

QUEANBEAN

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The Journal of
Queanbeyan and District Historical Museum Society

QUEANBEYAN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL MUSEUM SOCIETY

QDHMS is a local history society aiming at preserving the history of the city and its wider district and sharing this, with the strong support of the Queanbeyan City Council, through the context of the Museum of Queanbeyan.

Find us on the net at www.queanbeyanmuseum.org.au

Contact us: email qbnmuseum@yahoo.com.au

THE MUSEUM OF QUEANBEYAN

The Museum is open from 1pm to 4pm Saturdays and Sundays or by arrangement.

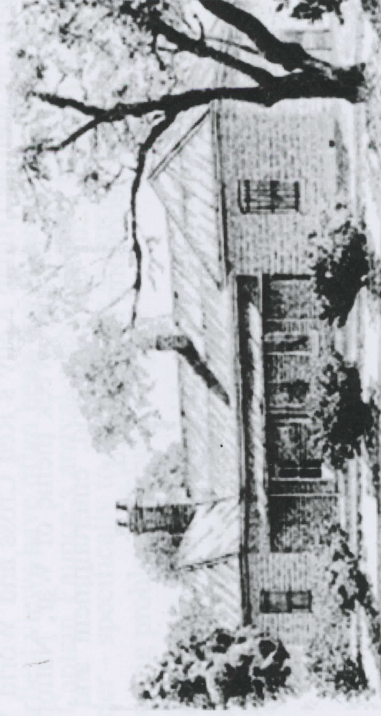
It is found at 10 Farrer Place Queanbeyan, next to the Police Complex and opposite the State Office Building.

Our Cover:

The corner of Crawford and Monaro Streets, c 1930, with the Boer War Memorial, the Fallick building and verandah, and the shops along Crawford St going West.

Photographer: Unknown, but may be F Boland.

Queanbeyan City Library Collection



QUINBEAN

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April 2015

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

First of all thank you from myself and the Society to the volunteers who kept the museum running smoothly while the Secretary and I were on an overseas holiday. We did manage to visit a few museums and galleries as well as superb National Parks in western USA. One observation I can make is that the practice of substantial donations to local community enterprises is much more entrenched there.

In our Society we have been working tirelessly to keep up our standards and can be proud of what we have achieved given our resources. *Quinbean* is produced to professional standard, the museum looks good thanks both to the quality of the exhibitions and to the attention of the volunteers in sweeping, tidying up and renewing the displays.

The Heritage Festival was a great success this year with lots of visitors and a themed WW1 concert from Jason and Chloe Roweth of a very high standard.

We have had another oral history interview transcribed, that of Bede Tongs, and we are working on a gallery of Queanbeyan and District people, both soldiers, nurses and those who stayed at home, from World War 1: *Stories from a Country Town 1914-1918*. This will be the centrepiece of our open day for History Week, Saturday 12 September and the display will be launched at 12 noon by the Mayor. The gallery, as well as Gillian Kelly's Red Cross and World War 1 display, fits well into the History Week theme of War, Nationalism and Identity. On the 12th there is food, entertainment and a re-enactment of a WW1 recruiting tent planned.

We are working too in tidying the archives store and antechamber to help make items more accessible and the spaces safer to negotiate. Shingo Ishikawa a conservator from the National Film and Sound

Archive, has provided valuable advice on conservation and storage, building on the preservation report of Kim Morrison from a number of years ago.

Ximena Briceno the QCC Museum Assistant has just completed a very inspirational internship at the Powerhouse Museum, looking at collection management and volunteer Heather Thomson who describes objects for Ximena to catalogue has gained a similar internship at the Australian Museum in Sydney.

The successful members' get-togethers with Marilyn Folger and Nancy Monk are continuing with one on August 30 with a Churches theme.

John McGlynn
President

FROM THE EDITOR

The history of a place is the history of its people. When we read the early histories of our district the immense importance, and I don't write that lightly, of land ownership and the burgeoning wool industry that was correctly deemed to make the colony of NSW wealthy, dominate discussion.

The earliest views have often been developed through the eyes of the law – Captain Faunce's arrival with his small team to dispense law and order – specifically to clean up the sly grog industry and dispatch the growing problems of bush rangers.

The next clear voices come with the arrival of the Hutchinsons in the 1850s when Emily, in her letters home, clearly describes the village

from her gentle point of view that can be quite disparaging about the lack of appropriate society for a quiet Wesleyan family.

But what of those who built the village of Queanbeyan from 1837 to 1850 and whose names dominate the records of the village without telling much about them. Who were Buckley and Hirst whose name is attached to a store surrounded by half a dozen cottages several years before the village was declared. Who were Hunt and Kaye who opened the Elmsall Inn in what we now know as The Oaks?

Who was William Skeate with his isolated blacksmith's shop near the river who was here with Buckley and Hirst.

Who was John Gray, often named as the great developer of the business in the town?

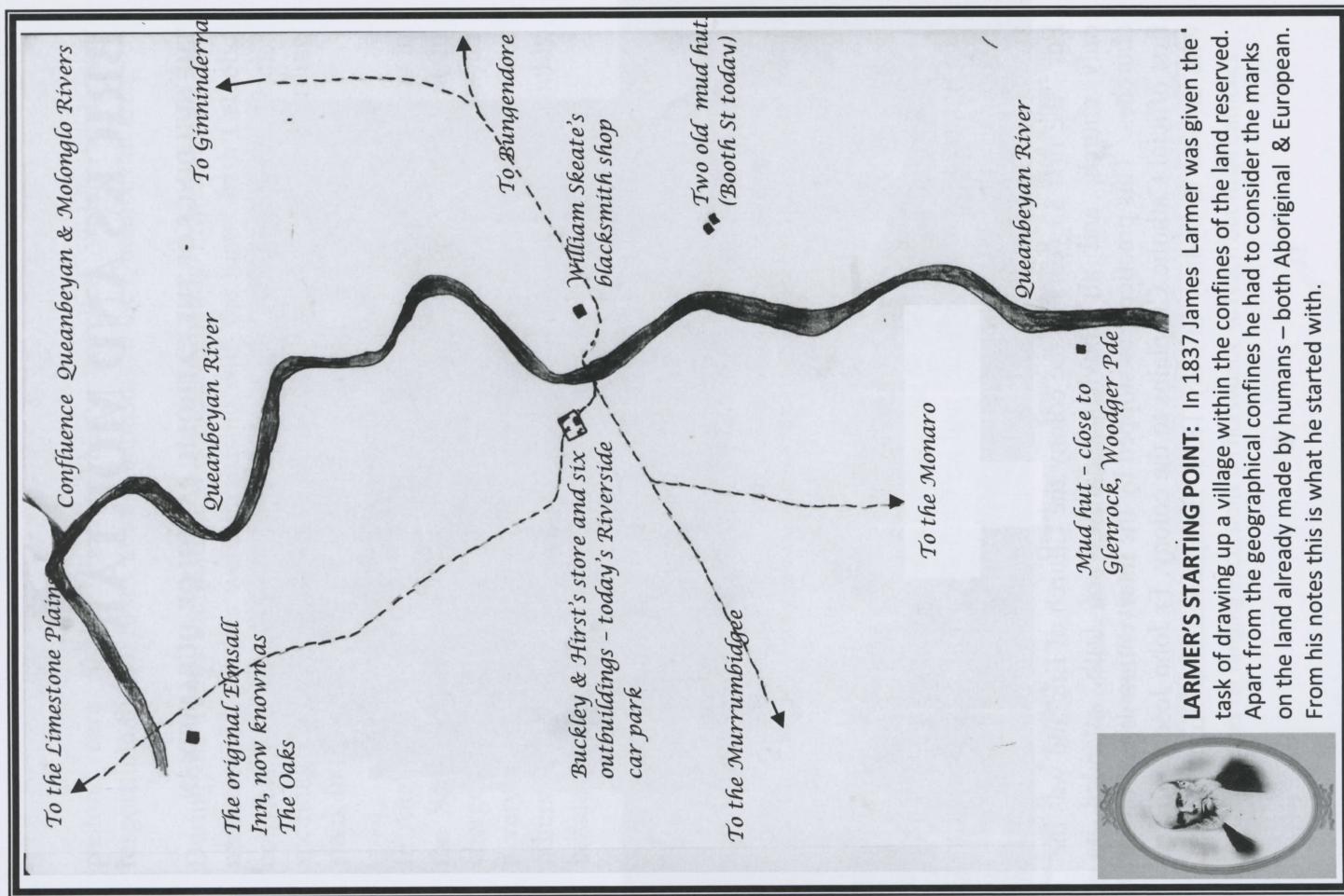
Who used the mud huts that appear on the first map at the river end of Booth Street and at the northern end of Woodger Parade?

