Albany Historical Society

SCHOOL NFORMATION PACK





Albany Convict Gaol Museum

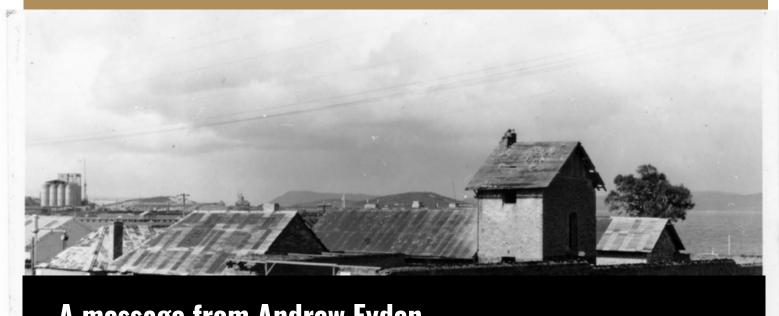
267 Stirling Terrace, Albany

Patrick Taylor's Cottage Museum

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SCHOOL INFORMATION PACK



A message from Andrew Eyden

CEO, Albany Historical Society

Dear Teachers,

The School Information Pack is designed to ensure that your knowledge of the Albany Convict Gaol and Patrick Taylor's Cottage both instructional and factual.

The Albany Convict Gaol is unique in the history of convict labour in Western Australia. It was built by convicts for convicts. Its construction used local granite as well as bricks made on the site. Much of the original construction is intact and visible.

The original building was for Imperial Convicts who had committed minor crimes. There were only a few occasions when the Gaol was full, and only two criminals were held. One man was hanged.

The newer part of the Albany Convict Gaol held local miscreants, including citizens of Albany and the districts, drunks, seamen and Aborigines. Although a section of the Gaol was set aside for women, this was added in the early 1870s.

The Patrick Taylor's Cottage is the oldest surviving dwelling in Western Australia, built by the Morley Brothers in 1832 when the town was a military outpost. The cottage was originally set on a 240-acre block (97 ha). Patrick Taylor purchased the Cottage in July 1834, and the eleven room, wattle and daub cottage consists of an entry room, boxroom, parlour, nursery, bedroom, dining room, family room, sewing room, kitchen, laundry, and side veranda.

The wattle and daub construction is a representation of the traditional building used by the early settlers and is surrounded by a lovely and quaint English cottage garden. The cottage is found at the base of a gently sloping path and has several mature trees and shrubs growing around the cottage.

The cottage displays over 3,000 historical artefacts and items from Albany's history, including a vast display of English porcelain and silverware, some of the items dating back to the 1600s, with in-depth information on Patrick Taylor and early Albany residents.

About the building

The building of the Albany Convict Gaol dates from the time that convicts were brought into Western Australia from Britain to help develop the State. The Gaol was built in two stages: the oldest part of the building, built in the 1850s, is to the right of the entry door; the newer section was built in the 1870s.

The Albany Convict Gaol was part of the complex, which was established as a hiring depot and included the Residency Museum, which was the Commissariat Store and an assortment of buildings for the Military Miners and Sappers (Engineers), and their families, a twelvecell lock up (The Albany Convict Gaol) and keeper's quarters. Other buildings at Point Frederick included workshops, a hospital, kitchen, a garden, and a parade ground.

The Albany Convict Gaol was used as a place of punishment for ticket-of-leave men who committed offences while working at the depot or in the district. It was built by the convicts - mainly ticket-of-leave men - and by stonemasons from the Royal Sappers stationed at the depot.

The end of the small exercise yard had a wall on which broken glass was placed to stop convicts from climbing the wall and escaping. Most of the prisoners that were held in the Albany Convict Gaol stayed from three days to twelve months, the most common offences being drunkenness and fighting.



During the 1860s, overcrowding of the town's Civil Gaol at Lawley Park was noted, and a decision was made to make the hiring depot a public gaol. In 1872, work started to enlarge the site to provide facilities for women in the form of female cells and a matron's quarters.

The refectory or dining hall was built with a cell at the rear to accommodate Aboriginal prisoners. Walled glass-topped exercise yards for male and female prisoners were constructed, and in later years, a high brick wall topped with broken glass surrounded the whole Gaol.

Apart from superficial changes and repairs, little was done to improve the facilities of the Gaol and the form of the Albany Convict Gaol today is as it was in 1880.

