

Coastal Current

Quarterly Newsletter Of The

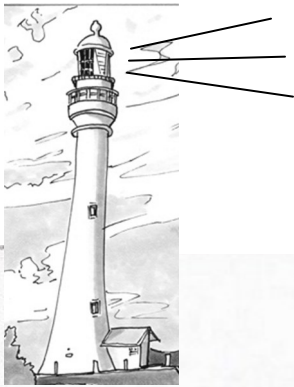
Anglesea & District Historical Society

Issue No. 96

Spring 2012

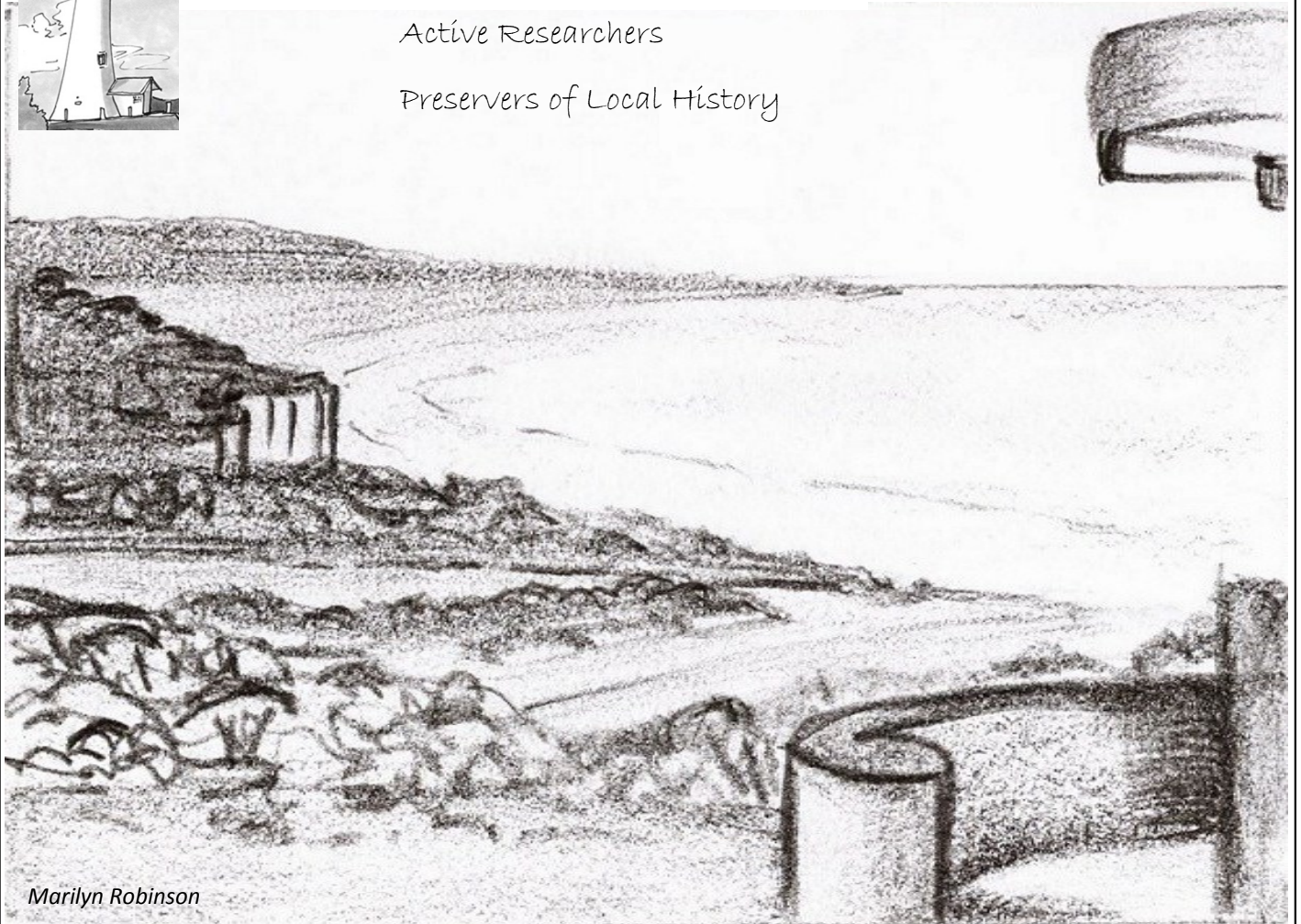
The Anglesea & District Historical

*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.

Visitors are welcome to attend.

