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Picton District Historical and Family History Society Inc.

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The society does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed or statements made by authors of papers in this journal.

Membership fees due 1 July each year

Pensioners & school students	\$15.00
Single	\$20.00
Family	\$25.00

Meetings

Meetings held at 9.30 a.m. on the first Saturday of each month except January, on the 1st floor of Wollondilly Public Library, Menangle St., Picton. The December meeting is held at one of the members' homes, at 11 a.m. followed by lunch.

The Annual General Meeting is held on the first Saturday in September, before the monthly meeting.

Research room

First floor Wollondilly Public Library, above entrance. 10 am to 3 pm each Thursday); other times **by appointment only**.

Research fees.

Members: Free (plus photocopying costs)

Non members: \$10.00 + photocopying. Written or emailed enquiries: \$20.00 + photocopying.

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CONTENTS

Annual General Meeting Reports – President	1
Librarian	2
 Picton Railway Station 150th anniversary celebration	
Railway area maps c.1921	3
Report from James Whitfield	4
Newspaper reports from 1863	6
Past and present Railway Precinct buildings	8

Reminder of the Christmas closing dates: we will close at 3 p.m. on Thursday 19th December 2013, and re-open at 10 a.m. on Thursday 16th January, 2014. The Library is closed from midday Christmas Eve until 2nd January 2014, so there is absolutely no access to our resources during that time.

President's Report 2012-2013 – Gail Hanger

On reflection of the past year, I realise our little band has been very busy. As a result the year has gone fast.

I had the pleasure again of presenting the John Ruffels History Prize at the Picton High School Presentation night to Amelia Dawson. This was run slightly differently this year, but was still an enjoyable evening. All the students who won awards are to be congratulated on their hard work.

We put on a display at the Australia Day celebration; this has always proved to be an enjoyable day, although the crowd seemed to be down this year, possibly due to it being on a Saturday. Sunshine shone for us at the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the opening of the railway line to Picton, after weeks of rain. It was a wonderful day with lots of visitors and locals admiring our display. A special thank you must go to Jim Whitfield who lent us many of the photos for that display, and has contributed so much to our journal this year.

Picton Society was again elected to the committee of the NSW/ACT Family History Association at the annual conference in Gympie. Following the election, I was nominated to be the Association's Vice-President, an honour which I accepted. This year's conference will be held in Canberra, and we have been nominated to the committee again.

We have been lucky enough to receive a small grant this year, from Wollondilly Shire Council, and a donation from the Veolia Mulwaree Trust, which will be used for conservation of our original documents and photographs. The fundraising efforts of member Caroline Richardson and her husband will go towards our new publication on local soldiers who died during World War I, which should be ready for the Anzac Centenary in 2015.

Member Elaine Callaway has, due to ill health, had to withdraw from her active role in collecting and filing the newspaper clippings, which add to our sources on local people and places. We thank Elaine for her help, which will be missed.

We have lost several members through death over the course of the year, and our thoughts and prayers go out to their families and friends. I would like to thank all members for their continuing support over the past year and hope to have their ongoing support for the next one.

Librarian's Report 2012- 2013 – Helen Hanger

Vacant chairs refill with new members, and it was nice to welcome members to the AGM.

Two of our members attended the NSW & ACT Family History Association conference in September 2012, held at Gympie and hosted by the Botany Bay society, which was a great success. Picton Society is on the committee, and has been re-nominated for 2013/4.

Many thanks to member Ken Williams who hosted our 2012 Christmas meeting and lunch, it was a very enjoyable day. President Gail Hanger attended the Picton High School presentation night, also in December, and awarded the John Ruffels Prize for history to Amelia Dawson. We were sorry to see the retirement of a valued committee member, Elaine Callaway, earlier this year, we thank her for her contribution and wish her a peaceful retirement. Sympathy cards have been sent to the families of deceased members.

A steady stream of enquiries from visitors and mail/email has kept us busy during the year. Other activities have included our regular display for the Australia Day celebrations at the Botanical Gardens, and other displays. One was at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre for the annual Heritage Fair in April, and another for the 150th anniversary of the opening of Picton Railway Station, and line, on 30th June (one day before the official date). We were lucky that the latter event was blessed with a mostly sunny day, after two weeks of rain. Our display was very popular, with many photographs from Jim Whitfield's collection, and some help from a small dog who was being baby-sat by one of our members.

Our old photocopier had to be replaced as parts were no longer available, and we were able to buy a "new" one in July. This includes colour copying, and automatic double-sided copies, very much quicker for producing our various publications. We are still learning about it.

We helped the newly appointed Local Studies/Seniors librarian, Carmelina Nunnari during Family History month in August, with two tours of our collection (with Helen and Kate), and a talk on how to use the internet for family research from Gail.

The library has received several acquisitions and donations. Acquisitions include:

Holmes, Marie	<i>A Scrapbook of History, Stories of the Macarthur District</i> 2012 (copies available, \$15)
Grant, Jan L & June F. Penny	<i>Goulburn Pioneer Cemeteries - St.Saviour's, Mortis Street, Towrang Stockade, Jewish and St. Patrick's College</i> 2013
Port Macquarie & Districts FH Society Inc	<i>Church of St. Thomas, Port Macquarie, Early Parish Registers: Baptisms 1824-1864, Marriages 1824-1856, Burials 1824-1876</i> 2013
Sproule, Colin	<i>Timbermen of the Wollondilly 1821-1991</i> 2008 re-print, indexed

Davis, Sue (comp.) *Chapters of Cawdor An Account of people and events that have shaped 150 years of education at Cawdor Public School 1858-2008*

Donations include:

National Museum of Australia *Landmarks 2013* (we helped with some research for the display)

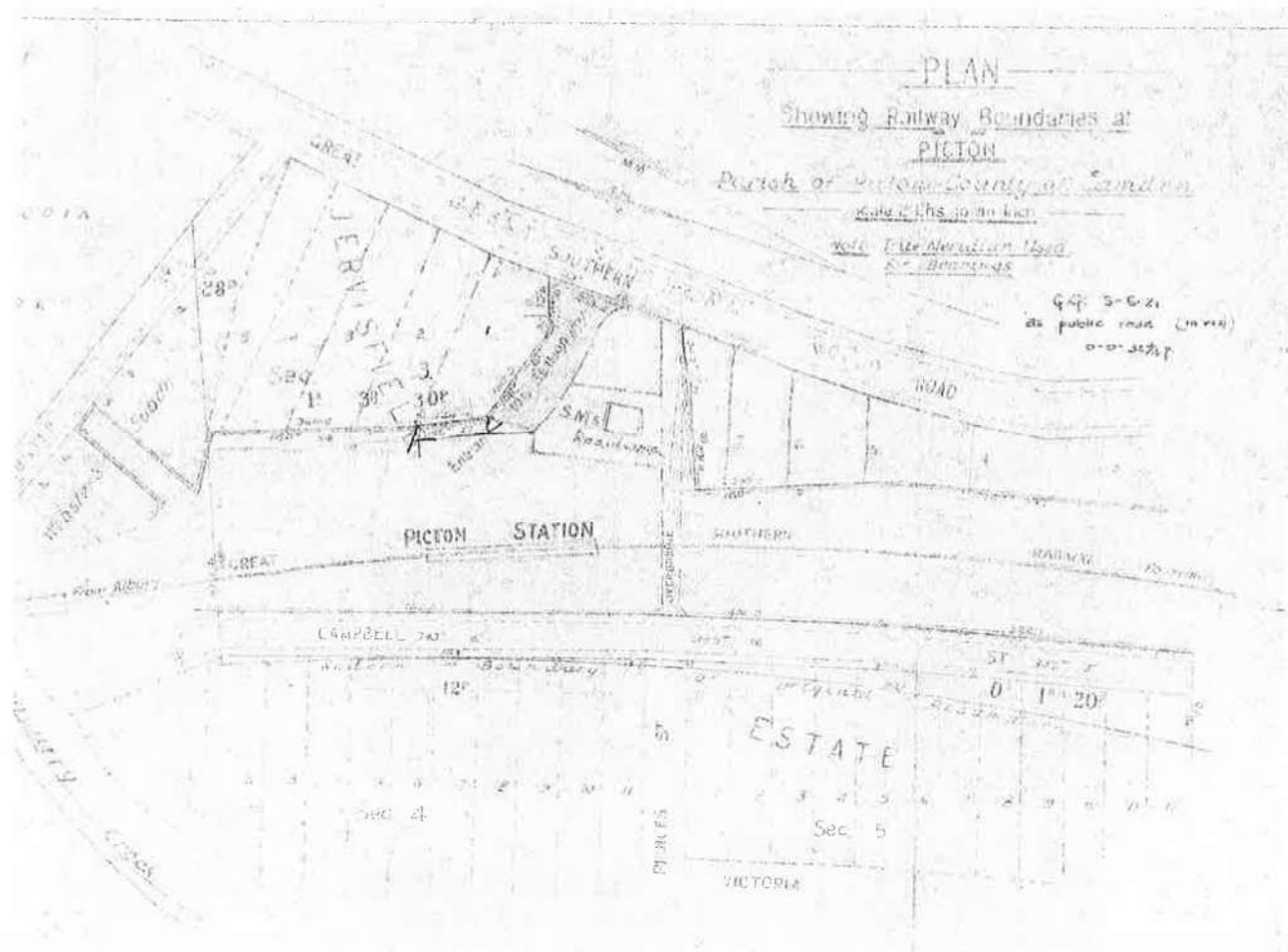
Pearson, Malcolm *Recollections of Pansy (The Camden Train) 2013*

Roads & Maritime Services *The Old Hume Highway History begins with a road. Routes, towns and turnoffs on the Old Hume Highway 2013* (we contributed, along with many other societies)

Two of our members have been tidying up at home: Ken Williams has donated much of the original documentation/research for his book *Along the Menangle Road* (amongst other items) and Jan Ross gave us her Probate files, mostly on Picton people – very interesting material.

We are most grateful for the support of our members, but some will find a gentle reminder about their membership renewals with this journal. We look forward to hearing from you, though we understand that some people join, briefly, to carry out family research.

Picton Railway Precinct Map c. 1921 showing that the entrance to the station was only gazetted as a public road in June 1921.



Picton Railway 150th Anniversary Celebrations

Report and photographs from James Whitfield

To celebrate the sesqui-centenary of the railway reaching Picton on 1st July 1863 a special day was organised by the Tahmoor Lions Club to be held in the railway station car park at Picton, on Sunday 30th June 2013.

The preceding week saw heavy rain fall across most of NSW including Picton. However, the Sunday morning dawned cloudy but fine, much to the relief of the stall holders – though sadly, several had already pulled out. There was one brief shower, but the sun shone for most of the day.

Trainworks Museum arranged to have shuttle steam train services operating between Thirlmere and Picton on the day. The first train arrived hauled by Diesel Electric locomotive No. 4490 with steam engine No. 2705 at the rear of the train. It is of interest to note that preserved locomotive No. 2705 was also used to bring the "Vintage Train" to Picton on the 29th June, 1963 on the occasion of the centenary celebrations.

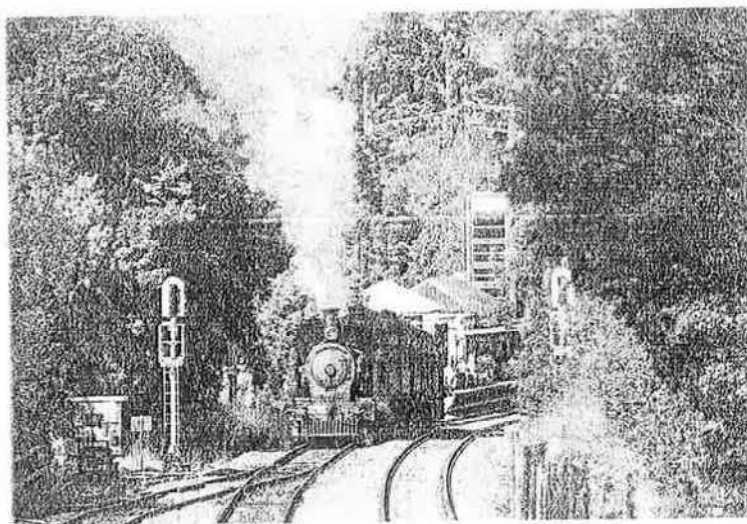
The Town Crier announced the trains' arrivals with the special guests on board.

The official part of the program was relaxed, and short, with Shire Councillor Michael Banasik as M.C. Afterwards the public were then treated to music by the Wollondilly Country Music Club and the Picton Strings.

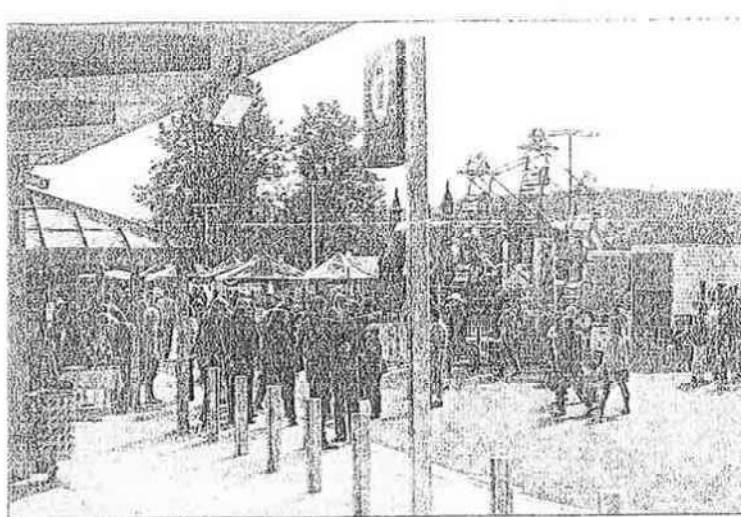
There were many stalls, a jumping castle, ferris wheel and food outlets. The Picton & District Historical & Family History Society had a display of photographs and information on railway history, with additional information collected by member Jan Ross. The Oaks Historical Society also had a stall with various books on display and for sale. There was some disappointment that there were no special souvenirs produced to mark the occasion.

A crowd estimated to be approximately 1,000 was happy with the sunshine, carnival atmosphere, steam train rides and walks around the historic station and surrounding buildings of the Picton Station Precinct.

Editor's Note: Jim is being far too modest in his report of the celebrations, as our display was a success largely because of his photo, as indicated on the next page.



Locomotive No. 2705 departing Picton Station en route to Thirlmere.



A view of the activities at the station.



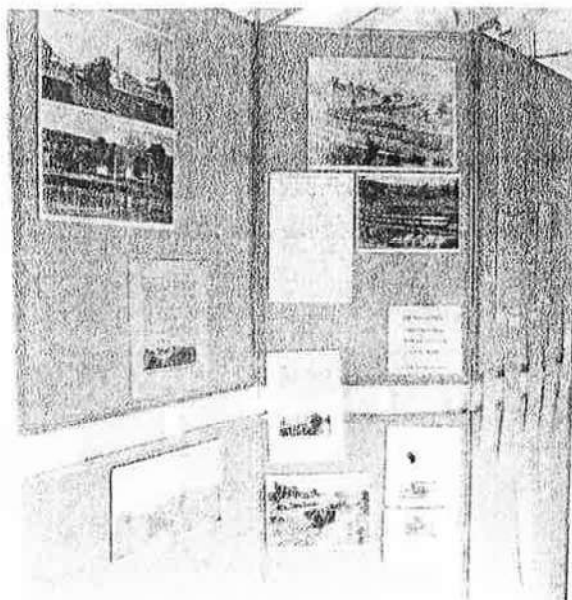
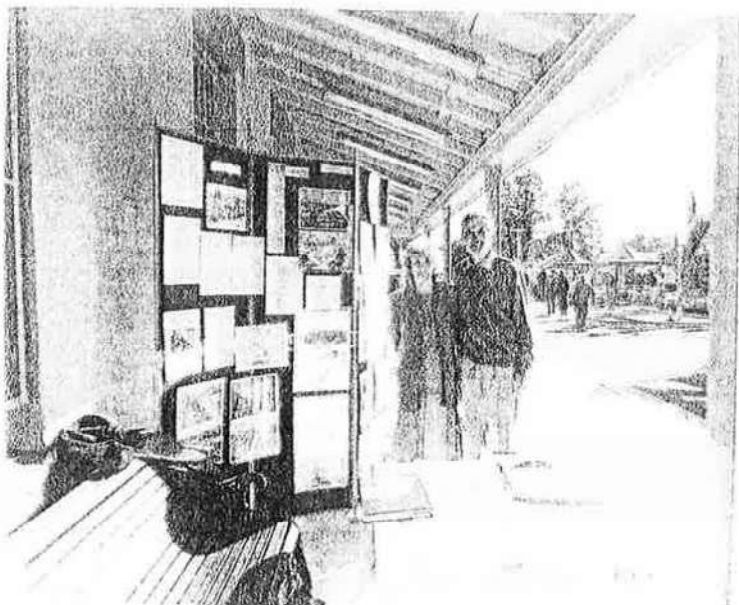
Kate Holmes (PH&FHS) reading an interesting account of the 1900 journey that preceded the official first train to Picton.



Special guests at the celebration. (30.6.2013)

L-R Councillor Michael Banasik, Station Manager Bill Higgins, A/NSW Customer Service Manager Intereity Phillip Allport, CEO NSW Trains Rob Mason, Wollondilly Shire Mayor Col Mitchell, Federal candidate for Hume Angus Taylor, General Manager Wollondilly Shire Council Les McMahon, CEO Trainworks Rob Austin and Councillor Lou Amato at the 150th Anniversary of Picton Station.

The photos below were taken by Gail Hanger, and show Jim and Carole Whitfield and our display



Extracts from contemporary newspaper reports of the opening of the railway line in 1863.

The opening of the railway line to Picton was covered by the Sydney paper, *The Empire*.

On Wednesday July 1st 1863 (the day of the official opening) the paper reported that after the official inspection of the line on the Monday, on Tuesday another train visited Picton briefly. The party was made up of the Governor of NSW Sir John Young and family, the Premier of NSW the Hon. Charles Cowper and family, Engineer-in-Chief John Whitton and others. There is no reference to any meeting with the Picton community on this occasion, and the train returned to the "Menangle Viaduct at 1 o'clock, where they partook of luncheon on the bridge."

Most of the article was taken up with describing the countryside and its beauties in this newly opened up area from Campbelltown to Picton, pointing out what a change it is from the "tiresome monotony" of the train trip from Sydney to past Liverpool:

"The extension of the Great Southern Railway ... is one of the heaviest engineering works ever undertaken in the colony. ... It runs through one of the best agricultural districts in the colony, and the scenery is of the most varied and delightful character from one end to the other. ... The numerous class of residents in Sydney, whose knowledge of the colony is confined to the rocky, sand, and scrubby scenery in the neighbourhood of the capital can form little or no idea of the rich beauty of cultivated hill and date, pasture and arable land, which stretching for many miles between the mountains and the Nepean river, is now open to the view of the excursionist. ... The railway runs through the midst of the rich lands of Glenlee, Menangle, Douglas Park, etc., celebrated for their fertility, even in a district which may be called the dairy and granary of the colony. This rail also here approaches very closely to the still more famous vineyards and orchard of Camden [Park]. a district abounding in varied, picturesque, and rocky views, as well as soft and gently undulating rural scenes. On one side rise the lofty heights of the Razorback range, cultivated in places almost to their summits, and on the other flow the dark and troubled waters of the Nepean, now winding beneath overhanging cliffs and caverns, - now rippling, a mere fordable stream, over sand and pebbles, and then stretching far away in long deep reaches - dark from the height of the shaggy precipices which form their banks."

The reporter goes on to describe the Menangle bridge in some detail, most of which has been torn and no longer readable, and then the line from there to Picton, which has "some of the deepest cuttings and heaviest embankments yet undertaken in Australia." Just after Menangle the line crosses a "succession of hills and valleys" with cuttings up to 80 feet deep and some embankments "probably 100 feet high". There seemed to be brick and stone culverts every two or three hundred yards, and "several wooden viaducts ... all constructed in the same substantial manner as those on the Campbelltown side of the river." He then lauds the scenery along the Razorback range made up of "well cultivated hills ... dotted with smiling farms and comfortable homesteads" which contrast with the "dark forests and rocky scenery bordering the Nepean." He approves the view to Appin and East Bargo [Wilton], including the striking Nepean Towers [now St. Mary's Towers] "the beautiful and picturesque seat of Dr. Jenkins, and formerly the property of Sir Thomas Mitchell. ... few things can contribute so effectively to an already picturesque scene of precipice, shaggy wood, and foaming torrent, as the addition of the Gothic towers and turrets of a castellated building." After this second burst of delirious description, the reporter reverts to the shortcomings of the line itself, being made up of "series of comparatively sharp curves. ... Even the great bridge of Menangle forms part of one of these curves, and there is hardly half a mile of straight

running on the whole line. The cost of the additional length of line rendered necessary by this constant succession of curves must form a considerable item of the whole expense."

