



NEWSLETTER – SUMMER 2024

Brief History of Ngadjuri People

Ngadjuri people are the traditional owners of the region on which the town of Penwortham stands and lived here for many thousands of years. The word 'Ngadjuri' in their language means 'we people'.



The Ngadjuri homelands covered roughly 11,500 square miles (30,000 km²), embracing Angaston and Freeling in the south and running northwards to Clare, Crystal Brook, Gladstone up to Carrieton and Orroroo in the Flinders Ranges.

The Ngadjuri are virtually invisible in the histories of colonisation. As with other Aboriginal groups in South Australia, the Ngadjuri led nomadic lives and were decimated by introduced European diseases, such as measles and smallpox. As colonisers took over their water and land resources, this led to their dispersion. The discovery and development of large copper mines at Kapunda and then Burra in 1844 and 1845 respectively, spurred a notable influx of settlers into their region. Calculating from records on the supply of foodstuffs to the native population, in 1852 it is estimated that there were some 70 Ngadjuri people drawing rations.

The spread of agriculture appears to have coincided with the disappearance of the central community within the following 20 years.

Source: Wikipedia

Remembrance Day 2023 In Watervale

Remembrance Day was observed in Watervale on the 10th of November. The day was quite warm, with the temperature in the high 30s, so the ceremony was held under the shade at the Watervale School, instead of at the Institute.

The entire service was led by the students, and they did a great job. Individual students read items to remind us all how important it is to observe this day. Leonie Moore played the Last Post on her clarinet and assembled guests were invited to place wreaths and rosemary on a special table set up for the occasion.

Meredith McInnis



Watervale School Students and
Leonie Moore with her clarinet

The Society offers condolences to Pamela McTaggart (nee Horrocks) on the passing of her husband Malcolm. Pamela is a great-granddaughter of Arthur Horrocks (brother of John Ainsworth Horrocks) and has been a staunch supporter of the Society since its inception in 1983.



Opening of the 'Vale' at Watervale

On Sunday 19th November the Vale Community Hub at Watervale was officially opened by the Mayor of Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council, Allan Aughey.

Fifteen years ago, a decision was made by the community to sell the historic Foresters Hall. The hall was in a serious state of disrepair and the community was not in a financial position to pay for much needed repairs.

So, with proceeds from the sale of the old hall and numerous grants, a facility was built which would be beneficial to the whole community. The community was keen to establish a meeting place for everyone in a popular location. Sporting groups such as the cricket club, tennis club and bowling club all have their facilities near the location of the Vale.

The popular Vale has been in operation for some time, being hired for weddings, Melbourne Cup luncheons, and more recently a regular social night for locals.

Mayor Aughey said that *"The centre was one that would prosper well into the future. It was great to see a community that is passionate about where they live, and it was a strong commitment that saw this come together."* He went on to say *"It is important in small communities that we understand what we are about today, tomorrow, and yesterday, and this is a facility that will remain for a long time"*



Watervale community at the opening of the Vale

1924 – from MHHS Photographic Collection

Watervale Cricket Team – Mid-North Association Premiers 1924-25



L-R standing: R Burgess, E Grace, M Sobels, C Sobels, A. Burgess, MS Grace

Sitting: G Burgess, AJ Halls, RD Newland (Cpt.), JA Grace (Sec), D Tavender (Pres.), E Baker



November 1924 - Mrs. CA Sobels opening the Pavilion at the Watervale Memorial Park accompanied by Mr. Pope. The pavilion was built by local Mr. N Grace.

Congratulations to the Historical Society of South Australia Inc. who celebrate their 50th Anniversary this year. You can follow the Society on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/HistoricalSocietySA> or their website www.historicalsocietysa.com





COBB & Co. - Last Run 1924

Cobb & Co. was established in 1853 in Melbourne, Victoria by a small group of American immigrants with the intention of servicing the Victorian goldfields. Cobb & Co quickly became an important transport company delivering mail, gold and passengers throughout the country. The first passenger coach left Melbourne for Forest Creek (now Castlemaine) and Bendigo on 30 January 1854. Soon after, mail contracts were awarded to the business and Cobb & Co operated a gold escort, passenger and mail service.

In May 1856, the company was sold to Thomas Davies and changed hands again five years later when it was bought by a consortium, part of which were James Rutherford and William Franklin Whitney. Rutherford became the General Manager and both he and Whitney were to become the driving forces behind the Cobb & Co. success.

