



TRIBUTE

AUTUMN, 2016

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 Swanston Street.

We are open! On Thursday, 17th March 2016 a civic reception was held to officially open the refurbishments to our headquarters and the naming of the St Marys Memorial Hall meeting rooms. The two meeting rooms were named in honour of Kevin Dwyer OAM and Brian King AM both former Mayors of Penrith and tireless advocates for St Marys.



Necessary refurbishments had been carried out over several months to the Chambers building including an access ramp and verandah, new entry, accessible toilet and ceiling fans.



Cutting of the Ribbon



(LtoR) Deputy Mayor, Clr Ross Fowler OAM, Treasurer of St Marys & Districts Historical Society, Norma Thorburn OAM, Mayor of Penrith, Clr Karen McKeown, and President of St Marys & Districts Historical Society, Caroline Volkiene, cut the ribbon to officially open the refurbishments to the Old Council Chambers building at St Marys Corner. The new entry now faces the Precinct car park.

Photo courtesy of Penrith City Council

AWARDS



Caroline Volkiene and Penrith Mayor
Clr Karen McKeown
(Photo courtesy of Penrith City Council)

Congratulations to our President Caroline Volkiene on her award. Caroline joined the Historical Society in 2001, quickly becoming an integral part of the Society. She served for several years as our Hon. Secretary, before becoming the President in 2011, a position she still holds. Caroline is very respected by the members for her commitment and super organisational skills. She has a long history of serving our community from involvement in sporting teams to Meals on Wheels. We congratulate her on receiving a Penrith Local Appreciation Award at the Penrith City Council's Australia Day Dinner.



Tom & Norma Thorburn
(Photo courtesy of Tom Thorburn)

HONOURS - Congratulations to our Treasurer, Norma Thorburn, who has been honoured with an OAM for her service to the St Marys community. This included her work with the St Marys & District Historical Society, the Association of Independent Retirees, South Creek (St Marys) Probus Club, the St Marys Development Committee and the St Marys Spring Festival. An award well deserved.

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd), Governor of New South Wales presented Norma with the Order of Australia Medal on Thursday 7th April 2016 at Government House Sydney.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENTS

National Servicemen's Memorial

On Sunday 1st February 2016, the 10th Anniversary of the National Servicemen's Memorial and Tribute Laying Ceremony at Victoria Park, St Marys was attended by Caroline Volkiene (President) and members Norma and Tom Thorburn. As a tribute on the day, the Society's book "History of Victoria Park & War Memorial" was donated on behalf of the Society. The book was researched and published on behalf of the Society by our Vice-President Lyn Forde.

15th Makings of City History Conference 2016

The 15th Annual Penrith City Council and Library History Conference were held at the Joan Sutherland Performing Arts Centre on Saturday, 12th March. The theme this year was 'Sex, crime and politics – Castlereagh connections.

The Keynote Address was given by Grace Karskens – Men, women, sex and desire: family history on Australia's first frontier (Castlereagh).

Information Librarian Lorraine Stacker looked back on 15 years of the History Conference. All in all a rather enjoyable day.

The Oaks Historical Society Book Launch

Members Norma & Tom Thorburn, Marion McLeod and Caroline Volkiene travelled out to Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum, for the opening of 'Her War' exhibition and launch of the book 'Red Poppies and the White Waratah' – Heroines of the Great War from Wollondilly written by Elizabeth Villy (centre). This event was officially opened by Professor Dame Marie Bashir (left). Trish Hill, President (right).



Colyton's 174th Birthday Celebration

Saturday 9th April, 2016 members Caroline Volkiene, Norma and Tom Thorburn attended the 174th birthday celebration held at the Roper Rd Soccer Fields, Colyton. The birthday cake was cut and served after an enthusiastic rendition of "Happy Birthday". The sausage sizzle was well patronised and the parents and children loved competing in the sack races and tug-o-war. Congratulations to Team Colyton in partnership with Neighbourhood Renewal – Penrith City Council.

