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"History is more or less bunk".  
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

# "Bunk"

## Taking pleasure in the suburbs

### Diary Dates 2017

**Museum Open  
10am to noon**

**Monday to Friday**

**Meetings at Museum  
22 Alexandra Street  
Hunters Hill**

**Thursday 26 October  
Morning Tea 10am in  
the Museum**

**Followed by  
GENERAL MEETING  
IN THE COUNCIL  
CHAMBER**

**Commencing 10.30am**

**GUEST SPEAKER**

**Chris Schofield**

**The Saint of All Saints**

### Tuesday 21 November SYDNEY HERITAGE FLEET 'SHIPS & SHORE' TOUR

Meet at the ship's anchor outside the Maritime Museum at 9.30am, then a short walk to tall ship *James Craig* for morning tea. Board the heritage motor launch *Harmon* for a tour of the heritage docks and vessels at Rozelle. Return to ANMM by *Harmon* for lunch at own expense (\$15 special). The tour finishes at noon.

### Tour and morning tea \$30

Transport by car pool from the Museum, leaving at 8.45am, or park at Harbourside Car Park or The Star Car Park.

**BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL  
PHONE TONY SAUNDERS ON  
9817 1432 BY**

**FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER  
NUMBERS LIMITED TO 26**

**WE ARE INFORMED  
NO WALKING FRAMES OR  
WALKING STICKS**

**H**unters Hill had its fair share of pleasure grounds in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

These places of socialising and recreation were popular throughout Sydney in Victorian and Edwardian times.

In Hunters Hill, there were three such venues – The Avenue Pleasure Grounds, Seymour's Pleasure Gardens, now the location of All Saints' Anglican Church and Fern Bay Recreation Grounds on the banks of Parramatta River.

The largest of these local amusement areas was The Avenue Pleasure Grounds, occupying about 16 riverside hectares of the current Hunters Hill High School site.

People caught steam ferries from Sydney at weekends for a day of picnicking and strolling around the various grounds.

Long tables were provided for communal eating and undercover areas were set aside for dancing. As one commentator has stated: "In a pleasure garden, you're a million miles from care but with in cooee of suburbia".



One of the biggest and most popular such places in Sydney was close to Hunters Hill – Fairyland Pleasure Grounds situated on the upper part of Lane Cove River and now incorporated into Lane Cove National Park.

Here, the Swan Family, owners of the land, literally transformed the area into a fairyland – enhancing it with what have been described as fairy-like structures and motifs. Some of the cardboard representations were positioned in surrounding trees.

But as trains, buses and the motor car enabled weekend trippers to venture further afield, these urban pleasure grounds waned in popularity. By around the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, faced with slicker entertainment on offer elsewhere, all had died out.

However their existence and eventual passing marks a significant part of the history and development of Sydney. **Picture: Lady Carrington arriving at The Avenue Pleasure Grounds, now Hunters Hill High School grounds**  
**BOTH ARTICLES ON THIS PAGE BY CHRIS SCHOFIELD**

## Rowing hero came from Woolwich

**O**ne of Hunters Hill's most famous sons was Ned Trickett, born in Woolwich in 1851.

He rose to fame as a sculler and became a world champion, the first Australian to win an international championship in any sport.

Sculling had become a popular pastime in the 1800s, and one of the best known locations for racing was on Parramatta River, between Gladesville and Ryde.

Ned's maiden attempt at competitive rowing took place before he had reached the age of 15. After various successes on the water, Ned, now

in his twenties, was sponsored to travel to England to take part in the World Sculling Championships.

In a race on the River Thames, between Putney and Mortlake, he wrested the title from the incumbent English champion.

According to contemporaneous reports, the English were stunned by the result.

It seems that not only a "colonial" had won, but the colonial in question was the son of a convict. Ned returned to Australia as a hero, and 25,000 people crowded around Circular Quay to wel-

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come him home. There was no shortage of local rivals ready to challenge Ned, and a grand contest was organised on Parramatta River with a purse of 200 pounds to the winner. Now aged 32, Ned successfully defended his title.

Some 70,000 spectators watched the race from either the shore or from aboard large steamers.

It was generally agreed that Ned had



gained an advantage from using a new sliding seat which his main rival

had declined to use. From then on, his racing years were behind him. Following his retirement from the Department of Trade and Customs in 1916, Ned went to visit his son in Uralla in northern NSW. While assisting in his son's hobby gold mine, Ned was fatally injured when the shaft walls collapsed on him. A tragic end to the life of a person to whom early Australia was justifiably proud!

### ELIZABETH QUIRK A LEGEND IN HUNTERS HILL

**E**lizabeth (Eliza Kelly) Quirk was born in was born in County Meath on 18 January 1837. She migrated to Australia, arriving in Sydney on the *Ida* on 18 January 1864, her 27<sup>th</sup> birthday. In the shipping records, under 'Read or Write', she is listed as 'neither'.

In 1871 she married John Quirk of Ryde. They moved into the stone cottage at 27 Madeline Street, which John owned. When John died in 1887, she owned 27 and 25 Madeline Street. There is a Historical Society plaque opposite no. 27. She ran a dairy, and besides these two properties, owned a house in Alexandra Street.

The *Sydney Morning Herald* of 18 January 1937 carried this story:

#### '100 YEARS OF AGE TODAY

#### Hunters Hill Woman Believes in Hard Work

Mrs Elizabeth Quirk, of Madeline Street, Hunters Hill, is 100 years of age today. She comes of an extraordinarily long-lived family; her father's death occurred when he was only one day less than 100.

'One has only to sit and talk with Mrs. Quirk in her snug stone cottage, in surroundings that often remind her of the rural quiet and charm of her birthplace in County Meath, to appreciate her keen sense of humour and for a woman of her age her remarkable mental alertness. It is not difficult to understand that she has always enjoyed good health.

"I still feel something of a young woman, although I get a little weary at times," she said.

'Mrs. Quirk is a firm believer in hard work.

"It has never killed anyone," she said. "If it had I would have been dead years ago."

'She recalled the days when there were few houses in Hunter's Hill and when the ferry ran from Parramatta to Sydney and back only once a day. The return fare was 3/-.

'A little spot still dear to Mrs. Quirk's heart is her birthplace in County Meath. As evidence of her keen memory she recalled persons and places she knew when she was a girl.'



### The abandoned infant of Ferry Street

In 1895, a sad and sorry incident was reported in Hunters Hill. The details were published in local newspapers of the time. The local policeman, a Constable Pilsbury, was said to be quickly on the case.

It seems that Mrs Jane Eaton of Ferry Street heard the muted cries of a baby outside her house at about 8 o'clock one Friday evening. On going out to investigate, she discovered a baby, estimated to be about a week old, wrapped in an old newspaper, lying on the doorstep. Mrs Eaton at once took in the baby and bathed and dressed it. Seeing that the baby was in a starved condition, she also provided some nourishment.

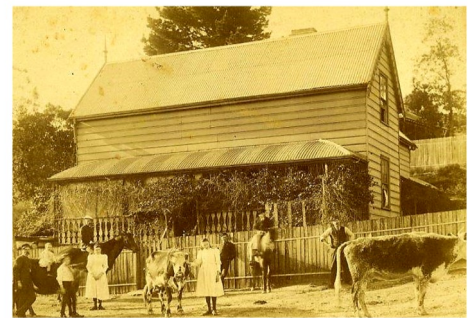
Constable Pilsbury was summoned and took steps to have the female child removed to the Benevolent Asylum in Sydney where she was taken in and christened. The constable then made inquiries to try to find out the person responsible for leaving the baby.

This led to Constable Pilsbury confronting a local woman, Susan Bailey, a widow in straitened circumstances, and accusing her of wilfully abandoning the baby. He accused her of recently giving birth to the child. At first, she protested her innocence but later broke down and confessed her guilt. She also admitted the father was a Henry Northam who, after learning of her pregnancy, had left the district.

In evidence, the accused woman said that as she already had three other children she could not afford to look after a fourth. She was quoted as saying: "I did not mean to hurt it and knew Mrs Eaton was a kind woman and would take it in".

The tragic end to the story was that Susan Bailey was sentenced at the Metropolitan Quarter Sessions in Sydney to three months imprisonment, with light labour. Because of the infant's malnourished condition, she did not survive. She was just a month old at her death.

As for the good Mrs Eaton, she and her husband George, a dairyman, continued to live in Ferry Street until 1900 when they moved up to Nimbin in northern NSW. George died in 1928 and his wife in 1945.



The Eaton house in 1892, with George Eaton at left. Picture provided by Helen Patterson