

At the Balmoral temple the faithful could have their names inscribed on benches, according to subscription, the rule was the greater the subscription the lower the inscription. Aunt Gertrude had hers on the second or third last bench and I was told that this cost a few thousand pounds. I am sure she gladly paid, and she was well able to afford it, and I do not doubt that there was no pressure of any sort at all. Of course, Uncle Cecil was dead by then. The mere idea of his paying out all that silver for a front seat for the Resurrection stretches the imagination. The theosophists faded out and the temple was left deserted.

Then a vaudeville company took it over. This was wonderful. Imagine a pleasant summer evening, with bright stars punctuating the dark sky overhead, a soft evening breeze blowing lazily around and the occasional harbour noise rising and then subsiding, and as you sat on a cool stone seat a crude but amusing comedy being played before you. Shades of Aristophanes! Unfortunately, this did not last long.

Henry Storey

By the 1920s beachwear was cooler but men were still seen on the sand wearing felt hats and braces and older ladies rarely took off more than their shoes and stockings. Smart swimmers wore costumes with cut-outs or, daringly, very low backs. Ultraviolet was never mentioned, let alone feared, and children and teenagers grilled themselves black.

The boat in the picture presumably belongs to the Balmoral lifesavers – sixpence an hour will help the Club funds.

In 1923 Mosman residents began to murmur about a building being erected at Edwards Beach. At first there were merely grumbles about eyesores spoiling the scenery, but as the work progressed strange rumours began. It was being built by the Theosophists; it was going to be a Greek temple; people were paying £100 for a seat with their name on it; it was for the Second Coming, said to be imminent. When the new Messiah arrived he would walk through the Heads on the water. Members of the Star in the East were building an amphitheatre. It was to be dedicated to the furthering of universal brotherhood, knowledge and the arts but its most important function was as the setting for the first public appearance of the Great Teacher, a young Brahmin named Krishnamurti who had been chosen years before and trained for the role. The members believed implicitly in his divine mission. He was now to reveal his message to the world.

Despite the cynical, amused, disapproving comments of Mosman residents the amphitheatre was completed in little over a year. The Great Teacher arrived. He did not walk through the Heads and though he addressed his followers he came only once to the amphitheatre. After he left Australia brave attempts were made there to further the arts; drama, Greek dancing, lectures were presented but the public did not respond. Members of the Order became disappointed, lost interest, drifted away. The building was in debt and was put up for sale. Krishnamurti, a rather reluctant messiah, dissociated himself from the Star in the East and in 1929 the Order was disbanded.

The amphitheatre survived as an open-air music-hall. Sopranos and funny-men performed where the Great Teacher was to have expounded his message. Deck-chairs were supplied in front and people brought cushions and rugs for the £100 seats. The rugs and the darkness up in the back rows were appreciated by the young. At first the concerts were popular; on hot summer nights the stars and moonlight were ravishing, but business declined and eventually the amphitheatre was sold, and in 1951 pulled down.



With the continuing increase in population Harnett saw the need for a Community Hall. It was erected on the "Great Military Road" in 1880, next to the present Post Office. It was an all purpose hall, the only meeting place for the growing number of organisations, our first public school in 1880 (in the name of "Mossman's Bay" Public School). It was a church and a drill hall for the Volunteer Regiment, a dance hall and was used by "the Sisters of Mercy from North Sydney who came daily in a waggonette to conduct a mixed kindergarten school".

Its most important role came later, as Council Chamber for the first Mosman Municipal Council, elected in 1893.

PUBLIC SCHOOL HALL, ON FRIDAY EVENING,

OBJECT: To protest against the ROAD, and to assert the PUBLIC of the said Road from "The Ra Bay, via the Wine Shop, and kno

ATTEND AND PROTE

MEETING MOSSMAN'S BAY, MAY 2, AT EIGHT P.M.

Obstructions placed upon AVENUE RIGHT to free and unrestricted use ngers" to the waters of Mossman wn as the OLD AVENUE ROAD.

GT YOUR INTERESTS.

During the ferry war, Harnett's own hall was the venue for several meetings of protest against him blocking off access to his opposition's ferry.



Harnett's Hall served as a community meeting place.

modern miracle—the telephone—came to Mos-
 the 90's, and the first telephone exchange was set
 e disused office of P. Leahy, Estate Agent, at the
 e present Post Office. In 1898 the number of sub-
 had risen to 55 and a well-remembered number
 that of Dr Doak. Number 11 would call the other
 dico, Dr Arthur, but he was often attending to the
 of the locals in another field—that of Parliamanta-

From Jack Carroll Records.

*First meeting of the newly formed Mosman Council
 was decided:*

*labourers employed should work 48 hours per
 the rate of 10½ pence per hour."*

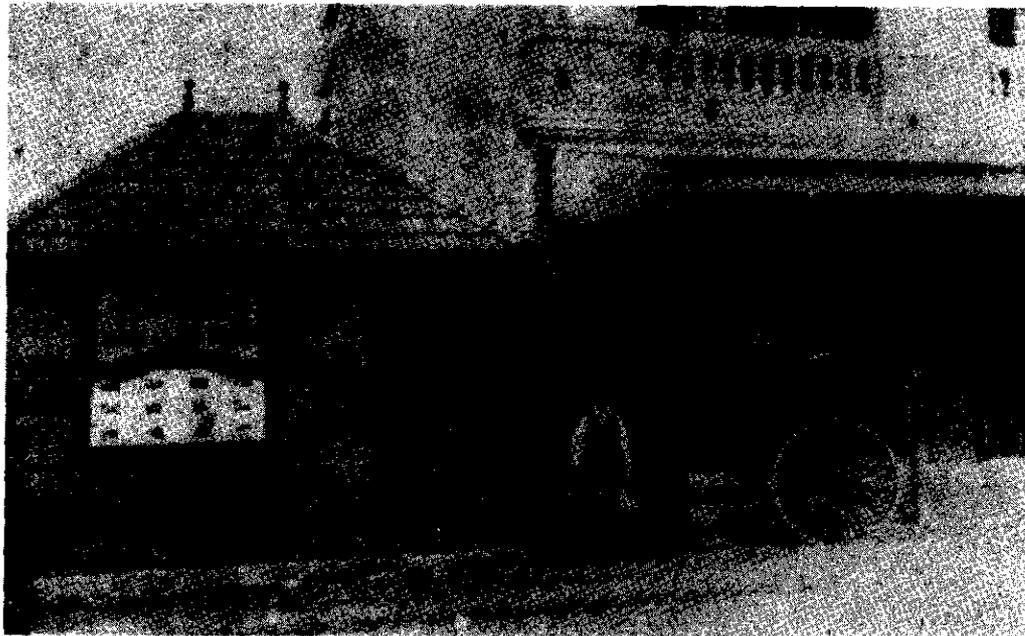
From The Harnett Papers.

Early Mosman Council Business: 1893-94.

*"The suggestion to build a crematorium was deferred. The
 motion to erect a water tap at Spit Junction on account of
 many ratepayers being entirely without water for domestic
 use, was carried.*

*Erection of Balmoral Baths was approved and the 'stump-
 ing' of Bardwell Road was given to E. M. Bailey if he takes
 it at £3."*

The office that became
 telephone exchange.



The old exchange still stands
 behind a Mosman shop.

Photo: by the author.

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*Mr J. J.
 Cyprian*