



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

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6/9 Austral Street,
KOGARAH 2217

March, 1989

Dear Friend and Member,

The March Meeting will be held as follows:

Date Friday, 17th March, 1989 at 8 p.m.

Place Council Chamber, Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale

Business General

Syllabus Item

Rockdale's Heritage - What does it mean to you?
Miss Meredith Walker and Mr. Terry Cass are making a study of this subject and will share their knowledge with us.

Supper Roster NO ROSTER HAS BEEN DRAWN UP FOR 1989
CAN YOU PLEASE HELP?

LADIES PLEASE BRING A PLATE

Mr. A. Ellis,
President and Research
Officer

587 1159

Mrs E. Wright,
Treasurer

599 4884

Mrs J. Price,
Minute Secretary

587 7407

Mrs B. Perkins,
Secretary

587 9164

Mrs E. Eardley,
Bulletin Editor

59 8078

'Life has no guarantee' There is no guarantee of anything more than the moment we have. So, if we don't use today well, then we have really got ourselves fooled.

Our speaker for April will be Alderman Ron Rathbone

Members might care to look back to 1988 and think about the Speakers who were generous enough to give their time for our pleasure, some travelling quite some distance, this at no cost to the Society. the following will refresh your memory, your appreciation and enjoyment.

<u>January, 1988</u>	Quiz Night	Courtesy of Mrs Bronwyn Perkins
<u>February</u>	Daisy Bates	Mrs Betty Goodyer
<u>March</u>	Adelaide Ironsides	Jill Poulton
	(The first Australian female artist to be acknowledged overseas)	
<u>April</u>	Heritage Week Origin of the Name of Rockdale	Dr. Peter Orlovich
<u>May</u>	Australia Day Celebrations in Sydney	Peter Sage
<u>June</u>	Stained Glass	Kevin Little
<u>July</u>	Election of Officers	
<u>August</u>	Buried Alive	Arthur Ellis
<u>September</u>	Shipbuilding and Society	Vaughan Evans
<u>October</u>	Streets of Sydney over the last 100 Years	Noel Thorpe
<u>November</u>	We enjoy a trip overseas with	Ald. Ron Rathbone
<u>December</u>	And then to Expo 1988	Peter Sage

I sincerely trust that you really enjoyed our 1988 Syllabus Items. If you have any suggestions for Syllabus Items please pass details on to me.

Eileen Eardley

A cheerio to the members and friends who are not so well from all of us. We hope you will be back with us soon.

SIR JOSEPH CARRUTHERS & THE CAPTAIN COOK MEMORIAL IN LONDON...

- Peter Orlovich
29th October 1984
Chairman, Botany Bay
Historic Sites Advisory Committee
N.S.W. National Parks & Wildlife
Service.

An address delivered on the occasion of the presentation by Captain Cook's Landing Place Historic Site by Mr Graham Carruthers, of the correspondence of Sir Joseph Carruthers, in 1911, relating to the rection of a memorial to Captain James Cook in London.

- Reproduced with permission.

The name of Joseph Carruthers is intimately associated, not only with Captain Cook's Landing Place Historic Site at Botany Bay, but with the commemoration of Captain Cook in London & in Hawaii. No greater debot of public gratitude is due to any person in Australia more than Sir Joseph Carruthers for his untiring devotion to the commemoration of the heroic deeds and achievements of Captain Cook.

He was the longest serving Trustee of Captain Cook's Landing Place Trust, having been appointed to the original Trust on 8 November, 1899, and on which he continued to serve, including the period from 1901 to 1911, when he was President, until his death on the 10 December 1932. It was largely due to his own persistent efforts as Minister for Lands between 1894 and 1899, that the area which now comprises Captain Cook's Landing Place was resumed and dedicated in 1899 for the use and enjoyment of the public for all time.

Sir Joseph had long been interested in the idea of securing for the people the resumption of the historic site at Kurnell. In December, 1887, as plans were maturing for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the colony in the following year, Sir Joseph, as member of the Legislative Assembly for the seat of Canterbury, proposed (1) to the N.S.W. Parliament, that immediate steps should be taken by the government to secure a sufficient area as a park reserve at and adjacent to the place at Kurnell, Botany Bay, where Captain Cook first landed in Australia.

