

UPPER HUNTER MUSEUM of RURAL LIFE Inc.
& ABERDEEN LOCAL STUDIES GROUP
P.O. Box 140. Aberdeen, NSW, 2336.

NEWSLETTER - November, 2017

The Scottish Thistle: As the National Flower of Scotland, the thistle is considered a prickly weed throughout Australia, but why is this national emblem given such importance in Scotland ?

Legend has it that it was adopted when a party of Scottish warriors were saved from a surprise ambush by an invading Norse army. Coming ashore the Viking force planned to creep up quietly on the Scottish clans as they slept. Going barefoot the unwary invaders came down hard on thistles and their cries were loud enough to wake the sleeping Scots who charged into battle and vanquished the invaders.

The image of the thistle has been an important symbol in Scottish heraldry for over 500 years and can be seen on a range of decorative items from tea towels to fine china and jewellery.

In Aberdeen, NSW, the thistle was used in early branding at the meatworks and the butter factory. Today the thistle is incorporated into the logos of many of the town's clubs and organisations.



The thistle image that we use as part of the UHMRL was designed by John Scriven as part of the logo for the Aberdeen Sesquicentenary in 1988.

The words, "Aberdeen on the Hunter", were added to the thistle when a group was formed to work towards the establishment of a local museum and cultural centre.



Aberdeen Golden Oldies Christmas Luncheon
Tuesday, 12th December, 2017
"Funny Things Happen Down Under"



Starring: Olivia Newton John & Ian Turpie
DVD, Colour, 1965, 86 min, [G]
Bookings: Daphne 65 438 356

Next Meeting UHMRL
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Wednesday, 22nd November, 2017
4.30 pm at Aberdeen Library.

New members and volunteers are always welcome.

Next scanning afternoon for the
Aberdeen Local Study Group
Friday, 24th November, 2017
2 pm – 4 pm at Aberdeen Library.

The image collection will be open for display.

We will be there to scan your photographs or hear your stories from the past.

Upper Hunter Museum of Rural Life Inc. raising funds to establish a Museum and Cultural Centre in Aberdeen.
www.aberdeenmuseum.org.au Email: uhmrl@skymesh.com.au

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THE JEWBOY GANG OF BUSHRANGERS

In the late 1830's many ex-convicts and escaped convicts had "taken to the bush" and formed gangs. One of the most colourful group of convict bushranger was "The Jewboys".

Edward "Teddy, the Jew" Davis (alias George Wilkinson) was tried at the Old Bailey in London and transported to NSW in 1832. Assigned to a road gang operating from Hyde Park Barracks he soon absconded and was not apprehended until December 1833. He later absconded from further assignments at Penrith and Hexham.

In November, 1840, Phillip Wright, publican, storekeeper and settler, reported that an assigned convict, Edward Davis, had absconded from his party near Murrurundi as he was moving sheep from the New England region to his property at Aberdeen, NSW.

Originally thought to be to be just a runaway convict, Edward Davis had joined with other runaways to form a gang of bushrangers known as "The Jewboys".

The gang, numbering about 4, committed many robberies in the Hunter Region. As bushrangers they were well armed, their robberies were bold, they stole horses when they needed them and were very conscious of their ability to get away quickly from any pursuers. They wore quality cloths and jewellery that they had stolen as they rode off to commit further havoc.

The "Jewboys" soon joined with another group of convict bushrangers that had previously absconded from Hyde Park Barracks in August. The gang now numbering about 8, had power over isolated homesteads. During their months of freedom they roamed the area and terrorised the Police Districts of Maitland, Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Brisbane Waters, Wollombi, Dungog, Muswellbrook and Scone.

On Sunday, 20th December, 1840 the gang bailed up a property on Skellator in Muswellbrook and by sundown were seen heading in the direction of Aberdeen. Edward Denny Day, the Police Magistrate in Muswellbrook received information of the gang and organised a party of volunteers to go after them.

The bushranger rode through Aberdeen during the night. "Teddy" Davis knew the country well and two or three of the gang had previously been assigned servants on Turanville Station near Scone.

On the morning of 21st December, 1840, the gang rode on to the Turanville property and broke into the house at about 3 o'clock in the morning. They smashed open draws and boxes with axes and made the cook prepare breakfast for them.

One of the gang got up the bell-pole with an axe, intending to smash the bell he remarked, "You called me out of bed many a time, but I'll settle you now". As he desperately hit at the bell the head came off axe

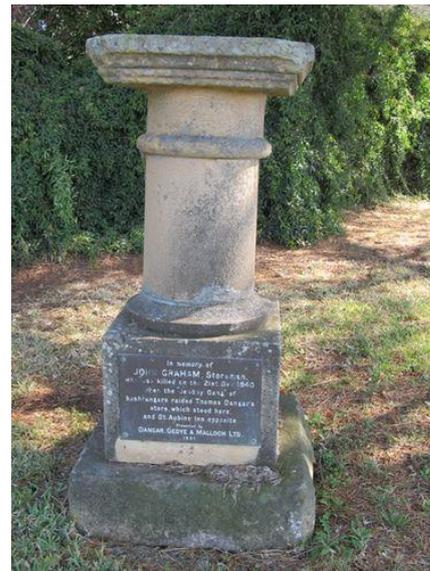
handle and he gave up. They gang rode off towards Scone with their horses decorated with ribbons.

(This bell was later used to call the worshipers together at St. Mark's Anglican Church in Aberdeen, having been presented to the church by Mr. William Dangar of Turanville in the 1850's.)

On reaching Scone Edward "Jewboy" Davis and his gang held up the St. Aubin's Inn and robbed Thomas Dangar's Store. John Graham, an employee at the store, shot at the gang as they were leaving and then set off to alert the police. One of the gang mounted his horse and pursued him, shooting Graham in the back.

After they murdered John Graham the bushrangers headed towards Murrurundi where they acquired new horses and headed north over the Liverpool Ranges.

The bushrangers were known to frequent an area between Ardglen and Willow Tree. Late in the evening Day's party caught up with the bushrangers as they were making doughboys for a meal. After several shots were exchanged the gang of seven men surrendered and another was captured soon afterwards. (This area is now known as "Doughboy Hollow".)



John Graham is buried in St. Luke's churchyard cemetery.

Memorial in Scone Rotary Heritage Park on the corner of the New England Highway and Gundy Street, Scone.

"In memory of John Graham, Storeman, who was killed on 21st December, 1840 when the Jewboy Gang of bushrangers raided Thomas Dangar's store, which stood here and St. Aulbin's Inn opposite."

The Jewboy Gang were removed to Maitland Goal in irons and by 28th December had arrived at the old Sydney gaol. On 24th February they were tried before the Supreme Court, convicted and condemned. Edward Davis and five of his gang of accomplices were sent to the gallows and hanged on 16th March, 1841.

In the Dungog area local traditions believe that the bushrangers' treasures still lies hidden somewhere in a cave about Pilcher's Mountain. [JS]