



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

## “WHAT’S OLD”

Issue 16—December 2020 Email: wandonghistorygroup4@gmail.com



### CONGRATULATIONS KAREN



A special presentation was held recently to honour our President Karen, in receiving one of the five ANZAC of the year awards. This prestigious award recognises the dedication Karen has shown developing the Wandong, Heathcote Junction War Memorial and identifying the 182 men and women from Wandong, Heathcote Junction and Clonbinane. It is important their services are now recognised for generations to come.

#### Di Vidal



Des Callaghan, Karen Christensen.



L-R Rod Dally, Kilmore Wallan RSL—Des Callaghan, Victorian RSL Vice President—Lynne Dore—Rob Mitchell, Karen and her mother Kath seated.

### **FROM THE EDITOR**

2020, The year that wasn't! Wow who would have thought the year would have went the way it did. But all through the difficulty we still saw lots of smiling faces around the community, local people just getting on with it, adapting and making do. Makes you proud to live in the community, and makes me even more determined to ensure we look after our history for next generations.

On that note we are absolutely overjoyed to be able to announce that the long awaited and third time lucky grant application for the renovations to St Michaels church has been successful. This means this heritage listed and very important building for our community will be restored and preserved for the future, we cant wait to get started, although our operations will be limited as we will have to vacate the building to allow the works to be carried out, a small price to pay for the end result.

We also are pushing ahead with the Internment hut project, the council election stalled things as council had gone into caretaker mode but we are hoping that we will be back on track now that has been dealt with. Maybe our timeframes will be a little delayed but we are determined to see this project through and have an excellent permanent place to display our military history. So while 2021 looks to be a busy one for the group the outcomes of these projects will be here for generations to come. We are looking forward to being part of a special ANZAC Day service in 2021 and after no service this year it will be wonderful to have the community together again on that special day. On behalf of the Wandong History Group we wish you all a safe and happy Christmas.

**Karen Christensen**

## OUR YEAR IN REVIEW 2020 STUFF DID HAPPEN!

Although the year was littered with cancellations and unknowns when we look back some things did go ahead, maybe in different ways, modified to meet the rules in the new world we found ourselves in, but still it just shows that the Aussie spirit lives strong. So let's look at what did happen, record the year from our perspective as this year in itself has been an historic one, and hopefully one we will never see again.

### AUSTRALIA DAY

We kicked off the year with our usual Australia Day breakfast, little did we know that it was to be our last community get together for some time. Our three Australia Day Community award winners were Jim Chatz, Ruth Laurens and Ken Bausch all worthy winners pictured below with David Lowe.



Sadly the "Back to Wandong Luncheon" was cancelled, it's always a fun day, hopefully the day can be rescheduled for 2021 as we see more restrictions lifted.

As the Covid situation worsened we were advised ANZAC Day ceremonies were off the table as well. We couldn't let our soldiers go without some recognition so as usual the creative locals planned driveway services, these were touching reminders of the world we were living in.



The History Group was very excited in May to announce that after three applications we were finally granted the funding through the Saluting their Service Grant to move the internment hut from Range Avenue to the Memorial Park. Once in position and renovated, the building will be used as a military interpretative centre for our local history, we will be able to display the history we have accumulated so far and help others in researching their families. Having this building means we can run our exhibitions over longer periods giving more people the opportunity to see and learn about our military past. Tying in with the War Memorial it will enable us to ensure our soldiers are never forgotten in a real and meaningful way. We can't wait!!



Internment Hut



## **REMEMBRANCE DAY**

Although we were not able to advertise a service this year we ran a shortened version and several locals attended.



## **OCTOBER - HISTORY MONTH**

History month came and went and still the restrictions applied. Our plan was to have an exhibition on the end of WW2 and fortunately the restrictions lifted for us to be able to have an event, a month later than planned but still at least within the 75th year of the end of the war. Bendigo Bank, ARTC the Victorian Government and Victoria Veterans sponsored the event and the commissioning of an artwork made entirely of glass was unveiled at the event. The artwork was made by Marina Villani from Myriad Glass in Kilmore. Every soldier who left for war from Wandong, Heathcote Junction and Clonbinane area were represented by a poppy on the artwork.

