



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff St.,
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.
June 1983.

Dear Friend and Member,

The June Meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, June 17th, 1983, at 8.00 p.m.

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

Business: General.

Syllabus Item: Mr. Ralph Skelton, Retired School Teacher, a widely travelled man,
will take us for: "A TRIP ON THE GHAN".

Something to look forward to.

Supper Roster: Mrs. Havilah, Captain, and Miss Moffitt.

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 Ed.

Phone 59 8078

Mrs. E. Wright,
Treasurer.

Phone 599 4884

Miss D. Row,
Social Secretary.

Phone 50 9300

Mr. A. Ellis,
Research Officer.

Phone 587 1159

"Those who flatter a man may deceive, those who court may betray, but
those who take pains to imitate, have certainly the highest esteem for
him."

..... Lucian.

A cheerio for Members who are not so well - we hope to see you at the meetings soon.

SPECIAL NOTICE. The St. George Historical Society is pleased to announce that the following books, Nos. 1 - 7 written and illustrated by the late Gifford H. Eardley for the Society, have been reprinted and are now available. Books Nos. 8 and 9 have been compiled by Mrs. Bronwyn Perkins.

No. 1. "The Wolli Creek Valley" - (presently out of print))	
No. 2. "Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway")	Price
No. 3. "Saywells Tramway - Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach")	\$2.50
No. 4. "Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway")	plus
No. 5. "Our Heritage in Stone")	postage.
No. 6. "All Stations to Como")	
No. 7. "Tempe and the Black Creek Valley")	
No. 8. "Early Churches of the St. George District")	
No. 9. "Early Settlers of the St. George District" now available.)	
Price \$4.00 plus postage.		

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 - Sec., Phone 59 8078, Mr. A. Ellis - Phone 587 1159.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE:- Annual Subscription due in July 1983.
Single Sub - \$5.00. Family Sub. - \$7.00

2NBC-FM STEREO 90.1 - ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY SEGMENT.
Tuesday Evenings 6.30 p.m. - 6.45 p.m.

14th June & 21st June	- The Early Picture Theatres of Arncliffe (2 tapes)	- Arthur Ellis
28th June	- Copy of Thomas Birkby's letter written 31st May 1836.	- B. Perkins
5th July	- Possible Location of Hannah Laycock's farm house at Kingsgrove and Post Offices in Kingsgrove.	- Brian Madden
12th July	- The Terraces of Single-Faced Cottages of Gibbes St., Rockdale.	- Don Sinclair & Jean Faulkner
19th July	- John Murphy of "Leeholme", Bexley - The Horse 'Buses.	- Jean Faulkner
26th July	- Brighton le Sands - A suburb evolved from the Sandhills.	- Don Sinclair
2nd August	- The Rev. James Clark & John Lucas.	- Don Sinclair
9th August	- Christina Stead - Authoress.	- B. Perkins
16th August	- Primrose House.	- Arthur Ellis
23rd August	- The Man and the Collection (The Mitchell Library)	- B. Perkins
30th August	- A Brief History of the Carss Family & of Carss Bush Estate.	- Arthur Ellis
6th September	- The Sans Souci Tramway.	- Frank Moag.

VISITORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME AT OUR MEETINGS.

LYDHAM HALL LOCAL COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 28TH FEBRUARY, 1983.

With the restoration of Lydham Hall now almost complete the year just concluded has again been a fairly quiet one, the only addition of note to the building being a fountain to complete the landscaping of the rear garden.

We have however, received a number of additional articles of interest and were delighted to learn that the painting "Welcome" by Thomas Dean painted in 1895 and donated by his niece, Mrs. Margaret Tracey in 1982, has been declared a highly significant piece of early Australian portraiture.

During the year under review, Lydham Hall was completely repainted externally and the curator's flat was also repainted.

Despite no particularly outstanding publicity we have continued to attract a constant stream of visitors including a number of school groups. Without exception all have been loud in their praise of Rockdale Council for its foresight in having such a lovely old building preserved. This was particularly so during Heritage Week when over 300 people visited Lydham Hall during one weekend.

The year has, in short, been one of steady, if not spectacular progress marred only by a severe hailstorm in February 1982 which decimated the garden and damaged the roof. Both have now been repaired.

