

# *St George Historical Society Inc.*

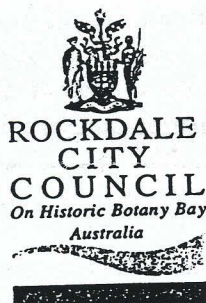
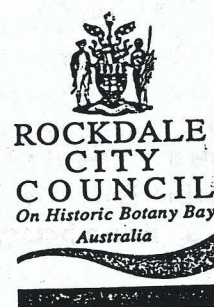
## *Bulletin*

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

MAY - JUNE 1999 Edition

*This Rockdale Heritage Walk is one of a set of two walks and a drive, which interpret some points of interest identified in the Heritage Study. The other walk is around Arncliffe and the drive enables a broad appreciation of the whole City.*

*This two-hour walk features many fine Victorian and Federation houses and public buildings.*



1999

## *Rockdale*

# *Heritage Walk*

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**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**

##### **May 11 Put The Buzz Back Into Your Life!**

Mr. Eric J. Whitby, a prize winning apiarist of considerable note, will be the speaker at this month's meeting. Come along and see and sample the produce of that most productive of all six-legged creatures - the Honey Bee.

We guarantee that you will not walk out empty handed or empty bellied!

##### **June 8 The Spirit of Art Deco**

Mr. John Johnson, Local History Librarian from the Rockdale City Council, has agreed to show some archival material concerning the "Spirit of the Art Deco" movement in architecture. This style of architecture is synonymous with the 1930's to 40's.

Be assured, that the material being viewed at this meeting would be very difficult to access at another venue.



## July 13 Annual General Meeting

This is the Society's A.G.M. and represents a most important occasion via which all members have the opportunity to express their opinions about the running of the Society and/or stand for a position on the Committee.

A film of historical interest will be shown if time permits

## FROM THE EDITOR...

As President, I thank all members of the Society who participated in the *Heritage Week* celebrations at Lydham Hall on Sunday, April 21st and at Rockdale Plaza for the duration of *Heritage Week 1999*. The Society and the Lydham Hall Management Committee members agreed that each event was well received.

A steady flow of visitors toured Lydham Hall on the Open Day, listened to the various items of live music being performed in the grounds of Lydham Hall or viewed the archival films being presented by Mr. John Johnson, the Local History Librarian of Rockdale City Council.

Mr Jack Mundy, Chairman of the Historic Houses Trust (a figure closely affiliated with the "Green Ban" movement of the 1960's and 70's) launched the new Lydham Hall booklet and Rockdale City Council sponsored brochures pertaining to self-guided walks and drives of historic parts of the Rockdale and Arncliffe area as well as officially opening the inaugural display titled "Items of Interest and the Unusual in Lydham Hall."

The Society is indebted to the efforts of Cr. Anne Field who was heavily involved with the co-ordination of the day and Mrs Bettye Ross for her laborious and seemingly solo effort on stocking and manning the arts and crafts stall. Well done!

I received mixed reviews about the Rockdale Plaza display. In general, there appeared to be little public interest during the off-peak trading hours, although this was apparently compensated during the Thursday - Saturday periods. A post-mortem of this display will be discussed at the May society meeting.

In this edition, some informative feedback relating to the St. George District Cricket Club article featured in the March-April 1999 edition has been included for general perusal. Thank you Mr. Madden for your efforts.

A copy of the Rockdale City Council sponsored *Rockdale Heritage Walk* has been included in this journal for those members who were unable to obtain a copy of this publication at its launch during *Heritage Week*. The *Arncliffe Heritage Walk* will be incorporated in the next Bulletin.

The third article is a brief history of a scenic seaside suburb whose name caused some considerable degree of consternation among the locals. As always, articles for publication are greatly appreciated and currently are in very short supply!!

Kind regards,

The Editor

## A Cocky's Woes

A Farmer and his mate were discussing their problems. One went on for some length while they sipped their beers.

"It all started in 1966 when they changed from pounds to dollars and me overdraft doubled. I was getting used to this when they brought in kilograms instead of pounds, and me flamin' wool clip dropped by half.

Then they changed the rain measure to millimetres and we haven't had an inch of rain since. So then what do they do? They bring in a thing called Celsius and it seldom gets hotter than 40 degrees in mid-summer. No wonder me wheat won't grow.

As if this wasn't enough, mate, they change us from acres to hectares an' I end up with half the flamin' land I had. So one day I sat down and had a think.

I reckoned that with daylight saving I was working seven extra hours a week for nothing, so I decided to sell-out. But to cap it all off, I'd just got the place in the agent's hands when they changed ruddy miles to kilometres.

