



# THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

MAY, 1976

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OUR NEXT MEETING. Our next meeting will be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday, 13th May, on the second floor of the Civic Centre, Belgrave Street, Kogarah.

On this occasion we are fortunate in having a visit from Mr. Bill Webb of the Bankstown Cine Society and he will screen two interesting films - one dealing with The Wiseman's Ferry - St. Alban's Area and in the other we'll see some fine old stonework in many interesting Churches and Bridges for which Tasmania is famous.

Ladies on SUPPER ROSTER are Mrs. Taylor and Mrs. Lawson.

The RAFFLE PRIZE is being donated by Mrs. V. Smith.

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OUR APRIL MEETING.

Unfortunately, a few days prior to our April Meeting, it was ascertained that our Speaker, Mr. W. F. Freeman, had developed an attack of influenza and would be unable to give his illustrated talk on Sydney Cove which has therefore been postponed until August.

In this sudden emergency, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Foster, most kindly agreed to attend when Mr. Foster gave a most interesting and informative talk on America and the Americans when some common misconceptions were brought to light and remedied. With his usual bright and breezy manner, Mr. Foster had no difficulty in holding the interest of members, most of whom, I think, were considerably surprised to learn, for example, that comparatively few Americans can now trace their ancestry to Britain but look, instead, to other European countries as their "homeland".

As a complement to this factual talk, Mrs. Foster screened a selection of colour slides which were made doubly interesting by her well-prepared commentary. We express our gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Foster for so willingly coming to our assistance.

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A PROJECTED TOUR FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT.

For forty-three lucky people we have a proposed tour in a very comfortable bus on the week-end of 16th-17th October. We propose to take you to Bathurst and Hill End.

We leave Kogarah at 6.30 a.m. and arrive in Bathurst in time for lunch. There is much to see at Bathurst and the afternoon will be given to sight-seeing.

We spend a comfortable night in the Motor Inn Motel and leave early the next morning for interesting Hill End where we will remain until lunch time.

After lunch we leave for home and expect to arrive at Kogarah at about 7.30 p.m.

How much for all this? Everyone agrees that the approximate cost of \$29.00 is a bargain! But the amount is payable by the date of the September Meeting.

We can take only 43 so how about booking with Mrs. Val Burghart 546-4385.

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CUR STREET STALL.

Pardon another reminder about our Street Stall on 20th August but NOW is the time to prepare anything saleable - except cakes and biscuits. But it's time to get promises from friends for them too.

(A fortnight ago the Presbyterian Ladies' Street Stall made a net profit of \$247. Can we beat that??)

#### MUSEUM REPORT.

The month of April has been an extremely active one for the Museum with Easter and Anzac holidays falling in this period.

The faultless weather over the Anzac Week-end attracted many visitors to the Park and Cottage. The entrance takings for Anzac Sunday were \$13.90 and on Monday \$16.80 was collected, which indicates the success of these two days. It is interesting to look back and compare other years with this results. In 1975 total admission takings for Anzac day were \$8.10 and the weather was recorded as dull; in 1974 takings \$1.60, weather "very overcast and we have had intermittent rain all afternoon"; 1973 takings \$14.30, fine and sunny weather. From this comparison it can be fairly safely said that the weather can make the difference between a good, and a bad day at the Cottage. With this in mind let us keep our fingers crossed for fine weather every Sunday.

Two members of the Society, Mrs. Kermond and Mrs. Fitzhardinge, went on duty for the first time this month, and from all accounts spent a busy, but enjoyable time at the cottage. Would YOU like to join the Museum roster? If you enjoy chatting to people about bygone days and ways, and if you can spare one Sunday in every two months, you are just the right person for the job.

I'm pleased to report that Gwen Lean is recovering nicely, and should soon be back on deck looking after the Museum and adding her special, and much admired touch to the cottage.

The characteristics of many Museums seems to include a moth-eaten appearance, and a musty smell, but such labels cannot be applied to Carss' Cottage. One reason for this is the addition of fresh flowers every week-end, but in recent weeks I have had great difficulty in finding enough flowers in our garden. If anyone could give some flowers for arrangement one week-end I would be most grateful.

