



Peninsula Historian

Newsletter of the Manly, Warringah &
Pittwater Historical Society Inc.

VOLUME 7 No. 12

December 2014

ISSN 1835-7628



*Happy Christmas to
One and All.*

The ice crib in Megeve, France

FROM THIS MONTH'S EDITOR

What a shame if you missed the 90th Birthday Christmas celebration. A great time was had by one and all. Thanks are very much due to those who organised the event.

There are more photographs relating to this edition on the web site.

Gloria's account of her experiences during the war years is a fascinating personal story.

It would be great to be able to include some articles, like Gloria's, each month in the Peninsula Historian. It reminds of days gone by but also adds a wonderful personal touch. And Di Farina tells of her fascination with steam railways.

(Come on. There must be members with interesting experiences to share.)

Subscriptions for 2015 are now due. A renewal form is included with the hard copy of this edition it can also be printed from the email edition or by downloading from the web site.

PRESIDENTS REPORT

The last month has been fairly hectic what with the RAHS Conference which I have described elsewhere, various end of year committee meetings and the most pleasant BBQ function held by the Mosman Historical Society at the Spit.

However the 90th Anniversary celebration was held at the Long reef Golf Club and enjoyed by all. It was somewhat fitting that the Golf Club was the venue, as it opened in 1923, a year before our founders saw fit to establish a Society, which conducted research and recorded the history of the Peninsula. The evening celebrated those people, who over 90 years, worked hard to see that publications were produced, memorials and plaques produced and sited, and talks were given both here and elsewhere. The portrait of Percy Gledhill by Rubbo was on display as was an extraordinary large coloured photograph of our coastline produced by the Sydney Northern Beaches Catchment Management committee, that had been procured by Phil Colman. It was a great night and a superb venue for the occasion. One must thank Barbara Davies and Di Farina for their work in making the night such a success.

WARTIME LIFE AT NORTH HEAD 1942-1945

Corp. Gloria Carroll, Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS)

When I joined the Australian Women's Army Service in 1942 my first allocation and commitment as a drafts woman was with the School of Artillery at North Head. At this time about twenty to thirty women were billeted at the Far West Home, Wentworth Avenue, Manly (as no children had holidays there in the war years).



It was quite luxurious after the three weeks' Rookies Course at Ingleburn. But it was only a temporary arrangement until more permanent quarters were available. We either walked up the hill from Manly, or caught a little bus from Manly Wharf to the offices at North Head.

Mostly the girls worked in the Administration Building, which also contained the Drawing Office and Intelligence Offices. We moved into two wings of the Artillery School building which overlooked the Parade Ground where we had a roll call and early parade (sometimes in pyjamas) each morning.

The meals were very good and it was a change for us to eat in the huge mess room with all the new men recruits who were doing their artillery training.

There were also recreation rooms, and a huge concert hall, which provided great entertainment for us all, mainly by "concert parties" which were organised from the radio and theatre people of the day. There were also two tennis courts which we often used for basketball too or we swam in the small inlet beaches around the harbour quarantine area. Most of the girls were from country towns, so we were a very mixed but agreeable lot.

My good friend, Nance Duncan, was from Hay and her mother (a lovely woman) sometimes came to Sydney to see her. It wasn't easy to travel during the war years, as most transport was commandeered for



Kevin Martin discussing the recently awarded RAHS Certificate of Achievement with Shelagh and George Champion at the Anniversary Celebrations.

The event organised by Mosman Historical Society was a great idea and we did participate in a small way in giving a short talk on Clontarf and Seaforth. In some ways we were replicating Halloran's efforts on a hired ferry in the early 1900s, to enthruse prospective buyers to invest in the marvels of Seaforth. It is really the subject of another talk, where traffic noise is less of an issue. Many of those 3 storey dwellings, now gracing the southern face of Seaforth only became possible with new construction techniques and some very deep wallets. A sausage sizzle was enjoyed not too far from the structure commemorating the "Lucinda" and its contribution to Federation. It has been decided that our Society will reciprocate with an event at the Manly Cemetery in the new year, as we did with the Dural Historical Society some years ago.

