



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

24 Duff Street,
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.
February 1974.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular Meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Friday Evening, February 15th, 1974, at 8 p.m.

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

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Mr. L. Stevens will speak on: "Municipality of Hurstville
- Forest to Suburbia".

Supper Roster: Miss Dunsmore, Captain, Miss Cheetham, Mrs. McMillan,
Miss Callister, Mrs. McDonald, Mrs. Lee.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. D. Sinclair,

President.

Phone 587.4555.

Mrs. E. Eardley,

Secretary.

Phone 59.8078.

Mrs. E. Wright,

Treasurer & Social Sec.

Phone 599.4884.

Mr. A. Ellis,

Research Officer.

Phone 587.1159.

"There is no office in this needful world but dignifies the doer if well done."

Alfred Austin.

(Poet Laureate)

SPECIAL: "DATE TO REMEMBER"

Date: Saturday, March 30th, 1974, at 8 p.m.

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

PETER SAGE PRESENTS: "SONGS OF AUSTRALIA", SLIDES OF AUSTRALIA.

accompanied by such Singers as: Rolf Harris, Lionel Long, Slim Dusty, and others.

This will be something different, a **SHOW** you are sure to enjoy.

Do come along and bring your Friends.

Admission: Adults 50¢. Children 30¢. Light supper.

Tickets available at next Meeting.

March 31st, 1974.

This is the date of the Historic Lancer Service to be held in St. John's Church, Parramatta, and an "Annual Pilgrimage" which our Members and friends seem to enjoy, so do come along. It has been suggested that a Bus be chartered for the occasion and, after the Service, we proceed to "Prospect Dam" for lunch, approximately half an hour's drive from Parramatta.

Weather permitting, we could return by a roundabout way, through Historical places arriving back at Rockdale 5.30 p.m., or as close to that time as possible. The cost will be kept at a minimum, details just as soon as can be. Your Social Secretary, Mrs. Wright, is arranging this outing for your comfort and convenience, and she sincerely trusts that you will all support her effort. Please try to come along and bring your many friends, and make the outing a "SUCCESS". Phone 599.4884.

Have you any "Historical Jottings" you would like included in our Monthly Bulletin? We would like to share them with you.

Please ring Secretary 59.8078

Items Donated to "Lydham Hall":

Mrs. E. Wright, German Cookery Book
81 Watkin St., German Lutheran Bible. 1878.
Bexley.

Mrs. McDonald, Irish Peat Stud Box, bought in Ireland 1947.
Oakura St.,
Rockdale.

Mr. A. Field, Riding Crop.
Bellevue St., Ornamental Jardiniere, (Small size)
Arncliffe.

Mrs. K. Chase, "Whatnot" details (later). 60 years old.
Mrs. Goecher, Mandolin - Guitar: more than 50 years old.
2 Palmerston St.,
Kogarah.

Have any of our Members or Friends an early "Period Frock" they would care to "Loan" to "Lydham Hall" for a time? If so would you please contact Miss Bet Otten, the greatest of care will be taken if you could help in this regard. Phone 59.2861 or 59.8078.

Have you visited historic "Lydham Hall" ? This lovely old Home is situated at No. 18 Lydham Avenue, Rockdale, between Clarence Road and Herbert Street, and was built in 1855.

"Lydham Hall" is open for inspection - Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays from 2 - 4 p.m. Weekdays by arrangement, and is well worth a visit.

Parties Welcome - Ring 59.8078 - 587.4813.

Winners of Christmas Raffle:

1st Prize.	Mrs. M. Smith.
2nd Prize.	Miss M. Dunsmore.
3rd Prize.	Miss Lambert.

A HISTORY OF CARLTON N.S.W.

by
R. W. RATHBONE

PART 5.

THE ROYAL HOTEL.

This establishment had a well won place in the hearts of Carlton residents - even those who had never breasted its well-appointed bar. Since it was erected in 1888 and particularly during the occupancy of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mitchell it had been the social centre of the community. Originally it had been built by Mr. Thomas Bartlett and opened by a Mr. Bourke. For some time it was occupied by Mr. John Morton and provided excellent accommodation for visitors, the view from the upper storeys being quite expansive. During the occupancy of the Mitchells, a very refined old couple who would stand no nonsense, it had the reputation of being one of the best establishments of its kind along the Illawarra Line.

