



Peninsula Historian

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

VOLUME 13 No. 6

July 2020

ISSN 1835-7628 (print) 2207-8401 (electronic)

FROM THE EDITOR

Last issue I asked whether anyone had information on the Dutch Shop that traded on Pittwater Road, Dee Why for many years from the 1950s. Peter Graves and Marianne van der Voorde kindly sent in some recollections. They are in the Pot Pourri section. Thank you to both.

Thank you also to Jenny Wilson who sent me some information on the two Manly residents who died in the Bubonic Plague mentioned last issue. Jenny is a member but is also associated with the North Head Sanctuary Foundation.

Finally, thank you Keith Amos on several fronts, firstly for researching the life of Dorothea Mackellar, author of perhaps the best-known Australian poem - *My Country* (I love a sun-burnt country ... etc.) and source of the names of a local girls' high school and a Federal electorate, secondly for writing his research up and publishing it as a 40 page booklet, and finally, but most graciously, allowing me to publish portions of it in our Newsletter. This is a significant agreement (and risk) by Keith as he is allowing me to pick and choose from his publication to produce Newsletter-sized pieces. Thanks Keith.

Also, we have had an offer to assist members with their family history research. Information is on Page 3.

Richard Michell

DIARY

Meetings held at the NB Council Community Centre on the corner of Abbott and Griffin Roads, North Curl Curl

11 July, 2020 2.00 pm

Annual General Meeting

Election of office bearers plus some videos, all with appropriate Covid-19 precautions

8 August, 2020 2.00 pm

Intention is to revert to standard format with a speaker. Details to be confirmed

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

NB Council has partially lifted some restrictions on the use of their community centres and so we plan to recommence our monthly meetings as from next month, Saturday 11 July. We will start off by holding our deferred AGM but will make it a little more interesting by showing some videos and hopefully there will be some afternoon tea, albeit served with appropriate precautions.

So it will be a chance to get out of the house and meet up with friends. By the following month we hope to be back to our normal format but that is contingent on the incidence of the virus continuing to trend in the right direction.

At the AGM all executive positions will become vacant. We would love to have people offer themselves. The position of Treasurer is one we would particularly like to fill but all roles are potentially available. Please contact any member of the Executive (p. 7) if you would like more information.

Richard Michell

NEWS AND VIEWS

NEXT MEETING, Saturday 11 July, 2020

The next meeting will be our AGM. Please see the notice on Page 3.

POT POURRI

Two Dutch treats

Hi Richard ,

In 1970, I was living in a boarding house at 1 Ocean Road Manly (Newsletter, April 2012), where one of the residents was Joe (he who always played **The Moody Blues "A Question of Balance"** when he arrived home). Joe was Dutch by background and made a strong point of taking me up the peninsula to Dee Why and introducing me to the Dutch shop which traded in his heritage: rolmops (to use the Dutch spelling).

As they had a strong smell of raw fish, I was initially hesitant. Joe reassured me that they were delicious, consisting of pickled herring fillets rolled into a cylindrical shape, with a filling of sliced pickled gherkin, all secured with a cocktail skewer. We would buy several and stand outside munching them contentedly - both of us. Eating rolmops was a great introduction to going Dutch.

How's that then? I'm just about at the end of my Manly anecdotes, though - unfortunately. I greatly enjoy from afar reading your Newsletter and their stories. Living in Manly in the 1960s was one of the positive highlights of my life.

By the way - one of my places - 16 Cliff St Manly - is now inserting (or has inserted) a swimming pool - just around the corner from Fairy Bower!

Cheers - Peter

Dear Richard,

We - my parents and their five children, of which I am the second-born - lived at Lake Park Camping Area, North Narrabeen, as it was called then, for four years from 1951, along with many other Dutch migrant families. In response to your request about the grocer, Mr George Broekhuijsen (Dutch spelling) from Dee Why, I do recall that he initially rode a motorbike, with sidecar which contained all the Dutch wares he imported from the Netherlands and sold to the Dutch community on the Northern Beaches, amongst which were the (temporary) residents of what is now known as upmarket Lakeside Caravan Park.

Not 'having a handle' on the English language yet, other than 'school English with a Dutch accent,' the Aussies weren't keen to rent to migrants, nor was there sufficient accommodation available anyway - other than backyard garages and the like - so this was the only way for new arrivals to put a roof of sorts over their heads.