Mate, now I'm too far out of town for anyone to want to buy the flamin' place!" he concluded.

"You can't win in this game, old boy, " his friend said sympathetically.

Contributed by B. Ross

Source: Australian Post, December 31, 1988

Some proverbs to ponder:-

*"If you live enough before thirty you won't care to live at all after fifty";*

*"Act so in the valley so you need never fear those who stand on the hill";*

*"All beginnings are hard, said the thief, and began by stealing the anvil";*

*"Death is but what the haughty brave, the weak must bear, the wretch must crave"; and*

*"Be not a baker if your head be of butter"*

## 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

<b>MAY</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>SPECIAL DAYS</b>
	3rd A. Field & C. Welsh	
	9th W. Fairhall & J. Fairhall	
	16th A. Field & C. Welsh	
		<b>TUESDAY 18th</b> Time: 12.00 noon to 3.00 p.m. 24 children and teacher from Arncliffe Infants School. A. Field, C. Welsh, J. Fairhall, and other volunteers requested
	23rd V. Beehag & B. Beehag	
		<b>FRIDAY 28th</b> Time: 10.30 a.m. - 12.30 p.m. 16 ladies from Miranda Legacy. A. Field, C. Welsh, J. Fairhall, B. Ross and other volunteers requested
	30th D. Lenane & A. Stahl	
<b>JUNE</b>		<b>SATURDAY 5th</b> Time: 2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m. Bexley Guides and parents. A. Field, C. Welsh, B. Ross and other volunteers requested
	6th A. Field & C. Welsh	
	13th W. Fairhall & J. Fairhall	
	20th M. Persen & friend	
	27th A. Ellis P. Herrick & P. McLoughlin	



## BRIAN MADDEN

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Phone and Fax:  
(02) 9718 4538

19 Marcella Street  
KINGSGROVE NSW 2208

18 March 1999

Dear Editor

I was interested to read the article about the St George District Cricket Club by Mr Bruce Blackshaw in the March-April 1999 edition of the Bulletin.

However, in the interest of historical accuracy, I should point out that the name *Hurstville* did not derive from the town of *Hurst* in Lancashire, England, which was suggested as a possibility by Mr Blackshaw.

In 1976, I researched the name *Hurstville* and found that the first known use of the name was on 10 January 1876, when Mr W McIntyre, the Inspector of Schools, suggested that name for the new public school at Gannons Forest. He had earlier proposed the name *Forestdale*, but the Council of Education thought the word *Forest* already occurred in too many school names and asked him for another name.

Mr McIntyre gave no explanation for his suggestion of the name *Hurstville* but he probably coined the word to maintain the association with the forest, with the word *hurst* used with the meaning of a grove of trees or a wood.

I could find no connection with a place in England nor with a clergyman named *Hurst* which has also been suggested as a possible origin of the name.

Yours sincerely

Brian Madden

## History

The Rockdale District was first developed as an agricultural area on the fringe of Sydney. The first land grants being given by Governor Macquarie in 1809.

Roads were cut through the forest and a dam built by convict labour in 1839 across the Cooks River enabled access to the district from Sydney. However it was the railway from Sydney to Rockdale opened in 1884, and the private tramway along Bay Street to Brighton which enabled land speculation. A number of villas and houses resulted being built along the transport routes.

The latter use of the car enabled more land to be developed and "filled in" with houses.

In 1991 a Heritage Study was completed for the City of Rockdale. The Study outlined the history and development of the area and recommended buildings, parks and natural areas to be preserved.

### Walk 1

Starting at Rockdale Railway Station

#### 1. Rockdale Railway Station

Victorian in style, the station was opened in 1884.

The bus turning bay outside was the terminus of the Rockdale - Brighton-Le-Sands tramway. Walk through the arcade of shops to the Highway, crossing at the King Street lights. The Highway was originally lined with Victorian style shops. Widening planned in the 1930's and completed in 1960's brought new Art Deco style buildings including the two hotels, and the Town Hall.

Turn left into Bay Street, the route of the tramway to Brighton-Le-Sands. On the left is a large rock outcrop, with Victorian style houses above.

#### 2. Bay Street Uniting Church

Collection of historic buildings including sandstone Wesleyan Chapel, 1858, the church 1883, parsonage 1884. The site includes a cemetery last used in 1894 and redesigned in 1950 as a wall of remembrance.

