

*St George Historical Society  
Inc.  
Bulletin*

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

JULY - OCTOBER 1997 Edition

## TAREN CITY

The new Residential Waterside Suburb

40 MINUTES FROM SYDNEY  
10 MINUTES FROM CRONULLA

—  
AUCTION SALE on the Ground  
Easter Monday, April 1st  
1918 at 1.30 p.m. Wet or Fine  
TORRENS TITLE

—  
LARGE MARQUEE — BAND — REFRESHMENTS

The terms are £2 deposit per lot, and the balance  
in 60 equal monthly payments with interest at 5% .  
The right to pay off at any time within the five  
years is extended to the purchaser.

—  
AUCTIONEERS:  
H. W. Horning & Co. Ltd.,  
131 PITT STREET, SYDNEY  
In conjunction with  
Lance Giddings  
115 PITT STREET, SYDNEY  
and CRONULLA and MIRANDA

—  
SOLICITORS:  
MacGREGOR & PALMER  
131 PITT STREET, SYDNEY

LICENSED SURVEYORS:  
J. G. GRIFFIN & HARRISON  
350 GEORGE STREET, SYDNEY

—  
This booklet was written and designed by HEDLEY V. GRAHAM,  
35 Pitt Street, Sydney, Architect for the Estate.  
Bungalows, Cottages, and week-end designs.

—  
P. CUNNINGHAM & CO. LTD., PRINTERS, SYDNEY



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## NEXT MEETING

14 OCTOBER "WW1 - Our Local Boys in France"

Hurstville Local Studies Librarian Margaret Murphy, will give an interesting talk based on her extensive research of our local boys' role in the military action in France during WW1.

Meetings are held 8 PM every second Tuesday of the month (except January) in the Meeting Room 1st Floor, Rockdale Town Hall, Princes Highway, Rockdale. Members, please bring a plate. Visitors are welcome.

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# St George Historical Society Inc.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM 1997- 1998

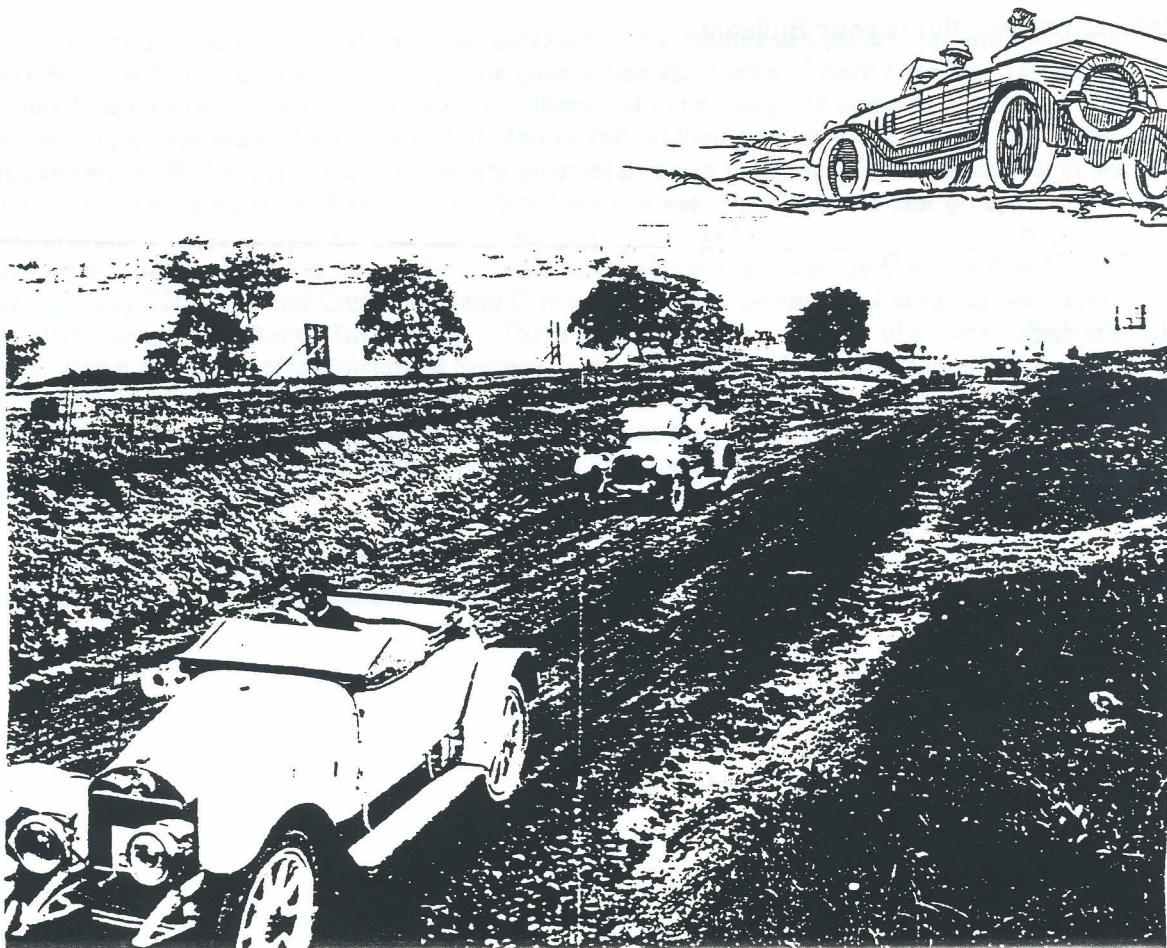
Name:

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Please return this form together with cheque or money order for \$7 (individual) or \$10(household) to:-

The Treasurer,  
St George Historical Society Inc.  
4 Harford Ave  
Panania NSW 2213



## FROM THE EDITOR...

At the Society's Annual General Meeting (A.G.M) held on Tuesday 12 August 1997, Mr. Bernard Sharah retired from the position of Bulletin Editor.

Despite fierce competition, I narrowly secured the coveted position of Bulletin Editor of the St George Historical Society. To my nominators and supporters on the night, I convey sincere gratitude for their confidence in my as yet untried ability.

Those members present at the A.G.M, unanimously expressed gratitude for Mr. Sharah's enthusiasm and dedication in the role of Bulletin Editor over the past nine years. As incoming Bulletin Editor, I personally thank Bernard for his guidance during the "handing over of the reins" process. I am singularly conscious of my predecessor's hard work and will strive to uphold the excellence of this publication.

Readers, please accept my apologies for the very late distribution of this issue of the Bulletin owing to the aforementioned changes. As can be seen from the cover, I have elected to make this a "Bumper issue" covering the period July to October 1997. Future editions will resume the bi-monthly format.

As editor, I aim to make the Society's journal interesting, informative and a pleasure to read. To achieve this goal, I require and welcome your constructive feedback as to the articles published in this bulletin and would **especially** value contributions or suggestions as to future topics.

Please do not be inhibited in putting pen to paper as I will if requested to do so, assist in the preparation of your material for this publication.

Remember readers; this is **your** Bulletin!

Kind regards,

Wesley Fairhall

## TO THE MEMBERS

My thanks to those who supported me once again over this last twelve months and also for their confidence in electing me for my fifth year as President. I hope I can live up to everyone's expectations. I did not intend to stand for an Executive position at the recent July Annual General Meeting but due to current conditions felt it would be disloyal not to accept the confidence placed in me for one more term.

I find it most disappointing to see approximately 109 names on the Mailing List and yet it is the same people who cover the two Volunteer hours at Lydham Hall Saturday and Sunday each week. Even allowing for half the names listed being unable to help because of age or health problems or where they live, it still leaves a good number who never 'phone to do even one or two stints a year of the two hours needed either day of the weekend. We are all busy in this modern age. I work 5 hours two days a week and 6 hours two days a week, as well as having a retired husband and house to keep in order.

I have one grandchild to get to school every morning and for the last 7 years had two grandchildren to walk to and from school each morning and afternoon. I do not drive. I also belong to a Choir which entails practice Monday evenings and we sing once or sometimes twice a week throughout most weeks of the year. I also sing solo's at Church which means more practice. This is besides an External Uni Course I'm working my way through.

