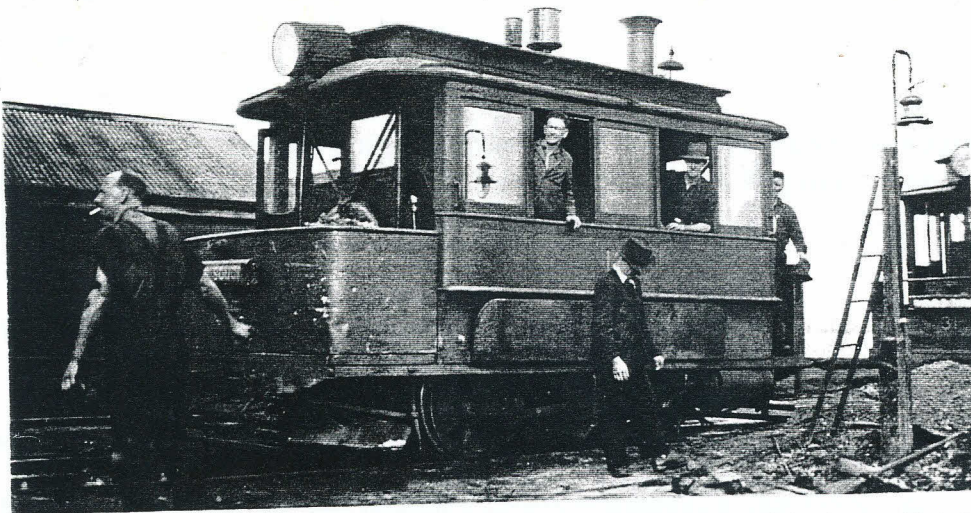


St George Historical Society Inc. Bulletin

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1998⁹ Edition

Cover photographs taken from "River, Road and Rail" A History of Kogarah Municipality, published in 1985 by Kogarah Municipal Council.



69. **STEAM TRAM MAINTENANCE, 1937.** One of the problems with the steam tram, apart from its noise, smoke and soot, was its need for constant maintenance which increased its running costs over the less troublesome electric

trams. The maintenance being carried out here was at the tram shed at Sandringham, just prior to the trolley buses superseding the steam tram.



70. **TROLLEY BUS 'DERAILED', 1959.** Not infrequently the 'trolleys' became disengaged from their overhead wires and the conductor had to reconnect them using a long hooked pole kept in the side of the bus. The 'derailed'

bus was turning out of Ramsgate Road into Rocky Point Road, on its way to Sans Souci. Compare this photograph with illustration 115, taken 45 years earlier at the same spot.

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SECRETARY	Mrs. Valda Beehag	9546 2819
TREASURER	Mrs. Dora Lenane	9660 2714
SENIOR -VICE	Mr. Bernard Sharah	9567 8989
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LOCAL COMMITTEE	Mrs. J. Byrne & 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

FEBRUARY 9 Sylvester's Castle - Oatley

Mrs. Betty Goodger of the Kogarah Historical Society will speak on what she has learnt through personally researching the mysterious "Sylvester's Castle", which once graced Oatley.

The secrets of this enigmatic edifice will ensure entertainment and education enough for everyone!

March 9 A History of William Carrs Esq.

Mrs. Janette Hollebone has chosen a very local person for her talk to the Society. Come along and learn how the legacy of William Carrs extends far beyond that of Carrs Park alone.

FROM THE EDITOR...

I have taken the opportunity to forward this edition of the Bulletin out early for a number of reasons. First, I would like members to give serious consideration to the enclosed Lydham Hall Volunteers' roster. As from Sunday, January 17th 1999, Lydham Hall will be open on Sundays only (unless alternative arrangements have been agreed with the Society). The Committee would greatly appreciate additional members volunteering to assist with Lydham Hall Duty. Please contact the editor if you could assist.

I also direct your attention to the Heritage Week information. The St. George Historical Society Inc. would receive considerable public relations exposure if members are willing to spend some time at Rockdale Plaza. Please carefully review the information enclosed and help make Heritage Week a success. Finally, please also note the What's on section of the Bulletin, particularly as Sunday, February 21st 1999 is the Anniversary of the Opening of the Lydham Hall Museum. This anniversary is particularly notable, as the Society will be launching a much improved brochure on Lydham Hall itself and its history, so please take the opportunity to come along with as many friends, family and neighbours as possible.

