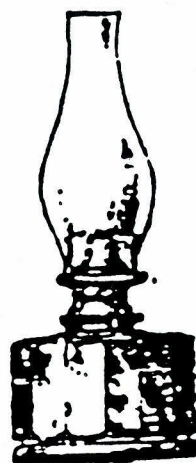


*St George Historical Society*  
*Inc.*  
*Bulletin*

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 1998 Edition

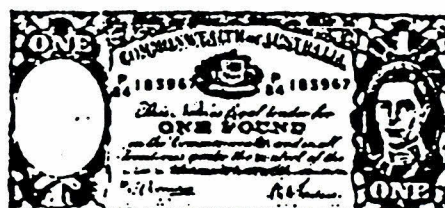
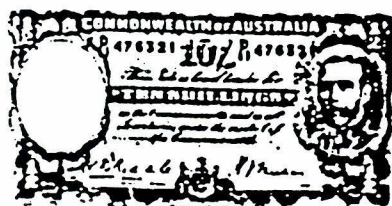
**EMPIRE DAY**



Kerosene lamp



The baker



POUND SHILLINGS & PENCE

|                    |  |                        |
|--------------------|--|------------------------|
| PRESIDENT          | Mr. Wesley Fairhall                      | 9546 5555              |
| SECRETARY          | Mrs. Valda Beehag                        | 9546 2819              |
| TREASURER          | Mrs. Dora Lenane                         | 9660 2714              |
| SENIOR -VICE       | Mr. Bernard Sharah                       | 9567 8989              |
| PRESIDENT          |  |                        |
| VICE - PRESIDENT   | Mrs. Bettye Ross                         | 9589 0229              |
| RESEARCH OFFICER   | Mr. Arthur Ellis                         | 9529 4879              |
| SOCIAL SECRETARIES | Mrs. Dora Lenane &<br>Mrs. Joan Fairhall | 9660 2714<br>9546 5555 |
| PUBLICITY OFFICER  | Mrs. Joan Fairhall                       | 9546 5555              |
| BULLETIN EDITOR    | Mr. Wesley Fairhall                      | 9546 5555              |
| LYDHAM HALL        | Mrs. B. Ross,                            |                        |
| LOCAL COMMITTEE    | Mrs. J. Byrne &<br>Mr. B. Sharah         |                        |
| PUBLIC OFFICER     | Mrs. Joan Fairhall                       | 9546 5555              |
| HERITAGE ADVISORY  | Mr. Bernard Sharah                       | 9567 8989              |
| COMMITTEE          |  |                        |
| REPRESENTATIVE     |  |                        |
| AUDITOR            | Mrs. L. Thompson                         |                        |

**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.**

## **NEXT MEETING**

### **NOVEMBER 10 Feedback from the Rockdale City Council**

Mr. John B. Brandenburg of Rockdale City Council's Property & Recreational Development department, will speak to the St. George Historical Society about our role in the affairs of the Rockdale Area, particularly in relation to the functioning of Lydham Hall.

This meeting also serves as an informal means through which to raise any concerns you have in relation to the local area. Please come along and support your society. The Council very much appreciates community input from organizations such as ours.

### **DECEMBER 8 CHRISTMAS PARTY**

Members and guests are cordially invited to attend the Society's Christmas Party. Once again, a fellow member, Mr. Peter Sage promises to entertain us with a slide spectacular presentation concentrating on the "Wonders of Argentina." Unforgettable sights such as the Iguacu Falls that rival those at Niagara, the wilds of Patagonia including the glaciers of the southern Andes to name but a few.

## FROM THE EDITOR...

I wish members all compliments of the Season and sincerely hope that 1999 proves to be a healthy and rewarding year for you all. I take this opportunity, on behalf of your Society, to wish members who are currently unwell a speedy return to better health, especially our former Honorary Treasurer, Mrs. Margaret Persen.

Do make a special effort to come to at least one of our Christmas Parties. Members who dislike travelling at night are always most welcome to attend the afternoon Christmas Party at Lydham Hall detailed in the What's on section of the Bulletin.

This edition should awaken many fond memories. The feature article represents the first instalment of some reflections penned by Mr. William (Bill) Thomas, who still resides within the St. George Municipality. Interestingly, Mr. Thomas was motivated to write the article in an attempt to show his grandchildren what life was like when he was young. If this article triggers any personal anecdotes of the "early days," do jot them down and forward them in for inclusion in the Bulletin - your experiences are well worth recording!

The second article contributed by Mrs. Joan Fairhall, summarizes the recent "Camden Country" trip. Outings advertised within the Bulletin are most enjoyable and well worth supporting.

