

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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July 2001

President: Stephen Hellings

Welcome to the July Newsletter

'Celebration of Women' Display a Winner!

One of the many events held to mark the centenary of Federation was a recent display, at Mid Valley shopping centre, Morwell, entitled '*A Celebration of Women*'. Five local community organisations, including the *Latrobe Combined History Group*, took part, presenting displays illustrating the work and lifestyles of women over the past century. The Combined History Group's entry won first prize of \$600, donated by Mid Valley Shopping Centre management, and drew a great response from the public. Thanks are due to members of the Boolarra, Morwell, Yallourn North and Yinnar Historical Societies for presenting and manning the display and to Pauline and Tom Corrigan, of *Antiques & Collectables*, North Road, Yallourn North, for their generosity in lending furniture and other items for the display.

On the Internet

Those with access to the internet may like to log on to two excellent web sites with a Morwell content:

www.lvonline.com.au

This site contains a great segment on Morwell's history. Ben Claassens and Mary Hill, of *Claassens Computers*, 4 Church St. Morwell, have put in many hours building this site and we greatly appreciate their efforts in making our heritage available to internet viewers worldwide. The site is constantly being updated and is well worth a visit.

www.peoplesvoice.gov.au

This site, developed by the Federal government as part of the Centenary of Federation celebrations, contains information on many communities, both large and small, throughout Australia, Morwell among them. It is still under construction but, again, well worth logging on to.

If, like your newsletter editor, you are somewhat electronically challenged, most libraries have internet access and your friendly librarian will be able to help you log on. Alternatively, the grand children or the kids next-door are usually only too happy to display their computer prowess. However you do it, though, do have a look at these two web sites.

***NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, JULY 17
7.30pm – 21 CHURCH ST, MORWELL***

Collins Street State School

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of Collins Street State School No.4655 in Morwell and some of the ex-students are planning a reunion for later this year. The school closed in 1992. All ex-Collins Street students, parents, teachers and anyone else with a connection to the school will be welcome and the organisers would appreciate the loan of any photographs or memorabilia for the occasion. The date and venue will be decided upon very soon and there will be more details in our next newsletter. Meanwhile, you can contact Elsie McMaster (03 51341149) for further information.

MEMBERSHIP

Members are reminded that fees for the coming year are now due.
Fees are: \$13.00 Single member \$15.00 couple or family
 These fees include a bi-monthly newsletter (one per household) and accident and public liability insurance costs.

If a cross appears in this box we have no record of having received your subscription for the coming year. Subs can be sent to The Secretary, Morwell Historical Society, 2 Harold 3840.

Mechanical Vacuum Cleaner

We have, on display in our room in Church Street, a **mechanical vacuum cleaner**. Restored and loaned to us by **Ron Court** of Morwell, it dates back to 1912. The original brass plate on this machine reads:

Made in USA

CARBINE Vacuum Cleaner

1912 Model

UNITED DISTRIBUTING COMPANIES LIMITED

50 YORK ST, SYDNEY

As the machine is pushed or pulled over the carpet, a roller underneath operates a pair of bellows. These bellows create a suction at the nozzle at the front. A small bag between the nozzle and the bellows collects the sweepings .

As Ron says: 'One wonders at the choice of name – probably for Australia and N.Z. only. Carbine won the Melbourne Cup in 1890. He cleaned up the field there. It is possible that the principal of the company cleaned up on him too. What better choice for a cleaner!'

Collins Street State School No.4655

The following brief history (author unknown) was produced for the occasion of the opening of the Collins St. School library on 11 October 1968.

An area of approximately five acres on the site of the old Collins farm was purchased by the Education Department from Mrs A.M. Simmons (Mrs A.M.Collins) on 12 January 1950 as grounds for a new school.

In 1950 this site was prepared and in 1951, three 'Bristol' pre-fabricated two-room units were erected on a levelled portion of Collins' farm amid fruit trees and box thorn hedges. The Collins Street School opened in rooms at Commercial Road School in February 1951, the first Headmaster being Mr L. Kelly. The children moved into the Bristol units on 23rd April 1951 – the net enrolment being 200. By the end of the year the net attendance had reached 263. Preparatory children were enrolled in July 1951 but, until the end of the year they received tuition in St Mary's Church of England Hall, Latrobe Road.

Tenders were called for the sale and removal of the old Collins farmhouse in 1952. Electricity was first connected to the school in 1953.

The School Committee held its first meeting in May 1951, the members being: Mr A Froomes (Chairman); Mr D Wallis (Secretary); Mr R Cousins (Treasurer); Messrs R Guy, E McElroy, J.Palmer and L Bond.

