

St. George Historical Society Inc. Bulletin

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL

AUGUST – SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2001 EDITION

Women Work after Federation



Picture: Women university graduates
(Fairfax Photo Library)

Taken From: Encyclopaedia of Australia 1996. Published by Webster Publishing, 1995.
Copyright Webster Publishing, and/or contributors.

Centenary of Federation

PRESIDENT	Mr. Wesley Fairhall	(02) 9546 – 5555
SECRETARY	Mrs. Valda Behag	(02) 9546 – 2819
TREASURER	Mrs. Dora Lenane	(02) 9181 – 2121
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT	Mr. Bernard Sharah	(02) 9567 – 8989
VICE PRESIDENT	Mr. Richard Henke	(02) 9587 – 8307
RESEARCH OFFICERS	Mrs. Bettye Ross	(02) 9589 – 0229
	Mrs. Pamela Herrick	(02) 9529 – 4879
SOCIAL SECRETARIES	Mrs. Dora Lenane	(02) 9181 – 2121
	Mrs. Joan Fairhall	(02) 9546 – 5555
PUBLICITY OFFICER	Mrs. Joan Fairhall	(02) 9546 – 5555
BULLETIN EDITOR	Mr. Richard Henke	(02) 9587 – 8307
	Mrs. Bettye Ross	(02) 9589 – 0229
LYDHAM HALL COMMITTEE	Mrs. Gloria Henke	(02) 9587 – 8307
	Mr. Bernard Sharah	(02) 9567 – 8989
	Mr. Robert McGarn	(02) 9587 – 4469
PUBLIC OFFICER	Mr. Robert McGarn	(02) 9587 – 4469
REFRESHMENTS OFFICER	Mr. Allan Stahl	
AUDITOR	Mrs. L. Thompson	

Meetings are held 8:00 PM the 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 MEETINGS

- September 11th** **Once Upon A Dream – Video – Lorraine Desmond**
A fabulous Film released by the Australian Theatre Historic Society Inc. on the Capitol Theatre
- October 9th** **Once Upon A Dream – Video – Lorraine Desmond - Continued**

COMING ATTRACTIONS

- September 8th** **Arncliffe Village Festival**
Firth Street, Arncliffe. 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.
* Books * Children's Rides * Face Painting * Novelties
* Hand Crafts * Jewellery * Demonstrations * Displays
* Identikid by Rockdale Lions Club * Live Entertainment
* Coffee * Tea * Cold Drinks * Ice Cream
* Asian Food * Australian Food * Turkish Food * Sweets
- October 6th** **Jubilee Oval - Volunteers Day**
This is a day in which Volunteer Associations in the St. George Area are going to have displays at Jubilee Oval.
This Event will be on from 9:00am till 2:00 pm and there will also be a concert held on the day.
- October 13th** **Tempe House**
This trip to Tempe House will be in celebration of St. George Historical Societies 40 Anniversary. It will take place between 10:00 am and 1:30 pm.
Please bring a picnic basket and a blanket if you wish, so that we can have a picnic luncheon after looking through the house.

EXCURSION

October 14th

A Village Garden Ramble through Bundanoon

Share the hospitality of 12 Village Gardeners & view a spectacular display of Waratahs at the Bundanoon Flower Farm. One Ticket covers all gardens.

Adults - \$12.00 Pensioners - \$8.00 Children – Free

Ticket Sales on the day at the Garden Market in the Memorial Hall.

Shuttle Bus available from the Station for the Garden Circuit.

For further enquiries contact Mrs. Joan Fairhall on (02) 9546 – 5555 or Marina Beaumont on (02) 4883 – 7285

THE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As our President, Mr. Wesley Fairhall is unable to attend the next few meetings, I will be running them and providing correspondence on his behalf.

Please remember that our meetings are always filled with information beneficial to you and it would always be good to see you on these nights. Those who missed the last meeting missed out on the pleasure of listening to Janette Hollebone, a member of Kogarah Historical Society, who attended our meeting as a Guest Speaker, who gave a very informative presentation on her current research project which was the life and work of the Sculptor, William Priestly Macintosh.

