

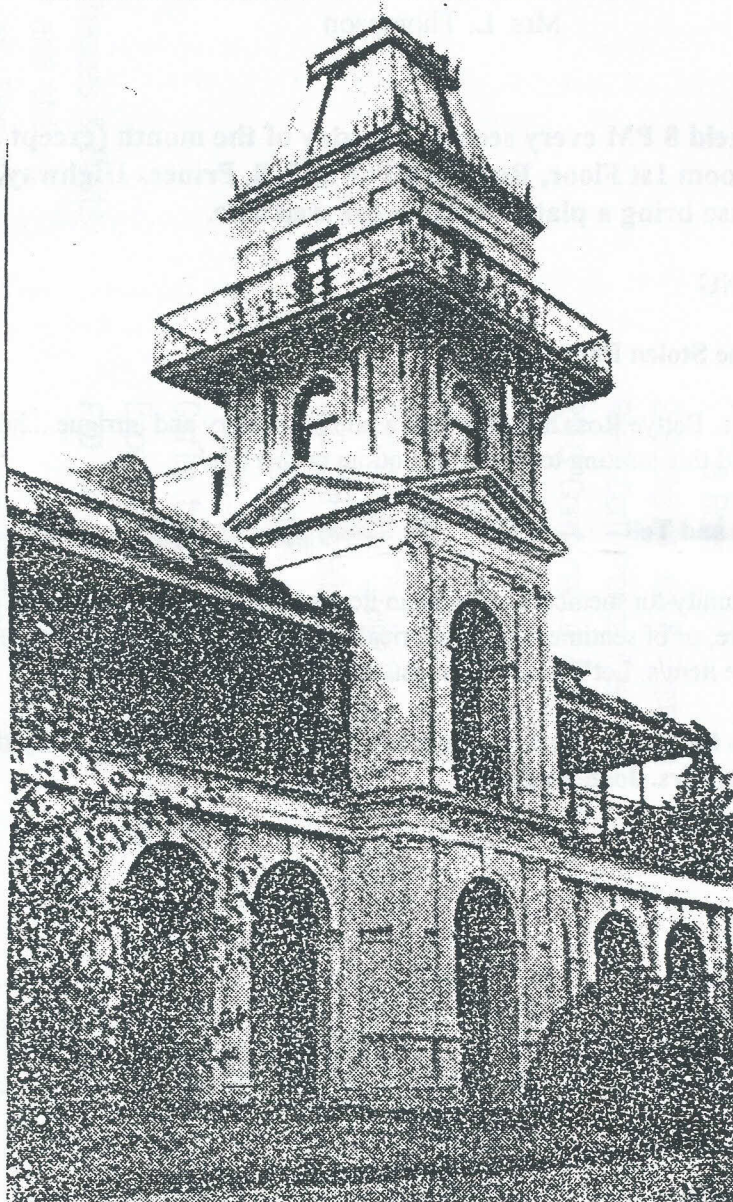
*St George Historical Society*  
*Inc.*

*Bulletin*

SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1999 Edition

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Heathcote Hall

PRESIDENT	Mr. Wesley Fairhall	9546 5555
SECRETARY	Mrs. Valda Beehag	9546 2819
TREASURER	Mrs. Dora Lenane	9181 2121
SENIOR -VICE	Mr. Bernard Sharah	9567 8989
PRESIDENT		
VICE - PRESIDENT	Mrs. Bettye Ross	9589 0229
RESEARCH OFFICER	Mr. Arthur Ellis & Mrs. Pamela Herrick	9529 4879
SOCIAL SECRETARIES	Mrs. Dora Lenane & Mrs. Joan Fairhall	9181 2121 9546 5555
PUBLICITY OFFICER	Mrs. Joan Fairhall	9546 5555
BULLETIN EDITOR	Mr. Wesley Fairhall	9546 5555
LYDHAM HALL	Mrs. J. Byrne	
MANAGEMENT	Mrs. D.Lenane & Mr. B. Sharah	
COMMITTEE		
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**

**September 14 The Stolen Baby....**

Our Speaker, Mrs. Bettye Ross has promised a tale of mystery and intrigue....however, you will have to attend this meeting to get to the bottom of this tale!

#### **August 12 Show and Tell**

This is an opportunity for members to bring an item/s to the meeting that would be of interest through being rare, or of sentimental or historical significance. We would like members to give a brief talk on the item/s. Let's see what treasures we possess.

