

History alive

Orange & District Historical Society newsletter

Winter 2019



We celebrate 70 years of history

In this issue



70th anniversary dinner
Pages 4 & 5



1949: the way we were
Page 7



Discovering cemetery's secrets
Page 9



All in a Day's Work exhibition opens
Page 10 & 11

Cover image

Long-term society member Phil Stevenson and special guest Kylie Winkworth cut the celebratory cake at the 70th anniversary dinner at Duntryleague on 25 May.

Full story pages 4 and 5.

Orange & District Historical Society

Orange Heritage Centre
148 March Street
PO Box 1626 Orange NSW 2800.
Email: orange.history@yahoo.com.au
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Orangehistory>

Patrons: Russell Tym and Marie Hammond

President: Liz Edwards

Vice-president: Euan Greer

Secretary: Phil Stevenson

Treasurer: Annette Neville

Committee: John Glastonbury, Julie Sykes, Judy Agland, Ross Maroney, Karen Kloosterman,

Publicity officer/newsletter editor: Liz Edwards

Honorary historians: Ross Maroney, Liz Edwards, Julie Sykes & Elizabeth Griffin

—

Membership fees from January 2019

Family \$45; individual \$30; single concession \$20; couple concession \$30. Contact secretary or treasurer. Please pay promptly.

Research inquiries:

The Research Officer, Orange & District Historical Society, P O Box 1626, Orange, NSW 2800
Please supply an A4, stamped, self-addressed envelope.
Cost: \$20 for the initial inquiry (plus additional charges for more extensive research).

Please provide your name, address, phone number and email address, details of your inquiry, any information you may already have, and the reason for your inquiry.

Bank:

Orange & District Historical Society,
Orange Credit Union, BSB 802-129,
A/c No 34252 (please include name and reason for payment). If you are transferring money from your account at Orange Credit Union, please add S1 to our account number.

A message from the president

This will be my last message to you as president as I will finish three years in the position at our Annual General Meeting in August. It has been a great pleasure leading our society and witnessing some of our notable achievements.

When I took over the helm in 2016 the Orange Regional Museum was at last taking shape and we looked forward to it opening.

Since it opened in November 2017, our society has worked closely with director Brad Hammond and his staff, collaborating with them on the Paddock to Plate Exhibition and the current one, All in a Day's Work. The museum has an active Friends group, to which a number of our members belong.

One of Orange's iconic buildings was due to undergo a profound change in early 2017. The Myer store closed in late January that year, ending well over 150 years as a retail outlet in the city. Started by James Dalton, it became a huge emporium in its heyday, drawing shoppers from miles around. Some of us were privileged to go behind the scenes in 2016 to catch a glimpse of what the store was like in years gone past. Our society lobbied Orange City Council to ensure the building would not be destroyed completely, and we are pleased that the developers were persuaded to retain its façade, which has graced Summer Street for so long. We also held a very successful History Alive meeting to stir up memories among those who worked at the store. On display were dozens of photos showing life at the store over many years.

The future of another historic Dalton building has been a cause for concern: Duntryleague, James Dalton's family home, is in need of major restoration so it is good to have the Duntryleague Mansion Foundation working to that end. Already the port cochère has been renovated.

The historic Carrington Hotel was another historic building that members of our society took an interest in when it was scheduled for renovations. We were able to provide a detailed history of the building, which started as John Peisley's store, as well as historic photos. The renovations show just what can be done when there is a will to preserve an historic building and acknowledge its past.

We lost another Orange icon in 2016 when the Electrolux factory closed, no longer able to compete against cheap imports of whitegoods from Asia. When the last few hundred workers left, our society formed a group which has met regularly ever since to identify some 16,000 photos of life in the factory since it opened in 1946. Besides doing a useful job, the group, some of whom worked at the factory, enjoys the camaraderie of their weekly meetings.

In 2017, the 140th anniversary of the western railway line reaching Orange was cause for great celebration and we held a successful day-long symposium to mark the event, with notable guest speakers. We also collaborated with Orange railway station staff to give the XPT a right royal welcome when it arrived at the station on 19 April, exactly 140 years after the first train arrived.

