

DUIDGEEANA

(From the Nyungar language - Duidgee, a place of plenty)

The Newsletter of the Toodyay Historical Society Inc. Issue No. 42 (Autumn 2016)

JUNE EXCURSION TO HISTORIC JUMPERDING

Sunday 26 June 2016

Car pool at Visitors Centre 10am

Bring morning tea and chair (see below for details)

JULY Sunday 31 - BUSY BEE AT HISTORIC SYRED'S COTTAGE, BEJOORDING

JUNE EXCURSION - Sunday 26 June, 2016.

Jenny Edgecombe will show the sites/sights & tell the stories, including Jumperding Seventh Day Adventist Cemetery, the ill-fated school site, Nolan's Rocks and the remains of two bridges and a tiny house. If the weather is bad, Jenny will present a talk & slides at Donegan's Cottage in lieu of the tour. Wear stout shoes if you'd like to explore the river bank and bridge sites; otherwise take a gentle stroll through the peaceful cemetery.

AGM - Sunday 10 April 2016

We had a splendid turn-up for our AGM. Not everyone is excited by such events, so it must have had something to do with our guest speaker John Viska, who gave a wonderful talk on 'Colonial Kitchen Gardens', and also the invitation to the Toodyay Garden Club. First, we whisked through the procedures with the usual suspects being re-elected to office, apart from the position of Secretary that saw a changing of the guard. A huge thank-you to **Desraé Clarke** who had been doing a sterling job and has agreed to continue on the committee, and a big welcome to new Secretary **Linda Rooney**, who has already proved her capabilities.

Guest Speaker John Viska: Colonial Kitchen Gardens

John is the Chairman of the WA branch of the Australian Garden History Society, formed in 1980. He lectured in Horticulture for 25 years at TAFE (Technical & Further Education) and is the author of *A Guide to Conserving and Interpreting Gardens in Western Australia* (2007).

Right: John in the CWA Hall. (Photo: B. Frayne, 2016)



John has also contributed to *The Oxford Companion to Australian Gardens*, the *Historical Encyclopedia of Western Australia* and has written numerous articles for the Australian Garden History Society's journal. John's lively talk, with copious illustrations from the 19th and early 20th century, had everyone enthralled. He brings a fresh eye to the way paintings, sketches and photos can be 'read' for the rich information they reveal about early garden practices. One interesting detail, amongst many, was the use of the Giant Reed (*Arunda donax*), often call Bamboo, to create windbreaks and stakes for plants. Toodyay Friends of the River are always digging up this 'feral weed', and castor oil plants, but I suspect there is no danger of these hardy Europeans becoming extinct.



The new Committee:

Just so you know who we are when you meet us in the street:

Back row (L-R): Milton Baxter (VP), Colin Kendall, Peter Robinson, Linda Rooney (Sec.), Wayne Clarke (Treas.), Desraé Clarke, Allen Clabaugh, Len Leeder (Patron).

Front row (L-R): Beth Frayne, Robyn Taylor (Pres.), Jenny Edgecombe (Archivist).

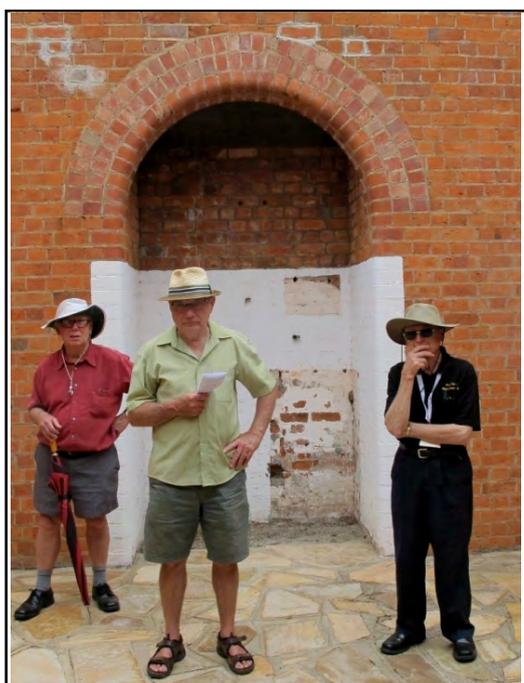
(Photo: G. Warburton, 2016)

Toodyay Tidy Towns Australian Awards weekend - 17-20 March 2016. Well, what can we say but a very big hearty CONGRATULATIONS to everyone involved with this very successful four-day festival in Toodyay. I would like to thank member Beth Frayne who worked closely with Shire Curator Margie Eberle in organising the Shire Museum walking tour 'Convict Depot - Behind the Scenes'. This walk included the Shire Chambers (formerly the 1897 Court House), the 'new' 1907 Toodyay Lock-up and the Museum Workroom, near the Old Stables. The walk finished at the Masonic Lodge in Fiennes Street where participants were treated to morning tea. The combined Lodge (1924) and Hall (1878) is a gem of a building representing one of the dwindling numbers of lodges that continue to function into the 21st



century. Beth provided new research on the Templars' Hall from 1878 to 1924, and Lodge member Stan Eastward followed with the more recent Lodge history.

