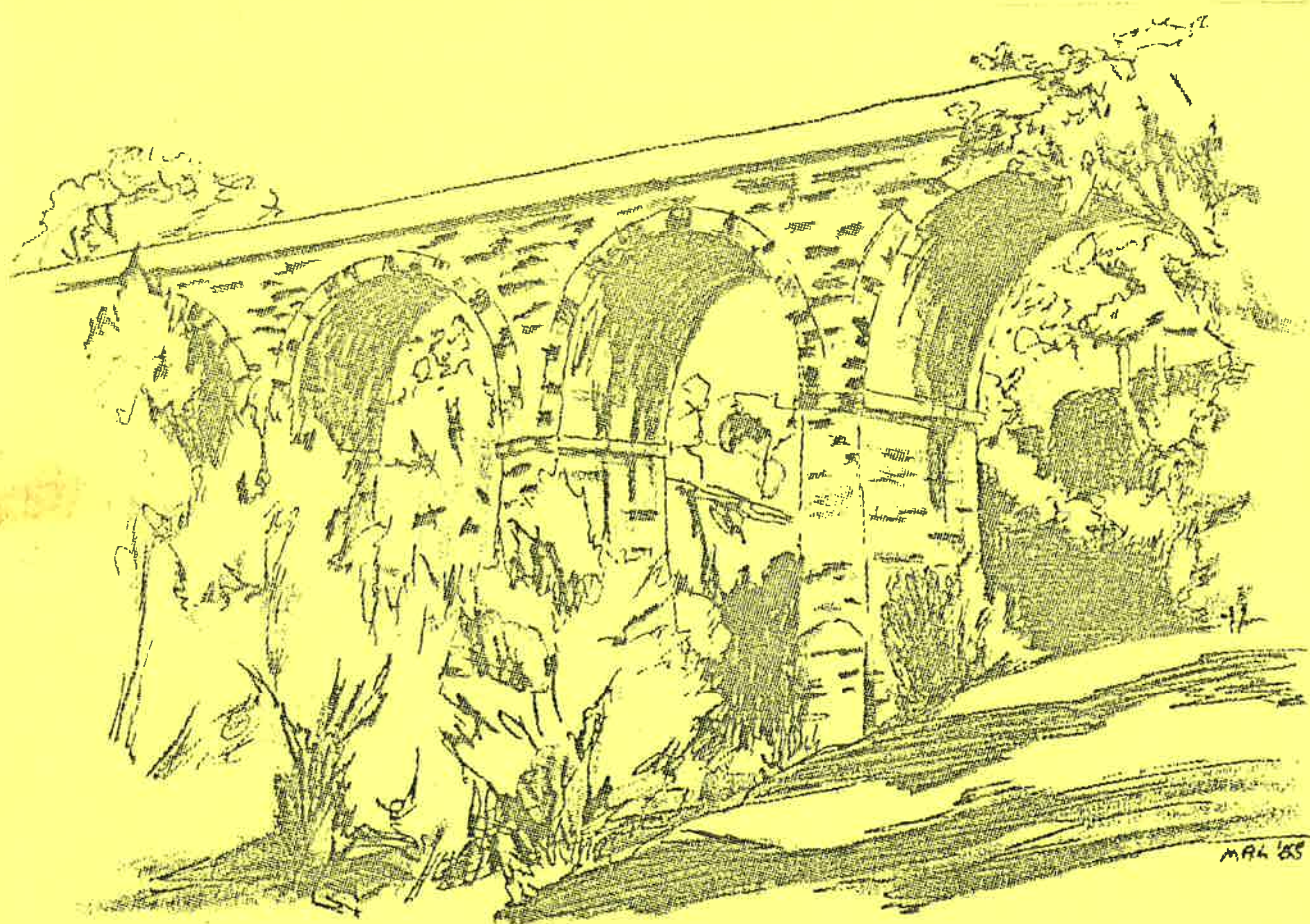


The Journal

MARCH. 1990

VOLUME 4. NUMBER 1.

