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KOGARAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY INCORPORATED

Carss Cottage Museum - Carss Park
Postal Address P.O. Box 367 Kogarah 1485



Newsletter

September - October 2005

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

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Secretary:	Mrs. J. Hollebone	Tel. 9529 7117
Treasurer:	Mrs. C. Sullivan	Tel. 9579 6149
Newsletter Editor:	Mrs. C. Lewin	Tel. 9546 1580

MEMBERSHIP: \$8.00 per annum (single) \$12.00 per annum (couple)



MONTHLY MEETINGS

General Monthly Meetings are held in the Kogarah School of Arts, Bowns Road, Kogarah on the second Thursday of each month at 2.00 pm.
The Speaker is followed by afternoon tea then a short business meeting.

Speakers

- September 8** **Yvonne Brugmans:-** will discuss the history of the hospital with the focus on nursing. An electronic photographic display will illustrate the eras of 1894 to 1913; 1919 to 1939- between the two world wars and the post war construction era of 1946 to 1970. *any*
- October 13** **Lesley Muir:** will talk about Sydney in the 1880s - The Garden Palace and the changes it brought to Sydney and its suburbs.

Committee Meetings

- September 5 7.00pm - 3/14 Resthaven Road, South Hurstville
- October 10 7.00pm - 36 Louisa Street, Oatley



33 Duffy

**Mavis Ward reports on our Meeting of
14th July 2005**

We were well entertained at this meeting by **Cherry Corder** who is the author of "*A Mavis Singing*" which is the true story of her Mother's family and which was short listed for the Australian Book Council Award for Literature. Cherry jokingly told us that her book was turned down seven times before it was published but she didn't feel so bad when she knew that 'The Lord of the Flies' was turned down forty-seven times.

Cherry began by explaining that the Mavis is a little Scottish Song Bird and she played a tape of the song "Mary of Argyle" which begins with

"I have heard the mavis singing his love-song to the morn
I have seen the dew-drop clinging to the rose just newly born"

Cherry's Mother's name was Mavis and it was from Mavis that Cherry learned the family history in a manner which seemed to relate to the little bird. It all began with the arrival in South Australia from Scotland of Captain and Mrs John Wauchope and their children who settled in Adelaide in 1839 and Cherry has recounted the course of their lives, their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. The story is mainly about five sisters, Cherry's Grandmother and Great Aunts. There was Grandmother, Kate, who wanted to be a concert pianist but couldn't because "girls didn't do that", Blanche who was a great beauty and, as she always said she would, married a doctor, Bertha who had a lost love, Gertrude who was the blue stocking and suffered because of that and Adelaide who was the villain of the family, at one stage referred to as "a bitch".

The story is historical inasmuch as it highlighted life and conditions in Australia as experienced by the Wauchope family. They were pleased to have settled in Port Adelaide as there were no convicts there, therefore none connected with the family.

As a child, Cherry believed that her family had 'a castle' -- somewhere. "Didn't every family have one?".. While giving an outline of the story about the sisters, Cherry told us just enough to stimulate our interest and desire to know who and why someone lived in Fanny Bay Jail in Darwin and who lived in a tree in Western Australia. She also teased our interest to know about the sea captain, the cousin who cut his throat on a railway station and the general who died in the Boar War, as well as other members of the family.

Cherry's talk was delivered in a very pleasant and relaxed manner with lots of humour which often showed through, such as when she told us about her Mother finally bringing her children to Sydney and taking out a lease on a large house at Kings Cross. Because of her lack of experience, she didn't realise that she was leasing a brothel.

Cherry's father was a commercial artist and she showed some of the illustrations he did for Arnott's Biscuits and Morley Johnson (remember the furniture shop?). This was before photography was used for advertising. His work was extremely good but unfortunately he didn't ever make much money. During World War II Mavis made jewellery out of bread which she moulded into flower shapes and then coloured them. From this she made enough money for a deposit on their first real house, their 'castle'.

The family experienced many highs and lows, joys and sorrows, coped with poverty and the effect of alcohol but were always extremely loyal. This would appear to be a very interesting story, told with the warmth and humour Cherry revealed in her personality as she talked about her book.

