



# THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

S E P T E M B E R

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council)

President:  
Mr. J. E. Veness,  
6 Lance Avenue,  
BLAKEHURST. 2221.  
'Phone: 546 3932.

Hon. Treasurer:  
Mrs. K. Johns,  
38 Princes Hghwy,  
KOGARAH, 2217  
'Phone: 587 4848

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 - 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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Our next meeting will be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday, 12th September in the Exhibition Lounge on the Second Floor of the Civic Centre, Belgrave Street, Kogarah.

Our breezy Speaker will be Mr. W. Foster, M.A., Dip.Mod.Languages (one of our Hon. Consultants) who was listened to with great enjoyment when he gave us a Talk about the Botanic Gardens.

From his wealth of knowledge concerning early Sydney, Mr. Foster has extracted a pot-pourri of events to capture our interest. You'll hear about the building of the Sydney Town Hall, the Wreck of the Dunbar, St. Andrew's Cathedral, the Sandhills Cemetery, some old Court Cases, St. Mary's Cathedral, Shipwrecks, the Greycliff disaster, etc. etc. all related in Mr. Foster's inimitable manner. No one will willingly miss this talk, which is entitled "Some Highlights of Early Sydney".

The Ladies on Supper Roster are - Mrs. D. Diment and Mrs. Margaret Miller.

The Raffle for the Rug, which was kindly donated by Mrs. McEwen, was won by Miss Coxhead.

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There was an excellent attendance at our August meeting, when Members who flocked to hear Mr. Don Sinclair's talk "The Incident at Clontarf" were not disappointed but thoroughly enjoyed a well-prepared address presented as attractively as Mr. Sinclair has taught us to expect.

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It is with very sincere regret that we record the decease of our friend, Mrs. Thelma Hayman. Mrs. Hayman has not enjoyed good health for a very long time and has been lovingly cared for by her husband, Fred, who at the time of writing is a patient in The St. George Hospital.

Members have enjoyed contributions to our Newsletter by Mrs. Hayman. One article, in December 1971 was about Hillcrest Avenue, Hurstville, and the other, in August, 1973, related to the Fitzgerald family and Fitzgerald Hill in Kogarah. A further article concerning early Hurstville picture shows will appear shortly.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to Mr. Hayman, and family, and it is our earnest wish that Mr. Hayman will greatly benefit as a result of his stay in Hospital.

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A number of our Members attended the splendid Exhibition which the Hurstville Historical Society arranged in the Amaroo Hall at the Hurstville Civic Centre. This most extensive and interesting exhibition was open to the public at three sessions each day from the 12th to 16th August and was very well attended.

Our sincere congratulations to our sister Society, and we are happy to know that the hard work of members who so cleverly arranged the display was obviously greatly appreciated.

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OUR SOCIAL SECRETARY SAYS .....

The Bowral - Kangaroo Valley Tour - September 29th.

We have a full Coach, but will take reserve bookings at the September meeting in case there is a cancellation. All we have to do now is to be on time at 9 a.m. sharp at the Civic Centre, Kogarah and hope for a fine and sunny day. Please remember to bring a thermos of tea or coffee. Biscuits, milk and sugar will be available for morning tea. Also pack your picnic lunch.

We'll hope that the rain we have had will ensure that the Tulips will be at their very best. We hope to return home at 5 to 5.30 p.m.

All money to be paid at the September meeting, please. Seats \$3.50.

President's Beef & Burgundy Night on 28th August.

Fifty four members and friends helped to make this a happy and pleasant evening. We were all sorry that Mr. Vince Smith and Mr. Bill Wright, our Vice Presidents, were on the sick list and could not attend. Hope both are well over the wog by now.

Mr. Philip Geeves, who is an authority on the subject (as well as being a noted historian), gave a most delightful and informal talk on the making of wines and members enjoyed some special varieties he so generously brought for tasting. They must have been pretty good, too, for one of our ladies, after a few tastes, gave an impromptu dance, then had everyone on their feet.

Thanks to Mr. Chris Kelly of Kelly's Cellar who donated the wines for the evening, also to Mr. & Mrs. Bob Collins of Kogarah Bay who, as usual, donated the Orchid Posies.

Mr. Jack Lean supplied the old time music which kept many toes tapping.

