



## ***Bathurst District Historical Society Inc.***

### **MEMBER'S NEWSLETTER**

**No 105**  
**Price \$3.00**

**January – March 2016**  
**Free to Members of the Society**

#### **FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

Welcome to Member's newsletter number 105 for the time period January to March. I trust that everyone enjoyed the Christmas and New Year festivities including the Society's Christmas Party, they certainly seem to come around very quickly. (Carol Churches and Fran Hickson below.) As you can see later in this newsletter there are plenty of activities on for the next few months.



The Society's new president, Samantha Friend, is settling in well with her new and busy routine. She is busy working on the programme for 'Museum Open Day' which will occur on 30th April (Saturday). The Museum will be open from 10am till 4pm with free admission, guided tours of the Museum, show bags, giveaways, specials in the Museum Bookshop, guided walks of both William and George Streets and a self-guided tour of the Memorials and Monuments of Kings Parade, including an opportunity to see inside the War Memorial Carillon. Charges will apply for the Carillon. So be sure to put this event in your diary and support your Society. Also bring your family and friends and enjoy a great day out!

We are after someone to train up to assist in doing house reports for the Society. This would involve an investigative streak, an organised mind and preferably some local knowledge. Call in and see Samantha Friend initially.



The decision by the Committee to change the venue for the Society's Monthly Musters (guest speakers) has proved to be most beneficial. The larger venue was necessary to accommodate the increased numbers attending these monthly events. Seen below left, is part of the crowd of members and others at the talk by Mark Gordon titled "A Leap of Faith - The Pioneers of Teapot Swamp and Moorilda." The book of the same title was written by Sandra Retallack of Newbridge but as she was not available till later in the evening Mark Gordon, who edited the book and had relations in the area, stood in very capably to tell some of the stories of the Teapot Swamp/Moorilda area. Both Mark and Sandra are descended from David Gordon of Poor Man's Hollow and Alexander Crilly.

Just a reminder for members of the opening times of the Bathurst District Historical Society Museum and Bookshop in Russell Street are now – Tuesday to Friday 10am - 4pm and Saturday and Sunday 11am - 2pm. The Old Government Cottage Museum and Colonial Garden at 16 Stanley Street are open every Sunday from 12 noon to 4pm.



For those members who have not visited 'Old Government Cottage' since last October should go down down and see the new interpretive photographic display that has been erected there.

The display tells the story of Bathurst's early history from the Wiradjuri caretakers to the crossing of the Blue Mountains, Oxley's visit to find a route and see what was on the other side of the mountains, Cox's Road, Bathurst convict settlement through to the history behind 'Old Government Cottage'.

An auto-change video screen has been installed to show a series of early photographs of Bathurst, some of which were featured in the successful Snapshots











On Sunday evening, 1st November, 2015, the marchers from 2015 Coe-ee march reenactment reached Yetholme around 1600hrs. As the crowd gathered in expectation you could hear in the distance the “Coe-ee” call, just as their forebears had done 100 year ago. As they approached the village they still set a cracking pace, even after marching from Bathurst via Tarana that day.

When they arrived at Yetholme they were welcomed by a gathering of local residents and others, as was the case 100 year ago. Norm Blomfield, President of the Yetholme Progress Association and Ian North, Deputy Mayor of Bathurst Regional Council formally welcomed them to Yetholme and thanked them for their efforts in this reenactment and encouraged them on their journey to Sydney. The Master of Ceremonies, Bruce Irvine said “this was a big event for Yetholme 100 years ago as it is today”.

The marchers assembled in front of the Yetholme War Memorial near the original school house as a plaque to commemorate the centenary of the recruitment marches that passed through Yetholme during World War 1 was unveiled. The marchers expelled loud “Coo-ee” in recognition of the welcome and words of encouragement and support.

Following this they were provided dinner and somewhere to rest the night before continuing their journey to Sydney.

*Lest we forget*

[illegible]

## “OLD PROPERTIES” BUS TRIP

(From Chris Stewart) On Saturday 21st November last year Jeff McSpedden, Chris Stewart and Betty Beasley conducted yet another popular Bathurst District Historical Society bus tour. They visited historic rural properties and Yuranigh's grave – a very interesting site. The properties included were “Amaroo”, “Geneffe” and “Gamboola”.



We had morning tea was at Borenore Caves picnic area, where a delicious morning tea with fresh billy tea was served up. A highlight was a surprise

birthday cake for Carol Whyte, long time tour supporter and volunteer with BDHS.

