

THE MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Published every month except December.

The Society meets every 3rd Tuesday of the Month 7-30pm Collins St. State School Library

Mr. GEORGE BILLINGSLEY, of Morwell, is a native of the North of Ireland, and was born in 1864.

Mr. Billingsley came to Australia in 1889, bringing with him Mrs. Bil-



MR. GEORGE BILLINGSLEY, MORWELL.

lingsley and their two daughters. After living for some time in Melbourne he eventually settled in Morwell, Gippsland, and started in a small way in the business of carrying. Under Mr. Billingsley's management this business expanded to such an extent that before long he was using 45 horses in connection with his flourishing business, and opened out as a contractor in road construction work. The road building work was mostly done in the Morwell district, and he constructed the first deviation in the old Haunted Hills road.

Mr. Billingsley later devoted the whole of his time to this class of work, and is responsible for the building of most of the main roads in the Morwell district.

About this time he purchased his fine farming property known as "Glen Tolmie," which comprises some 240 acres of first-class grazing country situated right on the Morwell town boundary. Another holding at Pratt's Flats was also acquired.

Mr. Billingsley's family consists of five sons and three daughters, surviving out of a large family of ten children. One son, Alex., served overseas with the A.I.F. for five years before being invalided home.

During his long association with the district of Morwell Mr. Billingsley has done much for the progress of the locality.

The society, re-formed last November, is compiling a history of Morwell. Treasurer, Mrs Dorothy Taylor, said the society would copy and return any items borrowed unless the articles were donated.

The history and the society's library will soon be moved to a room at the Morwell Shire Offices.

In the meantime, new members are welcome to attend society meetings in the Collins St Primary School library at 7.30pm on the third Tuesday of each month.

THE EXPRESS
JULY 2 1985

History search

IF YOU have old photographs or newspaper cuttings about Morwell's early days, the Morwell Historical Society would like to hear from you.

Mr G BILLINGSLEY... from VICTORIA and
RIVERINA a biographical record 1933

NEWS OF INTEREST

President, Lou Bond and Archivist, Bruce McMaster attended a meeting of Regional Historical Societies in Moe to discuss the requirement of the State Archives that early municipal records be moved to Laverton.

The Royal Historical Society of Victoria has moved to new rooms in the old Y M C A building which is now part of the Victorian Art Centre complex.

Darell Blewett has just compiled a brief history of Morwell Primary School No. 2136, (Commercial Road). Costing \$2.00, the book not only covers the school but places it in the context of the development of the State System of Education in Victoria. Section 1 deals with early schools in the Morwell district. Section 2 looks at early Morwell, from simple beginnings through to the early developments of the coal resources. Two articles reproduced in Section 3 (which deals exclusively with Primary School No. 2136), provide valuable reminders of the school crossing debate in June 1965. The book is available from Darell at the school, phone no. 34 2329.

VEIL OF TIME by MORWELL HODGES pages 54-55

I would like to have remembered something of my birth-place. All I have ever seen of it were fleeting glimpses caught when passing through it in the train en route to Sale about 1924 to fill temporary reportorial positions on the Sale "Mercury" (then owned by the late Mr. Harry Luke) and "Times" (Mr. S. J. Overend). The "Mercury" is now incorporated in the "Times."

Evidently Father was a "live wire" in Morwell, for records show him to have taken a keen interest in local affairs.

Besides being editor-proprietor of the "Morwell and Yinnar Gazette" (since amalgamated with the "Morwell Advertiser," owned by the highly-esteemed Watson family), he was, among other things, secretary of the Maryvale M.U.I.O.O.F., and a prominent member of the Morwell Brass Band.

