

# Coastal Current

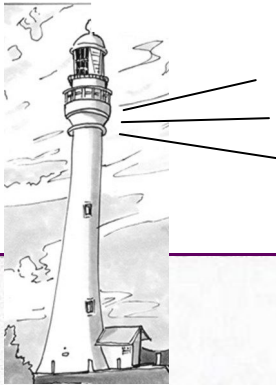
Quarterly Newsletter Of The

## Anglesea & District Historical Society

Issue No. 119

Winter 2018

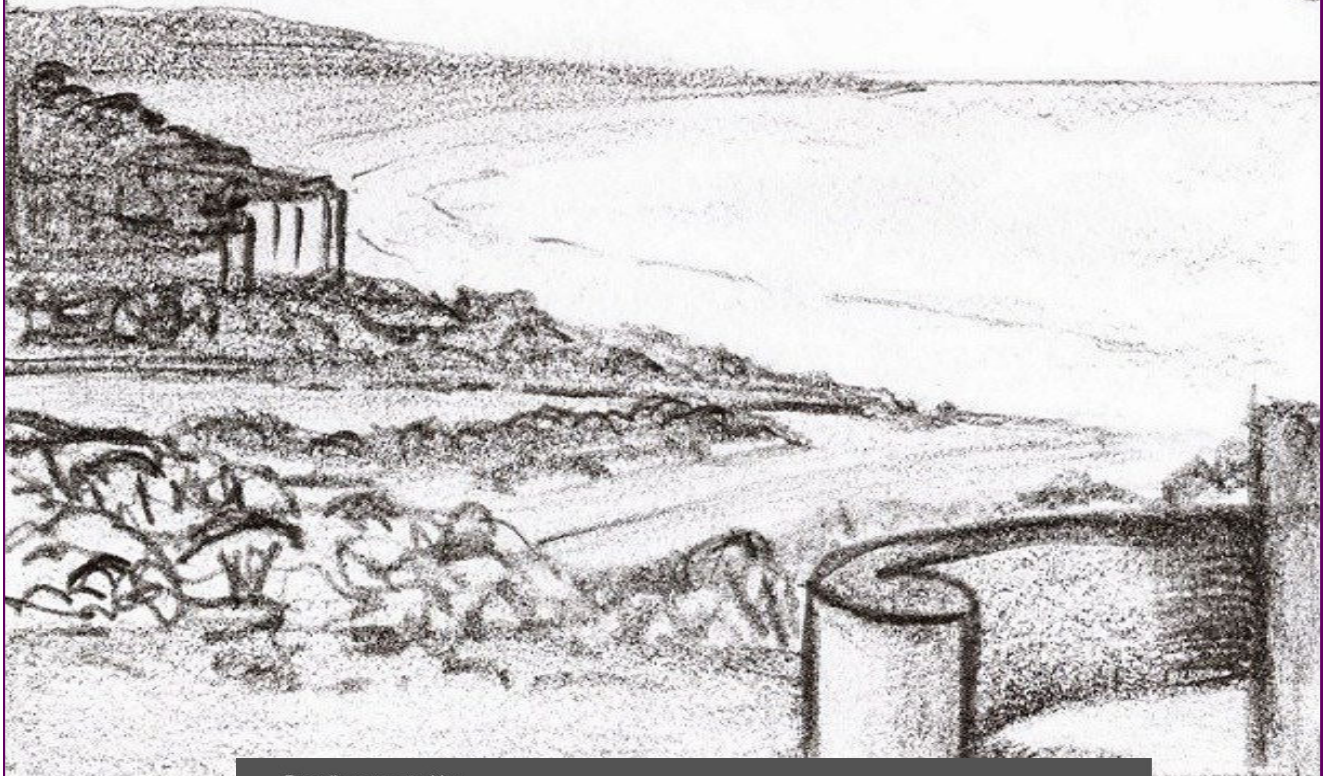
*The Anglesea & District Historical Society is a not for profit organisation staffed by volunteer members of the community, whose aim is to research and preserve history of the local area.*



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.

### Historical Society Committee

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### 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.

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

**JULY COMBINED WINTER FEAST** Thursday 19 July



Combined meeting and lunch with Family History Group:  
Cost \$10 Venue: History House Anglesea 11.00am

Speaker: Sergeant John Digby Topic: The Hereford ship and the Digby family

**AUGUST MEETING** Sunday 5 August 2.00pm  
Speaker: Rex Bills  
Topic: Scouting

**SEPTEMBER OUTING** Thursday 6 September  
To Geelong leave 10.00am from History House. Cost \$15 plus cost of lunch .

**Members & Visitors welcome to all activities.**

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

### Photographs

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

It is with great sadness that I record the passing of Marg. Cecil and Wally Dite. Both were members who had not enjoyed good health for sometime. We express our condolences to the Cecil family and to the Dite family, especially Wally's wife Ilma. May the families enjoy many happy memories of the times they spent with their loved ones. We also have happy memories of times they spent with ADHS. Two years ago Marg. came and opened the corner we have dedicated to her late husband Keith who was such a prolific writer about Anglesea and surrounding areas. There is an African saying that "when we lose one of our older community members it is like having a library burnt down." This is certainly the case with these two. We have lost both skills and their memories.

