

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Sec/Editor: Elsie McMaster
 Tel: 03 51341149
 2 Harold St. Morwell 3840

Welcome to the March Newsletter

First of all, *Cheerio* to Jean Mooney, Leonie Pryde and Eric Lubcke all of whom are, or have recently been, out of action - Jean is in hospital in Melbourne receiving treatment after an operation, Eric has a badly infected leg and Leonie is home from hospital after having a heart valve replaced. We send you all our best wishes!

AND NOW THE GOOD NEWS! We have been advised of a \$2,500 grant from the Shire of LaTrobe for the upgrading of our computer and purchase of a CD Rom and scanner. The upgrade was necessary to accommodate the data on our photographic collection much of which has been recorded by Mick Farrell, and is continuing to be recorded by Kym Tunbridge. Computerisation of this information makes accurate and detailed information readily available to members and other researchers.

EXCURSION - SUNDAY, APRIL 2.

Members and any other interested folk will leave our Information Centre, cnr Hazelwood and Commercial Roads, at 2.00pm for a visit to the site of the former residential area known as "White City". This was also the site of a racecourse and an airstrip in earlier times. We will then move to the site of the former Morwell Pottery Works (near the end of the Rose Garden), then on to Hazelwood Cemetery. Our guide for the afternoon will be Mr Lou Bond.

HERITAGE SIGNS

Four metal signs have been ordered. They will be coated brown and will have yellow lettering denoting points of historical significance in the Morwell district. The first two will be erected to mark the sites of Hazelwood Homestead and Hazelwood Ridge State School. A date for the unveiling has not yet been set but we hope to arrange a small "Back-to-Hazelwood Ridge School" to mark the occasion. More details in later newsletters.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of Morwell Historical Society Inc will be held on Tuesday, March 21, at 7.30pm in the Information Centre, cnr Hazelwood and Commercial Roads, Morwell. This will be followed by an ordinary general meeting.

LOCAL INVOLVEMENT IN THE BOER WAR

In October 1899, war broke out between Great Britain and the Boers in the Cape Colony, (later called South Africa). Local men were quick to respond to the call to help the Mother Country. Only a week after the announcement of hostilities, the *Morwell Advertiser* reported that the first group of volunteers from the Morwell Rangers had joined the Victorian and Tasmanian contingents which were leaving for South Africa.

Local residents also displayed their patriotic fervour. During the first week in January 1900, the Morwell District Patriotic Fund was established to support the war effort and the *Advertiser* ran frequent reports and published letters from local lads serving in South Africa.

Among the locals to enlist were Privates Bolding, Bruton, Cook, Cooper, Holmes, McDonald, McInnes, McMillan, Nadenbousch, Rose, Shaw and Walker. In all, 16,175 soldiers were sent to South Africa from Australia. 251 Australians died in battle, 882 were wounded and 267 fell victim to fatal diseases such as typhoid and enteric fever. Privates Bolding and Rose both succumbed to typhoid.

On May 25, 1900, the *Morwell Advertiser* reported on the local celebrations over the relief of Mafeking:

"Someone rang the church bells, others fired off guns and fireworks, flags were hoisted, bunting displayed, cheers and songs rent the air; whilst everyone felt like 'standing on their head' and doing something out of the common. A great crowd gathered at Hall's corner, where the President of the Shire got on top of a large box and gave a stirring address. He eulogised Colonel Baden-Powell and his 'gallant six hundred', referring at length to the hardships they had endured in order to keep the old flag flying, and to the manner in which they had repulsed every attack made on them by the Boers.... In the evening a public meeting was held in the Mechanics' Institute, where there was a large attendance."

Grant Reimers, grandson of our member Lou Bond, has a collection of Boer War Memorabilia which he has kindly agreed to put on display in the foyer of LaTrobe House.

Grant's two great-grandfathers, although they did not enlist in Morwell, both fought in the Boer War and both became local identities in the Morwell District. William Bond, (Lou's father) settled at Driffield in 1916. Among his many community activities he was well-known as Clerk of the Course at the Morwell Races for many years. William's brother Louis also enlisted, and was killed in action in South Africa. Mrs Bond's father, D.J. White, also settled in Morwell. He served on the Council for many years and was Shire President on a number of occasions.

RECENT REUNIONS

Two recent reunions have yielded a number of photographs and some memorabilia for the Society.