1906 was memorable for yet another event for, on October 15 of that year a licence was granted to W. A. Hales to run a passenger coach from Carlton Station via Short Street, Durham Street and Lily Street to the junction of Croydon and Forest Roads.

In January 1907, Alderman Griffin announced "that in order to relieve the nuisance arising from the Webber's Road Drain, £4220 worth of the proposed Illawarra Sewerage Scheme would be constructed." The Bexley Council hailed this announcement with understandable joy and Carlton and West Kogarah were connected to the scheme almost twenty-years before surrounding areas. Local residents, however, were not as enthusiastic over this new fangled invention as their civic leaders and continued to bury their nightsoil as they had always done, thus assuring the continued pollution of the creek.

Thirty years later the Council was still having difficulty getting people to connect to the sewer.

The outstanding event of 1908 was the erection of a horse trough at the intersection of Carlton Parade and Webber's Road.

But just one year later, in 1909, occurred an event which has impressed itself indelibly on the minds and anatomies of succeeding generations of Carlton residents. Carlton's first brick footpath was laid.

A PARK FOR CARLTON.

Another event took place this year, the aftermath of which was to be felt for many years. In this year, "Besborough" the vast Preddey Estate between Forest Road and Stoney Creek Road, Bexley, came on the market. As the Borough of Bexley lacked an official Park, the Council made earnest representations to the Department of Lands for the acquisition of 10 acres of Preddeys back paddock.

After protracted negotiations the land was obtained, handed over to the Council and named Bexley Park.

These negotiations were watched with great interest by the people of Carlton, who had been agitating for a similar amenity in their arca since the

mid-1890's. Urgent representations were made by the Carlton Progress Association to the Council and the Lands Department for the purchase of 5 acres of Section 13 of the Carlton Estate - the whole of the block bounded by Mill, Durham, High and Cumberland Streets as a Public Park.

Not only did the government and the Council refuse to entertain the idea but insisted that the only way a park could be provided in Carlton was by striking a Special Rate on surrounding property holders. In September 1910, a referendum of those people affected voted 84 to 49 against the implementation of the Special Rate and there the matter has rested. In the 1920's and early 30's when almost every block of land in Carlton was built on, the 1,100 children who attended the local school were forced to play in the streets as in some of the most over-populated and underprivileged sections of the city leaving today's authorities with the unenviable task of resuming small areas of land at enormous cost to correct the short-sightedness of a Council which could have acquired the whole lot for less than £1,000.

In that year, however, one lasting improvement was made. Negotiations were commenced with Mr. Ebenezer Glencross Grant for the purchase of a strip of land 33 feet by 565 feet from the side of his property at the intersection of Webber's Road and Forest Road. This had the effect of making Webber's Road a full 66 feet wide where previously at this point it had been only half that width.

Between 1910 and the outbreak of the war, considerable improvements were effected to the railway station at Carlton. The dangerous pedestrian access at Mill Street was closed and the overhead pedestrian bridge transferred from that end of the Station to Short Street. Success was accorded the persistent efforts to abolish the Webber's Road Vehicular Crossing when in 1912 the long sought after subway at Prospect Street was completed - to become an immediate traffic hazard and headache to both the authorities and the users.

All these improvements were obtained only by a very considerable amount of effort on the part of those people who represented this area on the local Council.

Although the redoubtable J.G. Griffin was always well to the fore in any move to benefit Carlton and in fact achieved a staggering amount, other citizens of Carlton played their part. W. Wiseman, E. Edwards, T.J. Carr and W.J. Berryman are perhaps the best remembered.

THE LAST OF THE LAND SALES.

The pre-war era concluded with two important land sales. These were the auctioning of the "Perry's Hill" and "Pick of Carlton" Estates, the last unsold portions of George Perry's original purchase from Michael Gannon way back in 1854. Early in 1914 both allotments were put on the market and Perry's Avenue and Anderson Street made their appearance on the Municipal Directory. Anderson Street was to have been Kimberley Street but the vendor, Mr. W.T. Anderson, later changed his mind.

On August 5, 1914, Australia was at war and thus ended an era in the life of Carlton which has never been recaptured. These pre-war days were the days of leisurely living, when the home and the family were supreme - where a sense of solidity and security reigned. These were the days of late shopping, when the normal Friday night's entertainment was to take the family to either Kogarah or Hurstville to look in the gas-lit shops packed with goods, to listen to the brass bands and to watch and listen to the jugglers, organ grinders or the Band of Hope.

