

# Taralga Historical Society News

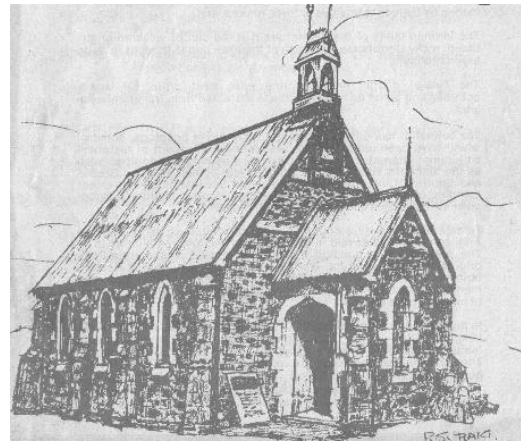
No 3, 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

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## President's Report

Hello everyone and welcome to the final newsletter of 2023.

As usual we have been very busy keeping all the different parts of the museum running. Thank you to everyone that helps out.

To keep everyone up to date the minutes from our last meeting are included at the end of this newsletter.

Read on to see what's been happening.

## Grants

Our applications for grant funding to Veolia and the Wind Farm have been successful. In August Jenny, Judith and I accepted a grant from the Veolia Mulwaree Trust (pictured right) which will go towards our new and improved research centre. This funding has allowed us to already have a compactus installed which has helped to organise and preserve our existing collection. It also gives our archiving team the chance to store donated material straight away so it's protected and doesn't get scattered. You can look forward to a more detailed tour of this system with Margaret and Helena in upcoming issues.



Graham Lambert has overseen the Wind Farm application which has provided funding for the repairs and restoration on our Mast Foss windmill. This is underway and the works are being carried out by a millwright out at Molong.

## Christmas Party

Our Christmas party lunch will be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of December starting at midday. Earlier this year I was talking to my father, Ken Ainsworth, about previous Christmas parties that the Historical Society had held

at his place which allowed people to inspect his steam engine collection. It's been well over twenty years since the last one was there so we thought it was about time we paid him a visit.

If you would like to attend and I haven't been in touch with you yet please give me a call on 0418919357 or send through an email. Please RSVP by the 8th of December. The address is 'Montrose' 632 Bannaby Road, Taralga. A bbq lunch will be provided, BYO esky.

### **Chevrolet Car Club Visit**

In September we had a visit from a Chevrolet Club. They brought about twenty cars and we greeted fifty visitors with a tour of the museum and Graham gave a brief talk on Taralga's history while morning tea was served. Thank you to our catering team for organising that, the hall looked great. Many of the cars came from the early 1920's and were very well looked after. An interesting fact I heard was that although manufactured in the USA often the cars were imported into Australia via Canada to avoid import duties seeing it was part of the British Empire. A particularly stylish feature I noted on some of the cars were leather pads on top of the doors to rest your elbow on.



### **Machinery Shed**

The building works have been completed on the extension of the machinery shed so the next stage is to continue sorting out the large collection that has built up in there over the years and arranging it for public viewing. A workshop area will be set up within the new extension.

The building work continued with some alsonite being added to the back wall of the shed housing Ernie Stevenson's bullock wagon. This will prevent easterly mist blowing in onto the timber, Jeff has also sprayed the wagon with linseed oil to help preserve it.

### **Vale**

Robin Cole 12<sup>th</sup> September 1935 – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Robin was one of our long-term members and put a lot of time and work in at the museum over the years. We received a visit from Robin earlier this year while she was on her way to the Taralga Show, recently I spoke to her son Robert and he told me this was one of her last outings and it brought back happy memories of being in the shearing shed at Holmbrae with her father George Alders. On the right is a photo from our collection of Marie and Robin in 1938 on the veranda at Holmbrae with their dog called John.



## Bannaby Weekend

The 23<sup>rd</sup> of October saw a very successful event at Bannaby organised by Laurie Chalker to celebrate 125 years of Saint Matthews church. You may remember from the last newsletter that I was going to be at Hillasmount to give a talk on Matthew and Martha Hillas's family who lived there. Visitors were also able to see the shearing shed and a very well attended service was held at the church. I was pleased to see a good turnout at Hillasmount and I met a few new people including Ted Cordingley from Big Hill who could of course tell me all about our Cordingley Cottage in the museum grounds.