**P.S. Suggestions for future guest speakers would be gratefully received by the Society's Publicity Officer, Mrs. Joan Fairhall.**



ST GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

INCOME & EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 1999

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
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Membership Subscriptions	447.00	Postage & Envelopes	314.05
Donations	57.00	Stead Photograph & Cassettes B Ross	27.00
Sale of Publications	83.00	2 Books, Card & Postage	23.60
Sale of Goods	51.00	RAHS Conference Fees	75.00
Raffles	153.75	RAHS Conference Accommodation	224.90
Tour Profits	292.00	RAHS Annual Subscription	60.00
Miscellaneous Badges	128.00	Bus Trip Bargo	242.00
Bank Interest	<u>2.04</u>	Purchase of 500 Books	846.00
	1,213.79	G10 Public Liability Ins	125.00
Balance in Bank 30/06/98	<u>2,147.05</u>	G10 Personal Accident Ins	60.00
	<u>\$3,360.84</u>	Community Transport	81.40
		First Addition Books	58.00
		Gifts to Speaker	9.00
		Expenses B Ross Speaker Card	8.40
		<b>FID 73¢ GDT \$5.70</b>	<u>6.43</u>
		Balance in Bank	2,160.78
			<u>1,267.26</u>
			3,428.04
		21/06/99 Unpresented chq 000054	<u>67.20</u>
			<u>\$3,360.84</u>

I have examined the Books, Bank Statements, Vouchers, Cheques & Butts presented by Mrs Lenane, Treasurer of the above Society and this presents a true statement of these financial affairs at at June 30, 1999.

Auditor *L. McAnally, A.C.M.*

## FROM THE EDITOR...

I thank Bettye Ross (yet again) and Bernard Sharah for their donation of articles for reproduction in the Bulletin. The article donated by Bernard on *Heathcote Hall* has been included in this edition.

Have any members undertaken the Arncliffe or Rockdale Heritage Walks as per the brochures sponsored by the Rockdale City Council? If so, how did you find them? Would you recommend them to other people? Please write in with your views.

As always, articles for publication are greatly appreciated and currently are in very short supply!!

**P.S. 1999-2000 Membership Renewal forms have been enclosed for all currently unfinancial members. Please complete and return as soon as practicable.**

Kind regards,

The Editor

### Teaching Mathematics Through the Ages

#### Teaching Mathematics in 1950:

A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100.  
His cost of production is  $\frac{4}{5}$  of the price.  
What is his profit?

#### Teaching Mathematics in 1960:

A logger sells a truckload of timber for \$100.  
His cost of production is  $\frac{4}{5}$  of the price, or \$80.  
What is his profit?

#### Teaching Mathematics in 1970:

A logger exchanges a set "L" of lumber for a set "M" of money. The cardinality of set "M" is 100. Each element is worth one dollar. Make 100 dots representing the elements of the set "M". The set "C", the cost of production contains 20 fewer points than set "M". Represent the set "C" as a subset of set "M" and answer the following question:  
What is the cardinality of the set "P" of profits?

#### Teaching Mathematics in 1980:

A logger sells a truckload of lumber for \$100. His cost of production is \$50 and his profit is \$20. Your assignment: Underline the number 20.

#### Teaching Mathematics in 1990:

By cutting down beautiful forest trees, the logger makes \$20. What do you think of this way of making a living? Topic for class participation. After answering the question: "How did the forest birds and squirrels feel as the logger cut down the trees. There are no wrong answers.



## **President's Report**

The Society's AGM held in July 1999, resulted in no significant changes to the previous Committee. I was elected for a further term as your Society's President, a role in which I take great pride. Nevertheless, I will qualify this comment by stating the need for other members to become more involved in the administration and activities of the Society. New blood = innovative thoughts and the suggested means by which to implement new ideas for projects, articles and so forth.

It is a concern that monthly attendance at our meetings is fairly low. I have both experienced and been told by others that the trend towards smaller attendances is increasingly "normal" for non-profit organisations. There are simply too many specialist interest groups or people have too many other interests in their lives. Perhaps this is so. What then for the future of the St. George Historical Society Inc? Would members prefer meetings on a different night or during the day - perhaps held during the weekend? Please write to the Society and state your views on this matter.

