

VOLUME 16–NUMBER 1: FEBRUARY 2013



MINDFUL OF THE PAST – FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY

The SSHS has a proud tradition stretching back 46 years and is an entirely volunteer and not-for-profit organisation. Over the years the Society has taken on the responsibility of recording and preserving local history so that Shire residents can learn more about our past.

WRITING FOR THE *BULLETIN*

Since its beginning, the Society has fostered the skills of local writers and their work is recorded in the *Bulletin* – copies of which can be accessed in Sutherland Shire Library Local Studies room. Members and non-members are invited to submit material for future editions and although we give local history priority, we are happy to accept stories on Australian history generally. We ask that you quote your sources and acknowledge any material used as well as obtaining permission from authors.

The *Bulletin* 'style-guide' is available from the editor: Clive Baker. 13 Veronica Place, Loftus. 2232. warbookshop@bigpond.com. Make sure to include your contact details and/or email address.

BULLETIN

Copies of this publication are free to all Society members and are also distributed to all Shire council libraries, the Mayor, Shire General Manager, all Councillors, the Royal Australian Historical Society, National Trust of NSW, NSW State Library, National Library of Australia, University of Sydney, University of NSW, State Rail Authority, Australia Post Archives, Sydney Water Board Historical Research Unit and Shire high school libraries.

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REGISTRATION

Other than the *Bulletin*, other Society publications are registered with the National Library of Australia in accordance with International Standard Serial Numbering and usually have an ISBN number.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEETINGS

Monthly meetings are held on the THIRD Saturday of each month at 1.30 pm (except December) – at Stapleton Centre, 3A Stapleton Street, Sutherland (near the library). We welcome your company to hear our guest speakers, mix with local history enthusiasts and share afternoon tea and a chat.

SHIRE MUSEUM

NOTE: THE INFORMATION BELOW DOES NOT APPLY WHILE THE MUSEUM IS BEING RENOVATED

Our museum is located in the School of Arts, East Parade Sutherland (opposite the bus station). It usually opens on the FIRST Saturday of each month from 10am to 3pm and contains some gems of Shire history and a fine collection of old photographs. For schools and other groups wishing to organise a special tour at other times: contact the Curator, Jim Cutbush (9521-3721).

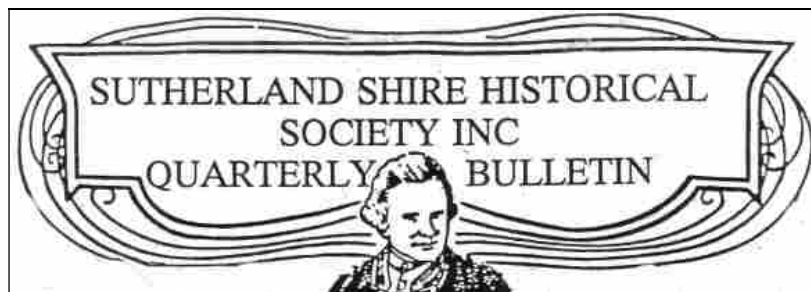
DONATING MATERIAL: If you have items of historical significance for Sutherland Shire, we welcome their donation to the museum to keep for posterity. Temporary loans for specific periods are also welcome. Cash donations and sponsorship assist us to improve the museum and perhaps you can keep the museum in mind when planning your estate.

CONTACTING THE SOCIETY

All correspondence and membership enquiries should be addressed to The Honorary Secretary, Sutherland Shire Historical Society. PO box 389. Sutherland. NSW. 1499 or a.badger@optusnet.com.au

THANKS TO SUTHERLAND SHIRE COUNCIL

The Society is most grateful for the on-going support from the Council in printing our *Bulletins*.



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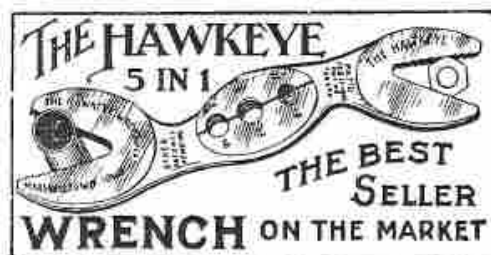
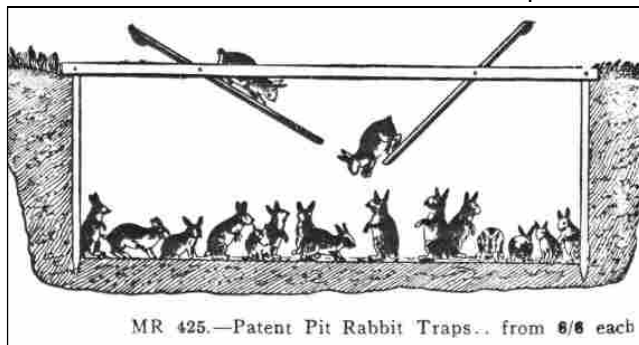
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Front cover: Another treasure from the museum – an embroidered object – probably a handkerchief. It is a gift from a Digger to his mother (Mrs Fisher in Sydney). In the frame is a note dated 7.6.1916, “Dear Mum, Just a little card that I have selected for you – it’s French [and] just a part of what we have plenty of – these things here. Well Mum I hope you will like [it] as it’s the best I could get.” [sender’s name obscure].

Back cover: Some photographs from the Christmas party in 2012.

THE SSHS COMMITTEE: 2012-2013

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|---|---|---|
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*Shop catalogues around 1910 offered a variety of items for sale.
Here are some of the more unusual.*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BRUCE WATT

It seems odd to wish everyone a Happy New Year in February, however, except for our January general meeting, it's the first opportunity to report to members. Much is under way and 2013 promises to be another year of change and growth.

We have been promising a new and updated website for so long now, but it will be ready very soon. The Shire has so much to offer the wider digital community, with so many 'firsts' that are of interest to others. Cook, Phillip, Bass and Flinders, Thomas Holt, Donald Mackay and Gough Whitlam are all names that helped shape world and Australian affairs. Other events and institutions such as the 'shark arm case', 'the Wanda Beach murders' and ANSTO are also of interest to a wider audience. We plan to put many of our past *Bulletins* on-line as well.

The museum is our largest project this year. We dismantled our previous exhibition in June last year and rationalised the collection. The museum committee is to be congratulated on the amount of effort involved in the physical movement of the collection and in recording it. Many museums have specialised staff to perform these tasks but this is all being done by volunteers. Much deliberation went into the planning of our new exhibition. The museum committee devised a theme which can be described as 'The Shire, a journey through time'. Six broad themes have been chosen to tell the story: the past, (Geology and Aboriginal occupation), discovery and settlement, (Cook and Phillip), the pioneer years, (19th century), the early 20th century, the war years and the post-war years. Specific aspects of each era will feature to highlight the period.

We have an affiliation with Museums and Galleries NSW and a grant was applied for and received to facilitate the daunting task. This involves consultancy on the many facets of museum layout, display and marketing. We plan to have a 'soft' opening in time for Heritage Week in April and a formal opening which will include a members' day a little later.

Each themed area or 'pod' is being coordinated by various committee members. General interest and appeal, consistency in signage and labelling, layout, keeping the message clear, focused and as much as possible, uncluttered is the aim. This all has to be achieved in a museum space that is 12 x 8 metres! Much of the work in making it happen goes on behind the scenes. Some of the work is physically demanding and all of it is on a volunteer basis and is very time consuming.

We need to thank the museum committee for its untiring work and dedication. Wish us luck and we'll keep you posted.

Down the track we need to consider opening more than one day a month. Special interest groups such as Men's Sheds, other historical societies, school groups, clubs and openings for special occasions can be promoted. 'Manning' the museum is an issue so, if you would like to volunteer, please let us know.

Last year when the closure of the Cronulla Fisheries facility at Hungry Point was first announced, the Society made a submission in support of the retention of the site. Despite an Upper House enquiry into the closure and opposition from a large number of locals and interested parties, the decision to close the site was upheld. There are significant buildings etc that have State Heritage listing. A Management Trust is being established for the site and the Society has been invited to be on the Board. Whilst we oppose the closure, our representation would ensure that a community voice would be heard regarding its heritage value and possible future use. It is early days as yet on that matter.

At our last meeting, several members expressed their satisfaction with the general tone and conduct of the functions. They valued the contribution of the speakers and commented on the friendly atmosphere. Our afternoon tea is always a time to for a chat and to exchange information and views. We think that 40-50 people at each meeting is a sign of a healthy organisation but we always welcome new members. Perhaps you could invite a friend or recommend the meetings to others or even give a membership as a gift.

Many people eagerly await news of Terry's future excursions, which are also listed in each *Bulletin*.

Congratulations to Clive Baker, our new editor – there is a lot involved in the *Bulletin* production. Clive would greatly appreciate feedback and also, any items for publication. An editor gathers the stories but it shouldn't be up to them to write them as well. With the *Bulletin* going on-line, your story may be read anywhere in the world!

A publications sub-committee is one of several groups operating within the executive. It was formed to plan future publications, following the successful launch of our book, *When I Was Ten*.

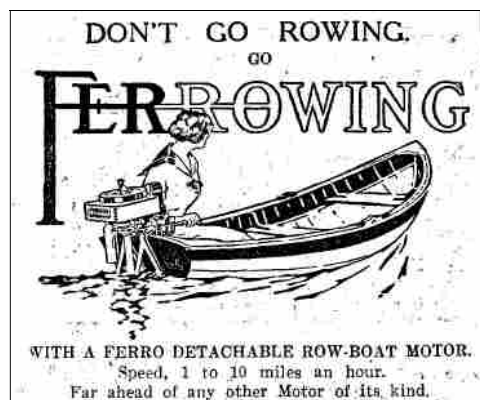
Murder and Mayhem in the Shire is one project that plans to 'dig the dirt' on dastardly deeds in the past.

On the matter of book launches, our next meeting in February will feature a book launch of Jim Heather's book, *Cronulla and Beyond 1939-1956*. It is his memories of 'Life as a kid in the rural seaside village of Cronulla'. I'm reminded of L.P. Hartley's book, *The Go-Between* in which an elderly man looks back on his childhood with nostalgia. The novel begins with the line, 'The past is a foreign country. They do things differently there'.

I wish you all good things for this year.

Our Treasurer, Leanne Muir is moving out of the Shire but has assured us that she will still attend our meetings and continue as Treasurer. Leanne's skills and professional manner have been greatly appreciated and we wish her well for the move. Whilst we hope that Leanne will remain as Treasurer in the medium term, it is a reminder that we need to cultivate the talents of members and find others who can step up when required.

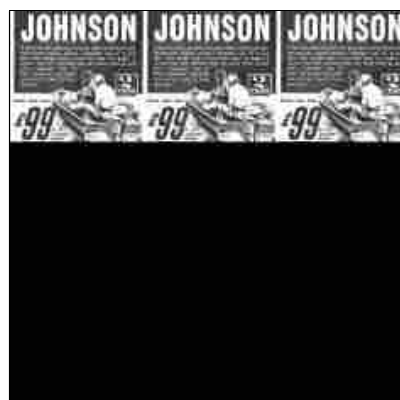
Elizabeth Craig is ably assisting both Angela Badger in her role as Secretary and Clive Baker in his role as *Bulletin* editor. We are appreciative of these efforts which help to spread the workload.



1915

Although these adverts are over 51 years apart, they carry a similar theme of life on the water.

It is interesting to note that outboard motors were in use in 1915 and of much the same size as the later version.



1966

SOCIETY ACTIVITIES: 2013

| MONTH | | EVENT | NOTES |
|-----------------|----|---------------------------------|--|
| FEBRUARY | | Museum | Still closed for renovation |
| | 16 | Meeting: 1.30pm | Guest speaker: James Bird (Mercy ships) |
| | | Excursion | None |
| MARCH | | Museum | Still closed for renovation |
| | 16 | Meeting: 1.30pm | Guest speaker: Caroline Davey (Discovery & Charting of Australian coastline) |
| | 23 | Excursion Bookings essential | Rail Transport Museum – Thirlmere – bring lunch or buy at their shop – departs Multi-Purpose Centre (Sutherland) 9 am sharp. Cost \$30 per head. |
| APRIL | ? | Museum | Re-opens in Heritage Week – probably 4 April |
| | 20 | Meeting: 1.30pm | Heritage Week – guest speaker: To be advised |
| | | Excursion | None |
| MAY | 4 | Museum | First Saturday 10 am–3pm |
| | 18 | Meeting: 1.30pm | Guest speaker: Allan Murrin (Writing the Story) |
| | 25 | Excursion Bookings essential | 'Mystery Tour' bring lunch/drinks – departs Multi-Purpose Centre (Sutherland) 9 am sharp. Cost \$20 per head. |
| JUNE | 1 | Museum | First Saturday 10 am–3pm |
| | 15 | Meeting: 1.30pm | Guest speaker: Angela Badger (Lost stories of our past) |
| | | Excursion | None |

EDITOR'S SAY

ALL MAIL TO: Clive Baker. 13 Veronica Place, Loftus. 2232.
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Thanks to those who gave a 'thumbs-up' to the previous edition of the *Bulletin* and its new layout. Vital support came from Elizabeth Craig who is a positive and very competent proof reader. Regrettably a few 'typos' did sneak through but Merle Kavanagh's keen eye picked them out.

