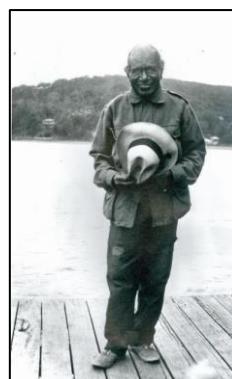
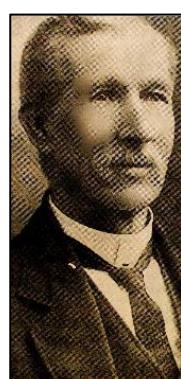
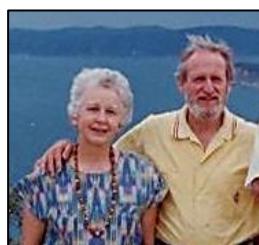




BOUDDI BIOS
VOLUME 4 S -W
Robyn Warburton (Ed.)



INDEX

Imogen Sage.....	Phil Donnelly et al.....	3
Esther Seymour.....	Helen Warlike.....	6
Jim and Anne Shires.....	David Dufty.....	7
Colleen Smith.....	Hal Hopkins, Bruce Lay & Robyn Warburton.....	9
Oskar Speck's House.....	Lee Casey.....	27
The Stewart Family.....	Alan Stewart...Recollections.....	34
Allen and Beryl Strom.....	Gary Nipperess.....	54
Jack Taylor.....	Nature, Bush and Apathy.....	58
The Thierings.....	Ian and Jeannette Thiering.....	60
The Thompson Family.....	Suesan Thompson.....	77
Tisdell, Myer & Bayly Families.....	Ian & Suellen Tisdell.....	82
Ken Tough.....	Jennifer Poole.....	106
Graeme Troy's Story.....	Holidays at Wagstaffe.....	108
On Family & Surf Club.....	Jim Tubby	112
Turo Downs.....	Bruce Dunlop.....	120
George Wagstaffe.....	Brian Wagstaffe.....	129
Eddie Walsh.....	Beryl Poole.....	135
Silver and Laurie Ware.....	Silver Ware.....	140
Helen & Terry Warlike.....	Meg Fromel.....	146
Marjorie Whiting	Reminiscences of Holidays.....	154
Margaret & Trevor Wilkinson.....	Wagstaffe in 1958 and beyond.....	162
The Wilmot Family.....	Geri Levett.....	167
The Woulfe Family.....	Cathy (Woulfe) Ford.....	174

IMOGEN SAGE

by Phil Donnelly et al

Imogen Sage's acceptance at the London School of Speech and Drama (the alma mater of Laurence Olivier and Judi Dench) was the catalyst which led to the Bouddi Foundation for the Arts.*



Imogen Sage Lindquist lived on the Bouddi Peninsula and attended Pretty Beach Public School and it was here that she discovered her love for dressing up, performing and acting. Her mother was actor and filmmaker, Bev Callow. Bev encouraged Imogen's aspirations and was happy to comply with Imogen's requests and therefore instrumental in bringing about her changes in high school from Pittwater High to the more creative Mullumbimby Steiner School and then North Newtown School of Performing Arts.

She was on her way to achieving what she had dreamed of doing since she was a child, and she had the maturity, determination and know-how to make it happen.



Here we see Imogen and friends dressed up for parts in plays at Pretty beach Public School.



Her move to Melbourne with its more creative arts scene was her next move. It was here that she learnt of the possibility of being awarded a place in 2012 at the very prestigious London School of Speech and Drama (Sir Laurence Olivier and Judi Dench studied there). She applied, auditioned and won a place, one of just 24 successful students, from around the world and one of the first from Australia.

The catch was that the award was entrance only, so considerable funding for the three-year course had to be found. She looked for sponsors and was very happy when one of her idols, John Bell of Bell Shakespeare, came on board.

A phone call by Imogen to Robyn Warburton was followed by a visit to John Bell. Robyn told him about Imogen's achievement (and asked for assistance). This put in motion a series of events with a wonderful outcome. John Bell responded with a great idea. He would gather together local artists to put together a program called *My Lucky Break*. The subsequent concert on January 22, 2012, jointly sponsored by the Bouddi Society and the Wagstaffe to Killcare Community Association, presented John and his wife, Anna Volska, and their friends: Graeme Blundell, Greig Pickhaver (HG Nelson), Phillip Johnson and the artist Peter Godwin. It was a very entertaining afternoon to hear how people like Graeme Blundell and Grieg Pickhaver (H G Nelson) began their careers.



The community choir and David Dufty performed also and one of Bev Callow's films was shown. (Bev Callow is Imogen's mother.) The show attracted a capacity crowd to Wagstaffe Hall which generously contributed to Imogen's substantial fees.

Local artist, Peter Godwin played an important role. He donated a painting which H G Nelson auctioned off, adding to the success of the afternoon. Altogether, \$10,440 was raised. The Minutes of January 17, 2012, state: 'All proceeds of the concert to be donated to Imogen Sage on a progressive basis over the next two years', giving Imogen a wonderful start to her career.



Bev Callow

Bev promoted Imogen's successful bid to gain a place at the revered college and emailed friends and acquaintances: "Young actor Imogen Sage has been granted Abaf status - tax deductible for donations to study at [@CSSDLondon](#)."

Imogen added the following to outline as to what donations would do for her needs.

- \$1000 – \$5000 will assist with my course fees.
- \$600 will assist with 1 month of rent
- \$300 will assist with 1 month of groceries
- \$100 will assist with books, plays and clothing required for the course.

It was John Bell and Peter Godwin who declared there was enough community support to warrant a permanent arrangement to assist Central Coast young people striving to achieve in the arts. He recalled his own youth in the Hunter Valley and how difficult it was to develop artistic talent outside the metropolitan centres. John approached the Bouddi Society for help in implementing his vision.

The Bouddi Foundation for the Arts was launched under the umbrella of The Bouddi Society whose President, Phil Donnelly, made the announcement at the concert. Imogen Sage was the catalyst and the first recipient.

It was eagerly accepted by the Society which altered its constitution to house a specific charitable wing to be known as the *Bouddi Foundation for the Arts* with John Bell as its founding chairperson. The Foundation is on the Commonwealth's Register of Cultural Organisations and has tax-deductibility status. In November 2013, the Foundation staged a major fundraising entertainment event, *Bouddi at Bells*, on the lawns of the resort at Killcare Heights, at which over 600 people attended. The *Bouddi Arts Foundation* is now the pre-eminent Arts Charity on the Central Coast of NSW. In the past three years it has made grants of \$44,000 to talented young artists in a diverse range of the Arts, including music, dance, writing and the visual arts.



And Imogen? She proved to be an outstanding student at the London Drama School. She finished the very demanding but wonderfully inspiring three-year course with flying colours. She then spent the next year starring in the stage play, *Rebecca*, taking it around England and Scotland to great acclaim.

She is pictured here in costume for one of her roles and below with her fellow students at the college.



ESTHER SEYMOUR

by Helen Warlike



I opened this script, expecting a story, a story about Esther Seymour. Instead, I find a poem. A poem written by a friend of mine as well as a friend of Esther's, Helen Warlike. I did not know Esther Seymour but from Helen's words a picture has been painted of a very special lady, who had a very full life, enjoying her friends and working hard for her community. Helen is a very special person too. Robyn Warburton Ed. (2008).

In Hardys Bay there lived a lady
Mid sunlit flowers and shady
Trees, with vegie patch across the creek.
Lorikeets and butcher birds, all come to seek
The seed and tid-bits put out for them.
Cat birds too from Fletcher's Glen.
Wily Esther kept her vegies
Safe with wire from turkeys
Which are wont to scratch.
Our friend was busy all the day
In garden and around the Bay.
In Fletchers Glen, the privet weed;
With Meals on Wheels she saw the need
To help with meals and take them round.
And time for neighbours also found.
She made her tread; and with deft hand
Soft toys which are always in demand.
And plants she potted up
For friends and fetes and Garden Club.
At Trust and Store and Birdwalk
She also made her mark.

Note: Esther died in 2002 aged 85

JIM AND ANNE SHIRES

By David Dufty

Jim and Anne Shires were two of Killcare's best loved and most respected citizens during their time of residence here. Although both were very modest people, they were always in the centre of people and conversations and their home was the site of many a fine drinks or dinner party. Jim and Anne were highly active, cheerful and utterly reliable voluntary workers in a variety of endeavours.

Jim and Anne Shires came to Australia in 1968 from New Zealand. "Deported!" Jim said.

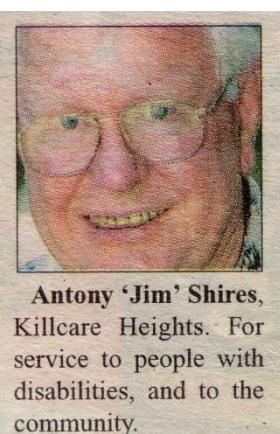


Anne and Jim Shires at a Garden Club gathering, Anne with an inevitable pot plant in her hand; both with characteristic smiles.

Jim worked in the Bank of New South Wales and was heavily involved in the name change to Westpac. He retired in 1988 but was re-employed as a consultant until 1989. When he fractured his spine and had to retire permanently, he and Anne came to live at Killcare.

“The best 10 years of my life,” Jim said, because he was able to become involved in various local activities. At various times, he was East Gosford Probus Club’s secretary, Vice President and much appreciated President. He was also treasurer of Killcare Heights Garden Club, secretary of the Killcare Wagstaffe Trust, secretary of the Bouddi 2000 Committee, a member of the weekly bridge group which met in each other’s homes and campaign treasurer for Jim Lloyd during the Federal elections.

In 2000, Jim (Anthony not Antony) Shires was awarded the OAM for 25 years volunteer work for Technical Aid to the Disabled, a well-deserved recognition for a lot of back-room effort over the years. He was also on the Fair Trading Tribunal and the Building Disputes Tribunal.



Antony ‘Jim’ Shires,
Killcare Heights. For
service to people with
disabilities, and to the
community.

Anne deserves a medal too for her work with two others in establishing ‘Easy Care Gardening’ in 1988, on Sydney’s North Shore. It was aimed at ‘frail, aged and disabled gardeners’, many of whom were still in their family homes and wanting to stay on but being overwhelmed by the demands of their traditional gardens. From three volunteers and a small grant from Kuring-Gai Council in 1988 the service has grown to 500 volunteers and 1000 clients and had spread to other parts of Sydney by 2008.

Jim and Anne particularly enjoyed helping to conserve and improve the local environment, Bouddi National Park and environs, such an important area to help to keep unspoilt. Both supported the work of the Killcare Wagstaffe Trust. Both enjoyed bushwalking. Anne was President of the Killcare Garden Club for three years, which she saw as a particularly important group for new residents to join, in order to get to know both people and the area. Both Anne and Jim worked on the bush garden, adjacent to the Marie Byles Lookout. Retirement to Killcare for the Shires couldn’t have been better planned!

Postscript: Sadly, Jim died of cancer in 2002. Anne left her beautiful garden at Killcare and moved to a retirement unit at Kincumber in 2007 with lots and lots of pot plants.



COLLEEN SMITH'S STORY

by her grandson, Hal Hopkins, Bruce Lay and Robyn Warburton

Colleen Smith is a very special person. She is a small woman, slim and barely five feet tall but size hardly matters when it comes to vitality and energy. Colleen is a dynamo! When looking for words to describe Colleen and do justice to her personality, one has to think of all the things she has done in her lifetime and is still doing. She is always busy and most of the time, it is concern for other people that is uppermost in her endeavours. Her love of life and people is what makes her the person she is. (Robyn Warburton Ed.)



She cares about people and always has and because of this, she is able to tell you how everybody and everything is right here and now... and remarkably she can also tell you the history of her lifetime and the people and places that helped make it. Her memory of the past is amazing. Other people may know a great deal but may not necessarily share it. Not so with Colleen. Because she loves to talk and is a storyteller; she is always full of information. In one conversation she will tell you about the busy day she has had, how at least one member of her family is getting on, who has had a baby, become engaged or died, how the shops at Killcare changed hands over the years and what the CWA is doing next.

Because of the interest and the caring, she extends to people, over the years she has made many friends. Her grandson, Hal Hopkins, was very impressed when he attended the birthday party which the community held for Colleen to celebrate her eightieth birthday in May, 2006. Queen Elizabeth 11 turned eighty in the same year so Colleen thinks she is in good company. Many, many people came to the luncheon to acknowledge the important place she has always had in the community and to wish her joy. She is held in very high regard.

Hal was asked to write about his grandmother. He begins her story.

Colleen's real name is Sheila Colleen Joy Smith. She was born 12th May, 1926 at Wentworthville, NSW. She was Arthur and Valmai (Grace) Beasley's third child. She followed her sisters, Gloria (known as Dawn) and Beryl. Her infant brother, Keith, was born in 1933. Tragically, he died as a baby. The next arrival was her beloved brother, Arthur (Junior).

To understand a little about what made Colleen the person she is, it is important to look at the main influences on her life. Her parents probably deserve a big pat on the back for instilling the values, the strong character values that make Colleen special. It is what we all love about her.

I was not even a year old when my great-grandmother, Grace, passed on, but from what I understand she was a most generous and giving person. I have fond memories of Colleen telling stories about her mother, Grace. How, often guests would come to the family home and would comment on something, saying something like, "Oh Grace, that clock you have is lovely," or "What a beautiful painting you have on your wall." Grace would then reply, "Take it with you, if you like." If this sort of generosity was evident in Grace's life, then I would say that it defines Colleen's life too. She, too, has the spirit of giving.

Her dad, Arthur, served in WW 1 in France, enlisting from Chinchilla in QLD with another of his brothers. Arthur married Grace when he returned from the war in 1920. Arthur, from what I understand, was a gentle man of few words, and the words he did speak, he spoke wisely.

So, Colleen's early life was spent in Killcare at the family home built in 1925 at the top of the ridge above the bay. The address was 30 Bay Road, later changed to Araluen Drive. To this day the pagoda, at the entrance still exists. It was the entrance to what was a fantastic, exotic garden. The stairs wound up between numerous garden beds and rockeries until the top was reached where there was a magnificent view. The home was rightly named *Bonnie View*.

The children, including Colleen, attended Pretty Beach Public School. Not to be outdone, Beryl was a real identity too, holding a very important position for 40 years. She was the school's cleaner

Colleen's first job was at the guest house, *Belleview*, at Killcare and as a very young teenager she started work at Eason's store in Killcare and there she met her husband to be, Neville Hopkins, who was with the army, training in the area. She was a people person plus.



Young Neville, aged 6 at *Bonnie View*



Young Michael and Neville Hopkins and when somewhat older, with their mother,

Neville and Colleen had two children, Neville and Michael, both born in private hospitals while Neville senior was on active service. Colleen and her husband, and the kids settled in Newcastle as there was plenty of work in the heavy industries during the post war boom. Colleen says 'white ants got to the marriage' so it did not last.

After the divorce, Colleen returned to live with her parents in Araluen Drive. To support her sons, she had to go to work.

Colleen had no fear of hard work. She had many jobs including catering, and she catered for the RSL Club when it was located at the community hall, that became the Community Church. She worked long hours; whatever it took to make a living. and as mentioned, she worked at the Corner Store (The Old Killcare Store) at Killcare on and off and on for many years. On her days off she picked beans and sometimes tomatoes. She worked at Gosford Bowling Club on Friday and Saturday nights and at weddings. She worked as an assistant in the catering industry. She gained experience as she did it all, the preparation, the serving and the cleaning up afterwards.



With this experience Colleen started her own catering business and became the contract caterer to Hardys Bay RSL. Colleen purchased local produce from around the local farms. Imagine having the dollars these days to purchase an all-organic wedding feast. Colleen worked in the local store in the 1960s and then typically leased the shop in the 1970s.

Hardys Bay Community Hall, then RSL, now church.

Of the many weddings she catered for, the one which stands out was the reception when Terri Radford married Russell Mares at, ‘of all places,’ Granville Town Hall.

Someone thought Colleen was from Killara, ‘a little different to Killcare’. Terri’s father brought the prawns, a washing basket full which ‘must of cost an arm and a leg’ (sic).

All her hard work was brought to a halt when Grace had a stroke in the mid-seventies, requiring virtually twenty-four-hour assistance.

After her mother died, Colleen went back to McCall’s store for two years and then, from 1979 to 1984, Colleen worked at two nursing homes, Woodlands at Cherrybrook and Archers at Waitara. She stayed with a friend at Pennant Hills during the week and came home at weekends. She said her St John Ambulance training helped very much.

From 1985 onwards, she cleaned houses at Killcare. The houses belonged to the Sparks, the Beasleys, the Baxters, the Daniels and the Horderns, the son of Anthony Hordern and his wife, Joy. By doing so, she met many more people who continue to value her friendship and loyalty.



Her dad Arthur had passed away in 1971 in his 84th year and Grace followed in 1977, aged 77. All members of the Beasley family have been laid to rest at St Pauls, Kincumber. Her parents, her beloved sister, Dawn, brother Arthur and baby brother, Keith, are there.

Colleen – The Matriarch

Through all her giving life she has been the family matriarch, keeping in contact with family members, wherever they are. She has a special concern for anyone who has been doing it tough. Colleen has two sons, 6 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Colleen is very proud of her family’s achievements. Her sons are good family men, successful in their careers and well-travelled. Neville speaks Mandarin. Colleen believes her daughter-in-law, Adele, is ‘the daughter she never had’. Perhaps the best known of her grandchildren is Nell, the Sydney artist and academic. Nell is the daughter of Michael and Adele and the sister of Hal and Casey. In October 2008, Nell exhibited her work at the Oxford Gallery in Sydney – which Colleen thinks is ‘a step on the path to real success’. Neville’s daughters are Justine and Jodie. Both qualified and worked as engineers which Colleen finds quite amazing. Currently, they are stay-at-home mums.

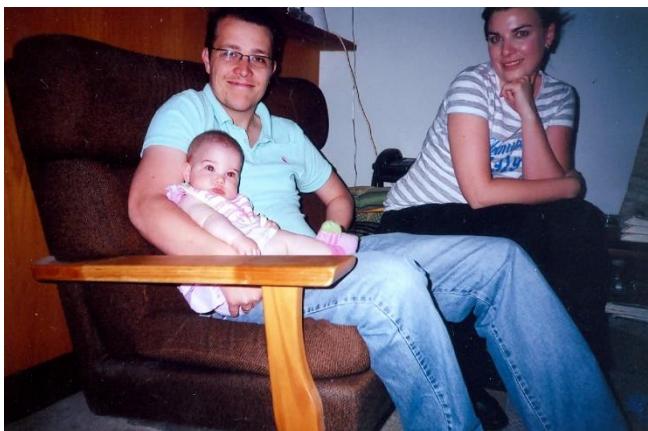
Justine is married to Hank and is the mother of Tarkan and Jodie is married to Greg and has two little boys, Jess and Dakota. Justine and Jodie are expecting babies which are due on the same day, 1st January, 2009. Neville's partner is May and Colleen is very fond of May's son, Ian. She says, "I love him to bits."



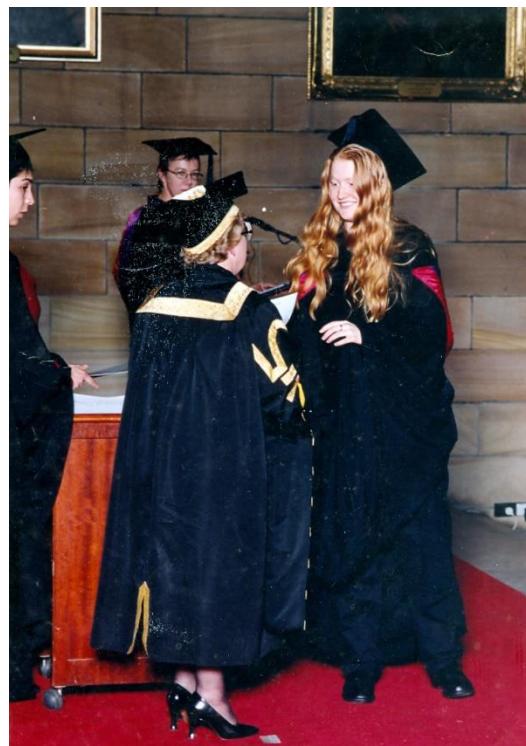
Grandchildren, Hal, Nell and Casey. –



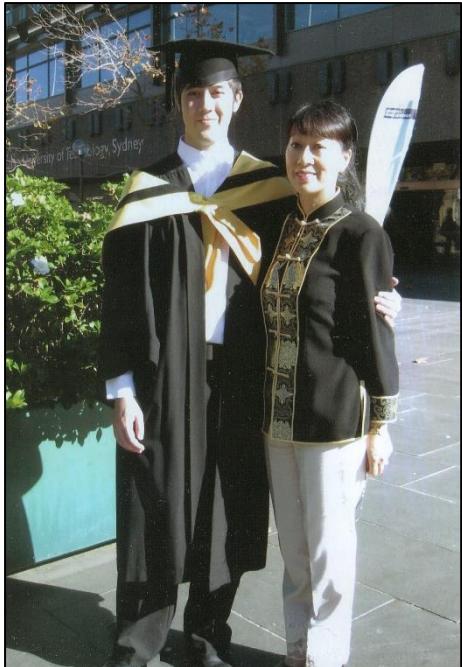
Grandchildren, Justine and Jodie



Hal is married to Angela and they have a baby girl, Lily.



Nell at her Graduation Ceremony



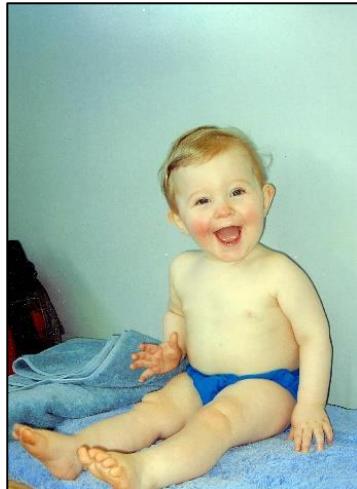
Ian with his mother, May.



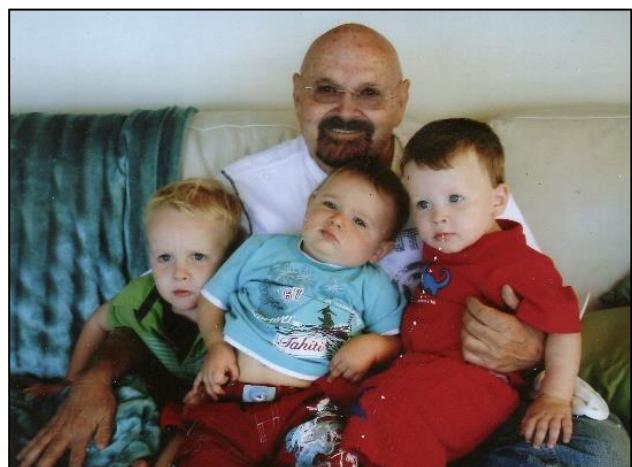
Great-grandchildren, Tarkan, Jess, and Dakota.



Jodie with Justine and Baby Tarkan.



Great-grandson, Louis,
Casey's son.



Neville with his grandsons.

Hal goes on to write

My time with Colleen.

*Over the years I have often stayed with my grandmother.
I would stay up to the wee hours over many cups of tea
and listen to oh, so many stories.*

*I would listen with wonderment when she told me the
story of Radford's experimental aqua vehicle prior to
the building of the Rip Bridge. Rod Radford was the
chemist at Ettalong, and he was able to cross the
channel quickly to reach his shop.*

*Our family visited Nan every school holidays, and
unashamedly, I absolutely loved it.*



Colleen's grandson, Hal Hopkins.

*There was a routine. Our mornings were spent happily: getting up
very early, taking Nan's dog, Max, to the beach and going for a swim or surf. Hopefully we
would catch a few fish in the afternoon, and Nan would lovingly cook them up for us both.*

*At the beach I did much exploring. I grew up to love the area and being around Colleen a lot
of the time made it doubly good.*

*It's on Killcare beach that I learned to bodysurf and then I soon graduated to standing up on
a board.*

*Unbeknownst to a lot of people, The Bouddi area has two of the most revered surfing waves
in the country; undoubtedly the longest wave in Australia is at Box Head and there is another
amazing left hand break named "Bugs." Without giving too much away as to its location (as
it is quite a secret), rumour has it, that it is very close to Maitland Bay.*

*I digress. Back to Nan! Nan is the most family-oriented, kind hearted, witty and selfless
person I have ever known. There is no doubt Colleen will always have a cause in life but I
believe it will be the effect that lasts.*

We are all better people for having known Colleen.

Hal Hopkins

Colleen thinks Hal is rather special too. "Hal is a beautiful person. He took me to Queensland, just he and I for two weeks, to visit Arthur's family. That's the sort of thing he does."

Colleen – the Historian

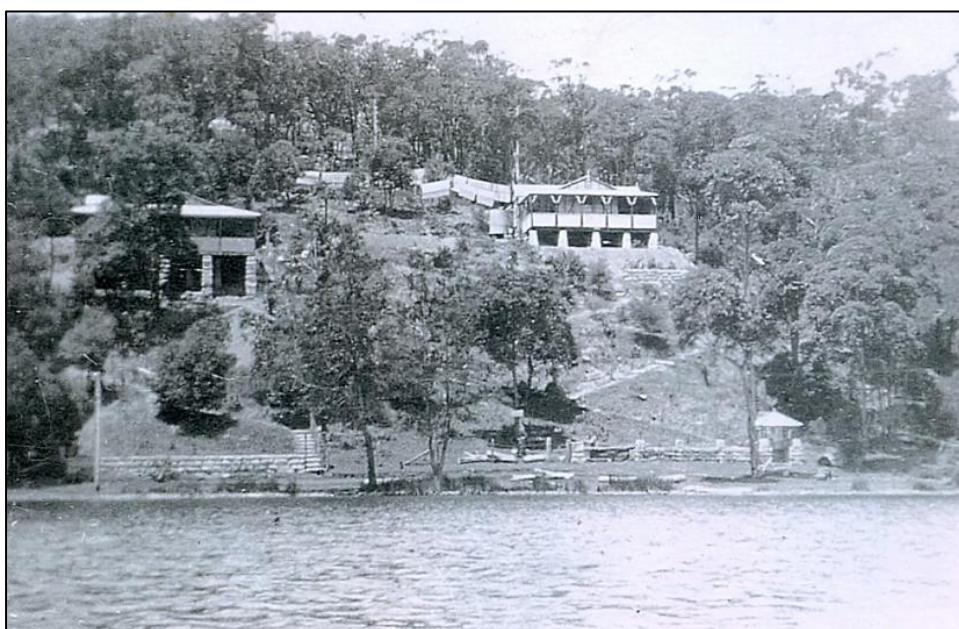
Because of her wonderful memory of things past, Colleen is an excellent resource when it comes to history. Heritage architect, Bruce Lay, interviewed Colleen with regard to the old houses at Hardys Bay. We also find out more about Colleen. Her love of people and place is evident when she talks about the past. Bruce interviewed Colleen in September, 2007. Excerpts which tell more of Colleen's story have been used here.

Here is Bruce Lay's contribution to Colleen's story:

Colleen must be considered a local historian. She has been interviewed many times because of her acute memory of the Killcare area and evident love of the area. My focus at this time is in researching the early houses in the area, sparked by my interest in No.118 Heath Road, and apparent rare use of the external frame, outside Queensland.

So, my questions and the interview focused on the surviving early houses, particularly from the 1920s until the after WW2, but not including the huge number of new houses built over the last 20 years.

Colleen's pride in her family home made it an important part of the story. The family lived at No 30 Government Bay Road, known as Bay Road and now Araluen Drive. It was a high-set house built by Nick Myer, father of Bert Myers. It was built in 1927 using timber transported by water on the steamships, Gosford and Erina. Because Colleen's father, Arthur, spent his working week in Sydney, he spent the weekends working in the garden and developed the beautiful terraces over time.



Bonnie View (at right), the Beasley' house and gate house in Araluen Drive.



Colleen's father built the terraced garden with stone retaining walls, steps and the gate house. There were 99 steps up to the house. They called the house *Bonnie View* after a visit from a visiting Scottish lass who commented, "What a bonnie view." It was often photographed by people, fascinated by its position and the steps.

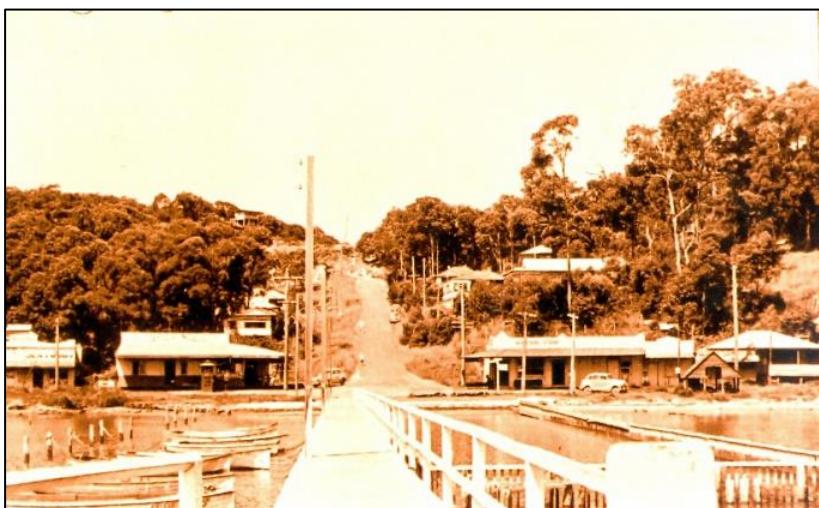
A section of the steps through the terraced garden.

Colleen's father worked at the Eveleigh Railway Workshops in Darlington, after service in WW1 and spending some time in many parts of Queensland.

Arthur Snr was a foreman in the paint shop for the Carriageworks. He had a small flat in Petersham for use during the week. Before the war he was a bushman. His father owned rural properties including one at Peak Hill. Arthur used to walk along Wilson Street to work. (I live in Wilson Street Newtown, opposite the entry to the Carriagework; hence this exchange).

The interview with Bruce was conducted during a drive around Araluen Drive and Heath Road looking at the houses but as Colleen chatted with Bruce, he found out more about her early life.

Colleen walked to school at Pretty Beach. Colleen maintains the Old Killcare Store was not there when she started school. She started in 1932 and attended until 1938. It had two classes, one inside with a fireplace and one in the porch with about 30 pupils, initially. There were two teachers. She then went to school at Wentworthville, until she left, at fourteen, in 1941. Colleen worked in the Killcare Store. She also worked on local farms and cleaned for Jack Shavit Real Estate. She took on a wide variety of jobs and says, "You name it, I did it and made beautiful friends." She married at 18 in 1944.



Looking at the shops from Killcare Wharf.

The next section completes Colleen's interview with Bruce.

There was also a general store on the other corner which was replaced by a Service Station and is now the general store and liquor outlet. This store, built in the 1930s by Charlie Hogan was built earlier than the 'Old Killcare Store,' whose owner, Ian McCall, she disagrees with. He maintains 'The Old Killcare Store' was built in the 20s but Colleen remembers it was built when she was going to school and that was the thirties. She remembers the huge blackberry bush that was on the block.

She also said that the building of it had to wait for the electricity to arrive.

A boat builder, Wally Worthington, occupied the premises next to the shop on the southern side. To launch a finished boat, he would wait for a high tide, then winch it on to car wheels, and with ropes, pull it across the road into the Bay.

The stone seawall and reclamation was done in the 1960s. Local ALP Ward Alderman, Bob Brading, is to be thanked for that. Colleen noted the importance of local representation.

Colleen, then went on to supply the names of the houses and the families who lived along Araluen Drive and Heath Road, helping Bruce with his research.

Robyn asked Colleen about the war years at Killcare. Here is what she had to say.



33rd Battalion..Horse Guard Feb. 1942
At Alec Martin's farm this battalion laid barb wire
on Putty Bch,during the 2nd World War.

Corporal Toby Ingless and local lass Collene Beasley

A whole contingent of men with dozens of horses came to Putty Beach during the war. They camped at Fisherman's End, the northern end of the beach.

The soldiers were taken under the wing of many a local lady. Mrs Cameron, Mrs Beasley, Mrs Halloran, Mrs Cass and Mrs Annie Annand befriended them and often took home their washing. These women organised dances at the Community Hall for the soldiers. Some kept in touch with Colleen's mother, Mrs Beasley, at Christmas time for many years.

Power came to the peninsula in the '30s. However, Killcare Heights did not get power until after WW2. The line was brought up Wards Hill Road and dropped down into Fletchers Glen and Fraser Road, by-passing Killcare Heights.

Here we see Colleen speaking at the launch of the Bouddi History Project in June 2007.

The community was invited to bring along their stories and their photographs which were scanned on the day so they could take them home. Colleen is a very special part of the History Project. Many topics are being covered and she has supplied information regarding quite a few of them.



The stories were collected over the next three years, resulting in a CD-ROM: *The Bouddi Peninsula: Voices and Images from a Colourful Past* and then the book: *Bouddi Peninsula – a very special place*. The CD-ROM was made available and packaged with it was a film: *The Bouddi Peninsula, A Time Tour*. Colleen is a star of the film as are two of the ‘old-timers’ in the photo below, Bert Myer and Ruth Hawkshaw. The stories of **all** the people below are found in *Bouddi Bios*, a part of *Bouddi Stories*, *Bouddi Bios*, *Bouddi Artists*, now all eBooks.



Joan Smith, Bert Myer, Jean Myer, Ruth Hawkshaw and Allan Cameron

Robyn continues Colleen’s story.

Colleen – The Community Worker

Colleen was and, in 2008, is still unstoppable when it comes to helping community causes. Early on, Colleen was the leader of the local kids in their study of the St John Ambulance First Aid Certificate. The organisation had a modest club room at Ettalong, Alice Ransom House. Every Saturday the contingent of children and Colleen could be seen joining Murphys Ferry service for their trip to Ettalong.

Roberts owned the bus company and rides were free if St John Ambulance was mentioned. Every girl at Pretty Beach Public School earned her First Aid Certificate. Some girls went on to do nursing.

In 1961 she took the group to Victoria Barracks to meet Eric Woodward, Governor General of Australia. Colleen and a brigade of young people were inspected by the Queen Mother on one of her visits to Australia in the 1960s.

Colleen was very proud that the St John's girls recited the *Ode to the Fallen* at the RSL's Anzac ceremonies.

In the fifties, Colleen was the Treasurer of the School P& C when her big sister Dawn (Mrs Peaker) was the Secretary.

She supports the fire brigade -Killcare Rural Fire Service, Killcare Surf Club, Gosford Hospital and the CWA. She makes home visits to the sick. And then there is her legendary knitting! The members of the Wagstaffe to Killcare Community Association (formally the Progress Association) regard her as their 'Raffle Queen'. Colleen is famous for often putting together a Mother's Day basket of goodies to raffle. She spends many a morning outside Killcare Cellars or Wagstaffe Store selling tickets to raise money for Wagstaffe Hall. She sells tickets at each meeting too. She is a keen helper with the Community Association's special events: the Australia Day Breakfast and Trash and Treasure, the annual community re-cycling event.



Colleen in her St John Ambulance uniform.



Australia Day 2001: Chris Dillon, Colleen Smith, Robert Bell, Robyn Warburton and guest speaker at the microphone.

Her latest knitting project is for children in Mongolia. To her horror, she believes the mothers have to put their children's feet in paper bags to keep them warm, so she is knitting and sending socks.

Colleen now belongs to the Woy Woy branch of the Country Women's Association but for many years she attended the CWA meetings at Wagstaffe where she happily helped with their local and international endeavours.

At one of the CWA concerts at Wagstaffe Hall, local residents, Judy McDonald and Josie Frost, pictured at right, did not recognize Colleen, in her costume and make-up for her Al Jolson act (not regarded as politically incorrect at that time).

Her impersonation and rendition of *Mammie* brought the house down. Colleen also remembers Merle Bowie being a beautiful Shirley Temple at the same concert.



Gary Irving, owner of Wagstaffe Store, with the help of the CWA and Bob and Ann Yuile decided to put on a money-raising sausage sizzle at the shop.

Safari attended with his benefactors, Janet Seath and Frank Scaysbrook. Recently, Janet and Frank were married. Guess who was invited to the wedding? Yes. Our Colleen.

This little piece was added later.

In the photo at right, Colleen is with Safari, aged seventeen. He returned to Wagstaffe in order to remember Colleen and the people who helped him and his village when he was a small boy.

On Thursdays each week she takes morning tea to the ladies who work in the RSPCA shop at Woy Woy. She also belongs to the RSPCA.

Colleen is a great supporter of Safari, the little boy from Kenya in Africa who suffered horrible, disfiguring burns when he was a young child. He was brought to Australia for a series of operations to repair the damage.



Colleen has always been a great supporter of Gosford Hospital. During her working years, if ever she had a Thursday off, she would do voluntary work at the hospital, such as feeding the little children or older people. For ten years she has regularly attended the meetings of the hospital's auxiliary. On the first Thursday of each month a stall is held at Gosford to raise money for the hospital. Colleen's contribution is her knitted goods. Bed-socks and beanies are her specialty.

Colleen and Friends in High Places



Colleen shares a moment with Kevin Rudd, soon to be Prime Minister.

Colleen, according to grandson Hal, has always had the ability to "whisper" to politicians at all levels, from the Mayors of Gosford, (her friend, Jim Mcfadyen, was mayor in 2008), to the Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd (pictured at left). She is passionate for the many causes of the Labor party.

I spite of this, Chris Hartcher MLA (Liberal) and Cr Robert Bell (Independent) would consider her a friend. The people with whom she is on a first name basis is a fairly incredible mix: John Singleton (she considers him a local); celebrity chef, TV personality and author Kylie Kwong (partner of her granddaughter, Nell) and Johnny Lewis, famous Australian boxing coach. Special friends are Sam and Joy Hordern, who holiday at Killcare. They often visit Colleen and take her 'goodies.'

Colleen – the Awardee

Colleen has received many accolades and has enjoyed those moments unashamedly.



Colleen received a Gosford City Council Australia Day Award in 1988 for her voluntary work in the community. In the photo above we see Colleen being presented with her Australia Day award and the large crowd at the ceremony.

Her achievements were seen to be the result of her energy, drive and participation, which benefited the organizations for which she worked.



Colleen at Sydney Town Hall

In 1999, she was recognised by the state government at *The Premier's Seniors Achievement Awards*. It was The Year of the Aging, and Colleen was seen as an excellent role-model for older people.

The presentation was made at Sydney Town Hall. Watched by thousands of people, she was paraded around the city in a motorcade.

She tells the story about how the next day, feeling extreme underarm soreness, she immediately self-diagnosed cancer of the lymph nodes. She had only to think a little bit harder to realise her arm was sore from the relentless waving she had done on the previous day.