Another concern stems from the flagging interest of members to assist in serving on the Lydham Hall Volunteers' roster. In actual fact, over the past year, there has only been one response to the rosters enclosed with most editions of the Bulletin. As a consequence, Lydham Hall is now only routinely opened on Sundays; with Lydham Hall roster duty falling on the shoulders of about 16 of the Society's 100+ members - food for thought! It would be encouraging for 4 "new" people to agree to attend to Lydham Hall duty on the 2 vacant Sundays in October and December.

As President, I am greatly indebted to many individuals for their support of my Presidency, I would like to personally thank the following:-

Valma Beehag for her succinct, well documented and read minutes of the Society's regular and AGM meetings as well as the many miscellaneous duties to be undertaken in her secretarial role;

Joan Byrnes for her volunteering to maintain the Lydham Hall Accounts and for her and Geoff's assistance at special Lydham Hall openings;

Dora Lenane for her diligence as the "numbers' cruncher" in the at times onerous position of Treasurer. Dora has also been a very hard working Social Secretary who has organised and run tours to a wide variety of places of interest as well as assisting at Lydham Hall;

Joan Fairhall for her perseverance in contacting Guest Speakers for our monthly meetings as well as her suggestions and input towards the tours run by the Society and Lydham Hall assistance;

Bettye Ross for her assistance with the provision of articles for the Bulletin, items for the monthly raffles, craft stalls and also for her assistance at special Lydham Hall openings. The Society is greatly indebted to Bettye for the considerable sum of money she has raised over the years;

Bernard Sharah for his chairing of the meetings in my absence and during the election of Office Bearers. The Society has also benefited from Bernard's expertise in matters pertaining to the running of the Society, local history, the effects of changes in law on the heritage of the St. George area and his liaising on behalf of the Society with other bodies such as the Rockdale City Council; and

Alan Stahl for his most conscientious and kindly attention to the supper requirements of the monthly meetings. He is guaranteed to be the Society's "Tea Lady" for the term of his natural life!

Finally, I express a heart felt thank you to all members and friends who have supported me by undertaking Lydham Hall duty. Without volunteers for Lydham Hall roster duty, the Society's involvement with this superb house museum would be at an end.

Yours sincerely,

Wesley Fairhall

Some proverbs to ponder:-

*"Action from youth. advice from middle age. prayers from the aged".*

*"A good name is a second inheritance";*

*"All criminals turn preacher when under the gallows";*

*"Grief is a stone that bears one down. but two bear it lightly"; and*

*"If you aim at nothing you will surely hit it"*

## **LYDHAM HALL VOLUNTEERS' ROSTER**

At this stage, the stalwarts at the Society's August meeting put pens to paper and committed to undertaking Sunday Roster duty for the rest of the year. Two days however remain in need of a couple of volunteers. They are as follow:-

**Sunday 24 October, 1999 and Sunday December 19, 1999.**

Would all members not currently on the Lydham Hall roster kindly consider volunteering in the capacity of Lydham Hall guides for the above dates. 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.

Direct enquiries to Mr. Wesley Fairhall on 9546.5555 or 9220.5404



## HEATHCOTE HALL & HEATHCOTE ESTATE

In the 1840s, East Heathcote, or Bottle Forest as it was then called, was divided into nine land grants. Two of these Grants, one to George Fleming of 24 acres, the other to William Fleming of 31 acres were destined to become Heathcote Hall Estate. In 1857 Abel Harber, married a Jane Upton, at Glebe, Sydney. They had eleven children composed of six girls and five boys. One of the reasons for the family's move to Heathcote is said to have been Abel's desire to take his daughters away from 'the undesirable elements' in Marrickville.

Abel was born in Sussex, England in 1834. He died in Perth, Western Australia in 1904 when aged 70. Jane was born the daughter of James and Elizabeth Upton. James is said to have been a convict in Tasmania. He is supposed to have been punished at one time whilst a convict for going to sleep in church. In those days the convicts were not always provided with seating and had to stand at the back of the church during the service. In the early 1880s, Abel, a brick manufacturer, at St. Peter's Sydney, purchased the Grants of George Coulson and William Fleming. Abel built Heathcote Hall between 1883 & 1887 for the said sum of 7,000 pounds (\$14,000).

