



# Peninsula Historian

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

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## FROM THE EDITOR

Back to more usual fare this issue after our excursion into natural history. The visit to the Sydney Bus Museum brought home to me very strongly that unfortunately, in a magazine, you cannot generate some of the responses that being physically-present with an historical object can produce. An example was given by the Atlantean double decker buses. I travelled on them quite regularly in their hey day and my recollection of their shape and layout proved to be accurate.

But stepping in through the door, seeing the driver layout with the facility to issue tickets (no conductors), proceeding upstairs and feeling the two step treads that are located about half way up move under my feet (they counted the number of people going up and down, the difference giving the number upstairs and hence when capacity had been reached), brought long-forgotten memories and feelings flooding back. No magazine article, picture or

video can match the actual physical experience. Then riding in one on the city roads was the final consummation of a journey back in time.

After that perhaps slightly pessimistic digression, I trust that you will still enjoy this issue!

*Richard Michell*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

A busy month. A great turn out at our monthly meeting, an enjoyable outing to the Sydney Bus Museum and many enquiries on local history matters. Not to mention some new Members. Welcome.

As reported last month, we have had a bumper response to our Member Survey - a total of 43 responders from a membership of about 130 is wonderful. Thank you to everyone who took the time.

To avoid overwhelming any one issue of the *Historian*, I will spread the summary of the responses out a little. On Page 4 you will find your thoughts on the frequency of meetings, the preferred meeting venue and the interest in activities of various kinds. The other matters surveyed will be summarised next issue.

Speaking of activities, the big one is coming up, our Christmas function. Please come along if you possibly can. Full details are in the Diary and on Page 3. For those who do not drive we will arrange a car pool from Dee Why to the venue. It should be a great night but please RSVP by 15 November.

You will also note from the Diary that there will not be a December meeting. Monthly meetings will resume in the new year. However there will be an *Historian* in December, covering both December and January.

Finally, thank you to those Members who have contacted me to express an interest in helping with the management of our archives. If you would like to help please contact me as per the email address on Page 7.

*Richard Michell*

## DIARY

### Meeting at the Curl Curl Community Centre, cnr. Griffin and Abbott Roads

11 November, 2017                      2.00 pm

The Palm Beach Bible Garden

Susie Holman from the Friends of the Palm Beach Bible Garden will talk on its history. If there is sufficient interest, we will arrange a visit at a subsequent time.

### Function at North Curl Curl Surf Club, off Huston Parade

23 November, 2017                      6.00 - 9.00 pm

Christmas party. Come along for refreshments, finger food, Christmas cake and a good chat. See details on p.3. Please RSVP no later than 15 November.

December, 2017

No meeting. Resume in new year (date to be advised)

**NEWS AND VIEWS**

NEXT MEETING, Saturday 11 November, 2017

Our speaker will be Susie Holman from the Friends of the Palm Beach Bible Garden. She will talk on the history of the gardens and its creator, plus the challenges of protecting and maintaining it. If there is an interest, we will arrange a visit early in the new year.



Bible Garden, Palm Beach

MONTHLY MEETING REPORT, Saturday 9 September, 2017

A great turnout heard Past President Jim Boyce introduce Jennifer Hill from Architectural Projects P/L. Jennifer is an expert in Art Deco architecture and also in built-form heritage research and protection, including the involvement of local historical societies. She spoke from her first hand experience on a number of important Manly-related matters including the renovation of *Dungowan*, a block of flats on South Steyne, the history of the built form of Manly Wharf and its renovation, the Steyne and New Brighton Hotels and the protection of the streetscape aesthetics of the Pittwater Road approach to Manly. Her talk was followed by a lively question and answer session.



Interior of *Dungowan* on South Steyne, Manly 2017



Sydney Bus Museum outing - arriving (top), returning (bottom)

OUTING TO THE SYDNEY BUS MUSEUM

A group of nine enjoyed a visit to the Sydney Bus Museum at Leichhardt on Sunday 15 October. The Museum was celebrating the days of the Public Transport Commission, the period in the 1970s when the fleet changed colour from green, brown and cream to blue and white. We travelled to the Museum from York Street outside the Queen Victoria Building in a single decker Leyland and returned after our visit on a double decker Atlantean.

The Museum has a comprehensive collection of buses, going back to prior to WW2. They are in good condition and very accessible. Memories cannot help but come flooding back as you sit or ride in them.

