



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

A P R I L, 1 9 7 2.

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council

President:

Mr. J.E. Veness,
6, Lance Avenue,
BLAKEHURST. 2221

Phone 54 3932

Hon. Treasurer:

Mrs. P. Briancourt,
9, The Mall,
SOUTH HURSTVILLE. 2220

'Phone 54 2156

Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. D.A. Hatton, J.P.
15, Annette Ave.,
KOGARAH. 2217

'Phone 587 9970

OBJECTIVES:

To promote interest in the history of the Kogarah Municipality and Australia in general.

To give support to the preservation of historic buildings and other objects considered to be of historic value.

MEMBERSHIP:

Any enquiries regarding membership should be directed to the Honorary Secretary. Visitors are especially welcome.

Subscription: \$1.00 per annum
Senior Citizens: .25¢ per annum
Students: .25¢ per annum

MEETINGS:

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, commencing at 8 p.m. in the Soldiers Memorial Presbyterian Church Hall, Kensington Street, Kogarah, (opposite St. George Hospital).

CARSS' COTTAGE MUSEUM: ('Phone number 546 7314)

Open Sundays and Public Holidays from Noon to 6 p.m.

Cost - 20¢ Adults; 10¢ Children with a maximum of 60¢ for families.

DONATIONS FOR MUSEUM:

Donations of items of historical interest suitable for inclusion in the Society's Museum will be gratefully accepted by

Mr. J.E. Veness,
6, Lance Avenue,
BLAKEHURST. 2221

'Phone 54 3932

CONTRIBUTIONS:

Contributions of articles and information of local historical interest for publication in this Newsletter would be welcomed by the Editor -

Mr. P. Orlovich,
54, Culver Street,
KOGARAH. 2217

'Phone 587 0377

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR YEAR, 1971

Our second year was a momentous one for the Society, as our membership increased by nearly threefold and more members became involved in voluntary work. It was mainly because of this help that the year was so successful.

Firstly, the most important occasion was the opening of Carss Cottage as an historical museum on 28th August, 1971. We are indebted to Kogarah Council for making the cottage available to us and for work done to the outside of the building and grounds. However, the members showed their calibre by getting the inside ready for the opening in the incredible short time of ten days by working day and night. This showed how dedicated they were to want to add something more of value to the district. Three trustees were appointed to take over the responsibility of Carss Cottage on behalf of the Society.

We are very grateful to all those who supplied historical items for display in the museum and these are very varied. It has involved a great amount of work cataloguing these by our Secretary and the work she has done during the year in all capacities has been of colossal value to the Society.

Another factor worthy of notable mention is the fund raising which started early in the year in preparation for possible expense at the opening and which totalled over \$500. and we received \$300. from the Mayoress' Charity Fund, which was very acceptable as it took several thousand dollars to meet our museum commitments.

The second milestone in our progress was the day we were honoured by a visit from the President and members of the Royal Historical Society on the occasion of their Annual Convention, together with visitors from N.S.W. and interstate.

Last, but not least, Mr. & Mrs. K.R. Cavanough were made Life Members of the Society in recognition of their work on our behalf.

Our meetings have always been well attended and we are indebted to speakers who have addressed us on various historical subjects during the year, thus helping to make the meetings more enjoyable.

We look forward to your continued support in all fields of endeavour during 1972, as our commitments will grow with the care of the museum, and I feel it will take a very great effort to surpass the standard reached in the 1971.

Thank you one and all for the support you have given to me and the Society in the past year.

(Mrs.) D.A. Hatton

The following is a list of members who were elected to hold office in 1972 and members of Committees:

EXECUTIVE:

President: Mr. J.E. Veness
Vice-Presidents: Mr. V. Smith & Mr. W. Wright
Hon. Secretary: Mrs. D.A. Hatton
Asst. Secretary: Mrs. B. Butters
Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. P. Briancourt

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:

Mr. W. Wright
Mr. & Mrs. Burghart
Mr. & Mrs. J. Lean
Mr. & Mrs. T. Kelly
Mr. & Mrs. D. Briancourt
Mr. H. Mortel
Mr. K. Bolton
Mr. V. Smith
Mr. & Mrs. K.R. Cavanough
Miss C. McEwen

MUSEUM COMMITTEE:

Mr. & Mrs. J. Lean
Mr. W. Wright
Mr. & Mrs. T. Kelly
Mr. H. Mortel
Mr. K. Bolton
Mr. V. Smith
Mr. J. Fletcher

