



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

53 Bruce Street,
BEXLEY.
14th July, 1967.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

All members of the above Society are reminded that the Annual Meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Friday Evening Next, 21st July, 1967, at 8 p.m.
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Rockdale.
Business: Reception of Reports.
Election of Officers for 1967/68.

Guest Speaker: Mr. Vaughan Evans, will give an illustrated address on Australian Inland Navigation with special reference to the Murray and Darling River Systems.

If you like paddle steamers this should be a most enjoyable evening.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE

Please complete this form and send to Hon. Treasurer, St. George Historical Society, 7 Prince Edward Street, Carlton.

Dear Mr. Sinclair,

Please find enclosed MY/OUR Subscription to the St. George Historical Society for 1967/68.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

MEMBERSHIP RATES.

\$1.00 for the first member of a family.
\$0.50 for all other members.

ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Receipts & Payments Account for the Year Ended 30th June, 1967.

RECEIPTS.

TO	Balance at Bank as at 1/7/1966	\$ 234.47
	Members' Subscriptions ..	117.50
	Sale of Badges ..	8.40
	Sale of Books ..	241.45
	Proceeds of Raffle ..	131.50
	Bank Interest ..	2.71
		<u>\$ 736.03</u>

PAYMENTS.

BY	Subscription to National Trust ..	\$ 6.30
	Subscription to Royal Australian Historical Society	10.50
	Printing of Books ..	495.00
	Postage ..	47.16
	Purchase of Painting ..	31.50
	Christmas Party ..	7.35
	Donation to Mt. Blaxland Landmark Committee	10.00
	Balance at Bank 30/6/1967 ..	<u>128.22</u>
		<u>\$ 736.03</u>

D. H. Sinclair,

Hon. Treasurer.

THE JUBILEE OF THE ARNCLIFFE METHODIST CHURCH.

1880 - 1930.

Culled from Official Brochure.

"As we look upon the picture of Arncliffe as it was fifty years ago, the impression we receive is in striking contrast to the surroundings with which we to-day are so familiar. The district at that time was very sparsely populated and dense bush grew to the very edge of the main roads. The residents gained their living from three main sources, namely market gardening, wood carting, and poultry raising. The site of the present Arncliffe Park was then a market garden and orchard worked by a Chinese named Kim Too, who was the first of his Countrymen to take up gardening in the district. His garden was watered by a spring which had its source about half a mile higher up the road and continued through the land now known as Earl Park. The ground on which the turnstiles to the park now stand was then the site of a slaughter house and yard owned by Mr. Davis of Newtown, and the house which was used in connection with this yard still stands, being just inside the entrance gates. On the opposite side of the road, between the river and the yard, there stood a wool-wash owned by Mr. Barden, and there were also several poultry farms scattered in the vicinity.

The roads were simply bush tracks, the main ones being Rocky Point Road, Forest and Wollongong Roads, although the latter did not terminate at Done Street as it now does, but continued in a straight line until joining Arncliffe Road, somewhere near the War Memorial Monument now at the Tempe Tram Depot. West Botany Street, as we now know it, was then called Muddy Creek Road. Arncliffe Ward was then a portion of the Municipality of West Botany, and the Council Chambers were situated in Rocky Point Road, just below the present Oddfellows' Hall. Portions of the building can still be seen, although this fact is generally not known. At Cook's River Bridge a toll bar was erected and there was also a second one at the junction of Forest and Wollongong Roads. All travellers using the road had to pay the toll fixed by the Council, and this formed one of the principal sources of revenue to the Municipality. Of course, the railway line had not been built at this time, and people wishing to travel to Sydney would use the coach which ran from Cooks River. Neither was there any Day School, and those children who desired to attend one had to either travel to Tempe or to a school held in the Methodist Hall at Rockdale.

It is obvious that a Sunday School would have been a very important place in a community and district such as described above, and this outline will serve to give some idea of the nature of the country immediately surrounding the site of the first school."

THE HISTORY OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL - 1880 - 1930.

"In giving a resume of the conduct of the school during the first four years of its existence, we have to rely, for the most part, on the memory of those few persons who were in the district at the time. Memory is fickle, and when we attempt to reconcile the recollections of one person with those of another, we oftentimes find ourselves in a rather difficult position.

