

Kogarah Historical Society Inc

Carss Cottage Museum, Carss Park

Postal Address PO Box 367, Kogarah 1485

www.kogarah.historicalsociety.com.au

Patron: Kevin Greene, Mayor

President: Gill Whan

Newsletter

September/October

Volume 12 No.4



Exhibition Building in Prince Alfred Park C1870s – story p.3

Meetings and Speakers

Thursday 10 September 2020

Barbara Appleton, Author -
Tracking Mr Sharpe

Thursday 8 October 2020

Patrick Dodd, NSW State Library -
Hell to Paradise, the Norfolk Island Story

Fingers crossed this month! 2 pm start in the School of Arts, Bowns Road/Queens Avenue Kogarah with the speaker. Afternoon tea to follow with limited 'mingling'. A short business meeting 3.30-4pm. Apologies for non-attendance at meetings should go to Gill Whan (9546 4623). Visitors are always welcome.

Find us on Facebook



Monday at the Museum

28 September 2020

Heritage Stoneworks

If our figures in NSW remain stable and the weather is fine, then Monday at the Museum will go ahead on **28 September** with a visit by Heritage Stoneworks. They will give a demonstration of working with sandstone and a talk.

The meeting will start at 10 am with the usual excellent morning tea in the courtyard. Cost is \$5.00 per person. Please book through Adele 9529 6730 – leave a message if no answer.

The Museum is now open again on Sunday afternoons and we have had good attendances. We are also accepting group bookings who hear the talk outside and then inspect the Museum in groups of four people.

Numbers in the Cottage are limited to 6 in total (4 visitors and 2 volunteers) and COVID – 19 precautions observed.

Sunday Museum Roster

Opening Hours 1 pm-4 pm (Winter), 1 pm–5 pm (Summer)

September

6th Anne Williams & Rob.McGarn
13th Pat Young & Heather Campbell
20th Gill Whan & Betty Goodger
27th Adele Ryan & Harvey Langford

October

4th Wendy Agzarian & Elaine Filewood
11th Adele Ryan & Joe Spinelli
18th Gill Whan & Betty Goodger
25th Miryam & Niver Rodriguez

Problems: If you need to exchange days on the regular roster, please try to do so amongst yourselves, otherwise contact Wendy Agzarian (0402 136 147).

Emergency volunteers – Barbara Davids (9389 6742), Fiona Johnstone (0401976130), Margaret James (0411252887), Cath & Leo Sullivan (9579 6149)

Committee 2020 (* denotes Executive)

President*	Gill Whan	Ph.0439 667 843
Vice President*	Adele Ryan	Ph.9529 6730
Secretary*	Gill Whan	Ph.0439 667 843
Treasurer*	Cath Sullivan	Ph. 9570 6149
Public Officer*	Robert McGarn	Ph. 0425 706 579

Committee Members: Wendy Agzarian , Barbara Davids, Glynn Pulling, Robert McGarn, Pat Young, Beverley Earnshaw, Elaine Filewood, Anne Williams.

Committee Meeting Dates:

7 September, 2 pm, Pat Young, 15 Culver Street, Monterey (9593 1898)

5 October, 2 pm, Gill Whan, 11 Dewrang Street, Carss Park (0439 667 843).

9 November, 2pm, Pat Young, 15 Culver Street, Monterey (9593 1898)

1870! Centenary of James Cook's landing at Botany Bay

How Sydney celebrated.

The year 1870 marked one hundred years since Lieutenant James Cook sailed into Botany Bay and stepped on to its shore at Kurnell. For the people of Australia this was a major event and its centenary required appropriate acknowledgment. It was the Agricultural Society of NSW which suggested Sydney host an Intercolonial Exhibition, not only to celebrate James Cook's landing in Botany Bay, but also to showcase the outstanding progress the Colony had made in its first century.

The term 'Intercolonial Exhibition' referred to those British Colonies on the continent of Australia which at that stage had not federated. Such exhibitions had grown in popularity since the Great Exhibition held in London in 1851 when the idea spread throughout the world that such exhibitions gave impetus to trade and industry.