SOCIAL COMMITTEE:

Mr. & Mrs. T. Kelly
Mrs. Lovatt
Mrs. McEwen
Mrs. Burghart
Mrs. Evans
Mrs. Thompson
Mrs. Briancourt
Mrs. Zimeris

(The President and Hon. Secretary are ex-officio members of all committees)

Research Officers - Mr. J. Fletcher and Miss C. McEwen
Editor "Newsletter" Mr. P. Orlovich

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APRIL MEETING:

The next meeting of the Society will be held on 13th April, at 8 p.m. This will be followed by an address by Mr. J. Swinfield on "The Importance of the Use of Firearms in Colonial Australia", demonstrated with early specimens. This should be of particular interest to male members.

The meeting place will be as usual in the Kogarah Soldiers' Memorial Presbyterian Church Hall, Kensington Street, Kogarah (Opp. The St. George Hospital).

The prize for the April competition has been donated by Mrs. K.R. Cavanough and is a box of linen hand crocheted edged handkerchiefs.

Last month's competition was won by Mrs. Whitby and was donated by the Mayor Ald. F.J. Baker.

Supper Roster for April: Mesdames Sneddon and Burghart. Supper is now being provided for out of the funds.

Just a word from the Secretary:

I have been working as a professional secretary for many years, principally in finance, but for the last few years in Social Welfare. I do not aspire to reach the high standard of my predecessor, but trust I will enjoy the same support as you have all given so spontaneously to Miss Colleen McEwen.

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The following is the Roster for attendance at the Museum for the next month:-

April 16th Miss Foley and Mrs. McOnie
" 23rd Miss Coxhead and Mr. Wright
Tues: 25th Anzac Day - volunteers required
30th Mrs. Bryan and Mrs. Taylor
May 7th Mr. and Mrs. Lean

Please contact Mr. W. Wright, 587 3244, if any of the above need transport.

We have been successful in obtaining members for the Museum Roster on Sundays up until July 30th, but during this time there will be two holidays, viz. Tuesday 25th April (Anzac Day) and Monday 12th June (Queen's Birthday) and as it is our policy to open on holidays, I would be pleased to hear from anyone who could help on these days.

Library of historical books:

We now have a good collection of historical books at the Museum. Members may obtain these by requesting the member on duty for the day to show them to you. You just need to sign the book set up for this purpose which will show the date taken and when returned.

REPORTS:

OUTING ON 20TH MAY, 1972:

We have been advised that there will be an extra charge of \$1.00 needed for the outing to Camden Park etc. The home of Mr. & Mrs. Quentin Macarthur-Stanham is now open for inspection by the National Trust of Australia (N.S.W.) and this will make the charge \$3.00 instead of \$2.00. I would like to receive all moneys at our next meeting.

Camden Park House was commenced in 1831 and a book can be purchased for a small sum which describes every room and there are many very interesting pieces of sculpture and early paintings therein. Australian marble and cedar have been used in its construction. The large library also contains the Macarthur's early connections with England and many other items too numerous to mention here, but I am sure the inspection will add greatly to our enjoyment of the outing.

SOCIAL:

A Coty Demonstration will be held in the Sea Scout's spacious hall in the vicinity of Carss Cottage Museum on Monday, 24th April. At 12 noon a light luncheon will be served and the afternoon should finish at approximately 3 p.m. which would allow time for mothers to collect their little ones from school.

A very attractive gift will be raffled and tickets for the demonstration will cost 60¢ each. Members are asked to give this function their full support.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE MEETING:

Ladies on this Committee are asked to attend a meeting at the home of Mrs. Hatton 15, Annette Avenue, Kogarah, on Tuesday, 11th April, at 7.30 p.m.

Fellow Members -

The Society starts its third year with a somewhat rearranged set of officers but with the enthusiasm which has been so evident in the past I am sure any adjustments necessary will be made and we will go forward to greater strength.

The rearrangement of officers and the spreading of the activities over a greater number of members will allow more participation in the working of the Society and therefore a greater amount to be achieved.

In this regard, we are endeavouring to establish our research groups as was announced some time back and any members who are interested in any of the subjects who have not contacted Mr. J. Fletcher should do so. There is no need to have had experience in this field, merely to be keen and be able to devote some spare time to seeing people and checking records.

The value of this work to the Society and the district can be tremendous, and as 1. We are recording information about the district which may otherwise be lost.

