

KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY
INCORPORATED

Postal Address: P. O. Box 367, Kogarah, 1485



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2003.

Patron: The Mayor of Kogarah. Life Patron K.R. Cavanough A.M. J.P.

President – Mrs. B. Butters – 9580 6954

Vice Presidents: Mrs. B. Goodger and Mrs. J. Hollebhone

Ass. Secretary - Mrs. J. Hollebhone – 9529 7117

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. C. Sullivan - 9579 6149

Newsletter Editor: Mrs. B. Butters 9580 6954

CARSS COTTAGE MUSEUM is open Sundays and Public Holidays (except Good Friday and Christmas Day) from 1.00 p.m. to 5.00 p.m.

Admission – Adults \$2.00 - Children 50 cents.

Groups by special arrangement contact – Mrs. C. Lewin or Mrs. B. Butters.

MEMBERSHIP OF KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS \$6.00 per annum (single) \$9.00 per annum (couple)

MONTHLY MEETINGS.

General meetings are held in the Kogarah School of Arts, Bowns Road, Kogarah on the second Thursday of each month.

✓ FEBRUARY 13 - 2.00 p.m. GENERAL MEETING.

Speaker – HEATHER JOYNES - "The Pleasures of Needlework". Sewing equipment in the 18th and early 19th Centuries, the people who used this and the needlework they produced. Illustrated with pieces from her Collection.

✓ MARCH 13 - 2.00 P.M. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.,

ELECTION OF OFFICE BEARERS – We would like to have some new nominations for the Committee.

Don't forget your Membership Renewal is due by this date.

Our GUEST SPEAKER will be MARI METZKE (manager, Outreach Services, Royal Australian Historical Society).

We have invited members of both St. George Historical Society and Hurstville Historical Society to come along. We would like to see you there, too.

✓ ✓ We have decided to hold our Committee Meetings in private homes on the Monday night prior to our General Meeting - at 7.00 p.m. – i.e. 10th February and 10th March. The February meeting will be held at my home, 36 Louisa Street, Oatley.

This will enable us to commence our General Meetings punctually at 2.00 p.m. We will have our Guest Speaker first, at 2.00 p.m. – then Afternoon Tea – and then follow on with a short meeting. We would like to see more members at our meetings.



AUSTRALIA DAY - 26TH January

Australia Day this year falls on the Sunday so our Museum will be open as usual from 1-5 p.m. and will be manned by Betty Goodger and Janette Hollebhone. Kogarah Council will be having all their activities in the park on the Sunday, including the fireworks. As the Monday is the designated holiday we would appreciate volunteers to go on duty on that day, thank you!

MUSEUM ROSTER.

- February 2 - Trudy Johns and Gilda Tillia
- 9 - Glad Baldwin and Thellie Tatum
- 16 - Rae Reed and Norrene Burns
- 23 - Betty Goodger and Janette Hollebhone ✓
- March 2 - Coralie Lewin and Ken Grieve
- 9 - Trudy Johns and Gilda Tillia
- 16 - Glad Baldwin and Thellie Tatum
- 23 - Betty Goodger and Janette Hollebhone ✓
- 30 - Rae Reed and Norrene Burns
- April 6 - Coralie Lewin and Ken Grieve
- 13 - Trudy Johns and Gilda Tillia
- 20 - Glad Baldwin and Thellie Tatum (Easter Sunday)
- 21 - Easter Monday (Volunteer please)
- 27 - Betty Goodger and Janette Hollebhone ✓

(Please contact Beryl Butters – 9580 6954 if date unsuitable)

We would appreciate it very much if others would consider going on Museum Roster. As you must have noticed the list of willing members is very small – many of them are involved on other days as well, and there is the opening and closing of the museum, transport for a few – and replacements when members are unable to go on duty because of sickness or etc. Please consider this as urgent! We do need you help! Thank you!

