



# Braidwood & District Historical Society

PO Box 145 Braidwood NSW 2622

## Newsletter

Number 6 September 2017

### Annual Dinner

A good time was had by all in July when we had our Annual Dinner in the National Theatre. Our President Peter Smith launched the new DVD of the recent Re-enactment of the capture of the Clarke bushrangers. It is now available from the Museum and Bendigo Bank. Many thanks to Vanessa Bunn for the wonderful catering.



Very serious conversation



Peter Smith with his favourite outlaws



Wonderful talk Tony



Have a preview of the new Bushranger Re enactment DVD at  
[https://youtu.be/ ADTBGQIqos](https://youtu.be/ADTBGQIqos)

#### To order by mail:

Send a cheque for \$28.00 (includes Postage and Packaging) to  
 Braidwood Historical Society PO Box 145 Braidwood 2622

#### Direct Deposit:

Braidwood and District Historical Society  
 BSB: 633-000  
 A/C: 1322 33354

Put your name in the reference, and email your postal details to  
[help@braidwoodmuseum.org.au](mailto:help@braidwoodmuseum.org.au)

Our volunteers will post your DVD as quickly as possible.

#### Historical Society AGM

To be held on ***Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September***  
 in the Servicemen's Club at 6pm. All  
 welcome. Nominations for the  
 Committee must be received by Friday  
 15<sup>th</sup> September. John Feehan will speak  
 on some interesting Braidwood topics.

The society would love to hear from  
 interested persons who would like to  
 volunteer at the museum on Fridays,  
 Saturdays or Sundays for a few hours.

#### Repairs to the Museum

Extensive restoration work has been  
 done by Murray Harrex to repair  
 externally our wonderful building. This is  
 as a result of our successful application  
 for a grant from Queanbeyan Palerang  
 Council.



**This newsletter features Majors Creek stories. The next one will focus on Araluen. If you would like to contribute a story please ring or email the Museum**

## **MY CONVICT ANCESTOR**

**by Helen Digan (nee McGrath)**

Charlotte Foster/Forster was my Great-Great Grandmother and the only convict in my family history. Her life is a true 'rags to riches' story.

Charlotte Foster was born 1815 in Manchester, England, a Catholic. Her mother was Elizabeth Foster and father ? Hanlen. When she was young her family moved to Clunes, Co. Monaghan, Ireland. Charlotte had two children, Jane born c.1835 in Ireland (father Andrew McMurray) and Margaret born c.1839 in Co. Monaghan Ireland (father Patrick Newton).

On 29 June 1844 Charlotte was tried and convicted in Co. Monaghan, Ireland, for larceny (stealing potatoes) and sentenced to imprisonment for one month and transportation for seven years. She was aged 29, listed as a Farm Servant, 5ft ½ inches tall, brown complexion, large oval head, black hair, low forehead, brown eyebrows, hazel grey eyes, straight nose, wide mouth and a large chin. She had two moles on her left cheek and a scar on her right arm. Charlotte could neither read nor write.

Charlotte's daughters, Jane and Margaret, were confined in the Grange Gorman Convict Depot in the city of Dublin while she was in prison and she did not see them again until they embarked on the *Phoebe* departing Dublin on 25 September 1844, and arriving in Van Diemen's Land on 2 January 1845. Charlotte and the other female prisoners were immediately taken to the Female Factory, some twenty miles from Hobart. Her daughters, Jane aged 10 and Margaret aged 6, were placed in the Orphan School

where they would live until they were old enough to work, and as far as is known they had no contact with Charlotte for several years.

On 9 March 1848 Charlotte gave birth to David Foster (his birth certificate states father unknown, however he was later known as Heazlett) in Hobart, Tasmania. Charlotte's convict record states he was an illegitimate child. It is assumed Charlotte met David Heazlett on the voyage to Van Diemen's Land.