THE CARLTON METHODIST CHURCH.

Before concluding our description of this period we must pause for a moment for the opening of a third church in Carlton which in the hustle and bustle of the preceding events had grown up almost unnoticed.

Methodist Churches had been established at Hurstville in 1879 and at Kogarah six years later and for many years had adequately served the needs of the area but in 1912 services were commenced in the Carlton Hall in Short Street. Shortly afterwards three blocks of land were purchased in Mill Street with money made available by Mr. Ebenezer Vickery. In 1913 it was decided to erect a church on the land and on July 18, 1914, Ald. W. J. Berryman, J. P., well known Carlton Estate Agent, lay preacher, ardent prohibitionist and leading member of the National Association who was later to become wartime Mayor of Bexley, laid the foundation stone. The first service in the new church was held on Sunday, October 18, 1914, the preachers being the Rev. Herbert Green and the Rev. H. E. Andrews. Rev. G. W. Payne and Herbert Green were the first two ministers to serve the church. Miss G. Hambly was the first organist and the original trustees were Messrs. W. J. Berryman, J. Bone, A. Vaughan, C. Austin, J. McKinstry, C. E. Napper, and E. A. Henry. This building served as the Methodist Church until July 1959, when a modern church was opened on the property.

SCHEMES WHICH DID NOT COME OFF.

It is also interesting to reflect on a number of schemes which during these pre-war years were embraced with great enthusiasm in Carlton and which could have made it quite a different suburb from the one we know today - had any of them ever come to fruition.

Among these we number a proposed main road which Ald. Griffin sponsored in 1913 to link Durham Street, Carlton, in a direct line with Rockdale Station; the terrace of nine two-storeyed houses which were approved for erection at the corner of Webber's Road and Ethel Street; a goods siding and shed at the railway and later a mortuary station; two pedestrian subways under the railway line, one at the foot of High Street and one to link Guinea Street with Gray Street, Kogarah; the extension of Griffin Avenue through to Milsop Street and the proposed inclusion of Bexley in a Greater St. George Scheme which was alternately supported by the Council when there seemed little prospect of its success and bitterly opposed when there appeared some likelihood of its eventuating.

THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

On August 5th, 1914, the Australian Government declared war on Germany and the ailing Andrew Fisher, soon to be thrust into the Prime-ministership he did not want made his famous pledge to "Stand by the Mother Country to help and defend her to the last man and the last shilling." Nowhere was this call to arms answered with greater spontaneity than in the small community in which our story is set. 164 names appear on the Carlton Honour Roll still to be found on the side of the Booking Office at the Station whilst many more appear on the Honour Rolls in various churches.

A perusal of the Post Office Directory for the years 1914-18 shows that there was scarcely a family in Carlton which did not have some relative in uniform. Those who could not offer their services at the front threw themselves into a flurry of War Work and patriotic activities. On April 13, 1915, the people of Carlton met in the Baptist Church and formed a Belgian Relief Fund Committee, but this was soon superseded by an organisation called the Carlton-West Kogarah Voluntary Workers.

THE CARLTON-WEST KOGARAH VOLUNTARY WORKERS.

Under the energetic Presidency of Mr. Thomas Allen with Mr. Edgar O'Regan as secretary and Mr. Alfred Camfield as treasurer, this organisation raised fantastic sums of money - working in turn for each appeal as it occurred. The first great appeal was for Belgium Day when a monster carnival was organised adjacent to the railway station on railway land then known as Carlton Square. This was followed by appeals for Australia Day, Allies Day, France Day, for the War Savings Campaign, the War Chest and for Wounded Soldiers. Towards the end of the war these carnivals were lit by electricity from Mrs. Rate's Shoe Factory in Short Street, and were supplemented by garden parties at "Alabama", the home of Mr. Ebenezer Glencross-Grant.

At least 26 of these young men who answered the call to the colours did not return, the Argall, Bulmer and O'Donnell families being particularly hard hit. The movement of the telegram boy during these years as he went about his mournful task was watched with a mixture of relief and sympathy, whilst the long lists of casualties were anxiously scanned at each release.

WEBBER'S ROAD BECOMES WILLISON ROAD.

The first local boy to fall during that conflict has been immortalised and his monument could well serve as a fitting memorial to those other men who gave their lives in two world shattering conflicts.

