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**“The Political Trials and Tribulations of
Rockdale City: A History”**

**2014 Junior Ron Rathbone Local History
Prize**

A look into some of the political personalities, issues and perspectives that have occurred in Rockdale City in all three tiers of government. This essay attempts to explore some of the lessons which a modern audience can take away from a study into historical local politics. Not only is such history important in order to understand the political decisions which have shaken the people and politicians of Rockdale in a way that has not been documented thematically in such a manner before, it also serves to bring forth the lessons which can be learnt through years of political mistakes and intrigue.

Established in 1871 as the municipality of West Botany, Rockdale City has had a political history which certainly stretches back in time.¹ In all three tiers of government, be it the Local Rockdale City Council², the Rockdale State Electorate³ or the Federal electorate of Barton⁴ (which all encompass roughly the same areas in and around Rockdale city itself), the city has experienced its fair share of political trials and tribulations, affecting the residents and causing scandals involving political representatives. An analysis of some of the key issues facing these various political institutions throughout the history of Australia's democracy, as well as some overarching social trends that have had great influence on Rockdale, reveals a great deal about the reality of political history. Rockdale's rich political history gives modern onlookers a myriad of interesting and sometimes contentious political personalities, areas of dispute that riled and concerned the people of the day and the varying and changing perspectives of the local people and their political representatives on many issues. It is through the study of such history, that Rockdale City (as a geographical area largely encompassing the aforementioned political electorates) serves as a case study of the nature of all politics and its fickle nature that is so reminiscent of the Gillard minority Government and the ensuing Abbott Government. It also serves as an acute reminder of how often history repeats itself in personalities who commit the same mistakes, or issues which continuously appear – one only needs to look at a Leader article which expressed great concern about the changed pension age to sixty-seven in a modern context where the age will rise to seventy.⁵ Thus the study of Rockdale's political history provides more than simply

¹ Rockdale City Council, *About Rockdale*, <http://www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au/Pages/Rockdale_History.aspx>

² Appendix Source 1

³ Appendix Source 2

⁴ Appendix Source 3

⁵ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 14/5/2009, "Seniors in firing line"

entertainment, but through the eyes of retrospect an acute awareness of the reality that confronts all politics.

Firstly, though, to properly consider the political history of all three tiers of government that governed Rockdale, its political landscape must be considered. In general, Rockdale tends to be a safe Labor seat –with (in its history) seven out of twelve elections in Barton going to the ALP;⁶ and five out of seven elections in the Rockdale State electorate going to the ALP.⁷⁸ In recent elections Rockdale experienced a swing towards the Liberal Party, with a Liberal member as representative in Barton and Rockdale electorates, as well as a majority of Rockdale city councillors also Liberal Party members (six out of fifteen).⁹ It is important to consider this political undertone in an analysis of the community’s reactions to particular events within its history, as the political associations of the people bear a reflection and explanation in examining political reactions from Rockdale City residents. In the most recent census (2011) Rockdale was shown to have a high proportion of ethnic minorities (including a significantly higher number of people with parents born overseas).¹⁰ With that knowledge in consideration (but used with caution – because of the fact that demographic statistics change with time, and 2011 is certainly very recent), Rockdale provides an image of a political landscape involving voters from a large proportion of ethnic minority groups as well as a historically Labor supporting electorate.

⁶ Australian Electoral Commission, last updated 27/9/2013, *Profile of the electoral division of Barton*, viewed on 19/7/14, <http://www.aec.gov.au/profiles/nsw/barton.htm>

⁷ Wikipedia, last updated 31/8/2013, *Electoral District of Rockdale*, viewed on 19/7/2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electoral_district_of_Rockdale

⁸ Electoral Commission NSW, last updated 17/02/2014, *Rockdale*, viewed on 19/7/2014, http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/profiles/district_profiles/rockdale

⁹ Electoral Commission NSW, *Rockdale City Council*, viewed on 19/7/2014, <http://www.pastvtr.elections.nsw.gov.au/LGE2012/rockdale-city-council.html>

¹⁰ ABS, latest issue released 28/03/2013, *2011 Census Quickstats – Rockdale*, viewed on 19/7/2014, <http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/SED10072?opendocume nt&navpos=220>