If there was any piece of ground in the whole colony to which historical importance attached, and which ought to have been preserved and become a landmark to all posterity, it was, he believed, the spot which was the birthplace of this nation; where civilisation was first brought to our shores; and where the great and immortal discoverer first brought within the ken and the power of England, this glorious land. He thought that while they were considering the question of celebrating the first centenary, it would be a blot on their actions and a blot on their fame, if they allowed the opportunity to pass of reserving for all time, some small area of ground to commemorate perhaps the greatest event which had occurred in their history - the event which caused the foundation of the colony. It was most apt, he suggested, that this step should be taken at that time, because while they were proposing to celebrate the centenary of the colony, they should not

forget that, although the anniversary of its foundation was the 26th January, yet really the establishment of N.S.W. as a colony occurred on the 18 January 1788, when Governor Phillip with his fleet, anchored in Botany Bay and landed at Kurnell.

In view of the severe financial difficulties then facing the government, and opposition to the expenditure of funds for the resumption of land, Sir Joseph was obliged to withdraw the motion. (2)

It was during Sir Joseph's tenure as Minister for Lands between 1894 and 1899, that he took steps to have the land resumed, and on the 22 March, 1899, an area of about 35 acres was initially resumed (3) for the purposes of a public park at Kurnell. A further area of Crown Land was subsequently added on the ocean side of the resumed land, and the whole - amounting to about 251 acres in all - was set apart and dedicated by Executive Council minute on the 1 May, 1899. At a ceremony held at the Landing Place on the 6 May, 1899, at which Sir Joseph delivered the principal address, the Lt. Governor, Sir Frederick Darley publicly declared the reserve to be the "Captain Cook's Landing Place", which he dedicated for the recreation of the people of N.S.W. for all time.

The appointment of the original Trustees - including Sir Joseph Carruthers - was announced on the 8 November 1899 (4) and, as previously stated, he served continuously on the Trust until his death in 1932. His interest in, and dedication to, the perpetuation of the memory of Captain Cook, never waned.

Some two years prior to his death, he published a book entitled "Captain James Cook, R.N., One Hundred and Fifty Years After" (5) in which he recalled (6) that he happened to have spent many years of his life in the district where Cook first landed in Australia, and represented that district in the Parliament of N.S.W. for over 21 years. During his term of office in Reid Government (1895 to 1901) as Minister for Lands, he "rescued from private ownership" a large area at Kurnell, the site of Cook's first landing in 1770. It had, he said, been alienated with an utter disregard of proper sentiment in the early days of colonisation in Australia. He caused that area to be dedicated for all time as a public park, for he considered it to be sacred soil to the people of Australia and to the people of the race which produced such a man as Captain Cook.

He also pointed out that he had acted with good effect in other ways. As a result of his letter in 1908 to the London "Times" steps were taken towards the erection of the only statue to Captain Cook in London. Furthermore, as a consequence of his initiating the proposal, the Territorial Government of Hawaii was, at the time of publication of his book, dedicating to the public the land in Kealahou Bay, Hawaii, where Cook was killed in 1779.

Furthermore, a suggestion which he made in Honolulu in 1924 contributed to the movement which eventuated in the Sesqui-Centennial celebrations in August 1928, in the Hawaiian Isles under the auspices of the U.S. Govt. and that of the Hawaiian Territory. He was specially commissioned by the Prime Minister

of Australia and the Commonwealth Government to attend those celebrations as the representative of Australia. He did so, and at the request of the American Commission, he delivered the principal address at the unveiling of the tablet on the spot where Captain Cook died on the 17 February 1779.

It is, however, in relation to his letter to "The Times" in London, in 1908, and the events which subsequently transpired, that is the occasion of our gathering here today.