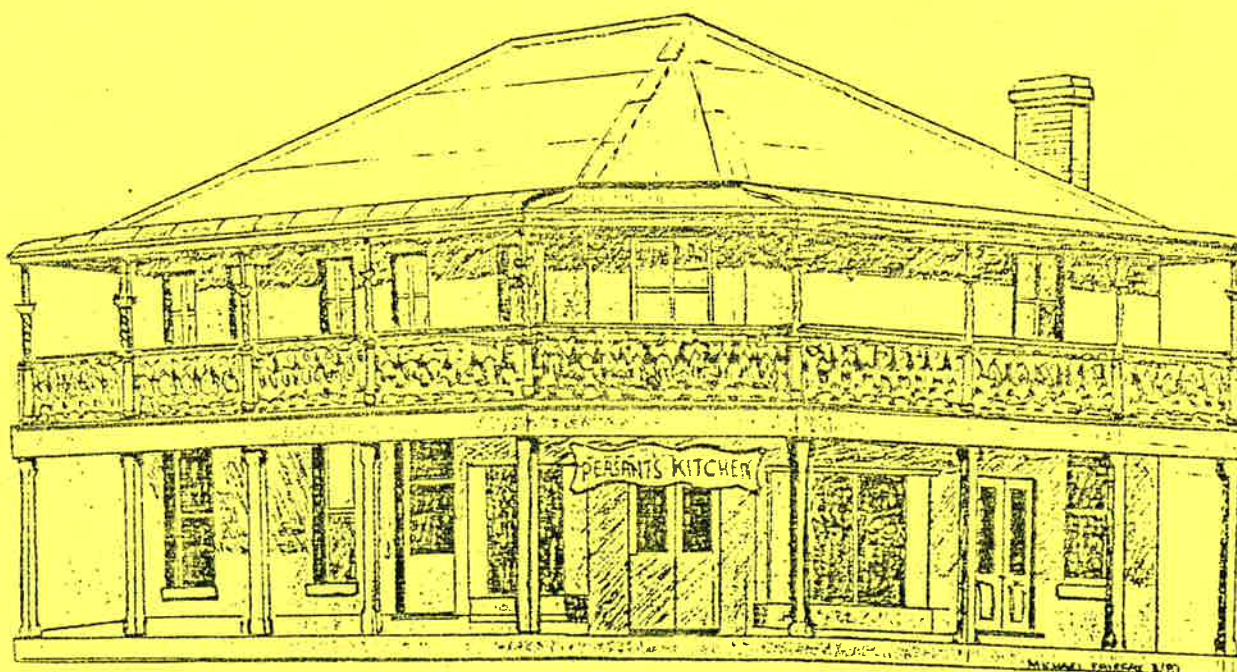


Picton and District Historical
and
Family History Society

The Railway Hotel was situated on the corner of Oaks Road and Argyle Street, Picton, opposite the George Inn.

In the early days, the trains ran across the road up "Picton Hill" and went through the old tunnel.

As the railway station at Picton was a long way from the centre of the town, it was usual for Picton passengers to alight at the railway gates on Picton Hill and then walk down to the main part of town. The Railway Hotel, later named The Royal, was first licensed in the early 1860's and ceased operation as a hotel in 1913.



Part of the old hotel is now The Peasants Kitchen Restaurant.

Open 7 days a week - Monday to Saturday: 10:30 to 5:30

Sunday: 10:30 to 4:00

Phone: (046) 772294 - Open evenings to group bookings (minimum 15)

The Picton & District Historical & Family History Society meets at The Peasants Kitchen Restaurant on the second Monday of each month at 7.30 pm.

PICTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.

MARCH, 1990

VOLUME 4. NUMBER 1.

PRICE \$1 00

President. HARRY HOARE

Secretary. JAN ROSS

Vice President. CYNTHIA COLLISON

ADDRESS ALL ENQUIRIES TO:

The Secretary, PO. Box 64.

PIC^TON. 2571

Family history enquiries to the above address.
non-members fee - \$5.00 + S.A.E.

Library Hours Thursday - 10am - 2pm.
 Saturday - 2pm - 4pm.

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THE SOCIETY DOES NOT HOLD ITSELF RESPONSIBLE FOR STATEMENTS MADE OR
OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN THIS JOURNAL.

PICTON & DISTRICT

BARGO (EAST & WEST), BUXTON, COURIDJAH,
DOUGLAS PARK, LAKEELAND, MALDON, PICTON,
REDBANK, TAMMOOR, THIRLMERE, WILTON.

The PICTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC.
has, since its foundation and with the help of our many dedicated
volunteers, gathered together a large collection of local historical
information which we know will be of great interest to Family Historians
with relatives who may have at some time lived in the Picton District.
Members are continually working on the indexing of this material with
other ongoing projects including :

- * Compilation of Genealogical Information on Local Families including
indexing under the mother's maiden name as well as the father's.
- * The extraction of Obituaries, Death Notices, Memoriums, Accident
Reports, etc. from Local Newspapers.
- * Recording of Cemeteries and Up-Dating Local Cemetery Transcripts
already published.
- * More detailed local history studies are being undertaken of:-
 Picton; Tammoor/Bargo; & Wilton (East Bargo).

These include the study of Local Architecture, Public Utilities (e.g. Water
Supply, Railway, Roads), Agricultural & Commercial Development, etc.

