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ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



PRICE 5 c .

ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

1/46 Oatley Avenue,
OATLEY. 2223.
February 1978.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be as follows:

Date: Friday Evening, February 17th, 1978.

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

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: "Collecting Material for Local History", presented by
Miss Jean Arnot, MBE., This address should be most interesting.

Supper Roster: Captain: Mrs. Kalucy, and Mesdames Thompson, Hunt, Troughton,
Grace and McLeod.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. A. Ellis,
President.
Phone 587.1159.

Miss A. Lang,
Secretary.
Phone 57.2608.

Mrs. B. Perkins,
Publicity Officer.
Phone 587.9164

Mrs. E. Wright,
Treas. & Soc. Sec.
Phone 599.4884

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer.
Phone 587.1159

"The smallest deed is better than the grandest intention."

.... Larry Eisenberg.

"ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE".

The following responses have been received following the request for information "On The Street Where You Live".

LYDHAM AVENUE - Rockdale.

- Mrs Edith McMillan.

At 1914 when we built our house, the plan showed "Joseph Street", the original name.

At the request of Mr Frank Marshall, who built his house, now No. 17 Lydham Avenue, prior to our home (No.27) being built (there were no numbers in those days), my husband Duncan McMillan was persuaded that a change of name would be good, as Mr & Mrs Marshall didn't like "Joseph" for the street name.

So Mr Frank Marshall and my husband approached Rockdale Council about 1920, I think, and suggested it be changed to Lydham Avenue, after the first home in the area and permission was granted.

It has always been in Rockdale Municipality and Rockdale Council.

At the time of writing I have lived in the street 63 years.

"FONTAINBLEAU" - Napoleon Street, Sans Souci.

- Mrs June Hyde.

My husband and I live in the above-named house which we purchased eleven years ago, when it was in a very dilapidated and vandalised state. Needless to say it has been a real joy and labour of love to restore.

On a visit to the Mitchell Library, my husband was delighted to find it listed in the Sands Directory 1882 - James Cameron Crawford, Squatter from Redfern. His first wife was French and we have sometimes wondered if she had any influence over street names in Sans Souci.

There is a photograph of Mr Crawford at the Local Primary School, being founder of the Parents and Citizens Association. It is rumoured he owned the land stretching to the water edge, along Riverside Drive to the Sans Souci Hotel. The enormous pine tree

outside our back fence is approximately the same size as those on the shore-line and Hotel.

With the passage of time and possible pressing financial needs, the land has withered to its now minimum size, such that the southern aspect of the house, which was originally the front, facing the riverside, has now become encrouched upon by present day suburbia.

The house is built of sandstock bricks on sand and stucco cement finish. It features solid walls and slate damp course, original tiled front entrance and servants entrance, original well-worn slate steps. Evidence of the original breeze-way between the rear rooms and the front is still present today, but modified possibly a few years after its construction.

A nearby weatherboard house was constructed for Mrs Abott, who was Mr Crawford's daughter.

From the occupants of "Fontainbleau" - Dr & Mrs Trevor Hyde
daughters - Allison, Loraine
& Kathryn.

Any further information received from members will be published in due course.

- Bronwyn Perkins
Publicity Officer.

GILROY - A Rock Amid Change.

- Sydney Morning Herald
- October 22nd 1977.

The following tribute to the late Sir Norman Thomas Cardinal Gilroy is reproduced to record details of his life and career, within the St George District where part of his education was received at the Marist Brothers School, Kogarah, and whose family roots went down deeply within the St. George District.

- Bronwyn Perkins
Publicity Officer.

"I do not see any necessity for changes in the hierarchical structure or in the patterns of (Church) authority," His Eminence Sir Norman Thomas Cardinal Gilroy told the Herald in one of the rare occasions on which he gave an interview to a newspaper.

Cardinal Gilroy, who died yesterday aged 81 was a conservative in the affairs of the Roman Catholic Church, and was the first to admit it. He listened to the clergy and laymen who questioned authority and procedure in the Church, but their voices did not move him. Indeed, one of his last actions in this field was to forward to Rome on behalf of the Australian bishops an expression of complete support for Pope Paul in his determination to retain priestly celibacy.

