



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

MAY, 1973

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council.

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Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. B. Butters,
36 Louisa Street,
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OBJECTIVES: To promote interest in the history of 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 Hon. Secretary. Visitors are especially welcome.

Subscription: \$1.00 per annum (plus 50c joining fee)
Senior Citizens: .25c per annum
Students: .25c 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 The St. George Hospital).

CARSS' COTTAGE MUSEUM:

Open Sundays and Public Holidays from Noon to 5 p.m.
Admission 20c Adults, 10c Children (Maximum 60c for one family).

DONATIONS FOR MUSEUM:

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

Miss C. McEwen,
84 Carlton Parade,
CARLTON. 2218.

'Phone 587 2090.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER:

Contributions of articles and information of local interest for publication in this Newsletter will be welcomed by the Publications Convener:

Mr. V. S. Smith,
26 Prince Edward Street,
CARLTON. 2218.

'Phone 587 2938.

OUR MAY MEETING. Our meeting at 8 p.m. on 10th May will be held in the Soldiers' Memorial Presbyterian Church Hall, Kensington Street, Kogarah (opposite The St. George Hospital).

The Guest Speaker will be Mr. N. Horwood and he will present a recorded and illustrated address on the "History and Development of Sutherland Shire".

The Competition Prize for this Meeting has been donated by Mr. & Mrs. W.Q.Dorney.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE. The Management Committee meets at 7.30 p.m. on the last Thursday in each month at Carss Cottage.

THE MUSEUM CONVENOR'S REPORT.

We have indeed been fortunate to have received a painting by Elioth Gruner of the Old English Homestead. Elioth Gruner, a well known Australian Artist, and seven times winner of the Wynn Prize lived at No. 233 Princes Highway, Kogarah, during the period 1908-1911. The painting was donated to the Society by Mrs. Rose Schneider, a neighbour of Mr. Gruner during his residence in Kogarah. Unfortunately the painting is not signed, but we have been assured by an expert that the work is authentic. The painting has now been hung in the room where the English family display is set up.

Our model is now dressed and looks most attractive. Already many favourable comments have been received from visitors. It is intended to set up the second bedroom with a costume display as we have been given quite a lot of suitable articles. The model will take pride of place in this display, but until it is ready we have positioned her in the front bedroom.

The following items have been donated during the last months:-

1. Water Jug - approximately 100 years old - anonymously donated.
2. Blacksmiths tools; Hand sickle; scythe; mattock; crow bar; boiler poker; fire shovel; fire tong and a box camera - donated by Mr. E. Schweichardt.
3. Shaving stand; stud box; silver thimble; wooden washing board; lamp -- donated by Mr. & Mrs. E. Naylor.

MUSEUM ROSTER:

6th May -- Mr. & Mrs. Lean.
13th " -- Miss Coxhead and Mrs. Grant.
20th " -- Mrs. McOnie and Miss Foley.
27th " -- Dr. D.J. and Mrs. D.A.Hatton
3rd June - Mr. & Mrs. Lean
10th " - Mr. Grieve and Mrs. James.

Colleen McEwen
(Museum Convener).

OUR SOCIAL SECRETARY SAYS:-

The Jewellery and Slide Night, presented by Mr. Buhn on 29th March, resulted in a profit of \$50.00 which our Society shared with the Sea Scouts.

Our proportion was \$20.00 from admissions and \$5.00 from commission on sales.

The evening was most enjoyable, and "something different".

- Sylvia Kelly.

NEW MEMBERS.

At our April meeting we were happy to welcome the following new Members:

Mrs. M. Miller, Miss G. Giersch, Mr. & Mrs. J. McCann,
Mrs. L. Larkham, Mrs. P. Kuneman and Mr. Paul Malliate.

SIXTY YEARS AGO.

Thanks to Mrs. S. Kelly, we are able to include this interesting snippet from the 14th December, 1912, issue of the "St. George Call".

OLSON'S NEW PHARMACY.

"Among the latest up to date structures to be noted in the district is the business premises erected for Mr. Olson, Chemist, opposite the Kogarah Post Office. That the District is growing and advancing in up-to-date, roomy and healthy structures is due in large measure to its progressive and business like men. The improvement to Kogarah may be realized in large part at the corner of Belgrave Street and Railway Parade, where Olson's corner has superseded the old cottages that for years occupied that site.

Mr. Olson came to Kogarah about two years ago, taking over the business hitherto conducted by the late Mr. F. Leeder. By strict attention and courtesy he built up a connection which justified the expansion into more commodious premises, and he is to be congratulated upon the enterprise.

The building which is a well lit and ventilated shop and dwelling, also comprises the premises at present occupied by the Government Savings Bank. It is enhanced in appearance by the mirrored stanchions and large plate windows. Beneath the shop is a well aired cellar of some 18,000 cubic feet space for use as a cool storage in keeping drugs fresh and pure - a valuable adjunct to a chemist's business. The designing and contract are both by local firms.