Further details of the Society's Records appear on our "Flier". (see
opposite page)

The Research Officer welcomes all enquiries whether of a Family History
or Local History nature. We request the payment of a \$5 fee to help with
the cost of postage and photocopying.

Address all enquiries to: THE SECRETARY
P.O. BOX 61, PICTON, NSW. 2571.

PLEASE NOTE:

The above service offered by the Picton & District Historical &
Family History Society Inc. HAS NO CONNECTION with the "Picton
(NSW) & District Surnames Index - Pre 1920".

Picton and District Historical and Family History Society

Information Sheet

Although only a little more than two years old, our Society has amassed a vast collection of resource and reference material. Valuable research tools for both the local and family historian have been compiled and are continuously being updated. Information has been extracted from local records, personal and official diaries, early publications, journal articles, newspapers, surveyor's field books, railway accession registers, land, Post Office and School records plus unpublished manuscripts.

On receipt of an enquiry a detailed search, of the following, will be conducted:

A. Publications produced by the society.

Cemetery Transcripts

- i) St. Marks
- ii) Upper Picton
- iii) Redbank
- iv) Thirlmere
- v) Bargo

Monuments and Memorials - Picton and District

B. Local records - pre 1900

- i) Birth Index
- ii) Mother's Maiden Name Index
- iii) Occupation Index
- iv) Death Index

C. Name Index (People and Places)

Created from all other indices including Post Office and School records

D. Family History Inquiry Index

E. Members Interest Register

F. Land Utilization Index

i) Conditional Purchases

1863 - 64

1865

Pastoral Occupation of Crown Lands

1859 - 60

1865 - 66

1875 - 76

1878 - 79

1885

ii) Land Title Records

iii) Parish Maps

The Society holds copies of all these specified Land Usage Reports for the State of N.S.W., in excess of 70,000 names. These were printed in various Volumes of the Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

For further information, enquiries should be addressed to:-

Picton and District
Historical and Family History Society
P.O. Box 64
Picton 2571

Library Hours:-

Thursday 10am - 2pm

Saturday 2pm - 4pm

123 Argyle Street, Picton 2571

Dates to remember

- March 12 ; General meeting
guest speaker - Alex Goodsell, Historical sites of Campbelltown
- April 9 ; General meeting
guest speaker-- Judith Dunn, Historical Cemeteries
- April 25 - 29 ; Agview .90, Camden
- May 14 ; General meeting
guest speaker - Colin Sproule, Picton to Pretoria (Boer wra -
men from Wollondilly Shire) .
- June 11 ; General meeting
- July 9 ; General meeting
- August 13 ; General meeting
- August 25 ; Annual Ball - To be confirmed
- September 10 ; Annual General Meeting
- September 29 - October 1 ; Stonequarry Festival of Arts and Crafts

Stonequarry Festival of Arts and Crafts

An annual event, this festival is currently organised by the Picton and District Historical and Family History Society Inc. It provides an avenue for artists and crafts people to both display and sell their work. Sponsored by the local community, comprising business houses, the council and orivate citizens, the exhibition offers prizes in all major catagories.

OCTOBER LONG WEEKEND - 29th SEPTEMBER - 1st OCTOBER, 1990

PICTON & DUSTRICT HISTORICAL & FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY INC. BALL.

Theme ; Masked Ball.

TENTATIVE DATE : 25th AUGUST, 1990.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE SKELLET FAMILY OF PICTON

by SYD PERCIVAL

(assisted by F. B. Knox)

One of the best known residents of early Picton would be the Skellet family. The original one, although born in England, came with his wife and two young sons to Australia from France in the late 1850's as a railway engineer, having been employed by a French Engineering firm who had won a contract for building a section of the main Southern Line. He took up residence at Moss Vale where later on his two sons, Albert and A.J. Skellet, set up as store keepers in partnership.

Some years later Albert came to Picton and began storekeeping at the lower end of Menangle Street. A short time later, in 1880, he married Kate, daughter of John and Isobel Percival of North Hampton Dale, Appin. They went to Melbourne for their honey-moon and travelled by train. Owing to the railway line not then being completed they had to travel a short part of the journey by horse coach. However, in three weeks time, when returning, the line was completed and they were able to do the whole journey by train. I was told by their daughter, Madge, that when they reached Glenrowan (where the bushranger Ned Kelly was captured a few days before) smoke was still rising from the ground where the corner posts of the hotel were still smouldering.

Albert and Kate lived next door (or close by) to their store in a neat cottage called "Coville" - named after the French town his parents came from. They were blessed with three children: Stanley, Jessie and Madge.

