

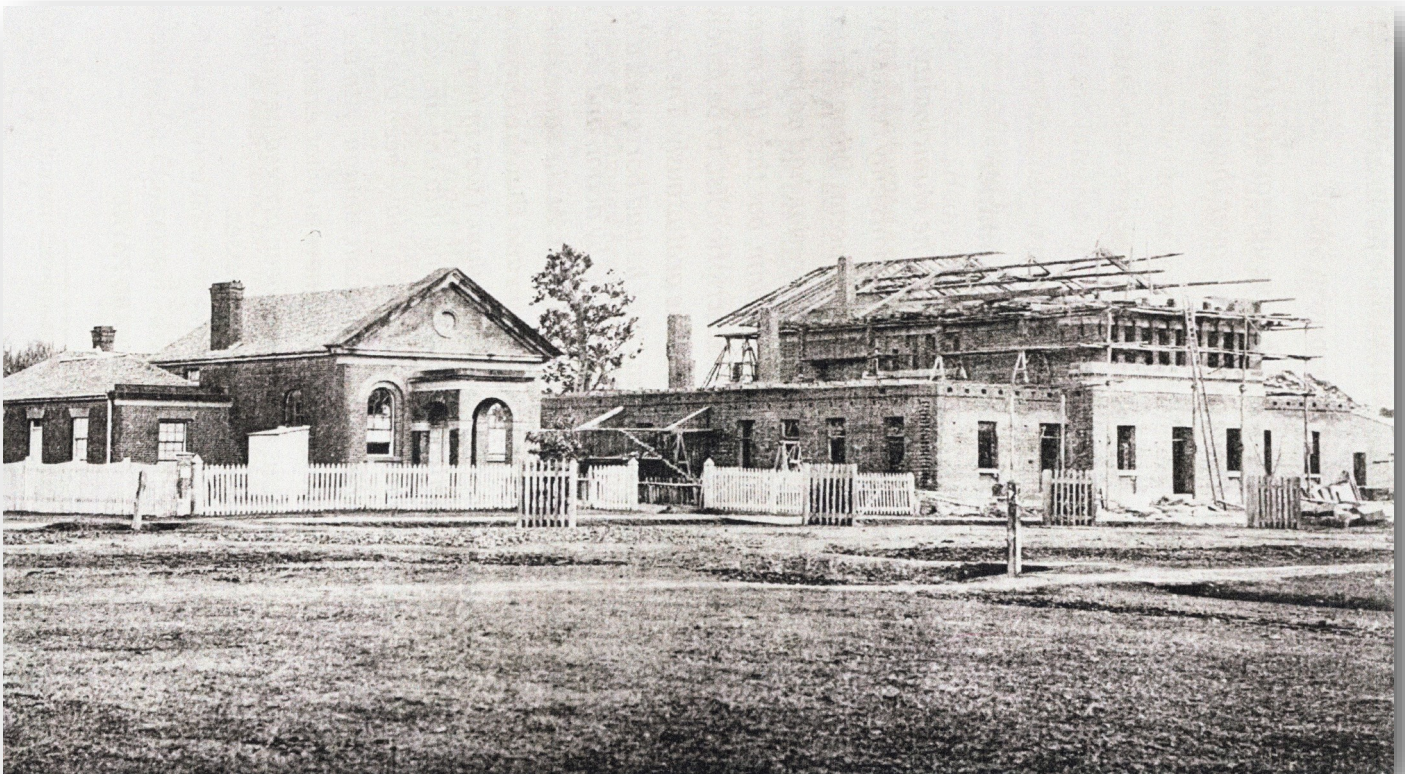


The Newsletter of the
**CLARENCE RIVER
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC**
 Established in Grafton City in 1931

Issue No 180

ISSN 1036-5656

31st March 2024



Courthouses of Grafton: Photograph of the second Courthouse (built 1860) on the left and the third Courthouse being constructed on the right, which was commenced in 1876 and was completed in 1880.

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OFFICE BEARERS

<p>President: Steve Tranter</p> <p>Vice Presidents: Nita Child & Patricia James</p> <p>Secretary: Robyn Schaeffer</p> <p>Treasurer: Anne Ellem</p> <p>Committee members: Vickie Beith, Cheryl Barnes, Suzanne Gibson, Judy Johnson and Rosemary Marshall</p>	<p>Public Officer: Bill Dougherty</p> <p>Research Officer: Hazel Lawson</p> <p>Recorder/Librarian: Vacant</p> <p>Roster Clerk: Suzanne Gibson</p> <p>Newsletter: Steve Tranter/Rosemary Marshall</p> <p>Hon. Solicitor: Joe Fahey</p>
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Principal Patrons: The Duke and Duchess of Grafton **Patrons:** Kevin Hogan MP, Ritchie Williamson MP, Mayor Peter Johnstone, Bill & Dot Dougherty.

Schaeffer House is open from 1.00pm to 4.00pm on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sundays. Other days by appointment, please contact the Secretary on (02) 66425212. Research Room is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 8.30am to 3.30pm.

Membership fees are due in **January** each year. Fees remain at \$25 for Individuals, couples or families. Be sure to pay fees prior to the **AGM** in **March** if voting rights are to be retained. New members who join between 1 September and 31 December are deemed to be members up to 31 December of the following year. **Please note that donations to Clarence River Historical Society of \$2 or more are tax deductible.**

JOTTINGS FROM THE HOUSE

Membership Fees

Members are reminded of membership fees now being due. Fees remain unchanged for 2024. Direct deposit, the banking details are:

Clarence River Historical Society at **Greater Bank, BSB: 637-000; Ac. No: 718374995**. Please add your name. If you want to pay online please call the Secretary on (02) 66425212. If you have already paid please accept our thanks!

At the February 2024 Committee Meeting, the escalating costs involved in production and posting of the Newsletter was discussed and the Committee determined to continue with paper and digital versions. But in order to reduce costs the Committee decided to reduce the number of newsletters each year from four to three but with the addition of an extra four pages. This will reduce costs involved. Your newsletter will continue and so will the wonderful stories!

