



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,
ARNCLIFFE, 2205

May, 1979.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:-

- Date: Friday evening, May 18th, 1979, at 8.00 p.m.
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.
Business: General.
Syllabus Item: Mr. Alan Roberts, Tutor in History, Macquarie University;
Ph. D. Graduand, University of Sydney, will give an illustrated
talk on: "Development of Town Planning in Sydney, 1870-1914.
This should be most interesting, especially as we compare with
Sydney today.
- Supper Roster: Mrs. Kalucy, Captain, with Mesdames Grace, Troughton,
Thompson & Hunt.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. A. Ellis,
President.
Phone 587.1159

Mrs. B. Perkins,
Publicity Officer.
Phone 587.9164

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

Mrs. E. Eardley,
Hon. Secretary &
Bulletin Editor.
Phone 59.8078

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer.
Phone 587.1159

Appreciation is the lubricant of life.

George Horton Bath.

Many of our Members have been and still are ill. We are sorry to hear this and hope you will be well again soon.

It is with regret that we record the death of Mr. J. Malone, late of Bexley, and Mrs. M. Waddington, late of Bexley, two of our very early and most regular members.

To the Family of the late Mr. Malone and the Family of the late Mrs. Waddington, 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 old 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

The following social outings have been arranged by Mrs. Wright for your pleasure:

Date - A Coach Trip to Brooklyn, Motor Launch to Patonga, then Coach to Ettalong Beach for lunch, which you may care to supply yourself, or perhaps dine at the local R.S.L. Club.

Time: 9 a.m. Sharp, meeting place as above.

Cost: \$4.50 per person. Launch trip included in cost.

* * * * *

October Long Weekend. Mrs. Wright, Social Secretary, has organised 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 May Meeting please. For details ring Mrs. Wright, 599.4884 (81 Watkin St., Bexley).
Waiting List Only.

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LYDHAM HALL LOCAL COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28TH FEBRUARY, 1979.

Once again, we are able to report a very successful year's activities at Lydham Hall.

The year opened with some excellent publicity in the journal of the St. George League's Club which resulted in a steady flow of visitors over the next three months. In June, there was another excellent article in The Sun Newspaper. Despite petrol strikes and a period of prolonged hot weather the flow of visitors was maintained. The net result was a record 2,735 people visited Lydham Hall in 1978 an increase of nearly 400 over the previous year and a record for any year since the building was opened to the public in 1971. It is interesting to record these attendances.

1971	1,015	1974	1,970	1977	2,318
1972	1,493	1975	2,595	1978	2,735
1973	1,303	1976	2,298		

Not only has there been a constant flow of visitors but also a regular flow of donations of historical and local interest - so much so that exhibiting them has become a very real problem.

In order to make more space available we are in the process of converting the storeroom into another exhibition room and one of our main projects for the coming year will be the provision of a number of full length show cases to enable the cluttered display we have at present to be better exhibited; the extensive collection of clothing to be displayed and to make room for the steady flow of additional items we receive almost every month.

The highlight of the past year, of course, has been the completion of the caretaker's kitchen and bathroom as a result of the receipt of a Government Unemployment Grant which was subsidised by Rockdale Council. Not only has this provided the Curator, Miss Otton, with reasonable facilities for the first time since she took over her role in October 1974, but it has enabled the completion of the restoration of the outside of the building by removal of the unsightly enclosed section of the back verandah. Further, it has enabled us to provide a full sized exhibition kitchen which is now possibly the most interesting and attractive room in the house.

These alterations were officially opened by the Mayor on Monday, 11th December, 1978.

Once the new display area is completed the next task will be the proper landscaping of the garden at the rear of the building to complement the lovely view of Botany Bay and it is hoped that plans for this will be available in the near future.

It is a source of particular gratification to Miss Otton and myself to look back over the last 8 years with their many traumas and much hard work to see Lydham Hall going from strength to strength.

Much of the reason for this has been the fact that we have been able to maintain public interest in the project, that we have had such a dedicated and outstanding Curator who spares no effort to keep the house in immaculate condition, that we have been supported by a small but very loyal band of ladies and because of the constant support we have received from the Council. I would like to conclude this report by placing on record the Lydham Hall Local Committee's appreciation to the late Mr. Arthur Day who, with Mrs. Day, has been one of our most devoted helpers. His death in November last year leaves a gap that will be very hard to fill.

