



**_Taralga Historical Society Inc
83 Orchard Street
Taralga NSW 2580**



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

Newsletter No 2, 2016

Presidents Report:

Well, doesn't time fly, another year is halfway gone and we have so much still to do.

Graham Lambert has produced a colour marketing brochure designed for distribution throughout local attractions, businesses and food outlets throughout the region. The brochure is designed to boost awareness and visitation to the Museum. The black and white precinct map and description folder has also been upgraded to colour.

We have been successful in obtaining windfarm funding to the value of \$4,700 for the painting of the timber sections of the Masonic Hall. This work will be undertaken by a local painter, also included in this funding is provision for the commencement of the enlargement of the Dairy to house the milk vat.

Members of the society assisted with the Australia Day Rodeo Barbecue. The Taralga Rodeo and Campdraft Committee in appreciation has presented the society with a \$1,000 donation.

Many members of the society have for many years regarded an early era School as a necessity in conserving early educational history and memorabilia. I am pleased to advise that we are in the process of relocating the remains of the Fernbank School (near Wombeyan) to the grounds of the society. Grant funding for reconstruction is currently being sought.

The front gate has been widened which will allow for a more comfortable access.

Lighting of the interior of the settler's cottage is to be undertaken.

The Ben Hall discovery trip to Forbes and Parkes departs 17th June and returns 19th June, for those who have booked we need \$ confirmation soon please.

We are always looking for new personnel for the Sunday museum duty roster, if you have the time and think that you may enjoy showing our wonderful resource to our visitors please call. There is also much to do in regard to maintaining the displays and maintenance in general.

**Michael Chalker
President**

Jennifer Lamb a member of our Society, was Guest Speaker at a lunch given for seniors in the Jamieson Hall during Seniors Week organised by Richlands Red Cross:

As I am just short of the biblical age of three score years and ten, I thought I would start with some reminiscences of my growing up at Greenwich Park - the other side of the Tarlo River from Taralga - and see what eventuated.

Greenwich Park is 10 (16) miles from Towrang, 20 (32) from Goulburn and about 30 (48) from Taralga via the Swallowtail Pass across the Tarlo River - which immediately raises an interesting element. Greenwich Park's first European owner was John Jamieson who was granted land there in 1822. His descendant Phil Jamieson owned the land above the Swallowtail Pass that I bought in 2007 and now look after. Whenever our family recollected life at Greenwich Park we often reminisced about picnics at the Swallowtail but, as it is still a pretty hairy dirt track of about 25kms from Greenwich to Swallowtail, I reckon we had just one picnic there but talked about it a lot.

Talking of roads, I recall that our dirt road from Greenwich to the Hume Highway intersection at Danganelly was maintained by horse and cart. We all learnt to drive on a dirt road - and if we ever saw a snake on the road we were taught to skid it to smithereens - back then, kangaroos were rarely seen on roads so the only roadkill were the ill fated snakes.

The district of Greenwich Park was typical of many other districts with an active community. There was the big woolshed where many dances were held - with Pearly Watling playing the music and sawdust strewn across the wool greased floorboards so we could dance the Pride of Erin and the Foxtrot and do the hokey pokey - while many of the men hung around outside swigging their beers.

There was - about 3 miles down the road - the legendary Post Office and Telephone Exchange. Naturally the telephone was a party line - our call was a long and three shorts, and we could always tell when the Postmistress was listening in to telephone conversations because we could hear her clock ticking - I well recall my mother often interrupting phone conversations with: I know you're there, Mrs Chalker, I can hear your clock ticking.

There was a tiny wooden church atop a hill and nestled in the bush. Its 6 pews were tree trunks sawn in half lengthwise - the sawn length was the seat - with two short sawn-off branches at either end serving as legs. There was a wheezy old pedal organ played by Mrs McWhirter, complemented by the tone deaf singing of my family of 6. Fortunately, the church had clear glass windows so you could look into the encroaching bush as the sermon dragged on. It was a lovely little church that was obliterated in the 1965 bushfire that ravaged the district.

There were two cattle studs at Greenwich - Shorthorns and Poll Shorthorns. I grew up - especially in my pre-teen years - living cattle, and would spend many hours helping with them in the sheds, including grooming them in their pens. They were pretty quiet - and much smaller than cattle today - I have a photo of me on my ninth birthday leading a young cow and she wasn't even up to my shoulder. Each year we all used to assemble at dawn to farewell the cattle that were

heading off in the straw lined semi trailer to the Royal Easter Show. Once my father decided to drive the semi back from Sydney along a different road that went via Taralga. He never fully recovered from manoeuvring the semi along the Wombeyan Canes road.