AGM

Members are reminded of the Annual General Meeting for the Society. It will take place at Schaeffer House in the Research Room on the 27th of March 2024 at 11am. Refreshments will be available and all are welcome. Proxy voting is encouraged and a voting slip is enclosed. Please email the voting slip back to clarencehistory@bigpond.com or post to CRHS 190 Fitzroy St, Grafton NSW 2460 to arrive by 26 March, 2024.

Contributions

We welcome articles/contributions to our newsletter from our members. If you have an item of interest, please contact our Secretary, Robyn.

Volunteers

As always we can still do with more volunteers from local members. If you live in or close to Grafton, please think about joining us.

RESEARCH ENQUIRIES

(Compiled by our Research Officer, Hazel Lawson)

RESEARCH ENQUIRIES FEBRUARY 2024.

PERSONAL VISITS

BRIAN Researching the Diamond and Bender Families, Memorial Board WW2 Southgate.

KATRINA. Looking for a book "The Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith" and information on Harry Potter who died in 1901. If anyone knows of this book, please contact the Society.

SARAH History of house at 199 Villiers Stret, Grafton.

DEBBIE History of old timber house on property 458 Rushforth Road South Grafton.

MELISSA History of Grafton Fire Station.

PETER Researching G A Happ, took up land holding approx. 1909 in Dorrigo, may have started Happ Store in Coramba.

OSCAR Researching Ship Winston Churchill escaped on in the Boer War.

IAN Researching Mary Andrea Morrison/Patterson. Husband Andrew Graeme Patterson.

JOHN Looking for information on Carnival Capers, South Grafton.

TONI Stan and Dulcie Charleston and family.

CAROL Sellers or Sellars, descendants of Benjamin Sellers of Myrtle Creek.

JOE Timothy O'Driscoll, wife Valerie Lord. Parents John William O'Driscoll and Ann Riley

BY EMAIL

SANDY Mary Comynes born 1847 County Clare Ireland Married Patrick Morrissey 31/11/1878 Mary also known as Mary Cummins, any information on Mary.

JOHN House in Bacon Street where Alexander Mitchell Blow lived, owned store in Prince Street sold to Fred Hall.

TREVOR The Band called Marsh Merrymakers lead by Maud March, names of members in the band.

JANELLE Samuel Weatherstone, wife Letitia Dougherty, children Adam, Mary, Nancy, John, Sarah and Samuel. Sarah married Benjamin Carrol, any information on Benjamin.

BRIAN Richard Craig, where born? Why was he sent to NSW with convict father.

SONYA Jules Dourex and wife Mary. Aboriginal daughter of Jenny.

BARRY Grave site for William James Paine, died 31/1/1905 at Grafton Hospital, buried by Rev Barker of the Wesleyan Church.

TERRY Researching the Jacaranda Festival of 1961.

STEPHEN Researching the Ryder Family, Jack Ryder married Isabella Martin.

COLLEEN James Fry, born Witney UK 1826, died Ulmarra 28/3/1898. Alderman and farmer. Info on foster daughter Ellen May Lamiller AKA Nellie Fry.

TONI Trying to find my live Birth Certificate. Born 1955 in Runnymede Hospital, maiden name Stratten. Do you know where the live Birth Certificates are now?

ROBERT. Kenneth Thomas McLennan, sheet metal worker and tanner. Newspaper story of him being commissioned by the mayor, to make a whip approx. 49 feet long. Where is the whip now?

RICHARD Anne Stratton, photos of the shop Vienna Styles, Home at 70 Mc Hugh Street Grafton. Information as organiser of theatre performances.

INGRID War Grave of Henry James Giese, killed in action 27/9/1917, Battle of Polygon Wood, 31st Australian Infantry Battalion

GRAFTON'S CHURCHILLIAN REMINDER

Unbeknown to most people living in the Clarence Valley, South Grafton's natural emerald, green riverside holds a strong lasting 122-year connection to Britain's most famous Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, who helped steer the Western Allied military forces to victory during World War 11.

As a young 25-year-old determined adventurer, Winston was employed by the London Morning Post newspaper to work as a foreign correspondent covering the Boer War in the late 1800s.

He duly arrived in South Africa and, while travelling in a British armoured train, was taken prisoner by a posse of Boer fighters who had succeeded in derailing the locomotive carrying him to a new war front.

As the son of a prominent British Lord,

Winston was regarded by the Boer hierarchy as one highly miraculous find in a million.

As a result, they intended to hold him as a valuable hostage for future possible war negotiations with the British. But our ardent young journalist managed to make an almost unbelievable and sensational Houdini-style escape from the most highly guarded gaol in Pretoria, the then capital of the Boer Republic.

After evading possible confrontation with the enemy, Winston managed to secretly hitch rides to freedom on coal trains to the port of Lourenco Marques in Portuguese East Africa. There, he donned a disguise for fear that the 25 English pound sterling bounty placed by the Boer Government on his head, dead or alive, may entice someone to have him re-captured.



SS Induna in earlier times

"I used to be a baker, but I couldn't make enough dough."

GRAFTON'S CHURCHILLIAN REMINDER CONT.

In making his final getaway to the safety of Britain's Natal Province, Winston bought a ticket on a 190-foot and 700 gross ton coastal steamer, the S.S. Induna, named after Zulu warrior kings.

On his arrival in Natal's main port of Durban, he was heralded as an absolute hero for his great escape from Boer custody as a prisoner of war.

As he later explained, that day was the start of his long history as a leading politician and statesman.

Historians have claimed that his safe arrival in Durban on the S.S. Induna was, in fact, a good omen for the British during the Boer War and gave impetus to his later well-known Allied war efforts from 1939 onwards and his being awarded a knighthood.

But what has all this to do with South Grafton, one may ask? I recently wrote an article on Churchill's great escape which was published in our leading Clarence Valley Independent newspaper. This caused me to be duly contacted by Mr Stephen Tranter, president of the Clarence River Historical Society.

This genial man, surrounded by the important ageing records of the Clarence area and surrounds, revealed to me that South Grafton's Earle Page Park still held a little-known connection with Winston, the one-time war escapee, and the S.S. Induna which took him to safety.

Absolutely amazed on hearing this news, I soon learned that the vessel, which had

so successfully carried Britain's future Prime Minister to freedom at such a young age, had continued to work as a merchant coastal vessel from Lourenco Marques and further south until it was sold to Burns Philp's commercial and maritime interests in Sydney before the First World War.

At the start of hostilities, the ship was working in the Pacific when it received word at gun point from a German sea-going merchant raider, the SMS Wolf, of the outbreak of war between Britain and the German homeland.

The S.S. Induna immediately tried to flee but was chased under full steam by the enemy vessel to the waters of the Marshall Islands where it was literally impounded and its crew held in virtual custody — and with all its crucial stocks of steam coal being confiscated, totally crippling the unfortunate island cargo and passenger ship.

When the invading German army and navy were, however, eventually forced by the Allies to leave the Pacific zone, a passing and friendly Japanese vessel supplied the stricken S.S. Induna with sufficient fuel to enable it to return safely to Australia.

This ship, well known to have sailed most of the seven seas during its life, was eventually sold to the New South Wales Department of Railways and was sent to the then still busy port of Grafton on the mighty Clarence River.

GRAFTON'S CHURCHILLIAN REMINDER CONT.

It was bought by the Government in 1932 to assist another official vessel, the S.S. Swallow, as a giant river ferry between South Grafton in the south and Grafton City in the north.

This was before the construction of the old but existing Grafton 'bent' road and train bridge over the Clarence, and the two steamships were used to carry railway coaches across the river on board their specially levelled deck and super-structures to join up the Sydney to Brisbane rail line broken by the gap caused by the very geographical presence of the Clarence and no available bridge.

Once South Grafton and Grafton City were physically coupled by the opening of the 'bent' bridge in 1933, the hard-working S.S. Induna was pensioned off and was moored in retirement on the water's edge adjacent to Earle Page Park near to what is now the South Grafton Ex-Servicemen's Club.

The most important ship in Winston's life had been sold to Webber's Sawmill in the area. She was then tied up on the Clarence River's South Bank adjacent to the park to work as a temporary wharf.

Slowly but surely the upper deck housing and funnel were sold off and the hull was initially all that was left, to sink partially into the Clarence River sand with land vegetation later encasing much of its historic remains.

Grafton City Council was concerned at the time about the possibility of the old ship breaking adrift during a flood and striking

the then new 'bent' bridge. As a consequence, the sawmill owners prevailed upon to cut holes in her hull and finally sink her in the river beside the mill.

Before this final act was carried out, however, 200 tons of steel rails, originally concreted to the bottom of the hull as ballast, were removed together with the ship's boilers. This was then sold to Japan as scrap iron.

Anyone travelling north over the old Grafton bridge today can still see the old S.S. Induna's naked bow reaching up to the sky on the left bank of the Clarence as if to say it is there for all time as a reminder of important days long past — and, particularly, that of a man of considerable destiny.

Any reader interested in the history of the S.S. Induna can find further evidence of the vessel in Grafton's comprehensive museum at Schaeffer House in Fitzroy Street.

Footnote: As a former foreign correspondent and journalist with a history of working in Africa I have been particularly taken by the S.S. Induna's Zulu name. The reason for this is that another Englishman many years before had run a coastal shipping company along Africa's East Coast and had christened his ships with similar Zulu names such as Indaba and Indema.

This man was Mr George Rex who, it was claimed, was the pretender to the English throne, being the alleged legitimate son of King George 111 in the 1700s.

GRAFTON'S CHURCHILLIAN REMINDER CONT.

The story often retailed in Knysna, South Africa, is that George and his English mother were sent there when King George 111 took to the throne, were well looked after financially, and started a timber milling company and coastal shipping service with ships bearing Zulu names.

I wonder whether the former British Prime Minister's S.S. Induna, now lying quietly in the Clarence, may have been related in some way to those other old-time ships said to have possibly been allied to royalty and to the Zulu nation by name.

Oscar Tamsen is an esteemed retired foreign correspondent who worked in Africa in the early 1950s for two decades. He is a resident of Yamba and has produced a number of articles "The Tamsen Chronicles" for the Clarence Valley "Independent"

*Below photograph:
The hull of the SS Induna as she is today in 2024. Residing on the southern side of the Clarence River upstream from the old Grafton Bridge*



Early Horse Racing and the July Races

Horse races were held as early as 1845 and were attended by the men who had taken up 'runs' in the surrounding district.

The first race track was on a flat, at the bottom of Junction Hill and deemed a great test of the thoroughbreds owned by the graziers.

In 1857, the Reverend Selwyn wrote to his wife " I daresay the letter you sent gives all the events of the race week, with

its numerous visitors" which is as true today as when it was written over 100 years ago.

The first meeting of the newly formed Race Club in Grafton was held in 1859. It is the oldest racing body on the Northern Rivers and one of the earliest established in Australia

The Clarence River Jockey Club was formed in 1862

"I used to play piano by ear, but now I use my hands."

FASCINATING FINDS IN THE HOUSE

Sometimes an item pops up which creates a measure of excitement in some of our volunteers. Such an item was found by Pat James our vice-president who was assessing some very very old music. Pat is an enthusiastic and very talented pianist and ex-teacher and she came across a piece of music called Arbor Day which was written and composed in 1891 for the children of Public Schools in New South Wales. The words were written by the Countess of Jersey and the music was by Hugo Alpen.

Inside the cover was a small note by a woman named Bertha which said, "I played the piano for the first rendition of this in Grafton. I met Lady Jersey at a function at South Grafton."

Inside the back cover was a note about the Honorable J.H. Carruthers, founder of "Arbour Day," also called Tree Day.

Some of our older readers may remember when public schools celebrated Arbour Day. It is a secular day of observance in which individuals and groups are encouraged to plant and care for trees. Today, many countries observe such a day, usually in the Spring but the date varies somewhat, depending on climate and suitable planting season.

The Countess of Jersey in 1891 was Margaret Child-Villiers, wife of Sir Victor Albert George Child-Villiers, 7th Earl of Jersey and the Governor of N.S.W at that time. She lived in Australia during

her husband's term of office.

