

The Oaks Historical Society Inc

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Newsletter

MAY 2017

Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum

The Horse Mill from our Collection

Story by Trish Hill—images by Robyn Gill & Kevin Wintle

In March we ran a metal conservation workshop here at the Museum with the support of the Powerhouse Museum. During the course of the day objects in our collection were the subject of conversation with the conservator and the group. One of those was the Horse Mill that we have in the machinery section in the yard where it has lain idle since it was donated to us. It has since been the focus of some restoration work though perhaps on the day it was deemed to be in 'the too hard basket' because it was rusty, seized and incomplete.

The mill's use was pre-mechanisation and powered by a horse or horses, pulling a wooden shaft connected to a crown wheel, and walking in a rotation around the mill. The crown wheel connected to gears which produced the energy or power to drive belts that might operate machinery such as chaff cutters, saw mills etc. Frank Mackie and Kevin Wintle investigated the possibility of getting our mill in working condition again.

With a little time, the use of oxy acetylene torch and brute force, it freed and slowly began to move.

They transported the mill to Mackie's where the work has continued. Frank machined a couple of replacement parts on the lathe. A wooden bush was one of the parts required to support the universal yoke on the drive shaft.

Work is ongoing but the mill is now functional and supported on a base of timber. The aim is to have the mill operated manually and run a small alternator which will power LED lights. Today, this is a practical way of demonstrating the use of the mill and this could be incorporated into the Schoolies Education Program.

Despite an exhaustive search of our Mosaic catalogue, to date we have not been able to determine the origins of the mill or its donor, so if you have any knowledge of its whereabouts we would be pleased to know. ■

R. Hunt and Co of Atlas Works, Earls Colne, Essex. Maker of stationary engines.
1808 The company was established by Robert Hunt.
Later joined by his sons Thomas, Robert and Reubin.
1855 Robert Senior died and the company became T. R. and R. Hunt
1855-60 Three or four engines were made. When Thomas and Robert died it passed to Reubin who was just 21 years old when he became the sole proprietor.

Tawell joined the firm and the name changed to **Hunt and Tawell** but later reverted to **R. Hunt and Co** when he left.
1872 Manufacture of Biddell's patent Food-Preparing Machinery was taken over from Messrs. Ransomes of Ipswich.
1899 Incorporated as a Limited Company.
1900 June. Royal Agricultural Show at York. Showed chaff and turnip-cutters, pulpers, grindstones etc.
1911 Catalogue for Self-Oiling Plummer Blocks.
Source: <http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/>



Before and after images: (1) Pre-restoration in March. (2 & 3) Restored and assembled. (4) Image from the website





President's Annual Report

By Trish Hill

In the blink of an eye another successful year has past. As we head into another, I want to acknowledge and give credit to our great team of volunteers here at the Heritage Centre, each and every one, who has enabled all the aspects of our museum to run smoothly.

To our committee, thank you for your diligence and the support you have given me. Improvements during the year include a new sound system and excellent new seating in the drill hall (generously funded through Glencore Coal community grants) and it is hoped that we are successful in the coming year with plans to commence our extension.

Newly installed are two additional flagpoles which will enable us to comply with correct government protocols regarding the flying of multiple flags.

Recently we have experienced a quieter than normal period but despite our efforts it is beyond our control, generally though I feel our exposure has grown with the help of our website and social media.

Accolades aplenty to Maureen Whyte, our long standing treasurer, for her guidance in our money matters which keeps us financially sound and all of the 'behind the scenes' work that both Jim and Maureen attend to. To Wollondilly Shire Council, Mayor Judy Hannan, Community Projects Officer Emma-Jayne Gardiner, David and Pam Campbell, June Hickey

and Patrons Luke Johnson and Richard Booth, our thanks for your support.

In drawing attention to our operations, I am sure that I shall miss someone or something, so please accept my apology for missing detail, however, this doesn't mean anything more than a poor recollection by me! Thanks to Jenny Wood and Sue Davis who are always there to prompt me when the brain fails.

The Oaks Historical Society team strive to preserve and promote Wollondilly's history for the benefit of everyone. THANK YOU.

The Annual Burratorang Reunion was Sunday, 23rd and well attended. It was great to see some new faces and visitors from afar.

