

MOLONG HISTORY NEWS

MOLONG HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC
1965-2017

Volume 2 Issue 5
SUMMER
2017

MUSEUM ADDRESS
20 Riddell Street
MOLONG NSW 2866

OPENING HOURS

Thursdays 11am until 3pm

Last Sunday of the month from 11.30 until 4

Or by appointment



RESEARCH ENQUIRIES

Enquires to the Society should be written,
then posted or emailed to :-

PO BOX 119 MOLONG NSW 2866
molongmuseum@hotmail.com

Please include :-

- Your Name, contact number
- Reason for enquiry (family research, writing book etc)
- Relevant information

COMMITTEE for 2017-18

PRESIDENT
VICE PRESIDENT
SECRETARY
TREASURER
RESEARCH OFFICER
ASSIST SECRETARY

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MUSEUM NEWS

COMING EVENTS FOR 2018

2018 is looking to be a very productive year. Dates for your diary below

- FAIRBRIDGE FARM BI-ANNUAL REUNION 1938-2018
Saturday 10th March at the Museum see details in newsletter)
- ORANGE REGIONAL MUSEUM NEW EXHIBITION OPENING. In conjunction with this event Molong Historical Society will have new displays in the Museum.
- MARKET DAY
MOLONG ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATION will be holding 3 Market Days in 2018. The dates are
Sunday 29th April
Sunday 29th July
Monday 1st October (Long Weekend)
Please keep these dates as we will be having a stall.



OPEN DAYS AT THE MUSEUM

More Open Days are being arranged for the Museum. These will include Artesian Visits (Machinery, crafts etc), Book/jumble sales, Special Talks, new displays and Teas on the verandah. If you have any more ideas please contact the committee.

MUSEUM OPENING HOURS

The Museum is closed from Thursday 21st December until Thursday 18th January. Please contact Sue (0400425015) or John (0428719645) if you would like to arrange an appointment during this time.

In 2018 we would like to be able to open the museum on other days during the week. To do this we will need to have more volunteers on the roster. Early in the year we plan to have an afternoon tea for anyone interested in finding out more.

Please contact Sue or Marie if you are interested in attending.

Front page photograph

Bank Street about 1840. Can you recognize any of the buildings?
Courtesy of Carolyn Mullins & Michael Frew of Molong

NEW CONTACT

molonghistoricalsociety@gmail.com

This address for all emails except research enquiries



CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

Marie Hammond

Having already written out a report I reread it and thought it was a bit "lack lustre" can I say for a Christmas letter come report. The newsletter during the year keeps up with most of our news etc. during the year and let our friends and members know of our activities. This year we really "raised the bar", so to speak, with great achievements made, including more members, more visitors (several from overseas again mainly to visit the Fairbridge Room and glean information, see photographs of their days at the farm as youngsters.

When it is close to Christmas it sometimes brings back memories of Christmas' long past. I'm sure we all have those memories tucked away somewhere. I love to remember such occasions of my own childhood. Always so exciting, helping making the cake and the plum pudding, cleaning the three pence and sixpence, sometimes more. By December the weather was always warm, in fact quiet hot sometimes. Grandfathers flowers and vegetables would be ready, the flowers in bloom, especially the Christmas lilies. Also the white fleshed peaches that were always ripe and picked at this time.

In the lead up to Christmas, I made my own Christmas cards. I always drew flowers and painted with my watercolours. I really enjoyed doing this . Under my grandmothers supervision I made homemade sweets. Toffee, marshmallows and coconut ice was a favourite.

My grandparent's home was large with verandas around. One side had doors opening from two of the bedrooms. The sides had rollup canvas blinds. Out here, were spare beds rolled up for the winter but soon unrolled and made up when family arrived. Aunts, uncles, cousins, all full of chatter, it was a happy time.

This was during the war years; coupons were needed to buy goods and materials. I don't have memory of the values or what was able to be purchased but I do remember if someone had spares they would pass them on to another family member, all sent by mail of course and stitched to the letter. This was to discourage anyone undoing and taking the cards. I don't have any negative memories about this only sugar. It was raw and always had many stringy pieces in it.

Somehow, everyone managed to make the cake and plum pudding. With the war being on there weren't any decorations for sale. Nothing like that. This particular year the tree was up and in the dining room. On going to bed on Christmas Eve, I was very upset because the tree looked so dismal. All that was on it was a paper chain I had made at school. My uncle and grandfather helped make another. I went off to bed with the words about Santa coming soon and they all wanted to go to bed. I well remember my heavy heart as I went.

I was first up I think, checked out Santa's' surprise I'm sure, but when I got to the tree, magic had happened. Unforgettable! The tree had come to life with cut-out painted stars, also birds cut and coloured, pieces of coloured paper, cotton wool and other pieces that blend into a wonderful memory. The family had all sat around the dining table and had been like little elves spinning their Christmas magic for me. I was so excited and forever thankful for this lasting memory.

We had traditions when family were together Christmas and Easter of singing the grace. A Scottish tradition my grandmother had no doubt taught her children. It was sung standing up but the words have long faded from my memory. A pity! Another tradition was women in the kitchen preparing the midday celebration dinner and later the men doing the cleaning up. Good tradition; worked well. Men kept cool doing the job and drinking beer at the same time before the annual game of cricket when it was a bit cooler.

In the cool of the evening, it was often finished with a family concert, Grandfather playing his tin whistle, my uncle the mouth organ, singing together or solo. Poetry was a favourite; my father was tone deaf for some reason while his siblings all had great singing voices. Not to be outdone he would entertain with poems by Lawson, Paterson, Kendall and others. (He once taught me a poem by Kendall with twenty-two verses). Ah!

Often at this time we sat outside in the cool at night, usually talking telling stories of bygone times but it was also the time we sat and watched for the ghost, as we called it. The nights were also usually clear and we could see up the valley towards "Vale Head", once having the roundhouse as its claim to fame as well as being the house built on the Marsden's land grant. It was amazing to see these lights appear just show up and disappear again. It was always a puzzle to me. I think the family just accepted that this happens. I guess they must have wondered too.

It wasn't until some years ago we were on a visit to Tasmania and we visited a friends brother who had grown up in Wondilla in Northern NSW, he

spoke about the "Min Min lights". I asked about them and it would appear that this is what we would sit and watch. I wonder who else may have had "Min Min lights" for Christmas to help make this particular one and many others so memorable for me.

I'm sure you all have wonderful memories tucked away there in your memory box, don't let it go. This is your history; we would love to share it with us but more importantly to share with your family. Don't forget the photographs as they too are so important for your history.

We all look forward to seeing you at the Museum in 2018 but in the meantime a big thank you to all for all the support we have had from so many and look forward to seeing you all in the New Year as we have an exciting year ahead.

Merry Christmas, Happy New Year to all. John joins me in sends best wishes.

Marie Hammond
(President)

PS. Next year will have to get John to relate his tales of his great Christmas' in England when he was young. Great stories!

CHRISTMAS 1917

The Royal Hotel

Host Colbran of the above popular hostelry has made special provisions for the festivity season by laying in a big stock of choice wines, spirits and bears, in bottles, and at the right prices too. So don't go short of a wee drop. Then too, as usual his Christmas table will be something out of the box.

(*Molong Angus Friday 14th December 1917*)

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Pioneer Bakery

Mr Albert Hughes of the above bakery, has made adequate provision to supply the needs of his patrons at Christmas. His shop will present a bright and plentiful appearance. Besides the abundance of the real "Staff of Life"-bread (of the best quality) he will have an assortment of Xmas cakes, other cakes, lollies and in addition a splendid stock of fresh vegetables and the season's choicest fruits.

BOOK/JUMBLE SALE REPORT

A very successful book sale was held at the museum on the weekend of 11/12 November this year.



On Saturday the 11th (Remembrance Day) include several added attractions. The Central West Antique Engines & Machinery Club had a working display of several small engines. Robin Wills demonstrated his whip making skills along with Elizabeth Forbes with her cane work . These all proved very popular.



At 11o'clock, the ringing of the Fairbridge Chapel bell announced the minutes silence for a service held at the RSL Club, opposite the museum. It is believed that this is the first time the church bell has been officially used since it was last heard in the Fairbridge chapel before the farm school closed in 1974.



Patron, Bob Sullivan led a service at the Museum, which linked with the RSL service.

It was quieter on Sunday, but still many visitors searched the books for treasures. Many returning from Saturday for another look.



A raffle was conducted and was drawn on Saturday 17th November at our Street Stall. The winner being Annette, daughter of Life Member Jean Bennett.

Thank you to everyone who visited or helped over the week to make it such a success. We will be



AP6 Valiant Bought new in Molong from McMahon's Motors in 1966



SOCIETY HIGH TEA Saturday 9th December

On a balmy Molong evening, the Historical Society invited everyone their first "High Tea" on the verandah. Over forty people attended, many seeing the museum for the first time.

