

# *St. George Historical Society Inc. Bulletin*

PROUDLY SPONSORED BY ROCKDALE CITY COUNCIL  
JULY - DECEMBER 2007 EDITION



*Merry Christmas*

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*Meetings are held 2:00 PM the third Saturday 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.*

## JULY - DECEMBER EVENTS AGENDA

**Dec 9<sup>th</sup> Christmas Gathering at Lydham Hall 1pm – 4pm**  
 Members and their guests are invited to our Christmas function at Lydham Hall.  
 Please bring a plate and gentlemen can bring lollies, nuts and drinks.  
 See you all there.  
 Enquiries: Please call (02) 9587-8307.

**2008**

**Feb 23rd The Launch of St. George Historical Society Bulletin Index. 2pm – 4pm**  
 An Afternoon Tea will be held for this occasion.  
 Our many thanks go to Mrs. Bettye Ross and her helpers for their diligent efforts over the past 7 years in compiling this index, which we will proudly launch on this day.  
 Enquiries: Please call (02) 9587-8307.

**MAY EVERYBODY HAVE A VERY  
 JOYOUS AND SAFE CHRISTMAS  
 AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR**



## **A NOSTALGIC TRIP INTO THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRIGHTON LE SANDS**

Recently there have been many articles written in our local paper "The St. George and Sutherland Shire Leader". They have mainly been about the remaining Terraces built by Thomas Saywell of which 5 of the original 12 still remain.

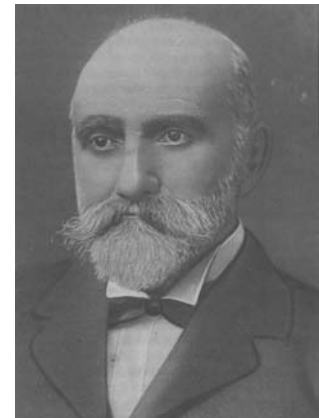
One has now been called an eyesore, because it has not been maintained. It and 3 others are owned by one person who we believe wants to turn all of them into a restaurant preserving the buildings facade. The other articles are concerning the Pine Trees, which have been voted, by Rockdale City Council, to be removed. Three arborists have examined the trees and deemed "that they are disease free and quite safe." The trees are also "Heritage Listed". Articles have been written both by a Councillor and Local Residents, for and against.

*It is amazing what people will do "In the Name of Progress".*

*Let us remember that Brighton Le Sands is part of "The Birthplace of This Nation"*

The Editors

Thomas Saywell exercised such an enormous influence on the early development of Rockdale Municipality that it is surprising we know so little about him... but Mr. Saywell was never one to encourage personal publicity. Reprinted below is a description of a civic function tendered to Thomas Saywell at Rockdale in April 1893, when he was about to leave for a visit to North America. This press account was unearthed by Mr. Phillip Geeves during his research and is reproduced here for the first time.



The principal purpose for Mr. Saywell's tour was to visit the great Columbian Exposition in Chicago - the splendid exhibition which the United States staged to mark the 400th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of America. Later the same year Mr. Saywell returned from his visit, in company with Mr. Edmund Barton, who was destined to become the first Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia. When Mr. Saywell returned he brought with him a great novelty - an electric tram system which he installed on his private tramline between Rockdale Station and Lady Robinson's Beach. Now read on...

### **AN EVENING WITH MR. SAYWELL**

On Friday evening a number of gentlemen entertained Mr. Thomas Saywell, at the Town Hall, Rockdale. The hall was very tastefully decorated with flags, ferns, and evergreens, and at the head of the table a cushion of white flowers was placed with the words, "Bon Voyage" done in red berries by Messrs. Milner and Smith. The catering was carried out in a very recherche style and the table decorations were displayed in a most artistic manner by Mr. C. Lincke, host of the Grand Hotel, Rockdale. The company numbering somewhere about one hundred and fifty of the most influential gentlemen of the district. An elaborate and artistic address executed by L.C. Cunningham, of Law Court-place, Melbourne, of the album design, and on the left corner was a cluster of flannel flowers and a spray of the Australian wild fuschia, Scot's College, Lady Robinson's Beach, on the cliffs at Bulli, on the right corner Christmas bells and flannel flowers, and a scene of Botany Bay looking towards the Heads, was given to Mr. Saywell.