We criss-crossed our way around the country side and even tasted the delights of a local Molong ice cream shop. Some information of the locations follow, not necessarily in order.

We visited Amaroo which is situated on Gundagai Road at Junee. The 'Amaroo' story began when James Keenan arrived in 1825, aged 25. The area around Amaroo was not supposed to be settled in 1848.



The origins and age of this station seem to be a mystery but 12,000 acres of 'The Cheeseman's Creek' run was owned by Harry Cheeseman and later by Fergus Hawthorne. It was acquired by James Keenan in 1849, the same man who acquired the first freehold sections of that block in 1858. After James's death in 1863 the property was taken over by his wife. She acquired more land between 1876 and 1890. In 1882, the property was divided between James Keenan's two sons, Richard and Thomas, the latter naming his portion 'Amaroo'.



In 1885 the railway arrived the same year and he constructed a five roomed home and after the present woolshed was built. After becoming bankrupt the property was finally sold in 1896 to Thomas McMahon. Today it is owned by the Pratten family.

## Yuranigh's Grave

Along with two other aboriginals, Yuranigh left with Surveyor Thomas Mitchell on 5th September, 1845.





Societies.

On the Sunday the delegates of the Federation of Australian Historical Societies joined with Society members and guests to visit the old gold mining township of Hill End and Tambaroora.



One soon realises how much work has gone on in Hill End since the gold was first found in mid 1851 though the area took on a whole new transformation with the gold that was found there in the early 1870s. Our first host was Kerri Burns who fortunately was able to keep us informed despite a back injury.

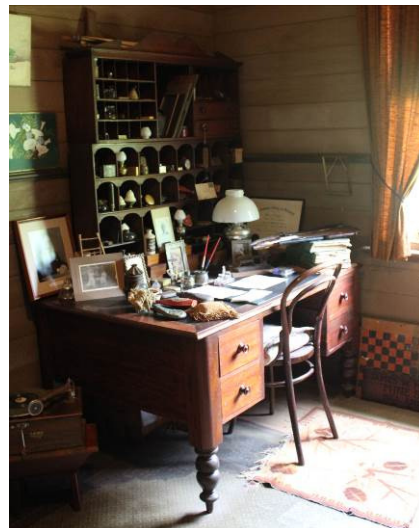
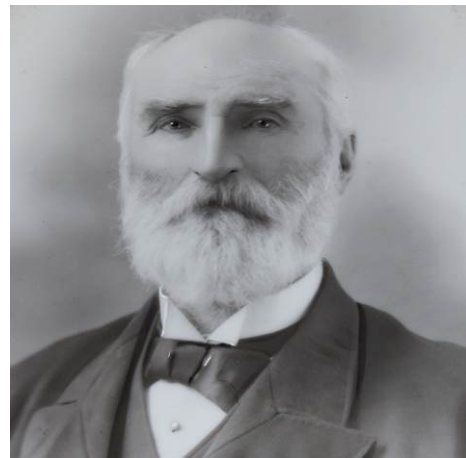


One special stop was at St Paul's church (above) in Tambaroora Street which had been completed in 1872 when the township had a population of some 8000. Despite costing £1500 it has never had its future extensions completed. A thistle representing the Scottish Presbyterians is behind the pulpit along with grapes representing Jesus's blood.

Rev. Rodger McKinnon was appointed the first resident minister after the church was completed and he was still in Hill End in mid-1875, whilst many others were leaving. Like all early churches the clergy and congregation used candles and oil lamps which are still in situ and are used today with two "lamp light services" conducted annually, one at Easter time and the other at Christmas.



Whilst Kerri took one group on a tour of the town Sandra Thompson showed ten people at a time through Craigmoor Historic House, an impressive double storey A-frame style house built by James Marshall (below) in 1878. It was to emulate a Scottish Hunting Lodge from his homeland.



Much of the Marshall house is still as it was used before the last family left.

What remains shows how they lived and some of the pastimes that people enjoyed from yesteryear.



An enjoyable lunch was served at the Hill End Ranch on the corner of Thomas and High Streets followed by a visit to Ackerman's Miners Cottage and gardens (below) which is almost just as it was in the 1870's.



Michael Ackermann built his cottage down from his brother-in-law Johann Krohmann. Building materials were mostly of mud and slab timber with many of the miner's huts added onto as the family grew larger. There were a great number of interesting photos of the families over the years. We then said farewell to Kerri and hello to Daphne Shead, local Hill End author and researcher who has recently published another book.