A decision was made in 1940 to close the Gaol and demolish the buildings, but because no tenders were received, the building stayed intact. Later, the Public Works Department used the buildings as a store and repair shop. The Public Works Department vacated the buildings in 1959, and in 1968, they were handed over to the Albany Historical Society (Inc.), who have since repaired and renovated the buildings.

In 1973, the National Trust of Australia classified the buildings as Heritage Buildings. The period between the withdrawal of the Public Works Department and the Albany Historical Society (Inc.) taking control of the buildings saw the complex fall into disrepair. During this time, it was used by school-age children as a local haunt. The children graffitied and damaged the complex extensively.

It is also believed that in this period, up to three local people committed suicide within the complex.

Several alterations to the cells were made over the years, including the division of sleeping arrangements, which varied over the years. It is thought that the original convicts slept in hammocks, and then wooden beds were used and, later, probably iron bedsteads.

Toilet arrangements would have included a slop bucket in the cell. Outside privies were built in the small exercise yard and were evidently appalling. The toughest prisoners were put in the cells closest to the foul-smelling latrines - an added punishment. After the new Gaol buildings were completed, new water closets were built in the main exercise yard.









Learning beyond the classroom.

The Cell Block

The twelve-cell stone lock-up was one of the first buildings of its type being constructed and was completed in 1854. Attached to the lock-up was a three-roomed brick cottage used as the superintendent's quarters and depot store. Reports from later years describe the cells as damp and poorly ventilated, with spring running water flowing under the building in winter.

The granite used was quarried from Mount Melville. The bricks were made from local clay, which was taken from the town clay pit, which is now a part of Parade Street - the oldest street in Western Australia.



The lock-up was intended to be a place of punishment for a ticket of leave men who committed offences while working at the depot or in the district. All the convicts were Imperial convicts, being those who had committed offences in Britain and had been transported to Western Australia. However, colonial convicts, i.e. those who committed offences in the colony, were soon also gaoled in the building.

Several alterations to the cells were made over the years, including the division of the lock-up into two sections, each of six cells and the changing of single cells to become two-man cells. A wall was demolished to combine two cells as a kitchen - this wall has been restored.

THE BLACK HOLE

The Black Hole cell was a common form of punishment for difficult prisoners, though the stay in the Black Hole cell was usually for short-term isolation and the use of the Black Hole cell for punishment was officially abolished in 1898.

At the time of the first settlement, a Black Hole cell was used as punishment for several drunken soldiers. They were packed into the Black Hole cell and as a result, one soldier died from suffocation.

THE ABORIGINAL AND SEAMEN'S CELL

This cell was built in 1874 for Aboriginal prisoners. Up to that time, the Aborigines had been held in the town gaol at Lawley Park.

Aboriginal prisoners frequently escaped from that prison by digging under the walls and when the cell was built, it was lined with timber to prevent digging.

The cell has several remarkable carvings on the timber. They include a snake, a lizard, and a kangaroo. They are believed to be the oldest Aboriginal cell art in Australia.

Foreign seamen were also held in this cell, and there are carvings of sailing ships on the walls. Grooves have also been carved into the timber to denote the number of days some prisoners had been gaoled.



The Great Hall

The Great Hall was planned in 1871 as part of the new additions. Its exact purpose is unknown as an unusual sloping section was planned for and built along the length of the north wall.

Because of the number of warders, the Hall was later used as a dining room. Thus, the area is called 'The Refectory', but it was also used for other purposes, including a day room and a church.

By the 1900s, it was used as a ward for hard labour prisoners.





The Tower

The upstairs room was built in 1879 after the Great Hall; although the design was included in the original plans, the exact purpose and its subsequent use after construction is unknown.

It is constructed with a high window and has a fireplace on the east wall with access to the room by external wooden stairs.,

One theory is that it was built for a mentally ill person. The story is about a young man who had periods of unmanageable behaviour, which included hurting his sister. He was incarcerated in the Tower and was only visited by his priest. At times, when he was lucid, he wrote poetry.

However, this has not been proven. It may have been two cells, one on either side of the fireplace. Another theory is that it was a storeroom, but this is unlikely because of the fireplace.

Female Cells

These cells were added for female prisoners in 1874. All the female cells are doubles. Most of the prisoners were convicted of drunkenness, prostitution, or other minor offences.

There was at least one mental prisoner, but she was transferred to Perth. The female prisoners had a day room where they were allowed during the daytime. The female prisoners worked in the adjoining washhouse doing the washing and ironing.