In the late 1950s an innovative program of artificial insemination was begun with the cattle and I spent many an afternoon amusing myself watching the vet stimulate one of the top stud bulls to get some semen. Obviously, I witnessed lots of reproductive activity amongst the cattle - but, at least until I was about 11, I thought that that sort of thing was only done by animals - not humans; and if humans did do it - well the queen certainly didn't.

There had been a school at Greenwich but it had closed by the time I was ready for it in 1952, so my brother and I and other kids from Greenwich went to school at Towrang. My father, Ralph Mansfield, started a school bus which began as a sort of ute with a cover over the back where we sat on 2 benches facing each other. The bus driver, Greg, often made us scream by driving slowly past the house of the man who ate children.

Towrang was a metropolis compared to Greenwich Park - as well as the school, it had a Post Office-come-basic store, a train station, 2 churches, a real hall-that didn't have to double as a shearing shed-and about a dozen houses.

There were never more than 20 pupils at Towrang Public School (we were pupils back then, not students). The one teacher, Mr (Charlie) Bayliss was wonderful, and his wife struggled - poor soul - to teach us girls to sew. At school, there were 6 forms, each able to sit about 4 pupils, each form representing a different class from 1 to 6.

We learnt to read from our Fay and Don books, and when we had graduated from pencil to pen we dipped our pen nibs into wells of ink made from squashed flies. Outside and way past the cricket and rounders patch and among the gum trees, there were two pit or long drop toilets - the girls' was on the right and the boys on the left. There was no school uniform and I don't even think we had to suffer school milk. Our annual end of year concert was held at the Towrang Hall on a stage I recalled as being 5ft high until I saw it 40 years later and it was in fact 1ft high.

Charlie Bayliss left Towrang School when I was in 4th class and many of us from Greenwich Park were then sent to other schools in Goulburn or, in my brother's case in Sydney. I went - as a day girl - to PLC in Goulburn and my idyllic school life ended at its front gate.

The Greenwich Park bus now went all the way to Goulburn in the morning but we all had to catch the train in the afternoon to Towrang where the bus met us and took us home. Tales about that Goulburn-Marulan school train with its dog-boxed carriage would fill a library - and a lot of it would have to be in the adult section. I was usually pretty relieved to get off the train at Towrang, then - as often as not - it would have to go back into a loop line to let the Melbourne Daylight Express through and the school train would then limp into Marulan around 6pm.

As I see parents picking their children up from even high school nowadays, I often think that my parents were pretty confident in me as a nine-year old walking alone from PLC (now the Goulburn TAFE way up the back of Goulburn) all the way down to the Goulburn station to catch the train.

Goulburn was our shopping centre. We bought our groceries at Moran & Cato and our clothing across the road at the right store on the wrong side, Knowlmans, or if we were feeling a bit down market we would go to Rogers. We bought our books and stationery at Gittoes and bits and pieces from the Coles Variety store. We mostly ate at the Blue and White Cafe - especially my favourite Cherry Cheer. When nature called we went to the ladies toilet in Belmore Park for which you had to pay threepence. My mother was so incensed that she had to pay threepence to spend a penny that she joined the Lady Belmore Club so we could go to the toilet there.

We went to the Odeon and the Hoyts to see whatever films we saw and the latest newsreels - including one once about a stud bull we imported from Scotland. We mostly sat upstairs in the gallery in the Odeon to get the full advantage of the starry sky above, and we ate Minties and Fantales and Peters ice cream in a cup.

It was good to grow up in country Australia - or at least it was for me.

When I finished school I went to University in Canberra and eventually got an arts degree and a husband - all done and dusted by 1969.

The husband, Chris, worked for the Department of Foreign Affairs, so I became a diplomat's wife for 10 years after which time the marriage ended. During that 10 years we had two and half years in Vienna, Austria, immediately followed by two years in Rangoon, Burma, (now Myanmar) then 2 years in Canberra and just under 3 in New York. I had my older son, Giles, while in Burma - his Burmese name is Kyaw Tint San - and the younger, Angus, when in Canberra - his Australian name is Gus.

In addition to that progeny, it was a productive ten year stint. Vienna was magical with its history and abundant snow for skiing. Rangoon was challenging under the military dictatorship of U Ne Win but diplomats lived very well there even though our movements were restricted and watched; it was wrong to see how everyday Burmese lived in harsh conditions and in fear while we played tennis and golf and partied most nights. New York was where I developed my interest in art, and what a place to do that!