The Hall was designed by the architectural firm of Thomas Rowe and Partners. It is an outstanding example of a late nineteenth century *Italianate* mansion and is the only surviving major residence of that period in the Sutherland Shire. Thomas Rowe also designed the Imperial Arcade, in Sydney. Aside from building Heathcote Hall, Abel was involved in the building of the Imperial Arcade, which is thought to have caused his financial downfall. By July 1889, Abel was forced to mortgage the property to an Edward Terry. On 19 January 1892, the property passed to the Colonial Finance, Mortgage Investment and Guarantee Corporation Limited. This Corporation could not sell the property, so it was offered as first prize in a lottery, at a value of 7,000 pounds (\$14,000) in 1896. The lottery was organised by Tattersall's, of Queensland. It was won by a Samuel Gillett, a Marrickville builder.

Samuel is said to have received only two pleasurable sensations in connection with the property. One at the time he was notified that he had one the prize. The other when, after five years' of ownership, he managed to sell the estate for very much less than its valuation. Samuel's family being strict Methodists, were said to have shunned Samuel for participating in a lottery. A mansion and estate at Heathcote before the advent of the motor car and a one train a day service was not an ideal home for a city contractor during the depressed times of the 1890s.

In 1901, the estate was purchased by Edmund Lamb Brown and his wife Jessie Fotheringham Brown. Edmund was born in Haddington Scotland circa 1860, as the son of James Brown and Isabella Aitchinson. He died in November 1925 when aged 65. At the time of his death, he had been in Australia for 50 years. Jessie was born in Leith, Scotland circa 1846, as the daughter of William Young and Janet Fotheringham Pearce. She died in July 1932 when aged 86. Edmund and Jessie were married at Glebe in 1884 and are buried at Woronora Cemetery.



Edmund hoped when he bought the estate, to spend his remaining time in peace and quiet, as he had been advised by a leading Sydney physician, that he had but a few months to live as he was then thought to be suffering from Consumption. However, Edmund confounded his medical advisers by occupying Heathcote Hall for 24 years. During World War 1, there was a rumour that the Browns' were German spies who had changed their name from Braun to Brown. They were said to have been flashing messages from the observatory tower to German ships. This rumour is said to have been investigated by the military. Later it was thought that the light flashes were the reflection on the tower's glass from a lighthouse either at Watson's Bay or La Perouse. A Mrs. I Drury who worked at the Hall between 1914-17, in later years wrote that there were no spies at Heathcote Hall.

After the War it was established that at no time during the War had there been German ships off this part of the coast of New South Wales. How did this rumour start? Who knows? This rumour probably cost the Browns' a great deal of unfounded distress. After the death of James, his wife Jessie together with James Hall, set up the *Heathcote Hall Estate*.

On 21 April 1928, the estate was submitted for sale on the grounds. The estate which totalled approximately 55 acres comprised 168 allotments, 160 feet by 60 feet, also Heathcote Hall on 5 acres of land. Between 1928 and 1933, deposits were paid on some of the blocks. The terms were 5 pounds deposit and the balance over 5 years at 3% interest. There was extensive advertising in the press and a small office was located at the corner of Wilson Parade and Dillwynia Grove. Timber archways were erected at the entrances to the estate and Mr. H.W. Stork of Kennett Villa, 40 Dillwynia Grove was appointed Estate Manager.

With the advent of the Depression, not all of the purchases were finalised. During the Depression the estate offered to waive the interest and even give a rebate on the price if buyers would complete the purchase. The Hall was not sold and was rented for a time by a Miss I. Pocklington, who endeavoured to run a guest house and tea rooms. These proved unsuccessful and closed. At that time there was a tennis court and putting green. During WW11, a Mrs. Horen rented the Hall and let rooms. On 5 December 1944, the Managing Director of the Estate wrote to a Mr. Smith of Cronulla and informed him that the Reserve on the Hall and the 5 acres of land was 1,500 pounds (\$3,000), but the buyer would have to make arrangements with the tenant, Mrs. Horen, for vacant possession.

In 1945 the Hall was purchased Mrs. Mimina Consuelo Farrelly. The Hall is still owned and occupied by the Farrelly Family. Two other properties, the *Log Cabin*, 20 Dillwynia Grove and *Nyalora*, near the railway station at 122 Wilson Parade were both built about 1928 and belonged to the Estate. The Log Cabin at this time (1999), is still occupied by a member of the Farrelly family. Nyalora is thought to have been built as an 'exhibition home'.