Kind regards,

The Editor

## **What are Seniors' Worth?**

Remember, old folk are worth a fortune - with silver in their hair, gold in their teeth, stones in their kidneys, lead in their feet and gas in their stomachs.

I have become a little older since I saw you last and a few changes have come into my life.

Frankly, I have become a frivolous Old Girl. I'm seeing five gentlemen every day. As soon as I wake-up, Will Power helps me out of bed. Then I go to see John. Next, its time for Uncle Toby to come along, followed by Billy T.

They leave and Arthur Ritis shows up and stays the rest of the day. He doesn't like to stay in one place for very long, so he takes me from joint to joint. After such a busy day, I'm really tired and glad to go to bed with Johnny Walker. What a life! Oh yes, I'm also flirting with Al Zymer.

P.S. The preacher came to call the other day. He said that at my age I should be thinking about the hereafter. I told him, Oh I do, all the time. No matter where I am, if I'm in the parlour, upstairs, in the kitchen or down in the basement, I ask myself, Now what am I here after?

## LYDHAM HALL VOLUNTEERS' ROSTER

Would all members kindly consider volunteering in the capacity of Lydham Hall guides. Guide work is not onerous, requiring two hours on a Saturday from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. For ease of handling and security purposes, at least two volunteers should staff Lydham Hall each Saturday. The following table indicates the days requiring an extra volunteer. Direct enquiries to Mr. Wesley Fairhall on 9546.5555

| NOVEMBER | SATURDAY                         | SPECIAL DAYS   |
|----------|----------------------------------|--|
|          | 7th<br>W. Fairhall &<br>A. Field |  |
|          | 14th<br>B. Sharah &<br>?         |  |
|          | 21st<br>A. Fields &<br>C. Welsh  |  |
|          | 28th                             | "Scottish Day"<br>Lydham Hall open from 1.00p.m. to 4.00p.m.<br>W. Fairhall, B. Sharah, V. Beehag. Other volunteers<br>would be appreciated. |
| DECEMBER | 5th<br>N. Burns &<br>?           |  |
|          | Sunday 6th                       | Lydham Hall Thank you Afternoon Tea from 2.00p.m.<br>to 4.00p.m. for volunteers from the St. George<br>Historical Society.                   |
|          | 12th                             | Lydham Hall Christmas Party<br>A. Fields, C. Welsh, W. Fairhall, J. Fairhall. Other<br>volunteers would be appreciated.                      |
|          | 19th<br>W. Fairhall &<br>?       |  |
|          | 26th<br>Boxing Day<br>(closed)   |  |

Some proverbs to ponder:-

"A certain peace is to be preferred to an expected victory";

"A barley-corn is better than a diamond to a cockerel";

"A bolt does not always fall when it thunders";

"A prudent youth is superior to a stupid old man"; and

"A good anvil does not fear the hammer"

## MEMORIES

### EARLY YEARS....

Born on the 1st April 1930, at 46 *Napoleon Street, Sans Souci*, my parents Alonzo and Lillian Hudson named me William Thomas. My brother John was born ten years earlier.

Our house was built of brick with a slate roof. There were two bedrooms, a lounge room, a dining room, and a kitchen, with a gas stove as we had no electricity. Mum was a great cook. I loved her Steak and Kidney pies, Rolly Polly puddings and sago and tapioca. In the corner of the kitchen was a copper where once a week Mum would light a fire so she could wash our clothes. Alongside the copper were two tubs that were used both for the laundry and for washing up our dishes. The kitchen drain would flow into a pipe that led to the paddocks outside, where large white lilies (Arum lilies?) grew in abundance.

Outside at the end of the verandah was our bathroom, we had a large metal bathtub. We had a bath once a week, the rest of the time we used a bowl to wash our face, hands and feet.

We used Kerosene lamps for light, they gave enough light to see our way around the house but barely enough for reading. We had to fill the lamps daily with kerosene and trim the wicks, they were quite dangerous and started many a house fire. I was about six at the time we finally had the electricity connected, what fun, going from room-to-room switching the lights on and off...whatever will they think of next!?

### CHOOKS AND DUCKS....

Most of our neighbours kept fowls and ducks, and with grain spread around the ground in large quantities there were also plenty of rats and mice. Whenever one of our hens became broody, Dad would let her sit on at least ten eggs at a time.

As I grew older Dad would send me across on the old Sans Souci Punt to Taren Point. At the poultry farms I would buy a dozen <sup>very</sup> old pullets and we would keep them in the house for the remainder of the day away from the hen, otherwise she would reject them as not being her own. At about eight o'clock that night, we would go to the nest and place the chicks under her, next morning, "Bingo" the mother hen would find her family had suddenly increased to twenty two!

