



Peninsula Historian

Newsletter of the Manly, Warringah &
Pittwater Historical Society Inc.

VOLUME 10 No. 3

April 2017

ISSN 1835-7628

FROM THE EDITOR

With great foresight, or perhaps just plain common sense, the founders of our Society defined its area of activity and interest as the entire northern beaches and its immediate hinterland. To emphasise this they named it the Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Historical Society (note the comma between Manly and Warringah).

With the recent amalgamation of the three Peninsula councils we find that those founders were some 93 years ahead of the pace. This is potentially fortuitous for the new Council, with its emphasis on melding the three local government areas and building a common sense of community and place. Because, for a period of some 50 years, prior to the formation of the Local Studies sections in the library services of each of these councils, the Society had been actively recording the history of the Northern Beaches and collecting and storing relevant photographs, artefacts and news clippings.

Our archive is extensive - well over 7,000 items. Although part of it is catalogued, the catalogue is not complete. To correct this, the Society intends to apply for one of the upcoming Stronger Communities Fund grants. These grants are awarded by the Northern Beaches Council out

of a pool of money set aside by the State Government to assist amalgamations. We will be proposing to get professional help to assist us to update and complete the catalogue and to ensure that it is in an electronic format compatible with the one that will be used by the amalgamated library services. As part of the project we will also commence digitising our early photos

Successful completion of this project will allow our archival material to be accessed by all residents of the Northern Beaches, including schools and their students, hopefully lifting the profile of the Society - particularly amongst younger people - while contributing to a stronger sense of local community.

Returning to the present, thanks to Keith Amos for his words of remembrance for Shelagh Champion and to Beth Robertson for an interesting cameo on one of the perhaps lesser-known graves at Frenchs Forest with a military connection, to coincide with upcoming Anzac Day. There is also a little more on the author Ruth Park's short sojourn at Collaroy in the 1940s and a piece on the Salvation Army at Dee Why.

Richard Michell

DIARY and REMINDER

Monthly meeting at the Curl Curl Community Centre, cnr. Griffin and Abbott Roads

8 April, 2017 2.00 pm

Local Author talk

Pam Bayfield is a local resident and member of our Society. She is also a self published author who has written 12 books over the past 15 years. The three most recent have been historical novels with a local setting. Pam will talk about both her writing and her research.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to all those members who have renewed (which is most of you!). This is the final general reminder to stragglers. Details are on the last page.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We are still in the doldrums. Although several new paths are being explored, we have not yet found El Dorado. As usual, or so I personally feel, our major hurdle is simply lack of a home, a permanent place where we can meet, store archives, open our own library, etc.

One new path, still more a pipe dream than anything else, is to address a concept of what might be called co-ownership. This concept does not in any way relinquish our major ownership, but allows us to collaborate with other bodies – say the Aboriginal community; an already existing comprehensive technical 'museum'; even explore some sort of partnership with the local U3A. It has been suggested that Facebook might be the way to go. I do not rule that out completely, but personally feel that it is better to tread carefully there so far – if for no other reason that by doing so we say good-bye to many current members who are not computer-literate but have been faithful to us for sometimes a long time.

Phil Colman

NEWS AND VIEWS

NEXT MEETING, 8 APRIL

Author talk with local history connections

Pam Bayfield is a member of the Society and a writer who has written 12 books over the past 15 years. The last three have been historical novels set in old Sydney Town and Manly, forcing Pam to (willingly) do a lot of research into the era they are set in.

The first book in the trilogy was called *For the Love of Grace*, the second one was *For the Love of Grace, the Sequel* and the third is *For the Love of Grace, the next Generation*. This covers the First World War, the 1920s, the 1930s and up to the Second World War. It will be launched at the War Vets Collaroy Plateau on 6th April.

Just two days later, on Saturday 8th April, Pam will be talking about her writing, and especially these three novels. Our own Jim Boyce gave Pam some help with her research for the first book and she certainly caught the local history bug.

Pam has been the the President of the NSW Society of Women Writers. She is an excellent speaker so please come along for what will be another interesting talk.

Vale Shelagh Champion

Our esteemed Society Fellow, Shelagh Champion OAM, died on 22 February last, aged 84, after a brief illness.