Returning to Canberra to live with my two sons and without the hindrance of a husband, I took up painting with a vengeance and very badly. Fortunately, after a year I got a job working at the Nolan Gallery at Lanyon about 20kms from Canberra. The Nolan Gallery housed the famous Ned Kelly paintings by Sidney Nolan - and working with and talking about proper art made me realise how bad my own painting was.

All was going well in Canberra but I started to want to live in the country again. I would visit Goulburn often as my parents, who had left Greenwich Park, now lived near Norwood on the Middle Arm Road where they ran both cattle and

Stonehaven Woolshed Antiques.

Although my idea of living in the country did not encompass returning to Goulburn, I did just that as I applied for and got the job as the first director of the new Goulburn Regional Art Gallery in 1983. The Gallery was located in what was known as the old police station at 260 Sloane Street, but was mostly in the old 1849 courthouse section of that building complex.

It was interesting coming back to Goulburn to work in an art gallery because it was the last thing I ever expected to be in Goulburn - and my impression is that many others thought the same way too, including the Aldermen and women of Goulburn City Council which was bewildered to find itself managing an art gallery, I mean, for heavens sake, an ART gallery in Goulburn.

I had no interest in art at school - at PLC you did French or art and I, believing myself to be more intelligent, chose French. My arts degree at university had nothing to do with art as it focused on philosophy and history which were the only subjects I could pass. So it wasn't until New York and my 30's that my art interest came.

Anyway, I was back in Goulburn and determined to make the art gallery work even though I really knew very little about running one. So, I just dug in and started organising exhibitions of local artists and craftspeople and taking in touring exhibitions - the most notable one of those was an exhibition of cake decorating which consisted of amazingly decorated fake cakes made of foam. The exhibition's curator visited each gallery as the cakes arrived to make any minor - or major - repairs. At the end of the exhibition's tour, when the cakes were being returned by car to the curator, the car driver had to break suddenly and all the cakes shot forward with rather unfortunate results.

In the late 1980s Goulburn City Council decided to build itself a civic centre and got the best known architect in Australia to design it - and if you want me to explain why I like it, I'll tell you later. Meanwhile the Gallery was struggling in the old police station as it was riddled with damp and, as Council did not own it, it didn't want to spend any money on it. Somehow, we managed to get Council to come up with the brilliant idea of relocating the Gallery to the new Civic Centre, which they did. Thus, a more-or-less purpose built Gallery was included in the Civic Centre and was officially opened with much fanfare by Margaret Whitlam in February 1990.

That marked a turn-around for Goulburn Regional Art Gallery and things started to go well. The Gallery took to developing and touring its own exhibitions around the state and around Australia, and started hosting comparative blockbusters like the Archibald Prize.

But what was just as important, as far as I was concerned, was that we still worked at a local level, not only engaging local artists and craftspeople in thematic exhibitions but also in taking such exhibitions to halls and other venues in small towns and villages across the region. These exhibitions often included artworks that dealt with local issues such as the subdivision of farmland, weed control and

drought.

One of these locally touring exhibitions was Country with a Capital C - about living in our region which was then called Capital Country - and the Gallery brought it to Taralga in 2001. It was one of the inspirations for the Taralga Art Show which had its first airing alongside Country with a Capital C. So I like to think - maybe selfishly - that Goulburn Regional Art Gallery helped get the now famous Taralga Art Show started. The first Art Show was organised by Red Cross in 2000.

I ended up spending 24 years at Goulburn Regional Art Gallery. I retired in 2007 to take on a new life attacking serrated tussock out at my patch of land at Swallowtail and revegetating it with trees and shrubs propagated from seeds I find out there. As I plant the trees, I often think that those people - probably convicts - who worked so hard to clear the land must be turning in their graves.

Another aspect of my retirement is that, out of the blue, I have written three plays. The first was about Miles Franklin and how vital Goulburn was to her writing of her famous novel *My Brilliant Career*. The play evolved from research others and I had done for an exhibition about Miles Franklin at the Gallery in 2001, a hundred years since the publication of *My Brilliant Career*. It is a true and great story.

Miles and her family lived at Thornford, between Yarra and Collector from when she was 9 until she was about 22. They were there, trying to run an unsuccessful dairy farm during the great Federation drought. In nearby Goulburn there was Mr T J Hebblewhite, then editor of the Goulburn Evening Penny Post. Miles - whose first name was Stella, Miles being her third name - had been taught at Thornford School by Miss Mae Gillespie.