Among the most useful ways in which to gauge historical periods and the perceptions of a people at a time is through the personalities (especially those who are elected into their positions of power) prominent during that time. Such a fact is equally true for our understanding of Rockdale's rich political history. These personalities epitomised their time – and were a reflection of a changing political landscape. Perhaps most prominent of all Rockdale politicians in recent history was Robert McClelland, a man who represented not just the people of the Barton electorate but also served in the cabinet as the Labor government's Attorney General. Like many other Labor politicians, McClelland was marred in by his support of then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd in the internal Labor power struggle that characterised the previous Labor government.¹¹ Having originally thought his demotion from the front bench was temporary, he was soon dumped. The Leader article "Dumped for being a mate" highlights a perspective around a sense of disillusionment regarding the power struggle within Labor which provides a brief insight into the very recent past and an ever existent political cynicism. Under his term, Robert McClelland was also recognised for having introduced reforms for gay couples limited to equality in the treatment of de facto gay partners but no endorsement or support of civil unions or of marriage equality. That decision though, received negative attention from the local newspaper, The Leader, which then drew a cartoon involving two gay men walking down the aisle with a person from the ATO waiting at the end.¹²

While not as well known, but arguably with a political story as fraught with challenges as was Robert McClelland's, was that of Barrie Unsworth, another Labor member who represented the state electorate of Rockdale. Criticism over speculation about whether he would even live in the electorate he was representing certainly did not aid his political

¹¹ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 6/3/2012, "Dumped for being a mate"

¹² *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 6/5/2008, "Same sex reforms"

career.¹³ It would be an understatement to say that he did not enter parliament with much popular support, considering a large number of traditional Labor voters seemed to desert the candidate in the election, resulting in a victory by an extremely small margin of fifty-four votes.¹⁴ Having attained his seat in 1986 he managed to increase support in Rockdale itself during the next election but led it to a crushing defeat in the state overall. Overall, Mr Unsworth was a political anomaly that dotted upon the surface of Rockdale's long political history – but while his story too may seem only to exist merely for the entertainment of modern onlookers, his politically distraught career yielded a gem in Rockdale's geographic landscape – Rockdale's Bicentennial Park – a physical legacy vastly different from the rubbish tip that existed there before.¹⁵

Perhaps though, while personalities give an insightful shot into the political tribulations engulfing an electorate at a specific point in time, it is reports of major areas of contention within the local community that gives a modern audience a greater understanding of the particularly riling and enraging issues of the day. Rockdale as Barton, Rockdale state electorate or the Rockdale City Council has certainly never been a passive electorate over its past and that is exemplified by the reaction of the community to a variety of issues. One such issue was that of donation money. Great controversy emerged, for example, after revelations that the local state member and planning minister Frank Sartor had granted the approval of a major housing development against the recommendations of his own planning committee, from a company which had coincidentally been a Labor donor but which Mr Sartor incidentally did not recall.¹⁶ This was, as many politically damaging things do, occurring at a

¹³ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 2010, "Premier's slip led to vote quip"

¹⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵ *Ibid*

¹⁶ ABC, last updated 28/2/2008, *Iemma, Sartor deny favours for another donor*, viewed on 19/7/2014, <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2008-02-28/iemma-sartor-deny-favours-for-another-donor/1056614>>

time where this issue was increasingly being drawn to the public's attention. In an article in the local newspaper only around a week after the revelations surrounding Mr Sartor's misconduct, Rockdale City Council was shown to be the council in NSW which received the tenth most money in donations.¹⁷ At the same time, there were also issues with election money going on in regards to the local council, where the ALP councillor Bill Saravinovski denied allegations that his fund-raising dinner hosted major developers.¹⁸ One councillor's response, a Kogarah councillor – Anne Field – who resigned after receiving an attempt to bribe her was that all developer's donations should be banned.¹⁹ While this was going on, in response to the increasingly contentious issue, the state government (at that time led by Morris Iemma) proposed a raft of reforms that would attempt to make the entire matter more transparent.²⁰ Once passed, several months later, the legislation to some, including the local Leader reporter which was engaged throughout the issue in its coverage found the result to be ultimately unimpressive because of a perceived continued lack of transparency.²¹ Of course, there are issues in assessing the outcome and the damage dealt by the scandal involving donation money, especially if from a local news perspective much reporting of the government's actions was negative. Perhaps to add more information to build a greater historical image about the convoluted and constantly repetitive nature of political history it would be well worth noting that Sartor (the Rockdale member who allowed a development site from a development company which provided donations go ahead) was, only a month before, embroiled in conflict regarding yet again developers and money. Changes proposed by Sartor would have seen developer's levies funds withheld from local governments and

¹⁷ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 4/3/2008, "Election Money"

¹⁸ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 24/4/2008, "ALP fund-raiser defended"

¹⁹ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 4/3/2008, "Election Money"

²⁰ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 4/3/2008, "Reforms set for donations"

²¹ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 3/7/2008, "Laws fail to stop pollie donations"

invested and then supposedly returned when it was needed. Many outraged mayors refused to comply and Sartor's response was to threaten to force councils to do so with legislation.²²

The issue of donation money was just one among a plethora of other issues which reigned rampant at the time.

