The Priority of the Beach

Beach-going,
Leisure and Australian Life, 1860 to the Present.
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A thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Arts of the Australian National University.

September 1987
Declaration

Except where otherwise indicated this thesis is my own work.

Stein Helgeby
18 September 1987
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"It's the beyondness of it, as it were,"
said Egbert again,
and led the way down the hill.'

Jean Curlewis,
BEACH BEYOND,
1923.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION.

In Australia today, beach-going is a major pastime but a poorly understood activity. A large number of stereo-types and images have been used to characterize beach-going and beach-goers. There have been images of national types, such as life savers; images of groups, such as willowy board riders; images of sex, such as bikini-girls; and images of character, such as lazy workers who take sick-days off to go the beach. Such stereo-types suggest that beach-going is an important aspect of Australian life yet, because they deal only with isolated aspects of beach-going, they do not significantly advance our overall understanding of beach-goers and beach life. This history will try to provide a general understanding of the changing character and role of beach-going in Australian life.

Both popular authors - those who have written for the general public - and academic authors have tried to improve the general understanding of beach-going. Popular authors have written about the beach since the 1920s and have usually focused on general themes, on the point of going to the beach. In 1931 the anonymous author of the colourful pamphlet *SURF: All About It* said that going to the beach was about pleasure, and that the history of beach-going was the history of innocent fun versus prudish repression.¹ That theme has been dominant in all subsequent popular accounts. In her 1949 book, *SURF: Australians Against the Sea* C. Bede Maxwell prefaced her description of surf life saving with a retelling of the victory of fun over prudishness at the turn-of-the-century.² Popular writers, such as Maxwell, argued that, in the late 1890s, ocean bathing was effectively banned throughout Australia by a series of repressive by-laws. In the early 1900s, those by-laws were seriously challenged at Manly, and body surfing became permissible across the nation. By 1910, according to most accounts, body surfing had become a national pastime, as though thousands of Australians had waited for some brave people to risk the punishment of the law, without actually

¹*SURF: All About It.* Sydney, 1931.

²C. Bede Maxwell; *SURF: Australians Against the Sea.* Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1949.
Figure 1-1: A Story of Liberty: G. B. Philip hands his calling card to an Inspector of Police, who refuses to accept it.
[Source: Philip; SIXTY YEARS...]
The Policeman reading from the Book of Regulations.

The Law and the Surfers' Victory.
being penalised, before venturing out into the surf themselves. The popular writers identified the actions of William Henry Gocher, a Manly newspaper owner, as the turning point. In 1902, at Manly, Gocher body surfed in broad daylight and on a Sunday in order to challenge the authorities to prosecute him under the current laws and regulations. Gocher was not punished, so other people began to body surf, without fear. Some of Gocher's contemporaries, such as the Sydney publisher G.B. Philip, claimed that they were really the first to challenge the laws. Regardless of whether Gocher, Philip or someone else was the first body surfer, all the claims have one point in common; they presuppose that Australians did not bathe in the sea in the 19th century, and did not do so because bathing was prohibited by a society which did not tolerate the attitude of simple fun involved in body surfing.  

Four decades after it was published, Maxwell's account remained the only lengthy account available. In 1982 Lana Wells showed the variety of activities which people had pursued at the beach since the 19th century. The theme of her general history, **SUNNY MEMORIES**, was the familiar one of natural fun versus prudish repression. The noted surfer Nat Young, in collaboration with Craig McGregor, produced a book and a film in 1983 called **THE HISTORY OF SURFING**. Young and McGregor also believed that the history of beach-going was the history of simple pleasure versus repression, and that the tide turned in favour of pleasure early this century. In his 1985 book, **SUN, SEA, SURF AND SAND - The Myth of the Beach**, Geoffrey Dutton presented the variety and range of artistic and literary reactions to the beach. Dutton, too, accepted the historical theme of pleasure and prudishness, although he began to go beyond that theme when he suggested that the 'myth' of pleasure at the beach was also an especially urban phenomenon.

Academic interest in beach-going dates only from about 1970 and has been generally confined to thesis writers. Of the scholarly writers, Mark Doepel alone has attempted to give an historical account of beach-going itself, as opposed to

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histories of particular surf sports or resorts. Doepel identified ocean bathing with body-surfing, and asserted that ocean bathing was not generally practised, at Manly, until the late 1890s. By writing of the clash between puritanism and the simple fun of beach-going in turn-of-the-century Manly, Doepel followed the theme of the popular writers; in that sense, the two bodies of writing can be regarded as one.7 Betty Cosgrove has written a thesis on the history of the resort of Yeppoon in Central Queensland, Robert Longhurst has given a similar treatment to the Gold Coast until 1940, and Michael Adams has written a history of the Illawarra resort of Stanwell Park.8 Megan Cronly wrote her thesis on the subcultural life of Sydney surfers between 1956 and 1966.9 All those works were limited because they accepted the emphasis on Manly, on Gocher and on the early 1900s as the period when a favourable attitude to the inherently pleasurable aspects of beach-going emerged. Both Cosgrove and Longhurst found anecdotal evidence for the acceptability of ocean bathing in the late 19th century, material which ought to have led them to criticise and doubt the accepted stories and themes of beach history. Yet, because of the geographical constraints of their studies, they did not pursue those possibilities.

The task of this thesis is to improve the understanding of beach-going in general; by taking a broader view of the origins, character and purpose of beach-going, it contests the conventional popular and scholarly perceptions of beach-going in Australia, and treats beach-going as a separable and general practice within Australian society.

The argument is that both Doepel and the popular writers have mis-understood the status of bathing in late 19th century society, and that they have wrongly characterized beach-going as a simple activity, unchanging in its character and significance. Instead, it will be shown that bathing was an accepted practice by the late 19th century, and that it has undergone at least two significant changes in character. The first of those changes took place between 1840 and 1860, when

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ocean bathing ceased to be a matter of hygiene and became a recreation. Between 1860 and the mid-1920s, ideas and feelings involved in beach-going tied bathing to the appreciation of natural beauty, and also to industrial processes. The second change occurred between 1890 and 1920, when the rise of body surfing introduced the notion of simple fun into the understanding of the character and significance of beach-going. Since about 1910 the connotations of beach-going have led from one recreational activity to another, and not beyond the field of recreation.

The present study begins with the 1860s, when ocean bathing began to be an explicitly recreational rather than hygienic practice, and describes the practice of beach-going up to the present day. Two methods are used in this thesis. The first turns around the normal direction of historical inquiry. Instead of beginning with the changing nature of society at any given time, and then showing how those changes influenced the particular form of beach-going at any given time, this thesis tries to establish the character of beach-going, and the impact of beach-going on the rest of society at particular times. The general development of society influences all the particular activities within society, and is influenced, in turn, by those special activities. The present history investigates the second direction; this is a study of beach-going itself rather than a study of how various characteristics of society have become manifest in beach-going.

The second approach establishes the emotional content and feelings of bathing or beach-going, and traces the relevance or irrelevance of those emotions and feelings to other areas of life and society. The argument is that, although economic and social factors have led different groups to have different experiences of beach-going, the different experiences which beach-goers have had of beach-going have represented variants to similar emotions, rather than different kinds of emotion. This thesis seeks to establish what was enjoyable about going to the beach or to a seaside resort, and is based on the assumption that people went to the beach because they enjoyed going there.

There are two reasons why a history of the beach should focus on enjoyment. One is to remedy a defect, discussed below, which leads leisure studies to become overly institutional and formal in their emphasis. A second, more immediate reason is that the popular accounts of the beach, and the scholarly accounts which elaborate on those popular themes, have made the chief theme of beach history one of pleasure versus prudishness and repression. That historical theme revolves around set ideas of how the beach was to be enjoyed at all times in Australia's history. By contrast, having considered both whether and how people have used the beach since the 1860s, it is contended here that there were at least two
distinct ways of enjoying the beach during that period. Between 1900 and the mid-1920s, one way succeeded the other, and the emergence of popular histories of pleasure and prudishness was part of that change.

In its social and cultural aspects the study of the beach encroaches on the general study of leisure. In the Australian context, there are several unconnected studies of particular regions, particular times and particular sports in existence. For example, Margaret Indian examined leisure in Melbourne between 1880 and 1900, and D. R. Shoesmith looked at leisure in Melbourne in 1919, but the two works have different subject matters, deal with different sports and different areas of Melbourne and different elements of society. Overseas, the field of leisure studies is more densely populated and broad syntheses have become possible. In 1980, Hugh Cunningham attempted to integrate recent British work in his study of leisure in Britain during the Industrial Revolution. Owing to the differing patterns of industrialisation in Britain and Australia Cunningham’s work must serve more as a methodological model than as a concrete example for Australian conditions. Cunningham saw the industrialisation of the 19th century leading to the separation of the field of leisure from other areas of life, particularly the political and work life of the working classes. Cunningham’s criteria for judging the integration or separation of leisure from other parts of working class life were the scale on which an activity was organised, and the degree to which it was commercialised; when working class leisure activities were organized on a decentralised and communal basis they served the interests of that class but, when those activities were centrally organised and commercially oriented, they no longer served the interests of the working class. As a follower of E. P. Thompson, Cunningham tried to give to the working classes a role in this development. On the one hand, the working classes sometimes resisted the changes to leisure, and persisted in their own separate activities. On the other hand, the formalisation of working hours and the increased capacity of working class people to pay for their leisure gave them the ability to choose what kinds of leisure they wished to follow.

Cunningham argued that the most important kind of working class influence on leisure was their desire to spend money on their own enjoyment. Working class entertainment was then industrialised and commercialised by the middle classes in

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order to make the general character of working class leisure, rather than its details, safe to the established class system. Accordingly, Cunningham believed that the commercialisation of leisure in the 19th century made leisure part of a general social hegemony. The implications of the theme of this thesis for the study of leisure contrast with those of Hugh Cunningham and his British example. Cunningham said that in Britain industrialisation made leisure a separate part of life. In Australia the situation was that at least one form of leisure, beach-going, did not separate from the rest of life because of industrialisation; instead, beach-going was a significant part of industrial society from the late 19th century to the 1920s. Only in the 1920s did the concerns of beach-going become separate from industrial society, the result of new industrial practices and a new way of regarding the beach.

Cunningham focused his study on control, ideology, the formal aspects of leisure and its economic foundations, on what may be called 'the institutions of leisure', though that is to use the word 'institution' in a very broad manner. Despite his professed purposes there is an important sense in which Cunningham did not consider the role or importance of ordinary people in their own leisure. By concentrating on how the activities were owned and organised he neglected the expectations of the people who undertook an activity or attended an event or sought out some entertainment. What did ordinary people find enjoyable about their leisure activities? Why were they attracted to particular kinds of entertainment? If the commercialisation of leisure was an important way in which the middle classes could increase their power was the enjoyment of leisure also significant to the social position of the working class? How were working class people influenced by the fact that they could increasingly afford to enjoy themselves in particular ways? This thesis tries to answer precisely questions of that sort.

Three methodological problems arise in a study of this kind: first, there is the question of determining the area to be analysed; secondly, of deciding how to account for the different experiences of beach-going of different sections of the population; thirdly, of locating and interpreting relevant sources. In order to meet limitations on the time to be taken for a study, and the length of the thesis, the investigation is limited to the East Coast of Australia, and concentrates on New South Wales and Queensland, where both population and seaside resort developments have been concentrated and from where most of the images and practices of beach-going have spread to the other States of Australia. Since the 1860s, beach-going has been practised by both sexes and all classes. The activity of beach-going has shown divisions along lines of class, age and gender, and has
Figure 1-2: The Study Area.
been influenced by developments in society as a whole. Economic conditions have been reflected in the changing levels of domestic tourism, and thus the rate and manner of resort development; the level of access which individuals have had to beaches and holidays has been limited by their wealth, social status and class; different images of men and women at the beach have emerged, and an alternative range of beach-going activities has been available to each sex, leading to varying emphases in the purpose of beach-going; according to their age, beach-goers have pursued different activities, with changing personal allegiances and varying consequences for their social lives and standing amongst their peers. When the general outline of beach-going has been established, those different ways of experiencing the beach should be investigated in detail; in order to gain a general understanding of beach-going, those differences are not investigated here. Thirdly, to establish the emotional content of beach-going, it has been necessary to use a process of indirect inference from a variety of sources, notably guide books and photographs. While those sources are not direct expressions of popular feelings and sentiments there appears to be no substantial body of direct evidence for popular emotions; the only sources which could be used to establish what it was like to go to the beach, or be on holiday, were indirect. That dependence on indirect reasoning and sources makes this thesis necessarily suggestive, an experiment or inconclusive investigation.

Several kinds of sources are available to historians. First, there are guide books and tourist brochures which describe seaside resorts, touch on the motivation for going there and elucidate the points of interest. It is not possible to establish who read such guide books, how many editions each book went through, or how many copies were distributed, for libraries have not always collected such material and many of the issuing organisations no longer exist. Nevertheless, guide books are a valuable source for establishing popular attitudes, as they were usually cheap or free, readily available at tourist and information offices or at railway stations, and were targeted at broad audiences; the writers may have made extravagant claims for the virtues of particular resorts, yet, because they wrote to be read and trusted by a large and diverse market, the broad assumptions of guide book writers may be taken to closely approximate many attitudes held in society as a whole. In addition there are photographs, souvenir post-cards, illustrations which show what people did at the beach, which show what was supposed to be interesting. Then there are the resorts themselves, the way they were built, what was included in them and how visitors were attracted there. Beyond those materials the sources split into two more distinctive kinds. First, there are the records and publications of the surf life saving and board riding movements. Secondly, there are the general reflections on contemporary life and contemporary society which comment
on what holidays were for and how resorts were regarded. The first kind of source helps to give detailed information for our understanding of the beach. The second kind of source, the reflective kind, helps an evaluation of the connections that might have been made at the time between beach-going and other elements of society. Taking all the materials together it is possible to establish the nature of seaside resorts at any given time, the kinds of activity which it was possible for people to pursue at the time and therefore the connotations of taking a holiday by the sea or going to the beach for a day. Through such sources one can establish the influences which structured Australian's experiences of the beach. To go beyond those structures to the qualities, the feelings and significance of being by the sea, requires an imaginative plunge on the part of the historian, but novels and other imaginative works about the seaside help to guide the historian who follows them, and provide a measure against which to judge the historian's own imaginative excursions.

The two styles of beach-going are discussed in the two parts of this history. A novelist could treat the themes by putting many ideas into the mouths of a few characters; an historian has many more characters, and much greater difficulty drawing the ideas together. If the subject matter of particular chapters in this thesis draws away from the specifics of beach-going, it is because the relationships between ideas were not always obvious. Nevertheless, within each part there is a common direction, though the content differs. Each part begins with the ways in which people have gone into the water, or with what they have done by the sea. From there follows an assessment of the kinds of feeling involved in those activities, the relationship between those feelings and the environment and with the character of seaside resorts at a particular time. From that last point the history passes to how the qualities of a resort were presented to society at large. Finally, the implications of being by the sea are related to issues in the contemporary society and in contemporary life. In that way one can reach an understanding of what it has meant for Australians to go to a beach.

Chapters Two and Three cover the first period, from 1860 to the mid-1920s. Chapter Two demonstrates that bathing was an emotional as much as a physical activity, Chapter Three shows the constructive role of beach-going emotions in the development of urban life between 1880 and 1920. Chapter Two describes the means of bathing, the feelings of bathing and the communion of those feelings with contemporary attitudes to nature in general and suggests the style of resort development in the period and the means by which those feelings and developments were presented to society at large. In the late 19th century style of travel writing and description there were direct implications for industrial society, and those
implications are the subject of Chapter Three. In her 1980 thesis on leisure in Melbourne between 1880 and 1900 Margaret Indian recognised the existence of a paradox about leisure and society. Indian held to the current theory of leisure, that leisure activities are different from work and other social activities and that people pursue leisure to make up for what they cannot find in work; in effect, that theory sees leisure activities as a form of ‘compensation’ against the unsatisfying nature of work. The paradox Margaret Indian found hung on that idea of ‘compensation’. In the late 19th century, she held, the people who had satisfying work were predominantly in the middle classes and professionals, the working classes did not have satisfying work. According to the theory, the impetus to pursue greater leisure should have come from the working classes. In fact, it was the ‘satisfied’ middle classes who awarded themselves greater leisure in the 1880s and 1890s, greater than that gained by the working classes for themselves through movements such as the Eight-Hours campaign in the 1850s. The middle classes ought to have had no desire for more leisure, yet they took it. In the late 19th century, there was a considerable body of literature, usually but not exclusively aimed at the middle classes, which sought to impress upon individuals and society generally that it was important to have holidays and pursue recreation. That literature was both specialist and amateur, medical and literary. Indian tried to explain away such material by claiming that it showed the middle class trying to justify to itself actions it could not condone, as though middle class writers were busy explaining away their own theoretically aberrant behaviour. In this thesis, it is assumed that that the literature on leisure and recreation was genuine, that it expressed actual beliefs and aspirations current at the time, beliefs which were coherent with the contemporary attitude to nature and which were vital to industrial society. In short, leisure and recreation were not compensations for boring work but guides to the values of work and society, guides to the feelings appropriate to late 19th century life. In that way, leisure and recreation were influential in creating a new urban society between 1880 and 1920.

Between 1900 and 1920 the way in which Australians went into the sea changed, became explicitly active rather than receptive; and the connotations of beach-going changed too. Chapter Four introduces the second period by showing the new style of bathing and the new style of resort which developed around it. In his 1969 thesis on the development of the South Australian seaside resorts of Port Noarlunga and Christie’s Beach, near Adelaide, Brian Ward made a simple yet vital point. After the Second World War, the two resorts came increasingly within

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the orbit of metropolitan Adelaide. From the 1920s onwards, however, when holiday functions began to replace the 19th century port functions of Port Noarlunga, the process of resort development was always a process of urban development.13 Such developments cannot be understood if they are viewed as necessary accompaniments of the tourist industry. The case of Port Noarlunga and Christie's beach contrasts with some overseas examples. On the South-East coast of Norway the small harbours and islands of Lyngør were a thriving centre of shipping in the early 1900s. By the 1920s that role was in rapid decline and tourism replaced skippers with urban holiday makers from Oslo and other areas nearby. Since the Second World War Lyngør has been a famous and very popular seaside holiday resort, but Nini Fritzner has shown that the change from shipping to tourism has led to a drastic and long-term depopulation of the area, and to its loss of urban complexity and facilities. To a considerable extent, the limits to tourism have kept Lyngør a viable community.14 In Australia, the importance of Brian Ward's point is most readily seen on the East Coast, in the development of areas such as the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast. In Chapter Four the development of those areas is set within the context of a change in the cultural associations of beach-going.

Chapter Five looks at the way in which the new emphasis on activity changed the image of the beach and altered the way in which the new resorts were promoted and depicted; it is contended that the way in which 20th century travel writing has dealt with the new connotations of the beach is chiefly responsible for simplifying the understanding of the the complexities of beach-going in contemporary Australian life. Chapter Six shows the relationship of the new understanding of beach-going to other ideas prevalent in society. The function of Chapter Six corresponds to the social investigation of Chapter Three, but the method is necessarily vastly different. One of the consequences of simplifying the image of the beach has been that aspects of life at the beach have not greatly influenced society. On the contrary, developments in other areas of society have served only to limit further the significance of leisure and beach-going. Chapter Six scans the very wide range of external influences which have all had the same limiting result on the importance of beach-going to society. The demonstration in Chapters Five and Six of how leisure and beach-going have been devalued is meant


as a contrast to Chapter Four. In Chapter Four the social importance of the new resort style was shown, by showing the growth of seaside resorts themselves. By the end of Chapter Six the limits to the social influence of ideas and feelings grouped around beach-going are brought out. Ultimately, those external social limits work because they have established imaginative barriers against joining the feelings of being at the beach to other feelings important in society at large. By setting up a contrast between the real significance of the new style of resort and the actual influence of beach-going on other areas of life this historical account of the beach returns to the brink of imaginative literature, where it began. Novelist and imaginative authors can choose whether the contrast should be lamented and condemned, or whether it can be safely passed over as being of little importance to contemporary life. An historian would have done enough if readers could feel the existence and the pervasiveness of the contrast.
Chapter 2

THE GROTTO.

In 1895 a guide book for visitors to Sydney was published with the title *BEAUTIFUL SYDNEY*.¹ The publishers of that guide book tried to show the beautiful aspects of Sydney, Newcastle and Maitland. The guide book described and showed pictures of attractions which visitors would have found it worthwhile to see. Most of the attractions were in Sydney itself. The guide book lauded the beauty of the many business houses in the city, the famous public buildings and the harbour views. A little further afield, the publishers recommended that visitors should be sure to take a trip to Manly, as Manly could be considered "the most picturesque part of Sydney...". At that time Manly was a small township surrounded by bushland, and was a well established tourist destination. The best time to see Manly, said the guide book, was in the spring, for in the spring the township was surrounded by "choice wild flowers..." and there were "shady nooks [to] give forth their flowing streams...", which abounded "with a rich luxuriance of foliage, ferns and rock lilies". In spring there was also a popular native flower show which highlighted the natural attractions. On the other side of the harbour, tourists might also enjoy Bondi, for although Bondi was more isolated and less developed than Manly, Bondi was a good place to "get a blow of the briny".

In the city itself, there was an attraction not unlike Manly and Bondi. At 400 Pitt Street, near Goulburn Street and the Railway Station, there was a commercial 'Natatorium'. The 'Natatorium' featured large indoor baths with two stories of lockers and changing rooms surrounding the pool. Patrons of the baths were able to take salt water baths or fresh water baths, in hot or cold water. The clientele of the 'Natatorium' were said to include "many thousands of busy bees from the warehouses, manufactories, and stores...", all of whom were thus able to "take advantage of a dip after their hard day's toil...". One reason for having the baths in the city must have been the difficulty of getting to the sea from the city.

¹All the material and quotations in this paragraph, and the next, are from *BEAUTIFUL SYDNEY*, including *Newcastle Coalopolis and Fertile Maitland*. Robertson, Sydney, c1895. unpaginated.
Secondly, the city baths offered greater comfort than those baths along the harbour shore, which were just fenced sections of land and water. But there may have been a more emotive and symbolic reason too. Apart from the main swimming pool the ‘Natatorium’ also featured a special facility for women and children. Set in "a lovely little grotto" inside the building there was "a pretty bath, quite unique and artistic in design and elaborately decorated...". The decorations for that grotto were ferns and plants and rocks, a garden. The bath was an unusual shape, reminiscent of a rock pool. The character of that grotto suggests that there could be more to bathing than swimming, that a place like Manly might well have been a model for the grotto and that the qualities of nature could be directly linked to those of bathing. That theme is the subject of the present Chapter. A second theme can be suggested arising out of the same example. The guide book laid stress on the fact that it was city people who went to those baths; was it also significant that such a natural setting be made available to urban workers? That theme can rest until the next Chapter.

A number of preliminary points need to be established, before the relation between bathing and nature can be made apparent. There would have been no connections if there had been no bathing. In order to counter the idea that bathing was effectively prohibited in the late 19th century, it is necessary to show, in detail, the legal status of bathing between 1850 and 1900. In that period, there were laws which set limits on bathing in the open, but those laws originated when bathing was a matter of cleanliness. Between 1850 and 1900, those old laws became increasingly irrelevant, because bathing was no longer a matter of hygiene; yet the laws were not revoked. Instead, outside the letter of the law, both local governments and the police regarded bathing with a degree of tolerance. Bathing became respectable, despite the old laws; yet the old laws were sometimes enforced, and the police interpretations of those laws shows some of the characteristics of late 19th century bathing.

A second preliminary point is that a fuller study of bathing practices reveals that late 19th century ocean bathing involved complex emotions. If there was any connection between bathing and nature, it was in terms of those emotions; so it is necessary to show the emotions involved in bathing, as well as the emotions involved in the perception of nature in the late 19th century. At the seaside, the emotions involved in the perception of nature can best be brought out by showing the character of seaside resorts. Studying the qualities of seaside resorts can lead the investigation into general attitudes to nature. Bathing was not only connected to nature, it was merely an example of the general connections which were made between nature and humanity.
Bathing was an old practice in white Australia. Early in the 19th century bathing in the sea, harbour or in fresh water was mainly a matter of washing and cleanliness, the more so the fewer opportunities existed for it in commercial establishments or private homes. J. W. C. Cumes, an historian of early Australian leisure practices, has noted that in early references to bathing it is hard to separate the aspects of cleanliness and hygiene from those of recreation. In New South Wales, in the 1830s, two laws were introduced in order to disallow bathing in daylight hours within public view. It may well have been that the chief evil against which those laws were directed was that of people washing and cleansing themselves in areas such as the Domain. Whatever the original reason for controlling bathing, it had become almost irrelevant in the large cities by the 1850s. As Cumes has shown, between 1840 and 1850 Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Hobart had all developed some form of bathing enclosure, such as baths or portable bathing machines, in the sea or in a river. For those who could afford it, there were now alternatives to bathing and perhaps washing themselves in the open.

Robin Boyd dated the appearance of private baths and bath rooms in prosperous homes from the gold rush period onwards. In 1858 Melbourne acquired a new bath house in the city, more comfortable and efficient than the old baths in the Yarra had ever been. A Select Committee of the Victorian Parliament, meeting in 1856-7, concluded that new baths needed to be built, and that the true purpose of public baths was to improve the cleanliness of the population. Consequently, the Committee referred the entire matter of baths to the sanitation authorities. The completion of the Yan Yean Reservoir in 1858 provided the opportunity to supply water to new inner city baths, thereby removing the need for working people to travel to places like St. Kilda in order to clean themselves. Slowly, in Australia as in America, the well-to-do could begin to secrete themselves inside their homes when they wanted to wash. The beaches around the major Australian cities could become places of recreational bathing, unmixed with hygienic considerations.

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4REPORT FROM THE SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY UPON PUBLIC BATHS. VICTORIAN PARLIAMENTARY PAPERS,1856-7,VOL.2.


Further from the large and prosperous cities the same needs were felt, but it proved harder to establish any means to satisfy them. In Newcastle residents craved a safe public bath long before the government in Sydney was prepared to concede it to them. Departments of state in Sydney controlled its open spaces, so the local municipality could not construct any baths of its own. In May 1865, the Council simply marched out into the town reserves and declared that they had taken possession of those lands.\(^7\) The lack of bathing amenities was a major reason for the Council taking that action. But the sites proved hard to acquire and the money hard to find, and when politicians or officials made promises about baths the promises were not necessarily followed through. Yet few men could be as bumptious as a powerful man in a small town. Revealing his ignorance when the people of Kiama wanted some baths in 1873, one notable proclaimed that he had ever had one bath in the whole time he was living there and so “did not see why other people could not do without them”. His will held up only one small town, and progress came to Kiama late in the 1880s.\(^8\)

From the mid-century the habit of washing the body in the sea faded amongst the prosperous and in the metropolitan centres. But the practice survived for decades among the less prosperous, and might have been even more pronounced had it not been for the expense of getting to the sea. Until the 1890s, there were still few bathing facilities outside the large cities, and those that did exist were sometimes privately operated and located away from the places where poorer people might come to live. In Newcastle, close to its ocean beaches and poorly supplied with shelters for public modesty, there were places along the shore where the people of its self-consciously dirty town had washed since anyone could remember, and in the 1860s assumed the “prescriptive right of at least forty years’ use...”. In a parody of shocked sensitivity, its paper noted that in the town the\(^9\)

immoral practice of ablution by immersing the whole of the body in the waves of the ocean, to which was added by some persons, the ceremony of rubbing the skin off by application of sand accompanied with violent friction, was universally practised by the degraded inhabitants...

Although the state of research into domestic architecture in Australia makes it impossible to establish exactly who was putting in private bath rooms at particular

\(^7\) *NEWCASTLE CHRONICLE.* 31-5-1865. [Hereafter *N.C.*]  


\(^9\) Quotations from *N.C.* 17-1-1866.
times, it seems reasonable to assume that well-off families could afford to buy their own baths or to go to a public bath; in that case, they would have been the first group to regard bathing in a different way. Among those same preening classes the old way of going into the water would lose its rationale, and a new emphasis and new rationale for bathing would first evolve among them too, between 1860 and 1890. Because the change depended on municipal development it would focus on large towns and cities along the coast, rather than little places. Improvements in transport, pay and holiday conditions in the second half of the century allowed more people and social groups to visit the seaside; those groups would have been drawn into practices and sensitivities evolved amongst the urban middle class.

Of all the colonies, only New South Wales had comprehensively regulated bathing. By the two laws of the 1830s bathing within sight of the public was to be prohibited, and a total ban applied between 6am. and 8pm. The law had originated to stop the unseemly behaviour of people too close to the town of Sydney itself. In Melbourne before separation the law also controlled washing in the Yarra, too close to the town. But after the separation of Victoria, in 1855, bathing was regulated solely at the discretion of the local municipalities forming along the Bay shore. In New South Wales, on the other hand, a confused situation developed. The law was alternately ignored, applied, re-interpreted and by-passed, and eventually incorporated into the Police Act of 1901, as section 77 of that Act.

In New South Wales, few communities could forget the bathing law altogether. Kiama was one place where the law was ignored. The law said that bathing was not allowed in public view, so the local residents simply went away from the town to a beach below a headland, where they could not be seen, and bathed there when they wished. So many people bathed in that place, and the practice of bathing became so established, that when, in the 1890s, some steps were cut down to the beach they became known as the ‘Golden Stairs’. Yet in the town the law was enforced.10

Newcastle was a more substantial town than Kiama but, like Kiama, Newcastle was close to the sea. In Newcastle, the law already seemed an unnecessary imposition by the 1860s, though prosecutions continued until the turn-of-the-century in a spiteful campaign. Whenever reasonable numbers of people were involved prosecution had an air of maliciousness to it; just two people might be dragged

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before the court out of almost fifty transgressors. If a long period of official inactivity was suddenly to be broken the unfortunate victims might have reason to suspect personal motives. In 1878, two young boys were prosecuted for bathing in daylight hours, and made to pay small fines. On that occasion, the boys were defended, in the newspaper, as courageous supporters of the rights of "British subjects".11

In Newcastle the initiative in bathing matters belonged chiefly to the police. By the 1860s local residents had conveniently re-interpreted the law on their own behalf to allow bathing up to 8am. and after 6pm., a confusion the police could decide to remember or forget.12 In 1872 the hours of 7am. to 7pm. were allowed but inconvenient. Then the police kindly announced when the law would be enforced or not.13 In 1877, however, in a particularly high-handed mood, the police decided to prosecute anyone bathing after 5am.14 In 1883 hundreds of bathers on week-day mornings attracted calls only for rescue equipment.15 By 1894 Council had constructed a bathing shed and at the opening ceremony both the Council and the police were commended by bathers for not enforcing the laws.16 By the 1890s with 13,000 people using the beaches on New Years' Day, and substantial numbers of them breaking the law, custom had simply overwhelmed the ability of the police force to enforce the law.17 The Council sought to repeal the laws in 1893 and in 1894; nevertheless, in 1900 there were occasional flurries by "bush lawyer policemen" who re-interpreted the law to forbid public bathing at any time and in any state.18 Again that behaviour by the police brought entreaties from the Council for the Government to repeal the law altogether.

