



The Arms Chronicle

Cnr. Gardenia Ave, Great Western Highway,
Emu Plains, NSW. Australia. Tel 02 4735 4394
Open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 9am - 2pm
1st & 3rd Sunday 1 - 4pm



No 75

February 2015

2015 History Conference: From Guard House to Gallipoli - Saturday 14th March

This year acknowledges some significant events in Penrith's history – the 200th anniversary of the construction of the guard house and depot on the new Great Western Road (now the site of Penrith Police Station) and the 100th anniversary on 25 April 2015 of the landing by ANZAC forces on Gallipoli.

In January 1815 the Great Western Road was completed and in April, Governor Lachlan Macquarie and his party made the first official journey along that road to where he would proclaim the government township of Bathurst.

A few months later William Cox commenced building the Great Western Road from the Nepean River back to Parramatta. He was instructed to build a guard house and depot on Crown land on the new road. The district became known as Evan and the village of Penrith grew around the guard house and depot area.

The Gallipoli campaign marked a significant event in the history of Australia and New Zealand. 18 local men died during this campaign and another two would die of disease. These local boys are commemorated on War Memorials across the local area and we acknowledge them and their service.

Speakers at the conference include, **Associate Professor Carol Liston** as the keynote speaker who will talk about the early days of the settlement that became Penrith.

John Bradley will be looking at the connections between Penrith and Mudgee, following up the families (such as the Coxes) who moved across the mountains to settle in the western districts of NSW.

Information Librarian **Lorraine Stacker** will look at the development of the District of Evan and its ultimate demise as a place name.

Norm Andrews has been working on a history of the RSL. He will share some of the stories about the creation of the organisation after the war and the establishment of Memory Park.

Kim Phillips is an historian with a great interest in Gallipoli. She will speak about the Gallipoli campaign and the local men who took part.

**For more information on the conference contact Penrith City Library, 02 4732 7891
or email: researchservices@penrithcity.new.gov.au**



Donald Leith and his wife Jessie on their wedding day 1916. (Penrith City Library)

NDHS at Glenbrook's Australia Day Celebrations



Left, NDHS members, John Kelaher, Richard Nutt, Beth Moore and Craig Werner show off the Bushells wagon at Glenbrook's Australia Day celebrations. Right, a visitor is put in the stocks, while Craig and Richard look on.



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Celebrating the Roaring 20s



The Valley Heights Locomotive Depot Heritage Museum at Valley Heights, will be celebrating the 1920s on Saturday and Sunday the 21st and 22nd of February from 10am to 4pm.

Visitors can ride on Sydney Steam Tram, explore the small exhibits and model rooms, see restored locomotives, carriages and Wagons, enjoy the unique collection of original railway paintings, watch a short documentary about the Lapstone Zig-Zag, and experience the ambience of the 100 year old Roundhouse.

On both days, the visiting Model "A" or Model "T" Ford, will be on show and on Sunday visitors can listen to the renowned Blue Mountains Jazz Ensemble.

Members of the Nepean Family History Society will be on hand to talk about tracing your family tree and tips on genealogy and experience the old-style classroom recreated by Nepean District Historical Society! Youngsters can be involved with the Kids' Quiz! Then all are welcome to relax in the cosy Café and browse the well-stocked shop.



Fancy Dress Competition with prizes!

This year a fancy dress competition will be held over the two days.

Turn up in period gear from the 1920s! Grab that slinky boa, fedora, "flapper" dress, cloche hat or even "spats" and step out in style!

Entrants on both days in the fancy dress competition will be professionally photographed in front of our historic Sydney Steam Tram. Images will be reviewed on screen, and judging will commence at 3pm on Sunday. There's no need to be on site when the judging is done by a representative from one of the visiting societies.

For more information: phone (02) 4751 4638 (leave message) email atmuseum@optusnet.com.au

web www.infoblue-mountains.net.au/locodpot

NB Steam Tram Operation, Vehicle Displays and Performances may be affected by adverse weather. Rides may cease at 3.30.



Bottles and more bottles!

A warm welcome to Ron Park, who has joined the working group of volunteers.

Since his arrival in November last year, Ron has labelled and numbered over 250 bottles!

Before joining us, Ron worked for Caroma Industries and lives in South Penrith. He is interested in history and how things were done in the past.

Seniors Week Free Bus Tour

This year's seniors bus tour of historic Emu Plains will start at the Arms of Australia Inn Museum on Monday March 16 leaving at 1pm.

