



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

53 Bruce Street,
BEXLEY. 2207.

14th February, 1969.

Dear Friend and Member.

The regular monthly meeting of the St. George Historical Society will be held as follows:-

DATE. Friday Evening Next, 21st February, 1969, at 8 p.m.

PLACE. Council Chamber, Town Hall, Rockdale.

GUEST SPEAKER. Mr. D.A. Carr, Vice President of the National Trust of Australia (NSW. Branch), will give an illustrated address entitled -

"The National Trust Today".

Would lady members please bring a plate.

D.A. Sinclair.

R.W. Rathbone.

President.

Hon. Secretary.

58.4813.

Supper Roster. Mrs. Coghlan (Capt.), Mrs. Perkins, Miss McCartney, Miss Dunsmore, Miss Cheetham.

THE PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL, SANDRINGHAM.

Gifford and Eileen Eardley.

Perhaps the most fascinating of the historic hostelries which once graced the land district of St. George was that erected at Strippers Point, a sandy protrusion located on the western shores of Botany Bay near the entrance of Georges River. The area today is known as Sandringham of which place-name there is more to follow. In the early days of the Colony of New South Wales, it is evident that the region was an untracked wilderness, a forest land interspersed with treacherous tea-tree covered swamps and meandering sluggish streams. Kangaroos and wallabies led an idyllic life in the dense and almost impenetrable undergrowth, whilst all manner of ducks, wading-birds, and pelicans frequented the adjacent tidal mud-flats. It was a favourite camping place of the aborigines as witnessed by the length and width of the local kitchen middens, the accumulation of sea-shells portraying countless years of savoury feasting in a land of plenty.

The quietude of the place was rudely interrupted in the summer months by the deafening song of the cicadas, a chorus which throbbed incessantly from these insects ensconced amongst the foliage and trunks of the beautifully shaped and ruddy-hued red gum, or angophora trees. There was "Cherry-eyes", "Double Drummers", "Floury Bakers", "Green Grocers", and "Yellow Mondays" amongst the varieties of cicadas, or locusts as they were misnamed, and on the hottest days a small black member of the species served to make the heat feel more intense by its discordant "Peter-peter-peter" noises uttered at minute intervals.

Human population was sparse, insofar as the white man was concerned, and according to early chroniclers the inhabitants of this secluded spot eked out a good living by fishing, shooting, and gathering shell-fish and oysters. It is recorded that escaped convicts from Sydney found a sanctuary in this untamed wilderness where they were, to a large extent, free from prying Government interference, "forgetting the world, and by the world forgot".

The advent and subsequent success of the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel and its famous pleasure grounds at Botany had far reaching effects in the later development of Strippers Point as a popular watering place. It would appear that Mr. William Rust managed the aforementioned weekend paradise at Botany and this gentleman decided to better his fortunes by establishing a similar waterside resort at Sans Souci, about the year 1865, using the then established Sans Souci Hotel as a base for his efforts. During 1876, for reasons not now apparent, but possibly on account of the rock shore line at Rocky Point, he made a further move to the nearby Strippers Point where there was a splendid sandy beach and an extensive area of tidal flats where cockles and whelks could be gathered without number. At this delectable tree-clad spot Mr. Rust built the Prince of Wales Hotel against the bay side, the premises being spoken of as following the trend of a Swiss chalet. This small weatherboard structure, obviously of a temporary nature, served to accommodate the thirsts of the picnic crowds at weekends until such time as a pretentious two-storied hotel, construction of local sandstone was erected in its place. Assisted by neighbours, Mr. Rust constructed the western portion of Sandringham Street and the length of Clareville Avenue, as a bush track leading from Rocky Point Road to the hotel and its pleasure grounds.

The new and important Prince of Wales Hotel was a large two-storied structure, built of random rubble plastered with a cement finish and painted against the inroads of damp, and lined to represent squared ashlar shaped stonework, a conceit popular at the time of building. The public bar was

ranged along the northern side beneath an eastern extension of the main building, whilst the kitchen, with its huge cooking range occupied a similar position on the southern side. All in all, the hotel was a fascinating assembly of dining rooms, parlours, etc., a real warren in fact, which proved most popular with honeymoon couples seeking a so desirable solitude.