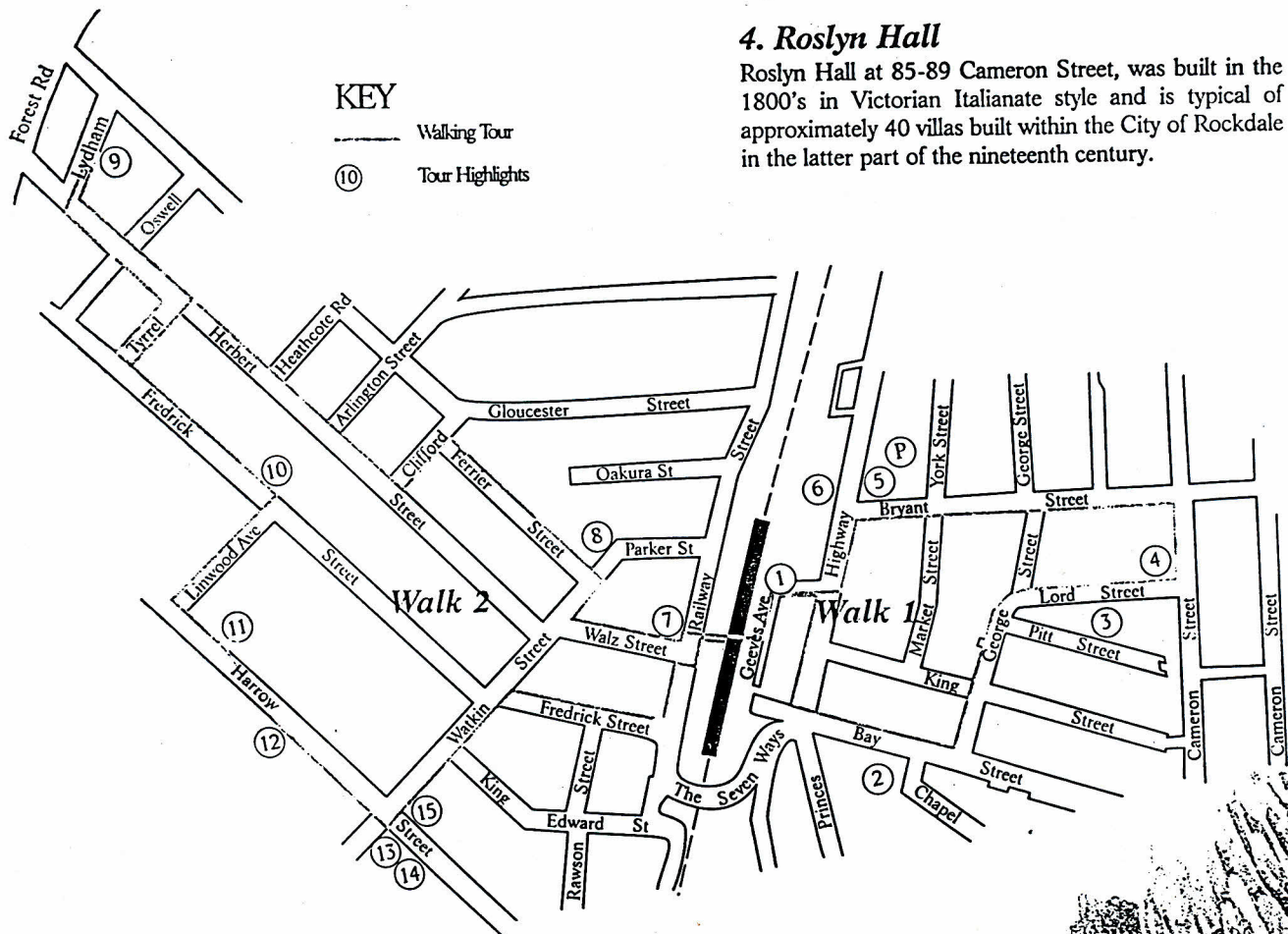
Turn left into George Street which has been cut through rock and has a number of single storey Victorian houses. Take the upper road to Lord Street. The district views to the north are over the red roofs of Federation and Californian Bungalow style houses which form most of Rockdale's residential character.

#### 3. Rockdale Public School

Rockdale Public School built in 1888 in Victorian style, was previously housed in Bay Street Uniting Church. From here there are commanding views over Botany Bay.

#### 4. Roslyn Hall

Roslyn Hall at 85-89 Cameron Street, was built in the 1800's in Victorian Italianate style and is typical of approximately 40 villas built within the City of Rockdale in the latter part of the nineteenth century.





