



COWPER 200 NEWSLETTER

1809 - 2009 - The Cowper Family in Australia

December 2010

Janet Hay OAM!

Family members may not yet be aware that Janet was awarded an OAM in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June.

It was awarded to her for services to the community through the National Trust of Australia. We all owe Janet a great debt of gratitude to her work for the Trust, in particular the time and energy she has devoted to the cause of her forebears, William Cowper and his family as well as Georgiana and Andrew McCrae and their descendants in Australia.

Family members will recall that Janet arranged the highly successful Cowper Places event during our 200 year anniversary commemorations in August 2009.

A thoroughly deserved honour!

Mervyn's medal

Extract from the Port Macquarie Independent 15 April 2010

“When Mark Currie discovered what he thought was an old coin in his front yard, he never realised it would be so priceless.

“The Port Macquarie dad was digging out the groundwork to erect a colorbond fence at his Parker Street address when he scooped up a handful of coins from the late 1800s.

“But that was not the real surprise. Amongst the rubble he found a World War I Victory Medal – an extremely rare and

exciting find, said Port Macquarie RSL Sub-branch president Greg Laird.

“Mr Currie, knowing too well that the descendants of the gentleman's medal would surely treasure it - as his own family had with his late father John's medals from World War II - he took it to the Sub-branch for closer analysis. Under a microscope it revealed the name Charles Mervyn Cowper etched into its surface.”



DRIVER C. M. COWPER,
Son of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Cow-
per, Rose Bay - great-great-
grandson.

What happened next?

A quick thinking client sent the press clipping to Charles (William Branch) who quickly emailed it to John (Charles Branch) who in turn quickly negotiated with Warren Kenny (Thomas Branch), Bill Brooks and Christine (Charles Branch) and Greg Laird from the Port Macquarie RSL Club.

Identity was quickly established and confirmed that Chris' dad, Charles was the nearest living relative and it was agreed that

he should be duly “delegated” to collect Mervyn’s medal on the family’s behalf.

Reproduced below is the speech he made during a short ceremony at the club:

Charles Cowper – speech at Port Macquarie on the occasion of taking possession of Mervyn Charles Cowper’s WWI Victory Medal. 24 June 2010.

“I am a WWII returned War Vet. I am 87 years old. My name is Charles Cowper and I am the nephew of the late Mervyn Charles Cowper who was originally awarded the WWI medal that was recently uncovered here in Port Macquarie and handed in to the local RSL by Mark Currie.

“The Cowper family is deeply grateful to this good person for taking the trouble to hand it in to the RSL. We will treasure it always.

“Unfortunately, not a lot is known about Mervyn. The family always knew him as “Mervyn”, although I note on his attestation paper he was listed as Charles Mervyn Cowper. He joined the AIF on 15 May 1916 at the age of 33. Enlisted for service abroad, he was shipped to France as a driver for the 2nd Field BDE.

“Uncle Mervyn was not married. He worked as an overseer on a large sheep station near Wagga. When not actually working he lived with his two sisters and four brothers in Rose Bay, together with his mother. He remained a bachelor for his entire life.

“After WWI ended, my father together with his cousin, Jonathon King, applied for sections of a property in the Coonabarabran District that Government had resumed for soldier settlement. They were both successful, drawing adjoining blocks, a part of “Goorianiwore”. They then persuaded Mervyn to join them as chief adviser. He accepted providing they build him a reasonable cottage to reside in. So they then proceeded to build, which turned out to be a tiny little hut, so tiny my sister thought it was a dolls house. However, Mervyn moved in and apparently enjoyed living there. His cottage was quite close to our house. My sister and I used to visit our uncle quite often. It was always a good excuse to observe our uncle partaking of dry bread dipped in very

strong black tea, which seemed to us to be his staple diet.

“My father eventually sold his block and we moved on. Jonathon King was killed in a horse riding accident. We lost touch with Uncle Mervyn until his death in 1934.

