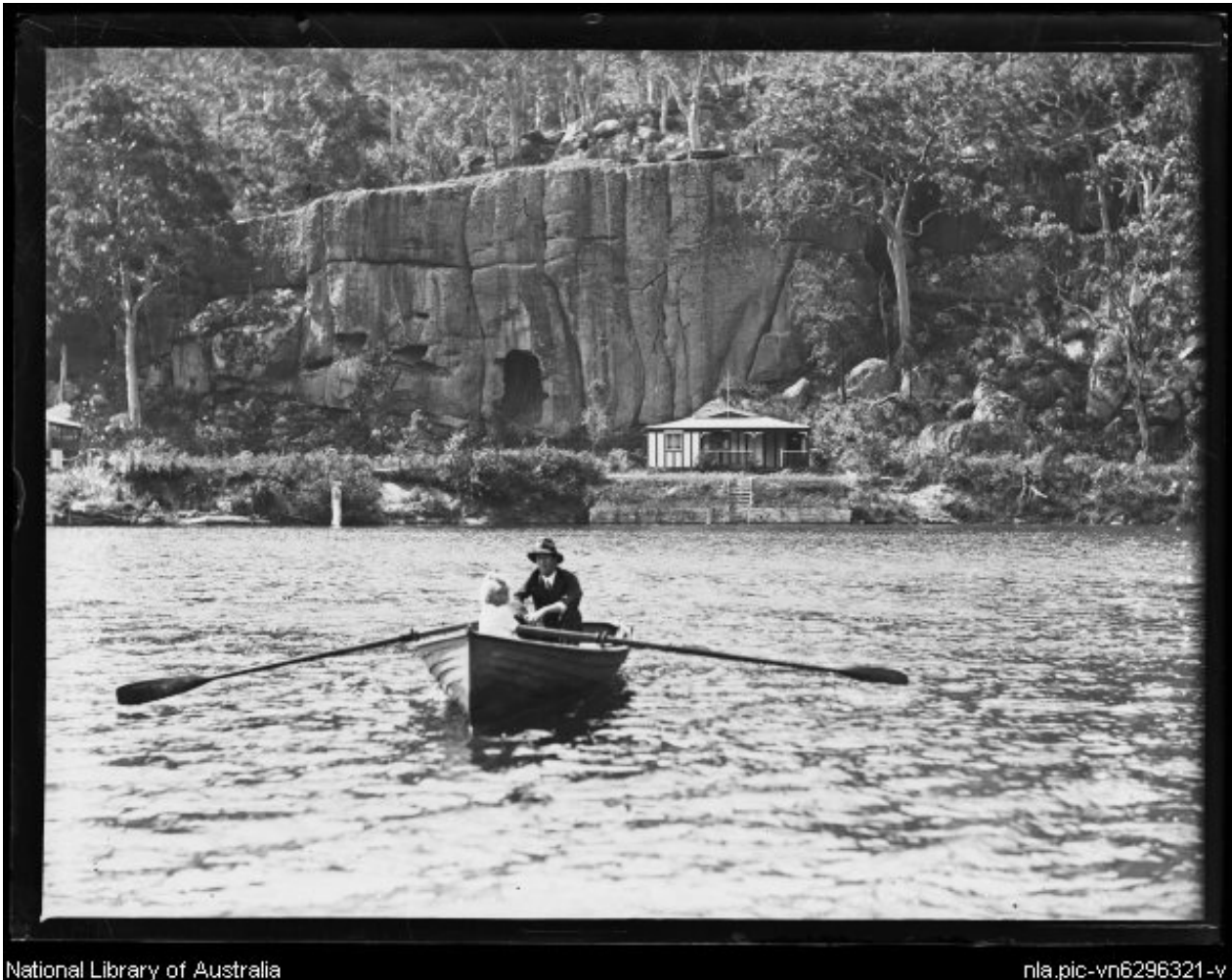




Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc Bulletin



NUMBER: 202 — FEBRUARY 2017



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Boating on the Woronora River with Cathedral Rock in the background, c.1940s

MINDFUL OF THE PAST – FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

SOCIETY WEBSITE: www.shirehistory.org.



www.shirehistory.org

NATIONAL TRUST HERITAGE FESTIVAL 2017

VOICES at SUTHERLAND MUSEUM

Saturday 22nd April 2017 9am-5pm

23 East Parade Sutherland 2232

The Sutherland Memorial School of Arts is the
Heritage Bus Stop to reach other Shire events,
located on the west side at Sutherland train station

At 1pm Dr Jan Lindrum will give a voice for
Australia's champion of the Snooker & Billiard Table,
Horace Lindrum, Master of the Cue Arts

Jan, Horace's eldest daughter, will enlighten and entertain you with stories and video of her father, in the same room where Horace gave an exhibition in 1944.

The permanent museum display includes photos of the building of Woronora Dam and also the oral histories of the migrants, including the early Chinese in the Shire, will be available for listening.

Sausage sandwiches and tea/coffee available from 12pm

An accessible toilet is in the courtyard



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Front cover photo: NLA, from David Robinson, *An outline history of Woronora to 1940*, 2014

SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

THE SOCIETY

The SSHS has a proud tradition stretching back 50 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: Elizabeth Craig at elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com or phone 9528 4707.

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

Apart from 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 Avenue, Sutherland (near the library). We welcome visitors to hear our guest speakers, mix with local history enthusiasts and share afternoon tea and a chat.

SUTHERLAND SHIRE MUSEUM

Our museum is located in the School of Arts, 23 East Parade Sutherland (a short walk north from the pedestrian crossing and corner of Adelong Street).

Aside from the Christmas–New Year period, the Museum is open on each Saturday from 9am to 1pm and contains some gems of Shire history and a fine collection of old photographs. For schools and other groups requiring a special tour at other times: contact the Curator, Ian Kolln on 9528 3094 or iankolln@yahoo.com.au.

DONATING MATERIAL: If you have items of historical significance for Sutherland Shire, we welcome their donation to the museum to keep for posterity. If you do not wish to part with items, we would appreciate having copies of documents and photographs. 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

Alternatively, email us at shirehistory@gmail.com

+ SOCIETY COMMITTEE: 2016-2017

ELECTED MEMBERS

| | | | |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|--|
| PATRON: | Shire Mayor, Clr Carmelo Pesce | | |
| PRESIDENT | Bruce Watt | 9523-5294 | watto51@optusnet.com.au |
| DEPUTY PRESIDENT | Pauline Curby | 9523-8814 | pcurby@iprimus.com.au |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Helen Rosner | 8539-7707 | hmrosner@bigpond.com |
| VICE PRESIDENT | Ian Kolln | 9528-3094 | iankolln@yahoo.com.au |
| SECRETARY/PUBLIC OFFICER | George Miller | 9521-3454 | george.miller@bigpond.com |
| HONORARY TREASURER | Anna Estephan | 9525-6441 | annaestephan@gmail.com |
| MUSEUM CURATOR | Ian Kolln | 9528-3094 | iankolln@yahoo.com.au |
| MUSEUM ARCHIVIST & ARCHIVIST | Pat Hannan | 9528-8294 | patricia.hannan@bigpond.com |
| EXCURSION OFFICER & BOOKING CLERK | Noel Elliot | 9521-8622 | |
| PUBLICITY OFFICER | Joan Tangney | 9523-6774 | jtangney@optusnet.com.au |
| BULLETIN EDITOR | Elizabeth Craig | 9528 4707 | elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com |
| COMMITTEE MEMBERS | Creo Hines Peter Moore | 9589-0251 | Angela Thomas 9528-6251 |
| | Terry McCosker | 9542-1137 | Don Rothnie 0409820815 |
| BOOK REVIEW EDITORS | Pauline Curby | 9523-8814 | pcurby@iprimus.com.au |
| HONORARY SOLICITOR | Michael Solari | AUDITOR | |

APPOINTED MEMBERS

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|--|
| ASSISTANT SECRETARY | Carol McDonald | 9528-5122 | jmcdonald@optusnet.com.au |
| WEBSITE MANAGER | Andrew Platfoot | 0404-038-090 | andrew_platfoot@yahoo.com.au |
| BULLETIN PROOF READER | Merle Kavanagh | 9521-1043 | merle.kavanagh@gmail.com |
| MUSEUM COMMITTEE | Joan Tangney | Noel Elliot | Ineke Niewland John White |
| PUBLICATIONS OFFICER | To be appointed | | |
| PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE | Pauline Curby | Bruce Watt | Elizabeth Craig |
| HERITAGE WEEK LIAISON OFFICER | Helen Rosner | 8539-7707 | hmrosner@bigpond.com |
| SCHOOLS LIAISON OFFICER | To be appointed | | |

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

BRUCE WATT



This year marks the beginning of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society's second 50th year. We're proud of this achievement, despite some 'grizzles' that we feel from time to time in navigating

these changing times. Historical societies and museums have changed a lot over the last 30 years in response to wider community tastes and expectations. Unless generously supported by local governments, smaller societies with community/volunteer run museums face challenges of limited funds, changing technology and ageing membership. In the past, some have folded and no doubt, others will in the future unless they broaden their appeal and methods of delivery.

Many were established in the pre-digital era, especially in the 1960s as lifestyle changes were altering the way we lived. In this simpler, less time poor era before television and the internet, social interaction, outings and lectures were important reasons for joining. The challenge today is to avoid atrophying into an aged cohort that either lacks skills or isn't attractive to a wider membership. In October last year, the executive held a planning day to discuss such challenges and to prioritise some strategies. We owe allegiance to both our members and to the wider public as some of our activities are supported by the Sutherland Shire Council.

While we are sometimes disheartened by the enormity of the challenges, I am encouraged by the results of a survey by the Federation of Australian Historical Societies conducted in 2016. It received 304 responses to its survey and the results shine a positive light on our own performance relative to others. The following are some comparative extracts.

The largest numbers of societies were established in the period 1960 – 1969 (59) and

1980 – 1989 (60) perhaps corresponding to the 1970 and 1988 bi-centenaries. Ours was established in 1966. 74% had less than 100 members while 15% had between 100 and 200 members. We are in the top 25% category and this reflects a strong and growing membership. Most (81%) occupied premises while only 14% owned their premises. 41% had between 11 and 25 volunteers which we are fortunate to have. Local government provided rent free accommodation in 52% of respondents (same as us).

The survey showed the main sources of income. In descending order it was membership fees, donations and bequests, sale of books and merchandise, grants and fund raising. Our accumulated fund was added to significantly over recent times by the inclusion of a raffle at our monthly meetings. If you have worthwhile prizes to donate, please bring them along to the meeting. It's a bit of fun and just about everyone wins a prize!

58% operated a museum, 77% had a website and 77% used Facebook (this is an aspect that we need to improve).

In general activities, we tick all of the boxes in terms of: running regular meetings, making resources available, producing a magazine, publishing books, running a museum, conducting tours and organising fund raising events, having special opening days, providing advice and support and having annual dinners.

In common with similar organisations we have an ageing membership and difficulty in attracting younger volunteers with skills, succession planning and space. Please, if you know of someone who is looking for a satisfying hobby or activity, encourage them to join us.

One of our on-going aims is to publish suburb profiles and books. One of our members, Elizabeth Adams is preparing a book on Kareela which is planned to be ready for publication in 2018 for Kareela's 50th anniversary.

Our grants officer, Don Rothnie was successful in gaining a grant to build a shelter in the garden area at the museum. We are currently seeking Council approval.

On Australia day, the society mounted an exhibition in the foyer of the Cronulla School of Arts to raise awareness of the Society's activities and especially the museum, its location and its opening times. Again, if you haven't visited the museum or know of others who haven't, invite them along. We are open every Saturday between 9 and 1 at the Sutherland School of Arts 23 East Parade, Sutherland. We do need more visitors.

A perfect opportunity to visit the museum is during the Heritage Festival. A reminder that our normal meeting date, April 15 falls during Easter so there is no meeting for April. Our main activity is on at the museum on Saturday April 22. Put the date in your diary. As usual, the heritage bus will be

running on a loop, commencing at the Tramway Museum, Woronora Cemetery and on to our museum at 23 East Parade Sutherland. Between 12 and 1pm we are holding a sausage sizzle as a preliminary to a talk by our guest speaker. Dr Janne (Jan) Lindrum has written a book about her famous billiards playing father, Horace Lindrum who played an exhibition match at the School of Arts in 1944. We'd like as many members as possible to attend the talk. We will also be running some recorded extracts of life stories of migrants about their experiences moving to the Shire from countries like China, South America and Sudan.

I trust that you had a good holiday break. I would like to thank in advance, all those heroes that contribute in so many ways to running our 'family'. We are blessed in where we live. Whether it's our unique history that appeals or the social benefits, let's look forward to another great year.

VALE NORMA GODDARD

BRUCE WATT

Norma Goddard passed away on January 20 after a short illness. She was 90. The remarkable thing about Norma was that she worked for the last 46 years as the receptionist at Port Hacking High School until she retired in October last year. Asked often why she hadn't retired she would reply that she loved coming to work and anyway, she wouldn't know what to do if she did retire. She proudly claimed that she had broken in eight Principals in her time. Norma was known to thousands of parents and students who passed through the school. She had a remarkable memory and could recall the names of students and parents of students who had also attended the school, often from decades ago.

I had the privilege of knowing Norma well during my teaching days at Port Hacking. She was a real character. I joined her up to the Society as she had a keen interest in history and loved reading the *Bulletin*. Norma's people skills, 'corporate knowledge' and wise 'grandmotherly' demeanour were qualities that gave character to the school and her prominent presence on the front desk was proof that older citizens have a lot to offer.

Though she didn't attend meetings the huge crowd that attended her funeral was testament to the love and respect that she garnered from staff and pupils and those who knew her in the wider community.

| SOCIETY ACTIVITIES: March – May 2017 | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|----|---|--|---|
| DATE | | MEETING 1.30pm, 3 rd Saturday in month Stapleton Centre | MUSEUM Saturdays, 9.00 am – 1.00 pm CURATOR: Ian Kolln – 0466 215 289 iankolln@yahoo.com.au | EXCURSION EXCURSION OFFICER Noel Elliot – 9521 8622 |
| MARCH | 4 | | Supervisor: Peter Moore – 0427 213 575 Guides: Leone Harris | Walk – 9am-3pm (BUS FULL) <i>Burraneer, Bundeena, Bonnie Vale.</i> Meet 9am at 10-18 Robertson St. S'land. Bring morning tea and picnic lunch |
| | 11 | | Supervisor: Noel Elliot – 9521 8622 Guides: John Doherty, Carol McDonald | |
| | 18 | Speaker: Christine Edney – Scouting history in the Shire | Supervisor: Peter M. - 0427 213 575 Guides: Christine and Bruce Edney | |
| APRIL | 25 | | Supervisor: George Miller? 9521 3454 Guides: Helen Rosner ? Joan Tangney | |
| | 1 | | Supervisor: Andrew Platfoot 0404 038 090 Guides: Anna Estephan, Carol McDonald | Walk – <i>Redfern/Surry Hills</i> Date to be confirmed at meeting – Either Sat. 1 st or Friday, 7 th April |
| | 8 | | Supervisor: Noel Elliot – 9521 8622 Guides: John Doherty, Joan Tangney | |
| | 15 | NO MEETING | E A S T E R | MUSEUM CLOSED |
| | 22 | HERITAGE FESTIVAL - MUSEUM OPEN 9am – 5pm 12.00 - <i>SAUSAGE SIZZLE</i> Supervisor: Bruce Watt – 9523 Guides: Bruce Edney, Christine Edney MORE VOLUNTEERS NEEDED – Contact Ian Kolln | | |
| | 29 | | Supervisor: Andrew Platfoot 0404 038 090 Guides: Leone H., Ineke Nieuwland | |
| MAY | 6 | | Supervisor: John White – 9542 6631 Guides: Elizabeth Craig, Maurie Beavan | Bus Outing – <i>Albion Park/Shell Harbour</i> Date to be confirmed at meeting. |
| | 13 | | Supervisor: Noel E. – 9521 8622 Guides: Joan Tangney, John Doherty | Possibly mid-week. |
| | 20 | Speaker: Shire artist Otto Kuster on his life and his painting | Supervisor: Bruce Edney 0422 116 669 Guides: Leone Harris, Dorothy Dalyell | |
| | 27 | | Supervisor: Bruce Watt – 9523 5294 Guides: Eliz. Craig, Anna Estephan | |

SSHS MEMBERS' NEWS

.....

There is both good news and sad news in this *Bulletin's* report of how members are faring.

THE GOOD NEWS

Congratulations to Pauline Curby on the publication of her history of St George Girls High School in November last year. As a professional historian, Pauline has written many local and commissioned history books, and *Independent Minds* is another fine publication. (See a review of the book on page 25).

Welcome home, Anna Estephan. Anna spent much of last year in Poland nursing her ailing mother who died in December. Our condolences on your loss, Anna. And a huge 'Thank you' to George Miller for filling in for Anna as Treasurer in her absence, as well as taking on his new role as Secretary at the September AGM. They are both very big jobs and you kept things running without a hitch.

VALE

We have also lost several members in the last few months, some of them of very long standing in our Society. Jim Cutbush, known in more recent years for his role as Museum Curator, but who served in many other executive positions as

well, succumbed to cancer in November (see a tribute to Jim on page 9). In late December Doug Archer also passed away. He was a quiet achiever, who had attended meetings since the 1970s, always in the background just getting on with things, but never looking for acclaim. A tribute to Doug appears on page 23. Another member who was very active in the early days of the Society, Athalie Ivers, wife of our longest serving president, Harold, died in November. A tribute to Athalie by her daughter, Jenness Platfoot is on page 16. Just at the January meeting we learned that Ernest Snell had died after a long battle with cancer. His wife, Valda, joined SSHS about six years ago and Ernest began attending meetings in the last two years. However, his illness prevented him from attending regularly. Our condolences to you, Valda. And then in December we lost Norma Goddard who at 90 only retired from work last October. Her friend and one-time colleague, Bruce Watt, has written a tribute to Norma (see Page 5).

If you have news of members that you think should be included in the *Bulletin*, please contact the editor at elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com, or write care of the SSHS, PO Box 389, Sutherland 1499.

MUSEUM REPORT

A donation for SSHS of historical documents from Jacaranda Cottage Hospital

IAN KOLLN

On 23 November last, I was pleased to represent the Society at the 60th Anniversary Celebration Dinner Dance of the Thomas Holt Village held at Sutherland Entertainment Centre.

I was invited to receive the donation of historical documents from the Jacaranda Cottage Hospital which were held by Thomas Holt Villages Pty Ltd when they acquired the business started by Sister Irene Haxton and built up and run by Sister Mullins at English St Cronulla.

On 14 August 1957 Sister Irene Haxton was issued with a NSW Board of Health licence for a 'Medical, Surgical and Lying-in [Maternity] Private Hospital', with a Commonwealth Certificate of Approval for eleven beds. By December 1965 the approval had been extended to 16 beds.

Jacaranda Cottage Hospital became famous in the Shire and wider as the source of Jacaranda trees handed out to new mothers as they left after the birth of their children at the Maternity and lying in hospital.

The documents donated to SSHS represent a social history of the Shire. Besides rate notices, receipts for electricity and sullage removal, and accounts for goods reflecting the daily necessities for the hospital which served our community in the last century, there is a poetic ode to Matron Mullins, written by Dr Walsh. There

were also boxes of photos and thank you letters from mothers who remembered their time at the Maternity hospital for the birth of their children

The night was attended by the local member for Miranda, Eleni Petinos MP and Sutherland Mayor Carmelo Pesce who had the pleasant duty to present Certificates of Nursing education to staff and then service awards for 10 and 15 years and longer to various staff members.

The Jacaranda Cottage Hospital information was displayed at our Australia Day exhibit at the Cronulla School of Arts.

MAKING GOOD USE OF OUR MUSEUM ARCHIVE

Those of us who were present at the January meeting to hear Carol McDonald's fabulous talk about the building of the Woronora Dam were lucky. Carol brought the project to life for us with stories she had gleaned from her research at our Museum archive about the lives of the workers and their conditions as work progressed. The presentation was made even more special by the photos shown from those collected by former Museum Curator Jim Cutbush for a heritage display on the Woronora Dam. These of course, are also archived at the Museum, painstakingly catalogued and digitised by Archivist Pat Hannan and Carol. And what gave Carol's talk extra greater authority was that she had visited the Woronora Dam site herself, so that she could understand the documents and maps and put it all into perspective. A really interesting presentation. Carol. Thank you!

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

ELIZABETH CRAIG

A good mix of stories

Thank you to all those who contributed such great articles on Shire history for the *Bulletin* this month. Topics range from convicts in the Shire to history of the Internet for laymen, to Sutherland and its pubs in the 19th century ... and more.

Sadly, we also have several tributes to members who have died in recent months. Some are quite legendary figures in SSHS history and it is quite revealing to read of their activities in the tributes.

Grazie mille

Newish member Floriana Camper, has come to the rescue of my sanity and taken over the labelling of the *Bulletin* envelopes. After an exasperating first attempt herself, she's now got it down pat and had them done for February in no time. Thank you, Floriana.

No letters page

The absence of a *Letters Page* is for the simple reason there were no letters – except one from

Jim Wood, which as you will see (on page 10) has been expanded into a full blown article on Woronora in the 1940s.

The *Letters Page* is a chance for you to give feedback on the content, have your say about anything in the Shire you think of interest, or suggest ideas for *Bulletin* articles.

Meet the Members

I am keen to publish the story of members' lives in the *Bulletin*. Everyone's life stories are unique and of interest to other members. So please get in touch with me if you would like to write a page or two about your life for the *Bulletin*.

Who remembers Sutherland Public School? (See photo on inside back cover)

Sutherland Public School made quite an impression on Jim Wood, shown in this photo of the 1947 5th class. If you, or anyone you know, appears in the photo I would love to hear from you to dig up more memories about this school.

Please send your submission to: The *Bulletin* Editor, SSHS, PO Box 389, Sutherland 1499,
or email me at elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com

VALE
JAMES SKIPTON CUTBUSH
1941 – 2016

BRUCE WATT

The Society was deeply saddened by the passing of Jim Cutbush in November 2016, after a protracted illness. This marked a long period of family association with the Sutherland Shire and with the Sutherland Shire Historical Society.

Jim's grandfather brought his family out to Cronulla in 1916 and Jim's father grew up in the area at a time when it was still largely undeveloped. He bought two blocks of land in Hyndman Parade Woollooware in 1939 and built a house. Jim was born during the running of the Melbourne Cup in 1941. The winner was 'Skipton' so he was christened James Skipton



Cutbush. Schooled on stories of the early days, Jim had a deep knowledge of 'the old Shire' and its characters and it was from this background that he developed a lifelong interest in local history.

He attended Cronulla Public School and Sutherland Intermediate High School, and on leaving school was apprenticed to *Sun Gravure* as a lithographic printer. He continued this career, working for many years for Deeton and Spencer at Alexandria. On various occasions he made prints for famous Australian artists such as Lloyd Rees, William Dobell and Arthur Boyd. Throughout his life, Jim was interested in photography, aeroplanes and Sydney airport and in Shire history.

In 1963 he married Marjorie Tetley, who lived a few streets away in Castlewood Avenue, Woollooware. They built a house in Kirrawee and moved in in 1967. They raised four children; Karen, Steven, Jodie and Nathan. Following the death of his father, Jim's mother, Aida, joined the Sutherland Shire

Historical Society in 1976 and contributed greatly to its activities. Jim joined around 1981 and over the following 35 years, held virtually every position, including *Bulletin* editor, museum curator, vice president and president. He coordinated several important exhibitions including Mariners of the Pacific, scouting, astronomy and the 2000 Olympic celebrations. As

museum curator he mounted exhibitions of Shire photographs for the Australia Day celebrations.

Calm and thoughtful, Jim commanded respect for the manner in which he conducted himself, his wise counsel and for the depth of knowledge that he had of Shire history. He was twice rewarded with a Cook award for volunteering work in the Shire and also received a Premier's award for volunteering. He was instrumental in raising awareness of and garnering community support for the preservation of the Hospital Bay wharf. This campaign convinced Sutherland Shire Council to restore the wharf rather than demolishing it.

Jim was a devoted husband and father. He gave generously in time to the activities of the Historical Society and contributed greatly to its maintenance and growth over a significant period of the Society's existence. Jim was a gentleman, the like of which are all too few. He is remembered with great fondness.

Meet the Members

RECOLLECTIONS OF JIM WOOD, A WORONORA BOY

JIM WOOD with ELIZABETH CRAIG



Dr James Wood, Colonel (Rtd) joined SSHS in 2012. He has not attended meetings because he lives in Melbourne. However, Jim spent his early life in Woronora in circumstances that belie his later achievements - stellar careers in teaching and in the CMF (Citizens Military Force)/Army Reserve, as a Commando amongst other roles. He has several graduate and postgraduate degrees, including one from Hong Kong University and a Ph.D from Deakin University, Jim has also published two books on military history and several articles.

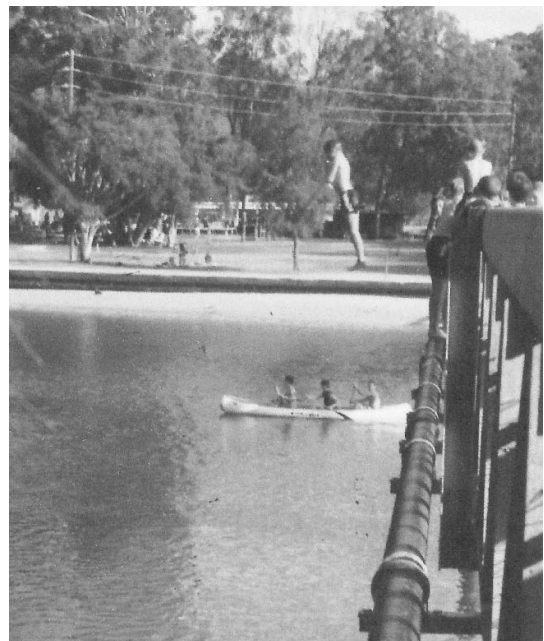
A few months ago Jim wrote to the Editor of the Bulletin with some 'biographical notes' of his life in Woronora in the 1940s and afterwards, which he said 'may be of interest to those who continue to live in the Shire.' With a follow-up interview to expand on his notes, a compelling story has emerged. His memories are both vivid and detailed, and he has put his family's experiences into the context of the period, making his story a valuable social history.

Idyllic river life

From the early 1940s the Wood family of eight lived in a rented house at 83 The Crescent¹ on the Woronora River near the footbridge at Prince Edward Park. The boatshed was just a few doors along. Life revolved around the river. 'It was a boys' paradise,' says Jim Wood, the eldest of six children. They messed around in tin boats they made and taught themselves to swim. There were just two rules, recalls Jim. 'You had to be home by dark, and you had to look after your mates.' A big thrill was to jump off the footbridge. Once Jim got caught in a change of current at the junction of Forbes Creek and the river and nearly drowned. He eventually became a member of the Woronora Life Saving Club established in 1939, gained his Bronze Certificate in swimming and served shifts on guard in front of the Club or near the shop at Menai Bridge.

Jim and his best mate Jim Stahl (son of the bus driver, Norm Stahl) fished for blackfish on the school side of the river bank with a makeshift rod, float sinker and a wrong size hook – sufficient to catch a shark! Fortunately there were no sharks in the fresh waters of Woronora, but they were known to be in the salty Georges River into which the Woronora flowed. Families went prawning with a small

square net at low tide, then boiled the catch to eat on the spot.



*Jumping off the footbridge over the Woronora River
(undated) [Jim Wood]*

There were a lot of small craft in the river. Jim remembers when most were commandeered and taken to Botany Bay during the war years, a result of the Japanese use of small craft to bypass British defence of Malaya. 'Later,' recalls Jim, 'a military landing craft was abandoned up the river north of Cathedral Rock.'

Jim and his mates collected money for their Saturday afternoon 'picture show' by picking up bottles left by picnickers and taking them to the local shop for a refund. At the Odeon Theatre in Sutherland they saw some wonderful serials like *The Black Hand Man* and westerns. They walked to and from the pictures via Prices Track which criss-crossed from the river up the hill towards Sutherland and adjacent to the cemetery. Coming back late Saturday afternoons the Track took them under the overhanging cave which bore an Aboriginal painting of a huge face. The kids rushed past here as a scary hermit and his dog resided nearby. A special event was to catch the 'picture show bus' to the cinema on Saturday night.



The Wood boys: Michael (rear), Peter (left) and Jim with their pet dog [Jim Wood]

Of course there are negatives to life on the river. Floods occasionally threatened the local area, and Jim remembers once when a boat crew rowed into their back yard to check they were okay. They were. Bushfires were a fact of life in hot summers and a constant threat.

Infections spread easily and Jim recalls that besides the usual childhood diseases, mumps and chicken pox, they were plagued by scarlet fever, diphtheria, meningitis and rheumatic fever – for which Jim's brother, Peter spent six months in hospital. The 'horror of all,' says Jim, 'was infant paralysis or polio.'

Services

Various stores were established along the river supplying basic foods such as bread, milk, fruit, vegetables and meat, and during the war ration cards were distributed for essential items like tea and sugar. The iceman doubled as the 'sanny man' and collected sanitary pans from the outside toilets. In 1946 a postal run began from Child's shop which was adjacent to the car bridge over Forbes Creek. Jim's father made a little money by selling bunches of wild flowers he'd collected – such as Christmas Bells, Christmas Bush and Waratahs, while trying to avoid the prowling Inspector Kelly.

The Wood children attended Sunday School set up by the Midgley family, who walked from their home in Menai each Sunday to a house overlooking Prince Edward Park Road where they conducted Bible study on an open verandah for the children of Woronora. They made those who attended feel very welcome. Later, a small church was set up, assisted by the Reverend Keith Matta of Sutherland Congregational Church.

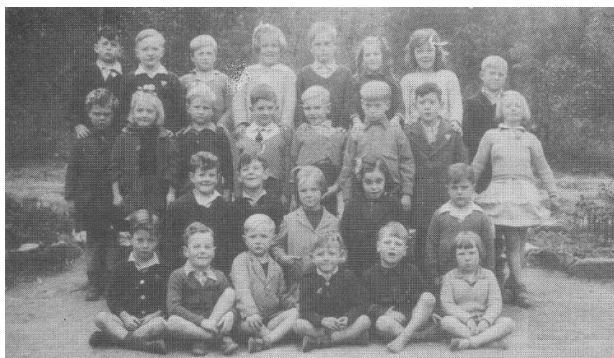
School

In 1938 the idea of a public school was promoted by the Progress Association because 27 young children walked two miles to Sutherland Public School along the Price's Track each day.² A footbridge was built across the river in 1939/40, and a site in Prices Avenue was selected for the school. In 1942 a portable classroom was transported from the recently completed Woronora Dam site.



The first Woronora River Public School, showing the addition of a second room, c1950s [SSL]

The one-room Woronora River Public School opened in May 1942 with 27 children and one teacher, Miss Hamblen.³ Jim and his brother, Peter were the second and third students to enrol at the school just across the footbridge. There were snakes about at that 'little school in the bush', and a kangaroo that often came to be fed. There was no power or telephone at the school for some time, but they had a fuel stove on which they warmed up their Milo at lunchtime.⁴ Jim recalls four rows of chairs in the small schoolroom, with the youngest class to the teacher's right, and the older ones to the left. 'We were taught to write on a slate initially,' says Jim, 'and I remember feeling enormous pleasure when Miss Hamblen reached into a cupboard and took out beautiful pieces of paper on which we were to write for the first time.'



*Woronora River Public School Foundation Class, 1942
(Jim, 2nd back row, 4th from left)⁵*

As the school went only to third grade, Grades 4, 5 and 6 students moved to Sutherland Public School where classes were segregated into single sex classes. 'There was a white line down the playground,' explains Jim, 'with boys on one side and girls on the other.' Teachers weren't averse to using a cane on primary school students in those days. One teacher there was known for his ability to whistle, and when he 'whistled out' his cane from its cupboard, you knew you were in trouble. Depending on the severity of the misdemeanour, the students were given one, two, four or six cuts – known as a 'sixer'- of the cane.

Disaster

The Wood family's world was turned upside down when Jim's father lost his job working night shift on the wharves in 1949. They were evicted from

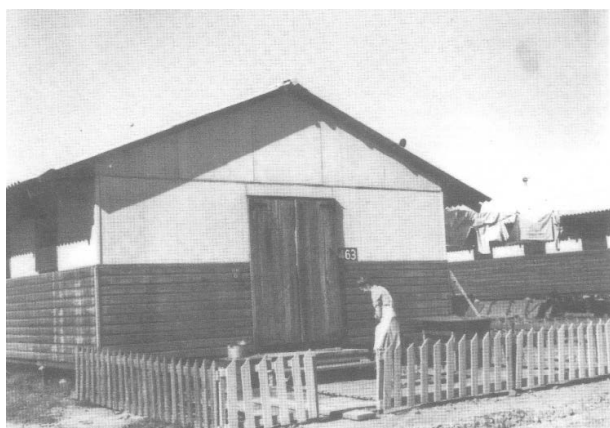
their house with all their belongings dumped outside, and housed temporarily with some people who lived on the Prince's Highway in Sutherland. Then the Wood family moved to the camping area for the homeless located above the current RSL. Jim, with Peter and their mother went down by the river searching for a suitable site for an Army tent that had been given to them. They found a spot by a large tree and dug a level area to set up the tent. It had a wooden floor. The cookhouse and a toilet were in a tin shed. One tap attached to a gum tree about 60 yards away served the whole camping area.⁶ Water was collected from the tap in a kerosene tin, and they bathed and washed in a tin bath. Jim recalled at least 50 families at this campsite, but he has since read the figure was more like 200. 'These people just couldn't get accommodation,' he explains.



Jim Wood at the site of the family's tent in Woronora in 1949. [Clive Baker, c.2012]

After some months at the camp in Woronora, Jim's family moved to Herne Bay Housing Settlement, a former US Army hospital. It was a time of great hardship and misery. The Wood family were sent to the '400s', a series of long military huts divided into four by fibro walls to accommodate four families, and there was a common washhouse. Jim's family was right on the wooden walkway, once used to push patients around in trolleys. 'It was harsh,' remembers Jim. 'You could hear what was happening next door.' When Peter, Jim's younger brother got sick for the second time the family were moved to the '200s', supposedly better accommodation with only three families

to a hut. 'There was a lot of crime, a lot of SP bookies amongst the residents,' says Jim. In 1958 Herne Bay was renamed Riverwood because of the infamy of the Herne Bay emergency housing settlement.⁷



Hut at Herne Bay, 1946 [AWM 129552]

Sutherland Intermediate High School

In 1949, while still at Woronora, Jim began his first year of high school at Sutherland Intermediate High School (SIHS), a separate building from the Public School, where girls and boys were put into the same class. (SIHS closed in 1959.)

After moving to Herne Bay, most of the Wood children attended the local Herne Bay Public School. Jim was thrilled to be able to remain at Sutherland Intermediate High School. He loved the school. For him it was a haven from a pretty grim home life. 'In school you belonged and there was a wonderful sense of community,' he says. To get to school each day he walked to the bus stop, took a bus to Mortdale, and then the train to Sutherland – well over an hour each way.

Teachers could be pretty tough. Jim recalls one occasion when the students were held back after school for assembly. He heard the Cronulla train in the distance, and turned to look. The teacher caught him and he was caned. But he didn't resent it. 'I broke the rules and got what was due,' he says.

He was pleased with the teaching generally at SIHS. The classes were streamed, and different subjects offered according to level of ability. There was woodwork and tech drawing, as well as French and Latin. Jim, in the B grade, could

do French but not Latin. He found the principal, Adam Schuemaker a very impressive headmaster, especially in light of the principals he met later in his teaching career. 'The man had authority,' says Jim. The school was forward thinking too. One event which made a huge impression on him was when some of the school children sat in Council chambers and held a mock debate. 'I think it was quite marvellous. Here we were on 25 October 1950, imitating the Shire Councillors, and it was broadcast live on 2SM.' Coached by Mr W.L. Cooper and the English mistress the students had been interviewing people throughout the school beforehand to canvas ideas. It was reported on the front page of the *Sydney Morning Herald* the next day with the headline, 'Children "take over" Shire Council duties'.⁸ In light of today's values, what was most impressive, comments Jim, was that girls were portrayed in senior positions.



Pupils of SIHS carry out the duties of Sutherland Shire Council at the Council chambers. 'Councillor' Marion Alderwick, 13 of Hurstville addresses the chair. Seated from left: 'Shire Clerk' Jim Wood, 13 of Herne Bay. 'Deputy Shire Clerk', Marie Lees, 14 of Hurstville. [SMH, 26 October, 1950]

Jim was 14 when he sat and passed the Intermediate Exam in 1951. The following year he began work as a clerk at the then Electricity Commission in the city until 1959. While working, he completed Years 4 and 5 of the Leaving Certificate as a private evening student at St George Technical College, Kogarah, attending classes three to four nights a week. Then after two years teacher training on a scholarship at Sydney Teachers College, Jim began an appointment as a Junior Secondary School teacher at Cleveland Street Boys High School teaching English and History. In the evenings he studied at Sydney University and was awarded a BA in 1967.

Meanwhile in 1956 Jim enlisted in 1 Commando Company, qualifying for the Green Beret and was commissioned in 1961. From 1967 until 1984 he held a range of civilian appointments with

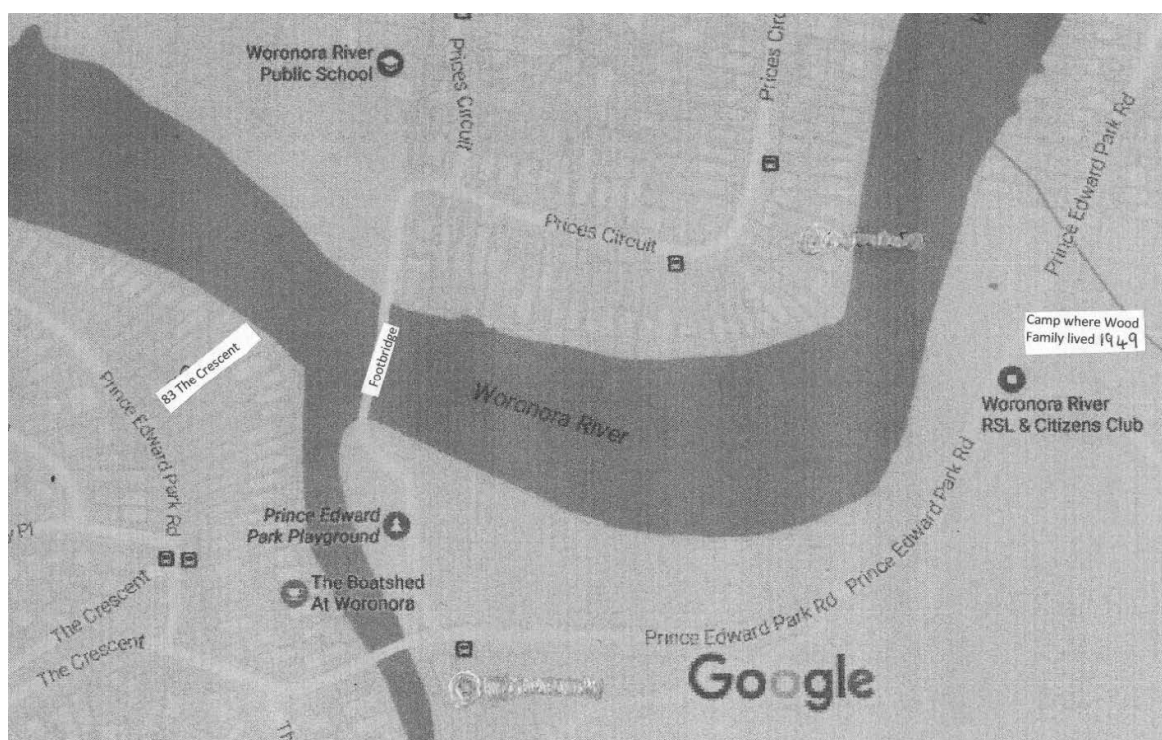


LT James Wood, 1961 [Jim Wood]

the Departments of Defence and Foreign Affairs, with postings in Australia and overseas.

He gained post graduate qualifications, and returned to secondary teaching in 1988 in Melbourne, retiring as Head of English at Fairhills High School in 2010.

Jim married Mortdale girl and St George Girls High School student, Colleen Nelson in 1960.⁹ Colleen also followed a career in teaching. Her continuing studies were interrupted by Jim's overseas postings. However, she picked up her studies after her retirement and in 2015 was awarded a Ph.D in Australian History from the University of Melbourne. Jim is proud of her and of his three children who have also had stellar careers: one is a haematologist, another a lawyer and the third is an expert in IT.



The section of The Crescent where the Wood family lived has been renamed Prince Edward Park Rd
[adapted from Google Map 2017]

¹ The Crescent later became part of Prince Edward Park Road

² 'Woronora River Public School', <http://www.woronorai-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/our-school/history>

³ *ibid*

⁴ 'When snakes and roos went to school', unnamed local newspaper, August 1982

⁵ Woronora River Public School golden jubilee, 1942-1992: commemorative booklet, p.42, WRPS 1992

⁶ The Woronora Dam and pipeline had been completed in 1941. Prior to that families used tank water, local creeks and wells.

⁷ Brian and Barbara Kennedy, *Australian Place Names*, Hodder and Stoughton, 1989

⁸ Children "take over" Shire Council Duties, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Thursday, 26 October 1950

⁹ Colleen Nelson appears in Pauline Curby's newly published history of St George Girls High School. See a review of *Independent Minds* on page 25 of this *Bulletin*.

AXIS PRISONERS OF WAR IN UK

ANGELA BADGER

At a meeting a while back we heard of Australian prisoners of war in Colditz Castle in that excellent talk by Colin Burgess at the February 2016 SSHS meeting. An inspiring story, and one which has earned its place in history many times over.

How about a tale from the other side ... the Axis prisoners of war in UK?

We lived in Dorset in the south of England, the heart of all operations for defence and invasion. First of all, trains came through bringing Dunkirk survivors. The Women's Institute set up huge trestle tables under the oak trees at our railway Halt and plied those exhausted men with as much food and drink as they could take.

Four years later that same railway took endless battalions of troops down for D-Day and almost immediately the hospital trains with their big red crosses on the roofs brought back the wounded.

But in between those times there had been a constant stream of enemy prisoners of war. They were divided into two distinct groups.

Jolly Italians, pleased to think that Italy was out of the war. Clad in their maroon prison garb they were billeted out amongst us. Italians had a fearsome reputation as engineers. Two with the nicknames of Macaroni and Spaghetti (not very original!) were taken in by our local garage. Farmers took their tractors and we kept them busy fixing bikes and cars. They and their compatriots had complete freedom to come and go. Many of them were given a home by local households and became part of the family.

With the Germans it was different. They wore green/grey uniform and peaked caps. Grim faced, defeated they stared at us locals from the back of the trucks taking them to and from their camps with barely disguised contempt. For they were closely watched - or at least more closely than their Italian allies. They had to be in camp each night and were only allowed out for work and otherwise on rare occasions. My mother said that if she ever came face to face with a German she'd do what the women did in Crete with parachuting Nazis who became entangled in trees pour boiling oil over them and set about with a knife



Axis POWs helping with harvest in UK in WWII
[Getty Images]

We lived in a remote farm, no neighbours in sight, with a large swamp in front of our house. There was a causeway across but only my family knew of it ... strangers took pot luck if they ventured to cross, but usually they took the lane.

One day we saw a solitary figure struggling up to his knees in the mud. He was obviously a German POW, and he held his hands above his head. Determined to keep something dry and out of the mire. I looked at mother. Time to heat up the oil?

Not a bit of it!

In no time at all he was being hosed down, sitting in front of the kitchen range with a cuppa in his hand and beaming all over his face. He sold us his precious cargo, felt slippers that they spent their time making in the camp at night, for 2d for cigarette money.

Germans, Italians – they were all prisoners. Surrounded by water on all sides, what hope did they have of escape? No need for prison walls and maybe we benefited as much as our enemies from these close encounters.

VALE

ATHALIE DAWN IVERS

18 August 1928 - 21 November 2016

JENNESSE PLATFOOT

How can one summarise a life in such a short space. A long time active member of the SSHS from the very early days, Athalie was born 18 August 1928 in Bulli to Darcy and Agnes (nee Cavill) Stewart where the family was heavily involved in coal mining. At school recitation, acting and drama were her key strengths and she particularly distinguished herself at school in elocution and even read a poem to Dame Mary Gilmore. She was very creative and good with

her hands, especially in cooking and sewing. Her children usually had homemade bread for lunch and preserved fruit all year round. These skills would come to the fore later in life.

Her father joined the Railway in his teens and rose to the position of Assistant Station Master at Sutherland a very significant responsibility. In those days the Railways was a very prestigious job given the railway was the major form of transport. Because of his job, the family received discount train trips. Athalie loved train travel and the family would often go on holidays to Albury to visit relatives and relations.

On leaving school Athalie went to hair dressing college. She would go on to be the senior colour and tinting person at Mark Foy's. This was in the days before do it yourself home colouring kits.

