

Hawkesbury Historical Society

Newsletter of the Hawkesbury Historical Society Inc.

HAWKESBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Website: www.hawkesburyhistoricalsociety.org

Facebook: facebook.com/hawkesburyhistoricalsociety

Aim: Hawkesbury Historical Society aims to encourage and preserve the history of the Hawkesbury

Meetings: 4th Thursday, alternate months, 7.30pm-10pm, except June and August - 2pm. Venue – St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall, 25W Market Street, Richmond.

Open to: People interested in the preservation of the history of the Hawkesbury, new members welcome.

Patron: Wendy Sledge

Office Bearers 2025/2026

President: Jan Barkley-Jack
Alternate President: Rebecca McRae
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Secretary & Facebook Administrator: Peta Sharpley
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Bookshop Manager: Kathy Layton

Committee members

Ted Brill, Neville Dehn, Janice Hart, Jan Readford and Oonagh Sherrard

HHS Collection Committee

Jan Barkley-Jack

Publications Committee

Michael Christie, Jan Barkley-Jack, Cathy McHardy, Rebecca McRae and Jan Readford
(To be confirmed)

2026 MEETINGS

Saturday, 27th June – 2.00pm

Saturday, 22 August – 2.00pm

Thursday, 22 October – 7.30pm AGM

St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall
25 West Market Street, Richmond

Keep an eye out for details about our next
Tebbutts Observatory Stargazing event
– COMING SOON!

Hawkesbury Historical Society General Meeting

Saturday, 27 June 2026 – 2pm

to be held at

St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall

25 W Market Street, Richmond

Parking is available next door

Speaker: Louise Wilson

Topic: Richard Ridge: Opening a Surprise Package

Louise Wilson's talk, 'Richard Ridge: Opening a Surprise Package', will focus on his involvement in several unusual aspects of Hawkesbury local history. Literate and numerate, and living mostly at the Hawkesbury from 1798, Ridge's role as a trader in the early 1800s led to his surprising employment as the colony's bailiff, performing day-to-day duties never seriously researched before, until now. As bailiff from 1807, Ridge worked for the Provost Marshal, a Crown appointee and the man who arrested John Macarthur in January 1808. The forces against Governor Bligh were powerful, and the Provost Marshal and Ridge both suffered the consequences of the Rum Rebellion. Ridge's personal relationships and his various addresses also revealed him as an interesting man in all other aspects of his life.



About our speaker:

A Sydneysider by birth, Melbourne-based Louise Wilson is the author of nine family histories and biographies and four other books. Her most recent book 'Richard Ridge:

Convict, Trader and Bailiff in Early Colonial NSW' recently won the Don Grant Award for a family biography, the award presented by the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies, now called Family History Connections, at its annual luncheon in Melbourne. The judges described the Ridge book as 'the model of how a biography of an ancestor should be written'. Two other books by Louise Wilson about early convict settlers of the Hawkesbury have also won this group's annual awards: 'Southwark Luck' won the Alexander Henderson Award in 2012 and 'Sentenced to Debt' won the Don Grant Award in 2020. Her book about Sydney's first professional scientific botanical illustrator, 'Margaret Flockton: A Fragrant Memory', won the Don Grant Award in 2016. For details of all thirteen of her books, see www.louisewilson.com.au

Getting to know Hawkesbury Historical Society's Members

This new feature of our newsletter, introduced in our February 2026 to coincide with the Society's 70th birthday year, is intended to showcase our various members and their personal special memories, some about the Hawkesbury, some the Society, some not.



This month, it is Ted Brill that we wish to feature.

Ted Brill gives credit to his primary school teachers at Wagga Wagga Public School for initiating his interest in history. At high school he chose to study Ancient and Modern History. At Wagga Teachers College he chose history as an

elective subject, and this was followed by studies of Australian and American History with the University of New England.

Ted and his wife Sue moved to the Hawkesbury in 1972 when Ted was appointed as principal of Ebenezer Public School. For the Australian bicentenary year of 1988, he compiled *Ebenezer Schools – 1810 to 1988*. He has also been involved in three editions of the booklet *The History of Ebenezer, Australia's Oldest Church*, the production of *A Colonial Churchyard*, a book that records inscriptions on memorials in the Ebenezer Church Cemetery and an Ebenezer Church bicentenary edition of its history.

In 2011, Ted was awarded an Australia Day Hawkesbury City Council Cultural Heritage Award. In the same year he was

made a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Club of Windsor and a Life Member of the Ebenezer Rural Fire Brigade.

Ted was always interested in joining the Hawkesbury Historical Society, but it was not until 1984 that he attended his first meeting, an occasion he remembers well. The largely attended meeting was interrupted by a woman, who was standing at the back of the room and pointing to Ted, calling out, "Excuse me, Mr President, but I need to speak to *that* man." It was Sue and Ted's wedding anniversary. A group of friends had arrived at the Brill's house unannounced to celebrate, only to find the groom missing! It took Ted six months to overcome the embarrassment and attend another meeting!

Over the following years, Ted has enjoyed the friendship extended by Society members and the collegiality experienced when working on an Historical Society event. His knowledge of the history of the Hawkesbury has been broadened by the interesting guest speakers at meetings. Sharing the leadership of the Society's guided tours has also been interesting, especially the Wilberforce – Ebenezer end.

Ted's particular historical interest has been that of Ebenezer Church. For the last three decades, Ted and Sue, along with a small group of church members and volunteers, have both been highly involved in sharing the interesting history of the church, keeping church buildings and grounds in a high standard of maintenance and maintaining Ebenezer Church as a living church.

Hawkesbury Historical Society's 70th Anniversary Celebrations

The Society will celebrate its 70th Anniversary at our August 2026 meeting and will coincide with the Alan Aldrich Memorial Meeting.

Do you have photographs of any excursions, meetings and special Society events held over the last 70 years?

If so, please send them to Jan Barkleyk-Jack, who will coordinate and show the photographs at the August meeting, to:
j.barkley-jack@hotmail.com.au

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

June 2026

Hi everyone,

Well, I have now been settled in up on the Central Coast for only a few weeks, but have already been back to the Hawkesbury for four days in that time, and have a Teams meeting scheduled for Monday about McQuade Park and its heritage, and have been part of two more discussions with Hawkesbury historians about its heritage matters. I think I shall always be part of the Hawkesbury and shall be coming back here regularly for the rest of my life- and even after that, as Ian and I have places in the Columbarium at Ebenezer. However, I do feel the need to see more of my two lovely daughters who are now melded to the Central Coast, hence the move.