The other important group of *Bulletin* supporters are those people who contributed articles to the last edition. Please keep it up and we are hoping for other members to send in material for inclusion during 2013.

During 2012 Colin Burgess gave us a talk on the 'Space Race' and now his brother, Laurie, has become a member and has immediately sent

a lengthy article on early Shire hotels. As it is too long for the *Bulletin*, we have made it available as a separate publication. See the overview later in the this issue. It is nice to see new material from an enthusiastic new member.

Due to much material from members, some articles have been held over to May; particularly those that need typing which takes time.

Corrections

The November 2012 issue (page 26), mentioned Colleen Wood being related to the Highfields of Caringbah but she is actually a member of the Nelson family – see article this issue. Also, Jim Wood's final army rank was full-colonel.

BOOK SALES NEW POLICY

RECENT COMMITTEE DECISION

At the December 2012 meeting your Committee discussed the problem of storing books belonging to authors, accounting for sales and the need for a member to sit at a table to sell them at meetings.

To resolve the problem, it was decided that:

- 1) A copy of each book for sale will be put on display showing details of price and who to contact to purchase a copy.
- 2) Society authors are welcome to sell their own books at meetings but they will need to be on

hand to collect money and manage their own stock.

- 3) Books that are published or owned by the Society will be available for sale – Clive Baker will have stocks to sell at meetings.

- 4) Second-hand books will continue to be on sale and there will be an 'honesty box' provided for payments. All revenue from these sales goes towards developing the museum and for other Society uses.

MUSEUM REPORT

JIM CUTBUSH

Firstly, I hope all readers are rested after the Christmas and new year break. I would also like to congratulate and thank all those involved in the successful atmosphere at our function at the end of 2012.

In the museum, all display cabinets and the service desk are now fitted with castor wheels that make it much easier for us to move the displays. Book cases for a small office are in place and other fixtures are taking shape.

Thanks to all those who have helped over recent weeks during the 'silly season' and have committed to following through to the opening.

We have had some recent enquiries about our local history which have been attended to.

During the re-organisation, several items of interest have been 're-discovered' and they will help to enhance the new display. Please feel welcome to lend a hand if it interests you.



Jim Cutbush and Maurie Bevan fitting wheels to display cabinets.

OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY: 2012

ANGELA THOMAS

Our thanks go to Mary, Mavis, Grace, the two Anns, Pat, Beryl and Gloria and many others who made the day such a pleasure. That kitchen was buzzing and the tables were dressed for Christmas.

We started in style with beautiful music from Beth Maloney, her son Sean and daughter Kate. Beth and Sean played their flutes and Kate thrilled us with her new full-sized harp. Such an elegant and festive recital, let's hope we hear them again before too long.

Beth has forged a name for herself as one of Sydney's leading teachers of the flute and Theory of Music, having Master of Music and Bachelor of Music Education degrees. In addition, Beth is leader of The Sutherland Shire Symphony Orchestra where she is also welcomed as a guest conductor.

(Sutherland Shire Symphony Orchestra)



*Beth, Kate and Sean Maloney
playing for SSHS members.*

This was followed by four speakers, Joan Morison, Josephine Saunders, Jim Cutbush and Merle Kavanagh, who recalled Christmases of their youth. It is a fascinating experience to recall these youthful memories.

Next we had three 'visitors' who came to tell us about Christmas in Sydney in the 19th century.

They were of course our members, Clive Baker, Leanne Muir who dressed in period costume and Bob Osborne.

Their stories were from 1844, 1895 and 1906 and recalled horse-drawn drays loaded with Christmas bush to be sold in Sydney Town; 'cannon ball like' Christmas puddings which were indigestible; children playing games such as Drop the Hankie, Twos & Threes and Oranges & Lemons; families crowded on harbourside picnic spots with their Christmas fare spread before them; the men dressed in white flannels and wearing white boots while the ladies' hats would 'do credit to a florist'.

Four more members then recounted their youthful Christmas experiences – Mavis Sourry, Bruce Watt and Andrew Platfoot while Doug Archer read Marie Frost's memories of Christmas at the Bentley homestead in Bangor/Menai in 1906. Four more charming memories.

Joan Morison had brought her family's 1960 silver Christmas Tree, still in good condition, along with its home made decorations, and she told us of the wonderful memories it evoked.

Then Santa appeared and a very impressive fellow he was too! His bag was full of goodies (supplied by the members) and all happily received a surprise gift in return. Our Secretary said she received a little *Woman's Weekly* 'Make it Tonight' curry cook book, "I made a Prawn Laksa the next night and most successful it was. Many more gastronomically happy nights lie ahead, so thank you – to whoever put that one in Santa's sack."

By now we were all quite ready for our tea and that certainly proved a really festive affair, finishing with mince pies, home made Christmas cake and large platters of fruit.

Our President completed the festivities with his own contribution – "Shire Bingo" – which stretched our knowledge of the district.

So we all felt we had enjoyed a real Christmas party. A great many had contributed to the organising but basically after the lovely music we entertained ourselves, and not for one minute did the afternoon falter or slow down. Every moment was full of interest and we all do thank those marvellous members who planned and executed such a delightful few hours.

The Committee members wish to thank Nola Watt for her expertise in planning and organising this great event – one member added a comment that, “If Winston Churchill had been lucky enough to have the services of our Nola then World War Two would have been over in a matter of weeks.”

—0—

OUR XMAS MEETING

ELIZABETH CRAIG

While Christmas is an integral part of our Anglo/Celtic culture, and has been enjoyed by children for many hundreds of years, it is also an evolving tradition as these stories

show. A common theme of our speakers was the heat of Christmas in Australia, so at odds with the bitterly cold conditions of northern Christmases, and the adjustments in food and celebrations we have made to accommodate our climate.

The vanished tradition of embedding Christmas puddings with threepences and sixpences was another theme (it's now considered unsanitary). And a third was the change from simple meaningful presents given in earlier generations to the multiplicity of sophisticated presents arranged under the Christmas Tree in this present age of overconsumption.

These personal accounts will be included in an article for the November 2013 edition of the *Bulletin* looking at the different ways Christmas is viewed and celebrated in different countries and at different times.

GENERAL ELECTION OF 1907

JOHN CAMPBELL

In 1907 Sutherland Shire was part of the Electoral District of Camden which included Campbelltown, Liverpool, Cabramatta and Appin areas. It was listed as a 'country electorate'.

The election was held on Saturday, 10 September 1907 and there were three candidates to choose from:

Frederick William Archer DOWNES, MLA (sitting Member) – Liberal

John Edward MOORE – Independent Liberal

Frederick William WEBSTER – Independent (An alderman on the Liverpool Council).¹

The successful candidate for Legislative Assembly was Frederick Downes who was re-elected with a total of 2671 votes, Moore the Independent Liberal gave him a run for his money with 1807 votes but poor old Webster was popular with only 73 voters.

In Miranda 128 voted for Downes, 71 for Moore and there was just one solitary vote for Webster.²

The Booths

There were eight sites at which Shire residents could vote:

| | LOCATION | VOTED |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| Bangor | Public School | 21 |
| Como | Como Hall | 35 |
| Cronulla | Cronulla Hall | 90 |
| Heathcote | Railway station | 28 |
| Lilli Pilli | Simpson's Store | 30 |
| Miranda | Public school | 164 |
| Sutherland | Public school | 206 |
| Waterfall | Public school | 40 |
| TOTAL | | 614 |

(In the whole electorate there were 133 informal votes).

ENDNOTES:

1 *Liverpool Herald*, 7.9.1907, p. 8.

2 *Liverpool Herald*, 14.9.1907, p. 7.

A WAY OF LIFE THAT MANY RECALL

This came via Pat Hannan and tells of lifestyle now gone

Grandma's Laundry

This poem published in the *Caboolture Catholic Parish News* of 29 July 2006, carries the words, "by Archie Bigg". A search of *Books of Norfolk Island* describes him as, "one of Norfolk Island's Finest Bush Poets".

I remember Grandma's laundry with a basket made of cane
And lines that stretched from wall to wall to hang things when it rained.
There used to be a copper out where Grandma used to toil
It used to take forever to wash when the water reached the boil.

There were twin tubs made of concrete with a wringer in between
A wringer in a laundry now is hardly ever seen.
Upon a shelf a little box of starch called "Silver Star"
Kero tins for buckets, remember back that far?

A dipper with a handle to help our Grandma cope
And a little wire basket with a piece of Sunlight Soap.
She used to have a washboard for scrubbing out the clothes
You must be getting on in years if you used one of those.

A saucer on the windowsill with bags of Reckitt's Blue
To make the white clothes whiter still and good for bee stings too.
Some sandsoap and a scrubbing brush, for scrubbing all the floors
And some firewood for the copper in a box behind the door.

A tin roof and some guttering with a funny sort of sag
And a heap of wooden dolly pegs in a homemade hessian bag.
And out the back a clothes line not the kind that spins around
But a clothes prop held the clothes up high from dragging on the ground.

I wonder what would Grandma say if only she could see
That wash-a-matic marvel where the copper used to be
The dryer in the corner the tubs of stainless steel
Hot water pouring from the taps I wonder how she'd feel.

I think that Grandma would approve the changes made and yet
There were things in Grandma's laundry that I simply can't forget.

COMO HIDE-OUT

JOHN CAMPBELL

While researching the topic of old Como, I came across a most innocuous headline from the *Liverpool Herald* (October 1898) with the heading, 'ALL SAINTS R.C. CHOIR PIC-NIC'.

The Liverpool Church choir and friends had been on an excursion to Botany Bay, aboard the steamer *Eclipse* leaving from 'The Quarry' (about five miles down the Georges River from Liverpool). At San Souci a "sumptuous repast was served in first-class style".

One of the leading lights of the party was the Postmaster-General the Hon. V. Parkes MLA. The final sentence was the one that got my attention:

Mr Parkes' thorough knowledge of the river enabled him to point out the various points of interest – notably the location of Peisley's hiding-place at Como – which added much pleasure to the outing.¹

As I'd never heard of Peisley I immediately did some further research. My first thought was a Lawson-like character hiding from society in the tranquil Como area.

I soon found that my first thoughts were far from the mark. George Peisley, 38, was wanted for the shooting of a policeman at Cabramatta on 6 August 1898. Constable McLean had encountered Peisley in company with Henry Hunter at Warwick Farm and accused them of stealing a saddle, harness and some fowls. The police had been watching the hidden goods for a day and a half and saw them loaded into a cart.

The two were arrested but, as the three rode together toward Cabramatta, Peisley started to veer away from the route to the police station. Constable McLean ordered him to stop and reached for his pistol. In the ensuing struggle the constable was shot in the arm.

Peisley and Hunter made a break for freedom and went separate ways. Hunter was eventually caught on the Penrith road near Richmond on 12 August and gave the police a false name of 'Yacob Shultz'.

However, the police discovered tell tale tattoos on his breast and arrested him. He made a statement accusing his partner in crime of the shooting and a £50 reward was put on Peisley's head.

Peisley (alias Sparkes, alias Williams) had been sighted carrying a double-barrelled gun near the Holsworthy church on the same day as Hunter's arrest.

It was reported that Peisley and his wife Ellen Baker lived at some time in the Como district. Police kept a watch on Ellen which paid off when she entered the rugged country "back of the town".

On 18 August they followed her to Peisley's hideout a quarter to half mile from Como station. Shots were exchanged and Peisley ran toward the Woronora River, discarded his clothes and swam almost naked across the Georges River.² There were several accounts of this event some saying it happened on the Oatley side of the river at Gunyah Bay.³ The usually-reliable *Sydney Morning Herald*, gave the location as Oakleigh.⁴

Whichever side of the river it occurred Mrs Peisley took all of this calmly and was taken into custody charged with having no visible means of support.

Unfortunately, or maybe some would think fortunately, evidence given in Peisley's trial seems to support the Gunyah Bay–Oatley location and that the near-naked swim across the river was written with poetic licence.

The next day Peisley was sighted near Lady Robinsons Beach at the mouth of the Cooks River and after initially outdistancing police Detective Donovan commandeered a horse and rode Peisley down at Arncliffe.

Peisley was put on the train at Arncliffe and large crowds gathered at every station on the way to Redfern to see this tall and ragged individual who had evaded the police for two weeks.

