



Our History

MAGAZINE *of the* ST GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

JULY - SEPTEMBER 2016



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Front Cover Image - Rocky Point Road (now Princes Highway), Rockdale, circa 1910. A postcard view northward of the eastern side of the main street of Rockdale, including the original Town Hall, and shopfronts for Kinsela and Sons Funeral Directors, John Hunter & Son and S.Rodway Swyny. [1]

Back Cover Image - Princes Highway, Rockdale, at the Bay Street intersection in 1937. [1]

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July – September 2016

Welcome

As a new member of our society, I've enjoyed researching and writing about our local history and I was very grateful to see my articles published in recent editions of the magazine. As the new editor of our society's quarterly magazine, I hope to provide an informative, entertaining resource for anyone fascinated by the ideas, discoveries and stories resulting from our local history.

Dr. Garry Darby's significant contribution to the promotion and preservation of our local history, most recently as this magazine's editor and as an advocate for the State Heritage Listing of Primrose House, have been particularly appreciated. Thank you Garry. I'm certain I speak for the local community when I express our gratitude for your enthusiastic focus on St George's local history. I wish you every success with your future endeavours.

In this edition of the magazine, I've explored varied topics, including the census, local crime, sport, cinema and satire. To continue reflecting on the ANZAC Centenary, there are stories and photos of local volunteers. Most importantly, I've offered a series of questions to share the most important resource for our local history – the memories, knowledge and ideas of our readers. I encourage you to consider these questions, discussing them with your friends and neighbours. Please contact me or any of our members with your answers or if you have questions or suggestions for future editions of the magazine. I'm looking forward to providing updates in our next edition.

On behalf of the society, I extend a warm welcome to our latest member, **Ms. Jennifer Baxter of Penshurst.**

On a final note, please let me know if you have a local story you would like to see published. Don't feel intimidated by the writing process. I can assist with compiling your story and scanning photographs for publication and preservation.

Barry Johnson
Editor

Events

Meetings are held on the third Saturday of each month (except December and January) at 2pm. Visitors are very welcome to enjoy presentations by guest speakers, discuss local history with members during our afternoon tea.

- **Saturday 16th July 2016 2pm**
Annual General Meeting and 'Show and Tell' with members and guests recalling local memories linked to historic objects and photos. Venue: Sans Souci Library on the corner of Russell Ave and Clareville Ave, Sans Souci.
- **Saturday 30th July 2016 9am - 5pm**
Grand opening of the new Rockdale Library. Visit www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au/library for event details. Please note, the library's Local History Collection will be unavailable until the Monday 1st August as it is being transferred to the new site.
- **Saturday 20th August 2016 2pm**
Monthly meeting. Guest speaker: Dr. Pam Como on "Early settlement in the Hunter Valley". Venue: To be confirmed. Please visit our website or Facebook page, check the Events pages of the St George Leader published on Wednesday 17th August or contact our Secretary, Laurice Bondfield on 9599-4274 to confirm the details.
- **Saturday 17th September 2016 2pm**
Monthly meeting. Guest speaker and venue: To be confirmed. Please visit our website or Facebook page, check the Events pages of the St George Leader published on Wednesday 17th August or contact our Secretary, Laurice Bondfield on 9599-4274 to confirm the details.

Anniversaries – July

By Barry Johnson

17 July 1902 - Christina Stead born in Rockdale

At the turn of the century, a bold new author begins her literary journey

Christina Stead, one of Australia's finest writers, was born in Rockdale in 1902, living in Bexley's Lydham Hall in her early childhood. Her father, David George Stead, remarried and the new family moved to Watsons Bay after her step-grandfather died.

Her writing, particularly the novel *The Man Who Loved Children*, resonates with the imagery and painful childhood memories of her father's overbearing nature. Considered one of the best novels of the 20th century, the protagonist's family was rewritten in an American context to garner a larger audience but readers will still recognise Australian themes. The destructive impact to the children as the couple's rift develops is particularly insightful.

Her father was a marine biologist and one of the founders of the Wildlife Preservation Society of Australia, dedicated to the protection of native species including the bilby, eastern quoll, koala and sea turtle. He persuaded the US President, Herbert Hoover, to ban the import of wombat and koala skins during a difficult single-term in office as he grappled with the effects of the Great Depression.

