

# CLARENCE RIVER ADVOCATE

March 2024

Volume 25 Number 1



***DISTRICT MUSEUM and STONE COTTAGE***

***Corner Wharf and Grafton Streets, Maclean***

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EDITORS COMMENTS – Welcome to our first ‘Advocate’ of the year. Our AGM was held on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 9.30am. Just a reminder that your next membership year runs from the 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025. I hope that all members are currently financial. Remember your fees assist in the running of the Museum.

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*Caledonian Hall*

## **Joseph Percy Harris (Percy) Howard (1887-1957)**

[Manager/teacher on Ulgundahi Island: June 1916- February 1920]

*(Researched and compiled by Trish Bowes)*

Joseph Percy Harris Howard, known as Percy, was born on 16 December 1887 in Altrincham, Cheshire, England to Mary Jane [nee Siddeley] (1857-1935) and Frederic Joseph Harris Howard. His father Frederic Howard (1860-1904) was a Solicitor's Clerk, but he died at 44 of lymphosarcoma and left an estate of £448 10s 3d.



*Back: Frederic, Henry, Mary Front: Percy and Jessie*

Percy Howard had three siblings: Jessie (1885-1970) who married in 1907 and remained in England; Henry Rudolph (1890-1970); and Fanny Clarissa [Fox] (1892-1975).

When his father died the family stayed in Cheshire for another 8 years. In the 1911 English Census his mother was listed as working as a cashier at the Manchester Tramways Corporation and his brother was a clerk with the Manchester Gas Company. I could not find Percy in the 1911 Census but there is a Manchester photo taken for his 21st. It is stated in a Family Document that Mary, Percy, Harry and Fanny came to Australia in 1912 (supposedly due to Harry's health) and settled in Mosman.



According to the NSW Public Service Lists, Joseph Percy Harris Howard's first appointment as a teacher was on 1 September 1913. Unable to unequivocally ascertain where he taught before June 1915, although there is a J. Howard who was at Pymont Primary School in 1914 as a Training Teacher, and he did get married in 1915 in Mosman. His wife was Irene Bagaley (1891-1983). She obviously knew Percy in England as her P&O ship, the "Commonwealth" departed England in 18 March 1915 and they were married in May. Irene was born in Kidderminster, Worcestershire but was living in Manchester by 1911. Her father was a Commercial Dealer in Wines and Spirits.



*Percy and Irene's wedding day in 1915*

Mr J.P.H Howard was then appointed to Edgeston Aboriginal Station and Mundooran School. He replaced Herbert Hockey who was the founding manager-teacher from January 1911. As another school was called Edgerton, the station's school was renamed Mundooran Aboriginal School and formally opened on 21st April 1911. Percy Howard only held the position for a year, from June 1915, before Mundooran School closed in June 1916. By the end of that year, the station also closed and was sold by the Aboriginal Protection Board. The main building was the old Edgerton homestead, first built in 1860, and which became the manager's residence.

<https://museum.hall.act.au/school/2583/mundoonan-aboriginal-school.html>

The Howard's first child, Frederic Keith Davenport (Deric) was born on 30 March 1916 in Yass. The family then moved to Ulgundahi Island, Maclean on the Clarence River where Percy Howard was the manager/teacher. Mr Howard was at Ulgundahi Island from June 1916 to February 1920. Two more children were born at Maclean, John Percy Siddeley on 10 June 1918 and Edward Bruce on 11 January 1920. Unfortunately, Edward died in Moree on November 1920 when they moved to Terry Hie Hie Aboriginal Mission, near Moree.