Cameron Street has a number of fine Federation dwellings, typical of those found throughout the City. Turn left into Bryant Street which has a collection of Victorian cottages and also demonstrates the diversity of house styles within the City.

## 5. Rockdale Town Hall

Rockdale Town Hall was built in 1940 in the Art Deco style - architect G A Henderson. This building replaces an earlier Town Hall 1888, and contains the Library and Council's history collection of early photographs, maps and books.

## 6. St John's Church

The Church was built in 1897 but was extensively altered in 1938 and is an example of Victorian Gothic architecture.

## Walk 2

Over the railway, this section of Rockdale was developed on land also granted in 1853, and has a wealth of Federation style buildings. Railway Street and Walz Street contain many shops dating from the 1900-1920 period, although most have been altered.

## 7. Guild Theatre

Built in 1912 the Rockdale Community Centre was originally the Rockdale School of Arts, typifying a Federation Building: red brick walls, terracotta tiled roof and timber windows and doors.

Continuing up Walz Street, turn right into Watkin Street. Named after local stonemason and Real Estate agent respectively.

## 8. St Joseph's School and Church

Built on land donated by German settler Joseph Walz, the school is a Federation style building constructed in 1921.

Turn left into Ferrier Street which contains a fine group of Federation houses. Left into Clifford Street and right into Herbert Street, left into Tyrrell and left into Frederick.

A short diversion of this walk by continuing up Herbert Street will take you to Lydham Hall.

## 9. 18 Lydham Avenue

"LYDHAM HALL" is one of Rockdale's most important pioneer buildings built in 1860 of materials quarried locally by Swedish stonemason, Sven Bengtson for wealthy butcher, Joseph Davis. The building is now owned by Rockdale Council and is open each Sunday 2pm-4pm, phone 9588 6553.

## 10. No. 73 Frederick Street

"LINDCLUDEN", 1893, is a late Victorian stone house, once the home of the General Manager of the Australian Gas Light Company. A two-storey Federation style house with timber shingles.

Turn right into Linwood Avenue which contains modest Federation style dwellings. Turning into Harrow Road:-

## 11. No. 50 Harrow Road

"ST. ELMO" built in 1897 for Joseph Palmer, a railway official. It was designed by William Kenwood and is transitional in style between Victorian and Federation.

## 12. No. 25-37 Harrow Road

A row of houses designed by William Kenwood and built in 1894 for property developer, Thomas Saywell who developed Brighton-Le-Sands. Note each house is named after an English Castle.

## 13. No. 2 Beaconsfield Street

"BAYVIEW LODGE", home of Sir George Reid, former Premier of N.S.W., Prime Minister of Australia and member of House of Commons.

## 14. No. 77 Harrow Road

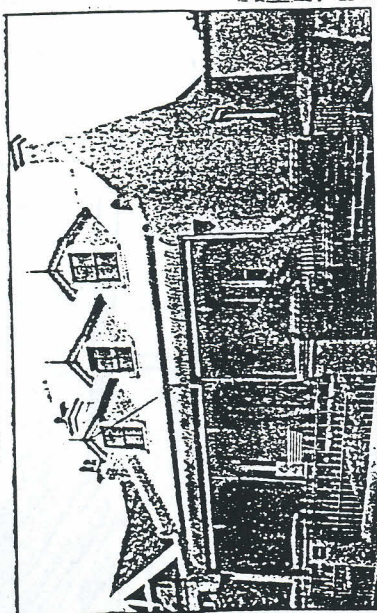
"ITALIA", once the home of marble importer, Frederick Gagliardi, contains marble floors and a cellar.

Turn left into Watkin Street.

## 15. No. 36 Watkin Street

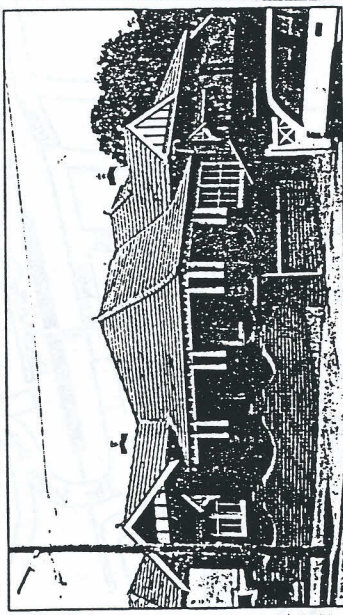
"THE GABLES", a Federation style house built in 1915, it features a gable roof with turret and was once the home of Frederick W. Beehag, former Mayor of Rockdale.

Continue along Watkin Street and Frederick Street, joining the Federation houses back to Rockdale Railway Station.

