



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

F E B R U A R Y

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council)

President:

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6 Lance Avenue,
BLAKEHURST. 2221.

'Phone 546 3932.

Hon. Treasurer

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

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Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. E. Butters,
36 Louisa Street,
OATLEY. 2223.

'Phone 57 6954.

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.

Subscriptions: \$1.50 per annum.
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).

PARKING: Cars may be parked in the ground floor parking area, the entrance to which is in Wick's Lane, at the rear of the Civic Centre. Post Office Lane alongside the Civic Centre has one-way traffic and it is necessary to enter at Montgomery Street end. From that Lane you turn left into Wick's Lane and use the first entrance into the parking area. An alternative way is to enter Wick's Lane from Kensington Street. In such case, use the second entrance into the parking area.

CARSS PARK 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 Officer:

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

'Phone 587 2938.

MUSEUM REPORT. We have now employed the services of a carpenter and new display areas will soon be completed. Immediate plans include the erection of a simulated shop display for the entrance area and a book case to house the publications which we have been given. This case will also be a repository for the publications the Society receives on a subscription basis.

Some members who would like to volunteer for duty at the Museum have refrained because they are not sure as to what is required of them. It has been suggested that such members should attend, at first, in the company of experienced members and thus become accustomed to the very simple procedure involved.

An afternoon spent at the Museum can be most enjoyable -- so who will volunteer to attend with experienced members and see for themselves just what a happy time it can be.

Donations. -- we acknowledge with many thanks the following items which have been donated to the Museum during the last month:-

"Fourth Reader" from the New Australian School Series; and "The Prince of Wales Book", 1920, donated by Mr. V. Smith.

The following newspapers have been donated by Mr. Philip Geeves:-
Australasian Sketcher - March 16, 1878

Illustrated Sydney Mail 1788-1888 (Centenary issue)

The Town & Country Journal - January 5th and 12th 1901

The Australasian - January 26, 1901

Souvenir of the Inauguration of the Australian Commonwealth 1901

The Sydney Mail - 1st 5th & 12th January 1901; March 30, 1927; March 7, 1928; April 10, 1929; April 22, 1931.

The Sydney Mail Souvenir - Australia's Welcome to the U.S. Fleet
Centenary issue of the Sydney Morning Herald - April 18, 1931.

Wooden Money Box -- Mrs. Aiken

2 Pillow Shams, Carver Cover and Doilies - Mrs. Gossling

Doily Holder, Bedspread, Pillow Sham - Mrs. Bevan

MUSEUM ROSTER - Please advise me as soon as possible if these dates are not acceptable (Phone 587 2090)

10th February	- Mrs. McOnie and Miss Foley
17th "	- Dr. D.J. & Mrs. D.A. Hatton
24th "	- Mr. & Mrs. Kelly
3rd March	- Mr. & Mrs. Lean
10th "	- Mr. Grieco & Mrs. James
17th "	- Mrs. Johns & Mrs. Taylor

Museum Taking for January

Admissions	\$78.30
Pottery	18.30
Jam	23.20
Books & Cards	10.20

Colleen McEwen.

A SEAT FOR TIRED PEOPLE.

By Colleen McEwen.

I am sure anyone who has travelled throughout the countryside has been aware of the many memorials that have been erected to the memory of outstanding poets, explorers and statesmen in our history. However, although there is a wealth of such memorials very few are dedicated to the memory of women.

One such memorial to a woman, however, is in the suburb of Oatley. It comprises a road, and a seat for tired people dedicated to Dame Mary Gilmore. The small story of its origin illustrates what Barrie Ovenden, in "Mary Gilmore: a Tribute", describes as "her acute perception and deep understanding of humanity".

In the immediate surroundings of Oatley Park in the years preceding 1954, there could be found three streets all containing the word Park - Park Avenue, Oatley Park Road and Park Road. The West Oatley Progress Association, at the request of two of its members, Mr. & Mrs. Staples, suggested to Hurstville Council that the name of Park Road, running alongside Oatley Park, be changed to Dame Mary Gilmore Road. The suggestion was accepted.