As I revisited the history of the Hillas family for my talk I became aware of how little information we have on Martha and Matthew Hillas's children, Albert and Clarinda. Evelyn still remains in living memory in the area but I would like to know more about the other two children. So anyone out there who finds this and knows more information please get in touch. I'm particularly interested in Clarinda, all I know she married Frederick Middleton who was a dentist in Sydney, he died in 1949 and then Clarinda died in 1950.



Clarinda, Matthew, Stanley, Evelyn and Martha Hillas circa 1890, Matthew died in 1894 at the age of 52 (THS COLLECTION)



Hillasmount with wisteria flowering on cue.

## Historic Homes – Saint Ignatius Catholic Church, Taralga.

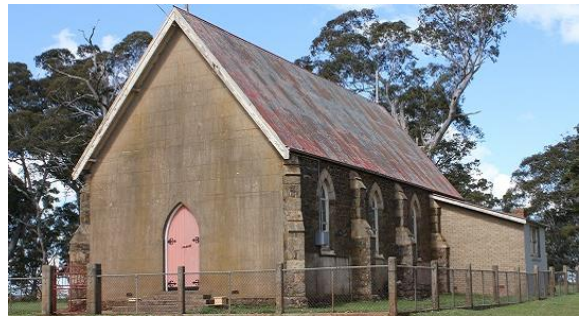
As many of you will have noticed there have been great changes in the last few years to the original Catholic church, convent and school on the corner of Macarthur and Walsh Streets. In this newsletter I'm focusing on the church which underwent a conversion into a home in the late 1990's by Patrick Corbally Stourton. In Patrick's time we saw the concrete render removed from the outside, a large open fireplace fitted on the southern wall, a bathroom put into the original entrance and a new door put into the northern wall. At the western end of the building you can still see a cross in concrete render that Patrick must



have decided to keep. Over the years the church disappeared behind the cherry laurel hedge but it has recently been sold and the new owners moved in during May this year.

I arrived to find the new owners Attiyya Malik and Richard Powell hard at work in the vestry which they intend to convert into a bathroom. The vestry is on the southeastern corner of the building and has its own fireplace. The original lining boards are on the ceiling and the floorboards are still in place. As I stepped up into the area which was the altar the church is undergoing a great transformation. The whole building feels fresher and brighter with a lighter paint scheme. The internal walls are rendered, I seem to recall that beneath subsequent paint jobs there was an ashlar pattern lightly scored on the walls.

Work began on getting funds together to build St Ignatius in about 1863 when 400 pounds was raised for its construction. The land that the church sits on was donated to the catholic church by Sir Edward Macarthur and the builder was a Mr Murphy. The building is of local basalt which records suggest was collected in part by eager catholic parishioners wanting to see their church get built. The pile of stone must have been huge, the initial dimensions of the building were reported as 13 x 6.7 metres, but the final construction is much larger than this. The stone is worked in many cases to give a flatter surface and tighter joints but hasn't yet reached the refinement seen in some of the later buildings in Taralga's main street. Windows, doorways and the small buttresses have sandstone or brick surrounds. This light coloured and easily shaped sandstone was probably brought in from Bannaby Hill to the east. Construction must have initially progressed very rapidly as newspaper reports from early 1863 that focus on the funds being raised soon change to reporting on the church nearing completion by June 1863. I assume this was the stonemasons hard at work and then things seem to slow down as the timberwork started on the roof. Interestingly, an 1863 Goulburn Chronicle article mentions that a catholic church at Grabben Gullen was to be constructed at the same time at a cost of 500 pounds. I've added a photo of it above and you will notice that it's pretty much the same as St Ignatius. Perhaps Mr Murphy the builder was involved with both churches or this was possibly a standard design that catholic management of the time had drawn up.