President Jeff, made his usual speech of welcome and then announced the Beef and Burgundy was on. It was indeed -- Many came back for a second helping which made the Four Cooks (Mrs. Burghart, Mrs. Veness, Mrs. Butters and Mrs. Kelly) very pleased indeed. All felt they had at last passed Grade 1 in cooking.

Usually this night ends at around 9.30, but at 11 p.m. we were beginning to wonder if it was to end up as an all night affair, but by 11.30 p.m. all was under control and everyone was on their way home.

I would like to express my thanks to Mrs. Burghart and Mrs. McEwen for the wonderful support they give on these nights. Without them I just would not be able to manage. Also to Jeff who works harder than all of us, even if it is his night! Many thanks!

Barefoot in the Park.

Everyone who attended the Illawarra Theatre Guild to see this show enjoyed it very much. Although we did not make very much on the night financially, it was a pleasant night out. The next show "Duet for Two Hands" will be in October -- more news in our October Newsletter.

Carss' Cottage Special Recipe "Beef & Burgundy"

As we have had many enquiries about the recipe we have decided to sell it for 15 cents per copy. Please let me know at the next meeting who would like to purchase a copy.

Sylvia Kelly  
(Social Secretary)

### MUSEUM REPORT.

The month of August, marked the third anniversary of the opening of "Carss' Cottage" as the Historical Museum and Art Centre of the Kogarah Historical Society.

During these three years, the number of visitors to the cottage would probably exceed ten thousand and a tremendous amount of interest has been shown in our displays, and in the history of our locality.

Many changes and improvements have been made in the presentation of exhibits as our collection has grown, and this we hope, will be a continuing process.

The celebration of our "Birthday" was held in "Carss' Cottage" on Wednesday, the twenty eighth, and a most enjoyable occasion it was!

Now, it's on with the job again, and perhaps some "spring cleaning" for the cottage, (both interior and exterior) and some attention to the garden is also necessary.

The weather has not been very favourable on August's four Sundays, but sales have been quite good.

Our first acknowledgement for donations this month, is to Mrs. B. Phelan, who visited the Museum recently and left the following items with the members on duty -

1. Theatre Royal Posters - Reprints of Stage Performances - one of 1908.
2. Hunter Valley Festival Souvenir (1973)
3. Souvenir Colour Reproductions of photographs "Old Government House", Parramatta (National Trust)
4. Snuff tin from Hedge's Chemists, Birmingham.  
(Snuff formula on edge of tin)
5. Four Volumes (of set of 5 vols) "Electrical Installations"  
by Rankin Kennedy C.E.

Also, we have received a butter cooler, donated by Mr. D. Taylor of Carlton and we acknowledge this gift with our thanks.

Gwen Lean  
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(Convenor)

### MUSEUM ROSTER (Please ring 57-5940 if date is inconvenient).

September	8th	- Mrs. R. Diment and Mr. P. Diment
	15th	- Mrs. B. Butters and Mrs. B. Drake
	22nd	- Mrs. K. Slater and Mr. K. Griove
	29th	- Mrs. S. McOnie and Miss M. Foley
October	6th	- Mrs. G. Johns and Mrs. G. Taylor
	7th	(Monday - holiday) Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Lean
	13th	- Mrs. J. James and Miss D. McLean
	20th	- Mr. and Mrs. R. Holmes
	27th	- Mr. and Mrs. E. Schweikert

### NEWS FROM THE TREASURER.

Our Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. G. Johns, has extracted these items from the financial statement for August -

Museum Admissions	\$28.00	Jam Sales	\$26.00	Pottery Sales	\$45.25
Subscriptions	\$13.50	Rug Raffle	\$23.20		

(Paid to Potters' Group for July Sales \$7.65.)

### LIBRARY REPORT.

We are endeavouring to collect a complete set of our Newsletters and would be very appreciative if members could give to the Library any of the following issues we are missing:-

1971 - January, February, May, June, July, August.

1972 - May, June.

1973 - February, March, May, June, August, October, November, December.

1974 - January, May, June, July.