KOG'RAH TELEPHONE GIRLS

BY AN OLD SUBSCRIBER

The City girls are fairly smart
 The Randwick girls can do their part,
 The Edgecliffe girls are somewhat crude,
 The Redfern girls are sometimes rude.
 The Kog'rah girls I'm bound to state
 Can beat the band, they're up-to-date.

Now if you want a number quick
 Just speak them fair, and they will stick
 And try as hard as girls may do,
 Until they get your number through.
 But if they're slow and you are growling
 I'll bet your bill will start you howling

Of course they all love a flirt,
 The gentle kind that does not hurt,
 They'll pull your leg and tell you tales,
 At yarns they are – oh well – just “whales”,
 But all the same, they are good sorts,
 The kind we call the best of sports.

Of all this flirty merry crowd,
 There's two of whom the rest are proud;
 I would not tell just who they are,
 But blossoms can be seen afar.
 Of all the greens, so I've been told
 The ivy best can stand the cold.

Now if you guess their names from this,
 I can't be blamed by either miss.

The “poet”, An Old Subscriber had his poem published in the St George Call of 27th September 1919. He is writing of the days when telephones were manually operated. For each call, the “girls” plugged into a board to connect the call. Everything was a little slower than today and used people to make things work.

This was taken from a book of newscuttings in KHS's collection, that I believe was kept by Richard W. Churchill,, Town Clerk of Bexley from 1902 to 1937. He was also a journalist, so it is possible that An Old Subscriber is one of his noms de plume. though I cannot prove it.

I was intrigued , because my mother, born in 1888, had come to the big City from her country town, to be a telephone girl – a very daring and independent step.- only to be taken when she was twenty-one. She was one of the Edgecliffe girls from 1909 until her marriage in 1916, and I'm sure she would not have agreed that they were “somewhat crude”!

B.GOODGER

The Herbarium Centenary Quilt

our meeting of 11th August 2005

At this meeting our speaker was **Karen Wilson**, from the National Herbarium of NSW, Royal Botanic Gardens. The Botanic Gardens were officially established in 1816 when Charles Fraser was appointed Supervisor, the title equivalent to the current Director and Karen described some of the work carried out at the Gardens and stressed the importance of cultivating and preserving our natural flora.

Karen displayed the Herbarium Centenary Quilt made by a group of thirty past and present staff members, their spouses and members of The Friends of the Gardens. It was presented to the Royal Botanic Gardens on 8 March 2001 to commemorate the opening 100 years ago of the first National Herbarium of NSW, now called the R H Anderson Building.

The quilt is made up of eight panels reflecting the diversity in research, from one of the first specimens collected by Joseph Banks and Daniel Solander in 1770, to recent studies and Karen described in detail the plants depicted in the embroidery. The top of the quilt commemorates the facade of the building while the panels depict the layout of garden beds outside the Anderson Building, the site of the first farm established in 1788, as well as the Gardens' sites at Sydney, Mt Annan and Mt Tomah and some of the wildlife still found there. In the centre is a Waratah, stitched by Karen and two others, representing the State's floral emblem.

The quilt is beautifully hand embroidered and is the result of about 600 hours of dedicated team work, with mostly two or three people working on each of the main panels. The side and corner panels, depicting plants and fungi, including the Wollemi Pine, were embroidered by eleven people. Another group was involved in sewing together and finishing the quilt. It was noted (surprisingly) that some of the embroidery was actually done by men. Some of the members of the team contributed design ideas and others displayed delightful needlework talents and used their imagination, with basic instructions being given by Elizabeth Brown.

We were indeed fortunate to have the opportunity to examine the quilt so closely and to be able to appreciate its beauty and learn so much about its history and construction.



How about this?????

From the earliest times, to be toothless was considered ugly.

The ancient Egyptians were the first to address the problem and **false teeth**, attached by gold wire, have been discovered in Egyptian mummies. The teeth were made from reshaped animal teeth, ivory or human teeth possibly removed from corpses.

Wooden teeth were tried in later years but it was not until the late 18th century that porcelain teeth were invented.

Beverley Earnshaw.