I had fun watching Dad chop off the head of a chook, letting it go and watching the dog chase a flapping headless bird around the yard, blood spurting everywhere, "They were the days."

## DELIVERY MEN....

Our street was a continual procession of delivery men. The Milkman would arrive early in the morning with his horse-drawn cart, on the back would be two large oblong steel tanks with large tops on the end. The Milkman would fill-up his large milk jug then fill-up your *billycan*. There were no measurements, whatever size *billycan* you left out then that was what you got. He would then sing out to his horse "getup" and the horse would then move on to the next house. A well-trained horse would walk slowly up the street with the Milkman keeping pace.

If the Milkman did not have enough milk to go around, there was always plenty of water in the taps to add to the tanks.

There was another man who came around with his horse and cart calling out at the top of his voice "clothes props." The props were long wooden poles with a "V" on one end. The pole would lift a long wire just high enough to keep Mum's washing off the ground and "Lookout" if anyone knocked the pole so as to cause her washing to fall!

The kids loved the "Ice man," who would come around three times a week, as he would chip of small chunks of ice for us to suck. We had an "ice chest" and the man would carry the block into the house and place it in a container on the top shelf. During the day the ice would melt and the water would run down a pipe into a large drip tray. The tray would be emptied every night. Whenever it got too full and we tried to empty it, a wave would be created that grew bigger and bigger - by the time you reached the sink half the water would be on the kitchen floor.

The Baker was not strictly a baker, but a bread carter who carried his bread in a wicker basket slung over his arm. His horse would know the route and patiently follow him around all day with the cart.

Our Postman was named Bill, he rode a pushbike and if he placed mail in our letter box he would blow his whistle, he would do his rounds twice a day including Saturdays. As very <sup>few</sup> people had a telephone, "Telegram boys" were employed to ride their pushbikes from the Post Office to your front door and deliver urgent messages personally. The person in charge of the Postal Service was known as the "Postmaster General."

Other men delivered fish, fruit and vegetables and there was the "Rabbito." They all used the horse and cart except the "Library man" who drove a car around once a week with his books. The books cost *threepence* each per week. Dad used to read westerns and Mum enjoyed love stories.

The "Bottle Man" came every few weeks buying our empty bottles for *sixpence* a dozen, even medicine bottles went back to be used again and again.

Our "loo" was situated about eight yards from the back of the house. About once a week early in the morning the *Pan Truck*, (we used to call it the Twenty Four Door Saloon) would do its rounds. The unfortunate "Dunnie Man" would hoist a clean pan onto his shoulder and then run the gauntlet, down our side-passage, between a large hedge and the fence, straight into huge spider webs, open the side gate, manoeuvre around the dog or anything else that might be left in the back yard, remove the full pan, place a lid on it and then back up the passage then onto the next house... On Christmas Morning we would always leave two *shillings* on the toilet seat.

### EMPIRE DAY....

Empire Day, held always on May 24th, the Kings' and later Queen's Birthday and Bonfire Night. What a time it was! For weeks we would be chopping down trees and laying them out to dry. On the afternoon of the big event, we would dig a hole into which we would stand the biggest tree we had. We would then pack branches and any rubbish onto which we could lay our hands. We would then guard our bonfire until all our neighbours' arrived at about seven o'clock; then up it went.

For the next hour we would be letting-off "Tom Thumbs," baskets, Catherine Wheels, "Sky Rockets," Sparklers, flower pots, and "Bungers" of all descriptions. Next morning, we would be up early to search the area for any unlit crackers that we had dropped.

Once I spent Bonfire Night with my cousin who lived at Millers Point, "The Rocks." When it came to about seven o'clock, all the kids ran onto the road and there in the middle of the tram lines they piled old chairs, boxes, all sorts of timber and rubbish, and set it alight. And what a fire, down came the Police and then in the distance I could hear the wail of the Fire Brigade sirens. The Brigade was very unpopular on Bonfire Night "How dare they squirt water onto our Bonfire!"

### POUNDS, SHILLINGS AND PENCE....

Although we stuck to the official names in school, we had our own slang for money. A *Penny* was a "Brum" and a *Ha'penny* therefore a "Half-a-Brum." *Threepence* was a "Trey," *Sixpence* a "Zac." A *Shilling* was either a "Bob" or a "Dinar" but, although we talked of "two Bob," "three Bob," and so on, the "Dinar" never seemed to go plural. A pound was a "Quid." ten Shillings could be "ten Bob," "Half-a-Quid," or a "Half-a-Note."