People thronged to Sandringham, so named after the birthplace in England of William Rust. They came in all manner of horse-drawn vehicles, ranging from small gigs and sulkies to four horse drags which had seats ranged one behind the other, accommodating perhaps, some forty picnickers. At times musicians accompanied these popular drag picnics and it was not unusual to see a brace of trumpeters ensconced on the back seat. A trip to the Prince of Wales Hotel on a Sunday, or holiday, was one of the enjoyments of the populace, as the horses trotted along Rocky Point Road through the environs of Arncliffe, Rockdale, and Kogarah, the animals no doubt, looking forward to a dip in the briny as a suitable reward for their exertions.

A row of Norfolk Island Pine-trees, which over the years have grown to magnificent proportions, were planted along the foreshores of the Bay in the immediate surround of the hotel, likewise several Moreton Bay Fig trees which now have the reputation of being amongst the largest of their species to be found around the Sydney area. It is most fortunate that these splendid trees have withstood the destructive hands of the so-called developers, a circumstance for which tree lovers have to thank Mr. Mick Moylan, of whom more anon.

The construction of the steam tramway from Kogarah Railway Station to Sans Souci and Sandringham, via Gray Street and Rocky Point Road, proved a great boom to the financial success of the Prince of Wales Hotel. At weekends in particular the tram brought crowds of people to the new pleasure ground where a menagerie on a small scale had been set up for their entertainment. The meandering semi-tidal creek, appropriately named the Serpentine, which wound its sinuous way in a huge balloon loop from the vicinity of Napoleon Street and returned to that neighbourhood, via the hotel grounds, before entering Botany Bay, was an added attraction. Here mullet could be caught by the younger members of the picnic parties with a bent pin and a length of string. This stream was foreshortened at its narrowest alignment, near Napoleon Street, by means of a timber lined channel cut through the obstructing sand dunes. Here a supply of water was first obtained for the steam tram locomotives but proved too salty for their requirements. The new channel arrangements permitted the tramway authorities to fill with sand portions of the original course of the Serpentine for embankment purposes, thus creating a series of somewhat stagnant narrow but lengthy lagoons. One of these pools, complete with a tree and arum-lily (Lily of the Nile) covered island of no great area, graced the hotel grounds at its southern end. The island was approached by a short white painted timber bridge with open lattice balustrading, making an ideal consorting place for loving couples on a moonlight night.

To celebrate the occasion of the opening of the first section of the Illawarra Railway, which came into operation between Sydney and Hurstville on Wednesday October 15th, 1884, arrangements were made for the official guests, some two hundred in number, to travel by special train, proudly hauled by the solitary "Z" class engine No. 10, the first engine built by the Railway Department, to a special function at Hurstville. After this ceremony the train returned to Rockdale where a string of horse omnibuses and other

vehicles were in readiness to take the guests, via Rocky Point Road, Sandringham Street, and Clareville Avenue, to the official luncheon set out in Rust's Pavilion at the Prince of Wales Hotel. A trip up the beautiful Georges River in a large steamer followed. Tickets were sold to residents and property holders of Kogarah, Rockdale, West Botany, and Georges River, amongst others, at twenty-five shillings each, and included free ? train journey from Sydney to Kogarah, horse omnibus from Kogarah Station to Sandringham, the luncheon and presumably liquid refreshment, and the opportunity of viewing Georges River from the deck of the steamer. It is believed that the insidious nature of the brew kept a number of people, including important Cabinet Ministers, from making the steamer trip. It is evident, however, that a good time was had by all.

In the early nineteen-hundreds, during November 1904 to be precise, a German licensee of the Prince of Wales Hotel, Mr. Lincke, established a bowling alley and dance hall which had a length of 120 feet and a width of 30 feet. This single-storied edifice, painted a dark red colour, nestled amongst the trees and shrubs of the garden immediately south of the hotel premises and overlooked the placid waters of the little lagoon and its island. The bowling alley attracted a large German clientele at weekends when the "Herrs" quaffed unlimited quantities of nut-brown ale whilst engaged in the affairs of the skittle alley. Prawns were also consumed to quantity, being sold by local vendors in pints, half-pints, and quarter-pints, from fern decorated baskets covered with a suitable piece of muslin or mosquito netting, against the greedy attentions of the all pervading bush-flies who also seemed to relish prawns and beer.

