

Newsletter of the Molong Historical Society Inc.



VOLUME 4
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Points of Interest:

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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2025/26

President	Bob Sullivan	(0427696256)
Vice President	Cameron Wild	(Maintenance/Displays)
Secretary/Membership	Jan McIntyre	(0402030270)
Treasurer	Susan Grinpukel	(Cataloging/Accessions)
Committee	Julie Lawrie	(Exhibitions)
	John Lawrie	(Odd Jobs)
	Doug Watson	(Equipment Officer)
	Sue Milne	(Editor/Fairbridge)
	Kim Frazer	(Cataloging/Accessions)
	Di Whiting	(Cataloging/Displays)

Historian— Catherine Mackenzie

PATRONS Jean Bennett, Marie and John Hammond.

MEMBERSHIP

Fees are \$25.00 (per year)

MEMBERSHIP YEAR is from July to
June.

Fees can be paid by direct debit, mail
or in person

Bank Details
BSB 062-573 28007189
FOR MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES
Contact
Jan 0402030270
EMAIL molonghs@gmail.com

RESEARCH ENQUIRIES

Enquiries to the Society should be
emailed to :-

molonghs@gmail.com
www.molonghistoricalsociety.com

Please include
Your Name, contact number
Your Email
Reason for enquiry
(family research, writing book etc)
Relevant information
Fees on Request

DISCLAIMER The MOLONG HISTORICAL SOCIETY accepts no responsibility for
the authenticity and accuracy of any contributed article in this newsletter.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2026

	DATE & TIME	INFORMATION
MUSEUM OPEN DAYS	Every Weekend from 10 am until 2pm and most Public Holidays	All welcome to visit and view the museum. Limited research available.
MUSEUM OPEN with WORKING DAY	Every Thursday 10am until 2pm.	Members will be working on various projects. Open to visitors to view museum displays.
ANNUAL FEES DUE	NOW DUE.	Payment accepted in cash or card at museum and direct debit.
COMMITTEE MEETING	Held each month as required	Please let Jan know if you have anything for the agenda.
Significate Collection Program (Orange Regional Museum Project).	Tuesday 8th September Tuesday 7th October Tuesday 3rd November	Cataloging FAIRBRIDGE COLLECTION with Monica (Sue)
ST JOSEPH'S SCHOOL	Wednesday 9th September	Group visiting during the morning.
MAG MARKET DAY	Monday 5th October (long weekend)	Museum will be open
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	Saturday 10th October 2pm at the RSL	See details in the newsletter
CUMNOCK FAMILY DAY	Saturday 17th October 10 till 3	Cumnock Memorial Oval
ORANGE REGIONAL MUSEUM	Saturday 19th November	Opening of Exhibition celebration 10 years .
BI-ANNUAL FAIRBRIDGE REUNION	Tuesday 9th March 2027	Museum will be open on Wednesday 10th (TBC)

MEMBERSHIPS DUE



Fees for 2026/27 remain at \$25.00 per year are now due.
Fees can be paid by cash or direct debit

JUST A THOUGHT

You should never take the attitude of "Lets someone else do it" unless you are having a haircut.
ANON



61st

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

will be held on

SATURDAY 10th October 2026

At the RSL Club.

Commencing at 2pm

All positions will be declared vacant and Committee selected.

Guest Speaker. Scott Sullivan, who will speak on the Black family of Cumnock. William was a pioneer of the district and established a thriving General Store business in 1882. It is still operating today.



Followed by Afternoon Tea

REMINDER

To be able to vote, you will need to be financial for 2026/2027
Photo from our archives.

Anyone wishing to be part of the Committee,
Nomination Forms will be available on the day.

AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY "FRUITS OF ORANGE" Visit



On Monday 28th September the museum will be hosting Morning Tea for delegates from the AUSTRALIAN GARDEN HISTORY SOCIETY. The delegates will be arriving in three buses, at staggered times from 10am.
Any members who are able to assist please phone Julie on 0438467292.

The AUSTRALIAN HISTORY GARDEN SOCIETY will be holding their "Annual National" Conference in Orange in late September. After the conference, a optional tour of the Molong District has been arranged..

This tour includes stops at KANGAROOBIE", The MUSEUM, WIAMERA (Cameron's property), BOREE CABONNE, and BOREE NYRANG.



The Historical Society is providing Morning Tea, while Susan is providing Afternoon Tea, with Boree Cabonne providing lunch (Catered for). There are expected to be 150 delegates arriving on three buses during the day.