The firm decisions and unwavering strengths of Cardinal Gilroy were perhaps the most unexpected trait of this enigmatic Prince of the Church.

It was one of the paradoxes of this self-confessed conservative that he was the creator of more ecclesiastic "firsts" than any other Australian churchman. He was the first Sydney-born priest to become the Catholic Archbishop of Sydney. He was the first Australian-born cardinal to receive a knighthood.

His priestly service was marked by such rapid elevation and distinction that it might be imagined to have followed careful grooming and nurturing for the Church from boyhood. Yet it was not until he was 20, had worked as a post-office telegraphist and served as a radio operator on a naval transport ship at Gallipoli, that he decided to enter the Church. He told the story himself in a book published some years ago, entitled "Why I became a Priest".

God, he said, undoubtedly played the major part in any vocation to the priesthood. His mother, "whose faith was the deepest it has ever been my privilege to encounter" had played a positive part by example. His father was a lovable and somewhat irresponsible Irishman who had an "appreciation of social life coupled with neglect of his financial

business." His example was perhaps a negative one, but also influential in the shaping of the Cardinal's personality.

When he finished his schooling with the Kogarah Marist Brothers at the age of 13, Norman Gilroy thought of joining the brothers' order. His mother was not over-enthusiastic and his grandmother opposed the idea so strongly it was dropped. He therefore joined the Post Office and rose from suburban messenger boy to become a qualified telegraphist. He served as a postal assistant at Bourke and in 1914 was transferred to Narrabri as a relieving telegraphist.

When World War 1 began, telegraphist Gilroy was 18. His parents refused to allow him to enlist in the Army. But, at the end of 1914, he joined the Naval Wireless Transport Service and left Sydney in January 1915, as a junior wireless operator on the transport ship Hessen, which carried the Light Horse to Egypt. The Hessen was in the first line of transports at Gallipoli. From his ship Norman Gilroy watched the Anzac landing, on April 25, 1915. The vessel stopped offshore for three weeks and was often shelled. He returned to Australia with the Hessen in September 1915, and was immediately seconded back to the Post Office. He became a clerk in the electrical engineers' depot at Lismore.

His experiences on the transport vessel in the Dardanelles marked a turning-point in the young man's life. He decided, as a result of reflections while overseas, to attend Mass and Holy Communion wherever possible. His devout life at Lismore brought him to the notice of the vicar-general of the diocese, who asked him one day if he had ever thought of becoming a priest. "Yes," he replied, "but I put it out of my mind because of my complete unworthiness and unsuitability."

Evenutally he spoke to the bishop, who was doubtful because Gilroy was now 20 and had spent six years in a wordly career. The bishop suggested a year's leave from the Post Office to see how he fared in a seminary. The future cardinal's determination showed through then. No, he told the bishop; if he was selected as a candidate for the priesthood there would be no turning back. There was not.

He went to St. Columba's College at Springwood, and in September 1919, left for Rome to become a student at the Urban College of Propaganda. He was ordained in Rome on Christmas Eve 1923, obtained his Doctorate of Divinity in 1924, and returned to Australia.

His zeal, scholasticism and administrative ability had already been noted. Until December, 1930, he was secretary to the Apostolic Delegate to Australasia. On return to his Lismore diocese in 1931, he was secretary to the bishop and chancellor of the diocese.

In December 1936, Dr Gilroy was appointed Bishop of Port Augusta. His record-making had begun. He was a young bishop, in charge of a diocese which was one of the biggest in Australia.

His rise in the Church was meteoric. In 1937 he returned to Sydney to take up his appointment as Coadjutor-Bishop to Archbishop Kelly. He relieved the aged Archbishop of much of his administrative burden and became widely known throughout the diocese for his oratory. In 1940 his Grace the Most Rev. N.T. Gilroy, DD, became Sydney's new archbishop. At 44 he was the youngest man appointed archbishop in charge of an Australian see.

