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MACLEAY RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER, 2016

Number 17

President's Report

As this is the final Newsletter for the year, I thought it would be appropriate to thank all our hard working volunteers for their commitment and making this another successful year for our Society. We are achieving record attendances for some months and also ran some education programmes. On several occasions, visitors have complimented us, saying ours is the best museum they've seen.

The Macleay was successful in receiving several awards at the recent 2016 Royal Australian Historical Society Conference in Wollongong. Dianne Nolan and Noeline Kyle of our Society won an Arts NSW Cultural Grant to publish their book *The Macleay Valley – A Collection of Early Australian Historical Studies*. This project is supported by Art NSW's Cultural Grants Program, a devolved program administered by the Royal Australian Historical Society on behalf of the NSW Government. I was awarded an Achievement Award, whilst the Willawarrin Hall Committee was also awarded an Arts NSW Cultural Grant to publish *The History of Willawarrin Community Hall*.

We lost a couple of volunteers along the way due to changes in people's circumstances, however we did pick up several new volunteers. We wish Leah and Russell well in their new situations and welcome Bruce, Barbara, Ken and Peter.

Several more local schools participated in our Education Programmes during the past few months. Lee also had a booking from a home schooling group. Lee wrote "I have also shared the wonderful thank you cards I received from St Josephs with many of the volunteers who helped on the day and written replies to the children. I will bring them in next week. I am impressed that the home schoolers have found out about the program. Thumbs up to us." Lee has now assembled a number of dedicated volunteers to assist in the

Education Programmes in addition to our Museum volunteers who help out. We have been able to reinvest some of the funds from these programmes in buying shade covering to ensure safety and comfort for our children and volunteers.

Garry Munday brought up the centenary of the coming of the railway to Kempsey which will be in November 2017. Kempsey Shire Council offered us their Committee Room for a meeting and Mayor Liz Campbell offered to chair a meeting to gauge public support for a commemorative event. The meeting was poorly attended and it would appear there is no public support for this. Thanks to Mayor Liz Campbell and Kempsey Shire Council for assisting us with the public meeting.

Speaking engagements during the past few months included Dianne and myself at Kempsey Probus Club, and Garry and Sue at Cedar Place.

Thanks to Noeline for all the work she has put in for grants. At the time of writing we are awaiting results of a further three Grant Applications.

During October, we had visits from members of Port

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Macquarie Uniting Church, and also the Wauchope District Historical Society on another weekend. Our visitors had a guided tour and we put out a morning tea for them on arrival in the courtyard. All remarked that the morning tea was more than they expected and the cottage garden drew many favourable comments and was closely inspected by more than a few of them. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped out with this and greeted our guests, see the Visitors Book for their favourable comments. We have another visit booked in for Probus Port Macquarie early next year.

On a sadder note, we lost former volunteer Doug Small during September. During the memorial service, mention was made of how proud Doug was to show visitors the wooden cab of our Leyland truck which his students had built during his time at TAFE.

Phil Lee
President



President Phil Lee receives 2016 RAHS Achievements Award

Research Report

Research requests over the past three months have kept us busy. Below are some of the files that have been of interest to those inquiring:

Family names included: Willard; Pearce; Goymour; Kemps; Macguire/McGuire; Julian; Nelson; Hooper; Supple; Byrnes; Leamy; Egan; Weingarth; Davis; Rossiter; Dew; Welch; Jobling; Booth; Ball; Herbert; Clarke; Judd; Gorman; Smith; Power; Cunningham;

Davison; Lawrence; Burke; Sweeney; Benson; Smith; Killmore; Perrin; McKenna and Archie Rudder.

Locations included: Clybucca bus crash; Macleay River entrance; Clybucca historical site; Chaddie's store; Darkwater; Frederickton; Frederickton (Heritage Walk); "Waterloo"; Crescent Head Headland; and the Verge subdivision at Mud Island.

Topics included: European tree blazes; Aboriginal artefacts; WW2 bombing of Darwin; Dondingalong Methodist Church; University assignment on early pioneers; Madge Wallace's retirement from East Kempsey Public School; WW1 Northcoasters; and John Patrick Desmond's Produce Store (circa 1917).