One of our continuing areas of interest has been the preservation of photos and negatives. We were delighted to be able to assist with the conservation of one of Orange's iconic photos, the panoramic photo of the town taken in 1907. The owner donated the original to Orange Regional Museum and funds were allocated to have a Sydney expert conserve it.

One of our many projects which I have taken a keen interest in over a number of years has been the CWD Negative Collection. It was a thrill in early June to see some outstanding photos on display for the All in a Day's Work exhibition. If you have not yet seen it, I urge you to go – the images are a true reflection of working life in Orange and district in the 1950s and 60s.

Our society has always supported the work of others in writing local histories, and we were thrilled last year to see the finished result of Graham Lupp's monumental two-volume history of architecture in the Central West. Graham shared his knowledge at a History Alive meeting and the society bought a copy of the wonderful book for the reference library. We were also delighted to see Robert Bartlett's long-awaited second volume of photos of Orange and district in days gone by. Like the first volume, it is a great photographic record of our city.

You can see from the above that we have been actively working on the preservation of Orange's history as well as providing enjoyable events for members and the public.

The society's 70th anniversary this year was a significant milestone. We hope to have many more years of service to the community and enjoyment for members.

Finally, I would like to thank our volunteers who work so hard on their various tasks, and who have contributed so much to preserving our city's rich history, and Orange City Council for its continued support.

- Liz Edwards



ODHS 70th anniversary

Celebratory dinner at Duntryleague



Duntryleague's Campdale Room was packed for the society's 70th anniversary dinner on 25 May.

Photos John Kich.

The weekend of Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 May marked the culmination of many months of planning for our society's 70th anniversary.

About fifty members, friends and special guests attended a celebratory dinner on the Saturday at Duntryleague to mark the event.

Among those present were our two patrons, Marie Hammond and Russell Tym, long-term supporter of the society Kylie Winkworth, City of Sydney historian Dr Lisa Murray, Orange Mayor Councillor Reg Kidd, and Central West Libraries Manager Jan Richards.

MC Euan Greer introduced the guest speakers.

Cr Kidd spoke about his lifelong passion for history, and the influence of his teacher, long-term Historical Society member Ross Maroney, who persuaded him to study history. He also spoke of the importance of Orange's Heritage Advisory Committee and the need to preserve the city's heritage. Included in that was Duntryleague, and he called for both the State and Federal governments to support its preservation.

Special guest Orange-born Kylie Winkworth, who is a respected Sydney-based museums adviser, reminisced about her childhood in Orange, riding her bike with sib-

lings and friends to historical sites such as Templer's Mill. She believes it was places like this which started her obsession with heritage matters.

Kylie congratulated the society on reaching its 70th anniversary, pointing out that many small regional societies and museums have not survived. She noted the society's positive relationship with Orange City Council, which had proved beneficial to both parties.

Society president Liz Edwards was overseas during the celebratory weekend but her sister Jenny Holdaway read a speech on her behalf.

Liz spoke about the origins of the society in 1949 and the work of members over the years to preserve the district's history for all to enjoy.

She mentioned the randomness of historical events and how tiny shifts in time and place could make huge differences to the course of history.

She finished by thanking the society's volunteers for their enormous contribution through their countless hours of work researching, sorting, cataloguing and exploring the district's history for the benefit of all.

Kylie and long-term member Phil Stevenson cut an anniversary cake to mark the occasion.



Special guest Kylie Winkworth.



Orange Mayor, Reg Kidd.



Jenny Holdaway speaking on behalf of Liz Edwards.



MC Euan Greer.



Phil Stevenson.

ODHS 70th anniversary



ODHS 70th anniversary committee members Karen Kloosterman and Judy Agland.



Memories of Cherry Blossom Festival



Left: A street float celebrating milk, in the days when milk deliveries were still made by horse and cart around town.

Orange's Cherry Blossom Festival was one of the highlights of the city's calendar.

It included a big street parade with scores of floats, the crowning of the Cherry Blossom Queen, fund-raising for charities, and a celebration of the fruit which in days gone by was one of the principal crops of the Orange district.



Left: crowning of the Cherry Blossom Queen in 1963.

Right: The 1963 Cherry Blossom Queen Gloria Hastedt is crowned.



