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Editorial

At the launching of the “Chronicle” on 26th September 1986, at the Old Post Office, Port Arthur, 70 old and new residents shared memories and the memorabilia on display. The magazine’s success from then on was assured as was proven by the favourable comments, letters of support, and the sell-out of the first edition 300 copies, while less than 20 of the further 150 copies printed remain. Many thanks for your support, and to the enthusiasm of the committee.

Local history has direct contact between a community and its past. Gwen Blackwood (whose article is in this edition) has the piano “lent by Mrs. Wellard” for the Oakwood school concert in 1894 (No.1 p.22), while her mother was one of the pupils at this little school, Gwen also becoming a teacher.

Harold Rumney, whose diary appeared (No.1 p.27), was the brother-in-law of George Clarke, whose diary extract is in this edition. Alison Shoobridge, who holds the diaries, lives in the house at Lottah where the farm diaries are set.

Through a friend, I met a grand-daughter of Ivey Allen – ‘Godetia’ in the “Children’s Corner” during World War 1 - who has photos of the Allen brothers who volunteered (No.1 p.33). (Warden) Terry Kingston’s interview with Laurel Price and an article by her sister Ruby Lorkin re-live the days when *Taranna Lodge* was a home away from home before World War 1.

Sometimes, a proximity to the past causes communities to deny parts of their history. Convict ancestry was an embarrassment and, being closer to Tasmanians than to those in other states, has been slower to dispel. (Even now, the convict index at State Archives is still not directly accessible to the public!) Less than eight years ago I found my name-sake to be a convict – to my grand-father’s great amusement, but other relatives were not so impressed.

The Noye family (a well-known aquatic family – see No.1 p.9) are descended from Charlotte Noye, a Devon transportee. The writer, Kath Noye, lives with her husband Neil in the original home at *Noye’s Hill*.

Port Arthur’s notoriety was attracting tourists by the late 1880’s, as can be seen from the letters of 15 year old Percy Shearn. By contrast, Surveyor Archibald Blackwood, then living at Port Arthur, discouraged his family from mixing with emancipists’ children, and was something of a tarter, but whose children became well-established. Blackwood’s 1873 survey

of “areas fit for pastoral or agricultural purposes” on Tasman’s Peninsula will make for interesting reading in a future edition.

Now only a stone’s throw from Port Arthur, Safety Cove to Alan Briggs and his family in the 1930’s was a world of its own. Maurice Hallam, for many years radio and newspaper correspondent for the Peninsula, talked to Eva Spaulding several years before her death and submitted her interesting story.

Articles are most welcome for Chronicle 3, which will feature a maritime theme.

Peter MacFie
Editor

Contents

5	<i>Taranna Lodge</i> Memories	by Terry Kingston
13	Early Settlers – the Noyes	by Kath Noye
17	Schoolboy Tourist 1889 – Percy Shearn	by Peter MacFie
24	Archibald Blackwood	by Gwen Blackwood
27	Diary of George Clarke	by Alison Shoobridge
30	Mrs. Eva Spaulding	by Maurice Hallam
31	Safety Cove in the 1930s	by Alan Briggs
38	70 Birds of Tasman Peninsula – James McClymont	by Peter MacFie

Index

Allen, Ivey	1	Noye, Neil	1
Blackwood, Archibald	1, 2	<i>Noye's Hill</i>	1
Blackwood, Gwen	1, 2	Oakwood school	1
Briggs, Alan.....	2	Old Post Office	1
Clarke, George	1, 2	Port Arthur	1
convicts	1	Price, Laurel.....	1
Hallam, Maurice.....	2	Rumney, Harold	1
Kingston, Terry.....	1, 2	Safety Cove	2
Lorkin, Ruby	1	Shearn, Percy	1, 2
Lottah.....	1	Shoobridge, Alison	2
McClymont, James.....	2	Spaulding, Eva	2
Noye family	2	<i>Taranna Lodge</i>	1, 2
Noye, Charlotte	1	Wellard, Mrs.....	1
Noye, Kath	1		