The Howards arrived by the SS Pulganbar on 8 June 1916 and were "tendered a welcome by the aboriginals(sic) who erected an arch on the landing stage, over which floated the Union Jack." *Grafton Argus*, 9 June 1916



*SS Pulganbar at Maclean Wharf* <https://shippingtandy.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/11/3>

While on Ulgundahi Island it was noted "that Mr Howard was "experienced in medical attention with the approval of the Aboriginal Protection Board" as a doctor very rarely called at the Island. Mr Howard's experience was an asset. Mr Howard however was himself subject to bouts of malaria. Mr Howard's duties on the island were controlled by the Aboriginal Protection Board, so his duties were not only as a teacher, but also as escort for the aged for confinement in Sydney Hospital." [Marg Switzer, *History of Education on the Lower Clarence-Past Schools*, 2000]

Percy Howard quickly threw himself into Maclean community life as in November he performed at the Lower Clarence Hospital Benefit Concert. It was noted that "Mr J.P. Howard, manager of Ulgundahi

Island was a surprise packet, and his recitals and musical sketches were far away above the average. In his character sketches his make-up was particularly good, and before the audience was satisfied, he had to give five items....” *Grafton Argus*, November 1916

He was also a prolific letter writer to the local papers and his letters gave insights into his work as manager and the effect of WW1 on Ulgundahi Island. He noted in March 1918 that “I know more than one local farmer who would be hard pushed but for the assistance of the colored (sic) labourers, and many would be surprised at the number of applications of these men that I receive. In one week alone I have dealt with eight different inquiries, asking for twenty-seven men in all and offering up to 15/- a day for their services .... There have been four enlistments by men of this island; two have, returned unfit for service, and two are now in the fighting line.” (*Grafton Argus*)



*Deric, Irene and Joseph Howard taken in 1917*

Percy Howard was a committeeman of the Lower Clarence Hospital until his resignation in October 1919. (*Daily Examiner*, March 1920) and in June 1918 informed a representative of *The Daily Examiner*. “..that, the matron is very anxious for farmers in the district round to send some vegetables to the institute. Shortage of funds does not allow of larger expenditure in this direction and donations will be welcomed. Also,

the hospital cow has gone dry, and supplies of milk daily, would be very gratefully received....”



*This photo was taken at Maclean in 1918.*



*Percy Howard, taken in*

Percy Howard, and his family, moved to Terry Hie Hie Station in 1920 and he stayed there until 1924. In the NSW Public Service Lists of 1920 and 1921, it notes that Joseph PH Howard is teaching at Terry Hie Hie Aboriginal School and his salary was £201 (with a living allowance of £20) and £254 17s 4d (with a living allowance of £25 9s 0d) respectively. As stated previously, the Howards did lose Edward in 1920 but two more children were born while they were at Terry Hie Hie and these were Ileen Margaret on 1 June 1921 and Joseph Winston Harris (Win) on 21 July 1923. Ileen is an unusual name but apparently it was popular in the 1920s and means strength or little bird.

<https://www.facebook.com/MookiBassendean> In 1925 the Howards moved to Bassendean Station (although the NSW Public Service List spells it as Bassenden) and stayed there until 1929. Bassendean Station is 12 miles outside Tingha and was established as a provisional school in early 1923. Mr Broun (pronounced Broon), the Scottish owner of Bassendean Station, had previously built cottages for the Aboriginal



people on the station. The school was opened by November 1923 with Mr Wood as the teacher. “Mr J Howard then transferred in May 1925 from Terry Hie Hie with his wife and 5 children to teach at the school. His wife taught sewing at the school as well.” Their fifth child was Irene Audrey Louise (Audrey) who was born at Inverell on 5 April, 1925.

Mario Hardie (Mickie) [1920-2011], who was third daughter of William “Jim” and Maria Broun in an interview in November 2003 talked about her “idyllic childhood” at Bassendeen Station. She notes there were 160 Aborigines on the property because there was an Aboriginal reserve of 320 acres in the middle of the property. James Broun built eight huts as they worked as stockmen and domestic servants. She states that her parents were married 14 December 1914 and that the homestead was built in 1903 and had 22 rooms. “...there was another cottage built to house a teacher from the Aborigines Protection Board. My father had also built a little school on the property, so the Aboriginal Protection Board sent this teacher/manager of the Aborigines. And they went to this school that was built on the flat, down below the homestead. The Aboriginal children went to this school; and the first teacher (according to Mickie) was a man named Mr Howard. For a little while we, the Broun children, went down there and had a little bit of education with the Aborigines, but it didn’t work ... so my mother and father brought in tutors and governesses.” <http://australiansatwarfilmarchive.unsw.edu.au/archive/1162>