"He was" (vide "Morwell Gazette" obituary on him, 1/10/'42) "one of the local syndicate of five, comprising Messrs. Hodges, John Hall, C. E. Miller, G. Watson and Batty, who leased the old Morwell Show Grounds for a period of five years, built an excellent asphalt bicycle racing track and organised successful bicycle sports meetings, which were very popular at that time. At one of the meetings a challenge match of £25 a side was held between the late Mr. John Hall, of Morwell, and Mr. T. McLean, of Sale, for the Championship of Gippsland, over one mile, two miles, and five miles, the winner of two out of three to get the stake and claim the championship. Great interest was aroused by the contest. Mr. Hall won, and his win was very popular."

Well, a year or so passed, and Father, for some reason or other that I never knew, decided to forsake the inky way and try his luck at hotel-keeping; he had had such a congenial time as a guest of Grandfather Farrell's in Burnie, and Mother was such an excellent cook, housekeeper and all the rest of it, that they both seemed cut out for the hotel business.

So, in 1897, they left the small Gippsland town that was always to hold deep memories for them, and entered upon a new world and means of existence.

The "Morwell and Yinnar Gazette" was sold for £400 to Messrs. Samuel Gill and George Charles Holloway, journalists, of Morwell. The late Mr. Gill, a capable and popular pressman, was father of Mr. Norman W. Gill, the present proprietor of the "Lilydale Express."

I don't know how it was they came to go there, but my parents now ventured into the hinterland of North Melbourne—of all places!—and assumed the proprietorship of a two-storey stone hostelry known as the "Crystal Palace." (This wasn't its real name, but will suffice here.)

28th Dec

7

1908?

W. G. Walsh.

Morwell,

Dear Sir,

I have to inform you that at the Meeting of Council held on the 23 instant you were appointed Inspector of Nuisances and Slaughterhouses for the Morwell District of the Shire of Morwell, at a remuneration of £5 per annum.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your Obedient Servant
Thomas Leggatt Sinclair.
Shire Secretary

[THOMAS LEGGATT SINCLAIR Shire Secretary / Shire Engineer
1898 - 1924]

MUNICIPAL GOLF SITE CHOSEN

A well-attended public meeting last night adopted resolutions presented by the steering committee which investigated the proposal for a golf course for Morwell.

The meeting agreed that a site of 145 acres east of Vary's Track, adjacent to Princes Highway west of Morwell, was the most suitable site for a course.

The Shire is to be asked to lease this land from the SEC.

£25,000 LOAN

As the general feeling was that the capital cost of construction of a course would not be obtained from the public, the meeting will ask the Shire to raise a loan of up to £25,000 over 25 years to construct an 18-hole municipal course.

The meeting resolved that the Shire Council should become the responsible authority for construction of the course.

The steering committee was appointed as a deputation to the Shire Council to submit proposals and information. The deputation will probably be received in January.

Holiday for 3 Legacy boys sought

Accommodation is required over the holidays in the Latrobe Valley area for three Legacy boys from Melbourne.

The boys are aged from 12 to 16 years and the period is from December 18 to the end of January or any part of the period.

A Legacy spokesman said today that 117 of 120 children had been placed in the Valley area on farms or in private residential homes. About 10 still had to be placed.

CONTACT THEM

The children were all from Legacy homes in Melbourne.

He asked for anyone who can help should contact F. "Darkie" Wilson, (Boolarra 11); H. & T. Lazarus, Morwell 4-3112; Mr C. Rutter (Moe 394 or 471); Mr N. Lowe, (Coalville 4).

The Legacy spokesman said that 33 Legacy children from the Latrobe Valley would spend a holiday in Melbourne as the guest of Melbourne Legacy.

They would occupy the Legacy centres vacated by the children coming to the country.

He said that the Valley children would be taken on tours of Melbourne and would have "days out" with such organisations as the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and Harbor Trust.

He added that Moe, Yallourn and Morwell RSL sub-branches provided the children with pocket money.

New Sergeant

Sgt. P. H. Bennett will arrive in Morwell this week to replace Inspector C. J. Crowe at Morwell Police.

Sgt. Bennett was stationed at Russell-st. Police Headquarters.

