



# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

24 Duff Street,  
Arncliffe. 1974  
August 1974.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:

Date : Friday Evening, August 16th. 1974, at 8 p.m.

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

Business : General.

Syllabus Item : Mr. Bill Bayley, of Bulli will give an Illustrated  
address entitled : " Travels in Historical Research."

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

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. D. Sinclair,  
President.

Phone ; 587.4555

Mrs. E. Wright,  
Treasurer & Soc. Secretary.

Phone 599.4884

Mrs. E. Eardley,  
Hon. Secretary.

Phone 59.8078

Mr. A. Ellis,  
Research Officer.

Phone. 587.1159

" A LITTLE NONSENSE NOW AND THEN IS RELISHED BY THE WISEST MEN."

The following Office Bearers were elected for the ensuing year -  
1974 - 1975.

<u>Patrons :</u>	<u>Mayor of Rockdale, Alderman G. Moore.</u> <u>Alderman R. Rathbone, Mr. R. Stark.</u>
<u>President :</u>	<u>Mr. D. Sinclair.</u>
<u>Senior Vice President.</u>	<u>Mr. W. Napper.</u>
<u>Vice Presidents:</u>	<u>Mr. W. Foster, Miss M. Dunsmore.</u>
<u>Hon. Secretary :</u>	<u>Mrs. E. Eardley.</u>
<u>Hon. Asst. Secretary;</u>	<u>Mrs. B. Williams.</u>
<u>Hon. Treasurer &amp; Social Sec :</u>	<u>Mrs. E. Wright.</u>
<u>Hon. Auditor:</u>	<u>Alderman A. Ford.</u>
<u>Research Officer :</u>	<u>Mr. A. Ellis.</u>
<u>Publicity Officers:</u>	<u>Mr. &amp; Mrs. A. F. Day.</u>
<u>Lydham Hall Fund Raising Committee :</u>	<u>Mesdames Prebble, M. Smith, B. Otto</u>
<u>Management Committee:</u>	<u>President -Mr. D. Sinclair, Sec.</u> <u>Mrs. Eardley, Treas. Mrs. Wright, &amp;</u> <u>Messrs. Day, Foster, Napper, Ellis,</u> <u>Mesdames Prebble, Gash, (power to add.</u>

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The following extract was taken from the "Church of England Messenger",  
St. David's Church, Forest Road, Arncliffe. July 1974.

On Friday, June 7th. the Mayor of Rockdale, Alderman George Moore officially opened the St. George Potters' Group, Old St. David's Hall. The Group is in full operation there now, and the Guest of Honour was Miss Mollie Douglas, who was one of the sources of inspiration for the formation of the Group. The Group is to be responsible for the upkeep of the interior of the Church, while Council will be looking after the grounds and exterior.

It may be of interest to many to know the hours the Group is there, and Mrs. LLOYD has been good enough to furnish these.

The Pottery classes are 7p.m. - 9p.m Monday to Thursday, and 10a.m.-12.30 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday. For further information you are invited to ring Mrs. R. Hall (529.9976) or Mrs. Lloyd (587.7268)

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ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE, 1974

It is my pleasing duty to present the President's Report at the completion of the thirteenth year of our Society's activities.

During the last twelve months our membership fell by four and we now have 240 members. A feature of our Society has always been the large proportion of members who attend our monthly meetings and in the past year our average attendance was 62.55

At six of these meetings a guest speaker addressed the members, at another four our own members delivered an address, whilst slides and films were shown at the other two.

For the third year a trip was arranged over the Eight-Hour Day week-end - this time to Port Macquarie - and whilst this proved popular, it is disappointing to report that members did not support other outings to the extent we would have liked.

During the year many items were received for display in Lydham Hall, and 1303 people took the opportunity to visit our museum. This was slightly less than the number recorded in the previous twelve months, and it is hoped members will accept the Local Committee's invitation to visit the museum <sup>this</sup> ~~next~~ month.

Many contribute to the smooth-running of the Society - the office Bearers, the Ladies on the Fund Raising Committee and the Supper roster, Miss Otten who works unceasingly at Lydham Hall and Mr. Eardley, who compiles and helps despatch our Bulletin. To all these people I would like to say "thankyou" for it is due to their constant efforts that the St. George Historical Society owes its existence.

Social News.

A Harbour Ferry Cruise For Just \$1.00

Port Jackson and Middle Harbour.

"From the tall city buildings past the Opera House and Fort Denison, to the serenity of Middle Harbour's bushland foreshores. There's lots to see and lots more to remember!"

Ferry leaves No4 Jetty, Circular Quay at 2.30 p.m., returning at approximately 4.45 p.m.

Refreshments are available, or maybe you would prefer to take your own.

An interesting commentary will be given.

Please ring Mrs. Wright, 599.4884, she would like to arrange a party.

Date; Saturday Sept. 21st. 1974 or if you prefer  
Sunday Sept. 22nd. 1974

Meeting place: No 4 Jetty, Circular Quay.

Time: 2 p.m.

Cost: \$1.00 per person.

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Weekend Coach Trip to Canberra, October 5th.6th.7th. 1974

There are still a few seats vacant, if you are interested ring Mrs. Wright, 599.4884, All deposits should be paid at the August meeting, to allow time for booking accommodation. This is important.

