



THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council)

President:

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Hon. Secretary:

Mrs. E. Butters,
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OATLEY, 2223.

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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.

Subscriptions - Ordinary Members:	\$1.50	per annum.
Pensioners:	\$1.00	" "
Students:	\$1.00	" "

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 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:

Mrs. J. A. Lean,
24 Victoria Ave.,
PENSHURST, 2222

'Phone 57 5940.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWSLETTER: Contributions of articles and information of local interest for publication in this Newsletter will be welcomed if forwarded to the Publications Officer:

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

'Phone 587 2938.

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JULY MEETING. The special Speaker for our July Meeting, at 8 p.m. on the 11th July, will be - Mr. Leonard Traynor who is the President of the Antique Arms Association - his subject "The Medical Practitioner 1861-1865". Mr. Traynor's interest in this subject has been based upon the development of modern medical practice which arose during the American Civil War.

This meeting will be held in the Exhibition Lounge on the second floor of the Civic Centre in Belgrave Street, Kogarah.

The prize for the Raffle has been kindly donated by Mr. W. Wright.

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Our JUNE MEETING. As foreshadowed in our June Newsletter, members were most interested in the Talk entitled "From Forest to Suburbia" given by Mr. L.K. Stevens of the Hurstville Historical Society. Many of the estates referred to extended into the Kogarah Municipality. Mr. Stevens displayed an expert knowledge of his subject and the Talk was very much appreciated.

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We record, with regret, the death of our Member, Miss M. J. Phelps. Miss Phelps, who died in Calvary Hospital, has been ill for a long time. We express our sympathy to members of her family.

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CAN YOU HELP!!

We have found in the past that one good way of raising money for our Society has been to hold a Street Stall once a year in Belgrave Street, Kogarah (opposite the Post Office). This year it will be held on Friday, 19th July, from 9.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m.

But we must have things to sell!

Anything old - anything new

Something to sell from each of you.

Cakes large and small - and handicrafts too

Second-hand clothes will also do.

You could bring your donation to our next meeting - or direct to the Stall. Otherwise we can pick up your articles if you phone Mrs. Kelly -(587-6986)

- Mrs. Burghart - (546-4385) or Mrs. Putters (57-6954).

WE HAVE THE WORKERS - WE NEED THE GOODS!

OUR TREASURER'S REPORT FOR JUNE.

Income.

Members' subscriptions	16.50
Admission Fees	62.50
Books	2.50
Jams	28.05
Etchings & Photos	3.50
Raffle	8.25
Donation	1.50
Pottery Sales	<u>12.80</u>
	\$135.60

Expenditure.

Postage on Newsletters	5.88
Purchase of Cardboard	21.48
St. George County Council	8.52
St. George Studio Potters	21.15
Group (for May Sales)	
	<u>\$57.03</u>

G. Johns (Hon. Treasurer)

MUSEUM COMMITTEE REPORT.

"Carss' Cottage" in its parkland setting overlooking Kogarah Bay, was presented by Channel 10, in Sydney, on Sunday, 2nd June. The film was shown in "Round and About" with Warwick Ranken, "Eye Witness News" reporter.

As the cameras scanned various exhibits, and items of special interest, our President, Mr. Veness spoke with the interviewer, describing the Society's aims and ideas, for setting up the Museum and Art Centre as an informative and attractive display.

He emphasized the fact that our intention is to portray life as it was, in its many aspects, rather than simply a cottage of earlier times.

He also identified and explained the manner of using, several articles, as they were shown to viewers. Members who saw the film, agreed it was a credit to all participants, and could give wide publicity to the society's endeavours.

The latter has been borne out, by many people in the last few weeks, who have come to visit Carss' Cottage as a result of seeing the film.

Congratulations and thanks to Reporter, Warwick Ranken, his Cameramen, Channel 10, and Jeff Veness.

Thanks are also due to Bill Wright who made many 'phone calls to inform members of the film, and the time it would be shown.

A happy event for the Kogarah Historical Society!

Many people have donated very interesting reference material and articles for the Museum this month. Some of these articles are already on display, and others will follow as new projects take shape. Each person expresses pleasure in contributing to the Museum, and we in turn are most appreciative.

We acknowledge the following items, received in recent weeks, and thank the donors sincerely.

Cedar Wall-shelf with mirror and clothes brush (donated by Mrs. Hague of Brighton)
Filigree Silver-plated metal and fabric dress belt (Miss J. Nicholson)
Set of fine brushes, used in the painting of carriage decoration (Mr. E.G. Upton)
Sampler (Stitchery) made by Olive Beavers 1896 (loaned by Mrs. Beavers of Blakehurst)
Brass Kerosine Table Lamp - green glass inkwell - Fluted Glass Vase - Small Willow
Patterned Butter Dish in carved wooden base - carved Wooden Ansonia Clock -
Christening Robe (believed to be at least 120 years old, and of Cornish origin)
- Lady's Evening Purse - Souvenir Newspapers (1901-1918) - Banner Bookmarkers
(Coventry, England) - Greeting Cards and old family letters (1857) - Reference
to gold mining, conditions in South Australia - Arrangements for Naylor family
to migrate -- An Invitation to Opening of Trades Hall (1888) -- ALL DONATED BY
MRS. MCNEIL (NEE NAYLOR).

Items donated by Mrs. E. Lowe and Mrs. Stelzer will be listed in the next report, with further acquisitions.

In order to compile a complete list of books, journals, etc. belonging to the Society's library we make a special request to members, that any you may have borrowed, be returned at our next meeting. This will be greatly appreciated.

Members rostered for Museum duty are as follows - (please phone 57-5940 if unsuitable)

14th July	-	Mrs. S. McOnie and Miss M. Foley
21st "	-	Mr. & Mrs. E. Schweikert
28th "	-	Mrs. G. Johns and Mrs. G. Taylor
4th August	-	Mr. & Mrs. J. Lean
11th "	-	Mr. & Mrs. J. Howard
18th "	-	Mrs. S. Kelly and Mr. N. Kelly
25th "	-	Mrs. D. Hatten & Mrs. M. Cleve.

GWEN LEAN (Convener)

MY EARLY RECOLLECTIONS OF SOUTH HURSTVILLE AND BELLEVUE.

By Frank Weatherall

In 1904, when I was two years old, my parents came to live in a small white single-fronted house which is still standing and was then known as No. 2 Salisbury Street, South Hurstville.

A walk from my home to Hurstville Railway Station in those days was through paddocks and tree-covered land with very few houses in Woniora Road and Maher Streets. Gallipoli Street did not then exist. On the corner of Salisbury Street and Woniora Road lived people named Brown who had a dairy of about 20 milking cows which, after being milked, were allowed to roam free and graze in the surrounding open paddocks. Mr. Brown built his house with hand-made sun-dried bricks for which he obtained clay from a brick-pit located between Woniora Road and West Street not far from Blakesley Road.

Next door to Brown's lived people called Winkworth whose house still stands but is now divided into two semi's. He conducted a nursery which covered land extending from the back of his place, up Salisbury Street to where we lived, across to where Culwulla Street is now and up to near where the Methodist Church stands in King Georges Road. At the top of the hill in Culwulla Street there was a large fence-enclosed well from which Mr. Winkworth drew water for his nursery. He had four sons whom he ruled with a rod of iron, making them work in the nursery from early morning until night. He was a hard worker himself.

There were then only five houses in Salisbury Street that I can remember and they still stand. Two are brick houses that resemble churches. Then there was the old house of Mr. Douglas on the corner of Carysfoot Street, our little house on the eastern side and next to it the brick house of Mr. Drake. In Carysfoot Street, between Australia and Gallipoli Streets, was a large weatherboard two-storey house surrounded by a very high wooden fence. It was known as 'the Ark' because its architecture resembled Noah's Ark. A Mr. D. Read, an artist and technical teacher, had it built and he lived there until his death. It was later demolished and three houses occupy the site.