From 1867, at least, local Councils in New South Wales were entitled to regulate and run public baths, although for 30 years they had no legal power to acquire the

11 Quotation from :NEWCASTLE MORNING HERALD,<Hereafter N.M.H.>14-1-1878.
12 N.C. 17-1-1866,2-10-1869.
13 N.C. 22-10-1872.
14 N.M.H.18-1-1877.
15 N.M.H.21-11-1883.
16 N.M.H.19-6-1894.
17 N.M.H.3-1-1894.
18 N.M.H.2-2-1893,21-4-1893, 2-2-1894,quotation from 10-2-1900.
waterfront land for them. For 30 years Councils operated illegally in providing baths, until the problem was noted and corrected, by legislation, in 1896. A similar confusion applied to bathing in the sea itself. On its own initiative the Newcastle Council acquired an extra two hours at either end of the day through its bylaws of 1879. As the Police Act still applied the bylaw about bathing was *ultra vires*. The Council again decided to permit all day bathing in 1894. Not until the 1894 proposal was scrutinised by authorities in Sydney did the legal status of the bylaws become clear; consequently, the proposal had to be disallowed. The Waverley Council, whose beaches included Bondi, Bronte and Tamarama also sought to stretch the law, in order to permit an extra two hours bathing in the morning; to achieve that objective a series of bylaws was proposed in 1889. In the messy legal operations perhaps the Mayor of Manly in 1889 had the best method. His zealous Inspector of Public Nuisances took it to be part of his proper routine to inspect the behaviour of bathers in the area, even into June. The Inspector took the chief nuisance to be improper dress rather than the fact of bathing; even then his Mayor gave him the word not to notice dress before 7am.

Newcastle Council's 1894 bylaw would have allowed all-day bathing; it was, however, found to be *ultra vires*. As a result of the decision to disallow the Newcastle bylaw, a Bill to permit local Councils to regulate bathing was introduced into the Legislative Council. The debate about that Bill indicates wide-spread acceptance of daylight bathing. The Legislative Council considered the Bill, and no voice was raised against burying the old Police Act. During the course of the debate it became clear that several of the members were themselves avid practitioners of ocean bathing, or intimately concerned with the matter. People should bathe when they wished; they should even be encouraged. Nevertheless, the measure lapsed because of disagreement over whether it was necessary to include some minimum requirements for dress, or whether that matter could best be left to the Councils and the people themselves. The Legislative Councillors believed that most men were, at that time, bathing naked, or with a covering having no more width than the "ordinary surcingle of a saddle". It appears that by 1894 the real point was no longer whether daylight bathing should be allowed, but how it should be conducted; yet the ban on daylight bathing remained until 1906.

19 *STATUTES OF NEW SOUTH WALES*, 60 VIC.NO.16.


From the 1850s onwards, the Victorian Councils implemented measures to separate the sexes while they bathed. The Victorian Councils used a variety of measures, at the one time, in order to enforce the separation of men and women at the beach. The measures might include defining specific areas of the beach for each sex, or establishing regulations about the hours when each sex could bathe. There might even be regulations to force all people into commercial or publicly-owned baths with screens, by banning beach bathing almost entirely. Allocating parts of the beach to men was, in fact, a way of guaranteeing them a place on the beach. The first Brighton bylaw of 1859 noted, as a separate qualification, that no man was to go within 200 yards of the beach when it was being used by a woman. The fact that a woman was to bathe apparently over-rode all other laws; if the reasons for that custom can be established, it may illuminate both the practice and the connotations of bathing.

In New South Wales as a whole, throughout the second half of the 19th century, women were assumed to be immune from prosecution under the law. They continued to bathe all day without notable interference. In Newcastle, where the city grew close to the sea and the people grew close to the beach, there was a particular area reserved by tradition to women and known as the ‘ladies bathing place’. The status of the ‘ladies bathing place’ was recognised by the men who formed committees to maintain it, improve it and provide access to it. Men were brought before the court for bathing in the women’s place, and a bylaw kept them from the cliffs above it. None of the legal quibbles or police interpretations was ever applied to women and the women’s bathing area remained an institution in the city until the First World War. In 1912, a government investigation into surf bathing found that the ‘ladies bathing place’ in Newcastle was the only one left in the State, which suggests that there had once been more.

There was a contrast between the ways in which men and women bathed in the late 19th century. Women bathed away from prying eyes, in a sheltered corner beneath a headland, or tucked into the crescent of a bay, in the baths and the


24 Municipality of Brighton; STANDING ORDERS AND BYE-LAWS. St. Kilda, 1859. No.5.

25 N.C. 17-1-1866, 28-2-1866. N.M.H. 29-1-1877, 4-12-1879, 9-1-1880, 17-3-1881, 13-4-1885, 5-11-1894.

26 New South Wales Surf Bathing Committee, (1912); EVIDENCE pp.145-146.
Figure 2-1: Slipping In. [Source: Queensland Railways; SOUTH COAST HOLIDAY RESORTS. 1912.]
ladies bathing places, amongst rocks or along a shelf that broke the waves. The women's preference seems to have been for relatively quiet water, and they seem to have worn skirts in the water. Perhaps they slid down into the still water or were quietly surrounded by it until they bobbed around. As women bathed in enclosures or places defined by custom, sheltered and exclusive to them, the practice, the implications and the conversations stayed secrets from the men. Perhaps the women carried on talking amongst themselves about their own matters, perhaps they continued friendships, perhaps they whispered secret things about the men. Other women might have found out things about some men that those men would not want to be known. The exclusive and secret practices of female bathers may have caused men to wonder exactly what went on when women bathed. Mixed bathing did not begin until early in the 20th century, at a time when the attire and conduct of male bathers was influenced by strict dress standards. The subject of those dress standards will be discussed below, but one reason why they were accepted in all their rigour was that women would begin to find mixed bathing acceptable. Men would then be able to watch their women as they bathed, yet some women stayed away and kept their secrets. In 1912, a Commissioner appointed by the New South Wales Parliament to assess the needs of surf bathers showed that the reluctance of the women to join the men disturbed him very much.

Separation of the sexes was a custom; the strength of that custom can be illustrated with an anecdote, an account of an incident which occurred in the Melbourne area in 1880, and was recounted by D.M.Gibb in his thesis on the history of Sandringham. On one occasion in 1880 an unidentified man came within sight of a naked Scottish woman on the beach at Sandringham. He communicated to the local newspaper the fact that he had felt a great shame in having seen her so. She had been inconsiderate by allowing him to be embarrassed, but it was he who felt naked without an umbrella to shield him from her view. It was not enough for him to look away, he wished to cover the sight of himself apparently watching. That anecdote suggests that the sight of a woman bathing was a

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28 NSW Surf Bathing Committee (1912); EVIDENCE. pp. 145-146.

cause of concern to men. There is a small body of evidence which suggests that, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, men were sometimes romantically aroused by the thought of a woman bathing, and that the sight was arousing because there was an affinity between men and water. In W.G.Henderson’s 1911 novel, *THE BATHERS*, the hero, a Minister of religion, felt that his love was a rush of water, that it eddied around the heroine. It was as if the sea was in him. An unidentified newspaper clipping from about 1906 used the anthropomorphic word ‘caress’ in order to suggest the way waves would handle a woman. In 1910, A.H.Adams, who wrote a serial on suburban life for *THE LONE HAND*, described the feeling of small waves rolling over a body as being a “provocative” experience. In a piece of voyeuristic light verse published in 1908, Frank Morton, a journalist and poet who worked in both Australia and New Zealand, wrote of a woman bathing in her tub, and said that the water gave out audible signs of joy when it enfolded her. Such examples suggest an ability on the part of male writers to find their own emotions embodied in the behaviour of the water; yet, if there was shame associated with bathing, it is more likely to have come from the behaviour of men than from the behaviour of waves.

All the restrictions on bathing were directed at men by men. Was there something about the way men bathed that Councils, proprietors of commercial baths and other public men considered wrong or shameful? When male bathing changed from a matter of hygiene to a recreation, were there any implications for morality in that change? If there was any moral shame to bathing, then that would show that the practice of bathing could have implications which reached into other areas of experience. The next part of the discussion of bathing laws and practices will show that there were moral implications to the act of bathing. Those implications depended on there being connections between bathing and nature, and the discussion of morality will be used to begin to draw out those connections.

If there was any moral shame to bathing, the characteristics of that shame are

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likely to be revealed by the interpretation of the bathing laws. By the 1880s there was one point which concerned all the Councils, one issue on which they tried to win. That issue was whether or not the male body should be 'encased' in cloth.\textsuperscript{34} As it happened, dress standards were the only area in which regulations were successfully enforced, though not until the early 20th century. If a body casing was the issue it may have been because new dress standards would deny men some feelings and sensations which they might otherwise have had, feelings which were themselves considered shameful.

While most women appear to have bathed dressed the men bathed naked, until they were ‘encased’ in cloth costumes at the turn-of-the-century. Male nudity caused great concern to waterside Councils in the late 19th century. The Inspector of Public Nuisances at Manly and the notables of the Legislative Council who stalled the law for all-day bathing were agreed on one thing. What they really had to worry about was the undress of male bathers. When the Newcastle Council tried to gain control of bathing with their own bylaws what they really wanted was some influence over the men who had interpreted the law to allow nude bathing up until 8am. and bathing at any time thereafter in proper costume. In 1902 the Manly Council received two letters about bathing on the same day. One was from a local newspaper man named William Henry Gocher, who advocated all-day bathing and noted that the police saw no problem with it as long as the costumes were up to standard. The letter was simply noted, presumably the issue was not considered to be as passionate a cause as Gocher wished it to be. The other letter was from a local resident complaining of the undisciplined nudity on the ocean beach in the early mornings. In that case, the Council felt that action was needed, for the men were undressing in front of women and children.\textsuperscript{35}

Up in Queensland at Yeppoon, where a small resort had developed to cater for the male society of Rockhampton, it looked as if the naked men were so entrenched women might never be able to bathe.\textsuperscript{36} Two successive Inspectors at Manly shifted the emphasis of their patrols entirely to nudity and to men bathing near women. In early May 1889 50 male bathers breaking the law in the early morning received only a caution about dress; by 1890 those who bathed in a full

\textsuperscript{34}N.M.H.14-12-1882 used the expression 'cloth casing'.

\textsuperscript{35}THE NORTH SHORE AND MANLY TIMES 6-12-1902. Manly Municipal Council; MINUTE BOOKS 1-12-1902.

costume were simply ignored although, a year later, when he confronted them, the Inspector found that it was still hard to convince nude morning bathers that they should bathe only when they were fully dressed. At Newcastle the police were ready to compromise by 1901. Up until 8am, nude bathing would be allowed; after that time a neck-to-knee costume was required. Three years later, the Mayor proposed the same compromise. That time, the bathers complied with the rules, and adopted full costumes for morning bathing; early-morning bathers had shown that they were prepared to accept the neck-to-knee covering. Presumably, full costumes were acceptable to the bathers because they were used to wearing them at other hours of the day although, even in 1904, some changed from skimpy trunks as the morning grew late. Four years later the State had a clear ordinance, trading increased hours for increased dress. While all-day bathing had slipped through the laws, the police and the inspectors had managed to change the dress standards of male bathers, from complete nudity to baggy and cumbersome neck-to-knee coverings.

Before 1860, when men had washed themselves in the sea, they soaked and rubbed themselves in the shallow parts of the beach, where the foam had slipped back into the shrinking waves, or in the rock pools and sheltered corners beneath a scenic cliff. Since the 1860s male bathers had moved out into the waves, with the water just above their waist, reaching up and subsiding as each wave closed and then departed. For the men who had been able to free themselves of the need to wash in the sea there was a new aim. If you had to use the beach for cleanliness that was one thing, but there was nothing to top the luxury of twenty minutes among the green curling breakers, as you breast their billowy crests, and feel the emerald column dashing over you, infusing energy and vigour into your frame...

Perhaps, in amongst the collapsing waves, men came as close as they could to the threatening forces of nature. In 1891 a Queensland travel writer, A. Meston, had recommended the ocean beaches of Southern Queensland for the delights that could

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37 Inspector of Public Nuisances, Manly; DIARY: 23-12-1888, 1-5-1889, 14-5-1889, 21-11-1889, 5-1-1890, 6-4-1890, 21-12-1890, 27-4-1891, 5-3-1893.

38 N.M.H. 20-9-1901.


40 N.M.H. 6-4-1908.

41 Quotation from N.M.H. 13-9-1877.
be had there but must stay unknown to anyone bathing in quiet water.\(^{42}\)

Force and excitement attached a quality to being in the sea, even if there was little danger. At Wollongong it was claimed the men’s baths scooped out of a rock platform provided safety without denying the peculiar feelings of facing up to a rushing wave.\(^{43}\) Even in commercial baths inside Botany Bay, the owners promised that the sea still powered in to Lady Robinson’s Beach and that the bathers would enjoy their “battle with the rollers”, and, “breasting” them, feel the “buffeting and excitement” from “live crystal waves...”.\(^{44}\) The delicious rumble took place just where the waves would slap the chest or rush the bather down.\(^{45}\) It was a place where the sea’s power seemed to concentrate. There the water threatened to pull them out, there it soaked them and was still about them, there it fought them, or ignored them, pushing straight through them. Men were bathing where the waves collapsed.

In Newcastle, in 1904, before the regulations about dress were enforced, men went naked into the water. Sometimes, when they had come out of the water, they ran, still naked, up and down the beach.\(^{46}\) In the early mornings the water might have been refreshing, even exciting. At dawn, half-way between the night and the day, men went into water that reached up half-way between their feet and their heads and, half-way between the sea and the shore, let the waves crash over them. When men ran around on the beach immediately after coming out of the water, it may have been because they were just as exhilarated as newspapers reported them to be and promoters suggested they would feel.\(^{47}\) While Newcastle Council was pushing for male bathers to dress in a neck-to-knee costume they were being resisted by men who said that there was a special enjoyment in bathing naked they could not get otherwise. It could not be the same bathing in a soggy

\(^{42}\) A.Meston; QUEENSLAND RAILWAY & TOURISTS' GUIDE. Gordon and Gotch, Brisbane, c1891. p.67.

\(^{43}\) South Coast Tourist Union; THE ILLAWARRA OR SOUTH COAST TOURIST GUIDE, 1899. Andrews and Cook, Sydney, 1899. p.68.

\(^{44}\) A PLACE OF PLEASURE; Some Notes on Lady Robinson’s Beach. Maclardy, Sydney, n.d. Quotations from pp.7-9.

\(^{45}\) N.M.H. 3-1-1894.

\(^{46}\) N.M.H. 31-10-1904.

Figure 2-2: Sensitivity. [Source: Philip; SIXTY YEARS...]
Swimming at Bondi at Dawning Day in the 'Eighties.
woollen case, a suit which merely hung from the shoulders. Against that the waves would just slap. In 1910, although another style of bathing had become popular by then, the writer Frank Fox still thought that the point of bathing was standing up to great breakers of ocean water, champaged to foam as they break their crests; and giving to the meeting body mighty thumps, massaging and bracing the muscles delightfully.

The physical act was the same and yet, by 1910, when dress standards had been enforced for six years, Frank Fox did not express any feelings of excitement about bathing, he did not think of bathing as an emotional activity, and he did not dream of running around on the beach. To Frank Fox the waves did not excite or tingle, just bump and massage.

Although there is no direct evidence for such an interpretation, the excitement which indirect sources attributed to male bathing suggests that the link between bathing and nature was that sensory stimulation created emotional excitement. If local Councils had tried to address moral issues by forcing men to be locked up in woollen costumes, perhaps it was to dull the stimulation of the senses they could have got from bathing naked. As the quotation from Frank Fox showed, dress standards had deprived men of sensations and sensibilities that might have led to shameful behaviour. The emotions involved in bathing naked would have included a sense of personal power. If there was any moral danger in bathing, it may have been because men did not stop feeling excited when they came out of the water; perhaps the public figures did not want women to see men like that, all naked and assertive, feeling their own power.

Potentially, at least, bathing and beach-going in the late 19th century was both emotive and thrilling. The question remains whether the excitement was simply an incidental feature of bathing, or essential to its purpose. That question can be approached by referring to the character of seaside resorts, to see if they were supposed to create feelings of excitement. If the resorts were supposed to create excitement, the purpose of taking a holiday by the sea would be to feel thrilled, and bathing would have been one of the chief means of meeting that aim. The importance of bathing to seaside holidays is suggested in the words that the Melbourne publisher, Cordell, used in 1880 to describe the summer holiday season. Cordell was writing for a wide audience, presumably using concepts and terms that

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48 N.M.H.31-10-1904.

would have been familiar to a large number of people; he called the summer the "bathing season."  

There had not always been specifically seaside visions in Australian holiday resorts. Some parts of the coastline which became popular for seaside excursions were originally opened as residential areas for the well-off and notable, without any particular seaside identity. That was especially true of areas developed in the 1850s or earlier. The suggestion made by the promoters of those resorts was that they had a vaguely rural character. Distance from the city, a quiet gardening air, and the substance of the houses and reputations, were supposed to be the attractions of buying a block in such a place, or visiting the area. Brighton, Victoria, from the 1840s and into the 1860s was a rural retreat only occasionally marred by crowds on the beach or railways. Further down the bay, a subdivision of the 1850s at Sandringham looked to creating a 'Gipsy Village', and then settled into a long period of rural gardening. From the 1850s on, a more successful 'village' grew on the harbour side of Manly.

The vision of an isolated rural retreat did not survive in recreational settlements along the coast in the second half of the century. The residential settlements along the shorelines away from the cities attracted transport facilities to themselves, although not always immediately. But roads and trains and boats or ferries increased the opportunities to reach the sea, and eventually opened up the coastline to other economic groups. Over the forty years from the time it was developed by H.G. Smith as a residential village and excursion destination, Manly attracted broad social patronage. It was well established amongst the middle classes of Sydney by the 1870s, and by the 1890s catered even for the urban poor with cheap excursion fares. This excursion traffic was not attracted by the village climate fostered for the residents but by a profusion of public recreation grounds and nature walks supplemented by showmanship and rides or other amusements, drawing people from the harbour and across to the sea. A souvenir illustration from the 1870s of the harbour beach showed the entrance to Manly as

Figure 2-3: Manly Beaches.
Figure 2-4: Natural Manly, c1875. [Source: SOUVENIR OF NEW SOUTH WALES. 1875.]
a quiet, restful and natural place, the few figures were isolated and unobtrusive. Manly was popular, although the image of it virtually denied that fact in order to strike a contemplative mood.

Manly’s great claim throughout the second half of the 19th century was its natural beauty, the contrast of harbour and sea, woods on North Head and its little indented bays, a profusion of walks that could take in the bare and exposed ocean beach as well as waterfalls or a creek with quaint bridges. It could all be captured close up or in panorama, with the view from the garden crossing to the field and from the field to the woods. In spring especially the woods exploded in colours and forms, with fragrances and great beauty. One of the main attractions of late 19th century Manly was its annual wildflower show, established in the early 1880s as a small church affair; within a few years the show was a major metropolitan event that appears to have lasted into the mid-1890s at least. The show gave a chance to prove that Australian nature was not grotesque, but delicate and subtle, worthy of close attention. The reputation was fading by the turn of the century with residential growth, and the “merciless plucking” of adored wildflowers."}54 By 1899 the magical Fairy Bower, a beautiful natural glen, was quite damaged, the plants, and presumably the fairies, simply trampled down."55

Further from the city, towns like Queenscliff and Sorrento and even Warrnambool in Victoria developed a more specifically seaside quality. Instead of providing rural residences for the metropolis those independent communities embodied especially seaside ideas. Elements of sensitive remembrance added to the attractiveness of Sorrento, with the site of Colonel Collins’ abortive settlement of 1803 and old haunts of William Buckley and his aborigines giving scope to reflect on failure, the open vagaries of history, and the irony of gentle peoples shot out of “Christian...humility...”. At Sorrento the first well sunk by Collins was still to be found and the visitors could drink from it."56 Queenscliff was an old memory for many emigrants, the first town to still their fears that Australia might all be barbarous."57 Shipwrecks on the way to Warrnambool gave a little bite to the


55MANLY NEWS.30-3-1899.

56CENTENNIAL ALMANAC,1888.FACTS ABOUT OURSELVES AND THE LAND WE LIVE IN.GUIDE TO SORRENTO.Melbourne?, 1888. Quotation from p.14

sentiments of Samuel Hannaford, a nature writer of the 1850s and 1860s. Hannaford was usually happy with a fare of open seas, rocks, melancholy skies and undulate land promising a quaint surprise.58

Sorrento had gained a significant impetus in the 1860s and 1870s when the actor and developer George Coppin took up an offer of land from an owner who had built there, found it relatively inaccessible and subsequently sought to encourage its growth to bring the facilities he wanted. Coppin built a hotel, guest houses and a road and tramway under the name of the Ocean Amphitheatre Company, referring to the back beach - where he provided paths and benches. The very name, 'Ocean Amphitheatre', was an apt description of the shape of the back beach, and suggests that time by the sea should serve the purpose of presenting a show of enjoyment and sentimental delight.59 By the 1880s other developers of more exclusively holiday resorts had turned to poetry and illustrations or decorated pages to prompt the moods which, they claimed, would necessarily be brought by the site. The Excelsior Land and Investment Company built a resort at Toronto, on Lake Macquarie, in 1887. The lavish affection which the promoters showed for Australian plants and colours dictated that the site should be an isolated locality by the water. On Lake Macquarie, a large number of hills and views in the background were said to be the true luxury.60 At Mount Martha on Port Phillip entrepreneurs seized the backing hill and its run down to sea cliffs to create a spectacular resort. As a service to their buyers the promoters created little walks along the edge of the cliff, cut through thick growth and opened in appropriate places to make a gentle frame in which to catch the rugged bits.61 As if to show that the seaside experience was an experience of nature, James Hingston, a travel writer of the 1860s and 1870s, felt that people returning from a stay at Lorne should take as a souvenir a potted fern.62

The qualities and significance of individual resorts must be set within the context

58 S. Hannaford; SEA AND RIVERSIDE RAMBLES IN VICTORIA; BEING A HANDBOOK FOR THOSE SEEKING RECREATION DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS. Heath and Cordell, Geelong, 1860. passim.


60 Excelsior Land, Investment and Building Company and Bank Ltd.; PLANS, VIEWS AND PARTICULARS OF THE TORONTO ESTATE, LAKE MACQUARIE. Sands, Sydney, 1887.


Figure 2-5: The Density of Ferns and Palms.
[Source: POSTCARD, stamped 1906.]
of the general attitude to nature and to the seaside. The emblematic attractions of the 19th century and early 20th century were the dense fern forests. Amongst the native plants they were the most readily adopted and appreciated; while they recalled British ferns their variety, size and locations were more exotic, distinctly native. Samuel Hannaford reported enthusiasm for them in Tasmania during the 1860s, where the vogue shaped gardens, filled living rooms and other indoor areas and gave a very definite accent to the demand for certain sorts of tourist scenery. On the mainland the vogue for ferns created a demand for the sort of scenery which could be found in the Illawarra and in Victorian forests or gullies that lay behind the sea. A similar approval greeted palms and Moreton Bay Figs, and early in the 20th century the politician W.M. Fleming noted an anecdote about Palm Flat near Terrigal. Locals had wanted the area preserved in its original state. So thick was the growth at Palm Flat that it blotted out the sun. The Lands Department, considering the preservation somewhat disbelievingly, sent an officer to assess the value of the area. He had been armed with the criteria for such decisions but when he got there and found that he could not see the sun that was enough. He had been convinced, the place should be a reserve. Just as dense, though perhaps more moist, Samuel Hannaford had found fern glens to be dark, quiet and soothing, as they spoke of a luxurious decay.

Travellers may have been attracted to the coastline by ferns and gullies, but the significance of the sea itself was quite different. If Samuel Hannaford said that fern glens were places to feel a mood of dark decay, the sea itself had only one allocated mood. The sea was for storms. Even on Port Phillip Bay the sea was apparently always rough. In 1880 it had been suggested that the best place to enjoy the sea was from the bluff at Schnapper Point. There the cliff face vaulted above the foam and presented the two in sharp contrast. The sea was furious, the cliffs resolute. The *ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO SYDNEY AND ITS SUBURBS*, published in 1882, vividly expressed the qualities of the sea. The guide said that visitors who went to Coogee in bad weather would be offered an exciting and awesome view. In a storm, spray would climb the rocks in the bay, the sea would become dark, the sky would descend on it, the spray would rise up and join the two together. The guide commented that six miles was not a long way to go for

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such a view. A more prosaic Sydney guide book of the 1890s broke through passages of spare writing to recall how the sea could foam. A hotelier at Kiama in 1916 offered not just real storms but historic storms, a site famous for its history of storms. In the early 1920s, in a very late expression of similar sentiments, the Victorian Government Tourist Bureau suggested that the best place to see a storm was Portland, and that any journey there should be made in the stormy season. Beyond the actual margins of the ocean, any 19th century seascape inevitably posted a ship on the furthest horizon. The presence of the ship implied that it was leaving the area of the painting for distant shores, and so suggested how vast the ocean was. The power of the sea might not always be obvious but, if it was not, that was just because the sea brooded. When men and women bathed in the sea in the late 19th century the unruly image of the ocean may have heightened their awareness of the contrasts and the symbolic importance of what they were doing, might have filled them with emotion.

Travel writers, promoters and etchers conveyed to the general public what it was like to be by the sea; it was they who assured visitors that the sea was stormy and the fern forests quiet, and it was they who could have re-inforced or replaced the emotions people might have taken from their own experience of the seaside. Because their work was readily available and accessible, if any element of society could prevent the spread of feelings and sensibilities from seaside life to all other facets of life it was pre-eminently the writers and promoters. Late 19th century travel writers often wrote for railway companies, in order to publicise train services. To achieve that aim, their works usually came out in free brochures or cheap books, distributed through travel agencies and the railways themselves; between 1860 and about 1910 there was a fairly coherent style in Australian travel writing. The practitioners of that style included James Hingston, who wrote on


67 THE HOTEL METROPOLE VISITORS' GUIDE TO SYDNEY, And the Various Health and Pleasure Resorts in the Vicinity. 5th Issue, 1894-5. Hotel Metropole, Sydney, 1894. p.54.


70 Of the authors mentioned, the only ones for whom no titles have yet been given are Lorck, Brady and Coghlan. E.J. Brady; PICTURESQUE PORT PHILLIP. Robertson, Melbourne, c1911. T. A. Coghlan; PICTURESQUE NEW SOUTH WALES: An Illustrated Guide for Settler and Tourist. Government Printer, Sydney, 1901. William Lorck, ed.; NEW SOUTH WALES PICTURESQUE RESORTS, Convenient to the Railways; Two Sections. Lee, Sydney, 1907. William Lorck, ed.; VICTORIAN ILLUSTRATED. Government Printer, Melbourne, 1909.
The characteristic feature of the late 19th century style of travel writing was its emotional content. The writers tended to invest the natural world and human world with emotive significance. Most of the writers showed a preference for places of contrast, failure, decay, death and danger, yet they do not appear to have intended their readers to become gloomy or depressed or dispirited. Early in his career, in 1886, Francis Myers had condemned Marcus Clarke for his gloom, for his tendency to cast the scenery in a dreary tone and to melancholy effects. Francis Myers thought that Marcus Clarke even denied how beautiful the country was in the forests and along the coast, in the mountains and in the gullies. They were not romantics who believed that nature had a personality, and that the personality of nature was overwhelming, to be regarded with awe. They did not think that nature had human moods and that they should show the same moods. They noted the changes and drama in nature and delighted in having noticed. They did not feel the strength of nature and so feel powerless; they felt its strength and, because they were capable of recognising that strength, they felt greatly stimulated, greatly excited, immensely powerful. William Lorck categorized locations such as mountains, rivers, plains and caves for what they could offer the human imagination; his great interest was how a place and a climate with such picturesque and imaginative qualities would come to have energetic and resourceful visitors and citizens. The picturesque travel writers were active from 1860 to about 1910. In 1886, at the height of the style of picturesque writing and a picturesque attitude to nature, Francis Myers had wondered if anyone who had ever been caught in a storm by the sea, with trees


shaking, leaves torn off, water hurled as if it was smoke and the cliffs constantly and furiously challenged, could ever miss feeling a great and deep "elation".73 In 1911, at the end of the period, E.J. Brady thought that there was no greater thing than to stand on a hill above a fertile land, perceiving all much more quickly and sensitively than otherwise, feeling that the morning was a morning within himself. On such a commanding height and impressive day one would know74...

an exaltation, a sense of human power and dominance which the clear hill air stimulates to the point of intoxication.

What mattered to the 19th century travel writers was what was in front of them, what would be in front of any traveller. When they became excited it was because of what they had seen. Meston travelled to Mackay and saw its prosperity and so eulogized the pioneers who had brought the town so far so quickly.75 In Tasmania the Union Line of Steamers suggested a tour of Port Arthur, Eaglehawk Neck, the Tasman Arch and the Blowhole nearby. Those were places of beauty and of a contrast with the recent past. To feel the horrors it was suggested one should turn to Marcus Clarke's novel, but once the ruins had been seen the real joy of those parts were the pretty walks along Eaglehawk Neck and the pleasant beauty of Port Arthur with its English trees.76 Myers stood before the ruins at Peats' Ferry and felt that was a place where great human passions had been worked out, happiness, sadness and tenderness which had all run to ruin. Myers went so far as to admonish anyone who could not see the same things for being inattentive to what was around them.77

To the picturesque writers, human triumph and human failure belonged as much to the present as to the past. James Hingston referred residents and visitors alike to the cemeteries and failed industries of Melbourne. At Deep Creek the kaolin deposits had once been used to make crockery and plates, great hopes were built, but they failed. He wanted to remind people of failure. So many reputations had failed in Australia. Perhaps there were not so many ruined buildings in the 1860s

73Myers;COASTAL SCENERY.... Quotation from p.25.

74E.J. Brady;PICTURESQUE PORT PHILLIP.Robertson,Melbourne,cl911. Quotation from p.12.

75A. Meston;QUEENSLAND RAILWAY AND TOURISTS' GUIDE.Gordon and Gotch, Brisbane, c.1891. p.125.


77Myers;COASTAL SCENERY. pp.27,29,32.
but prominent people whose status had collapsed were legion, and instead of seeking to visit old castles and the like, as was done in Europe, in Australia the human catastrophes were worth pondering. At the Fitzroy Gardens he recalled the many suicides and asked how it was possible in a land and place of beauty to feel such deep unhappiness. Visiting the Melbourne Cemetery the habit of patience and care to notice would help to fill out one's sense of life and loss; the cemetery, like all other places, was a place at which to come in contact with such emotions, a place to summon them up and give them exercise. James Hingston was not morbid. He had learnt to see and convey the special feelings and emotions within even the more obvious elements of contemporary life. Even the recent past could be a prompt to emotion. If the attitude of an anonymous Tasmanian author of the turn-of-the-century was typical then the fate of the Aborigines could also have hinged on the efforts of late 19th century Australians to cast the fate of the Aborigines in a particular emotional light. As it was, the anonymous author felt the extinction of the Tasmanian Aborigines showed that the route to complete annihilation was a quick one, no matter how hard a heart might beat, all would become "dust beneath the sun". In that case the Aborigines were important as a prompt to melancholy. The survival of the remaining Aborigines could have been viewed with unconcern; if their lives had not been precarious the Aborigines could not be prompts to melancholy, could not be seen with sympathy.

The picturesque writers all shared a style of writing, a narrative where the highlights were as much the emotive qualities of a place as the physical look of the same place. Francis Myers was probably the most proficient exponent of that style; for some of the other writers, such as James Hingston, interspersed their books with spare descriptive passages. Myers' style is therefore the best indication of the general attributes of the emotive narrative style. Born in 1854, a young man when his work came to prominence in the 1880s and early 1890s, Myers pursued journalism in Sydney and as 'Telemachus' of the ARGUS in Melbourne. Along with W.H.Traill and Frank Morton, J.F.Archibald counted Myers as one of the three redeemers of Australian journalism, writers who made it literature. Myers had been a bohemian in the circle of the New South Wales politician William Bede Dalley and wrote constantly of the beauty of nature and the power


of man in Australia, until he suffered an eclipse in the 1890s. Appropriately, that was the decade in which an image of hardship, futility and mere perseverance was fostered for the inland plains. The launching of THE LONE HAND in 1907, with an urban, modern and even reformist tone brought him once more to the fore but he died on assignment at Jindabyne in that same year. When it was formed the magazine had found him "toiling somewhere in darkness...".81

In his writing, Myers took a series of experiences and incidents in special detail, his own experiences of a journey he had made, and made them prospective, as though they would be the future experiences of other travellers on other journeys. Details of tints of the sky and shades of a tree or a river or a hillside over time, under particular conditions, changing in a course of hours, unexpected occurrences and departures from a plan were made to seem objective, as though what he had seen was what any other traveller might come to see and feel. But what was a prospect for a traveller was present to the reader. In that sense his imaginative discourse included his readers as participants and may have promoted the same attitudes and feelings in his readers as he himself enjoyed.