A newspaper described his hiding place:

Peisley's Snug Hiding Place

The very snugness of the interior of the cave astonished police. Two natural shelves of rock had been utilised as supports for a number of thick palings, laid lengthwise. Over these were laid sheets of bark transversely, which in turn were covered with ferns and dry leaves. Thus was improvised an excellent bed.

Where Peisley's head would rest was a natural peephole in the rock, whence an excellent view of the surrounding country on three sides could be obtained. When not in use, a piece of paper was stuffed into the aperture.

*By the simple process of turning on his side and applying his eye to the peephole, Peisley could acquaint himself with the whereabouts and disposition of the police, provided they were not in his immediate rear.*⁵

He indicated that he was tired of running but wasn't scared of police shooting at him as, "most police couldn't hit a haystack". He had nothing but praise for the professionalism of Detective Donovan.⁶

Peisley and Hunter were acquitted of the

attempted murder of Constable McLean as it was judged to be an accidental shooting. Constable McLean, after an operation to remove the bullet from his bone, had recovered enough to testify at the trial. Hunter was sentenced to a couple of months.

During the court case it was revealed that Peisley had a lot of 'previous form' and had been sentenced for horse theft in 1894 and sent to Trial Bay Gaol. In addition, he and Hunter had broken out of that gaol in 1896.

Peisley was convicted of shooting at policemen at Como/Oatley and given four years hard labour, while Ellen Baker was dismissed without charges.

Perhaps a Society member can throw some light on the location of the hide-out.

Endnotes:

- 1 *The Liverpool Herald*, 15.10.1898. p. 6.
- 2 *SMH*. 18.8.1898. p. 5.
- 3 *Cumberland Argus & Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 27.8.1898. p. 8.
- 4 *SMH*. 8.10.1898. p. 7.
- 5 *Cumberland Argus & Fruitgrowers Advocate*, 20.8.1898. p. 4.
- 6 *The Chronicle*, Adelaide, 27.8.1898. p. 8.

THE NELSONS OF CARINGBAH

COLLEEN WOOD (from notes written by Alfred Lloyd Nelson in the 1930s.)

Joseph Thomas Nelson was born in Birmingham, and was five years old when he landed in Sydney with his parents on the *Diamond* in 1848. As a lad, he wandered beside the Tank Stream, and was thrilled to watch when the first train left Sydney for Parramatta. After the death of his father, a silk hat maker, in 1851, Joseph became a pupil in the school run by the Redfern Congregational Church. Later he became a teacher at the same school. Joseph commenced his working life as a grocer's boy, then was employed by a building contractor.

He travelled widely in New South Wales and Queensland on horseback, often camping under the stars. On returning to Sydney, he established a grocery business in Botany Street, Redfern. In 1868 he met Miss Sara Hammond at a concert in the old school room of the Redfern Congregational Church. They married in the manse of the Bourke Street Church.

For the following information and drawing, I am grateful to the late Fred Midgley who had been able to interview one of Joseph's sons, Wilfred Nelson, before his death in 1980. I have used much of the article that was published in the *Bulletin* in February 1983.

Joseph Nelson, my great-grand-father, went to Miranda in 1892, having been forced out of Sydney by the Depression and a number of business failures. His wife and children joined him the following April. The family had been unable to pay their rent and, facing eviction, sought to begin life elsewhere. Joseph felt guided by Providence to try his hand at mixed farming.

The family was taken around Miranda in a horse coach driven by Robert Cook, in search of a suitable block of land. Eventually they chose a site on Port Hacking Road. The land agent representing the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Co. Ltd. directed their attention to a mound of fresh earth saying it was good soil, and demonstrated by giving it a hearty kick, but revealed the ironstone underneath.

Joseph Nelson didn't change his mind and built a 'bag humpy' to shelter his family, but had nothing to cover the roof rafters. He went to William Burns' timber yard, and explained that he had just arrived in Miranda but had no money, and asked Burns if it was possible to supply him with galvanised iron for a roof, and that he would pay for it as soon as he could. Joseph got his iron.

William Burns, a Roman Catholic, proved to be a good friend to the Nelson family, who were Baptists, later loaning them £100 to set up a grocery business in Redfern.

Wilfred Nelson, a son, left the farm with his younger sister Clarice and went to look after the shop in Redfern, coming home at weekends.

Wilfred commenced lessons at a private school run by Mrs Walcott on Port Hacking Rd, not far from his home, near the present Five-Ways, his parents paying six pence a week for his tuition.

His two sisters, Edith and Clarice, who had been attending the first Miranda Public School, also attended the private school for a while because of ruffian tactics by some of the boys at the public school.

After some years of mixed farming, Joseph Nelson developed a small store called the 'Pill Box' on the border of farmlets on Port Hacking Road. Business was slow and settlers few. A passing motor car was something to run out and see. Things gradually improved and in 1914, Joseph established the firm of J.T. Nelson & Sons, Grocers and Provision Merchants, on the Kingsway, Caringbah.



Joseph and Sara Nelson, c 1920.

Throughout his life, Joseph Nelson was actively associated with missionary and church work. He was one of the foundation members of the Miranda Congregational Church.



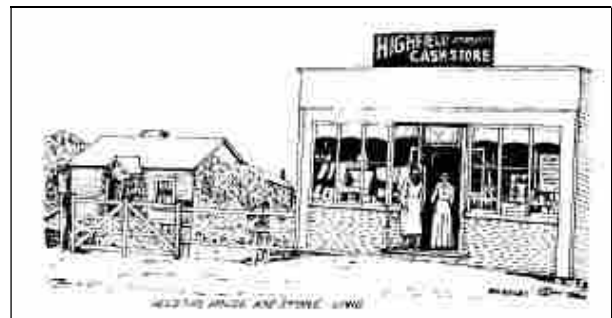
Wilfred collecting boxes of eggs, Miranda, 1927.

After his death on 13 January 1928, at the age of 84, the business was maintained by his son, Wilfred, and daughters Edith and Clarice, who then lived at 22 Vista Street, Caringbah.



Above: The Nelsons opened a small store near their house facing Port Hacking Road. In 1914 a new and much larger store (above) was opened on the Kingsway, Caringbah.

Below: Fred Midgley's drawing of the shop.



The Nelson family gathering shown here was taken at Christmas 1924 and is a fine study in 'Sunday Best' clothing – note the assortment of hats and an oriental-style parasol. The boy at the front appears to have a box camera. The cricket bat indicates that the Christmas backyard cricket match was already in existence in the 1920s!

AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY LIFE

MERLE KAVANAGH

“Charming Sutherland district” “Beautiful Cronulla and Port Hacking”

Just over a century ago, on 25 September 1911, the *Australian Country Life* published a Sutherland District Number under the auspices of the Sutherland Shire Council, then only five years old. It sold for sixpence (5 cents) and featured notes and photographs of the Shire. Comments on the leading page lauded the local attractions – The city man’s paradise: The delight of surf bathers: Perfect home for small farmers: Splendid fishing: Healthy tourist resort: Excellent fruit growing district: Snug poultry farms!

Photographs of the Shire Councillors, appeared, two with beards and moustaches and five with moustaches. One photograph featured a view of a bay with a home or two “Far from ignoble strife”. Advertisements included “First class accommodation and the best of Liquors and a Billiard Room, etc.” for the Railway Hotel at Sutherland, proprietor Mr. Ted Boyle. Comments told of people unable to build “owing to the difficulty of obtaining labor [sic]” which was only “a temporary trouble”.

The road from Tom Ugly’s Punt “like all those in the Sutherland Shire was kept in remarkably good repair all the year round.” At the hotel on Tom Ugly’s Point, there was an ancient and historical cockatoo which was a curiosity for visitors.

Poultry farms abounded in the Shire and most residents had their own fowls. “The ever-thoughtful council” had provided water for “man and beast” with “wells having been sunk and drinking troughs erected all over the district.”

The National Park was featured giving boat rental charges as five shillings (50 cents) per day and three shillings (30 cents) for half a day. “The Rest”, the accommodation house in the Park was said to be “an ideal place to spend one’s honeymoon.”

Nolan’s Miranda Store was also the stopping place for the Yowie Bay Hotel, said to be “only a short walk of half a mile”.



*The “historical cockatoo” is now preserved
In the Carrs Park Museum. It died in 1916
at the reported age of 119.*

(Writer’s comment – it was more like a mile, as I lived there for seven years in the 1940s!). Miranda Public School catered for surrounding districts with children being “brought to school and taken home in (horse-drawn) coaches subsidized by the Government.”

Yowie Bay was the site then of Matson’s Pleasure Grounds, where boats could be hired and over 400 visitors could enjoy the amenity of a very large pavilion for dances or games in bad weather. There was also a cricket pitch and half a mile of waterfront where oysters were there for the taking.

Heathcote Hall was then in the hands of Mr. D.R. Brown. A survey staff were then engaged on a road to connect the infantry camp at Liverpool with the artillery camp at Heathcote “thus giving a training ground unexcelled in the State.”

Waterfall had its “marshalling yard and dozens of shunting engines” giving proof of the expanding coal and coke trade in the surrounding district.

The railway commissioners provided cottages there for their “numerous employees”.

Water for the village was provided by the Railway Department whose pumping engine from the Waratah Rivulet gave “a most liberal supply.”

“Bohemian” Cronulla had a “salubrious climate, saturated with health-giving ozone”. It had a “splendid tram service ... from Sutherland Station along a road not less than 100 feet wide (c 30 metres) in any part.” The journey from Sydney to Cronulla could be made in one and a half hours. Mr. Munro had recently acquired the House and Estate Agency from Messrs. Mobbs and Co.

At Gunnamatta Bay there was the Marine Hatchery run by the Board of Fisheries where visitors could make an interesting and educational visit.

The townlet of Sylvania was “one of the prettiest places on the South Coast and well patronized by picnickers and tourists.” The problem with Sylvania was the “extreme inconvenience” in reaching it. A tramway from Kogarah to Tom Ugly’s Point for the punt was considered a necessity. The boarding establishment of Sutherland House at Sylvania was a popular resort but at that time it was under consideration of being resumed by the Government as a naval training college.

The Woronora River Park could be reached

either by boat from Como, or a short walk from Sutherland. This Park has been for a long time “a favourite spot for young men to camp out week-ends and holidays.” Cook’s Boatsheds there hired out “first class boats” and bathing costumes.



Matson’s Pleasure Grounds, Yowie Bay, 1908.

On Port Hacking’s southern shore Simpson’s Hotel had operated for about 50 years – the beach in front of the hotel was “a perfect place for children to paddle and sail their toy boats.” “At Jibbon, blackfellow carvings could be seen on the rocks.”

In promoting the budding Shire in 1911 the Council painted a picture of country tranquillity, quiet enjoyment and pleasurable experiences. Today we live in a different place to that described. We have lost much of the Shire’s early ‘bush and bay’ feel and gained some unpleasant but convenient modern amenities. It is still a good place to live, but what will the next century bring?

As mentioned earlier, Laurie Burgess has written a lengthy and detailed account of two Shire hotels and he has unravelled the truth and the fiction of the story. Here is taste of his article – a full version of which is available from Clive Baker at no charge.

A TALE OF TWO HANLEYS

Publicans in the pre-Shire at the Woronora and Heathcote Hotels
and other aspects of their life and time.

LAURIE BURGESS

A mystery! Were there two separate Hanleys — Thomas and William — or was it, as indicated in one source, only a William Thomas Hanley, a bit of a rogue who needed to keep a separate identity to isolate his creditors and the Insolvency Court and to keep secret some past financial problems and previous involvement in the hotel industry?

It is of note that in the many court appearances over the years there is never any reported mention of William and Thomas being the same person!

The evidence seems to fall with Thomas and William being brothers, of Irish descent, who with a little help later from a third brother, John, were pioneers of the hotel industry in the area which later became Sutherland Shire...

HMS SUPPLY

BRUCE WATT



We are fortunate to have this excellent scale-model of Supply in our museum and it will join the stunning model of Cook's Endeavour.

Supply was one of only two ships supplied by the Royal Navy to accompany the First Fleet to Botany Bay in 1787. Its exploits are as deserving of praise and notoriety as the more famous ships used for of exploration.

Background

England in the late eighteenth century was experiencing a crime wave. The Industrial Revolution was beginning to produce social dislocation as people moved to the towns and cities. In 1717 an Act was passed allowing for the transportation of convicted criminals to other countries. Many were sent to the American colonies.

Following the American Declaration of Independence (1776) the war with Britain was lost and they were forced to sign a treaty in 1783. This meant that convicts could no longer be sent to North America. In the meantime (1777), Britain had passed the *Hulk Act* which enabled the confinement of convicted criminals in decommissioned naval ships on the Thames and other places. Despite this the question of what to do with a mounting number of prisoners was the subject of debate.