Historical Society Committee

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Coming up:

SEPTEMBER Thursday 13th 10.00 am –Bus tour of significant sights In Anglesea followed by lunch. Tour guide Lindsay Braden. Cost \$5, bookings essential
Jan Morris 5263 3085

OCTOBER Sunday 7th at 2.00pm AGM

NOVEMBER - Thursday 8th Car pool visit to Ballarat Rail line - 150 years celebration.

Bookings Melva Stott 5663 2801

DECEMBER - Sunday 2nd 2.00pm -
Christmas ADHS Style

JANUARY—No meeting

Museum

Our Museum at 5a McMillan Street Anglesea,

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

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.

As we continue to be custodians of the history of Anglesea and surrounding district, we were asked to support the halting of a demolition order on the **Pole House**, while Heritage Victoria considered heritage listing for the property. It was not our job to make a decision but to ensure it was given due consideration before it was too late. The decision made by Heritage Australia was that it not be listed but that it may well be of local heritage importance.

We have two outings coming up. The **Historical Sites** Braden is the guide. We all appreciate his extensive knowledge of Anglesea's history. We look forward to sharing lunch after our bus trip. There are just a few places left on the bus. Phone Jan Morris on 5263 3085 if you would like to go. The November outing is to the Ballarat Railway line that is celebrating 150 years. Those interested in this trip should register their names with Melva Stott on 5263 2801.

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CURRENT PROJECTS

Loveridge Lookout: Concept plans for car parking etc. at the DSE for Coastal Management. The shire will now be able to schedule the work.

Loveridge Lookout have been approved by to schedule the work.

Bridge Plaques: The Surf Coast Shire requires a nominee at Coogoorah Park. This person would be responsible for monitoring the plaques to ensure any vandalism or graffiti is attended to. We need some one to volunteer to do this job please.

from ADHS to oversee the bridge plaques monitoring the plaques to ensure any vandalism or graffiti is attended to. We need some one to volunteer to do this job please.

Bark Hut: Power has been connected to the Bark Hut. A key order to use the power point in the hut. A key is available from Marty Maher at Great Ocean Properties.

to the power box on the pole is essential in from Marty Maher at Great Ocean

Airconditioning: Airconditioning is in the hands of the shire now be carried out by approved Surfcoasr Shire contractors.

as any work done at the Museum must

Memorial Tree: We are still waiting for final approval from the Surf Coast Shire before we plant a memorial tree to Private Alfred John Evans. The Shire has to remove a dangerous tree before we can replace it with the memorial tree.

Indexing: Newsletter indexing has been commenced. Anyone who is able to assist with this task is asked to contact Jan Morris on 5263 3085.

AGM: Our AGM is to be held on 7 October when all positions will be open. Nomination forms are available from the secretary or at the Museum.

PLEASE NOTE

The **Annual General Meeting** of the Anglesea & District Historical Society Inc. will be held on Sunday 7th October at 2.00pm at the Museum. Nomination forms for Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee Members are available at the Museum or from the Secretary Bruce Bodman phone 5263 1249.

Annual fees are now due - \$15 per person Historical Society, plus \$15 per family Family History Group.

REMINDER: We hold a meeting at the Museum on the even months, and organise an activity for

THE POLE HOUSE

The Pole House at 60 Banool Road, Fairhaven is not historic but it is an icon of the Surf Coast. Plans to demolish the current house were put on hold while Heritage Victoria Assessed the building. The house is believed to be the only house in Australia built on a single pole. The most likely outcome is that the house will be rebuilt on the same pole.

The house known as the Pole House must be the most photographed house in Victoria. Everyone seems to know it and travellers along the Great Ocean Road always watch for it. The house was designed and built by Frank Dixon, who is a graduate of Melbourne University in both engineering and architecture.

Frank was injured in the surf in 1963 and had time to dream and plan. The Pole House was the result of this. It then took him 15 years of researching, designing, planning and preparing before he was able to build the house.

The house sways in the wind like a large tree, so the foundations had to be built to withstand winds up to 100 kilometres an hour. It was 1969 when Frank eventually completed his design for the Pole House, having purchased the steepest block of land at Fairhaven. As well as the Pole House, his design included a bunk-house and garage dug into the hill side. The dimensions of the actual Pole House were 15 metres above ground and 40 metres, the height of a 10 storey building, above sea level.

