



NUMBER: 227 — MAY 2023



*Bruce Howell, Lee Nation and Bruce Watt at the launch of the Matson Collection of Aboriginal artefacts (in the glass cabinet behind Bruce Watt) [Photo: Elizabeth Craig]*

See how a series of serendipitous events led to this valuable and unique collection being on display at the Sutherland Shire Museum (page 13)

**MINDFUL OF THE PAST – FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE**

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**FACEBOOK:** Sutherland Shire Historical Society



## MEETING OF TWO CULTURES

Kamay Botany Bay National Park– 29 April 2023

This annual event commemorates the first encounter of the local Gweagal people with Lt James Cook and the crew of the *Endeavour* in 1770

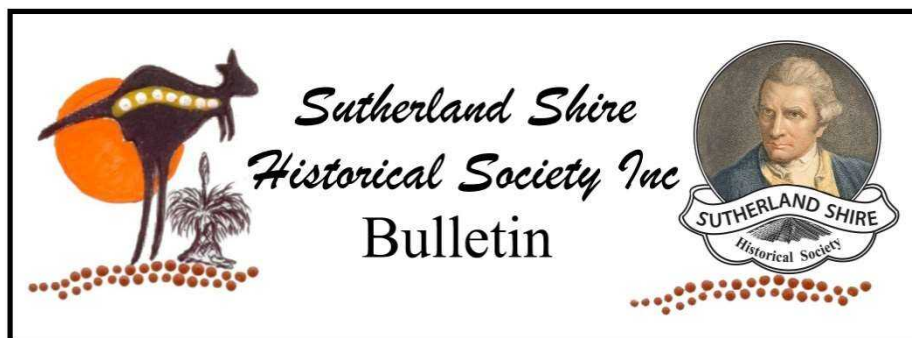


*Aboriginal dancers entertain the crowds who were not deterred by the rain.*

[Photos: Elizabeth Craig]



SSHS member, Ed Duyker, has written a thought-provoking *Letter to the Editor*, on the appropriateness of naming this annual event 'The Meeting of Two Cultures' (see page 8).



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*Just a reminder that*  
**SSHS Membership fees are due by 30 June**  
 \$40 individuals/\$60 couples

Pay at meetings by cash or EFTPOS  
 or complete enclosed 2023-2024 Membership form and follow payment directions.



## **SUTHERLAND SHIRE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

### **THE SOCIETY**

The SSHS has a proud tradition stretching back more than half a century 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 on our website: [www.shirehistory.org](http://www.shirehistory.org) or for issues up to end 2020, at Sutherland Library - Local Studies. 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. Any enquiries contact the Editor: Elizabeth Craig at [elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com](mailto:elizabeth.craig@y7mail.com) or phone 0491 096 642.

Digital copies of the *Sutherland Shire Historical Society Inc Bulletin* are emailed to all Society members with online access. Print copies can be purchased at \$5.00 each. Digital copies are also emailed to all Shire council libraries, the Mayor, Shire General Manager, all Councillors, local politicians, the Royal Australian Historical Society, National Trust of NSW, NSW State Library, National Library of Australia, University of Sydney, University of NSW, neighbouring local history societies, Shire high school libraries and some local businesses. Issues from September 1966 are also posted on the SSHS website: [www.shirehistory.org](http://www.shirehistory.org)

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### **REGISTRATION**

**SSHS BULLETIN – ISSN 1444-2930 (from February 2000); ISSN 2652-4000 (ONLINE) (from May 2019)**

Society publications are registered with the National Library of Australia in accordance with International Standard Serial Numbering and have an ISSN or 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. Although Covid-19 restrictions have been lifted, Covid is still a concern. Please do not attend a meeting if you are unwell, and wear a mask if unsure.

## **SUTHERLAND SHIRE MUSEUM**

Our new Museum at 88 Venetia Street, Sylvania is now open for visitors. Opening hours are: Tuesdays, 12.00 – 4.00pm, Thursdays 9.30am – 1.30pm, Saturdays 9.00 – 1.00pm. Entry is \$5. To organise a group visit, please contact Museum Manager, Peter Moore: 0427 213 575 or email us at [shirehistory@gmail.com](mailto:shirehistory@gmail.com).

**DONATING MATERIAL:** If you have items of historical significance to Sutherland Shire such as artefacts, documents or photographs, that you wish to donate or lend to the Museum, please contact us at [shirehistory@gmail.com](mailto:shirehistory@gmail.com). While we welcome such items, we have very limited space and have to adhere to our acquisitions policy which dictates what sort of items we can accept. If you do not wish to part with original items, we would welcome copies of documents and photographs. Temporary loans for specific periods for suitable items 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](mailto:shirehistory@gmail.com); or phone us on 0424 600 150

## SOCIETY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: 2022-2023

### ELECTED MEMBERS

<b>PATRON:</b>	Shire Mayor, Cllr Carmelo Pesce
<b>PRESIDENT</b>	Pauline Curby
<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b>	Elizabeth Craig
<b>SECRETARY/PUBLIC OFFICER</b>	Hamish MacDonald
<b>TREASURER</b>	John Doherty
<b>COMMITTEE MEMBERS:</b>	Creo Moore
	Deb Burton
	Kate Doherty

### APPOINTED POSITIONS

<b>MUSEUM MANAGER</b>	Peter Moore
<b><i>BULLETIN</i> EDITOR</b>	Elizabeth Craig
<b><i>BULLETIN</i> PROOF READER</b>	Claudia Dixon
<b>ONLINE ADMINISTRATOR</b>	Creo Moore
<b>PUBLICATIONS EDITOR</b>	Elizabeth Craig
<b>PUBLICITY OFFICER FACEBOOK</b>	Creo Moore
<b>ARCHIVIST</b>	Carol McDonald
<b>GRANTS OFFICER</b>	Graham Burton
<b>EXCURSIONS OFFICERS</b>	Greg Jackson Christine Edney (Assistant)
<b>FUNDRAISING COORDINATOR</b>	Kate Doherty
<b>WELFARE OFFICER</b>	Mary Small
<b>AFTERNOON TEA COORDINATOR</b>	Deborah Burton
<b>HONORARY SOLICITOR</b>	Michael Solari

To contact any Committee member or office bearer, email or phone us:

**Email:** [shirehistory@gmail.com](mailto:shirehistory@gmail.com)

**Phone:** 0424 600 150 (leave a message)

Your message or email will be forwarded on to the appropriate person, who will contact you directly.

**SSHS CALENDAR: JUNE - AUGUST 2023**  
(See website: [www.shirehistory.org](http://www.shirehistory.org) for updates)

**SSHS MEETING** - normally held at **1.30pm, 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday in the month**  
at the **Stapleton Centre, Sutherland**

**Sutherland Shire Museum at 88 Venetia St., Sylvania is open:**  
**Tuesdays** 12.00 – 4.00pm  
**Thursdays**, 9.30am-1.30pm and **Saturdays**, 9.00am – 1.00pm

**DATE**

<b>May 2023</b>	<b>Wed 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>EXCURSION</b> – Tramway Museum, Loftus – led by Christine Edney Meet at front of the Tramway Museum at 10.00 for a guided tour. Cost \$15 (incl. tram rides). Contact Christine on 0410 141 439 to confirm attendance.
<b>June 2023</b>	<b>Sat 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>GENERAL MEETING</b> <b>SPEAKER:</b> Bruce Watt, will speak on the theme of his new book, <i>Curious Eyes: Reports by Spanish, American and French expeditions to Sydney Cove in the first 15 years of the colony. The reasons for the establishment of Port Jackson and its progress have largely been told from a British perspective. Discover a new, secret history of the colony</i>
<b>July 2023</b>	<b>Sat 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>GENERAL MEETING</b> <b>SPEAKER:</b> Local Studies Librarian Helen McDonald with Pauline Curby. will discuss 'Who was Thomas Holt?' This talk explores the life of a man who once owned most of what is now Sutherland Shire. Pauline Curby will also have on display Holt family artefacts from Sutherland Shire Museum.
<b>August 2023</b>	<b>Sat. 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>GENERAL MEETING</b> <b>SPEAKER:</b> Christine Hill, author of <i>Bass and Flinders</i> will be our speaker. More information to come.

**EXCURSIONS:** Please note that for insurance reasons only SSHS members can attend excursions.

There are more excursions in the pipeline and will be announced at meetings. They are based on the results of Christine Edney's survey to members on preferences for places to visit and time of the week.

**PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE AT THE MEETING**

*The Matson Collection – Sutherland Shire Museum*, by Bruce Powell, 2022: \$25

*Murphy's Lore – Unravelling the myths around James Murphy.....*, by Kim Hatherly, 2023: \$10

Extra May 2023 *Bulletins*: \$5

## SSHS STANCE ON AUSTRALIA DAY?

### Your thoughts

In her President's Report in the last *Bulletin* (February 2003), Pauline Curby asked members for their view on what the Society's stance should be on the increasingly controversial question of 26 January as the date for 'Australia Day'. Some Australians call it Survival Day or Invasion Day and say the date for a national day should be changed. Others disagree. Here are two responses to her question: should we as an organisation engage with this issue or should we take a neutral stance and ignore it?

*From my own perspective I celebrate the Day and would prefer that we not take a position. One of my ancestors was a convict who arrived on the First Fleet and I am very proud of what he and his descendants achieved. He had no say in coming to Australia and made the best of a bad situation. I have no doubt that others members would also have a similar background. I understand that there are other issues involved in respect of the Day but think it would be a good idea for the Society to take a neutral position.*

*Leigh Wallbank*

*The date and celebration of what's become known as Australia Day has had an interesting evolution. It is celebrated variously as a solemn milestone of foundation, a date marking citizenship ceremonies, as a public holiday signifying the end of the summer break or dubbed as Invasion Day by Indigenous people.*

*Arriving in Botany Bay on 18 January 1788 and finding it unsuitable, the fleet beat a hurried exit north to Port Jackson when the French ships of the La Perouse expedition unexpectedly arrived in Botany Bay. On 26 January the First Fleet's Officers rowed ashore at Sydney Cove and drank to the health and success of the settlement. None of the convicts were allowed on shore. A more significant date was 7 February, as described by David Collins, Judge Advocate:*

*The whole colony was assembled with suitable solemnity. The military was drawn up under arms, convicts were assembled and the principal officers stationed near the governor. The Royal Commission was then read by David Collins. In this manner Arthur Phillip was constituted and appointed Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief in and over the territory called New South Wales. [<https://northarmcove.nsw.au/blog/week-1788>]*

*The 26 January event was not celebrated until 1818 when it was known as 'Foundation Day' or 'First Landing Day'. Other States held their own celebrations on other dates. In 1888 all States with the exception of South Australia celebrated 26 January as 'Anniversary Day'.*

*It wasn't until 1935 that all states adopted a common date and name for Australia Day, and in the 1940s that a national holiday was set in place.*

*It is not the intent of this article to suggest alternative dates or names but rather to inject some clarity into the process of its establishment and its current significance.*

*Bruce Watt*

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

PAULINE CURBY



On Saturday 18 March Sutherland Shire Historical Society launched the Matson Collection of Aboriginal artefacts collected locally many years ago. Throughout his long

life Fred Matson (1899-1993), a third generation Shire boat builder, located these objects and prior to his death passed them onto his friend, Harvie Nation, whose family have deposited them for safekeeping with the Society on the basis of a semi-permanent loan. Wiradjuri descendent and Society member Bruce Howell has produced a beautifully illustrated catalogue of the Collection with detailed descriptions allowing viewers a better understanding of Aboriginal culture. (See full history, p.13.)

As I have previously reported, it's all happening at Venetia Street. Our wonderful volunteers are sorting, accessioning and generally working to improve the operation of Sutherland Shire's only museum – as well as mowing the grass. Several group tours have resulted in appreciative feedback from participants. It's great to see guiding co-ordinator Sue Burrell's 20-minute Snapshot Tour put to the test. As always, we are at the mercy of the weather but on one particularly gloomy day – between showers – museum manager Peter Moore managed to showcase our outdoor artefacts to visitors.

Another local heritage issue has arisen. A development application has been submitted to Sutherland Shire Council for a nine-storey building behind the façade of what is probably the oldest structure in Cronulla. I have submitted an objection on behalf of SSHS as this building on Gerrale Street – then the main street – was the hub of the

'village' until 1911 when the new tram service was routed down Cronulla Street. The current building where Little Italy restaurant is located was built in about 1908, and the adjoining building housing Pilgrims restaurant replaced an older single storey building in about 1912. This unique reminder of old Cronulla will disappear if a development on the scale proposed goes ahead.

On two occasions recently executive members have 'manned' tables at events in an effort to raise the Society's profile. John and Kate Doherty led the team at the Tramway Fair on 26 February and helped once again at the former crematorium on 22 April when Woronora Cemetery had an open day as part of the Heritage Festival. At the annual Meeting of Two Cultures celebrations on 29 April we intended to sell books but the wet weather deterred us from that idea. Nevertheless, several members attended this Kamay Botany Bay event which as always was an impressive display of reconciliation at its best.

I asked in my last report for feedback on the question of SSHS's position on the controversial issue of how Australia Day should be celebrated – if at all. One of the two responses offered no opinion, but provided a snapshot history to enhance our understanding of the celebration. The other suggested we continue to virtually ignore the day as has been the case for the last few years. In view of this, that's what we'll do unless members have other ideas.

Keep in mind members are entitled to have their say during the business part of our general meetings each month. If you've got anything you'd like to share with members let me know and it will be included in the agenda.



# MUSEUM REPORT

PETER MOORE

It has been a very eventful three months since the last report, with the prime event being on 18 March when we launched our display of Matson Aboriginal artefacts, all found in the local Shire area over many years by Fred Matson. My whole-hearted thanks to our good friend Bruce Howell, who took on the enormous task of putting this important display together. I will not say much more on this as others will be writing on the subject in this *Bulletin*, but we all congratulate Bruce on his fine work.

Fortunately, on the day of the launch weather was clement with proceedings running smoothly. Many thanks to the committed volunteers who helped with the setting up and the catering, as well as to JDs at the Sylvania Bowling Club for their contribution of the finger food.

There has been a disappointingly small stream of individual visitors passing through the museum, but this has been offset by a number of group bookings. What we need is a continuing publicity campaign which should come from all members of the SSHS, so everyone, please tell all your friends about us.

New member Sue Burrell has a great number of fantastic ideas to attract visitors. One is to bring children from a number of nearby pre-schools through the museum, and then to encourage some of the older school children to visit as well. She also plans to expand our school box program.

Another of Sue's ideas was the resurrection of the Olympic torch and cauldron, and many of our visitors are thrilled to be photographed with this Olympic memorabilia of the Shire. Who would have thought that such an annoyingly large object, so difficult to store, would be so

popular with our visitors? The cauldron is a bulky item and always seems to be in the way of something else. Some members suggested we should dispose of it, but thankfully we kept it in our confined storage.

This brings me to the perennial problem of our limited size. The committee has been mulling over a number of possibilities, and are firming up on a plan to buy two demountable buildings to add floor space to the museum, and also provide wet weather cover for visitors and social functions. This will be expensive, and the grants committee are working on submissions to apply for funds for this and for some smaller projects.

In the short term we are looking to acquire a small second-hand mobile compactus (cabinet on tracks) to place in one of the sheds to relieve some of our storage problems. We are also planning a minor rearrangement of some of the office furniture to free up space in the office.

We have one new item on display found by Greg Jackson near Lucas's mill (on the Woronora River). He has authenticated it as a convict artefact dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

A donation by Dave and Gene Simpson has added to our Olympic memorabilia with souvenirs from the 2000 Sydney Games. The Fentons have donated a lawn mower, as the SSC seems to have taken us off the list for mowing. Thanks Vicky.

As usual I must thank all of our dedicated volunteers who devote their time to guiding, sorting, cleaning, mowing, leaf raking, general maintenance and accessioning.

There is always room for more helpers, and if anyone wants to help please come along and join the crew.

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

ELIZABETH CRAIG

As our President and Museum Manager both noted, it's been a very eventful three months – providing some great material for the *Bulletin*, and leading to a bumper edition this time.

We have heard a fair bit about the recently acquired Matson Collection of Aboriginal artefacts, but I think the story of the many Shire individuals who separately played their part in ensuring its preservation was well worth relating (See page 13).

The official handing over of the Taren Point Honour Roll to Taren Point Public School last 11 November, resulted in SSHS member, Claudia Dixon offering her memories of growing up in Taren Point as a new migrant from Germany in 1955 (see page 30).

Greg Jackson reports on another of his popular excursions – this time to Parkesvale,

a former pleasure ground (see page 35). Greg also provided a beautiful photo of the site taken in its heyday, and one of the same scene today (see inside back cover).

I would like to thank Ian Hill for the fabulous photos he has contributed to the *Bulletin*. This time they included images of the launch of the Matson Collection, and also of the Parkesvale excursion. They add interest, attractiveness and quality to the *Bulletin*. Thank you, Ian.

Thank you also to Dawn Emerson for proof reading the *Bulletin* for so long, sometimes under difficult circumstances. Your work is very much appreciated. Claudia Dixon will now take over that task, beginning with this issue. Thank you, Claudia, and to all contributors to the *Bulletin*.

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### *Letter to the Editor*

*Sutherland Shire Council has done a good job changing the focus of the annual commemoration of the arrival of the Endeavour at Kurnell in 1770 and using it to foster reconciliation with indigenous Australians. The event is now called 'The Meeting of Two Cultures'. But is this really accurate?*

*What about the Polynesians Tupaia and Tayeto who were the first to attempt to speak with the Dharawal on the shore of Botany Bay? Their culture was very different from the Europeans on board the Endeavour. While we can generalise about that European culture, was James Cook's outlook really the same as that of the Swedes Daniel Solander and Herman Spöring, the Venetian Antonio Ponto, the Brazilian Manoel Pereira, the Orkney islander Forby Sutherland or the Americans John Gore and James Matra?*

*They were all at Botany Bay, like the culturally diverse English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh and Channel Islander crew members of the Endeavour. Joseph Banks' African (or West Indian) servants Thomas Richmond and George Dorrton had already died at Tierra del Fuego. But then a half-Dutch, half-Javanese Alexander Samarang joined the crew in Batavia and other Scandinavians and Dutchmen joined the crew at the Cape of Good Hope.*

*We should drop the 'two' and rename the event simply 'The Meeting of Cultures'. We could then use it to foster both reconciliation with our First Nations citizens and celebrate our diverse multicultural heritage.*

*Ed Duyker*

(Also published in the *St George & Sutherland Shire Leader*, 3 May 2023)

# FROM THE MUSEUM: A CONVICT ARTEFACT

GREG JACKSON and PAM FORBES

*Although there is plenty of documentary evidence for convicts in the Shire, notably those working at John Lucas' Woronora Mill in the 1820s and the convict clearing party working on the Illawarra Road in 1843, they have not left much in the way of artefacts. The clearing party of 1843 was transitory and as none of their temporary camps have been found, no artefacts have been found. Without excavation at the Woronora Mill, which is not possible without a permit, the surface artefacts have been largely removed from the archaeological record by a combination of bushfires, floods and the age of the mill. Although no artefact that can be attributed to Lucas' time has been found at his home at the Brisbane Mill one was located at the Woronora Mill site. This article discusses what it can tell us about life at the mill.*

The artefact, shown in **Image 1**, is a heavy piece of cast iron curved in both dimensions. On the inner side is the remains of a ceramic dish and inside that dish are small traces of a metal resembling lead (not visible in **Image 1**). Testing with a soldering iron (approximately 335 degrees C) this metal appeared to be pewter (approximately 90% tin, 10% lead) which melts at a 170 – 230 degrees C compared to lead which melts at 327 degrees C).<sup>1</sup>

This artefact was located wedged in a fissure in the rock below the north-western corner of the mill building. The iron appears to be a sherd of an iron pot, resembling the pot shown in **Image 2**, with eating equipment in the form of plates nested inside. A reconstruction of how this pot may have looked is shown in **Drawing 1**. Given their location under the mill floor and their appearance, it is probable that these vessels are from Lucas' Mill. Their broken and melted condition is consistent with the mill being destroyed by fire in the 1830s. By making some measurements of the curvature of the iron sherd the diameter of the pot can be estimated, using Pythagoras' theorem, to be 0.36metres (14inches). This would give a pot with a volume of approximately 0.0118m<sup>3</sup>, capable of holding 11.8litres (2.5gallons). This is a very large pot for cooking the meals of the few convicts living at the Woronora Mill.

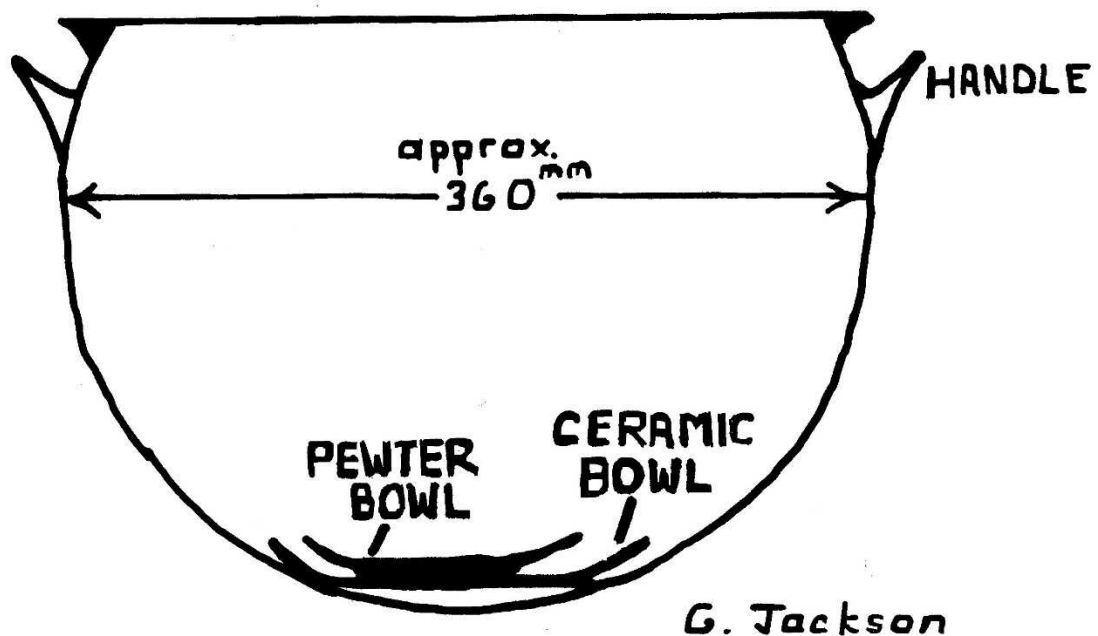


**Image 1:** Remains of pot and eating equipment with scale cm [Photos G. Jackson]





**Image 2:** Iron cooking pot, Franklin House (NT), Launceston, Tasmania [Photo G. Jackson]



**Drawing 1:** The original iron pot with ceramic and pewter eating equipment stored inside.

This large pot tells of the convicts preparing large amounts of stew that would last for several days, possibly using local wallabies or possums if they could trap or shoot one, together with vegetables from their garden, located on the cleared arable land beside the mill.<sup>2</sup> The location of

this artefact suggests that the food preparation area was at the mill, possibly using a fire outside on the bed rock beside the mill.