Entertainment was provided by organist Paul Weatherston and Mark Oates who recited poetry. Mark also showed a painting of Mick Langdon on his horse. The food provided by the catering team of Lynne, Margaret, Rozzie and helpers was plentiful.



The Society will be having many more events on the verandah during 2018.

FAIRBRIDGE FARM SCHOOL NEWS

There has been activity in regard to Fairbridge Farm recently. In 2018 it will be 80 years since the first children arrived from England as part of the British Child Immigration Scheme. This coincides with the Bi-annual Reunion of the Old Fairbridgian Association in March held in Orange and Molong.

The museum will open on Saturday 10th March but final arrangements are yet to be made. The usual opening is from 10.30am and lunch from 12.30pm. It will be a light lunch and cost will be about \$10 - \$15. There will be new displays and a change to catch up with old friends. Numbers will be limited for lunch.

While in Orange and Molong, David Hill, Derek Moriarty and Jan Barby visited the museum as well as other Fairbridge sites. They were visiting the area as part of research for the Children's monument (see next page)

FAIRBRIDGE ENQUIRIES PETER DENIS POSTLETHWAITE

Hello, one of the children that travelled on the SS Oransay is my mother's cousin (Peter Denis Postlethwaite), my second cousin.

Peter disappeared when my mom was a young girl, and no one had any idea where he had gone. I noticed that he appears on the list of children travelling on the Oransay in 1938 on your website. I wondered if any of your existing members might know him, or if anyone can tell us anything about him and his life in Australia. I don't see him listed on your Vale site but he would be in his 90's today if he was still alive. I just wondered if he had ever attended any of the gatherings.

Thank you Tina Jones (Mrs)

I have been able to find a photograph of Peter shortly after leaving Fairbridge and he may have moved to Forbes.

Peter is pictured with Marie Field (Bennett) at a reunion in the early fifties.

If anyone can assist please contact the editor.



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Euphemia (Vera) Priestnal,

Vera arrived in the first party after the war, on the Ormonde in 1947 Vera as she was known was aged 12

Vera is living in Queensland and her son Michael Whymark is looking for information.

(from the Fairbridge Photograph Collection, held at the Molong Museum)



This article was in the November 2017 "FOLLOW THE FOUNDER" newsletter from the OLD FAIRBRIDGIAN ASSOCIATION .

Since appearing in the above publication there has been adjustments to the original text (from the OFA editor)

Photograph is part of the Fairbridge Photographic Collection held by the Molong Historical Society.

FAIRBRIDGE CHILDREN'S PROJECT FOR FORMER FAIRBRIDGE CHILD MIGRANTS

We are planning to erect a permanent Fairbridge Children's project to commemorate all the child migrants who went to Fairbridge and to celebrate the contribution they have made to Australia. The proposal is to have a life size statue of some Fairbridge children along with a plaque listing the names of all one thousand child migrants who were at Molong. At the moment the most popular suggestion is a life size statue of the four children photographed carrying their big Fairbridge cardboard suitcases who came out in the second party to Molong in 1938 (see photo below). The monument will most likely be erected along the Mitchell Highway near Fairbridge Farm although some other local sites may also warrant consideration.



We would welcome your thoughts about the project and your ideas about what form it should take.

We want the project to be supported and embraced by the local community as well as by former Fairbridge children. We want it to be something that all passers-by find interesting enough to stop and hop out of their cars to view and admire. The monument will

complement the trees that form the Fairbridge Remembrance Drive and act as a beautiful entry to Molong.

Recently, Old Fairbridgians President Derek Moriarty along with Jan Barby and David Hill met with the Mayor of Orange, Reg Kidd, who expressed enthusiastic support for the project. The local media also showed great interest and so far all the people we discussed this with think it is a great idea. Mayor Reg Kidd and local Federal Member of Parliament for Calare Andrew Gee have already agreed to start our list of Patrons as supporters of the project.

The project will cost tens of thousands of dollars. Some of our friends in Orange, including Wade Mahlo, have agreed to help raise funds from the local community and will help our application for Federal and State regional grants.

To attract funding from the local community and from governments we have to demonstrate that we have already made a contribution ourselves, so we are setting a target for the old Fairbridgians of at least \$10,000. If you want to pledge a donation of \$100 or more, please let Derek Moriarty derekmoriarty@optusnet.com.au, Jan Barby jan.barby@bigpond.com or David Hill davidhill04@optusnet.com.au know, though any donations, large or small, will be gratefully accepted.