So the countryside is great, but the line itself not so good. And as a regular train user, I don't think it is possible to see St. Mary's Towers now, possibly due to the tree growth along the river and on properties, or that the old trains were higher, thus providing a better view. The only visible towers across the river are those of the Tower Colliery, and on this side, the bridge approaches for the infamous Maldon-Dombarton railway line, first proposed in the 1970s, with work beginning in December 1983, but cancelled in June 1988. The society has a respectable file on newspaper references to this line in the last ten years or so.

The official opening was reported in *The Empire* on Friday July 3rd, 1863:

"... a large number of passengers and pleasure seekers left Campbelltown and Menangle for Picton; at the Menangle station there was quite a rush for the carriages. Near the station were to be seen the Pioneer locomotive, belonging to Sir Morton Peto and Co and several carriages gaily adorned with evergreens, and carrying a large body of navies on the eve of starting for Picton, where Samuel Wilcox, Esq. had ordered a sumptuous banquet for the men who had been employed on the works. ... On reaching the terminus there was a stirring appearance, and large numbers were collected to see and welcome the visitors. On the right of the station, near the road, was erected a marquee, with long tables, and capable of seating three hundred persons, and in an adjacent paddock were congregated the German band and numerous groups of navvies and their friends and spectators. After breaching a cask of ale, the men scattered over this green and commenced football, etc. for about two hours; the whole scene was gay and animated."

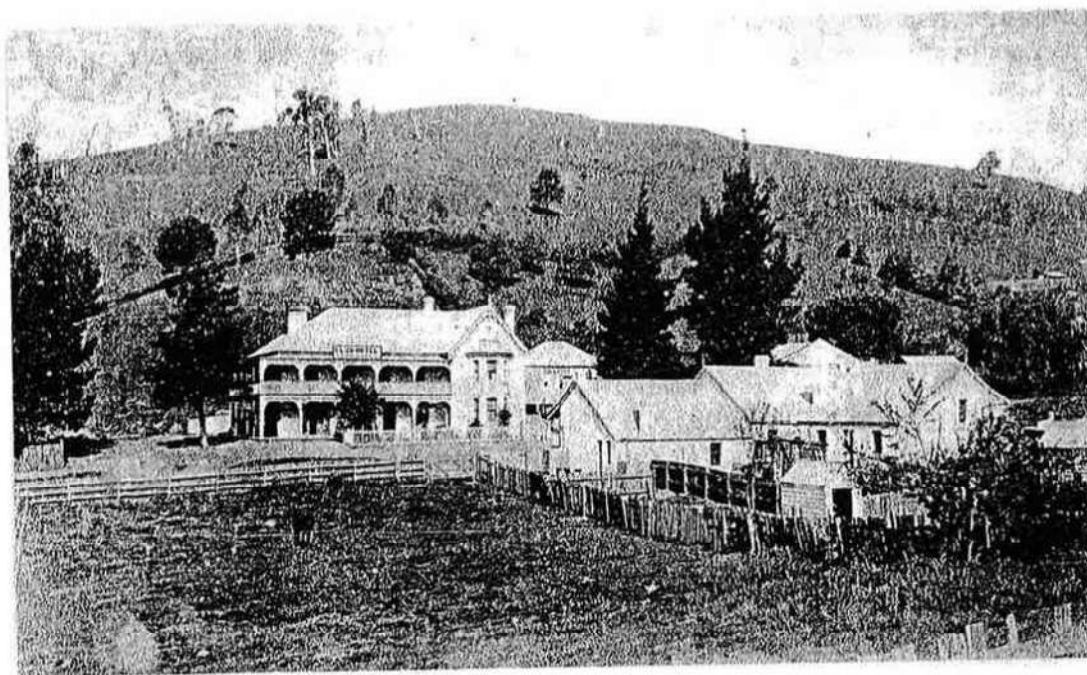
The banquet was ready by 2 o'clock, when the tables were covered with platters of "beef, mutton, hams, turkeys, fowls, vegetables, plum puddings, etc. with a good supply of ale and porter." Grace was said by the Rev. John Gibson, and then "there was a general and active onslaught at the good things. It was pleasant to witness the goodwill that prevailed; occasionally the enthusiasm of some of the men broke forth as they emptied their glasses of good brown ale."

The Chairman, Mr. Wilcox proposed the health of Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, and Mr. J. Antill responded by proposing the health of Mr. Wilcox; both were responded to with "great cheering." After this, some had to rush to catch the 4 o'clock train, while others moved to the paddock for "amusements" and "music". It was noted that the locals had no special celebration of this great occasion.

Peto, Brassey & Betts, a large English company, won the railway contract for the extension to Picton (plus Penrith and Singleton) in March 1859, and two of their agents signed the contracts; one was Alexander Rhodes, and the other was **Samuel Willcox**, the work to be finished by June 1861. The company sent out the plant, including a locomotive, and 2,000 labourers, who started arriving in August 1859. Progress was slowed down by arguments between the contractors and John Whitton over bridges, and the rain and floods in 1860. That at least ensured that the bridge over the Nepean at Menangle was 2 metres higher than the original proposal. The other delay was caused by the sinking of a ship bringing out part of the iron superstructure for that bridge; the replacement arrived late 1862 but work on the actual railway line had continued. Source: Lee, Robert Colonial Engineer John Whitton 1819-1898

John Macquarie Antill is presumably the J. Antill who proposed Mr. Wilcox's health, and was one of the "locals", being from the first family of Picton, a large land grant being made to his father, Major Henry Colden Antill in 1822. It is probably due to John Antill that the railway line came into Picton, and he gave or sold land to the Railway Commissioners through his property from Maldon to Stonequarry Creek.

