



The Wandong History Group Inc. Quarterly Newsletter FREE with your What 's News

“WHAT’S OLD”

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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the winter edition of What’s Old, it has been a busy year for the group so far. We have applied for a Living Heritage grant for St Michaels Catholic church and everything crossed we are successful and are able to have the building restored to its former glory, and more importantly conserved for the future. I would like to thank the Kilmore Parish Council who have worked with us, allowing us to apply and a special thanks to member Lynne Dore who has braved the mountains of documents required for the application. This has been a mammoth task and without Lynne’s expertise may not have been possible. Now we wait and hope that we get the grant, we are excited to see the church restored and stabilised for years to come.

We are still working on the Derril Sawmill site, the more we look the more we find and from our investigations so far it may be that the site can be not only placed on the Heritage Inventory, but like the Comet Mill may be worthy of a Heritage Register listing. Over the summer period we had to stop work on the site, but hopefully we can complete this work with the cooler weather.

We will be having an event for History Week; we have a few grant applications in that will determine what the subject will be so more news on that later.

Once again we were happy to take part in Wandong Heathcote Junction’s ANZAC Day service. The history group provided the soldier profile, a new addition to the program, where within our service we highlight one of our servicemen. We are happy to be able to share these stories and the work that was done on the “Walk Through the Wars” event has enabled us to use the profiles. We hope that this addition is appreciated. I would like to commend the Wandong Primary School Captains and Vice Captains who took part on the day, the respect shown by these children was great to see.

We have recently had contact from another relative of Robert Affleck Robertson and have met and shared information, there is a book to be written on this family and its definitely on our bucket list.

Editor: Karen Christensen

SUNDAY CREEK

Mrs G. Clayton — Wandong

*When first I beheld thee, vision of grandeur,
Ye heart on my sight, made me-powerless to speak
So grand was thy lovely uncultured beauty,
Bright star-lighted, lifegiving, Sunday Creek.
Sprinkling the flowers; and ferns shading thy way.
The moon like a spectre shone brightly above me,
The small stars attendant, in silent delight,
Blinked as they viewed, their perfection reflected
So clearly by thee in the moon's gentle light.
As morning appeared, the mist gently rising,
Envelopes the vale in a mantle of gauze;
But glorious Aurora, o'er hilltops advancing,
Night's silver-spun curtain quickly withdraws.
Linger Aurora, fair goddess of morning,
Whilst I this glorious vision survey;
Tell me. ah, canst thou, was Eden more lovely
Than this simple spot at the dawning of day.
Bright-feathered songsters that flit through the wildwood
Leave sheltering trees in the heat of the day
To bask on thy bosom in wild, happy freedom,
Filling the air with their soft melody.
Adorn'd and adorning thy beautiful margin,
Mirrored by thy crystal waters, so pure,
A homestead of beauty, a star in the forest,
Stands an Elysium, sweet Clonbinane.
Reposing in beauty mid rose-scented bower;
Laved by thy crystal showers morn, noon and night
All art aiding culture surrounding but renders
Thy natural beauty more lovely and bright.
Gates always open inviting the stranger,
The rich or the poor, the old or the' young,
All are with true hospitality welcomed
Nor are the needy forbidden to come.
Sweet, modest Clonbinane, travellers adore thee,
And welcome the hour that bears them away
To thy sylvan retreat, where pure healthy pleasure,
Abundant, awaits them day after day.
Ah, were there more beings on earth like M'Kenzies,
Who worship not Mammon, though claiming his power.
Bestowing with hand and heart charity freely,
Nor herald their actions from tower to. tower.
Long may they dwell in beautiful Clonbinane,
Long may the rose of health bloom on their cheek,
Around them the lovelight of happiness linger,
Peaceful and calm as the pure Sunday Creek.*

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Each issue we talk to a local identity, this edition it's Clonbinane resident Cathy Soulsby.

How long have you lived at Clonbinane?

Over 34 years. My father brought the property known as "The Spur," once owned by the Smedley family, from "Pa" Brewer, who was Milly Hibbert's father. He ran sheep and also ringbarked trees on the property for the Inness brothers, who felled them, and cut them into 5' logs then transported them to Broadford, for the woolscouring works and APM boilers.

What was the property like back then?

When dad bought the property, it was a small (2roomed) corrugated iron dwelling and one stand shearing shed, built in the 1930's with timber milled onsite. There was no phone, electricity or bathroom initially. This is how our family of 6 lived when staying at the property. Our other life was in Melbourne. Four city kids between the ages of four and thirteen, thrust into the world of horses, sheep and the bush.

How did you spend your days living at Clonbinane?

