ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

24 Duff Street,
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.
May 1973.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular monthly meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, May 18th, 1973, at 8 p.m.

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

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Mr. Endean will give an Illustrated talk on "Historical Overseas Buildings".

Supper Roster: Mrs. Chase, Captain, Mesdames O'Meara, Tilbrook, Gash, Eardley and Nelson.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. D. Sinclair,
President.
Phone 587.4555.

Miss J. Noble,
Secretary.
Phone 599.4884.

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer.
Phone 587.1159.

Mrs. E. Eardley,
Editor & Social Secretary,
Phone 59.8078.

"Always choose a busy man if you want a job well done, the others haven't the time." W.G.P.

Recent Acquisitions.

We would like to say "Thank you" for these recent acquisitions to "Lydham Hall".

Miss Banks.	Wicker Sewing Basket which was used by her Grandmother. Love Card. Photograph of Old Kogarah Station with a Steam Motor and Cars standing in the bay running parallel to the Railway.
Miss Thomas, Forest Road, Bexley.	Four lovely lace Centre Pieces, over 50 years old.
Miss Otten, Bexley.	3 Pieces of Willow Pattern China, also Willow Pattern Meat Dish, 150 years old.
Mr. & Mrs. Eardley, Arncliffe.	Candle Snuffers, Sugar Cutter, Cork Cutter, and many odds and ends, age unknown. Portable Typewriter, 1910.
Mr. W. Kennard, Eastwood.	Hand Sewing Machine. Age unknown.
Mrs. Watson,	Complete Washstand Set, Australian Wildflower design. 15 Assorted pieces of English Willow Pattern China.

* * * * * * * * *

NEWS ITEMS ....

An Afternoon Outing to Paddington to see the lovely old Terrace Houses, amongst others, which have been restored over a period of time, has been arranged for -

Date.   Saturday, June 16th, 1973. NOTE - Change of Date.
Place.   Town Hall, Rockdale.
Cost.   Per Person - $1.50.
Time.   1 p.m. SHARP.

Time permitting, we could perhaps have Afternoon Tea at Vaucluse House.
Phone Mrs. Eardley - 59.8078.

OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND VISIT TO HISTORIC PORT MACQUARIE.

Leaving Rockdale Saturday, September 29th, 1973.
Spending Saturday & Sunday Nights at Port Macquarie.
Returning Monday October 1st, 1973, (Morning in Taree)
Phone Miss J. Noble, 599.4884 for further information.

FIRST PROVISION OF MAIL FACILITIES IN THE ROCKDALE DISTRICT.

KOGARAH.

Earliest records held by the Postmaster-General's Department, Sydney, reveal that the first Post Office in the Rockdale area was established at Kogarah on 1st August, 1863, with Mr. William Blake as Postmaster at a salary of £12 per annum.

In 1882 the mails were carried to and from the G.P.O. via Newtown, Macdonald Town, St. Peters to Tempe by horse-drawn coach 12 times a week. There were two mail runs from Tempe, one through Arncliffe, Rockdale, Kogarah and Woniora (Tom Ugly's Pt.), and the other from Tempe, Bexley to Hurstville. Both the Woniora and the Hurstville services were performed six times a week (return). Mr. William Lowe of Kogarah received £150 per annum for providing the G.P.O. - Tempe and the Tempe-Woniora services, and Mr. Charles Fripps, Omnibus Proprietor, received £78 per annum for the Tempe-Hurstville run. A Mr. Blake of Kogarah ran a coach from Wynyard Square to the Woniora Post Office, twice daily about this time.

The Post Office and the Telegraph Office were amalgamated in 1886 and by 1916 the staff had grown to include the postmaster, 4 assistants, 7 postmen and 2 messengers. Full postal, money order and telegraph facilities were available, and the population of 13,000 served by the office provided a revenue of almost £8,000.

ARNCLIFFE.

The Arncliffe Post Office was opened on 1st April, 1878, and Mr. William Henry Smithson, a Storekeeper, was the first postmaster. The office was situated next to the Tempe Family Hotel in Rocky Point Road (or Kogarah Road as it was known) near Arncliffe Road.

Mr. Smithson opened a store some 300 yards along Rocky Point Road in April 1884. However the residents complained that the new site was inconvenient, and Miss Sarah Matilda Tye was appointed postmistress on 2nd June, 1884, occupying apparently those premises vacated by Mr. Smithson adjacent to the Hotel.

However on 1/12/1884 Mr. W. Marsden, the Railway Station Master assumed the postmaster's duties, and the Post Office business was conducted in the General Booking Office of the Railway Station.

It is recorded that in 1887, in each week about 24 mails were handled, and 280 letters were posted, the total revenue was £50 and the postmaster's allowance (which was £11) was increased to £27 p.a.

Money Order and Savings Bank facilities were available in 1890 when Mr. W.E. Grainer, previously a telegraph operator, took charge as Post and Telegraph Master.

The Post Office building was completed on 21/3/1898 at a cost of £1270.

By 1916 the Arncliffe Post Office was providing full postal, money order and telegraph facilities for 7,700 people in the district; it employed in addition to the postmaster two assistants, 5 postmen and a messenger, and the revenue had risen to almost £1,400.

ROCKDALE.

A post office was established at Rockdale on 15th April, 1882, and Yeoman Geeves was appointed Postmaster with a salary of £10 per annum. In 1889 the post office was adjacent to the Railway Station, and the Postmaster, Mr. Samuel Walter York, was also the Railway Station Master. Full postal, money order and telegraph facilities were available at that time, and the revenue was approximately £250. Mr. York's staff included one assistant and operator, one letter carrier, and one messenger.

The Rockdale district continued to rapidly develop, and with it, the volume of post office business increased. Banking facilities were made available from 12th May, 1890, and by 1894 the revenue had increased to almost £600, and two letter carriers had been added to the staff. By 1916 the revenue had grown to over £2,500, and the postmaster's staff of 3 postal assistants, 6 postmen and 2 messengers served a population of almost 9,000 residents.

It is interesting to note that Mr. A. W. Plumley who was the Rockdale postmaster in 1896 is still alive, and is almost ninety.

BEXLEY.

On 1st November, 1882, the Bexley Post Office was established and Mrs. Pearse who conducted a store in Forest Road was appointed as postmistress. She arranged the despatch of mails, but deliveries in the Bexley Area were made from the Rockdale Post Office. Her daughter, Mrs. Jessie Clune succeeded her on 1st September, 1890.

It is recorded that in 1909 over 1,200 mails were despatched from the Bexley Office, and over 22,000 articles posted. By 1910 this figure had grown to 47,000. On 1st July, 1911 the Post Office was taken over by Alice McBride who was an "assistant draper", and had premises further along Forest Road. The Telephone Office was opened about that time.

A postal inspector's report dated 22/12/1916 states that at that date Bexley was then an "allowance" office, selling stamps and postal notes, and transmitting telegrams (by telephone to Kogarah). Three mails were despatched daily and one on Saturday and Sunday. No mails were received, letter deliveries twice daily being effected from Rockdale, Kogarah and Hurstville official offices and Carlton semi-official office. It was recommended in this report that money order facilities be made available at Bexley and this was arranged as from 1/2/1917.

The Bexley Post Office was moved on 4th February, 1925 and three years later it was raised to "official" status.

On 1st September, 1941, a non-official office was opened at North Bexley.

SANS SOUCI.

Sans Souci was served prior to 1892 by a letter carrier from Kogarah who delivered once a day at Sandringham, Sans Souci and Dolls Point.

This office opened on 16th November, 1892, with Henry Dose as Postmaster. He was paid an allowance for a "mailboy" who effected daily delivery by horseback. The New South Wales Government Tramways was requested in 1892 to carry the mailbags between Kogarah and Sans Souci, but this Department declined the responsibility. The trams were used for this purpose at a later date, probably when they were taken over by the New South Wales Government Railways, about 1900 or perhaps earlier.

A postal inspector reported on 22nd December, 1916 that the staff at Sans Souci Post Office included besides the Postmaster a postman and a messenger. The population served was 2,000, and the annual revenue amounted to £172. Over 1,000 letters were despatched each week, and over 2,000 mails were received and despatched in the year.

BRIGHTON LE SANDS.

Prior to 1896, mail at Lady Robinsons Beach was posted in letter boxes, which were cleared by letter carriers from Rockdale. However, in that year, letter boxes were attached to the Lady Robinsons Beach-Rockdale tram, clearances being made at Rockdale 5 times daily. The tramway was owned by Thomas Saywell, the Manager in 1896 was Mr. J.E. Leng, and Messrs. Alfred Rigby and Sidney Maddocks were guards at that time.