*Audrey, Irene, Joseph (Win) and Ileen. Photo taken at Bassendeen Station.*

Interestingly, the son of the Brouns from Bassendean was Malcolm David Broun (1935-2014) OAM, QC, BA (Hons), LLB (University of Sydney) who was both the founding and perpetual president of the Sydney Society for Scottish History (SSSH) from 1982. The Celtic Council of Australia conferred the honour of *Cyfaill y Celtiaid* (Friend of the Celts) on him in 1995 and, *Tus Enorys Ewn* (Truly Honoured Person) in 2010. He was involved with the Scottish Australian Heritage Council (SAHC), from its inception, and also the Sydney Society for Scottish History. He supported the Scottish Polish Club, the Auld Alliance (a FrancoScottish organisation) and the Dalhousie Society (a Scottish Indian friendship group). He helped establish the Chair of Celtic Studies at the University of Sydney and was a student of Scottish Gaelic. He was the patron of Sydney Scottish Week, “offering an outstanding level of hospitality to visiting Scottish chiefs and academic historians”. Lorna Barrow “In Memory of Malcolm David Broun”, *Journal of the Sydney Society for Scottish History*, Vol.15 (2015)

According to the NSW Public Service Lists for 1925 and 1927, Percy Howard was not paid a living allowance, as he lived on the station and thus his family's accommodation was provided, and his salary was £278 5s 2d and £310 15s and 2d. Their next move was to Runnymede, (Stoney Gully) Aboriginal Station, near Kyogle from 1929 until 1939. He is on the Electoral Rolls for this time and his address is listed as Aboriginal Station, Runnymede, manager and his wife's occupation is listed as matron. Interestingly, their son, Frederic Keith Davenport Howard is listed as Aboriginal Station, Kyogle, and occupation as assistant manager.

However, 1932 was not a good year for the Howards, following the birth of their seventh child, Barbara Mary on 5 January 1932, at Casino. She died in Queensland on 15 July 1932 but is buried at Kyogle. Also, in November 1932, it was reported in the *Kyogle Examiner* that Irene Howard's only brother, Edward Bagaley died “in a motor accident at Buenos Ayres, Argentine. Deceased, who was 39 years of age, was in charge of Vestey's interests in the South American Republic. He served in the Great War, through which he passed unscathed, and after demobilisation, entered the employ of Lord Vestey, and ultimately reached the highest position the firm he controlled had to offer”. *Kyogle Examiner*, 18 November 1932

Percy Howard was employed by the Aborigines Protection Board (until 1940)/Aborigines Welfare Board (after 1940). At Stoney Gully Reserve in March 1940 the reserve was closed and the Howards moved to Cabbage Tree Island Station. An interesting sideline is the fact that originally Allan Cameron and his wife were to be transferred from Ulgundahi Island in March, 1940 (Percy Howard had been Manager there, in their absence from 1916-1920) and a school teacher appointed in their place. The Maclean Chamber of Commerce lodged a complaint with the Chief Secretary and the Department of the Education. In the end, Allan Cameron stayed as manager/teacher at Ulgundahi Island until 1957 and Joseph Howard went to the “bigger charge of Cabbage Tree Island on the Richmond River.” *Richmond River Examiner*, March 1940.