The Agricultural Society was ably qualified to organize a large scale exhibition as it had been holding annual shows on its Parramatta ground since 1858, but an undertaking on such a grand scale required Government support. In 1865, 15 acres of land known as the 'Cleveland Paddock' had been gazetted as a public reserve and in 1868 it was named Prince Alfred Park in honour of Queen Victoria's son a recent visitor to Sydney. It was a central spot, close to the railway terminus at Redfern, but the land was described by one party as 'a quagmire with a filthy drain running across it – a plague spot'. Nevertheless, planning went ahead and responsibility for landscaping and the design of a suitable building was handed to Architect, Benjamin Backhouse. His brief was to design 'an industrial palace' which would be a fitting tribute to James Cook's arrival in Australia. Backhouse went ahead and his innovative plans for the groundworks reflected international trends in Exhibition Garden Design. Prince Alfred Park was the first park to be laid out in conjunction with a major Australian exhibition.

The foundation stone was laid in March, 1870 with the builder required to have the building ready in time for the grand exhibition in August. Workers toiled night and day. To warm them through cold winter nights they lit a bonfire in the center of the building.

The Backhouse design was palatial. The building was to be of brick, timber, glass and iron. It featured towers, minarets and cupolas. The centerpiece was a spacious covered hall 198



feet long by 130 feet wide beneath an immense arched roof from which hung five large gaslights with patent reflectors. Water was laid on to service a fountain which beautified the ground floor. Sixty double sashed plate glass windows on the ground floor and the same number above admitted daylight while during evening openings eighteen gaslights lit the side aisles which were paved with concrete. The

windows were mounted on swivels to provide ventilation. Because the practice of smoking in public places was so prevalent it was necessary to add ventilation shafts operated by underfloor pumps which carried smoke to the top of the towers. Wide staircases either side took visitors to a gallery 15 feet wide on the sides and 23 feet wide at the ends. Here, an organ was situated.

Livestock was to be displayed outside. Galvanized iron horse boxes measuring 10 feet by 10 feet surrounded a circular yard where horses were to be judged and paraded daily. One hundred and fifty horses were expected. Cattle sheds were roofed in iron and surrounded an open yard and there were circular sheds for sheep, pigs, dogs and poultry. An outdoor shed was provided in the grounds to allow working machinery to be demonstrated. There was a raised platform for a band to play, behind which was the main refreshment building. Another circular refreshment building near the main entrance served 'the sons and daughters of temperance' and nearby was the main office and the bookstall of The British and Foreign Bible Society. The building cost about £18,000.

The Agricultural Society through its publicity campaigns excited the interest of the other colonies where the spirit of Federation was already stirring. So great was the response that some feared the building would be too small for the extensive support the Exhibition was receiving. The Victorian Government voted £1000 to cover the expense of bringing Victorian products to Sydney. After the exhibition many of the items were to be sent to the International Exhibition in London the following year.

When the Exhibition opened on August 30th, 1870 there was general rejoicing and a Public Holiday was declared. Crowds of well-dressed people surged towards the park from an early hour. Omnibuses, cabs and carriages filled the roads. By 11 am those with entry cards were being seated. The Highland Brigade mustered in front of Hyde Park Barracks and followed by a large crowd marched down Castlereagh Street to the Exhibition Building where they formed a Guard of Honour to receive the Governor, Lord Belmore. By noon, five or six thousand people had been admitted.

When the Vice-Regal party arrived, Lady Belmore was escorted to her seat by Sir William Macarthur while the Governor and official party proceeded up the center aisle to much cheering. The organ then struck up the National Anthem.

In his speech the Governor acknowledged that the grand building, the grounds and the exhibition itself had come about to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Captain James Cook's arrival in Botany Bay in 1770. He went on to say that '*this Exhibition will show how wonderful has been the progress of Colonization in Australia since 1788 when the first Governor, Captain Phillip, arrived*'

The exhibition had two great departments, Agricultural and Non-agricultural which consisted of manufacture and fine arts. On the ground floor wine and wool were shown while heavy machinery and vehicles were positioned around the side walls. There were buggies, sociables, phaetons, barouches and drags, all of the newest designs and made in Australia. Two handsome horse buses, as yet unused, were on display to indicate transport of the future. Decorative items and horticulture were displayed under the central roof

The galleries were reserved for light goods and there, thousands of small items were on show. Cages held poultry, singing birds and rabbits. Sewing machines, cabinet work and upholstery flanked the organ. Polished table tops displayed the rare beauty of natural Australian timbers. Sir William Macarthur exhibited his farm produce in space allocated for roots, cheese, bacon, ham, butter and miscellaneous products such as alpaca wool, sugar and flour. F.Lassetter & Co mounted a display of horticultural tools. There were fancy soaps and candles, a display with a handsome trophy presented by the Swallow Biscuit Company and twist tobacco from E.T.Penfold.