People who have worked in the Albany Convict Gaol - and some visitors - have related experiences of ghostly happenings in the female cells.

These include the sound of a baby crying. As several of the McGovern children died while living at the Albany Convict Gaol, there are theories that the ghosts belong to them.

Warder John McGovern

Of all the Wardens at the Albany Convict Gaol, the one we know the most about was John McGovern. He was a warden from 1879 to 1913. John was a police constable at York until 1871, when he transferred to Perth and Fremantle.

In 1881, he was appointed Gaoler at Albany. John had married Mary Ann Mannix, who became the matron at the Albany Convict Gaol. The family lived in the rooms to the right and left of the entrance to the Gaol.

In these quarters, he and his wife had nine children, and at least eight of these lived in the Gaol.





There was no electric power and only one gas light in these quarters until 1913 when the next warden installed extra gas light at his own expense. Times were hard for families at this time. Three of the McGovern children died between 1886 and 1892, and then in 1899, twin daughters and Mrs. McGovern died after childbirth. Mary Ann was just forty years old.

When Mary Ann McGovern died, the position of Matron passed on to her daughter Minnie then aged sixteen years old, who retained the title until 1905. She was followed the same year by her 15-year-old sister, Lillian, who remained Matron until 1913 when her father retired, and a new warden was appointed.

John McGovern made several improvements to the Gaol and organised most of the convicts, who had few skills, to carry out routine repairs and maintenance. However, because little money was forthcoming from the Colonial Government, the Gaol became rundown and obsolete. Some changes were made, including the conversion of solitary cells into larger cells by removing internal walls, giving the prisoners more space. A kitchen was added. However, the proximity of the Gaol keepers and their families to prisoners meant that they were subjected to the noise and abusive language of the drunken prisoners, who made up the greater proportion of the inmates.

Although the living conditions for all were harsh, it appears that the conditions were relaxed. At one time, it was a prisoner who rushed into a Gaoler's bedroom and extinguished a fire that threatened the whole Gaol. In addition, the Gaol Bakehouse became a friendly place for the prisoners to gather.

John McGovern tried many times to improve the building, including the removal of the shingle roof to be replaced by iron sheeting. A doorway in the stone wall on the Parade Street side of the building was bricked up, and a window was built in the wall over the old opening.

McGovern retired as a warden of the Albany Convict Gaol in 1913 and died at "Neumylda" hospital on Grey Street, Albany, in 1926.

Peter McKean alias William McDonald

In cell 12, there is a replica of Peter McKean alias William McDonald, who was born in 1829. He was convicted at Ayr, Scotland, in 1855 for housebreaking; he was transported for 21 years. He arrived on the "Runnymeade" on 11th September 1855 and was granted a Ticket of Leave on 28th July 1860.

McKean, as a ticket-of-leave man, came to work for Henry (Yorky) Marriott on his lease at Slab Hut Gully, which is near Kojonup, in return for his keep. It appears that a business agreement between the two men involving money for sandalwood ended when the money McKean owed did not materialise.

On Sunday, 30th June 1872, Yorky Marriot failed to pay his usual visit to neighbours. On 8 July, Marriot's body was found lying behind a cart, and the police near Kojonup were informed.

McKean was not at the farmhouse but later returned and told neighbours that he had left to go to Albany but had lost his way. When questioned, he blamed the death of Marriot on a vicious horse, but because of other evidence, McKean was brought to trial in Albany and was found guilty. He was sentenced to be hanged. As Albany did not have a scaffold, portable scaffolding and a hangman were shipped from Fremantle for the execution. The scaffold was set up in the grounds of the Albany Convict Gaol in the corner facing the east. Peter McKean was hanged on 12th October 1872.

At the time of the hanging, the identity of the hangman was kept a secret as he was a convict who was given twelve months' remission from his sentence. The identity of the hangman was George (Thomas) Marshall.

Frederick Bailey Deeming

Cell 15 held the multi-murderer Frederick Bailey Deeming, alias Baron Swanston, alias Albert Williams. Deeming was an Englishman who came to Australia (Melbourne) with his wife Emily. He changed his name to Williams but once in Melbourne rented a house under the name of Druin. He changed his name several times.

On a visit to the house, the landlord of the premises found Druin had gone but detected a disagreeable smell in the house. On investigation, the police found the body of a young woman.





Deeming - at the time F. Duncan - then advertised for a wife. However, on a voyage from Adelaide to Melbourne, Miss Katherine Rounsefell met Williams (now Baron Swanston), and after a period of time, she consented to become engaged to him and to go to Western Australia with him.