In 1945 when the war finally ended she and her friend were up on the roof of Mark Foy's taking a load of dirty towels to the laundry. When the news came through they proceeded to throw the dirty towels up in the air. (Later they had to come back and retrieve them all!)

Athalie was a bit of a risk taker and in the early days she became a 'biker chick' going



Athalie Ivers with husband Harold, in 1984 [Platfoots]

out with a motor bike rider from the Mount Kembla region racing up and down Bulli Pass on an old bike.

Athalie was married in September 1952 to Harold Sydney Ivers, an engineer from Sutherland. Her childhood spirit of holiday adventures came to the fore and she and Harold would travel far and wide on long camping and later caravan trips. Reputedly it was Athalie rather than Harold that loved to travel to new and exciting places. Harold was great at improvising and long before car radios, Harold built a valve radio

for the car, complete with a HT power system to run the device.

In the 1960's when lapidary became the rage they joined the Kogarah Rock Hounds. The group would range far and wide in search of precious and semi-precious gemstones. On returning to their home in Sutherland, Harold would proceed to cut and polish and facet their finds making wonderful pieces of jewellery.

In the 1970's copper artwork and enamel ware became the next craze and Athalie became heavily involved. Her home today still has examples of these works of art. Then came leather work – any hand craft that emerged in those pre-Internet days generated Athalie's full and enthusiastic support.

Long before researching family history became popular Athalie was getting birth and marriage certificates for her forebears to fill in gaps in family stories about her connection to John Macarthur and when Ned Kelly stole her grandmothers show horse, and then returned it when he heard it belonged to a young woman!

About this time Historical and Musical societies started to flourish and grow. Athalie's mother (known as 'Nessie' and who was a great chorister) became active in both. She joined the Sutherland Shire Historical Society in the late 1960s and encouraged Harold and Athalie to join. Harold was always interested in history and glad to be involved, albeit quietly from the back row. Through yet another explosive schism, Harold suddenly found himself projected into the role of President – a position he neither wanted nor particularly cared for. However with the support of Athalie he applied himself to the job and the Society went from a collection of warring tribes to something more family oriented and fun for the members. Since Athalie was an excellent cook, supper time at the end of the meeting became a major highlight of the evening.

Harold and Athalie's love of travel helped inspire years of interesting excursions and even the annual three day trip to some distant site, a key and enjoyable feature of the Societies activities.

Athalie always supported and helped Harold, yet she also added her own touch - whether it was on the float (the Good Ship Sutherland Shire) in Heritage week displays in the Sutherland Entertainment Centre or her interest in Heritage and Pioneer cooking which she wrote about in the *Bulletin*. Certainly the success and respect Harold earned as President was heavily dependent on Athalie's "quiet" support of Harold.

In recent years following Harold's death and her own failing health Athalie has stepped back out of sight. She remained firm friends with many of the "old guard" and never lost her interest in the Society, or her own Irish history.



Athalie Ivers with granddaughter, Tammy in period costume for Heritage Week at the Museum c.1991 [Platfoots]

CONVICTS IN THE SHIRE: Part 2

GREG JACKSON and PAM FORBES

In the last *Bulletin* details of the convicts assigned to miller John Lucas were discussed. Lucas' convicts were probably amongst the first convicts in the Sutherland Shire. This article covers possibly the last convicts in the Shire, those who constructed the Shire's first road, Mitchells *New Line of Road to the Illawarra*. Several articles by the authors about this road have appeared in past *Bulletins* (Vol.14, No.1, 2, 3, and 4), but recent studies of the letters from Assistant Surveyors Roderick Mitchell and William Darke to the Surveyor-General have brought to light details of the convicts in the road gang that built this road.

Convict transportation to NSW ceased in 1840 and when the Illawarra Road's construction commenced in 1843 convicts were in short supply. The 1840's were a time of economic depression in Australia (and the world) and the NSW government were anxious to get as many convicts as possible assigned to private individuals and off the government stores. Convicts available for road construction from Hyde Park Barracks were of poor quality. Many had been in the colony for several years and had been returned to the barracks from private assignment as unsatisfactory. The men in the Illawarra Road work party were from the bottom of the barrel.

The Cooks River Dam at Tempe was completed in around 1839 and the road was to proceed from there to near Bulli. The surveying of the road was entrusted to 21-year-old Assistant Surveyor, Roderick Mitchell, son of the formidable NSW Surveyor-General Sir Thomas Mitchell, and his surveys were completed and delivered to Sir Thomas in July 1843. A small work party with an overseer was assembled and work commenced under the control of Roderick Mitchell. The nominal strength of the work party seemed to be 25 men but this number was rarely, if ever, achieved with sometimes as few as three men working.

There was soon trouble. Roderick had difficulty controlling the older hardened convicts in the

gang. On the 26 August 1843 the more experienced 33-year-old Assistant Surveyor, William Wedge Darke, was ordered by Sir Thomas to take over from his son who returned to Sydney and resigned in September 1843.

Darke's brief was to:

- Take over control of the road party from Roderick Mitchell
- Procure better rations for the deserving portion of the road gang
- Undertake other measures to keep the men at their work, checking their constant practice of returning to Sydney under the pretence of illness.
- Simultaneously survey arable lands along the road.

Darke immediately began work; he recommended the removal of the overseer ('too timid') and the demotion of the assistant overseer ('a man of the worst character'). He also recommended the restoring of 'indulgences' (tobacco, tea and sugar) so he could withhold them from the convicts for bad behaviour. The convicts continually wished to return to the Hyde Park barracks where they could relax and make money by making and selling shoes and hats. Darke also requested that he have permission to punish the convicts on the spot, avoiding the delay of sending the men back to a magistrate in Sydney. Darke's measures were put in place, and six days after taking control he requested that indulgences be restored to 14 of the men in the party. Darke's work in surveying arable land along the route and land in the town of Appin took him away from the work party on many occasions and he relied on the overseer, John O'Hara, to keep the men at work and under control.

The letters from Darke also contain some information about the road being constructed. In October 1843 the gang was working at the Woronora River crossing (the Pass of Sabugal) and Darke requests 'a bullock and cart and a horse and cart if possible' so he could move his camp equipment and tools easily. The road

constructed must have been of sufficient quality to allow the passage of wheeled vehicles, not an easy thing to do in the rocky and steep Woronora Valley. While there, Darke also made use of river transport. In October 1843 a boat under 'Captain' Moriarty and 'five steady men' was dispatched for Sydney. Captain Moriarty is almost certainly Merion Moriarty (R.N. but never a captain) who was appointed the Port Master of the Colony in 1842 (Powell, 1974). Moriarty owned 190 acres of land above John Lucas' 150 acres on the Woronora River, and construction of the Illawarra Road would have provided access to this land and been to his financial benefit. Work at the Woronora took a considerable time for there is a report in *The Sydney Morning Herald* Saturday, 3 February 1844 of a convict death:

INQUEST.—On the 31st an inquest was held at Liverpool, by Mr. Bethel Lyons, upon view of the body of William Moore, a convict attached to the road party stationed at Waranora on the Illawarra Road. The circumstances of this case were peculiar and painful, and appeared to affect the feelings of even the man's fellow-convicts in the gang. It appeared that Mr. Darke, the surveyor of the line of road, had visited the station at Waranora, on Monday last; the deceased had requested permission to go, with a pass, to see his wife at Parramatta; this, Mr. Darke felt it his duty to refuse; and within an hour the poor fellow was found resting on his hip and hand, the other hand being on his breast, and he spitting blood; he was removed to bed and all care taken of him; many letters and locks of hair from his wife, of whom he was continually talking, were taken from under his head in his sleeping place. He had heard of some misconduct of his wife, and from the general tenor of the evidence, it is probable that the man died from the rupture of a vessel, caused by intense feeling and excitement. There was no medical evidence. Verdict, natural death.

Note: William Moore's errant wife has been identified as convict Julia McAdams (their story is told in the side box).

In the bush beside the Woronora River near Lucas' Mill and about 100 metres from the Illawarra Road the man-made feature shown in the next image was located.

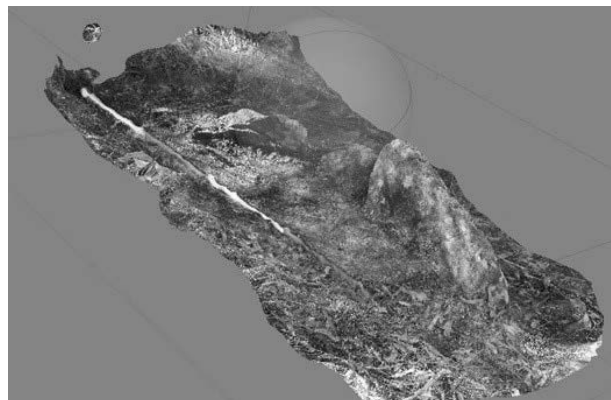


Image: Snapshots from a photogrammetric image (see note below) of a feature at the Woronora Watermill. A large heavy slab of unworked stone occupies the centre of this feature under the range pole, divisions on range pole- 0.5m.

A large unworked horizontal stone slab is flanked on the river side by three upright field stones. This resembles the convict graves at Pulpit Hill; near Katoomba (which may not all be authentic). It is possible that Mitchell's road gang may have occupied the huts beside Lucas' Mill (Jackson 2015), and it is tempting to think this unknown feature may be the grave of the convict William Moore, buried simply by his fellow convicts beside the road he was building. Unfortunately the *Parramatta Chronicle and Cumberland General Advertiser*, 3 February, 1844, tells us that William Moore's body was taken to Liverpool for the inquest so unless he was returned to the Woronora for burial, which seems unlikely, the function of this feature remains unknown. Only an excavation can answer that question and given the sensitivities surrounding graves that is not possible.

The road building moved on with more trouble coming in November 1843 with eight of the road gang taken away by constables for cattle duffing, leaving overseer O'Hara with only three men in his work party. Darke states that it is 'quite impossible that any such occurrence as the killing and eating of four bullocks can have taken place in the road party without the knowledge and collusion of the overseer'. The eight men implicated were returned to the Hyde Park Barracks and overseer O'Hara lost his ticket-of-leave and his job as overseer but stayed on in the party. More men were transferred to the party with 25 listed as being entitled to slop clothing from the government stores in May 1844.

With the party working on the escarpment above Coalcliff another death was reported in late May 1844. An Irish convict, Richard Davis, 'in obtaining a hearth stone for his hut, fell over a cliff and was seen dashed from rock to rock but his body has not been found'. Both Darke and Sir Thomas Mitchell were suspicious. Surveyor-General Mitchell instructed that an '...instant search for the body and fullest inquiry [be made] into all surrounding circumstances, including relations of the man with his companions'. Frank Cridland (1950, p86) in his book, summed up this event by stating: 'The Surveyor-General evidently formed the same opinion as we do today, that it was a very thin story and that the missing man had been put out of the way by his convict mates' (this story is also told in the side box).

In November 1844 William Darke wrote to the Principal Superintendent of Convicts with a list of the 20 men sent to the Illawarra road party and how they had been 'disposed of'. There is now but eight men working in the road party and O'Hara (who had been reinstated as overseer) requested another 17 men to bring the party up to full strength. By January 1845 a bridle road has been completed to the end of the line at Keira Neck (an unknown location but

presumably near Mount Keira) and a cart road was now being constructed. In October 1845 Darke sent all plans of the completed Illawarra road to Mitchell.