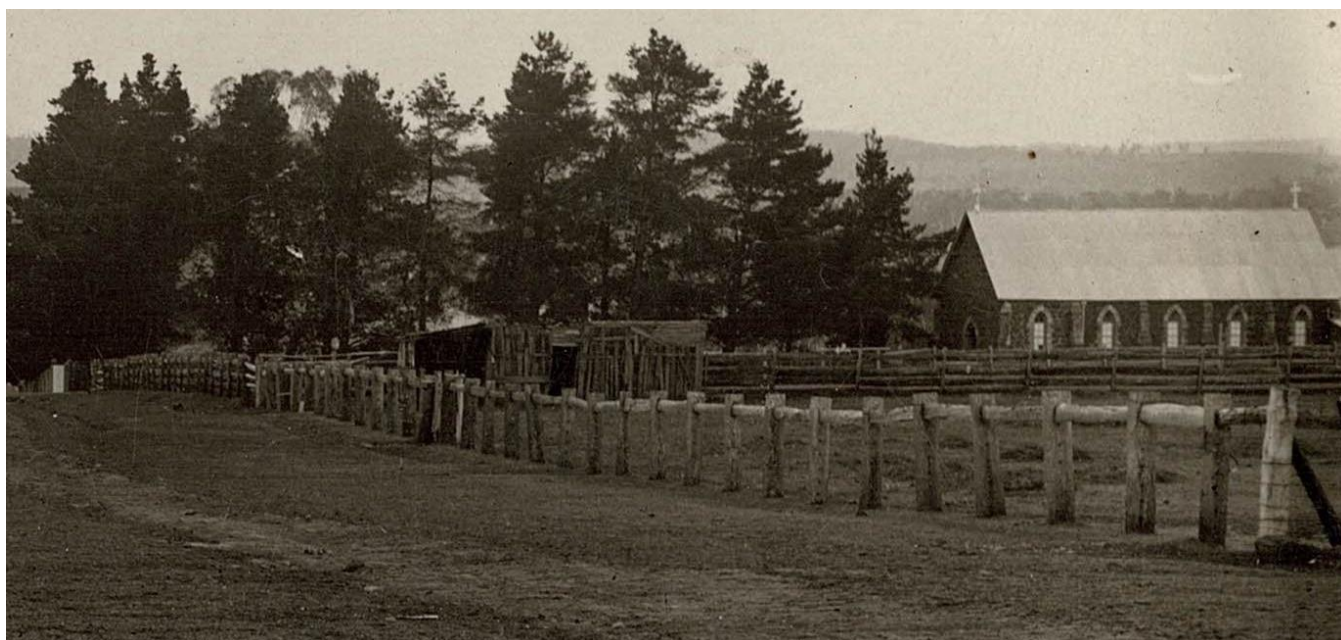
A large amount of timber would have been cut to construct the roof frame. The corrugated iron roof is from the 1990s and replaces an earlier one but I wonder if originally it was timber shingles. Simple arches formed by the trusses each come down to rest on a stone protruding from the wall. Some of the stones have what I assume was a saints face carved on them but these were chipped off during the deconsecration of the church (see photo on the right). The timber in the roof remains original however three different floorboards from different eras are present. The vestry floor is original with wider floorboards which were probably cut from Angophora or Eucalyptus species at Bannaby, these are common in many Taralga buildings. The main flooring is a narrower board which is similar to the Memorial Hall. Some cypress boards lurk near the bathroom. As we know the church became Saint Michaels Hall in 1934 following the construction of the new catholic church, perhaps the new floor was put in during the Saint Michaels hall phase. Richard and Atti have had the floor sanded and sealed.



The current bathroom is in the corrugated iron section of the building at the western end. This was once the entry area and ticket booth for St Michaels Hall and I assume it would have been added in the 1930's, the ticket window is still visible from the street. Richard and Atti intend to reinstate this as the main entrance.

The first mass was held in the church at 10:30 a.m. on 26<sup>th</sup> of October 1864 and the priest was Father McAlroy. Saint Ignatius saw 70 years of use as a church, the last wedding there was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1933 the bride and groom being Ellen Mooney and Ernest Lawler. The last baptism was Allen Cusack on the 19<sup>th</sup> of July 1934.

Below I've added a photo of Saint Ignatius in 1906. You'll notice there were once crosses on each end of the roof which are now gone, the corrugated iron entry area hasn't been added yet to the western end. The stonework is still visible and hasn't disappeared under the cement render which was probably added in the 1950's and then removed in the late 1990s. The convent building is hidden behind the pine trees and the cattle yard fencing we see was on a block belonging to the Charteris family.