Deeming moved west, and after the discovery of the body of Emily Williams and the subsequent press coverage, Kate, realising his identity, then cancelled the journey to Western Australia.

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Swanston journeyed to Albany, then on to Perth and then by rail to Southern Cross, where he worked as an engineer at Fraser's gold mine at Southern Cross. In the meantime, police in Melbourne contacted the English police, who confirmed that Williams was an alias, the man's name was Deeming and that he had a wife and four children. On investigating the family's home in England, the police found the bodies of a woman and four children - Deeming's first wife and children.

Melbourne police travelled to Southern Cross and arrested Swanston (Deeming). From there, he was taken to Perth and then Albany, where he was held at the Albany Convict Gaol overnight and then on to a ship to take him to Melbourne. During the night, even though regularly checked by wardens, Deeming managed to remove his moustache with a piece of glass and by pulling out his facial hair to alter his appearance.

At the trial, he professed his innocence and tried to contact Katherine Rounsefell. After a trial of four days, the jury found Deeming guilty of murder. The judge pronounced sentence, which was that he 'be hanged by the neck until dead'. He was hanged in Melbourne on 23 May 1892.

Nineteenth-century interest in phrenology resulted in the belief that criminals could be identified from the bumps on their skulls. To further this study, it was common for hanged criminals to have a plaster cast made of the head. This model was used by scientists to map the bumps in attempts to support their theories.

About Patrick Taylor

The Flemish-style town of Montrose in Scotland was the birthplace of Patrick Taylor in 1807. The family had a large, impressive property at Kirktonhill, and the family tree can be traced back to the 1500s. In the family tree, an amazing assortment of versions of the Taylor surname is displayed -: Tailour, Taileur, Tailzeor. This is not entirely due to ancient spelling; Colonel John W. Renny-Tailyour, a sprightly old relative of Patrick's still living in the Scottish family home, wrote in 1963, "The family name is Tailyour, but a Patrick Tailyour married a daughter of George Taylor of Jamaica and took the name of Taylor on being promised to be made his heir. He never was!

Most of the Kirktonhill Tailyours (if not all) have now changed back to the original spelling and can be traced back to the descents from John Tailyour, who was Bishop of Lincoln. Queen Mary ordered him to be burnt at the stake, so he wisely hopped it. He died in 1554 in the County of Angus". The Scots Ancestry Research Bureau confirms the colonel's story, while the Western Australian branch of the family has virtually died out, there being only two female descendants remaining in Scotland and England, they are quite numerous and include a company director, a retired Brigadier, a Naval Commander, and a Major-General in the Marines.

Why Patrick migrated is not known but he was well acquainted with Sir James Stirling, a fellow Scotsman.





A Western Australian relative, the late Doctor Robert Fairbairn, records that Patrick's parents died when he was young and that his guardian brought him up. As a schoolboy, he was allowed £1 (\$2) a week pocket money (a princely sum in those days) to encourage him to be generous with his friends.

Whatever his motive, Patrick Taylor set sail in 1833 on the "James Pattison". On board were Sir James and Lady Stirling, W. B. Sherratt, Peter Belches, Captain Cheyne, Mrs Bussell senior and her eldest daughter Mary. The Bussells were on their way to rejoin the rest of the family settled at "Cattle Chosen", Busselton.

Mary wrote a fascinating diary of her shipboard life. Enjoying her role as the only eligible girl on board the ship, she describes long conversations with various young men. Like most passengers of the period, she was constantly engaged in attending to her livestock – bees, fowls, a cat, and a dog.

The family background was that of an Anglican parsonage. The deceased Rev. W. M. Bussell had been perpetual Curate of St Mary's Portsea and had baptised novelist Charles Dickens, so it is unsurprising that Mary was deeply interested in religion. There are several accounts in her diaries of shipboard services, and once, she and her mother were invited to Sherratt's cabin for Sabbath service.

This somewhat upset Mary, for she had hoped for an invitation from Taylor, who conducted morning service for his servants. Mary had to comfort herself with the "deep-toned voice of the youngest patriarch issuing from the adjoining cabin."

When the "James Pattison" reached Australia, it had followed the usual course Antipodean's-bound vessels sailed along the 40 latitudes. Albany was reached on May 12th, 1834. The weather was so stormy that the ship was forced to remain for two months. It seems inevitable that they met Sir Richard Spencer, the new Government Resident. Stirling and Spencer were well known to each other; Sir James had heartily recommended Spencer's appointment to the Home Government, especially to the Under Secretary for Colonies, H. H. Hay.