Another way we have kept our Museum looking fresh is by having a nicely painted interior. As the cottage was last painted in 1971, prior to the opening, the Management Committee felt it was time for the walls to be repainted. An acceptable quote has been obtained, and work will begin shortly on this project.

Two displays are under preparation at the moment, the Federation exhibit set up in commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of Federation in Australia; and moves have been made to extend the display in the front room (where the model is situated), to a full parlor setting. The table in this room was made by William Carss, who was a cabinet-maker by trade. We intend to have this piece polished and add other pieces of furniture to the room. Mrs. Johns has undertaken the task of dressing another model to complete the display.

Items donated during the last month have included:-

- \* A glass hand-painted vase approximately 100 years old - donated by Mrs. R. Young of Kyle Bay.
- \* Rostrum Sewing Machine - donated by Mr. Fornder of Croydon Park.
- \* A portrait of Mr. Coxhead, first Ranger of Carss' Park - donated by Miss Gwen Coxhead.

Colleen McEwen.

#### Museum Roster.

May 16th Mrs. R. Diment and Miss K. Duggan  
" 23rd Miss J. Nicholson and Mrs. M. Boland  
" 30th Miss P. Harry and Mrs. B. Dodd  
June 6th Mr. and Mrs. J. Howard  
" 13th Mr. Wright and Mr. Grieve  
" 20th Mrs. M. Grieve and Mrs. D. Hatton  
" 27th Mrs. G. Johns and Mrs. G. Taylor  
July 4th Mrs. S. McOnie and Miss M. Foley

#### To Open.

Miss C. McEwen  
Mr. J. Veness  
Mrs. C. McEwen  
Mr. J. Veness  
Miss C. McEwen  
Mrs. D. Hatton  
Mrs. G. Johns  
Mr. J. Veness

(If any date is not suitable, please 'phone Miss C. McEwen  
537-2090)

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#### "AUSTRALIA DAY" or "ANNIVERSARY DAY"

On this question, referred to in our April Newsletter, the voting of Members at the last Meeting indicated that the majority preferred "Australia Day".

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#### PAYMENT FOR BUS TOURS.

It is thought that the majority of our members will agree that those who book seats for our Bus Tours are responsible to meet the cost even if they don't come. Our trip to Springwood was a most pleasant outing and at the meeting where it was announced all seats were immediately booked and 15 names added to a waiting list.

Those fifteen disappointed people and also others whose friends they were are certainly not going to be pleased to learn that we left for Springwood with 5 EMPTY SEATS for which payment has not yet been made.

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#### THE HOLE IN THE DOUGHNUT.

##### So That's How it Started!

An old New England sea captain, one Hanson Gregory, gave the modern American doughnut its hole. The date of the great contribution was 1847. The captain was a boy at the time. Watching his mother fry doughnuts, he noticed that the centers of the cakes always seemed doughy, and suggested eliminating this part before the cakes were cooked. Laughingly she followed the suggestion and the result was so satisfactory that she never went back to the old way. Her method was copied by others until it spread over the whole country. -- Adapted from the American Restaurant Magazine.

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As the income-tax bureau sees us -- Australia, land of untold wealth!

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A woman's promise to be on time carries a lot of wait!

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## BUS TRIP TO SPRINGWOOD.

Sunday - May 2nd, 1976.

Despite the fact that the weather-men reported the end of the so called Indian Summer, and predicted a sudden cold snap, we had a perfect day weather-wise and every other wise.

The Bus Driver directed our attention either left or right to particular places of interest. Sometimes a very old home of the pioneering days or a new development where the houses were crammed together as though there was an acute shortage of land.

After crossing the George's River at Liverpool, we travelled on the Hume Highway and turned off at Elizabeth Drive and continued our journey some distance on Wallgrove Road.

Our Driver informed us that Lapstone Bridge was so named because the formation of the surrounding mountains reminded the pioneers of a cobbler's lapping stone. (Lapstone - a stone held in the lap on which the cobblers beat leather - Webster's dictionary). We looked out on the beautiful Nepean River where rowing and motor boat races are held. The surrounding bushland still showed the scars of the 1973 bush fires. Looking back we had a panoramic view of Emu Plains where the Prison Farm for the rehabilitation of male prisoners is situated.