SHELAGH CHAMPION

George Champion has asked me to pass on his heartfelt thanks to the very many people who have sent or given him their condolences for the passing of his wife and partner Shelagh. In George's own words:

*Dear Richard,  
I wonder if it is possible to thank all those kind people who gave me so many tributes, both written and verbal, following the death of my beautiful wife Shelagh in February last. The majority of them came from members of our local Historical Society, past and present. They continued to arrive until the present date.*

## POT POURRI

### William Bradley

In last month's article on the "Manly Women" I did Lieutenant William Bradley a grave disservice. I said that, in the caption to his painting, his memory fails him a little and he dates the encounter as February 1788. It actually happened on January 29, as his diary makes clear.

However, if you enlarge the reproduction of his painting that was in the last issue, you will see that it reads *First interview with the native women Port Jackson New South Wales*. So why did I add February 1788 to the title in the box that I placed under the reproduction? Because that is how the drawing is catalogued in many sources (e.g. The Dictionary of Sydney). Presumably some reputable source made the error sometime in the past and it has been copied ever since, including by me! I have no excuse. I actually have a facsimile copy of Bradley's journal and paintings and I looked at this drawing several times in preparing the article. The problem arose when I sourced a digital image to include in it.



Bradley recorded many events during his stint with the First Fleet. Here is his depiction of the Sirius passing an iceberg on November 25 1788 at Latitude 57.30 Sth. Longitude 288.00 Et during its emergency voyage to South Africa via Cape Horn to obtain food for the settlement.

Attributing a memory lapse to William Bradley is even less forgivable when you know something of his story, post-Port Jackson. From Wikipedia:

"William Bradley (1758–13 March 1833) was a British naval officer and cartographer who was one of the officers who participated in the First Fleet to Australia. During this expedition, Bradley undertook extensive surveys and became one of the first of the settlers to establish relations with the aborigines, with whom he struck up a dialogue and whose customs and nature he studied extensively.

Bradley's later career was overshadowed by his steadily deteriorating mental state. Although a successful small ship commander, Bradley became increasingly erratic. Removed from service by his illness, Bradley later joined the impress unit at Cowes, but in 1812 again suffered a mental breakdown, and was retired as a rear-admiral. Two years later, Bradley suffered personal disaster when he was caught involved in a minor attempt to defraud the postal authorities. Arrested and brought before the Winchester Assizes, his conduct was noted as being highly unusual, but this was not taken into account initially and he was stripped of his rank and pension and sentenced to death. Appeals from his family later brought about a reduction of sentence, firstly to transportation and subsequently exile.

Retiring to Le Havre, France in 1816, Bradley devoted the sane hours of his life to a series of inventions designed to easily calculate longitude. He hoped that by inventing such a device, the Admiralty might be persuaded to reverse his sentence and permit him to return to Britain. This never occurred and attempts by his family to get the sentence repealed on the grounds of his insanity were equally fruitless. Bradley finally gave up these efforts after years of failure and died in France, a recluse, in March 1833."



# Christmas Party



## Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2017

### North Curl Curl Surf Club

## 6.00 - 9.00 pm

Cost: \$25.00 per person

RSVP: 15 November 2017

Email [president@mwphs.com](mailto:president@mwphs.com) or  
mail to PO Box (see p.7)

Payment: By EFT or cheque  
(details as per Membership Form  
on last page. Identify payment  
as Christmas)



**Help needed!** (please email [archivist@mwphs.com](mailto:archivist@mwphs.com) or contact requester direct if they have given details)

**From Jody Goodman:**

I'm a local resident and tour guide wishing to show off our beautiful part of Sydney to visitors both Australia wide and International tourists. I wish to conduct specialty walking tours of areas of interest and being a dramatist with a theatre degree, would make my tours entertaining as well as informative. I'm passionate about storytelling.

My reason for contacting you is to pick your knowledgeable brains with questions that would assist in my research of the area. Your archives person might be good for this. If you're able to assist please phone me on 0417 62 61 62 or email back if we could meet up.

**From John Heffernan:**

I am a past president and life member of Warringah Rugby Club having been involved with the club since 1974. Currently, along with a number of others associated with WRC, we are compiling a video to cover the 50plus history of the club.

We have always been proud of turning the local tip into a significant sporting asset for the northern beaches community and that includes some of our players actually planting the grass for the playing surface of the ground. I would love to include any shots of the old tip or surrounding area as part of the narrative of the story of our club. Would your Society have any such photographs and if so would you be prepared to assist us in our endeavour?