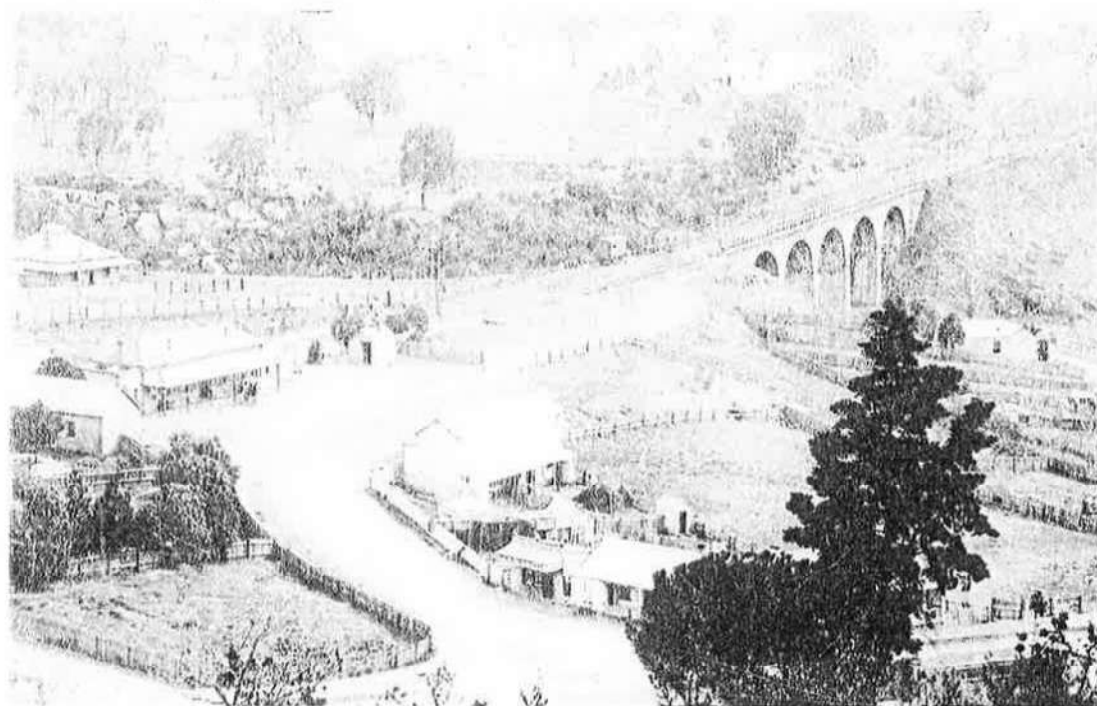
The **dining marquee** is said to be "on the right of the station, near the road", which raises some interesting questions. The railway station would have been in the very earliest stages of construction, because the contract was signed only on June 25th, so the builders Jamieson and Eaton would have barely prepared the ground. The other challenge is the natural slope in this area, being higher on the Prince Street side, and sloping down towards the Menangle Street and the Webster Street sides (not that Prince or Webster Streets existed at this point). It seems that the marquee was set up in the area close to Menangle Street, possibly including the Jarvisfield Store site, which may have been built in 1863 or 1864.. The photograph below, probably taken in the 1890s shows that part of this area was relatively flat. The back of the Jarvisfield Store building can be seen on the right, and the present **Imperial Hotel**, originally the **Terminus Hotel** and later the **Club Hotel** can be seen across Menangle Road:



The **Terminus Hotel** had been built before the opening of the railway line. Robert Pooley was licensee at The George Hotel in 1859, but the Picton Licensing Court recorded on 14th December 1860 that Pooley was applying to transfer his licence to "his new premises on Menangle Road". This was granted on the condition that "the premises and stabling are ready by 1 January 1861". He was granted a licence in May 1861, so the hotel must have been finished before that time. It is even possible that the hotel provided the banquet, being so close. Pooley gave up the licence in 1877 and the hotel was leased by Colonel Goodlet as a private hospital for consumptives until 1888, which was then moved to what is now the Queen Victoria Home, between Picton and Thirlmere. The building reverted to being an hotel, licensee Alfred John Skellett, and the name was changed to the **Club Hotel** (with the railway line continuing south, the Terminus was no

longer such an appropriate name). In 1934 Count Romano (of Sydney restaurant fame) bought the hotel and named it the Imperial.

Returning to the buildings within the station precinct. The (slightly cropped) photograph below, taken from the opposite ridge behind the Imperial, shows part of the Jarvisfield Store, the small tea rooms next door, and the back of a terrace of three houses, as well as the station itself. It was taken c.1910 – the terraces were demolished in 1920, when they were sold by E.F. Fieldhouse to William Kutnewsky who built his Fur & Feather Factory that same year; the house in the left background, No. 2 Campbell Street was built between 1897 and 1906. An earlier Fieldhouse, William, may have bought this same block c. 1864, though it is possible both the store and the terraces were built the year before.

