

# MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

published monthly, except December

The Society meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at  
7.30 pm at Collins Street Primary School

Secretary: Mrs. E. McMaster phone 34 1149

Vol. 6

No. 1

JANUARY 1990

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## WELCOME TO THE JANUARY NEWSLETTER

Our first newsletter for 1990 contains a variety of information. The publication, "Glimpses of our Past" has been a success. The answers to the crossword will be published in the February newsletter.

FIRST MEETING FOR 1990 FEBRUARY 20, 7.30 pm

## **BOOK NEWS** - "Gippsland Roundup" - Summer 1989 edition

The Jumbuk reunion in October proved so successful that the organizers are planning a more comprehensive history than the booklet prepared for the reunion. Advance orders for this publication can be sent to Mrs A Glover, 36 Fairview St, Traralgon, Vic. 3844.

By the time readers receive this issue of *Roundup* Norm Medew's (Sale Historical Society) book recounting many of his war experiences in the RAAF will be available. It is being launched at a RAAF reunion in Western Australia.

The Shire of Morwell, in preparation for its centenary celebrations in September 1992, is commissioning an historian to write the history of the shire. This will be a major publication.

John Pearson, School of Education, GIAE, is editing a series of letters written by two Gippslanders who enlisted in the First World War from Jumbuk, south of Morwell. The letters are evocative, simply expressed and very moving. The CGS will be publishing the collection early in 1990.

Readers of *Roundup* will be aware of the Port Albert Maritime Museum's project to reprint the articles on early Gippsland history written by the Rev. George Cox, and first published in the *Yarram Standard*. Volume One of *Notes on Gippsland history* was published in August 1988, and Volume Two, 'The beginnings of Gippsland', is at the printers as I prepare *Roundup*. Volume Two contains a fascinating array of information gleaned from the Melbourne and Sydney newspapers of the 1840s. A major theme in Volume Two of Cox's *Notes* is the 'Clonmel' and the consequences of its wreck. More details can be obtained from the secretary of the Port Albert Maritime Museum.

LOCAL DIRECTORY 1916 (cont).

Counties: Buln Buln and Tanjil

Parishes: Binginwarri, Budgerree, Hazelwood, Jeeralang and Jumbuk, part Maryvale, Mirboo, Narracan, Narracan South, Tanjil East, Wonyip and Yinnar

Member of Federal Parliament: Hon G.H.Wise

Members of Legislative Council(Gippsland south): Hons. E.J.Crooke and W.Pearson.

Member of Legislative Assembly: Mr. T. Livingstone.

Morwell Shire Council: President: Cr.J.McDonald (Morwell Riding)

Councillors:J.Daly, J.English, J.Howard,(Hazelwood Riding)

J.H.Edney, E.Heesom, W.J.Scanlon, (Yinnar Riding)

Editor's E.Kneebone, D.T.Latter, J.Radburn (Boolarra Riding)

(Note: It appears that two Morwell Riding councillors have been omitted - there were twelve councillors in all at this stage.)

Secretary and Engineer : Mr.T.Sinclair

Health Officer:Dr.E.W.Sutcliffe.

Poundkeeper: Mr.T.Keogh, Yinnar

Inspector of Nuisances: Mr.C.Walsh

Bankers: Colonial Bank

Treasurer: Mr.A.W.Witt

Portions of Narracan and Traralgon Shires severed and constituted Morwell, 27th May, 1892.

Area: 275 Sq. Miles

Population: 2896

Rates: 1s 3d in the £, revenue, £3,700 for 1906-07.

Subdivided into four ridings - Morwell, Hazelwood, Yinnar, Boolarra,- on 22nd august, 1912.

The Council meets in Morwell on fourth Wednesday each month.

Loans - Act 1142 - £2,000. Sinking fund £481 18s 9d.

GOVERNMENT

Police Magistrate, Coroner and Warden - Mr. Harris

Justices of the Peace: Messrs J.Hall, L.Vary, Morwell; S.Vary, Driffield; J.H.Edney, Yinnar; D.T.Latter and W.F.O'Grady, Boolarra.

