



NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2014



School Visits John Horrocks Cottage

It was very pleasing to have more schoolchildren visit Horrocks Cottage to learn about Horrocks and his exploring adventures.

On 26th November twenty 2nd/3rd year primary school children visited from the Vineyard Lutheran School. After being told the story of Horrocks and his exploring by Janet, students took part in a Seek & Find in and outside the cottage. This was followed by lunch beneath the walnut tree, then off to St Marks Church, Horrocks grave and Horrocks Tree. Final stop was the monument on Horrocks Highway erected in 1946. Positive feedback from the teacher was encouraging and it would appear the children had an enjoyable visit.



On 4th December the procedure was repeated for 23 1st/2nd year students from the same school and again the teacher was very pleased with the visit and is hoping to return next year.



Time Capsule Located

In November 1997 as part of the 150th Jubilee celebration in Watervale, a time capsule was buried at the Soldiers Memorial Park. The capsule contains:

- Book *Watervale The Village Among the Vines*
- Banner painted by Joni Johnson
- Fourteen local photographs by Ian Smith
- Plains Producer Newspaper dated 15/10/1997
- Northern Argus Newspaper dated 15/10/1997
- Register of names of attendees at the celebration
- Invitation and Programme of Remembrance Day Service 11/11/1977
- Souvenir Key ring medallion



Stephen John, the Chairman of the J150 Committee, buries the time capsule on Tuesday November 11th, 1997 assisted by Les Bryksy and Father Roy Todd

It was agreed at the time that the capsule be exhumed 25 years from that date. The only clue to the location of the time capsule was that it was buried “*behind the CFS Fire Shed 1 yard south of a Grevillia Tree*” and that “*a Pincushion Hakea was planted in line with the trees planted on Arbour Day*” MHHS wished to mark the spot with a stone inscription locating the position and have been successful in finding the time capsule to complete this task. The laying of the slate will be reported in the next Newsletter.

Is This “Harry”?



Whilst excavating for the installation of a new shed, Leo Faulkner who lives close by to St Marks Church, Penwortham made a very interesting find.....what is thought to be a camel skull. Is this Harry?

In 1846 Horrocks' dromedary camel became the first camel to be used for exploratory purposes in Australia, but Harry's reputation gained him the name "Harry the Horrible" or "Horrocks' Beast". In this year Horrocks organised his expedition to discover new pastoral lands and it was on this expedition that things went terribly wrong for both Harry and Horrocks.

It is not recorded exactly how Horrocks came to own Harry, but it is thought that the camel probably arrived in Australia in early 1846 from the Canary Islands. It is reported that Horrocks handed over 6 cows each worth £15 in exchange for Harry. After being prodded and poked by all who saw him as a wonder to behold, by the time Horrocks purchased him Harry had become a cantankerous beast. Horrocks' neighbour George Hawker at Bungaree recalled later that Harry was a particularly fractious animal much given to bolting; *"in fact all the north considered whether they should indict Mr Horrocks the owner of the nuisance"*.

Despite the early indications that Harry was not overly rapt with his human companions and his new home, Horrocks persevered with him, most probably due to the expectation that he could carry a greater load than any of his horses and be less dependent on a daily drink of water.

Horrocks and his party had trouble with Harry as they attempted to make their way through what is now known as Horrocks Pass. The contrary camel bolted as he was being loaded and tipped the party's provisions into a gully, he later bit into the bags of flour and raising them in the air, powdered the contents over the countryside.

Although not intentionally the cause of Horrocks fatal accident on the shores of Lake Dutton, on his death bed Horrocks instructed that Harry be shot, presumably because he blamed him for his current misfortune and imminent death. Various accounts report that the inaugural Mayor of Clare, Edward Burton Gleeson was tasked with the murderous deed, but he was apparently so frightened of the 'beast' that his aim was askew and his bullet failed to kill poor old Harry. The execution had to be completed by a bystander.

There is every chance that this deed took place in the vicinity of Leo's property...so the question remains...is this Harry?