In the gallery also was electro-plated ware, jewellery, scientific instruments, models, minerals, native woods, busts and bronzes. Handicrafts included novelties made from shank

bones. When the Agricultural Society announced it would accept paintings and artwork, the residents of the Colony responded heartily. Pictures poured in to be hung around the galleries. The work of the amateur artists was separated from that of the trained professional artists.

The Exhibition was a resounding success and exceeded the wildest dreams of its organizers. It closed on September 30th, 1870 during which time 185,000 people had come through the gates. The Kiama Independent Newspaper declared it to be '*the grandest sight ever witnessed south of the equator*'.

After the Exhibition closed, the Exhibition Building remained an important public amenity. It predated The Garden Palace in the Sydney Domain by 9 years, but that building was destroyed by fire, leaving the Exhibition Building as the venue for Sydney's exhibitions, meetings, balls and public gatherings. From 1925 to 1936 it housed the collection of the Australian War Memorial. In the days before the Eastern Suburbs Railway took trains underground at Erskineville, the Exhibition Building was a landmark for St. George residents commuting to the city, but it became dilapidated and fell into disrepair. It was demolished in 1954 to make way for a swimming pool.

The building is now beyond living memory of most of today's citizens and its purpose is forgotten – to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Captain Cook's landing in Botany Bay.

Beverley Earnshaw



What's On

25 July – 15 November - Hurstville Museum & Gallery

Joan Hatton: The everyday observer . A selection of historical photographs taken by long-term local resident and member of the Society Joan Hatton (1926 – 2002). Much of Joan's personal collection of over 3,500 photographs was donated to the Council's Local Studies collection.. Joan also left a bequest which was used to set up the Local Studies room in Kogarah Library (now called the Clive James Library) Joan's interests in all things historical are revealed, providing a significant record of the history, character and development of the district.

Until 18 October – State Library of NSW

World Press Photo exhibition - it can be visited and is always a fascinating and informative look at the world's best photojournalism – all from 2019.

Friday 25 September – Oatley Seniors celebrate their 50th anniversary with a lunch at Conca D'Oro, Riverwood. From 10.30 am. Inquiries to David Suba Ph: 0439 483 627.

Yes, they started the same year as the Society and Ken Cavanaugh was again a strong supporter and Norm Butters became the first President.

Editors favourite Covid joke

Wife: Have I put on weight during 'lockdown'

Husband: You were never skinny in the first place

Time of death: 11pm

Cause: Covid 19

Trivia Quiz

By Rodger Robertson

Answers all begin “v” and “w”

In Swedish they don't have a W but include it as they didn't want to offend the Americans whose capital starts with a W. But in Swedish it is pronounced Double vay- ie v+v. Now the quiz.

1. Australian Prime Ministers starting with W or V? One has a v in his first name?
2. Lots of Sydney train stations start with a W but there are only two that start with a V?
3. In order the English or British Monarchs that start with V or W?
4. US Presidents surname starting with V and W?
5. Country Capitals starting with V and W?
6. Countries starting V only?
7. Only two chemical elements start with V or W?
8. Australian cricket captains starting with V or W? In order, the first one was captain in Don Bradman's first Test. One was only a stand-in for one test.
9. A St George Rugby League Prop forward in the first the 10 grand finals won beginning in 1956. Surname starts with W and his first name also starts with W but is shortened to start with B.
10. Name the first manmade object to leave the solar system? Starts with a V!

