



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER

1973

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council)

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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 Exhibition Lounge, at the Civic Centre, Belgrave Street, Kogarah. (Take lift to second floor and turn to the right).

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 SEPTEMBER MEETING. Miss Peek of the Canterbury and district Historical Society was the Speaker and had prepared a very interesting talk on "Old Canterbury". She then screened some colour-slides illustrating the district.

OUR OCTOBER MEETING will be held at 8 p.m. on October 11th in the Exhibition Lounge on the second floor of the Civic Centre. Our Speaker on this occasion will be Mrs. B. Goodyer of the Bankstown Historical Society. Miss Goodyer is the Research Officer and Librarian of the Society and is a Librarian in the Mitchell Library. The talk is entitled "Research in Local History, illustrated by The History of Bankstown" and at its conclusion Mrs. Goodyer will show some slides.

The Competition Prize for this meeting has been donated by Mrs. Fordham.

The Ladies on Supper Roster are Mrs. Johns and Mrs. Taylor.

MUSEUM REPORT.

Roster - 1st October - Mr. V. Smith
7th " - Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Lean
14th " - Dr. & Mrs. Hatton
21st " - Mr. & Mrs. E.W. Gaskin
28th " - Mrs. G. Taylor and Mrs. G. Johns
4th November - Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Lean
11th " - Mrs. S.T. McOnie and Miss M. Foley
18th " - Mr. K. Grieve and Mrs. J. James

Would you like to go on Museum Duty? It's a very pleasant way to spend a Sunday Afternoon. You will have the chance to meet people interested in the same things as you are and at the same time be of service to the Society. If anyone is interested please contact me.

Colleen McEwen
587-2090.

SOCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT. Our tour of Paddington on Sunday 9th September was a thoroughly enjoyable one. Our thanks to Miss V. Murphy of the Paddington Society who was our guide for the afternoon and was a most interesting and knowledgeable person. One could sense the pride she has in the restoration of Paddington and I am sure we all wish the Society the best of luck in what they hope to achieve and preserve for future generations.

Tulip Tour of Bowral - Sunday October 14th. For this popular day's outing we have two coaches fully booked but as there is always the chance of a last minute cancellation please phone Mrs. Butters on 57-6954 for the reserve list. Empty seats are a waste of space when we have members who are disappointed at not being included so please phone early if you intend to cancel out.

The coaches will be in Delgrave Street at 8.45 a.m. and leave at 9 a.m. It would be advisable to bring a cup and Thermos Flask for morning tea (biscuits will be available) as this will only be a 20 minute break. Tea, Sugar, Coffee, Milk and Boiling Water will be available for a basket lunch.

A visit to King Ranch is included in the tour for an additional cost of 40c (which goes to the local hospital) for those who wish to inspect the gardens. Others may view them from outside. We expect to return to Kogarah by about 6 p.m.

For any further enquiries, please phone Mrs. Butters (57-6954) or Mrs. Burghart (546-4385). Our best wishes for a Happy and Pleasant day.

Sylvia Kelly.

CHRISTMAS PARTY. In lieu of the December Meeting it is our custom to hold a Christmas Party at Carss' Cottage. This year the date is 13th December. Book early.

Xmas Hamper - Tickets are selling quickly in this well-stocked Hamper and members who have butts and money are kindly asked to hand same to the Hon. Treasurer. More tickets are available.

In our selection of Articles for our Newsletter, we have endeavoured to present a variety of subjects, and for this month's issue we thought members would be interested to read portion of a Environment Project, prepared for the Intermediate Section of the "Project Environment Competition" conducted by the Sydney Morning Herald.

The original Project, prepared by Paul Malliate, has been very neatly prepared and includes a Synopsis and comprehensive list of sources and also three maps and over fifty illustrations which, unfortunately, we cannot reproduce.

Paul is a 14-year-old student in Third Form at the James Cook High School and is one of the youngest members of The Kogarah Historical Society. His entry was "commended" by the Judges.

THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE KOGARAH DISTRICT by Paul Malliate.

The Kogarah area is typical of any present Sydney suburb, except for its history. Kogarah is one of 8 main areas lying to the south of Sydney. It has, historically, very sturdy foundations not only for New South Wales but the entire country of Australia. This is because Botany Bay was the proposed site of the first settlement. If the settlement had been started at Botany Bay, Kogarah would be part of N.S.W.'s capital, but due to unfavourable conditions (discussed later) the site was changed to Sydney Cove.