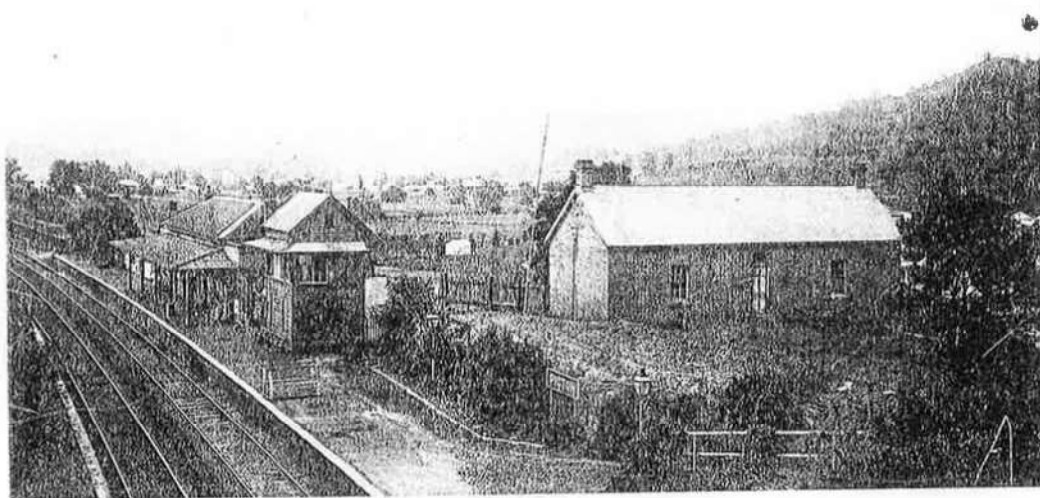


The dating of these buildings needs more research, but as the railway station was a little isolated from the rest of Picton, and the station-master's residence wasn't built until 1877, there had to be some earlier housing for railway staff. Just on the left of the above photo, and showing more clearly in the following is the Guards' Barracks, probably built by the 1890s as the Picton railway yards were very busy by that time. The small tea-room building may date to a similar time; according to advertisements in the local paper, a Mrs. Jeffress ran the Railway Refreshment Rooms in 1902, while M.J. Armstrong had a fruit and confectionary store there in 1928. Station Street itself does not seem to have been gazetted until 1921 – Mrs. Jeffress just notes that her Rooms adjoin the station, while Mr. Armstrong gives Station Street as his address. Advertisements for the Fur & Feather Factory in 1924 rather grandly give the address as Station Square!

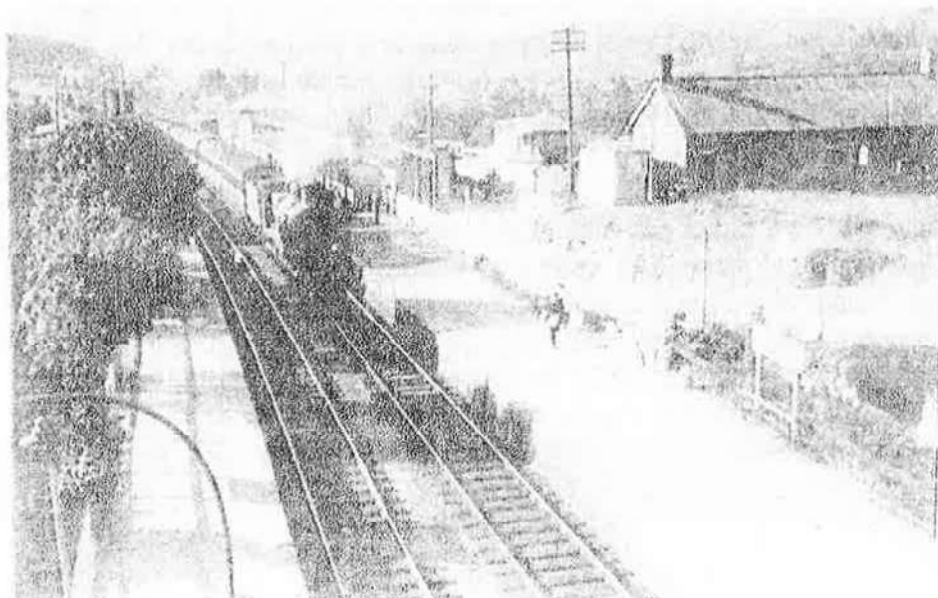
William Kutnewsky and his factory have a rather sad history: he came to Thirlmere around 1910 and started building his house, using local stone, and known as Kutnewsky's Castle, in Kendal Street. He disappeared during World War I (presumably interned), but returned with enough money to go into business. He bought the terrace opposite the railway station for £350 in 1920, and the factory would have been costly. By January 1924 he was expanding the factory, and was advertising for "Young Ladies as apprentices to learn trade of fur and feather work ..." While he had showrooms in Sydney, the advertisements suggest that he also sold "fur garments, rugs and

mats" locally, and could repair any worn or damaged furs. William died in 1926, and the "commodious Stone Building" was for sale in February the following year. Various attempts were made to use the factory, with the most successful being the cheesemakers. First the Dutch Tonnesen & Sons, from the early 1930s, and the Joe Attanasio from 1937. Sadly, history was repeated in World War II when Joe was interned, and the factory closed. There was a damaging fire in 1959, and by 1973 the Wollondilly Council issued a demolition order. A large part of the building running along the parking area was removed, probably at this time, but the corner remains just survived until a major restoration saw it renewed as Vaby's Restaurant in the early 2000s.

