



WWDHS NEWSLETTER No. 424 April 2017 – May 2017 ISSN 2207-1016

Next Meeting Date:

Monday 17th April 2017,
at Museum of the Riverina,
Willans Hill site.
Committee Meeting @ 6:15pm
General Meeting @ 7:30pm

Following Meetings Date:

Monday 15th May 2017,
at Museum of the Riverina,
Willans Hill site.
Committee Meeting @ 6:15pm
General Meeting @ 7:30pm



Who
are
we
?



Guest Speakers.

April: Show & Tell - bring along photos and other items of interest.

May: Bill Tearle - re his mother, Mrs Sheila Tearle, and Dame Mary Gilmore.

See more details inside.

New members - Welcome to our newest member — Simone Richardson.

WWDHS Patrons: Michael McCormack, Federal Member for Riverina,
& the Honourable Wal Fife.

WAGGA WAGGA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. PO BOX 90, WAGGA WAGGA. 2650.

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Committee meetings: 3rd Monday of the month
6:15pm at MOR, Willans Hill site.

General meetings: 3rd Monday of the month
7:30pm at MOR, Willans Hill site.

Annual Subscriptions: Single: \$20, Couple:
\$30. Corporate: \$50. Due 1st July each year.

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Gundagai Flood of 1852 - Yarrie & Jackey Jackey

After the disastrous Gundagai flood of 1852, Edgar Beckham, the Commissioner of Crown Lands, wrote a letter to the Colonial Secretary on 16 July, 1852, and commented in the letter – *Four of the aboriginal natives were very active during the flood and saved many lives and much property*. Two of the natives, Yarrie and Jackey Jackey are very well documented in the history of the town.

On Saturday, 10 June, 2017, at 11 am a sculpture dedicated to Yarrie and Jackey Jackey will be unveiled at Gundagai, on the corner of Kitchener Street and Sheridan Street. The sculpture has been commissioned from Melbourne sculptor, Darien Pullen. It will depict the two Wiradjuri men standing and pulling a canoe out of the water. The 25th June this year will mark the 165th anniversary of the flood.

As part of the day's proceedings, the folk musical "Yarrie of Wiradjuri" will be performed by the Gundagai Dramatic Society at 2 pm. This dramatic performance was first performed at Gundagai in 2002, on the 150th commemoration of the flood. The day will also include markets and displays in Carberry Park.

For further information contact the Gundagai Visitor Information Centre - Ph. 02 69440250.

Those interested in the musical, can learn more at www.folkjohnwarner.com, the site of John Warner who wrote this work.

Thanks to member, Marcia McIntyre for bringing this item to my attention.

RAHS News:

On 22 March 2017 the Copyright Amendment (Disability Access and Other Measures) Bill was introduced to Parliament. The Bill will end perpetual copyright for unpublished materials. As a result millions of historical manuscripts will be freed into the public domain on 1 January 2019.

According to a Press Statement from the Australian Libraries and Copyright Committee,

"The Bill ends antiquated provisions in the Australian Copyright Act that provide perpetual copyright for unpublished materials, no matter how old they are. As a result millions of historical manuscripts – from celebrity letters and diaries held by the National, State and Territory libraries and archives, to the thousands of theses at our universities – will be simultaneously freed into the public domain on 1 January 2019. This bounty will be a major boon for Australian artists, researchers, teachers, innovators and historians, as they gain access to materials that were previously locked unusable behind overly strict copyright law."

What's happening at CSU Regional Archives - Jillian Kohlhausen, Collection Management Archivist, advises:

For many years now, Charles Sturt University Regional Archives has been offering an annual scholarship to a Charles Sturt University student. The aim of the scholarship is to provide a work experience opportunity for a student from the School of Information Studies interested in a career as an information professional.

Our most recent scholarship holder, Nicole Gammie, may go down in the annals of CSU Regional Archives as the scholar who processed the most collections in the shortest period of time.

Rather than focusing on a single collection as most of our scholars have done in the past, Nicole processed 11 collections of great variety, all of which are now neatly boxed up, listed and ready for use.

Some of Nicole's collections included records from:

- [Wagga Wagga Urban Landcare Group](#)
- [Agricultural Bureau of NSW](#)
- [Rural Youth Organisation of NSW](#)
- [Wagga Wagga Art Society](#)
- [Mrs Beryl Ingold](#)
- [Letona Co-operative Cannery](#)
- [Mitchell College Academic Staff Union](#)

Some of these collections may be of interest to members.

State Records - new name.

State Records make the following announcement:

"On 25th October 2016, a change to the State Records Act 1998 (the Act) was approved returning 'Archives' to our name. Our corporate name is now **'State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales'** but we may also be called State Archives, State Archives NSW or State Archives and Records NSW."

