

# CLARE REGIONAL HISTORY GROUP

NEWSLETTER  
SUMMER – AUTUMN 2017



A special issue prepared by John Wilson for this newsletter.

## THE RIESLING RAILWAY

The history of the Riverton to Spalding Railway, will be my book published in July 2018, to mark the centenary of the opening of the railway to Clare.



I have reached the stage where most of the serious research has been done, and am spending more time with photographs and diagrams. However, I continue to tinker around the edges, and surprise myself with new pieces of information.

Harry Sherwin has completed this painting (above) which will be used on the front cover of the book. It depicts a Brill Model 55 railcar at the Clare railway station c1925.

Only recently I discovered that there was an incident near Undalya in 1922, when Wirth's Circus train ploughed into a mob of horses that had strayed onto the track. The railway gang from Auburn was sent down to clean up the mess. The Spalding community put on a special train, and 800 of them travelled to Clare for the one-night performance. The lavatories at the Clare railway station were not designed for those numbers!

[continued Page 3]

## PAGE 2 UPDATE

### Planned History Month events

DATES	TIME	EVENT NAME	VENUE	DETAILS
TUES 2ND MAY	10.30AM	DEDICATION OF STAN SCOTT MEETING ROOM	TOWN HALL FOYER	IN CONJUNCTION WITH FRIENDS OF CLARE LIBRARY AND CLARE TOWN HALL COMMITTEE. MORNING TEA.
FRI 5TH MAY	6-7PM	RESEARCH ROOM OPENING & CORPORATE	TOWN HALL FOYER	WINE & CHEESE. INVITE CORPORATE MEMBERS & COUNCILLORS
FRIDAY 12TH	10AM - 4PM	HISTORY BOOK SALE	TOWN HALL FOYER	NEW & SECONDHAND BOOKS, CARDS, CDs - ALL OF HISTORIC CONTENT [do you have books to pass onto us please?]
FRI 5TH - FRI 12TH MAY	OPENING FRI 5TH MAY 6PM. THEN MON 8TH - FRI 12TH MAY 10AM TO 4PM	RAILWAY DISPLAY "Researching a railway history".	TOWN HALL FOYER - POP-UP GALLERY	PRELIMINARY TO RAILWAY CENTENARY JULY 2018
SAT 20TH MAY	10AM	UNVEILING RAILWAY HISTORY	RIESLING TRAIL HEAD, LENNON STREET, CLARE	UNVEILING HISTORIC INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE
SUN 28TH MAY	3PM	UNVEILING CEMETERY SIGNAGE	CLARE CEMETERY - BENNY'S HILL ROAD, CLARE	DETAILED LIST OF ALL BURIALS IN THE CLARE CEMETERY 1872 - 2017. SPEAKER, UNVEILING, TEA & SCONES

Can you identify this Clare residence for Julie who contacted us through our Facebook page?

Finding out about this house might be a vital link in a broken chain. Written on the back is Mr Reece's house, Clare. I think it was taken between 1867 and 1871, going by the photographers, Blood and Nixon. Can you please help?



## THE RIESLING RAILWAY [continued from front page]

I have sent as an attachment an item out of *Catchpoint Magazine* [see page 6] which was published recently by the National Railway Museum. The Museum has funding to embark on this oral history project, and I shall be working closely with them.

As part of that oral history project, funding has been made available to make a replica uniform that the refreshment room girls wore at the Riverton Railway refreshment rooms in the 1940s. I have two ladies in Riverton who are in their 80s or more, who worked there, and are keen to be involved in this project. A seamstress has been engaged for the task, and has already started work. The intention is that this uniform could be put on display at the local libraries or tourism offices, as a means of publicising the forthcoming Centenary. I plan to use the photograph of the uniform in the book, and expect that the permanent home for the uniform will subsequently be the National Railway Museum at Port Adelaide. They do not have a waitress uniform in their collection, and are very interested in this project.