Molong township in the early 1860s by Bill Barlow

Edward Barlow (c.1819 - 1890) built, or had built, the stone house at 154 Market Street, Molong on one of the seven lots he purchased from Edward Moon, the publican of the *Freemasons Hotel* in 1861.

In 1861 from his house on the hillside in the West End, Edward could walk down, across the un-bridged Boree Hollow Creek and along Hill Street to Edward Street. It was here that the first public school had opened two years earlier in a slab hut on the northwest corner opposite the Molong Creek. Schooling for their son may have been the attraction of moving in to the town. Turning left would have brought him to the police station and residence, and the courthouse, built with timber slabs and a shingle roof, which was then much needing replacement. On the other corners of Edward Street, William Bloomfield jnr. (1820–1902), storeowner, builder and bricklayer, had a house and the newly arrived Dr Andrew Ross owned land. Dr Ross lived further out in the West End, but he would later build the *Court House Hotel* (1878) and establish his surgery on this corner. Turning right, Edward Street - and Edward - ascended the long gentle slope of the ridge between Molong Creek and Boree Hollow. Just before the next corner, at Bank Street, an Anglican Church had recently been built (1860) with a church school. Two years before that, the Wesleyans or Methodists had built Molong's first church on the opposite corner (1858). These two buildings are still in use as halls. And Mr Hull, a local builder, built a church for the Episcopalians in 1860. So there was no lack of religion in town. As a reaction to the numerous 'sinks of iniquity' despaired of some years earlier, the Molong Total Abstinence Society, attended by 80 people, had met in the Wesleyan Chapel in March 1860.

The growth in churches was more than matched by the number of inns: the *Wheelwright Arms* in East Molong still operated, James Mortal jnr had built the stone *Golden Fleece Hotel* (1856) on the corner of Gidley and Riddell Streets and William Milgate (1796–1878), who had been the publican for Cotter's *Criterion Inn* 'in the rocks', took up the licence for the *Travellers Rest* in Riddell Street. Martel still ran the *Union Inn* north of town. The correspondent to the *Empire* writing of Molong in September 1860 asked: 'When will the working man act as rational beings, and flee the allure of the rum bottle..? Three-fourths of the deaths of adults in Molong during the past six years, have been caused or hastened by the use of alcoholic drinks.'

Edward no doubt often turned left into Bank Street, where stores had been established. Here in the middle of town, in Gidley Street, a new flour mill had been opened by David Dalziel in January 1861. After a walk of less than a mile, Edward would have reached the then single-story *Freemasons Hotel* at the eastern end of Bank Street, where Edward Moon was the publican. Moon had promoted the town's first Race Meeting, held over three days in April 1860, on a course out along the road to the Ironbarks. The *Freemasons Hotel* was opposite the creek-crossing to old East Molong. In July 1861 tenders had been called for the supply of timber for a bridge there, but nearly a year later it was lamented that 'the towns of East and West Molong, divided as they are by a river, have not a safe crossing place connecting them.' It took nearly two more years, before the first piles for the bridge were driven.

Though Molong was connected by coach with Wellington and Bathurst from the '50s, well before Cobb and Co arrived, the two-day journey was rough and there was still the risk of bushrangers. The roads were often a quagmire and there were no bridges. Water was taken from the Molong Creek and from wells. Nearly every household ran a cow, a horse or goat. Flocks of sheep belonging to local pastoralists grazed on the unsold town lots, consuming all the grass so that the cows and horses of the town inhabitants were driven further away to find feed, for want of a designated commonage. The Government had also called tenders in July 1861 for forming a 20 foot wide road for 40 chains along Market Street. Five years later, public meetings and petitions were still being held to protest the delays in these works and to request a commonage. But at least, after many petitions about the ruinous state of the original building, the town got a new courthouse, built of local stone in 1862. The pace of change would remain slow in Molong.

(References to this article are found on the following page)

INFORMATION ABOUT ORIGINAL HOUSE AT 15 MARKET ST., MOLONG

Do you have photos or any information about the original brick house that stood at 15 Market Street (corner lane opposite Reynolds St., Molong. This house was inherited by Norah Clara Barlow in 1890 and she sold it to Annie and Clarinda Couch in 1901. Please contact Bill Barlow
e: billbarlow@bigpond.com.au or call 0400 570 318.

REFERENCES & SOURCES

William Barlow, *Edward Barlow: freeholder of Molong 1861-1890*, W. Barlow, 2011 (Molong Library).

Empire 6 Oct 1860, p.8. *SMH* 9 Dec 1861, 'Country Works'- contract let for erection of a new Courthouse. Replacement, 1863, NSW Office of Environment & Heritage, accessed 27 Nov16.

