

Harry Louttit

By Shirely Jurmann



Flo and Harry Louttit c. 1980

Arthur Harry Louttit, known as Harry, was born in Moruya in 1914, the fifth child of Abraham Louttit and Alice nee Keyte. He dearly loved Moruya, especially his farm “Oaklands” and a little plot of land up near where the saleyards now are, which he called “Paradise”. He loved the history of Moruya, and his family, and recorded many stories for which family historians are very grateful. He was worried that much local history was being lost as the older folk left this life.

Harry grew up in Moruya, went to primary school at the local public school and away to high school. He joined the Post Office and was sent to Newcastle where he met and married

Florence Catherine Patrick in 1941. They lived in Sydney for a time between 1941 and 1942 and eventually had two daughters, Wendy and Kathryn. As a motor driver for the PMG Harry had a National Security permit to enter enclosed wharves.

After his marriage Harry returned to Moruya to take over the running of “Oaklands”. Here he had dairy cattle and later beef cattle. He also purchased part of “Smithfield” on the Congo Road. He was a keen horseman and enjoyed riding in local shows. He loved to share his knowledge of horses with younger members of the community. He became a Shire Councillor and was involved in many local causes including the establishment of a Rodeo Committee and the Historical Society. He made a flat area on his “Oaklands” property available for the first motor sports events in the area which eventually led to the racetrack at North Heads. These events were known at this time as motor gymkhanas.

The Historical Society was very dear to his heart. He canvassed local people to gauge the interest in such a project and found much enthusiasm. He was responsible for calling a meeting at the High School in June 1970 at which the Historical Society was formed. He addressed the meeting, saying it would have been better if the meeting had been called 10 to 20 years earlier but although much had been lost it was still not too late to pick up the threads. He thought it was disgraceful that there was nothing in the town to recognise Francis Flanagan the founding father of Moruya. Not even a lane was named after him at that stage. His grave was said to be in the Moruya Cemetery but there was nothing to mark his last resting place. Harry said that bits of information were being lost. Another mystery was an area of Mullenderree known even in 1970 as “Irish Corner”. The boundary of Flanagan’s grant passed alongside it but not through it. Why was it so called? He spoke of huts and stockyards at Buckenboursa and Bateman’s Bay as early as 1817, according to the early pioneers. At the end of his impassioned speech he recommended the formation of an historical society, saying that such a society would be an “exciting and rewarding project”, and so it has proved to be.

The house on “Oaklands” was inundated with floodwaters at various time so Harry built a new elevated house next door. Downstairs was a garage and family room, built to survive flood waters with the main rooms and verandah upstairs.

When Flo and Harry could no longer manage on their own they moved to nursing homes in Bathurst where daughter Wendy and her family were living.

Harry died 29-6-1990 and Flo died 12-11-1992. Their ashes were returned to Moruya.