Emu Plains' European history goes back to 1789 when the Nepean River was first discovered by Watkin Tench.

It was where the road to the west started, it provided food for the growing colony and produced Australia's first theatre performances presented by convicts.

Following the tour, there will be an old fashioned high tea and a tour of the museum.

For information and bookings please call the inn - 4735 4394 - during opening hours, Mon, Wed, Thur 9-2 or email us. info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au

2015 Annual General Meeting

The NDHS's AGM will be held at the February meeting on Saturday 28 at 1pm

If you haven't paid your membership fee by the 28th you will be unable to vote at the AGM.



Display of the Carthona and Dobson Family Collection at the Museum

with Rachel Wong
NDHS's Research Officer



Display in the Museum.

Three Brothers of the Dobson Family of Picton (Left: Charles Septimus Dobson. Right top: Name not known. Right lower: Harry Albert Dobson).

This display in the History Room at the Museum, prepared by Lynne Cheshire, shows the collection of items that belonged to the family of Harry Albert Dobson and his wife Anne at the 'Carthona' Dairy Farm. The farm was on a block of land bounded by the corner of Old Bathurst Road and Russell Street, Emu Plains. The Dobson family lived at this property from 1914 and it remained a working farm until 1978. In 2009, the property was sold and all the buildings including the house, the schoolhouse and sheds, were demolished and removed.

Of interest is a collection of seed packets purchased by the Dobson family for the farm. These seeds were given to David Bowen by Bruce Dobson (son of Charles Septimus Dobson), then donated by David to the Museum in November 2012. Annette Scarlett (nee Dobson), the grand niece of Harry Albert Dobson donated a collection of items seven days later. These included copies and original photographs, baptism certificates, a motor vehicle driver's licence, recipes, business letters, Certificates of Registration as a Dairyman from 1935 to 1948, a notebook recording the rainfall at the farm from 1947 to 1955 and other items.

'The Arms Chronicle' in March 2013 featured the story of the Dobson family of 'Carthona' Emu Plains with photographs of the Dobson family home with schoolhouse, Harry Albert (Junior) with the pumpkins grown at the farm, the 1935 Certificate of Registration as a Dairyman and the Dobson family.

Next month's Chronicle will feature the Seed Merchants in the display.

Shed with cows, and the collapsed shed below in 2008.



The schoolhouse in disrepair in 2008 and below in the demolition period in 2009.



CONVICT Extraordinaire

The Story of Arthur Bristol (1808 – 1884)

By Paul Wheeldon

The rural serenity of a village graveyard at Murringo, near Young, belies the turbulent life of Arthur Bristol whose body was laid at rest there in 1884.

Arthur was a son of Arthur and Elizabeth Bristol (nee Burke). His father was a whitesmith and appears to have been born in Nottingham, in the midlands of England.

In March 1823, Arthur Bristol in company of others, stole a shawl worth 10 shillings from a shop in Leicester. He was sentenced to nine months imprisonment with hard labour, however within 10 days of his release he re-offended, stealing a tea caddy worth two shillings and six pence and containing one shilling and three pence. The penalty was raised to 12 months imprisonment with hard labour, in the hope that "by sending him to what he had not been accustomed to (a little wholesome exercise), he still might become a good member of society". The punishment failed to deter him from further criminal activity, as within a year of serving his time, Bristol was facing the death penalty for the burglary of a hat and other articles valued at five shillings. He was spared the hangman by being granted the Royal Mercy on condition that he was transported for life to New South Wales or Van Dieman's Land. This was in April 1826. He was described as having a stout frame, just over 5' 6" with a fair complexion, light brown hair and grey eyes.



Arthur Bristol

Bristol arrived in Sydney on the 'Albion' in February 1827, with 191 other male convicts. Following a brief assignment to Joseph Underwood (a merchant and shipowner who traded mainly in seal skins and seal oil from the South Pacific), he was assigned with four other convicts to the boat crews of the Surveyor and Searcher of Customs. The duties of Customs were to meet and board all arriving vessels, determine their name and tonnage, master's name, last port of call and the nature of the cargo, assess and collect any duties payable, obtain clearance dockets, supervise unloading etc. For the small boat crew it was arduous work, often extremely dangerous in rough weather, with long and irregular hours.