The Mayor presented the address in a very neat and appropriate speech and stated that Mr. Saywell had done much to advance the district. He had caused a tramway to be constructed and run through the streets, had built the beautiful Scots College and a terrace of palatial residences at Lady Robinson's Beach. He (the Mayor) hoped that Mr. Saywell would be spared to the district for a long time to come.

The following address was handed to the recipient amidst loud and prolonged cheering - "Rockdale, New South Wales, "14th April, 1893.

*"To Thomas Saywell., Esq., Rockdale.*

*Dear Sir - On the occasion of your visit to America and Europe, we residents of this District cannot allow you to leave our shores without tendering to you an expression of our esteem. It is with pleasure we have observed your business integrity and the generosity and benevolence of your character and your genial social qualities have secured you very many warm friends. We also cordially acknowledge the fact that to your energy and spirited enterprise is due in large measure the development of this important district. Wishing you a pleasant holiday and a safe and speedy return.*

*Signed on behalf of the residents.*

*William Taylor,*

*Mayor of Rockdale."*

Mr. Saywell said that he would treasure the address and would hand it down to his family who would also highly appreciate the gift. He would not say much more as his health was to be proposed later in the evening and then he would have to reply. Mr. J.H. Carruthers said that he was certain that the toast would be drunk with enthusiasm. When we have going from our midst one, who has done so much we cannot allow him to leave without doing honour to him.

Mr. Saywell came to this district about the time when the railways came here. He was a man of energy, and its men of that description that we want. He came to this country, not as it were with the proverbial sixpence. This gentleman has developed our coalmines which benefited the country. Some years ago he (Mr. J.H. Carruthers) came to Lady Robinson's Beach on foot, and sorry he was that he had not followed the example of the late Governor and his good lady, after whom the beach was named, for they came on horseback. Now the poor can go to the beach by rail and tram. One of my first maiden speeches was to pass a bill in connection with Mr. Saywell. If a man bath a kind heart he will do much to benefit his fellow-creatures. He gained praise for himself by his actions, and it can be well said of Mr. Saywell, "Well done thou good and faithful servant." Much good will be derived at all times to come by the large investments Mr. Saywell has made in the district, and there were none here but wished him a safe return.

Mr. Saywell on rising was received in an enthusiastic manner; he said that it was more than he expected to see so many friends around him tonight. He was fifty six years of age, and had been in the colony a number of years. He had been to England once. He was now going to America, and would be some time away. He was going to study the tobacco trade; he would visit Canada before coming back. He went to Botany Bay now Lady Robinson's Beach some years ago and was pleased with the view and resolved to buy land about the place. Mr. Saywell said he has cut up several estates and sold them. Has helped people to build. He has spent in Rockdale £160,000, but he has not regretted what has been done because he has received back £70,000. He (Mr. Saywell) said he would come back and spend his days at the beach. He was glad Mr. J.H. Carruthers had said so much because he saved from speaking at a great length and would conclude by thanking them for the warm manner in which they had drunk his health.

Mr. R. Watson, on behalf of the employees, also presented an illuminated address to Mr. Saywell in a brief and concise speech, and wished him bon voyage, and hoped that he might be spared to have a safe return.

Mr. Saywell returned thanks and said this was far beyond his expectations, and that Mrs. Saywell and family would be pleased with the presentation.

The company all enjoyed themselves up to a late hour. Several songs were rendered by Messrs. A. Edwards, Bennett, W. Clancy, and others.

The accompaniments were played by Mr. E. J. Quail. The success of the evening was due to the exertions of the committee - Messrs. C. Bull, sen., Patridge, Kenwood, and the Rev. A.A. Aspinall, and the two indefatigable secretaries, Messrs. C.H. Barsby and A.E. Green.

Source: *Originally printed in April 1966 issue of this Bulletin by Phillip Geeves.*

## THE NEW BRIGHTON HOTEL



In 1885 a publication in Sydney by John Woods and Company had made the following predictions about the future of Lady Robinsons Beach ---

*In the course of a few years fit will possess the finest park, promenade, boulevard and marine parade in Australia. Between Sandringham Road and the Rockdale Tram is a broad area of country covered with a fairly dense forest growth, with clearings here and there marking out suburban homes and market gardens. The Beach and a good strip of land adjoining the beach [has been] reserved in the public interest. In notifying the park, it is to be called Cook Park after Mr. Samuel Cook who was the first person to ask for it and in doing so has rendered good service to the Colony and more especially to the people of Sydney and the suburbs.*

Thomas Saywell did not intend to leave it all to Samuel Cook. The second stage of his plans for his watering place included the erection of a hotel, a residential subdivision and a row of superior terraces along The Grand Parade.

