

SPONSORED BY
ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



PRICE 5 c.

ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BULLETIN

Registered by Australia
Post N.B.H. 0335

563A Princes Highway,
BLAKEHURST 2221

March, 1986

Dear Friend and Member,

The March meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Friday, 21st March, 1986

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

Business: General

Syllabus Item: This meeting we go to China. Mr. Bowra, who very kindly showed slides of parts of Asia last year, will take us further, this time to China. How many of us have been privileged to go to China? It is a fascinating country. You are sure to enjoy these slides. Do Come along.

Supper Roster: Mrs Kell, Captain together with Mesdames Abigail and Welch.

LADIES PLEASE BRING A PLATE

Mr. A. Ellis,
President and Research
Officer

Telephone: 587 1159

Mrs B. Perkins,
Publicity Officer

Telephone: 587 9164

Mrs K. Hamey,
Secretary

Telephone: 546 3355

Mrs E. Wright,
Treasurer

Telephone: 599 4884

SOCIAL SECRETARY!!!
Surely there is one amongst
us who will help out?????

Mrs E. Eardley,
Asst. Secretary &
Bulletin Editor

Miss D. Row,
Asst. Treasurer

Never lose a chance, it does not come every day.....ANON.

The error of a Moment becomes the sorrow of a lifetime

A Chinese Quotation

A cheerio to our friends who are not so well. Our best wishes to all for a speedy recovery.

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" |) | |
| No. 2 | "Kogarah to Sans Souci Tramway" |) | |
| No. 3 | "Saywells Tramway - Rockdale to Lady Robinsons Beach" |) | Book Nos. 1-8 |
| No. 4 | "Arncliffe to Bexley Tramway" |) | \$2.50 each |
| No. 5 | "Our Heritage in Stone" |) | plus 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" Volume 1 |) | |
| | (Price \$4.00 plus postage) | | |
| No. 10 | "Early Settlers of the St. George District" Volume 2 |) | |
| | (Will be available soon, it is now being printed) | | |

ALL BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE AT OUR MEETING, ALSO MEMBERS BADGES

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

- | | | |
|----------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Miss B. Otton | - | Telephone 59 4259 (after 8.00 p.m.) |
| Mrs E. Eardley | - | Telephone 59 8078 |
| Mr. A. Ellis | - | Telephone 587 1159 |
| Mrs K. Hamey | - | Telephone 546 3355 |

NEW MEMBERS AND VISITORS ARE WELCOME

Yours sincerely,

Catharine O'Carroll

-----Catharine O'Carroll, Member R.H.S.



The Sisters of Charity
St. Vincent's Convent
Potts Point, 2011

TELEPHONE: 358 2288

December 20, 1985.

Mrs E. Eardley,
Assistant Secretary and Bulletin Editor,
St George Historical Society,
24 Duff Street,
Arncliffe. NSW 2205

Dear Mrs Eardley,

The arrival of the St George Historical Society Bulletin unfailingly gives pleasure, and I manage to drop the research I am doing and avidly devour its contents. It is so consistent, and with its masthead is well presented with a professional finish.

No Historical Society in Sydney has had its local areas so beautifully delineated, and with such sensitivity. What a wealth of historical detail is thus recorded while still fresh in the writer's memory! Coming generations will surely have cause to praise the generosity and assiduity of the St George members for putting in print the region's first halting steps from earliest nucleus of a few stores through to a thriving suburb. Australian city suburbs thus differ very much from European cities which often were first Roman garrisons or the English ones which were feudal villages round the Manor house.

If ever we wonder what makes us Australians (pre-1988) surely the emergence of our suburbs must play a feature role. The beauty of a backyard or a bushland paddock or the bit of Crown land in one's vicinity had the capacity to make every little boy or girl an adventurer equal to anything Robert Louis Stevenson ever dreamt up. Climbing the nearest gumtree far excelled all the man-made play parks of today.

I like the way the Bulletin includes items of general interest concerning this far-flung city of ours. Such professional articles culled from the S M Herald recall for us items we might have overlooked. If the silver is good, a fresh polish up can only enhance it.

I wish you all courage in the faithful production of your Journal, for its value cannot always be clearly recognised except perhaps by a minority. Perhaps no query in another country could evoke such interest as when put to a pioneer Australian of any suburb: "How did you get there in the early days?" On foot? Horseback? Coach? Rail or Tram?

For the coming Year of 1986 may St George Historical Society continue to be tops!

Yours sincerely,

Catherine O'Carrigan
(Sister) Catherine O'Carrigan Member RAHS.

FANNED INTO FLAME -

The Spread of the Sunday School -

- Beverley Earnshaw.