Private David Heazlett of the 1/96<sup>th</sup> Manchester Regiment of Foot – (service no. 1126) arrived in Van Diemen's Land on 2 January 1845 on the *Phoebe*. He was responsible for the convicts on board. David was discharged shortly after his arrival, on 10 January 1845, however he was a participant in the Maori Wars as a volunteer.

On 10 April 1849 Charlotte was found to be 'out after hours' and falsely representing herself to be free. She had visited her daughters presumably to tell them about her relationship with David Heazlett and the birth of their son. For this offence she was sentenced to six days in a cell.

Jane Foster left the Orphan School on 25 October 1848, when she was 14, and was apprenticed to a Mrs. Frederick Hall of O'Brien's Bridge. On 11 May 1852 Margaret Forster, also 14, was apprenticed to James Bonney of Hobart.

On 24 April 1849 Charlotte and David Heazlett were given permission to marry and on 8 May 1849 were married at St John's Church, Newtown, Hobart, by the Rev. Thos. J. Ewing. Their marriage certificate lists David aged 30 and Charlotte aged 30, however David was born in 1825 and was 9 years younger than Charlotte. It is of interest to note that the witnesses at their marriage were William and Ellen Frederick Hall, the couple who had taken Jane into their employment just seven months before.

It is not known whether Charlotte, David and baby David were allowed to live



together under supervision until Charlotte's seven year term was up, but by 1852 they along with Charlotte's daughters Jane and Margaret were on their way to Araluen NSW. One can only imagine the hazardous journey from Van Dieman's Land. First by ship across the Tasman to the mainland, then wagon or coach over roughly made tracks from the east coast, near present day Nelligen NSW, over the Clyde Mountain to Braidwood, then to Araluen and later Majors Creek, in search of gold. Gold was discovered at Araluen in 1851 and shortly afterwards at Majors Creek.

On 8 October 1851 Abraham Heazlett, (father of Private David Heazlett) with his wife Sarah Guthrie, and their four children Elizabeth, Sarah, Mary and Rebecca, and David's siblings, Jane and John (from Abraham's first marriage to Ann Kennedy) arrived in Sydney on the *Kate* from Plymouth, England. They settled in Maitland NSW. In 1852 John Heazlett left Maitland to join his brother David at Majors Creek.

Life was busy on the goldfields for Charlotte and David and their family grew with twins John and Charlotte born 29 September 1852. The twins' baptisms were solemnized in the Parish of Araluen goldfields on 10 October 1852 by William Allworth, Minister. At the time of the baptisms David Heazlett's employment was listed as Policeman. John and Charlotte are reputed to be the first white children born on the goldfields. Charlotte and David had three more children, Rebecca born 24 February 1854; Mary born 1855 (died 1856) and Sarah born 5 August 1855 (possibly twins).

David Heazlett continued as a Policeman on the Goldfields at Majors Creek and later bought a Public House there which he ran until he died in 1872, and then his widow, Charlotte, conducted the business until she died in 1884.

Charlotte's daughter, Jane Foster married Edward Powell, an innkeeper at Majors Creek on 6 September 1852. Her daughter, Margaret Foster, married John Heazlett on

24 December 1855 (David's brother). As Margaret was only 16 years old her mother was required to give her consent.

Margaret and John Heazlett were my Great-Grandparents, they had ten children:

Annie b.1856

James Edward Kennedy b. 1867

Rebecca b.1859

**Sarah Jane b.1870 – my grandmother**

John Abraham b.1860

William Henry b.1872

Charlotte b.1863

Robert Irvine b.1875

David Ninian b.1864

Albert Charles b.1877

*Charlotte FOSTER is commemorated in the convict brick walkway situated in the High Street, Campbell Town, Tasmania.*

Charlotte died quite a wealthy woman on 27 April 1884 aged 69 years. An extract from her Will states:-