Her first novel, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, examined the despairing lives of inner-city residents and dockworkers with scenes of poverty likened to the encounters in John Steinbeck's novel, *Grapes of Wrath*. Her writing style was soon noticed in Hollywood, as she was hired to contribute to the script for the film, *They Were Expendable*, directed by film-making pioneer, John Ford, and starring John Wayne. The film is a fictionalisation of the World War 2 battles in the Philippines as United States Navy patrol boats defended against the Japanese Navy. Though she lived abroad for much of her life, she did return home in 1974. In that same year, she received the inaugural Patrick White Literary Award, established by the Nobel Laureate to be selected after each Melbourne Cup in November to briefly replace sport with literature as the national focus. She continued writing but remained unsettled as her health declined and she died in 1983. [3]

Stead's literary achievements were formally acknowledged with the establishment of the annual NSW Literary Award, the Christina Stead Prize for Fiction and the National Fellowship of Australia's Christina Stead Literary Award for notable Australian fiction. She is commemorated on the Writer's Walk in Circular Quay, with a plaque bearing a quote from *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*:

This land was discovered; why? A ghost land, a continent of mystery... It's heart is made of salt; it suddenly oozes from its burning pores, gold which will destroy men in greed, but not water to give them drink.

Built in the 1860s, Lydham Hall is one of St George's oldest homes. It has been accessible to the public since 1971 when it became a museum featuring exhibitions of antique furniture and ceramics. St George Historical Society Inc. members are volunteer guides, aiding visitors, including groups of school children, since the museum opened.

Rockdale Library's branches hold eight of her novels as well as short story collections and a radio interview transcript. Search for these works with the Library catalogue at

<http://library.rockdale.nsw.gov.au/OPAC/default.aspx>



Photograph of Christina Stead in the National Portrait Gallery collection.[2]



5 July 1904

Sir Bernard Sugerman (pictured) is born in Rockdale. A barrister, he was appointed King's Counsel, serving as a judge presiding over compensation cases resulting from compulsory Crown land purchases and upholding a trade union claim to implement a forty-hour working week. He also sat on the Full Court that dismissed an injunction against a referendum to abolish the NSW Legislative Council. The referendum, held in 1961, was not carried. [4]

17 July 1916

The **St George Rifle Club** holds its first annual meeting at the Kogarah Public School, 2 decades after reviewing potential sites for a rifle range in the National Park. The club's committee included the mayors of Rockdale, Hurstville and Kogarah and Joseph Carruthers, the first State MP for the St George electorate and subsequent Premier of NSW, as Patron. [5]

2 July 1954

Taira Kashiwagi died in Rockdale. Born in Japan, he worked as a planter throughout Pacific islands before arriving in Brisbane. He remained in Australia during World War 2, despite an offer to return to Japan to avoid the internment of 'enemy aliens'. A president of the Japanese Association in Brisbane, also contributing to Australian charities until his internment of 2 years. [6]

11 July 1974

Richard Stanley Charles died in Hurstville. Born in Worcestershire, England, he pursued a variety endeavours, including aircraft engineering, car sales, teaching music and rescue procedures and prospecting for gold. His true calling was in the water. He promoted the sport of spearfishing, developing new safety equipment and procedures after becoming one of the founders of the St George Motor Boat Club. [8]

23 July 1975

James Anthony Meagher died in Calvary Hospital in Kogarah. Born in Dublin, Ireland, he was a solicitor and broadcaster, distinctive for his monocle, cane and buttonhole. During his legal career, he represented a series high-profile characters, including the madam Tilly Devine, subject of a dramatisation in the fictional television crime series, *Underbelly*. A panellist on ABC radio and television programmes, he was particularly passionate about the literary arts, regularly enjoying the company of Sydney's most successful writers and journalists, including Miles Franklin. [9]



Australian internment camps [7]

In The News – Rockdale Library

By Barry Johnson

On Saturday, 30 July 2016, Rockdale's new library will open, replacing the previous library, in use since 1982. In the previous 3 decades, library services have dramatically changed as the Internet, personal computing, smart phones and tablets, wireless networking, digital catalogues, digitised versions of books, magazines, music and audio books have become commonplace.

In 1958, Rockdale's library on Bryant Street behind the Town Hall opened to the public. Photos of the ceremony and the interior form an interesting contrast with the upcoming event.



- A. The entrance to the library on Bryant St.
B. Shelves of books and drawers of index cards used as a catalogue to locate items.
C. The opening ceremony with Alderman Nairn, Alderman Jones, Mrs Jones and Mr Metcalf.
D. the library's reading and study area. [1]

Our Earliest Horseless Carriages

By Barry Johnson

In 1905, Alan Stirling registered the first motor vehicle in Rockdale, sharing dusty streets with horse buses and carriages. The traffic on our streets steadily changed throughout the 20th century as horses were eventually replaced as a means of transport. Photos during the period provide a view of this motorised takeover.



