

# Kogarah Historical Society Inc

Carss Cottage Museum, Carss Park

Postal Address PO Box 367, Kogarah 1485

[www.kogarah.historicalsociety.com.au](http://www.kogarah.historicalsociety.com.au)

Patron: Kevin Greene, Mayor

President: Beverley Earnshaw

## *Newsletter*

*July/August 2019*

*Volume 11, No 3*



*Charlie Stannard, tram conductor 1932. Note the money bag around his neck and the book for issuing tickets. Story inside*



### **Meetings and Speakers**

**Thursday 11 July 2019**

**Dr Michael Sheret, Aust Golf Heritage Soc**

*Golf in times of War. Also showing of documentary 'The Unworn Wedding Dress'*

**Thursday 8 August 2019**

**Ian Tyrell, Author**

*The Cooks River: an unnatural history*

Meetings start in the School of Arts, Bowns Rd/Queens Ave at 2 pm. The July meeting will start with the presentation of the History Awards, the showing of 'The Unworn Wedding Dress', afternoon tea and then the speaker. Apologies for non-attendance should go to the Secretary, Gill Whan (9546 4623).

Find us on Facebook



# **Mondays at the Museum**

22 July 2019

## **Caroline Chisholm, an irresistible force**

**Sarah Goldman**, author and journalist is our speaker on this fascinating woman.

We start as always at 10 am with morning tea. Admission is \$5.00 which covers your home-cooked morning tea and gives you a chance to win our lucky door prize. For bookings please contact Adele on 9529 6730. Leave a message on her answering machine if she is not there.

## **Sunday Museum Roster**

**Opening hours 1pm–5pm in May, 1pm – 4pm in June (winter hours)**

### **July 2019**

7<sup>th</sup> Heather Campbell & Pat Young  
14<sup>th</sup> Anne Williams & Robert McGarn  
21<sup>th</sup> Betty Goodger & Gill Whan  
28<sup>th</sup> Wendy Agzarian & Fiona Johnstone

### **August 2019**

4<sup>th</sup> Wendy Agzarian &  
11<sup>th</sup> Adele Ryan & Joe Spinelli  
18<sup>th</sup> Betty Goodger & Gill Whan  
25<sup>th</sup> Miriam & Niver Rodriguez

**Problems:** If you need to exchange days on the regular roster, please try to do so amongst yourselves, otherwise contact Wendy Agzarian (9774 3667) Emergency roster – Anne Williams (0425 215 589), Cath & Leo Sullivan (9579 6149), Barbara Davids (9389 6742)

## **Committee 2019 (\*denotes Executive)**

<b>President:*</b>	Beverley Earnshaw	Ph: 9546 1091
<b>Vice President:*</b>	Adele Ryan	Ph. 9593 1898
<b>Secretary :*</b>	Gill Whan	Ph: 9546 4623
<b>Treasurer:*</b>	Cath Sullivan	Ph: 9579 6149
<b>Public Officer*</b>	Robert McGarn	Ph: 0425 706 579

**Committee Members:** Wendy Agzarian, Barbara Davids, Glynn Pulling, Rodger Robertson, Mavis Ward, Pat Young.

### **Committee Meeting Venues:**

8 July 2.30 pm Pat Young, 25 Culver Street, Monterey (9593 1898)  
5 August 2 pm Beverley Earnshaw, 15 Hamer St., Kogarah Bay (95461091)  
9 Sept 2 pm Gill Whan, 11 Dewrang St., Carss Park (9546 4623)

## **Welcome to New Members**

**Esther Spokes and Jan and Dick Goodfellow**

**We hope you enjoy your time with the Society**

## CHARLIE STANNARD – THE TROLLEY BUS MAN

*(Written by Olivia Ayling as a tribute to her father, Charlie Stannard, who worked for 45 years with the Department of Tramways.)*

The year 1937 saw a big improvement in public transport in Kogarah and Rockdale Municipalities. The steam trams that ran between Sans Souci and Kogarah ended and the cream and green, double decker trolley buses began service. Their run was later extended to Rockdale Railway Station.