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To all of our Members who have been ill, and to those who are still indisposed, The President, Mr. Don Sinclair and Members send best wishes for a quick and lasting recovery, to Mr. Malone, Deepest Sympathy is extended in the loss of his dear Wife.

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THE Highbury Barn Hotel, Forest Road, Arncliffe.

Gifford & Eileen Eardley.

With the construction of that section of the Forest Road, extending between the Princes Highway at Arncliffe and the junction with the older Wollongong Road, in the early 1860s. there came into being the famous Highbury Barn Hotel. This hostelry was located on the western side of the intersection of Barden Street, the actual site now occupied by a Service Station. The name of the hotel was intriguing as there did not appear to be any local feature that warranted the use of such a title, consequently one was at a loss to explain such an appellation. In all probability the local name was based on that of a celebrated pleasure resort, known as the "Highbury Barn", once located near Islington, a suburb a mile or so to the north of London. This place became the venue of the fashionable men of that foggy city, and their ladies, as from about the year 1856, hence the possibility of such a well known and notable name being transferred, for business reasons, to the crest of a wind-swept hill in the then incipient suburb of Arncliffe, in the State of New South Wales.

It would appear that the English counterpart was laid out in a most attractive manner and its amenities included a huge dance floor, said to be unrivalled in Europe at the time. A military band provided the music for dancing. In addition there were club rooms, ball rooms, and many private rooms where peace and quiet could be enjoyed. The surrounding gardens were a source of great beauty, at night the various walks amongst the trees were illuminated, whilst here and there little Arbours were arranged amongst the dense foliage especially for the Sweet-hearts. Other attractions were of a more public nature and catered for foot-ball enthusiasts and their vocal supporters, trap-ball, battledore or as we know it, shuttlecock. There were swings galore, and the up and down movements of "tittle-cum-tortars", or, as the late Thomas Saywell would have it- "see-saws". Although of no particular interest to the management they advertised; "There will be moonlight for parties who prefer walking home." In 1870 the Highbury Barn lost its dancing licence and a year later it went out of existence, the beautiful pleasure grounds coming into the hands of the developers of a housing estate.

It was a far cry from these merry scenes to the quietness of the hill-top at Arncliffe, where the local Highbury Barn catered for the enjoyment of the then few local residents and to a greater extent, for the hot and thirsty wood-carters wending their way to Sydneytown from Gannon's Forest, now known as Hurstville. It may be mentioned that similar resorts to the English Highbury Barn were located at the Sir Joseph Banks Hotel at Botany, however the residents of St George usually repaired to Shady Nook at Brighton-le-Sands, or the Prince of Wales Hotel at Sandringham.



Mrs. Andrews, Haberdashery Store, Rocky Point Road, Rockdale.

Eileen Eardley.

A rather gaunt two-storied shop located in Rocky Point Road, Rockdale, southwards at a little distance from Bay Street intersection and on the eastern side of the road, was occupied for many years at the turn of the present century by the Andrews' family. Mrs. Andrews, a very charming little lady carried on a well known haberdashery business in these premises. The shop front consisted of two small windows, one on the southern side of the entrance doorway, whilst the other, just slightly larger was on the northern side.

Just inside the doorway on the northern side of the shop was a short counter, whilst a series of shelves and small drawers lined the northern wall. Mrs Andrews was always dressed in black, the high-boned collar of her blouse fitted comfortably just beneath her chin, and she invariably wore a little black bonnet with a black ribbon bow on the front. A most gracious little old Lady, and very attentive to her many and varied appreciative customers.

The stock -in-trade covered a wide range of haberdashery, and by virtue of its variety, the store was regarded as a "miniature Anthony Horderns". Amongst the multifarious items, mostly pertaining to female requirements were: needles, hair pins, hat pins, with all manner of ornamental features at one end and very sharp points at the other, veiling to be worn over hats and to cover the face, safety pins, all sizes, tortoise shell side combs to keep the "bun of hair" in place, combs, hair brushes, linen buttons on a fan shaped folding card, bundles of tape, darning wool, (almost unknown today) hooks and eyes on cards, belts of all kinds, buttons, many and varied, buckram for the waist of my lady's skirts, button hooks, bone crochet hooks, (museum pieces today and countless other bits and pieces that escape mention. It certainly was a fascinating little shop so ably managed by this kindly little old Lady, who always had time to inquire as to your health and also that of your family. What wonderful days now beyond re-call.

One remembers the red paper covered boxes of hair-pins, each box with its coloured drawing of Louis Waine's playful kittens, whilst colored glass-headed pins came in dozens wrapped tightly in small circular spirals of green paper, one pin being pushed through the top of the packet to indicate the colour within. One could sit on the slender high cane-seated chairs and gaze in rapture at the brightly coloured ribbons coiled in paper rolls and displayed for your convenience. There were delicate lace blandishments, belts hanging in bundles, and a thousand and one tempting items of personal adornment so dear to the feminine heart.

Shops of this nature are very few and far between today, and pride in giving personal service is almost a thing of the past. The enthusiasm engendered over a visit to Mrs. Andrews shop has departed from our midst, and the purchase of these small items is now a prosaic happening, free from the discourse as to the well being of "little Willie and his mumps."

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