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Churchill tenders to \$1m given

Tenders in excess of \$1m. — £500,000 — have been let for shops and dwellings in Churchill.

Allan Grieve Pty. Ltd., of Morwell, have secured the contract valued at £121,330 for the erection of 14 shops in the commercial section of Churchill.

The tender is in two parts — Block I being for eight lock-up shops and Block II for six brick shops with office space overhead.

Another tender, with a total value of £391,032, for the erection of 91 homes — 83 one-storey brick veneer villas and eight two-storey brick houses in four pairs — has been let by Marley Pty Ltd., of Essendon.

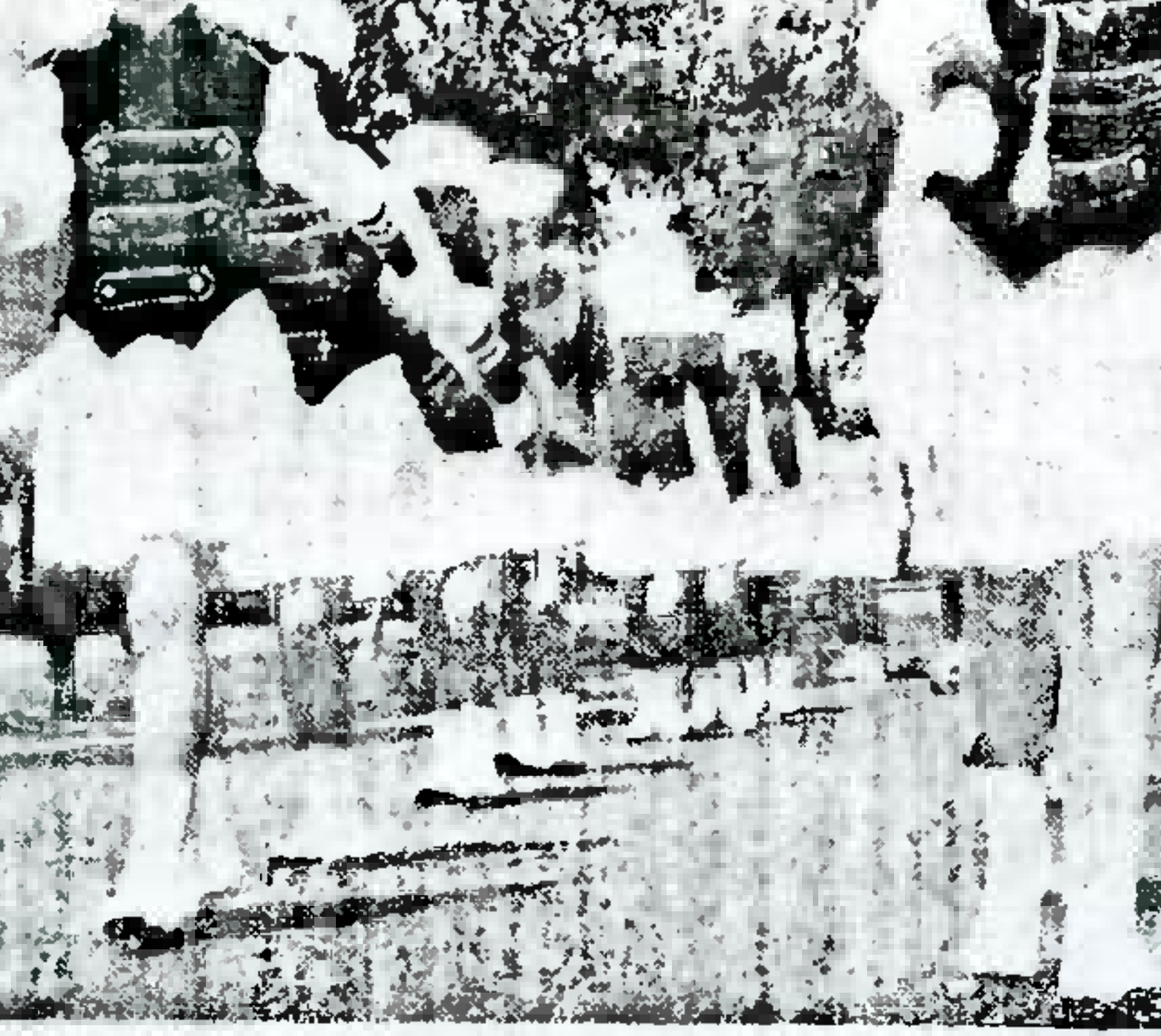
These houses will each have hot water services, slow combustion room heaters and cement tile roofs.