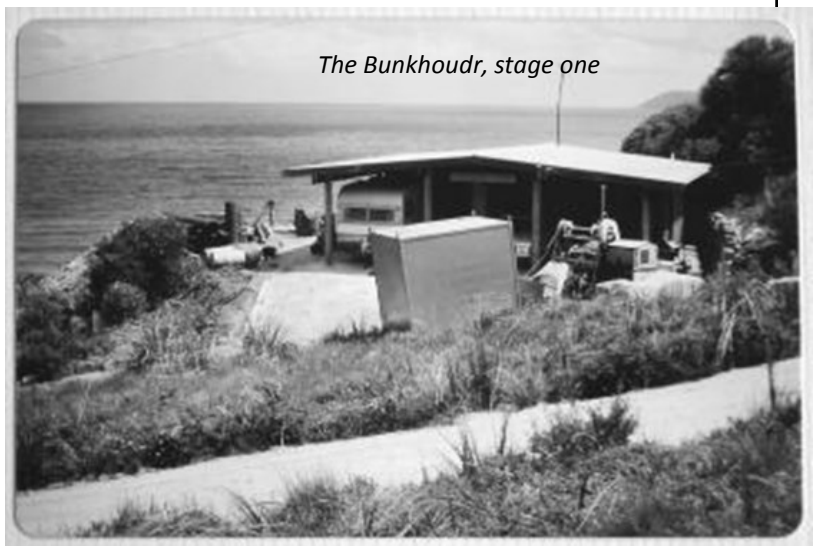
In 1970 Frank went to the then Barrabool Shire for a building permit. After the initial shock of such unusual plans they issued the permit, more on Frank's reputation as an engineer than the specifications they received. The shire engineer acknowledged that Frank knew more about the engineering side of the building than he did, so had no doubts about the project.

First Frank built the bunk-house and garage, bringing the materials down in his trailer each weekend. The bunk-room had two sets of three bunks, to accommodate his six children. The middle bunk on each wall could be dropped down forming the back of a settee for daytime use. The small laundry doubled as a kitchen and they brought their caravan from the Aireys Inlet caravan park and parked it in the carport. This provided them with holiday accommodation while Frank built the Pole House. This part of the house was a square of the same dimensions as the actual house and would be eventually joined to the house by a 25 metre bridge. The exterior was clad in treated pine, and the interior walls and ceiling were mountain ash lining boards. The roof was a low gabled steel, pre painted steel-deck roof.

The concrete pole was done in January and February of 1976. The cross shaped base of the pole sits on nine reinforced concrete piles driven eight metres into the ground. The concrete



A 1978 photo by the Herald Newspaper, of the Pole House



was poured in five sections, using plywood as the formwork into which the concrete was poured. A lot of scaffolding was required to do the job. The five sections can be easily identified on the pole. The last one being the actual platform.

The house itself was mainly built by Frank and his sons, working at weekends. They started with the brick core and slowly over three years completed the job, only employing contractors when essential. The brick section formed an internal structural core. Their work was often slowed by high winds. Even Frank was amazed when one day when laying bricks, the wind blew the mortar from his trowel.

The balustrade was essential for safety. Frank attached it with marine grade stainless steel brackets, and attached thick timber rails both top and bottom. Glaziers installed the ¼ inch thick plate glass.



The final concrete pour, showing the extensive scaffolding



Larger than usual 6X2 inch studs were used on the external walls, and steel tie rods were put at each corner panel, as well as thick cross-bracing, to deal with the strong winds. These rods, as well as two mullions in the main lounge are tied directly to the concrete at the base and the roof above.

The roof beams had exposed metal brackets. They were topped with pine boards, built like a deck. The walls were clad in treated pine, as was the bunkhouse, and the windows were of western red cedar. Monier concrete roof tiles were used for the roof as Frank knew they would withstand the salt air and wind. Each tile is nailed down to

withstand the weather conditions.

With his wife Aileen's input, Frank designed or made everything inside the house. He designed the unusual triangular firebox, put carpet up the walls and cork paneling behind the shelves. Brown floor tiles, timber bench tops, orange globe bottle light fittings were typical 1970's décor.

The house was now causing the Great Ocean Road traffic to slow as people stopped to look at the Pole House and photograph it. Frank and Aileen enjoyed a house with sweeping uninterrupted views. The lounge windows took in Fairhaven beach below, the rugged coast over to Lorne and the endless sea, sweeping around to the bedroom windows looking towards the Aireys Inlet lighthouse.

On 16 February 1983 the Ash Wednesday fires swept from Lorne to Anglesea, destroying most houses in its path through Mogg's Creek, Fairhaven and Aireys Inlet. The Pole House stood with only minor damage. The bunkhouse however was totally destroyed. Frank then used the house as a base this time while he rebuilt the bunk house. This was the reverse of the original building process.