In the beginning, Kogarah was part of a vast network of streams, swamps and marshes. The area was densely vegetated and its landform consisted of sunken valleys, with the topsoil mainly being hard clay, and decomposed shale covered over with various silts.

In 1770 Captain James Cook, when he sailed into Botany Bay, opened up the history book of the Kogarah area. Since then, Kogarah has developed into a very prosperous suburb of Sydney, yet, enough of its history remains to instill into its residents the work of Kogarah's early pioneers and the foundations of the area, in which they live.

Aborigines. There is little known about the early aborigines who inhabited the area around Kogarah, but there are examples suggesting that aborigines did live in parts of the area. Many of Kogarah's street names are of an aboriginal derivation. Here are some of them:-

Waitara Parade
Dinjerra Crescent
Carwar Avenue
Benwerrin Avenue
Allawah Avenue

Orana Crescent
Gooroa Street
Boronia Street
Currawong Street
Kuroki Street

Culwaller Street
Mowera Street
Bunyaki Street
Kiarawa Street

Kogarah itself is an aboriginal word meaning "Place of Reeds". Many of the street names above are situated in the Carss' Park area in Kogarah (this area has been recently developed). It is situated on the foreshores of Kogarah Bay. Carss' Park still contains a lot of woodland known as Carss' Bush Park. Inside the original woodland has been found an area where aborigines, over many past years, have feasted on shell-fish obtained from nearby Kogarah Bay, such as oysters and mussels. This results in layers of discarded shells which accumulate to a considerable depth. These mounds of shells are called "middens". Some carved paintings have been reported to have been found, but evidence to uphold this has not been verified. These examples seem to suggest that many aborigines existed in the Carss' Park area of Kogarah.

Furthermore, old time residents of Kogarah seem to think that once the white men came to Kogarah, the aborigines left and travelled further inland. It can be seen that so little has been preserved and found about the first inhabitants of the area... but there is still hope that in the future more will be uncovered about the original natives of Kogarah.

Discovery & Exploration.

Kogarah has an interesting history dating from its discovery by white men. Botany Bay was discovered in 1770 by James Cook. He described the land as "flowing with milk and honey". Even though the area had been discovered in 1770, it was not settled until 46 years later. The reasons for Kogarah's late settlement being that, when Phillip came to establish the Penal Colony in 1788 at Botany Bay, he saw the area from a more practical view. Phillip did not see the area like Cook's descriptions. He realised the trouble involved in clearing the area of its aged, massive growth of enormous trees and shrubs. Some other reasons, preventing Phillip from establishing the Penal Settlement in Kogarah were Botany Bay was very shallow so that there was little shelter for the ships. Most of the soil could not be cultivated as the area was full of swamps and the area contained too much thick scrub and lacked pasture.

So it was, that Kogarah was completely neglected until 1804 when it was that people started to settle anywhere near Kogarah. As Sydney expanded more land was needed and finally in 1816 some land from Kogarah was granted by Governor Macquarie, and around 1820 Kogarah began to attract settlers.

Pioneers and Early Settlement.

The first land grant in this area was of 1,950 acres and was made by Governor Macquarie to Dr. J. Townson in 1816. Captain Robert Townson (John's brother) received a grant of 1,605 acres, some time after. A further grant of 1,200 acres was made in 1831 to James Chandler. Captain Conell also received a land grant in 1831. Some years later Kogarah was surveyed and the ungranted land was opened up for purchase by Auction. The first land purchase (170 acres) was made by John B. Carroll in 1848. The whole area was first called Lord's forest after Simeon Lord. The name was later changed to Gannon's Forest after Michael Gannon. Later still the name was changed to "Kogarah".

The council was a body which greatly influenced the way in which early Kogarah would be run. The first Mayor of Kogarah was Alderman E. Hogben who presided at the first council meeting held at Beaver's Hotel in 1885. The Council's meeting place was later changed to the Kogarah School of Arts. Some members of Kogarah's council are remembered by having Kogarah's streets named after them. Here are some:-

Alderman P.A. Tanner	---	Tanners Avenue
" C.J.S. Battye	---	Battye Avenue
" M. McRae	---	McRae's Road
" P.J. Lacey	---	Lacey Street
" N.P. Nielson	---	Nielson Avenue

Two well-noted early pioneers of Kogarah were William Carss and Joseph Hector Carruthers. William Carss came to N.S.W in 1831. He acquired the area known as Carss' Estate from Jonathan Croft and built in the 1860's, the still-standing "Carss' Cottage". He and his descendants lived in Kogarah until 1916. Joseph H. Carruthers was a noted politician and one of the area's wealthy early residents. He is noteworthy as being responsible for Kogarah's incorporation by proclamation on 22nd December, 1885.

