



# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

53 Bruce Street,  
BEXLEY. 2207.

13th June, 1969.

Dear Friend and Member,

The next meeting of the above Society will be held as follows:

Date. Friday Evening next, 20th June, 1969, at 8.00 p.m.

Place. Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.

Guest Speaker. Mr. Vince Saunders will present a paper on "Old Forest Road".

Business. General.

Would lady members please bring a plate.

D. Sinclair,

President.

R. W. Rathbone,

Hon. Secretary.

587.4813

Supper Roster. Mrs. Eardley and Mrs. Perkins. Miss Dunsmore, Miss Cheetham and Mrs. Wilson.

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OUTING TO HUNTER'S HILL. (Yes, we mean it this time).

Saturday, 19th July leaving the Rockdale Town Hall at 12.30 p.m. Bring your own afternoon tea. \$1.00 per person. Ring Mr. Sinclair, 587-4555 for bookings.

BULLI PUBLIC SCHOOL CENTENARY.

Mr. Bill Bayley, who so efficiently escorted us around Bulli some time ago has written to inform us of his school's Centenary Celebrations, Saturday 12th July, 1969, at 2.00 p.m. Full details will be available at the meeting.

"HISTORIC BUILDINGS OF WINDSOR & RICHMOND".

A most interesting booklet issued by the State Planning Authority of N. S. W. entitled "Historic Buildings, Windsor and Richmond" may be had at a cost of 50 cents from the office of the Authority located on the 4th Floor of Mark Foys Building, Liverpool Street, Sydney. This publication is recommended to our members who may be acquainted with these old farming areas.

OUR TRIP TO MINNAMURRA.

Eileen Eardley.

On Saturday, April 19th members of the St. George Historical Society and their friends had an outing to Minnamurra Reserve. Leaving Rockdale at 9.00 a.m. the Bus, which was chartered for the day, wended its way along Princes Highway to Sutherland where four more passengers were picked up, filling the bus to capacity. The weather was perfect, and all were in good spirits.

A morning tea stop was made at Sublime Point which, that day, lived up to its name. Sublime Point rarely, in these days of smog, offers such views as were enjoyed and photographed by enthusiasts.

Our President, Mr. Don Sinclair had the job of "rounding up" his charges, and we resumed our journey via Mount Kiera and Albion Park. On arrival at the Reserve the Park Ranger, Mr. Howard Judd welcomed our party and invited us to enjoy lunch and a "cuppa", after which he gave a short address on the many attractions of the Reserve, not the least being the most recent acquisition, The Regional Museum. This has been built to represent, externally at least, an old cottage. In his address, Mr. Judd told or explained to us that the walls of the Museum were Slab, and the stone chimney incorporated in the building was transferred, brick by brick, from the Rangers original old cottage at the entrance to the Reserve.

The roof was covered with shingles obtained from an old building in the vicinity, being carefully overlaid on galvanised iron to ensure that the structure was water proof. To view the exhibits, a full length verandah has been placed on the southern side, and two large glass windows with a centrally placed doorway have been added. The Museum altogether proved a great attraction.

Minnamurra was never so beautiful following the heavy rains earlier in the week. The volume of water, (99.4% pure we were told) was literally racing over the rocks as the able and energetic ones walked along the track to the falls. Ferns were in profusion, and everything so green.

The falls were beautiful, almost deafening, and were photographed from all angles, safe and otherwise. Maybe some of the members will bring their slides along to one of the meetings, I am sure they will be enjoyed, especially by those who were unable to share the lovely day.

Reluctantly returning to the bus our President thanked the Ranger and, saying goodbye to Minnamurra, we went on our way to Jamberoo. On arrival at "Minnamurra House" we were met by Mr. and Mrs. Ross Stewart, present owners of this lovely old home, which was built in 1840 or thereabouts for Dr. Menzies and his wife Margaret who came out from Scotland to New South Wales in 1839.

Mr. Stewart invited the driver to drive the bus right into the grounds, which, after much manouvering and many frantic hand signals from unofficial hand wavers, he succeeded in doing. We scrambled out and were met by Mr. and Mrs. Stewart who suggested that interested members wander around and photograph at will. The old home is set in beautiful surroundings with Minnamurra Creek running at the foot of the sloping, unbelievably green fields. Mr. Stewart gave a very brief outline of the history of their home which was very interesting. He and his wife were quite disappointed when we had to leave, but understood that we had a time-table to adhere to and unfortunately time was running out. On behalf of the Members the President thanked them for their kindness and once again we were on our way, this time traversing the old Jamberoo Road to Kiama.

Arriving at Kiama the famous Blow Hole was admired, and, to the edification of the "Shutter-Bugs" it really did "blow".