Coming down Woniora Road from the railway, I remember seeing only five houses. There was a large two-storey home on the corner of Railway Parade and Woniora Parade. In recent years it was demolished because it was a traffic hazard and Kogarah Council established a park and garden there. Originally, this large home was built and occupied by the Slater family. They were known in the City Markets as the 'Strawberry Kings'. Sons Alf. and Lou. were well-known in the district. Dr. Bourke was the last occupant.

Further down Woniora Road, on the same side, was a large two-storey home standing in grounds with an 8-foot fence surrounding it. A Mr. Nixon lived here. He had a family of daughters (I think there were six) and people said the high fence was erected to provide privacy for them from the peeping eyes of young men. Only one of his daughters married. Many a time I saw the gaunt, bearded Mr. Nixon come out with his fishing-rod and basket on his way to fish at Tom Ugly's Point, always locking his front gate when he left. Nixon's house has gone and a number of cottages have been built on the site.

Almost opposite Nixon's house was a large home called 'Syncarpia'. It is still there and has been converted into a Special School by the Education Department. Further down Woniora Road, on the same side as 'Syncarpia' was a large weatherboard home standing in grounds with tall pine trees and lawns.

I first remember a Mr. & Mrs. Grey living there. They were the parents of Mrs. J. A. Lean, our Museum Convener. Further along Woniora Road, on the top of the hill before Salisbury Street, still stands the large two-storey home built and then occupied by Mr. & Mrs. Crane of Crane & Sons, Stove-makers and Ironmongers.

Let me now take you to where Salisbury Street runs into King Georges Road. In the years before the 1914-1918 War, King Georges Road was known as Belmore Road. It was a rough blue-metalled road running from Blakehurst's Chinamen's gardens up to the railway line between Hurstville and Penshurst. It crossed the railway line by means of an old rickety wooden bridge. For about half a mile before the bridge was reached the road became a narrow bush road with high blackberry bushes each side where many of us gathered blackberries with which our mothers made jam and pies. Of course, Arrowsmith Park was not then in existence.

It was about here that natural bush drainage formed itself into a clean-water creek flowing under Belmore Road and following a natural gully under Hillbrest Avenue. It then passed under a wooden bridge (known as Picnic Bridge) at Hurstville Road just near the old quarry, and then into the bush-surrounded gully down to where it met the tidal waters from Oatley Bay, in what was known as Addis' Channel. At high tide a lovely, clear salt-water swimming pool was formed where many young chaps, including myself, learned to swim.

Many of us carved our initials on a high rock where we undressed, and we all swam in the nude because only mother nature was there to see us. I wonder if that tall steep rock is still there. Somebody erected a spring-board and on Sunday mornings during the summer months, crowds of young fellows from South Hurstville and Bellevue (now Allawah) visited this first-in-the-district swimming-hole. I can still remember the names of some of the chaps - Wood, Nelson, Lockyer, Deady, Brown, Kerr (Kerr's had a dairy in the gully below George Street, next to West Street), Sherwood, Weir, Gardner, Gabbe, Tinsley, Landers, Storey. Other names have escaped me.

Mr. Addis, after whom the Channel where we swam was named, had fought in the Crimean War and when he came to this country he established a market-garden in an area now bounded by King Georges Road, Halstead, Truman and William Streets and Rickard Road. These gardens were abandoned before my time and only the grass-covered formations could be seen. The area was known as Addis' Flats. Mr. Addis shipped his vegetables to the Sydney market. His boat would come up Oatley Bay at high tide into the creek where we swam and what is now known as Poulton Park stands.

I remember that each year the Sperio-Sterio tribe of gypsies would camp there for a period, telling fortunes and petty thieving. In addition to village cricket and football matches, quite a number of bare-knuckle fights occurred on Sunday mornings on these unfenced paddocks. The best fight I saw there was between Fred Deady and "Nugget" Sherwood, the local blacksmith's son. About fifty chaps watched the fight, which was properly timed and refereed and I believe lots of money changed hands. Fred Deady got the verdict.