The following is an acknowledgement and review of publications received during July and August:-

- \* July and August issues of the St. George Historical Society Bulletin. In the July issue a chronological arrangement of events relating to the Sans Souci area compiled by Lieut. Commander R. F. Moag is presented. The August issue has a leading article entitled "The Highbury Barn Hotel, Forest Road, Arncliffe" by Gifford and Eileen Eardley.
- \* August Newsletter of the Hurstville Historical Society. The historical article is a "History of Hurstville Park and Oval and of Associations of the St. George District Cricket Club".
- \* August Newsletter of the Royal Australian Historical Society. Articles include "A Royal Gift" by Hazel King which relates the story of how King William IV in 1835 sent to the Maori Chief Litore a suit of armour in recognition of the help he gave to Captain Sadler Commander of the H.M.S. Buffalo; and "The Switched on Generation" by Philip Geeves which gives an account of the initial adoption of electric lighting in the 1880's.

Colleen McEwen.

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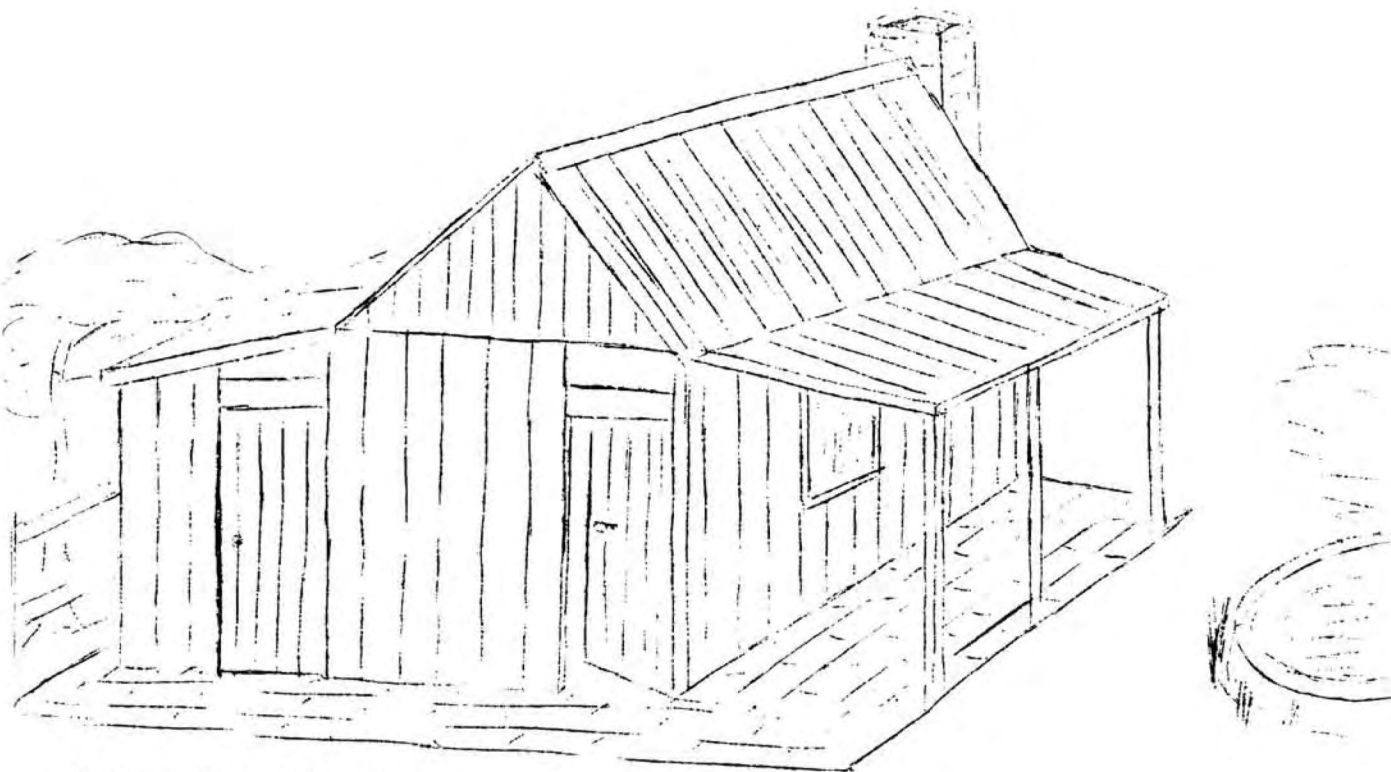
### THE HOUSEWIFE'S LOT.

by Mrs. M. Grieve.

A kitchen clean and quite capacious,  
A box of wood and a fire rapacious,  
Poker and bellows and tools of trade,  
Home made bread and marmalade,  
Fresh churned butter and milk to skim  
Grates to clean and wicks to trim.  
Bees' wax and Mrs. Pott's irons  
Nothing but work in the home environs,  
A backward glance to Grandma's day  
"She had it hard" I hear you say.

The kitchen now is a dream of bliss,  
Automatic that and automatic this,  
No peas to shell and nothing to fix,  
Just buy the packets of "ready mix",  
All mod cons and electric fans,  
Washing up machines for the dirty pans  
"Take-away" meals and a big deep freeze  
We've never had it so good, so take your ease.

But! There's one little snag, the fall-out my dear, And also pollution, the danger we fear.



#### PRESIDENTS REPORT.

Many years ago when the colony was still comparatively young, coaches made their laborious way along the great western road from Parramatta. Their first stopping place for a change of horses and stretching of the passengers legs, was a relay station at what is now called Colyton.

Within the area of this relay station, was erected a small dwelling typical of its time, earth floor, split slab walls, sapling roof frames bark or shingle roof.

After 150 years or so of use, first as a dwelling and eventually as a cowshed, this hut has now come into the possession of the Kogarah Historical Society.

A willing team of workers sketched, photographed, measured and numbered all details of the building and then proceeded to pull it to pieces. A lot of effort a few bruised fingers, some aching backs and the structure has been transferred to storage at Carlton.

What significance has a slab hut at Colyton to an historical society at Kogarah? In Carss' Cottage Museum we have a photograph of such a hut which was erected on land adjacent to the Kogarah Road at what is now Beverly Park.

While the particular hut was built near Parramatta it is similar to so many houses which existed throughout the Kogarah area.

It is our hope that the hut may be re-erected near the Museum area so that a true representation of early Australia building will be preserved.

## "ALL STATIONS TO BORONIA"

By V. S. Smith.

If the efforts of the Mortdale Chamber of Commerce and about two hundred residents of Mortdale had met with success in 1923, the familiar train destination-sign "All Stations to Mortdale" would not now exist, but would be replaced by one reading "All Stations to Boronia".

The story begins a long time ago and perhaps can be best introduced by quoting what two newspaper correspondents had to say. One, in the year 1905, contended that "Mortdale is rather a bad name to give this flourishing little township. Translated from the foreign tongue it signifies 'the Valley of Death' - a bad name for such a health-giving spot". In 1922, the other correspondent wrote "For over twelve years residents have been endeavouring to change the name of Mortdale because of its deadly meaning - 'Mort' = 'Dead', 'dale' = 'valley', - 'Valley of the Dead'".

Over many years there have been strong advocates among those who have favoured the retention of "Mortdale" as "a name commemorating one of the most illustrious citizens of the Commonwealth" as one correspondent described Thomas Sutcliffe Mort, and also for the many who represented the "Mort" = "Dead" school of thought and sought a change of name.

The arguments raged for so long, and proposed alternative names for this pleasant suburb have been so numerous, that we can give only a few examples which will enable the reader to appreciate how divergent have been the views of the opposing sides.

In the year 1917 the name "Letton" was submitted to the Department of Lands as a suitable alternative to "Mortdale", but it was rejected. Then, in 1920, "Montrose" was suggested and in 1921 so was "Morella". Neither of these met with success.

Of course, there is no evidence that any of the suggested names were more acceptable to the residents than was "Mortdale". Concerning "Morella", one correspondent wrote that he "failed to understand why the Chamber of Commerce" which submitted the name "was willing to risk the stigma of apparent association with a Spanish brigand or some such picturesque cutthroat by proposing to saddle themselves with a name which would appeal to the imagination of the writer of 'blood-and-thunder' fiction".

The same writer suggested that a suitable name could perhaps be culled from the field of Australian flora, and submitted "Boronia" which, in addition to being appropriate to the district, in which wild-flowers abounded, needed no disfiguring tag such as "glen", "grove" or "ville" to make it complete. The Mortdale Chamber of Commerce gladly adopted "Boronia" and submitted it to the Department, only to receive a rejection "owing to there being a similarly named locality in the Hornsby district". It turned out that such "locality" was a spot, distinguished only from the miles and miles of wild uninhabited country surrounding it, by a railway signal-box which was dignified by the name "Boronia" on its side.