Despite his brilliant church career there was some surprise, indeed chagrin, among Catholics when he was appointed a cardinal by the Pope in 1945. He was the first Australian cardinal and he heard the news while listening to the radio with his mother at her home at Brighton-le-Sands.

The new Cardinal Gilroy was popular and highly respected, but he was not the leader of Catholic thought as was the fiery and controversial Archbishop Mannix, of Melbourne. And, of course, he was still comparatively young, while Archbishop Mannix had battled long and hard.

One Catholic public figure was prepared to voice these sentiments openly. The then Minister for Immigration and Information, Mr. A.A. Calwell, criticised Cardinal Gilroy's appointment in public and said it should have gone to Archbishop Mannix. He also criticised the ability of the Apostolic Delegate of the day, Dr Panico. Mr Calwell found no publicly expressed support.

Cardinal Gilroy rarely entered the field of public controversy on political questions. But that did not mean that he did not hold firm views, or that he was not prepared to fight for the interests of the Church. A friend said: "His great concern has always been that nothing which takes place in the political arena should estrange a man from his faith. He has always believed that Catholics are perfectly free in political matters and he would never attempt to influence anyone in their political beliefs."

Whether he was prepared to wield influence or not, Cardinal Gilroy shrewdly assessed the divisive dangers in permitting an unbridled expansion of the Melbourne-based National Civic Council and its forerunner, the Movement, into NSW. His coolness to these groups saved the Labor Party in NSW from the bitter upheaval of its Victorian counterpart. The introduction of State aid to independent schools in NSW also owes a great deal to his quiet efforts.

In the 1969 New Year Honours list he received a unique distinction. The Queen created him a Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE). He was the first cardinal to be knighted.

In 1970, Cardinal Gilroy announced to the 400 priests at the annual synod of the Sydney diocese that he had submitted his resignation to the Pope, in obedience to the Pope's wishes that all archbishops should do so at 75. His 75th birthday came on January 22 the next

year, but his resignation did not become complete until August 20.

He exchanged the comforts of his official residence at The Swifts at Darling Point for a room at a home for retired priests conducted by the Little Sisters of the Poor at Randwick. He lived humbly, taking the old-age pension.

Only rarely did he come out of retirement - to ordain some new priests, to be con-celebrant of an open-air Mass for 6,500 to celebrate the 150th anniversary of St. Mary's Cathedral.

Late in 1971, Cardinal Gilroy suffered a mild heart attack and spent nearly four weeks in Lewisham Private Hospital. He recovered well and in November 1972, was able to visit Rome and have an audience with the Pope. But illness struck again and he entered hospital on New Year's Eve for a prolonged rest.

Catholics, indeed all Australians, will remember Cardinal Gilroy for many things. Some will remember him as a builder of churches and schools, some for his gentleness and genuinely expressed love for his flock. Others will recall his simple but powerful calls for devotion in his regular letters to parishioners. He will always be remembered for presiding firmly over the vast changes in the Australian Church since Vatican II.

Many schoolboys from St. Mary's Cathedral High School will have cause to remember the affection and interest the Cardinal showed them (often remembering Christian names when they met on their unofficial short-cuts through the Presbytery grounds).

Priest of God, Prince of the Church, Knight of the Empire, Norman Thomas Gilroy was a man of devotion and integrity whose suddenly realised brilliance and determination brought him a long way from his humble birth-place at Glebe.

THE HOLIDAY WEEK-END TRIP TO CANBERRA - 1977.

- *Ralph Dunsmore.*

Saturday, 1st October, was a lovely spring morning, a little on the warm side but lovely and bright and sunny.

Forty-five of us assembled at the Rockdale Town Hall in high spirits anticipating a pleasant and interesting trip. 7.30a.m. was the departure time and shortly after 7 O'clock our Coach arrived and our driver was Peter Willing who proved to be an accomplished and popular Captain of the Coach.

We moved off exactly at 7.30 and set out on our first stage to Mittagong. On the journey through Bexley, Peakhurst, East Hills to Liverpool the gardens were gay with azaleas and browallia, flowering shrubs, etc. From Liverpool we followed the Hume Highway and the countryside was nice and green.