The renaming was drawn to the attention of Dame Mary who wrote to the Progress Association "there are so few roads and streets called after women in Australia that this is an almost unbelievable honour". In appreciation she donated £5.0.0 and raised the question as to whether the road was "wide enough for a tree to be planted, or for a seat for tired people". As the trek up from the water and baths in the Park was long and steep it was decided that a seat for tired people would be appropriate, and that it should be positioned just outside the entrance gates to the Park within the shade of the 'Lone Pine'. This tree was grown from a seed of the original 'Lone Pine' at Gallipoli.

The Mayor of Hurstville, Alderman Hedley Mallard suggested the wording,

Donated by
Dame Mary Gilmore
"For tired people"

to be inscribed on a tablet set into the back of the seat. However, the wording was altered at Dame Mary's request to,

Given by
Dame Mary Gilmore
"For tired people"

as she explained, "donated always seems a bit pretentious but given makes us all belong together".

On May 23rd 1954, a ceremony was held to celebrate the naming of the road and the erection of the seat. The President of the West Oatley Progress Association Mr. H.N. Gould presided over the gathering of invited guests and interested residents. Mr. F. L'Neill M.L.A. welcomed the guests, expressing pleasure that Dame Mary's name would be perpetuated in the district. He said that all who were conversant with the history of Australia realised the debt of gratitude we owed to Dame Mary Gilmore for her contributions in poetry and prose.

Dame Mary expressed her pleasure in having a roadway named after her. She pointed out that the most important part of history was tradition and in Australia folk were of the opinion we had no tradition, being only approximately 150 years old. "The pioneers who paved the way for development and prosperity in this land of ours provided a tradition from which we all benefit. They endured hardships, met with constant failure, but eventually won through".

Miss Ann Poole presented Dame Mary with a bouquet of carnations. Mrs. Leahy, Secretary of the West Oatley Progress Association, entertained Dame Mary Gilmore and other guests at afternoon tea in her home.

(Material for the above article has been drawn mainly from original letters made available by Mrs. E. Leahy, former Secretary of the West Oatley Progress Association, and a member of our Society to whom I express my appreciation).

OTHER DAYS ---- OTHER WAYS.

Just over one hundred years ago, on 4th April 1873, there appeared an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald which caused eyebrows to shoot up - questions to be asked in Parliament - letters to be written to the Editor - and a big deputation to wait upon a very apologetic Minister for Works.

This is a copy of the advertisement in question and if we offered a prize to the reader who could select the one word which caused the stir, it would probably remain unclaimed -

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS

Richmond Volunteers Encampment

Special trains will leave Sydney for
Richmond, calling at Homebush, on Friday,
Saturday and Sunday at 8.40 a.m. and leave
Richmond at 6.44 p.m. each day

Fare: Closed vehicles	5.0
Open vehicles	3.0

John Rae
Commissioner for Railways

You are wrong if you selected the reference to "open vehicles", for passengers were quite accustomed to travelling in carriages without windows, with nothing to protect them from the wind and rain - and soot.

The word which caused the eyebrows to rise was "Sunday". A railway excursion for the sabbath was unheard of. Naturally, on the following day, a large deputation of Ministers from the Church of England, and the Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Congregational Churches, accompanied by Messrs. Watson and Wearne M.L.C. waited upon the Hon. John Sutherland, Minister for Works, strenuously expressing their whole-hearted disapproval.

One Minister for Works was no match for all these Ministers of Religion and the Hon. John Sutherland could only explain that he had wrongly been informed a number of popular preachers had requested the running of the trains. He had no reason to doubt the correctness of the information and, on the spur of the moment, acceded to the request. He had since made enquiries and had ordered the offending advertisement to be withdrawn and the Sunday trains cancelled.

The Minister stated that when he took office, he found that Sunday trains ran to Penrith, Richmond and Picton, thus causing much work for Station-Masters, porters and gatekeepers etc. A deputation had even asked him to extend the trains to Sutton Forest. He not only declined the request but had withdrawn the trains to places beyond Parramatta. He found that many people availed themselves of trains to go to Church at Parramatta and Sydney, between which places two trains ran in each direction.

The Minister said he regretted the present advertisement. He was, at the time, very much pressed with business and gave his sanction without sufficient consideration. And so the members of the deputation happily departed.

Mr. H. Mayfield of our Management Committee has also furnished me with a list which purports to be the Office Rules of a Sydney firm of Merchants and Ships' Chandlers in the year 1852. Here it is --

RULES FOR THE CLERICAL STAFF.