There has been a lot of new information come to light in relation to the Percy Brookfield shooting at Riverton in 1921. I have a psychiatrist colleague in Adelaide who is very interested in the case and has agreed to review the evidence, and provide an opinion about the gunman, Tomayeff. He is also going to have a crack at giving an opinion about Percy Brookfield's psyche. My research has indicated that Tomayeff and some of his Russian mates in Broken Hill had quite an industry going, pimping for the local prostitutes. As an alien, Tomayeff had to advise the police if he was moving to another locality, and on the day that he boarded the train he advised the Broken Hill police that he was relocating to Clare. It begs the question of what business he intended to follow in Clare, particularly with a Spanish revolver and 72 rounds of ammunition in his bag.

The alignment of the railway took it through the Hope Farm section at Penwortham. This was John Horrock's property, but by the time the railway was surveyed the "manor house" was a ruin. It is recorded that the Hope Farm Manor was demolished, but where exactly along the railway it was located has remained a mystery. I have been helped in this quest by David Spackman of the Mount Horrocks Historical Society, and with the help of an 1845 drawing, we think we have located the site.

I had initially included in the text, a few paragraphs on the Baby Health Train, which was operated by the Mothers' and Babies' Health Association from 1932 to 1964. I have done further research on this, and it has expanded to become a significant chapter in the book. The driving force within the MBHA for the Baby Health Train was Lady Paquita Mawson, who was enthusiastically supported by the MBHA's General Secretary, Kathleen Hilfers. Each was honoured with an OBE.

I wish to report favourably on the present situation of the Riverton Railway Station. It has had its ups and downs since ANR departed in 1986. The present owners are Ivor and Bina Turney, who have had it for 13 years now. Internally the main building is in excellent condition. They have plans to develop the goods shed as an art venue. It looks as if there will be three events surrounding the launch of my book - at this stage ... one of those events will be at the Riverton Railway Station. That function is planned to be a private "thankyou" function for those who have helped with the book. The Turneys have a grand piano in the main "refreshment room". There has even been a song written for the occasion, "The Riverton Railcar Blues".

I expect to have a book-launch event in Clare on the day of the centenary, 4 July 2018. The third event is expected to be a major promotion at the National Railway Museum on the weekend of 7/8<sup>th</sup> July 2018. It will involve the running of the Museum's Bluebird with special Clare line tickets. It is hoped to combine that weekend with a theme of the Railway refreshment rooms, and serve coffee and fruit cake as was served in the days of steam.

Thank you to former mayor of C&GVC, Patricia Jacka, for sending information about Kanipo (pronounced rhyming with Hippo). It was the unofficial name of a spot adjacent to Roach Road (just south of Barinia). In the 1920s and 1930s there would be special trains for the Clare races, separate trains for the horses and the racegoers. The horses would be unloaded at Kanipo, and be ridden to the racecourse. Does anyone have or know of any photos of these horse trains?

There were many crossings along the line that attracted local names, which were not officially recognized by the SAR. I am endeavouring to compile a list. [concluded over page]

## THE RIESLING RAILWAY [continued from page 3]

I am still on the lookout for photographs, particularly good quality shots. In particular, I am seeking photographs of the inside of the Riverton signal cabin, and the indoors operation of the Riverton refreshment rooms back in the days when the trains were still running. Wirths' circus trains came to Clare every couple of years. Did anyone take photos?

I have created a Facebook page for The Riesling Railway, and am adding new material each Sunday morning. The Riesling Trail Management Committee has kindly granted me space on their website for a book synopsis. It is updated every month or two. This can be viewed at

<http://rieslingtrail.com.au/history/the-history-of-trains-by-john-wilson/>

A few chapters for the book have now been completed, and I have done some "paste-ups" (literally) with photos and diagrams. I have had the printer do some proof copies and one of those copies is for inspection at the Clare Regional History Collection. The chapters are:

- The Broughton Bridge and other bridges
- Putting Penwortham on the map
- Safe working
- The Baby Health Train

I have also sought comments on the work so far:

*From what you have done it is very informative and detailed, can't wait to read more. EXCELLENT work.* James Duggin, Lead Member of the Clare Railway Centenary Group.

*Very interesting. A lot of things in it that I didn't know!* Bob Sampson, Exec Officer of the National Railway Museum – and believe me that Bob knows his trains.

