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ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



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ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,
Arncliffe. 2205.
February 1979.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Friday Evening, February 16th, 1979, at 8.00 p.m.
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.
Business: General.

Notice of Motion. "That the tour to Tamworth - Armidale
be extended to four days or a close alternative be chosen."

M. Callister.

Syllabus Item: Alderman Ron Rathbone will share with us some experiences
gained on his very recent tour of Israel & Iceland, illustrated
with colour slides.

This will be a delightful evening, and more so as few have had
the opportunity of visiting these countries.

Supper Roster: Miss L. White, Captain. Misses G. Frost, F. Lambert and
Mrs. D. Murray.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. A. Ellis,
President.
Phone 587.1159

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

Mrs. B. Perkins,
Publicity Officer.
Phone 587.9164

Mrs. E. Eardley,
Sec. & Bulletin Editor.
Phone 59.8078

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer.
Phone 587.1159

'A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step.'

.... Chinese Proverb.

Many of our Members have been and still are ill. Our President, Mr. Arthur Ellis, is in hospital. We are sorry to hear this and hope you will be well again soon. Also, Mrs McMillan, we understand, is not so well at this time. Our best wishes go to her.

It is with regret that we record the death of Mr. Don Gow, late of Hurstville, and Mrs. May Hook, late of Carlton, two of our very early and most regular members until a long illness prevented their attendance at the meetings.

To Mrs. Gow and Family, and the Family of the late Mrs. May Hook, the President and Members extend their deep sympathy.

Miss Otton, 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 hold Home, and your presence would greatly facilitate the Inspections. Ring Miss Otton, 'phone 59.4259. Your call will be appreciated.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

The St. George Historical Society is pleased to announce that the following books, written and illustrated by the late Gifford H. Eardley, for the Society, have been re-printed and are now available.

Price: \$1.00 per copy. (Postage extra)

- No.1. "The Wolli Creek Valley"
- No.2. "Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"
- No.3. "Saywells Tramway. Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach."
- No.4. "Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway"
- No.5. "Our Heritage in Stone"
- No.6. "All Stations to Como"
- No.7. "Tempe and the Black Creek Valley" is also available. (Limited stocks only.)

For your copy of the above books, please contact one of the following:

- Mrs. E. Wright - Phone 599.4884
- Miss B. Otton - Phone 59.4259 (after 8 p.m.)
- Mrs. E. Eardley (Secretary). Phone 59.8078.
- Mr. A. Ellis - Phone 587.1159

If you have any items of Historical interest will you give them to Mrs. Eardley for publication in the Monthly Bulletin. Your news could awaken memories for others.

Social.

Mrs. Wright, Social Secretary, is organising for your pleasure, a three day tour to Tamworth - Armidale, for the long weekend, September 29th, 30th and October 1st, 1979, cost \$75.00. Deposit of \$10 secures your seat for the tour. For details ring Mrs. Wright, 599.4884. Be early to avoid disappointment.

OUR ANNUAL OCTOBER WEEK-END TRIP - 1978.

- *Ralph Dunsmore*

Although it rained heavily during the night and was raining at 6.30a.m. on Saturday morning, our party of 49 assembled at Rockdale, all in high spirits, anticipating a pleasurable trip. Our Coach, a modern one belonging to the V.I.P Tours of Hurstville, arrived at 7.15, and our Driver, Jim Garvey, stowed our luggage whilst we took our seats and we were away promptly at 7.30a.m.

The rain had stopped and although overcast it was a pleasant morning. We travelled via Strathfield to Top Ryde, Eastwood, Epping, Beecroft, Pennant Hills, out onto the Pacific Highway at Wahroonga and headed North. We crossed the Hawkesbury River at Brooklyn, on past Mt. White, Calga to Peats Ridge where we stopped for morning tea. Leaving Peats Ridge we proceeded to Wyong where we met with a lot of traffic and were held up for quite a while. At Doyalson we turned left and made our way via Morisset avoiding the City of Newcastle.