- A. Alan Stirling happily piloting his newly registered automobile, circa 1905.
- B. A horse bus travelling between Penshurst and the Cooks River.
- C. Cornelius Ifland's motor bus, circa 1920.
- D. A tram and trolley bus on the Grand Parade in Brighton-Le-Sands in 1949. [1]

Our War, Our Words – July 1916

By Barry Johnson

Acting Corporal Albert Edward Offord, born in London, England and living with his wife, Grace, in Alice St, Oatley, enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force at the age of 31 in 1915. Whilst serving in Egypt, he wrote two letters to his family which were published in *The St George Call* in July, 1916. He was stationed at Tel-el-Kebir, the site of a decisive victory in 1882 as the British defeated Egyptian forces, occupying Egypt and controlling the recently constructed and strategically vital Suez Canal. In this excerpt, he expresses his delight at finding a piece of home:

“...on going into my chum's tent this morning I saw an Australian paper. Imagine my delight on finding it was our local paper, “The St George Call”...The person who posted “The Call” to Egypt would be well rewarded if he or she could see the pleasure that reading it gave to me and others in my tent...we are camped on the site of a big battle fought in Egypt in 1882. It is terrible hot here now (110 in the shade). We are sailing in a few days to a cooler climate in one sense, but very hot in another. Tell the boys of the St George District that we need them over here, also tell them not to imagine it is a tourist trip, but it means real hard work.” [10]

Upon leaving Egypt, bound for England, he writes again about his experiences aboard the S.S. Megantic, an Irish ocean liner used as a troopship by the Allies in WW1 and surviving a German U-boat attack 8 months after Offord's voyage:

“Since writing to you last, we have been ordered to England. The news was very welcome to the boys, for although

Egypt is a very interesting country, it is not exactly a white man's land, especially in the summertime. 135 degrees in the shade is not unknown. Many signs of the Battle [of Tel el-Kebir] still remain, such as earth works, pieces of shells and other relics ... Most of us are travelling second saloon on this boat. It is quite a change after camping, in the desert, in fact we feel obliged to have a 'brush up,' and put on our best uniform before going into the dining saloon. We never have [the lifebelt] off, only to sleep, then we must put it under our head. Boots are not allowed to be worn, as they hinder swimming. Submarines and mines have been pretty busy about here, but up to-date we have not seen anything of them. The boys were sorry at not being able to see the famous rock of Gibraltar in the daylight. Today, we are well into the Bay of Biscay, but it is in one of its quiet moods.

Wednesday will see us in civilisation again, that is if a 'tinned fish' does not get us before then. If it does, well you will not receive this letter.” [11]



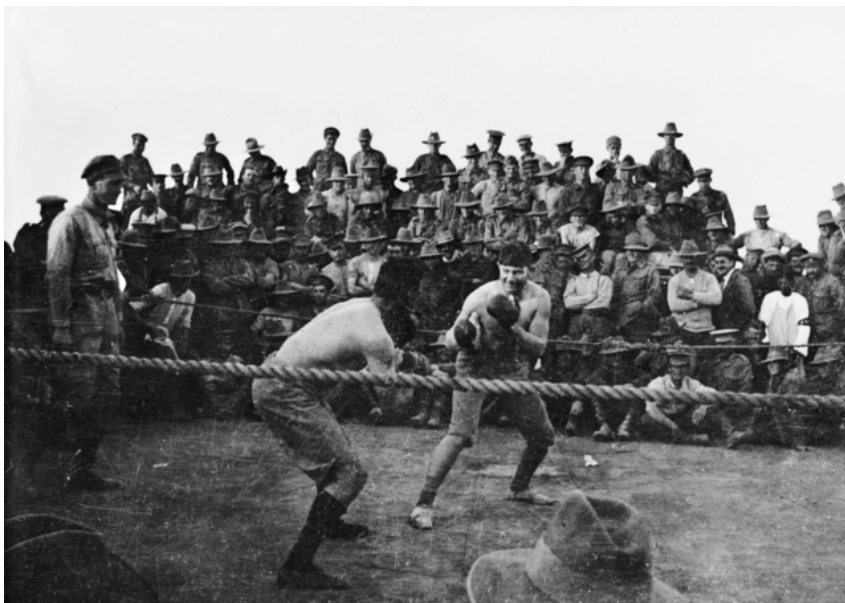
AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

PS0470

Infantry entering Alexandria [14]

Signaller Ernest George Peatfield, of Francis St, Kogarah, while serving at Tel el-Kebir in north-east Egypt, recounts his experiences in a letter to his parents:

"Things have been fairly quiet in the trenches and our chaps have been busy. The last few days have been "boska," real Australian days. I could almost imagine I was there, only for the explosions which disturb our thoughts now and again. ... Mail is still chopped about, so with 'Calls' etc., I have the latest, and up-to-date news. It is surprising how many Kogarah and district lads are in the battalion, there must be about a hundred now. We all like to read letters from some of the returned soldiers who write to the daily papers about experience at Gallipoli and the like. We often wonder whether it is their imagination or whether they are suffering under a delusion by their letters. Almost everyone is far fetched. The chaps who say least are the ones who know most. ... Things are different here, no bills to hide behind, "Fritz," can reach us with a shell anywhere he likes. It is full moon now, and it is daylight from 2.30 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. The light is too bright for work on the parapets and exposed positions. I don't know whether "Fritz" likes us being opposite him, but he gives us plenty of hints. Boards on their parapets with sarcastic messages on them. This morning ... they played 'Advance Australia Fair,' an invitation we could not accept just then. Rats still abound in large numbers. Our food is good roast beef and baked potatoes for dinner, scones for tea. It is always steak, a roast, or boiled meat, with mashed potatoes. We have tea three times a day, and bacon, bread and butter, also jam. Remember me to all friends." [12]



A boxing match during Anzac Day 1916 at Tel el Kebir camp, Egypt [15]

Lieutenant Albert Campling

Campling, killed during the Battle of the Somme in France on June 14, 1916 in France, is remembered with a eulogy before a memorial service at the Methodist Church in Kogarah for 5 local volunteers: The late Lieutenant Albert Campling was a fine type of Australian manhood. Born at Penrith, New South Wales, in 1874, he was still young when he took an earnest interest in the Cadet movement and rose therein to the position of Captain. He was a man of many virtues; his steadfastness and gentleness manifested themselves as a devoted teacher in the Methodist Sunday Schools at Erskineville, Tempe Park, and May-Street, for a period of nearly thirty years. His military bearing and soldierly disposition led him to serve in the South African War, and this true patriotic spirit was further tested when he relinquished a lucrative dental practice at Kogarah to join the Australian Forces as a First Lieutenant. Little did he think when giving the final kiss to his family on the 1st October last, that this great sacrifice would be the final result of his devotion to his country. He died an honourable death, faithful to his duty and a noble example to those that served under him. Resolute, resourceful, brave, and in the prime of his life, he gave all he possessed, wife, family, position, and a promising career, together with his life in the defence of his King and Country. Could any man show greater patriotism? Lieutenant Campling will be missed by many friends who loved him for his many sterling qualities. He leaves besides, a sorrowing wife and four children, viz., George, 18 years (having followed his father's footsteps, is now on his way to the front), Wilfred, aged 14 years, Nellie, 9, and Daisy, 4. Having served his country faithfully, as a loving father, a loyal citizen, and a brave soldier, may he be numbered amongst those who are privileged to hear the voice of the Master : "Well done, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." [13]

For King and Country – July 1916

By Barry Johnson

During World War One, the local newspaper, *The St George Call*, published photographs and brief biographies of local volunteers to the Australian Infantry Force when they departed for foreign battlefields. The portraits published in July 1916 were:



- A. Sergeant C.O. Harper, son of Alderman Harper, of Sans Souci. [16]
B. Harold Tuffy, son of Pat Tuffy, of the Kogarah-Sans Souci Tram Service. [17]
C. Private Joseph H. Lipman, son of P.J. Lipman, of "Devonshire", Park St, Kogarah. [18]
D, E. Drivers Donald and Kenneth McLeod, sons of A.J. McLeod, of Hampton Court Rd, Kogarah. [19]
F, G. Frank and Harry Breakspear, sons of Clarence Breakspear, of West Kogarah. [20]

In the Courts

By Barry Johnson

The Leader, the St George local newspaper published each Wednesday, records a summary of criminal offences either committed by local residents or occurring in the local area as they are judged in the Sutherland and Downing Centre Courts. Until December 2014, criminal and civil cases were also heard at the Kogarah Court House, now hosting sittings of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal. These reports typically note shoplifting, assault, motor vehicle offences, alcohol-related offences, drug sales and distribution and the occasional violent crime, including use of a firearm. In the St George Police Court during July 1916, alcohol-related, theft and assault offences were the most commonly reported matters in *The St George Call*:

- William Gillard, a soldier, fined 5p and 16/- and 5/-, 6/-, 1p/17/6, 5/- for indecent language, damage to Cronulla Hotel, drunkenness and costs.
- Florence Estella Gale, of Banksia, fined 3p for stealing a fur hat, valued at 12/6 from P.A. Dale, a draper, of Rockdale.
- James Russell, owner, and John Sylva, driver, fined 1p and 5/- and costs respectively for using a horse not free of sores.
- Joshua Moseley, of Peakhurst, pleaded guilty to taking a quantity of oysters from Lugarno Ferry. Fined 2p and costs. [21]

Over a Rope

“Robert J. Jones was charged with stealing a rope, the property of the Railway Commissioners.

Constable Hale stated that he saw accused with a piece of rope, which he said he had found on the road. William Francis identified the rope as railway property, and said he rove* it about 4.30pm and put it in a truck.