Were the Hunts and the Rowleys connected to Buckley and Hirst, all Yorkshiremen?

Why did William Charles Wentworth purchase village blocks in this remote isolated place?

Perhaps it was these folk who made the town what it is, and not the big land owners and not the maintainers of the law!

Gillian Kelly
Editor

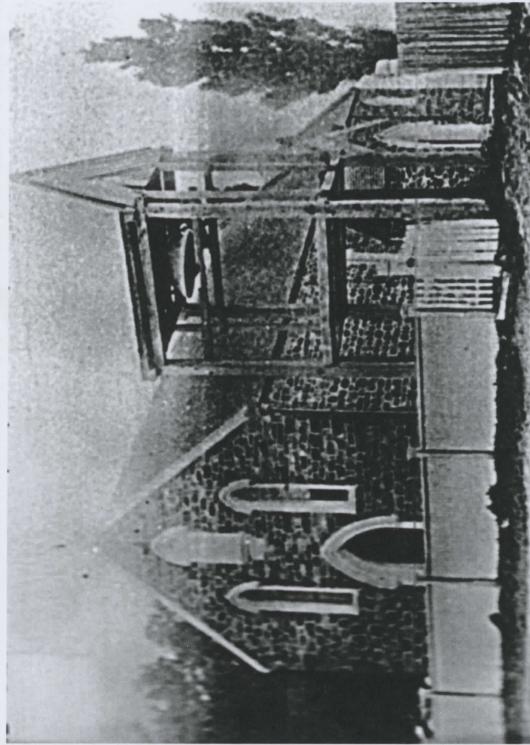


LARMER'S STARTING POINT: In 1837 James Larmer was given the task of drawing up a village within the confines of the land reserved. Apart from the geographical confines he had to consider the marks on the land already made by humans – both Aboriginal & European. From his notes this is what he started with.



BRICKS AND MORTAR

THE BUILDINGS OF THE CATHOLIC PARISH OF QUEANBEYAN



St Gregory's Church Macquoid Street, c 1890
Photo :Errol Lea Scarlett Collection, Queanbeyan City Library

The Colony of New South Wales was founded when the Penal Laws of England were still in force, and no Catholic priest was allowed to accompany the 300 Catholic convicts with the First Fleet.

For the first 33 years of the colony the Church of England was the only church, and all convicts regardless of faith, attended its churches. This practice was stopped by the intervention of one of the first official Catholic Chaplains to the colony, Fr John Joseph Therry who arrived in Sydney in May 1820. Being committed to providing

pastoral care to his Flock, Therry travelled widely and was responsible for the first Catholic baptisms in the Queanbeyan area.

During the 1830s the district was predominantly Protestant but the numbers of Catholics were increasing with the many Irish Catholic convicts, free settlers and even some of the Highland Scots, Gaelic speaking Catholics, who were taking up pasturing and shepherding stock in the area.

In August 1839 Archbishop Bede Polding, known as "The Bishop in the Saddle",¹ established the Queanbeyan Mission. The priest in charge was Father Martin Heston who lived on Dodsworth but stayed a very short time. He was followed in quick succession by several others, but in 1843 Father Michael Kavanagh arrived and he quickly became the Mission's builder.

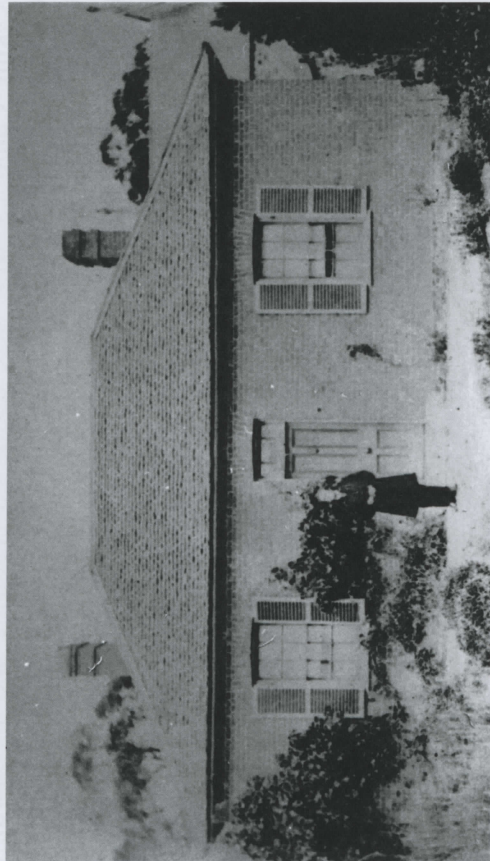


Macquoid St Presbytery Church School Molonglo St Hand & Heart Inn

St Gregory's Church complex 1876 Photo: Pickering
Collection: Queanbeyan City Library

¹Because of his far ranging excursions on horseback to reach out to all Catholics.

The NSW Government Gazette for July 10th 1846 listed the reservation of Crown Lands in Macquoid Street: one acre for a church, and two roods² each for a Clergy man's Residence, and a Catholic School House. By 1850 Daniel McCloskey had completed St Gregory's Church and apart from a small extension in 1873, it is exactly as McCloskey finished it.