Shaw Family
Penshurst Residences

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THE SHAW FAMILY at 37 Kuroki Street, Penshurst

(Permission was granted by Maxine Gray to copy extracts re the Shaw family, 37 Kuroki Street from her family history, *From County to Colony, Vol 1—Macklin/Shaw/Bull* for our Newsletter)

Harry Edward Shaw was born 21 August 1900 at Emmaville, and married Ielene Wilson, 27 April 1927 at Dulwich Hill Methodist Church. Harry grew up in Emmaville and was educated in the town. He joined the Transport Department as a clerk when the family moved to Lewisham, played with the Newtown Football Club and sailed the harbour in 18ft skiffs.

Harry and Ielene purchased a block of land in Kuroki Street, Penshurst, part of the MacRae's Estate—a large area of land which had been owned by Myles MacRae, a well-known councillor and local developer in the late 1880s. They designed and built their home which commanded a wonderful view to the south, over the valley towards the bush, then later in 1937 extended the back section.

Harry became involved on the Layside Committee in the Scouting movement and was President of Hurstville District in the St George area, for many years. He was a keen bowler and an inaugural member of Penshurst Bowling Club and also Francis Drake Bowling Club at Sans Souci. He was also a loyal member of the Masonic Lodge. He enjoyed a game of golf occasionally and in his younger days played a good game of tennis. Gardening was a keen hobby and gerberas were his speciality—the garden was always looking good and provided Ielene with the cut flowers she so dearly loved for her house. The house was given the name *Girraween* which meant "a place of flowers".

Harry was always a help to his neighbours and enjoyed a dry sense of humour. During his children's early years they spent many holidays away and he was able to perfect his fishing skills.

During his career with the Transport Department, Harry was promoted regularly, ending his years as an Inspector with the Tramways. He retired from the Transport Department about 1964 and was hoping to do some travelling around Australia but Ielene's health prevented this from happening and he became her carer. Ielene died in 1971.

On 6 August 1976 Harry married Hazel Sterling. Harry passed away 27 May 1979 and left the house to his children, Valda and Alan, with Hazel to have tenancy as long as she lived. Hazel died 3 April 1997 and the Kuroki Street house was eventually sold.



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 **historyweek**
A historycouncilnsw initiative



"The Swamp Dreaming"

This is an official event of History Week 2005

Carss Cottage Museum

Carwar Avenue – Carss Bush Park
The Museum of Kogarah Historical Society Inc.

Saturday 17th September 10am

Meet at the Museum and join

Francis Bodkin

Indigenous Education Officer at Mt. Annan Botanic Gardens
for an outdoor talk about the history surrounding the area
of Carss Bush Park .

Listen to the stories and legends of the animals, birds
and plants of the area.

Tea/coffee and damper will be served afterwards and the Museum
will be open until 4pm.

Cost: \$5.00 which includes refreshments and Museum entry.

Booking is essential – Telephone: 9546 1580

Email: coralew@chilli.net. au

History Week is an annual state-wide celebration initiated by the History Council of NSW to promote the practice of history and the role it plays in the cultural life of the community and runs from 17 to 25 September throughout NSW.

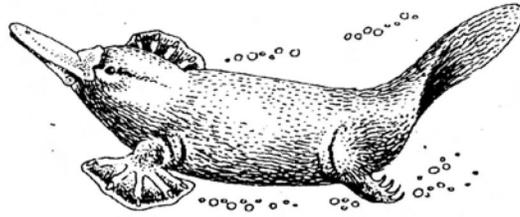
For a full state wide listing of History Week events, log on to
www.historycouncilnsw.org.au

Carss Bush
Park

OUR SPECIAL HISTORY WEEK EVENT

'The Swamp Dreaming'

will focus on the flora and fauna of Carss Bush Park.



Following are some extracts from the Kogarah Historical Society publication
The Carss Family- Carss Cottage and Carss Park by Dr. Joan Hatton.
(this publication is available from the Museum or by phoning 9546 1580)

*These are the recollections of the 1920s written by Gwen Coxhead,
the daughter of the first Ranger.*

" In Carss Park I used to feed possums. There were bandicoots who holed the front lawn the ringing laughter of kookaburras was frequently heard; likewise the cooing of the doves. Pelicans inhabited Carss Bay along with kingfishers, shags and other water birds. Some long legged species would sometimes strut through the mangrove flats searching for tasty mud dwellers.