Their smart appearance, comfortable interior and noiseless performance made the trolley buses instantly popular. No pollution was caused by these vehicles as they were powered by electricity through two poles attached to the roof and in contact with overhead electrical cables.

At that time my family was living in the Eastern Suburbs at Rose Bay where my father was employed by the State Government Tramways at the depot situated at Rushcutters Bay. In his early years he worked as a tram conductor, treading along the external running boards of the old 'toastrack' trams. As the trams passed through Kings Cross, a frequent traveller was the eccentric Beatrice Miles. Later my father became a driver and his daily routine was to drive trams from Erskine Street in the city to Watsons Bay and back.



My father was the grandson of pioneer, William Stannard, whose first sighting of Sydney Harbour came when he was a 12 year old cabin boy aboard a sailing ship from England. The ship sailed away to the United States and it was 10 years before he saw Sydney Harbour again and decided to make his home there. In those days wharves had not been developed and the great sailing ships bringing goods to the Australian Colonies had to moor off shore. William bought a rowing boat and rowed to and fro, helping to unload the ships. He bought a second rowing boat and gradually developed a whole fleet of boats which later became Stannard Brothers launches of Sydney Harbour. Grandson, Charlie, was born at Edgecliff in 1898.



*Ritchie St. Trolley Bus depot, now the site of Sans Souci Medical Centre*

We (Charlie's family) always lived in rented accommodation and the introduction of the trolley buses at Kogarah seemed an ideal opportunity for my parents to buy a block of land, build their dream home, and for my father to transfer to the Ritchie Street Depot, driving trolley buses. This idea became a reality in 1938 when I was 12 years old and the move took place.

It took some time to settle happily into the new surroundings in Sandringham Street, Dolls Point. It was sparsely inhabited, had many unmade roads, no kerbing and guttering or sewerage. Across the road was White's Dairy from which milk was delivered each day by horse and cart into the customers' billy cans left on the front doorsteps. Quite a change from Rose Bay!

However, all the problems seemed to disappear as I explored the neighbourhood, made new friends, discovered Ramsgate swimming pool and enjoyed frequent trips in the trolley buses.

My father, Charlie Stannard, was a man of many talents. He was an excellent cyclist and in keeping with family tradition was a skilled oarsman and took part in the annual boat race of the Rushcutters Bay Tram Depot. One of his lifelong interests was the practice of First

Aid. He possessed medals and certificates from the St. John's Ambulance Brigade to certify his competence. Children in the Dolls Point area were often brought to our place for treatment, which he gave willingly. At the Ritchie Street trolley bus depot he was known as their local 'Zambuc'.

An example of his skill was reported in the Press in September 1933, exactly a month before the old 'toastrack' trams were being phased out in favour of the corridor variety. A passenger, Michael Dwyer, slipped while alighting at Kings Cross and was pinned underneath the tram. Immediately the tram crew jumped to his rescue. "*While the driver and conductor jacked up the tram, C. Stannard who was collecting fares on the second car, crawled to the helpless man's side. Dwyer's head was jammed under the brake rod and his arm was caught under the light shield, but Stannard released him in barely two minutes*". The man survived with multiple injuries.

My father was very friendly and obliging and always pleased to meet people. He enjoyed working at the Ritchie Street Depot as the staff was like one big happy family. Dances were organized at Ramsgate School of Arts to which all the families and their friends attended. A pianist, drummer and violinist provided the music for all the participants in the Barn Dance, Pride of Erin, Dorothea, quickstep, foxtrot, waltz etc.

It was on one of these occasions I recall that a promotion of the new, sensational soft drink, Coca Cola, which had just hit the market, was made. All bottles were FREE! I sat next to the huge red ice container and drank more than my fill. The next day I had off school recovering, having been taught a very timely lesson on over indulgence.

Life was at a much slower pace in those days. The trolley bus crews were the essence of service and would not start the bus if they saw a commuter running to jump aboard. The conductor was usually there to give a hand when needed.