OUR TRIP TO CAMPBELLTOWN. All we need say is the weather was perfect, we had two buses nearly full and, because of the excellent attendance our Hon. Secretary reports a profit of \$58.50.

From every point of view, this was a delightful trip and we are very pleased that so many members and friends were able to be present.

The commencement of a detailed report about this outing commences in this issue and will be concluded in our June Newsletter. It has been prepared for us by Mr. H. Mayfield.

EXCURSION TO CAMPBELLTOWN AND AIRD DISTRICT

8TH APRIL, 1973.

We were rather later than expected in setting off as we had to await the arrival of our second coach. However, we made good time on the road. I don't know whether our party were easily led or whether the bus driver really didn't know his history and locale, but he would have us searching for Mt. Giliad Windmill and the Hume and Hovell Monument along the road east of Appin. There was quite a burst of good humoured banter as the relics were spotted in the right place between Appin and Campbelltown.

These two townships, in their history, tell something that is vital in the saga of our forefathers cautious but enterprising spread from the coast inland. Their story also hints at the steady diversification of the young New South Wales colony's activities.

Appin was the earlier of the two settlements. It was brought to life when Governor Lachlan Macquarie made some grants of land in the district in about 1810, upon the suggestion of Sir Joseph Banks' protegee, George Cayley. It was interesting to reflect, as we passed over the ground, how far-reaching was the influence of Banks in that age, and how intimately bound up with the fortunes of early New South Wales he was. That reflection assumed a new dimension, and the history of the region came alive again as one remembered that a considerable number of the original settlers around Appin were Irishmen transported to the colony as political prisoners for their part in the unrest that permeated their homeland at that time. How interesting that out of the troubles of that tortured corner of the world, we here reaped the fruits of these convicts enterprise and determination. We were to find, as the day proceeded, that "Little Ireland" was a nickname peculiarly appropriate from the multitude of Irish names engraved on the headstones of the cemeteries we were able to examine.

Our trek nudged its way towards Campbelltown even as the first road must have done through Appin by 1821. Campbelltown itself was founded on Friday 1st December, 1820 by Governor Macquarie who named it in honour of his wife's maiden name. The people present were indicative of the pulsing vigour of the growing colony. Macquarie himself was ever busy in the affairs of the settlement, going on tours of personal inspection in all directions and, as his journals record, casting a keen appreciative eye over all in his path. Moreover, he took a careful and constructive interest in the welfare and enterprises of the people, particularly if they were convicts or had been emancipated. Witness could be borne to this by Doctor William Redfern also present with his wife. Redfern had been transported for his connection with a naval mutiny in 1797. He had been nineteen years old then and a promising young surgeon aboard H.M.S. "Standard", but had merely advised the active mutineers' leaders to "be more united among themselves". For this, young Redfern, originally, had been sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted to transportation for life because of

his youth. "The quality of mercy is not strained". Now, by 1820, he was carrying on a lucrative practice as a surgeon in Sydney although he had but lately fallen under the shadow of Commissioner Bigge who made no secret of his objection to Macquarie's preferment of the emancipist, asserting that Redfern's manner "betrayed an entire forgetfulness in himself of that occurrence in his life which he will find it difficult to erase from the memory or feelings of others".

The Redfern's son was also present at the foundation of Campbelltown as was young Lachlan the Governor's lad with his friend, Charley Whelan. Mr. & Mrs. Moore, Rev. Cartwright, the Deputy Surveyor James Meehan, Reverend Reddall, Betsy Broughton and between fifty and sixty settlers from the surrounding district looked on.

Originally Campbelltown contained 175 acres. It's boundaries, set out by Surveyor Hoddle, became known at first as High Street (later called Queen Street); Allman Street, named for Captain Francis Allman who had landed at Sydney Cove in 1818 as officer commanding a detachment of the 48th Regiment; George Street, named after George IV, pleasure-seeking, dissolute King of Britain; Broughton Street, named for William Broughton of the Commissary Department and an early settler in the Appin District who had arrived in Sydney with the First Fleet as the personal servant of Surgeon John White. In 1789 he had been appointed Storekeeper at Parramatta. He remained with the Commissary Department until he died at Appin, at the age of fifty-three, in 1821.

The site of Campbelltown was chosen with a military eye. It was determined by its position at the head of a wide valley and on the road that led southward to Appin, and it was the centre of a district bounded by the villages of Glenfield, Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn, Minto, Leumah, Menangle Park, Wedderburn and Kentlyn. Problems dogged the new town for a time, however, for its water supply proved to be uncertain and as a result building was curtailed. Efforts to find a more reliable water source continued. Water tanks were sunk in a tributary of Bow Bowing Creek approximately at the corner of Stewart and Dumaresq Streets, but pollution rapidly made the tanks unusable.

