

This record is an entry  
to the 2021 Ron Rathbone  
Local History Competition

**An Archival Record  
of  
Lydham Hall 1995-1999**

Anne Field



Lydham Hall, Lydham Avenue, 2004  
Bayside Council online Catalogue, NSW

September 2021

## INTRODUCTION

This report on Lydham Hall, which details the period 1995-1999, has been written as a historical record for future Committees. It details what happened during my time as both a Committee member, and later, the Chair of the Lydham Hall Management Committee.

I have divided my report into various parts. The first part of the report explains Miss Otton's role and the new management role, that was introduced from 1995 onwards. The Council guidelines for the operation of the Committee have been included in the Appendix.

I have detailed the visits to Lydham Hall from the variety of heritage, museum and textile specialists, some of whom completed a report on some aspect of the house or the garden.

Special days such as Christina Stead Day, and the Anniversary of St George Historical Society are held annually. Over the period 1995-1999, there were many visitors from schools and the community to Lydham Hall.

Publications such as heritage drives and walks, Lydham Hall brochures and booklets have been launched during the 1995-1999 time period.

Lydham Hall holds a unique textile collection. Special conservation needs to be completed on these garments, along with their appropriate storage.

The silk patchwork quilt, which has 9000 pieces, must be registered on the National Quilt Register. The employment of a part-time curator was recommended by Ian Bowie in his 1997 Report, and has not as yet been acted upon. The work of the Lydham Hall Management Committee must be ongoing.

I would like to conclude, by paying tribute to the valuable volunteer work and contribution to the history of the property and its contents over many years, by Mrs Bettye Ross. Mrs Ross passed away in November 2020.

*Anne Field*

Lydham Hall's caretaker and curator, Miss Otton lived at Lydham Hall from 1974 until part of 1995. During 1994, Miss Otton met with ill health and was hospitalised in May 1995. She did not return to Lydham Hall to live. A new caretaker was appointed in late 1995. His contract extended to May 4, 1998, however he had resigned prior to February 1998. The caretaker's position was then discontinued.

## **COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP**

A Lydham Hall Local Committee set up in 1970, was reinstated in November 1995. The office bearers were Mrs Bettye Ross, then President of St George Historical Society Inc, Councillor Anne Field as Secretary, Mrs Joan Byrne (later Rankin) as Treasurer, and Mr Bernard Sharah. Council asked for the Committee to have 3 representatives of St George Historical Society, and 3 members from the public.

The Lydham Hall Local Committee was reappointed by August 1997 for 1997-1999. By late 1997, the Committee had become the Lydham Hall Management Committee, which gave it a greater role than a Local Committee. I have included the *Terms of Reference* for the Lydham Hall Management Committee, from Rockdale Council, at the conclusion of this report.

Councillor Anne Field became the Chair of this Committee in December 1997, and remained Chair until early September 1999. Anne was elected to represent North Ward, Kogarah Council at the September 11, 1999, Council elections. Due to her commitments at Kogarah Council, she had no time available to continue her involvement with Lydham Hall, Bexley.

Alex Sikkes, Head Botanist at Kirribilli House, Sydney was appointed as a member of the public to the Committee, by November 22, 1996. He was joined by two local residents, Ms Christine Welsh and Mrs Helen Polydorou, who were appointed by December 4, 1997. Mrs Bettye Ross, resigned in early September 1998 and Mrs Polydorou resigned in October 1998, due to work commitments. Bettye and Helen were replaced in October 1998 by Mrs Dora Lenane and Mrs Gloria Henke, both members of St George Historical Society.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The monthly meetings of the Lydham Hall Committee dealt with the museum's operation and administration amongst other matters. They also addressed the use of Lydham Hall's outdoor area for weddings, christenings and their associated photos. This Committee reported to the Works and Services Committee at Council, and then these minutes then went to the Council Meeting to be adopted.

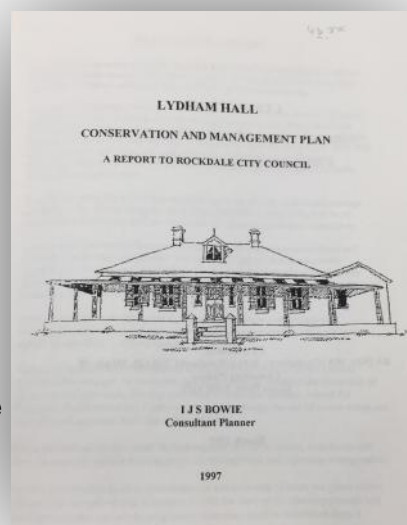
St George Historical Society provided a roster of volunteers to man Lydham Hall. The volunteers were able to assist visitors to the house by showing them through the property, and explaining the history of the house.

## HERITAGE TRAINED VISITORS TO LYDHAM HALL

A *To Do* List was revised at the Committee Meetings, particularly over the period of late 1997-1999. The Museum was fortunate to have had a number of heritage specialists visit the property over the period, 1996-1999. They were invited by the Committee to visit, and in some cases, the heritage expert was commissioned by Council to produce a report on some aspect of the house.

A National Trust representative, Ian Stephenson inspected Lydham Hall and the furniture in the Holbeach Collection prior to November 1996. He returned in early 1999, to again inspect the Holbeach Collection, and to give advice on details of an appropriate track for the Interpretation Room.

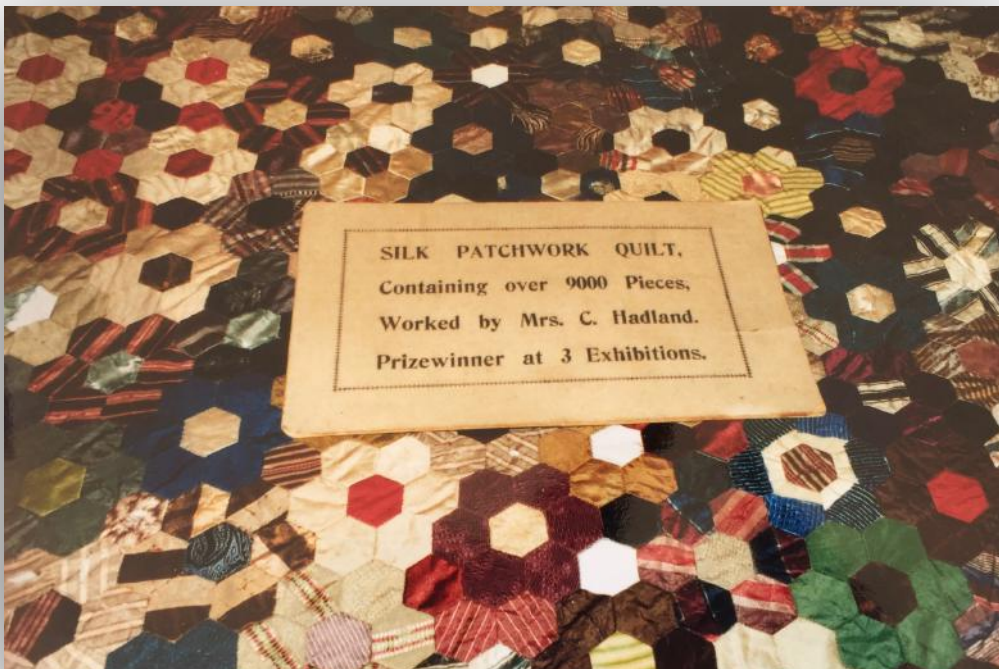
I.J.S. Bowie  
Lydham Hall, Conservation and  
Management Plan Cover,  
1997, Bayside Council Local Studies Collection