Russ Tyson, a popular ABC radio announcer, experienced the friendly assistance of the trolley bus staff when he travelled to work in the early hours of the morning to conduct his breakfast session. He lived in a house on Rocky Point Road, Sans Souci, and caught a bus at a certain time each day to Kogarah Railway Station. If he was not at the stop when the bus arrived, the driver would gently tap the horn to tell him to 'shake a leg'. That brought a grateful Russ to the scene within seconds. Such was the nature of the men who operated the buses. No one was left standing.

All too soon the trolley buses had reached their 'use-by-date' and in 1959 the government decided to replace them with diesel driven buses. My father was chosen to drive the last trolley bus out of the Ritchie Street Depot, which I was proud to witness on television.

My happy memories of these wonderful times will live with me forever.

*Olivia Ayling 2019*

*Our thanks to Olivia for sharing her story with the Society.*



## **Heritage Tour of Sydney University**

### **Come and join the Society trip on Thursday 18 July**

We meet at 10.15 am in the main quadrangle for a 10.30 am start. It is a one hour tour and following this we have booked to have High Tea in the Courtyard Restaurant and Bar. The cost of the high tea is \$38 (sorry it is a slight increase on the original price as they went up on 1 July!). It is payable on the day at the Café.

We suggest either sharing a cab from Central station or take one of the many buses from Railway Square 'Stand M'. This could be a 438, 439, 440, or 480. Get off at the Sydney University Footbridge and it is a five minute walk to the quadrangle.

Please let Cath Sullivan know if you would like to come - 9579 6149

## **A Narrative of one local Kogarah Citizen's Sporting and other Achievements.**

By Monica O'Brien

*This was one of the three winning entries in the 2018 Local History Awards.*

Part 2 – at the end of part one we left Stan finding it difficult to adjust to civilian life....

He took 'time out' to visit his mother's sister in Newry Bar, in Northern NSW. He assisted his uncle in his bakery. Once the bread was baked it was delivered by truck to surrounding towns. Stan's uncle asked Stan to stay on in the business but Stan's roots were in Sydney and so he declined the offer. In Sydney, Stan took up the offer by the government of a rehabilitation programme set up to help returning service personnel readjust to civilian life. He elected to study a pastry cook's course but later developed an allergy to flour and had to leave that job. He tried some dead end jobs but was advised by his father who had now settled back into civilian life after war service to seek work with the government. He added 'it is a secure life-long employment opportunity'. Stan took his advice and commenced work with the Postmaster General Department in the area of computerised installation of telephone networks. The job lasted 30 years. He worked at the Kogarah telephone exchange.

By this time Stan had become interested in a young girl who also lived in the region. He would sometimes sit in the park where her Vigaro team played competition on Saturday afternoon and on this occasion he was reading the Express, a local paper. His eyes spotted an ad which read 'VJ for sale'. It gave an address. Stan rode his bike to the place and saw the gleaming sailing craft. He persuaded his girlfriend to have a look at this beautiful sailing vessel. Neither of them were experts on sailing boats and to them it looked magnificent. Stan bought the boat only to find that when it was tested in the Georges River it leaked like a sieve. At the end of the first race it was so heavy with water inside that it couldn't be lifted from the water. He promptly got rid of that boat and bought another with wins to its credit.

In 1948 Stan joined the Connells Point Sailing Club which met in a boat shed at the rear of Les Stewart's home in Queen's Road, Connells Point. Meetings were held every Friday night in his garage. Races were held on Saturday afternoons from the beach at Connells Park. The sailing course ran from Bald Face in the East to Green Point near Como in the West. Stan still had much to learn from his fellow sailors. He bought a book by Ted Wells called Scientific Sailboat Racing. This book was to teach him much about tide, wind and currents and 'lifts' off the shore. Gradually his skills were improving. But he was still not entirely happy with his performance and started to compare his boat with other competitors. He found that although they were theoretically similar in design there were still slight differences in design. He talked with a boat builder, Ken Minter, who operated from his shed in Sans Souci. Ken built a Vacluse Junior for him. From then on Stan's sailing skills improved. There was still more that he improved and this was in design of sails. He talked with a local sail maker, Jim Tapfield from Brighton. Stan designed a revolutionary sail with full length battens the entire width of the sail. This kept the sail rigid without curling on the edges. Now he had a real racing machine. He began to win races. His friends teasingly called his boat the 'Chinese Junk'.