For the year about to begin the Committee has set itself three tasks. 1. To increase attendances by opening the building to organised groups at night. 2. To increase the number of school parties visiting, and 3. To upgrade those rooms where the wear and tear of the 25,000 people who have visited the house since it was opened is beginning to show.

We hope that Council may be able to see its way clear to rebuild the retaining wall at the front of the house which in one place has collapsed completely. This is all that remains to be done to complete the restoration.

In conclusion, I would again like to place on record the Committee's appreciation to Miss Bet Otton, the curator, for the excellence of her commentaries and the immaculate manner in which she maintains the property; to those members of the St. George Historical Society who assist her in showing visitors through the house, and to Mr. Kevin Casey of Council's staff for his ready and prompt response to any matter requiring his attention.

Alderman R.W. Rathbone.
Hon. Secretary,
Lydham Hall Local Committee.
April 1983.

THE COLLINS FAMILY - Caterers - Bexley.

- Gwen Frost.

Mrs Catherine Collins, nee Swarbrick, came with her parents, Richard and James Swarbrick, and her four sisters and two brothers, from Woodplumpton in the Manchester, Blackpool area, about 1910. They had lived in a comfortable two-storey farmhouse on the farm, which had been in the Swarbrick family for generations. The family migrated because of Richard's ill-health. It was thought the warmer Australian climate would be of benefit to him.

They went first to Toowoomba, where Richard had been engaged prior to leaving England, to manage a farm in the area. They found conditions were very primitive, far different from their comfortable home in England. The farmhouse consisted of just one, very large, unlined room, totally unsuitable for themselves and their seven children.

Jane Swarbrick's brother, Robert Rhodes, had come to Sydney some years previously - the first of the family to migrate. He established the first pig and poultry farm in the Matraville area in Smith Street. This area became a big farming community, with pig, poultry and vegetable growing as the main industry. It is now known as Pagewood and is totally suburban. Rhodes Street was named after Robert Rhodes, who was very highly respected in the area.

The Swarbrick family came to stay with him and as he and his wife, Nellie, had seven children of similar ages to the Swarbricks, it was a very lively and crowded household.

Richard and Jane bought land at Arncliffe, in a rural area, now known as the suburb of Turella. Richard's health did not improve. He was found to have cancer of the stomach, and died within a year of reaching Australia.

Jane, who was a wonderful cook and manager, established a dairy farm, run on sound English lines. The family rose at 2.00a.m., milked the large herd of cows and delivered milk in horse-drawn carts to the area around Bexley, Banksia and Arncliffe. There were two deliveries daily. Catherine delivered milk in the Bexley area, alone. A terrifying experience one would think, since the area was sparsely populated and mostly without any street lighting.

Jim Collins came to work on the dairy and courted Kitty. When they had a night out, with transport as it was then, it was usually a case of changing into work clothes on arrival home and on with the milking.

There were many Chinese market gardens around the farm and the industrious Chinese were often the subject of good-humoured tricks on the part of the Swarbricks.

After their marriage the farm was sold and Jane bought land in Sackville Street, Bexley, where she built a wooden home called "The Bungalow". She gave her daughter a block of land next door, and another timber home was built, by the young couple. Both homes are still occupied.

Their two daughters, Jean and Maisie were born, and Jim Collins carried on a milk delivery business from there.

He sold the business to Albert Beale in 1915, and rented a shop in Rouse's buildings, between Harrow Road and Frederick Street, Bexley. He opened a cake shop there and in 1917, built his own premises on the corner of Forest Road and Bayview Street.

By hard work and sheer determination, the young couple built up a cake shop and later, a catering business there. They weathered the depression years. The premises were remodelled and a hall built above the shop, where weddings and small functions were catered for and they prospered.

Two sons were born in 1928 and 1930, James and Richard (Jack), a cause for much rejoicing. In 1944, they retired to live at 20 Henderson Road where they remained for nearly 30 years, finally moving to Ulladulla in 1973.

James became a High School Teacher, but his heart was always set on farming, and he is now a prominent and very successful farmer, at Springvale near Bega. He and his wife are public-spirited, and have by their work, greatly helped the farmers of the valley..

Jack went to England to teach, then to Lake Quesnel in Canada, where he met his wife, Helen, and they now live at Coquitlam, an outer suburb of Vancouver.