At Mittagong we stopped at the park for morning tea but the tulips were not out properly, being a little later than usual this year.

We travelled down the Highway, there being a good deal of traffic, but the cars were travelling much faster than we were and we were not inconvenienced. Arriving at Goulburn we proceeded along the Braidwood Road to "Pelican" Station some six miles out. Here we were met by the owners Mr and Mrs Sykes.

"Pelican" Station was originally a 14,000 acre Grant given to Dr. Gibson in 1826. Later, about the year 1900, 6,000 acres was purchased by the Mitchell family. In 1950 the Sykes family bought 2,300 acres and to-day it is a highly improved and desirable property. It has all been sown to improved pasture and is regularly top-dressed with Superphosphate. In its natural state the carrying capacity would be barely a sheep to 1-1 1/2 acres, now they are carrying about 4 sheep to the acre plus 100 breeding cows, and cropping about 300 acres.

Mr Sykes is a keen and very progressive farmer and is very interested in all the modern and up-to-date ideas. We were first shown Rams of different breeds of sheep that he runs on the place. They were tethered in a circle just outside the Shearing Shed. Mr. Sykes gave a little talk and explained each of the breeds and their use in the production of wool and meat. The breeds comprised:

- MERINO, which gives us the wool for which Australia is famed.
- CORRIEDALE, which is a New Zealand & Australian breed, being a dual purpose sheep.
- POLWORTH, which is another Australian breed.

The Encligh Breeds of Long Wools as they are known, including the LINCOLN, BORDER LEICESTER, CHEVIOT & ROMNEY MARSH, all used for

crossing purposes. Then the Short Wools or Downs Breeds -- SUFFOLK, HAMPSHIRE, SOUTH DOWN, all used for the production of fat lambs. Mr Sykes has a 4-stand Shearing Shed equipped with electric-driven machines. He shorn a lamb to show how shearing is done. After this we were taken to a large building, built of round timber very similar to the old pioneering buildings. It had only been up about four years. Here we enjoyed a lovely barbecued lunch. I think most of us were very impressed with what we had seen.

We now set off to Canberra where we were due to catch the 3.p.m. launch for a trip on Lake Burley Griffin. We were cutting things a bit fine & hurrying along. Just as we were almost to the wharf we were frustrated by roads being blocked and having to make detours, & arrived at 6 minutes past 3 to see the launch out in midstream. We were very disappointed at missing the Lake trip but made up for it. We went to our Motel - the Wellington in the suburb of Forrest where we settled in and had a rest and an early dinner, after which we were taken round the sights of Canberra and finished up on Red Hill to view the lights of the City, returning to the Motel about 9.p.m. after having a very full and pleasant day.

Next morning we left the Motel en route for Braidwood and "Bedervale" Station. The countryside was beautifully green and there were plenty of ewes and lambs in the paddocks. The Canberra district has enjoyed a higher than average rainfall for September, which is reflected in the condition of the pastures. "Bedervale" Homestead is situated on a rise, and has a commanding view of the open country from the front verandah. Upon our arrival we were met by Mr & Mrs Royds, the present owners, also Mr & Mrs Hindmarsh and their two little boys. Jeanette (Noble) as she was known to us is Mrs Wright's niece. She was busy making morning tea, while John was showing us how raw wool was spun on the old fashioned spinning wheel. Jeanette and John are active members of the Braidwood Historical Society, which organised our visit.

Originally, "Bedervale" was purchased by Captain John Coghill in 1826, comprising 5,600 acres for which he paid pounds 1,400. In 1836 John Verge the well-known Architect, was engaged to design the Homestead which took 5 years to build. The materials were taken from the property, the timber being Black Ash for the columns, and Cedar for the interior. The marble for the fireplaces came from Marulan near Goulburn, and the bricks were made on the property. It is a typical colonial style, having a front verandah across its full width, low on the ground with supporting columns. The front door is in the centre and leads into a square vestibule furnished with a Grandfather Clock, Gossip-seat, card table, hallstand, and several fine paintings on the walls. The main room in which was displayed some Rockingham China -- they have the largest collection of Rockingham China in the world, but only a few pieces were displayed. There were several paintings and photos of the Coghills and Maddrells. One of the interesting features was the series of lighting arrangements commencing with candlesticks, kerosene lamps, gas lights (the brackets and fittings are all intact including a beautiful chandelier with balance weights which enable it to be raised or lowered) and now electric light. There were two huge dumb-waiters

upon which were two very large meat dishes with silver covers, and a big fire-place with beautiful marble overmantle.

