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THE STONEQUARRY JOURNAL



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The Picton and District Historical and Family History Society Inc.

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Membership

Pensioners and Students	\$15.00
Single	\$20.00
Family (living in same residence)	\$25.00

Meetings

We meet at 9.30 am on the first Saturday of each month (**except** January) in the View Room, Picton Library, 42 Menangle Street, Picton. The Annual General Meeting of the Society is held on the 1st Saturday in September.

Research

Our Research Room is in the Susan Keohane Local History Room, Picton Library, 42 Menangle Street, Picton and is open each Thursday from 9.30 am until 3 pm or by appointment.

Research Fees

Members	Free – plus photocopying costs
Non-Members	\$20.00 first hour - \$10.00 per hour thereafter plus copying/postage costs

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

At the AGM held in September 2020, the following were re-elected to the committee:

President:	Gail Hanger
Vice President:	Kate Holmes
Secretary:	Marlane Fairfax
Treasurer:	Tony Jagicic
Public Officer:	Peter Meyer

With the easing of COVID restrictions in the Library we are able to resume monthly meetings. Our first meeting in 12 months was held on 6 March 2021. As the first Saturday in April will be Easter Saturday, it was agreed to not meet again until May.

Gail Hanger

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

We have been busy since August, with a steady stream of research enquiries, as well as requests from Barbara at the Council for street names in new developments. This particular request concerned the old Grasmere property in Tahmoor, whose owners seem to go from Sell to Clinch then Dr. Heatherington and Brentnall. Marlane was kept busy checking the five Brentnall sisters, one brother and a possible cousin living there between the 1930s to the 1950s. At the same time Fiona from the Library asked us for some information she could put on the Library website for History Week, which we did very quickly. That did bring back memories of the months of work we did for History Week in 2019. Council was in touch about a plaque that was placed in front of the Shire Hall around 1993, in memory of victims of domestic violence. We couldn't find anything – does anyone have any recollections of the event?

On Saturday 19th September Marlane and I were invited by the Sydney Hellenic group to celebrate 140 years since the death of our Greek convict/freedom fighter Antonis Manolis, the first Greek naturalized in Australia. The full story appears in the journal, (page 5) but it was a good day.

While we have been allowed back in the Library since late June, no-one else was allowed upstairs. Early visitors included two students looking for information about the Picton Railway Station, so carting all our archive down the stairs was an effort, but the students were happy. Council has also asked us about the trees in Victoria Park – are any of those still there from the original plantings in 1902, or those planted during World War I for those who died. The challenge was finding photos of the Park showing tree growth, but with droughts and vandals it is hard to say if any of those 100 year old plus trees survive. We suggested that an arborist might be able to help.

In between enquiries and visitors we continue the long process of digitizing and re-organising our photos, which is turning out to be much more complicated than we realized. Marlane, Cheryl and I are involved.



We were very pleased that in November Dr. Michael Carr and his wife visited, on a very wet day. They had brought the doctors' plates for Dr. Parry (here c. 1902 until he died in 1919) and Dr. Johnson (here 1949 until his death in 1976). Included were the times the surgery was open for both these doctors, as well as

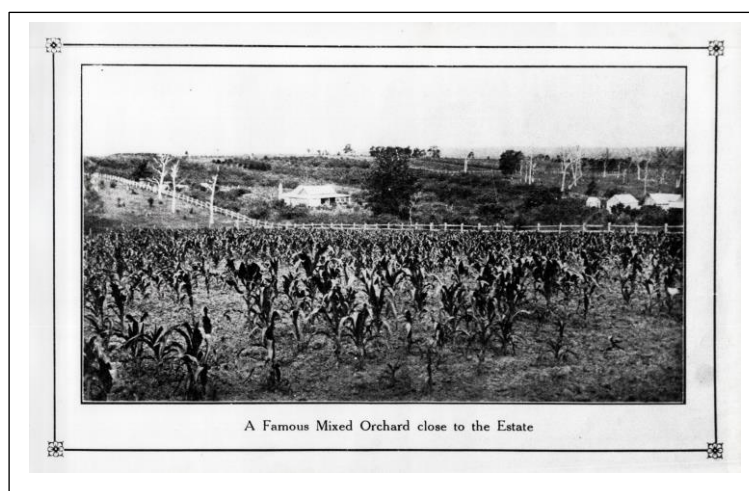


Michael's plates. So for the earlier history of Macquarie Cottage, it was both the surgery and the residence for the doctor's family, and it is in the Carr's time, from 1977, that they moved to a separate residence. Another donation from

