

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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President: Stephen Hellings

Welcome to the January/February Newsletter

The ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC will be held on **TUESDAY, MARCH 19 at 7.30pm** in our rooms at **21 Church St, Morwell**. Election of office bearers for the coming year will be held. All positions will be declared vacant.

'Cockies, Townies, Church and the Rest'

On April 12,13 and 14, Morwell Historical Society, Airlie Bank Gallery and St Mary's Anglican Church, Morwell, will present a weekend of activities to coincide with the National Trust's *Victorian Heritage Festival*. Entitled *'Cockies, Townies, Church and the Rest'*, the activities will include historical walks through Hazelwood Cemetery and along Commercial Road, Morwell; a family picnic day in the grounds of Airlie Bank Gallery featuring displays of memorabilia of local farming families, and an art show and historical display in St Mary's Church to mark the centenary of the Anglican Diocese of Gippsland. Any local families interested in participating in the memorabilia display are asked to contact Gloria Auchterlonie – Tel: 51344602

Further details of the weekend's activities will appear in our March newsletter.

BOOK LAUNCH

Members are invited to the launch of a new book on Yallourn written by Meredith Fletcher. ***'Digging People Up for Coal: a History of Yallourn'*** Will be launched at Monash University, Churchill, on Thursday 28 February at 5pm. If you would like to attend, please let Elsie McMaster know by February 20.

NEXT MEETING:

Our first meeting for the year will be held on
Tuesday, February 19 at 7.30pm in our rooms at 21 Church St Morwell
HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!

PROPOSED EXTENSION OF HAZELWOOD OPEN CUT COAL FIELD

The following is taken from *Heritage Victoria* Annual Report for 2001.

A project of historical and archaeological investigation has recently been undertaken as a result of the continuing expansion of the Latrobe Valley's coal mining industry. Hazelwood Power, in association with Heritage Victoria and Biosis Research P/L have developed a strategy to ensure that any places of cultural heritage significance that are located within the area of the mine expansion are identified and appropriately recorded prior to disturbance.

Ten historical archaeological sites, as well as a number of aboriginal sites, were located. To date, seven sites have been investigated and the results of three of these investigations are discussed below.

The Ronald's Homestead was occupied from c1892 to 1944. Local residents recalled that the homestead had been destroyed in the fires of 1944 that devastated much of the Valley. Archaeological evidence correlates directly with this anecdotal information. Extensive evidence of burning was exposed including burnt glass and deposits of charcoal. In addition to the house structure, evidence for a cistern, a shearing/hayshed, and stable and coach house, a sheep dip, stockyards and a domestic dump was found. Ceramic, glass, leather, metal and bone artefacts were located, which provide an insight into the behaviour of the residents of the Ronald's Homestead.

Local sources considered the site of the former ***Macmillan's Homestead*** the location of the first settlement in the region in 1844. The Macmillans occupied the property from 1860 until 1919, when the land was acquired for soldier settlement. Owing to the possibility of 1840s occupation at the site, it was necessary to undertake a program of archaeological excavation. The excavation failed to find evidence of any occupation of the site from this period. Extensive twentieth century remains were found, along with various deposits of nineteenth century refuse to the rear of the house structure. Archaeological evidence demonstrated that the former Macmillan Homestead was an extensive domestic and agricultural complex occupied from the late nineteenth century to the twentieth century.

An archaeological monitoring program was undertaken at the ***Applegate's Homestead*** in conjunction with that at an adjacent ***Aboriginal Site***. No substantial structural remains were located at the Applegate's Homestead. The evidence found at the site was comprised of a domestic dump and an orchard. Although the location and layout of the house structure and associated buildings remains unknown, the contents of the domestic dump could again provide information about the people who had lived at the site. As an example, various patent medicine bottles and jars were recovered, which suggest a reliance on alternative medicines in the absence of accessible conventional medical treatment.

The investigation of the archaeological sites in the Hazelwood area has had a number of pleasing outcomes. The local community has been involved in the background research component of the project and has helped to provide a detailed record of the area's history. Hazelwood Power has commissioned a book on the history of the families who previously lived in the Hazelwood/Hazelwood West area. Significant artefacts recovered during the excavation projects have been delivered to Heritage Victoria's conservation laboratory for cataloguing, storage and treatment.

RECENT ADDITIONS TO OUR COLLECTION

Biography of Stan Winchester

Our thanks go to member Betty Woolley (nee Winchester) for a biography of her father, the late Stan Winchester, one of Morwell's best-known citizens in the 1930s –1980s.

Born in Fitzroy in 1904, Stan and his wife Norma came to live in Morwell in 1935 and, over the next 20 or so years he became one of Morwell's best-known and most successful builders, associated with the building of around 300 houses in the district. (At first he could not afford a truck but would balance his timber and building needs on his pushbike and ride to work. A local friend used to say "If ever you saw a load of timber on wheels, you could be sure Stan Winchester was under it!")

He later became first Building Inspector, then Building Surveyor with Morwell Shire. Stan was a foundation member of Morwell Rotary Club, receiving a Paul Harris Fellowship in recognition of his service and community work. He was also a long-serving member of the Morwell Hospital Committee, the Good Neighbour Council and numerous other community groups.

The full biography, together with a number of photographs, press cuttings and certificates are now available in our archives.

'Cows and Coal' compiled by members of the Churchill Neighbourhood Centre Creative Writing Class–2001. This is a collection of reminiscences of local residents as revealed in interviews with class members.

Press Records of Hazelwood/Churchill. Our thanks go to Mr J.Koedijk of Churchill for a most comprehensive collection of newspaper articles relating to the planning, building and development of Churchill. These provide not only a record of events but a valuable insight into community attitudes of the period.

The 60 Year History of the Morwell Caledonian Pipe Band 1939-1999

Our thanks go to Mr John Davidson of Traralgon, long time band member and compiler of the book for this excellent record of the band's history. It is a treasure trove of press reports, reminiscences and photographs covering the 60 years of the band's activities to 1999 in great detail.

Hazelwood Estate School 60th Anniversary Reunion

Many thanks to Ann Pawley for a collection of photographs, documents and reports relating to the 60th Anniversary Reunion of students of Hazelwood Estate School, held in 1986.

Photos and Bricks

We have also received two Yallourn bricks and a number of photographs of historical interest from Mr B Lenscak and Ms J Dodson and we thank them both for their donations.

ADVERTISER
11/10/1962

HAZELWOOD TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE TO MEET

A positive step towards the fulfilment of the Latrobe Valley's destiny will be taken in Morwell today when the planning committee for Hazelwood township meets for the first time.

The committee comprises three members from Morwell Shire Council and three from the Housing Commission.

Morwell's representatives are Crs White and Jones and Shire Engineer, Mr J. W. F. Connan.

The Commission will be represented by its chairman, Mr V. J. Bradley, chief technical officer, Mr R. Burkitt, and chief architect, Mr R. R. Prentice.

Housing Commission secretary, Mr G. G. Bolwell,

will also attend the meeting.

It was previously announced that the planning and siting of Hazelwood would be authorised at Cabinet level, to ensure that the satellite township became one of Australia's showpieces.

Every effort will be made to avoid mistakes incurred when mass

home building was completed to a very tight time schedule.

Morwell's "Butterbox Hill," has often been cited as an area which could have been greatly improved had proper planning been done beforehand.

After Monday's initial meeting it is likely that the six-man committee will meet at frequent intervals, because the first 300 homes at Hazelwood are expected to be finished before the end of 1964.

Additional homes will be built at the rate of 150 a year. Forty per cent of the lots to be opened up at Hazelwood will be offered to the public for private home-building.

ADVERTISER
5/11/1962

HOUSING COMMISSION VICTORIA

Lease of Farm Property Hazelwood

Tenders are invited for a 12 months lease from the end of December, 1962, for approximately 194 acres of dairying or grazing land, together with a 4 room W.B. house with S.C. stove, H.W.S., Sep., Sew., phone garage, town water and outbuildings, being approximately 6 miles from Morwell.

For further particulars contact Mr. Riach, Estates Branch, 7th Floor, Head Office, Phone 60-0511, ext. 311.

Tenders close at 12 noon on Tuesday, 20th November, 1962, and must be submitted on official tender forms and envelopes.

Any tender not necessarily accepted.

Lease of Farmlet Hazelwood

Tenders are invited for a 12 months lease from the end of December, 1962, for approximately 6 acres of land, together with a modern W.B. home containing 2 B.R., Lounge, Kitchen, Elec. Stove and H.W.S., car port, phone, town water, situated approximately 5 miles from Morwell.

For further particulars contact Mr. Riach, Estates Branch, 7th Floor, Head Office, Tel. 60-0511, ext. 311.

Tenders close at 12 noon on Tuesday, 20th November, 1962, and must be submitted on official tender forms and envelopes.

Any tender not necessarily accepted.

30,000 AT HAZELWOOD

Morwell Waterworks Trust and Sewerage Authority are to be responsible for servicing the Hazelwood satellite town, which will have a population of 5000 by 1971.

The authorities accepted the assignment on Friday following a letter from the Housing Commission of Victoria. Consulting Engineers, Garlick and Stewart, are now working on plans for the area.

The Housing Commission's letter was: "You will recall that, at a conference in Morwell concerning the development of Hazelwood Estate, it was agreed that your Trust would be the appropriate body to make the initial investigations and administer the supply of water to the estate.

"You will note that the area of intended Commission acquisition is approximately 1700 acres and could ultimately accommodate a population of between 20-30,000 persons. The planning area will be somewhat larger."

The letter continued that the SEC estimates that its Hazelwood Power Station and associated works will require a population of 5000 by 1971, comprising SEC personnel and associated population.

The first 300 homes at Hazelwood are scheduled for construction by 1964-65 and thereafter the building rate will be

at between 100 and 150 houses per annum.

To accomplish this, facilities will be required at the area of initial development by April, 1964. This initial

area has not as yet been determined, but it is envisaged that it will be in the northern half, somewhat to the west of Jeeralang Road.

More power giants ahead

The statement that the Hazelwood satellite town might ultimately accommodate between 20-30,000 people was obviously something of a surprise.

Chairman of the Morwell Waterworks Trust, Cm. V. Hourigan, said, "I just cannot see Hazelwood developing to this size—where are all these people going to work?"

"Will it become another Herne Oak?"

Cmr. J. Wes Jones said that, with electricity requirements doubling every nine years or so, many

more Hazelwood power stations' would be needed in the area. He added that the plans would make the satellite town 'the best in Australia.'

The SEC is likely to begin the building of another Hazelwood power station before the completion of the present one—it takes some years before start of construction to commissioning.

ADVERTISER
11/11/62