A VIP night was held to thank our sponsors and those who continually help our group, we are a small group so any help is greatly appreciated. We held a very moving Last Post service in the grounds of the hall, complete with a cross and knitted poppy for each soldier among lighted candles. The strains of Amazing Grace bagpiped through the dying rays of the sun was a great experience and was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.



Poppy Artwork  
Bendigo Bank Carol Ryan and Karen Christensen



Laying the wreaths at the Last Post Service



## **MY CHRISTMAS - Cheryl McIntosh**

It's Christmas time again this year

A time for all the relatives to combine in cheer,  
Mums slaving over a hot oven making a dinner hot,  
Enjoying her Christmas the mother is definitely not,  
And when she burns herself, not a whimper do we hear.

Next who's gonna sit where at the Christmas table,  
I'll be at the head because that's reserved for the disabled,  
Who wants to eat what, as all the food goes cold,  
Mother's cooking gone to waste, but she stays resolute and bold,  
We stuff ourself stupid with food...eating more than we are able.

Dessert is then presented, and not an eyelid did about the bat,  
We eat in spades, though, don't you worry about that,  
Whose having Pavlova? Who is having pudding,  
Whose having both? Who'll be too filled up to find their footing,  
When, eventually, food has been devoured, it's time for a chat.

Presents...aah, yes, the presents are to be unwrapped,  
Another Springsteen orientated thing, for me I already have  
But I don't let on I already have it, tact not my strong point, is employed,  
I enjoy giving rather than receiving, and with others' emotions I like to toy,  
About now, my "people tolerance" is up but, in a sea of relatives I am trapped.

Dinner eaten, wrapping paper strewn across the floor,  
FINALLY, they start to head for the door,  
That's that for a little while, as the years get shorter, and  
my sister gets on the train,  
The others relatives dwindle as, sets in, the cleaning up pain,  
And the comfortable mundaneness returns to the way it was before



From all of us to all of you: Have a Merry and safe Christmas be kind to each other and look after our most precious resource, our beautiful town.

### DID YOU KNOW

That the six extant buildings in Wandong made from Terra Cotta Lumber are the only examples of the material being used as an external material rather than an internal fireproofing brick.

### 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.

We are working with Australian Rail Track Corporation on the area that will be impacted by the works for the new overhead bridge and associated road works. We need to make sure the impact area does not disturb any historic sites or if it does that appropriate investigations are done.

During the process of this we found that site cards although written by consultants six years ago when the Heritage gap study was completed were not sent off to Heritage Victoria. This was the job of the shire and somehow it wasn't done. They are now in the process of rectifying the error and we have and are still doing some work on correcting some errors and improving the cards to reflect the history as we are able to research it. Given that 2021 will be a difficult year as for most of the year our collection will be packed away we are planning only one major event. This will be a reunion of the Robertson Family, as most of you know Robert Affleck Robertson was the man who founded the Wandong township as we know it now, it was his subdivision that makes up the old original part of town and of course most know of his many business enterprises that were happening from around 1884. At this stage we haven't planned exactly what we will be doing for the event but it will open for interested public to come along. We hope to be able to bring a March What's Old to you, with updates of the progress of all our projects, if due to logistical problems this can't happen we will keep you up to date via What's News.

### 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.

Thank you to the Kilmore Historical Society for your recent donation to the History Group.

### 2020/2021 COMMITTEE

President: Karen Christensen

Vice President: David Moran

Secretary: Di Vidal

Treasurer: Sandra Moran

Newsletter: Karen Christensen & Di Vidal

Committee Meetings will now be held bi-monthly on the first Thursday of the month 7.00pm at the Wandong Public Hall.

### DISCLAIMER

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