1. Godliness, Cleanliness and Punctuality are the necessities of a good business.
2. On the recommendation of the Governor of this Colony, this firm has reduced the hours of work, and the Clerical Staff will now only have to be present between the hours of 7 a.m. and 6 p.m. on week days. The Sabbath is for Worship, but should any Man-of-War or other vessel require victualling, the Clerical Staff will work on the Sabbath.
3. Daily prayers will be held each morning in the Main Office. The Clerical Staff will be present.
4. Clothing must be of a sober nature. The Clerical Staff will not disport themselves in raiment of bright colours, nor will they wear hose, unless in good repair.
5. Overshoes and Top-coats may not be worn in the office but Neck Scarves and Headware may be worn in inclement weather.
6. A Stove is provided for the benefit of the Clerical Staff. Coal and Wood must be kept in the locker. It is recommended that each member of the Clerical Staff bring 4 pounds of coal, each day, during cold weather.
7. No member of the Clerical Staff may leave the room without permission from Mr. Ryder. The calls of nature are permitted, and the Clerical Staff may use the garden below the second gate. This area must be kept in good order.
8. No talking is allowed during business hours.
9. The craving for tobacco, wines or spirits is a human weakness, and, as such, is forbidden to all members of the Clerical Staff.
10. Now that the hours of business have been drastically reduced, the partaking of food is allowed between 11.30 a.m. and noon, but work will not, on any account, cease.
11. Members of the Clerical Staff will provide their own pens. A new sharpener is available, on application to Mr. Ryder.
12. Mr. Ryder will nominate a Senior Clerk to be responsible for the cleanliness of the Main Office and the Private Office, and all Boys and Juniors will report to him 40 minutes before Prayers, and will remain after closing hours for similar work. Brushes, Brooms, Scrubbers and Soap are provided by the Owners.
13. The New Increased Weekly Wages are as hereunder detailed:

Junior Boys (to 11 years)	.....	1/4
Boys (to 14 years)	.....	2/1
Juniors	.....	4/8
Junior Clerks	.....	8/7
Clerks	.....	10/9
Senior Clerks (after 15 years with the Owners)	.....	21/-

THE OWNERS HEREBY RECOGNISE THE GENEROSITY OF THE NEW LABOUR LAWS, BUT WILL EXPECT A GREAT RISE IN OUT-PUT OF WORK TO COMPENSATE FOR THESE NEAR UTOPIAN CONDITIONS.

In view of the result of my enquiries in respect of the "rules" for steam-tram conductors, the reader may doubt the authenticity of these office regulations also, but they do seem to be genuine. Mr. Mayfield has suggested that we compare them with the historically authentic rules of a spinning factory at Tyldesley, near Manchester. These were reproduced in the "Political Register" of August 1823. Spinners worked 14 hours per day under these rules in a temperature of 80 - 84 degrees.

<u>Rule</u>	Penalty for Breach.	
	s.	d.
Any spinner found with his window open,	1	0
Any spinner found dirty at his work,	1	0
Any spinner found washing himself,	1	0
Any spinner leaving his oil can out of its place,	1	0
Any spinner slipping with his gas lighted,	2	0
Any spinner putting his gas out too soon,	1	0
Any spinner repairing his drum binding with his gas lighted,	2	0
Any spinner spinning with gaslight too long in morning,	2	0
Any spinner having his light too large, for each light	1	0
Any spinner heard whistling,	1	0
Any spinner being sick and cannot find another spinner to give satisfaction must pay for steam per day . . .	6	0

Harsh regulations like these were imported from England and implemented in Sydney.

And what did these spinners earn? Wages were declining, and for a third-grade spinner fell from £1. 4. 0 to £1. 2. 6 in 1833 and to only £1. 1. 0 in 1836. A first-class fine spinner dropped from £2. 4. 6 in 1815 to £1. 15. 0 in 1833.

The Rev. John Dunmore Lang, that well-known Presbyterian Minister, chartered a sailing ship in 1831 and in view of the high cost of living in Scotland, and the low wages being paid, had no difficulty in persuading a ship-load of skilled workers to come to Sydney - and among them was William Carss.

- - - V.S.S.

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