them was a very handsome doctor's bag, left by Dr. Johnson and used since by Dr. Carr. This looks like a rectangular bag, but when opened has three drawers in it – very neat. I was slightly disconcerted to find, on opening a drawer, that it contained several packets of drugs, but Michael was quick to explain they were empty, but would be a record of what was being used in the 21st century. Among other items was an old sphygmometer for measuring blood pressure. We are trying to think of how we could mount and display these plates, so if anyone has any ideas, please get in touch.

Also in November we had a visit from Marilyn Dietiker, a descendant of William Anderson (of Bargo and Picton), through his daughter Rachel who married Henry Robottom, and had a large family. Marilyn came with her husband plus a cousin and spouse and had already collected a lot of material about her family. One of her queries was about a house called Swiss Cottage, in Upper Picton, where Rachel's mother-in-law lived for a few years, until her death in 1896. Marlane was eventually able to find that the original owner was a William Scutt, who bought four lots on Argyle Street, just up from Antill Street. There is no old house on either of the lots, and Marilyn's husband, who was born in Switzerland, was surprised at the name, Swiss cottage. He was imagining a Swiss chalet style, but we thought it was just a popular name for cottages in the later 19th century – does anyone have any other information?

On the same day we had a phone call from a Tony Crane in Darwin, who asked if we would be interested in material kept by his grandfather Alfred Crane, who had a small mixed farm just north of Tahmoor from the 1890s until his death in 1950. Some of you might remember an article from the local newspaper in 1927 about Tahmoor farmers, used in a journal some years ago. Not sure that we now have any members who would remember Alfred Crane, who brought his fruit and vegetables into Picton every week, using a horse and cart. He was killed



Maywood Orchard owned by Alfred Crane – from Tahmoor Sale brochure 1921

when for some reason he'd got out of the cart, on the main road, and was hit by a car. Alfred's son Alan (and Tony's dad) had recorded his memories of childhood on the farm – would we be interested? Great excitement on our part, and Tony sent his father's recollections, and we have done a little more research. Alfred Crane married Katherine Knauer, whose family came to "Rosenfels", a property on River Road, Tahmoor, in the 1880s, from Riverstone in the Sydney area. Some of the six Knauer children were born there, and some in Tahmoor. Katherine and Alfred were married in 1893 at the Mission church, Upper Picton. More work to be done on the families, but it was good to see that the

Frank Baker collection of photographs (mostly of Tahmoor) include some of both the Crane and Knauer farms.

We also had a brief visit from John Tsekas, of the Macarthur Greeks, interested in putting up an information panel re Antonis Manolis in the Preschool car park, next to the Upper Picton Cemetery, and quite close to the Manolis grave. This would provide more information about his life, and importance to the many Greek Australians. This year is the bicentenary of the beginning of the Greek War of Independence, so it is likely that there will be an even bigger celebration at the Manolis grave in September. Then the Campbelltown Library sent over some material – newspapers etc., as well as some photos: one of Jarvisfield/Antill Park Golf clubhouse in rather poor repair, and several from the 1984 Picton/Wollondilly Festival parade along Menangle and Argyle Streets.

December was relatively quiet. A Bev Hayes, now living in the old house at 432 Argyle Street (just south of Redbank Creek) wants to know if it ever had a name. We couldn't help, but it was common to have house names before street numbers were introduced. A previous owner was Raymond (Soapie) Cheetham, who lived there from about 1954 until he died in 2010. Soapie's father John W., and grandfather Frederick were born in Picton, but John moved away for a few years, so Soapie was born "away", though the family moved back soon after, in the 1930s. Has anyone got any more information on the family, and why was he called Soapie?