In the early 1890s Francis Myers made a trip up Mt. Buffalo in Victoria.82 He went with a guide so he wrote of the experience of going with a guide. On the journey to the summit the rocks and trees and shadows seemed weird so Frank Myers wrote that the shapes were "shapes of horror, awe and dread".83 That made Mt. Buffalo a place of changing and unexpected sentiments. When Myers got to the top his sentiments changed. He thanked God for the mountains and what they could show people. Then, in his book, written for the Victorian Railways, he conveyed his memories of the trip as though they were present experiences, and he led his readers through them. He remembered that on that day there were no gaps between the earth and heaven, and he laid it down as a general and current truth that84 -

There are days when the great gulf which separates the world from that which is beyond, seems not all void, when a spirit broods again on the chaos of our dark, uncertain life, and we feel as though once more the words are spoken 'Let there be light'.

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82 This paragraph is based on: F. Myers ["Telemachus"] ed.; THE VICTORIAN TOURISTS’ RAILWAY GUIDE. Ferguson and Mitchell, Melbourne, 1892. The entire passage is on pp. 77-81.

83 Ibid. Quotation from page 79.

84 Ibid. Quotation from p. 81.
This view was implied to be, all at once, an eternal truth, a personal memory, and an image presented directly to the readers imagination. As soon as he had stated that view from the mountains, Myers broke it again, remembering the human delight of creating echoes in the valleys around.

Narratives of the kind which Myers wrote progressed sequentially but mixed and changed the tense. Perhaps because the tenses were mixed the differences between the writer and the readers would be confused too, and the readers could well have imagined that they had already taken the trip, already seen what there was to see and already felt all there was to feel. Those narratives might have served to inculcate both a habit of attentiveness and the sense of the particular qualities Myers wished his readers to see. The involvement Myers fostered was an imaginative involvement, the journeys he posited were not so much physical as imaginative. The country through which the journey should be made was not simply a place of objects, monuments and sights, but a country of imagery, reaction and emotion. Myers and the picturesque authors who had preceded him, and the authors who would follow him, would supply those images and appropriate reactions, the required emotions and the sense of what qualities life and nature had. Perhaps to sit in a chair reading such writing, considering such trips, being carried through them and then returning with the close of the narrative to the city or the town was already to know and to have such sensibilities and emotions, and so to carry them into the city itself and then beyond. The grotto in Pitt Street suggested that there was a path leading from the feelings of going to the beach and the sensations of bathing to the rest of life, to nature and society. The example of Francis Myers suggests that the path between bathing and nature was laid by emotive travel writing, which made it seem as if the whole world should be permeated by emotions rooted in the dramatic qualities of nature and the receptive capacities of human beings. Such drama could be felt amongst the breakers; the resorts would provide only support for those feelings, and nature itself provided many analogies of dramatic excitement. By following the guide of emotional reaction and writing, sentiments formed at the beach, nurtured on holiday, may have reached deep into the structures of urban life.

85 Myers; COASTAL SCENERY. F. Myers; BEAUTIFUL MANLY; ITS APPROACHES, SURROUNDINGS, CHARMS AND HISTORY, with Visitors' Guide To all places of Beauty, Rest and Sport. Sydney, 1885. F. Myers; BOTANY BAY; Past and Present. Woods, Sydney, 1885. F. Myers; IRRIGATION OR, THE NEW AUSTRALIA. Spectator, Melbourne, 1891. F. Myers; 'Telemachus' [edt.; THE VICTORIAN TOURISTS' RAILWAY GUIDE. Ferguson and Mitchell, Melbourne, 1892. This last volume provides some of the best examples of his style, eg. on the passage of a sunset at St. Kilda, pp. 25-6, the qualities of a dense forest at Mt. Juliet and waterfalls at Marysville, culminating in a storm, pp. 64-68, another view from a great height, at Sandhurst, and his invitations to feel what he has felt, pp. 120-124.
Chapter 3

'OUR THIRD ORDER.'

Between 1871 and 1921 the populations of Sydney and Melbourne rose sharply. The population of Melbourne increased more than three and a half times, and that of Sydney grew over six times as large. In 1871, the population of metropolitan Melbourne was 207,000; by the next census, in 1881, that figure had reached 283,000, and the metropolitan population continued to rise dramatically over the next forty years. By 1891 there were 491,000 people in greater Melbourne and in 1911 the population stood at 589,000, reaching 766,000 in 1921, when metropolitan Melbourne reached from Preston in the North to Sandringham in the South, and from Footscray in the West to Nunawading in the East. A similarly dramatic growth took place in Sydney. The population of metropolitan Sydney stood at 137,000 in 1871, reached 225,000 by 1881, and 383,000 at the census of 1891. At the time of Federation, in 1901, greater Sydney housed 488,000 people, ten years later there were 629,000 Sydney residents and, in 1921, 899,000 people lived in an area bound by the sea on the East and reaching inland to Ryde, Strathfield and Hurstville. The sheer growth in population of the major cities was accompanied by two important phenomena; an increase in the proportion of city dwellers to the whole population, and the accommodation of this growing population by spreading houses across broad areas of land. The key point for this thesis is that between 1880 and 1920 urban Australia became suburban Australia. This Chapter contends that the demand for suburban housing - separate homes on individual blocks in landscaped surroundings - expressed prevalent ideas about nature and its importance to industrial life. The first Chapter was based on a link between bathing and the experience of nature; this Chapter shows a link between suburban subdivision and the experience of nature. Those two points, together, show the relationship between bathing and suburban life; bathing involved emotions which justified, for those who could afford it, a suburban life style rather than life in inner city tenements.

This Chapter begins by showing that the commentaries of the travel writers moved very readily into themes of the nature of modern life, its peculiar problems and also the remedies for those problems. The 'Natatorium' in Pitt Street featured
a bath in a grotto, and brought a grotto into the city. The picturesque travel writers tried to express what was beautiful about fern grottoes; they also tried to express what was beautiful about cities. The scope of travel writing took in the character of industry and issues of a medical nature. The ease with which travel writers made the transition from one subject to another suggests that the various subjects were not considered to be entirely different in the late 19th century. The example of the travel writers suggests how values formed at the beach could guide the social thinking and behaviour of holiday-makers. If the feeling of going to the beach and ideas about modern industrial life were directly related to each other, beach-going would have had a direct role in the development of late 19th century and early 20th century urban life.

If the travel writers had any influence on industrial life, that influence would have been made possible because those writers invested their accounts of the city with the same strong emotions with which they invested the natural world. The picturesque writers cherished urban life and modernity. Frank Myers and Sir Timothy Coghlan both loved dainty little wildflowers or cabbage palms and little waterfalls. They also found the city beautiful, even the filthy air it cast up from chimneys and factories. Both writers liked the end of the day when, in Sydney, the remnants of the day's labour drifted about in black clouds above each house or building. Smoke would settle on the city and briefly catch alight when the sun withdrew. While the sky appeared to sear from the smokestacks below the journalist and the statistician alike could catch a glimpse of how much effort had been made that day.¹

In 1880 the publisher Cordell suggested that, down in Victoria, along Port Phillip Bay, travellers should take advantage of the view from Arthur's Seat.² From there one could see the bay and the indentations running back around it to Melbourne. From that distance Melbourne would appear surrounded by a great expanse of trees and agricultural land. Far enough distant to be seen whole, the city was smothered under black air. Cordell advised that the tourist should not be alarmed, the black was not the frightening black of a bushfire. It was the beautiful black of industries and striving families. To the traveller of the 1880s the view was supposed to seem natural, it was proper for the black city to sit beside the forests and the plains and the sea. The whole complex made for a


²Cordell; Op. Cit. pp.11-12.
Figure 3-1: Man in his setting.
[Source: Meston;
QUEENSLAND RAILWAY...GUIDE.
c1891.]
SCRUB SCENE NEAR YANDINA, N.C.LINE
spectacular panorama and Cordell held that it would make a spectacular memory, a memory to nourish the tourist in the same way as a view of the sea itself would feed those who saw such a view.

If a picturesque writer and traveller went inland from the cities, away from the sea and the dense forests, and looked down on the great inland plains they might feel a great sense of dissatisfaction. Myers felt that there was no significant agriculture out on the plains, no mine or factory or chemical plant, nothing but squatting, bare pasture that seemed wasted because men had not exerted themselves enough over it. Myers felt that urban society should march out into the waste and push the pastoral life style into oblivion. Myers thought that the existing rural society should be supplanted by one attuned to the dynamic cities and dependent on their railways and machines. Sheep should be replaced with agriculture or viticulture and dense settlements and the prosperity of many rather than the unworthy wealth of the few. Myers tried to elucidate the great qualities of human works, and the drama of bringing about great changes, to lend excitement to daily life as well as to a holiday or a trip away.

The picturesque rural hero was not a drover or a stockman or a squatter. To the picturesque travel writers those people just walked across empty plains and set no new towns upon the land. The squatters might just as well walk off the land as over the land. To a writer and compiler such as William Lorck, timber-getters were the exciting rural workers. Along the plains and escarpments by the coast, following the rivers back up into the mountains, in northern New South Wales, or in the Illawarra, in the thick Victorian forests, the timber-getters had physically to confront massive obstacles, they cleared forests that might be thought impenetrable and made productive land out of beautiful land, they replaced a profusion of giant trees and ferns with huts and children. As in Frederick McCubbin's 1906 tryptych, The Pioneer, the timber-cutters cleared a way for towns and cities to grow behind them. Francis Myers thought that the spread of urban society would, inevitably, destroy much beautiful country, but he felt that the loss would be compensated by the beauty of the towns, that new beauties would surge into the barren pastoral country. Myers wished to see city people move out into the Mallee to make new towns, and the proponents of irrigation chose him to convey the potential. Both Myers and the irrigators believed that the new towns should

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3. This paragraph summarises F. Myers edt., THE VICTORIAN TOURISTS' RAILWAY GUIDE, Ferguson and Mitchell, Melbourne, 1892, pp. 120-123, 151-152.

4. W. Lorck edt., NEW SOUTH WALES PICTURESQUE RESORTS, Convenient to the Railways, Section 1, Lee, Sydney, 1907, pp. 140-141.
be without the degraded underside of the metropolis, towns with just the best of modernity, the machines, and houses, and education and fairer shares of happiness. Machines would bring the ancient waiting water to the surface, and the harsh soil would soak.\(^5\)

The late 19th century saw the old Australian pastoral society lose both population and importance to the large cities along the Australian coastline. In the cities new wealth came increasingly to depend on offices and businesses and factories and railways and mines. That new order was what the travel writers and nature lovers had wanted, for the reason that modern urban and industrial society seemed to them to bring more drama and excitement into the world than, so they thought, had existed under the old pastoral life-style. In turn, industrial society paid at least symbolic homage to the importance of nature. Graeme Davison has noted that the official dais at the 1880 International Exhibition of industrial products in Melbourne was fully bedecked in fern fronds.\(^6\) The excitement and aggressively modern attitudes of 'Marvellous Melbourne' are a reminder of the almost universal commitment to material progress in the late 19th century, a commitment to seeing industrial life as something glorious.

The contemporary medical literature on the problems of industrial civilisation suggests that some of the human costs of that glory were already felt at the time of that 1880 exhibition. Late 19th century treatises on popular medicine convey the general sense that the industrial glory of society had put some very serious demands on the people who served that society. In much of that popular literature the dominant concern seems to be whether or not modern individuals could cope with modern society, whether the patients who went to see doctors in that age were not symptoms of a general malaise. As T.S. Pensabene has indicated, professionalised medicine only began to replace these broad issues with the clinical appraisal of particular diseases and specialised treatments in the 1880s.\(^7\) Between the 1860s and the 1880s there had been a profusion of medical theories, treatments and practitioners. Between 1880 and the early 1900s the old practices confronted the new profession. Because the old principles were often holistic and readily adopted by the general public, popular medical ideas were to be found both in tracts and in guide books or travel brochures.

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\(^5\) F. Myers; *IRRIGATION; OR, THE NEW AUSTRALIA*. Spectator, Melbourne, 1891, pp. 32-33.


\(^7\) T.S. Pensabene; *THE RISE OF THE MEDICAL PRACTITIONER IN VICTORIA*. Health Research Project, Research Monograph 2, Australian National University, Canberra, 1980.
A patient's incapacity to serve the modern world could take the form of simple self-doubt or a deadly disease. Mild self-doubt could be easily remedied. One anonymous travel writer of the turn-of-the-century told of how he left Melbourne for Tasmania and began to feel that his life in Melbourne was not very great. The writer had been through a storm on the crossing and, compared to that, city life seemed to be just a busy rush over tiny things. The storm was dramatic but politics, the stock exchange and the social round did not seem to bear close scrutiny. But as his journey through Tasmania continued he regained his sense of excitement about people and about the world. A trip into a deep gully, a glance at happy children, and an inspection of a mine calmed his doubts and reminded him of the passions appropriate to modern times. In 1891, 1899 and again in 1917 local tourist authorities and transport companies considered that mine inspections and tin smelters were vital and interesting attractions of Tasmanian holidays because of the massive work mining and smelting involved and the dramatic way in which the work was performed.8

Modern life was lived, claimed The Age in 1897, at "a pace that kills". Businessmen, professionals, labourers and shop employees all suffered because the modern world was so massive and so great.9 The cause of many diseases in the late 19th century was often attributed to modern society itself. The diseases themselves were often manifest as a derangement of the ability to partake in the modern world. At the simplest level, industrial life was blamed for painful stomachs and liver complaints and so for personal bitterness. The English writer Henry Wheeler and the Victorian practitioner Albin Lurz, two popular authors of the 1890s, who each introduced medical principles to the general public, both traced many diverse health problems back to digestive, bowel or liver problems caused by inadequate diets.10 Those two authors said that the cause of those dietary problems was itself to be found in the rushed life-style of the times. Because modern city residents went constantly to meetings, or talked, or changed from one task to the other, they had been forced to eat the wrong kinds of foods or to rush their food down when eating meals. Both Wheeler and Lurz showed that although diets were upset by the pace of economic life, the consequences could range much deeper.

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9Quotation from THE AGE. 22-12-1897.

The general tendency of popular medicine in the late 19th century was to treat the entire body as a system. Before the 1880s orthodox medical ideas also saw human beings as systems. Once an imbalance had become manifest it was simply a matter of time before the whole system would fail. The body would either be cured or it would degenerate. To come home from work tired could eventually lead to death. One would not eat properly, and so not sleep properly, the next day work might be just as much of a strain but the ability to sustain it would be reduced. After a few days the body would not function properly, it would not expel its poisons and the poisons would collect somewhere in the body. The specific type of disease often depended on where the poisons collected.11 If a patient was unlucky the poisons could accumulate where they caused consumption. To avoid consumption it might be necessary, as Dr. Dougan Bird propounded in 1863, to seek a complete change of lifestyle in order to avoid the social and environmental grounds for the derangement of the system.12

Orthodox doctors, such as W.H.Cutts in the 1880s, more unorthodox medical practitioners such as Albin Lurz in the 1890s, and travel writers such as the anonymous ‘J.S.’ at the turn-of-the-century, all saw that one kind of disease bulked largest of all. It was universally felt that modern life had turned the body system askew, thrust forward the brain, demanded too much of it, exercised it beyond its proper balance with the body. If that dependence on the brain continued, said ‘J.S.’, the people of the future would have puny frames and enormous heads to accommodate their overworked brains.13 Medical writers claimed to find the symptoms on all levels of society. Between them, Henry Wheeler, Albin Lurz, W.H.Cutts, J.Smith and an anonymous writer in the Melbourne Review in 1876 managed to trace the damaging influence of brain work to professionals, who used their brains to the exclusion of their bodies, to business men, who pushed their brains in many directions at once, to school-children who had been worked too hard mentally at school, and to workers in factories, who had to stretch their mental capacities in order to control the new machines. The same writers also found sufferers who worked in shops, and housewives who had to concentrate all their capacities in order to meet the modern demands for efficiency and cleanliness. Even in the social whirl, women who danced too much or too fast and always kept


12S.Dougan Bird; ON AUSTRALIAN CLIMATES AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN THE PREVENTION AND ARREST OF PULMONARY CONSUMPTION. Longman, Green, London; 1863.

one eye on new styles and subtle signals stressed their nervous capacities beyond what they could take.\textsuperscript{14} Fast, rational, all-knowing, the modern mind had apparently out-stripped its previous capacities, out-stripped the body it supported and which supported it, pretended to be a separate creature. Cutts, Wheeler, Lurz and Smith had attributed many gradual and inexorable diseases to disorders of the brain, diseases which might only be revealed in people who walked absent-mindedly, their eyes fixed on something unseen, who drifted at work, or could not sustain the perfection of which they were capable, who slept poorly or turned to drink but who had nevertheless begun the steep slide into an asylum or an early grave. Apparently, the times had made them use the mind as it had never been used in the past, the times conspired against the patients. The times stole the vitality and confidence it took to serve the times.

A Victorian Parliamentary Commission investigating the treatment of the insane in Victoria in the 1880s found that virtually any group or person unable to undertake an active role in society could be placed in an asylum. The unclean, the poor, senile, sad, deluded and incapable were excluded from society, and doctors might commit a patient for not having right ideas.\textsuperscript{15} An anonymous commentator in the \textit{Melbourne Review} in the 1876 pointed to the proportionately much larger number of people in asylums in Victoria than in England in order to introduce to the middle class public the point that brain disease was a pervasive and significant problem in contemporary society.\textsuperscript{16} In 1899 \textit{The Age} took the view that the numbers of insane people, the range of neurotic disorders and the prevalence of suicide were a reflection on how demanding modern life could be.\textsuperscript{17} Over the previous two decades medical writers, such as the medical practitioners who contributed testimonials to the \textit{CENTENNIAL ALMANAC} of 1888, a promotional pamphlet designed to show the virtues of the Victorian resort of Sorrento, had found the diseases of civilisation to include paralysis, epilepsy, neuralgia, hysteria, anaemia, inflammation of the brain, brain fever and water in the head. More generally the same doctors felt that the consequences of overusing the brain might include a feeling of enervation, of being too weak to carry on, a


\textsuperscript{16}\textit{Mental Disease and Modern Civilisation',\textit{THE MELBOURNE REVIEW}.No.5,[1876?] pp.36-54,esp.pp.37-42,46.

\textsuperscript{17}\textit{The Age.},30-3-1899.
reluctance to care any more. Throughout the cities the medical practitioners claimed to find people for whom the big tasks were all too much, who had a 'general debility' and from whom a precious psychic vigour had simply drained.\(^{18}\)

In 1897 *The Age* still subscribed to a view of brain work which had been held in unorthodox medical theory since the 1870s or earlier. The theory held that all work involved the destruction of matter in the body; as *The Age* said, modern merchants and modern salesmen had to "expend an exorbitant amount of brain tissue..." each day, simply in order to stay competitive.\(^{19}\) Every time a man thought he lost matter from his brain, it shed remnants through his body. In one version the process was said to be as if he had dropped a rock into the water of his body and great ripples must be formed for a small wave to spread.\(^{20}\) W.N.Richards, a Sydney sexual therapist of the 1880s, found that the greatest effects of brain work would be felt in the testicles, as they had much the same matter as the brain, and the same convoluted structure. The force sent out from a man's head echoed there, and could be lost from there. Richards taught that when a man satisfied the sexual cravings that originated in his brain work the nervous exhaustion reached back up the spinal chord and became manifest in the brain itself. That theory suggested that a two-way traffic had been set up to the exclusion of all else. Only one way existed to break it, the relative strength of the physical body had to be restored, the muscles, including the heart, had to be developed, there must be competing impulses against the sexual brain. Richards taught that, once a man had regained his lost physical strength, the body could manage and limit the effects of intellectual effort, work could proceed more perfectly, and the body could assume once more its place in sexuality, which Richards said was in ministering to mutual pleasure.\(^{21}\)

E.N.Raymond, a proponent of physical exercise during the 1890s, believed that exercise would have beneficial effects for both men and women. He thought that women were as psychically competent and powerful as men were, but that women had less physical strength and therefore an imbalance between desire or apparent capacities and the ability to make them count in the world, to bring them into

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\(^{19}\) Quotation from *The Age*, 22-12-1897.


That theory would have made it proper for a woman to feel tormented, for her spirit to set her up for what she could never do. Perhaps the presumed emotional imbalance in women led to the late 19th century belief that women were peculiarly likely to become hysterical or to faint at public events. W.N. Richards proposed a sexual cure. Women had desires; if a man did not meet them she would have grounds to leave him and seek her satisfaction elsewhere. Richards taught that in marriage hysteria, nervous irritability or shyness and a lack of constancy would vanish from a young woman. With a man the burning a woman might feel inside herself could suffuse her as a reaching joy. Richards advised that the marriage bed could be a place of "hallowed ecstatic and transporting delight."

Raymond was a follower of the British exercise theorist Eugen Sandow who had developed a range of exercises for both men and women and who toured Australia and New Zealand in 1902 with great success, giving public demonstrations and instruction on his system to the military. Sandow held that the human body was a muscular system, and that muscular fitness was necessary for its proper functioning. Any breakdown in muscular health could lead to a comprehensive breakdown in other physical aspects and in nervous health. As the body exercised to his system, and apparently improved its internal musculature, those muscles would push the blood along better, expel the wastes quicker and process food more efficiently. In a similar way, Albin Lurz had publicised a method of moving along the street in order to shake the organs and break up the quiet fluid pools that formed and stagnated in the body. According to Lurz one should progress with a gentle trot, broken now and then by a simple skipping movement. As long ago as the 1860s James Hingston had advocated walking in order to breathe clean air that would flush poisons from the system. Hingston felt that, sitting in an office or a living room, the bad expired air simply accumulated in a fog around

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one's head, to be sucked back in and undo its good work. Hingston taught that walking outside was the remedy, for every step carried you first into the old air, but then you broke through it and the next suck was taken in clean air, which once inside would flush the system. The important thing about collecting plants and shells and views, said the naturalist Samuel Hannaford in 1856, was the exercise it gave.

Walking outside could be important in another sense too. Part of the theory of the mental enervation of modern civilisation was that true mental health rested on healthy impressions. What the brain could do was assumed to be seated in what it had received and stored. A healthy brain was made healthy by the impressions fed into it. In an office or a factory, reading or writing, the stimulation would have been specific and limited. The anonymous critic in the Melbourne Review for 1876 voiced a common concern by lamenting that too many human faculties remained unused and atrophied. If that was so then what came from the brain would become too tight in scope and lack the broad perceptions which could give them effectiveness and a comprehensive quality. To restore a proper balance in the brain immediate sensations and pleasures must replace the constricted and contrived labour of the factory, office, shop and club. Such sensory stimulation was readily found in the delights of nature. Alexander Sutherland, a 'rambler' and writer of the 1880s, urged that people should just lie down in a patch of grass, turn off the rational mind and drink with the senses, passively receive all that there was to be given, gratefully garner the qualities of the natural world, stretch the ability to perceive qualities, be tantalised and excited; Sutherland thought that ordinary human beings should imitate the legendary Antaeus, who touched the earth and was fed its strength.

If picturesque travel was important to modern urban life, then it may have been because the picturesque writers had impressed upon their readers the need to be attentive to nature; therefore, picturesque travelling may have been a way in which to garner the kind of immediate impression which popular medical theory held as


29 'Mental Disease'. pp.51-52.

the starting point in returning the urban worker to health. One theme recurred constantly throughout both the long disquisitions of the literary travel writers and the brief introductions of the guide book compilers. As one handbook to Newcastle put it in 1907 the city, with its panoramic views of gardens, docks, wharves, the colliery at Stockton, gentle country and rough country, beaches, the open sea and the night time spectacle of the city itself provided "a feast of delight to the senses...". Travel administered to the unused senses, and because it gave exercise to unused human capacities travel could care for the health and vigour of the whole being. Discursive travel writers drew out the implications of the quality of immediate perceptions. William Lorck felt that people were always happier in rural areas, where minds and eyes never had to be closed, noses rarely blocked, where quiet places and high places and open places were always nearby. Rural people had a fuller red to their cheeks, they were rarely as sick as people in the cities, they played sports more vigorously and displayed something which Lorck called 'surplus energy'. An anonymous woman travelling through tropical Queensland about 1912 found that she herself became more reflective and healthy as her trip progressed and that the residents she met along the way were more serious, industrious and content and had more right ideas than those she knew from the city. Jealous and tired city workers could only be in awe.

In 1897 *The Age* took it as a certain truth of science and philosophy that recreation is not merely a pleasure to the senses but an actual re-creation of the powers.

A guide to Port Phillip Bay in 1874 doubted that it was ever possible to return from the sea, with its storms and excitation of the senses, without both health and vigour, without a delightful energy which could be preserved in the memory. But the *Australian Medical Gazette* in 1888 thought the benefits could be even more specific. Back from the sea sufferers of nerve diseases, of insomnia or anaemia, or impotence, phthisis, hysteria, blennorrhea, leucorrhea, women's

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34 *The Age*, 4-1-1897. Emphasis in the original.

diseases, consumption and respiratory diseases could return with a rude health. The chlorides, the carbonates, the animal and vegetable matter of the sea water in which they had bathed and which they drank would have had a cathartic effect. Organs and their systems would have been stimulated to purge the poisons, to pump the good blood while the good, ozone rich, air of the sea filled their frames.36 The sea and countryside could sculpt a strong being for modern life.

When, in 1863, S.Dougan Bird, who became President of the Medical Society of Victoria in 1869, noted that his age was rapidly becoming an excessively intellectual age of overwork, and that a decline in the nervous capacity of modern workers was leading to the rise of tuberculosis, he pushed the current premises of treatment a little further than they had been pushed. As he set out the theory, all schools of medical thought were agreed that the type of life which led to nervous degeneration, the collapse of the purgative system and thus tuberculosis, had to be avoided and counteracted, and all agreed that a healthy environment and personal hygiene were needed to maintain a healthy state. But Dougan Bird thought that the importance of the broad environment, the very climate of the place, had hitherto been undervalued. Instead of being a peripheral matter, the climatic conditions should really be the centrepoint of treatment, because as climates differed so did the life people lived in them. A sick Englishman should look to the moderate Victorian climate as the starting point for a chance to build a more active outdoors life than the one to which he had been accustomed. Even the Australian towns, never entirely hygienic, allowed for open windows and sunlight reaching into some of the rooms and, despite the initial disappointment an Englishman might feel, the Australian scenery was luxuriant and varied, and so it too promised better health for the consumptive, and the future well-being of the country. Yet those were only remedies, restoratives. According to Dougan Bird, the kinds of buildings and the kind of society which would be built in Australia were not the true province of medicine. Since the true causes of ill-health were social, Dougan Bird felt that it was up to the public political and economic men to tackle the problem; those men should decide whether the Australian population was to be cured when it became sick, or whether the population would be fortunate enough rarely to be ill.37


Travel writers, popular authors, newspaper editors and medical practitioners all considered that recreation and nature had a bearing on health. If contemporary public health institutions were inadequate to deal with the health worries of that time, those beliefs might have had a real impact on society. There were two ways in which the existing health structure might have been inadequate; first, if there were too few and ineffective public health services, secondly, if the health authorities simply did not address the same problems as those raised by the popular health authors. Recent scholarly research, by A.J.C. Mayne on 19th century Sydney, Bernard Barrett on Melbourne and Stefan Petrow on Hobart and Launceston suggests that by the 1870s public health authorities in the major cities had become committed to a specific miasmatic theory of disease. Instead of wafting about the city and the country, episodically, haphazardly spreading illness, miasmas were now believed to originate and congregate in the particular vicinity of cesspools, open drains and running effluent. Old, ugly and smelly corners of the inner city were their natural habitats, and the working class their cause, unwilling and unable to keep themselves and their lodgings clean, or having animals living and decaying by them. Public health had become a matter of sanitation policy but, as Mayne and Barrett have shown, the small, disorganised and poor local governments of the industrial areas could not stop the pollutants that drained into their borders, even if they had been prepared to rid themselves of what was already there and even if they had dared to challenge the enterprises they represented and might have regulated. In that sense, public health had taken too narrow a focus, limited itself geographically, socially and medically. Miasmatic theory had allowed officials to burrow themselves into a little hole and organisation for checking smells and decay and running effluents. Beyond the official burrow, the popular medical writers had found people who were suffering nervous and physiological diseases that needed a comprehensive appraisal of life and work. In contrast to the limited aims of the public health authorities, Stefan Petrow has found that when, in the 1880s, the middle class public of Hobart began to take up the cause of health and sanitation, they did so under a broad banner of urban and municipal reform. The involvement of the middle classes of Hobart in health issues was not prompted by outbreaks of epidemic diseases, to which governments made specific responses. In Hobart, health issues were debated with fervour and, the debates involved both men and women; the involvement of women in such public issues suggests that health issues were considered to be very broad, touching

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many areas of life and needing a response from many groups and interests.  

Outside the government instrumentalities, outside the city centres, opening up new areas to absorb a new population and express the wealth and confidence of the 1880s, practical men, builders, real estate agents and their comfortable clients were developing their thoughts and proposals towards the comprehensive reform of urban life. Instead of the mid-century villages with forced rural connotations, or the luxurious gentry parks which aimed to provide a living display of opulence, practical men felt their way, gradually and imperfectly towards suburban life, the urban resort. As writers such as Robin Boyd have suggested, from the 1880s, in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney, terrace buildings and row houses with rude fronts to bare streets and negligible front gardens began to be replaced by separate houses set back in a garden with space between each dwelling, through which air could circulate. Streets became more generous and the choice of site became a vital concern.  

A new style of residential locale grew away from unhealthy regions and industries and amongst houses of a similar style. Sometimes there were also various attractions nearby. Graeme Davison found that a major selling point of Melbourne developers in the 1880s were the views they offered, of the city, sea, and country. Davison thought that such a site represented a 'compromise' between city life and country life. Instead, such a site was a place with panoramic views, and in the picturesque experience of nature the focus of the panorama was the person who saw it, not the views it contained. In the picturesque view, panoramas were not important because of the different elements which could be found at the limits of vision; panoramas were important because they gave the viewer a chance to feel the excitement of seeing many different sights at once. For that reason, panoramic views did not represent a 'compromise' between country and city; instead, panoramas represented an opportunity for residents to feel the kind of excitement they would need for city life.

Brooding above economic machinations was an imperative. The imperative was

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41 G. Davison, THE RISE AND FALL OF MARVELLOUS MELBOURNE. Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1978. Rejecting the widespread idea that suburban Australia from the 1880s was a 'compromise' between city life and the Bush Legend of the 1890s Davison opts for another variety of compromise, that suburbia was a compromise, a "bastard ideal" [p. 137] bred of English notions of Town and Country. As evidence for his view Davison cites developers offers of houses with views of city and country [p. 138] as though to wish to see both was to be undecided about which to live in, rather than an asset and integral part of a way of living.
the need to restore the victims of modern city life from their diseases and brain disorders, to cultivate in them the quality of vigour society constantly measured in them and so to serve the society they made but seemed too weak to master. Beyond the prosperous times of the 1880s, through the hard 1890s and into the new century, no longer advocated solely by its builders and promoters, then in the war years made a cornerstone of the new society that would come out of it, by the 1920s the suburb was the accepted pattern of all future urban growth, surrounded by complex rationales and minimum standards unknown in the late 19th century yet born there. In Town Planning ideas, announced contentiously by John Sulman in 1890, and through the early 20th century Town Planning movement, suburban standards found a rational formulation and public front.

Disparate elements were combined. A hierarchy of principles evolved, especially around road plans and the integration of natural features or the construction of alternatives. Fundamental points, such as the isolation of industrial areas from residential areas according to the sensitivities and peculiarities of the site, became standard assumptions. What developers fumbled with town planners clarified, and so significant private operators of the early 20th century, such as H.F. Halloran, could seek out theoretical perspectives and become prominent in the movement based around them. Above all, by arguing their case in terms of principles for construction, and with a wholeness and consistency in their advocacy, the town planning movement gave an air of inevitability to suburban life. It was as though it was natural that cities, in a time of scientific advance, should grow like that. Old ways were not simply ignored, they were discredited. Urban life had only one true residential form, and because of that assumption of obviousness, town planning did what may never have been entirely achieved with the private process of subdivision; it extended the principles of suburban life to working-class households as a matter of course.

The late 19th century travel writers followed up their views on the condition of society by taking an interest in suburban development too, in the urban environment. In that way they prepared the ground for the introduction of holiday values directly into the field of urban development, they opened up the possibility that ordinary people might turn to their holiday feelings in order to guide them in their choice of where and how to live. The efficient programmes which made suburbs seem a given of future development never touched the emotional grounds and unspoken sensitivities of the builders and their clients,

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42 John Sulman; 'The Laying Out of Towns', Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science: Reports, Vol. II, Melbourne, 1890, pp. 730-736.
sensitivities which might become apparent only when people toured a house or a site or drove through a subdivision and felt that it was right, that they should live there or that others would wish to live in the place they had bought to rent or sell. Years before Sulman sat down to write his seminal paper, Francis Myers, champion of ‘Beautiful Manly’, quiet rivers, spectacular mountain views, delicate wildflowers and birds, chemical plants, drainage schemes and irrigation areas saw a new era coming, an era in which a picturesque sensibility would determine the way of life in the big towns and cities. Taking the apparently dreary and ignored journey from Newtown to Botany Bay in 1885 he found the ruins and old exotic trees historically exciting. At Sylvania Myers saw a wealth of gullies, vines and ferns, and a field of tantalising flowers. Around Botany Bay he saw the potential for a great public reserve and resort. Poised between the rich landscape of the Illawarra, and the metropolis, between the city and the coalfields, he saw the whole area as a residential paradise. Parks would separate homes from smelting works and chemical plants at Kurnell, playgrounds would line the shores of the bay, and on the land behind it, or reaching back to the city, would live workers of industry, of the Illawarra mines, of the city. There were the essentials for a great bowl of families.

On the subdivisions and estates emerging around Botany Bay and with a range of regulations and authorities to preserve the quality of each element, Myers felt that a distinctive residential life would and should emerge. Houses would be well designed and healthy, there would be gardens and nearby walks to take the residents out amongst the violets or vines, the air would always be fresh and exciting, near the river they could picnic and go boating and fishing, they would be near enough to the sea to swim each day. Whatever made for physical and sensory health and comfort would become an everyday context for life, and beautiful places to holiday would always be close and accessible. A promise of constant prettiness and delightful childhoods would accompany the rise of modern industry. Having discarded the sheep of colonial immaturity, the iron, coal and railway industries of modern times would take garden suburbs as their domestic analogue. Myers felt that Manly too, when the city had grown, would enable people to live in a place of such beauty that a society of contentment would grow along the shore from Port Jackson to the Hawkesbury. With their bodies

43 F. Myers; BOTANY BAY: Past and Present. Woods, Sydney, 1885.
44 Ibid.
45 F. Myers; BEAUTIFUL MANLY. pp. 95-98.
cleaned and fit, receptive natures satisfied and thrilled, suburban life would give workers happiness outside of work, because without happiness the work could not be done. It would give them happiness where work drained them, and it would give them happiness because they were happy in their wholeness and vigour. Truly, society should be remade. Francis Myers felt that Australian society had already gone through two stages, and was about to enter a third. After convictism and pastoralism, and after the second age of cities, which had given birth to the modern industrial and mechanical world but which carried its own collapse in its very methods, there was a new age coming where industry restored its chief material to save itself. In coastal residences, in houses and suburbs stretched along the sea but connected to the city, lay "our third order".

The holiday homes and the weekenders of the well-to-do and the picturesque criteria of the holiday resorts stood as the example which may have led buyers and builders alike to a realisation of what they needed in their daily lives. The major realisation of the private developers who built suburban Australia was that their claims for holiday subdivisions were appropriate and applicable for a new urban life too, that the benefits people felt on holiday were vital to society itself, that daily life should have the qualities and satisfaction of a holiday, that holidays and ordinary life should be the same thing and run neatly into each other. There had been a hint of that idea in the 1880s and 1890s. The developers of Toronto, on Lake Macquarie, had promised the brain-weary doctors, professionals and businessmen of the city a distant and pristine spot where mists rose across the water, where those who bathed could laugh, or where they could exult, passively, in the wealth of flowers, or thrill to deep distant forest tones. Coming there for their annual holidays the owners would add about 20 per cent to their lives, but would add immeasurably to their happiness, wholeness, contentment and strength. Because they were happy success in their ventures was assured. As well as the wealthy city dweller the estate was also open to smaller investors and purchasers, to tradespeople and artisans who would live there and work there, have families that would grow healthy there and have a great start in life because they were already promised contentment and a full being. The developers chose to build a brickworks at Toronto, presumably to take advantage of the worker's strength.

46 F. Myers; THE COASTAL SCENERY...OF NEW SOUTH WALES. p.65.


48 Toronto Progress Association; TORONTO TOURIST GUIDE, SOUVENIR ISSUE, To Commemorate the CENTENARY CARNIVAL, 1924. Carnival Committee, Toronto, 1924. Unpaginated.
Early in the 20th century developers and promoters such as H.F. Halloran and Arthur Rickard blurred the lines between the city and the resort even further, operating on the boundaries of current urban growth where the web of transport gave access to the city. The way in which the developers operated actually presupposed that the general public had similar values to those of the travel writers, or that the general public had undergone a similar process of associating natural values with urban values as the travel writers had done. The developers opened up attractive or well sited recreational areas which were ambiguously resorts and residences, waiting only for the land to fill before they were truly suburban. Halloran was a particularly entrepreneurial Sydney developer, whose interests spanned many areas of realty, and whose company, in the 1930s, separated into a property development section and a town planning section. In the 1920s Halloran was twice an official representative to international town planning conferences. Halloran had distinctly picturesque holiday interests at Avoca, near Woy Woy; his prize was Stanwell Park, in the Illawarra. Always preferring areas near the sea or a body of water he actively presented the dramatic quality of his real estate, its contrasts, views, quiet, excitement and the opportunities for bathing. He promoted all those activities and qualities and offered his land as the way to gain access to them, drawing a buyer further and further into their reservoir of holiday memories or anticipations of delight. Closer in to the city, around Cronulla and Burraneer Bay, at Seaforth or Warriewood the promise was the same. You would be close to the sea, the foaming sea, or by the water, you could bathe, or become lost in a stretch of woods, your eyes would reach out over vast distances and catch a multitude of sights and broken lines in one vision, you would always breathe the sea air and the clean woodland air. The blocks were smaller, yet the memories which Halloran tried to invoke were holiday memories. The difference between holiday houses and permanent residences was that in the permanent homes there would be permanent happiness, not the transitory happiness of a week off each year, or a day now and then. All those natural values would belong to you in perpetuity, they would be your constant companion, restive or restless on each side, they would set the terms for the whole of life. In the big picturesque world Halloran would offer his clients each house would have a garden, and buyers were assured that the garden would be clean ground on which to grow exotic and tropical plants, there would be space for the ferns and flowers, for the shade and the light, the water aspects and the open ground. Once opened out to let people in, the new residents were supposed to close the picturesque forest about

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them.\textsuperscript{50}

Into Halloran's Burraneer Bay estate, off Port Hacking, in 1907, he greeted the recognised modern victims; he greeted the businessman who lived a life of constant worry.\textsuperscript{51} He opened the same estate to other people as well. Clerks, mechanical labourers, artisans, housewives with their nerves shattered by the reach of the modern world into the home, all could come to this place which would give them a life quite as rich as the life they lived on vacation. The factories and noise were distant, too distant to annoy or enervate the workers, but close enough to be an exciting part of the panorama. There was still a touch of country peace about the area, and even the melancholy tone of historic ruins, there were views to be had and the air of the sea to breathe. On the other side was the 'restless Pacific', and in this place Halloran could see the pattern of a wonderful daily life. In the morning the families would troop to the beach before they went to work or school; father would go into the surf, mother and the kids would collect shells and paddle. Once they were back home, the family would eat their fill of the fish they had caught for themselves. Here was the life of permanent happiness, the life of the holiday trip, the life made longer and richer. Those working people had previously only been able to delight themselves in such ways but once or twice a year.

Peter Spearritt, in his history of \textit{SYDNEY SINCE THE TWENTIES}, considered that Arthur Rickard was Sydney's most prominent private developer in the massive suburbanisation of the post-war period.\textsuperscript{52} Rickard, like Halloran, was dedicated to water sites, and collapsed resort ideas into an urban form. Also like Halloran, Rickard was liberal in his use of scenic photographs, some with pretty \textit{art nouveau} borders, and poetry which suggested the exalted state of being by the sea or in a forest. Halloran and Rickard usually passed over the more technical aspects of their subdivisions, trying instead to suggest how life would be lived on that estate, trying to get clients to remember times when they had felt happy. From Tuggerah Lakes or Brisbane Water, from Narrabeen or Pittwater, Turramurra or Bankstown, Rickard called out to the tired inhabitants of the inner city, to the tenement dwellers and the crowded wealthy, the wan, drawn, exhausted men who


\textsuperscript{51}This paragraph is a summary of: H.F.Halloran;\textit{BEAUTIFUL BURRANEER BAY}. Sydney,1907.

\textsuperscript{52}P. Spearritt;\textit{SYDNEY SINCE THE TWENTIES}. Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1978, pp.46-47.
asked if their lives were still worth living, if they had not given all they could, if they could survive the cycle of endless weariness. Rickard offered camp sites and cottage sites, weekend homes and permanent homes. He offered quiet, ease, relaxation and recovery, he offered the scents, the sea, a place to garden and a great outdoor garden in the public domain. He offered sights, sounds, games and sports, and healthy air. Let Bankstown be a Sanatorium. Buyers should contemplate a permanent life at Narrabeen, or draw a bit further away to his weekend resorts at Pittwater or Woy Woy. At Tuggerah one could return to nature and walk along a pretty jetty and two beautiful paths to a commanding plateau from which to catch the whole range of natural qualities. Like the resorts, the suburbs were to make nature accessible, a picturesque satisfaction could be found in them, the emotional stimulation only nature would give. At Bondi the waves flashed up the sand regardless of who saw them, forever enticing. Down by Bondi one could enter the sea, and having entered it work with greater ease. A worker who returned to Bondi in the evening could be sparked in the breeze. Rickard’s clients could build their own red brick houses with gardens and picket fences, they would never need to leave Bondi to find a weekender. Arthur Rickard asked whether a house at Bondi could do anything but “SEAL YOUR HAPPINESS”.

By 1915 resort and suburb were irretrievably combined. Near Jervis Bay, close to the proposed Commonwealth port, Richardson and Wrench subdivided a tight parcel of roads and quarter-acre blocks. They were close to the beach, at a place where the brain could rest its tired faculties, and where the eye could revel and extend its own. The blocks were close to the sea breezes and far from the draining city, perhaps in the future the place would become a part of a new city at the port, yet it would already be insulated from it. Richardson and Wrench sought to entice customers into a holiday retreat built to suburban standards, with gardens for each home, building materials of a quality and price found only in the city, and a site adorned with palm fringed avenues which might delight the advocates of town planning. The plan was clearly for a resort, and the refined


54 Materials used: as for previous footnote, with the addition of O’BRIENS BONDI BEACH ESTATE. Deaton and Spencer, Sydney, 1910, from which the quotation is taken. All unpaginated.

55 Richardson and Wrench, Ltd.; MACLEAN’S POINT, Jervis Bay. Gordon and Gotch, Sydney, c1915.
definitions of a resort were borrowed from the suburbs, the site could be one or the other, depending on the time, depending on what the Commonwealth did with it’s port. The ambiguous plan by Richardson and Wrench showed up a thread and an order in work and life. The thread was in the interdependence of many concepts. Homes in the city were becoming like places of seaside rest and joy. Seaside places could be improved or assessed by reference to the new style of home. Between the natural setting of Jervis Bay with its pretty lures to the senses, between work and the diseases which came out of work, as well as the cures for those illnesses, between the holiday house in the city and the urban home beside the sea, there were few distinctions and even fewer gaps. The order was one of reconstituting the person for the sake of social life. That order found a clear statement in the early Town Planning movement, until the 1920s.

A Health Conference in Sydney in 1917 took as its major theme the reform of the cities, above causes such as control of the race through its breeding. When other bodies looked to urban policies for guidance, town planning became a matter invested with great significance and seriousness. Two national conferences, one in Adelaide in 1917 and the other in Brisbane in 1918, were held before the soldiers came home, and one of the reasons they were held, according to the Governor of Victoria, Sir Arthur Stanley, was to create a new kind of society, a society where workers would be happy and the old conflicts of capital and labour would disappear. The President of the Adelaide conference, J.D.Fitzgerald, thought that the question was whether industrial society had left a people as stunted and weak as the industrial classes of Britain, and whether industrial society could be put to rights before the soldiers came back and found that too many things in contemporary society were wrong. The conferences were held because too many features of contemporary life seemed dark and because the matter needed a greater urgency than could be conveyed by measures such as the Royal Commission on Improving Sydney of 1909. Like the 1909 Royal Commission, the Conferences believed that too many working people lived in tight or poky tenements, too many children grew up in slums, too many country towns had too little of the vaunted


58 Ibid.pp.35-36.

health of the country life. There were too few playgrounds, roads were inadequate, there were too few trees and flowers and bushes where people lived, they caught too few views that would excite them. Dark cities would make for a dark future.\(^60\)

The Adelaide and Brisbane town planning conferences had brought together a Governor-General, several State Governors, Ministers and politicians, architects and developers such as H.F. Halloran, publicists and the representatives of housewives. Together those groups set a seal on the aims of town planning. The general tone of both conferences suggested that the future Australian society should be a suburban society. As the Governor-General, Sir Munro-Ferguson, had said at the Adelaide conference, the notion that an answer could be provided by settling returned soldiers back on the land was a totally "useless" thought; what needed to be done was to bring the good things about rural life into the cities, and city life out into the country.\(^61\) The town planning vision was a vision of an industrial society where the lives of those who served it would be lived in ways that were serviceable to it. At neither conference were questions asked or doubts raised that modern methods of work might have to change too. There was no thought that in reforming society to preserve the vigour and character of its people change might touch absolutely everything they did. By society the eminent people meant homes and home life, recreation and excitation; by vigour they meant vigour and psychic power for work. The conferences left the content of work alone, as though they felt work was an untouchable and venerable presence.

From the conferences councilmen and politicians, such as the Mayor of Manly, went home knowing that there should be no slums, that they should acquire for themselves land to keep simply so that people could walk through it or sit in it, that small subdivisions were the enemy of civilisation, that they must put trees outside homes and buildings and flowers in little pots beside the road.\(^62\) The exhibitions held in conjunction with the conferences showed ideal home designs, and architects might well have gone home knowing that houses should be set back from the street and away from each other for the air to circulate around them and the light to come into them. Rooms need only be few and simple but they should be

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\(^{60}\) Second Australian Town Planning Conference; *VOLUME OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECOND AUSTRALIAN TOWN PLANNING CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION*, Brisbane, 1918. Government Printer, Brisbane, 1918.


\(^{62}\) *MANLY DAILY*, 25-9-1918.
arranged so that women moved efficiently through them and did not become unduly tired. If there was a little rise or a knoll and a view the house should be placed for it, though it must always be possible to walk to shops or schools or friends. Between each new area there should be space left open that might be a park or a playground, a sporting oval or an ornament. Towns would be divided according to function, and developers like Halloran could continue to develop a distinctly domestic character for the function of domestic life. Real estate agents might have been heartened to know that everything would be done to get each family to buy its own home, to keep it themselves, to take an interest in how neighbours kept theirs, to promote each element of the life planned for them of their own accord.

Before the First World War suburban developers dreamt how society should be. In its city and age of steel, the modern and prosperous life brought a Garden Suburb to Newcastle in 1914. A public garden and bandstand stood in the centre. Perhaps the developers hoped that music would one day reach out across the public lawns and flower beds into the shops and businesses, which fringed the central square, and then glide down streets, where the developers would plant and care for the trees. The developers may have hoped that the music would cross the garden of each house, where people would work to create beauty for their permanent enjoyment and where they exercised, and enter homes with simple floor plans and elegant fronts. The suburb was a garden and the house a prize set in it. Planning for the layout and the site, care was taken to keep an easy and direct route to the nearest beach. At Altona in Victoria in 1913 a Sydney developer hoped to create a huge industrial project. In the Altona scheme there would be coalmines, a power station and room for all the massive industries that fed on them. Close by, but insulated from the factories by tree-lined streets, parks and sporting facilities, the workers would live pleasant recuperative lives. The whole complex would be spread along 2.5 miles of beach frontages, it would be a seaside resort and an industrial haven, a garden suburb and a bathing place.

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64 J.Sulman,J.F.Hennessey,planners;GARDEN SUBURB,NEWCASTLE.Australian Agricultural Company,Newcastle,1914.

Figure 3-2: How houses should be built.
[Source: SECOND AUSTRALIAN TOWN PLANNING CONFERENCE... 1918.]
TOWN PLANNING CONFERENCE, BRISBANE
1918 - "IDEAL" HOME
T.B. WIGHTMAN, A.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECT.
JAS. CAMPBELL & SONS, BUILDERS

PLAN.

ENTRANCE

LIVING ROOM 20' x 14'

SLEEPING ROOM 12' x 10'

BALCONY 5' x 10'

TOWN PLANNING CONFERENCE, BRISBANE, 1916:
''IDEAL'' HOME:
A.E. BROOKS, ARCHITECT,
BROWN & BROAD, BUILDERS.
Between the machines and the lounge rooms, between the backyards and the water, between work and home and holiday there would be only about a mile.

From the 1920s on, in the eastern suburbs of Sydney, north from Manly, by the indentations of the harbour, or along the eastern shore near Melbourne, back into the pretty hills, cutting through the rural land near Adelaide or out towards the coast at Perth, along the river, in Brisbane reaching for nuggety hills or out towards the bay, taking the natural features of each place as given or sponsoring them with trees and parks, the union of the factory and the sea had issue.66

The possibility that feelings and sentiments formed at the beach and on holiday could have a major influence on urban and industrial life depended on the ease with which ideas could be taken from one field to another. The late 19th century travel writers showed how that transfer of ideas could be done, and the developers of suburban estates had assumed that ordinary people had also transferred their holiday ideas to their understanding of industrial and urban life. But, from about 1880, many fields of human endeavour became specialised and separate from other fields, as part of the rise of professionalism in the late 19th century. The effect of professionalisation on areas such as medicine was to devalue and challenge the status of popular medicine, and thus to undermine the authority of non-specialists to propound ideas in fields in which they had not been trained. Professionalisation switched the initiative in making connections between different ideas away from the public at large to the specialists themselves. Under such pressures, the unified conceptions of feeling, disease and effort frayed, and the picturesque sensibility fell with it. In medicine, Dr. Koch's germ theory of tuberculosis, the advance of surgery and Freud's psychoanalysis all tended to break the body into little sections each treated separately and distinctly from the other by particular specialists. Propounded from the 1880s onwards, germ theory continued to promote the emphasis on environmental factors in disease, but made them more specific, not some general tendency of society made people sick with tuberculosis, but a particular contagion. Sufferers learned not to look to the kind of job they had, but to cleaning the sputum from their floors.67 Some doctors, such as

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67Department of Public Health, Victoria; NOTES ON PULMONARY TUBERCULOSIS (CONSUMPTION) AND ON THE SANATORIUM TREATMENT OF THE DISEASE FOR THE INFORMATION OF SANATORIUM PATIENTS; Government Printer, Melbourne, 1908. R. Walker; 'The Struggle Against Pulmonary Tuberculosis...'. 
Figure 3-3: How to live.
[Source: COVER.]
Second Australian Town Planning Conference.

VOLUME OF PROCEEDINGS of the Second Australian Town Planning Conference & Exhibition.

Brisbane, Queensland. 30th July to 6th Aug. 1918.
J.W. Springthorpe, took germ theory as just another weapon in their armoury, although a new profession tended to treat it as a new scientific basis for their medicine, which indicated that they could treat one thing without treating the entire being. Freud hived-off the mind into its own special class of illnesses, and what had been a mere presumption of 19th century industry, that the mind might be a separate realm, found an authoritative statement. Surgeons looked at sick people and cut out the offending parts. Professional doctors tried to convince mothers that only doctors and scientists knew how to care for children. Defenders of the old medicine, like T.P. Lucas the paw-paw specialist, charged that surgeons had no sense of cure. To be cured the body had to be preserved intact, surgery might deprive people of their physical wholeness. Medicine lost all sense of a comprehensive system, and patients were often unwilling to surrender that idea of medicine as a system. Despite the ready acceptance of the theory of tubercular contagion, when doctors spelled out its implications in Boulder City, Western Australia in 1910, the doctors complained that they and their audience were talking about different things. The old ideas and practices were even wrenching from those who trusted them. At the front the military doctors had forcibly to deprive soldiers of their paw-paw cures, and stop the cures from being sent in the mail.

The development of professional medicine had tended to make ordinary people seem less responsible for their own well-being than the popular medicine of the late 19th century had said they could be. In the field of work, the responsibility, the sense of importance which had attached to all kinds of labour in the late 19th century, and which had seemed to cause most of the illnesses of modern urban society, was being undermined by another profession, engineering. In America in 1911 Frederick Winslow Taylor, engineer, looked at the work people actually did, and had come to be doing in the later decades of the previous century, and with

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70 T. P. Lucas; DR. LUCAS’S PAPAW TREATMENT VERSUS GERMAN KULTUR. Vera Papaw Hospital, Brisbane, n.d.

71 Dr. H. A. Ellis; THE WHITE DEATH. Boulder Brotherhood, Boulder City, W. A., 1910, esp. p. 9.

72 The charge was made by T. P. Lucas; Op. Cit.
what he saw made a foray into social issues. Jobs that had been becoming smaller, more specialized and less complex, had become so, he said, because they fulfilled simple aims. The tasks were not very demanding at all, they required little skill, innovation or application on the part of the people who did them. Taylor took away what he thought was a great lie, though in the 19th century theorists and employees alike had seen so much in what they did that it tired them. Taylor made the workers who did those simple jobs look smaller than they did before; they could be manipulated from without, they only needed to be supervised, tricked by a small number of employers and managers in the know into making them more productive. Such lesser beings did not need their character, they did not need to be socially created individuals to do the things they did, it needed no comprehensive social reforms to minister to their full beings. They could be succoured by wages alone. In Australia the industrial psychologist Elton Mayo denied that economic reasons were the only ones to be considered in management but he too moved towards a view that the solution of industrial problems was both a matter for experts and a matter for supervision. With the new assumption, that employees were or could be treated as lesser beings, life in the suburbs would be cut adrift. The intellectual and emotional connections which had given some point to adopting a suburban life-style would be much more difficult to make, and specialised professions would be hostile to ordinary people presuming to make such connections at all.

The impetus to separate human activities from each other did not come only from professionalisation, and was not simply forced upon popular mentalities from the outside. On the beaches of the east coast of Australia, or where the surf ran up a long shelf of sand, a new way of bathing had been found, and the emotional implications of that new way of bathing did not run out to society as much as they led inwards to the private experience of bathers themselves. As early as the 1890s, a handful of young men learnt how to body surf as the islanders did. Body surfers would run out into the water, they would break through the coming waves; then they would keep going, not turn back to run at the waves again, or stand with both feet firmly planted on the bottom waiting for the waves to break over their sensitive skins once more, as the majority of male bathers had done in the late 19th century. Throughout the first two decades of the 20th century bathers, of both sexes, learned to trust themselves in the deeper water which had been


Figure 3-4: Breaking through the waves.
[Source: F.Fox; AUSTRALIA. 1910.]
feared in the late 19th century, began to look at the sea in a new way, began to
develop new skills. The importance of body surfing lay in the fact that it was a
skill. Body surfers were not as likely to be attentive to the emotional qualities
of the ocean in quite the same way as the late 19th century travel writers had
said people should be towards nature. For that reason, the body surfers were
unlikely to feel the same feelings about the beach as late 19th century bathers had
done, and unlikely to draw the same kinds of connections between being in the
water and social life. Body surfers were themselves beginning to separate their
skills, activities and feelings from the medical and industrial aspects of life and, in
the 1920s, the path between feelings formed at the beach and industrial society
became impassible.

75. Municipality of Manly, THE QUEEN OF SOUTHERN WATERING PLACES. Manly and Its
Environs. N.S.W. Government Tourist Bureau, Sydney, n.d. P. Harris, Surf-Bathing in New South Wales, THE
Figure 3-5: On The Other Side.
[Source: POSTCARD. marked 1905.]
Chapter 4
SOME ROOMS.

On Saturday 21 December 1929 almost 200,000 people went by road or tram or foot or car or bicycle to Bondi Beach, once a desolate sand bowl that lay between two abrupt cliffs and a circling lip of hills.¹ Near the large carpark and near the concrete block of the promenade, between bare grass and bare sand, half-way from the water to the local hotels and shops and flats and cottages was a squat Spanish building with a long verandah and regular arches. People changed into their swimming costumes there; it was like the Pavilions Councils had built since the early years of this century. Someone had tried to get Waverley Council’s Pavilion replaced since 1923, and to get the surroundings done at the same time.² At last, there it was on that day in 1929, a place to get changed. There was more too; a Turkish Bath, a buffet, a soda fountain, hair dryers, a large dining room for 350 people, a Ballroom which held 350 people and an orchestra plus a smaller dining room for 50 people. In the open courtyard there were bands on Sundays and later films. People drank new drinks, heard new music, danced new dances, watched the new pictures and enjoyed the new luxuries. They could go to the beach, surf, then eat and drink, wash, change, eat, and dance. When it was dark, they could dance slower and look out the windows and glide on the wooden floor as moons on a gentle sea.³ The complexity of the Bondi Pavilion made going to the beach like going to the city, but Waverley Council were not trying to bring Pitt Street and George Street down onto Campbell Parade. What Waverley Council did try to do was to cater for many of the interests which attracted people from the suburbs to the city, interests like going to the movies or to the theatre, dining out and dancing. What the design of the Bondi Pavilion indicates is that the beach had become a place to do many different things. The purpose of this Chapter is to

¹ SYDNEY MORNING HERALD.23-12-1929.
show that the promotion and expansion of established seaside resorts in the 1930s, and the development of new seaside resorts since the 1950s - particularly in Queensland - depended on the attitude to human activity embodied by the Bondi Pavilion. The designers of the Bondi Pavilion believed that beach-goers would want to do many things in the one place, and that human activities were themselves separate; in the Bondi Pavilion the different activities were each put in different rooms.

The new style of beach-going can be illustrated through changes in the promotion of Bondi, the development of body-surfing and through the rise of the surf life saving movement. In the 1920s, Bondi was a suburb of the city. As Rickard hoped, people had come to live there, in multi-storeyed flats and cottages built of red brick. Where there had been large dunes drifting far inland there had come to be gardens and paths reaching into the bowl from places once a long trudge away. The old way of looking at nature was expressed by one anonymous writer who saw the beach in 1918. That anonymous writer claimed that a sunset at Bondi must be more beautiful than elsewhere. Striking from yellow to deep red, the colours were caught in the wash and skipped across the little waves and climbed Ben Buckler. On the wet sand the moon stood up and cut a path so each step was on a slide. Now, in 1929, urban boulders blocked up the north head with solid rock fronts, clambered up and between the sectioned air and would have lit in little squares as dark introduced the night; if the moon bounced light across the bay it could have been sliced by warm electric lamps.

That very day, 21 December 1929, people used Bondi Beach for a large range of activities. The whole day and night floated on music. There were bands playing in front of cheerful admirers, bands trying to play better than the last lot, drummers who aimed at the right spot on the skin to make a quick sharp shot, buglers who were dismayed about missing one note, and electricity carried music to far ends of the promenade. Life savers marched, a surf boat deposited King Neptune with balloons, for which children scrambled, people raced scooters along the road and an aviator jumped out of a plane and bounced off the roof of the Arcadia Flats before getting caught in the ropes of his parachute. Politicians assured everyone that great things had been done, and reminded people of what they could already see, that it was a remarkable day. The local M.P. prompted people to remember, if they could, when there had been no houses at Bondi, when

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4 *Surf and Suburban News*, 9-3-1918.

5 This paragraph summarises a report in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 23-12-1929.
Figure 4-1: Beaches of Waverley and Randwick.
people were fined for being in the water, of how there had once been only geebungs and lovers. Lovers might always be there, might always be the same, but the building marked a new era of beach-going.

Waverley Council proclaimed that Bondi Beach was "Beautiful", but they meant it in a new sense of the word "Beautiful".⁶ If a writer like Francis Myers had said such a thing it was usually because the site had lush growths and shaded walks and gently winding paths up a little knoll to a creek. Instead, Bondi had flat green grass sliding down an almost bare hill punctuated with ornamental trees and well-trained flower beds. Bondi had a large car park and a concrete promenade that curved gradually but evenly behind the beach. The place was broad, open and empty. To the Waverley Council Bondi was "Beautiful"; people filled it, local residents and visitors rushed onto the sand and made the sand into a patchwork of towels and umbrellas and seats and cushions. At Bondi, beachgoers sat on the grass hill and their coats and dresses and suits and hats and scarves decorated the bare picnic spots. People threw balls to each other, or raced each other along the sand, or broke through a coming wave or, as in the illustration the Council used to show the beauty of Bondi, sat in little groups and told intimacies and nonsense.

The rise of body surfing brought with it a new attitude to the sea; the sea seemed to become more benign. It was best to body surf when conditions were stable, when the waves were regular, not too close in, when they ran rather than broke, when the sea and air were clear enough for the surfers to see how each wave behaved and where to go out past the broken surge. When surfers were at their best it was because the sea was helping them, they did not want to challenge the waves or brave the ocean or confront it, they did not want to feel its aggression to feel the risk they took. Early in the new century Cecil Healy, Olympic swimmer, writer, surf bather and life saver looked out at the waters of Manly, and heard the sea quietly purr, let the sound play gently in his mind and saw that the Pacific had teeth, that they were white, and that they were open in a smile for him.⁷ Body surfers began to lose the sense of force with which the sea had been invested in the late 19th century.

The development of body surfing made the beach a centre for diverse human activities; journalists and story writers said that body surfing improved the


Figure 4-2: Beauty is Human.
[Source: BONDI THE BEAUTIFUL. 1929.]
individual character of those who practised the activity. For that reason, the beach became a show-place of human characteristics, and all the different activities at the beach were ways to demonstrate personal qualities. Individuals and small groups of boys and youths garnered the essential confidence and poise of body surfing from the early 1890s and onwards, but the activity had little public penetration until half-way through the first decade of the 20th century. At Manly, its introduction was associated with a young Pacific Islander working in the village, unsure of how to express exactly what he was doing, unable to teach the skills, leaving only his example and a captivating image of secret joy to act as a lure and enticement. Dulcie Deamer, who wrote stories of the primitive ancestors of the white races, attributed to the carefree young of the primitives a passion for body surfing. Around the early body surfers, men and women, and life savers, there grew a mystique of essential physical perfection. Story writers and journalists felt that body surfers worked and improved their bodies, developed their physical attributes; to those physical qualities attached ideals of manliness and womanliness, of a primitive wholeness surviving in modern life, attached to their persons, re-introduced into society by them. Dim notions of race replaced the conjunction of excitement with factories and picturesque nature; the habits of beach-going were put at a distance from the social world.

