



ISSN 2206-8740

## MACLEAY RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY, 2017

Number 18

### President's Report

Welcome to another year and a special thank you to those members renewing their memberships. Our February journal is by Dr Noeline Kyle on the Nurses' Strike at Kempsey District Hospital in the 1940's, and we have an interesting variety of topics planned for the next twelve months. For those who haven't renewed yet please reconsider, we need your support to carry on preserving and educating the public about our local history.

2016 saw our Society pick up a swag of awards and also several grants and we hope to continue in the same vein in 2017. Full details of grants and awards will appear in the Annual Reports in the May 2017 Newsletter.

Our Student Volunteer programme was in full swing during the past school holidays with up to five volunteers completing a range of tasks very competently. These included digitising rare books, cataloguing and labelling artefacts, filing and preparing ephemera items for display.

Phil Lee  
President

### 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

### Research Report

We have received more valuable land records for the Upper Macleay thanks to Jamie Schmidt and his work at State Records in Sydney. Of particular interest were copies of Parliamentary Papers concerning an inquest held into the timber industry at Kempsey Courthouse on 27 May 1908. The papers include submissions from David Piggott, Joseph Lalor, William Nalder, Henry Woodward, Enoch Rudder, Archie Rudder, George Davis, Henry Crossman, Charles Ducat, David Kirkpatrick and William Schmidt.

We decided to redesign the Research Request form to align it with the Photograph Order Form hopefully this will now be easier for volunteers to follow and easier for visitors to complete. There is a new schedule of fees which everyone should be familiar with.

Research enquiries and requests for the past three months have sought information on the following:

### CONTENTS

President's Report	1
Research Report	1
Our Affiliations	1
Photography Report	2
Museum Report	2
Annual General Meeting of MRHS	2
Publications Report	3
2017 Heritage Festival	3
Women's Business	3
Benefits of Membership	3
Seniors Week	4
Exploring our Collection – Cell Door from Border Police Station	4
Perry the Poet	6
Recent Additions to our Library	8
Office Bearers	8

Families: Ball; Brophy; Baker; Cummings; Davis; Dixon; Ducat (Southside Cellars); Escott (Smithtown store); Fitzpatrick; Flanagan; Gersbach; Irwin; Internees at Trial Bay Gaol; Julian; Mason; McNally; McQuade (Sister); Ryan; and Yabsley.

Locations: Christmas Creek Cemetery; Dondingalong Road; Innes Street East Kempsey; Belgrave Street, Kempsey (Silman Center); Killick Creek Foot Bridge; Kinchela Boys Home; and the SWR Pilot Station.

Topics: Car accident 1956; Health - Macleay Hastings; Red Gold; Surrender of the Red Fleet; Kempsey Bypass; Tiger sharks; Ancestry.com; Family History research; Paddle steamer; vessel :Lake Wallis; and the first Steam train in Kempsey.

Dianne Nolan  
MRHS Research Manager

### Photography Report

With volunteers on examination papers supervision and holidays during the past few months, there is not much to report. Our big event is the Glass from the Past Exhibition which commenced at the Nulla Nulla Gallery, Slim Dusty Centre on Friday February 3. Contrary to information published in the last Newsletter, the exhibition was also previously held at Kempsey Museum in March 1994.

The exhibition also features a display of historic cameras from the MRHS collection.

Around sixty cameras and pieces of photographic equipment have been assembled as part of the Glass

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MACLEAY RIVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

The Annual General Meeting of members of the Macleay River Historical Society will be held on Tuesday, March 21 at 3pm.  
Please contact the Secretary for information forms or call at the museum.  
Ruth Woodward  
Honorary Secretary

from the Past Exhibition. The majority of these have never been on public display before. The oldest item on display will be an 1850's Daguerrotype portrait and the youngest an early model Digital SLR camera from the year 2000.