The hotel was to stand immediately opposite the baths close to the corner of Bay Street and set well back from The Grand Parade. Again, it was designed by William Kenwood who had already built a number of other hotels for Saywell.

It was two and a half storeys in height with a prominent square tower which supported a flag pole over the entrance portico and from which expansive views of the bay could be obtained. It was designed in flamboyant Italianate style. The second storey verandah, supported on delicately fluted columns with a decorative cast-iron balustrade, was the epitome of Victorian pomposity and extravagance. Its tall decorated chimneys soon became a local landmark.

The building consisted of over eighty rooms, sixty of which were bedrooms, and most commanded a view of Botany Bay to the north or to the south. The bedrooms were particularly generous in size and were equipped with an innovation not enjoyed by any hotel outside the central city area. Every room was provided with hot and cold running water. Once more, the water was obtained from bores sunk deep into the sand and pumped to a series of large tanks located over the kitchen and service area, from where it was reticulated to all parts of the hotel. The building was also equipped with its own septic sewerage system.

The reception and entertainment rooms located on the ground floor of the hotel were the last word in elegance and compared with any hotel then operating in the Colony. Apart from a spacious

bar and dining room and a room where men could play cards, it also had a large billiard room with two tables and was described in the Sydney Press as —

*One of the most complete and high class places of public resort within excursion distance of Sydney.*

The ballroom could cater for parties of up to 500 dancers and the Ladies Parlour was quite unique, being a large decorated chamber containing a grand piano where ladies could gather in comfort to take tea while their menfolk enjoyed the other facilities provided by the licensee.

The sand hills at the rear and side of the hotel had been leveled and the scrub removed. The area was attractively landscaped with formal gardens, ferns and clumps of trees and a roofed pavilion was provided where light refreshments could be taken whilst enjoying the view of the bay and the cooling breezes which blew over it.

A decade later, it became one of the first hotels in Sydney to be lit by electricity, produced from a generator installed in a converted stable at the rear of the hotel.

Saywell called his hostelry the New Brighton Hotel and thereby started a controversy which has surrounded the naming of the suburb ever since. Whilst it has always been assumed that Brighton le Sands was named after the popular watering place in Sussex in England, there is also an equally popular holiday and recreation town developed in the mid-1800s on the south side of the Mersey River opposite the great seaport of Liverpool and called New Brighton.

Unlike the other Brighton, which was a playground for the rich and fashionable, New Brighton had been built by the Quaker merchants of Liverpool – the Cadburys, the Frys and the Levers - as a resort for working people and their families. It also had a pier, a marine parade and a bathing pool. Whatever the origin of its naming, Saywell's new hotel was an instant success.

The hotel and the baths flourished during the summer months but in winter, when chill winds frequently swept across the bay turning its normally calm and peaceful waters into a white-capped cauldron, patronage was thin. In order to ensure a steady stream of customers all year round, Saywell decided to erect a large hall at the rear of the hotel so that entertainments and sporting events could be staged when the weather outside was uninviting.

The huge structure was 170 feet long and 41 feet wide with a high ceiling and domed roof decorated with Russian onion-shaped minarets. Some people said it looked like the Royal Pavilion at Brighton in England. That great chronicler of events in early Sydney, the Sydney Morning Herald, described it as 'unique in its class and possibly not excelled by any other hall in the Colony'. It could accommodate up to 1,500 persons.

The Pavilion Hall was opened in January 1887 by Hon. James Inglis, Minister for Education and a business associate of Saywell's, in the presence of 400 people. It was a very large crowd considering the whole population of Rockdale was less than 4,000 at the time.

Like everything else Thomas Saywell undertook, the opening was a gala occasion for the whole district. Rockdale Station, the steam tram and the hall itself were festooned with flags, bunting and greenery and large calico signs were hung along Bay Street. A combined Flower and Canary Show with a Promenade Concert was held in the Pavilion and lasted three days. The building was later lit by electricity from the same generator which supplied the hotel and which was supplemented by the use of large storage batteries.