Another major issue of contention for the Rockdale community in several instances in its past was centred around the issue of amalgamation – the combination of two or more council areas to form a single council. The consistent reality of Rockdale council's response to amalgamation reveals a great deal, perhaps, not only of the pride that the council had for its city but even more than that, the state of the council and its selfishness. The issue, raised in 1977, received a response to the people of the city from the council about what it thought.²³ The pamphlet issued to the people was against amalgamation simply because Rockdale council was better off than the proposed councils it was meant to merge with: Kogarah and Hurstville. The pamphlet stated: "Neither Hurstville nor Kogarah are so fortunate. So the simple truth of the matter is, in any enlarged super council, we will fall back to **their** level ... either way you can see how amalgamation will cost **us** dearly." The source reveals a great deal about the interests of the council in maintaining their reputation for well-funded resources and the method in which they appealed to the general public in order to keep things that way. Interestingly, on the same topic, but years later in 2008, the local councils were once again called upon to amalgamate to form super councils. In this instance the Kogarah council mayor discussed how the change would, once again affect their council and their rate payers (seemingly showing that the selfishness and desire to remain separate from poorer councils was not unique to Rockdale) – forcing them to pay more at the expense of others. The Rockdale mayor simply said that his council worked cooperatively with its border

²² *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 5/2/2008, "Sartor threatens rebellious mayors"

²³ Appendix Source 4

councils – a statement which seems, more than anything, a polite rejection at the need for amalgamation.²⁴ Yet again on this major issue, local political history has yielded to the old dictum that history repeats itself.

Finally, one large area in which we can gain a perspective and understanding of the history of politics in Rockdale would be the perspectives of the people and its politicians on certain issues which, because of their changing nature, we can use to gauge and analyse the changing perspectives that Rockdale council has undergone. In fact, a very interesting nugget of a story, which highlights the fickle nature of changing perspectives, and can be found in the annals of Rockdale Library's local history room, is one which describes how violent protests from anti-Vietnam protestors against Harold Holt when he came campaigning in the Rockdale City Hall led to the Liberal take-over of Barton and Hughes electorates, as one Liberal party official had said: "The revival came to a peak at the Rockdale meeting, at which Mr Holt was abused and assaulted."²⁵ Certainly, though, when properly considering differing perspectives within the local history level, one cannot ignore for example the high proportion of independents in the council. Currently there are four independent councillors within the Rockdale City Council, it is therefore not surprising that as a result, when reviewing the election campaign flyers handed out, there are examples of flyers which completely dismiss both major parties, and that some of the disillusionment that people experience had a lot to do with the local government elections.²⁶ Understandably however, that has also resulted in instances in the past where many independents applied, but not enough of those applicants provided any evidence that they were serious about running because they had not left any

²⁴ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 9/12/2008, "Bigger Councils by Chamber"

²⁵ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 22/7/2010, "Riot helped PM win war election"

²⁶ Appendix Source 5

method with which people could get into contact with them.²⁷ That simple contrast shifting between dislike of the major parties, but at the same time seeing issues within independents because of the number that applied that were not serious also highlights the changing nature of perspectives throughout Rockdale's political history.

Of course, when considering the changing historical perspectives of Rockdale in all three tiers of its government, there can never be forgotten the constantly shifting perspectives (a phenomenon which was in no way restricted to Rockdale) about greater acceptance of different races and women within the community. For example, only recently there have been ever more pushes for greater female representation in the local councils.²⁸ This followed a study which revealed that the typical councillor in NSW was male and aged 50-59, and that women only comprised twenty-five percent of the council members.²⁹ Of course, it was not only in terms of female representation that Rockdale has seen changes within its council leadership. When John Ajaka (now the first Liberal Australian Lebanese Politician in parliament) became a councillor of Rockdale city council he not only represented a change within the Rockdale demography towards a more multicultural place, but also pushed himself to reduce racism within the country – requesting that ethnic descriptors be taken away when discussing alleged perpetrators of crime.³⁰ In these ways, by looking at Rockdale over the recent past, a big change can be seen (aligning with general changes across the nation) for greater multiculturalism and female representation within politics. That observation though, resonates with the idea that we can observe broader historical changes through these local communities and through local history.