*'To my son David Heazlett the sum of three hundred pounds sterling and one hundred and twenty seven acres situated at the Clyde road Mongarlowe River also two allotments of land in the Village of Monga Clyde Road. To my daughter Charlotte Carter the sum of two hundred and twenty pounds sterling – to my daughter Rebecca Wallgate the sum of two hundred and twenty pounds sterling – to my daughter Sarah Heazlett the sum of three hundred pounds sterling – to my daughter Margaret Heazlett the sum of one hundred and twenty pounds – to my daughter Jane Powell the sum of fifty pounds sterling – and to my son John Heazlett the sum of one hundred and twenty pounds sterling together with all my real and personal estate situated at Elrington Majors Creek – comprising land, houses, cows, calves and all other property which may be remaining after the foregoing legatees have had their legal rights satisfied. I appoint my sons David and John Heazlett Joint Executors of this my Will'*

Signed by Charlotte Heazlett with her mark.

Charlotte Heazlett (Foster) died at Majors Creek NSW on 27 April 1884

David Heazlett died at Majors Creek NSW on 24 January 1872

Margaret Heazlett (Foster) died at Majors Creek NSW on 16 October 1909

John Heazlett died at Majors Creek NSW on 2 January 1902

### **William Hennessy of the 'Crick'**

(Anonymous)

The shadowy early life of William refuses to divulge its secrets. However we do know that he was born in Maitland to two Irish convicts. His mother was Mary Cremin of Bantry County Cork, who received a 7 year sentence for stealing clothes. His father was James Hennessy of Kilmurry County Clair who had served in India as a gunner with 3rd Company 1st Battalion of the Bengal Artillery, until the Battle of Bhurtpore in 1825 when he and 3 others decided to take the side of the Indians. Court martialled for 'defecting to the enemy', he and another Irishman were sentenced to be hung. The other 2 defectors were English, and they were sent back home. However, the sentences of the 2 Irish men were revised to 'life' sentences in Australia.

Mary arrived in Sydney on the 'Palambam' in 1831 and James arrived on the 'Marquis of Landsdowne' in 1827. Both were sent to Maitland. Mary worked as a housemaid for James Spark, a landowner on the Hunter River, and James, being literate, worked in the Maitland Gaol office. On receiving his Ticket of Leave, he became a gaol warden. Once he and Mary were married in 1834, they lived in the gaol yard in a slab hut and their children were all born there. James died suddenly in 1846 leaving 6 children under 7 years of age. Mary could not have foreseen a worse future, being widowed, Irish Catholic, illiterate and unemployed. It is here that the story goes cold.

We next find William Hennessy in the Braidwood area at Little River in 1856, age 13 years, gold prospecting at Soldiers Point and apparently alone. By 1858 he was in the vicinity of Bell's Flat, as the Maitland Mercury reported his horse had been stolen and William Berriman had been charged.



Catherine Berry and William Hennessy

In 1869 William Hennessy married Catherine Berry, daughter of Thomas Berry and Bridget O'Connell of Jerrabatgulla. Their children were William, Ellen, Emily, Catherine, Elizabeth, James, Herbert, Stanley and Reginald. William would have met Catherine at the Traveller's Rest Inn at Stoney Creek, where she worked as a barmaid for her uncle Michael O'Connell. William also participated in local kangaroo hunts with the O'Connells and other locals. These hunts always culminated in enjoying the hospitality of the Travellers Rest for the celebration.

A report in an article entitled 'Old Braidwood' of 1871, said Hennessy and party on Favourite Flat were reported to be doing well. In 1879, the railway from Braidwood to Cooma was being considered and an exploratory party appointed by the Braidwood Railway Committee, and consisting of John Musgrave, William Hennessy, Frank Mason and Henry Payne was formed. It was noted that Hennessy and Payne found a 6 mile gap in the Big Badger Range near the division of Jerrabatgully and Jinden Creeks. The party stayed