Police Officer: Constable Willett

Registrar of Births and Deaths: Mr.McIntosh

Government Surveyor: Mr.Pinninger

MILITARY

Commander of Morwell Detachment of A.L.H. - Lieutenant B.Ronald.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES

Morwell Branch A.N.A.- Pres. I Billingsley, Sec. W.Lyons.

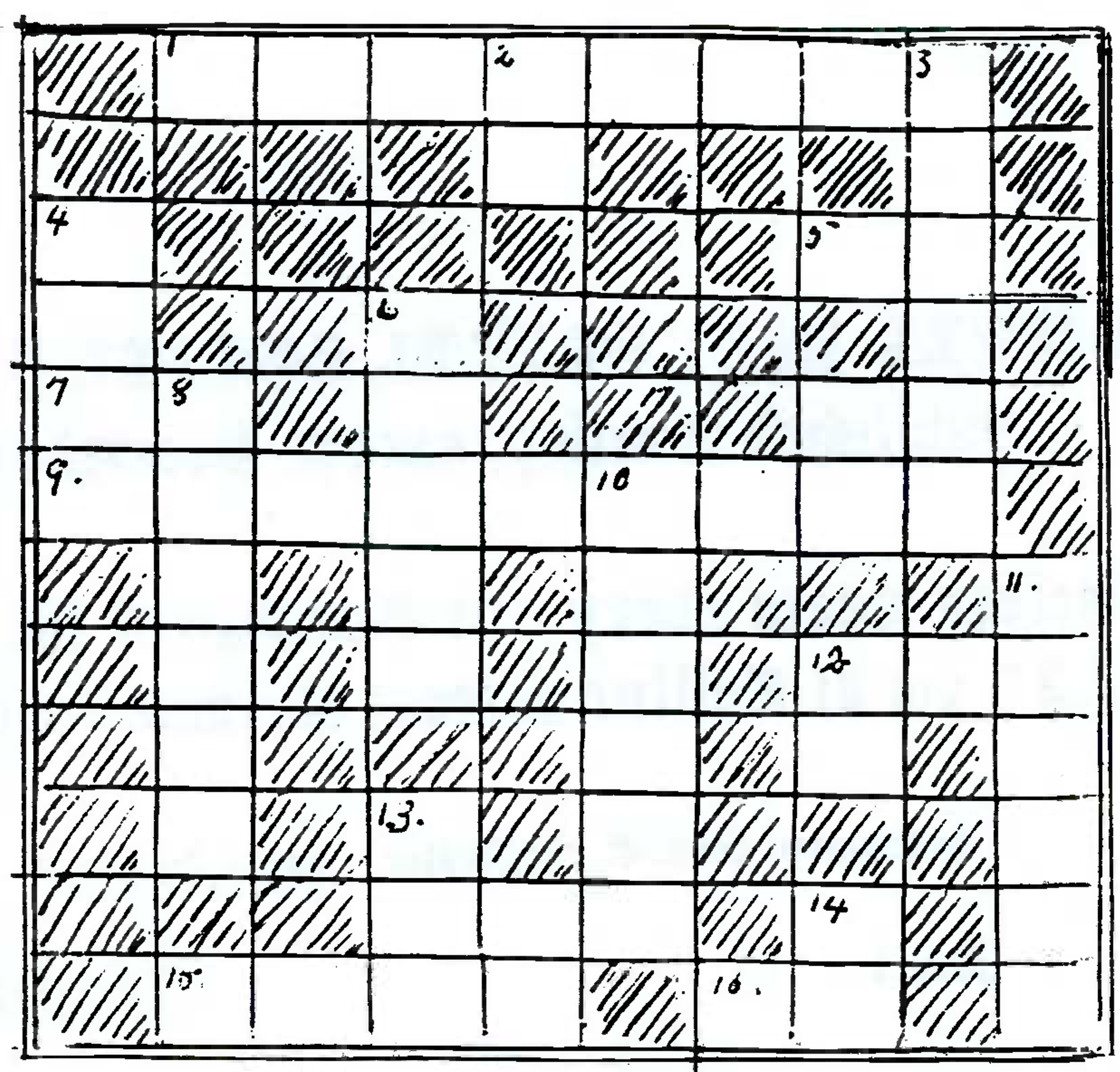
M.U.I.O.O.F. - N.G. B.Thomson, Sec. J.B.Hoyle

I.O.R. - C.R. J.Lindsay, Sec. R.J.Thompson

MECHANICS INSTITUTES

Morwell - Sec. H.McIntosh; North Hazelwood - Sec. W.Maxwell;

Yinnar - Sec. E.Robotham; Boolarra - Sec. J.Bell.