It started to rain heavily and the roads were all awash. We passed a group of golfers with their umbrellas up splashing their way along the fairway. We saw the Eraring Power Station on our left and Coach Captain Jim pointed out the Grahamstown water supply where he said they were pumping from the sands. Coming back to the Pacific Highway near the Sandgate Cemetery we crossed the Hunter River at Hexham, on through Raymond Terrace. Passing the turn off to Nelsons' Bay we took the turn to Swan Bay where we had lunch at Moffat's Oyster Barn. This is really a large galvanised iron shed in which Mr Moffat has established a restaurant and wine bar. Mrs Moffat gave us a talk on the culture of oysters and had on display racks with oysters at various stages of growth. It takes from 3 1/2 - 4 years for the oysters to mature. Swan Bay runs into Salamander Bay which is part of Port Stephens. The water here is rather shallow and is ideal for the cultivation of oysters, as the spawn which is gathered during January - March is not washed out to sea as it is in some of our rivers. Port Stephens is divided into two areas, the Salamander Bay where the oysters are grown, and the other area where the water does flow out to sea. The spawn in Salamander Bay is washed towards the sea, but upon reaching the currents of the second portion, it is brought back by the tides before it is lost.

The rain had ceased by this time and half our party enjoyed a fish and oyster lunch while the others were taken on a trip around the oyster farms in a very nice launch. When they returned, the second half of the party boarded the launch. There were acres and acres of oyster beds or racks. During their early stages of growth the racks are placed in tiers of three about eight inches

apart under the water. We saw many trays of mature oysters laid out in long rows well above the water. Mr. Moffatt has a fairly large farm and employs 15 people, but his neighbour has the largest farm in the State and employs 90 hands. It was all very interesting, but I don't think any of us would be keen to work on an oyster farm.

Upon boarding the Coach it started to rain again, but we were lucky to have had our lunch and boat trip in fine weather.

Back onto the Highway again, still heading North we passed through the little township of Bulahdelah situated on the Myall River. It has a population of about 1000, and has a thriving timber industry, also a lot of dairying is carried on. Leaving the open dairy and grazing country the road started to rise and we went through several patches of the thick Rain Forest over O'Sullivan's Gap through the little village of Wootton. We were back into the dairy and timber country and passed the turn-off to Nahiatic, another small township relying on dairying and timber for a living. Soon we were back into the hilly forest country and continued our way to Taree.

Taree has a population of over 11,000 and is situated on the Manning River. It is a prosperous town and produces primary products, timber, dairy products, fish, vegetables, millet and corn. The residential and industrial area extends to Cundletown a few miles North. We now came to the very rich grazing dairying country where a good deal of lucerne, maize and vegetables are grown, extending to John's River. From here on we passed through hilly forest country to Port Macquarie, where we arrived at 6.00p.m. and settled in at the Macquarie Motel.

After a very nice dinner most of us went to the Port Macquarie Museum where we met Mr & Mrs Anderson who showed us through. They really have a Museum to be proud of. They have a very strong and active Historical Society and since we were here about five years ago they have made some wonderful improvements. Mr Anderson said they have just spent \$30,000 having the back portion of the building altered giving them a large auditorium carpeted and fitted with projectors and screens, also a large Office Room which they call the Archives. This is carpeted and fitted with 4 or 5 office tables with typewriters and other office equipment. The walls are lined with steel shelves where books of reference and records are kept. There is also a Microfilm Viewer with which they can show lists of convicts and their particulars and other items gathered from the Mitchell Library. Apart from early relics and items of interest they have a model of Trial Bay Jail and one of Major Innes's home, carved from blocks of Beechwood by a Mr. Little. The ladies of our party were very interested in the collection of period clothing and fancy work and the work being done by the local ladies in repairing and restoring these items. We returned to our motel at 10.0 o'clock after having had a full and pleasant day.

Port Macquarie is a large town situated on the Hastings River, it has a population of 15,000 and a large tourist and holiday trade. The district produces timber, tropical fruits, beef, dairy products, vegetables, fish etc. and there is a good deal of rutile and red oxide mining. Port Macquarie being a convict settlement has a lot of history which has been reported in earlier bulletins.

