley and down the western side of the Woronora River to the Illawarra. Although clearly visible on Google Earth this road now runs through Holsworthy military reserve and is thus difficult to explore.

The original road via Bottle Forest however remained passable for many years although prior to the Woronora Dam's completion in 1942 floods would have continually washed away the causeway. This section of the road was improved by depression work in the 1890's (although there was little call for it)⁵ and the road and causeway that we now see is largely the result of Water Board work installing the water pipeline from the Woronora

Dam to Sydney's southern suburbs in 1942. A small community grew up, clustered around the causeway and down past the needles, little now remains of these houses, they appear to date from the 1930's and were all gone by the 1960's. An old Parish map⁴ shows Tirto Road running through Lucas' old land grant 100 feet back from the river from Mitchell's old road and today this road is flanked by rockeries and chimneys in the bush. There is no sign of habitation on the Engadine side of the river. The ferry from Tom Ugly's Point to Horse Rock Point (Sylvania) started operating in 1864 and this provided an easier and more direct route from Sydney to the Illawarra. This new ferry also replaced the Lugarno Ferry until increased settlement in the Menai area caused its re establishment in 1887.

This article completes the full length of Mitchell's road to the Illawarra.

1. Available from the NSW State Archives. The map accompanying Mitchell's letter to the Governor is missing.
2. Parish Map No 14041401 Parish of Holsworthy 1899
3. The portion of road around the Woronora River crossing was originally named The Pass of Sabugal by Mitchell, after a town in Portugal where he served in the 95th Rifles during the Napoleonic Wars.
4. Parish Nap 14043001 Parish of Holsworthy 1962
5. Frank Cridland. *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and the Sutherland Shire*. Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1924

Women like silent men. They think they're listening. Marcel Archard

Knowledge is power. Francis Bacon

What's in a Name?

Part 1

(Bruce Howell 2011)

I can clearly remember the day, it was about 10 years ago, when I first heard someone refer to “South Cronulla” Beach. I’ve lived for 50 years in Cronulla, having grown up in Arthur Avenue, not far from Cronulla Point. I attended Cronulla South Primary and Cronulla High School – most of my friends were surfers – my summers were spent on one beach or another, but never had I heard of this beach at South Cronulla. I thought for a moment – “do they mean Shelly Beach?”

Of course I am now well aware that this usage is a way of distinguishing Cronulla Beach from North Cronulla Beach, but having walked along the Esplanade so many times, having passed Cronulla Surf Club and North Cronulla Surf Club, having seen so many surf carnivals with Cronulla and North Cronulla competing, there was never a need to invent a way of distinguishing the two beaches.

It may seem like a trivial point, but minor changes in the name of a locality so firmly rooted in one’s sense of place, can be a real jolt – if you’ve ever seen “Woolooware” spelt *Woolaware* and felt a twinge of despair, or been mortified to hear a traffic reporter refer to the “Princess” Highway at Sutherland, you’ll know what I mean.

“Blackwood’s Beach” is a similar example. *Blackwood’s* is just south of Cronulla Point, with Shark Island almost directly offshore. During the 1960’s the beach was referred to by at least some locals, as *Blackman’s* Beach. In fact, some teenagers who frequented the beach carved their names into one of the vertical rock faces at the southern end of the beach under the title “Blackman’s Beach Bums”¹. I remember hearing a rumour that the beach was called “Blackman’s” because a man by that name had been drowned there, having been caught in the beach’s notorious rip. Looking at the beach now, with its expansive central rock shelter, I can also imagine that it might have been a favourite place of the original inhabitants of our local area, pre European settlement, possibly

giving the name “Blackman’s” a different slant.

These are two examples of where a name of a locality has “mutated”, whether the mutation be in the spelling or in the sense of the origin of the name, but there are many other examples.

Take the name *Cronulla* itself. There still seems to be uncertainty about whether the name derives from the aboriginal name “Kurranulla” (place of pink shells) or from the name of the earliest European landholder of the area, John Connell, who owned land both at Cronulla and near Kurnell. Interestingly an 1835 map of the area² shows that Cronulla Beach has always been known as such, although a real estate advertisement from 1900³ shows the main street of the township as *Curranulla* Street, which adds to the confusion about the origin of the name. Of course “Kurnell” also sounds like “Connell”, but as in the case of Cronulla, there is a similar sounding aboriginal word that may give the true derivation of the name Kurnell.

