



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

MAY, 1972

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council

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Hon. Treasurer:

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Hon. Secretary:

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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,
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'Phone 587 0377

May Meeting:

The next meeting of the Society will be held on 11th May, at 8 p.m. in the Soldiers' Memorial Presbyterian Church Hall, Kensington Street, Kogarah (Opp. The St. George Hospital).

This will be followed by an address by Mr. C. Sweeney, who will discourse on early cemeteries and show slides of tombstones of those who are buried there. This will cover well known historical personalities and should be very interesting to all. If any members have been to Hobart and seen the little park which was once a cemetery and now has the tombstones around the edges under the trees will know just how historical and interest absorbing these can be.

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SOCIAL NOTES

Firstly, the Coty Demonstration proved to be another successful day, both socially and financially; an amount of \$62.00 being raised including sales and raffle. 65 members and their friends were present.

A very lovely luncheon was provided by the ladies of the Social Committee, along with the help of ladies from the Society, and they are all to be congratulated.

The Guest Speaker, Miss Lorraine McWhirter, held everyone's attention and showed just what can be accomplished with good make-up. To Mrs. Fay Kelly, who was the model for the afternoon we extend our thanks and I would also like to say thanks to Mr. Smith who helped in so many ways to make the day the success it was.

Sylvia Kelly

Secondly, Kogarah Council has advised that the Social Committee have been allotted the 11th August to have a stall at Kogarah, and the Committee would be grateful for any items for this stall.

Supper roster for May meeting: Mesdames Sneddon and Lovatt. Mrs. Hatton will be responsible for the supply of refreshments on this night.

Competition prize will be donated by Mrs. Hatton.

Dates for Museum roster for next month:

May 14th	Sunday	- Miss Coxhead and Miss Tame
" 21st	"	- Mrs. Zimeris and Mrs. Gilmour
" 28th	"	- Mrs. Davis and Mrs. Woodward
June 4th	"	- Mrs. Johns and Mrs. Taylor

We would be grateful if any member could recommend a paid cleaner. Mrs. Slater very kindly attended to this voluntarily on 26th April and she also cleaned up outside and watered the garden, which we appreciate very much, but we do not expect our members to do this.

The outing to Camden on 20th May will require to be finalised at our next meeting. It is expected that the bus will leave from Kogarah Municipal Council.

New members for April/May -

Mrs. L. Giger, Mrs. J. Godfrey, Miss Judy Mattison, Mr. Allen Mayfield, Miss M.J. Phelps, Mrs. E.M. Price, Mr. R. Sneddon, Mr. I. Sneddon, Mr. R. Sneddon Snr., Mrs. Leonie Hunt, and Mrs. D. Hartley.

Mrs. B. Butters is also a welcome addition as Assistant Secretary.

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MUSEUM REPORT:

Attendances at the Museum continue to be very encouraging even with the advent of cooler weather. The interest shown by school children in the various articles on display has prompted the committee to embark on a programme of identification and description of the items which would be of most interest to children and other visitors to the museum. With this in mind it is also intended to notify schools in the district informing them of the museum and its displays.

Recent acquisitions:

Magic lantern slide projector made available by the Kogarah Congregational Church.

Vacuum hand clothes washer, donated by Mrs. B.A. Foxe of Narrabri.

President's Report:

Fellow members -

Those of you who were present at our last meeting were treated to a most interesting talk by Mr. Swinfield on "Early firearms in the Colony".

The place that these took in the moulding of the colony has not been emphasised to any great extent to date, and to be shown examples of the actual guns to illustrate their story made for a singularly interesting evening. There is no doubt that having something tangible to show an audience greatly adds to the appeal and impact of any lecture.

Following the appeal for members to participate in research activities, we are now able to start on the first of these groups and the programme for commencement is now being prepared.

Members would be interested to know that our Museum is now listed as a tourist attraction with the N.S.W. Department of Tourism, and that our booklet published for the opening of the Museum has been accepted by the National Library and our society allocated a registration number as a contributor and source of historical material.

Our meetings, now being held in the Presbyterian Church Hall allow much greater freedom of movement and excellent facilities for a very pleasant evening, so do come along and help keep the Society **active** and alive and enjoy yourselves in addition.