The First Fleet

In 1786 a plan was devised to transport convicts to Botany Bay with two ships procured from the navy. The *Sirius* was a small warship that became the flagship of the First Fleet and the *Supply* (built 1759), was smaller than a Manly ferry at 70 feet but was an armed support vessel for the fleet.

The other nine ships were to be contracted from private owners.

The *Supply* was a blunt-nosed, wide-bodied ship with two masts. Being 70 feet in length and weighing 170 tons it could only carry 55 people and a limited amount of supplies. It was skippered by Lieutenant Henry Ball. Though quite small, it was the fastest ship in the fleet.

On 12 May the fleet left Portsmouth. After rounding the Cape of Good Hope, as planned, Phillip split the fleet into two. He had hoped to arrive in Botany Bay two to three weeks ahead of the slower ships so as to make preparations for establishing the settlement and also to explore the coastline north, if Botany Bay was found to be unsuitable. To this end, Phillip transferred to the *Supply*.

The faster ships however encountered very heavy seas and the hatches were bolted down for most of the trip. After reaching Tasmania, the last leg up the east coast was very slow. As Lieutenant Philip Gidley King was to complain, "Her size is much too small for a long voyage which added to her not being able to carry any quantity of her provisions and her sailing very ill renders her a very improper vessel for this service".

The slower fleet took a more southerly course which proved to be much faster. As a result, the *Supply* reached Botany Bay first on 18 January 1788, but only two days ahead of the slower ships and Phillip had no time to explore the coast for more suitable sites.

The unsuitability of the Bay was immediately apparent and the site abandoned although the convict settlement at Sydney Cove was referred to as 'Botany Bay' for several decades. Phillip had first explored Port Jackson in a small boat and returned on 25 January in the *Supply* with a number of officers, some marines and about 40 convicts.

Early on the morning of January 26 a small party rowed ashore and took possession in the name of the King. The rest watched from the deck of the *Supply*.

The haste in performing the ceremony was no doubt because as the *Supply* was leaving Botany Bay the previous afternoon it encountered the two French ships entering the bay, under the command of Captain La Perouse.



The ceremony at Sydney Cove

Phillip was concerned about the presence of the French who were rivals for colonial conquest in the Pacific.

Further Events

In February 1788 the *Supply* was sent to Norfolk Island to establish a colony there. By November all the privately-chartered convict ships had returned to England leaving only the *Sirius* and the *Supply*. On New Year's Eve 1788, "tired of the state of petty warfare and endless uncertainty' regarding the relations with the Aborigines", Phillip ordered Lieutenant Ball of the marines to go down to the north end of the harbour in the *Supply* and to abduct as many natives as possible so as to learn something of their language and customs.



Some of the ladies who make the meetings and functions such a success.
L-R: Mary Small, Mavis Sourry, Beryl Davis, Pat Hannan and Nola Watt.

In the struggle that ensued, only one native, 'Arabadoo', whom they called 'Manly' was abducted.

In April 1789, more than a year after the arrival of the First Fleet, there was an outbreak of smallpox that was to kill more than half of the Aboriginal people in the area. Only one European died, a sailor from the *Supply*.

In March 1790, the *Sirius* and the *Supply* were sent to Norfolk Island where the *Sirius* was wrecked on a reef. With the colony in a desperate plight, the *Supply* was sent to Batavia (Jakarta) in April for vitally needed food. On their return they pick up the stranded members of the *Sirius* wreck from Norfolk Island. In November 1791 the ship eventually departed for England, carrying with it a kangaroo as a present for King George III.

Being the first ship of the fleet to enter Botany Bay with Governor Phillip on board and the one present at Sydney Cove when Phillip took possession, the *Supply* deserves due recognition in the annals of colonial history. After the wrecking of the *Sirius* it was the only ship available to Phillip and was vital to the survival of the colony.

An Inglorious Ending

On its return to England, *Supply* was sold into private ownership and renamed the *Thomas and Nancy* and was used to carry coal on the Thames until 1806. Its final destination is unknown.

Reference: 1788 *The brutal truth of the First Fleet*. David Hill. Heinemann. 2008^a



LETTER FROM THE 'ROVING RETIREE': DAPHNE SALT

On the road again, this time Daphne is on a solo trek.

I have changed vehicles and now drive a Prado and when I headed off in mid-September I went for Broke camping there for a few nights, then drove via Burning Mountain at Wingen, Murrurundi and Quirindi Creek to Tamworth, then 50k along a narrow winding mountain track across several cattle grids and railway crossings beside the river to Woolbrook where I pulled in beside the McDonald River, a general trout stream. Though I watched the fat trout in the river and thought about flinging a line in, the sign beside my van said that trout season is from the October long weekend until Queen's Birthday weekend – I was ten days too early! But I think that the pleasure of sitting outside the van with a cuppa or a glass of wine beside the river watching reflections and half a dozen platypus play every morning and evening for a week more than makes up for that.

From Woolbrook I drove to the Bellingen River at Thora before going to Coffs Harbour for a fortnight then to Ebor Falls to a peaceful camp site overlooking the lower falls. I found it hard to believe that in mid-October, when I got up in the morning it was – ten degrees and snowing. By the time I got to Guyra everything was completely white – trees, paddocks, mountains – the houses and cars were under a foot of snow and it was banked up on the edge of the road with the wind blowing the snow almost parallel to the ground as it fell. By the time I arrived in Tenterfield the temperature was up to six degrees at 11am and it was raining and windy.



I made for Bald Rock where I camped for a couple of nights and climbed the rock. It was 1.5k to the top of this, the largest exposed granite outcrop in the southern hemisphere – the view from the cairn and trig station at the summit was wonderful, looking north over the border ranges into Queensland. I took the more leisurely Bungonia walk back through huge round granite boulders and arches disturbing a lyrebird on the way.

Dendrobium speciosum (rock lilies) with massive yellow flower bracts smelling of honey grow on top and sides of many of the boulders amongst the moss and ferns.

I drove the round-about way via Mount Lindsay – like Macquarie Pass but 40k longer – nevertheless it was a spectacular drive through the rainforest on the steep narrow winding road. I detoured again via Drake, Woodanbong, Warwick, the Clarence Valley and into Queensland then through Lockyer Valley (named for football player Darren Lockyer- there are a lot of new houses on high ground replacing those devastated during the floods last year). I then took the New England Highway to Crows Nest Caravan Park. My site was under a windmill between the swimming pool and a lake with a deer farm and goats behind me and a dairy farm to the north.



The next morning I got my bike out and rode into town dropping in at the Crows Nest Soft Drink, Cordial and Ammunition factory. Next I camped at Lake Cressbrook (it was a glorious camp – kangaroos everywhere – then to Toowoomba where I spent a wonderful two weeks with my brother and his family who I haven't seen for many years. The bushfires began the day after I left Cressbrook.

After driving through Dalby and Roma on the Warrego Highway I stopped at Mitchell in the caravan park just before the Maranoa River (named by Major Mitchell in 1846), where there is detritus high in the trees above bridge level from the floods and a plethora of huge European carp in the river. The pylons of the bridge are painted as a Graffiti Arts Project with a series of fifteen murals entitled Booringa Past, Present & Future. It was 29 degrees at 9am and crept up quickly to 40 degrees.

Mitchell hasn't got much going for it other than four pubs, the river, bottle trees and the Artesian Spa where the water from the Mitchell bore more than a kilometre deep emerges at 50-70 degrees (locals get free hot water – cold water has to be cooled in tanks) and the fact that the town was named after explorer/surveyor Major Thomas Livingstone Mitchell who named the river Maranoa River in 1846. The brochure says that the main activities are camping and swimming in the artesian water.

There are plenty of road kills including goats, roos, echidna and pigs. Just out of Charleville I pulled in at a beautiful natural rock pool with a large camping spot, where I set up the van, then spent about an hour swimming. At about 4pm herds of long horned goats of all colours came in to drink, followed at dusk by kangaroos. The goats kept coming – nannies, kids, billies. A young bloke P plater with a dog in the back of his ute drove in and around the pool then left – I must have mucked up his shooting by camping there. There was a strong smell from smoke haze in the air – Charleville has had severe bushfires over the last couple of weeks.

I detoured to Augathella to see the Big Meat Ant (made in copper over a steel frame by a local lass and unveiled in the park in May 2011) before stopping at the highest point in Queensland – water to the east of this point flows into the Murray Darling System and water to the west flows into the Cooper Creek/Lake Eyre Basin. In Tambo on the Barcoo River the local children were dressed for Halloween and walked the streets Trick-or-Treating – fortunately they did not come in to the van park. After crossing the Dingo Fence I stopped in Blackall to photograph the Black Stump – where the surveyors rested their equipment to take readings because it was more stable than the tripods. The stump is gone but there is a fossilised tree stump in its place.

Next stop was Barcaldine at the 170 year-old Tree of Knowledge, the meeting place for the shearers strike of 1891 which led to the formation of the Labor Party. Heading up to Muttaborra I turned onto a side track three kms from town and drove to the Pump Hole for the night. I was thrilled with this fabulous camp spot on the Thompson River, a perfect camp with a rubbish bin, picnic table, winding steep-banked sandy shored river, plenty of shade but no loo, drinking water, power etc.

Muttaborra is the geographical centre of Queensland and the place where the *Muttaborrasaurus langdoni* dinosaur skeleton was found in 1963.

It is the most complete fossilised dinosaur skeleton yet to be discovered in Australia and there is a full-sized model of it in the park. The most intense concentration of dinosaur bones and fossils is in the Channel Country from Mungo to Hughenden – Muttaborra, Winton etc. Could the mass extinction have been from floods, inland tsunamis, intense rain, similar to or in excess of what we have had in those regions in the last couple of years?

At the post office I was advised not to go to Longreach yet because Prince Charles and Camilla are there today and the town will be full of royal pomp and ceremony and crowds in the 42 degrees heat, so I turned around and headed back to Pump Hole. About half way in I took another track to Hardbank campsite – oops! Big mistake! The track ended directly opposite my last night's camp in a very small narrow spot – I had to reverse the van down a winding track and back it up onto a raised clearing to turn around with a 15-point turn. Then back to the beautiful Pump Hole again, then spent the day swimming, reading and drinking water, letting the cozzies dry while reading then back into the river. I felt sooo sorry for poor Prince Charles in his hot suit in Longreach while I was wallowing in the river.

At Longreach Caravan Park I booked in for a week and as I was unclipping the van roof to raise it I looked up and saw there was a rainbow ring around the sun – a perfect halo caused by a layer of ice crystals between the sun and the earth – took a couple of photos of it. These sun halos are purported to indicate a coming storm. After spending the next morning at the QANTAS Founders Museum I returned to the van in time to have another swim as it was still over 40 degrees but at 3.20pm there was a strong wind ahead of thunder, lightning and downpour from the north – the temperature dropped to 21 degrees in half an hour. With the rain came the Apostle birds scrabbling about like flying rats calling in their raspy voices "give us a bit, a bit, a bit".

Next morning I drove to Ilfracombe where the street is lined with old cars, trucks and tractors etc. Returning to the van I had another swim just before the blackening sky began to rumble, then with the downpour the Apostle birds dived under the van screeching abuse.

One sultry afternoon three blokes (about my age) pulled in their van next to mine and struggled to set up – doing it all wrong but they nussed out most of it. A couple of hours later they had the annex out but it had a massive sag in it.

They were getting a bit short with each other as

this was the first time in a caravan for all three. I eventually asked them if they would mind if I showed them how to tension it so the wind wouldn't rip it. Also, they couldn't connect the water to their van because they had no step-down adapter to fit on the tap so I gave them one of my spares.

They then couldn't use the gas stove so I showed them how to direct the regulator and how to light the stove. The following morning one of them came to borrow sugar then asked me to go to the RSL Club with them for karaoke and dinner – I graciously declined.

Here in Longreach there are broilgas, emus and kangaroos idling about the park which occupies the entire block and has over 300 sites plus a few dozen cabins and the Woolshed which is a function venue and restaurant. On a hot day the best place is in the swimming pool under the shade-cloth.



Some of the bird life in the caravan park.

Cheers for now, it is time for a cuppa (it's always time for a cuppa). I am headed next for Boulia then the Plenty to Alice Springs where I may stay until after Christmas.

THE OPINIONS OF MR TWOPENY

CLIVE BAKER

Over future issues, I would like to share with the members the self-opinionated thoughts of Richard Twopeny, who arrived in Australia from Britain about 1865 and later became an editor of newspapers. There is no aspect of colonial life upon which he does not have an opinion but in his writings, the emerging, distinctively Aussie character, of the 1880s is revealed.