This irksome uncertainty about the derivation of key place names doesn’t end there. On the same map mentioned above², the whole area is referred to as “Southerland Parish”. Now the name “Southerland” makes sense because the area was always the southern extremity of the fledgling settlement at Sydney Cove, and “Southerland” would probably be pronounced “Sutherland” anyway (compare the pronunciation of “southerly”). But wasn’t Sutherland named after Forby Sutherland, a member of Cook’s crew who was buried at Kurnell in 1770? Cook named Point Sutherland at Kurnell after him – the *Forby Sutherland Garden* sits right alongside the Sutherland Council buildings, so the connection seems very strong. Here we have two almost identical names, each a strong contender for the true source of the name of our shire, but can both be right?

The same is true for the name *Port Hacking*. Port Hacking was named by no less than George Bass and Matthew Flinders when they explored the estuary all the way up to Audley in 1796. But

throughout the early and middle 1800's, the port was referred to as "Port Aiken".⁴ But wait on – if you say "Port Aiken" ten times fast, it starts to sound like "Port Hacking"!

Now you might conclude that Hacking and Aiken are just different spellings of the same name, but they're not! Bass and Flinders were acknowledging Henry Hacking, a member of the First Fleet who was accepted by them as the first European to reach the Hacking River, but "Port Aiken" recognises James Aiken, also a "First Fleeter", as the first.

What we have here is an example of two names concurrently used to name a location, with very different origins, but with very similar spellings.

But there's more:

The creek that flows into Yowie Bay is called Ewey Creek. (You cross Ewey Creek if you drive along President Avenue from Miranda to Caringbah, in the big dip). Indeed an early map⁵ that was probably part of the "Walker Report" on the Holt Estate of 1868, shows the bay as *Ewey Bay*. Various internet sites tell a story of Scots or Yorkshiremen who tended sheep in the Ewey Creek area in the 1800's, with "Ewey" referring to the ewes. The idea is that if a Scots or Yorkshireman were to say "Ewey" it might sound like "Yowie", so perhaps *Ewey* mutated into *Yowie*⁶. Curiously, Frank Cridland, in his book "The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and Sutherland Shire", first published in 1924, tells a story⁷ of Charles Gogerly, one of the earliest settlers on the southern side of Port Hacking, who operated a shell gathering business in the mid 1800's, but when confronted with strangers entering the port near where he was living, dispatched his sons to warn the newcomers of a strange creature seen nearby, that he called a "yahoo" – an attempt to scare possible competitors away. Gogerly lived at Gogerly's Point, almost directly opposite Yowie Bay, and of course in Australian folklore, a *yowie* and a *yahoo* are the same thing! In her book "Gateway to the South:

First Stop Sylvania", Daphne Salt suggests "Yowie" to be of aboriginal origin.

Also in Daphne Salt's book, the origin of the name "Tom Ugly's Point", is given as either a corruption of the name Tom Huxley, who was a landowner in the Sylvania area around 1810, or of the name of a local man, also named Tom, who had a wooden leg and was referred to as "Tom wooden leg" which was corrupted to Tom Woggleg then Tom Ogly. Then again, the Kogarah Council website gives five other different possible explanations.

Again, a very interesting mutation can be seen in the name "Turriel Point" in Lilli Pilli. In the mid 1800's, Turriel Point was the terminus for the local transport routes from Sutherland. Travellers could cross from Turriel Point by boat to visit Simpson's Hotel in Bundeena. Simpson was in fact a land owner at both Turriel Point and at Bundeena, and his hotel was originally called "Tyreal House". But on the Walker Report map⁵, the name of the point at Lilli Pilli is marked as "Tyreal Pt". So it looks very likely that Turriel Point somehow mutated from "Tyreal Point" and so has an origin in the connection between Simpson's interests in both Lilli Pilli and Bundeena.

I imagine that part of the problem is that since we are talking about names that were coined in only the first 50 years or so of the European settlement in Sydney, there may not yet have developed a sufficient sense of "history" to bother recording the origins of names. Add to that the remarkable coincidences in the spellings of some of the key names involved, *Connell*, *Kurnell*, *Curranulla*, and *Cronulla*; *Southerland* and *Sutherland*; *Port Hacking* and *Port Aiken*; *Yowie* and *Ewey*; *Huxley* and *Ugly*; *Turriel* and *Tyreal*; and even *Blackwood's* and *Blackman's*, the uncertainties become even more difficult to unravel – surely the stuff of many sleepless nights for our shire historians.

