



Foster & District Historical Society Inc.



## PROM COUNTRY NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2018

### Office Bearers:

**President:** Meg Rogers  
**Vice-President:** Mike Heal  
**Secretary:** Kerry Corcoran  
**Treasurer:** Noela Cripps

**Curator:** Jennifer Jones  
**Archives:** Noela Cripps  
**Research:** Nola Taylor  
**Maintenance:** Reg. Williams



Switchboard in the Museum.

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: **President's Report:** :  
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: The annual meeting in August was well attended with the 2017-2018 office :  
: bearers all re-elected. Thank you to all members who have filled out their :  
: membership forms and paid their subs. (Still a few outstanding). :  
:

: Thank you to the rostered members who have opened the Museum through the :  
: cold/wet/windy days with mixed patronage (very hard to know if you'll be "run :  
: off your feet", or "sitting on your hands"). :  
:

: Meetings continue to be well attended with interesting speakers. Jim Whelan :  
: spoke on Wilsons Promontory; Cheryl Glowrey spoke on Snake Island and the :  
: Prom. Reg. Williams launched Nola Taylor's *Let's Take a Walk through the Streets* :  
: *of Foster* and Richard Jones summarized the three and a half years of articles he :  
: wrote for the *Mirror*, remembering all the soldiers killed in World War One. Mike :  
: McCarthy will speak on the train line at Port Franklin in November. Included in :  
: this newsletter is an invitation to the Christmas Party which we hope all :  
: members can attend. :  
:

: We have reprinted the books: *Wonga, Waratah, They Called it Bowen, How They* :  
: *Kept in Touch*, plus *Let's Take a Walk Through the Streets of Foster*, which is :  
: selling well. Neil Everitt's book, *The Power of Water* has been entered in the :  
: RHSV Victoria Community History awards. We hope Neil and Rita enjoyed the :  
: night. :  
:

: The calendar is at the printers. It is a little different this year with a sepia cover :  
: and a price rise due to printing cost. :  
:

: The Honor Roll of servicemen who enlisted in the old Shire of South Gippsland :  
: for World War One will be unveiled on November 11<sup>th</sup> at the F.W.M. A. C. after :  
: the Remembrance Day service at the Cenotaph. :  
:

: Foster Historical Society is fortunate to have talented and willing volunteers to :  
: keep history in the area alive. :  
:

: History Matters :  
: Meg Rogers :  
: President. :  
:

: **WHAT'S ON** :  
:

: **2 October** - meeting 7.30 pm. Richard Jones the speaker. :  
:

: **20 October – 2.00 pm** - Book Launch-Cheryl Glowrey, *South of the Strzelecki* :  
: *Ranges*, Exchange Hotel, Foster. All welcome. :  
:

: **6 November** - meeting 7.30 pm. Mike McCarthy to speak on the Train Line at :  
: Port Franklin. :  
:

: **4 December** - Christmas party – 6.30 for 7.00 – BYO cutlery, plates, bowls and :  
: glasses. :  
:

**Launch of *Let's take a walk through the street of Foster.***



Meg Rogers, Reg. Williams and Nola Taylor

Based on the memories of the late Ken Munro and compiled by the Society member Nola Taylor, Foster & District Historical Society's new book "*Let's take a walk through the streets of Foster*" is a valuable addition to our knowledge of the town. Focusing on the derivation of the street names including the personalities after whom some of them are named, the book puts meaning and history into the sights we see every day.

Speaking at the launch of the book at the July meeting of the Society, long-time resident of Foster, Reg Williams provided reminiscences of his experiences growing up and living in the town in the 1940s – 1980s. He spoke of houses in Station Road still with earth floors in the 1950s and of his time working at the Collis Cordial Factory – which still stands. In the discussion which followed other long time residents added their memories – living history.

The book is available at the Museum for \$10.00.

Richard Jones.

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**IT News – Howard Plowright**

As a result of a sterling effort by FDHS member, Cheryl Glowrey, the museum received a significant grant which is enabling a major overhaul of our website. Andris Dinsberg, Loud Mountain met with members of the committee, when it was agreed that Cheryl and Howard are to plan the revamped internet pages. The intention is to provide a large audio segment and many more photos and videos.

## Lest we forget – South Gippsland’s Fallen

For the past three and a half years the Foster & District Historical Society has been privileged to write articles for The Mirror to recognise the 100th anniversary of the deaths of each of the soldiers from the old Shire of South Gippsland during World War I.