Answers

1. Whitlam, Watson, Kevin Rudd
2. Vinyard, Villawood
3. William 1,2,3,4 and then Victoria
4. Washington Van Buren?, Wilson
5. Windhoek for Namibia, Vienna for Austria, Washington for USA, Vaduz for Liechtenstein, Valletta for Malta, Wellington for NZ, Vatican City for same, Victoria for Seychelles, Warsaw for Poland
6. Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam and maybe Vatican City?
7. Vanadium and Wolfram or Tungsten
8. Bill Woodfull, Steven Waugh, Shane Watson
9. Billy (William) Wilson
10. Voyager 1

Our ‘golden’ year

Celebration – Sunday 15 November from 1pm – 4.30pm

We are thrilled that Her Excellency, the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor of NSW has accepted our invitation to attend the celebration of our 50th anniversary. She will be accompanied by Mr Dennis Wilson

The event will be an outside one, held around Carss Cottage, with the Life Savers Hall booked as back up in case of rain.

There will be a new exhibition to look at inside the Cottage – it will feature Kogarah's Amazing Achievers and a pictorial record of the Society.

The Governor will launch a ‘History of the Society’, being written by Beverley Earnshaw. There will be music, a birthday cake and of course afternoon tea.

Invitations will be sent out in late September/early October and we hope that by then restrictions on gatherings may be relaxing.

Date for your diary

Amelia's Story

The Carss Family Housekeeper who became Mrs James Carss

By Wendy Agzarian/Bastock

Those of you that have heard the story of the Carss family or visited the Cottage will recognise Millie Claggett and the photo below. We are fortunate to have Wendy Agzarian on our Committee. She has taken on the role of custodian of the Museum which is in the cottage which was so familiar to her mother.



Fashions changed but Amelia wore long skirts all her life.

Amelia Claggett was my great aunt. My mother, Vera Bastock/Claggett lived with her at Carss Cottage from 1917 to about 1921 before the cottage was taken over by the Council. We know very little about Amelia (Millie/Aunty Lil) but my mother wrote her history down so although there are still gaps not yet filled in, this is the story as I know it.

Amelia's parents, my great grandparents, Charles Claggett/t [born Southwark, London in 1828] and Caroline Jane Lewis [born Dover, Kent in 1827] were married in St Giles church in London in 1850. They very quickly had two children, Caroline Milborough and Emily and at that stage decided to seek a better life in Australia. A long voyage on a sailing ship with two babies sounds horrific but clearly a life in Australia must have sounded attractive enough to risk all their lives. They arrived in Sydney in 1852/3. Caroline gave birth to a son in 1853

so would also have been pregnant on the voyage.

They started their new life in the St George/ Cooks river area which was opening up further south from the Tempe Bridge along Kogarah Road. Charles was a grocer and charcoal burner but in 1854 he bought a licence for The Man of Kent Hotel on the corner of Kingsgrove and Forest Road - he lost it a year later for selling 'grog' on Sunday. Interestingly, he also ran a book reading group there. The earliest records I can find are when he had a grocery and charcoal burner shop on Forest Road, Gannon's Forest, near Hurstville, where in 1864 he became the first Postmaster in the area. He remained in that position until he died in 1870. His eldest daughter Caroline Milborough then took over as the first female Postmistress until a post office was built in Hurstville.

Amelia Claggett was born in 1854 in St George (then a suburb) and another brother in 1856. This brother and her older one had died by 1860 and also another sister. A third son, George was born in 1861 and then my grandfather Charles Lewis born 1863.

In 1868, when Amelia was 12 years old, her mother died and 3 days later another 3 year old sister died as well. The cause of death is not given but may have been Scarlet Fever.

Mother, Caroline had spent her whole life in Australia being pregnant or with young babies, a hard life. When she died, she was only 41 years old. Two years later Amelia's father died at 42 years old, so Amelia at age 14 was an orphan. Her eldest sister Caroline had recently married and her 17 year old sister Emily probably had to take care of the two young boys, George aged 9 and Charles 7. However, Amelia at 14 years was the right age for work.

Whether Amelia went to work at Carss Cottage in 1870 we don't know, but she was now alone and as they had lived close by, the family's plight may have been known in the area. All that is known is that she spent most of her life at Carss Cottage with the family. Although William Carss was 'well off', the Carss family had been trades people so would not have been used to the British servant tradition and Amelia had apparently always felt like part of the family.

The whole family would have had to work hard at the cottage and would have been happy for extra help.

Mary Carss was almost twenty years older than Amelia and James fifteen years older. We have speculated on where Amelia actually slept if she lived at the cottage before William Carss died in 1878 as there were only three bedrooms. My mother had said that James was a 'traveller' and in the district he was called 'captain' so perhaps he spent some time at sea and didn't live at the cottage until he retired. This could have been the reason Mary seemed to be in charge of all the business side also. Amelia took care of them both as they aged and we understand they were 'wheelchair' bound at times so she was nurse maid to them until they died.

