NOVEMBER MEETING:
The following are summaries of the papers by Mr. A. P. Fleming, President:

"THE ILLAWARRA TOLL BARS"

and Mr. W. V. Minton, Hon. Curator Librarian:

"STUART PARK AND FAIRY CREEK".

THE ILLAWARRA TOLL BARS

There were two toll bars in Illawarra — at Kiama and Russell Vale.

A toll bar was erected on the Jamberoo Road, about one mile from Kiama in 1844. Not very much is known about it, but the first toll keeper was one John Bele, who tendered £53 per annum for the right to collect tolls and keep the road in repair.

The site is marked today by a sandstone slab on the right-hand side of the hill going down to Jamberoo, and about 50 yards South of Spring Creek.

The slab carries a marble plaque which is inscribed "Toll Bar 1844-1849", the plaque being the work of Richard Townend of Kiama. The inspiration for the erection of the plaque was that of Miss Mary Weston, aunt of Mr. Bert Weston of the "Kiama Independent". Miss Weston suggested a public subscription of 1/- per person to mark the site and the marker was unveiled on Tuesday, 24th November, 1931.

The memorial was dedicated by the Mayor of Kiama (Ald. J. Price) and also among those present were the Mayor of Jamberoo (Ald. D. Weir). Ald. C. W. Craig of the Jamberoo Council and Miss E. Weston who deputized for her sister Miss M. Weston who was abroad.

Ald. Craig remarked that as a small boy he had seen his father pay toll. Assuming Ald. Craig was 5 years of age in 1849, he would then be 85 — I understand he was over 90 when he died.

THE NORTH ILLAWARRA TOLL BAR

The Municipal District of North Illawarra was proclaimed on 26/10/1868 and following a public meeting of Ratepayers in 1870 the Council obtained Government approval to collect tolls for the maintenance of the Main Road.

The Government Gazette of 16/1/1871 gave the by-laws for regulating the toll. Tolls varied from 4d for every sheen, lamb, pig or goat to 9d for every vehicle drawn by one horse or other animal, plus 3d for every other horse or animal.

Exemption included the Governor and his attendants, soldiers and police in uniform, vehicles belonging to the Government and Council and on official business, people going to and from church and funerals. Penalties ranging from 5/- to £5 were provided for any person endeavouring to avoid the toll.

The toll house was erected on the mountain side of the road at the northern end of the municipality, i.e. where the South Bulli Colliery tramway now crosses the Prince's Highway at Russell Vale.

The first Toll Collector was James T. Buksell who was paid a salary (unknown) but later on the right to collect tolls was sold by tender.
A news item of 24/3/1874 in the “Illawarra Mercury” said Auctioneer C. F. Smith had sold the lease to Henry Parsons of Fairy Meadow for one year for £135.

Another news item of 27/2/1880 commented that the South Coast Main Road from Campbelltown to Nowra would be maintained by the Government.

The Council minutes of 4/3/1881 included a motion that the lessee be instructed to quit the Toll House on Monday 4/4/1881 and the Works Committee be authorized to have the house and other fixtures pulled down and all material sold by auction.

The last tollkeeper was Francis Cheney and his lease expired on 4/4/1881 when the road was taken over by the Public Works Department representing the Government.

The toll house was duly sold by the firm of Osborne and Co. and the “Illawarra Mercury” gleefully recorded “the toll bar keeper’s lease having expired yesterday, the road to the North is now free”.

The above is only a digest as Mr. Fleming has a number of contradictions and deficiencies to resolve.