ROYAL AUSTRALIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY VISITS ILLAWARRA

On Saturday, April 3rd, 157 members and friends of the Royal Australian Historical Society made an excursion to Illawarra. The party was led by Dr. George Mackaness and Mr. C. Price Conigrave, President and General Secretary, respectively.
The excursionists were met at Wollongong Railway Station at 11.40 a.m. by a number of the members of our Society who acted as guides. Our visitors embarked in special buses and travelled via Crown Street, Port Kembla, Shellharbour and the Prince's Highway to the Kiama Showground, where lunch was partaken. Arrangements for the supply of hot water, milk and shelter facilities were kindly made by the Kiama Municipal Council, to the officers of which we offer our grateful appreciation.

The excursion then proceeded to the Bass Memorial at the Blowhole, where a welcome to the municipality was extended by the Mayor, Alderman Holden, and Town Clerk, Mr. Lyons. Our President, Mr. Worland, also greeted the visitors on behalf of the Society. These greetings were acknowledged by Dr. Mackaness. A very fine address was then delivered by James Jervis, Esq., F.R.A.H.S., detailing the early history of Kiama and district.

The homeward route was via Jamberoo, Albion Park and Prince's Highway. Wollongong Station was reached at 4.30 p.m. for afternoon tea, and here we thank our friend Mr. Collins for the arrangements he so courteously made and the manner in which his staff looked after our guests, prior to their departure for Sydney by the 5.10 p.m. train.

The following dates were extracted from the talk by Mr. Jervis, noted above:

1826 Land reserved for township—not surveyed until October, 1838.
1837 John Gowen, a “First Fleeter,” died April 28th, and buried in Anglican Cemetery.
1837 “The Gum Tree” Inn, David Smith, proprietor, licensed June, 20th; site now occupied by Railway Goods Yard.
1840 105 acres of land sold in township for £18,000, with prices as high as £800 per acre.
1841 January 1st, George Hindmarsh appointed first postmaster, Present post office completed 1879.
1841 “Tamar,” first steamer to visit port, July 27th.
1843 First Anglican Church erected—present building foundation stone laid, June 17th.
1848 First agricultural show, December 5th—Kiama Agricultural and Horticultural Society formed, December, 1856.
1850 First Court House erected—present building opened 17th January, 1861, and District Court held 21st.
1853 February, Kiama Steam Navigation Co. formed with capital of £35,000.
1858 “Kiama Examiner,” first newspaper established. “Kiama Independent” founded April, 1863, by Joseph Weston and carried on to date by descendants.
1859 English, Scottish & Australian Bank opened a branch. Municipality proclaimed August 11th.
1861 April—National School opened on site of former Illawarra House Academy (founded late “fifties”). September—construction of harbour commenced—opened Sept. 20th, 1876 and named Robertson Basin.
1862 Telegraph Line from Wollongong completed, October.
1870 October—beginning of stone trade—first shipment March, 1871.
1883 Municipality lit with gas.
1886 Foundation stone of hospital laid, September 22nd.
1887 Lighthouse lit January 1st.
1891 Population 2,300.