During WW2 their son, John Percy Siddeley Howard enlisted in 1940 and was sent first to Malaysia and then to Singapore. He was captured during the fall of Singapore and remained a POW at Changi Prison until September 1945. His brother Joseph Winston Harris Howard enlisted in July 1942 and was sent to Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea in October 1943. He caught malaria and was returned to Australia, where he spent time at Ballina Hospital. (*Northern Star* August 1944) However, he then went back to Rabaul and didn't leave until July 1946. Percy Howard was no longer manager by March 1948, which is when the position of manager was abolished at Cabbage Tree Island Aboriginal Settlement. Irene and Percy Howard moved to Warrawong, Wollongong, with their son Joseph Winston Howard, and on the 1949 Electoral Roll Percy's occupation is listed as housing officer. <https://recordsearch.naa.gov.au>



*Percy and Irene's 40<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1955.*

Joseph Percy Harris Howard died on 25 March 1957 and his occupation was listed as “buyer.” The amount noted at Probate was £2040. He was buried at Woronora Memorial Park, Sutherland, Sydney.

## **\*\* M.V. BEARDMORE. \*\***

Vessel Number: HV000305, Date:1914, Builder: J G Pashley & Sons

Previous Owner: CSR Limited until 1975, Nungera Co-operative Society 1975 – 1987, Maclean District Historical Society 1987 to present.

**Vessel Dimensions:** Length 18.8m(81.68ft), Beam 7.34m(11ft), Depth 1.5m (5ft), Weight 31 tonnes (30.5 tons).

**Significance:** MV BEARDMORE is the only survivor of three similar sugar cane barge tugs that operated on the Clarence River in northern New South Wales from 1912 until water transportation of cane ceased in 1975. BEARDMORE (1914) operated alongside two sister vessels AJAX and MARAMA which have not survived.

**Description:** Built at Harwood in 1914 by J G Pashley and Sons, who came from Sydney, BEARDMORE is carvel planked in local hardwoods. It is heavily constructed with large rubbing strakes to guard against continual wear from shunting barges and coming alongside wharves. The original deck planking was pine, but this was replaced with hardwood covered by malthoid, a combination that has survived with minor repairs.

The name BEARDMORE was taken from the make of the vessel's original semi-diesel engine. The Beardmore engine was started using a blow lamp to create a hotspot and former rivermen recall that it was kept running for days because of the difficulty of starting it again, should it stop. The engine had a distinctive loud sound which identified the tug's river passage to people for miles around. The engine was later replaced with a Gardner diesel.

The Harwood mill on the Clarence River is Australia's oldest sugar mill and began operating in 1870, when cane was brought to the mill from properties along the river using heavily laden barges towed by the company tugs.





After it was retired from service the BEARDMORE was used for general transport by the Nungera Aboriginal Cooperative. In 1987 the vessel was acquired by the Maclean District Historical Society. The Harwood mill management agreed

to put the vessel on public display as a reminder of the role played by river transport in the cane industry.

Mr O K Shortt, ex tug-master of the mill fleet, devoted two years of work to the restoration and preservation of the vessel once it was taken over by the Maclean District Historical Society. After his death a committee was formed. It was moved to a nearby shed with the help of Rotary and a Maritime Museum Grant.

**\* 100 Yrs. Ago \***

**JANUARY 2024**

### **MACLEAN RAINFALL.**

The total amount of rainfall registered at the Maclean post office for the year 1923 was 4378 points. Of this total more than half fell in the month of April.

The following are the readings: — January 279 points, February 157, March 207, April 2199, May nil, June 163, July 184, August 268, September 37, October 159, November 165, December 560.

## **MACLEAN STATISTICS.**

The following statistics have been furnished by the District Registrar of Births, etc. (Mr. R. W. S. Kelly), for the year ending December 31, 1923: Births 147, marriages 37, deaths 59.

The following is a list of business dealt with at the local Police Court: - 159 charge and summons cases, 5 committals for trial, 36 applications for licenses, 53 matters dealt with in the Licensing Court, 139 small debts cases.

## **FEBRUARY 2024**

### **MACLEAN.**

The Maclean Brass Band held their meeting in Giese's refreshment rooms during the week, when an effort was made to restore the band to its former standard of efficiency. For some time we have heard very little by way of a programme from the band and have been wondering if the organisation was going to pass out of existence. The committee is to be congratulated on the step taken to revive activities. It is understood that it is the intention of the performers to give a series of programmes in various centres of the town during the next few months. One particular spot mentioned was in the vicinity of the local hospital; there nothing so helpful to a convalescent patient as a programme of good music. The committee has purchased several of the Brushgrove Band's instruments, and thus has brought the number of instruments up-to-date. There are enough young men in Maclean to make up a full band of 30 performers, and it is to be hoped that they will not be backward in joining up with the band, for by so doing they not only get free tuition for the services they render but they fill the need that is felt in every town. A town without a good brass band, can never supply the entertainment which is looked for by the citizens.