Maisie was a secretary, and married Norman Hooper, who was an apprentice in the family business, and after living in Carlton with their five daughters, have retired some years ago to Lake Burril.

Jean, became a senior State School Principal, when women were given that opportunity. She married Charles Groom, but is now widowed, living at Kurrajong where she very successfully breeds Cairn Terriers and maintains her professional interest in teaching children with learning difficulties.

The following Obituary - James (Jim) Collins - is from the Express, dated 21st April 1982.

James (Jim) Collins - "Pop" to everybody, was born August 14, 1886, in Denchworth, Berks, England.

"Pop" was an indentured apprentice to the saddlery trade for a period of four years at Wantage, but became dis-satisfied due to the confined activities which prevented him from following his football training, such as tunning and bicycling, which he also enjoyed at this period of his life.

He left this trade and assisted his father for a short time in farm work, shepherding sheep and ploughing fields.

He was then intorduced to the baking and pastry cooking by a mutual friend. He was employed by the GreatWestern Railway Co-operative at Reading in Berkshire, England where he became a proficient tradesman and as the years went by, he acquitted himself well as a pastrycook.

Later he migrated to Australia and settled at Arncliffe in Sydney, finding work as a dairy hand. He formed an attachment to the daughter (Catherine) of his employer, Mrs Jane Swarbeick, who later became his mother-in-law.

Pop and Catherine set up in business with the financial help of her mother as a caterer and pastrycook, in Forest Road, Bexley, where they conducted a successful enterprise for about 33 years, making many friends in the district during this period.

On retirement, Pop travelled overseas to his homeland and renewed lots of old associations of his youthful days. His wife accompanied him on a later trip.

His first and last love was fishing. Like most fishermen he was prone to exaggeration so far as the size and number of fish he caught or in respect to the ones which got away.

He made a study of fish - habitat, tides, winds and always knew the reasons why fish don't bite. In fact, he became an artful and cagey foe, making it difficult for the fish to escape, whatever the circumstances and it has been suggested that the fisheries inspector was taking more than a passing interest in the "size" of the fish in his bag, particularly when he lived in the St. George District.

In May 1973, he and his wife Kitty, moved from Henderson Road Bexley, (their retirement home) to 27, Boree Street, Ulladulla, where he lived until his death, for nine years, and during that time he and his wife took on an identity in the district, - his wife for her philosophical insight into life generally, with all its plusses and minuses.

Pop being an extrovert, made friends easily. He was always his own man, and to the last took a keen interest in football, tennis and cricket, with a good sense of recall as to the players names, clubs and the score of each event.

His garden was always colourful and immaculate.

He was interesting and told many stories about "the good old days" and his opinions of the workers to-day, by comparison to yesteryear, were provocative. He was concerned about the direction Australia is taking today and of course, he is not the only person to be aware of this, and sharing his concern.

He has lived a good and industrious life and has had a good innings, playing the game of life to its end.

He is survived by four children - Jean (Kurrajong), Maisie (Dolphin Point), Jim (Bega) and Jack (Canada). There are also thirteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren.

Death Notice: COLLINS James - died April 17, 1982 - at hospital, late of 27 Boree Street, Ulladulla, formerly of Henderson Road, Bexley. Dearly loved husband of Katherine (dec'd), loved father of Jean Groom of Kurrajong Maisie Hooper of Dolphin Point, Jim Collins of Bega, and Jack Collins of Vancouver, Canada. Loved Pop of his 13 grand children and 15 great grand children. Aged 95 years.

MICHAEL GANNON. 1800-1881.

-Claire Gannon & Jean Woods.

Michael Gannon, a builder & Inn-keeper, was born at Westmeath, Ireland in 1820.

He and his younger brother James, were sentenced in Meath - Michael for life and James for fourteen years. In December 1820, they arrived in Sydney in the "Almorah".

Michael married Mary Parsonage in 1824 and was assigned to her. They lived in the Rocks area and he worked as a carpenter.

By 1829 he had a ticket of leave and by June 1836, his conditional pardon was granted.

Gannon prospered as a builder and accumulated real estate. He was an Undertaker and ran a Commission Agency in Lower George Street. He also played an active, but largely hidden role in Sydney's politics.