Lockup Opening

Bob Sullivan our President welcomed over 90 people who attended the opening of the pre 1915 Lock-up (Goal) which was literally built from the ground up by over thirty committee and community members over the past 18 months.

On a bleak and cold day, *Phil Donato* our local member for Orange cut the ribbon to Officially open the lock-up

Braving the cool conditions the patrons were amused and entertained by a group of committed 'dressed up' - 'felons' and 'police' who braved the crowd to present a 'skit' of the misdemeanors by five accused offenders.



Mark Oates was the *Narrator of the Skit* and also recited a great Bushranger Poem.

A young "Francis" was the main culprit who came from Sydney to his brother at Manildra and promptly rode the train to Parkes filling sugar sacks with goods from the train carriages, he was charged and then taken away in manacles and locked in the "Lock-up" by Police. His brother Roland was an accessory after the fact according to Police for accepting stolen goods in his house. He got a good behavior bond of £20.



Roland's wife who was in possession of several packets Aspirin (for her headaches) was not charged. "John Delmonte: aka John Yeats who also resided in Roland's house was accused of accepting stolen goods and was wearing them - was he charged or not? You had to be there to find out.

Geoff Tonkin entertained everyone with great music while visitors enjoyed a sausage sandwich and a tour through the Lock-up, some even trying the "cut-out" for a photo opportunity.



Thank you to everyone who supported us in the rebuilding of this unique building.



POLICE LOCKUP FINDS A NEW HOME



A Police Lock up has had a long journey to find its final resting place at Molong Museum. The building was officially opened at the location on Sunday July 16th. After researching the history, including talking with locals and searching various websites, the following has been discovered.

The building, which is over a century old, measures 12 foot by 11foot 6inches, is located behind the old museum building which was built in 1856. It has been discovered that it was built at the original Manildra Police Station some-time before 1915. It was moved to the new station in Loftus Street and then the newest station was moved further away.

The second Police Station became a private residence, and the building remained onsite, being very close to the backdoor. It was starting to fall to bits, and it was full of bats. At one point it had been used to make beer, which certainly was not what it had been intended for. One day, all the beer bottles blew up, making a bigger mess. It was then offered to the Manildra Lons Club, who planned to install it at a local park. This never eventuated.

Mrs Lorna Boucher, who had pottery and a tourist attraction on the outskirts of Molong then swapped the building for a garden shed. The building remained on her property for many years. Following Mrs Boucher death in 2022, she had requested that The Molong Museum preserve the old lock up to add to their collection. In late 2025, plans commenced to relocate the building to the Museum grounds, in Riddell Street.

There was a fellow in town who transported railway carriages and said it was no issue to lift it to his truck and transport it to the new site. The old cell was carefully loaded and transported to town without a hitch. Several volunteers assisted with the move. Disaster struck metres from the museum gates.

Literally across the road, with only 10 metres to go, it fell to bits, turning it into a pile of kindling. After the initial panic the pieces were collected and stored away and the massive job of rebuilding commenced. Cameron says that it was rebuilt piece by piece, who had fortiously numbered and documented all the timbers in case of such disaster. Some corner posts and horizontal slabs were remade by a young local fellow as some pieces were broken.

Thanks to the extraordinary effect of an army of volunteers the heavy hard wood timbers were manhandled into place, and the lock up stands proud once more. It is even lockable using the original padlock and key. As well as volunteers providing labour, much of the timber was donated and lifting equipment provided free of charge.

It was a great community effect, with over 30 individual volunteers, skilled and unskilled, plus the committee contributed in one way or another.

REFERENCES

Drawing of Police Station "Lets share a yarn or two" written by Robyn Livermore.
Information from Cameron Wild interviews
Orange City Life
Molong Express

IVY BARRETT Grave side Eulogy

Written by Ron Barrett (read at the Molong Cemetery)

Ivy was a "True Blue" Aussie, a very special lady, a woman made of the same stuff as her pioneering forebears. Ivy was fourth generation Australian born on three family lines, and third generation on five lines. Her ancestors include hardy stock from local families including BENNETT, LANGDON, PARSLOW, PACKHAM, JAYE, UNICOMB AND HALCROFT. (taken from tribute read at UPA hall following her funeral)



Our mother, Ivy Clara Barrett, had love in abundance for her family, immediate and extended. There are only three of us to share her affection, as opposed to a clutch of a dozen or so siblings.

So, who was Ivy Barrett? The answer is all around us. This sacred place was dedicated in 1863. I invite you to join me in a mindful meander as we gather a few snippets, about the character of Ivy's ancestors. Ivy is a member of the fifth generation of newcomers to our shores.