To be continued



### THE CROWN

A constant reminder of our British loyalties and heritage was the ever-present British Crown, placed conspicuously on or in government-owned vehicles, buildings, uniforms and articles of all descriptions.



## *CAMDEN COUNTRY*

Our Coach trip on Friday 16/10/98 was our last bus trip this year. We left Hurstville Station at 9.00 a.m. as usual and arrived at *Wivenhoe* shortly after 10.00 a.m. After a look around the gardens, chapel and house, a Devonshire Morning Tea was served in the 1900's conservatory, overlooking a lawn surrounded by magnificent trees and a picturesque garden.

Then on to *Spring Herbs* where the enthusiastic Mauritian expatriate owner Philippe greeted us warmly and proudly showed us his many gardens of herbs, this time in bloom and vying for competition with his beautiful roses. Tea, coffee and biscuits were served in a gazebo in the centre of the garden to complement our packed luncheons.

A great effort was made to get everyone back onto the bus and we headed for St. John's Anglican Church Camden, where we met a guide from the local historical society. The keys had been obtained to show us through the church, then onto Cobbitty to view St. Paul's Anglican Church, cemetery and the adjacent Heber Chapel, many interesting tales were told.

Our guide stayed on the bus and directed us on a tour of Camden for a couple of hours, pointing out historical highlights, interesting modern buildings and plans for the future. We then had an easy return trip to Hurstville by 4.30 p.m. Not a bad day for \$15.00 and a \$3.00 Morning Tea donation.

I will be booking four bus trips for 1999 and hope that you can join us on one or all of them. We endeavour to vary the types of places that we visit and certainly all are good value for money, and offering great fellowship. Members and friends are most welcome and a list of upcoming trips should be available for the next journal.

Meanwhile, may I wish you a very Merry Xmas and best of luck with your New Year's resolutions. I am sure that Dora Lenane who has put much thought and work into the various outings that she has arranged for your pleasure during 1998, will also join me in this wish.

Joan Fairhall

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

### **A Solemn High Mass for Christ the King.**

**DATE:** Sunday 22/11/98 at 5.00 p.m.

**MEETING PLACE:** Christ Church St. Laurence, Broadway

This annual mass is a stupendous highlight of the church year for many people of a variety of denominations as well as the resident Anglicans. The beauty of this historic sandstone church, heady aroma of incense, arguably Sydney's finest choir and a chamber orchestra constitute a truly holy and most spiritually refreshing experience.

Although the Mass is at 5.00.p.m, it is advisable to arrive early for a good vantage point.

Everyone welcome!

**COST:** Free - other than a voluntary donation in the offertory collection.

**CONTACT:** Joan Fairhall on telephone number 9546.5555

### **Scottish Day**

**DATE:** Saturday 28/11/98. Time 1.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** Lydham Hall, Bexley.

This day aims to celebrate Australia's Scottish legacy. The atmosphere of the day will be enhanced through playing videos of former Military Tattoos and the architecture and scenery of the wilds of Scotland.

**COST:** \$3.50 includes entry to Lydham Hall and light refreshments of tea and coffee as well as traditional Scottish delights including shortbread.

**CONTACT:** Joan Fairhall on telephone number 9546.5555

### **Lydham Hall Thank You**

**DATE: Sunday 6/12/98. Time 2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m.**

**VENUE: Lydham Hall, Bexley.**

This afternoon hosted by the Lydham Hall Management Committee has been arranged as a means of saying a heart-felt thank you to all the volunteers from the St. George Historical Society who have served as office bearers within the society or have actively volunteered as guides at Lydham Hall mid-week or on the weekend.

**COST:** Free - refreshments to be supplied by the Lydham Hall Management Committee.

**CONTACT:** Christine Welsh on telephone number 9587.9072 after 6.00 p.m. or on Anne Field's answering machine 9588.6553

### **Lydham Hall Christmas Party**

**DATE: Saturday 12/12/98. Time 3.00 p.m. - 5.00 p.m.**

**VENUE: Lydham Hall, Bexley**

All members and friends are most welcome to attend what traditionally has been an event marked by fine food, enjoyable fellowship and good fun! The more the merrier!

**COST:** Free.

**CONTACT:** Bettye Ross on telephone number 9589.0229 or Joan Fairhall on telephone number 9546.5555

**LADIES, PLEASE BRING A PLATE OF CHRISTMAS GOODIES AND GENTLEMEN SOME CHRISTMAS SNACKS OR DRINKS WOULD BE MOST WELCOME.**