We have no idea why James and Amelia married, but my mother had said that it was improper for Amelia to be living with a man without being married after Mary died. This was the story Mum had been told as a child, nobody mentioned that James had dementia! But one wonders - did the average person know he had dementia? Maybe there had been a love story going on there, or maybe it would have meant James being sent to a sanatorium and Amelia felt she could take care of him. They were married in 1917. However, James died a week after. He was 78 years and Amelia was 63.

My mother at the age of 10/11 was then taken out of school to be a companion to Amelia now living alone and quite isolated. My mother loved it after living in a house with 7 other siblings and being 3rd youngest. She had freedom to roam Carss Park all day, swim, fish and spend nights in a house full of books and games- and privacy! I think Amelia taught her the love of books and how to take care of the house that she cherished, as Mum always loved old things. What school education Mum had missed out on was more than made up by living with Amelia [Aunty Lil as we always knew her] at Carss cottage.

When Amelia had to leave she was allowed to take the furniture with her and she moved to a similar house that she bought in Point Road, Woolwich. There she lived the rest of her life with the companionship of her unmarried sister Emily and brother George. She had learnt to be philanthropic from Mary – in her will she left money for unmarried women to be able to take care of themselves. Aunty Lil died in 1945 at the age of 90.

Out of the five siblings only two had children, Caroline Milborough who married William Parkes [a builder of Moorefield Racecourse] and my grandfather Charles who kept the family going with eight children.

I haven't been able to connect with of any of our descendants and would appreciate hearing from any Parkes or Claggett connections.

Vale Graeme Schroeder

3 Oct 1935- 1 July 2020

Graeme with his wife Deirdre was a familiar figure at our meetings both at the School of Arts and Mondays at the Museum. We could always rely on Graeme to ask a question of the speaker. The couple lived in Gooroa Street, Carss Park for many years but had been residents of Banks Lodge for the last year or so.

Graeme was a graduate of Sydney University and taught English and History for many years at Birrong High School for Boys. History was his passion. He leaves behind, Deirdre who remains at Banks Lodge (and is happy to receive phone calls), daughter Annabel who lives here and son Glenn and partner and a precious grandson, Daniel, who live in England.

RIP Graeme

Vale Beryl and Norm Butters

1926-2020 and 1930-2020



We are saddened to report that both Beryl and Norm Butters passed away on 10 August 2020. The couple was farewelled and their lives celebrated in a joint service on 20 August attended by as many family and friends as were allowed in this difficult time. Their two daughters, Julie and Kerrie with their families were the chief mourners and it was moving to hear their sons tell stories of time spent with their grandparents.

Beryl was a founding member of Kogarah Historical Society and had been honoured with a life membership. She was President three times (six years in all) and in fact had held every office except Treasurer over her 50 years membership. She was ably supported by Norm and both were active in every aspect of the Society – in later years we looked on Beryl as our ‘corporate memory’ and she never lost interest in our activities.

Their contributions to community life were legendary and certainly not confined to Kogarah Historical Society. Both were foundation members of Oatley Seniors, with Norm as the first President (even though he was not a ‘senior’ at the time), followed by Beryl with Norm as Treasurer and that continued for at least 40 years.

They had met through tennis and moved to Oatley in 1956. Both had careers and one wonders where they found time to pursue them. Beryl was a secretary, and Norm a plumber whose skills were appreciated when the Museum was being set up. After their children were born, there was involvement with P & Cs – Beryl was secretary at Oatley Primary and Penshurst High. She was also secretary of Oatley Girl Guides and Oatley’s 150th anniversary celebrations of the land grant to James Oatley, the convict clockmaker.

Both received a Senior Citizens Premier’s Award, Beryl was awarded A Centenary Medal in 2003 and Kogarah Council’s Australia Day Award for Senior Citizen of the Year in 2007. They featured in Kogarah’s Volunteer Heroes book published by Council in 2009.

Beryl enjoyed travel in her middle years and her good friend and travel companion Cath Sullivan was at the service to farewell her. Betty Goodger was always in close contact with Beryl and was able to be there.