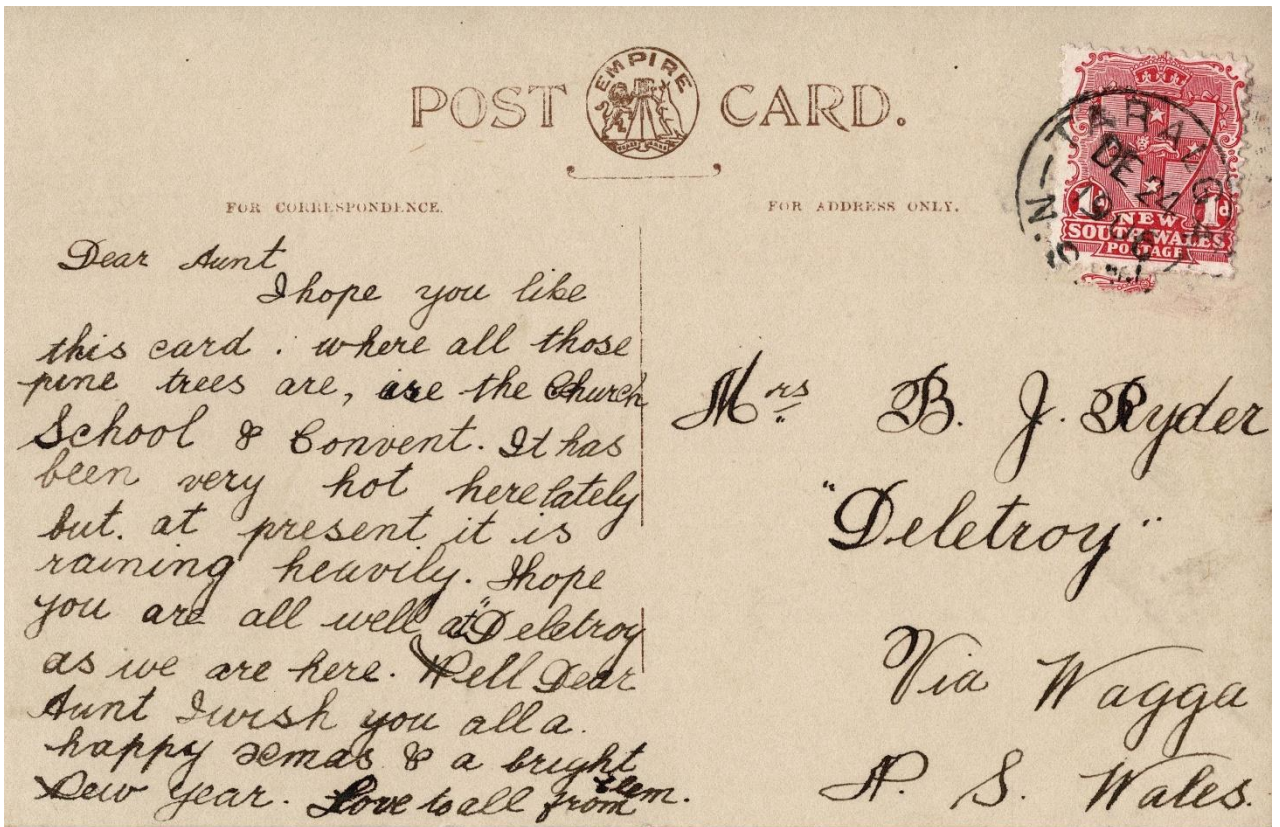
This image is cropped from a larger photo of Macarthur Street which appears on a postcard. I found it on eBay and I've added it below in case you're interested.

The final burning question is which Saint Ignatius the church was named after. There are four Saints Ignatius, two were canonised after the churches construction so that leaves us with either Saint Ignatius of Antioch or Saint Ignatius of Loyola. Ignatius of Antioch appears to be the patron saint of throat and chest disease while Ignatius of Loyola is the patron saint of soldiers and spiritual retreats. Ignatius of Antioch was fed to the lions in Rome, Ignatius of Loyola died of malaria in Rome. If you know which Ignatius it is let me know as I'll be back on the corresponding saints feast day to check on progress.

Thank you to Richard and Atti for letting me have a look at your home and all the work you've done.