When only 16, Miles wrote her first novel - about lords and ladies in England - and Miss Gillespie gave it to Mr Hebblewhite in Goulburn for comment. He wrote back to Miles telling her to write about what was familiar to her, what she knew, to write about her life in country Australia. She then wrote at age 18 *My Brilliant Career* - a heartfelt story of a young girl wanting a career in the arts. It is set in Thornford, Goulburn and the Brindabellas where her grandmother lived. She sent the manuscript to Angus and Robertson Publishers but it was rejected. She then had Miss Gillespie give it to Hebblewhite who read it in one sitting and wrote to Miles saying how truly wonderful her manuscript was. He had her visit him in Goulburn so they could correct some minor grammatical errors. She sent the corrected manuscript to Henry Lawson and asked him to take it with him to England for publication. The book was published in 1901 and is still renowned as one of the great Australian novels - and it all came out of the Goulburn district.

I wrote that play for the Lieder Theatre to celebrate Goulburn 150th birthday. For the Lieder Theatre to commemorate the centenary of World War 1 last year, I wrote a play about the Aboriginal man William Punch who was raised in the Woodhouselee district and served and died in World War 1.

The story of how he came to Woodhouselee is believed to be true and is tragic. His Aboriginal family were murdered out west for killing and eating a cow. He was found as a baby, beside his dead mother, by John Siggs from Woodhouselee and

raised as part of the extended Siggs family. Punch became a well known and much liked member of his local community - and a good violinist as well. Steeped in local history, the play included this actual quote from the anti-conscriptionists "The man who is forced to fight is as vilely outraged as the woman who is forced to fondle".

Writing that play was rewarding, but also challenging as it had to include some vicious racism and of the prejudiced attitudes I had happily accepted in the 1950s. The third play was a crazy one based on the three little pigs and some 20 other nursery rhymes and fairy tales.

And that is what eventuated from my reminiscences.

Vale



Snowy (Roy) Shawyer
24.7.1927 - 28.2.2016



Esma Craig
17.2.1929 - 1.4.2016



Ray Miller
5.5.1926 - 3.5.2016

Harry's heroic gift triumphs over tragedy

Taralga farmer's selfless last act



Harry McPaul was a very generous man, and it was this selflessness that led him to make a huge difference to the lives of others.

The Taralga farmer, who died at the age of 96 in March 2014, left the proceeds of the sale of his 135-hectare "Richlands" property to Cancer Council NSW to help those suffering from cancer.

The \$1.3 million bequest left to Cancer Council NSW will help fund significant cancer research into improving the long-term physical and mental health conditions in childhood cancer survivors and their families,

The bequest has been honoured in the form of an official research grant in memory of the Southern Tablelands farmer.

Mr McPaul's sister Jennifer Halkett, Batemans Bay, said it was a long history of cancer in their family which led her brother to make this generous decision.

There were seven children in their family, and they grew up at their Taralga property, where they ran Herefords and cross-bred sheep.

But the family's tragic story began in 1954 when their brother Owen died at the age of 23 from Hodgkin's Lymphoma, then three months later their father died from bowel cancer.

After their father's death, Mr McPaul took over running the family farm.

"He was a very good farmer. He was looked up to as a farming role model", Mrs Halkett said.

But their worries weren't over. Their sister Marie died from cancer at the age of 46

in 1966 and their sister Winifred died from breast cancer at the age of 60 in 1976. Mrs Halkett herself survived breast cancer, and Mr McPaul then survived prostate cancer after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of the disease in 1994.

Mrs Halkett said Mr McPaul served in the Army during World War Two, and he suffered from hearing loss. Because of this, he was single for a long time. It was only when he was 72 that he met Thelma, and they were married. They spent 25 years less one day together.

Having lost so many family members to cancer, Mr McPaul decided that his farm would be sold when he died and he wanted the proceeds to go to the Cancer Council.

“He didn’t have any children of his own, and there has been so much cancer in his family and his wife’s family”, Mrs Halkett said.

“He was very generous, and very straight down the line. He loved his family and Thelma’s family”.

Mr McPaul’s family specifically chose his gift to be granted towards the work of Associate Professor Claire Wakefield, who works at the University of New South Wales and the Kids Cancer Centre at Sydney Children’s Hospital.

Associate Professor Wakefield’s project will develop and implement new tailored programs to improve quality of life across the family, as well as helping prevent chronic physical and mental health conditions in families who have survived a childhood cancer diagnosis.



Wife of the late Harry McPaul, Thelma McPaul (sitting, his stepdaughter Daphne Hughes and sister Jennifer Halkett with Associate Professor Claire Wakefield

THE CROOKWELL GAZETTE, Thursday March 17, 2016 - extract

Acciona awards Gunning wind farm scholarship for 2016



Madeline Selmes

Acciona Enery Australia recently announced the recipient of its 2016 Gunning Wind Farm Education Scholarship, which helps young people with tertiary education expenses.