For the Slim Dusty Centre, our exhibition will have a strong Kempsey flavour and help them build stronger links with our local community. For our Society, it is a chance to display some of our unique collection in a world class setting.

Books added to our library recently with a photographic theme include "The Story of the Camera in Australia" by Jack Cato, and The Good Old Days Volume 2 (Barrington to Harrington and around the Great Lakes) by Jim Revitt.

Judy Waters  
Manager Photographics

### Museum Report

A major acquisition for our Museum during January was a collection of around eighty Aboriginal artefacts (stone tools) collected from around the Macleay region. Whilst interpretation and identification may take some time, most of the tools are labelled with their place of origin. The following month we were very privileged to have had donated the theodolite of Otto Herborn, the surveyor whose father, Ernest Herborn, first laid out the plans for West Kempsey, Darkwater (now Galdstone) and Arakoon.

Around sixty cameras and pieces of photographic equipment have been assembled as part of the Glass from the Past Exhibition. The majority of these have never been on public display before. The oldest item on display will be an 1850's Daguerrotype portrait and the youngest an early model Digital SLR camera from the year 2000.

We have now received our grant money for shelving for the shed but some major rearrangements will need to be made before then which we hope to commence in a cooler month.

Due to wrong advice, our application for a fire arms permit, required for reacquiring the two John Verge revolvers from the NSW Police and Justice Museum, did not proceed and we will need to make a new

application. We have extended the loan period until August 2017 and hope to have finalised matters by then.

Maintenance problems with the Museum building are continuing, we still have rainwater leaks, the lighting system needs replacement as maintenance parts are non-existent and we have just been advised the alarm system has reached the end of its useful life.

Phil Lee

## Publications Report

Our publishing programme continues to be restricted, we cannot proceed with any new publications unless a grant or some form of outside funding is received. Currently we have an RAHS Grant to publish Noeline and Dianne's Early Kempsey book/journal publication which is in progress. The Everson Family book is being printed with the family providing funding for a small number of books. Noeline's book *Women's Business* was unable to attract grant funding and will now be privately printed. Copies may be pre-ordered.

Noeline Kyle  
Publications Manager

## 2017 National Heritage Week Festival

15 May 2017 1-3pm

Kempsey Museum presents a talk by Mr Phil Lee and Dr Noeline Kyle.

In 1917, the number of soldiers lost to the war greatly impacted on the country town of Kempsey. Young men had marched eagerly to sign up and young women, anxious to serve overseas, had also joined. The first of these servicemen and women sailed in 1914, and by 1917 many deaths were recorded. Both soldiers and nurses were loath to write home about the horrors of the trenches but the few who did have left a poignant and dreadful reminder of the terrors of their time on the front lines of war-torn Europe.

In this talk, the 'voices' of WW1 soldiers, nurses and

families from Kempsey and the Macleay Valley will be heard as the presenters read from letters, newspaper reports and diaries, placing these texts into the context of the war's progression and how the townspeople viewed these distant events.

This event is held as a part of the 2017 National Heritage Festival. For more information contact Kempsey Museum on (02) 6562 7572.

Read more:

<http://regionalartsnsw.com.au/event/kempsey-museum-home-and-away-voices-from-ww1/#ixzz4ZDdQmyhE>

## Women's Business – Midwives on the Mid North Coast

Noeline Kyle will publish her book *Women's business: midwives on the mid north coast of NSW to 1950*, a study of Port Macquarie/Hastings, Kempsey/Macleay Valley and Armidale/Uralla regions, in mid 2017. The book details the training, careers, family life, business enterprises, travel to and between towns/villages, friendships and partnerships with other midwives or nurses, community participation and their contribution to the profession and their communities of more than 200 midwives and the 70 hospitals they established or managed. Normally \$35, Noeline is offering a pre publication purchase price of \$25 if purchased before 22 May 2017. For details on how to place an order and make payments email Noeline at: [noelinekyle@gmail.com](mailto:noelinekyle@gmail.com), or ring her mob.: 0403868051. You can also place an order on Noeline's website, at [www.writingfamilyhistory.com.au](http://www.writingfamilyhistory.com.au).