Being President of the Society and Chairperson of the Lydham Hall Local Committee entails planning, bookings, Executive Meetings and attendance at Lydham Hall mid weeks for Coach. group and School Bookings, so you see my own time is spread fairly thin each week.

If you can offer to assist now and again or on days when we have a special occasions planned please give me a call (9539.0229) as your time would be more than appreciated.

This past 12 months has been quite a good one again. We've had some excellent Speakers at our Meetings and I'm sure more are to follow for the ensuing year.

A new Inventory (room by room) has been achieved of the exhibits at Lydham Hall and my thanks go to Norrene Burns for the 6 to 8 hours she gave in this assistance. There were two Garden Parties held towards the end of last year at Lydham Hall - one being the combined 125th Anniversary of Rockdale City Council, 25th Anniversary of their purchase of Lydham Hall, 35th Anniversary of St. George Historical Society Incorporated and many such anniversaries of other local organisations during 1996 in the area. We have had two Weddings and four groups for Wedding photo's attend Lydham Hall during this year, we've also had the 1997 Anniversary of Lydham Hall being opened to the public for viewing in February, St. George Day 23rd April, Heritage Day 27th April and Christina Stead Day on 19th July to celebrate what would have been this world renowned writer's 95th Birthday. There have also been a number of groups visiting mid week. Quite a number of the Historical Society books have been sold from Lydham Hall and at last year's RAHS Conference - the money going to the Society. Also at least 44 St. George Pictorial Memories, Rockdale, Kogarah & Hurstville Books have been sold at Lydham Hall - the profit going to the Lydham Hall funds. The latter is an excellent book and there are still about 15 left for sale at Lydham Hall.

Due to the Christina Stead Day being held in July a celebration for the 36th Anniversary of the Historical Society has been held over until a later date.

A Heritage Consultant and Adviser has attended Lydham Hall, which entailed a further three Meetings for the Lydham Hall Local Committee to attend, and he has offered advice on a good number of ideas to Rockdale Council who are in the course of following these up at the moment.

Wishing you a Happy 1997-98 season.

*Betty Ross*

LYDHAM HALL  
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED WHERE BLANK SPACES ARE

<u>SEPTEMBER</u>	6th	7th	
	13th	14th Dora Lenane	
	20th	21st Wesley Fair- hall	Tues 50th - 1st Ladies Winton P.R. Uniting Ch
	27th	28th	Wed. 1st 10 am Unio. Club Ladies Winton
<u>OCTOBER</u>	4th	5th	
	11th 1.50 p.m. St. Geo. Evening View Club, 15 Ladies. Val Beesag & Stella Fricson.		

Some proverbs to ponder :-

“A fence lasts three years, a dog lasts three fences, a horse three dogs, and a man three horses”;

“A gentleman should be honest in his actions and refined in his language” ;and

“A crow is never the whiter for ever washing”

## ***TAREN CITY.....A Home in the fresh air forty minutes from Sydney***

Many of us would be familiar with the legendary adage describing Manly as "seven miles from Sydney but a thousand miles from care.."

But how many of us would speak in such evocative terms of an area within the St George region, known today as Taren Point? The following information as depicted on the Bulletin's cover, was extracted from a 1918 booklet written by a Mr Hedley V. Graham, architect for the "Taren City" estate.

The trip from the city is comfortable, cheap and speedy. Frequent through fast trains to Kogarah, connect with the Sans Souci tram, and the new punt crossing the river is in of the most modern in the service. This punt must in the near future be replaced by a bridge, for the road is now carrying traffic equal to any high road in the state. The Taren Point Punt service is to be duplicated by next summer.

There is also a frequent motor service from Rockdale to Cronulla passing through TAREN CITY.

Haven't you longed for the freedom of the big out-of-doors; for a home away from the dust and noise of the city, just outside of town, yet close enough to the office or store, where you can own a cosy little home, with its garden, some chickens, and a place for fruit trees and flowers? That is TAREN CITY; home sites at easy prices, within your reach, on easy terms, at less than you are now paying simply for a place to live in. Pick out your home lot now.

IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND THE SALE, select your lot, and send the deposit to the Auctioneers before the sale and they will secure it for you at the auction price.

HEALTH IS WAITING FOR YOU  
WEALTH IS WAITING FOR YOU

## **At TAREN CITY**

**TAREN CITY** is the popular front door by road to the great Sutherland Shire. This Shire included Cronulla, the safest surfbathing beach in N.S.W. Miranda, a very progressive farming centre, Sutherland, a flourishing township, Kurnell, which every Australian knows as the birthplace of our country, Port Hacking, with its fine river, the great National Park, and numbers of fine bays and other beauty spots.

Compare the Building progress of Sutherland Shire with the Blue Mountains Shire last year. Fifty-three thousand pounds worth of new buildings were erected in Sutherland Shire against thirty-eight thousand pounds for the Blue Mountain Shire. The bulk of the buildings were erected between TAREN CITY and Cronulla.

Cronulla is now lighted by **electricity**, and an extension of the supply will undoubtedly be a thing of the near future.

**Gas** is only just across the river from TAREN CITY and now that this fine property has at last been unlocked, it is reasonable to expect an early extension of the mains across the river.

**Water.** The whole Shire will soon have one of the finest supplies in N.S.W. Cabinet has sanctioned the Woniara Water Supply Bill, the cost of which is estimated at one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. All the money has been arranged for and construction will take about twenty months.

TAREN CITY is a fine area, divided into splendid building blocks, all with excellent frontages on to good roads.

This first subdivision consists of 166 large lots, most of which are beautifully level, ready for building. The others have slight gradual slopes. In no case will the foundation cost be anything but very light.

All the lots have splendid water and panoramic views, and are within a very few minutes walk of one of the finest stretches of sporting water obtainable.

You do not pioneer at TAREN CITY. There are stores of every kind within easy reach and deliveries will be made at your home. The progress association is working with the object of having a tram running from Taren Point to Cronulla. Post, telegraph, and telephone facilities are to be had in close proximity.

The Anglican and Roman Catholic churches have both secured lots on the estate, and there is a fine public school within a very short distance.

The land is almost surrounded by the reaches of Georges River and Botany Bay, and commands a grandstand view of this wonderful stretch of water, famous the world over.

The opportunities for swimming, sailing, rowing and fishing, are unrivalled. On the opposite foreshore at Sans Souci are excellent baths and boatsheds, and storage space is available for purchasers wishing to keep boats.

Your children will thank you for giving them the opportunity to grow up in this bracing air. Every advantage will be theirs; the fine open spaces to give them clean fresh air, the beautiful sheltered waters of the bays to swim, and boat, and fish, and the splendid roads for riding and walking.

Remember, that **TAREN CITY** land is increasing in value with every tick of the clock, and that **EASTER MONDAY IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY**

AUCTIONEERS: H.W. HORNING & CO. LTD., 130 PITT STREET, SYDNEY, IN CONJUNCTION WITH LANCE GIDDINGS, 115 PITT STREET, SYDNEY, CRONULLA AND MIRANDA



## A HISTORY OF LYDHAM HALL

Many Bulletin readers would without doubt be familiar with the basic history of Lydham Hall per se. The following edited article was derived from notes used by the Society's president Bettye Ross, for a presentation to the Botany Bay Family History Society.

Mrs. Ross has kindly permitted the information from her presentation, to be reproduced for the Members' interest. As you will read there is much more to Lydham Hall than mere bricks and mortar.

When asked to write this article, I wondered which part of Lydham Hall I should write about first as a number of B.B.F.H.S. members visited Lydham Hall shortly after its 25th Anniversary in February of this year. However, as many have not seen the Lydham Hall leaflet or visited, I will try and submit a few interesting details even though some of it may be known to readers.