Progress with the bathing box has been held up while waiting for the internal walls to be sanded, but we are on the move again and hope to have it finished by History Week in October. Marilyn Wendt has offered to paint the interior ceiling and upper walls. We have clear Perspex doors organized for the cupboard so we can lock more valuable and fragile items in the cupboard but they can still be seen clearly. Jim Tutt is fitting a security screen over the window. Outside the box we are going to mount the sled donated by Brian Smith. Brian found this in 1956 following a storm that washed away much of the sand at the beach. Brian discovered the old sled which was from the salvage operation of the *Inverloch* in 1902.

In April we were treated to a visit from a team from the Sport & Recreation Club who told us about the restoration of their 100 year old boats that are used each New Years Day. It was a privilege to give them a donation towards the great job they do in continuing this exciting regatta each year.

We have had two outings in the last quarter. Over 30 people visited Eurack and Beeac where we saw the history of this area and the Windmill Park. On 3 May 20 people visited Modewarre, one of the oldest settlements in this area. We saw where the earliest settlers began farming, the old Wensleydale Railway Line and the Wurdi Boluc Reservoir. We always find a great pub to have lunch. Both were enjoyable days with good weather. Our next outing is in September when we will visit some places of historic interest in Geelong and have lunch at the Commun na Feinne hotel. The Comunn na Feinne Society, was established in Geelong by Scottish Highlanders and lasted from the 1850s to the 1940s and featured the traditional Highland games.

Coming up we are looking forward to hearing from Melva Stott at our June meeting. Melva will tell us about her experiences in Town Crier competitions world wide. Our Museum Curator Susan Clarke with Marilyn Wendt, has set up an exhibition of the town crier uniform of Melva's husband, the late Stan Stott. It is on display in the fabric display case in the museum.

July will be our combined Winter Feast when we join with the Surf Coast Family History Group. Our speaker will be Sergeant John Digby from Colac. John is the grandson of Constable Digby who lost his life in 1881 when he attended the grounding of the ship the *Hereford*. John will tell about this tragedy and the effect it had on his family. This promises to be a great day. In August Rex Bills is visiting us again. This time to tell us about the history of scouting, especially in Anglesea. Rex has been our speaker on a couple of occasions previously.

A special meeting to plan for 2018 and beyond will be held at 11.00am on Friday 1 June at History House. We encourage any interested members to come to this meeting and join in. This not just a meeting for the committee.

**BE CONNECTED** - Karl Jacklin, Secretary phone 0412 619 219

Be connected is aimed at those older members of the community who want to learn more about the on-line world. We are 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.

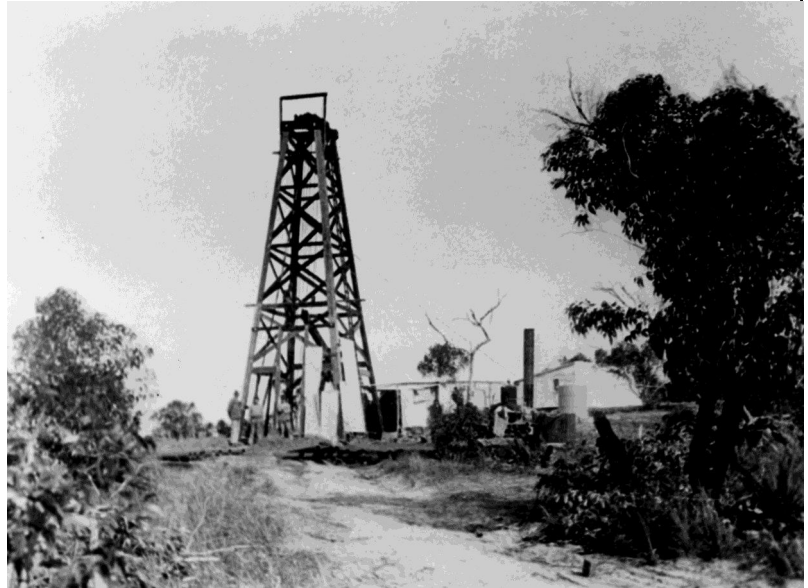
Topics Include:

- Gaining a basic understanding of how your computer operates
- Using the internet to talk to family and friends
- Shopping safely and securely on line
- Connecting to the internet
- Being safe 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 you have any area of computing you don't understand or want to know more about contact Karl.

## MOUNT MISERY

Mount Misery was the uninviting name once given to the area at the top of Harvey Street. The area was administrated by a government division with the title of Forests Commission of Victoria. This particular region was once part of a pine plantation area, planted after WW1. Two workers cottages were built on the site in the 1920s. They were listed in the November 1938 phone book as Mt. Misery Lookout, extension phone number of Anglesea River 16.



After the 1947 fire, a wooden look-out tower was constructed. The observation platform was assembled on the ground, then hauled into position with a truck and winch, as there were no cranes for hire in those days.

Although this was constructed in 1947, by the late 1960's white ants were found to be making a meal of one of the support legs. Nearby residents feared a collapse so the tower was eventually brought down with an explosive charge. Following the failure of the Pine Plantations, the two workers cottages were relocated.

Today the bush has reclaimed the area and it is difficult to imagine what was there 50 years ago. Only a loop track marks the place where the lookout and houses once stood.

### JUST A COMMON SOLDIER

He was getting old and paunchy  
And his hair was falling fast,  
And he sat around the R.S.L.,  
Telling stories of the past.

Of a war that he once fought in  
And the deeds that he had done,  
In his exploits with his mates;  
They were heroes, every one.

And 'tho sometimes to his neigh-  
bours  
His tales became a joke,  
All his mates listened quietly  
For they knew where of he spoke.

But we'll hear his tales no longer,  
For old Jack has passed away,  
And the world's a little poorer  
For a Digger died today.

He won't be mourned by many,  
Just his children and his wife.  
For he lived an ordinary,  
Very quiet sort of life.

He held a job and raised a family,  
Going quietly on his way;  
And the world won't note his passing,  
'Tho a Digger died today.

When politicians leave this earth,  
Their bodies lie in state,

While thousands note their passing,  
And proclaim that they were great.

The Media tell of their life stories  
From the time that they were young,  
But the passing of a Digger  
Goes unnoticed, and unsung.

Is the greatest contribution  
To the welfare of our land,  
Some smoothie who breaks his  
promise  
And cons his fellow man?

Or the ordinary fellow  
Who in times of war and strife,  
Goes off to serve his country  
And offers up his life?

The politician's stipend  
And the style in which they live,  
Are often disproportionate,  
To the service that they give.

While the ordinary Digger,  
Who offered up his all,  
Is paid off with a medal  
And perhaps a pension, small.

It is not the politicians  
With their compromise and ploys,  
Who won for us the freedom  
That our country now enjoys.

Should you find yourself in danger,

With your enemies at hand,  
Would you really want some cop-out,  
With his ever-waffling stand?

Or would you want a Digger  
His home, his country, his kin,  
Just a common Digger,  
Who would fight until the end?

He was just a common Digger,  
And his ranks are growing thin,  
But his presence should remind us  
We may need his likes again.

For when countries are in conflict,  
We find the Digger's part,  
Is to clean up all the troubles  
That the politicians start.

If we cannot do him honor  
While he's here to hear the praise,  
Then at least let's give him homage  
At the ending of his days.

Perhaps just a simple headline  
In the paper that might say:

"OUR COUNTRY IS IN MOURNING,  
A DIGGER DIED TODAY."

Adapted from *Just Common Soldier*  
by A. Lawrence Vaincourt

## NEW EXHIBIT AT HISTORY HOUSE

Susan Clarke

On 8 April a new exhibit was unveiled at History House by Melva Stott. Melva has kindly loaned us Stan Stott's town crier costume, and this is now on display with his 'tools of trade'.

Town criers are appointed by their councils, and Stan was inducted by Councillor Max Anderson, Mayor of Barrabool. He worked with wife Melva after she was appointed by Commissioner Toni McCormach when Surf Coast Shire was formed. He represented Australia seven times in New Zealand, and at seven World Town Crier Competitions in England, Canada and America, as well as two in Australia.



Stan's uniform is a copy of that worn by Matthew Flinders, which explains the accompanying cat. The tools of the trade are his bell, which is used to summon the people, and his scroll, from which he read public declarations. The plume in the tricorne hat is traditionally a quill for writing. Stan appeared regularly at tourism and other local events, such as Australia Day celebrations by the river in Anglesea, and Bellbrae Primary School's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Stan also welcomed two Governors to the Surf Coast: the Hon. Richard McGarvie and John Landy, and welcomed Premier Jeff Kennett to Anglesea.

The certificate on display is Surf Coast Shire Town Crier Appointment 29 June 1994. The trophy included in the display is for Best Theme Cry, 7<sup>th</sup> Victorian Town Crier Championship, Melbourne, 23 October 1998.

Melva will be talking on the topic "Town Criers Worldwide" at the Historical Society meeting on Sunday 3 June.

