

Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.

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Newsletter July 2019

Amazingly we are into the second half of the year, the Winter solstice is over and still it will not rain. Maybe it will have obliged us with some rain by the next Society meeting which will be held at **Dumaresq Chambers , 7.30pm on Tuesday, 16 July**. The speaker will be **Phillipa Charley-Briggs**, Curator of the 'Invergowrie' Museum project who many may remember meeting on the most enjoyable 2018 ADHS excursion to 'Invergowrie'. Phillipa's talk is

Invergowrie Memorabilia – Establishing a Museum

New England Regional Art Museum Exhibition, 'The College on the Hill':

A display of Armidale Teachers' College photographs and memorabilia from the UNE Archives will complement the permanent NERAM exhibition on display in the Howard Hinton Gallery. Howard Hinton OBE donated almost 1000 original artworks to the Teachers' College over the years 1929 – 1948 and these graced the walls of the College building. With forced amalgamation of College and University, the paintings (principally by Australian artists) were placed in storage until the community and Government funded Art Museum was built in Kentucky Street where they could once again be displayed. The beautiful permanent Hinton Gallery features around 130 works of art from the Hinton Collection. 'The College on the Hill' exhibition will remain open until 18th August.

A Trip Down Memory Lane: Talks presented at July meetings each decade
1969: Mr George Atkin – The Introduction of Compulsory Voting to Queensland, 1914.

1979: Dr H. Royle and Mr W. Nichol – Doctors W. Sheldon and S.P. Spasshatt, Two Prominent New England Medical Practitioners of the Nineteenth Century.

1989: Jock Elphick - Armidale Teachers' College in World War II.

1999: Mr Graham Wilson – The Changing Historical Landscape of Armidale since World War I.

2009: William Oates and Graham Wilson OAM – Snapshots of New England, Armidale

Snippets of History: A letter received in relation to a family query which provides a vivid picture of life in the 1850s for **David and Janet Sutherland** who, with five children, arrived in Australia on the *Conway* in 1856 and travelled north east of Walcha where three more children were born.

‘Winterbourne’, New England 23 October 1858.

Dear Brother and Sister,

I take this opportunity of writing to let you know we are still in the land of the living and well – thank God for his goodness, hoping this will find you the same. I have been a long time in writing but the time we had in Sydney we never settled to get back an answer. We left Sydney last January and were four months on our way up the country. We were drawn by bullock and dray and twelve bullocks. It was four hundred miles and just had to make our beds under the dray at night. You can have no idea of the bush that is here and travelling with a family is very costly. It cost us about twenty pounds to get here and we were only three months up when our master sold his station and went 500 miles away further to the north and he took our John away with him. He was driving the bullock dray with the overseer’s family. We had a letter from him after he landed and they got to their new home in eight weeks. We went to the master’s brother’s place where Robert has been since he came to the country. He is a very nice gentleman and we think in a short time we will be very comfortable, if it pleases God to spare us all. David has thirty pounds a year and rations – that is 20 pounds of flour, 20 of beef, four of sugar, one half pound of tea that we get every Saturday. Little David is at the Head Station until a flock cast up for him. He gets four shillings per week and eats in the kitchen. The three little ones are all I have about me now, John only lived with us for one year when he went away – he has twenty-six pounds a year and rations. Whether he comes back when his time is up or not we don’t know yet, but he will not shepherd, it is too lonesome a life for him.

Dear brother and sister I am very anxious for a letter from home. I have never heard a word about one of my own folk since I left home. Many times I think of poor old mother, where she is or what she is doing or if she is still alive. I hope if this reaches you, you will be able too let me know about her, that we may send a little money to her. Also let us know about our sister and our brother, how he and his wife are doing, if they live together yet.

Dear friends, we need no regrets at leaving home because we will be a great deal better off than we could have been at home – we have as much garden ground as ever we like to dig. We have dug about half an acre and it is all planted. It is the garden that makes up the shepherd’s wages. We have been very healthy since we came to the country – there are no children’s diseases here and it is a good place to live – it is a little lonesome no doubt, but it is a harmless life and we will never get everything to our liking. I hope you will not delay in writing as soon as you get this. I must close by saying we will have to travel twenty miles to post this. Yours affectionately ...