Madeline Selmes from Wheeo, NSW, said she was shocked to discover she had won the annual \$5,000 grant.

“I rang mum straight away and she was very excited, she was very happy for me”, the 19-year-old hockey player said.

Ms Selmes said her passion for sport led her to pursue a Bachelor of Human Nutrition at the University of Canberra, for which she had to move away from home.

“I want to help people living with diabetes and obesity”, she said.

“The money will go towards my text books, which are insanely expensive, and will also help me with my rent because it’s quite expensive to live on campus”.

Gunning Wind Farm site manager Craig Simon said being able to help Ms Selmes pursue her dream career was really rewarding.

Madeline is the grand daughter of Margaret and the late Bruce Lang.

105 wonderful years

Laila Kierman
laila.kierman@abcmedia.com.au

PORT Macquarie's Sylvia Nina Arnett celebrated her 105th birthday surrounded by friends, family and staff of Garden Village.

The tea room was abuzz as her friends, and fellow Garden Village residents, flooded in to enjoy some cake and share well wishes.

Ms Arnett was overwhelmed and grateful for the celebration.

"I now spend my days listening to classical piano. I used to play but my fingers are not good anymore. I started when I was five years old and I love it," she said.

Sylvia was born on April 11, 1911 at Bannaby via Taraiga NSW.

Her parents were Wilmina Margaret Stephenson and George Edward Connor.

On May 25, 1932 she married Norman Oswald Arnett at St Ignatius Catholic Church, Taraiga.

The two took up residency at Riverstone Boral shortly after.

Their next big move was to Goulburn where Norman was employed by Wilkie Tyres.

In 1935, they welcomed their first (of four) child and Sylvia had great help from her sister Molly who lived just around the corner.

The family then moved to Hornsby where Norman set his own retreat shop - naturally Sylvia was involved.

"As business grew larger premises were found, to add the first Holden dealership to Hornsby. Their next house move was to Turramurra Orchid Nursery, Castle Hill hobby farm.

"Then to Epping, and Port Macquarie Parklands Avenue 42 years ago," son Max said.

"At first I didn't want to move to Port Macquarie because I was leaving all of my friends behind, but as time went on I made many, many new friends," Sylvia said.

Sylvia and Norman managed the St Vincent De Paul store for many years.

Norman passed away in May 1986 and Sylvia continued to work at St Vincent De Paul for many years before moving to Garden Village.

She lived independently until two years ago, he said she fills her time by socialising and participating in crafts.

Sylvia is loved by her children Max, Jan, Mary and Elizabeth.

"Along with all her grandchildren and her great great grandchildren who respect and love Sylvia dearly.

"Sylvia is very thankful for the attention that she receives from the nursing staff and management of Garden Village," Max said.



Sylvia pictured with her son, Max and daughter-in-law Pattie
Sylvia is also the sister of Dolly Gordon



Programme

June

We will be discussing our trip to the Forbes District for two nights stay over at our next meeting.

Next Meeting - Sunday 5th June 2pm at the Masonic Hall

IF YOUR NAME ISN'T APPEARING ON THE MUSEUM ROSTER AND YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE, PLEASE CONTACT US ASAP



Museum Duty

June 5	MEETING 2pm MASONIC HALL Ken & Joyce Fleming, Marcus Hartstein & Nicola Young
June 11/12	LONG WEEKEND
<u>Saturday:</u>	Pat & Bob Blay, Marg Balfour, Geoff Sieler, Ernie Stephenson
<u>Sunday:</u>	Mick & Annette Chalker, Brian Kelly, Jason Voorwinden
June 19	MEMBERS TRIP TO FORBES
June 26	Graham Lambert, Sandra & Max Keith, Andrew Moore
July 3	Glennis & Max Keith, Judith Matthews, Pat Murray
July 10	Ken & Joyce Fleming, Jennifer Lamb, Ray Shiel
July 17	Joan Scott, Maureen Long, Esma Faucett
July 24	Pat & Bob Blay, Allan Robertson
July 31	Mick & Annette Chalker, Geoff & Judy Chalker, Peter Davies
August 7	Graham & Sue Lambert, Jim Dean, Robert Rabjohns
August 14	Mary Chalker, Margaret McAlister, Nerida Croker, Robyn Alders
August 21	Joan Scott, Maureen Long, Esma Faucett
August 28	Pat & Bob Blay, Shirley & George Smith
September 4	Mick & Annette Chalker, Pat Newman

Editor: Maureen Long