As we now have a gap during the summer, it is an opportunity for members to explore the possibilities of a greater contribution to the Society. The Newsletter Editorship is presently being handled by Bill Slessor but this is only a short term arrangement. The newsletter is mainly an issue of formatting rather than the origination of content. Distribution of hard copy is handled separately and 70% is distributed by email. I would be happy to have a chat over coffee/tea about the details of the job that has to be done.

I wish all our members a Happy Christmas and look forward to the new year which amongst other anniversaries celebrates Waterloo, the birth of Bismarck, and the invention of the miner's lamp by Humphrey Davey (1815), the first appearance of motorised taxis and the birth of Arthur Miller and Saul Bellow (1915). In the spirit of Waterloo, we also have Agincourt (1415) and last but not least Runnymede (1215). But Anzac will probably soar above all, although the Australian history of the Great War is now being seen in far greater complexity.

.....

troop movements. Nance and I also had some good fishing lines and sometimes caught a couple of little fish (which could be cooked for dinner).

When my fiancé, Bill Evans, left Sydney in the Air Force to serve in England, he had given me his prized box of fishing tackle. So with directions from the men, one day we decided to try the ocean rocks. It was quite a winding track through the bush but we arrived at Bluefish Bay with lovely waves lapping the edge, and an occasional wave forming a water spout in the rocks. We left our gear to scramble over for a better look and weren't disappointed.

The blow hole spouted up but then carried all our gear into the deep surging water!

There was no way that we could rescue our shoes, hats, jackets and tackle from the swift current taking it all out to sea!

It was a sad couple who trudged back to headquarters to tell our sorry tale. Of course, our clothes were replaced quickly but never could I replace Bill's lovely scarce fishing gear. Fortunately when I wrote to Bill to tell him the sad tale, he was amused but also grateful that Nance and I hadn't been swept away too.

About this time, I was asked to do night duties in the Intelligence Office which meant manning the secret switch board and decoding messages. It was usually quiet at night time and we were provided with camp beds to sleep on and swapped books to read. I was alone this night. It was usually uneventful. However, I always slept soundly and didn't realise an urgent message had come through unanswered. Of course the callers had used alternative phones to ring the Colonel who, next day, wanted to know why I hadn't attended the urgent call. I replied I was asleep and didn't hear the phone ringing. Further interrogation revealed his partial disbelief that I was asleep and he asked:

"Was anyone else with you at the time?"

I answered: "No, I was alone." not realising what he was inferring. However, there was no more said about the incident and alternative arrangements were made with night duties.

About this time our strict Sergeant Major had us performing our marching and formations in perfect timing at assembly. There was to be a war effort parade in Manly with brass bands and many troops to march in a very spectacular event. This day was most successful and our hard hearted task master wept with pleasure with the performance of his all-girl marchers.

So life went on and news of our troops was a daily event.

Our Intelligence Office updated the overseas and local Australian war on our doorstep. By November we were planning our Christmas leave and most of the country girls had a chance to see their families again briefly.

When I watched from our balcony one evening, I saw Nance walking up from the office so I waved as usual and she looked away. I saw the paper in her hand and knew it was bad news. She sadly handed me the message that Bill and his crew had been shot down over Germany, all missing believed dead. I was given compassionate leave and went home to be comforted by my family.

I also went to see Bill's mother living in Mosman. She was a widow and had had a stroke recently. There was only one teenage daughter to help her and, fortunately, a caring family of five sisters and two brothers. Bill could have come home when she had the stroke but he knew her family would help out and he couldn't let his crew down.

Soon after Christmas and New Year we had news of the closing down of the permanent School of Artillery which meant a mass transfer of units. I was posted to Bonegilla in Victoria, a huge retraining and transfer camp not far from Albury (the area was used after the war for new settlers from overseas waiting for permanent homes).