**Old Miners of “Snob Hill” Mine, Majors Creek taken late 1890**

**Back Row-** Joe Holmes, Bob Carter Snr, William Hennessy Snr, Bill Stinson, Crace, George Cleaver Snr, Joe Snare

**Middle Row** – Harry Snare, Richard Crandell Snr, Bill Stuart, Jack Gearin, Jack Spooner, Bill Snare

**Front Row** – Arthur Turner, Jack Cock, Alan Douglas Snr. James Green Snr

overnight at Hindmarshes, then explored along the Queanbeyan River and on to the Big Badger River, then crossed the head of the Bredbo River and came out near the Umaralla Post Office

By the 1880's the Hennessy family were living at Majors Creek. William was a stocky man then who frequented John Heazlett's hotel, the Elrington. John's



**The old Elrington Hotel**

daughter Bertha Heazlett played tennis with William's daughter Kitty. The Hennessy family lived on a rise on the opposite side of the creek to the battery where the stone was crushed. The house was a long shape with silver birch trees growing around it. Later, Jocelyns and Cannings homes were near there.

In March 1896, his 14 year old daughter Elizabeth committed suicide by drowning in the nearby dam. The local newspaper reported she left a note for her parents bidding them farewell and saying she hoped to meet them in heaven.

In July 1898, William's wife, Catherine died of heart disease, and is buried at Majors Creek with their daughter Elizabeth.

By 1899, Hennessy, Green and party at Bell's Creek were taking 3oz of gold per ton. In 1900 he was working on the Welcome Reef at Bell's Creek. The reef was 2" wide and 70' deep, the last 30' being through rock.

By 1902 he was writing regularly to the newspaper. He wrote his memories of early days in Araluen, which produced a duel of pens with another old Majors Creek identity. He also wrote stories that were published, such as "The Dead Selector", "A Squatters Troubles of Early Days", "Christmas at Murphy's". Where he acquired his education and literary skills is unknown. He was keenly interested in the building of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, and is remembered espousing facts and figures as the structure proceeded.

In 1904 he acquired 40 acres at Jerrabatgully, which he called "The Laurels", but he was still intensely mining at Bells Creek. The cyanide-bromide process for better extraction of gold had just been introduced by J W Summers to the Majors Creek fields. There were now 8 parties on the Creek, namely Hennessy, Dunshea, Snare, Crozier, Stalker, Cook, Paton, Bills and Summers.

In May 1907 he was being driven from the Creek to Krawarree by one of his sons when on standing up in the trap to put on his overcoat, the horse shied and he was thrown out. Taken to hospital, he remained there for 5 months. On leaving he went to live with his daughter Kitty in Sydney, where he died in 1923. The Hennessy family remained at Jerrabatgulla at 'The Laurels' until Bill Hennessy jnr died in 1940. He is buried at Emu Flat.

## Our Unidentified Mystery Photo

Last Newsletter's photo was identified as Luke Tierney, a teacher at the Catholic school at Reidsdale. He also taught at Araluen and Yatteyatah before moving to Young where he died in 1889 of throat cancer. His wife was Mary Jane, daughter of Dr Havens of Braidwood.

See if you can help with this one.



**Dated 1870-1890**

She is definitely a Braidwood little girl.

### **School Day Memories in Majors Creek by James Ferguson Heazlett**

The school house was an old barn like building divided into two rooms with large cracks to ensure a variety of ventilation. Mr Treehy, the master, was short and stout. There was a generous supply of canes in the quince orchard



next door and we often watched the old man cutting a few. He was old and grumpy and he was an inveterate tobacco chewer. He often put two marks across your slate after carefully licking his fingers. Two yellow streaks that smelt to the heavens proved stubborn when you had to write over them. His daughter Grace seemed a sweet angel and assisted her dad in all but the usual stern castigation with his trusty flagellator.



He was replaced by George Hogg a worthy representative of an old Braidwood family. The schoolhouse was now crowded, there being many large families on the Creek by then. The fathers usually met on the sports ground on Sundays and played marbles. They made sporting wagers as to who would require Sairey Gamp (from Charles Dickens' Martin Chuzzlewit) in his household next. Sometimes we swam in the creek under the cool willows at the back of Nosey Green's orchard on the Braidwood Creek. Also swimming there were the Canvin boys, Jim Styles, Fred Bell, Inspector Willis' boys and others.