Ian Bowie reported on the Museum Collection, and strongly recommended: that the Holbeach Collection be purchased, the front carriageway entry to the property be reinstated, and that a professional part-time curator be hired. His report went to Council on April 30, 1997, and he addressed the Committee on May 15, 1997.

Kathleen Moss, a textile teacher at St George Girls High School in Kogarah, was invited by Councillor Anne Field to inspect the textile collection. Kathleen wrote a report on her observations of her July 23, 1998, visit, and provided recommendations for the care of the collection to the Committee. She also recommended the need for further consultation with a textile conservation specialist. Kathleen noted that the precious period costumes and garments needed conservation.

On August 22, 1999, Kathleen addressed the Lydham Hall Committee. Kathleen started her talk by saying that “a lot of textiles need to be put away. This needed to be done yesterday. Fabrics are falling apart because they are not in archival storage boxes.”



The Quilt  
Lydham Hall Textile Collection  
Photo Kathleen Moss  
Anne Field Personal Archives

She produced a variety of items to talk about and wore gloves as she handled the clothing. She showed an old baby bundling wrapper, dated 1866. It appeared to have *71b12ozsb* on it. Other gowns were produced, and the quality of the stitching was commented on. The sewing machine was not invented until 1870, so the quality of stitching in these garments has allowed them to last at Lydham Hall. The oldest garment was 1834, a 2 piece brown outfit.

Kathleen was thanked for giving up her valuable time and preparing her 5 page report to the Committee, free of charge. Her report was never actioned by any following Committees.

Old quilts have always been about memories and women's unhidden often unspoken language. They carry stories about our history. The Quilt Register by early 1999 had 870 quilts registered. They can be in public or private hands. The Quilt Register was a Centenary of Federation (2001) project, actively supported by major museums and heritage organisations, quilting and embroidery groups, regional museums, womens' groups and individuals across Australia.

The National Quilt Register was to be published in electronic and print form in time for 2001. Wendy Hucker, Coordinator asked in early 1999 for ownership of the quilt to be confirmed and to determine any provenance. The quilt had to be photographed and measured. Deborah Ward on her visit had done this.

This quilt was loaned from Mr and Mrs E. Upton of Oatley, a friend of Mrs Dalziel in 1975. Kogarah Council were contacted in August 1998. A phone call was received from Kogarah Council in August 1998, however no other information was forthcoming.

John Johnson, Council's Local Studies Librarian addressed the Committee on May 2, 1998, Mr Chris Betteridge, a Victorian landscape garden expert from Musecape Pty Ltd, addressed the Committee on June 13, 1998. He was to produce a report on the garden. Samantha Trotter, a TAFE student in the Associate Diploma of Applied Sciences addressed the Committee on December 1, 1998. Samantha had worked in the garden at Lydham Hall, whilst she was undertaking her TAFE Course. She produced a report on Lydham Hall in 2000.

Don Truman, a heritage architect (Truman, Zaniol and Associates) addressed the Committee on March 20, 1999 in relation to issues relevant to Lydham Hall.

The Museum and Gallery Foundation of NSW visited on April 13, 1999. Zoe Scott and Helen Kaptan commented on the need to supply visitors with information on the property in the 1860's. Zoe Scott, Education and Public Program Outreach Officer, and Helen Kaptan, Exhibition Development Outreach Officer, forwarded a report to the Committee on their visit to Lydham Hall.

On June 9, 1999, The Powerhouse Museum representatives visited. They included Julie Garrard, Regional Programme Coordinator; Pat Townley, Head of Conservation; and Kimberley Webber, Senior Curator Social History.

Deborah Ward, Head Conservationist at the National Gallery in Canberra, visited Lydham Hall on September 27, 1998, to inspect the quilt. She indicated that the quilt must be on the National Register and put the Committee in touch with the Co-ordinators of the Project. She indicated that the quilt needed restoration work. In November 1998, Deborah forwarded material on the conservation of textiles.

## **COMMITTEE VISITS**

The Committee and a Council Officer visited Elizabeth Bay House on May 31, 1996, to look at Fire Safety. On August 19, 1998, a Committee member met with two representatives of Historic Houses Trust, Tamara Lavrencic and Jenny McDonald at Government House, to discuss computer systems. On May 23, 1998, Committee members met with members of Don Bank Museum in North Sydney. Don Bank was similar to Lydham Hall in its operation. As a result of this visit, new forms came into existence - collection documentation, inward loan agreement and incident/hazard report.





Councillor Brian Simpson, Councillor Anne Field and Mick Freedman  
Anniversary High Tea, Lydham Hall, September 7, 1996  
Anne Field Personal Archives

#### **LYDHAM HALL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN NO 4**

The 4 page DCP on Lydham Hall was tabled at the Heritage Advisory Committee on June 1, 1998. This Plan was identified as Rockdale Development Control Plan No 4. The plan was to preserve the existing views and outlook from this building and grounds of Lydham Hall being an item of environmental heritage and to conserve its environmental amenity. The plan was to take effect from November 1st, 1988.

The DCP was discussed at the Lydham Hall Committee on January 19, 1999. Committee comments were “any future development should be in keeping with Lydham Hall. The area could be under threat if houses opposite Lydham Hall are demolished and replaced by unsympathetic designs. The DCP covers the side and the rear of the property.” Mr Sharah suggested that the current DCP be extended to include the western side of Lydham Hall. This was referred to Town Planning at Council.



