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# The Granville Guardian

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**The next general meeting of the Granville Historical Society will be held at 2.00 pm on Saturday 23 October 2010**

**at our Research Centre  
62 Railway Parade Granville  
Executive Meeting 1.00 pm**

**Guest Speakers:**

**Dorothy Warwick and Pat O'Brien  
"Memories"**

Our Centre is open every Wednesday from 10 am to 4 pm and on the fourth Saturday of the month for personal research.

Visitors and members of family history societies are welcome.

A fee applies for non-members

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Members,

October is our last month of guest speakers, next month will be our Christmas party. Firstly we would like to inform you of the passing of June Parkins. After many years of illness and many months of pain and suffering, June passed away last Monday. Her passing has left a sad hole in our membership. Many of our members attended her funeral on Thursday. One pleasing thing to come out of that day was to see Daphne Wiles turn up at the crematorium for the service. Bright as a button in her chair accompanied by her daughter Frances she made it, more determination in her little finger? It was an emotional experience for the members who attended. Daphne solved the mystery for June who knew that Daphne had given her the book numbers but could not think where she had put them. Maureen McManus is improving slowly and speaks of making the Christmas Party. We have asked Daphne to the Christmas Party but we need to have a ramp up the back gutter first, does anyone have anyone who could do that?

The History & Genealogy Fair at Parramatta RSL is on next Friday and Saturday 22-23 October, 9.00 am to 6.00 pm. This is put on by Unlock my Past and has interesting stalls and speakers.

June and I attended the Forum of Historical & Family History Societies last Saturday at the Balcombe Heights Estate, Baulkham Hills, the home of the Hills District Historical Society. A pleasant morning with about 16 people attending, this forum is kept together by two of our members Pat O'Brien and Dorothy Warwick. These two are also involved in Holroyd and Guildford History as well as the Friends of Mays Hill and the Friends of Linnwood. The forum is a way of getting new ideas and projects, and provides a network for discussion and support. A thank you must be given to the Hills District Historical Society for their hospitality and welcome. They have building No.10 on the Balcombe Heights Estate on Seven Hills Road, Baulkham Hills, and have set up a very nice museum; it is well worth a visit.

June & I attended the Church of Christ Friends Group on Thursday 14 October at Engadine to present a talk on the Lady Bushranger. It was well received and they want us back next year. It took us over an hour to get there, but the public relations were worth it.

We are also presenting a DVD production to commemorate the end of WW2 at the Granville RSL on Tuesday 16 November 2010 which is the Granville RSL Remembrance Luncheon

Next month 27 November 2010 is our Christmas party and it will be held at our rooms, bring a plate of food, all are welcome. There will be no speaker, so there will be plenty of time to have a chin wag.

Our last official working bee is Wednesday 24 November 2010; our last Saturday will be 27 November 2010; our first official working bee is Wednesday 2 February 2011, and the first general meeting is on Saturday 26 February 2011.

Our guest speakers this month are Dorothy Warwick and Pat O'Brien; their topic is "Memories".

**Barry G Bullivant OAM**  
President

<p><b>WORLD WAR I WAR SERVICE HOMES</b></p>
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**At the end of World War I, the newly created War Service Homes Commission began purchasing blocks of land in Sydney's fringe suburban areas for a housing scheme for war veterans.**

**The Commission bought land in areas such as Belfield, Bankstown, Lidcombe, Auburn, South Parramatta Merrylands and Wentworthville. Ten allotments in Montrose Avenue and Britannia Avenue at Merrylands, in the Locksley Hall Estate on the western perimeter of Granville Park, were among the early purchases. Locksley Hall was a mansion built in the late 1870s for a successful gold miner, Andrew Sutherland Low, and was originally known as Sutherland House, It was renamed following its sale in the 1890s to Matilda Harkness, widow of the late William Harkness of Cooma. Locksley Hall was demolished in 1937.**

**Historian Terry Kass gave a very interesting talk on the scheme at our August meeting. The scheme was introduced to compensate the soldiers for the sacrifices they had made, as well as to alleviate a housing shortage. It provided for a maximum payment of £700, which was raised to £800 in 1920. The money was offered as loans to returned servicemen and the widows or parents of men who had died on active service. Borrowers had to pay off the purchase of their homes. Terry Kass said that because of the high cost of servicing loans, many purchasers abandoned their cottages, and some houses had multiple owners or occupiers over a number of years.**

**The homes were constructed in quality materials, and those in Sydney were mainly brick. The Commission built homes in groups or for individual buyers. One of the best extant group of war service homes is in Fullagar Road at Wentworthville, in a subdivision that was once part of the old Government Domain. A large number of homes were built at Lidcombe, in the vicinity of Gallipoli Street. One of the earliest war service homes in Granville was built for Michael Adams, the first man to enlist from the town in World War I.**