In 1850, he bought for £732.0.0, in St. George Parish, a heavily timbered estate of 1,905 acres known as Gannon's Forest and later re-named Hurstville.

Buying and selling property, he lived in the St. George area until his death in 1881. He was survived by four sons and two daughters, one son being a well known local Solicitor.

He was a generous benefactor to the Roman Catholic Church in Hurstville, and many streets and a Park are named after this pioneering gentleman.

Some descendants of this family still live in the area, one being Claire Gannon, for many years a teacher at St. George High School, and now enjoying retirement.

HISTORY ON TAP AT THOSE CORNER PUBS...

- Percy Burton
- *The Sydney Morning Herald*
- April 8th, 1978.

Sydney pubs, in general, have a fascination for visiting pub-crawlers - but some are more interesting than others. These are the funny-shaped ones, like slices of cake.

The wondrous "cake-slice" pub is usually known to patrons as "The Wedge" and generates a great deal of loyalty. It sits in the fork of two roads, taking a triangular shape by necessity.

These pubs are mainly very old, which adds to their charm. They are also products of Sydney's early "Topsy" growth. Carts taking cargo from Sydney Cove to the city stores wandered wherever the horses or bullocks found the going easiest. Roads came later and followed the tracks. When buildings sprang up along the route, Sydney's serpentine street system stuck. Only now are some of these roads being straightened, at great cost. But pray, to whomever you pray, that demolishers don't cut down any more of these Sydney landmarks. May I list just a few....

- . The Pyrmont Bridge (now closed & deprived of its licence).
- . The Palace (a cosy family pub at Darlinghurst, near Moore Park).
- . The Royal Sovereign (a "true" wedge, standing alone on an island).
- . The Heritage (an Irish ex-patriate pub in cosmopolitan Kings Cross).
- . The Hero of Waterloo (in the Rocks & the oldest of them all).

The Pyrmont Bridge Hotel - unfortunately, no longer rings to the sound of revellers. It is boarded up, and will soon go to the auction. Whether it is destined for the demolisher's hammer will depend on the new owners. Tooth Brewery decided the trade had fallen and transferred the licence to a North Shore tavern.

"It's a shame to see it being gutted", said the former licensee, Denis Flowey. "It was a popular and busy pub a few years ago, but most of the residents have moved away from Pyrmont. There are mostly factories and warehouses now on this side of the road and the workers don't hang around long after knockoff time. I think the pub just outgrew its usefulness - more's the pity."... and Denis went back to clearing away the vestiges of a bygone era.

The Palace Hotel - though, is still active - in a British pubsy way. It gets trade day and night, from the workers in Flinders Street and from the residents of the terrace houses in South Dowling Street. It is cool, under widespread awnings, on sunny Sydney days; and wall heaters warm it in winter. It is remarkably quiet inside, considering the dense traffic flow outside.

The Palace has many British migrant customers, including the inevitable

Jock and Mick. They appreciate its polished wooden bars and timbered walls. A unique feature is the bar decor of curling, smoke-stained parchment replicas of British inn signs. Enjoy a walk along the sharply slanting interior walls to read all the signs and enjoy the Pickwickian verse (with a cold glass in your hand - of course).

The publican, Brian Black, quietly commands a lot of respect from his regulars, including the daytime dalliers - in the Ladies Parlour. Yes, it still has one; and the odd man who wanders in soon finds what it is like to be the odd man out.

Mr Black's wife, Judy, has one complaint about the wedge-shaped pub. "Housekeeping in a place like this is a work of art," she says. "When we laid carpet upstairs it had to be cut individually for each room to allow for the angles. None of the rooms has a square wall." Mr Black is anxious to preserve the wall signs. "The heat of the sun on the outside of the walls is making them curl around the edges and the smoke in the bar is turning the paper brown," he said. "They'll be impossible to read if I don't do something. I'm thinking of getting them coated with some sort of plastic and insulating them from the heat of the walls."

The Royal Sovereign Hotel - at the Kings Cross end of Darlington, has two special claims to fame.

It is an "island" wedge with Liverpool Street running along the back wall, while Darlington Road and Hardie Street frame the two long walls. It has also been in one family's hands for 40 years and has been their home for almost all that time. Tooheys built it.