Radio 2GZ announcer John Laws opening the Cherry Blossom Festival, November 1963 with Leonie Hyland (sports queen), Anne Noonan, Hilda Egan (reigning queen), Gloria Hastedt, and Janice Miskell.



One of the many floats which joined the 1963 parade.

1949: the way we were

The History Alive May meeting turned the clock back to 1949, the year the society was founded, to catch a glimpse of our city at that time.

The guest speakers were Merv Wilkie, Harold Balcomb and George White, who each had a story to tell about the Orange district that they remembered.

Merv was a 21-year-old in 1949 and working in the Western Stores hardware department. He had started life on the family orchard in west Orange, helping with the milking before and after school.

Harold, aged 22, had received his schooling at Wolaroi College but was back on the family farm at Toogong in 1949. He would come into Orange once a week to attend the stock sales. George, just 17, was working on the family orchard in Anson Road, and later went share farming and then turned to trucking, delivering fruit from the Orange district to the Sydney markets.

Orange was a very different place 70 years ago, as convenor Julie Sykes found when she started researching the subject. In these days of climate change it is hard to imagine that the city was subject to significant snowfalls in winter.

The population was about 14,000 people, about a third of what it is now. It had been declared a city in 1946 but was still very much a small rural centre.

Julie had on display a map showing the city boundaries in the late 1940s, which helped put into perspective the gradual expansion of the city over the ensuing years.

The inhabitants were overwhelmingly Anglo-Irish and, in terms of religious adherence, slightly more than half were An-

glicans and slightly less than 50 per cent were Catholics, with a small number of Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists.

Most people saw Britain as the 'homeland' and they espoused British values and traditions.

People living in the surrounding district were mostly engaged in agriculture and orcharding. The Emmco factory, which produced refrigerators, ovens, electric fans and washing machines, had opened three years previously and employed hundreds of men and women. The other major industry was the woollen mill.

Only the city centre had sealed roads and dirt roads were still common in residential streets and surrounding rural areas. Orange City Council concentrated on essential services such as water supply, kerbing, guttering and road maintenance. It played no role at that time in providing community services or developing the culture of the city.

The first post-war European migrants – displaced people mainly from the Baltic states, Poland and Ukraine – had arrived in Orange in 1948 and were soon followed by others from throughout Europe. They were sent to Orange because there were jobs available – the foundation of a new life in their adopted country. They were given jobs at the factory, Bloomfield Hospital and the railways and, over time, helped diversify the population and brought cultural change to the city.

One of the city's most popular annual events was the Cherry Blossom Festival, held each spring. It included the crowning of the Cherry Blossom Queen and a parade along Summer Street.

The meeting was well attended and some said it was the best History Alive session they had ever attended.



Guest speakers Merv Wilkie, Harold Balcomb and George White.



Convenor Julie Sykes.

Captured: portraits of crime

The next History Alive meeting is a special collaboration between the society and Orange City Library. Titled 'Captured: Portraits of Crime 1870-1930', it corresponds with the opening of an exhibition of the same name. Guest speaker will be

Wendy Gallagher from NSW State Archives. Entry is free and open to all. Supper will be served afterwards.

For inquiries, please contact Phil Stevenson on 0402 412 188, or email: ibiswines@bigpond.com

Talks on collections, symbolism

The society's 70 anniversary celebrations included sessions on the Saturday morning by museums adviser Kylie Winkworth and City of Sydney historian Dr Lisa Murray (both pictured right).

Kylie's session was titled 'The Future of Collecting in Regional and Community Museums'.

Kylie is a museum and heritage consultant. She was born in Orange and grew up roaming heritage places in the district. This had a profound influence on her interest and work with collections and heritage sites. Over more than 30 years in practice, her work has focused on regional and community museums and heritage places. She has a particular interest in museum renewal, collections and the connections between people, places and objects.

Kylie has a long standing interest in heritage and museum policy, and has served on various boards and committees. She is a former trustee of the Powerhouse Museum, and was for 12 years a member of the National Cultural Heritage Committee which oversees the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act.

In her talk, Kylie cited the purchase by the Orange Regional Museum of the Campbell Epergne, which she said was a landmark purchase for the new museum and one of the most significant acquisitions by a regional museum in recent years.

The Epergne was presented to David and Amelia Campbell in October 1864 for their part in repelling bushrangers at their property, Goimbla, in 1864.

She said that in the 1950s, 60s and 70s there was a flurry of museum building in regional Australia, and museums were inundated by offers of donations. Rarely did any money change hands. And perhaps too rarely were offers of donation declined.

With many regional and community museums reaching maturity, grappling with the legacy of decades of collecting is just one of many challenges they now face. Offers of donations have slowed, stores and sheds are full, and most museums have a backlog of collection documentation work. Some curators have suggested that objects don't have much interest for Gen Z visitors, who



have grown up face-to-face with digital screens. Does the collection even have a place in the modern museum? Kylie's talk explored some of the issues, challenges and opportunities for collecting in regional Australia.

Dr Lisa Murray's talk was titled 'Going out in style: the hidden meanings of headstones'.

Lisa is an award-winning author, curator and digital content maker. With over 20 years' experience in the field, Lisa is passionate about making history accessible to the public. Lisa is involved with community history groups, including being a volunteer with the Dictionary of Sydney and a member of the National Trust. She has just finished a manuscript on the history of Australian cemeteries, which is due to be published by the National Library next year.

Lisa talked about the essential part of the Australian cemetery being the grave marker or tombstone. The design of a memorial was chosen by individuals as a personal, yet public, expression of their religious beliefs, values, and social aspirations. The shape, style and material of a headstone are all pointers to the period in which it was manufactured. In her illustrated talk, she introduced the audience to the stylistic fashions displayed in Australian cemetery memorials and the craftsmen who made them.



Left and right: Members of the audience at the talks.

Photos courtesy John Kich.



Gravestones reveal their stories

A large crowd of about seventy people joined Elizabeth Griffin, Sue Milne and Heather Nicholls on a walk through Orange cemetery as one of the events for the society's 70th anniversary celebrations.

On a sunny late autumn day, a circuit was made of the older sections of the cemetery, taking in the stories of the ordinary and the extraordinary, with Elizabeth speaking about local and family history matters and Heather adding information about cemeteries and symbolism.

The tour followed a talk given by Lisa Murray about the symbolism of gravestone markings.

Some of the graves talked about included those of the Dalton, Moulder, Newman, Penhall, Lidster, Sykes, Proudfoot and Hanrahan families.

Elizabeth plans to do more of these popular walks later in the year.



Elizabeth Griffin and Sue Milne. Photo courtesy Jude Keogh, Central Western Daily.



Left: Heather Nicholls explains the symbolism on gravestones.
Photos left and below courtesy John Kich.



Elizabeth Griffin talks about some of the families whose graves are in the cemetery.



The cemetery is rich in symbolism and history.

ODHS 70th anniversary

All in a Day's Work exhibition opens

The opening of the 'All in a Day's Work' exhibition at Orange Regional Museum on 6 June was the culmination of years of work carried out by the society on the CWD Negative Collection.

The collection, which comprises more than a million negatives donated by the Central Western Daily to the society in 2010, represents the work of the newspaper's photographers from 1955 to 2000.

Since acquiring the collection, volunteers have been sorting, cataloguing, rehousing and digitising the images, a labour of love which will continue for many years.

As they started scanning negatives, it became clear to team leader Liz Edwards that there were some wonderful images of people working in the Orange district which were worthy of an exhibition.

What particularly struck her was how much the workplace has changed over the years. Many of the images show workplaces and work practices which no longer exist.

She took her proposal to Museum Director Brad Hammond, who was excited by what he saw and agreed that the images would make a fine exhibition.

Liz and Phil Stevenson were appointed co-curators and worked closely with Brad and museum and Orange City Council staff in ensuring the exhibition would be an outstanding display.

The exhibition was opened by the Mayor, Councillor Reg Kidd, who noted that not only did the dates of the collection coincide with his youth but that he knew



A team effort: Orange Regional Museum public engagement and education officer Sally MacLennan, curators Phil Stevenson and Liz Edwards, acting museum manager Alli Campbell and museum director Brad Hammond.

many of the people in the images on display.

Liz talked about how lucky the society was to have the collection, given that many newspaper negative collections had been thrown out when negatives were superseded by digital photography. She praised the then Editor of the Central Western Daily, Tony Rhead, for having the foresight to ensure the collection was saved as an important part of Orange's visual history.