During the great-depression years two brothers named Cole, who lived in Whitfield Parade, assisted by two Duggan brothers, one of whom is Alderman Ernie Duggan, formerly Mayor of Kogarah, built a causeway across the creek where there is now a road. How important that area now called Poulton

Park has become in recent years - a centre of controversy! Once it was an unpolluted sylvan glade, a place where every prospect pleased, and as far as I can remember, not even man was vile.

Earlier in this article, I referred to a place called Bellevue from where many young chaps walked about two or three miles to swim at Addis' Channel. Bellevue was that area south of the railway line at Allawah, taking in Illawarra and Noble Streets, Woids Avenue, Bellevue Parade, St. Georges Parade down to Blakesley Road or Blake's Quarry. The southern boundary was formed by a creek running between St. Georges Parade and George Street. Where Allawah Railway Station now stands there was only a wooden signal-box bearing the name 'Bellevue'. When Allawah Station was built, many local people wanted it to be called Bellevue but they were over-ruled.

This area was for many years known locally as "Struggletown" because in the early days people who bought land there usually erected one or two rooms as a start. Many were migrants from the United Kingdom who came out in large numbers in 1913, just before the first World War. In such group at that time were people like the Hon. Mark Gosling, who was Chief Secretary in Jack Lang's Government in the 1930-1932 years. Mark Gosling now lives at Northbridge. His son Ron is Chairman of St. George County Council and has been Mayor of Rockdale on a number of occasions.

I suppose the most distinguished person to come from "Struggletown" was Sir Ian Potter, stockbroker, underwriter and a director of many companies. He came out with his parents from the U.K. in 1912 and went to Hurstville School with me

In the early 1920's Hurstville United Junior Rugby League Team recruited many of its players from the Bellevue area and they were urged on by the spectators by the cry of "Come on Struggos". Players like Gabba Gardner Perc. Gabbe and others got into the St. George First Grade side.

Well, one could go on and talk about Connell's Point and Kyle Bay area, as well as Carss Park, Blakehurst and Tom Ugly's Point. For those were the good old days, long before motor cars and pollution came to annoy us!

* * *

THE CARSS BUSH ESTATE.

Mrs. Sylvia Kelly, in her capacity as one of our Research Officers, has unearthed this very interesting letter addressed to the Editor of the St. George Call and printed in the issue of 12th October 1923. The letter was written by Mr. W. Duncan of Kogarah Bay.

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"There is no doubt that it will come as a surprise to many residents between Hurstville and Sydney, to be told that there is a patch of nearly one hundred acres of real bush-land within ten miles of the metropolis. Twenty years ago many people had never heard of such a place as Kogarah Bay, on the western shore of which this beauty spot lies. Though the gate giving entrance to this sylvan glade is right on Kogarah Road, on the way to Tom Ugly's Point, an ugly pinch and ugly S twist in the road, requires all the motorist's attention whether coming or going, so the gate may be passed unnoticed.

To those who wish to see what the sheltered corners of Botany Bay were like when the first landing was made at Kurnell, I say, go at once before the surveyors cut down too much scrub to get their lines true.

Although Kogarah Municipal Council has acquired this Estate, for financial reasons they find it necessary to sell a few building blocks on the fringe nearest Kogarah Road, leaving the entire water-front for recreation, as well as many rocky ridges, sheltered nooks, and grassy slopes, in all about 45 acres of Park, that is NOT to be made a sports-ground.

As I have seen the rising sun gilding the tree-tops on the eastern side of that bit of bush-land for over thirty years, I am glad to know that the Council intends keeping it in its natural state, so far as utility will permit.

Unfortunately, many veteran gums and oaks have to be sacrificed in the march of progress, but if the hands of future vandals can be restricted from pulling up wild flowers and plants, roots and branch, many samples of Australian flora can be retained.

