

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY, EXCEPT DECEMBER

Meetings : 3rd. TUESDAY of the month at 7.30 PM

OLD TOWN HALL , MORWELL

Vol. 10 No. 4 APRIL 1994

Welcome to the April Newsletter

The Annual Meeting of Morwell Historical Society Inc was held in March. Copies of the annual report and balance sheet appear inside.

Guest speaker at the meeting was Kath Ringin (nee Cook) who gave a most interesting and entertaining outline of her family's connection with the Morwell and Yallourn North districts. For those who missed the meeting, a tape of Kath's talk is available for loan.

It has been decided that, in future, we will hold our monthly meetings in our rooms at the Old Town Hall and our thanks go to the Presbyterian Church for the use of their premises over the past years.

A group of members visited the Centre for Gippsland Studies last month to investigate the various methods of cataloguing and our thanks go to Linda Kennett for her help. We plan to develop a cataloguing system which will enable easy access to our collections and a filing and storage system which will preserve not only our extensive photographic collection but also the various documents, books and artifacts in our possession.

The next meeting of the Society will be held in the Old Town Hall.
TUESDAY, APRIL 19, at 7.30 pm.

HERITAGE WALK

To celebrate Heritage Week, Morwell Historical Society will conduct a Historical Walk along Commercial Road from Sacred Heart Church to the Old Town Hall on Sunday, April 24. The walk, to be led by Mr Will McRoberts, will leave the car park near the Gippsland Business College at 1.30 pm and will take in sites of interest and significance in Morwell's history. Members of the public are most welcome to participate.

For further information, contact Elsie McMaster (051)341149.



A New Book for Our Library

Moe Historical Society has kindly given us a copy of 'Three Lifetimes of Dairying in Victoria' by Ken Sillcock. The Sillcock family was, and still is, well known in the Yinnar area.

First published in 1972, this is an account of the experiences of three generations of dairy farmers in Gippsland but it is much more than a personal history and covers not only the dairying lifestyle but technological and scientific advances, political control, economics, marketing and related developments. Our thanks go to Moe Historical Society for their gift.

EXCURSIONS

We have been invited to take part in an excursion organised by Traralgon Historical Society to the Seacombe - Letts Beach area on Sunday May 22, leaving Traralgon at 9.30 am. At Traralgon Society's monthly meeting on Tuesday May 10, Mr Carl Wilson, a long-time resident of the Seacombe district will be the guest speaker and the excursion on May 23 will be related to his talk. Members interested in attending the meeting and/or the excursion may like to contact Elsie McMaster (051)341149 or Eric Lubeke (051)342203 to arrange sharing of transport.

Preliminary Notice:

At the October meeting of Traralgon Historical Society, Mr Jack Muleman will speak on the Coopers Creek area and there will be a related excursion to Coopers Creek on Sunday October 23. More details later.

GIPPSLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES MEETING

The Annual Conference of the combined Gippsland Historical Societies will be held on Saturday, May 7, at Bairnsdale.

The gathering will commence with morning tea at 10.15 am followed by the business meeting, lunch (B.Y.O.), and time for informal discussion, exchange of archival material etc. Member societies are invited to bring along their own publications for display and sale and the Bairnsdale Museum will be open for inspection. Our hosts would appreciate an indication of numbers so, if you plan to attend, please let Elsie McMaster, (051)341149, know by April 30.

NOTES FROM 'GIPPSLAND ROUNDUP' Vol 9, No1, 1994.

(Newsletter of the Centre For Gippsland Studies)

* The Annual Conference of the Centre For Gippsland Studies will be held on Saturday October 15 this year. The title of the Conference is '*Putting Gippsland on the Map*' and it will look at "how Gippsland has been mapped, surveyors, interpreting maps such as parish plans, and even recent techniques such as cultural mapping." (Gippsland Roundup Vol 9, No 1, 1994). More details will appear in a later newsletter.

* C.G.S. has decided to extend the exhibition of 'Yallourn Revisited' and has received a number of donations to add to the collection. A 'portable' exhibition entitled '*Five Gippsland Naturalists*' will be on display at a number of venues, including, it is hoped, most Gippsland libraries. The exhibition focusses on the work of Norman Wakefield, Bill Cane, Elsie Rossiter, Tarlton Rayment and Jean Galbraith.

* The Latrobe Valley Regional Library Service is producing a brochure on their Yallourn Collection which consists mainly of books published between the late 1940s and early 1970s and includes books from the old Yallourn Public Library.

* The Danish Australian Society has published a newsletter outlining the activities of this group in Gippsland. In February a Danish picnic was held at Poowong East where a significant number of Danes settled in the 1870s. The next activity will be held at Maffra on Saturday May 21. It will focus on Danes and the sugar beet industry and will include a visit to the Maffra Sugar Beet Museum. More information can be obtained from Beryl Olsen, Drouin Rd Poowong East 3988 or Lyn Johnson, Hillcrest, Neerim South 3831.

(Our thanks to the Centre For Gippsland Studies for the above items from their Newsletter.)

CHANGING STYLES IN JOURNALISM

It is interesting to note, on looking through old copies of our local newspapers, the change in journalistic style over the years. Here are a few extracts which highlight the changes!

From 'Gippsland Times' June 7, 1878:
Morwell (from a Correspondent):

"The question is, who are we to get now as a representative for South Gippsland in the place of Dr. McCartney? It would scarcely do to put Mason in. I think McKean would be far preferable, if we could get him to keep his temper."

A Voice from Traralgon: (on the candidacy of a Mr Slattery of Sale for the seat of South Gippsland).

Sir - ... for good straight impudence commend me to the composer of Slattery's address. What has this local nonentity to commend him?...does Mr Slattery think his experience in one Council makes him competent for a representative? Or is he relying upon his

newly-acquired J.P.-ship to carry him through? We certainly hope he will take the advice of an Honest Man, and retire at once to the duties of his commercial life. Do not be made the tool of others and do not think that South Gippsland will dance to your music, charm you ever so wisely."

And here is part of the report of a wedding, from the 'Morwell Advertiser' of March 14, 1890:

"On Wednesday last, Mr John Grant and Miss Nellie Vary...were joined in the holy bonds of matrimony. At the altar the bride looked very pretty attired in cream liberty silk trimmed with lace to match and adorned with sprays of orange blossoms. The neat little church (Driffield) was literally packed with friends who after the ceremony showered their congratulations on Mr and Mrs Grant. A start was then made for the homestead and quite 150 sat down to the long tables laid in the best style with all the delicacies of the season. The host and hostess were spoken of in the most eulogistic terms and the happy couple consigned to everlasting joy and felicity. The breakfast over, the visitors hadn't to search for some employment to while away the afternoon. Lawn tennis, music, cricket, skating and quoits all had their partisans and when after tea, dancing was started, we may fairly anticipate the average human had reached the zenith of felicitous imagination and kept floating on the wings of a coruscating fancy until the grey streaks of dawn told of the practicability of this world and that he who would be happy with his neighbour must needs labour in the vineyard of life. All who were present will never forget the day's enjoyment afforded them by the hospitality of Mr and Mrs Vary."

"Sun" Thurs. Jan 20, 1994

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL REPORT 1993-94

A chip off the old block but so much cooler

REFRIGERATORS are now common! But they weren't in 1926 when I was a kid in the Mallee.

We had a Coolgardie safe, a large box-like structure with hessian sides that were kept wet by water syphoning from a container on top.

The wind blowing through the wet hessian kept butter, cheese, milk and meat reasonably cool in temperatures that went over 100 degrees in the summer.

But meat still got "blown" and a good thing to do was wash left-over meat in vinegar. That took away the tainted taste and provided an opportunity to brush off the blowflies' eggs.

When we shifted to Melbourne, our first cold-storage unit was an ice chest. For the first time, butter wasn't runny and cheese oily.

The ice man delivered three times a week and a block of ice cost one shilling, but if you didn't have a shilling, and many didn't because of unemployment, he'd chip off sixpence worth with his ice pick.

But we still, at times, ate tainted meat, sour milk and rancid butter. Food was too precious to waste because money got tighter as the Depression deepened.

When the kerosene-operated refrigerator hit the market, the age of miracles began. A pint of kero feeding a wick caused expansion and contraction in the freezing unit that provided a chilly atmosphere in which one could make ice blocks.

After the war our first fridge was a kero one, bought secondhand.

It was an Electrolux. Another good model was the Silent Knight. Many Silent Knights are still around, serving as beer fridges in sheds.

Our kids all possess deep freezers and fridges. Their fridges, of course, are also chock-a-block full.

Compare that with our kero fridge of 40 years ago! You'd see a roast beef for the weekend, a few pounds of stewing steak and maybe a dozen sausages, plus the milk and butter and any left-overs.

And that, in comparison to my mum's ice box in the '30s, was luxury beyond compare.



Our Society has completed another busy year. Probably the most satisfying aspect has been the move into the Foyer of the old Morwell Town Hall which provides display space and storage for our growing collection of photographs, documents, books and artifacts. A great deal of work has been done - the main foyer has been painted, carpets cleaned, a hanging system purchased and vertical blinds installed to protect the photographic display. During the year we plan to develop a cataloguing system for the various collections in our care. The Ivan Maddern Memorial Seat, erected by our Society some years ago has, after several moves, been located in an attractive setting in Maryvale Crescent and this will be its permanent home. Members have taken part in a number of activities during the year, one of the most pleasing being the launch of the book on Morwell's historic walks by Grade 5/6 students at Commercial Road State School. The Society has 44 registered members and our monthly newsletter is sent out to 48 recipients, including six neighbouring Historical Societies. Altogether we have had a pleasing year and we look forward to bigger and better things in 1994-95.



- TED McDONALD

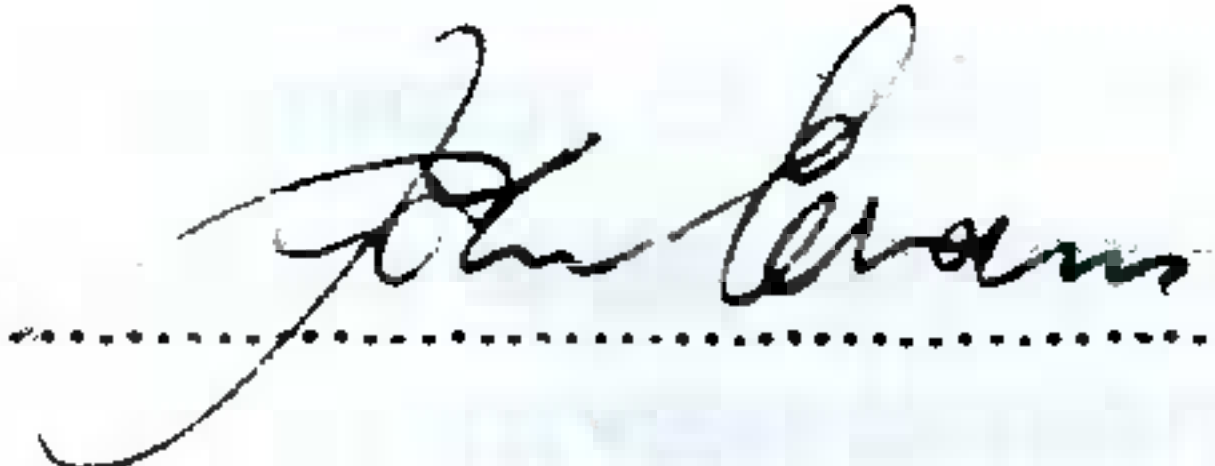
MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY INCORPORATED
 STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
 FOR THE YEAR ENDED 328 FEBRUARY 1994

	1993/94		1992/1993	
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Balance brought forward				
C*Wealth Cheque Account	2,289.99		1,766.23	
C*Wealth Term Deposits	<u>8,500.00</u>	10,789.99	6,000.00	7,766.23
INCOME				
Bank Interest	414.75		478.68	
Book Sales	464.00		3,977.32	
Donations	7.00		101.00	
Loan Repayment	1,700.00			
Morwell City Centennial Display			2,301.00	
Photo Sales	477.50		652.50	
Subscriptions	284.00	3,347.25	270.00	7,780.50
		<u>14,137.24</u>		<u>15,546.73</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Accommodation			56.00	
Advance - Interest Free for Publishing	1,700.00			
Bank Fees	14.76		13.74	
Book (Yallourn Power House)	40.00			
City of Morwell Centenary Expenses			1,818.00	
Corporate Affairs	27.00		27.00	
Insurance	64.00		60.00	
New Rooms - Floor Cleaning	100.00			
- Furnishings	1,454.50			
- Paint	32.00			
Petty Cash	200.00		150.00	
Photo Expenses	937.50		2,528.00	
Rent for Meeting Room	100.00			
Stationery			30.00	
Subscriptions	89.00	4,758.76	74.00	4,756.74
		<u>4,758.76</u>		<u>4,756.74</u>
ACCUMULATED SURPLUS				
C*Wealth Cheque Account	1,178.48		2,289.99	
C*Wealth Term Deposits	<u>8,200.00</u>		<u>8,500.00</u>	
		<u>9,378.48</u>		<u>10,789.99</u>

BANK RECONCILIATION

Balance as per Bank Statement - 28.02.94 1,178.48

Checked and found to be in accordance with Records produced

 John Evans, Hon. Auditor
 10.03.94

FAMILY HISTORY RESOURCES IN THE RHSV LIBRARY

The RHSV library is an under-utilised repository of books, journals, manuscripts, microfiche, photographs, maps etc which enable family historians to look at the lifestyles and times of their forebears from the perspective of the local historian.

The most frequently consulted resources are the Melbourne and Victorian directories (1847-1974), supplemented by the select collection of Almanacs (1849-1937). A number of specialist directories such as the Australian Pastoral Shearers and Selectors directory and various Postal directories add further interest for researchers pursuing elusive information.

Municipal, church, and school year books are standard fare for the family historian, but how many have examined professional and sporting indexes and registers for family records? The Australian Cycling News or the Victorian Oarsman and Rowing register 1857-1919 contain useful references.

Published histories of businesses, associations, organisations and clubs can assist the researcher. Did your forebear belong to a Temperance association, a lodge or the A.N.A.? Was he/she a member of a trade union? Perhaps library material relating to the Old Colonists' Association will lead to new lines of research.

Victoria and Its Metropolis, the *Cyclopedia of Victoria* and *Records of Pioneer Women of Victoria 1835-1869*, provide information which includes date of arrival, place of residence and occupation.

An extensive collection of local history monographs are a rich source of genealogical material. Ranging from school essay competition entries to commissioned works, the titles are distinctive for subjects covered, sources of information and origins of publication. Very few districts are not represented.

Member society newsletters, magazines and journals are available for perusal. The content of these place emphasis on the different aspects of local history development - Koori life, European settlement, family histories, burgess rolls, cemetery records, newspaper indexes, personal accounts and diary records. In addition, the Library's serials include local and interstate historical and genealogical society publications.

No family historian should overlook the *RHSV Victorian Historical Journal* formerly the *Victorian Historical Magazine*. First published in 1911, editors placed due emphasis upon reminiscences, memories and obituaries. The four volume index is available for pur-

chase and is recommended reference for researchers.

The manuscript collection, which exceeds 20,000 items, holds a rich archive of documents, private papers, research articles and memorabilia donated to the Society. The publication of the catalogue, *Sources of Victoria's Heritage*, has ensured the accessibility of a] material. Letters from the goldfields, the Log Book of the Oliver Lang (Liverpool/Melbourne 1854), the diary of Rev Francis Hales 1848-1851 and John Fraser's *My Holiday* (1874), are examples of references which can be used.

Family historians should ask to see the Index of the Pioneer Register - a Register of Persons who arrived in the Colony before 1900. Registration forms for more than 900 entries, together with supporting documentation and photographs have been lodged with the Society.

Commenced in 1917, many early registrations were completed by pioneers or their children. The forms contain more than 3000 names. Should researchers be expecting to find newspaper files, cemetery transcriptions or school registers, they will be disappointed. However, several series of newspaper cuttings books, all indexed, will attract much interest. Particularly strong in shipping, local history and biographical information, the books supplement published material.

Access to the Vertical Files, the cornucopia of material to which researchers are attracted as bees to the hive, is assisted by a Files Subject Heading. No description does justice to the content - family histories, obituaries, suburban and country districts brochures, programmes, historical sketches and much more!

The family historian must take time to look at the Visual Collection catalogue. This astonishing and wonderful collection encompasses some 6000 photographs, 1000 glass slides and 800 postcards among its treasures. major subjects areas include pioneers, architecture, street scenes and views. The picture collection of drawings and paintings and the map collection with over 2000 accessions are likewise catalogued and cross referenced.

The library is pleased to offer its resources to family history researchers. A telephone call or a letter prior to a visit will ensure some material relevant to the search be immediately available and if required a microfiche reader booked.

Judith Bilszta