Margaret was known for her public speaking skills and was an advocate for women's rights.

From Mrs Schaeffers's Recipe Book.

Jubilee Apricot Bread.

Ingredients

- ½ cup honey
- 1 kg fresh apricots
- 2 eggs
- 3 cups self raising flour
- ½ tsp bicarbonate of soda
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 tbsp butter
- ½ tsp grated lemon rind
- ½ cup chopped almonds
- ½ cup sultanas

Method

Cook apricots in ½ cup water until tender. Rub through a sieve removing the stones.

Sift dry ingredients. Rub in butter.

Add milk, honey, apricot pulp and lemon rind to beaten eggs, then fold in flour mixture.

Lastly add sultanas and nuts.

Pour into greased loaf tin and bake for 45 minutes in a hot oven.

COURT HOUSES OF GRAFTON

Court Houses of Grafton

Grafton has had three Court Houses in its history.

According to Mr Thomas Bawden in his lectures delivered in 1886, the first Court House was erected around 1846/7 close to the river in Victoria Street in the vicinity of Blackwood Close.

Although information relating to the building is sketchy, references describe it as a simple wooden structure not much bigger than a lock-up. It was erected in response to the early settlers of the Clarence Valley applying for a Court of Petty Sessions to be established. Previously, Courts of Quarter Sessions were conducted under the Hon. Judge Robert Owen with Mr. W.J. Foster Crown Prosecutor and had been held in Sharp's Inn, situated near where the Crown Hotel is today.

According to a previous newsletter article by late member, John Moorhead, the Historic Building Group of the Department of Public Works in Sydney found Gregory Blaxland's signature as one of the local justices on a 1848 requisition for furniture for the first slab court house/lock up.

From 1860 onwards, Grafton was growing in prominence and its town centre became more sophisticated with the erection of more government buildings in masonry, mainly brick, since stone was difficult to get. More district administrative tasks were to be carried out by Court Houses and more Government facilities were needed.

The issuing of licences for publicans and hawkers, responsibility for the census, maintenance of public buildings, supervising building of government projects and other important administrative tasks were carried out at the Court House.

The first Court House was soon found to be too small and in poor condition and in 1860, tenders were called for the construction of a new Court House to be built of handmade sandstock bricks with stone cornices and lime from local oyster shells and with a shingled roof. An estimated budget of £2000 each was allocated for construction of a new gaol and Court House, and local contractors French and Wray were appointed to build the Court House to design plans by Colonial Architect Alexander Dawson.

The Grafton Gaol was to be of the "Braidwood" type, which included similar gaols at regional towns such as Braidwood, Albury, Armidale, Mudgee and Wagga and it was to be situated on the corner of Duke and Victoria Streets. Even though materials such as timber were available locally, building supplies were bought up from Sydney.

After problems with foundations, material shortages and record floods, the gaoler finally took possession of the gaol in late 1861 and the first Court of Quarter Sessions in the Court House was held in October that year with Judge Francis presiding. Soon after the completion of this Court House, a police barracks and lockup were added to the

rear of the building. In later years, extensive remodelling occurred, creating a much grander facade to match the impressive streetscape created by the 1880 Court House construction. This resulted in its adaptation as a police station with the entrance along Duke Street rather than Victoria Street. This building also became inadequate around the late 1870s as Grafton developed into an important regional centre and a new Court House was planned as a major addition to the magnificent collection of public buildings that graced Grafton.

During the time 1877 to 1891, more than 100 courthouses were constructed or remodelled in other regional towns such as Bathurst, Dubbo and Newcastle. Colonial architect, James Barnett devised the plans of the new building and the construction work costing £8,734 was completed by Mr. J. C. Lowe.

The building was constructed of sandstock brick with flagging and cornices transported by schooners from Sydney. The roof was of Welsh slate. It measured 50 feet by 35 feet and consisted of the main courtroom in the centre of the building with a height of 25

feet. The dais at the front of the court was decorated with a beautiful panelled cedar canopy topped by the Royal Arms. On either side of the main court were offices for the judge, jury members, crown lawyers, barristers, witnesses and the Clerk of Petty Sessions. At the entrance, a varnished cedar partition in panels shut out the view of the main Court House from the exterior and on the left hand side was a staircase which gave access to the public gallery which extended across the whole front of the building.

Spacious verandahs which, together with the wide eaves, cooled the building from the heat of summer. Three stone steps led up to the front porch which was emblazoned with the date 1879 on a carved shield.



(Rose Selwyn, an early Clarence Valley artist, painted a watercolour sketch of that building in 1853).

The verandahs of the 1880 Court House and the renovated 1862 courthouse indicate that the same architect James Barnett, designed the latter's alterations that changed it into police quarters. Interestingly, one

of the rooms was made available as a vaccination centre during the smallpox epidemic of 1881.

MRS ELIZABETH HARMAN

Elizabeth Haddy Harman (nee Glinn) was born around 1832 in Cornwell, England. She was the daughter of Andrew and Elizabeth H. Glinn.



Original shop in Prince Street, Grafton. Presumed burnt down in the early 1880s and replaced with the current building. It is assumed that Elizabeth is on the left, William on the right and their three children

Sometime in 1855 she arrived in Sydney, Australia where she met William Harman, who also came from England, having been born in Kent around 1835.