"Look what I dug up"
Leo Faulkner shows his find to Gypsy Sandow & Wendy Spackman

Summer Picnic in Times Gone By



That quintessentially summer activity – going on a picnic – was an extremely fashionable thing to do in the Victorian era. There were no BBQ chooks and a bit of coleslaw on offer; typical picnic fare in Queen Victoria's time for the well-to-do included iced champagne, lobster tails, poached chicken in cream sauce, trifle and whisky punch.



Great care was taken to select an appropriate site that would provide adequate shade, a good covering of grass, have not an anthill in site and be far enough from any cliffs or sudden drops so as not to alarm the ladies. The food was served by one or two of the servants (having too many staff at a picnic was thought unseemly) before those with musical talents were expected to entertain. After that everyone played games such as tag, croquet and blind man's bluff. Gentlemen were expected to do their utmost to be amusing and entertaining!



Games of the Past

It may well have been that those enjoying the above picnic would have amused themselves by playing a card game. A huge variety of games have been devised over the years. Two of the most popular by far were *Snap* and *Happy Families*, both of which were originally invented by John Jaques of London in the 1860's. Jaques also gave the world *Croquet and Ping-Pong, Tiddlywinks, Ludo and Snakes and Ladders*, but none of those games have come anywhere near to matching *Happy Families* for popularity.

MHHS Christmas Lunch and & Shed Opening

On Sunday 1st December 2013 the Committee and several MHHS members gathered at Horrocks Cottage for an early Christmas celebration and to officially open our new storage shed. The honour of cutting the ribbon was given to Alan Williams without whose guidance and expertise the project would never have come to fruition. The Society also wishes to thank:

- Clare Building Supplies
- Mace Engineering
- Peter & Janette Low
- Alex and Jan Ryan
- Steve Walsh Plumbing



The Society would also like to thank Peter Low of Clare Joinery for the generous donation and installation of a new storage cupboard pictured below.



All that remains now is for the Committee to organise the interior and put it to its intended use as a storage facility allowing more room in the Interpretive Centre for displays and the like.

Penna Family Memorabilia Returned

A request was made by the Penna family whose ancestors were well known residents of the district for the return of certain items donated to the Society by long-time member Nancy Turner (nee Penna). Having moved into smaller accommodation with insufficient storage space, Nancy donated a cape made by her grandmother Ulalya Penna. She had already donated the family bible and numerous other items relating to the Penna family. With Nancy's permission and approval of the Society, the cape and bible were handed over to Judy Hayter (nee Penna) for safe keeping within the family.

Letters written by Nancy's father Herbert William Penna from the Middle-East during WW1 have been donated (with Nancy's permission) to the State Library of SA to add to their collection of WW1 memorabilia. Also passed on to the SLSA were 64 photographs taken by HW Penna while serving in the Middle-East.

Nancy celebrated her 90th birthday late last year, and the Society wishes to extend belated birthday wishes and thanks for her continued interest in the Society.

Wicked Wit

"Tact is the ability to describe others as they see themselves."

Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865)

History SA – "About Time"

As in previous years MHHS will host an event in the "About Time" programme which runs during the month of May. John Horrocks Cottage to open:

Sunday 4th May
10am – 4pm

An ideal opportunity for you to meet up with your Committee for a cuppa and check out what has been happening at the cottage and inspect the new shed.

St Mark's church will hold a service at **11am** and the Church will be open to view from **1pm – 4pm**

MHHS would like to send a special birthday greeting to Society member and well-known local identity Val Tilbrook on the occasion of her 80th birthday



A Child's Rhyme

*For yarn we spin and fabrics make,
With cotton wares great pains we take
And modern woman ever wise
Will cherish all our goods she buys
Our name it cannot be forgotten
Horrockses,
The Greatest Name in Cotton*

Committee Members

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| Vice-President | Janet Morran | Minute Secretary | Jim Morran |
| Secretary | Anne Weddle | Public Officer | David Spackman |
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Details of charges for research undertaken by the Society are available on request

Website: www.communitywebs.org/MountHorrocksHistoricalSociety

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