By this time the Connell's Point Sailing Club members found that they had saved about thirty pounds. After some discussion as to whether they would have a night out or spend the money more wisely, it was decided to build a real club house. Stan had heard that

disused army huts were being auctioned at La Perouse. Several members of the club were assigned to attend the auction and for the princely sum of thirty pounds they bid for and obtained a hut. Many of the club members had building skills and together they erected their first sailing club, a wooden L-shaped construction. . The Kogarah Council had approved a site on which the club house would be built: on the waterfront at Donnelly Park, Kyle Bay. Many years later a much larger red brick sailing club house was built. Sailing races are held there every Saturday afternoon and Learn to Sail sessions are provided for newcomers.

By this time Stan had married his sweetheart and they rented a house in Kyle Pde, Kyle Bay. It had a deep water frontage and on summer afternoons Stan hurried home from work, launched his boat and sailed for an hour before dinner. To say he was keen was an understatement. Fortune smiled on Stan as his f'ward hand was a young man named Roy Isaacs whose father, Don Isaacs, owned a chrome hardening factory. Don was generous and allowed Roy the use of his utility to transport Stan's VJ to all regattas, even as far away as Mordiallic, in Victoria. Other regattas were held at Jervis Bay, Brisbane Waters, Pittwater, Lake Illawarra, Vacluse and on the Georges River. Another very challenging experience Stan had was to be selected to try out in the Finn Class Yachts for the Olympics Games in 1956 to be held in Melbourne. It was an honour to be selected but he failed to live up to expectations in that particular class of one man boat.

Stan had fierce competition in the Vacluse Juniors from two brothers from the Central Coast who were sometimes beating Stan in sailing races. He talked with these lads and asked if he was permitted to measure their boat. They agreed that he could do so. He set out for the Central Coast on his BMA motor bike. The trip there was uneventful, however on the return trip it rained all the way home. He almost had to be chipped off his bike at journey's end. He had achieved what he needed and proceeded to build a new VJ according to the measurements he'd acquired. He built this in a spare room in his home. The place hummed with activity as helpers trudged in and out. The result was amazing. He had a boat within the guidelines specified and began to win championships. He had notched up the Kurnell Cup, the Pittwater Championship, The Sydney Harbour Championship and the Botany Bay Championship. His performance won him selection to represent NSW in the National Titles in Perth in 1951. He was runner up in this event. Even though Stan's life was full of activity he managed to fit in other interests. He had been persuaded by Fred Richardson to join a political party. This in turn led to a course in public speaking. He and fellow members of the ALP, Sen. Doug McClelland and Max Kelly formed a debating team. Competitions were held between other political branches. His team was successful in these competitions.

Early in Stan's sailing career his family enjoyed beach activities while sailing races were held but as the family grew and pressures mounted to build their own home, sailing activities had to be sacrificed. This was not the end of sailing altogether as Stan's skills were required by skippers of bigger boats. Meanwhile Stan's children had grown up and were members of the Scouts and Guides Associations. Stan offered his services as a Sea Scout Leader, at 1<sup>st</sup> Kyle Bay Sea Scouts. He took on responsibility for the Venturer Unit. This age group consisted of young men and women aged between 15 and 18 years of age. Stan created an interesting and challenging programme for this group. Their activities included Scuba Diving. For this activity Stan recruited an ex commando to be quite sure that everyone was safe and in expert hands. Other activities included caving, abseiling, canyoning, canoeing and orienteering.

Stan was still with Telecom but he became disgruntled when he saw young freshly graduated students getting jobs higher than his own. He was not impressed because these students did not have the physical skills required for the job. They came to him for guidance. He came to the conclusion that he should return to education. He saw this as an opportunity to get ahead. When Gough Whitlam announced that higher education would be free even to mature aged students Stan accepted this offer. He at first enrolled at an evening college to gain his matriculation and from there he enrolled in a university course. He chose psychology as one of his subjects and graduated with a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology. He coupled this study with a hypnosis course. The two courses complimented each other.