Alderman R. W. Rathbone.
Hon. Secretary.
Lydham Hall Local Committee.
8th March, 1979.

KOGARAH PUBLIC SCHOOL

An Historical Account - *J.J.Fletcher*
Division of Planning
N.S.W. Dept. of Education
- July 1970.

Kogarah in the late 1860's was a small, struggling community, isolated from the main centre of population in Sydney by poor roads, thick bush and the barrier posed by Cook's River.

The community numbered about 400, mostly earning a living from the market gardens they worked. The work was hard; the rewards meagre.

The total population of Rocky Point Road, Kogarah Road, and Arncliffe was estimated by a school Inspector to be approximately 800.

Already some educational facilities were being provided in the district. There was a Roman Catholic School on Rocky Point Road, less than a mile south of the present St. Paul's Anglican Church; a Wesleyan School on the same road, about one mile nearer to Sydney on the site of the present Rockdale Methodist Church; and a Public School at Arncliffe, which had been operating since 1861.

The Roman Catholic School had been opened in 1862 (probably in June) with an enrolment of 21, though only 14 children regularly attended. According to an Inspection Report on the school at the end of 1862, "the building used was unsuitable for a school, the organization was defective, the children unpunctual and irregular in attendance, & their attainments were low."

In 1865 the enrolment had risen to 47; by 1867 it was 52, of whom 35 were Roman Catholics, 15 Anglicans and 2 Wesleyans. In 1868, some unaccounted-for controversy reduced the enrolment to 16, but by 1869 enrolments were back to 47, and the teaching was carried on with "great earnestness and fair skill" by Mrs. Burke.

The Wesleyan School began about 1863 under the charge of Mr J. Andrews the local Wesleyan lay-preacher. The enrolment was 52 and the Inspector described the building, which doubled as the Church on Sundays, as being in good repair & having a teacher's residence. Enrolments remained fairly constant & in 1869 they were 55, of whom 10 were Anglicans, 2 Roman Catholics, 40 Wesleyans and 3 undesignated. According to the Inspection Report (1869), the furniture was unsuitable, & there was no longer any residence, but the "instruction was given with great earnestness & industry though the methods were inappropriate." Mr. Andrews was still in charge of the school.

Thus in 1869, both the Wesleyan & Catholic Schools had enrolled between 20 and 30 Anglican children. However, there were approximately 50 Anglican children of school age plus a number of Lutheran children of whom, at the most, half were attending some school. Apart from the undesirability felt by Anglican parents of sending their children to Wesleyan or Catholic schools, there was a clear need to provide a school for the children not attending either of the denominational schools.

The residents of Kogarah who wanted further educational facilities for their children were faced with the difficulty of raising the amount of money needed. There were three courses open to them in gaining a school. They could provide their own building & pay both the teacher's salary & the cost of equipment needed in the school. They would then own the school & could promote any course of instruction they desired. If the majority of the parents were Anglicans, then such a school would teach the Catechism & main tenets of the Anglican doctrine. This, however, was an expensive business.

Another course of action was to provide a building for a school & then apply for a paid teacher from the Council of Education. The Council (1866-1880) was responsible for allocating government finance to schools. If the Council agreed to grant aid it would provide a paid teacher, all necessary textbooks & equipment but only on the condition that the school followed a non-denominational course of study, that is, the same course as the Public Schools followed.

The third avenue open was to ask for a Public School, where the Council of Education would provide almost everything - building, teacher and equipment. The only draw-back was that the local community had to provide one-third of the building cost. For a comfortably-sized school to suit Kogarah's needs at the time, about pounds 160.0.0 to 200.0.0 would have been ample; the residents' one-third would have been around pounds 50.0.0.

Even this relatively small sum was apparently too much for the struggling market gardeners who were suffering badly from the effects of a run of poor seasons. The comment by Council of Education's Inspector regarding the "majority of them being in poor circumstances" was no exaggeration.

With the completion of St. Paul's Anglican Church in 1869, the cost of building a school was no longer a problem. The Church building was quite large enough (48' x 24') to accommodate the 40 or 50 children who might attend the school. So the residents decided to follow the second course of action; provide the building & ask the Council to supply the rest.