There was a Dutch greengrocer, Mr. Wijsman, who sold his fruit and vegetables to the Dutch housewives housed in tents, as well as the abovementioned Dutch grocer who later also sold all the typically Dutch specialties, including to the first local Dutch Society 'Neerlandia' - established within the camping area, with my father being its first secretary - when they held their monthly dance at Collaroy Surf Club to give hard working parents a chance to socialise.

George also supplied the goodies for special events such as Kerstmis/Christmas and the children's celebration of St. Nicolaas/St. Nicholas, who arrived, as per tradition, on a white horse to surprise the young ones being brought up in a tent; and to the general public from his house at Dee Why, later also serving coffee and Dutch speculaas and other delicacies such as raw herring - to be eaten by holding it high by the tail and devouring it from the head up!

There is gossip galore about George the Grocer, but that would be hearsay..... Hope these bits 'n pieces help a little!

Take care, keep well, sending sunny cheers (it's still shining behind the clouds),

Marianne

Note: Georges's house at Dee Why was also his shop. A single front room was the shop and the other front room and the rear section was his home, although one room may have been a stock/store room. Because of widening of Pittwater Road the front of the house was almost on the footpath (see photo). Ed.



The Dutch shop at 645 Pittwater Road, Dee Why, almost opposite Pacific Parade



George and his wife serving a customer. Social distancing would have been a problem

ARTICLE

Dorothea Mackellar at Lovett Bay

Compared with the vivid clarity of her iconic poem 'My Country', Dorothea Mackellar had an elusive private life that many who write about her have found hard to fathom. From 1926 to the late 1940s - middle-aged, rich and single - the poet loved nothing more than escaping Sydney for the quiet seclusion of Tarrangaua, her holiday cottage at Pittwater's Lovett Bay.

Lovett's Bay was named after John Lovett, an Irish ex-convict who first settled at the bay in the early 1830s. The land Dorothea bought in 1925 was on the bay's northern side, partly cleared by a previous owner Joseph ('Portugee Joe') Cario and family who arrived in 1881. Cario was granted 40 acres under an 1861 Land Act that enabled buyers to acquire small landholdings on conditional purchase, providing they improved them over time. By December 1881 he had improved his property to the value of 40 pounds, by way of clearing, planting an orchard and constructing a dwelling.

By the early 1900s, Lovett Bay had a stone jetty, built at government cost by the first trustees of Kuring-gai Chase national park. A year after the park was dedicated in 1894 a team of men was employed to build the jetty, causeway and a path to the entry of the park at the head of Lovett Bay. More paths went on to a waterfall and a high lookout above Pittwater. No doubt a key reason that Dorothea liked the location was that it could only be reached by boat, and was next to this National Park, with its well-made paths through pretty, fern-shaded glades and she-oaks, a cascading stream (Salvation Creek) and an ascending track to the lookout – all enhanced in Spring with beautiful wildflowers.

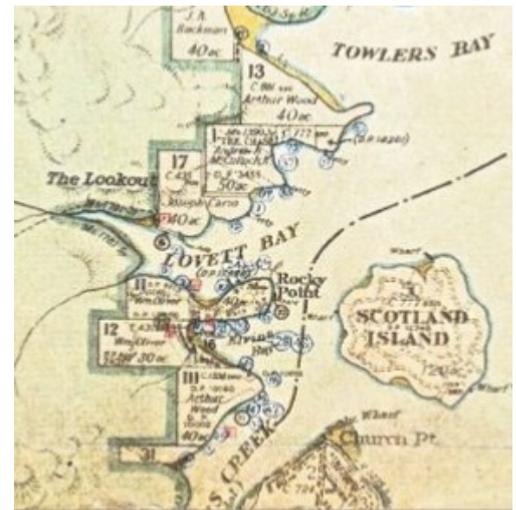
It is likely Dorothea was already familiar with Broken Bay from local boating trips. As roads improved in the 1920s, wealthy Sydneysiders would motor to Pittwater, cruise their yachts or motor launches and holiday at summer retreats. Also, her diaries mention having picnics at the northern beaches with her best friend and writing collaborator, Ruth Bedford.

