



# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

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24 Duff Street,  
ARNCLIFFE. 2205.  
September 1983.

Dear Friend and Member,

The September Meeting will be held as follows:-

Date: Friday Evening, September 16th, 1983, at 8.00 p.m.  
Place: Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale.  
Business: General.  
Syllabus Item: Peter Sage presents: "Abandoned Mining Ventures in N.S.W."  
(including Hill End and Sofala). Come and enjoy.  
Supper Roster: Captain. Mrs. Lee, together with Mesdames Buckingham, Manser  
and Ronson.  
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

"The friendship between you and me I will not compare to a chain;  
for that the rains might rust or the falling tree break."

..... G. Bancroft.

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 Wollie Creek Valley" - (presently out of print)	)	Price
No. 2.	"Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway"	)	\$2.50
No. 3.	"Saywells Tramway - Rockdale to Lady Robinson's Beach"	)	plus
No. 4.	"Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway"	)	postage.
No. 5.	"Our Heritage in Stone"	)	
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 July 1983.      Single Sub. - \$5.00.  
    Family Sub. - \$7.00.

### HAVE YOU OVERLOOKED THIS?

### AN APOLOGY.

Unfortunately the copies of the Society and Lydham Hall Annual Statements to 30/6/83 included in the August Bulletin were not complete.

Full copies are set out in the current bulletin.

Eileen Eardley,  
 Hon. Secretary,  
 16th September, 1983.

2NBC-FM STEREO 90.1 - ST. GEORGE SOCIETY SEGMENTTuesday Evenings 6.30 p.m. - 6.45 p.m.

- 13th September - Social Outings. - D. Row & M. Callister.
- 20th September - Bexley as I knew it - C. Wilding.  
1895 - 1917.
- 27th September - Street Lighting in Bexley - M. Callister.
- 4th October - Woronora & Botany Cemeteries - D. Row.
- 11th October - The Street Traders of Old )  
Sydney Town - )  
Anis and George Bills - ) - C. Wilding.  
Horse Lovers - )  
A Testimony of the 1870's - )
- 18th October - The Wollli Creek Valley - Book 1 - A. Ellis.
- 25th October - The Tramway books 2, 3 & 4. - A. Ellis & B. Perkins.
- 1st November - Heritage in Stone, Como, Tempe - A. Ellis & B. Perkins.  
Books 5, 6 & 7
- 8th November - Early Churches of the St. George District - B. Perkins.  
& Early Settlers Vol. 1.  
Books 8 & 9.

# ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
INCOME	AND	EXPENDITURE	YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE 1983
Members' Subscriptions	579.20	Nu Print - Book No. 9	2270.00
R.A.H.S. Cultural Grant	100.00	Mrs. Eardley Postage	266.29
Members' Donations	101.40	Mrs. Eardley Petty Cash	69.47
badge Sales	6.00	Mrs. Wright Petty Cash	60.00
Sale Society Books	627.75	Mrs. Wright Stamp	8.90
Tempe-East Hills Book	9.85	Miss Row Christmas Party	120.00
Bus Trips	604.00	R.A.H.S. - fees 2 Delegates	80.00
Raffles	68.95	R.A.H.S. Annual Subscription	40.00
Refund Christmas Party	23.00	National Trust Subscription	24.00
Loans by members	1100.00	Australia Post - fee	20.00
State Bank Interest	38	Blytheways Bus Co.	630.00
Commonwealth Bank Interest	40.22	Mrs. Perkins Stationery	51.24
		Mr. Lee 2 Books & Receipt Books	17.12
		Cheque Book	5.00
		F.I.D. 40c & F.D.T. \$1.25	1.65
		State Bank transfer fee	1.00
		Balance in bank 30/6/83	3664.67
		Less unrepresented cheque	773.46
			21.62
			751.34
			\$4416.51

I certify that I have examined the books of account vouchers, cheque butts and bank statements presented by Mrs. E. Wright as treasurer of the above society and my opinion this represents a true statement of its financial affairs as at 30th June, 1983.