The last road renaming project for Kempsey Shire Council has been completed and we are advised a further two suggestions of ours have been accepted and will be put out for community consultation. Faulkner and Maragan were suggested for the eastern part of South Street running through Gill Park.

A compactus has been donated and will allow easier access to Research Files. Stephanie has continued with reformatting of the Family Files Indexes and is halfway through, whilst Ken has started work on the Locations Files Indexes.

Thank you to all involved and please keep up the good work.

Dianne Nolan
MRHS Research Manager

Photography Report

In February-March 2017 we will be having an exhibition of the famous Angus McNeil photographs developed from glass plate negatives. Titled "Glass from the Past" it will be in the Nulla Nulla Gallery in the Slim Dusty Centre.

This will be the first time the collection of Angus McNeil photographs selected for "Glass from the Past" have been exhibited in its entirety since the original exhibition was held at L& P Galleries, Artarmon, Sydney in February 1994. They were selected by Jane Symons, formerly of the

Australian Picture Library who did a lot of early work on the Angus McNeil collection.

Judy Waters
Photography



Olive Harvey (standing) and Islet Harvey, daughters of William Harvey who founded the Kempsey furniture store in 1882 (Angus McNeil Collection MRHS)

Museum Report

Work on the park refurbishment is now well underway and it will be interesting to see if the closer proximity of the shelter and childrens' play ground will result in increased visitations to our Museum.

Items donated during the past few weeks included a collection of old dolls (Bev Rangi collection), large home medicine text book; an 8mm film projector, items relating to the World War 1 service of Charles Grace Andrews and collection of rare cigarette cards and post cards.

The cards are in self adhesive albums and are being rehoused for preservation in archival quality albums. We also received a large quantity of books including many on Aboriginal History from Val Miles which we will add to our Library.

The Macleay River Festival went very well, book, Journal and calendar sales were over \$500. The Film Tent also attracted a lot of attention with Yarns from Bellbrook and film of a hip hop sequence from Melville High Students being favourites. Thanks to Garry, Sue, Barbara, Richard and Peter Ryan for giving up valuable weekend time to help out.

Thanks to retiring Dr Peter Hatton we have acquired a number of upholstered visitor chairs and a Namco compactus unit. The compactus holds 24 Metres of shelving and according to my rough calculations will hold all Research files currently in 10 four drawer filing cabinets taking up a slightly smaller floor area. Thanks also to Garry and Ken for disassembling and transporting the unit back to the Museum.

Phil Lee



History Film Tent at 2016 Macleay River Festival

Publications Report

The Slim Dusty Centre will trial the sale of a few of our journals after some representations by Noeline. We have provided copies of several journals with a musical or Slim Dusty theme. The original printing of Journal 180 on Slim Dusty by Margaret Ennis sold out so we have ordered a reprint and it is now available again.

Earlier in the year we reprinted Garry Munday's *Riverboats of the Macleay* which was relaunched appropriately at the Macleay River Festival where it sold really well. Our 2017 Calendar with the theme Kempsey in 1917 was printed early and is also proving popular.

New books we have for sale include *Against the Tide*, the stories of Salmon women pioneers in colonial New

South Wales by Perry Snodgrass and *Bondi Pioneer* 2016 by Milton Milligan. We also have copies of the DVD of the Belmore River Hall Centenary.

Future Journals in progress for 2017 are on Hat Head (Phil Lee), the ship Grace Irving (Garry Munday), Sister Pamela Swift and the Nurses Strike of 1946 (Noeline Kyle) and the Macleay Valley and the Great War – 1917 (Phil Lee).

We have started on the reprint of the Everson family history.

Noeline's book on midwives is ready, we are looking at funding at present as well as for Garry Munday's book on the Kempsey-Armidale Road.

Phil Lee/Noeline Kyle

Remembering Catherine Canny (Kenny)

My Irish born great-great-grandmother, Catherine Canny, set sail for New South Wales on 8 December 1862 from Plymouth, England. Recently widowed, Catherine with her four youngest children Ann (18), Mary (14), John (12) and Thaddy (5), walked aboard the *Sir John Moore* perhaps with hope of a better future and certainly in anticipation of joining two older children who were already settled in that new land so far away. Catherine and her children spent almost four months on their immigrant ship arriving in Sydney on 22 March 1863.