At the commencement of World <sup>War</sup> I all the beautiful Lapstone Hotel was taken over by the R.A.A.F. and it is still in their control. We passed through various Mountain townships, Glenbrook, Blaxland, Warrimoo, an aboriginal word meaning "the nest of the eagle", Valley Heights, where in bygone years extra engines were stationed to be used to "push and pull" the trains up the very steep grades.

Then on to Springwood and Norman Lindsay's home, which of course was the main objective of our outing.

After partaking of a picnic lunch in idyllic surroundings we proceeded to inspect the house with its priceless collection of paintings by an Australian genius. It would be interesting to obtain one brief sentence from each person on the bus - just one sentence to describe one's reaction to the vibrant testimony depicted on those walls, to the amazing talent and prodigious energy of one of our most famous sons who worked all his life, even in his declining years. We could have stayed much longer and appreciated every moment.

On the homeward journey we visited St. Thomas' Church of England at Mulgoa. The foundation stone of this historical building was laid by Miss Jane Jamieson, 22nd August, 1836. If time had permitted we would have browsed among the tombstones and found much history recorded there. The following poem was near the collection box just inside the door - "Come in and rest and think and kneel and pray - What men have builded for God's glory see -- Give thanks, and so in peace, go on thy way". From the outside of the building its appearance is so fresh and new, it must have been recently restored. St. Thomas' was consecrated by the first Bishop of Australia, William Grant Broughton in 1838.

Our next stop was another place of worship - the Shrine of Mount Shoenstatt, which was built by the German Catholics in the community. The Shrine, the surrounding grounds and the view from the main building were things of beauty. I think every one had a very rewarding and enjoyable day.

M. Grieve.

## THE FLASH COOT.

by C.J. Dennis.

Kids 'imself, don't 'e, a treat?  
  Drivin' around like a squatter,  
Dressin' in clobber so neat,  
  Puttin' on dawg like a rotter,  
Drivin' around with a skirt,  
  Careless of wot 'er pals think 'er,  
  'Im and his jinker!

Out on the Yarra Glen road  
  Puttin' 'is prad thro' 'is paces,  
Treatin' the tarts a la mode,  
  Talkin' right inter their faces,  
Talkin' O' love n' such rot,  
  While they gets pinker and pinker,  
'As 'em on strings all the lot.  
  'Im an' 'is jinker!

If I can't rope in a wife  
  'Thout spendin' quids on a pony,  
I'll remain single for life,  
  I wouldn't buy matri-mony!  
Say, but 'e makes a bloke sad,  
  Drives 'im to be a 'ard drinker,  
Drives 'im fair ropeable mad.  
  'Im an' 'is jinker!

Henry Lawson described C.J. Dennis "as my young friend Dennis" and "The Sentimental Bloke" as "more perfect than any alleged larrikin or Bottle-O character I have ever attempted to sketch". For the first edition in 1915 it was thought necessary to supply a glossary of slang words and this practise continued in future editions although many of the words no longer needed explanation and had been absorbed into the "strine" language. Recently I met an American exchange student who admitted she was fortunate because her greatest problem of settling into Australian life was learning to cope with slang!

Clarence Michael James Dennis (1876-1938) grew up in South Australia where his father was an inn-keeper. In 1908 he went to Toolangi, 40 miles from Melbourne, where he lived for awhile in a tattered tent called "the Den of Den". He contributed some verse to "The Bulletin" and the "Lone Hand" and a friend of those days, the former Toolangi school teacher, Florence Mitchell, said he seemed to think in rhyme. His poetry is humorous, but with a poet's sensitivity C.J. Dennis does convey pictures of his Australia which are nostalgic and brim-full of social comment about "the skirts and blokes 'e knoo".

The poem chosen here was written in Toolangi in 1911 before 'The Sentimental Bloke' and before his marriage. It was written for the school teacher (later Mrs. Roy Rawson), out of mock jealousy when she abandoned a promised game of tennis with Den for an exciting ride in a jinker with another young man. A jinker was a light one-horse vehicle with large wheels which bounced easily over rough tracks. It was derived from the American frontier and was ideal for the Australian bush.

E. Howard.



## A VICTORIAN MANSION

by E.M. Howard.

You may have read recent newspaper reports of the sale of an imposing mansion in King Georges Road, Penshurst. For seventeen years this house, on the corner of Penshurst Avenue, was occupied by the Oblate Fathers and has now become the property of the Life Revival Centre.