Examples of early settlement are two of the oldest houses in Kogarah. One a two storeyed house, was built by Charles Barsby in 1900, who owned the business which has developed into Turner Bros. store in Kogarah. The house was sold in 1908 to Mr. Alfred Black, who died a few years later leaving it to Mrs. Black who stayed there until 1914, when it became Brooklyn Private Hospital. The building is now to be demolished because of its sad state of dilapidation. The other, reputedly the oldest house in Ramsgate, is "Terwood", built by Thomas Wilson. Little of its history can be retraced but was built in the Victorian style of Architecture and has a large court yard.

Much of Kogarah's early settlement was due to increased transport facilities making settlement in outer areas from Sydney possible.

Transport.

Ever since Kogarah has been settled it has depended greatly on transport. Land transport was essential to bring Kogarah into communication with the expanding colony. Many people were responsible for Kogarah's transport progress. Some residents themselves, cleared roads and even built bridges. Early records state "the first bridge across Cook's River was Thompsons Bridge built by Mr. Thompson, a solicitor, about 1830, which was later replaced by Undercliffe Bridge.

By 1840 various road trusts (such as the Kogarah Road Trust) had been formed and had enabled the building of few roads of very low quality. The roads were rough and pot-holed and "the streets were not kerbed, except for a few". The main road, Rocky Point Road, was built of blue metal.

The earliest form of transport was by pack horse. Bullocks sometimes used for carting heavy loads; horse drawn drays, were used for carting wood, coal and chaff. After these early forms of transport came punts, cars, ferries, trolley buses, trams, trains (steam and diesel).

A main form of early land transport was by steam trams and this is one of the most significant memories that lengthy residents of Kogarah have.

"The steam trams were quite a community service in those days".

"One of the outstanding memories that I have is that a steam tram ran from Kogarah Railway Station".

"The place where the tramlines joined near Sans Souci known as the loop, which was quite a little shopping centre in those days."

"The old trams picked up trucks containing coal and chaff and other commodities for the local wood and coal store".

The trams were lit by kerosene lamps. There were sometimes complaints because of soot from the engine.

There was also near the then "Prince of Wales Hotel" a steam-engine servicing depot where the steam engine would take on water, coal and be serviced. Trams were helpful to the infant industries of the area as well. Another interesting incident would be when the tram would go up "Gray Street Hill" -- Sometimes the steam tram might not have enough power to make it up the hill, the tram would return almost to the starting point and then try again.

The Illawarra railway line was opened in 1884 and the trains were able to provide frequent and faster service. In July 1937 the steam trams were replaced by trolley buses and they in turn were replaced by diesel engine buses in August 1959. A bus service known as Hunt's Bus Service ran from Cronulla to Rockdale.

There were practically no motor cars at the turn of the century, the only people who had motor cars were the wealthy, professional men like the local doctor. The first car, introduced in 1907, was a three wheeled car, shaped like a "horseless carriage". It was owned and driven by Alan Stirling. Bicycle riding became popular as a cheap form of transport.

The main form of water transport was by punt or ferry. Before Tom Ugly's bridge was completed a vehicular ferry operated across George's River. The first punt across George River "was a miserable affair" worked by a coir rope. The passengers sometimes had to wind themselves over the river. Some time later the coir rope was replaced by wire and later still the old punt was replaced by a steam punt.

There was also a ship called the "Mariner" which took Kogarah's orchard products up the coast. Sixty-six years ago a writer said that "like most suburbs of Sydney, Kogarah has suffered severely from want of good roads and consequent means of communication with the city."

Today, however, Kogarah has over 118 miles of roads of which 115 are surfaced. These roads carry many private and Government buses and the area is served by eight railway stations. Many bridges have been built to replace the old punt or vehicular ferries. All this has helped to improve Kogarah's standard of prosperity, industry and also to change its economy.

Economy.

Early industry and trade in the district were Market garden products, orchards, dairying and timber-getting. These were needed to support the area's growing population and expansion. From these industries came smaller secondary industries in the form of firewood, ship-building and by the early 1850's Kogarah contained a nursery, timber yard, Sawmill, 14 dairies, a brass foundry, a livery stable, iron works, 25 market gardens, a plant where ships knees (joints) and ribs were made and some other smaller factories. The main factory, in the area, was the Hurstville Brick Company's works. At this time small shops were set up.