In 1875, a souvenir illustration of Manly left the patrons out, showed only the surroundings; by 1920, journalists who wrote about Sydney beaches found that the association of surfing with personal character had made the activities and behaviour of beach-goers seem the most interesting aspect of the seaside. A Sydney newspaper of the First World War, THE SURF AND SUBURBAN NEWS, was filled with anecdotes which revealed the personal qualities of individual beach-goers. In the war people still went to the beach. The newspaper found that, at the beach, the war was a wounded soldier made cheerful again.


Figure 4-3: Perfection.
[Source: THE LONE HAND. 1909.]
"The Glorious Girl . . . confessed that her attractive tint had been acquired in the surf at Manly."
SUBURBAN NEWS collected the gossip that surrounded the beach during the war. Beach-goers were happy with each other and with themselves, happy to pass acerbic little comments about who needed a new costume, who was looking good these days, who was a regular surfer, who was good at it and who was still too scared. Kathleen Musgrave looked terrific on a surf board, Charlie Curtis was swimming so far out to get the good waves that he was just shark bait, Harry Watts had locked himself into the surf shed like he was an oyster. There was pleasure in what other people could do, or looked like; they did so many different things and showed so many different attitudes; there were so many ways people could be happy or sad. Down at Bondi there was one siren in a green gossamer swimsuit who could spirit away several great brown men each week. She had turned the pirate plays of the men upon themselves and they buckled, they were breathless. She walked with the force of a myth, other women bought green gossamer, she wore a black one piece and two more Bondi men went missing. Emerald green became the colour to wear at Cronulla. THE SURF AND SUBURBAN NEWS claimed that the girl in the green gossamer dived in ways that a mathematician would love to describe. At Newcastle they had a girl who had the same power but wore blue. At Manly a young lady in ordinary dress walked along the beach, passed the men’s surf sheds, turned herself upside down and walked about on her hands, the men’s faces hung like skirts.12

The life saving movement itself represented the diverse functions of beach-going generally. The early life savers lived and cultivated a double life. The clubs gave their members an aura bigger than their muscles and the chance to earn their prestige. Behind their vigil the beach was made safe for human delight. Initially, until about 1912, the clubs were social groups for devoted male surfers who took onto themselves rescue responsibilities. A few women’s clubs existed on the same basis and in the Illawarra the male clubs admitted women, until governments reduced the number of clubs, and limited them to life saving functions alone between 1912 and the mid-1920s. While the Bronte and Bondi clubs were still social clubs they found that members used the facilities to press their ways with young women or showed too little decorum when dressing to bathe.13 As the social clubs became life saving clubs an heroic imagery developed around them. They were saviours, true followers of Christ, disciplined, polite and dedicated

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12The anecdotes and style of the above paragraph are taken from the following issues of THE SURF AND SUBURBAN NEWS: 1-12-1917, 15-12-1917, 22-12-1917, 29-12-1917, 12-1-1918, 19-1-1918, 26-1-1918, 26-2-1918, 2-3-1918, 9-2-1918, 16-2-1918, 23-2-1918, 2-3-1918, but represent the typical content of the paper.

Figure 4-4: Human Delight.
[Source: H. Phillips; SURFING BEACHES OF SYDNEY... 193-]
community workers. There also developed a practice of drinking and larrikin behaviour. The Maroubra Surf Club in 1929 had to caution its members against sun-bathing nude on the club house roof, where they could be seen from the heights above, and to avoid calling out to young women or insulting passing members of the public or using bad language on the telephone. In the 1920s a dozen or so shop girls working at Farmers' store in the city travelled to Dee Why each summer weekend. They soon got to know the private side of the life savers. The girls left notes to remind each other of which ones were too free with their hands. The saviours longed for those hot nights, those

Hot tarts in tights!

The life savers showed that the beach had different uses but, in their double life, they also showed that such human activities were often separate from one another.

In the 1920s, some discursive travel writers were beginning to draw out the implications of the new style of beach-going, and the new importance of human activity. One writer, E.Lynch, adopted such an attitude when he described the New South Wales South Coast. Down the New South Wales South Coast, beyond the Illawarra, beyond the railway terminus at Nowra, across the Clyde River at Bateman's Bay and heedless of the border with Victoria there was a potent scenic mix. Lynch felt the South Coast was ready to be discovered in the 1920s, and so he described it lavishly and provocatively; he wrote that the farming land, fishing communities, forest land, and seaside communities were a haven of gentle delights. Lynch thought that he had found a truly happy land. On that coast people seemed content with life, their backs were warm and, when they worked outside, Lynch saw them reach up into the sky and confess that this was the best life. The residents had energy and vigour, their work was good and rewarded, all their activities were a reward to them. Lynch did not recommend that South Coast residents should move to the cities to make city life strong; instead, he felt that the sense of activity one could gain by the sea should be invested in that place. If one wanted to live a vibrant and happy life the place to live was the place by the sea.

Figure 4-5: Saviours.
[Source: Philip; SIXTY YEARS...]
Figure 4-6: Seals.
[Source: WALKABOUT. November 1935.]
FREE AND HAPPY IN THE BREAKERS.
Near the Snowy River mouth in Victoria, at Marlo, one could still find an old resort. Marlo was an almost neglected place in the pantheon of Victorian beauty, even in the 1920s. There was a lake and the river, it had a certain elevation, there was a fairly high coastal plain and a series of cliffs with sheer drops and broad views. Like Mallacoota, the vegetation was profuse, a hint of the tropics. The place was mainly for fishing and shooting. Other old resorts survived at the western end of the Victorian coastline; a Tourist Bureau writer journeyed there for the sake of a fragrant tree and a storm. On the long coastline between extremes young people were full of joy like the seals on Phillip Island and like the seals they lay bare and lazy in the sun, or dived into the water, splashed about in it and followed each other from wave to wave. Writers of the old style could find the scene taxing; there was a clamour, a frantic energy and a confusion in the season about those resorts, the surfing resorts. The surfing resorts had spread along the coastline but had not yet swallowed the tips of seclusion.

By the 1930s there was also a distinctive style of nature writing. The new nature writers separated the experience of nature from all other experiences and wrote about nature as though it was an isolated phenomenon with no significance for social life. That new attitude to nature may have represented a reaction to the emphasis on human activity in beach-going and writing about seaside life; seaside life no longer centred on the experience of nature, so the new travel writers may have taken the attitude that nature should not be forgotten by holiday makers. In order to press that point, the nature writers began to search out extravagant and exotic examples of natural beauty. From its foundation in 1934, the travel magazine WALKABOUT, and its authors, such as Vance Palmer, wrote about nature in the new way. Vance Palmer and WALKABOUT spread the notion that nature was a parcel of qualities which were clearly different from modern society. Writers and photographers began to look far away from popular holiday resorts in order to find natural subjects. WALKABOUT sent writers and photographers to Lord Howe Island and Dunk Island, the Torres Strait and the whole Hinchinbrook Passage, into southern forests and subtropical forests.

18 This paragraph is a summary of anecdotes and attitudes in the following publication: Victorian Government Tourist Bureau; AT THE SEASIDE. Melbourne, 192- pp.1,6,13,14,16,27,28-29,37, 38,39,48.

19 This paragraph draws upon numerous articles published in WALKABOUT between Vol.1,No.1, November 1934 and c1940 including, ‘Romantic Lord Howe Island’, February 1935, ‘Isles of Allurement’, September 1936, ‘My Island Home’ by H.G.Lamond, November 1936, C.Roderick’s ‘Heron Island: A Fairy Isle of Romance’, December 1936 and many more, particularly three articles by the novelist Vance Palmer: ‘People of the Reef’, March 1935, his article on Kingfish in the May 1935 issue and, ‘Cruising’, June 1935. The editorial in WALKABOUT, Volume 1, Number 1, announced that the magazine would be dedicated to “the romantic Australia that exists beyond the cities and the enchanted South Sea Islands and New Zealand”, the magazine would suggest locations where travellers could feel the “thrill of the strange and the new”.[p.7]
WALKABOUT contributors even went to far off Melanesia to live with the local people, or tried to survive as solitary on one of the group of Molle Islands. That style of writing and publishing betrayed a new attitude that nature and natural life really only existed in pockets, as if nature was not everywhere but was cut off from centres of population by a series of ravines and difficult country. When the WALKABOUT writers found what they thought would be an appropriate natural area those areas turned out to be, like tropical forests and islands, concentrated zones where the plants and birds and animals were both bizarre and delicate, fragile and ferocious. The natural sites found by WALKABOUT writers were always complex, and there was usually a profuse variety of attractions. Among those islands and forests and native tribes there was supposed to be an honesty about the primitive state; nature had been invested with a range and degree of qualities without there being any apparent connections between those qualities and modern life.

The new way of regarding nature had two implications for beach-going. First, since nature was found in pockets, there might be only one or two natural pockets in each resort; therefore, resorts could no longer be defined purely in terms of their natural attributes. Secondly, since nature had to be sought out, for a holiday maker to find natural beauty was simply to perform another separate activity; therefore, the pursuit of natural values on a holiday did not imply that a holiday maker had turned away from the new style of resort and beach-going; rather, when holiday makers sought out nature, they were behaving in a manner which fitted in with the new perception of resorts and beach-going.

The new attitude to nature could also be found in the new seaside resorts. When they had built the Bondi Pavilion, where so many things could be done, the Waverley Council left Bronte and Tamarama as they were. Those beaches had gullies and big trees and shade and native plants. An afternoon there might be very gentle, the exercise might be to open a picnic basket or spot a particular species of tree and flower. Just as the Pavilion had rooms for different patrons to do different things at different times, the Waverley Council had created beaches that were different from each other, that were more human or more natural. Waverley Council offered beach-goers a choice amongst different kinds of beaches and activities. Unlike the new nature writers, Waverley Council did not think that nature could be found only on a tropical island; they did recognise that there was

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20 Waverley Municipal Council, all Bondi Junction[?]BONDI THE BEAUTIFUL.1929. BONDI,The Playground of the Pacific.c1933. BONDI,Australia;The Playground of the Pacific.c1937. BONDI,The Playground of the Pacific-Sun,Sand, Sea.c1940s. BONDI,Sydney,Australia.195-.
a difference between natural values and the diverse entertainment provided in the Bondi Pavilion. The implication of that difference for the residents of Waverley was that they had to choose a beach as well as a set of values which they wanted to emphasise. In that way, because of the need to choose, the new style of resort development increased the responsibilities of beach-goers. That increased responsibility corresponded to the idea that the beach was now a place to show one's personal character.

The importance of the beach as a place where personal character could be developed and displayed can also be seen in a number of books about the beach written for children in the 1940s. Those books found that many of the principles of personal growth were involved in what people might do by the seaside. Such books showed that, down on the sands, a family could be split, and yet be content together. Father could be father and intimate his knowledge of the sea and the seagulls. Mother could be mother, supervise her children from a distance and gain their help to free her for her own pleasure. The young children might play in the sand, the elder children would go into the water. They might fish from a pier, watch a Punch and Judy show, build sand castles, go on the merry-go-rounds as well as take donkey rides and visit aquariums. The children learnt to keep their balance, and to be confident about themselves and their control of animals. They could improve their motor skills and perceptiveness, add to their vocabularies, and gain or satisfy a voracious appetite for novelty. At the beach the parents could leave their children to do many things on their own, to grow with little supervision, to acquire gently the basic attitudes of adolescence and maturity. While children grew as children the parents could play and read and relax, and acquire aspects to themselves. Even the Anglican Church saw that beach-goers were developing their personal character, so the Church tried to influence the way that character grew on the beach. In 1934, Dr. Mowll, the Archbishop of Sydney, said that he would send the Church to the beaches, he wanted services on the sand at Manly, Cronulla and at either Bondi or Coogee.

Personal character was not just something which could be found on the beach, the emphasis on the development of personal character through the pursuit of different activities modified the functions and look of older resorts and, by the 1950s, created new resorts. Resorts were built in order to serve the conception of

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22 DAILY TELEGRAPH. 26-7-1934.
human character. Two contrasting examples from the property portfolio of H.F.Halloran demonstrate the impact which the new emphasis on human activity had on the old style of resort. The first example shows how the diversity of activities was peripheral to the picturesque style of seaside resort. When, in 1908, H.F.Halloran started to subdivide and develop land at Avoca Beach he planted Norfolk Island Pines along the shore. In places where the original vegetation had been cleared or degraded, and which had become exposed, the Botanic Gardens in Sydney long since recommended those tall and radiating trees to replace the giant figs and undergrowth. All along the eastern coast the trees established fringing rows above the promenades and announced where towns broke through to the sea. Hinting at the beauty of Manly they established the form of remembrance and anticipation. Behind his trees, away from the beach, Halloran built a guest house, 'Avoca Lodge'. The lodge had electric lights, a smoking room, a piano, balconies, a telephone, refrigeration, its own dairy and vegetable patch, poultry and steam laundry. Avoca Lodge was a self-sufficient and complete resort. There were playing fields too. Halloran encouraged surf bathing but the pitches and ovals were not such an important part of his seaside resort; he used them to attract teams of sportsmen, who already had sporting interests and sometimes had only that in common. It was not the point of the holiday, but the pitch kept the group together.

The second example concerns Stanwell Park. From 1907 Halloran bought up land at Stanwell Park in the Illawarra to create an ideal picturesque resort. The area was already popular with day-trippers and had some guest houses. It was at a place on the coast where the mountains ran right down to the sea and rose rapidly above it with ferns and creeks and views. There were lagoons for gentle bathing and a surf beach just in front. The railway was forced close to the sea by the reach of the mountains. After a long and sometimes dangerous journey through the total black of the Otford Tunnel the railway burst upon a complete and complex panorama of sea and mountain and beach and greenery and sky. After an extreme deprivation of the senses, they were saturated. Michael Adams

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25 H.F. Halloran; *STANWELL PARK*. Sydney, 1908.
has followed the subsequent history of Stanwell Park. In the guest houses there was quiet and repose, people went to Stanwell Park to walk, to fish and to bathe. Entertainment peaked with a 'Gypsy Tea'. Halloran offered nature and surf bathing, but the place did not sell well, only 70 blocks out of his first release of 200 had sold by 1913. He built a kiosk and changing rooms, he gave funds to the surf club, he built lookouts, created stoneworks and walking tracks. By the 1920s his land was being illegally used by large numbers of working class campers, and many stayed throughout the Depression. The surf club catered for miners from the coal fields at Helensburgh and then the campers from Sydney. In a little node between the club and the campground, away from Halloran's secluded bush blocks, just behind the beach, grew a constant community flitting between the sand, tents and club. Into the forest behind the sea, up the mountainside, through the decaying guest houses, from the clubhouse rose all the noise of a dance hall, the sympathies of a picture show and the groans of a sports centre. Despite Halloran's efforts and intentions, Stanwell Park had become as diverse and complex as the Bondi Pavilion.

Waverley Council had wanted to create a better beach. The new style of resort appeared in places other than Bondi. In Queensland, at Southport, a few years before the Bondi Pavilion was opened, the local Golf Course Company took out a lease on the pier and baths the Council had built there so that they could build a theatre for 2,000 people and a dance hall that could take some hundreds of couples at a time. Perhaps they danced the same dances at Bondi.

From the late 19th century the wealthy and respectable of Brisbane followed the example of Governor Sir Anthony Musgrave and repaired to the South Coast. He wore a bathing costume in the water so many of them did too. He stayed for long periods, so that was the thing to do. He left, but the residents of Brisbane kept coming. Southport was a base for the whole long coast from Stradbroke Island to the border. At Southport one could walk along a promenade, bathe in gentle waters, change in sheds owned by the hotels and could be sure that there

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27 *The Sun*. 30-1-1929.


29 Longhurst; *The Development of the Gold Coast*. pp. 92-93.
Figure 4-7: The Call.

[Source: COVER. 1912.]
was no undertow. The visitors also took long trips. They went across to Stradbroke to see the staghorns, the orchids and the ferns. They went across to Main Beach to feel the sea, the way waves tore at them and tussled with them. They drove their carriages on the hard sand all the way to Burleigh Heads and offered a pair of wheels to the sea and looked back inland to the mountains far away, they scored the boundaries of each and were stung by their own spray. Further south, at Burleigh and Currumbin, small numbers of campers could be alone, sleep in the outdoors beneath a sheet so thin it let in the night. Little headlands and a creek punctured the sand. Even the sea might vanish amongst the koalas and the native turkeys and trees with fat leaves.

On another jutting headland, above a river a little further south, promoters had discovered that the sea was happy, that it bubbled in to shore, that it invited young people especially to play and be like it. The Queensland tourist authorities said that the visitors were happy at Coolangatta and Tweed Heads, happy like those smiling, friendly waves. In the water the surfers could move along with the waves into the shore, and that was a way to feel excitement. Being thrilled they could do so much more than before. Coolangatta had grown rapidly in the mid-1920s, spreading houses with new designs and pretty red roofs into Kirra, Bilinga and Tugun. The houses fronted the beach, they followed it, not climbed above it or spread behind it, the land they pushed aside seemed not to have pretty little flowers or bushes and rare species worth collecting. The Council looked at the wetlands and began to call them swamps, then they got rid of them. In this way real estate agents, builders, holiday travellers and surfers recognised that there was one thing, the beach, and behind it was nothing. The builders and the buyers spread depth and diversity, they spread happiness. When a house with a little garden and a red roof and a picket fence took in the poor soil a guide book praised the builders for having claimed the world for beauty.

Coolangatta acquired electricity and great lights and hot water and open-air picture shows and nice little cafes where no-one served too little portions and there were garages and service centres for the cars which lay the town on a rumbling


31 Queensland Railways; SOUTH COAST HOLIDAY RESORTS: Tours in the South Coast District. Government Printer, Brisbane, 1912. pp. 9-10, 28, 30, 35.


33 Ibid. p. 147.
Figure 4-8: Brisbane and the Gold Coast.
bed. Coolangatta had many new amenities, the only modern facility it lacked was an aerodrome. The town was not like a little fishing town with a constant smell and mess and where the houses and the streets stayed poor and there was not enough money to spend on keeping it tidy and making it beautiful. It was not like an outback town where the drovers and the stockmen and the owners had to come to load up huge waggons with flour and barrels and leave again. It was not like Brisbane where people worked in offices or warehouses or taught in schools, yet it did have electricity and lamps like Brisbane, and cars and garages and places to eat and places to go and things to do, like watching movies and dancing. It was a place to count the number of new houses, to watch the way new schemes made Coolangatta beautiful, to want the latest things put in houses or on sale in shops. A 1920s guide book said that the modern amenities of Coolangatta were important to tourism.

The author of the guide book which praised the modernity of Coolangatta may have felt that the town should be measured in the same terms as the visitors might evaluate their own homes. The modern home was a place where whoever lived there could all come together and break apart and each find something right for them, and then find something else right for them, and then come together and then break apart again. In the 1920s and 1930s Mrs. Muir of Harrington in New South Wales was letting her little cottage above the Manning River mouth, near the local swimming pool, complete with its sleep-out verandahs. Mrs. Muir supplied all the linen and the cutlery and all the modern things she had in order for people who stayed at Harrington to feel that they had a home there. In a new house every few steps took the residents to a new room where different things were done and when they moved into the garden and into its parts there were different things to do in each place and when they walked along the street and went down to the intersection they had to know what they were doing. Coolangatta had become like that, different activities were gathered there.

In 1925, cars ran a bridge across the Nerang to be beside the sea and Jim Cavill built a hotel. First, he asked the Council to keep the campers with their tents

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34 Ibid. p.151.
35 Ibid.
36 Harrington Progress Association; BEAUTIFUL HARRINGTON, NORTH COAST. For Your Next Holiday. Champion, Taree, 193-. unpaginated.
away from him and the campers were kept away, then Jim Cavill built his hotel, he was sure it would be his hotel. His hotel was near the beach and people could surf there, some already did and that is why he chose that place. Alexander McRobbie has pointed out that Jim Cavill did not simply try to build a hotel, he built a town around his hotel. Jim Cavill gave the name ‘Surfer’s Paradise’ to his hotel and to the town. Cavill felt that the town needed many facilities, he felt it needed a surf club so he made a surf club. Cavill created a Progress Association, and in the 1930s the Progress Association helped Surfer’s Paradise to get a post office and then a school. Much later there would be a fire brigade, but before that there were churches. The surf club moved to bigger premises and the Anglicans got the old beach hut. That is what a town needed; it is possible Jim needed a town because he wanted to offer a variety of facilities and attractions to attract beach-goers to stay at his hotel.

Jim Cavill owned the Surfer’s Paradise Hotel; it had different styles of accommodation and Jim kept animals, although that was not very new. In Sydney, last century, there had been many hotels on the Harbour and along Botany Bay and some of them had animals and amusements and baths as well. Ferry companies owned some of them, other owners built private tramways to their hotel and offered all inclusive fares. Patrons got a trip and entry and the right to use or see some of the attractions that were already there. They could swim in the baths, pay for some food, maybe look at an elephant, sit under the giant trees and watch other people try out the amusements. But when the amusements became predictable, and the trees seemed dreary and if someone wanted to make their own food and bring their own drink and it was boring to go on that old tram or ferry people did not use the baths and the resort closed. The beach where Jim Cavill built his hotel in the 1920s was already an established place to surf; Jim Cavill made it a place to stay. A 1920s guide book to the South Coast had said bathers did not require any “special hardihood, but merely the true joy of living is needed to face the breakers”.

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to put so many things in his hotel and to build a town, so that visitors could utilise their 'joy of living' in many other ways as well.

In time, Jim's hotel was only one of the attractions of Surfer's Paradise. Even before the war, Brisbane people were building houses and little shacks along the beach and in little clumps all the way to the border. Yet there were still large stretches which did not have houses or towns or nature, only beaches, so Brisbane people wanted to build there. They put down tents or rough iron constructions or neat little places running down the coast.\(^42\) Compared to what travellers and occasional visitors were expected to do, what those visitors actually did was mysterious. In the war half-a-million troops came through the South Coast. They swam and wanted to dance and drink; that was called rest and recreation.\(^43\) During the war, psychologists argued that what people should do when they went on a holiday was relax and just lie back. They believed that workers went on holidays in order to become healthy enough to perform their jobs, and that it did not matter which place workers would choose as long as they could be quiet in themselves. Yet after the war holiday-makers expressed their preferences for particular resorts, by going to the town where Jim had his hotel, and to Coolangatta and to Burleigh Heads; travel writers who were familiar with the psychological theory of holidays might moan that everyone was going on trips and trying to fit the social adventures of a whole life into two weeks away.\(^44\)

At the Gold Coast the different qualities of the human attractions became separate and particular, even extreme and discordant. After the war the Gold Coast became a mess.\(^45\) There were tin sheds and abandoned buses and tents and log-cabins and Cape-Cod roofs and Dutch style houses and familiar wooden bungalows. Places fell down and places went up, someone built in pink, someone else in blue and someone else in green. There was no sound modern design, no consistency, no unity of image or hierarchy of qualities, no green belt, the road ran right behind the houses and behind the beaches. The Council ran a town, and felt that towns should not have slums so they got rid of the broken down buses and tin sheds; a mix of Tudor and Romanesque, Spanish Mission and butterfly-roofs


\(^{44}\) R.Glen;'Avoid that "HOLIDAY HANGOVER".'HOLIDAY AND TRAVEL Jan-Feb.1948.p.38. See also Chapter 6 below.

\(^{45}\) This paragraph is a summary of the ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA.Special Gold Coast Issue. Jan-March 1959.Vol.48, No.1.passim.
Figure 4-9: Exuberance.
[Source: J.Carnemolla;
AUSTRALIA'S GOLD COAST. 1969.]
This group of young people are all set for Hawaiian night at the Surfers Paradise Beachcomber Hotel. A special charter bus will pick them up from their Coolangatta guest house, take them to Surfers and return them at the end of the night. It's all part of the service.

For youngsters and teenagers enjoying a guest holiday at Coolangatta every day offers a new round of pleasure and fun and prices are always at a concession rate.

On Greenmount Beach there are regular talent quests, dress-ups and beach football matches, with the guest houses hotly competing against one another for free nights out. Each week the contest highlight is the girls’ football match. If you think the men play a hard game you should see the girls in action.

Whether your taste runs to beach football or just plain relaxing on the sand, a Coolangatta Gold Coast holiday is one you'll long remember.
continued to be erected. Visitors did not stop coming, and some residents built feature walls and used lurid pinks and houses came up next to each other in all sorts of different styles and colours. When, in 1959, the magazine ARCHITECTURE IN AUSTRALIA dedicated an issue to the Gold Coast there were several laments that Gold Coast developers had such bad taste, but no complete condemnations, for at least the developers had modern tastes.

The complexity of the Gold Coast was to be found in its modernity. So many things were new after the war. There were refrigerators and ovens and new kitchens and washing machines and tissues and plastic tables and basins and bowls and complete plastic kitchens. If people stayed at Jim's hotel they did not have far to go to dance the new dances or find a shop or take their clothes to the dry cleaners. In a caravan there were all those things people wanted in a home, without separate rooms, so it was much easier for mother to do the cleaning. Apartments were being offered all along the coast where the price included somebody to do the housework. There were American style diners with bare fronts covered in detailed signs. In the middle of Surfer's there was a Chinese restaurant, then there were French restaurants, a Dutch style, fast American, Viennese, Indonesian, steak, pie-and-peas. There was luxury and a rude simplicity, sophistication and decay. But the big difference between the Coast and the usual pattern of urban households was that the growth of the seaside resorts depended on the extent to which women could be relieved of housework, the Coast was a place where everyone should be freed to pursue a great range of activities.

In her semi-official survey of tourist developments on the Gold Coast in the 1950s, Eve Keane rejoiced in the clutter, the non-descript international style of architecture and the pattern of ribbon development. Keane closed her book with a contrast, between the Gold Coast and the Hinterland. She said that these two areas could offer travellers two sets of values; the Hinterland was a place of

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49. A. Richards; 'Mother doesn't cook in the heart of THE GOLDEN MILE.', THE COURIER MAIL. 4-10-1954. p.2.
superlative natural beauty, a place where visitors would be entranced by the magical handiwork of nature. Keane said that anyone who had experienced that beauty would probably have felt a sense of uplift. Keane did not link the feelings to be had in the Hinterland to any other feelings or kind of life. Next she turned to the Gold Coast itself, picturing it as a kind of ‘King’s Cross’ in Southern Queensland. She listed the types of accommodation that could be found on the Gold Coast, and expressed delight in the rush of the shopping centres. There were so many things to do, she said, so many places to go, there were many scents and many noises. Keane described the air as an intoxicating mix of “frangipani, roasting poultry, petrol, ozone and warm asphalt”. In any other town that blend might well have been found disgusting or bizarre, but Keane used it to suggest the beauty of the place; the smell suggested just how much life there was up at the Gold Coast. The reputation of the Gold Coast as a place of life was carried, in the 1960s, into romantic literature. In Lindly Adams’ SURF NURSE and in Fiona Murray’s GOLD COAST AFFAIR the heroines, jilted and disillusioned, went to Surfer’s Paradise to restore their sense of pride and excitement in life, and to start their romantic lives all over again. The important thing about the Gold Coast was not nature or scenery, but activity and what that activity could do for people.

A survey of attitudes towards the Gold Coast, carried out in the southern cities in 1970, found that young people felt the strongest pull to visit the Gold Coast. Those young people saw the Gold Coast as a place to surf, to find the weather that opened up a range of excitement to them. They hoped to meet new people there, it seemed that the place lived at night, that all the best dances were up there, that their urgent interests would be acknowledged in clubs which announced themselves in neon. Older people retired there. If they wanted quiet that was what they got, if they wanted a round of golf or bowls or a chance to sit and let their opulence do the shouting that was what they could do. Fleeting extravagant behaviour in the young visitors and a permanent withdrawal from some social functions by retired residents found a new complement during the 1970s. From the big cities and small towns, from Queensland and from the southern states, a

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51 Ibid. p.103.

52 Ibid. p.104, including Quotation.

53F. Murray; GOLD COAST AFFAIR. Horwitz, Sydney, 1967. L. Adams; SURF NURSE. Calvert, Sydney, 196-.

steady and established group of the middle-aged and active moved onto the coast, not to the tight tourist centres, not to the retirement villages, but into homes that were once holiday flats and into new suburbs behind the rows of beaches, flats and shops, and behind the highway. Not yet ready to retire, not yet ready to withdraw themselves from work many tried to become their own employers, to run a small business, such as renting out holiday units, running shops and services, or amusements and carriers, even dry-cleaners and restaurants. If they ran a small business it might be unnecessary, or impossible, for middle-aged people to retire.55

In the 1960s and 1970s the Sunshine Coast and the North Coast of New South Wales began to feel the same pressures as were felt on the Gold Coast. New settlers had come from country towns and big cities alike. There had never been as many brash signs or colours or as much proud clutter there as on the Gold Coast. In all those other places residents and planners could look to the Gold Coast and see that their place was a little bit like that, see how they did not want their place to be, see a littered path first marked out there.56 Small seaside towns, some ports and fishing towns, some rural service towns and some vacation colonies became self-consciously urban. On the Sunshine Coast there grew vast new suburbs, the developers promised that these were better suburbs, suburbs people had not lived in when they lived in big towns. At Noosa the Council experimented with the thematic design of urban landscapes, with new ways of controlled development where they lay down a detailed and complex village style and expected private owners and builders to conform and construct their plan for them.57 To Byron Bay there came sophisticated restaurants, national and international performers who rarely went outside metropolitan cities and schemes for an urban hub for pedestrian access, bike paths and varied plantings.58 On the


Figure 4-10: The Sunshine Coast.
Gold Coast entire new towns were planned, such as Robina. In the 1990s, when it would be completed, the population of Robina was to be 60,000 people, living in a fully landscaped, coherently integrated and serviced town, the self-professed peak of the modern conceptions and styles for suburban life.\(^{59}\) On the South Coast of New South Wales, golf courses beside the beach and communal amenities in contemporary urban styles set the standards for streets and shops and housing at Mollymook and Merimbula.\(^{60}\) In 1981 a survey of Sydney residents found that only 55 per cent of the population wanted to stay in Sydney. Half of those who wanted to leave wanted to settle on the North Coast. There, they thought, it would be possible to find a better lifestyle, quieter than Sydney, less dangerous and with a better climate. The disenchanted Sydney residents thought that, on the North Coast, they would find it easier to get to places where they had to go and to places where they wanted to go. The minimum standards they expected of the areas where they wished to live were suburban standards.\(^{61}\) The qualities of the towns they were drawn to were becoming urban. The styles were urban because to be urban was to be diverse and complex in combination; the seaside was a place for urban styles because the coast was for combining different activities, interests and qualities. Expectation and hope needed a beach before they could be set to earth.

The population of the Sunshine Coast rose from 57,000 in 1971 to 125,000 in 1981. Noosa grew from 5,800 people in 1976 to a predicted total of 33,000 in 1984.\(^{62}\) The big coastal suburbs, the little resorts and the urban destinations were promoted as perfect places to live.\(^{63}\) But, if that was why new residents moved to such places, the new comers could not always stay. If they could start their own business perhaps their business collapsed, if they could find a job perhaps it did not last or it came and went as visitors came and went. Many would not find work at all, yet many who had no job still stayed because they had found good places in which to live. The Gold Coast population rose from about 6,000 in 1933, to 20,000 in 1954. In 1966 50,000 people lived on the Gold Coast and when


\(^{60}\) LIFE BEGINS AT TURA BEACH. Jennings, Merimbula, 1986.