In March 1923 the Kogarah Council submitted "Kingrose" as a name which it thought was suitable and the Department replied that it regarded the name as being satisfactory providing the Postal, Education and Railway Departments were also agreeable. The hopes of many residents were raised - but only for a short time, for they were soon to be dashed by an intimation from the Postal

Department that it could not accept "Kingrose" because it might be confused with "Kingcote" in South Australia. Neither could the Education Department agree for it already had a school called "Kingsgrove", and the Railways Department could see no need for any change whatever "because there is little confusion so far as railway business is concerned".

Before the abovementioned reply was received by Kogarah Council, a correspondent reminded readers that "nine-tenths of Mortdale, including railway and school, lies on the former premises of George Kemp and James Newman" and stated that the latter was the first man to make and burn bricks in the district. He therefore submitted "Kempville", "Kemphurst", "Kempfield", "Newmanville", "Newmanhurst", and "Newmandelle" as names from which a choice could be made.

Likewise, before the Department's rejection of "Kingrose" had been received, the Secretary of the Mortdale Chamber of Commerce, which was most active in the matter, published a list of twenty aborigine names which he had received from residents. If a particular one of these had been chosen, our train destination-sign would now read "All Stations to Koomangoonong".

Then an indignant reader wrote protesting that any new name should continue to commemorate Thomas Sutcliffe Mort and strongly urged the choice of "Evermort". He must have indeed have been an optimist to think that those who read "Mort" as "Dead" would agree to accept a name which, to them, would mean "Everdead".

The same writer then, as a second thought, suggested that perhaps the time had come to honour the name of an "old, respected, and sport-loving family" and to adopt "Juddham", "Juddthorpe" or "Juddley".

At this point, Mr. Michael Bocking, the Secretary of the Mortdale Chamber of Commerce produced a bombshell! He lodged with the Minister for Local Government, a Petition signed by over 200 residents, praying that the Governor, in exercise of the powers conferred upon him by the Local Government Act, should separate from the Municipalities of Hurstville and Kogarah those portions of land described hereunder, and constitute such portions as a new Municipality under the name of the "Municipality of Boronia".

The proposed boundaries of the new Municipality of Boronia were described as follows, viz, "All that part of Hurstville Municipality west of Penshurst Street and north of Georges River and all that part of Kogarah Municipality west of Laycock Road and the north-east arm of Oatley Bay".

Thus, the area proposed to be severed from Kogarah would have been about 1144 acres with a population of about 2730 persons. The area to be taken from Hurstville comprised about 3091 acres in which lived about 5590 persons. The respective sizes of the three Municipalities would then have been as follows:-

	<u>Mun. of Kogarah</u>	<u>Mun. of Hurstville</u>	<u>Mun. of Boronia</u>
<u>Area in Acres:</u>	3305	2669	4235
<u>Population:</u>	15814	11811	8310

The Petitioners gave the following five reasons to justify their request:-

1. The Municipalities of Kogarah and Hurstville are too unwieldy for economic and equitable government.
2. The area seeking separation being so far removed from the centre of present administration and being the extreme end of the two Municipalities, it would be desirable that the growing population, of which Mortdale is the hub, be controlled by a Municipality in that centre.

3. The decided and extreme dissatisfaction of over 95% of the ratepayers at the administration of this end of Kogarah and Hurstville Municipalities by the respective Councils.
4. The main portions of both Mortdale and Oatley are cut in two by the railway line and are part of two separate Municipalities which is most confusing and inconvenient not only to ratepayers but to visitors and postal and other authorities. It is considered advisable for better and more economical management that these two suburbs should be in one Municipality.
5. The existing managements are detrimental to the district's progress.

The Kogarah and Hurstville Councils had not been unco-operative regarding a proposed change of name of Mortdale, but a Petition seeking the deletion of large areas from their respective Municipalities was a horse of a different colour and caused quite a stir. The Hurstville aldermen were sharply divided into two opposing and very vocal groups. The Kogarah aldermen were united, anti, and most angry. Shaking with rage, they moved that the Minister be informed that "this Council is distinctly, strongly and unanimously opposed to the scheme".

However, the Petition complied with the law and the Minister for Local Government appointed Mr. R. D. Fitzgerald, the Deputy Chief Engineer for National and Local Government Works to hold a public inquiry and make a report. After thoroughly inspecting the areas in dispute, Mr. Fitzgerald opened the inquiry in Mortdale in September 1923 and heard witnesses for and against the proposal.

