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ROCKDALE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL



ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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78 Wollongong Rd
Arncliffe 2205

JUNE 1990

The next meeting will be held as follows:-

DATE: 8pm Friday 15 June

LOCATION: Council Chambers, 1st Rockdale Town Hall, Princes Hwy
Rockdale.

BUSINESS: The President, Bernard Sharah will propose a major project for
1991 - a "St George Heritage Fair".

GUEST SPEAKER:

"THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF THE COOKS RIVER AREA"

Chrys Meader, local history librarian for Marrickville Municipal Council, will present a history of the Cooks River environs. Chrys has many interesting slides of the area in the early days.

SUPPER ROSTER: Volunteers please. Members please bring a plate.

200 PEOPLE ATTEND BEXLEY HISTORY WALK!

Yes, that's right, 200 people! Our History Walk was an outstanding success. People of all ages and from different areas of Sydney.

Mind you, such a large group made organisation more difficult but it was a joy to see that so many people ARE interested in local history.

Thanks to all the people who helped but especially to Ald Ron Rathbone who did such a tremendous job under trying circumstances.

We gained some new members and sold Society books to the value of \$180!

LAST MEETING

After poor attendances at previous meetings it was heartening to see a lot more people at our May meeting including a number of new faces.

Amongst those new faces were Mr and Mrs Knight who were attracted by guest speaker, Laurel Horton's topic, "A History of St Peters Church Cooks River". Mr Knight is a direct descendent of Henry Knight the church's builder.

We were esp We were especially pleased to meet Mr and Mrs Stan Spark. Mr Spark great grandson of Alexander Brodie Spark, the original owner of Tempe House. Naturally, he is very interested in any information we have related to his illustrious ancestor.

INTRODUCING OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Welcome to new members - Mr and Mrs Stan Spark, Mrs Joan Fairhall, Mr Wesley Fairhall, Mrs Joan Byrne, Mr Geoffrey Rankin, Mr and Mrs Bruce McLaren, Mr Ray and Mrs Catalina Mitchell, Mr Noel and Mrs Valda Beehag.

Thanks to Ray and Catalina Mitchell owners of "St Elmo" for allowing our Bexley History Walkers a quick inspection of their beautiful Victorian house in Harrow Rd (former home of the Palmer family).

BOTANY GOODS LINE

The question of giving railway communication to Botany was considered in 1882 when it was proposed to extend a line from Eveleigh, via Waterloo to the Botany area. In 1902 a trial survey was made from Erskineville to Botany and also from Flemington to Belmore, the estimated cost then being 107,933 and 56,738 pounds respectively.

The Minister for Public Works, Hon. E W O'Sullivan, promised that the question would be referred to Cabinet with a view to the line being referred to the Public Works Committee.

In August 1909, the question of a railway to Botany from the nearest point on the then existing system was brought under the notice of the then Minister for Public Works, Hon C A Lee, by a deputation, including the mayors of Botany and North Botany and representatives of the Pastoralists Union; The Sydney Meat Preserving Co; the Sandown Freezing Works, Clyde; the Wool Combing Mills, Botany; the Bunnerong Wool Scouring Works, Botany; the Metropolitan Coal Agency and others. It was pointed out that the construction of a railway to Botany was indirectly before the Public Works Committee in connection with the proposed line from Flemington to the new abattoirs and that a recommendation should form portion of the scheme in connection with the establishment of new abattoirs at Homebush.

It was admitted by the Minister, in the course of his reply, that the line was one that must be built, and that as soon as a new survey was completed the line would be referred to the Committee.

A further deputation representing residents and other interested bodies waited on the Minister of Public Works, Mr A Griffith, in 1911, when it was urged that as the abattoirs were to be removed from Glebe Island to Homebush Bay, and the bulk of the by-products were treated in Botany, a railway to the latter place should be put in hand at once, so that it might be available by the time the new abattoirs were completed. This proposal was submitted to the Public Works Committee in March 1912.

Two proposals for the route were considered, one from Tempe along the north side of Cooks River to Cooks River Rd, crossing Alexandria Canal a few chains south of St Peters Park, then to Ascot Racecourse terminating in a "Y" shaped branch, one of which was to terminate on Botany Pier and the other on the southern side of Botany Rd between it and the bay. The other suggestion, approved by the Chief Commissioner for Railways, Mr T R Johnson, allowed the line to leave the Illawarra line a little to the north of Sydenham Station, rising gradually, cross the Illawarra line by means of a bridge, with a connection with the Belmore line.

It was estimated that 100 tons of skins per day would be forwarded from Homebush to Botany, and in addition, the local Botany industries would require 60,000 tons of coal and 100,000 tons of raw material per year, the whole being carried from St Peters, Sydenham and Alexandria stations.

A branch line, 1 mile 50 chains long, was also suggested to Alexandria .
a junction with the then proposed Eastern Suburbs Railway.

After a careful inquiry, the Committee recommended that the railway
extension to Botany, from Sydenham, be carried out. Construction was by the
Department of Railways, and the line opened for traffic on the 11th October
1925.

The length of the line is 5 miles 28 chains long, made up of 26 chains
double track and 5 miles .02 chains single track. Maximum gradient is 1 in
80 and the sharpest curve 12 chains. The main goods yard is at Cooks River
with a smaller yard at Botany. A deviation of the line around Mascot
airfield of 10.5 chains was opened on 22nd March 1960, making the line 5
miles 38.75 chains in length.

Sidings from Marrickville end:-

Cooks River Goods Yard - 17 sidings.

Southern Portland Cement

BHP By-Products

Mascot Goods sidings and loop

Commonwealth sidings

Stewart & Lloyds

Ready Mixed Concrete

Email

Total Oil Co.

Kelloggs

Bates

Botany Goods Yard - Goods line

Goods loop

Goods siding

H C Sleigh

Boral

Bunnerong --- Switch House

A.O.R. Boral

8 sidings to Power House

This article by the late W. Foster was kindly submitted by Mrs Ruth Foster

A NEW SECRETARY, PLEASE?

Both our Correspondence Secretary, Bronwyn Perkins and Minutes Secretary, Hilda Loring have indicated that they will be unable to renominate for their positions at the Annual General Meeting next month.

Bronwyn has moved out of the district and being without private transport would find it extremely difficult to attend meetings. Hilda is fully committed with her other responsibilities.

The present arrangement of having separate secretaries for minutes and correspondence is not entirely satisfactory so we are looking for someone who will take on the job for the coming year.

I explained our predicament to people in attendance at the conclusion of the History Walk. One of our new members Mrs Valda Beehag has indicated she would be prepared to nominate for the position at our AGM.

BERNARD SHARAH
PRESIDENT
5991971

MRS H LORING
MINUTE SECRETARY
5992847

MRS B PERKINS
CORRESPONDENC SEC.
5879164

MISS C WILDING
TREASURER
5973215

MR A ELLIS
RESEARCH OFFICER
5871159

BERNARD SHARAH
BULLETIN EDITOR
5991971

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WELL JUST COMPLETE THIS APPLICATION AND SEND TOGETHER WITH CHEQUE OR
MONEY ORDER (\$7 INDIVIDUAL, \$10 FAMILY) TO 4/73 FREDERICK ST ROCKDALE
2216

NAME:

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