Sad farewells were the order of the day. We girls were scattered to the four winds.

I was assigned to a Signals Unit and soon settled into the new surroundings.

My brother-in-law had recently been sent from his three years' stint in Western Australia to Bonegilla for an Officers' Refresher Course. I soon became a member of his group for tennis and many dances and social events so life wasn't too bad. We could walk or cycle over to the newly built Murray River Dam and swim in beautiful fresh water and often having night leave to catch a bus into Albury for dinner and a film. What a luxury!

But soon Noel was posted back to WA coast and I eventually had a posting in an Engineers' Unit at Bathurst. I enjoyed this change and in 1945 was on a long waiting list for demobilisation.

The war was over and that's another story.

Gloria Carroll

November 2014

RAHS CONFERENCE 2014, MITTAGONG

As is usual at this time of year, the Royal held their annual conference running over the last weekend in October. The venue was the Mittagong RSL Club and there were 80 attendees, 29 of whom came from country NSW. The weekend started with a social function hosted by the Berrima and District Historical Society and the late spring weather on the Southern Highlands provided a very pleasant environment. The other natural bonus, was the greenness of the countryside, owing to the amount of rain the district has had recently.

The morning of the first day was taken up with the announcement of heritage and cultural grants. Amongst the recipients, was Bob Pauling who not only received a heritage grant but also a cultural grant towards a publication focusing upon the cinemas of the northern beaches. Tony Dawson was also successful in obtaining a heritage grant for research into the history of Port Macquarie. Following that we had the presentation of the Certificates of Achievement and I was privileged to accept a Certificate on behalf of George and Shelagh Champion. Our Society had made a submission to the RAHS drawing attention to their work over many years and it was good that it had a satisfactory result. The rest of the morning was devoted to 3 short presentations on research into the history of the Southern Highlands but preceded by the major Conference address by Professor Bill Gammage on "The First Anzac Days in Australia and New Zealand". Bill Gammage's book "The Broken Years" (1974) was one of the first books that really ignited my interest in the Great War and it was not only a delight to hear him but to get him to sign for the Society, his recent highly praised book (2011), on Aboriginal treatment of the land. The talk explored the semiotics of the language describing Anzac Day and the events that surrounded it. Interestingly Anzac Day had been more a festival day in the immediate years following 1915 and only progressively did it become a solemn day of remembrance. This was as much by governmental action rather than popular sentiment. The questions, that followed the address, explored the differences between city and country towns both in Australia and New Zealand.

The afternoon presentations concentrated on the history of roads, particularly the Great Southern Road which is now the Old Hume Highway. The conference Dinner took place at the Mittagong RSL Club. The addresses on the Sunday focused on various

dimensions of the Great War. Richard White, who this year gave a talk to the Society on the history of tourism, spoke about the experience of the AIF in Egypt, before and after Gallipoli. Richard also showed some of the recruiting posters for enlistment in Australia and how these were more or less saying, "Join Up, and see the World". As many of these young men had either been born in England or were only one generation removed, this was an appealing proposition.

The Conference ended on Sunday afternoon, with a short presentation on the successful TV series "Who Do You Think You Are?". The series, now in its 7th year involves significant research and it was interesting to hear how the well known personalities that appeared on the show had not only cooperated but had become engrossed in their story. A good conference and we look forward to what unfolds at the next in October 2015.

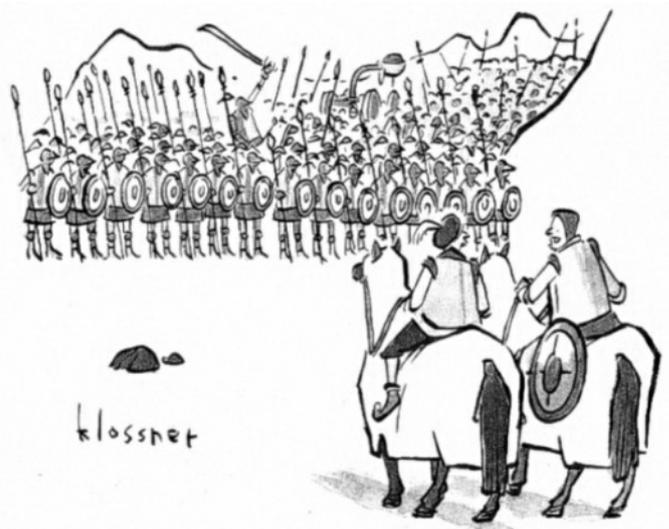
.....