In his Report to the Minister, Mr. Fitzgerald said that so far as the area proposed to be deleted from Kogarah was concerned, there did not appear to be any serious desire on the part of ratepayers for the transfer or that any advantage would result therefrom. A large proportion of the general rate had been expended in the area, where the roads etc. were in good order.

He said that if the new Municipality was confined to the Hurstville area, there would be entirely insufficient funds available for roads etc and therefore the new Council would be compelled to borrow. But the rating limit did not permit of a sufficiently large rate to enable the loan to be repaid.

Mr. Fitzgerald reported that the proposal had emanated from a restricted area and was not proved to be in accordance with the wishes of a reasonably large majority of the ratepayers concerned.

Upon receipt of this unfavourable report, the Minister intimated that he was not prepared to take any further action in the matter - and there it has uneasily rested.

But over the years rumblings of discontent concerning the name "Mortdale" still have been heard. For example, after declining to support a request for a change of name to "Renown Park", "Wavell" or "Winston" in 1941, a year later Hurstville Council received another suggestion, this time for a change to "Kintail".

Perhaps with the desire to settle the question of a change of name once and for all, Council gave the question publicity and intimated that it would welcome the views of ratepayers. In due course the Town Clerk reported that letters and signatures to petitions in favour of the change of name numbered about

one hundred and fifty, and objections to any change of name totalled a similar number. Council considered that this very small response to its invitation denoted a lack of interest in the question on the part of ratepayers, and decided "to oppose a change of name to "Kintai" or to anything else."

It has been a long battle of words, extending over many years, but to date those favouring the continued commemoration of the name of Thomas Sutcliffe Mort have been victorious, thus, no doubt, earning the gratitude of the Commissioner for Public Transport who has been saved the trouble of re-painting all those train destination-signs reading "All Stations to Mortdale".

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For a considerable proportion of her life Kay, the eleven-year-old daughter of our President, Mr. Jeff Veness, has been accustomed to having Dad arrive home with important new discoveries and interesting items of historical news, so it is not surprising that when the opportunity occurred for HER to secure for us one of the most interesting descriptions of Carss' Bush we have had, she grasped it - with both hands! Here, she tells us about it!

#### A 50-year-old Newspaper Description of

#### CARSS' BUSH

By Kay Veness

On a recent Monday morning some teachers were searching in a cupboard at the Blakehurst Public School when, much to my surprise, they discovered a neatly-folded newspaper, discoloured with age, which upon being opened disclosed some very clear photographs of Carss' Bush - taken at a time, in 1923, when axemen were felling the forest giants, whose tops, silhouetted against the sky, may have been actually seen by Captain Cook, who is known to have visited this locality - or by Bass and Flinders, as they rowed up Georges River in the Tom Thumb.

One picture shows the lonely 96-year-old tomb of William Carss as it lay among the tangled undergrowth at the edge of the forest.

Another, captioned "Sunshine and Shadow" gives us a glimpse of a pretty bend in the track leading to the old homestead. The thick woods rise steeply to the right, while on the left is a very old post and slab rail fence. Trees and bushes grow across the disused track.

An illustration indicates the enormous size of the base of a forest giant, fully six feet in diameter, which two men, with what Dad says is a "monkey jack" are endeavouring to uproot. The caption says "a herculean task. Two men shift twenty tons." This picture proves that the description is not exaggerated when the age of some of the trees is given as over two hundred years.

Carss Bush was a privately-owned heavily wooded area which the Carss family were interested to preserve in its natural state - and nothing ever happened there to cause newspapers to take the slightest notice. As an example of the kind of occasion when the property was opened to visitors, Mr. Smith has told me that in 1889 Miss Carss invited the boys and girls of the Kogarah Presbyterian Sunday School to hold their picnic in her grounds. The Sunday School had to go as far as Newtown to hire two omnibuses, each drawn by four horses, to take the children to the shores of Kogarah Bay. At the end of the day the children lined up beside the old stone home and sang hymns for Miss Carss.

But this is not the sort of news that newspapers write about - and nothing more exciting ever happened. It seemed impossible, therefore, to find anything about Carss Bush in old newspapers.

That's what makes this description, printed in The Sun on 7th September, 1923, (and priced at one penny) of great value and I was most grateful when Mr. Bradshaw, the Deputy Head Master, donated it to the Society.

There seems to be no need to question the accuracy of the news-reporter about his description of the property in 1923, for he only told us what he saw. But in speaking of the past he draws on his imagination when he says that convicts cut the stone for the cottage walls - and quotes the date of its erection twenty years too early. So I have omitted a few points such as these, for it is the 1923 description of the property that Members will find to be interesting.

