



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

# “WHAT’S OLD”

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## FROM THE EDITOR

The History Group was overjoyed to receive the news that we have been successful in gaining the grant to move the internment hut from Heathcote Junction to the park in Wandong. The Saluting their Service grant was the fourth attempt at gaining funds and we were nearly out of options. We cannot thank Chris and Kerry Bellomo enough for their generosity in donating this building to the community. Once in place repaired and set up it will be a great to be able to permanently display our local military history, we will be asking locals who can spare some time to help man the building during the opening hours which are yet to be decided. We also thank Mitchell Shire Council for working closely with us on this project easing us through the process of the many permits and hoops that have to be jumped through. We will keep everyone informed of the opening day, sometime in 2021 and hopefully in a post Covid world. Plans are still in place for our History Month event in October, we will confirm the date as soon as we can, again Covid has made even the simplest thing a problem, however we are ready to go with the display so we hope to be able to commemorate our WWII soldiers in this very important year. The grant for St Michaels church should be known by October we are very hopeful of getting this grant and having the church restored as it is deteriorating fast. The restoration will allow us to open the building publicly as the current access is not compliant and the building in parts is not really safe for the general public. Having the Internment hut holding our military history will enable us to run displays on Wandong Heathcote Junctions vast history of timber and sawmilling at the church, we are looking forward to bringing those to you.

Until the next edition stay safe and find the joy in every day.

Editor: Karen Christensen

## **SPRING - Cheryl McIntosh**

It's almost Spring, a time for the sun to shine,  
And the atmosphere should be divine,  
And all the little lambs are freezing,  
The hay fever sufferers are wheezing,  
A great time for a picnic and and a nice glass of wine!

The children are supposed to be outside playing,  
But to their devices they are slaves, indoors staying,  
A time for the trees to blossom and flowers to bloom,  
Spring brings with it merriment, for anything else  
there isn't room, apparel obeying.

A time for joy and laughter, a time for change,  
Terrific is the time for scheduled rearrange,  
For the adults a time to get out in the garden,  
Without some sunscreen their skin will, invariably, harden,  
But for a bit of fun and frivolity, no one would exchange.

However, this year Spring brings with it something terribly perverse,  
We can't be free; Covid-19 brings an awful curse,  
We're locked in our houses, can't even go out to eat,  
And if a friend is met, not even a hug or a kiss, a formal greet,  
Something no one can do to reverse!

We're from Heathcote Junction & Wandong,  
Where the Virus doesn't belong,  
It may make us a little bit blue,  
But together we'll get through,  
We will nor let this dastardly virus, our spring go wrong.



Thanks to local resident Cheryl McIntosh for contributing her poem "Spring" for this edition of What's Old.

## SWIMMING HOLE TRAGEDY AT WANDONG

Sunday, December 21st 1930.

Eric Peter Maloney a 13-year old school-boy drowned in a dam on the south edge of the town of Wandong.

Eric was the son of Mr John and Mrs Ruby Maloney, he was born in England, his father had bought him to Australia 11 years earlier upon the death of his mother. Mr Maloney's sister Mrs Winifred Thomas, wife of Ernest Thomas who ran the local General store at Wandong had taken on the responsibilities of raising Eric since the age of two.

School was finished for the year, Eric had just received his certificate of merit, the highest grade available at Wandong State School at the time, the weather was warm, a great time to go for a swim.

Eric Maloney, had been swimming in the dam at the edge of Patrick Davern's property with friends from school on the Sunday morning, he had gone home for lunch, organising to meet his friends there again in the afternoon.

Eric returned to the dam, the old clay quarry of the Terra Cotta Brick Works at about 2 O'clock. Just after 5.00pm Charles and John Wentworth came down for a cooling dip and noticed Eric out in the middle of the dam he seemed to be in some difficulty.

John, who said he was not a strong swimmer had to let Eric go and make it back to dry land, he then went to find some help .

He ran to the Davern house adjacent to the dam, where he enlisted the help of Mr Patrick Davern. Upon returning they saw Eric paddling with his hands, seemingly unable to move his legs, they then saw him sink, then come to the surface again before disappearing once more.

It was some time before rescuers could locate and recover Eric's body, his cousin Jack Thomas found him and carried him to where Dr Keane was waiting, but despite his best efforts Eric could not be revived.

The inquest on Eric's death was held in Wandong on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> December before Justice of the Peace Mr William Taylor JP esq. who found that Eric died in Wandong on 21 December 1930 from drowning.

A funeral procession left Wandong on the Tuesday heading for Wallan, the casket covered with wreaths from many people.

School children marched in front of the hearse for more than a mile as it headed off to Wallan on its way to the cemetery.

The casket bearers were, A Wilson, W Collins, R Ryan, P Davern. The pall bearers were S Price, E Smalley, W Paull, W Stainsby, J Maloney and M Walsh.

Rev Father McHugh conducted the burial service.



Image of Eric Maloney  
Donated by Geoff Hughes

Eric Maloney was not the only child to die at Wandong in the early days.

Vera Barron

In Memoriam. Many and genuine were the expressions of sorrow and sympathy when it became generally known in Wandong on Monday 5th inst that Veronica Elizabeth, aged 9 years and 8 months, second youngest daughter of Mr and Mrs J. T. Barron had breathed her last on the preceding evening as the result of an accident. The news appeared incredible at first, and many hesitated to believe it. Only a few hours before she had been seen with her companions in the full flush and vigour of youthful health, buoyant and full of life, and to think that so shortly after she was hushed in the long calm sleep of death appeared beyond belief.