Having graduated, his mind turned to finding employment. At age 52 many workers were being told that they were redundant. Stan was hopeful and answered an ad for the Navy. It was for a six month only position. He applied for the job. To his amazement he was given the job at Nirimba, Naval Training Base, Quaker's Hill. The selectors wanted someone 'with a fatherly image' and Stan certainly had that. At the end of the six months the former employee announced that Stan could keep the job as he would be moving on. Stan settled into this job which lasted until his forced retirement at age 65. This was however not the end of the road for Stan as he was accepted as a consultant for the Navy. His task was to service all ship's personnel as well as any issues faced by the recruits. Stan was regarded as an officer and as such was required to select recruits from each state in Australia. This meant that the selection panel travelled to each Australian capital with the exception of Darwin, every six months to interview and select recruits. The Northern Territory recruits travelled to Adelaide to be interviewed.

On the occasion of the Australian Bi-Centenary Britain gave the Australian people a Sail-training- ship –The Young Endeavour. Young people aged between 18-25 were invited to apply to travel on a Round-the-World voyage. It was Stan's job to interview the applicants and select the most appropriate persons. The tests were unbiased and the applicants came from all walks of life. One hundred individuals were chosen. Only 25 could be taken on the ship at any one time and so they were divided into groups. The first group would travel from Sydney to Greece where they would leave the ship. Another group was flown to Greece to meet the ship there. This group sailed to Southampton where they were exchanged for the next group who sailed for North America. The final leg sailed to South America. From there they sailed back to Australia. Whilst on board the ship, all applicants learnt to handle all aspects of sailing including navigating, understanding the radar equipment, climbing the mast to shorten or lengthen the sails, scrubbing the deck, cooking and cleaning. By journey's end the applicants were adept at managing the ship without the aid of the crew. Stan was given the privilege of joining the ship at Sydney and sailing to Portland, Victoria where his brother lived. He was treated as an applicant and did the same tasks as they did. On their return to Sydney those selected for the voyage arranged a get-together for all concerned at Centennial Park as a way of saying 'thank you' for their inclusion on the trip. It was a most educational and valued journey.

Whilst with the Navy Stan's supervisor sent him for advanced training in the treatments used in psychology. The lectures were held in Baltimore Universities, USA. During the ten day lectures Stan learnt from experts about treatment for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The Americans had years of experience treating returned service personnel suffering PTSD. Stan returned home with an arsenal of techniques for use in his practice. It had been discovered that the sooner the client is treated after the traumatic event, the quicker

the recovery. It works best if debriefing occurs immediately after the trauma occurs. Therefore a 'buddy help buddy' system was employed. Fellow workmates can debrief each other.

After the age of 65 Stan tapered off his work load from 5 days a week to four. Two days were spent with the Navy and two days with the Police Department. He became a part-timer. It was with the Police Department that Stan found his new training most valuable as he was asked to lecture at the Goulburn Police Academy. Here he taught police officers how to debrief fellow officers after they had suffered trauma. This venture proved so successful that Stan was seconded to lecture at the Glen Waverley Police Academy in Victoria. In NSW he held lectures at the Police Headquarters in Hurstville. Stan's services were required in many outback areas of NSW; anywhere from Moree to Deniliquin, from Jervis Bay to Braidwood.

I have related a story of one ordinary man doing extraordinary things. There would be hundreds of other ordinary men and women in the community weaving a thread to form the colourful tapestry that we know as Kogarah's history.



## Trivia Quiz

By Rodger Robertson

### Music and composers

1. Who wrote the Planet suite?
2. What was the movie that featured Beethoven's 9<sup>th</sup> Symphony?
3. Name the 4 Beatles?
4. Waltz of the Flowers comes from which suite of music and who wrote it?
5. 1812 overture was written by which Russian Composer?
6. Who was Hitler's favourite Composer?
7. What group sings "we don't want no education" and dark side of the moon?
8. Who wrote Advance Australia Fair?
9. Tosca, Madame Butterfly, and Turandot were written by which Italian Composer?
10. "Return to Sender" was sung by which pop singer?