Colleen was driven through the city in the motorcade of awardees.

Killcare Surf Club presented her with a medal for ‘support and help given to Killcare Surf Club’. When Colleen sees the third clubhouse opened next year, she will have attended all three openings of the clubhouses. She was with her father for the first one in 1934 and was there for the second in the 1971 and now she’s proudly up for the third in 2009.

Killcare Wagstaffe Rural Fire Brigade similarly acknowledged her support and accordingly awarded her a certificate.



Colleen, wearing another special hat raised the flag on Australia Day at Wagstaffe Hall in 2003.

Colleen is famous for her hats, often hand made. She designs them specially to suit the occasion. They are always broad-brimmed and colourful.

Colleen -The Writer

Colleen is a great writer of letters and that is the way she stays in contact with her family and distant friends. She says she keeps the postmen in business. If she wants to find out something, she will write a letter. Here is an example.

She wanted to know more about the retrieval of the bell from the ship, *The Maitland*, which sank in 1898 in the bay, which has been given its name. She was aware that the Wall family, who owned the store at Maitland Bay, knew the story so she wrote to George Wall. He wrote back, relating the story about how his parents had recovered the bell and struggled up the hill with it.

Colleen is not deterred by technology. No, she doesn't have a computer, but she does have a fax machine. Her son installed one for her, to make communication easier and she uses it.

Colleen, who has beautiful handwriting, when asked, has been happy to write letters or cards for people. She finds just the right words to express the joy, the sadness or the sympathy, required.

A little bird told me she also wrote a column for the local newspaper. Colleen confirmed this and explained. She wrote *Colleen's Column* for *The Express Advocate* for a few years in the 1970s. It was a friendly, gossipy piece informing people about the social happenings and the latest 'hatch, match and dispatch' events in the area.



Colleen at Wagstaffe, Australia Day 2010. Photo: David Dufty

Colleen – The Thinker

Everything written about Colleen convinces us that she thinks a lot about people and things. Not only does she think about things she produces ideas and shares them. How often does she ring someone with an idea? She often rings with items for *Talking Turkey*, the community newsletter.

The item suggested could be notice that someone has died or to suggest that a farewell gesture be organised for someone who has left the district. A famous suggestion was the headline for *Talking Turkey* she came up with when two of our residents, Jim Fraser and Eva Fulton, turned one hundred within days of each other. KILLCARE CELEBRATES DOUBLE CENTURY was the headline. She often rings Jim Macfadyen, Mayor of Gosford, to tell him what he's doing right and what he's doing wrong. She has come up with excellent ideas for prizes for raffles.

For many, many years Colleen has been almost totally deaf, so the achievements, which are part and parcel of her life's story, are all the more remarkable. She tops her 'lip-reading class'.

She has also given thought to this, her story, and what must not be forgotten.

Colleen insisted her thoughts about her good fortune must be included. She spoke proudly of her sons, "They have never wasted a minute of their lives." Praise indeed from a busy woman. She emphasised how lucky she is and has been throughout her life. She says her fortunate life is the result of the wonderful love and support she has always received from her friends and most importantly from her family; her sons and her daughters-in-law, her three grandsons (including Ian) and three granddaughters. She believes she has been blessed.

We, too, think we have been blessed to know Colleen, a very important member of our community.

Photographs: Colleen Smith; David Dufty, The Bouddi Collection.

Robyn Warburton Ed. 2022

THE HOUSE OF OSKAR SPECK

by Lee Casey

In 1952 much of the area of the heights above Killcare, not suitable for farmland but commanding magnificent views over Brisbane Water and the Pacific, consisted of steep rocky bushland generally considered unsuitable for building. Levelling in some cases was possible only by hand using shovels and wheelbarrows. This did not faze the German-born opal merchant Oskar Speck when he purchased several acres off the now Scenic Road and designed and built what the Australian Women's Weekly described in the House of the Week feature in 1968 as 'a haven for an adventurous traveller'.

Almost an understatement – Oskar Speck spent seven and a half years travelling from Germany to Australia, alone, in an eighteen-foot collapsible kayak, made of laminated rubber, canvas skin and a pliable timber frame. Unfortunately – or perhaps fortunately – he arrived here in 1939 and was immediately interned for the duration of the war. Fortunately, because he learnt the intricacies of opal cutting from a fellow inmate, after the war ended he headed for the opal fields of Lightning Ridge and made his fortune.

His journey to Australia has become folklore in kayaking circles and has been the subject of many articles and documentaries both here and in his native Germany. He left Germany in 1932 basically to get a job – there were 7 million unemployed in the country at the time. Paddling down the Danube through Austria and Yugoslavia he finally entered the sea at Salonica in Greece. He lugged his kayak across Syria and then paddled down the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf and three years after leaving Germany reached Colombo.

His equipment consisted of a compass, two small sails and a paddle. He apparently headed for Australia via New Guinea goaded by comments that he hadn't tackled a "real" ocean crossing.



Speck arrives in New Guinea

Oskar experienced many hardships; obtaining food and water was often difficult. It was nature, however, that turned out to be his biggest adversary: gale-force winds, monsoonal torrents of rain and huge seas. And he had many adventures. To name a few – his boat was stolen in Syria, and he had to bribe the police to get it back; he contracted Malaria and had to put his journey on hold for six months; he was arrested and declared a spy in India. He also became a celebrity and was welcomed with parties wherever he went. His determination saw him slowly travel east towards his goal, Australia.

It was early September in 1939 and the local magistrate in PNG told him he must surrender his pistol and report at Thursday Island. He was allowed to finish his intention to kayak to Australia. After interrogation that lasted a month, he was then detained as he had been declared ‘a loyal German’ but not politically active. However, there was a war on, and he was an enemy. The story goes that he was surprised to find that there was war on but who knows? It is a good story.



Speck himself became something of a landmark. The company in Germany that made his original kayak donated him a new one and he was often seen launching it into Brisbane Waters as in this photo, originally published in the Australasian Post, along with an article entitled *Incredible Journey*, recounting his 50,000 km voyage to Australia.

Following his success at Lightning Ridge, Oskar moved from the opal fields to Sydney and established himself as a highly successful opal merchant.

In 1952 he decided to build his dream home at Killcare. He designed and built his house essentially as a one-person home, doing much of the building and landscaping himself.



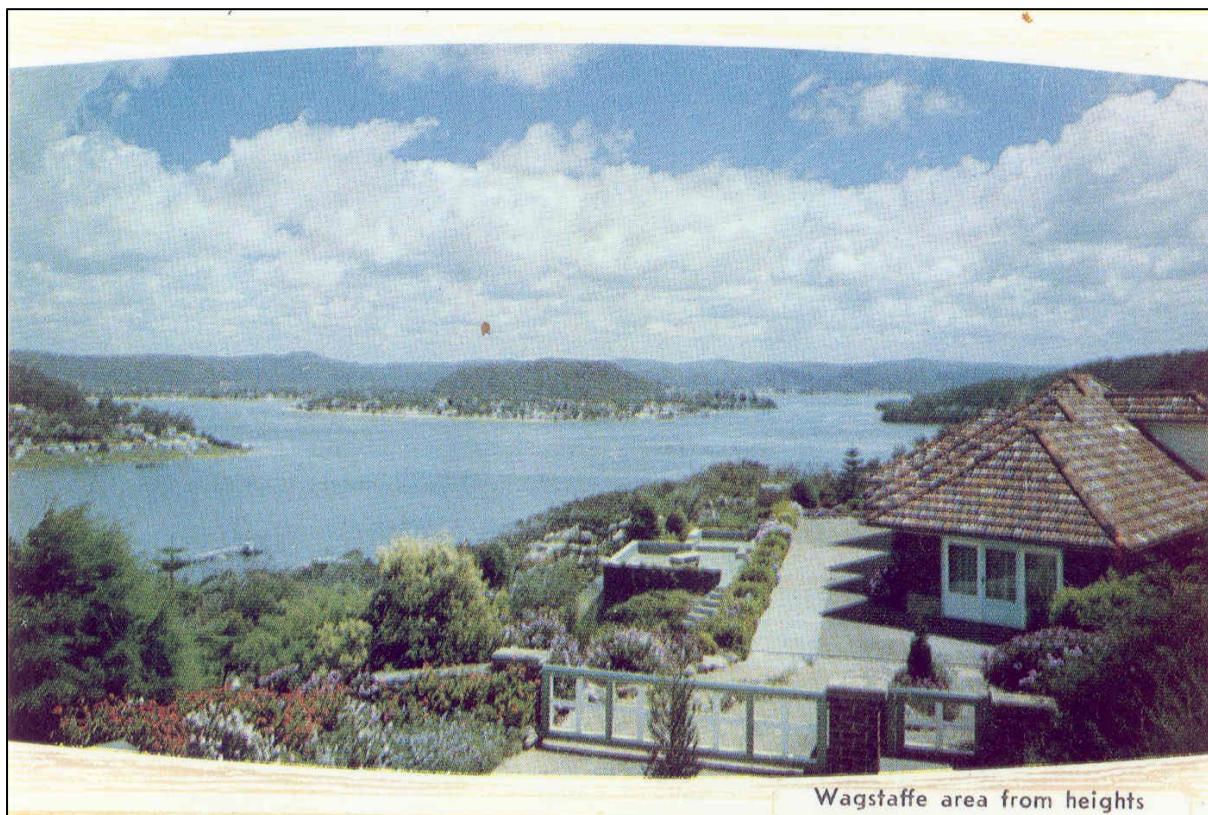
Two stages of the construction can be seen in the photos above.

Oskar did a lot of the work himself.



He later built an apartment above his nearby workshop to house his lady partner. The time came when Nancy Steel had her own house next door. To begin with, she worked in Sydney and visited Oskar every weekend. When he became ill, she moved to Killcare Heights permanently and cared for Oskar until his death.

The home quickly became a landmark and featured on postcards (below) promoting the Killcare-Wagstaffe area.



Postcard circa 1960

In 1978, with Speck now in his seventies, the property was listed for sale. An advertisement in the Financial Review stated, '*...price negotiable for approved buyer, vicinity \$90,000...*' and described the property as a '*...country or retirement house, cavity brick, 13 ½ squares plus attic, brick garage, terraces, patios, laid out gardens approx. one acre... Views over ocean to Palm Beach and over Brisbane Water... Unique position can never be built out... Not suitable for large family but ideally suited for active retired garden lovers who require guest accommodation as well.'*'

The property was not sold at the time and remained in Speck's hands until his death in 1995, aged 88. The property, which passed to his life partner Nancy Steel, had been subdivided into two lots—Oskar's house on one and Nancy's on the other. Oskar's house remains essentially as he designed and built it except that the original brick walls have been rendered. It is now linked by an atrium to a large extension in keeping with the original building.

Fortunately, the present owners, Wolf and Herta Gruber, fitted the bill of that 1978 advertisement as far as the garden is concerned. They purchased the property in 2003 and over the next four years have extended the garden down the steep slopes towards Hardys Bay creating possibly the most attractive and dramatic garden on the Peninsula.

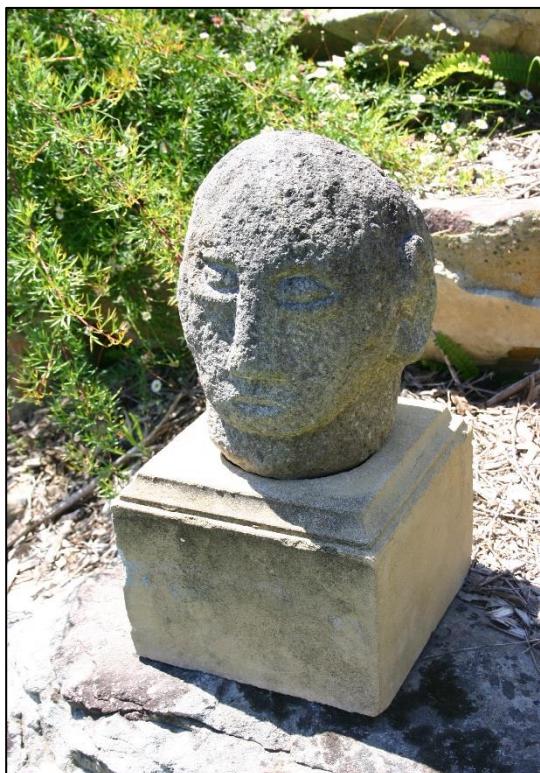




Wolf and Herta have renamed the house *Grubaldi* – a play (with a Bavarian touch) on the great House of Grimaldi, rulers of the principality of Monaco for centuries.



Herta likes to think that the spirit of Oskar Speck remains in the form of a small stone statue bearing a likeness to the man himself—found in a Sydney antique store and now residing in the garden.



The Statue



Oskar Speck

Lee Casey 2009

Photographs: The Bouddi Collection, Lee Casey

THE STEWART FAMILY

Proprietors of the Wagstaffe Store 1937 TO 1945

CHILDHOOD RECOLLECTIONS

by Alan Stewart

Before Wagstaffe

George Frederick Stewart was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on June 17, 1899. He migrated to Australia arriving on September 11, 1921. Margaret Hunter Paterson (Meg) Ferguson was born in Cowdenbeath, Scotland on February 22, 1905. She migrated to Australia arriving on March 3, 1923. They met in the main street of Kurri Kurri in the Northern Coalfields on March 5, 1923 and were married on December 25, 1926.

George worked as an electrician in Richmond Main Colliery but was laid off in 1932 during the Depression years. To feed his family he started an electrical contracting business during this period. On a hot day, he noticed a woman carrying ice cream cones, which were melting, so she was hurrying down the hill from the main street. When he saw her, he thought a small shop at the bottom of the hill should do very well. He found suitable premises and opened a small business at the corner of Victoria and Deakin Streets, Kurri Kurri,

George gave up the electrical contracting as few people had money to spend on this facility during these tough years. Around 1936, he returned to employment firstly with Australian Iron and Steel at Port Kembla, leaving Meg to run the shop. Being away from the family, and only getting home once a fortnight, was not to his liking. He found another job at Blackjack Colliery, Gunnedah. He sold his shop and house in Kurri Kurri and took his family to Gunnedah in 1937.



Wagstaffe 1938. George and Meg Stewart, nephew Bill Bell and Arthur Wright.

Wagstaffe

In 1936 or early 1937, my father had been interested in purchasing the General Store at Wagstaffe, but electricity had not been available at that time, so he deferred purchasing it, until the electricity supply had been connected and we subsequently moved there in late 1937.

At this stage the family consisted of Dad George; Mum Meg, me (Alan), Colin (7), and Neil (1½). At the time a young man, named Arthur Wright, had been employed by the previous owner and Dad kept him on as the busy Christmas period was about to start.

At this stage Gordon Rix ran the Post Office in the same building and he lived opposite the shop on the southeast corner. Sid Osborne had a greengrocer's store on the northwest corner with *Manly House*, a popular Guest House (Wagstaffe Hall now stands there), diagonally opposite the General Store. Charlie Hanscombe ran the local dairy, and his cows freely roamed the streets of Wagstaffe, keeping the grass under control. The Whiting family had a small business near Pretty Beach while our bread and bakery supplies came from Pop Holwell's Bakery at Pretty Beach, next to Frost's shop with Crowe's General Store on the opposite corner (where the tennis courts are today). The Murphy Brothers (John and Bill) and Jack Owen ran the Amalgamated Ferries, which were the major means of transport in and out of Wagstaffe at that time.

There was only a gravel road to Gosford and there was little more than a goat track in those days on Ward's Hill and hence very little road transport. I only remember two motor vehicles in the area at that time, our car and Sid Osborne's small truck which he used to go to Gosford for fruit and vegetable supplies. The roads were so bad that Dad sold his car and we were without a car for most of our stay in Wagstaffe.

Wagstaffe was made up of quite a number of holiday cottages, but some of the permanent families I recall are listed in a document entitled 'Families of Bouddi Peninsula circa 1937': this list covers the area from Wagstaffe Point to Killcare Heights. Because of the Depression, unemployment was still quite high at the time and some families had moved to the area where cheaper rental was available, better clothing was not required and fishing could supplement the diet and was a great help when rationing came into force in the War years.

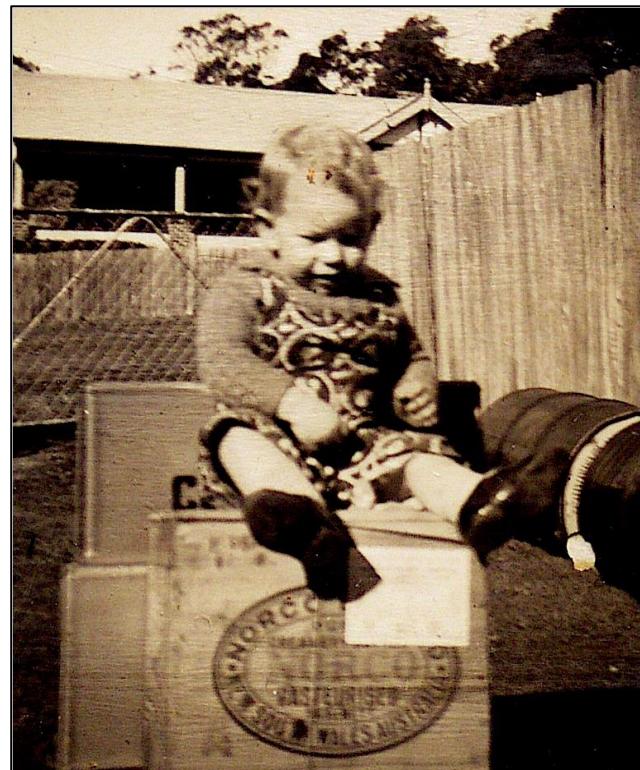
Following our first Christmas holiday period, Dad let Arthur Wright go and he eventually joined the Navy. This left the family to run the business and myself and my brother Colin, aged only 9 and 7, became more involved in the business. Although we worked very hard in the shop, there was still a great sense of freedom about the area.



Wagstaffe Store circa 1938

Most of the goods required for the shop came by boat from Sydney. Two boats, the *Gosford* and the *Erina II*, had a regular run from Sydney to Gosford. These were later replaced by rail services and improved roads. All the goods were unloaded on to the wharf and we had to get these to the shop, using a wheelbarrow. Similarly soft drinks and ice cream came from Margins of Woy Woy via the regular Amalgamated Ferries Service.

Try to imagine up to 200 cases of soft drinks (18 large bottles or 24 small bottles per case) on the roof of one of those ferries. In those days, most goods came in bulk: egg, flour, sugar, salt and rice. These had to be weighed up into brown paper bags, 4lb, 2lb, 1lb, 1/2lb, etc. Fuel such as petrol, kerosene and methylated spirits came in drums and had to be dispensed in gallon, quart, pint and 1/2 pint tins and bottles. As cars were few and far between; most of the petrol was used in boats, and the other fuels in lanterns and primus stoves.



Robert helps fill a one-gallon petrol tin and sits on butter boxes with petrol drums nearby.

Electricity was rather new at that time and most of the Holiday Cottages were not connected. We also sold firewood, and this had to be delivered in corn bags or potato sacks by wheelbarrow, to the many holiday cottages that were in Wagstaffe at that time.

School holiday time was always very busy in the shop, and I guess that we owe a lot to other members of the family, who came and helped out. In particular Auntie Mary and her husband Uncle Bob Bisset always appeared to be on hand. I also recall some of my cousins, Tom and Bill Bell and Tom Bisset being on hand, when new babies arrived.

Away from the work associated with the shop, there always appeared to be so many things to do such as playing ball games on the grass in the area surrounding Manly House, the two shops and the public wharf late in the day on beautiful summer evenings; playing cricket on Murphy's Paddock; building bonfires up on the hill to celebrate Australia Day and Cracker Night (Empire Day) and saving up to buy fireworks to brighten these displays.



Wagstaffe in 1939 after the Manly House fire. Note: Murphy's Paddock with Cricket Pitch and Ferries moored behind

We used to collect empty bottles from the holiday cottages and sell them to make a bit of pocket money. We got threepence a dozen for beer bottles, and quart bottles were worth a halfpenny each, if you took them over to the Ettalong Hotel via the rowing boat.

Cutting firewood was also another means of obtaining pocket money. Colin and I tried this with friends, Donny and Frank Osborne, but it was hard work with an axe and crosscut saw. We still managed to remove quite a number of trees from the Wagstaffe hill in our endeavour to supply the holiday makers with fuel.

We learnt to swim under our own steam in the old wooden swimming baths adjacent to the Wagstaffe Wharf. We rowed a boat to Ettalong, down around Half Tide Rocks to Lobster Beach and in later years rowed the old wooden clinker-built surf boat, *The Blue Bottle*, from the Surf Club at Putty Beach to Killcare, via Box Head, for storage during the winter months.

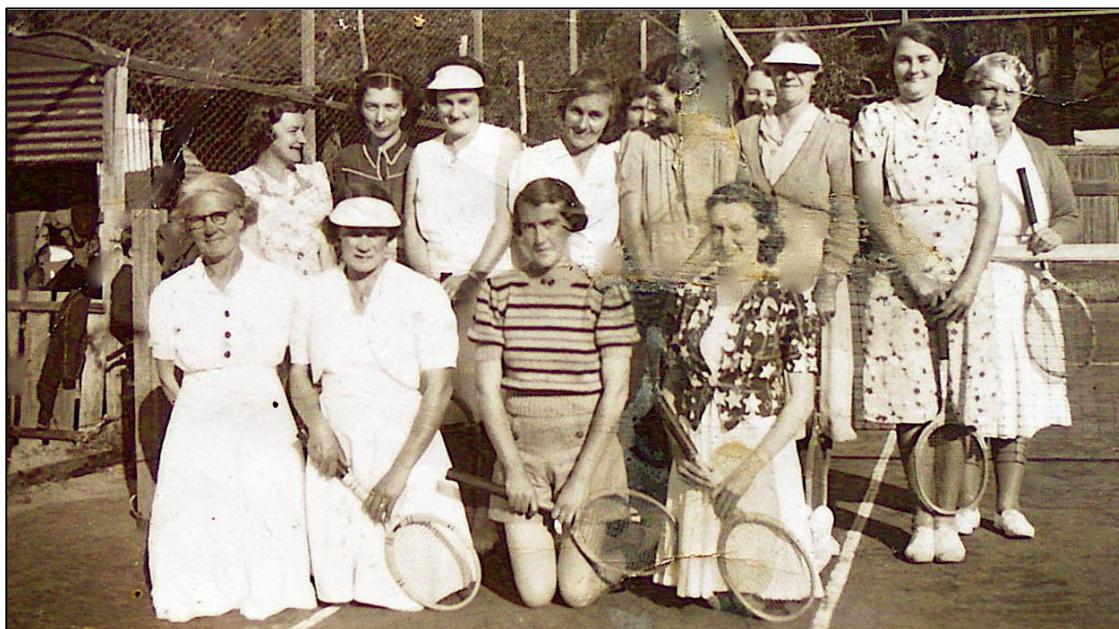
On at least one occasion Don and Frank Osborne, Colin and myself rowed across to Booker Bay and hired canoes from Bullions and went up through The Rip and around Daley's Point, Merritt's Wharf, Riley's Island, Empire Bay etc.

We took long walks to Half Tide Rocks, Lobster Beach, The Iron Ladder, Box Head, Tallow Beach, Killcare Heights and Maitland Bay and explored the bushland, caves and waterfront. We fished in all the aforementioned places.



Meg, Colin, Alan and Neil at Dog Face Rock, 1938.
(Lobster Beach in background)

There never seemed to be a shortage of things to do. One evening at Pretty Beach, when we were teenagers, Don and Frank Osborne, my brother, Colin and I were prawning, when we met a group of girls holidaying at the time, so we all ended up at their holiday cottage, enjoying some indoor games. When we left about 11 o'clock it was still high tide and Don started prawning again. We were not very popular, when our fathers came looking for us about midnight.



Ladies' tennis group, Holwell's Tennis Courts, Pretty Beach, 1942. Back row: unknown. Centre row: Meg Stewart, Phyl Annand, Babs Murphy, Vi Osborne, unknown, Tressa Willsmore, Mavis Johnson, Mrs. Rix. Kneeling: Mrs Cameron, Phyl Woods, unknown, Sylvie Owen. (Compare names with similar photo in the Martinsyde story p. 84 Volume 3

For the adults, dances were held in the church hall at Wagstaffe and the Hardys Bay Hall. I was taught at a very early stage to dance at these locations. I also remember that all the babies were taken along, wrapped in their shawls and placed on the stage, where Bert Hallinan played the piano and Jack Owen played his Squeeze Box. Tennis was also a great entertainment for the adults, the ladies in particular.



Margaret Stewart, Meg and Robert, 1941, with Osborne's Greengrocer's shop in the background.

There were other highlights - Robert was born on December 6, 1939 and Margaret arrived on July 12, 1941. Robert was named after Uncle Bob (Robert Bruce Bisset) and I guess this was in recognition of all the help Uncle Bob and Auntie Mary gave to Mum and Dad. These two were born at Hinemoa Private Hospital at Gosford, and we boys thought Margaret got all the attention, being the first girl after four boys - we probably went a long way to spoiling her ourselves. There was a little panic when Mum went into labour with Margaret, but fortunately Jack Owen had a car and was able to get Mum to hospital in the nick of time.

There were many walking tracks through the bush, extensively cleared and used; most areas were easily and quickly reached. These activities reduced the buildup of combustible material and probably reduced the severity of bushfires in those days.

There were also problems with living at Wagstaffe; there was no medical attention, and this caused many problems as when Mum was having the babies, but it always seemed that some family member was able to help out. I have previously mentioned my cousins, Tom and Bill Bell, in this regard. Having lost their mother in 1936, these boys turned out to be very good cooks and were able to manage our household very well.

I sustained quite a few injuries myself and still bear the scars today, because we were unable to get injuries treated or stitched up. There was an old gay gentleman named Sid Chant, who had some first aid knowledge, but he was pretty rough.

One form of sport we had was Grass Sledding. We used to get two tree branch suckers, shaped like hockey sticks, nail a foot board across the upturned ends and a seat across the rear end. The foot board had a couple of straps across to put your feet in and a tobacco tin fixed in between to hold some dripping to grease the runners; the seat generally had a seat belt-like strap to keep you on and a couple of sticks pivoted off the side of the seat to act as brakes and a steering mechanism. We then climbed to the top of the hill in Mulhall Street (seen in the photo above taken in 1943), to the right of Miss Jennings' house, and slid down, firstly on all the leaf mulch, dodging the trees, then bursting out on to the grass and down the hill.

Anyway, that was the theory. I miscalculated and came an awful cropper and finished up with a deep gash on my shin, which probably should have been stitched up, from the corner of the tobacco tin. That is another scar which I bear today. My friend, Frank Osborne, fell out of one of the coral trees that we all used to climb and play under. You can probably understand the pain he was in, with no treatment for quite some time before he could be transported to Woy Woy for medical treatment.



I had another near accident when returning from Putty Beach on my bicycle. I was doubling Kenny Evans and as we came down the hill into Killcare, the back pedal brakes failed. Ken tried to slow us down by pushing his bare foot against the back wheel but only succeeded in very seriously burning his heel. Fortunately, there were no vehicles or boats on the waterfront in Araluen Drive and with a big sweep, we managed to get around the corner, despite our great speed, and finally slow down of our own accord.

On another occasion, I was playing with my brother Neil and his tricycle in Mulhall Street, and I allowed him to tie me onto the tricycle. When he had finished, he gave me a bit of a push and the tricycle rolled down to Wagstaffe Avenue; being unable to steer the bike I hit the gravel and capsized, the result being a beaut black eye and gravel-rashed face. I was not a pretty picture when I had to front for my first day at High School the next day.



Part of Manly House in the background and the Coral Tree which Frank Osborne fell out of and broke his leg, when he hit the seats below.



My brother, Neil, was one who got into a lot of strife at Wagstaffe. He tried to burn the house down by building a bonfire of cardboard boxes and packing crates at the side of the house. He most probably saw the older boys getting ready for cracker night and decided to have his own fireworks display. Fortunately, the shop had a corrugated iron wall, and the fire was found in time, so no damage was done.

On another occasion, he got himself lost when he wandered away with his mate, Donny Tindall, and there was some real panic that he may have been drowned. I was lucky enough to find him several hours later over near Lobster Beach. You can see them trying their hand at fishing from Half Tide Rocks in the photo below taken in 1938.

He also had a confrontation with Colin in a dispute over some kindling that Colin was chopping with an axe. As Colin swung the axe, Neil reached for the piece of wood and he lost part of a finger. Without the medical facilities of today, Neil has gone through life with a deformed finger.

On another occasion, Neil and Donny Tindall hitched a ride on a tray type truck (unknown to the driver), from Pretty Beach to Wagstaffe, by hanging on to the tray of the truck and holding their legs up. At Wagstaffe, they wanted to get off, but the truck continued along Wagstaffe Avenue without slowing down, so they let go with rather drastic results - lots of gravel rash and bruises so they did not try that again. Robert did not escape unhurt either. He received a broken arm as a young baby, when he slipped out of a blanket while being nursed at the picture theatre at Ettalong one night and fell to the floor. It was some time before X-Rays showed the arm to be broken.

Another problem was lack of water, as most people had to rely on rainwater tanks, although I can't remember complaining when we were only allowed to have a bath once a week and even then, having to share the water with the rest of the family.

But on the serious side, fire was always a serious threat, both from uncontrolled bush fires and the use of fuel fired stoves, bath heaters and coppers in and around the house, and you always had to be extremely careful. You would not have thought so if you had seen the action when we stoked up the chip heater in the bathroom with cardboard to heat the bath water. Flames would leap about two feet out of the heater and the boiling water would be coming out in spurts because the rainwater going in could not keep up with the demand. The copper was situated just outside the back verandah and was used to boil sheets, nappies and linen. It was my job to assist Mum to get these items out of the boiling copper on a stick, carry them across the verandah to the rinsing water in the cement tubs against the wall, put them through the hand wringer into the blue water, then back through the wringer before they were hung on the clothesline. Reckitts Blue Bags were a popular thing in those days to help brighten the linen.

In our time at Wagstaffe, Hanscombe's dairy cows roamed freely through the bush. People gathered fallen sticks as kindling to light house fires. We children gathered this material for our bonfires, folk collected leaf mulch for their gardens and some trees were culled for firewood.



If a building caught fire, there was nothing you could do about it; like the time Manly House was burnt to the ground in 1939 (photo below). The people just had to stand back and watch or in Dad's case keep very busy with a bucket of water, trying to protect the shop. We were in school at the time and could see the thick smoke from there and many rumours soon spread. So as soon as we were allowed out of school, it was run all the way home to find just a smouldering mass of rubble, where Manly House once stood. It was a very sobering lesson.

I mentioned Dad being busy during the Manly House fire. At the time there was a wooden verandah across the front of the shop about a foot high and there was a book burning on the ground over near Manly House and as each page burned the wind blew it off and it rolled toward the shop and Dad was frightened that it would get under the verandah and start another fire, so he was dousing them with his bucket of water. Dad later removed this verandah while carrying out some renovations to extend the shop.



Neil on his first day at Pretty Beach School. Colin and I were now at High School.

Schooldays

I attended three different Schools for third class, starting at my birthplace in Kurri Kurri; then nine months spent at Gunnedah and ending the year at Pretty Beach. I then went on to 4th and 5th Classes where our teacher was Mr Charles Allen, who lived at Booker Bay and came over each day in his motor launch.

He was a remarkable man, handling up to seven classes at times. He was very skillful at wood working. I remember the chip carving he used to teach us for Manual Arts. He would take the completed carvings home and make them into jewellery boxes and the like. One still exists in my family today.

Unfortunately, late in 1939, Mr Allen suffered a heart attack and was unable to continue teaching and as World War 2 had commenced, there was no replacement for him.

Mr Herbert Walsh was appointed Acting Principal from July 25 to November 18, 1940, not seeing the year out. Mr Eric Rossiter was appointed Principal from January 31, 1941.



Local boys off to Gosford High School, 1941.
Back row: Ron Walters, Jack Battishall, John Corfield, Allan Cameron, unknown, Bruce Naylor,
Centre row: Alan Stewart, Colin Stewart, Frank Osborne, Bevan Hallinan, Tom Starr Front: Neil Stewart

My father decided, as I was now in 6th Class and due to go on to Gosford High School the following year, that I could not afford to miss school, so he sent me to Woy Woy Public School. I was most upset at this because my brother and friends did not have to attend school for most of the year.

I guess Dad's decision was in my best interest. I, of course, went on to Gosford High School and remember well the travel arrangements. We caught the ferry at about 7:00 am to either Ettalong or Booker Bay, depending on the tide, thence by bus to Woy Woy and train to Gosford and finally the walk to the school. This was all right for me living near Wagstaffe Wharf, but the likes of Les and Ron Walters had a five mile walk from Killcare Heights to catch the ferry. On the return journey we had to look out of the train, to see if the ferry was still at the wharf at Woy Woy, as its departure time coincided with the north bound train from Sydney and only if that was late could we get the ferry from Woy Woy; otherwise, we caught the bus to Booker Bay where we would be picked up by the ferry. On Thursday, Market Day, we could sometimes catch the ferry from Gosford. We would arrive home about 5.30pm.

Wartime

Of course, World War Two intervened and brought its own problems, such as food and clothing rationing, blackouts, confiscation of our boats and canoes, the building of a barrage from Half Tide Rocks to Ocean Beach to prevent any shipping or submarines entering Brisbane Water, and general feelings of insecurity.

A number of us youngsters always thought it would be fun to try to cross to Ocean Beach over this boom, which consisted of a number of pontoons strung across by a couple of steel cables, but we were never quite game enough.

I suppose clothes rationing did not worry us too much, as the clothes we wore did not have to be too good, being generally hand-me-downs and most of us young fellows never wore shoes at Wagstaffe or even to school, if we could get away with it. We did try to prepare for an invasion by being associated with the Air Raid Wardens, of whom Dad was the Chief, having access to the telephone through the Post Office.

Us young fellows were runners or bike riders, if you had one, and were required to deliver warnings to other parts of the peninsula. We used to practice on a Sunday afternoon, by running from Wagstaffe to Putty Beach, having a surf and running home again. We also built an air raid shelter in the back yard of the shop, which eventually filled with water and collapsed during heavy rain. At Gosford High School in 1942, we seemed to dig miles of air raid trenches instead of going to sport, while the girls tore up bed sheets and pasted strips on the School windows to prevent injuries from flying glass. I also remember helping to dig air raid trenches at Pretty Beach School.

The only scare we had was when Dad received a 'Code Red' alert, by telephone, when the Japanese mini subs entered Sydney Harbour. During the war years, there were a number of Defence Forces exercises conducted in the area and we boys sometimes camped out in the bush with the soldiers. To while away the time, they played cards around the campfire and that is where I first learned to play 'Nap' ('Napoleon' or '21').



Liberal Party Rally, Wagstaffe Church Hall, 1941. Left to Right: unknown, Mrs Gayleard, unknown, The Hon. Mr Spooner, George Stewart, Gordon Rix and unknown.

My father, at one stage, dabbled in Politics and ran as a candidate for the Local Government elections but was unsuccessful. The photo shows him attending a Liberal Party rally in 1941, which is hard to understand, as he was a staunch Labor Party supporter. Dad was also a member of the Masonic Lodge, having joined Freemasonry in Scotland before emigrating to Australia in 1921. To attend the Lodge in Woy Woy, he would dress in his dinner suit without his shoes and socks on, roll his trousers legs up to his knees, then row our boat across to Ettalong, put his shoes and socks on and catch the bus or be picked up by car for the trip into Woy Woy, with a repeat performance, in reverse, on the way home after Lodge.

I remember a few of the local men who joined up for war service, among them Mick Reynolds, Reg and Arthur Wright, John Murphy and Don Hanscombe. Don lost his life when his aircraft was shot down over Europe. I recall how Mr Rix had to deliver a Blue Telegram, which was the means by which his parents were informed by the Government, that their loved one was 'Missing in Action believed killed'. It was a sad day for the district, bringing home the reality of a War so far away.



Local servicemen: Left to Right: Mick Reynolds, Don Hanscombe (son of the milkman), John Murphy (part owner Amalgamated Ferries), Reg Wright and his son Arthur Wright.



Jimmy Nelson (on right), with his grandson (on left), daughter, and his son in law, who had just arrived home after being released from POW Camp in Germany in 1943.

Fund raising for the Red Cross and the War Effort occupied a fair bit of the time for local residents, although there was very little money about in those times. There were stalls held in the square in front of the shop; the ladies were busy knitting socks and things to be included in parcels to be sent to our Servicemen. Concerts and entertainment were organized too.



Red Cross Stall, Wagstaffe in 1943. George Stewart's tent. Left to Right: Unknown, Meg Stewart, Alan Stewart, Neil Stewart, Robert Stewart, Don Osborne, Unknown, Donny Tindall, Colin Stewart, Frank Osborne, Joyce Hodgson, Kenny Greenhalgh and Maisie Miller.

The establishment of a concert group was done by Joyce Hodgson. Joyce was a former Tivoli Theatre showgirl, who came to reside at Wagstaffe with her two children and a friend, Maisie Miller, in the house formerly owned by Gordon Rix. (At this time Mr Rix had left Wagstaffe and my father took over the running of the Post Office). Maisie was also involved with the Tivoli Theatre in the wardrobe section. Joyce moulded all the local children into a pretty fair concert group, and we performed at Wagstaffe, and in the Masonic Hall at Woy Woy. I remember that apart from the general chorus I was in a song and dance act with Norma Naylor, where we did a soft shoe shuffle to *Lily of Lagoona*. This was the extent of my appearance on stage, as I believe I was a terrible singer.

To start and finish the show the whole cast sang our theme song along the following lines.

This would be repeated for Pretty Beach, Hardys Bay and Killcare.

*How do you do everybody, how do you do,
This is Wagstaffe here, calling you,
We're here to do our best,
It's up to you to do the rest,
How do you do every body? How do you do?*

Ship building was a prominent industry in the Merritt's Wharf, Daleys Point area and I can well remember the launching of the vessel *Patricia Camm*, for whole families attended. It was a great celebration and it really stuck in my mind, as all we children enjoyed free soft drinks, cakes and sweets, which were a great treat. There was also a boat builder in Araluen Drive, Killcare, who built small craft like rowing boats. This was where we got off-cuts of beautiful beech timber for our chip carving at school.

Entering the Work Force

When we were working in the shop, it was often relatively easy to con Mum or Aunty Mary into letting me sneak away, I would explain that the tide was just right to go and jag a few mullet down at the wharf or some such airy fairy excuse. However, I did gain experience for entering the workforce by working as a deckhand on the Ferries and as a Telegram Boy, delivering telegrams by push bike from Woy Woy Post Office during school holiday periods.



Family group in front of the shop, 1943. Note the wooden veranda has been removed.
Left to right: George, Robert, Alan, Margaret, Meg and Colin. Neil was absent.