Not all the people I meet up here on the Central Coast, realise that they are living connected to the Hawkesbury River, and that Brisbane Water is really just a part of Broken Bay, where the Hawkesbury has its mouth and finishes its long journey to the sea. I hope to help them understand the connection and to show them some of the early history which started in the central parts of the Hawkesbury-Nepean River, which we all value so dearly. And this district of Woy Woy, where I have bought a villa, and its surrounds like Ettalong and Umina, have a lot that already interests me about river history, which as you know is a particular interest of mine. For instance, you may not already be aware that the earliest boat builder mentioned in the Hawkesbury area, as early as 1794, was making small craft for Hawkesbury farmers, and then moved to the Hawkesbury's mouth in 1823 after a stint in what is now Darling Harbour.

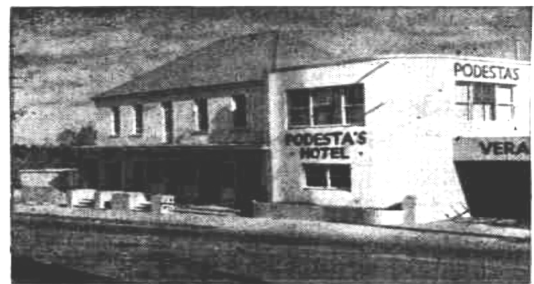
James Webb was his name and although his origins are still somewhat confused, I now believe he was a soldier when he first arrived in New South Wales. By 1794, he was a settler in the Hawkesbury district amongst the first group of European farmers to arrive. He constructed for himself as well as for Owen Cavanagh. As Cavanagh's boat was capable of transporting more than 2 to 2.3 cubic metres of grain, Webb had clearly constructed a vessel of at least two tonne's burthen, and presumably his own vessel was at least this size. These two sailing vessels were recorded as transporting grain by 1797 to Sydney town, and both outlasted other early small vessels on the river, like Daniel Smallwood's *Hope*. James Webb had his Hawkesbury grant on the river just

before Canning Reach which is near present-day Pitt Town. His grant in Brisbane Waters was near today's Rip Bridge which crosses Brisbane Water holding one of the roads heading north. Webb's Central Coast boat building is now where the suburb of Orange Grove is located just across the river from where I shall soon live- so ring me if you are coming this way and I shall love to see you and to show it to you. And who knows what else I may discover in the way of the connections between the two parts of the Hawkesbury River.

I shall be down in the Hawkesbury Valley to chair the Hawkesbury Historical Society's June General Meeting on 27 June at 2pm, eager to hear our guest speaker, Louise Wilson give us information about another early Hawkesbury pioneer, also in the central Hawkesbury district from the 1790s. Richard Ridge quickly became well-known, and being literate and good with numbers, was soon a respected part of the early official Hawkesbury scene. Louise's biographies of the Ridge, Forrester and Bushell families, and others, as part of her own family roots, have won awards and are deeply researched and very wide-reaching as you will know from the information we provide in this newsletter, and even from having read some of them, perhaps even in having common roots with her. Louise is living in Melbourne, so we appreciate her time and it will be good to see her in the Hawkesbury again.

I do hope to see you all at the June meeting for this interesting guest speaker and keep in mind that non-members and visitors are most welcome.

Dr Jan Barkley-Jack
President



Always at the Right Temperature!
TOOTH'S NEW and OLD BEER

Bottled Beer for that Formal Function
or Party — always Frigidly Cold

Only the Best Brands of Wines and Spirits
Stocked

**PODESTA'S
HOTEL**

WINDSOR

PHONE WINDSOR 146

Windsor and Richmond Gazette, Wednesday 24 April 1957
(Trove). Courtesy Peta Sharpley.

PEAK INTO THE PAST

On Tuesday 14 April 2026, our annual 'Peek into the Past' event was held at the home of Rob and Wendy Sledge at 74 The Terrace, Windsor.

Dr Jan Barkley-Jack gave an informative talk on the history of the home, before a fascinating guided tour was conducted by Wendy and Rob. Everyone was astounded at the beauty of the house, and the quality of the conservation undertaken by the Sledges, resulting today in the house being redolent with the charm of the building in the late nineteenth century.



Photo: Hawkesbury Library Service



From the original deeds held by Wendy and Rob, Jan learnt that in 1798 the land was originally granted as part of 20 acres to ex-convict Chief Constable Thomas Rickaby and named by him 'Catherine Farm' after his long-term partner Catherine Smith. It was given by the government in addition to Rickaby's original farm grant on the Cornwallis lowlands. Rickaby was very entrepreneurial and from mid-1806 he became the first person in the Hawkesbury district to sell tiny allotments on his property, thus beginning the Green Hills village. These lots were on high land beside the main track which later was named George Street by Lachlan Macquarie when 5 years later he created the town of Windsor and incorporated Rickaby's village into it.

In 1818 when Thomas Rickaby died, he left the land to Thomas Rixon, his Godson. Rixon sold to Samuel Terry, a well-known ex-convict landowner in Sydney, who, in turn, sold to wealthy Maria Cope, in 1834. Maria further subdivided her land between The Terrace and George Street resulting in the formation of New Street and several other streets. Maria advertised The Terrace land with its views and healthy position, as befitting the residences of the more elite, whilst mechanics and others would be best suited, she said, to purchase the land nearer George Street. This subdivision played a crucial role in the development of the town of Windsor.

Laban White bought any unsold pieces of 'Catherine Farm' in 1840. White, another ex-convict, when he died, Laban senior had married Lucy Brown/Upton from Cornwallis which continued what would become a long connection with Cornwallis families including the Norris family.

In 1853, Laban White sold the Sledge land and another holding which reached up to Catherine Street, to William Walker, an important state politician. Walker built immediately on the southern portion of his purchase and 11 years later also built number 74, the current house now owned by Wendy and Rob. Mary Robertson bought this house in 1877 from Walker and over



the next few years it changed hands several more times, including to Edward Mellish who had married into the Upton family.