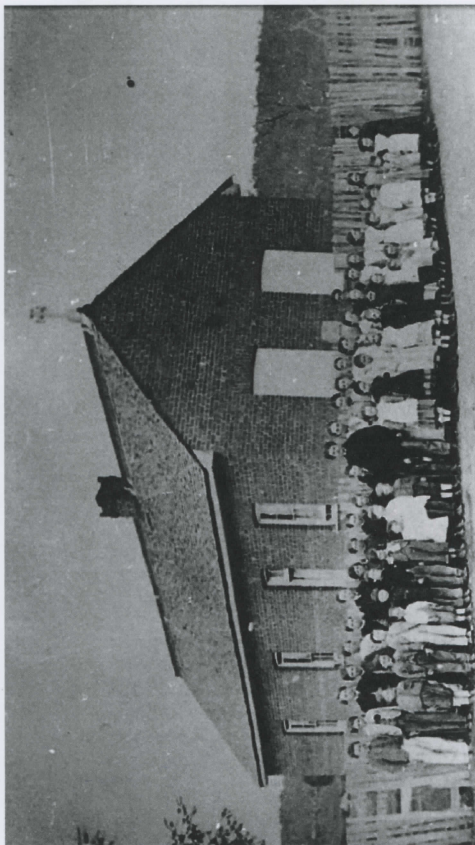


The Presbytery, Macquoid St 1870 Photo: Beaufoy Merlin
Errol Lea Scarlett Collection, Queanbeyan City Library

In 1852 a church-school was opened within the church itself. By 1857 a small school building had been erected at the corner of Macquoid and Mowatt Streets, on the grant originally intended for this purpose. The school, however had a rocky history of incompetent lay teachers and a high-handed priest.³ It continued under the supervision of priests and a school board until 1879 when four Good Samaritan Sisters arrived with plans to establish a convent and a school.

² 1 acre = 4000sq m approx; 1 rood = 1000 sq m, approx

³ Lea-Scarlett, Errol, Queanbeyan District and People, Queanbeyan Municipal Council 1968, p110



St Gregory's School, cnr Molonglo & Mowatt Streets, 1870
Photo: H Beaufoy Merlin, Collection G Kelly

The Sister's convent and school was begun at 7 Macquoid Street⁴ with five pupils, initially as a 'Higher School for Young Ladies', but by the end of that year St Gregory's school was closed and the nuns assumed the responsibility for the education of all Catholic students in the area.

The Queanbeyan community generously supported a new school project and the initial plans for a small school were amended to produce a much larger building. Martin Byrne donated the whole of Section 21⁵ The wealthier townspeople gave financial aid but 1879 proved to be a disastrous year for private education in NSW.

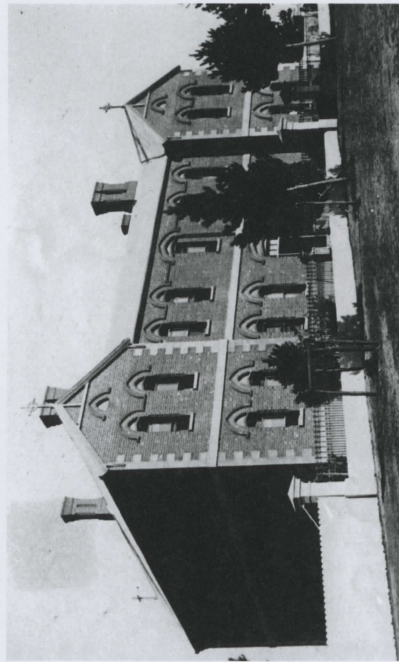
Until then all schools had received some government assistance under a mixture of schemes. There had been campaigns for free, secular and compulsory education for some time and Henry Parkes introduced his Education Bill late in the year. It became increasingly clear that private schools would not be able to rely on Government

⁴ Lent by John Dwyer of Ashby, Bungendore

⁵ Land bounded by Isabella Place, Crawford Street and the Queanbeyan River

support, but the Catholic church and its members decided to continue with the philosophy of a Catholic Education System.

In September 1880, Jordan, McCauley and Priest commenced work on the new school. By the end of 1881 the walls and roof were completed, there were no stairs and the walls had not been plastered but the first pupils arrived in January 1882. By 1886 the building was finally completed and from the start was a success.



St Benedict's Convent c 1906
Collection: QDHMS

It was to be another 40 years before the bricks and mortar of the Parish were extended. By the 1920s Queanbeyan was entering a boom time with the building of the nation's Capitol.

On March 25th, 1924 an application was made to the Municipal Council for the construction of St Gregory's Hall and shops in Monaro Street. By August 15th, 1924 the *Age* reported that the hall was now definitely taking shape and that it was understood that the billiard room - to hold three tables - would be the first part completed! The hall had seating accommodation for 1000 people,

was fitted up for picture show purposes and in addition there were five shops, eight offices and a large supper room to seat 250. Dr Blackall noted at the time that town was bursting its bounds in all directions, the school and the church would have to be enlarged, and the community would be able to do this at minimum expense by means of the hall.⁶

The Hall was opened February 26th, 1925 amid much fanfare and the support of the entire community, Catholic and Protestants alike. Within days moving pictures were being shown and dance, sales, elections and school events all found a venue in the hall.



St Gregory's Hall c 1926
Collection: QDHMS

By 1926, St Benedict's was no longer able to accommodate the children wanting a Catholic education. This time the parish

⁶ There was an eye to the needs of Canberra, developing, but with no facilities. Queanbeyan Age June 5th 1924

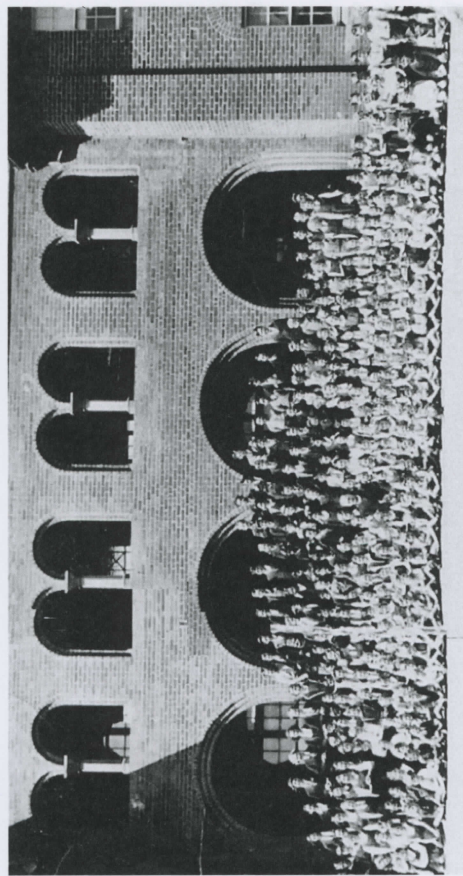
acquired from the Showground Trust land fronting Lowe Street. In 1927 a new school was constructed on the site and although much changed over in the last 89 years the original building is clearly evident.