### **Epilogue to Heathcote Hall**

Heathcote Hall, so named by the original Builder, Abel Harber, could possibly more aptly have been called Harber's Folly. For to build, what he did, when he did and where he did, could be regarded as a folly. Certainly in the 1880s there were many mansions built, but in most cases they were either near the city or on productive properties, that could maintain them. Heathcote Hall was neither near the city, nor on a productive property. It was destined always to be a financial drain on whomever owned it. That this is a very heavy burden, is evidenced by its sadly neglected appearance. Nevertheless, despite its outward appearance, it is a tribute to its original owner and structurally remains quite sound.

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Perhaps now is the time for some organisation such as Sutherland Council, to step in and restore the building to its original condition. The building is after all, the only mansion of its type and era left in the Shire. The Hall could be used for a number of purposes, an art gallery, Shire museum, craft rooms, memorabilia and tea rooms - just to name a few. The grounds could be landscaped in a similar manner to those of the Camellia Gardens at Miranda. It is hoped that something is done to preserve this fine old mansion. It would be a shame, if it is left until it eventually falls victim to a wrecker's hammer.

**Disclaimer:**

This information was obtained from a number of different sources. It is not guaranteed to be correct in every detail.

**Source:**

Author, Mr. Harold Warburton.

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

**An Artistic Day's Outing**

**DATE: Wednesday 15/09/99. Time 10.30 a.m.**

**MEETING PLACE: Martin Place - near the fountain at the Macquarie St. end of Martin Place.**

This outing will involve a visit to the State Art Gallery. We will commence the day by proceeding through the grounds of Sydney Hospital and then via a leisurely walk across The Domain to the Art Gallery of NSW where we will view some of the many beautiful displays on exhibition. On departure from the Art Gallery, we will view the sculptures located along Gallery Road and the splendid vista of the Woolloomooloo wharf and surrounds. We will then undertake a peaceful walk through the Botanic Gardens enjoying the atmosphere of historical architecture and heady spring scents. Expected finish time circa 3.00 p.m.

**COST:** Own expense - donations welcome and don't forget to bring picnic luncheon!

**CONTACT:** Dora Lenane on telephone number 9181 2121



### **The 1999 Annandale Amble**

**DATE: Sunday 19/09/99.**

**Meeting Place: Gallery Cafe.**

This day has been organised by the Annandale Historical Society, Annandale North & South Precincts in conjunction with Leichhardt Council, the Heritage Council and members of the Hunter Baillie Church Committee.

Hear about the historical, social, cultural, political and physical aspects as reflected in the suburb as it exists today. Highlights include the Witches' houses, Hunter Baillie Presbyterian, St. Aidan's Anglican, St Brendan's Roman Catholic churches, Bicentennial Park, lunch at the Cafe (at own expense) and learning about the Leichhardt Library's Heritage section

*..... and end the day with the "piece de resistance"..... Conservatorium Wind Ensemble at the Hunter Baillie Church.*

Money raised will be used for historic plaques throughout Annandale. Proceeds from the concert will augment restoration costs of the historic William Hill & Son organ in the Hunter Baillie Church.

**COST:** Cost of tickets for walk only \$5.00.

**CONTACT:** David Springett on telephone number 9660 4588

Details for the Hunter Baillie Concert featuring Music Wind Octet/Quartet, Quintet in conjunction with Historic Precinct walk are as follow. Refreshments from 2.30 p.m. and Concert commences at 3.00 p.m.

**COST:** Cost of tickets \$20.00 - Concession \$15.00 inclusive of refreshments

**CONTACT:** Ms Heather Melbourne on telephone number 9660 4926 or Mrs Margaret Beveridge on 9969 8071

### **Three St. Peter's**

**DATE: Thursday 07/10/99.**

**Meeting Place: Central Station for 9.30 a.m. train to Hornsby.**

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

This day has been organised by the Church of England Historical Society Inc. and promises to be both informative and picturesque. If possible, catch the 9.30 a.m. train from Central arriving in Hornsby at 10.14 a.m. We will be met at Hornsby Station and various sites of historical interest pointed out whilst en route to our morning tea destination - the second St. Peter's church. We will then proceed to the third St. Peter's whereupon the noted writer Mrs Eunice Ramsay will speak on the church and history of the Hornsby area. Don't forget to bring your luncheon.

