Three Sydney Members in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. C. Law and Miss Barwick, joined us and it was indeed good to meet them again.

The homeward journey was via National Park where a pleasant break was made for afternoon tea. — N. S. King.

NOVEMBER MEETING:

There was an attendance of 32 members at the November Meeting when Senior Vice-President Mr. N. S. King read his researches into the activities of Cornelius O’Brien a young Irishman who emigrated to Australia in 1814-15 at the age of 16 and joined his uncle, Charles Browne, who had settled in the Appin District some years earlier. After five years at Appin, during which time he had accumulated cattle and money sufficient to entitle him to a grant of land, he applied for and was granted 300 acres in the Bulli area the grant being dated March 31st, 1821. About this time, he discovered a track from Appin to the Illawarra at the back of Mt. Keira through what was known as O’Brien’s Gap, coming out at Fig Tree. O’Brien’s Road over Mount Nebo is still in existence, but beyond that has fallen into disuse.

He married and built the first house in Bulli, known as the “Sentinel of the North”, was made the first J.P. of the district and eventually a Magistrate. Highly enterprising and energetic, he cultivated and improved his property, sought other areas for grazing his cattle, took part in any project for the improvement of the area and settlers, especially petitioning the Governor for road improvement, built schooners and started a whaling station.

After twenty years in Bulli, he sold his property and joined his brother at Yass, where he, at first, entered into grazing activities, but falling into disagreement with his brother, acted as a Magistrate on the Bench at Yass and later at Binalong, for a period of 30 years. At times he was harsh in his dealings with law-breakers, especially men assigned to Landholders. He died on July 4th, 1869, and was buried in the Catholic Cemetery at Yass.

Slides shown of the area, revealed that nearly one third of the land granted to O’Brien, is still open space. The old rifle range and the park at Bulli and the schools and grounds being part.

Mr. King is again to be commended for his work and we look forward to the publication of his researches in 1965.

NOTES FROM “THE ILLAWARRA MERCURY”, 1862 (compiled by W. A. BAYLEY, F.R.A.H.S.):

3/1/62—Bellambi: Footraces on New Year’s Day and cricket match.

21/1/62—Bulli: Wesleyans met at residence George Somerville senior past 4 or 5 years — population and growth Wesleyan cause rendered house too small. Large building formerly barn and granary converted by house carpenters with doors, windows to temporary chapel — adjoining William Somerville’s Mount Hanks (now site of Bulli Hospital W.A.B., 1961).

31/1/62—Bulli: Tea meeting at 3 p.m., Monday, January 27 — largest assembly persons ever known at Bulli — many rode from Wollongong to mark opening temporary Wesleyan Chapel. Tables arranged in Chapel — 72 inside, 50 in tent at rear — 70 to 80 waited for second sitting. Followed by public meeting under trees. Wollongong chapel choir sang. First tea party ever held at Bulli.

60 to 70 also witnessed launching boat built by Hill and Higgs of Bulli in Holden’s Creek.

Chinese collect, boil, salt and pack in barrels mutton fish for Sydney thence China.

22/4/62—Bellambi: “Caroline” left with 300 tons coal for Ballarat railway. Bellambi coal found superior to Newcastle coal.

30/5/62—Bellambi and Bulli School of Arts: Mackenzie of Woonona gave 4 acre block fronting Bulli Road. Subscriptions to be sought to match £100 voted by Legislative Assembly for new building.

17/6/62—Bellambi: Public meeting 150 resolve petition for breakwater.

W. G. McDONALD, MISS P. de JERSEY, A. P. FLEMING, President, Hon. Secretary, Hon. Editor.

Yates Avenue, 17 Corrimal Street, 2-4142.

Mount Keira. Wollongong.

2-6161.