Albury & District Historical Society - Our friends at Albury have a new updated web page. Check it out at "<https://alburyhistory.org.au>"

LUFF FAMILY REUNION:

Thanks to advice from member, Marcia McIntyre, I am able to provide the following details of the family reunion to be held in March 2018. We will endeavour to provide additional as the date draws nearer.

Bicentennial Reunion - Descendants of William Luff are invited to a family reunion to be held at Gundagai in March, 2018. William from Lincolnshire, robbed the White Hart Inn at Ketton, Rutlandshire, and was convicted and transported to NSW on board the "Ocean" in 1818. He was one of the earliest settlers at Gobarralong near Gundagai. William drowned in the 1852 Gundagai flood, but was survived by his widow and nine children.

For details phone Jill Jones: 0429441170 or Tony Luff: 0409675565. There is also a Facebook page - "Luff Family from Gobarralong"

Feature Article — Part 2 of the Miss Wagga Wagga article has been held over until the next newsletter, in order to accommodate our tribute to Phyllis de Jersey

TROVE - Latest news (courtesy FAHS)

The National Library of Australia has been given a funding boost including an upgrade to its popular digital resources portal Trove.

After cuts through the government's efficiency dividend were announced in late 2015, the library had stopped funding the digitisation of newspapers and other content in July. The NLA had also requested that contributors provide funding if they wished to expose their collections through Trove.

The funding allocated in the mid year budget review includes \$16.4 million over four years from 2016-17 for digitisation of material and upgrade of critical infrastructure for its Trove digital information resource and to upgrade other critical infrastructure.

The National Librarian has put out a circular to staff giving more detail on how the money will be spent to "enable the Library to support Trove to meet Australian's expectations for continued and contemporary access to large-scale digital collections; to upgrade critical Information Technology infrastructure; and to support other vital programs and services".

Trove is the commonwealth's fourth most heavily used website, behind the Bureau of Meteorology, Centrelink, and the Department of Human Services, with more than 55,000 visitors a day.

The above information reinforces the importance of TROVE to all of those interested in history -family or other. It is important that governments of all persuasions maintain such critical sources. There is, unfortunately, at least one example of privatising access to such important sources - specifically the records of what used to be the old Lands Department - now known as Land & Property Information, a division of NSW Finance, Services & Innovation. These records now have to be purchased through one of several authorised entities. Whilst there is no evidence at present that this has been detrimental to access of such records, there is concern from some that costs could increase with time.

Whilst there is no immediate concern we should be vigilant in protecting public access to such valuable resources.

It should also be noted that these records can still be freely accessed at State Records, Kingswood and at the NSW State Library. Our society has approached our local member in the past with a view to establishing such access through CSU Regional Archives, which is a repository for State Records, but to no avail. It is unjust that people who live in Sydney can access Land title records at two different locations, whilst those in rural regions are denied such access.

Guest Speakers:

April Meeting—There will be no guest speaker in April. Instead there will be a **show and tell session**. Members are invited to bring along a special photo, or other item of historical interest, which they can talk about.

In addition we will show a selection of photos and documents from the society's collection, which is held at CSU Regional Archives and which is currently being digitised. Lots of rare photographs from the past to stimulate members interest, followed by a cup of coffee or tea with supper.

It has been a while since the society has held such an event and they have proved immensely popular in the past. We look forward to seeing you all there.

May Meeting - Our guest speaker in May will be Mr Bill Tearle. His presentation is titled, and described as follows:

From under a Bed - Dame Mary Gilmore and Sheila Tearle

Both teachers, both historians. Each had a deep love of the bush and, indeed, of all things Australian.

Dame Mary was, of course, a truly great poet, and it was her poetry that first drew them together. It was, however, their shared love for, and memories of, the Riverina region of NSW that formed the basis of their ongoing friendship.

This is the story of that friendship, evidenced by what Dame Mary and Sheila wrote to or about each other. It is also the story of an unexpected discovery (under a bed!) of what might well prove to be Dame Mary's final poem.

Sheila Tearle (nee Byrne) grew up in Wagga Wagga, and lived for a time at the old Great Southern Hotel. She attended school at Mt Erin, and is believed to be the first ex-student of that school to have graduated from University. Sheila became a teacher, and an historian.

Our speaker, Bill Tearle, is the only child of Sheila Tearle. He was born in Griffith, and later moved with his parents to Temora. Bill is a raconteur, a poet, and a wanderer, and he shares his mother's love of the Riverina, and its history.



Dame Mary Gilmore's connections to Wagga Wagga and the surrounding districts have established her as a vital link with the region's past. Her fame has added to Wagga Wagga's fame, and like Tom Castro, has created an awareness of our city around the world. Dame Mary had a special connection with the old Wagga Wagga Teachers College and Bill's presentation will no doubt bring to life many of the old connections. We thank Bill for travelling to Wagga Wagga to be with us on what we believe will be a most enjoyable evening.

