



# THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 1977

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#### APRIL MEETING

Next meeting will be at 8.00 p.m. on Thursday, 14th April, on the second floor of the Civic Centre, in Belgrave Street, Kogarah.

A raffle has been kindly donated by our Librarian, Mrs. Howard.

After formal proceedings have ended we shall have as guest speaker Mr. Rob Sturrock of Mosman Historical Society, who is also President of Mosman Photographic Society. Those members who remember his last presentation will look forward to this one and those who missed out on the previous occasion will have a treat in store. Presentation will be audio-visual - slides and taped commentary with music - and it is entitled "This Island Continent". During the presentation Mr. Sturrock will take us across the continent from East to North and West to South.

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Ladies on SUPPER ROSTER are: Mrs. V. Burghart and Miss G. Coxhead.

N.B. Mrs. Burghart would appreciate having the names of any ladies willing to help in this area of the Society's activities. Please don't be backward in coming forward - duties are very light!

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MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING - 26th April, at 7.30 p.m., Carss' Cottage.

#### March Report

Twelve persons were present at the last Management Committee meeting on Tuesday, 22nd March. Various matters were discussed, some at length, but the one message coming through strongly was that of the President who is appealing to members to take a more active part in the creative aspect of the Society's plans.

A letter was received from the Council of the Shire of Sutherland asking for assistance in tracking down pre-1960 copies of old local newspapers, especially the earlier editions. Newspapers mentioned are: The SENTINEL, DISTRICT NEWS, SCAM (Sutherland-Cronulla Advertising Medium), the PROPELLER and the OBSERVER (formerly CRONULLA-SUTHERLAND ADVOCATE).

The Council wishes to microfilm the newspapers, or parts thereof, for its permanent records. Anyone able to help is assured by the Council that every care would be taken of the newspapers and that they would be returned to the lender.

Please advise our Secretary, Mrs. B. Butters, if you can help.

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## SOCIAL REPORT

CARCOAR-BLAYNEY WEEK-END has had to be cancelled as it has not been possible to obtain the required number. We may decide to have it at a later date, perhaps in October, when the weather will be warmer.

BESSEMER DAY. Many thanks to Val Burghart for a very lovely day. All who attended enjoyed the morning demonstration. We were pleased to meet Val's sister, Mrs. Lawrence, who proved to be such a good cook. (I wonder if anyone was hungry enough for dinner that night?)

Two very nice gifts were given to us for raffles later on.

LANE COVE-HUNTERS HILL TRIP has been postponed as it has been decided that this would be better as a full day tour. Date will be notified in a future NEWSLETTER.

### ADVANCE NOTICE

### STALL DAY - 4th NOVEMBER

This event is scheduled for FRIDAY, 4th November. Do please jot down this date in your diary NOW. We had a most successful day last year - perhaps we can do even better this year!

FORT DENISON TOUR. This has been arranged for Saturday, 11th June, at a charge of \$1.00 per person. The party is limited to 30 persons so please be early in giving your name. Names MUST be in at the next meetin. The tour starts from No. 2 Jetty, Circular Quay at 2.00 p.m. sharp.

SYLVIA KELLY

### MUSEUM ROSTER FOR APRIL

3rd - Mrs. James and Miss Nicholson  
10th - (EASTER SUNDAY) Miss G. Coxhead and Friend  
11th - (EASTER MONDAY) Mrs. Kermond and Another  
17th - Mr. J. Wright and Mr. K. Grieve  
24th - Mr. and Mrs. J. Lean  
25th - (ANZAC DAY) Miss G. Coxhead and Friend

#### To open

Miss C. McEwen  
Miss Coxhead  
do.  
Mr. J. Veness  
Mr. J. Lean  
Mr. J. Lean

### MUSEUM ROSTER FOR MAY

1st - Mr. and Mrs. J. Howard  
8th - Mrs. G. Johns and Mrs. G. Taylor  
15th - Mrs. D. Hatton and Mrs. M. Grieve  
22nd - Mrs. S. Kelly and Mrs. J. James  
29th - Mr. and Mrs. E. Schweikert