Finally in November of 1832, the residents determined to build a Reservoir at their own expense. We were able to view the result of their effort. The Shire Engineer is now about to restore its walls and it will be partially filled with water and so equipped that the level will be raised or lowered within defined limits according to climatic conditions.

When we visited "Glen Alvon" and toured its stable - now used as a Museum by the Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society we were able to view a portrait of John Scarr who was a member of the committee of residents which petitioned Governor Richard Bourke in 1832 concerned the building of the Reservoir. Scarr's colleagues on the committee were John Patrick, innkeeper, Thomas

Meehan (son of James Meehan).

John Scarr, we learned was the First Postmaster of the Campbelltown District and Registrar of the Court of Requests. In one of the display cases lay a brass stamp for the purpose of sealing documents. Beside it was a letter written for the Royal Australian Historical Society on the 31st March, 1925, addressed to Harold B. Reeve, J.P., the letter indicated that the stamp belonged to the Office of the Court of Requests, Campbelltown. James H. Watson had signed the letter and besides identifying further John Scarr as the court's registrar, he pointed out that the Court of Requests was also a Court with Civil Jurisdiction with Roger Therry Esq., as its Commissioner in 1834 and Henry Bradley its Bailiff.

All this information, of course, tended to define and enliven the surmises that floated through one's mind about the problems, in so remote a place, of keeping the peace. Everything was brought into sharp focus by the story surrounding Fisher's Ghost for which Campbelltown is famous. Fisher disappeared one evening after a long stay at the local. This was 17th June, 1826. Frederick Fisher was an ex-convict, and George Worrall also an ex-convict, who lived with Fisher on the latter's farm, put it about that his friend had fled the district to avoid being charged with forgery. Worrall added that he himself had been authorised to deal with the property. Accordingly he sold some of the stock and offered to pay a debt incurred by Fisher if the deeds of the farm were handed over to him.

Although the circumstances must have aroused at least some suspicion, no action was taken for four months. A man named Farley is supposed to have reported then, amid signs of terror, that he had encountered Fisher's "ghost" sitting on the sliprails of a fence and pointing to a spot in the paddock. An investigation was therefore undertaken; black trackers were called in. Blood stains were found on a fence close to where the "ghost" had been "seen". Thence the trackers could follow signs leading to a marshy spot in Fisher's paddock where his body was discovered under about three feet of soil. Worrall was arrested, tried for murder and convicted. Before his execution he confessed that he had indeed murdered Fisher.

The keeping of the Peace had other connotations. In the 1830's an "Iron Gang" was dispatched to Campbelltown to construct the reservoirs at the upper end of Dumaresq Street. Commander of this gang was Captain Allman who also became a Police Magistrate for the district in 1836, a position he held until 1843. These circumstances serve to remind us of the penal nature of New South Wales during its first fifty-five years, and also of the intimate association of military rank with the gentry of that day and the close ties between that social rank and the magistracy.

Completion of the reservoir in 1839 had an immediate effect on the town. The Campbelltown correspondent of the "Australian" (the newspaper nursed into existence by W.C. Wentworth and

and Dr. Wardell) deepens our appreciation of its value and history when he reports in January 1840 of the rapid advances of the township and that houses were springing up, also that the "value of property (was) considerably increased by the completion of the dam."

October of that same year found the correspondent eloquent. For he declaimed, "Ceres sheds most beneficent smiles upon us; our harvest must be ample and luxuriant. The next, tho not inferior blessing, is that our reservoir is supplied to overflowing. Thus we have a provision of the two leading vital commodities - bread and water. I cannot help reverting to bye-gone times, and instituting a comparison between the then state of things, and the state of things now - when a bucket of beer was given to a horse in default of water. Nor must I omit another high advantage accruing to us from the completion of our reservoir, which is the advance of temperance amongst us; such is the demand upon the limpid stream that ardent spirits will be known only as a thing that was."

Horses - the prime movers in transport of past ages. We saw numerous relics of their importance as we toured about Campbelltown. In Queen Street, for instance, there are four two-storeyed houses of the 1840's which, together, preserve a typical colonial street fascade based on the Georgian architectural tradition eventhough they have some distinctively Australian characteristics. The design of all of them is symmetrical; they have tall slim verandah columns and stone-flagged verandahs; their windows are small-paned; their doors are panelled and surmounted by dormer windows or fanlights. The last house in the row, with its wide carriage entrance through the centre of the building, is said to have been used by Cobb and Co., as a staging post on their passenger and mail runs. This suggestion would seem to be supported by the presence, behind one of the buildings, and extending over a sufficient area, of a long, tall, stable-like building. The whole complex is a reminder of the importance of Campbelltown as a coaching centre for the Illawarra and Southern Districts.