On the 29 September 1908, shortly after his return to Sydney from a visit to Europe, he wrote a letter to "The Times" which was published (7) in its issue of the 3 November 1908, and in which he remarked that during his recent stay in England, he was deeply surprised to learn that in London, the great capital city of the Empire, there was no statue, tablet or monument to commemorate the life work of Captain Cook. London, he observed, teemed with its monuments to the great dead. The absence of any token of national sentiment with regard to Captain Cook, was a reproach to England, and an Australian going there felt that there was something wrong. He felt it more keenly day by day as he viewed the numberless monuments, statues and tablets in London. He had, he said, spoken to many Englishmen about it, and they admitted that it was a glaring omission on the part of the nation not to have honoured the memory of a great Empire builder like Cook by an adequate monument in the heart of the Empire itself.

In the 136 years which had passed since Cook had taken possession of Australia and New Zealand for the British Empire, by which England had benefitted to an incalculable extent, yet even up to that time, there had been no effort made by the country and the race he served so well, to erect any monument to worthily commemorate his services. If England would do its duty in the matter, he thought he could promise that there were thousands of Australians who would gladly join in a national movement to honour one of the most illustrious men, not only of an Empire, but of the world. They already had, Sir Joseph concluded, one statue and other memorials in Sydney, and in other towns in Australia, but that fact would not excuse them from joining in a wider honouring of the founder of British power in the Southern Seas.

Sir Joseph's letter elicited responses from several correspondents anxious to point out the existence of memorials of one kind or another in various parts of England with which Cook had had an association, but it ultimately to be conceded by "The Times" (8) that it indeed appeared to be the case that London had not hitherto commemorated the life work of Captain Cook by any public statue, tablet or monument.

Over the signatures of 6 flag-officers who had served as commanders-in-chief on the Australian station, "The Times" published (9) an appeal to the British public to support Sir Joseph's proposal; and it was subsequently reported (10) that on the 23rd November 1908, the proposal was brought before the executive committee of the British Empire League, by the Rt. Hon. Herbert Samuel M.P., who represented the district of Cleveland in the North Riding of Yorkshire, where Cook spent his early life. The executive committee resolved, that, in its opinion, it was desirable to promote the erection in London of a memorial to Captain Cook, and that a subcommittee should be appointed for the purpose.

At a meeting of that subcommittee on the 1 December 1908, it was decided (11) to take steps to form a large and representative general committee - the Prince of Wales (soon to be King George V) having consented to be chairman - the same prince George, incidentally, who, with his brother Prince Edward (later Duke of Clarence), as a midshipman on board the H.M.S. *Bacchante*, visited Kurnell on the invitation of the Hon. Thomas Holt, in the course of a world cruise, on the 9 August 1881, during which he planted two Norfolk Island pine trees. (12)

The committee was to be widely representative of vice-regal, military, diplomatic and political officials, (one of whom was The Lord Brassey, former Governor of Victoria from 1895 to 1900), of both Australia and New Zealand, but included also representatives of the Colonial Office, the Admiralty, mercantile shipping interests, scientific and learned societies and the Cleveland District of Yorkshire.

A meeting of the general committee, at which the Duke of Devonshire presided, was convened (13) on the 30 March 1909, and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, was duly elected chairman; the Lord Brassey was appointed Hon. Treasurer; and an Executive Committee; with Mr Herbert Samuel (member for Cleveland) as chairman, was appointed to secure the erection in London of a memorial to Captain Cook, and on which Committee devolved the duty of collecting the necessary funds, of determining the character of the memorial, and of selecting the best available site. The death of King Edward VII on the 6 May, 1910, and the subsequent accession of the Prince of Wales as King George V, effectively prevented him from further active involvement in the work of the committee.

A subscription fund was opened and in anticipation that the monument would be in the form of a statue, a sum of £3,000.0.0 was sought. Several public appeals were made (14) by the committee, supported by The Royal Society, (15) and a prospectus or circular was issued, copies of which (16) are included in the documents presented by Mr Carruthers today to the Captain Cook's Landing Place Historic Site Museum and Visitor Centre.

In accordance with the promise by Sir Joseph in his original letter to "The Times" in November, 1908, he undertook to raise subscriptions in Australia towards the erection of the memorial, and the correspondence, which Mr Carruthers has generously presented to the Historic Site, relates mainly to the raising of those subscriptions.