## **GRANVILLE'S BUSES**

**A snapshot of bus proprietors and their services that operated in and through the former Granville Municipal area.**

**By Arthur Naylor**

**In the years of low car ownership, buses provided the necessary transport to work, shopping, and entertainment. Some companies operated 5½ days a week; others had a seven day service. There was a morning and evening peak when workers went to, or returned from work. There was also a Saturday noonday peak when shoppers and workers returned home. With the introduction of a 40 hour five day working week in the late 1940s, the Saturday noonday peak remained, as the shops remained open until 12 noon.**

**Granville's bus services generally followed the north-south pattern of its streets. Many of the early bus services were a family business and offered service to their passengers.**

**Even in the days of horse buses, Parramatta had been a popular destination, with its markets and its selection of shops and services, and remained so. Granville was the ideal station for train travellers, being serviced by both the South and Western lines.**

### **The First Buses**

**Prospective omnibus proprietors first approached the Traffic Police, who in turn, approached the local council. The council considered if the roads the route was to take were trafficable. A petition from local residents was helpful.**

**January 20 1919 saw a motor bus begin operating locally.**

**F. L. O'Neill [sic] commenced a service from Granville to Ferndell Street via Blaxcell Street. Four months later, over 450 millimetres of rain fell. This and subsequent breakdowns forced Frederick Leslie Neill's bus service to cease in June. The service was back by the following month and he alternated Ferndell Street with trips to the corner of Oxford Street and Dog Trap Road from Granville station.**

**Lever's Motor Bus De Luxe Company started in the same year, operating from Parramatta Town Hall to various destinations. One destination was Guildford, with some of the trips being provided by their Fairfield service.**

**Granville Council approved two new services in 1923: Granville to Auburn via Mona Street, and a service on Clyde Street from Granville, operated by George Robert Sinclair.**

**Buses of this era were built on a truck chassis, usually an International or T Ford. Passengers were accommodated on bench type seating. A roof was provided with canvas blinds on the sides to offer some protection from the weather. Smith & Myhill, a firm of coach builders at Granville, built one along these lines for an unknown local operator circa 1924.**

**Dedicated bus chassis were built from the 1930s, providing a lower floor for the passengers, but many buses continued to be built on those designed for trucks.**

By the 1930s, buses took on a more modern appearance, with sliding glass windows, upholstered seats, and hydraulic brakes. A change to pneumatic tyres became compulsory from 1927. There were two crew: the driver, and a conductor who collected fares. Fares were calculated by the number of sections travelled. There was no standard to the sections, each bus company choosing its own length of section, often using a cross street or landmark.

#### **The 1920s**

Some of the operators and their services from the mid 1920s include:

**W.M. Solomon, with two buses, operated from Parramatta to South Granville via Park Hill.**

**Mr Tweedie, with two buses, operated from Parramatta Park Gates through Rosehill and Granville to Auburn station.**

**C.W. Wright had one bus and operated from Parramatta to Granville via Rosehill.**

**David Madill, with one bus, operated from Granville station to Campbell's Hill Road, South Granville via Blaxcell Street. Dave Madill had bought the bus service from F.L. Neill.**

**G.R. Sinclair was operating from Granville station to Waters Road Auburn via Auburn Station.**

**G. Bell with two buses operated from Parramatta to Lansdowne Bridge via Guildford.**

**N.R.B. Barklimore, with two buses, ran a service from Parramatta to Merrylands via Granville.**

**Stan Glenister and Roy MacKenzie operated a route to the City along Sydney Road, Route 174 Parramatta to Central Station. They used open-top double-deckers, but after a passenger fatality at the Lewisham rail bridge, the buses were rebuilt as single deck vehicles. Buses were permitted to operate only as far as Central Station due to inner city traffic congestion. This service was well patronised although Granville had an electric train service from 1929.**

**Glenister and MacKenzie were also agents for American Faegol buses. Sidney Try of Merrylands is known to have had at least one. Although American built, photos show them as right hand drive.**

#### **A Shake-up in the bus industry**

**In 1917, it was estimated there were less than 15 motor omnibuses in the Sydney metropolitan area. By 1924, this had increased to 531. These were private buses, as there were no government buses.**

**The Government's Tramway Traffic Manager, E.J. Doran, reported on the private bus industry c.1925. With an improvement in roads, private buses were operating in competition with NSW Government trains and trams, causing a loss in revenue to government services. The problem was centred on the inner suburbs with private buses versus trams. Legislation**

was passed to limit the loss of revenue, but the private operators defeated it by dubious means. More effective legislation came in the form of the Transport Co-Ordination Act of 1931, that deemed private buses as either competitive and in direct competition, or non-competitive, that is, as a “feeder” to trains and trams. Those that were deemed competitive were taxed at one penny per passenger per mile or section, a heavy tax burden that operators could not afford. Private bus services ceased with the last shift on 29 October 1931.

