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PRICE 5 c.

# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,  
Arncliffe. 2205.  
October 1981.

Dear Friend and Member,

The October meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, October 16th, 1981, at 8.00 p.m.  
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.  
Business: General.  
Syllabus Item: Mr. J.C. Vaughan will speak on the history of "Flags of Australia". Mr. Vaughan will have many different flags to demonstrate his talk. Come along and learn about our Flags, which should be very dear to all of us.

Supper Roster: Captain: Mrs. Havilah, together with Mesdames Turton, Misses Heath & Moffett.

Ladies please bring a plate.

Mr. R. Lee,  
President,  
Phone 570.1244

Mrs. B. Perkins,  
Publicity Officer.  
Phone 587.9164.

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

Mrs. E. Wright,  
Treas. & Soc. Sec.  
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Mr. A. Ellis,  
Research Officer.  
Phone 587.1159.

"He who can suppress a moment's anger, may prevent many days sorrow."

... Chinese Proverb.

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

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### 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 reprinted 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" (Temporarily out of stock).
- No. 6. "All Stations to Como"
- No. 7. "Tempe and the Black Creek Valley" (Temporarily out of stock).
- No. 8. "Early Churches of the St. George District"

All books now available at \$1.25 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.

The Research Project - "Early Pioneers of the St. George District" - undertaken by some of our members is progressing. Much information has been gathered. However, there is still a long way to go. Help from interested members would be greatly appreciated. Can you help towards "Book No. 9" in our series of books on history?

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Members please note: Due to circumstances, it has been found necessary to increase the Annual Subscription as follows:

|                   |    |          |                       |
|-------------------|----|----------|-----------------------|
| <u>Per Member</u> | .. | \$3.00 ) | <u>Due July 1981.</u> |
| <u>Per Family</u> | .. | \$5.00 ) |                       |

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN TO PAY YOURS?

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KOGARAH SCHOOL CELEBRATES CENTENARY.

- St. George & Sutherland Shire Leader.  
12th August 1970.

"On visiting this school I found the accommodation scanty and the appearance of the buildings very poor...."

This is a quote from a minute dated October 1, 1890, by the then Minister for Education (Mr J.H.Carruthers), and it refers to the then comparatively new Kogarah Public School.

The words have been echoed over the years by various school and Parents and Citizens' Association authorities.

Mr Carruthers had a special interest in the school - it was in his electorate and he lived near it.

His minute continued: "As a Roman Catholic school is in the neighborhood competing, and as the locality is growing, steps must be taken to increase the accommodation and improve the appearance of the school.

There is a piece of vacant ground 'shown' on the sketch hereon which should be acquired by resumption or purchase.

Let the architect prepare a plan for a two-storey building of some pretension - providing adequate accommodation for girls and infants"

A photostat copy of the minute is included in a history of Kogarah Public School prepared by Mr J J. Fletcher, of the Education Department Research Section, to coincide with the school's 100th anniversary this month.

The school had its origin in 1870 when classes began in St. Paul's Church, Kogarah.

Two denominational schools - a Catholic (opened in 1862) and a Wesleyan (1863) - were in existence already, but the classes set up in St. Paul's Church were designed to be inter-denominational rather than Anglican.

For this reason local residents had promised to send 88 children to the school when it was established - 64 were of school age already, the remainder were between the ages of one and three years.

In May 1870, the Council of Education (the authority responsible for allocating Government finance to schools) agreed to "come to the aid of the party."

The district school inspector, (Mr J Huffer) suggested the same month that the school's name be changed from its original title "Rocky Point Road" to "Koggerah" Non-vested Public School.

(A non-vested school meant that the building did not belong to the Education Council, and could be used for religious purposes outside school hours.)

The first teacher, John W. McDonnell, arrived on August 5, 1870, and the school began operating soon afterwards.

In 1875, the then inspector (Mr. W. McIntyre) investigated and decided a public school completely separated from the church was 'desirable'.

