

# Coastal Current

Quarterly Newsletter Of The

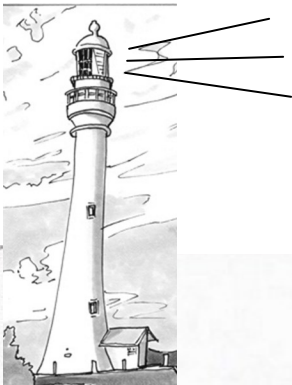
## Anglesea & District Historical Society

Issue No. 95

Winter 2012

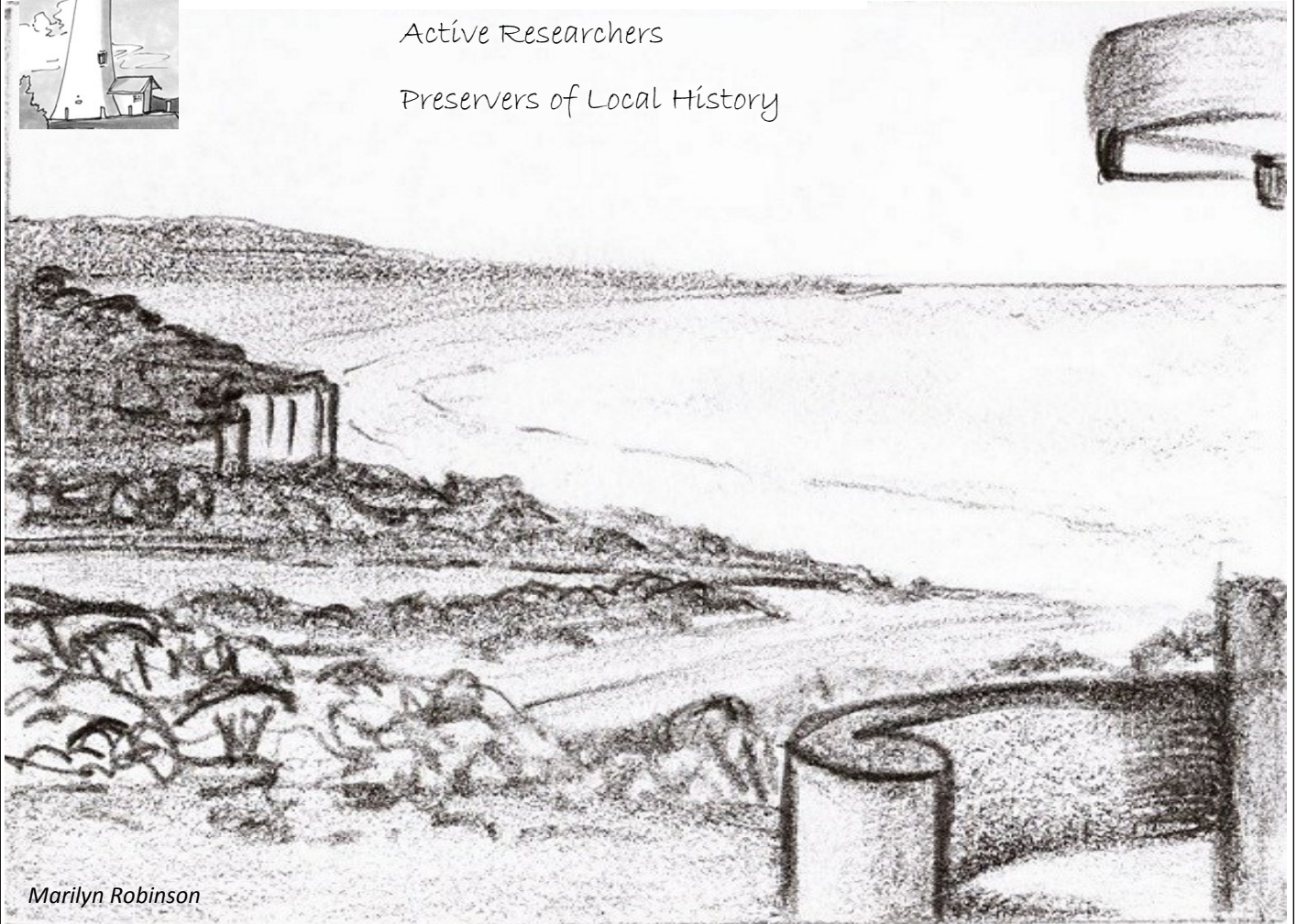
*The Anglesea & District Historical*

*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



Marilyn Robinson

**PLEASE NOTE** - Coastal Current will be sent only to financial members.  
Membership fees apply from 1 September to 31 August

### Meetings & Activities

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

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

Other activities are organised for the alternate months.