We made friends with the Davern and Clarke families from Wandong and the Wallis family from Clonbinane. I remember going to a few woolshed dances at their place plus other sheds in the area. In 1985 with husband Lew I made the permanent move to the farm and fulfilled my dream. We lived in the original tiny homestead cottage for 6 years, then Lew built our new home on the property. I ran boarding kennels for 20 years, then had a B&B in the renovated former homestead. Lew and I never had children and our fur babies don't help around the place. The property is now 70 acres, and that's enough to manage.

The 2009 Black Saturday fires were devastating at Clonbinane with the loss of many historic landmarks.

Sadly, our homestead, shearing shed, my late parent's newer dwelling and lots of other stuff was destroyed on Black Saturday. My world as I

knew it, disappeared that day. Life goes on and for the past 10 years. I have been heavily involved in community recovery work with the Clonbinane Community Action Group, including the process of building the Clonbinane Hall. I will be retiring from this soon, and hope to spend more time on my writing. I love to write poetry and Clonbinane inspires me. I have published 2 poetry books. *Burning Love-Fire In My Heart* and *The Curse of Verse*. I am currently in the throes of completing my life story.

What changes have you experienced since living at Clonbinane?

Clonbinane has changed a lot since 1967. I wish I could have bottled the silence back then; now in the early morning hours, if I'm outside I can hear the hum of the Hume Highway. The lights of Melbourne are an ever increasing glow to the south at night. For Clonbinane in the future, I hope it doesn't develop too much more, and keeps its country feel. I would like to see the old history sites retained and marked in some way. One of the saddest things about the Black Saturday bushfires in this area, was the loss of Clonbinane Park homestead, Halpin's house 'Glenburnie' and other historic places. I would like to get together with Di Vidal and write an updated book on 'Old' Clonbinane. I am very excited to have recently joined Wandong History Group and hope to contribute something in the future.

Thanks for your time Cathy and for sharing an insight into your life at Clonbinane. You are a very active person in your community. Good Luck with the publication of your new book on your life story.



Cathy Soulsby

CLONBINANE

This edition we thought it would be good to look at the history of one of our near neighbours. Clonbinane.

Clonbinane is located 55 kilometres (34 miles) north of the Melbourne. Geographically, it lies east of the Hume Freeway but now lacks a distinctive township precinct. According to Crown Land records of 1856, the pastoral region was part of the Western Port District. At the 2011 census, Clonbinane had a population of 381.

The name Clonbinane suggests a marriage of two surnames, Clon and Binane. The Binane part may have found its origins in Welsh, Irish or Scottish clans' surnames, deriving from the Latin "Benedictus". It is suggested that the Binane part of the name came from the gallicisation of Benedictus and that the Clon part may have its origins in early Scottish history. It is not clear how the name came about. During the development of the Australian colonies, the Clonbinane area was part of the Colony of New South Wales between 1788 and 1851 when, on 1 July 1851, Victoria was separated from New South Wales. An early mention of the name Clonbinane appeared in The Argus on 29 September 1848 in relation to Claims to Leases of Crown Land. At that time, a 10,400-hectare (25,600-acre)-run Clonbinane was cited as a claim by Michael Heffernan. The property was bound by 8 kilometres (5 mi) along Reedy Creek to the north, Mt Whitehead 2.4 kilometres (1.5 mi) to the west, up to the ranges east and 4.8 kilometres (3 mi) off Kirk and Harlin to the south with a potential for 600 head of cattle.

Gold mining commenced in the Clonbinane area around 1870 and lasted until around 1880. There was a cyanide processing plant on the Wandong—Kilmore Rd which served the local gold mines. When the gold appeared to run out, the area was extensively logged and supported saw milling.



Clonbinane Post Office

Clonbinane Post Office opened on 23rd January 1892 and closed on 1st July 1895, reopening again 5th October 1897 and closing 30th April 1956. According to National Archives of Australia, it was determined in 1964 that, at the time of its existence in 1902, the Clonbinane Post Office was domiciled at the Clonbinane Park homestead. According to the Victorian Postal Guide of March 1895, mail coming from Melbourne had to be posted by 0530 hours to reach Clonbinane Post Office by 1330 hours on the same day, allowing for sorting and logistics. At Clonbinane, mail had to be lodged by 0900 hours to reach

Melbourne's GPO by 1525 hours. Those time-frames suggest that mail was routinely carried by train during the period, probably between Melbourne and Wandong. The Clonbinane post office building burnt down in the Black Saturday fires on February 7th 2009. It was a single room weatherboard shed with a corrugated iron roof and was on the property known as Walhaven on Government Road which, along with the original Clonbinane Park homestead, was destroyed in the fires. In its gold mining heyday, the village had about 20 houses and a school. Clonbinane shares a postcode with neighbouring towns Broadford, Flowerdale, Hazeldene, Reedy Creek, Strath Creek, Sugarloaf Creek, Sunday Creek, Tyaak and Waterford Park.

