

Coastal Current

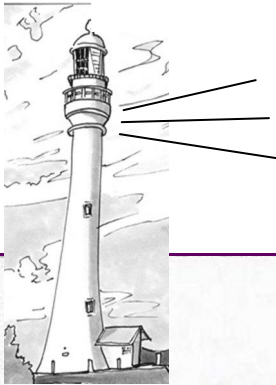
Quarterly Newsletter Of The

Anglesea & District Historical Society

Issue No. 118

Autumn 2018

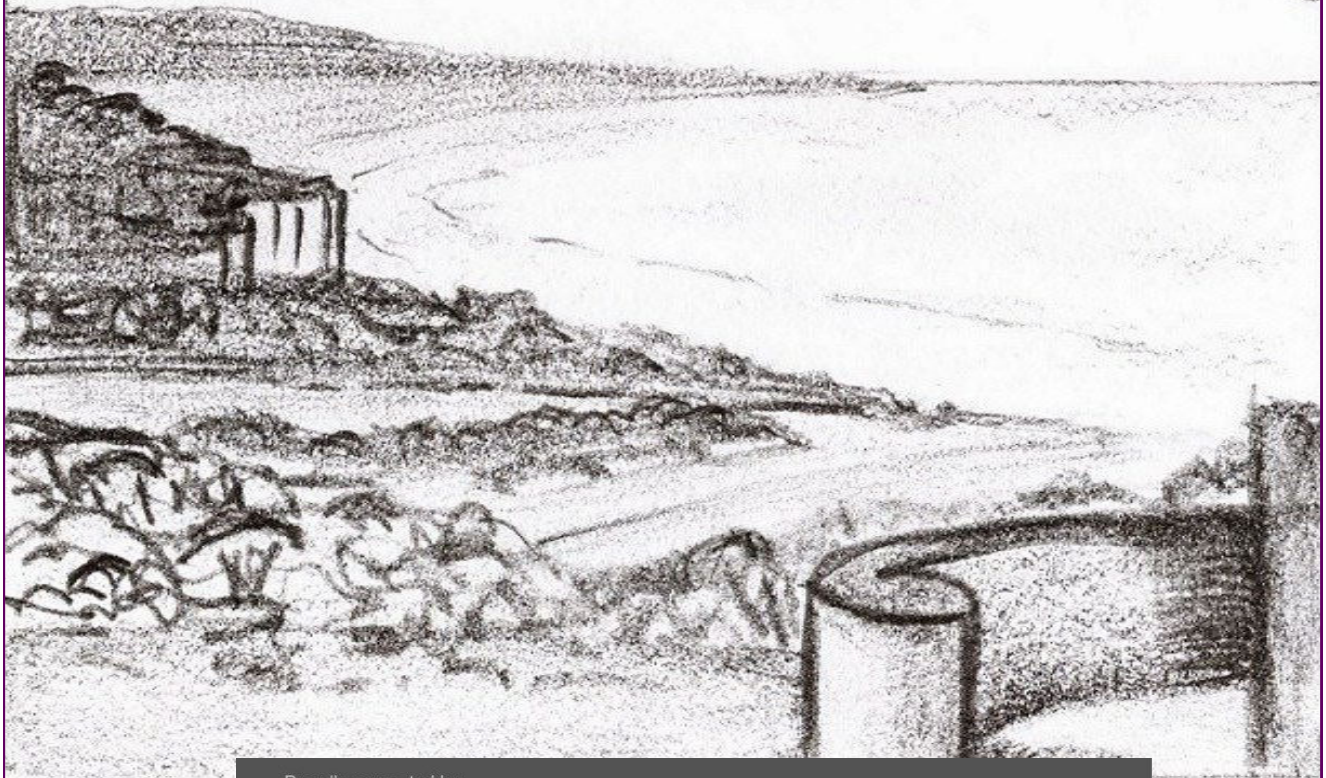
The Anglesea & District Historical Society is a not for profit organisation staffed by volunteer members of the community, whose aim is to research and preserve history of the local area.



Active Researchers

Preservers of Local History

Keepers of the Museum



Marilyn Robinson

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ARE YOU A FINANCIAL MEMBER? . Historical Society is \$20 for the first family member per year and \$15 for other family members (this includes insurance). People over 90 free (no insurance). Family History (optional extra) is \$15 per family. Please notify if extra \$15 is Family History or extra Historical member. FEES DUE 1 SEPTEMBER_Pay direct: Bendigo Bank—BSB 633 000, Account 1430 28421—reference, your name, **OR** post to PO Box 98, Anglesea, 3230

Meetings & Activities

Meetings are held at History House
5a McMillan Street, Anglesea
Entrance 4 of the McMillan Street
Community Precinct

The Historical Society meetings are usually on the first Sunday of the even months (February, April, June, August, October & December). Meetings start at 2.00pm followed by a speaker and afternoon tea.