In 1904 tragedy struck the family when their son and his cousin, Barry Skellet, were both drowned in the Nepean River at Maldon. It was one of the worst tragedies to strike Picton up to that time. Stanley was barely twenty years of age and Barry seventeen. The whole town was deeply shocked and all businesses closed on the afternoon of the funerals.

Some years later Albert and his wife suffered another blow when their shop was burnt down. Not long afterwards another and bigger shop was built by a firm known as "Pickards". Straightaway they employed Albert as an experienced shopman. He made a valuable contribution to the business as he was so popular with the community through his friendly and gentle nature which enabled him to remain on the staff until he was in his late 70's.

In the mid 1920's, Madge and her sister, Jessie, started a refreshment business in Argyle Street, Picton, where it flourished for many years. The refreshment room was popular with the tourist busses that stopped there for morning and afternoon teas on the way to and from Canberra. Some time during the early 30's Jessie died, but Madge carried on with hired help. There would still be some local women, I'm sure, who would have helped Madge in that shop when they were young girls.

When her father died in the early 40's (her mother died in 1919) she sold her business and took up a housekeeping position at Queen Victoria Homes, Thirlmere, where she remained until her retirement some 25 years later. After staying in a flat for a time in Yerrinbool she went to live in a unit for aged people at Eastwood, where she made many friends. She remained there until her death in 1979, so bringing to an end the last of the Skellett family to inhabit Picton.

THE PICTON POST AND ADVOCATE, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH, 1904.

- an extract from the article:

"DROWNING CATASTROPHE AT MALDON"

Two Lives Lost

A terrible drowning fatality in which two Picton boys lost their lives occurred at Maldon River, on Monday morning. The victims of the sad disaster were Stanley, only son of Mr. A. D. Skellett of Picton and Barrington John, son of Mr. A. J. Skellett, formerly of Picton who is at present residing at Scone. Both boys were native of Picton and were well known to everybody.

..... on Monday morning a party consisting of Mr. Albert Skellett, Stanley Skellett, Barry and Alfred Shelton Skellett, (twin brothers), Frank Batty,Roy Bugess and Alfred Sayle caught the 8 a.m. train for Maldon where they proposed to have a few hours fishing and then walk back home. They arrived at the bridge, at Maldon River, where Mr. Skellett proceeded to pass the time in fishing, while the boys went a little way down the river to what is known as the 'pump hole', a popular resort for bathers, to have a swim. All were good swimmers and no danger was anticipated.

The scene of the catastrophe is an exceedingly rocky gorge through which in flood time, the water of the Nepean rushes in torrents, but in dry

weather the water quickly subsides leaving a series of what are best described as lakes. The 'pump hole' is one of these..... it forms an ideal bathing place and the scenery, with its rugged grandeur, is very impressive. On reaching there, Roy Burgess dived in and swam across to a sandy beach on the other side of the river. He was followed by Shelly and Stanley Skellett and Frank Batty and later on by Alfred Sayle. Stanley and Roy swam back to accompany Barry over: they had got three parts of the way when Barry said he was out of breath. Stanley swam to help him along when Barry clung to his neck and the two went under together. Upon coming to the surface, Barry, who had evidently been seized with panic, caught hold of Batty, who tried to pull him along. Stanley coming up, Barry clung to him again and the two went down a second time. Stanley pulled the boy up again, when he caught Roy Burgess by the leg. Roy dragged him two or three yards when the unfortunate lad caught hold of Batty and Stanley, and the three went down together. Batty managed to get away and reached the bank in a state of exhaustion. The two boys not coming to the surface again, Burgess and Sayle, in a great state of alarm, ran for Mr. Skellett. The distracted father, although not able to swim much, jumped into the water in the vain hope of getting the boys out and was with difficulty restrained from getting into extreme danger. Alfred Sayle then ran to Maldon Station and word was telephoned to Picton. Dr. Parry was quickly on the scene but the bodies had not been recovered.

The search for the bodies.

Willing hands were soon available for the work of recovery. Warra Warra, employed at Mr. Nicolson's Farm, Charles Perry and Charles Williams, all good divers, did their utmost to find the bodies but without avail. Others arrived and in a marvellously short space of time a raft was improvised of timber which was fortunately lying at the top of the hill. Ropes and hooks were procured and a number of volunteers toiled all day at the sad task. Under the directions of Mr. Nicolson: J. Matthews, J. Blackwood, C. Perry, C. Williams, W. Sayle, and J. Harvey worked like ten men in the water, under the burning sun, while a host of helpers led by Mr. W. McDonald rendered every assistance from land: Constables Lucas and Flood were present throughout the whole of the time and everything that experience could bring to bear to the work was put into effect, with the result that the body of Stanley was recovered by C. Perry about 4.30 p. m. after an immersion of nearly 7 hours, and was conveyed in charge of Constable Flood, to Matron Sig's private hospital.