²⁷ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 11/3/2004, "57 Mystery candidates don't want you to know"

²⁸ *The St George Sutherland Shire Leader*, 1/5/2008, "Standing up for equality in local government"

²⁹ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 17/4/2008, "More women for councils"

³⁰ *The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader*, 31/5/2007, "New MP targets prejudice"

Considering all these observations, however, it is very important to raise some of the historiographical issues surrounding the evaluation of local history. Historians often gain their understanding of areas with a smaller number of previously written histories (such as in instances of local history) from primary sources. In this instance, a closer inspection at the sources from which these stories are told reveals many articles to be by the same journalist named Trembath for the same local newspaper (The Leader). This raises questions of historiography and reliability as to how well we are able to understand the perspectives of ordinary people and the general Rockdale public on the issue of donation money and many others considering this almost inevitable one side reporting of local politics. The reality is that due to the limited nature of primary and secondary source material widely available about Rockdale's local political history, there are inevitably some issues regarding historiography. However in general the facts presented, while potentially non-representative of the general population's views, are quite likely to be correct and such primary sources can be taken as representative of a local media perspective which had in certain circumstances attempted to convey the feelings of local residents (but which is something that cannot be guaranteed). As a result of this, and the general reliability of the facts (if not the representation of perspective), as well as the inevitable historiographical challenges that confront writers of more obscure history, interpretations and historical lessons can still be drawn from this history of Rockdale.

The issues of the Rockdale community have been and still are wide and disparate.

Throughout its history, Rockdale has had constantly shifting perspectives and beliefs, as well as personalities who have come to the forefront of presenting and representing such beliefs.

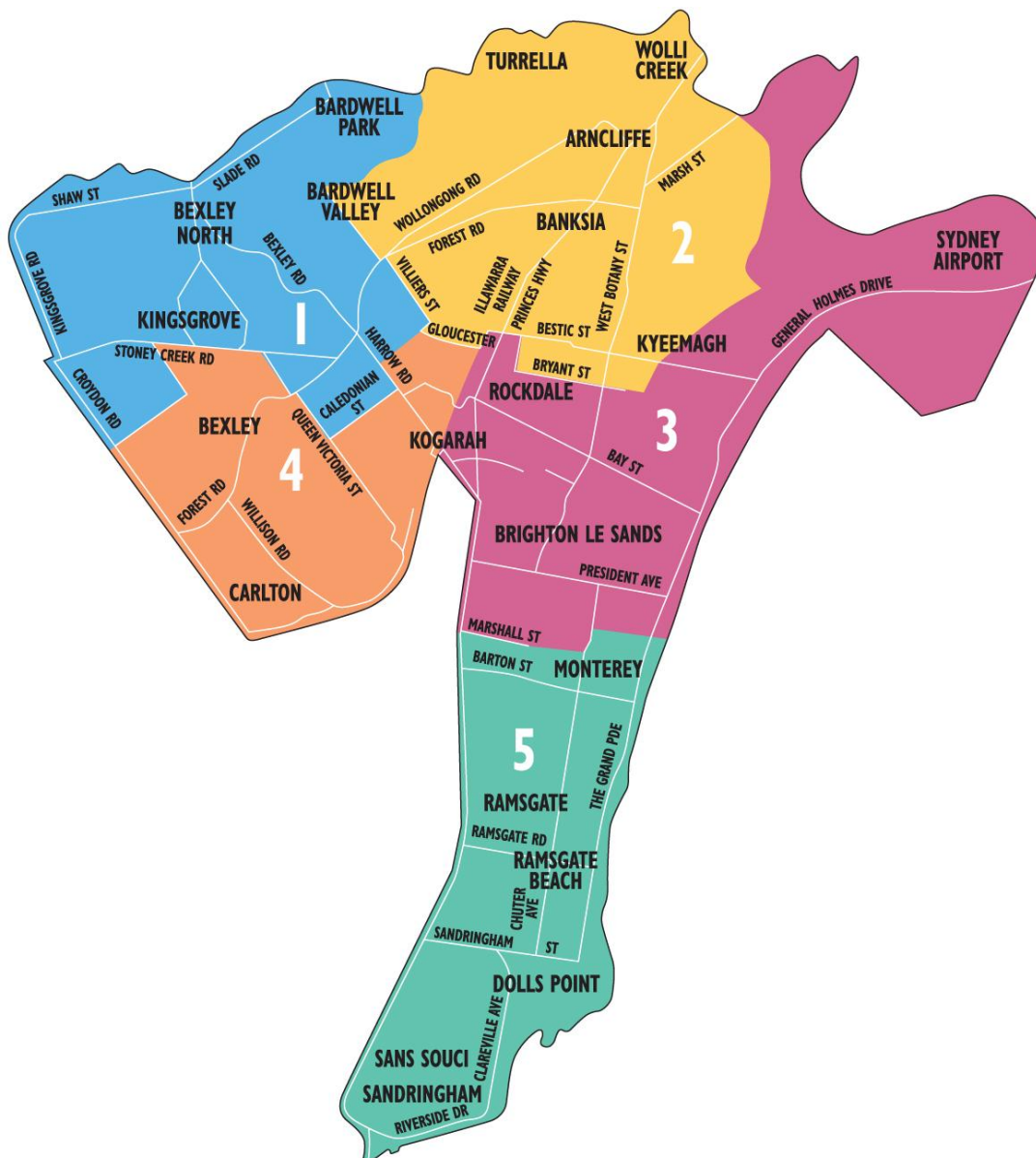
The reality of such a history – that it may be cyclical or repetitive is highlighted to an audience that now reflects upon a very old electorate. However, while the ideas and the stories have not been linear in this area, one linking theme between all of these otherwise