My father, at this time, believed that he should guide his sons into trades, or the Public Service or Government Employment to gain some stability and permanency for the future and so, after trying entrance exams for the Navy, Public Service and Railways, I commenced an apprenticeship as an electrical fitter with the Railways at the Signal Branch, Chullora.

I had completed my education at Gosford High School at the Intermediate Certificate Level and was notified, after I had commenced with the Railways, that I had achieved a pass of 5 As and 2 Bs which was equal top pass with Nancy Sterland for Gosford High School that year. On reflection, I should have continued on at school, but the die had been cast. Like many other young people starting out, it was necessary to board in Sydney during the week as transport in those days was impossible. I was fortunate to obtain board with a former Wagstaffe resident, Tressa Willsmore at Earlwood, and so began commuting between Wagstaffe and Sydney at weekends.

To get home on Friday night I used to catch a train from Strathfield, a train that would already be full when it left Central and so you would be obliged to cram onto a carriage platform and stand for the whole journey to Woy Woy. This was never pleasant, out in the open, on a steam train, particularly going through the tunnels and you would emerge dirty and often with cinders in your hair and eyes. I recall on one occasion, standing on the buffers between the carriages, arms wrapped around the handrails and holding on to my suitcase for the whole journey. The return journey on Sunday evening was not much better but with a group of fellows we developed a strategy for getting in through the toilet window, which was generally in the centre of the carriage, and six or seven of us would climb through the window, lock the door and stand jam packed for the return trip.

Surf Club Days

At this stage, I became interested in the Killcare Surf Club and along with many of the other boys, who commuted to the district, we got the club going towards the latter part of the war years. I vividly remember the first group of fellows, who were to take the Bronze Medallion test. Among them were Allan Cameron, Harold Hackman, Aubrey Nash, Bill Hanscombe, Colin Gow, Ronny Jones, Don Whiting and the examiner was Mr Frank Payne.

However, it was the boat crew that nearly caused a tragedy. The crew consisted of a Sweep or Captain and an untrained crew of Bruce Naylor, Jack Battishall, Les Walters and me. Apart from the Captain, I believe that I was the only person who could swim. We were asked to set the buoys in readiness for the test so off we went in the old *Bluebottle*. At this stage, the surf had become rather huge and as the tide dropped the waves were dumping on a sandbar. Well, the old boat climbed up over a huge wave and came down with such a thud that it knocked the drainage bung out of the bottom of the boat and unseated all the rowers. There was a mad scramble to get the oars going again, as we were being dragged by the current into the rocks at the southern end of the beach and the boat was rapidly filling with water.

Someone noticed the bung floating in the boat and managed to get it back in, to the screams of the captain. Ever so slowly, we managed to pull the boat away from the rocks and thus averted a tragedy. We got far enough out to enable us to bail some of the water out and breathe a sigh of relief. Frank Payne was signalling us to bring the buoys closer to shore, but there was no way we were going to get that close to the breaking waves. So, they started the test.

Aubrey Nash made it out to the buoys as a ‘patient’ swim, but he got in the boat and refused to go back in the water. By this time the waves had reached about three to four metres and were dumping quite hard on the sandbar. A couple of belt swimmers attempted to come out but really had no chance and so the test was called off. As I said before, there was no way we could have got the boat back through the surf, so we rowed all the way to the fisherman’s end of the beach, dragged the boat up the beach as far as we could, left it there and walked home.

Sometime later, the boys completed the test for their Bronze Medallions; I think it was at Ocean Beach and Bill Hanscombe, who was not a strong swimmer, practically walked all the way out to the buoys. I also obtained my bronze medallion at Ocean Beach, when I turned 18, as I was the only candidate from Killcare at that time.



The first *Bluebottle*’s last row at Ocean Beach, 1945. *Bluebottle* came from North Steyne Surf Club and at the end of its career was given to the Woy Woy Sea Scouts.



‘A Motley Crew’, 1944. Alan Stewart is the boy on the left in the boat.
Numbered are: 1. Don Whiting 2. Bill Hanscombe 3. Ron Jones 4. Jack Battishall.

After the War

When a committee was formed to run the Club at the end of the War, I remember Harold Hackman became the Secretary and I became First Aid Officer, on account of having completed a St John First Aid Course with the Railways. At the end of the war and the return to some normality, chaps like Ken Stewart and George Dodd added to the club's strength and the Club competed favourably at various Carnivals. Bill Hanscombe was very fast and was the forerunner of the Killcare Club's success at Beach Sprints, which continued into the future. I was a member of the R and R team, the youngest and probably the weakest swimmer of the team, in there mainly for my drill work. However, I did excel in the sack races, which were part of the Carnivals in those days. All these fellows I have mentioned from the Surf Club were instrumental in getting the Woy Woy Rugby League Club going after the war.

In the meantime, my father, who had taken over the Post Office from Gordon Rix, decided to sell the shop but keep the Post Office. Joyce and Maisie left Wagstaffe to return to the city. Dad bought Gordon Rix's house, now vacant, and life settled down following the cessation of hostilities... but not for long. Dad found that the Post Office was not making enough money for his needs; he had probably thought that I would be paying my way at this stage, but having to board in Sydney was eating into my apprentice's wage and he still had to provide some financial support for me. He took a job as Relieving Postmaster, firstly at Wiseman's Ferry, until his niece took over that Office, then Stockton and then he went to Terrigal Post Office. As a residence was available above the Office at Terrigal, the family moved there. The house at Wagstaffe was sold and so ended our family's era of living in this wonderful community.

It is not the end really, as members of the family have made many return visits to see old friends: for Nostalgia Days, Australia Day celebrations, school reunions etc., and I still retain very fond memories of the best eight years of my youth. This could be no better displayed than by my friendship with Don and Frank Osborne. Don named his son, Alan, after me - a great privilege. Although we met only a handful of times over the next 60 years, nothing changed, and it was as if it had only been yesterday that we parted.



After the fire. Wagstaffe from the 1940s. So many memories. So many stories...So many changes.

Such is the nature of childhood friendships and the spirit of mateship that I experienced in those wonderful years at Wagstaffe Point.

Epilogue

From Terrigal the family moved to Gosford, where George took a job in the Post Office. He retained an interest in Wagstaffe, Lawn Bowls and the Masonic Lodge. He devoted some time to the Boy Scout Movement and was the founder of the Gosford Caledonian Society and Pipe Band. He retired from the Post Office in 1965 and continued to live in Gosford, until his death in 1988.

Meg ran a small shop in Faunce Street, Gosford, until the unexpected arrival of their sixth child, John, in 1952. She became a Lawn Bowls Champion. She died in 1998.

I (Alan) married Aileen Holmes. We lived at Narrabri for eight years, where our children, Desley, Keith and Graeme, were born. I became an Electrical Superintendent for Peel Cunningham County Council at Quirindi and retired in 1988, moving to Bonny Hills on the Mid North Coast until 2002, when we moved to Wamberal.

Colin became a builder. He married Gwen Blewitt and had three girls, Maxine, Fiona and Catherine and one son, Andrew. They resided for many years at Ourimbah. Colin died in 2006.

Neil entered the Printing Trade and married Janet Todkill and had two daughters, Sue and Wendy. They resided at Green Point until 2007 and now live at Saratoga.

Robert became a Bank Manager. He married Margaret Jackson and had two boys, David and Bruce and a daughter Alex. They now reside at Normanhurst.

Margaret is now a Travel Consultant. She married Claude Person, and they have two boys, Marc and Christophe. They now reside at Hornsby Heights.

John entered the field of Real Estate and is now the proprietor of Raine and Horne, Gosford. He married Lorraine Sherack and they reside at Point Frederick.

Alan Stewart 2009

Photographs in this article have been supplied by the Stewart family, except for two photos on Page 17, which belong to the Surf Club Collection compiled by Jim Tubby.

ALLEN AND BERYL STROM

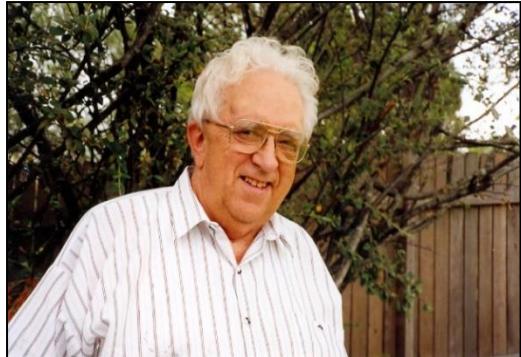
by Gary Nipperess

Allen Axel Strom AM (1915-97) and Beryl Joan Strom OAM (1933-2002) worked tirelessly for the community, the environment and educational programs.



Allen trained as a teacher at Sydney Teachers College during 1932-33 and became interested in environmental education after a teaching appointment at Yanco Agricultural High School. It was here that Allen in his own words, "...first began to question the accepted concepts of land use and the human impact upon the natural systems." Allen returned to the city and involved himself with the National Fitness Council, school camping and the Caloola Club, which aimed to provide firsthand experiences with the environment.

In 1946 Allen established the Education Officer Service at The Australian Museum and in 1947 joined the staff at Balmain Teachers' College. From 1958-67 Allen served with distinction as the Chief Guardian of Fauna of the Fauna Protection Panel prior to the establishment of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. Allen was a pivotal member of the National Parks Association (NSW Branch) and the Nature Conservation Council of NSW.



He returned to the Department of Education in 1967 as Advisor in Conservation with the task of establishing conservation education in schooling and in 1972 was awarded the Australian Natural History Medallion for ‘Special Study and for Increasing Knowledge and Appreciation of Natural History in Australia’. Allen ‘retired’ in 1977 and was a recipient of the Member of the Order of Australia Award in the same year.

Beryl attended Balmain Teachers’ College during 1950-51 and her first appointment was to Normanhurst Public School with a kindergarten class. She subsequently taught at Bingara PS, Oak Flats PS and Batlow PS until 1955. Beryl loved the outdoors and often cycled with her friends, hundreds of miles through coastal NSW; she was a Sea Ranger. Her enthusiasm for the outdoors saw her become involved with the Caloola Club, serve as secretary of the National Parks Association (NSW) and in 1961, she was appointed the first secretary of the Nature Conservation Council of NSW. Her regular attendance at environmental meetings and the Caloola Club meetings brought her into close contact with Allen. Allen and Beryl married in 1967.

An amazing partnership then ensued of continued tireless dedication in the public interest in environmental education and heritage issues. On retirement, Allen became increasingly interested in Central Coast land use issues and Beryl with her three adult children, from her previous marriage, having left home, enveloped herself in researching local history and the built environment. Allen and Beryl supported each other in their new interests and quickly developed into a formidable duo, striving to retain the environmental values of the Central Coast.

In 1978, Beryl attended a Gosford Council meeting after hearing of a development plan for a heritage shop. She rarely missed a council meeting until her death in 2002 and Allen also attended, both questioning Council decisions and speaking in the public forum on important issues. In the 1980s Beryl and Allen established the Gosford District Historical Research and Heritage Association, Gosford District Environment Foundation and the Association for Environmental Education (Central Coast Branch). They were foundation members of the Killcare Wagstaffe Trust and held positions on the committee. Beryl worked on numerous Gosford City Council committees and was actively involved in the Gosford City Coastal Open Space System (COSS).

For service to community history and to the community Beryl was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in 1991. In 1997 she was made an honorary member of the National Parks Association and received an Australia Day Community Award for the Environment. In 2001 Beryl was re-elected Chair of the Central Coast/Hunter Range Advisory Committee and received a citation which acknowledged her outstanding voluntary work to the National Parks and Wildlife Service after 40 years association with Bouddi National Park.

Beryl researched and wrote many historical publications, including *Gosford/Wyong History and Heritage*, *City of Gosford - History of Local Government* and the *Gosford and Central Coast Sketchbook*.

Her greatest legacy to the Central Coast built environment was to ensure most of the sites and buildings identified in her *History and Heritage* publication were listed as heritage items in a Gosford City Council Local Environmental Plan. Allen produced publications about Wamberal Lagoon Nature Reserve, Wyong Valleys and the Kincumber Environment. They also co-wrote many other publications and were instrumental in establishing the Woy Woy Environment Centre during the bi-centennial year.

During meetings of the various organisations and well organised field trips (see photo below), Allen and Beryl disseminated and shared their knowledge, skills and passion for the environment. Together they were an indispensable reference source and were generous with sharing their skills within the local and environmental community. They provided the scaffolding and information for community members to question Council decisions and encouraged others to formally object to development applications. Allen was knowledgeable about local Council and State legislation, particularly the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. Even officers of Gosford City Council had been known on occasion to contact Allen seeking his understanding, advice and opinion on issues! They are missed by many in our community for their profound impact on people's thinking; their example made people think of more than just themselves.



Following Allen's death in 1997, the NPWS established the Allen Strom Lookout in Bouddi National Park overlooking Brisbane Water and the NSW Environmental Protection Agency implemented the \$10000 Allen Strom Eureka Prize in 1999, aimed at encouraging excellence in the design, implementation and evaluation of environmental education programs. Beryl continued her work on a significant number of committees and as a volunteer at the Maitland Bay Centre and as a member of the MacMasters Beach Progress Association. In 1999, she received a Commonwealth Recognition Award for Senior Australians in the community of Robertson and was seen as a role model for people becoming involved in volunteer work.

Beryl died suddenly after a short illness in 2002 and in recognition of her contribution to Gosford Council's Coastal Open Space System a ceremony and plaque unveiling was conducted at North Avoca in April, 2003, followed by the Central Coast Hunter Region of the NPWS holding a dedication ceremony at Gosford for the Beryl Strom Herbarium. Gosford City Library also established the Beryl Strom Collection which contains many of her historical papers and photographs.

The property *Miara* was gifted to the NPWS by Beryl to be developed and used as a centre for the administration and management of Bouddi National Park and for housing educational resources.

Gary Nipperess (Beryl Strom's son)

October, 2008

Note: This information is an outline of the Stroms' outstanding achievements, community participation and lives dedicated to the public interest. A comprehensive story of Allen and Beryl has been recorded by long-time family friend, Allan Fox, one of Australia's most highly regarded naturalists, who is currently negotiating with publishers to have the manuscript printed.

NATURE, BUSH AND APATHY

by Jack Taylor

Jack Taylor's article was found in the archives of the Killcare Wagstaffe Trust. It contains some interesting detail and a plea for greater care of the environment, which, although written in the 1980s is just as important, thirty years later.

I was born October, 1915. My great grandparents came from England and Scotland. They settled in the Newcastle-Maitland district.

Early lessons in nature.

In 1925-26 I arrived at Woy Woy by steam train, where I boarded a fifteen-passenger bus for Ocean Beach. The bus proprietor was Mr. Parker. We alighted 100 yards south of the then bus depot - now Peninsula Buslines - for a rented holiday house on the beach front, with a rail and chain wire fence. Only the top rail and three inches of chain wire were visible above the sand.

As a schoolboy, I assisted my uncles during a dismantled house reconstruction at Lake Macquarie entrance. The two houses occupied adjacent blocks. By 1935, natural bush on the sand dunes had been removed and shifting sand resulted in the two houses being demolished. In 1958 and 1961, I revisited Lake Macquarie to cut down and remove an evergreen shrub of prolific growth. It had yellow daisy shaped flowers, and it was menacing the house. This was my introduction to Bitou Bush.

In 1951, my family and I arrived at Killcare, via East Gosford. There was a single lane punt bridge on the Terrigal and Entrance Road. The road to Killcare was unsealed. We had no electricity and only tank water. Our house was on the Scenic Road and we purchased our milk, weekend needs, etc. from the Maitland Bay Store on many occasions.

When electricity came to the Killcare-Wagstaffe Peninsula in the 1960s, so also did Rutile Mining with its legacies. We now had a completed, sealed road to Gosford and a dirt road to Tallow Beach. We also got Bitou Bush with its own job-creating legacies. More recently, we had a radioactive scare at Kincumber on the site of the Rutile Processing Plant.

In 1974 the Rip Bridge opened, halving the distance to the railway.

A counter benefit of reticulated water was a broken main between the Scenic and Killcare Roads, resulting in the collapse of Killcare Road in various places with gouged holes a half metre deep or more. Events like this caused the filling of Hardys Bay with road base materials and soil from blocks, cleared of all natural growth. Carelessly dumped plastic, aluminium cans and bottles don't help. Right now, people of the Fraser and Noble Roads area are awaiting Council activity to prevent flooding of their properties, by the local creek.

Nature's Revolt

In 1972 cyclonic weather extended throughout Gosford and Wyong Shires, resulting in two or three days wait for restoration of power lines: No.4 Manly View Road was stripped of its roof; Norm Holloway's builders shed was destroyed; No.3 Manly View Road folded like a cardboard box and was dumped on our house at 20A Scenic Road; a kit home under construction in Manly View Road was severely damaged.

In 1974, cyclonic weather hindered the outgoing tide, so the next high tide flooded low areas and houses.

In January 1975, when there was no city water, our area was ravaged by bushfire. No homes were lost but three or four small buildings were destroyed. A car was completely burnt out, resulting in the reinforced steel ring of the steering wheel hanging on the steering column. A hardwood tank platform on concrete piers was burnt out. Empty Margins soft-drink bottles were distorted beyond use. Some power poles still bear bush fire scars, such was the heat of the bushfire. Volunteer brigades from other areas were in attendance. As the fire reached Gerrin Point so did a 'southerly buster' with raindrops the size of marbles.

In 1985, Wards Hill Road was closed after a rock fall in the early hours of the morning.

By the way, the front fence of 54 Beach Drive is reported to be atop the original fence covered by sand. The wooden peg in the footpath indicates a buried council marking.

Progress and Tourism are not always approved by Nature

Bitou Bush created jobs in seeking to eradicate it from our peninsula. A group meets on the second Saturday of each month from 8.30 a.m. until noon. Bitou Bush may be found in the following areas: along the beach front, Beach Drive, Grandview Crescent, Killcare Road, Martha Jane Avenue, Blythe Street, Fraser Road, Araluen Drive, Heath Road and High View Road. There are seedlings and regrowth in various places along the Scenic Road. The list is incomplete.

Bitou Bush has the possibility to produce 50,000 seeds per mature plant which may have up to five years dormant expectancy. (Information: Agfact p 7.16 First edition 1982.) More recently, the Gosford City Council issued a coloured leaflet on the said subject. Bitou Bush is a deceiver and a strangler. It has been mistaken for a native, enjoys the company of lantana, layers itself and thus has beaten the poison application. Bitou Bush strangles natives in our area. Don't just cut it off; it will regrow.

PLEASE ERADICATE BITOU BUSH WHERE YOU ARE ABLE – ROOTS & ALL

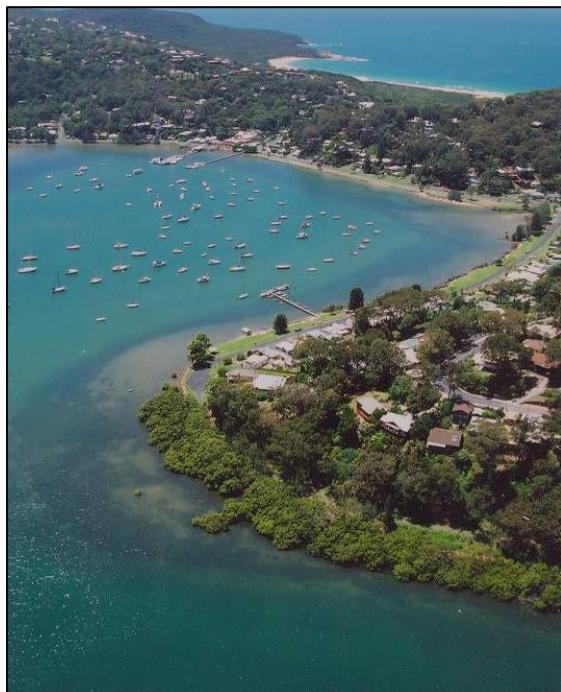
In the name of PROGRESS and TOURISM (the desire to share the beauty of this peninsula) – a plea. So, we may maintain NATURE'S GIFTS, let us meet the challenges of unwanted environmental desecration and expensive selfish development. Let us not be apathetic.

Jack Taylor, 20A The Scenic Road. Circa 1988

THE THIERINGS AT HARDYS BAY

by Ian and Jeannette Thiering

In 1977 we decided it would be wonderful to own a holiday house and after driving down the Central Coast beaches one by one we found Hardys Bay – a place we had never heard of before.



1977–1985

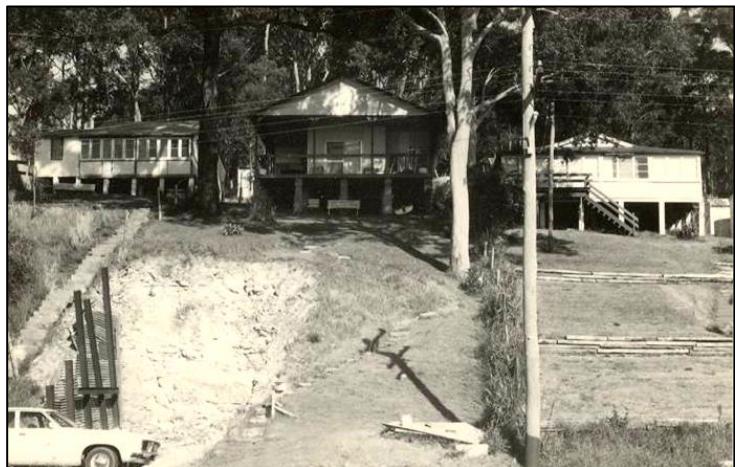
76 Araluen Drive

We bought a small house at 76 Araluen Drive, Hardys Bay. It was a two-bedroom fibro and iron cottage about thirty years old, on a very long narrow block going almost up to Nukara Ave which was not yet a formed road. No town water, no sewerage, no telephone. There were three tall gum trees in the front yard. The previous owner had intended to put a garage in at street level. However, he had died quite suddenly and a hole with three steep sides was waiting for the building itself. The view, after you climbed the fifty-odd steps, was completely captivating.

We had four teenage children who had wanted a large flat block with room to play ball games, but they soon fell in love with the scenery, the quietness and the beach. At sunset, the view from the verandah straight across to the Rip Bridge was often full of the colours of an impressionist painting. We enjoyed sitting there on a rusty old swinging hammock which we still own, more than thirty years on.

Sometimes we had to put up with large stick insects flying onto the verandah. There were always plenty of spiders.

We came fairly often at first, less frequently as the children grew older. They began to travel up just with their own friends and spent many an evening on the front verandah, playing their guitars. Sometimes they had rowdy parties the neighbours didn't appreciate.



We really enjoyed Bouddi National Park and walked everywhere: from Dingledei to Maitland Bay, Maitland Bay to Putty Beach, along the Bullimah Track, around Half Tide Rocks to Lobster Beach and out to Box Head, where once we saw a large echidna on the rock shelf below the cliffs.

We used to make a point of visiting the kangaroo, carved long ago by indigenous Australians, on a flat rock near the track. We also walked around the bay at low tide as far as the Rip Bridge. We enjoyed Bouddi Moor and Bullimah Moor and the walk over Daleys Point to the Aboriginal carvings, but Maitland Bay was always our favourite. It still had some campers and a few nude bathers. Jeannette's sister, Elizabeth, a painter, fell in love with the tessellated pavements near Putty Beach and they inspired some of her artworks.

For a swim, we all loved 'fishermen's end', Putty Beach. The boys caught blackfish off the rocks and so did Jeannette's sister, Marie, when she came to stay. She was a skilled fisherwoman. Our sons preferred to drive to other beaches rather than Killcare after they began to buy their own cars.

Renovating



On buying the house we already knew that the back rooms had severe termite infestations, so we demolished the rear third of the house, including the huge sandstone kitchen fireplace with its lintel stone 1.8 metres long. Rocks from the fireplace are now in the stone retaining wall we built behind the house. Ian took three weeks off work and assisted a local carpenter, Max Mohr, to rebuild the rear.

Max was 60 and lived further round in Araluen Drive, past where the RSL was then. Soon after the job finished Max had a severe stroke and couldn't work again.

During the alterations Ian's brother, Max, left his truck for the whole weekend in the 'garage hole' at the foot of the block. We filled the truck with old building materials, tossing them down from quite a height. When we were exhausted, we jumped into the bay to get refreshed and clean, at least until the new shower was installed. The renovated house had a rear rumpus area with spare beds, two other bedrooms, a three-way



bathroom/laundry, a big eat-in kitchen and a living room.

There were rainwater tanks at first, but town water arrived about 1980. We dug the trenches for the water pipes ourselves and later Ian dug a deep two-metre-diameter pit for the septic in front of the verandah. The flushing toilet was such a boon after the awful Hygeia rotating dunny up the back (see photo on previous page).

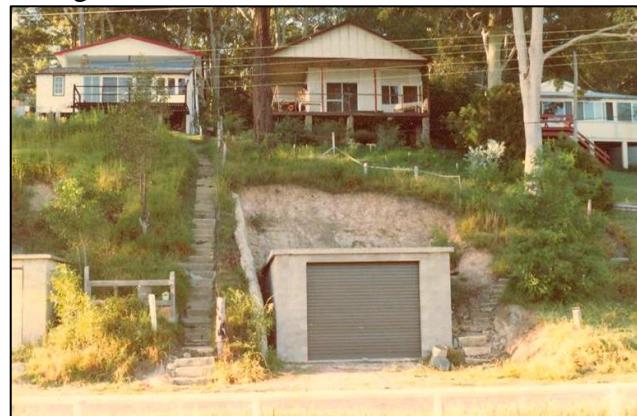


horizontals.

A contractor sprayed fast-setting concrete to complete that wall. Then we levelled the soil for the floor and set out the reinforcing. The concreter finished the job. We used rocks and plants to deal with the rear wall and the right-hand side. Finally, the cement block garage went in with room for a car and a small boat.

Then there was the ‘garage hole’ to be dealt with. We retained the sides, doing most of the labour ourselves. The left-hand side already had several tall steel girders and corrugated iron sheets holding up the sheer wall of rotten rock, so dealing with that wall was the first job.

Max Ridden, a welder, lived at 101 Heath Rd (which we purchased later in 1991). Max welded many horizontal steel rods to the existing girders. Jeannette and our daughter, Margaret, tied vertical steels to those



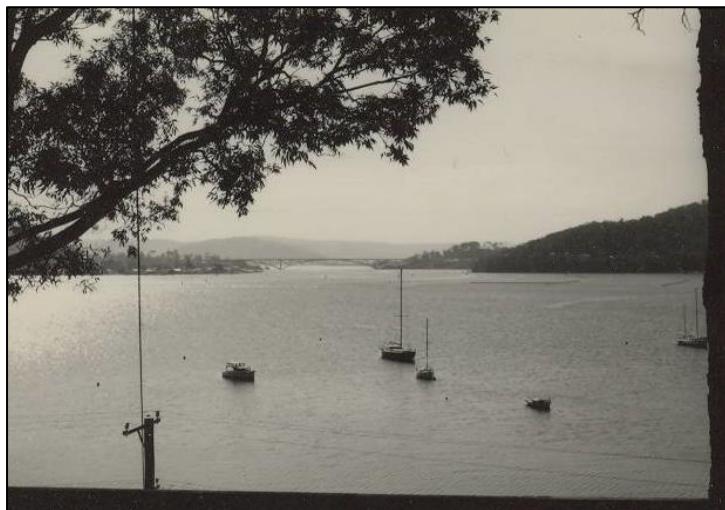
Friends and neighbours

About 1978 the Duftys whom we had known since 1959 came to visit us from their North Avoca holiday house. That began their infatuation with Killcare. We had many visitors from our extended family and wide circle of friends. Some didn’t think much of the building, but the views and the beauty of the surrounding district captivated them. We didn’t get to know many local residents except for Max Mohr and his wife, and various members of the McCall family through the Old Killcare Store and McCall’s Real Estate which was then adjoining the store. We recall Mrs McCall and Colleen Smith at the shop. A memorable neighbour, Mrs Beattie, was related to many pioneers of the Kincumber area. She hated having leaves on her grass, so even as early as 4 a.m. she would ‘sweep’ the leaves off her lawn with a strong continuous and powerful stream of water, whether there were water restrictions or not.

Gradually we began growing quite a lot of native shrubs in both the front and back yards. We had to call on Gosford Council to help us protect one ironbark and two spotted gums in the front garden from some chainsaw-wielding neighbours, who feared losing their views. The

three trees are still there, too tall now to block anyone's view. There were not many cars passing along Araluen Drive and visitor parking was no problem.

We watched the locals regularly walking along the reserve to the post office, the general store and the bottle shop, many of them going in Indian file on the sandstone retaining wall. There was enough water in the swimming pool near the Yum Yum tree for a good dip at high tide. At night, tens of thousands of soldier crabs scuttled as you walked by. We fished sometimes from the wharf and took our put-put 'tinny' over to the oyster leases at Rileys Bay to catch fish and crabs. We had some good catches, but one of our visitors, a vegetarian, nearly fainted when we cooked blue swimmers in front of her.



Interestingly, there were only about 6 boats anchored in the bay even into the early eighties.

One day Jeannette lit a rubbish fire in the back yard and a westerly sprang up. Cheryl at the post office called the local fire brigade who took control. Ian was further around the bay chatting with Max Mohr. He raced home when he suddenly realised the smoke was

coming from our place! After the fire we easily removed decades of rusty corrugated iron sheets and old paint tins previously hidden in the long grass.

As we cleaned up, dozens of kookaburras, magpies and currawongs swooped on the spiders, mostly funnel webs, swallowing them with glee.

At about that time, Gosford City Council planted a row of eight or so native trees in the grass reserve along Araluen Drive. Then Council workers came along very enthusiastically with the newly invented 'whipper-snippers' and managed to ringbark most of the trees. Ian stuck hardwood posts around the melaleuca that was opposite 76 Araluen Drive, in order to save it and today it is large enough to give shade to picnickers. Many of the others died.

We owned the Araluen Drive house for eight years and sold it reluctantly when work and family pressures in the mid-1980s became too demanding. The house today is much the same, slightly enlarged by the current owners who bought it from us in 1985. The native shrubs are now filling up the front garden.

1985 – 1991

In 1980 Helen and David Dufty bought their block of land at Killcare Heights and built their New Zealand Lockwood house. Helen asked us to join the newly formed Killcare Wagstaffe Trust and we did, but we never got to any meetings. Reading the quarterly 'KWT Newsletter' we found that the Stroms were Trust members, though we did not catch up with them for another year or two.



Ian had known Allen Strom as the lecturer in Manual Arts at Balmain Teachers College, when Beryl English (later Allen's wife) and Ian were fellow students there in 1950-51. During the next few years, we remained members of Killcare Wagstaffe Trust and sometimes drove up to Killcare to see the Duftys. On various visits we walked with them on Bombi and Bullimah Moors, having fun spotting the special plants adapted to that windy place. We still enjoyed a swim at Putty Beach and Maitland Bay.

We both retired rather suddenly from our jobs, Ian in 1989 and Jeannette in 1990. As we thought about where to live away from Sydney, we realised we needed a place where we had once had some roots. Armidale? Batlow? Bathurst? Hardys Bay? Yes!

1991: Moving back to Hardys Bay

House-hunting began with the help of Laurence McCall, who had been our agent in both 1977 and 1985. We wanted a place with a view and enough space for married children and their young families to visit us. In January 1991 we stayed at the Duftys' house for a week, while they were working in the Solomon Islands. We decided to buy 101 Heath Rd, Hardys Bay. The house sits on a very steep slope midway between the main road above and the 'Dog Track' below. The block fans out gently on the right-hand side. Most of the sloping, tree-filled land between the rear of the house and the track below is actually a council reserve. In 1991 the view was marvellous, but later the trees in the reserve grew much taller and considerably restricted our view of Brisbane Water.

Previous owners

This Heath Rd house was built by the owner, a resident of Gladesville. He came to live at Hardys Bay with his wife in the mid-1930s, shortly after the area was sub-divided, leaving his three young daughters to stay on in Gladesville, at least during the week. There were four rooms, plus kitchen and bathroom, with an open verandah on two sides. The iron roof had a sort of pointed hat shape in the centre with skillion roofs all around, similar to the original roof of the Wagstaffe Store.

During the 40s and 50s the owners conducted a protestant Sunday School on the verandah and Gwen Perrie told us that she was one of the children who attended.

In about 2000 we were visited by an elderly man and his wife. He had married one of the daughters. They were both well over 80. He said that many keen suitors had slept on army stretchers on the verandah at weekends when they were courting the girls. Apart from the brick cladding he said the house was 'much the same'.

It was owned for some years in the 80s by the Ridden family. Max was the welder who had worked for us on the retaining wall at 76 Araluen Drive. Up on the edge of Heath Road, Max had constructed a huge brick garage to take his two trucks, with a welder's workshop below.

He had a block-and-tackle system to lift his welding constructions up into the garage and onto the trucks.

The erection of this garage had cut off what was previously a well-loved vista of the Rip Bridge and Brisbane Water for walkers and drivers on Heath Road.

In about 1988 Max died in a car accident near Empire Bay. His wife remarried, but she died a few years later from leukaemia so her second husband and her two sons and daughter eventually moved away.

The Ridden boys were both bricklayers and before they moved, they bricked the house and basement and took off the old iron roof, replacing it with a tiled gable roof. The Riddens' alterations and later, ours, turned the house into a comfortable modern bungalow with three bedrooms, two bathrooms and large open-plan living rooms facing the wonderful view to the Rip Bridge, Booker Bay and Ettalong Beach.

Because of the significant slope of the land the building had always had a full-width basement which for many years was not enclosed. It housed two rain-water tanks, a piston pump, a laundry tub and later, a hot water service. When the HW tank rusted out we put a solar tank on the roof, which was excellent. A 1938 survey showed the building with its present footprint and a curved path going down on the right into the reserve. This path had 17 sandstone steps, as we discovered when we unearthed them during the 90s.



Living at Hardys Bay

We sold our Pennant Hills house in 1991 and moved to Hardys Bay. The removalists had never been to the Killcare area and became terribly anxious after negotiating the bends up Wards Hill Road and down the Scenic Road. The pantechicon pulled up at the junction of Scenic Road, Beach Drive and Nukara Avenue and the crew had to be persuaded that it was safe to continue. They never did return to pick up their empty cartons and tea-chests.



On the morning after we moved in we spoke to some surveyors on Heath Road and found they were just beginning work on Bryan and Annette Wilson's house, three doors away. That was pretty exciting as Jeannette had known Annette ever since their high school days in the 1940s at Sydney Girls High where they were close friends. (Photo: Jeannette (left) and Annette)

We converted Max's welding workshop under the huge garage into an area for beds and bunks, utilising the toilet and shower which Max and his workers had used. Our families loved coming to 'the flat'. There were so many grandchildren being born in the next few years that we had a little intercom and if babies cried in the flat, their Mum or Dad would dash up the dozen steps from the house below. The deck was the favourite place for eating meals, weather permitting. Many a birthday or Christmas dinner was enjoyed out there.

We had glorious views over the north-west, from the Rip Bridge to Ettalong and beyond. In the early 90s, after Mount Pinatubo erupted in Indonesia, the sunset was reddish gold every evening for weeks. The same colours glowed ferociously during the January 1994 bushfires when a few embers even blew onto the deck from fires on Blackwall Mountain and further west. The yard was littered with charred fragments.



At the same time Putty Beach and Killcare Beach were covered with scattered embers.

Two or three times over the years, someone spotted dolphins in the deep water, that ran along the main channel below our houses and let the neighbours know. The dolphins seemed to frolic in the estuary as they swam towards the Rip Bridge.

Part-time employment

Both of us had part-time jobs from about 1991–1997. Jeannette was asked in December 1991 to edit a government document for a former TAFE colleague in Queensland and so began a home-based job, receiving documents to edit, lightly or heavily, before sending them back to their source for approval. The texts almost all related to adult literacy and numeracy courses in TAFE, nationwide, for adults needing better basic skills. The impetus for funding had come from the 1990 'International Year of Literacy'. She employed our daughter part-time to do specific jobs like checking detailed bibliographies. Freshly completed texts were posted to printers, usually in Sydney, and multiple copies came back to Hardys Bay. The Hardys Bay Post Office benefited from the large postal value of many consignments to capital cities in all states.

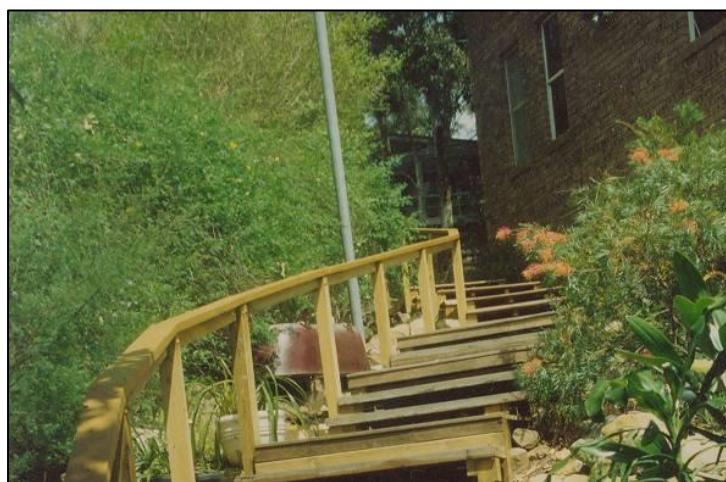
Ian used his 40-year teaching background and his teacher education experience as a school principal for 25 years to qualify to teach adult literacy students in TAFE. He went by car to Woy Woy and by train to Hornsby every Tuesday and Thursday evening in term time, leaving Hardys Bay before 4 p.m. His students were all ages from 18 to 60. Some had a non-English first language but were able to converse in English; others were Australian born.



They all needed to improve their reading and writing skills for personal reasons or for employment. Ian loved this work and did it for seven years. Ian's students came several times to Bouddi National Park for walks and picnics. (See photo above.) In 1998 we finally retired altogether from paid work.

Working on paths and weeds

From the street to the house, there was a wide, but rough gravel path with railway-sleeper steps every few metres to retain the slope. We decided to build an elevated pathway of steps alternating with short platforms. Under the garage we found a good supply of tallow-wood decking timber. We planned the construction ourselves, set up the treated pine support structures, built steps where needed and laid the decking.



We ended up with a path of five decks and 29 steps from the garage door to the front door. It was a most satisfying task. (When we sold this house we moved to a level block, so our fitness and waistlines suffered!)

Later, we used the same method to build a deck outside 'the flat' as well as another path and steps to the back door.

Nearby, we developed an entirely native garden with some lovely dendrobium orchids and a fine macrozamia (grass tree) near the front door.

The growth of the remaining trees, as well as lantana, had dislodged most of the rocks, so some of them had tumbled lower down, even onto the 'dog track' and across it to the water's edge. We decided to remove all the lantana we could. It was hanging like lianas from high branches, as much as 30 feet up.