Beginning with their first publication, *Forest History* (1961), Shelagh and her husband, George, always insisted on making original, primary sources the main basis of their work. Their skills were remarkably complementary, Shelagh having been a Mitchell librarian and George, a school headmaster.

George and Shelagh joined our historical society in 1975, serving respectively as president and secretary in the years 1989-1991. Together, they went on to co-author numerous books, monographs, essays and articles, consistently providing accurate, detailed and reliable accounts and/or revisions of our local history.

Their most important publications: *Manly, Warringah and Pittwater 1788-1880* (2 volumes, 1997 and 1998) and *Bathing, Drowning and Life-Saving, Warringah and Pittwater to 1915* (2000) became standard references for any students of this history. As well, Shelagh and George have long been our 'go to experts' for any researcher seeking assistance - always generously given whenever they could.

All who knew Shelagh would agree that she was an exceptional person: gracious, highly principled and an excellent historian. From her close working partnership for over 50 years with George, Shelagh's tremendously dedicated contribution to Manly Warringah and Pittwater's local history will always provide the main foundation for anyone following in their wake.

Keith Amos



Shelagh Champion with her husband
and co-researcher George

MONTHLY MEETING REPORT, Saturday 11 March, 2017

I'm a biologist. Everything I see has a story, and the pathway towards an understanding of the story of that organism can take another unexpected path, often to give an answer quite different to that expected.

Geoff Lambert is an historian (neuroscientist really, but) and has been involved in recording, protecting and researching North Head (so close to European Australia's birthplace but so unknown to so many). His research is, like my biology,

turning up all sorts of interesting things, at times totally unexpected. Geoff is part of the North Head Sanctuary Foundation, a community body but considered as an equal to the other seven official bodies such as the Sydney Harbour Trust, the NPWS, etc. who together administer North Head. Together they hold thousands of pages of data on all things 'N.H.', but there is still a lot to learn. Geoff talked of seven puzzles which he and his team have been researching for a long time. Everything from the missing holotype of *Antechinus stuartii* Macleay, first found and described from North head (Spring Cove, in 1837), OR the obelisk, dated from 1809 – or was it 1855, or perhaps 1837, and who erected it and why? OR the skeleton (with Japanese typewriter?) OR a strange gun? emplacement. He (and I) recommend a trip to North head (make it more than once as one day is not enough) to get some idea of what is up there, or better still join the North Head Sanctuary Foundation.

Phil Colman

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Thank you to all those who have renewed their membership. If you are not as yet in that category we would encourage you to use the form at the end of the newsletter.



POT POURRI

Ruth Park at Collaroy

Last issue I mentioned that my wife, Fran, was reading the second volume of the autobiography of the New Zealand-born but Australian-domiciled author of adult and children's books, Ruth Park, and that it revealed that she lived, in 1944/45, with her husband D'Arcy Niland and their young first child, in a very run down beach house at Collaroy, on the thin strip of sand that lies between Pittwater Road and the ocean. Readers may recall that in the October 2016 issue of the Historian, as a follow on to Phil



Collaroy/Narrabeen Beach, June 1945
(Sydney Morning Auditor)

Colman's article on a war time emergency landing of an Ansett Airways Lockheed Electra on Narrabeen Beach, I stated that the pilot had been fortunate that he had a wide beach available for, just nine months later, a huge storm washed away a great deal of the sand from Collaroy to Narrabeen, eroding well into the dune area, undermining and destroying many houses. I included a photo from the June 1945 edition of the Sydney Morning Auditor which is reproduced here. Well, by coincidence, the period that Ruth Park was in residence at Collaroy coincided with that storm event. The house they were renting was one of the those undermined and she gives a first hand account of the terror as the seas struck during the night.

That Collaroy sojourn also gets a run in her novel *Harp of the South* (1948) about the Darcy family. Phil Colman mentioned it in an article in our September 2016 issue. He was particularly struck by a drawing from the

illustrated version of the novel that was serialised in the Sydney Morning Herald, showing the honeymooning couple running over the sand dunes at Narrabeen (next page). They were staying in a "tiny, square, pink cottage" on the beach front there.

