

*We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Hunters Hill  
and show respect to Elders past and present.*



[www.huntershillmuseum.org.au](http://www.huntershillmuseum.org.au)

# “Bunk”

“History is more or less bunk”  
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

## Diary Dates 2021

**Battlers for Kelly's Bush  
Exhibition  
Opens 5.30pm  
Thursday 17 June at the  
Museum and thereafter  
10am until noon weekdays  
for 3 weeks  
All Welcome**

**Thursday 29 July  
Winter Lunch  
Gladesville Sporties  
Ryde Rd Gladesville  
12 for 12.30  
Members buy own lunch  
There will be a Show and Tell  
from our archives**

**Thursday 4 August  
Visit to Manly Quarantine  
Station  
Details to come**

### An anonymous view of Hunters Hill in 1890

**A**lthough Hunter's Hill is within four miles of the city, it is comparatively unknown. Waverley, Randwick, Marrickville, and other suburbs are linked to Sydney by tram and railway lines, while Hunter's Hill, being situated across the harbour, is reached only by steamer, and is consequently less easy of access. But the trip by steamer to and fro is very delightful, and it is not to be wondered at that the population is increasing, and visitors are becoming more numerous.

After a half-hour's trip, the visitor is landed at the wharf facing a hill with a considerable gradient. But they will feel thankful for the good, asphalted footway and the umbrageous trees that shadow it. One striking feature of this suburb is that the streets and roads are planted with shady and ornamental trees planted many years ago, and which now lend enchantment to the scene.

At the top of the hill the Woolwich Road runs east and west along a narrow ridge having Lane Cove River on the north and Parramatta River on the south. The views from this road are such as few suburbs enjoy. Fern Bay picnic grounds are close by. As one stands on Pulpit Point there fairly revels a prospect which, we have no hesitation in saying, is unequalled by any other in our harbour.

Then, retracing our steps to Woolwich Road, we walked eastward. This part of the municipality seems destined to be the select end of Hunter's Hill. The few residences already built, with their environments, compel the visitor to linger by the way. At Sunnyside, a panoramic view of Sydney is obtained. I remembered being on the same spot 20 years ago when all around was 'nature unadorned' excepting a rude hut here and there; but now, looking down upon the picturesque village of Woolwich, with the extensive Atlas works, we wondered at the transformation.

A Lane Cove steamer conveyed us from Woolwich, round the point of the peninsula to another landing place at Hunter's Hill. The

lakelike scenery of Lane Cove is very beautiful. St. Ignatius' College, rising from the heights of Riverview, is imposing and attractive; and the many fine residences on either side of the river are suggestive of comfort and well-doing.

On leaving the steamer at the foot of Alexandra Street, we face the hill, now and then turning to look down upon the landscape. Passing several fine houses and pretty cottages we reach the top, where stands All Saints' Church, a fine building - more massive than ornate. A new post-office is in course of erection on a beautiful site near to the council-chambers. Next to the municipal-chambers and standing in two acres of ground is the Congregational Church, a small, ornate, Gothic structure, all but hidden among trees; and opposite is the Public school, whose 'arbor day' must have occurred long ago, as the trees have all reached maturity, and grass plots and flower beds are equally advanced. Standing here, we obtain a beautiful view of Balmain and Parramatta River, and regarding the sloping ground on all sides from a sanitary point are convinced that Hunter's Hill must be one of the healthiest suburbs of Sydney. It is certainly one of the cleanest, and we have not yet seen any dwelling in which there could be found the proverbial 'poor man'. Our next difficulty was where to go. Lane Cove River, The Avenue picnic grounds, The Lover's Walk were all equally inviting; but we kept on the top of the ridge, and found our way to a tiny bridge, which forms the only connection between the city and North Shore. Here, in every direction, we see wide streets, over which the corporation must have been generous, but the superior houses and pretty cottages around doubtless justifies the expenditure.

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We next strike Gladesville Road, pass St. Joseph's College and Villa Maria Chapel - an attractive building on a beautiful site at the head of Tarban Creek - across the creek, at the 'dam,' where the water is conserved for the washing purposes of the Asylum. A small gas works erected here supplies light for that institution, which we see before us on the top of the hill.