As this year is the Centenary of Federation there are a lot of events to see and plenty of time to reflect on who we are and where what has happened in the past in order for us to live the way we do today.

I look forward to seeing you all at the next meetings.

Kindest regards,
Richard Henke

THE EDITORS REPORT

I trust that all members are in good health, and for those who are ailing, the society sends its prayers and well wishes for a speedy recovery and it is good to see that Mrs. Joan Byrne has almost fully recovered from her recent Knee Cap injury.

It would be wonderful to see more members at our monthly meetings, please make an effort to come to even one meeting during the year. The guest speakers always deliver an interesting talk on their area of knowledge. I would also suggest members to support Mrs. Dora Lenane and Mrs. Joan Fairhall by attending the outings organised by these ladies. It is not easy for a person to coordinate and arrange an outing and it is very disappointing for someone who has put a lot of hard work arranging an event to turn up on the day only to find that there are only a few people interested. Please make an effort to attend the events arranged as they will definitely provide you with a memorable experience.

I offer a very special thanks to our President, Mr. Wesley Fairhall for his excellent report on his recent Overseas journeys and I would also like to thank Ms. Anne Field for the information she sent to me about her recent achievements. Help make this bulletin more interesting and suited to your interest. Have you visited a historic building or annual show which you thought would be suitable for us to arrange a trip to please let me know. I am always eager to hear from you and share your ideas with others.

To send me something you can:

Contact me by phone on (02) 9587 - 8307 or 0414 - 339 - 510

Mail your news to 27 Waratah Street, Bexley NSW 2207

E-mail me at rwh19475@yahoo.com.au

Kindest regards,
Richard Henke

A Remarkable Achievement

It is always good to see one of our members going out of their way to show people the importance of our historical background and also demonstrate the importance of federation to our country. Ms Anne Field has certainly done this. On August 10th, 2001 she coordinated and starred in a production called "A Nation at Last" which was an 1897 Constitutional Role Play. This can be seen from the 2 articles below.

Back To The Future

Men in three-piece suits and top hats; ladies in hoop skirts, bustles and feathered hats Kogarah residents on the night of August 10 were waiting for the horse and carriage to appear as they viewed the anachronism move through the middle of Queens Avenue.

An elegant procession of ladies and delegates from five States in Australia, led by Kogarah Municipal Band, made their grand entrance to the Kogarah School of Arts for the 1897 Constitutional Role Play.

The event was a fundraiser for St George Hospital, celebrating the Centenary of Federation in Kogarah and honouring Sir Joseph Carruthers, a solicitor and politician responsible for the establishment of the District of Kogarah and the development of Local Government in the area.

The role players included actors, lawyers, Members of Parliament, namely Mr. Robert McClelland, Federal Member for Baron and Shadow Attorney General, and Mr. John Mulcair, St George and Sutherland Shire Leader.

Ms Field was in charge of much of the evening's organisation, which required months of coordination and behind the scenes work. She also performed in the role play as one of nine Ladies, active in the movement towards Federation and the fight for women's rights, who told of their role in Australian society at the turn of the century.

Hansika Bhagani of Year 12 and myself, Alicia Tripp of Year 11, were invited as a youth envoy to relate the story of how women fared in the decade leading up to 1 January 1901. We narrated Australian women's history from enfranchisement to holding public office in Parliament, to the establishment of women's prisons, women police. special regulations for women workers and a separate school syllabus for girls.

A number of Year 10 students volunteered their Friday night to usher the guests and audience and to serve food and refreshments during the interval. The night was a success. Ms Field's efforts did not go unnoticed or unappreciated. Mr. Mulcair presented her with a beautiful and extravagant arrangement of flowers. Mr. Mulcair also congratulated St. George Girls' High School for consistent participation and high achievement in fundraising and community events. I accepted a lovely bouquet on the school's behalf.

It was a rare opportunity for Hansika and I to be involved in a "special night in the history of Kogarah". We are honoured to have our names and photographs preserved in the local archives. Our time as Victorian Ladies was an enjoyable experience but the clothing was so uncomfortable that we were glad to go back to the future!

By Alicia Tripp

Year 11

St. George Girls' High School

The Parliamentary Education Office Fellowships

The Parliamentary Education Office is based in Parliament House Canberra, and is funded by both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Its purpose is to help educate both school students and teachers, as well as the wider community about the Commonwealth Parliament and its functions and processes. The Office's core function is to run programs for students and others who visit Parliament House.

This year, the Parliamentary education Office awarded Fellowships to eight teachers throughout Australia. Anne Field was awarded one of these Fellowships. Fellows have developed celebrations of Federation in their local communities.

The Parliamentary Education Office is very pleased to be associated with this special celebration in Kogarah. The achievement of Federation a century ago, happened because lots of people in local communities such as Kogarah, worked for an ideal that they believed was important.

Anne Field, and all those involved in this celebration, believe that Federation is important and is worth celebrating. They join the thousands of other Australians who are working locally to celebrate national events. This spirit will help define what this country becomes in the next hundred years.

Geoff Clarke

Parliamentary Education Office

The Collins Family – Caterers – Bexley

by Gwen Frost

Mrs. Catherine Collins, nee Swarbrick, came with her parents, Richard and James Swarbrick, and her four sisters and two brothers, from Woodplumpton in the Manchester, Blackpool area, about 1910. They had lived in a comfortable two-storey farmhouse on the farm, which had been in the Swarbrick family for generations. The family migrated because of Richard's ill-health. It was thought the warmer Australian climate would be of benefit to him.

They went first to Toowoomba, where Richard had been engaged prior to leaving England, to manage a farm in the area. They found conditions were very primitive, far different from their comfortable home in England. The farmhouse consisted of just one, very large, unlined room, totally unsuitable for themselves and their seven children.

Jane Swarbrick's brother, Robert Rhodes, had come to Sydney some years previously, the first of the family to migrate. He established the first pig and poultry farm in the Matraville area in Smith Street. This area became a big farming community, with pig, poultry and vegetable growing as the main industry. It is now known as Pagewood and is totally suburban. Rhodes Street was named after Robert Rhodes, who was very highly respected in the area.

The Swarbrick family came to stay with him and as he and his wife, Nellie, had seven children of similar ages to the Swarbricks, it was a very lively and crowded household.

Richard and Jane bought land at Arncliffe, in a rural area, now known as the suburb of Turella. Richard's health did not improve. He was found to have cancer of the stomach, and died within a year of reaching Australia.

Jane, who was a wonderful cook and manager, established a dairy farm, run on sound English lines. The family rose at 2:00 AM, milked the large herd of cows and delivered milk in horse-drawn carts to the area around Bexley, Banksia and Arncliffe. There were two deliveries daily. Catherine delivered milk in the Bexley area, alone. A terrifying experience one would think, since the area was sparsely populated and mostly without any street lighting.

Jim Collins came to work on the dairy and courted Kitty. When they had a night out, with transport as it was then, it was usually a case of changing into work clothes on arrival home and on with the milking.

There were many Chinese market gardens around the farm and the industrious Chinese were often the subject of good-humoured Tricks on the part of the Swarbricks,

After their marriage the farm was sold and Jane bought land in Sackville Street, Bexley, where she built a wooden home called "The Bungalow". She gave her daughter a block of land next door, and another timber home was built, by the young couple. Both homes are still occupied.

Their two daughters, Jean and Maisie were born, and Jim Collins carried on a milk delivery business from there.

He sold the business to Albert Beale in 1915, and rented a shop in Rouse's buildings, between Harrow Road and Frederick Street, Bexley. He opened a cake chop there and in 1917, built his own premises on the corner of Forest Road and Bayview Street.

By hard work and sheer determination, the young couple built up a cake shop and later, a catering business there. They weathered the depression years. The premises were remodelled and a hall built above the shop, where weddings and small functions were catered for and they prospered.