In 1914, Sarah Holland bought the property and by 1943 it was in the hands of a relative R.F. Mellish. In 1951, it was inherited by Elsie Holland, until eventually it was sold out of the wider family and finally bought by Wendy and Rob in 1981.

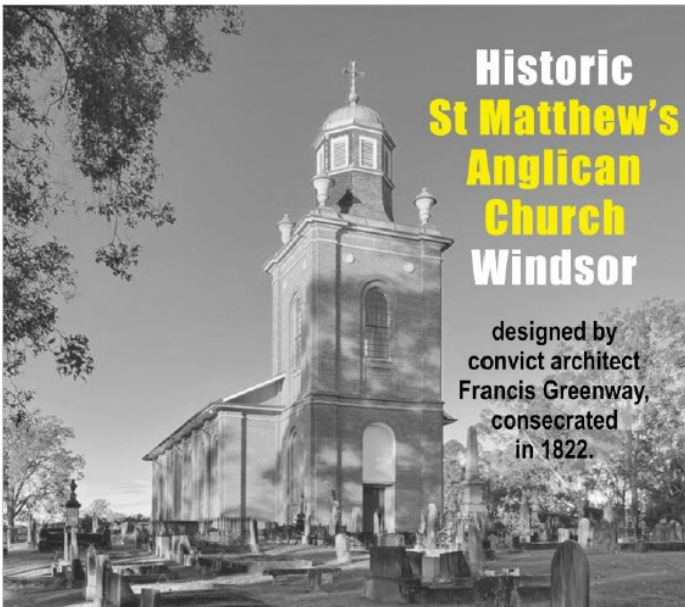
There were 25 people in attendance, all of whom thoroughly enjoyed the experience of the house, as well as the wine and nibbles provided by the Society. This number was made up of several people who had come

from other parts of Sydney and who were not disappointed by the experience and a couple of others who have just lately moved into Windsor and are busily conserving their own cottages. We look forward to meeting up with them at future events and hearing about their progress too.

We thank both Wendy, the Patron of Hawkesbury Historical Society, and Rob for their generosity in opening their house to us and for giving us all a very pleasant evening.



Photos taken by Keith Friend





**Historic
St Matthew's
Anglican
Church
Windsor**

designed by
convict architect
Francis Greenway,
consecrated
in 1822.

TOURS

Defenders of Thompson Square, in collaboration with St Matthew's Anglican Church and the Hawkesbury Historical Society, is offering guided tours of the church, belltower and cemetery at 5 Moses Street, Windsor

2026 Sundays 1 - 3 pm
Dates: 26 April, 28 June, 30 August, 25 October
Cost: \$50 per person for a 2 hour tour comprising of church, belltower and cemetery.
Age: Restricted to persons 18+ years of age.

Tours of St Matthew's Anglican Church, belltower and cemetery

For bookings and details:
www.defendersofthompsonsquareinc.com/defenders-tours

Maximum of ten participants per tour and one tour only offered on each advertised date.

Cancellations with refund:
For cancellations and refunds please email defendertours@gmail.com **at least 5 days before the tour date.** If we cancel a tour we will offer you a refund or a place in the next advertised tour date.

Cancellations with no refund:
If you request to cancel the booking less than 5 days before the tour, we will not be able to offer a refund.

Extreme weather:
If extreme weather events (heat, heavy rain, flood, fire) are predicted, we will cancel and provide refunds.

Light rain or drizzle:
Please dress accordingly. We may cancel the outdoor component of the tour and provide a partial refund.

Recommended clothing, footwear and bags:
Please wear comfortable clothes and enclosed rubber-soled shoes, suitable for walking on uneven ground and narrow stairs. No large bags please.

Mobility:
Please note that the tour involves climbing steep, narrow stairs with no hand rails and walking on uneven ground.

60% of all funds raised will be donated to the St Matthew's Anglican Church conservation fund.

@DefendersofThompsonSquare on facebook

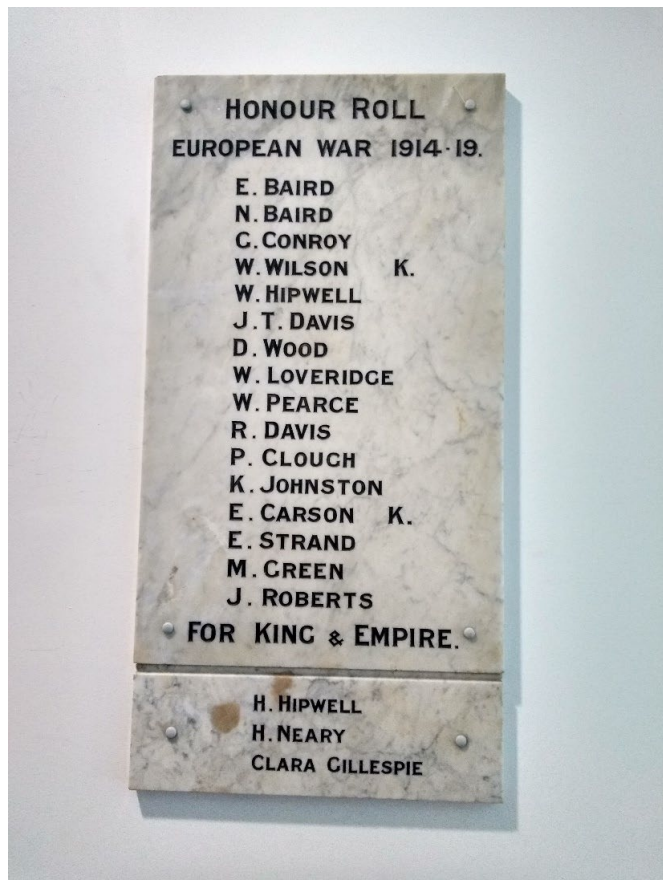
Who was Sister Clara Gillespie of Pitt Town?

By Cathy McHardy

Researched May 2024 and updated June 2026

Waiting patiently in the foyer of the Pitt Town Sports Club located on Old Pitt Town Road, Pitt Town for my turn to sign in as a visitor while looking forward to a pleasant lunch with friends, my eye was immediately drawn to a grey marble plaque mounted in the entrance hall. The honour roll included a number of names noting that two had been killed in action. Curiously, there was an additional plaque, also in marble mounted below the main roll, noting two further names and even more curiously, the name Clara Gillespie. I am always pleased to see women's names included on war memorials, as their important service should never go unrecognised.