We used a cut-and-paint method with Round-up and put all the lantana rubbish, and other weeds, in our petrol chipper so we could return it to the ground as mulch. We also mulched two big banana clumps and a coral tree that leant on the house, and we planted a macadamia nut tree below the deck. Gosford Council gave us thirty small shrubs for the reserve below our boundary in order to retain the slope.



We added more shrubs as well as native grasses. In the reserve there were some very lovely natives, especially several geebung (*Persoonia pinifolia*) and a row of fairly rare clerodendrons (*Clerodendron tomentosum*). Next door at 99 Heath Rd, Max Breckenridge worked hard to clear rubbish plants from his backyard (and reserve area), putting in more natives as well as growing vegetables. His front garden was full of natives that Judy Dunstan had tended for some years for previous owners.

Birds and other creatures

We planted as many natives as possible to attract birds. This was pretty successful, but we also had visits from carpet snakes, marsh snakes, a python and blue-tongue lizards. You could see young sulphur-crested cockatoos tearing fresh shoots off the eucalypts and ibis coming in, to roost on the branching arms of huge spotted gums below the Wardells' and Wilsons' houses at 105 and 107 Heath Road. Helen Dufty came one evening to photograph a ritual of several ibis in the largest of these trees, now on Council's Significant Tree Register. (See right) As each pair landed, they bowed up and down to each other for some minutes, while the air was full of hooting sounds.

When we had persistent rains there was a grey butcherbird that regularly took refuge on the old swinging hammock on the deck where he sang and sang till the rain abated. We did a two-week survey in 1998 and 1999 for a Wollongong University project and counted all the birds that came to our yard in the early mornings. So many! The first one we recorded was a fine channel-bill cuckoo.

For a couple of years, in springtime, Annette Wilson and Jeannette compared notes on hearing the musical song of a pied butcherbird at about 3 a.m. This was not easy to believe as these birds were not usually found so far south, but Alan Cameron confirmed it when he saw one sometime later at Hardys Bay wharf.





During our time at Heath Rd there were several other unusual birds; a family of three crested hawks (Pacific Bazzas) perched directly in front of the deck; a flock of about twenty Rufous Night Herons flew like a dusky pink cloud against the afternoon sky and Tawny Frogmouths roosted with a young one for some weeks in a Lilly-Pilly near the front door.

The call of Whistling Kites always brought us out to watch the sky and the treetops, as did the squawk of large flocks of Long-billed Corellas. The large bedroom windows attracted superb Blue Wrens that banged into the glass when they saw their reflections. Sometimes this woke visitors sleeping in the spare room. Butterfly decals pasted on the glass stopped their dangerous attacks – dangerous to themselves.



On a spring morning, from two of the bedrooms, you could stand and watch Whipbirds hopping about scratching up the mulch as if you were in a bird-hide. Silver Ware and her husband, Laurie, had never seen Whipbirds, though they knew their calls well. We told them we had a pair who had made this part of our garden their ‘home’, so the Wares came for breakfast and as soon as the male whipbird started calling – and the female began replying – we all watched, just delighted. Our neighbours loved birds too.

We swapped tales about nesting and roosting behaviours, including the vicious Indian Mynas that attacked other birds and their young. We all had some success getting rid of them by never leaving out any bird seed or food scraps in pet-food pans. For a couple of years Rufous Night Herons roosted near the front door between the Breckenrides and our place; at the same time another Rufous Night Heron family roosted on the other side of their house as well. Altogether we counted over 40 different kinds of native birds in 12 years. This was quite remarkable, as we could only have identified a few birds before coming to Hardys Bay!

Neighbours and friends



There was a very friendly cluster of neighbours in our section of Heath Road: Keith and Beryl Wardell, Bryan and Annette Wilson, Daphne Montague (Peter died in mid-1992), Jeff and Karen Tinker, George and Anne Felton, and many many others.

The Tinkers used to lend us baby gear, a highchair or a stroller, when we had country families visiting with young grandchildren. Later, Max and Sue Breckenridge moved into number 99.

We all shared events like morning tea or coffee and occasional dinners – any excuse would do – from New Years Eve to footy finals. Sometimes we went on night walks by the light of the full moon. Bryan and Ian ran ‘City to Surf’ for many years, along with David Dufty. Annette ran several times and Jeannette walked it once with Babs Nettlefold. Bryan sometimes asked us out on his sailing boat – just delightful.

We learned very early that Daphne Montague, across the road, loved classical music. Peter and Daphne were very friendly and happily joined the Music Nights. After Peter died, we asked her to come with us about five times a year to the Sydney Symphony ‘Meet the Music’ series at 6.30 p.m. and later to Thursday matinees at 1.30 p.m. We added Judy Adderley and Gwennyth Flood to this group and generally drove them into Woy Woy. We all talked flat out or did crosswords on the train there and back. Daphne still comes with us to these concerts. Annette, Ian, Keith and Beryl played tennis at Pretty Beach in the group that Mary Dent organised. When the tide was high, we often had a swim at Pretty Beach tidal pool, especially after tennis. Mary Porter who lived at Wagstaffe became our good friend. She also liked to swim at Pretty Beach. Mary was an artist and a poet.

Jeannette did the desktop layout of a book of her poems so that Mary could publish them. The book was *Memory under the Moon* and Mary illustrated it with several black and white drawings that looked like etchings.

Bill Gum and his wife, both Chinese, lived at 97 Heath Rd. Bill grew large quantities of Asian and other herbs to sell. Bill was born in Australia, but his wife was from China and had little English. Dahlas Cleland had taught her through AMES for a couple of years. One day in a fire restriction period there was a lot of smoke coming from Bill's place and Ian went over to investigate. It turned out that Mrs Gum was cooking a traditional Aussie Xmas pudding in a big pot – on their BBQ!



For many years the Wilsons, Wardells, Breckenrides and Thierings owned campervans at the same time. Once when we were about to depart for a long trip, our van's refrigerator needed urgent repair. Neighbours had come to say, 'happy holiday' but the technician took so long to fix the fridge that a leisurely morning tea was enjoyed by all on the back deck outside 'the flat'. Then, happy travelling!

The Duftys, Edgars and Thierings all decided they wanted to buy a boat and this little runabout was the result, but backing the trailer was always a poorly managed skill. We enjoyed exploring Brisbane Water, but soon lost interest and the boat stayed in our huge garage for two years until we all agreed to sell it.

There was quite a flurry of political activism when Gosford City Council proposed turning the 'Dog Track' into a bitumen road. Council notices were stuck up at the Post Office and in bus shelters. Local residents were divided, and arguments were quite heated, but finally we were invited to vote on the matter. The result was strongly in favour of the status quo. This saved that lovely walking track for locals and visitors and for dog owners who can use it with dogs off their leads. As well, dozens of mature native trees and understorey plants were saved from the bulldozer.

Clubs and other activities

We joined a lot of organisations that widened our activities and our circle of friends.

- **Neighbourhood Watch:** Ian was Secretary from 1997 until it folded in 2002; Clive and Mary Dent had been President and Treasurer from its inception, and they kept up their enthusiasm until the end. Each year concluded with a Christmas Party at the Surf Club with all local organisations invited to join in. Snr Sgt Irene Jurgens of Gosford Police was very supportive all the year and usually came to the party.
- **Central Coast Philharmonia Choir:** From 1991 Ian sang tenor in this choir. For many years he shared car travel with David Dufty and the Tricketts of MacMasters Beach. Other local choristers were Monica Bray, Jill Baxter, Barbara Benson and Ann Bowe. Paul Edgar was very involved as the accompanist at rehearsals and as organist when he was needed for performances. Ian and Monica are still members. Jeannette joined the choir as an alto in 2005.
- **Growing Together:** Helen and David Dufty set up this program of free informal adult education, conducted at Kincumber Uniting Church for several years. Many friends from the Killcare area were regular members of this group. Weekly sessions covered social, scientific or cultural themes and there were three or four programs a year for about eight years. One theme was ‘Dance’ and we concluded that program with a dance evening.

Another course was about painting and Jean Melvin (David’s sister) and other artists talked about their works and their methods. One of them actually painted a landscape, based on a northern Sydney suburban scene, while we watched. For a change of style, they took us on ‘tours’ of various countries by asking recent travellers from the community to talk about somewhere they had visited on an overseas trip. We led one evening session after we returned from the United States in 1998.

When David decided to explore the instruments of the orchestra, he could not find a string player who was available, so he asked Jeannette to take on the role. She had not played her violin for forty years except at family Christmases, but she took on the challenge and, with Paul Edgar’s help, demonstrated the basics of string instruments. Shortly after this (in 1995) she started lessons at the Central Coast Conservatorium. It took her several years to regain her competence and confidence.

- **Central Coast Symphony Orchestra:** The conductor, Chris Bearman, invited Jeannette to join the orchestra in about 1997. She played second violin for about eight years, thoroughly enjoying the experience of being part of some fine performances of great orchestral works, sometimes with the choir in which Ian was singing as one of the tenors. There were also Saturday morning chamber music groups.
- **Bird Walks:** We went on monthly Wednesday morning walks to find as many native birds as possible.

- Judy Adderley was a tireless leader, and Allan Cameron was an experienced birder and very dependable. Silver and Laurie Ware really loved the walks and kept a personal bird list. Sometimes we walked so slowly we did not get much exercise and we talked so much that we missed the birds! This group still exists.
- **Music Nights:** In 1991 the Duftys set up a home-based music listening group which was quickly followed by a second one in Killcare/MacMasters Beach. Once a month we met in one of the members' homes and listened mostly to recorded music chosen by the hosts. Sometimes we had live items, e.g. Noel Melvin singing, Paul Edgar playing piano or his organ, Jeannette on violin and recorder players, Judy Adderley, Eleanor Scott-Findlay and Hildegard Anstice. Other live events included Jeannette and three of her friends performing a Haydn string quartet, Paul and Hilary Day (from Avoca) playing the Saint-Saens cello concerto and about ten of us singing favourite songs learnt in a small *a capella* choir led by Paul Edgar.
- **Pretty Beach, Wagstaffe & District Progress Association:** Jeannette went to their meetings for several years, helping on the traffic sub-committee. This was before Wagstaffe Hall was renovated. They also ran some Saturday evenings of bush dancing – great fun and very energetic. The violinist was the son of old friends from Armidale. We participated in the fun of their annual Trash and Treasure sales at Wagstaffe and usually joined in the Australia Day flag-raising ceremony.



- **Killcare Wagstaffe Trust:** After coming to live at Heath Rd we attended almost every KWT Sunday morning quarterly meeting and we still belong. During 1992 and 1993 Jeannette was a committee member under the leadership of Allen Strom who taught the members so much about environmental activism. After Allen died in 1995, she took on the secretary's job. Later, during the six years that she was President, Jim Shires and then Ann Bowe were truly able secretaries. Jeannette was also the *KWT Newsletter* editor for about eight years until 2008.

- Apart from the meetings we threw ourselves into special events and several exhibitions: the centenary of the wreck of the *SS Maitland* in 1998; *Down to Earth* (geology of the local area); *Wattles and Weeds*; *Sand to Sea* and *Wetlands*. We have always enjoyed being on the roster for the Maitland Bay Information Centre, thanks to the very interesting people who come for information or assistance in accessing Bouddi National Park. Our most interesting visitor was a US citizen who, in 2006, walked in excitedly and was thrilled to see the permanent display of the *SS Maitland* disaster. His wife is the granddaughter of the baby that was saved by the bosun on the day after the wreck occurred.
- **Early morning swimming:** For many years we joined a handful of swimmers who went to ‘fishermen’s end’ at about 7.30 am. They included Dick Thornton (he and Ian used the shrubbery as a dressing shed), Babs Nettlefold, Dennis Herbert, Mary Porter, and Gwennyth Flood. Babs, being from England, always dived straight in regardless of how cold it was. We shared transport and sometimes a couple of us would walk from our place to the beach for extra exercise and be driven home. Mary wrote about such swimmers in one of her poems, in which she called us the ‘young old’:

Retired,

Unselfconscious as gulls

the young old trip across the beach

in fashions from the summer

before the summer before.

Bouddi 2000

No account of our years at Hardys Bay could be complete without recording the exceptional celebration of the turn of the century. David Dufty inspired us all to look at the coming event with fresh eyes, saying that ‘our place’ is ‘the place where the world turns around’.



After some initial scepticism we got behind as many of the events as possible, especially Killcare Wagstaffe Trust’s Geology Exhibition, *Down to Earth*, and the Street Parade. The photo above: Diane Everingham (NPWS) and Jeannette at the opening of the *Down to Earth* Exhibition. The photo at left shows the young women representing ‘Igneous’ and ‘Sedimentary’.

The street parade involved the whole community



Front row: Jim Shires, Ann Bowe, Anne Jackson, Meg Fromel, Jeannette Thiering, Ina Kerr.
Second row: Jeff Tinker, Miriam Edgar, Kaye McClure, George Kerr.

Leaving Hardys Bay

It was hard to leave the Killcare/Wagstaffe district. We made the decision because we were both turning 70 and for practical reasons. We had to cope with the emotional stress that it caused. In October 2002 we sold 101 Heath Rd and moved to 61 Robin Crescent, Woy Woy. Our home is a one-storey modest house on flat land, just a comfortable walk to Woy Woy station and the shopping centre. We have again enjoyed developing a native garden.

When we go on our frequent walks in the nearby reserve along the edge of Brisbane Water we look across to the Rip Bridge and beyond to Hardys Bay with some genuine feelings of regret.

However, we are deeply thankful for the memorable years we had at Hardys Bay and for all our unforgettable friends. So, we say to each other: "That was a wonderful place to live."

Ian and Jeannette Thiering.

Photos: from the Thiering collection.



The Thierings' house at Woy Woy: 61 Robin Crescent Woy Woy

THE THOMPSON FAMILY

by Suesan Thompson

Life at Killcare was enjoyed by the Thompson family. The story of Bruce and Shirley Thompson and their children, Phillip and Suesan, is told by the children.

Bruce Thompson known as ‘Thomo’ bought a block of land at Killcare Extension in 1948, which he owned until 1963. Bruce first met Shirley, while doing carpentry work on her mother’s house in Sydney. Romance blossomed from then on. In 1954, Bruce Arthur Thompson married Shirley Margaret McCulla in Marrickville and they lived at Bellfields in Sydney.



Bruce Thompson and Shirley McCulla

Bruce and Shirley Thompson with their two children, Phillip and Suesan, moved to *Riverview* at 6 Flora Ave, Hardys Bay. They purchased it on 5th November 1960 from Lilian E Grill for 1,950 pounds. The house came fully furnished, including a fuel stove and bucket shower and sixty steps to the front door, just to keep you fit. Bruce was a carpenter by trade, before a serious back injury impaired his life. Bruce was a life member of the Building Workers Industrial Union of Australia NSW branch. He had notched up 40 years in 1991.



Riverview at No. 6 Flora Avenue, Hardys Bay.

Bruce and Shirley were well known in the area. Bruce could often be seen, out fishing or coming home with a bag of blackfish or whichever fish were on the bite

Memories from Suesan

Growing up in Killcare, with my parents and my brother Phill, was the best experience a child could have. The wonderful community, the characters, the freedom, sun, surf, great school with caring teachers and let us not forget the abundance and wide selection of sea food. In summer you could be eating any of many varieties of fish, oysters, prawns, crab or mussels; especially with dad being such a knowledgeable fisherman.

Mum had the hard (home) duties like most in those days. I have fond memories of her cooking on the old fuel stove that came with the house; great in winter, but not so great in summer.

We would always do the traditional hot Christmas Dinner and everyone would swelter. The party hats and bonbons made up for the heat a little. We all enjoyed the new electric stove in later years.

I can remember Mum pulling me up those sixty steps in my stroller; I would have been only two or three years old then. I would be giggling away, totally unaware of the struggle my mother was having.

I remember dad taking me out in his boat, *Myrtle*; we went out to Box Head when I became seasick over the side. He would say, "Good burley for the fish," and then when I started to feel better, he would say it was time to go and we slowly puttered our way back to the wharf.

On another occasion he took me out to show me how to catch Blackfish and I ended up whipping him; we used to laugh about that episode a lot.



Personality

Phillip Thompson, nine years' old son of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Thompson, of Hardy's Bay, is this week's Personality.

Phillip is in third grade at Pretty Beach School, and his favourite subject is arithmetic. He is a keen cricketer and plays whenever possible.

At home, he likes fishing, playing with cars, football, and just playing with his mates. He is also very fond of boating, and watches with interest the boat his father is building.

When he leaves school he would like to be a mechanic.

The clipping, which featured Phillip Thompson as the 'Personality' in the edition's *Wagstaffe Killcare Pretty Beach NEWS* section from the local newspaper *Central Coast Advocate* was included in the story sent to the Editor. The clipping is not dated.

We are told he is keen on arithmetic and cricket and fishing and likes playing with his friends. He would like to be a mechanic when he grows up.

Very much by coincidence, the NEWS item featuring Susan Thompson, turned up in the archival material of the Pretty Beach Wagstaffe Citizens' Association, forerunner of the Progress Association. It was part of an article written by Mrs Joan Reid, a member of the Association and appeared in the paper on February 10 1965.

It tells us that Suesan is just six years old and attends Pretty Beach Public School, enjoying reading, ball games and is learning to swim. She likes to collect shells in her spare time.

She wants to be a nurse when she grows up.



PERSONALITY

Six years' old Susan Thompson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Thompson, of Hardy's Bay, is this week's Personality.

Susan is in first class at Pretty Beach School, and her favourite subject at present is reading, probably because of the fascinating reading laboratory at the school. Her chief interest in sport is centred on ball games and learning to swim. In her spare time, Susan likes collecting shells.

Susan would like to be a nurse when she leaves school. In the meantime, she skilfully nurses her dolls back to health.

Suesan continues her story:

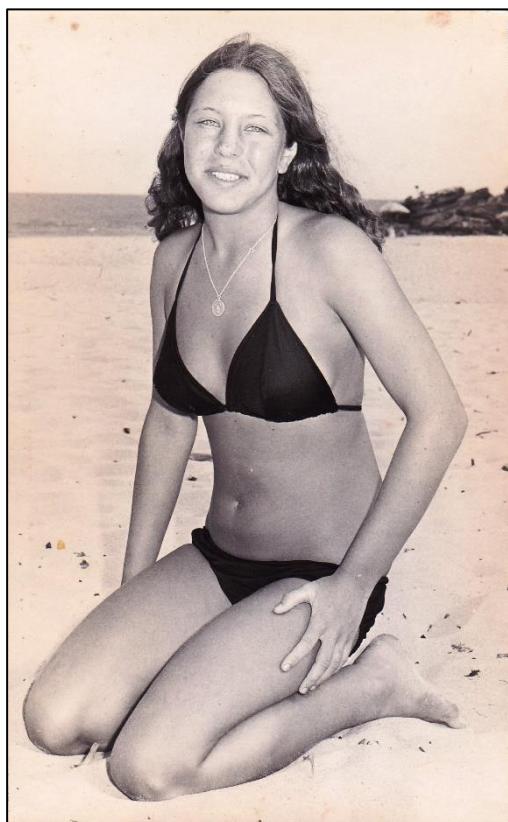
Many a great Cracker Night was enjoyed with Phillip being my older brother. He would get the bungers and skyrockets. We would sometimes have a bonfire on the waterfront with our neighbours, the Beasley family.

I loved my school days. Friday afternoon was swim time with my great friends and teachers. I also had the privilege of being a School Captain which brought with it the honour of carrying the School Flag on Regional Sports Day, marching down Mann Street, Gosford and around the oval at Grahame Park.

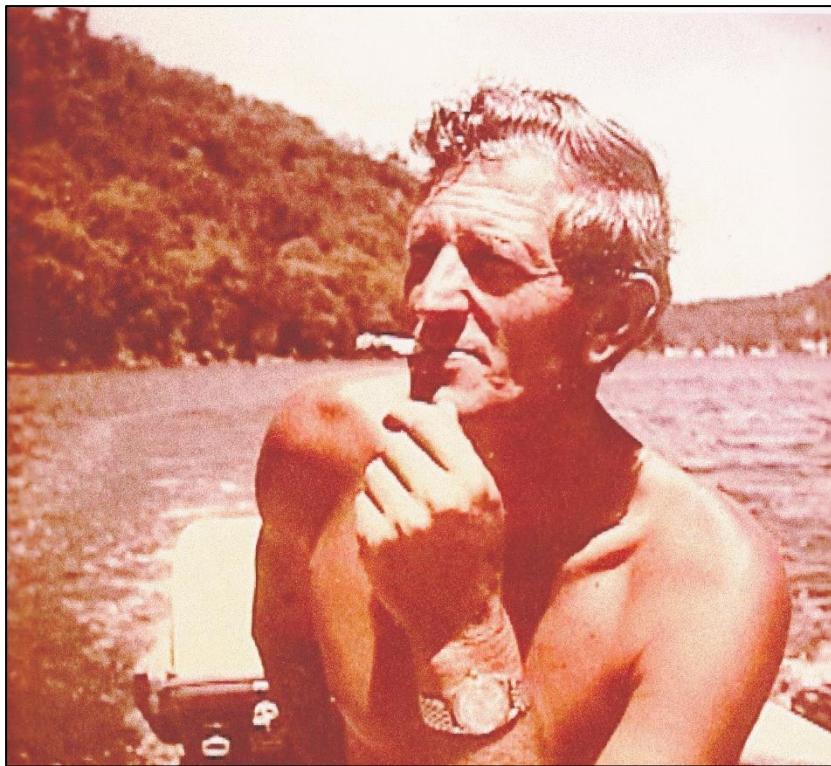
I remember being part of the first Nipperettes of Killcare Surf Club and all those great carnival days.

I can remember Daphne Leo making our swimmers and Ian McCall driving all of us to many beaches on the coast for carnivals. The newspaper cutting above shows that Phillip enjoyed Pretty Beach School and his life at Killcare.

In later years there were many great family occasions but most memorable were the fish and chip nights, also shared with my husband, Barry, and then with our son, Brodie, being the only grandchild of Bruce and Shirley.



Sue Thompson of Flora Avenue, Hardys Bay, is a regular visitor to our local beaches and a keen follower of the Killcare Surf Club. (Local paper)



Bruce, the fisherman, on board his boat, *Maude*.

Bruce and Shirley moved to Tewantin in Queensland in June 1997. Shirley passed away November 2003 and Bruce followed in February 2004.

THE STORY OF THE TISDELL, MYER AND BAYLY FAMILIES, NEIGHBOURS AND LOCAL ‘INSTITUTIONS’

by Ian and Suellen Tisdell

The Myer family, consisting of Nicholas (Mick), Annie and their six children had moved to Killcare permanently in 1919. Mick was a builder and they farmed. The Tisdell family holidayed at their cottage, Oceanview, in Beach Drive from the mid-thirties. The two families were connected when Edward William (Ted) Tisdell married Alice May (May) Myer. Their four children, Nerida, Grahame, Ian and Gary grew up at Killcare Heights. Ian Tisdell married Suellen Bayly and has told the story of the families and related memories of neighbours, friends and local ‘institutions’. Very often, Ian’s voice tells the story best and Suellen Tisdell tells her part of the story. The photographs are from the Tisdell family collection unless otherwise stated. Editor: Robyn Warburton

Ian’s story begins with his paternal grandparents and their holiday cottage at Killcare.

The Tisdell family owned a holiday cottage from the mid-1930s till the mid-1950s on Beach Drive called **Oceanview**. They would come by train to Woy Woy and then by ferry to Hardys Bay for their stay. Our father helped to build an extra closed in verandah on the western side of the house.



Oceanview



Making extensions



After Extensions



House in 2000 Photos: Dulce Connor (Tisdell)

Here is the story of Ian's maternal grandparents, the Myers of Killcare and his mother.

Ian's grandparents were Nicholas George Myer (known as Mick) and Annie Elizabeth Ashton. Mick and Annie moved the family from Turramurra in 1919. Mick had already built the house in Blythe Street by then. They ran a dairy and Mick also used his horse and cart, repairing potholes in the road as well as building houses around the district. He took part in building the back road (Grandview Crescent) with his son, Edmund (Ted), and clearing rocks from the Bogey Hole, using wooden poles as a gantry.



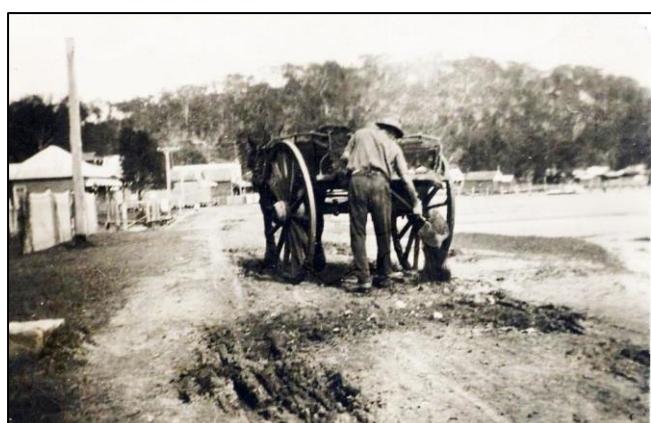
The Myer family about 1927. From left George, Ted, May, Bert on Snowy the draft horse, Mick, Annie, Frank on Billy the pony, and Rose.
Photo: Bert Myer



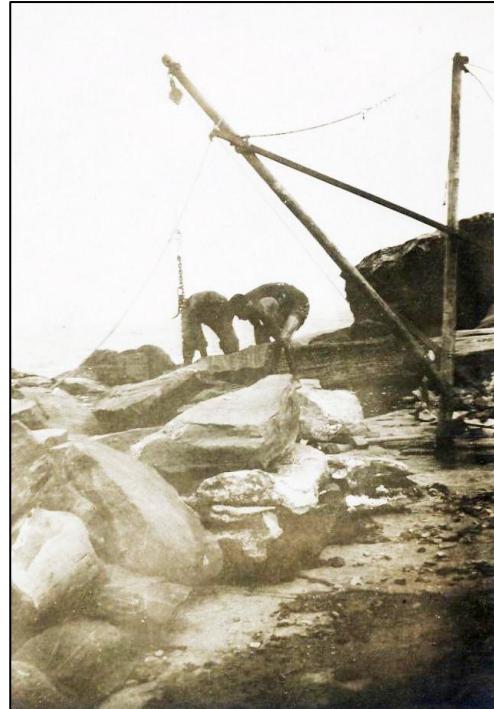
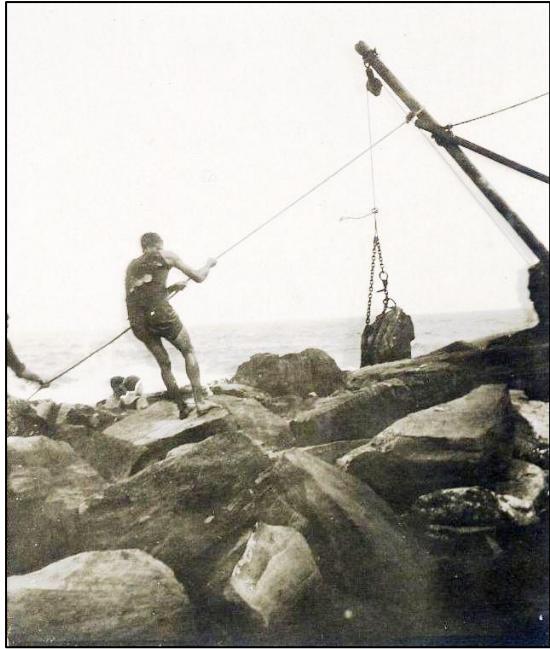
The Myers: Standing - George, Ted, Annie, Nicholas, Bert,
Sitting – Rose, Alice, May, Frank.



Nicholas (Mick) and Ted and another man building the back road.



Nicholas (Mick) repairing a road



Building the Bogey Hole

Alice May Myer (known as May) was born in June 1919 at Turramurra, NSW. The family moved to Killcare sometime after her birth. It was 1919, according to her brother, Bert Myer, who was also born at Turramurra. Another sibling was Rose. They were living at Killcare when brother Frank was born at Gosford in 1921. When old enough for school Bert, Rose and May walked to Empire Bay School.

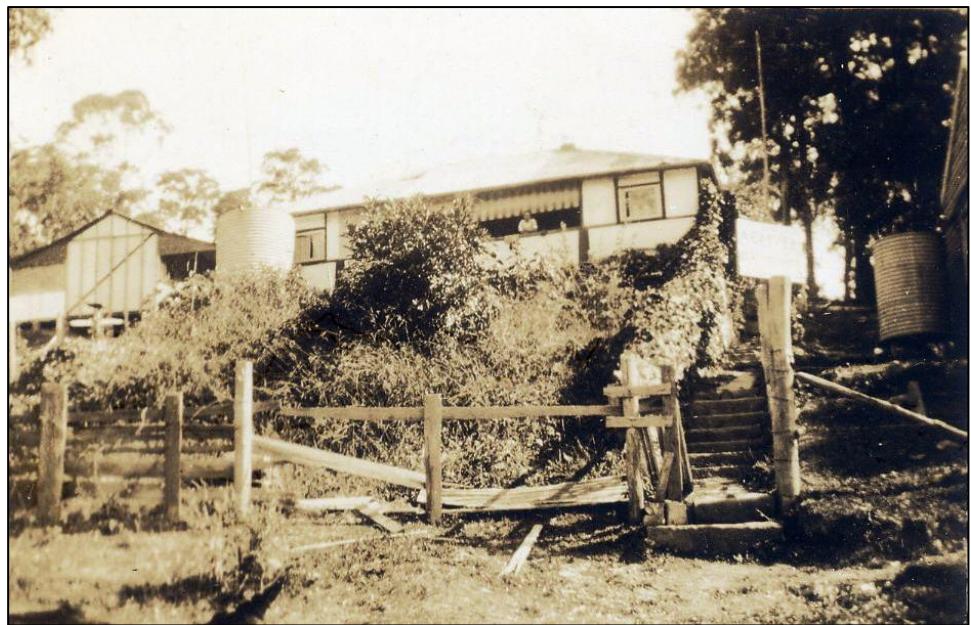
They attended Pretty Beach School after it opened in 1927. May and her sister Rose helped out on the farm, doing chores such as milking. May also worked at *Manly House* at Wagstaffe before it burnt down in 1939. During the war years May worked in the munitions factory at St. Marys. Nicholas died in 1939 at the age of only 54 years. Annie died in 1948 aged 66 years.

May marries Ted and they move to Killcare Heights where the children grow up.

In 1942 May married Edward [Ted] Tisdell at St. Johns Church, Parramatta. They lived at 192 Pennant Street, Parramatta. In 1943 Ted joined the American Small Ships and served in New Guinea. Ted was discharged in 1944 with Dengue Fever and Malaria



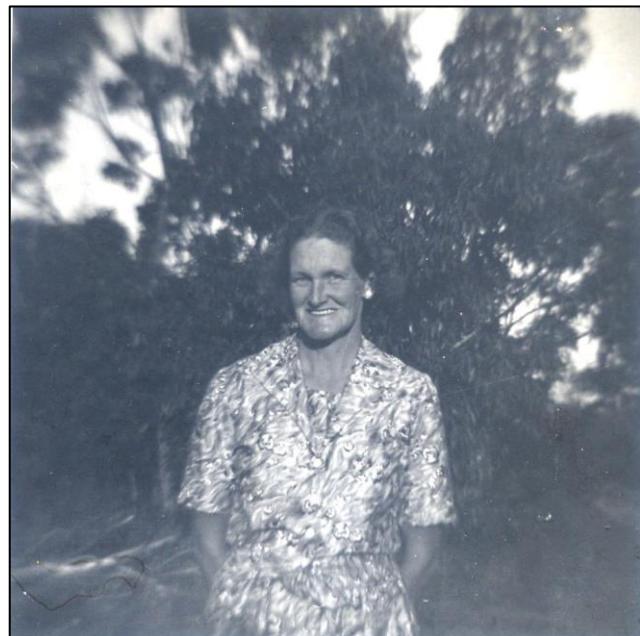
Edward William Tisdell



8 Blythe Street, Hardys Bay

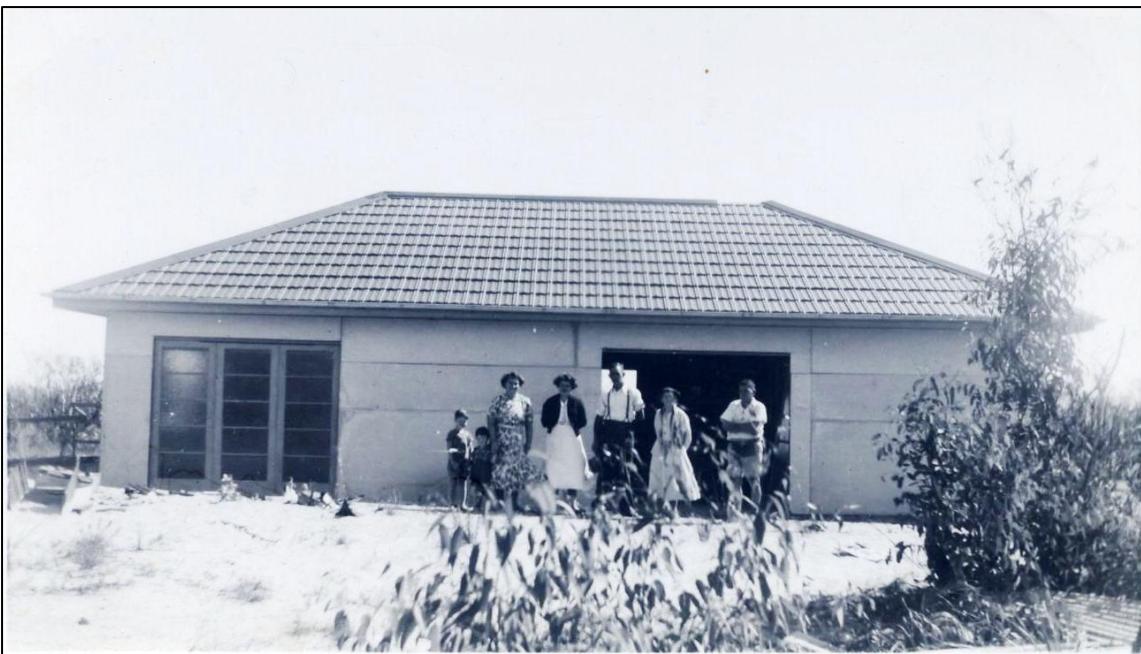
In the late 1940s Nerida and Grahame were born and the early 1950s saw them move to the old house at No 8 Blythe Street, Killcare where Ian was born. Gary was born after the family moved to Killcare Heights.

When they were old enough Nerida and Grahame went to Pretty Beach School. They would walk to school with the Ford children who lived in Fraser Road.



Alice May Tisdell

Early in the 1950s Ted built the house at 135 Scenic Road, Killcare Heights, on about 14 acres. He was badly burnt by a bush fire, trying to save the triple wood and glass doors that he had bought for the house. The burn marks could be seen on the doors and on some of the framing timbers before the house was lined. When the house was liveable [but not finished properly inside], the family moved in. There was no power or phone until much later on and the only water was tank water.



The house at Killcare Heights

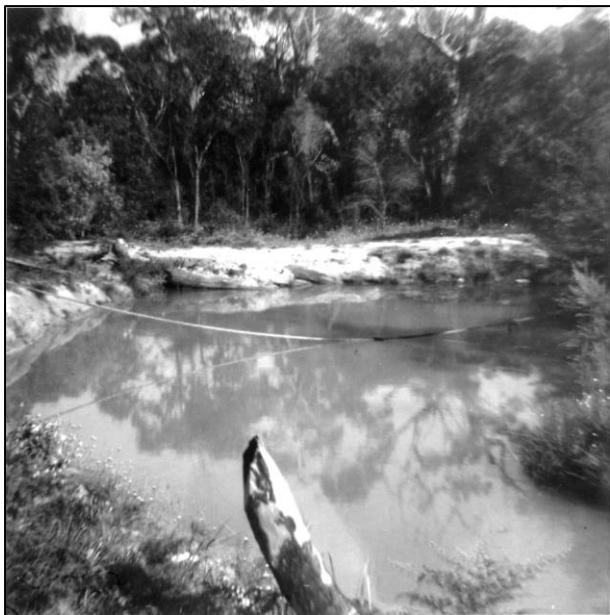
Ted cleared a few acres down the back, all by hand with mattock and crosscut saw [money was hard to come by and he couldn't afford a bulldozer. The children had to help or get the strap. There were some large dead trees that had to be grubbed out [dug out by hand]. Wire strainers were used to pull the trees over once they had dug enough around the roots; then they had to use the crosscut saw to cut it up.



When enough land was cleared Ted grew passionfruit and pumpkins and other vegies. There was a spring further down the back with very nice fresh water (believed to have come from the Blue Mountains). There was not so much water running when the family left, probably because of all the bores being put down in the area.

Ted and the kids built a dam on the creek, the old-fashioned way with a long-handle shovel and wheelbarrow. When it was finished it was a great swimming hole. It even had a diving board and a long thick rope to swing on.

The dam on the property at Killcare Heights



While digging the dam, sometimes they would come across crayfish which were cooked in an old kero tin and eaten on the spot. Also uncovered was a sandstone rock shelf with aboriginal axe head sharpening grooves. Ian believes all would be covered over by Mother Nature now.

After moving to the heights, Nerida and Grahame went to Kincumber Primary School; then to Gosford High School. Ian and Gary also went to Kincumber Primary; Ian then went to Gosford Annex, now Henry Kendall High. Gary went to Erina High.

Another view of the dam.

Here are Ian's words, talking about life when he was a kid at Killcare Heights.

After helping dad with the hard yakka, we were mostly free to go anywhere we liked as long as we were home by dark. We went fishing at Maitland Bay or Kangaroo Point or down to Killcare Beach. We often walked to the Killcare shops for mum. We didn't have push bikes until later.

We had no electricity until the mid-1960s so had to do our homework by kero lantern and we would listen to the wireless program, Greenbottle, on a 6-volt battery powered wireless if the battery was charged. Jack Walters would take the battery away to be charged at Col Poulton's Caltex service station at Green Point.

I don't know where it came from, but we discovered an old broken wind-up record player, and we would spin the records around with our finger to make it work. We had to make our own entertainment back then.

An old chip heater supplied us with bath water. We had to go out and bring back a good-sized arm- full of sticks for mum. She would send us back out again if we didn't have a big enough arm full. We had to have a bath whether we needed it or not. Mum would do the washing in an old copper that we also had to find the wood for, to feed it.

The toilet was a pan job down the back. When it needed emptying, we were delegated by dad to go and dig a hole. Most times the ground was hard, and we couldn't dig deep enough. Dad would tip the pan in, and we had to cover it over. One can remember playing chasings, forgetting about the deposit and stepping in it. Yuck!!!

Our father also worked in the building trade in Sydney and would come home on Friday night for the weekend. He often would bring home lollies and stale chips, which we had to heat up in the oven to make them fresh again.

