

St Marys & District Historical Society Inc - Quarterly Newsletter
 PO Box 640, ST MARYS NSW 1790 – Street Address (St Marys Corner, Mamre Rd, St Marys)

KEVIN DWYER PARK

On the 21st May, 2010, Penrith Council dedicated Roper Oval at Colyton as the Kevin Dwyer Park. This was the culmination of the members of our Society and the Dwyer family to recognise a man who dedicated his life to the Penrith - St Mary's area. Kevin was a member of our Society and also a member of various other Organisations as well as Mayor and Alderman of Penrith City Council at various times over the years. Both Kevin and his wife Margaret (who is our Vice-President as well as one of this year's Penrith Council Wall of Achievement recipients) were also awarded the OAM for services to the Community.



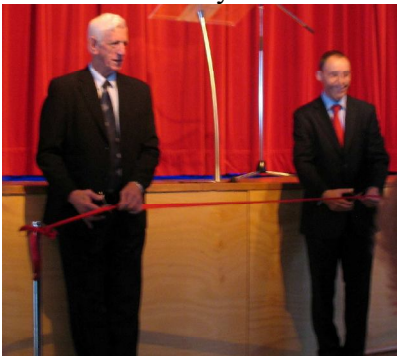
Mayor Cramereri dedicates the park



The Dwyer family with Mayor Cramereri at the dedication

RE-OPENING OF THE ST MARYS MEMORIAL HALL

The wet weather didn't dampen the enthusiasm at the St Mary's Corner on Saturday, 29th May, 2010 for the festivities to re-open the newly restored Memorial Hall. The one year wait was well worth it. If you didn't come along you missed out on a great day. All the Organisations within the St Marys Corner precinct were open to the public as well as the "Chambers" having a photo and dress display on past Memorial Hall activities. The Mayor Kevin Cramereri re-opened the building and a plaque dedicated to Alf and Billie Randell which pleased their family members who travelled to St Marys for the event. The entertainment in the Hall was excellent and everyone received back positive feedback from those who attended the day.



Mayor Cramereri & David Bradbury Cut the ribbon to re-open the Hall



Members of the Randell family



Member Rosemary Crupi in costume at the "Chambers"

History of St Mary's Bowling Club to 1980

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, M 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.

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 – 1980).

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 Bartley, 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.



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.

Thanks to Carol Volkiene for typing out this article.

St Mary Magdalene Anglican Church turns 170

The year 2010 is being celebrated in this district as the anniversary of the Macquarie era, but it is also the 170th anniversary of the St Mary Magdalene Anglican Church at St Marys. The anniversary was celebrated by Reverend David Clark, Church members and the public on Saturday, 24th April.

This historic Church has a long association with the early King and Lethbridge families, as well as many prominent St Mary's families and people from the district and beyond. The Church was named after the Church of St Mary Magdalene in Launceston at Cornwall in England. The name was given to our Church by the King family who worshiped at the Cornwall Church before coming to Australia. This impressive 16th century Church bears no resemblance to our humble Church here in Australia, but nevertheless, our St Mary's Church does have a rich heritage, both in the building as well as those sleeping in the Churchyard.

St Marys was originally known as South Creek before taking the name of the Church. South Creek in the early days was a very impressive waterway. Many a child and adult drowned in its waters, as well as livestock and a racehorse called "Cave Dweller" came to grief there in 1934. It was the only creek where families from the area could cool off from the summer heat without needing to go to Penrith. Eric Cuckson saw a need for a safe place for the children to learn to swim and opened his swimming pool at his Zipper factory on Forrester Road. He later helped with the building of the St Marys swimming pool near the High School.

But I digress. Our Church had a very fine Architect named Francis Clarke, who worked as an Architectural draftsman in England for Decimus Burton who was responsible for the layout of Hyde Park in London around the time that Francis was working for him. On coming to Australia, Francis lived in Clarence Street in Sydney with an office in Phillip Street. The local builder of the Church was James Atkinson. James was also the builder on St Stephen's Church at Penrith and St Bartholomew's Church at Prospect.

The foundation stone of St Mary Magdalene was laid by Bishop Broughton in 1837 and the Church was open for worship in April, 1840. Before the building of the Churches at St Marys and Penrith, worshippers of the Anglican faith from the area had to make do with a room in a slab building on Victoria Road (*the Highway*) at St Marys on loan from Philip Parker King. The Reverend Thomas Hassall (*known as the Galloping Parson*) held services there, as well as Reverend Samuel Marsden and others who would fill in when needed.

The first burial in the Churchyard was that of nine week old Thomas Reveley in October, 1840. The King family Vault and the headstone of Governor King gives provenance to the history of the Church and the families involved. The fact that the whole of the St Marys area was given as land grants as early as 1804 shows the significance of this area within the early framework of the Colony. Until the land grant of Mary Bligh-Putland-O'Connell was put up for sale in 1841, the township of South Creek-St Marys didn't really exist. Burial of the dead before the opening of the cemetery was mainly left to the family. Early burials used a briar to carry the coffin to the gravesite. This was made for the Church out of wood and structured to fit around the coffin so that family pallbearers could carry the coffin from the Church to the cemetery. From the time of the opening of the cemetery, the coffin would lay at home until it was moved via carriage to the Church. If the home was not far from the Church, family and friends would gather at the home to follow the coffin on its way to the Church. This practice remained virtually up until the early 1940's. Families who could afford it would use the local undertakers of John Price & Sons of Penrith whose name of Price & Sons was still used in the 1970's. The Church and cemetery still remains in use to this day. Burials are limited and burials now are within the St Marys General cemetery on the Highway. In the one hundred and seventy years, the Church has been cement rendered to protect the crumbling brickwork and the inside and stain glass windows partially restored. A testament to the love it has been given over all those years and hopefully the years to come.

Photos on page 4 taken at the celebrations by Lyn Forde



The St Marys & District Historical Society meets every 4th Saturday at 1 pm - at the St Marys Precinct "Chambers" Building - Mamre Road, St Marys. Car park via 29 Swanson St. **No meetings in January or December.** Patron of our Society is Sister Mary Louise Petro

ALL WELCOME

Back issues of the "Tribute" can be found on our website at www.stmaryshistoricalsociety.org

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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