GENERAL REPORT:

One of the first actions of the Society Council this year, after receiving with pleasure the news that the property “HORSLEY” had been purchased with intent to restore it authentically, was the despatch of a letter to the Town Planning Section of the City Council, regarding the preservation of historic sites and buildings in the district, when threatened by private developers, and attaching a full list of buildings, sites and houses in the area, classified as worthy of preservation. Similar letters with lists were subsequently sent to neighbouring Councils.

Were we clairvoyant, we should have seen the timeliness of such action, for ’ere the year depart, this was to become a major issue within the City.

Co-incidentally, at the very next meeting of the Society, a letter from the P. & C. Association of the Wollongong Public School, expressed distress at the present unsafe condition of the tower at the School, and pleading assistance when repair work commenced, to retain authenticity of style. Not feeling qualified to meet that demand, we made certain suggestions for reference, with we trust, a happy result.

Next came the controversial proposal for the “development” of Belmore Basin, resulting in strong action against it from the Society, with deputations, public letters in newspapers, and information from the Minister for Environmental Control, Mr. J. Beale. Gloom still loomed when it seemed that nothing short of a miracle would keep “Bustle Cottage” and “Cormiston” standing. It seems these (the miracles) are not so rare, as both are still extant, and what a wonderful Christmas Present it was to hear that “Cormiston” had been withdrawn from sale.

MUSEUM REPORT:

Once again we are proud to report progress at the Museum, which is steadily becoming an established part of community life.

It is estimated that several thousand people (including School and other groups) passed through, and as evidenced from the Visitor’s Book, from overseas and the four corners of the continent, resulting in continuous “non-stocks” of the souvenir brochure.

In addition to the various artifacts, items (large and small) pictures, furnishings, fixtures, etc., the completion of the Blacksmith’s and Wheelwright shops demonstrate the constant expansion. Still in hand are the Colonial Kitchen and the projected Mining Exhibition Building.

(Articles do get broken and need expert repair — thanks Mr. Brown.)

Community acceptance, and the consequent flow-on therefrom of course, has its commitments, the major one being staffing. In August our Supervisors, Mr. and Mrs. Watters, regretfully resigned for health reasons (although still regulars around the place)!!! Following verbal unsuccessful appeals for a principal Supervisor the urgency was detailed in the Bulletin culminating in response from outside the membership. We have been fortunate in securing the services of Mrs. A. Pezzutto, who is enthusiastically carrying out duty, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday during the Tourist Season, including Public Holidays. Society members regularly staff Wednesday and weekends.

The week by week opening has been possible by the efforts of Mesdames Evans and Howells in roster control, and Joyce McCarthy, who doubles as Museum and excursion booking officer.