It seems certain, however, that Sunday School classes were held in the house of Mr. Nelson and conducted by Mr. Peter Nevins for a short time before 1880. Arncliffe at this time was part of the Newtown circuit, of which the Reverend George Lane was Superintendent-Minister. The class eventually met at the Council Chambers in Rocky Point Road, until 1st February, 1880, when School was first held at the present site. A note in the first roll book states that the School was opened on that date with three teachers and twenty-eight scholars in attendance. It is difficult to state with any degree of certainty what building was used to house the scholars on that day, but it is known that there was a bush frame structure approximately 15-ft. by 30-ft. standing on the ground now occupied by the Kindergarten building. The roof was flat and covered with ti-tree, together with a material similar to a split cane verandah blind, with sides and ends made of the same combination. Admittance was gained by a door in one end facing towards Wollongong Road, and as a sufficiency of light and air penetrated the walls and roof, windows were not considered necessary. We can readily see that the pioneers of our School laboured under conditions vastly different from those enjoyed by us today. This structure was not long in use for this purpose, as the first Church was built shortly afterwards, and the Sunday School classes then met in that building.

The Church was built by Mr. W. Bray, and it was during its erection that he had the misfortune to fall from a scaffolding and break his leg. The scarcity of skilled labour in those days is demonstrated by the fact that the building could not be completed until his recovery. However, the old bush frame was found to be still useful, and it was the scene of many a happy "tea-fight", or tea meeting, as we would call it. A tea meeting in those days was considered a social event of no little importance, and people would travel from neighbouring Churches to take part. After tea in the Church grounds all the folk would proceed to a vacant paddock adjoining what is now the Park, and there games etc. would be played, and a happy time spent by all.

Mr. Nevins was not in charge of the School for long, for in about October, 1880, his place was taken by Mr. Luscombe, who was at that time a local preacher and active Church worker. Two school sessions were held in addition to two Church services every Sunday. School being opened at 9.30 a.m. and 2 p.m. with the latter services at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Mr. Luscombe continued on this work until 1882, when Mr. William Samways took charge of the school. The latter was then a young man of about 21 years of age and worked a market garden somewhere near the junction of Wollongong Road and Done Street, as we know them today. In 1884, Mr. Samways went for a trip to England, and it was then that the School was first conducted on constitutional lines. If Teachers' meetings were held prior to 1884, then no records were kept relating to them, but we have, however, a complete set of Minutes from that date onwards, with few exceptions.

The first Teachers' meeting was held in the "Chapel" on May 8th, 1884, with the Reverend J. Bowes, as Chairman, and he proposed Mr. Henry Cook as a "fit and proper person" to be Superintendent. Mr. John Collins was elected as Secretary, and Miss A. Favell, lady teacher. These three comprised the stall of the School.

Progress was not rapid, owing, no doubt, to the small population of the district, but nevertheless by 1889 the number of scholars on the roll had increased to fifty with an average attendance of forty. In August, 1892, a monthly teacher's prayer meeting was instituted. This rule is still observed in our school today, and we can attribute much of our success as a school to the prayers of those who have taken advantage of this means of approach to the Throne of Grace.

During 1893 a Christian Endeavour Society was formed and that Branch of the school work is still being carried on. In later years Miss E.E. Caddy was actively associated with this work, and many young people today cherish her memory for what she did for them whilst under her tuition.

The number of scholars on the School roll had now increased to 118 with 15 teachers, and it was found that the available accommodation was fast becoming inadequate. At a special meeting held on August 28th, 1893, a proposition was put forward for the erection of a school hall, and a committee, consisting of Messrs. Partridge (Superintendent), Price, Campling and Stephenson, was appointed to go into the matter. Two months later three tenders were received by the Committee for the erection of the building, and the matter was eventually handed over to the Church Trustees to be dealt with. No records of this work can be found however, other than a note in the School minute book dated November 25th, 1895, stating that the debt on this structure had been fully liquidated. This is the weatherboard hall that stands today at the rear of the Church, but a number of alterations have been made since its erection. In 1904, it was found that still more space was required, and the portion now occupied by the platform was added. Then again, a lean-to was built at the rear end to use as a lumber room, but in 1909 it was utilised to accommodate the kindergarten children. Seating accommodation in this latter portion was provided by the erection of a platform which had the appearance of a series of steps leading to the roof rather than of seats for infant children. These additions were carried out by the Church Trustees, although the cost of approximately £20 was borne by the School.