Robert Jones said he was a resident of Austral Street, Kogarah for twelve years. On Friday night he went home as usual. He got the last train and was over carried to Hurstville. He walked the sleepers to Carlton, and picked up the rope near the pumping station. He crossed the railway line with the rope.

The Bench gave accused the benefit of the doubt and mentioned that he had run very close to a felony.” [22]

* Rove – to thread or coil a rope. The verb originated in the late 18th century.

Lost in the Mail

“Frank Edward Thomas was charged with stealing letters and a postal parcel.

Detective W. J. Mitchell, Postal Officer, said he saw accused at a house in Arncliffe. He showed him four postal notes which had been signed and cashed, and accused denied having done so. He searched accused's room, but found no stolen property. This was not his room. He afterwards went to his proper room and under a mattress [sic] found eight letters — six of which had been opened. One letter contained a cheque for £10 and various others postal notes of various values. In a locked case in the room witness found thirty-seven postal notes of a gross value of £10/7/9. He found six handkerchiefs, knitted sox [sic], a soldier's mirror, and a plum pudding in a billy can. He also found other articles not connected with the present charge.

Elizabeth Adcock, of Wazier Street, Arncliffe, said on June 16 last, she sent a parcel to her son on active service. She posted the parcel at Arncliffe and identified the billy can and other articles.

Postmaster W. R. Guest said accused was employed as temporary mail assistant. He had access to all articles posted at the office.

Committed for trial. Bail £80. Two other charges were withdrawn.” [23]

A Night At The Pictures

By Barry Johnson

Kogarah Pictures

NOW ROOFED IN
DERBY STREET, KOGARAH

During the Winter Months (wet or fine) the Show will be open on each Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Monday, July 3

Eleventh Series of

ROMANCE - of - ELAINE

and the 4000ft. Equitable Feature

The Devil's Toy !!

Thursday, July 6

CIRCUS of DEATH

The Eighth Wonder of the World.
For One Night Only. And Come Early
Also ANZAC DAY IN LONDON

Saturday, July 8



Triangle Again - Aloha Oh -

A 5000ft. Feature, and 2500ft. of

Keystone brightlights

Each Night a Varied Programme in addition.

Popular Prices, 3d. and 6d.

Chairs One Shilling

St George hosts cinemas in Beverley Hills and Hurstville, featuring films from around the world, broadcast using visual and audio technology to create a three-dimensional experience. In 1916, moviegoers enjoyed the silver screen with silent films shipped from Hollywood to Derby St in Kogarah.

Highlights of the cinema in July 1916 included:

Romance of Elaine was a silent adventure film serial. Many silent films were considered to have little or no commercial value at the end of the silent film era in the late-1920s. As expensive vault space became limited, many were intentionally destroyed. Others were lost in fire as the film, composed of nitrate, was highly flammable and unstable to store for long periods in poor conditions, turning to ash.

The Devil's Toy was a silent horror film, adapted from the Faustian tale of a hero achieving great success after submitting to a pact with the devil. After committing murder, amongst other evil deeds, the protagonist's pursuit of true love results in dramatic twists and a tragic punishment.

The Circus of Death, an Italian silent film, was considered sensational for the exhilarating circus scenes, including a fire beneath the Big Top, rampaging monkeys and a female acrobat performing a death-defying climb to rescue a baby. The spectacle prompted local vaudeville acts with monkeys erroneously claimed to have featured in the film.

The Eighth Wonder of the World refers to the new technology of film tinting, allowing the addition of colour to previously black-and-white cinema.

Anzac Day in London was newsreel footage of the 1916 parade in London of Australian and New Zealand soldiers with cavalry horses and artillery.

Aloha Oh was an American silent film produced by Triangle Film Corporation. D.W. Griffith, the company's owner, was one of the most important influences in Hollywood film-making. *Aloha Oh* was

the romantic story of a lawyer escaping to a tropical island in the hopes of curing his alcohol and drug addiction. Enchanted by the island's princess, he falls in love but is soon urged by his family and colleagues to return home. He must now choose whether to remain in the tropical south sea paradise or return to the his former life.

Bright Lights was a "comedy of life in the metropolis", featuring stunts by Roscoe Arbuckle, one of Hollywood's most popular comedic actors before relationship scandals stalled his acting career. It was produced by Keystone Studios, a unit of the Triangle Film Corporation. [24]

St George Dragons – Never Before and Never Again

By Barry Johnson

Sixty years ago, the St George Dragons Rugby League Football Club began a streak of premierships victories, continuing for a record 11 years. The team of naturally gifted players, many named amongst rugby league's greatest, revolutionary strategies to dominate possession and improve fitness, an unlimited tackle count and a courageous response to injuries led our local rugby league team to repeatedly achieve the feat of a premiership victory, a challenge some rugby league clubs have yet to accomplish.

