



## THE MASONIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

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### SIR JOSEPH CARRUTHERS, KCMG, BA, MA, LLB. (1857-1932)

Joseph Hector McNeil Carruthers was born at Kiama, New South Wales, on 21 December 1857. 1.

The family moved to Sydney and his boyhood home was in Goulburn Street, just above Pitt Street where there was once an orchard which young Joseph sometimes raided by climbing the fence. 2.

Carruthers Place, the rather pretentious name for the lane at the rear of the Sydney Masonic Centre, was later named in his honour.

He was educated at William Street and Fort Street Schools, as a boarder at Goulburn High School and the University of Sydney. 3.

He was admitted to practice as a solicitor on 28 June 1879 and, six months later, on 10 December, he married Louise Marion Roberts at Sydney's St James' Anglican Church. They later divorced.

He began investing in land on the western shore of Botany Bay when he became the solicitor for the Reform Land Investment and Building Co. Ltd., who were subdividing the Sans Souci estate. 4.

In 1887, he was elected to the Legislative Assembly as the member for Canterbury which then included Rockdale and Kogarah.

He had built his home, *Ellesmere*, at Sans Souci after the opening of the railway line to Hurstville on 15 October 1884 and his maiden speech to the House strongly advocated a tramway from Rockdale to Sans Souci. A steam tram service opened on 10 September 1887. It was later electrified and, in 1937, it was replaced by electric trolley buses which were, in turn, replaced by diesel buses in 1959.

A slightly built man who often suffered ill health, Carruthers was an enthusiastic and astute politician who strongly opposed the Labor Party and socialist policies.

From March 1889 to October 1891, Carruthers was Minister for Public Instruction in the Parkes Government and he enthusiastically promoted the enlargement and beautification of school property and he introduced Arbor Day at Ryde Public School, attended by the Governor, Most Wor. Bro. Lord and Lady Carrington, on 16 July 1890.

He was responsible for the introduction of technical subjects in schools and the establishment of the Sydney Technical College at Ultimo.