They will be missed by their friends, family and the community to whom they contributed so much. I think one can truly say “Well done thou good and faithful servants”.

“I suggest that there is no better tribute than to rename Oatley Senior Citizens Centre the “Norm and Beryl Butters Senior Citizens Centre” - Quote from Kevin Greene, Mayor of Georges River Council in a recent mayoral minute.



Elizabeth Cook

In the E. G. Waterhouse Camellia Gardens at Caringbah is a plaque and a fountain, believed to be the only monument to the wife of James Cook, celebrated navigator, whose arrival on our shores 250 years ago is being commemorated in various ways this year.

Let us spare a thought for Elizabeth neè Batts who married James in 1762 at age 20 years when Cook at 34 years was already making a name for himself in the Navy. They

were married for 17 years but spent a total of only about four years together, between his epic voyages. They had six children in all, two died in infancy and the only daughter when she was 4 years of age.

Cook's death in 1779 began a litany of tragedies for Elizabeth. Her three surviving sons all died – Nathaniel at 15 years was lost at sea when his ship went down in a hurricane (1780), Hugh, 17, a student at Cambridge, died of scarlet fever (1793) and James at 31 years, a Commander of the Royal Navy, drowned (1794).

The 'story board' at the Camellia Gardens tells us that Elizabeth was so shocked by the deaths that she took to her bed for two years and for the rest of her life observed the anniversaries of the bereavements with fasting, meditation and prayers using her husband's bible. She wore a ring with a lock of her husband's hair in it and had the highest respect for his memory. One of her proudest possessions was a gold medal, struck in his honour by the Royal Society. She received an annual pension of 200 pounds from the Admiralty after his death, surely a sign of respect from the whole country for her husband's achievements.



At the time of his death Elizabeth, a skilled needlewoman, was embroidering a waistcoat for him to wear at court and this is now in the possession of the Mitchell library together with relics which include the grant for Captain Cook's Coat of Arms, which was awarded to his descendants in 1785. The Mitchell also has a portrait of Elizabeth at age 81 years by William Henderson.

Elizabeth died in 1835 at the age of 93. Before her death she destroyed all her private papers and correspondence with her husband, considering them too sacred for other eyes. She is buried in a family vault between sons James and Hugh in St Andrew the Great Church, Cambridge.

There are no known descendants of the Cooks as all the children predeceased her and died without issue.



“Making the decision to have a child – it's momentous. It is to decide forever to have your heart go walking around outside your body” – *Elizabeth Stone*

Knight of the Theatre Organ

Remember the organ playing in the cinemas/theatres? This article is adapted from an original in a 1985 newsletter written by John Gardiner.

Theatre organist Knight Barnett enthralled audiences for many years with his sophisticated organ presentations at several major theatres including the Victory Theatre Kogarah and the Savoy Theatre Hurstville. At an early age Knight became a proficient church organist and musical director for various amateur musical societies and in 1924 was appointed orchestral conductor and announcer for radio station 2BL then operating from studios in Phillip Street Sydney. There he achieved the distinction of conducting one of the first broadcasts of George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" with an orchestra of specially selected musicians.

Attending the opening night of the Prince Edward Theatre in November 1924 he became intrigued by the Wurlitzer organ played by Eddie Horton, received tuition and in 1929 became assistant organist at Sydney's Capitol Theatre. He received acclaim for his playing on the Wurlitzer although management did receive a letter which said, "Knight Barnett at the organ is very good, but please don't keep the spotlight on him too long, because he isn't very good looking." He told this story himself, adding that it was a good thing he got out of broadcasting before the coming of television.



In December 1929 Knight married violinist Dulcie Blair a member of the State Conservatorium Orchestra. The best man was the organist at the Sydney State Theatre and among the guests were the Director of the Capitol Theatre, his wife (a prominent pianist and organist) the members of the Capitol Theatre Orchestra and their conductor. The brief wedding reception ended with the groom, best man and most of the guests hurriedly returning to their respective theatres to prepare for the "evening de-luxe session".

On 15 February 1930 Knight gave his opening performance at Kogarah's Victory "Theatre of Personality" where he stayed until May alternating with the Ritz Theatre Concord. The distinguished title of "Australia's First Featured Organist" was bestowed on Knight when he succeeded American organist Julia Dawn at the Prince Edward Theatre on 20 May 1931 his appearance coinciding with the premiere of the screen operetta "Viennese Nights".

In June 1933 he accepted a New Zealand offer to appear at the Regent Theatre Auckland and the Empire Theatre Dunedin where he arranged for the popular "Singing Organist" Paul Cullen (who opened the organ of the Savoy Theatre Hurstville on 4 September 1937) to come to Australia. Returning to Sydney in December 1933 Knight joined Western Suburbs Cinemas 8 at the Palatial Theatre Burwood and for a period of eight years was principal organist of all the major theatres on the circuit.

In 1942 he joined the Armoured Division of the A.I.F. for the duration of the war during which time Western Suburbs Cinemas was absorbed by Hoyts Theatre Ltd. After being demobilised he rejoined the circuit and returned to the Savoy Theatre Hurstville in March 1947 until April 1949 when the organ interludes were confined to Saturday nights.

In 1949 Knight was appointed resident organist at the Regent Theatre Adelaide, a position he held until 1968 when the theatre was remodelled and the organ removed.

Throughout his career Knight Barnett was a regular broadcaster, his signature tune "So Deep is the Night" (based on a melody by Chopin) introduced his programs from Hurstville and in Adelaide his theme became "September in the Rain". He died at aged 80 years and a memorial concert was presented in Adelaide as a tribute to his fine artistry.

The Royal Agricultural Society of New South Wales

Sydney's Show, a great annual spectacle, had its beginnings in a fair held at Parramatta in 1823. This fair grew out of a Government Order issued by Governor Macquarie on 26 December 1812, establishing a public market in Parramatta. Under the Order, market days were fixed for Thursdays from 6 am until 12 noon, a store was built for grain and stalls and yards for stock.

At the time the main problem facing farmers was marketing. They could not leave their farms and families unprotected and take their stock or crops to Sydney or Parramatta and as a result were obliged to accept what they were offered on the spot and buyers (forestallers) reaped the financial harvest.

The marketing venture was so successful that the colony's leading agriculturists decided to organize. At a meeting on 5 July 1822 it was resolved that it was in the interests of the colony that they form a Society to be called "the Agricultural Society of New South Wales".

Sir John Jamison was elected president, The Rev Samuel Marsden and Dr Robert Townson were two of four vice-presidents and there was a committee of 25 members. The first function was a dinner at Parramatta in July 1822 attended by "upwards of 80 gentlemen of the first rank and opulence in the Territory" including the Governor, Sir Thomas Brisbane. Sir Thomas became Patron endowing the Society with a grant of land.

The first award of any kind made by the Society was a silver tankard given to Jonas Bradley of Windsor Road on 4 February 1823 for 1 cwt of negro-head tobacco. A week later the Society offered a reward of half a dollar for every dingo tail brought in. Next were prizes for stock. Entries were paraded at the Parramatta Fair on **7 October 1823** and this can be regarded as **Australia's first agricultural show**.

The Society and its show continued for 10 years but then collapsed in 1834 due to drought and economic depression. The grant of land, 6 ½ acres was returned to the government as a model farm – the Kings School was later established on this site.

The Society was revived in 1857 and held its first Sydney Show in May 1869 at Prince Alfred Park, the Cleveland Street Public School being used as the main exhibition pavilion. As Beverley Earnshaw's article tells us (pages 3/4) it was the Agricultural Society who suggested the intercolonial exhibition which led to the City Council erecting the Exhibition Building. In 1881 the Society had to look for other premises due to high rent and empty coffers. A lease was obtained by of 40 acres of the Sydney Common at Moore Park and the show was held there from 1882.



It was granted the right to use the prefix "royal" by Queen Victoria in 1891.

Shows continued at Moore Park for 115 years except when cancelled during the influenza epidemic of 1919 and during World War 11. In 1919 buildings on the Showground were repurposed as temporary hospitals and the Royal Hall of Industries served as a morgue and during WW11 it was requisitioned for military use.

Now called Sydney Royal Easter Show, it had outgrown facilities at Moore Park by the late 80s. In 1994 it relocated to Sydney Olympic Park at Homebush and the first show was held in 1998. 2020 has once again seen the cancellation due to the pandemic but normally it is Australia's biggest annual event, injecting more than \$600m into the NSW economy and attracting close to a million visitors.