Among the bush birds were blue and brown wrens, red and yellow breasted robins (wild canaries), tits of various kinds, whip birds, lots of perky willy wagtails, crows, sparrows, hawks and swallows. The nightly hooting of mopokes was sometimes augmented by the eerie call of a lone curlew. Less common were crested pigeons, magpies and apostle birds, white cockatoos and galahs. Lorikeets and parakeets were occasional visitors.

Snakes and lizards, spiders, scorpions and centipedes were everywhere; within Carss Bush were the tall yellow mounds of ant's nests..... Soldier crabs, rock crabs and jelly fish took their revenge too - there were even octopi to watch out for when bathing.

Fish were abundant all over the Georges River and Carss Bay and Kogarah Bay were no exceptions..... Prawns were netted from the beaches. The great water worn rocks about Carss Park were thickly encrusted with periwinkles, cockles, mussels, oysters and small star shaped shells.

How well I remember the wildflowers which really did bloom in sweet profusion. Carss Bush would be bright with the colours of wattle, waratahs, Christmas bush - even a few stray Christmas Bells - flannel flowers, pink and white boronia, pink, red and white heath, grevillea, 'eggs and bacon', 'soldier buttons', native roses, fuschias and clematis, the purple flowered hovea and so-called 'snake flowers' in the same hue and tiny grass orchids.

There were.....many types of gum trees, flowering banksias, geebung trees, pittosporum, ti-trees, the old Moreton Bay fig trees..several species of fern.
I have no recollection of wallabies and koalas in Carss Bush although these did once inhabit the area."

The Moreton Bay fig trees are still there on Carwar Avenue, just down from the Cottage, but not the flame tree and magnificent creamy white scented magnolia remembered by Gwen.

Although the area has changed, and much of the flora and fauna remembered by Gwen no longer remains, Carss Bush Park is still a beautiful and peaceful place to spend some time.

Coralie Lewin.

In our Museum we have a small, quite elegant polished timber box which has a small lock and key and a brass plate on which the word

'Tea'

is engraved.



Originally, tea was imported from China by the East India Company under a virtual monopoly and for a long time was so expensive that it was kept in locked boxes called **'tea caddies'**

In the early 1800s no one drank water because it was feared, often rightly, to be unsafe and impure. The preferred drinks were beer and ale. Later in the century the drinking of coffee and tea rivalled beer in popularity, even among the lower classes - after all, the water was boiled which made it safe to drink.

The tea was not very strong and the monopoly was broken in 1833. Subsequently, imports of tea began to pour in from India and Ceylon - gunpowder green being the favourite type- but in the meantime a flourishing market in ersatz and secondhand tea had grown up, so great was the demand.

Enterprising "tea" merchants busied themselves converting things like blackthorn leaves into reasonable facsimiles of tea leaves by the addition of artistic colouring here and there, a business so successful that the government estimated that for every seven pounds of authentic East India tea being sold there were four pounds of phony tea being sold to unsuspecting buyers. Even when the import monopoly ended, import duties kept the price very high.

So, people recycled - sometimes for profit. By the 1840s there were eight factories in London busily recycling used tea leaves, often dyeing them and mixing them with new tea for resale. At one point it was estimated that about 80,000 pounds of tea were gathered annually and rejuvenated in this manner.

The habit of afternoon tea began in the 1840s. Before that, tea was frequently offered after dinner when the ladies and gentlemen had gathered in the drawing room. By the 1860s or so, five o'clock tea was a recognised ritual and by 1877 there was even a special costume - the tea gown - with which ladies could grace the occasion

Our early colonists were without the luxury of tea except for a few of the privileged gentry, wealthy enough to afford the cost of importation.

It was soon discovered that a passable brew could be made from a diffusion of the leaves of a local shrub, a species of the Melaleuca, which came to be known as the tea tree.

Campers and stockmen still include a billycan in their pack to boil the black, sweet tea they find so refreshing.

Coralie Lewin

Reference: What Jane Austin Ate & Charles Dickens Knew by Daniel Pool

Notes of Gwen Coxhead.

Mondays at the Museum

25 July 2005

Mavis Ward has penned the following report on the interesting talk we heard on that day.....