Two years passed then in September 1828 he was implicated, with other members of the boat crew, in the theft of 'a bag of dollars' from the baggage of the vessel 'Nimrod' which was preparing to leave for Singapore. Bristol's share of over 23 pounds was passed to a hut-keeper in an attempt to avoid detection (the hut-keeper later refused to hand it back, there being little honour among thieves). Bristol and his accomplices were found guilty and he was sentenced to 'a penal settlement' for three years. After being held on the hulk, 'Phoenix' (moored at Lavender Bay) for three months, he was transferred to the transport ship, 'City of Edinburgh' bound for Moreton Bay with 167 other convicts. Even before the ship left Sydney a violent attempted mutiny by some of the prisoners had to be quelled, resulting in eight prisoners being wounded by gunshot, nine being flogged, and all the prisoners being handcuffed and put in irons.

Bristol's three years at Moreton Bay and nearby Eagle Farm settlements were from January 1829 to February 1832. Located where the city of Brisbane now stands, the settlement was noted for its harshness and brutality. His time there was characterised by fatal outbreaks of illness (Bristol himself being briefly hospitalised with ophthalmia), murderous attacks from aborigines (even the Commandant Patrick Logan lost his life in this manner), prisoners being executed and with many escapes. Bristol was discharged back to Sydney on the 'Isabella' and reassigned to the Customs boat crew, though certainly he would have been hardened and aged beyond his 23 years, if not chastened by the experience.

In October 1833 Bristol was found drunk and disorderly after hours and 'very insolent', for which he received 25 lashes and returned to service on the boats. Then in May 1834, he absconded from this service, only to be seized about a month later at Parramatta. This cost him 14 days on the treadmill at Parramatta Gaol. Within a few weeks he absconded again. He was caught soon after in Sydney and sentenced to 12 months hard labour

in irons, which usually meant manacles chained to leg-irons.

Bristol and the other 34 prisoners in the Parramatta Gaol No. 1 ironed gang were under the superintendence of the Asst. Surveyor of Roads and Bridges. The gang laboured, from sunrise to sunset, on road work and the quarrying and cutting of stone for the Duck Creek bridge on Parramatta Road. In the early summer of 1834-35 half the ironed gang was reassigned to harvest duties around Penrith and Campbelltown. Although only half way through his year sentence, Bristol was assigned to Captain Phillip Parker King (retired maritime explorer and son of former Governor Phillip Gidley King). But in July he absconded from service on King's dairy farm, 'Dunheved', at St. Marys. Within a few days however he was picked up in York Street, Sydney presenting a false name and an altered Certificate of Freedom.

While awaiting trial he escaped from the watch-house at the Sydney Police Office, but was quickly recaptured at Parramatta. His ensuing trial for the forgery and uttering of a Certificate of Freedom resulted in a sentence of 14 years transportation to a penal settlement in irons. The appointed penal settlement this time was the notorious Norfolk Island. He arrived there in December 1835 aboard the 'Governor Phillip' with 57 other prisoners, just less than four years after his discharge from Moreton Bay and with a much bleaker future than when he arrived in New South Wales nine years earlier.

Norfolk Island had been revived in 1824 as, in Governor Darling's own words, "a place of extreme punishment, short of death"; a place of banishment for the worst type of convicts – multiple offenders to whom the more traditional forms and places of punishment seemed an ineffective deterrent. As a repeated offender, Bristol fitted this description, though it should be noted that none of his crimes appear to have been particularly violent or physically harmful to other persons.

Captain Alexander Maconochie, that humane reformer, made the following observations on the plight of the convicts upon his arrival to take command of the Norfolk Island settlement in March 1840: "the most horrid vices with acts of brutal violence, or of dexterity in theft and robbery met with little direct censure, while the possession of a pipe, a newspaper, a little tea, some clothing not furnished by the Government, or the omission of some mark of respect, or a saucy look



Norfolk Island

or word were deemed unpardonable crimes. They were fed more like hogs than men. Neither knives, nor forks were allowed at the tables. They tore their food with fingers and teeth, and drank from water buckets". Further, "not a single place of worship had been erected. There were no schools, no books". And, "in every way their feelings were habitually outraged and their self respect destroyed".