Left: Dame Mary Gilmore (nee Cameron). Borrowed from Crookwell Historical Society newsletter, March 2014.

VALE - Phyllis Lilian Myrtle de JERSEY (1922-2017)

It is our sad duty to report the passing of our treasured member Phyllis de Jersey on Tuesday 21st March 2017. Her funeral took place on Tuesday 28th March at St John's Church, Wagga Wagga, where her fellow parishioners and members of the Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society, along with other friends and acquaintances, celebrated her life. Phyllis would have been ninety five years old this coming October.

Given the significant contribution of Phyllis to our society it is fitting that we record some biographical details of Phyllis and her family.

The Family of Phyllis.

Phyllis Lillian Myrtle de Jersey was born on the 7th October 1922, at the home of her parents, Henry and Isabella, it being situated in Coromandel Street, Goulburn. Phyllis was the couple's second child, her sister Thelma having been born on the 2nd June 1913.¹ Thelma's birth was registered in Marrickville where, presumably the family resided. Thelma predeceased Phyllis, her death occurring in January 1980.



Henry Alfred Ernest de Jersey (aka Jack), was born on the 7th May 1885², at Sydney, he being the sixth child, and fourth son, of William Walter de Jersey and Caroline Clara de Jersey (nee Crastin).

Left: Henry Alfred Ernest de Jersey, c.1906.

In 1911, on the 23rd August, Henry married Isabella Susan Adams at St Barnabas' Church of England, Sydney³. His father who had passed away in 1895⁴, was living at Ultimo at the time. William's wife, Caroline, was living at Ultimo when Henry married and it is assumed this was the same house. Isabella was the eldest daughter of Mr & Mrs TW Adams, of Brisbane, Queensland.

In 1913 Henry and Isabella were living at Marrickville, in Victoria Street. Henry was described as a, "*telephone-fitter*", whilst Isabella was listed as, "*domestic duties*".⁵ It was in this year that their first child, Thelma Isabella May de Jersey, was born, on the second of June.

Right: A young Isabella Adams.

According to Phyllis her father was employed by the Post Master Generals department (PMG), initially at Hunter's Hill, in Sydney, and then at the Goulburn



telephone exchange, from 1919 until 1925, when he was transferred to the Bowral Telephone District, where he remained until his retirement in May 1950.⁶



Above: Wedding photo, August 1911 - Henry (seated) and Isabella (left of Henry), the parents of Phyllis de Jersey.



In 1930, the family were living in Merrigang Street, Bowral, with Henry still employed as a telephone mechanic and Isabella looking after the family and the house.⁷ Henry and Isabella continued living in this house at least until 1963⁸. Isabella, passed away on the 31st July 1966,⁹ and at this point in time Phyllis was living in Wollongong. By 1968 Henry was living at 2 / 5 Allen Street, Mt Kiera (Illawarra),¹⁰ with his daughter Phyllis, and by 1977 he had relocated to 1/24 Kenneally Street, Koorinal.¹¹

Thelma had married, in 1958, her husband being Robert de Louth,¹² and it appears there were no children from the marriage. Thelma passed away in 1980, leaving Phyllis as the sole surviving member of her immediate family.

Left: Thelma Isabella May de Jersey.



Above: Wedding photo 1958 – Thelma on the right and Phyllis on the left – Marriage of Thelma & Robert de Louth.

The Life of Phyllis.

In her early years Phyllis attended Bowral Public School before moving to high school, where, in her second year she made the decision to leave school and get a job. There followed a variety of jobs, including some part time work at the telephone exchange, where her father was anxious that she should obtain a more permanent position. In September 1939 Phyllis was employed full time, as a temporary employee, which continued until after the war. It was after the war that Phyllis passed her Public Service examination and was appointed to a permanent position at Bowral.

Shortly afterwards she attained the status of “*Monitor*”, a supervisory position in which she was in charge of a telephone exchange. Phyllis served as a relief monitor, for some fifteen months – firstly at Temora and then Queanbeyan – before obtaining a permanent position at Temora, in 1950.

In 1952 Phyllis was appointed to the position of Travelling Supervisor, at Bathurst, and was responsible for some twenty eight official exchanges and a dozen or so non-official exchanges, in the central west of NSW. The position required that Phyllis was on the road constantly, travelling by train and staying at local hotels.

To quote Phyllis, “*There were some pretty primitive hotels around in the 1950’s, particularly in the mining areas where women guests were not welcomed and facilities were male orientated*”.

The job became more enjoyable in January 1955, when Phyllis was able to purchase a car, which gave her a lot more flexibility in her daily routine.

In 1959 Phyllis applied for, and secured, a temporary transfer to Wollongong, and this led, eventually to a permanent position, as one of three supervisors, at this location.



Above: Phyllis (right) and Thelma (left) in Red Cross Aid uniform, 7th June 1946.