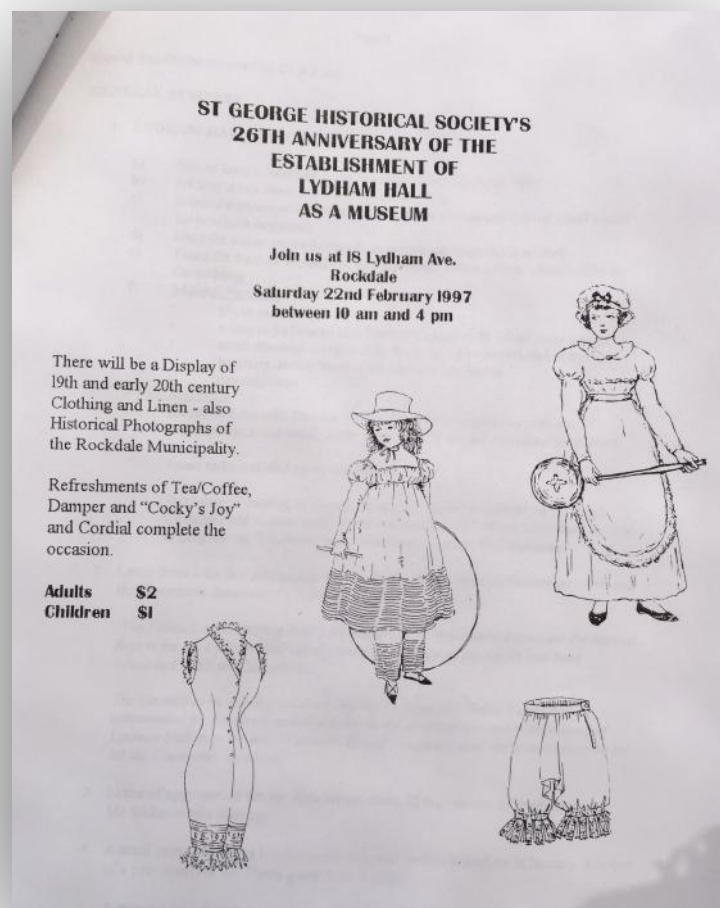
## FUNCTIONS AND VISITORS AT LYDHAM HALL

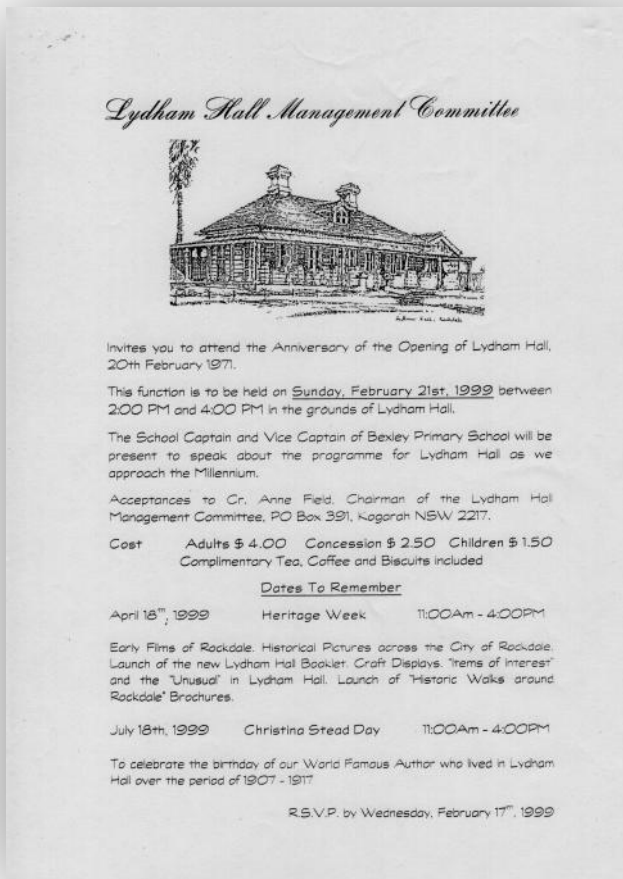
### LYDHAM HALL EXHIBITIONS

### AND LAUNCH OF ITEMS RELEVANT TO LYDHAM HALL

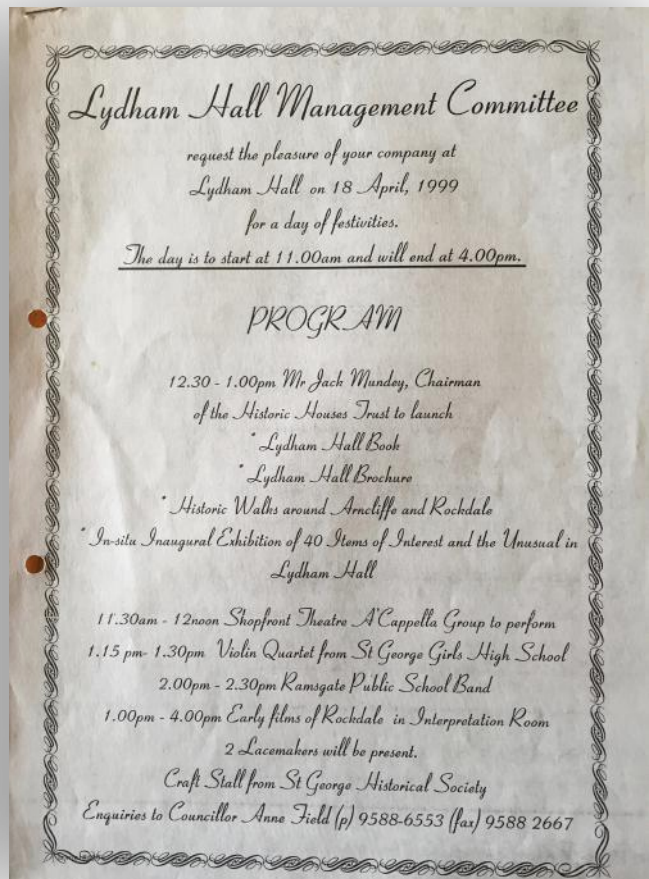
Lydham Hall's garden was used on September 7, 1996, to celebrate co-jointly 125 years of Rockdale Municipality, St George Historical Society's 35th Anniversary and Lydham Hall's 25th Anniversary. An Anniversary Committee had been set up at Rockdale Council in order to organise the afternoon's High Tea.

A display of nineteenth and early twentieth century clothing and linen took place on Sunday, February 25, 1996, and the following Sunday, March 3, 1996. It was a great success and approximately 430 people attended Lydham Hall. Over 100 pieces of clothing and linen were prepared for the exhibition. A display of nineteenth and early twentieth century clothing and linen, along with historical photos of Rockdale Municipality were held on February 22, 1997.





The functions leaflet,  
Lydham Hall Management Committee, 1999  
Anne Field personal archives



Lydham Hall Management Committee,  
Lydham Hall, 1999  
Anne Field personal archives

A *Christmas in July*, organised by the Rockdale District Heritage Association, was held on July 31, 1999, for a sit down dinner in the Interpretation Room.

Lydham Hall was used each year for some of the following occasions: Christina Stead's birthday (July 17, 1902), St Davids Day, St Georges Day, Bastille Day, Scottish Week, St Patricks Day, then Heritage Week and occasionally during the annual Local Government Week. Christina Stead Day was held for the first time in 1997 as was St Georges Day.