### Historical Society Committee

#### President :

Harry Davies  
Phone (03) 5263 1726  
Email - hedcat234@yahoo.com.au

#### Secretary

Bruce Bodman  
Phone (03) 5263 1249  
Email - bodman@netspace.com.au

#### Vice President:

Lyle McConachy  
Phone (03) 5267 2585  
Email - lylemcc2009@hotmail.com

#### Researcher

Lindsay Braden  
(03) 5263 3311

#### Committee Members:

Beryl Parsons  
Phone (03) 5263 1164  
Email - elms31@bigpond.com

Thelma Western  
Phone (03) 5263 2865  
Email - ethelwestern@gmail.com

Jan Morris  
Phone (03) 5263 3085  
Email - davejanmorris@bigpond.com

Norma Morrison  
Phone (03) 5261 6239  
Email-leslie.morrison@bigpond.com

### Coming up:

**JUNE — Sunday 4th** 2.00pm - Speaker Russell Holloway, *Our Water Supply*

**JULY Thursday 26th** 10.00am We are joining with the Family History Group to hear Stuart Evans, member of the Melbourne Highland Pipe Band speak on **"History of Scottish Bagpipes"**

**AUGUST Sunday 5th** 2.00pm - Archeologist Dr Ian Edwards will be speaking on *25 Years of Excavating in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan*

**SEPTEMBER Thursday 7th** 10.00 am —Tour of significant sights In Anglesea followed by lunch.

### Museum

Our Museum at 5a McMillan Street Anglesea, is open by appointment - Phone 5263 1249

### Photographs

Anglesea & District Historical Society has an extensive collection of photographs. These may be ordered through Jan Morris phone (03) 5263 3085  
Email - davejanmorris@bigpond.com

Prices	On high quality photo paper	On 100 gsm fine finish paper
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A4 8.26X11.69	\$15	\$8
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A5 5.82X8.26	\$8	\$4
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A6 4.13X5.82	\$4	\$2
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A3 maybe available by special arrangement 11.69X16.53		
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A discount of 10% applies to financial members.

It must be noted that photo quality varies from excellent to poor. Our final product is dependent on the quality of the original photo.

Photos can be viewed at the museum when open, or by appointment.  
- phone Bruce Bodman on (03)5263 1249

**Anglesea & District Historical Society Inc.**

**Box 98 Anglesea 3230 Victoria Australia.**

## Secretary Snippets

B.B.

Thank you to the people who returned their surveys. It has given us some ideas for what you would like in the future. We have moved to a trial of having a Sunday meeting on the even months, February, April, June, August, October and December, with other activities on the alternate months. We did not have a Sunday meeting in May but instead went on a trip to discover the remains of the old Wensleydale train.

A highlight of the trip was to visit Peter and Donna Loney at Gherang. They own the old Geelong Council gravel pit and Peter has collected lots of narrow gauge railway engines and equipment. Peter is the son of Jack Loney, the author of many books about shipwrecks in this area and also the Otways.

We plan to index our Newsletters. There is a lot of interesting research in these newsletters, much of it done by Lindsay Braden. We need to have this information at our finger tips. Thus we have organized a working bee for Thursday 5th July at 10.00 am. We plan to work in teams of two with one typing into a template and the other being the reader. So you do not have to be computer literate to volunteer. Please let Jan Morris know (5263 3085) if you are able to come—we need your help!

We have plans to reorganize our museum displays. I will keep you informed about when we need assistance. We plan to purchase new shelving and cabinets. I am currently investigating suitable units.

Plans are being made for field trips for our group. Please let us know your ideas as we would like to visit new places or places we have not been to for some time.

Several years ago we had electricity put on at the Bark Hut Park in Aireys Inlet. The council regulations have changed since then. If we are running an event we now have to keep electrical leads at least seven feet above ground. Consequently we have decided to have electricity brought underground from the power box to the actual Bark Hut. This will cost us \$1,200. It can also be used by other groups that use this park.

I note that Angahook Homestead has been sold. Angahook was the home of our esteemed member the late Claire Roberts. The original homestead was built with local stone in 1860 by Thomas Pearse. It was bought in 1890 by William McMullen, Claire's great grandfather and has been in the family ever since. The original home was destroyed in the 1983 fires and Claire had it rebuilt using the original stone. Following Claire's death it was advertised for sale. I have heard that it has been bought by a family member so will remain in the family—good news.

Best wishes as we continue to make history, research history and record history.

*Bruce Bodman*

### 1949 Bedford Truck

This truck is owned by Mick Allerdice, of Allyweld, Winchelsea, who has restored it.