But first a disclaimer. If I mention a family name or perhaps several, that you recognize as part of your own heritage, that doesn't guarantee that you are directly related to Ivy, but it possibly does.

I was raised with the notion that there were **no convicts** in our Family Tree. After fifty years of research, in the old fashion way, I managed to flush out five. NOTE that none of them reoffended, rather, quite to the contrary, as you and I acknowledge them as noble pioneers who brought with them to the antipodes many positives from the culture of England. They thrived in the advantages of "Down Under"

The first to be transported was RICHARD HALCROFT. in 1827 "Barragan Dick" is cited as one of Molong's first storekeepers, purchasing four blocks "above flood line" when West Molong was initially laid out.

The youngest felon, a feisty 16year old ANNE STORRETT arrived in 1829, Anne was assigned various masters, but was repeatedly returned to the Female Factory in Parramatta.

Anne married JAMES JAYE who arrived in 1832 and they produced eight children at Bathurst.

HENRY BENNETT, arrived in 1832 (more later)

THOMAS GEORGE also arrived in 1832 and after petitioning the authorities, his family arrived by way of the "Convict Family Reunion Program" his wife WINIFRED GEORGE, Ivy's three times great grandmother is buried with her daughter MARY ANN who married RICHARD HALCROFT. These three graves are near the entrance to the cemetery.

Here beside Ivy is the love of her life, our father FRANK BARRETT JNR. On the other side is JACK and then their father FRANK SNR. In a nearby ROBARDS plot is GLADYS EDNA, Ivy's mother-in-law. Ivy's parents BERTIE JONAS and CLARA BENNETT, nee LANGDON. He was referred to as the "Governor". The eldest of his family had the maturity and sensibility about him that everyone respected. He was a tinker, and as the fruit industry swung from frantic to dormant, our Pop, used the quiet times to reflect, repair and invent... Clara was quiet, considerate soul. Her masterly was packing grapes securely and immaculately into half-bushel cases, but her heart truly soared when she tendered her garden.



Ivy's Grandparents HOLFORD BENNETT and HANNAH, daughter of GEORGE CHANDLER and SARAH PACKHAM, she was daughter of HENRY PACKHAM and ANN UNICOMB, who are resting in the paddocks of "Quickbourne" which you know as KEITH PACKHAMS farm. IN 1880 Holford took up land on Sandy Creek Road. They married in 1884 and their family of seven all laboured to generate income. 1923 saw their first grape harvest. The next three generations of orchardists and vignerons was underway. But that wasn't the beginning!

HENRY BENNETT and MARY UNICOMB were married at Larras Lake in 1847, spending time at Montefiores (early Wellington) then settled at West End. Their offspring numbered twelve, and a quirky note in their epitaph cites the fact that all the children had names beginning with "H". Sadly, both Henry and Mary perished at an early age, leaving five orphans under eighteen. Holford's older sister HANNAH BENNETT married JIM GADD, and this offers a hint as to the origins of prowess in erecting buildings found in subsequent generations. HENRY BENNETT was convicted of stealing a most impressive catalog of items, but the reformed Henry is cited in the records as Molong's FIRST gardener, vigneron, apiarist and orchardist. Henry's father was gardener or groundsman at Arundel in West Sussex, who often sent letters and seeds to his absent son (from a letter held in Ron's collection). These familiar plants from "The Old Country" must have bought comfort to many, and Henry's established garden saw mention in at least one Sydney newspaper. Happy JOE PARSLOW and his wife Happy ANNIE, daughter of JAMES and ANNE JAYE were revered by folk of their generation. They are resting in the family plot on "Home in the West" on Peabody Road.

JOHN GEORGE LANGDON SNR was apprenticed as a Flour Miller, when a teenager. He later excelled to become a certified Ship's Captain, first Navy and then Merchant shipping, regularly plied the waters between England and the Mediterranean. His wife SARAH nee DALE, whose brother was mayor of Orange (three times) was a schoolteacher. Today "Ash Villa" has none of the rumble and aroma of Molong's first Flour Mill. Known by various titles but capably managed by George and sons HENRY JAMES and WILLIAM CHARLES: LANGDON'S MILL produced a quality product. Two LANGDON brothers married two HALCROFT sisters and later joined by JOHN HENRY JNR took up wheat farming at Pinecliffe.

By the time Ivy completed a DNA test there weren't many surprises, just conformation that her delicate complexion was entirely due to her heritage from Southern England. Ivy was undoubtedly a distilled version of her forebears. In her youth, Ivy worked beside her parents on "Glenside", grapes, fruits. Vegetables and flowers were her life.