Although the new road had reached its destination it was obviously still not fit for the general conveyance of goods by the public. *The Sydney Morning Herald* on 21 August 1845 reported that prominent politician, Sir John Robinson brought a motion before the NSW Legislative Council for the grant of 1000 pounds to 'repair and finish' the road. It would be many years before a wheeled vehicle would complete the journey between Wollongong and Sydney on the Illawarra Road.

A total of 47 convicts who worked in the road party on the Illawarra Road have been identified and most have been located in various convict records. A database of these convict records has been constructed and the stories of some of these convicts and other convicts in the area will be the subject of future *Bulletin* articles. The building of the Illawarra road was a credit to its supervisor William Darke. It was constructed despite the poor behaviour and work ethics of the convicts involved.

I would like to thank Clive Baker for information about convict deaths on the Illawarra Road.

Roderick Mitchell: 1822 – 1851. Died at sea, age 29, falling overboard from the schooner *Beaver* during a gale while on passage from Morton Bay to Sydney (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 4 September 1851).

Photogrammetry: This is the construction of an interactive, true 3D image of any object by combining multiple digital photographs. The image created is rotatable and scalable. It can be viewed from any angle and can be used by a 3D printer to create a physical model of the object. The image on the previous page is a snapshot from a photogrammetric image created from 51 digital photos. Software to create photogrammetric images is available free from <http://www.123dapp.com/>

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CONVICT STORIES: DEATHS ON THE ILLAWARRA ROAD

GREG JACKSON and PAM FORBES

On the previous pages our article on the Illawarra Road gang describes the tragic death of convicts William Moore and Richard Davis in 1844. Although no single record is available for NSW convicts their records have been largely reconstructed from a variety of sources.

| William Moore | | | |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Convicts Name: William Moore | | | |
| Ship: <i>Lady Harewood</i> 1832 | | | |
| Offence: Sheep stealing | | Sentence: 14 years Northampton 1831 | |
| DOB: 1810 | Marriage Status: Julia McAdams in 1841 | Religion: Protestant | Education: R and W |
| Country of Origin: England | | Place of Origin: Southampton | |
| Occupation: Ploughman | Height: 5'4 ³ / ₄ " (1.64 metres) | Complexion: Dark | Hair Colour: Brown |
| Eye Colour: Brown | | | |
| Freedom: ToL July 1839 | | | |
| Pardoned between 1838 and 1841 | | | |
| Colonial Crimes: In Windsor Jail June 1838 for examination (interrogation) ToL cancelled for marrying and harbouring a female prisoner, illegally at large in June 1843. | | | |
| Crimes Prior to Transportation: Many crimes committed by William Moore at Northampton, unable to determine if it is the same William Moore | | | |
| References: ToL No 39/1468, 11 July 1839, SRNSW 4/4131; Reel 933. BDA-Biog Item No. 120129326 Governors ref. 43/3832 | | | |
| Notes: Originally assigned to Mr Faithful of Richmond. 'M' tattooed on left arm near elbow. Died on the Woronora, Jan 1844 | | | |

Moore's record suggests that, unlike many of the convicts in the Illawarra Road gang, he was well behaved and cooperative, obtaining his Ticket of Leave in 1839 after having completed half his 14 year sentence. He married Irish women Julia McAdams in 1841.

The record of his wife, Julia McAdams is somewhat different.

| Julia McAdams | | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|--------------------|
| Convicts Name: Julia McAdams | | | |
| Ship: <i>Isabella</i> 1840 | | | |
| Offence: Receiving stolen goods | | Sentence: Cork 1830, 7 years | |
| DOB: 1819 | Marriage Status: Granted permission to marry William Moor, 1841 | Religion: Protestant | Education: R & W |
| Country of Origin: Ireland | | Place of Origin: County Cork | |
| Occupation: Needlewomen | Height: 4'8 ¹ / ₂ " (1.44 metres) | Complexion: Fresh | Hair Colour: Brown |
| Eye Colour: Grey | | | |
| Freedom: Cert of Freedom 1848 | | | |
| Colonial Crimes: Newcastle jail for 28 days, Sept 1840. Newcastle jail Oct 1840. Newcastle jail for 7 days, Dec 1840. Newcastle jail for 20 days drunk, Feb 1841 (+ Many more jail admittances for minor crimes). Newcastle jail March 1843, sent to the Parramatta factory for absconding. | | | |
| Crimes Prior to Transportation: 2 previous sentences of 3 months | | | |
| References: BDA-Biog Item No. 120044828 | | | |
| Notes: Stout | | | |

McAdams had two convictions prior to being transported for receiving stolen goods and a continuous string of convictions in the Newcastle region of NSW, culminating in her absconding from her master in 1843. Moore's only crime was harbouring his wife after she absconded but this was enough to see him lose his Ticket of Leave and back, as a convict, on the Illawarra Road gang. Moore's application for permission to visit his wife at Parramatta, after reports of her misbehaving, was refused and his tragic death, seemingly of a broken heart, was recounted in the article. Both the inquests' findings and the crimes of William Moore tell the same sad story of a man who loved well but not wisely. The initial 'M' tattooed on his arm matched his wife's initial.

The other fatality during the Illawarra roads construction was the suspicious death of convict Richard Davis at the camp on the steep escarpment above Coalcliff in May 1844. His reconstructed record follows:

| Richard Davis | | | |
|--|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Convicts Name: Richard Davis | | | |
| Ship: <i>Parmelia</i> 1834 | | | |
| Offence: Vagrant (came as one of 7 vagrants from Cork, age 16 - 25) | | Sentence: Cork 1833 (age 16), 7 years | |
| DOB: 1818 | Marriage Status: Single | Religion: Protestant | Education: R & W |
| Country of Origin: Ireland | | Place of Origin: Waterford | |
| Occupation: Sailor, Labourer | Height: 4' 10½" (1.49 metres) | Complexion: Ruddy, freckled & eruptive | Hair Colour: light brown |
| Eye Colour: Grey | | | |
| Freedom: None found | | | |
| Colonial Crimes: In Parramatta jail 1834, In Bathurst jail 1838 for examination (interrogation) – convicted of robbery and sent to the Phoenix hulk Sydney, 1839 sentenced to be transported to Norfolk Island for life. | | | |
| Crimes Prior to Transportation: No previous convictions | | | |
| References: DL44/13, BDA-Biog Item No. 110706825 | | | |
| Notes: Tattoos on both arms, Scars on face, Sister Martha came to NSW free. " Evidently killed by falling down a cliff" near Bulli on the 26 May 1844, age 26. | | | |

Davis's story is a sad indictment of the convict system. Sentenced as a 16-year-old, with no previous criminal record, his only crime was vagrancy. He was one of seven young men on the *Parmelia* from Cork, sentenced for the same 'crime'. Once in the system he was evidently influenced by hardened convicts and was sentenced to Norfolk Island for life in 1839 for robbery. It would seem that this sentence may not have been carried out and Davis was instead sent to work on the road gangs. Davis was just 4' 10½" (1.49 metres) tall and it would have been an easy matter for a fellow convict to nudge him over the steep Coalcliff escarpment. Davis had been sent to Australia to escape the appalling poverty of Ireland in the early 19th Century. What the sentencing magistrate had not taken into account was the corrosive effect the convict system could have on a 16 year old Irish lad.

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Findmypast <http://www.findmypast.com.au/>

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VALE

DOUGLAS ('DOUG') LAWRENCE ARCHER

19 July 1941 - 20 December 2016

ANDREW PLATFOOT

Doug Archer was a member of Sutherland Historical Society for over 35 years. If I was to try and summarise Doug's character and nature I would probably say he was a quiet retiring man, almost shy, but always willing to lend a hand. Doug never put himself forward, but he was always there to help if he could. How he became involved with Sutherland Shire Historical Society is unknown, but I suspect his close involvement with the Midgley boys, Fred and Alf with whom he had a lifelong association and with whom he attended the little fibro Menai Congregation church, was at the heart of it.

Back then of course before Facebook and Twitter and other social media, people with a common interest used to get together and share their interests. So Music clubs, Garden clubs, Historical Societies were all the rage. But Doug didn't just come and warm a seat, he quietly became involved. So when the annual Heritage Festival was erected in the Sutherland Entertainment Centre, Doug was there in the background helping Fred and the President, Harold Ivers put the display together. When the Council built and entered a float into the various Shire Spring festivals, Doug would sometimes 'crew' the float. Doug was always there, but just slightly invisible.

Born in 1941, Doug Archer grew up on his parents' poultry farm in Menai, (where the shopping centre is now located). The 26-acre farm was initially bought by his grandparents, Albert and Florence Archer during World War I. Albert was a patternmaker who worked in Sydney, and the farm was initially operated by his wife and eldest son (also Douglas). Some years later after working in the city, Douglas (senior) and his new wife Elsie Rooke from Rockhampton, returned to help run the poultry farm. Douglas and Elsie had two sons, John and Douglas (junior).



In his 2013 oral history Doug describes the farmhouse his father had helped build being made from concrete and rubble. It was relatively big with a lounge room with a fireplace, bedrooms, larder in a corner of the kitchen and bathroom next to that. The toilet was away from the house and had a tin roof and swinging doors. They used the *Herald* or a cut up telephone book for toilet paper. Grandma Archer lived in a fibro shack built on the property by Doug's father after his grandfather died. Doug's mother, Elsie hated living on the

farm, but when the water was connected in 1949 she became less restive as she could now create a garden.

The family bought day old chickens from the Carters and bred them for eggs which another local family, the Delardes help sell to the Egg Marketing Board. There was a room in the house that was used for cleaning and packaging eggs and that was where Doug's mother taught him to read – while she was cleaning and packing the eggs.

Because of its remoteness, Menai was a self-contained community. There were social hubs such as the Congregational Church run by the Reverend Matta which Doug and the Midgley boys attended. Former Society members Gwen Mayman and Nell Bentley (and also members of the Society) cleaned the Church and arranged the flowers for it. (Interestingly Gwen's husband, Frank Mayman was a Catholic, so when he attended Doug's father's funeral at the Congregational Church, he paid his respects from **outside** the building.)

The School of Arts, designed by Doug's grandfather, Albert, was another social hub. Movies and old time dances such as the Pride of Erin and the Barn Dance were held here. It really was another time and another place.

Doug and his mother remained on the property until his father died in the late 1960's when they moved to Sierra Road, Engadine.

Doug has always been popular – quiet, unassuming, always with that quiet grin. I don't think he had any idea how to get angry.

He was elected to the Society Executive committee as a vice president, a position he held for many years and you could always rely on him to help – you just had to ask. Even if you did not ask, he would *muck in* tidying up, putting away chairs and cleaning up the hall.

Doug loved Society excursions and outings and never missed a trip. Doug of course was a famous collector – everyone knew Doug loved to collect, china, glassware, paintings. It became a constant joke on Society outings when the coach passed a garage sale sign, that Terry McCosker the driver would call out, 'Someone distract Doug, there's a garage sale up ahead but we can't stop'. Doug of course would just grin.

The Society has a monthly meeting with a guest speaker. In days gone by, January was called

Members day. Any member could stand up and talk about anything for 5 minutes. Without fail Doug would come and bring something of his prodigious collection of porcelain, fine china or glassware and give a 30 minute dissertation. Although he knew his subject matter well, he would never speak off the cuff but always read from various books and magazines and journals taken from his library that was as vast as his collection.

Doug also had a great love of music and was a keen supporter of the Music Club (although he was not a chorister) and the Engadine Garden club where he was President for many years although his garden was to say the least 'different'.

But that does not matter Doug was there as a friend, a supporter. He was there largely for what he could give not receive.