The line is joined by Mrs Solomon (nee Jeanette Mann), whose father John was the original licensee. Mrs Solomon explained: "Most of our patrons call it 'The Wedge'; and it was once called 'Headquarters' because a taxi company had a depot across the road and all the drivers dropped in here."

The Royal Sovereign has many souvenirs of bygone pub services. One item due for restoration is a "quartsing" machine, a device used to fill quart bottles for the take-home drinker who didn't want a full five-gallon keg. (There was a time, young man, when there were no cans, no glass kegs - and no drive-in bottle departments!)

"The wooden kegs used to be heaved up on to spring frames and tapped right on the bar," Mrs Solomon said. "When we were 'quartsing', the customers would keep us hopping to buy them hot off the press, so to speak. The quart bottles carried our own Golden Ale label and were popular because it was good draught beer."

Mr and Mrs Solomon searched through old clippings and scrapbooks to find a specimen of the Golden Ale label, but in vain. The pub was modernised a few years ago and lots of items had to be thrown away.

Mrs Solomon prevailed on her father, still bright and alert in his '80's, to recall the recipe for "Tom and Jerry" rum drinks, the Royal Sovereign used to serve in large numbers on chilly nights.

Ingredients: Fresh eggs, sugar, rum (over or underproof), hot water, cream, nutmeg (or a similar spice).

Directions: Beat the eggs; add sugar and stir to a thick paste. Add the rum and bottle it to mature; it will keep for weeks). When ordered, pour a nip of the stuff into a glass and fill with water. Top the glass with cream and sprinkle with spice to suit your taste.

Mrs Solomon now caters well for students from East Sydney Technical College (the old Darlinghurst jail), who are the main lunchtime customers. "We know that they don't have a lot of money", Mrs Solomon said, "so we keep our counter lunches simples and wholesome. We cook the fillings in our own kitchen and serve chicken, roast beef and other sandwiches quite cheaply. They can get pies and rolls, too."

Relatives of patients in nearby St. Vincent's Hospital get special rates in the Royal Sovereign if they have to stay close at hand. Hospital social workers send them over.

The Australian Heritage Hotel - down Bayswater Road, Kings Cross, is as Irish as Mickey Moloney's pig. Why, you may well ask, should a pub known as The Australian Heritage, be so Irish? A feller by the name of Phil Fitzpatrick, upped and left Liverpool for Sydney Town. Young Phil had gone up in the pub game from bell-hop to boss and wanted new challenges. He ran the Elizabethan Inn, in Darling Point, for his first five years here and then bought the Heritage a year ago - lock, stock and barrel.

Soon Irishmen of the Eastern Suburbs drifted in, and out, and then back in again. And why not? Here was a bit of home, where one could sing if one had a mind to, without getting a dirty look from some big bouncer. "I like to hear a bit of a song myself", said the jovial Mr Fitzpatrick. "I believe the customers come here to be happy - or a little bit sad if the mood of the song takes them so."

On St. Patrick's Day last month the counter lunch was free and for a couple of hours there was no charge for the hard stuff. Patrons feasted on sliced boiled beef, potatoes boiled in their jackets and soaked in butter sauce, pickles, onions and thick bread, dripping with butter.

The Hero of Waterloo - as befits the eldest, is left to the last. A landmark of the Rocks district, it reeks of history. The lanes around it were the lairs of the larrikins and the Push.

The Rocks got its name from its obvious geological toughness soon after the First Fleet dropped anchor in Sydney Cove. It became the roughest quarter soon after the first rum was poured.

The Hero was first built as a military barracks on the corner of Windmill Street and Lower Fort Street.

It is said, that it was first licensed as The Little Princess Inn, some years before the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), after which its name was changed to honour the Duke of Wellington's victory over Napoleon Bonaparte.

Of all the wedge-shaped pubs, it must be the plainest. Yet it is probably the most graceful architecturally, with its relatively unadorned stonework - mellow with great age. The cellars give a visitor the impression of going back into another, quieter age. The walls are cool and shine with whitewash and they ramble through a labyrinth of tiny, echoing chambers.

In a corner of the cellars there is a solitary confinement cell - doorless now. It must have been incorporated in its barracks days; was it being reserved for the writer who interrupted the serious drinkers with his questions about the wedge-shaped pubs of Sydney?