individual and separate events are the physical geographical characteristics of such history and the people of Rockdale City – thus combining them, in a way, into a coherent history. Political decisions in our time have often sparked outrage in many forms and a simple peer back into our past can reveal that that has always been the case. What the study of local history speaks most clearly to us, however, as a modern audience, is a poignant reminder of how inseparable our politics are from historical phenomena, scrutiny from the people and media at the time of events, as well as a continuing scrutiny of the legacy left behind for years to come afterwards.

Rockdale History Prize Appendix:

NB: There must be an understanding that because of poor documentation of the history of Rockdale as well as little historical research into the nature of politics within the electorates, specifically in most recent years, it must be noted that great efforts and lengths have gone into ensuring the accuracy of and corroboration of sources of the research that is presented in this essay.

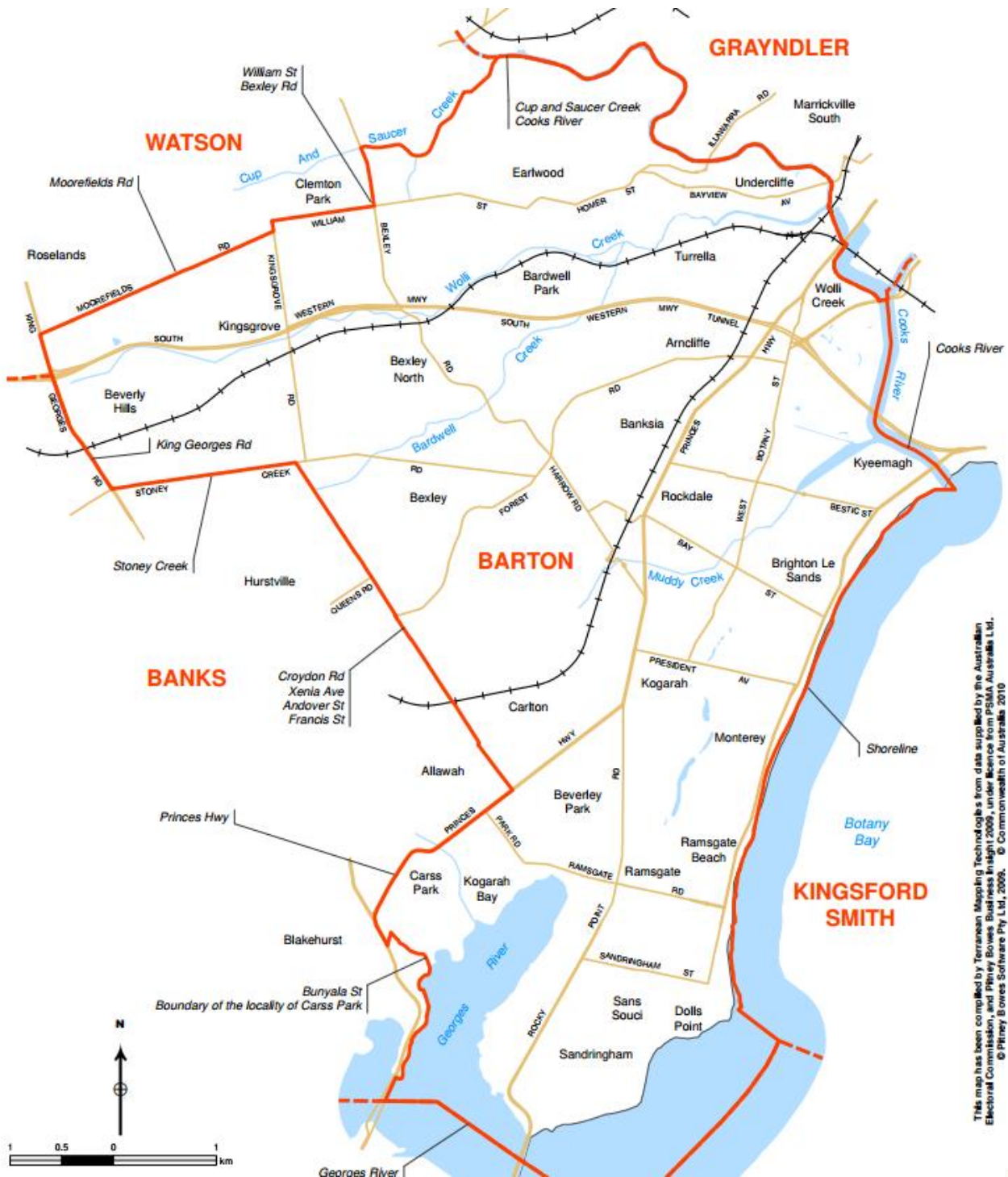
Source 1 – A map of the Rockdale City Council and all of its wards
(http://www.rockdale.nsw.gov.au/Pages/Rockdale_Map.aspx)



Source 2 – A map of the Rockdale State Electorate:
(http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0016/74221/rockdale_a3_nl.pdf)



Source 3 – a map of the Federal electorate of Barton
 (http://www.aec.gov.au/profiles/nsw/files/2009/2009-aec-a4-map-nsw-barton.pdf)