## 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)

*Exploring our Collection –*

## Cell Door from Border Police Station

In the first half of the nineteenth century, the government was faced with the problem of policing the vast expanse of New South Wales with limited resources. They tried to restrict settlement to a geographical area to be known as the nineteen counties the boundaries of which were first gazetted in 1829. Surveyed by Sir Thomas Mitchell, the nineteen counties extended from Moruya on the South Coast to the Manning River and west as far as Orange in 1829. By 1830, the County of Macquarie had been added which extended to the southern bank of the McLeay River although the term nineteen counties continued to be used.

Military police maintained law and order in the

settled districts, however squatters had established runs well outside these boundaries and lawlessness ensued culminating in the Myall Creek massacre of 1839. A new police force which came to be known as the border police was established exclusively from soldier transportees, British soldiers transported for military offences. An office of the Commissioner for Crown Lands and for the Border Police Force were set up in Kempsey in 1839 by Commissioner Oakes, however when Robert Massie was appointed as commissioner in 1842 he decided to move the headquarters to Belgrave Falls at the head of navigation of the Macleay River. This was a well used crossing for pioneer settlers moving north with stock.

## A Seniors Week Event 2017

Free entry to the Kempsey Museum  
Tuesday 7 March to Friday 10 March  
10 am to 2pm  
Kempsey Museum, South Kempsey Park,  
62 Lachlan Street, South Kempsey

Kempsey Museum welcomes Seniors, families and friends to enjoy free access to the entire Museum and its exhibitions, including WW1 displays, women's textiles, indigenous displays, historical timber displays, and the settler's cottage. Why not ring the school bell in the school room and see a model sawmill and a homestead carved in wood by Frank Little. There is so much to view at the museum – household items from long ago, the Abbot buggy that our grandparents drove to church, the Leyland truck, maritime history and the world famous Angus McNeil photographic collection. Look for your history here and find out how to research it.

Visit and meet the friendly volunteers, see how historical research is carried out by our volunteers and get to know the history of your local area. Ask how you can become volunteer and join us at the museum.

Seniors, families, individuals, children, all welcome to roll up to this special free events for Seniors Week, 10am to 2pm, on the days Tuesday 7 March to Friday 10 March

Group bookings are essential if larger numbers are involved.

For more information visit our website [www.kempseymuseum.org.au](http://www.kempseymuseum.org.au) **Phone:** 65627572  
**email:** [mrhs5@bigpond.com](mailto:mrhs5@bigpond.com)



*Painting of Border Police Station Belgrave Falls (State Library of New South Wales)*

Buildings at Belgrave Falls included a Courthouse, Commissioner's residence and lock-up. With the end of transportation in 1840, free troopers were increasingly employed. There were eight on the staff of the Border Police Force at Belgrave Falls – a corporal, three troopers, two horse handlers, a carpenter and a blacksmith. Typical duties of the Border Police were as follows (from State Records):

January 1<sup>st</sup> 1843

Henry Long	Escorting prisoners to Port Macquarie
John Callaghan, Michael Clogher	At the Station in charge of Prisoners awaiting Trial

January 2 1843

James Smith, John Callaghan	Attending Court with Prisoners
Henry Long	Returned from Escort to Port Macquarie

January 5<sup>th</sup> 1843

Henry Long	Serving Summonses
John Callaghan, James Smith	Serving Notices of Assessment on Stock

January 18<sup>th</sup> 1843

Michael Clogher	To New England in Pursuit of Runaway. Return on 25 <sup>th</sup> with Runaway
-----------------	---

The Border Police Force was disestablished in 1847. Many years after the last traces of the Belgrave Falls buildings had gone, the door from one of the lock-up cells was discovered in long grass and donated to the Museum by Mr Patrick Purcell on whose property it was found.