Alas! it was too true, and the circumstances that led to the dire event were but simple. A hurried step along a veranda to greet a sister; a hand incautiously placed on a frail balustrade which gave away; a fall of a few feet on a vital spot on the hard cruel earth, and in a few hours-death.

The full facts concerning the fatality have already been reported in these columns but may briefly be repeated. On the Sunday evening she fell on her head from the high veranda of a neighbour's house. She was carried inside and first aid treatment was adopted. Improving slightly she was removed to her home. Serious symptoms supervening medical aid was sent for but, before the arrival of Dr J. Semple, she fell into a state of coma from which she never rallied, but passed tranquilly away.

From her earliest years she evinced an uncommon aptitude for learning, which made her the delight of her teachers, and, being of an affectionate nature, and cheerful disposition, she was loved by all her school mates, many of whom were quite overcome on learning of her timely demise.

The problem of her removal seems hard to solve unless it be by the verdict of the ancients. "Those whom the Gods love die young. Still it affords a ray of hope in the darkness of the sorrow of those who mourn for her that in her case.

"This life of mortal breath was but the suburb of the life Elysian whose portal we call death."

Her remains were followed to the Kilmore cemetery on Thursday 11th inst. by a large number of mourners, her schoolmates marching before the hearse for some distance outside the town. The burial service at the grave was impressively read by the Rev. Father Power while the mortuary arrangements were efficiently conducted by Mr J. Beegan.

General and sincere sympathy is felt for Mr and Mrs Barron in their sad bereavement. On the grave a cross of immortelles is placed bearing the inscription: 'In fond remembrance of dear little Vera from her teachers and schoolmates, Wandong.

### **Patrick Collins**

#### **YOUTH KILLED. WANDONG, Wednesday.**

A fatal accident occurred to-day at Wandong. A youth named Patrick Collins, who resides with his grandmother, went for a load of firewood. Not returning when he was expected, a search was made, and the dray was found upturned, with the horse-lying -in the shafts and the dead body of the unfortunate lad beside the dray. It is surmised that when the vehicle capsized the youth was pinned underneath, and the struggles of the horse moved the dray, releasing the body.

**The Age Thursday, January 27th 1910.**

### **Thomas Maddicks KILLED BY LIGHTNING. WANDONG, Thursday.**

During the thunderstorm this afternoon, a youth named Thomas Maddicks, aged 19, eldest son of Mr John Maddicks, of "Burnside," Wandong, was struck dead by lightning. Deceased was engaged delivering bread for Mr Burke, baker, on the Clonbinane round, and had just driven up to Mr Wilson's shop when both the young man and the horse were killed instantly.

**Geelong Advertiser Saturday, October 25th 1902.**

### **Jane Dau**

Jane Dau was the fifth child born to Joachim and Martha Dau, she was born at Somerton on the 17th February 1872, the family moved to Wandong soon after. Jane died in February 1888 aged 16 years. Brother Harry said "That a terrible bout of diphtheria entered their home and several of the children had it. The family were ostracised and no one would buy their produce. Janie kept crying I don't want to die, Im only sixteen, it was terribly sad her crying could be heard all over the house— but die she did." Janie is buried in the family plot at Wallan cemetery.

### Did you know?

The Coffee Palace was used as a Bakery for many years. David Campbell was the last baker to operate out of the building. It closed on the 10th October 1944. The remaining building was demolished after council determined it was unsafe.



### 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 in the shire that may affect us.

We are talking to ARTC regarding the new bridge and the impact works may have on the area. We believe that there will be some disturbance of possible archeological sites connected with the Australian Seasoning Timber Company and its associated works and tramlines when the new roadway is constructed to meet the new bridge which will be two meters higher than the old one. This project is almost taking us back to early days as the new bridge will be constructed about where the first bridge was located. The bridge we have now was constructed in 1961 so has served us well for all those years.

While in lockdown we are still working, Lynne is working on a project to compile a list of those working at the Comet Mill and the jobs they were doing. Dave and Sandra have been looking at the old rates microfiche and deciphering the information. I have been working on a list of who lived in which house in the area from a list compiled by Lottie Campbell, hopefully we can match some of it with the rates. Also working on family tree maker programs with the aim of getting some of the large families trees completed.

Some great work is being done by Trevor Vienet to get a plaque installed in remembrance of the pilots who lost their lives at Mt Disappointment, we are looking forward to adding that to our Military history.

Our AGM has not happened due to Covid so as soon as we are allowed to meet we will have the meeting, we would love to see some fresh hands on the committee, to bring some new ideas to the table and help our small team with all the various tasks we undertake.

A big thank you to Marie Elson for her recent donation to the History Group. Marie being the original organiser of the "Annual Back to Wandong Luncheons".

### 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 related historical artefacts. All items will be kept and displayed sharing our past and preserving it for the future generations.

### Blast from the Past

The house pictured was located at what is now 23 Wandong Avenue, the last resident was Daisy Faulks, (pictured) the house was demolished and a new unit built.



### 2019/2020 COMMITTEE

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

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