



# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,  
Arncliffe. 2205.

September 1980.

Dear Friend and Member,

The regular meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, September 19th, 1980, at 8 p.m.

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

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Mr. Les Vaughan, Senr. Vice President of the Willoughby District Historical Society has chosen for his address:  
"Captain Matthew Flinders" (from childhood): (All names mentioned in this address will have had some part in building Australia.)

Supper Roster: Mrs. Mendoza, Captain, & Mesdames O'Dwyer, Armstrong and Turton.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. R. Lee,  
President.  
Phone 570.1244

Mrs. B. Perkins,  
Publicity Officer.  
Phone 587.9164

Mrs. E. Wright,  
Treas. & Soc. Sec.  
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Mrs. E. Eardley,  
Secretary & Bulletin  
Editor.  
Phone 59.8078

Mr. A. Ellis,  
Research Officer.  
Phone 587.1159

"Happiness is belonging, not belongings." .... Elizabeth Harvey.

"Bad conscience is a conscience doing its duty." .... George MacDonald.

(2)

Many of our Members, including Mrs. Gash, Miss Heath and Mrs. Vears, have been and still are ill. We are sorry to hear this, and hope you will be well again soon.

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. No.8 Book was compiled by Mrs. Bronwyn Perkins.

- 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).
- No.8. "Early Churches of the St. George District"

All books now available at \$1.00 per copy - plus current rate of postage.

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

Mrs. E. Wright - Ph. 599.4884. Miss B. Otton - Ph. 59.4259 (after 8 p.m.)

Mrs. E. Eardley - Secretary - Ph. 59.8078. Mr. A. Ellis - Ph. 587.1159.

Also available from the Secretary (59.8078) - "The Bundeena Book", illustrated. Price \$4.00 plus postage. Compiled by Mr. Les. Philpott, Published by the Bundeena Book Committee.

NEW BOOK .... "History of Bexley" 1822-1949, by R.W. Rathbone, now available. \$3.00 per copy.

Society Badges available from Mrs. Wright, Treasurer, at \$1.00 each.

#### SOCIAL.

Coach Trip to Wagga Wagga & Districts.

October 4, 5 & 6, 1980. (Long Weekend). Pay in full September meeting.

A visit to St. Thomas' C. of E., North Sydney Annual Flower Festival.

Also 19th Century Farmhouse in Napier Street - (Admission 60¢)

& Victoria Stone Mansion - (Admission 40¢).

Date: 11th October, 1980. (Saturday).

Meeting Place: Western side of Rockdale Station.

Time: 9.00 a.m. Sharp.

Cost: \$3.00 per person (plus \$1.00)

See Mrs. Wright for details.

CORRECTION IN BALANCE SHEET - Income Column.

Subscription R.A.H.S. \$200.00 - should read "Cultural Grant - R.A.H.S. - \$200.00. We apologise for this error.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS - 1980 - 81.

President	-	Mr Bob Lee
Patrons	-	Alderman G Moore Alderman R Rathbone Mr R Fuller - Town Clerk
Senior Vice President	-	Mr Don Sinclair
Vice Presidents	-	Mr W Foster Mr A Ellis
Honorary Secretary	-	Mrs E Eardley
Honorary Treasurer	-	Mrs E Wright
Honorary Auditor	-	Miss M Dunsmore
Bulletin Editor	-	Mrs E Eardley
Research Officer	-	Mr A Ellis
Publicity Officer	-	Mrs B Perkins
Lydham Hall Committee	-	as appointed by Rockdale Council.
Management Committee	-	President - Mr Bob Lee Secretary - Mrs E Earldey Treasurer - Mrs E Wright (all Executive Officers) plus Mrs B Perkins Miss M Callister Miss M Dunsmore Messrs L Kell, A Ellis, D Sinclair & W Dixon.

18th July 1980.

DONATIONS TO LYDHAM HALL.

The Spent Family, Bexley.

1 large white and blue fish dish over 100 years old.

Pair silver candle sticks. On Loan.

Mrs. Goulder, Bexley.

2 Anzac Medals 1915.

1 large medal presented to John Henry Kelsey.

A getwell letter from King George in 1918.

Miss Callister, Bexley.

Common Prayer & Hymns Book.

Holy Communion 1916.

Mrs. E. Forwood, Bexley.

1 Pair of very old spectacles.

THE ABORIGINAL TRIBES OF THE SYDNEY REGION.

- B.J.Madden - Kingsgrove.  
June 1980.