St Gregory's School, c 1930
Collection: Queanbeyan City Library

The town continued to expand towards the Federal Capital border and with this expansion it was obvious that the small church of St Gregory's could not manage the population of the town. In 1929 Father Haydon bought a disused timber yard with an old shed on it beside the Hotel Queanbeyan in Uriarra Road.

The humble building was constructed of corrugated iron, with an uneven floor and a leaky roof that some parishioners swear meant umbrellas were used inside, but it was known as St John Vianney, and was used as a church. For a little while after WWII it was used during the week as an Infant's School, but in 1953 the building was destroyed by fire.



St Gregory's School, Lowe St, 1950s
Errol Lea Scarlett collection, Queanbeyan City Library



St Gregory's boys at
St Benedicts, 1918

References:

- Cross, Rex L, *Bygone Queanbeyan*, Revised Edition, Queanbeyan Publishing Co, 1985
- Lea Scarlett, Errol, *Queanbeyan District and People*, Queanbeyan Municipal Council, 1968
- Goulburn Herald, 1848 – 1860
- Northern Mission Incorporation 2015
- Queanbeyan Age, 1850 – 1995
- Sydney Morning Herald, 1839 – 1955

Gillian - To be concluded December

DISCOVERING ANZACS –THE WEBSITE

There are many sources for Queanbeyan research at the National Archives of Australia, including, for example, Anzac history. Adding to the National Service records available for all the WW1 soldiers on the Record Search database (using Namesearch), and their accompanying free digital copies, (the gift to the nation since 2007) is a website called Discovering Anzacs.

I have recently had the privilege of working on this website, for our Anzac centenary project. You can find the website Discovering Anzacs on our website www.naa.gov.au under Visit us, Connect with us. (NB: both Ancestry.com and Defence charge a fee for copies. NAA only charges if hard copies are required).

You can see here not only the digital copies of the Australian AIF and Naval personnel, but as well nurses and other personnel who served in the war. A unique feature of this website is that details of the New Zealand service personnel have also been added, making available the whole spectrum of ANZAC service, in an unprecedented cooperation with Archives New Zealand. You can also now link related records from NAA collection, and add stories and timelines, and profiles of the physical characteristics of the individual.

Photographs can be uploaded to the site. This builds on our previous Mapping Our Anzacs web site, and we now have more ability to search for birthplaces and milestones of the career and grave sites using the Google map facility. (There is ongoing research of the records to correct many birthplaces.)

There is a facility to populate the profiles with personal details, not only of the service, but the physical characteristics as listed on the Attestation papers. Adding life events such as marriages, sicknesses or death, uploading photographs, and giving details of the individual's subsequent life is now possible as are links to related records in the National Archives collection, and to other institutions. This creates the potential for a wonderful research tool, with search facilities and links to the collections of

other museums and libraries, including the Australian War Memorial, the National library, and state libraries.

One of the linked records I have been involved with in the NAA collection is the copyright collection which includes some wonderful art and literature of the time.

Another linked record is the repatriation records. The Archives is progressively digitising them for the soldiers who first set out from Albany. This adds to the later history of the individuals traced through their repatriation history of pensions and medical cases, providing further rich, personal information for families and historians, and sheds light on the history and development of the nation.

I have been going through adding data from what we know from the Queanbeyan related soldiers and nurses. If anyone has any more information to add, it would be greatly appreciated.

I would encourage anyone with an interest in local history, more particularly family history, to have a play around with the site.

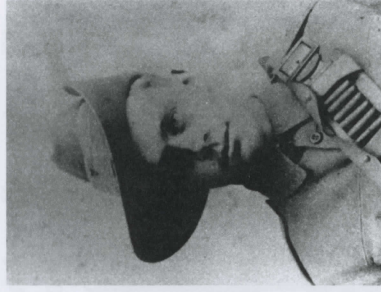
Lee Davy



Richard Arneson



William McNamara



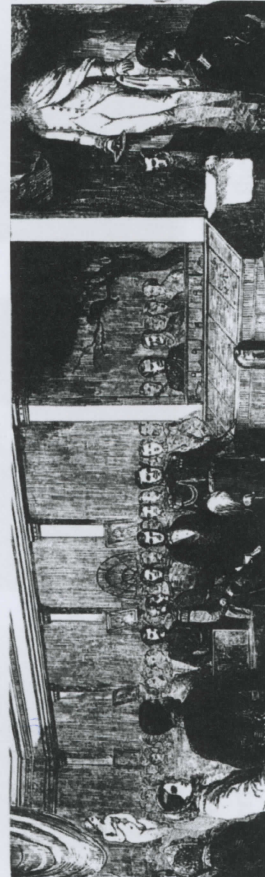
Bertie Land Barber

QUEANBEYAN: A CHANGED COUNTRYSIDE

The last explorers of the Molonglo and Limestone Plains area before European settlement, were Mark John Currie, John Ovens and Joseph Wild. Travelling through the Australian bush, they commented on its 'inferiority and indifferent appearance.' Camping by the side of the South Fish River' (Queanbeyan River), they also noted that they 'killed two kangaroos...with grey hounds... not such good eating as emus'. Thus began the degradation of our local indigenous wild life.

On the 19 July, 1879, the 'Queanbeyan Age' reported: "A rare white ibis was shot at by boys with catapults for a month until John Jordan's young son, Thomas brought it down. It measured two foot ten inches from bill to toes, and had a wing span of three foot seven inches. John Gale heard of it and had it sent to the Australian Museum. We have checked through the Australian Museum records, and were unable to identify this particular enquiry from John Gale. Perhaps it was logged with different details.

The Australian Museum (originally known as the Colonial Museum) was involved in much field collecting during this period, with the growing concern at the disappearance in settled areas of plant, animal and bird life. Gale was known to send scientific specimens to the curator on a number of occasions.



Opening of the Colonial Museum, Sydney 1854, source

The Museum's first Custodian (commencing in 1829) was William Holmes, who in his enthusiasm collecting specimens, accidentally shot himself. The first actual Curator was Naturalist George Bennett (1835) and the second Curator was Rev W B Clarke, later known as 'the Father of Australian Geology.' (A memorial to Clarke may be seen on the Woolshed Creek bridge just out of Queanbeyan.)

Errol Lea-Scarlett notes that in the Monaro, kangaroos and wallabies were viewed as pests and few survived by the 1900s. One shooting drive would kill twenty eagle hawks, and as in the article in the *Queanbeyan Age*, it took a month of shooting at it to bring down one rare white ibis. Gentlemen's hunting drives were a popular activity, and one hunt could bag over a hundred specimens of wildlife.