Our AGM is Monday evening the first of May and membership fees are due for renewal. ■



Some members on our visit to the Goulburn Water Works last year



Marketing Annual Report

By Louisa Singleman

Bus Tours Annual Report 2016 – 2017

Over the past twelve months we have had 50 bus groups enjoy the wonderful exhibitions, morning teas, talks and the DVD on the Burratorang Valley. From all the comments in the visitor's book our visitors have been very surprised, amazed and appreciative of the work, dedication and expertise of all our volunteers. Therefore we must thank Trish, Kevin, Doreen, Ben, Vivian, Bob, Maureen, Jim, Jan, Kathy, Pam McV & Pam S, Colleen, Robyn, Ray, Poppee, Noelene and Marlene who have given their time to assist with the bus tours.

From May to December we had seven groups in May, six in June, five in July, six in August, eight in September, five in October and five in November. From February this year numbers have somewhat decreased to three in February, three in March and only two in April. With this in mind we will endeavour do increase numbers by sending out more advertising literature to prospective visitors.

Marketing Annual Report

Over the past year we have been to four major events in the Wollondilly Shire to expose our museum to a wider group of

people. Firstly, in September we attended the celebration of 100 Years of the Naming of Tahmoor held at the Tahmoor Public School. This was a very successful event due to our excellent location and the generosity of those who attended this historic event.

Next came Australia Day held in the Botanic Gardens in Picton. This was a well organised day and the ceremony was excellent. One of the largest events in the Shire is The Thirlmere Steam Festival which unfortunately was rained upon which dampened the spirits somewhat. However, all was not lost as we met many interesting people from all walks of life who were interested to hear about the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum.

By the time this report goes to press we will have been to the IlluminARTE Festival in Picton for the third time. So here's hoping for good weather and a profitable day.

Over the twelve months many volunteers have turned up to give a hand and support our efforts to market the museum and the services we provide. May I thank the following volunteers for their support, Sue, Ben, Doreen, Betty, Jenny, Kevin, Ray, Robyn, Bev. I apologise if I have forgotten anyone. ■



History & Local Archive Research Annual Report

By Sue Davis

FAMILY HISTORY AND RESEARCH

We continue to expand our resources in Family History Research through contact with our various researchers with whom we are very happy to exchange information. We have also attended two conferences in the last 12 months where we held information stalls and gathered more ideas to improve our service. They were the Kiama Family History Society Conference at Kiama and the New South Wales Family History Conference held at Camden. These conferences also showcased the many avenues that may be used to research and store your family history.

From May 2016 to April 2017 we have supported 57 formal research enquiries. Researchers have not only been grateful for the information we provide but the volunteers who assist have also improved their knowledge of the area and the people who once lived in the community.

Thank you to volunteers who have assisted over the last year, including Vivian Allen, Betty Villy and Ray Gill. Thanks also to Tina Crocker, who has helped during our duty days together, and our President Trish who remains a very versatile volunteer.

LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTION

The Wollondilly Local History Archives continue to be used regularly and have proved vital resources in such areas as research when organising displays and for high school and university students completing assignments. Thank you to Pam McVey who has been helping locate topics of interest in local newspapers. The bank of recorded interviews with retired miners continues to grow and to provide an interesting insight into the mining industry. The master file used to catalogue these archives is currently being updated. ■



Acquisitions Corner

By Allen Seymour

This has been a quiet month, with just a few items. There was a WWI Australian bayonet dated 1907, a souvenir magazine from the African Lion Safari, an old black dial telephone and a sign from Ryder registered dairy at Douglas Park.

From our own store I found an order of service for the opening of the new rectory at St Lukes Church of England at The Oaks on 23 January 1972. This was mixed in with some other items and had not been processed separately. It even includes a lay-out plan of the rectory. ■



Bus Visits & Marketing Report

By Louisa Singleman

APRIL BUS TOURS

What a bleak month as far as bus tours were concerned. We only had two groups this month one being the MG Car Club who kept Vivian and Bob busy on their rostered day and the other a seniors group from Dapto. Neither of these ordered morning tea so please don't think I have forgotten our volunteers who help with the morning teas. Hopefully, things will look up in May.

MARKETING REPORT

IlluminARTE Festival—Saturday 29th April 2017 12 noon to 9pm

This should be a great day to advertise our museum and other services provided by The Oaks Historical Society. I will be setting up between 10.30am and 11am.

