

MAY MEETING: Thursday May 2nd, 1996 at 7.30. p.m.

VENUE: 21 Stewart Street, Wollongong

SPEAKER: Mr. John Shipp, Past President of the Society

SUBJECT: Charles Throsby-Smith (1798 - 1876) and his life in Illawarra

In 1823, Charles Throsby Smith and his wife, Sarah, moved from Appin to Wollongong to take up a land grant of three hundred acres. Their property, Bustle Farm, covered the area now bounded by Crown St, Cliff Road, Stuart Park and the railway line. At that time, the land was covered with thick scrub and their home was a bark-roofed cottage near the corner of Smith and Harbour Streets. Over the next fifty-three years, Charles Throsby Smith took every opportunity to foster the development of Wollongong which he would have preferred named Bustletown. Although there were few civic activities in which he was not involved and he tried his hand at many commercial ventures, he was not overly wealthy when he died.

Today, he is barely remembered but his contribution to the fledgling town was both beneficial and restrictive. Without his sponsorship, the town would have been established at Port Kembla. While he sold some of his land for residential and business development, the bulk of his estate remained undivided until 1879. This blocked the growth of the town to the north and the Garden Hill estate limited expansion to the west until 1884.