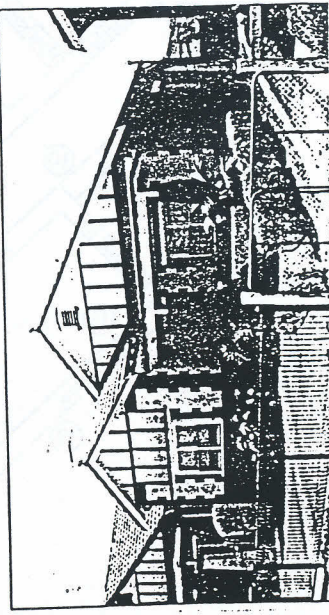


The Victorian House (1840-1890)

The average Victorian house in Rockdale was detached and single storey. The plan was asymmetrical with principal rooms having high ceilings. A verandah with it's own roof on one side and the principal room, a parlour or drawing room projecting under a hipped or gabled roof on the other side. Walls were usually plastered and painted, roofs iron or slate.



The Federation House (1890-1915) often had the same Victorian house plan, but materials changed radically to include red brick walls and red tiled roofs.



The Californian Bungalow (1915-1940)

These houses were informal, asymmetrical, spread out structures, fronted by a deep verandah; materials were dark liver coloured bricks, cedar shingles, stone stairs and leadlight



## MONTEREY

This small suburb located between Brighton-Le-Sands and Ramsgate was for many years "nameless". The name *Monterey* appears to have been adopted from a long standing post office that formerly stood on the corner of Scarborough Street. The local residents referred to the little shopping precinct as the *Monterey shops*.

The suburb received official recognition as late as 1972, when the Rockdale Council determined to remedy the confusion by creating a new suburb after the Post Office. There was not universal sentiment in favour of this selection. Some thought the name too American, especially with streets named *Hollywood, Pasadena, Monterey* and *Culver* already in the area.

The suburb is blessed with a picturesque outlook between Lady Robinsons Beach and Scarborough Park and regardless of its "American" name has a *dinkum Aussie* feeling in the friendliness of its residents.

Article Source: "The Book of Sydney Suburbs" Compiled by Francis Pollon and published by Angus and Robertson in 1988 and 1990.

## WHAT'S ON.....

### A Vice Regal Evening with the former Governor of New South Wales

**DATE:** Friday 14/05/99 at 6.00 p.m. for 6.30 p.m.

**VENUE:** Royal Automobile Club, 89 Macquarie Street, Sydney

The *Friends of the First Government House Site Inc.* invite all interested people to their Annual Foundation Day lecture. The speaker for the evening is the Rear Admiral Peter Sinclair AC, former Governor of New South Wales. In preference to his nautical leanings and those of some of his illustrious predecessors, the theme for the evening will be *Naval Governors*. You are guaranteed to enjoy both a convivial and mentally stimulating evening.

**COST:** \$12.00 - inclusive of supper.

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

### **The Art of Stained Glass**

**DATE:** Monday 24/05/99. Time 10.30 a.m.

**VENUE:** Flying Angel House, 320 Sussex Street. Sydney (behind the Sydney Town Hall).

The *Missions to Seamen* - Sydney have organised a talk by Mr Phillip Handel on the art of making stained glass windows. All people are welcome to attend the talk that promises to be an illuminating experience. Mr Handel will discuss the history of the art of stained glass making as well as its use in contemporary settings.

**COST:** Donation of \$8.00 - inclusive of morning tea.

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

### **A Greenway Experience.**

**DATE:** Wednesday 16/06/99.

**VENUE:** St. Peter's Anglican Church, Campbelltown.

This outing has been arranged by the *Church of England Historical Society Inc.* to enable members and guests to view this historic 1820's Francis Greenway designed church. A speaker has been organised to shed some interesting light on this delightful edifice constructed of convict made sandstock bricks. Following inspection of the church, the speaker will conduct a short bus tour of the local area pointing out buildings and sites of historical interest.

At this stage, train times and meeting time at St. Peter's Church have yet to be decided.

**COST:** \$10.00 - inclusive of church inspection, morning tea and bus tour.

**CONTACT:** Joan Fairhall on 9546.5555

### **Chappelar Family Gathering**

**DATE:** Sunday 11/07/99. Time 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** St. George Rowing Club, 1 Levy Street, Arncliffe.

This gathering has been organised to enable persons connected with or interested in the Chappelar family to both meet and renew old fellowships and acquaintanceships.

**CONTACT:** Bettye Ross on telephone number 9589.0229