AUCTION OF OLD PUBLIC SCHOOL SITE, 1889

Recently, while searching through microfilm of the Illawarra Mercury, I came across this advertisement in the issue dated 18th July, 1889, advertising these “central building lots in the town of Wollongong.”

As the old microfilm does not print as clearly as one would like, I will repeat parts of the advertisement:

“TERMS: 25 per cent. cash deposit, 25 per cent. at six months, 25 per cent. at 12 months, and 25 per cent. at 18 months, respectively, with 6 per cent. interest added.”

“Lots 8 to 13 having frontages of 20 feet each to Crown street.

Lots 14 to 17 each having frontages of 33 feet to Kembla street.

Lot 18 — Corner Lot, 67 feet to Kembla Street, by 49ft. 6 in. to Barrella street.

Lot 19 — 49ft. 6in. to Barrella-street.

Lots 20 to 23 — each 33 feet to Barrella-street, with road at rear 20 feet.

Lot 24 — 29 feet frontage to Barrella-street.

“The Auctioneer reminds purchasers that the above Building Lots, in the centre and most improving parts of the town, are admirably suited for erection of first-class stores or Business Premises, Dwellings or Sites for Factories or Workshops. There are no better positions for commercial pursuits in any parts of Wollongong, while the liberal terms of
sale favor (sic) the acquisition of these splendid allotments by people of humble means.

“N.B. — On payment of the deposit, purchasers are at liberty to go into possession, and immediately commence building.”

Readers will no doubt notice that lots 14 to 24 now house the Art Gallery and a large portion of the area known as the Civic Plaza. In response to one of the Councillors calling the Civic Plaza a glorified car-park, the Wollongong City Council is working on an application for funding from the Australia Council’s Cultural Development Fund, such funds to be used to re-design the Plaza. It was in this context that the advertisement caught my eye.

Frank Osborne

The Illawarra Volunteers 1914-1918.

As the basis for a study of the impact of World War 1 in the Illawarra 1 am currently compiling a database which will hopefully describe every individual man and woman who volunteered for service between 1914 and 1918. For inclusion an individual should have an identifiable link to the Illawarra region which satisfies one or more of the following criteria:

1. Lived in the region at the time of their enlistment.
2. From a family resident in this region, but living out of the region for work purposes, eg a young unmarried school teacher posted to another area but having no other ties to that area.
3. Listed on a war memorial in the Illawarra region. The geographical definition of the Illawarra region for the purposes of this study being all localities from Gerringong to Helensburgh inclusive, and west to the escarpment.

Currently almost 2000 volunteers have been identified with the final total expected to be approximately 2200. This estimate is based on the frequency of previously unidentified individuals found in embarkation rolls. These are usually men who worked in the area but did not have family here, and men whose names do not appear on local memorials for various reasons.