We are Stall No.5 in Menangle Street Picton, opposite the Wollondilly Shire Council Chambers. If you can lend a hand for a couple of hours on Saturday I would be very grateful. ■

IlluminARTE Roster

Time	Volunteers
10.30am – 1pm	Louisa, Ben & Doreen (Set up)
1pm – 3pm	???
3pm – 5pm	Debbie & Allen
5pm – 7pm	Ray & Robyn & Trish & Kevin
7pm – 9pm	Ray & Robyn & Trish & Kevin



Display Officer's Annual Report

By Doreen Lyon

The Display Team Leader is resting at the moment after the WWI work. Some of the team have created a display around the **Clutha Cup** – we seem to have a lot of objects and photos to share from this subject. It all looks great and was popular with the local community at the launch in October last year.



This year has also celebrated the installation of the **Castrol globe** sign which was a scale reproduction by Mick Fairfax of one which was on Razorback in the 50s/60s. This was a great collaboration between our volunteers and the Razorback Crankhandlers. Well done to all who worked on this project!

We have removed items from the previous mining display to provide more room for objects associated with the improvements to mining gained by unions. We have a beautiful and interesting **Nattai Bulli Miners Lodge** banner and we are trying to find more of its history, eg:



- ◆ When was it used
- ◆ Where was it used

- ◆ Why was it used
- ◆ Who painted it
- ◆ Any memories of using it

A recent 'think tank' revealed some ideas which are presently being followed up. If we can find anyone who can talk about the banner then we can make digital recordings and include them in the display. We have several objects which we want to use and will be asking people of their uses also. We are discussing ideas for the display area – should we use glass doors? How to display the objects. Hopefully these issues will be finished soon and we can commence on the display. Anyone with ideas to help is very welcome.

I have had discussions with the Macarthur Textile Group about using our **Her War** exhibition as a themed display using textiles for International Womens Day in March 2018. This is when both war displays will be taken down and new displays installed. I am open to ideas for replacements.

History Week in September has the theme of 'Pop' - by which they mean pop art I think. We are considering using a music theme for this, concentrating on a specific year – say 1965 – and using some of the old vinyls which many people still have. Combined with photos and ephemera from the period and objects from the collection we can create a pop-up display in the drill hall. Again – contact any of our team if you want to help. ■

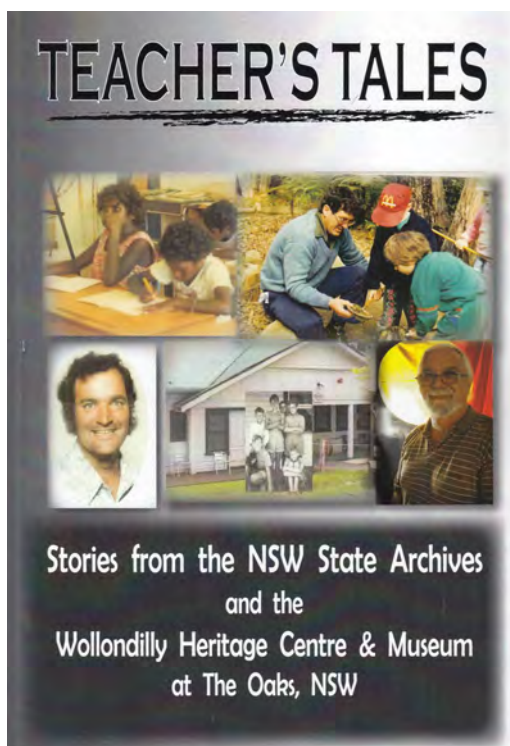
BOOK REVIEW

Stories from the NSW State Archives and the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum. Available at the centre for \$15.

Teacher's lives have always been interesting and rewarding but as this publication indicates, often quite difficult, especially in the early years. Women could not teach after they married, residences were often dilapidated, classes were very large and the job description included things like riding a horse, chopping wood for the fire, cleaning toilets and one teacher even had to row the pupils to school!

The archives in the book tell the stories of many local schools including Picton, The Oaks, Bargo, Thirlmere and Buxton.

The second half of the book includes many reminiscences from well



known locals and members of the Heritage Centre. Among them Jan Gall remembers teaching at Nattai Public School where *“every tree trunk, branch and blade of grass was coated in coal dust”* and clean children were smudged by recess. Laurette Hughes reminiscences about newly arrived migrant from Yugoslavia trying to do the normal curriculum with 30 or 40 other children without any help with English and Steve Benoit remembers children from Bosnia at Wooglemai Field Centre walking through the bush worrying about land mines!

