

*We acknowledge the traditional custodians of Hunters Hill
and show respect to Elders past and present.*



www.huntershillmuseum.org.au

“Bunk”

“History is more or less bunk”
HENRY FORD, Chicago Tribune, 1916

WILLIAM PIGUENIT

William Piguénit, born in Hobart on 27 August 1836, was a well-known Australian artist. His father had been transported and his fiancée, William’s mother, followed him to Hobart.

William became a cartographer, working for the government. Eventually, he left to become a full time artist, his paintings in oils and watercolours receiving many favourable reviews. He is looked upon in some circles as a painter of Tasmania although his works are in state galleries across Australia.

In 1880 he moved to Hunters Hill where he lived for the rest of his life. His art studio is in our *Historical Walks* booklet – there is a Historical Society plaque in the ground outside.

William Piguénit’s subjects included the Darling, Nepean and Hawkesbury rivers and of course the waterways and bush around Sydney. In particular he was interested in painting around the Lane Cove River.

William Piguénit died on 17 July 1914 and is buried in the Field of Mars Cemetery.

His painting, *Fishing on the River*, is in the Community Art Gallery.

Federal member opens Indigenous exhibition

Federal MP Trent Zimmerman officially opened the new *Indigenous Connections* display at the Museum.

The display is presented in a stand-alone cabinet which contains artefacts, photographs, picture boards and an aboriginal painting depicting the involvement of Australia’s first inhabitants on the Hunters Hill peninsula. An informational booklet has been published to supplement the display. Hard copies of the booklet are available free at the museum. The contents have also been published on the museum’s website –

huntershillmuseum.org.au.

The project was made possible with a community grant from the Commonwealth Government. The Historical Society received invaluable professional assistance in putting the display and booklet together from a third year Ancient History student, Rebecca Nisbet, from Macquarie University. To ensure cultural sensitivity, the Historical Society consulted with an Aboriginal community representative.

President Chris Schofield commented that until now the museum had predominantly

focussed on colonial and post-colonial local history. “This project is an attempt to fill a gap in the museum’s collection. Early aboriginal people have left their



mark on the peninsula and their important contribution should not go unrecognised.”

Attendance at the opening was restricted because of COVID. Among those present were Historical Society patron, Mayor Ross Williams and Rebecca Nisbet’s university supervisor, Associate Professor Linda Evans.

Picture: President Chris Schofield, Rebecca Nisbet, Trent Zimmerman, Mayor Ross Williams, Associate Professor Linda Evans.

One good turn deserves another

In a humble residence at Tarban Creek, close to the asylum, lived a couple named, or known as, “Mac”. The husband repaired boots and the wife managed

a small dairy where she made exquisite butter. It became necessary occasionally for either one or the other to visit the metropolis. When the husband’s turn

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arrived, he went to Sydney, transacted his business, refreshed himself well but managed to board the steamer successfully on his return. By the time the steamer arrived at Bedlam Ferry, he had been so well "topped off" at the bar on board that he had become limp and helpless. To ship him off the ferry boat and land him was a difficult task. At the wharf his loving wife awaited his arrival with a wheelbarrow into which she and the punt man managed to bundle "Mac". He was then wheeled home by his wife unassisted, uphill all the way over a very bad road. In the course of time, the wife's turn to visit Sydney came about, when exactly the same performance occurred, but the individuals were changed!

From the Royal Australian Historical Society Journal, 1919, The Parramatta River and its Vicinity 1848-1861, by WS Campbell.

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2020-2021

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What's in a name?

For we locals, Hunters Hill is a special and unique place. But that is not entirely true. There are other locations in the world that bear the same name. Most are located in the UK.

For instance, Huntershill (note, the single word) village is situin Bishopbriggs, East Dunbartonshire, Scotland. It was originally part of the Huntershill Estate, former residence of the political reformer Thomas Muir. Muir was transported to Australia and his Scottish home was once thought to have given rise to our own Hunters Hill. However, this was subsequently disproved.

There is an area called Hunters Hill in the vicinity of Beacon Country Park, Up Holland, near Wigan, in North West England. A steep gradient hill gives the area its name.



The addresses of some houses are given as Hunters Hill.

Across the Pennines, in West Yorkshire, is a business called Hunters Hill Quarry. It is located at Wainstalls, near Halifax.

In the North Riding of Yorkshire is a sash-windowed Victorian house called Hunters Hill in the pretty village of Sinnington on the edge of North Yorkshire Moors National Park. The village is some 40 minutes by car from the city of York. The house now provides bed and breakfast accommodation.

Further south in the English Midlands is a college called Hunters Hill. It is set in extensive grounds in open countryside south of Birmingham between the villages of Blackwell and Bromsgrove. It consists of buildings, grounds, woodlands, playing fields and farmland. The school provides education to special needs students.

Not far away is a heritage house called Hunters Hill in the district of Wychavon in the county of Worcestershire. It is a 16th century Elizabethan thatched cottage made up of a timber frame with plaster and whitened brick. It is a picturesque one-storey building with an attic and has a half hipped gable facing the front.

In the United States, Hunters Hill is a residential area south west of Nashville in the state of Tennessee. It is probably located on the site of a 260-hectare slave plantation, named Hunters Hill, which the seventh American president, Andrew Jackson, (1767-1845) bought in 1796 and where he lived until 1804. The Hunters Hill house was destroyed by fire in 1903.

Finally, closer to home, there is a rounded elevation called Hunters Hill. It is some 980 metres above sea level. It is situated in Towong Shire, Victoria. **Chris Schofield**
Picture: Andrew Jackson, seventh president of the United States.

The judge and the constable

In 1904 *The Australian Star* newspaper carried a story about Justice Archibald Henry Simpson (1843-1918), of *St Ives*, Hunters Hill. It reports an account by Judge Simpson which he tells against himself – possibly during a speech made to a legal function in Sydney.

Judge Simpson was spending his holiday at his country residence on the Hat Hill Road at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains. It seems an underfed horse took a fancy to his garden and “was wont to put his head over the low fence and eat down all it could reach”. The Judge was not amused and sought out the local police constable to complain. He concluded by demanding that the horse be impounded. “The police at my place at Hunters Hill would quickly impound

this animal,” he declared.

The burly constable, who towered over him, looked down and eyed the judge dressed in his “sundowner” country casual wear. He then replied “Hunters Hill is Hunters Hill, but this is Hat Hill. Hunters Hill is a municipality but Hat Hill is not. He continued to lecture the judge: “If you knew anything about the law, which I don’t suppose you do, you would know that a stray horse cannot be impounded outside a municipality”.

Chastened, the judge, according to the newspaper, was as crushed as if “The High Court of Australia had sat upon him!”

Chris Schofield

A riveting tale

From time to time, after downpours, old shipbuilding rivets are exposed on the ground at Clarke’s Point.

The rivets are most likely from the days when the area was the Mort’s Dock Woolwich shipyard. They are unused in that they have never been hammered home.

They were probably dropped or rejected during the riveting process.

They are made of steel rather than iron, which



dates them probably after 1900. This was after the site had passed from Atlas Engineering to the Mort’s Dock Company.

Maritime expert Mori Flapan told the Historical Society that it was likely the rivets were left lying on the ground because the shipyard workers, who were being paid on the number of rivets they fitted, wouldn’t have wanted to waste their time picking them up.

Chris Schofield