The motel was very comfortable and our breakfast was delivered to our rooms in good time on Sunday morning. It was a nice morning after rain during the night. We boarded the coach about 9.00a.m. and set out for Trial Bay Jail near South West Rocks. Reaching the Pacific Highway we turned right, travelling North passing through the village of Telegraph Point. It was forest country with tall Blackbutt, blue gums, ironbark with some spotted gums etc. Upon reaching Kempsey we turned right before crossing the bridge into the town and followed the Macleay River down to Trial Bay. The Macleay River is a large, broad river and we followed along its banks most of the way. The country was open grazing and dairy land and there were quite a number of poplar plantations. These are grown for the timber which is used in the making of matches. There were a number of old and derelict homesteads, even on the better types of country and I believe this is because the owners have gone out of farming and dairying and live in the towns and villages, utilising their land for grazing.

The Jail is situated at a little village of Arkoona and is built on a headland known as Lagers Point overlooking the sea and beautiful beaches. The sun was shining and the cameras were clicking.

The reasons for building the jail were two-fold - the seas at this part of the coast are very rough and dangerous during stormy weather and there had been a number of ships wrecked with a good deal of loss of life. It had been suggested that a breakwater built from Lagers Point would make a refuge for ships in rough weather.

Mr. Maclean, Comptroller General of Prisons and Mr. Edward Moriarty conceived the idea that a breakwater could be built with prison labour. In 1877 a contract was let to Mr. D. Macquarie of pounds 2,500.0.0 to build the jail and work commenced that year.

The first wing of the jail was completed in 1886 and the first prisoners to occupy the jail were those that had received sentences of hard labour.

Mr. Maclean's idea was to make the jail one that would be conducive to helping the men rehabilitate themselves. By 1889 all the prisoners were "Licence Holders" -- that is men of good behaviour and had almost completed their sentences elsewhere. In order to help rehabilitate them they were paid to work on the breakwater and were given almost semi-freedom. The work on the breakwater suffered several times from storm damage and setbacks, and the cost of maintaining the jail was excessive. The jail closed in 1903,

and the breakwater was never completed. Later, during the first World War it was used as an internment camp 1915-1917. The walls and buildings were made of granite, quarried nearby.

Leaving the jail we were taken to the village of South West Rocks where we had lunch at the Country Club. After lunch we returned to Kempsey, driving along the opposite side of the river.

Kempsey is a large town situated on the Macleay River and is the busy business centre for a very rich and thriving farming and timber district. We drove around the town, out to West Kempsey where we had some splendid views looking down on the river, across the rich farmlands to the mountains in the distance.

Arriving back at Port Macquarie some of the party left the coach to wander through the historic cemetery and to visit St. Thomas's Church and see the town. Those of us remaining in the coach were taken for a drive along the Pacific Drive to Laurieton. It was a delightful drive along the coast line, the sun was shining, the sea calm, clear and a deep blue and the beaches looked lovely. We passed the Golf course, through Lake Cathie and Bonnie Hills where there are a lot of new modern homes and homes being built, also at North Haven.

Laurieton is a pretty little village, mainly older type of cottages situated at the mouth of the Camden Haven River. We returned to Port Macquarie, arriving back at the motel a little after 5.00p.m. After dinner some of us went visiting, and others walked round the town.

Monday morning was really beautiful the sun shining, the air was clear with just a touch of Summer. Breakfast was served promptly and we were all ready and waiting when the coach arrived. While waiting for the coach we were entertained by the Water Hens in the big park at the back of the motel. They looked very pretty dotted across the green grass chasing food. They were black in colour with yellow legs, red combs and beautifully dark royal blue shoulders with white under their tails. (Margaret said they were wearing white underpants). They made a pretty picture.

We set out for Wauchope and Timber Town. It was an interesting drive through the heavy timber country. Timber is the mainstay of Wauchope, together with dairying and cattle. It is a nice little town on the main Northern railway line and on the Hastings River.

Timber Town is an enterprise owned by the Hastings Shire Council and run by a management committee for the purpose of displaying the conditions as they were in the 1880's/ It comprises 87 acres of bushland set in the Broken Bago State Forest a few miles from Wauchope. It is a replica of a complete village.