In the short space of 70 years, the world of the Aboriginal tribes of the Sydney region, which had remained unchanged since the Dreamtime, became a living hightmare. The land which had been theirs alone for so long was suddenly and irretrievably lost to the fair-skinned newcomers of the First Fleet. The aborigines were in no way prepared for the cataclysm which engulfed them as settlement spread, and they found themselves dispossessed not only materially but also spiritually.

A recently-published book by Keith Willey, "When the Sky Fell Down", traces the dynamic years of the colony's growth between 1788 and 1860. It is the story of the effects of the exploits and achievements of the white men on the country's original inhabitants. Keith Willey had used such information as is available in personal journals, newspaper articles and official documents to find the world of the nineteenth-century aborigine.

A number of the incidents mentioned in the book are of interest to our local area.

The attack by aborigines on Bond's far at Punchbowl on 1 October, 1809 was not an isolated incident. It was part of the resistance, verging on what we would now call guerrilla warfare, by the aborigines to the white settlers who were taking possession of their hunting grounds. As mentioned in an article in the Canterbury and District Historical Society Journal Series 2 No.8, the aborigines were led by Tedbury, who was the son of Pemulwoy, and both father and son had been leaders of the resistance to the white settlers over a number of years. Keith Willey's book discusses this quite extensively.

Willey refers to a trial of a number of settlers on the Hawkesbury in 1799 on charges of having murdered two aboriginal boys. During the trial, Sarah Hodgkinson, whose husband had been killed by aborigines about 3 weeks earlier, admitted asking the defendants to kill the boys. Is this the same Sarah Hodgkinson who was given 60 acres at the present-day Canterbury-Ashfield on 12 November 1799? If so, it is an example of the possibility of finding local history information and references in a variety of unlikely sources.

Another interesting reference is to Mahroot, also known as the Boatswain, who was said to be the last man of the Botany Bay tribe, who gave evidence to the N.S.W. Legislative Council's Select Committee on Aborigines in 1845. Mahroot was born at Cooks River, probably about 1796 and he related the changes which had resulted from the arrival of the white men. Some of his evidence was hearsay, since the First Fleet arrived 8 years before he was born. When he was born, the Botany Bay tribe numbered about 400. By 1845, it had been reduced to 4 people, himself and 3 women. His evidence stands almost alone as an aboriginal overview of the

succession of calamities which befell the tribes of the Sydney area after the arrival of the First Fleet.

Not mentioned in Willey's book is the fact that Boatswain died on 31 January 1850. The Sydney Morning Herald of 2 February 1850 refers to him as "the well-known Aboriginal Boatswain, whose intelligence and superior manner, coupled with the fact of his being the last of the Botany Bay tribe, rendered him a favourite with all who knew him, and especially with his white countrymen."

Willey's book, which is very readable, increases our understanding of this era of Australia's history.

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THE WOOD-CARTERS OF EARLY ST. GEORGE.

- B.J.Madden - Kingsgrove  
December 1978.

In 'Notes on the Early Life in Peakhurst', written in the 1930's by Mr George Peake, son of Issac Peake and grandson of John Peake, it is stated that during the Gold Rush in the 1850's, firewood was carted from the present St. George district to a place in Darlinghurst where there was a water pump, and sold there at good prices. (Copy held by Hurstville Hurstville Historical Society).

However, he says that, after the gold rush, there was a slump, money was scarce, and firewood nearly had to be given away. The wood-carters no longer went to the pump, but the wood was cut into small pieces almost ready for use, hawked around the streets, and sold by one shilling's worth instead of by the load.

In an article about old residents of Newtown in 1922 (Smith S.D., 'Municipality of Newtown Diamond Jubilee Souvenir', 1922 - Mitchell Library: 352.911/1A 1), is the story of Mr T Deaman, (who was 73 years of age at that time and so was born between 1848-1850) and his connection with the wood-carters, perhaps from as early as the mid-1850's:

I claim that Mr Tom Deaman, of Alice Street, Newtown is Newtown's longest resident.

'Tom' Deaman was born in the district 73 years ago, and has lived in it ever since. He started work as a nipper in the fuel business, and stayed in that business, and was never in any other, to the end, and now resides in Alice Street.

Actually it was outside the municipal boundaries of Newtown as we know them today that Mr Deaman was born; but he was brought within the boundary shortly after his birth, and has never gone outside. The family home is in Alice Street.

Mr Deaman's first job was among the 'Bushmen' as they were then known. Fuel for practically all purposes was wood-logs from gum trees, felled, stripped, dried and split. And a hardy breed they were who engaged in the work.

