The following letter has been forwarded to the Town Clerk on behalf of the Society.

Dear Sir,

At the November meeting of the Council of the Illawarra Historical Society much concern was expressed about the implications of a proposed development on the corner of Cliff Road and Harbour Street Wollongong.

Inspection of the plans reveals that this “Motel” will rise six storeys above ground level, whereas your Council’s own zoning quite sensibly provides a three-storey height limit in this area.

It also appears the plans involve destruction of the last remnant of the Mount Keira mine railway, the old bridge at the rear of the present kiosk; and that in addition part of Osborne Park will be alienated for a new kiosk.

As the harbour was the cradle of European settlement in Wollongong, we feel that more tourist advantage would be gained by retaining and preserving what remains of its original character, rather than allowing it to become another high-rise jungle similar to the Gold Coast.

The Society, on behalf of its members, wishes to protest about such a development being allowed in this historically and environmentally sensitive portion of Wollongong. We protest at the proposed destruction of parkland; the infringement of the Council’s own town plan; the breaches of traffic regulations the exit from this building would entail; and on the impact which the proposed high-rise development would have on this historic precinct, on the lifestyle of local residents and on children from the nearby school.

We therefore urge the Council to reject this proposal in its present form. The Council at the very least should preserve Osborne Park intact, keep any development within the height limits imposed by its own town plan, and insist on a design in sympathy with the historic nature of the area.

Yours faithfully,

Frank Osborne
Senior Vice-President/
Acting President

LADY JANE MAKES HER DEBUT

At the December meeting Michael Organ will have the Illawarra Diary of Lady Jane Franklin (10-17 May 1839) on sale at $8.00 per copy. Only 100 copies have been printed.

Lady Jane was the wife of Sir John Franklin, Governor of Van Diemen’s Land (now Tasmania) and later one of the most famous and unfortunate of Arctic explorers. She herself was the first woman to travel overland from Melbourne to Sydney. During this journey she spent a week in Illawarra, and this is the period covered by the diary.