The next teacher was Phil Kennedy of Araluen, then Ellen Walsh of Jembaicumbene. She married one of the Edmunds family of Bungendore. Next came Nellie Stuart, then Thomas O'Sullivan and Catherine Madigan of Araluen. You had to take your 3d every Monday morning to pay for schooling.



**Majors Creek School Children with left Mr Hanley and front with Miss Lil Heazlett**

They had the pleasure of moving into the new building which opened with very little ceremony. The bricks for the building were made up near the old pound yard. The brick maker was George Banks. You would find him at the races or cricket matches with his pet goose. The goose could pull a marble out of a barrel in a game of pool. George usually won, until police officers spoilt his profitable game.

School attendance was about 150 children. The senior class comprised Tom Wiggins, Fred Routley, Jack Morris, Anne Douglas, Martha Canning and a couple of others. There were innumerable Keytes, Dunsheas, Heazletts, Douglass', Gardiners, Caldwells, Stuarts, Routleys, Clowrys, Grants, Coles, Lewis, Wiggins, Cooks, Jurys, Martins, Fensoms, Jocelyns, Carters, Morris', Johnsons, Greens, Stinsons, Cleavers, Hennessys, Bells, Shipways, McCarrons and some smaller families. George Hogg was not in robust health and inclined to be irritable, but most had a kindly feeling toward him. He tried to instil into his youthful students the spirit of good citizenship, healthy recreation, honesty and temperance. His early death closed a useful life. My association with the school ended about 1891.



## New Araluen book



Researched by our wonderful Ros Maddrell

It is being launched at the Araluen Pub on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017 2pm

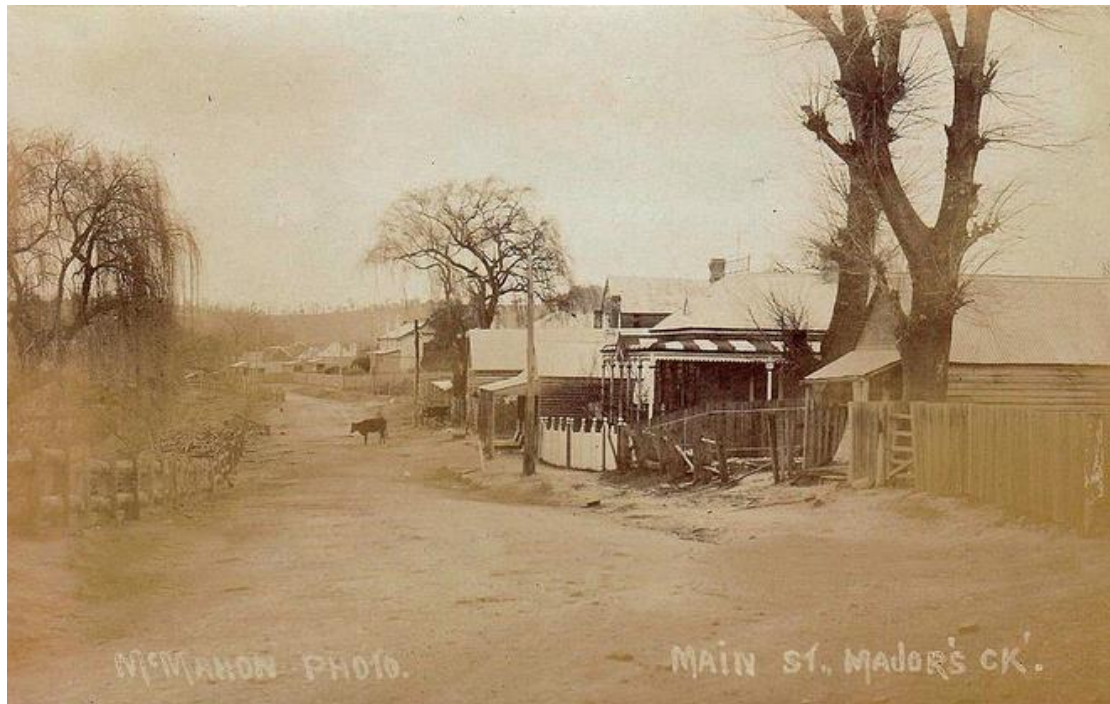
### **Majors Creek Reunions a collection of comments by James Heazlett**