I realised that there was so much more to this story, who was Clara Gillespie, where did she serve and how did the two plaques find their way to the Pitt Town Sports Club which opened in 1987?



World War One Honour Roll, Pitt Town Sports Club, Pitt Town. Cathy McHardy, 5 September 2023



Excerpt from the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* reporting on the unveiling of the honour roll and the war trophy at Pitt Town on Saturday 4 February 1922.

In February 1922, during the unveiling of the Pitt Town Honour Roll remembering those who served in World War One, it became apparent that a number of names had been omitted from the plain grey marble tablet. The *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* of 10 February (1) reported that:

“Unfortunately the name of H Hipwell was omitted from the honor (sic) roll, by the monumental masons, (a Sydney firm) and this name, as well as those of W Smallwood, H Neary, and Sister G (sic) Gillespie, will probably be added”.

The report intimated that the fault may lay with the “Sydney firm” who made the plaque rather than considering the possibility that an incomplete list was supplied by local authorities!

Along with the marble tablet, a war trophy in the form of a machine gun was erected on the western wall of the Pitt Town School of Arts. According to the article, the machine gun was of German origin purportedly captured on the Western Front.

The School of Arts had been opened in late January 1918 and once stood at 28 Bathurst Street, Pitt Town. The land had been donated for the purpose by Alderman Samuel Cox and was a small part of portion 53, a grant of 40 acres to James Wilbow on 1 October 1803. The building was demolished in about 1976, so it is indeed fortunate that this marble tablet, complete with the additional names mounted at the bottom, was saved from the building.

It is also interesting that just three of the four names omitted from the tablet are now inscribed – that of “W Smallwood” still remains unrecorded for an unknown reason.

Clara Gillespie was born at Pitt Town on the 28 November 1880 to James Gillespie and Isabel Eliza (Isabella) Laycock. She was educated by the Sisters of the Good Samaritan Convent in Windsor and at the age of 15 years in December 1895, the Catholic newspaper published the results of the Catholic Primary School Examinations in which Clara gained a Certificate of Merit (2).

Clara’s training as a nurse, together with the early years of her service, remain elusive, but by 1912 she was employed in the Maryborough district of Queensland where her sister Isabel Paull and family were residing. The *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* reported several times, including the edition of the 7 December 1912, that “Miss Clara Gillespie, Sister of Messrs Ernest and William Gillespie, of Pitt Town, is over from Queensland on a month’s holiday. Miss Gillespie is a nurse in one of the Queensland hospitals” (3).

On the 22 February 1916, the *Maryborough Chronicle and Wide Bay and Burnett Advertiser* reported that Nurse Gillespie had “gone to Lismore” to take up a position at Lismore District Hospital (4). She was promoted to matron in early August that year, according to the *Daily Examiner* (Grafton) (5).

During 1917, at the age of 37 years, Clara made the momentous decision to join the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS), which she did on 14 December that year.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

REL34219

Embroidered cloth sleeve badge [REL34219] worn by nurses of the Australian Army Nursing Service in which Clara Gillespie served from 1917 until 1920. This badge depicts the red Cross of Geneva, a laurel wreath, and the King’s crown at the top. Courtesy of the Australian War Memorial.

Clara (listed as Clare in the records) then enlisted for service in Enoggera, Queensland on 2 November 1918, noting her sister Mrs Isabel Paull who was living in Virginia Avenue Hawthorne, Queensland as her next of kin. She sailed for Bombay, (now Mumbai) India aboard the *SS Wiltshire* on 9 November arriving in that port on the 3 December 1918 (6).

Posted to the 34th Welsh General Hospital Maharashta, Deolali, India, her period of service was brief, however the heat and conditions in India can only be imagined and would have presented a stark contrast to the Australian country hospitals to which she had been accustomed.

An article published by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation Victorian Branch remembering the life of Victorian nurse Marie Evelyn Armstrong who served at the same hospital provides some sense of conditions endured (7).

[The 34th WGH] was a large hospital complex of old army huts and stone buildings, housing somewhere between 3000 and 5000 beds. At one point, the hospital was staffed by just 59 Australian sisters and 15 Indian temporary nurses to handle a workload of 2,188 patients.

In addition, the heavy uniforms would have added to the discomfort in the hot and humid conditions and the risk of malaria and cholera were ever-

present. It was necessary for all staff to be vaccinated against smallpox and the plague.



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H1 2569



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

H1 2551

Two views of the 34th Welsh General Hospital Maharashta, Deolali, India.

The top image [H12569] shows the water tower in which the supply was chlorinated before being reticulated for use in the hospital, a necessity as the cleanliness of the water supply could not be relied upon.

The lower image [H12551] shows the layout of the buildings housing the wards and other facilities. Both images courtesy of the Australian War Memorial.

Embarking aboard the *SS Dilwarra* bound for Singapore on the 17 November 1919, Clara then travelled aboard *SS Mataram* from Singapore to Brisbane arriving in December.

Clara's service record notes that she was medically discharged from the service effective on the 21 January 1920, but no details of the nature or period of illness accompany the documents stating that she had "no illnesses – no disability now" on her arrival in Australia (8).

The *Brisbane Courier* reported the arrival aboard the Burns Philp steamer *Mataram* of the party of twelve nurses who had served in India (9):

Among the passengers on the Burns Philp steamer *Mataram* which reached Brisbane from Singapore yesterday morning, was a party of twelve AIF nursing sisters, who have been on service in India. The little detachment, which was in the charge of Matron P Frater, of Sydney, included Sisters G (sic) Gillespie, J S Harris, and A E Warner, of Queensland.

Sadly, no medals were awarded to Nurse Gillespie for her service even though she enlisted before the end of hostilities. The Officer in Charge of base records, Canberra, stated that her ship "had not left Australian waters before the 11th November, 1918, [therefore] she did not qualify for the award of War Medals".

After her return from India, she visited relatives at Pitt Town accompanied by her sister Isabel Paull and her husband. The party then returned to Brisbane by car at the end of January according to the local newspaper published on the 30 January 1920 (10).

On the 3 April 1944, the *Sydney Morning Herald* recorded the death at a private hospital in North Sydney of Clara Gillespie, a resident of Mosman for many years. A notice also appeared in the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*. She was laid to rest in the Catholic Cemetery at Windsor (11).