First of all, James Chandler in the 1820's was granted 1200 acres in the Parish of St. George that he named after his English birthplace of Bexley. After a few divisions of the land and changes of ownership, Joseph Davis purchased 67 acres of this grant in November 1859. Some time around the early 1860's, he had a home built on this acreage which fronted Forest Road from stone quarried where Villiers and Arlington Streets (Rockdale) meet, which was the lower portion of his property.

Joseph Davis was a Master Butcher and had a very lucrative business in King Street Newtown, from where he supplied meat to hospitals, asylums and other institutions as well as to the public. His enterprise enabled this lovely home to be built of good and substantial building materials as well as to employ stonemasons to cut the stone on his own property.

He drove his cattle across from Homebush to this site, as a place to water and fatten them. The cattle were then taken down to the vicinity of where Earl Park stood to be slaughtered and subsequently transported to his shop. Earl Park now has a number of factories built on it and lies just north of Arncliffe Station near the underpass.

"Lydham" later became known as "Lydham Hill" in Joseph Davis' time. By 1907, this name had changed to "Lydham Hall" when the widowed David Stead, the famous Marine Biologist with his 4 year old daughter Christina, who became equally, if not more famous than her father, though as a novelist, moved into it with his new bride Ada Gibbons.

Ada's father Frederick Gibbons had purchased the home when Joseph Davis died in 1889 and rented it until 1907. The Stead family lived rent free at Lydham Hall until 1918, when the home was sold following Frederick Gibbons' death.

Structurally, "Lydham" has four main rooms measuring 20 feet by 14 feet downstairs, the two rear ones being bedrooms (one is the resident Caretaker's alongside an addition to his flat built in keeping with the original building). The two front rooms are composed of a Drawing Room and a Dining Room with 1860's period furniture.

The majority of the furniture is on loan from the National Trust and is believed to have been originally with the Richardson family when living at "Tempe House" Cook's River. The building is shaded on three sides by a verandah nine feet in height that on the south side having been resumed by the later addition of two side rooms. These rooms are respectively used to display an old kitchen of the day and to house what is reputedly, the largest collection of "Willow Pattern" china in the Southern Hemisphere. These two rooms were originally on the block of land next door before the second last division of the land was made.

Each bedroom has a pink Carrara marble fireplace of slightly different styles, those in the two front rooms are of the more formal black Carrara quarried in Tuscany, Italy. Flooring is of Kauri pine with the remainder of the interior woodwork being Australian Red Cedar. Large windows front the house, the sides featuring french windows that are backed by white wooden louvred shutters of the 1860's style. Adjacent to one side of each fireplace remains the bell pull, formerly used to summon the kitchen staff.

The centrally situated hall is 10 feet wide and runs the full depth of the house, from the double front doors to their virtually identical counterparts at the rear. A narrow staircase leads from the rear of the hall to where the 2 children's attic bedrooms were, each having been 18ft.6 inch's square. These now comprise the Museum section of Lydham Hall and contain dormer windows that afford a view across Botany Bay, the airport and on a clear day, the Blue Mountains.

The original kitchen, stables and domestic quarters were on the adjoining south block until the final subdivision of the land. A tennis court remained on this land as late as the 1930's.

The Lydham Hall leaflet mentions that Joseph Davis was born around 1827 and came from Brede, Sussex in approximately 1850 to Australia, but I believe that he may have come via New Zealand in 1848 or directly here in 1848. This history has yet to be proven, however the leaflet tells one very little of the "lady of the house" Ellen Turner, other than to say that she was a local girl.

Ellen was born 1831 in Sydney, but not baptised until a month after her father died in 1842, (the same year as Ellen's infant brother and sister died a day apart during a Scarlet Fever outbreak). She was the last living child of her mother Ann (nee Cawson/Corson) and Edward Turner, a stonemason who arrived under a Life Sentence for Treason in 1818.

Edward Turner's brother had suffered the Sentence of Death with two others, as all three were judged to be the ringleaders of England's last revolution, staged in 1817. It was Edward Turner's part in this revolution along with his nephew Joseph Turner, which resulted in their transportation to New South Wales.

