

# Going Dutch

The camping area at North Narrabeen – today called Sydney Lakeside Holiday Park – is a very popular family holiday destination. It also has some permanent on-site cabins. Its residents choose to live and visit there because of its great location. In the dozen or so years following World War II, the campsite also accommodated a lot of families. However, for the parents at least, it was not necessarily a holiday. Those residents were migrants from Europe, mostly from The Netherlands. They were living in tents as they did not as yet have the resources to buy a home, and landlords were somewhat suspicious of these “aliens”.

Many stayed for a number of years and a strong Dutch community sprang up, formalised as the Neerlandia Society. Amongst many activities they held a regular dance at the Collaroy Surf Club.

With such a concentration of Dutch people, enterprising types started specialised businesses to cater for them. One of them was George Broekhuijsen, who lived in a small weatherboard house in Dee Why. He visited the camp regularly on a motorbike, with a sidecar packed with Dutch specialty foods and wares which he imported from the Netherlands.

As the residents gradually found



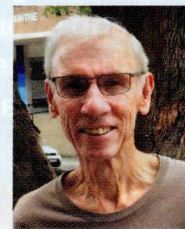
The Dutch Shop,  
645 Pittwater Road, Dee Why.

more permanent accommodation, George switched from motorised delivery to a fixed shop. He converted the front room of his house, which was located on the western side of Pittwater Road, a little south of the Pacific Parade intersection.

The Dutch Shop became a feature of Dee Why, its Dutch clientele coming from all over Sydney for various specialties, in particular for speculaas (spiced shortbread biscuits) and rolmposen (pickled raw herring wrapped around a savoury filling).

But the shop had an enormous range of items, including Delft ware, all packed into a tiny room. No chance of social distancing.

Unfortunately, The Dutch Shop has since been demolished, and the Nautilus Pacific apartment block sits on the old site. **P.**



*Richard Michell is the president of the Manly, Warringah and Pittwater Historical Society and the secretary of Friends of Dee Why Lagoon. Visit [muphs.com](http://muphs.com) and [fodyl.asn.au](http://fodyl.asn.au) respectively.*