A changing countryside was certainly observed by Gale as he wrote in 1927: "bush turkeys have disappeared from the settled districts. Even the black duck, widgeon teal...tree goose and the bronze wing pigeon, once so numerous hereabouts, are hard nowadays to be seen."



Widgeon teal with its teal-framed eye



The bush turkey - long gone from the district



The black duck has returned in very healthy numbers

Snakes which had been a-plenty had become so rare that one Australian Museum Curator, Gerard Krefft, offered a substantial reward for any snake exceeding ten feet in length. John Gale reported seeing one "more than fourteen feet in length!" Another huge snake was observed near Gininderra Creek "from which they cut several full grown possums."

While we went about extinguishing as much of the wild life surrounding the Queanbeyan area as possible, English settlers were busy introducing foreign life to the district. English skylarks were liberated at Gundaroo in 1881 by George Harcourt, and hares were loosed in the Monaro in 1880. By 1889, a day's hunt at Gundaroo took 1500 of them, and twenty eagle hawks would be killed in one shooting drive.

By 1895, fox hunts were common, and few natural animals and birds remained in the Queanbeyan area. Whereas in the 1860s large flocks of emus were reported to roam the area, thirty years later Mrs Rusten of Queanbeyan Hospital reported surprise at seeing "one large emu" from her window.

Settlers in 1835/36 enjoyed shooting parties, and Edward John Eyre (settler and later explorer), living at Woodlands, later owned by the Rutledge family, described these events:

"We bagged ducks, quails, o'possums (for fur) and native dogs. Sometimes we went shooting o'possums and flying squirrels by moonlight for the sake of the fur.. which was fine soft and warm. Sometimes I killed some very large native dogs, and I shot eagles measuring between seven and eight feet from tip to tip. I also got platipii which frequented the neighbouring streams, and found Murray cod from one to four or five pounds weight.

Such drives to kill native life in the young colony are echoed by poet Henry Kendall in his poem

After the Hunt

Far away the bounding prey

Leapt across the ruts and logs

But we galloped, galloped, galloped on

Till we heard the yapping of the dogs

Oh, it was a madly merry day.

Don Watson, in his appreciation of the Australian bush, states "we can date the European history of Australia's wild life to the moment at Botany Bay in 1770, when Joseph Banks sent his hounds after the first kangaroo he saw." We who are left, with what remains of our wild life, need to learn to "love the bush as it is and can be, not the way it was and never will be again."

Rosemary Curry

References:

- Eyre, Edward John; *Autobiographical Narrative*, published 1984
 Gale, John; *Canberra History and Legends*, published 1927
 Kendall, Henry; verse of poem 'After the Hunt' Wikipedia
 Lea-Scarlett; Errol; *Queanbeyan District and People*, published 1968
 Watson, Don; *The Bush* published 2014 *Queanbeyan Age*; 19 July, 1879



THE CAMOUFLAGE NETS OF ADAMINABY

During the 2nd World War there was a frame set up in the School of Arts hall in Old Adaminaby to weave camouflage nets for the military as they were in great demand.

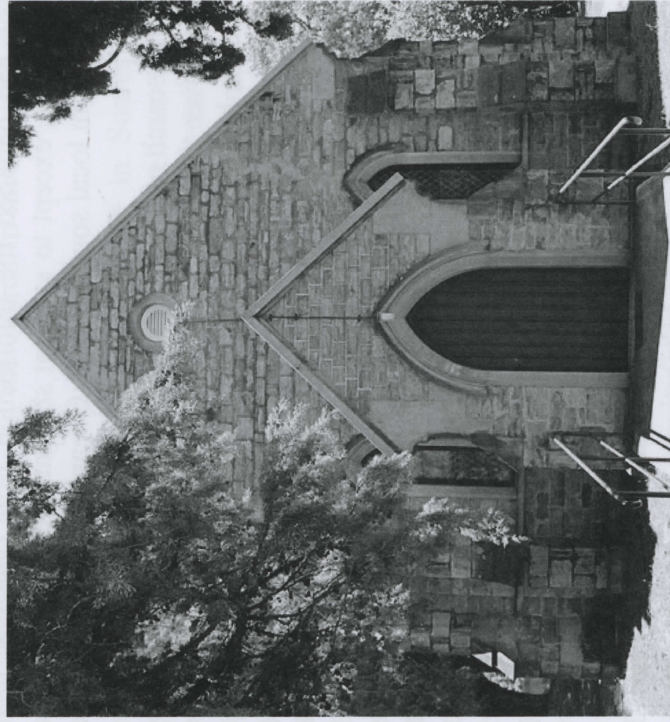
People were encouraged, as they went by the hall or had any free time, to do a few rows of weaving. As children on the way home from school we would stop and do a little weaving.

Looking back as I was 9 at the time perhaps I did more harm than good to the net. Although it seemed quite easy at the time. We used a large wooden shuttle and I remember the twine was quite rough on the hands.

June Dean
Queanbeyan Red Cross



THE ALLEGED METRIC DIMENSIONS OF ST STEPHEN'S CHURCH – A SOLUTION TO THE MYSTERY



St Stephen's Presbyterian Church in Queanbeyan was designed in 1871 by the Reverend Alberto Dias Soares, then the local Church of England minister, and was erected in the period 1872-74. In her centenary history of the church published in 1974, Jan Armour stated that Soares drew up the plans for the church 'in metric configurations'.⁷ The statement has now become a part of Queanbeyan folklore, regularly repeated as accepted fact. If it is correct, it would almost certainly make St Stephen's the only church

⁷ Jan Armour, *And this Stone – The story of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Queanbeyan*, Queanbeyan, 1974, p. 27.

designed and built to metric specifications in Australia in the 19th century. Unfortunately, Mrs Armour did not indicate in her history what her source was for this piece of information. Asked recently where she had obtained the information from, she was unable to recall the source, except to say that she gathered all of the material for her book from local sources in the Queanbeyan-Canberra area.

An intensive search of local historical sources, including newspapers, failed to uncover the origin of the information. There is no mention of the church having been designed to metric dimensions in any contemporary newspaper report or in Presbyterian and Anglican sources. Curiously too, the Reverend A.G. Mackintosh-Carter's *Souvenir History of the Presbyterian Charge of Queanbeyan*, which was published in 1914, makes no reference to the matter. It is also odd that the metric story is not mentioned in any of the histories of Queanbeyan published before Jan Armour's book, notably Errol-Lea Scarlett's 1968 history, *Queanbeyan District and People*. Now, however, thanks to a great find by Gillian Kelly, the mystery surrounding the source of the story looks to have been solved.

On the face of it, it seems an extraordinary claim to make that St Stephen's was built to metric proportions. However, if anyone was equipped to design a church on the metric system, it was Soares. He would have become familiar with metric measures when he lived in Oporto for two years in 1846-48, Portugal having adopted the system in 1814, and when he subsequently resided in Paris for two years in 1850-52.⁸ But if he did design the church to metric specifications, there was an immediate practical difficulty. The tradesmen engaged in construction of the building are most unlikely to have had metric measures. This would have been a particular problem for the

⁸ 'Death of the Rev. Canon A. D. Soares', *The Southern Churchman*, vol. 12, no. 4, 15 May 1909, p. 5; Ken Charlton, 'Southern Spires', *Anglican Historical Society Journal*, no. 25, April 1998, p. 1.

quarryman and stonemason. To overcome the problem, Soares would have had to convert his metric dimensions into imperial measures for the tradesmen. Given this practical difficulty, one wonders why he would have bothered to design the church in metric units in the first place.

A possible answer to the question may lie in Soares's wish to distinguish St Stephen's from all of the Anglican churches he designed, which were presumably designed in imperial measures. In this regard, it is intriguing to note that he would almost certainly have relied upon James Barr's famous text, *Anglican Church Architecture*, in designing his Church of England churches. He certainly had access to a copy of this work as one had been brought to Queanbeyan in 1844 by the builder Daniel Jordan, the father of one of the carpenters who later worked on the building of St Stephen's. Jordan's copy of Barr's book was long held by Christ Church in Queanbeyan.⁹ While Soares probably made use of Barr's book in designing St Stephen's, it is conceivable that he could have resorted to metric measures to accentuate the fact that it was a Presbyterian rather than an Anglican church.

There is some evidence to suggest, though, that this was not the case. On 29 May 1872, Charles Campbell, who was then Chancellor of the Goulburn Diocese, wrote a stern letter to Soares, saying that his attention had been directed to an article in the *Queanbeyan Age* a few days previously in which Soares was reported to have 'furnished the Presbyterian Denomination at Queanbeyan with a plan and specifications', had 'permitted [himself] to be described in a public document' as 'the Architect' of 'their new place of worship' and, at a meeting of the Queanbeyan Presbyterians, had paid his first year's subscription 'with best wishes'. The article in question was a report

⁹ Rex Cross and Bert Sheedy, *Queanbeyan Pioneers - First Study*, Queanbeyan, 1983, p. 67.

of the laying of the foundation stone of St Stephen's. Campbell warned Soares that, if the report was true, he had made himself liable to suspension and even revocation of his licence to practise as a minister.¹⁰

No reply from Soares is on file and, in the event, he was not sacked. Campbell's letter reveals, however, that he did not seek permission from his bishop, Mesac Thomas, to design St Stephen's. It may thus be surmised that he saw nothing wrong with providing the Queanbeyan Presbyterian community with plans and specifications for the church. On this basis, it seems rather less likely that he would have designed St Stephen's in metric measures to distinguish it from the Anglican churches he designed. It is possible of course that he did do this, but if he used metric units for the design in the belief that the design might otherwise cause him problems with higher authorities in the Church of England, then he would surely have sought permission from Bishop Thomas beforehand.

In an effort to confirm or disprove the alleged metric dimensions of the church, Queanbeyan's Heritage Adviser, Pip Giovanelli, in company with the current author, took measurements of the exterior of the church in November 2014. It turned out that another heritage architect, Ken Charlton, had also measured the church in 1998. Belatedly, yet another set of plans and measurements were found by the church's current minister, the Reverend Andrew McConaghy, and handed to Pip Giovanelli in December 2014.¹¹ These last-mentioned drawings are interesting because they are accompanied by a brief summary of the church which baldly states that it was 'built in the metric system'. The drawings are undated but, as the

¹⁰ Letter, Charles Campbell, to A.D. Soares, 29 May 1872, Letter Book of Bishop Mesac Thomas, 1872-1874.

¹¹ 'St Stephens Presbyterian Church Queanbeyan presented by Reg Wolfe, Gary Luton and Arthur Marzalek', undated.

accompanying summary goes on to state that the church's centenary 'will be celebrated in 1974', they were clearly prepared some time before this. Both the context and the style and text of the drawings suggests that they were done earlier in the 1970s.

In referring to the church as having been built to metric dimensions, these pre-1974 drawings apparently accepted this as established fact and accordingly recorded the measurements in centimetres. The trouble is that the measurements do not actually confirm that the church was built to metric specifications. The measurements are mostly odd numbers of centimetres that do not equate to any regular number of metres, as might be expected, while in two important cases they equate to imperial measures. The exterior width of the church, for example, is quoted as 762 centimetres, which is virtually exactly 25 feet. The exterior length of the church, including the porch and vestry, is given as 1858 centimetres which is almost exactly 61 feet.

The only significant measure which the drawings quote in a regular number of centimetres is that for the internal width of the nave. This is given as 660 centimetres (*ie*, 21 feet 8 inches). However, in his careful measurement of the width of the nave in 1998, Ken Charlton arrived at a figure of 652.6 cm or 21 feet 4 inches in the imperial system. He also measured the interior length of the nave as 1220.5 cm or 40 feet, as against a figure of 1228 cm in the pre-1974 drawings. Ken Charlton and Pip Giovanelli independently measured the exterior length of the body or nave of the church as 43 feet 3 inches, while Giovanelli measured the external width of the church as 25 feet, the same as the pre-1974 drawings. Charlton did not take this measure.

There was only one feature of the church for which Charlton and Giovanelli found any suggestive evidence of the use of metric units.

This consisted of the length from the front of one buttress to the front of the next, for the rear four of the five buttresses on the northern side and for the four buttresses on the southern side. (There are only four buttresses on this side because of the presence of the bell tower.) The measure from one buttress to the next is exactly 3 metres (or 9 feet 10 inches). However, the measure from the front of the first buttress to the front of the second on the northern side is 305 cm (or exactly 10 feet). The spacing between the buttresses would thus appear to be a mixture of metric and imperial measures. But when taken with the rest of the measurements for the church, which look to be definitely imperial, the 3-metre spacing between most of the buttresses seems to be purely coincidental.

The three separate measurements carried out on the church, coupled with other evidence cited above, do not provide any support for the claim that St Stephen's was built to metric specifications. Gillian Kelly's recent find adds considerable weight to this conclusion. While trawling through Errol Lea-Scarlett's correspondence, she found a long letter that Jan Armour wrote to him on 1 August 1973. Referring to St Stephen's in the letter, Mrs Armour mentioned that:

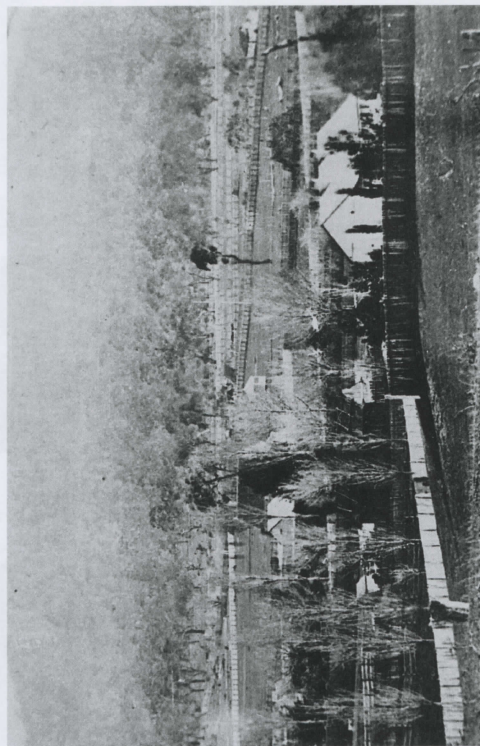
A group of Architecture students has measured the Church and found it to have been designed in metric.

There can be little doubt that this is the origin of the story about St Stephen's having been built to metric specifications. It is highly likely, furthermore, that the pre-1974 drawings referred to above are actually the ones made by the 'Architecture students', together with the measurements purporting to show the church's metric dimensions. As detailed above, they show no such thing.

While the tradition that has grown up about the metric dimensions of St Stephen's thus looks to be without foundation, the church has

other claims to fame. In the thirty years that Soares practised as an ecclesiastical architect (1859-88), he designed at least fifteen Anglican churches, as well as a number of rectories, school buildings and church halls.¹² St Stephen's is unique among his ecclesiastical commissions in that it was the only non-Anglican church that he designed. Moreover, though the building is fairly modest in scale, it is an harmoniously proportioned structure that exhibits some notable design features, as well as a high standard of workmanship in its construction. Along with the 1883 manse beside it, the church has now been nominated to the NSW State Heritage Register.

[A more extended version of this article is to be published in the *Anglican Historical Society Journal* later this year.]



St Stephens tucked into its rural village of the late 1870s. Note behind the church roof the bare Public Recreation area with its white bandstand. (Now the Queanbeyan Park)
Photograph: Pickering c 1876, Queanbeyan City Council collection

Brendan O'Keefe

¹² For the buildings that Soares designed, see Charlton, 'Southern Spires', *Anglican Historical Society Journal*, no. 25, April 1998; Ransome T. Wyatt, *History of the Diocese of Goulburn*, Sydney, 1937; and entries in the NSW State Heritage Register and Inventory.



Carroll



McDonnell



Phegan



Kennagh

THE JINDEN MURDERS

One of, if not **the** most atrocious crime that stains the history of the colony and present day Australia was perpetrated at Jinden, 60 kilometres south of Braidwood on the 9 January 1867.

The murder of the four special constables to this day constitutes the largest mass murder of police in Australian history (Ned Kelly killed three Victorian police officers at Stringybark Creek in 1878).

The Clarke Gang, (made up of relatives and friends) headed by Thomas and John had been rampaging, robbing and killing around the district including Michalego and the far south coast (Bega) since about 1865. So notorious were they that the Felons Apprehension Act of 1865 was amended to incorporate outlawry & killing of criminals on sight by citizens.

Many in this day and age describe them as amongst Australia's "bloodiest" bushrangers of all time. No one was immune from their wrath: farmers, gold escorts, store keepers, police, publicans and travellers alike. By direct authority of the Colonial Secretary, Sir Henry Parkes, a group of special constables (detectives) were sworn in secretly for a special expedition to go forth, search and capture the gang of bushrangers. They were to pose as surveyors, travel by horse and were heavily armed. The party consisted of Special Constables Patrick Kennagh (b1841), Eneas McDonnell (b1817), John Phegan (b1837) and their leader John Carroll (b.1829), who was also a senior warder at Darlinghurst Goal.

Whilst patrolling very dense bushland in an area known today as Jinden Station (situated on the eastern side of the Cooma road near present day Deua National Park) the party was ambushed by the Clarke gang on the afternoon of January 9th 1867. Witnesses had heard shooting that afternoon but did not investigate until the following day. In a clearing in the bush McDonnell and Phegan were found shot to death and about 800 metres away were the bodies of Carroll and Kennagh. Pinned to the body of Carroll, their leader was a pound note. From writings at the time there is a suggestion from their wounds that two of the special constables were executed.

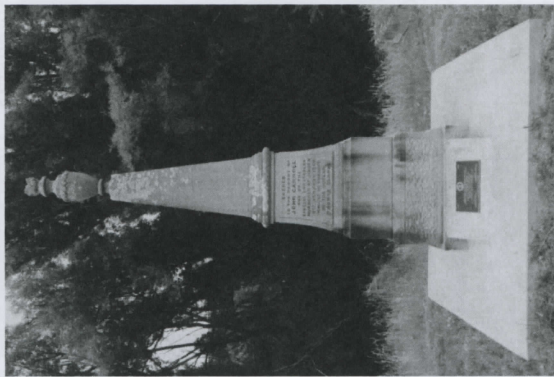
Senior Constable Wright and an Aboriginal Tracker Sir Watkin Wynne (later bestowed the title of Sergeant Major) arrested the two surviving members of the Clarke Gang at Berry's hut, near Jinden on Friday April 26th 1867 after a shoot out. The reward at the time was £1500, one of Australia's highest rewards offered (other than that of Ned Kelly), even to this day.

The Clarke's trial on the May 28th 1867 lasted just one day. The jury took minutes to find both brothers guilty of



The Clarke Bros after capture

attempted murder of Constable Walsh only. They were never tried or convicted for the murders of the police (the four special constables and Constable Miles O'Grady of Nerrigundah and some 71 robberies. Thomas Clarke, 26 and his brother John, 24 were hanged from twin gallows at Darlinghurst Goal on June 25th, 1867



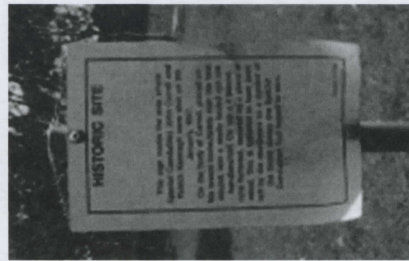
Memorial, Braidwood cemetery
Photo: Paul Batista

It is also proposed to dedicate a small memorial on this hallowed ground that evening. A small group of locals has banded together to commence proceedings. This group includes the property owners of the now Jinden Station, Mr John and Mrs Jenette Hindmarsh, Braidwood's very own claimed author on the Clarke Gang Mr Peter Smith and Sergeant Paul Batista. from Queanbeyan Police Station.

Paul Batista

A large memorial for the four special Constables was established at the Braidwood cemetery. A couple of signs on a star picket were placed at the location of the mass murder at Jinden by Mr Peter Smith in recent times.

It is envisaged there will be a commemoration of the sacrifice of the four special constables on the 150th anniversary of their murders at the hands of the Clarke brothers with a special service on the evening of January 9th 2017 at the actual site, which is now private property.