So if you remember bonfires on Empire Day, learning sewing from the teacher's wife, using pit toilets, ink wells and blotters this book will bring back many memories. An ideal gift to add to your Mothers' Day present.—Bev Batros

INTRODUCTION TO ORAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

At the Royal Australian Historical Society History House, Sydney April 21st 2017

ATTENDED BY DOREEN LYON & ROBYN GILL

Scott McKinnon from Wollongong University started the workshop by defining and explaining some of the terms used in recording oral history.

MEMORY – this covers what people did – what they wanted to do – what they believed they wanted to do – what they believed they were doing - and what they now think they did! As defined by Alessandro Portelli. Memories are things we are interested in, selective and often reconstructed.

What we remember:

- ⇒ Rehearsed memories and stories
- ⇒ People, Places and events
- ⇒ Daily routines
- ⇒ Smells, sounds, music, tastes, images, feelings

What we don't remember

- ⇒ Dates, facts, lists, statistics
- ⇒ Genealogical details

Our memories are influenced by

- ⇒ Age of interviewee and interviewer
- ⇒ Physical and mental health
- ⇒ Environment of the interview – check room for suitability, repeated noises like loud clocks, air con etc
- ⇒ Other people such as family and friends popping in bringing tea and coffee
- ⇒ Purpose of the interview & other experiences of interviewing
- ⇒ Gender, class, cultural background

ANISE PURI, professional historian, then took over the workshop to explain how to set up an oral history project. **The first and most important point was in good planning!**

PLAN PROJECT

- ⇒ What is the topic and why are you choosing this?
- ⇒ How many people will you need to interview? Write down their names.
- ⇒ What is your initial approach? Will you use media or personal approach? Be clear as to the demographics you will need, eg for cultural diversity you can contact ethnic communities.
- ⇒ Try and capture a range of experiences.

CONTACT INTERVIEWEES

- ⇒ Explain the project so you are both clear as to the expected time to take and outcomes – you may need more than one interview.
- ⇒ Confirm by mail or email and include a copy of the consent form which needs to be filled in after the interview.
- ⇒ Keep track of all documentation so you can easily find it again!

PREPARE

- ⇒ Do your background research – it is important to know as much as possible about your topic before you begin.
- ⇒ Actively LISTEN to your interviewee when they answer your questions. This is not a conversation!
- ⇒ Practice interviewing with family or friends before you start your project-perhaps it will help if you prepare a list of topics to guide you but don't be afraid to deviate from the list if the project is stronger for it.
- ⇒ There is no need for special equipment for recording unless the recordings are to be used in radio. Smartphones, ipads

etc are all ok, the main consideration is that YOU must be familiar and comfortable with the machine. Practice, practice practice!

- ⇒ Use headphones to check background noise

RECORD

- ⇒ Find a quiet place where you are both comfortable. Provide a glass of water and tissues.
- ⇒ Start with recording the name of the person being interviewed and date and place of recording and your name
- ⇒ Try to use open ended questions to avoid the interviewee giving one word answers.
- ⇒ Try and avoid making encouraging sounds (Oh! Really?) or adding your own memories or comments while the interviewee is speaking
- ⇒ Don't worry if she stops talking and pauses to consider something or becomes upset. Give her time to adjust and if necessary stop the recording and ask if she wants to go on with the interview
- ⇒ Record sound of the room to give a sense of place

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- ⇒ Explain the consent form and request a signature
- ⇒ Write down your reflections immediately after the interview and store them with notes of the recording

PROCESS RECORDING

- ⇒ Transfer audio files to the computer and back them up
- ⇒ Label each file and save
- ⇒ Can save as MP3 or Wav files

TRANSCRIPTIONS

- ⇒ Summaries using keywords are useful
- ⇒ Transcriptions are good for outline. 'Dragon' is transcription software
- ⇒ Give interviewee a copy of any transcript or a link to a digital file and give them enough time to correct and review
- ⇒ 'Wordpress' is a useful software to set up website for interviews

STORAGE

- ⇒ Where will you store the material
- ⇒ How will it be accessed/

Advice can be found at the National Library website or www.oralhistory.org

Examples of interviews can be found on oral history website.

Anise gave an example of a project she is working on for Radio National 'Hindsight' on Australian Generations: she was interviewing people about their lives today and targeted the following: People 21 and over; Aboriginal people; migrants; older people; women; LGBTQ people; Some subjects covered were; glory boxes, going to school, motherhood, home, daily routine.