July 2007, a Rockwell Commander 500S aircraft, en-route to Shepparton from Essendon Airport, broke up in-flight approximately 1.5 km SSW of the Equine Centre, crashing in a heavily timbered mountain range. The aircraft was carrying the aircraft's owner and a pilot on an aircraft recovery mission when it encountered severe turbulence; both sustained fatal injuries.

"Clonbinane Park" was built for M. K. McKenzie around 1885 located approximately 250 metres off the Clonbinane Road. Crown land licence records from 1856 suggested two large pastoral properties (runs) of around 10,400 hectares (25,600 acres) were operated by the McKenzie and McDonald families at Clonbinane and Reedy Creek. According to The Argus of 27 January 1866. John McRae McKenzie was reported as being of Clonbinane and Tallarook Stations when on 25 January 1866 he married Emily Anne Cairnes, eldest daughter of Henry Cairnes of Dublin, Ireland. John McDonald was reported in the records to have been assessed for 4,600 sheep, 20 cattle and 8 horses. "Clonbinane Park" was in 1922 a property of 779 hectares with a 490-hectare grating area with excellent potential for cattle grazing and wool production. "Clonbinane Station" appears to have been a much larger property with a sales notice in The Argus of 4 July 1878 citing 32,000 hectares.



Clonbinane Park Homestead
Destroyed by the Black Saturday bushfires in 2009



Clonbinane State School No 1653

Did you know?

That W. H. Budd operated a sawmill in Mt Disappointment prior to 1873. The mill employed sixty men and produced 12,000 superficial feet of timber a week.

History Matters

In this column we will try to keep abreast of the things that affect our town and its historical links.

The Wandong History Group's charter is to protect and preserve the history of our area. As we are within the Mitchell Shire, we need to be informed of happenings within the shire that may affect us.

Just a reminder that anyone finding artefacts anywhere, it is illegal to remove items from the place they are found. Items should be photographed in place and if possible a GPS location taken. Anyone who is unsure about this can contact us and we can provide assistance.

The back to Wandong Luncheon was a great success and it was pleasing to have some new people come along. The day is casual, just a chance to meet and talk to people that we may not catch up with through the year. Thanks to Bobby and Brian Smith who brought along some great photos of the L.B. Davern Reserve during the construction of the Kinder and Community Centre, these are like gold to us and I have now added them to our collection. Anyone else with photos out there please let us know, we are always looking for photos that mark the history of our town, they don't necessarily have to be old.

We are still investigating possibilities for moving the historic hut from Range Avenue to a position within the town where it can be used for the community. We are currently working with the Shire to determine the best outcome for the building and hope to have some news on this soon.

The group always welcomes new members, we need people willing to help with cataloging our items, so anyone with a few hours to spare please contact me on the history groups email. On the back of our successful railway display for History Week 2017 we are putting together a book on the Rail History of Wandong. Dave Moran is researching the book and would appreciate any information anyone may be holding. Contact Dave on Mob: 0409 164660 or Email: mountview@ssc.net.au

A big "THANK YOU" to member Gloria Cordingley who has put her hand up to assist with cataloguing and digitalizing our records. Such a big job ahead.

VALE

The History Group was saddened to hear of the death of three people who once lived in Wandong. Maurice Carboon, Terry Davern and Jean Ramage (Connew) Our deepest sympathy to the families on the passing of your loved ones.

BOOK SALES

There Was a Soldier—Karen Christensen

(A history of Wandong at War) \$20

From Lightwood Flat to the Forest—Lynne Dore

(A history of our schools) \$20

WANDONG IN PICTURES

Book (1-5) \$7 each or \$25 the set.

Wandong War Memorial

Wandong Seasoning Works

Wandong in Business,

Wandong Timber Mills and Tramlines

Wandong Buildings

All books available at the Wandong Newsagent or contact the History Group.

Donations

The Wandong History Group accepts donations of any Wandong/ Heathcote Junction, Clonbinane related historical artefacts. All items will be kept and displayed sharing our past and preserving it for the future generations.



Ron and Lawrie Pickett entertain with local stories at the "Annual Back to Wandong Luncheon". Held at the Australia Restaurant in March.

2018/2019 COMMITTEE

President:	Karen Christensen
Vice President:	David Moran
Secretary:	Di Vidal
Treasurer:	Sandra Moran
Newsletter:	Karen Christensen & Di Vidal

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