A 1998 - 1999 Membership Renewal form has also been enclosed for those members not currently recorded as being financial. *Please renew your membership promptly, as Membership Renewals contribute significantly to the functioning of the St. George Historical Society Inc.*

This edition contains a final Presidential report from the Society's immediate past President, Bettye Ross. Thank you Bettye once again for your efforts.

The second article continues with Mr. Thomas' reflections on his childhood experiences of Sans Souci in the decade between 1930 and 1940.

Kind regards,

The Editor

Reflections

*Is anybody happier because you pass his way?
Does anybody remember that you spoke to him today?
Were you selfish (pure and simple) as you rushed along your way?
Or is someone mighty grateful for a deed you did today?
Can you say tonight in parting with the day that's slipping past that you helped a single brother in the many that you passed?
Is a single heart rejoicing over what you did or said?
Does a man whose hopes were fading, now with courage look ahead?
Did you waste the day or lose it?*

*Was it well or poorly spent?
Did you leave a trail of kindness or a scar of discontent?
As you close your eyes in slumber, do you think that God would say:
You have earned one more tomorrow by the work you did today.*

Contributed by Cr Ron Rathbone.

Volunteers' Names & Dates of Duty	Saturday 17 April	Sunday 18 April	Monday 19 April	Tuesday 20 April	Wednesday 21 April	Thursday 22 April	Friday 23 April	Saturday 24 April	Sunday 25 April
	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	N/A	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M. Cr. A. Field	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	N/A
	9.30 - 10.30	10.00 - 11.00 A.M.	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30 Cr. A. Field	9.30 - 10.30	10.00 - 11.00 A.M.
	10.30 - 11.30	11.00 - 12.00	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30 Cr. A. Field	10.30 - 11.30	11.00 - 12.00
	11.30 - 12.30	12.00 - 1.00	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30 Cr. A. Field	11.30 - 12.30	12.00 - 1.00
	12.30 - 1.30	1.00 - 2.00	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30 Cr. A. Field	12.30 - 1.30	1.00 - 2.00
	1.30 - 2.30	2.00 - 3.00	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30 Cr. A. Field	1.30 - 2.30	2.00 - 3.00
	2.30 - 3.30	3.00 - 4.00	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30 Cr. A. Field	2.30 - 3.30	3.00 - 4.00
	3.30 - 4.30	N/A	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30 Cr. A. Field	3.30 - 4.30	N/A
	4.30 - 5.00	N/A	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30 Cr. A. Field	4.30 - 5.00	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.30 - 6.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.30 - 7.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.30 - 8.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.30 - 9.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

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 Sunday from 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m. For convenience and security purposes, at least two volunteers should staff Lydham Hall each Sunday. New volunteers are welcome to come on the first or second weeks of the month, to learn from some of the more experienced guides. The following table indicates the days requiring extra volunteers. Direct enquiries to Mr. Wesley Fairhall on 9546.5555 or 9220.5145 or Councillor Anne Field on 9588.6553

JANUARY	SUNDAY	SPECIAL DAYS
	17th J. Fairhall & N. Burns	
	24th ?	
	31st ?	
FEBRUARY	7th A. Field & C. Welsh	
	14th W. Fairhall & ?	
	21st 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Lydham Hall Anniversary of Opening of Property A. Field, C. Welsh, J. Fairhall. Other volunteers would be appreciated.
	28th ?	
MARCH	7th A. Field & C. Welsh	
	14th W. Fairhall & ?	
	21st ?	
	28th ?	

Some proverbs to ponder:-

"A good archer is not known by his arrow but by his aim";

"A man often admits that his memory is at fault but never his judgement";

"Accusing is proving when malice and force sit as judges";

"Death has a thousand doors to let out life"; and

"A man without a smiling face must not open a shop"

HERITAGE WEEK ROSTER - ROCKDALE PLAZA

Would all members kindly consider volunteering as representatives of the St. George Historical Society Inc. for the purposes of a *Heritage Week* display, to be held from Saturday 17th April to Sunday 25th April 1999, during the opening hours of the Rockdale Plaza.

Our Society, together with the Southern Sydney Branch of the National Trust and Rockdale Heritage District Association, have been invited to participate in the above display designed by Rockdale City Council. The display will consist of an "*an exhibition of maps and photographs illustrating the development of the City of Rockdale from the pre-European landscape to today.*"

The display's purpose is to arouse the General Public's interest in their local area. It will feature land sale maps and architectural style maps; the latter of which could be used to enable interested people to see what period of architecture predominates in their street or neighbourhood. In addition, photographs illustrating styles of housing covering Victorian, Federation, Californian Bungalow etc. will also be displayed to augment the maps.