**The Pavillion**

Over two hundred pounds was collected in aid of the proposed Literary Institute at Rockdale. The hall was used for dances, roller skating, concerts and exhibitions. Its most successful use, however, was as a gymnasium.

In the late eighteen eighties and early nineties a number of sporting celebrities made the hotel their home for extended periods, including several famous boxers who used the great hall for their training. Among them were Albert Griffiths ('Griffo'), who won the Australian Featherweight Title in December 1889 and the World Title in September 1890; Dan Creedon, one of the finest light heavyweights the ring has ever known; and World Heavyweight Champion Tommy Burns, who trained there in 1908.

It was at the New Brighton Hotel that the famous coloured boxer, Peter Jackson, took up residence after he returned to Australia from England and America in 1899. A giant of a man who had been born in the West Indies, he had won the Australian Heavyweight Championship in 1886 and toured England and America in the 1890s. He could have been World Champion in 1892, but for the fact that the reigning World Champion, John Sullivan, refused to fight him because of his colour. All those men attracted a huge following of admirers.

The New Brighton Estate - Princess, Gordon, Bruce and Sellwood Streets - had been auctioned in January 1886 by the Metropolitan Mutual Permanent Building and Investment Association, of which Saywell was the major shareholder and his agent, T.S. Huntley, the Principal, with indifferent success. That led him to build the famous terrace along The Grand Parade between Princess Street and Gordon Street to help development along.

It also was designed in the most extravagant Victorian style by William Kenwood. Saywell's Terrace, or as it is more correctly called, Brighton Terrace, originally consisted of twelve residences of which five still remain. They were not the mean little dwellings so frequently associated with the crowded inner suburbs of Sydney, but huge in size with rooms suitable for use by servants located at the rear. No expense was spared on their interior fittings and decoration. They were not for the 'working man'. They were for residents of more substantial means.

On their completion, Thomas Saywell himself moved from Petersham into Nevada, Number 8, later moving to Number 12 and remaining there until shortly before his death in 1928.

Many people of influence were to live in the Terrace over the ensuing years, two of the best known being Ernest Andrews, the New South Wales Government Geologist, and WW. Monahan KC. Andrews became a geologist of world standing and was the stepson of John Andrews, one of the founders of the Rockdale Wesleyan Church and, some claim, the first school teacher in the St George District.

William Willis Monahan KC was a leading barrister and an acting judge of the New South Wales Supreme Court. He was the Mayor of Rockdale from 1914 to 1917.

It was after Thomas Saywell moved to Brighton le Sands that he began to pull his various enterprises together. Through the efforts of his agent, Thomas Sellwood Huntley, who was also an alderman of the West Botany Council between 1887 and 1889 and, for a period, the licensee of the New Brighton Hotel, The Grand Parade between Bay Street and Gordon Street was surveyed and aligned and Saywell set about the task of beautifying the area.

Never one to pass up a good idea, Thomas Saywell had noted how attractive the beach at Manly was becoming with its row of Norfolk Island pine trees, and was also aware that pine trees had been grown successfully around the Prince of Wales Hotel at Sandringham since the early 1870s. In the grounds of his hotel and in the parkland opposite he planted a number of those trees which, in later years, were extended along the remainder of the shoreline.

The four ancient cannon which formed part of the beachfront beautification were added in the early 1900s. Acquired from a decommissioned naval vessel, the Wolverine, three dated from the

1870s and one from the 1820s. They were set at a distance of 100 feet apart, and only two still remain in place.

One was buried in the sand in the 1930s as it proved too heavy to be lifted when the Brighton Life Saving Clubrooms were built. One fell into the Bay when a ferocious storm in 1966 deeply eroded Cook Park, and was later rescued and re-sited, and the oldest, cast in the reign of King George IV, was restored and remounted and now stands outside the Rockdale City Council Administration Building in Bryant Street Rockdale.