..... Scarcely ever has Picton experienced such a time of gloom and depression as that caused by the lamentable death of these poor lads. All business people have agreed to close their premises, from 2.30 p.m. today, out of respect to the bereaved families.

DONATIONS TO THE LIBRARY: DECEMBER TO FEBRUARY.

PEG GARD	CAMDEN PARK ESTATE. Australia's oldest Pastoral Property. (Original Edition).
KEVIN CORK	ST MARK'S CENTENARY BOOKLET 1850-1950. (Original)
COLIN SPROULE	SOUTH AFRICAN (BOER) WAR BIOGRAPHIES 1899-1902. by Colin Sproule. 1990.
MARLANE FAIRFAX	BRONZEWING (Tahmoor Public School) 1989 YEARBOOK.
VAL MALCOLM	FROM KENT TO SUTTON FOREST. A RECORD OF THE DITTON FAMILY. by Val Malcolm. 1989.
GAIL HANGER	INDEX TO NSW CONVICT INDENTS 1788-1842. (7 FICHE)
CAMPBELLTOWN & AIRDS HISTORICAL SOCIETY	COLONIAL BUILDINGS MACARTHUR GROWTH CENTRE. Campbelltown, Camden, Appin. (Pub. by The Macarthur Development Board 1977.)
PAT SHEPHARD	A LOCAL HISTORY HANDBOOK: Establishing Local History Collections & Information Services. by Gillian Pearson. Auslib. Press. 1986. S.A.
JOHN MEREDITH	FRANK THE POET. by John Meredith & Rex Whalan. (Pub. 1979).
GEOFF HURST	Copies of letters pertaining to John Bollard.
HARRY HOARE	Letters Re Wilton Park and Railroad.
NORM BARNES	History of the RAAF. (3 pages)
KATH SHEEDY	Local PICTON POST Newspapers
JOHN BEST	Notes on Abbotsford, Patrick Mulloy, etc.
BOB WOODS	4 PARISH MAPS
JAN ROSS	(I) Various notes on Picton, the Sydney Cove Medallion, etc.
	(II) MEMORIAL-MONUMENT:-
	Appin Mine Disaster; Bargo: Lyrebird & Koala;
	Couridjah: Phillip Lazarus; Picton: Antill Family,
	Antonios Manolis, Lach Nicolson Memorial Yards,
	Obelisk (Viaduct), Picton Water Supply; Thirlmere;
	Harmony Homes, Queen Victoria Memorial Homes.
	(III) Collection of Colour Photos of Hist. Sites, Picton.

Thank you to all those mentioned above who have contributed information and books to the library shelves over the past three months.

A reminder that the library is open on Thursday: 10 am to 2 pm; and Saturday: 2 pm to 4 pm. If you have any enquiries or would like to place your name on the duty roster then please contact Pat Shephard either at the rooms or by telephoning (046) 309 380. The Library Rooms are temporarily situated in Menangle Street West above the L J Hooker building.

LIBRARY ACQUISITIONS & PURCHASES: DECEMBER TO FEBRUARY.

CENSUS OF NEW SOUTH WALES. NOVEMBER 1828. Pub. Lib. of Aust. History. Sydney. 1985.

GENERAL RETURN OF CONVICTS IN NEW SOUTH WALES. 1837. ABGR in Assoc. with the S.A.G. Sydney. 1987.

NEW SOUTH WALES PROBATE INDEX 1800-1982. (76 Fiche.)

THE LAST KODRADGIE. MOYENGULLY, CHIEF MAN OF THE GUNDUNGURRA PEOPLE. by John Meredith. Kangaroo Press. Kenthurst. NSW. 1989.

CAMDEN. FARM AND VILLAGE LIFE IN EARLY NSW. by Alan Atkinson. Oxford Uni. Press. Melbourne. 1988. (1989 Premier's Literary Awards Winner).

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES. A PRACTICAL LEGAL GUIDE. by Shane Simpson. Museums' Assoc. of Aust. Inc. NSW. Pub. by Redfern Legal Centre. 1989.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S PAPERS 1788-1825. PROSPECTUS. Pub. The Archives Authority of NSW. Sydney. June 1989.

MEMBERS INTERESTS DIRECTORIES:- Blue Mountains; Coonamble; Lithgow.

TRACING KODRI ANCESTRY. by James Miller. (R.A.M.S. Technical Information Service Pamphlet).

Obituaries, Death Notices, Accident Reports - as taken from the Society's Local Newspaper Collection post 1900.