Coaches, in those days, went to the newly opened territories to the southward, to Cowpastures, to Illawarra, to Parramatta and back to Sydney via Liverpool, which, at that time, was also a port. A daily coach service between Campbelltown and Sydney was advertised in 1836. It operated six days a week (exclusive of Sundays), the coach departing Campbelltown at 3.30 a.m., and arriving at Sydney at 8.00 a.m. It would then leave Sydney at 5.00 p.m., and be returned to Campbelltown by 10.00 p.m. The coach's proprietor asserted that the district's inhabitants would be able "to leave home in the morning, have nine hours to transact business in Sydney, and return the same evening in good time."

Further reminders of the horse's importance and of the coaching days came to light in the Museum where a well-preserved horse-collar and a farrier's forge with several handmade horse

shoes, the blacksmith's tongs, the nearby horse-drawn ploughs all combined to conjure up again in the mind's eye a vibrant picture of the technology of a bye-gone age when motor cars aeroplanes, refrigerators and electric stoves were as yet unknown - things of the future.

In company with these were the relics of the pioneer housewives realm - a Kangaroo Churn so-called because it produced butter by a hopping action as distinct from the more usual circular motion; a drip-stone water filter and contemporary iron pots and pans.

A little further along we came upon Miss Mary Eccleston's CIPHERING BOOKS with their copperplate writing, and her Mathematics Work Book for 1848 - samples of the educational style of those times, and, close by a copybook and writing case. In the same display case lay

"The Stars and The Earth"

or

Thoughts upon Space, Time and Eternity

Revised and Enlarged with notes

by

Richard A. Proctor, B.A.,

Hon. Secretary of the Royal Astron Socieity

Published in London by Bailliere, Tindall
and Cox, 20 King William St., Strand
1880.

The book had belonged to John K. Hume and gave us some idea of his interests while, at the same time it emphasised the educational and intellectual links, which, for our forbears, were so strong and so vital, with England. It is worthwhile reflecting too, for the full and profound appreciation of our history, how much those links have been alloyed and weakened over the past seventy-odd years, and why, despite all improvements in transport and communications, they have become so attenuated.

And then one must comment on the lady's side saddle sign of the days when it was highly improper for women to "show a leg" or dress in any manner resembling a man; also on the ancient Pedal Loom recalling that the days when Glen Alvon was built were still the days, for Australia, when craft industries flourished rather than the mechanisation which prevailed in England at the same time. As you took it in you could imagine the cottage wife working at the loom by candlelight after the normal day's work was done, as cottage craft eked out so many resources at a time when people had to wait so long for goods to arrive from the "Old Country" across the vast uncertain and stormy seas. The 'Shepherd's' smock on display was of home-made cloth.

Certainly the smock reminded us of the basically pastoral pursuits of the Airds and Campbelltown District. But Keighran's

Mill, or the "Old Mill" as it is often called, which had been photographed in its older age, attested to some industrial diversification. This was emphasised by another photograph, this time of Kendall's Steam Mill erected in 1843 beside Fisher's Ghost Creek. It was a good photograph showing the old boiler and the mill pond. Kendall's Mill was for making flour. Industrial variety was further shown in the numerous other photographs we saw which had been arranged by Mr. C.W. Green. The acknowledgement and thanks extended to him by the Campbelltown and Airds Historical Society for his efforts and expertise are well and truly deserved.

Among these photographs one could see the numerous inns which Campbelltown once boasted and which were testimony of a thriving and very busy community. There was the "Wheelwrights' Arms" whose licensee had been James Graham between 1836 and 1846. This was, of course, yet another indication of the industrial variation in the town yet still inextricably interwoven, like the Flour Mill, with the agricultural needs of the surrounding community. The "Wheelwrights' Arms" was demolished in 1961. Another photograph showed the "Old Stone Jug" - a homely title for what must have been a snug, inviting and homely haven after a long day's ride and hard day's work - a place where the host would serve a welcome jug of frothy brown ale and the travellers could swap yarns and puff a leisurely clay pipe.

H. MAYFIELD

The second part of this article on the excursion to Campbelltown and Aird District will be presented in the next Newsletter.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

With the opening of the Civic Centre another milestone has been reached in the development of the Kogarah Municipality. In the years to come residents will have cause to be thankful for the foresight shown by our Council in making a reality of such a building which will no doubt become the focal point for so many civic activities.

In conjunction with the Civic Centre opening the Art Competition was conducted and a prize donated by the Historical Society. This was won by Mrs. P. Kuneman with her painting "Cloud over Tottenham House". Our congratulations to Mrs. Kuneman on her fine entry, and our welcome as a new member of the Historical Society.

J.E. VENESS,
President.