Mr. Robert Stephs supplied the information about Taylor's land purchases. The June records for 1835 show: -

Albany building Lot S44 offer for fee simple by Patrick Taylor: Improvements buildings £250 (\$500) Enclosures £ 10 (\$20) Sundries £ 40 (\$80) Total £300 (\$600)

This lot was initially assigned to John H. Morley on 29 March 1832 and transferred by him to Patrick Taylor by public auction."

Among other things, Morley had been the local commissariat officer and occupied the Old Farm before Sir Richard Spencer's arrival. The Patrick Taylor cottage still stands upon Lot S44.

Taylor's early years in the colony were hectic. Having inspected land at Albany, he was anxious to return to it from the Swan and hitched a ride with Captain Blackwood, commander of the "Hyacinth", sloop of war.

Due to contrary winds, he was carried right past and ended up in Tasmania. Here, he stayed with the Hentys, that well-known Eastern States pioneering family who first migrated to the Swan, then transferred to Tasmania, and later won fame as the earliest pioneers of Victoria.

Old Mr Henty described Patrick to a friend as a "very pleasant well, - educated, gentlemanly young man who had come out for the benefit of his health and had entirely recovered."

1837 was a restless year. Early in January, he made a daring excursion looking for land in company with Doctor Thomas Harrison. They visited the Hay River, where Sir Richard Spencer's two eldest boys were farming.

Almost upon return, he set out once more into the hot, brassy inland, journeying from Albany to Perth in 12 days travelling time with Mr James Harris and party.

He and Mary Bussell were married in September at Lieutenant Bull's house at Fremantle. The wedding was a quiet one for family friend Capel Carter, who had just died, but the guest of honour was Sir James Stirling, who acted as the father of the bride.

They almost hadn't got married, for native runners bringing Mrs Bussell's consent had dawdled, and Mary was on the verge of returning to "Cattle Chosen". The happy young couple returned to the Sound by ship, accompanied by bridesmaid sister Fanny. An ill-omen greeted them as they entered the harbour. Chief Constable James Dunne, a passenger on the "James Pattison", had an arm blown off by the cannon while firing a salute in their honour.

Their home was at "Candyup" at the time, another property bought by Patrick. This was on the Kalgan River, a farm now owned by Mr Sewell. At that time, the house was situated just below the present one, on an elevated hill with enchanting vistas of the Kalgan and Oyster Harbour.

Fanny wrote: "The country is now an exquisite green, and Candyup abounds in pretty grassy slopes covered with close fine sward. The cattle are looking extremely well, and when this house is plastered, their sitting room will be one of the finest in the colony". A series of economic disasters soon shattered this sylvan existence. To his dismay, his agent in Scotland absconded to America with a considerable portion of his fortune. Nothing was right at "Candyup" – cattle died, and even the hens wouldn't lay.

Patrick wrote to his wife's sister that Mary was obliged to search the nests from early morning to night to obtain only a few eggs. Even if they had grown all their requirements and more besides, it would have been to no avail. Their problem was the same as all settlers of the first colonial days - there were no markets. Whaling ships calling to port were the only buyers of produce.

There was a family argument with the Bussells. At "Cattle Chosen" a decision had been reached about finances. In future only those who were sharing the work of the moment would share in the profits. Patrick claimed that his wife had shared the early hardships, therefore she should benefit to some extent. John Garrett Bussell wrote a dramatic farewell to his brother in-law, of whom he was genuinely fond, and from then on, Taylor seems to have had little contact with his wife's relatives.

Patrick Taylor was a leading figure in the town's affairs for several years. A fanatically religious man, he was deeply concerned with the death of clergymen in the new colony. While on board the ship, he had guaranteed £200 (\$400) for the stipend, claiming that the presence of a minister "would remove the only objection to a settler's life." Taylor was closely acquainted with Wollaston, who mentions him in his Picton and Albany journals.

In 1841, the Government Resident called a meeting "of the inhabitants to consider the propriety of building a church at Albany." Thus, St John the Evangelist's Church was born.

The sixth of the 11 resolutions passed were:
"That it being well-known that Patrick Taylor, Esq., takes a deep interest in promoting religious instruction and desires Albany's welfare, the trustees do write to him requesting his subscription".