One can recall with pleasure the excitement of the household when a picnic day was to be spent at Sandringham. Great culinary preparations were made for the occasion. Two huge scone loaves, circular in shape and full of currants and sultanas and topped with candied peel were specially baked, together with a great number of small cakes coated with white and pink icing. There were quantities of tomato, german sausage, and banana sandwiches, washed down by hot "billy" tea, the hot water being obtained for three-pence from the shop of the nearby Selmon's Boatshed. The elder children left early with the woven cane hampers (sitting on the rear seat of the tram-car for preference) in order to claim a summer house within the pleasure grounds. Here a centrally placed table was flanked on three sides by backless wooden seats of spartan simplicity, the sides of the erection, which had a pointed roof, being open to the elements. The younger members of the flock, under strict parental control, followed on a later and more convenient tram. The day was spent in shell gathering, swimming, building sand castles on the tree shaded beach, seeking five-corners in the neighbouring bush, keeping clear of passing trams and tethered horses, and cracking pine cones open, which had been obtained from the Scotch firs which lined the frontage of Clareville Avenue, for their "monkey-nut" content. The attractions of the Serpentine Lagoon and its murky mud was parentially placed out of bounds, but duly inspected never-the-less. It was always a weary but happy contingent which travelled homewards after a busy day well and truly spent.

At this period, especially on Saturday nights, there was a great deal of drunkenness, a circumstance which eventually led to the closing of many hotels under the provisions of the Local Option Act which was passed by

Parliament in 1911. Fights amongst the local toppers at Sandringham were common and it was customary for visitors and resident fishermen to become embroiled when in their cups. Most of the festive onslaught centred around the Prince of Wales Hotel much to its detriment amongst picnic minded folk. The old hotel became known, unofficially, of course, the "THE BLOOD AND GUTS", which, as pub names go, is rather unique and aptly applicable. To the writers the name is really splendid and redolent of Olde England, a nick-name is always so personal. Other nick-names were bestowed in the old hostelry which it would perhaps be libellous to repeat in this year of grace.

The hotel continued to function over the years and although its reputation was restored the pleasure grounds were neglected and the dance hall abandoned. The remnant of the Serpentine Lagoon was filled with rubbish and a general air of decay descended on the scene. A great loss of trade was encountered when the Sans Souci Steam Tramway was closed on Sunday July 4th, 1937, as the superseding trolley bus avoided the precincts of the hotel by passing along Napoleon Street. It became necessary to attract custom and to this end the licensee at the time, Mr. Mick Moylan, decided to create a beer garden, after the ancient German fashion, whereby both men and women could sit together away from the restraints of the public bar and its masculine taboos.

To this end the area immediately to the north of and adjacent to the hotel was set aside. The side enclosures gave protection against inclement weather and an amazing roof of scantlings and galvanised iron covered the garden, said scantlings being nailed to the trunks of the might Norfolk Island Pine trees which, praise be, survived the effort and provided the stability so necessary to the structure. The garden part of the ensemble consisted of a few dejected stag and elk-horns nailed here and there to suitable posts. Mother earth formed the floor which was always scrupulously raked and swept clean. A platform was provided at the north-eastern end for visiting artists and a first-class orchestra was engaged on a nightly basis. When all aglow with many coloured electric light globes at night the place had a bizarre fascination, with its little tables occupied by patrons sitting on those uncomfortable iron-seated chairs which leave so much to be desired, particularly in cold weather. On winter nights a measure of spectacular heating was afforded by several iron braziers, placed here and there, filled with glowing coke fires, giving much needed comfort to those sitting nearby. The local dog population also appreciated this warmth, away from the howling westerlies.

White coated drink waiters glided to and fro, bringing middies, schooners, and to one particular person, an occasional pint. To cater for the inner man a booth was set up from which wafted an exhilarating odour of fish and chips, and frying steak for hamburgers. There was also an atmosphere of prawns in quantity, all of which, combined with cigarette smoke, created a blue haze through the premises which formed a major part of its attraction. The experiment was a great success, and the erst-while deserted grounds became thronged with the motor cars of the entertained. The only persons not amused were certain municipal officers who were chagrined because the beer garden, or possibly its unorthodox roof design, did not conform to this or that regulation, but there is no pleasing some people.