MARCH OUTING

Thursday 8 March
Combined visit to **Beeac Windmill Park**, with talk by local historian.
* Leaves 9.30am
* Lunch at *Farmers Arms Hotel*
* Cost: \$15
* Lunch extra



Historical Society Committee

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APRIL MEETING Sunday 8 April 2.00pm at History House
Speaker: Peter Doyle
Subject : Restoration of the Anglesea Regatta Boats

MAY OUTING Thursday 3 May Leave History House 10.00am Visit to Historic Modewarre followed by lunch at Mount Moriac Hotel

JUNE MEETING 2.00pm Sunday 3 June at History House
Speaker: Melva Stott
Subject: *Town Crierss World Wide*

Members & Visitors welcome to all activities.

Transport can be provided to all meetings and activities by phoning 5263 3085.

It is the policy of this society that no activities will be held on days of code red or extreme fire danger.

MUSEUM OPEN TIMES

Second Sunday of the month 2.00 - 4.00 pm or by appointment - Ph. 5263 3085.
Open for browsing when groups in attendance.
Mondays 1.30 pm - 3.30pm
Tuesdays 10.30am – 1.00pm
Saturdays 10.30 am - 1.00pm
The museum is also open at other times when working groups are present.

Photographs

Anglesea & District Historical Society has an extensive collection of photographs. Orders to Jan Morris: Phone: 5263 3085 Email -*davejanmorris@bigpond.com*

| | Prices | On high quality | On 100 gsm |
|----|------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| | | photo paper | fine finish paper |
| A4 | 8.26X11.69 | \$15 | \$8 |
| A5 | 5.82X8.26 | \$8 | \$4 |
| A6 | 4.13X5.82 | \$4 | \$2 |

Digital images for personal use only \$5 each
A discount of 10% applies to financial members.

Anglesea & District Historical Society Inc.

Box 98 Anglesea 3230 Victoria Australia.

2018 is well underway. Just prior to Christmas the bathing box was finally painted and it now looks like it did when it stood in the sand dunes on the beach. After being meticulously restored by Kevin Pollard and Keith Hornibrook, it was painted by McKnight's Painting and Decorating. Our project for this year is to paint the inside and put together a suitable marine display, that will record the history of our bit of coastline. We are grateful to the Surf Coast Shire, our volunteers who worked and raised money and also to Seaside Seconds who helped fund the reroofing. This has been a real community effort.

It was with an element of sadness that on 18 January we farewelled Bob and Lyn Smith who have moved to Queensland. We had an enjoyable morning tea at the Corner Café to say goodbye to them. They have been enthusiastic and supportive members of both the Historical Society and the Family History Group. We wish them well in the new chapter of their life in sunny Queensland—no more cold winters. We will miss them.

We all know the story of Wesley Anderson, a negro who came Australia in 1839 aged 18. He married in 1840 to Sarah Jane Clarke. He brought his family to Louttit Bay (Lorne) in 1850. As there was no road, he let his bullocks, dray and family over the cliff and drove along the beach.

Stewart McConachy has just discovered a little more about Wesley Anderson, born 1821 in Pennsylvania. He was a well known negro in this area in the 1800s. His father was Zebudee Anderson, a negro slave and his mother was Mary Polly Billingsworth. Wesley had worked his way from America on a ship to England and then to Australia. His wife Sarah Jane, was a Quaker. The Quaker religion fully accepted colored people as equals. Thus she was happy to marry Wesley. Andersons went to Louttit Bay (Lorne) and then settled at Bambra. A section of the family then moved to Aireys Inlet where they had a hotel, guest house, post office and store. Stewart was also able to obtain a photo of Sarah Jane. Many descendants of Wesley and Sarah still reside in the Surf Coast Shire. Wesley Anderson was the first person to discover coal in the area, when he found a coal seam at Wormbete in 1856. Wesley is buried just outside the Winchelsea cemetery. Being a negro, he was not allowed to be buried in the cemetery. There is a plaque to Wesley, attached to his wife's grave inside the cemetery.



Jonas Hollingworth outside the Bark Hut built by his namesake.

It was a surprise to have contact from Jonas Hollingworth. The only Jonas Hollingworth I knew of died in 1934. He was the first settler west of Aireys Inlet. He was well known from Jan Juc to Lorne as a builder of bark huts in the days before building materials could easily be brought in from Geelong. Jonas had a bark hut at Point Roadknight for many years. He and his sons would net the bay for fish. Jonas was caretaker of the McMillan property on the corner of Parker and Jackson Streets. He built the bark hut there that still stands today.