Leaving the main room we were taken to the bedrooms which were sparsely furnished in period style. One room had a 4 poster cedar bedstead with a canopy, the other rooms had iron bedsteads. All rooms had solid cedar chests of drawers and cedar wardrobes. At the back of the kitchen, store room, butcher's shop on one side, the servant's quarters on the other side, together with the coach house, stables etc., formed a large quadrangle.

The furniture is now the property of the National Trust, but the home and 1200 acres of land belongs to the Royds family who purchased it from the Maddrells in 1973. The Maddrells came into the property in 1853 when Captain Coghill died. Robert Maddrell had married the elder daughter of Captain Coghill in 1848. The Maddrells built up the property to an estate of 33,000 acres and the present owners, Mr & Mrs Royds, have only been there since 1973. The Maddrells had held it for 120 years.

Leaving "Bedervale" we returned to Braidwood and had a look through their Museum, after which we set sail for "Durham Hall", about 8 miles out. Arriving there we were greeted by Mr & Mrs Royce. They had tables set up in the garden and a large barbecue upon which chops, sausages and potatoes were cooking. It was very hot and the sun was shining, but as we sat down to lunch, the clouds came over and we had a very pleasant meal. Most surprisingly there were no flies. After lunch we were shown the original kitchen with a covered way leading to the house. At the back was an old building of slabs which was at one time used as racing stables and jockeys rooms. They had some nice peacocks.

We met Mr Keith Green, a member of the Braidwood Historical Society, who had managed the barbecue, & he came with us to Major's Creek & gave us a little of the history of the district. Major's Creek was once a thriving little gold-mining town with a population of 3000. We were shown St. Stephen's Church of England. It was commenced in 1870 & completed in 1872. Rosconi hand-cut stone of which the Church is built (& later did the stonework on the Sapling Creek Bridge). It is indeed lovely workmanship. The Pews are made of cedar & sassafras, while cedar was used for the Altar Rail, Reading Desk & Tables. The original roof was shingles but these have been replaced by fibro cement tiles. After leaving the Church we called at the old inn which is the social centre for the village folk. We toured the village and returned to the turn-off to "Durham Hall", where we farewelled Mr Green.

We now headed for Captain's Flat. After a few miles we stopped at a road junction where we said good-bye to Jeannette, John & the children. They had accompanied us in their car during the afternoon. Captain's Flat was once a prosperous copper mining town, but now the mines are no longer working. The trains which ran from Goulburn - Bungedore - Captain's Flat have ceased running. It was rather late in the afternoon, and we did not stop but there seems to be quite a fair population left.

Some of the people travel to Canberra each day to work. Timber is the main industry now and we passed one large Timber Mill. We could see the scars on the hillsides left by the mines. After a very full & interesting day we arrived back at our Motel about 6.30p.m. After dinner most of us were content to retire to our rooms.

Monday morning was a glorious sunny one, & we were all bright and early. Our departure time being 8.30a.m., some of us who were lucky enough to have had an early breakfast, managed to go over to see the Serbian Orthodox Church about a quarter of a mile away. It is only a small Church, a replica of a very old Church in a remote village of Serbia. There is a monument of General Mihailovic erected in memory of the fathers and brothers who fought Naziism and Communism & gave up their lives for Freedom & Democracy. An 82 year old man, Mr Karl Matzek, has been painting the walls & ceilings with Murals. He is doing the work just for the love of painting & has been occupied for the past 9 years. He still has another 8 years to complete the whole interior. The pains & materials he is using come from Talens of Holland & will last for many hundreds of years. They are all original paintings designed by Mr Matzek himself. The colours are very vibrant & the work is beautifully done. On the ceiling is depicted the Crucifixion which dominates the Transfiguration and the Resurrection of Lazarus. Along the walls are The Stoning of St. Stephen; Conversion of St. Paul; Martyrdom of St. George in Rome; Crucifixion of St. Peter; St. George; Ikonostas; Servian St. Sava; Buring the body of the Serbian St. Sava; St. Helena Finding Holy Cross in Jerusalem; Pentecost. The whole work and atmosphere was very impressive.