On August 23, 1998, during Local Government Week, the then Mayor Brian Simpson launched three Brochures, which had been initiated by Rockdale Council's Heritage Advisory Committee. These included the Arncliffe Heritage Walk, Rockdale Heritage Walk and Rockdale Heritage Drive. The initial draft was done by Gary Stanley, Council's then Heritage Advisor.

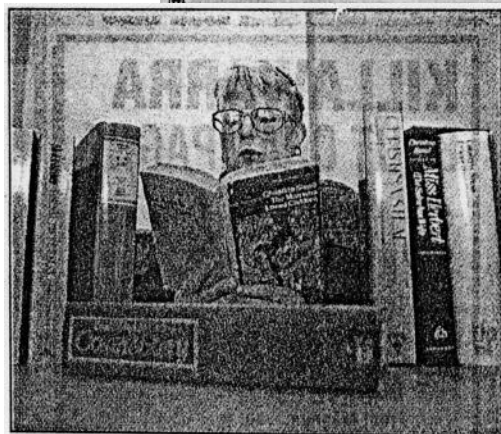
The Anniversary Committee of Rockdale requests the pleasure of your company at an

## Anniversary High Tea

to be held at Lydham Hall  
18 Lydham Avenue, Rockdale  
on Saturday 7 September 1996  
from 2pm to 5pm



1792)



ROCKDALE Councillor Anne Field, one of the organisers of Christina Stead Day.

## Special event honours author

FORMER St George Girls High School student and famous author Christina Stead will be remembered at a special day in her honour on Sunday.

Christina Stead Day is being held at Lydham Hall, Bexley, and guests include Ms Stead's 98-year-old school friend May Grieve and her relatives Elizabeth Stead, who is the president of the NSW Writers Guild, and David Meale, who is travelling from Melbourne.

The celebrations will begin at 12pm with a video about Christina Stead followed by presentations by May Grieve and Stead family relatives.

A reading of Mrs Stead's works will be followed by the screening of another video from 2-3pm.

Her novels include *The Man Who Loved Children*, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney*, *For Love Alone*, *I'm Dying-Laughing*, *House of All Nations* and *Great Stories of the South Sea Islands*.

She was awarded the inaugural Patrick White Award in 1968, the NSW Premier's Award in 1982 and was made an Honorary Member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters.

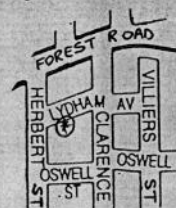
She died at the age of 80, on March 30, 1983, while living with her brother Gilbert at Hurstville.

Anyone interested in attending the day can phone 9588 6553. Entry costs \$4 for adults, \$2 concession and \$1.50 children.

h Tea celebrates the anniversaries of:

- ✧ Regals Musical Society
- ✧ Rockdale Musical Society
- ✧ Shopfront Theatre
- ✧ Airport Hilton
- ✧ Lydham Hall

re provided



## "CHRISTINA STEAD DAY"

LYDHAM HALL  
18 LYDHAM AVENUE, BEXLEY

**JULY 18, 1999**

**12noon - 4.00pm**

*Christina Stead Video 12 noon - 1.00pm*  
(1 hour duration)

Presentation by

✧ Mrs May Grieve  
(attended school with Christina at St George Girls in 1916.)

✧ Relatives of the Stead Family.

✧ A reading of Christina's work

*Christina Stead Video 2.00pm - 3.00pm*

Afternoon Tea

**Enquiries: Phone (02) 9588-6553 Fax (02) 9588-2667**

**Entrance Costs: - Adults \$4, Concession \$2, Children \$1.50**

Special event honours author, St George & Sutherland Leader, 15/7/1999

Christina Stead Day, promotional poster and tickets, Lydham Hall Management Committee, 1999  
Anne Field personal archives

The covers for  
Rockdale Heritage  
Drive and Arncliffe  
Heritage Walk  
brochures  
Anne Field  
Personal Archives



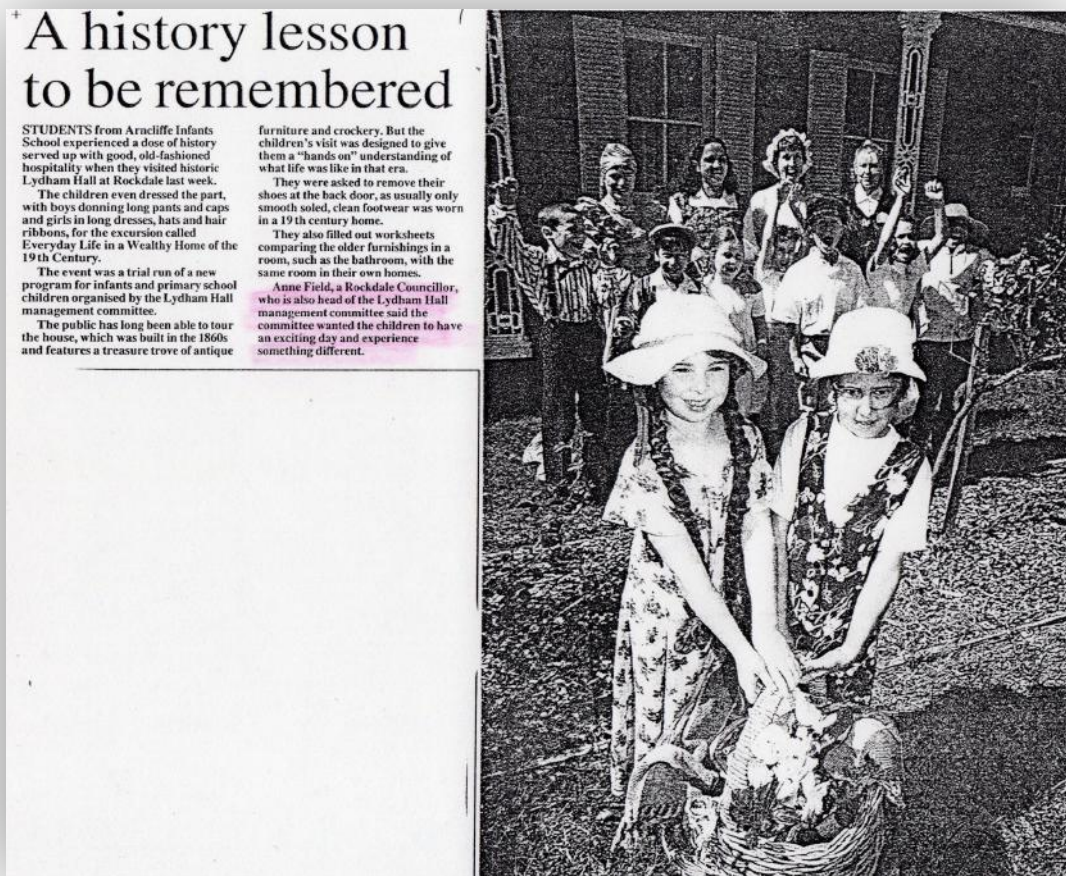
The April 1999 Heritage Week saw the launch of the Lydham Hall Book and Brochure; launch of the *Inaugural Exhibition of Items of Interest and Unusual* in Lydham Hall and Historic Walks around Arncliffe and Rockdale. Early films of the Rockdale area were shown. Entertainment on the day was provided by A Cappella group from Shopfront Theatre in Carlton, a Violin Quartet from St George Girls High School, Kogarah, and the Ramsgate Primary School Band.