1. Gustav Holst
2. Clockwork Orange
3. John Lennon, Ringo Starr, Paul McCartney, George Harrison
4. Peer Gynt Suite by Edward Greig
5. Peter Tchaikovsky
6. Richard Wagner
7. Pink Floyd
8. Peter Dods McCormick
9. Giacomo Puccini
10. Elvis

### **Pope Leo XIII said:-**

*The first law of history is to dread uttering a falsehood; the next is not to fear stating the truth; lastly, the historian's writing should be open to no suspicion of partiality or animosity.*



# A Kogarah Treasure TROVE

By Dr. Garry Darby

The following is a small part of a long article which was printed in the "Propeller" newspaper on Thursday 26 June 1941, p7. This newspaper was produced at Hurstville commencing in 1911 and continuing until 1969. That is 58 years! Every copy of the Propeller between 1911 and 1954 is available on Trove. You can read it on your home computer or at your local library - FREE. This particular article introduces the Concannon and Hickey families. Interested in local history? Why not look up the rest of this article which goes on at some length - in a very valuable way - about early Kogarah and surrounds - fascinating!

## EIGHTY YEARS IN KOGARAH.

Pioneer Great-Grandmother.

Memories of the Past.

by "FATHER TIME."

Far back in the romantic story of Sydney's early settlement, at a time when the colonists had not as yet seen the running of the first steam train from Redfern to Parramatta, a hardy pioneer Irishman possessed himself of forty acres of untamed bushland in the heart of what is now Kogarah, and there, with his wife built a simple slab-hut home with walls and



roof of rough-hewn timber. In that remote and lonely spot beside the rough cart track that was Rocky Point Road he cleared for cultivation, and commenced his labours as a market gardener. There, in the rich soil that now sprouts a dense mass of modern cottages, the adventurous settler spread his wide acres of gardens. Around the homestead were paddocks, for horses and cattle, and beyond all, was the natural

bush, the playground of opossums, bandicoots, and wild pigeons.

Two or three years passed, and the place grew into a typical country farm; made picturesque with fruit trees, bee hives, poultry, pigs, cows, horses, slip-rail fencing, and other rustic features of a pioneer's squattage. From the bare rafters of the slab home's kitchen hung large sections of ham - cured by the Irishman himself, while at meal times the table was graced with rich home-baked bread. Then, into that pleasant rural setting in the distant year 1858 a daughter was born to those hardy pioneers; a daughter, remarkable to relate, who was destined to spend no fewer than eighty-three years of her life in the same district of Kogarah.

The Irishman of whom I write was James [ed. John] Concannon, one of the original pioneers of St. George. He hailed from County Galway, of the Emerald Isle. His daughter, now in her eighty-fourth year, is best known to-day as Mrs. E. Hickey, widow of the late Michael Hickey of Kogarah, who once drove the Royal Mail, horse-drawn coaches, from there to the city. Recently I had the privilege of a most interesting interview with this grand old lady at her home in Garden Street, Kogarah, where she resides with her daughter, Mrs. M. Allen. Mrs. Hickey is a great-grandmother; counting amongst her descendants four children (only two of whom are now living), eleven grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.



Not only, however, has this Kogarah octogenarian watched the growth and progress of her own family, but she has also witnessed the gradual opening-up and construction of our modern local suburbs — and in this can relate many interesting and colourful facts about the history of the district. Indeed her rich and vivid memories of a pioneering past that bears such strong contrast with "streamlined" 1941 are to-day some of Mrs. Hickey's most treasured possessions, and she never tires of re-telling her story of other times to those who are interested.

What this lady has related to me—as one who is gradually piecing together the early passages, in St. George's history— has been invaluable!



## Growing up in the 40's and 50's

*Joe Spinelli was born in Australia to Italian parents. These are some of his memories of growing up in Australia in the 40's and 50's.*

The forties came to an end. We had endured the unnecessary death of my father, eviction from home. Abuse! The threat of Japanese invasion, blackouts. The torment at school and afterwards. The struggle for my mother to provide for us in a one room flat filled with what remained of our furniture. I had learned to be alone and friendless because of the war years. The prejudice because of being known as the enemy, enduring the terrible hatred levelled at my Mother, sister and myself. Once welcomed neighbours we became the vile enemy overnight.