Coming back to the Motel, the Coach was ready & we set off for Braidwood about 8.30a.m. Although we had been to Braidwood the previous day, there was still plenty to interest us. Some of us caught a glimpse of Lake George away over to our left. It was a glorious Spring day. Arriving in Braidwood we stopped at the Park for half-an-hour & were able to get ice creams etc. Leaving Braidwood we travelled down the Clyde Mountain towards Bateman's Bay. We crossed the Clyde River at Nelligen & eventually came to the Pacific Highway. We could see the Bridge over the Clyde River at Bateman's Bay but turned left and headed for Ulladulla. The scenery & the countryside changed dramatically, instead of the open rolling pastures, we were travelling through forests of Spotted Gum, Black Butt, etc. There were several Timber Mills, especially a large one at Benandarah. Further on we passed through several Pine forests. Between Tabourie & Burrill Lakes we had a very good view of Pigeon House Mountain about 15 miles on our left. After crossing the bridge at Burrill Lakes, we soon came to Ulladulla where we had lunch.

Milton was the next town of any importance and it is the centre of a rich dairy industry. Milton has one of the highest rainfalls of any N.S.W. town. The surrounding countryside was rather pretty, hilly, but covered with rich pastures thicker and much more rank in

growth than those we saw inland, typical dairy country. Between here and Nowra we passed several Timber Mills. Crossing the Shoalhaven River at Nowra, we turned right, off the Pacific Highway, past Bomaderry, the back of Berry, seeing "Coolangatta" the original home of Alexander Berry. We came back on to the Pacific Highway at Omega Railway Station. Mrs Wright thought we might make a Saturday trip to see Berry and "Coolangatta" some time during the Summer. Instead of following the Pacific Highway over Mt. Ousley at Wollongong, we took the lower Coast Road through Bulli, Coalcliff, Stanwell Park and avoided the heavy traffic.

By this time it was dark and we then had a really good sing-song led by our driver, Peter Willing, and accompanied by Mr Kell on his mouthorgan. Climbing the steep hill from Stanwell Park we could look back on the lights of Stanwell Park, Coalcliff and Bulli and in the distance, Wollongong. It made a lovely picture. It was quite a warm evening and the singing was much enjoyed. We arrived back at Rockdale at 7.30a.m. tired, but feeling that we had had a very enjoyable week-end, and we all extend our thanks to Mrs Wright for her efforts in organizing it.

* * * * *

Many of our Members are on the sick list. We are sorry to hear this, and trust that you will all be well again soon.

Books numbered 1 to 6 should soon be available again at a reasonable price.

Also available (by Author the late Gifford Eardley)

Book 7. "The Early History/Tempe & The Black Creek Valley".

Contact Asst. Secretary 'Phone 59.8078.

OR Miss Otten 'Phone 59.4259 (after 8 p.m.)

Society Badges are available - \$1.00 each. (See Mrs. Wright).

Miss Otten, Curator of 'Lydham Hall', is in need of Ladies and/or Gentlemen to assist with the weekend roster. Visitors come from far and wide to see this lovely old Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate inspections. Ring Miss Otten, Phone 59.4259, your call will be appreciated.

There is now a large glass display case upstairs in Lydham Hall. At present it contains a few souvenirs from the various wars. Can you help to enlarge this display by exhibiting some of the war relics which you might have? These will be greatly appreciated, and good care taken of any souvenirs which you might care to loan or perhaps donate. Ring Miss Otten 59.4259.

NOTE TO MEMBERS.

Please advise Secretary (phone 57.2608 - after 6 p.m.) of any change of address - this will save disappointment when your Bulletin is posted to you.