Two of the Anglican Wardens, Joseph Shelton & William Berghöfer, together with the Presbyterian, James Wilson, formed a school committee & visited local families. They managed to enlist quite a number of parents prepared to send their children to the proposed school. The committee of three forwarded an application to the Council on December 16, 1869, asking for aid for a school, giving details of expected enrolments & the building to be used, & indicating their willingness to act as Local Patrons. The

Council of Education preferred the Local Patrons to represent different denominations & so, in what appears to be an after-thought, James Wilson hastily filled in the religious denomination of the three men:

Joseph Shelton, "Church of England"
William Berghofer, "Luther"
James Wilson, "Presbeterean".

James Wilson was not a very good speller; yet there were some who "signed" the application form (See Appendix A)* who could not even write their name, & they simply put their mark (x) which was witnessed by someone else.

As soon as the Council received the application, they referred it, as was the usual practice, to the school inspector for the district, Mr J Huffer.

Mr Huffer wasted no time; just after Christmas he reported to the Council that he had been to Kogarah and talked to the residents. He claimed that they felt the denominational schools already established in the district (the Wesleyan & Roman Catholic Schools) were unsatisfactory for its educational needs.**

The parents had promised to send 88 children to the school if it was established; of these, 64 were of school age & the rest were between the ages of 1 year and 3 years old. Huffer expected the school to be a serious rival to the two denominational schools, but as these two schools really only catered for Catholic & Wesleyan children, a public school to provide education for all children was necessary. As Huffer stated, a public school "would undoubtedly better supply the means of education for the locality, & consequently I believe the existing schools would, in time, be closed." Therefore, he recommended its establishment under the name of Rocky Point Road Non-Vested*** Public School.

* A copy of application form has been included because of the difficulty the writer experienced in decyphering James Wilson's handwriting; it is left to the reader to interpret.

** It was difficult for Anglicans to send their children to either the Wesleyan or Catholic Schools as each of these schools taught doctrine relating to their own religious beliefs. Yet despite this, some of the Anglicans had to do so in an effort to get at least some education for their children; but such a situation was not really satisfactory.

*** Non-Vested meant that the building did not belong to the Council of Education, & thus could be used for religious purposes outside of school hours.

In May 1870 the Council agreed to aid the school, & in the same month Huffer suggested that the school's name be changed to *Koggerah** as the "*Koggerah*" Post Office was on the same road and only about 300 yards from the Church where the school would be held.

A few months later, on 5th August, a teacher, John W. McDonnell, arrived at the school & requisitioned for a supply of books and apparatus from the Council. The school would have begun operating shortly after his arrival despite the fact that much of the material would not have had time to arrive.

It is worthwhile pausing here & endeavouring to build up a clear picture of the school - the building; the books & equipment; what subjects were taught; & the teaching methods.

As already mentioned the Anglican Church in which the school was held was 48' x 24'. It was constructed of substantial sandstone blocks & there was an air of solidity about it. The building was unfenced & had no water supply for either the teacher or the children. The windows were tall & narrow & were designed more for appearance & atmosphere than for allowing light to enter, so that inside the school would have been dim, but not unpleasantly so. The floor was wooden; arranged in rows about the room were ten long forms (10 1/2' long & 18" high) & four desks of the same length which sloped slightly down towards the children sitting at them. Four of the forms were used by the more advanced children sitting at the desks, who needed ink-wells & a support for the books they wrote in. The other forms were used by the younger children who could perch their slates on their knees & work away with their slate pencils.** The smaller children used slates about the size of half a foolscap page, while others used slates almost as large as a foolscap page.

On the walls Mr McDonnell hung several maps - one of the world & one of Australia. Later when he received one of N.S.W., this too was suspended conspicuously. There were also some diagrams showing how certain goods were manufactured & these would have been displayed.

At the front of the room was Mr McDonnell's blackboard & easel; his only chalk was a box of white chalk. As well, the school clock probably sat on his table & possibly the "ball-frame", a type of abacus, was also located there.

* The name *Kogarah* was spelt in a variety of ways over the years. Inspector Huffer in 1869 spelt it *Koggerah*; in 1870 Mr McDonnell, the first teacher, spelt it *Koggorah*; the second teacher spelt it *Kograh*; & in 1875 the Council of Education spelt it *Koggarah*.

** For the smallest children these forms were too high & their feet dangled several inches above the floorboards, so that, according to the teacher, every now & then, when they became cramped, the children would jump down to ease their legs & in so doing disrupt the routine of the school.

Finally, he had some scripture books & a stock of reading books: 36 of the *First Book of Lessons*, which would have been used by the children as soon as they knew their alphabet & could read monosyllables*; & a number of the *Second* & *Third* readers.