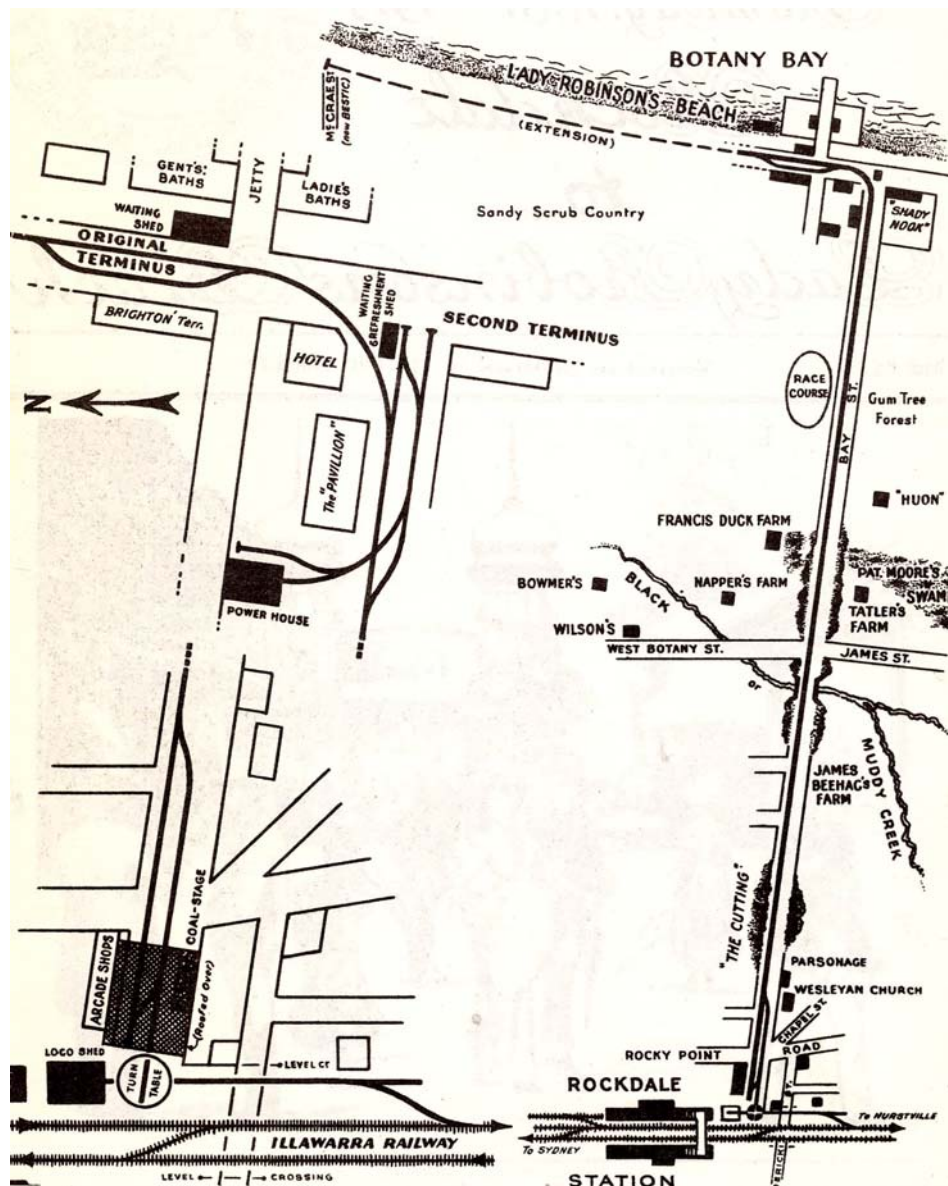
It was no wonder that Thomas Saywell was described by a leading Sydney newspaper as –

*A man with unstinted energy who had laid out sufficient money to all but perfect the requirements of a watering place that even the most fastidious could not take exception to.*

Yes, Thomas Saywell was a very remarkable man and he had not finished yet.

Source: Extract from Late Ronald Rathbone's book "Brighton Le Sands" Available from "Lydham Hall"

Map Courtesy of Gifford Eardley.





## Shady Nook. Brighton-le-Sands.

Prior to the advent of surf bathing it was customary for the citizens of Sydney and the metropolis generally to spend their weekends at one of the many watering places, as they were termed, located around the foreshores of Sydney Harbour and Botany Bay. At Botany, adjacent to the Cooks River entrance, was the famous Sir. Joseph Bank's Hotel and its adjoining pleasure grounds, which attracted vast crowds of holiday makers to splash and swim in the shallow waters of the northern section of Botany Bay, to picnic in the bush surrounded grounds, to ride on the miniature steam train, to patronize its hotel bars, to inspect its zoo and the elephant, and generally make merry.