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Passing through the main building comprised of restaurant, souvenir shop and offices one comes to Timber Town railway station. The station is typical of most railway stations, having a high platform, ticket office, waiting rooms, goods office etc., all nicely painted in the usual stone colours. It is approached by a fairly steep ramp backed by an old-fashioned picket fence. There is a neat weather-board cottage with a verandah all round for the Station Master. The train has three carriages and is drawn by a steam engine on a narrow gauge track through dense forest for a distance of 1 1/2 miles. It really circles the whole project.

Boarding the train, the whistle blew and off we set, passing a cottage and dairy, several primitive bark huts, past a sports ground and oval, to the bullock yard where a team of mostly red bullocks were waiting to be yoked up. We passed a railway siding which was just typical. We could see the village through the trees, the church and school. Passing a heavily timbered stretch we came to Broken Bago station. Here we alighted and went across to watch a man splitting shingles. He told us they have an order for 60,000 shingles to be used in the re-roofing of the old Mint Building in Sydney. He was cutting them from Forest Oak, which is a light, strong, straight-grained timber that will last for years and years. The shingles are 3 inches wide, 15 inches long and about 1/4 inch thick. The logs are 15-18 inches in diameter and are cut into 15 inch lengths. These are split into billets. The cutter then takes the billets to a bench where he splits off the shingles, using a froe and a maul. The froe has a blade about 9-10 inches long, about 2 1/2 inches wide and is attached at right angles to a fairly long handle. It is used like a chisel, being placed across the timber and is struck by the maul, which is like a heavy rolling pin with a handle at one end. Leaving the shingle cutter we passed the charcoal burners camp, we could see the sleeper cutter's camp through the trees. The train now crossed a trestle bridge about 420 feet long across a gully, passing the water-supply (a dam) and back to Timber Town Station, where a cup of tea and scones awaited us. It was very interesting and I think most of us would have liked to have been able to have spent more time here. They have a Saw Mill under construction and have just purchased a steam engine from the Armidale district which is being overhauled, they hope to have it in production at the end of the year.

Leaving Timber Town we set off for Taree on our return journey. It was very pleasant driving through the heavy timber country. Soon after passing Taree we turned off the Pacific Highway and headed for the Twin Towns of Tuncurry and Foster. We had lunch at Foster Golf Club. After lunch when everyone was in the coach, Bob Lee made a little speech on our behalf thanking Mrs Wright for organising our trip, also Jim our coach captain for the manner in which he conducted our tour. He presented each with a little token from us showing our appreciation of their efforts.

Leaving Foster we followed Lakes Way skirting the edge of Wallis Lake. Stopping at Tiona we visited Green Cathedral. This was a little open air church set in a dense clump of Cabbage Tree Palms on the edge of Wallis Lake. The pews, 14 on each side, were logs which would seat about 7 or 8 persons; the altar table was made of stones, the lectern was a round piece of timber cut from a log and mounted on a post in the ground. The choir seats on either side also made of logs and behind the altar table, forming a natural window was a curved limb of a tree. The Church was dedicated for private and public worship. There were two wooden plaques, one a dedication and the other a rather long prayer. It was really unique and beautiful sitting in the pews looking past the altar table, through the natural window on to the lake.

Leaving the Church we wound our way past Smith's Lake, Bungwahl, Myall Lake, coming back to the Pacific Highway near Bullahdelah. The traffic was beginning to get heavy. We stopped at Karuah for petrol and also for refreshments for ourselves. From now on the traffic got thicker and we had a very slow trip home. Jim had a good supply of cassettes of old-time music which was enjoyed by all.

Arriving at Rockdale about 10.30p.m. all were cheerful and satisfied that we had had a very pleasant week-end, and are looking forward to another trip next year.

NOSTALGIC MEMORIES

- Presented by Mr Don Sinclair
at the December 1978 meeting.

The following articles were published in December 1967 and December 1969 and written by the late Gifford Eardley.

THE STREET TRADERS OF OLD SYDNEY TOWN.