On April 25, 1915, the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed amid merciless fire on the inhospitable shore of Anzac Cove. In one of the first units ashore was Corporal Robert Willison, of Carlton. On May 29th in the Turkish assault upon Quinn's Post, Robert Willison fell, mortally wounded under a hail of Turkish bullets. He lingered for some weeks and on June 28 he died. Robert Willison's father was an Alderman of Bexley Council. On September 18, 1915, at the meeting of the Council held on that evening, Alderman Griffin moved, the Mayor, Alderman Berryman seconded, "that the name of Webber's Road which was named after a one-time German resident be altered to Willison Road, in honour of Corporal R. E. Willison, son of

Alderman Willison, who has fallen for his country at the Dardanelles". The motion met with "cordial" approval and was unanimously passed.

In an age when so many of our public figures go out of their way to be "impartial" on matters of important political consequence, it is interesting to record the reactions of some of Carlton's more prominent citizens during these years.

SIDELIGHTS OF THE WAR YEARS.

Throughout 1916 there were continual calls for more and more recruits to replace those 20,000 men who had perished in the unbelievable carnage of Gallipoli, Pozieres and the Somme, but the prospect of placing one's life in the hands of inept and uninspired military leaders combined with repeated political interference and indecision made the blood soaked fields of Flanders plainly uninviting. Demands for reinforcements could not be met voluntarily and Australia's earlier pledge to support Britain to the ultimate began to sound a little hollow. Recruiting had dried up to a mere trickle and the only solution appeared to be to resort to conscription. At last the decision was made, a decision which split not only the Government but the nation.

On August 30, 1916, the Prime Minister, William Morris Hughes, who had replaced Fisher a little over twelve months before, announced that a referendum would be held to give the Government power to conscript men for overseas service.

The people of Carlton were left in no doubt where their civic leaders stood. On September 26, Alderman Griffin was appointed to the executive committee of the National Referendum Council and the Borough of Bexley pledged itself solidly to the carrying of the Referendum. It even refused to allow the "Carlton No Conscription League" to collect at a public meeting. But when the results were announced Carlton had voted overwhelmingly against the proposal and the referendum was defeated.

The War Years had some very strange sidelights. On September 12, 1916, Alderman Charles Amey Howard, one of the founders of the Carlton Baptist Church, indignantly demanded that the Carlton Voluntary Workers cease their activities on Sundays for they were desecrating the Lord's Day, while in 1917 he and Alderman Griffin moved this motion at a Council Meeting -

"That all Municipal Councils be requested to co-operate in asking the Federal Government to use its powers under the War Precautions Act to prevent the practice of "shouting" or treating drinks to members of the military and naval forces or civilians during the period of the war and thus follow the example set by Great Britain and New Zealand whose laudable legislation forbidding the practice has had a beneficial effect in connection with national and domestic efficiency and economy." This motion was carried unanimously, but the Minister for War Precautions understandably declined to take action.

Because the war was so removed from our shores, life during 1914-18 went on normally. Brick footpaving and kerbing and guttering was carried

on apace. The first agitation for lighting by electricity commenced, the West Kogarah Drain was again in the news and smoke from the Carlton Pumping Station engaged the attention of nearby inhabitants. It was during 1916 that West Street was changed to Edgehill Street to avoid confusion with the street of the same name in the Kogarah Municipality. Alderman Griffin clashed with Alderman Carr at a Council meeting, the latter claiming Griffin was "a damned nuisance who ought to have been put out an hour ago, and that the Health Inspector had 10 times as many brains as Griffin had."

But on November 12, 1918, the War was over. Children at the local school were presented with Peace Medals under the shade of a huge Union Jack, races, skipping and a tug-of-war were engaged in and on the following Sunday a united open-air service was held at which the King's Proclamation was read.

With the Peace came yet another phase in the growth of Carlton.

CARLTON PUBLIC SCHOOL.

As early as 1890 moves had been made to establish a school at Carlton which was then served only by the schools at Kogarah and Hurstville and by a number of private and denominational institutions. A school had been opened as early as 1870 at Kogarah and at Hurstville in 1876, whilst the Convent of St. Mary's Star of the Sea had been established in 1885. Among the best remembered of the private schools were Miss Harriett Griffin's which was housed in the former stables of the well known racehorse trainer Jimmy Gardiner, in High Street the Bethany High School which operated under the auspices of the Church of England in Cooper's Hall, Fleet Street, and the "Rothesay Private School" in Railway Parade. It was not until 1902, however, that the first application was made to the Department of Public Instruction for the establishment of a public school on the site now occupied by the Church of England.