To emphasize the irreplaceable value of our architectural heritage, a panel of photographs indicating "*things we have lost*" and "*things we want to keep*" will also be on view.

Volunteers would not be expected to have a comprehensive knowledge of all things historical. Interested members, if they so desire, can be teamed up with somebody else more knowledgeable in local historical matters. Background information about the contents of the display will be made available to the volunteers who man the display.

The table on the following page indicates the dates and times for which volunteers are required. Direct enquiries to Mr. Wesley Fairhall on 9546.5555 or 9220.5145 or Councillor Anne Field on 9588.6553

If you wish to volunteer for duty on the roster, please print your name and the date/s you wish to serve in the first column, then circle the time/s you wish to attend from one or more of the subsequent columns.

Volunteers' Names & Dates of Duty	Saturday 17 April	Sunday 18 April	Monday 19 April	Tuesday 20 April	Wednesday 21 April	Thursday 22 April	Friday 23 April	Saturday 24 April	Sunday 25 April
	8.30 - 9.30	N/A	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	8.30 - 9.30 A.M.	N/A
	9.30 - 10.30 A.M.	10.00 - 11.00 A.M.	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	9.30 - 10.30	10.00 - 11.00 A.M.
	10.30 - 11.30	11.00 - 12.00	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	10.30 - 11.30	11.00 - 12.00
	11.30 - 12.30	12.00 - 1.00	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	11.30 - 12.30	12.00 - 1.00
	12.30 - 1.30	1.00 - 2.00	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	12.30 - 1.30	1.00 - 2.00
	1.30 - 2.30	2.00 - 3.00	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	1.30 - 2.30	2.00 - 3.00
	2.30 - 3.30	3.00 - 4.00	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	2.30 - 3.30	3.00 - 4.00
	3.30 - 4.30	N/A	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	3.30 - 4.30	N/A
	4.30 - 5.00	N/A	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.30	4.30 - 5.00	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.30 - 6.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.30 - 7.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7.30 - 8.30	N/A	N/A	N/A
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	8.30 - 9.00	N/A	N/A	N/A

SO LONG - FAREWELL - AND THANKS

We've said goodbye to 1998, hullo! to 1999 and thanks for blessings gone by and to come. However 'better late than never' - I'd like to thank all those who supported me through my years' Presidency of St. George Historical Society (my 5th) ending in our last financial year and wish Wesley Fairhall 'good luck' for the present year. He's making a good job of it so far, just as he is with the new style Bulletin. I hope Wes enjoys his time as President as much as I did and also his involvement with Lydham Hall from whose committee I resigned a few months ago.

During my last year we had some excellent speakers such as -

James Kane who came along and spoke to us of Christina Stead, and briefly of Miles Franklin and Clive James.

Margaret Murphy, Hurstville Library's Local Studies Librarian gave a talk and showed slides of the areas in which local boys had fought in France during WW1.

John Brandenburg of Rockdale City Council's Property and Recreational Development Department, spoke of St. George Historical Society Inc.'s role in the Rockdale area, particularly in relation to Lydham Hall.

Peter Sage at our Christmas Meeting presented us once more with a spectacular talk and slideshow from one of his tours overseas. So enjoyable, that he was immediately booked for a mid year showing as we felt we couldn't wait for another 12 months to be so educated and entertained.

The first meeting of 1998 featured John Logue of Rockdale with a talk on current affairs of the Rockdale area.

Margaret Fleming brought us interesting facets of her life in Scotland and involvement there in WW1. Her charm and wit are very captivating.

The work of the Australian Red Cross was presented to us by John Lechners.

Maxine Gray of the Hurstville Family History Group introduced us to the Cornish (most of whom were miners) who came to make their home in Australia.

All this was brought to a close in June 1998 with an informative talk and beautiful views of the Hawkesbury River by Peter Sage.

As well as the above, a Christina Stead Day was held at Lydham Hall on 19th July 1997 to commemorate what would have been her 95th Birthday (which actually fell on the 17th).