It was safer being a loner and creating my own world. I had books and pictures from the penny chocolate wrappers that opened a world of imagination to me. Faraway places with strange sounding names that stirred my imagination and transported me to a fantasy world where I could be Zorro, Robin Hood or Tom Sawyer. A fantasy where Tarzan, the Lone Ranger



and the Marx brothers were all my friends. Imagination took me to new heights, to places where the world was filled with colour and adventure for a day-dreamer who fed his fantasies with books and pictures; places exotic, exciting and magical. And so I survived the forties.

The war ended and though the bitterness was still rife and endured because of our Italian background, there was some growing tolerance. I made friends but always remained wary. I was a loner by circumstance armed with a bright imagination that could take me to heights beyond the routine aspirations of my new found friends.

And so the fifties began. We moved to Kogarah Bay where my Aunt and Uncle had a newsagency at Park Rd/Princes Highway. Kogarah Bay was another world - a place of big sky and open space. Everyone knew who the people in the street were. The war was in the past and a new road to something better absorbed the neighbourhood. I made friends and I would set out some days with them on voyages of discovery. Carss Park bushlands, the wilds of Scarborough Park, Pemberton's baths at Ramsgate, the Chinese market gardens at Kogarah

Bay, the scrub before the houses claimed it. There were steam train trips to the bush at Otford where we swam in rock pools and climbed to the cliffs at Stanwell Park and down the escarpment camping in the wilderness.

I grew into my teens.

Dreams of romance filled my thoughts. Meetings at Parry's milk bar after school at Kogarah. Jazz music and the sound of Big Dance bands became the passion. The Rockdale town hall dance nights, Jitterbugging, Paddington Town Hall, Petersham town hall, Hurstville Palais De Dance. We travelled wherever the bands were playing hoping for a 'yes' to take some girl home. Once it was as far as Lindfield where there was a quick cuddle at the front door before a rush to catch the last train back to Central only to sleep on hard wooden benches on the platform trying to keep warm, waiting for the first train to Allawah and the long walk home to Kogarah Bay.

Life as a teenager in Sydney was something of a whirlwind. Thrill seeking as teenagers do. The first pair of Jeans with the bottoms rolled up. White socks and blue suede shoes. Cowlick haircuts, the Bodgies and Widgies craze. The latest trends and then National Service and the army. But my dreams always prevailed and while my friends thought of domestication and settling down; my dreams were elsewhere. A world beyond Sydney, beyond Australia! My imagination created greater expectations. An aimless search for the trade or employment that I could make my career in and a near disaster of early marriage was the kick in the pants I needed.

I left my late teens and moved adventurously into my twenties. Then came the day when I paid for a fare to Europe on the Lloyd Triestino shipping line to Europe. Six months later on a cool July morning the countless coloured streamers from ship to shore began to snap as the ship slowly moved away. I was still in the 1950's but with the severing of those coloured ribbons my life changed forever. I was on my own. Facing a future that would lead me to new places, new careers, to new heights and experiences and a wonderful ride into the future.