Who were some of the key people involved in the first victory in 1956?

- Tommy Ryan – winger and centre from Inverell, was the competition's leading try scorer in 1956, achieving the feat the following year to set a club record which stood until 2001.
- Norm Provan – second-row forward from Urana, NSW, playing in 10 of the 11 grand final wins, and as captain and coach in four. 'The Gladiators' trophy featuring Provan with Arthur Simmons after the 1963 Grand Final victory against South Sydney, still represents the game's highest values.
- Merv Lees – centre. Broke his collarbone during the grand final, forcing the team to play with one man down in an era without interchanges.
- Billy Wilson – forward with the nickname of 'captain blood', often playing with injury and occasionally inflicting injury prompting his send-off.
- Ken Kearney – hooker and captain. A dominating influence on the team in 1956 and an important factor in the offensive on-field strategy and off-field fitness regime to create a foundation for the incredible run.
- Frank Facer – a hooker playing in the club's 1949 grand final victory. As his playing career ended, he became the club's secretary from 1956 – 1977. He appointed Ken Kearney as coach and captain after the victory in 1956, dismissing the current coach, Norm Tipping. [25]



Back: Tommy Ryan, Bryan Orrock, Norm Provan, Merv Lees, Kevin O'Brien, Kevin Brown

Front: Bob Bugden, Billy Wilson, Peter Carroll, Ken Kearney (c), Doug Fleming, Ross Kite, Harry Melville.

Ball Boy: W. Green [26]