### Survey Results (Part 1)

#### MEETINGS

<b>Frequency</b>	Monthly:	31 (76%)	Two monthly:	10 (24%)	Other:	0
<b>Venue</b>	Single:	33 (80%)	Several:	8 (20%)		
<b>Location</b>	Nth Curl Curl:	28 (67%)	Narrabeen:	11 (26%)	Other:	3 (7%)
<b>Preferred day</b>	Weekday:	9 (21%)	Saturday:	34 (79%)		
<b>Preferred time</b>	Morning:	1 (2%)	Afternoon:	38 (88%)	Evening:	4 (9%)

#### ACTIVITIES

<b>Meetings with speaker (as current)</b>	42 (33%)
<b>Local tours/own transport</b>	36 (28%)
<b>Bus tours</b>	32 (25%)
<b>Relevant theatre/cinema outings</b>	16 (12%)
<b>Other</b>	3 (2%)

The main conclusions are:

1. Monthly meetings are probably most appropriate but certainly no more frequently.
2. We should strongly consider holding some meetings further north on the Peninsula. The results are biased somewhat towards Curl Curl as some of the responses were gathered at a meeting at Curl Curl.
3. Saturday afternoon is the preferred meeting time.
4. There is an interest in having tours as well as meetings.

More results next month.

## ARTICLE

Joan Lawrence continues her article on the Manly Warringah and Pittwater Historical Society of the 1950s and 60s

### **MEMBERS - LESLIE CLARENCE WELLINGS, TOWN CLERK, MANLY (1889-1973)**

Leslie Clarence Wellings was resident in Manly in 1925 and served as the Town Clerk of Manly in the 1930s and 1940s, but also was an active member of the MW&P Historical Society. He married Emily Arabella Sly (1890-1945) in 1911 at Manly, presumably one of the well-known Sly family of Manly. (The Sly family had a long association with Manly and Little Manly, they were fishermen and labourers. George Sly father's worked for Aourousseau's Baker on the Corso and in the 1870s at the Quarantine Station. The Slys attracted the attention of the Inspector of Nuisances at regular intervals. More importantly the Sly family provided the first life boat service at South Steyne Beach, Manly.)

Two daughters were born to Les and Arabella Wellings in 1913 and 1915 and the family resided in 1930 at Darley Flats, Darley Road, Manly, and Mr Wellings was still listed at that address in 1968. He also saw service during World War 1 as a Sergeant, but also, through an association earlier with the Manly Band, he became Band Master of the 8<sup>th</sup> Brigade, 5<sup>th</sup> Division, AIF.



Waterfall in Welling's Reserve, Balgowlah  
(above North Harbour, ex seafarrwide)

### **Genealogy**

Leslie Clarence Wellings was born on 17 November 1889 at Kogarah, NSW, and died on 5 December 1973 at Newtown, NSW, being buried at Frenchs Forest Cemetery. His family came to Manly in 1902 and he attended Manly Public School. His parents were Isiah Burrows Wellings (1858-1907) and his wife, Alice Maud Brackenreg (1868-1938).

The genealogy of Mr Wellings is of some interest. His father Isiah Wellings was born at sea on 16 August 1858. He was an architect and married Alice Maud Brackenrig in 1888 and the family resided at *Norwood*, George Street, Manly. Isiah B Wellings died at 49 years of age on 9 November 1907 at Terry's Creek, Marsfield, Ryde, NSW. His wife had reported her husband missing and stated he had been very despondent of late. An inquest subsequently found he had taken his own life. This must have been not only difficult for his bereaved wife, but also for his son, who was then only 18 years of age.

Mr Les Wellings' genealogy on his mother's side traces back to colonial Sydney. His mother, Alice, was the great granddaughter of James Brackenrig who had come out as a Private in the NSW Corp, the notorious Rum Corps. The Brackenrig line goes back Gavin Brackenrig born 1697 in Hamilton, Glasgow, Lanarkshire.

At MW&P Historical Society meetings Les Wellings was sometimes our speaker and on one occasion he told how he had rescued, from a rubbish bin, an account by the Manly Inspector of Nuisances and Pound Keeper, Mr Leahy. This position was part of local council functions in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, with a wide ranging job description. Such officers were required to supervise that municipal areas were clean and sanitary, to inspect food for sale in markets and for sale on the streets, also to inspect dangerous buildings, hoardings and any nuisances on streets as well as keeping them free from obstructions, which constituted breaches of by-laws. In Manly the Inspector of Nuisances was also required to capture runaway horses, cattle, pigs etc., and hold them in the Council animal pound until reclaimed by the owner and a fine paid by that person.

As an aside, the Salvation Army felt their organisation was harassed when such inspectors intervened when they believed a Salvation Army Service was interrupting traffic and particularly when their officers knelt and prayed on the street. The Salvation Army appealed to the High Court.