The chassis was imported from England and the cabin and tray were made and fitted in North Geelong.

It was owned for many years by a farmer who used it in the paddock and for carting stores. These Bedford trucks were popular both in Australia and New Zealand.



## MILK CANS

Anglesea Museum has two milk cans, one of each of the most popular types used by dairy farmers. Milk cans were used by dairy farmers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century before they were replaced by large stainless steel vats.

Farmers used milk cans to transport their milk to local butter and cheese factories. Depending on the distance from the farm to the factory, they may have brought their cans directly to the factory by cart, dray or later by utility or truck. Some farmers left their cans of milk at a nearby spot, usually a wooden milk stand by the side of the road. They would be picked up by a truck from the factory.



This method made the cream/milk product vulnerable to going sour during hot summer days. The afternoon milk was most frequently kept for pickup on the following morning.

The beehive type of milk can was used by milk vendors to store milk destined for sale on their run. The beehive shape allowed milk to be easily poured out, in an even flow, to be measured with a measuring cup which always accompanied the can. Beehive cans were also used by farmers for transporting their milk to the factory. These cans were designed to withstand the heat that would be faced during transport, with the material of the body and the lid protecting against spoilage. Milk deliveries were common in most parts of the state in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In subsequent decades, milk was delivered in bottles. As access to store bought milk increased, the service of home delivered milk was phased out. Lyle McConachy has donated a old

Malley's milk can to our museum.



*ADHS members with Malley's milk cans*

to

## COOGOORAH BRIDGES

The Surf Coast Shire has given us permission to replace the names on the bridges at Coogoorah Park. The bridges were originally named in 1996 following the landscaping of the area and the formation of islands. Each bridge was named after one of the early school families in Anglesea. Coogoorah Park was developed after the area had to be excavated to put out the peat fires following the Ash Wednesday fires. Unfortunately the pottery name plates were destroyed by vandals, consequently the bridges have not had names on them for several years.

The Men's Shed are making new name plates of hardwood with each name routed into the wood. We hope these name plates will last as they will not break easily, are of no value for scrap, and should stand up to the weather conditions. They will be fixed in place with one way screws onto the frames made for the original plates. The Historical Society has agreed to maintain them, including removal of any graffiti. We'll let you know when they are ready to be installed, as we'll have



## OBEY YOUR COMMANDING OFFICER – STOP THAT SHIP!

Colonel John Purdue has a unique claim to fame. He is credited with firing the first salvo marking Australia's entry into World War 1. His historic shot was fired from the fort at Port Nepean on 5 August 1914. Colonel Purdue enjoyed a distinguished military career, as well as being a well-known Anglesea resident. The months leading up to WW1 were bleak days as the world waited for the possibility of a long conflict in Europe. Then, ties between Britain and its Empire (later known as the British Commonwealth of Nations) were strong and powerful. If Britain declared war, her colonies were at war with her. Any nation that was an enemy of Britain was automatically an Australian enemy too. Because Germany was seen as the enemy, any of its ships were declared articles of war.

So when Britain declared war in London at 11.30 pm on 4 August, it was 9.30 am on 5 August in Australia. Communications between nations were not as sophisticated or as rapid as they are today. So, according to a report in the *Geelong Advertiser* (26 March 1980) word did not actually reach the Australian Government until 12.30 pm that day.

The German ship that was destined to receive the famous salvo was the *Pfalz*. It had left the Port of Melbourne at 7.30 am on 5 August, heading for the entrance to Port Phillip Bay, where it would have to negotiate the treacherous waters known as *The Heads*. The captain and crew of the *Pfalz* could not be expected to know that a nasty surprise awaited them.

Anyone serving in the armed forces knows that you obey the orders of a commanding officer without question. Disobedience would probably lead to a court martial. So Colonel Purdue had no choice but to obey his commanding officer, and fire the shot over the bows of the *Pfalz*.

Fast track half a century and we learn more about this historic event. On Monday 2 December 1968 the *Melbourne Age* features a story about two guns which fired the first Allied shots of the two world wars being officially mounted at the gates of the Officer Cadet School at Portsea the previous day. A picture accompanying the article shows the well retired Col. Purdue shaking hands across the gun with his commanding officer, Lt-Col. Moreton Williams. Of course Col. Purdue was not a colonel when he fired the shot. He was only 24 at the time with the rank 'Bombardier'.

In the *Age* article, Lt-Col Williams is recorded as saying, "The *Pfalz* was steaming down past my post with flames coming from her funnel. I asked her for the correct signal, but she couldn't give it. I was the only one with the right signal. I gave her the signal to stop instantly. When she disobeyed, I gave the order for a single shot to be fired across her stern."