(Part 4 - continuing the
Colonial Sunday School)

The story of the founding of Australia's first Sunday School has been told many times until it has become one of those gems of oral history quite without documentation. It is said that young Thomas Hassall, then 19 years old, was sitting at home one Sunday afternoon reading an account of the foundation of Sunday Schools in England by Robert Raikes. He dozed off but was disturbed when a fly persisted in settling on his face. Looking out of the window, he observed some children playing in the paddock opposite and being influenced by what he had just read, decided to invite them in and tell them some Bible Stories. He dismissed the incident from his mind until the following Sunday when there came a knock at the door and there stood the children, this time accompanied by some of their friends asking to hear more of his stories. In this manner a regular Sunday class began in the Hassall cottage and its numbers increased so rapidly that the Hassalls had to seek permission from the Rev. Samuel Marsden to hold it in St. John's Church.

The local schoolmaster, John Eyre, expressed great displeasure at the move. He thought the religious instruction he gave in the day school was adequate, but many of the children Thomas Hassall brought into his Sunday School were from such poor families that their parents could not afford to educate them at all.

Much of the credit for the Sunday School's success should be shared by James Smith, a builder, who along with Hassall went from door to door throughout the district canvassing for children. According to John Dunmore Lan in whose church Smith later became an elder, James Smith was an emancipist, a "Scotchman" who had been transported to N.S.W. for his part in a riot during which the military had been pelted with stones. Smith was identified by witnesses as one of the stone-throwers. (13) His contribution to the colony as a builder is still evident today in the towers of St. John's Parramatta and the church of St. Luke's, Liverpool.

Once the first Sunday School was underway, others quickly appeared. In 1813 William Pascoe Crook, another of the 1803 Tahitian Missionaries, opened one at Concord, where, after a ten mile drive from his home he would teach 8 to 10 children and afterwards conduct divine service for their parents. (14)

In 1816, Mr Ellis formed a Sunday School at Prospect, a district settled by many small emancipist farmers, and enrolled "nearly 30". (15).

Also in 1816 the Liverpool Sunday School made its appearance with "30-35" scholars. There children were perhaps the keenest of all, as this anecdote recorded by Dr. Thomas Reid will show:-

"revd. Mr Cartwright was the resident clergyman at Liverpool where on Sunday Evening he usually gives instruction to all the children who care to come to his house. It happened on one of those occasions that heavy rains had caused the overflow of the river (Georges) so as to render it impossible for anyone to wade across, consequently he did not expect any of those children whose parents lived on the opposite side; to his astonishment, however, some of them came... It appeared they had tied their clothes upon their heads and swum across, intending to return in the same manner..." (16)

... There was only 1 printing press in the colony and its use to produce Sunday School books would have proved too costly. Therefore Marsden setup a Missionary Press in Rowland Hassall's cottage for the purpose of printing catechisms.

This press was used to publish the first set of Rules and Requirements for persons engaging themselves as Teachers in the Parramatta Sunday School, compiled by Thomas Hassall, the Supt. and Secretary. Such people had to be nominated and elected by a majority on a show of hands at the monthly teachers' meeting; were to attend regularly and punctually; were to visit absentee children; were not to inflict bodily punishment on the children; and were to meet the children socially during the week to gain their confidence and affection.

On entering the school, the children were given books suited to their capacities, and when they could repeat the catechism, they were given a testament. There was no offertory, of course, and the teachers made a "voluntary" monthly subscription to pay for the children's book. The main aim of the Parramatta Sunday School was -

"that you (teachers) endeavour, to the best of your ability, in the plainest and most endearing manner to impress on the minds of your scholars the plain, simple and fundamental principles and doctrines of the Bible; together with the several moral duties which as children they owe to their parents, masters etc., etc., in no wise attempting to influence their opinion in favour of any one denomination of Christians." (17)

It was this last-mentioned rule that made it possible for adherents to the different denominations to co-operate.

There were 15 teachers in the Parramatta Sunday School, mostly young people. The names of several who were teaching in the early years are known, but there is no way of telling if they were the original teachers. Rowland & Thomas Hassall took classes, as did Miss Elizabeth Marsden, Charles Simeon Marsden, Hannah Mason, Isaac Mason, Mr White & Lucy Shelly. In 1820, Ann Marsden, who later became Thomas Hassell's wife, wrote:-

"There is now a good Sunday School in operation with 110 children attending regularly. The little black children made rapid improvement. The girls read fluently and sew very neatly."(18)

In Sunday School, reading was given the highest priority as this was the key which opened the scriptures, an indispensable tool in a child's progress towards total commitment to Jesus Christ.....