From her autobiography we learn that the real couple did not honeymoon at Narrabeen (they could not afford one anywhere). However, as in the novel, they did move into a house at Surrey Hills shortly after they were married. From there they moved, in 1944, to Collaroy, not to a cute pink cottage but to a share of a drafty, leaky weekender shack at Collaroy which they called "Wits' End". They moved out a little under a year later when the residence was essentially destroyed in the June 1945 storm, the waves breaking onto the roof and smashing through the rear wall while they were in bed. Perhaps Ruth Stark saw the cute cottage further along the beach and imagined staying there. If so, then there are two cottages to track down, not one.



Running down the Narrabeen sand dunes (ex *Harp of the South*)

Cemetery Tour

If this piece has whetted your appetite, Beth is running an 'Anzacs in the Forest' tour of the cemetery on Friday 21st April at 9.30am. It is part of Heritage Week organised by the National Trust of NSW. Details can be obtained online.

Anzac Heroes in the Forest

George Hampton

After surviving both world wars serving for Australia, George Hampton died tragically in a quarry in Belrose in 1946. There was a 'fall of earth and stones' after a dynamite explosion 30 feet down in an open cut mine owned by George Turvey on Pymble Road [now Forest Way].

At that time George, a poultry farmer, lived with Margaret Hall in Glen Street, Belrose. Margaret cared for his children from a previous marriage and their own two children. When she appealed to the court for compensation after the accident, it questioned the right for 'illegitimate' children to receive compensation.

In WW1 George had served on the Western Front and was wounded twice, first in October 1916, receiving a bruised abdomen after a bomb blast in the **Battle of Broodseinde Ridge**, which was part of the Ypres offensive.

George's second injury was a gun shot wound to his right axilla (armpit) in May 1918 when the German Army launched its last great offensive. George's battalion was part of the force deployed to defend the approaches to Amiens around Villers-Bretonneux.

To intensify the discomfort of his injuries, he was admitted twice to the military hospital for pleurisy and rabies. Further agitation occurred when he lost two days' pay for an absence without permission of only 1.5 hours!

Not disquieted by his WW1 experiences, George volunteered in 1942 for WW2 serving in a Garrison Battalion in Darwin, being discharged in 1944, only two years before he died.

George Hampton is buried in the **Frenchs Forest Bushland Cemetery** next to his mother Mary Anne Pound. Her second husband, a poultry farmer and orchardist, sadly ended his life under a citrus tree on the present site of the cemetery. Pound Avenue, adjacent to the cemetery, is named after this important local family.

References include: National Archives of Australia, Australian War Memorial, Trove newspapers, Ancestry.com.au, BDM of NSW, NSW Archives, Ryerson, Auscem.com.au, World War 2 index, and oral history of Pound family.

ARTICLE

Howard Avenue Dee Why

Howard Avenue in Dee Why was in the news last year when plans by Warringah Council to remove all of the trees on its northern side, to facilitate construction of a bike path, became widely known. The current Administrator has put a temporary stop to this, leaving the decision to the new Council once it is elected in September.

Unrelated to that notoriety, Howard Avenue's name perhaps also stands out in the sense that it is not based on a geographic feature, in the way that its adjacent parallel colleagues, which received their names at the same time, are - namely Dee Why Parade, Oaks Avenue and Pacific Parade.