John McDonnell taught the usual subjects of the public schools in those days:

*Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Scripture Lessons,
Object Lessons, Geography and Grammar;*

though not all the children learnt geography & grammar; only the more advanced.

The methods used by McDonnell are not known for certain though Inspector Huffer in 1871 claimed that they were "suitable, and fairly well applied."

By the end of 1870 there were 45 children on the roll, of whom 36 were Anglicans, 5 Presbyterians, & 4 undesignated, but only an average attendance of 14 boys & 15 girls was reached. Each child paid 6d. per week in school fees & McDonnell's salary was approximately pounds 100.0.0 plus whatever he received in fees from the children.

In 1871 the enrolment dropped to 32 & the average attendance to 21. Inspector Huffer found this most unsatisfactory especially when the parents had promised to send 64 children to the school when it opened.

In reply to a query on this subject the Local Committee explained that because the school did not open for nine months after the original application was made, "the Parents were kept in a state of suspense" & so sent their children to the other schools in the district refusing to move them when Kogarah School finally opened. The Committee also suspected, though they gave no evidence, that the denominational schools were offering cut rates on school fees & in this way "enticing" children of poorer parents to their schools.** A further excuse for the low attendance was the departure of five families from the district.

Mr McDonnell, felt that something far more sinister was behind it all. He claimed that when he examined the list of parents who had promised to send children to the school certain surprising facts emerged:

* Words of one syllable such as cat, dog, hit, run, go. etc.

** The enrolments at the denominational schools dropped when Kogarah School opened. The Catholic School enrolments then remained constant till at least 1875; the Wesleyan enrolments did not begin to increase until 1872, a year after the Local Patrons' suspicions.

- (1) 9 of the parents did not have children of school age;
- (2) 6 signed in the belief that by so doing it would give "the Church children a school";
- (3) 4 signed it believing it would entitle their children to free education.

In all McDonnell estimated that those who signed in good faith could not have mustered an average attendance of 20 children. This he interpreted to mean that there had never been any intention of establishing a *bona fide* Public School, but rather an Anglican School in disguise; the local Patrons had hoped to get an Anglican teacher* who would also teach in the Sunday School, be active in Church affairs, & who could draw in certain families from the Wesleyan body.

McDonnell's arguments sounded very convincing until the other side of the story emerged.

McDonnell found it very difficult to get on with people. At Jamberoo, his previous school he had been generally disliked & in order to save the school, he had been removed to another school. Inspector Huffer, familiar with the Jamberoo affair, as well as what was happening at Kogarah, believed McDonnell to be a competent teacher but, as Huffer put it, "he has defects in his character which will, I fear, always render his qualifications as a teacher comparatively useless." Certainly he had antagonized a number of parents because seven heads of families flatly refused to send their children to the school while he was there.

The Anglican minister, Rev. John Done, though very anxious to co-operate with McDonnell, found that this was almost impossible. During one interview he had with McDonnell, Done claimed that McDonnell "gave way to a most violent gust of passion & called me a liar." Done felt unable to continue his visits to the school under such circumstances** but was willing to meet with the Local Patrons or the Inspector in an effort to resolve the problem.

Towards the end of 1871 the Inspector noted that McDonnell had requested to be transferred to another school; he did not want to remain at Kogarah & the local residents were "equally desirous" of seeing him on his way. But the Inspector could not recommend his removal because he felt that McDonnell had already been unsuccessful in two schools & it would not be fair to inflict him on another community. Therefore, he recommended that he:

* McDonnell was an Anglican.

** Rev. J Done usually visited the school twice a week to give religious instruction to the Anglican children enrolled.

"endeavour to the utmost to make his future conduct such as should win the respect, confidence, & goodwill of all rightminded persons with whom he may have to act in his position as teacher."

The Council of Education sent him a letter to this effect. Unfortunately it came too late. The Local Patrons accused McDonnell of falsifying his attendance records to show a higher average attendance*; & though Insp. Huffer thought that McDonnell may possibly have made a mistake, the Council of Education dispenses with his services as teacher from the end of January 1872.

A few days later McDonnell applied for re-instatement:

"I shall endeavour to overcome all infirmity of temper, to avoid all cause of complaint, & as far as lies in my power, to satisfy all the requirements of the Council...."