Colonial Men's Appearance

...for thorough untidiness of person, there can surely be no one to beat the Australian. Above all must one beware of judging a man's position by his coat. It is impossible to tell whether the dirty old man who slouches along the street is a millionaire or a beggar. The older his coat and the dirtier his shirt, the more the probabilities are in favour of the millionaire. The city men are more careful of their personal appearance and have kept up the shadow and image of London ... but, as it is, most of our city men are both uncomfortable and untidy.

Their clothes look as if they had been bought ready-made at a slop-shop [cheap clothing retailer]. The tie they prefer is a black bootlace; if not, it is bound to be of the most tasteless colour and pattern you can think of. A heavy gold watch-chain and diamond ring is 'de rigueur' but otherwise they do not wear much jewellery.

Their hair, like their clothes, generally wants brushing and hands and nails are not always so clean as they might be; but one knows for the most part they tub every morning – this is a consolation.

The bushman, at least, dresses sensibly. When he comes into town, he puts on a slop-coat but retains, if not a cabbage tree, at any rate a wide-brimmed soft, felt hat.

Sacrificing comfort to ceremony, he generally puts on a collar but he often kicks at a tie: he finds he must draw a line somewhere.

But there is something so redolent of the bush about him, that one would not have him otherwise; the slop clothes even become picturesque from the cavalier fashion in which he wears them... a bull would not be more out of place in a china shop, though less amusing and more destructive.

The poor fellow meets so many friends in town that by the end of the day he has probably had more nobblers [drinks] than are altogether good for him. It is a very hard life that he leads and he takes his pleasure, like his work, hardly.

SOURCE:

Town Life in Australia.

TWOPENY Richard. Penguin. Blackburn. 1976.

COURAGE UNDER FIRE
REMEMBERING THE 1994 BUSHFIRES IN SUTHERLAND SHIRE¹
ELIZABETH CRAIG

Barbara Moore tells of the loss of her home in Bonnet Bay to the January 1994 bushfires in an oral history interview with the author on 3 May 2006 – a copy of the sound recording and transcript of this oral history are in Sutherland Library's Local Studies archive.

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In 1979, Barbara and Phillip Moore built their dream home in Lincoln Crescent, Bonnet Bay, overlooking the Glen Reserve, a bushy valley sweeping down to the Woronora River. Across the river to the west are the bushland suburbs of Illawong to the north and Menai in the south. The beautiful rural views, along with the close proximity of the shopping centre and railway station at nearby Jannali, convinced the Moores that this was the ideal spot to raise a family.

While bushfires are a fact of life in Australia, the Moores believed that with the river below them and suburbia behind them they were not at risk. The fire authorities agreed. In January 1994, Phil Koperberg, the then NSW Commissioner of Bushfire Services, wrote that Como/Jannali was simply not considered a bushfire risk area.²

—o—

Between late December, 1993 and mid-January, 1994, a deep low-pressure system, more typical of late winter than mid-summer, developed south of Tasmania, causing a pattern of hot, dry westerly winds to whip across New South Wales, a state already in the grip of drought.³ More than 800 fires raged along New South Wales' coastal hills and plains all the way from Queensland to Bateman's Bay. It was the most widespread, most prolonged and most devastating bushfire period – in terms of homes lost - in the history of New South Wales to that time.⁴ 800,000 hectares were burnt out, over 200 houses destroyed and four people were killed.⁵ A small enclave of Sutherland Shire spanning parts of Como, Bonnet Bay and Jannali were amongst the worst affected. Here 87 homes were wiped out in less than an hour and one person was killed.⁶

Barbara Moore recalls in vivid and evocative detail her experience as she and Phillip tried to save their home in Lincoln Crescent. Her memories have been woven into a day-by-day account of the fire's progress as recorded by fire analysts.

—o—

The week leading up to Saturday, 8 January 1994: From New Year's Day, the Bureau of Meteorology reported increasing temperatures, decreasing humidity and weak sea breezes giving way to dry, gusty westerly winds in the afternoons.⁷ Barbara remembers it like this:

It was incredibly windy. There seemed to be a bit of

a pattern around lunch-time. The winds would whip up and be quite fierce and very hot. ... And I think that was the first time I really started to think fires are so prevalent they could affect us, and I know I listened out very carefully to what you should do. I was well versed in knowing things like stopping up all the drainpipes, filling everything like baths and sinks and so on with water, putting wet cloths around the windows and doors and any gaps.⁸

Along with the advice Barbara heard over the radio, the Department of Bushfire Services was advising residents:

YOUR HOUSE IS YOUR BEST SHELTER

Don't leave home at the last moment – this is when lives are lost ... Stay inside until the main fire has passed. Immediately after the fire has passed, inspect your home and put out any fires.⁹

FRIDAY, 7 JANUARY 1994

(6.00 pm): A fire which had broken out at Menai Oval at 3.00 pm was spreading in two directions. The north-eastern flank had reached the northern end of Billa Road. The south-eastern flank had arrived at Woronora, just across the river from Bonnet Bay. Five homes had been lost at Menai.¹⁰

On their way home from a trip to the Botanic Gardens with their two young daughters to watch a performance of *Toad at Toad Hall*, Barbara and Phillip Moore were conscious of a red haze on the horizon all around them. They bought icecreams to eat when they reached home. As they neared Bonnet Bay, they saw flames in Woronora to the south. They really began to panic.

As we drove into our street, my husband said to the kids, 'Now, when you get home, sit down and eat your icecreams, and just do as you're told.' And they were quite surprised because he's normally very easygoing and jovial.

The kids sat down and ate their icecreams and we raced around doing all the things we'd talked about: blocking up gutters, filling up sinks and whatever.

10.00 pm, Friday: The south-eastern flank of the Menai fire had spotted over the river to Jannali Reserve and had reached Tudar Road, Bonnet Bay.¹¹ Firefighters backburned to contain the northern flank.¹²

After packing photo albums and videos of the children into an overnight bag, the Moores drove the children to Phillip's brother's home in Engadine. Barbara and Phillip returned, but could not sleep.

We had radio, television, whatever we could have on to try and find out what was going on. We could hear about what was going on in the North Shore and various places, but we weren't getting local stuff. So we didn't find media actually very helpful.

They could hear the sound of chainsaws through the night as people pruned or chopped down their trees. "You just got this buzz that the whole of the area was preparing for the worst."

Saturday, 8 January: In the morning, Phillip's brother, Robert and his wife, Cate, arrived with Barbara's children to help prepare the house.

11.00 am, Saturday: The north-eastern flank of the Menai/Illawong fire broke away and rushed towards the river north of Still Creek, destroying houses below the Illawong escarpment.¹³

At about this time, the wind had whipped up, and Barbara took her children to a friend's place just over the railway line at Jannali. She drove their prized Jag, which had belonged to Phillip's father since new. But on the way home major branches were hurtling through the air in the strong winds. When Phillip asked her to go back out and hire a petrol pump he had located so that they could pump water from the swimming pool, he put the Jag safely in the garage and Barbara took their new Falcon instead. Unlike the Jag the Falcon was replaceable.

2.00 pm, Saturday: The southern flank of the Menai fire had spotted from the Jannali Reserve to just west of Lincoln Crescent.¹⁴ 200 fires were raging across Sydney. With stretched fire fighting resources and appalling weather conditions, many were out of control. Interstate help had been recruited.¹⁵

The Moores waited in the lounge-room listening in vain to the radio for any news of the local fires. A fire brigade arrived and parked at a lookout a little way up the street, but drove away again.

The Moores were surprised, but supposed the firemen had concluded there was no danger. Phillip and Robert tried to get the petrol pump going, but it wouldn't start.

4.00 pm, Saturday: The fire from Jannali Reserve arrived at Lincoln Crescent. At the same time the fire at Illawong in the north spotted 400 metres across the river into the Glen Reserve below Lincoln Crescent. Fire was converging on Lincoln Crescent from the north and the south.¹⁶

Phillip was up on the roof when he saw something alight fly cross the river on to their side. He got down from the roof, grabbed a shovel and ran north up the road intending to put it out. On the way he met some teenage boys racing towards him, yelling: "Go back! Go back!" Behind them were forty-foot flames. Phillip dropped his shovel and ran back to the house. Following advice they'd heard on the news all week, the Moores stayed put, waiting for the order to evacuate. They'd already filled the bath and gutters, etc with water.

And about four o'clock, I think it was, we just realised there were flames everywhere – all around us. We had been expecting to be evacuated, and nothing was happening.

Barbara tried to phone the fire brigade, but couldn't get through. She eventually got through to triple 000, which was under siege from callers. They asked her to wait. Then the phone cut out. So the Moores went into the main bathroom and draped themselves in wet towels.

We were expecting a fire front. ... the fire front actually moves very quickly and noisily past you. And if you protect yourselves with wet towels Then as soon as it's passed, what will have happened is that little bits and pieces will have caught fire and you're there then to put those out. And that's essentially what prevents houses getting burned down.



The progress of the fires from Menai Oval at 3pm Friday, 7 January 1994

So that's the plan. So we're waiting. There's the four of us and we're waiting for this front to pass. And we realize that in fact the houses in front of us – on the other side of the bush to where we are is on fire. And we could see flames. We were in the bathroom, and it was frosted glass, so we can't see clearly. But we could see enough that there's flames and everything in front of us. We were expecting the flames to come behind us. So we were really starting to panic at that moment, because we really felt we were surrounded, you know – potentially surrounded – by fire. And you know, I'd made the phone call. Got nothing. No phone at this stage. And then things like - we could hear cracking. We could hear the glass cracking...

Smoke started to come up through the pipes in the bathroom. They knew that had to get out, but had no idea where to go because the fires were all around them. Phillip's brother, Robert, who had had fire training, did a reccie around the house. Barbara remembers Phillip counting to check how long he was gone for. Robert returned with the news that the stairs on the southern side of the house leading into the garage, which they'd expected to be the safest place, were on fire. Their front door, which they'd expected to be the worst place, was still unaffected. And Mick's house next door was still standing. In the absence of a better plan, they decided to leave through the front door and make for Mick's house.

The house was full of smoke and we just crawled out of the house. Now everything was on fire around us, but smouldering. So anyway, we went into next door's house and were just exhausted. We just flopped on the floor.

Fortunately, the neighbours had left their front door unlocked when they evacuated. Barbara went into their bathroom, plugged up the bath and turned on all the taps, but because of the huge drain on the water supply there was no water. She left the taps on, and later, when the water came on again, the bath overflowed causing water damage. (The owners were really nice about it, laughs Barbara. "They just said they were so glad that their house was there for us to shelter in.")

5.00 pm, Saturday: The spot fires from the north had taken less than ten minutes to travel the 500 metres up the slope to Lincoln Crescent. By 4.30 pm the Glen Reserve was completely burnt out. In just 45 minutes the fires had destroyed or damaged over 100 houses in a 30 hectare area.¹⁷

Exhausted and unsure what to do because the fire had behaved so unexpectedly, the Moores waited in their neighbour's house. "We really couldn't tell what was happening," says Barbara.



Barbara Moore in her burnt-out back yard

"Going outside didn't seem like a good idea because all we could see was smoke and flames."

Eventually they saw a fireman with breathing apparatus walk by. He was very surprised when they yelled out to him. He hadn't expected to see anybody there at all. The Moores followed him, walking north up the street, sharing his breathing apparatus.

We'd barely sort of walked ten yards with him, and some kids came running out and called him away. We found out later that was because the family just up the road - a few doors up the road - were in a very bad way. The wife had died and the kids were badly burnt ... So we didn't know at the time, but he was called away to that.

Meanwhile, the Moores continued wandering aimlessly. "There just seemed to be smoke and flames everywhere, so we really didn't know where to go." Just around the corner from their street they saw a fire brigade, and they decided to stay with it.

And there was just this really pathetic scene of this fire brigade with water – just trickles coming out of it. The firemen were obviously exhausted. They'd probably been on their feet for forty-eight hours or something. There was a woman hysterical, saying, 'Put my house out. Put my house out.' The firemen were just – couldn't do anything. And we just sat in the gutter and watched. It was a really – you know – sad scene.

At this point, it dawned on Barbara that the fire was so widespread the children may be in danger. The friend's house they'd gone to was not far away. She jumped up, and started walking. When a police car came by she stopped it, saying urgently, "My kids are over there. I need to get to my kids." "Jump in the car," the policeman said, "I'll take you there." Still clutching their wet towels, by now smoke stained and dirty, the four of them got in the car.



View over the Glen Reserve to the Woronora River from Barbara Moore's home, May 2006.

We'd no sooner got in the car when he [the policeman] got a call to say, 'Can you please evacuate Mulyan Street?' So, he said, 'Okay, help me evacuate Mulyan Street, and then I'll take [you to your kids]...'