It was reported (17) in May 1911, that sufficient money had by then been raised by subscription for the erection of a statue of Captain Cook, including several sums from Australia; that permission had been granted for the statue to be placed in the Mall on the west side of the Admiralty Arch, at the end of the Processional Road; and that the Commission had been given to Sir Thomas Brock, K.C.B., R.A., the sculptor of the Queen Victoria Memorial, who had also been responsible for the work on the Admiralty Arch itself.

By June of 1914, the work was completed. On 28 June 1914, the Archduke Ferdinand of Austria and his wife were assassinated at Sarajevo, and on 2 July, Joseph Chamberlain, former Secretary of State for the Colonies in Lord Salisbury's

coalition government, died. It is hardly surprising, given the momentous nature of the events which were about to transpire that public attention was diverted to other more pressing matters.

On the 7 July, 1914, Prince Arthur of Connaught unveiled (18) the statue of Captain Cook. The figure was life-size, in bronze, and was mounted on a high pedestal of white stone decorated with naval emblems. The Captain is depicted in naval uniform, standing in front of a capstan, holding a telescope in his right hand and a scroll in his left. The inscription states (19):-

Captain James Cook, R.N.F.R.S.
Born 1728 - Died 1779
Circumnavigator of the Globe
Explorer of the Pacific Ocean
He laid the foundation of the
British Empire in Australia and
New Zealand.

At the unveiling ceremony, there was a guard of honour of a detachment of seamen from the "Pembroke", the band of the Royal Navy Barracks, Chatham, and a company of Australian Mounted Cadets. At the foot of the statue stood a squad of boys from the training ship "Exmouth". Amongst those who welcomed the Prince at the unveiling ceremony was Mr Herbert Samuel, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Mr Winston Churchill (First Lord of The Admiralty), Admiral Prince Louis of Battenburg (First Sea Lord of the Admiralty) and Sir John Ashburn, representing the British Empire League.

In inviting Prince Arthur to unveil the memorial, Mr Samuel recalled (20) the circumstances in which Sir Joseph Carruthers "a distinguished Australian" had written a letter to "The Times" in 1908.. "an appeal from Australasia which could not be allowed to fall on deaf ears; it deserved and it received response."

Prince Arthur, in unveiling the memorial, said that it seemed strange that some 135 years should have elapsed before the great discoverer, and perhaps, the greatest benefactor that the maritime services of all nations had ever known, should have been deemed worthy of a monument in the capital of their great Empire...The statue was erected, he concluded, not only as a tribute to the memory of a great sailor, and in compliment to the British Navy, but to express their gratitude to the man who helped make them one with Australia and New Zealand....

On behalf of the Botany Bay Historic Sites Advisory Committee, the National Parks and Wildlife Service of NSW, and the people who come to enjoy this Historic Site and pay tribute to Captain Cook, I should like to express to Mr Carruthers our deep appreciation of his thoughtfulness and generosity in presenting these documents to Captain Cook's Landing Place Historic Site, and to assure him that they will always be treasured for the important association which they reflect between this Site, Sir Joseph Carruthers and Sir Thomas Brock's statue of Captain Cook in the Mall, near the Admiralty Arch in London.

REFERENCES:

- (1) - Legislative Assembly, 16 December, 1887.N.S.W.
Parliamentary Debates, series 1,v.30,Session 1887-8
p.2181
- (2) - NSW Parliamentary Debates, series 1, v.30,
Session 1887-8,p.2186.
- (3) - NSW Goverment Gazette, 22 March,1899.p
- (4) - NSW Governemnt Gazette, 8 November 1899,p.
- (5) - London, John Murray, 1930.
- (6) - op.cit.,p.x.- xi
- (7) - The Times, 3 November, 1908,p.10 e-f
- (8) - The Times, 4 November, 1908, p.11c
- (9) - 14 November 1908, p.7d
- (10) - The Times, 25 November, 1908, p.16d.
- (11) - The Times, 25 March, 1909, p.14a
- (12) - Species Araucaria Excelsa. Prince Edward planted 2 other
species, Araucaria Cookii and Aracaria Cunninghamii.
- (13) - The Times, 31 March, 1909, p.10a
- (14) - The Times, 20 June, 1910,p.10c, 6 August, 1910,p.6c and
14 February 1911, p.4f
- (15) - The Times, 18 November 1910,p.13e
- (16) - Documents located at Captain Cook's Landing Place
Historic Site.
- (17) - The Times, 19 May 1911,p.8d.
- (18) - The Times, 8 July, 1914, p.10f
- (19) - Godfrey Thompson, London Statues, London, Dent,1971,p35
- (20) - The Times, 8 July, 1914.p.10f.