J.E. Veness
President

EDMOND ENGLISH - A PIONEER RESIDENT OF KOGARAH

One of the most prominent families associated with the early history of Kogarah was the English family, of whom the progenitor in New South Wales was Edmond English. He was a native of Tipperary, Ireland, who arrived in Australia in 1850 and engaged in mining with success on the Ballarat, Bendigo, and Turon gold fields. Upon his return to Sydney, he purchased the property subsequently known as the English Estate and engaged in farming. His wife, who was also a native of Ireland, predeceased him in 1892. Edmond English died at his residence "The Homestead", Station Street, Kogarah, on Wednesday, 17th July 1912, and was interred in the Roman Catholic Cemetery at Woronora, Sutherland, after a service at St. Patrick's Church, Kogarah, on 18th July 1912. He was survived by two sons, James Patrick and John, and three daughters, Mrs. John Clune, Mrs. Martin Murry and Miss Kate English. Members of the English family took an active part in the movement for the Municipal incorporation of Kogarah in 1884-1885.

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The following obituary notice has been kindly made available from the files of the "St. George Call" of July 20th, 1912 - by Mrs. Sylvia Kelly.

"This week one of the pioneers of the district, Mr. Edmond English, passed to his rest at the ripe old age of 94 years. On May 18th 1912, Mr. English attained his 94th year and it is scarcely believable that his recollection was clear in respect to many events of his long career. He however, had the crystalline memory that often belongs to those who lead a simple life, marked by clear cut eras. His coming to Kogarah in 1857 was one of these.

He bought from McNab, eighty-seven acres of land, then far out in the wild bush, now the flourishing township of Kogarah. Interviewed last year Mr. English said 'the Moores and the Blakes were our first neighbours. I started the first market garden but you will understand that I had first to clear the ground and put up a house. The present house, with some additions, was built of locally obtained stone, and I may say that I practically built it myself. There was in those days no church - that is no Roman Catholic Church - nearer than St. Benedict's, 13 miles away, and once a month I walked there and back to service on a Sunday. Railways were not even thought of along the southern suburbs, and unless you got a lift in a team or a gig there was no way of getting into the city but on shank's pony'. In later years Messrs. English, Moore and Father Terry, purchased the present site of St. Patrick's and gave it to the Church, also building the school-house with their own hands.

'The ground when cleared, was very fertile, and everything grew plentifully. We had large numbers of natives all around us but they were a gentle, kindly lot who never did any harm. King Kogarah, after whom the bay was named, had been dead for some time, but there were some boat builders living at Tom Ugly's, and I remember two vessels of some considerable size being built and launched.'

Did you come directly to Kogarah when you arrived in Australia? he was asked. 'No, I had to earn the money to buy land. In Ireland I worked for £1. a week on the railways, but in 1850 when I arrived in the Colony I earned as much as 15/- a day. There were 14 married couples (of which we were one) on the vessel in which we came to Australia - there being 251 young women who were placed under our care

and therefore we were allowed half of our fare. I walked from Sydney to the Turon diggings and back. Indeed I walked the distance twice, for I returned to see my wife was well. My brother had gone to the diggings in Victoria and when I went there by chance came across him. It was in Bendigo, I had just arrived and was starting work when another digger asked me - Are you the brother of James English? You are so like him. When I got land in Kogarah I gave him 27 acres and it came back to the family at his death'.

Mr. English spoke of the traffic that used to come by the main south road before the building of the Illawarra and South Coast railway. The teams used to make the hotel in Kogarah a resting place for the night, and therefore he built the Kogarah Hotel which for many years was kept by his son. It was a very busy district for the overlanders and the property of Mr. English lying along the road gained additional value.

One of Mr. English's memories is of a fight between Larry Foley and Sandy Ross, when a great supper was given in his house the night after the encounter. 'The police were out looking for them' said Mr. English, 'for pugilism was against the law then, but one eye must have been closed for they could see where the crowd was around Frog Hollow (near Como Bridge) where the fight took place. The police were across the river and remained there. It was a great time.'

Right up to the time of his death Mr. English retained his faculties and was keenly interested in all local affairs, and in parliament particularly.

Mr. English, with Messrs. J.B. Carroll, Pat Moore, P. Weber and H. West, were the original Road Trust from Cook's River to Bottle Forest, and in the early days it was no uncommon sight to see the residents take roadmaking into their own hands for the general benefit, and this went on until municipal incorporation.

The funeral took place at Sutherland after a short service at St. Patrick's Church, the Rev. Father O'Driscoll officiating."