Our mother would work for the local farmers picking beans, peas, passionfruit, tomatoes, oranges, lemons or whatever was in season at the time. I did the same in school holidays.

It was long, hard back-breaking work. Grahame picked beans for Jack Walters until he had earned enough money to buy a Rangoon fishing cane and all the runners etc which he made up into a fishing rod with an Alvie Side cast reel and went fishing (he was the smart one).



Some of the pickers Photo: Holland Family

Ian remembers working with pickers, Hilda Ford, Marge Smith, John Duell, Marilyn Annand, Mrs Haden, Ally Settree, Barbra Walters, Kevin Walters, John Walters, Jack Walters, Eileen Walters, Neil Walters, Carol Walters, Les Walters and his wife Norma, Bill Sanders, Carol Waterson, Kate Jones nee Walters, Jumbo Newel, Peggy Holland, Ruth Smith and Bert Toone, to name just a few.

Here are Ian's recollections of his uncles.

George Edwin Myer was born in Blayney NSW in 1908. He became a contractor and builder around the district. He built Hogan's store which he managed for a time. He married Wenda May Holwell (Fred 'Pop' Holwell's daughter) in 1929. In 1943 George joined the American Small Ships as a shipwright and served in New Guinea till late 1944. He was granted his discharge on compassionate grounds as his wife was very ill.

We remember our uncle, Edmund Nicholas (Ted) Myer, who used to drive the ferries. Sometimes on the weekends we were allowed to go roller-skating at Ettalong, at the old picture theatre. We would walk down the hill to Killcare Wharf and catch the ferry across. The fare was sixpence but if Uncle Ted was on, he would just walk by us and not charge us.



George and Wenda. Photo Don Holwell



Hogan's Store on left.



Edmund (Ted) Myer

Ted Myer was well known in the area. He was granted his Ferry Masters Certificate in 1930 and drove the ferries for the Murphys. He also sold sly grog and got his supply from a pub in Woy Woy.

He owned an old Armstrong Sidley ute and when it couldn't be registered any more, he gave it to Grahame to learn to drive on the farm.



Grahame and the Armstrong Sidley

After the ferries stopped running Ted delivered newspapers until his death in 1968 at the age of only fifty-eight years.

Bert Myer lived in Blythe Street, Killcare until well into his eighties and still likes to visit. During the Depression years Mick Myer bought each of his sons a block of land in Killcare, costing approximately twenty pounds a block. Only Frank and Bert did not sell their land.

Bert left school at 14 to work on the farm. When his father died in 1939, he took over the dairy farm and orchard. Farming was a protected industry, so he did not go to war. He supplied the army with milk and vegetables. They were camped at Putty Beach.

Bert married Jean Annand. After their marriage they rented 18 Blythe Street and then purchased the house.

Bert planted this land with fruit trees and grew vegetables as well. They raised chickens and pigs and had cows on the Fraser Road property. The produce was sold to the local community when Bert did his weekly rounds in his truck. In 2009, Bert aged 92, is still going well.



Above and below: Jean and Bert Myer

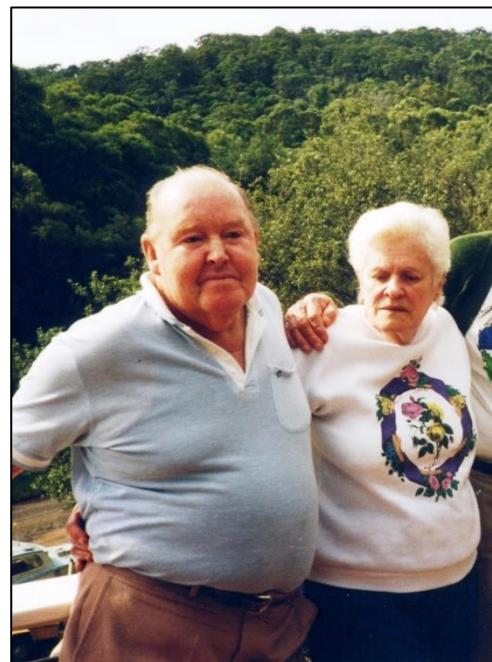
Bert Myer's story has been documented in this publication.



Francis Frederick Myer (Frank) was the youngest of the four Myer boys. Frank was born in Killcare in 1921. He worked for Gosford Shire Council as a maintenance worker, repairing the local roads as his father used to do with his horse and cart. Frank drove a Willys Truck. Frank joined the Australian Army in 1941 as a Gunner, 18 Anti-Aircraft Battery and was discharged in 1944. In 1954 Frank married Norma Annand



Frank Myer



Frank and Norma

Ian's recollections now focus on his family's neighbours at Killcare Heights.

Clyde and Don Walters were the Tisdell's next door neighbours up on the Heights. They had a chook farm as well as pigs, citrus, beans and other produce. Clyde taught Ian how to drive his Massy Ferguson tractor. Ian would spend time after school and weekends doing chores, collecting eggs, feeding the pigs and so on. The Walters had two wire haired terriers, Trixie and Bessie. Trixie was the male and if you didn't keep an eye on him, he would lift his leg and pee on you. He could add more to this story!

Ian remembers a lucky escape.

I can recall just how lucky I was one day when standing on the back of the tractor while Clyde was using the disc plough. Clyde told me to hang on, but as soon as the tractor started I lost balance and was heading for the discs below. I can consider myself very lucky that Clyde looked around just in time and he caught me by my shirt. After that episode I very quickly disembarked from the tractor.

Jack and Eileen Walters lived in Saratoga / Davistown and had the farm next to Clyde and Don. John and his wife Val Walters lived in the house on Wards Hill Road. The Tisdell children would often take a short cut through the two properties.

Jack grew mixed produce and would be the main transport with his truck for other farmers in our area and also from Macmasters Beach. He would take the produce to the packing house at Gosford or to the train for the market in Sydney. On the property was a large mulberry tree and the kids were allowed to climb and pick them. They also had Beagle Hounds, which would roam all over; they could often be heard day and night when they were on the scent of a fox or other rodent. Sometimes we would even see them at Macmasters or Kincumber walking back to Saratoga / Davistown if they had missed their ride home on the truck One dog's name was Punch and he would sometimes call in for a short stay.



Punch, the Beagle Hound

Eric and Ally Settree lived opposite the Maitland Bay Store and had several acres of farmland. They farmed the old-fashioned way with a draught horse to pull the plough. Ian can remember having a ride on the horse. He said, "It sure seemed a long way from the ground."

We can remember cutting across through the scrub to the Settree's to buy watermelons and rockmelons. They also had large loquat trees and we were able to help ourselves to the fruit when in season.



Ian's Commer bus

Bert Toone farmed on the Heights. Ian can remember planting and picking cucumbers and marrows near where Sir Russel Drysdale's house is built now. As kids we used to collect some of the Sugar Cane, that was growing just inside the fence, to chew on. Bert also grew sweet potatoes opposite to where the Bouddi Nursery was.

Ian's first vehicle, a rusty Commer Bus, no rego, was given to him by Horace Mills, who lived in the last house on the heights on the way to Macmasters Beach. The Wakehams lived there also. Bert Toone towed the bus down to our place with his tractor and Ian had it running shortly after.

Here is the story of the Bayly family by Suellen Tisdell.

Ted (Edward) Bayly was born in Wellington, NSW. He lived and worked there before entering the RAAF in WW 2, where he served overseas as a navigator on Catalina aircraft

After the war he gained his Private Pilot Licence and would fly whenever he was able.

Paddy (Elsie) was born in Bathurst and lived on a large property called *Swashfield* near Oberon, before moving to Elizabeth Bay in Sydney with her parents.

During WW 2 Paddy joined the WAAFS, where she learned how to repair instruments and served in Sydney and Melbourne.

After they married Ted and Paddy lived in Wellington, where Ted worked for Wellington Stores and later Sunserve. Paddy worked for AML&F, the District Schools Inspector and Wellington High School.

Ted and Paddy Bayly, with their youngest child, Suellen, moved from Wellington in the central west NSW to Hardys Bay in April 1971. The Baylys had purchased the Post Office next door to the bottle shop from Reg and Jean Farmer. They rented a house in Araluen Drive.

We came from having all mod cons to a house with no phone and a Hygia (Chocolate Wheel) toilet! The Hygia is an old-fashioned toilet that works when deposits land on a disc below the seat and then are swept off with centrifugal force, as the disc is spun when the lid is closed.

The family later purchased an old house on the waterfront at Davistown where they lived and restored the house. *The foundations used to sink and every couple of months Dad would jack up the house and pack the foundations. After that the house would crack and creak as it settled back sinking to where it was before.*

After selling the house they bought a house at 92 Heath Road and later built a home which they called *Wombalano* at 6 Pauline Avenue on Killcare Heights. The house was built by Norm Holloway.

Ted and Paddy had several mail delivery contracts including St Huberts Island, Bensville, Killcare, Killcare Heights and Hardys Bay, which kept them very busy. During the Christmas period Ted would do mail deliveries from dawn to dusk. Somehow Ted found the time to work on building a plywood boat in the garage at the side of the Post Office. Unfortunately, he did not complete it but had most of it done when he sold it.

Working in the Post Office must have had its moments such as having to deliver a Christmas card addressed 'Freddy and Bobby Hardys Bay' and a telegram 'to the house with the yellow M G out front'.

The Baylys sold the Post Office in 1979/80 to Ian and Christine Brittingham who built a house on the block behind. Suellen Bayly married Ian Tisdell in the late 1970s.



In 2009, the Post Office is a Fish and Chip shop.

Ted was a member and a director of Hardys Bay RSL and well known and esteemed by all, making many friends. Ted died in 1982 after a battle with leukaemia.

When living at Killcare, Paddy was involved with many organisations including the Red Cross, Meals on Wheels and also the Walking Group. Paddy now lives in the West Gosford Retirement Village.



Paddy and Ted Bayly.

Ian's reminiscences conclude with memories of some of the local 'institutions'.

MAITLAND BAY STORE

The store was built by John and Dulcie Wall. They later built and moved to *Lilac House* on the heights, near the lookout not far away towards Killcare. John was also the district ranger, so we were told. Ian recalls picking Christmas Bells with his father on the cliffs overlooking the beach.

There was only one house and a shack at the time. Someone shouted, "RANGER," and Ian dropped his bunch and took off like a shot. Ian found out later it was just one of Dad's mates having a joke. 'The RANGER' turned out to be Bert Annand.

The Halls had taken over the store by 1966. Ian can remember the year because it was the year decimal currency came in. He got up early and waited for the store to open to buy some lollies and get some of the new currency but was disappointed when told they didn't have any yet.

We would often go fishing at Maitland Bay and beyond; Mrs Hall would always buy fish from us. I can remember going down to Maitland Beach one day to see the dead whale that was washed up there. Mr and Mrs Hall had two daughters who would catch the bus to school. The one named Clover could draw lovely pictures of horses.

Jim and Dawn Sanders took over the store sometime after the Halls.

We would often walk to Daleys Point to visit dad's friends, Ray and Marie Sawyer, who lived at Melrose Wharf. Ray was a linesman with the P.M.G. I can remember them having an old round refrigerator. We walked along the fire trail and then cut through the scrub to their house. Other times we would explore the Aboriginal carvings on the rocks and also the cave and midden at the base of the rocks.



Aboriginal carvings

THE SWEAR BOX

Dad had a swear box which cost the swearer ten cents a word. One fellow put two dollars in the box and let fly. He would have got his money's worth as no change was given.

SLY GROG

Someone suggested that dad sell sly grog. This is a false statement and should be retracted. Why would anyone need to sell grog with the local bottle shop and RSL operating at the time? The person involved should get the facts right before making a statement in print and make sure of the right spelling. Perhaps they are getting our father mixed up with our uncle, Ted Myer, who actually was involved in selling sly grog.

TED'S SHED

In the 1960s dad built a shed (every bloke needs a shed) down the back. It was soon to be known as 'Ted's Shed'. Many a party was to be had down there with lots of good memories. The shed was caught in the bush fire of January, 1975 and all was lost including vintage cars and motor bikes that belonged to our friends. Jim Mercer Snr had built a bike track around the back through the scrub and across the dam wall with his grader.

Our friends and others would converge on the weekends and have time trials around the track. We remember at least two bikes ending up in the dam and one bike breaking in half. No one even got hurt.



Ted's Shed 1975

THE FIRE 1975

We don't know where or how it started but it sure came fast. Grahame, Alan Smith, I and someone whose name we don't even remember, were at the house throwing buckets of water out of the fishpond (used to be our swimming pool when we were young) on to the house. Alan left with Jim Saunders to help further up the road.

We went to the gutter in the road, but the smoke was choking us, so we went back to the house which was locked. Grahame smashed a glass panel on the door to get us inside. At last, we could breathe better. While inside the fire was going right over the house with embers falling through the gaps in the iron. Just as well the house was not lined as we could see where they fell and could put them out. The beds were catching fire, so we were throwing water over them to put the fire out. We still don't know why the fibro didn't explode. Maybe the poor old goldfish had something to do with it. Mum and Dad were told to expect the worst. Imagine their surprise to see the house still standing. Mum gave us a lottery ticket called "Thank You", but it didn't win a prize.

You can't keep a good shed down. It was rebuilt again with lots of donated material from all over. Many people came up on weekends and rebuilt the shed. A big thank you to all who helped.

After the fire Ian went up in a small Cessna plane, piloted by his soon to be father-in-law, Ted Bayly, and took photos of the devastation the fire caused.



View from the air facing north

In the centre, three quarters up, you can see the snake path which was the bike track on our property.

KILLCARE WAGSTAFFE FIRE BRIGADE

Ian joined the brigade in the mid-1960s. The cost for subs at that time was 25 cents which later was raised to 50 cents in the early 1970s. (Ian still has the receipts). After gaining his car licence at seventeen years and because he was an apprentice motor mechanic and the brigade needed more drivers, the brigade voted to make him in charge of maintenance on the truck.

At one meeting a motion was put forward that the brigade write to the Commissioner for Transport asking that Ian be granted a special licence to drive fire fighting vehicles (at the time you had to be twenty-one years old). Harry Kinson was the secretary at the time and wrote to the commissioner. The reply was: "If Ian could pass a truck drivers test permission would be granted."

I was apprenticed to Col Poulton at Green Point. Col asked a customer, Mr Les Sharp from Davistown, who owned a truck, if he would allow me to do my driving test in his truck. His reply was yes, and we agreed to meet at the police station at the required time. Test time came and I climbed into the truck and drove off with the policeman sitting in the passenger seat. I had to do a hill start in a truck I had not even driven before. After the hill start the policeman turned to me and said how long have you been driving this truck? I replied this was the first time. After that he said to me just go back to the station. He then endorsed my licence to drive fire fighting vehicles. When I turned eighteen my licence allowed me to drive any truck, not just fire fighting vehicles. We would fight many fires on our own in those days. There was not much help from outside your area unless it was of a major concern.

Ian can recall driving the Blitz up the hill to a fire on the heights; it was so slow.

When we got the New Bedford, it had to be run in and was even slower than the Blitz, until they took off the governors on the engine and even then, it was still so slow. One could just about walk as fast as the truck going uphill. Thanks to modern thinking it is much better these days.

(After leaving the coast Ian would continue as a volunteer Bush Fire Fighter with Killabakh (Yes! KILLABAKH), a volunteer bush fire brigade. More later.)

Ian can now recall the meetings at the Fire Brigade shed. Some of the discussion he did not understand at the time but can make sense of most of it now. A lot went on and a lot was said. Some people did not get along together, and punch-ups occurred, but when a fire was on, all was forgotten, and everyone would work together to get the job done.



The old Ford Blitz tanker



The new Bedford tanker

Ian recalls persons from the brigade. Sadly, some have passed on.

Bill Sanders, Jim Saunders, Harry Kinson, George Burns, Bob Isbell, Peter Dale, Sandy Low, Glen Ford, Oliver Holland, Bill Archer, John Stewart, Robert Gold, Alan Smith, Greg Bush, Grahame Tisdell, Norm Holloway, Roley Ford, Ted White, Arthur Beasley, Les McGarratty, Neville Hazzard, Keith McDougal, Len Wardrop, Russ Akers, Noel Stalling, Garry Lees, Leon Walther, Allan Duell, to name but a few. Leo Brown was the area F. C. O. Jim Saunders would later take over from him.

HARDYS BAY RSL.

The first RSL was at the old hall in Araluen Drive. I believe Fred (Bar) Bonfield had much to do with its start as an RSL. A good job done but he got a few people offside with him. There are a lot of stories to tell (maybe later). Ian used to work for Don Evans in Gosford. Don was a transport carrier carting from the breweries in Sydney to the local area. Ian and Bill Sanders delivered the first kegs of beer in Ian's 1964 E H Holden station wagon after knock-off time.

Bill Sanders and Ian later on ended up as barbers at the club (another story).

Bomb Scare at the club. There was a phone call to the club to say a bomb was planted somewhere in the club. What do we do? "Evacuate," said the police. Everyone left the building except Clem Miller who said, "Who cares, let them blow me up". He did eventually come out after the beer was shut off.

Someone knows more. (Maybe all will be revealed later.)

WAGSTAFFE HALL

Most Friday nights a minister, Mister Bingham, who we referred to as Captain Bingham, would have a youth night at Wagstaffe Hall. We could bring our records and dance and have a get together. One record was titled Honey by Bobby Goldsborough and would make the girls cry.

Reverend Bingham would come by boat and tie up at Wagstaffe wharf and go home afterwards. One often wonders how he got home at all. His boat would often be the object of sabotage by a few nameless people. He would also preach from his boat with a loudspeaker on Sunday in the bay. He could often be heard even up on the heights if the wind was in the right direction

HALVERSON BOAT AT TALLOW BEACH

Arthur Beasley, Don Radford, Glen Ford, Ian Tisdell and Mr Halverson are important to this story.

We had heard of a boat going aground on Tallow Beach and decided to have a look. In those days you could drive all the way down to the beach.

The boat was stuck on the rocks on the southern end and with the tide going out we could reach it without too much effort. As it was getting dark, we noticed another boat coming over to the beach and staying just out from the breakers. Next thing we saw a torch light in the surf and a small boat coming ashore. Arthur went to investigate, and it turned out to be Mr Halverson, who appreciated us being there to help with the salvage of his boat. Afterwards the boat was pulled further up on the beach by bulldozer and repaired enough to be towed back to Brooklyn for more repairs.

We know there is more to this story about the people, who turned up naked at Hardys Bay and asked some locals to help them. We know the event made the newspapers.

BOOM...

The tale about a big firecracker (another story) just might be true. What happened? Woy Woy's windows rattled. Kincumber's windows rattled. Even Gosford heard some noise. Someone's father, who lived in Kincumber asked his son if he had anything to do with the noise, which had rattled the windows the night before. "What noise?" was the reply (What a fibber.) Colleen Smith was walking to the shops next morning. She came over to us and said she just wanted to know if we were still on the map (true story).

The story is that someone had an idea that oxy and acetylene make a good fire cracker. Great idea down on the beach. Garbage bags were filled with a mixture of oxy and acetylene and a time fuse was lit. The first fuse went out so back to start again. Shorter fuse this time. Finally, people on Manly View Drive saw a flash of light and heard a slight 'boom'. Next day, several stories were told by other people who did not know the full story.

BOB MALONEY...

Bob was a sand truck driver for the Rutile Works and lived at Macmasters Beach. Sometimes he would give us a lift up the hill. Mum would often send us down to the bay shops for supplies, which we would carry back in string bags. Bob would be fully laden with sand and could not stop. As we were walking up the hill his truck would draw near, and the passenger door would fly open. We had to run to keep up with the truck and throw the shopping on the floor and then he would reach across and pull us into the cab. One wouldn't even think of doing that these days. Bob passed away in 2009.

THE SANI MAN...

Ted Walters (no relation to Walters on the heights) lived at Pretty Beach. Ted was a sanitary man or night soil remover, as the occupation was known as, at the time. Dad would often tell the story of when he was given a lift down the hill in the truck. He stopped for our father and said to him jump in and make a load. The truck was full to capacity and Ted only had one more pan to pick up, so he had to put it in the cab between them. Also, he didn't have any lids left to cover the pan. As they were travelling along, Ted's coat slipped off the back of the seat and into the open pan. As Ted was retrieving his coat, Dad said to him, "You wouldn't wear that coat again would you?" "No," was the reply, "but MY LUNCH is in the pocket."

ANYONE FOR CHEAP MEAT...

Who would rob a butcher's shop. Someone broke into George Lyell's shop and stole his produce, Ken Johnston worked out who it was and one day out in front of his marina he asked the fellow why did he do it? "How do you know I did it?" was the reply. Ken's answer was, "What about the blood on the back of your ute?" The fellow in question shrugged his shoulders, got in his ute and drove away.

This is a True Story because I was there. One can tell this story now because the bloke with the ute has since passed away.

FISHO...

At times when the mullet was running and the fishermen had some left over, they would go around the district to sell the fish. We can remember scaling, gutting and removing the black from inside many fish to be frozen for later on. This was when we had the power on.



"THE FISHERMEN'S RETURN."—One of the many splendid entries in this week's amateur photography competition conducted by the "Telegraph Pictorial." Taken by John V. M'Phee, Kendal Street, Cowra, it wins the second prize of One Guinea.

If we were down at Fishermans End when the fishermen were doing a dig, we would often help them to pull the net in and they would throw us a few fish in return. One remembers the Stirton's, Aleck, Teddy, Rosemary and Bill.

Long illness finally catches Shaky Bill



William Stirton

A MEMORIAL service will be held tomorrow in memory of well-known professional fisherman, William Varney Stirton.

Mr Stirton, 79, died in Gosford Hospital on February 16 after a long illness.

Mr Stirton grew up at Killcare and became a professional fisherman when he left school.

During World War II he served in the Merchant Navy, surviving a torpedo attack off New Guinea.

On another occasion he was put ashore to have his appendix out and his ship was sunk with all his mates.

His war experiences earned him the nickname of Shaky Bill.

On his discharge Mr Stirton returned to Killcare and later married his wife Irene, who pre-deceased him.

Mr Stirton's working life took him to many places throughout Australia doing seasonal work.

But he never forgot the Central Coast and eventually returned to Killcare to resume his role as a fisherman.

In the early 1980s Mr Stirton took over the role of caretaker of the Ettalong Caravan Park before deciding to live at Orange.

Once again the call of the Central Coast beckoned and Mr Stirton returned and spent the last years of his life living at Gertrude St, North Gosford.

In 1997 he received a certificate from Prime Minister Howard expressing the nation's thanks for contributing to Australia's effort in World War II.

The memorial service will be held tomorrow at 10.30am at the Ettalong public wharf.

W.A.D.D.C. WAGSTAFFE AND DISTRICT DARTS CLUB

The club was formed in the 1970s by a few bored teenagers who needed something else to do on the weekends. It was decided that each person in the club would put in twenty cents per week to go towards a social gathering (booze up) when we had enough money in the bank. For the people who would ask the question about the club being registered the answer is yes...although we didn't have a dart board.)

The social gatherings would start at Ted's Shed and sometimes finish a few days later. For those who may remember, the weekend of 'the three kegs' is just one of these episodes. Maybe more later.

BEER BOTTLE COLLECTIONS

Arthur Beasley Senior was often seen with his dog and a sugar bag over his shoulder, walking the roads and collecting discarded bottles. Ian remembers passing him on his way to the shops when saw Arthur's dog come out from the bush on the side of the road with a bottle in its mouth (a well-trained dog). Rows of beer bottles were stacked in neat rows at the front of the Beasley's property waiting for the Bottlo to come to purchase them.

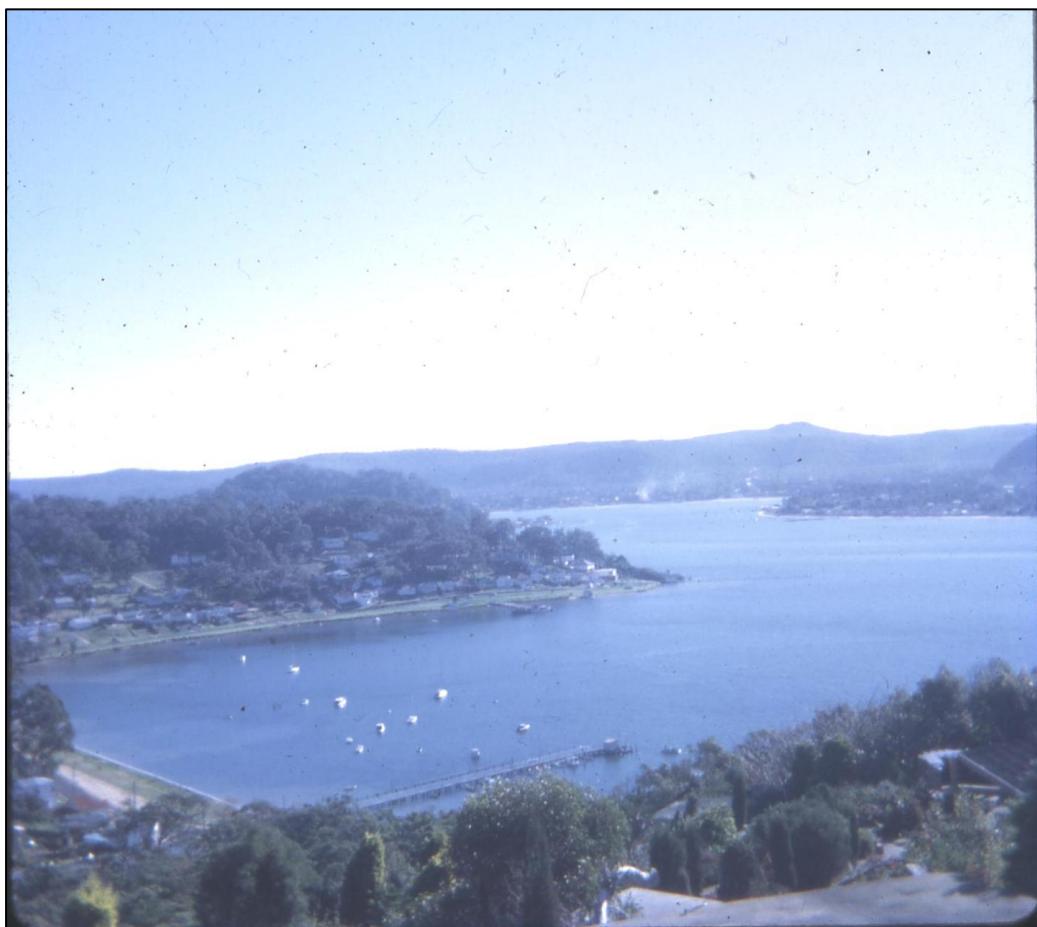
Our father liked to have a beer or three when he was home on the weekends. We, as kids, had our own separate bottle collections. It was always a race to be the first one to get out of bed to collect the bottles that dad had thrown on the lawn during the night. When the Bottlo came he would give us sixpence a dozen for them.

OSCAR SPECK.

Ted Tisdell was a cabinet maker by trade and Oscar was a very fussy person to work for because he knew what he wanted, and he wanted the best. He asked Ted to do the interior panelling on his new house which Ted did on the weekend. One of the rooms was lined with Burmese Teak. Oscar was proud of an off cut about twelve inches long and said the piece was worth more than a bottle of beer in those days. All the timber had to be secretly nailed, meaning that no nails could be seen.

Oscar had a cave under his first house which he used as his workshop in the early days. One remembers seeing his blue kayak stored up on the roof.

He bought a new opal polishing machine and asked us to round up some friends to help move it into his new workshop. It had been delivered down the driveway on the new subdivision on the northern side of his house. As the machine was heavy, it took five of us to manoeuvre it into the workspace. After we had finished, Oscar said that in his younger days he would have moved it on his own. He later gave us a carton of beer for our help.



View from Oscar Speck's house. Note how many boats in the bay.
Photo: Bill Archer.

Ian and Suellen Tisdell (né Bayly) 2009

KEN TOUGH

By Jennifer Poole (his wife)

The community feels privileged to call Ken Tough a neighbour and friend. Ken is gifted when it comes to reciting poetry and he makes each and every poem live for its listeners. It is now many years that he has performed at the local Australia Day ceremony in Wagstaffe Square each January 26. He is also a clever artisan when he works with timber and a memorable example is Tom Jackson's seat at Wagstaffe Hall. Ken responds immediately any time he is called upon to fix things, to help at events and lend a hand whenever required.

Ken Tough has retired successfully with many interests which he works tirelessly. He & his wife Jennifer came to Pretty Beach for a short stay after a busy Christmas in Sydney in 2003. They immediately fell in love with the area and on impulse bought their little cottage in High View Road. Ken has called the area 'Perfect Beach' ever since. He couldn't wait to retire from his Sydney business as a commercial builder and started lovingly restoring and extending their small cottage which has now become their home.

When Ken was still in his 30s his company employed up to thirty staff, designing and constructing new Clubs and Industrial Meat Works. Ken also designed and developed the Structural Floor Grating we now see on many jetties and walkways all over the world including the gun decks on our Naval Destroyers. The cost of developing this material in the late 70's and the difficulty of marketing this invention forced Ken to sell his factory and design to the Cooperative Insurance Company (CIC).

Ken then went back to building and became a Project Manager responsible for a number of major projects, including:

- The Ramada Hotel at Palm Cove, north of Cairns
- A shopping centre north of Brisbane, the same design as Chatswood Chase
- The five original Exhibition Halls at Darling Harbour
- The development at North Sydney that includes The Greenwood Hotel, Greenwood Shopping Centre and The Optus Tower Building. This at the time was the largest commercial construction project in Australia.

He was now in his mid-40's. For the next 10 years Ken and his wife Jennifer formed and ran the company KTC, renovating floor areas in commercial buildings, including Grosvenor Place, NAB House, Martin Place Railway Retail and many others.

At the age of 60 Ken and Jennifer retired to Pretty Beach with their dog Banjo. Not long after Ken moved here the local community learned about his life-long passion for Australian Bush Poetry.

He now has time to pursue this love, which he first developed growing up in Condobolin, NSW. After joining the Gosford Bush Poets and attending their monthly meetings he started travelling to country towns to participate in Bush Poetry competitions. It was not long before he was collecting a shed full of awards and trophies.

Six years ago, he was invited to recite at the annual Wagstaffe Australia Day Ceremony; that first year he recited Clancy of the Overflow, and he has recited on Australia Day at Wagstaffe ever since. He also recites at Keron's Street Parties at the Wagstaffe Store and on local Anzac Day Ceremonies. He can be easily persuaded to recite and has quite a varied repertoire which the locals seem to love.

He can often be seen down in his street-side workshop outside his home, building furniture, splitting and chopping firewood or just simply stopping for a chat with the passers-by. In his short time here, he has fast become a local identity.



GRAEME TROY'S STORY

Holidays at Wagstaffe

Graeme Troy has known Pretty Beach since he holidayed there as a child aged 6. The house they stayed in was at No.1 Wagstaffe Avenue. How fortuitous that the holiday house he had known as a child became available for sale in 2010. (See the photo on Page 110.) He bought the property and began to do it up. The locals were fascinated to see the old house coming to life; often each day brought a new improvement. Graeme and his family continue to visit the house, (see photo on Page 112), still a holiday destination for the Troys. Here he tells his story of the wonderful times spent at Pretty Beach.

The house, pictured in 1932, is at far right on the waterfront in the photograph below.



I was fortunate to grow up in the Sydney suburb of Kingsgrove in the 1950s. As children, we had billycart races down our street and roamed the bush around Wolli Creek with our dogs in tow: collecting firewood for the annual bonfire cracker night, catching tortoises and tadpoles and running free were all part of life. How things change.

Our fibro house was built in 1952. There was no family car until a decade later. In 1956 Dad heard about a cottage available for rent during Christmas holidays. At age six I accompanied my father to Wagstaffe to have a look at the property and make rental arrangements.



Back in the 1950s there was no Rip Bridge; there was a gravel road at Pretty Beach and Wagstaffe. An open creek ran alongside 1 Wagstaffe Avenue with a footbridge to the road; The shop over the road was owned by the always welcoming Mr and Mrs Stewart. There was another shop just down near Pretty Beach (now Ooro street), a bakery next door; a wharf and of course the present-ay shop at Wagstaffe. There were no flashing green and red lights over the water at night. All of the local public wharves had sheds and a bench seat at the rear – a great refuge for us children when raining.

Getting to Wagstaffe on Boxing Day was quite an effort. Suitcases had to be packed for Dad, Mum, my sister and myself. There was a walk to the bus stop; bus to train station; train to Central; a change of train to Woy Woy or Gosford; then a walk to the ferry wharf; we alighted at Pretty Beach Wharf and walked to the cottage. The annual three-week holiday was worth the effort. I always looked forward to seeing the dolphins join up with the ferry and ride the bow wave. Better than sitting in the back seat of a car playing a computer game.

Our cottage at No.1 Wagstaffe Avenue has always been precious. The owner, Mrs Brandstater, was always well dressed; smoked cigarettes through a filter and ensured the creek running out beside the cottage did so in a straight line so that the sandbank in front of the cottage was protected. This required a lot of work to maintain the straight edge.

The premises consisted of two residences – the boat shed (near the road) and the main cottage. In the early years we stayed in one or the other for our three-week Christmas holiday. We never went anywhere else for holidays. Swimming out the front and the sound of water lapping under the house have always been great pleasures to savour.

Our holidays without a car restricted our activities: a walk to Putty Beach didn't happen annually. Walks to Lobster Beach over the hill or more enjoyably via Half Tide Rocks were enjoyable. Walks to the ladder with Dad to do some fishing were wonderful experiences to enjoy and imprint the beauty of the environment into the mind. The occasional walk to Tallow Beach and Little Tallow Beach was likewise wonderful.

Our holiday experiences were much moulded by the water and the tides, to swim at high tide and to fish at high tide.

My mother was a very keen mullet fisherwoman. Mum and I would get up at 5am and walk to the bakery to buy a fresh loaf of bread for mullet fishing. The aroma of fresh bread is an intoxicating sensation for a young boy. We were often the first to grab a fishing spot on Pretty Beach jetty. We often caught a bag full of mullet. It is exciting for a youngster with a rod in hand to see the float dive beneath the surface and react and land a flapping fish on the wooden jetty: grasp the fish tight, unhook it, place it in the hessian bag and there you are, back seated with legs dangling over the end of the jetty for a repeat of the achievement. Dad always scaled and cleaned the fish. We ate plenty of fantail mullet. I still enjoy the taste. In those days there were two commercial boats moored at Pretty Beach wharf. I remember the surly fisherman, Radcliffe. His daughter was nice. Fishing had to cease for a minute or two when a ferry docked for passengers to get on and off. I recall a few ferry names – Kincumber and Bellbird Star.

Tied up at the end of the private jetty in front of our place were two heavy wooden clinker boats. We had use of one of the boats and that gave us access to Ettalong. Dad would row the four of us over at least once a week. My sister and I would paddle around in hire canoes for thirty minutes until our numbers were called over the megaphone to come in.

Ettalong trips enabled food supplies to be replenished; dad to have a beer, mum a shandy and evening bingo to be enjoyed. Trips to Ettalong were largely determined by the tides. We would head over on the outgoing tide and come back on the incoming tide. Occasionally Dad got the timing of the trip back wrong and was totally exhausted as we stepped onto the jetty.

The rowboat enabled us to fish in the bay and around Half Tide Rocks and over towards Ettalong; that widened the eating choice of fish – flathead, flounder, whiting and bream. We enjoyed them all for dinner. We normally went to bed early but a game of competitive cards or patience or dominos often preceded sleep.

When coming back with mum from a morning fish, dad regularly had the radio on, the main means of being in contact with the world. There was a public telephone box down near Pretty Beach wharf.

Life at Wagstaffe for my family was very basic for many years. Basic does not mean difficult or unenjoyable. You lived life as it was presented. Only tank water was available and there was a septic sewer of sorts which I later referred to as the chocolate wheel. Leave it to your imagination.

Following the passing of Mrs Brandstater, the property was purchased by Cliff Emerson. Cliff used to work at the fruit and vegetable markets in Sydney which took a toll on his body. Cliff lived in the small self-contained middle of the 3 buildings. He had a table on the enclosed verandah which he sat at for hours looking out at the vista over the bay. I remember dad and Cliff enjoying a beer and cigarette/cigar in late afternoons.

I maintained a relationship with Cliff. As my life changed with work, marriage and children I always made sure that I spent a week at Wagstaffe every year. My holiday period changed from Christmas to Easter. I love autumn at Wagstaffe.

Cliff and I had many enjoyable chats. I used to save interesting articles from the new scientist magazine and bring them up to Cliff. He appreciated the environment; all living things and had an enquiring mind.

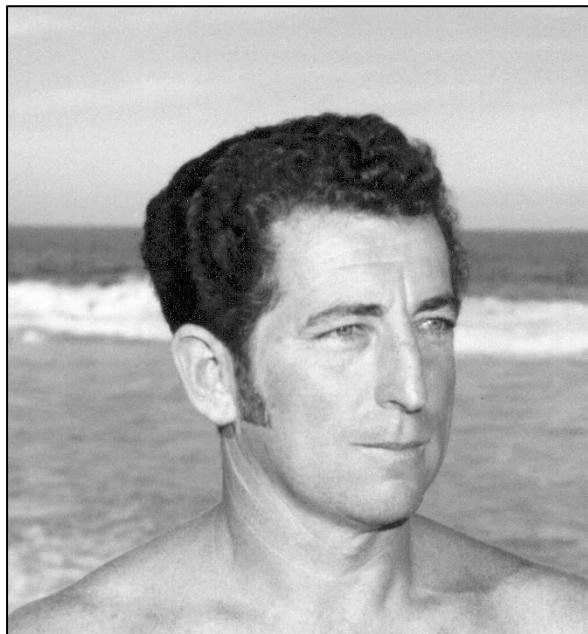
Our children and now grandchildren love Wagstaffe. I fondly remember showering our four children in the early 1980s. The shower bucket was filled up with a mixture of boiling and cold water and the rope was pulled and then secured so the device was above shoulder height; four naked children were lined up, the shower head opened and with quick soap work and the call of ‘next’ all four children were washed with the one bucket of water.

I was fortunate to be able to purchase the property in 2010 when Cliff passed away. The property was in need of an upgrade. With many years of attachment to the premises there was no way it was going to be knocked down and a modern luxury house erected. I understood the beauty of the place and its significance. The place is now very comfortable with the basic character hopefully retained. I still listen to the radio a lot. Cliff’s marble table is now the hearth in front of the fireplace.



JIM TUBBY

ON FAMILY AND SURF LIFESAVING AT KILLCARE



KILLCARE - one or two L's? For me double L symbolizes what this seaside hamlet is all about - KILL CARE - relaxation, fun, family, companionship. It had it all. Is it gone? Are we losing it?