#### **The 1930s**

On Monday 2 November 1931 the only Granville services running were those deemed “feeders” and not taxed at the new rate. These were;-

**Granville to Woodville Road**

**Granville to South Granville**

**Granville to South Granville via Clyde Street**

**Granville to South Granville via Blaxcell Street.**

**Residents north of Granville at Rosehill were without a bus service.**

At Granville, “THEY’RE HAPPY” read the opening of a 1931 article in the local paper. Granville Chamber of Commerce and the shop keepers were happy at the bus ban. Business had increased. But on the other hand, the Chamber of Commerce was sympathetic to Mr Elliot, proprietor of the Old Guildford-Granville bus service. The Chamber promised to support Mr Elliot in his approach to the Transport Board for a variation to his route and the resumption of his bus service. The proprietor of the Rosehill to Granville service also received the Chamber’s support.

The shop keepers at Guildford were unhappy. Trade had fallen. There were no buses serving Guildford, west or east of the railway line. A group of Guildford business people led by Mr Schey, approached the Chief Transport Commissioner Mr Goode with a proposal for a bus service “feeding” Guildford from both sides of the line, and “no competition with railway lines“. Mr Goode “received it favourably”.

Similarly, Merrylands Chamber of Commerce was unhappy, and was attempting to make arrangements with Sidney Try, bus proprietor, for a service feeding Merrylands. Mr Try’s buses had been forced off the Parramatta to Merrylands and Guildford run. As an inducement to Mr Try, a subsidy was spoken of.

Over following months, Chief Commissioner Goode reviewed routes on a one by one basis, allowing some to be reinstated after a variation of their route. Those that ceased and were not reinstated were;

**Glenister and MacKenzie with their Parramatta to Central Route 174.**

**G.R. Sinclair and his Route 164 Parramatta to Auburn via Rosehill.**

**N.R.B Barklmore’s Route 153, Greystanes to Merrylands and Granville, which was deemed competitive between Granville and Merrylands, but his route west of Merrylands was considered a feeder service.**

**William Armstrong (Bill) Neely had begun a service from Parramatta to**

Guildford station via Woodville Road, which was truncated to South Granville Public School due to the 1931 Act. Bill Neely had started business c.1930, with a motor service garage at 231 Guildford Road Guildford. In a year or two he was in partnership with W. Hutchins, trading as Hutchins and Neely. Both drove buses in the Granville area. W. Hutchins began operating from Old Guildford to Granville; in 1934 he extended it to Guildford. Mr Hutchins faded from the scene, his bus run passing through the hands of J.H. Moore, Derby & Perry, and into the ownership of G. R. Sinclair.

In 1931, Dave Madill had three buses with a depot at 300 Blaxcell Street. He had joined forces with his brother, William, and they traded as Madill Brothers. Both were Blaxcell Street residents.

G. R. Sinclair bought their business in 1937. Mr Sinclair later extended his Clyde Street route to terminate at Dixmude Street (1935), then as Granville's population grew, to Oakleigh Avenue, South Granville. Sinclair became further established in the area with Routes 209, Granville to Old Guildford via Guildford station (1934), and 210, Granville to Villawood via Excelsior Street and Rawson Road (unknown date).

1934 saw Tom O'Bryan of Arthur Street Rosehill purchase Route 175 from W. Murphy. This operated via Rosehill. In 1937, Tom O'Bryan was able to re-start G.R. Sinclair's former Route 164 Parramatta to Auburn, by operating it to North Auburn. It would be another 30 years before a service would operate from Auburn station to Parramatta.

With the introduction of Child Endowment in the 1930s, bus operators would run extra buses to Parramatta on Endowment Day.

#### The 1940s - the years of the Second World War

In 1943, the Commissioner of Transport stepped in, hiring Departmental buses to Mr. Sinclair to maintain essential services while his buses were overhauled. Despite manpower shortages, the Commissioner went so far as to make two additional mechanics available to him after a Departmental engineer examined the buses and found "mechanically, they were not in the best condition".

At a meeting of Granville Council, Alderman Barrett moved an unsuccessful motion that "The Government be requested to run a double-decker bus service between Granville and Regents Park". Many men and women were working at Regents Park in the vicinity of Babcock and Wilcox Ltd, in Park Road, and the Air Force Stores. The motion was defeated.

The Grand Avenue to George Street steam tram ceased on 31 March 1943. There were insufficient buses available from Granville and Parramatta bus owners to provide a replacement service in the afternoon for factory workers. There was, however, a train service on the Carlingford and Sandown lines.

Documents from the war years provide a glimpse of the fleets of two

**owners:**

**Tom O'Bryan operated with a REO 26 seat, built in 1937, a GMC 27 seat built in 1940, and a REO 27 seat built in 1937. W.A. Neely had a REO 27 seat built in 1927 and a REO 27 seat built in 1937.**

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**[Arthur Naylor is a member of the Executive Committee of the Granville Historical Society]**

**Part 2 of 'Granville's Buses' covering Post-World War II to the 21st Century will be included in next month's Guardian.**