OLD district friends heard with extreme regret of the death, in a private hospital at North Sydney, on Saturday of a popular former resident in Miss Clara Gillespie, of Mosman, and formerly of Pitt Town. The late Miss Gillespie was a member of the nursing profession, and her wide and varied experience included that as a member of a nursing unit abroad in the last war. She is survived by two brother, Ernest and William, and two sisters, Mary and Kathleen, another sister, Amelia, having predeceased her. The remains were laid to rest in the Catholic cemetery at Windsor on Sunday. Mgr. W. O'Flynn performing the last rites.

* * * *

From the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 5 April 1944. P. 2.

Clara was survived by her two brothers, William and Ernest and her sisters Mary and Kathleen. Another sister Amelia had passed away in 1940. Her other sister Isabel Paull of Mosman was mysteriously omitted from the notice.



Monument erected over the grave of Clara Gillespie in Windsor Catholic Cemetery. Courtesy of Hawkesbury on the Net <https://www.hawkesbury.net.au/>

I acknowledge the many gaps in the story of nursing sister Clara Gillespie and I would welcome any information and photographs to further illuminate the life's work of this courageous woman from Pitt Town.

There is also another question outstanding. Why was the name of W Smallwood, who was mentioned as omitted from the original inscription at the unveiling of the original plaque at the Pitt Town School of Arts in February 1922, not also engraved along with H Hipwell, H Neary and Clara Gillespie on the additional plaque.

Looking for the service records for a W Smallwood, I did locate William Smallwood of Cattai who enlisted on the 4 November 1915 aged 49 years, serving in the 7th Light Horse until his discharge as medically unfit on the 15 September 1916 (12). Further research will be needed into whether this was the W Smallwood who was left off the honour roll and why this happened!

Cathy McHardy - cathy@nisch.org

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2. *The Freeman's Journal*, December 1895. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/111106442/12545858>
3. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 7 December 1912. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85850354>
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5. *Daily Examiner* (Grafton). <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/151074735>
6. World War One Service Record for Sister Clara Gillespie. National Archives of Australia. <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5008862>
7. Australian Nursing and Midwifery Federation, Victorian Branch accessed 4 May 2024 from <https://stories.anmfvic.asn.au/remembering-ww1-nurse-marie-armstrong/>
8. World War One Service Record for Sister Clara Gillespie. National Archives of Australia. <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=5008862>
9. *Brisbane Courier*, 7 January 1920, p. 9. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/20421363>
10. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 30 January 1920, p. 4. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/85874154>
11. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, 5 April 1944, p. 2. <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/86027912>
12. World War One Service Record for William Smallwood. National Archives of Australia. Retrieved 12 June 2026 from <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/SearchNRetrieve/Interface/ViewImage.aspx?B=8086564>

BE SURE NOT TO MISS

the General Meeting for the
Hawkesbury Historical Society

Saturday, 27 June – 2pm

and our speaker

Louise Wilson

on the topic

'Richard Ridge: Opening a Surprise Package'

at

St Andrew's Uniting Church Hall

25W Market Street, Richmond

PARKING is available next door.

Entry via West Market Street

What is a Bondi Point?

By Arthur Cooper

Bondi Points were called this as they were first identified at Bondi many years ago. [Following a storm in Sydney in 1899, thousands of Aboriginal tools were located in the sand dunes around Bondi]. They are a stone implement manufactured by Aboriginal people with the purpose of making a sharp pointed spear point as well as very effective barbs on spears.

Like a lot of Aboriginal stone implements, there were always other uses including attaching to a straight stick and used as a drill to make holes in bone or shell. The long sharp edge on one side could be used to cut like a knife. The Point was ideal for making holes in skins, digging out a splinter or to poke out food like sea snails or witchetty grubs.

A Bondi Point has a distinctive sharp triangular cross section with much evidence of working on the thick margin by chipping. Bondi Points can be found particularly on the east coast of New South Wales. The coastal regions are where most food is found, so Aboriginal groups would camp near the sea.

It was common to camp in amongst the sand dunes to shelter from the wind. Sand dunes keep creeping due to the wind and this can expose heavier material such as stone chips, flakes and even larger artifacts and bone implements.

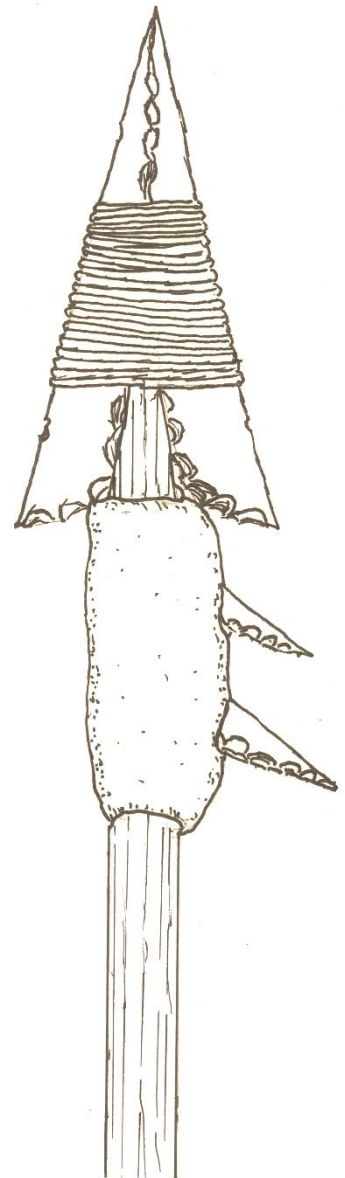
Most Aboriginal groups also went inland in a circuit for a change of seasonal food such as berries, yams, small animals, birds eggs, honey etc. It is in these inland camps where artefacts can be found as well, near water such as rivers, creeks, lakes and swamp areas.

Bondi Points can be found in the Hawkesbury area in caves and rock shelters. Heavy rain and dripping water can expose stone chips and flakes on the front edges of caves as well as on bush tracks. Where a river or a creek meets, the sea is an ideal spot to find Aboriginal artefacts.

In the Hawkesbury area the material used was mostly chert which is very similar to flint. Along the east coast of NSW most of the small artefacts are made from quartzite.