*Right: Stan Eastward in the Masonic Temple.
(Photo: M. Eberle, 2016)*



Left: What's up in the clink! (Photo: Jenny Edgecombe, 2016)

Caption competition: This photo of members Bob, Milton and John just begs for a suitable caption. It was taken in the men's exercise yard of the 1907 gaol. Apart from the honour of winning, the lucky recipient will receive a slice of cake and has to attend a meeting to enjoy the prize.

World War 1 Memorial Walk through Toodyay Public Cemetery

On Sunday 24 April, Beth Frayne led an excursion around the Toodyay Public Cemetery on Telegraph Road to look at the burial sites of some of Toodyay's WW1 veterans. Her search had identified at least 25 men that have memorials there. Their exploits have now been recorded in a small illustrated reference booklet titled: *"Resting in Peace"* (not for sale, but can be consulted at Donegan's Cottage). Copies will be given to the Shire Museum, Visitors' Centre and the Toodyay RSL.

Right: Listening to Joseph Wroth's story; he was Toodyay's RSL President in 1919. (Photo: Jenny Edgecombe, 2016)

Most of the men were ANZAC servicemen, but some served in the British Army and subsequently migrated to WA, namely Ernest Gray (Toodyay Road Board foreman, 1927-1932), Tom Patten (Eric Patten's father and well known raconteur) and John Truman (Calcarra farmer, who had won the Belgium Croix de Guerre). After touching on some of the stories, morning tea was held in the delightful CWA gazebo in the grounds of the cemetery.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Congratulations to 'veteran volunteer' Peter Robinson for winning the Australia Day Premier's Active Citizenship Award. Although this was way back in January, and reported elsewhere at the time, the well deserved award needs to be published in the prestigious pages of *Duideeana*. Talking about Pete, he was quick off the mark in mounting a THS 'Currency Exhibition' in our Community Bank to acknowledge the fact that it was only 50 years ago, on 'the 14th of February 1966', that decimal currency was introduced in Australia. Brings back childhood memories!

Planning Day a success, 20 January. Many thanks to Faye and Milton Baxter for hosting our annual Planning Meeting and dinner in their home at Dumbarton, which is surrounded by spectacular views of the Avon Valley and the Standard Gauge Railway.

Wikipedia's 15th anniversary and the Wikidata Tour Downunder



On 15 January Robyn and Beth joined Toodyay Museum Curator Margie Ebele at a Wikimedia Australia celebration of the 15th anniversary of the start of the online co-operative encyclopaedia Wikipedia. The event was held at the tiny Museum of Perth located in Grand Lane, between Murray and Barrack Streets (google Museum of Perth for more info). 'Toodyaypedia' was one of the many WA Wiki events that featured on the night.

Left: Beth, Rob and Margie flanking a Toodyaypedia poster in the Museum of Perth. (Photo: Taken on Beth's camera, 2016)

The following month, Margie told the Toodyaypedia story at a Wikimedia mini-conference at the State Library,

attended by THS members. A talk on NoongarPedia, under development, caught the interest of Toodyay Shire officers. Keynote speaker was English Wikimedian Andy Mabbett, who later visited Toodyay with Wikimedians Gideon Digby and Tom Hogarth for a Toodyaypedia tour and a face-to-face session with THS members.

Toodyay Inclusive Program Fire Fighting Heritage Session

THS members were pleased to help at the Museum's Session held on 22 January, around the Museum's Old Police Stables and Shearing Shed on Clinton Street. Volunteer fire brigade member Max Heath and members of the Toodyay Fire and Rescue crew related the history of fire fighting, while the old red hand-pulled fire cart and a polished brass fireman's helmet was much admired by the 40 children and 27 adults who took part, enjoying various water-based activities.



Right: Beth supervising the slippery slide. (Photo: M. Eberle, 2016)

Dinner at the Vic, 28 February. Our first Sunday social event for the year was a very enjoyable meal in the Victoria Hotel's heritage dining room. When our new website is up and running, we can show you a lovely pic of the 'long table' of 17 members having a good time.

