**SPRINGWOOD VISIT**

Members of the Springwood historical society will be visiting the Illawarra on Saturday, 21 October, 1989. A welcoming party is required to staff the museum and to mingle and talk with the visitors and to accompany the bus travellers on their tour of central and southern Wollongong.

**BACK TO BULLI WEEKEND**

Volunteers are needed to staff the IHS stand at the Back to Bulli Celebrations on the September 23 and 24. This would merely involve selling thousands of IHS publications to the milling crowds at the exhibitions. It's a great way to meet interesting people and sell books to them. The venue is out of the weather in one of Bulli’s most delightful historic buildings and I can assure the experience would be nothing like a wet Sunday afternoon at the IHS Museum.

**OLD PIONEER’S REMINISCENCES OF ILLAWARRA**

Society vice-president, Michael Organ, and Councillor, Peter Doyle, have republished this extraordinary work in updated form. Many have previously written off these anonymous reminiscences as unreliable, despite their obvious popular and historical interest. Under Michael’s and Peter’s careful and gentle editing, these reminiscences now stand as a unique and invaluable sourcebook for the history of nineteenth century Illawarra. The reminiscences are available from the IHS Museum or direct from Michael Organ at 26 Popes Road, Woonona. 2517. The cost is a very reasonable $12.00 for a large (176 page) book with excellent index.

**ABORIGINES IN THE ILLAWARRA EXHIBITION: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

This exhibition will be officially opened by Peter Cullen, editor of the Illawarra Mercury, at 11.30 a.m. on Sunday, September 10. All members are invited.

**THE TRIAL OF SETH HAWKER**

The following report concerning the trial of Seth Hawker, regarding the shooting of an aboriginal woman at Illawarra, appeared in the Sydney Gazette of 14 June 1822.

"Criminal Court. - Monday - Seth Hawker was indicted for the wilful murder of a black native woman, at Illawarra, or the Five Islands, on the 15th April last.

The principal features attending this case are as follow:- The prisoner was an overseer upon an estate at Illawarra, belonging to Captain Brooks (the Magistrate that had committed the prisoner to take his trial for the offence with which he now stood charged before the Court); and, upon the night of the 15th, was alarmed by the violent barking of the dogs upon the farm.

The prisoner was induced to arise, and in company with others proceeded, without hesitation, in the direction to which the watchful animals conducted them. The prisoner was lost sight of for a few moments by his companions, in which interim the discharge of the muzzle was heard, which he had seized in the house upon the first alarm. When he returned, the prisoner said he thought he had shot something or somebody. He was desired to return to the dwelling with his companions, and reload the piece; and again went in pursuit, the dogs continuing to bark. The prisoner, with another man, proceeded through a cornfield, which was enclosed, and just as they had quited it, on the off side, a figure was beheld in the act of endeavouring to effect its flight. The prisoner fired and the poor object fell, which (to be brief) turned out to be an unfortunate black native woman. The poor thing, it is supposed, was shot dead, as the body was found next morning much mangled by the dogs. Two nets, such as the natives carry their food in, were found containing shelled maize, one of which was full and held about
a peck.

The prisoner was properly advised, by a brother overseer in the same concern, to hasten to the district constable with all speed, and inform him of the unhappy circumstance, so that the nearest Magistrate might become acquainted with the fact, and proceed accordingly. It was proved by the constable that the prisoner followed the directions given him, and hence became committed.

From the whole of the evidence on the part of the prosecution it was easily observable, that no murderous intention had existed in the mind of the prisoner; nor did any circumstance transpire, during the arduous examination of the witnesses by His Honor the Judge Advocate, to enfix even the most remote degree of manslaughter upon the prisoner.

As was the case in former times, and many years since well to be remembered in consequence of the decisive measures that were resorted to by the Government for the protection of the settler, and his family, the natives are excessively troublesome and annoying in the neighbourhood of the Five Islands, during the corn season. This last season they had been remarkable active in committing depredations; in the space of one night 100 or two of them would take the liberty of clearing a field of every cob and thus ruin the hopes of a poor hard-working man's family. This species of bitter robbery had been oft repeated, and the natives became worse daily, purloining everything that came in their way.

One man, in the name of Graham, who had a wife and a large family, was near being killed in the act of pursuing those sable robbers. One night a party had stripped his field of its produce; and in the morning himself, and eldest son, went in pursuit. They fell in with five of the natives, who had two nets full of the preceding night's spoil. He required them to surrender the corn, when they made off. Graham then fired at the legs of the natives who had the net; when one of them, armed with a bundle of spears, was preparing to throw at Graham, who lost no time in making up to him, and with the butt end of his musket broke all the spears, which would have been immediately discharged at him, had not one of the other natives, who had flown, taken the wammara with him; to which circumstance Graham and his son, may doubtless owe their lives. The native then took from his girdle a tomahawk, with which he endeavoured to cleave the head of Graham, when the latter, at the same instant, seized from the hand of his son a sword, with which he cut off the hand of the native that held the tomahawk, when the black immediately made off, with the loss of his limb.

This circumstance came out, among others, upon the trial, which showed that the prisoner was only endeavouring to protect that property that was confided to his care, though it was to be lamented that a life in such a case had been untimely destroyed.

His Honor the Judge Advocate wished it to be properly and lastingly pressed upon the minds of all, that the aboriginal natives have as much right to expect justice at the hands of the British Law, as Europeans; and that such ever would be the case; in this instance it was exemplified.

The prisoner was acquitted; but previous to being liberated from custody, received that pathetic and energetic admonition, which, it is to be anxiously hoped, will ever remain endelibly and profitably stamped upon his conscience."

RE-INVENTING THE WHEEL

In the August Bulletin I pointed out that there was no evidence whatsoever that Professor Thomas Henry Huxley ever visited the Illawarra. This was hardly news to careful, long-time readers of the IHS Bulletin. In the May, 1973 Bulletin Edgar Beale, in an article entitled "H. Huxley and Illawarra - A note upon a Non-event", came to exactly the same conclusion.