*A. H. Lunn*  
Auditor 8/7/83.

LYDHAM HALL FUND RAISING COMMITTEE  
FOR YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE 1983

INCOME

Lydham Hall Admittances	436.80
Cake Sales	4.20
Raffles	97.80
Donations	54.85
Century of Progress Sales	48.00
St. George Historical Society Books sold	227.00
Lydham Hall Teaspoons	180.00
Hurstville Historical Society Books sold	12.80
Bank interest	22.01
Cash in bank and on hand 30/6/82	<u>491.33</u>
Grand Total	<u>\$1574.79</u>
Capital Investment in St. George Building Society A/c No. 111 973 702 at 30/6/82	1662.15
Interest	161.65
Less F.I.D.	<u>02</u>
	<u>\$1823.78</u>
Value of teaspoons on hand \$56.00	

LYDHAM HALL FUND RAISING COMMITTEE  
FOR YEAR ENDING 30th JUNE 1983

EXPENDITURE

Petty Cash	30.00
Purchase St. George Historical Society books	205.90
Mobile Carpet Cleaning	40.00
Christmas Raffle 1982 - prize	30.00
Purchase Rockdale Council - Century of Progress books	40.00
Fee to Australia Post re circulars	27.00
Petty Cash	15.00
Cheque book	<u>5.00</u>
Transfer fee to State Bank	1.00
F.D.T. & F.I.D.	26
Cash in bank	<u>1207.63</u>
Less unrepresented cheque	1601.79
	<u>27.00</u>
Grand total	<u>\$1574.79</u>

I certify that I have examined the books of account vouchers, cheque butts, bank statements and building society passbook presented by Miss B. Utton as treasurer of the above committee and in my opinion this represents a true statement of its financial affairs as at 30th June, 1983.

*B. Utton*  
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Auditor 8/7/83

## I REMEMBER -

This article entitled "I Remember" and the one also entitled "Old Arncliffe" were written some years ago and unfortunately not dated nor signed. They are written in a clear handwriting, using a fountain pen. On sorting out older files, they have re-surfaced. Maybe someone reading them, will recognise them and let the Society know.

1. I was born in Arncliffe in 1903, a notable event for the world; but was it for me?
2. The Arncliffe - Bexley Tramway in its infancy, the first tram departing from Arncliffe Railway Station amidst pomp and ceremony.
3. The Kindergarten School conducted by Misses Cork and Osborn. School located at 75 Hirst Street Arncliffe a weatherboard structure, subsequently transferred as a residence to Broe Avenue, to accommodate Granny Litely.
4. The fire that burned the structure to the ground, and the burning to death of the dear old Granny at the same time.
5. Arncliffe Park with its post and rail fence, its creek, now piped drain way, its pear tree, the weatherboard pavillion in the centre, where the present Soldier Memorial Oblesque is located. The fence enclosed. Cast iron drinking fountain, with its cast iron cup attached to chains.
6. The horses which roamed the park and the mushrooms.
- 6a. When that portion of Broe Avenue between Station Street and Wollongong Road was a paddock, and palings removed to allow access to each.
7. Bobby Dunsworth, that pleasant old "Cop" who was fond of the "kids", playing football with them, and lecturing them for their wrong doings.
8. The "top picture show", the Lyric, with its roof half way along. The rainy Saturday nights when those front part patrons crowded into the back part to escape a wetting and to enjoy the show on a wet glittering screen. The nights when the stubborn old donkey engine would not start, and the apology from the Proprietor, "Old" Blackadder and later Matt Predeaux and the Matters family.
9. The nights the front patrons were noisy.
10. The screen effects, peas in a film tin rattled for water effect, two halves of coconut shells tapped on boards to imitate horses running and a 6d. cap gun for the revolver shooting of William S Hart.

