



## Taralga Historical Society Inc

83 Orchard Street

Taralga NSW 2580



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**President: Michael Chalker 4843 5975**

**Secretary: Graham Lambert 4843 8187**

**Treasurer: Glennis Wright 4840 2215**

***Aim: To preserve history of Taralga & District for future generations***

### **Newsletter No 2, 2019**

#### **Presidents Report : June 2019**

Well hello again, winter is upon us so we are no doubt getting our flu shots and keeping warm.

The complex is in pretty good shape, Maureen, Joan, Pat and Elaine have been busy reorganising the filing system and the church in general. (Well done ladies).

On Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> May a small ceremony was held to dedicate the plaques in memory of the late Patricia Blay and Lorraine and Ian Ross. The three plaques have been mounted in the picnic shelter. We then moved to the hall where Ken Fleming in a moving tribute outlined the very important actions and commitments undertaken by these three people in the early years that has enabled the society to establish into what is today. A delightful afternoon tea and many yarns followed.

In April we had the pleasure of a Coach Tour of thirty four from the central coast. They all had a good time viewing the complex and enjoyed a delicious morning tea supplied by our splendid catering ladies.

In early May, Upper Lachlan Council hosted a community outreach meeting in the Masonic Hall. At a previous meeting we raised concern with the Council regarding the non-compliance of the access and pathways to the hall and facilities. This concern was again raised, the Council has again agreed to re visit the issue.

At the last general meeting discussion was entered into as to the state and usability of the machinery shed (that's the one near the Fernbank school). The meeting agreed that the executive be empowered to investigate extending the shed rearwards by up to five metres. If carried out, the shed would provide room for exhibits as well as providing workshop facilities to assist with the maintenance of exhibits and machinery.

As you are all no doubt aware, Taralga, on the Saturday and Sunday of the October long weekend 2019, will be celebrating 200 years since Charles Throsby and his party passed through the area and camped at Burra Lake. The Historical Society will be playing a role in the staging of this event.

In our grounds on the Saturday, there will be shearing demonstrations both mechanical and blade, spinners and weavers, sausage sizzle, guided tours of the facility, and at 3pm, the unveiling of the plaque acknowledging the Bicentenary.

Sunday will see a street parade commencing at 11am featuring the re-enactment of the Throsby party's arrival, bullock team pulling our dray, sulkies, vintage machinery, cars and machinery covering the 200 years, and culminating at the showground where there will be events and entertainment for all.

We will be looking for as many volunteers as we can get to staff the Historical Society's grounds and exhibits over both days.

If you can offer some time please give me a call on (02) 4843 5975 or email [wombeyan@gmail.com](mailto:wombeyan@gmail.com)

For more information visit T200 [www.tasteoftaralga.com](http://www.tasteoftaralga.com)

**PLEASE NOTE: Our next meeting is Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> July at 2pm**

Michael Chalker

President

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*Vale*



**John Francis**

**Aged 72 years**

**4.2.1947 - 24.3.2019**

**Husband of Meg**

**Father of Scott & Carla**

**Dianne (Craig) Secomb**

**2.4.1945 - 20.5.2019 aged 74 years**

**Former Myrtleville Family**

**Wife of Paul**

**Mother of Grant and Phillip**

**Daughter of**

**Bill and Thomasina Craig**

**Youngest Sister of**

**Wilma, Barry (dec) Graeme (dec)**

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**A member of the Taralga Historical Society**

**Dianne visited Taralga a few months ago for the 'OVER 70'S photo**

**(Dianne's mother was a member of the BARRY family from Hillcrest  
Myrtleville who are featured In this newsletter)**

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### **Pioneers of Taralga NSW 1922**

#### **PIONEERS HONOURED, A REMARKABLE GATHERING**

Speaking on Saturday 29 April 1922, at the celebration of the 152<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the landing of Captain Cook, Sir William Cullen said: "we should be proud of the pioneers, who by their courage and energy have helped to make Australia what it is today".

Taralga is not only proud of her pioneers, she honours them. What was probably a unique gathering, as far as New South Wales is concerned, took place at Taralga on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1922, when the pioneers of the district were entertained at a dinner by a committee representing the remaining residents of the township and district.