An allowance office was opened on 23/11/1898 under the name of "Lady Robinsons Beach". The main function of this office was the sale of stamps, but telephone and telegraph facilities were available, and the trams were still used to convey the mails to Rockdale Post Office, a charge of 3d. per trip being made for carriage of the mailbag.

On 16/2/1903 the name of the Post Office was changed to "Brighton Le Sands". A Postal Inspector's report in 1916 states that 1200 people in the area were served by this office. There, stamps were sold, postal note and telegraph facilities were available and mails including parcels and registered articles were despatched. The revenue for that year was approximately £300.

BANKSIA.

Representations for the establishment of a post office at Banksia were made before 1911, but as it was considered that the postal requirements of the locality were adequately met by the Rockdale and Arncliffe Official Offices, and the other facilities, namely, Public Telephone, licensed Stamp Vendors, and postal receptacles, it was not until 19th October, 1931, that a non-official post office was established in Banksia.

TURRELLA, KYEEMAGH AND MONTEREY.

Non-official offices were opened at Turrella on 22nd May, 1933, at Kyeemagh on 1st December, 1939, and Monterey on 1st July, 1941.

Dates of Establishment of Post Offices in Rockdale Area.

1st August,	1863	Kogarah.
1st April,	1878	Arncliffe.
15th April,	1882	Rockdale
1st Nov.,	1882	Bexley
16th Nov.,	1892	Sans Souci
23rd Nov.,	1898	Brighton le Sands
19th Oct.,	1931	Banksia
22nd May,	1933	Turrella
1st Dec.,	1939	Kyeemagh
1st July,	1941	Monterey
1st Sept.,	1941	North Bexley

INAUGURATION OF TELEGRAPH FACILITIES IN THE ROCKDALE DISTRICT.

The Telegraph Offices at Rockdale and Kogarah were opened about 1885 or early 1886, the exact date being uncertain. On the 3rd June, 1949, a teleprinter was installed at Rockdale to handle the large volume of telegraphic business.

EXTENSION OF TELEPHONE FACILITIES IN THE ROCKDALE DISTRICT.

Telephone communication was established at Rockdale on 9th April, 1886. This did not involve a switchboard, probably being a telephone set for use by the office, which was superimposed on the telegraph line. A public telephone bureau was not established there until 1898. The Rockdale Automatic exchange was opened on 2nd November, 1936.

Kogarah manual exchange was opened on 1st October, 1896 and by the end of that year 28 subscribers in an area "South of Cooks River" were connected. A list of early subscribers is attached herein. A public Telephone Bureau was opened at Kogarah Post Office in 1897 and was open from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The charge then was 6d for each 3 mins.

The Kogarah automatic exchange (LW) was opened on 22nd November, 1936. (The original Kogarah area is now served by Ramsgate and Rockdale exchanges).

The newest automatic exchange in the Rockdale district is that at Ramsgate which came into operation on 13th October, 1948.

Arncliffe's first telephonic communication was established on 8th January, 1886, probably for use by the post office for transmitting telegrams to the nearest telegraph office.

Telephone Numbers of early subscribers to the Kogarah Exchange.
(which covered the area south of the Cooks River) - 1897.

