

a public subscription was opened in January, 1875. The new church was St John's Anglican Church, at Bar Island. The congregation came from around the River, but some, at least, came through Peat's Crater.

The church on Bar Island was actually in the centre of a growing river "village", which was forming where the waterways joined. To provide road access to the settlement, a road was surveyed in 1878 and opened in 1882.

Locally, at least, the road became known as "St John's Road." At first, of course, it was a side-street from the Old Peat's Ferry Road. To the locals, however, it was an important thoroughfare because it linked the peripheral settlers at Peat's Ferry with the centre of what may well have become a major River village, with Bar Island as its centre.

Two other landholdings deserve comment at this stage. A small, triangular block of land was acquired by Rev Henry Britten in 1883. Britten also acquired the Sullivan portion and was the first preacher on Bar Island. He had a small holiday property on the site. The second was the holding taken up by Joseph Izzard, near the head of Peat's Bight. He appears to have been in occupation of the land by 1883, although his purchase was not confirmed until 1886.

The Izzards kept a boarding house at Peat's Bight and maintained close family relationships with the Crumptions, their relatives and neighbours.

There were some problems with the St John's Road. Its drainage was not totally successful. In 1892, V.W.Seymour, Secretary of the Brooklyn and Peat's Ferry Progress Association, wrote describing a washaway that had made the road dangerous for pedestrians and impassable by horses. The road was maintained by the Public Works Department in this period before Hornsby Shire was formed.

St John's Road may, in fact, have become an important thoroughfare. There were moves, in the late 1890s to complete the road from Gentlemen's Halt to Fisherman's Point. It would then have linked, by ferry, to St John's Road. This would have provided a road from Wiseman's Ferry to Brooklyn. Instead, authorities chose to construct

the road over Berowra Waters in 1902.

It is interesting to speculate that the road through Peat's Crater may well have been a main road by now, with a bridge across the mouth of Berowra Creek, serving major settlements along the banks of the Hawkesbury.



TUNNEL UNDER ST JOHN'S ROAD - built during the war to enable the road to be blown up with explosives if the Japanese invaded. The work of the army in repairing roads etc in the Crater may have been quite extensive. The bridge at the Devil's Elbow was blown up by the soldiers.

MARVELLOUS MUOCAMURRA

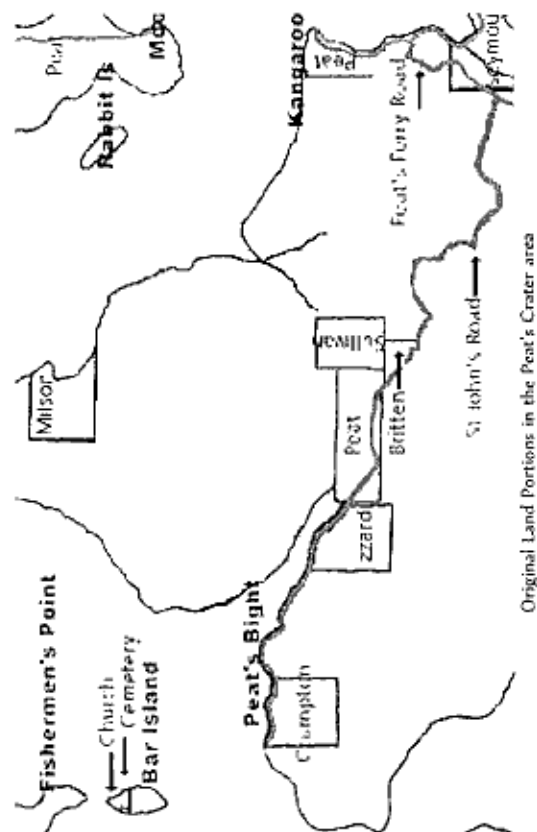


INTRODUCTORY NOTES BY
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ST JOHN'S ROAD PEAT'S CRATER

ST JOHN'S ROAD

George Peat, as has been previously mentioned, had land holdings at Mooney, Kangaroo Point and Peat's Crater. Just as the Ferry was necessary to link the holdings on each side of the River, so a road was necessary to link his land at Kangaroo Point with that at Peat's Crater.



Peat's original track from the Point to the Crater is, fortunately, marked on a survey map of the Peat's Ferry Road. The ascent at the Devil's Elbow was much steeper and the track followed the river bank in its initial stages from Kangaroo Point.

Once it reached the top of the hill, of course, the track headed down into Peat's Crater. The 1878 survey map of the road has an earlier route showing on it, and it is possible that it was Peat's original track. This original

track may well have been "convict-built" because Peat had an assigned servant, Patrick Madden, in the early days.

The extent to which the land in Peat's Crater was ever worked during Peat's life is a question that largely defies investigation. It may well be that Peat extracted useful timber from the area and he may well have run a few cattle there. Some authors have suggested that Peat had a house in the Crater, but there seems to have been no reason for this to have been true. Suggestions that Ned Higgins later lived in Peat's house appear to be spurious, because Higgins bought part of the Sullivan Grant.

No houses are shown on the 1878 Survey Map of the road. The surveyor described the nature of the country as "rough and steep sandstone ridges and gullies, timbered with oak, redgum, bloodwood. Considerable undergrowth in places." The Peat grant, at that stage, was owned by John Campbell, while William Dawson owned the Sullivan Grant.

In 1840, George Sullivan had acquired 30 acres at the eastern end of the Crater. His holding bordered on Peat's. There is, however, no evidence that Sullivan ever used the land. In fact, it would appear that there was, at this time, a considerable amount of speculation as to possible northern road routes. In 1840, King and Robinson acquired both Fisherman's Point and Flat Rock Point, perhaps thinking that these could be the locations of River or Creek crossings.

The general development of the area does not seem to have progressed until the arrival of the Crumpton Family.

John Crumpton's forty acre lot on Peat's Bight was registered to his ownership in 1867, but, under the conditional purchase procedures of the period, he may have been there earlier. Crumpton's choice of land now seems less logical than it originally was. In the 1860s, it appeared that a centre of settlement could develop near the mouth of Berowra Creek. The Marramarra Creek area, to the west, had been settled in the 1820s, albeit in a manner bordering on abject poverty. Both Bar Point and Fisherman's Point were popular spots for fishermen's camps.

In fact, the location of Crumpton's property, near the junction of Marramarra and Berowra Creeks with the



IZZARD'S BOARDING HOUSE - the ruins of this building are still visible near the shore of Peat's Bight. Joe Izzard later had a boatshed at Brooklyn.

Hawkesbury, placed it in an ideal position as far as water transport access was concerned.

The growing strength of the small community is indicated by the movement to open schools for the children. The primary movers in this regard appear to have been James Cole and Vincent William Seymour. Seymour had settled at the site now known as "The Old Dairy", at Brooklyn, in 1862. It was organised for a Provisional School to open in 1872, in a house near where the present Brooklyn Cemetery is located. The house had previously been used by the Superintendent of Roads in the area. The original school failed. Mr Seymour attributed the failure to the attitude of James Cole.

In 1875, however, a further attempt was made to bring education to the children. Two schools opened as "Half-time" schools. One was located in the disused house at Kangaroo Point and the other in Crumpton's house, with a room being provided for the purpose.

It is interesting to note that some pupils walked over the Peat's Crater Road to attend both schools. In later years, Annie Seymour recalled making this walk with Bill Smith, the son of the local Fisheries Inspector at Peat's Ferry. She went to the school at Kangaroo Point, but also crossed the hill to attend the one at Peat's Bight.

The opening of the school in Crumpton's cottage anticipated the building of a church and school on Bar Island. The land had been set aside for the purpose and