Near the entrance to the old Redfern Railway Station in the vicinity of Devonshire Street, Sydney, was an establishment known to all and sundry as Dick's, whose surname was withheld for reasons that are now obscure. Dick's covered stall was mounted on four wheels from which he dispensed saveloys, peas and meat pies, all of which were served on a plate and eaten with the spoon he thoughtfully provided. A serving usually cost six-pence which sum covered the supply of Worcestershire sauce, vinegar (for the peas) and mustard. These dainty comestibles were in great demand and could be taken with coffee at a slightly extra charge.

In the same line of business another gentleman traversed the streets of Redfern advertising his wares in a loud voice to attract custom - "Ot saveloys, one a penny, two fer tuppence. Liddies, come an buy". Large sales were made as meals of this type were so "easy to chuck together". The "saveloy vehicle", on four wheels to give the requisite steadiness essential for the stability of the cooking apparatus, was drawn by an aged and tired horse. A huge brass rimmed lamp, mounted above the front end of the wagon, shed a dim light ahead and, in the hours of darkness, gave the impression that a steam tram motor had wandered off the accepted tracks and was making its way slowly through the back streets of Chippendale.

Another street trader was the muffin man who retailed crumpets, a winter indigestible well known even to this day, and muffins. The latter were flattish circular cakes which the purveyor carried in a peculiarly shaped basket skillfully balanced on his head. A large hand bell was lustily rung to denote his presence.

Then there was a Chinese fruit and vegetable man who trotted around the streets with his wares contained within two semi-circular baskets dangling from the outer ends of a nicely tapered shoulder yoke. The leading basket was devoted to fruit and was thus under the watchful eye of "Ah Yum", whilst the rear basket contained vegetables and greens, of no particular interest to small boys with thieving

tendencies but of great interest to horses. The weight of these baskets was really beyond the capacity of a human but it is understood that the trotting movement assisted in alleviating the load.

Late at night there was always a procession of produce carts in the main streets of Sydney heading towards the City Vegetable Markets. The plodding horses knew the route intimately and needed no guidance from their masters who often reclined fast asleep among the cabbages, Particularly wicked school boys have been known to carefully gather the reins and turn the horses around so that the sleeping Chinaman arrived back at the market garden gate. The reception from his compatriots can well be imagined.

Small hand-carts, tastefully painted white for hygienic reasons and bound with polished strips of brass, were used to convey small tubs of "Home-made" ice cream through the streets. This delicacy was usually "Plastered" between two slender biscuit wafers which came in tins and were in some way, to us kids, associated with a rosella. Connoisseurs of the day could, for the expenditure of a penny, have a tiny glass tumbler half filled with raspberry jelly and topped with ice-cream. Spoons were provided by the proprietor and kept, when not in use, in a white enamelled billy which contained a milky solution of water, a colouration brought about by the undigested leavings of earlier customers. "Ice-cream and jelly - good for the belly".

Magnates of the ice-cream business paraded the streets in small two wheeled carts in which they stood at the rear to dispense this delicacy over the back board thus keeping their customers away from the danger of getting a kick from the horse. Overhead was a canopy supported at each of the four corners by a turned spindly post, the roof edges being decorated by a fringe of tassels which gave an air of gaiety to the white painted vehicle. In some instances a "spring Hung" bell, which jangled to the movement of the horse, was used to attract customers. Other purveyors tootled on bugles in a most unmilitary fashion, but what did this matter to those with a penny to spend?

Clothes props, cut from lengthy slender saplings, suitably forked at one end, were peddled around the back streets, contained in long-shafted two-wheeled gigs and retailed at ninepence each. The gigs were of the type used for breaking in refractory horses and so designed to keep the driver well clear of a madly kicking animal. However, the spiritless nags usually associated with the business were more occupied in trying to keep their four feet on the ground, as the load,

plus the weight of the retailer at the back, tended to give a see-sawing motion, the pair of wobbly wheels acting as a fulcrum.