Catherine Crotty was born around 1816 in Ballymalone, Parish Tomgraney, County Clare in Ireland. On 30 May 1836 she married John Canny of Revail in the same parish. The name Canny (Caithnia) means battle-champion and this family can be traced back as far as the ninth century in Tomgraney. Both the Crotty and the Canny families almost disappeared during the second half of the nineteenth century due to famine, emigration and the landlords consolidating the small holdings. Baptismal records for Catherine and John's children bear different addresses suggesting John was finding work as an itinerant farm worker.

The oldest of John and Catherine Canny's six children, Bridget, came to New South Wales at the age of nineteen as an assisted immigrant on the *Simonds* on 12 April 1855. Two years later, she sponsored her younger

sister Margaret contributing £4 (\$8) towards her passage to Australia. Margaret arrived in Sydney on the ship *Castilian* on 13 June 1858. She was eighteen years old.

Bridget married a Prussian baker, Henry Weingarth, in Sydney on 5 May 1860. Around this time, John Canny passed away and on 19 March 1862 Henry Weingarth filed an application to bring Bridget's mother Catherine and the remaining children to Australia. He contributed a total of £20 (\$40) towards their fares. The children accompanying Catherine were Ann (18), Mary (14), John (12), and Thaddy (5). It was recorded that none of the family could read or write and from the time of their arrival in Australia, the family name "Kenny" was used.

Around 1865, Henry Weingarth built the West Kempsey Hotel and the Kenny family appears to have moved to Kempsey the Weingarths. John Kenny learned part of his apprenticeship as a blacksmith in West Kempsey before setting up his own business. John married Martha Geraghty with whom he had six children. By the time of his premature death in 1893, he had become a prominent figure in the town.

Mary Kenny had married Thomas Lee in Orange NSW in 1874 and that family moved to Kempsey as well around 1888, where Thomas worked as a carpenter. They had seven children. Of Catherine's remaining daughters, Margaret married Charles Kennedy (1861),



Catherine Canny (Kenny) MRHS

Ann married Henry Honholly (1865) and Mary married Thomas Lee (1874).

Ann's husband Henry Honholly, died from bronchitis contracted on a boat trip to Sydney with some maize in 1868, leaving her widowed with one son, Henry Frederick Honholly. As the story goes, Ann had struck up a friendship with John Hand, a 20 year old youth from County Monaghan, on the trip out to Australia but by the time the *Sir John Moore* berthed in Sydney they had quarrelled and separated. Another version has it that Ann's mother would not let them marry. As Ann was trying to sell some property a Darkwater after her first husband's death, one of the prospective buyers turned out to be John Hand. The shipboard romance was rekindled, and on 29 March 1869 Ann and John were married. They were to have a further eight children.

John Hand was a blacksmith and Ann's first son Henry Frederick learnt the trade from him. The business name H F Hand became very well known and respected in the Macleay Valley for coachmaking and blacksmithing and is still in existence.

Little is known about Catherine's youngest son Thadrus (Thaddy, Teddy) who is last mentioned as a witness at the marriage of his sister Ann in 1869 when he would have been twelve years old.



John Hand (seated) with John Frederick Hand (Angus McNeil Collection MRHS)

Catherine Canny passed away on the last day of the 19th Century from *oedema glottidis* (abnormal accumulation of fluid in the larynx) at her son-in-law Thomas Lee's residence in West Kempsey. Catherine was buried the following day, New Year's Day 1900 in the Catholic section of West Kempsey cemetery however no trace of her grave could later be found. In May 2016, descendants of Catherine erected a plaque on the grave of her daughter Bridget Weingarth. After 116 years, Catherine finally has a visible memorial in Kempsey.

Catherine Canny, affectionately known as Granny Kenny, at the time of her death was matriarch of a large and growing family which contributed much to the economic and social fabric of the Macleay valley.