Marker at location of murders
Photo: Paul Batista

THE ACKERMANN'S AND THE ARO



ARO Meat Produce Company, Crawford St, Queanbeyan
Photo: Ackerman Collection

There are many amongst the readers of *Quinbean* who will remember the ARO Meat Produce Company in Crawford Street, where a delectable, and often new to the Australian palate, array of continental meats were available. Just as many will remember its owners John and Anna Ackermann.

This Hungarian couple embraced the Australian way of life, running their highly successful butchery, developing the Australian passion for horse racing to the extent of winning the prestigious Wagga Wagga Gold Cup, while remaining connected to their community through the Hungarian club, but it was while being held captive during WWII that John Ackerman sharpened his skills for survival, wrote Andrew Kazar for the Canberra Times.

JOHN ACKERMANN had every reason to be thankful for his trade. Being a butcher helped John improve his chances of survival while a prisoner of war for four years in Russia during and after World War

II. Some commonsense and luck also helped John¹ of Queanbeyan, make the most of the harsh conditions he was forced to endure during these tough times.

"One time, two of us and one guard went out with a horse-drawn sled to cut meat from some horses that had been frozen solid," John said. "I pinched a few strips of horse meat which I put under my hat and belt which I later ate at night and which helped me survive."

Born in Hungary in 1922, John served his compulsory national service in the weapon and bomb division of the Hungarian Air Force, which he entered at the age of 21. Russian troops captured him and other soldiers near the Austrian border in 1945, and transported them by train to the first of three prisoner-of-war camps located in Russia.

The first camp, about 150km south of Moscow, was filled with German and Hungarian POWs. He was soon transferred as part of an agricultural work program to another camp where he planted and gathered potatoes, cut timber and did other jobs to benefit the local Russian farming community.

"A tractor went along, and as we picked the potatoes from behind it, some Russian people asked us not to pick everything up. That was so that at night they could gather some food for themselves because there was a shortage."

Eight months later, John was transferred to a Hungarian camp in the outer suburbs of Moscow where he did tiling, bricklaying and other



John Ackermann c 1944 in uniform. Photo Ackermann

work involved with building multi-storey flats. "I always tried to find a job where I could save energy and not be out in the cold where I could get sick, because temperatures ranged from about -16° to 0°."

He soon realised the benefit of learning Russian and turned his hand to interpreting Hungarian to Russian. "To survive in the war camp you had to be polite. I could see that if I learnt Russian, I could make my life easier. You always had a guard who talked to you and gave you orders in Russian which was how I picked up the language. It was always on my mind that I wanted to survive and go home, and they were the things that kept a person going there."

It was while talking with fellow POWs about getting as far away from war-torn Europe as possible, that John made a pact with two of them to go to Australia. "We saw it as a big continent with not many people and it provided a future for us. It didn't matter how or when, just so long as we got there. It was a just a dream that we shared."

John was released in July 1948 and returned to his family in Hungary. He was 26. On the train journey home, he said the carriages were unlocked because the Russian troops knew that everyone wanted to return to Hungary and would not escape.

After arriving home, a lack of freedom reinforced the pact he had made with his fellow POWs. John was the only one of the three to make it to Australia. "One fell in love with a girl and married in Hungary, and the other one's father died so he had to stay and look after his mother."

Three months after arriving in Hungary, John escaped to Austria where he registered himself in the French Zone to migrate to Australia. While he was in Austria, he learned that his childhood friend, Anna, who would later become his wife, was also there.

At the age of 18, on Christmas Day, Anna was taken prisoner by Russian troops to forced labor camps in Russia. Anna Ackermann, now almost 90, said the soldiers needed people to work in coal mines

in Russia. With many of the young men in her home town away fighting, townfolk ranging from 17-year-old girls to 50-year-old men were the next obvious choice. About 75 people were taken prisoner from the town which had a population of about 4000.

"They told us to get ready at mid-night on December 26 with 25kg of food and clothes and anything else we could carry, because we had to go to a Hungarian city called Pecs to clean up a bombed airstrip," Anna said "We walked about 50km to Pecs in the bitter cold winter. It was snowing and raining. I thought I'd never get warm again in my life.

We were housed in army barracks in Pecs for three weeks where we ate what we had before they took us to Russia in early 1945 by train. They transported us in cattle carriages in which there were no toilets and so many people that you couldn't even lie down. The trip took about seven to eight weeks because we stopped many times to pick up extra prisoners and the train often broke down."

She said the train took about 2000 people from countries bordering Hungary to a bombed coal mining area in Russia where the healthier prisoners worked three eight hour shifts a day, seven days a week. "It took us a good hour to walk down and up from the mine where it got to -35 degrees above-ground. All I wanted to do was go home and see my mother."

At the age of 20, Anna was released. Less than 25 people out of the 75 returned to her home town. "When I returned to Hungary my mother was no longer alive and because my family and I had no communication through mail, I found out from others in the town that my father went missing in the war."

Anna escaped to live with relatives in Austria in 1947. While in Austria, John received details from his family in Hungary about where Anna lived. He eventually found her and they married in February 1950. The newly-weds arrived in Fremantle, Western

Australia, in September that year from where they were transported with about 1000 other immigrants by train to a camp in Northam. Anna described Australia as being like "heaven on earth because we could eat as much as we wanted."

John took on work as a janitor in the camp, while Anna worked as a nurse's aide at what was then known as the Woolaroo Tuberculosis Sanitarium. The couple later took up residence in nursing quarters in the sanitarium where John found work as an orderly and later as a cook. They moved to Perth in 1953 where they bought a block of land and built a home. While keeping in touch with friends who had moved to other parts of Australia, John heard there were better business opportunities in Canberra because it was a developing city. He and Anna moved to Queanbeyan in September 1959 where they set themselves up in their successful butcher business.

"Since we've moved here we have never looked back," John said.



John Ackermann, second from right with his staff at the ARO
Photograph: Ackermann coll.

Ref: Canberra Times May 25th, 1995

Queanbeyan My Home

*Queanbeyan, I love you and I always have
We came to you from a distant land
You welcomed us and gave a life
To a displaced man, his kids and wife.*

*You gave my Dad work so he could be
Safe and secure and so could his family
You were small then, just a small town
And it is great to see how you have grown.*

*We loved Floral Festival and also the Show
To Isabella school we kids did go.
I grew up here and my sons did too
And I will always have a love for you.*

*I was just little when we came to live here
And it was so good to grow up without fear
So Queanbeyan, my Queanbeyan, my only home
When I'm in Queanbeyan I don't feel alone.*

*Activities to go to and friends to meet
Meetings and poetry and good places to eat
I live in you Queanbeyan and love it that way
I'll stay in you Queanbeyan until my dying day.*

I joined the Society on 18/4/2015 and I was asked if I would like to write something for the magazine. At first I said no. Then when a friend asked me to write something, maybe a poem, again I said no, but the words to the poem came to me so I wrote them down. I have lived in Queanbeyan for 64 years (at the same address too). I have seen so many changes but I just love Queanbeyan.

Maria Lukacs 2015