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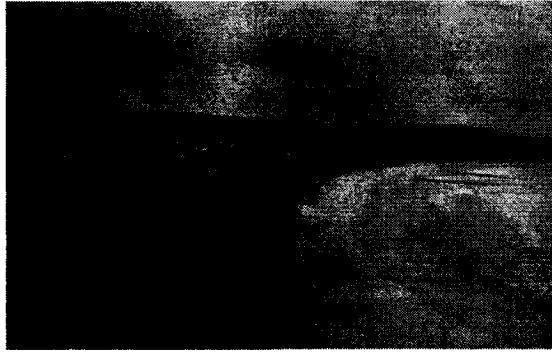
The National Library of Australia's Trove database continues to add to its riches. This month has seen the addition of *The Land* (1911-1954); *Arrow* (1916-1933), which is very good for sporting results; and *Construction and Local Government Journal* (1913-1930). The latter sounds like dry reading, but contains a wealth of information about building jobs, architects, and local councils (and their failings). The issue of 1 March 1922, for example, contains a puff for the new "Dungowan" four-storey block of flats on South Steyne. "The high rentals charged ensure that the class of people with means will find here a place which satisfies their requirements," states the accompanying caption. "The building is dignified in its architecture... and a heavy overhanging cornice lends distinction".



[<http://4.bp.blogspot.com/-Q8NdwdUpXgM/UaQ6WfMcJ4I/AAAAAAA0w/5JwlaZGSWm4/s1600/Dungowan.JPG>]

Dungowan was built for the wealthy pastoralist Leslie Sprague, and designed by the practice of Ross and Rowe in the Free Classical style. The flats were the last word in luxury, and had every modern convenience, including an electric elevator. The building continues to add its dignified presence to the eastern end of South Steyne.

O'Reilly, writing about Manly in the New South Wales Medical Gazette, urged the medical profession to consider the 'locality's sanitary importance and advantages as a convalescent station ... any professional gentleman has only to visit Manly once to become aware of the fact that it offers special inducements to those suffering from liver complaints and chronic infections of the digestive organs...' At the beginning of this century newspapers wrote of Manly as 'the Watering Place of the Nation' and the 'Brighton of the South' referring to it as place for recuperation and relaxation.



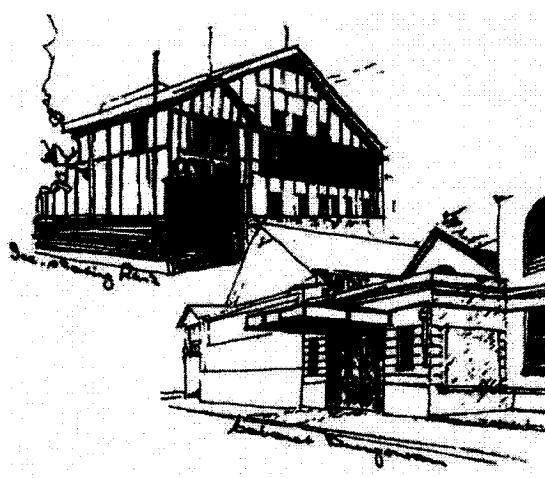
Opposite the beach stands the Royal Far West Children's Home. Family life in outback NSW was tough when Methodist pastor, Stanley Drummond, and his wife Lucy cast about for a remedy to relieve those who suffered most. Sea breezes and good food were the tonic they chose. In 1925 they brought a group of 58 children and six mothers to the coast for the first in a series of visits that became an annual event. The children they

selected were physically disabled, malnourished and debilitated by the heat, dust and flies. The Drummonds' legacy has continued. This important organisation today still provides all country children with accommodation and education while they receive medical treatment.

Local legend has it that the planting of Manly's Norfolk Island pines, Araucaria *Heterophylla*, was begun by Henry Gilbert Smith. Over 500 trees flourished for almost a century until nearly half were damaged or destroyed in the 1960s by airborne pollution from the North Head sewage outfall. Rock star and environmentalist, Peter Garrett, planted the first new pine at South Steyne in 1991.

Subsequently 85 new trees were planted to begin the reconstruction of the crescent of pines along the length of the oceanfront. The National Estate listing of the pines and promenade was celebrated together with the first stage of Manly Council's replanting programme. Manly's success in providing welcome shade in these harsh seaside conditions was to provide a model for similar planting elsewhere in Australia.

In the block between Victoria Parade and Ashburner Street stands a building named Dungowan. Wealthy pastoralist and company director Leslie Sprague built Dungowan Flats in 1919 naming them after his country property Dungowan Station, 33 kilometres east of Tamworth. The Flats offered their privileged tenants a home with 'every modern convenience' fully supplied with electricity, telephones and an 'electric elevator'.



A commercial kitchen on the ground floor serviced the Restaurant De Luxe above. In 1925 the company Dungowan Ltd converted the Paramount Picture Theatre next door into the Cabaret Dungowan where grand social occasions were celebrated. An ice skating rink was added at the end of the 1920s, creating a complex of buildings extending to the corner of Ashburner Street and South Steyne.

# Dungowan approaches its centenary on Manly beachfront

At FIRST glance, little has changed between 1921 and the present when looking at the exterior of Dungowan, the beachfront residential building at 7 South Steyne.

**John Morcombe**

less than 2 min read

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**Manly Daily**

At FIRST glance, little has changed between 1921 and the present when looking at the exterior of *Dungowan*, the beachfront residential building at 7 South Steyne.

Built in 1919 by wealthy pastoralist and company director Leslie Sprague and named after his country property, the four-storey residential flat building with its classical facade has stood guard at the southern end of the beach for almost a century.



Dungowan today. Picture: Troy Snook

Research by architect Jennifer Hill indicates it was designed by notable Sydney firm Ross and Rowe as a luxury residential building and was designed as "a cubic form reminiscent of American interwar apartments, which had evolved the typology of Florentine Renaissance palaces".

A close look at the older photo shows a poster for the movie *The Lone Star Ranger*, starring William Farnum, which screened in Sydney in early 1921.

One of the theatres at which it was screened was the Paramount Picture Theatre, which stood immediately south of *Dungowan*.

The Paramount operated from 1916 to 1923 and in 1925 was acquired by Dungowan Limited and converted into the Cabaret Dungowan, a large ballroom and function centre, although it was temporarily transformed back into a picture theatre for screenings in 1926 of *Jewelled Nights*, which starred Louise Lovely.

In 1927, the Dungowan Cabaret hosted Manly Council's Jubilee Ball. An ice skating rink was added, extending the complex of buildings to Ashburner St.

The ice rink later became a car showroom and is now the site of a nine-storey unit block.

*Dungowan* was renovated and substantially altered in 2007 and 2008, when three extra storeys were added at the rear of the building.

Daily Telegraph Article