**COST:** Donation of \$5.00 - inclusive of Morning Tea (please bring own cup).

**CONTACT:** Joan Fairhall on telephone number 9546 5555



### **Buds and Blooms**

**DATE:** Saturday 09/10/99. Time 11.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.

**VENUE:** Uniting Church Hall Turramurra (located behind the shops)

Do you enjoy flowers and or gardening? If so, be sure to attend The Australian Geranium Society's Annual Spring Show. Geraniums and their allies will take your breath away as they bedazzle you with their gorgeous colours. Did you know that geraniums can be used in cooking? Come along and sample the fare. Besides the display put on by the Society's members, a couple of specialist geranium nurseries will also be on hand to sell cultivars unavailable through other outlets. Remember the early bird gets the worm!

Morning Tea and luncheon available at reasonable cost.

**COST:** \$2.00 admission (children under 12 years free).

**CONTACT:** Joan Fairhall on telephone number 9546 5555

### **All Aboard! - Goulburn Rail Pilgrimage**

**DATE:** Saturday 16/10/99.

**Meeting Place:** Central Station for 8.20 a.m. specially chartered train to Goulburn. Return to Sydney Terminal at 7.30 p.m.

**VENUE:** St. Saviour's Anglican Cathedral, Goulburn.

This excursion continues in the great tradition of St. James Rail Tours. The specially chartered train will be diesel hauled and comprise comfortable, non-air-conditioned cars, owned and maintained by 3801 Limited. The 3 hour pilgrimage will pass through the beautiful Southern Highlands, to the Great Dividing Range. Pilgrims will enjoy quality refreshments on the forward and return rail journeys.

En route champagne, juice, fresh fruit salad, yoghurt, freshly baked pastries/rolls and bottled wines will be served. (From 10.30 a.m. tea and coffee will be available for purchase from the buffet car for \$1.00 per cup.) Cuisine on the return journey will include spicy chicken pieces, freshly baked savoury mini-pizzas, fresh salad, olives, grain rolls and more. Fruit juice and quality bottled wines will accompany the evening refreshments.

Bishop Peter and Mrs. Watson will lead the pilgrimage over the short distance of three blocks from Goulburn Station to the Cathedral (car transport will be available for those who require it). The focus of the pilgrimage will be joining in the Solemn Eucharist to be celebrated in the cathedral, with fine music.

After the Eucharist, luncheon (included in the fare) will be served in the cathedral grounds. A freshly prepared hamper will include two portions of gourmet filled damper, salad, home-made trifle and tea/coffee. Other activities after the Solemn Eucharist include a guided tour of the cathedral and grounds (with the option to climb the bell tower), an organ recital will also be held. Other suggested activities include exploring Victoria Park, the regional produce and crafts housed in the Fibre Gallery, the Goulburn precinct including the Court House and Sts. Peter & Paul Roman Catholic Cathedral.

**COST:** Adults \$69.00, Senior Citizens \$65.00, Children \$49.00 and Family (2 adults & 3 children \$199.00) - inclusive of fare for rail travel, breakfast, luncheon and evening supper).

**CONTACT:** Wesley Fairhall on telephone number 9546 5555 or Work 9220 5404

## 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. 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>SEPTEMBER</b>	<b>SUNDAY</b> 5th A. Field & C. Welsh	<b>SPECIAL DAYS</b>
	12th W. Fairhall & J. Fairhall <i>R. McGarr</i>	
	19th B. Sharah & friend	
	26th V. Beehag & R. Beehag	
<b>OCTOBER</b>	3rd A. Field & C. Welsh	
	10th W. Fairhall & J. Fairhall <i>R. McGarr</i>	
	17th <del>R. McGarr</del> D. Lenane <i>a friend</i>	
	24th ?	
	31st B. Kelly & W. Fairhall	
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	7th A. Field & C. Welsh	
	14th N. Burns & J. Fairhall	
	21st P. Herrick & A. Ellis	
	28th M. Person & friend	
<b>DECEMBER</b>	5th Members & friends	<b>Christmas Party?</b>
	12th J. Fairhall & N. Burns	
	19th ?	
	26th	<b>Boxing Day - Lydham Hall closed</b>