The Christina Stead Day on July 18, 1999 welcomed Stead family members. The video on Christina Stead, which was one hour in duration, was shown. A presentation was made by 98 year old Mrs May Grieve, who attended St George Girls High School with Christina. (St George Girls High School opened in 1916) There was a reading of Christina's work by Elizabeth Stead, President of the NSW Writers Guild.



Wendy Stewart, a PHD student at UNSW was researching Christina Stead, and made contact with the Committee in relation to the July 18, 1999 function. David Meale, a Kensington, (Melbourne) relative of Christina Stead, visited Lydham Hall on August 15, 1998, and returned for the July 18, 1999 event. Christina Stead (1903-1983) wrote numerous books in her lifetime, and received many accolades for her work.

There were visits from school groups, infants and primary school students, during this 1995-1999 period. Community groups such as *Probus*, Church groups, Friendship Clubs, Nursing Homes, Art students, Workers Education Adult groups, Walking groups, Bexley Guides, Car Clubs and Legacy also visited. Some walking tours of the local area included Lydham Hall.



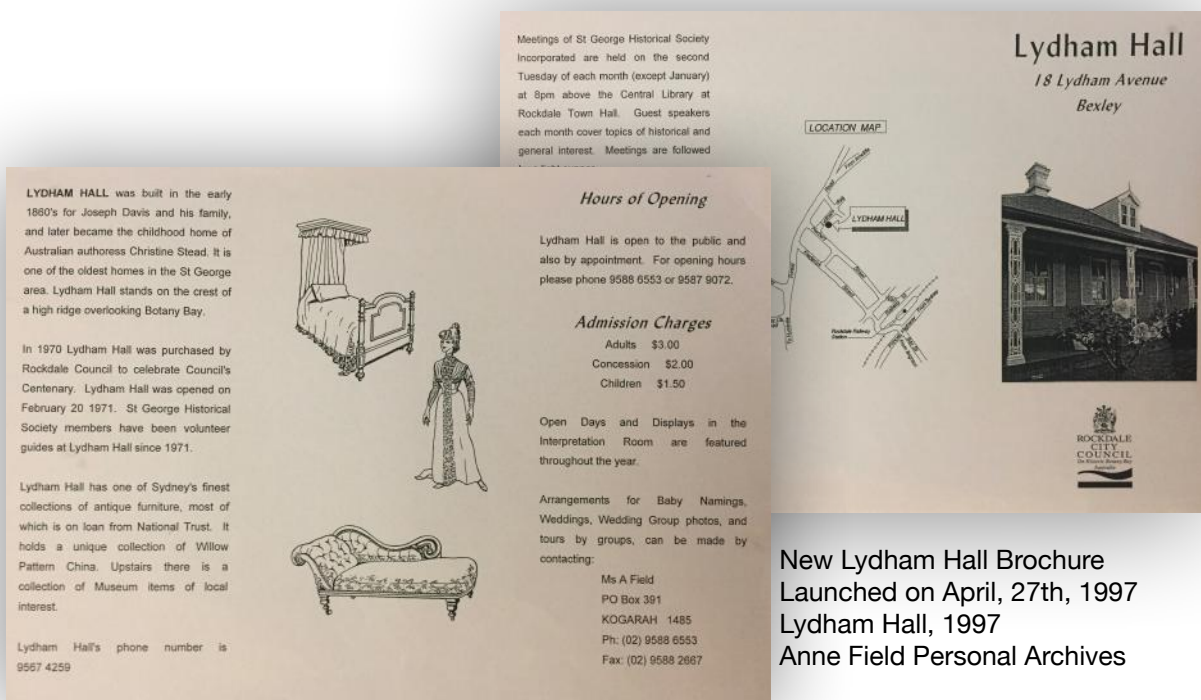
A history lesson to be remembered,  
St George & Sutherland Leader, March 30, 1999  
Picturing school girls in Lydham Hall garden  
Anne Field personal archives

The National Trust held its Branch Meetings at Lydham Hall from September 1998, as did the Rockdale District Heritage Association from December 1998. The meetings were held at Lydham Hall for at least 12 months.

The highlights of the 1990s were two exhibitions. These were the last major events held at Lydham Hall during the 20th Century.

The first major exhibition in 1993 was a display of the Esdaile Collection of historical photos. This included Esdailes' former residences - the newly built "Berowra" in 1901, a large Victorian home "The Towers," and another home called "Walworth." The collection also included local stone cottages, interiors of homes, social activities, gardens, family portraits, and most importantly, photos of Arncliffe from the early 1900s.

Bernard Sarah, a long term member of St George Historical Society until his resignation in 2015, had researched the Esdaile Collection, and entered this into the 2007 Ron Rathbone Local History Award. Edward William Esdaile and his eldest son, Edward Jnr left over 144 glass negatives and rolls of film, which were in the custody of Mrs Watts, the daughter of Edward Jnr. A few items are kept in the Bayside Library Local Studies Collection.

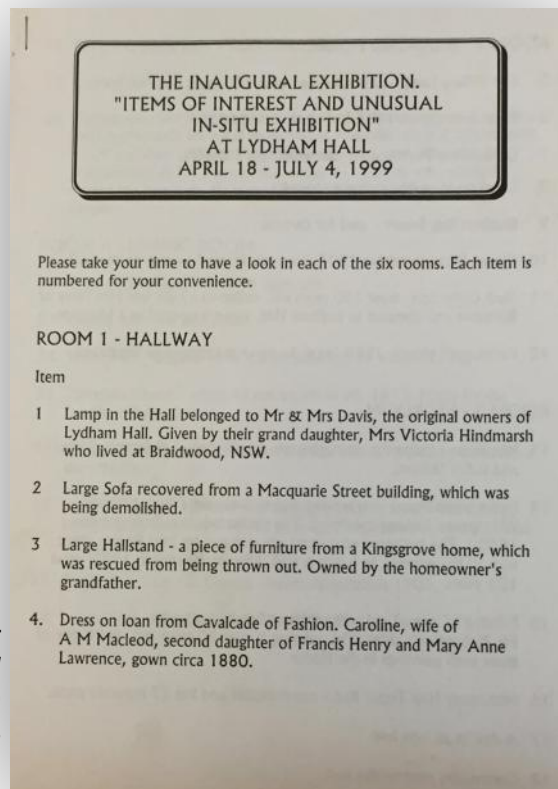




The School Resource Kit was launched during Local Government Week by George Thompson MP for Rockdale on June 20, 1995 at Rockdale Council. This 170 page *Resource Kit* featured a section on Lydham Hall. The kit was produced over a two year period by Councillor Anne Field, local teachers and Council's Public Relations Officer, Karen Hotchkins.

The next major exhibition was open to the public from April to July 1999. It was launched in Heritage week April 18, 1999. It was called *Items of Interest and the Unusual In-Situ in Lydham Hall*. The exhibition introduced 40 of the most important items from the Museums Collection.

The title page of the catalogue for  
*Items of interest and the Unusual  
In-Situ in Lydham Hall, April, 1999*  
Anne Field Personal Archives



Amongst the items was a 100 year old shell collection; a photograph of Frances Rebecca Small (September 22, 1789 - January 30, 1883) who married Frances Oakes on January 27, 1806. She was acclaimed to be the first white person legitimately born and registered in NSW. This lady was the grandmother of Alexander Richardson, who originally owned most of the furniture in the Museum prior to it being passed to Miss Holbeach. Also included in the exhibition were a dinner gong, which was owned by Miss Mabel Holbeach, and the Davis family's original spice box.



■ ROCKDALE Councillor Anne Field and Jack Munday examine the new Lydham Hall brochure.

## Champion of history

### Munday at launch

HE was a champion of Sydney's heritage wars in the 1960s and '70s so it was only fitting that former trade union leader, Jack Munday, should launch the new book and brochure on historic Lydham Hall, Rockdale.

Mr Munday, now chairman of the Historic Houses Trust, was behind the world famous green bans which saved The Rocks in Sydney, and parts of Woolloomooloo, Glebe and Centennial Park from demolition.

The event at Lydham Hall was on a much smaller scale but almost as important to the members of the Lydham Hall Management Committee and community who gathered for the launch during NSW Heritage Week.

The projects represent years of work by the committee and volunteers who have worked to make Lydham Hall more accessible to the public since Rockdale Council purchased the property in 1970.

The book will not be available until later in the year but the brochure sets out the history of the house and its inhabitants.

Visitors were also taken on historic walks around Arncliffe and Rockdale and previewed the

inaugural exhibition of 40 unusual items from Lydham Hall such as a 100-year-old Lily Tiffany Lamp and a mahogany half tester bed.

Lydham Hall, built around 1860, is one of the few buildings remaining from the time when Rockdale was a sparsely populated rural area.

The land on which it stands was originally part of 1200 acres granted to James Chandler in 1822 and named Bexley after his birthplace in England.

In 1859 wealthy butcher, Joseph Davis, bought 67 acres there and commissioned Swedish stone mason, Sven Bengtsson, to construct a house with sweeping views of Botany Bay.

### Champion of History Munday at Launch

St George & Sutherland Leader, April 29, 1999

Pictured Anne Field and Jack Munday

At Lydham Hall, 1999

Anne Field Personal Archives

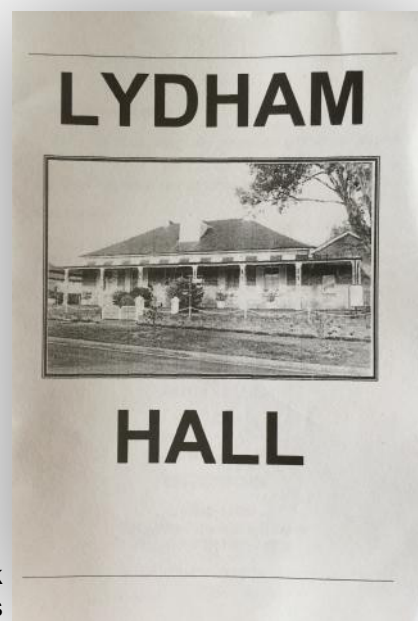
In July 1996, Bruce Sharp, a local artist, produced some sketches for a new booklet for the Lydham Hall Committee. This brochure, on an olive coloured paper, was launched on April 27, 1997, by the school captain, Christina Pilovski and prefect, Goran Cuca from Bexley Primary School.

Jack Munday Chair of Historic Houses Trust was invited to launch a brochure and book on Lydham Hall, during Heritage Week on April 8, 1999. Jack accepted the invitation. The publicity photograph, which was taken by *The St George & Sutherland Leader*, and the associated article, was published on April 29, 1999.

## BOOKLET, INVENTORY AND PHOTOS

The St George Careers Development Centre was to manage the Work for the Dole programme from the Federal Government. This was to begin in October 1998 on a 6 month project. I had met with Adrian Rhodes of *Skills Share*, later St George Careers Development Centre on May 11, 1998. The group, supervised by Adrian Rhodes and Jilli Streit, were provided with plenty of resource material to produce both a book and brochure.

On January 19, 1999, the Work for the Dole programme representatives presented With Compliment slips and a gazebo design to the Lydham Hall Committee meeting. The contents of the planned 12-15 page booklet were also discussed. Unfortunately, the quality of the group's work, along with their progress, proved to be unsatisfactory, and they were terminated by the Committee in the week of March 8-12, 1999.



Cover of the Lydham Hall book  
Anne Field Personal Archives

At the 11th hour, a brochure was produced by Anne Field and Richard Henke, the son of Committee member, Mrs Gloria Henke, on behalf of the Lydham Hall Committee members. This brochure, printed on cream paper, was launched on February 21, 1999.

Council printed the book, but it printed poorly. This was then considered to be draft 2 of the book, and was not to be sold. A draft 3 was to be prepared to be launched on April 19, 1999.

Mrs Bettye Ross started the inventory of Lydham Hall on July 27, 1996, and completed it in March 1997, a total of 60 hours of work. There has been a delay of over 20 years, in converting this inventory, along with an update of additional acquisitions, to a computerised version.

By October 1998, 16 photos were found at Lydham Hall and were then framed at Rockdale Council's depot. They included the following photos: *Rocky Point*

*Road, Sans Souci; Western Suburbs Line, Arncliffe; Gardiner Park, Banksia in 1935; Unemployed humpies Kyeemagh, 1932; Lady Robinson Beach, 1874; Bexley Post Office, Elisa Pearse Store; Cooks River Dam, The Idyll Disturbed; Thomas Saywell's New Brighton Hotel, 1893; Hotel and Picnic Grounds Sandringham, 1913; Arncliffe Railway Station; Wickham Arncliffe; Arncliffe Public School, 1879; West Botany Council Chambers, 1872; Garden Kinsel Grove, Bexley, 1888; Kinsel Grove Bexley, 1888.*

These photos, according to Mr Bernie Sarah, had been found under a bed in a bedroom and belonged to Lydham Hall. The prints were enlargements of originals used in "Rockdale - Its beginnings and its Development.

## **GRANTS AND THE CONSERVATION REPORT**

The Lydham Hall Committee applied for a number of grants during the period 1996-1999. They were unsuccessful.

Council's Heritage Advisor, Gary Stanley had prepared a report in late 1995 proposing that "a Conservation Study be undertaken on Lydham Hall. The report indicated that \$ for \$ funding could be available for a study and the all up, the cost could be \$10,000 to \$15,000."

The April 20, 1996, Minutes record the Conservation Study is to consider the following :

1. Assessment of the existing museum exhibition material; house and history to formulate how the facility will function in local, City and State context. Cost \$2,000.
2. With reference to the period proposed to be demonstrated, prepare a Conservation Plan for the interior maintenance and decoration (finishes and colours for all surfaces and appropriate furnishing) including exterior colours or the painted trim. Cost \$5,000.

3. By late 1998, funds had been given to Rockdale Council \$ for \$ in a grant from the Heritage Office to complete a Conservation Study. The Conservation Study was not started by 1999.

### **EQUIPMENT PURCHASES AND GARDEN SHED**

The sisal rug from Natural Flooring Centre in the Interpretation Room, and the 8 marone coloured Toucan Display Systems boards, were installed in August 1998. The alarm was installed in early May 1998. A champagne coloured blind was installed upstairs by Matraville Blinds on July 18, 1998.

The Development Application for the garden shed was to be submitted to Council in the second half of 1999. The garden shed's location needed to be agreed on. Gary Stanley, Council's Heritage Advisor, believed that the garden shed should be near the House to stop the shed blocking the view and making it more practical to store furniture in.

### **EVENTS IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY**

The Interpretation Room later became the Arthur Ellis Room, and was so named in Arthur's memory. Arthur, a well-known local historian passed away in 2001, aged 85. The hall in Lydham Hall, was named in 2006 in memory of Ron Rathbone OAM. Ron was former Local Government Councillor of over 40 years, a four term Mayor, and local historian, who passed away in January 2007.

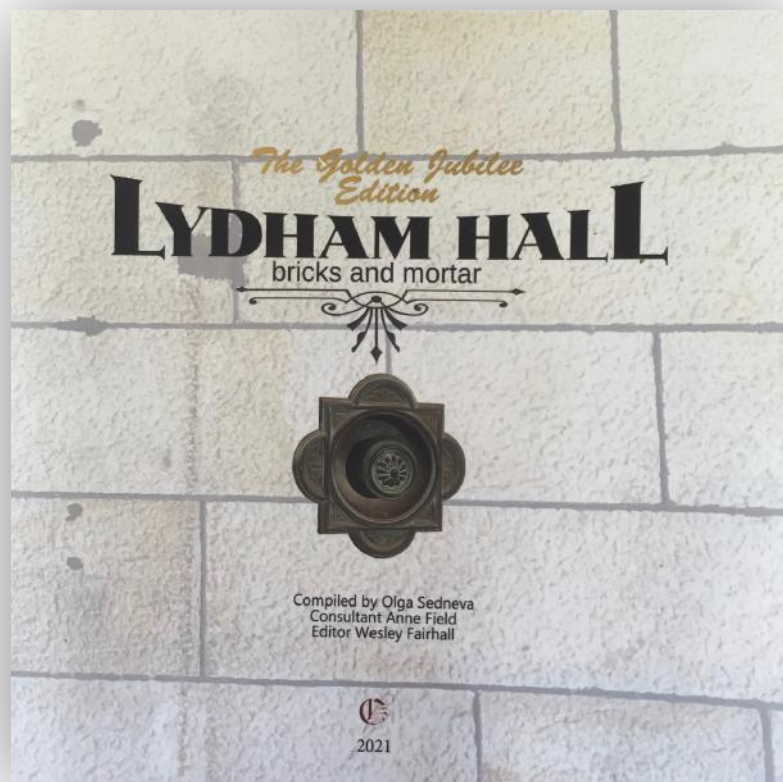
The garden at Lydham Hall was used for the inaugural launch of the Ron Rathbone Local History Award on June 3, 2006. Councillor Anne Field submitted an entry, at the request of Councillor Ron Rathbone; the entry submitted was *The Sale of Moorefield Racecourse, Kogarah (1888-1951)*. This chapter is included in Anne's book on the History of Moorefield Racecourse (1888-1951), as a tribute to Ron Rathbone, OAM. Councillor Field, then a Kogarah Councillor, was in attendance on the afternoon of the launch of the Ron Rathbone Local History Award.

Mrs Bettye Ross resigned as President of St George Historical Society in early 1999. Bettye had both a long association and dedication to Lydham Hall where she had spent many hours as a volunteer.

In late 2016, Rockdale City Council was merged with Botany Council to become Bayside Council. Council elections for the new Council were held in September 2017.

During 2020-2021, a new roof was installed at Lydham Hall by Heritage Slate Roofs. The original part of the house is now waterproofed and has refurbished dormer windows. There is also a new verandah roof all around the house.

On February 28, 2021, at Tempe House, Wollie Creek, NSW, The Golden Jubilee Edition of *Lydham Hall, Bricks and Mortar* was launched. The book was compiled by Olga Sedneva, the consultant was Anne Field and the editor was Wesley Fairhall.



*Lydham Hall, Bricks and Mortar*  
The Golden Jubilee Edition, 2021  
Olga Sedneva, Consultant Anne Field,  
Editor Wesley Fairhall  
Anne Field Personal Archives



## Appendix

### **STATUTORY PROVISIONS FOR THE LYDHAM HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, August 23, 1997 Minutes (A Council Document)**

#### **General**

The role and responsibility of each Advisory Committee is outlined in the Decision of appointment. Any delegation of authority to the Committee under Section 377 of The ACT is limited to authorising the Committee to examine Specific aspects and advise the Council with suggested courses of action.

Advisory Committees have no power to take decisions binding the Council to the expenditure of funds or the adoption of policy, and can only act in accordance with any powers and authorities outlined in the instrument of delegation.

#### **Specific**

Although the interest of the Management Committee will extend to the whole of the property and all furniture and exhibits at 18, Lydham Avenue, the Committee or any member, will not move any item from the property for exhibit or storage elsewhere, without the approval of Council or the National Trust of Australia (NSW) as appropriate, first being obtained.

### **REASONS FOR ESTABLISHING ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

#### **General**

Council establishes Advisory Committees in order to:

1. monitor and evaluate Council policies and procedures;
2. obtain a broad range of views before policies are finalised and/or major resources committed;
3. obtain expertise in relation to Council services any policies for specific populations or special needs groups;

4. provide a means for community goodwill to be channelled into productive work.

### **Specific**

The Council has been actively involved with Lydham Hall since it was acquired by the Council in 1970. The St George Historical Society has maintained an interest in the management of the property since that time. In fact, the Society through its membership on the Lydham Hall Committee formed in 1970, has had an active role in assisting the acquisition of furniture and other exhibits, restoration works, cleaning, fundraising, and promotion of the site. In recent years the Society's role and its interest in Lydham Hall tended to wane until the Council resolved to separate the role of caretaker/cleaner from that of curator. Council engaged a caretaker in late 1995, and reappointed the Local Committee with membership from the Society to promote the property, collect entrance fees and conduct tours for visitors.

The current principal objectives are:

1. to promote Lydham Hall and its links with the early history of Rockdale;
2. to conduct site visits and tours of the property;
3. to establish and maintain an inventory of contents
4. to increase the income;
5. to assist the Committee with its works.
6. further, to develop the concept Friends of Reserve.

### **Membership**

#### **General**

1. Advisory Committees may consist of individual Councillors, Council Officers and members of the public;

2. All Committee members are appointed by Council. Should a member resign, the Committee has the power to recommend a replacement member, who is to be approved by Council. Additional members, if required, need to be approved by Council;
3. Community members will be selected by the Council following public advertisement;
4. Appointment to Advisory Committees will be limited to two (2) year terms;
5. Membership of the Committee will cease if absence is recorded at two (2) consecutive meetings where no valid apology has been received.

### **Specific**

The membership of the Lydham Hall Management Committee will comprise one (1) Councillor of the City of Rockdale and six(6) community representatives.

Note council Officers who may attend the Advisory Committee Meetings will not exercise a vote at those meetings as they may need to provide a contrary opinion or comment to the council on matters resolved by the Advisory Committee.

## **Protocol and Procedures**

### **General**

#### **1 Regularity of Meetings**

Committees will meet as often as required. Each Committee will be required to set a minimum number of meetings per year in terms of reference. In this regard, the Lydham Hall Management Committee has resolved that it will hold at least four (4) meetings per year.

#### **2 Quorum**

The quorum for any meeting of the Committee shall be the next whole number greater than the number obtained by dividing the number of the members of the

Committee by two. No business shall be conducted at a meeting of the Committee unless a quorum is present.

A meeting can resolve to adjourn any meeting or in the absence of a quorum within 30 minutes of the scheduled time of commencement of any meeting. A majority of those present can resolve to adjourn the meeting and may determine the date, time and venue of the adjourned meeting.

### **3 The Chairperson**

The Chairperson of the Committee shall be a Councillor of Rockdale City Council.

The Committee shall appoint office bearers as it determines from time to time.

The Committee Chairperson shall chair all meetings of the Committee, if the Chairperson is not present meeting, or any part of a meeting, the Committee shall elect one of the members to Chair the meeting.

If any question at a meeting arises in relation to rules of debate, procedure for the conduct of the meeting, or the forms of motions that maybe submitted, the Chairperson in making a ruling on the matter, shall have due regard to the standard procedures for the conduct of a meeting. In relation to any procedural matter, the ruling of the Chairperson shall be final.

Councillors are to provide strong support and leadership to the Committee.

### **4 Role of Council Officers**

Council officers will provide professional advice, support, and where required secretarial support. It should be noted that employees of the Council full time, part time or casual shall not be subject to the direction of the advisory Committee or any members thereof.

Council Officers are to provide strong support and leadership to the Committee.

### **Specific**

#### **1 The Role of the Management Committee**

The role of the Management Committee is to promote Lydham Hall, and its links with the early history of Rockdale and to conserve, exhibit and interpret the furniture fittings and display of items located on site.

The Council will be responsible for building and grounds maintenance and for cleaning, building and content insurance.

## **2 Business Plan**

The Lydham Hall Management Committee will produce a Business Plan for the property. The plan will be reviewed regularly and at least annually, the committee will report to Council on the performance measures of the Plan.

## **3 Secretarial Support**

The Minutes of Meetings and general secretarial activities of the Lydham Hall Management Committee will be the responsibility of the official appointed by the Management Committee for that purpose. Council Officers will provide advice as required, assistance with working bee activities and the necessary tools and equipment.

## **4 The Minutes of Meetings**

The Minutes of the meetings of the Lydham Hall Management Committee are regarded as a record of attendance and of the items discussed. A specific request is required for the Council to address policy.

## **5 Treasurer**

The Committee will appoint a Treasurer to conduct the financial affairs of the Committee. Income from fees and charges will be retained by the Committee to be used for promotion and minor maintenance.

## **6 Non Policy / Strategic Issues**

The Lydham Hall Management Committee is encouraged to refer to non-policy/strategic issues to the Customer First Suggestion scheme or Councillor request System. Non-policy/strategic issues of interest to any member of the Management Committee can also be directed to the appropriate Council Department or Officer for advice and attention.

The Council acknowledges that the Lydham Hall Management Committee deals with day to day management issues and the maintenance and conservation of the collection. Issues of a minor nature will regularly arise due to the site specific requirements relating to a building the age of Lydham Hall and the extensive collection of small items and documents.

## **7 Volunteer Update**

To ensure that the significant effort of Lydham Hall Friends group and the support from the community is suitably recognised by the Council, the Management Committee is encouraged to maintain a record of volunteer hours via the Volunteers Update form.

## **8 Management Grant**

Council will provide an annual management grant to assist the Lydham Hall Management Committee with its activities.

## **9 Evaluation of Committee Performance**

The Advisory Committee is required to submit an Annual Report to Council in August of each year reviewing progress over the past 12 months.

The report will include

- goals and objectives
- the activities and initiatives undertaken



- committee structure
- number of meetings and attendance record
- staff and other resources provided
- future priorities.

Anne Field

September 9, 1999

Updated September 3, 2021



Photos from the inaugural Ron Rathbone Local History Prize 2006,  
Lydham Hall, Bexley  
Anne Field Private Archives

## **Bibliography**

- The Lydham Hall Local Committee, and later the Lydham Hall Management Committee Minutes, were the source of most of the content. The Minutes were handed to Rockdale Council after the September 11, 1999 Council election, when I was elected to Kogarah Council to represent North Ward.
- Some of the items mentioned in my report were referenced across a number of Minutes.
- A phone conversation with Kathleen Moss, August 30, 2021
- A phone conversation with Christine Welsh, August 31, 2021
- A phone conversation with Bernie Sarah, September 2, 2021
- My folder of *The Leader* newspaper articles of the period 1995-1999
- St George Historical Society Bulletins 1995-1999
- My personal diaries 1995-1999
- My personal archives