

Armidale and District Historical Society Inc.

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Newsletter for August 2022

The next meeting of the Society will be the **Annual General Meeting**, followed by the regular monthly meeting featuring a talk given by **David Armitage**, well-known and now retired Armidale Stock and Station agent.

The meeting will be held on Tuesday, 16th August at 5.30pm at the Imperial Hotel.

Membership Renewal: The August AGM is a timely occasion to remind members who have not yet renewed membership for 2022/3 that subscriptions are overdue.

Annual General Meeting: It would be most heartening if some members would either nominate or put their own hands up for nomination for positions at the AGM, we could achieve so much more for the Society with more assistance.

Armidale A History in Stories and Photos: The 15th of July launch of Armidale history in the form of a collection of reports, published by Ian Johnstone (stories) and William Oates (photos) was an enjoyable occasion. The book makes great reading along with the significant collection of accompanying photographs.

Dangarsleigh Hall Event 20th August: The celebration at Dangarsleigh Hall of its centenary at Dangarsleigh and 125 years since its opening as the Hillgrove Convent School will commence at 11.30am with a sausage sizzle, outdoor displays, the Armidale Pipe Band and children's games. At 1.30 Adam Marshall MP will open the indoor presentation of the Story of the Hall with short talks and music. The event will conclude with the Mayor, Sam Coupland unveiling a noticeboard depicting the history and refreshments in the form of a high tea. Dressing up would add to the occasion. Come along and celebrate the grand old Hall's double birthday!

A Trip Down Memory Lane: Talks given at the August meetings over the decades.

1962 - No meeting

1972 - Mr G. Page: Convictism in Australian History

1982 - A/Prof J.S. Ryan: The Life and Times of Thomas Girvan, one time Superintendent of Police in Armidale

1992 - Graham Wilson: Researching the History of your House

2002 - Graham Wilson: The Cobb and Co Coach Company in New England 1870-90

2012 - Garry Burgess: The Burgess family in the New England

Snippets of History: The Society recently received a quilt which has been passed on to the Armidale Folk Museum as a more appropriate keeping place. The accompanying information from the donor, **Lorraine Cobcroft**, indicated that the quilt was handmade during the Great Depression by her great grandmother, **Elizabeth Ann Woods** (nee Horner), handed down to her daughter **Bridget Maria Marshall** (nee Woods), then to her daughter, Lorraine's mother, **Gladys Kingdom** (nee Marshall).

Information provided with the quilt indicates that '**John Horner** was a brickmaker who was partly responsible for the manufacture of the bricks used in St Mary's and St Peter's Cathedrals. He carted the mud by bullock dray from 'Saumarez' and had kilns at what was known in the 70s and 80s as Fittler's Farm. His daughter Elizabeth, (b. 1861) married Irish immigrant **Patrick Dennis Woods**, (1838-1926) who worked at John's brickworks and share-farmed at 'Eurandangie'. Patrick's family were wealthy, but he apparently misbehaved (with a young lady) at university, brought shame on the family and was given a stipend for life on condition that he migrated to Australia and never returned.'

Elizabeth and Patrick had ten children, the fourth being **Bridget**, born 1885, who lived to be 102. Bridget's daughter **Gladys Marshall** told her memories of watching her grandmother Elizabeth sitting in a rocking chair in the kitchen, candle alight on the table beside her, delicately and precisely stitching every piece in the growing number of quilts she made. The fabrics of the quilts were all pieces cut from outgrown and worn clothing, worn in the depression by Elizabeth's grandchildren. Gladys could identify every piece and the name and age of the child who wore the garment it came from and often the special occasion for which the garment was first made and worn.

The Centenary Shield for Rifle Shooting: The Society is custodian of the Armidale Rifle Club cups which are on display at Dumaresq Chambers. We now have the Centenary Shield for Rifle Shooting to put on display. This large handsome trophy with bronze decorations was donated by the Armidale, Uralla, Guyra and Hillgrove Clubs in 1937 (*AE* 1/4/1938). It is thought to have been named Centenary as 1938 was the Sesquicentenary of European settlement. Competition for the shield was held annually to 1940, with ten person teams shooting three seven shot matches. World War Two intervened and competition resumed in 1948. The shield has 141 silver plates on both front and back, each naming members of the winning teams. These records are to 1980, as the shield was 'lost' in 1981. In 2022, it was recovered, having been stored in its large wooden box under a bed for 22 years. The winning Clubs recorded are Armidale (49), Walcha (27), Tamworth (19), Coonabarabran (12), Spring Ridge (8), Glen Innes (7), Hillgrove (4), Port Macquarie (3) while Uralla, Narrabri, Woods Reef/Barraba, Manilla, Inverell each won the shield twice and Wollomombi and Gunnedah once.