

# Newsletter of the Molong Historical Society Inc.



VOLUME 4  
ISSUE 7  
AUTUMN 2025



FAIRBRIDGE VILLAGE  
Nuffield Hall.

## Points of Interest:

Museum, located at 22 Riddell Street,  
(Cnr Gidley St) Molong

OPEN Thursdays, Saturdays and  
Sundays

10 am to 2pm

Or by appointment

Phone Contact 0400425015

contact email—[molonghs@gmail.com](mailto:molonghs@gmail.com) or [susanmilne55@gmail.com](mailto:susanmilne55@gmail.com)

Website [www.molonghistoricalsociety.com](http://www.molonghistoricalsociety.com)

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024/25

President—	Bob Sullivan	(0427696256)
Vice President	Elizabeth Griffin	(0437868595)
Secretary—	Lyndall Scott	(0419993660)
Treasurer—	Susan Grinpuke	
Committee	Sue Milne	(Membership)
	Lynne Robertson	(Social)
	Julie Lawrie	(Exhibitions)
	Jan McIntyre	(Promotion)
	John Lawrie	(Odd Jobs)
	Cameron Wild	(Equipment Officer)
	Doug Watson	(Equipment Officer)
Historian—	Catherine Mackenzie	
PATRONS	Jean Bennett, Marie and John Hammond.	

MOLONG  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
1965-2025

60 years of preserving the  
History of  
MOLONG District.

## RESEARCH ENQUIRIES

Enquires to the Society should be emailed  
to :-

**[molonghs@gmail.com](mailto:molonghs@gmail.com)**  
**[www.molonghistoricalsociety.com](http://www.molonghistoricalsociety.com)**  
Please include

Your Name, contact number  
Reason for enquiry  
(family research, writing book etc)  
Relevant information  
Fees on Request

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2025

	DATE & TIME	INFORMATION
MUSEUM OPEN DAYS	Every Weekend from 10 am until 2pm and most Public Holidays	All welcome to visit and view the museum. Limited research available.
MUSEUM OPEN with WORKING DAY	Every Thursday 10am until 2pm.	Members will be working on various projects. Open to visitors to view museum displays.
Next MEMBERS MEETING	Thursday 8th May from 2pm at the Museum	All Members invited
SOCIETY'S 60th BIRTHDAY	Throughout the year	Members will be notified of activities.
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	Saturday 23rd August	All members and supporters invited
ANNUAL MOLONG SHOW	Saturday 6th September	
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FIELD DAYS	23rd to 25th of October	The Society will be having a display in the TIN SHED.
MEMBERS MEETING	Thursday 13th November at the Museum.	

## NEW WEBSITE

Our new Website is now online. Thank you to Jan who has worked hard to update and prepare this site.

The site includes the following but this is not all

- Contact details for the Society
- Membership applications
  - Coming events
  - Photo Gallery
  - Fairbridge Farm
  - Books for Sale
  - Research Inquiries

**[www.molonghistoricalsociety.com](http://www.molonghistoricalsociety.com)**

# MUSEUM REPORT

The Historical Society has kept busy over the last few months with many of us continuing to work over the holiday period. The large shed has been emptied and is now lined and is ready to return our multiple items. This will make access to them easier as well as the shed is now protected against weather and vermin.

Our annual Christmas Function, held on the veranda with 40 members and supporters was the last event for 2024. 2025 first event was assisting with Australia Day Celebrations which were held at the RSL Club. We were able to open the Museum and a few visitors took the opportunity to visit.

Visitors to the museum continues to increase and it is open three days a week. We are now open on Saturdays as well as Thursdays and Sundays. To continue this we are looking for more members who can spare time to assist. Thank you to Glenys and Kath who are volunteering fortnightly. Sundays continue to have a small group who man the building. Thank you to Kim, Cameron, Doug and others who attend each Sunday. Thursday is the main working day as well as being open for visitors. The Committee as well as Di, Mary and other who assist. We have had several locals drop in to have a chat and cuppa with us on these days. We welcome anyone who would like to visit the museum to catch up on our activities..

At our February Meeting, all members were invited to attend to be enable them to be involved in the running of the Society. These meetings are designed for members to have more input into the direction of the Society with events, displays and general layout of the museum. All financial members are entitled to have their say and vote. This was very successful and we will be having the next meeting in May.

The Committee will continue to meet each month.

## SCHOOL VISIT

Kindergarten students from Molong Central School visited the Molong Historical Museum. The children had the opportunity to peel an apple using an apple peeler from 1870 and wash a sock using an olden day wash board. The children sat at wooden school desks and used pennies to do coin pencil-rubbings. In the colonial kitchen the children took turns at churning butter and making butter pats with wooden paddles and in the shed the students were able to look at telephones from the past and mow the grass with a push mower. The volunteers at the Museum put a lot of time and effort into making this excursion a very enjoyable, hands-on experience for our students.



## SOCIETIES 60TH BIRTHDAY

An impressive and interesting antique display at the Molong Centenary Show in September 1964, triggered interest in the history of the Molong district, and was directly responsible for the subsequent move by Molong Apex Club which resulted in the formation of the Molong and District Historical Society. The first Annual General Meeting took place on 28th May 1965, electing Mrs. Murray-Wilcox as the founding President.

A small museum was established behind the Rural Bank in 1965 before a move to the current location in 1970.

This year we celebrate 60 years of being part of the community and hope to continue to serve for another 60 years.

## YURINGAH'S 175 ANNIVERSARY OF HIS DEATH



2025 marks the 175th anniversary of YURINGAH'S death and his burial near Molong.

Yuranigh, a Wiradjuri man, accompanied early explorer and surveyor Sir Thomas Mitchell on an expedition into the tropical interior of Australia in 1846. When Yuranigh died 4 years later, he was buried within a circle of carved trees, according to the traditional custom of his people. Out of respect, Mitchell also had a headstone placed over his grave. The original sandstone headstone was donated by Sir Thomas Mitchell. Also a marble headstone was later installed in 1900.

## AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL FIELD DAYS

The Historical Society has been invited to have a display at the 2025 Field Days which will be held in October.

The Field Days which are the oldest annual agricultural exhibition in the country were established in 1952.

The first Field Day was staged at "Kyala Park" and featured displays and demonstrations by 40 exhibitors. The annual event was held each year and was located at various properties around Orange. In 1972 a permanent site was purchased at "Borenore" where it is still held.

If you would like to assist in planning or have any ideas please contact Bob or any of the Committee

## MOLONG SHOW

The Molong Show will be held on Saturday 6th September. Assistance and ideas for a display are needed. Please contact Sue



## BEHIND THE SCENES

The volunteers at the Museum have been working hard over the last few months to improve our storage areas and to add new displays to our grounds. These are just two of the projects planned.

### “LOCK UP” Building

A ‘Lock Up’ has been gifted to the Molong Historical Society by Lorna Boucher. This ‘Lock Up’ will be coming to the Museum at some stage this year. But there is still considerable work to be done prior to this move. Further details about the history of the ‘Lock up’ will be forthcoming over the next few months.

Step One was to stabilise the building:

So late last year a team of volunteer workers ‘inspected’ the building and found it needed some major work to be able to move it. Machines, tools, and manpower spent a day preparing for the move to a more stable area with great success.



There will still need to be more work on the building before The building can be moved to the museum site.

Step Two was to move what we call the ‘Mower Shed’ at the Museum so that more space will be available..



The ‘Mower Shed’ is in the process of being dismantled, moved and reassembled by a group of dedicated volunteers in preparation. This has been achieved over several weeks.

There are still a few key steps to achieve before the big move, so keep watch on FB and our website for further details.

Without our dedicated volunteers, MHS and community members, coming on board we could not achieved what we have over the last six months. So, our grateful thanks go out to everyone who has been involved.

### THE BACK SHED

During the holidays Susan, Craig and other members have been busy lining and coating the large back shed (built in 1974) to prepare it for storing our many objects. Cameron and John sprayed the shed to protect it. This is to ensure they are maintained in more ideal conditions, protect against vermin and weather.



## MARIE CELEBRATES



Marie Hammond (nee Evers) celebrated her 90th birthday with an Afternoon Tea at the RSL Club with her husband John, family and friends.

Marie is a Life Member and Patron of the Society and has devoted many years to preserving the "History of Molong and Orange"

Marie has contributed the following article .

## MOLONG CELEBRATES THE WAR ENDING.

After my mother died, I came to Molong to live with my grandparents so I could go to school when I was five.

During the war years the top playground [at Molong Public School] was dug up for air raid shelters. This was done mainly by the older boys at the school, as I remember. They weren't very deep and we used to laugh and wonder how we would all fit if ever we did have to jump in.

At this time, at home everyone had to cover their windows at night and restrict any lights outside just in case Japanese planes might spot the township and bomb it. No such aircraft ever came over, I'm sure, but a couple of times there was an alert about Aussie planes needing to land at night which happened out at the Molong Showground.