By this time heavy storm clouds hovered overhead, and the light was failing. Our Whistleblower gave the signal for "all aboard", and as it was rather cold and windy, all were happy to return to the bus.

The wheels were turned homeward, and I sincerely hope that, for each and everyone, this concluded a very happy and satisfying day.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT OF  
CHURCH DATED 30TH MARCH 1894.

"An application was received from Miss Watt for the use of the Vestry for the purpose of commencing a school. The application was granted, Miss Watt to use the Vestry from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

That the rent of the Vestry be 1/- per week for the first quarter ending July 1st 1894 and 2/- per week for the remainder of the year."

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The Church property is bounded by Derby Street, Kensington Street, and a lane. The original church, opened in 1893, was built facing Kensington Street at the corner of the lane. It is now the "Front Hall" and the present church is on corner of Derby Street (front) and Kensington Street.

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Minute of 3rd Sept. 1894 ".....motion re rent of Vestry be here and now rescinded.....that the rent of Vestry in future be 1/- per week".

Above information supplied by (Mr.) V. S. Smith of 23 Prince Edward Street, Carlton, 2218.

#### ON THE WORONORA RIVER. AN ECHO OF THE EARLY DAYS.

Supplied by Mr. A.H. Matheson M.B.E.

Persons who have at various times visited the upper reaches of the Woronora River will surely know Price's Boatshed at the foot of the Sutherland track, but few will know of the difficulties encountered by that family in their early pioneering work, when they settled there twenty-two years ago. Actually the late Mr. Thomas Price (who died last week) obtained his first knowledge of the river thirty-seven years ago, when he was sent to do some clearing and dig a well on what was then the property of the late P. B. Walker, and which Mr. Price later purchased. At that time the journey to the river from Mr. Price's home at Waverley was by train to Hurstville, then on foot to Connell's Bay, where a boat was obtained for the long row up the river. The well was dug and good drinking water obtained, which in those days meant so much, as there was no other way of conserving the water. The old well still exists, and Mr. Price was very proud of it, although he did not depend on it in later years, having numerous tanks to draw upon. He was so taken up with the beauty of the district that fifteen years after his original introduction he purchased the present property of 150 acres and settled himself and family thereon, his youngest child, Albert, being only two years old.

At that time a family named Swain were living on the property, but they moved down the river nearer to Como so that the Price family were the sole occupants of the river above Swain's new abode.

The difficulties they experienced may best be gauged when consideration is taken of the fact that there was only what might be termed a goat track over rocks and gullies from Sutherland to their place. So bad was the track that all heavy goods had to come up via Como by boat, only small parcels being carried down the track. When the trains came on to Sutherland there were only five per day from Sydney, viz., about 8 a.m., 1.30 p.m., 2 p.m. (funeral), and 5.30 p.m., with one about 9.30 p.m. At that time Mr. Price was employed by the old Parramatta River Ferry Co. at the foot of King Street, and he used to go to his work from the river every day. Needless to say, it would not do to miss one's train in those days, and when we take into account what it must have been like to walk that rough track back and forth every day, especially in wet weather, it shows that Thomas Price

and family were possessed of a grit and backbone which characterised so many of our early settlers.

Interviews with the family reveal many interesting matters. For instance, fish were plentiful, also bird life and game, such as gill birds, bronze-wing pigeons, wallabies, 'possums, bandicoots. Needless to say, there were also plenty of snakes - reptiles that most of us dread. As far as that goes, they, like the poor, "are always with us," for even now they are rather too plentiful up there in the summer. The river, too, was fairly good for light navigation, as the channels were more open then than now, the only bad place being at the crossing where they used to drive the cattle across just below the spot on which the bridge (Sutherland) is now built. Of course there was no bridge in the early days, nor road either. There was a small tug drawing three or four feet of water that used to come up towing barges and take them back loaded with sand for Shen's Creek works at Botany. Norman Price states that there was then about 15 feet of water in Brown's Creek (then known as Forbes' Creek). Now the same creek is silted up at the mouth to such an extent that a skiff can barely manage to get in over the bar at low tide.

As a side line Mr. Price did a little in the way of raising cattle. Years later various week-enders started to frequent the river and purchase land. Amongst the first of these was Mr. Fred Rugg, and now there are hundreds of neat little cottages and camps on what used to be a veritable wilderness of bush and scrub.

Great credit must be given to the late Mr. Price for his pioneering work, as it is mainly due to his initiative and example that so many people are now permitted to enjoy the beauties of the river, as many a picnic party and visitor has been able to do and hire his boats to explore the pretty nooks and upper reaches of one of the most beautiful spots within easy reach of the city.