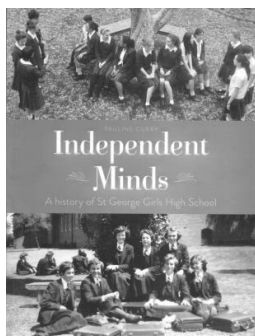
Most will not realise he was a recipient of the community Hughes award, but how could you, he was not the sort of bloke to talk about himself.



Doug Archer (right) with other SSHS members in period costume for the Engadine Fair, 1985 [SSHS]

BOOK REVIEW

ELIZABETH CRAIG



Pauline Curby

Independent Minds: A history of St George Girls High School

UNSW Press, Sydney
2016

\$50.00

Independent Minds is a centenary history of St George Girls' High School, a selective girls' high school in Kogarah, serving southern Sydney. Pauline Curby traces the school's development since its establishment in 1916, and interwoven with the school's history she outlines the evolution of the education system in New South Wales from the late 19th century - who the most influential players were and the political and social context they operated in. In the last century we have had two world wars, a Depression, a post-war boom and a population that has grown and changed with immigrants from non-English speaking countries. Pauline describes how these enormous changes affected the direction of the school. Also important is the changing attitude over time to the education of girls, to single-sex schools, to selective education in principle and to the use of technology in education.

Pauline explains that she was commissioned to write this history to celebrate the school's 100th anniversary, and as such 'the tone is a little celebratory.'¹ Certainly, the school is portrayed in a very positive light, but that doesn't detract from the authority of this obviously solidly researched and extensively referenced work. What enriches the history is the use of oral histories where former students and teachers reminisce about their experiences at school.

Twenty-nine formal oral histories were recorded, many by Pauline's daughter, Nicole, who is also a professional historian. Resources in the school archives provided comments by students and teachers as far back as the school's foundation. Students recall inspiring teachers, eccentric ones, how parental attitudes helped or hindered their education, their memories of discipline and of camaraderie. These recollections also illustrate the changing social mores – such as rules forbidding the girls to talk to boys on the train, of the struggle for girls to be recognised in the sciences, of the type of pranks they got up to. One such prank from an earlier era is notable. On muck-up day in 1959 some 'naughty' students put up a 'No smoking' sign in the teachers' staff room from which cigarette smoke regularly billowed out.

This 230 page soft cover book (including 22 pages of end notes, bibliography and an extensive index) is well illustrated with colour photos and on good quality paper. It includes boxed biographies of the principals, who invariably set the tone of educational attitudes in the school. Many were interviewed for the book and they describe their passions and aspirations for the school and for the education of talented girls in particular.

Independent Minds is a scholarly, but warmly written, easy to read account of the history of St George Girls High School, and an authoritative reference on the evolution of the philosophy of high school education in New South Wales.

It costs \$50.00 if you order by phone from UNSW Bookshop on 02 9385 6689 or online at: <https://www.newsouthbooks.com.au/books>. It is also available from St George Girls High School (02 9587 4109 or 9587 5902) for \$70.

¹ 'St George Girls High School Centenary History,' Pauline Curby, *SSHS Bulletin*, August 2016

A WEB WITHOUT SPIDERS

ANDREW PLATFOOT

For some the Internet is a total mystery while for others it is a part of everyday life. An interesting question is where did it come from? What do terms like web site and web address really mean?

Like most modern technology, it was a product of the Second World War which saw an explosion in technology like the computer and the jet engine. However a more sinister outcome was the very real fear of nuclear war and how a society might survive and then respond to a nuclear strike and that meant a lot of money was available to find solutions. But while these changes might have helped fund the development of 'the Web' the first concepts came from scientists and researchers looking to meet a very real need as they sought to further their research.

In August 1962 a scientist called J.C.R Licklider from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) began to discuss his Galactic Network concept with some of his research peers. Licklider was looking for a way to connect computers together so that scientists could quickly and easily share data and information from any place in the country. (Russian scientists were separately contemplating a similar idea around the same time – but that is another story).

The launch of the Russian satellite Sputnik was a huge blow to the prestige and nerves in USA and so the military set up a group called Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency. Powered by fear, uncertainty and doubt the USA poured endless amounts of money into developing a communications system that could survive multiple nuclear hits on mainland USA. The old fashion point-to-point telephone system was seen as critically flawed. What was needed was a distributed network that was dynamic and self-healing and could survive a nuclear holocaust. The need to drive research and development in multiple areas in the face of alleged Russian technical superiority required a method for scientist and researchers to quickly collaborate and share information; paper and standard letter mail was never going to be effective. The age old partnership of money, military and science was reignited.

All across America, multiple groups of scientists were experimenting with ideas and testing concepts. These various groups often had little knowledge of the work other people were carrying out, but the apparently duplicated and often wasted effort

allowed different groups to work in parallel to develop and test ideas and look for alternative solutions to what was basically the same problem – how to share ideas using standard computer and communications equipment.

It was not until August 1968 that the first rudimentary system called Advanced Research Projects Agency Network (ARPANET) appeared. Although crude and limited compared to what would evolve over the next 30 years, ARPANET was possibly the first system one might recognise as what we call the today the Internet.

So what is the Internet – it is a communications system or more crudely a very flexible and clever telephone network. It is more advanced than the system derived by people like Alexander Graham Bell, but at its heart and core that is all the Internet really is.

For those still a little confused by it all consider your home phone. Most homes have a telephone point somewhere in the house. Anyone can go down to their favourite electronics shop like the Good Guys or Harvey Norman or Bing Lee, choose a phone that has all the features they want, take it home, plug it in and call some relative on the other side of the planet, provided you know the number. (If you don't know the number there are various facilities you can use to find out.)

In the same way, the Internet is a computer telephone system. If you have a computer port in your house you can go down to your favourite electronics shop like the Good Guys or Harvey Norman or Bing Lee, choose a computer that has all the features you want, take it home, plug it in

and connect to some computer on the other side of the planet, provided you know the computer number (known as its IP address). (If you don't know the number there are various facilities you can use to find out.)

So what is the World Wide Web (or Web for short)? Most people use the terms Internet and the Web interchangeably. However they are not the same. The Web is like library that sits on top of the Internet, the Internet is the electronics that allows computers to talk (or share books if you like). But it is a lot of hard work making one computer talk to another machine

on the other side of the planet. In fact it was not until 1989 a clever chap called Sir Tim Berners-Lee came up with a scheme that we now know as the Web. Sir Tim was a physicist working at the Geneva-based nuclear research organisation CERN¹ at the time, and he realised the tedious effort that was required to connect his computer to another computer. Using the analogy above it was not unlike designing and building your own telephone handset to talk to a relative in another country while taking into account any technology difference between Australia and the country where that relative resides.

Sir Tim developed three concepts

- Hyper Text Markup Language (HTML) for formatting information leaving your computer enabling the remote computer to understand what you require. (The idea was largely lifted from the printing industry where text was marked up to assist in printing). HTML will insert special tags (invisible to the computer user) which tells any computer that sees these tags, what is a heading, what is a paragraph, what colour the text should be - (and much more).
- Uniform Resource Identifier (URL) which is just the distant computer's address using words (often made up) instead of the native numerical address known as the IP address. It is much easier to remember **www.shirehistory.org** when you want to check up on our next meeting than

remember an IP address like 192.68.20.50. Most people prefer to use the name when moving around the Internet (known as surfing), because names are easier to remember than numbers.

- Hyper Text Transfer Protocol (HTTP) is a special computer language known by all computers (Apples, PC's Unix, Linux) in any country and controls such issues as:
 - which computer created the message,
 - which computer it is heading towards,
 - how the message is formatted and
 - how to keep control of the entire message no matter how long it is and whether it is simple text, pictures, music or some other content.

This simple yet brilliant method allowed anyone with minimal understanding of the underlying technology to send messages(email), find information using search engines (Google, Bing), read books, share pictures or find out what Sutherland Shire Historical Society is doing. You don't need to know what the Internet is or how it works, you don't need to understand the brilliance of Sir Tim Berners-Lees proposal. You just need to know what you want to do and let technology take care of itself.

¹CERN was recently in the news for its discovery of the Higgs boson, or so-called God particle

But what of the Historical Society?

We have had a web site for well over 15 years. It has had a few names, but currently it's URL or its human readable name is ShireHistory.org. Why does the name look like this? The **ShireHistory** is like our given name – it is who we are. The **org** is an abbreviation to tell people we are an organisation. The dot between ShireHistory and org acts as a spacer. We were also known for a short while as ShireHistory.com. Why **com** - because com is short for company. While the Society is not a company in the early days the only choices were .com (company), .edu (education), .gov (government), .mil (military) and .net (part of the Internet apparatus and infrastructure) and .org. However the application of these top level names to specific types of organisations was not strictly enforced. Now there is a whole host more like .biz, .pro and .coop so it no longer means anything. It is like the surname Cooper centuries ago was given to people who made barrels but now-a-days it is just a name.

Does any of this matter? Not really. The Internet, the Web, however you perceive it, is just a tool to help us find and enjoy something we find interesting – a modern analogue of Gutenberg and the mass produced book. We are about to embark on a major face lift of our web site this year. Hopefully it will provide more facilities and more information for your enjoyment – that is what really matters. We will keep you posted on progress.

SUTHERLAND TO 1890s

Two excerpts from a presentation to SSHS meeting, October 2016, on the history of Sutherland

GEORGE MILLER

1. History of Sutherland to 1888

In 1846 Sutherland's population was said to be 23 males and 18 females all of whom could read and write. Farming was the early mainstay of the Shire.

In 1865 Government Surveyor S. Parkinson surveyed what was the Illawarra Road from Tom Ugly's Point to the South Coast. The western boundary of the Holt-Sutherland Estate had the main road to Wollongong passing through it as well as the road to Liverpool which crosses the Woronora River, bringing increased traffic through Sylvania, Miranda, Sutherland and South to Bulli.

In 1868, the land close to what would become Sutherland shopping centre was described as mostly 'too rocky or too poor for the plough.' It was not part of the Holt-Sutherland Estate but remained government land, referred to in a report prepared for Thomas Holt. This land was purchased as two portions by Samuel Gray in 1878. Gray had been the member of the Legislative Assembly for Illawarra and had favoured the construction of the Illawarra railway line.

By 1873 it was decided to build a railway line from Sydney to the Illawarra. In 1879 18,000 acres (7284 hectares) of dedicated land to the south of Port Hacking and close to the proposed line, were opened as a national park for public recreation¹. The potential to increase the numbers of tourists who were easily able to take day-trips from the city after the line opened was an obvious benefit. In addition, it provided employment opportunities within the national park and an incentive for permanent settlement in the surrounding area.

After lengthy debate and public meetings, the railway route was officially approved in 1881. Instead of a crossing at Rocky Point, it was decided to make the crossing at Como as it was found that although shallower at Rocky Point it

was difficult to obtain foundations for bridge piers. As the route passed through a portion of the Holt-Sutherland Estate an opportunity for a subdivision was created.

In 1881 Thomas Holt subleased most of his estate to a company named the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company which was formed primarily to prepare and administer the land for settlement. The first release was at Sylvania and in October 1881, the company's surveyor, was asked to submit a design for a proposed township to the south-west of the Sylvania subdivision. In November 1881 it was completed and at the request of the company directors the subdivision was named Sutherland.

In February 1882 the company made the land available for sale as the Township of Sutherland. Speculation rather than settlement was the initial interest in this subdivision.

In 1885 Samuel Gray sold his land to the Intercolonial Investment Land and Building Company. The railways decided to site the station in the Intercolonial subdivision rather than in that of the Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company.