In spite of the shortage of clergy within the colony, the outskirts of Parramatta were well-served by missionaries. Rowland Hassall used to preach at Kissing Point & help at a little day school run by 2 other Tahitian Missionaries, William Henry & James Cover (Hassall's brother-in-law). In 1817, a Sunday School was started by an elderly gentleman, James Shepherd, in Dowdle's Barn, which was built on land originally granted to Captain William Kent (1751-1812) the nephew of Governor Hunter. This site is now intersected by the main northern railwayline. Unfortunately the enrolment dwindled from 17 to 3, due to lack of interest.(20) Some time later, Mrs Henry, the missionary's wife started a Sunday School which developed into the Ryde Wesleyan and as late as 1877, this grand old lady was guest of honour at a function of the Sunday School she founded..herself close to 100 years old. (21)

Pioneer Sunday Schools were not established in the Hawkesbury District. This parish was administered by the Rev. Henry Fulton ...who favoured the church day school system. When he went to Castlereagh in 1814 he opened a seminary in his rectory and received young gentlemen to be educated in "the classics, modern languages and such parts of mathematics both in theory and practice, as may suit the taste of the scholar.".....

The Sunday School at St. James Church Sydney was founded by the Rev. Richard Hill whose efforts went undocumented until after his death. It was only after Hill died suddenly in his own vestry at St. James in June 1836, that the Sunday School Committee published a testimonial to him in the 79th issue of "The Colonist". It stated that Hill had laboured for the Sunday School for 16 years -

"with all the energy of one deeply interested in the welfare of the children of the colony and by his uniform kindness and accessibility attached both teachers and children to him in a very remarkable manner."

Therefore, St. James Sunday School must have been older than the church.

According to Archdeacon Scott the Colony had 4,724 children in 1825. Of these, 802 attended the 18 Crown Schools and 991 the 5 private schools, leaving 2,931 children without any education at all. (23)
 ..There was no legislation to force them to go and no legislation in Australia restricting the age of child labourers, thus it was common practice for children to work to supplement the family income... When giving evidence before the Legislative Council Committee on immigration in 1838, William Macarthur expressed the opinion:-

"Every healthy child of 8 or 9 years should be able to earn enough for its maintenance & children 2 or 3 years younger can contribute towards it - (at Camden) we have generally 10 to 20 children from 5 to 6 years old to 16, employed at rates from 3d. to 1/- (2cents to 10 cents) per diem. Their labour remunerates for the rates paid. These are paid with reference to the value of their work; and frequently, where circumstances admit, it is performed by task, when they not unfrequently earn considerably more than the daily wages I have named." (24)

The Macarthurs built a school at Camden Park capable of housing 100 to 120 children, but only about 30 attended daily, however, the whole of the children, whether their parents were Roman Catholic or Protestant attended a Sunday School in common. (25) ...The Rev. Thomas Hassall was their local Rector....

After founding Australia's first Sunday School, Thomas Hassall went to England to study for his ordination, which took place in 1821. On the homeward voyage aboard the convict ship "Mary" which arrived in Sydney in January 1822 he conducted school as he explained in a letter to the Bishop of London:-

"...your petitioner was allowed a Passage in the convict ship "Mary" for which he performed duty every Sabbath and instructed upwards of 40 boys and men during the voyage." (26)

His first charge was Port Macquarie, then a provisional appointment to Bathurst, where he opened a little day school. This was the town's second school, the first being conducted by William Coates, the convict Magistrate's Clerk in 1820. (27)

Almost 50 years after Richard Johnson came with the First Fleet, his wish was fulfilled to have a Sunday School for the convict adults. On Norfolk Island, on 12th November 1837, the Rev. Thomas Sharpe wrote in his diary:-

"Visited the Sunday School. I believe 112 were present today. It is an interesting sight to see all these men voluntarily reading their Bibles ... men who have many of them passed their days in crime and sinfulness now eagerly perusing those sacred records which teach them to deny themselves of all ungodliness and do their duty towards God and man." (28)

When William Grant Broughton, who was to become Australia's first Bishop arrived in N.S.W. in 1829, he was appalled at the low state of religious life amongst the settlers. He saw them:-

"Living in a state of concubinage, frequently promiscuous, without books or means of instruction of any description, the observation of the Sabbath day totally obliterated among them, their children growing up not only without Baptism, but almost in unacquaintance with the name or being of their Creator, these persons .. are placed in a situation as dreadful to contemplate as that of any race of heathen existing upon the earth." (29)

When Broughton arrived in Australia, there were only 9 churches, St. Philips & St. James - Sydney & those at Newcastle, Liverpool, Windsor, Campbelltown, Parramatta, Cobbity and PortMacquarie. In 1833 he declared, "I cannot look on with tranquility while I see such extended and populous districts without churches, without clergy and without schools."