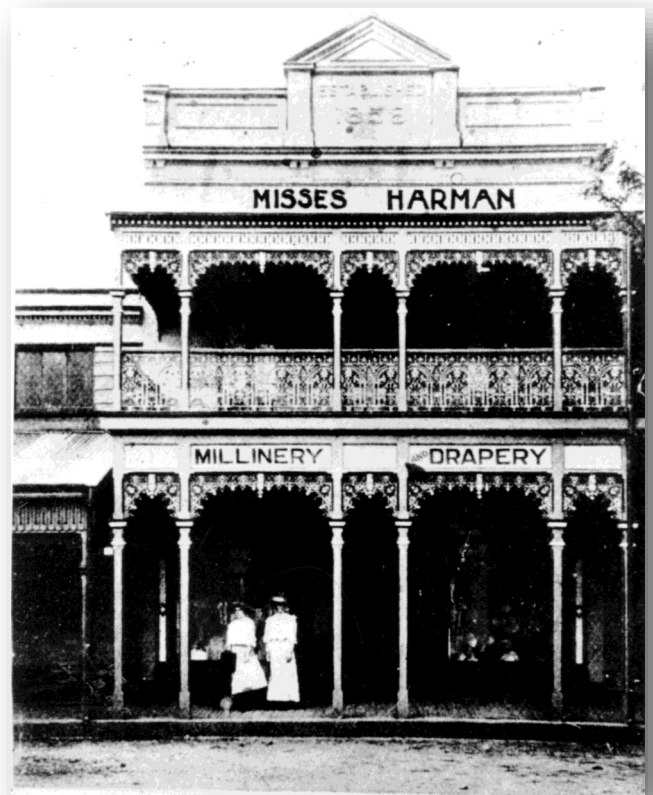
They married and we believe arrived in Grafton in 1856. William obtained employment as a mail contractor at first, carrying mail by pack horse from Grafton to Glen Innes. In 1874 he was the successful tenderer for the carrying of mail from Grafton to Armidale, via Gara Station, for a period of two years.

Soon after arriving in Grafton they bought a block of land in the Junction Hill area, cleared it of virgin scrub, and commenced farming for several years. They later moved into town where they bought one of the first blocks of land put up for sale in Grafton. Mrs. Harman

opened the first dress making and millinery business in Grafton, which she ran for a long period of time.

Some time in the 1880s the shop burnt down and not to be deterred, the Harman's rebuilt the shop on a much grander scale. The new building was a two story brick structure with room for two shops on the ground floor and a residence above. The building still stands today.

At one time the building had a lace work verandah over the street but this has been removed. At the top of the building there is written in brickwork "Est. 1858". It is presumed that this was the date of the establishment of Mrs. Harman's business.



Second building in Prince Street, Grafton replacing previously burnt down store. Photograph courtesy of "Sydney Mail" 8Jan1908

THE CLARENCE RIVER GORGE

The Clarence River is one of the largest and most beautiful rivers in Australia, being over 400 kilometres long: a result of geological forces over 290 millions of years ago when the waters of the Upper Clarence were cut off from the sea by earth movements.

The Clarence River Gorge is situated in some of the most rugged and spectacular scenery in our state. The gorge is known for its unique geological features including Impressive rock formations, thundering waterfalls and rapids which have led to deep tranquil pools and broad calm waters.

To understand how the Clarence River Gorge was formed, we need to look at the geology of the area around Grafton and surrounds.

The Camelback mountain, which can be seen from Grafton, was named because of the shape of its distinctive hump. The Camelback Range runs north, forming the Dividing Range between the Clarence and Richmond Rivers and extends with a rising grade to the MacPherson Range on the Queensland Border. The same range also extends south forming a diversion between the Orara and Nymboida rivers and to Guy Fawks via Dorrigo.

The area behind this range was the



catchment area for the two main branches of the Clarence River which met head on to form a lake when the Clarence was cut off from the sea. The lake rose high enough to flow over the camelback, a fall of 350 feet and it is estimated that 2000 cubic feet per second passed over the Camelback Falls in normal times but there would have been more in flood times thus creating a deeper and spreading channel. Bare rocks on either side of this channel were constantly falling in, in order to carry this volume of water making the channel very deep in areas. It is this channel which was eventually cut through that is now known as the Gorge.

During the time that the Camelback Falls were at their highest, a volcano broke out in the Timbarra River, a tributary of the north arm of the Clarence River and located in the Northern Tablelands area. Steam, ashes and rock fragments were blown up covering the granite country in layers of volcanic ash to a few hundred feet. The ash fell into the lake that supplied the water passing over the Camelback Falls, washing over the falls and being deposited on the banks of the Clarence River. And the resulting abrasive nature of the ash assisted in the cutting of the channel. The lake was drained through the deep channel and now forms part of rich cattle country on the Upper Clarence and the silt that passed over the falls assisted to build up the fertility of Lower Clarence farmland.

Information & Photograph supplied by Nita Child came originally from an Examiner article in 1948 by Mr. W.J. Mulligan.

IN THE GARDEN WITH PAT JAMES

Summer flowering is just about coming to an end with welcome showers of rain after such hot windy days. The cane mulch thankfully, saves us a lot of constant watering.

bright red Echinacea which has been putting on a beautiful flowering display for many weeks. She is now cutting flowers from special Dahlias and already planning the next Sweet Pea trellis.

Plant Profile.

Coleus are a group of colourful velvety foliage plants which are grown outdoors in warm climates and indoors in cooler climates. They are spectacular grown on mass and in partial to full shade though some can tolerate full sun with the foliage the main attraction. Morning sun and afternoon shade produces the best colour foliage and they can be grown in containers where they will brighten up a patio, or in the ground.

Vibrant hues and intricate patterns in shades of green, pink, red, yellow, purple and orange make them a quick way to add colour to a garden and they look spectacular in mixed plantings.

They are easy to grow and attract pollinators like bees and butterflies.



Lots of different moths and butterflies seem to be everywhere, dodging the bees that dive into the tiny flowering spikes of Coleus. Now is the time to prune these plants and grow more plants for fabulous Autumn leaf colour. It's also nearly time to prune those leggy shrubs like Salvia and Pentas in our garden ready for more Autumn flowering too.

Great excitement recently was the nest building in our Jacaranda tree at the front of the house, by a pair of Wagtails. The three baby chicks survived, grew and flew in just 2 weeks!. The parents are still here and hopefully will raise another family as our garden is like a buffet for them.

Kerry Quinn, our hard working garden volunteer, planted a



WORLD'S LARGEST DIAMOND

New England Find (at the time)

Mr. George Townsend, a gentleman who states that for some time he has been engaged in geological investigations in this colony, has called to inform us that he has been the fortunate discoverer of what is presumed to be the largest diamond in the world and that the colony of New South Wales has the credit of producing this invaluable gem.