The first school building was completed in November, 1876. It was designed to accommodate 100 children and had a five-roomed residence for a teacher.

By 1890 the school had outgrown its accommodation and was in the condition described in Mr Carruther's minute.

Extensions were added, the first of several in the years between 1891 and the 100th anniversary this year.

The school will celebrate its centenary with a re-union afternoon next Saturday.

The present principal (Mr J.G.Hart) and the president of the school P. and C. Association (Mr A Williamson) will welcome guests.

- Ruth Johnson.

### THE FIRST GRANTS IN KOGARAH

The first land grants in Kogarah were made by Governor Macquarie, 1950 acres to Dr John Townson, and 1605 acres to his brother, Captain Robert Townson, Captain R.N. A grant of 100 acres was made to Captain Connell shortly afterwards. Captain Connell had a large ironmonger's shop in Sydney on the corner of Hunter Street along George Street. Dr Townson built a house, and planted a fine orchard and orangery, but, with exception, very little work was done in the district.

About the year 1816, Dr Townson sold his estate to Mr Simeon Lord, and it was afterwards known as Lord's Forest. Some years later this fine estate was purchased by Mr Michael Gannon and the name was changed to Gannon's Forest. A part of the Townson grants is in Kogarah, and the remainder in Hurstville. A considerable portion of Mr James Chandler's Bexley Estate of 1200 acres, is also in Kogarah, both the Kogarah and Rockdale railway stations being on this estate. This dates only from 1831. Some years afterwards the remainder of the land was surveyed, and opened for purchase by auction.

One of the first purchasers was Mr John B Carroll, who bought 170 acres between Dr Townson's land and the Kogarah Bay, in 1848, the hilly section known as Carroll's Hill.

Messrs William Blake, Patrick English, James Derwent (who purchased land in Gannon's Forest in 1854), William Maher, West, Justice J.A. South, Biden, Murphy and others, settled there some time after the gold rush or between 1853 and 1856, and built houses, and formed gardens, orchards etc., some on Government land and others at Bexley, Gannon's Forest and other estates, portions of which they purchased.

- G.H.Eardley.

TEMPLE FOR THE BOOKS OF SYDNEY ---

- *Leslie Walford*  
*Sydney Morning Herald*  
27th June 1980.

At the centre of what is being called the 'cultural precinct' of Sydney is that most literate place, the temple of the printed word, the State Library of New South Wales. Here is conserved and made available to all, the record of our history, the thinking of today, the knowledge of the past.

The State Library is a busy, much frequented place, an essential facility in the community. It is architecturally imposing and surrounded by the other great institutions that constitute the branches of culture on the tree of the city's life. Nearby is the Art Gallery, the Opera House, the Conservatorium, the Australian Museum, all forming the cultural heart of Sydney.

I went to visit Russell Doust, the State Librarian, at the beginning of my tour of the Library building, so that I might hear from its head about the history of the building and the collections it protects.

Russell Doust sat at his desk, a tall stained glass window behind him. On it were depicted birds and lizards, frogs, fish and monsters. Against this exotic background Mr Doust appeared conservative in his dark blue velvet jacket, his greying beard neatly trimmed. "The decision to have a library", he began, "was made in the 1820s and in 1826 a group of interested citizens formed the Australian Subscription Library. The Governor thought it a good idea. Some land was granted but no other assistance was given. It was a library for the gentry of the day. "

By 1860 this creation had gone downhill. In 1869 its holdings were sold cheaply to the government to become the Free Public Library, with government funding and staff. The first Chief Librarian was Robert Cooper Walker. Only seven people have held the post, the others being H Anderson, F. Bladen, W. Ilfoud, J. Metcalfe, G. Richardson and since 1973, Russell Doust. In 1899 the Library was incorporated by statute and given a Board of Trustees.

The first structure built to house the Library, was in 1845, on the corner of Bent and Macquarie Streets, where the State Office Block now stands. It was quite elegant. The Government Printing Office was nearby. This original library building was demolished in 1961 and some of its sandstone blocks were used to build retaining walls at the University of N.S.W.