Jonas's namesake that visited us was born in 1971, 136 years later. Jonas junior, as I will call him, was most anxious to find out as much as he could about the first Jonas. The McMillan family kindly allowed me to take Jonas to the Bark Hut and tell the story of when it had a chimney and an attached kitchen. I only wished Lindsay Braden was still in Anglesea to share his vast knowledge about Jonas Hollingworth 1845-1934. We will keep in touch!

BE CONNECTED - Karl Jacklin, Secretary

If you're over 50 and not confident with computers or feel unsure about accessing the internet, then Anglesea Historical Society has the answer for you. We are running a repeating series of four, two hour sessions at History House. It is aimed at those older member of the community who want to learn more about the on-line world.

We have become a network partner in the *Be Connected* program which is a free government initiative aimed at increasing the confidence, skills and online safety of older Australians when they use the internet and technology.

Topics Include

- Gaining a basic understanding of how your computer operates
 - Connecting to the internet
 - Using the internet to talk to family and friends
 - being safe on line
 - Shopping safely and securely on line
 - researching topics of interest
- You don't necessarily have to own a computer to participate in the program, as you can use the centre's equipment.

If interested call Karl on 0412 629 219.

POLICE HONOUR PAST MEMBER WHO LOST HIS LIFE

Jan Morris



The plaque to Constable David Digby, outside the Anglesea Police Station

On Thursday 16 November, the Victorian Police Force honoured a past member who lost his life near Anglesea 137 years ago. He was 49 year old Constable David Digby, who had been sent to investigate the ship *Hereford* that was stuck on rocks just off Point Addis. George Noble the only resident at Anglesea at the time, had rowed through rough seas to the wreck. He was able to attach a line that resulted in all 27 people on board being rescued. However tragedy was to come a week later when two police constables were sent to investigate. When returning to shore the boat was overturned and Constable Digby and another man named Frank Wright were both drowned. Their bodies were never recovered.

Last November a plaque, mounted on stone, was erected in memory of Constable David Digby. It was unveiled at an impressive ceremony with police honours. Sergeant Digby of the Colac Police was a speaker at the unveiling of the plaque to his, great, great, grandfather. Later generations of the family have continued to serve in the police force for five generations.

We now have a permanent reminder of this historic event with the plaque outside the Anglesea Police station. The plaque read as follows:-

Constable David DIGBY

Died 18 January 1881

On the 10 January 1881 the ship *Hereford* was stranded on rocks at Point Addis. A week later Constable David Digby and Mounted Constable Purcell went to the vessel to interview the manager. During the night the weather became very rough and waves repeatedly broke over the ship. The following morning it was decided to send Constables Digby and Purcell, and eleven others to shore. As they travelled through rough water an unusually large wave swept over the boat. Constable Digby and one other were carried off into the deep rough water. Their bodies were never recovered.

David DIGBY was born in 1830 in Clifden, Ireland. He married Ellen Jane HOBEN and they settled in Geelong. They had ten children, George, David, Elizabeth, Georgina, Henry, Albert, Alfred, Ada, Louisa and Reginald.



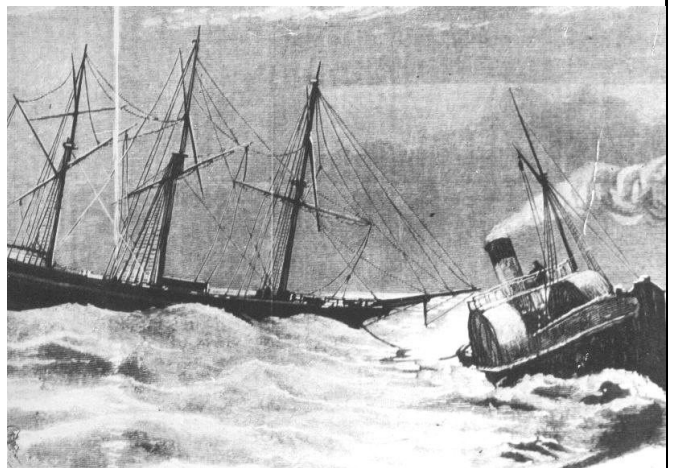
The bell of the Hereford

It is interesting to note that the iron clipper, the *Hereford* was not actually wrecked. The Victorian Marine Underwriters received a message from the insurers, Lloyds of London, telling them not to sell the wreck. Unfortunately the message arrived too late. It had already been sold. The new owners were able to pull the wreck off the rocks and found there was very little damage and it was towed to Melbourne.