So what's in a name?

A lot more than you think.

¹ Interestingly the carvings at Blackwood's Beach, so prominent in the 60's and 70's, are now, only 45 years on, heavily eroded, and only partly legible.

² See page 11 of "Pictorial History Sutherland Shire" by Pauline Curby, Kingsclear Books (2004)

³ See page 20 of "Pictorial History Cronulla" by Pauline Curby, Kingsclear Books (1998)

⁴ At the time Port Hacking was the centre of a lively industry in shell gathering for production of lime, and ships would routinely travel to "Port Aiken" as proved by shipping notices in the Sydney Morning Herald at the time. (Incidentally, *Aicken* and *Aitkin* appear as alternative

spellings of *Aiken*.) See also page 13 of the May 2011 SSSH Bulletin.

⁵ See page 11 of "Pictorial History Cronulla" by Pauline Curby, Kingsclear Books (1998).

⁶ See page 137 of "A Pictorial History of Sutherland Shire" by Joan Lawrence, Kingsclear Books (1997).

⁷ The story of the "yahoo" can be found on the 1st page of Chapter 2 of Frank Cridland's book.

WHEN I WAS TEN.

Ian Stewart

When I was ten it was March 1953. The westerly extremity of Caringbah, a street away from Kareena Road and just off the Kingsway, had been the location of my home for six months, the time since my uprooting from the gentle, rural environment of Inverell in northern NSW. A term at Miranda Public School at the end of fourth class had acclimatised me, but I hardly needed acclimatising. The atmosphere was just like my old school in the country. Then came fifth class with the athletic and insightful John Morrow as class teacher. This was an invigorating experience, capped the next year by the guidance and stimulation of Alan Kelly. They prepared me well for my time at Sydney High.

Ours was the Boys' School, on the south-eastern corner of Kiora Road and the Kingsway. The girls were safely tucked away several hundred metres to the west, although, at ten, I wasn't really noticing their absence. In fact it was not until the end of the next year that I began to feel some attraction, the object of which was, sadly, to head off to a high school distant from mine.

In 1953 the Shire still had its rural heart. The Miranda Co-op continued to function; small farms were worked in the Box Road area; and houses, ours included, were only gradually appearing on old orchard land. The Sutherland Hospital site was still a venue for gymkhanas. Burns' Timber Yard purveyed building material from its Caringbah CBD location.

I was bemused at first to find that Friday afternoons, especially in summer, were set aside for 'sport' which, for most of us meant a trip on the train to Cronulla and swimming in the rock pool between North and South Cronulla beaches. The easy access to the sea was like a taste of heaven for me, who had previously only been afforded the luxury of salt water on occasional holidays at Manly. And to immerse in the sea every week! I quickly honed my swimming skills and achieved a certificate for a mile at the end of the year.

Half way through 1953 neighbours around the corner put in a tennis court on their next door block and invited us kids to play. My parents gave me a racket and by the end of the year I was judged proficient enough to be part of a C6 comp team. This opportunity allowed me to travel as far afield as Bexley and Rockdale. For me these trips were almost like leaving the country!

Friendships were easily made. Their cementing was aided by my acquisition of a bike. My mate Ross who lived at the end of Attunga Road in Miranda was the top of my list. His grandmother lived next door. Her house, which was on the water front on Gympsea Bay, had a boat and a tidal swimming pool. And Don, another classmate, lived just along the road and also had a waterfront. This one was on Yowie Bay. Fishing for yellowtail and leather jacket filled a lot of hours for us.

At the end of the year we discovered the mud flats at Sylvania, a spot which has now been overtaken by Sylvania Waters. Low tide gave

us exciting sport riding our bikes at high speed to produce the greatest skids. Spills were frequent and muddy clothes brought grieved sighs from our mothers.