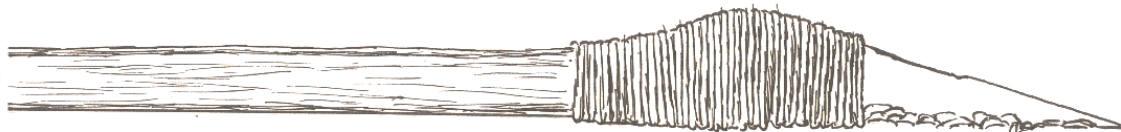
The author has seen Bondi Points made from agate, jasper and even petrified wood. Some of this material can be found in Kangaroo Valley.

Aboriginal People, Australia-wide, traded material with other groups. After European settlement they also had access to materials such as glass.



Bondi Points drawn by
Arthur Cooper

The author has learnt from reading Fredrick D. McCarthy's book, "Australian Aboriginal Stone Implements" that Bondi Points were widely distributed. It has been reported that Bondi Points have been located in Western Australia, South-eastern South Australia, Victoria, the East Coast of NSW and as far inland as Cobar and the South Coast of Queensland.



Bondi Points drawn by Arthur Cooper

According to McCarthy, Bondi Points generally range from 10mm to 60mm in length, in width from 18mm to 30mm and in thickness from 2mm to 5mm.



Varieties of Bondi Points drawn by Arthur Cooper

Presentation Photograph (life size) of
MR. BRINSLEY HALL, M.L.A.
[By Bloome.]

**Mr. B. Hall, M.P.,
Honored.**

**Token of His Constituents'
Appreciation.**

**SMOKE CONCERT AND PRE-
SENTATION.**

**THE MEMBER'S ENERGY
EULOGISED.**

Mr. Brinsley Hall, M.P. for the Hawkesbury, was on Thursday night the recipient of an honor, bestowed on him by his constituents, which is not very often conferred on politicians, who generally receive more kicks and cuffs than caresses from their electors. The member was the guest at a complimentary smoke concert tendered to him in the School of Arts, and he was also the recipient of the presentation of a life-sized photograph of himself.

Who was Cecil Stuart Icely?

By Michelle Nichols

Many locals have either played or watched, a game at the sports ground or played on the play equipment at Icely Park. It is located adjacent to Richmond Lawn Cemetery and managed by Hawkesbury City Council. The park has a range of facilities including soccer fields, public toilets, picnic shelters and play equipment.

Icely Park was named in memory of Cecil Stuart Icely, who had been involved with both Colo and Richmond Councils in the early 20th century.



First Colo Shire Councillors - Standing: J.E. McMahon, A.C. Anderson, W.H. Gosper, H.A. Wilson, E.T. Bowd. Sitting: A. Adams, J. Lamrock and C.S. Icely (Shire Clerk).

Courtesy Hawkesbury Library Service

Cecil Stuart Icely was the son of grazier Charles and Maria Emily nee Lawson of 'Goimbla Station' in the Orange district and was born in 1871. His mother was the daughter of William Lawson, Jnr., of Veteran Hill, Prospect, and a granddaughter of the Blue Mountains explorer Lt. Lawson.¹

His mother, a widow at the time of her death, died at 'The Astor' Macquarie Street Sydney, died in 1918 and left an estate with the net value of £35,882, the whole of which she bequeathed to her children, including Cecil.

¹ Obituaries Australia from <https://oa.anu.edu.au/obituary/icely-maria-emily-16063> from OBITUARY (1918, June 21). *Windsor and Richmond Gazette (NSW : 1888 - 1971)*, p. 9. Retrieved January 4, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article86152850>

Cecil was educated at Sydney Grammar School and began his career in the Hawkesbury district working in the Roads Board office.

In 1905, the tiers of Government came under review as part of the process of Federation. The Local (Shires) Act 1905 introduced a number of rural localities to local government. One hundred and thirty-four councils were established in NSW as a result. Colo, formed in 1906, was one of those established. A provisional council was elected for the district of Colo with Henry Albert Wilson elected as chairman and Cecil Stuart Icely appointed as the temporary Shire Clerk. The first election was held in late 1906 with John Lamrock, Edward Bowd, Henry Wilson, William Henry Gosper, Arthur C. Anderson and James Edward McMahon appointed. Lamrock was elected as Mayor.

Icely was appointed as the first Shire Clerk of Colo Shire Council from 1906 until 1920 and played a crucial role in establishing and guiding the new council through its formative years. Icely was widely respected for his administrative ability as well as his efficiency. In 1920 he tendered his resignation as clerk. Icely told the Colo Council, *“For the past 18 months I have been considering taking this step and have now decided to give up permanent indoor employment, and so, be able to give time to the management of my own private affairs.”*²

In 1913, Cecil married at Leura to Ruby Isabel Sharpe when he was aged 42. The couple had four children, Sybil, Heather, Margaret and Peter.



24 Bosworth Street Richmond

Photo: N. Dehn, 2017 / Hawkesbury Library Service

He was involved in a number of local community organisations including Hawkesbury Race Club. He served as Secretary of the Hawkesbury Race Club for many years and contributed significantly to the club's success and growth. Icely was elected as Secretary of the club in 1915, following the death of the long serving C. S. Guest. Icely resigned in 1928 and was appointed to the Committee. He was an active supporter of the Richmond School of Arts, President for a period, and played a leading role in patriotic and charitable work during both World War I and World War II. He was involved with the local Red Cross, Patriotic Fund, and War Fund activities. He was a strong advocate for returned servicemen and served as Patron of the Richmond R.S.L. Sub-Branch. A keen horticulturist, he was a member of the Richmond Horticultural Society.