Bristol, remained in this environment for a little over four years. The Commandant for most of this time was Major Joseph Anderson. It was a time when major building works were being undertaken, including new Military Barracks, Officers' Quarters, a 36 bed hospital, a new gaol and a crank mill (treadmill). The number of convicts varied between 1200 and 1500, of which more than a third were engaged in building, about another third in agriculture, and the remainder in various services. The events leading to Bristol's earlier than expected return from Norfolk Island began in January 1839, when a boat capsized while transferring officers from shore to the 'Pelorus'. The officers were saved from drowning by the six members of the boat crew, one of whom was Bristol. For their heroism they received remissions of their sentences, Bristol's being reduced from 14 to 10 years. Then in August 1839 the boat crew were involved in preventing the 'Indemnity' from running aground. Proposals of indulgences led to Bristol's total sentence to serve being commuted to eight years. So it was that, in March 1840, Bristol now aged 32, left Norfolk Island on the 'Nautilus', the same ship that three days earlier had brought Captain Maconochie to the island.

Now back in Sydney, Bristol was transferred to the Woolloomooloo Stockade, in an ironed gang quarrying and dressing stone for the completion of the Darlinghurst Gaol. He then made another daring dash for freedom. Prisoners were routinely turned out of their boxes (wheeled, mobile, container-like crates, 14 feet by 10 feet, sleeping twenty gangers on two levels) three quarters of an hour before the 7 am muster. During this interval, Bristol and six others, all in irons, prised the padlock off the rear gate of the new gaol wall and hid under blankets placed on a clothesline before making good their escape. It was 21 months before "notorious runaway" Bristol was recaptured in Pitt Street, Sydney in March 1842.

Continued next month



Berrima's Headless Ghost Part 1

with John Staats

President, NSW Corps of Marines

The nowadays sleepy tourist town of Berrima in the Southern Highlands of NSW lays claim to be the best preserved example of a colonial Georgian village on the Australian mainland and to be amongst the most haunted towns you are ever likely to visit. The story of Lucretia Dunkley – 'the headless ghost' of Berrima, with her links to the historic buildings of Berrima Courthouse and Gaol, certainly lends support to Berrima's dual 'claim'.

Berrima

The Berrima district was first explored in the mid 1790s, but it was not until the 1830s that a permanent European settlement was established in response to the exploration and expansion of the settlement beyond the Nepean River. By the 1840s it was recognised as the administrative centre for the 'Southern Districts' and had its own Court House (1838) and gaol (1839) as well as some thirteen inns to cater for travellers on the 'Great South Road' leading to Goulburn and beyond.

The magnificent Berrima Court House and Gaol's heyday was brief (eclipsed by the transfer of court circuit proceedings to Goulburn in 1848) and the town went into decline after 1867 when the railway by-passed Berrima in favour of Bowral and Moss Vale. Berrima became a true 'backwater' when, in 1989, the F5 expressway's 'Berrima By-pass' opened and the town lost the bulk of its 'through traffic' from Sydney to Canberra.

Nonetheless in the 1840s Berrima earned its share of notoriety with sensational trials and executions including those of Patrick Curran (1841), bushranger, murderer and rapist (whose ghost reputedly drove condemned prisoners at the Berrima Gaol insane or to suicide); Patrick Clearham (1842); Australia's first serial killer John Lynch (1842); Henry Atkins (1844), murderer; and the first and only woman to be executed in Berrima Gaol, Lucretia Dunkley (1843), along with her accomplice and paramour, Martin Beech (1843).



Berrima Court House.



Members of the NDHS visit the Berrima Courthouse, October 2014.

Lucretia Dunkley – Axe Murderess

Lucretia Dunkley (nee Davis) arrived in Sydney, a convict, and was sent to the Female Factory at Parramatta before being married to Henry Dunkley (a man twenty years her senior) in 1834. The couple ran a farm at Gunning, but the marriage was not a happy one; both were alcoholics, Lucretia was feisty with a sharp tongue and her husband was a man with an inclination to violence.

The arrival of a ticket of leave man, Martin Beech, to employment on the farm in 1842 saw the beginnings of a love affair between Martin and Lucretia; the result was that the two lovers decided to murder Henry Dunkley. This they did on the night of the 13th

September 1842 when they crept into the bedroom of the sleeping Henry Dunkley and dealt him a fatal blow with an axe to the forehead. Two or three additional axe blows to the face followed. Lucretia claimed later that she was a mere accomplice and that Beech threatened to kill her unless she assisted him in the grisly business and held the chamber pot to catch the blood from the battered head that Beech held aloft as he dragged the corpse from the bed.

Beech and Lucretia bundled up the body and buried it about 300 yards from the homestead, cleaned the blood and gore from the murder scene and set upon constructing a tale to cover up the murder and account for Henry Dunkley's 'disappearance'.

Lucretia and Beech failed to convince their suspicious neighbours who had their suspicions heightened by the acts of 'open familiarity' in which Beech and Lucretia now engaged. Nine days after the murder Lucretia, in the company of Beech and another assigned servant, went to Goulburn to inquire after her missing husband. The police were alerted, Beech questioned and detained. Lucretia was taken back to the Gunning property and a search commenced; the authorities found Henry Dunkley's body as well as evidence of blood in the bedroom. At the sight of her husband's corpse, Lucretia broke down and confessed to the crime. Both Beech and Lucretia were arrested and sent to Berrima Gaol. Almost a year passed as evidence was collected. The trial of Martin Beech and Lucretia Dunkley commenced at Berrima Courthouse on September 5, 1843.

In Part 2 of 'Berrima's Headless Ghost' we examine the trial evidence, hear the extraordinary judgement of Justice James Dowling. In Part 3 we learn how a woman, hanged by the neck, became the 'headless ghost', and we investigate the sightings of the ghost of Lucretia Dunkley at Berrima.



The NSW Corps of Marines Inc. is a re-enactment group. The Marine Corps we depict was formed in 1786 specifically to come to Australia to protect the new colony and preserve order. The 212 marines along with their families, other settlers and convicts on board 11 ships witnessed the official Flag Raising held at Farm Cove on the 26th January, 1788.



For more information call (02) 4620 5789

Bateman Battersby
LAWYERS

19 Lawson Street, Penrith NSW 2750
PO Box 981 Penrith NSW DX 8040 Penrith
Telephone (02) 4731 5899 Facsimile (02) 4721 4008
Email: johnbateman@batemanbattersby.com.au
Web: www.batemanbattersby.com.au

John Bateman
B.A., LL.B., Q.D.L.E., M.Com. (Nestlé Public; AAP) (Econ.)
Mobile: 0419 315 876

PAK
KIT HOMES

The 'Elizabeth' on display at Emu Plains.
113-115 Russell St. Emu Plains
www.paalkithomes.com.au

Stuart Ayres MP

Member for Penrith
Ph: 4722 8660
penrith@parliament.nsw.gov.au
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SUNDAY ROSTER

February

Sunday 1 Elsa & Jan
 Sunday 15 Richard & Jan

March

Sunday 1 Reg & Joan
 Sunday 15 Elsa & Harry

April

Sunday 5 EASTER
 Sunday 19 Reg & Bob F

Please take note of your duty days and if you can't make it, please try to change with somebody who can.

Reminders

Please remember to sign in the diary in the meeting room, and write any information in the diary pertinent to your time on duty. Inquiries that need following up or abnormalities of equipment or facilities.

Accession forms are on the desk with the log book. Please get people to sign them and fill in as much detail as possible.

Why not hire the Museum grounds for your next function?

To book call
 02 4735 4394
 during opening hours
 02 4735 1734 after hours
 Email: info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au

Call AGM Emu Plains

02 4735 7214

For any reasonable engineering jobs
 No job too small
 Unit 3, 144 Old Bathurst Road
 Emu Plains

NOTICE BOARD

February 11

Inn tour, numbers to be confirmed

February 18

Blue Mountains Seniors plus Devonshire Teas

February 21/22

'Roaring 20s' at the Valley Heights Railway Museum.
 We will showcase the school room.

February 28

Monthly meeting and AGM

March 14

Penrith History Conference

March 15

Family History Fair, Penrith City Library

NB: If you would like to purchase the commemorative History Book, or The Emu Plains plate we have them in stock.

Office Bearers 2014

President	Craig Werner	02 4722 5776
Senior Vice President, Publicity, Chronicle, Website	Rosemary Weaver	02 4751 6975
Vice Presidents	Bob Moynahan	0406 425 383
	Bob Fielding	02 4735 8570
	Richard Nutt	02 4777 4365
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P.O.Box 441, Penrith NSW 2751 Australia

Phone: 02 4735 4394 Email: info@armsofasutralia.org.au

Contributions welcome. Please contact Rosemary Weaver. Tel. 4751 6975 email weaver@pnc.com.au

www.armsofaustraliainn.org.au info@armsofaustraliainn.org.au