432 Argyle Street Picton

Also of interest was an enquiry about a Sarah Goldsmith who died in 1904, at Thirlmere. Her husband Henry was a schoolteacher, first in Goulburn, and the couple came to Picton in 1891 and he became the catechist for St. Mark's church which included the Upper Picton and Thirlmere churches. In 1900 they moved to the Parish of St Stephens Newtown and on that occasion Henry was presented with a Memorial from "the inhabitants of Thirlmere and neighbourhood" expressing their regret at him leaving the district. Ill health however saw the return of Henry and his wife Sarah to Thirlmere in 1902. Henry died in 1907, Sarah predeceasing him in 1904. We have probate papers for both Sarah and Henry. She owned a couple of allotments at Macquarie Fields, and had life insurance, so she left an estate of £245/10/10, while her husband left only £58/13/11, even with his third of Sarah's estate. Henry was renting Rosewood Cottage, and probably not in good health because his unpaid bills of almost £50 included two doctor's bills of £44. (See page 10)

We closed a little early last year, as both Marlane and I had appointments on 17th December, and we re-opened on January 14th, when our first visitor was Frank Baker who wanted information about the Dutch Inn near Bargo, started by Mr. de Graaf – refreshment rooms with a bowser, on the then Hume Highway. All I could find was that in 1952 Mr. de Graaf was issued with a refreshment licence. The building survives, but Frank isn't sure how much of it is original, as he knows of some additions. Some time, possibly in the 1960s, the Hume Highway was straightened out as there was a bad corner near the Inn – known as Suicide bend. Has anyone else got more information? The Thai restaurant formerly in Picton (flooded in 2016) moved to this site, with access now via Caloola Road.



Sadly we heard that Gail Dunn, the Library Team Leader who was forced to retire last year due to ill health, had died. Some of the Library staff went to the funeral, and the rest of us saw the live-stream in the View Room at the library. Gail had married young, and when her three children were at school she began volunteering at her local library, before going on to get her qualifications, and soon after coming to our library. Apart from her innovations here, she spent a couple of years in the early 1990s helping a small village in East Timor establish a small library there. She hadn't reached her 60th birthday.

Left: Gail Dunn at the opening of the 2019 History Week

Other deaths occurred over the summer. One was Pat Shephard, a foundation member of the Society, and also a long time local, Marie Wonson, who died in December. Marie and her husband Hugh – who passed away in 1997, were also long time members and supporters of the Society. Marie was one of nine children of Mary O'Brien of Burragorang Valley and Samuel Bennett of Gundagai. Marie's father worked on the Nepean Dam where Marie started her schooling. Hugh and Marie were married in 1949 and spent the whole of their married



Marlane Fairfax, Marie Wonson and Pat Shephard - in earlier times.

life in the Picton district. Marie and Hugh lived in Lumsdaine Street in the 1950s, and for some years she worked at the mushroom farm in the old Redbank Railway tunnel – very hard work, climbing up and down the shelves of mushroom trays. Marie and Hugh were regular participants and winners in the Wollondilly Garden Competition and were also heavily involved with the Picton A H & I Society. Marie was a good friend of Helen Hanger and had donated several folders of material to the Society. Marie was 93.

All in all it has been a momentous six months with interesting work and donations, but with sadness as well.

Kate Holmes.

Patricia Joan Shephard, Historian A/Dip LAH

Pat, like Marie Wonson was from a large family, one of eight children she grew up in Lidcombe and remained a "city" girl until 1981 when she and husband Brian decided to move to Wilton for more space. One of Pat's sisters, Kath, was also living at Wilton. I first met Pat around 1986 at the then Community Library where we discovered we both had an interest in family and local history; Pat joining the small informal group which went on to initiate the formation of this Society. We became friends. Anyone who knew Pat will know that she loved to talk – my children would groan when they knew I was calling Pat or she me! Pat was a tireless worker for the Society in those early years and a wonderful researcher. Together we took on studying for an Associate Diploma in Local

and Applied History through the University of New England (thanks to the prompting and encouragement of life member and friend Jan Ross who had already embarked on the course). That study formed the basis of Pat's incredible archive of Wilton history.

Pat and Brian moved to Orange in 2001, returning to the Wollondilly and settling in Thirlmere in 2013. It was at this time that Pat noticed a decline in Brian's health. Pat was no longer an active member of the Society and instead concentrated on her family history as she battled her own health issues and cared for Brian who was suffering from dementia and a form of leukemia. In July last year Pat was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. I was very fortunate to be able to spend some time with Pat over her last few months, talking of times past, family and local history. She had little time or strength to sort through her local history archive but together we managed to identify the contents of the numerous boxes. Pat died at her home on 5 November aged 72, her three children caring for her during those last months. Both Jan and I were able to attend Pat's funeral.



The archive, which also includes material on Appin and Douglas Park has been entrusted to me by Pat and her children to ensure it remains intact as a collection and accessible for research.

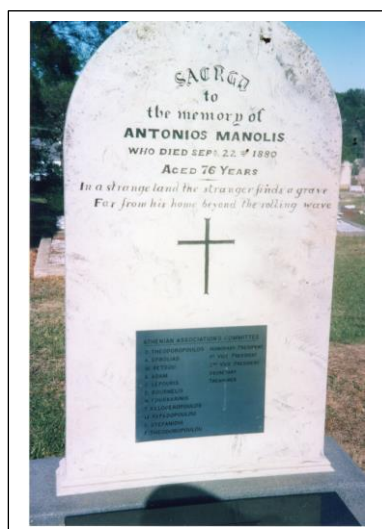
Following Pat's diagnosis Brian was placed in care in Carrington. Due to his condition, it was not possible for the family to tell him of Pat's passing. Brian died on 23 January 2021.

Marlane Fairfax

Antonios Manolis, our first Greek-Australian

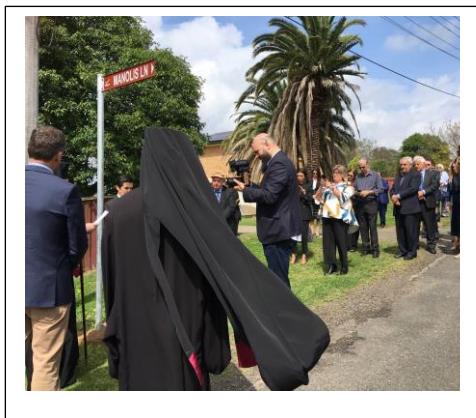
Kate Holmes

The headstone stands in the quiet of the Upper Picton Cemetery, just on the south side of the highest point. It is a substantial stone with a rounded top, and the simple inscription:



*SACRED
to
the memory of
Antonios Manolis
WHO DIED SEPR. 22ND
1880
AGED 76 YEARS
In a strange land the
stranger finds a grave
Far from his home beyond
the rolling wave*





Then, on a cool Saturday, 19th September 2020, people came, in groups and singly, mostly dressed in black, many bringing flowers, to honour the 140th anniversary of Manolis' death. Apart from the attendance of many Greek-Australians from this area and Sydney, our new Mayor, Robert Khan and other Councillors, our Federal MP, plus Marlane Fairfax and myself representing the Society, we were greatly honoured to have His Eminence Makarios Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Australia, with his entourage come to bless the grave. We also marked the naming of the short street on the north side of the cemetery as Manolis Lane, where both the mayor and the archbishop spoke. From here we went down to the RSL Memorial Park – Antonis being considered a fighter in the Greek War of Independence (1821-1829). It was here that some locals saw the entourage of men in black robes with tall back hats and wondered what was going on. It was a short ceremony, with prayers and wreaths laid by local and Greek dignitaries, and very moving. Most of the wreaths were beautiful white chrysanthemums.