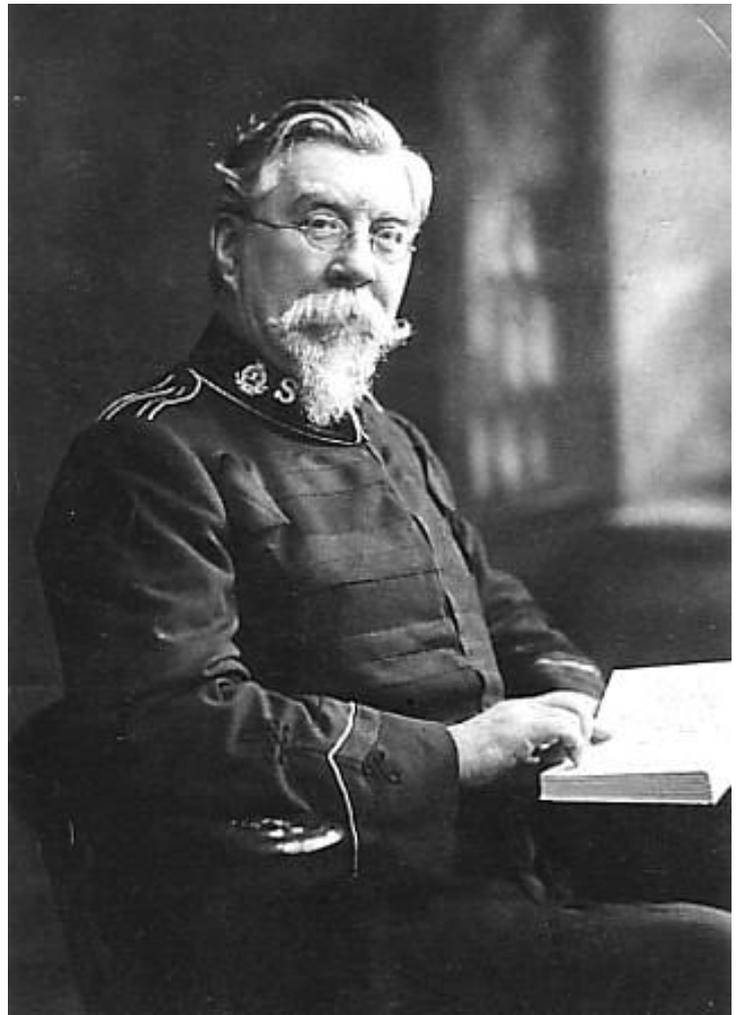
All of the names came in 1911 with the subdivision, into residential lots, of the land bounded by Dee Why Parade to the north, Pacific Parade to the south, the ocean to the east and Pittwater Road to the west. The owners were the Salvation Army and the trigger for the move from farming to real estate was the imminent coming of the tram line to Dee Why and hence easier travel to Manly and, via the ferry, to Sydney.

Thomas Henry Howard joined the Salvation Army in England in 1881. He was 32 years old and a builder by trade.

At the time that he joined it, the Army was only half his age. It had its beginnings in 1865 when William Booth, a Methodist preacher, commenced work in the east end of London. He quickly established a small organisation which he called the Christian Revival Society, soon changed to the East London Christian Mission as it began offering basic schooling, reading rooms, penny banks, soup kitchens and relief aid to the destitute.

The ministry spread to places outside London and grew rapidly, becoming known simply as the Christian Mission, with William Booth as its General-Superintendent. In 1878, prompted by a reference to its members as a "Volunteer Army", Booth changed the name, for the last time, to the Salvation Army. By 1880 its members were wearing a uniform and Booth's title had changed to General. This was the organisation that Howard joined in 1881.

Meanwhile, in far away South Australia, a couple of members of the earlier Christian Mission, who had migrated to Adelaide, held a street meeting in the Botanical Gardens, inviting anyone who had not had a decent meal that day to "come home to tea". As had been the case in London, growth was fast and there was an appeal to the UK to send out an Officer. Captain and Mrs. Thomas Sutherland arrived in February 1881, wearing the first Salvation Army uniforms seen in Australia. They brought with them 12 more uniforms and were met by 68 converts to the mission. From South



Thomas Henry Howard later
in his career

Australia the Army spread to NSW and Victoria in 1882, Tasmania 1883, Queensland 1885 and Western Australia in 1891.

The rate of spread and growth was such that in 1894 the Army's founder and commanding officer William Booth despatched his son Ballington to the Colonies to review the organisation. He was accompanied by the now-Major TH Howard and, when he returned to London in 1886, Ballington Booth left Howard in charge, with the title of Commander of The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory. Howard stayed for a further three years before returning to the UK.

I do not know whether Howard was directly involved but, during the period he was in the Colonies, the Army had some activity on the Northern Beaches. They obviously left a very good impression on Elizabeth Jenkins, the 70 year old spinster daughter of James Jenkins, who was living alone in the Jenkin's family homestead at Collaroy. She owned, through inheritance from her father, all of the coastal strip from today's Pacific Parade to approximately the position of today's Mona Vale Hospital, north of the mouth of Narrabeen Lagoon.