The logs prepared, you took your dray in early morning out Gannon's Forest (Hurstville and Bexley these days), loaded up and started for town. You did your best to sell it at some works, or to some householder, on the way, of course. If you didn't you went up Oxford Street, and took your place in the line by the 'old pump' (from which the householders around drew each day's supply of water).

When a buyer came along and bought it (6/- per load was about

the usual price), you took it home and packed it into his wood-house for him. Then you went out Gannon's for another load. If (as sometimes happened) you didn't sell out, you very rarely took the load home, but 'dumped it' on one of the paddocks, down near where Grace Bros' is now, say.

They don't go into the bush at Bexley (!) nowadays, and sell loads of logs up Oxford Street (!) these days; but Mr Deaman is still in the fuel business - or, rather, the boys still carry on the same old biz (that is probably almost 60 years old) with never a break. Dad sits back and takes it easy these days.

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THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN VERANDA -

34/200/7  
ROCKDALE

- Garry Maddox  
The Sydney Morning Herald  
2nd February 1980.

Like the koala, kangaroo and wombat, the wide veranda on a home is an Australian symbol. Almost every sizable house built between white settlement and World War II in N.S.W. had one - in the suburbs or the sticks.

The war years brought austerity to construction and the veranda was found to be a dispensable part of house design. Now there are signs that the venerable veranda is back as a feature of modern homes.

Some of the country's most prominent architects and project-home companies are incorporating them into their houses to meet the demand.

In fact, the Kempsey homestead that won the last Royal Australian Institute of Architects' coveted Wilkinson Award for design had a modern version of this traditional feature.

A major building-materials company says the trend towards wide eaves that often extend into verandas is strong in the southern states.

In some older homes, enclosed verandas are being opened up and the decorative features highlighted. Some small ones, despite the not inconsequential expense, are even being extended.

The veranda is said to be one of the first characteristically Australian features in home design.

Professor John Freeland writes in *Architecture in Australia* that the severe daily and seasonal temperature changes in areas beyond the coastal strip posed architectural problems for the early settlers.

The solution came second hand from the tropical countries of the East, via the counties of Devon and Cornwall in England. It was a feature borrowed by the founders of the empire and called by the Hindi name "veranda". "The veranda had been used from time immemorial in the enervating heat of the tropics", Professor Freeland writes.

Thus Elizabeth Farm at Parramatta, the country's oldest remaining building, and many of its long-vanished contemporaries had verandas. When they were not for protection from the heat or rain they served as external passages in narrow houses.

The veranda suddenly rose in popularity in the early 1800s. Country people, writes Professor Freeland, found that it was an excellent airy and shady place for cooling both milk and people.

"Firstly, by keeping the direct heat of the sun off the walls it had a considerable cooling effect. But secondly, and more importantly,

it provided a sheltered and shaded area for sitting and relaxing when the air inside of the house became overheated. With this, the verandas increased in width to 10 or even 12 feet and, where the space allowed, were often extended around the walls of the house."

As a shuffle through just about any book with pictures of Australian homes will show, the veranda quickly became a decorative feature. In the prosperous 1880s, for instance, verandas were often trimmed with elaborate cast-iron lace and rounded iron roof.

Even in the simple suburban bungalow in Sydney, the characteristic pillars of the veranda were evident, although they gradually changed from tapering columns to squat stumps as fashions changed in the early years of the 1900s.

The house itself was changing constantly throughout these years, and in the years before World War II L-shaped houses were built with a tight portico in the angle, replacing the veranda.

The severe changes wrought by the war brought in decades of rectangular homes built without verandas and porticos, with only entrance porches formed from thin slabs of concrete.

The increased emphasis on leisure, prompted possibly by the introduction of daylight saving, has influenced many people towards a part-indoor, part-outdoor recreation area, according to the Sydney architect and author Howard Tanner.

The veranda also serves as a transition zone, he says, in which the eyes can adjust to strong glare outside. At the award-winning Kempsey home designed by Glenn Murcutt, the impact of the move indoors or outdoors is softened by a screened veranda, portico and pergola.

A spokesman for the building supply company, James Hardie & Co., Pty. Ltd., Mr Bruce Woodfield, says the sale of materials shows that the trend towards the inclusion of a veranda or wide eaves in a home is strong in the southern States.

"Most project builders offer colonial variations - on their more traditional home designs", he says.

Rather than being just roofing iron over a timber frame fixed to the wall below roof level, the modern veranda is usually a fully lined extension of the roof.

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