Ivy was Dux of her cohort in 6th class, but left school after 7th class when Mr Rolfe unsuccessfully demonstrated the mysteries of algebra, but as a friend recently stated "to Ivy a spade was a spade"

Off farm Ivy worked as a Retail Sales assistant. In retirement she could still be found behind the counter, at the "Yarn Market" happily counting the till at the close of business. Ivy may not have milled her own flour, but her date loaves always sold out very quickly.

After a lifetime of frugal saving, Ivy designed the house known as "Morilla" in Thistle Street. Frank's labour and Ivy's gardening skills kept their dream home polished and imposing. It was Ivy's pride and joy for 34 years. A feature was the fabulous loquat tree near the back door.

THE BENNETT WINDWILL



Ivy's Grandfather BERTIE JONAS BENNETT of "GLENSIDE" Sandy Creek Road, was an "early acquirer" of technology, but also aggressively independent. As mentioned in a earlier story, he was a tinker and as the fruit industry swung from frantic to dormant, Bertie, used the quiet times to reflect, repair and invent...

This is an example of one of his projects.

Here we have his 1930s project, to harness wind power to generate electricity, using a motor vehicle generator (possibly from a retired Fire Truck) and a fully "home grown" windmill to drive it... via a hand crafted custom leather belt!

Beside the house was a small shed, a copy of the dinkum dunny, where the battery bank received and stored the charge, and supplied 6v lights in the house as required. (Some years later a Lister Genset replaced this arrangement.) Most of the Windmill is long gone, but his relatives still have the old Genny, and the Lister...



Original article posted by Ron Barrett in Stationary Engines Around AUSTRALIA in 2022. Permission to reprint given by Ron Barrett (August 2026)
Contributed by Cameron Wild.

CUMNOCK CWA GROUP

What a lovely group of ladies & gentlemen from the Cumnock CWA who attended a luncheon on our verandah in July. They enjoyed the exhibitions which brought back memories. During lunch there were further discussions about their childhood.



CANNONBAR COTTAGE RELOCATED

Following the Society's request for information on the relocated Fairbridge cottages, we received an email, locating the cottage known as "CANNONBAR". The cottage was moved to Isabella and this is its history.

As we all know the story of the FAIRBRIDGE FARM SCHOOLS, I will not go into this. The Farm in Molong was established in 1937 and continued until 1975-Fifteen cottages as well as a dining room, kitchen, hospital and school were first. Four more cottages were built in 1952, with a donation from the "Goldsborough Mort Company Pastoral Company", one of which was "Cannonbar". After the closure several cottages were sold and transferred to other areas such as Garra, Cumnock, Molong, near Yeoval and Isabella (near Oberon).

CANNONBAR COTTAGE was purchased by the WARREN FAMILY who owned a property known as "HIGHE PAELE" (now known as High Pael) at Isabella (a small hamlet 45kms south-west of Oberon). The family were living in a Nissan Hut which had been converted into a comfortable home. When it was time for the Warren family to move into a larger home, they were told by a retired Architect living nearby of an advertisement for the sale of cottages from Fairbridge Farm in Molong and they decided to investigate this alternative to building a new house.

The Warren's bought CANNONBAR which had been completed in 1952. It was a large cottage, with a dormitory at one end, and a flat for the Cottage Mother and her family at the other end, with living areas in between. .

To prepare for the move, The cottage was divided into four sections for transportation with several chimneys being removed as well as the water tanks. The cottage arrived on site in the middle of a snowstorm. Mr Paul Mazotti, an Italian migrant builder from Black Springs worked on the cottage to put it back together and make internal changes to suit the family. The weatherboard house was then bricked, with stone foundations by the Czech stonemason, one chimney and fire-place reinstated, again in stonework, windows replaced and the front verandah enclosed. Finally it was ready for occupation in November 1978.

In 1987, the Warren family sold the property to the NSW Forestry Commission, The property was subdivided with DA approval to subdivide the house and wool shed on 60 acres, which was purchased by the STAPLETON family which continues to be known as *High Pael*. The remaining section is now part of the DOG ROCK FOREST.

CANNONBAR PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY



PHOTOS

TOP

The 4 Cottages being constructed in 1959
CANNONBAR , onsite at Fairbridge

MIDDLE

Moving CANNONBAR from Molong to Isabella

BOTTOM

CANNONBAR Completed(LEE STEELE Photo }

REFERENCES

Information and photos are from the following sources

- The FAIRBRIDGE COLLECTION (Molong Historical Society)
- IAN BAILIFF PAPERS [The Papers | The Ian Bayliff Fairbridge Farm School Molong Papers](#)
- 100 HOMES OF BATHURST VOL4 by Lee Steele
- Emails and phone calls from JUDY SMITH, Family friend .
- NSW Department of FORESTRY Website.



MOLONG IN THE 70's
 A GLANCE THROUGH OLD FILES
A selection of articles found in a 1903 Express.

The MOLONG EXPRESS has been part of Molong for 150 years.
This is an article I found on TROVE reviewing the first issue dated 7th October 1876.
The Opening passage is as relevant today as in 1903.

From Molong Express Saturday FEBRUARY 14, 1903,



The first issue of the MOLONG EXPRESS was published on the 7th of October 1876- somewhat over 26 years ago- and though the date is comparatively recent a perusal of the back numbers reveals much that will interest and amuse present day readers. The initial issues of the EXPRESS were extremely creditable, the paper being newsy, well printed and brightly written, while then, as now it enjoyed a large share of advertising favors.

The names of John Ebbs LEATHEM and Henry Vale LEATHEM, appear on the first imprints, the editorial control being vested in the latter. It is interesting to not that the motto "For the cause that lacks assistance, etc which still appears above each week's leader, was the first through not the only one, adopted by this journal.

In the first issue, Mr J. HASLAM's advert, occupied about four columns of space, while Mr W. TANNER, jun, of the Molong Stores, was another big advertiser. Among other advertisements which appeared were those of

NEW ROYAL HOTEL, Bank Street, kept by J.M. HUGHES
The ROYAL HOTEL, Riddell Street, kept by H. HICKS
LANGDON AND SONS, Molong Stream Mill
J. DENNING Builder and Cabinetmaker, Undertaker
W. GADD Builder and Carpenter
Andrew KERR Butcher
F. JAMES Tailor
J.L. FERGUSON Baker
John LISCOMBE Auctioneer (Gidley St opposite the flour mill)
J. HALE Architect
J.F. WYNNE Freemasons Hotel
J.P HULL AND SON Builders and contractors
A. PARKER Saddler
Mrs HORSELEY Ladies School Edward Street

Mr John QUINN. Of the Vulcan Forge, it advertises that he can execute work with celerity and dispatch at Sydney rates and winds up his announcement; thus, -

*Men of note of care and skill
Will always ask if Old Quin's in
Your services I require, do not me delay.
As I have business to transact this day.*

BOOKS FOR SALE

(Reviewed February 2026)

AILEEN ROBERSON

A HISTORY OF THE MOLONG CATHOLIC CHURCH	\$20.00
ALLAN TOM Picture Show Man	\$20.00
PADDY McARDLE	\$20.00
THE SHEEN TEAM (Max &Nita)	\$15.00
VILLA ASH	\$5.00

ROBERT ELLIS

SESQUICENTIENNAL HISTORY OF MOLONG SHOW	\$35.00
PIPER & YURANGH	\$25.00
HOW THE WEST WAS WON	\$25.00
HISTORY OF THE SHEEPDOG	\$25.00

DAVID RUTHERFORD

LIFE & TIMES OF JOHN SMITH	\$30.00
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KATE GADSBY

CONVICTS, CAPITALISTS & CORRUPTION	\$40.00
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HELEN HAYNES

MOLONG RSL PORTRAIT GUIDE	\$15.00
ORANGE 1901	\$8.00

DIANNE WOOLBANK

WOOLBANK MEMOIRS	\$10.00
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ORANGE ROTARY CLUB

BANJO PATERSON & NARRAMBLA	\$3.00
\$15.00	

GREG RAFFIN

EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING	\$20.00
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BERTHA MacSMITH

LETTERS OF JOHN MAXWELL	\$20.00
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TINA McGEOGH

BOREE CABONNE	\$10.00
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ANNE MARIE INGHAM

THE BOSS DROVER	\$35.00
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PLEASE ADD POSTAGE \$10 TO \$15 depending on book size.

JEAN WINIFRED BENNETT (JEANNIE)

The passing of another Foundation member, who was still active within the Society, Jeannie Bennett on the 22nd of August was a shock to all connected with the museum.



Jean was a special guest at the "Opening of the Lockup" two weeks ago as well as visiting the museum last week.

Jean and her (late) husband David have been involved with the Historical Society for 60 years, serving in many executive positions. They contributed to the work required to establish and maintain the old building as the Museum it is today.

Jean has been supported by her daughter Annette as well as other daughters Nancy and Alison and her family.

There will be memorial for Jean in the next newsletter. If you would like to contribute please contact Sue or the museum.