Soldiers from the district fought and died in most of the major battles of the war, from the landings at ANZAC Cove on 26 April 1915 through to the AIF’s last battle at Mont Brehain on 23 October 1918. They fought at Lone Pine, Poiziers, Fromelle, Villiers Bretonneux, Hamel and Amiens. They also fought at Beersheeba. By the end of hostilities on 11 November 1918, 97 local soldiers had died, killed in action, dying of wounds or from disease. Three more were to die after the war.

Who were these 100 Fallen ANZACs from South Gippsland and where did they end up?

- They were young men – six under the age of 20 who would have needed their parents’ consent on enlisting, twelve over the age of 30 with the oldest at 42, the rest in their 20s.
- They came from all over the Shire – Foster, Fish Creek, Toora, Welshpool, Port Franklin including two from the small settlement at Buffalo who died on the same day in the attack on Lone Pine.
- As one would expect from such a community, some described themselves as farmers or graziers, many were labourers or farm hands. There were timber hewers, a butter maker, a butcher’s apprentice, railway workers, bank clerks, a teacher and a Minister of Religion.

Some of the 100 were buried where they fell or in small cemeteries close by, some were buried at sea, dying on the hospital ships, some have no grave at all with their names being added to the many thousands on memorials around Gallipoli, the Western Front in France and at Beersheeba.

The Armistice was declared on 11 November 1918, but the deaths continued. After years of fighting in Gallipoli, France and the Middle East there was a new foe – Spanish influenza, which was sweeping through Europe. Three local soldiers were listed as having “died of disease” in the three months after the War.

- **Private Robert John Cameron**, a 27 year old farmer from Toora died of flu on 15 December 1918 at the 1st Australian General Hospital at Sutton Veny in Wiltshire, UK and is buried in the churchyard of St John the Evangelist, Sutton Veny along with 138 other Australian soldiers.

- **Bombardier Michael Flanagan**, a 24-year old clerk from Welshpool died of influenza leading to broncho-pneumonia on 12 February 1919 in the 5th Casualty Clearing Station at Wimereaux, in France. He is buried in the Maubeuge (Sous-les-bois) Cemetery at Avesnes sur Helpe.
- **Lance Corporal Samuel Polkinghorne**, a 28 year old Agent from Foster, was the 100th and last South Gippsland soldier to die during or immediately after the War. Enlisting in July 1915, he had served throughout most of the War, serving in Egypt and on the Western Front. He was injured twice. In August 1918 he was involved in the push through the German Hindenberg Line and was awarded a Military Medal for his efforts.

The citation in part reads:

*“...This NCO displayed great bravery and coolness in the face of very heavy machine gun fire. Whilst choosing the best tactical position for his gun, he showed the greatest disregard for his own personal safety, and was untiring in his efforts in putting the enemy machine gun out of action.....he freely exposed himself in moving his team to a new position of safety, and was an inspiration to his men through many hours of a hard fought action. By his coolness and initiative he supplied his O.C. with very valuable information concerning the formation of ground in front and enemy movement, by which means a local counter attack was crushed at its inception.”*

He did not survive to receive the Medal. Surviving the War, he too was struck down with flu and died on 22 February 1919 at Sutton Veny and is also buried at John the Evangelist, Sutton Veny. His grave stone reads “In loving memory of our only son”.

In all, 100 local soldiers died during World War I. Many more were injured, returning home with physical and mental scars. Their story is often forgotten. Some returned to the district. Earlier this year the Society and the local branches of the RSL recognised their deaths, placing Australian flags on the graves of returned ANZACs in Foster, Toora and Welshpool cemeteries.

Over 61,000 Australian soldiers (1.2% of Australia’s population at the time) and over eight million soldiers, sailors and airmen from both sides died during what was then called the Great War, the War to End All Wars. Just 21 years later the world was immersed in yet another conflict, with greater casualties across a global battlefield.

Lest we forget  
Richard Jones

**Report of theft of Poison Post Historical Marker**

Attention: D. Lomax

27 Sep 2018

**Poison Post Historical Marker**

My name is Jennifer Jones. I am the curator of Foster and District Historical Society Inc. (FDHS)

As has been reported to you already, by Mike Heal, the sign for the Poison Post Historical Marker and the description disappeared from their wooden stand on or around 19 September 2018 – which just happens to be ‘speak like a pirate day’!

I stopped at the sign and description on Monday 17 September so know they were present at that time, but they were missing when I passed by on Friday 21 September.