Originally, however, this Tudor-style home was erected for Mr. A. B. Weigall, 19th century educator and greatest headmaster of Sydney Grammar School, whose genius is revered and whose memory will always be bright as long as boys collect in the Big Schoolroom in College Street, Sydney, and read the memorial plaque which hangs there.

The sights and sounds surrounding Mr. Weigall's home in 1889 could have shown no indication whatsoever of the busy A-class highway front it would become in the 1970's. Although the house is built back from the road on a level area with a front garden of massive trees ringed by formal cemented garden beds, the road in front here begins its steep southern descent from the Hurstville ridge, once an unfavourable stretch of road before modern improvements. There is a 1930s photograph of Belmore Road, as it was called, in the Carss' Cottage Museum, which makes one wonder who would ever go that way by choice. The joys of jolting in a carriage or sulky over the old grades, ruts and bubbling creeks in 1890 are not worth contemplating.

Hurstville village and Forest Road were a comfortable distance away from the residence; no chance, one would think, of commercail enterprise polluting this sylvan scene. At that time the site of Arrowsmith Park, across the road, was a swampy depression and an area of thick impenetrable scrub, but beyond that was the Villa Maria Estate with its lush orchard and comfortable homestead.(1) There was a private road from Belmore Road near the railway bridge to the "Villa Maria" and on, through large unlocked gates, to Woniara Road and thence to Hurstville. The Illawarra railway line from Sydney to Hurstville had been opened with great ceremony in 1884. (2). Extensions went ahead and by 1889 railway construction had progressed as far south as Heathcote thus opening much of the St. George area for land sales. After leaving Hurstville station the line passes through a steep clay-sided cutting crossed by Belmore Road near Mr. Weigall's property, but despite the proximity of the railway cutting and the wooden traffic bridge complete with corrugated iron sides, the panorama to the south was unique in its display of forest, farm, bay and river scenery.

This was the place chosen by Albert Weigall for his magnificent colonial home reflecting his nostalgic yearnings in the Elizabethan architecture, and revealing himself as a man of letters in the decorative stained glass depicting English men of literature, meanwhile building for his own era, the Victorian Age of Plenty, a gentleman's residence of elegant proportions. Although it is private property this home is known to the National Trust for its place in our heritage. Built of red brick and sandstone with a high roof and tall Elizabethan style chimneys, it was made to last forever.

The solidity of the beautiful red chimneys recall memories of older red brick Tudor manors and palaces which have endured for hundreds of years, and although other embellishments are not numerous, the restrained neo-Gothic archway of sandstone surrounding the sturdy main doorway and the grandeur of gables, exposed beams and windows are both pleasing and impressive. The interior is decorated with leaded stained glass and high carved arches with cedar also in architraves and panelling. There is an atmosphere of quietude about the house and it is of interest to note that few women have lived there, although there was a ballroom,

now a chapel, where the decorative glass solemnly honoured Shakespeare and Bacon. (6)

Mr. Weigall arrived in Sydney in 1867 for an interview with the trustees of Sydney Grammar School. He was at that time a master at Scotch College, Melbourne. Showing his appreciation of the aura which surrounds a building, here is his own description of his first impressions: "My first sight of the (school) building was not an exhilarating one. What had once been its main entrance on its western face was represented by an ancient pair of doors, that were never opened, and by a broken arch of brickwork connecting with the street. The general appearance of the place suggested neglect and premature decay. The sense of depression that I experienced from a cursory view of the School buildings and surroundings was not lessened by my first meeting with the Board of Trustees, who informed me that there was a strong probability that the School would be closed, and that in any case I seemed too young a man to undertake its management." (3).