CONCLUSION The workshop was too short – 11am-1pm – to allow for much interaction and question time. It would have been improved if there had been opportunities for role playing and examples of interviews. It was quite basic information but has provided a useful list of guidelines to follow.

We both agreed a follow up workshop on ways to use the recordings in a museum situation would be useful. We were given lots of suggestions on using them on websites and archives but none in a museum situation. ■

Picton Masonic Temple Part 2

Address by Tony Morrice reflecting on the origins of Picton Lodge and its relationship with Picton

Continued from April issue

The Lodge of course wanted to own their own premises and did so after many building committees and enquiries ranging over a number of years. One Lodge member who owned the brickworks on Redbank Creek offered a block of land at a huge discount with the proviso we used his bricks in the new building. The Lodge however could smell a rat and events turned out they were right. A block of land on an Antill Estate was purchased in Colden Street at 10/- per foot. We have a 72ft frontage known as 2 and 4 Colden Street and a tender from Sid McFarlane of Braemar for £112/15/0 to erect a temple and associated rooms was accepted and the dedication and first regular meeting was held on October 12th 1935. The total cost including furnishings was £1,544/4/7.

It may have been the first new building to receive lighting from Port Kembla via a new transmission line because up to 1935 Picton's power was provided by a power station in Picton Avenue.

The temple and hall were used continuously until 1960 when extensive alterations to the building, except the temple, adding a new kitchen, ladies and gents toilets and extended the hall to the west. Prior to 1960 a room outside with a copper to heat soup and one toilet was provided. A G Miller & Sons of Tahmoor carried out the alterations with Colin Miller being the principal builder. The electrician was a young 30 year old Tony Morrice. Colin's father worked with Sid McFarlane, a fellow Mason, on this building and soon after built the Anglican Church and post office at Tahmoor. To have an all electric kitchen, septic tank and a ramp was indeed the very latest things to have in 1960.

In recent years much more attention has been given to the upkeep of our property, such as improved lighting, railings and having an emergency exit from our temple (not compulsory). We constantly work at maintaining the paint work, plumbing and updating kitchen fittings and everything associated with general upkeep because I believe regular work and upgrading for a few dollars a year keeps us away from huge capital outlays in future years if nothing is done.

Air conditioning and hooking up to sewerage system has lowered our operating costs as the air conditioning is cheaper to run than strip heaters and gas. The sewerage is cheaper than the previous pump out costs.

The ramp built in 1960 complies with modern day standards. The Grand Architect visited recently and I asked him did it meet today's standard. He said "yes". Our Secretary/Cook of that period announced in Lodge one night, "I am not going to pay the dunny man tonight." Of course no questions were asked as we act in complete harmony and peace inside the

temple and it eventually transpired that the Council contractor was supposed to call every Monday in his 40 door 1940 Ford truck. Jack suspected he wasn't, so set him a trap—a lump of cow dung dropped in the pan and Jack was right—it remained there for the next few weeks and he proudly told us all at the meeting.

All Masons meet in places called Temples and it is no secret that our Lodge meets in a temple. Our history and workings are based around King Solomon's great temple and you don't have to have a keen eye to notice all Masonic Lodges have their front porch adorned by two pillars, one either side, as was King Solomons.

We are not a secret organisation but may have some secrets and we do not ride billy goats. We do know one Mason from another—not by two winks or the touch of an ear I may add. Our meetings are only open to Masons, just the same as meetings of the clubs etc. are only open to members and by invitation. This Temple is used by the orders of Masonry and has been open on a number of occasions to the general public and I and other Masons are willing to explain what is in here or what we are about.

For instance Classics of Picton hold a *Bach in the Dark* at St Marks Anglican Church several times a year. One was due early in the year and as St Marks had been flooded I asked the organisers if they would use the temple at no cost. Everyone including me was hesitant but in the end, one hundred or so enjoyed the ambience and

the acoustics and the organisers put their funds towards the restoration of the Pioneer Graveyard. This Temple is used by other Orders of Masonry and has been opened on a number of occasions to the general public and I and other Masons have no hesitation in explaining what is in here on such open days.

The building is owned and maintained by Lodge Picton. When any Lodge property is disposed of the Grand Lodge enters the scene. The Uniting Church and a lot of organisations operate in the same way—that is, they own them until they are sold.