This was the year of his significant financial losses. Despite this, in company with Lady Spencer, Government Resident Phillips, Peter Belches, George Grey (later Sir), Taylor donated £10 (\$20), Mary £5 (\$10), while humble tradesman and builder of the first local church, the Octagon, R. B. Sherratt gave £25 (\$50).

To decentralise responsibility for the maintenance of widely scattered districts, Governor John Hutt passed an "Improvement of Towns Act" in 1841. It was Western Australia's first experiment in local government and got off to a slow start in Albany, for it was not until 1843 that the first town trust was formed, with publicminded T.B. Sherratt as its first Chairman.

Patrick Taylor was a member of that body in 1845, as he was in 1846 and 1847, while in 1849, the town trust failed to function. Taylor was chairman of a public meeting in 1846, which was hurriedly summoned to deal with a local catastrophe. York Street suffered one of its periodic floodings, which persists today.

Patrick Taylor sent a memorial to the Governor, asking for assistance for the town to rebuild the street, which had been scoured with gullies deep enough to hide a man. The emphatic wording of the petition served no purpose. Resigned to official procrastination, the locals erected footbridges over the gullies and the road was not repaired until 1870, 24 years afterwards. From the period of the unsuccessful petition, Patrick Taylor seems to have retired from public life. The original diaries of Mrs Taylor, spanning the years 1873 – 1875, tell of a dreary existence at Candyup.

Daughters Fanny and Kate did much of the hard work on the property assisted in a desultory fashion by a farm labourer and some local natives. Eldest daughter Mary, born at Candyup, was married to Edward Dempster, and son John lived at Northam; Campbell was pioneering at Esperance. Occasionally, a visitor in the person of Sir T. Campbell, one of the Hassell, Egerton - Warburton or Spencer boys would drop in, and the harmonium would assist in making the evening pleasant.

Patrick Taylor died in 1877. He and his wife, Mary, who died on 11 March 1887, infant Christina, and son Campbell all share the same headstone in the cemetery on Middleton Road.

The building now known as the Patrick Taylor Cottage was misleadingly termed a beach cottage by Wollaston. The house is mentioned in the diaries, was sometimes used when they visited the town or rented to various tenants and was repaired by young Sherratt.

None of Taylor's blocks were on the beach itself although this one is only a few chains (a few meters) away, nor was it the smaller brick cottage, now demolished, on the Stirling Terrace end of the same block. This consisted of one main brick room with dilapidated tin structures attached. The windows of the main room were as high as the ceilings.

The first material used for houses in the colony was "wattle and daub". Windows were small because of the cost of glass, and ceilings were low. The central rooms of the Patrick Taylor cottage are "wattle and daub" and are rough and uneven. The roof is still shingled under the tin, and the house follows the usual colonial plan of central rooms surrounded by a verandah.







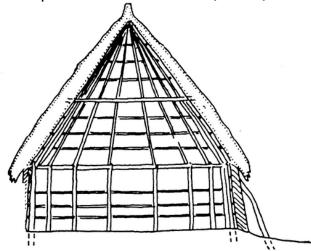
Later, this was covered in to provide more rooms, Among later pioneers who resided at the Cottage was Campbell Taylor, the eldest son and sister, Miss Kate Taylor (some elderly residents may remember her for the large number of cats she kept). Miss Lawndes, the first domestic science teacher at the local High School, the Western Australian poet "Dryblower" Murphy and kindly Dr Ingoldby and his wife.

Until the 1950s, the property had remained in the hands of a Taylor descendant, the last owner being Doctor Robert Fairbairn of Peppermint Grove.

Wattle and Daub Construction

There are two primary forms of house construction. The first is for the walls to be strong enough to support the roof structure. This method is used for solid brick houses, stone houses, log cabins, and some mud brick dwellings.

The second form of construction is for a frame to be built that will support the roof, and then the spaces in the frame are filled in to give privacy and provide protection from wind and rain. For thousands of years, the most favoured infill in this form of building was a weaving of thin, pliable branches (wattles), which was then plastered with mud (daub).



To the left demonstrates a typical round hut construction, the panels of which would have been in filled with wattle and daub. (John Coles Archaeology by Experiment Hutchinson 1973)

Below is a section of wall in a Tudor building showing the woven wattles and then the stages in applying the daub. The finished coat has been applied only to the panel below the window. (Richard Harris Timber Frames Buildings Shire Publications 1978)



Because of their British background, early settlers in Australia were aware of this ancient form of construction from the villages in which they lived, and they applied this building method to their new homes. *Bill Henderson 2004*