## What's On

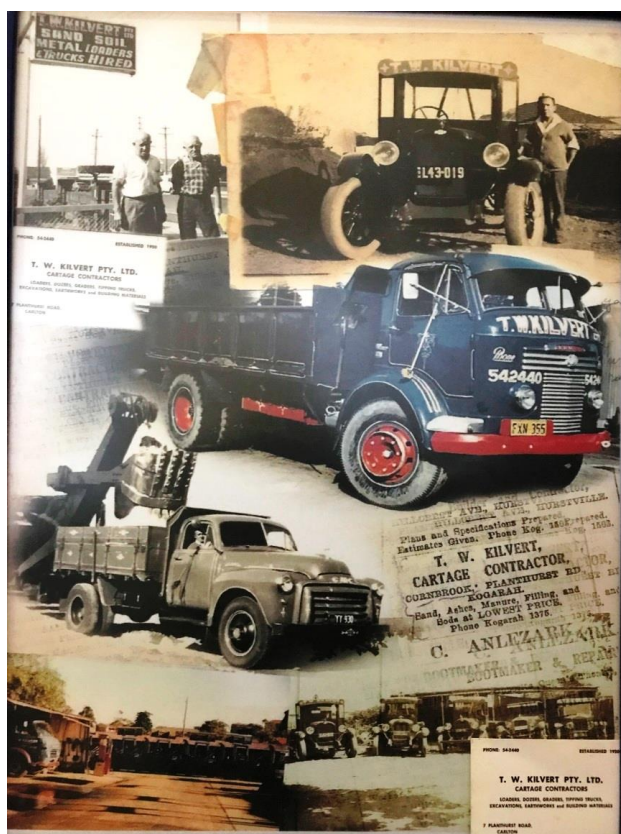
**23 July – State Library of NSW – *Bedlam in Botany Bay*** with James Dunt. James Dunt chronicles the madness in the early days of the Colony. 12.30 – 1.30 pm. \$10 non members Free to Friends. Bookings through 99273 1779 or [bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bookings@sl.nsw.gov.au)

**4 August – Tempe House – from 10 am – 4pm. The Living Heritage Festival.** Presented by the Historic Houses Association. Showcases the forgotten crafts of the past and heritage skills of tomorrow and will include an exhibition of 1830s dresses, pop-up histories, workshops, history talks, stalls, artisanal food and drink and a trip around the disappearing island of Fatima in a heritage rowboat. Sounds great. Tickets from \$10 for a general ticket. Bookings through [www.hha.net.au/festival](http://www.hha.net.au/festival)

**10 August – Kogarah Library – 1 pm – 2.30 pm.** It's National Science Week. 3 female scientists from ANSTO share their passion about their research. Free event but registrations necessary through Eventbrite

**12 August – Kogarah Library – 10 am.** *Wrap with Love.* The annual knit-in. Each square adds to another blanket for someone who needs it. Free

## The Kilvert Brothers Excavators extraordinaire!



For many decades vehicles and machinery belonging to T.W. Kilvert Pty. Ltd. were a familiar site around the roadworks, the earthworks and the many projects being carried out by Kogarah Municipal Council. It seems that T.W. Kilvert Pty.Ltd. was the principal contractor to Kogarah Council.

The business was founded by Tom Kilvert (senior) who immigrated to Australia from Manchester UK in 1910 with his wife and two sons, three year old Norman and the infant, Thomas Junior. The family settled in Planthurst Road, Kogarah (now Carlton) where he opened a small cartage business using horse drawn vehicles. The horses were stabled at the rear of the family home until the 1920s when T-Model Ford trucks replaced the horse-drawn drays. There was a further upgrade about 1930 when a four cylinder Chev truck

was added to the fleet.

Tom Senior continued with this fleet until he became too ill to carry on and handed the business over to his two sons, Norm and Tom. When their parents passed away about 1939, the two sons demolished the original family home and in its place built two identical smart brick cottages for themselves.

By the start of World War II the business was prospering but the introduction of petrol rationing restricted its activities. Many vehicles at that time were being powered by 'charcoal burners' and in 1941 Norm went bush to burn charcoal for use in cars and trucks. The war restricted replacement of vehicles and so the family business was put on hold.

The two brothers, Norm and Tom, enlisted in the R.A.A.F., but after their discharge at the end of the war they reactivated the family business. This time cartage was made secondary to the new demand for excavation. A fleet of front-end-loaders revitalized the business. There was never a name change and soon T.W. Kilvert Pty.Ltd. became a leading and well respected business in Kogarah.

The two Kilvert brothers joined the South Hurstville Bowling Club in 1947 and were made life members, Tom in 1976 and Norm in 1979, in recognition of their many hours of voluntary work. They were members of St. Cuthberts Anglican Church in Park Road, and in 1956 when the Kindergarten Hall had been completed they spray painted 180 small chairs.

The Kilvert brothers have now passed on, but will forever be anonymous contributors to the changing landscape of Kogarah.

*(Thanks must go to the Kilvert descendants for the information contained in this article)*