From there we moved to Vaby's for lunch, where interspersed between the courses there were speeches by the archbishop, Angus Taylor, and local councillor Michael Banasik, who kindly made sure that the information provided by our Society was acknowledged. Later Dr. Panayiotis (known to us as Panos) Diamadis gave an illustrated talk on Antonis Manolis, to round out the day. He also acknowledged all the help that we had given. The day was a great success – and there will be another celebration this year, to mark the bicentenary of the Greek Revolution. The Greek-Australians are very proud to have

two freedom fighters on Australian soil, one buried at Picton, the other at Nimitabel.

On the 22nd September I took some flowers to the grave – some grapevine, olive, rosemary, Australian natives and other flowers; when I went back a few weeks later I was touched to see that other flowers had also been left on the exact day of his death.

So who was this man? One of many names, for a start- variously recorded as Andonis, Antonio or Antonios, Manlass or Manless.

Antonis – or Andonis – Manolis was born, in Hydra, c. 1805, but by the 1820s was one of the crew, probably the captain, on the Herakles. Greece was fighting for independence from Turkey, and when, in 1827, the young men came across an English ship, Alceste, taking cargo to Egypt, then also part of Turkish territory, the English were considered fair game. The young Greeks stole part of the cargo and let Alceste continue. Two days later the Royal Navy ship Gannet, on anti-piracy patrol off Crete boarded the Herakles, arrested the nine crewmen and took them to Malta. It took some time to

organise the very unusual trial, (Greek prisoners, British “court”, on Malta) which dragged on for several months. Two of the crew were acquitted, the rest sentenced to death – eventually commuted to transportation. Three, including Manolis, for life, and four for 14 years.



Above and below: Picton RSL Memorial Park



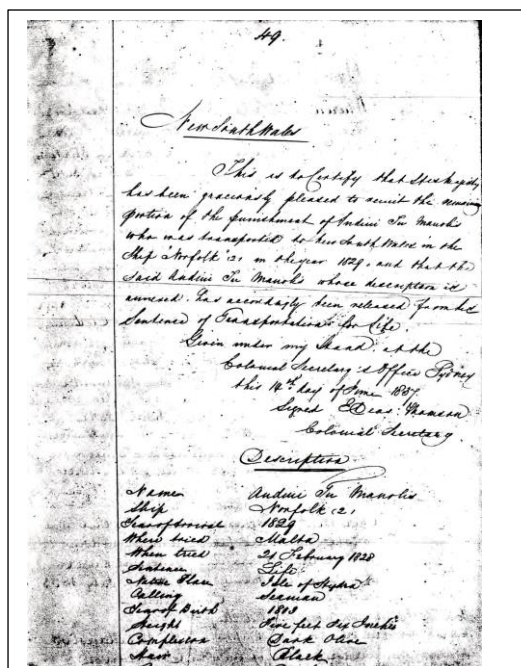
These first known Greek “emigrants” arrived in Sydney in August 1829, on the Norfolk. They were described as in their twenties, unmarried, with no known criminal record in Greece, and most were illiterate – but maybe they didn’t have much English. At this time Antonis was recorded as Andonis Manolis, and he and Nikolas Papandreas were allocated to William Macarthur, and began working at Elizabeth Farm near Parramatta.

William, his father John and brother James had travelled to France in 1817 to study viniculture, bringing back hundreds of cuttings and starting a vineyard at Camden Park. The two Greeks seem to have worked in both places, as James Busby mentioned a Greek worker at Camden in his 1830 Manual of practical viticulture, while Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell, visiting Elizabeth Farm in 1831 noticed “Greek pirates at work training vines ...according to the method of their country”. Camden Park soon became their main place of work, with a new, larger vineyard being established with the help of Manolis and Papandreas.

Most of the Greeks were granted tickets-of-leave around 1835, but not the three with life sentences. Greece had won its independence in 1829, but it took some time for the authorities to establish the whereabouts of their overseas freedom fighters, and it was not until 1836 that all the men were pardoned. The men were provided with their fares home - five returned, but two, Manolis and Ghikas Boulgaris (who had settled in the Braidwood area and married a local Irish-born girl, Mary Lyons) decided to stay. But why would Manolis stay? He had an exemplary record while working for the Macarthurs so perhaps he preferred life on the land rather than at sea, and liked the area.