On reaching it we find it more extensive than we had ever imagined, and it is so beautifully situated, and the grounds are so well kept, that we would regard the inmates to be indeed insane did they ever wish to leave it.

Here we find a bus that takes us back to Sydney, and certainly we have been much impressed by the natural beauty, the many evidences of municipal activity, and the cleanliness and apparent prosperity of the suburb.

**From the Sydney Mail and NSW Advertiser, 27 September 1890**

**Hunters Hill Historical Society Inc  
Office Bearers and Committee  
2020-2021**

*President* Chris Schofield

*Vice President and Treasurer*

Peter Kelly

*Secretary* Tony Saunders

*Committee*

Dorothy Cubban

Jan Griffiths

Dean Letcher

Ross McBride

Jean Pritchard

HUNTERS HILL HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY INC

ABN 72012103152

Address Mail To The Secretary  
Hunters Hill Historical Society Inc  
PO Box 98 Hunters Hill NSW 2110

Phone 9879 9443

www.huntershillmuseum.org.au

Email:

contact@huntershillmuseum.org.au

Editor: Ian Adair

## floating the boat

**O**n the ferry trip to Circular Quay you may have noticed a large grey steel vessel moored near the Birchgrove wharf. As the ferry passes, you'll notice it consists of two rectangular sides joined by a deck at water level. This is a floating dry dock, the purpose of which is to raise a ship in order to carry out repairs to the underneath when a land-based dock isn't available. Water flows into the side tanks until the dock can be brought underneath the ship, then the water is pumped out, raising the dock and the ship at the same time. The ship is then se-

60 metres long, 20 metres wide and eight metres high, with a lifting capacity of 1,000 tonnes.

From the late 1940s through to 2013 when it ceased operating, it was moored for much of the time at the Captain Cook graving dock at Garden Island naval base and used in the repair of working vessels.

After being acquired by the Noakes Group, the floating dock was towed to Yamba by the company's tug, Warren, in 2015 for a four-million dollar refit. In 2018, it was towed back to Sydney.



Another floating dry dock, designated AD1001, was built at the Evans Deakin shipyard in Brisbane and commissioned in 1941. It was sent to Darwin and came under attack during the Japanese bombing in February 1942.

After the war AD1001 was

cured for repairs.

Construction of this floating dock, designated the AD1002, commenced at Mort's Dock, Woolwich, in 1942; however, by the time it was commissioned in 1946 the war was over. It cost £80,000 to build and was the largest all-welded vessel built in Australia up until that time. It is

sent back to Brisbane where it languished in various parts of the Brisbane River until 1952, when it was leased to the Melbourne Harbour Trust. Maintenance costs became excessive and in August 1978 it was sold to a shipyard in Singapore.

*Chris Schofield and Ian Adair.*

## An insight into Sydney Harbour industry

**A** fascinating insight into the industrial heritage of Sydney Harbour was provided to members of the Historical Society when they visited the Coal Loader site at Waverton.

They were given a guided tour of the now preserved facility which is situated on the cliffside overlooking Balls Head Bay.

Many aspects of history intersect at the Coal Loader. Aboriginal Australians, the Cammerygall people, lived on the peninsula for thousands of years. Evidence of their existence is visible in the form of large rock carvings which survive.

In the early 1920s, the area became an industrial

site that operated primarily as a transfer depot for coal from bulk carriers to smaller coal-fired vessels. A major component of the coal loading operation was an elevated platform which housed a large stockpile. A series of tunnels lie beneath the platform and coal was transferred into coal skips through overhead chutes. These skips then moved the coal to the wharf where it was loaded onto waiting vessels.

The facility was decommissioned in 1992 and five years later the site was dedicated as public open space. It is now managed by

North Sydney Council, and encompasses a sustainability education centre. After the tour, society members were treated to a short film, showing old footage of the site, and containing interviews with those involved when it was operating.

The visit ended with a focus on fuel of a different sort with a welcome lunch at the adjoining café. *Chris Schofield*

