REPORT ON NOVEMBER MEETING

Osbornes in Early Illawarra

We are indebted to Frank for the insights into our early days that his address revealed. There was a Royal naval Surgeon, Dr Alick Osborne, born in 1793 in County Tyrone, Ireland, who made frequent voyages to the colony as a surgeon on Convict ships. Why Illawarra appealed to the Doctor remains unknown but his two brothers became prominent free settlers in the district - settling at Dapto (Dr Alick Osborne), Marshall Mount (Henry Osborne) and Mangerton and Garden Hill (Dr John Osborne also a superintendent surgeon on convict ships).

Frank did not concentrate on these men but focussed his attention on his own ancestor, Robert Osborne, his great grandfather, who responded to Dr Alick’s call on behalf of Governor Bourke to encourage mechanics (skilled workers) to leave their native land and settle in the colony. Robert arrived here in 1837, as a married man in his late twenties. He came with his brother, James Osborne (then about 20 and also married).

By no means were they the only Osbornes to arrive in the late 1830s. The ships on which Osbornes served as superintendent surgeons brought a number of other relatives bearing that name.

Robert and his cousin James were, for a brief period, business partners in building. It was the late 1830s and early 1840s. It has already been covered in our talks that the town of Wollongong was gazetted. Government land sales (Crown Street and to the south) were occurring and Charles Throsby Smith was involved in land subdivision of his own. Business activity was on the increase, as were public works - roads and harbour construction. The Osborne’s got caught up in it. The boom was followed by a bust. So it was that the Osbornes struck financial trouble. Whether it was caused by the untimely death of cousin James is not known.

There are joys and tragedies in the lives of the Osbornes.

Robert died in 1859, aged 51. He had chosen to be multi-skilled by the time of his deaths, with interests in “building”, “undertaking” and “hotel keeping” and land ownership. He owned the Commercial Hotel in Crown Street and the Freemasons Hotel in Market Square which remained in the family after his death.
The text of Frank’s address is available and we are open to suggestions as to its publication in some form, together with others made during the year.

A special thanks to Frank Osborne for the effort he put into this address.

Peter Daly

**VALE JOHN (JACK) RANDOPH MAYNES**

(5/12/1909 - 22/10/1996)

The Society extends its sympathy to family and friends - particularly Harry and Janis, Derek and Jacqueline.

Illawarra has lost a well known identity.

Starting life at Charcoal Creek (Unanderra) he developed a love for Illawarra that was obvious to all.

He saw Unanderra change from a farming community to a thriving garden, residential and industrial estate. He was there at the Primary School as an honoured guest when it celebrated its centenary.

Jack’s business interests included the Dairy Industry for which he had a special love and this continued until his death.

Jack’s interest in people was the external manifestation of his love for his fellowman. He had the ability to relate to young and old alike. St Matthew’s and St Mark’s at West Wollongong were the recipients of his benevolent nature as was any other organization he belonged to.

He was a pillar of the Illawarra Historical Society and a member fro 26 years. He served as Vice President, then President and was a curator on and off a long time. He loved the Museum and was Publications Officer for many years. Our bus trips would not have been the same if he had not attended with his wife Isabel. Jack was also on the committee for some 20 years. He was also the Society’s representative on the Heritage Committee and was a guest speaker for both our Society and for many other organizations.