He married Elizabeth Gorey in St Bede’s Catholic Church, Appin in 1843, when he was recorded as Anthony Manlass, and it seems they had a son John, or possibly James. We are not sure where the family were living at this time, but by 1852 Antoni Manless had bought two lots in Hill Street, Upper Picton, for £8. It was a canny choice for someone interested in gardening/horticulture as a small gully and occasional creek runs through his land. It was then realized that he was a “foreigner”, and so in 1854 he was the first Greek to become a naturalized British subject in New South Wales.

Very little is known of his life, but it is possible that more of the local landowners had planted vineyards, and some had quite large gardens which required looking after. In the 1860 Camden electoral role he is listed as Manlis, but finally in the 1870 roll he was Manolis. His family life was rather unhappy: in January 1864 Elizabeth sued Antoni Manles for desertion, but as neither party appeared in court, the matter may have been dropped. In that same month, their probable son, James Manless was up before the court, accused of being at Mrs. Mary Jane Hamilton’s house “for an



Pardon of Antonis Manolis (NSW State Records)

unlawful purpose.” He was declared guilty, but discharged as he had been held in custody for several weeks. In August 1866 James was again in trouble for drunkenness and obscenity, but did not appear in court. He may have left the district, because the case was postponed until he could be found. No reference was made to his parents, if they were so, during the cases, and nothing further is known of James or Elizabeth.

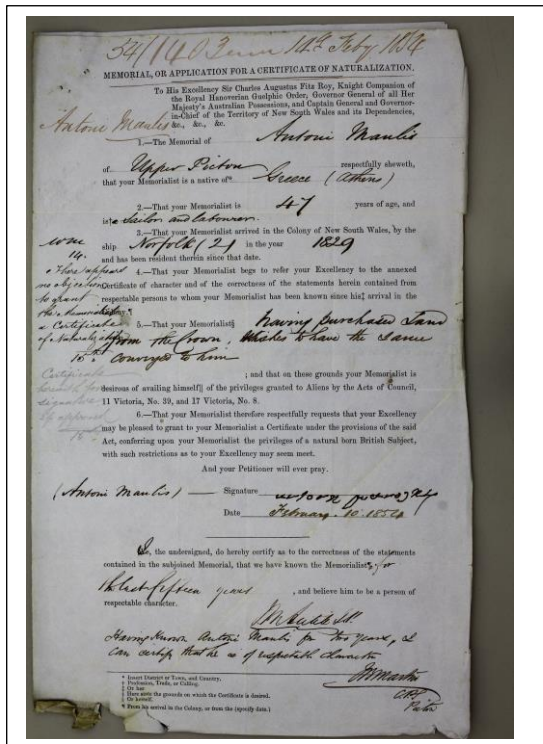
Antonis died in 1880, still described as a gardener, and possibly dying of a stroke. The notification was made by George Bell, possibly one of his employers, and witnessed by Henry James and James Bell. All had property nearby, though Henry James’ home was south of the village of Upper Picton. Antonis must have been well-liked, or at the very least respected, because his very handsome headstone would have been quite expensive.

We did find out a bit more about Antonis in 2020, once we met Panos and Vasili from the Sydney Greek community, who visited several times before the big celebration. They were able to explain that records showing the name as Antonis tu Manolis meant that Manolis was his father’s name. Also their ship being quite a way from Greece, down near the North African coast, when it was captured – that was an historic route for ships for many centuries. On our side, Marlane was able to visit State Archives and found a couple of really important records. One was his pardon, dated 14th June, 1837, which gave his date of birth (1803) and place (Hydra – there had been some argument within the various Greek-Australian groups that he may have been born in Athens). He was five feet 6 inches tall, of dark olive complexion, dark eyes and hair, and spoke broken English. The latter fact probably explains various spellings of his name – and the accepted pronunciation was emphasizing the first syllable, which left the “O” in the middle less obvious.