We visited the National Parks Visitor Centre, which is in the 1873 original hospital, before Daphne took us to visit the remains of the Cornish quartz roasting pits (above in 1977) and stamper battery shed which are comparatively close to Hill End.



The roasting pits were built from stone quarried close by with building commencing in 1854. The

complex was completed the following year by which time the stamper battery was operational and miners huts and work buildings along with a dam had been constructed for both the mine and other local miners to use. It, along with a Mine Managers hut, was constructed by the Colonial Gold Company and operated from 1855. Numbers of Cornish miners were employed to build and operate the crushing plant. Soon the quartz containing gold was barrowed into the pits to 'soften' it prior to crushing. The pits were operated by some thirty men.

A reliable water reservoir was essential as water was required to fill up the boiler, loosen the crushed ore in the twelve head stamper battery, saturate each load of roasted ore and to wash the quartz and any gold along the Long Toms.

The large Cornish boiler used to drive the machinery had its smoke and steam directed along the stone lined flue which ran along up the slope of the hill and is still evident. A sixteen horsepower engine powered the site.



Just one of the double kilns are seen above, these being constructed into the hillside. Miners would throw in the quartz from their horse-drawn carts along with alternating tiers of firewood. The usual practice was to fire the pits alternately i.e. one being loaded and fired as the other cooled down after calcination. The latter was then shovelled into railed hand-carts and probably doused in water to further cool it before it was sent the short distance to the battery, thus maintaining a more continuous load to the stamper.



Records show that the plant room (above) could crush between twelve to eighteen tons of quartz each twenty four hours (imagine sleeping nearby). After



crushing in the stampers water took the now powered quartz slush along a sequence of four sluice troughs called Long Toms with the slats collecting the heavier gold ore. The lighter material just flowed through before draining into the nearby creek.

It seems that the Colonial Gold Company mainly received quartz from their own Dirt Holes mine and ore from Mr. S.B. Sergeant, a solicitor from Bathurst and himself a Cornishman. He was operating his recently acquired Cornish Quartz Vein Mine. Maybe there were small consignments from other local mines as well.

With poor gold yields, few stampings and bad management the company folded within a year. Other miners didn't find what they expected and Sergeant's Cornish Quartz Vein Mine sent less than 90 tons to be 'roasted' and stamped. In Britain the British Colonial Company folded the following year, investors looking elsewhere to put their money.

The site was abandoned until the late 1960s when Hill End was gazetted as an historic site under the National Parks and Wildlife Act in 1967.

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## HISTORY COLUMNS



Alan McRae each week supplies a researched history column to both the Western Advocate (which comes out each Tuesday) and the Bathurst City Life weekly newspaper. Be sure you get your issue each week if you are interested in Bathurst and District history.

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## EARLY BATHURST IMPORTERS

This photo of Preen and Company in lower William Street in the Kite Building was taken in 1910, this building is still there today. These buildings were known as the Britannia Buildings. Preen & Co sold a large range of groceries, home furnishings and

ironmongery, though today we call the latter hardware. A couple of doors down the street Mr. T. Carroll was operating his saddlery business making saddles and bridles to order. He displayed a range of horse rugs, whips, various harnesses and other leatherwear.

P R E E N   &   S M I T H,

[Late H. J. KELK],

Grocers, Tea Dealers, and Ironmongers,  
WILLIAM STREET, BATHURST.  
GRAND VALUE IN TEAS!

Agents for the Willcox and Gibbs and the No. 7 Sewing Machines.  
GALVANIZED AND HOOP IRON, PENCING WIRE, &c., at the Lowest Cash Prices.

A horsedrawn cart belong to Preen & Co is waiting out the front, this being used to make home deliveries around Bathurst, Kelso and Eglinton. The business had two other horsedrawn vehicles, one much larger to collect freight and goods from the Bathurst Railway Yards. A stable and buggy shed was located at the rear of the premises.



Initially Preen & Smith was operating as early as 1886 when they bought out Mr. H.J. Kelk's business after he decided to retire in the mid 1880s, though the Country Business Directory has Preen & Co in 1901. It is also listed in 1906, 1909 and 1913 though nothing is listed in 1929.