THE BRIDGING OF COOK'S RIVER ...

-Arncliffe Progress
Association News
Vol.9 No.2
June 1965.

Supplied by Mrs E Eardley in 1987.

The early road developments in the Arncliffe section of Forest Road and Wollongong Road, were evolve through the decisive role played by water.

Likewise, in the origin of the earliest main road system and settlement in Arncliffe, water became the prime factor in determining the time when the first great impetus to development actually began, as the ensuring story will show.

Early in 1838, a drought descended on Sydney Town. At that time its principal water supply was the Tank Stream and Busby's Bore which ran from the swamps, where Centennial Park now stands, to Hyde Park.

These main sources of supply became so scanty as the drought developed that the Colonial administrators anxiously looked to other alternatives to supplement them. Why not separate the freshwater from the salt at an appropriate site on Cook's River and channel the water to Sydney Town?

In February 1839, the Governor of the day, Sir George Gipps, decided to erect a substantial dam across Cook's River near "Tempe House", and soon after about 100 convict labourers were despatched to the site.

The dam, about 50 feet in width, was built slightly more seawards than the present bridge (the "Endeavour") over Cook's River and constructed of large blocks of stone, some of them 3 or 4 tons in weight, the interstices being filled with clay.

Completed in the first months of 1840, the dam proved to be a failure, as it could not separate the fresh from the salt water, due apparently to some fault in construction.

By this time, however, rain had come to the rescue of the drought stricken residents of Sydney Town, and no further efforts were made to ensure that the costly dam fulfilled its original purpose as a water supply.

The dam persevered for several decades, but was eventually demolished because, in the absence of sluice gates, the flotsam and silt carried down stream were unable to gain a clearance.

Whilst failing as a water supply, the dam was soon used as a roadway - a continuation of the road from Sydney via New Town - by an increasing number of pioneers who settled in Arncliffe and others who gradually spread throughout the St. George District.

If Sydney had not experienced a drought at this time, the bridging of Cook's River may well have been delayed for many years and perhaps also the first road systems of the St. George District may have followed a somewhat different pattern.

Nevertheless, the dam causeway, whatever the reason for its existence, appears to have provided the starting point of the first road (about 1840) south of the river. This road, or track, known later as the road to Rocky Point (now Sans Souci) ran from the causeway up to what is known as Arncliffe Hill and beyond.

In 1843, the famous Wollongong Road also was commenced near the causeway and over a decade later the road, known to-day as West Botany Street, about a quarter of a mile south of the dam, came into being.

Much of the land up to Arncliffe Hill was owned originally as separate estates by Alexander Sparke and David Hannam. These two estates were created in the late 1820's and persevered until Sparke's "Tempe" estate was put up for sale in 1859, as villa sites and small farm allotments.

This sub-division greatly stimulated the growth of the settlement in the area and the prosperity of the "Tempe Family Hotel" mirrored the increasing tempo in the number of horse-drawn vehicles south of the dam at this period.

The "Tempe Hotel" occupied the site covered today by a car sales park on the corner of the present Arncliffe Street and Princes Highway, and an interesting event took place there on 13th February 1871. It was the first meeting of the Rockdale Municipal Council - then known as the Council of West Botany.

Adjoining the hotel was the first General Store in the area, owned by William Smithson, who also ran the postal services. Opposite lay the vast area of salt marsh, utilised for the fattening of cattle, now occupied by the Kogarah Golf Club, (previously "Bonnie Doon").

This then was the general picture of the early settlement near the northern gateway of Arncliffe brought about by the bridging of Cook's River, an enterprise which was the direct result of the challenge of water to the citizens of Sydney Town.

In contrast to the pioneering days of our District, our modern urban community, thanks to the great network of roads, and water and drainage systems, has largely minimised the power that the elements, not so long ago, had on the daily life of the local populace. In this sphere of activity, we have obviously made great progress.