Phil Lee

References

- Macleay Argus files
- Macleay Chronicle files
- Research from Clare Heritage Centre (1985)
- Research of Lesle Berry, Rosa Combes and Margaret Hand
- State Records of NSW (Assisted Immigrants)

Writing the life of the convict Mary Holland

By
Dr Noeline J Kyle



Saskia Maharnie Kyle, (gg x7) wearing the bonnet for Mary Holland, made by Rowena Summers, Botany Bay Family History Society, for the Roses from the Heart Project, Photography Noeline Kyle.

Writing about convicts and criminals¹ can bring stories of great moment to the page. Not everyone has a murder in their past but most of us can find a convict – indeed there is likely a thief, a fraudster or a forger in most family history. I have seven convicts all from my father's Kyle ancestry a fact my mother would point to with great relish. My favourite is Mary Holland.² Arriving on the *Indispensable* in 1796 it would be not too far fetched to say that if Mary Kirkpatrick³ is the revered matriarch of my mother's family then Mary Holland is the forgotten progenitor on my father's maternal side.

Mary Holland was born in 1775 in the Parish of St Mary, Lambeth, County Surrey. She was arrested for stealing. I found no record of her parents. Why Mary

Holland fell into criminal activity can be linked to the growing numbers of poor crowding the slums of London during the years 1780s onwards. Thieving was a common crime for women. Mary Holland's crime was to steal bed sheets to the value of eighteen shillings and one cotton counterpane to the value of two shillings.⁴ A report from *The London Packet* sent to me by Ken Leonhardt had the following information

Mary Holland was brought before Alderman Clark, charged on suspicion of stealing a quantity of linen, a pair of sheets, and other articles, which she was stopped with at a pawnbrokers, where she went to pledge them: and not being able to give a satisfactory account of how she came about them, she was committed to the Poultry⁵ Compter for further examination.⁶

Although Mary's crime was likely related to poverty and deprived family circumstances this report does give the impression that this was not the first time Mary Holland had stolen goods. She waited two years after her trial during which time she was likely shifted from prison hulk to gaol and from the Thames to Portsmouth in the most appalling conditions before sailing on the French-built *Indispensable* for Botany Bay.

Mary Holland began her new life in Sydney living in a de facto relationship with the New South Wales Marine Corp soldier Lachlin (Locklin, Laughlan, Lauchlin) Ross bearing him two children, Donnal or Daniel (1797) and Mary Ann (1799). Ross had arrived on the *Scarborough* in June 1790 and Mary Holland was assigned to him as a servant.

Lachlin Ross' career in the colony was not distinguished by any great highs or lows although he was promoted to corporal in January 1802 and to Sergeant in 1805. He left New South Wales in November 1802 for Norfolk Island where he remained until 1810. He returned to the United Kingdom in 1810 and died there in June 1815.⁷ Their son Daniel/Donnal joined the New South Wales Marine Corp in March 1810 as a Drummer aged fourteen also sailing for England in 1810, possibly travelling with his father, and leaving Mary and her daughter alone in New South Wales. Daniel died in 1811.⁸

In the meantime Mary Holland began a de facto relationship with Joseph Butler who had a grant of land at Mulgrave Place in the same district as Ross. Mary Holland and Joseph Butler were together for four years and during this time she had two sons; James, born in 1802 and Sylvester in 1804. It is Sylvester's daughter Mary Ann who married into the Rose family and links Mary Holland to my father's family history.

For Joseph Butler it was not the convict Mary Holland who was to cause problems in his life but there is evidence that he had difficulties with his first de facto wife Mary Manderville. She quarrelled with her next door neighbour Mary Pawson, reputedly over a pair of chains Pawson, her de facto, had lent to Joseph Butler. Mary Pawson extracted a destructive and cruel revenge burning down Joseph Butler's house and 350 bushels of corn the latter clearly the result of hard work and his entire livelihood at the time. In the ensuing court case Mary Pawson is reported to have left the court: 'clapping her hands as she said, You bloody Whore, before this Day Month I will give you a warm Arse.' It

was a terrible revenge as Mary Manderville died, more than likely from burns from the fire, less than seven weeks later.⁹

Writing about Mary Holland illustrates how the stories of convicts, crime and criminality are vexed and complex things, their stories enmeshed with and mired in the strictures of social class, gender, continuing injustice and grinding poverty. Mary Holland was caught in a time of history when the seething masses of poor in England had to fight, literally, for their bread. That she stole bed clothing most likely from the beds she was then making is ironic and poignant. But that she survived to be a grandmother and perhaps see her children prosper¹⁰ suggests there is a lasting and positive legacy to link us to her long, tough and largely forgotten life.