Mrs. J. Howard  
Mrs. G. Johns  
Mrs. D. Hatton  
Mrs. S. Kelly  
Miss C. McEwen

NOTE: If any date given is inconvenient please contact the under-named as soon as possible (Tele. 575 -5940)

GIVEN LEAN

## HISTORY IN THE KITCHEN CUPBOARD

An Article contributed by Elaine Howard

It isn't everyone who can collect and store great treasures, but for those of us who must practise some economies, there are items of everyday use which are interesting or attractive enough to search for and collect. Sometimes collections of everyday articles are started more or less accidentally, through an inheritance or a gift of some utensil that the donor has no further use for. Among these everyday objects for collecting, royal commemorative mugs (or jugs or teapots) are quite interesting, as they depict historical events, and many people, whether serious collectors or not, like to commemorate such occasions. It is possible to begin this fascinating hobby right now for, in this year of Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee, many commemorative items are available in ceramics or metal.

"The only Sovereigns since Queen Elizabeth I to have reigned for twenty-five years have been King George III in the 18th century, Queen Victoria in the 19th century and King George V in the 20th century. Now Her Majesty, Elizabeth II, has, like them, and with great distinction, occupied the throne for twenty-five years," said Archbishop Lorne at the Silver Jubilee Service, St. Andrews' Cathedral, Sydney, 13th March, 1977 in the presence of Her Majesty.

King George III had one of the longest reigns in English history. He was the ruling monarch when the first transported colonists breathed in the perfumes of the Australian bush, and felled the cabbage palms for their makeshift homes, mere shelters for themselves and their meagre possessions. It was during George III's lifetime that potteries were first established in England at Chelsea (1743), Bow (1744), Derby (1745) and Worcester (1748) and Josiah Wedgwood, in Staffordshire, produced an earthenware which was soon in great demand. During the 18th century it became more usual for people to want china for ornaments, as well as its usefulness. At that time figures were in great demand, but by the 19th century homes also displayed earthenware mugs, usually decorated with a pattern or commemorating an important event.

The first royal commemorative mugs were produced in 1821 when George III's son, the former Prince Regent, was crowned George IV. When William IV was crowned in 1831 mugs were produced to commemorate this royal occasion. Queen Victoria's coronation mugs are very expensive as so few were made in 1838, a curious fact as collaboration was growing between manufacturers and business distributors. Her youth was considered a disadvantage and did not have the appeal which a modern designer would see as enhancing his decorations. There were no commemorative articles produced for her Silver Jubilee as it took place soon after the death of Prince Albert, and the Queen had withdrawn from public life. However, there were enthusiastic celebrations for her Golden Jubilee in 1887 and the Diamond in 1897, with souvenirs available for her nostalgic subjects. One of these teapots, mugs or jugs probably formed the basis of many an Australian commemorative collection.

A shop in Sydney recently displayed commemorative mugs of Edward VII and Queen Alexandra's coronation in 1902, and of the coronation of George V and Queen Mary in 1911 and their Silver Jubilee in 1935.

In 1937 commemorative mugs were produced for the coronation of Edward VIII and, in spite of the Abdication, these mugs may still be found. On the other hand, there was not much time to manufacture mementos in time for the coronation of George VI and Queen Elizabeth, but there were more articles made to commemorate Queen Elizabeth II's coronation.

In the twenty-five years since then interest in the fine arts has burgeoned, and designers and manufacturers strive for qualities not seen in the simple commemorative articles of bygone days. The arts of a master-craftsman in silver, or of the Wedgwood pottery, which has existed through ten British reigns, are much too sophisticated to join the domestic collection on the cupboard shelf.

#### QUIZ CORNER

Q. Does the National Trust recommend only buildings for preservation for posterity?

A. No. Its register is open to landscapes, townscapes and streets in addition to historic buildings. Among environmental features it wants to see preserved and already on its classified list are at least two suburbs - Hunters Hill and Paddington.

Among towns on its list are Millthorpe, O'Connell, Rockley and Sofala. These date back to the days of the gold fever in the State's mid-west.

The Trust bases its recommendations on surveys by qualified people who may be kept busy for months while they are carrying out their detailed studies.

Q. Who was the inventor of the lifebelt?

A. The distinction belongs to a local man, Mr. Dick Charles, who died a few years ago in Hurstville.

It was in 1963 that he invented an inflatable rubber lifebelt. Since then the device has been credited with saving innumerable lives - of fishermen, water skiers and skin divers, as well as passengers in watercraft.

Q. What is the difference between a carrot and a turnip?

A. Whoever does not know this is either too young or is surely the world's worst cook!

## BLAKEHURST HISTORICAL SERIES

Editorial Note - Members of our Society, being closely associated with Carss' Cottage in the Blakehurst district will probably welcome the resurrection of some past data relating to the acquisition of Carss' Park as a public reserve.

Therefore it is proposed to reproduce in our NEWSLETTER as a continuing series, published and unpublished material in the possession of the late Joseph Harold Coxhead, one time Ranger of Carss' Park and founder secretary of the Blakehurst Progress Association. This comprises related articles printed in the PROPELLER and the ST. GEORGE CALL - two newspapers then in weekly circulation. There will also be some letters tracing the progress of negotiations for acquisition.

Below is the first in the series. It was printed in the PROPELLER, presumably in April, 1921.

A.G.C.

### BLAKEHURST PROGRESS

A meeting of the residents of Blakehurst was held at the Blakehurst School Hall on April 23 for the purpose of forming a progress association. There was a good attendance of residents.

Mr. John Weatherlake was voted to the chair. The chairman, after briefly outlining the object of the meeting, called on Mr. Harold Coxhead, convenor of the meeting, to address the assembly. Mr. Coxhead said it was essential, if the district was to make headway, to bring into existence an organisation such as a progress association.

Blakehurst had been too long neglected on account of the absence of such a body. With a progress association all residents of Blakehurst would be able to meet together to discuss local affairs, and they would be able to present a solid front on all matters affecting the district. Matters of importance to the district, which would occupy the attention of the proposed association for some time to come, would be the proposed tramway to Tom Ugly's Point, delivery of the mail, erection of a public hall, the urging of the resumption by the Government of Carss' Bush, the proposed bridge over George's River, and other municipal matters.

A resolution was carried to the effect that a progress association be formed, to be called the Blakehurst Progress Association.



The election of officers resulted as follows: President, Mr. A. Willis; vice-presidents, Mr. C. Ibbotson, Mr. B. Dewhurst; honorary secretary, Mr. Harold Coxhead; treasurer, Mr. Herbert Howland; executive committee, Mesdames Marcusson and Howland, Messrs. Blackett, Collier, Coleman, with the president and secretary members ex-officio. Auditors: Miss Marcusson and Mr. J. Weatherlake. The executive committee were empowered to draw up a constitution and rules for the association, which will be submitted to the next meeting to be held on Saturday, May 21, at 7.30 p.m.

Through the personal representations of Mr. Mark Gosling, M.L.A., the Education Department granted the association the use of Blakehurst Public School Hall in which to hold its regular monthly meetings.

Judging by the enthusiasm displayed at the meeting, the new organisation is going to be a real live one.

#### JOTTINGS

On Wednesday, 9th March, Carss' Cottage was able to add yet another interesting event to its book of records. An outdoor wedding was celebrated in its grounds.

The time was evening, when shadows were falling, picnickers had departed, the air was fresh with the faint perfume from the bush, and the setting was at its best - serene and dignified like the simple ceremony. Guests must have been congratulating the bride and groom on their choice of a marriage place and their formal attire complemented the oldworld charm of the Cottage.

A tribute must be paid to the bridal party for the respect they paid to their surroundings - not even a speck of cigarette ash was left.

Known cat population of Carss' Point is seven. They include two mother cats, one white and one brindle; three half-grown ginger kittens and one slightly larger lighter one; and an evil-looking black tom who slinks out of sight like the criminal he probably is.

The younger kittens must have been taken away by children. Let's hope they have actually been accepted as pets and not put out as yet more strays.

It is not uncommon to see a group of budding artists in the Park, busily trying to capture on canvas the colour and beauty of the scene.

Favourite subject is either water or trees of which there is an abundance.

### Editorial Note

By kind permission of John Fairfax & Sons Limited the following article which was published in the "Sun-Herald" on November 24, 1974, is reproduced in its entirety, without additions or deletions.

A.S.C.

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### THE CONVICT GIRL WHO BECAME "FIRST LADY"

Review (of the book "Australian Genesis: Jewish Convicts and Settlers 1788-1850) by Tom Fairhall

When young Marine Lieutenant George Johnston leapt ashore from the back of convict James Ruse on January 26, 1788, he became the first European to set foot at Sydney Cove.

Watching from the decks of the convict transport, Lady Penrhyn, was a pretty Jewish girl, not yet 20, who had become his mistress. She was Esther Abrahams, who was to bear him two sons and four daughters, and share with him the dramatic days when he helped depose Bligh and become rebel Lieutenant-Governor.

It was a long cry from the filthy convict hold of the Lady Penrhyn when she thus became the colony's unofficial "first lady".

The story of her romantic but tragic life is told, with those of hundreds of other early Jewish pioneers, in an intensely interesting new book, AUSTRALIAN GENESIS: JEWISH CONVICTS AND SETTLERS 1788-1850 (Rigby \$12.95).

The authors, J. S. Levi and G. F. J. Bergman, have not only told the first complete history of the origins of Australian Jewry, from the First Fleet to the Gold Rush, but have thrown new light on much little-known Australian history.

Among the 751 convicts in the First Fleet, at least eight - and possibly 14 - can be identified as Jews, say the authors.

The authors say Australia became the only community of European people in which Jews were present at the moment of its establishment.

"It was the prelude to history's mildest struggle for Jewish emancipation, and the beginning of a unique Jewish experience," write the authors.

"Esther Abraham's crime was that she had stolen two lengths of lace, for which she received seven years' transportation. She had obviously been driven by despair, say the authors, for she was pregnant at 15, and her baby girl was born inside Newgate.

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In Sydney in 1793, Johnston received substantial grants of land on Parramatta Road where he and Esther built Annandale House. She managed his affairs when he was in England on courts-martial - once for duelling with Colonel Paterson and again for mutiny in the Rum Rebellion.

Cashiered from the Army, he returned as a free settler.

He and Esther were married at Concord in 1814.

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Jewish First Fleeter John Harris, twice condemned to die, lived to become Australia's first policeman.

He suggested to Judge Advocate David Collins, a night watch to "secure all found straggling from their huts at improper hours" and got the job.

Collins reported that the watch was of "infinite utility" and that "probably many streets in London were not so well guarded and watched as the small but rising town of Sydney.

But, he became involved in the flourishing liquor trade - and fell foul of the law when charged with trading liquor for convicts' rations.

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Israel Chapman was Sydney's first detective. He arrived in 1818 to serve a commuted death sentence for theft, aged 24.

Within a year he was chief warden at the prisoners' barracks in Hyde Park and soon afterwards principal overseer at the government lumberyard.

Conditionally pardoned for good conduct, he was awarded one pound for helping to capture a bushranger, and began a career as a detective.

Only 5ft. 3-3/4in tall, he once fought off a crowd of drunken soldiers, with a brace of pistols. It seemed that nothing would daunt the Jewish detective, it was said.

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Joseph Samuel, arrested at 14 for housebreaking in Petticoat Lane in 1795, arrived in Sydney in 1803 with only a few months of his seven-year sentence to be served. He was soon to be involved in macabre events that caused him to be remembered in history as "the man they couldn't hang".

Samuel and three others, including Chief Constable Isaac Simmons (also known as "Hikey Bull") were suspected of having robbed Mrs. Mary Breeze, Sydney's most successful prostitute.

A few nights later a Constable Luker, sent to trap them, was found murdered. The four were tried, but only Samuel was found guilty and sentenced to hang.

At the execution site, Samuel claimed that after exchanging "an oath of secrecy in the Hebrew tongue" while in jail, Simmons had told him where the stolen money was hidden and that he had killed Luker.

When the cart was driven from under him the "suspending cord was separated at the centre" and Samuel fell to the ground.

The hangman fastened another rope to the gallows, and the cart was again driven off. But as Samuel fell, the rope unraveled.

At the third attempt to hang Samuel, the rope snapped.

Amidst pandemonium the provost marshal galloped off to tell Governor King what had happened, and returned with news of his reprieve.

"It would seem there had been divine intervention," said Governor King, commuted Samuel's sentence to life imprisonment.

He was transferred to the dreaded penal station at Newcastle where in 1806, he escaped with seven others. All were drowned in a storm.

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Then there was Edward Davis, the Jewish bushranger, who had been sentenced to seven years' transportation at the Old Bailey at 16 for stealing a money till valued at two shillings and fivepence.

At the time, both his father, Michael, and his eldest brother, John, were serving sentences in Australia.

Edward arrived in Australia in 1833 and was assigned to a Maitland farmer. Four years later, he emerged as "Teddy the Jewboy", leader of a gang of runaway convicts and for two years, "worked" the roads from New England to Gosford.

The gang dressed gaudily - a broad hat, brim turned up in front, "with an abundance of braid pink ribbons, satin neck cloth, splendid brooches and all wearing rings and watches." Pink ribbons also streamed from their horses' bridles.

In December, 1840, Davis and his gang of seven held up an inn and store at Scone and shot dead a clerk who ran off to call the police. The gay adventure was over.

An avenging posse led by magistrate Denny Day found them camped in the bush. The gang surrendered when they ran out of ammunition.

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Sydney Jews paid for Davis' defence, but in vain. All were found guilty and were hanged at the lower George Street Jail, watched by 1,000 people.

Brother John, then free and chief constable at Penrith, promptly resigned and went to Melbourne to become a journalist and actor and later a Tasmanian legislator and founder of the Hobart Mercury.

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Most Jewish convicts died in poverty, either before or after completing their sentences. Many died in chains. But some who remained did extraordinarily well. The colonial freedom from snobbery and prejudice enabled their children to take their places on the Bench and in the legislative chambers, and to found some of the notable families of the land, say the authors.

Jewish influence on early Australian music and entertainment was considerable.

They provided the colony with an impressive proportion of its first actors, singers, musicians and playwrights.

Barnett Levey, who in 1821 was the first free Jewish migrant to Australia, was regarded as the "father of the Australian theatre."

He made professional theatre history on Boxing Day, 1832, in the saloon theatre of his Royal Hotel when he staged the drama, Black Ey'd Susan, and the farce, Monsieur Tonsen, to a packed audience of 500.

Others were John Lazar, one of the earliest professional actors; and Isaac Nathan, the nation's first composer; and Jacob Levi Montefiore, merchant and parliamentarian, who wrote and translated the libretto for Australia's first opera, Don Juan of Austria.

Joseph Simmons, an auctioneer, managed the colony's second theatre and acted in and wrote some of Sydney's earliest plays.

Nathan founded the St. James and St. Mary's choral societies and established a musical academy. He died in 1864, crushed to death under the wheels of one of Sydney's first horsedrawn trams.

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The Jewish population in Australia in 1851 was 0.47 per cent of the total. The proportions have not altered greatly since, say the authors.

"In 1973, of a total population of approximately 13 million, 700,000 were Jews; a community which has developed on foundations laid during the convict era of Australia."

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THE KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

(Sponsored by Kogarah Municipal Council)

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

President:

Mr. J. E. Veness  
6 Lance Street,  
BLAKEHURST. 2221  
Phone: 546 3932

Hon. Treasurer:

Mrs. G. Johns  
38 Princes Highway,  
KOGARAH. 2217  
Phone: 587 4348

Hon. Secretary

Mrs. B. Butters  
38 Louisa Street,  
OATLEY. 2223  
Phone: 57 6954

Vice Presidents: Mr. V. S. Smith and Mr. H. Kelly

ACTIVITIES: 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.

<u>Subscriptions</u> - Ordinary Members	\$2.00 p.a.
Pensioners	\$1.50 p.a.
Students	\$1.50 p.a.

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 of 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 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 1.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Admission charges: Adults - 30c.; Children - 10c.;  
Maximum per Family - 80c.

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 donor's name and address and details of objects donated.

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, Miss G. Coxhead, 61 Carwar Avenue, Carss' Park, Blakehurst. 2221