2. We are able to present this information to the meetings, in the museum displays, in publications available to all.

3. We gain as members for having taken part in the group activity.

Much of the history of the district has yet to be written and it is the duty and privilege of the society and its members to undertake this task. I am sure those members who do so will be repaid many times for their effort.

J.E. Veness
President

MUSEUM REPORT

As many members will be aware our latest acquisition of note has been a bullock wagon which is now on display at the front of the museum area.

It has proved very popular with youngsters and certainly draws attention to the museum. The wagon came originally from Bigga near Crookwell in N.S.W., where it was used up until the war for transporting wool and wheat to the rail head.

The wagon, originally drawn by 20 bullocks, was named "Bluebird" and owned by Messrs. D. & A. Cameron. We hope to be able to restore it to its original colours with a painting session in the future.

Another acquisition has been a set of bound copies of "The Graphic", an English illustrated weekly from 1915 - 1918, covering the period of the first world war. These books were obtained by Mr. V. Smith from the Kogarah School of Arts Library and will be a valued addition to our library.

We also have on display, the organ which was referred to at our last meeting, this being obtained through Mrs. K.R. Cavanough.

Attendances at the museum have continued to be most encouraging, with the greater proportion being visitors from other areas.

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The winning ticket for the Easter Hamper was drawn by the Mayor, Ald. F.J. Baker, at the Museum on 29th March, and the winner was Mrs. G. Lean, ticket No. 1512. Second prize of a tinned ham was won by Mrs. Fawcner, ticket No. 1154. We wish to thank all those who contributed in any way to the success of this venture.

ST. GEORGE GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

Some recollections by Mrs. M. Grieve

At the February meeting of The Kogarah Historical Society, Mr. J. Fletcher, Historical Research Officer for the Department of Education, presented an address on the St. George Girls' High School. It was a very interesting account of facts and figures relating to that academy of learning.

No doubt many of the ladies present were old St. Georgians and we could be excused for feeling rather nostalgic as we recalled those good old "Golden Rule" days. It is a far cry back to 1916 when we first took up residence in the roomy cottage, which was formerly a privately owned family residence. In that year the total enrolment was 143 pupils, some of whom travelled from places as far south as Thirroul. In fact, with so much travelling time being involved a school day was more like a hard day's work.

Imagine a three mile walk over rough roads to the station and on the return journey the commuters had to wait one hour at Sutherland Station for the South Coast train. Those who lived at Blakehurst used the coach service which plied between Tom Ugly's Point and Kogarah. Girls living at Sylvania and further out had to cross the river in the punt which connected with the bus. Incidentally, this service consisted of about 5 or 6 trips per day only.

When the time came for the Intermediate exam I invited my friend from Helensburgh to stay with me to ease the strain and tension. But our plans went awry, as on the very first day when we reached Blake's Bridge one of the horses fell to the roadway dead. All the passengers, scholars included, had to make it on foot for the rest of the journey to Kogarah. Blake's Bridge was a favourite place for swagmen who were very prevalent in those days, as "Underneath the Arches" they had a dry spot to bed down, and running water close at hand.

To get back to school - We certainly pursued our studies in a delightful environment - a beautiful garden containing ornamental shrubs and also a conservatory. In due course the apricot, plum and pear trees produced a bounteous crop of luscious fruit. However, according to our teachers it was too green to be eaten and we were allowed only to feast our eyes on the tempting provender.

Somewhere in the precincts of the school lived the caretaker, his wife and a large brood of children. As the stork arrived with monotonous regularity, the teachers - all of whom were single ladies - combined their efforts to prepare a layette for each newcomer. School life in general was very informal and a very happy atmosphere prevailed.

In 1924, an additional building facing Victoria Street was erected and again in 1967 there was further development in the Riley Street area. The "Old Girls' Union" was first formed in 1921, although there had been some attempts to organise preliminary meetings in 1920. Because of the fire danger in wooden buildings the girls had some difficulty in obtaining permission to use one of the portable rooms to commence these meetings. However, complete with hurricane lamps the first meeting finally eventuated. "Life is but a Vapour" and the years have passed very quickly.

Last year the Jubilee celebration was held at the Rockdale Town Hall. The present enrolment at St. George is 855 pupils with slightly more last year. Ex-St. Georgians have moved out to take their place in the world and they are well represented in all the professions, including politics, but I think I am right in saying that our most famous pupil is Christina Stead, the authoress.

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