Empire 14 March 1860, p. 5.

SRNSW *Index of Publicans*. Roberson for Wynne at Golden Fleece and Milgate. The *Travellers Rest* in Riddell St (Roberson) may have been the *Commercial Hotel*, cnr Watson and Riddell Streets (lot 18), which J.S.Taylor claimed was built by George White in 1860/61 and later reopened as a pub by J. Woolbank (*Molong Argus*, 23 May 1919 'Early Molong'. Burnt down in 1919. Auction notice *Molong Argus*, 13 June 1919, p. 4.

Empire, 22 Sept 1860, p.5.

BFP 23 Jan 1861, p. 3. Construction was commenced by Mr Blakefield, who became insolvent before it was finished. *Empire*, 20 Mar 1860, p. 6. The mill was later bought and run by James Haslam jnr, from c.1877-1889. Now *Villa Ash B&B*, 9 Gidley Street. See Roberson, p. 94.

Empire 21 July 1859 records the first case of the Molong District Court being held at Mr Moon's *Freemasons Hotel* (as the Courthouse was unfit). *Empire* 30 Apr 1860, p. 5. Licensing court meeting. E.W. Moon, *Freemasons Hotel*.

The Ironbarks, now Stuart Town, 25 miles NE of Molong, the site of gold diggings and famed for A.B. Paterson's *The Man from Ironbark*.

Sydney Mail, 19 Apr 1862.

SMH, 20 Feb 1864, p.13.

Molong Express & WDA, 13 Oct 1906, p.12. 'In Ye Olden Time' by 'An Old Coach Driver' (John Wynne). Wynne wrote that Cobb & Co came on the Molong line in the '70s.

Empire, 30 April 1860, p.5.

From Molong on 20 November 1873, The Australian Town & Country Journal reported:

"Last Wednesday evening, a meeting was held in the Courthouse, called by placards headed 'Roll Up', for the purpose of incorporating the town of Molong. About 200 persons were present. Charles Blakefield, Esq, occupied the chair."

BOOKS FOR SALE (updated 16/12/2017)

AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE
Aileen Roberson	FAMILIES OF MOLONG & DISTRICT	\$35.00
Aileen Roberson	A HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF MOLONG	\$20.00
Aileen Roberson	ALLAN TOM The Picture Show Man	\$20.00
Aileen Roberson	PADDY McARDLE and Molong	\$20.00
Joan Marriott	THE CROSSROADS History of Cumnock	\$20.00
David Rutherford	The Life & times of JOHN SMITH	\$30.00
Robyn MacKenzie	From Life to Life in Australia	\$15.00
D. Spears & R. Blowes	Pioneering with Christ, Baptist Church History	\$5.00
Noel Cantrill	BORENORE Centenary 1878-1978	\$15.00
Orange Historical Society	Story Of Byng	\$5.00
Orange Rotary Club	BANJO PATERSON & NARRAMBLA	\$3.00
Margaret Gribbin	WELLINGTON VALLEY The Early Years	\$30.00

MOLONG 100 YEARS AGO

A quiet wedding was celebrated at St John's Church, Wellington, on Monday last, by the Rev. Canon Barry Brown. The bride being Miss Edith Elizabeth Barnett, daughter of Mr. W.J. Barnett and granddaughter of Mrs. J Martin of Curra Creek (says "Times"). The bridegroom was Mr. Claude Bennett, son of Mr and Mrs H.A. Bennett of Molong. The bride was attired in a tussore silk travelling dress with hat to match and wore a gold necklet: her gift to the bridegroom was a gold watch chain pendant. Miss P.O.M Bennett, sister of the bridegroom acted as bridesmaid and was costumed in a manner similar to the bride. Mr. William Bennett, brother of the bridegroom acted as best man. The newly wed pair left by the evening train for Orange, where they will spend their honeymoon. Their future home will be at Molong.

(Orange Leader Monday 3rd December 1917)

Dynamite Accident at Molong

At Molong this week, a youngster named Richard Bradley, picked up, a detonator, and with the juvenile inherited precocity, commenced picking the cap with a pin, probably to find out what made the noise. He discovered it to his sorrow, as the next moment an explosion occurred, shattering the boy's hands, and necessitating the amputation of several of his fingers

(Orange Leader Friday 13th December 1907)

During this festive season of giving, let us take time to slow down and enjoy the simple things. May this wonderful time of the year touch your heart in a special way. Wishing you much happiness not just today, but throughout the year