Members of the former *Church of England Fellowship* got together at the weekend. Among them was our member Marion Holding (nee Scarce) who brought with her photographs, newspaper cuttings and several programmes for local events, all of which she has donated to the Society - thanks Marion!

Former employees of the *Morwell Woolworth's Store* also met at the weekend. The first Woolworths in Morwell was on the south side of Commercial Road, approximately where 'House & Gift' now stands. Then, when Murdoch's Hotel, (further west on the same side of Commercial Road), was demolished, a new Woolworths store was built on the site. The present occupant of this site is Manny's Market. Returning employees brought a number of photographs which we were able to copy and add to our collection.

CELEBRATION OF ROSES - APRIL 14,15,16

Advance Morwell is organising a *Celebration of Roses Festival*. On the Friday night there will be a Rose Ball at the Falcons Club; on Saturday activities will centre around the Morwell Rose Garden with jazz bands, children's activities, stalls etc. We will be opening our Centre on that day and any offers of help will be gratefully received.

On Sunday, the restored *Airlie Bank Homestead* is to be officially opened. This will become the permanent home of the Auchterlonie Collection - *Dad's War Stuff*. *Advance Morwell* and the LaTrobe Shire have put in a great deal of work on the homestead and, although much remains to be done, it is pleasing to see the project well under way. It is hoped to have members of the Ogilvie family, who first farmed the land and gave the property its name, at the ceremony and, of course, members of Morwell's well-known Bridle family, who took over from the Ogilvies, will also be there.

From Morwell Advertiser -February 12, 1953

Dedication of Maryvale Memorial Gates

A deeply impressive ceremony in the presence of a gathering of 300 people was held at the Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd Maryvale Mill on Saturday afternoon last, on the occasion of the dedication of the recently erected Memorial Gates, in commemoration of Maryvale servicemen who gave their lives for their country in the 1939-45 War.

The gates are sited on rising ground overlooking the Mill from the east, the short straight section of the approach road to which will eventually be beautified by the Company.

The supporting pillars are built in granite, and carry the full road width wrought iron gates. The two main columns bear the names of the men who gave their all:-

ANDERSON, N. ARMSTRONG, J. ASHBY, J. BROWN, E. CATTERICK, J.
FINLAYSON, W. GILLIES, A. GRIFFITHS, R. HICKS, W. LAWRENCE, F.
POLLOCK, D. STAGG, L. WATSON, F. WILLIAMS, R.

..... The two plaques were unveiled by Major General Steele and Mr A R. Souter, representing Maryvale employees. Seventy Morwell, Traralgon and Yinnar ex-servicemen, drawn up in three columns presented a fitting background to this impressive ceremony."

TRIVIA

1. The cairn beside the Hazelwood Pondage commemorates 100 years of government-funded education in Morwell Shire. It stands on the site of:
 - a) Hazelwood North Primary School
 - b) Hazelwood South Primary School
 - c) Hazelwood Ridge Primary School
2. The Education Act of 1889
 - a) raised the school leaving age from 13 to 15
 - b) lowered the school leaving age from 15 to 13
3. John Rintoull, well-known Morwell blacksmith, set a record for making horse-shoes in 1874. In one hour he made
 - a) 28
 - b) 32
 - c) 36½
4. Which products had the following slogans?
 - a) "A light with every strike"
 - b) "You'll go better on a"
 - c) "You can feel it doing you good!"
 - d) "Are you too fat, too fat, too fat? What you need are"
 - e) "..... - a little dab'll do you."
6. A football match between Morwell and Thorpdale in the 1880s was declared a draw even though Thorpdale kicked 2 goals 11 behinds and Morwell kicked 2 goals 5 behinds. The reason was:
 - a) behinds didn't count in the score in those days
 - b) an all-in fight made it impossible to give a fair decision
 - c) the umpire walked off at half time.
7. A riddle from the Victorian Readers Second Book:

"In marble halls as white as milk, lined with skin as soft as silk,
Within a fountain crystal clear, a golden apple doth appear.
No doors are there to this stronghold, yet thieves break in to steal the gold."
What is it?.....
8. In the 1960s, little white pills were given weekly to all school children in Morwell. What were they?.....
9. The first church built in Morwell was
 - a) Church of England
 - b) Catholic
 - c) Methodist

ANSWERS

1. c) 2. b) 3. c) 4. Bryant & May Matches Malvern Star Bonnington's Irish Moss Ford Pills Brylcreem
6. (there's no 5!) a) 7. an egg 8. iodine 9. c)