This discovery was made in the district of New England and the locality is situated between Armidale and Bendemeer, the station of Mr. T.A. Perry J.P. The diamond was found upon the surface of the ground, having evidently being washed down the creek from the place of deposit where, in all probability, there are more to be found.

Mr. Townsend describes the gem as being of about the shape and size of a turkey's egg. Any incredulity which the announcement of this extraordinary and exciting discovery may cause will be speedily tested for Mr. Townsend, on fully convincing himself of the genuineness of his valuable prize, proceeded at once to Tamworth and delivered it to the manager of the New South Wales Branch Bank, there, to be forwarded to Sydney by the escort which will arrive here on the 10th of the present month. All doubts will then set at rest and it is not improbable that the diamond if it be one, may be publicly exhibited.

In the meantime, Mr. Townsend who has come to Sydney for the express purpose

of meeting the escort and taking possession of his property, the value of which it would be impossible to estimate if genuine- has no doubt whatever that it is a veritable diamond.

If so, it is the largest in the world being 7oz18 dwt (198.45grams) while that of the Koh-i-noor is only 5oz 10dwt. Of course the whole value of this discovery depends upon the genuineness of the stone.

That such a stone has been discovered, is believed to be a diamond and is now on its way to Sydney is certain. On the arrival of the escort the more important question can at once be decided by those who are competent to form an opinion.

We may remark, as confirming to some extent the truthfulness of Mr. Townsend's statements respecting this great diamond, that he has shown us correspondence which proves that he had previously sent some valuable gems to Sydney some of which are now in the process of cutting by a well-known lapidary and goldsmith in George Street; and he also produced documentary evidence that the said alleged diamond was placed in the custody of the manager of the Bank at Tamworth for transmission by escort to Sydney.

The article is reproduced in whole from the Clarence and Richmond Examiner on 10 August 1869.

No further information on the subject has been found and we are unable to verify the result of the examination of the diamonds genuineness . Ed

BOOK REVIEW BY PAT JAMES

"The Galloping Parson"

If you want to be inspired and uplifted, read this true story in his own words of the life of Reverend Bill "Jock" Steele!

His life of adventure began in Ireland and ended in Australia after volunteering to come out with others in the "Dreadnought" Scheme. His first "home" was in Grafton at the Experimental Farm, training to work on farms. He learned to ride and break in horses, taking part in rodeos.

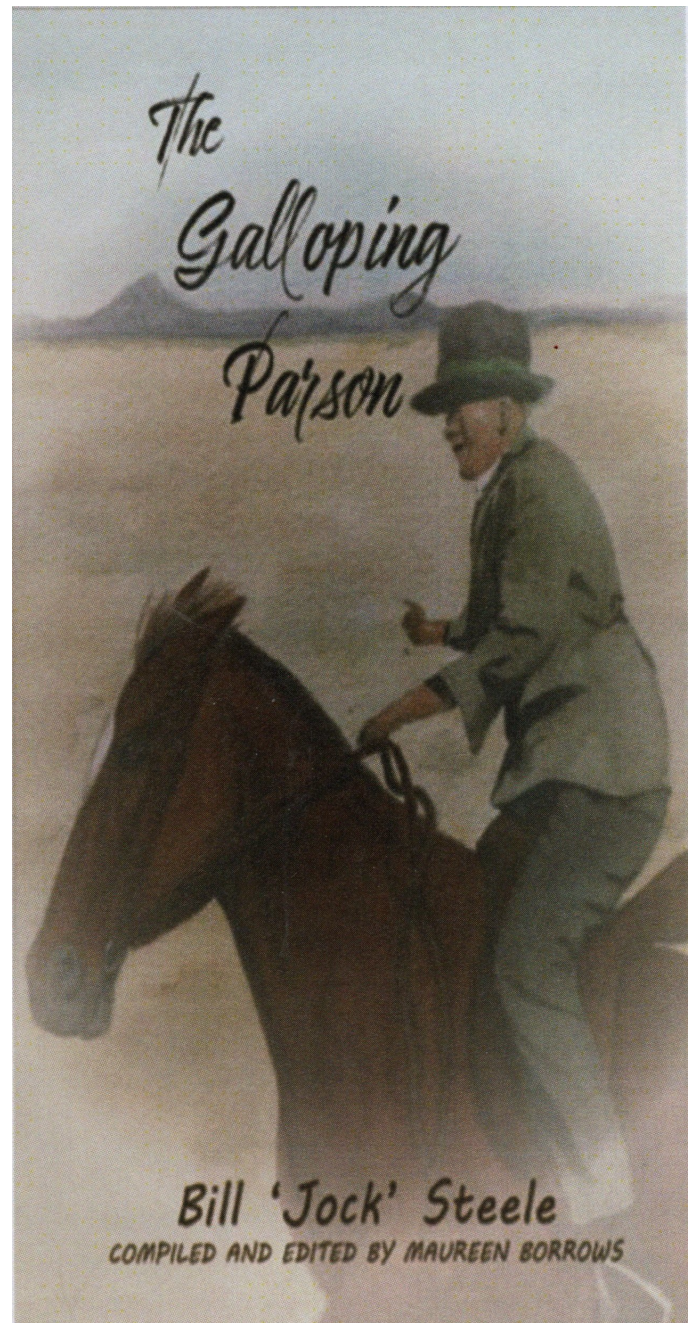
An adventurous lad, he had a calling to become a Christian missionary so he studied to matriculate and enter the Methodist Church but when World War II broke out, he went overseas as a chaplain to New Guinea and other parts of the tropics. Before he left he married his beloved sweetheart Kath who became his great soulmate and helper.

The book describes, in his own colourful language, the couple's life around the country of NSW and in Sydney Glebe Mission. He was very popular because of his ability to sing and tap dance to entertain others well into his late 80's.

Bill served at many country towns, including Condobolin, Toronto, Hay, Camden, Katoomba, Alice Springs, Coffs Harbour and finally Maclean in 1990.

I was fortunate to know him when he took services at Woolgoolga Methodist Church in the 1950's. To read this exciting story of his life has been an inspiration.

One of his three daughters, Maureen Burrows has published his story and the book launch was held at Schaeffer House from where you can buy the book for \$25.00.