\(^{63}\) Robina; Op. Cit. LIFE BEGINS AT TURA BEACH.
the Strategic Plan was compiled, in 1969, the population was expected to reach 200,000, in 1990, though that figure was actually surpassed in the mid-1980s.64 At the Gold Coast, in the 1950s, the Council could see that there were enough people to call it a city, although there were few of the industries which older cities had. Many older cities had heavy industry or at least medium industry and so businesses and companies were offered land and cheap rates at the Gold Coast, along with electricity and roads; whatever else they might have wanted they might very well have got. Magnates were invited to build factories and anything else they might have wanted to build.65 Builders came and built for newcomers to live and for the visitors to stay. Boats were made there and used on the Broadwater. Clothes were made, sold and worn there, and furniture was made and sold there and put in the houses and the units and the hotels that the builders had built there. What people did at the Gold Coast suggested the industries and the jobs, but the jobs did not keep up with the people.66 Perhaps the magnates believed that the Gold Coast was a different city. The Council knew that theirs was a city, but they were nervous because they did not know what sort of city it was or how it would get the jobs or if the money coming in to them would stay constant. On the Sunshine Coast, in the 1970s, officials and planners could look at the Gold Coast and see what sort of city theirs would be. It would be a ‘population driven’ city.67 That meant that it was a city because the prospective residents knew what sort of life they wanted to lead, and how they could live it, and where it would be best, and what sort of things a place had to have before they could live the life they knew was the best life to lead. Mines did not tell them, nor factories, nor paddocks or big offices. Those things could not tell anyone what life was, but they had work for people to do. Whoever moved to the little towns and better suburbs by the sea, where they could do as many things as they could do where they lived in the city, knew what life was. The newcomers took the chance that there would be enough residents and visitors who also knew that they could work to support those other people in their knowledge.


Bruce Small had expressed, years earlier, what modern life was like. He had made bicycles, and the riders could feel the air brush off their cheeks. He had made electric household cleaners so that after the war women would be able to recline in hammocks reading books. Those were some of the good things money could buy after the war. Bruce Small owned land at the Gold Coast from the 1950s. He felt that he would be able to give people life more directly than he had ever been able to before. He owned land and it was his land and so he wanted the city to be his city; then, in the late 1960s, he became Mayor and it was his city and the city became as it was with his land. His land had been planned, the plan had order and the plan put things where it was right for them to be.

On his own land at the Gold Coast, once pasture in a bend of the Nerang River, Bruce Small had wanted to build a great city. His development was called PARADISE CITY and it would be the earthly city of happiness for those who lived there. Whatever was worldly and made for happiness would be found in his city. If the residents went to church in his city then they would have seen all which was true and great. PARADISE CITY would be a city of its own a short walk from the beaches and the centre of the Gold Coast. There would be no chaos and din in the city, there would be no taut traffic or dominant chimneys. The city would be sensitive to the natural beauty of its site on the river. Families could settle in simple bungalows, perhaps longing for a time when they could own an opulent house on the river. They might socialize on the lush grass in the lovely sun while the river passed waterskiers and sail boats down to the sea. There would be a cricket oval, some park land and a city centre. Bruce Small thought that people would stand in his city centre and feel that this was as great a city as ancient Athens, but modern, a city for the future. From the city centre people could strike out for the beaches, a golf course or race track, they could cross the river through the night, when fantastic neon lay a path across the water. Residents would be able to do so many things outside the city, they would lead active busy lives, and they would come back to his city square and his city and there would be so many things for them to do there. The residents would live a life which would make them want to be active.

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69 The STRATEGIC PLAN for the Gold Coast was introduced in the first period of Bruce Small as Mayor.

70 This paragraph, and the next one, are summaries and expositions of the ideas and illustrations in B.Small; THE PARADISE CITY STORY. Bruce Small Enterprises, Surfer’s Paradise, c.1960, supported by the ideas he put forward in the following article: B.Small; Resort Development’, THE VALUER. Vol.25, No.2, April 1978. pp.108-113, 119.
In the centre of \textit{PARADISE CITY}, the square would suggest the virtues and distinctiveness of the buildings and functions set around the open space. There would be a Hall where the community could meet and perform and discuss what was important to it, an Art Gallery for the cultivation of creative talents and broad sensitivities, and there would be space for four religious denominations. There would be a supermarket too. There would be no offices or factories and there would not be many jobs. People would live in the city, but Bruce Small did not presume that they would work there or anywhere else. It was a city of happiness, it was an ideal world, and ideal worlds had nothing to say about work. Ideal cities could be built, they were created and creative but there was nothing in the ideal that reached out so far that it could re-make the world. The life of happiness and earthly perfection was different from having to work. The city should lead to enchantments and busy activities, it should create sensibilities and discharge them, it should offer but not suggest what the residents should take. In the square of \textit{PARADISE CITY}, residents should stand as they stood in the world itself. They could choose the churches and a time of meditation and humility, the Arts and a time of uplift, the hall and a time of social communion. The river was nearby, and offered them boats and water-skiing and swimming. No resident would be far from the beaches, where they could surf and lie the sun, as well as play and flirt. \textit{PARADISE CITY} offered playing fields and parks for cricket, football, golf, running, watching and snoozing. In the square was the supermarket and if they had gone into the supermarket the residents would have seen that living was a kind of shopping. All the different things were in different tins; in life you had to have so many different tins. The tins were different because they were in different aisles.

Since the 1920s, beaches and holidays had offered the same variety as Bruce Small offered his clients. Holidays did not offer one chain in a hierarchy of chains, a resort was not a resort for the sake of a stronger urban life, which it had been in the 19th century. In the 20th century resorts and beaches existed for the sake of life itself, because the beaches gave a chance for people to work out and bring out their human nature. To be human was to have different faculties, to exercise one sensibility and another, to enjoy one kind of thing and then another. After the war, when visitors went to Manly, Frank Hurley wanted them to know that Manly was Paradise. Blues were more blue, soft breezes were more soft, greens were greener and the beach was more of what it could be. Because it could be for human life it had gained all the dances and the nature walks and the tours and the hotels and the music and the sport it had. Life might be like Frank Hurley’s
pretty book about Manly, happily diverse and colourful. In 1971 one travel writer announced that Utopia was a place on the Sunshine Coast and, as opposed to what had been thought for so long, it did not consist of one rule or one element but of many, the many elements which could be found up there, tasted on a holiday, lived in the new suburbs. When, in the 1980s, the old whaling, slaughtering and dairying town of Byron Bay was becoming sophisticated the tourist authorities wanted visitors to know that a well-travelled American surfing editor was pleased to live there, because it was the best town in the world, and he had seen so very many. In the 1960s Ansett could take you away to where couples ran along the water's edge, and there life would feel full again, great again, and TAA could take you to the Gold Coast where young people splashed around in the water and where there were so many places to stay, so many things to do at night and in the day. Both visitors and residents could come alive up there, a holiday offered a variety of attractions because each attraction represented a separate part of life. The Gold Coast was a place to discover what it meant to have such life. But the sense of life tended to exclude work, for it was based on retirement or vacation or insecure employment. The sense of life that could be gained at the beach had in fact shrunk, no longer dealt with whatever people did. Modern society might re-make life, but the sense of life fostered at the beach would not. The sense of life fostered for seaside resorts was one of activity and the full development of life, yet work had not been included; by the sea, to have life was not to alter the development of society.

71 B. Young; 'Manly: The Village by the Sea.' HOLIDAY AND TRAVEL. June 1948. pp. 6,34.
F. Hurley; MANLY...SOUTH PACIFIC PLAYGROUND. Manly Council, Manly, 195-


73 B. Cleary; 'The Last Place On Earth.' BYRON BAY HOLIDAY GUIDE. Summer 1985-6.

Chapter 5

A BIG SECRET.

Since the early 20th century going to the beach has become a continually more distinctive part of life and more distinct from other parts of life. The unity between beach-going and broader social interests, gradually established between 1860 and the 1890s, began to dissolve at the turn-of-the-century and was supplanted by fragmentation after the 1920s. Going to the beach and going to work became distinct activities and, upon the beach sunbaking became different from surfing, paddling from exercising, and as new sports or new toys or new colours were added to the things that were done at the beach and the things that were taken there, those too became different from each other. Beaches became places of broken activities, broken significance and so of experiences broken from each other. The difficulty of drawing connections between beach-going and other areas of life was re-inforced by a new attitude to the depiction of beach-going. That attitude can be seen in the work of artists as well as promoters. This Chapter will show how first painters, then 20th century travel writers and imaginative writers, as well as promoters and groups such as surfers, all removed the old bridge between the beach and the rest of society. Writers like Francis Myers had built a bridge because they wrote about and illuminated the actual experience of taking a trip or being on holiday. In the 20th century, writers and artists no longer specify what it feels like to be on holiday, so they no longer suggest how holidays could be important to other areas of contemporary life.

It was the artists who first stopped imagining the feeling of being at the beach. Artists and photographers had imagined and interpreted the beach in the late 19th century, but from the early 20th century onwards they became increasingly concerned with the formal and even abstract character of what they themselves were doing. The imaginative perception of the beach changed as artists sought to differentiate their own activities from those of others. As Linda Slutzkin tried to show in the Art Gallery of New South Wales 1982 exhibition of paintings and photographs about beach-going, there has been a shift in the 20th century, a shift from depicting the seaside setting and its moods to depicting the people who went
to the beach and their activities and their moods.\(^1\) With that change came a change in the function of pictorial representations for those who saw them. A landscape in the late 19th century style could be emotive, it brought out the appropriate emotions for viewing the sea by making the physical environment contain or impose a dramatic or emotional quality. In the 20th century, paintings or drawings of people on the beach would treat them singly or as groups and crowds, and the landscape was only an incidental setting for them. Yet photographs and paintings of people became abstract. In her 1913 painting of beach-goers at Manly, *Summer is here*, Ethel Carrick Fox painted individual people as sources of colours, colours which broke into one another. That made for a landscape of people. From Harold Cazneaux in the 1920s and 1930s and Max Dupain in the 1930s and 1940s to Brett Whiteley in the 1970s, artists found people interesting on the beach because they made shapes, rounded shapes, irregular shapes, dense shapes or open shapes. Other photographers and painters made juxtapositions; Charles Meere put together many unrelated groups of figures in his *Australian Beach Pattern* of 1940; Ann Noon stood an old swimmer against a setting of horizontal lines in the sea wall, the horizon and a sturdy barge in her *Iceberger* of 1975; in one spot someone did one thing and behind them or around them, oblivious of each other, someone else was adopting a posture or performing an action which echoed the first shape or played on its formal characteristics. All the artistic action was taking place on the canvas or print. Making a painting or a photograph like that was to see connections that were never there in the minds of the people who went to the beaches, the artists were presenting a picture of the beach different from the experience of being there. Eugene Von Guerard had provided the evocative and healthy landscape illustrations for Dougan Bird’s treatise on pulmonary consumption, but Brett Whiteley’s beach paintings would not even have been suitable for a tourist promotion. Whiteley did not offer beach-goers self-recognition, he commented upon their behaviour.\(^2\)

Brett Whiteley did not do decorative posters; Ken Done did. The way Ken Done did his posters and paintings and diaries and clothes in the 1970s and 1980s stood in a direct line of descent from earlier 20th century advertising and decoration.\(^3\) In his beach images the people and the objects became single entities

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\(^2\)All of the works and artists mentioned, plus many more, are illustrated in: G. Dutton; *THE BEACH*. Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1985. passim.

presented as though they were separable and distinctive things with little direct relationship to each other, except that they occurred in the same setting. Each encapsulated a particular value. Shape or colour, diversity or unity, each object had a distinctive quality to represent in the paintings, and so those qualities, in turn, became identical with specific objects or sights. The identification of qualities with particular objects or sets of objects was fundamental both to advertising and souvenir photography, though in each case human beings were more important than mere physical objects.

When the Manly Council wanted, in 1927, to demonstrate the great progress of the Municipality in its first 50 years, the image they chose to represent progress was that of surf bathing. Surf bathing was intimately identified with their region, and looking back it seemed that their growth was much like that of surf bathing itself. Where once there had been very little there was now a flourishing and robust attitude. Council too accepted the myths about surf bathing and its own predecessors. To show the abstract story a pictorial juxtaposition was used. In 1877 women had been bound in cumbersome clothes, their faces hidden, their eyes averted from the world. In 1927 women were liberated, their bodies were freed of bulky drapery and they had attitudes which faced out to the world. They went to the beach and they enjoyed it. The male image had become encrusted with that of the surf life saver guarding the beach for pleasure, and women became the representatives of pleasure in pictorial language. Harry Phillips was a professional photographer and a publisher of souvenir booklets in Sydney during the 1920s and 1930s. In his photographs, Phillips wanted to show that the beach was fun, and the way he showed it was to show all manner of women enjoying themselves by the water.

Between the mid-1930s and the late 1950s the Victorian Tourist authorities used the magazine WALKABOUT, amongst other vehicles, to promote their ocean resorts. Over that period, the advertisements in WALKABOUT updated the styles of clothing and the accoutrements of a beach trip, yet the advertisements preserved several fundamental themes and qualities throughout the period. The Victorian

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5 H. Phillips; SURFING BEACHES OF SYDNEY. 1930. passim.

6 Victorian Government Tourist Bureau, advertisements in WALKABOUT.c1934-c1957. During the late 1950s and early 1960s the format of the magazine was becoming increasingly dated, and the magazine underwent several format changes during from then until its demise in 1974. These problems may have led the Victorian authorities to withdraw their advertising from the magazine during the late 1950s.
Figure 5-1: Progress.
[Source: OFFICIAL JUBILEE...SOUVENIR OF MANLY. 1927.]
Figure 5-2: Happiness.
(Source: WALKABOUT. March 1935.)
Sunny Days . . .

in the Sea at LORNE, COWES

and other delightful haunts along Victoria’s golden coastline, with all the incomparable fascination of a glorious laze in perfect surroundings, make

An Ideal Holiday

Consult the travel experts at the Government Tourist Bureau, Queen’s Walk, Melbourne, for particulars of 8-day and longer tours to these popular resorts.
advertisements focused on the sand and the water as a common setting with common themes and uses that happened to be found in different places from Lorne, Angelsea and Phillip Island right through to the Gippsland Lakes. The beach was a general representation and it stood for fun, pleasure or excitement. To prove it, readers of WALKABOUT were presented with photographs of young women busily enjoying themselves on the beach. The women ran or played games or looked up from the sand or came out from the water. The women faced the camera, they showed their own delight, they were open to view. In one picture from the 1930s two happy girls walked along the beach. The girls walked towards the camera. If they had walked right up to the camera they would have had to stop. There was a barrier between them and the readers. There was no invitation to the readers to enter the picture; there was a clear difference, a confrontation. The happy faces showed that it was possible to have fun at the beach, but the advertisements did not presume, nor did they create, an imaginative involvement with their audience. The advertisements did not give out any sense of what life was like by the sea. All a reader could know was that fun was to be had, that it brightened a person’s face. What others felt stayed a secret, the confrontation of the image with its audience emphasised the present exclusion of the reader from the reality. It may have prompted a longing in the readers to find out just what being at the beach did feel like, and why the girls were smiling.

Decades of seaside advertising preceded the sustained promotion and depiction of the Gold Coast. When, in the 1950s, the unity of the south coast resorts became both a physical and an administrative reality the modernity of the coast became a standard theme. The ways used to convey that modernity, however, were little different from those used in Victoria in the 1930s. Fun and pleasure could be found there, and the promoters and souvenir makers were now able to posit definite contexts for the happy feelings. The contexts were the beaches and the water parks, theme parks, shops, streets, restaurants, signs, lights, crowds, games and sports. Photographs which aimed to prove how much fun there was at the Gold Coast would show people in action, often in close up, busily doing what was appropriate to their setting, obviously engrossed in the special feelings of the scene and the action. At first, in the 1950s and 1960s, the pictures of happy people had no underlying unity and the souvenir booklets simply accumulated the sites and distinctive attractions to be found there, the lack of a theme in the presentation spoke of the diversity and complexity of the place itself. The elation

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Figure 5-3: Packed.
[Source: WALKABOUT. November 1959.]
GOLD COAST HOLIDAYS

The Railway Travel Bureau plans inexpensive holidays on the Gold Coast.

Arrangements provide for travel from Sydney on Friday nights by the Brisbane Limited Express, motor coach travel from Casino to destinations as far as Surfers Paradise, and accommodation with breakfast at a leading hotel or guest house. The coaches provide a door-to-door pick-up for return to Casino Railway Station.

A week’s holiday can be planned for as little as £15/4/-.

Telephone BA 3018, or call on Railway Travel Bureau Officers at Sydney Station or at Challis House, Martin Place, Sydney, for full particulars.

The N.S.W. Department of Railways congratulates WALKABOUT on attaining its Silver Jubilee

WALKABOUT, NOVEMBER
of doing things, of being active and engrossed, was the only link between any one picture and another and between any one attraction and another. In the early 1970s the Gold Coast City Council stated that the true aim of promotion was to provide diverse visions, each with a heightened quality held together by continuous happiness,\(^8\)

one enormous carefree atmosphere of non-stop leisure and entertainment.

From about 1969 onwards tenement towers began to appear on the waterfront at Surfer’s. At first they rose singly then, between 1979 and 1982, they appeared in large numbers until demand and investment collapsed in 1982, whereupon construction returned to a lesser rate.\(^9\) The towers gave a new unity to the diverse images of the Gold Coast. Attractiveness and excitement were equated with complexity and variety. The souvenir booklets set active people up against the sheer bulk and size of the towers. The waterfront buildings became as dominant a theme as the beaches themselves. In one 1984 booklet three images were put on the cover and then constantly repeated. There was a surfer thinking only of the wave he rode, two girls walking along the beach absorbing the sun and admiration, and at the top were the tall buildings of Surfer’s.\(^10\) On the beaches visitors and locals could surf or fish, there were crowds and in photographs the crowds could be telescoped together to give a greater density. The buildings would be telescoped as well, leaving little space between each, echoing the beach goers, spelling out the packed nature of life up there. The skyline looked like so many other cities with tall buildings, the suggestion was that readers should think of the Gold Coast as a city, that the reason why it had so many different attractions was that it was a city. Happy faces showed that it was a city of happiness. Faces still looked at the camera, emphasising the exclusion of those who looked at the pictures from the activities and delights of those who were in them.\(^11\) The photographs would have kept the feeling of being there and being busy a secret. In October 1986, during the Queensland school holidays, family groups of visitors

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\(^8\)Quotation from Gold Coast City Council; NEWS AND INFORMATION KIT. n.d. mid blue folder, Gold Coast Central Library.


Figure 5-4: Density.
[Source: D.Potts; THE GOLD COAST. 1984.]
were taking photographs of each other on the beach, or against the backdrop of the built skyline, facing the camera, smiling. Perhaps those photos echoed the souvenir booklets. If the people in the photos unconsciously mimicked the happy models, perhaps those pictures said just as little about the feeling of being at the beach as the souvenirs did.

Throughout the 20th century, promoters who have tried to express the attractiveness of beach-going have relied on the same principle that was used by the builders of the Bondi Pavilion. The Bondi Pavilion was a place where many activities could be pursued, and where the activities were put in different rooms. The differences between recreational activities gradually became a premiss of travel writing in general. Although resort construction was a slower process than travel writing, resort construction was also affected by the presumed differences between recreational activities. The premiss was expressed by different means, to different purposes, by different organisations, at different times and in different places, yet it stayed constant. The constant principle was that human activity and human purposes were specific and distinct. By the 1940s, the consequence was that places, too, became specific and distinct. On the beach, the first clear distinction was between humanity and nature and, as it became apparent what the new emphasis on the beach as a centre for different human activities involved, other distinctions became apparent too.

In the 19th century the seaside resorts and the mountain resorts were virtually interchangeable. Resorts were assessed in terms of picturesque values and those values dictated a preference for dramatic and emotive features. That equivalence implied an abstract notion of the functions and character of a resort. The measure of attractiveness was the degree to which those common qualities were realised in each place. The extent to which each resort participated in the repertoire of picturesque values determined whether or not it served picturesque purposes. In the 20th century there has been a tendency to fragment the characteristics of resorts. The degree of each quality enjoyed by a particular resort has been assumed to be high. Instead, the resorts have been segmented by their specific functions.

During the 20th century the promotion of resorts has intensified the distinctiveness of each resort. In a simple way promoters were using heightened claims for the distinct features of resorts before the Second World War, though that process was limited by the rate at which the new style emerged in beach centres. Waverley Council had observed a distinction between Bondi Beach and the native luxury of Bronte and Tamarama, and there was a sense that the growth
of the resorts of Southern Queensland did not depend on their natural attractiveness. The identification of historical towns was a more general process of specification. In the late 19th century Beechworth had been promoted as a picturesque health resort.\textsuperscript{12} Tom Griffiths has written a history of the images which have been used to attract tourists to Beechworth during the 20th century.\textsuperscript{13} Griffiths showed that, in late 19th century Beechworth, the sense of local history had been very limited and was based on people and personalities, on the human quality of the town. Until the 1920s, there was no local interest in maintaining the old buildings, though that had changed by the 1950s, when the National Trust began to take an interest in Beechworth. From that time onwards the buildings were not valued for the context they gave to the human life of the town, but as objects to be preserved. To be an 'historic town' came to mean to have a certain number of good old buildings, and preserving them imposed significant constraints on the development of the town. An 'historic town' became a distinctly different form of town, preserved to emphasise the age of the town.

Before the Second World War, the islands of the Great Barrier Reef had been accessible on a variety of cruises based on the mainland, including distant Brisbane. A limited number of establishments throughout the islands could accommodate a small numbers of tourists, although touring a number of locations was a more established practice. Tours were set around general themes and activities, such as isolation, fishing or the inspection of coral reefs. The general tone was exotic and unusual and the attributes were superlative. The writer Vance Palmer spent a year on one island and found the fishing people more intense in their characteristics than the urban society to which he had been accustomed.\textsuperscript{14} Another visitor of the late 1930s sought extravagantly large fish to catch, the people with him on his cruise played at being natives and climbed coconut trees. Fishing, a different lifestyle and the natural wonder of the reef seemed different elements to him. Among the coral there was a spectrum of colours and a diversity of species, all of which bore examination. Museums of shells and corals filled in some of the details and depicted the range of things to look for. Each element of this 14-day cruise from Brisbane was distinct and, in

\textsuperscript{12} Beechworth Progress Association; \textit{ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO BEECHWORTH AND VICINITY}. Ingram and Son, Beechworth, c1892.

\textsuperscript{13} T. Griffiths; \textit{National Heritage or Town History: Beechworth in the 20th Century}.\textsuperscript{,AUSTRALIAN CULTURAL HISTORY}. No. 4, 1985, pp. 42-53.

the context of a "daily grind", the whole trip seemed, on reflection, superlative.\(^{15}\)

After the war major operators such as Ansett began to create a winter custom for the tourist industry by moving onto the reef islands to build single destination resorts. Ansett took up Hayman Island and Daydream Island in the late 1940s and late 1950s. TAA had acquired and re-designed the facilities at Dunk Island by the early 1960s.\(^{16}\) Initially, the prevailing theme of the reef resorts was peace and natural beauty of an exotic and tropical kind. The amenities and structures were limited to certain parts of each island, contrasting with the relatively secluded beaches and forest paths of other areas. When Don Gazzard designed the accommodation for Dunk Island in the 1960s he sought to lessen this contrast and to run the tropical growth into buildings which blended the local Queensland architecture with Japanese styles sensitive to the location.\(^{17}\) The hotels on Hayman Island brought international comfort, lavish food and a sophisticated night life. Most of the resorts concentrated a variety of sports around the beach by the social centre, and kept the rest of the island for solitary pleasures in a little world where, for each element, the reality 'outshone expectations'.\(^{18}\)

Interest in visiting the reef increased constantly and greatly throughout the 1960s and 1970s and new resorts found a market share by adopting thematic differences. By the 1980s the major airlines were themselves operating a complex grouping of islands where the variables were the number of visitors permitted at any one time, and the relative emphasis on natural qualities. Visitors could choose isolation or gregariousness, natural quiet or a complex of daytime and night-time activities set around the beach. There were considerable variations across the range of islands. Despite the variations, the promise of exquisite standards within each niche remained. In the 1980s an American expert on the tourism industry told Australian architects that a variety of functions and amenities within each resort,
and across the industry, was necessary by definition.\textsuperscript{19} At the same time, Phillip Cox, whose Yulara Tourist Village at Ayer’s Rock was attracting considerable praise, reminded his colleagues that resorts implied differentiation, and thus a distinctive theme for each case.\textsuperscript{20}

By 1980 the differentiation and specification of resorts was substantial and well established. A travel writer in Melbourne considered the beach resorts of Queensland alone and reminded his readers that the diversity included the city life style of the Gold Coast as well as the isolation of more tropical beaches.\textsuperscript{21} The writer thought that Bowen would provide seclusion, the Whitsunday Islands romance, that Great Keppel was a place to dream and that the islands as a whole could offer a chance to indulge in a castaway self-image or an exhaustive night-life. The same writer suggested that, even within the confines of the Gold Coast, there were chances to live a quiet life or an active life, to find simplicity or sophistication. The same writer also said that the Sunshine Coast offered a similar diversity, for the individual resorts were different from each other.

In the 1920s Harold Cazneaux took beach photographs which revealed his figurative interest in the shapes that human beings assumed. When she introduced those photographs, Jean Curlewis found it necessary to specify the various aspects of the beach scene.\textsuperscript{22} Curlewis described the dense colours of a thousand costumes and towels, and wrote that there was a time to surf and time to be spent in the sun, that there were different people with different purposes in being there. Curlewis found that, at the beach, businessmen cleansed themselves of life in the office, housewives caught a quick wave while dinner cooked, that children sought to play after school, and that there were pleasure seekers and self-sacrificing life savers. Jean Curlewis did not find any one interest which linked those features and people together. The sand was simply a setting, people accumulated on it. Because all those things seemed different, in order to express an idea of the character of beaches writers listed them, mentioned each, assumed that the picture was only whole when all the pieces were spelt out in hard detail. So, in the 1930s, C.B.Christeresen, a writer and long-serving editor of MEANJIN, wrote a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19}L.Helber; \textit{The Resort Development Planning Process.}, in Dean and Judd eds.; \textit{Op.Cit.} pp.37-44.
\item \textsuperscript{20}P.Cox; \textit{The Architecture and Non Architecture of Tourism Developments.} in Dean and Judd eds.; \textit{Op.Cit.}, 46-51.
\item \textsuperscript{21}D.Day; \textit{THE HERALD QUEENSLAND BEACH HOLIDAYS}. Herald Travel Bureau, Melbourne, 1980.
\item \textsuperscript{22}Curlewis, Cazneaux; \textit{SYDNEY SURFING}. Art in Australia, Sydney, 1929.
\end{itemize}
travelogue of Queensland and spelt out that beaches were places of colours, of happy waves, of happy sunshine, of happy crowds.\(^{23}\) To Christesen, the quality of being at the beach was the quality of the sea, the activity of the waves, and the trick of riding them, it was body surfing or being on a surf-ski or on a rubber mat. Christesen felt that the beach meant playing in the water, or on the sands, or relaxing in the sun. Everything could be specified, and so needed to be spelt out. The beach was broken, but it had not fallen apart. In the 1960s Keith Dunstan was one of several popular authors to give their impressions of beaches by listing the paraphernalia that people took with them onto the sand and resorts by providing a summary of the sports or entertainments they encompassed.\(^ {24}\)

Lists and other necessary tourist information had always been available. Such publications covered transport and timetables, accommodation and costs, opening hours and amenities in a brief and handy form. In the 20th century, discursive travel writing assimilated the form and the assumptions of the brief lists, became spare rather than evocative, simply announced the distinct characteristics of a particular location in continuous prose. The particular qualities of each resort had to be described. C.B. Christesen was capable of writing continuous prose but in his travel book he provided literary nuggets for each particular town or area he had wanted to describe. Christesen summarised the special interest of a town or settlement in its history or industry.\(^ {25}\) Such descriptions were not evocative. They introduced and set out the unseen lineaments of a locality. They told things which gave the locality a definite presence or character, and were aimed at setting up an itinerary in the imagination of the reader. That prose style did not intrude, suggest or indicate what it would be like to see such a place. When he wanted to give a more intimate or emotive description Christesen tended to do it in the form of personal anecdotes from the past, unique and isolated occurrences. Nowhere were there imaginative invocations or suggestive enticements, merely impersonal detail or personal feeling.

Soon after the Second World War the local newspaper at Moruya provided a...


\(^ {25}\) Christesen; Op. Cit. passim.
guide to the town. The paper assumed that what a visitor wanted, even someone merely passing through, was to accumulate information of an historical, social or otherwise impersonal character. The compilers guessed that those who passed through were full of questions, and that the answers to the questions would be provided by listing the significant facts and figures about local industries, public buildings, churches and the social organisations of the town. Visitors would be told when the area was explored, how the land was used, the potential for economic growth, the social characteristics and make up of the Shire and the range of life and recreation available. Moruya tried to separate its region from others in the travellers' imaginations.

In 20th century travel writing, where lists of accommodation, attractions and means of transport were prevalent and discursive works were assimilated to the catalogue style, a distinctive literary problem was set up. After the Second World War, there was a profusion in the means of transport. Motor vehicles became generally available, and there was a small but important use of aeroplanes. Coastal vessels and train travel had set unified standards for transport from the 19th century until the early 20th century. Those common standards enabled early writers to assume a repertoire of common destinations, as well as a common experience of travel, which allowed them to evoke emotions as shared emotions, collective emotions. By the mid-20th century, however, the new means of transport did not all provide common routes, let alone common experiences of travel. Cars could go to places the railway had never reached, at a pace more variable than that of the railways and taking detours to places that might otherwise not be seen. Route buses established more comprehensive networks than trains, with almost the same flexibility as the private car. Certain resorts were geared specifically to cars which carried tents or towed caravans. The resorts themselves might no longer be common destinations and so the attractions would no longer be common attractions. Shellharbour, on the South Coast of New South Wales, was a 19th century shipping centre sacrificed to the railway which went to Albion Park rather than Shellharbour, but it revived from the 1920s onwards as a resort for those who had private motor vehicles.

The extent to which a resort emphasised human activity, was the extent to which it became more urban and developed a range of amenities and attractions.


Those amenities might include beaches, historical sites, natural parks, entertainment centres, shops and restaurants, even theme parks. There was a tendency to detail and so particularise or differentiate all these aspects. Nevertheless, the beaches were sometimes not described at all, even for regions such as the South Coast of New South Wales where they were the major attraction, upon which other tourism was heavily dependent. Beach life was thought to be general, and so could not be particularised in one place as distinct from another. In one 130-page book on the South Coast the beaches merited only half a page, noting merely that they existed, and which ones had surf clubs.28 Like the shops and the movie theatres and the parks and the medical services, the beaches would be listed as a distinct and separate attraction or feature of each town. In that tendency was set the problem. What held all the individual features of any one town together? On the broader scale, in any one journey across different areas what held the different regions and resorts together? What was it to be a tourist in a time without common destinations? The lack of common destinations itself revealed the lack of direct common experiences.

In the 1940s the Ansett Pioneer coach company faced the problem of unity, of the character of the tourist experience. Formed in 1914, the operations of Pioneer were suspended during the war and the company was acquired by Ansett in 1944, then geared to tours, which ranged from half-day trips within a single city to 60 day trips through the Northern Territory.29 The company perceived that there was a vast range of distinct attractions in Australia, which would appeal to domestic and foreign tourists alike. There were snowfields and surf beaches, mountain forests, wheat growing plains, a host of different and interesting animals and plants and a range of industries including mines and pastoral runs. Touring was the means by which the company could introduce visitors and locals to such sites and interests, both as single attractions and in their combination. A major premiss was that the passengers would gain the best impressions if the coach captain was knowledgeable in those aspects of Australia to which the passengers would be introduced. The captains were educated in matters of history, social, political and cultural life and armed with a wealth of statistics or anecdotes. The coaches took only about 20 people, in order to ease the task of supervision and intimate care. At each location the passengers could hope to turn to the driver for the sake of providing the supporting details which they could not see for the


29 This paragraph summarises: AN APPRECIATION OF THE TOURIST INDUSTRY. Pioneer Coaches, Melbourne, c. 1947, pp. 6, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20.
things which they could see. The comprehensive nature of the care and service provided by the company was claimed to be revolutionary, though on the longer trips the general standards of Australian hotel accommodation was often found to be inadequate or unsatisfactory to these new purposes. As a result, Pioneer moved into the hotel industry on its own behalf. The company bought and rebuilt hotels in Victoria, Tasmania and New South Wales, and built its Barrier Reef facilities to fit into the programme. Comfortable, spacious and modern amenities, built to overseas standards, complemented the new style of touring. The absolute requirement was privacy in rooms and private bathrooms. Like the trip itself the hotel grounds should include complex and diverse interests, such as boating facilities, tennis courts, a pool, walking paths and areas for quiet relaxation.

Pioneer issued at least two substantial books describing particular tours, and those volumes were simultaneously promotions, itineraries and souvenirs. In them the company and the coach captains appeared as efficient organisers, unobtrusive but comprehensive in their concerns; the drivers were on top of everything. The tours, one through Tasmania and a journey in the Northern Territory, linked separate places and attractions into themes. In the Northern Territory the major interest was the anthropological curiosity of the aborigines, what they did and how they were placed in 20th century life. In the North the nature was peculiar and different, and tales about exploration or opening up the interior set up a contrast between contemporary tourists and the past; the travellers were strangers to both past and present. The Northern Territory was a place to see because it was so different, because there were so many contrasts. The tour could fill city minds with unique places and lives, people and towns had to be seen to guarantee their existence. Tasmania would have been a more recognisable scene to Australians of the cities and the South-East, but it too was a foreign place. Towns and sights in Tasmania were identified by their particular histories, though there were also numerous ‘natural wonders’ and some areas of contemporary prosperity which were of interest because they pointed to the future. At locations such as Tasman’s Arch or the Blowhole, nature was peculiarly concentrated, though separate even from the history of the localities around them. The contemporary description of Port Arthur was brief and bare but its history was effusively related, giving to the area a density and detail separate from the way it looked. Travellers could not see history; they were simply assured it had taken place. Wherever they went, what the travellers saw and how it was made to appear to them were different.

Pioneer’s invocation of a Tasmanian tour was dedicated to new friends, and the gradual but progressive growth of friendship by the accumulation of shared incidents was a theme alongside that of history and prosperity. Stuart Rudd, a retired widower from Auburn, spent much of his retirement in the 1940s and 1950s travelling within Australia on Pioneer coaches. His late wife had admonished him not to let his own life pass him by so he travelled, and his experiences led him to announce the virtues of the company and of touring in general. The basic requirements of travel were sociability, ease of mixing and a willingness to contribute to the common life by taking part in group singing and the like, but though this was a feature and aim of travelling, his memories were rather more sparse. From day trips to long ventures, in major cities and across more isolated regions Stuart Rudd’s memories read like the wisdom of the coach captains. Places were interesting, he recalled, for their history or some statistics about them; he recited place names and brusque categorisations. When he had written in this way about all the areas he had visited a number of the ‘Interesting Facts’ that he had acquired were left over, so he placed these at the back of his book on a page of their own. The details and figures had no conceivable relevance or relationship to each other; together and in toto they contributed in narrow focus to a picture of the size and complexity of Australian society, as though to realise the substance of that fact was the great lesson of his years of touring. The routes, like his memories of them, were a celebratory catalogue which had allowed him to

Admire the public buildings,  
The park lands and the schools,  
The clean wide streets and highways,  
And Olympic swimming pools.

In the 1930s, the Harrington Progress Association had felt a change in the nature of travelling or holidaying. There, on the North Coast, the Pacific was still restless, still dramatic, and the colours all around quite striking or notable. It was suggested that a visitor should go to the top of a hill, their eyes would fill with a dense panorama of sea and river and distant mountains. It was not suggested

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32 S. Rudd; FAR AND NEAR. By Pioneer in Australia. The Author, Auburn, 195-. esp. pp. 9, 24, 87.

33 Ibid. Quotation from page 94.

34 Harrington Progress Association; Op. Cit. unpaginated.
what the visitor to Harrington might feel up there. Instead of submitting to momentary and fleeting impressions or feelings, it was suggested that you take a camera up to Flagstaff Hill, and postpone any feelings by taking a camera shot of the view. The postponement may have been more of an abandonment of emotive reactions to the scene, for the impulse the Harrington Progress Association had wished to suggest was an imperative to "capture the panorama".35

In the Illawarra the small coastal town of Kiama had been promoted as a tourist destination since the turn-of-the-century. After the Minnamurra Falls was opened to the public, in the late 1890s, the town deployed the same repertoire of attractions for at least 60 years.36 The Cathedral Rocks, waterfalls, Blowhole, beaches and baths, a lighthouse and golf were the relatively constant fare. In 1906 it was a place of recuperation and recovery, a place which stimulated the imagination so much that nothing of it would ever be forgotten, a place where the waterfalls were not to be photographed but 'pictured' or imagined.37 At about the same time it was claimed that the sick and weary had returned from the area completely recovered and healthy, a consciousness of surf bathing tended to attribute these characteristics to its seaside character.38 During the First World War a local hotel owner invited people to sit on his balcony and consider the dramatic and rich history of Kiama which would bring out strong sensitivities in them and lead them to see the place in the poetic way of Kendall.39 By the 1940s its motoring clientele was blandly presented with a list of the standard attractions and amenities. The Blowhole was commended not to the sensibilities and sensitivities of visitors but for the essentially decorative effects of water rushing from the rock platform.40 In the 1950s there was a new name for some of the same sights which had once been picturesque. Without needing to give descriptions of each attraction, let alone a justification for viewing it, a brochure

35 Quotation from Ibid.


38 Kiama Tourist Association; TOURIST GUIDE TO KIAMA: The Most Beautiful Seaside Resort in the Commonwealth. Weston, Kiama, n.d.


40 Kiama Municipal Council; FOR YOUR NEXT HOLIDAY VISIT KIAMA, Ideal Climate... Summer and Winter. Kiama, 194-.
announced the places of interest, what one might find there would be left to the visitors themselves. The general way in which Kiama was now styled hinted at the merely pictorial interest implied in the idea of 'capturing a panorama'. Kiama had become "Scenic".41

Throughout the 19th century, and despite the often noted relative bounty of public holidays in Australia, there was a notable division between the ways different social strata could take their holidays. Professionals, pastoralists, the owners of businesses and public servants could either organise and take their holidays as they liked or might be entitled to enough of a holiday to enable them to observe a sustained break. Amongst the working classes this opportunity was generally limited to major festivals such as around Christmas and New Year. Public holidays consequently tended to be intense affairs. Holiday entitlements were defined, established and extended piecemeal over several decades into the mid-20th century, by which time discretionary and sustained holiday periods became standard in the workforce. Together, the opening up of new transport technology, the spread of motor vehicles into working class households and the diversification of resort styles greatly increased the range and variety of resorts accessible to large sectors of the population, and discretionary holidays provided the means to take advantage of such opportunities. The duration, the distance, the cost, the comprehensiveness and the intensity of a holiday were open to self-control, particularly to those with private motor vehicles. Pace and self-direction were not just aspects of an attractive holiday, they could be a major part of the attraction. Objective descriptions of towns and localities might set up an ideal itinerary in the imagination, a series of places known intimately but impersonally, a trip or a holiday might be to make a place a part of personal life and experience. The experience of following such an itinerary, of touching the points in a mental map, of extending the boundaries of the personal world, might be the purpose and the pleasure of a journey. Mr. and Mrs. Krause of Palm Island in North Queensland said, in 1951, that their best holiday had been when they had spent eight weeks touring Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. What had been best about it was that they had drawn the itinerary and set the pace themselves.42

Impersonality in travel writing, a concern with local history or the peculiarities of nature and the bare listing of amenities were consequences of the social

41Quotation from KIAMA. n.d,195-. unpaginated.

42Mr. and Mrs. Krause; 'Our Ideal Holiday.'; HOLIDAY AND TRAVEL, July 1951, pp.39-41.
development of discretionary holidays. Writers and promoters did not presume to
speak for the choices that others would make, and so would not suggest the point
or purpose of a holiday. Brochures and promotions would bring the visitor to the
point of choice about the means of travel and the types of accommodation
available. The attractions they listed gave a bare prospect of what could be done
there, of the choices they might need to make about how to spend time in a
certain place. Such spare lists would not evoke the feeling of being on holiday,
they did try to assure you that here was a place in which holidays could be taken.
No list could entice a person to go sight-seeing, or to visit a beach, or to try
water-skiing. The promoters assumed that the different activities were sufficiently
enticing and eloquent as to their own virtues as to make the opportunity to
practise it enough of an invitation. However, general activities like beach-going
and sight-seeing had only such tourist promotions to speak of them. Beyond the
bare prospects, no promoter would venture to locate and define the quality of a
vacation or a recreation, no writer would invoke the emotions involved in an
activity and revealed by happy faces and people engrossed to their own account.

Near Bulli, at the entrance to the Illawarra, there was a lookout well known
since the 19th century, no less popular this century. ‘Sublime Point’ looked down,
upon the coastal plains, through a thick forest, along the escarpment, south to a
distant horizon and along the scalloped shore, the view retracted only far out to
sea. The very name spoke of the union of view and sentiment in the 19th
century. In the 1980s the regional tourist association noted how apt the name
was. To the tourist association, it was not the feeling of looking out from such a
place that deserved the name, it was the view itself, the sheer fact that it was
possible to see the coastline for a superlatively long distance, a total of 176
kilometres.43 Stuart Rudd had seen it decades earlier and he saw it at night,
thinking that all the lights below the escarpment made for a fantasy land, a play
land of diminutive size and delicate effects. His reaction was one of wonder that
reality could have special and different faces, that a real thing could seem as
though it was something else; the wonder was with the world itself.44 In the
1960s a guide book to the South Coast noted and identified the various elements
that would have been encompassed in taking a view from that place. That list
would have helped to identify the sights, it did not presuppose any detailed
reaction to the view. The book gave an account of what could be seen, not what

43Leisure Coast Tourist Association:ILLAWARRA'S LEISURE COAST: AUSTRALIA'S BEST KEPT
SECRET.Creative Tourism,Narwee,c1986,p.5.

the significance or experience of taking it in might be. What was most important about the account was the description of how to get there, how to not miss seeing it. There were many things to look out for but then “The trees thin and there it is...”.

A reader and a traveller could be brought to the edge, but they were abandoned there, without evocation or stimulation. Signs at each location would help to identify the components of a panorama, and distances to well known places. There was no room for any suggestion or emotion on signs. Yet guide books found a place for personal feeling. One 1960s guide book to the South Coast of New South Wales first set out the different localities, and then described the coast itself as a country quite as natural as it had been before the coming of the white man, despite its history of farming, mining and timber-felling. Next A.H.Chisholm wrote about when and where to find the animals and birds and plants which nature was. He could bring you to the edge; it was up to you to find what was beyond it. Professor Griffith Taylor then detailed the geography of the South Coast, giving the land an objective and scientific density. That would have helped anyone who wanted to recognise places and landscapes in their scientific garb. M.H.Ellis next gave the history of the coast, giving it a human quality. With such a guide places could be identified, differentiated, compared, contrasted and they would gain their depth in qualities that might not otherwise be seen. Ellis did not suggest any way to react to the places and industries and buildings on the coast as they stood and were used and seemed. History could not entice. History was imposed, history comprised names, dates, and events which marked historical localities, and made historical localities seem different from natural areas and from entertainment and recreation. What could be seen on the South Coast had been filled out with what could not, with matter and definitions and distinctions that could be adopted or replaced by similar items of information, but never bear reactions. Roland Robinson, poet, was introduced to give the personal feel of the coast. What was important, he said, what qualified it as a place about which to have feelings, was that it was his country; to press the point, he used the analogy of the Aborigines’ traditional relationship to the land. It was land with which he was familiar, which had become full of personal and private resonance and memory. His memories were not memories of places and events that were readily accessible to others. Since he was a poet, and his poetry was often a poetry of private reactions and sensitivities to people, particular incidents or sights, what deserved


feeling and memory were the special prompts to that privacy. That was what he told readers, prospective visitors, residents, interested readers. A place was significant because it was the scene of a life, and that life was itself often private and reflective. That was what someone might hope to find in a place, it might become their country too; that reminder, that evocation of feeling, could not serve as a road into such feelings.47

Haydon Kenny was not a poet, and he lived on the Sunshine Coast. He was a surf life saver who had fallen in love with the place in 1954 because it had weather and sand and surf and that was what he was about.48 His son was Grant Kenny, ironman and public figure, and the two were used to telling people about themselves and about other things in ways that everyone would understand. Haydon Kenny’s life did not consist of the pursuit of private feeling; it consisted of publicly recognisable aims. He found that the Sunshine Coast was a worthwhile place to be, he remembered when there had been very little and he had seen the area become cosmopolitan. He could tell that there were surface changes, what they were, and that the cosmopolitanism was just one. He commended the area by invoking his own personal feelings. Sitting on a balcony at sunrise, tasting tropical fruits grown in his own yard, surfing at Sunshine Beach and being kept company by dolphins while he had done so, such were the things that gripped him and held him there and taught him that it was right to live there. That was his evocation and invitation. Perhaps no one could hope to experience the things he had, or to understand what made them so attractive. They were private feelings, but Haydon Kenny had shown that the Sunshine Coast could provide those feelings, was a place worthy of attention because it had given such feelings to one such as he. The hope and the lure was that other people might have private feelings there; the content of those feelings must stay unspoken.

Objective and impersonal descriptions let people know that places were not as they seemed and separated descriptive information from the experience of seeing and coming to know a place. What a traveller, a tourist, a resident or a participant could do or see was not what they were informed about. The holiday world contained a range and depth of involvement and feeling. Faces from beach photos and the memories of coastal dwellers proved it. Advertisers and souvenir makers could suggest that holidays were for the sake of those feelings, but they cut

47 Ibid. Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7.

48 This paragraph is based on: H. Kenny; ‘Foreword.’ to Queensland Tourist and Travel Corporation; SUNSHINE COAST. Brisbane, 1982.
short of presuming to detail what those feelings might be. Since the emergence of figurative depiction in the art of the beach and the advertising of the beach; since catering for human nature made the expectations of a resort more complex; since the resorts themselves diversified, from the 1920s onwards; since holiday rights became standardised and the means to take advantage of them became wide-spread, one note has predominated in the depiction, promotion and characterisations of beaches and beach going. A guide could tell you the details of a place; to feel it in the imagination was another thing altogether, required a different process and activity. Of Manly it was recently said that it is

not just a place to read about - one has to get up and go there...

Neither life savers nor surfers made any clear and accessible statements about beach-going which might help bathers describe the feeling of being by the sea; life savers and board riders left holiday-makers to themselves, unable to cross the boundaries to understanding. The surf life saving movement appeared in New South Wales between 1906 and 1908, though its form was not settled until the 1920s. In other States it appeared later, but surf life saving claimed the same place on the beach throughout Australia. The images and values fostered by the movement could not be acquired by the generality of beach-goers, could not tell others what the feelings were. Both in its organisation and its images the movement eulogised itself, and could only cast other beach users in a negative and even aspersive way. The other people supplied the ungrateful fools that life savers had to rescue, patrols were the secure screen behind which people could do what they liked. No images were forthcoming for the activities of other beach-users, besides those of pleasure. Both the Surf Life Saving Associations and the Royal Life Saving Society have awarded certificates of surf rescue. The Royal Life Saving Society has always admitted women; the Surf Life Saving Associations did not admit them until the 1980s. Initially, the exclusion of women from the Surf Life Saving Association, as being physically incapable of the effort, or liable to damage their breasts by wearing cork belts high on the chest, was only enforced in metropolitan Sydney. As the New South Wales Association spread to the South Coast in the 1920s, and the South Coast clubs were separated from the Royal Life Saving Society, the exclusion of women spread. South Australian clubs did not join the Surf Life Saving Association of Australia until the 1950s, by which time several generations of women had become active members. The need to exclude


Figure 5-5: Finding the Man.
[Source: COVER. 1962.]
Make a Man of your Boy

Help Him Join a Surf Life Saving Club

Obtain all Information from BONDI SURF BATHERS' LIFE SAVING CLUB Bondi Beach, N.S.W.
women was enforced upon the new South Australian Association, with considerable resistance. Following a 1912 investigation by the New South Wales Parliament into the needs of surf bathers and the status of surf clubs, the relationship between the clubs and the local Councils in New South Wales has been fairly well-defined. As a consequence of the secure status of the surf clubs, since 1912 the definition of the task and the distinctive qualities of the group have become a large part of the activity and reflection within the Surf Life Saving movement generally. The definitions have varied between clubs and over time yet they always maintained a clear differentiation between average beach-goers and the character of the movement as a service and a sport. When the life saving movement experienced a decline in membership in the 1950s and early 1960s it turned, initially, to its self-imagery of manly quality in order to attract new members, promising that those members too could become men. During his sociological investigation into the self-perceptions and character of surf life savers and board riders, Kent Pearson found that individual surf life savers still preserved, as a part of their self-conception, a distinction made early this century, a distinction which marked them as the inheritors of the 19th century male idea of standing up to the force of nature and the danger of the elements. Instead of receiving that force into themselves the life savers saw that they fought it or risked it, and that such risks and encounters had won the beach for the new uses of the majority.

Life saving was an exclusive institution. In the 1950s board riding became technically and financially open to large segments of the population. The expressions of purpose developed by board riders did not enrich the general perception of beach-going; the language and the reality of board riding became elusive. Until the 1950s the development of boards and board riding skills had rested with the life saving movement. The relatively few female riders were excluded from the movement itself, although they may have adopted the means and the purposes of the men. After the war young riders sought a greater number of uses for surf boards, uses which the association did not accept. Riders and board designers left the movement. At times the riders felt the need to define their own aims in opposition to those of the life savers, but the life saving clubs exercised policing functions over the board riders who had split from them, and so

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53 Cronly; Op.Cit. passim.
the antagonisms were heightened by questions of authority. Amongst the board riders dedication and single-mindedness became an exclusive mark against the comparatively undedicated intermittent users of the beach.\textsuperscript{54} What the new style of surfing had opened up was a little world with closed experiences at its centre, experiences most people would never have shared. Surfing sponsored a self-conscious cult in the 1960s and early 1970s, which highlighted the exclusive attributes and experiences of a dedicated surfer, yet it was the privacy of the experience of surfing which itself kept ideas and images from spreading to a broader range of beach activities. Midget Farrelly, who self-consciously avoided a cult mentality, and enjoyed a mass popularity in the 1960s for his success as an international sportsman, experienced special feelings when he surfed well. He could not express them without moving into a mystical language where time stilled and all that mattered was him, his board, a particular wave and a particular moment. If that was alluring it was also a suggestion to try it for yourself, to seek to gain such private feelings in such a closed moment. Those who did not do, or did not seek, or did not feel such things, or did not recognise them, could not have been enlightened by others having those feelings, or imagine what those others could have seen.\textsuperscript{55}

In the 20th century the responsibility for feeling and emotional attachment, for making a day at the beach a part of intimate life, has been brought to rest with the people who have gone there, while they have been there. Faces and figures in photographs have shown that enjoyment and excitement are possible at the beach, that people may have fun. Fun was to be experienced privately, separately both from imagining it or recognising it in an advertisement or a picture. In so far as the arts and advertising have provided the only supply of imaginative terms through which to understand the private feelings of the beach, that understanding has been limited to elusive terms such as ‘fun’ and ‘pleasure’. From the implicit private feelings that made a face happy for a souvenir booklet, all anyone could take would be the public image ‘fun, pleasure and enjoyment’. If that was all that be brought into the imagination, perhaps it was the only way that complex and diverse feelings could be understood. Perhaps the understanding that 20th century beach-goers have had of themselves could only be as elusive and uninformative, as limited as the understanding they had of the people in those pictures where each was a stranger to the other.


The development of personal character through participation in a variety of activities was one of the central points to the 20th century style of beach-going; that attitude had led to the development of a new style of seaside resort. The next Chapter will show how other social developments reduced the importance of personal character in the social order; by the 1980s there was a discrepancy between the social implications of beach-going and other community attitudes. At issue was the notion of character as a matter of purely personal concern or a foundation for society. If the importance of human character was merely personal the complexity of the new style of resort would have been hidden and the ideals which formed around the new style of resort would have been made to seem as if they were empty notions. If beach-goers were to assess the issues they would have to be able to understand the complexities of beach-going; yet the nature of beach-going had not been expressed in any explicit or coherent way, and the old bridge between feelings formed at the beach and other areas of life had been removed.
Chapter 6
PRIVACY.

Over the past ninety years, beach-going has become a form of leisure, has become separate from industrial life. Beach-going has created new resorts with new ideals. Those ideals regard leisure as if that were the whole of life. The ideals raised upon the 20th century style of beach-going do not deal with work, for beach-goers would feel that the fields were private to each other, that it was improper for one area of life to provide the principles for another. Yet it was a general tendency of 20th century ideas about work and individuality to promote only a limited conception of life. Leisure and beach-going were supposed to be separate aspects of life; the limited nature of beach-going ideals suggests that beach-going and leisure were actually representative of a general social tendency. The tendency to perceive life in a limited sense only can be found, at different times, in the fields of work, urban planning and psychology and was manifested in the notions of leisure which were accepted by the practitioners of each specialty. The development of beach-going in the 20th century may have provided a model for the more abstract ideas of leisure current in society generally. In turn, those abstract notions may have re-inforced the very characteristics of beach-going which had, by the 1920s, turned beach-going into a form of leisure.

The notion of leisure which has developed in this century has three aspects, which can be found in the field of work as well as outside of work. Firstly, the increasing availability of leisure time in this century has marked activities off from one another, both in society and in personal behaviour. That aspect of leisure will be shown in a discussion of the increase of free-time and holidays in the 1930s and 1940s and in ideas of town planning and civic purpose between 1920 and 1940. Secondly, leisure activities began to occupy a circumscribed and insular world and the value of holidays and leisure-time became identified with that limited world; the second aspect of leisure can best be seen in the attitudes of unionists, employers and the arbitration system to leisure values between the 1920s and the 1940s, and by examining the place of leisure in social theory during the past twenty years. Ideas of leisure fostered outside of work have generally been reactions against the interpretation of leisure made within the field of work. The
third aspect of leisure involves the interpretation given to the role of personal character in society. The managerial style of the 1920s sought to expel the human qualities of employees from the work-place. By contrast, a study of popular psychology in the 1940s and 1950s reveals how the feelings found in leisure pursuits were identified as expressing high values. Outside the field of work, the notion of leisure has been used to express high expectations for personal fulfilment, though expectations expressed through leisure are inevitably expressed through only a limited outlet.

The reality and concept of leisure were introduced into ordinary life, in the 1930s and 1940s, by a definition of the purpose of free-time for the workforce. Industry and business came to rely on free-time to add a quality to the way employees worked. The industrial innovators hoped to influence the character of workers to bring long-term improvements in efficiency and effectiveness. In 1939, a small booklet called AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY AND THE REST PAUSE was published in Sydney. The booklet contained testimonials from employers throughout Australia who were anxious to spread the word about a new way to improve productive efficiency. The employers had stopped thinking that being productive was just the continuous utilisation of resources. They had come to think that being productive was a relationship between items and goods manufactured or processed and the time and cost of producing them. Tired and dispirited workers were showing their human weaknesses, and employers decided to allow their workers some exercise of their human qualities, to make human nature strong in them so that it would not intrude. If workers were content, if they had sufficient sustenance, if they were relaxed, if they had a chance to be convivial amongst themselves they would also be happy with their managers, they would give fewer industrial problems, there would be fewer accidents, absences and strikes. The booklet dealt with just one new measure, the thrust of which, said the booklet, was to treat "employees like human beings instead of like machines". The tone of the booklet was that, if certain detailed proposals were introduced to each workplace, the employers would have done enough, all they could, there would be no residue of humanity they must consider, no need to ensure that workers were satisfied in every aspect of their lives. In the testimonials, these concessions were said to give employees the sort of human qualities they needed; energy, skill, the ability to defeat fatigue and not suffer it, the quality of not grumbling. In the war, when governments and employers panicked and took away what they had learnt to give in the years between wars, the unionist Lloyd Ross stood up for the

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Railway Workers and called out for the powerful to remember those lessons, to re­
install those benefits, to maintain within their procedures and thinking the 
calculable command of human nature they had all acquired, the methods they had 
freely adopted, the methods Lloyd Ross had come to see and accept as the bosses 
had done. Lloyd Ross wanted to remind employers and officials of the concessions 
to human nature, major advances in happiness made by industrialists on behalf of 
their employees, introduced in the 1930s. The industrial and humanitarian 
advances were not new ways of working, or new machines, or new responsibilities, 
nothing which might change the way factories looked or what they made or who 
reran them or what the lowest did. Lloyd Ross wanted the principles of efficiency 
and production to be enforced. The great innovation was the 15-minute tea break.

In 1944 the NSW Parliament considered an Act to allow all workers two week's 
annual leave each year on full pay, and so to standardise and extend benefits 
which had been gained piecemeal through arbitration over more than a decade. 
The Labor Premier, Mr. McKell, noted with pleasure that this move was not 
greeted with the dissension and strife which had characterized arguments over the 
44-hour week during the 1920s. The Opposition replied by pointing out that 
happiness and harmony were essential to proper production, and that such benefits 
would make employees happier with their masters than they had been before. 
They suggested that the definition of a worker ought to be broadened beyond 
salary earners, wage employees and those paid by piecework, contract or 
commission; it should also include children working in the family business. The 
Opposition wanted to bring proper principles into every corner of the workforce, 
even between parents and the children they employed. The Parliament was very 
impressed by advice from an Industrial Psychologist at Sydney University who 
noted that it was important to look after the well-being of employees, not only in 
manual work, but those who worked with their heads. All these people were 
subject to fatigue, and therefore blood did not flow properly between the limbs and 
the brain. Mr. Vincent, the Opposition Member for Raleigh, noted that workers 
were a kind of machine and suggested the best way to understand fatigue was to 
think of how machines developed metal fatigue, through various kinds of pressure, 
force and vibration, and how they needed to be stopped now and then for routine 
maintenance and to relieve those forces. On the Government side 
Mr. C.H. Matthews, the Member for Leichhardt and a former ironworker, stated that

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2 L. Ross; HOURS, HOLIDAYS, HEALTH AND THE WAR EFFORT. Australian Railways Union, Redfern, c. 1942.

there was another element on top of that of fatigue. Workers were not just machines, they were human beings, and they became bored. So it was important, in the long term, to look on human beings for what they were. In the course of each twelve months, in the great cycles of production, the holiday could best be understood, he said, as a kind of tea break.

The purpose of granting holidays was to create a gap between work life and the rest of life, to rid work of some of its problems. Outside the field of work, urban ideologues also tried to create a gap between work life and the rest of life, to limit the contribution of work to the whole of life. Between 1920 and 1950, Town Planners changed their views about the suburbs built between 1880 and 1920 and began to criticise and condemn the old ideas about the purpose of suburban society. The new Town Planners adopted a definition of the purpose of suburban life which created a large gap between the ideals of home life and the ideals of society; according to the new Town Planners there ought to be large differences between the values of each field of life. From the First World War to the 1920s, town planning was re-made by a concern with human irrationality. Nature survived in human beings as suppressed irrational urges. The outdoors still had many of the formal characteristics and genres of the late 19th century without the edge given by the need to excite emotion. Dramatic qualities in nature appealed to hidden irrational sensibilities.4 Irrationalist town planners absorbed themselves in nature in order to satisfy the irrational urges which they had found in themselves. They turned from the coasts and the mountains to the pastoral and outback life where, as in America, primitive conditions called upon primitive capacities, where nature made men who were permeated not by culture but by primitivism. The Town Planning Conferences of 1917 and 1918 hoped to bring city values to the country. In the 1920s the direction of that flow reversed, town planners looked to the country as a model of what city life should be; C.E.W.Bean, who celebrated the values of rural life, became an advocate of town planning.5 Pretending that they could fuse nature and modern society, suburbs seemed, to the town planners, to deny a fundamental truth. The natural and the modern could not permeate each other. The people who lived in suburbs seemed to deny fundamental truths,

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seemed shallow, seemed philistines. R.F. Irvine, co-founder of the N.S.W Town Planning Association, came to hate the suburbs which his movement had helped to create.

In the 1920s Walter Burley Griffin put the problem squarely with modern civilisation. Civilisation was not worthy of the efforts people made for it, it created nothing we should want to keep, it stood on the false premiss that the whole being of a person could be seen in what they had made of the world. For what had been made had been made purely by intellectualism, it had not been made by the whole irrational being. There was a side of life that had been lost, historically lost. It could not just be summoned up again instantly, like switching from one hand to the other, conditions had to be made for its sake, so that it would no longer be suppressed; there had to be a creative effort to give room to irrationality. In a future time people would be whole, and what they did would be of their whole. Walter Burley Griffin would engineer that time. He would bury the houses amongst trees, on large blocks, with contoured roads and sites sensitive to the view. He would isolate each suburb from the other, and bring them together not in a city but in a neighbourhood whose centrepiece would be its parks. He did not think a holiday was enough to bring out the natural side of people, to come into contact with nature. It had to be constant, inevitable, unconscious; it could only be done with a new idea of what suburbs could be. In his bushland neighbourhoods people would live like primitives, not because their houses were bad but because they were subservient to nature and subservient to the aims of the neighbourhood. Houses should only have small private areas and small kitchens, so that the residents would be diverted from private aims and spending time on their physical nourishment to higher ideals, such as staging plays and poetry readings. Large living areas would cater for that cultural life, and the social life of the suburbs would put between the family and industry a new type of village, a new kind of tribe meeting together by the first necessity of maintaining standards; people would become subservient to the setting of their place.

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6 A. Gilbert; 'The Roots of Anti-Suburbanism in Australia.', AUSTRALIAN CULTURAL HISTORY No.4.1985.pp.54-70.


In the 1940s urban Australia had been a suburban society for at least twenty years. Changes in planning policy were changes within suburban standards. Town Planners such as Walter Bunning, the wartime Executive Officer of the Commonwealth Housing Commission and subsequently Chairman of the New South Wales Town and Country Planning Committee, set out the priorities and principles for post-war housing and development. Bunning took up Griffin's neighbourhood ideas, which implied that there was a difference between beauty and production, that they could be put next to each other by plans for decentralisation, although decentralisation would not stop beauty and production from being separate. Bunning thought that, by putting shops in concentrated zones in each locality, and building the suburbs around it, the trip to the shops could still belong to the life of beauty. Putting offices and workshops in little pockets with suburbs around them, the trip to the office and the workshop could still be part of the life of the suburb, could extend by a few minutes a day the time people lived with beauty, lived with their emotive, intuitive selves, lived to satisfy their whole being. But the suburbs would not change the tills or the filing system or the layout of the machine benches. The conception fostered, and implemented, by Griffin and Bunning, was that suburbia was a gratuitous concession by society to those who lived in it, was a sop of beauty and contentment, a sop to a neglected organ, a sop to private feelings. Into the post-war suburbs which Griffin and Bunning had helped to build were poured all the complexities and functions that life had to have which could not be accommodated elsewhere. Into suburbia went demands for excitement and stimulation and delight and joy, neighbourhood centres, community facilities, pools, halls, libraries, theatres, the disregarded elements of the complex individual. Into the suburbs went social workers, health workers, entertainers, manipulators and specialists of the private person. Living at home in a little house in a garden with a little family accumulated an impossible weight, a significance never dreamt for it when suburbs were planned for the peoples' strength and happiness and their strength and happiness was for their historical, social lives.