The remains of only two eating bowls of ceramic and pewter were found in this artefact. Other eating implements, made from wood, may have existed but the small size of the mill suggests that only two convicts had been stationed there. We have no records for the deployment of Lucas' convicts, but we are given a clue as to the name of one of the Woronora Mill convicts. At the convict musters in 1822 and 1825 convict John Walker, assigned to John Lucas, is described as a 'miller'. John Lucas together with his family lived and worked at the Brisbane Mill on Williams Creek, so probably John Walker became the miller at the Woronora Mill.<sup>3</sup>

The convict record of all of Lucas' assigned convicts has been reconstructed as far as possible and Walker is the only one described as being a 'miller'.<sup>4</sup> The record for John Walker has been extracted and is shown in **Table 1**. John Lucas' two mills are located about 10km apart but to travel between them by boat - the only practical way to make the journey - would take about eight hours, so this mill would be a lonely, isolated place.<sup>5</sup>

Convicts owned few material possessions and this convict artefact, the only one found in the Shire to date, tells us a little about the life of the convicts isolated in the bush at the Woronora Mill. A large amount of food was prepared using vegetables and probably local game, which together with the flour that their mill produced, would have provided an adequate if monotonous diet.

Extracting the maximum amount of information from this artefact involved a combination of archaeology and history, with these two disciplines combining to provide a plausible explanation for this rare convict relic.

<b>Convicts Name:</b> John Walker			
<b>Ship:</b> <i>Mangles</i> in August 1820			
<b>Offence:</b> Burglary		<b>Sentence:</b> 14 years, Derby in 1819	
<b>Age in 1825:</b> 29	<b>Marriage Status:</b>	<b>Religion:</b>	<b>Education:</b>
<b>Country of Origin:</b> England		<b>Town of Origin:</b> Derby	
<b>Trade in UK:</b> Labourer, Gardener	<b>Height:</b> 5'9"	<b>Complexion:</b> Pale	<b>Hair Colour:</b> Brown
<b>Eye Colour:</b> Hazel			
<b>Assignment:</b> 1822 Muster: working as a miller, Liverpool for John Lucas, June 1822, Sept 1822, Sept 1825,		<b>Freedom:</b> Convict in 1822-23, TOL 1827 cancelled 1829, Certificate of Freedom Aug 1833, 'Mutilated and Cancelled' Nov 1840	
<b>Colonial Crimes:</b> Ticket Of Leave cancelled 1829			
<b>References:</b> Colonial Secretaries in-letters index: Biog No. 140160640, 140160641, 140160642 Convict indents: Biog No.100144591 NSW Census 1822: Biog No.110421677 Census and NSW General Muster 1823/24/25: Biog No.110544566, 110543992 NSW Census 1828: Biog No.110643557 Ticket of Leave Index: Biog No.12011875, 120114210			
<b>Notes:</b> 1822 muster with wife and 2 children at Liverpool district			

**Table 1:** *Reconstructed record for convict John Walker*<sup>4</sup>

If you have not been to the museum at its new location on the corner of Holt Road and Venetia Street, Sylvania then you should visit. This convict artefact is one of the oldest European items in our museum but there are lots more interesting indigenous and European items to see.

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<sup>1</sup> The Engineering Toolbox, *Melting Point of Common Metals*,  
[http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/melting-temperature-metals-d\\_860.htm](http://www.engineeringtoolbox.com/melting-temperature-metals-d_860.htm)

<sup>2</sup> Forbes P, Jackson G, *The Watermills of John Lucas: The Woronora Mill*  
[https://www.academia.edu/8676795/Woronora\\_Mill\\_Settlement](https://www.academia.edu/8676795/Woronora_Mill_Settlement)

<sup>3</sup> Jackson G, Forbes P, *The Watermills of John Lucas: The Brisbane Mill*  
[https://www.academia.edu/3817560/The\\_Watermills\\_of\\_John\\_Lucas\\_The\\_Brisbane\\_Mill](https://www.academia.edu/3817560/The_Watermills_of_John_Lucas_The_Brisbane_Mill)

<sup>4</sup> Jackson G, *Convict Data* [https://www.academia.edu/40269528/Convict\\_Data](https://www.academia.edu/40269528/Convict_Data)

<sup>5</sup> Jackson G, Forbes P, Duncan B, *Working the Tides: The Maritime Cultural Landscape Linking the Woronora and Brisbane Mills*  
[https://www.academia.edu/3817565/Working\\_the\\_Tides\\_The\\_Maritime\\_Cultural\\_Landscape\\_Linkin\\_g\\_the\\_Woronora\\_and\\_Brisbane\\_Water\\_Mills](https://www.academia.edu/3817565/Working_the_Tides_The_Maritime_Cultural_Landscape_Linkin_g_the_Woronora_and_Brisbane_Water_Mills)



*Visitors watching proceedings at the launch of the Matson Collection  
at the Shire Museum 18 March 2023 [Photo Elizabeth Craig]  
(See story next page and more photos on back cover)*



# THE MATSON COLLECTION OF ABORIGINAL ARTEFACTS

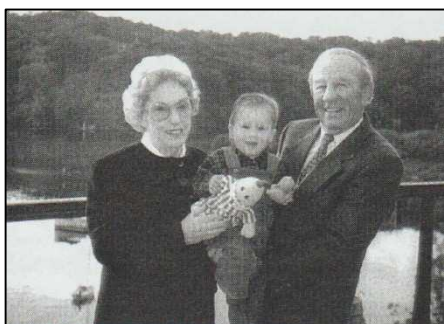
## Its journey to the Shire Museum

ELIZABETH CRAIG

You are aware of the pride we feel in having the Matson collection of Aboriginal artefacts on display in the Shire Museum.

To understand why we prize this locally found collection of stone, bone and shell Aboriginal tools, you need to know the history.

Fred Matson, a third generation Shire boat builder (1899-1993), whose family also established the Matson Pleasure Grounds in Yowie Bay (where the Camellia Gardens are now situated), was a passionate student of Aboriginal culture, and he collected Aboriginal artefacts from the shores of the Shire's waterways. This practice was made illegal by the NSW government in 1975, but until then there had been many such collectors. Most of those artefacts found have been dispersed or lost to time. However, Fred recognized the value of his collection and took great care to label the artefacts and keep them together until his death in 1994.



*Joy and Harvie Nation with grandson, Ryan, 1997<sup>2</sup>*

Fast forward more than two decades. Bruce Watt, then President of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society, was browsing through a history of Grays Point, when he came across a reference that piqued his interest. He read that before his death Fred Matson had given 'his prized collection of [Aboriginal] artefacts to his friend, Harvie Nation for safe keeping.'<sup>1</sup> Harvie and Joy Nation ran a boat hiring business in Grays Point, sourcing some of their boats from Fred Matson.

Bruce Watt, whose keen interest in Aboriginal culture led him to write a book on the Dharawal people,<sup>3</sup> immediately set about trying to trace Harvie Nation. He found that Harvie had died, but through his grandson, Ryan Hunter, who was still in Grays Point, managed to track down Harvie's daughter, Lee Nation, now living on the North Coast. Lee had been very close to Fred Matson herself and knew how much he valued the collection. She had taken over its custody from her father.

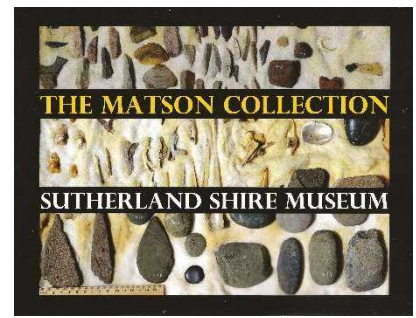


Bruce talked to Lee about the idea of displaying Fred Matson's collection at the Sutherland Shire Museum. She agreed it was the best place to house the artefacts where they could be viewed by the local community. After some thought she handed over the Matson collection to the Shire Museum on a semi-permanent loan.

Society President, Pauline Curby, Museum Manager, Peter Moore, and all the rest of the Museum Committee were thrilled that our small community Museum was to have the privilege of housing such a priceless collection, and plans were made to give it pride of place.



One more step was made to ensure this collection's posterity. Bruce Howell, of Waradjuri descent and a Society member, was deeply aware of the significance of the collection, and appreciated Fred Matson's value of it, as well as that of the people in whose custody it had passed since Fred's death. Determined to do it



justice, Bruce painstakingly measured and described the 249 pieces, taking beautifully sharp individual images, thus creating a comprehensive and high quality catalogue of this unique collection. If any of the artefacts are lost or damaged, there is a permanent record of them – a historical artefact in its own right. He also knew that a catalog of this nature would help explain the artefacts to viewers, offering insights and understanding into the deeper history of the Shire.

### Launch of the Matson Collection

Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> March dawned a beautiful sunny day, allaying our fears about how we would shelter 60-odd people from the wet weather. We sat in the shade of the trees while the Matson Collection and accompanying catalogue were launched by Gadigal Elder, Auntie Deanna Schreiber. President Pauline Curby was MC, and other speakers included Sutherland Shire Mayor, Clr Carmelo Pesce, Bruce Watt, Bruce Howell and Museum Manager, Peter Moore.

Lee Nation and her family were moved by the ceremony, and Lee remarked how proud she felt to have been part of this significant process in preserving a valuable history.



From left: *Peter Moore, Pauline Curby, Bruce Watt, Shire Mayor Carmelo Pesce, Auntie Deanna Schreiber and Bruce Howell speaking* [Photo: Ian Hill]

A smoking ceremony performed by Bruce Howell's friend, Rick O'Brien, had been held in the grounds a few days earlier – a custom to eliminate negative spirits around the area where the collection is to be housed (see photo on back cover).

And so the journey the Aboriginal tools Fred Matson collected from where they were left by the first inhabitants of our Shire, on through a series of caring hands, to the Shire Museum where they can be viewed and appreciated by the whole community, is now complete.