One of the "lost" railway buildings is the Guards' Barracks mentioned above. This 1908 postcard shows the brick building on the higher ground east of the station. Note that the signal box was originally on that same side, and was moved to the other end of the station some time between 1912 and 1920.



This 1925 photograph, also taken from the railway bridge, shows that the Barracks had been enlarged. On 27th August, 1924 the Picton Post reported that a branch of the Railway and Tramway Institute had been opened, unofficially, in the old Barracks. By the time the official opening was held, on 1st October, the building had been extended to make room for a billiard table and library; a tennis court being built, and there were 90 local members. Much was made of the educational and social advantages of the Institute, and it did was an important centre for the large railway community. The society has a glass light shade from the Institute, donated by Mrs. Twarloh; the building was demolished in the 1960s.



PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

Cemetery Transcripts

Bargo Cemetery Memorials (2010) A4, 121p, illustrated, s/c; photographs of all headstones
\$25.00 + \$5 p&p

Burial records of St. Mark's Anglican Church, Picton (2001) A4, 23p, s/c.; lists 849 people known to have been buried in the church graveyard, with locations, date of death, age and remarks.
\$12.00 + \$5 p&p

Redbank Uniting Church (formerly Wesleyan Chapel)– A Pictorial view (2004) A4, 132p, s/c; cemetery transcriptions with photographs.
\$20.00 + \$5 p&p

Marriage Transcripts

St. Mark's Anglican Church - Vol.1, 1839-1897. A4, 57p, s/c; full transcriptions of all marriages conducted by ministers throughout the parish (which covered much of southern Wollondilly Shire at times. Includes map of parish showing old place names/locations, indices for parties, parents and witnesses for each register.
\$15.00 + \$5 p&p

St. Mark's Anglican Church - Vol.2, 1898-1929. A4, 62p, s/c. Includes a register for marriages conducted at Yerranderie from 1911 to 1923, plus list of rectors of the parish from 1826 to 1963.
\$15.00 + \$5 p&p

St. Mark's Anglican Church – Vol.3, 1924-1963. A4, 99p, s/c. Includes a register for St. Alban's at Douglas Park from 1924 to 1957 and master index for all marriages showing groom and bride with date of marriage for the 3 volumes.
\$20.00 + \$10 p&p

Set of three volumes
\$50.00 + \$15 p&p

Along the Menangle Road – A concise history of the Land Grants on Menangle Road between Menangle Bridge and Picton Road by Ken Williams 2nd ed. 2009. A4, 44p, illustrated, index, s/c. Contains a record of the landowners of the various grants from time of grant until the land was transferred from the Old System to the Real Property Act (Torrens Title). Family histories, lists of employees and tenant farmers. Owners include Walter Davidson; John, William & James Macarthur; J.B.L. De Arrietta, Samuel Terry & descendants; Arthur Douglass & Dr. Henry Grattan Douglass; William & Thomas Cowper, Lachlan Macalister & descendants; Phillip Cavenagh, Hillas & Pearce families.

\$15.00 + \$5 p&p

Chronicles of the Early Cowpastures and Stonequarry – 1820 to 1850, Vol. 1 (2010). A4, 74p,s/c, illustrated, index, s/c. 12 chapters o people and subject: J.B.L. De Arrietta, A Bushranger Hunt, Frances Macnamara, The Village Shopkeeper – John Martin, Francis Little, Early Burials in the Cowpastures, Park Hall – The Mitchell Connection, The Woolpack Inn, Fairy Hill, Robert Crawford, Andonis Manolis – the Greek Pirate, Vault Hill.
\$20.00 + \$5 p&p

1824 Cawdor Bench of Magistrates Population, Land and Stock Book. A biographical register of the inhabitants residing in the Cowpastures by Ken Williams (2011). A4, 176p, sources, index, s/c. The earliest known muster of the district now a major part of Wollondilly Shire (includes absentee landlords). Biographies of the 530 persons recorded, with introductory explanations and appendices. Individual biographies vary from several lines to a page or more. Less than a quarter remained in the area, the rest moved to: Bathurst district (24), Botany (4), Brisbane Waters (Gosford) (3), Campbelltown (19), Cooke (4), Goulburn district (24), Liverpool (18), Maitland district (11), Parramatta (16), Penrith (5), Port Stephens (3), Richmond/Windsor (15), Singleton district (12), Southern Highlands (8), St.Vincent (Nowra) (10), Sydney (64). Some 98 were not identified in the 1828 Muster.

\$40.00 + \$10 p&p

If undelivered please return to

PDHFHS
PO Box 64
PICTON NSW 2571

POSTAGE
PAID

PICTON.

Friday, 4th March

AUCTION SALE on the ground of large allotment of land commodious Stone Building thereon, suitable for Refreshment Rooms, Factory or Residence, fronting and within 70 feet of Picton Railway Station.

W. LARKIN

HAS received instructions by order and on account of the Public Trustee, Sydney, and Administrator of the Estates hereunder mentioned, to **SELL** by public Auction on the Ground Station Entrance Picton, on **FRIDAY, 4TH MARCH, at 2 p.m.** as follows:—

In the Estate of William Kutnewsky Deed.

ALL that piece and parcel of land situate close to Picton Railway Station being part of allotment 1 of Section 3 of a Subdivision of Jarvisfield Estate, having a frontage of about 52ft 6in. to Station Entrance, together with a large stone and wooden building thereon which is very suitable for refreshment rooms, shops, factory or residence.