11. The "bottom show", the "Tin House", the Elite Theatre in Barden Street, Proprietor King, with the word REX in electric light on the outside of the building, right hand top corner of the screen. What seats -- and those trained fleas. Mr King was killed in a railway accident.
12. The night the films caught fire.
13. The Highbury Barn Hotel with its hitching rails, its fenced in small pepper corn trees.
14. The Arncliffe Hotel - Mitchells - with its verandah, hitching rails, water trough and big peppercorn trees.
15. The Dettman Timber Factory fire, the night Fire Captain Wolfendon was killed by the falling chimney stack.
16. The bell which rang at the railway station as a warning to intending passengers that a steam train was passing under the Forest Road overhead bridge.
17. The railway level crossing gates at the foot of Done Street.  
The days the World War I started and finished.  
The passing through Arncliffe of the "Kangaroo" recruits.
18. The seven years supremacy of the Arncliffe "A" cricket team with repeated ability to beat an English Eleven. What cricketers the victorious team had, to mention a few:  
Charlie Walker Captain, Charlie Crispo,  
Dan Moloney, Albert Ford, Nipper Nosworthy,  
Percy Marr, Frank Donaghue, George Crispo,  
Ray Freemans, that master hitter, alleged to have put a ball in Station Street.
19. That stately homes and properties of the Judds, the Gibbons, the Farleighs, the Esdailes, not forgetting the Castle near Tempe and the advent of Earl Park as the League Football Centre of the St. George District.
20. The brawl on Earl Park after Balmain v St. George match.
21. The last tram on the Arncliffe - Bexley run and the good-bye to old "Hughee" the driving ace who beat "Old" Wright's buses to Arncliffe.

22. Arncliffe School with its Montgomery, Heatherton, Finlayson, Morrow and Ben Roberts, Kate Smith, Mrs Bingham, not forgetting Miss Allan the teacher with a wonderful memory of faces.
23. The old sewerage farm and the anguish of the advent of the southerlies, which wafted the obnoxious perfumes in all directions.
24. The Depression and its haartache.
25. The first electric train through Arncliffe.
26. Vincents and Lusty's nurseries.
27. The great blow which blew the Seventh Day Adventist's Church from its foundations.
28. The great Waratah - Wanderers, Mortdale Deathadders, Marist Brothers and Bexley Waratahs. Football tussles on Arncliffe Park and the fights among the enthusiastic followers.
29. The swims in creeks, Ducky, Springy, Cooksie in our birthday suits and treacherous Jackoes where a number of our schoolmates lost their lives.

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Old Arncliffe.

You ask me do I remember the Arncliffe of old. The stately homes, the properties before being sold. The old proud families who lived in those homes, about whom great poets could write fancy poems - of the Judds, the Gibbons, the Farleighs and such who contributed to charities over generously much.

Yes, I do remember the Arncliffe of old. In my memory the Park is imprinted so bold. The pear tree, the pavilion, the trees, oh, so tall. The fountain, the horse trough and the Memorial Hall. The floods, the fights, and football galore, all prior to the 1914-15 great war.

I remember the Arncliffe and the the Highbury Barn, where so many men gathered to drink and to yarn. The hitching rails, horses but no motor cars. When fresh frothy nectar was sold in quart jars. The peppercorn trees and white fence surrounds that studded both the hotels boundary grounds.

Do I still remember the Sewerage Farm smell... from the notable farm that made our life hell... particularly was it bad on a hot summer night with humidity and temperatures seemingly high... when we craved for the southerly wind, so superb.. that blew the smells to



the neighbouring suburbs.

I remember the Lyric, the "top picture show" where whole families each Saturday ventured to go, to enjoy William S Hart and his cowboy guns.. to wait for "interval" to buy peanuts and buns. Then came the Elite, the Barden Street shed. And all got a shock to hear the Proprietor was dead.

I still remember the awful night when Dettman's Timber Yard caught badly alight and that brave Fire Captain Wolfenden, by name, was fatally injured, but there was no blame. The big chimney stack suddenly changed its position and crashed the fireman's helmet beyond recognition.

I remember when the Bexley Loop was built but the tram did not pay for this political scoop. I remember the tram with its human load puffing its way up Wollongong Road.