The following were the veterans present:

John Barry aged 89, J. Bee 70, C. Blay 70 ,Walter Bradbury 87, W.H.Bradbury 79, J.Cameron 70, Chas Chalker 81, Ted Chalker 71, John Clifton 73, Jas Connor 84, J.Cooper 72, R.Cusack 75, Geo Corby 69, J.Cosgrove 69, Mat Daulton 84, Thos Fitzgibbon 83, M.Fitzgibbon 77, T.Gorman 71, Pat Hearley 82, W.Horne 72, T.Horne 70, Jas Keogh 86, T.McAlister 69, Alex McDonnell 80, Angus McInnes 72, Alex McInnes 82, J.L.McKenzie 93, Chas McKenzie 80, K.McKenzie 75, Colin McKenzie 69, R.McLennan 72, P.Mooney 74, J.Ross 76, C.Ross 74,F.Sullivan 69, J.Venn 73, J.Williams 77, W.M.Wright 76.

The oldest, Mr J.L.McKenzie, bears his 93 years most ably, while the youngest, Mr Colin McKenzie, is a boy of 68.

Scotia thus headed and “tailed” the fine procession which filed into the hall and sat down to an excellent dinner.

Mr C.S.Bradbury presided, and in an eloquent speech paid a tribute to the courage and hard work of the pioneers. Cr Walsh supported, and the toast of “The Pioneers” was drunk amidst great enthusiasm. Among other toasts honoured were “The Pioneer Ladies of the District.”

Mr John McKenzie, the oldest of the veterans, who arrived in Richlands in 1861, responded to the toast of the day, and Messrs James Connor, A.McInnes and Charles Ross also spoke.

Speeches were also delivered by the Rev Mr Bramble, Mr C.Keith, Mr T.M.Chalker, Dr Lyons and others.

After the banquet a photograph of the group was taken - *(which can be seen in Museum).*

The people whole heartedly went into the matter of entertaining the veterans, and the response of those who were invited was most encouraging.

The lunch was prepared by Mrs Spence, of the Argyle, and favourably known as that good hostess's reputation is, on this occasion she excelled herself.

On arrival at the hall the guests of the day were met by Crs Bradbury and Walsh, and Messrs A.E.Swan, M.Fitzgibbon, J.P., J.Alders, J.P., and others and treated to refreshments. They then dispersed themselves around the hall, old friends meeting old friends, recalling old and stirring incidents of the (18) 40's. 50's and 60's.

“You and I”, said two men, well past 80, “went picking up fleeces at Lethbridge’s woolshed at Rockwell about 1855”. “Do you remember the cricket match we had about 1860?” said “Sandy” McInnes; W.H Bradbury and Walter Bradbury, both present, were there, and Rory McKay wearing a Scotch cap was fielding at long-on when a catcher came his way, and he caught it in his cap.”

But they were mostly horsey men in their day and generation. Practically every man had done his 100 miles almost straight on end for doctor or clergyman, and Paddy Hearley (82) had ridden from “Lambing Flat” to Taralga in a day getting home in good time, and not hurting his horse.

And didn’t everybody remember the races on Humbug Flat, near Taralga, when the prizes weren’t very big, no bookies, and every horse was a trier, and nobody thought a horse worth owning unless he could do a two or three mile gallop. And later on Davis Hannabury had “Barebones”, that won hundreds for him, and later still Hillas had “Macaroni”, and Martin Gallagher, recently deceased, used to ride in Taralga.

All the pioneers present, down to the last one, are sons of the soil, John L. McKenzie of Fassifern, the father of the gathering, is 93 now, and is 83 years out. “I came in ‘89, and George Street was nothing much to look at then. My family later went to Illawarra, but then, as now, the would-be-settler could not get on the land, and one of the worst droughts the State has ever seen was just about winding up. Work was scarce, wages low.

The progress of Macquarie’s day had given place to the stagnation of Gipp’s term.

After a spell at the Snowy, the family came to Richlands and still no land available only in isolated blocks of 80 acres, till Robertson’s Land Act of ‘61.”

And so this wonderful old man, who signs his name and writes letters with the facility of a lawyer’s clerk, tells his tale. “How old is Will?” I asked. “Oh, the baby, he was born on the 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1850”. And John Barry, of Hill Crest (89) is hale and hearty, able to eat like a boy, and till very recently could ride about the Cookbundoon Ranges.

He bemoans the fact that Jack Williams ("Good old Black Jack"), who is 76, is getting fearful, and is not the man he ought be, at his age. But nobody is sure of Jack's age, and barring Sandy McInnes - he is easily the youngest looking man present.