A little way along the road to the park, on the left, is the site of a building, now gone, only the stones on which it stood being left, originally built as what would now be called a week-end cottage for the use of married members of the Carss family, when they were occasional visitors. Three acres have been donated to the Kogarah Presbyterian Church, a fitting transfer, as the old building was altered internally and long used as a meeting-place for a monthly religious service, for many years conducted by Mr. David Walker, the once well-known secretary of the Y.M.C.A., until prevented by his final illness. The writer has been present at this simple service for a small handful of worshippers, and the distance at which the voices of the singers could be heard in the then still air of the bush-land was really surprising. (See Note A.)

Miss Carss had no wish to lock up this beauty spot, anyone was welcome to stroll through it, so long as there was no destruction. The gate was kept locked, but a stile next to it was long enough to cross (or wait at) and sundowners, swaggies and tramps knew it well, as they were always sure of some tea, sugar etc of which Miss Carss kept a good stock to give them. No doubt the mystic sign of the fraternity, indicating "good mark" or "keep away" was chalked on the gate or fence posts as it was a long walk from the road to the house, and there were many visitors.

When the plans of the subdivision on the edge of this bit of "Australia as it was" are available, there will no doubt be a rush for it. Such an opportunity seldom occurs, as being within five minutes' walk of real bush, with laughing jackass and other birds still there, to say nothing of the bull-dog ants, red-jacks or soldier ants and what the bushman calls locusts, without whose deafening noise he would not think it was summer. There's a shady canopy of gum leaves fifty feet up in the air, the feet sinking among dry gum and oak leaves and twigs, real salt water within reach, and fishing for those who desire it, all within forty minutes by train and motor-bus from Central Station, Sydney.

Thanks are due to the original owner, Captain Carss (See Note P) and his daughter, the late Miss Carss, who succeeded him, and would never allow a tree to be felled, only dead wood would she allow to be taken away.

Though an appeal may not have been made direct to the Government to secure this prize as a Park, more that one Minister has been conducted over this domain within the past six years; about two years ago Messrs. Gosling, Ley,

Loughlin and others were shown through, with a view to the Government taking it over, but while admiring the carefully-preserved beauties of an ideal pleasure ground, the usual plea of "no money available" was made.

Thanks are due to the energetic and business-like Council of Kogarah, which has taken the risk and responsibility with a view to making this an attractive pleasure spot for all time to come.

* * *

Note A:

In the year 1865 Presbyterian Church Services were commenced in the home of Mr. T. Wilson, "Torwood", Rocky Point Road, Ramsgate by the Rev. William Ridley. These services were attended by the Carss family and were held fortnightly.

In 1866, the worshippers held a meeting to consider the purchase of land on which to erect a Church. Mr. William Carss thereupon offered to donate an area of two acres on which there was a weatherboard cottage. This offer was gratefully accepted, and it was decided that religious services should be commenced in the cottage on 9th December, 1866, by the Rev. William Ridley.

Church records show that services by Mr. Ridley continued without interruption until 1878, when both he and Mr. Carss died. Presbyterian headquarters then arranged for Mr. David Walker, an Elder of Ashfield Presbyterian Church and Secretary of the Y.M.C.A. to continue fortnightly services, which records show that he did until at least 1880. I have no later records at present, but unofficial information seems to disclose that services continued, and at some stage were reduced from fortnightly to monthly.

Note B:

William Carss was not, of course, the "original" owner. The land was purchased from the Crown by Jonathon Croft, who sold it to William Barton. Barton sold it to John Chappelow who mortgaged it to Lewis Gordon. The latter applied to bring the land under the provisions of the then new Real Property Act (the Torrens System) and requested that the Certificate of Title be issued in the name of William Carss. The Certificate was dated 7th April 1863 and bore the very early reference number Volume 1 Folio 11 - the eleventh Torrens Title Deed issued in New South Wales.

William Carss was not a "Captain". He came to Sydney as a cabinet-maker in 1831 and in 1838 he became a publican. His son James was known locally as "Captain Carss" but at present we have no record as to his occupation.

V. S. S.