<sup>1</sup> *Making a Point: a history of Grays Point*, by Bill Barton and John Turner (2011), p.20

<sup>2</sup> *ibid*, p.122

<sup>3</sup> *Dharawal, the first contact people*, by Bruce Watt (2019)

# THE FIRST EUROPEAN SETTLER IN THE PRE-SHIRE (and it wasn't Blaxland or Birnie)

LAURIE BURGESS

Whilst Captain James Birnie can rightly be described as the first person to OWN land in the pre-Shire, there was an earlier settler . . .

One can look almost in vain for the name James Malone in books and articles about the early days of settlement on the southern shores of Botany Bay. If you blink while reading through all issues of the *SSHS Bulletin*, you might miss the one and only obscure mention of a certain 'Maloney' [sic] who had 'grant' [sic] of '100 [sic] acres' at 'Weeny [sic] Bay' (no date mentioned).<sup>1</sup>

So, who was James Malone?

James Malone was 'on list of convicts embarked on board the *Tellicherry*' on 17 August 1805 bound for the Colony of New South Wales, arriving there sometime in 1806.<sup>2</sup> He apparently behaved himself, as he does not rate a further mention until 9 January 1810, when he was 'granted certificate of freedom.'<sup>3</sup>

At that time, Government regulations permitted settlers to make a petition or memorial in writing addressed to the Governor to make an application for a grant of land.<sup>4</sup> Being a former convict, Malone was not considered for a grant of a large area of land often allocated to 'free settlers,' but had to content himself with 30 acres, promised by Governor Macquarie on 4 March 1811.<sup>5</sup>

It should be noted that a 'Governor's Promise' was only a prelude to a grant, and not an actual grant of land -- only persons who paid the full price outright were issued with a deed title to the land.<sup>6</sup> A Governor's Promise had a number of conditions attached, the main one being that the 'promisee' had to occupy his selected land and develop at least part of it. There were of course certain fees and charges, and a requirement that the boundaries of the land be confirmed before a grant could be issued.<sup>7</sup> There was certainly some confusion by early settlers who believed that, because they had been promised the land by the Governor, it was their land, and they could transfer it to someone else by signing over the 'Promise'. They also ignored the consequence of failure to meet the conditions — that the land could be taken from them and given to somebody else.<sup>8</sup> As early as 1814, the Colonial Secretary was expressing that 'Promises' made in 1809, 1810 and 1811 would have to be forfeited if the conditions were not met.<sup>9</sup> All this would probably not have been of immediate concern to James Malone who, now having 30 acres on which to settle, went about selecting a site for his home.

No information has been found as to when James Malone started living on the 30 acres. However, he had possession of the land as from 4 March 1811, and therefore had the right to settle on the land at that time.

Why he opted for a site on the previously unallocated Crown land on the shore of a bay on the southern side of Botany Bay can only be guessed at. It was in an area mapped a few years later as a swampy area with mangroves along the shores. The only possible 'industries' were fishing and oyster collection, although there could have been some raiding of shell deposits for conversion into lime for the building trade in Sydney. One author seems to indicate that Malone may have made a living as a fisherman:

*Some Aboriginal women married white men and their descendants lived on in the area [ie. around Botany Bay]. Indeed, many indigenous families remained along the Georges River,*



*just to the north, and its tributaries. They survived on the waterfront land no one else wanted or claimed, often making a living by fishing. One couple, the Malones, built a house on Weeney Bay across the peninsula from Cronulla's ocean beach . . .*<sup>10</sup>

This brings us to another reason why James Malone should be recognised as a Pre-Shire pioneer. He was not only the first European settler to officially occupy land in the pre-Shire, but also took as a partner an Aboriginal woman, and that union produced a son, John (or Johnny) who does feature in a number of articles about the Shire and surrounding areas along with his wife Lizzie. Little is known about James' Aboriginal partner, other than a record that she was a Dharawal woman,<sup>11</sup> of the Aboriginal group whose territory was centred on the future Sutherland Shire. Her name does not appear in any published material. The comments by Heather Goodall and Allison Cadzow in *Rivers and Resilience* are related to that situation:

*Yet none of these women have been named in written records we have examined. We only know that they had 'half-caste' children, indicating their ongoing relationship with white men.*

<sup>12</sup>

And further:

*We have already discussed the repeated failure to name the women involved in the fishing communities at the mouth of the Georges River. Like Johnny Malone's mother, although there were some exceptions — like his wife Lizzie Malone, who also became a key informant for ethnographers Mary Everitt and R H Matthews . . .*<sup>13</sup>

It is not known whether James Malone and his unnamed Aboriginal partner had other children. John Malone was, according to one source, born sometime in the 1820s.<sup>14</sup>

Although James Malone remained relatively 'unknown,' his son, John and wife, Lizzie became rather better recognised, as Goodall and Cadzow explain:

*John Malone continued to live in this area, and in the mid-1870s he recorded with ethnographer A Mackenzie the vocabulary he remembered from his mother. This was later published in 1878 — although still without recording this woman's name. Malone's wife was at least better recognised: Mackenzie recorded her as a Shoalhaven woman, Lizzie, who explained her knowledge of Wadi Wadi, her people's language, and of Dharawal, the language she described as being used from Wollongong to the north and on to Port Jackson. [Her implication is that John Malone's language was Dharawal.]*<sup>15</sup>

So, James Malone moving to his 'Governor's Promise' had the flow-on effect of all of us knowing more about the local Aboriginal language than would otherwise have been possible.

But now back to James Malone's 30 acres.

His closest European neighbour, Captain James Birnie obtained possession of 700 acres, 'Alpha Farm,' when issued with a grant from Governor Macquarie on 10 June 1815.<sup>16</sup> Birnie apparently did not live at Alpha Farm, but left it to be run by a series of managers, one of whom was David Duncomb, a friend of the Birnies, who lived on the property in a small cottage, and is known to have been there in 1823 when one of his daughters was born.<sup>17</sup> By 1824, Birnie was trying to gain a tenant for the farm.<sup>18</sup> David Duncomb had by that time left Alpha Farm, taking up a position as Chief Clerk in the Surveyor-General's Office and had also decided to convert the land reserved before he left England into a 700 acre 'Governor's Promise'<sup>19</sup> at 'Retreat'<sup>20</sup> (later 'Little Forest') in an isolated but well-timbered area west of Woronora River.

In early 1827, James Malone would have received a visit at his 30 acres from the party of Surveyor Robert Dixon, having been instructed on 17 February 1827 by Surveyor-General John Oxley, to conduct a survey which, amongst other things, was to commence at the '*outer south heads of Botany Bay and carefully trace the shore thereof to Georges River . . .*' The instruction also stated: '*There is but one farm measured on the south side of Botany Bay . . . to Mr Birnie of 700 acres.*' Further down the instruction it nonetheless stated: '*but in case other individuals should apply, you will refer them to me that the correctness of their claims may be ascertained previous to any measurement taking place.*'<sup>21</sup>

James Malone must have applied, because Dixon's plan includes a measured-up parcel bounded on the north by a bay on which is the name 'Weeney Bay.' The name of the bay is assumed to have been obtained by Dixon from Aboriginal people living in the area (or from Malone?). However, no record has been found that he recorded a meaning for the name, and there is no known meaning/translation. Dixon's plan was apparently used as a source for a map of the Parish of Sutherland, drawn from around 1831 and published in 1835. The first edition of the Parish of Sutherland shows a 30-acre parcel containing the name 'Malone', on the southern shore of Weeney Bay.



BELOW: Extract from First Edition of Parish of Sutherland – Source: Historical Parish Maps Collection – NSW Land Registry Services Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV)



LEFT: extract from map by Surveyor Dixon ca. 1827. [Source: R Dixon (undated). Part of a map of Port Hacking, NSW State Records Item NRS 13859, 4734/SG Map P256]

It would seem that James Malone had safely established his possession of the 30 acres, but circumstances were to turn against him over the next few years.

Surveyor Robert Dixon also surveyed five other nearby properties. One was Thomas Lawrence's 80 acres on southern side of Birnie's land (Governor's Promise on or before 31 March 1821), and the other four for John Connell: 300 acres on the southern side of Birnie's land (Governor's Promise on or before 31 March 1821), 520 acres at Cronulla Beach (Governor's Promise on or before 1 December 1821, exchanged for land elsewhere promised to Connell in 1810), 180 acres between Georges River and Gwawley Bay (Governor's Promise on or before 1 December 1821), and 1000 acres originally promised to Gregory Blaxland in 1814, but re-promised to Connell on or before 1 December 1821).<sup>22</sup>

Greenwood Lawrence Junior, made a claim to the Colonial Secretary that when Birnie was declared 'lunatic' (insane), John Connell moved in and purchased Alpha Farm from Birnie's trustees in 1828.<sup>23</sup> That left only two other persons with Governor's Promises in the area — Thomas Lawrence with 80 acres (promised 31 March 1821), surrounded by Connell's 300 acres with Alpha Farm on its north side — and James Malone's land.

By 1828, the Government was tightening up the requirements for issue of grants of land<sup>24</sup> and John Connell took advantage of this by formalising claims for grants to himself of Birnie's 700 acres, Blaxland's 1000 acres, Lawrence's 80 acres and Malone's 30 acres.<sup>25</sup> He also, incidentally, laid claim to Duncomb's 700 acres at Little Forest,<sup>26</sup> but that was repulsed by Duncomb, who was issued with the title to that land.

Connell had no trouble establishing his claim to Blaxland's 1000 acres and was issued with his title assented to on 8 January 1835.<sup>27</sup> The Birnie property took somewhat longer as Birnie's widow unsuccessfully pursued the matter of the title after Birnie died in 1844,<sup>28</sup> with the grant to Connell confirmed and deeds finally issued to him on 6 December 1844.<sup>29</sup>

There was also an apparent problem with the claim for the Lawrence's land. Connell was first issued with a deed assented to on 26 August 1834, but this was later cancelled for a technical reason, and had to be re-assented on 18 June 1835.<sup>30</sup> That was not the end of the matter, as Lawrence's son, (Thomas Greenwood Lawrence Junior) and his wife (Mary), believed that the land would become theirs by inheritance when Thomas (senior) died. That proved to be a false hope. On 31 January 1840, Thomas (junior) and his mother wrote to the Colonial Secretary that:

*'Thomas senior had 'made away' with this land to John Connell without receiving the permission of either of them. They claimed that as the land had been granted for the benefit of heirs, that this was unlawful. The Government disagreed, and decided not to interfere, so John Connell retained this land' [A.O. Reel 1151].<sup>31</sup>*

Thomas Lawrence (senior) died the following year, in 1841.