This application was refused, but when it was renewed in 1912 approval was granted for the establishment of an Infants' Department.

Further delays ensued and it was not until 1918 that the school finally came into operation - the delay being due mainly to the difficulty encountered in securing suitable premises. Steps were taken to obtain a site and in 1914 a total of almost one and a half acres was acquired, partly by resumption and partly by purchase, for approximately £1,600, some of the weatherboard houses being moved to new sites. Three portable and one pavilion classroom were approved, but, it was not until June 1918, that a building containing four classrooms was erected and officially opened with Miss Alice Day as teacher and an enrolment of 160. Miss Day remained at the school only a short time and was succeeded by Miss Alice Ellis in August. The attendance rapidly increased and it soon became necessary to rent premises belonging to the Church of England and to teach one class in an open shed. The progress of the district was so rapid that by 1920 the enrolment had increased to over 400 and additional accommodation was urgently required. It was not until 1922, that tenders were called for a new Infants' and Primary Block and by the time it was opened in April 1923, the number of pupils had jumped to 700.

During 1924 the school was divided into three departments - Boys', Girls' and Infants' and by 1926 the attendance had risen to 1036. Four new classrooms were added in 1926, but were totally inadequate by the time they were completed. During 1928 and 1929 the massive three-storied section facing Percival Street was added. But we are getting a little ahead of ourselves.

THE POST WAR YEARS.

With the end of the war in 1918 and the return of the troops from overseas came the dreadful outbreak of pneumonic influenza. Believed to have been caused by the decaying bodies on the European battlefields it took heavy toll in the more thickly populated parts of the city. No accurate tally has ever been compiled of the number of persons who fell victim to this pestilence. People died in their thousands - whole families were wiped out and it became obligatory for everyone to wear grotesque calico masks soaked in formalin. Soup kitchens and relief depots were established, emergency hospitals set up and those people still on their feet pressed into relief duties.

THE ST. GEORGE AMBULANCE.

One resident of Carlton rendered yeoman service during this trying time. This was Mr. Phillip Stell, of Carlton Parade, whose father Benjamin Stell had settled in the district as far back as 1893. Phillip Stell was the superintendent of the St. George District Ambulance, and had been intimately connected with it almost from its beginning in 1902. Over the fearfully rough roads of the day, the 15 horse-power Minerva ambulance which had replaced a hand-drawn litter only a few months before the outbreak occurred, carried load after load of sick and dying victims to the local hospital. Carlton, miraculously escaped the full impost of this terror. Whilst hundreds of residents were laid low with it, there were only seven recorded deaths, two of these being the daughter and son-in-law of Sidney Terrett, the Fleet Street storekeeper, who for many years was one of the two elected auditors of the Bexley Council.

THE BOOM THAT BURST.

The year 1920 opened with a tremendous boom - a boom that was to end in a disastrous bust less than a decade later. Home building broke all records. The Carlton-West Kogarah Voluntary Workers at their "Carlton Village Fair" raised nearly £600 for the St. George Hospital. The St. George County Council was formed to bring electric light and power to the district - the first of its kind in Australia. Compulsory numbering of houses was introduced and the widening of Willison Road was completed. On July 22, the Hazeldine Hall in High Street was opened - a building which later became a night club and finally a most untidy ball-bearing factory. The Government Savings Bank which had for some years been located on the other side of the line, returned to Carlton Parade. Hyland's bus service from Carlton to Arncliffe was rejected. Alderman Griffin was severely censured by most metropolitan councils for agreeing to extra holidays for water and sewerage board employees.

But perhaps the most outstanding event of the year was the presentation of a small trench mortar from the War Trophies Commission to form the basis of the Municipality's War Memorial. For the first time since its

formation in 1900 the Municipality of Bexley was united . . . in outrage against the presentation of so unworthy a trophy. Protest meetings were held. The Mayor, Alderman Barwell, declared that he was thinking of taking the wheels off and using it for a roller on the cricket pitch; a deputation was arranged, local members of parliament impugned, and the district's righteous indignation given full vent.

At last the trench mortar was withdrawn and with due ceremony a fine six-inch gun was unveiled outside the Council Chamber to the cheers of the assembled populace and the great consternation of the lady who lived next door.

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