And Wright's buses were particularly a hit, a fast trip to Bexley for a sixpenny bit.

I have memories to divulge, memories galore,  
But I'm afraid that my poetry is proving a bore,  
Arncliffe to me, is a wonderful thought,  
of boyhood experiences which cannot be bought,  
I'm now reaching the age when retirement's the rule  
But I'll always remember the old Arncliffe School.

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Does this article ring a bell somewhere in your own memory?  
I would like to be able to put a name to the article and give due recognition in a later Bulletin.

Maybe reading this will enthuse some members to look a little further and research some of the events and people mentioned. Of such articles come future papers for the Society.

- Eileen Eardley.  
Hon. Secretary...1983.

## HISTORIC CANNON IS RUSTING AWAY.

- St George Leader 15.12.82.

One of Australia's rarest colonial relics is being left to rust beneath many coats of paint in Cook Park, Monterey. The relic is a cannon cast between 1727 and 1760, during the reign of King George II.

Australia's only licensed cannon maker, Mr Ken Luker, of Hurstville Grove, discovered the cannon's importance five years ago when he rubbed off some paint to find the king's insignia.

He said most cannons in Australia were cast during the reign of King George III and the Cook Park cannon would be rare even in England.

Rockdale Council, which administrates Cook Park, does not know how the cannon came to be there, but Mr Luker believes it came out on the first fleet to be used for shore armament.

It was capable of firing a 12 pound ball 500 metres and had been recorded as firing two rounds a minute when muzzle-loaded.

Mr Luker has been corresponding with the keeper of firearms at London Tower, Mr Howard Blackmore, who inspected the cannon when he was in Australia last year.

In a letter to Mr Luker, Mr Blackmore gave Sydney a blast for neglecting an "historical relic". "I am convinced the Brighton cannon should be put indoors and displayed as a colonial relic" he said. "I think it is similar to the Captain Cook cannon now in the library in Canberra. If Canberra can treat its cannon properly, why should Sydney behave so badly?"

Mr Luker would like to see the cannon stripped of several coats of paint, fully restored and mounted under cover with the story of its history alongside. "It really hurts me to see it left as it is", he said.

Mr Luker is convinced he could restore the cannon to its original state.

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Further to the above article, the following letter dated 16th December 1982, has been received by the Society from Mr Alex J Hutchison, A.S.T.C. Chartered Engineer.

"I am a member of the Rockdale Historical Society, and am an old resident of Rockdale. My parents came to live in No.69 Bay Street Rockdale (a few doors from Goode's Bakery on the corner of Cairo Street) in 1906. I was then 5 years old. In 1907 we moved to 50 Bestic Street (previously called

Goode's Street) Rockdale, on top of Rockdale Hill, where my father quarried out the stone and built our house in his spare time, which took about 4 or 5 years to complete. Although I was then 7 to 12 years old, I also assisted. In the early years I remember holding the hurricane lamp at night while my father chipped and squared the stones, and later was able to do other tasks. The house is still standing, but subsequent owners have made alterations. My father was an alderman in Rockdale Council from 1920-1922, having been a successful candidate at the by-election caused by the death of Ald. Broe. He had many public and private interests and did not seek re-election after 1922.

With regard to the "Historic Cannon". I remember quite well that there were 4 of them, all in good order and apparently in almost new condition, on the sandhills above the beach when we first came to Rockdale. They were regarded as being part of the landscape, as much as were the famous pine trees.

One was placed near the footpath on Grand Parade, right in front of the Brighton Hotel, and was pointed towards the Heads. Matterson's Mens Baths was in front of it, but a little below it. There was a roadway next to the men's baths (a continuation of Bay St. leading down on to a wharf, where the S.S. "Erina" used to pick up passengers for Kurnell. There was no easy way of getting to Kurnell by road in those days. Next to the roadway, to the south, was the ladies' baths. On special occasions "Continental Bathing" was permitted, and the ladies were allowed to come through a gateway underneath the jetty into the men's baths, leaving the ladies' baths private for those who did not wish to join the men.