### **MACLEAN BATHS.**

On the motion of Ald. Munro, the standing orders were suspended for the purpose of receiving Mr. Atkinson, who was present on behalf of the committee to present the plans and estimates for the erection of the baths. In submitting the plan, Mr. Atkinson pointed out that it was proposed to

widen the baths and to take in the full width of the foot of Taloumbi street. The plan was set out in detail and provides for baths which will be permanent, and a decided acquisition to the town.

Ald. McFadden said that there was a lot of red tape but they would have to go through that. He moved that when the baths committee guarantee their share towards the cost of the work that the council pay its share of £50. Ald. Black seconded the motion.

Mr. Atkinson said the council were little hard on the committee in the attitude they had adopted.

## **MARCH 2024**

### **NORTH COAST STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY, LIMITED.**

Grafton to Sydney, single £2/5/0

Grafton to Sydney, return £3/4/0

Maclean to Sydney, single £2/2/0

Maclean to Sydney, return £3/0/0

Children's Fares: Under 14 years, Half fare; under 4 years, free for one child; more than one child quarter fare.

Deck Cabin Berths 5/ extra each way.

Return Tickets available for three months from date of issue.

Cheques will not be cashed or accepted as payment of passage money.

### **MACLEAN - SHOW.**

If correspondence is any criterion there is considerable interest being taken in the 1924 Maclean Show by other parts of the State. Numerous letters have been received by the secretary asking for particulars on several matters while it would appear as though the "Home Coming Week" Show was going to be a record for high class side shows. Already several spaces have been granted for side shows of an interesting nature, and if the residents of the Lower Clarence will remember that the big annual event is only within two months of us, and endeavour to accomplish something to give the district the boost that it deserves, a record show in every way is assured. It is the duty of every farmer to see that the entry list is well

filled and that a large number of high class exhibits is what makes the success of the show.

## PRICE of MEAT

**The duty of every housewife is to buy prime beef at the cheapest rate**

**Laws have the Prime Meat offering at Lowest Prices**

When I took the bold step of reducing the prices of meat it was in anticipation of doubling my business. My business has been doubled and I am still able to offer to the public the prime of beef at the lowest of prices. If you are not already a customer of mine, enquire from your neighbour the quality of meat she is obtaining from me at the following reduced rates :—

<b>LOOK AT THESE PRICES:</b>			
RUMP STEAK	9d	RIB ROAST	6d
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CORNER BEEF	3d	CHUCK ROAST	6d
TOPSIDE STEAK	6d	CORNER BRISKET	8d

**SPECIAL—25lbs PRIME CORNER BEEF FOR 6/.**

**G. LAW**

**BUTCHER RIVER STREET MACLEAN**



*McFarlane Bridge Approach*



## RESEARCH ENQUIRIES.

*Email us with details of what you already have plus what you would like, and we will endeavour to help. Research fees are \$25 per family, postage extra. If it is a large body of research, we may ask for a little more.*

1. Visit from James Pritchard re Bathgate houses at Ashby & Maclean ("Bristol"), photo of tablet memorial in Uniting Church & location of Gale / Bathgate graves.
2. George Morrison, cane farmer, mill owner, Goodwood Is.
3. Rose / Dwarte family, Cordwell & Wiseman (D.J. Rose, Ballina).
4. William T.R. Wallbank enquiry re licensee of Commercial Hotel, Maclean & location of Small property, Woodford Is.
5. Enquiry re original old School House, River Street.
6. Thank you email from Christine Johnson re Child research.
7. Email re life and sporting achievements of Lex Essex from Wendy Ford.
8. Email re Henry James Giese at Battle of Polygon Wood KIA 27/9/1917 - no information.
9. William Jones m. Catherine Marks, 1855 in Grafton - no information
10. Perry Albert Jones, son Arthur John Ware Jones and grandson Colin John Jones - no information
11. Re R.C. Garrett family & Churchill family - no information on Churchill family. Information supplied on R. Garrett, Mororo.