This map has been compiled by Terranean Mapping Technologies from data supplied by the Australian Electoral Commission, and Pitney Bowes Business Insight 2009, under licence from PSMA Australia Ltd. © Pitney Bowes Software Pty Ltd, 2009. © Commonwealth of Australia 2010

Source 4 – an anti-amalgamation flyer issued by the local city council in 1977:

ask yourself whether WE can afford amalgamation?

The idea sounds alright. In theory. Put three councils together and get three times as much use of the resources a Council should have.

But, right away, **there's** the problem for us in Rockdale. We **do** have just about everything a progressive area should have.

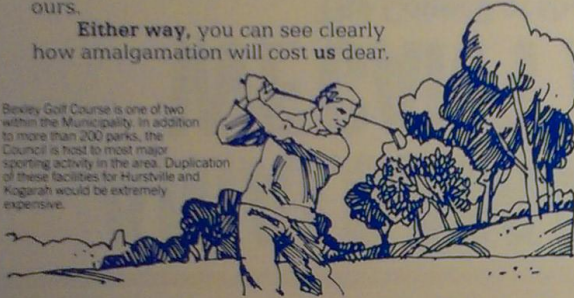
Fully sealed roads. First class sporting facilities. Beaches, parks and gardens. No fewer than **five** libraries. And five senior citizens Centres. A seven day, 24 hour nursing service. And so on.

Neither Hurstville, nor Kogarah are so fortunate.

So, the simple truth of the matter is, in any enlarged Super Council we will fall back to **their** level. Or, they will be brought up to **ours**.

Either way, you can see clearly how amalgamation will cost us dear.

Bexley Golf Course is one of two within the Municipality. In addition to more than 200 parks, the Council is host to most major sporting activity in the area. Duplication of these facilities for Hurstville and Kogarah would be extremely expensive.



We may well lose the services we're accustomed to. (And have paid for.)