There is a tradition in the Barry family that one day there arrived at the old homestead a black boy, wearing only a long coat and generally in a bad way. But Jack's star was in the ascendant that day - Barrys has been his home ever since, and a good home he has found it, and Jack has been a good member of the family too, for he is treated like one. Jack can still "shin" up an apple tree to get ripe apples for the kiddies, and any day he will ride fifty miles for a pub.

Recently Jack was confirmed by his Lordship Dr Gallagher, and he took a few days off to prepare. Anyhow Jack reckoned the Bishop would not be "hard on him", because "once, when the Bishop was only a young chap", said Jack, "I boiled his billy for him, and he won't forget." Jack is a pious man still, and the only thing worrying him on Pioneers Day was the fact that there was Mass at Myrtleville, but anyhow he felt pretty confident that Father Ryan would give him a "Dispensation if it was needed."

Walter Bradbury (87), of the Paling Yards, came to Taralga in '47 in Oct. Grass was four feet high. **The township was then called Trialgang, and later Trialga and Taralga. It got its name from the three round hills near the township.** "The first races were on Humbug Flat. There was a large tribe of blacks in the district, Miranda was the king. He was buried at the Paling Yards, and I was at his wake", says Mr Bradbury. "There was a large ring made, and the body of the king was placed in it, and fires were lighted all round to keep the 'Debil Debil' away.

The Macarthurs were at Richlands in those days, and left a good record behind them. Sir Charles Cowper, who was the Premier, had Chatsbury, and the McAlisters had Strathaird and Lethbridges at Rockwell"

James Connor (84) and M.M.Daluton (84) were both born in Taralga District, and Sandy McInnes (82), who is the oldest native of Taralga present, was christened in the old Strathairds Arms, Myrtleville, now John Miskellys.

Pat Hearley (82) was born in Goulburn, Tom Fitzgibbon, Golspie (83), has spent nearly all his life here, and it is not an unusual sight to see him a dozen miles from home with a mob of fat bullocks at nine o'clock in the morning.

John Keough (86) is still farming on The Meadows, but feels that he is getting the old man on him a bit. W.H.Bradbury (79), C.Chalker (81), M.Fitzgibbon (77), W.M.Wright (73), John Ross (Hanapool, 78) Charles Ross, J.P., (75), as well as practically all the younger men present are natives. John Ross of the Abercrombie (73), rides in and out from Goulburn when he has business to do, and practically every man in the 70's is actively engaged in farming, dairying and grazing pursuits.

The combined ages of these old people total 3645 years, an average of 76 years, or, taking a few of the youngsters out, the average is 80 years.

An analysis of the ages shows one over 90, 5 over 85, 7 over 80, 11 over 75 and 16 over 70.

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## Port Macquarie's Sylvia Arnett becomes the 11th oldest person in Australia - *From Port Macquarie Newspaper:*

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Port Macquarie's oldest resident Sylvia Arnett has celebrated her 108th birthday in style. Over 50 friends and relatives turned up to her party at Garden Village on April 11. Mrs Arnett is now the eleventh oldest person in Australia, the sixth oldest woman and the fifth oldest Australian born person. Mrs Arnett seemed a bit overwhelmed with all the attention. "Turning 108 is no different to turning 107," Mrs Arnett said. She said she is often asked what the secret to a long life is. Mrs Arnett was born in 1911 on a farm in Bannaby near Goulburn. She moved to Port Macquarie almost 50 years ago with her husband Norm. Her grandson Michael Arnett said Port Macquarie was part of the reason for her longevity. "Moving out of Sydney removed the stress from their lives," he said. Mr Arnett said the couple dedicated themselves to the service of others once they arrived.

Norm was head of St Vincent de Paul and he and Sylvia worked tirelessly for the organisation as well as other charities in the town. Mrs Arnett's husband Norm died in 1986. They have 4 children, 13 grandchildren and 19 great -grandchildren. Michael Arnett said Sylvia's faith in God remains integral to her life. "It led her to a life of service, helping other people no matter where she is." The oldest person in Australia is 110. Michael Arnett joked at Sylvia's birthday party that she "had a little bit of extra work to do but the goal line is not far ahead".



**Pictured with her son Max and his wife Pattie**

Sylvia (Connor) Arnett is the daughter of George and Wilhemina (Stephenson) Connor of Bannaby.