Robyn Taylor talked about **Canon Martelli** and **Jenny Edgecombe** about **Mr. Paull the Butcher**, at our February and March meetings, respectively.

'Daveys of the Avon Valley' by **Murray Davey**. This book was been donated to the Society by the author, and then it was up for grabs who would get to read it first.

Toodyaypedia QR plaques for Toodyay identities. These plaques linking to Toodyaypedia biographies have started to appear on or near relevant Toodyay buildings. CEO Stan Scott sent a congratulatory email to Margie and myself (Robyn) with an article on the Wikipedia project that appeared in the March issue of *Local Government Focus*. Identities include Nyoongar woman Annie Stack, nun Angela Brown and nurse Doris Durlacher, as well as the usual run of doctors, magistrates, convicts, farmers, business and church men.

New members: A big welcome to Toodyay folk, Maureen and Brian Wood and the Rectors of St Stephen's Anglican Church, Peggy and Brian Ludlow.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

The former Dr & Mrs O'Reilly's Cottage (1870s) in Stirling Terrace next to the Library was the scene of much excitement recently. A child's leather boot was discovered at the base of one of the chimneys that had been damaged in the February 2015 storm. The building is currently undergoing



restoration, and it is believed the boot was deliberately placed inside the chimney cavity as a magical charm to ward off evil spirits. This is a well known practice in England and Europe and there are probably many more such charms in Toodyay's older buildings.

Left: The found boot. (Photo: M. Eberle, 2016)

It takes a storm or demolition to reveal these charms as some can be placed under floorboards or the front steps. Charms come in various forms. A desiccated cat may or may not be a

neighbour's much loved puss that had gone missing. The boot has now been recorded in the Concealed Shoe Index in Britain's Northampton Museum.

Clay pipe with Donegan connection. At our April meeting a box sent by the Enrolled Pensioner Guards Group was ceremoniously opened to reveal a delightful little white clay pipe, minus part of its stem. The pipe had been given to the EPG Group by member Mrs Wendy Brennan, a Donegan descendant, and is said to have been found under Donegan's Cottage. The bowl of the pipe has some pretty decorative moulding suggesting it may have been a lady's pipe.

Nannup Historic Trail booklet. The April meeting was like Christmas. We also received a copy of this booklet from the Nannup Historical Society's President, and former THS member, Neville Tanner. Each place is illustrated and the booklet is a handy size for taking on a walking tour.

New exhibition opens at the Newcastle Gaol Museum - Museum Curator Margie Eberle
2 May-10 October: Not Just Barefoot and Pregnant - But Much, Much More'

The exhibition uncovers some lesser-known histories of women from Toodyay. Topics include establishing schools, forming associations (CWA), retailing foods & beverages, the migrant experience, entertaining for profit, and playing sport.

FROM THE ARCHIVIST - Jenny Edgecombe

NEW DISPLAYS, VOLUNTEERING & THE GREAT MANGLE TANGLE

Photographs of past THS excursions are interesting for the records of historical buildings and places visited, and also for memories of past members. A new Donegan's Cottage display shows a 2005 visit to Woodendale and the remains of Nunyle Hall. Sadly, many of the buildings shown are no longer there, even in this relatively small span of time. It is lovely to pick out the images of old friends enjoying the day as well.

Speaking of photographs, we've always believed our only image of the Methodist Chapel was the one in the Alf Thomas book. Last week, I realised we had a splendid rear view of the chapel behind a gorgeous shot of Eva Patten (the late Eric Patten's mother), who was posing next to a vehicle. The following day I found the half-demolished chapel in a 1960s article about the march of the Standard Gauge Railway through Toodyay. (SEE Display at Donegan's for the May meeting)

Get involved: If you'd like to see more of our collection, I am currently looking for volunteers who might spend an occasional couple of hours at Donegan's Cottage scanning some of the precious records and hard-to-find books in our collection. I'll show you what to do, even if you have little or no computer experience, and would always be there for guidance. Please contact me to arrange a time.

The Great Mangle Search: Can You Help?

I am trying to identify the donor and history of the Donegan's Cottage mangle. I've read minutes, files, newspaper reports and correspondence and talked with many past members. I have established that the mangle was donated by someone who was leaving for overseas, and wished it to remain in Toodyay. This occurred during the period of upheaval 2002-2003 when THS was moving from Stirling Terrace to Donegan's Cottage, resulting in sketchy documentation.

It was probably used in a large establishment: a big country property, a hotel or boarding house, perhaps even the Convent. It seems most likely to me that it was originally in the laundry of one of the town's hotels. Jan James has provided some interesting reminiscences from the time when her mother did washing for the Newcastle Hotel, using a very similar mangle.

Right: The mangle, now in safe storage. (Photo: Jenny Edgecombe, 2016)



FUTURE EVENTS

Next meeting: Wednesday 18 May 2016, 7pm.

Feature Speaker will be Jenny Edgecombe talking on 'Hidden Gems in my Chitty book'. Jenny will highlight some significant aspects of Toodyay's history including Toodyay's amazing successes in pioneering agricultural education, Eugenio Vanzetti and the Deepdale Tramway, Vic Riseley (Toodyay's well-known journalist), the school bus crash files which show government departments scuttling to cover themselves from blame, the real story of Gumley's Mill, early Central Australian tourism and the hilarious tale of building the Jumperding School.

No May excursion - due to our involvement in the Moondyne Festival on 1 May.

June 26 Sunday excursion: Jenny will take us on a trip to Jumperding.

July 31 Sunday excursion: Busy-bee at the historic Syred's Cottage at Bejoording.

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TOODYAYESTERDAY

Member Wayne Clarke was our 'feature speaker' before the April meeting, and gave a very interesting talk on the history of the Land Conservation District Committee (LCDC) and the beginning of his association with the landcare movement. He kindly agreed to adapt his talk for *Duidgeana*.

The history of the Land Conservation District Committee (1989-2015)

By Wayne Clarke

Across Australia by the end of the 1960s, problems following clearing began to compound, particularly dry land salinity (up to a million acres a year¹ was cleared in the South West - almost the size of Papua New Guinea). By the 1980s, governments recognised that the issues were widespread, and that they needed to assist. State governments provided some funding, but a new, national approach was needed.

So commenced the National Landcare Program (under the Hawke government) with the state government also introducing measures to combat land degradation; they instigated Land Conservation District Committees (LCDCs) across Western Australia.

LCDCs had a number of functions under the *Soil and Land Conservation Act 1945*, including 'preventing, remedying or mitigating land degradation and for promoting soil conservation and reclamation'. These functions have been achieved through a variety of projects, with both State and Federal Government funding, augmented by non-government organisations such as Greening Australia.

In July 1988 the Shire of Toodyay called a public meeting with a view to forming a Land Conservation District Committee in Toodyay. Following the meeting, the Shire forwarded the following nominees to the Minister for Agriculture for selection, and subsequent appointment:

- Farmers' and Graziers' Association (PGA) - Les Hodge
- WA Farmers Federation (WAFF) - Max Chitty and Brian Wood
- Shire - Geoff Ludemann and John Smart
- Community - Max Heath, Dr Haydn Dyer, Colin Kendall, Brian Hutchings, John Pearce, Anthony (Tony) Hamersley and Ron Jowett

The inaugural meeting of the LCDC was held in the Shire Chambers on 4 October 1989 with Dr Hayden Dyer being elected as Chair.

Dr Dyer was originally Toodyay's GP. Although moving on to further his studies he retained a small cattle property off Harders Chitty Road. He approached me (at the request of the LCDC) to

join the committee as Secretary / Treasurer, and I attended my first meeting as Secretary on 1st February 1991, being officially appointed in May 1991.



Left: LCDC Soils Workshop held at the Toodyay Race Club, 10 April 1991.

People identified, L-R: Martin Revell, Axel Strauss, Brian Wood (at the back), unknown woman, Brian Hutchings, Rob Pearce (?), Colin Liddle. (Photo: W.C. Clarke, 1991)

¹A 'must see' is the film *A Million Acres a Year*, directed by Frank Rijavec, produced by Frank Rijavec and Noelene Harrison, and written by Keith Bradby and Frank Rijavec. *National Film and Sound Archive, Australia. Produced by Snakewood Films in association with SBS Independent. 2003, 51 minutes.*

In the first few years of operation, the LCDC was successful in obtaining grant funding for projects like the Chitty Revegetation project on Toodyay Road. This very badly 'salt-scalded' site was revegetated with the help of 30 Toodyay District High School (TDHS) students, and was regularly monitored by the children as a 'Ribbons of Blue' project.

*Right: Ribbons of Blue 'Chitty Site 1', 10 June 1991.
(Photo: W.C. Clarke, 1991)*

Greening Australia (through the 'Billion Trees Programme') provided a grant to the TDHS for the development of a 'Tree Nursery' at the school.

There are nearly 60 catchments in the Toodyay Shire, and the formation of *Catchment Groups* in the larger catchments was considered the best management option.

The LCDC embarked on establishing these during the 1990s, with the first groups being Jimperding and Wattening. Phillips Brook catchment was formed later, along with Deepdale and Boyagerring Brook.