Born in 1885, apart from trips abroad and visits to her father's country properties, Dorothea had always lived with her parents. She had grown up privileged and protected – chaperoned well into her twenties. Privately tutored, she was the only daughter of eminent physician Sir Charles Mackellar MLC, KCMG, and his wife Marion. The eldest of her three brothers, Keith, had been killed in the Boer War and the other two, Eric and Malcolm, were each managing a family property near Gunnedah. This left Dorothea alone, apart from servants, in Rosemount, the huge old family mansion in Woollahra, with the heavy load of supporting her ageing parents - made worse by her mother being almost stone deaf and her father's advancing dementia (3).

Dorothea had achieved fame in her early 20s after *Sydney Mail* reported in 1908 that her poem, 'Core of My Heart', had just appeared in the *London Spectator*. A month later, the poem's lasting public appeal was accurately predicted in the *Sydney Stock & Station Journal*:

HURRAH FOR AUSTRALIA! – One of the best poems about Australia that has ever been written reaches us from the *London Spectator*. It was written by Miss Dorothea Mackellar, daughter of Dr Mackellar, M.L.C. Few men are known more widely than Dr Mackellar and this poem by his daughter will come as an added lustre to his name. We have much pleasure in reprinting the poem and can only suggest that if any man (or woman) can set it to a ringing tune, it would make a grand National Anthem for Australia. (4)

Renamed 'My Country', the poem helped to sell out five editions of her first book, *The Closed Door and Other Verses* (1911). From 1914 to 1926 she published three more volumes of poetry, a whimsical romantic novel (*Outlaw's Luck*) and two novels in the same vein co-written with Ruth Bedford. However as early as 1919, a respected critic held that her work, though 'always charming and graceful in style, stops short of the major notes' (5), which Dorothea herself recognised, saying later in life 'I never professed to be a poet....have (only) written...some amount of verse.' (6)



Lovett Bay and nearby landholdings, 1880s (Joseph Cario, 40ac, 17) - NSW Parish Maps



Lovett Bay wharf and causeway, c.1900 - NSW State Library

By the mid 1920s, tiredness from frequent public engagements, society positions, charity work, family responsibilities, health issues and the work load of her third book of verse, all contributed to the idea of withdrawing somewhere out of the city to rest and recuperate.

Almost certainly, Dorothea chose her land at Lovett Bay because she knew the occupant of the adjoining land. This was Dr Donald Fraser, a psychotherapist whose home and practice overlooked Hyde Park, Sydney, at 34 College Street. Dorothea might well have met him through her father, whose practice and apartment (where she finished writing 'Core of My Heart') was in nearby Liverpool Street, also facing the Park.



Dr Fraser's summer house - Bennett family

Dorothea decided to buy three vacant blocks at Lovett Bay to make one large site – one block over 3 acres from Henry Pickering in June 1925, and two totalling over 6 acres from Fanny Pickering a month later. This gave her a handsome expanse of about 10 acres with over 250 yards of waterfront, at a total cost of 3,590 pounds (11) – a very large sum for remote bushland. The land had a reasonably level building pad and an attractive outlook over the bay. It was only a short boat trip from Church Point, yet serenely private. There was also the prospect of Dr Fraser's engaging company within easy walking distance should their visits overlap.

Architect William Hardy Wilson was chosen to plan Dorothea's summer bungalow. A founder in 1913 of Wilson, Neave and Berry, architects of George Street Sydney, Wilson had established his reputation with Eryldene, a home at Gordon for Professor E.G. Waterhouse. He was soon the architect of choice for wealthy clients favouring his 'colonial revival' designs – bungalows featuring columned verandahs adopted by Australian colonists from British India. Noted for his 'painter's eye', Wilson also paid close attention to a home's garden, overall setting and views. He was a natural choice given Dorothea's poetic sensibility to colour, light and landscape.