Steve McNerney was Clare's last Station-Master. I had invited Steve's family to check what had been written. Maura McNerney is one of Steve's daughters and responded:

*I think ....you captured his experiences very accurately. I particularly like your understanding of the fierce loyalty railwaymen traditionally had to the railways and their jobs – that was certainly the case with Dad who saw his lifelong commitment to the railways as a very natural and important part of who he was.*

**And finally, if you know of others who may be interested in this book please forward a copy of this missive to them, or ask them to contact me, to be added to the distribution list.**

**Thank you John Wilson [wilsonriesling@internode.on.net](mailto:wilsonriesling@internode.on.net)**

## TRAIL SIGNAGE

Expect to see some new and exciting changes along the Riesling Trail in the next 12 months.

In several joint projects involving the Clare Regional History Group, the Riesling Trail Management Committee, the Railway Centenary Committee and even the Lavender Trail committee, signage and information boards will be appearing at key locations along the trail. First will be an information board featuring historic and contemporary photographs detailing the history of the former railway line and its transformation to the Riesling Trail. Several other boards are in the pipeline for sites such as the Penwortham Crossing as well as town maps and more directional maps. The Railway Centenary Committee plans to erect signs to identify places such as the Railway Cottages which housed railway workers. Finally the Lavender Trail committee intend to erect a sign to mark where the Lavender and Riesling Trails meet.

The historic information board at the Lennon Street head of the trail will be unveiled at 10.00am on Saturday 20th May (Clare Valley Gourmet Weekend) and all are invited. [Contributed by Sue Wurst]



# NEAGLES ROCK

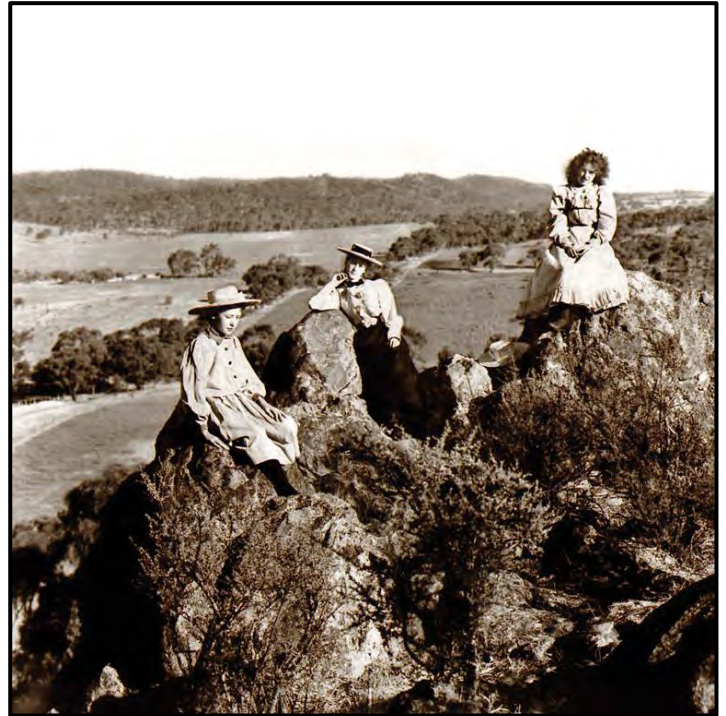
Contributed by Carolyn Semple

Neagles Rock is located on Section 261, Hundred of Clare and was named after a pioneer cattle owner George Neagle who lived directly east of the rock on Section 72. Described as a farmer of Third Creek, he was granted this 80 acre section for £80 on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1848. It became a favourite meeting place of courting couples and nature ramblers, and the site was made notable by the photo of picnickers taken in about 1900 by Henry Hammond Tilbrook, owner/ editor of the Northern Argus. The Neagles Rock name covers the valley stretching south of the Rock, down to the Gillentown Road - parallel to the Main North Road / Horrocks Highway.

*PHOTO – this was taken circa 1900 by Northern Argus proprietor Henry Hammond Tilbrook and shows picnickers enjoying this unique landform.*

## GEOLOGY

The rock and the valley it overlooks is part of the formation known as 'Skillogalee Dolomite'. Evolving from the rocks deposited horizontally some 750 million years ago and folded into a vertical orientation about 500 million years ago. The fractures and porosity of these rocks resulted in access to the aquifers which have provided a good irrigation supply for subsequent farming and viticulture ventures. The rock itself has been called 'the most significant structural discontinuity in the Clare Valley or indeed in the Mid North'. The geomorphology which produced infertile soils on the slopes and a widespread irrigation source from the fractured rock aquifers results in the eastern slopes being especially suited for viticulture.



## LAND USE

In addition to George Neagle, other early settlers included the Jesuits who came to support Aloysius Kranewitter in establishing a Catholic community. In the 1857 assessment of District Council of Clare, Anton Sokolowsky was the occupier and Francis Weikert the owner of Section 71, to the southeast of the rock – described as "80 acres fenced, house, hut, outbuilding, yard and gardens". In 1851 they acquired land which they called Sevenhill.

Charles Smith, William Hall and the Maynard family also owned land in the vicinity of Neagles Rock. Early agriculture included cereal crops and grazing, but a lasting environmental disaster was the planting of a Spanish lavender species *Lavendula stoechas*, for oil. This Mediterranean plant was not suitable for production and the enterprise collapsed. The plant has naturalised on the alkaline soils of the area which have provided it with an ideal bio-niche and it has become an intractable weed. Not palatable to livestock it can only be controlled by chemical or manual means. 'Bush for life' volunteers have worked to contain this severe threat to biodiversity but without more help they are fighting a losing battle. Ironically, local nurseries continue to stock and sell this particular variety of lavender so it is likely to spread to other areas.

Since the 1980s a number of vineyards have been planted including those of the Maynards, Schillings and Semples. Oddly the only wines to bear the name of Neagles Rock were those of a winery established by Willson family. Their winery and vineyards, except for a small planting on the junction with Spring Gully, were not on the Neagle Rock Road.

More recently a number of plots on the northern end of the road have become residential and a luxury accommodation complex, Neagles Retreat, has been built by the Scaglioni family on land formerly belonging to a Maynard family.

[continued on page 6]

In 1935 the hill was in danger of being stripped of its timber. However Henry Lewcock, a former mayor, suggested that the property be purchased by public subscription as a flora and fauna sanctuary. With the help of a considerable donation by Mrs Diana Christison, money was raised and the land purchased. The deeds were presented to the District Council of Clare in October 1936. Since then the reserve has been a popular tourist site, with the addition of car park and barbeque increasing its popularity. The work of killing weeds (especially the lavender) and keeping the track in order has presented an ongoing challenge for the local Bush for Life members and an occasional 'Work for the Dole' scheme.

## REFERENCES

- NOYE, RJ *Clare a District History*, Investigator Press, 1974.
- [www.clarevalleyrocks.com.au](http://www.clarevalleyrocks.com.au)
- HEAD, Michael Austin, McKEE, Paul Anthony and FYFE, Paul Raymond, *The Vine and the Branches*, 2016
- *The Bush Carer* (periodical), Autumn 2013 (10)
- Pattullo Land History (manuscript) - CRHG.

## ORAL HISTORY GROUP

WORDS MOANA COLMER



Anyone who has memories, such as visiting the Baby Health Centre carriages, as they made their way around much of the state is encouraged to make contact with the newly formed Oral History Group. There were both broad and narrow gauge Baby Health cars in operation with the SA Railways. NRM ARCHIVES

The National Railway Museum is second to none in representing Australia's railway history with its collection of locomotives, carriages and other artefacts. But there is another side to history - people's memories and recollections of their experiences of those exhibits and Railways in general. Capturing these is an important task to round out the Museum's collection.

The Oral History Group (OHG), chaired by Curator Exhibitions & Displays - Moana Colmer, includes Assistant Curator - Gabby Sexton, and NRM Board Members, John Evans and Frank Hussey. As its name suggests, the intention is to obtain audio-visual interviews primarily with past railway employees and link these to particular exhibits and projects within the Museum.

The commentaries in the Tea and Sugar train exhibit is a good example of this work. The OHG is interested in hearing from anyone willing to take part in these interviews, particularly if they have a history of railway employment, such as Station Masters, Drivers, Firemen, Guards, Shunters, Train Controllers, Roster Clerks, Signallers, Isolated Community Education or Baby Health Centre car

workers, railway refreshment room staff, Loco and Carriage Workshops Staff and Track Maintenance Gangers/Fettlers and so on.

