THE MUSEUM AND ITS GOALS WORKSHOP
To be conducted by Mr. John Shipp, Sunday 27th May at the Society’s Museum, 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. Contact Anabel Lloyd for further details.

"BOYS OF THE DARDANELLES"

The approaching 75th anniversary of the Gallipoli landing brings back to me schoolboy memories of the song composed by Marsh Little which in 1915 swept Australia.

"Old England needs the men she breeds when fighting’s to be done
Australians heard and were prepared to help her every one
From out the bay they sailed away, our pride Australia’s own
And now today they’re far away, some in the great Unknown.

Chorus
"Boys of the Dardanelles, they faced the shot and shells
Down in history their names will go
Our children’s children their daring deeds will know
Australia’s sons in khaki and in blue
They showed the world what they could do
How they fought and fell the daily cables tell
Boys of the Dardanelles”.

Later in 1915 a number of soldiers who had returned wounded from Gallipoli formed a concert party known as the "Gallipoli Strollers" which toured country districts raising funds for the war effort. In each place visited they were accommodated for the night by local residents and those allotted to our household were Marsh Little, Harley Cohen of the Postal Dept., and Bert Earl at one time pianist for Madame Melba.

So that was part of Albion Park’s contribution to WW1.

Bert E. Weston

ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE COMMITTEE 1989

The variety of issues that concerns the Committee continues to increase yearly. Heritage in the traditional sense of relating to “old buildings” forms only a part of the Committees involvement in heritage matters.

The field of heritage conservation in Illawarra encompasses an extremely diverse range of topics from protection and management of natural landscapes to preservation and recording of historic sites through to sympathetic development of heritage townscape.

An increasingly important role of the Committee is the development of environmental education and community awareness of local heritage items.

During the past year the Committee ran a weekly heritage programme on local ABC radio. Each programme dealt with a specific topic. The range of subject matter covered reflects the wide diversity of heritage within Illawarra.

In April, Illawarra’s Heritage Week programme again proved to be a great success. This week of events is co-ordinated by the Heritage Committee with funding assistance from the National Trust and Caltex. An important feature of Heritage Week is the promotion of many of the region’s heritage organisation. The Illawarra
Historical Society featured strongly in this period with exhibitions on the industrial heritage of the region.

In the Wollongong area the Committee has been working in close co-operation with a heritage study team of consultants. This group, funded by the City Council and by a grant obtained by the Committee from the Heritage Council is undertaking a detailed inventory and description of all major heritage components of the Wollongong built environment. This survey includes the commercial, rural and residential areas of the city. The report will be finalised mid 1990.

The retention and restoration of the Bulli Railway Station (1887) was a significant project in northern Illawarra. The issue required gaining the support of the State Rail Authority which traditionally did not encourage the retention of such railway structures. The station now restored forms a valuable part of the Bulli landscape.

In the Shellharbour district the committee has been involved in the ongoing revitalisation of Shellharbour township. This project involves the restoration of key heritage buildings through the enhancement of surrounding buildings through the use of appropriate colour schemes, signage, and facade decoration.

Within the Kiama area the development of a list of buildings for inclusion and protection in the Local Environment Plan has been an important task for the committee. The list prepared in co-operation with the local Nation Trust and Historical Society identified significant heritage precincts within each of the Kiama township i.e. groups or street blocks of heritage buildings, as well as important historical sites, natural landscapes, and prominent and significant trees.

Steve Dillon

AUCTION OF MENZIES PAPERS

On 24 March an auction was held at Jamberoo Municipal Hall in which a number of historically significant letters, documents, books, etc., associated with the Menzies - Tindell - Thompson families of Jamberoo were offered for sale. Some of the letters dated from 1822 and much of the material was related to Dr. Robert and Margaret Menzies who arrived in Illawarra in 1839 and built Minamurra House between 1840-43.

Such an important collection of papers ideally should have been presented to the National or Mitchell Library. Unfortunately they were offered for sale and the collection is now dispersed throughout the state. Many major items were brought by a Sydney collector with no ties to the family or Illawarra.

The IHS and Wollongong Universtiy Archives were represented at the auction, however the prices realised - with the total collection selling for about $2000 and individual letters going for up to $350 - meant that we were unsuccessful in our attempt to secure the material and keep it in Illawarra.

Luckily some of the successful purchasers, such as Elsie Stewart and Nicholas Dettman (former, and current owner of Minamurra House) hope to eventually donate their material to the National Library, and others have agreed to supply copies to the IHS.

However the point remains that, like the destruction of an old building, the dispersal of such a significant collection of papers is to be deeply regretted. A monetary value should never be placed on such material for, being unique, it is irreplaceable and therefore priceless.