"Wild Rabbo" was another cry heard in the land as the small gig with its scrawny hired horse went at whipped speed through the dusty streets. One person managed the horse, whilst another attended to the wares, which were usually tied in pairs by the back legs and draped around the sides of the cart. The fur of the rabbit assisted in keeping the mud and street grime off the delectable carcasses which it still covered as of yore. Sixpence each was the charge at one period and the skinning was expertly carried out in the presence of the housewife at the time of sale. Alley cats were all aware of this profession, and gathered round the cart seeking such inner tit-bits that the carity of the skinner cared to hand out.

The fishermen or rather fish purveyors, carried their purchases around from door to door in fern-lined arm baskets suitably covered against flies by a piece of white cloth. Some cleaned the fish on your doorstep, a procedure of great personal interest to members of the smaller feline tribes. Perhaps the best spot to take fish on the whole coast line of New South Wales was on tope of the redfern (then known as Eveleigh) Railway Bridge where sizable red-bream could sometimes be obtained as "six fer a bob".

Chinese fruit merchants, when finance permitted, drove round in two-wheeled cart fitted with open sided canvas roofs. Below the axle-tree it was the custom to suspend a piece of jute sacking held apart at the four corners by cords attached to the nearest component that was handy. This primitive "carry-all" contained bags of onions and potatoes, essential commodities but of no great value. The horses were well kept, and knew as much about the round as their celestial masters and were even prepared to take then home undirected if the said masters thought a little sleep was necessary for their well-being.

A certain Mr. Newton sold cheap-jack novelties from a four-wheeled wagon set up at the western end of the old Central Arcade in George Street, Sydney, just north of Goulburn Street. This stall was extremely popular as the patter and showmanship were of the highest order. The better to serve patrons and display the good value of the gee-gaws offered, Mr. Newton arranged two lengthy duck boards, supported at shoulder height on trestles, which radiated out from the side of the wagon nearest the crowd. The principal assistants, George and Fred, each occupied one board, whilst sales were in progress and after Mr. Newton had explained the virtues and the supreme quality of the article, brought them forward for personal approval. Combs

of various designs for men or for women were in great demand, also hair brushes and a thousand and one nick-nacks dear to the heart of the well-dressed larrikin. "Gold" watches changed hands at a sovereign each, a huge sum in those far-off days. Another specialty was penknives, which incorporated tweezers, finger-nail paring and cleaning devices, buttonhook and last but not least, a cork-screw; all these items were in addition to an assortment of blades, sometimes eight in number, none of which were of the slightest use from a cutting point of view. When business lapsed, Mr. Newton introduced a dwarf named Billy, who sang ballads, unaccompanied, to the crowd in a loud soprano voice. His repertoire included such favourites as "Ben Bolt", "Alice, Where art thou", "Sweet Genevieve", amongst others, but his rendering of the pathetic "Only a violet plucked from my mother's grave", brought a soft tear to many eyes and must have boosted the sale of handkerchiefs somewhat. The financial side of the business was in the capable hands of Mrs. Newton, a well dressed and tightly corseted woman, rather on the plump side, the cynosure of all male eyes, who carefully collected the money in metal buckets, two or three overflowing buckets marked the conclusion of a successful night.

In the late eighties, a "flash" dentist, who, for one shilling, would whip out any offending molar, operated in the streets around the Haymarket. Anaesthetics were a missing refinement and the dentist used his pincers dexterously on his patient who was seated in a special chair near the front of the cart. Luckily the horses were of a steady type and not worried by the screams of the patients or the presence of the footpath crowds of looker-on. The dentist was a man of resource and like all dentists had one eye on the need for decorum in the profession. Not so much to alleviate the sufferings of the tormented but in an attempt to drown his cries (deemed bad for business), he engaged a four piece brass band, who, seated in comfort at the rear of the vehicle, played suitable music calculated to exceed in tonal values the screams of the afflicted.

THE CULT OF THE GINGER-BREAD RABBIT.