There is a sense of urgency about this work as those who worked in the steam era in particular are of advanced age - and the OHG is certain many will have already experienced the sense of loss as one of these characters has passed on and taken all their memories and experiences beyond our reach. The OHG is focussed on minimising the loss of those memories and railway stories. If you know of or are aware of anyone who you believe would be ideal to liaise with that may be interviewed, please contact the OHG. The respective OHG contact details are:

**Frank Hussey** (NRM Oral History Group & NRM Board Vice Chairman) - Mobile: 0407 972 732

**Moana Colmer** (NRM Curator - Exhibitions & Displays) - Email: [curatorexhibit@nrm.org.au](mailto:curatorexhibit@nrm.org.au)

**Gabby Sexton** (NRM Assistant Curator) Email: [assistcurator@nrm.org.au](mailto:assistcurator@nrm.org.au)

From a SA District Council (not Clare) in 1972:

*Dear Miss.....*

*Your verbal request for two month's leave of absence was considered by the Council last Monday night.*

*The Council is of the opinion that with a new baby to care for, your own interests would be better served if you were not tied down to a full-time job and has consequently resolved that your services be terminated. ...*

- Store small Christmas baubles in egg cartons.
- Home-made holly berries. Coat peas with red sealing wax, pierce with floral wire & bunch with suitable leaves.
- Old electric light bulbs make Christmas tree decorations if extra large ones are needed on a stage. Paint them in bright colours & scatter with glitter. They show up against the greenery when bought baubles look too small from a distance.

*Ref. SA CWA Handy Hints (1973)*

## BOOKS & CDs

### NEWLY IN STOCK:

**Warrior, Fred et. Al. Ngadjuri – Aboriginal people of the Mid North region of South Australia**, Meadows SA, SASOSE Council Inc, 2005 - **\$40.**

**THE OWNERS OF STANLEY FLAT 1836 – 1986** researched and compiled by **William Pattullo**. This item has been out of print for 30 years but has now been reprinted in July 2015. **\$30**

**COTTAGES AND CAMEOS OF CLARE** by WN Johnson (1988) 100pp, illus. **\$25**

**CLARE - A DISTRICT HISTORY** by R. J. Noye (1998). Definitive history of the town and district. Includes photographs, sketches & maps. Essential starting point in Clare research. 231pp. 4th edition, with new index. **\$20 (\$15 - members)**

**CLARE VALLEY, SA** by Coralie Jones (2014) (A pictorial souvenir). **\$20**

**CLARE SHOW "A fine all round display" for 150 years** by David Bond (2014) Written to celebrate 150 years of shows in Clare. **\$33**

**A History of Ngadjuri Lodge Trust** by Win Johnson (2011). **\$10**

**The story of Bungaree Station** by Rob Linn (2011) Illus. **\$17**

**FROM WHERE I SIT** A Collection of articles on chosen themes written over past times by Win Johnson **\$16**

**THE PATHS OF GLORY LEAD BUT TO THE GRAVE a history of Clare Cemeteries** by EHH 'Clarion' Tilbrook and Miss M Tilbrook (originally published in *The Northern Argus* in 1939) **Re-released with updated index. \$20**

**CLARE CAMEOS** by Win Johnson (1986). 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Includes oral histories of our older Clare residents as interviewed by Win in the State's Sesquicentennial year. **\$15**

**TALKING HISTORY – Tales of Clare S.A.** by R.J. (Bob) Noye (2003). 50 articles published weekly in *The Northern Argus*. **\$15**

**THE CLARE I REMEMBER** by J.J. 'Boss' Simons. 13 articles published in *The Northern Argus* in 1944, describing the Clare of Simons' boyhood in the 1880's and 1890's. Fully indexed. **\$15**

**THE LAND HISTORY OF POLISH HILL RIVER 1842 - 1990** by William Pattullo (1991). Details the ownership history of 120 sections of land in Polish Hill River, to the edge of Mintaro township. **\$25**

**CARINYA 1956 - 1989 A Peaceful and happy home** Compiled by Marj. Ashby. **\$5**

**THE METHODISTS OF CLARE 1851 - 1977** by Win Johnson (1994). 124pp. Indexed. **\$12**

**CLARE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH - a history 1856 - 1988** by Helen Dickeson (1993). 120pp. Includes baptisms, marriages, burials, and extensive index. **\$14**