Keith Cecil, in his book *Wrecks and Some Near Misses* tells us that the

Hereford was bought by the Nourse line and used to transport labourers to India.

From stories passed down we believe Mrs Noble fed the 27 people rescued from the *Hereford*. She cooked rice in the laundry copper. The bell was presented to George Noble in gratitude for his bravery in reaching the stranded ship. The bell was for many years at the Noble property at Aireys Inlet. It was used to call the family to dinner. That bell is now in the Anglesea History House Museum. It has been professionally preserved to ensure it remains in good order.



The Hereford being towed off the rocks

THE HISTORY OF POLICING ALONG THE SURF COAST

Taken from the speech given by Sergeant Kevin Warburton at the dedication of the Constable Digby plaque

Policing along the Surf Coast has changed over the decades. Our story starts in the mid-1850's, providing insight into Victoria police's response to incidents in the area. Back then, you would not have heard the wail of a police sirens. Early policing was more sedate on horseback. Assistance was provided from Geelong including Water Police based at Corio Bay. Even though response to incidents was obviously much slower, the same principles are just as relevant today as they have always been. Thorough investigation leads to the best possible outcomes.

SHIPWRECKS were an important part of policing along the coast. Wrecks requiring police attendance included the *Hereford* in 1881, the *Joseph Scammell*, wrecked off Torquay ten years later, and of course the *Inverlochy*, wrecked on the Ingoldsby Reef. The pilfering and thieving from these wrecks provided challenging times for the police. Such was the pilfering from the *Joseph Scammell* that the police decided to shut the Geelong-Torquay Road, collecting 400 pounds in fines. For the 1890's, that was an enormous amount of money. It shows that crime does not pay.

POLICE PRESENCE REQUESTS The Surf Coast and the Shipwreck Coast have always been popular destinations for holiday makers. During these times, there are always requests for increased police presence. This was true as far back as 1886 at least. In that year, according to the *Geelong Advertiser*, the Lorne communities were asking for a police presence over the summer period.

THE HUMAN FACTOR A police presence is much more than keeping law and order. There is always the human factor, like a missing child, or someone behaving strangely who may need expert assistance. The following story clearly illustrates this. While the terminology recorded in the *Advertiser* (December 1886) would not be acceptable today, the anecdote should be recorded in its historical context.

In December 1886, Mary Mack, a 30-year-old servant girl, who was a maid at Anglesea House went missing. The owner could not account for Mary Mack's absence. Mounted Constables Kilmartin and Conway, with the assistance of locals, searched the surrounding bush and waters. Footprints, believed to be from the missing person, were tracked to the river bank. After six days missing, Ms Mack was sighted by a work man from Anglesea House. She was discovered hiding under a ledge in the river. Mary was suffering from exposure, and displaying symptoms of lunacy. Mounted Constable Kilmartin took her to Geelong. A magistrate later admitted her to the lunacy ward at Kew Asylum.

NO OBJECTION The scope of police work in our locality is highlighted by the following story. In 1890, Mrs Jackson, from Anglesea House, supported by solicitors Mr Whyte, and Mr Toohey, applied for a liquor license. There was no objection from the police, and the license was granted.

FIREBUG AT WORK The possibility of a firebug lighting fires indiscriminately is always present along our coast. In 1900, concerns were expressed to police about the behavior of an elderly man at Point Addis, who was observed continually lighting fires in stubble and long grass. In the dry season, we can imagine the terror for locals. Mounted Constable Brady from Mt Moriac took the old fellow into custody.

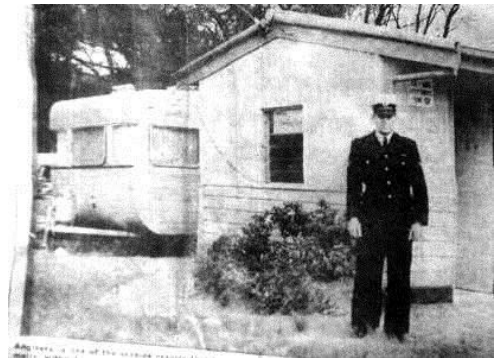
1918 TELEPHONIC ADVANCES ON THE WAY As WW1 ended, there was pressure on the authorities to have Anglesea included in the telephonic area. The residents hoped that with the increasing importance of the district, the request would be granted. When a drowning fatality had occurred a couple of years before, the news was brought to Geelong by car.

Advancing technology, primitive today, was nevertheless seen by police and residents as providing an opportunity to devise a system of signals that could be operational in cases of urgent assistance needed.