“It might be worth noting that Mervyn and his sisters and brother were 4th generation Australians. I am a 5th generation, my two daughters are 6th generation and are present here today and so is my grandson who is 7th generation and is also here today. A few months ago the Cowper family celebrated 200 years in Australia.

“Once again, thank you to the kind gentleman who found the medal, we very much appreciate your efforts.”



Greg Laird, Secretary of the Port Macquarie RSL Club and the boys who found Mervyn’s WW1 Victory Medal

William’s servants

We have received an enquiry from **Kay Williams** who is researching the tidal mills of the Lower Hawkesbury. She has come across an interesting reference to **James Singleton** – a lower Hawkesbury miller of whom it is said he “*came to Australia as a servant to Rev Cowper 1809*”. James’ brother, **Benjamin**, (after whom Singleton was named) was already in New South Wales with other family at this time, and the family built several early tidal mills.

The fact that William and Ann travelled to Australia with four small children – Henry, Thomas, Mary and Charles – begs the question as to whether or not they travelled perhaps with a maid or a servant; a question that was raised often during the Cowper200 celebrations. To the family’s knowledge however, we have no record of his ‘party’ although we do have the names of another

family who travelled at the same time on the *Indispensible*

Kay's email and the news it contains about **James Singleton** will lead to an entirely new avenue of research on the family's part. What, for example, was the background to James' appointment, foreseeably in London, by whom? (Was it the English Government or William). If the latter how did William know James, were they both members of William's group of Christian friends and acquaintances in London. All conjecture of course but part of building up a picture of the times.



Updating the family tree

Hi All,

Just letting you know that David and I have been adding to/correcting many entries within the family tree. With so much data coming on-line, it's becoming easier to find and correct errors that were inadvertently introduced in the lead up to the Celebrations.

Hope everyone has a wonderful Christmas & a Happy New Year.

Warren

Happy Christmas to
all our readers

Cowper200 – the CD - \$10.00 (Inc postage)

The interactive CD contains photographs of all the events, a copy of the family tree and other images and videos collected during the celebrations. Based on the Cowper2000 website and compiled by David Kenny.

Order now from cowper200@onaustralia.com.au

Importantly what do we know of William's other servants? Where are their families now?

William Macquarie's servant

Ironically, in an unrelated email received only a few days before that of Kay Williams we received an (unrelated) email from **Michelle Maher** who is researching her ancestor **Elizabeth Rutland** – Elizabeth married **James Cox** an employee of the AA Company at St John's Stroud during 1839. Together they had a little boy – Thomas.

William Macquarie conducted the ceremony – and had a rather special interest that day - for Elizabeth was *his* servant!

ELIZA SUTTON'S SISTER (More from Warren!)

“Perhaps a worthy item for the Newsletter would be the ‘news’ on Eliza Sutton's sister.

“Her sister Rachael Anne Sophia Sutton married John Wood, and they had five children, one of whom, **Christiana Eliza Wood** married Alexander Stuart, (later Sir Alexander). Christiana also received a Knighthood (Dame Christiana).

“Sir Alexander followed in the footsteps of Sir Charles Cowper by becoming Premier of NSW, And also Agent General for NSW in London. Like Sir Charles, Sir Alexander died whilst serving in the role of Agent General in London. Sir Alexander and Sir Charles were close both professionally and family wise.

“One of the very interesting business undertakings of Sir Alexander was a joint ownership of the Coalcliffe Mining Company. His partner was Charles Cowper (Jnr.). It is not clear as to when they became disassociated with the Company, but, I suspect it was not long after the death of Sir Alexander in 1886.”



William Macquarie Cowper – a life to remember

During July the family commemorated the life and ministry of William's fifth – and first Australian-born – child, William Macquarie – called Mac by his immediate family

The following words, written by Rev Chris Moroney, Acting Dean of the Anglican Diocese of Sydney were written to mark the anniversary of Mac's 200th birthday.



“William Macquarie Cowper had a remarkable life. Born in 3rd July 1810, two hundred years ago, he had a wide range of responsibilities in the Anglican Church. From the Cathedral's point of

view in particular he was the first Dean, appointed 10 years before the Cathedral was consecrated in 1868.

“Dean Cowper was Australia's first native born clergyman and a convinced evangelical. He was committed to the training of clergy and was Moore College's first principal. He was instrumental in the establishment of both St John's Glebe and St Barnabas at Broadway. He faithfully served five Diocesan Bishops: Broughton, Tyrell, Barker, Barry and Saumarez Smith.

“He was the administrator of the diocese for a total of 11 years, in times when there were vacancies. He worked very hard on a number of committees to make the diocese of Sydney a growing evangelical and vibrant group of churches and organisations. We will do well to learn about his character and his achievements as we look to play our part in God's work of proclaiming the gospel to a needy world.”



Special events

A number of special events were arranged to celebrate William Macquarie's 200th birthday

- At the Queen's Birthday Convention arranged by the Cathedral on Monday 14th June, Rev Dr Peter Bolt spoke on “William Macquarie Cowper in the light of Eternity.”
- On Saturday 3rd July the Friends of St John the Evangelist, Stroud and a number of William's descendants attended a special 200th birthday celebration at St John the Evangelist Anglican Church in Stroud – lunch at Stroud House followed.

“It really was a brilliant day. Peter and Jill worked well with Daphne and St John's generally should have been very pleased” – Liz Pawsey

- On 4th July 2010 the cathedral paid special attention to remembering and celebrating William Macquarie's contribution to Sydney Diocese at the Cathedral during the Morning service at 10.30 am. This was followed by a morning tea.

Grateful thanks to Jill Auld and Peter Macqueen for arranging and coordinating these special events



Jim White at the organ at St John the Evangelist Stroud on 3 July 2010

William Macquarie's descendants
congregate in St John the Evangelist
- Stroud

Nancy Mary Mannix (nee Goldfinch)

8 December 1911 to 10 June 2010

A descendant of the Rev. William Cowper by his son, Sir Charles Cowper, Nancy Goldfinch was born in the bank building of the Maitland branch of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney where her grandfather, William Robert Cowper, was manager. Nancy's parents, Philip and Mary Goldfinch, lived at Homebush near Mackay in Queensland where her father worked for the Colonial Sugar Refining Company. He returned to Sydney with the same organisation and they lived at Bellevue Hill and later at Warrawee.



Nancy on the SS Bremen – 1935

A lifelong interest in art began at the age of six when Nancy was encouraged to paint by an artist uncle. She was educated at Abbotsleigh where her art teacher was Eirene Mort. She had lessons with Will Ashton and on finishing school attended The Royal Art Society and the studio of Dattilo Rubbo.

In 1933, at the age of 21, Nancy journeyed by boat to England and studied at the Chelsea Art School, the most forward looking school in London. She toured England and Scotland and visited Paris, Bruges, Rome and Naples. Nancy, who painted under her maiden name, Goldfinch, exhibited with the Royal Society of British Artists in London. On returning to Australia she had solo shows of her transitional/modernist paintings, at the Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, in 1935 and 1940.

During the war she worked at the Ministry of Munitions where she met John (Jack) Mannix whom she married in 1945. They had three children, Sarah, Sibella and George and moved to Hunters Hill in 1951. She began the establishment of her garden which she continued to work on throughout her life. When Nancy resumed her painting career

many of her works were inspired by her surroundings.



Nancy in 1939

After attending John Olsen's Bakery Art School in Paddington during 1968 and 1972, Nancy became very interested in drawing for its own sake. She exhibited in Municipal Art Shows and won several prizes for her work. In 1991 she was given a show at the Macquarie Galleries and in 1994 a retrospective of her work was held at the Newcastle Regional Art Gallery. In 2000 the Art Gallery of NSW acquired two paintings for the permanent collection.



Nancy – 1983

Nancy was an early supporter of the National Trust in its efforts to protect and conserve Australian architecture. She took a keen interest in family history, particularly of her pioneer ancestors including Governor Philip Gidley King and the Rev. William Cowper.