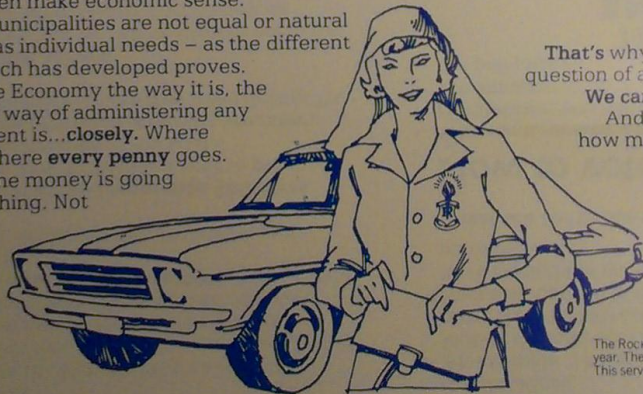
Or, we may be required to pay for the citizens of Hurstville and Kogarah to enjoy them too.

No. You're right. It's **not** fair.

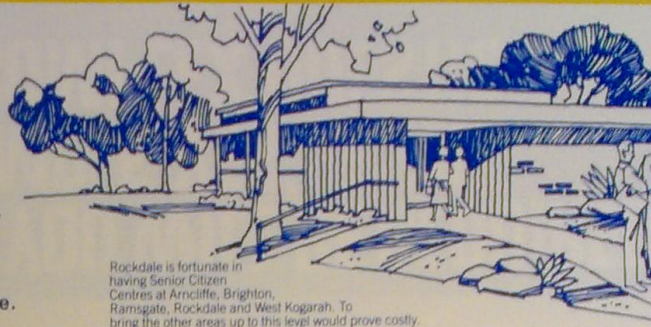
It doesn't even make economic sense.

The three municipalities are not equal or natural partners. Each has individual needs – as the different ways in which each has developed proves.

And with the Economy the way it is, the most economical way of administering any area of government is...**closely**. Where you can watch where **every penny** goes. And make sure the money is going into **doing** something. Not just into Super Administration.



The Rockdale Community Mobile Nursing Service made 45,000 calls a year. The service is available to residents 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This service is unique to Rockdale.

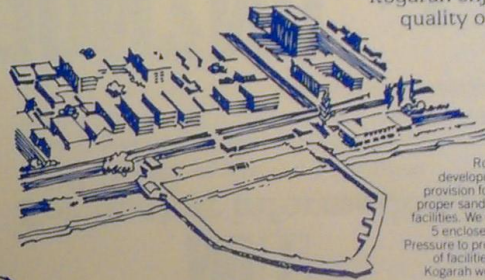


Rockdale is fortunate in having Senior Citizen Centres at Arncliffe, Brighton, Ramsgate, Rockdale and West Kogarah. To bring the other areas up to this level would prove costly.

That's something successive Councils in Rockdale have understood for more than 106 years.

Very well. We have, after all, the second lowest average rate of all Sydney Councils. And yet, we still offer a remarkable range of additional services. You'll find these bonus services listed on the back.

Because in our view amalgamation threatens their continuance. Or, will cost all of us more in rates, simply to ensure that the citizens of Hurstville and Kogarah enjoy **our** quality of life.



Rockdale's forest development has made provision for resident park proper sand control, recreation facilities. We have no fewer than 5 enclosed swimming areas. Pressure to provide a similar level of facilities for Hurstville and Kogarah would prove costly.

That's why we urge you to vote **No** on the question of amalgamation.

We can't afford it.

And, as the weeks go by, you'll see just how many friends and neighbours **agree**..

AMALGAMATION? NO. WE CAN'T AFFORD IT.

The Council of the Municipality of Rockdale



The services threatened by amalgamation.

- Rockdale has the second **lowest rates** in Sydney!
- The **lowest administration costs** in St. George.
- Yet, we spend almost as much on roads as Hurstville and Kogarah combined. (Without upping the rates.)
- And **contract** work where that leads to major economies.
- We offer **five** Senior Citizens' Centres. **Four** Youth Centres. **Five** Baby Health Centres. **Two** Women's Rest Centres. **Fully staffed.**
- We provide **six miles** of clean, healthy beachfront recreation areas, with free parking for residents, proper sand control and **five** fully netted beachfront pools.
- **In addition** to our very own Olympic Pool complex.
- **In fact, in sport, we offer no less than 60%** of the sports fields, in the whole St. George area. (Imagine the cost of duplication for Hurstville and Kogarah!)
- We have **two** golf courses and **more than 200** parks.
- And we spend more than \$200,000 a year to purchase land for **further beautification** of Rockdale.
- We plant more than 4,000 trees annually. We offer a **free** Tree Advisory Service. (Even **free** trees during Tree Month.)
- **Garden refuse removal service.**
- We **care** about local values. So, we've **always** taken the lead in defending **our area** against Port Botany, or Airport encroachment. **We're active.** (And successful!)
- We've ensured Airport Noise Abatement. (Would any Super Council care? Would they listen?)
- We take the lead in supporting residents' cultural activities, too. We're justifiably proud of the **Rockdale Opera Company, The Rockdale Orchestra, The Historical Society.**

