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## MORE OF NURSE SEYMOUR

Dr J. Davis

Editor Illawarra Historical Bulletin

Sir

I read with great interest, Ruth's Story in the July / August copy of the Bulletin. Nurse Seymour delivered both myself and my younger sister. I was delivered at Weerona and my younger sister, Eileen, was born at home which was directly opposite Weerona in Keira Street.

I point out that the location of Weerona was Keira Street. The one inaccuracy we detected in the story was being able to lie in bed at night and listen to the sea. We lived at 156 (the Illawarra Mercury now occupies this site) and we can, pretty well, name the families that lived in close proximity to Weerona.

Weerona was on the eastern side of Keira Street at No. 145, the O'Keefe family lived in No. 139, Fred Johnson ran a taxi and hire car business from No. 141, McAndrews lived at No. 143 and Weerona was No. 145 (enclosed a photo of the house). People by the name of Downey lived at No. 147, the Polleys at 149, and at 151, I can picture the house but I cannot put a name to it. In the last two houses before Ellen Street, Connie Quilty lived at 153 and on a double block on the corner of Keira and Ellen streets lived Mr Taylor who was one of the early bakers in Wollongong.

On the western side of Keira Street from Ellen Street back, on the corner was a big old stone house that was something of a mystery to we children (childhood wouldn't be childhood without a mystery house). Next door in No. 164 lived the Bain family. Jim Bain ran a trucking company from this house with about four trucks. No. 162 housed the Tougher family, the Deegan family lived in 160. (Joyce Deegan married Greg Knipe who used to own the Harp Hotel) people by the name of Hindley lived in No. 158 and the man in the car in the photo was Mrs Hindley's brother, his name was Percy Gray and he liked to do up old cars. The Murphy family lived in No. 156. Next door in 154 lived the Jones family who also had 152 which Mr Jones maintained as a whole garden block. In No. 150, which was directly opposite the O'Keefe's house, lived the three Miss Parkinsons. They were sisters of Vince Parkinson who ran Parkinson's cordials.

Our home was a big old house, badly in need of a coat of paint, with a partially closed-in side verandah. My older brother and myself both slept on this verandah so we had some experience of lying in bed and listening to the sounds in the area, and we never heard the sea from Keira Street. I do not think that you could safely sleep on a partially closed-in

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verandah in Wollongong today. This is perhaps a sign of the times. As children we used to play cricket and hit tennis balls in the middle of the road (Keira Street) and only move to the side of the road for the occasional car. Keira street was not sealed in those days.

Our father, Dave Murphy, was a men's hairdresser in Wollongong for many years and he operated a barber shop at the back of Mullen's menswear. The shop was frequented by people like Sid Thorne, Arthur Byron, Snowey Morgan and Bob Barbee who were all old identities of Wollongong and they used to come into the barbershop to just sit and talk and argue about who's watch had the correct time. Our father died at Easter time in 1969.

All of the houses mentioned above are now gone of course and, sadly, where Weerona once stood there is now a parking lot for the commercial vehicles in the area.

T.C. Murphy  
93 New Mt Pleasant Road  
Mt Pleasant 2519