Available from Maureen at
bill.jock.steele@gmail.com or Amazon or on
 Kindle.

BILL'S COLUMN

ELSIE JOAN BANCROFT. 1928-2006.

I am sure that anyone who knew Elsie, would readily agree with me when I describe her as a "delightful lady". Indeed to be in her presence was usually a time of joy and fun.

But first, a little of her history- and I quote from her Eulogy, as told by some of her grandchildren.

Elsie Bancroft was a proud Goori woman born of the Gumbaingerr and Dhungutti people-born at Mimmiga Gaugin (Mary's Waterhole), daughter of Jack and Elizabeth Marshall. Her father was a bullocky and timber worker and the family followed him wherever he worked-which was in many places. Maybe that was part of the inspiration for one of Elsie's later poems-Sense of Place.

*"Sense of place she told me
As I was standing there
And I was taken back
Through the heat and glare
To when I was so small
Barefoot and unaware.*

*Where ever I am in Australia
Sense of place is there
I love this land Australia
Land of my birth.*

*My ancestors had sense of place
When they were here on earth.*

*I roam around Australia
Bushland that I know
With me is sense of place
Everywhere I go.*

*The love of being Aussie
Isn't the colour of your face
It's a feeling deep within
That gives you
Sense of Place."*

Elsie saw a lot of changes in her life. She came to Grafton in the early 1930's with her mother and 4 small siblings. With nowhere to live they met a Goori woman who took them out of town a little and said "There you are. You can live

there in that hollow log". Later Elsie would add to that story telling us that she was born in a hollow log.

Many moves and schools later Elsie went to work for the Whittakers at Broadmeadow Station on the Glen Innes Road during W/War 2. A little later Elsie moved to Lionsville, where she met her husband to be, Toby, who was Manager for Claude Hynes on Coolum Coolum Station. This was where I first met her as Our Agency, Dougherty Bros, had been engaged by Mr. Hynes to sell the property. This meant several visits to the property for me.

Toby tried a few different occupations- Mines at Baryulgil , share farming at Coaldale, back to Lionsville, with their now 8 children. Soon after Toby died and Elsie was left to battle on.

Such ventures as fruit picking in Victoria, then off to Brisbane where she worked in hospitals for many years. Back to Grafton, Elsie involved herself in local affairs - Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

Later she travelled all over Australia, New Zealand, and Papua New Guinea. She began writing to the newspapers about unfair treatment of Aboriginals and became a member of the local Aboriginal Land Council. Being a strong believer in her Catholic faith she attended most Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Conferences held throughout Australia.

In 2003 Elsie was awarded the Centenary Federation Medal for services to the community, Elsie's brother, Rex and sister Carol were both warded OAM's in recognition of their community contributions.

Now she had time to write her feelings and thoughts in the Poetry she loved. Her gratitude she expresses in this verse "

BILL'S COLUMN (CONTINUED)*God's Garden"**"I linger in the forest with all the wild
delight**Through the clinging vines filters the
Shimmering light.**The rainbow of parrots filter here and
there**The odour of the dampening and orchids
fill the air.**The flora and the fauna in a playground
Just grand.**Aren't we the lucky ones to live in God's
Own land.**So don't bring in the fighting and the
panic**Of the earth**But give a hand to others in the land of
Your birth."*

Elsie was a leader for "reconciliation" long before the term was used. She was proud to have attended important Goori gatherings, such as Survival Day in Sydney, Bicentennial Protest in Sydney. She walked for Reconciliation across Sydney Harbour Bridge and she walked in the Myall Creek Massacre Memorial as well as attending the "Sea of Hands" in Canberra and Grafton Memorial. She always promoted co-existence. These are only a few of the many things Elsie contributed to, and was involved with.

Elsie's role as a story teller led her to writing poetry. She had 3 books of her poems published- I am fortunate to have these. They tell many great stories.

Later life was not kind to Elsie with many trips to Hospital and finally to an Aged Care Facility.

She was still "with it" to express that state of mind that often comes with old age with-

*"Seek and Not Find"**If I could find my phone book**After hours of look and took**I go in search of another thing.**If to my brain I could only bring**The sight of my glasses so I can see.**So happy I would be to find the**dictionary,**To remember who rang me just a while
ago.**Pacing up and down, round and round
I'm in overflow.**Over tired, over worked, over run.**They say life is full of froth and bubble,**It's my luck to just find trouble.**I think my house is full of hide and seek,**Mr. Nobody has just spent a week.**Miss ? I don't know will not speak**Tell me, tell me, what to do**Or are you in the same boat too."*

Whilst Elsie passed away 9th May, 2006 some members of her Family have carried on her traditions. Daughter Robyne is a well known figure around the Clarence. With many academic achievements she is much in demand as a public speaker and community leader.

In closing I wonder if Elsie had her own "passing" in mind when she wrote "Last Goodbye"-

*"Gathered at the Church once more**To say our last good bye,**Another one had gone from earth**To the dream time in the sky.**Our eyes were sad with sorrow**As we stood among the pain,**And his spirit was lowered-**In the pouring rain.**The head of a clan had gone,**To the dream time in the sky.**Umbrellas in our hands**We cried our last goodbyes."*

Bill Dougherty.

21.2.2024.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Christmas Break

Somehow we missed some of our break in order to catch up with the large amount of donations that have found their way to Schaeffer House.

An many items are absolute gems including a engraved foundation trowel for the first Council building and a piece of quartz from one of Saddam Hussein's palaces.

Photographs donated also never cease to amaze with photographs received of persons of interest and many long gone buildings.

All in all it is wonderful to see that donations remain high and it is great credit to the public who unselfishly bring these artefacts in to be kept by us and are there for the public to view well into the future.

Schaeffer House

As you may be aware we have had a number of setbacks during the year

affecting the house. Its age is certainly showing and as with most older buildings the need for constant attention is paramount. It is very important to have the wear and tear items fixed as soon as possible. Better to deal with small problems than wait until the problem becomes larger.

This leads me to the council's involvement (CVC) and we have a wonderful connection with the maintenance team at CVC.