HISTORY WEEK 2015

The History Council of NSW can't be blamed for short notice, they have announced the theme for the September 2015 event as being - War, Nationalism and Identity.

History week will run from Saturday 5 September to Sunday 13 September 2015. Members should have a think about the subject and let us know how we can firstly have the event publicised in the History Week promotional material and secondly how the Society can assist your research and support photographs and artefacts.

MILITARY HISTORY



'Maybe you shouldn't send out emails when you're tired.'

RAIL CRUISE TO THE CLARE VALLEY, BURRA AND STEAMTOWN, SOUTH AUSTRALIA

All Aboard!

The **Southern Aurora**, a much loved train now belonging to Transport Heritage NSW (THNSW) and which used to run overnight between Sydney and Melbourne, departed Central Station in September on a private charter to the **Clare Valley, South Australia**. The passengers including the Society's Membership Secretary, moved into the dining cars for a sparkling wine and canapé send-off on the beginning of an exciting trip to Broken Hill and Silverton, the Clare Valley and historic Burra and Steamtown, Peterborough SA.

Broken Hill is Australia's longest-lived mining city. The mining of Broken Hill's mineral deposits began in the 1880s and still dominates the city, even its streets are named for minerals and mine managers. The city's early prosperity shows in the handsome buildings dating from the nineteenth century. The isolation of the city was a problem initially until the narrow gauge railway to Adelaide was opened in 1888. Although the South Australian Government was blocked from extending the line over the border, the 30km section to the border was built as the privately owned Silverton Tramway. Ores from the mines were transported to the smelters at Port Pirie in South Australia and coal and timber were imported for use in the mines. It was not until 1969 that the narrow gauge line to Port Pirie was converted to standard gauge to complete the standard gauge line from Sydney to Perth. Adelaide is 600 km closer to Broken Hill than Sydney and operates on South Australian – Northern Territory time zone. The "broken hill" that explorer Charles Sturt saw when naming the Barrier Range in 1844, is no longer as it formed part of the massive body of ore called the Line of Lode and has now been mined away. This is a dramatic memorial to our 800 or more miners who lost their lives working along the Line of Lode.

The Broken Hill Sculpture Park is a Sculpture Symposium created by Lawrence Beck and 12 sculptors from many countries including Georgia, Syria, Mexico, Bathurst Island and Australia – all brilliant sculptors who have created sandstone masterpieces. Each sculptor worked on a monolith of the finest Wilcannia sandstone, which is visible for over 100 kilometres. The blocks, up to 14 feet high and each weighing up to eight tons, form a double colonnade defining a special flow from the pinnacle of the mountain top to Fred Hollow's resting place at Bourke.

Peterborough is at the southern point of the Flinders ranges, half way between Sydney and Perth and 2.5 hours from Adelaide, Whyalla, Broken Hill, Riverland and the Flinders Ranges with Wilpena Pound serving as a tourism sector.

In the mid 1800's, the South Australian Government made farm land available north of Burra and with the production of wheat and the discovery of silver on the boarder of SA/NSW more efficient modes of transport were needed to bring produce to the markets through the harbour in Port Pirie.

The South Australian Railways, Peterborough Division was established in 1925. Where Peterborough is today, surveyors decided the future railway lines would cross, linking Silverton/Broken Hill to Port Pirie and Burra via Terowie, Peterborough to Alice Springs. Peterborough (originally called Petersburg after the original owner of the land, Peter Doecke) became a major regional centre with a population of approximately 4000 of which 1300 worked in the Peterborough Division. It became the largest railway depot outside Adelaide, with its own huge workshops, a 23-bay roundhouse and a 3-gauge turntable. The **Steamtown Heritage Rail Centre** in Peterborough has the only 3-gauge turntable in the world.

In the early 1970s, with the introduction of diesel locomotive and standard gauge, the railways began to diminish in Peterborough. With the closure of the railways in the early 1990s, the town's population dropped dramatically and now sits at around 1900.

From Peterborough, the passengers travelled south by coach to the town of **Burra** to visit **Morphett's Engine House** at the **Burra Mine**. Morphett's Engine House Museum consists of a small part of the Burra Mine Historic Site located on the edge of the historic town of Burra in the mid north of South Australia.

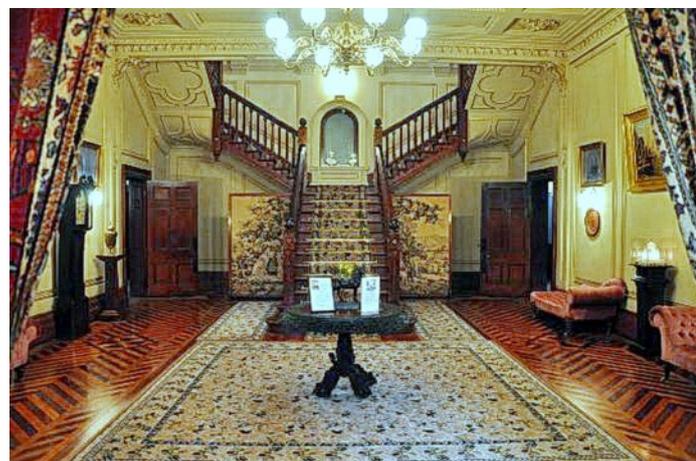
By 1850, Burra was the largest metalliferous mine in Australia and produced 5% of the world's copper up to 1860. More than 1000 men and boys were employed during this period, most of them Cornish. The surface and underground mining operations were typically Cornish and Cornish men held virtually all positions of responsibility. Pumping and winding engines were imported from Cornwall and housed in traditional Cornish engine houses. The water pumped from the mine was used to drive waterwheels that powered crushers and other machinery. With the arrival of steam power, Cornwall became the world's biggest producer of copper. As Cornish

mining boomed, Cornish engineers influenced the development of steam power. The period of greatest development was between 1825 and 1850 when a more or less standardised Cornish beam engine came into general use.

Production in the Burra mine declined after 1860 and underground mining ceased in 1867. The mine reopened in 1870 using the open cut method, but this proved unprofitable and the mine closed in 1877.

The passengers moved on to the **Clare Valley**. As the Burra mines developed and wheat farming spread north, Clare grew as a hub and service centre and transportation node for the region, a situation which was greatly helped by the arrival of the railway line in the 1880s. Today it is the centre of the Clare Valley and is surrounded by vineyards (mainly to the south) cereal cropping and sheep farming.

Located on the road between Mintaro (lying to the east of the Clare Valley) and Manoora, is **Martindale Hall**, a superbly preserved Georgian style mansion that was built in 1879-1880. This magnificent home was featured in the movie "Picnic at Hanging Rock" and has now been converted into an excellent guest house. You might remember the staircase that the



girls descended in the film.

The home was built initially by a wealthy gentleman for his fiancée who refused to come to Australia from England unless she had a home similar to the one she was used to in the UK. It is not certain if she ever arrived but the home and all its facilities are used by the fortunate who choose to be guests.

The Southern Aurora then prepared for its return trip via Broken Hill, Minindee Lakes, Parkes, Orange, Bathurst, Lithgow, Blue Mountains and on to Sydney.