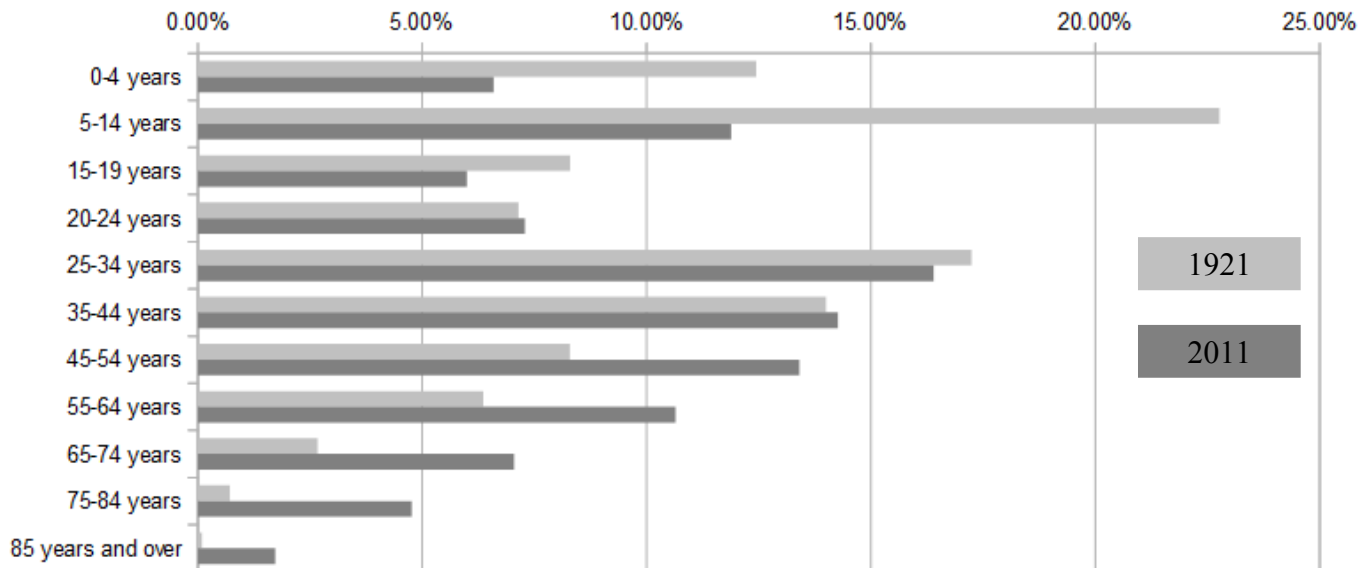
Census Snapshots

By Barry Johnson

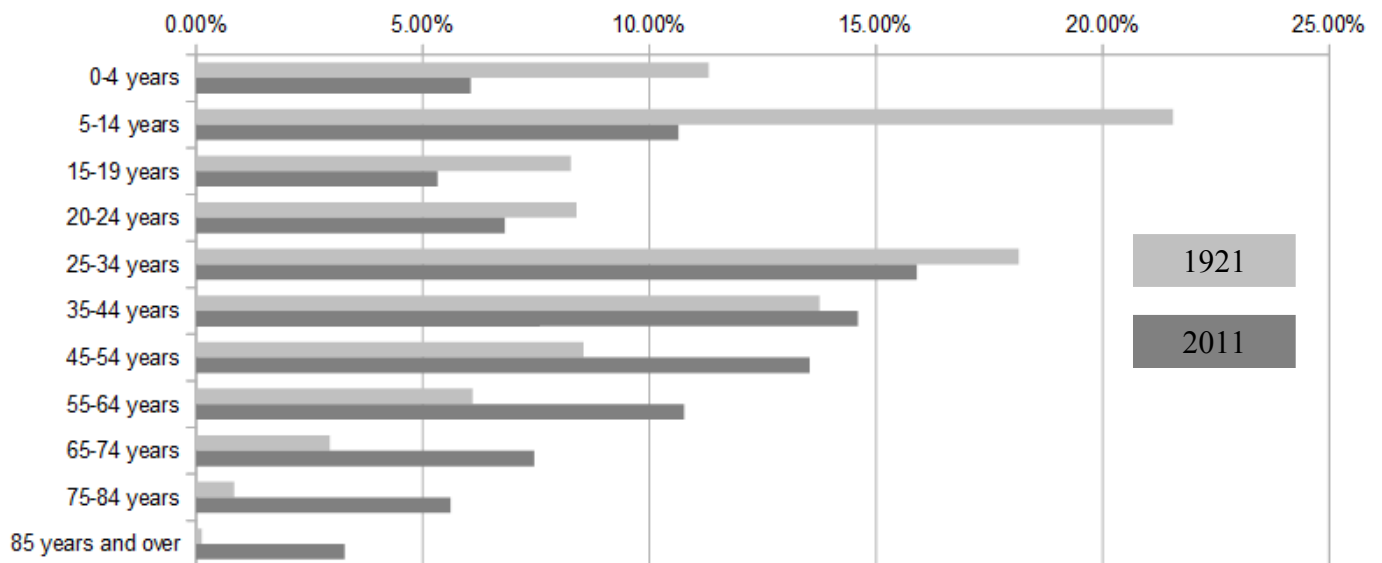
The Australian Census, the national compulsory collection of demographic data, is next scheduled for Tuesday, 9 August 2016. Since 1911, the census has provided a snapshot of Australia's suburbs, with information including age, gender, income, occupation, dwelling type and occupancy, transportation modes, ancestry, languages spoken and religious beliefs. In 1921, the census collected data from each municipality in the St George Area, which included the local government areas of Bexley, Hurstville, Kogarah and Rockdale. In 1948, the Bexley and Rockdale councils were merged to form the City of Rockdale. In the 2016 edition of the census, the Georges River Council will feature for the first time, formed with the merger of the Hurstville and Kogarah Councils on 12 May 2016.

These graphs provide a comparison of the age groups of the St George Area in 1921 and 2011. The most dramatic differences are in youngest and oldest age groups. [27, 28]

Men – 35,048 in 1921; 113,583 in 2011;



Women – 36,436 in 1921; 118,417 in 2011;



St George Satire

By Barry Johnson

The editorial cartoon, satirically commenting on community issues, has existed since the early 18th century. Our earliest examples are surprisingly familiar, resembling the present-day artistic styles and highlighting enduring concerns.

The Same Old Trouble



Mrs. Rockdale – "If you don't stop sending that dirty water along on to my property I'll apply for an injunction."

Mrs. Kogarah – "You can't make water run up hill."

The Chorus – "What about a Greater St George?" [29]