In the years surrounding the last war, lived a family of shopkeepers in Picton and one became the Master of Picton and was also the Mayor of the Picton Municipality at the time of its amalgamation in 1941.

Elaine Oakman was part of that family and she eventually married Dr Neil Graham and now lives in Sydney. Neil joined as a young student in 1945 and retains his membership to this day and now holds the distinction of the longest period of time on our register. Colin Miller and Ron Turner are the next longest.

The membership in those 'after war' years, was 212.

The membership in those 'after war' years, was 212.

Continued



Picton Masonic Temple Part 2 continued ...

Lodge Picton has retained its charter continuously and is still known as Lodge Picton 258 on the renamed United Grand Lodges of NSW & ACT and has held 2,011 meetings, the last few years in air conditioning comfort.

We maintain good relations with the After Care Centre, the Bush Fire Brigade and the Shire. As for the future, our Lodge will survive but our buildings may not because the Shire Council had overtures on buying us out, except they had no money.

Our hall, which we call the South is used on regular basis by outside users. It is licenced to seat 140 persons and complies with all relevant regulations. People with dire needs are relieved of the rent but this hasn't always been the case.

We rent the hall for two reasons—we believe we should be publically minded and the income helps us to pay the bills.

In 1938 a person wanting to rent the hall to raise funds for the *HMAS Sydney* fund was told the hall was not a public hall and he should try the Municipal Hall, and they also said, "no free rent", so he came back here and by paying 2/6 pence for electricity usage, he got the hall.

As a conclusion I will speak a little on four members who played an important part in our time and of course there were many others. Mr McGuiggen, the Municipality's first Mayor, was one of our first members. Hazel and I are good friends with his grandson and family who now live in Mudgee.

Mr Bunker, headmaster of Picton Public School, where Hazel, Laurie Emmett and Ken Q attended, was uncle to Colin Harmwell who belonged to Lodge Fairfield and now lives in Picton.

Mr Peter Webeck arrived in Picton as a young man with a young family and set about building a new chemist shop which he ran for many years. Peter, a generous man, gave me a cheque for £50 and said he wanted to update the lighting to the new fluoro lamps. The fitting of the new triphosphorous white tubes a few years ago cost more than the original fittings.

Peter was a councillor for many years and played a dominant role in introducing industry to the shire.

Mr Bob Lindsay came to Picton as a young man to work in local government and rose to be Shire Clerk before becoming the first Deputy and the Chief County Clerk of

the newly formed Nepean River County Council whose headquarters were here. Bob was our treasurer for many years and perhaps was the only person amongst us that knew the difference between a fixed rate and variable rate loan because we wanted a loan for the 1960s extension. He chose the variable rate from the CBC, now NAB, over the GL fixed rate. The GL was a lower rate but cost more over the loan period.

Of course things have to be brought up to date so after 56 years both ladies and men's toilets have been completely refurbished to a fine standard. The air conditioning was also completely brought up to date. Both of these projects have been ably organised by Michael Norris who knows how to handle tenders and bureaucrats. ■

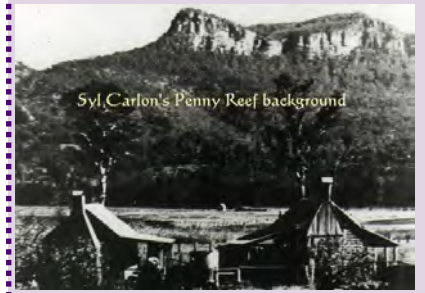


Tony wearing his Mason apron on Apron Strings Day, 21st March 2011 (Seniors Week)

Note: At the opening of his address Tony Morrice tabled our 2011 Apron Strings book for anyone to look through. Tony and other Masons featured in the book. After his address we adjourned to the hall for dinner where traditional toasts were made, including a toast to our Queen. It was an honour to be invited on this occasion.

Facts: 10 out of 26 Australian Prime Ministers were Freemasons. In 1945 membership to Freemason Lodges peaked at close to 400,000. In 2013 there were dramatic decreases in the number of freemasons in Australia and were estimated at 88,000 members.