According to the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 28 December 1885, the area in which the station was being erected was 'at present in a state of nature – a solitary house or two and numerous navvies' tents being the only evidence of habitation.' Local historian Maryanne Larkin states that there were 16 families living there in makeshift housing.

Residents lived in humpies or tents in the bush. The railway line to Sutherland was opened on 26 December 1885. Once the land was cleared, a township developed around the railway station. Before the railway opened land was being subdivided in the area bounded by the Boulevard, Acacia Road, Grafton and Eton Street. The Grand Parade and Oakwood Street were also subdivided in 1886, the year after the

arrival of the Railway. Land between the new station and Eton Street, also known as Sutherland Township, owned by the Intercolonial Investment Land and Building Company was cut into 40 allotments, a hotel and post office established, and the village of Sutherland was born. Allotments were offered for sale in April 1886.

In The Intercolonial Company's second Annual Report & Balance Sheet of 19 December 1887, it was stated:

Our Sutherland Township is rapidly being built on and contains two fine hotels, several business places, a number of private houses and a church, also a brickyard immediately on its confines, which is a great inducement to those requiring to build.

A Company map of Sutherland in 1888 shows there were 17 cottages and villas, including the Station Master's and the Gate-keeper's, between Eton Street, east of the railway line and The Boulevarde (now Linden Street), on the western side, then a boundary of the National Park.

The Holt-Sutherland Estate Land Company subdivision, on the western side of the railway

line, was offered for sale in September 1887. A difference between the land offered by the two companies was that the Intercolonial land was freehold and the Holt-Sutherland land was on a 99-year leasehold.

The construction of the railway line created business opportunities. William Bramley purchased three blocks in the Intercolonial Investment Land and Building Company subdivision on the eastern side of the railway station and built the first brick general store and a hotel in the late 1800s, which he named the Railway Hotel. The other permanent buildings were the railway station, the station master's residence and the railway keeper's cottage.

By the end of 1887 the Intercolonial Investment Land and Building Company declared that their Sutherland Township subdivision was being settled and the shopping/commercial area was growing. The majority of families were 'labouring men' in transient occupations, however the growth was thought to be sufficient to warrant and 'maintain a small public school' which opened in 1887. In 1888 about 50 families resided in Sutherland.



Sutherland township, c.1900 [SLLS collection]

2. The first two pubs in Sutherland

There is some conjecture as to which was the first hotel in Sutherland; the Railway Hotel (now Boyles) established by William Bramley, on the corner of Illawarra Road (now the Old Princes Highway) and Station Street (as Boyle Street was then known), or the National Hotel (now the Royal) on the western side of the railway line (now on the corner of East Parade and Adelong Street (formerly Flora Street)). Clearly, from the Intercolonial Investment Land and Building Company report of December 1887 both hotels were operating in 1887.



Railway Hotel (later Boyles Hotel), Sutherland, c1900 [SLLS collection]

The licence records between 1885 and 1890 appear to have been lost, but renewals of these in 1893 indicate that the National (Royal) Hotel renewed about six weeks before the Railway (Boyles) Hotel; which suggests that the National Hotel was the first to be built. The hotels catered for the large influx of employed and Government sponsored relief workers who were camped between Sutherland and the National Park following the severe recession in the late 1880s and early 1890s; workers engaged in building the South Coast railway and improvements to the Royal National Park.

In 1893 Catherine Major purchased the National Hotel. S.A. Hideout is believed to have been the first licensee of this Hotel. The following year Catherine married Alfred Kitt who became the licensee in 1895. In 1897 the now Mrs Kitt bought the Railway Hotel from William Bramley who was heavily in debt. Mrs Kitt leased the Railway Hotel to Ted Boyle in 1901 and sold it to Tooth & Co in 1910. In 1904 Ted Boyle built the National Hall opposite the hotel where dances and other social and sporting events were held. The roof of this building in Boyle Street is currently standing and covers offices and restaurants. The National Hall later became the Odeon Theatre.



Royal Hotel, East Pde, Sutherland, 1926 [SSHS]

Later the Railway Hotel was renamed Boyles Sutherland Hotel after its owner Ted Boyle. Ted Boyle was a civic minded person. In 1937 the Hotel was demolished and replaced by the present building on the Old Princes Highway, and which is currently listed as a heritage building.

In 1902 Mrs Kitt sold the National Hotel to Margaret Peters, whose son George become the licensee, the hotel now being known as Peter's Royal Hotel. Margaret Peters also sold to Toth's in 1920. In 1920 the Skene family became the licensees of the Royal Hotel.

It was not uncommon in the late 1800s and early 1900s for women to be the owners of hotels. In fact Clare Wright in her honours thesis *Real Women Do Shout: Narratives of Pub Culture* estimated that 50 percent of hotels in Australian states were owned by women. She found that women were granted hotel licences, controlled the businesses, and played a very important role in setting the standards of behaviour in the pub. Ms Wright added:

There was a third really interesting fact which was that up until the 1960s, the publican had to live on the premises and they had to provide meals and accommodation, so it was seen as a domestic industry and this really empowered women to go into it and raise their families there as well,

Both hotels were the venues for sport and entertainment and heavily catered to early community needs. However, in the late 1880's this was not necessarily so.

An extract from *The Evening News*, 23 July 1887, page 4

UNEMPLOYED AMUSEMENTS BACCHANALIAN RIOTS. DEBAUCHERY, DRINK, AND DESTITUTION CHAINED TO A FENCE

By a visiting [unnamed] magistrate

I arrived at Sutherland (a railway station on the Illawarra line) on Thursday, and was astonished to see a large body of men congregated at the Railway Hotel, which is situated about 100 yards from the station. I was never so much surprised, and I may say disgusted, as I was at the sight I witnessed. Nor would any one conjecture that proceedings of such a diabolical character could be seen in any civilised community. In fact, question whether those who did not see it would believe that the very lowest type of humanity would be guilty of such proceedings; and how men, many of whom had been apparently well educated and of respectable parentage, could lower themselves to such a state of brutality, which was both disgusting and unwarrantable.

There were present at the public-house about 100 men, who are known as the unemployed, but who are engaged on the relief works at National Park. The occupation in which they are supposed to be engaged is clearing this park and forming roads, or otherwise attempting to beautify this place of public recreation. On the ground in front of the public house some dozen men were lying in various places, in all sorts of positions, and clad in various garments. The only clothing of some were hats and trousers, their, bodies, being quite nude. Others had bare feet, with portions of trousers on and no head gear. Others had a sleeve of a shirt on, without any other portion of the garment. One had two sleeves of a shirt and the back of same on, the breast and front portions having been torn from the garments. The whole of the bodies of the men showed signs of filth and loathsomeness; as if they had never seen water; their faces were bruised and torn – either one or both eyes blackened and swollen up, and, as the police informed me, were ‘hopelessly dead drunk,’ and were quietly camped, and a ‘very good job, too,’ said they.

At the bar of the public-house were about thirty men sodden with drink, who had the appearance of madmen. Some were partially clothed with rags, others naked to the waist, with bruises over their bodies; in many instances covered with clotted blood. Noses broken, eyes blackened, and otherwise disfigured frontispieces. The floor of the bar was covered with beer. The outside and rear of the house were a mass of filth and dust, for which I may say that the landlord was in no way responsible. The men outside the house were either fighting or wanting to fight, and the coverings of their bodies were similar to those already described.

This district is under the supervision of two police officers, both of whom are efficient and good men. The hotel keeper, Mr. W. Hanley, is a man of genial temperament, and conducts his business, as far as he is able, in a proper manner. But what are the two policemen and one landlord to do against about 3000 of these people who are on these relief works? The police stated the way they manage is, if the men get drunk, they let them camp on the ground. If they are in fighting humor, they let them fight, and look on, and see fair play and a clear ground if possible, if they resort to any other misdemeanor or beastiality they handcuff them, and chain them up to the railway- station gate for twelve hours. By that time they are repentant, and about sober.

The pay day is on a Wednesday, each fortnight. Last Wednesday the large sum of £3000 was paid the people – the previous pay was £5000. The affair is a complete waste of public money, for in three or four years the undergrowth will spring up, and will be as wild as ever. For many years to come this park will not be used, excepting once a year for military display; the distance from the metropolis being too great for the place to be taken advantage of by the citizens.

One remarkable, yet amusing feature of the crowd I met there was that each one said of the rest that they never met such a 'lot of blacklegs, thieves, dirty, drunken sweeps as men located here;' and one of these said to me that 'seven workmen would do as much as three hundred of these unemployed, and he was sorry he ever came amongst them, and would get away as soon as possible.' This 'party' was about 55 years of age, and at the time I was speaking to him was fairly sober. Two hours after he was stripped to the waist, without hat or boots, roaming about Wanting to fight 'someone, anyone,' but, could not get a match on unless he was prepared to 'shout' or treat his proposed antagonist to a drink ; but, whether fortunately or unfortunately, he was out of funds and could not get a fight on. Two other pugilists fought several rounds, then shook hands, had a drink and a lapse of say half an hour, then there would be another contest, another drain 'of fighting beer,' then a final battle, and both camp on the ground wounded and bleeding, and I may say dead drunk.

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SSH Society Bulletins
Radio National Wednesday 29 October 2014 11:45A

¹ Australia's first national park, later Royal National Park, and the second in the world to be proclaimed a national park after Yellowstone National Park in USA.



Sutherland Railway Station, showing part of the Royal Hotel on left of photo, c1900 [SSHS]

SUTHERLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL

1947 – 5th class boys



Does your face, or that of anyone you know, appear here? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Tell us what you are doing now, and some of your memories of Sutherland Public School. [Photo: Jim Wood]

Write to the Editor, *Bulletin*, PO Box 389, Sutherland 1499, or email elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com

Back row from left:

Max Lye
Ralph Hodge
Phillip Newman (Neuman?)
*John Cropp
John Gray
John Barnes
*Terry Miller
*Greg Webb
??
Phil Ray

2nd back row from left:

Murray French
Ray Glover? (in front of Murray French)
Lorry Smith
Wilfred Piesley
Barry Jenkins
Les Webb
Kevin Burgess
Brian Henderson
Bob Fry
Bob Hoar
Ross Heaton
Ron Hart
??

3rd row (sitting) from left:

Ray Allen
??
Frank Everett
Walter Dunn
Ray (Boxer) Burgess
Phillip Allen
Jim Rogers
Tom McAlister
Jim Wood
Lorry Binder

Front row from left:

Les Nickles (Nicholls)
Bob Marsteller
Bruce Tracey
Ron Herbert
??
Sam Wheeler
Ernie Coleman
Chester Gould
Gordon Messiter
Clive Rattenbury

* Deceased

Evolution of two pubs in Sutherland over a century

(See story page 28)



Railway Hotel, Sutherland, c.1900s [SSL coll.]



Boyles Hotel (old Railway Hotel), Sutherland rebuilt in 1937. [Photo: George Miller 2016]



Royal Hotel, East Pde Sutherland, c1926 [SSHS]



Royal Hotel, East Pde, Sutherland 2016
[Photo: George Miller, 2016]

Junction of Woronora River and Forbes Creek, one century apart

(See 'Recollections of a Woronora Boy,' page 10)



Forbes Creek flowing into Woronora River, (taken from a hill in the north west) c 1915 [SSL]



Forbes Creek flowing into Woronora (taken from south-east in Prince Edward Park), c. 2006 [Peter Jackson, *Sutherland Shire Souvenir Guide*, Southside Pub., 2006, p.101]