So the four of them jumped out of the car, still wearing the wet towels. While the police car drove down the street, the four of them ran two on each side knocking on everybody's doors, yelling, "You've got to get out. You've got to get out." When they jumped back in the police car, everybody else was driving out and the street was a car park. They were going nowhere. Barbara hopped out announcing she was walking. The others followed her.

We walked over Como Bridge, over the railway. And that was like - it was just solid traffic everywhere - just trying to get out... And all the traffic was turning left - going north towards Como. And of course our girls were right - towards Jannali, and it was into bushfires. But I just walked and nobody stopped us. I mean, there were no fire brigades anywhere. No police anywhere. It was just cars driving out. And in fact - there were bushfires all around.

They walked along the railway line to their friend's house. It was up the hill a little bit. "As soon as I saw the house was standing I could relax a bit."

In fact, there was nobody at home at Barbara's friend's house, but she wasn't worried. She knew her friend would have taken the girls to safety, and indeed she and Phillip were soon reunited with them. For her, the fear that the girls might have been caught in the fire was worse than anything else she had been through.

Over the next few weeks, the Moores lived in a daze. Supported by the kindness and compassion shown by the community, they gradually got their lives back on track.

There were some bright spots, too, one while they were searching through the ruins of their house.

Their wedding rings, which they had always taken off in the house, turned up in the ashes. And although their beloved Jag was completely destroyed, ironically the Falcon, parked outside the house, survived.

Some repairs were needed - melted rubbers and damaged air-conditioning, but, laughs Barbara, "[Phillip] just walked in, started the car and drove off." Even better, the wallet he had left in the car was still there.

The Moores moved into the new home they had built on the site of their old one in July, 1995. One of the reasons they stayed was their neighbours. The fires had brought them closer together, and although they had never socialised regularly with the neighbours, they knew they were there if needed. Also, says Barbara, "We had a beautiful block of land. All those reasons we bought it in the first place were still valid."

End Notes

¹ This project, based on an oral history interview with Barbara Moore conducted on 3.5.2006, was the author's major assignment for the Oral History component of a Graduate Diploma in Local, Family and Applied History at the University of New England.

² Phil Koperberg, 'Bushfires: the threat that won't go away', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 20.1.1994.

³ NSW Rural Fire Service, *A State Ablaze*, 1998, www.rfs.nsw.gov.au, accessed 1.5.2006, p.8.

⁴ Matthew Willis, 'Fire history in Australia, by state and territory', *Bushfire Arson: a review of the literature*, Research and Public Policy Series, No. 61, Canberra, Australian Institute of Criminology, 2004, Table D1.

⁵ N.P. Cheney, 'Bushfires - an integral part of Australia's environment', *Year Book Australia* 1995, *ABS Catalogue No. 1301.0*, Canberra, 1996, p.7.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ NSW Rural Fire Service, *A State Ablaze*, p.8, p.12.

⁸ All quotes and references to Barbara Moore's experience of the fires have been taken from her oral history interview with the author on 3.5.2006.

⁹ Department of Bush Fire Services, *Bush Fire Bulletin*, The January Bush Fires special issue, Sydney, 4/1994.

¹⁰ NSW Rural Fire Service, *A State Ablaze*, p.24.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Andrew Sullivan, *The Nature of Severe Fire Events*, www.urbanservices.act.gov.au/data/pdf_file/18387/integratedbfmgmt.pdf, p.18. accessed 1.5.2006.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ NSW Rural Fire Service, *A State Ablaze*, p.24.

¹⁵ Phil Koperberg, 'Bushfires'.

¹⁶ NSW Rural Fire Service, *A State Ablaze*, p.24.

¹⁷ Sullivan, *The Nature of Severe Fire Events*, p.18.

THE WATERMILLS OF JOHN LUCAS

PART 3

PAM FORBES AND GREG JACKSON

greg.jackson100@gmail.com

This is the third instalment covering the history of John Lucas and his watermills. In this article Lucas' Woronora Mill, built in 1825 and its archaeology is discussed.

The Woronora Mill site is a steep valley on the Woronora River below the Pass of Sabugal and about 60 metres upstream from the extent of navigation. The mill was on the river's south-eastern bank with the dam extending across the river.

The isolated Woronora Mill site is largely uncontaminated by later development. The location of the site has long been subject to speculation by local historians such as Cridland (1924:131) and Curby (2004:25) but the location remained unknown or at least unreported until recently. It is undisturbed by human activity but has been largely destroyed by natural forces.

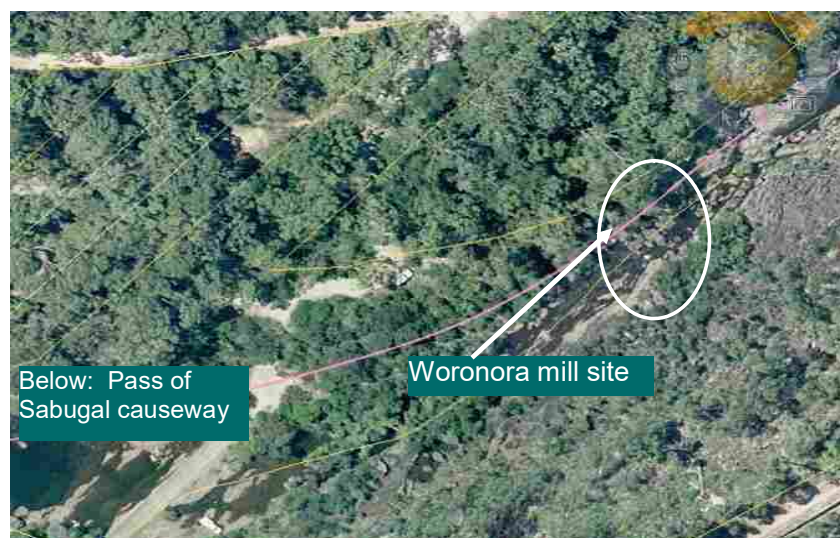
Description: The site is in a steep valley with residential development currently restricted to the ridge tops. The surrounding vegetation is open woodland. There is a fire trail that provides public access upstream at the Pass of Sabugal. A large Water Board supply pipe from Woronora Dam runs above the site on the southern bank of the river.

The river is navigable for small boats to approximately 60 metres below the original dam site.

The aerial map below shows the mill site on a large, rough but level shelf of bedrock on the south eastern bank of the Woronora River. Access to the site is provided either:

- 1) From the north side, walking down the Water Board access track seen on the aerial photo. This track approximately follows Mitchell's 1843 road from Sir Thomas Mitchell Drive in the suburb of Barden Ridge.
- 2) From the south side, walking down the track leading from the end of Woronora Road.
- 3) By boat up the Woronora to the extent of navigation. On reaching the causeway, at the Pass of Sabugal, a bush track leads on the northern side to the mill site along the north-western riverbank. High water levels may cover some of the archaeological features show on the site plan as well as making the crossing of the river unsafe.

How the site was located: On 18 May 1843 Major Sir Thomas Mitchell, then NSW Surveyor General, wrote to the Governor describing the, "...direct line of road to the Illawarra" that he had surveyed and was being built. A photocopy of this letter numbered 43/161 was located in the Local Studied Section of the Sutherland Library (the original is in the State Archives).



NSW Department of Land and Property Information (SIX) 2012.
(Latitude: 34.045753°S Longitude: 151.007679°E)

The letter states:

It will be obvious from the accompanying map that the River Woronora which is navigable for boats to Lucas' Mill Dam, (at A) ... and the Punt proposed on the Georges River' (at B).

The letter and its accompanying map that was mentioned, must have become separated at some time in the past. However, it was subsequently located in the State Library of NSW and the relevant part of the map is shown below.

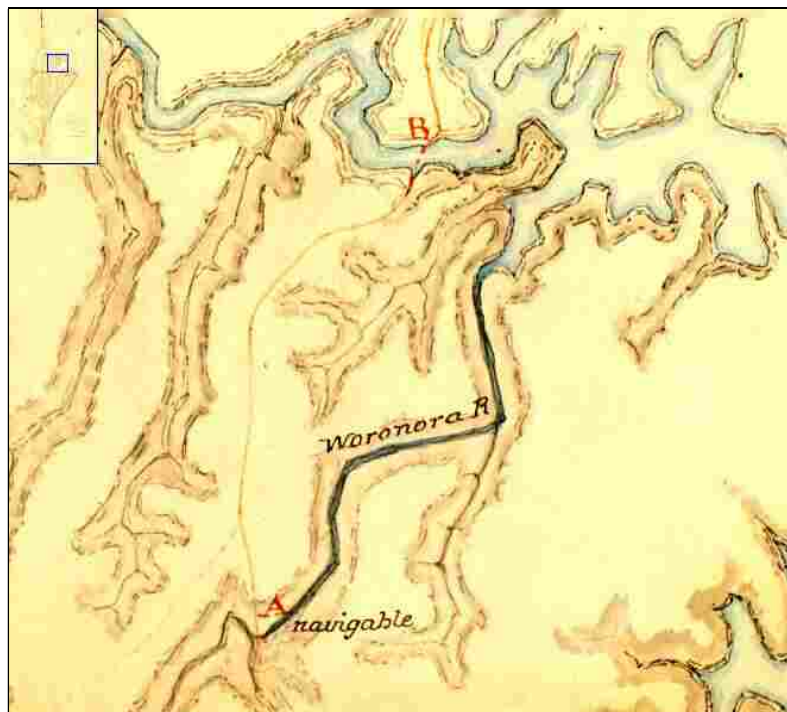
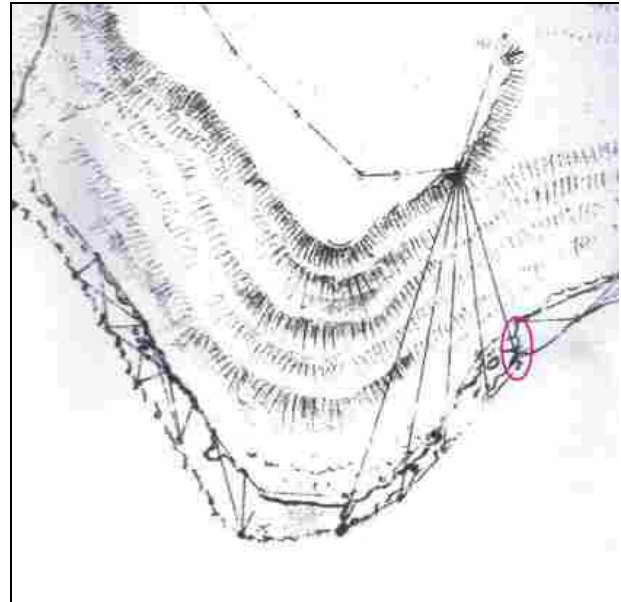
The Sydney Morning Herald, of Tuesday 14 March, 1843 offered the mill site for sale, now with imminent road access and described the mill building as destroyed by fire.