In 2006 Frank and Aileen handed the Pole House to new owners, but they still come to the Surf Coast regularly. In July 2012 Heritage Victoria decided not to list the Pole House but noted that it could be of special local interest.

Reference: The Famous Pole House, A Short History by Rohan Storey Heritage Consultant 2008

Photos: Courtesy Frank Dixon

MEMORIES OF ROBERT COWAN, FAIRHAVEN

From reminiscences of the late Lindsay Stewart.

Robert Cowan came out from Scotland before WW1 and after serving in the war he married Irene Mellor and built a house in Brighton. When the depression came he went down to Aireys Inlet and spent 1930 building the house which he called Fairhaven, with the help of a Mr Davis. At first they lived in a tent while they built a shed, then they lived in the shed while they built the house of sand bricks made on the spot. The house had a large living room with a big stone fireplace, one bedroom and a sleep-out, kitchen and bathroom. The Cowans intended to have a camping ground, but their first season must have been a complete loss because I don't remember anybody coming to camp. They all drove on to Lorne. Anybody who did come in wanted to have accommodation in the house. So Robert set to work to build on several small rooms. A large sand brick tank which did not hold water was converted to a bedroom. More and more people came to stay and as time went on Robert built several small cottages. Their clientele seemed mostly to consist of school and university teachers and they never needed to advertise. Robert played the flute and sang beautifully. His wife had a delightful personality. At the time there were not many residents at Aireys Inlet. I remember Mr and Mrs Willie Berthon, and the Roadknights. The Andersons were at hotel. Old Mr Noble lived in the house down by the pond. He had a library of ancient books which was open to all. I was a regular visitor.



This article was provide by Lachlan Richardson of Aireys Inlet.



Farmer Russell Holloway, Wensleydale

HOLLOWAY

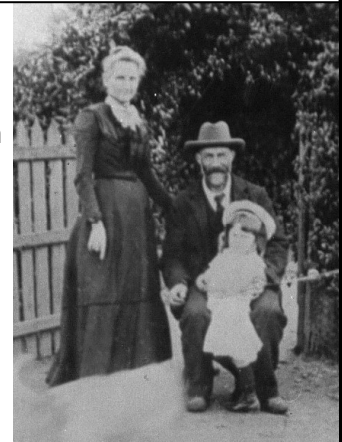
At recent meetings we have benefited from the local knowledge of Russell Holloway. Russell accompanied us on the Wensleydale Rail Trail. He also spoke at our June meeting about local underground water. Russell is one of the few farmers in the area descended from an original early selector.

George Holloway was born in Berkshire in 1795. He received two years jail for stealing sheep. In 1822 he was convicted of stealing a pig, and sentenced to seven years transportation to Van Diemens Land. He received another seven years for stealing wheat, a bullock chain and iron bars. He escaped, was caught and received six months in irons and 25 lashes. He ended up at the notorious Port Arthur prison for a three-year stint, during which he escaped. By 1842 he began to turn his life around. In the early 1850s, he purchased 140 acres at Wensleydale, north of Aireys Inlet. In 1857, at the age of 62, he married widowed Ann Dunn (nee Figil), aged 35. They had four children, John 1858-1939, William 1860-1919, Firth 1864-1936 and Henry 1865-1865. George died in 1873 leaving Ann with three children aged 14, 12 and eight. Ann lived for another 37 years, dying in 1910.

John married Martha Hunter in 1880, and took over the family farm. John worked as a rabbit exterminator. His son Ernest, youngest of eight children, remembered staying in a tent by Clarke's farm at Eastern View while his father worked gassing rabbit burrows on the big hill looking west from the arch. They had eight children. Martha died in 1916, predeceasing John by 23 years. The Holloway, Parish and Hunter families grazed sheep in the triangle of Aireys Inlet, Anglesea and Wensleydale. They frequently burnt the area to promote new growth for grazing. This is probably the reason that the 1939 fires did not burn to Anglesea and Aireys Inlet.

Many of the Holloway family regularly came to Aireys Inlet in the summer to fish and swim. Some stayed at Mountain House, forming a close friendship with Sarah and Ivan Roadknight. Ernest's brother Reg owned a holiday house in River Road, now named 'Hove.' Russell Holloway remembers visiting there and meeting Stan and May Moffatt who lived nearby. Aireys Inlet was where Russell first saw black faced sheep. They were Suffolks that Mr Noble had grazing near the swamp.

The Wensleydale farm is still in the Holloway family, now being worked by George's great, grandson Russell Holloway, a well known local identity. We are indebted to Russell for sharing his knowledge and expertise with us.



John and Martha Holloway with son Edgar 1897