In 1862, the company's headquarters were transferred from Victoria to the New South Wales town of Bathurst. On 26 June 1862, an impressive cavalcade of horses, coaches, wagons and drivers arrived in Bathurst to be greeted by a grand turnout of locals and an enthusiastic fanfare. The company soon established itself on the Bathurst scene. Within a week, Cobb & Co was operating a regular service to Forbes, and the speed and skill of Cobb & Co were such that an entire day was cut from the previous journey time between Bathurst and Forbes.

From here, its fortunes went from strength to strength and before long Cobb & Co had bought out many of its rival firms and expanded into Queensland in 1865. The name of 'Cobb & Co' became the byword for cutting edge communications and transport facilities across eastern Australia.

The company was enormously successful and at its peak, Cobb & Co. operated along a network of tracks that extended further than those of any other coach system in the world – its coaches travelled 28,000 miles (44,800km) per week and 6,000 (out of their 30,000) horses were harnessed every day. Cobb & Co created a web of tracks from Normanton on the Gulf of Carpentaria and Port Douglas on the Coral Sea down to the furthest reaches of Victoria and South Australia – in all, a continuous line of 2000 miles (3200km) of track over eastern Australia from south to north, with a total of 7000 miles (11,200km) of regular routes.

The advent of the motor vehicle in the early 20th Century, as well as the political and economic effects of World War I, saw the general decline of the coaching industry and led to the eventual closure of Cobb & Co. with its last run being 100 years ago in **1924**.



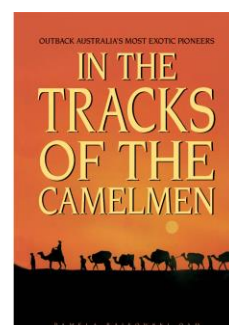
Clare Regional History Group Celebrates 40th Anniversary

12th April at 10.30

Barbara J Long Room, Clare

As well as local speakers, the special guest speaker will be Pamela Rajkowski OAM, author of "*In the Tracks of the Camelmen*". Pamela has spoken to numerous groups and always well received. Her book covers the history of the Afghan and Indian camel drivers, their families and communities as well as their camels.

If you wish to attend please rsvp by Friday 5th April to clarehistory@gmail.com



Introducing Committee Member; Eugenie Booth

Eugenie was born in Canada, studied and became a nurse. In 1976 she immigrated to South Australia on her own. One strange thing she remembers is, when she first came to SA you were, “able to open the windows”. She was also warned that SA was 20 years behind the times which she found wasn’t quite true, it was only 15 years behind.

Eugenie worked most of her adult life as a nurse in Adelaide and Sydney. She set up several Health Services in Port Adelaide and Gilmore, and an Ophthalmic Theatre in Sydney. In 1992 she entered the field of Mental Health Nursing, and towards the end of her working life was instrumental in setting up the Mental Health Service at the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. Another interesting job she did was as an Occupational Health and Safety worker within a shipyard. One different job was a dog grooming business on the Sunshine Coast, and says it was one of the “best things she ever did.” She joined the service group Jaycees, being the first woman in SA to be admitted. Whilst in Jaycees she was involved in a project ‘Apprentice of the Year’.

She met her husband Drew in 1992 and they married in 1993. They have one son, a Medical Doctor who works in Adelaide.

Eugenie and Drew moved to Watervale 6 years ago. Some of her hobbies include gardening and being part of a quilting and hand stitching group.

Eugenie joined The Society during a time of uncertainty regarding the Watervale Institute and wished to join a group of ‘liked minded people making a stand’.



MHHS thanks members for their generous donations, amongst which one was from local resident Louise Faulkner. We wish Louise well after the sale of her business in Watervale.

Acquisitions & Donations

A book: “*Preston at Work*” by Keith Johnson and a painting of St Mary’s Church, Penwortham UK. Donated by member John Hill

President	Wendy Spackman (0417175234)	Newsletter	Jim Morran & Meredith McInnis
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Secretary	Mal Paterson	Publicity	Meredith McInnis
Treasurer	David Spackman	Public Officer	David Spackman

General Committee: Viktoria Cormack, Eugenie Booth and Pam Datsun

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Details of charges for research undertaken by the Society are available on request



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