George (1875 - 1965) and Minie (1876 - 1957) had three daughters:

1. Gladys (Dolly) (1900 - 1994) who married Bill Gordon
2. Mary (1902 - 1975) who married Jack McInnes
3. Sylvia born 11.4.1911 who married Norm Arnett

**SYLVIA ARNETT**



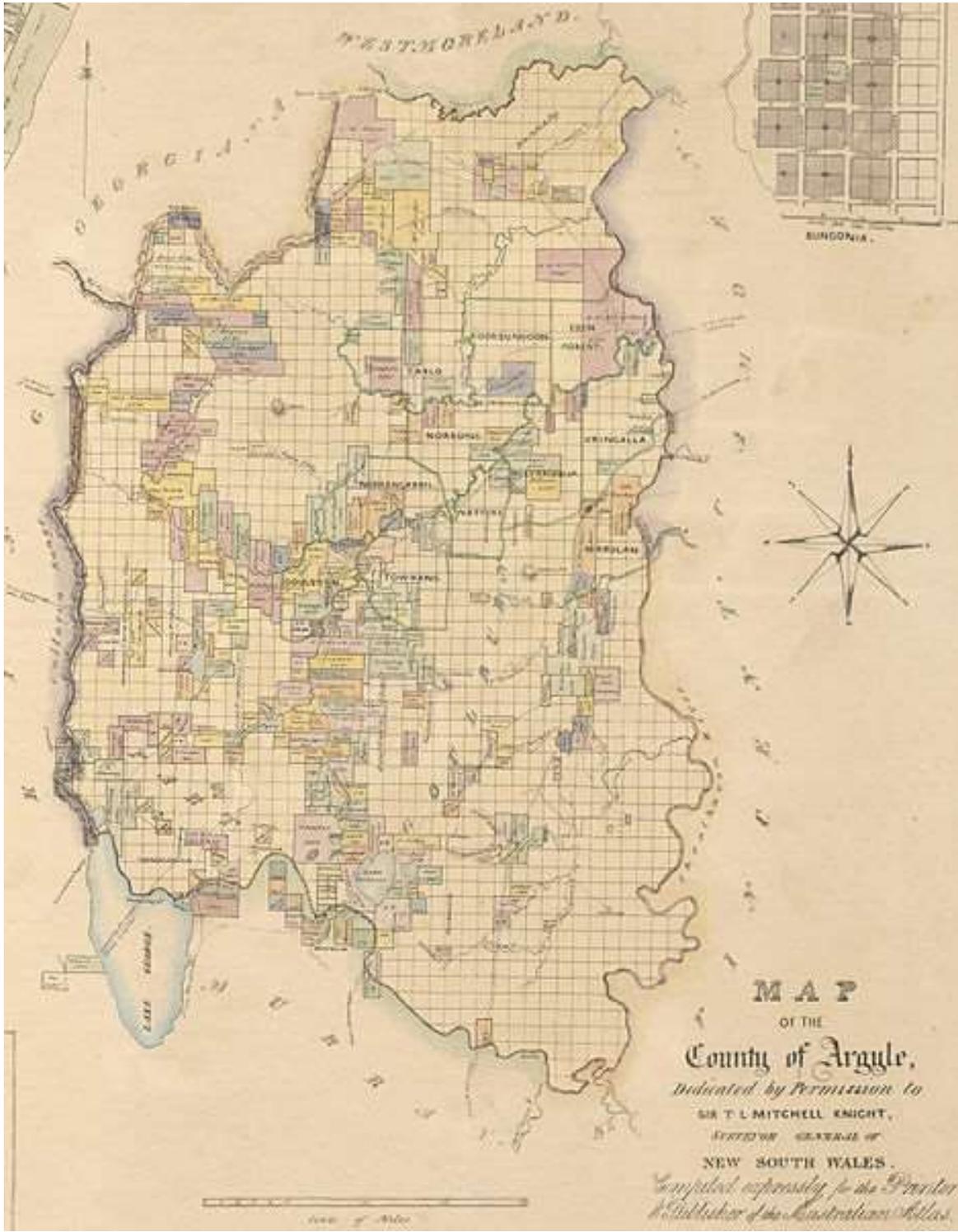
L to R: Mary, Dolly, Minie, Sylvia and George Connor



Back Row: Billie Fleming, Max, Norman and Charlie Alders, George Connor  
Front: Theresa Alders, May Keough, Sylvia Connor, Olive and Rita Alders, Mrs Connor

*The Discovery and Early Settlement of the*

*Taralga District*



Map Circa 1840'S

**Extract from report of**  
**The Discovery and Early Settlement of the Taralga District**

By F.F.WHEATON, B.A.