The gun that fired the shot was a massive six-inch 21 feet long monster. Lt-Col. Williams is recorded as saying he could not put a shot straight through the German vessel for fear Swan Island would have been blown to pieces.

Colonel Purdue went on to serve with distinction in his chosen career. He was born at Camperdown in May 1890. He spent most of his childhood at Barwon Downs, Werribee and Neerim, where he was dux of the school in 1902. His parents were farmers.

Col. Purdue joined the army in 1912. Following the incident with the *Pfalz* he served overseas for four years. He married in England and returned to Australia late in 1919, stationed at Queenscliff. Returning to London, he did a course in munitions inspection as well as studying chemistry and metallurgy at Melbourne University. He returned to active service in WW 2. As the Inspector of Munitions he had a staff of 8000.

Col. Purdue built his home in Anglesea in 1950, and his services to the military were recognised when he was awarded an OBE in 1952. The Colonel was a founding member of the Anglesea Golf Club, an active member of the RSL, and the Anglesea Lions Club.

Col. John Purdue died at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital on 24 March 1980, aged 89.

He deserves a place in the history of Anglesea as a distinguished member of the armed forces and the community.

(Acknowledgment – The *Geelong Advertiser*, 26 March, 1980; 6 October 1990, The *Age*, 2 December 1968; thanks to Ken Mollison, also undated notes from Col. Purdue where he recalls the first shot being fired.

It is interesting that the first shot in WW2 also occurred in Australia)



Portrait of Colonel John Purdue that hangs in the Anglesea Museum

## WENSLEYDALE RAIL TRAIL

We were 68 years too late to catch the Wensleydale train, but we had a great time anyway. We set off from Aireys Inlet, through the bush, along Bambra Road, watching carefully lest we hit a kangaroo. Suddenly two bushrangers appeared in front of us wielding rifles. They made us unload, but then they discovered we carried nothing worth stealing, so they decided to join us. In fact the bushrangers (Stan and Melva Stott) had our morning tea ready. After morning tea break at Hammonds Road Camping Ground, we proceeded in convoy to Wensleydale. Starting at the end of the old line, we worked our way up line to Moriac.

It was easy to find the old train turntable, ash pit, and buffer line. The centre pin of the 50-foot round turntable remains in the pit. An old photo we had shows the engine driver and guard pushing the steam engine around. A few metres down the road the mound on which the Wensleydale station once stood now has a farm dairy on it. Just north of the station an ariel tramway once carried hoppers full of coal across the valley. Large pylons support a rope on which the hoppers brought the coal to a tipping mechanism on a short loop line.



*Peter Loney speaks about the narrow gauge railway*

Making our way to the old Wormbete Station we saw the remains of some of the numerous cuttings and embankments, as well as some of the 16 bridges and 23 culverts built to accommodate the line when it was built in 1888. Wormbete Station had been mainly used for sending out timber and chaff.



*John Parsons & Kathryn Feather admire the horses*

Next we visited the gravel pits at Gherang. Gravel became the lifeblood of the line for several years when the Victorian Railways first considered closing it. The highlight of the first gravel pit stop, now on a private farm, was finding the hole in the pit wall where the gunpowder had been stored. A diversionary walk up the farm lane and we discovered many Clydesdale horses, lamas and donkeys, including the biggest donkey in Australia.

Our next stop was another surprise. At the old Geelong Council Gravel pit we discovered lots of narrow gauge railway equipment, including a steam and a diesel loco, a crane, passenger carriage and numerous equipment. Although this had nothing to do with the Wensleydale line, our train buffs browsed enthusiastically. Everyone enjoyed lunch in the shelter of the area. Peter and Donna Loney, current owners of the land, joined us and

told us about the Wensleydale gravel tramway that once went through their property from the gravel pit to the main line. Horses pulled the gravel hoppers to a siding just near the Gherang Station.

After lunch and a walk into the gravel pit we saw the remains of the Gherang station. We could see remnants of the old line as we made our way to Cape Otway Road then into Layard. Unfortunately the old Layard Station has been covered with landfill. This was the only station that was really used by passengers, Layard was once surveyed as a town but only a few houses were ever built there.



*Bushrangers Melva & Stan Stott*

Following Cape Otway Road to Moriac, we saw the remains of bridges, cuttings and elevated ridges. Just before Moriac the line joined the Warrnambool line. Our last visit was the remains of the Moriac Station from where the Wensleydale line was administered until it closed permanently in 1948. The line was dismantled in 1951.

The 28 of us who participated in the nostalgic trip really enjoyed our historic train trail. *Jan Morris*