CROSSWORD  
 Answers will be found in  
 "GLIMPSES OF OUR PAST"

CLUES.

Across.

1. He opened his shop in 1877. A mighty smith was he!
5. The initials of our member named on P. 82.
7. The initials of a member of the Yinnar Sth Calf Club. P. 22.
9. The maiden name of our member who is in the group on P. 67.
12. The initials of a gentleman in a group on P. 32.
15. The surname of three Yinnar Sth students on P. 52.
16. The initials of our secretary.

Down.

2. Initials of a member who lives at Hazelwood Nth.
3. See P. 89. (Enough said)!
4. The \_\_\_\_\_ family, farmers (Drifffield), footballers, etc, etc.
6. Our member, a descendant of this famous family, mentioned on P. 98.
8. This member is pictured on P 95. The handsome gentleman on the right.
10. See P. 10 for this pioneering family.
11. This surname is found several times in our book. However our members with this name claim no connection with the notorious one on P. 96.
12. The initials of a student among those pictured on P. 52.
13. On P. 100 a group of children are sitting on a \_\_\_\_\_.
14. The initials of the author of 'A Souvenir History of Morwell.

GLIMPSES OF OUR PAST - LAUNCHED AND SAILING SMOOTHLY!

Morwell Historical Society's first publishing venture, "Glimpses of Our Past", was launched on Sunday, December 3rd, 1989. Covering the period from the 1870s to approximately 1950, it contains a selection of photographs held by the Morwell and Boolarra Historical Societies, together with a number lent by residents and ex-residents of Morwell Shire.

The book was officially launched by Morwell Shire President, Mr. Brian Broadbent at a gathering at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church hall. The Morwell East Senior Citizens' Choir and Mr. Keith Taylor entertained guests with musical items from the pre-1950 era and Miss Val Wilson delighted the audience with her recitations of "The Pioneers", "Clancy of the Overflow", and "The Fire at Ross's Farm". On display were maps and photographs from the Society's collection together with a number of items of historical interest. After the formalities, afternoon tea provided guests with the opportunity to renew old acquaintances, reminisce and, of course, to buy their copies of "Glimpses of Our Past".

"Glimpses" has been a runaway success. More than half of the thousand copies printed have already been sold and members of the editorial committee have been obliged to buy hats several sizes larger due to the compliments they have been receiving about the book.

Financially, all expenses are covered and we are already a couple of thousand dollars in front - unheard-of riches for our small society! One of the pleasant tasks in 1990 will be deciding what use to make of this money.

Money matters aside, though, it is gratifying that "Glimpses" has been so well received because our main aim was not to make a great profit but to present the public with some glimpses of our past and, hopefully, to generate interest in our activities as a Society.

Error: Only one error has so far come to light. On P.21, the two butter factories are incorrectly named. The captions should read:-

Top: B.W.Heyman's Butter Factory.....

Above: Yinnar Butter Factory.....

ie. the Yinnar factory is the one with the group of people in front.

# Glimpses of Morwell's past in print

MORWELL Historical Society is launching its first book this Sunday.

'Glimpses of Our Past - Early Morwell and District' will be released in St Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall, Church St, Morwell, at 2.30pm.

The book features a unique selection of photographs from the collections of Morwell and Boolarra Historical Societies, together with many contributions from residents and ex-residents of the Shire of Morwell.

While by no means only a photographic record, the book contains, as the name suggests, many fascinating glimpses of occupations and lifestyles from the past. Two years ago, Morwell Historical Society began a program

(partly funded by a bicentennial grant) of copying and preserving privately-owned photographs, and many of the photographs in the book are the result of the program.

THE following is a summary of the events presented in the book.

The first white settlers in what later became the Shire of Morwell were squatters following the tracks of Strzelecki and McMillan in search of fresh pastures.

The four squatting runs, taken up in the early 1840s, were Maryvale, Hazelwood, Merton Rush and Scrubby Forest.