In March 1831 John Connell had begun to correspond with the Colonial Secretary claiming the block of land on which James Malone lived with his family.<sup>32</sup> James Malone's land was first advertised in a Government notice of 19 September 1831,<sup>33</sup> giving him the opportunity to present evidence to support his entitlement to the land in the Governor's Promise, but apparently, he was not able to do so. The land was then claimed by John Connell in a further notice of 19 October 1831.<sup>34</sup>

In 1832, the *NSW Government Gazette* started publication and became the prime source for Government notices: the notice dated 30 October 1832 confirming that John Connell's claim was successful was published on 31 October 1832.<sup>35</sup>

Apparently James Malone did not lodge any 'caveat' within the specified one-month period to indicate he had evidence to support a claim for the land. What is interesting is that the paperwork for issue of title to Connell had already been prepared. On the very same date as the notice of Connell's claim on 19 October 1831, Governor Darling had already signed the Grant to John Connell,<sup>36</sup> even though there was to be a further one month for objections to the issue of the grant! The authorised grant was recorded in the Register of Deeds on 3 October 1832.<sup>37</sup>

[NOTE: the following are 'split' extracts, the images showing in each case the prelude, then the particular later section of the notice referring to the land in question]



**Government Notice.**  
**COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,**  
**SYDNEY, 19th SEPTEMBER 1831.**

**GRANTS OF LAND.**

**T**HE following descriptions of Grants of Land in the County of CUMBERLAND, with the Names of the Persons to whom they were respectively promised, are published for general information, in order that all parties concerned may have an opportunity of correcting any errors and omissions which may have been made inadvertently:— And NOTICE is hereby given, that at the end of One Month from the present date, unless written Caveats be previously lodged in this Office, Deeds of Grant will be prepared accordingly, in the Form published in the Government Notice of 10th September, 1830.

It is requested that all Christian and Surnames may be communicated to this Office at full length, together with the intended name of the property.

**SOUTHERLAND.**

1. JAMES MALONE, 30, Thirty Acres; bounded on the East by a line South 22 chains; on the South by a line West 13 chains; on the West by a line North 20 chains; and on the North by Weeney Bay.

Promised by Governor Macquarie on the 4th March, 1811; Quit-rent, 1s sterling per annum, commencing 1827.

By His Excellency's Command,  
**ALEXANDER M'LEAY.**

**Government Notice.**

**COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,**  
**SYDNEY, 19th OCTOBER, 1831.**

**T**HE undermentioned Individuals having severally stated that the Lands set opposite their names are *bond fide* their property;— Notice is hereby given, that unless written Caveats be lodged in this Office within one Month from the present date, deeds of Grant will be then executed in favour of the said Individuals accordingly, in lieu of the Parties in whose names the said Lands were originally described, viz.

**SOUTHERLAND.**

1. JOHN CONNELL, 30, Thirty Acres; described as No. 1 in the Government Notice of 19th September, 1831, in the name of *James Malone*.

By Command of His Excellency the Governor,  
**ALEXANDER M'LEAY.**

*Government Notices referring to the claims for title of James Malone's 30 acres*

**COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,**  
**SYDNEY, 30th OCTOBER, 1832.**  
**DEEDS OF GRANT.**

**T**ITLE DEEDS, bearing date respectively the 19th October, 1831, of the undermentioned GRANTS OF LAND and TOWN GRANTS, advertised in the Government Notices of the 14th, 19th, 26th, and 30th September, and 12th October, 1831, were, on the 25th instant, transmitted to the Registrar of the Supreme Court, in order that, when duly enrolled, they may be forwarded, through the Surveyor General, to the Collector of Internal Revenue, for the purpose of being delivered to the respective parties, upon payment of the Fees prescribed by the Government Notice of 9th January, 1832, and any arrears of Quit-rent which may be due thereon; viz.—

**GRANTS OF LAND.**

**SUTHERLAND.**

49. John Connell..... No. 1  
 originally advertised in the name of  
*James Malone.*

*Gazettal of confirmation John Connell's claim for Malone's land*

Apparently, the issue of the deed of title was not finalised until years later through 'failure to record James Malone's grant, 1 July 1839; and response of Crown Solicitor, 28 Feb 1840 and 25 March 1840, eventually favouring Connell.'<sup>38</sup> All this was of little comfort to James Malone, who had effectively been evicted from his home. No further records of him have been found and he fades into history.

Unfortunately, authors writing on this subject have speculated at this point about how long the Malones remained on the property<sup>39</sup> — none of which hypotheses

can be confirmed. There are records that the son John Malone and wife Lizzie (nee Walden) and their children continued to live in the general area around Botany Bay and Georges River, however, there is nothing more on James Malone, **THE FIRST SETTLER IN THE PRE-SHIRE.**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of SSHS member Bruce Howell and historian and SSHS member Pauline Curby in accessing documents concerning Robert Dixon's 1827 Survey.

## NOTES:

The Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV) available online, courtesy of NSW Land Registry Services, has reference indexes and viewable images of historic titles and maps.

Newspapers and Government Gazette notices are available online, courtesy of the National Library Trove collections.

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<sup>1</sup> *SSHS Bulletin*, January 1968, p.5

<sup>2</sup> State Records NSW, *Colonial Secretary Index 1788-1825* (Reel 6028; 2/8283 p.39)

<sup>3</sup> *ibid*, (Reel 6038; SZ758 p.57)

<sup>4</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 14.1.1810, p.1

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, 22.9.1831, p.2 and other similar notices.

<sup>6</sup> It was not only the price of the land, but also a number of registration fees – see for example the schedule in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 12.10.1811 which lists various fees for the Chief Surveyor of Lands, Auditor's fees and registrar's fees.

<sup>7</sup> Eg. See order dated 5.11.1823, published in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 31.3.1825

<sup>8</sup> Enid Campbell, 1994, 'Promises of Land from the Crown: Some Questions of Equity in Colonial Australia', Introduction. (see [classic.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/UTasLawRw/1994/1.html](http://classic.austlii.edu.au/au/journals/UTasLawRw/1994/1.html)) summarises the situation.

<sup>9</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 23.4.1814, p.1

<sup>10</sup> Ian Hoskins, 2013, *Coast: A History of the New South Wales Edge*, UNSW Press, p.326.

<sup>11</sup> Rev. William Ridley, 1875, *Kamilaroi and other Australian Languages*, NSW Government Printer, p.99.

<sup>12</sup> Heather Goodall and Allison Cadzow, 2009, *River and Resilience: Aboriginal People of Sydney's Georges River*, UNSW Press, p.66.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid*, p.91.

<sup>14</sup> Dr. Paul Irish (on behalf of the Cooks River Alliance), 2006, *Aboriginal History along the Cooks River*, p.26.

<sup>15</sup> Goodall & Cadzow, *op.cit*, p.66.

<sup>16</sup> Birnie's Grant in Historical Land Grant Collection: NSW Land Registry Services, Historical Land Records Viewer (HLRV).

<sup>17</sup> Alf Midgley, 'David Duncombe', *SSHS Bulletin*, February 1978.

<sup>18</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 30.9.1824, p.3

<sup>19</sup> Midgley, *loc.cit*.

<sup>20</sup> Noted in Grant to David Duncomb (Serial 30 Page 49), HLRV

<sup>21</sup> 'Transcription of a letter from John Oxley to Robert Dixon regarding Dixon's Survey of Botany Bay, Port Hacking and the Illawarra' obtained by Pauline Curby from NSW State Records, transcribed by Bruce Howell.

<sup>22</sup> These are all shown as dimensioned parcels on Dixon's plan (similarly to Malone's land) but do not mention any names. The details of the 'Governor's Promises' are shown in the title documents in HLRV and also mentioned in *NSW Government Gazette* notices advertising for claimants to the land.

<sup>23</sup> M Hutton-Neve, 1983, *The Early Days of Kurnell to Cronulla*, published by SSHS, p.13. (and also, in a number of other books and articles)

<sup>24</sup> Government notices in *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 1928, were meant to formalise applications for land titles and associated Government resources. Probably also had the

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unintended consequence of some citizens, such as John Connell, to make claim to land which they had not originally selected but could somehow 'prove' entitlement to those properties

<sup>25</sup> These are notices, similar to that for the claim to Malone's land, that were published at various times in the *Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*

<sup>26</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser*, 22.10.1829, p.3

<sup>27</sup> Noted in Connell's Grant of 1000 acres, *HLRV*.

<sup>28</sup> M. Hutton-Neve, 1972, *Martha Matilda of Sydney Town (Wife of Captain James Birnie of Alpha Farm, Kurnell)*, monograph published by SSHS.

<sup>29</sup> Connell's Deed to 700 acres, *HLRV*.

<sup>30</sup> Connell's Grant of 80 acres, *HLRV* (2 documents)

<sup>31</sup> 'Lugarno History: The First Land Grant', <https://sites.com/site/lugarnohistory/home>

<sup>32</sup> Goodall & Cadzow, *ibid*, p.67

<sup>33</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* of 22.9.1831, pp.1-2.

<sup>34</sup> *The Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser* of 22.10.1831, p.1

<sup>35</sup> *NSW Government Gazette*, 31.10.1832, pp.377-8

<sup>36</sup> Connell's Deed to 30 acres, *HLRV* — the deed was '*GIVEN under my Hand and Seal of the Colony, at Sydney, in New South Wales, this Nineteenth day of October in the Year of our Lord, One thousand eight hundred and thirty-one.* [signed] *R. Darling*'

<sup>37</sup> *loc.cit.*

<sup>38</sup> State Records NSW; Colonial Secretary, Letters from individuals related to land 1826-1856 'James Malone 1830-1852, SR NSW NRS 907, 2/7913.

<sup>39</sup> The confusion as to how long Malone and his family resided on the land, was mainly based on the name 'Malone' remaining on various issues of the Parish of Sutherland map, and not being replaced by Connell's name until it was completely redrawn and re-issued in 1882. However, there are three issues of the map in use between 1835 and 1882, being 'charting maps' which were updated with new parcels and grantees as they were registered. Whilst these maps are undated, all of them indicate the following: 'Malone, 30, granted to J Connell.' Hence it is reasonable to conclude that James Malone no longer had any claim to the land after 19 October 1831, or at very latest when the deed was registered on 3 October 1832.

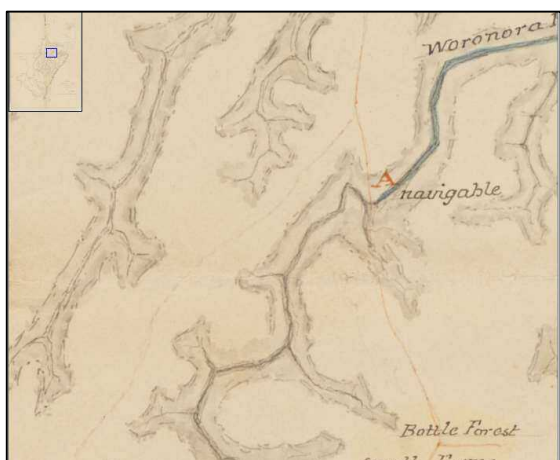
# REDISCOVERING THE WORONORA WATERMILL

PAM FORBES and GREG JACKSON

When looking at the most recent chapters of Australia's story, both history and archaeology can illuminate some lost gems. A case in point is the 19<sup>th</sup> century mill on the Woronora – subject of an SSHS excursion<sup>1</sup>. This mill had been researched in the past as it was known from the historical record,<sup>2</sup> but evidence was fairly uncertain, so much so that some historians decided that it had never existed. One explanation was that it had been a front for an illegal still, a reasonable theory given the conflict between colonial authorities and enthusiastic drinkers. Greg Jackson came across Pauline Curby's article on Lucas' Mill which sparked his interest in this unusual industrial site.<sup>3</sup> Subsequent serendipitous finds helped him, together with Pam Forbes, track down the location of the long-lost mill using archaeological methods to supplement the scant historical record.