The Church Act of 1836 gave a great boost to all denominations by subsidising the stipends of clergy and giving state aid for church buildings. Bishop Broughton took advantage of this and the next few years saw 15 Church of England Churches either started or consecrated. The population of Sydney had reached 20,000 and 3 new churches were commenced in the town, St. Andrews Cathedral, Holy Trinity Millers Point and Christ Church St. Laurence. Outside Sydney churches were started at Battery Point and Newtown in Tasmania, Melbourne, Bathurst, Queanbeyan, Canberra and Camden, and in the suburbs those of St. Peters Cooks River, St. Peters Watsons Bay, St. Thomas North Sydney, St. Stephens Newtown and St. Johns Ashfield.

With the churches came the Sunday Schools. They had a humble beginning and represented the unheralded service of faithful laypeople. Many record no commencement date but with the acute scarcity of clergy, the laity stepped in to minister to the "child in their midst".

By the 1830s the Sunday Schools had gained an identity and the 1830s & 40s saw many packed gatherings of

children from Sunday Schools and Church Schools at St. James Church, when on the Tuesday following Trinity Sunday the annual Children's Service was held, followed by refreshments in the Court House next door. In 1848 there were more than 1,500 children present. (30)

References:-

1. J.D.Bollen, Religion in Australian Society, Sydney, 1973. p.6-7.
2. Australian Encyclopaedia, Vol 5, p.137a. Grolier, 1963.
3. Ibid. Vol 4, p.231a.
4. Ibid. Vol 5, p. 136b.
5. Glenelg's Circular Despatch to Sir George Gipps, 20.5.1838. Mitchell Library A1220,p.931.
6. "Two Voyages to NSW & Van Diemens Land" by Thomas Reid, Member of Royal College of Surgeons, London, 1822.
7. J.T. Bigge - Agriculture and Trade. p.81-2
8. Aust. Encycl. Vol 3, p.155b.
9. Historic Records of Australia, Vol 12,p.313.
10. Sydney Gazette Quoted from "Anglican Sunday Schools in the Diocese of Sydney" Unpublished Thesis by Rev. Owen Thomas, p.8.
11. Aust. Encycl. Vol.8, p.16b.
12. T. Hassall "Address to Sunday School Teachers in England". 1821. Hassall Correspondence, Vol 4, part 4, pp.1514-19.
13. The Colonist No.71, 5th May, 1836.
14. Bonwick Transcripts Missionary, Box 49, p.335.
15. Ibid Missionary, Box 50, Vol 2, p 253.
16. "Two Voyages to N.S.W. & V.D.L." Reid, 1822.
17. Requirements and Rules, Parramatta Sunday School. Missionary Press, Parramatta, August 1816.
18. Royal Australian Historical Society (R.A.H.S.) Journal, Vol 23, p.493.

References (contd.):

19. Anecdotes from N.S.W. concerning Sunday Schools.
Rowland Hassall Papers, p.205-9.
20. R.A.H.S. Journal, Vol 46, p.203.
21. The Sydney Weekly Advocate. April 7, 1877.
22. Church of England Historical Society Journal,
Vol 15, No.4. December 1970.
23. H.R. of A., Vol 12, p.314.
24. N.S.W. Legislative Council Votes and Proceedings,
1838, Minutes of Evidence, pp.16-20.
25. Masters and Servants at Camden Park, 1838 from the
Estate Papers. Prof. A. Atkinson. A.N.U.
26. Hassall Correspondence, Vol2, part1, p.241-2.
27. No.136 Colonial Secretary's Memorial re Lands 1825.
State Archives N.S.W.
28. Journal of Rev. Thomas Sharpe, p. 155, Mitchell
Library, Sydney.
29. "That Better Country", by John Barratt, p.27,
Mitchell Library.
30. R.A.H.S. Journal, Vol., part 6, p.94.

Having read the series of articles "Fanned into Flame" -
members' memories have no doubt been stirred.

Should members wishto submit in writing anecdotes of
earlier days and Sunday Schoolmemories, a social
history article could be compiled for publication
within the Society Bulletin. This could prove
to be a very interesting exercise.

To illustrate - one member still has in good order
and condition a prize won in November 1938 for
"not missing a Sunday". The prize was a hard covered
Bible, costing then 6 shillings. The maximum award
from the Sunday School could only go as far as 3 shillings,
so by sheer dint of saving the parents gave the added
3 shillings as a Christmas gift and the Bible was purchased.
It has been read, used, thumbed and marked - it has had
two new covers, the last one cost \$14.00.