A Mothers' Club was formed in March 1951, the office-bearers being Mrs Cooper (President); Mrs Corbett and Mrs Donchi (Vice presidents); Mrs McLean (Secretary) Mrs Harrison (Asst Secretary) Mrs Ferguson (Treasurer)..

Improvements to the school and its surroundings soon followed. Volunteer labour (parents and Morwell Apex Club), using trucks owned by Mr L Bond – he had a cartage business in Morwell at that time – concentrated on these improvements and the results of their work soon became evident. A working bee in September '52 cleared away any trees and box thorns from the ground and soil was carted for filling. Later the same year the grounds were levelled and graded. When Mary Street was completed in 1953, 120 shrubs were planted inside the fence line.

In 1954, an additional shelter shed was built, the cricket pitch constructed and the football goal posts erected. In 1955/56, three light timber construction classrooms were erected by Mr W Campbell. The same years saw the completion of the boundary fencing. Next year, 1957, oil heating was installed in all rooms and in '61, a further two rooms were built by Jennings Construction Ltd.

1965/66 saw the completion of the present school buildings when Mr W Campbell added one new room and converted one of the older rooms into a new office and a new staffroom.

(continued overleaf)

In 1965 a 'Hawksley' building was purchased from the S.E.C. and delivered to the site by Mr N M Fowler of Trafalgar - 12 December 1965. In 1966/67 numerous working bees were held, improvements made and the building as it is today was completed early in '68. The Mothers Club have provided many amenities e.g. blackout curtains, dividing curtain etc while the furniture and floor coverings were provided by the Education Department. Electricity was installed by Mr J Martin of Morwell, plumbing completed by Mr D Duthie of Morwell and heating installed by Gas and Fuel of Traralgon. Total cost of the library has been \$3,500 of which the Education Department contributed approximately \$2000. The remaining cost has been met by the two parent organisations of the school. Volunteer labour saved tremendous expense. This library was officially opened by the Assistant Minister for Education, the Honourable J.F. Rossiter, on 11 October, 1968.

NOTE: We hope to update this history before the planned reunion later this year. Any information would be appreciated. Please contact Elsie McMaster – Tel: 03 51341149

FEEL THE FEDERATION EXPERIENCE VISIT MELBOURNE'S PREMIER FEDERATION EXHIBITION

A uniquely Victorian Federation Exhibition has come to Melbourne - the home of Australia's first Federal Parliament.

From Barton to Bruce, Australia's first eight Prime

The exhibition presents a rare opportunity to view the original 1891 Female Suffrage Petition presented to the Parliament of Victoria. Known as the monster petition because of its size, it includes approximately 30,000 Victorian women's signatures and was tabled in Parliament with the support of Premier James Munro. It was not until the Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902 that women could vote, as they did in the first federally organised election in 1903

Another feature attraction is a visual documentary featuring original footage of a tour of Melbourne when the city was Australia's capital, juxtaposed with footage of Melbourne today. There is also a rare collection of photographs of Melbourne from the Federation era, and a stereoscopic 3-D viewer of Victoria's Federation celebrations and our state's Boer War troops.

Also on display will be:

The 1899 Victorian Voters Roll - 152,653 Victorians voted in 1899 for a federated Australia and only 9,805 voted against. This icon from the Parliamentary Library Collection gives the names, occupations and suburbs /localities of over 160,000 Victorian voters.

Ministers led our nation from Victoria's Parliament House for twenty-six years. Find out why and how by visiting the exhibition **Our Nation's First Capital: Federation and the City of Melbourne, 1901-27**, open from 19 May 2001. Discover who voted at the first federal election, and why. Visitors can even cast their own vote on whether Australia should become a republic. "The long road to Federation is mirrored in the debate about an Australian republic." said Public Record Office Victoria Director Ross Gibbs.

Legislative Assembly Mace - Replica of the original mace used by The House of Representatives in Melbourne until 1927, and then in Canberra until 1951.

Saddle Bag Ballot Boxes - Ballot boxes that were sent around on horseback so that people in remote areas could vote.

Children's Medals - Presented to Victorian school children to commemorate Federation in 1901, the Jubilee of Federation in 1951 and the Centenary of Federation in 2001.

Free education kits are available for students along with a free walking tour of Melbourne that incorporates important historical sites and buildings from the Federation era. Anyone wanting a value-added cyber tour can also visit the PROV website at www.prov.vic.gov.au

The Exhibition is a joint project devised by Public Record Office Victoria (PROV, the State's archives), the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and the Parliament of Victoria. The exhibition is supported by the National Council for the Centenary of Federation.