In 1847, Lands Commissioner C J Tyers surveyed a route from Sale to Melbourne. At the point where it crossed the Mor-

well River, Peter Jeremiah Smith built a hotel in 1858. Henry Goldridge later built another hotel which became a stopping place for travellers on Cobb & Co's stage coaches. This crossing became known as Morwell Bridge and a small township grew.

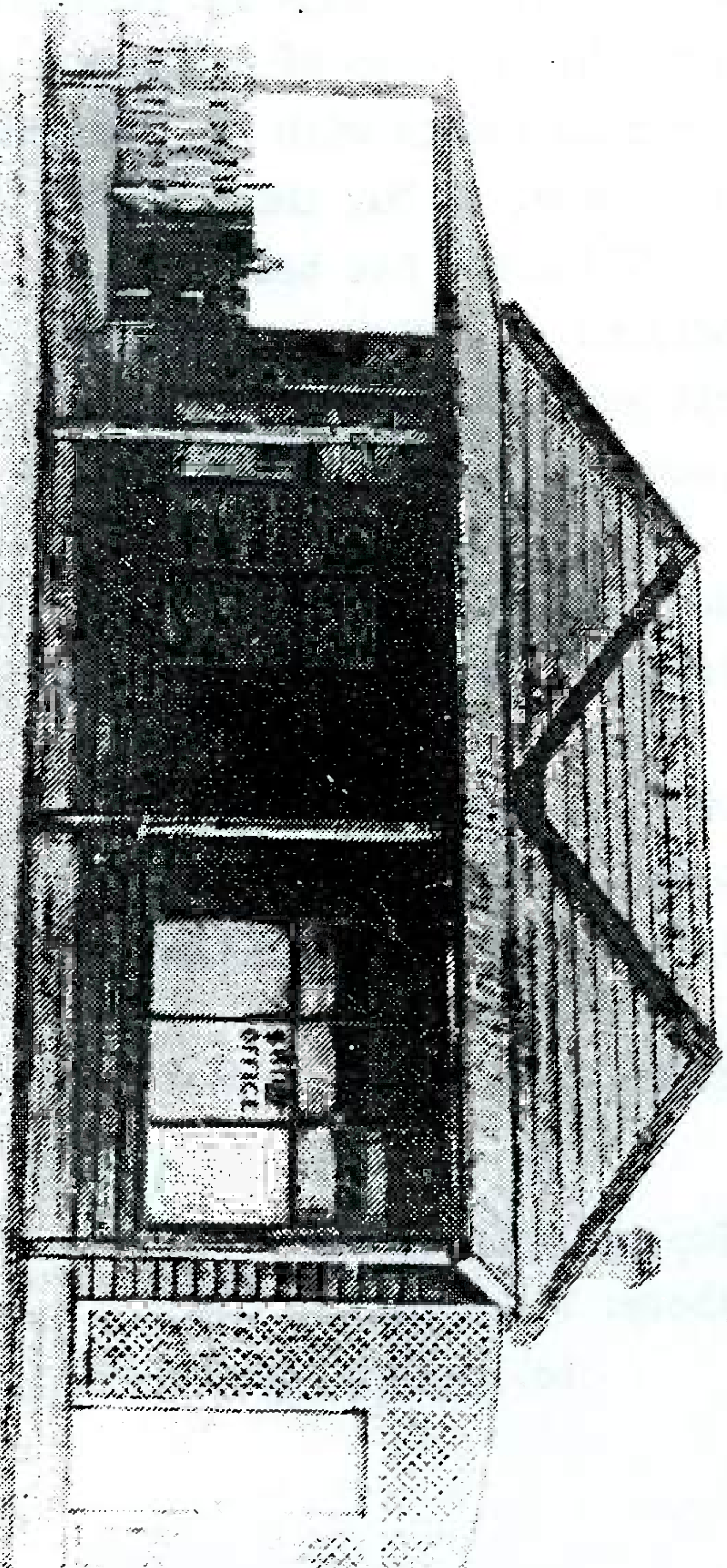
With the construction of the Melbourne-Sale railway line, completed in 1879, the importance of the road route declined. The township of Morwell began to serve the workers and the town continued to grow after the line was completed.