² RICHMOND COUNCIL (1940, May 31). *Windsor and Richmond Gazette (NSW : 1888 - 1971)*, p. 10. Retrieved June 15, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article86064655>

Cecil served as an Alderman on Richmond Municipal Service and elected the Mayor between 1925 and 1928. He was recognised as an effective and capable civic leader. This image (right) appeared in the local newspaper in 1925.³

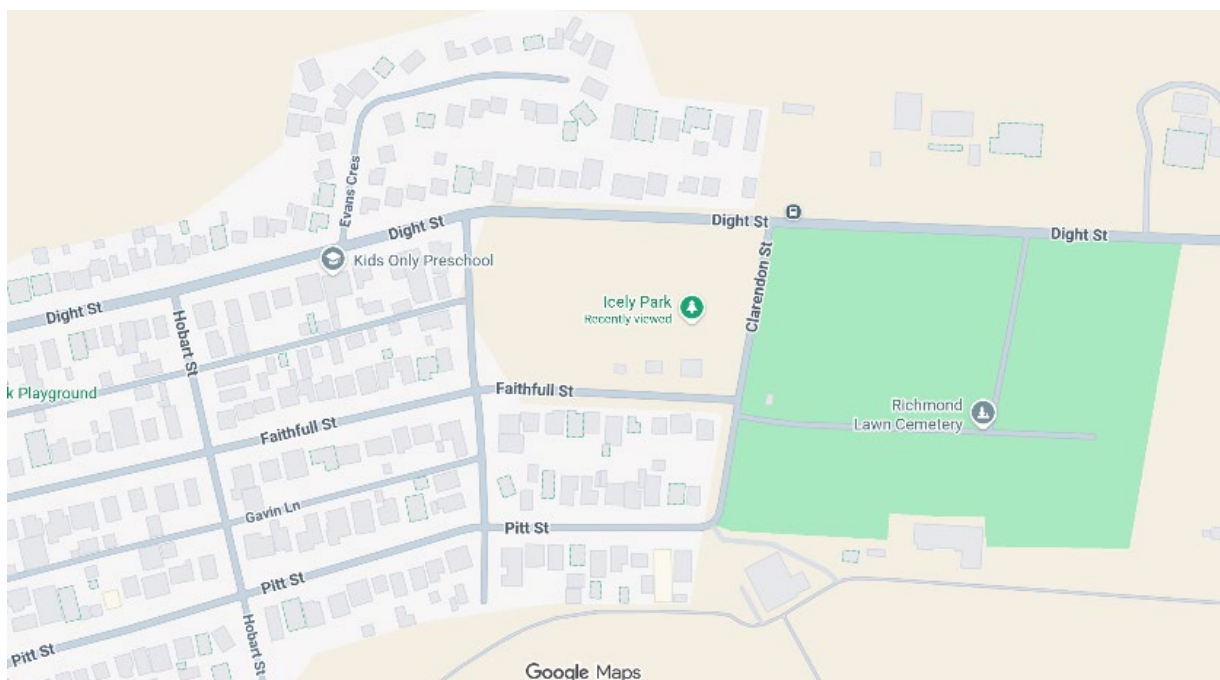
He was greatly interested in various sports. Icely was an accomplished tennis player in his younger years. He was instrumental in the formation of the Hawkesbury District Tennis Association and served as the President for many years and later became Patron. He was a strong supporter of cricket, maintaining a lifelong association with the Richmond Cricket Club and helped make possible the establishment of a turf cricket wicket at Richmond.



Cecil Stuart Icely was noted as having remarkable personal qualities. He was described as:

- A highly respected citizen, unassuming and sincere
- Dedicated to public service and an example of good citizenship
- His contributions extended across civic, sporting, charitable, patriotic, and social spheres.

By 1936, the sportsground and reserve bounded by Andrew, Faithfull, Clarendon and Dight Streets in Richmond, was named Icely Park, in his honour. Pictured below, courtesy Google Maps.



On the 8 June 1948, aged 77 years, Cecil Stuart Icely passed away at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown. His funeral was held at St. John's Church of England at Darlinghurst and he was interred in the Rookwood Crematorium. His obituary appeared in the *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* on 16 June 1948 (reprinted on the next page) and there were also other tributes published to Icely.

When you next see Icely Park, you will now know who it was named for.

³ ALD. C. S. ICELY (1925, December 25). *Windsor and Richmond Gazette (NSW : 1888 - 1971)*, p. 3. Retrieved June 15, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85899863>

OBITUARY - CECIL STUART ICELY

Few residents had a longer or more distinguished career in public life in this district than the late Mr. Cecil Stuart Icely, of Richmond, the news of whose passing, in a private hospital in Sydney on June 8, was received with widespread and sincere regret throughout the Hawkesbury. One who in his personal conduct and in civic, patriotic, social, charitable and sporting activities set a fine example of citizenship, he earned the genuine respect of the whole community, and his passing is a loss not only to his family and friends, but to the district as a whole, and Richmond in particular. Educated at Sydney Grammar School, his early official association with this district was in the Roads Board office, and at the inception of Local Government he was appointed first Shire Clerk of the Colo Shire Council, which position he occupied for several years, playing a leading part in establishing the infant council and guiding it through its early formative years in a manner which was a tribute to his administrative efficiency. Later he accepted the position of secretary to the Hawkesbury Race Club, where again his ability was demonstrated in the success which this popular body enjoyed throughout the lengthy term in which he so efficiently performed these duties, until eventually ill health obliged him to tender his resignation. Meantime, however, he had been active in leadership in many other fields for the general well-being of his fellow man, and his fine honorary work in that capacity demonstrated his unassuming but sincere convictions on the qualities of good citizenship. For some years he was an alderman of the Richmond Council, serving several terms as Mayor, in which again his inherent administrative capacity was used to full advantage. In the sporting field his first love was tennis, being a player of no mean ability and a member of a Richmond club in his younger life, while for many years prior to his death he had occupied the position of Patron of the Hawkesbury District Tennis Association, in the formation of which he had played a leading part, and was President for a considerable term. He was also a keen cricket supporter, being associated with the Richmond Cricket Club, in which he retained a close interest up to the time of his death, and was one of those whose enthusiastic support had made the provision of a turf wicket at Richmond possible. The Richmond School of Arts, also, owed much to his active interest and support, and during both World wars he played a leading part in patriotic activities, including those of the Red Cross and Patriotic and War Fund, while the interests of returned servicemen were another particular interest, which was recognised by his appointment as Patron of the Richmond R.S.L. Sub-branch. In addition to his wife, he is survived by a family of three daughters and one son, to whom the sincere condolences of all Hawkesbury friends are extended in their great loss. The funeral, at which there was a large representation of Richmond public and sporting organisations, took place on June 9, leaving St. John's Church of England, Darlinghurst, after a service, for the Rookwood Crematorium.⁴

Tribute To Ex-Mayor

AT COUNCIL MEETING

A SINCERE tribute to the services to the community of the late C. S. Icely was offered by the Mayor at the last Richmond Council meeting.