Between 1st July 1997 and 30th June 1998, Lydham Hall visitors, numbered in brackets hereunder, who enjoyed a morning tea/coffee with damper and golden syrup or a Devonshire Tea; came from Stella Maris Nursing Home at Cronulla (18), Jannali Neighbourhood Aid Friendship Group (25), Lakemba Uniting Church Ladies Friendship Club (12), St. George Evening View Club (15), Vauxhall Car Club (30), Port Hacking Rosemary Club of Legacy (22), Australia Day visitors (30), Rockdale English for Migrants Class (20), Clempton Park Uniting Church Friendship Club (15), St. George's Day (2), Heritage Day (?) thought to be over 100, Revesby Congregational Church Friends (25), Penshurst Presbyterian Friends (20),

Hurstville Home Library (11), Over 50's Walking Group (9), three separate groups from Bexley Primary Public School, consisting of 25, 26 and 58 children respectively, and also over 80 people attended for a Baby Name Giving Party and Viewing on May 24th, 1998.

So to all those who helped in any and every way on the above occasions, please accept my sincere thanks. You're a band of 'troopers' I could never have done without and even if I say so myself, "we were a good team" and that is not excepting all the volunteers - too many to mention but worth their weight in gold!

Bettye Ross

MEMORIES (continued from November- December 1998 Bulletin)

ANZAC DAY

I liked Anzac Day 25th April. Dad would give me his medals to polish and the next morning we would be off early in the morning to see the March. Mum and I liked to get close to the barriers, while Dad would be at the Assembly Point, with his "Digger" mates.

It was always a colourful march. The Mounted Police leading the various units of the A.I.F. with their distinctive banners, and then we would see in the distance the banner of the 3rd Battalion, held high! Dad would be marching and somehow he would find us in the crowd and give us a wave. I was very proud.

WORLD WAR 2

In 1944 during World War 2, our house had to be fitted-out with "Blackout" curtains over all the windows to stop the light showing through, in case enemy aircraft were flying overhead. The glass in the windows was crisscrossed with tape in the event of a bomb landing nearby.

Dad dug us an air raid shelter, out back, it was a trench with a sheet of corrugated iron over the top.

When the Air Raid Siren's sounded, there was no way we were going out into the cold to sit in that trench, if the bomb had our name on it, well too bad!

In 1944 we saw the introduction of "Ration Books," they were for tea, beer, clothing, sugar, butter and meat.

MOVIES

A weekly event in my life was going to the "Flicks" or Pictures, then affectionately known as the "Flea" or "Bug" House. On Saturday afternoon, my mates and I would walk about three miles to get there, pay out *threepence* and sit in the front stalls.

The programme was divided into two separate films with an interval between; first there would be an exciting serial such as "Flash Gordon" or "Buck Rogers," pure science fiction, or "Hopperlong Cassidy." There were also Micky and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

There was "Tarzan King of the Apes" and good Australian films such as, "Dad and Dave" in *On Our Selection* and George Wallace in *Going to the Dogs*.

We would watch horror films with our eyes shut, they included Dracula, Frankenstein, and Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

BROWN UP

I loved swimming, but I never played sport seriously as we had little transportation in those days.

Where we lived there were huge areas of bush. I thought nothing of climbing to the highest branches, particularly, the large Moreton Bay Fig trees and the tall pine trees; robbing the Sparrows' nests.

In the bushes we built hideouts. I loved to play Cowboys and Indians. Other games included marbles or Spinning a Top. Then there was our faithful catapult, of all the kids who had them, I can never recall any of them hitting anything! But we had a lot of fun. One Christmas morning, Santa left me a Cyclops Scooter and a Hornby Train Set.

HISTORICAL INFORMATION

In 1937, at the age of seven, the District saw a historical transformation. We lost our old steam trams, which travelled between Sandringham and Kogarah. The trams consisted of a small, black, smoke belching loco, and one or two carriages. A clean white shirt that you had at Sandringham would not necessarily be white by the time the tram reached Kogarah.

The trams were replaced by the most modern form of bus transport in the World, the Double Decker Trolley Bus. (That was the end of us putting our pennies on the tram tracks.)

First the Council paved the road with bitumen. I watched with great interest the men grading the road and the steamroller going up and down with the smell of hot tar everywhere. They then erected large poles to hold the electric wires.

And then came the day for which we had all been waiting - the first Trolley Bus. I had my *tuppence* ready for the Return trip that went not only to Kogarah, but onto Rockdale as well, so with Mum and Dad off I went! An experience never to be forgotten.