The mill on the Woronora was built by Lucas in 1825 in a remote site, but one that provided a good water supply to turn the water wheel. The site also had the advantage that it allowed Lucas to avoid duties which at the time were levied on wheat and flour moving around the colony. However, operations failed after only a few years because of the poor access, wildly variable water level and changing commercial conditions. Historically the mill is discussed in various government documents: e.g., letters to the Colonial Secretary and in newspaper articles, in particular notices of sale in the early 1840s when the mill had passed into the ownership of Solomon Levi but was in a state of disrepair.

In 2009 Greg was researching Mitchell's 'New Line of Road' to the Illawarra. This is an interesting road, as it was one of the last projects that involved convict labour and also because it was a foundational event in European settlement of the area (covered in an earlier *SSHS Bulletin*).<sup>4</sup> This research uncovered a letter from Surveyor General, Sir Thomas Mitchell to the Governor describing the route as it was being laid out in 1843.<sup>5</sup> The letter states 'It will be obvious from the accompanying map that the River Woronora which is navigable for boats to Lucas' Mill Dam (at A) ...'. It is worth remembering that by the time of road construction, the mill had been out of operation and the building destroyed by fire or flood. But this confirmed the mill had existed and located in the general vicinity, although in the years since these documents had been archived, the map and letter had been disassociated.

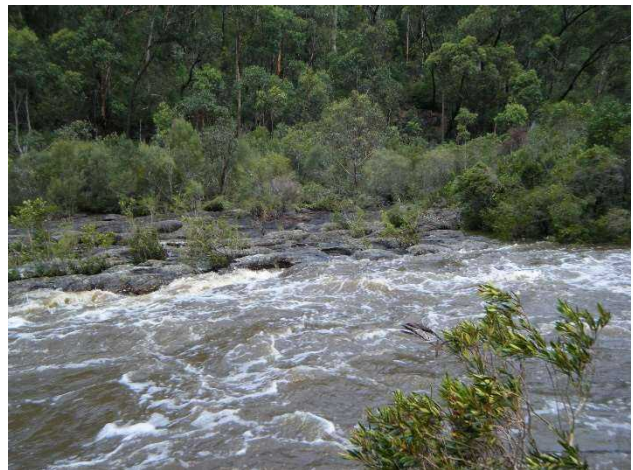


Serendipity comes in at this point as Pam was researching the original ferry crossing of the Georges River (also covered in a previous *SSHS Bulletin*), and was trolling through various maps of the area.<sup>6</sup> By good fortune, and having been involved in Greg's research, Pam recognised the significance of a map of the Woronora helpfully labelled with points A, B.<sup>7</sup> Matching the map with the notes enabled the location of the mill to be accurately estimated and the hunt then became a search for physical evidence of the early mill.

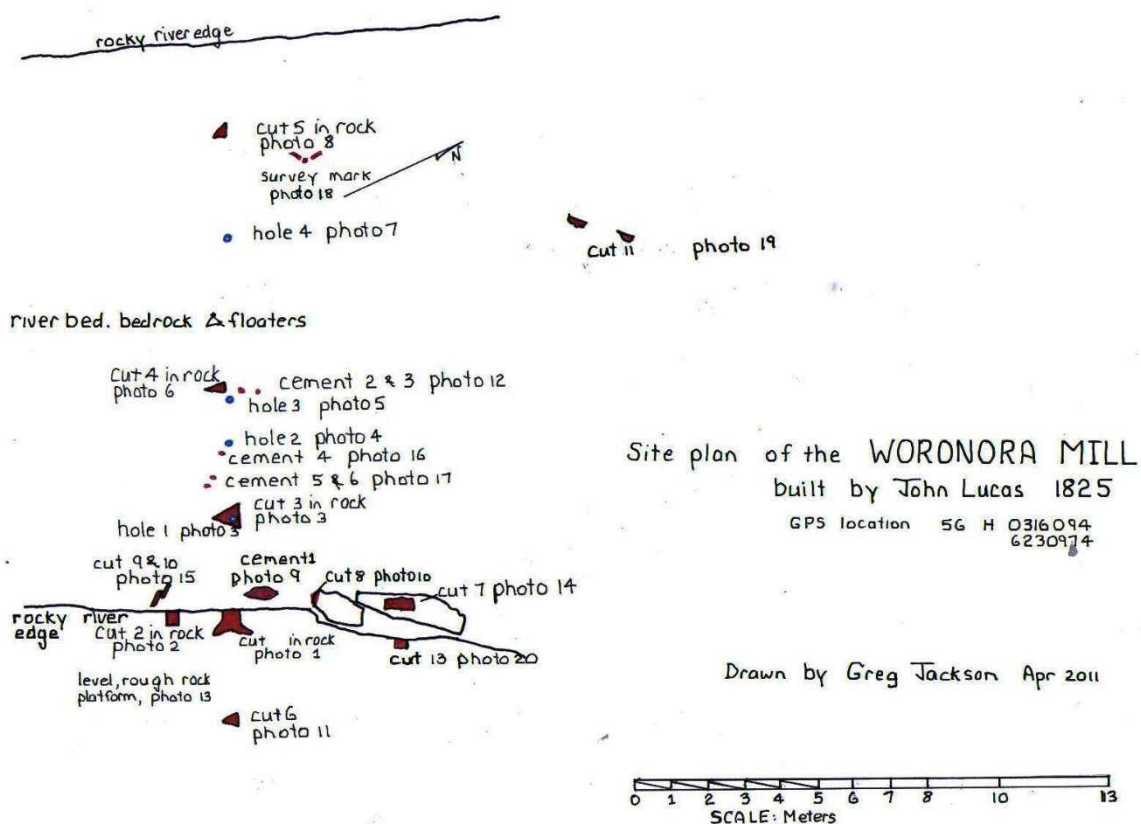
**Image 1:** 'The country southward of Sydney shewing [sic] the road lately opened through it to the Illawarra', 1845 [State Library of NSW, Dixon Collection]



The Woronora River is navigable until it cascades down a rocky platform just downstream from the current ford. Carefully checking this area in at least twenty visits under different conditions of water flow and lighting, revealed three types of features. The most common was cuts in the rock made with picks but there were also holes drilled into the rock, all approximately 50mm diameter, and patches of concrete. The cuts were generally slots to hold structural timber and the holes were attachment points where metal or timber elements were fixed to the rock. The concrete could be remnants of a dam wall. All these features were plotted to give an idea of how they could fit into a plan of the mill. Here is a selection of photographic examples and a site plan of the mill site. The photograph numbers refer to the site plan numbering.

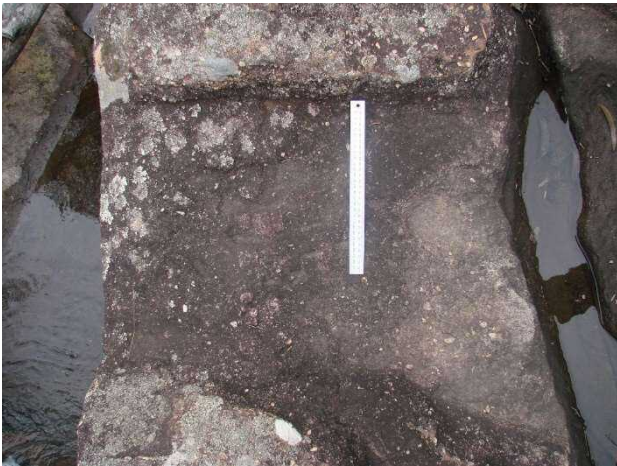


**Images 2 and 3:** Inspection of the rock platform. The site in flood conditions on right.



**Image 4:** Plan with keyed photos of visible archaeological features.





**Photograph 1.** Large rock cut in river bank rock platform. A 450mm timber in this cut would have supported one bearing for the water wheel. The wheel pit is to the left.

**Photograph 3:** shows a 50mm hole approx. 100mm deep. This hole is located in a very large level cut in the bedrock on the river bed. Approx. 1800mm below cut 1. A large post of 450mm diameter could be stood on this cut and prevented from moving by an iron bar leaded into the hole (as in Photograph 4). This could provide the base for one of the water wheels' bearings.



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

**Photograph 9:** shows cement and basalt aggregate in the river bed below water level. This cement is filling a crack in the river bed in the wheel pit below cut 1 – about 20 litres. The cement is relatively soft and the exposed aggregate has been identified as basalt.



How do we make sense of this plan? We have lots of evidence about how mills were built and operated. Apart from historical descriptions and images, we have existing mills and we have archaeological reports from other mill sites in Australia and overseas. By looking at the construction of these mills and using some practical knowledge, we can guess how the features on the Woronora site might fit together. Water mills have a large wheel that is turned by running water. The water is stored in a dam and races (channels) move water to and from the water mill. Water is fed at the top, bottom, or midway into the wheel. The wheel turns a main axle which feeds through gears to drive the mill machinery. Beside the water wheel is the mill building which needs to be strong to support the heavy machinery and its movement. Mills are usually two storeys so that the grain can be fed in at the top and flow by gravity through the stones till the flour is collected at the bottom. The mill building also contains storage and drying space for the grain and flour waiting for transport and perhaps accommodation for the staff. So we would expect a footprint of no less than 30m<sup>2</sup>. While you might immediately think of a quaint, stone building, stonework is difficult and reasonably skilled work, and we found no evidence of a quarry on the Woronora and no worked stone on the site. But there was plenty of timber available and as a carpenter, Lucas would know how to use it. He also had carpenters assigned to him. A timber building built on top of the rock platform would be relatively cheap and easy and leave little trace after 100 years.