MR ARTHUR ST. TARALGA



## Museum Roster.

If you have any problems with this please contact Chris.

|                     |                  |   |
|---------------------|------------------|---|
| <b>December</b>     | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Margaret and Peter McAlister, Jenny and Peter Haigh.  |
|                     | 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Chris Ainsworth, Michelle Green, Noelene Cosgrove, Elaine Connor.                                 |
|                     | 16 <sup>th</sup> | Museum closed for Christmas Party   |
|                     | 23 <sup>rd</sup> | Tim Dowsley, Joan Scott, Penny Gordon, Bob Blay.  |
|                     | 30 <sup>th</sup> | Graham Lambert, Judy and Jeff Chalker.  |
| <b>January 2024</b> | 6 <sup>th</sup>  | Chris Ainsworth, Tim Dowsley, Penny Gordon.   |
|                     | 13 <sup>th</sup> | Judith Matthews, Mick and Annette Chalker, Jimmy Dean.  |
|                     | 20 <sup>th</sup> | Helena Hopkins, Margaret McIntosh, Tim Dowsley.   |
|                     | 27 <sup>th</sup> | Jenny and Peter Haigh, Simon and Caroline Grieg.  |
| <b>February</b>     | 3 <sup>rd</sup>  | <b>AGM and General meeting</b><br>Pat Murray, Mick and Annette Chalker, Penny Gordon, Joan Scott. |
|                     | 10 <sup>th</sup> | Jenny and Peter Haigh, Francis Flood, Bob Blay.   |
|                     | 17 <sup>th</sup> | Alan Robertson, Brian Moloney, Chris Ainsworth, Lida Veenstra.                                    |
|                     | 24 <sup>th</sup> | Tim Dowsley, Michelle Green, Noelene Cosgrove, Elaine Connor.                                     |
| <b>March</b>        | 2 <sup>nd</sup>  | Penny Gordon, Joan Scott, Tim Dowsley, Chris Ainsworth.   |
|                     | 9 <sup>th</sup>  | Jeff and Judy Chalker, Lida Veenstra, Judith Matthews.  |
|                     | 16 <sup>th</sup> | Margaret and Peter McAlister, Helena Hopkins, Margaret McIntosh.                                  |
|                     | 23 <sup>rd</sup> | Pat Murray, Elaine Connor, Michelle Green, Noelene Cosgrove.                                      |
|                     | 30 <sup>th</sup> | Jenny and Peter Haigh, Francis Flood, Allan Robertson, Bob Blay.                                  |

**If you would like to receive this newsletter via e-mail please let us know.**

## **Minutes of General Meeting held in Masonic Hall, 4th November 2023 at 2.00pm**

**Present:** Chris Ainsworth, Jenny and Peter Haigh, Judith Matthews, Jeff and Judy Chalker, Peter Davies, Tim Dowsley, Helena Hopkins, Mick and Annette Chalker, Frances Flood, Ken Flemming,

Pat Murray, Margaret McIntosh, Randall Vlietstra, Penny Gordon, Suzanne Collins, Graham Lambert, Rita Worley

**Apologies:** Elaine Connor, Joan Scott, Joyce Flemming, Laurie Halpin.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the last general meeting were presented. Peter Haigh moved their adoption, seconded by Mick Chalker.

### **Business arising from previous meeting:**

- Follow-up on Grants Program brainstorm session -

- Interactive Research Centre - Compactus has arrived and is installed. A process for moving folders has begun and is ongoing.

- Genealogy Hub proposal was presented by Jenny:

- NSW Community Building Partnership funding has been applied for to enable a Genealogy Hub to be set up in the THS Research Centre.

- Successful funding would enable THS to purchase: Starlink broadband internet hardware and accessories, 24 inch Blue iMac with 4.5 Retina display (computer), Samsung 75-inch Crystal UHD 4K Smart TV, Apple TV, Colour Multifunction Printer, two office chairs, reupholster a set of 5 Heritage Odeon Theatre seats, 50 x White genealogy folders and some stationery.

- Recurring costs to THS would be \$1,708 for the increased internet and Genealogy sites. Jenny proposed a motion that THS link the recurring costs of the Genealogy Hub to the money THS makes from running the Show and Rodeo BBQs. This was accepted. Mick suggested that if we were unsuccessful in gaining the funding we could talk to Robyn Duncan about using part of her donation towards this project.

