



# HISTORY ROOM

## NEWS



June 2019

No 171

by Jennifer

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**“THE GRANGE”** by Penelope Hillam

For those of you that have never visited The Grange, I would encourage a visit to the home of Charles Sturt.

As we live in the Alexandrina Council area, Charles Sturt is a part of our historic background. He was born in India on the 28th April 1795 and was known as the “Father of Australian Exploration” sacrificing his health to form the foundation of this Nation and the State of South Australia. In 1829-30, he followed the Murrumbidgee, discovering and chartering the Murray River to the sea while outlining the problem of the inland drainage system of south –eastern Australia. He named the river after Sir George Murray of the Colonial Department. In a whale boat with seven companions, they endured great hardship and it amazes me to think they rowed back up the river against the current. He loved this country and returned reluctantly to England in 1853 after he had spent his health and life in service, ‘for the greater good.’ Sadly he died just before he was knighted but his wife was allowed to take the title Lady Charlotte Sturt. It is great to see her recognised for her support and for running the farm while he was away on his explorations.

I came to South Australia when I was seven years old and I remember his home, The Grange, to be in a derelict state with holes in the walls and much of it in ruins. My father David Sturt-Bray was Life President of the Charles Sturt Memorial Museum Trust Incorporated and set about public speaking all over South Australia to raise money for the home’s restoration. I remember coming to Goolwa as a child for an art show at the wharf and for the re-enactment of Sturt’s trip down the Murray. My father liaised with relatives in England resulting in Anthony Sturt donating paintings and furniture. This has assisted in creating an authentic museum.

Naturally, I grew up with a love of history and restoration. Over the years I have restored historic buildings, both here, including the Mount Barker Mill c.1844, and in Victoria. I now include restoring artworks that have been damaged with a new restoration technique that I have invented. I would encourage everyone to visit Sturt’s home at 39D Jetty Street, Grange, open to the public every first and third Sunday of the month between 2-5pm. Just phone (08) 8356 8185 to make a booking. There is a small entry fee of \$6.00 for adults and \$4.00 for children, which assists in maintaining the home. We need to preserve our history.



I now find myself in our wonderful history room in the library here in Goolwa along with a dedicated group of volunteers who document, collate, and assist people in researching their family history and other areas of investigation.

Please come in and visit the fantastic resources we have in our History Room or make a booking for assistance in researching your family history.

## “D” Day 75<sup>th</sup> Commemorations by Jennifer Repper

Learning more about our ancestors has grown in popularity substantially over the last ten years and one of the most favoured areas is with the military.

We have helped a number of locals glean more information about their military ancestors and get almost as much joy with our finds as they do. Some discoveries of recent times include a ‘Rat of Tobruk’, a prisoner of war, who earned a Military Medal and a nurse.

So we cannot publish this newsletter without acknowledging the recent 75th Commemoration of the D Day landings and the Battle of Normandy, June 6 1944.

Many books, movies, articles and websites describe in great detail, this critical turning point of World War Two. It was to be the largest seaborne invasion in history. The primary purpose was to liberate France (and later Western Europe) from German control.

The Australian contribution was mainly in the air with about 2500 airmen participating in ten Royal Australian Air Force squadrons of all kinds and many more RAF squadrons. About 500 men represented the Royal Australian Navy (Stanly 2004). About 18 servicemen were known to be killed (DVA).

To honour and learn more about these courageous men and women, thousands of people visit the various museums, memorials and war cemeteries in France every year. Having been one of these visitors, I can say that it is a very emotional experience which will stay with me forever.

Do you have any photos of our military men and women which we can add to our local historic photographic collection?

### Can you help identify us?

We have many photographs of locals in our history room and we would love to put names to these people.



This is a photo of the Goolwa and District Band taken about 1918.

It is located in our [Snapshots in Time](#) photographic collection.

Of the 13 gentlemen pictured we only have six names.

From left, *Back row*: Reg Graham, Mr Goode, ....., Jack Armfield, ....., Syd Armfield, ....

*Front row*: ....., ....., ....., Alec Milne, Bill Armfeild, ....

Please share this newsletter in the hope that more of these people can be named.

*Happy researching*

Help is available in the Goolwa and Strathalbyn history rooms when a volunteer is on duty. If you are travelling some distance it may be advisable to phone our library to ascertain whether a volunteer can be available. Genealogy research by appointment at Goolwa Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and Strathalbyn Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Please phone the Library on 8555 7000.

No appointment is necessary for general local history enquiries on Thursdays, 10am to 4pm.

For comments, suggestions or to receive this newsletter – email [history.goolwa11@gmail.com](mailto:history.goolwa11@gmail.com)

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