Continuing the list of names as published in our last journal:-

BAILEY	Harold Charles	BATEUP	Samuel Oswald
BAILEY	Sidney George	BATMAN	Keith Raymond
BAILLIE	Lydia	BATMAN	Phyll's Gladys M.
BAKER	Reginald Frederick	BAXTER	Velina Ellen
BALL	Mary Elizabeth	BAYLEY	Edith Emily
BARKER	Thomas	BAYLEY	Thomas
BARKER	Winifred	BEALE	Jimmy
BARNETT	Evelyn	BEAN	David
BARRAS	Edward	BEITSCH	Maree Elaine
BARRETT	Richard Charles	BEITSCH	Robert Edward
BATES	Dorothy May	BEITSCH	Stephen Edward

INTRODUCTION:

Many people use the term 'raving ratbag', others shout the word 'greeny', some may say 'environmentalist' and few utter 'conservationist'. Those who use 'raving ratbag' often do as a defence mechanism, either they do not understand or they simply do not want to know. 'Greeny' presents an image of banner waving protestors, of extremists throwing themselves in front of bulldozers, of people chaining themselves to trees, anti-anything and anti-everything. The latter two terms tend to be far more representative of their actual meanings and in being such, are used less frequently.

There are those who believe historical societies should not be interested in the 'natural landscape' only in the 'cultural landscape', landscape comprised of man-made objects, of bricks and mortar, landscape indicating evidence of man.

Errors have been made over the past two hundred years. One of the major problems has been that for most of this period, we have tried to adapt the land to our needs instead of learning to live within the restrictions and capabilities of our environment. Perhaps the greenies should be channelling their energies into developing faster growing trees rather than banning logging. More money into research. Is that the answer? Industry must be forced to act responsibly and to allocate funds accordingly. Surely technology has some answers but at what costs?

The environment is your heritage. If being a raving rat bag, a greeny, an environmentalist or a conservationist is one who is concerned for the quality of life, the conservation of our natural resources, the assurance that there will be a future for our children, so be it. I am one of them.

MACARTHUR REGION:

The Macarthur Regional Heritage Study (Working Paper 3 - 1986) was one of a series of studies commissioned by the Department of Environment and Planning to assist in the preparation of the Macarthur Regional Environmental Study. The conclusions of these studies which included the publication of six working papers, were the essential part of the process of formulating a Regional Environmental Plan for the Macarthur Region. The early identification of heritage resources was considered fundamental to their adequate and effective conservation. Appendix 'C' is an inventory of these heritage items. The draft plan (Draft Sydney Regional Environmental Plan - Macarthur Rural Lands 1989) includes policies relating to items of environmental heritage and landscapes which reflect a history of agricultural landuse. One of the objectives of the draft plan is:

'to protect the scenic quality and natural resources of the subregion while allowing orderly and economic development with minimal hazard potential which is compatible with the natural landscape.' (1)

WOLLONDILLY SHIRE COUNCIL SUBMISSION:

Following the release and publication of the draft plan, the Wollondilly Shire Council made a submission to the Department of Planning which included the following statement:

The section referring to 'Items of Environmental Heritage' read:
'The listed items have been surveyed where possible. Generally the listing is quite comprehensive and suitable however there are a number of exceptions to this. It is not considered that the following items are of particular significance -

Stonequarry Creek, Picton
Abandon land Mount Keira Road, Wilton (This should actually read "Abandoned landing field")
Bargo Cemetery, Old Southern Road, Bargo
Rockford Crossing, Bargo River
Tahmoor Colliery
The Oaks Airfield, The Oaks
Bowdens Stud: The Oaks (2)

A brief history of some of these sites follows.

STONEQUARRY CREEK:

Early white settlement centred round a source of water. Although Picton initially developed in three separate locations the focal point of settlement was the Stonequarry Creek.

Environmentally Sensitive Lands

Along the gorge edge in the vicinity of Stonequarry, Cedar and Matthews Creeks and Bargo River there are stands of wattle community. *Acacia binervia*, *A. falconiformis* and *A. prominens*, and *Eucalyptus quadrangulata* (coastal white box) which are unusual within the Macarthur Region. (3)

Several rare and endangered reptile and bird species are uniquely associated with the sandstone rock areas. The broad headed snake, eagles and falcons are particularly vulnerable. The construction of a number of facilities in this area e.g. the Maldon/Dombarton Railway, the Sydney Water Supply Pipeline, the Natural Gas Pipeline and the South Western Expressway have and are introducing human interference into these habitats. Further interference should be restricted, particularly in the area immediately above the gorge and in the gorge itself. (4)

Parts of the Bargo River, Cedar Creek and upper Stonequarry Creek are accessible to the public and need to be carefully managed so there is minimal conflict of recreational uses with the conservation of natural vegetation and wildlife. Limited access further downstream gives a degree of natural protection to the river gorges. In this area several large water holes provide extensive breeding areas for amphibians and native fish species. (5)

Historical Significance of Stonequarry Creek

The historical significance of Stonequarry Creek is not only of a local nature but also of national importance.

The romantic tale of 'The Wild Cattle of The Cowpastures' commenced in November, 1787..... (6)

Wet weather had hampered Caley's expeditions, carried out on foot, with an ex-convict, and a mare used as a packhorse. After an unsuccessful attempt to find Barrallier's bark hut at Nattai, on his sixth main expedition in December 1802, he was returning to Stonequarry Creek with some natives when they

came upon a herd of wild bulls..... (7)

It was during this journey that Caley had come upon 53 head of cattle lying down near a track leading to Poppy Creek (Stonequarry Creek). The cattle sprang up and 'started at us with fierce-looking visage'..... He pressed on to his Poppy Creek where he met two tribes of natives. Climbing to the top of the range west of Stonequarry Creek to fix his position, he stumbled upon another herd. (8)

..... Lt. Barrallier had seen no traces of the Wild Cattle between Stone Quarry Creek (Racecourse Creek) and the rock cliffs at Nattai. In his letter of the 1st March, to Lord Hobart, King now suggested that stockyards be built at Stone Quarry Creek, because of its permanent water, and that tame cows be kept there to encourage the others to join them. (9)

..... With the flooding of this valley by the Warragamba Dam, the mystery of the Wild Cattle remains. (10)

Stonequarry Creek indeed played a crucial role in the story of 'The Wild Cattle'

REFERENCE NOTES:

1. Dept of Planning, Draft Sydney Regional Environmental Plan, Macarthur Rural lands, p.22
2. Wollondilly Shire Council, Letter to Dept of Planning, Submission on Draft Sydney Regional Plan - Macarthur Rural Lands, 27 June 1989, p5
3. Dept of Planning, op. cit., p.20
4. ibid, p.21
5. loc. cit.
6. Wollondilly Shire Council, "A History of the Forbidden Land - Wollondilly Shire - Part One", Chapter 4, The Wild Cattle of the Cowpastures, L.R. Fowler and F. B. Knox, p.37
7. ibid, p.46
8. ibid, p.48
9. loc. cit.
10. ibid, p.59

ABANDONED LANDING FIELD, MOUNT KEIRA ROAD, WILTON

(compiled by Patricia Shephard)

It is not difficult to understand why the Council would suggest removing "The Abandoned Landing Field, Mount Keira Road, Wilton" from the list of items of "Environmental Heritage". Aesthetically, it is not all that pleasing. I would doubt that many people would get enthusiastic about a strip of bitumen in the middle of the bush. However, the Landing Field and surrounding acres are part of the Metropolitan Water, Sewerage & Drainage Board Catchment Area and as such should automatically be protected. This was not the case when only a couple of years ago the Federal Government proposed this very site for Sydney's Second International Airport.

The Macarthur Regional Environmental Study, Working papers 3, lists the Abandoned Landing Field at Wilton as "historically significant". The following is a brief history of this site:

The now abandoned air strip was originally constructed during the Second World War as an emergency landing field. It lies in an east

westerly direction and is cut in two by the Mount Keira Road (recently renamed the Picton Road). It was surfaced with bitumen and a water-tank was built nearby, but has since been removed.

In April 1938, the Wollondilly Shire Council agreed to put before the "Minister" a proposal "to open up the Douglas Park to Mount Keira developmental road". (1)

By May, 1939, surveyors were working on the 16 1/2 miles of road between Wilton and Mount Keira. The Minister for Works and Local Government also announced that the road between Mt Keira and Bulli Pass would be completed.

"Should both highways be re-constructed, the South Coast will have two adequate highways for evacuation purposes in an emergency, and 'as important connections with the metropolis and the mountains'". (2)

In January, 1940, it was claimed that the opening up of the road between Yerranderie and Oberon "would be of great strategical value for defence... purposes... With the completion of the Mt Keira to Wilton defence road now under construction, it was pointed out that the road from Wilton to Picton (already a main highway), and thence to The Oaks, where it would connect to the Burragorang and Yerranderie, offered with the carrying out of the proposed extension to Oberon, exceptional advantages for the movements of troops and the evacuation of civilians in case of an emergency". (3)

Although I have found no specific reference to the building of the landing strip, it would be reasonable to presume that it was constructed about the same time as the reconstruction of the Mt Keira Road.