Another cannon was placed a little to the north of the other one, perhaps 100' or so.

I am not sure where the other two cannon were placed, but I think they were at about 100' intervals south of Bay Street.

Bare Island, at the entrance of Botany Bay was a fort, and, I think in 1906 was actually manned.

The 4 cannons at Lady Robinson's Beach could hardly have been regarded as a protection against invasion, as Mr Luker believes **they** were meant to be. They had a limited range and there was a great expanse of unprotected beach in both directions.

At the time, we understood that they were placed there to commemorate the Boer War, and as a tribute to the Australian soldiers who fought in that war.

As time passed, the cannons became neglected, and the barrels were mostly filled with rubbish. I have a vivid recollection of the decayed and splintered timber framework on which the barrels were mounted.

The newspaper article states: "Rockdale Council which administrates Cook Park, does not know how the cannon came to be there, but Mr Luker believes it came out on the first fleet to be used for shore armament."

On page 92 of the book - "Rockdale - Its beginnings and Development" it states: "Thomas Saywell overlooked no detail that would add attraction to his resort... his pioneering of electric light... Installation of a large septic tank ... the old muzzle loading fortress cannon, over which generations of youngsters have swarmed, added a romantic note to the rusticity of the beach, whilst in its heyday Shady Nook boasted a bandstand, roundabout and children's playground..."

Again on page 90, it states: "Samuel Cook was one of its (Cook Park) early trustees, and was mainly responsible for forming the first road from Sans Souci towards Brighton. Cook and Saywell collaborated in planting the familiar pine trees which have long been an attractive feature of the beach."

It would seem from this that Thomas Saywell put the cannon and the pine trees there.

I think the Rockdale Historical Society might take the lead and ask Rockdale Council, who are no doubt, custodians of the cannon, to restore it and protect it for posterity.

Could the cannon which is said to be similar to it, and is now in the library in Canberra, be one of the original 4 which were at Lady Robinson's Beach?

Rockdale Council should have records regarding the present whereabouts of all 4 cannon".

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ARNCLIFFE FIRE STATION.

- Gifford H Eardley

George Cartlege, an upholsterer of Wollongong Road whose premises were located between Wolli Creek Road and Willison Road, was a volunteer fireman.

Together with the rest of the volunteers he was summoned to the station by means of a push button bell circuit. It has been related, that George, with his mouth full of tacks, and hammering away, heard the bell ring. George grabbed his bike, tacks went everywhere, he slammed the door and was instantly away to do his duty. Other firemen arrived on horseback, push bike or on foot, as expediently as possible.

The volunteer firemen were paid a flat rate of 5/- per call. The first man to arrive after the fire engine left the station, was duty officer at the station.

There was a "Dennis" motor fire engine in use in latter years, but originally a horse drawn engine sufficed, stables being located at the rear of the station.

Major fires attended were Tanner and Middleton at Hurstville, Whitakers at Banksia and Dettman's at Arncliffe, whilst many grass and scrub burnings were put out.

There were one or two men on permanent duty and six or seven volunteers, locally employed men, on call.

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Some Dames Schools in Arncliffe - years ago.

- G H Eardley

The Dunn School in Union Street, Arncliffe, was a former orchard property which reached towards Station Street, and was noted for its peaches.

Trotter's School was opposite the new St. David's Church of England in Forest Road, its school room being beneath the house. Had "~~s~~elect" pupils only, higher fees being charged.

The "Cork" School, taught by Mrs Cork and Miss Osborne, was located at 75 Hirst Street and was a typical country single roomed school at the side of the present premises, which were built later than 1906-7. Kindergarten pupils were taken. This school room was transported bodily to Broe Avenue and handed to "Granny" Lightly as a residence, which was located about five or six doors down from the intersection of Hirst Street and Broe Avenue, immediately opposite the Park.

Other Dames Schools were Miss Arnold, of Arncliffe College, Forest Road, later destroyed by fire, and Mr Adcock's private school at 28 Wazir Street.

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