Back to St Bartholomew's Day

Members Caroline Volkiene, Kerry Walker, Diane James and Norma Thorburn attended the Back to St Bartholomew's Day and Celebration of the 175th Anniversary of the opening of St Bartholomew's Church and Cemetery. It was a beautiful autumn day and was well attended.





*Members
2015 Christmas Party*



Members hard at work restoring the displays on “Mad Friday”!

Members Paul Mills, Margaret Mills, Eric Kent and son Phillip, Marion McLeod, Norma Thorburn, Caroline Volkiene, Tony Biddulph, Tom Thorburn and Lyn Forde hard at work on “Mad Friday”. A special thanks to Michael Mendham, Penrith City Council for his assistance.



NOW ON DISPLAY AT THE CHAMBERS

WW1 1914 – 1918

“On the Home Front 1916”



ANZACS IN FRANCE

1916 A terrible year (Ref. from Australian War Memorial)

1916 was the halfway point in four years of slaughter. For the French, there was the horror of the battle of Verdun. For Britain and the Empire forces – and the French who were also there – the period is remembered for the series of battles known as the First Battle of the Somme. The British and Commonwealth casualties from this fighting totaled an appalling 420,000, and the French lost 204,000. Combined with the German losses, there were more than a million battle casualties on the Somme.

For Australia, there had been few bright spots in a year that seemed to begin well enough. But once its troops became committed to the Western Front battles from July, their war quickly soured, with heavy losses and suffering at the front and widespread mourning at home. In the attack at Fromelles the cost in lives had been the highest in any 24-hour period in the war, while the casualty rate in the six weeks at Pozieres was the worst ever experienced. Then there was the conscription referendum which caused widespread and long-lasting divisions in the population.

The Australians had played a full part in 1916. The Somme offensive did not achieve its goals, but it was one of a series of hammer blows that eventually weakened the German army. In this war of attrition, the allies suffered similarly but had this advantage, that their burden could be shared between the French, the British and Empire troops, and ultimately, in 1918, the Americans. On 11 November 1918 Germany signed an armistice. The tragedy of so many deaths in battle during the Great War was only exceeded by the failure of this sacrifice to achieve an enduring European peace.

ARTICLE OF INTEREST

(By Paul Mills, Research Officer)

(Nepean Times 5th August 1948 (page 2))

FIFTY YEARS AGO

(From "Nepean Times", August 6, 1898).

BENNETT'S NEW STEAM LAUNCH.

Mr. Henry Bennett's steam launch, which is to be christened the "Warragamba", is rapidly approaching completion, and Thursday next will see her riding in the waters of the Nepean. The "Warragamba" has been built as a passenger boat. Her dimensions are 50ft. over all, 12ft. beam, and 5ft. 2in. deep, the limited draft being 3ft. 6in., with a full complement of 200 passengers. With but 100 passengers there will be room for dancing on either deck.

A TOWER WAGGON.

A vehicle of a curious and unusual type has made its appearance upon the streets of Sydney. It hails from St. Marys, and its counterpart now stands completed at Mr. James Bennett's coach factory ready to follow its predecessor. It is called a tower waggon and is to be used in connection with the erection of and repairs to the overhead electric wires running George Street tramway service.



The St Marys & District Historical Society meets every 4th Saturday of the month at 1 pm – at the St Marys Precinct "Chambers" – Mamre Road, St Marys.

No meetings in January or December.

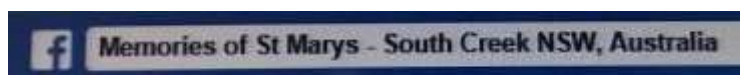
ALL WELCOME

Patron of our Society is Councillor Jackie Greenow, OAM.

Back issues of the "Tribute" can be found on our website at www.stmaryshistoricalandsociety.org

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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