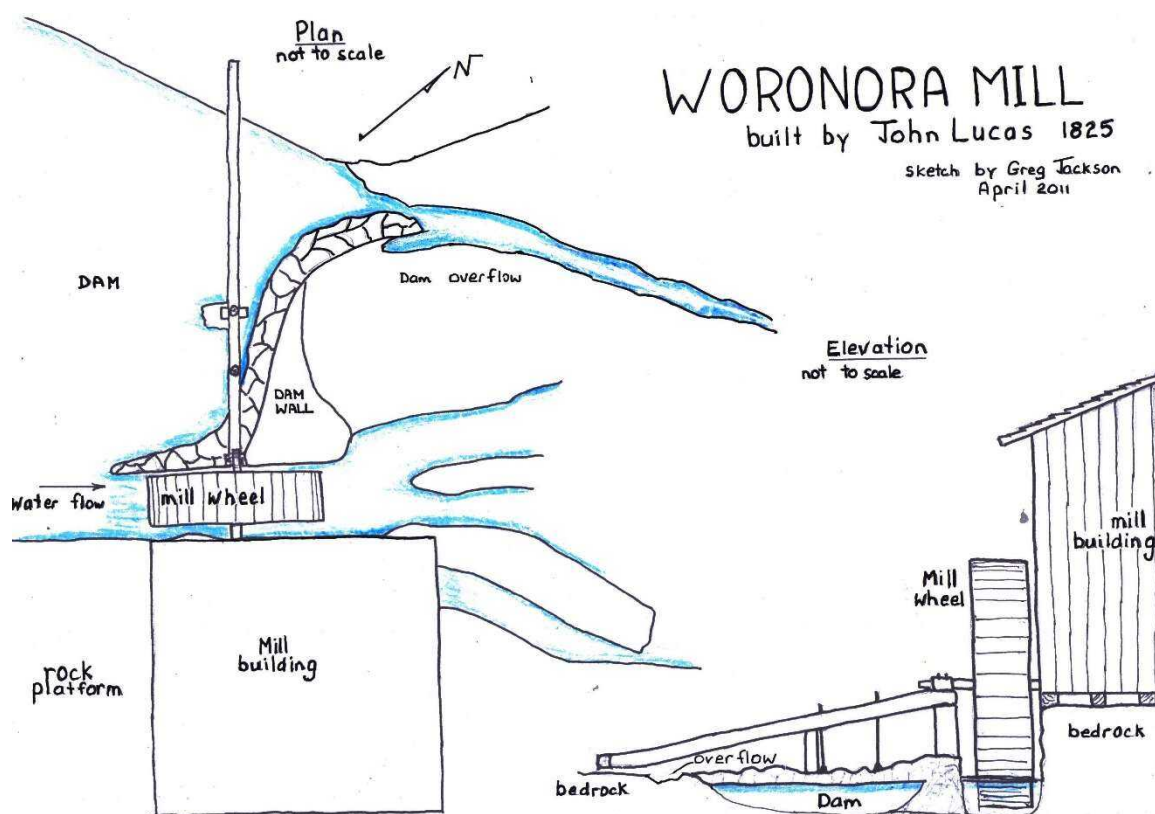
The concrete we found lines up nicely with the contours to indicate where the mill dam, made of local stone mortared together, would have been and the pool under the large cut at the edge of the rock platform is likely the wheel pit where the wheel turned. This gives us an indication about the diameter and width of the wheel (about 4m diameter and 1m wide) and locates the mill building adjacent. The newly developed rim-drive wheel would have been a good solution and in the early 1800s, local foundries were capable of producing them and associated machinery. Rim drives are a lighter and easier technology. The rock cut would have supported the wheel bearing at one end and the line of holes with metal fasteners could be explained as stays for the bearing on the other side. This highlights the technological innovation common in Australia when labour and materials were in short supply.



**Image 5:** *This photograph shows a privately owned, un-named rim drive mill near Hobart, Tasmania. The toothed gearing around the wheel's perimeter drives a small cog (not visible) transferring power to the mill's machinery. [Photo by authors, 5 November 2011]*



Putting this information together, Greg has drawn up an impression of what the mill might have looked like.



**Image 6:** A plan and elevation of how the mill may have looked

Interestingly we didn't find any infrastructure to get goods and people in and out. A jetty, paths etc. must have been there but didn't survive fires and floods. We also didn't find any mill stones but as these were valuable, they would probably have been reused in other mills. A flat area beside the river appears to have been cleared of rocks, and Greg speculates that this might be an agricultural plot used by the mill staff to supplement their diet. We also found the foundations of a hut nearby, with no glass and no metal roofing or fittings, suggesting it is very early. It fits the signature of a colonial slab hut which could well have been the accommodation for the mills convict staff.

As a result of our report, the site has now been added to the state heritage list providing it with a greater level of protection as well as recognising its importance. The mill demonstrates Australia's industrial heritage and the way we adapted European technology to suit the different physical, economic and cultural environment. It relates to convict labour and the developing agriculture and economy of early Sydney. The State Heritage Inventory is now available in an online database containing more than 30,000 heritage items and places on statutory lists in NSW. The Woronora Mill is listed with the Brisbane Mill (its sister mill) at Voyager Point under the name Lucas Watermills where you can find more information.<sup>8</sup>

Lucas' Woronora Mill was, in truth, never really lost. Elderly members of the SSHS remember being shown the site many years ago but the location was not recorded or reported, nor was any attempt made to interpret the archaeological remains.



The finding of Lucas's mill is a good example of how archaeology and history with their different sources, tools and methodologies provide multiple lines of evidence that enhance our understanding of our past. Historical documents are written by particular groups or individuals with particular perspectives and agendas. By using physical remains, archaeology can gather information from different groups in society, including those that don't often contribute written records because they are illiterate or disenfranchised, and reflects what actually happened rather than what may have been planned or reported. This doesn't mean that archaeology gives a complete record or that it is without bias and subject to interpretation. Thus, each discipline provides different information which contributes to a more accurate picture of the past. Both their accordances and dissonances tell us about what was happening. In the case of Lucas's mill, the documents gave us an area to look in, but the archaeological clues let us pinpoint the mill's location and added details about the likely form of the mill.

[All images by authors except where otherwise specified]

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<sup>1</sup> 'Excursion to the Pass of Sabugal', *SSHS Bulletin*, November 2021, p.28

<sup>2</sup> For example, Cridland, F., *The Story of Port Hacking, Cronulla and Sutherland Shire*, Angus & Robertson Ltd, 1924, Sydney

<sup>3</sup> 'Lucas' Mill,' by Pauline Curby, *SSHS Bulletin*, May 2004, pp23-26

<sup>4</sup> 'The Last Road Gang,' Part 1, by Greg Jackson & Pam Forbes, *SSHS Bulletin*, February 2021, p.20)

<sup>5</sup> Letter 43/161 dated 18 May 1843, State Records of NSW

<sup>6</sup> 'Parkesvale Ferry Run', by Greg Jackson & Pam Forbes, *SSHS Bulletin*, February 2015, p.14

<sup>7</sup> 'The country southward of Sydney shewing the road lately opened through it to the Illawarra', 1845, State Library of NSW, Dixon Collection

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.hms.heritage.nsw.gov.au/App/Item/ViewItem?itemId=5063418>

# THE BIRTH OF ROYAL NATIONAL PARK

BRUCE WATT

The land around the Port Hacking had been mostly unknown to European settlement until that part of the country was surveyed for the Illawarra Rail Line. Sir John Robertson MLC, impressed with the natural beauty of the land, ordered a survey to be made of the tract of land bordering Port Hacking. A description was then prepared of the boundaries of the area, and he set about securing the land for a public recreation ground.

Reported in *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 29 March 1879: 'The Government at the last meeting of the Executive Council, passed a minute for the dedication of the magnificent area of 18,000 acres of land for the purpose of a National Park.'

Following this decision by the Executive Council of the Government, Sir John Robertson, Acting Premier of New South Wales, and Vice President of the Executive Council, formally proclaimed the National Park at Port Hacking on 26 April, 1879. It is the second oldest proclaimed National Park in the world. Renamed in 1955 to Royal" National Park following a visit in 1954 by the Queen of Australia, Elizabeth II.

Robertson was one of our most interesting and engaged parliamentarians and his parliamentary career spanned thirty years from 1856 to 1886. He is perhaps best remembered for land reform, and in particular the Robertson Land Acts of 1861. Knighted in 1877, Sir John Robertson was passionate about land reform, and he recognised the need to open up the selection of Crown Lands to break the monopoly the squatters had on land. It is said that no other politician of the day held such sympathetic insight into the subtleties and fabric of colonial life and his land reforms were paramount to a triumph of the middle classes. It can be concluded from his biography that he helped steer a course for a more egalitarian society in Australia.

According to minutes of the first meeting of the Board of Trustees for the park, 25 September 1879, at which Sir John was appointed Chairman:

Sir John explained it is more than probable to be a more than large increase in population in the metropolitan district, and of the colony generally within the next few years and the consequent desirability of securing a suitable area as to extent, situation, for the use and enjoyment for the people of New South Wales.

In a letter to *The Queenslander* in April 1895, Mr John Plummer extolled the merits of the park, and his comments paint a vivid picture of some of the natural delights to be found and enjoyed.

*Thanks to the foresight of the late Sir John Robertson, New South Wales possesses one of the most beautiful public reserves in existence..... its value being enhanced by the fact that it lies, as it were, at the very threshold of the metropolis, thereby making it easily accessible to the great mass of holiday - makers in the colony....*

*... Well does it deserve the name, for it is an epitome of all that is lovely in Australian scenery. It is bounded on one side by the Pacific Ocean; on another by the waters of Port Hacking and the lower portions of the Port Hacking River; on a third by the railway line, which traverses an elevated plateau; and on the fourth side by the South Coast region...*

*...At the southern end of the park are several picturesque cascades, and from here the river silently glides, widening and deepening as it proceeds towards Audley, which is a kind of settlement forming the headquarters of the park keepers and other officials. On either side of the stream the hills rise to a considerable height, their sides being clothed with luxuriant vegetation; among which tree ferns and bangalow palms are conspicuous by their frequency. Magnificent trees, veritable giants of the forest, rise in every direction, their boughs frequently forming an archway over the road, festooned at intervals by climbing plants and hanging vines.*

*... As Audley is approached the surface of the river is enlivened by the presence of pleasure boats, and beyond we have the lower portions of the stream, here a noble sheet of water, with countless cosy bays and winding creeks and rich abundance of fish. On the ocean side of the park are glistening beaches, precipitous walls of rock, and shady pools suggesting the luxury of a sea waterbath.*

*The oysters of Port Hacking are famous for their delicious flavour, and visitors are allowed to gather them in moderate quantities. The trees, ferns, shrubs, and other vegetation are rigorously preserved, but there is no restriction placed upon rambles through any portion of the open park.*

There are many stories yet to tell about our beautiful Royal National Park and many people have played a part in its formation, planning and preservation. However, it was the inspiration and vision of Sir John Robertson, Secretary for Lands and five times Premier of NSW, which brought about the creation of this most beautiful of public reserves for all time.



*Cascades, Royal National Park [Getty Images]*

*Pleasureboats, Audley [Sydney Weekender]*



# MY FAMILY'S MIGRANT STORY

CLAUDIA DIXON

(All photos supplied by the author)

The 1950s were times of immense change in the world ... a time my family and I were lucky enough to enjoy in a brand new country – Australia.

As migrants from Hamburg in Northern Germany we arrived at Pymont on the Norwegian passenger ship MS *Skaubryn* in January 1955 – not fleeing Europe as many others had to, but by free choice. My dad was a very adventurous man. He had dreamed of and studied Australian life, animals, climate and landforms from a very young age. And at that time Australia needed people to populate and work in the less desirable areas around the country, or in jobs that needed more workers.



*Jutta and Hans Gruene with seven-year-old Claudia and her brother, four-year-old Dirk, in their Nissan Hut at the Villawood Migrant Hostel before moving to Cronulla.*

## Migrant Hostel living

Our journey from Sydney was by train to Maitland and on to the Greta Migrant Hostel. My strongest memories relate to 'smells'. The smell of phenyl used to clean the ablution block, and cold tea served in a brown beer bottle (recycling in its infancy). Meals – generally mutton – were served in a large communal building. Mutton was a totally unfamiliar taste to our family from Northern Germany, and as a result we rarely ate lamb after this because the smell of it cooking reminded us of the hostel days!!

As a computer programmer my dad could only get work in Sydney. It was in the infancy of computer technology – when computers were large metal machines the size of two double wardrobes from memory! Soon dad became lonely living by himself and his family so far away, so he hired a taxi in Sydney and came to Greta to collect us and our meagre belongings to take us to live in another hostel – this time to Villawood Migrant Hostel.

Here we stayed for a few months. Mum learnt early on how to use an electric cooktop and made what the family and I still call 'Migrant Camp Pasta' which consisted of spaghetti, salami, onions, tomato sauce and an egg to bind it all. This was then fried up and for us it was delicious!



### Cronulla days in the Shire

Finally, we found a house in Parramatta Street, South Cronulla to share with another family we had met on the ship. Life was changing quickly in the mid-1950s. The house was large enough for two families and had a good kitchen with a fridge and stove. There was also an outside flushing toilet, a laundry with a copper and a bathroom on the back verandah with a chip heater! All these things were a luxury to us kids at the time – and to our parents I'm sure. Fun times for three children aged 7, 5, and 4 with the beach so close, the school nearby, and the train station, Cronulla shops and many modern amenities all within easy walking distance.



*The share house at 37 Parramatta St, Cronulla*

### Finally, to Taren Point



*View from our apartment over to where I now live at Woollooware Shores (in Alexandra Avenue) in Taren Point*

In 1958 we moved into a one-bedroom apartment - No 29, Unit 4, a block on Taren Point Rd. Why, you may wonder, did we choose an apartment when people generally lived in single dwelling houses? Firstly, that was all we could afford. Secondly, living in a unit was the way of life in Germany – especially in the post-war years, and before that as well. Hence my parents did not have to think twice when they saw the apartment on the second floor with views of Woollooware Bay.

As the eldest and only girl I had the one bedroom, my younger brother had a day-bed near the front door and my parents had a fold-out sofa in the lounge – the room with a view! We had come a long way in the four years since arriving in Australia. For Mum and Dad the daily ritual was to travel to work by punt to Sans Souci. From there they caught a bus to Alexandria – where mum worked, and Mascot – where dad worked.



*The queue of cars waiting patiently for the punt along Taren Point Rd 1959. A friend of Claudia is on the horse.*

## Taren Point Public School

Mum tried to enrol me at Sans Souci school, but even in those days there were out of area zones and it was not permitted. So I walked up the hill each day and attended Taren Point Public School, as did my younger brother.

I spent Years 4,5 and 6 there. The principal was Tom Jones and his deputy, Oswald Catts. We had many composite classes due to the school numbers in those days. Then in 1960, in Year 6, it was a straight class of 26 students with Mr Jones as the teaching principal for Year 6. I remember an amazing school excursion to the newly constructed Warragamba Dam.

Many students, on leaving Year 6 went to the brand new Caringbah High built in 1960 on Willarong Road. I also attended Caringbah High School from 1961–1965, even after we had moved to Cronulla in 1963.



They were happy, carefree times in Taren Point. Warm days were spent in the enclosed baths near the punt ramp. Here we met school friends to swim, fish, chat in the shade of the big tree on the sandy shore.

*The enclosed baths viewed from the Sans Souci side with the punt ramp*

## Sunday School at St Stephen's Anglican Church

Whilst living in Taren Point I regularly attended St Stephen's Anglican Church Sunday School. I particularly loved the special activities at Sunday School organised by the teachers. One in particular appealed to me - making items for families and children in need in African nations. We would meet at Mrs Ruprecht's house in Woodlands Rd on a Sunday afternoon and sew a variety of items, such as bags, toys, triangle bandages and boxer shorts.

## Looking back

Now as I reflect on life 65 years ago it was a wonderful place for a migrant child to live, learn the language and adjust to the lifestyle on offer! My school friends were never unkind or judgmental from memory. Yes, I was different – ate salami instead of devon on my sandwiches; maybe I had an accent – but as a kid after five years in Australia I probably didn't stand out too much anymore.

How lucky was I to have spent my early years in this lovely backwater and now I feel very privileged to have returned to this area.



*Claudia Dixon (nee Gruene), 2021*



## The Honour Board – returned to St Stephen's Church



Photo: Claudia Dixon

Remembrance Day, 11 November 2022 was of special interest to Claudia Dixon. She attended the official return of the 1939-1945 Honour Board to St Stephen's Church, where it had been from 1965 until the Church's closure in 1993. (St Stephen's Church was relocated to Taren Point Public School. See box on the history of the Church.) The Honour Board had been in the custody of Sutherland Shire Historical Society for the past 13 years. Pauline Curby, President of the Society, spoke on behalf of members, saying that the Society had been pleased to have looked after this Honour Board when it didn't have a home, 'and now we're delighted to hand it into the safe keeping of Taren Point Public School on this special day when we remember and honour those who fought in the many terrible wars of the past.'

Also in attendance was Clive Baker, President of the Shire Military History Club, and some of his members. They presented a very interesting talk engaging with the young students

present, and encouraging them to try on various war memorabilia – helmets and gas masks, and to ask questions. The Honour Board lists the names of Taren Point residents who fought in the World War II – not just those who died. They were acknowledged with a crown.

The 1939-1945 Honour Board was originally in the Taren Point Welfare Hall which was demolished when Captain Cook Bridge was built in 1965. The Board was saved and re-erected in St Stephen's Church. After the church closed down in 1993 and looked like it was headed for demolition, the Honour Board was deposited with Caringbah RSL Club until 2009 when the Club closed. It was then given into the custody of the Sutherland Shire Historical Society.

## St Stephen's Anglican Church – a chequered history

St Stephen's Church was originally built in 1929 at 70 Taren Point Road (on the F6 corridor), on a site donated by Taren Point Land Co in 1918. At the time of building it was discovered that there was an accumulation of unpaid Council rates. Residents formed the Sunshine Club to raise funds to pay off the debt.

The foundation stone for the church was laid on 23 March 1935 by Thomas S Holt (a descendant of Thomas Holt, who had owned most of the land that became Sutherland Shire) and who had 'given' the land. It was called St Stephen's as it was built from recycled material (timber, doors, etched glass, leadlight) from old St Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Macquarie Street, Sydney. On 7 November 1936 the church was licensed and held its first Church Service. The congregation grew quickly and in 1954 it became necessary to extend the tiny church. St Stephen's Church closed in 1993.<sup>1</sup>

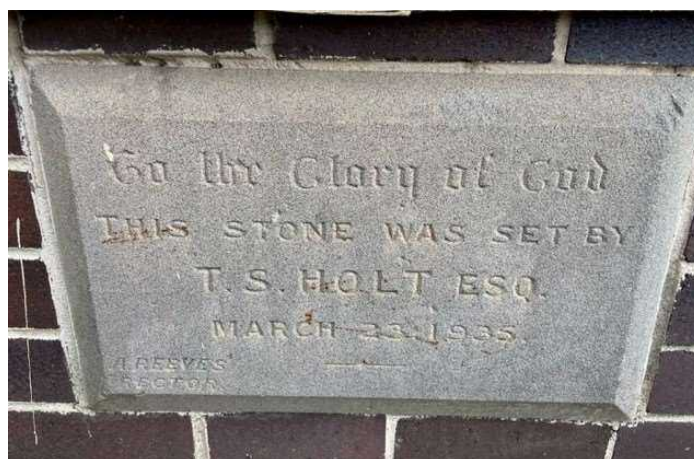
It looked like the old church might be demolished, but Peter Lewis and John Chenall of Caringbah Rotary Club, recognised its historic importance, and arranged for it to be transported to Taren Point Public School in 1996.

The school bell on the western wall of the building was the original bell at Caringbah's first fire station.

<sup>1</sup> Research by Christine Edney, from *History of St Stephens Anglican Church, Taren Point*.



*Current site of St Stephen's Anglican Church building in the grounds of Taren Point Public School, 2023*



*The foundation stone for St Stephen's Church was laid on 23rd March, 1935. [Photos: Claudia Dixon]*



## SSHS EXCURSION TO PARKESVALE

GREG JACKSON

(Photos by Ian Hill, unless otherwise specified)

The large pleasure grounds of Parkesvale, named after Sir Henry Parkes, operated from 1899 until approximately 1914, with the paddlewheel steam ferry *Telephone* bringing patrons from the train station at Como. (See inside back cover for image.) Parkesvale was owned by three enterprising brothers: Henry, Ebenezer and Fredrick Sandbrook from Camperdown, who also owned the *Telephone*. Parkesvale is in the extreme north-west of the shire and is now in the Georges River National Park, a short walk from Sandy Point.

On 24 March last, archaeologist Greg Jackson led a SSHS excursion to Parkesvale, meeting at the Sandy Point Community Centre carpark. Only four hardy souls participated, but despite threats of rain the day was fine and sunny.



*Georges River at First Beach, not far from Sandy Point Community Centre. On the opposite shore is the Alan Ashton Foreshore Reserve and Picnic Point.*



Chris and Gail Foran and Floriana Camper at the Red Hand Cave listening to Greg Jackson





*Red hand stencils on the roof of the Red Hand Cave overhang*

On the way we stopped at an Aboriginal shelter to observe the many hand stencils on the roof, then proceeded to the old pleasure ground's location, now part of the Georges River National Park. Much of the archaeology has been lost to trail bikes and four-wheel-drive vehicles but with the aid of historic photos and some imagination the scene from early last century - when up to 800 people danced the night away - can be recreated.

Ladies with parasols would have strolled along this promenade in the early 1900s, a short walk from Sandy Point



*Sandy Point. The waters adjacent to the sand mark the location of the final resting point of The Telephone paddle steam prior to scuttling and salvage*

The rectangular shaped object is a washer, probably from the wharf and the other is a piece of iron, probably from the breaking up of the ship's machinery.





## PARKESVALE: THEN AND NOW



*Parkesvale, Georges River c1904 with the paddle steamer Telephone, surrounded by private pleasure craft. [Source: Georges River Library]*



*The same scene today, now part of Georges River National Park. Trail bikes and four-wheel drive vehicles have degraded the area. [Photo D. Forbes]*



## Launch of the Matson Collection at the Shire Museum 18 March 2023 — See page 13 for story

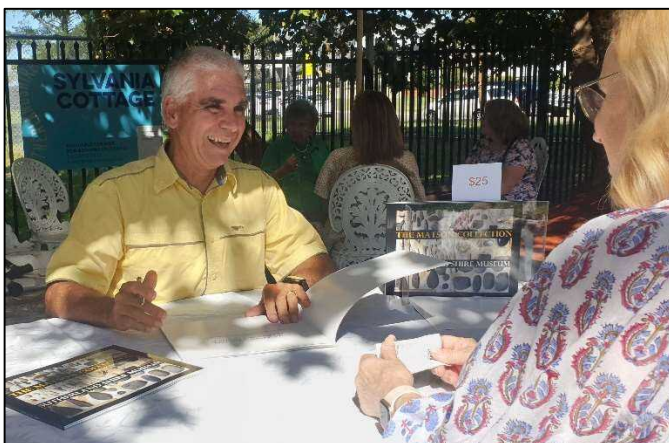


*The smoking ceremony for the Matson Collection at the Shire Museum.*

From left: Bruce Howell, Rick O'Brien and Didgeridoo player, Anthony Jones (Endeavour Sports High School) [Photo: Elizabeth Craig]



*Crowds sitting in the shade of the trees at the Shire Museum watching the launch*  
[Photo: Ian Hill]



*Bruce Howell signing Matson Collection books*  
[Photo: Ian Hill]



*Gadigal Elder, Auntie Deanna Schreiber launching the Matson Collection*  
[Photo: Elizabeth Craig]