People drove and shone their lights around the centre arena enabling the plane to land safely. When there was an emergency such as this, someone (usually Harry Connolly who had a very good and loud speaking voice) would stand on the back of a ute while someone drove and Harry would call through a megaphone and everyone would go outside at night and listen to the announcement and of course respond if necessary. The people of Molong always responded to calls such as this.

The other way we often knew what was happening was when a kid on a bike would ride around and yell out. When I heard, 'The Japs are in town', I couldn't get on my bicycle quick enough and get down town along with many others where we saw couple of Army open-back trucks with Japanese prisoners en route to the Cowra Prisoner of War Camp. The army personnel had stopped at the local cafes for refreshments. Our expressions of dislike were varied from the 'thumbs up' sign over and over, to thumb on nose wriggling our faces with tongues poked out. Of course we called them names such as 'swine' which I told the other kids was the 'worst word you could ever say'. They just sat there and looked at our performance.

## MOLONG CELEBRATES THE WAR ENDING.page 2

There was again a night to remember when Harry, on the megaphone again, was driven around the streets warning of the breakout at the Prisoner of War Camp in Cowra and saying they may come this way and to be on the lookout for any escapees. I was terrified and imagined every sound was someone out there. Later that night I insisted that there was someone out there so my dear little grandmother (her Scottish blood stirring) picked up the poker from the fireplace and marched to the doorway while Grandfather (six foot tall) came behind and me following up with a small shovel from the fireplace. Of course there was no one there but the fear has never quite gone away and left me from that terrible experience.

We had an old battery radio in our dining room. It was a French polished, free standing piece of furniture with brown mottled cloth behind the wooden fretwork on the front. It was part of our nightly ritual that at 7o'clock we would all sit and listen to the news, always anxious to hear the progress of the war from the ABC, or sometimes we heard an odd broadcast from the BBC.

Eventually the kid was on the bike again yelling out 'The war is over, the war is over'. You can't imagine our joy to hear that, and like many others – kids and adults – the main street became a mecca for everyone to gather – people everywhere dancing in the streets, singing, hugging, crying, really all so joyful and exciting. Some people decorated their houses.

My grandfather, Samuel Evers, who had a fairly good singing voice, was fairly merry (from drinking, of course, as many were) and was hoisted up onto the window sill at the Freemasons Hotel at the bottom of Bank Street, to lead the singing as they shouted out, 'It's a long way to Tipperary' and 'Roll Out the Barrel' and so on. During the war years the people of Molong had contributed much to the war, with women knitting socks, scarfs, jumpers, coloured squares from wool scraps, and many made fruit cakes which would last some months. All these were sent overseas to the soldiers.

One woman who remains outstanding in my mind was a Mrs Holt, wife of local solicitor Mr Rives Holt. She was a very cheery woman. She was never seen without knitting in her hands even if she was going door to door collecting, as she did for the Red Cross. She must have knitted dozens of these woollen socks. I always thought she was a lovely person but there were always awful mutterings that she was a Communist. I always wondered what one was.

### Here are 6 fascinating facts about Australia:

The Dingo Fence is an impressive 5,614 km long.

Australia is home to over 60wine regions.

80%of Australia's wildlife is unique to the continent.

The longest golf course in the world, measuring 1,350 km, is in Australia.

Australia hosts 21 of the world's most venomous snakes.

The Indian Pacific railway has the longest uninterrupted stretch of track in the world.

## FAIRBRIDGE FARM SCHOOL HOCKEY.

Sport has always been a large part of life at Fairbridge Farm Molong. Recently a trophy was recovered by Orange Hockey Association that had been awarded to a team from Fairbridge in 1939.

From 1938, when the children first arrived internal Sports Days were held during holidays and points were awarded hockey, baseball, league, soccer, fields sports and boxing. The four teams were names Kookaburras, Kangaroos, Koalas and Wallabies.

Hockey was one of the first sports where they were able to participate outside the farm. Mr Dodds (the first Principal) was a keen hockey player who coached the early teams.

The arrival of the second party aboard the ORONSAY in 1938 promoted the sport. The Manavadar Indian Hockey Team traveled out on the same ship. The team were touring New Zealand and Australia, which included games in Orange and Bathurst. Following their game in Orange, which they won 8 goals to nil, they visited Fairbridge Farm where they donated 66 brand new hockey sticks to the school.



A Grade Hockey. C. Dickins, N. Boucher, J. Johnson, J. Frazer, N. Mitchell, J. Eshlin, E. Chance, J. Wolvey, J. Napper, D. Kerr, F. Cook.



The boys travelled to Orange to play and were very successful. They won the "Skipper Cup" in 1939, 1940, and 1941. Most of this team were still together in 1948, playing in the Men's Competition.

