

Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.

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Newsletter for July 2021

The next meeting of the Society will be held at **5.30pm on Tuesday, 20th July.**

The speaker will be **Rose Lovelock**, Director of the Armidale Aboriginal Cultural Centre and Keeping Place, where the meeting will be held. The title of the talk will be -

'Getting to know the Armidale Aboriginal Keeping Place and its Director.'

The Keeping Place is at **96-104 Kentucky Street** and is beautifully set up as a Museum, Art Gallery and display centre and where we can comply with the 4 square metres per person rule. Masks will need to be worn.

Annual Subscription: Many thanks to those who have renewed their subscription for 2021/22 and a gentle reminder to those who still wish to do so. Renewal forms are available from the web site or from Dumaresq Chambers (10am -4pm Mon-Fri).

Dumaresq Chambers: The centre has been busy and remains open under the current conditions of wearing a mask, maintaining a 1.5 metre distance from others and having no more than five visitors at a time. The next exhibition, which is taking shape at present is the story of West Armidale with a wealth of photographic material on display depicting the 'suburb' of Armidale west of Faulkner Street. West Armidale had a close-knit population and with a school, shops, Anglican church, hotels and West Ward representation on Council were fairly self-sufficient in the pre-motor car era.

We have various members sorting books, maps and filling filing cabinets and would be delighted to welcome more volunteers to take on some of the projects which need to be undertaken to enable us to function in an orderly fashion. It is very gratifying and necessary to ensure that order can be made from apparent chaos!

'The Blade – Australia's love Affair with Lawn': A Carrick Hill (South Australia) National Touring Exhibition, supported by the Australian Garden History Society at NERAM in Kentucky Street. This showcases over 100 'Lawn Maintenance' hand tools (do you know the difference between a sickle and a scythe?), including Roman grass clippers from 23 AD, twelve vintage lawn mowers and much more in a cleverly curated exhibition. Don't miss it! It will be open until 15 August.

A Trip Down Memory Lane: The July meeting each decade.

1961: Dr W.G. Walker, Messrs D. Dufty, A. Smart – Some American Folk Museums

1971: Mrs J. Oppenheimer – Aspects of the History of Walcha

1981: Mr David Rose – Some Industrial Remains of Hillgrove

1991:

2001: Lyn Rankeillor – Keeping New England in Stitches – the dressmakers of Armidale 1856-1890

2011: Peter Elliott – The Elliott Family in Hillgrove and Dangarsleigh

Snippets of History: From the *Armidale Chronicle* 15 October 1927,
Memories of Mrs Johnson Norris of [157] Marsh Street

Domestic duties with crochet as a pastime keep **Mrs Norris**, aged 80 years busy. As active as most persons 20 years her junior, Mrs Norris retains her full faculties and when our representative called on her, she laughed heartily to think that anyone would like to hear of 'Old Armidale'. [**Elizabeth Jane Norris** died 1943, Johnson Norris was a carrier, constructed roads, culverts etc and was the grave digger. He died in 1904 aged 62].

'We came to live in this house 55 years ago. There was little else but bush. The property of half an acre was bought for 50 pounds and through it ran the Gostwyck Road. I have been here so long that I don't want to shift. The piggery and pound yard were then in Rusden St, near the Plymouth Brethren Church (sic?) and most of the land in that part of the town was owned by Edward Allingham. The **Ryanda** [?] **Hotel** near **Mallyon's bakery** was also owned by members of the Allingham family, while the same family owned the old Bonnar Hotel, further up Beardy St [? Royal Exchange Hotel]. Near this hotel was situated the first Grammar School, of which Mr Mayhew was the second headmaster. Down near **J. Browning and sons** wool and skin store, was a private hospital conducted by **Mrs Cowley**, who now resides in Brown St Armidale'. Mrs Norris recalled the day when she visited the hospital, just in time to see Mrs Cowley badly scalded by a pot of boiling fat. Opposite the wool store was the residence of **Dr Markham**. On the site of the **Presbyterian Manse** was a black's camp. **Edward Allingham's** house was the showcase in those days and was situated on the corner of Beardy and Allingham St. Close by was **Allingham's mill** at which **James Skinner** was manager. He was Mrs Norris' father. Along from the old hospital was the **Lord Nelson Hotel**.

'Armidale's first cordial factory, conducted by **Richard Jenkins**, was located on the site at present occupied by a boarding establishment next to the **Masonic Hall** in Barney Street. Provisions were brought from Maitland in those days, one of the drivers being **James Hiscox** who worked for Mr Allingham. **Moore's mill** was also working. The old cottage between Langham's Hotel and the bowling green was Richardson's **millers's, cottage**. Mrs Norris also recalls the tragic death of **Rob Selhems**, [?] who was drowned in Dumaresq Creek and also that of a man who was suffering from *delerium tremens* who was found in the creek near the bridge. Another incident Mrs Norris remembered vividly was the 1882 flood which brought whole haystacks down the creek. Riding on the stacks were fowls and birds of all kinds. A valuable stallion for which over 100 pounds had been refused two days before, went into the torrent near Markham Street and was washed up dead near **The Rocks** several miles lower down.

[From my memory - 157 Marsh St, the cottage owned by the Norris family was demolished by 1942 when the land was used to grow vegetables during the war and Ron Jackes built the units running east-west now on the site].