Two sons were born in 1928 and 1930, James and Richard (Jack) a cause for much rejoicing. In 1944 they retired to live at 20 Henderson Road where they remained for nearly 30 years, finally moving to Ulladulla in 1973.

James became a High School Teacher, but his heart was always set on farming, and he is now a prominent and very successful farmer, at Springvale near Bega. He and his wife are public-spirited, and have by their work, greatly helped the farmers of the valley.

Jack went to England to teach, then to Lake Quesnel in Canada, where he met his wife, Helen, and they now live at Coquitlam, an outer suburb of Vancouver.

Maisie was a secretary, and married Norman Hooper, who was an apprentice in the family business, and after living in Carlton with their five daughters, have retired come years ago to lake Burril.

Jean, became a senior State School Principal, when women were given that opportunity. She married Charles Groom, but is now widowed, living at Kurrajong where she very successfully breeds Cairn Terriers and maintains her professional interest in teaching children with learning difficulties.

>=====<

The following Obituary - James (Jim) Collins - is from the Express, dated 21st April 1982.

James (Jim) Collins - "Pop" to everybody, was born August 14, 1886, in Denchworth, Berks, England.

"Pop" was an indentured apprentice to the saddlery trade for a period of four years at Wantage, but became dissatisfied due to the confined activities which prevented him from following his football training, such as tanning and bicycling, which he also enjoyed at this period of his life.

He left this trade and assisted his father for a short time in farm work, shepherding sheep and ploughing fields.

He was then introduced to the baking and pastry cooking by a mutual friend. He was employed by the Great Western Railway Co-operative at Reading in Berkshire, England where he became a proficient tradesman and as the years went by, he acquitted himself well as a pastry cook.

Later he migrated to Australia and settled at Arncliffe in Sydney, finding work as a dairy hand. He formed an attachment to the daughter (Catherine) of his employer, Mrs Jane Swarbrick, who later became his mother-in-law.

Pop and Catherine set up in business with the financial help of her mother as a caterer and pastry cook, in Forest Road, Bexley, where they conducted a successful enterprise for about 33 years, making many friends in the district during this period.

On retirement, Pop travelled overseas to his homeland and renewed lots of old associations of his youthful days. His wife accompanied him on a later trip.

His first and last love was fishing. Like most fishermen he was prone to exaggeration so far as the size and number of fish he caught or in respect to the ones which got away.

He made a study of fish - habitat, tides, winds and always knew the reasons why fish don't bite. In fact, he became an artful and cagey foe, making it difficult for the fish to escape, whatever the circumstances and it has been suggested that the fisheries inspector was taking more than a passing interest in the "size" of the fish in his bag, particularly when he lived in the St. George District.

In May 1973, he and his wife Kitty, moved from Henderson Road Bexley, (their retirement home) to 27, Boree Street, Ulladulla, where he lived until his death, for nine years, and during that time he and his wife took on an identity in the district, his wife for her philosophical insight into life generally, with all its plusses and minuses.

Pop being an extrovert, made friends easily. He was always his own man, and to the last took a keen interest in football, tennis and cricket, with a good sense of recall as to the players names, clubs and the score of each event.

His garden was always colourful and immaculate.

He was interesting and told many stories about "the good old days" and his opinions of the workers today, by comparison to yesteryear, were proactive. He was concerned about the direction Australia is taking today and of course, he is not the only person to be aware of this, and sharing his concern.

He has lived a good and industrious life and has had a good innings, playing the game of life to its end.

He is survived by four children - Jean (Kurrajong), Maisie (Dolphin Point), Jim (Bega) and Jack (Canada). There are also thirteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren.

Death Notice:

COLLINS, James

Died April 17, 1982 at hospital.

Late of 27 Boree Street, Ulladulla,

Formerly of Henderson Road, Bexley.

Dearly loved husband of Katherine (deceased)

Loved father of Jean Groom of Kurrajong
 Maisie Hooper of Dolphin Point,
 Jim Collins of Bega
 Jack Collins of Vancouver, Canada.

Loved Pop of his 13 grandchildren and 15 great grandchildren.