Yinnar and Boolarra, like Morwell, started out as railway camps when the Morwell-Mirboo branch line was constructed in 1885 and continued to grow, serving farming communities in their areas.

In the last decade of the 19th Century, selectors began to move in to the Strzeleckis and commenced the daunting task of clearing the dense forest to carve out dairy farms. Some were forced to leave after a few years, defeated by the poor roads, distance from markets, rabbits, noxious weeds and the lack of capital; the Strzeleckis earned the nickname of 'The Heartbreak Hills'.

However, most farmers who managed to stay on their land eventually made good and close-knit communities such as Jumbuck, Jeeralang, Gunyah and Budgerree developed.

Most areas had a school and a public hall, which was the 'magnetic centre' for the district and was used for dances.



This photograph records Morwell's old shire office at the west end of Commercial Rd in 1895.

meetings, church services and social gatherings.

In the 1880s, coal production began with the establishment of a number of mining companies in Morwell and Boolarra. The only one to survive more than a few years was the Great Morwell Coal Mine which, in the 1880s, experimented with briquette-making. The mine produced coal until 1930, when it finally ceased operations.

1920 saw the beginning of the excavation of the Yallourn Open Cut, part of the Morwell Shire and originally known as the Morwell Project. In June 1924, commercial power transmission from Yallourn to Melbourne commenced.

Herne's Oak, at first named Haunted Hills, was originally part of the Shire of Narracan. It was settled in 1929-30, when men seeking work at the Yallourn undertaking, but infeasible to rent Yallourn

houses, built shanties and small cottages on miners claims in the area.

In 1937, Australian Paper Manufacturers set up a pilot paper mill at Maryvale, north of Morwell. This has continued to expand and the company's pine plantations have become a familiar part of the landscape.

Tremendous industrial growth has taken place since 1950, notable developments being the Morwell open cut coal mine, briquette factory and power station, Hazelwood and Jeeralang power stations and the establishment of the township of Churchill.

In the 1980s, the shire has a balance of rural and secondary industries, supported by the main town and municipal centre of Morwell and the smaller townships, Churchill, Boolarra and Yinnar. ● 'Glimpses of the Past - Early Morwell and District' is on sale at Morwell Library for \$20.00.

## A message to readers

"THIS book does not claim to be a historical record. It is simply a collection of photographs from the past which we hope will be of interest to present day readers.

We have tried to include photographs from most parts of the Shire of Morwell, in order to paint as broad a picture as possible of life as it was.