Several of the boys continued to contribute to the growth of Hockey in the area. John Wolvey trained several teams until the 1980's as well as umpiring and assisting with admin. Ted Chance is listed as playing for Wanderers in 1963 when hockey recommenced after a short break. Jim Napper, aged 97, who will be attending the 2025 Reunion, is the only surviving representative of this team of 77 years ago.

Involvement in sport continued with many of the children representing Orange Molong and at a higher level. In 1947, the boys' team continued to win competitions in Orange.



Fairbridge first entered a team in the Women's Competition in 1948. Reports in the Central Western Daily note that "On such form the new team will be a strong combination by the end of the season". Teams playing against them report "They were tenacious tacklers and fought every yard of the game" losing 4 nil to the top team.

In 1956, 2 Fairbridge girls were selected to represent "The Far West" to take part in matches against visiting Scottish and Netherlands teams at Parkes. Both these teams were in Australia to attend a International Tournament at Sydney University Oval against teams from New Zealand, South Africa, Canada, USA, Ireland India and Australia.

The Far West team played against the Netherlands while a team from Parkes played the Scottish team. The 2 girls were Shirley Bates who arrived in 1948 and Eva Reid who arrived in 1950. *Left half Eva Reid, from Fairbridge temporarily raised the hopes of the crowd with a piece of brilliant play. Eva intercepted on a short corner on her team's line and ran the ball 60 yards up the field, with little support but was unable to capitalize on her brilliant intercept. Eva was named as one of the outstanding players for her team. Western Districts lost 5-0 to a taller and more mature team. (unknown source)*



(Top Photo Shirley Bates & Eva Reid with friend )

(Lower Photo Girls team from the 1950's)



Hockey was played as a sport with girl's teams still as Fairbridge was wound down before closure. .

#### REFERENCES used

Information found on the cup (owned by Orange Hockey Association)  
"Follow The Founder" by David Rutherford (pages 88, 91, 93)  
"What's Over The Next Hill" by Jim Napper (pages 22, 28)  
Molong Express (various articles found on TROVE between 1938 & 1955)  
Newspaper clippings donated to Molong Museum by Eva Warhurst (nee Reid).

#### LOOKING FOR STORIES FROM THE PAST



This is only one of the sports played at Fairbridge. We are looking for any photos and details of any of the children who have represented their school, town, state or Australia in any sport or other discipline. I am aware of Artists, poets and sports people. Have your children represented your adopted country?

Please contact Sue 0400425015, [susanmilne55@gmail.com](mailto:susanmilne55@gmail.com) or at the Reunion.

## MUSEUM ACTION

The Museum continues to be a popular stop for tourists and locals alike. Several locals have stopped by to see what is happening inside and outside in the gardens.



Local Ernie Savill showed his visitors around and was willing to pass on his memories. John Lee arrived in style in his car and offered Jan a ride around Molong



Graham Baker (a local piano tuner) spent several hours cleaning and checking our pianola. More restoration is needed for full function. It is one of our displays in the parlour. One of our youngest visitors enjoyed testing his work.



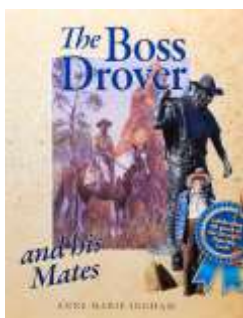
We have had many visitors who are interested in the FAIRBRIDGE ROOM. Chris was able to show her granddaughters memories from her childhood.

Russell who was at Fairbridge in 1965 spent time remembering many of his friends. Russell came out as part of the Two-parent Scheme.

There have been several people come in and spend time researching their families. These are two of many.



## ADDITIONS TO OUR BOOKS FOR SALE THE BOSS DROVER and his mates. by Anne Marie Ingham



Recently several copies of this book were given to the Museum for sale. This edition was published in 2013.

Anne Marie Ingham lived in the Molong District and was known for the establishment of the Portrait Gallery at the RSL Club. Anne Marie painted all the portraits displayed in the foyer. This is one of 3 books she wrote.