The introduction of steam trams enabled quicker transportation of goods, but the real boost to production came with the opening of the Illawarra Railway Line in 1884. It was also responsible for a great number of new people coming to Kogarah and with this rise in population went more and quicker production.

With the expansion of the area, tertiary services such as doctors, hotels, rest rooms, newsagents, local shops, post office and other such services were established "Mr. W. Pritchard drew attention to the want of a daily postal delivery as a result one was formed in 1863. Another memorable occasion was the night the lights were "switched on" in 1923. To quote from records -

"The Chairman of the County Council operated a switch and immediately the hall which had previously been darkened, and the section of the district which had been reticulated were flooded with electric lights". The event was cheered with enthusiasm by the thousands of residents who had gathered in the streets.

However, the depression hit Kogarah strongly in 1929 and by 1931 3,000 residents were unemployed, but by 1935 the depression was over. The area is now mainly a secondary and tertiary producing one but above all, a residential suburb of Sydney.

Growth.

In the beginning Kogarah was part of a vast network of streams and marshes -- but today Kogarah is one of Sydney's prosperous residentia and developing suburbs. How has this happened? During the 1800's Sydney began to expand from its centre, causing the foundation of new suburbs in its outskirts. Kogarah, 8 miles south of Sydney, is one of these suburbs.

Kogarah was discovered, settled and pioneered and was rapidly expanding with its own economy, before transport brought many more people to the area. However, in 1840, a depression struck and caused a break-up in land-holdings. The 1851 gold rush meant a decrease in Sydney's population expansion.

Kogarah has been, since its incorporation in 1885, controlled and influenced by its council. The council was responsible for Kogarah's recreational facilities, general services, reserves, parks and libraries. Kogarah's first school was a Church of England School called St. Pauls. It was begun in 1869. Other schools in the area are Carlton South, Brighton (1874), Sans Souci (1885) and Ramsgate (1937). Some high schools are James Cook, Moorefield, St. Joseph's Bexley, St. George and Kogarah High. Along with the schools came Churches such as St. Paul's Kogarah, St. Andrews Sans Souci and St. Patricks Kogarah.

Some very fine parks and gardens exist in Kogarah, the most well-known probably being Scarborough Park, which was opened for public use in 1879. Between 1932-1935 a lake was dredged in the park to drain, fill and level that area. In 1955 a pavillion and toilet block was erected at a cost of £616. Another interesting park is Kogarah Jubilee Park on which a modern sports oval was built in 1934.

Considered to be one of Sydney's most charming picnic ground is Carss' Park which is set in a scene of natural surroundings of exquisite beauty. This park covers an area of 43 acres. Other well-known reserves and parks are Arrowsmith Park, Anderson Park, Poulton Park, Renown Park, Moore Reserve and of course Kogarah's own 18 hole Gold course, Beverly Park. It was formed in 1938-39 by filling in the head of Kogarah Bay. This also made room for 360 home sites (Beverly Park Estate). The golf course is the only one in Kogarah.

Kogarah council was the first council in N.S.W. to build two full length Olympic Swimming Pools - one at Carss' Park and the other at Sans Souci and both were built in 1965.

Kogarah also contains beaches (Sans Souci, Ramsgate) and baths (Sans Souci, Ramsgate, Brighton). Kogarah Bay is popular for boating enjoyment.

The area also contains a modern hospital which stands on the site of the old "cottage" hospital. The St. George Motor Boat Club, opened in 1921, offers a good form of relaxation. The area also contains the newly erected Kogarah Library and the recently finished Kogarah Civic Centre.

I feel that it is unhistorical to discuss the "history" of the future, so in presenting the following statistical data about Kogarah, I'm sure you may be able to foresee to some extent - projected into the future - many of the trends of Kogarah's past history -- and in particular the leadership of a strong council.

First population census	1891	---	2,328
Population census	1971	--	49,000

Area - 4,807 acres

Number of Homes - 14,000.

Estimates of adopted expenditure in 1971 --

a) General Purposes	\$151,255
b) Public Works	794,095
c) Health administration	262,063
d) Salaries and general	37,350
e) Garbage service	224,480
f) Parks and gardens	163,550
g) Public services	353,370
h) Municipal property	13,000
i) Miscellaneous	129,673
j) Installments, loans	84,635
k) Capital expenditure	493,200