In 1891 she gave a little over 40 acres of her land at Dee Why to the Salvation Army, plus a donation of 400 pounds to allow them to build a 'Home of Rest' on it. Its purpose was to give Army Officers a place to take a break, to recuperate from their ministering activities. She went on to bequeath all of her remaining landholdings (about 1,740 acres) to the Army in return for an annuity for the rest of her life and a guarantee that they would look after her as she aged. She died in 1900 in her 84th year.

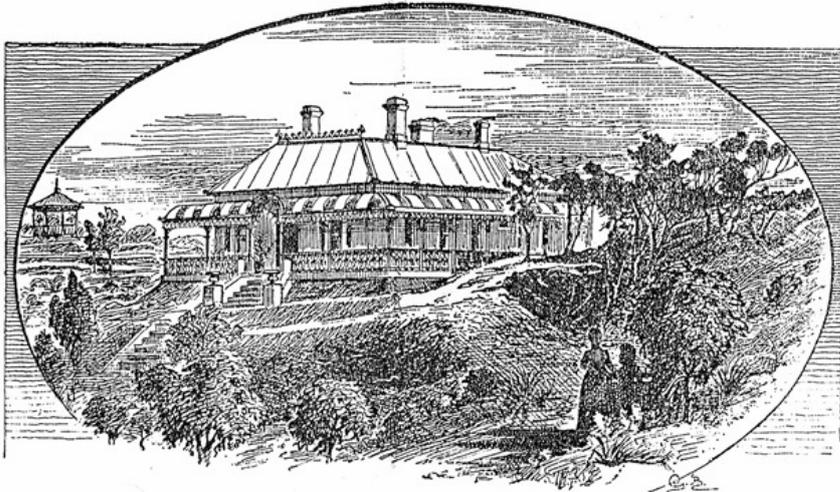
It was most of the original 40 acre gift that the Army subdivided in 1912. Howard Avenue was named in perhaps grateful honour of the man who had been in charge of the very embryonic organisation when the first contact with Elizabeth Jenkins - who was to become its great benefactress - was made.

As for Thomas Henry Howard himself, back in England he rose to the position of Second Chief of Staff, which he held until his retirement in 1919. In 1920 he was awarded the Army's highest honour, the Order of the Founder, and he died in 1923, just a few days short of his 74th birthday.

Richard Michell

Post Script:

In the last 12 months the Salvation Army has sold all of its remaining land at Dee Why, including the original 'Home of Rest' that sits on it. The collective group of buildings involved is known as 'Pacific Lodge'. The site will be redeveloped for residential units and will no longer have a social function. However there is a State heritage order on the Home of Rest and it will have to be retained and used/managed in an appropriate way.



Sketch of the 'Home of Rest' early in the 20th Century
(ex Salvation Army *War Cry*)



The 'Home of Rest' c. 1990
(ex Salvation Army *War Cry*)



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**Membership for 2017
is now due**

Manly Warringah & Pittwater Historical Society Inc.

Membership Application Form - 2017

Title: Dr/Mr/Mrs/Ms (please circle)

Name:

Age group (please tick): 10 – 18 19 – 50 51 – 70 71 – 85 86 – 95

[Note: this information is required for insurance purposes; if two persons included in this application fall into different age bands please tick both boxes]

Address:

State

Postcode

Phone: (Home)

(Bus.)

(Mobile)

E-mail:

Signature:

Date:

MEMBERSHIP FEES	\$20 Single	\$25 Household (2 persons) or Organisation
SUBSCRIPTION:	\$.....	including emailed copy of the Peninsula Historian
	\$12.00.....	If you require Peninsula Historian by post.
DONATION:	\$.....	
TOTAL:	<u>\$.....</u>	Do you require a receipt? Yes/No

PAYMENT METHODS

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Please make payable to 'MWP Historical Society Inc' and mail with the completed Renewal Form to:

**The Treasurer
Manly Warringah & Pittwater Historical Society Inc
PO Box 695
MANLY, NSW 1655**

[DO NOT MAIL CASH. If paying in person place cash, cheque or money order in an envelope together with the completed Renewal Form]

- **By Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)**

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BSB Number:	062-197
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