Crawford, Billie MRHS Journal No 44 November 1988

O'Sullivan, John 1979 *Mounted Police in New South Wales*

State Records of NSW, Returns of the Border Police

Weingarth, J 1921 *The Discovery and Settlement of the Macleay River* RAHS Journal Vol VII Part IV

## Jack Perry – Drover and Poet (1866-1919)



*Raffety's Federal Hotel ca 1910 where Jack Perry and Fred Cook "done a thing was risky" (MRHS Collection)*

The Macleay area has abounded with poets and musicians (refer to MRHS Journals 80 and 205) but probably one of the least known of these, at least to a younger generation, was John "Jack" Perry who wrote under the name "Perry the Poet". Jack was born in 1866 at Bellbrook the son of Michael and Julia (nee Stewart) Perry. His father Michael was employed as a stockman at Mooneba station after marrying Julia at twenty before taking up farming at Pee Dee, and later at Towal and Hickeys Creeks. Jack married Annie Theresa McCafferty in 1894 at Kempsey. Like Jack's mother, Annie was Irish-born.

Later, Jack lived at Hat Head and Gladstone, working as a stocktrainer and horseman. In 1903 whilst camped at Hat Head with cattle, Jack with his wife Annie were instrumental in rescuing the crew of the ship *Elliston*, which had beached there. The *Elliston* had sheltered in Trial Bay during a fierce gale, but after making a fresh start encountered heavy seas as the gale increased to

hurricane force. The ship was washed onto the beach. A line which was thrown from the floundering boat fell short but with great courage Jack plunged into the breakers and secured the rope to a tree. The crew were then able to come safely through the heavy surf. The sailors were then tended and fed by Mrs Perry for a week, although Jack and her had lost their own tent through the storm. The three masted schooner had left Bellinger Heads a few days earlier with a large cargo of timber for Sydney. The ship was later abandoned, a lot of the valuable timber having already being jettisoned in the attempt to save it.

Jack and Annie had eight children, however their eldest son, John Francis Augustus Perry was killed in World War 1 in 1917 aged twenty-three. Jack Perry passed away on 18 July 1919 at his West Kempsey residence aged just fifty-three from tuberculosis. Jack's obituary in the Macleay Chronicle 23 July 1919 has this description of his poetic skills:

*Of a bright and cheery nature, he was a particularly clever versifier; though he never sought publication, and some of his descriptive pieces are treasured to-day in the minds of middle-aged local residents.*

Some of Jack's poems have survived from the pages of the Argus and Chronicle, and the following poem was published in the Macleay Argus during the 1960's. It was supposed to have been written in the early 1900's when he was caretaker of Dr B N Casement's property at Kinchela.

*Fred Cook's again in trouble - along with flood and drought  
And losing couch and clover, his cattle are clearing out.*

*He says: "My cattle's strayed and gone, I don't know when or where –  
McKenna also lost a few, but he doesn't seem to care."*

*He says to Joe: "You stay at home, and keep the farm in shape,  
And I'll ride out to Hat Head and get Jack Perry to go to Smoky Cape."  
He rode out to Hat Head and said: "Good morning John,  
I've just come out to tell you Old Brindle Bally's gone."*

*"She's such a ripping milker, I never leg-roped better,  
And I want you to come to Smoky Cape and see if we can get her."  
I saddled up old Corkscrew and whistled to old Blue;  
I buckled on my leggings and took my stock whip, too.*

*Then I asked him: "Are you ready?" and he answered with a screech;  
"Come along" said Freddy, and we rode along the beach.  
All the conversation was about the floods in June  
As we passed the Lighthouse Station and went round by Arakoon.*

*When we got to South West Rocks we done a thing was risky  
We went into Rafferty's pub, and had a glass of whisky.  
When he'd drunk the shikker down Fred quickly hurried out;  
Although he loves his liquor, he's never known to shout.*