At the MWPHS meeting Mr Wellings highlighted various instances from the rescued report of Manly's Inspector of Nuisances, and pound keeper, Mr. Leahy - *June 19 – Cattle, hunting, 5.45 a.m. None about. Mangy dog in reserve. Tried to catch him, but no good. Will see if I can shoot him. Caught six head of cattle near Mr. H's house at 7 p.m. Could only impound three of them. Out hunting till midnight.*

Mr Leahy had to check on the burial of cows and horses, impound stray cattle, see that the reserves were tidy, watch out for daylight swimmers, check the source of offensive smells, see to their removal, and shoot down any mangy dogs he might come

across. He also had to take samples of milk to check for water dilution. One offender who was accused of putting water in the milk called on him later wanting to know how much water he could put in!

Mr Leahy had a job to do and he crossed swords with several people. He subscribed to the belief there was one law for all. Mr. Wellings suggested perhaps he became too officious in his duty and offended some of those higher up. What happened to him was unknown.

Joan Lawrence

### More on Les Wellings and the Manly Band

In her article, Joan mentions Les Willings' WW1 enlistment and his playing in the Manly Band. The following is from Manly Library's Local Studies Blog.

This weekend (*written on 21 Aug 2015, Ed.*) marks the centenary of the first of the WWI recruiting marches held at Manly, and the enlistment, virtually en masse, of the Manly Band.

The first recruiting march was on 23 August 1915, when 120 men recruited from Manly were presented with rosettes by the Mayor at Manly Town Hall, then marched to the Wharf to travel to barracks in Sydney. They marched through Sydney to the accompaniment of the Manly Borough Band. Their embarkation at Manly Wharf was described as: "The most thrilling five minutes Manly has known... like a Venetian Carnival day". (This recruitment march predated by several weeks the better-known 'Coo-ee March' from Gilgandra). Then, on 1st September, several members of the Manly Band who wanted to form a battalion band all enlisted together.

On 20th September an even more elaborate march took place, in which about a hundred volunteers from Warringah met Manly volunteers at Pine Street, then marched down North Steyne and the Corso, carrying banners, with the Manly Band playing as they went. It is shown in a photo which appeared in the Evening News, 20 September 1915, p4. On this occasion the men marched all the way to Victoria Barracks. There were stirring scenes as they boarded the ferry at Manly Wharf and as they disembarked at Circular Quay. They were greeted with loud cheers as they proceeded through the city with the remaining members of Manly Band to the fore. Several wives and sweethearts accompanied the men the whole way, as did all the local aldermen. Each of the contingents had its own banner: "Manly Still Answering the Call", "Freshwater Boys Answering Duty's Call", "Warringah Shire to Lend a Hand".



The Coo-ee recruiting march passing through Springwood in the Blue Mountanns on 8 November, 1915

A poem published in the Sun in August 1915 stated "Manly knows the value of a big and swelling wave/ and the squad that works together has the punch." One verse read:

*"There was cheering at the barracks when the gates were open wide*

*For the company from Manly marching in;*

*Could the Manly mothers hear it, they would feel a greater pride*

*In their boys that all together went to win."*

This mass enlistment was particularly noteworthy since the Manly Band of that time was probably the premier band in Australia, having won the Australasian Championship in 1911 and having come second in 1912 and 1913. In Les Wellings, they had the champion cornet player; he was to enlist later in 1915, once he had laid down his duties as assistant Manly Town Clerk. One bandsman recalled many years later, "We used to play in the Corso on Saturday nights, up one side and down the other. Goodness knows how many times we played HMS Pinafore!"



Bandstand on The Steyne at Manly, c.1915 (Manly Library Local studies)

John MacRitchie

## Manly Art gallery and Museum

The Phantom Show 8 Sep - 29 Oct 2017

The Phantom, created in 1936 by Lee Falk, was the first costume 'super-hero' and pre-dated both Superman (1938) and Spiderman (1962). MAG&M is the final Australian venue for a touring exhibition of contemporary artworks inspired by The Phantom, created by Peter Kingston, Dieter Lederwasch, Euan Macleod and Dick Frizzell among 40 artists. Explore why this comic book character resonates so strongly across the world nearly 80 years later.



Image detail: Dick Frizzell, Phantom on motorcycle, silkscreen

## Also at Manly Art Gallery and Museum

3 Boats 8 Sep - 26 Nov 2017

This unique exhibition presents a rare and original Manly Pier dodgem boat, alongside an early Manly Junior sailing dinghy - both 1950s. These craft are juxtaposed with Richard Goodwin's award winning sculpture Moth (2003), which plays with the pleasure craft form to invoke metaphorical allusions to journey and transformations. This project continues the approach of the blending of heritage objects with original art works that has come to characterize MAG&M's museum. Curated by Ross Heathcote.



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Established 1924

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Currently vacant

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# Manly Warringah & Pittwater Historical Society Inc.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Join now and get 14  
months membership

## Membership Application Form - 2017/18

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:** \$..... Do you require a receipt? Yes/No

### PAYMENT METHODS

- **By cheque or money order**

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)**

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