The tenders were announced in Melbourne yesterday by the Minister for Housing, Mr L. H. S. Thompson MLC, who said that the new town is being built to supply accommodation for SEC workers, their families, and for the persons who supply their needs and complete a community.

WEATHER

Weather: Tomorrow will be mainly fine, cool to mild, with a slight drizzle on the coast. Outlook for Thursday: Fine and mild.

STEPPIN' OUT



Lynn Smith (Golden Wrens) leads the parade from Norman Brookes Park to Northern Reserve during the combined contest between five Morwell Citizens' Band teams of Marching Girls. The fall-in and inspection was won by the Red Robins. The march-past was won by Shamrocks.

What's so new about MODS — with their toe-length skirts? They've been around for centuries.

Here's the dress of a Mod of 1879. It's the fine gros-grain skirt and jacket worn by Miss Sarah McDonald to the day ceremonies at the opening of Horsham railway on February 5, 1879.

But she had laced her stays too tightly, to show off her tiny waist. It was a very hot day — and she fainted, and fell into the arms of the Lord — a Mr Lord, to be exact.

At the Railway Ball that night his name figured at least four times on Sarah's two by four inch gilt-edged program.

Contrary to all predictions and to the matchmakers' romantic hopes Sarah did not marry Mr Lord. She was one of six sisters — and she was the only one who did not marry.

Miss McDonald was the great-aunt of Mrs J. Cafiso, of Wallace-st., Morwell, a teacher at Morwell High School.

The gown is worn here by Dorothy Madder, daughter of MHS headmaster, Mr I. T. Madder.

On Page 9 Mrs Cafiso continues her interesting story of the dress.

Mod: 1879 version



COMMERCE SCHOLARSHIP

A scholarship, valued at £100 a year for three years, is available to children of members of Chambers of Commerce.

It is awarded by the former secretary. Federation of Victorian Chambers of Commerce and is open to candidates doing a Bachelor of Commerce or a diploma course connected with commerce at a tertiary level.

Candidates must have matriculated with distinction in commercial subjects. The scholarship is awarded in memory of the late Mr V. R. Hill, a January 31, 1966.

State will pay half park cost

Minister of State Development, Mr J. W. Manson, has announced that the State Government would meet half the cost of purchasing 315 acres of land at Yinnar South for a national park.

The land is being bought for £10,500 from Quigley Bros. It is an excellent bird and wild-life area with a wide variety of plant life.

Shire Secretary, Mr R. Lord, told The Advertiser yesterday that Council would bear half the cost. The State Government's decision follows a proposal by Council through the Minister of Lands, Mr J. C. M. Balfour, that the Government provide a subsidy on a £1 for £1 basis for purchase of land.

The original proposal that the land — at the headwaters of Foster's Creek — be reserved as a national park was presented to Council by Cr M. Walker, on behalf of the National Parks Authority. Shire President, Cr K. White, said the State Government's decision was "good news indeed."

ART GRANTS

The Member for Morwell, Mr J. C. M. Balfour, MLA, has announced that grants totalling £100 have been made to Morwell music and art groups. The grants, from the Cultural Fund, are £50 to the Morwell Players, and £25 each to the Morwell Male Choir and Morwell Art Group.