Aged 95 years.

PRESIDENTIAL ADVENTURES OVERSEAS - LEG 2 - NOVEMBER 23rd 2000 - MARCH 5th, 2001

The second leg of my overseas sojourn involved great contrasts in scenery, flora, fauna and ALTITUDE!

This trip involved 3 sections of a largely "overland" camping nature. The first 3 weeks saw our group of 23 enthusiastic souls head south from Lima, Peru to La Paz, Bolivia. There were a number of highlights such as walking the Inca Trail, Lake Titicaca and the World's most extensive salt pans.

Lima was a sprawling city with seemingly innumerable churches and monasteries, I suppose typically Latin American in this respect. We visited one monastery and by means of a torch lit tour viewed an extensive and chillingly macabre collection of catacombs dating back many centuries. Archaeologists in the 1920s had arranged a significant number of the remains into spectacular, although somewhat sickeningly stylised wheel motifs reminding me of sections in a crocheted tablecloth (perhaps I am a tad strange, or perhaps it was the dank eerie atmosphere of my surrounds). The city was still suffering from the political instability of recent times so appeared a little jaded. Surprisingly, many of the parks were in excellent repair, some featured stunning banks of ivy as well as zonal pelargoniums. The Ivy cultivar "April Hamilton" was one such variety with which Australians would be familiar. Pelargoniums appeared to be the "in" flower in Lima.

The ancient Inca capital city of Cusco serves as the base point for people undertaking the Inca Trail. This city was memorable for the superb collection of Spanish colonial buildings dating back to the 1530s many on Inca foundations, cobble stoned paths and roads. Typically, there was a central square bordered by an imposing cathedral in which was housed a magnificent collection of church plate, icons and altars of exceptional beauty. One altar and accompanying reredos were crafted from solid silver! The descendants of the Incas are still the lifeblood of Cusco. These industrious people proudly wear their traditional handmade and brightly coloured garb fashioned from Alpaca, lama and cotton as well as speak the ancient Quechuan Indian language

The Inca trail was a four day hike over 48km along mountain passes from just outside Cusco to Machu Picchu the "Lost city of the Incas." This was definitely the most exhausting activity I have to date undertaken. We walked on average from 7.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. each day at altitudes sometimes exceeding 4,500m. The weather was mild and luckily rain free (very rare especially at this off-peak time of the year.) Our group had porters who pitched camp, transported most personal effects and prepared meals en route. It was here that I sampled Coca tea, derived from the Coca Plant, infamous in the west as the source of the refined drug cocaine. The tea was supposedly a cure-all against aches, pains, fatigue and altitude illness (I think it had rather more psychological than physiological value), it had a non-descript flavour and was drunk in the manner of an herbal tea.

The scenery was naturally stunning, verdant green slopes, snow capped mountain ranges and a quantity of butterflies and birds at the lower elevations and in the cloud forests (yes, we walked through clouds). I recognised en route, plants such as fuchsias, a variety of begonias, numerous orchids and other horticulturally valuable plants. Day 4 saw us arrive at Machu Picchu, just being amid the massive stone ruins felt special. The largely intact structures had remained lost from the Spanish Conquest in the 1530s to rediscovery in 1911. It felt very timeless walking on the paths fashioned by the Inca civilization as well as walk through its most intact legacy. Just imagine the backdrop of jagged mountain peaks, dense forest and enormous precipices.

Lake Titicaca at 3,810 metres is claimed to be the World's highest navigable lake and at 9,065 km² requires rather more exploration than could be afforded by a two day trip. We took a launch around part of the lake and visited the famous floating islands constructed from reeds and anchored by cables fabricated from reeds to underwater rocks etc. The floating islands probably exist today mainly to service the increasingly important tourist industry. Nevertheless, they were worth visiting. The local people sat cross-legged with their little stalls selling artifacts such as bead and shell jewellery, woven baskets, wind mobiles and pretty pottery. The all pervading sulphurous-like odour of decaying reeds was not easily ignored and it is inadvisable not to stand in any one spot for more than a minute (speaking from experience.) Trips between islands were undertaken via canoes made from reeds with prows crafted into mythological figureheads of monsters and the like. Incidentally, the base of the reeds look similar to a spring onion and are treated as a vegetable that has a pleasant nutty flavour.