The unique life that was afforded a ten year old by the Shire in 1953 has lived on in my mind ever since and provides me with the strongest 'home' attachment I have. That the Shire can still stand a little aloof from the hard

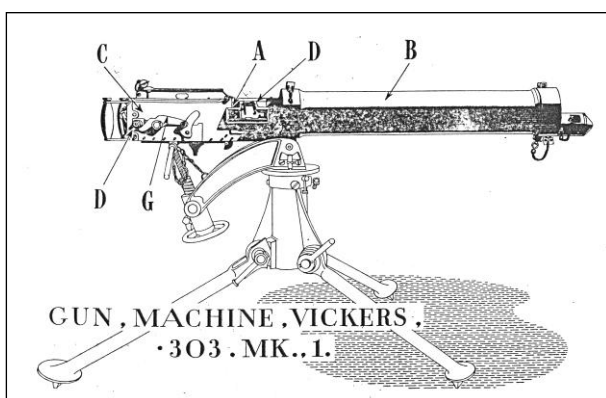
TROUBLEMAKERS AT AUDLEY **Clive Baker**

Bill Campbell registered for the Militia in 1927 at the age of fourteen. He was not permitted to commence training until after his seventeenth birthday and that he commenced about 1930.

He was in 19 Battalion which later became 1 City of Sydney Battalion (Militia) and he was always proud of it. It was the only unit that had the 'Keys to the City' and was therefore permitted to march through Sydney with fixed bayonets.

By 1934 he was a corporal in the 'E' (Machine-Gun) Company but by 1940 held the rank of sergeant major in E-Company.

They were then armed with Vickers machine-guns similar to the one below.



Bill used to tell the story of what occurred in the early war period when they trained on the Vickers in the Royal National Park. This was sometime before 1942 and they were firing live rounds from Artillery Hill just above the

rush of present day Sydney and maintain something of its 1953 character fills me with both pleasure and hope.

Audley popular picnic spot and its rowing boat hire service.

The machine gunners had been called up for full time service and, while training, they spotted two civilian men blissfully rowing two pretty girls on the river below.

The soldiers 'saw red' and the cry went up "Why aren't these two fit young men in uniform like us – they must be draft dodgers or such."

At that, the Vickers machine-gun was pointed at the boat and, judging a safe distance, they fired live rounds into the water behind the rowers. There was great amusement as the row boat took off with a speed that was described as good enough to water ski behind.

That display of fitness further enraged the machine gunners and the 'No1' on the gun turned it so that the bullets hit the water behind the boat at safe distance until it disappeared out of sight. The gunners thought that the bullets ripping at the water was a great joke.

The rowers reported the incident to the authorities but when questioned, the gunners all stuck together and the official report was that it must have been ricochets that were seen. The officer suggested that more care should be taken in the future.

Years later, Bill conceded that the two rowers may well have been soldiers who were enjoying some leave in civilian clothes!

While Bill was serving in New Guinea in WW2, his wife, Hilda, purchased a block of land in Soldiers Road, Jannali. After the war Bill built a house on the block while first living in a tent then a garage.

He went on to be a foundation member of the Jannali RSL Sub-branch (now defunct) and lived until 1982 when he passed away aged 79.

Source: Bill's son, John Campbell of Jannali

Aitken Vs Hacking

In the May 2011 Bulletin a letter to the editor from the 11th August 1863 was re-printed. The letter was from one of the grandchildren of Captain Aiken (Aitken) complaining about the port being called 'Port Hacking'. This was not the last time that Commander James Aitken's relatives complained about this apparent slight on the Commander's achievements. On the 21st December 1881, in the Sydney Morning Herald Aitken's great-grandson, a Mr E. B. Woodhouse, complained to the editor in a similar vein about the use of the term 'Port Hacking'. This time the letter did not go unchallenged. A letter from a Mr John W. Deering appeared in the Herald 2 days later. Mr Deering appears to be a serial letter writer to the editors of Sydney's newspapers in the late 1800's and this letter I have reprinted below.

Port Hacking

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HERALD

Sir, - I am sorry again to trouble you, but the letter of Mr Woodhouse in the morning's *Herald* necessitates a reply from me. It is not a matter of very great importance as to whom the port was named after; but it is a matter of interest to those who desire to preserve the original nomenclature of this continent. It would have been more satisfactory if Mr Woodhouse had given dates as to the time Mr. Midshipman, afterwards Commander, Aitken was in Sydney. My former note to you on this subject was written from memory. Since then I have referenced to "Collins' New South Wales¹" and also to Flinders. The latter says, at page 102 of his introduction, that in sailing up the east coast with Bass in the Tom Thumb in 1876², "We found the river, or rather port, which was the original place of our destination; and it having been a pilot named Hacking from whom the first information of it had been received, it was named after him." We may well suppose that Flinders, being in commission for the special duty of

maritime exploration and survey in these waters, knew thoroughly what he was talking about.