When asked recently about my thoughts on family life (our family that is) in the early years, and the joining of the surf club, I sat, pondered, then tried to put words to feelings. I have tried not to be too analytical in the 'then' and 'now' comparison, but you must agree... things have not changed for the better. But then it all depends on age, liver condition, mood of the good wife etc, etc and what are the trials of modern life.

SO... TO WHAT WAS!!!!

Our family history at Killcare goes back to 1932, to a rented cottage on the bay, *Monty Blue*, then just three doors down from the shop, now the bottle shop. From 1936 the family rented *Wandene* on the hill. In 1942, a family whip-a-round saw the purchase of *Wandene* for seventy four pounds (\$148.00) and so starts the saga of continuous weekends; the smelly, gritty steam train from Central to Woy Woy, that seemed to take forever and then the 45 minute ferry trip (55 if it went via Cockle Creek) to Killcare.

I especially remember the stop at Hardys Bay wharf, where the ferry was always greeted by 'Turo', that mystical aboriginal gentleman, his cap of wool with tight grey curls peeping out. He knew everyone, especially the kids, who adored his stories.



The Moore's Store in 1947



Above: Last drink at the old clubhouse, 1970. Below: The new clubhouse, 2009.



Next came the stocking up with provisions for the weekend from Jim and Ethel Moore's store, that stayed open till 11 o'clock, more for a chat than business; then the trudge up that pebbly hill to a three-room cottage, lit only by hurricane lamps. We would fire up the Metters wood burner, turn on that huge portable battery radio and settle in for another quiet, tension free weekend. The family usually beached or played cards and always placed an S.P. bet on the races with Cyril Haydon down by the Myer's store.

But back to a 5-10-year-old. What was here to excite a kid from Erskineville? Was it sitting on the wharf fishing for mullet or listening to the tales of the *Bunyip in the Bay* from Wingy Bob, a one armed local, whose prowess with a fishing rod was unbelievable. No kid ever went home without a fish to brag about, (even if Bob caught it). Bob and his brother, George, lived for many years in Mrs Elliott's flats down from the Orange Spot.

Or maybe it was the excitement of watching Wally Worthington, that English gentleman, building a boat in his boat shop, just down from 'Uncle' Jim Moore's store. The combined aromatic smell from his pipe and the essence of freshly shaven timber, still stirs within the memory bank. The fact that both Jim and Wally each had one leg and Bob one arm made little minds wonder what dreadful calamity had fallen on the hamlet.

Adventure after adventure; a trip to the waterfall in Ford's gully where with a bit of luck and some childish expertise, a yabby could be caught and a million mosquitoes fed. Getting past Bligh Street was a definite 'No no!' without a detour to the dairy, where Bert Myers was always good for a story and a squirt of milk. Christmas was something special, when two pensioners, Dad and Mum McIlwraith, put on a party for all the kids of the district, including the 'blow-ins'. Generosity of this nature never happened in Erskineville. Even the walk to the beach was an event, with a stop off to see Pop, who was building a launch on his front verandah. The verandah came down, but I don't remember the boat getting wet. I think Pop passed away before the christening. Both stores had a hall attached and there were frequent monthly dances or even a kids' fancy-dress ball put on by the surf club and the 'Wy Worry Boys'. Believe me, apart from the beach, the bogey hole, the fishing and sand crabs, the bush walks, the continuous sense of adventure, there was always something to excite this city kid. These happenings helped mould the family and community atmosphere for locals and those permanent weekenders for many decades.

At the age of 15 in 1952, city life was to fill in the period between weekends; for sure there was football, boy scouts and plenty to do in town, but the draw to Killcare was always there. I and many of the local lads, had our city jobs but for them, going to Killcare was the return to family. Local lads, John Annand, Ken Greenhalgh, Adrian Murphy and John Moore, all had that something I was missing, the X factor - Killcare and the surf club. Killcare had it all. (Dare I mention it?) The three Ss were there: surf, sand and those nubile young ladies were in abundance. In February 1954, I joined the surf club. I'm sure that after all these years my sponsors still regret their spontaneity, but there I was, a pseudo local. In fact, a smart-arsed city kid who was to spend two and a half turbulent years obtaining his bronze. For some reason my rebellious nature did not take to regimentation, but they soon sorted me out.

The camaraderie and social life at Killcare in those heady days centred on the surf club, Saturday smokos (there was no bottle shop to wet the whistle), the barbecue, the carnivals, and always the Saturday night ferry trip to Woy Woy pictures. If only the back of that ferry could talk. These were all part of our being. We had our Annual Ball and dance nights at Hardys Bay RSL, fancy dress or come as you are turns; all were a blast. Sunday morning patrols were an effort we tried to avoid, but a sense of duty always prevailed. Without the club life we undoubtedly would have seen many of the local youngsters gravitate to the city instead of vice-a-verse. Killcare accepted the influx of city slickers, those lads from Balmain, Campsie, Glebe, Newtown and Erskineville. Who knows, without them our club may not have enjoyed its success at carnivals or continued with its outstanding patrol record.

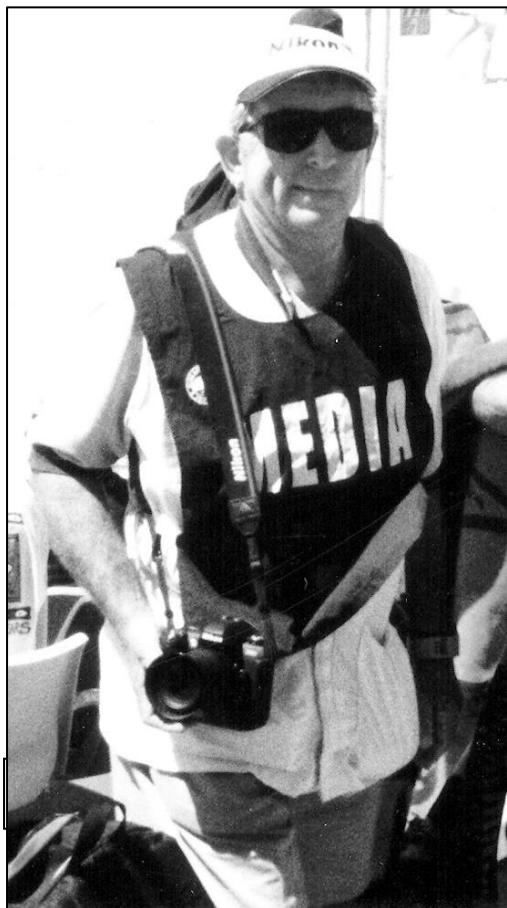
We had our share of doers or colourful characters: the unpredictable Johnny Mason whose antics are legendary and Stan Frame, our First Aid officer, to whom young ladies with sunburnt torsos showed preference. Then there was the Campsie kid, Peter Thomlinson, the youngest Australian soldier to be wounded in the Korean War; he tried hard to obtain his bronze, but the surf always beat him. There was Don Tindall, whose recital of rugby poems at smokos could never be equalled; the 'Wy Worry' Boys of the depression years; their assistance to many of our local pensioners will never be forgotten and Don (Choco) Dunlop, whose story at our fancy dress is best not told. Characters all, but a vital part of our club life.

The early years, 1931-35, when Killcare S.C. was part of District 8, an area stretching from the mouth of the Hawkesbury River to Catherine Hill Bay in the north, saw us adopted as a sister club by Palm Beach S.C., who attended many of our carnivals. They rowed over and often stayed the night. Rumour has it that after the carnival festivities, they were too tired to row back. It has been said that our first rescue reel was donated by Palm Beach - true or false the thought is nice.

Killcare has always been a force at carnivals; in the period 1931-51 our swimmers, boat crews, our R & R and beach teams were among the best of local clubs. Then came a small recession, a time of people growing up, growing out, looking for a city job, which meant a depletion in local members. Patrols were hard to fill for a period in the early 50s.

This situation didn't last long; again, an influx of city youth, mainly from Newtown and Erskineville: Bourne, Macfadyen, Tubby and Kemister, just to mention a few, helped to revitalise our club. Already in place was an outstanding R & R team, comprising of local lads; patrols were down and this much-needed boost in membership was to again kick-start a new era in rebuilding our club.

Surf Life Saving has and will always be part of Australian life. Since its inception, changes have been inevitable. Resuscitation has gone through many, possibly seven or eight changes: the Eve's Rocker, Sylvester Bosch, Schafer and Neilson among the early methods, changes all for the better and each more efficient. The belt has given way to the tube; this in turn was supplemented by the I.R.B. or rubber ducky, which we thought was the ultimate. Now there is the jet-rescue ski, a faster and yet more efficient rescue method.



In the past the Bronze Medallion was the criterion for a lifesaver; now there is a certificate for every function and with each, a re-qualification is required every year. What we enjoyed in the past has now become a chore, with much stricter regimentation, the possibility of increases in insurance litigation and each club becoming a controlled business body. Unfortunately, the fun side has become an unaffordable commodity.

Young people these days don't want to become tied down; their lifestyle and cars give them unlimited scope for self-expression, and few wish the responsibility of ensuring the enjoyment of others. At Killcare, we are lucky to have a competitive team of young and not so young, who can still instil an interest in surf lifesaving and community pride; something for which many clubs are struggling.

World, National, and State titles give momentum to any club but, and a big BUT - lifesaving starts and finishes between the flags with a good patrol.

To compare our club of today with the 'Killy' of old, is not to be. Somewhere, we have lost the togetherness, the 'all in all', and the sense of caring.



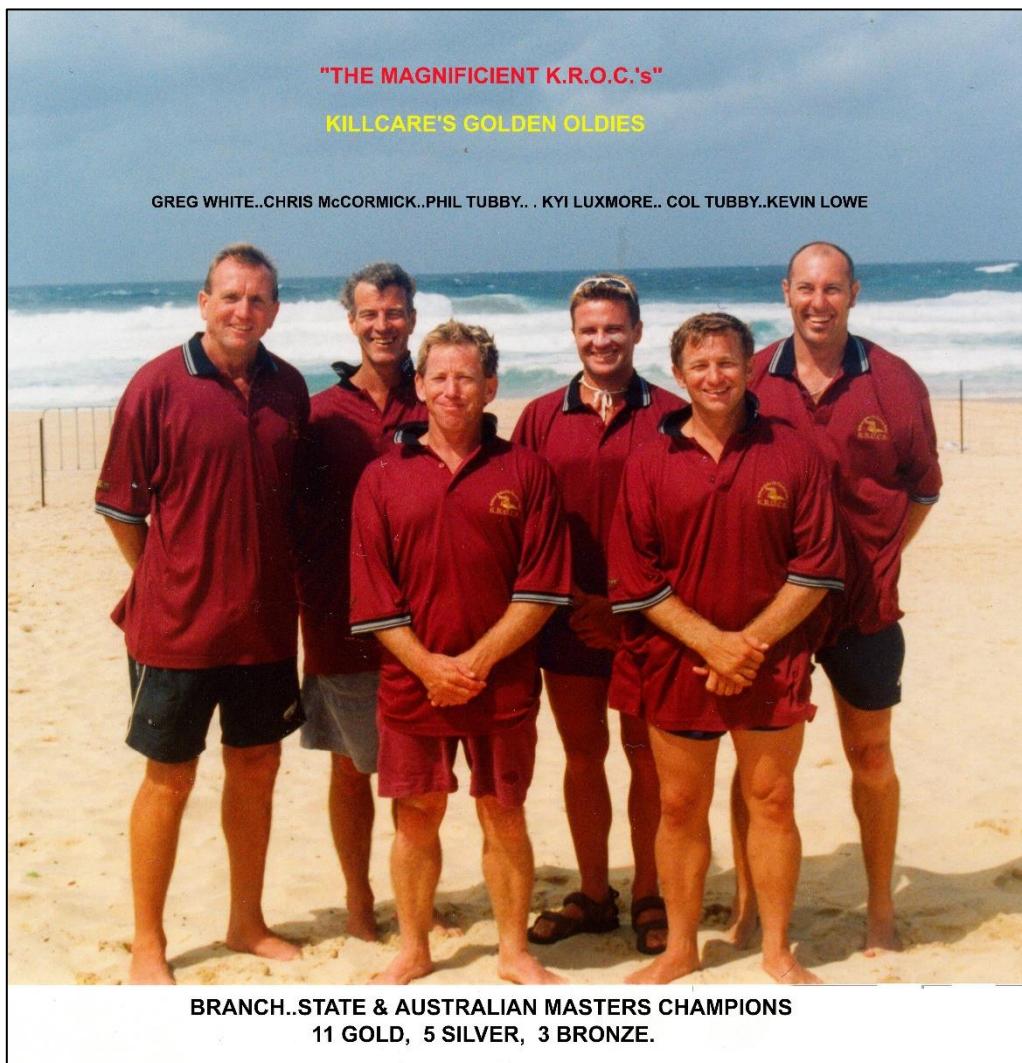
Killcare R & R Team in 1959

When club meetings were conducted once a month and every member was entitled to input, it was nothing to have 30 clubbies in attendance. Late patrols drew strict penalties; two missed patrols was sacrilege, and club officials were fully accountable at every meeting.

We saw the original clubhouse go, a new one built and opened in 1971, extensions added, and all paid for with little or no council help. We did it, the community did it. It was our pride and joy, our achievement.

With the building of a brand-new clubhouse, opened in 2009, by the Gosford Council with all mod-cons, are we going to follow the Queensland path with poker machines and general club like conditions? I sincerely hope not. If so, I feel we will lose that last vestige of lifesaving togetherness, something Killcare has always had.

Honestly, when one is an irascible old B, it is easy to criticise, to look back and say that everything then was done right; our lifestyle, our way of life - all was different. Progress and modern efficiency is very nice, but to retain some of the ways of yesteryear and the relating manners and control could only be beneficial to the community and the youth of today.



“Ode To Killcare”

*In the heart of Killcare,
where hotels are rare.
And kegs are served out by the cluster.
There's a place never missed,
by most blokes who get pissed,
The Surf Club's the place where they muster.
It's a good solid brew with a loveable crew
in surroundings that breed hepatitis.
For most blokes will sit midst the grit and shit,
so they to can catch piss-pot-itus.
Our brands are the best,
they have passed every test,
and although you can get it elsewhere.
It just isn't the same,
if you've not played the game,
with the pisspots who drink at Killcare.*

By an un-financial member, 1969.



Jim Macfadyen and Jim Tubby

All photos in this story are taken from Jim Tubby's exhaustive collection of Surf Club photos and memorabilia. D.Duft Ed.

TURO DOWNES

by Bruce Dunlop

Turo Downes passed away in 1942 at the age of 86, after living more than 50 years in the Brisbane Water district. He was buried at St Pauls Church of England, Kincumber, the church yard in which so many historical pioneers have been interred. The inscription on Turo's grave reads, 'Respected by all'. This fact was obvious to all who had had the pleasure of his company.

I was only 15 years old at the time of his passing, so my impressions are that of a remembered childhood and time spent by my brother, Don, and me, fishing and bush walking with Turo. He was a past master at everything he did. Fishing. Swimming. Running. Rowing. Turo was an accomplished card player and loved an occasional rum, the latter causing a few brushes with the law. He had a remarkable memory for names and faces and when meeting the arrival of the passenger launches (ferries), he would greet people that he had not seen for a long time, by their first name, especially the children, and for them he would change his voice to a type of falsetto, which would amuse everyone. Many of the young ones would be terrified of his black skin but given enough time he would win them over.

It is thought that Turo grew up in the Torres Strait area of Australia, where he may have had contact with Japanese Pearl divers; this could account for his swimming and boat craft ability. Whilst in Japan, I heard a Japanese man speak to his dog to stop it barking; he shouted Kuroi, the Japanese word for black. This word, evolving into 'Turo', may have become used as a nickname for Turo, as he was extremely black; you may say ebony.



Turo with some of his young friends at Hardy's Bay. Left to right: Pam Mainsbridge (nee Kirby), sister Moya, Turo, Alan Kirby, Enid Bryant.
Photo: Pam Mainsbridge



Turo at Hardy's Bay 1930

Turo lived in two places in the Hardys Bay/Killcare area that is known today. The first was at the old house originally owned by William Ward and then by Mr Mullen, (two historical figures featured in this publication), located on the high ground behind the present Fire Station.

In the 1930s, he was living in a humpy built from flattened Kerosene tins, covering a bush timber frame for the walls and corrugated iron for the roof, the whole measuring not 3 meters square. This home was situated on the high ground, on the corner of Heath Rd, behind what is now No 82; this was before any houses were built.

The view was extensive, taking in The Rip, Booker Bay and Hardys Bay, so Turo had a good idea of what everyone was doing.

He knew what launches (ferries) were arriving and departing and by them, the time of day, as they ran on time to meet the steam trains at Woy Woy.

Turo was a small man; he was bald with a tuft of white hair on each side of his head; he wore an old white panama hat, sand shoes, black trousers, and an old army tunic. In the winter he wore an army great coat. He fed and befriended many cats and dogs and there were always a few sardine cans about his camp. His needs were small, and he lived the simple life. When he died, a Police Officer threw a lighted match into his 'humpy', and everything was consumed by the flames.

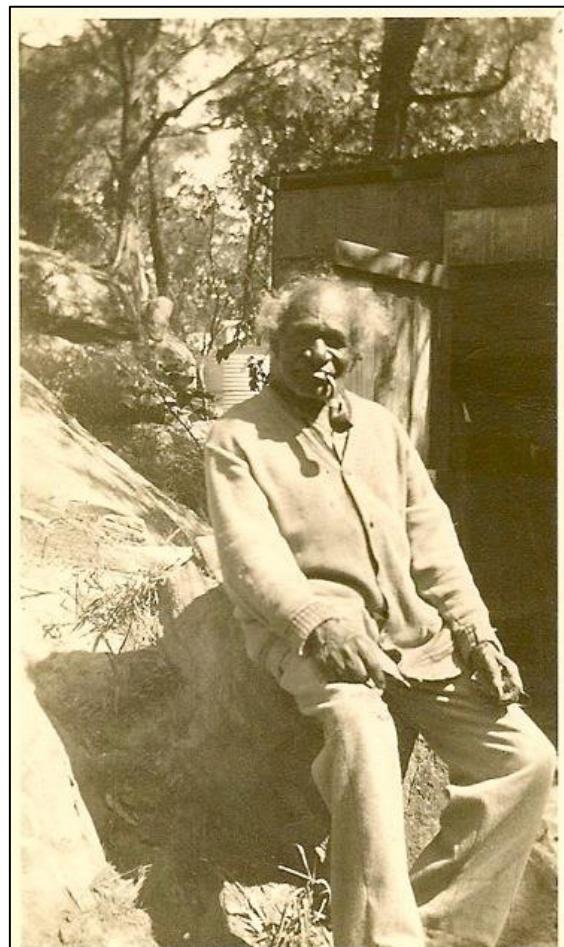
Charles Swancott in his book *Enchanted Waters* published in 1961 states: *A Contractor named Dunk came from Northern Queensland and he brought with him an Aboriginal named Turo Downs, who was a wonderful swimmer. To see him plunge into the ocean from the rocks at Killcare Beach (Putty Beach), swim under the water to the sea caves and reappear with a threshing lobster was a sight to remember.*

In the same story, reference is also made by Mr O.G. Huxley, who knew Turo, when the latter was cook, deckhand and general factotum on board Captain Anderson's *Tereza*, employed in carrying firewood from Wood Port, Erina Creek to Sydney. The captain said that Turo was capable of bringing the ship from Sydney to the Broadwater by himself if necessary.

Mr C.V. (Clarrie) Riley told me a story about Turo, which was both humorous and sad. Turo was a friend of the Callenders, an old local weekender family, who looked out for Turo. At this time, he developed pneumonia, and it was decided to send him to Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney. Wrapping him in a blanket and laying him on the roof of the passenger launch, he was conveyed to Woy Woy station and then placed in the Guard's van of the steam train for the trip to the Sydney Hospital. His recovery was slow, but he was eventually discharged into the care of Mrs Callander, who lived in Leichhardt when in Sydney.

Their son gave Turo his bed on the front verandah, and everything settled down until the early hours of the morning, when the milkman arrived and as was his practice, for a joke to surprise the young man, who usually slept there, he pulled down the bedclothes, to reveal not the usual sight but a very surprised Aboriginal man.

Turo was a close friend of my family, which was very large; my mother and father's families both having property in Hardys Bay, from where my parents met and married in 1920.





Turo with William & Mary Ann Montgomery.
Photo: Gosford Library

Mary Ann Montgomery (my great aunt) and her husband, William, first came to the bay in 1911 and purchased land in Heath Rd in 1918, at which time there were only two houses in existence. George and Mary Waring purchased the same year, followed by Hugh and Thomas Dunlop, upon their return from the Great War in 1919.

Eventually, several local friends of Turo applied on his behalf and he received the aged pension. It was said he was one of the first Aboriginal people to receive the pension (whether this is true or false is unknown).

Fishing with Turo and other children on Hardys Bay wharf for tailor, hardy heads and yellow tail for bait to catch flathead and bream was the main entertainment for children on school holidays and Turo was a great teacher, being very skilled in the sport.

We had many walking trips with Turo to swim in the Bogey Hole (rock pool) at Putty Beach and sometimes to help Alex Cameron, a professional fisherman and others, with catches of mullet and garfish, which they netted at the eastern end of the same beach, known as the Fishermans End.

On other occasions, the word would go around, and we would be off on a walk to Maitland Bay and view the remains of that famous wreck, parts of which were still visible at that time. Turo claimed that he had been involved in the original rescue of the survivors in 1898.



Turo and William Montgomery returning from a fishing trip. Photo: Bruce Dunlop

To go to Maitland Bay, the track taken from Hardys Bay was up the Rainbow Falls in the corner of Killcare (now Fletchers Glen) to the heights, along the Scenic Rd and then down into Maitland Bay. Turo would lead the way and have the 'billy' boiling for a cuppa when everyone arrived on the beach.

During the 1930s, the sighting of sharks in the Brisbane Water was quite a regular occurrence and children were not encouraged to swim outside the swimming baths provided. These were constructed from bush timber, driven into the bay and held together at the top with battens.

The side panels did not reach the shore at king tides and on one occasion a large shark, two metres or more in length, had chased a school of mullet in the shallow water along the shore and had trapped itself in the baths. Everyone had vacated the water before this happened.

Turo was soon to the rescue in a rowboat, rowing it with the footrest board like a canoe, as the oars were not available at short notice. Turo commenced hitting the surface of the water with the board and after much splashing and noise chased the shark out of the baths, much to everyone's amusement and cheers of encouragement. In reflection, Turo was about 80 years of age at that time; it was a great effort for a man of that age.



Turo in his rowboat at Hardy's Bay c 1920. Photo: B Daff

I have recently been given a copy of Turo's signature by local historian, Gwen Dundon, which is very well written (see below) and must have taken some time to accomplish. The name is shown as 'Teurio Down'. Common usage is Turo Downes.

Gwenio Down

Also included with this information was an extract from a talk given by Gifford Eardley, who was the President of St George Historical Society in 1966-67, and interested in the S.S. Erina, which was built at Erina Creek in 1903 and carried cargoes to and from Sydney:

These cargoes were always interesting, with large quantities of beer, both in casks and bottles, regularly shipped for Gosford wharf; from here the brew was delivered by horse drawn vehicles to all hotels northwards to Wyong and eastwards to the Entrance. In fact, the S.S. ERINA became known as 'The Beer Boat'. This lucrative traffic ceased when the Railway Department decided to lower truckage rates and advance other concessions favourable to the brewing interests.

The conveyance of Hudson's Ready Cut Homes, destined for erection as 'week-enders' was another lucrative cargo, likewise considerable quantities of second-hand timber (complete with rusty nails ready to tear the skin of the unwary), sundry doors and windows, discarded roofing iron, and odd and old mortar covered bricks, were taken to the various ports under instruction from those who preferred to build their Brisbane Water shanties from such recovered material.

Mrs Hydes of Paddington, a house demolition specialist (who worked like a man), was in great demand for such supplies. She was generally accompanied on her delivery run to the Erskine Street Wharf by a full-blooded aboriginal named Teuro Downs. According to reports, this gentleman had been educated to become a Lawyer but gave away this profession to help with the loading and unloading of Mrs Hyde's cart and stacking the contents aboard the S.S. ERINA.



S.S. *Erina*. Photo: Patricia Mainsbridge

Turo Downes eventually settled down at Hardy's Bay, where he was greatly respected, and to a certain extent maintained by the local residents. His nose for the presence of a bottle of beer was uncanny and no doubt this particular degree of skill was developed by his early years of training as a black tracker. In his peregrinations around Hardys Bay, he was always accompanied by a cat and a small black and tan terrier of nondescript parentage.

Gwen Dundon has also made available to me a copy of Turo Down's death transcript dated 31st October 2007, which gives his date of death as the 6th of December 1942 at Hardys Bay, aged 86 years, and place of birth as Flinders, Queensland. His parents were Peter Garran (father) and Tilly Paris (mother).

Many different possible origins abound as to where his roots commenced; one believes that his name meant 'Turo of the Downs' - the Darling Downs in Queensland; another is that he was a local aboriginal and had relatives in the Wyong area. This transcript backs up the belief that he was born in the Flinders River District of which Hughenden is the main town and situated on the Darling Downs.



Turo, everybody's friend, at the Hardys Bay Store.

The thoughts in this article are my own and I am sure others will remember Turo as a remarkable person, respected by all.

Bruce Dunlop 2008

TURO YOU'RE A HERO

Turo you're a hero

We love your friendly ways.

Turo you're a hero

You made our happiest days.

You taught us how to dig for worms

And fish for flathead too.

You took us for walks to Maitland Bay

And told us stories new.

Oh.... Turo you're a hero

We love your friendly ways.

Turo you're a hero

You made our happiest days.

You met the ferries at the wharf

And gave a welcome true.

You made a home in an old bush hut

With your moggies and a dog or two.

Oh.... Turo you're a hero

We love your friendly ways.

Turo you're a hero

You made our happiest days.

You ran as quickly as a kangaroo

And swam like a fish in the sea

And nights around the kero lamp

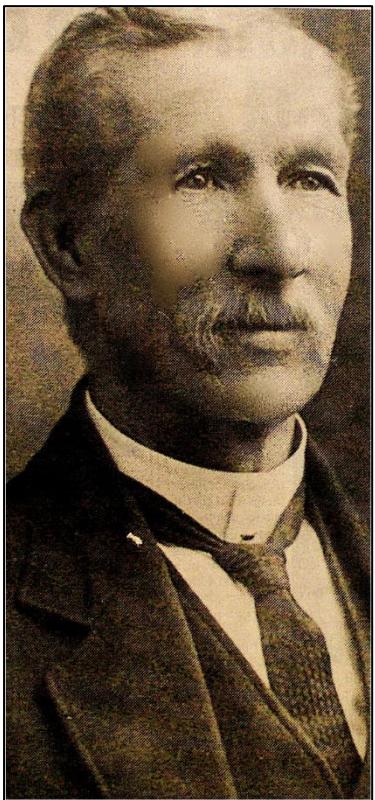
There were cards and a cuppa Billy tea.

Oh.... Turo

The above is a song composed for a concert at Wagstaffe Hall and sung by students from Pretty Beach School under the direction of Bev Callow. Words by David Dufty and tune by David Dufty and Paul Edgar.

GEORGE WAGSTAFFE 1853 – 1920

by Brian Wagstaffe



George Wagstaffe gave his name to our suburb of Wagstaffe. His grandson, Brian Wagstaffe, has provided us with the following information. Brian has not lived locally but another Wagstaffe family member, Dahlas Cleland, was an active member of the Killcare community. The photos were copied from the article ‘Wagstaff or Wagstaffe’ in the ‘Central Coast Express’ of 26.6.91 and reproduced again with permission of the Wagstaffe family. David Dufty Ed.

George Wagstaffe (pictured left) was the only son of John Wagstaffe and Hannah (nee Bywater), born in the village of Hunshelf, southern Yorkshire, on the 18th March 1853 and baptised in the family church at Glossop, Derby on 20th May 1857.

The parish church of All Saints, Glossop, has been the Wagstaffe family church for many generations, and research indicates records go back to at least the early 1600s. There were two Vicars of the church, William and Robert Wagstaffe, who were brothers, listed in proven records from the late 1600s.

Also, a Simon Wagstaffe was Vicar of this parish from 1367-1402. George Wagstaffe had two older sisters, who remained in England: Sarah Alice born 1846 and Elizabeth born 1848 (both pictured right). George was educated at college and was a powerful oarsman, rowing for his college.

Arrival in Australia



According to family historian and George's granddaughter, Mrs Truan King, George arrived in Australia at Maryborough in Queensland in September 1875, as a free passenger on board the *Star Queen*.

It is probable that he came to Australia as an agent for Burns Philp and in this capacity spent some time in New Zealand and the Solomon Islands. He then spent some time moving around Queensland and NSW, as an agent of Burns Philp, owning stores in Cairns and Sydney, where he also worked as a draper.

Notes recorded on his death certificate indicate that he was resident in the following areas: Queensland, 7 years; New Zealand, 3 years; Solomon Islands, 6 months; NSW, 35 Years.

He was living in Rockhampton shortly before his marriage, and the Marriage Certificate gives his place of residence as Sydney and his occupation as Draper.

The marriage was performed at St Lukes Church of England on the 15th November, 1883. The bride was Christina Maria, daughter of James Stewart Ogilvie and Jane Georgina (nee Obrien).

Children

A daughter, Alice Emily May (pictured right), was born in Sydney in 1884. In 1901 she was an art student under J. W. Morgan, and her sketch book contains several pencil sketches, which are probably of areas around her home at Brisbane Water.

The next children were twin boys, George and Charles, born in 1886 at Cairns in Queensland. At this time, George Wagstaffe, their father, was listed as a storekeeper at Edithvale near Cairns, where he was the agent for Burns Philp. Charles died as an infant. Alice had remained behind in Sydney with relatives, the Obrien's at Bondi.



Other children were the following: John, birth date not known, died 1890; Thomasine and Jane (twin girls), born and died 1890; Hector, born 1891, and William born 1893. The photos below show George, Hector and William.



Life in Cairns

While in Cairns, George Snr operated a general store. He also traded in the islands with the two masted schooner, *Adgenora*, where it is thought, he learnt much of the seamanship that later allowed him to obtain a Masters Certificate.

The store in Cairns and the *Adgenora* were lost after he extended too much credit to the miners, timber getters and farmers in the district. He was forced to sell the boat to meet the demands of his own creditors. It was after selling up in Cairns that he moved to Sydney.

Purchase of Wagstaffe Point

From 1889 to 1893 George Wagstaffe operated a store in George Street, Sydney, The Australian Confectionery Company. When banks closed due to the depression of the 1890s, he was forced to sell his properties in Sydney. He purchased farmland at Brisbane Waters with the proceeds of the sale. This property was of 50 acres, at what was then known as Mount Pleasant, Portion 30, Parish of Kincumber. This property was the original grant to Patrick Mulhall in 1841.

Recently, there has been some doubt expressed as to whether George Wagstaffe had actually purchased the land, as the record of ownership had not been registered in the files of the Land and Titles Office. What has now been established is that George Wagstaffe made a down payment on the purchase of the property, lived with his family on the property, paying yearly interest on the balance of the purchase price, but was not able to finalise payment.

When the proposal to bring the lands under the provisions of the Real Property Act was submitted to the Lands and Titles Office, many legal documents were attached, covering ownership of the land from the original grant to Patrick Mullhall and subsequent probate of Wills and Mortgages and sales of land up to the sale by Francis Gerard to Fredrick Wheeler and others.

The records in the files of the Lands and Titles Office note that:

On the 3rd September 1890, George Wagstaffe signed a contract to purchase the land, Mount Pleasant, Brisbane Waters from Francis Gerard, the owner of the land at that time, for the sum of 550 pounds. Terms of payment were as follows:

250.00 pounds on signing the contract and the balance at the expiration of 5 years, with interest at 5% per annum, payable yearly. The contract to be subject to Richardson and Wrench's usual conditions of sale.

George Wagstaffe and his family were in continuous residence on the property from the date of signing the contract, and apparently, by the end of 1905, some 15 years after first signing the contract, the balance of the purchase price had not been paid.

George Wagstaffe left for the Solomon Islands in January 1906 and his family continued to occupy the land at Wagstaffe.

On the 17th February 1906, as George Wagstaffe was not able to honour the terms of the contract, Francis Gerard took possession of the property and installed Albert Anderson as caretaker until the date of conveyance to F. Wheeler and others on the 3rd May 1906. By September 1906, George Wagstaffe had returned from the Solomon Islands.

From 1896 to 1903 he is listed on the Electoral Rolls at Mount Pleasant, Brisbane Waters as a farmer.

During this period, he farmed the land (watermelons is one product suggested), and each day rowed across the ‘river’, taking his children to and from school located on the western side.

Boat Building

George Wagstaffe and his family resided on the property for about 15 years, where he farmed. With the help of his eldest son, George, he had constructed a timber vessel at one of the boat building yards on Cockle Creek (probably Beattie’s, as they were family friends). This vessel was used to transport produce from the area to the markets at Hawkesbury and Sydney. He studied for a Masters Certificate and sat for an examination in Sydney in 1901. He was awarded his Masters Certificate No 775 (Coastal Trade).

While in Sydney in March 1901, studying for his certificate, he wrote a letter home, where he states ‘...had someone down to buy the boat, will be able to sell this one and buy a larger vessel’.

While at Wagstaffe Point, he built (with the help of local boat builders at Cockle Creek) the steam driven vessel, *Hopeful*. She was later taken over by G Burns Philp and used for towing lighters in Newcastle Harbour. The *Hopeful* was lost when she was rammed during a storm and sank.

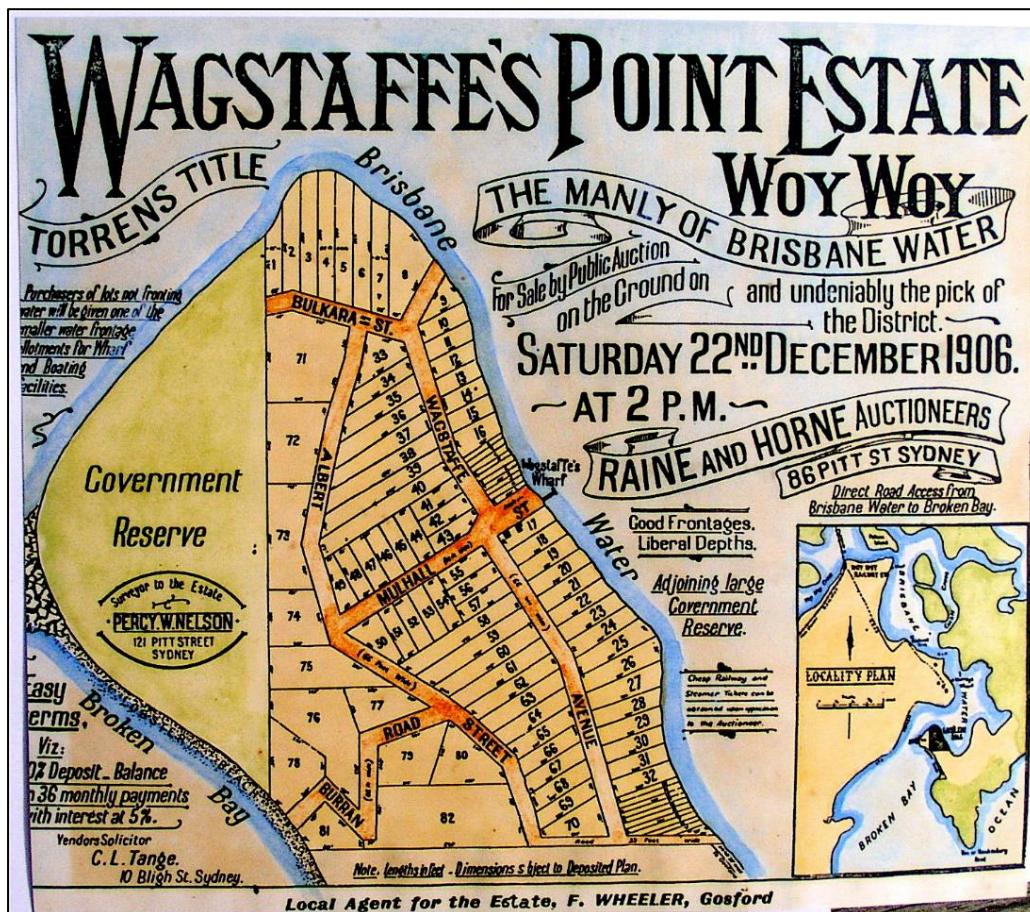
From the archives of the Maritime Services Board, we found that George Wagstaffe was registered as the builder of a wooden vessel, which was a carvel-built, two-masted ketch with a square stern. It was 39 ft 6 ins long with a 12ft 3ins beam and weighed 17.25 gross tons with an auxiliary oil engine of 10 horsepower. The vessel built in 1903 was named the *Gela* and was first officially registered in 1904, when the name of the registered owner was recorded as Trangolt Schneider, merchant of Sydney. It was sold on January 1905 to George Derbyshire and Thomas Harding, traders in the Solomon Islands, where it later sank about 1912 and was not salvaged.

What is not clear is, if George Wagstaffe was the original owner of the *Gela*. Did he sell it to Schneider, or was he engaged as Master of the vessel by Schneider and later by Derbyshire and Harding? If the latter is the case, it may explain the record of George Wagstaffe, being in the Solomons. Neither is it certain what the names of the vessels were that originally engaged in this trade, but they may have been the *Hopeful* as the name has been mentioned by some members of the family, who can also remember a photo of a steam driven vessel with a family group standing beside the wheelhouse, at its launching. This photo now appears to be lost.

During his time at Wagstaffe the government asked for and was given permission to locate a fisheries inspector on the foreshores near his wharf.

After the completion of the railway line between Sydney and Gosford, much of the produce was carried by rail. This resulted in a significant loss of earnings to the boat owners of Brisbane Waters and caused severe economic hardship.

Sale of Wagstaffe Point



The property at Mount Pleasant was subdivided in 1906 into 82 building allotments; 32 of these had water frontages and the remainder had private access to the water, via narrow parcels of land from Wagstaffe Ave. They were offered for sale by auction on 22 December, 1906. At this time the whole area had become known as Wagstaffe's Point.

After the sale of the property, George Wagstaffe returned to Sydney, where he was employed by Burns Philp as a senior provider until his death on 12th February 1920. He resided at Paddington, Woollahra and Belmont Street, Mosman.

The Wagstaffe home was sold and was incorporated in the Manly House building, which was burnt down in 1939 and is now the site of the Wagstaffe Hall.

Postscript: The Spelling of Wagstaffe

In an article in the *Central Coast Express* of 26.6.91, Brian Wagstaffe (pictured right) was at pains to point out that the place name, Wagstaffe, should be spelt with an 'e'. Up to that point the Geographical Names Board had spelt it without the 'e'. However, following an application by the Brisbane Water Historical Society, the Board approved the addition of the 'e' on 25.10.91 and now the spelling is no longer an issue.



EDDIE WALSH

by his niece, Beryl Poole



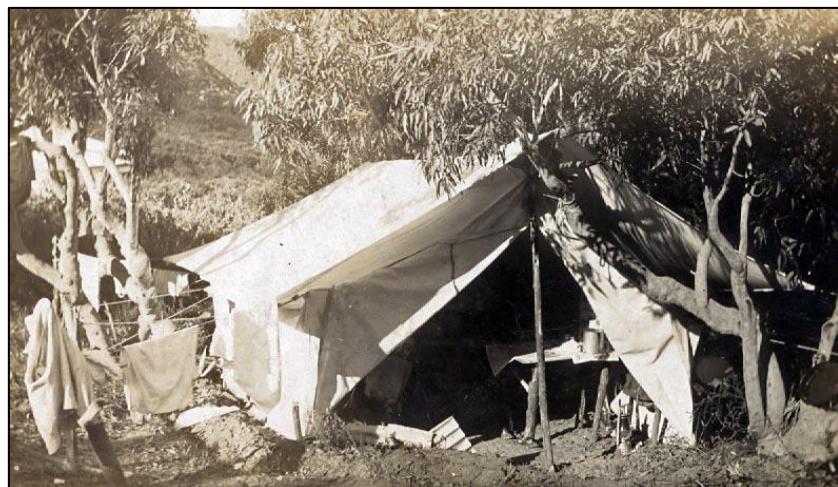
Eddie Walsh at home in Killcare.

Edward Walsh was born on 1st September, 1922, in Sydney. Eddie and his twin brother were the youngest of seven children whose parents came to Australia from Wales. They settled in the Bronte-Waverley area, where Eddie was born and lived until his move to Killcare. After the passing of her husband, Eddie's mother took her four younger children to stay for a holiday at a friend's place. The house was at Hardys Bay. This visit was the family's introduction to the area. They loved it and later bought land at Killcare.

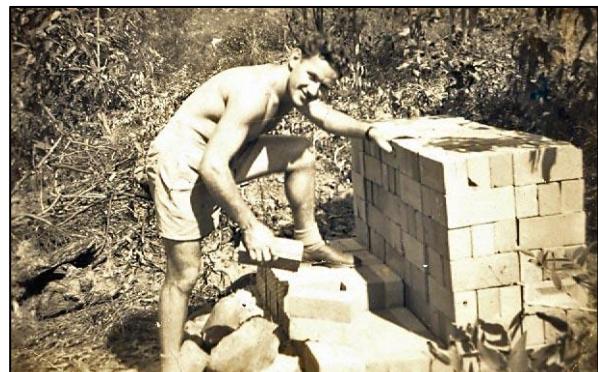


View of Killcare from Eddie's house.

By the late forties Eddie used to spend most of his weekends building the cottage in Grandview Crescent. Like many others at this time, he stayed in a tent on the property and as he didn't have a car, a lot of the material was carried on his shoulders up the hill, after being unloaded off the steamship from Sydney.



Eddie camped on the block while he built his house.



Eddie at work, building his house.



The house that Eddie built

He often had friends and family helping him and at the end of the day, there were some great local fresh fish meals and sing songs around the fire. Later, when the house was finished, Eddie was notorious amongst his friends, many of whom were chefs and entertainers, for hosting lavish dinner parties, which were shared in the little cottage.

Eddie just loved life and people and never tired of the things happening around him. He would go anywhere for a party, to see a musical or play, or to visit antique shops and art galleries. He was a lovely ballroom dancer and was always first up to dance or sing whenever the music started playing. He loved his home and obtained a lot of pleasure from enhancing it. Everyone was made feel welcome at Eddie's and they always left with a little something.

He was always re-arranging his treasured ornaments and pictures and tending his beloved garden. There were always vases filled with the beautiful native flowers, found growing all around the area.





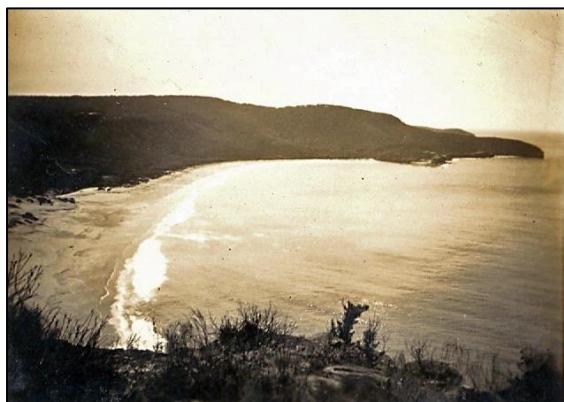
Eddie and his family and friends loved to spend time on Putty Beach, making the most of the long, summer days in the sunshine. The house was not far up the hill behind the beach, a pleasant walk away.

Many hours were spent roaming through the bush. They would follow the ridge line out to Box Head where there was a wonderful view of Broken Bay. Brisbane Water and Maitland Bay were not far away. He would take his camera and be on the lookout for beautiful scenery, snapping pictures along the way.

He enjoyed photography and took many photos of the beach, the bay and the bush, which he and his companions often explored. Many of the photos have descriptive captions reflecting Eddie's love of the place.



Eddie looking down on Brisbane Water



Putty Beach, Brisbane Water and Broken Bay; photographs of the places Eddie loved to explore, always taken from a high point



Eddie really loved everything about Killcare and always felt harmonious with the natural environment surrounding him. The beautiful spiritual feeling it gave him seemed to bring out his physical powers. His friends were confidants in his ability to read their tea leaves or they would give him an item of jewellery or a photograph, which he would study carefully, to see what the future held for them.



As the years went by the cottage grew larger and larger. As he was a keen decorator, the place was styled to suit the current trend but with his own special touch.

He spent most of his working life in the retail trade and worked for many of Sydney's major department stores. This suited him, as he was at his best when mixing with people.

After his retirement, Eddie moved between Killcare and Queens Park, where he cared for an older brother and sister, who were in poor health. After their passing, he lived permanently at Killcare. Always one who was very conscious of his appearance, Eddie would be seen most days, dressed to the nines, having a coffee at the corner café. He would then catch the bus to Woy Woy, where he called on someone from the long list of friends he had made there. He liked to shop, and of course, finding a bargain always made him happy.

He was very fortunate to have numerous friends and good neighbours, especially a neighbour, Kate, looking out for him. Even though he was very independent, he really appreciated this bond. Unfortunately, owing to his failing health, his last nineteen months were spent at Haberfield in a homecare unit, where he surrounded himself with his favourite pictures and ornaments but he always loved his visits to his home at Killcare and remembered the years he was privileged to live there.

Eddie Walsh died on 10th April, 2006.

The photographs are from Eddie's collection.

SILVER AND LAURIE WARE

by Silver Ware

Silver and Laurie Ware are two of our prominent citizens who achieved excellent work in both artistic and community fields. Silver Collings Ware was the younger daughter of designers and film makers, Geoffrey and Dahl Collings. Her parent's story is also included in the eBooks, Bouddi Artists and Bouddi Bios, Volume 1 and should be read in conjunction with the following story, contributed by Silver.

My parents spent many years living and travelling overseas. My sister Donna was born in London and I was born in Sydney.

From 1950-4 we lived in New York. My father worked for the United Nations and my mother for the Australian Trade Commission as a graphic designer, painter and commercial artist. She painted many murals, posters and displays containing Australian images. My sister Donna and I attended Junior and Senior High Schools on Long Island.

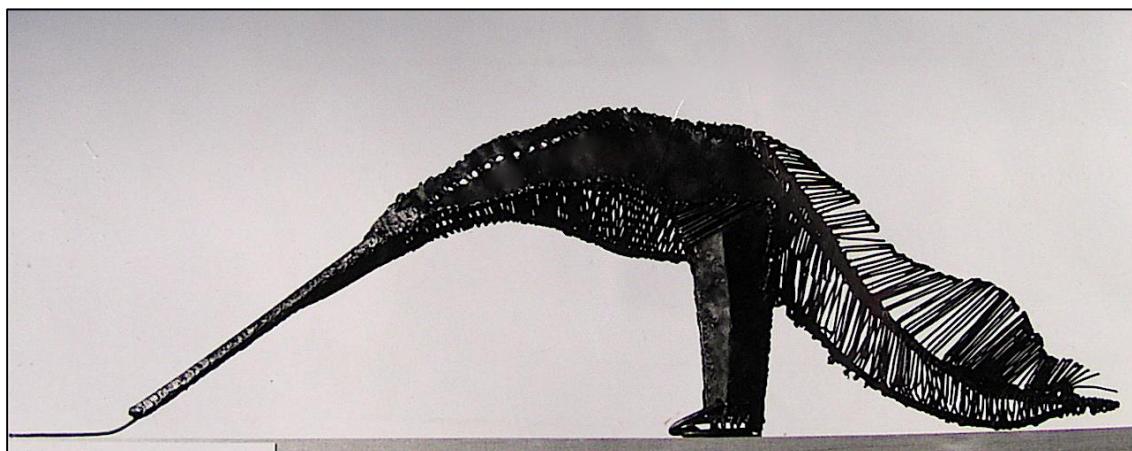


After we came home, my sister continued her schooling at Cremorne Girls High School and excelled in Athletics and Swimming, gaining a 'Blue' (blazer).

I attended Willoughby Home Science High School (for girls interested in Art) and came first in Art and Home Science, was Head of the Year, won a Swimming Championship and competed in Tennis and Hockey.

From 1955 to 1960 I attended East Sydney Technical College (The National Art School) at Darlinghurst and qualified with a Diploma in Art (Sculpture with credit), a five-year course. (See photo at left, taken at East Sydney by Geoff Collings.)

My sister Donna Christophell Collings attended Sydney University, doing Veterinary Science. She received a degree and became a 'Vet', her lifelong profession. Her love of animals continues still in her retirement and includes holding training classes for dogs.



Silver's sculpture of an anteater purchased by the Art Gallery of NSW.

I left E.S.T.C. and did commissions in sculpture for: Manly Council, (a large council Plaque); a bronze head larger than life for Samuel Brown, Accountant and Financial Advisor of the President of Monash Country Club; two commissions for Hana Juscovic, a Czechoslovakian lady, who came to Australia in order to have freedom of speech for her family. The first was called 'Strelitzia' and was 6'x3'x18".

SUCCESS FOR SYDNEY ARTIST

Gallery Buys Work Of Sculptress, 22

A 22-year-old Sydney sculptress who welds metal figures with an oxy-acetylene torch has sold one of her works to the Art Gallery of N.S.W.

Miss Silver Collings, 22, of Castlecrag, with one of her works, "Anteater", at the Barry Stern Galleries in Paddington yesterday. "Anteater" has been bought by the Art Gallery of N.S.W.

Then the Teachers Federation wanted an Acoustical Sculptural Wall cast in Plaster, based on 'Fire, Water, Earth, Air' to stop sound reverberating around the new hall.

I had a 'One-man' Show at Barry Stern Galleries in 1963 of Mixed Media Sculptures and Drawings. The sculpture in the press cutting at left was sold to the Art Gallery of N.S.W. and is shown in a better photo above.

For two years I did many commissions, and then established a studio, doing my own work: bronze casting, welding sheet and rod and woodcarving.



Lawrence (Laurie) Ware was born in Earls Court London, which was bombed out during the Blitz. His father was a London Bobby. His parents migrated to Australia when Laurie was five years old. His father was unable to get a job in the police force so worked instead as a painter and plasterer. At age 14, Laurie left school to help support the family. He began work in a plaster casting and cornice designing company with his father. His father lost his job and Laurie was keeping the family, as he was the only one with a job. He designed many ornate cornices

during that period of his life.

Later he was a toolman at East Sydney Technical College, where he did the casting of moulds, kept the clay in good condition for modelling and kept all the tools in good order. He went to night classes and finally received the equivalent of a 5-year Diploma. He became a sculpture teacher there and taught for many years. He was my teacher.

I spent five years overseas in Turkey, Greece and London.

**"Little Sydney" On
Greek Isle**

From a Special Correspondent
ATHENS, March 18.—A
picturesque house on the hillside
on Hydra Island, three-hours'
trip by boat from here, is a hive
of industry.

SILVER COLLINGS in her studio on the island of Hydra, puts the finishing touches to her sculpture "Man and Donkey."

I held an exhibition of my work in London and lived on the island of Hydra, where I was friendly with George Johnston and Charmian Clift. On my return to Australia, I met Laurie again and we were married. We had two children. Laurie was sent to Newcastle as Head of Hunter Street Technical College and we both taught there for some years. Then he was promoted to Head of the College of Advanced Education, and I was teaching Art, Sculpture and Terra Cotta using hand built and hand fired kilns. We started up a Sculpture Society, which was still continuing, when we left 15 years later on Laurie's retirement. We moved to Wallsend, where the children went to the local primary school and later Wallsend High, and I volunteered as a sculpture teacher and minutes secretary.

Laurie and I were both on the committees, which raised funds to build Newcastle Art Gallery and Library, and which established Dobell House. Laurie travelled around the Newcastle suburbs and nearby towns such as Cessnock to encourage local councils to contribute to the new gallery. We actually used our own home as collateral for the loan, which was obtained to buy Dobell House.

The Hunter Art School doubled in size and private art galleries were established in the district as a whole. Both our children did Art at school and Mindi continued at high school.

While our children were involved in sport, Laurie and I were volunteer officials in State and Australian championships for cross country running and other sports.



Laurie with a dragon created by his students at a Summer School at Morpeth.

My parents, Dahl and Geoffrey Collings, had moved to their house at Killcare Heights, and in 1989, when Mum died, we moved to Killcare to be of help to Dad. Laurie became the President of the Killcare Wagstaffe Trust, after Alan Strom had held the position for many years. Laurie was President for a number of years while I served on the Committee. We also manned the Maitland Bay Centre until a bigger volunteer group was formed.



Laurie restarted an earlier Bitou removal group in which I assisted with Cliff Emerson, Meg Fromel, Helen Warlike, Win Fenson and others. Laurie and I were both on the Caroline Bay committee which established Gosford Art Gallery.

My Dad died in 2000, after having to leave his home with dementia and other health problems. Laurie died in 2002, after also suffering some years of dementia. That year we scattered the ashes of my mother and father and Laurie in the Bouddi National Park above Maitland Bay.

I suggested to the National Parks Association that they carry on with the Bitou group as we were all getting on in years. I worked with another bush care group at Ettalong for three years. Now I am working with people with Dementia.



Silver, Laurie and Silver's father Geoffrey Collings visit the Gosford Art Gallery and



Sculpture by Laurie Ware, entitled 'Balance Beam'

Here are more examples of Silver's work.



'Torso' in soapstone by Silver Ware



Silver Ware 2009

Photos by David Dufty.

HELEN (AND TERRY) WARLIKER

by Meg Fromel

Helen Warliker and Meg Fromel are sisters, so we have encouraged them to write a brief Bouddi Bio about each other inspired by 'The Two of Us' in Saturday's Herald Magazine. Helen and Meg share an interest in writing verse and we have included two of their poems in each of their stories. Both play musical instruments. Sorry but we have no recordings to offer you. David Duffy (Ed.)



In May 1979, Helen and Terry Warliker retired to live in Killcare, after living and working in Sydney. They bought a house in Pauline Avenue, which had two frontages, one on Pauline and one on Manly View Road. From their house, they had a fine view towards Palm Beach, Barrenjoey and the Hawkesbury River. They immediately started a vegetable garden, planting citrus trees and indigenous flora.

They soon became involved in the local community and environmental issues. Their interests included: Meals on Wheels, The Hardys Bay, Killcare Progress Association, Telecross, Killcare Wagstaffe Trust and related Bitou Bush and Privet control. Helen also became involved with the Maitland Bay Information Centre, including staffing the Centre and helping to prepare exhibits for the fine exhibitions that were held there such as the *Wattle and Weeds* and the *Wetlands* exhibitions.





Helen Warlike & Pat Evans with native flowers for display at the Maitland Bay Centre

Helen and Pat Evans decorated the window of the Centre with indigenous flora each weekend (pictured above) for quite a while. Helen was active in excursions, run by the Stroms, from the Woy Woy Environmental Centre and in the bird-walks led by Judy Adderley. In 2009, Helen still attended the shorter walks with the birdwatchers.



Helen, at home in Pauline Avenue, January 2010.
Photo: Robyn Warburton



Terry's interests included playing chess with a neighbour, sailing his boat *Nimo* on Brisbane Water (pictured) and being a member of the Pistol Club at Kariong. For their holidays they would travel with a caravan and their dog 'Sarah' to the alpine areas of NSW and Victoria, where Terry would fish for trout.

Helen's interests include practising the piano, cooking and keeping in touch with overseas relatives and Australian friends. She is a very good cook, making bread and cakes for the raffle at the Killcare Wagstaffe Trust meetings and always giving something away to friends, like jars of marmalade, bread or cakes. Helen also started a small music group with Judy Adderley on recorder, Win Fensom and Meg Fromel on the flute and Helen on piano.

Helen likes to write. *A Mount Wilson Childhood* is about where we lived as children and *The Three Sisters* follows this up with the story of Helen, Meg and our sister Troth in more recent times. Included below are two examples of her poetry.

Terry died in 1995 and the family placed a plaque in his memory at Hardys Bay. Despite ageing and ill health problems, Helen carries on. She continues participating in the local bird-walks each month, volunteering at the Maitland Bay Centre, being a member of the Bouddi Society, including contributing keenly to their 'History Making Project', attending U3A courses, cooking, playing the piano, visiting friends and generally being a valuable member of the local community.

This brief story is not only about Helen's life at Killcare. It also gives me the opportunity to convey, how close we have been as sisters, from when we were very young to what some people call being 'old'. As young children we were sent away to boarding school at Bathurst and Sydney and for a short time at Leura. Helen and I shared digs in London, and we always lived in close proximity to each other in Sydney. We shared family responsibilities and we shared *Applecot* at Mt. Wilson, as a family and holiday retreat and always referred to it as 'home'. Helen helped me a lot in overcoming the change from living at Mt. Wilson to living on the Central Coast. She has a lot of common sense. She has always supported me in my artistic endeavours, and is tolerant of my sometime outbursts of willfulness. Our common interest and love for the Australian bush is very meaningful. I have been very fortunate to have such a caring sister and loyal friend, who lives close by.



Despite ageing and ill health problems Helen carries on.
Seen here on a local history excursion in March 2008 to a
wartime gun emplacement.

By Helen Warlike

It was sunset, the hour when the fishes are supposed to play and I was sitting on the rocks, hopefully dangling my fishing line into the water.

There were no other sounds than those of nature in this leafy spot. Above me, somewhere, the seagull called and before me lay the ocean, whose ceaseless murmur, together with the wild beating of the waves against the rocks, made music that was strangely beautiful as the cliffs sent back the echo.

Suddenly I felt a tug on my line. My heart leapt with joy and I gallantly tugged. Yes, up came - a fish at last – leaping, twisting on the rod. But then a sudden and as unexpected as had been my joy at the capture of the fish, came the moment when my thoughts turned from the delight of a fisherman to the poor little creature that I had caught for pure sport.

What was I thinking – this helpless morsel which twisted in a desperate struggle for freedom? I could picture it returning to its comrades, still shivering with fright over its adventure, and the older fish shaking their heads would repeat to the others, the artfulness of man. Then away they would go to play hide and seek among the seaweed on the sea floor until nightfall came.

When all was dark and silent some adventurer would slip away from the others and leap through the waters. There it would gaze for an instant in wonderment upon a silent shore, and sand gleaming whitely in the moonlight. It might dare to look beyond to the distant hills, where shone the lights of the village.

“What is beyond this sea?” it would ask; but the older fish would bid it come back, for there were dangers above; mortals that waited silently, ever watching for adventurers out of the sea.

So it would go back to the depths of the ocean, and in some silent cranny of the rocks, lulled by the heave of the sea that is never still, would dream its thoughts silently.

Bouddi Deep

Tread lightly on the rocks
Between the lilies and the moss.
Look far down into the deep
Of tangled boughs and vines. And keep
Now the silence that enfolds you.
Humans seldom tread: no path runs through
The bushland of the Bouddi deep.
So only look and let it sleep.
But raise your eyes and you will see
The treetops swaying in the breeze,
Sunlight dancing on the leaves
And on the far seashore.
Go now then dream for evermore.

Helen Warlike

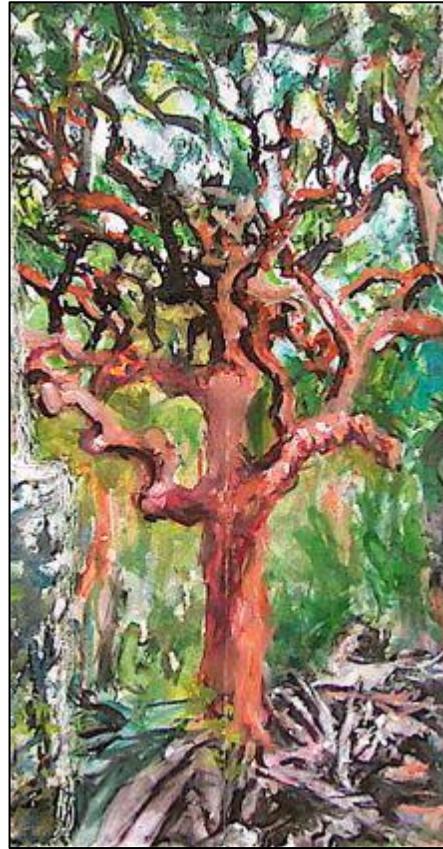


Photo Robert McClure

Old Angophoras

Old gnarled trees dusky red
Soaring high into the sky,
Limbs spread tortuously
Ending grotesquely,
Or clad in shining leaves.
Hollows, crevices and gargoyle:
Nature's joke that foiled
The men who came to fell.
So they passed you by
And nature smiled
On creatures of the wild,
On all that climb or fly
And now these trees saved from
plunder
Give solace to the souls of those
Who gaze at you in joy and
wonder.

Helen Warlike



Painting by Meg Fromel

KILLCARE FROM 1979 TO 1995

Some Memories by Helen Warlike

When Terry and I came in 1979, pipes for the town water were piled up at the end of Pauline Avenue, Killcare Heights. The water finally came in August 1980, although we ourselves continued to use the tank-water until 1985, using the town water for the garden.

The sewer did not come until 1993; wastewater being held in a holding tank extracted regularly by the Council pump out. Some properties had septic tanks which often drained into ditches beside the roads with smelly results.

In December 1979 bushfires exploded in Kuringai Chase and the Blue Mountains. We could see the Bahai temple dancing in the smoke while embers from the fires floated across the front balcony.

There were about twelve houses in Pauline Avenue when we came, some in the process of being built, others only recently finished. One of these houses belonged to Paddy and Ted Bailey, the postmistress and postman at that time. The garden of the weekender next to us was covered in Queensland wattle in flower.

There was no access to Upper Manly View Rd from Pauline Avenue until the sewer came in 1993 and then only steps. Babs Rd was unmade and difficult to negotiate. There were post offices at both Hardys Bay and Wagstaffe.

The Maitland Bay Centre, which was previously a store, a residence and café, was by now almost derelict, occupied only at holiday time by a ranger from the National Parks and Wildlife Service. The Service planned to demolish it but were persuaded by the newly formed Killcare Wagstaffe Trust to turn it into an information centre. Local people, some of whom met at the Stroms, initially worked on removing the weed pest, Bitou Bush. They also worked to refurbish the Centre and later worked as volunteers there.

Two progress associations, one meeting at Wagstaffe and one at Hardys Bay, existed without much contact or love for each other. It was Hardys Bay Killcare Progress Association, which helped to prevent the Dog Walk (between Hardys Bay and Pretty Beach) from becoming a one-way road in tandem with Heath Road. The association was also responsible for the establishment of Marie Byles Lookout just after the 1994 bushfires. My husband Terry suggested the name because it was said that Marie Byles in her youth would look across Broken Bay to Palm Beach, with her telescope. Her dream came to fruition eventually with the creation of the Bouddi National Park. Win Fenson, an active member and secretary of Hardys Bay Killcare Progress Association in earlier years, had become Marie Byles' legal secretary in her practice. Sadly, Win suffered a bad stroke in the late 1990s so had to sever her connection with Killcare, where she had become very involved. The Hardys Bay Killcare Progress Association became the Bouddi Society, the name being suggested by Jim Hunter.

In Babs Road a house was erected in the mid-80s on top of a hanging swamp. The owners complained of the dampness to Pat Evans, who lived opposite but got no sympathy from Pat.

She belonged to the Society for growing Native Plants and had created a delightful native garden. Unfortunately, when she and her husband left through illness, another nearby hanging swamp has become the site for another residence. Native flowers, gathered there by Pat, were used for displays in the Maitland Bay Centre window. See also my Bouddi Bio on Pat Evans.

Other characters of those years stand out in my memory. One was an old part Maori man who lived on the corner of Babs Road and Baden Street. He used to dig trenches in the backyard because he said he had been to Tobruk during the War. The other was Miss Purnell who lived next door to him in Baden Street. She used to say that her husband had acquired the land many years before in exchange for a loan of money he had made to a Railways mate. However, he was not interested in the land, but his wife was, and she and the children would periodically travel up from Sydney by rail and boat to look at it. Years later as a widow, she decided to settle here and became an owner builder but never properly finished the house. She was a great talker and clever with her hands. She made hats and all sorts of things at Day Care where she went each week.

We remember with affection, Esther Seymour, whose story I have told elsewhere in this eBook. And there was Cliff Emerson who worked on Bitou Bush eradication and belonged to the Birdwalk Group and was a KWT member.

I remember a local event in November 1979, which caused considerable excitement. A small launch ran aground on Killcare Beach. Its hull was reportedly made of concrete so the decision was made that the boat was too difficult to either refloat or drag further up onto the beach - but not before much effort was made before a large audience! It finally broke up but bits remained, embedded in the sand for a long time afterwards...reminiscent of the SS Maitland.

References

- Warlike, Helen. *A Mount Wilson Childhood*. Helen Warlike. Killcare, 1990.
Warlike, Helen. *We Three Sisters*. Helen Warlike. Killcare, 2003.

(These two privately published booklets expand the stories of Helen Warlike and Meg Fromel and include fine sketches and lino cuts by Meg Fromel.)

MARJORIE WHITING

REMINISCENCES OF HOLIDAYS SPENT AT KILLCARE

Marjorie Whiting's story turned up in a box of treasures belonging to Thelma Fraser. It consisted of two letters, written to Thelma, who was a good friend of Marjorie's. The first letter was written in 1990 and the second one on May 18, 1991. As there was some repetition, the two letters have been amalgamated in order to relate Marjorie's reminiscences of holidays spent at Killcare. Marjorie's personal story is also interesting, and Thelma provided a brief outline. (Robyn Warburton, Ed.)



Killcare: Killcare Road goes up the hill with the shops and wharf at the bottom.

The Sloman family owned No.13 Killcare Road. The house was built by Marjorie's father, Charles Sloman, and the family holidayed at Killcare for many years. Subsequently, the house was sold, firstly to Mr and Mrs Carson (and thereafter was known as the Carson house) and eventually to Charles Fraser. Many years later, Marjorie returned with her husband, Canon Tom Whiting, rented the Carson house from Charlie Fraser each year and spent many more holidays at Killcare.

When Marjorie was a young woman, she met Tom Whiting, a young Englishman, visiting Australia. They fell in love and a courtship developed but there was to be no happy ending at this time. Tom returned to England where he married, had children and no doubt led a fulfilling life as a Canon in the Church of England.



No.13 Killcare Road would be mid-way down on the right-hand side of the street.

Meanwhile, Marjorie remained a single woman, took up nursing and trained as a nursing sister. She was Matron of Bathurst Hospital for twenty years.

After many years, Canon Tom Whiting, now widowed, came back into her life. He returned to Australia, located Marjorie and their love for one another was re-ignited. They married and Killcare was not forgotten. They returned to Killcare for holidays. Many pleasant dinners were shared with Charles and Thelma Fraser.

Here are Marjorie's memories of Killcare.

My father, Charles Wansborough Sloman, bought 41.5 acres of land in Killcare Road from real estate agent, Richardson & Wrench in Sydney in November 1916 for sixty pounds. The first trip to Killcare was at the end of that year, or early 1917. There were no houses there then. Father, Mother, my brother Harold and I sat down by the water where the Killcare Wharf is now. People from the South Sea Islands were having lunch and offered us some onion sandwiches which we accepted.

I don't know how we reached Killcare (I was only 3 or 4 years old). The next time we made a trip to Killcare was after Mother saw an advertisement in the Sydney Morning Herald as such: *Seaside house to rent for a holiday at Pretty Beach – neat and clean, rowing boat available – Ethel Hyde, Venice Road, Pretty Beach, via Woy Woy*. So we went. Father came for the weekend only. His older sister came with us. Walking off the jetty after Father left, Aunt said audibly, "Will we be safe now that Charlie has gone home? I'm frightened." She kept talking despite Mother telling her to be quiet.

A man following behind us off the jetty was listening and came past Venice Road, where we were staying.

That night, someone tried to open the door where my old aunt was sleeping; all doors opened on to the verandah. Aunt called out to Mother, "Someone is trying to get in – you can't get to me, and I can't get to you." Mother said, "I have a gun," and she pulled the dressing table (which consisted of boxes) against the door, where she and my brother Harold and I were, and made her way to my aunt's room. When she saw her, she was convulsed with laughter because Aunt wore a wig, and (in her haste) she had put it on back to front. However, all was well, and Aunt decided to go home the next day. Then Mother's sister came down from Sydney to be with us. Mother guessed the man who followed us off the jetty had been the culprit (he seemed harmless) and so she was not frightened by the act. She and her sister made up poetry about the holiday house. I can't remember much of it, but here's a bit of it...

House both neat and clean.

The doors, they had no handles

And the roof would not keep out the rain.

They thought they would tidy up a bit, but when they found the broom, they nearly had a fit. It consisted of bushes tied together. That day we were leaving our house in Venice Road and to our horror we had met a 'rogue'.

Ethel took us in her rowing boat; the water was choppy and there were no rowlocks for the oars to fit into. My Brother Harold, who was about 6 years old, was afraid and called out, "Ethel, stop the boat," so she went back to the jetty.

Whilst there, we walked to Killcare to see the ocean from the top of the hill and the poets wrote the following poetry:

Up a steep hill and not far away,

When you get to the top you view Broken Bay,

The roar of the ocean, the dash of the spray

Is exceedingly fine on a very rough day.

That was about 1917 because I don't remember anything about it. I would have been only about 3 years old.

I believe the Frasers bought their land in 1916 also. Mr Fraser was a sea captain and lived there with his wife. (Actually, it was Tom Fraser's friend, Jim Ewin, who was a steward on a ship.)

In 1921 or 1922, Father rented a house from Mr Child, opposite the bridge going to Killcare Extension, where we stayed for two weeks. I was 6 or 7 years old and remember it well. In 1924 Father made arrangements with Mr Child to build a small cottage in Killcare Road (later it was No.13).

So, from 1925, we always spent our school holidays in this small cottage. In the years that followed we knew most of the people in Killcare. Mr Fraser's house was above ours, under the hill and Father paid him 1/- per week to keep an eye on our cottage. We knew the Frasers well, and those who helped them with the dairy – Andy, Jackie and their son Charlie who still lives in Killcare.

Simpsons, Reinbergs, Battishalls and Stirtons had built houses in Killcare Road. The people who owned those houses we knew well, and of course the Myer family (George in particular) and the Childs and Fords.

Over the hill towards 'Putty' Beach (which was named by an Irishman who meant 'Pretty' Beach) were Mr and Mrs Weate – we always bought tomatoes from them, and I have never had better tomatoes in all my life than they grew; they were delicious!



The Bogey Hole and Putty Beach beyond.

At Killcare Beach there was a Bogey Hole which was enclosed by rocks and the men folk dived from the highest rock – the water was very deep. Every February the Bogey Hole was covered with the summer wash of sand and disappeared and later the sands receded, and the Bogey Hole was usable again.

But some years ago, it was filled with sand which remained there – so it is no more!!

Mr and Mrs Martin, who used to serve dinners to people, lived at the beach, (now known as Killcare Beach because of Killcare Surf Club). She was a very good cook, and we had many enjoyable meals there after our dip in the surf or the Bogey Hole.



Their sons were Alec and Ray – all the Martins came out from England and had a lovely house overlooking the beach. They too had a dairy. I have a photo of myself taken with the calves which used to wander around; at the moment I can't find it or other Killcare photos – but will send them when I find them. Father had a friend, a Mr Garrard who built a house at Killcare Extension. He grew lovely grapes and as children we used to look forward to a visit to him when the grapes were in season. There were two stores on either side of the road at the foot of Killcare Road, near the jetty. Mr Williams owned one and Willards owned the other.



The Post Office was at Hardys Bay, and we used to walk to the Post Office which was in the store there. My mother's cousin – Irene Yates, had a store at Wagstaffe and we often called in to see her on our way to Lobster Beach, or when we went to Ettalong and Ocean Beach (via rowing boat). Market Day in Gosford on a Thursday was an outing we looked forward to.

A launch would leave Killcare jetty in the morning, and we spent the day in Gosford which was a treat, and was very interesting.

There were two companies of launches. Mr Murphy's launches were *The Victorious*, *The Conqueror* and the *Hero*. Mr Owen's launches were *The Regent Bird*, *The Bell Bird* and *The Mavis*. The launches went through a span of water known as 'The Rip' (The Bridge goes over the Rip now). They said the rip was unfathomable and if rough there were swirls of water which were difficult for rowing boats to steer through calmly.



Wagstaffe Store

As we grew older the Simpsons, my aunt and her family, who rented *Devon* (down the road from our place), and our family and school friends joined forces and had a picnic every day at the Beach, Maitland Bay, Lobster Beach, Ocean Beach or Ettalong. At night we had card games and concerts at each house. They were very enjoyable days.

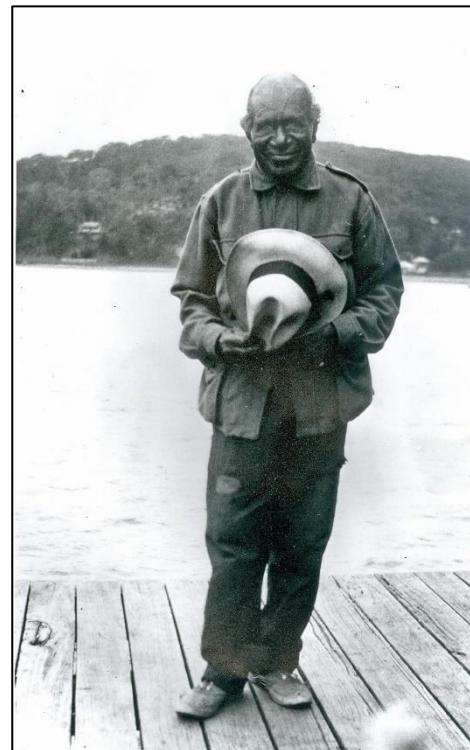


Remains of the wreck of the *Maitland* at Maitland Bay.

We liked to go to Maitland Bay. The boilers and anchor embedded in the rocks, from the wreck of the ship, *Maitland*, shipwrecked early this century were interesting to all; I believe most of the wreck has rusted away. I have a friend in Bathurst (Mrs Johnson) whose great uncle was the Captain of the *Maitland*.

She has shown me pictures and the paper ‘write-ups’ of the wreck of the *Maitland*. She has a lovely wall-sized photo of her uncle’s ship. If you want to know more about it, let me know, and I’ll ask her for the information.

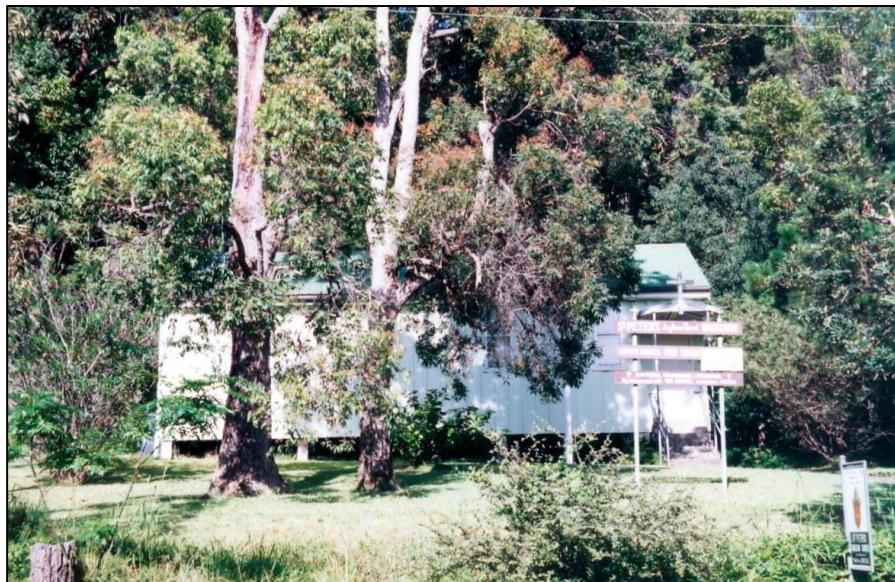
One night, my mother and her cousin were returning from Mrs Yates’s shop at Wagstaffe and Truro (Turo), the aboriginal from the Roper River passed them. He had been in Killcare area for some years. My mother and aunt were frightened and kept looking to see if he was following. He was following them and he said, “Don’t be frightened by me. I can see in the dark and I know that you did not know me. I just want to help people.” He was an excellent fisherman and gave advice to the fisher-folk where to catch fish as he could see the fish in the water.



Turo Downes

When my school friend was staying with us at Killcare, she wanted to go to Sydney via the *Gosford* or the *Erina*, so Mother gave in to her and the poetry typed will describe the trip. I had it typed years ago, and it is included separately.

We used to go to Wagstaffe Church when there was a service. The Rev. Edwards from Woy Woy conducted services when we were there. We also went to St Pauls Church, Kincumber, after the road was made to Gosford.



St Peters, Wagstaffe

With the advent of the “Depression” which laid low most families, I left Abbotsleigh and attended the Metropolitan Business College (then near Goulburn Street, in Pitt Street) Sydney with the intention of doing medicine at Sydney University after obtaining my matriculation. But the economic position became worse, and I switched to a business course; obtained my Junior Typing Certificate and was accepted as a junior typist in a solicitor’s office.

At this stage banks were affected by the depression (1931-2) and my father, who was Manager of the Haberfield branch, was forced along with all other officers, to take three month’s leave on half pay. The banks were closed for a while and on the day that the Premier, J. T Lang, announced the closure of the banks, my father was notified of the closure of his bank after 3pm.

Years later, Father passed the incident off as a joke, and said that our ‘Manx cat lost his tail when the bank doors closed so suddenly’.

Fortunately, we owned the small seaside cottage at Killcare, between Woy Woy and Gosford, on the ocean side, so I left my position and we all went to Killcare, where we stayed for three months.

My brother, Harold, was at this time a student at Moore Theological College in Newtown, so he stayed there, and made trips home to Epping where my Aunt Amy was looking after the house for us.

Killcare was a restful place, time was of no consequence, and it was there that we enjoyed the bush life interspersed with sewing, reading, swimming, fishing and taking bush walks to where the ship *Maitland* was wrecked at the turn of the century, with her boilers firmly embedded in the rocks. This was about five miles from Killcare. We enjoyed walks to Wagstaffe and over the hill to Lobster Bay about three miles away.

From this point Lion Island was very close, and Barrenjoey Lighthouse could be clearly seen, as was the case from the heights of Killcare. Ettalong was across the stream of water which divided it from Wagstaffe and we could visit Ettalong by launch to do shopping, or take a bus to Woy Woy and train to Sydney.

When I married Tom Whiting we stayed many times at Killcare, and my last trip was in 1993.

Marjorie Whiting

(nee Sloman)

Aged 80.

The photos supplied, courtesy of the Bouddi Collection.

MARGARET & TREVOR WILKINSON

Wagstaffe in 1958 and beyond

Trevor Wilkinson was in the British Navy (RN). He saw an advertisement in a newspaper which said that Australia needed experienced naval personnel. He applied and was accepted, so he and Margaret migrated to Australia. Accommodation was found for them at a migrant hostel at Rooty Hill, but they wanted to make a home for themselves and feel part of their new country. Here is Margaret's story of her introduction to Wagstaffe.

I had absolutely no idea where I was going when I set off to find Wagstaffe in September 1958. We were at a Migrant Hostel at Rooty Hill and my husband came home from the naval base saying there was a place to rent at Wagstaffe; would I like to have a look at it?



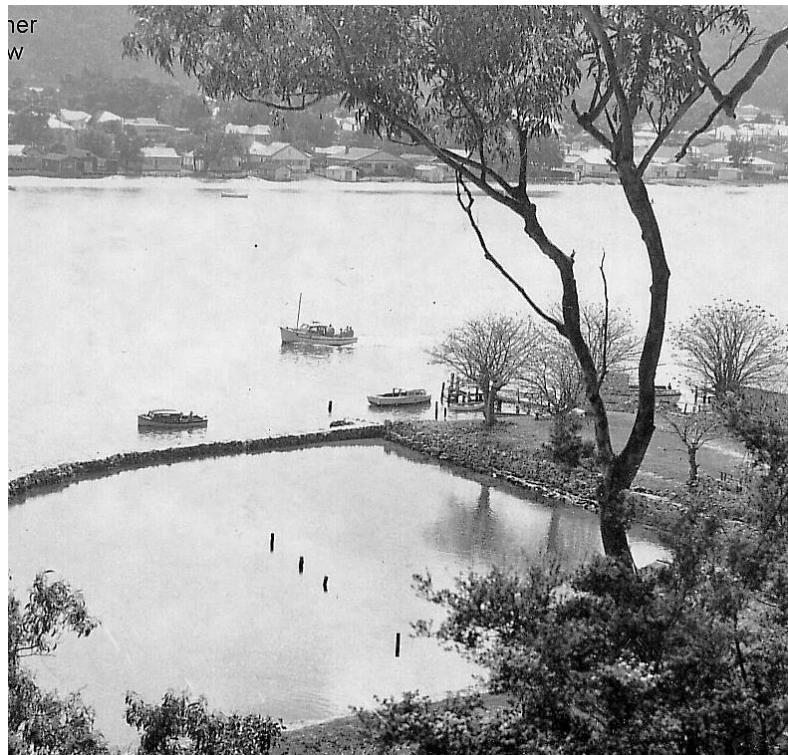
Looking across to San Toy Estate at Wagstaffe from Ettalong Beach 1955. Photo: Bouddi Collection

So, I set off on a Monday morning early in a taxi to the station and the train which took me to Parramatta; then a train to Strathfield; another train to Hornsby; a steam train to Woy Woy and finally a ferry. Five and a half hours later, I was deposited on Wagstaffe Wharf, compliments of the ferry man. I had my four-year-old daughter in tow.

Well, the beauty that surrounded me was and still is amazing. Each mile I travelled, it got better. I had not been further afield than Parramatta! I think I had decided to take the cottage before I had even seen it so about two weeks later, we moved to our new home at San Toy.

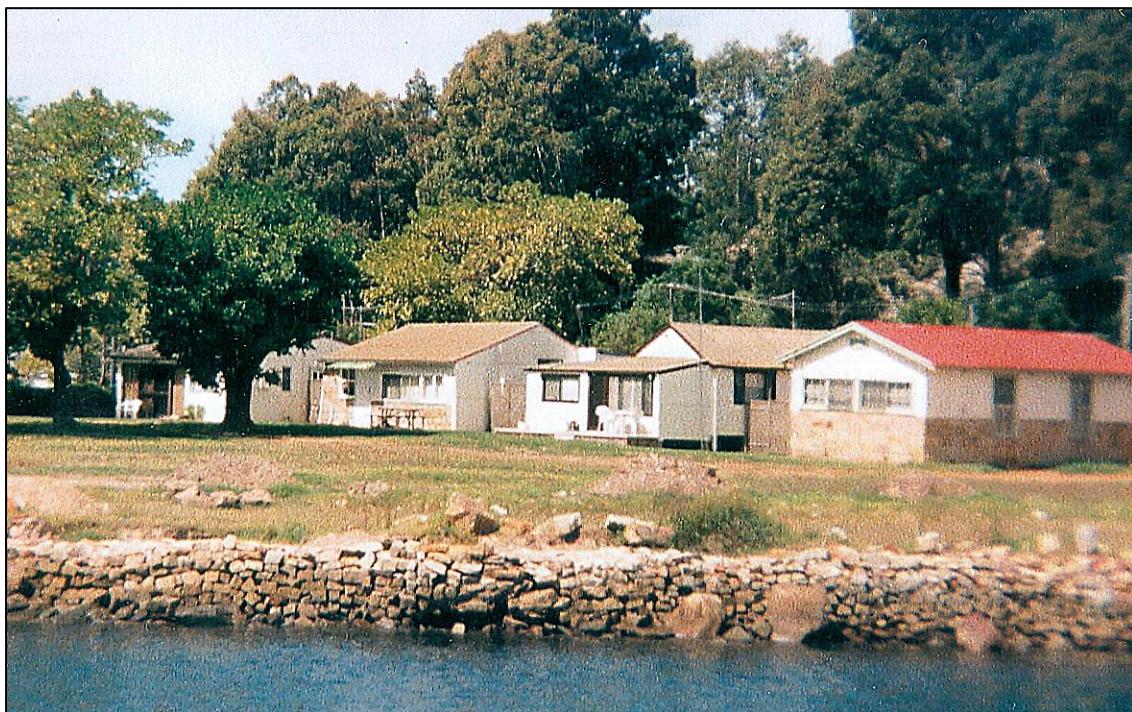


Looking at San Toy Estate from the south 1950s. Photo: Kevin Walther

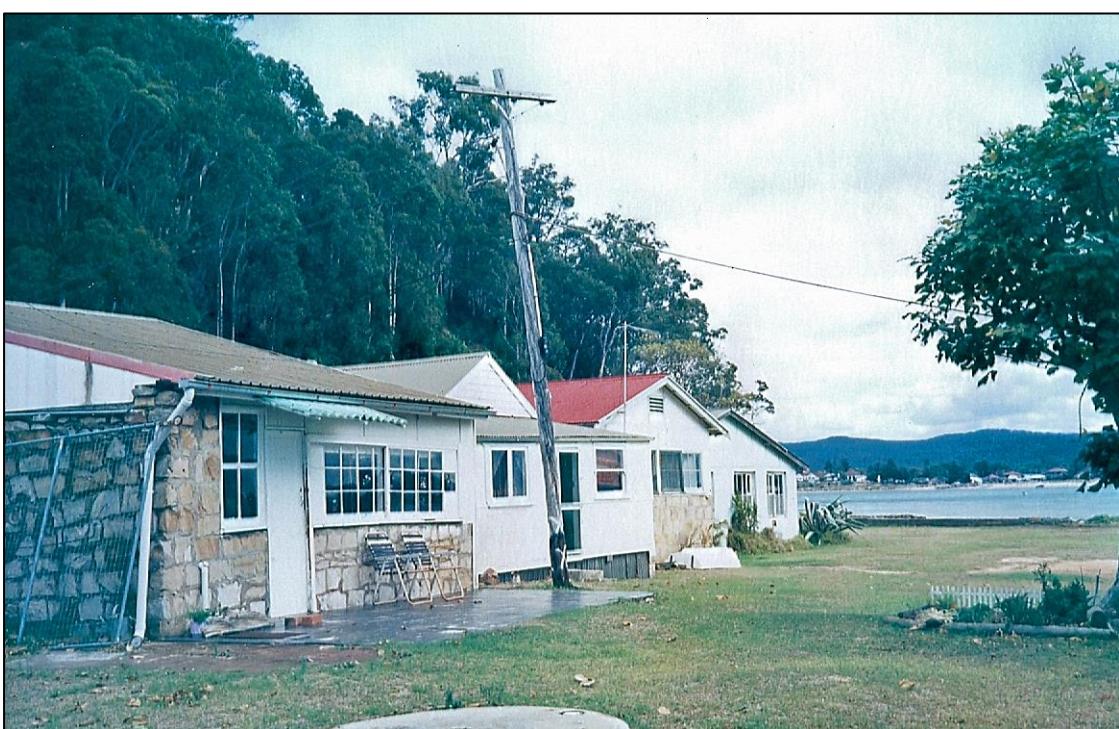


The swimming pool at the southern end of San Toy Estate.
Photo: Kevin Walther

We settled in well and loved it. Trevor was only able to get home for weekends and on Friday night, I would be looking out for him. I had an old telescope (which we still have) and I would lean out of the window of the cottage and wait for his signal. He would wave his sailor's hat. Then I would jump into a borrowed dinghy and row over for him.



The Wilkinson's cottage second from left (behind the tree). Photo: Margaret Harper



The Wilkinson's sandstone cottage at left. Photo: Margaret Harper

When Monday morning came, we both would row over at 4 am and I would row back. By the time I got back, I was wide awake so I would do some fishing. The only trouble was I couldn't, and still can't, take a fish off the hook, so I would have to wait till someone woke up and I would ask them to do the deed.



The sandbar between Ettalong and Wagstaffe. Photo: Kevin Walther

I used to row over to Ettalong sometimes to get groceries and one day I took a neighbour with me. On the way back home, the tide had changed, and a strong wind was blowing, too strong for me to hold the boat and we were heading towards Half-Tide Rocks. I said to Pat, "I can't hold this anymore," and we looked at each other. When over the noise of the wind and the waves, a voice said, "Are you in trouble? I'll throw you a rope." Now in those days there were very few people on the water mid-week, let alone someone with an outboard motor! He threw the rope, pulled us onto the little beach and was gone as quickly as he came. I still think about it and tell the story. I know someone was watching over us that day for sure. Neither of us had heard the motor!

I don't remember much of the village in 1958, only the corner store, Waggle Store. (Trevor remembers the sly grog shop of course!!) Most of our main shopping was done in Gosford. Our daughter went to school for a short while at Pretty Beach as did our two other daughters later and also, later on, our ten grandchildren.



Wagstaffe Store circa 1958. Photo: Kevin Walther

We were allocated a naval house at Lalor Park so we moved back to Sydney. We needed all the things one needs to set up a home. Mrs Radford, who was our landlady, took me to Sydney before we left to buy some furniture in the auction rooms. I didn't like to say no to her. I really wanted a nice red laminex dining setting instead of the solid oak one (that we still have 50 years later). I bought the table, lounge suite, bedroom suite, single bed, bedside tables and rugs, all for eighty pounds, including the delivery fee of 20 pounds!

We can never thank Mrs Radford enough for that. She was a very special person and a very good friend to us. She said, "Mrs Wilkinson, you will need extra money to buy curtains and floor coverings," and of course she was right! We had great respect for her and her family.

For the next twenty years (except for the three years in Darwin) we continued to spend weekends and holidays at Wagstaffe, always renting a cottage on San Toy. When we decided to buy a house, we knew where it had to be so while we waited for the right one to come on the market, we lived at San Toy. We were there for two years.

Well, in 1978 we moved to Pretty Beach permanently and have never regretted it. Our two youngest daughters went to Pretty Beach School. At one time I was teaching the older children to swim in the pool opposite the school. The pool is still there today but somewhat neglected. It was a bit tricky sometimes as the tide would be too low. I had previously taught children in Sydney and Darwin.

We are still here, in the same house, and hope to be here for as long as we can. Pretty Beach, Wagstaffe, Killcare and Hardys Bay have never lost their appeal and never will.

With fond memories --
Margaret Wilkinson 2009

THE WILMOT FAMILY

by Geri Levett



The Wilmot family. Photo: V. Wilmot

The Wilmot family first came to Killcare in 1946, when brothers, Victor and Fred, purchased two blocks of land, lots 23 and 24 Grandview Crescent.

Victor commenced building his house on lot 24 but because of post-World War II building material shortages, he took a few years to complete it!

The building materials were brought in by ferry across the water. Between 1946 and 1972, this house was the 'Wilmot weekender'.

Vic Wilmot Jnr was born in 1946. He talked to Geri Levett, reflecting on his early days at Killcare.



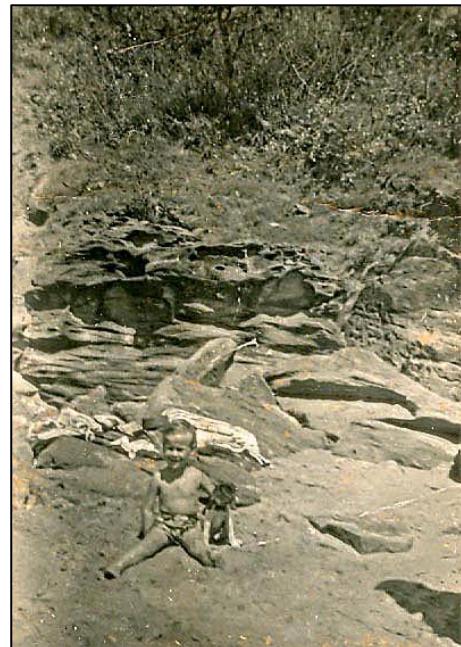
Young Victor at Grandview Crescent, 1952. Photo: V. Wilmot

In 1972, Victor and Margaret Wilmot moved to Killcare permanently, until Margaret's move to nearby Woy Woy in 1990. Their son, Vic and his wife, Beverly, moved back here in 2006 to live permanently. This trend of taking up permanent residency after having a holiday dwelling in the area was a common feature of families in the area. Such was the magnetic attraction of the place.

The Wilmot family had resided at Lakemba in Sydney. In the early days, their journey from Lakemba to Killcare took the best part of three hours, travelling as usual by public transport. Firstly, the Wilmot family would catch a bus to Strathfield, then a train to Woy Woy and then finally a ferry to Hardys Bay. As a youngster, Vic Wilmot would be delighted to travel by steam train along the very scenic route to Woy Woy.



Above: Vic and his sister at Killcare Beach Bogie Hole, 1950



Murphys Ferry, 1940s. Photo: Patricia.Mainsbridge

The ferries were an institution themselves and were owned by the Murphy family. The roads into Killcare were rough and made of gravel until the 1960s, when the Scenic Road was sealed.

After the road was improved, the Wilmot family travelled in their 1937 grey Chevrolet called the ‘Grey Ghost’. They reached Hardys Bay via East Gosford. Later, when the Rip Bridge was built in the 1970s, travel became even easier for the Wilmot family. It seems that the reward of reaching their destination always outweighed any difficulties of travel!



The reserve that became Araluen Drive 1940s

Killcare itself was still a fairly rural place. There were lots of cows still roaming around because a number of families owned dairies around the beach and the bay.

There was also no electricity or town water. Electricity didn't arrive in Grandview Crescent until the late 1950s or early 1960s. The locals had water tanks, hurricane lamps, kerosene lamps and fridges, primus stoves and chip bath heaters.

Vic often used to help the local fishermen pull in their nets. The fishermen would then try to sell their catch, singing out, “Fisho, fisho,” as they travelled from place to place. What they didn't sell locally, they sent to the fish markets. Vic also remembers that there were many oyster farmers too. A large number of citrus orchards were to be found between Killcare and East Gosford.

There were shops down at the Bay, including the Barnes’s General Store. A wonderful range of goods, comics and newspapers came in by ferry. There was a bakery at Pretty Beach and a butcher shop in Araluen Drive.

Mr Radford delivered pharmaceutical goods from his chemist shop in Ettalong. An amphibious car belonging to Mr Radford was used to make the journey to and from Wagstaffe and Ettalong. Vic reported it, as quite an amazing scene! The story of the Amphicar is told elsewhere in the eBook.



The Radford Car – Photo: Rod.Radford

Victor reminisced on the abundance of native flora and fauna in Killcare. Grandview Crescent was mainly bushland and there were large numbers of blue tongue lizards, goannas, bandicoots, glider possums and native birds such as kookaburras and brush turkeys. There were also many unique varieties of ants: bull, sugar, and meat ants. There was a deep affinity with nature amongst the local children! One young girl in Grandview Crescent used to have pet blue tongue lizards. She fed them ice-cream and dressed some of them in dolls' clothes!



Sandhills at Putty Beach Photo: Patricia Mainsbridge



Killcare Surf Club, 1940s. Photo: Surf Club collection

Vic remembered Killcare before the sand mining with the cricket pitch on the reserve, Beach Drive, huge sand hills and the billabong near the Putty Beach end that was always teaming with fish!

At the Killcare Surf Club end of Putty Beach (today to be found adjacent to the parking area near Grandview Crescent) was a swamp, alive with all sorts of wildlife:

Vic said, "It was a bit of a frightening place for a child, but it was also very interesting with lots of things to explore."



Unique characters featured in Vic's memories: there was Bob who used to fish off Killcare wharf, Darky involved with SP bookies and Bluey, an importer.

The locals remember Oscar Speck (left), a German gentleman, who travelled to Australia by kayak in the 1930s, to escape difficult times in Germany. He spent the war in an internment camp in Queensland, made his fortune opal mining at Lightning Ridge and finally built his dream home at Killcare Heights in the 50s and resumed kayaking on Brisbane Water. He died in 1995 aged 88.

Victor Wilmot Snr was a colourful character too. Being the local ‘tick-man’, he removed many ticks from locals and visitors by applying turpentine to the tick. He then used tweezers to remove it, without leaving the head in the victim’s skin.



Victor Snr and wife Margaret. Photo: V. Wilmot

Also remembered are families, like the Camerons, who built trawlers in Araluen Drive and the Ford family, who owned dairy farms. Their descendants are still in the area. Such was the attachment to the area:

“Killcare is such a beautiful place, that I think once it gets into your blood, it’s very hard to get it out.”

Law and order was another issue altogether!

Vic pondered: “Well, law and order has always been a bit of an issue because of the isolation. People, indeed, I think, had more respect for each other so we didn’t seem to have much antisocial behaviour. The only minor problems around here at times were probably a bit of heavy drinking sometimes or louts trying to crash dances around at the local halls. They may have been refused entry because they didn’t have shoes on!”

In the decades the Wilmot family has lived in Hardys Bay, there have been some changes. Vic Wilmot says: “...it was a gradual thing... it didn’t happen overnight. I think lots of people discovered Killcare through a friend or a family member and eventually moved here... the biggest change took place once they built the Rip Bridge. This was a sleepy hollow.”

“You’d get off the ferry and old men would be sitting out on chairs down there at Killcare Store, happily chatting to anyone who passed by... people really did have time to talk to each other and there was this community spirit that you probably can’t quite get back.”

The most dramatic changes occurred in the 1990s. At this time, the nature of the housing changed with old houses knocked down and new, large and modern houses erected.

The sense of community in Killcare was best expressed in two institutions: the Surf Lifesaving Club and the volunteer bush fire-fighters. Both were and still are reliant on volunteers. In the early days people dropped everything to go and help fight the fires. Vic Wilmot said, “You know the same people you saw at the surf clubs were up there fighting the fire!” In the early days, the volunteers worked with very little equipment often having to improvise with what they had!

Vic has had a sixty-year association with Killcare and the Hardys Bay area. With fond memories in his parents’ weekender after World War II and now as a resident and active member of the community, he is still infatuated with the area and its unique appeal.

“Well I would defy anyone to show me a more beautiful spot on the planet!”

His story, like the stories of many other residents in Hardys Bay, paints a picture of an area of battlers in the early days, with people often escaping the pressures of working-class suburbia in the city of Sydney. Although people did it the hard way in those days, there was a wonderful community spirit and in the words of Vic Wilmot:

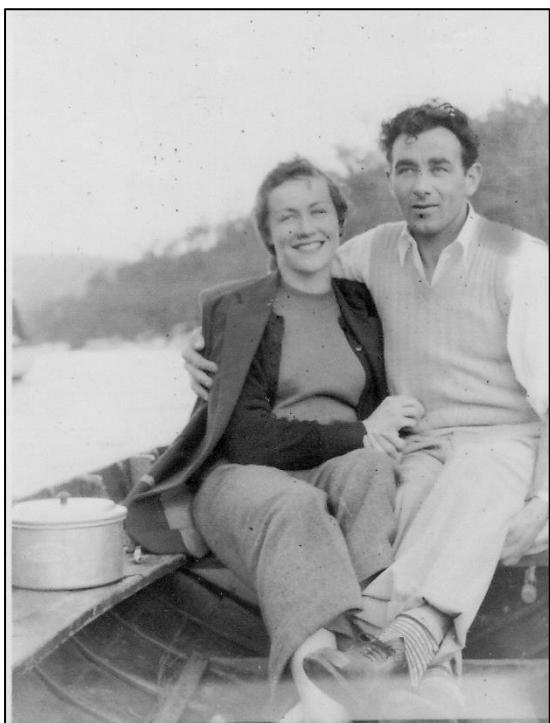
“The place had a good feel to it.”

Geri Levett – 2008

THE WOULFE FAMILY

by Cathy (Woulfe) Ford

The Woulfe family's connection with Killcare began with Mum (Pat) in the 1940s and it hasn't stopped. Pat Fitzpatrick married Johnny Woulfe and along with their six children continued to holiday in the area, until one by one they all moved to Killcare and now, because Johnny and most of his children are still here, it has become the focal point of the family's story and the place they love.



Johnny and Pat on the bay, 1955.

The Woulfe family's connection with Killcare began with Mum (Pat) in the 1940s. Patsy FitzPatrick spent holidays here with her family, and just like her Mum, she fell in love with all the area has to offer. She and her brothers, John, Frank and Terry enjoyed the beach and bush and attended local dances. When Patsy began to date Johnny Woulfe, he too began to spend time here with Patsy's family. So of course, after Johnny and Pat married and had kids - John, Therese, Stephen, Cathy, Martin and Maura, we also began the trip north. At that time, we travelled by train from Hornsby to Woy Woy, bus to Ettalong and ferry to Killcare. Later we travelled by car along the winding Pacific Highway and then the tollway.



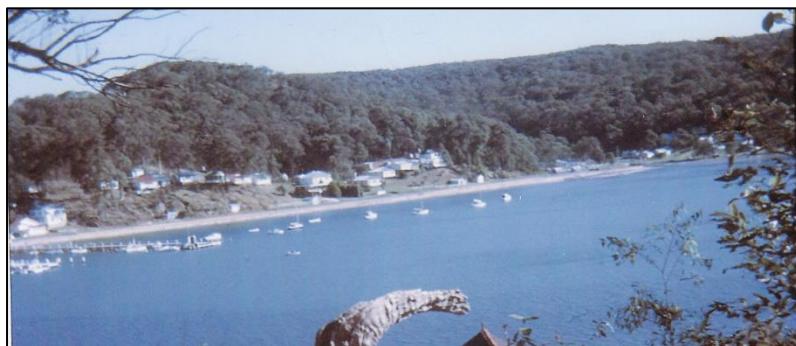
Cathy, Stephen, Therese and John at Pretty Beach, 1963

In the early 1960s Pat inherited £1,500 from an aunt in Ireland and she and Johnny purchased a weekender at 44 Marine Drive (now Hardys Bay Parade). This house is one of the few originals still standing. For the next sixteen years we retreated to the coast from Hornsby for most of our school holidays and many weekends.

Here we led a delightfully simple life. There was no TV or telephone. We were on tank water and we had an outside dunny, which was an adventure on rainy nights. Maura had quite a fright one day whilst seated on the loo; she looked up to see a snake above her. After much screaming Johnny (Dad) found it was a harmless Green Tree Snake.

We had no shower, so we showered in the cold, bore water, the surf club showers or standing out in a summer downpour with a bottle of Rainsoft shampoo.

We spent many carefree hours fishing at the Extension Wharf, paddling on the bay on boards or inflated inner tubes, walking, bike riding and exploring the area. Of course, during summer, we lived at the beach. We would lose track of days and a few times forgot Therese's birthday which fell in the middle of the summer holidays. We often had other people staying with us and I don't remember where everyone slept. Mum welcomed visitors for a meal or to stay, nothing was a problem.



Our house was nicknamed 'the house for the homeless hoods' as Mum took in local teens for a night (or longer) after they had a fight with or been told to leave by their parents.

The view from the rear of No.44 Hardys Bay Parade.

While Mum and the six kids holidayed, Dad would stay back in Hornsby during the week, working.

During one winter holiday in the late 60s, Dad travelled by train to Woy Woy on Friday afternoon. Ted Malony, a local Irishman met Dad at Woy Woy in his open timber boat to bring him over to Killcare but a storm had whipped up and as they came through The Rip the boat turned over. Fortunately, they were not far from shore and Dad was able to pull the boat close to shore and upright it.

The engine wouldn't start so Dad walked the boat, with a terrified Ted inside, along the waters edge to Killcare, trudging through mud and oysters. Meanwhile we were in a blackout awaiting Dad's arrival in the storm. After a few hours, Mum had us saying the rosary by candlelight but still he didn't appear and we kids fell asleep. We were awakened in the middle of the night when Dad arrived, dripping wet in his suit and exhausted. The soles of his best leather shoes were ripped to shreds from walking across oysters.

Luckily, his pay packet was still in his pocket and Mum hung it up to dry, strung across the verandah. He never accepted Ted's offers for a boat ride home again.



Our weekender, top left, in 1977. Martin Woulfe and Matthew FitzPatrick, paddling.

During the 1974 storm the front windows of our house blew in. I remember watching the glass bending with the pressure of the wind and Dad placing a blanket over one of the boys, moments before the windows began to explode, spraying glass across the verandah and the sleeping boys. No-one was hurt.

Another adventure during school holidays took place at Fishermens End (now called Putty Beach). We were enjoying some May sunshine and had the beach to ourselves (or so we thought). At that time there were a few fishermen's boats kept in the sand dunes in the corner. Stephen thought it would be fun to borrow one of the timber row boats and Mum said we could if we put it back the way we found it. Stephen, Cathy, Martin, Maura and one of our cousins dragged the boat down into the water. Just as we got the oars prepared to row, the owner of the boat, Ted Stirton, came roaring down from the headland yelling abuse and grabbed the chain Stephen had round his neck and twisted it. He demanded that we return the boat to the dunes and stood by watching as we all hauled it back to where we had found it. Years later, it was Ted Stirton who also claimed that the Woulfes had chased all the fish out of the bay by playing their music too loud.

When Mum wanted to call us kids home, she or Dad would use a Klaxon horn (vintage car horn). They would honk it out the front window of the house and all the local kids knew that was the Woulfes' call home.

The six Woulfe kids were in the Killcare Nippers/Nipperettes and it was then that we got to know the local kids and formed lasting friendships, always dreaming of the day we too, would be locals. After Nippers the boys stayed in the surf club but this was not an option for girls then. John screen-printed a lot of Nipper t-shirts for the club in the early 70s.



Cathy, Martin, Stephen, Maura and Therese with Gemmy, the dog. John was the photographer, 1971.

Stephen and Greg McCall created a beach buggy from a VW Beetle (see photo below) that was used for many years on the beach. John, Stephen and Martin took up surfing and in the 1980s Martin was one of the founding members of Killcare Board-riders. I (Cathy) held the positions of Secretary and Treasurer.

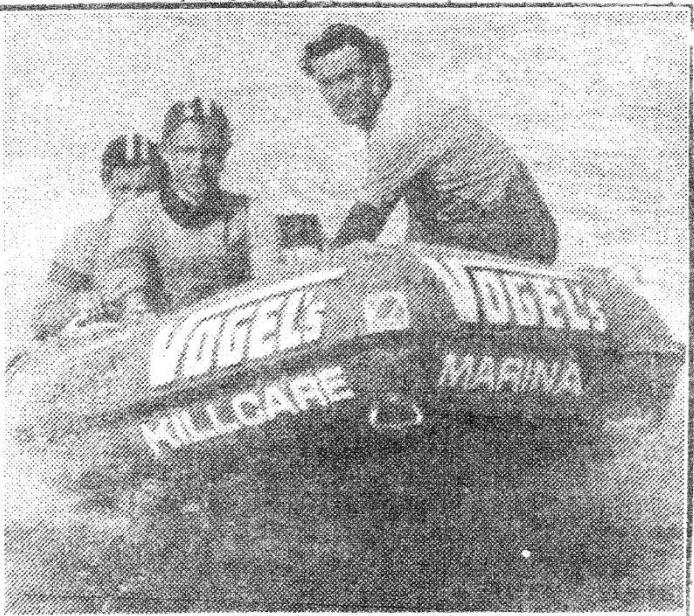


Later,

Stephen held the position of Club Captain for several years and organized many social activities for the junior club members.

Lifesaver of Year

THE captain of the smallest surf lifesaving club on the coast, Killcare, has been named Central Coast Lifesaver of the Year. He is Steve Woulfe, seen here on the right with his crew in the branch IRB titles. Steve has been a tireless worker to keep his small club going and is backed by keen members and a strong administration.



During the 70s the surf club held regular dances over summer with the entertainment being one of the many local bands or a disco. This provided a social life for the locals and weekenders. John was the drummer in one of these bands, *Hot Tequila*, along with another local Chris Knott (vocals). When we weren't at the beach, we would sometimes hang out at the pool room at Killcare General Store. The McCalls ran the general store and put in a pool table, four pinball machines, a juke box and a couple of other games. This provided us with another social venue; there was always someone hanging out there. When John got his driver's licence, we were able to come to Killcare for the weekend without Mum and Dad and soon our quiet weekender became the party house.

Over the years Mum (Pat) had said several times to Ian McCall that if he were selling the General Store leasehold, to let her know first.

So in 1978, when Ian did ring her, she took him up on the offer and the girls in the Woulfe family moved to Killcare and for the next three years we ran Killcare General Store (see photo at right). At this time, it was a genuine general store, selling a wide range of goods. Mum and I worked full time and Therese and Maura part-time.



Killcare has always attracted celebrities, so we met our fair share whilst running the shop.

One quiet Sunday afternoon, a white Rolls Royce pulled up at the door and out stepped a well-dressed Marcia Hines. She was wearing 5-inch heels and false eyelashes. Mum served her with an ice-cream cone and as Mum handed Marcia her change, she commented that she looked a lot like Marcia Hines, only smaller. Therese and I exploded with laughter as soon as the Rolls departed, and Mum was kicking herself that she had let that opportunity go as she was a big fan. During that time Martin and Stephen made the move up to Killcare and worked part-time in the shop - although Martin tended to eat far more than he earned, in between surfs.

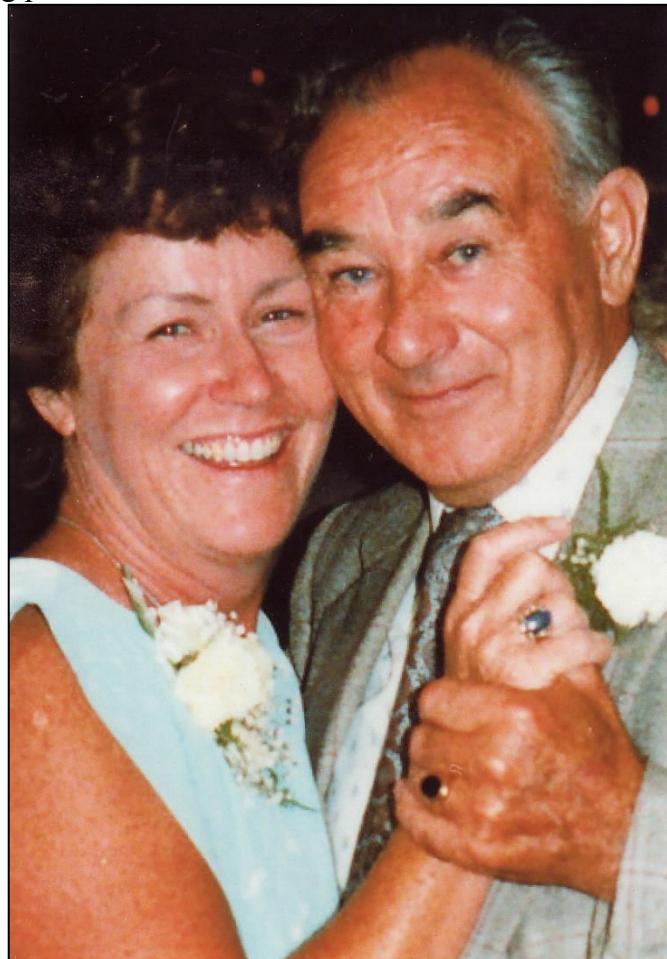
Just as we were preparing to close one afternoon, a Canadian backpacker arrived on the last bus. He came in and asked where he might find accommodation. We explained that the only place to stay was Putty Beach in a tent and as he had no tent Mum got very concerned and invited him to stay with us. So he did, for a week and we showed him around the area and fed him. When standing on Crocodile Rock overlooking the beach one perfect day, he remarked, 'It's just like walking around in a great big postcard'.

At the end of 1981, Dad retired as Operations Manager and Caretaker of Westfield, North Rocks. He too moved to Killcare. In 1982, Johnny, along with Pat and the girls, took his first trip home to Ireland since he left in 1948.

In retirement, Pat enjoyed walking and painting and Johnny could always be found in the garden. In 1985, they built a new house at No.6 The Scenic Road, where they spent many happy years. They spent a lot of time with their kids and seventeen grandchildren.

When all the kids had left home and started to have kids of their own, Mum started up a family dinner night on Thursdays. Over the years Thursday nights evolved into Guiness night when Dad began to brew his own stout and the door was open to anyone.

This tradition is still being practised twenty years on, now on Wards Hill Road where you will hear Irish music and laughter floating out into the night.



Pat and Johnny at John's wedding in 1985.



St Patrick's Day March in Sydney, 2008.

Johnny and his family celebrate their Irish heritage. Johnny's five brothers, Mossy, Tony, Paddy, Teddy and Eamy, followed him to Australia and our numbers have now reached one hundred Woulfes in Australia. Occasionally, we march in the St Patrick's Day March held each year in Sydney. Last time, Dad sat in an armchair on the back of Stephen's truck, which followed the banner-waving members of the Wolfe family. The kids especially have a great time and love to be part of the fun.



Johnny with his six kids and partners. Standing from left: Cathy and Stephen, Adam and Maura, Chris and John. Seated from left: Kim and Stephen Johnny, Therese, Martin and Jo.

The kids all married and have kids of their own. John married Christine Moy in 1985 and they have Liam, Jessica and Kaitlin. Therese married Ian Ford in 1978 and they have Nichole, Daniel, Martyne and Sean. Therese and Ian have since divorced and Therese's partner since 2002 is Dave Jones. Stephen married Kim Kentwell in 1986 and their children are Keelin, Breanne and Broin. Cathy married Stephen Ford in 1985 and they have Melissa and Sarah. Martin married Joanne Cummings in 1990 and Callum, Reece and Sienna complete their family. Maura married Adam Reeves in 1992 and they have Shaylee and Connor. The cousins are very close and love to hang out together. Twelve of the seventeen cousins attended Pretty Beach Public School. At one stage there were seven there at the one time and they enjoyed having the daily contact with each other. Cathy worked at the school for many years as a teachers' aide, also enjoying the daily contact with family. Prior to this, Cathy worked at Pretty Beach Pre-School. The first of the grandchildren to marry is Daniel to Kate Mahoney in Nov 2009. So, the next generation is busy creating the next chapter of the Woulfe story in Killcare.

Sadly, Pat died suddenly in 2003, just nine months after she and Johnny had moved into their new house on Wards Hill Road and the family was shattered by the loss of their dear mother and grandmother.



The Woulfe family celebrating Dad's 80th birthday party at Pacific Palms, 2001.

Fri 6th Jan '06

CENTRAL COAST NEWS



John Woulfe with *Hobart Bound* which won the Cromwells Art Prize.

Line honours for sculpture

IT was a natural progression from full-size boats to nautical sculpture for Daleys Point shipwright John Woulfe.

Mr Woulfe began building boats 34 years ago but diversified to more artistic pursuits following a life-threatening bout of meningitis.

For almost 20 years he has been painstakingly designing and making finely detailed yacht sculptures from Australian timbers, sandstone and stainless steel.

He said the illness opened his eyes to the creative possibilities afforded by sculpture.

"When I got meningitis that was the catalyst. I had a million ideas and wanted to get them all out before they put me in a box," he said.

"Because I'm a shipwright and love

sailing, I was lured into making the pieces. All the techniques I used to do boat work I applied to the sculptures."

His talents paid off in early December when he won the coveted Cromwells Art Prize for his Sydney to Hobart yacht race-inspired work entitled *Hobart Bound* - a 3m x 1.2m wall mounted sculpture of timber and stainless steel which will join an exhibition touring Australia, London, Paris and the United States.

Mr Woulfe makes the sculptures in his workshop and sells them through his company, Nautical Timber Classics, to yacht clubs as trophies and to collectors as display pieces.

One of his works can be seen gracing the foyer of the Crowne Plaza Terrigal.

Inquiries: 4360 2228 or www.nauticaltimberclassics.com.au

As I write this in 2010, Dad is still living on Wards Hill Road at the age of 88, supported by us kids and his wonderful neighbours and friends. Therese, Stephen, Cathy and Martin live locally, John is just over the water at Daley's Point and Maura is at Greenpoint. John, after working for many years as a shipwright and in the building game, is now a successful sculptor (Nautical Timber Classics). Martin works in the local National Parks and Wildlife Service along with Cathy's husband, Stephen Ford. Stephen Woulfe owns and operates Killcare Landscapes. Therese is working for Coast Shelta as she has done for many years. Maura and her husband, Adam, work for an Asian import company and Adam has just been promoted to state manager in Western Australia so they are moving to Perth in March 2010, giving us all a good excuse for a West Australian holiday.

And we are living the dream!

Cathy Ford 2010

The photos belong to the Woulfe family collection.