We spent a night on one of the permanent stone inlands that was the home to a number of far flung fanning settlements. Each family took between 2 and 3 guests. Our host family consisted of Grandmother, Son, Daughter-in-Law and 5 Grandchildren. We presented gifts of rice, pens, writing paper and candles (plus a few

chocolates) as a token of our appreciation at staying with them. The food was largely vegetarian but quite wholesome and tolerable for a couple of days. Our purpose built accommodation was clean and relatively spacious when compared with that housing the various family members. It was difficult to interact with these friendly people as our Spanish was limited, our Quechuan even more negligible and their English not much better. All the cooking was undertaken using wood in what doubled as a kitchen cum smokehouse. The family owned some sheep and goats and grew wheat and root vegetables. A hard life but they seemed happy, healthy and THIN.

La Paz was doubtlessly the most chaotic city I visited in the 8 months that I was away. Traffic pandemonium, it took a couple of hours to traverse 1 km or so in the city centre, this was normal! The city retained a colonial feel with numerous stone buildings and cobbled pathways. We went to a jazz bar one evening and listened to a fabulous group into the wee hours of the morning. The famous "Witches' Markets" were quite mediaeval and probably earned their name because of the prevalence of traditional Indian medicines and potions. The most ghastly being dried lama fetuses and mummified armadillos and Andean condors (probably a protected species). The handicrafts rivalled those to be found in Peruvian marketplaces in terms of diversity and competitiveness of price. Peru and Bolivia proved to be the 2 pre-eminent shopping Mecca's in South America.

The salt pans covered an extensive area of southern Bolivia and had more resemblance to the Moon than to planet Earth. At this stage my friend and I were traveling in a small group of 5. We hired a driver and undertook a 4 day tour. Much of the first day involved traversing flat land encrusted in salt to a depth of up to 50cm or more - absolutely devoid of all vegetation and landmarks. There were intermittent tepid to hot saline springs of a deep tannin like colour that oozed yet more salt to the surface resulting in formations that had a texture and appearance reminiscent of the old fashioned dripping associated with baked diners and the like.

We spent a night staying on one of the few landmarks in the area, an island clothed in *Cereus* like cacti and other drought resistant plants. Surreal sums up the whole experience, walking on what looked and felt like an enormous snowfield as it crunched underfoot with virtually nothing appearing to the horizon against a backdrop featuring a rocky island clad in cacti, and completely alone, seemingly on own little planet. The sunset was unforgettable as was (I am reliably informed, the sunrise.)

PRESIDENTIAL ADVENTURES OVERSEAS - LEG 3 - MARCH 6th 2001 - APRIL 16th. 2001

The third leg of my trip traversed arguably the most spectacular and certainly the most diverse array of flora in my travels in South America.

As we ventured south through southern Chile we came to the world famous region of Patagonia. By now, my friend & I had been "over landing" for some 5 weeks so were seasoned to relatively long drives and frequently rather corrugated roads. The weather remained cool but clear, good for morale as few people enjoy camping in inclement weather. A highlight was a half-day trek across the famous Moreno glacier. Superb ice sculptures were created through wind and water erosion as well as the effect of tremendous pressures within the ice pack. Some of the ice sculptures and subterranean rivulets were of the most intense cobalt blue hue imaginable. Naturally we partook of whisky on "glacial rocks" at the conclusion of our little excursion!

I was grateful for some botanical knowledge as Patagonia enabled me & the others on the trip (if only they had understood the significance of what they saw) to view some ancient parallels with Australian flora. We encountered fairly extensive "Monkey Puzzle" *Araucaria araucana* stands. These bizarre trees are in the same genus as the more familiar Hoop, Norfolk Island & Bunya Bunya pines. The name is derived from the fact that mature specimens have random branches that normally become quite intertwined and are clothed in broad, stiff prickle-tipped leaves, surely a puzzle for any monkey to climb! The trunks of some specimens had a girth of at least 5 feet and were probably centuries old.