After the formalities, guests toured the exhibition and immediately the place was buzzing with comments about the images, many of which were enlarged to a considerable degree without any distortion.



Left: Euan Greer and Judy Agland.



Right: Dorothy Balcomb, Julie Sykes and Ross Maroney.

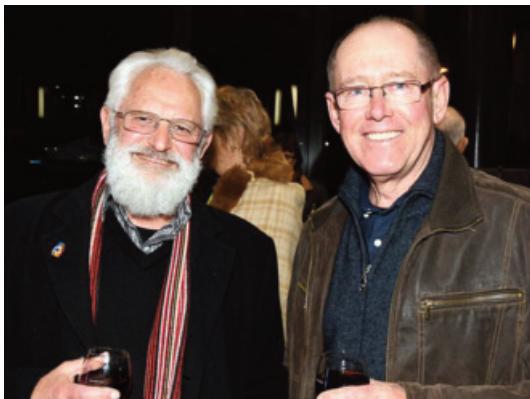


Left: Annette Neville, Alli Campbell and Robert Bruce.



Right: Marian and John Spanjer and Stephen Nugent.

Outstanding photos go on display



Left: Mike Milston and Tony Rhead.



Right: Don Saville and Phil Stevenson.

Below: Some of the images on display.

Opening night photos by Jude Keogh, CWD, Julie Sykes and John Kich.



Bill Priest operates a warp-winding machine at the Orange Woollen Mills in Byng Street in August 1955.



Orange City Council workers replace bitumen pavement with concrete in Summer Street in August 1955.



Edward Fuller, pictured here aged 83 in August 1956, was one of the last men in Orange to make bricks by hand.



The working conditions were primitive but local people loved Mayfield's cordials. Col Fitzgerald and Max Player at the factory in September 1958.

Diary April - June 2019

All in a Day's Work exhibition, featuring photos of working people in Orange and district from the 1950s and 60s, continues at Orange Regional Museum.

Millthorpe Golden Memories Museum: open on weekends, public holidays and school holidays 10am-4pm.

Molong Museum: Open on the last Sunday of the month 12.30-3.30pm, 20 Riddell Street.

Molong and District Servicemen and Servicewomen's Portrait Gallery: This can be viewed whenever the Molong RSL Club is open (phone 6366-8105 for details).

Wentworth Mine: open Saturday and Sunday on the first full weekend of the month 10am-2.30pm. See www.orangemuseum.com.au/wentworthmainmine

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: Historical Society volunteer working days at Heritage Cottage.

Wed 3 July: History Alive, a special collaboration with Orange City Library titled 'Captured: Portraits of Crime 1870-1930'. Starts at 5.30pm at Orange City Library, entry free. Supper will follow. Inquiries Orange City Library or Phil Stevenson on 0402 412 88, or email: ibiswines@bigpond.com

Wednesday 10 July: ODHS committee meeting, 5pm.

Wednesday 7 August: ODHS committee meeting, 5pm.

Saturday 17 August: ODHS annual general meeting, 2pm in the West Room of Orange Regional Gallery. Please come along to support your society. Please bring a plate for afternoon tea.

Wednesday 4 September: ODHS committee meeting, 5pm.

Wednesday 11 September: History Alive – subject to be announced

Digitisation project under way

Recently Orange City Council gave a generous grant of \$20,000 to the Historical Society towards the digitisation of the CWD Negative Collection.

Philip McClellan of Kea Video was awarded the contract to scan the negatives for the society.

Philip said he was amazed at the quality of the negatives, many of which date back well over sixty years.

He uses a high-quality flat-bed scanner and then processes the images with Photoshop.

The digitisation will ensure not only the preservation of the collection, but it will become more easily accessible to the public.

The society's volunteers have scanned about 1500 negatives and Kea's work will result in many more being digitised.

The society is profoundly grateful to Council for its generosity.

The next job for volunteers is to date 35mm negatives from the 1970s, which were numbered but not dated.



Philip McClelland of Kea Video, who is busy scanning thousands of negatives for the society. The project will ensure the negatives survive into the future and also that the images will be available to the public.