SICKNESS

Children in the 1930's and 40's suffered the usual ills. Measles, Whooping Cough, Diphtheria, Mumps, Chicken Pox, and a terrible disease called Infantile Paralysis (Polio). Boils were very common and were akin to a very large pimple that Mum would treat with Bates of Sav, and when the boil was ripe, a quick squeeze and pus would spurt everywhere. The only antibodies available then were the slow working sulphur drugs.

Head lice (the eggs of which are called "Nits,") were a problem. If one child went to school infected, within a few days the whole class would be scratching. If we had a stomach pain or constipation, out would come the good old caster oil, sometimes mixed with orange juice, (to this day when I drink orange juice I can still taste the caster oil)!

Surgery was often performed in the home, I recall my brother having his tonsils taken out on the kitchen table.

SCHOOL

My first year of school was 1936, at which time we had to write on slateboards. The next year I was given my own desk with an inkwell in it. The students would take it in turns to fill the wells.

The Commonwealth Bank gave each child a bank book, and every Monday morning I would give the teacher two *shillings* and she would stamp my bank book with the amount. At the end of the year we would all look forward to seeing what we had saved and what interest we had received - (there were no bank charges then)!

ENTERTAINMENT

Soon after the electricity was connected, Dad bought a wireless set in the form of a console which was a very large piece of furniture.

The most popular programme was "Dad and Dave," later to be made into a movie. Its theme tune was "Along the Road to Gundagai." Other popular serials were "Search for the Golden Boomerang," "Dr. Fu Man Chew," and "Yes What!" with Mr. Pimm, Bottomy, Stanford and Greenbottle. The whole family liked to listen to radio personalities such as Bob Dyer's "Pick a Box" and Jack Davy.

I eventually married a young lady named Margaret. We moved into our first home at 17 England Street, Brighton-Le-Sands.

Our first television set was a black and white seventeen inch *Pye*. Our favourite programmes were "Highway Patrol" with Brodwick Crawford, "I Love Lucy," "Pick a Box" and of course the "Mickey Mouse Club!" We all loved Mickey and Mini Mouse, Donald Duck, and Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

My first motorbike was a 125cc *Bantam* (which could do 150 miles to the gallon). I used it for travelling to and from work as well as an occasional trip to Kempsey. My second bike was a 250cc *AJS*.

Thank you Mr Thomas, I hope that your memory provoking article will inspire others to write in with their own memories.

WHAT'S ON.....

A Social Evening with the Southern Sydney Branch of the National Trust.

DATE: Thursday 04/02/99 at 7.30 p.m.

VENUE: Lydham Hall, Bexley

This is a good opportunity to meet and get to know other St. George Municipal residents with an interest in History in general, and our local region in particular. You are guaranteed to enjoy both a convivial and mentally stimulating evening.

COST: Free - but please bring a plate of food to add to the occasion.

CONTACT: Anne Field on telephone number 9588.6553

Welcome Aboard *M.V. Regalia!*

DATE: Saturday 13/02/99. Time 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Sans Souci Public Wharf.

This outing will enable young and old alike to enjoy the atmosphere of the historic ferry *M.V. Regalia* formerly the *Rodney*. The day has been organised by the Australian Ferry Society and will involve a round trip steam journey from Sans Souci to Chipping Norton Lakes.

The trip would be a splendid opportunity to introduce children and grandchildren to the charms of a bygone era when technology co-existed happily with craftsmanship. Soak up the sun, sit back and relax!

COST: The day will cost \$25.00 for full fare paying customers or \$20.00 for Seniors and Pensioners. The price includes the choice of a chicken or ham salad, sweet and drinks.

CONTACT: Noel Farr on telephone number 9758. 2248

Stained Glass Windows Dedication.

DATE: Sunday 21/02/99. Time 9.30 a.m.

VENUE: Bexley Uniting Church, 29 Gladstone Street Bexley.

This morning will see the dedication of two stained glass windows with the themes: "*You are the Christ*" (*Peter*) (*Mark 8:29*) and "*I have Seen the Lord*" (*Mary Magdalene*) (*John 20:18*) donated by an elderly parishioner of the church, Mrs. Ethel Noble.

The windows' installation is a significant event in the life of the Church, as they represent the final windows in a series of 13 spanning almost 73 years from 1926, when the church building was completed.

Dr. Steven Holroyd will be the Guest Speaker on the day.

COST: Free - donations gratefully received. Morning Tea to be supplied by parishioners of the Church.

CONTACT: Rev. M. Ghosh on telephone number 9567.8118 or 9567.1864