A movement was now in progress for the erection of a new Church to replace the building previously referred to. This building was demolished in February, 1905, but it was not until May, 1906, that a tender for the erection of the present Church was accepted, the successful contractor being Mr. George Dalton, whose contract price was £1,098. Mr. Anderson, who supervised the erection of the new School hall, just completed, was the Architect on that occasion. October, 1907, saw the opening of the Church after a period of nearly three years, during which services were held in the School Hall.

Owing to lack of accommodation during this period, difficulty was experienced in seating the congregations at the Sunday School Anniversaries, and this was overcome by holding the services in a marquee erected for the purpose in the park opposite.

Abundance of room was then available, and for the next few years the School made steady progress. In 1913 there was an enrolment of 253, and a movement was in progress for the erection of a building to accommodate the kindergarten children. The project was delayed owing to the outbreak of the Great War, and it was not until 1916 that definite steps were taken to put the

matter in hand. The first step was to remove the School hall to its present position. At that time it was facing Wollongong Road at an angle, and therefore did not allow sufficient room for the erection of a building between it and the tennis courts. The scheme having received the approval of a joint committee of the Trustees and Teachers, the work was carried out by voluntary labour on Eight Hour Day, 1916, under the supervision of Mr. Percy Marr. The day turned out to be wet, but nevertheless, the first stage of the work was successfully carried out. The building was divided into two sections, the main hall being shifted first and the platform portion at a later date. At the same time the lean-to at the rear of the building was demolished and an improvement effected by raising the platform to its present height as previously it was only about six inches above the main floor.

On October 21st, 1916, the Kindergarten Hall was erected. The building was designed by Mr. G.H. Pearce, then Superintendent of the School, and all the work of erection was carried out by a working bee held for the purpose. Mr. Pearce personally supervised this work and was ably assisted by Mr. Charles Broughton. At the end of the first day's work the construction of the building was sufficiently advanced to allow classes to be held therein on the following day, should this have been necessary. The size of the hall was 24-ft. by 32-ft., and the total cost approximately £180. Of this amount the School was responsible for collecting £137, while the chairs were paid for through the efforts of the Junior Christian Endeavour Society. The opening ceremony was performed by Miss E. Farleigh, who, with Miss D. Marr, was in charge of the Kindergarten Department at that time.

The year 1920 marked a definite step in the School's advancement, as the Graded School system was successfully introduced by Mr. G.H. Pearce. This meant that the School was divided into three departments, exclusive of the Kindergarten, namely Junior Department containing scholars from the age of 8 to 11 years. The new system gave excellent results.

The "Victory Tree" which is growing in front of the old School Hall is well worthy of mention. This was the conception of the Late Reverend H. Wheen, the idea being to plant a tree in every school in the State in order to impress on the minds of the children, a sense of gratitude to God for the victory vouchsafed to Britain and her allies at the termination of the Great War. The tree was planted by Mrs. Pearson on October 25th, 1920, and it has been our practice to hold a Service round this tree on Armistice Sunday every year.

The thanks of the St. George Historical Society are tendered to Mr. G.A. Davies and Mr. G.H. Pearce, for providing the above subject matter.

THE ARNCLIFFE WESLEYAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ROLL BOOK - 1ST FEBRUARY, 1880.

Through the courtesy of Mr. G.H. Pearce we are able to give a listing of the scholars who attended the first classes enrolled at the Arncliffe Wesleyan Sunday School on February 1st, 1880. The Roll Book was printed in London by the Wesleyan Conference Office, of 2 Castle Street, City Road, E.C. and is of the ordinary red ruled type with vertical lines and spaces for the class number, the name and weekly attendance covering a period, per page, of three months. The Roll Book was commenced on February 1st, 1880, and completed in February, 1890.

First Bible Class of Boys.

Gorge Collins
James Nelson
Henry Nelson
William Draper
Albert Griffis.
Charles Griffis.
William Baker.
Edward Tuck.
Henry Stockton
Herbert Bakar
William Tait

Second Bible Class of Boys.

William Tait
James Tatler
Arthair Beeheg
George Beeheg
Henry Lathain
George Robinson
Robert Tatler.
Gidon Tatler
William Clivedon
Christian Harmarment.

First Bible Class of Girls.

Emma Nelson
Sarah Draper
Aliza Lathain
Sarah Lathain
Lousia Tuck.
Harriat Tuck.
Aliza Favall.
Margart Tait
Ada Jones.

Second Bible Class of Girls.

Clair Nelson
Eliza Prattis.
Elizabeth Tatler.

First Reading Class of Boys.

William Bakar
Samuel Baker
Thomas Collins.
Joseph Baker
William Tait

Alphabet Class. Boys.