It was in order to house the important Mitchell Collection that the present library building was begun. The first section of the State Library complex, the wing on the corner of Macquarie Street, known as the Mitchell Library, was opened in 1910, soon after David Scott Mitchell died in 1907. It was a condition of his bequest that a proper building be provided by the government.

Mitchell's collection, made up of early Australiana, some things Elizabethan, some French (and some erotica) was the most important acquisition possible for the library. The State Librarian, Henry Anderson, courted Mitchell's friendship over the years, sharing a sincere enthusiasm for his collecting. Mitchell had money to indulge his passion - money inherited from his family's interests in agriculture and coal.

When he collected during his life (1836-1907), things were about, but today what he collected, would, doubtless, not be available. His collection included 60,000 volumes and he gave an endowment of pounds 70,000.0.0. to the Trustees of the Public Library. It was a priceless gift.

In 1929 the building we are inclined now to think of as just one whole was enlarged by the addition of the Dixon Wing to house the great Sir William Dixon Collection, especially his pictures and manuscripts. This wing faces onto Macquarie Street and backs onto the Mitchell Wing.

The main portico and the remaining sections of the present facade, and the great reading room were completed in wartime, in 1941. In 1964 the wing facing the Domain was added, and thus the whole site was covered, following a plan conceived in 1902 by the government architect, Lt.Col.W.L.Vernon. But actually much of the history of the building was of co-operation between various government architects and state librarians over the period.

Cobden Parkes, son of Sir Henry Parkes, advised by W.Ifould, designed the main reading room. The building follows, externally, the Renaissance style, and is finished in sandstone from Maroubra. The quality and detail is of the highest. The mosaic map in the Vestibule reproduces a 17th century hand drawn map showing discoveries by Abel Tasman and other navigators.

Other features of the building are the three great bronze entrance doors representing discoverers and explorers and Aboriginal subjects. There are many magnificent stained glass windows including those honouring Geoffrey Chaucer and his Canterbury Tales, and the martyrdom of Archbishop Thomas a'Becket. Several windows were donated by the proprietors of Sydney newspapers and one, from the Sydney Morning Herald, depicts William Caxton presenting the first book printed in English, made in Bruges in about 1474. On the outside of the building are several panels of stone sculptured in relief.

One special room within the building is the Shakespeare Tercentary Memorial Library, established in 1923, and in it reposes the rare first collected edition of Shakespeare's works of 1623, known as the First Folio, presented to the Library in 1885. Amongst other particularly rare printed books in the State Library are the Birds of America by C.Audubon(19th century) with its hand coloured plates the actual size of the birds.

But the rarest Australian book may not be very amusing reading -



it is the "General Standing Orders 1802", the first book printed in the colony, of which only 3 copies are known to exist. The Library also possesses the journal of Sir Joseph Banks while with Cook on the Endeavour, in its original manuscript, as well as the log of Captain Bligh of the Bounty.

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FOUNDATION STONES:

- Column 8 - *Sydney Morning Herald*  
28th June 1980.

Column 8 hopes there are no plans to lay a foundation stone for the new Parliament House. One exists already. It was laid on Capital Hill in 1920 by the then Prince of Wales (later Edward VIII) on the Antipodean leg of his world tour. The then Prime Minister, Billy Hughes, thought it would bring some much-needed prestige to the fledgling city of Canberra. Since then, this stone has had a sad history. It was removed in the mid-1920s during quarrying of the Capital Hill, then replaced but was never incorporated in the present Parliament House.

In 1951 it mysteriously appeared in a government store at the Causeway, a Canberra suburb. The low point of the Royal Rock's career was in 1952, when it turned up in a government hostel garage. In 1960, it was deposited at the Australian War Memorial store at Duntroon. Now, the War Memorial wants to empty its store, and the stone must move again. This time, however, it may go closer to its spiritual home. A Parliament House spokesman said yesterday there was strong interest in claiming the stone for display, ultimately in the museum section of the new building.