Huffer still believed he possessed good qualifications despite his failures, & recommended to the Council his re-appointment. The Council appointed McDonnell on a trial basis to Hornsby West where he appears to have performed his duties creditably. Before we leave Mr McDonnell, it is worth noting that his argument about the school being virtually an Anglican school was probably fairly accurate as later events showed.

Mr William Chapman.

Three weeks after Mr McDonnell left the school, Mr William Chapman arrived. Mr Chapman, a married man, had been at Evan's Plains Public School since September 1869, but had requested to be transferred because of his dissatisfaction with the low attendance at that school (an average of 22 during the last part of 1871), a problem which Chapman attributed to the poverty of the parents which required the children to work on the farms instead of attending school.

To Chapman a low attendance was a financial loss. He received pounds 84.0.0 per annum in salary from the Council of Education, but this was augmented by fees from the pupils. The less they attended, the less he received. In 1871, fees at Evan's Plains amounted to pounds 29.10.6; what Chapman probably did not know was that in 1871, fees at Kogarah were only pounds 26.7.0, & they were only pounds 26.1.6 in 1872.

At Evan's Plains, Mr Chapman's teaching had been described as "energetic & regulated with tolerable intelligence."

Chapman was able to build up the average attendance at Kogarah to 34 in 1872, but he still faced the problem of children having to be absent from school in order to help aprents at home. For instance, in the spring of 1872, many children spent most of their time helping with the pea-picking; others gathered "five corners".

* In those days salary was directly related to average attendance.

Inspector Huffer visited the school in November that year and his inspection report was rather favourable:

"The discipline is in all respects, fairly satisfactory. The prescribed subjects are taught, the classification is fairly appropriate, & the instruction is properly regulated. The methods are suitable, & earnestly applied. The general proficiency is nearly fair."

Compared to other reports of schools for the period this was an above average report.

The average attendance climbed to 42 in 1873 (school fees pounds 41.7.6) & the teaching continued to be "properly regulated".

However, in 1878, a new Inspector, Mr. J.S.Jones, reported that the children were making poor progress and that it would be better of a "more zealous, genial & active teacher were put in his place." Mr Chapman defended himself by claiming that the practice of the children helping their parents in the gardens exhausted them for "mental labour."

A New Building & a Change of Site.

When a school was held in a Church building it was often rather inconvenient for both Church and school. At the end of the school week, all desks, maps & equipment had to be put away so that the Church would be ready for the Sunday Service.

There were continual complaints that the Sunday School scholars were interfering with the public school books & equipment, & vice versa. Then, on Monday, what had been put away on Friday, had to be put back.

Another point to consider was the fact that in 1875, the Council of Education waived the regulation which required the local community to supply one-third of the building cost. Thus apart from the cost of the site, a new building would cost the residents nothing.

With these and other things in mind, a group of Kogarah residents* wrote the Council of Education in 1875 requesting the Council to build a Public School & a teacher's residence.

The residents were prepared to donate a two-acre site. The group was concerned at the situation in Kogarah as, despite the population growth, only 36 were regularly attending the school. This they put down to the fact that the school was held in the Anglican Church and this kept away children of other denominations. This was true enough as of the 53 enrolled, 37 were Anglicans; 3 Roman Catholics; 3 Presbyterians; 7 Wesleyans & 3 undesignated.

* John South, W.Berghofer; John Stockdale; W.C.Kirst(?); J.Shelton & Samuel Schofield.

Appendix A.

No.462.

APPLICATION for the Establishment of a PUBLIC SCHOOL.

at *Rocky-Point Road or Koggerah.*

Post Town *Rocky Point Road*

Date: *December 16th 1869.*

TO THE COUNCIL OF EDUCATION.

Gentlemen,

We, the undersigned, residents at *Rocky Point Road*
request that you will be pleased to establish a Public
School at that place, under the provisions of the Public
Schools Act of 1866.

For this purpose we have provided the requisite buildings,
as hereafter described; and we are prepared to execute a
lease of these premises for a term of years
at a nominal rent.

We have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most obedient Servants,

To be advertifed
29.3.70

Agreed to -
17.5.70

Local Committee	(<i>Joseph Shelton</i>	<i>Church England</i>
	(<i>Wm Berghöfer</i>	<i>Luther</i>
	(<i>James Wilson</i>	<i>Peesbeteiran</i>

Urgent

Mr Miller 13960

Entered & referred to
Inspector. J.M.
20.12.69

.. article to be continued.