Joseph Favall.
William Collons.
Robert Bakar.

Alphabet Class. Girls.

Anonia Collins.	Eva Favill.	Elizabeth Wyman.	Athal Nelson.
Alice Latham	ida Tuck.	Anne Stockton.	Janes Stockton.

*** Allowance must be made for a certain amount of mis-spelling in the above listing, which is a faithful copy of the original roll.

KOGARAH'S NOTABLE HOARDINGS.

Gifford and Eileen Eardley.

To the older generation, the approach from Rockdale to Kogarah by train was heralded, on the western side of the line, by the presence of two large hoardings, of flat sheet iron, supported on a rear framework of braced timber scantlings. These were erected on a straight north-south alignment, placed on the outer ridge of a low sandstone escarpment jutting out above the murky waters of Fry's Creek, which flowed, usually in a complacent manner, through the confines set by the pasturage known as Fry's Paddock. Their position today would be marked at a distance of about one hundred yards south-west of the present Harrow Road subway diversion, about midway between Rockdale and Kogarah railway stations.

The first hoarding from the northern end, was about twenty feet in height and painted as a large scale representation of a steam locomotive in full flight, detailed after the manner of a "D" class "High-flier", which once sped the mail trains, when they were really fast running, up and down the full length of the Illawarra Railway. The hoarding depicted the engine in all the splendour of its green livery and polished brass and copper fittings, whilst a huge column of billowing smoke trailed behind, over the top of the tender and the short train of three goods wagons. The major modification made to the ensemble was the painted provision of a side-tank mounted over the driving wheels in place of the curved splashers of the prototype. To avoid the end-on narrow-edged appearance of the hoarding its northern end was turned westward, thus enabling the frontal aspect of the engine to be included in the general picture, greatly enhancing the perspective values. All in all it was a carefully thought out piece of advertising, and one that was greatly appreciated by the young folk of the day. The billowing smoke-stream carried the words "PEARSON'S", whilst "SAND" was emblazoned on the green side plates of the tender and "SOAP" occupied a like position on the added side-tank of the engine. Each of the three wagons of the train were detailed insofar as their lower components were concerned, and their high packed goods contents were covered by tarpaulin sheets, each carrying an advertisement, the import of which is now forgotten by the writers. This interesting and unique hoarding arrangement survived until about 1926 or so when it was partially demolished in a wind storm, and then removed in the interests of public safety. Fortunately a photograph was taken before it disintegrated.

The second, but somewhat smaller hoarding, at the southern end of the alignment, represented the famous Noah's Ark of Biblical fame, complete with a bearded gentleman in flowing robes at the stern, presumably engaged in steering the unwieldy roofed vessel over the tumultuous waters. A representation of a dove was placed high up in the eaves of the Ark and appeared to be taking off on a journey to Sydney Town. This second hoarding was an artistic triumph, and of great speculative interest to those attending Sydney School. The sides of the Ark advertised Winkworth's pianos and organs, but it is not known if the original Ark carried this slogan.

Miniature Noah's Arks, mostly imported from Germany, were on sale at all the Newsagencies of the St. George Area, and were generally of the "box-toy" type. The lower portion inside the roofed box was usually packed with wads of coloured papers, upon which rested about a dozen pairs of assorted animals and large sized birds, presumably one being male and the other female as mentioned in the sacred book. Noah, in person, was of gigantic stature when compared with the elephant, but that was a matter of small moment to young boys. The other inmates of the box were also carved from pine wood, on a mass production basis, and were usually supported on slender legs which broke off far too easily. Each item in the box had been dipped in a coloured solution of some sort and appeared in various flat shades of yellow and or red. In the better class assortments black pin-pointed eyes and an oftentimes smiling mouth was added, the latter, presumably, being accidental as the flood affair was a serious business.

At one period, so it has been stated, this particular toy, being of a semi-religious nature, was reserved for sabbath entertainment, when all other toys of a secular nature were strictly taboo. The Ark toy is commonly supposed to have its origin in the peasant craft of the inhabitants of the "Passion Play" village of Oberammergau, located in the Black Forest area of Southern Germany. These villagers, since the sixteenth century, have been noted for their wood carving prowess in the production of religious figures, and, amongst numerous other items, cuckoo clocks. It is somewhat amazing that one of their age-old toy "Ark" designs was adapted at the entrance to the township of Kogarah to serve the organ and piano selling interests of Mr. Winkworth.