All these things were keenly obtained by Mr. Thomas Saywell who saw a good financial return was to be had in catering for the entertainment of the populace. To this end he commenced to develop the sand dune country at Lady Robinson's Beach, adjacent to the eastern extremity of Ocean (later Bay) Street, Rockdale. Here a palatial hotel was built, also large swimming baths with separate paddock enclosures to divide the sexes, evidently to protect the defenceless males from the wiles of the designing females, and a most spacious picnic ground where people could loll under the shade of the native trees. This area was aptly named SHADY NOOK, and its fame spread far and wide. It quickly became popular, especially so with mothers with young children to watch. There were swings and somewhat ponderous see-saws, made from a heavy plank suspended in the centre of its length between two upright ex-tramway sleepers, an arrangement which called for the careful balancing of the opposing loads of youngsters, as broken arms and legs were not altogether unknown amongst its patrons.

The Shady Nook enclosure was located at the southern side of Bay Street and its eastern fence line, formed of short stubby lengths of indigenous tea-tree packed tightly between parallel wires, strung between posts, in an endeavour to halt the inroads of the wind blown sand, followed the western verge of the present Grand Parade for some little distance. For a portion of its length the southern fence boundary was occupied by a shelter shed, replete with high ungainly seats, more solid than comfortable, and substantial picnic tables of a strength calculated to withstand the assaults of the vandalistic larrikin element, which has always existed in our midst. The remaining portion of the southern boundary, together with the western fence line, was enclosed by a rough-hewn post and rail fence, which prevented livestock from entering the enclosed grounds. At the time it was common practice to permit cattle and horses to roam at will, seeking agistment wherever it could be found.

The western section of Shady Nook was left, to a large extent, in its virgin state as far as the large trees were concerned. This growth was inter-mixed with small-leaved coastal Banksia Trees, and gnarled, grotesque shaped Saw-leaved Honeysuckles, (*Banksia Serrata*), which were once so common to the sand dune district bordering the western shore of Botany Bay. There were the bright green Geebungs (*Persoonia*), the Woody-Pears (*Xylomelum Pyriforme*), and a host of other Wildlings, which have fascinated generations of naturalists.

To cater for the ice cream, lolly buying, and tea and scone needs of the picnic crowds a small shop was erected at the northeastern corner of Shady Nook. This was housed in a long weatherboard building, a single room in width and extended for some distance along the eastern frontage of Shady Nook in a southerly direction from Bay Street, the tea-room and lolly shop being located at the northern end and a separate post office, together with the single room which formed living accommodation for Miss. Ward, the postmistress, were placed at the southern end. On the western side of this building, running for its full length, was a narrow side veranda sheltering the various doorways and also a series of attractive bay windows which displayed an excellent wealth of ferns and exotic plants.

The northern façade of the shop premises, abutting onto Bay Street, was largely devoted to window space, the lower section of the wall being divided into three glazed sections for confectionary display purposes. Immediately above these windows was an intricate pattern made up of small panes of coloured glass, reds, greens and yellow, said to be of German manufacture, this panel looked most attractive at night when illuminated from within by the mellow gleams of gaslight. The separate lettering of "CADBURY'S CHOCOLATE", in white glass, now a historic feature of advertising, was affixed in a semi-circular fashion, across the three panels of the display window. Beneath the eaves the upper section of the façade was enclosed with redwood shingles painted in an ochraceous shade of green, a covering that looked most attractive. The fascia boards were decorated at their ends by semi-circular drops and also midway in their length. The roof was of corrugated iron painted Indian Red, as a protection against the inroads of sea air and rust. Surmounted above the ridging was a crest board of pierced metal as an ornamentation, the sharp upper edges of which were not appreciated as a potential landing place by the local seagull population.

The tearoom was a friendly little place given over to dainty morning and afternoon teas served at small round tables with polished marble tops, around each of which were can-seated "Austrian Chairs". Behind the counter were shelves displaying a wondrous display of chocolate boxes depicting scenes from the Swiss alps, or flowering gems such as roses, cornflowers, or red poppies, each box being tied with rich coloured ribbon, the products of old established firms such as Cadbury's, Frys, Kailers, MacRobertson and Nestles, amongst others. For the younger clientele with a penny to spend the stock in trade ranged from gingerbread rabbits to pink and also white sugar pigs, plus a tremendous variety of sticky toffees, milk poles, liquorice telephone wires, also straps, and blocks (at 4 a penny) of the same black laxative material. There were pink musk sticks, sherbet bags with a liquorice tube to suck up the contents, fizzos, (round balls of sherbet encased in white toffee) at half-penny each, and many other tempting comestibles for the juvenile palette.