Still on the subject of foundation stones --- tomorrow (29.6.80) at 10.30a.m. Holy Trinity Garrison Church, Millers Point, celebrates the 140th anniversary of the laying of its foundation stone. The problem is that no one knows where the actual stone is. The Rev. Ron Clout, the rector of the church, told Column 8 that over the years people had tried to solve the mystery - "They even had the Army in once with scanning equipment, but they didn't find it" he said. Mr Clout suspects the engraving on the stone has worn away over the years.

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A RICH LODE IN HYDE PARK ...

- Geraldine Brooks  
Sydney Morning Herald  
28th October 1980.

Hammers and chisels ring against old stone in the forecourt of the Hyde Park Barracks building. Workers chip away the layers of rendering and slowly, brick by brick, the original convict-built walls are exposed. Around the Barracks and the Mint building, the noise and the activity are intense. On the inside of the Barracks, there is no sound or movement at all.

All work has stopped on the restoration of the interior. Half-sawn timbers and partially exposed walls have been abandoned following the discovery of a rich lode of convict artefacts in the dust and rubble under the Barracks floorboards.

Wendy Thorp, the consultant archeologist, on the site, believes the find may be the biggest, in quality and quantity, to be unearthed in an Australian historic building. "It's unique. I have worked on excavations at Elizabeth Farm in Tasmania, in Bathurst, but I've never seen an under-floor deposit as rich as this."

It took Wendy Thorp and her team two weeks to complete the excavation of two trenches in the ground floor of the building. There, among the rat holes and the damp earth around the foundations, they found clay pipes, old syoes, coins, bones, pins, cotton reels, the trivial possessions of the men and women who once lived in the crowded dormitories of the Barracks.

From 1819 to 1848 the Greenway Building was a barracks for male convicts. Later it became a reception centre for female immigrants.

"We have been able to date the artefacts quite precisely to the various uses of the building," Wendy Thorp says. "It is uncommon to be able to do that."

Among the earliest artefacts they have identified is a large, blue-striped convict's shirt, stamped by the Board of Ordnance. From the building's archives, Wendy Thorp has been able to discover something of the life of the man who might have worn that shirt: "He could have been a shoemaker, or a cook, or a worker on a road gang," she says. "He would have had to put up with very long hours of work and brutal conditions here at the Barracks. There were weekly floggings here during most of the convict period. It was, I suppose, not atypical of the conditions throughout the colony at that time."

"In one journal there is an oblique reference to the undesirable situation of young boys and older men sharing the same dormitories here. The barracks themselves were very overcrowded, rat-infested, dirty and noisy."

One mystery the archeological team has not yet solved is how, shirt, shoes and personal effects came to be under the floor in such large quantities.

At first the theory was that because of strict regulations about convicts' personal possessions, the men had hidden bits and pieces under loose floorboards. "We had to dismiss that idea when we found artefacts on the ground floor as well," Miss Thorp says. "If they were trying to hide things they wouldn't have dropped them through the ground-floor boards because they'd have fallen right through to the earth about half-a-metre down. Now we think that rats were probably responsible - dragging things into their burrows."

The excavations have revealed essential information about the building itself, its site and the methods of construction employed by Greenway and his workers. That information will help the architects in their restoration work.

No one knows how long it will be before the work is resumed.

Before the archeologists became consultants on the project, large areas of the building were disturbed and any artefacts they contained were lost. "Nobody realised what was contained in the earth and rubble they were ripping up. Now we know what's here we are determined to protect it," Miss Thorp says.

Because the Barracks is to become a museum, air-conditioning will be needed to protect exhibits. To have least impact on the appearance of the building, under-floor ducting has been proposed. "If that proposal is accepted, it means we will have to excavate the entire floor area", Miss Thorp says. "We couldn't risk the loss of so much knowledge."

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