



TRIBUTE

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FREE PUBLICATION

St Marys & District Historical Society Inc - Quarterly Newsletter

PO Box 640, ST MARYS NSW 1790 – Street Address - St Marys Corner, Mamre Rd, St Marys – Parking via 29 Swanson Street.

Vale Charles Connelly

The Society's former Research Officer, Charles Connelly, passed away in February this year. He was a tireless worker for the Society always researching information on St Marys and the district. He has published books on St Mary's Township, The History of the St Marys RSL, The History of the Catholic Church in St Marys and the Boer War. Penrith Library also holds in its local studies library unpublished research information from Charles.

Photo courtesy of Penrith Council website



WELL DESERVED AWARD

Our Vice-President, Margaret Dwyer, received a Penrith Council Community Award for contributions to Penrith at the Australia Day celebrations at Penrith in January. Margaret has also been a recipient of the Council's Wall of Achievement Award and is the widow of Kevin Dwyer who was Mayor of Penrith and a tireless supporter of all things St Marys. Margaret continues to work as a volunteer with the elderly in the district as well as the Catholic Church.

Photo courtesy of Penrith Council website

CAP Funding helps with binding our publications



Our President, Lyn Forde, accepts the CAP Funding cheque from the Mayor of Penrith, Kevin Cramery on behalf of the Society. Funding from Penrith Council's Community Assistance Programme will greatly help the society to buy a thermal binder and covers for future publications, plus a heavy duty stapler and staples to help with the Society's correspondence and small booklet publication. The Society currently has available for sale several booklets at \$5 each that were re-printed with the permission of Penrith Library who hold the copyright on the Eugenie Stapleton "Spotlight" publications from the 1980's. Eugenie was the Research Officer of the first St Marys Historical Society. Not all of Eugenie's books have been reprinted by the Society. Enquiries can be made via email on our website or our mobile number on Page 4 of this newsletter.

Photo courtesy of Penrith City Council.

Burials in the graveyard of St Mary Magdalene, St Marys - About thirty-odd years ago, I was looking for my relatives and I started researching the people buried in this historic old cemetery. Years later, I was gaining interest in the other families also buried there and I started to ponder on why some surnames only popped up once? I was curious to know what happened to their family when they buried only one family member in the cemetery. Did the family live in the area or did they move on? It made me sad to think that these dead family members were the only one in their family group to be buried in our churchyard, and what was their connection to St Marys? Luckily I had no such problems with my own research, as I have six generations (*and plenty of branches*) buried in the old cemetery.

The case in point I am going to discuss in this article is Miss Louisa Adam Panton. She died on the 4th December, 1847 at the age of 28 years. Thirty years ago, I recorded her death records from the Church register for my book on the graveyard and moved on, but her interesting name made me want to know more about her. So I started to research just why this young woman was the only member of her immediate family to be buried here. So far not much has been gleaned about her small stay on this earth, but her family name of Panton was a very different story. Louisa was a daughter in a family of nine siblings. Her parents were George and Maria Panton (Nee Kerr), being the fifth child born, and the first to be born in Australia on the 21st January, 1819 at "Burwood Villa" in Burwood. The other four children were born in North Leith, Midlothian, Scotland. George Panton was born there and worked as a wine & spirits merchant with a trade to France. He married Maria in March 1810 in North Leith, Midlothian, Scotland. Maria was born on the 11th October, 1789 in Culross, Perthshire, Scotland. In 1817 he suffered a personal loss due to the Napoleonic War and the family decided to immigrate to Australia. George brought with him documentation from various influential backers, including the Right Honourable William Adam, Sir David Dundas (*Lord Chief Baron of Scotland*), Sir Alex Cochrane and Sir William Forbes. These men appealed, on George's behalf, in their letters to Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies.

In the Sydney Gazette of 1819, George Panton, Esq., was given the position of Postmaster of the Territory of New South Wales, replacing Isaac Nichols who had passed away. He also received a grant of land at Bringelly this same year. George assumed office at a time when the population of the Colony was starting to increase rapidly and while his duties would prove heavier, it did not appear that any further Governmental measures to control the mails were taken until 1825 when an Act entitled "An Act to regulate the Postage of Letters in New South Wales" was passed. This act leaned heavily on an earlier Imperial Act and its purpose was to give the Governor power to establish post offices in Sydney and other parts of the Colony, to fix rates of postage, and to appoint Postmasters and determine their salaries and allowances. The first Postmasters outside of George were appointed for Bathurst, Campbelltown, Liverpool, Newcastle, Parramatta, Penrith and Windsor by an Order of 8th March 1828. At this time George, also became known as the Postmaster General, and had a private servant appointed the first Australian Postman in Sydney. Following the death of George from fever on the 24th April 1829 at Bunkers Hill, the family became destitute. Maria died on 15 October 1869 in West Kempsey, NSW.



Louisa, at the time of her death in 1847, was registered as living at Prospect - another register had her living at Shanes Park near Windsor (*which is confusing*). This would have put her within the vicinity of St Bartholomew's churchyard at Prospect or St Matthews Churchyard at Windsor. So the mystery hasn't yet been solved as to why she was buried at St Mary Magdalene cemetery at St Marys. Her grave is covered by a large sandstone slab, almost unreadable. It would once have had a decorative fence around it, but this has long since gone.