Mention has been made from time to time in our Society's Bulletin of the old-fashioned comestible of childhood days known as ginger-bread rabbits, which were purchased for a penny at each and every lolly shop catering for the sweet tastes of the younger group of school children. It is of interest to learn that edible dolls, and various animal shapes of a thin cut-out nature, can be traced back to early pagan days when they were used as a cheap substitute for the human or animal sacrifices associated with religious ceremonial altars. In Christian times the idea was perpetuated in the form of the more popular saints of the calendar and no doubt, to an ignorant people, there was considerable merit to be gained in the act of devouring, in shape at least, the image of some saintly person. The pretty town of Dinant, located on the Neuse River in Belgium, has long been famous for the quality of its ginger-bread products and still caters for the needs, in this direction, of vast numbers of tourists exploring the picturesque Ardenne region. The local bakers and ginger-bread makers mix their wares with an ancient and also a modern touch, as in the latter group plastic-wrapped steam locomotives and rather heavy looking aeroplanes can be purchased.

It is understood that the basic ingredients of ginger-bread are formed into a mixture of flour, sugar, honey (or molasses) and ginger, the latter substance being obtained by scraping the root of a pungent aromatic plant which flourishes in the East Indies. In Europe generally the paste was moulded into shape, before baking, by spreading the mixture inside a cut-out shape made of wood, levelling the top surface with a knife, and adding raisins too for the eyes of the figure represented. A gilt decorative colouring material was often added to the moulded shapes to increase their eye appeal, and should the gilt design become shop-worn, or the figure broken, they lost a great deal of their purchase value, a circumstance which has given rise to the expression, not so much in use now-a-days, "to take the gilt off the ginger-bread".

The word ginger-bread is often used, in another sense, in order to denote the elaborate flat designs associated with cast-iron lace, so beloved by the building fraternity of the latter part of the last, and the beginning of the present Century, and of which excellent examples exist in Arncliffe and Bexley in particular. The name is also applied to similar designs executed in fret-work style in wood as applied to furniture or house embellishment.

THE ORGAN GRINDER.

The organ grinder was a common sight on weekdays in the business centre of both Rockdale and Kogarah prior to the advent of the first world war. It is surmised that the musical repertoire was transferred to the various race meetings, or at least to the approach of the race course, on Saturdays, where punters proved an easy mark for a small contribution before the bookmakers had their turn. A familiar figure in the hurdy-gurdy business relative to St. George district was a dark visaged man, about fifty years of age, who possessed amongst other characteristics, the distinction of having a wooden peg leg, after the manner of Long John Silver, which was attached below the knee by means of an assortment of leather straps.

In his hey-day this performer first made a round of the more prosperous shops of Rockdale, including both the Grand and the Royal hotels, before proceeding to Kogarah, via Ricky Point Road and Regent Street, for the afternoon performance. His lilting tunes, about eight in number, always included the fascinating "Blue Danube", and always drew a fascinated concourse of boys and girls, from whom he derived little if any profit. He canvassed the shops with his hat in his hand and the proprietor's contribution warranted at least one tune being played outside the entrance doorway. Passers by placed their pennies, or the occasional three-pence, in a second hat thoughtfully placed on top of the organ.

The barrel-organ was mounted on a small handcart that was provided with a pair of wooden-spoked wheels and a pair of stocky handle bars by which it could easily be pushed along. In a stationary position a fixed leg, joined to the front of the vehicle, was brought into use, this arrangement necessitated the handcart to be pushed along with the front end tilted well up above ground level. Music was generated, the only word suitable, by turning a handle at the side of the instrument. This in turn revolved a cylinder fitted with pins which, at the appropriate moment, opened valves and admitted compressed air, from a mechanically driven bellow device, to the various organ pipes ranged in straight alignment along the outer side of the containing box. It is understood that the barrel-organ was initially developed in Holland and elaborate models of giant size and adornment are still one of the features of street interest in the wonderful city of Amsterdam.

A similar but smaller instrument, supported on a fixed stick extension when being played, was carried from place to place by means of shoulder straps strung over the person of a tall blind man, who

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was led from pitch to pitch by a little girl, presumably his daughter. There was evidently, some degree of collusion between the two street entertainers mentioned as they were never seen in the same suburb at one and the same time. Their music was merry, melodious, and delightful, and one wishes that it could be reintroduced to lighten the over earnest hustle and bustle of modern day shopping.