Forty and fifty years ago the gala day on the creek was the 1<sup>st</sup> January, the annual school picnic. People swapped yarns, played Jolly Miller or wigs on the green. Later, the residents of Majors Creek met at Parramatta Park on 29<sup>th</sup> January. Old residents and their descendants spent a memorable and happy day.

There was Jim Wiggins, whose figure today tends to be aldermanic. He taught us many nursery rhymes, still remembered. Mrs Wilson (Mary Stuart) has lost a little of her stately form. We used to call her Mary Queen of Scots. Bill Crandell was there with a smile that would trip a duck. A casual passer by would think he had been freely sampling hops. Dick Cleaver, well over the allotted span, was in a happy mood and

waltzed like a giddied youth in a ballet at the Trocadero. Jack Curry reminded us of the grim battles we had on the football field about 1896. He was a rough customer in those days. Millie Greenwood chatted about the days when she was a pupil at the old school at Nithsdale. Martha Gardiner, now a buxom matron, looked happy and contented. George Hopkins who had charge of a bullock team at Berlang 30 years ago, entertained with his accordion.

Alf Townsend was on a periodical bender. He sports a luxuriant ginger ziff, the admiration of all Farrington. When he was properly blithered, the lads removed the facial adornment. Mick McCarron from Bell's Creek greeted a few of his football mates. Charlie Greenwood had met with an accident, but as usual wanted to talk horses. Ned Camage told how on one occasion



**George St Majors Creek about 1920**

Paddy Guerin had a few beers across his chest, and they carried him down to the creek, placed him in a bag and stood him in a hole six foot deep. Bill Izzard then commenced the burial service, and when they got to “ashes to ashes”, they commenced to fill in the hole. Some women ran for Constable Caldwell who ended the joke.

Bill Gardiner was a Braidwood cricketer fifty years ago and later conducted a hairdressing saloon in Araluen. Lizzie Grant who married Mick Hart from Krawarree looked a buxom middle aged matron.

A few of the older hands recalled the dress the boys wore who went wooing in the old days. It consisted of white moleskin trousers, black coat and Wellington boots and a cabbage tree hat. Some old hands spoke of walks down the Araluen Mountain nearly 60 years ago. The men wore trousers tight at the knees and where you sit down. They were almost afraid to stoop. The girls had bustles, some of startling dimensions, and the beau carried the young ladies umbrella. Most of us were in knickerbockers then. The Beau

Brummels were considered to be Jim Dunshea, Long John Heazlett, Dave Joselyn and Jack Stuart.

Tom Cook remembered picking cherries for Mrs Cadell. The old lady hailed from Ireland. She smoked a short dirty clay pipe and kept a small store near the police station. She would order the Cook boys to whistle when she went outside in case they should eat some of her fruit.

Some remembered being packed off to the Presbyterian Church once a month. The Reverend S F McKenzie was the clergyman. He sported a luxurious growth of Dundreary whiskers and took snuff from a large red handkerchief often during the lessons. He was a dour Scotchman and the sermons were dry. Not that this mattered much, as most of us were asleep. Sometimes the snoring of the fat worshippers disturbed the minister. We all liked him. He never upbraided us, and his complacency always remained unruffled.

After dancing the night away and singing Auld Lang Syne, the happy party dispersed for another year.