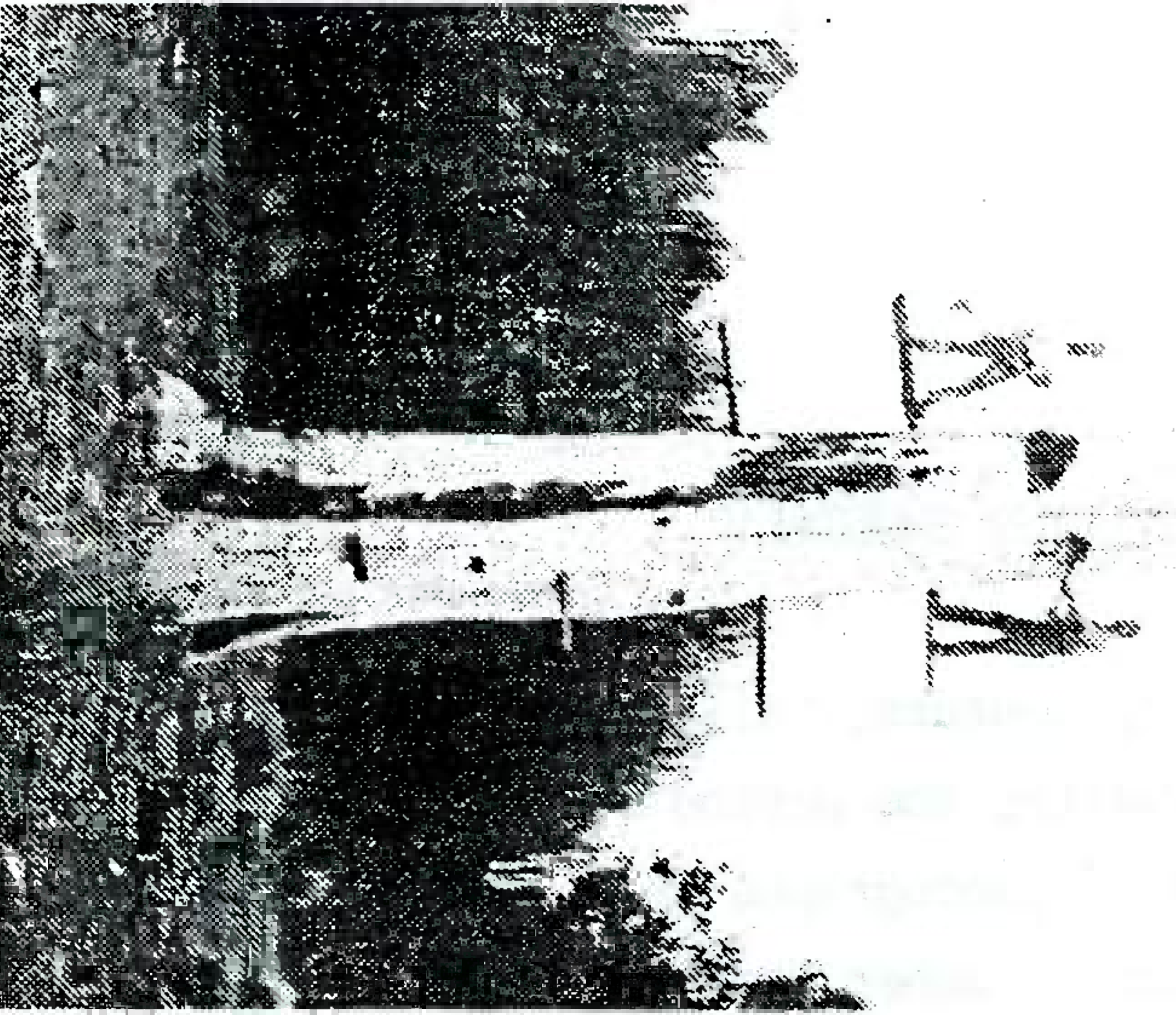
There are a few photographs dated later than 1950. A record of the tremendous growth which has taken place since then would fill a book on its own.

Inevitably there will be omissions and errors and we welcome contact from anyone who can add to or correct any of the information presented here.

A number of organisations and institutions are not represented in the book, because of a lack of photographic material, and we would be delighted to receive any photographs which can be copied and filed to add to our files to remedy these omissions.

We hope that you will find these glimpses of our past entertaining and informative and we wish you as much enjoyment in reading this book as we have had in compiling it."

Lou Bond, Jessie Cafiso, Eric Lubcke and Elsie McMaster, editorial committee.



Charlie Walker and Ferry Schiebel fell the last of the white gums on the 11th of April 1910.

# Writer appointed for Morwell \$100,000 history job

MORWELL Shire Council has appointed Monash University lecturer Stephen Legg to write a detailed history, costing \$100,000, of the shire for its centenary in 1992.

Mr Legg will leave his position with the university's Department of Geography and Environmental Science to take up a two year contract with the Morwell Shire. He was one of

eight well known authors who registered interest in the Morwell history project after it was advertised nationally last year.

Morwell Shire chief executive officer Ron Waters said Mr Legg would bring "considerable expertise in research work and writing capacity to the project." Some of Mr Legg's published work includes articles for the Gippsland Heritage Journal on

the abandonment of farms in South Gippsland, the Strzelecki Ranges and portraits of South Gippsland pioneers.

Morwell Shire has set a budget of \$100,000 for the history project to be financed over a four year period.

The shire's advisory committee on the centenary said the book will be fully researched and documented history of both

urban and rural areas of the shire, reflecting the work of the council and the influences of major figures on the development of the area.

The advisory committee is also planning a series of public events to mark the centenary which will focus on the declaration of the shire on 14 September, 1892.

Here is an edited transcript of an interview with Stephen Legg, broadcast on 3G1 on January 15. The interviewer's questions have been paraphrased but Mr. Legg's answers are given in full.

I. (Interviewer) - What approach do you think you'll be taking with the history?

L. (Legg) - I think you've got to take a very diverse approach, given that it's an almost unique mixture in Australian history of rural settlement and then, very rapidly from, certainly after the First World War, then very quickly after the Second World War, a change to urban and industrial settlement, so it'll have to be a very diverse approach that, on the one hand recognises the real value of historical research and yet can tie in a lot of themes and issues, some of which lie outside the area. For example, the political influence on the development of the area, particularly coal mining, and later on, even the late Henry Bolte's thrust for development within the Valley - unionism - a great diversity of issues there.

I. As an outsider, how do you perceive Morwell?

L. I guess in general, as an outsider, I should explain that I'm a historical geographer, and I see the past as being, probably, a different place - something that I have to analyse - so in that sense it's not too difficult for me to come in as an outsider because I've done case studies in that area. I see it as a community which is dynamic; particularly the post-war migration has led to a lot of diversity there and, to a certain extent, a historian's role is to try to find and present a sense of identity. I think that, clearly, with the centenary coming up, that's one thing the community is searching for because there's, not so much a conflict, but parallels, between the rural communities, particularly to the south, and the older settlers, and then the Valley community that's been brought in by the S.E.C., and then later on the more recent development that's associated with service industries, etc.

I. Would you say that a lot of towns in East Gippsland lack a sense of identity?

L. I think it's certainly true in the Valley itself. I think the further we move into East Gippsland, the more its history is dominated by the primary industries but it's this change from primary industries to secondary and then tertiary services all in the one place, and all of these having an influence at a local political level, such as at the Shire level, for example.

I. You mentioned the political influence on the path the history of Morwell took. Can you tell us exactly what that influence was?

L. At the moment I'm just beginning my study and I hope to do a fairly detailed analysis of how the local government perceived its role but certainly I'm aware, from just the time I've spent on local Shire minutes, that there's, for example, a Gippsland Municipal Association that goes right back to at least the late 19th century so there was a feeling of solidarity within Gippsland itself and not so much against, but compared with, the state government itself, and then, within that, you've got competition between different shires, competing for development.

I. How might its geographical location make Morwell a town different from any other region in Gippsland?

L. Well, I think it is very different. We've got to be wary of claiming the unique, which is what every author would like to do, but certainly, in terms of the whole of Australia, there are very few other places that have remained predominantly rural as well as industrial, and clearly in a geographical sense, the fact that, in the early days there was a junction of two rivers, the Latrobe and the Morwell, which attracted pastoral and, later, selection development; but, of course, the main geographical feature that led to the current development is the existence of brown coal so close to the surface in the Morwell area.

I. Does that mean the rural influence you were talking about is losing its significance?

L. That's one of the interesting issues that I'd like to pursue through the local government records to see whether the representation throughout the Shire from rural constituencies within the Shire has been maintained, even though the population has changed markedly towards an urban industrial people, who moved in since the late 1940s, that have very few links with the location, and I think that is a very challenging view in the history of the area.

I. Can you anticipate how you are going to present the history of Morwell? Will you do some sort of comparison with how it stands today?

L. Yes, I will. I mean, the basic answer is that it will be a chronological and thematic study but I think that, because of the peculiarities of the area in terms of its industrial development, in particular, it will need to be a comparative study in the sense that it'll need to take into account a lot of external differences and will need to compare whether there are any differences with neighbouring shires, as with Traralgon or Moe, or further south over the range.

The interview concluded with an invitation for anyone interested, or with something to contribute, to contact Mr. Legg at either the Shire of Morwell or the Centre For Gippsland Studies, G.I.A.E.

## JUMBUK EXCURSION

On SATURDAY FEBRUARY 17th, Traralgon Historical Society will conduct an excursion to JUMBUK, in which our members and friends are invited to take part. Those interested can join the convoy at Traralgon Post Office at 10 am or at Jeeralang Junction at 10.15 am on that day.

B.Y.O. Picnic Lunch.

The area covered will include some parts visited on the Morwell Historical Society's excursion last year but also those parts of the "top end" which we could not reach on that day because of the weather and the state of the roads.

At the Traralgon Historical Society's meeting, to be held on TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13th (in the R.S.L.Hall - 7.15 pm) our Vice-President, Eric Lubcke, and Mrs. Alma Glover, will speak on the history of Jumbuk and Eric and Alma will lead the excursion on the following Saturday.

If you need transport for either of these events, contact

Elsie McMaster (051)341149



Dear Mrs McMaster,

## LATROBE VALLEY HERITAGE STUDY

Earlier this year the Commission engaged a consultant to prepare a Heritage Study of the Latrobe Valley as outlined in the attached 'overview'.

The consultant, Ms Chris Johnston from Context Pty Ltd, is now undertaking research aimed at identifying those buildings or sites that are significant in the history of the Latrobe Valley. As part of this process a meeting of local historical societies was held at which Mr Eric Lubeck attended.

Firstly, I would appreciate you conveying our thanks to Eric for his contribution and support and secondly, ask if any other members of the Society could be of assistance. Specifically, we would appreciate any additional information regarding places that would be relevant for the proposed format of the booklet:

### 1. THE LATROBE VALLEY

An introduction to the booklet and an overview of settlement and change in the Valley, considering the attachment of the name 'Latrobe Valley' and what it symbolises.

This section would include some maps and photographs but no specific places.

### 2. THE RURAL LANDSCAPE

Rural settlement history and its evidence today. Sub-themes would cover the sequence of rural settlement (pastoral etc) as well as once-off enterprises such as draining Moe swamps, and rural industries such as butter factories.

### 3. THE TOWNS

This section would look at:

- surveying the towns (and the land) - evidence includes town layouts
- abandoning towns - evidence includes Yallourn houses elsewhere; town remnants left
- town planning - evidence

It would also include:

- travelling/transport routes (making the link between town location and different modes of transport)
- township commercial centre and buildings

### 4. HOUSING

Housing types and styles - evidence would include earlier housing areas/groups of houses of a particular period/style;

Building materials and associated industries - evidence includes lime kilns/concrete industry, timber, bricks etc.

### 5. CREATING COMMUNITY

Migration and settling - evidence would include housing; community buildings, churches, public parks and gardens etc. Different periods of migration and settlement would be distinguished.

### 6. WORK AND INDUSTRY

A 'work' focus on primary and secondary industry, to try and shown the individual and small-scale industry and workplaces, as well as the large-scale industries like the SEC and APM.

MORWELL DIRECTORY 1916. (As published in the Morwell Advertiser, Aug.4, 1916)

THE TELEPHONE

(9am to 8pm daily, Sundays and holidays excepted).

MORWELL

- 6 "Advertiser" (G.Watson, Proprietor)
- 11 Aherin, C.R. Commercial Rd.
- 14 Barry, R. Murdoch's Hotel, Commercial Rd.
- 1 Billingsley Bros. General Carriers and private residence.
- 1. Billingsley and Co. private residence.
- 13 Brown, Herbert H. Chemist, Commercial Rd.
- 10 Cricketers Hotel (Donald McKay)
- Club Hotel (H.M.Conlan)
- 9 Davey, Charles, "Waikomete"
- 22 Davey, L. Commercial Rd. Hazelwood Rd.
- 5 Green Bros. Tarwin St.
- 4 John Hall, Commercial Rd.
- 18 Hare, Les., Carrier, Livery Stables, Station St.
- 20 Hoyle, J.B. Commercial Rd.
- 8 Kleine, Thos. and Sons. Butchers.
- 15 McGauran, J & E. Morwell
- 19 Noy & Nash, Commercial Rd.
- 17 Ronald Benjamin "Hazelwood".
- 21 Sacred Heart Presbytery
- 2 Serjeant, Bruce & Frost-Samuels, Solicitors.
- 3 Shire Hall
- 12 Sutcliffe, Dr.E.W. Main St.
- 16 Tulloch, R.M. Tarwin St.

YINNAR

- 2 Edney, J.H.
- 1 Hall, John

BOOLARRA

- 1 Club Hotel (A.F.Ashley)
- 3 Railway Hotel (C.Boyd)
- 2 Malcolm, Bruce, "Clifton".

BANKS

Bank of Australasia - Manager Mr. Aherin  
 Colonial Bank - Manager Mr.Witt