



TRIBUTE

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FREE PUBLICATION

St Marys & District Historical Society Inc. - Quarterly Newsletter

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‘ Recording & Preserving the Heritage of St Marys ’

From the Editor - Whilst shopping at the St Marys Village Centre recently, I noticed a shop front advertising the development on the land once home to the St Marys Bowling Club.

The model on display consisted of four towers and advertised as 1 bed, 2 bed and 3 bed quality apartments. This new development is called “Carson on the Park;” brought to you by ALAND an award-winning Australian developer.



Therefore, I felt that the history of the Bowling Club would be of interest... For some years before 1951, a number of bowlers in St Marys were part of the Penrith Bowling Club as it was the nearest centre to St Marys. Clarrie Minns along with Joe Cook thought that the sudden expansion of growth in St Marys warranted the formation of its own Club. Accordingly, a public meeting was called for the 5th February to be held in the Mechanics Institute Hall at St Marys and twenty-three interested citizens turned up. On the 19th February 1951, the first permanent Committee was elected; **Patrons:** Alex McKay, Robert Methven, President: Clarence “Clarrie” Minns, Senior Vice-President: Joe Cook, Vice-President: Clive Randerson, Hon. Secretary: Arthur Lane, Hon. Treasurer: William “Bill” Bull. **Committee:** William “Bill” Astley, Harold “Hal” Bennett, Pat Christie, Arthur Haddow, Frank Hall, William “Bill” Hingerty, G. McMillan, S. Morphett, Mr. Rooke, John Taite. **Foundation Members:** William Astley, N. Barton, Harold Bennett, W. Bull, E. Crabbe, Joe Cook, H. P. Christie, D. Graham, A. Haddow, William Hingerty, F. Hall, A. Lane. T. Lane, G. McMillan, C. Minns, S. Morphett, Clive Randerson, M. Rooke. J. Stephens, J. Taite.

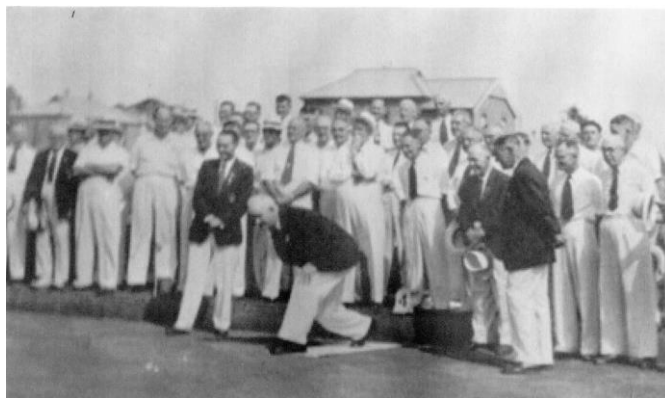
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President Minns was empowered to negotiate immediately with the Executors of Mrs. Beacroft's Estate for the purchase of some four (4) acres of land – with the offer not to exceed £400. A deposit of £40 was paid almost immediately, but the price agreed on finally was £420. On 16th May, 1951 only four months after the initial meeting, a General Meeting of Members endorsed a proposal to build a wooden Club House with a galvanised roof some 20 feet wide with an 8-foot veranda. Frank Hall, a master builder, estimated the cost at £500. In 1952 the first Club House was completed and it would have been considered primitive by to-day's standards; board floors, later graced with linoleum with wooden tables and chairs. For some time, an actual bar was not in use. Drinks were served through a lift up "hole in the wall" by all volunteer labour. Glass washing facilities consisted of a galvanised tub of water. It was said on one very busy occasion by a member that the washing up water was "strong enough to drink".

The Official Opening of the St Mary's Bowling Club was held on 21st March 1952. President Clarrie Minns welcomed the two principal guests, the President of N.S.W. Bowling Association Mr. George Carson and the President of the Blue Mountains Association Mr. Harry Morrison. To mark the event, it was suggested to Penrith Council that the lane entering the Club bear the name of Carson's Lane and the Council accepted the suggestion.

PRESIDENTS: C. Minns (1951-54, 1964-65), J. Innes (1954-59), A. Cameron (1959-1963, 1965-68), F. Clinton (1963, 1969-72), R. Shute (1963), R. Atwell (1968-69), A. Lang (1972-74), K. Gaskin (1974-75), T. Lang (1976-78), R. Kelly (1978), A. McKew (1979-80).