Also important was a copy of his application for naturalization in February 1854 – there had been some delay since buying the land in 1852, as noted by the Camden Clerk of Petty Sessions, Mr. J.B. Martin, as “Mr. Manlis resides 15 miles from here, and is seldom at home”! This came from a letter within the file. The naturalization form is interesting to us as it is signed by J.M. Antill, who notes that he has known Manlis for fifteen years. It is still not clear if that meant Antonis had been in Picton for those 15 years, as Antill may have encountered him at Camden Park – but we think (hope) it was the former. J.B. Martin also signed the form, having known him for two years; both men considered him to be a respectable man. And it was signed by Antonis – partially under the line on the form, and possibly in Greek. Panos mentioned that the word signature comes from the Greek meaning under the line – I think that’s what he said.

It seems that Henry James acquired the lot next to Manolis in Hill Street, and as there were no family to inherit, over time took over Antonis’ lots. Marlane has not been able to find any land title record for a sale from Manolis to James. Henry died in 1921, but his probate record does not include the extra Hill Street lots. However, this land was sold from his widow’s estate in 1957 when E.W. Wilkinson bought it. It was sold again in 1966 to Mr. and Mrs. T.R. Hawkins, who owned it until very recently.

Mrs. Glenys Hawkins had written to local historian Bruce Knox in 1982, and the Society had been in touch with her in 1999. The Hawkins had moved to Camden and sold the Hill Street lots c. 2019. In all that time there seems to have been no changes made to the Manolis land, but in late 2020 the three lots were subdivided and some 3-5 houses were being built there.



Naturalization Application of Antonis Manolis (NSW State Records)

Knowledge of Antonis Manolis seems to have faded over the decades but in 1975 a Canberra diplomat, Hugh Gilchrist, who had just been the Ambassador to Greece, began corresponding with Bruce Knox, local historian and poultry farmer of Tahmoor, about Antonis. Hugh was planning a book on the Greeks in Australia, and published a short article in the Canberra Historical Journal, March 1977, on the two “pirates” who had stayed here. He had done quite a lot of research, but it seems that Bruce Knox was able to find out where the Manolis land was and photograph his grave. An article in the Picton Post did mark the centenary of Manolis’ death, and in 1983 a group from the Athenian Association visited from Sydney. Again, a newspaper article noted that “the lonely grave will be upgraded by local monumental mason Jim Berger”. The Association added a plaque to the headstone, and a granite slab was placed on top of the grave. A suggestion was made that a plaque could be placed on his land to mark his importance as a “first Greek settler”, but this was not

done. Now his name lives on in the lane at the north end of the cemetery where he lies.

Hugh Gilchrist published his book “*Australians and Greeks – Volume 1: the early years*” in 1992, and the chapter on our two Greeks provides a great deal more information on the original trial, and the life of the second pirate, Ghikas Boulgaris. He and his wife produced ten children, and it was touching to see that the youngest son was given the second name of “Manolis”. I wonder if these two men corresponded at all, Ghikas and family moved around to various places in the Monaro area of southern New South Wales. The chapter provides only a few more details of Antonis’ life, apart from noting that he did do some work for the Macarthurs after he was pardoned. We still don’t know if he might have worked for the local Antill family, but will have to do more research. Marlane’s work has been so valuable, and Ian Tait found a copy of Hugh Gilbert’s book, and copied the relevant chapter for our file.

Another discoverer of information was the late Liz Vincent who realized more of the Manolis information was in the records under various names – she found the marriage details through her index to Catholic records, and the court cases through her index to the Picton Bench Books. And our Society holds more letters from interested parties in the 1990s – was an olive tree planted on his property still alive in 1999 – Glenys Hawkins replied no, possibly removed as part of the new sewage works. In 2011 the Australian Hellenic Council, NSW Inc. visited but none of us could attend, as it was a Saturday morning of our monthly meeting.

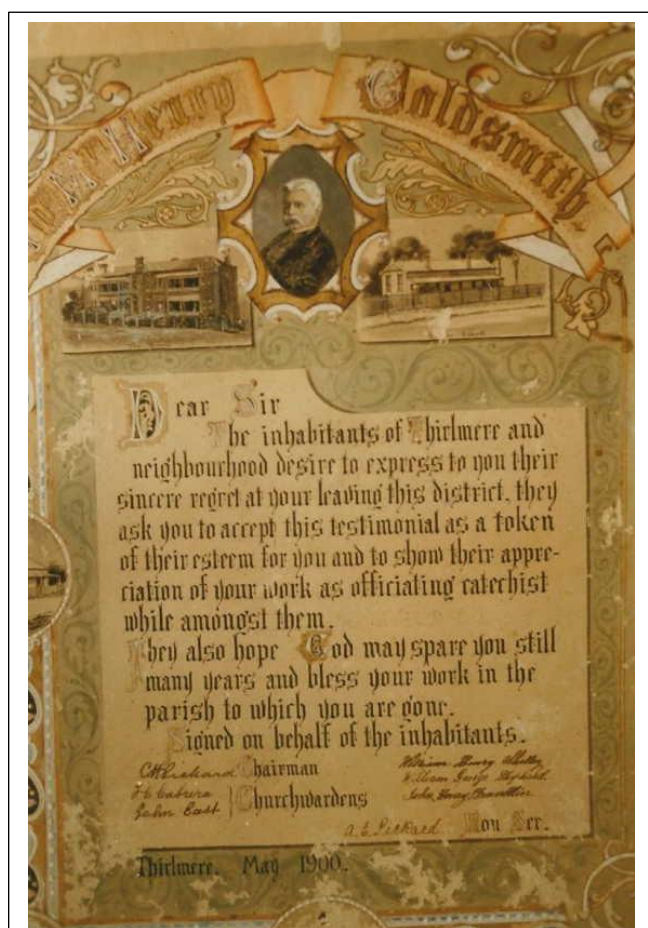
Do any of our members have any memories of people talking about Antonis Manolis any time in the last fifty or sixty years? Or of visiting the grave and wondering about the strange name? Anything would be a great addition to our now substantial file, although most of his life story still remains rather blank. We had hoped to get a special edition of the journal out in November last year, but with a surprisingly busy time, despite Covid 19 restrictions, you've had to wait till now for more about the life and times of Antonis Manolis, the first Greek-Australian.

Further notes on Henry and Sarah Goldsmith

The Memorial to Henry Goldsmith is from "The Inhabitants of Thirlmere and Neighbourhood" dated 1900.

At the top of the Memorial is a photo of the Queen Victoria Memorial Hospital and a photo of the Thirlmere School. The inquirer was asking for confirmation of the photo of QV and the identity of the school building. The inquirer believes that Henry's wife Sarah, died of TB in the hospital in 1904. Her death record doesn't state that she died at QV, which most hospital deaths registered at that time do, and it also states that she died of heart failure – neither of which rules out that she did die in QV of TB.

Henry and Sarah had 12 children in total, four being deceased at the time of Sarah's death. Both are buried in the C of E section of the Upper Picton Cemetery.



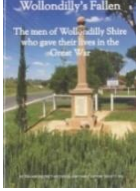


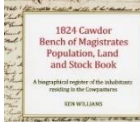

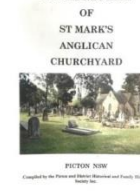
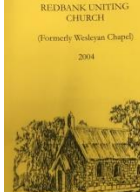
Dear Sir

The inhabitants of Thirlmere and neighbourhood desire to express to you their sincere regret at your leaving this district, they ask you to accept this testimonial as a token of their esteem for you and to show their appreciation of your work as officiating catechist while amongst them

They also hope God may spare you still many years and bless your work in the parish to which you are gone.

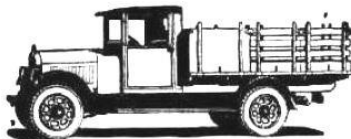
Signed on behalf of the inhabitants

C H Pickard	Chairman	William Henry Shelley
F Cabrera) Church Wardens	
John East)	William George Shephard?
		John Henry ?
		A E Pickard Hon Sec

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