The two horizontal bars which held the information sign have been sawn off by either a circular saw or chain saw.

The sign was constructed and placed over the top of the old wooden sign in November 2009 at a cost of approx \$200.00 including support structures and labour. The earlier sign is still there all be it in a poor state. There is also a small triangular sign that appeared recently (within the last two years I think) on the left hand pole.

The sign is approximately 550mm wide x 600 mm long

The sign is constructed of a black composite material (shiny and smooth like melamine)

The description was in a small wooden frame

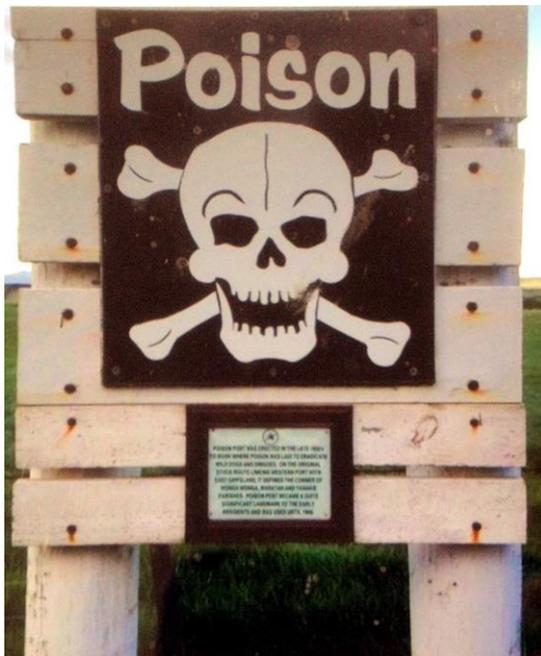


Photo taken Jun 2015 (showing panel & descriptor) replaced 2009

Photo taken Jan 2007 (original sign on wood)

**From the FDHS archives**

During World War One, mail from Tasmania came by steamer from Port Welshpool, on the horse drawn tram to Welshpool, then on to Melbourne.

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Walter Mansell came from Buninyong to work the horse drawn tram carting fish from Welshpool to Port Welshpool, a position he held for 25 Years, using his own family raised Clydesdale horses. He and his wife lived in a railway supplied house in Welshpool until he built in 1905, his own house on the Port Welshpool Road. The house still stands today on what was known as Mansell’s Corner.

**Kerry Corcoran's visit to Malanda Dairy Museum.**

I recently visited the Malanda Dairy Museum at Malanda about an hour and a half west of Cairns on the Atherton Tablelands in FNQ. South Gippslanders feel very at home with rolling green hills dotted with dairy cows, a little further west there are even rows of wind turbines on the hills at Ravenshoe.

Malanda is a town of similar size to Foster with a with a large milk factory. In an older part of the factory that is no longer in use they have established a facility to showcase the history of the area and in particular the dairy industry. There are many parallels to our area with the 850 farms in the 1930s now being reduced to 135 farms but producing 10 times the amount of milk.

The museum is beautifully curated with many artefacts, life size displays and photographs.

During WW2 the area was heavily used as a training base for jungle warfare. Up to 300,000 Australian solders were in camps nearby over the period 1942-1945. There was also an interesting display on the devastating effect that periodic cyclones have had upon the area. Entry to the museum is by gold coin donation.

Throughout the small township there are also a number of large mosaics depicting local historic events.

Kerry Corcoran

**Foster & District Museum Opening Hours**

**11.00 am - 3.00 pm, Saturdays and Sundays; daily during school holidays.**

**Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Good Friday.**

Other times by appointment (03) 5682 2101; (03) 5682 2297.

**Admission fees:** This is a volunteer run and maintained museum and FDHS relies upon the small admission fee to run and maintain the museum on behalf of the Foster & District community.

**Adult: \$5.00.**

**Concession ( senior, pensioner & student over 15 years): \$4.00**

**Children: (5-15 Years) 0,50 cents; under 5 years - free**

**Family: \$10.00**

**Membership:** Becoming a member helps us to preserve and present the district's history. You receive free museum entry, newsletters and invitations to events and new exhibition openings.

**Single: \$20.00**

**Family: \$35.00**

• YOU'RE INVITED TO A •

**MERRY**

LITTLE

*Christmas*

PARTY

Foster and District Historical Society

Christmas Party

Tuesday December 4th

6.30 for 7.00

RSVP November 27th

\$30 a head