THE GREAT OCEAN ROAD OPENS The construction and opening of the Great Ocean Road in the 1930's must be the most significant event in the history of policing along the Surf Coast. The region grew rapidly. Today, the Surf Coast plays host to over five million visitors a year. GOR has become one of the most popular holiday and tourist attractions, visited by travellers worldwide. As the region became more inhabitable and accessible, the need for police and emergency services increased.

PERMANENT POLICE PRESENCE IN ANGLESEA In 1963, the *Geelong Advertiser* records Anglesea groups making requests for a permanent police presence in Anglesea. In 1964, there was a temporary police station at Anglesea. A caravan was provided as the first official police facility. It was located at the foreshore caravan park. For public convenience, this caravan was periodically moved to the riverbank. The current site and building was purchased in the early 1960's. It has been renovated twice to facilitate increased police numbers and a 4 X 4 vehicle. Anglesea has four police members. The Surf Coast has the capacity for a 24 police response.

ON GOING CHALLENGES The challenges that our earlier colleagues faced continue today. As each summer approaches, thousands of visitors flock to the Surf Coast., we will be challenged. Motor vehicle accidents, searches, near drownings and the continuing threat of bushfire are at the forefront of our preparedness and planning.



1963 The Police caravan used during each summer prior to the establishment of a police station at Anglesea

107 Year Old Frances May Reid nee Cowan

Pat Hughes

One of our members, Elwyn Pollard has recently helped her mother celebrate her 107th birthday. Frances May Reid has seen an impressive 107 years of life. The great-grandmother celebrated her 107th birthday with friends and family. The impressive number makes Frances the oldest person on the Surf Coast and the Geelong area. She still has a bright personality, is interested in family and her surroundings and takes a daily walk around her Torquay nursing home. Although living in a nursing home she still maintains a considerable degree of independence.

Frances was born in Forrest on January 21 in 1911. Her parents were Joshua Cowan and May Reid. She had three brothers Joshua Percival and Edmund Cowan.

Frances married James (Jim) Reid in 1935. They had four daughters. They lived on a farm at Gerangamete until 1953, then moved to Skipton, a small country town. There she followed the local football and always enjoyed the weekly movies. When her husband Jim retired, they moved to Ballarat. After Jim passed away, she continued



Picking hops at Gerangamete Wilson family & Frances Reid

to live on her own until she was 100. She then moved to Torquay to be near her daughter Elwyn Pollard. Frances has nine grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, 11 great-great grandchildren and one great-great nephew.

Frances has lived through two world wars, man landing on the moon, and eleven Richmond premierships. The one-eyed yellow and black fan still has her room decked out in honour of her beloved Tigers' 2017 AFL flag.

Frances still reminisces about her childhood home in Forrest. "There were no roads until about 1932, It was just bush back then" she said. Around that time Frances and her family picked hops on Pengillys farm, with the Seabeck family. This was on the river flats of the west branch of the Barwon River between Gerangamete and Forrest. The work had to be done by the family as her father had his back in plaster and could not work for six months.



Elwyn with her 107 year old mother Frances

They were paid one penny a bushel. As hops are very light in weight, it took a lot to make up a bushel. They had big bins made from bags and six people would work together to fill one. The price did rise to three pence a bushel in the end. There were five hops gardens. The women folk from Forrest used to walk several miles each way to pick hops. Their husbands worked at the saw mills. The roads were not made in those days, they were just bullock wagon tracks.

Frances reminisced, "We had pet goats and they were fun, we milked them by hand. We did not have electricity until we moved to Skipton in 1953. Before that it was candles and lamps for lighting. After dark, people carried kerosene lanterns out of doors to finish their chores. We later moved to Gerangamete, where we trapped rabbits and foxes and the younger ones collected old bones and put them in bags and then sent away for lime. Also we cut tree ferns out of gullies, carted them to Gerangamete for Nurseries in Melbourne. We picked moss and put it into bags from across the road from Bill Reid's. It was in Balcombe's paddock, under trees of 20 to 30 foot high. We had to crawl under on our hands and knees; one day a 303 bullet went passed us, so we ran home".

"In 1930 the depression came and my father worked one and a half days a week for six shillings. We had to live on that. Dad was breaking stone on the road around the Alex Wilson Cutting.

The highlight of my life was when I was 87 years old I travelled overseas. We had a trip through Europe travelling through England, France, Belgium and Ireland."

Frances says that the most amazing change she's seen in her lifetime would have to be the invention of the motorcar and how it changed people's lives. We hope to report on Frances' 108 birthday next year.