On the chart by William Dawes, in "Hunter's New South Wales," in 1792, Port Hacking is not shown and nothing further south than Botany Bay, the chart embracing "all those parts of the territory of New South Wales which have been seen by any person belonging to the settlement."

On the chart published in "Collins's New South Wales," dated 1st May, 1802, the port we are considering is first shown, and the name is "Port Hacking."

If Mr Woodhouse is right, then it is clear that Flinders and Collins (who lived and wrote at the time) must be in error; but if they are right, and no reasonable person can doubt, then Mr Woodhouse is in error.

Will Mr Woodhouse give the date of Mr Aitken's first arrival in this country.

Henry Hacking was quartermaster on board H.M.S. Sirius, which, with the tender Supply, were the first two vessels that entered the waters of Port Jackson. When the settlement was formed, Hacking appears to have been employed in maritime surveying, and was I think, the first harbour master and pilot. He is spoken of as a person of trust, and a man "who could be dependent upon." During some of his coast expeditions he must have discovered the port now bearing his name, as recorded by Flinders in 1796, eight years only after the arrival of Sirius.

Unlike Mr Woodhouse, I have no personal interest in the matter: and having no family traditions as to the name to fall back upon, I am compelled to resort to the facts as narrated by that eminent and singularly accurate man, Flinders. *Palmarum qui meruit ferat*³

I am, &c,
December 21.

JOHN W. DEERING.

No further correspondence seems to have been entered into. The 'Shipping Intelligence' of the times seems also to be confused as to the correct name for the port. On occasions we had both 'Port Aiken' and 'Port Hacking' appearing in the same shipping report as different ports⁴ with presumably each ship's captain pleasing himself as to the name he gave the port.

This was typical of the confusion that occurred with the naming of the waterways south of Sydney. Other problems were:

1. A tributary of the Woronora River being called Port Hacking Creek despite going nowhere near Port Hacking⁵. This Creek is now called Forbes Creek.
2. Mill Creek getting its name without ever having a mill.
3. Lucas' Brisbane Mill on Harris Creek (a tributary of Georges River). This creek is now known as Williams Creek with the name Harris Creek being moved to the next creek west⁶.

So should it be 'Port Aiken' or 'Port Hacking'? Given the evidence provided on behalf of the two protagonists my money is on Henry Hacking.

- 1 *The book referred to is most probably: Collins, David 1804. An Account of the English Colony in New South Wales, Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies:*

- 2 This is obviously a typographical error, Bass and Flinders discovered Port Hacking in 1796 source: <http://www.bassandflinders.org.au/History.html>
- 3 Translates as "Achievement should be rewarded"
- 4 Examples of this confusion are the 'Shipping Intelligence' in: S.M.H. 7 November 1844 S.M.H. 13th December 1844 Australian 29th February 1843 Australian 11 March 1843 These records are available from: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper>
- 5 See Department of Lands Parish Map 14039301 (undated) Parish of Sutherland
- 6 Lucas' original land grant specified land on Harris Creek and this grant is shown on Parish Map 14065001 (undated) Parish of Holsworthy. Parish Map 14041401 (1899) Parish of Holsworthy (and all subsequent maps) shows this creek as Williams Creek and the name Harris Creek being moved to the next creek west. Williams and Harris Creeks join just before entering the Georges River.

Greg Jackson

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THE HEARTACHES AND JOYS OF SCHOOLDAYS

When I was a child going to school I was made to wear odd boots. Just picture to yourself – how crazy a little girl's feet and legs would look in one button-up boot and one lace-up, one fastening on the side and the other in the middle.

Originally, there were two pairs of boots, of course, but the soles of the left lace-up and the

right button-up wore out first, thus leaving two odd boots that were still wearable.

Mother, being extremely economical, saw no reason why I should not be made to wear out these boots, and a child in those days never dared question its parents' authority. It was seen, and not heard.

Only one other child in the class ever wore boots. These were of the plainest, most serviceable type, but, my, how I did envy even

that little girl her boots. They did at least match each other.

My boots brought disgrace upon me one day while drilling. Hoping to hide myself, and incidentally my boots (vain hope), I fell back a little behind the other girls. I was severely reprimanded for not keeping in line, and in addition was made to stand by myself in front of the whole class.