- ✓ WE HOPE TO HAVE MORE TRIPS THIS YEAR. It has already been suggested that on Monday, 31st March, we visit Fairfield Museum.
 - ✓ Monday, 28th April, we go by train and visit Carrington Hotel.
 - ✓ Wednesday – 21st May we visit St. James Church
- At a later date we hope to visit Sydney Hospital.
You will be further advised of these outings when arrangements have been finalised.

MUSEUM NEWS

May the New Year bring health and happiness to you all and above all, peace to the world.

With the Museum looking especially delightful and delicious Christmas Fare being served from our courtyard kitchen visitors to our "Tales of Christmas" on 8th December had a very pleasant afternoon. Stories of Christmas in the early days of the colony, of a notable Christmas in Queensland and of the origin of some of the traditions that we still follow were read by Betty Goodger and myself as both adults and children sat in the shade of large trees in a sometimes more than gentle breeze. Nevertheless we were cool and free of bushfire smoke that day so we counted our blessings. A story of a boy's Christmas in 1931 brought back memories and provided a laughs for quite a few of us.

1909?

The Museum Christmas decorations were loaned to us by the Christmas Shop, King Georges Road, South Hurstville and we thank them sincerely for their interest and generosity. If you have never visited the Christmas Shop you don't know what you have missed.

The New Year also brings the first of a new series of our **Mondays at the Museum**. The 2002 series proved to be successful and we have five interesting speakers for 2003. As usual, delicious morning teas will be served in the courtyard and we can assure you that this is a delightful way to spend a morning. The enclosed flyer tells you all about it.

Group visits to the Museum are already lining up with several adult groups interested and the children at the Vacation Care Centre which is held in the Lifesavers' Hall at Carss Park doing our "Let's Go Shopping in Grandma's General Store" tour and our "Walk in the Park" on the 6th January.

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What is It?

We have on display in the Museum an item of great interest but unknown origin.

It is a small, solid, timber box (with lid) about 10 x 16 cm and 12 cm deep. It has a platform near the top of the box which contains a sheet of metal, silver knobs, a small strip of metal with what may be measuring marks and a cylinder similar to that in an old fashioned musical box. Inside the lid is a piece of sea sponge and a metal cylindrical container with a piece of cord. The space under this platform may have contained a battery. It has been identified as a musical instrument by a couple of people but I am sure this is not so. More than one person has said that it is a old medical instrument of some kind and I think this is likely.

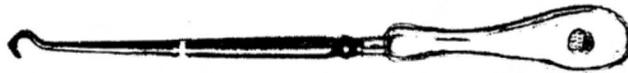
If you can shed any light on this, please let me know (Coralie on 9546 1580).

Some months ago I came across a single copy of a Monograph written by Gwen Coxhead entitled 'The History of Lighting'. Although written a long time ago it has been very well researched and contains a wealth of information on the many forms of lighting developed over the years. I have now completed the retyping of this and we are able to produce copies as requested. If you are interested, let Beryl Butters know on 9580 6954.

Coralie Lewin (Museum Custodian).

Buttonhooks

Button up!



I regularly try to relate artifacts held in the Museum to the lifestyle of the Carss family (and of their neighbours in the Kogarah area) when they lived in the Cottage during the years of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The women, and men, of those days would have been very familiar with that wonderful invention - **the buttonhook** - and in the Museum we have several. Not all of them are in good condition but we have recently received the gift of two beautiful boxed, silver presentation sets, each containing buttonhooks. These and other buttonhooks are on display at the moment.

Such a simple implement, but an absolute necessity in the days of buttoned shoes and boots, buttoned gloves, jackets and gowns. Compared to today, dressing and undressing in those days was a tedious and uncomfortable exercise and while many had the advantage of a maid or valet to assist the majority struggled alone with the help of the buttonhook, glovehook and shoehorn.

Both button hooks and shoehorns had been in existence for centuries but it was the Victorians who revived their use and subsequently manufactured them in varying styles and sizes.

The history of the buttonhook is not at all clear but a 'button-pull' or 'buttoner' was in use around 1680. The buttonhook, as we know it, naturally followed the use of buttons as fasteners on footwear and clothing and may have come into general use in the mid 16th century. Although they are seldom referred to in the following 150 years they apparently survived in one form or another. Buttonhooks are difficult to date.

In the early 1800s button hooks were almost exclusively used by men and were a necessary requirement for fastening their stylish button-boots but it wasn't long before changes in the styles of womens' clothing, their long, tightly fitting kid gloves and their own ankle snugging button-boots led to the mass production of the buttonhook in huge variety.

There was great potential for silversmiths and other craftsmen to create an ever increasing amount of styles and sizes. While steel was the preferred metal for the hook all manner of materials were used to fashion the handles, silver, gold and other metals, wood, ivory, glass, bamboo, mother of pearl, bone, agate and other gem stones and enamel. Handles, when not plainly shaped took the form of flowers, animals, birds and a variety of other exotic shapes.

Nevertheless button hooks could be anything from a simple piece of looped wire to elaborate and precious creations.

The men and women of the Carss family most certainly were the owners of one or many button hooks and would have been very familiar with their use.

Coralie Lewin (Museum Custodian)

War Memorials

"LEST WE FORGET"

by DR. JOAN HATTON

(from Hurstville Historical Society Newsletter
April 1985.

The seventieth anniversary of the Anzac action at Gallipoli will soon occur and another Anzac Day will be commemorated. Whatever one's opinion about the causes of wars, whatever one's attitude to the sending of Australians overseas, it is an historical fact that Australian service men and women were involved in wars. They suffered and their families at home suffered. The St. George district had servicemen at the Soudan and Boer Wars, but it was not until the Great War of 1914-1918 that permanent memorials were planned to honour those residents who enlisted. Each suburb planned its own form of memorial and it is interesting to follow the histories of these memorials since they were dedicated with great pride mixed with sorrow and hope for the future.

War Memorials will not be forgotten for with the activities leading to the Bicentennial Celebrations, they will be involved in at least two projects - a plan of the Royal Australian Historical Society to compile a State-wide Register of Monuments and Memorials; and a survey by Professor Inglis of the Australian National University to list all war memorials in Australia whether they be monuments, gates, avenues, halls, hospitals or honor boards. It is also pleasing to know that younger people are being made aware of the existence of these memorials because a favourite project for school children as Anzac Day approaches, is to find out information about the war memorials in their suburb. The help of local historical societies is frequently sought for these purposes.

The churches and schools of St. George have their individual memorials. St. George's Anglican Church at Hurstville has a side chapel with three memorial windows dedicated "in proud thanksgiving for those who gave and offered their lives in the Great Wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45." As well there are individual memorials. St. Cuthberts at South Carlton has an honor board for the first war and a remembrance book for the second war. At St. David's at Arncliffe an honor roll, 7 feet by 4 feet of polished maple in the form of a cabinet, containing 250 names, was dedicated on Anzac Day, 1920. A lectern was dedicated in St. Paul's Church, Kogarah, in honour of fallen soldiers. At St. Patrick's Catholic Church, Kogarah, a stained glass window has been erected "in memory of H.W.; N.J. and K.V. Mullarkey, M.J. Hickey, L. Clarke, V.J. Foster, W. Jarvis, Roy Doughan, A.E. Page and A.Sippel who lost their lives in the War 1914-18. R.I.P."

Sandringham (Now Sans Souci) Public School in March, 1919, unveiled an honor roll board of polished maple and carved, with 80 names of whom 14 died. Kingsgrove Public School unveiled an honor roll in August, 1919 with 54 names, 13 of whom died. The honor roll of Mortdale Public School was unveiled in June 1920, by the Hon. G. Cann, Minister for Labor and Industry. The board contained over 100 names and was designed and constructed by Mr. Tuckwell, with signwriting by Mr. V. Smith.

Other organisations, such as lodges, also made their own honour boards, so there are many more war memorials in St. George to be recorded.

A well-known monument is the obelisk to the memory of William Valerie Cross, who was killed in action in France in 1916. It was erected by his father, Thomas V. Cross; his son "was a resident of Lugarno and very interested in its welfare." Originally, it was outside the Cross home in Moons Avenue, but now is on the corner of Forest Road and Ponderosa Place. At the northern end of St. George is the little soldier who now

gazes pensively over the bowling greens of the Kyeemagh R.S.L. He was previously seen from the train as he was on a plinth at the old tramway construction depot near Tempe House.

Nearby is General Holmes Drive, with at the southern end a memorial to Major General William Holmes, C.M.G., D.S.O., V.D., who served in South Africa, New Guinea, Gallipoli and France where he died in July, 1917. In August, 1914, he was in command of the Australian force which captured Rabaul, the first action by Australians in that war. He was killed by a chance shell while escorting the Premier of New South Wales around the battlefield in France. In between his military duties he was chief executive officer of the Metropolitan Board of Water Supply and Sewerage in Sydney.

A little seen memorial is at the corner of Princes Highway and Massey Street, Kogarah, honouring William Currey, V.C., where a housing estate has been named after him. He was awarded the Victoria Cross in France in 1918, and a field gun captured by him was installed at Leichhardt, but during the next war it was melted down for scrap metal. When he entered the N.S.W. State Parliament in 1941, as the member for Kogarah, he was the first V.C. winner in the House. He remained a member of parliament until his death in 1948.

The 1914-18 War produced a movement for War Memorials financed by public appeals in each suburb. They took different forms, some were subject to much discussion and they were all opened, unveiled or dedicated with a display of much fervour. Surprisingly, despite the good intentions of public celebration, some have had to find new homes when they were supplanted from their original locations.

Rockdale was first alerted to the personal cost of war when the Deputy Town Clerk Mr. F.C. Waine was killed on active service at Gallipoli in May, 1915. A tablet to his memory was placed in the Council Chambers. In July, 1916, a subscription list was started to purchase a brass Honour Roll which was unveiled in October, 1916. A second honour roll was unveiled in March 1921. These were transferred to the new Town Hall in 1940, where there are also memorial books for the two great wars.

After 1918, the War Trophy Committee allocated captured German weapons to those districts which requested them. Rockdale received a 77 mm Field Gun which had been captured by the 54th Battalion during the Australian attack on Peronne in France in September 1918. The School of Arts agreed for the trophy to be placed in its grounds at the corner of Railway and Walz Streets. The unveiling was performed by Major General Sir Charles Rosenthal on 18 June, 1921, before a large gathering which included politicians who were to be present as guests, but who were not invited to take an active part. The gun was to be "an emblem of victory, as a memorial of the great sacrifice made by 60,000 Australians for the freedom of Australia, to be held by the people of Rockdale in perpetuity". During the second world war it was removed for scrap.

Rockdale did not have another outdoor memorial until 1971, when during its centenary year, a memorial garden was dedicated at the seven ways by the then Premier and Treasurer, the Hon. R.W. Askin.

The Municipality of Bexley claimed its War Trophy. It was allocated a trench mortar which was, however, considered totally unworthy of the district's war effort, although it was admitted that an honour board had been two years in the Council Chamber without any names on it. Bexley was eventually allocated a six inch gun which was erected outside the Council Chambers in Queen Victoria Street. It also was removed for scrap in the second world war.

A more permanent memorial is located in a small garden adjacent to the Bexley Golf Course at the corner of Stoney Creek and St. George's Roads. The stone cairn, built by Bexley Sub-Branch of R.S.L. was dedicated in memory of deceased comrades on 11th November, 1937.

Hurstville has been more fortunate in its choice of memorials. An Honour Board was made with over 300 photos of Hurstville residents who served in 1914-1918. It is an unique historical document, displayed in successive town halls, until recently it was placed in the Mortdale R.S.L. Club. The memorial monument has remained at its original site in Forest Road in the old railway square. It was unveiled by the Governor, Sir Walter Davidson, on 27 May, 1922, before a large crowd. The cost was £1200. and it has the names of 177 men who died out of the 1500 who enlisted from Hurstville. The surrounding gardens are kept in good order by Hurstville Council and the whole is a dedicated area, an island beside the busy Forest Road.

In the Penshurst district, it was decided not to have a monument, but to build a hall as a meeting place for the returned men. Funds were raised over 2 years and the foundation stone laid by the Premier, Mr. Dooley, in November, 1921. The memorial hall was opened by the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Ald. W. Mc Elhone, in January, 1922. An honour roll was unveiled in the hall in June, 1922 by General Sir Granville Ryrie, the Assistant Minister for Defence. It listed the names of 171 men, 24 of whom died.

The Mortdale Memorial Monument Committee was formed in 1920, funds were raised by carnivals and concerts, and the foundation stone was laid in October, 1922, near the old railway gates at the junction of Morts Road, Pitt and George Streets. The ceremony was performed by Major General Sir Charles Rosenthal, who placed a casket within the stone. This contained an honour roll of names, coins of the period, stamps, an historical summary and photos of Mortdale. The ceremony of unveiling the obelisk monument was held in November, 1922, when Sir Granville Ryrie officiated with the population of Mortdale in attendance.

In 1924, the Committee handed over control of the Monument to Hurstville Council. In the 1930s it was removed to Boundary Road beside the Memorial Park. As the trees in the park grew, their roots spread and disrupted and cracked the footpath and the monument. It was not able to be patched up, so a new memorial was erected in the park in 1965-66, by the Mortdale R.S.L. This recognised service in two world wars and in Korea. The Mortdale R.S.L. is proud of their memorial and its setting in the park where the lawns and gardens are maintained to a high standard by Hurstville Council and the R.S.L. When the casket was removed from the old memorial, it was in poor condition, the contents were disintegrating but the silver plaque survived, and is now in the museum of the Hurstville Historical Society.

Peakhurst, only a scattered suburb in the 1920s, had its own honour roll which is installed in the School of Arts. The board contains the names of 67 men of whom 14 died in the 1914-18 war.

Near the entrance to Oatley Park is the tree which was grown from a seed from the original "lone pine" at Gallipoli. The tree was planted by Hurstville Council and a plaque states that "citizens are asked to respect the tree in honour of the epic courage and sacrifice of which it is a living symbol."

In Oatley, the first memorial was the font in St. Paul's Church which was inscribed with the names of those who had died in 1914-18. An Honour Roll was placed in the School of Arts. It was still desired to have a monument and in 1923 a Committee was formed to raise funds. The land between Oatley Avenue and Oatley Parade was then an untidy area with the old railway station still showing and was not considered fitting as the site for such a project. The Department of Education allowed a corner of the school ground to be used and the memorial was unveiled in October, 1924, by Brigadier General Cox before a large gathering of local residents and officials.

The Oatley R.S.L. was not formed until 1944. In 1951, the sub-branch planted a number of poplar trees in Oatley Reserve in memory of fallen comrades. The Kogarah Council had developed the Reserve into attractive gardens, and it was decided to move the memorial to a more central position in the Reserve, now called Oatley Memorial Gardens. The original obelisk was incorporated into a new memorial and was dedicated in March, 1962. A plaque was placed among gardens on the corner of the school grounds marking the original site of the Oatley War Memorial.

At Kogarah, a meeting to plan the erection of a permanent memorial to the men of the district, was held as early as June, 1919, but the memorial was not unveiled until November 1923. The delay may have been in part due to division within the community, where some wanted a war memorial and others a memorial hall. The flourishing School of Arts provided special membership facilities for the returned men, but another group worked towards having their own hall where the men could meet and enjoy their recreation time. An Honour Roll was placed in the School of Arts containing the names of 125 members who enlisted, of whom 10 died.