- We **cherish** our historic past and we're **actively** restoring, and exhibiting, **our area's** pioneering heritage.
- We have an Annual Crafts Exhibition. No fewer than **five** libraries. **And** a bookmobile!
- We have the staff, **already**, to do the things you take for granted, from the Council. Our Pest Control Survey and Advisory Service is **free**. We have a Dog Control Officer. We dispose of unwanted vehicles **at no cost**, to owners. Our Park Rangers patrol 7 days a week.
- **Every Council Department is available to residents after hours, on the emergency numbers, Even on weekends.**
- We have a policy of encouraging self help in local organizations.
- An example. The **only** 24 hours a day, 7 day a week Mobile Nursing Service. This service offered residents more than 46,000 calls last year. (And, a Social Worker.)
- Rockdale Council is the only council in the area **ever** to have earned the coveted Bluett Award for municipal achievement.

These are the bonus services threatened by amalgamation.

How to vote.

When you receive your ballot paper for the election of aldermen you will also be handed a poll paper on the amalgamation question. Here is how to mark the poll paper.

YES 2
NO 1

For further information call 597 1666 or your Ward Aldermen

*The Government was asked to put forward a case in favour of amalgamation. But they declined the opportunity.

AMALGAMATION? NO. WE CAN'T AFFORD IT.

The Council of the Municipality of Rockdale



ON SEPTEMBER 17, YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO GIVE A SIMPLE 'YES' OR 'NO' TO THIS VERY COMPLEX QUESTION.

"At the present time, the Rockdale Municipality is being investigated by the Intergovernmental Commission, with a view to it being amalgamated with the Municipality of Hurstville and Kogarah:-

Do you favour this amalgamation proposal?"

YES
NO

Before you make up your mind...

Source 5 – A flyer criticising both major parties and encouraging voters to vote independents instead.

Why you should not vote Liberal or Labor

Ex-Councillor Smynis	Ex-Councillor McCormack	Current-Councillor Kaloudis
Liberal	Labor	Liberal
 Shane	 Shane	 Shane
<u>Confessed to</u> corrupt conduct as a Councillor	<u>ICAC finding of</u> corrupt conduct as a Councillor	<u>Convicted for</u> Threats faxed to fellow councillors
Don't trust a Labor or Liberal candidate		

The shame is from Liberal & Labor only

The Independent Commission Against Corruption found that a Liberal and a Labor Councillor, plus two developers and two "Bag Men" had acted corruptly and referred the matter to the Director of Public Prosecutions to consider laying criminal charges against them.

At the time of writing we await the criminal charges and you may be as confused as us, as to why it has been delayed.

Liberal Councillor Kaloudis (now calling himself an independent) was convicted in Court for sending threatening anonymous fax messages to three other Councillors in relation to a matter before Council. Because he was only fined, and not given a prison sentence, he was permitted to continue on Council.

How unfair to ratepayers.
He did represent 1st ward but has now moved to contest 5th ward. He has also been a Liberal Candidate for State parliament.

The high rise is from Liberal & Labor only

In this election, Labor & Liberal claim to be opposed to high rise—but all attempts to increase high-rise have come from the Labor & Liberal, combining with each other (strange "bedfellows") against the Independents.

They tried a major rezoning in Princess St against the wishes of the residents and a Commission of Inquiry. Indeed, one of the owners in Princess St and a proponent of rezoning, is the Liberal candidate for 5th Ward. Will he revive it in the new Council???

Two of the three present Liberal Councillors vote with the Labor Councillors on a regularly basis.

Rockdale had an excellent reputation under Independent control but a shameful reputation when power shited to the political parties.

Don't trust a Labor or Liberal candidate

vote for an independent-

But only the independents who don't give their preferences to a political party

Bibliography:

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The St George and Sutherland Shire Leader, 6/3/2012, “Dumped for being a mate”

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