Di Farina

November 2014

FOUNTAINS ABBEY, FOUNTAINS HALL AND STUDLEY DEER PARK - YORKSHIRE

England, and particularly Yorkshire, is the home for the ruins of many Abbeys built back in the middle ages. Fountains Abbey is one of the most famous and the largest remains. Pictures of the abbey appear in many places including the cover of a CD.

Its story begins in 1132 with signs of unrest at St Mary's Abbey in York. 13 monks fled York under the protection of Archbishop Thurstan and were granted the land at Fountains to start a new Abbey.

The land was a valley with the minor river Skell running through it. It is only a few miles from the Cathedral town of Ripon where there was already a church going back to Saxon times.

These few monks started to clear an area of wild shrub and wild boar. Whilst they built their first, wooden accommodation and chapel their first shelter was an overhang in the hillside. They will have gradually attracted and employed young men from the area and the community and the buildings grew.

The enclosed valley had all the natural features needed for the creation of a monastery, providing shelter from the weather, stone and timber for building, and a supply of running water. After enduring a harsh winter in 1133, the monks applied to join the Cistercian order and in 1135 became the second house of that order in northern England, after Rievaulx. The monks subjected themselves to Clairvaux Abbey in Burgundy which was under the rule of St. Bernard. A monk was sent from Clairvaux to teach the new community how to observe the Cistercian ways and how to build according to the Cistercian plans.

With the appointment of Abbott Murdac in 1143, the small stone church and timber buildings were replaced. Within three years, an aisled nave had been added to the stone church and the first permanent buildings around the cloisters were built in stone and roofed in tile had been completed.

In 1146 an angry mob, displeased with Abbott Murdac's role in opposing the election of William FitzHerbert as Archbishop of York, attacked the abbey and burnt down all but the church and some surrounding buildings. The community recovered swiftly from the attack and founded four daughter houses.

The monks were highly organised and lived their lives according to strict rules. The abbey grew in size, wealth and power throughout the 1200s.

In the first half of the 13th century Fountains increased in reputation and prosperity under the next three abbots. Massive administration and increasing demands for money in taxation and levies were a constant burden but a large amount of building was accomplished. This included enlarging the church and building an infirmary. In the second half of the 13th century the abbey was in more difficult circumstances largely due to forward selling of its wool crop, and the abbey was criticised for its poor material and physical state when it was visited by Archbishop John Romeyn in 1294. The community was also badly affected by the raids of the Scots during the 14th century and further demands for taxes. The culmination of these misfortunes was the Black death of 1349–1350. The loss of manpower and income due to the ravages of the plague was almost ruinous.

The Papal Schism of 1378–1409 also caused problems. Fountains Abbey along with other English Cistercian houses was told to break off any contact with the mother house of Cîteaux, which supported a rival pope. This resulted in the abbots forming their own chapter to rule the order in England and consequently they became increasingly involved in internecine politics. From 1410 the community was torn by several years of turmoil over the election of a new Abbott. Between 1415 and the death of Abbott Marmaduke Huby in 1526 some much needed restoration of the fabric of the abbey including notable work on the church was undertaken and Fountains regained stability and prosperity. An attempt was made to build a tower over the crossing of the church but the walls began to crack and the tower was taken down. Cracks in the walls had to be strengthened and the work is still evident including a buttress inside the church. Abbott Huby had the tower built at the end of the north transept and it still stands today known as Huby's Tower.

In 1539 the Abbey was surrendered when Henry VIII ordered the Dissolution of the Monasteries.



The monks were famous for developing the management of sheep and production of wool. Land was owned in parts of Yorkshire far from the Abbey. Sheep farming was carried on in these places, managed by monks from the Abbey who lived in 'Granges' and employed local labour. They also mined metals, mainly lead around the county and they had a section of the fishing harbour at Scarborough.

The Abbey remains with much of the building still very evident. Large sections of the boundary wall remain and the hollows which were fish ponds are still evident.