## MYSTERY FIND



This heavily encrusted small cannon was found on the rocks at Point Roadknight in March this year by Paul Cleeland. The cannon is now held at Queenscliff Maritime Museum and they are making efforts to find its origin. It would seem to be pre settlement possibly 16th or 17th century but nothing confirmed as yet. If you are in Queenscliff, I'm sure that they would be happy to show it to you. It was found in a reef crevice at low tide on the beach at Roadknight about 50m towards Soapy Rock.

Would ships have carried small cannons when bringing immigrants to Australia? There was always a risk of pirates so I

was interested to read a diary from 1841 when the ship the *Catherine Jamieson* was coming to Australia. A man named Nicholson wrote "A slaver taking slaves from Africa to America pulled up beside us about a week after we left Bahia. Captain Hutchinson immediately armed his crew with blunderbuses and the male passengers with pikes (long pointed sticks)." They were able to ward off the attempt to mount the ship. This seems to be a common occurrence so maybe some ships carried cannons as protection. More research is needed. The very heavy encrustation suggest this cannon may be even older than the immigration ships of the 1840s and 50s. We will keep you posted about whatever the Maritime Museum discovers about the cannon.

Reference: Saville, Vanda, *Tapestry within the Shire of Portland*, 1978

## ALEXANDER MACONOCHIE 1787-1860

Jan Morris

Prisons are for punishment, the more severe the punishment the better, or so many people thought in the 1800s. Not so Alexander Maconochie. He thought prisons should be for reform, giving convicts a second chance at life. We have all heard of convicts being sent to Australia for stealing a loaf of bread because they were starving. However many of them were hardened criminals. Maconochie thought that there was hope of reform even for the worst of them. He had a background of being a captain in the navy. He also had early legal training and worked with Sir John Franklin in Tasmania at the Van Diemen's Land Convict Settlement. At Norfolk Island he was able to put into practice his theory of allowing prisoners to earn points towards shortening their sentences. Norfolk Island was the place where double convicted prisoners were placed: those who had been convicted in Britain and had offended again after reaching the colonies. In other words Norfolk Island held the worst of the worst.

Maconochie believed that prisoners who felt they had no hope of release became hardened and impossible to work with. Even the worst needed to feel there was some hope of a better life. When Maconochie arrived at Norfolk Island with his family, he found that the prison was ruled with violence; lashings and hangings being the method of keeping control. Many convicts had little or no clothing, necessitating them to work naked. Soldiers and guards were sometimes as violent as the convicts themselves. Maconochie immediately brought change to Norfolk Island.

Alexander Maconochie introduced what he called the "Marks System", whereby convicts could earn marks for good behaviour, and lose them for bad behavior. Marks added up to provided privileges and eventually a "Norfolk Ticket of Leave." Once convicts obtained a Norfolk Ticket of leave they were given a small patch of ground to build a hut and plant a garden. They had the freedom to roam the island as they wished.

Other improvements were made to humanize the settlement. Wooden floors were put in the prisons and convicts were issued with blankets and clothing. Their food ration of salted pork and maize was cooked and other vegetables were introduced when available. Maconochie conversed with the convicts as well as the soldiers and guards. He made use of their skills and training where possible. One convict became his daughter's music teacher. His second daughter Catherine married one of the soldiers.

Unfortunately the government of the day assumed Maconochie's theories were not working. Before a report reached London praising the difference his system had made on Norfolk Island, he was recalled. However his "Marks System" remains the principle on which modern penology is based today. Most prisoners are now given a minimum and maximum term. It is up to them to work towards the minimum term.



*Remains of the Convict Barracks Norfolk Island*

Alexander Maconochie was born in Edinburgh, the son of Alexander McKonochie. The spelling varied greatly in those days. Like my McConachy ancestors, Alexander's ancestors came from the Isle of Bute, where they sheltered from the army of James 1. As with my family they were part of the Robertson Clan and changed their name from Duncan to Conochy, the Mc or Mac being added later to indicate "son of." I am unable to prove a relationship but believe if records on the Isle of Bute showed more than just the father's name it would be possible to prove a connection.

I recently visited Norfolk Island and saw where Alexander Maconochie worked and lived with his wife and six children in Government House. The remains of the convict buildings can still be clearly seen and the houses where the government officials lived have been restored. History speaks kindly of Alexander Maconochie. One historian described him as "...a great politician, slow to anger, patient and merciful." I am proud to claim him as kinsman.

Jan Morris (nee McConachy)

### References

Morris, Norval, *Maconochie's Gentlemen*, Oxford Press, 2002

Berry, John V., *Australian Dictionary of Biography* Vol. 2 ,MUP, 1967

Barry, John Vincent, *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, Vol. 47 Issue 2



*Alexander  
Maconochie  
1787-1860  
Governor of  
Norfolk Island  
1840-44*