In her later years she wrote her memoirs and enjoyed her garden, family and friends.

Sibella Lee

Mary Stepheana's family

Research continues apace into the 'forgotten' branches, Rod Hirst submits the following for publication



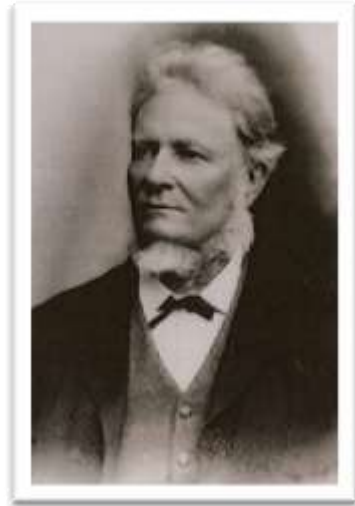
Hannah Euphemia Brooks (William's granddaughter) 1829 – 1915



Hannah Euphemia (William's granddaughter) with her daughter Mary Stepheana (1871-1949)



Hannah's husband Atwill Kenrick



John William Brooks (William's grandson)
1834 – 1911



Mary Stepheana Kenrick
William's great granddaughter (1871-1949)



Mary Stepheana's husband Percy Verney Hirst
with his sister Doris

Elizabeth Ann's birth spoons located

As reported above, since the commemorations of 2009 additional material continues to come to light from family members and their friends. Foremost among these has been Keith Cowper from Buckinghamshire in the UK, custodian of so many memories so thoughtfully and lovingly kept by the descendants of Elizabeth Ann, William's second daughter.

Imagine the surprise then when we received an email from the United Kingdom containing pictures of Elizabeth Ann's birth spoons (pictured).



The spoons are being carefully looked after together with Elizabeth's locket (also pictured) which contains a lock of her hair.



The handle is engraved "Elizabeth Ann Cowper" and the bears the initials "EAC"



Have you a photo of the gatehouse at Wivenhoe?

An email received on 19 November asks for our help

I am a heritage consultant for Godden Mackey Logan, and we are currently trying to locate a photograph of the gate lodge for Wivenhoe. This building was demolished in 1978. It is thought to have been one of the first buildings constructed at Wivenhoe in 1834 and may possibly have also been designed by Verge. Sadly, no archival recording was made of the building before it was demolished and the Sisters of The Good Samaritan, who currently own the property, do not have a single photograph of the gate lodge.

Macquarie Grove Road is being widened and the footings of the lodge will be uncovered. We would like the lodge to be represented in a memorial plaque.

Any assistance your family could give us would be greatly appreciated

Regards

Michelle Richmond | Historian-Senior Heritage Consultant

If you can you help? Please email cowper200@onaustralia.com.au

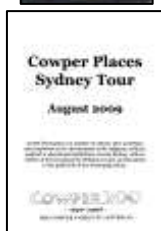
RELIVE COWPER 200!

The committee is making available several items of memorabilia which we hope will keep our memories alive as August 2009 sinks into the background.



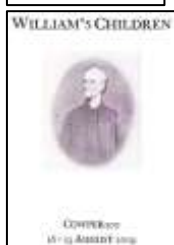
Cowper200 – the DVD - \$10.00 (Inc postage)

The DVD contains photographs of all the events, a copy of the family tree and other images collected during the celebrations



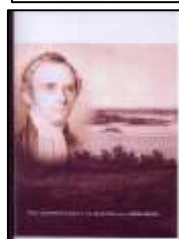
Cowper Places Tour Guide - \$6.00 (Inc postage)

We have a limited number of guides left and these are offered on a first come, first serves basis. Read about the places the where the family worked and loved their lives – two hundred years ago! 24 page booklet



William's Children - \$12.50 (Inc postage)

Re-read the speeches, as given at the Scots Church when we learnt about the lives of William's eight children.
36 page spiral bound booklet



Descendants of William Cowper – \$20.00 (Inc postage)

Family tree compiled by Angela Lind especially for Cowper200
60 pages printed and bound

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