No.	11	F.W. Astridge, Grocer, Rocky Pt. Rd., Rockdale.
"	5	C.H. Barsby, Storekeeper, Rocky Pt. Rd., Rockdale.
"	15	Dr. L.F. Bucknell, Belgrave St., Kogarah.
"	23	Chas. Bull, M.P., "Bolaro", Bexley.
"	20	W.E. Burney, Forest Road, Bexley.
"	12	William Burns, Timber Merchant, Rockdale and Hurstville.
"	28	Water Board Pumping Station, Carlton.
"	25	Hon. J.H. Carruthers "Ellesmere", Sans Souci.
"	33	Police Station, Kogarah.
"	10	Isaac Chapman, Monomeeth Street, Bexley.
"	3	F. & W. Cox, Produce Merchants, Rocky Pt. Rd., Rockdale.
"	16	James Gannon, Dolls Pt. Sandringham
"	13	John Gilchrist, off Rocky Pt. Rd., Kogarah.
"	1	E.M. Hill, Chemist, Rocky Pt. Rd., Rockdale.
"	31	Hurstville Council Chambers.
"	17	Hurstville Steam Brick Co., Hurstville.
"	6	Chas. Kinsela, Undertaker, Rockdale.
"	24	Council Chambers, Kogarah.
"	22	Fire Station, Kogarah.
"	14	Dr. J. Lamrock, Belgrave St., Kogarah.
"	26	Lick House Hotel (Harry Figg) Lady Robinsons Beach.
"	35	Rev. M. Macnamara, The Presbytery, Kogarah.
"	7	Moorefield Hotel, Rocky Pt. Rd., Kogarah.
"	34	Ernest Needs, Endeavour St., Sans Souci.
"	32	Mrs. C.T. Richardson, Arncliffe.
"	8	T.S. Scholefield, Riley St., Kogarah.
"	18	St. George Cottage Hospital, Kogarah.
"	30	George Stone, Dolls Point.
"	2	J.C. Thom, Bexley.
"	4	Prince of Wales Hotel, Sandringham.
"	19	Armitage Wilkinson, Belgrave St., Kogarah.
"	27	Water Board Turncock, Kogarah.
"	9	W.G. Mastin, Grocer, Kogarah.

Note.   There are odd pages missing from the Directory so there may be a few more subscribers.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LYDHAM HALL LOCAL COMMITTEE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28TH FEBRUARY, 1973.

The second year of operation of the Lydham Hall Local Committee has been marked by co-operation and very real progress.

Under the chairmanship of Alderman Burke, the Committee has met regularly each month and discussions have been both frank and constructive.

It is pleasing to report that in the twelve months ended 28.2.73, 1493 people composed of 1052 adults and 441 children visited Lydham Hall - an increase of 478 on the same period last year.

Without exception, these people have been full of praise of Council's, the Historical Society's and the Local Committee's efforts to maintain, preserve and further develop the property.

The Committee has received numerous valuable gifts from visitors towards the furnishing of the house including a magnificent 5 feet by 3 feet mantle mirror, 90 years old, which once belonged to Mrs. Mary Ann Geeves, the lady who gave Rockdale its name.

Gifts have also been promised by the family of former N.S.W. Premier and local M.L.A., Sir Joseph Carruthers; ex-convict landowner and St. George District pioneer, Frederick Gannon as well as David Stead, the Naturalist, who gave the suburb of Banksia its name.

Throughout the year, the grounds at the front of the building have been maintained by Alderman Ford at considerable personal inconvenience and the thanks of the Local Committee are here recorded to him.

The two large indication signs on Forest Road at Clarence Road and Herbert Street are proving a most effective means of advertising and it is significant that many of the people now visiting Lydham Hall are coming from outside the Rockdale Municipality.

During the year just concluded considerable research has been undertaken, both in England and Australia, into the life and family of Joseph Davis, the builder of Lydham Hall. The Committee would like to place on record its appreciation to Mrs. Victoria Hindmarsh, granddaughter of Joseph Davis, for her most willing co-operation and valuable help in this regard.

The Ladies' Fund Raising Committee has again worked very hard during the year and has raised the sum of $567.41 which together with the $292.95 paid in entrance fees has augmented the Restoration Fund by a total of $860.36.

The highlight of the year just ended has been the Agreement reached with Mr. and Mrs. Long in which they have made available to the Council, the gallery of Lydham Hall. This will be renovated and used for the exhibition of objects of historical interest.

It will also go a long way to solving the severe accommodation problem that had arisen and will allow the Public access to the sweeping views obtained from the rear upstairs windows. Further, it will allow work to proceed on the proper furnishing of the hall.

Work is already well under way to renovate the gallery and it is anticipated that it will be available to the Public by the end of March.

No report of this kind would be complete without the Committee placing on record its deep appreciation of the outstanding work carried out by Miss Bet Otton who, almost every Saturday, Sunday and Public Holiday, has made herself available to conduct people through the building.

Her knowledge of its history and its contents is unrivalled and her sense of Public Relations is excellent.

There have been many very appreciative comments about the excellence of the commentary she gives.

Finally, the Committee would like to thank Council's Superintendent of Properties for his assistance with the maintenance and development of the building.

Alderman R. W. Rathbone.
Hon. Secretary,
Lydham Hall Local Committee.
7th March, 1973.