The Post Office catered for the then rather limited postal needs of Brighton-le-Sands and has the usual counter, stamp draws and delicate brass letter weighing scales. Letters in New South Wales needed a one-penny stamp, red in colour and issued by the New South Wales government, and interstate letters were two-pence, a blue stamp. Newspapers, irrespective of their destination were sent at one half-penny each, the stamp of this denomination being green in colour. It may be of interest to give details appertaining to the furnishing of the bed-sitting room occupied by the local postmistress. The dividing walls of the room were of vertically fixed match boarding and the ceiling, of the same material, followed the apex shape of the roof timbers. A large table, fully covered with a cloth of elaborate floral design, occupied the central position, whilst a sideboard, with a longitudinal mirror and shelves loaded with vases, ornaments, and trinkets, lay against the wall. There was a natty single bed of iron construction, adorned with spherical brass knobs, one on top of each bedpost, together with a multitude of brass and china fittings. Framed pictures added colour and interest to each wall, and at night a golden glow was shed by an ornate centrally gas bracket which, at the end of chains, could be raised or lowered at will. It was certainly a wonderful cozy little room.

The eastern half of the fence along the Bay Street frontage of Shady Nook was formed with white painted pickets, a double gate being placed therein to admit vehicular traffic. The main pedestrian entrance was adjacent to the tearoom veranda where a number of vertical posts, afforded a maximum of discomfort to obese persons and a wonderment to members of the canine family. Side by side, to admit perambulators and go-carts, was another entrance protected by a revolving cross-bar arrangement, pivoted in a central round post, these protective facilities effectually kept out the roving larger animals and the revolving cross-bar gave endless pleasure to the smaller children as they were pushed round hanging on for dear life, by their excited mates. The long veranda was paved with brown glazed

bricks and the children spent much time gazing at the ferns displayed in the several bay windows and trying to pry through the fronds into the rooms beyond. The grassy sward of the eastern portion of the enclosed grounds was planted, at about 20 foot intervals, with Norfolk Island Palms, each tree being protected by rectangular shaped guards of wooden palings and several guards had seats arranged around their outer sides.

Perhaps the principal feature of Shady Nook was the large ornate Merry-Go-Round, placed near the north-eastern corner of the pleasure ground. This appurtenance was constructed about the beginning of the present century by Messrs. Stewart and Cropp, a local firm of contractors, and was electrically driven per medium of a winch, several idling pulleys, and an endless rope, the latter, after leaving the winch, being coiled around and immediately below the rotating wooden floor of the machine. Circular single rail track, concentric with the main pivot, was traversed by railway type wheels, each revolving on separate radiating axles. A large electrically operated organ played strident "mechanical" music which was clearly audible more than half a mile away, amongst which on vividly remembers the rendition of the "Blue Danube" in particular. The Merry-Go-Round was housed in a many-sided wooden building with a conical roof, above which a small cupola gave a sense of adornment. The entrance doorways were closed with wooden shutters when the machine was not in use to prevent unauthorized intrusion and acts of vandalism. The wooden horses, three abreast, moved up and down on vertical cast rods, each dappled steed bore a distinctive name on its neck relative to some well known racehorse of the period. The were at least wheel-less chariots, equally spaced, which gave a measure of comfort to the younger children who were too frightened to rides the bouncing nags ahead. There was also a razzle-dazzle nearby. This contrivance consisted of a large diameter circular seat suspended by stout iron rods from a metal cap mounted on top of a high and stout post. By the strenuous efforts of the more able participants, the circular seat rotated around its post in a rising and falling fashion. As this machine was on the free list it was a prime favourite with its many and often shrieking patrons.

About the period of 1908 a couple of discarded de-wheeled tram card bodies, complete with glass windows, were placed in Shady Nook west of and in the vicinity of the Merry-GoRound. These erstwhile vehicles had end doors and side seats facing inwards and were popular with the picnic parties. They also provided shelter should a thunderstorm arise. Another arrival about the same period was a "Dummy" or (driving cable car) formerly in use on the then abandoned King Street Cable Tramway in Sydney. This open sided vehicle, minus its wheels, had seats facing outward and towards each end, the space between the raised backs of the seats once provided standage for the former tramcar "Grip Man" where he manipulated his control levers. This unit found great favour playing at "Trammies" but did not remain at Shady Nook for very long and its ultimate end is not known.