- Windmill repair - Graham gave an update on the repair progress. He and Mick transported all the pieces of the windmill to Molong. Thomas Glastonbury, repairer, has started on the tailpiece but won't get to the head until the new year. He is currently getting quotes for new frames to resheet as the old ones are deemed to be too damaged. The old frames are to be kept to be part of a display. Graham will let us know if the quotes are within the grant money. Thomas is aware that Acquittal of the Wind Farm Grant is due September 2024.

- Progress on Ernie Stevenson plaque - Fiona, has a rock and plaque for placement and will place that, possibly, in January 2024, for the anniversary of Ernie's death. Jeff has moved the bricks and cleaned up the area beside the shed, still a little clean up to do.

- THS website has had a lot of work done by Penny. A new membership form and bank details have been added.

### **Review of agreed actions and motions arising from general business:**

1. Stevenson Shed - Jeff finished off the spraying of the wagon.

2. Machinery Shed update - that the new section of the machinery shed be prepared for public access and display. Chris consulted with Ken Fleming, Bob Blay, Russell and Mary Chalker, Max and Glennis Wright to review the list of artefacts in the machinery shed that Chris has already compiled. Everyone gave input on what to keep and are happy to proceed with Chris' recommendations. He was able to get some great stories



on many individual items through this process. Has been decided that the tractor with the rubber tyres and the hay bailer may go to Yass Museum. Chris is negotiating with them.

3. Ken's restored buggy - Ken and Joyce restored this 4 wheel buggy, which was a part of the John's collection, when they were at Tallygang and have been looking after it for 40 years. Ken is happy for the THS to house it. It will remain in safe keeping at Ken's place until the Machinery Shed is ready to house it.

4. THS Christmas gathering to be held at Ken Ainsworth's place on Saturday 16th December at midday. THS complex will be closed for the day. Chris will send out invitations. Jenny will approach The Tangled Twig regarding catering for the salads. If unsuccessful, Tahlia may be interested in catering.

5. Chris met with Love Vintage Taralga and community groups who are interested in creating a community event/initiative, Festival of Small Halls/Villages which would be held next Easter. THS would be happy to help advertise. Taralga Brass Band Display using our musical artefacts was proposed which would attract visitors to the THS complex.

6. CWA visited the THS complex on October 14th, 2023. Thanks, on behalf of the CWA, was given by Francis.

7. Thanks to Jeff for disposing of the bricks beside the Stephenson Shed.

8. Chris contacted Jason Chalker, the Rodeo Committee, to advise that we are not available to carry out the BBQ in 2024, but we can provide contacts and information from Peter Davies to assist with the day. We will wait until we are asked in the future before we make a decision on doing the 2025 BBQ. Chris also let the Show Committee know that we are still interested in hosting the BBQ in 2024.

#### **Reports:**

President - Chris Ainsworth - Very grateful for the work being done by everyone.

Secretary - Jenny Haigh

- visit of Sunday 24th September by Chevrolet car group, the morning tea was a great success. We made \$988.00
- visit of Saturday 28th October by Model T car group had disappointing numbers but we did get a couple of people from town.

Treasurer - The treasurer's report, with a balance as at 3rd November 2023 of \$47,452.49, was tabled by Judith Matthews and moved to be received by Mick Chalker. This was seconded by Annette Chalker. Judith reminded us that our investments mature presently. Mick moved a motion that our investments be reinvested for 12 months at the best available rate. This was seconded by Penny. Motion was accepted.

Archives - Penny reported that accessioning and archiving of artefacts is ongoing and we are beginning to assemble the Portrait Gallery using the old pictures of the Over 70s, 80s etc. We were advised that there are more portraits to consider in the Wombie Room.

Garden - Annette reported that the gardens are all completed except for the Cottage garden which is still to do. The grounds are looking very nice.

#### **General business.**

1. Ken offered his assistance in explaining the workings of the Masonic Lodge should we have visitors who wish to know about the Lodge.
2. Max and Glynnis Wright have expressed their eagerness for the Robyn Duncan donation of \$10,000 be spent, showing our appreciation for the donation.

**Next Meeting:** 3rd February 2024 at 2.00pm - a joint AGM and General meeting