¹ Noeline Kyle, *A Greater Guilt: Constance Emilie Kent & the Road Murder*, Boolarong Press, Salisbury, Brisbane, 2009.

² Noeline Kyle, Rose Family History, unpublished manuscript, 2000.

³ Noeline Kyle, *Memories & Dreams: A Biography of Nurse Mary Kirkpatrick*, Mullumbimby, 2001.

⁴ L. Robson, *The Convict Settlers of Australia*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1965, p.78. Surrey Assizes, 26 March 1794.

⁵ Poultry is an area in central London.

⁶ ASSI94/1389 Indictment Files, National Archives, Kew, London (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/)

⁷ Primary Records Index, Marine Corp Records, Society of Australian Genealogists, 4/18739, p.89.

⁸ Pamela Statham, ed *A colonial regiment: new sources relating to the New South Wales Corps, 1789-1810*, I need to get Daniel/Donnal's death certificate to verify this.

⁹ M. Flynn, *The Second Fleet: Britain's Grim Convict Armada of 1790*, Library of Australian History, Sydney, 1993, pp.185-186..

¹⁰

I have yet to find the exact record of Mary Holland's death but according to the convict musters she was still alive when aged in her 50s.

Exploring our Collection – Items relating to the service of Pte Charles Grace Andrews in World War 1

The Museum was fortunate enough to have had donated precious items relating to the service of Private Charles

Grace Andrews in World War 1. Charles Grace Andrews was born in Kempsey on 10 December 1896, the son of William and Elizabeth (nee Grace) Andrews. He enlisted in the 1st AIF on 1 November 1915 and sailed for Egypt on the SS Suevic with the 7th Reinforcements of the 17th Battalion. Charles was killed in action at Pozieres France on 4 August 1916. He was aged 19 years and eight months.

Charles' personal items were consigned to his father, William T Andrews who signed for them on 26 July 1917. Included was a Common Prayer and Hymns book, inscribed on the inside cover as follows: "To Dear Charlie with love from Mother on his 15th birthday 10/12/11."

On the voyage to Egypt, Charles sent home two postcards bearing a photograph of the SS Suevic. On one, he obtained the signatures of officers and non-commissioned officers of the 7th Reinforcements 17th Battalion. "... a finer lot of men could not be found." he wrote. The other bears the signatures of the boys of No 4 Platoon of 7th Reinforcements 17th Battalion.

Phil Lee

Editor: Dr Noeline Kyle

Design: Gary Marshall

Benefits of Membership

Membership Applications and Renewals start from January in the New Year. Members of the Macleay River Historical Society now enjoy the following benefits:

- Quarterly Journal (posted or pick up from Museum)
- Quarterly Newsletter (posted, emailed or pick up from Museum)
- Discount on basic Research Fee (\$25.00 instead of \$30.00 per subject)
- Discount of 10% on Photograph orders (excluding postage)

Our Affiliations

Australasian Federation of Family History Organisations
Australian National Maritime Museum
Historic Houses Trust
Museums Australia
Museums and Galleries NSW
Royal Australian Historical Society



Macleay River Historical Society

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Membership

\$20 pick up journal

\$25 including journal postage

\$30 large envelope

General Meetings

Meetings are held at 3pm

every third Tuesday of the month

Research

Tuesday: Desley Nunn

Wednesday: Dianne Nolan

Thursday: Garry Munday

Photographic

Friday: Judy Waters, Debbie Reynolds, Phil Lee

MUSEUM OPEN

10.00 am to 4.00 pm daily except

Good Friday and Christmas day