**PREEN AND SMITH,  
IMPORTERS,  
Grocers, and Furnishing  
IRONMONGERS.**

**Crockery, Glassware, and Novelties, Paints,  
Oils, and Paperhangings. Fencing Wire,  
Netting, and Galvanized Iron.**

Lowest Prices for Best Quality obtainable at

**PREEN & SMITH'S,  
BRITANNIA BUILDINGS  
WILLIAM STREET.**

A typical advertisement from 1886 for Preen and Smith, above, gives an indication as to what the business had to sell. In 1889 they advertised



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**By Alan McRae**



2016 marks the 50th anniversary of the change to decimal currency in Australia on Monday, the 14th February, 1966. Fifty years ago the Australian Government announced their intention to the nation that they intended to go decimal and transform our 140 year old system which we had inherited off British – the pounds, shilling and pence and replace them with the ‘easier’ decimal currency system.

I lived in Uralla, near Armidale, when we changed over. My father had just paid £1079 for his new Ford Falcon and our family had spent weeks and weekends going over changeover plans as well as 'double pricing' all our stock in our store i.e. the 'old price' and the 'new decimal price' on the same price ticket, thus all stock was marked in pounds, shilling and pence as well as dollars and cents.

I recall that it was not just all the stock that had to be changed, and there was massive amounts of that, but

also our tills had to be either converted or renewed, all our scales had to be converted in both the grocery, produce and hardware sections. Much of the stock was changed from pints and gallons to litres over the months. All our petrol and oil measuring pumps had to be changed also and it was quite a cost.

With the radio advertising surrounding the changeover we kids soon learnt the decimal jingles off by heart which was sung to the tune of ‘Click go the Shears’ – “In come the dollars, in come the cents, to replace the pounds, the shilling and the pence, so be prepared when the money starts to mix on the 14th of February 1966”. People began to organise their notes to be exchanged such as the one pound below.



“Then there was the other rhyme we had to learn to convert the money – “One and two remain the same, the only difference is the name, three to nine lose one it’s true and for the rest you take off two.”

My parents were amazed at how smoothly it had run really, I recall Dad especially remarking on it several times over the following weeks. I suppose I was too, but didn't really know what to expect. In fact years later, around 1986 or 1987, he was recalling how pleased he was with the changeover.



We had new dollar notes as well as silver and copper coins in our large shop safe and we carried the white bags of cash down the main street of Uralla to our store the day before, it was a Sunday. I recall several bank staff working at the bank when we arrived to collect it, fancy a bank working on a Sunday. I was told I was not to tell anyone we had it in the safe at the time until after the next day. I had come home from boarding school in Armidale for the weekend and stayed an extra two days to help out.

Older Australian notes, some going back maybe fifty years and hoarded here and there saw the light of day for the first time in many years. Some of the first



early overprinted colonial banknotes were handed in.



Over those two days there were a few queries with the change but I knew all the conversion charts off by heart as a fair bit of my January holidays was spent putting on the 'new decimal price'. There was still Miss Leamon, a retired schoolteacher, who didn't think that things were quite right with a penny now being worth a cent, 12 pennies made a shilling, but a shilling was only worth 10 cents, that meant 2 cents were lost - the Government must be up to something!

I remember that one customer who usually paid in gold sovereigns reckoned that the new decimal notes looked like 'play money', though there were numbers of comments like that. And she was not the only one, some kept bags of coins under the bed, though many later exchanged them. If they had kept the good quality pre-decimal they would have made money selling to collectors in the late 1970s and 1980s when old Australian coins were worth real money.



Apparently there was quite a line-up at the Uralla banks to withdraw some of the 'new currency.'

Australia's Note Printing Branch and the Royal Australian Mint had been very busy printing notes and striking the new decimal coins. The Commonwealth Treasury distributed some \$300 million to the various banks around Australia at the time. Later as I learnt more about coin collecting I realised that all the effort to produce so much coinage that the Melbourne and Perth Mints also struck our coins with the Royal Mint in London also assisting in the mammoth task.

The initial decision to possibly change to the new

decimal currency system began some seven years earlier in 1959 when the Commonwealth Government instituted a committee, known as the Decimal Currency Committee, to look into a change in our nation's currency. This committee prepared a report which they delivered in Canberra in August the following year. Basically the committee was unanimous that there was no doubt that a change to the decimal currency system would be a saving in both effort as well as time and that this would far outweigh the inconvenience of the changeover as well as what the conversion costs would be. There was much debate and discussion about how things would go.