George Carson, Clarrie Minns, Harry Morrison & Arthur Lane at the Opening in 1952.

The first bowl was put down by George Carson on 21/3/1952.

The St Marys Women's Bowling Club was officially formed on 2nd October, 1954 and the following women were the first officers; President: Mrs. K. Lane, Vice-Presidents: Mrs. Randerson, Mrs. Cook, Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Barley, Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. G. Lang. In 1964 the business side of the Club was completely re-structured and management came under the control of a Board of Directors, subject to the Companies Act and the Club was incorporated as a limited company.

Photo: *Greta Lane, Mrs. George, Kay Shute & Kit Lane.*



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENTS

2022 ANZAC Dawn Commemoration

At 4.15am members Norma & Tom Thorburn and Caroline Volkiene travelled to the St Marys RSL sub-Branch for the Commemoration of the ANZAC 2022 Dawn Service at the Guns War Memorial. A wreath was laid on behalf of the Society.

Highlighted this year was the 80th Anniversary of the Fall of Singapore and the Bangka Island Massacre. A large crowd attended and as always it was a heart moving service.



The Fall of Singapore & Bangka Island Massacre Overview

The Fall of Singapore considered by many to be one of the greatest disasters in British and Australian military history. Remembered also were the courageous women of the Australian Army Nursing Service.

During the Second World War, Singapore, with its extensive naval base, was considered by many to be an impregnable 'island fortress'.

In the days prior to the surrender of Singapore on 15 February 1942, Australian nurses stationed on the island were evacuated for their safety. Sixty-five nurses boarded the SS *Vyner Brooke* on 12 February 1942 with other evacuees.

On 14 February, while in the Bangka Strait, the *Vyner Brooke* was bombed and sunk by the Japanese. A group of survivors, including 22 Australian nurses, managed to make it ashore on **Bangka Island**.

Two days later, on 16 February 1942, the group surrendered to the Japanese forces who had landed on the island. Most of the prisoners were killed, including 21 nurses. Australian Army nurse, Sister Vivian Bullwinkel and a wounded British soldier survived, but were forced to surrender 12 days later.

There was fierce fighting on the island of Singapore, but British forces were poorly led and the defence was disorganised. Japanese troops moved swiftly across the island and captured the water reservoirs and pumping stations.

A week after the invasion, the senior British commander General Arthur Percival decided there was no option but to surrender.

While evacuations had begun in January 1942, more than 100,000 British and Commonwealth troops, including some 15,000 Australians, became prisoners of war.

Ref: dva.gov.au

Member Special Birthdays

Congratulations to Tom Thorburn on his 90th Birthday. Members celebrated this important occasion at the June meeting with the cutting of a Bavarian cake. Well wishes were given and all enjoyed a piece of cake in celebration for afternoon tea.



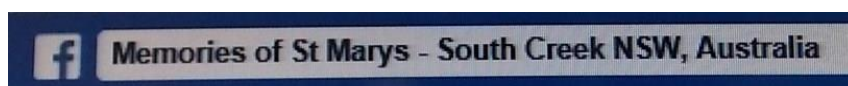
The St Marys & District Historical Society meets every 4th Saturday of the month at 1 pm – at the St Marys Precinct “Chambers” Building – Mamre Road, St Marys.

No meetings in January or December
ALL WELCOME

Open to the Public on Wednesdays & Saturdays from 10.00am - 2.00pm
(meeting days till 1.00pm) and by appointment for Groups
Please contact: Lyn Forde: 8840 8771 / Guest Speaker - Norma Thorburn: 9623 2307
Patron of our Society is Kerrie Davies.

Back issues of the “Tribute” can be found on our website at
www.stmaryshistoricalsociety.com.au

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(While care is taken to ensure that all articles are accurate, the opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Society.) **Any comments on this Newsletter are encouraged.**

PLEASE, DON'T THROW OUT AUSTRALIAN HISTORY. OLD PHOTOGRAPHS, BOOKS, LETTERS, RECEIPTS, DOCKETS, NEWSPAPERS & MAGAZINES. IF YOU HAVE ANYTHING YOU ARE NOT SURE ABOUT PLEASE CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY.