**Essays on Mount Crosby - Susan Ward**

If you start walking from the pumping station towards Kholo on that up, down, and then flat little way now known as Stumers Road, but not so long ago as Tanseys Lane, you will soon pass the farm once called "Dunmara", former home of Susan Ward, the daughter of William and Rose Ward (nee Daly).

When I walk that way, I notice that the hills north and east seem to dampen the noise of the world and by the time you pass the sharp hill at the beginning and the Christmas trees on your left you find yourself in part of the district that doesn't know much about the twentieth century. Over there, it is easier to imagine the early days, and the landscape seems quiet and kind to the farmer.

This place serves the memory of Susan Ward well, since she was a gentle soul known for her involvement in social activities that helped the community through difficult days. Susan was assistant teacher to headmaster F.W. Perrett at Mount Crosby State School on two occasions (1911-13 and 1918-20), and was much loved by all of the children and their parents. At every dance or social occasion during those years Susan could be seen arranging children's activities and guiding the little ones, or singing, or providing music for the dances.

Susan's gentle nature has been captured in a scrapbook she kept while an assistant teacher, first at Mount Crosby, then on her transfer to Silkstone, then at Irvingdale and later back at Mount Crosby. It's filled with the mementos of life, including newspaper clippings about local occasions, personal notices and the effects of war. About Mount Crosby, there are many entries and something very tangible - a fragile hundred year old posy of dried flowers with the tag "Mount Crosby S. School 1913" and indirectly related to this, I feel certain, there is a clipped out mark for a botany exam.

Of course, big parts of the story are missing and can't, perhaps shouldn't, be interpreted. It is difficult not to be tempted, though. I wonder, for instance, what is the significance of the Jack of Clubs cut in halves - and who has the other piece?

Col Hester