IN referring, at the opening of the meeting, to the death of the late Mr. Icely, the Mayor (Ald. J. W. Smith) said Mr. Icely had been an alderman of this council for many years at one period of his life, and for several terms was Mayor.

"He did his duty faithfully and well, and it is due in a great measure to his efforts and those of other stalwarts of those days that we to-day are enjoying the fruits of a cheap supply of electricity," Ald. Smith continued.

"He had a long career in public life. He was the first Clerk of the Colo Shire Council, and did an excellent job for local government. It is to men like him that the people of to-day owe so much in local government, and his only reward was his own satisfaction in doing such a good job for his fellow people. At times it means a great sacrifice to give such long and yeoman service.

"I am sure the sympathy of the whole district goes out to the bereaved family. We as a district are the poorer by his loss, and his life was an example to younger men to give the public service he gave."

A motion of sympathy to the family of deceased was carried by all present standing in silence.

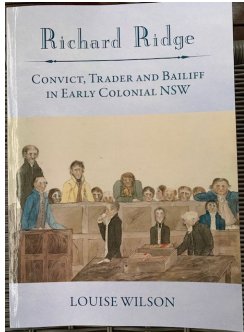
⁴ OBITUARY (1948, June 16). *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* (NSW : 1888 - 1971), p. 1. Retrieved January 4, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85664598> and Tribute To Ex-Mayor (1948, July 7). *Windsor and Richmond Gazette* 7 July 1948 (NSW : 1888 - 1971), p. 1. Retrieved January 4, 2026, from <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article85661205>

BOOKS

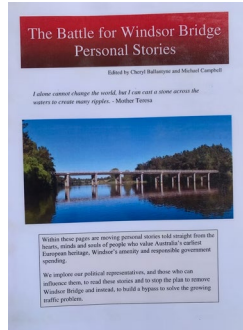
Hawkesbury Historical Society

The Hawkesbury Historical Society has an interesting variety of books for sale. There is an emphasis on people in earlier times in the Hawkesbury and nearby Nepean and Blue Mountains areas.

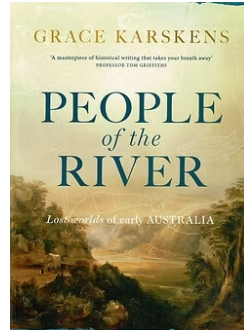
See a preview via the links for the following selections.



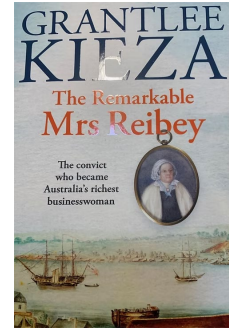
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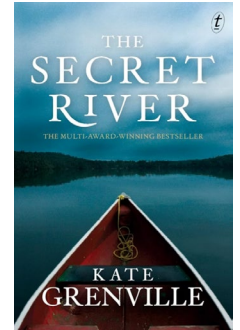
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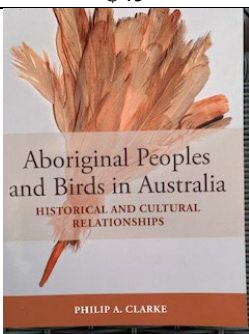
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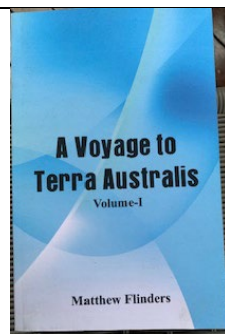
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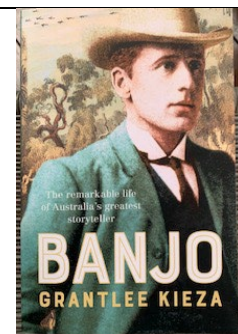
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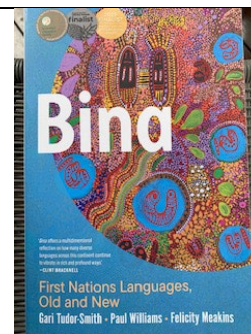
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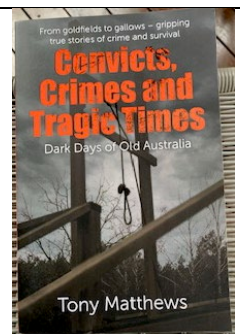
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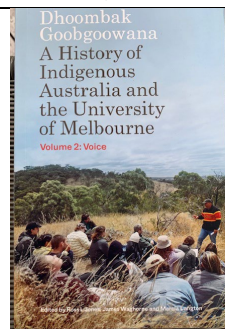
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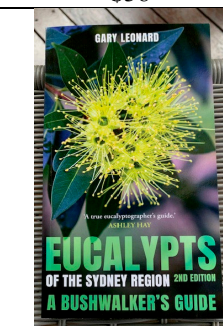
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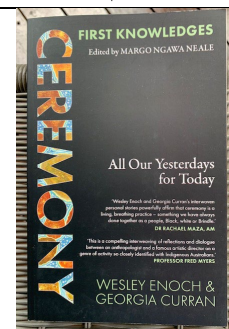
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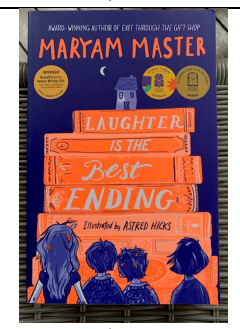
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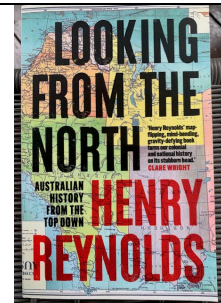
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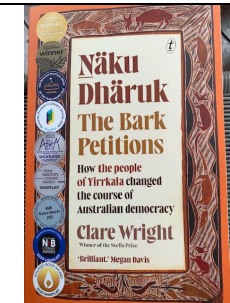
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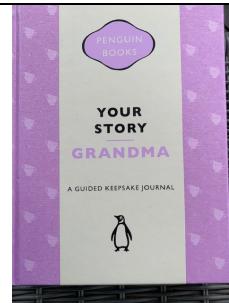
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\$25

Please visit the Society's Bookshop in the Hawkesbury Regional Museum, 8 Baker Street, Windsor or online at: www.hawkesburyhistoricalsociety.org

Happy Reading!

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