## MACLEAN DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

ABN 73 033 923 282

Maclean District Museum and Stone Cottage

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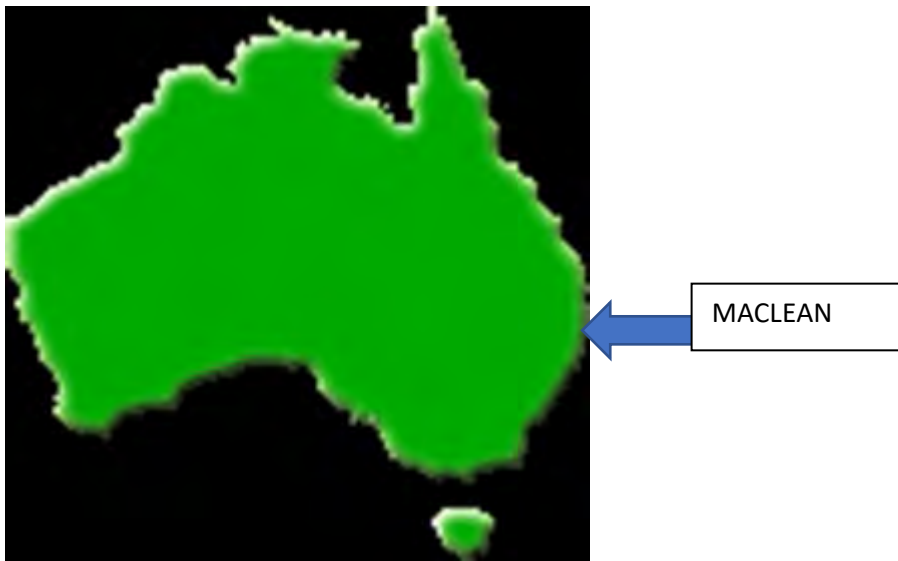
## MACLEAN DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

### PUBLICATION COSTS

<b>Book Title</b>	<b>Total Cost Posted (\$)</b>	<b>Book Cost (\$)</b>
<b>Maclean, The First Fifty Years</b>	<b>54.35</b>	<b>40.00</b>
<b>History of Education on the Lower Clarence - Past Schools</b>	<b>25.95</b>	<b>15.00</b>
<b>History of Education on the Lower Clarence - Maclean</b>	<b>25.95</b>	<b>15.00</b>
<b>History of Education on the Lower Clarence - Maclean High School</b>	<b>30.95</b>	<b>20.00</b>
<b>A Tour Among the Mills (Sugar Industry)</b>	<b>25.95</b>	<b>15.00</b>
<b>Lower Clarence Cemetery List</b>	<b>25.95</b>	<b>15.00</b>
<b>Discovery and Settlement of the Lower Clarence</b>	<b>16.75</b>	<b>6.00</b>
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<b>Clarence Valley WW1 Volunteers</b>	<b>47.95</b>	<b>30.00</b>
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<b>Do You Remember Them?</b>	<b>52.95</b>	<b>35.00</b>
<b>Michael Rush - champion Australian sculler</b>	<b>55.95</b>	<b>38.00</b>

The Museum has published a substantial list of publications on different aspects of the history of Maclean and the surrounding area. Including the areas, World War 1 history and the Schwonberg publications. This updated list of our publications shows the total cost of sending the publications to interested parties via the post. Total cost is a combination of the cost of the publication itself, plus the packaging costs and postal costs. These two costs are based on the size of the publication.

# MACLEAN DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.



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***Our Society meets on the third Tuesday of every month in  
our meeting room at the Museum at 9.30 am.***