The LCDC has had a presence at the Toodyay Agricultural Show since 1990, providing the marquee for the environmental groups until 2008. Other projects included the Shire Mapping, and a recent extension to the Chitty project (opposite the original site). Advice was also provided to the Commissioner on local landcare issues, including the dumping of thousands of tyres.²



Left and below: The tyre dump in a creek gully in the Toodyay district. (Photos: W.C. Clarke)



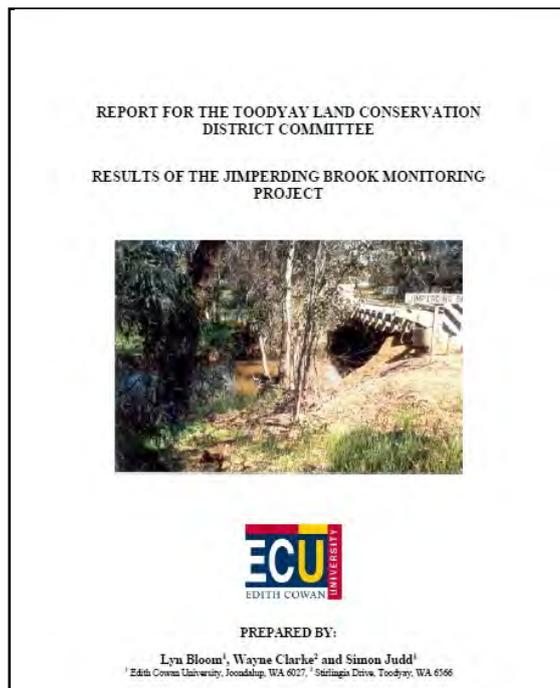
In 1996, a submission to the Shire of Toodyay was prepared by Rob Edkins (Dept of Agriculture) and myself, seeking support for the employment of a Community Landcare Coordinator (CLC). The submission was based on funding being received from the Australian Government for the first three years, after which the Shire would fully fund the position. Council considered the submission and in January 1997 advised it would provide the financial support.

Over the following years we successfully applied for funds for the CLC position, with \$22,000 being received for the 1997-98 financial year. When the first appointee left after two

²These tyres remain buried under a mound of earth in a gully near the Vernon Hills subdivision. Over a hectare of land was cleared and the soil dozed over the top of the tyres.

years, Bethan Lloyd was appointed, in July 2000. Over the following years the LCDC had been successful in obtaining funding from NHT, with a total of \$167,500 from 1998 to 2004.

In 2002, in order to honour its commitment to continue the employment of a CLC, the LCDC took the initiative and ask the community to maintain this position through a service charge on its ratepayers for a period of three years. Specific criteria had to be met prior to the imposition of the service charge, including the holding of public meetings and the endorsement of Council. The matter was referred to the Minister for Agriculture who subsequently agreed to apply a service charge for the period ending 30th June 2005.



Left: Cover of a report for the LCDC on the Jimperding Brook Monitoring Project, prepared by Lyn Bloom, Wayne Clarke and Simon Judd. Lyn and Simon were from Edith Cowan University, Joondalup; the report was issued 26 Dec. 2002. (Photo: W.C. Clarke, 2016)

In December 2004 the LCDC realised the Shire was not in a position to create the permanent position originally agreed upon, and again asked the community to support a service charge to maintain the position. Following the process adopted previously, the Minister agreed to extend the completion date to 31 October 2008.

Regrettably, at the end of October 2008, the Community Landcare Coordinator position terminated. The LCDC continued to operate, and to discharge its responsibilities in relation to the Soil and Land Conservation Act, but it was not in a position to provide advice to ratepayers on managing their land, or any of the other activities previously carried out by the Landcare Coordinator.

In lieu of CLC support the LCDC produced a written strategy for continuing investment in sustainable land use and environmental awareness into the future. This strategy was presented at a public meeting in November 2008. A website was developed, with Bethan populating it with data relating to various landcare issues, and it became a component of the strategy for the future. The LCDC was confident that its 'Vision for the Future' would be achieved with support from local government and the community.

Right: Cover of the 2008 Strategy document. (Photo: W.C. Clarke, 2016)

In the years following 2008 the LCDC found it difficult to continue to attract members. By 2014 the LCDC decided that it had 'run its race' and the process was put in place to dissolve it. I understand that finally, in March 2016, Council recommended to DAFWA (Dept Ag. & Food) that the LCDC be wound up, and the funds distributed (as per the LCDC recommendation) to the Toodyay Agricultural Alliance.

What a sad way to see the end of the LCDC. It had attracted significant external funding into the Shire while at the same time provided professional advice to landholders on the restoration of a delicate landscape.