Camden News, 14th October, 1897
Courtesy of Trove



Burraborang

We have told of creature comforts, and how excellent you'll fare,
But there's one thing most particular we'd mention while you're here,
Start early one fine morning and drive to Burraborang,
Where the mountain road stands up on end and the edges overhang,
Where away down underneath you in the valley far below,
Twixt the level plots of tillage you may watch the river flow,
Past the seeming toy farm-houses, and I guess twould not be hard,
To drop a stone on one of them, or jump down in the yard,
And before the curving chasms, the slopes of timber rise,
Against a sombre background that mounteth towards the skies,
When your first surprised sensation and all dizziness is past,
You'll stay for to admire the scene and wish the day might last,
And if the day's transparent and serene and doesn't rain,
And if you're fond of nature's grandeur, why you'll want to come again.
You may go to foreign countries if you please and far from home,
But Burraborang will charm you still wherever you may roam.

From the visitor's book of
The Oaks Sanatorium Hotel

"Mothers to the Australian Character"

Extract from *The Kerry Girls—Emigration and the Earl Grey [Famine Orphan] Scheme* by Kay Moloney Caball

Permission granted to use these stories

Description on back cover—As part of the controversial Earl Grey Scheme, this is the true story of the Kerry girls who were shipped to Australia from the four Kerry Workhouses of Dingle, Kenmare, Killarney and Listowel in 1849 and 1850. Leaving behind scenes of destitution and misery, the girls, some of whom spoke only Irish, set off to the other side of the world without any idea of what lay ahead. This book tells of their 'selection' and their transportation to New South Wales and Adelaide, their subsequent apprenticeship, and finally of their marriage and attempts to rebuild a life far from home.

[Earl Grey was the principal architect, Secretary of State of the Colonies at the time of the Great Irish Famine and The Earl Grey was one of the first ships to make the voyage. Over 4,000 adolescent female orphans emigrated from Irish workhouses to the colonies under the scheme. 105 young women journeyed south to Yass.]

Under the chapter—WORKING LIFE IN AUSTRALIA

Mary Brandon

Mary Brandon was in Listowel Workhouse, and on her departure for Australia, her address was given as Newtownsandies. However, on arrival she herself gave her address in Ireland as Ballylongford. She was aged 16, could read and write and her parents, Thomas and Mary Anne were 'both dead'. While there are a number of Brandon families in the Tarmons and Ballylongford area, despite an extensive trawl through baptismal records in both Ballylongford and Newtownsandies, County Kerry, from 1829 to 1834, I would not trace Mary's parents or a baptismal certificate.



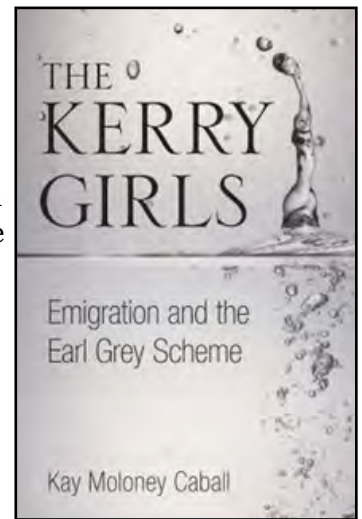
Mary was again one of the lucky girls who departed on the *Thomas Arbuthnot* from Plymouth on 28 October 1849, arriving in Port Jackson on 3 February 1850. During the voyage, she and the other girls from Listowel and Dingle were under the supervision and care of Surgeon Superintendent Charles Strutt. She was even luckier to be one of the girls who travelled with Surgeon Strutt on the journey to Yass, and he carefully arranged placements for his charges at locations along the way. However, they were only on the road a couple of days when disaster struck. Two of the drays crashed into each other and in the accident, Mary Brandon and

Mary Conway (both Listowel girls) were thrown off and the wheel went over their legs. Strutt had no option but to leave the girls behind in Camden, but not before he put them in the care of an Italian priest—Fr Rogers.

Mary's great-great-grandson Neal W. Chiddy relates:

After Mary Brandon and Mary Conway were left behind at Camden in the care of Revd Ruggiero Emanuel or as his name had been anglicised, Father Rogers, both girls were in a state of shock and disbelief at their predicament. After travelling so far and their final destination only a few weeks away, the thought of losing the only friends and people they knew was devastating. True to his word Father Rogers tried his best to calm and settle them down, finding accommodation and care for them both. He visited them regularly and when they were well enough he found positions of employment for them. Mary Conway was in service for a settler in Appin some twenty odd miles from Camden. Mary Brandon's leg had not quite healed so he found a position for her in Camden.