Hardy Wilson planned a comfortable four-bedroom brick bungalow with tiled roof and stone foundation. Front and side verandahs surrounded a spacious central living dining room with open fireplace and French doors. The kitchen, pantry and laundry were on the western side; bathroom, toilet and main bedroom on the eastern side. A long hallway linked these symmetrical wings. The rear courtyard had a sheltered northerly aspect; tanks collected roof water; sewerage drained to a septic tank (the only remaining plan). For a single lady's holiday cottage nothing was undersized: the living room 36ft x 18ft, main bedroom 22ft x 11ft, side verandahs and sleep-out 12ft wide, front verandah 60ft x 10ft. From the front, Wilson's design is serenely elegant, the long, columned verandah supporting a strongly pitched roof. (12)

When Hardy Wilson's plans were ready in September 1925, interested builders were invited in to submit their quotes for the job: *Builders desirous of tendering for large Stone Cottage at Lovett Bay, Pittwater, apply for quantities etc to WILSON, NEAVE, and BERRY, Union House, 247 George Street.* (14)

The construction was challenging: 60,000 bricks, terracotta roofing tiles, tons of sandstone (quarried offsite) for the foundation and retaining walls, and a large amount of timber, were all landed at high tide and winched up to the site. Most materials were shipped from Sydney and unloaded at the bay from a barge. The timber boards and window sills were tallow wood, doors and cupboards Queensland maple, the ceiling and roof framing Douglas fir (oregon). Ceilings were fibro laid on the top of the joists, the walls double brick, verandah columns rendered brickwork. The tiles had a glazed Marseilles pattern first marketed in 1924. Taylor (the builder) probably had a big building team to complete the job as quickly as possible. The work most likely began before the end of 1925, continuing into 1926. (17)



Dorothea's Pittwater cottage, Tarrangaua - courtesy Church Point Ferry Service

Dorothea chose to name the house Tarrangaua meaning 'rough high hill' (thought to be Aboriginal), and it would have seemed just that to the men who manhandled all these materials from the jetty below. Some distance from the main house a timber caretaker's cottage was built, but there is no record about Wilson designing it and its exact whereabouts are not known. An old existing cottage may have been renovated, or a new one built by Taylor. On completion of both buildings, many gallons of cream calcimine paint were used to paint them inside and out. (18)

By about mid-1926, Tarrangaua was finished and Dorothea began using it. And when her father died in July, Lady Mackellar encouraged her to get away more often by employing a resident companion for herself at Rosemont. Dorothea would be driven to Church Point in the family Rolls Royce, meet the caretaker and be taken by launch to Lovett Bay. Although up to four guests could be comfortably accommodated overnight, she preferred to be there either alone or with very few others during longer stays.

The caretaker stocked the food and when guest numbers were small, Dorothea cooked simple meals herself. Or if a larger party went, extra staff from Rosemont would be taken to assist. Her brother Eric came occasionally and Ruth Bedford went often. Typical excursions were launch trips around Pittwater for picnics and swimming, or pleasant rambles around the property and through the Park. (20)

1926 was a busy and eventful year for Dorothea and included the preparation of a further book of poems, *Fancy Dress and Other Verse*, for publication. To this point her reputation was primarily as a lyricist. However in *Fancy Dress*, which was to be her final book, there is noticeable reference to some very personal mid-life concerns, in particular a yearning for more fulfilment in life. A striking example is 'The Waiting Life', reproduced below.

Keith Amos, 2020

*Since it befell, with work and strife
I had not time to live my life
I turned away from it until
Work should be done and strife be still*

*My hands and head for use are free
Nor does my own life worry me
But docile as a spaniel waits
Until this present stress abates*

*Tranquil it breathes, and waits, I know
With all its joy contained. But oh
I hope when I have time to play
My life will not have run away! (22)*



Dorothea Mackellar in 1925 aged 40 when she built Tarrangaua at Lovett Bay

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- (Continued next page)



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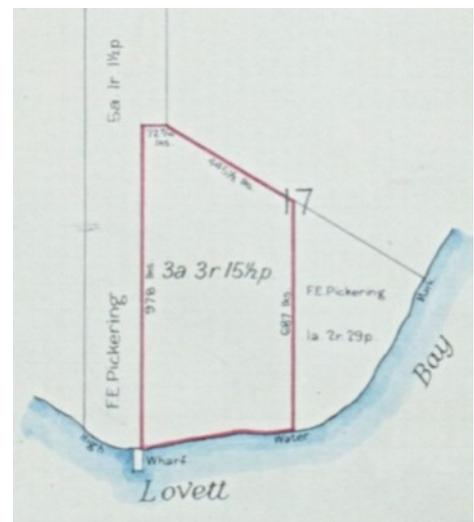
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Dorothea Mackellar's land at
Lovett Bay, 1925 - LTO

Manly Warringah & Pittwater Historical Society Inc.

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