The Abbey buildings and over 500 acres of land were sold by the Crown to Sir Richard Gresham, a merchant. The property was passed down through several generations of Sir Richard's family, then sold to Stephen Proctor who built Fountains Hall with stone taken from the Abbey probably between 1598 and 1604. The hall is a Jacobean mansion, Fountains Abbey mill is the only 12th-century Cistercian corn mill left in the UK and the oldest 'intact' building on the estate.

John Aislabie inherited the Studley estate from his elder brother in 1693. He was The Tory Member for Ripon in 1695, and became Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1718. Studley Royal House (or Hall) stood in the north-west corner of the park. Originally a medieval manor house, having a main block with forward projecting wings, it burned down in 1716 and was rebuilt by John Aislabie who also created gardens. After his death in 1742, his son William extended his scheme by purchasing the remains of the Abbey and Fountains Hall. He extended the landscaped area in the picturesque romantic style, contrasting with the formality of his father's work. Thus was created what is arguably England's most important 18th century Water Garden.

After William's death, ownership of the estate passed through his daughter Elizabeth Allanson and then to her niece, Mrs Elizabeth Sophie Lawrence. It then devolved to Thomas de Grey, 2nd Earl de Grey, a distant relative. In 1859 the estate passed to his nephew the Marquess of Ripon, the Viceroy of India, who built St Mary's church in the park. On his death in 1923, the estate was acquired by his cousin Clare Vyner.

The Hall was again destroyed by fire in 1946. but a large stable block, built between 1728 and 1732, survived and is now a private house.

In 1966 the estate was bought by West Riding County Council and in 1983 was taken over by the National Trust.

BOOK REVIEW

In 1986 the entire Park was designated a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. It gained recognition as it fulfils the criteria of *being a masterpiece of human creative genius, and an outstanding example of a type of building or architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates significant stages in human history.*

The water garden at Studley Royal created by John Aislabie in 1718, and expanded by his son William, is one of the best surviving examples of a Georgian water garden in England. The garden has elegant ornamental lakes, canals, temples and cascades provide a succession of dramatic eye-catching vistas. It is also studded with a number of follies including a neo-Gothic castle and a Palladian style banqueting house.

There are many paths for walkers through the grounds where deer roam and there is good catering for visitors. Within a car drive there are two other abbeys, the massive Middleham Castle, once owned by the Neville Family (Richard Neville is known as 'the King Maker'), Edward IV was imprisoned there and the future King Richard III lived there until he was crowned. All places that are well worth including in a visit to Yorkshire.

Bill Slessor

November 2014

.....

Did you know that this and previous editions of Peninsula Historian, are available to view or print on our web site?

Details of future meetings, some interesting articles, pictures relating to articles in the Peninsula Historian and email links to officers of the society are also there.

In fact, there is much more on the web site than is sent out by email or hard copy.

www.mwphs.com

There are history books and history books, but when you come across a book focusing on a new dimension for a period you had thought had been covered, it is hard to put it down. Such a book is Roger Knight's book, "Britain Against Napoleon – The Organization of Victory 1793 – 1815".

The book starts with William Pitt the younger assuming the prime ministership in 1783 and finishing with Waterloo in 1815. Pitt was 24 when he became Prime Minister and 46 when he died in 1806 and it was very much a case of cometh the time, cometh the man. Not only did the public service reach a new level of professionalism but the parliamentarians evolved with them, with the consequent reduction in the power of the king, George the Third.

The book is a fascinating read of 475 pages with 200 pages of Appendices, Chronology, Glossary, Biography and Notes

The detailing of the changes in the organisation of government over this period, whilst facing the threat of Napoleon does not bog down in detail and the Appendices are invaluable in this respect. As we approach the 200th anniversary of Waterloo, it is useful to ponder on the positive impact this improvement had in the organisation of government in London, and how that impacted on the history of Australia.

At \$25, this paperback would be an excellent Christmas present and is strongly recommended.

Jim Boyce

November 2014

.....

In last month's Peninsula Historian Jim raised the question of definitions for history.

The City Archaeologist in Bradford, UK, once described history as:-

'The story of us Then.'