In grim Depression days, 12 year old Clarrie Pankhurst left home on the River Murray. He found an adventurous life on the great stock routes, taking huge mobs of cattle to Queensland from stations in WA and the Territory. The drovers are gone now, replaced by road trains. Their hair raising escapades, sense of humour, and full and generous lives live on-in the yarns and memories, paintings and photos in this book. From the author of Wild Cattle, Wild Country and Pioneers of the Kimberley. (From Title page of book)

## MOLONG IN THE 70's A GLANCE THROUGH OLD FILES

*A selection of articles found in a 1903 Express that relates to  
Molong in 1877.*

From Molong Express Saturday 19th May 1903 issue

JAN 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1879, a daily mail has been established between Molong and Parkes as from the 1<sup>st</sup>, Mr J Still, a veteran, is in charge of the line, the inauguration of which has given intense satisfaction to both centres. When the first coach left Molong on Wednesday we saw a suspicious looking hamper and upon enquiry learned it was a couple of bottles of malt and Chandon's "fix" and one or two of pale brandy, destined for consumption in the Parkes Chronicle Office. Referring to the inauguration of the line the 'Chronicle' says Forbes displaces us, Orange ignores us, Sydney thinks we are duffered out-so let us go hand in hand with Molong in anything that will tend to advantage both towns.

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At Orange on New Years Day, a local eleven defeated Molong Cricket Club by 62runs. Speaking of George Bonnor, the Express representative said "George Bonner who top scored for Orange is a first-class bat, possessing both science and strength and should make a name for himself in the cricket arena. He put up 27 runs in first class style and made one hit for 5, putting the ball clean over the circular fence. (How well the once mighty Australian smiler fulfilled this prophecy is a matter of common knowledge to all cricket enthusiasts today)

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Jan 17<sup>th</sup>, 1879, At a meeting of the School of Arts" Committee this week it was decided in view of the refusal received from the Commercial Bank to a request from Mr John Smith of Gamboola and Mr J.S. Smith of Mamre to advance the £300 necessary for the erection of the new hall.

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The following mail contracts have been awarded: -

T Healey	Molong	Ironbark	Twice a week
J Still	Molong	Parkes	Six times a week
Henry Paton	Molong	Obley	Tree times a week
G.F Milgate	Parkes	Balgandramine	Twice a week
J Denning	Obley	Dandaloo	Twice a week
J Denning	Dandaloo	Cannonbar	Twice a week

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Feb 14<sup>th</sup>, 1879, The election of the first elder men to represent the new Municipality of Molong took place on Monday last, when intense excitement prevailed in town. The poll resulted:W. Tanner Jun, J.Black, J.F Wynee, J. M. Hughes, H.S.M. Betts and R. Shields elected John Burgess and J.J Morris were not elected, W.H Bennett and H.V Leathem were nominated but declined to stand. Alderman W Tanner was elected Mayor at the first meeting held at the Court House. The Mayor elect admirers had a buggy outside the building and as soon as he emerged from the meeting he was put inside and carried in triumph around the town.

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## BOOKS FOR SALE

(Reviewed February 2025)

AILEEN ROBERSON

A HISTORY OF THE MOLONG CATHOLIC CHURCH	\$20.00
ALLAN TOM Picture Show Man	\$20.00
PADDY McARDLE	\$20.00
THE SHEEN TEAM (Max &Nita)	\$15.00
VILLA ASH	\$5.00

ROBERT ELLIS

SESQUICENTIENNAL HISTORY OF MOLONG SHOW	\$35.00
PIPER & YURANGH	\$25.00
HOW THE WEST WAS WON	\$25.00
HISTORY OF THE SHEEPDOG	\$25.00

DAVID RUTHERFORD

LIFE & TIMES OF JOHN SMITH	\$30.00
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KATE GADSBY

CONVICTS, CAPITALISTS & CORRUPTION	\$40.00
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HELEN HAYNES

MOLONG RSL PORTRAIT GUIDE	\$15.00
ORANGE 1901	\$8.00

VAL McKENZIE

MOLONG SHEEP DOG WORKERS	\$25.00
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DIANNE WOOLBANK

WOOLBANK MEMOIRS	\$10.00
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NOEL CANTRILL

BORENORE CENTENARY 1877 TO 1977	\$15.00
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ORANGE ROTARY CLUB

BANJO PATERSON & NARRAMBLA	\$3.00
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CLEMENT SEMMLER

A.B. PATERSON	\$15.00
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GREG RAFFIN

EVERY CLOUD HAS A SILVER LINING	\$20.00
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BERTHA MacSMITH

LETTERS OF JOHN MAXWELL	\$20.00
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TINA McGEOGH

BOREE CABONNE	\$10.00
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ANNE MARIE INGHAM

THE BOSS DROVER	\$35.00
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PLEASE ADD POSTAGE \$10 TO \$15 depending on book size.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Fees are \$25.00 (per year)

MEMBERSHIP YEAR IS from July to June.

Fees can be paid by direct debit, mail or in person



Bank Details

BSB 062573 28007189

FOR MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

Contact Sue (0400425015), [susanmilne55@gmail.com](mailto:susanmilne55@gmail.com)

(Please complete a Membership Form each year for our records)