By about 1920 Elton Mayo had detected in workers a lack of a sense of any social function, and concluded that because of the nature of modern work workers could have no sense of purpose in work. He wanted to find ways of restoring some sense of purpose; yet, over the next thirty or forty years, the lack of purpose

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in work became an axiom, accepted as a natural and inevitable state of affairs. Early this century Mayo could feel a loss but, in treating it as a problem purely of industrial society, he was already putting a distance between his perception and the comprehensive view of life he felt had been lost. Within twenty years of Mayo's pronouncement, the emphasis on irrationality in leisure had cut the lines between holiday ideals and civic life. When, in the 1930s and 1940s, Alan Walker lived in the coalmining town of Cessnock, he found that the workers' happiness had been equated with their leisure, that they considered their leisure to be something very different from work and that, therefore, the happiness of the workers was often separate from the way they usually lived their lives. During the 1930s and 1940s Cessnock was a town sustained by one industry so that, even outside of mining, what its citizens did often followed similar patterns. They had similar sorts of working weeks and holidays. In Cessnock the whole community was affected by reduced working hours and so by the distinction and concept of leisure, which separated activities, motives and feelings from each other according to the time in which the activities took place. In that one-industry town the residents came to think of the whole town as just being for work, it was just a place to work.

Alan Walker thought workers in Cessnock lacked any involvement in common concerns; there was a lack of civic pride in the town. He blamed the belief that Cessnock was just a working town. But each Christmas, when the mines shut down for ten days, people could holiday together. They went to Lake Macquarie or to the beaches around Newcastle. Alan Walker estimated that, in the war years of 1942-1943, out of a population of 15,000 people, at least 8,000 left Cessnock by rail and coach alone, and that most headed for the sea or the water. The town was virtually deserted, a small fragment of what it had been, streets were empty, houses were empty, shops were closed, businesses pulled down the blinds and doors locked shut. The people of Cessnock went down to the sea with their friends from work, their neighbours, folk they otherwise knew every day. They congregated in the same groups with the same loyalties as they had in the town, they moved the community and it became a community. There by the sea they shared a life and excitement and joy and a sense of belonging with the same people they saw at home, but it was being by the sea that gave content to their common feelings, common interest, to their capacity for joy.


13 Ibid.
The second aspect of the notion of leisure has to do with what activities are leisure activities, the relationship between those activities and the status of those activities in social life and personal life. Industrial practice and political acceptance split time into different kinds of time. The judgement of what went on in the workers’ own time changed too, separating activities which, unionists and others involved in the arbitration system supposed, contributed to society and to bettering the lot of ordinary people from those which made no such contribution, which did not have the status of ideals or serve any other ideals. In 1920, Mr. Justice Higgins considered the Timber Workers’ case for a 44-hour week, and heard arguments of general principle. Justice Higgins, the employers’ advocate and the workers’ advocate all assumed that the sort of work people did in those times was demanding, though only in a limited sense. Work did not extract the full capacities of the people who did it, and so it could never lead them to develop those capacities and the rounded character they could all have. If people were to become rounded, full, satisfied human beings it would have to be done outside of work, it would involve different activities, activities which employers and workers’ advocates and judges could not talk about. Henry Bournes Higgins thought that his role was to look at what was happening in the workplace and at what society in general needed. He was sure society still needed its citizens to be complex and complete, still needed them to contribute their whole to the common life, still needed them to be vital and to offer their vitality. Higgins saw that workers could not gain vitality in the workforce, nor could they use their vitality there. To gain vitality and to give from that vitality needed different activities, different motives, different aspects accumulated to a life. Because those aspects and complexities were excluded from work leisure had to be more generally available if workers were to develop those human qualities. Society could only hope that leisure time would be filled well. Higgins hoped the workers’ leisure would be filled by tasks which were for the full benefit of society, because they were for society they were called ‘higher tasks’. The workers’ friend hoped so too. The employers suspected that leisure time would become an unworthy emptiness.

Between 1920 and the end of the next war, the union leaders and the labour activists came to agree with the employers. The time which workers had obtained so they could become different had turned out to be something of an empty time. Workers did not all become cultural or intellectual or advance the cause of

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14 This account of the proceedings is taken from: COMMONWEALTH ARBITRATION REPORTS Vol.14, 1920. pp.847-862.

15 E.J. Holloway; BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE FORTY-FOUR HOUR WEEK ENQUIRY. Labor Call Print, Melbourne, 1920.
humanity with great deeds in the evening or at the weekend or on their annual holidays. May Brodney, the Secretary of the Victorian Labor College, tried to save the respectability of the labouring classes; if they did not directly contribute to the vital concerns of society, if they did not actually take part in the rich life which unions and sympathisers wanted them to share, at least some of them became involved in education classes and the study of political activism and contributed to the organisations that sought to further well-being. In 1946 May Brodney tried to get workers to understand themselves in terms of machines. She thought that being educated was very important, but she agreed that, like machines, the workers had to use some time to 'idle'.

The workers' free time, their own hours, were often empty, undirected, unsupervised, like the tea break, yet unionists had come to accept that the tea break was beneficial and necessary. It gave the chance to talk, to laugh, to tell gentle secrets, to savour a bite of a cheese and tomato sandwich with just the right amount of pepper on it. If the tea break was empty, it was necessary to divest oneself of effort or care or worry, in order to enter a separate plane of life. Working people entered that distant stage of life for the sake of being human. Proper and serious labour activists had a fear of what being human might be. When he presented the ACTU case before Justice Higgins in 1920, and reported back to the workers themselves what had been done or said, E.J.Holloway made a slight change. Higgins thought that the pursuit of learning and culture, such as "art, education, science, literature..." in the workers' own time would be a great benefit to society, even the workers' "hobbies or amusements, as he selects...". When Holloway told the unionists what Higgins had said he did not want them to get the wrong idea. Embarrassed by what these people actually got up to he edited Higgins' statement to read as if he extolled the worth and benefits of "art, education, science, literature, etc...". Socially important activities were to be approved, though personal interests did not seem to have any depth or consequence.

Free time was a concession and, by 1946, employers, unionists and arbitration courts regarded the gift of time as a gift of happiness. After the Second World


18 14CAR, p. 847.

War the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration considered the general case for a 40-hour week. The bench felt that the principles and premisses of both the employers and the unions were the same although there was a dispute about the time to introduce the shorter week. There was a shared understanding of what this time was for. It would aid production by decreasing fatigue and so improve efficiency. It was time which the productive process had to set aside for its human agents for the sake of their doing and becoming different.

All the separate parties to the hearings agreed that this time was time in which people would be happy, that workers had gained an opportunity for happiness. They saw that what was lost from the work place would be gained in delight, contentment and satisfaction, in the enjoyment and fulfilment of life. It was as though shortening working hours effected a revolution, changed unhappiness to contentment. The way in which the workers' advocates argued their case and the summaries made by the bench assumed that fulfilment and happiness could no longer mean and involve whatever a person did, however they lived their social and productive lives, only the times they were being carefree.

The various parties to the arbitration system did not venture to say what activities made for happiness, what leisure included, rather than what was excluded from work. Since the Second World War, leisure theorists have included under the head of leisure whatever counted directly to individuality, directly to a sense of human fulfilment. In the 1970s social life and friendships were still very dependent on the workplace; friendships came out of work and amongst power station workers in New South Wales friends at work were one of the good things work had to offer. Yet Governments counted socialising and friendship as a leisure activity, a leisure interest. In 1974 the National Youth Council of Australia presented the results of its surveys into the recreational priorities of Australians aged between 12 and the early-20s to the Federal Government and the Australian public generally. The Council had found that the chief desire of young people was a desire to socialise on an informal basis. The Council automatically identified socialising as a

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20 This account is a summary of: Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration; 40 HOUR WEEK CASE, 1946-47. TRANSCRIPT, pp.21-25, 2935, 3767-3769, 4048.

21 A.J. Sutton, J.E. Bird, P. Costello; LEISURE AND HOURS OF WORK, School of Behavioural Sciences, Macquarie University, North Ryde, 1972, esp. pp. 13-14, 17.


23 Youth Say Project; THE RECREATIONAL PRIORITIES OF AUSTRALIAN YOUNG PEOPLE, National Youth Council of Australia, 1974, passim.
recreational activity with no connection to work and took the attitude that the desire of young people to socialise expressed their need to develop a sense of themselves, their aims and ideals. Because the Council had identified socialising with leisure, they told the Australian public that the values of young people were a rejection of, what the Council called, the materialism of adult society. Since they viewed the separation of leisure interests from work as a positive contribution to individuality, the Council had effectively abandoned any attempt to find a place for personal character in society. The concept of leisure did not simply limit the contribution of personal development to society, it justified the limitation.

In the 1970s Gough Whitlam, a Labor Prime Minister, saw that it was time for government to take onto itself a responsibility for leisure. Mr. Whitlam said that one of the things governments were for was to promote the happiness of the citizens. He thought that if he helped people in their leisure he would be giving them life. Mr. Whitlam's Minister responsible for making people happy in leisure was Frank Stewart. He was proud to be the Minister for doing that. Mr. Stewart said that life was two things, that there was "a duality of urges" in human beings, and in leisure they satisfied one for which the reward was human fulfilment. The other urge was just an urge to stay alive. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Whitlam had asked John Bloomfield, an academic who had been a surf life saver, to tell them what leisure was for and how it should be given to people. John Bloomfield explained what leisure was for. We had leisure, he said, because our society and technology were very complex. Like the psychiatrists, John Bloomfield saw that the problem was how to adjust individuals to that society; he also said that we had failed. He did not want to promote leisure in order that those adjustments should be properly made. He did not want to change society through leisure so that it would not cause problems to individuals. The distance between having life and making life had become even greater. John Bloomfield wanted us to have leisure as a compensation for our not being properly adjusted to our times. Then, when he had said what leisure was for, John Bloomfield told the government how to give it to the citizens.

\[\text{24 Ibid. pp.v-vi.}\]


\[\text{26 Ibid. pp.3-6, quotation from page 5.}\]

\[\text{27 J. Bloomfield; THE ROLE, SCOPE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RECREATIONS IN AUSTRALIA. Department of Tourism and Recreation, Canberra, 1974. pp.1-4.}\]
By the 1980s ‘leisure’ had come to stand for one source of happiness, direct
human happiness. Economists had to consider it not as a loss in production but
as a direct production of human goods. So it mattered who got leisure and who
did not, it mattered that men had gained the most from the reduction in working
hours, because so many of them worked. Most women still worked at home and
many had jobs so, instead of gaining leisure, they were losing it. That meant they
were losing out on life. There was scope for women to get more, their housework
could be reduced. 28 Hugh Stretton was an historian and a planner of housing
policies for Adelaide in the 1970s and 1980s. In the 1970s he taught that the life
away from work, life at home was something for which to work, to try to get
more of. Society should make the choice of fostering life away from work. 29
Home life, of which leisure was a major division, was a self-sufficient end. It
contributed directly to human complexity, it was the scene for developing
individuals. Hugh Stretton had come to his interest in suburban quality in the
same way that the early town planners had done, out of a concern for
individuality. The first suburban ideologues had sought to create individuals for
the sake of society, but Stretton’s understanding of individuals was that they were
to be realised there, as end products. Away from work, he taught, people could
be happy, were happy; being happy would not re-make society, it would not colour
the world. Being happy was an end. Being happy, happy individuals would see
that it was individuals they were supposed to be. Society should pursue private
feelings. Private feelings had only themselves to pursue; Hugh Stretton separated
the realm of satisfaction and personal development from the realm of other social
ends, implying that it was improper for all of life to be euphoric.

The third aspect of the notion of leisure concerns the interpretation of personal
character. In the work-place, the personal character of employees has come to
represent an intrusion. By the 1920s, the managerial emphasis in industry made
the personal character of employees seem a burden to the productive process, a
factor which should be expelled from the workplace. In medical theories of the
1920s, human qualities were sometimes treated as though those qualities made only
a negative contribution to work. Human beings suffered fatigue. Fatigue was a
disruption to the productive process from the inability of human beings to
maintain the pace of the whole system and, if it was not countered, it could lead

History, No. 19, Australian National University, Canberra, 1983. pp. 1, 14, 16, 17, 20. Jim McKay; Leisure and

29 H. Stretton; HOUSING AND GOVERNMENT, Boyer Lectures, ABC, Sydney, 1974. passim.
to accidents. In 1924, D.G. Robertson told the Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science about a new kind of medicine, industrial medicine, which was a product of the specialisation and limitation of medicine to a clinical form at the turn-of-the-century.\textsuperscript{30} According to Robertson, the focus of industrial medicine was set within the gates of the factory rather than all around it. Robertson suggested that the experience of industrial medicine was typical of many areas of medicine; doctors could supervise individuals in different clinics and different ways specific to the aims of the school or work-place. By his statements on how medicine could be broken up to serve different functions, Robertson implied that modern medicine no longer had any over-riding social imperatives. If that was the case, then modern work no longer required comprehensive social reforms, managers no longer had to look beyond the factory gate in order to control the efficient performance of the people within. Employers might assume that health outside the factory would be taken care of, by other functionaries and to other purposes.

Industrial health practices were remedies for human weakness - the chief human quality involved in the running of factories - introduced at the work-place. Similar beliefs heralded the introduction of physical fitness programmes into the work-place in the early 1970s, although those programmes did not have a direct impact on work practices. Repeating a common theme within contemporary thinking, the Victorian Minister for Youth, Sport and Recreation, former footballer and coach Brian Dixon, proclaimed in 1974 that exercise and health could transform life. Modern workers needed to exercise in order to sustain their ability to participate in the things they did, whether at home or at work. Brian Dixon said that Australian workers needed to be fit because, being fit, they would be able to control stress, and modern lives and modern work made for a great deal of stress. Yet fitness would not stop our jobs putting us in stressful conditions, and Brian Dixon thought that in order to gain fully the benefits of fitness Australians might actually have to go and live in small towns.\textsuperscript{31} Considering that he had begun by trying to address problems of urban life, Brian Dixon could suggest only that urban workers abandon the urban life style altogether, that city dwellers could either live without remedies, or they could live according to the remedies, in a place where the problem presumably did not exist. Brian Dixon had separated his vision of life from the reality of the urban life style. Other proposals for improving the fitness of employees were not quite as dramatic as that advocated

\textsuperscript{30} D.G. Robertson; 'Industrial Medicine and Its Relationship to Public Health.', \textit{Australasian Association for the Advancement of Science: Report}. Vol.17, Adelaide, 1924, pp.601-606.

by Brian Dixon, though they also separated the well-being of employees from the benefits to the company. The consequences of exercise for the individual and for their employer might be radically different. Brian Dixon had seen the improvement of fitness from point of view of the individual employee; in the workplace, fitness was not expected to have any implications for the kinds of work they performed. In the 1980s instrumentalities such as the South Australian Department of Recreation and Sport promoted fitness schemes because they provided a means by which employees could themselves contribute, by keeping themselves healthy, to keeping their personal weaknesses out of work and production.32

The field of work had no place for personal character, and expelled it to the field of leisure. In order to interpret personal character in a positive sense, writers from outside the field of work have found it necessary to stress the distinction between home life and work life. In turn, that first distinction between home and work has come to represent a second distinction, between the irrational and the rational sides of human life. In his 1945 book, 6,P.M. TILL MIDNIGHT, A.E.Mander, a moral writer, was struck by the distinction between the rational and irrational, between home life and work life.33 In that book, Mander said that ordinary working people could not hope to get much personal satisfaction from work, and so they had been forced to look away from work to find personal fulfilment. Mander also said that, up until then, ordinary people had tended to identify personal fulfilment with satisfying the irrational side of their natures. Consequently, between each day and each night, between Friday and Saturday there was a gap between rational and irrational, satisfaction and dissatisfaction. A.E.Mander said that people could live only between 6.p.m. and midnight and on weekends. He was a moral writer so he said that the problem was whether or not it was possible to make that life rational too; for popular psychologists of the 1940s and 1950s, the problem was to interpret irrationality in a positive way.

During the Second World War Harvey Sutton, Olympic athlete, Rhodes Scholar, Professor and Director of the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine at the University of Sydney, sometime Principal Medical Officer of the NSW Education Department, judge of beauty quests, head of the Father and Son Welfare Movement and of Sydney Health Week, surveyed the conditions for mental and


33A.E.Mander;6.P.M. TILL MIDNIGHT.Rawson's,Melbourne,1945.
personal health. Different movements and organisations catered for different aspects of health. Sex education made sure that sexual life was for happiness; teachers and parents kept a young life in secure bounds and within the norm of personal development. Town planning was a great hope which could lay solid foundations for all that was good, which could rid the world of delinquency, poverty, prostitution, alcoholism and venereal disease, and instil in the home, in private life, a quality of "euphoria". Euphoria was the enjoyment of a rounded individuality. Euphoria was created by society and enjoyed in the home. Somehow a euphoric individual would not see the need to make the whole of life euphoric, would know where it should stop, would know that it must only be a part of life, never life itself.

Sydney Health Week was an attempt to promote modern health principles and practices amongst the general population, particularly through the extensive publication and distribution of informational pamphlets. Harvey Sutton used Health Week to publicise his views. His special interest was mental health and how it was involved in daily life, how it was fostered or hindered by social life. He thought that happiness was mental and that it could be brought into being by organising life and society for its sake. If people exercised, if they went for walks, if they had seen the oceans and the beaches and the forests and the mountains they would have felt a singular joy and delight in life; Sutton thought that this joy was mental and people could make it so that they had it often. Good personal habits and a healthy body, good houses and good cities created conditions in which to be happy, in which to enjoy that mental state. If people were given good houses and good cities, if their jobs were not too bad, if they exercised, drank milk, kept themselves and their environment clean they would receive happiness. Happiness would be a resting place for them, it would be given them to know secretly and intimately, privately. For Harvey Sutton, to be an individual was to be privately happy and because society was for individuals he felt that society should help people to become privately happy. Sutton felt that such aims could be most fully met in leisure. To Sutton, leisure time was a time when there were so many things that made for happiness and so few that made for boredom.

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and unhappiness; it was when the aims of society were most fruitfully realised.\textsuperscript{36}

In the war years, a new kind of psychology was introduced to the Sydney public through Health Week, and Harvey Sutton's influence declined. Sutton had broad interests. The new psychologists introduced a theory which meant that the interests of psychology and the interests of the general population alike were to be retracted from the whole of life. The retracted vision made it seem as if life ought to be principally, even entirely, concerned with private feelings. In that psychology there was a clear distinction between purely physical obstacles to health and mental ones.\textsuperscript{37} Physical disorders might have mental complications but mental disorders were essentially disorders of individuality, treatable by means including psychiatry. An unconscious mind controlled the subconscious functioning of the organs, and so the health of the physical body might be related not to its external circumstances, not to the way life was lived, the way work was, the quality of houses and public hygiene, not to anything that public instrumentalities ought to change or could control but to private disorders of individuality.\textsuperscript{38} Instead of comprehensive reform, society during the war and after it could be reformed piecemeal, by treating personal mental problems, which often originated in childhood, and which consisted in the failure of particular individuals to become sufficiently independent in their emotional and psychological life.

The new psychology was exemplified by a relatively new profession, that of almonry. The first almoner was appointed in 1929 and by 1950 there were 115 of them working in hospitals and community health areas.\textsuperscript{39} Almoners represented a style of social work devoted to discovering the inherent nature of each individual, finding and developing the grounds for their independence and matching them up with the tasks of society. Individual natures did not choose which tasks society should fulfil. Since human natures were purely individual, to ground a person in what was most intimate and vital to them was to effect no changes in the world, erect no principles, find no over-riding common cause, merely to make sure that unsuitable applicants did not end up in unsuitable jobs, or in unsuitable relationships. What was deepest in the individual and what was deepest in the

\textsuperscript{36}Ibid.esp.1944.p.109.

\textsuperscript{37}Dr.H.M.North;\textit{Mental Hygiene.};\textit{SYDNEY HEALTH WEEK BOOKLETS}. 1940.pp.35,83.


\textsuperscript{39}\textit{The Almoner - A Worth-While Career.};\textit{SYDNEY HEALTH WEEK BOOKLET.1950.pp.119-120.
society around them were inherently mismatched and essentially antagonistic. Under the terms of psychiatrists and social workers, striving to secure the individuality of their patients, to live would be to feel most of the content of life as a threatening stranger.

After the war, psychological health meant more than the individuality which had been the aim before the war. Now it meant both the existence and the independence of those psychological conditions, and the complete independence of the individual comprised in that way. Dependence was the enemy of personality. Families should only exist and function to the extent that they created such independence, such individuals. In Health Week campaigns after the war parents were told that they should strive to create individuals out of their children, free of dependence, marching through pre-set stages of personality development. In time the children would be parents and their task would be to create individuals, perhaps to lose what independence they had gained through their own upbringing in the social task of creating independent individuals. Teachers too, and playground supervisors, anyone who administered a child should administer them for the sake of compiling out of them an independent psychological entity. In a sense, the new psychologists implied that only the young could enjoy a full and true individuality, because they had few dependent responsibilities. In the psychiatric post-war world, it was as if only the young were fully human. Psychiatrists looked at broader social issues only to the extent that they could prevent the number of incomplete individuals, so they were silent about what all the effort was for. A healthy mental state was a happy one. The long route from weaning a child of its dependencies was so that it could be happy. The child could only be happy in its individuality. In the 1950s and 1960s, through cult groups and isolated worlds like the world of surfing, young people began to shift their focus from families to their peers in order to find authority for their behaviour and wisdom. They were castigated or eulogised for taking a departure from older values. Material prosperity may have provided young adults with the means to establish new group allegiances; the motivation may have come from the popularisation of the ideals and practice of fostering psychological independence, which had preceded that search.

For Health Week in 1951 New South Wales school students of many ages were

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asked to write competitive essays to show their awareness of health issues, not merely mental health but of all the fundamentals of hygiene and of the order needed in life and in the home. The prize essays were all written in the third person plural. All the winners wrote of health in an objective sense. Health implied a series of standards to be applied indiscriminately, not related to particular needs or practices, not to any authority within the family, as if health stood above all households dispensing minimum definitions and enforcing rules. If all the rules about cleanliness in the house and the person, of diet, exercise, exposure to sunlight and the maintenance of community standards were filled the consequence would be happiness; their own happiness. The children knew that is what it was all for, but they did not write anything which would have suggested that they knew what happiness was. Perhaps the children thought, or had been taught, that one could not know what happiness was until all the conditions which made for happiness were fulfilled. The children expressed their belief that, if their home life was lived around modern principles of health, then they would be happy; to bring about something for their interior life they had to write from the outside, think of themselves matching up to those rules. Whatever was the result after all the right things had been done, that was happiness. A ten year-old girl knew what people who had got it looked like.

As had happened with the experience of travel, in the post-war world the actual perception of what a good life was like had been withdrawn. Psychologists and town planners alike felt that the aim of society was to create individuals. The psychologists had gone further, and proposed that those individuals were essentially psychological entities. Those psychological entities were cut off from each other in that to become more independent was to become more ineffable. So it was not presumed what it would be like to be an individual. Happiness in others could be no more than a challenge to become an individual, to seek the inherent, psychological, a-social and a-historical character of one’s own being. The psychiatric attitude clarified the general tendency of society to seek essential privacy as a common aim. That attitude also showed that the notion of the private self, the prize, had been deprived of any real content. Any terms in which to recognise the force, capacities and implications of a full being were gone. What had become socially highest gave the least ability to make the society which had made those aims, and thus the cherished sense of individuality.

Although they represented different occupations, and worked at different times, Mander, Griffin and Frank Stewart were re-inforcing the one point. All their ideas

42 SYDNEY HEALTH WEEK BOOKLETS. 1951. pp.87-93.
implied that the differences between home and work, rational and irrational, happiness and tediousness, were rooted not in society, but in the nature of humanity, and that the differences were, therefore, essential aspects of humanity which could not be altered. The gap between personal development and social life was becoming a gap upon which it would have been improper and even impossible to transgress; it was in that form, as a division between feelings which each had separate origins in human nature, that the activity of beach-going would be affected most pervasively by the concept of leisure.

In the late 19th century, along promenades and beaches, on public holidays and weekends men and women dressed up to go to the beach, to take walks and picnics. Until the 1930s or so men still wore suits to the beach, when they were not bathing.43 It was not that they were ashamed of their own undress, for until they were cased in the early 20th century they had swum naked or in brief 'v' trunks. In the late 19th century women's bathing costumes reached a degree of complexity, elaboration and decoration little short of fancy day dress. It was not that they accumulated layers of cloth to hide the body as the body was hidden in the daytime, because, as Valerie Steele has argued, those other clothes were themselves created within erotic ideals of feminine style and presentation.44 Suits and dresses worn to the seaside were often made as stylish as their wearers could afford, in cut, combination and accoutrement. Men's clothes were very similar to the styles they wore at work. They did not wear clothes consciously different from such styles, though perhaps consciously more becoming. Those suits and dresses were put through a great range of uses: dining, travelling, walking, and other proper uses. People also sprawled across the sand in them, adopted ungainly and undignified poses in them, got them messed up and dirty.45 People dressed up but the clothes did not put a stop to abandon. No distinction was observed in their use because between the beach and the promenade and society and work the differences were not great. But from the 1940s male dress in particular became different for the beach. Women's dress had always been more diversified and it did not further diversify in its uses so much as the uses became more clearly defined. The shorts and tops men wore in the surf became the model for clothes.


to wear at the beach, on holiday, in leisure. Among board riders in the 1960s and 1970s a degree of decoration and range of colours was used unknown in male dress beyond leisure, unthinkable beyond that. Such styles, generated from within the field of leisure, spread to other beach-goers but they did not spread to other areas of life. There were at least two distinct fields of dress, they were distinct because they fields they evoked were different, because it would not feel right to go to the office in a t-shirt of psychedelic green and it would not feel right to wear a blue pin-stripe suit on the Gold Coast; it might clash with the white leather shoes. Propriety and abandon, multiple uses and multiple feelings in one garb and one guise, had become emotionally incompatible. The emotions themselves were incompatible, private to each other.

The change, early this century, towards a more managerial style in the workplace, had two implications for the status of beach-going in society. Firstly, personal character became irrelevant to work so, as was shown in Chapter Four, the ideals which grew around beach-going from the 1920s did not address work. Secondly, since the 1920s, the positive interpretations of personal character and the notion of leisure have converged. The positive interpretation of personal character and leisure has generally involved a reaction against the negative interpretation of personal character in work; though beach-side cities grow around them, if beach-goers understand beach-going as a form of leisure, they also understand personal character as a contribution only to private life and feelings. The emotions of beach-going are now different from the feelings involved in work; the gap between activities, originally an abstract conception found in fields such as work, urban design and psychology, has established roots in human feeling, become one of the fundamental features of human behaviour, and reaches, through activities such as beach-going, back into the society in which it originated.
Chapter 7
CONCLUSION.

Since 1860, the activity of beach-going has been as much an emotional activity as a physical activity. The emotions of beach-going have had implications for the personal status and social life of beach-goers. From about 1860 to about 1920, the content of those emotions influenced attitudes to nature and to industrial life; from the 1920s, those emotions have referred to personal character. The practice and the emotions of beach-going have always been complex but, since about 1920, those complexities have been over-laid by an image of emotional simplicity. The task of this thesis was to go beyond the simple images and poor understanding of beach-going to give as much complexity to the understanding of the beach as there was in the activity itself.

In a sense, this history has been a social commentary and evaluation of the imaginative commentary by Jean Curlewis in BEACH BEYOND, her 1923 novel for young adults. Jean Curlewis was a relative of Ethel Turner and a member of the famous Curlewis family which supplied several prominent surf life savers, including the long-serving national president Sir Adrian Curlewis. When she wrote the book, Jean Curlewis straddled the changing values of the beach. BEACH BEYOND is an adventure story, but its themes are moral themes. In the novel, several ideas about the character of beach-going are played off against one another. The hero is a young city clerk named Merrick. Merrick is a life saver and his ideas of the beach are that it provides a weekend escape, and convivial delights which have no bearing on his job. Merrick’s job bores him, and when his employer offers him the chance to spend all summer at an isolated beach as a paid life saver he takes the opportunity, though he is worried that being in an isolated place might also be boring. The beach-colony of ‘Beach Beyond’, where Merrick is the life saver, is owned by a group of prominent Sydney professionals and businessmen, including two lawyers, two doctors, two editors and two businessmen; Merrick’s boss, Mr. Massimer, is one of the two businessmen. This group of

successful men are all happy, they all seek to infuse their jobs with passion. The beach is important to them because it enables them to withdraw from daily details to a place where they can come into contact with natural values, relaxed and true values. Once recharged by a stay at their weekender colony all the prominent men return to Sydney with renewed vigour and a renewed sense of their own roles and the importance of their work.

In her novel, Jean Curlewis did not use any simple images. Instead, she tried to show the implications of the different ways of bathing for her character's general outlook on life. Besides Merrick and Massimer's friends, there is a third group of characters in the book, a gang of ruffians, led by an eccentric millionaire. The gang try to kidnap the inhabitants of 'Beach Beyond'. The millionaire has bought a Pacific Island, on which he intends to create a Utopia, a version of William Lane's New Australia, a place of happiness where good things would be done to aid the rest of the world. The millionaire believes that the group of prominent city men who stay at 'Beach Beyond' are the only truly happy people to be found anywhere in the world. After the kidnap plot is foiled the moral question emerges: Where and what is Utopia? Mr. Massimer says that Utopia is not on a Pacific Island, that one cannot abandon current society to try to start again, that to make the world happy one has to work in and through the world. In Massimer's words, Utopia is "in the heart of factories and smoke and grime and muddle".2

Merrick has also found out what Utopia is; for him Utopia is being by the beach. Merrick asks3

Why should I go and sweat my soul out to be a commercial magnate when all I want when I've attained that giddy height is just what I can have here without doing a stroke? I tell you straight, when I've made the money I'll come back here or somewhere like it and build a wooden cabin and go barefoot and live on hard tack. And it doesn't cost anything to surf. Once again, why should I go and bullock in an office?

Merrick has found out that the beach is a truly special place, but another young man in the colony at 'Beach Beyond', a convalescing mathematician named Egbert, reminds Merrick why life cannot be like that. Egbert says that to understand how special the beach is one has to have worked. The crucial point is how one should enjoy the beach, whether the beach will be as special for the young people facing life as it was to the established men who already knew what life was about. In

2Ibid.p.235.

3Ibid. p.241.
Egbert's words,⁴

If you and I stay here now, we miss the whole point of the place, - we've got to mill into life and work and sweat and bullock and get tired out before we get the essential flavour that's in the air here. If we don't, to us it'll only be any old beach, while to the others it's Beach Beyond.

At that point, Merrick manages to see the beach in the way in which the older men had seen it, manages to see that work and beach-going each benefit the other activity.

Outside the novel, outside Jean Curlewis' imagination, similar questions were being asked about the character and status of beach-going in relation to work and broader society. In society generally it was the views of men like Massimer which were being eclipsed. Perhaps that was why Jean Curlewis wrote her book, because she felt a world being lost. The old world of beach-going was lost in two ways; new ways of using the beach had emerged, and it was becoming more difficult for beach-goers to recognise the complexities of beach-going. BEACH BEYOND represented a high point in the imaginative understanding of beach-going. After the publication of that book, simple images of pleasure were the only ones used to understand what was taking place on the beaches of Australia. This thesis has not gone beyond the perceptions of Jean Curlewis, except to point out that the Merricks did not undergo a conversion, never did come to see the beach in the way that Massimer had. Today, beach-going is dominated by the ideas of Merrick before his enlightenment. Like Egbert, the present history has tried to show that much more than Merrick had thought is involved in the act of going to the beach. This history has shown some of the complexities of beach-going, complexities in the practice of beach-going and complexities in the relationship between beach-going and other activities in society; if the practice and significance of beach-going for life in Australia has been shown to be varied and intricate, then some of the understanding of beach-going, lost since the time of Jean Curlewis, would have been recovered.

⁴ Ibid. p.242.
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