

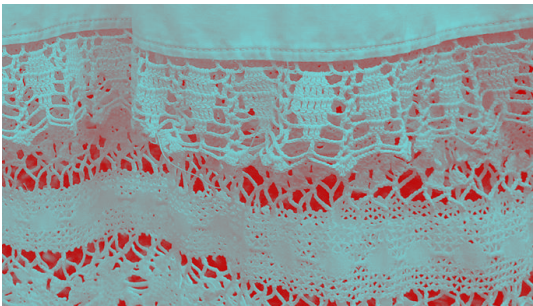
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## ST GEORGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER | JULY 2023



### WELCOME

It's been an odd few years, hasn't it? Covid has changed our way of life considerably and the Society certainly took a hit with a membership drop. For this reason, we are even more grateful to those members that have continued to support us & to those who have lately joined up or offered donations. The cost to be a member is a relatively small one but every contribution makes a big difference to our ability to continue. We are excited about the next few years and, once we finally have an agreement in place with Council for Lydham Hall, the Society can focus on what it does best - research, collect and preserve local history and present this to the people of the St George area.

*The Editorial Team.*



### WHAT'S ON

#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**15 July 2023** | 2pm to 4pm | Rockdale Library, Level 3.

We know this isn't your favourite 'talk' of the year but it is an important part of our operations. This year we will be calling for Executive nominations for all positions as well as general membership. After the meeting we will have afternoon tea and 2 short historical films.

We hope to see as many members as possible at the AGM.

Note that the AGM is only open to financial members. We hope to see everyone else for next month's talk!

[VOLUNTEER AT LYDHAM HALL](#)

[SEE WHAT ELSE IS ON](#)

## **PRESIDENTS REPORT 2022/2023 by Wesley Fairhall**

This report is being written on the cusp of what I trust will be the renaissance of the St. George Historical Society Inc. Members are doubtlessly aware of the seemingly unending delays, numerous meetings with Bayside Council and remaining members of the former Lydham Hall Management Committee. What a tiring and often exasperating 24+ months! But there is light at the end of the tunnel, as we will soon have keys to Lydham Hall!!! Keys of course facilitate access to our treasured collection and access will necessarily involve a great deal of work with cleaning, other interior maintenance, reinstating the collection and much overdue cataloguing. It will be very much a case of 'all hands on deck'!

Whilst members of the Executive have all played their part, Tina Workman has shouldered (often single handed), the great bulk of the correspondence, logistical organisation and spearheaded negotiations with Council and other stake holders. Aside from commencing the daunting task of resurrecting the Society's collection, Tina has to date successfully obtained grants for much required infrastructure updates – chairs, computer, desk, filing cabinets and much more! Tina will also be preparing a schedule of tasks and a corresponding roster for members to help as often as is practicable. The Society is indeed indebted to Tina for going 'above and beyond the call of duty'. Mention should also be made of the rebirthed newsletter, a joint initiative with Laurice following the cessation of Council funding. This 'slimmed down' publication is designed to find a balance between historical information and the happenings of the Society. Thank you Tina!

In our largely 'living with COVID reality', the Society has been able to meet unencumbered by plague or other malaise. Our dedicated Secretary Laurice, aside from recording the minutes of meetings with great attention to detail, has also secured a varied and interesting range of speakers, a number of whom were noteworthy winners, finalists or commendable entrants in recent Ron Rathbone Annual History Prize competitions. The logistics of sourcing speakers is not easy and can be quite time consuming. Laurice has also worked hard with keeping members in the 'communications loop', which as noted earlier, includes contributing to the newsletter. The personal experiences of Elaine Phillips and Diane McCarthy also assisted in the format of the revamped on-line newsletter.

Laurice also replies to and assists with enquiries concerning the local area from members of the public, a recent case in point, being the letter from a Mr. Paul Street concerning a plaque to the late Sydney Owen. Who can forget Laurice's expert handling of necessary Constitution changes (with feedback from other Executive members and Janette Pelosi) at the last AGM! Thanks also to Laurice for providing the bulk of the afternoon teas members and guests readily enjoy at each meeting.

Our Treasurer, Barry Johnston has quietly maintained the Society on an even financial keel. He has initiated on-line banking and works hard to find productivity improvements and economies; every cent saved helps! Barry has also considerably

improved the Society's website, as well as the Facebook page, and the addition of past newsletters makes for a great community resource.

Anne Field and Robert McGarn have also played their parts in providing wise counsel and constructive feedback as regards the negotiations with Council and other stakeholders. Thank you Anne and Robert, the latter of whom should also be acknowledged for his dedicated undertaking of the role of Public Officer.

Finally, thank you to all members who contribute ideas, provide feedback, supplement the food at the Society's afternoon teas, offer words of encouragement and attend our meetings. Without your commitment, there would be not be a St. George Historical Society! Please keep on keeping on.

One sad event which I would be remiss in not acknowledging, was the recent passing of Beverley Scott. Bev was a faithful member and a tireless worker at many a Lydham Hall event. She was never shy in contributing a helping hand or expressing a point of view. To Fred and family, we extend our corporate condolences on the loss of a much loved and esteemed wife, mother and grandmother. Bev will truly be missed.

So what of the 2023-24 Financial year? Our July meeting will of course be the Society's AGM. This is an opportunity for all members to contribute to the continued operation of the Society. Laurice has published a list of the Executive roles for your consideration. Please do not feel shy at 'stepping-up'. No roles are sacrosanct or the sole domain of any one individual. Please feel free to enquire prior to the AGM if you are interested in a particular role, or even consider joining the committee.