(Read before the Royal Australian Historical Society June 27, 1922)



Since **Lachlan McAlister** is an important figure in our early history, and yet very little is known of him, I propose to put before you all the facts of his life as I have been able to gather them.

Lachlan McAlister was the fifth son of Duncan and Janet McAlister of Strathaird, Isle of Skye, and was born in 1797. In 1815 being then in his nineteenth year, he purchased a commission as ensign in the 48<sup>th</sup> Regiment. His regiment was detailed for service in New South Wales, and arrived in Sydney in

1817, under the command of Lieut-Colonel Erskine. In 1818 McAlister was stationed at Port Dalrymple (Tasmania), and in 1820-21 at Newcastle.

About this time he seems to have come in contact with the Macarthurs.

In 1822, as we have seen, he was at Tarlo with William Macarthur.

In 1823 he was the bearer of a letter from Governor Brisbane to the Macarthurs.

In a letter from James Macarthur to his elder brother, John, then in England, dated from Parramatta, January 1, 1824 we read:-

I enclose Mr McAlister's half-pay voucher for the year 1823. He has sent me

some letters for his friends.

Since they were written the usual written promise of a grant of two thousand acres has arrived here for him.

This promise was dated January 21, 1824. The land he selected was near the present village of Myrtleville, on Myrtle Creek, five miles south of Taralga.

In 1825 he purchased five yearlings from Macarthur at £18/2/-, and in the next year one hundred and thirty two ewes at £3/3/-

In 1826 he was made a magistrate of the Territory.

In the *Sydney Gazette* , October 1, 1828, appear the following announcements:-

DEATH This morning, at Parramatta, after a lingering illness, The Turf Club, to the great grief of its few friends and supporters, and to the inexpressible regret of its creditors.

BIRTH This morning, at Parramatta, to the gratification of the whole colony, the Australian Racing and Jockey Club.

This was the occasion of the first meeting of the Racing and Jockey Club, and at that meeting a cup, presented by Governor Brisbane, who had left the colony three years before, was won by Lachlan McAlister. This cup is now in the possession of Mrs Henderson, youngest daughter of Mr McAlister.

In 1829-30 he was resident magistrate and officer in charge of mounted police at Goulburn Plains. In the latter year he had an encounter with Donohoe and his party of bushrangers. A full account is given in the *Sydney Gazette* of September 7, 1830, ending up with the following eulogy:-

The hardships suffered by Sergeant Hodson and his party during their long pursuit of this daring gang have been very severe, and they well deserve their

reward. To them and their indefatigable commanding officer, Lieutenant McAlister, too much praise cannot be given for the coolness, courage and perseverance with which they followed up their well-concerted plan.

Mrs John Macarthur in a letter dated Camden December 27, 1830, to her son, Edward, then in England, evidently refers to this episode. She writes:-

Mr McAlister has not descended from the Highlands since I have been at Camden.

Poor fellow, he had a narrow escape in a skirmish with a desperate set of bushrangers, in which he was wounded, but not severely. One of the mounted police under his command was also wounded, and a constable severely so. The desperadoes were all finally captured, tried at Bathurst, and executed.

Another passage in the same letter is of interest in giving an insight into the character of the man:-

Your warm-hearted friend, McAlister, will scream with joy at your remembrance of him when he gets the pocket-book.

His daughter informs me that he was noted for his hearty laugh.

During 1833-4 he was in command of the Mounted Police at Bathurst, and in the latter year, having left Bathurst, he acquired four thousand acres, granted by purchase, between his first grant at Myrtle Creek and Macarthur's lands at Taralga.

He also had the habit of acquiring land, and by 1837 had an estate of 16,320 acres south of Taralga, known as Strathaird, after his father's estate in Skye, but lived at "Clifton", a property near Picton.

In the year 1837 saw one of the worst droughts in the history of the colony. Whether this had anything to do with it or not I cannot say, but in that year McAlister sent his brother Matthew into Gippsland to take up land for him there,

and he is reported to have purchased a block of land in Melbourne when the first subdivision was made there.