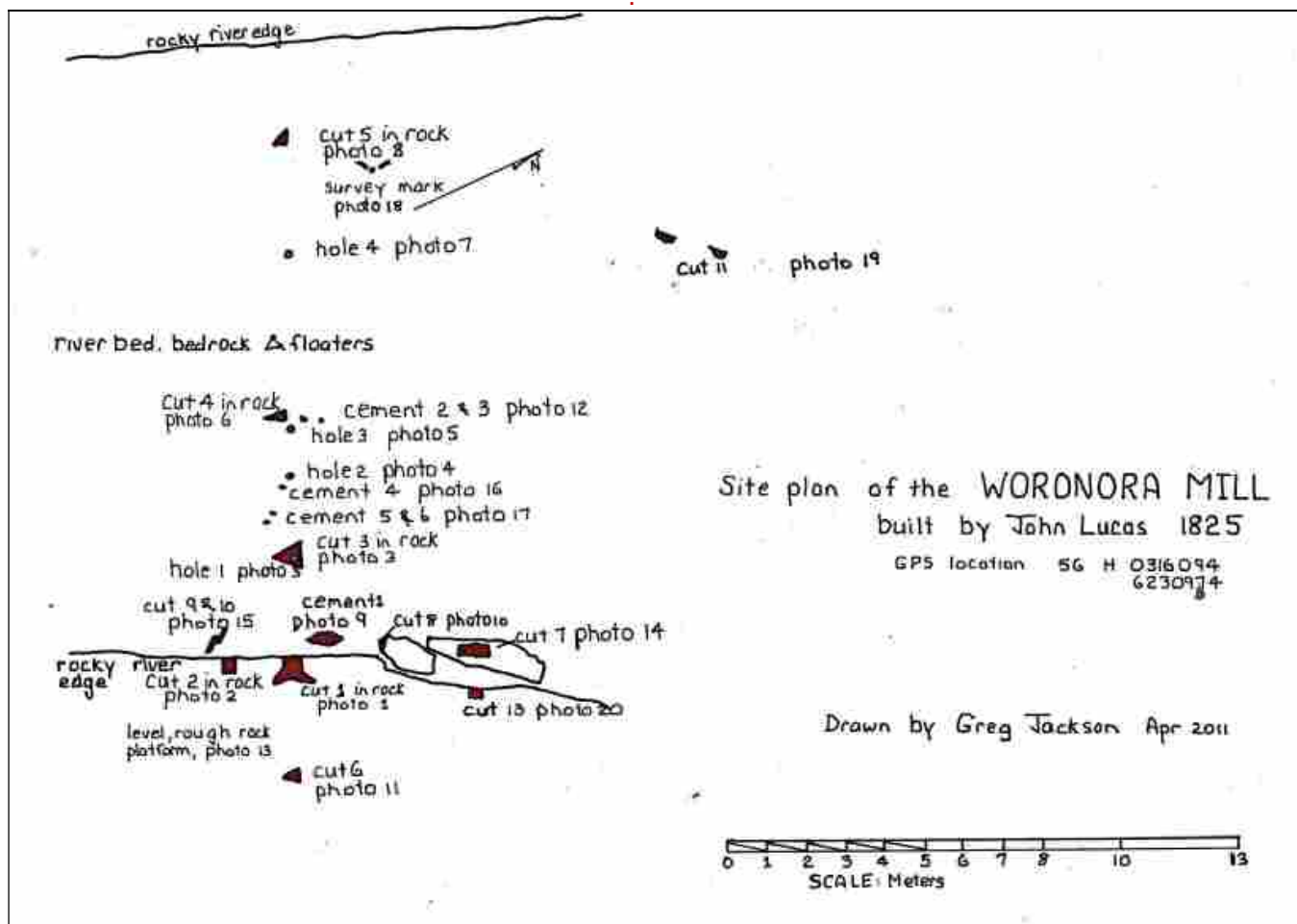
The fire, either the result of bushfires or the action of local aboriginals, probably occurred in the 1830s but certainly before the 1843 advertisement. Mitchell's letter therefore mentions only Lucas' Dam.

Additional information on the mill location is contained in a survey by Thomas Mitchell's son Roderick Mitchell (NSW State Archives). Opposite is a magnified portion of his survey – perhaps the only representation of the Lucas Dam and Mill.

By overlaying this survey onto a modern topographical map the eastern-most survey line stops on the location of Lucas' Mill (circled).

This is a good representation of the location, shape and alignment of the dam considering the very small size of this drawing. Roderick appears to have drawn some structure on the south eastern river bank, possibly remains of the mill building or machinery. No structure now exists at this location.





Site plan showing keyed photos of visible archaeological features.

Using this information the Woronora Mill site was located by searching the south-eastern river bank just above the limit of navigation of the Woronora River.

As at the Brisbane Mill, Lucas chose not to build this mill on his own 150-acre grant on the north-western side of the river but instead built on crown land on the more suitable southern bank. Lucas would have chosen the best site for the mill regardless of land ownership. In this remote river valley there would have been no adverse consequences for this decision.

There are three types of features on the site:

- Cuts in the bedrock, made with picks. These are the most common type of feature.
- Holes drilled into the rock, all of approximately 50mm diameter.
- Remnant cement that can be used to trace the line of the mill dam.



Photo 9: This illustration shows a fissure in the bedrock of the river filled with an estimated 20 litres of cement and basalt aggregate –filling a crack in the river bed in the probable wheel pit. The cement is relatively soft and worn away by water flow.

Roman Cement: *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (3 July 1823 - p4), contains an advert for 'Roman Cement', a true hydraulic cement and *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* (25 March 1826 -p1) describes in detail the

many uses of Roman Cement, including mill dams. This cement is very soft compared to modern Portland cement and has been eroded to expose the aggregate. This can be seen in photo 9 (p 25). A source of basalt for road base and aggregate was available from the 1820s onwards from Prospect Quarry (Prospect Heritage Trust Inc, 2012). Lucas would have had access to this source and the Brisbane Mill where he lived, is located close to Prospect with access from Prospect Creek.



Photo1: Large rock cutting in river bank. This could take a timber beam up to 450mm wide which would have been suitable support for one of the bearings of the water wheel. The wheel pit would be to the left with the river approx 1.5m below the cut.



Photo 3: 50mm hole approx 100mm deep. This hole is located in a large, level cut in the bedrock on the river bed, approx 1800mm below cut 1. A large post of 450mm diameter could have stood on this cut and been prevented from moving by an iron bar 'leaded' into the hole (see photo 4). This post probably provided the base for the second of the water wheel's bearings.



Photo 4: Hole in the bedrock on the river bed. A piece of iron, 25mm x 25mm is inserted into the hole and retained by lead. The iron rod has been broken off at surface level and may be the remains of an iron ring or bar. The hole in the rock appears to be approx 50mm diameter, the same size as holes 1, 3 and 4 which are empty. Also imbedded into the lead are several hand made, steel cut, nails.

NOTE: Many more photographs of the archaeological features are available from the Dropbox web site – see endnotes.

Condition of Fabric

and/or archaeological potential

Fires and floods since the abandonment of the mill have removed most of its structure however possible archaeological remains could include:

- a) Structures that controlled water flow
- b) Waterwheel
- c) Mill machinery
- d) Buildings for grinding machinery and associated infrastructure

Dams and other water control structures survive more commonly than buildings. Machinery and wheels rarely survive (Birmingham, Jack and Jeans 1983:40,41).

Water mills can be categorised by the way water is supplied, the type of wheels used and the power takeoff.

Tide mills use the tide to fill a reservoir which is then emptied to turn the wheel. A tidal mill was built at Parramatta and there were two tidal mills at Wisemans Ferry (Birmingham, Jack and Jeans 1983:40).

However it was more common to drive water mills from a river using either a dam or millrace. Caley described the dam of the first water mill at Parramatta as being roughly built of stones packed with earth (Tratai 1994:36) and a sketch by Busby shows Blaxland's mill and a dam made of logs on the Nepean River about 1833 (Birmingham, Jack and Jeans 1983:27). The wheel can use the dam water directly but for greater falls, a race can be either cut into the ground or a flume constructed above ground using timber, canvas etc. An overflow is added to protect the mill from too much water.

There is evidence of a stone and concrete dam wall on the Woronora site and an overflow created by clearing a natural channel. As the dam is just above the tidal influence the Woronora Mill must have been powered by the river. The Woronora River drains a huge catchment area south of Sydney but the Woronora Dam, completed in 1942, greatly reduced the maximum water flow in the river downstream. Prior to the dam's completion the Woronora River flooded regularly but since 1942 no property damage from floods has resulted in Woronora Village, about three kilometres downstream of the mill site. Even with the dam's moderating effect significant rainfall events produce large rises in the river near the mill site (Sutherland Shire Council: Woronora Estuary Management Plan, 2006).

When the flood photo (opposite) was taken, the water had fallen by almost two metres from its peak that day. Had this rainfall event occurred when the mill was operational this height of water flowing at an estimated speed of 20 kph would surely have damaged the mill and its machinery.

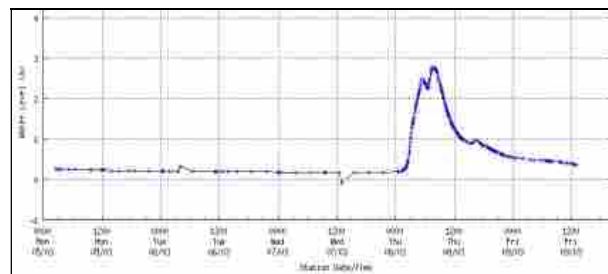


Overshot mill wheel.
(Author: 5 November 2011)



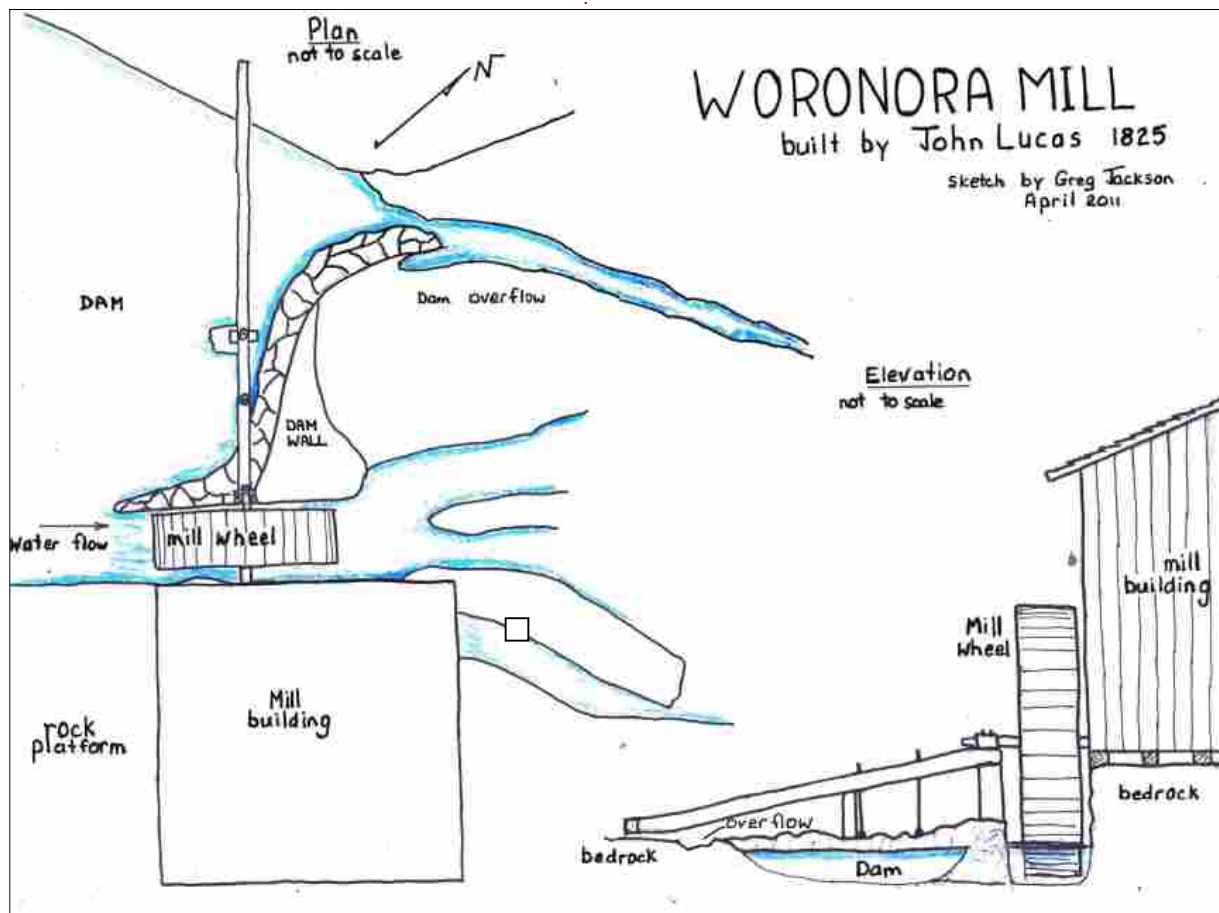
Above: This photograph was taken by the authors on 8 March 2012, after a major rain event. The mill was built on the rock shelf visible on the far side. The fast flowing water would have been 1.5 metres over the estimated top of the mill dam, almost up to the mill wheel's axle. This flood event would have completely overwhelmed the dams overflow channel.

Below: The graph shows the water level at The Needles stream gauge (approx 300m upstream of the mill site) on the same day (Bureau of Meteorology, 2012).



Mill Types

Mill wheels can be overshot where water enters from the top of the wheel, breastshot where water enters between the top and bottom or undershot where water flows at the bottom. The most efficient is the overshot followed by breast then undershot. The choice of technology depends on the available water flow and height of water and affects both the water supply system and the design of the wheel. The smaller, irregular flows and steeper falls typical in Australia tended to favour larger diameter, narrower overshot wheels with long millraces (Pearson 1996:54). However where there is a shorter drop but good volume of flow, undershot or breastshot wheels, which are smaller diameter and wider, can be used.



Examples in Australia include Howell's Mill at Parramatta with an undershot wheel and the pitchback wheel (a type of high breastshot) at Bridgewater in SA (Birmingham, Jack and Jeans 1983:43,44). The power of the wheel is traditionally transferred to the grinding machinery via a large axle and pit wheel. Rim gears, developed in the early nineteenth century as an alternative to a pit wheel, transfer power to a small pinion allowing for greater speeds, more light weight construction of wheels and axles and an easier gearing chain (Schools Council Project Technology 1975:7).