Sir Henry Parkes

Our speaker was ***Ian Thom*** who, as Great Great Grandson of Sir Henry Parkes, was able to pass on a wealth of information about "***Sir Henry Parkes, the Man***". It was extremely interesting to hear about the not so well publicised side of this great man's life.

In 1836 Henry married Clarinda Varney and they had two children both of whom died in infancy before they decided to come to Australia. They arrived in 1839 on the "Strathfield".

A good deal of Ian's talk consisted of reading several letters written by Henry in which he outlined in great detail his life experiences, beginning with a letter to his sister. He described the voyage as being most unpleasant and during which a daughter was born. He was disappointed at what he found in Sydney; he had very little money, in fact he told his sister that money she had given him enabled him to survive. Accommodation was poor, jobs very hard to find and he sold most of his possessions to buy food.

After working near Penrith for six months and leaving with a good reference, he obtained a job with the Customs Department. He was not satisfied with this and, in 1884, he wrote to Lord Lee who had been his father's landlord in England, seeking help to obtain a better position in the Customs Department. He described to Lord Lee how the family had lived in very poor circumstances on the estate, how he had worked as a bricklayer for a small wage and how little education he had received. When he was 17 or 18 he managed to save enough money to get a ticket to the Mechanics Institution to improve his education. He also learned the trade of ivory and bone turning.

Henry later set himself up in business in Kent Street and Ian showed us some examples of Henry's skill, among which was a photograph of a paper knife, originally given to Governor Samuels and is currently on the desk of Governor Bashir whose desk is the one Henry used in the Colonial Secretary's Office. Ian also showed us an ivory tea-set, so small that it fits into a walnut shell, a small carved boot and Henry's beautifully ornate fob watch.

Henry's ability to network enabled him to come into contact with people of like mind who met and discussed events in Sydney and what should be done about them. This led him into a long political career, including election to the Legislative Council and later to the Legislative Assembly. Henry served for twelve years in Parliament without pay as, at that time, the only paid positions were Premier and Colonial Secretary. He later became Premier and held the position for the record period of a total of 34 years 3 months and that record still stands. During that time he established a successful newspaper called "The Empire" for which he wrote articles at night, at the same time attending Parliament during the day

continued:

After two terms as Premier Henry managed to build a house at Faulconbridge and this became a mountain retreat. In 1888 he was made bankrupt, lost Faulconbridge and was forced to step down from Parliament but re-elected six days later.

He formed a relationship with Eleanor Dixon with whom he had three children, first registered in her name, later changed to his. When Eleanor became ill with cancer and after Clarinda's death in 1888, she suggested that Henry marry their housekeeper, Julia Lynch, so that the children would have a mother. They then lived at "Kenilworth" at Annandale where Henry died in 1896 aged 80. He was buried at Faulconbridge and his papers given to the Mitchell Library.

Sir Henry Parkes published a number of poems and contributed a great deal to the improvement of living conditions in Australia during his diverse lifetime

Please Note: our next Mondays at the Museum is on 26 September - 10am - and the Speaker will be Ruth Pope who will talk about the History of Silver Table Wear.

Thel Tatum

Thel's husband, John, recently passed away after many years in a Nursing Home. Thel devotedly spent part of every day with him and we convey to her our sincere sympathy. At the present time Thel is in St. George Hospital recovering from heart surgery. We trust that she will soon be feeling much better and send her our best wishes for a good recovery.



Cars's Cottage Museum

**The Museum is open Sundays and some Public Holidays
from 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm**

Admission: Adults \$2.00 Children 50 cents

✓ Museum Roster

September

- 4 Mavis Ward & Ken Grieve
- 11 Trudy Johns & Elizabeth Emerson
- 18 Coralie Lewin & Meg Thompson
- ✓ 25 Betty Goodger & Janette Hollebhone

October

- 2 Trudy Johns & ??????
- 9 Bob & Mary Williams
- 16 Carol Teir & Gilda Tilia
- ✓ 23 Betty Goodger & Janette Hollebhone
- 30 Cath & Leo Sullivan

Diary Dates

- ✗ 8 September General Meeting 2pm
- ✓ 17 September 'The Swamp Dreaming' 10am
- 26 September Mondays at the Museum 10am
- ✓ 13 October General Meeting 2pm