That teacher, I think, was not a very intuitive nor understanding one. It is now well over

thirty years ago, and the incident is as vivid in my mind as though it happened yesterday.

Phoebe, Sutherland,
NSW

Quoted in:
Sydney Morning Herald. 17. 5.1938

(CliveBaker)

AN AIRMAN AND CHURCHMAN OF THIS SHIRE



One of the men who presided over the 'Elephant House (St Andrews, Cronulla) in the 1960s, was Allan Whitham who led a very interesting life.

In WW2, a young Allan joined the RAAF and became a Radar operator at the apparatus at Collaroy Plateau. His first experience of danger occurred while he was there:

there came the night when, as I was warily operating the monster, one of the cooling fans seized and, without any warning...BANG!!!! Melt-down occurred in a series of blinding flashes, explosions and smoke, while I sat eyes closed and huddled up in a tight ball on my insulated seat until the uproar suddenly ceased and I was able (gingerly) to escape into the fresh night air.

We discovered next day that our meltdown had blown the fuses at the local sub-station and had blacked out a considerable area of the coast for the rest of the night.

When another operator became sick as he was about to be sent to New Guinea, young Allan was sent in his place.

He had various adventures as the Allies pushed the Japanese north and his Radar unit followed. On one occasion at sea, he survived a massive storm 'event':

We had sailed right into the enormous eye of the storm ... I had no way of making accurate measurements but it seemed to me that the eye was at the least two miles or more in diameter, a chaos of heaving, peaking swells...

He survived the war years despite a fall that damaged his neck – an injury that came back to plague him in later years. During his time in New Guinea, he also had an "epiphany" regarding his religious beliefs.

After the war, he became a journalist and then, in 1946, married Coral Rathbone of Cronulla at a local church – St Andrews.

The couple made their first home in The Shire, where his father-in-law was a great mentor:

On my days off from the newspaper I used to work with Jack who was a builder and earn extra money that way. He taught me how to build houses which was a great help later, when he and I built our own home near the beach at Cronulla.

In 1963, Allan began religious training and in 1965 was Ordained. Nearly 20 years later, he was given the Curacy of the same St Andrew's church that he had been married in.

Reverend Whitham went on to have a distinguished career in the Anglican Church:

Founding St James Church at Mt Druitt.

Board member of Mt Druitt Hospital.
Charter Member of Mt Druitt Rotary Club.
Appointed CEO, Anglican Home Mission Society (Anglicare), 1982.
Appointed Senior Anglican Chaplain (Honorary) to the NSW Police Service, 1984.
Elected as Canon of St Andrew's Cathedral.

In 1984 he was awarded an Order of Australia, for services to church and community.
Appointed Canon Emeritus, St Andrew's Cathedral, 1998.

When he retired, he stayed involved with his local church.



Allan and Coral at the ceremony to receive his OAM.

In his memoirs, Canon Allan Whitham summed up his 80-plus years:

life is still wonderful, interesting and fulfilling, thanks to God and my dear wife and ever-expanding family ... God meant me to be spared to come back from the Pacific War ALIVE and live a busy life in repayment.

In war and peace, this is one man who lived up to that famous proclamation, "...ask what you can do for your country".

Source: *Just An Aussie*. Published 2007.
Clive Baker

True friendship comes when silence between two people is comfortable. David Tyson Gentry

Last edition's 'What is this object?' was a 'clacker' – used as an air raid siren or at sporting events to make a lot of noise

This space could be yours!

Do you have a short story or anecdote that we could use in the bulletin?

Forward it to the editor.

Correction.

In the August edition it was reported that Heathcote Hall is for sale. This is incorrect. Negotiations for the sale of part of the curtilage only are proceeding.

Notice to members

The by-laws of the Society state that if payment for annual membership is more than three months in arrears then their membership is terminated. That means that membership fees should be paid no later than the end of September. Have you paid your membership fee?

If you have enjoyed this edition of the bulletin then let the writers know or show a copy to a friend or colleague who may also enjoy it. Become an ambassador for the Society

Sutherland Shire Historical Society

Membership application or renewal 2011/12

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 at 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.

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 for 2011/12 enclosed

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

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

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

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

TITLE: Mr, Mrs, Ms

Family name: -----

Given name: -----

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