With the expiration in 1914 of the thirty-year franchise granted to Thomas Saywell by the original Act of Parliament, a move was made by Rockdale Municipal Council to acquire Shady Nook as a public park. Two years later the government was urged to purchase the area for recreation purposes, but to no avail. In 1920 the local council had the option of taking over the property at a cost of £10,000 but could not arrange the finance, and as late as 1928 agitation for its purchase was still proceeding. However the developers took over and, after the ruthless destruction of the lovely trees had taken its course, they erected the row of shops, which face Bay Street and Grand Parade. Trafalgar Street, The Boulevard and Duke Street were eventually constructed to serve the needs of the residential area spread over the southern and western portion of the once so beautiful and popular Shady Nook.

Source: *Article by Gifford & Eileen Eardley*

My parents told me about Mr. Common Sense early in my life and told me I would do well to call on him when making decisions. It seems he was always around in my early years but around less and less as time passed by.

Today I read his obituary. Please join me in a moment of silence in remembrance because Common Sense had served us all so well for many generations.

### **Obituary Common Sense**

Today we mourn the passing of a beloved old friend, Common Sense, who had been with us for many years. No one knows for sure how old he was since his birth records were long ago lost in bureaucratic red tape.

He will be remembered as having cultivated such valuable lessons as, "knowing when to come in out of the rain," "why the early bird gets the worm," "life isn't always fair," and "maybe it was my fault."

Common Sense lived by simple, sound financial policies (don't spend more than you earn) and reliable parenting strategies (adults, not children, are in charge).

His health began to deteriorate rapidly when well intentioned but overbearing regulations were set in place. Reports of a six-year-old boy charged with sexual harassment for kissing a classmate, teens suspended from school for using mouthwash after lunch, and a teacher fired for reprimanding an unruly student only worsened his condition.

Common Sense lost ground when parents attacked teachers for doing the job they themselves failed to do in disciplining their unruly children. His health declined even further when schools were required to get parental consent to administer aspirin, sun lotion or a sticky plaster to a student; but could not inform the parents when a student became pregnant and wanted to have an abortion.

Common Sense lost the will to live as the Ten commandments became contraband, churches became businesses, and criminals received better treatment than their victims.

Common Sense took a beating when a person couldn't defend himself from a burglar in his own home and the burglar could sue the home resident for assault. Common Sense finally gave up the will to live after a woman failed to realize that a steaming cup of coffee was hot. She spilled a little of the hot coffee in her lap and was awarded a huge settlement.

Common Sense was preceded in death by his parents, Truth and Trust; his wife, Discretion; his daughter, Responsibility; and his son, Reason.

He is survived by three stepbrothers - I Know my Rights, Someone Else is to Blame, and I'm a Victim.

Not many attended his funeral because so few realized he was gone. If you still remember him, pass this on. If not, join the majority and do nothing.

**ST. GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.  
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE  
YEAR ENDED 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2007.**

<b>INCOME</b>		<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	
Cash at Bank 30/6/2006	\$ 1,199.41	Bulk postage	\$ 57.00
Membership Subscriptions	\$ 495.00	R.A.H.S Conference	\$ -
Donations (General)	\$ 75.00	R.A.H.S Subscriptions 2005/06	\$ 91.00
Donations - R. Rathbone Memorial	\$ 300.00	R.A.H.S Insurance 2005/06	\$ 595.95
Sale of Books	\$ 1,715.00	Arncliffe Street Stall	\$ 13.98
Tours / Walks	\$ 1,050.00	Bexley Street Stall	\$ 12.50
Raffles	\$ -	Office of Fair Trading	\$ 63.00
Bank Interest	\$ 13.65	Xmas Gifts. Caretaker/Printer	\$ 33.18
		Guest Speaker Gifts	\$ 20.00
		Balance in Bank 30/6/07	\$ 3,961.45
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u><u>\$ 4,848.06</u></u>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u><u>\$ 4,848.06</u></u>

*I have examined the books presented by Mrs Lesley Fairhall & am satisfied the above figures present a true & accurate account of the financial affairs of St George Historical Society Inc. as at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007*

*J Rankin*