Aside from conifers, Southern Beech *Nothofagus* forests of a number of different species were to be seen. These trees also developed sizeable bolls, often bedecked with mosses and epiphytes up to their majestic domed canopies. They require cool temperatures and moist conditions. Australian members of this genus are nowadays confined to places such as Lamington Tops National Park & Tasmania: Their most interesting feature were the relatively tiny and very dainty oblique leaves of little more than 1 cm in length. I believe certain deciduous species turn a rich Autumnal colour at that time of year.

Our group enjoyed (excluding our long suffering legs) 4 days' trekking in Tomes Del Paine National Park. It was here that we had the opportunity to see pristine wilderness encompassing mountain heath, cool-temperate as well as alpine Nothofagus forests and alpine bogs. Waterfalls, snow-capped mountains with the occasional thunder of distant mini avalanches were just some of the scenic highlights.

We had some time in Punta Arenas, the southern most town on the South American continent. It was here that I sailed through the Beagle Channel following in the footsteps of Darwin to see colonies of penguins and seals.

Onto Brazil to view the incomparable Iguazu Falls. Although not as deep as the Victoria Falls in Africa, the curtain of these falls extends for over a kilometre. A number of walkways facilitated viewing over the edge to witness a fraction of the literally millions of cubic litres that spill per second across the broad expanse. A 15 minute helicopter flight added to my sense of awe.

We then spent time in the Pantanal of western Brazil. This wetland area has a semblance to the Kakadu area in Australia with abundant and apparently well-protected wildlife and habitats. It was here that I fished and caught a small Piranha, suffice to say that a degree of dexterity was required to remove the hook from the tight mouth ringed with razor sharp teeth. We stayed in an extremely "rustic" ranch without electricity and minimal hot water - first in best dressed. Nevertheless, what we lacked in amenities, was more than compensated for by semi-wild local animals.

Parrots such as the brilliantly coloured Scarlet, Blue & Yellow Macaws very amenable to tourists as they clambered over arms and heads at the first offering of some choice tit-bit. The most memorable encounter happened every afternoon, when without fail, a flock of the extremely endangered Hyacinth Macaw wheeled raucously into fruit bearing palm trees growing near the main building on the property. At 1m in length and of a deep blue colour, this the largest and most magnificent parrot makes the more commonplace "cocky" look comparatively mediocre. My one regret was this flock's reluctance to descend below the very high palm canopies.

Our trip concluded in Rio de Janeiro in time for Carnivale. Rio was a spectacular city when viewed from on high such as at the statue of Jesus Christ the Redeemer or the Sugarloaf rock formation in Rio harbour. The city has a "feel" of something akin to a cross between Sydney and the Gold Coast. Copacabana beach extends for some miles but was literally a cheek to cheek experience at this time of year. Carnivale was held over 2 nights' in the purpose built mile long sambadrome. The gala spectacle begins at 9.00 p.m. and extends through to 7.30 a.m. the next morning. During which time 10 processions set to specific themes and theme songs and involving approximately 3,500 participants each and multiple floats file past. The atmosphere is electric and the costuming & choreography surely make this the greatest show on Earth!

Much to the enjoyment of the crowd located at the end of the parade route (including my party) was the fact that the majority of the participants discarded or otherwise gave their costumes and props away to the crowds. Just about any item was seized with relish. It should be noted that an average costume cost in the vicinity of US\$500.00. The parade was certainly inclusive as participants spanned the demographics of Rio society, from famous (by Brazilian standards) identities, school aged students, middle-aged, the elderly, where possible, disabled persons and numerous special interest groups. A large number of underprivileged participants had their expenses subsidized through their fee paying counterparts and general ticket sales.

Alas, my over landing travels in South America and hence these recollections concluded in Rio. A wonderful time was had by all. And yes, I still have the "Travel Bug" and itchy feet.