Mary Conway settled in well at Appin and only visited Camden infrequently, she eventually married her settler and they moved from Appin and settled in Wagga Wagga district. On Sunday 28 of April Dr Strutt visited Mary [Brandon] at Camden. He was returning to Sydney after seeing all his girls were happy and settled in their new homes in the vast Yass district. He found Mary very unhappy; she completely broke down when she first saw him. When he had calmed her down and they had spoken for some time he realised he couldn't leave her without trying to help her. She had told him she wanted to travel to Yass to be with people she knew. He decided that he would travel to Campbelltown and speak with Fr Rogers. A few weeks later Mary, in company with Fr Rogers, was on her way into the Burragorang Valley where she was put into service with an Irish family, Charles and Mary Collins. Both had been convicted to seven years' transportation; Charles in 1835 and Mary [nee Donovan] at Tipperary.



Continued next month.....

Reminders, News & Info

WEEKEND ROSTER

MAY	
Saturday, 6	Robyn & Ray
Sunday, 7	Maria & Betty
Saturday, 13	Working Bee
Sunday, 14	Bob & Vivian
Saturday, 20	Jan & Jenny
Sunday, 21	Allen & Debbie
Saturday, 27	Phil & Laurette
Sunday, 28	Maria & Betty

SUPPER ROSTER

May AGM	Louisa & Marie
June	Doreen & Ben
July	Maureen & Jim
August	Aileen & Pam
September	Shirley & Trish
October	Vivian & Pam McV
November	Jenny & Pacita
December	Please bring a plate

VALLEY OF WEALTH and TEACHERS TALES

books have been reprinted

Ideal gifts for Mothers Day & Fathers Day

Special invitation to the volunteers of the Sydney Volunteer Network to celebrate

Volunteer Week 8-14 May 2017

Free tickets and guided tours to the Art Gallery of NSW, Australian Museum etc.

<https://national-volunteer-week-2017.eventbrite.com.au>

Continuation of the story

Agriculture in The Oaks Part 2

Will appear in next months issue

TRUCKIES REUNION

Saturday, 6 May 2017— Family Day BBQ

Doors open at 10am

Open to anyone who was involved in the transportation of Burragorang Coal—owner drivers, subbies, company drivers, mechanics, loader drivers, supervisors etc.

Entry fee is \$3 ■ BBQ \$5 (sausage or steak sandwich/drink). Alcoholic beverages are not available however participants are welcome to provide their own drinks. Contact Ian Welsh on 0403 823 934 or Wollondilly Museum.

See poster on our website for more information

WOLLONGONG BUS TOUR

Wednesday, 10 May 2017— Illawarra Museum

Bus departs from the museum at 9am

Campbelltown Steam & Machinery Museum



“Oil, Steam &
Kerosene”

FAMILY FUN

20th & 21st May 2017

9.00am to 3.30pm

‘Great Value! - Step back in time’

Bargain Rates *Adults \$12 * Children \$6 * Family of 4 only \$28

‘A great day out for the whole family’

Vintage Machinery Hauled Rides

Steam Machinery

Ploughing, Blacksmithing

Vintage Oil Engines

Vintage Cars & Military Vehicles

And much, much more

*Burgers * Pies * Ice Creams * Drinks*

Stalls

Free BBQ Facilities

86 Menangle Road,
Menangle Park, NSW 2563

Email: csmm.info@gmail.com

Phone: 0417 215 513

See our website: www.csmm.com.au

Later Open day is Oct 14th & 15th 2017

MONTHLY MEETINGS: The Oaks Historical Society Inc. holds its meetings on the first Monday of each month (except January) at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum, 43 Edward St. The Oaks starting at 7.00pm. Upcoming meetings are 5 June & 3 July 2017. Patrons are Luke Johnson and Richard Booth. The Oaks Historical Society Inc. takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the articles, papers or reviews that appear in this newsletter. The statements made or opinions expressed are not necessarily those of The Oaks Historical Society Inc. Copies of the minutes are available.



ANZAC service at Thirlmere Memorial Park on Sunday, 23 April 2017

If undelivered, please return to:-
The Oaks Historical Society Inc.
P O Box 6016 The Oaks NSW 2570



HAPPY MOTHERS DAY for Sunday 14 May

**MEMBERSHIP FEES FOR 2017 /18
ARE NOW DUE**

\$10 for single ◆ \$18 for family

Plus \$10 postage for newsletter

EMAILED newsletters are postage FREE