Edward Turner seems to have been not only an excellent stonemason but a businessman of some calibre. Edward's financial acumen is evidenced that even before his marriage to Ann Cawson or Corson (20 years his junior) to whom he was assigned, he purchased in 1825, land in her name in Kent Street (next to the still extant Judge's House) and in 1830, 3 years before His Conditional Pardon, he purchased land in the "Great Ultimo Estate."

By 1833 he had been assigned 3 convicts who helped him to build two cottages, a publican's house and some other buildings in Parramatta Street. He gained a Publican's licence and named his inn the "Stonemason's Arms." This building still stands 163 years later, just as the two storey home he and his brother William built around 1800 for their parents in South Wingfield, Derby, England still exists. The Stonemason's Arms now operates as the "Little Snail" restaurant, the building's facade has been preserved, as have been the original cellars, although the interior has been renovated to suit its new role. Edward received an Absolute Pardon in January 1835.

Edward bought other property at Abercrombie Place and at Blackwattle Creek, as well as 30 acres along Liverpool Road that he improved extensively from as a fine garden and orchard. Part of the Western Suburbs' Hospital stands there today. He died September 4, 1841 and is buried with his two infant children Alice (named after his sister) and Edmund at St. Peter's, Cook's River.

Ellen Davis (nee Turner) can be traced in Australian back to 1801, when 18 year old John Cawson/Corson arrived here on charge of theft. John's name does not appear again on any Muster, Census, Birth, Death, Marriage or Probate record, but his name appears as the father of Ann Cawson/Corson when she was baptised shortly after her birth in 1805. Ellen's mother was Mary Nuttall (otherwise spelt as Nuttall, Nuttall, Nottal, and Nutll) who was transported to Australia in 1804. Records indicate that a year after Ann Cawson's baptism, both she and her mother were in the Parramatta Female Factory and the elusive John Cawson seems to have permanently disappeared.

A few years later, Mary Nuttall bore the first of a number of children to another Free Convict Thomas Reynolds, whom she married about 1822 when the aforementioned Edward Turner was assigned to him and this no doubt was how the 17 year old Ann Cawson came to meet him.

Edward and Ann (Cawson) Turner seem to have had a successful and financially rewarding partnership together but did not live to see their daughter Ellen marry Joseph Davis. Ann died a year after Edward and is buried with him at St. Peter's. How full of pride they would have been to see the fine home Joseph Davis built for Ellen and their seven children on the second highest point of the St. George Parish named Lydham Hall and which today is the second oldest home standing in that area. "Tempe House" is the oldest having been built in the early 1830's.

Do visit Lydham Hall, admire and enjoy its many varied and beautiful contents, gained through the generosity of members of the St. George Historical Society and other friends and visitors.

**THE AUSTRALIAN GERANIUM SOCIETY INC.**

**PRESENTS THE ANNUAL SPRING SHOW**

**'PRETTY AS A PICTURE'**

**TURRAMURRA UNITING CHURCH HALL**

**10 Turramurra Avenue, Turramurra**

**ON SATURDAY 11TH OCTOBER 1997 - 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

**Entry through the glass doors from the Council Car Park**

**NAMED PLANTS FOR SALE**

**CULTURAL ADVICE**

**REFRESHMENTS FOR SALE**

**ADMISSION:**

**Adults:                    \$2**

**Pensioners:             \$1**

**Children: (over 12) \$1**

**Phone: 9604 5481**



**WHAT'S ON.....**

**A WALK THROUGH TIME IN BALMAIN**

**DATE: Wednesday 29/10/97**

**TIME: 10.15 A.M.**

This is a unique opportunity to visit the many places of interest in Balmain and compare the vast changes that have taken place in recent years; a time to go back in history.

I do hope you can join us and so help to make this a day for all to enjoy. Friends welcome!

Arrangements are as follow:-

**MEET:** 10.15 A.M. at Bus Stop 442 in Druitt Street beside Sydney's Town Hall.

Lunch can be had from one of the many restaurants in the Balmain vicinity.

Return by ferry to Circular Quay

**COST:** Free plus luncheon money

**CONTACT:** Dora Lenane on telephone numbers 9181 2121 or 9660 2714

**DONATIONS WELCOME.**