BARGO CEMETERY - Old Southern Road, north of Bargo village.
"A small village cemetery on land which was a portion set apart when the area was surveyed for settlement.

Fencing and clearing of the cemetery was carried out after the formation of the Bargo Progress Association". (approx 1890's)

"There were no burials before that date." (4)

ROCKFORD CROSSING - Crossing of old Great Southern Road over Bargo River.

"Difficult crossing over rough rocks that was an impediment to early transport. Many early writers complained of the inconvenience. Later, Bargo farmers used the ford to take poultry and fruit to Thirlmere Station. Until a bridge was built in 1897 travellers often camped at the ford because of an uncertain ford base or a flooded river. A rail bridge was built in 1919 and new road bridge in 1967, but the camping ground remains." (5)

REFERENCES

1. Picton Post and Camden Advocate. 27 April, 1938
2. Picton Post and Camden Advocate. 10 May, 1939
3. Picton Post and Camden Advocate. 17 January, 1940
4. Macarthur Region Heritage Study Inventory. (Working Papers 3). Source Bruce Knox.
5. Ibid.; Bayley, W. 'Picton-Mittagong Loop-Line Railway'; Macarthur Country Information Pamphlet, 1982.

ENQUIRIES

KEMP George & Elizabeth - daughter Jane born at Berrima, 1840.
Jane married William PAWLEY at Maitland, their daughter Mary Jane
b. Gunnedah 1864, married George Saywell PRIOR.
Information sought on birth death & marriage of George & Elizabeth
Kemp - Mr. N Ridgeway, 3 Cheviot Road, Mt Waverly Vic 3149

DOUSETT/DOWSETT & MANNS. Were in Berrima area. Mrs Kerri Hearn,
1 Oleander Crescent, Lake Albert, Wagga Wagga 2650.

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS

Mr R Drury, South Camden
Mr P Reay, Tahmoor
Mrs D Irwin, Picton
Mr K Williams, Douglas Park
Mr J Best, Wahroonga
Mrs J Brennan, Camden
Mrs K Flynn, Thirlmere
Mr & Mrs J Dunn, Picton

Mr & Mrs T Morrice, Picton
Mr & Mrs D Ryder, Tahmoor
Mrs C O'Sullivan
Mrs E Shephard, Picton
Mr C Sproule, The Oaks
Mr & Mrs G Parrington, Picton
Mr Aavik, Buxton
Mrs J Armstrong, Picton

May 20th "HISTORY FAIR"

Wollondilly Heritage Centre is having an open day.

Our Society will be conducting a stall - helpers needed.

Many of us are becoming aware of the wealth of information to be found in the Votes and Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly for both family and local history. I recently extracted some petitions from the NSW Votes & Proceedings relating to our area. They relate to such matters as the Electoral Bill (1858); State Aid to Religion (1862); Public Schools Bill (1866); Lock Up at West Bargo (1868); and the following petition of Felix Swainston, which we thought members may find of interest.

FELIX SWAINSTON.

(PETITION OF.)

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be Printed, 11 October, 1861.

To the Honorable the Legislative House of Assembly for New South Wales, in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of Felix Swainston, Carrier, of Sutton Forest, Camden,—

MOST RESPECTFULLY SHEWETH:—

That your Petitioner, in his occupation as a Carrier, was proceeding from Sydney to Goulburn, loaded with merchandize and cases of spirits.

That your Petitioner arrived at Picton on the fourteenth day of March last, and finding the new bridge not opened, took every precaution, by hiring assistance, to cross the old one in safety; but owing to its dangerous and out of repair condition, your Petitioner was precipitated, together with the whole of the team, from the top to the bottom, being a perpendicular fall of twenty feet.

That your Petitioner's loss by this accident consists in having two horses killed, and a third rendered useless, the dray and harness broken, a portion of the property destroyed, and your Petitioner severely injured; and owing to it he is unable to obtain a living for himself, or support for his wife and children.

That the new bridge was opened the morning after your Petitioner's accident, it requiring only a few loads of earth to be laid at either end.

Your Petitioner submits that notice had been given by the contractor nearly three weeks previous, that the bridge was ready to be thrown open to the public; and that it was owing to the neglect of the Government, in not causing the entrances of the bridge to be completed, that this accident befel your Petitioner.

Your Petitioner most humbly prays that your Honorable House will take his case into your favourable consideration, and grant your Petitioner such relief as your Honorable House may deem fit to award, according to the foregoing circumstances.

And your Petitioner, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

FELIX SWAINSTON.

Sadly for our Society, the NSW Parliamentary Librarian has advised that none of the original petitions for our area survive.

Marlane Fairfax.

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