Finally on 7th April, 1963, the then Treasurer Harold Holt, later to be the Prime Minister (who drowned off Victoria), finally told the media and the nation that it had been decided to change to decimal currency at the earliest possible date. I was in 6th Class at Uralla Public School at the time with the Assistant Head Master Mr. Barney Lennon as my teacher.

I recall the hullabaloo about what the new decimal coins would be called, in fact we talked about it in class. The 'Royal' had been suggested though I don't recall having an opinion one way or the other though I remember Mum wasn't that concerned, she was a fan and admired greatly Queen Elizabeth II.

I remember that Mum was also pleased with the new effigy of the Queen and proceeded to save all the round fifty cent pieces that she found in a new and shiny state as it portrayed the largest effigy of the monarch.

I know we all had to come up with a name for it in class and mine was 'silver', not very imaginative was it. Other names I have since read in newspapers of the time were ideas such as cobber, bunyip, jumbuck and bonza, though I expect there were names that couldn't be printed. It seems that the Government heeded what silly names were being bandied about and went for 'dollars and cents.'



I recall the signs, or posters they probably were, around the store, featuring 'Dollar Bill' a cartoon character created for the government to help with the changeover (probably to save the politicians doing it.)

So what do you remember of the changeover? Did you

hoard any one and two dollar notes when they were demonetized? If so the notes are virtually worthless if you collected them out of circulation!



## JUST AN OLD CLOCK OR IS IT



Over the last year we have been making a number of changes at 'Old Government Cottage' to stock take the Society's collection and get it onto the Society's new collection software 'Mosaic' and making labels for the collection down there.

Whilst it has seen better days the timing instrument above is an American tower chiming 8 day 30 hour clock without any alarms. The marine lever time piece was made by Jerome & Company of New Haven in Connecticut, U.S.A., who boasted about their double bushed movements. The company, founded in 1853, went broke but was bought out by New Haven Clocks who owned a very large factory making massed produced bearings. Later their workmen mounted their movements in the 'Jerome & Company' clock cases with their Roman numeral clock face. This clock was manufactured in the 1860s with the company offering a 30 day guarantee to their customers. The floral painting was presumably added by the owner at some time.

The New Haven Clock Company was the first such business to mass-produce brass clock movements in America. The business came about after discussions with the Jerome Manufacturing Company to provide clock movements. The latter at the time was the largest clockmaker in the world. However things did not go well and when the Jerome Manufacturing Company went into bankruptcy in 1856, the New Haven Clock Company made enquiries into purchasing the business, which it did.

Fortunately the Jerome brand had enjoyed an excellent reputation for quality and the new owner soon found out that there was a network of clock businesses who were prepared to continue selling products similar to what they had been supplied

with. Not only were American companies happy to continue but others were in England also. The company went on to sell a wide range of clocks into the 1900s.

Popular were their mantel clocks with their rosewood veneer cases and their double-dial calendar clocks designed for walls and shelves. Oak and rich walnut cases later proved popular too. The business finally closed down in 1960.

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**BRUNSWICK**      **BLACK**  
**BOTTLE**

This crude darkish green glass bottle once contained a fast drying varnish that was black in colour. It was known as “Magic Brunswick Black” which was manufactured from the 1860s to early 1900. It has a shear top and would have been sealed with a cork that was most likely tied on to prevent spillage. The contents tended to dry out fairly quickly but could be reconstituted by heating and adding some turpentine. Each has the embossed name

"MAGIC" AND "BRUNSWICK BLACK".

## GENERAL INFORMATION

*Bathurst District Historical Society Inc.*

*Museum and Archives:*

East Wing, Bathurst Court House, Russell Street.

P.O. Box 237, Bathurst NSW 2795

Phone: (02) 63308455 (Museum Open Hours)

*Email:* [info@bathursthistory.org.au](mailto:info@bathursthistory.org.au)

Website: [www.bathursthistory.org.au](http://www.bathursthistory.org.au)

Annual Membership Subscription (due July 1st)

\$20 single and \$32 family

Corporate rate on request

Once only joining fee of \$25

*Museum and Bookshop Hours:*

Tuesday to Friday 10am – 4pm.

Saturday & Sunday 11am-2pm

*Archives Hours:*

Tuesday 10.30am-12.30pm; 1.30-3.30pm

Subject to volunteers availability.

*Old Government Cottage and Bicentennial Garden, 16 Stanley St., Hours:*

Open each Sunday 12 noon to 4pm.

Information on the Society, as well as membership application forms, are available at the front desk during opening hours.

**Alan McRae FAIHA Newsletter Editor**