The nightly entertainment afforded the patrons of the Beer Garden was always of a high standard, and some fine baritones and tenors appeared from time to time, likewise clever jugglers and trick cyclists. A group of three shapely lasses, known as the "Sophisticates", portrayed chorus dancing at its best and were always enthusiastically received. Then came a young man, a young lady, and a pair of pure white Aylesbury ducks, the principals of a mystifying disappearing act whereby the ducks vanished without trace inside an open box sitting on a table arrangement. One was pleased to see the ducks at ease in a cage ready to go home after the show was over.

The death knoll of the old hotel was sounded when Mr. Moylan conceived the idea of establishing modern premises which would cater for the travelling public, particularly those people arriving by air at the Kingsford Smith terminal at Mascot. Arrangements were made to erect a special pavilion for nightly entertainment, named the "Silver Sands Lounge", replete with stage and orchestra, and a small dancing floor. When all was complete the old premises were dismantled, together with the attractive Beer Garden. The new hotel became known as Hotel Sans Souci. Fortunately Mr. Moylan retained the huge ancient trees and these alone remain to mark the site of the once famous Prince of Wales Hotel.

It should be mentioned in closing that a move was made by our St. George Historical Society to have the old hotel building set aside as a regional museum, and also that the Rockdale Municipal Council was interested in the project, with a view to re-erecting the building for this purpose on a block of land in the vicinity of the Rockdale Town Hall. Unfortunately the National Trust reported against the scheme as in their opinion the building had no historic value, which may be true in one sense, and also that the building structure as such would not stand re-erection. Certain local builders disagreed and said the building could have been re-erected without difficulty although it would have been an expensive procedure. Mr. Moylan generously offered the building materials without cost, however, the Rockdale Council vetoed the regional museum project insofar as the ex hotel premises were concerned and the matter lapsed.

MOORFIELDS WESLEYAN CHURCH CEMETERY

A record of all the headstone erected in the cemetery and the inscriptions thereon, so far as can be obtained. March 1962. At March 1968 portions of the ground were covered with brambles and other rough vegetation making a detailed inspection practically impossible. The record book was loaned to Mr. Albert Matheson, of the St. George Historical Society, per courtesy of Miss Monnell.

"Most headstones are in good condition and quite legible, a few of the older ones have indistinct lettering and are somewhat difficult to read, also a small number have fallen and are broken, but the graves are all known and names of those buried are in the records book. In some instances names on Headstones are memorials only, and the persons named are not buried in the cemetery.

P. W. Cant. March 1962.

Tablets with inscriptions are included. Note. This book does not contain a record of all the burials in the cemetery, but only those which have Headstones erected."

It is understood that the cemetery was available for burial purposes of all persons, irrespective of their denominational faith.

"A" section is the only one which numbers from Moorfields Road end, all the other sections number from the back fence. Additional details can be obtained by inspecting Headstones and the Record Book.

"A" Section (Number from Church). Tablet Headstones only.

- No.
3. Pithers, James. January 1895. Aged 84 (Indistinct)
 4. Pithers, Mary Ann. December 1899, and Mary wife of Charles Pithers. Pithers, William. January 1868. Aged 12 years.
 5. Caroline Anderson. June 1943. Aged 90 years.
 6. Andrew Anderson. November 1939. Aged 90 years. (Double grave)
 7. James Chard. March 1856. Aged 79 years.
 8. Emma Lees. January 1855. Aged 2 years (No kerbing 3 graves)
 11. Job Tomkins. September 1901.
George Tomkins. 17 months. Archball Tomkins. 10 months.
 22. Miss Alice R. Miller. January 1948. Aged 84.
 23. Albert Miller. August 1956. Aged 55.
 29. Thomas Howard. October 1894. Aged 68.
 30. John Cook. January 1907. Aged 55 years.
 31. Mary Ann Cook. June 1912.
 33. Henry Luck. (Indistinct)
 34. Thomas Luck.
 35. Enid May Morton. November 1908. Aged 5 months.
William Morton. May 1960. Aged 18 years.
 - 39A. Edward Hawkes. September 1937. Aged 62.
 70. Caroline Horner. October 1887. Aged 78.
 71. Henry C. Horner. February 1858. Aged 10 years.
Henry Horner. December 1900. Aged 88 years.
Marble Cross to Frances, Edith, Louisa.