Mr. Weigall became Headmaster, but the school was small in 1867 with a staff of nine and fifty-three boys - numbers which grew steadily during the forty-five years of his leadership. He was the fourth son of the Reverend Edward Weigall and was born at Nantes, France on 16th February, 1840. After a brilliant education at Macclesfield Grammar School, Cheshire and Brasenose College, Oxford where he won the Hulme scholarship in 1861, he graduated with 2nd class honours in 1862 and sailed for Melbourne the following year to take up an appointment as classics master at Scotch College. Although the classics were his discipline, his interests as an educator embraced all aspects. Mathematics, English and modern languages were important to the school, and sport was encouraged without becoming the chief preoccupation. (5). Above all he worked for the development of character and many of his pupils attained distinction in adult life. He introduced the prefect system and was himself leader of the School Cadet Corps. (4) "Resplendent in scarlet coats, blue cuffs and white braid, blue trousers with red stripes and peaked caps, the Corps was an impressive sight as it marched out to drill and skirmish in the Domain, Captain Weigall leading. After entering Macquarie Street he would often give the order, "Companies Form Front", and the column would come into line, and march in line down the street. There was not much traffic to trouble them then; an occasional hansom cab had to get out of the way. If, as seemed to happen, the pupils of Miss Flower's well-known Girls' School near Bent Street were at the windows as his troops passed, the Chief would give warnings of "Eyes front", which he scarcely expected to be obeyed; or if they met a Girls' School out walking he would in an undertone give the martial exhortation "Steady, brace your courage".

In 1893, after 26 years, he had leave of twelve months from the school, and in 1904 he suffered a breakdown in health. During this time he was a member of the Chapter of St. Andrew's Cathedral and in 1909 was awarded the C.M.G. He died on 20th February, 1912 survived by his wife, the former Ada Frances Raymond, and four sons and four daughters..

In the oldest secondary school building in Australia, Sydney Grammar's Big Schoolroom, there is a plaque commemorating the life and work of this honoured late resident of Kogarah municipality:

In Memoriam Albert Bythesea Weigall, Artium Magister,  
Comes Michaeli et Georgi,  
E Collegio Aenei Nasi  
Oxonienſi quondam ſcholar  
qui huius ſcholae annos  
quadraginta quinque princeps



fruit magistro praeceptorum comiti  
amato amantes discipuli posuerunt.

Anno millensio nongentesimo  
duodecimo

Quid Dominus requirit a te? Utique facere  
judicium et diligere misericordiam et  
sollicitum ambulare cum Deo tuo

In Memory of Albert Bythessea Weigall, Master of Arts,  
Companion of the Order of Michael and George, former  
scholar of Brasenose College, Oxford, who was headmaster  
of this school for 45 years, this plaque was placed to their  
beloved headmaster, teacher and companion by his loving  
pupils in the year nineteen hundred and twelve.

"What does the Lord require of you? It is that you should  
exercise judgement, choose to practise mercy and walk  
carefully in the sight of your God."

The quotation at the bottom comes from the Book of Micah, Chapter 6. (3)

References:

1. The Kogarah Historical Society Newsletter April 1973. O'Brien's Villa Maria Estate, Hurstville; V.S. Smith.
2. St. George Historical Society. All Stations to Como - Gifford Eardley.
3. Sydney Grammar School. The Sydneian Centenary. Nov. 1975. A Brief History of the Big Schoolroom; J.L. Sheldon.
4. ibid. Sydney Grammar School Cadet Corps 1870-1975; compiled by G.D. Capel.
5. The Australian Encyclopedia.
6. Sydney Morning Herald. At Home. "The Oblate Fathers Say Their Farewells"; Pat Morath.

THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council)

PATRONS: The Mayor of Kogarah & Ald. K. R. Cavanough, A.M.

President:  
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6 Lance Street,  
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36 Louisa Street,  
OATLEY, 2223.

'Phone: 57 6954

Vice-Presidents: Mr. V. S. Smith & Mr. N. Kelly.

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: \$2.00 per annum.

Pensioners: \$1.50 " "

Students: \$1.50 " "

MEETINGS: Meetings are held on the second Thursday of each month, commencing at 8 p.m. in the Exhibition Lounge of the Civic Centre, Belgrave Street, Kogarah. (Take lift to Second Floor and turn to 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.

CARSS PARK MUSEUM: Open Sundays and Public Holidays from 1 to 5 p.m.

Admissions: 20c Adults, 10c Children. Maximum 60c for one family.

DONATIONS FOR MUSEUM. Donations of items of historical interest suitable for inclusion in the Museum may be left with the Attendant. Please be sure to leave your name and address and details of object.

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:

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26 Prince Edward Street,  
CARLTON, 2218

'Phone: 587 2938.