



Federation of Netherlands Societies Ltd.



**SHORT HISTORY
of and
INFORMATION
on
NETHERLANDS SOCIETIES
in
NEW SOUTH WALES
and the
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

THE NETHERLANDS SOCIETY IN THE SUTHERLAND SHIRE

De Nederlandse Vereniging in de Sutherland Shire

This club is very active, despite the fact that, over the years, many of the original members have moved to other parts of Sydney. The dance evenings are less frequent, but many other events have taken their place. To name a few: a fishing club, klaverjasclub, picnics, bingo evenings, cruises, and many other activities, in fact, too many to name them all. All events are mentioned in a monthly magazine "The Club Post", which is readily posted to you by the Secretary.

The first gathering took place in August 1953 at the Highway Cafe in Sutherland. Its attendance was so good, the place was literally overflowing with people and enthusiasm, that this turned out to be the club's 'flying start'. However, money was scarce, but with very little in the coffers, many activities were still organised and well attended. Over the years, the financial situation improved and the club has always given generously where the need arose. For instance, in the 17th year of its existence, all the children in an orphanage in Cronulla were given a small Christmas present.

When it became obvious that many charities had the same idea at the same time of the year, the committee

decided to surprise the children on their birthdays. Also, in 1980, when the fierce bushfires in the National Park claimed the lives of five men, a considerable sum of money was made available to assist the surviving relatives. A good example of how the Dutch can become generous to others in times of need. To give another example, when a cyclone devastated Darwin in 1973, liberal assistance was given.

The Society's greatest achievement however, was the efforts it made to help raise money for the Juliana Village, a 'hamlet' for senior Dutch people in Miranda, about which more will be mentioned later. The Sutherland Club was instrumental in this fundraising action. There were the V.V.V., Vele Vlijtige Vingers (Many Industrious Fingers), who, with their arts and crafts products, collected a lot of money. However, most important of all, and the highlight for many Dutch families, were the seven 'kermissen' in 7 successive years. It was unforgettable, both for the organisers and for the visitors, and the funds raised on those evenings, lasting from 4 p.m. till 10 p.m., were generous. The last 'kermis' (Mardi Gras) in 1978 left a net sum of \$10,000 for the Village. If anything, this is a big feather in the cap of the Netherlands Society in the Sutherland Shire.