Here is the newspaper account:-

Forest at the City Gates

Beautiful Carss' Bush

Giant Trees and Quaint Stones.

Can you imagine a forest at the city gates? A place where giant trees have flourished since Captain Cook landed in Australia, a virgin area of seventy glorious acres of natural bushland, unspoiled, untouched by the hand of man? Can you imagine a place of peace and complete quietness, away from the noise and rattle of traffic, where the birds sing all day long, where every kind of wild flower grows, where you can stroll through dense standing timber for about an hour without sighting any man-made thing? Can you?

If you can, then let your mind carry you to Carss' Bush, the forest at the city gates, just a trifle over nine miles from Sydney. But hasten slowly for this is what you could have seen a month ago, before the spoiler with his axe and forest devil, his monkey-jack and wedges came on the scene. A month ago it could have been saved, and what are probably the last of Sydney's greatest trees preserved - but that was a month ago.

Today, many of the forest giants that have waved their skyscraping branches for two hundred years, and more, lie humbled in the dust. Their leaves mingle with the chips the axe-men left behind them. Great gaping holes, excavated by powerful explosives, mark the sites of their grip on mother-earth and heaps of fire-wood and split rails are all that is left of many a noble red-gum, blackbutt, bloodwood and honey-suckle.

Wander further under nature's cathedral, treading lightly on the deep mossy carpet, ascend the rocky plateau, covered with flowers, and flowering shrubs and one might well be pardoned for imagining that Sydney was a thousand miles away. Through the trees, where fire has forced a little

clearing, gleams a wide silver streak, edged with golden sands - Kogarah Bay. A hundred feet below dance its wavelets, which ripple and run as the tide advances from Botany Bay to this deep inlet of Georges River.

If you could visit it today, and obliterate from your mind the fallen trees and the scene of desolation left behind near the entrance by the axemen, you could picture it as William Carss, who died in 1878, left it and about exactly as he found it when he purchased it early in the 1860's.

Once this beautiful area was his estate. Even today, you can see signs of the care he bestowed upon his undeniably lovely grounds. Follow the old drive, which is hard and firm, despite the fact that it was first laid down three quarters of a century ago, and let it lead you to the quaint stone house at Carss Point. Forget for a minute that you live in the bustling days of 1923, and see it with the eyes of those who planned it. Stout fences, covered thickly with lichen and moss, stand even today, resisting the weather, the ants, and climatic conditions generally. Solid stone blocks constitute the building material used in the house. No fancy trimmings, just solid straight lines, good for another hundred years or more. Pass between the tiny stone laundry and the main house and observe the octagonal flagstones in the yard, and then into the garden, where the stone sundial reposes.

A tiny black dog barks at you from beside the stone trough, and an agile fox-terrier with a wicked eye comes sneaking out from the depths of a verandah chair carved out of a solid log. In the garden the undergrowth is so deep that the water, only yards away, is invisible. Having seen all there is to see there, pass further on and follow the pretty pathway a couple of hundred yards away from the house - something gleams through the trees, something sombre, and out of place in such a spot. A grave - surely not? Yes, a grave. Here, a few yards from the waves, surrounded by trees, lies all that is mortal of the once proud owner of Carss Bush. Read the plain inscription: Sacred to the Memory of William Carss, who died at Kogarah, May 26, 1878 and was interred here on May 30, aged 78 years. A peaceful spot and a fit resting place for souls who crave peace.

"Crash". In the distance you hear another forest giant falling and then the ring of axes. What does it all portend? Progress! The advance of civilization to this quiet and out of the way corner. It means all that, and more. Where the trees are falling, wide streets will open up. Some day houses will be built here, and little children who never knew of the giant trees or the Carss' family will romp in the streets and play in the gardens.

Luckily not all of the trees have to fall, the path of destruction lies only where the roads are to run. The rest will be converted into a beautiful park by the Kogarah Council, but they have found it necessary to subdivide a large portion of this great virgin forest in order to pay the cost of the total area. It is probable that had an appeal been made to the Government the whole could have been saved, but that, alas, is too late to think of.

A forest at the city gates, nine miles from Sydney, just outside Langlea, on the Tom Ugly's Road and about two miles from Kogarah.

You wouldn't believe it, would you?

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