In May 1973 Phyllis was appointed Service Advisor at Wagga Wagga, where she remained until her retirement on the 7th October 1984, at age sixty three.

From the beginning of her time at Wagga Wagga Phyllis was an active parishioner of St John's Church. The church was very important to Phyllis and it was within the church community that she found purpose and reward. Phyllis described the relationship as, "*part of my life and very special to me*". She was, no doubt, influenced by her father in this regard, he too being devoted to the church and drawing much pleasure from the relationship.¹³

It was through the church that she became a volunteer worker at the Forrest Centre.

In 1977 Phyllis joined the Save the Children Fund, which had been formed in 1973, and as well as participating fully in all of its activities, she was branch secretary for a number of years.

In 1989 she became a member of the Wollundry Ladies' Probus Club, where she shared many happy experiences. She joined their committee in 1998 and served as President for one year.

After years of leading a secluded life out west, Wollongong opened up new opportunities for Phyllis. Her sister, Thelma, had married and no longer lived with her parents, and with their mother not being well Phyllis spent most of her weekends at Bowral, with her mum.

Like her father, Phyllis had a strong affection for the church and she was now able to become involved with church activities. She also saw a notice in the local paper announcing the meeting of the local historical society. Phyllis went along to this meeting and soon became secretary to the Illawarra Historical Society, a position she held for seven years. She was also president for one term, in 1970.

In 1971 Phyllis participated in further training and was subsequently appointed to the position of Service Advisor. She relished this new role, which involved interaction with the business community advising them on the installation and operation of switchboards and related equipment.

As an extension of her involvement with the Illawarra Historical Society, Phyllis joined the Wagga Wagga and District Historical Society shortly after moving to Wagga Wagga and her membership was ratified at the June meeting of the society in 1973.¹⁴ Phyllis subsequently joined the Management Committee on the 23rd September 1974.¹⁵

In 1987 Phyllis was elected as one of three vice-presidents, along with Maurice Gissing and Keith Le Lievre.¹⁶ In September 1998 Phyllis accepted the role of president,¹⁷ and retained that position until September 1992 when Dr Henry Gardiner took over. Phyllis was elected vice-president for the ensuing year,¹⁸ and held that position until September 1995, at which time she resumed the position of president.¹⁹ In 1998 Dr Henry Gardiner was once more the president and Phyllis was once more the vice-president,²⁰ a position she retained until September 2002.²¹

Phyllis continued to serve the society, in a variety of ways, up until the time of her death, most notably as society archivist where she and Judy Buik did such great work cataloguing the society's records.



Above: Phyllis de Jersey, in more recent times.



It should also be noted that Phyllis played an important role in the critical period when management of the museum was transferred from the society to the Wagga Wagga City Council.

The society is indebted to Phyllis for her contributions over an extended period of time and this was acknowledged in February 2003 and when she was awarded honorary life membership.²² Suffice to say that the world would be a much better place if there were more Phyllis's in the world.
Rest in peace.

Left: An early photo of Phyllis with her father, Henry.

Note: The photos featured in this article all come from the personal records of Phyllis de Jersey, as does much of the information. It is a tribute to Phyllis that she kept such records and that they have been retained within the family, as she planned.

¹ NSW BDM's. Birth registration # 25211.

² NSW BDM's. Birth registration # 1859.

³ NSW BDM's. Marriage registration # 8185. / Sydney Morning Herald. 30th September 1911, p16.

⁴ NSW BDM's. Death registration # 7382. / Sydney Morning Herald. 11th September 1895, p10. / Evening News. 9th September 1897, p4.

⁵ Australian Electoral Rolls. 1913.

⁶ Notes recorded by Phyllis de Jersey in 2001.

⁷ Australian Electoral Rolls. 1930.

⁸ Australian Electoral Rolls. 1963.

⁹ NSW BDM's. Death registration # 26044. / Sydney Morning Herald. 2nd August 1966.

¹⁰ Australian Electoral Rolls. 1968.

¹¹ Australian Electoral Rolls. 1977.

¹² NSW BDM's. Marriage registration # 15510.

¹³ Notes on Henry Alfred Ernest de Jersey. From the personal records of Phyllis de Jersey.

¹⁴ WWDHS. Newsletter # 122. June 1973.

¹⁵ WWDHS. Newsletter # 135. October 1974.

¹⁶ WWDHS. Newsletter # 249. October/November 1987.

¹⁷ WWDHS. Newsletter # 260. October/November 1989.

¹⁸ WWDHS. Newsletter # 278. October/November 1992.

¹⁹ WWDHS. Newsletter # 296. October/November 1995.

²⁰ WWDHS. Newsletter # 314. October/November 1998.

²¹ WWDHS. Newsletter # 337. October/November 2002.

²² WWDHS. Newsletter # 343. October/November 2003.