Headstones etc. in "A1" Section. Numbers from back fence.

- No.
7. Rose I. Fulcher. September 1947. Aged 44.
 8. Agnes M. Hearps. June 1947. Aged 71.
 9. Thomas W. Hearps. September 1947. Not on stone. Single lot.
 11. Fred W. Hiscocks. March 1954. Aged 62.
 13. Henry V. Maher. November 1943. Aged 53.
 14. Dorothy I. Forrester. September 1945. Aged 18.
 16. Herbert Carter. May 1946. Aged 80.
Margaret Carter. July 1959. Aged 87.
 17. Stanley C. Coleman. December 1941. Aged 21.
 18. Henry Coleman. June 1934. Aged 64.
Harriet Coleman. June 1958. Aged 73.

26. Elizabeth J. Groll. November 1946.
27. Amelia Fetherston. June 1940. Aged 73.
30. Albert Wearing. February 1942. Aged 80.
31. Sarah A. Wearing. July 1947. Aged 78.
32. Albert R. Jones. March 1948. Aged 82.
33. Eden Sean. (Mrs) May 1942. Aged 79.
35. Arthur H.J. Chard. August 1956. Aged 57.
38. Eva May Stead. July 1946. Aged 44.
46. Mary M. Blunder. July 1948. Aged 69.
45. James E. Blunder. September 1950. Aged 83.
50. Edward C. Halliwell. November 1934. Aged 68.
- Mary E. Halliwell. August 1956. Aged 90.
51. Annie E. Halliwell. September 1957. Aged 86.
52. William Sheffield. March 1941. Aged 49.
54. Elsie E. Jurd. May 1950. Aged 68.
58. Sarah J. McCoy. February 1937. Aged 66.
59. Thomas E. Warriss. February 1939. Aged 23.
60. Richard E. Warriss. July 1949. Aged 68.
61. Starkie Parkinson. November 1939. Aged 15.
62. Ronald A. Parkinson. June 1954. Aged 34.
64. James Forrester. August 1936. Aged 71.
65. Flight Sergeant W.H. Richards. October 1950. Aged 38.
66. John P. Gardner. August 1942. Aged 36.
70. Caroline Taylor. May 1940. Aged 78.
73. Hugh M. Trotter. August 1947. Aged 69.
75. George W. Davis. November 1936. Aged 15.
68. Mr. B.S. Irvine. (later than March 1962.)
15. Elizabeth G. Molloy. June 1961. Aged 58.

Headstones etc. in "B" Section. Numbers from back fence.

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| No. | |
| 1. | Thomas Chapman. July 1934. Aged 64.
Lucyetta Chapman. May 1948. Aged 77. |
| 3. | W.N. & M.A. Humphrey. Four children and one grand child. One
was 18 years, others under one year. |
| 8. | Francis H. Beamish. July 1907. Aged 66. |
| 11. | John Parkes. May 1884. Aged 74. |
| 12. | Mary A. Parkes. November 1903. Aged 69. |
| 13. | George C. Parkes. July 1927. Aged 57.
And three babies. |
| 17. | Albert Pendlebury. October 1934. Aged 54. |
| 19. | Edward J. Geary. October 1934. Aged 68.
Minnie Geary. December 1941. Aged 74. |
| 20. | Ruby M. Coleman. November 1940. Aged 52.
Maurere. R. Coleman. March 1957. Aged 10. |
| 27. | Rosie Lees. September 1928. Aged 5. |
| 31. | Mary A. Lees. August 1944. Aged 83. |
| 35. | Ellen Hawkes. July 1911. Aged 62. |
| 36. | Charles Hawkes. November 1922. Aged 76.
Adeline Smith. October 1937. Daughter of Hawkes. Aged 57. |

- 37. Dinah Lees. August 1912. Aged 56.
- 37A. William R. Lees. October 1933. Aged 87.
- 38. Margaret E. Lees. May 1937. Aged 42.
Also tablet A.M. Miller.
- 44. Alfred McBirth. October 1911. Aged 30.
- 47. Emily Barnes. February 1913. Aged 31.
- 49. Ethel J. Barnes. June 1920. Aged 34.
- 50. Elizabeth Prideaux. April 1913. Aged 68.
William Prideaux. June 1916. Aged 83.
- 51. Joseph Faulks. March 1914. Aged 73.
- 52. Elixia Faulks. October 1940. Aged 85.
- 53. Grace Truscott. June 1914. Aged 4.
- 54. James Triscott. July 1938. Aged 77.
Richard Truscott.
- 57. Ann E. Butler. August 1914. Aged 42.
Joseph B. Butler. April 1945.
- 62. Arthur Garrad. June 1919. Aged 43.
- 66. William Robinson. August 1926.
- 67. Ann Robinson. May 1934.

Headstones etc. in "C" Section. Numbers from back fence.

- No. 3. Thomas Smithson. June 1908. Aged 92.
- 4. Mary Smithson. June 1873. Aged 59.
- 5. S. Elizabeth Ridgewell. September 1869. Aged 26.
- 6. Arthur J. Smith. October 1879. Aged 6.
- 7. Elizabeth Ridgewell. September 1880. Aged 76.
- 8. Herbert.
- 9. C. & E. Luhr. Edward. March 1871. Aged 1 year 10 months.
Henrietta. December 1875. 1 year. John. June 1888. 2 years.
- 10. James Eddlestone. September 1871.
- 16. William Coleman. July 1892. Aged 14.
- 17. Sarah Coleman. August 1907. Aged 67.
William Coleman. August 1922. Aged 90.
- 20. Mary E. Hatfield. August 1929.
- 23. Elizabeth Hillard. October 1882. Aged 2 months.
- 28. Thomas Miller. September 1892. Aged 75.
- 29. Ruth Miller. August 1918. Aged 82.
Private Frost in France.
- 30. Andrew Lees. February 1902. Aged 46.
Sarah E. Lees. May 1946. Aged 85.
Marg. A. Lees. Memorial only? Aged 75.
February 1957. (Not in register).
- 31. Alice Wark. February 1916. Aged 27.
- 33. ? Alice Tomkins. August 1910. Aged 86.
- 34. ? James Tomkins. October 1902. Aged 77.
- 35. ? John Tomkins. September 1906. Aged 52.
- 36. ? Jane Tomkins. March 1916. Aged 53.
Dinah Conroy. April 1928. Aged 62.

- 37. Alfred Watt. May 1903. Aged 39.
- 40. Eva May Pearson. March 1909. Aged 34.
- 41. Joheph H. Pearson. May 1939. Aged 76.
- 42. Charles J. Hebblewhite. December 1910. Aged 56.
- 43. Charlotte Hebblewhite. August 1925. Aged 60.
Lottie Theobald. April 1923. Aged 27.
- 44. Charles King. May 1911. Aged 55.
Annette King. April 1932. Aged 76.
- 45. Dorothy Evans. September 1912. Aged 2.
- 46. Edward Evans. May 1949. Aged 64.
Private Gordon Evans. May 1942. Aged 22.
- 48. William Hardisty. May 1934. Aged 76.
Martha Hardisty. December 1945. Aged 86.
- 49. Stephen Barnett. July 1913. Aged 64.
Harold Barnett (son) October 1914. Aged 26.
Mary Jane Barnett. May 1938. Aged 84. (3 adults, single lot).
- 54. Joheph Clarke. April 1918. Aged 69.
Sarah Ann Clarke. January 1933. Aged 78.
- 55. Thomas Parkes. June 1915. Aged 58.
- 57. Thomas Hillard. October 1914. Aged 73.
- 58. Susannah Hillard. March 1941. Aged 88.
- 60. Emma Mainwaring. August 1914. Aged 46.
- 62. George T. Smith. November 1933. Aged 87.
Susanna R. Smith. January 1935. Aged 88.
- 62. Gertrude E. Kennedy. February 1932. Aged 50. (Aged 24).
- 67. Bernice Truscott. Jan. 1928. Aged 35. Alice M. Truscott. March 1946

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