The Executive is mindful of the need to reengage with the wider community. To this end, the Society gifted a pack of our late member Gifford Eardley's local history books to Campbelltown City Library for an exhibition on his art in their local area. Further book donations were made to Bexley Public and St. Mary and St. Mina Coptic Orthodox schools. In the future, some of this interaction will be via exhibitions and other events at Lydham Hall. However, there will be other opportunities such as walking tours and possibly other excursions to visit an historic precinct, building or area of scenic charm. Your ideas for outings would be welcome; feel free to contact Laurice or myself with suggestions. Similarly, if you have an idea or a burning desire for a themed exhibition in Lydham Hall or for an event of a different nature in this building or its grounds, please have a chat with Tina. Perhaps you have skills in arts or crafts, or know of others who have? Together we can truly make for a ground breaking year ahead.

I sincerely wish all members good health and look forward to meeting with as many of you as possible at the July 2023 A.G.M. Thank you for all of your help and well wishes.

Take care,

***Wesley Fairhall***

President, St. George Historical Society Inc.



*Thank you for being a part of the St George Historical Society and we hope you've enjoyed being a member. Being a Society member is the best way support us to:*

Lobby for historic preservation of local area

Maintain our collection at Lydham Hall

Undertake research for members

Help the community with local history questions

Publish histories of the St. George area

Host talks and walks for members and locals

Facilitate society meetings and gatherings

Support our volunteers

## RENEWAL FOR 2023-2024

Your SGHS membership is expiring soon, but we hope you'll join us again as we have exciting plans that we hope you'll be a part of.

To continue supporting us, please renew your membership today.

**\$15** for singles or **\$20** for households.

Deposit your membership to the SGHS bank account. Include your name in the payment description:

Bank: Commonwealth Bank

Account name: St George Historical Society Inc.

BSB: 062 119

Account No: 0090 3599

Or you can pay our Treasurer in person by coming along to our next meeting.

## LYDHAM HALL HISTORIC HOUSE AND MUSEUM | UPDATE

*The good news is that we finally have a Licence Agreement that all parties (the St George Historical Society and Bayside Council) are happy with. The bad news is that we still are waiting on handover.*

On 21 June 2023, the St George Historical Society signed the Licence Agreement with Bayside Council giving the Society operational access to the museum for the next 5 years, with a commencing date of the 01 July 2023. The negotiations have been complex and lengthy and we are thankful that Bayside Council has been understanding of our needs and have structured the Agreement to reflect the challenges the Society faces in the management of the museum. In return, the Society will do everything possible

professionally and profitably.

Unfortunately, before Council had a chance to countersign the Licence Agreement, an Emergency Notice of Motion was raised by Councillors at the Council meeting on the 28 June 2023 that urged Council against signing the Agreement.

The argument presented in the Notice of Motion suggests that further discussions and meetings need to take place regarding the responsibilities and obligations of both

to ensure that the museum is run

the St George Historical Society and



the Lydham Hall Advisory Committee. We were unaware that this motion was to be presented and are extremely disappointed to have yet another delay, particularly after the considerable amount of productive discussion that has taken place between Bayside Council staff and the St George Historical Society to finalise the Agreement over the course of the year.

From the Society's point of view, we believe we have a very clear understanding of our obligations and responsibilities in relation to Lydham Hall. The Licence Agreement is

is very specific and any ambiguities as regards responsibilities and obligations have been resolved. We also believe the role and responsibility of the Lydham Hall Advisory Committee has been clearly presented and all has been patiently explained to all parties by Bayside Staff at various meetings and through correspondence over the course of the last year.

The Emergency Notice of Motion is copied below for information to members. A more detailed update will be provided by the President at the Annual General Meeting.

#### ***12.6 Notice of Motion - St George Historical Society and Lydham Hall***

*Minute No. 2023/121 - Resolved on the motion of **Councillors Barlow and Saravinovski***

*That Council does not sign the lease with St George Historical Society for Lydham Hall until:*

- Agreement is reached about the procedures and authorisation required to develop and agree any works to be undertaken or functional changes to be made at Lydham Hall and that the role of the Lydham Hall Working Group be clearly described in that process.*
- There is clear and documented agreement about the Council's responsibilities for Lydham Hall, including but not limited to, a definition of what is building and garden maintenance, and what constitutes structural and major works. The obligations and operational responsibilities of the St George Historical Society should also be clearly described, eliminating any*



*future confusion.*

- *That a progress report be brought back to Council after the Working Party have met to discuss the issues above.*



### *Historic House Review*

## **TARELLA, WENTWORTH FALLS**

This column is the start of a series on the various historic houses open to the public in NSW and beyond.

Tarella is a quaint 1890's timber cottage in the Blue Mountains managed by the Blue Mountains Historical Society. It is open on the last Sunday of every month from 10am-3pm. More images of the house and garden below.

[For more information, click here](#)



*The approach to the house*



*Volunteers in front of the admin building*





*The kitchen with it's lovely kitchen garden*



*The fire inside where they make scones!*

*Carefully selected and displayed bedrooms*



*Simple and clean interiors*

*Impressive research centre*

*A library open to all*

*The visit ends with afternoon tea*

*Delicious!*

COMMITTEE

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LOCAL HISTORY IMAGES

## **St George Historical Society Incorporated**

PO Box A89 Arncliffe NSW 2205

[www.stgeorgehistsoc.org.au](http://www.stgeorgehistsoc.org.au)

*One of the benefits of becoming a member of the St George Historical Society is receiving information about the Society & the local area. If you do not want to receive this newsletter, please unsubscribe below.*

*Note that once you unsubscribe, we will be unable to add you to our mailing list for newsletters in future.*

[I want to unsubscribe](#)