## FOR SALE

**HARD-YACKA - The story of a Mid-North town in South Australia** by Julie-Ann Ellis (1995). **\$40**

**JUST AS IT WAS** by Winifred Johnson (2001) Tells the story of Win's life with humour and affection. 96pp including photos **\$20**

**BLYTH - a silo of stories 1860 - 1990** by Win Johnson (1991). A comprehensive history of the town and district of Blyth, including family stories, farming, community and sporting activities. Excellent photographs, many in colour. **\$45**

**BUNGAREE – Land, Stock & People: History of Hawker family and Bungaree Station** (1992). 230pp **\$45**

**MAGPIE CREEK JUNCTION a history of Brinkworth and district 1892 – 1992** (1992) **\$50**

**SADDLEWORTH - Hub of the Wheel** by Elinor A. Bellman (1995) **\$35**

**CLARE – A BACKWARD GLANCE** – by J. Haynes & E.J. Schmaal (1980) **\$8**

**HEAD OF THE RIVERS – Black Springs, Manoora, Waterloo** (1992) **\$25**

**MARRABEL & DISTRICT REVISITED** – additional material of the 'early days' at Marrabel **\$25**

**HILL RIVER A Valley of History** by Gerald Lally (2004) **\$30**

**A LANDMARK OF FAITH Church of the Immaculate Conception Mintaro and its parishioners 1856–2006** by Gerald Lally (2006) **\$35**

**TIMES PAST – a pictorial history of Farrell Flat** by Gerald A. Lally (2012) **194pp. \$30**

**"A WALK WITH LAUREL" a walking tour of the buildings and families of Farrell Flat from the memories of the period 1929 – 1939** by Laurel Neill (nee Mickel) (2012) **\$5**

**SOUTH CLARE SPORTS CLUB – Celebrating 50 years of success 1960 – 2010** by Gerald Lally et. al. (2010) **\$20**

**THE INCHQUIN STORY** by Jean Schmaal. **\$5**

**A QUAIN COURT HOUSE** by Jean Schmaal, **\$5**

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**CD-ROMS**

**HEADSTONE PHOTOS FROM LOCAL CEMETERIES (CD Rom)** (2005) **\$10**



**THE ANNUAL REPORTS OF ROTARY CLUB OF CLARE 1964 – 2011 (DVD)** **\$20** Limited release



**FEDERATION CD ROM** - history of the Clare & Gilbert Valley District for all computer buffs and their friends - a great gift idea! (2002) **\$10**



## **CLARE REGIONAL HISTORY GROUP**

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

Postal Address – PO Box 6 Clare SA 5453

Location – Clare Town Hall (upstairs)

Phone (08) 8842 4100 in opening hours

Web: [www. users.on.net/~clarehistory](http://www.users.on.net/~clarehistory)

Email: [clarehistory@internode.on.net](mailto:clarehistory@internode.on.net)

**OPENING HOURS Thu & Fri 1 – 4pm**

(If travelling some distance it is wise to ring and check.)

**Out of Hours Opening Fee - \$20.00**

### **ACQUISITIONS**

Ragless, Richard & Margaret *Puttapa spring from Beltana* 1986

*Clare High School: Student Register 1921 – 1966, 2016 (CD)*

## **BOOKS WANTED**



Please help our funds by donating books of historic interest for our book sale to be held

**on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> May,**

**10 – 4pm, Town Hall foyer.**

This event was very successful last year.

We will also sell new books, cards & CDs.



Have you seen the Settler's Oak near the site of the railway turntable, just east of the Riesling Trail off East Terrace, Clare? It may be the key to the early houses there – watch this space for research findings! Photo next issue.

Members of the Clare Quilters Group with the Clare Valley quilt they produced. Back L-R: Sue Mayfield, Sarina Taylor, Carolyn Semple, Diane Richardson, Anne Morrison, Sonia Zwiersen, Lyn Woods. Front L-R: Rosemary Jenner, Barb Sanders, Chris Cootes. It depicts many aspects of the area and is on display at the Clare Library. [Photo: Sue Wurst, 2016]