Firstly we are indebted to the Council for the brand new tin roof over the northern end of the house, installation was completed with minimal disruption and great care by all parties involved. It is a great relief to have the new roof over the priceless collections store at Schaeffer House.

Kind Regards,
Steve Tranter

DIARY DATES 2024 & ON THIS YEAR

Committee Meetings

23 April 2024.
22 May 2024.
26 June 2024.

Major Displays

Heritage Week (18 April)

In House Displays

Midwife Display (current)
ANZAC DAY 24 April
Race Week July
Jacaranda Oct/Nov

Open Days/Book Launches

CRHS Anniversary 18 November 2024

Christmas Party

Christmas Lunch TBA.

On this year

Birth of George Avery 1884
Anglican Church built 1854
Foundation Stone laid for Grafton Christ Cathedral 1874
Salvation Army commenced in Grafton 1884
Girl Guides, South Grafton 1924
South Grafton High School 1964

100 YEARS AGO

Compiled by our Research Officer, Hazel Lawson

Extracts from the Daily Examiner of February 1924

GRAFTON COUNCIL MEETING CLOCK TOWER. The clerk reported the necessity for bringing up to date the names of the various Mayors on the tablet on the Clock Tower. He submitted a list of names of various Mayors since 1900. R D Bawden to be inscriber 1910-1911, Samuel See 1912-3-4, Chas Strauss 1915-16, W J E Johnson 1916-17, R H Truman (Administrator) 1917-18, D McFarlane 1920, T H Matheson 1920, G Morrisen 1921-2, H M Baldock; 1922-3-4, Alderman C Page moved that the names be inserted on the Tower.

The Principal of the High School, wrote asking for permission to use Fisher Park Tuesday and Friday afternoon and asking that a special charge be made. It was decided to grant the High School the use of the park on Tuesday and Friday at an annual rental of one pound one shilling per year for each day.

SOUTH GRAFTON COUNCIL MEETING. CYCLE TRACK. Mr. K G Maughan wrote on behalf of the South Grafton Cycle Club asking if the Council would put down a track 18ft wide around Mc Kittrick Park, for the purpose of cycle sports. The Club asked that the council state in what way they were prepared to give assistance in the event of their request being refused.

GLEN INNES – GRAFTON. Mr. H C Vincent, the secretary of the Glen Innes Railway League has been requested to prepare an approximate estimate of the volume of inter-district trade between Glen Innes and the Clarence which might reasonably be expected in the event of an electrified railway being constructed between the two centres by the proposed county council.

MIRACULOUS ESCAPE. Dive into 18 feet

of water off Brushgrove – Cowper punt. At 7 O'clock last night a Ford car containing four passengers ran straight through the gates at the river end of the Brushgrove-Cowper punt and fell into 18 feet of water. The passengers had a miraculous escape from death. The car was driven by Rev. H Woodger of Ulmarra. He was accompanied by his wife and daughter and Miss Lancaster, a teacher at Ulmarra Public School.

Mr. J A McAulay – one of the most notable figures on the Lower Clarence for many years, passed away at Kingaroy (QLD) recently. In the early 1860 he and his half-brother, M J Mc Leod, started the widely known butchery at Snizort, now better known as Ashby. There being no cleared roads on the Clarence at that time all meat was delivered by boat and the firm had the largest business on the North Coast killing up to 36 bullocks at times.

Miss Chrissy Stuart, a former resident of Tyndale is spending a holiday among relatives and friends on the Clarence and Richmond River. She returns to Sydney on Friday 22nd inst. by the Yulgilbar and will resume duties on the nursing staff of the Sydney Hospital, Macquarie Street.

Tenders are invited for the erection of a Reinforced Concrete Factory for the Grafton Co-operative Dairy Com. Ltd Grafton. Plans and specifications can be seen at the Company Office, Grafton. Tenders close at Grafton on March 8th 1924 and are to be addressed to the Chairman, Grafton Co-operative Dairy Company Ltd.

PERSONAL. I am 33years old. I am starting on my own and require a helpmate with a view to marriage. Reply by letter, Photograph exchange. W Groves C/o Walker, Ryan Street South Grafton.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE MUSEUM

(Bold denotes new additions).

TITLE	PRICE
Across the Bar	\$20.00
A History of the Clarence River	\$35.00
A place by the River, 150 Years of Tabulum History, Part 1: 1839 to 1919 by <i>Isabel Wilkinson</i> .	\$35.00
A Place by the River, 150 Years of Tabulum History, Part 2, 1920 to 1989 by <i>Isabel Wilkinson</i> .	\$35.00
Bawden Lectures - with Notes [New Edition]	\$35.00
Bawden Lectures - without Notes	\$20.00
Bombers over Grafton	\$20.00
Corn Beef and Damper - <i>Isabel Wilkinson</i> .	\$35.00
Early Days On The Clarence	\$20.00
Early Midwives in Grafton and South Grafton by <i>Robyn Higham</i> .	\$25.00
Forgotten Country - <i>Isabel Wilkinson</i>	\$35.00
Four Legs But No Wheels	\$35.00
From Glen Innes to South Grafton: Early Days Along the Old Road by <i>Sheila McLennan</i>.	\$25.00
From Rivertree to the Sea	\$30.00
Grafton Floods to 2011	\$40.00
Heritage In Line	\$25.00
History of Grafton Hospital	\$40.00
Life and Times of Eatonsville by <i>Sheila McLennan</i>.	\$25.00
Memories of Southgate Village by <i>Nita Child</i>.	\$25.00
Men We Have Met	\$30.00
Old Grafton to Glen Innes Road: The Recollections by <i>Sheila McLennan</i> .	\$45.00
Pre 1900 Clarence River Pioneer Register published by CRHS Inc.	\$45.00
The Journal of Abner Gray A4	\$30.00
The Journal of Abner Gray A5	\$20.00
That's What They Taught Me (When I went to school) Part 1	\$35.00
That's What They Taught Me (When I went to school) Part 2	\$20.00
The Journal of George Abner Gray	\$20.00
The City of Grafton	\$20.00

Produced by the Clarence River Historical Society

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