*We came across a fisherman, his name it was McRae,  
Fred galloped down the beach and shouted "My cattle's gone astray.*

*Keep your peepers open while fishing round about  
And if you round old Brindle up, there's money sticking out."*

*"I'll give you a description of the ones that got away  
The cow, she is a large one, the other two are steers  
And, I near forgot to tell you, the tips are off both ears.*

*I am not a rich man, I do not own a mob  
But, if you find the three of them, I'll give you seven bob!"*

*"So now, I must be getting home, for the nights are getting colder;  
You know I suffer very much with rheumatics in my shoulder.  
The pain that's in my shoulder is the worst I ever felt.  
I think I'll send to Sydney for a new electric belt."*

*While coming home that afternoon a strange thing did occur  
Fred saw a beast out in the swamp. He said "I think that's her.  
If only I had my spyglass, I'd bring her down so fine,  
But, really, at this distance she resembles one of mine."  
"It's too wet to ride out there – we'll get a boat and pull."  
And the brindle cow turned out to be - German Verge's bull.*

#### References

Macleay Argus files  
Macleay Chronicle files  
TROVE



## Recent Additions to our Library

(from last half of 2016)

- Bannon, Patrick Noel 2016 *Bannons on Belmore River*
- Baxter, Carol J 2000 *General Muster List of NSW – 1823, 1824, 1825* (to complete a full set of seven Australian Biographical and Genealogical Record volumes by MRHS)
- \*Belmore River Hall Committee 2016 *Belmore River 100<sup>th</sup> Centenary* (DVD)
- Cato, Jack 1955 *The Story of the Camera in Australia*
- Drew, Philip 1991 *Leaves of Iron: Glenn Murcutt, pioneer of an Australian architectural form.*
- Freeland, J M 1970 *Architect Extraordinary: The Life and Work of John Horbury Hunt (1838-1904)*
- McLysaght, Edward 1980 *The Surnames of Ireland*
- McSwan E H 1974 *Discovery and Settlement of the Lower Clarence*
- Martin, Glenn 1988 *Places in the Bush: A History of Kyogle to 1988*
- Melville High School 2016 *Dunghutti: Stories from Yesterday* (DVD)
- \*Milligan, Milton 2016 *Bondi Pioneer*
- Monaghan, Jay 1966 *Australians and the Gold Rush: California and Down Under, 1849-1854*
- NSW Government DECC *Harbour of Refuge: Historic Trial Bay* (DVD)
- Reed, A W 1970 *Aboriginal Place Names*
- Revitt, Jim 1980 *The Good Old Days: From Barrington and Harrington and around the Great Lakes*
- Sager, Janine 2014 *Imaging Australia in Black and White*
- \*Snodgrass, Perry 2016 *Against the Tide: Salmon Women Pioneers in Colonial New South Wales*
- Walker, Meredith 2015 *Every Story Counts: Recording Migration Heritage*

Items marked with an asterisk (\*) are also available for purchase from our Museum.

Editor: Dr Noeline Kyle  
Design: Gary Marshall



## Macleay River Historical Society

*Office Bearers:*

**President**

Phil Lee

**Vice Presidents**

Garry Munday

Tom Plunkett

**Secretary & Public Officer**

Ruth Woodward

**Treasurer**

Barbara Coughran

**Patrons**

Terry Eakin

Geraldine Yabsley

Ald. Liz Campbell

**Postal Address**

P.O. Box 390, Kempsey, NSW 2440

**Phone: (02) 6562 7572**

**Email:** [mrhs5@bigpond.com](mailto:mrhs5@bigpond.com)

**Website:** [www.kempseymuseum.org](http://www.kempseymuseum.org)

**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:* Ken Brown

**Photographic**

*Friday:* Judy Waters, Debbie Reynolds, Phil Lee

**MUSEUM OPEN**

10.00 am to 4.00 pm daily except

Good Friday and Christmas day