The evidence on the site suggests an undershot wheel which matches the water flow characteristics of the Woronora River. The mill wheel and machinery would probably have been made off site, disassembled and transported by boat to the mill site. Pearson (1996:57) suggests that Sydney's foundries were capable of producing castings such as wheel frames and gears up to four tons by 1823 but it is known that mill parts were also imported. Getting these large items and the mill stones weighing approximately a ton

each from boats to the site would have been difficult and required a substantial labour force. The lack of a pit in the bedrock for the pit wheel suggests that the mill machinery was driven by rim drive. The photo on page 27 is a privately owned, un-named pitchback rim-drive mill near Hobart, Tasmania. A toothed iron rim on the water wheel engages a drive shaft to power the mill.

No evidence of machinery has been found on site but there is equally no evidence of its removal. There is a remote possibility that some machinery could be found downstream of the mill site as a result of flood action.

Mill buildings are usually several storeys high to allow grain to feed through the machinery by gravity and although variable in size must be large enough to house the grinding machinery. Compared to Britain, Australia particularly lacked skilled labour and tended to favour more labour efficient technology – for example auxiliary grain and flour processing machinery (Pearson 1996:51).

Associated buildings can provide storage for grain and flour, facilities to dry grain and accommodation for the miller.

Such utilitarian buildings are found at Donnybrook Mill at Spring Creek near Gundagai (Birmingham, Jack and Jeans. 1983:44).

The mill building on the Woronora was probably relatively small and constructed of timber available on site. Bloodwoods (*corymbia gummifera*) and Sydney Peppermints (*eucalyptus piperita*) may have been used for structural timbers and slabs for cladding, with local she oaks (*Casuarina*) – also known as shingle oak, used for roofing. This structure would not have survived subsequent fires and floods.

Opposite is a plan and elevation of how the mill may have looked in 1825. Using the foundation cuts in the bedrock, the length of the mill along the riverside is estimated to be 6.2 metres (20 feet). The depth of the mill is not easily determined as footing placed on the rough rock platform would leave little or no trace. The mill may have been either two or three storeys high. Rock cuts at either end of the wheel pit together with the depth of the wheel pit suggest that the water wheel was approximately 4.2 metres (14 feet) diameter with a width of 1 metre (3.3 feet).

Together with Lucas' Brisbane Mill, discussed in the last article, the Woronora Mill provides an opportunity to study the transport systems that supplied the mills, distributed their products and integrated their operations into a single economic and social unit – discussed in the next *Bulletin*.

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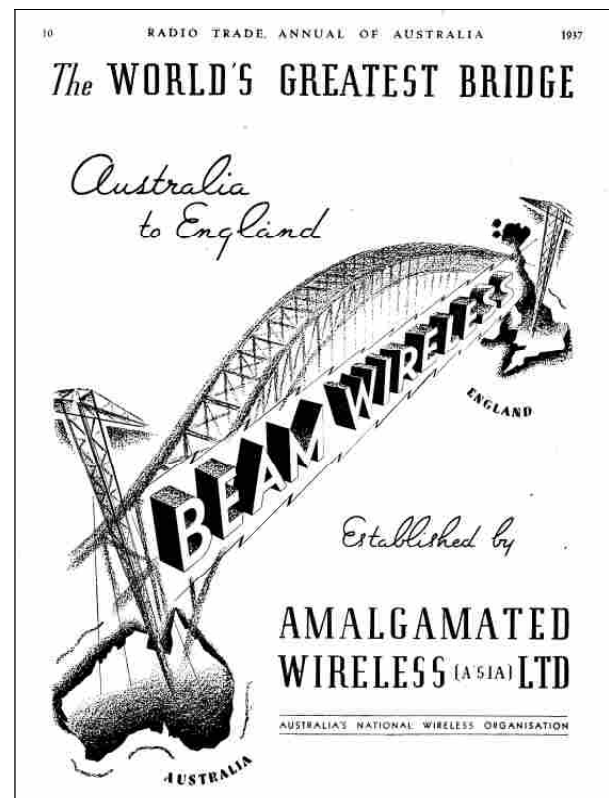
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DROPBOX: The number of images here is limited and many of them are hard to interpret in black and white. All the mill images can be viewed on:

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/85728880/Woronora-Mill-Images.doc>

or:

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/85728880/Brisbane-Mill-Images.doc>



1937

MILITARY WIRELESS EXPERIMENTS

FRANK PURVIS

Conducted at Heathcote: 28 March 1910

It must be 15 years since I first saw a photograph of what was believed to be one of two experimental wireless stations connected with wireless experiments conducted at Heathcote, NSW, by the military in 1910.

Recently my interest was rekindled to discover more about these wireless experiments, so I visited the internet site, 'Trove' (an unrivalled repository of material: books, images, historic newspapers, maps etc: <http://trove.nla.gov.au/>) and was able to locate some information and a number of photographs about the subject.

At the same time, other information was provided by Brian Kirkby, who is a great grandson of civilian, Edward Hope Kirkby, who built the wireless apparatus and was involved

with two other civilians in actually sending the signals. Brian readily passed on a lot more information about his great grandfather, including a comprehensive report he wrote about the experiments.

There is a monument to the experiments in the park on the corner of Veno Road and Princes Highway opposite Heathcote Hotel. This is not where the experiments occurred nor is the inscription correct. Lieutenant Taylor never transmitted the signals and he was a Lieutenant not a Captain as inscribed on the monument.

It was civilians Kirkby, Hannam and Wilkinson who successfully performed the tests as Brian Kirkby's report states but are not mentioned. A more in depth article about the wireless experiments will appear in future Bulletins.

HERITAGE WEEK

ANNE O'CONNOR

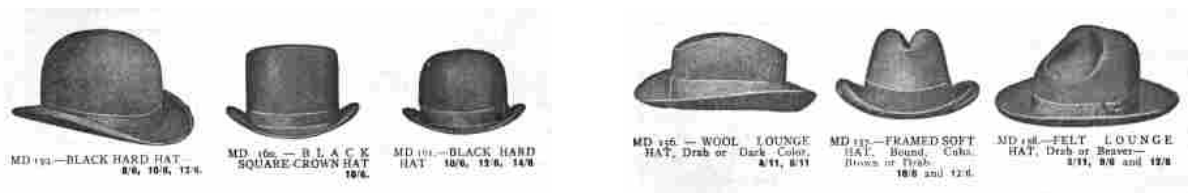
We sat at tables freshly spread with linen cloths so clean,
Greeting friends and meeting new we had never seen.
The talk was all about the past, how else could it be so...
Our ages ranged from ninety plus to positively low.

We spoke about the Sutherland Shire in times that now have gone
And told the tales of local folks whose stories linger on.
Of times when transport meant a horse or row your boat to school,
And goods were brought from far away in carts pulled by a mule.

The busy crew who fed us all with many a welcome platter
Rushed around to set the scene for the more serious matter.
A talk about the historic Bay, the very heart of our nation,
Criss-crossed by pipes to aid the flow of water desalination.

The age-old tale of flood and drought that is the Australian scene
Demands the use of modern means to keep our water clean.
As keepers of our precious past, our heritage we must spare,
While innovation has its place, old crafts are rich and rare.

But as we keep our treasures safe to show off all their glory,
It is we human beings who manipulate the story.



1911 STYLES

ANOTHER SHIRE MYSTERY

The Carving in the Bush

On the track between Sutherland and Woronora [UBD: P332-F.2] is Price's Cave. It was originally an aboriginal shelter and just before reaching the cave, on a rock above one's head on the left is this life-sized carving of a head and body.



This photograph gives some idea of its size and detail. If any member has knowledge of its origin please let Clive Baker know.

Feedback: The mystery rock 'box' that appeared in the last issue, has since been visited by SSHS member, Judith Carrick (an expert on the Royal) but she was unable to throw any light on the matter. Many are the theories but we may never really know what it was used for.

CAN YOU HELP?

Horace Madden Korean War Hero

Born at Cronulla in 1924, Horace had left the Shire and moved to the New Lambton when he joined the army in 1942 and served in New Guinea.

After the war he worked near Newcastle in a psychiatric hospital but again joined up to go to Korea with 3RAR.

For more than a day in the Battle for Kapyong his outnumbered unit delayed thousands of Chinese soldiers as they tried unsuccessfully to capture Seoul.

In the chaos, Horace was knocked unconscious and became a prisoner when 3RAR withdrew and he was not seen..

During his imprisonment he never gave up his defiance and died in captivity in 1952. After the war he was awarded the George Cross – his citation stating (in part):



Despite repeated beatings and many other forms of ill-treatment inflicted because of his defiance to his captors ... Private Madden remained cheerful and optimistic.

Although deprived of food because of his behaviour, resulting in malnutrition, he was known to share his meagre supplies ... with other prisoners...

He was never married and it was his sister who accepted his medal when it was awarded in 1955.

—0—

Clive Baker is trying to locate members of Horace's family as he is writing a detailed story of this local man. He would appreciate any leads from readers.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

The following people have joined us over recent months – we are pleased to have you.

Laurie BURGESS
Bruce HOWELL
Lorna MacAULAY

Patricia MUSICK
Patricia REEVES
Valda SNELL

MEMBER PROFILE: LAURIE BURGESS

Laurie was born in Mascot in 1944 and the family moved to Gymea Bay in the mid-1950s. He attended Gymea Bay Public School – the old one (now Old School Park), and Sydney Technical High.

In his youth, he rode a pushbike all over the Shire, and remembers the old Council library (now Peace Park), the 'Six-Ways' (now Five-Ways) and skied down the Kurnell sandhills.

After his school years Laurie worked at Sydney Water Board, moved to Canberra in 1970 – married there and returned in 1985 to live at Miranda.

He attended the University of New England and Macquarie University as a 'distance education' student and gained a BA in European Languages and European History.

He started work at Sutherland Shire Council in 1990 and over the years kept lots of historical data that nobody thought worth keeping. Because of the collection, he was also the person who seemed to be able to find answers to questions on all kinds of obscure matters.

One of his amusements was to wander around the Council library and branches, reading anything that looked interesting about the Shire history (including of course the *SSHS Bulletins*). As part of his job, he also looked up reference material at the State library and on line.

His 'Two Hanleys' article came about when trying to catalogue old Crown Special Leases where the first name of the lessee of a site at Waterfall changed on renewal:

After discovering that one historian thought that the Heathcote Hotel was at East Heathcote and another that William and not Thomas ran another pub at Como, I figured that the best way was to find out for myself. After all, the one who has the best paperwork will always win the argument.

Another of his projects, while working closely with Christine Edney, was the preparation of the origins of the road names in the Shire. He noted that:

Apart from obvious ones like 'Anzac', and the battlefield names around Engadine, others were named after VC winners, military leaders, etc. Probably my most surprising find was that several of the streets east of Jannali railway station are named after Boer War military figures (that part of Jannali was subdivided at that time). The complete list has been recently published on Sutherland Shire Council's web site.

Laurie and his wife moved to Adelaide where he still works for the Council by 'remote control', "I find no difficulty living in Adelaide and still being interested in the history of the Shire – after all I spent most of my life there".

CARROT PUDDING

Two ounces brown sugar.
Four ounces brown breadcrumbs.
Two ounces suet or dripping.
One tablespoon treacle.
Four ounces plain flour.

Six ounces carrot.
Four ounces sultanas.
Two ounces candied peel.
Pinch salt.

METHOD:

1. Grate the raw carrot.
2. Mix it with the chopped fat, breadcrumbs, sugar, peel, fruit and flour. Add the treacle and mix well.
3. Put into a greased mould and steam for three hours.
4. Turn on to a hot plate and serve with a sauce.

Austerity recipe from WW2

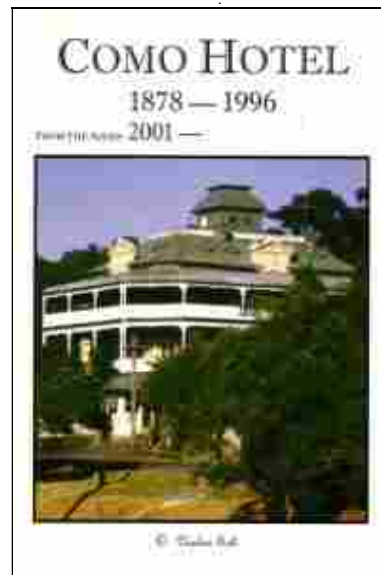
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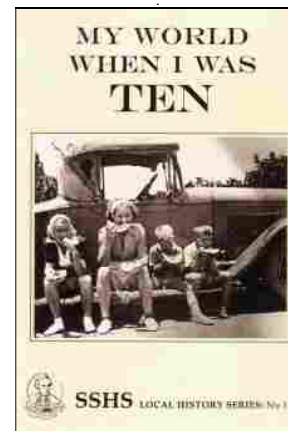
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