In the year 1840 he was responsible for sending Angus McMillan, one of his employees, on a journey of discovery into Gippsland as far as the Latrobe River. This was before the work of Strzeleeki in that district.

Captain McAlister died at his home, "Clifton", Picton on December 24, 1855, aged fifty eight years.

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***Tuesday 13 September, 1859***

**TARALGA**

We learn that a piece of land has been granted by Colonel Edward Macarthur, for the erection of a Catholic Chapel at Taralga. On Monday last a meeting of the Catholic community at Taralga was convened by Mr G. Martyr J.P., who pointed out the land to the meeting, by whom it was approved and who tendered their thanks for the gift. Three trustees were appointed. The same day the sum of £10 was collected for the purpose of procuring a medal for presentation to Mr Martyr, in acknowledgement of his kindness in having the ground measured, in convening the meeting and pointing out the site, and for the interest he had taken in the matter generally. Steps, we presume, will shortly be taken for the erection of the chapel. The meeting was numerously attended.

***Goulburn Evening Penny Post, Thursday 30 May 1907***

**TARALGA**

***(From our correspondent)***

***Accidents:***

Two accidents of a serious nature occurred here on Saturday. Mr George Barry of Myrtleville, while riding towards home was thrown heavily from his

horse in the street, and dragged for about thirty yards on the metal. He sustained a slight concussion of the brain, and was dreadfully cut and lacerated about the head and face. This morning (Sunday) he was still partly unconscious and suffering severely. The Rev. Mr. Nicholson kindly attended to the injuries. The patient, who is at Byrne's Hotel, cannot be removed for some days.

The second accident occurred to Mr Thomas Fitzgibbon, jun., who is in the employ of Mr. A.D. Swan of Swannell Grange. It appears that Mr Swan was trying to harness a horse he had recently purchased and as he was going all right both Mr Swan and Mr Fitzgibbon got into the sulky. After going a short distance the horse suddenly started kicking, and Mr Swan pulled him up, but the bit broke almost immediately. Mr Swan called to Mr Fitzgibbon to jump out, and got out himself, escaping unhurt. Unfortunately Mr Fitzgibbon, fearing for Mr Swan's safety, did not get out in time, and the horse bolted madly, eventually throwing Mr Fitzgibbon out heavily, dislocating his shoulder, spraining his ankle, and injuring him severely in other respects. The Rev Mr Nicholson also attended to the injuries in this case. It will be necessary for Mr Fitzgibbon to lay up for a long time.

**NEXT MEETING SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2PM AT MASONIC HALL**

### **Taralga Historical Society Members Duty Roster**

**Please note opening hours (unless otherwise advised) are**

**10am to 2.30pm inclusive**



#### **June**

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> Matt & Vicki Chalker Alan Robertson

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> Mick & Annette Chalker, Robert Rabjohns, Peter Davies

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> Maureen Long, Joan Scott, Pat Murray, Laurie Halpin

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> Graham & Sue Lambert, Tim Dowsley

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Judith Matthews, Peter & Margaret McAlister

### **July**

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> Annette & Mick Chalker, Helena Hopkins, Margaret McIntosh

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> Jeff and Judy Chalker, Tim Dowsley, Peter Davies

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> Maureen Long, Joan Scott, Pat Murray, Elaine Connor

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Chris Ainsworth, Ernie Stephenson, Geoff Sieler, Brian Kelly

### **August**

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> Margaret & Peter McAlister, Brian Moloney

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> Graham & Sue Lambert, Brian Corby, Laurie Halpin

Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Maureen Long, Joan Scott, Pat Murray, Elaine Connor, Tim Dowsley,

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> Bob Blay, Jim Dean, Ken and Joyce Fleming

Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> Glennis & Max Wright, Robert Rabjohns, Mick Chalker

### **September**

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> Judith Matthews, Matt & Vicki Chalker, Alan Robertson

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> Mick & Annette Chalker, Peter Davies

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Annette Chalker, Judy Chalker, Pat Murray

Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> Peter & Margaret McAlister, Tim Dowsley

**Folks if your name hasn't been appearing on the roster or you would like to do more, or less, please let me know. Please feel free to come along at any time as we all have something to offer.**

**Phone Mick Chalker 4843 5975 or Graham Lambert 4843 8187**



*DON'T FORGET IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID ALREADY*

**\*\*MEMBERSHIPS DUE\*\* \$20 for all members**

*Editor - Maureen Long*