However, a war trophy was awarded to Kogarah and on Anzac Day in 1921, it was unveiled by Brigadier General H. Gordon Bennett. A German gun captured in August, 1918, was placed in the garden plot opposite the Fire Station in Gray Street.

In October, 1920, a Kogarah Anzac Memorial Committee was formed but little progress was made, for by February, 1922, at a public meeting Ald. Matthews suggested that the money already raised should be given to St. George District Hospital. There were objections to this, and Ald. Lipman said that Kogarah had lagged behind other districts in providing a war memorial, the only memento was a war trophy which was provided free. A better effort was now made and fund raising projects held. By July, 1922, the design of a memorial had been prepared, a column to cost about £500.

The unveiling ceremony was performed on Armistice Day, 1923, by Major General Brand at the garden plot in Gray Street adjacent to the war trophy. It was intended to list names around the base but this was not done. The inscription states - "Those whom this monument commemorates sacrificed their lives in the great war, 1914-1919, that others might have freedom. Let those who come after see that their sacrifices are not in vain". During the 1960s, when road improvements were made in Gray Street, the monument was moved to a quiet corner of Kogarah Park.

The Carlton and District Honor Roll for the 1914-1918 War was unveiled at Carlton Railway Station on Saturday, 21 June 1919. The ceremony was performed by Mr Hector Lamond, the local member of Federal Parliament, before a large number of local residents.

The afternoon's events were duly recorded in the local newspapers—*St George Call* and *The Hurstville Propeller*.

The meeting was chaired by Mr T J Allen who was President of the Carlton-West Kogarah Voluntary Workers who had raised vast sums of money in every public appeal during the war. He introduced the Mayor of Bexley, Ald W F Brown, who was also the Secretary of the Honor Board movement. Ald Brown apologized for the delay between the inception of the movement and the erection of the Board, and explained that the securing of funds, and the collection of names was a long and tiring process, and the ladies who had done this were deserving of all the praise that could be bestowed upon them. The next step was to tabulate the names and forward them to the Military authorities for authentication and approval. This also entailed a considerable amount of time and work. Then the Board had to be made and the names painted in gold. The work had been interrupted by other functions and the influenza epidemic.

Apologies were received from the State member, Mr T J Ley, who was attending the unveiling of the Honor Roll at National Park, and from the Mayor of Rockdale, but the Mayoress, Mrs Broe, was present. The Mayor of Kogarah, Mr George Hanigan, had died only a few days earlier from pneumonic influenza.

The Honor Roll was placed on the wall beside the Booking Office at Carlton Station, the most public place in the district, for many residents passed by daily on their way to catch the train. The Board contained the names of 164 residents of the district, a large response from a small district; 26 of these young men were killed while on service. Well known families from both sides of the railway line were represented—English, Mullarkey, Willison, Argall, Bulmer and O'Donnell. This Honor Roll is now hanging in our Carss Cottage Museum.

Despite the hopes for lasting peace, those who suffered in the 1914-18 war and who overcame the indignities of life in the depression of the early thirties were once again tested when their children became involved with another world war in 1939. When peace came, the memorials of the past were brought up to date. The same family names are repeated in the new lists. The Kogarah memorial commemorates those who sacrificed their lives in the second world war, 1939-45, and the war in Korea, Malaya and Vietnam. A memorial to members of Australian Women's Services was included.

✓ The Oatley Memorial also has a tablet for Korea, 1950-53, Malaya 1955-1960 and Vietnam 1960-1972. The design of the memorial at Mortdale shows a short white plinth on the left hand side backed by the names of the 1914-18 soldiers, which illustrates the shortening of their lives; on the right hand side is a tall plinth backed by the names of 1939-45 servicemen and this is intended to show those who carried on.

Each Anzac Day the memorials become the centre of public attention for a short time. Wreaths are laid with due solemnity. For the rest of the year, they remain in quiet places, mostly unnoticed as the stream of life passes by.

References:

The St. Call - numerous issues.

The Propeller - numerous issues.

Australian Dictionary of Biography.