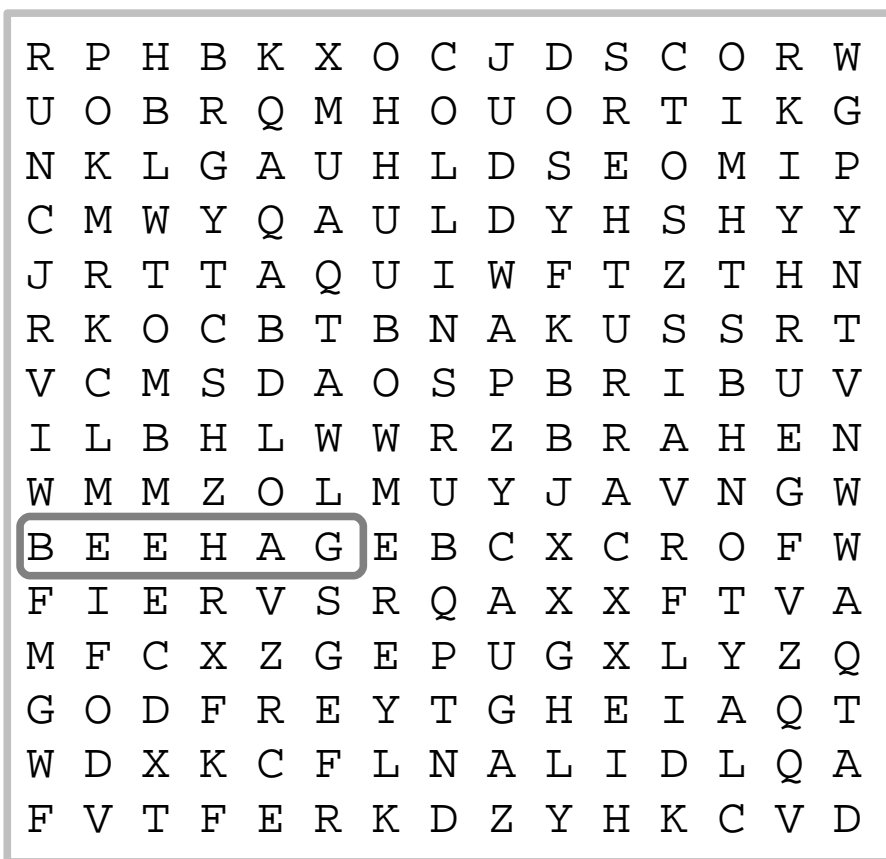
In The Public Eye



He's a hardy Scot., and he knows a lot
of the district called St George;
For it's many a year, since he landed
here – how many he won't disgorge;
For most of the time he's dealt in lime
in quality – best, of course;
Rocky Point Road is his abode – Auld
DAVIE CAIRNCROSS. [30]

Word Search Puzzle – Rockdale's 19th Century Mayors

By Barry Johnson



- ☒ BEEHAG – James Snr, a market gardener living in Kyle St, Arncliffe, served two terms as mayor.
- ☐ BOWMER – John, a market gardener. He received a box of poisonous black spiders from a disgruntled ratepayer. He lived in Bryant St, Rockdale.
- ☐ CARRUTHERS – Alfred George, a land agent who subdivided the land along Russell Ave, Dolls Point and lobbied for steam trams to travel through the St George area. The bank crash in 1893 resulted in his bankruptcy. He lived in Sandringham St, Sans Souci.
- ☐ CLAYTON – John Horatio, a solicitor, lived in Forest Rd, Arncliffe. Clayton was one of earliest advocates of the amalgamation of the Bexley and Rockdale Councils.
- ☐ COLLINS – James, a market gardener, built Bay and Sandringham Streets. He appointed the first Inspector of Nuisances in Rockdale and approved the public acquisition of Tempe House for public use. He lived in Illawarra St, then Hirst St, Arncliffe.
- ☐ GODFREY – Elias, a stonemason and builder, lived in West Botany St, Rockdale.
- ☐ GODFREY – Edwin, Elias' son, owned a bone mill where abandoned domestic pets throughout NSW were boiled to recycle the animal fat. A Royal Commission judged the mill to be “abominable”. Godfrey St, Banksia was named in recognition of his local road building.
- ☐ JUDD – George, served 2 terms as mayor. A storekeeper and brickmaker, he lived in Wollongong Rd, Arncliffe. He presided over the opening of the first Rockdale Town Hall.
- ☐ TAYLOR – William, a produce merchant, he became mayor at only 30-years-old. He lived on the corner of Herbert St and Forest Rd, Bexley.
- ☐ YATES – William, a pig and poultry farmer living in Arncliffe St, Arncliffe was West Botany's (later Rockdale) first mayor, serving from 1871 – 1872. [31]

Questions for the Reader

- Have you met Christina Stead, discovering a new insight into her novels?
- Have you met any of the people or organisations highlighted in the Anniversaries section on page 6? Perhaps you knew members of the St George Rifle Club or you've listened to James Meagher's radio broadcasts.
- Do you still have a library card or book from the first Rockdale library on Bryant St?
- What are your memories of the former library's collection?
- What are your childhood memories of public transport?
- Trams have left our streets but light rail has returned to CBD and South East Sydney. Would you like light rail to service St George?
- Photograph D on page 8 contains an advertisement for Kinkara Tea and Mother's Choice Flour. Did your family use these products? Did the flour packaging contain a recipe?
- Albert Offord reflects on a 19th century battle while serving in Egypt. Have you visited the sites in Egypt where the Australian soldiers have served? Have you noticed similar remnants of history's wars?
- Did your family know of the people involved in the court cases on page 12? Did they agree with the final verdicts?
- Have you experienced any silent film broadcast during special events at local cinemas?
- Have you met any of the players in the 1956 Dragons squad? How did they describe the premiership victory?
- Do you remember the local reaction to the dismissal of Norm Tipping after the team had won the grand final? Did locals believe the change was justified?
- What are your earliest memories of the census?
- Have you kept newspaper clippings of amusing or clever editorial cartoons?
- Do you know what issue prompted an irate resident to deliver poisonous spiders to Mayor John Bowmer?

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