*Information on George Panton thanks to Jacquelyn Munro & the Post Office Archives.
Article & Photo by Lyn Forde*

The Society's participation at the 10th Annual Penrith History Conference



The Theme of this year was "Landlords & Tenants". Several of our members attended the conference and helped out with our stall on Saturday, 12th March, 2011. As usual the conference was very well attended and congratulations to the Library Staff headed by Alison Spencer, Lorraine Stacker and Vanessa Stockton for their continued commitment to excellence. The venue was held at the "Joan" in Penrith with interesting speakers, Dr Carol Liston, Ian Jack, Bill Irvin and Ken Heldon along with Lorraine Stacker who talked about the Woodriff family and an update on her latest book.

Photo shows Secretary Carol Volkiene and member Rosemary Cruppi at the Society's table. Photo taken by Norma Thorburn.

Santa came to the Chambers last December and he was quite interested in the Society's computer that had worked hard for us and was happy to have a rest. Member Tom Thorburn, got into the spirit at our end of year 2010 Christmas party and along with members and guests help "cap" a successful year. Our Patron Sister Mary Louise Petro was also present along with some members of the Encore Historical Sewing Group.

Photo taken by Lyn Forde



Marie Koen, Tracey Watkins & Joan O'Brien were just three of the members of the Historical Society who helped make a special day for local Seniors on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2011 for our contribution to Senior's Week, thanks to the CAP funding from Penrith Council. The theme this year was "Celebrating local women from 1788 to 1922" and was very well received by those seniors who attended. Afterwards a lovely old fashion morning tea was partaken and enjoyed by all.

Photos taken by Lyn Forde

Members help celebrate our Vice-President's Surprise 80th birthday.



Our members were invited by Margaret's family and friends, to help celebrate a very special birthday. Margaret has been a very active member of our Society and has been our Vice-President for a few years now. She was also a members of the first Historical Society in St Marys many years ago. Many wonderful speeches were made by Family and friends who kept the secret from Margaret who was really surprised and kept in the dark.

Photo courtesy of Lyn Forde

CONDITIONS ON CONVICT TRANSPORT SHIPS – by Rev. Richard Johnson (1753-1827)

Ships arrived in Port Jackson in June 1790

The “Neptune” - 520 convicts - 163 died on board & 269 landed sick

The “Scarborough” - 252 convicts - 68 died on board & 96 landed sick

The “Surprise” - 211 convicts - 42 died on board & 121 landed sick

“I have been on board - the first was the “Surprise”. I went down amongst the convicts where I beheld a sight truly shocking to the feelings of humanity, a great number of them lying, some half and others quite naked, without either bed or bedding and unable to turn or help themselves. I spoke to them as I passed along but the smell was so offensive, I could scarcely bear it. I then went on board the “Scarborough” and proposed to go down among them but was dissuaded from it by the Captain. The “Neptune” was still more wretched and intolerable, therefore I never attempted it. Some of these unhappy people died after the ships came into the harbour before they could be taken on shore; part of these had been thrown into the harbour and their dead bodies case upon the shore and were seen lying naked upon the rocks; I took an occasion to represent this to his Excellency; in consequence of which immediate orders were sent on board that those who died on board should be carried to the opposite North Shore to be buried.

The landing of these people was truly affecting and shocking; great numbers were not able to walk, nor to move hand or foot; such were slung over the ship's side in the same manner as they would sling a cask or box, or anything of that nature. Upon their being brought up to the open air, some fainted, some died upon deck and others in the boat before they reached the shore. When come on shore, many were not able to walk or stand or to stir themselves in the least. Hence some were led by others, while some crept upon their hands and knees, and some were carried on the back of others. The complaints they had to make were not less affecting to the ear than their outward condition was to the eye. The usage they met with on board, according to their own story was truly shocking. Sometimes for days, nay, for a considerable time together, they had been to the middle in water, chained together, hand and leg - even the sick not exempted - nay, many died with the chains upon them. Promises, entreaties, were all in vain and it was not till a very few days before they made the harbour, that they were released out of irons. The greatest complaints by far, were from those persons who had come in the “Neptune”. No wonder that they should be so afflicted - no wonder to hear them groaning and crying and making the most bitter lamentations.”

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The St Marys & District Historical Society meets every 4th Saturday at 1 pm - at the St Marys Precinct “Chambers” Building - Mamre Road, St Marys. No meetings in January or December.

Patron of our Society is Sister Mary Louise Petro

ALL WELCOME

Back issues of the “Tribute” can be found on our website at
www.stmaryshistoricalsociety.org

This Newsletter is a free publication.

Articles in this Newsletter may be republished if permission is given by the Society.

Please contact: us on 0450132181 & leave a message

(While care is taken to ensure that all articles are accurate, the opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society)

Any comments on this Newsletter are encouraged



PLEASE, DON'T THROW OUT AUSTRALIAN HISTORY. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS, BOOKS, LETTERS, RECEIPTS, DOCKETS, NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU ARE NOT SURE ABOUT PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY