

# MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

published monthly, except December

Meetings: 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7.30 pm  
in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall

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## WELCOME TO THE MARCH NEWSLETTER

Firstly, a correction to our report last month on the Bolding family. The article stated that the two houses on the original Bolding property (The Grange), were burnt in the 1944 bushfires. This was incorrect. The first house fell into disuse and was probably pulled down, but the second house, which was moved from Thomsons Rd. and placed beside the original, is still there and is still occupied by a member of the Bolding family.

This month we publish the story of the Lowe, Thomson, Koenig and Cameron families, written by Dorothy Fogarty (nee Koenig) for her grandchildren, as seen through their eyes.

The Annual General Meeting of Morwell Historical Society Inc. will be held on TUESDAY, MARCH 19th at 7.30 pm. in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Hall, Morwell.

Hope to see you all there!



## A FAMILY OF SOLDIERS - THE MCKENZIES OF HAZELWOOD NORTH

The Society recently received a request from Mrs. Margaret Munro of Fernihurst, (60 miles north west of Bendigo) for information about the McKenzie family of Hazelwood North.

The family had lived at Fernihurst, where Mr. McKenzie managed a creamery, between 1890 and 1900 and had moved to Hazelwood North some time after that. The names of five McKenzie boys are on the Fernihurst State School World War 1 Honour Board and Mrs. Munro was seeking information about their war service and subsequent activities for a history of the Fernihurst district.

We were able to put her in touch with John Pearson (editor of The Koenig Letters) who is compiling a record of men of the Morwell Shire who enlisted in the First World War. John's research revealed that five McKenzie sons did, in fact enlist in World War 1. All enlisted at Hazelwood North.

Robert McKenzie joined the 4th Light Horse on 24th August 1914 at the age of 19. He returned to Australia, presumably injured, in June 1916 but re-enlisted in August 1917 and saw further overseas service.

William McKenzie joined the 4th Light Horse Regiment on 25th October 1914, aged 23. Archie, aged 30, enlisted in the 13th Infantry Battalion on 30th July 1915 and 18-year-old twins Burke (Paddy) and Gordon joined the 13th Light Horse within three weeks of each other - Paddy on 25th May 1916 and Gordon on 15th June 1916.

As John Pearson says: "five enlistments (or six if you count Robert twice) from the one family, all of whom returned, must be close to some sort of record?"

In fact, Gordon again enlisted in the army in World War 2 and was killed in Egypt.

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From R.H.S.V. "HISTORY NEWS"  
MARCH 1991

**RHSV EXCURSION — 'FISKVILLE' AND QUEENSCLIFFE MARITIME CENTRE — SUNDAY, 24 MARCH**

'Fiskville', near Ballan, is now the Country Fire Authority's Training Wing. It was built in the 1920s by Amalgamated Wireless Australasia Limited (AWA) as a transmitting station, part of the Empire Beam Wireless network. It was named for AWA's first Managing Director and later Chairman, E. T. Fisk (Sir Ernest), a pioneer wireless engineer who had served his apprenticeship with Marconi. Other places on this excursion associated with the history of wireless are Rockbank and Queenscliff. However, on this occasion, the major interest in Queenscliff will be a visit to the award winning Maritime Centre. This is of particular relevance in the centenary year of many of the major shipwrecks on Victorian coasts. (Spelling note for readers: The Borough of Queenscliff is spelt with an 'e'; the town itself is spelt Queenscliff, without the final 'e').

The coach will leave Market Street at 9.15 a.m. and return about 5.45 p.m. Provided morning coffee, BYO lunch and afternoon tea. The cost of the excursion is \$24, with a \$2 discount to members of the RHSV and its member societies. Bookings accompanied by remittances, to be with the Director RHSV, no later than Tuesday, 12 March.

**RHSV EXCURSION — TWO-DAY VISIT TO THE NORTH EAST — TUESDAY, 30 APRIL-WEDNESDAY, 1 MAY**

The RHSV is grateful to Mr Dudley Sheppard, FRHSV, for offering us an excursion in the North East, where he has had a long and illustrious involvement in the local history movement.

Participants will travel to Wodonga on the Tuesday morning and in the afternoon visit the award winning Jindera Museum and tour the Albury district. Overnight accommodation will be in Wodonga. On the Wednesday morning, Beechworth and Yackandandah will be visited and in the afternoon participants travel home.

The deadline for bookings will be early in April, so if you are interested in joining this excursion, please watch for the April History News for full details.

**WEST COAST SHIPWRECKS ANNIVERSARY**

The year 1891 was the worst for major shipping disasters in Victoria's history.

The large vessels lost were:

Barque 'Fiji' — near Moonlight Head

Ship 'Joseph Scammell' — at Torquay

Barque 'W.B. Godfrey' — near Lorne

Barque 'Craigburn' — near Port Phillip Heads

Steamer 'Gambier' — inside Port Phillip Bay



## Our Family Were Gippslanders In The 1850's

This is the story of the entry into Gippsland of our forebears the Lowe-Thomson and the Koenig-Cameron families. That is our great, great, great, great grandparents. John and Mary Lowe (nee Newey) in 1853 and William and Margaret (nee Hamilton) Thomson in 1852; and our great great, great grandparents Johann Gustav & Christine Henrietta (nee Finger) Koenig in 1854 and Thomas & Mary (nee Hodge) Cameron in 1869.

### Lowe - Thomson Line.

James and Mary Lowe, our great, great, great, great grandparents came to Australia in 1839 on the Ship "Hooghly" as free settlers. They firstly settled at Black Forest, a farming area south of Adelaide where James worked as a farm labourer. Their first son George Brighton Newey Lowe was said to be the first white child born in Adelaide. His is the oldest birth recorded at the Adelaide Registry. Five sons were born to James and Mary whilst they lived in South Australia. George, John (our great great great grandfather), James, Alfred and Edwin.

James and Mary Lowe and their family came to South Gippsland in 1853 and tried farming at Snake Island, but not liking it there they went to the Woodside area and settled at Rosedale Road, just north of Balloong Road where some trees still mark the area of the old homestead which was known as "Oaklands". When James & Mary and later their sons John & James (Jas) settled blocks, the land was virgin bushland with gums and native scrub. There were ample trees for timber for houses, sheds and fences, and scope with much hard work to make productive farms from their selections. There were few roads, just dirt tracks that the selectors used for hauling loads, either by teams of horses or bullocks.

James Lowe lived to be 95 years old and died in 1889 at his residence "Oaklands" Rosedale Road. Mary Lowe died in 1894 aged 84. They are both buried in the Woodside Cemetery.

George, John (our great, great, great, grandfather) and Jas stayed in the Balloong/Woodside area. These 3 brothers were carriers in the days before the railways were constructed.

Port Albert was important then as a busy shipping port and goods landed there were hauled by road by the Lowe brothers. Machinery for the Walhalla Goldfields was also shipped to Port Albert and carried to the diggings by the Lowe brothers.

So these early pioneers, who were first generation Australians were well involved in occupations that helped open Gippsland to further settlement. George, John and Jas were also successful farmers. George on his father's farm whilst John and Jas both selected land at Balloong.



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John Lowe, our great, great, great grandfather married Isabella Thomson from Tarraville in Gippsland in 1868. She was one of three sisters who arrived in Gippsland in 1852 with her parents William and Mary Thomson on board the "Marmion" (An infant son James died before the family came to Australia). A younger girl Margaret was born to William and Mary after settling in Gippsland.

John Lowe, our great, great, great grandfather selected his land on the Balloong Road - this farm is on the east side of the present McLachlan's Road. John named his land "Stud Farm". This was John and Isabella's family home, they reared some fine horses, mostly Clydesdales for heavy farm work, also lighter breed horses. They sold many horses at big prices - some they even shipped to India for the Cavalry. Besides horses the farm also carried pigs and cows. There were enough cows milked to provide cheese and butter for the family with extra to sell also with bacon which was smoked and cured at "Stud Farm". Isabella, our great great, great grandmother would drive to Port Albert in the dray with a collection of butter, ham and bacon to sell in the busy shipping town. Often on the lonely roads she would be troubled by the blacks.

Eight children were born to John and Isabella at "Stud Farm" William 1869, John Edwin 1871 (our great, great grandfather), Thomas 1874, Henry 1876, Margaret 1879, Isabel 1882, Elizabeth 1885 and Norman 1888.

John and Isabella's eldest two sons William and our great, great, grandfather John Edwin stayed with their grandparents James and Mary during school times to enable them to attend school across the road from their grandparents' home.

Later the Education Department purchased two acres of "Stud Farm" and a school was opened there in 1881, so all the children were able to go to school from home.

The Lowe family were quite a musical family. When each of their three daughters ( Margaret, Isabel and Elizabeth) married - John Lowe presented each of them with an organ as a wedding present. Margaret's organ is still in use in the Uniting Church at Binginwarri.

Isabella Lowe, our great, great, great grandmother died in 1908 aged 62 years. John later married Margaret - Isabella's younger sister. John Lowe died in 1931 aged almost 90 years and Margaret in 1933 aged 67 years.

Our great, great grandfather John Edwin Lowe left his family home at Stud Farm in the 1890's to become a Coach Builder. He learnt his trade in Sale. On completion of his training he opened a Coach Building and Wheelwright business in Morwell in the late 1890's. In 1899 he married



Bessie Ann Robson from Upper Woorndoo in the Western District. (The Robson family emigrated to Australia in 1859 and settled in the Western District).

John Edwin and Bessie Lowe lived in George Street Morwell and his business was at the rear of John Rintoull's blacksmith shop in Commercial Road Morwell.

John Edwin and Bessie Lowe had two daughters - Ruby born in 1900 and Beatrice in 1905. Bessie Ann Lowe died in 1938 and John Edwin Lowe in 1947.

Ruby, the elder of the two girls is our great grandmother. She was born in Morwell, educated at Commercial Road State School and lived in Morwell all her life.

John Edwin Lowe was an accomplished violinist and his wife and daughters good pianists. Ruby was the organist at the Presbyterian Church in Morwell for many years and her sister Beatrice used to play for the Silent Pictures at the Old Mechanic's Hall in George Street Morwell.

Ruby married Charles Koenig, a boot repairer in Morwell in 1920 - they lived at 233 Princes Highway Morwell (then called Station Street) where they brought up their three daughters, Gwen born in 1922, Dorothy 1923, and Lorna 1925.

Dorothy the second daughter is our grandmother.

Ruby played an active part in the Morwell community. She was President of the Commercial Road State School Mothers' Club during the 10 years her daughters were at school. She held executive positions in the Red Cross, Presbyterian Womens' Missionary Union and the Ladies Guild.

She was an active person in the life of Morwell right up to her death in 1958.

Charles Koenig, our great grandfather died in 1952 (more about the Koenig family's entry into Gippsland later).

Our grandmother Dorothy, now Dorothy Fogarty, formerly Dorothy Buchanan has played an active role in Morwell. Dorothy, also with her sisters Gwen (Mrs Medew) and Lorna (Mrs Williams) did her primary schooling at Commercial Road School Morwell, then her secondary schooling at Yallourn Higher Elementary School. Dorothy then was a student teacher at Commercial Road State School during 1940 and 1941 waiting to be old enough to go to Melbourne Teacher's College.



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One of the biggest thrills of our grandmother's teaching career was when in the late 1960's she became Vice Principal at the Commercial Road School. Our grandmother has taught in Gippsland schools for a total of 38 years but she felt it was a cycle completed when she became 2nd in command at a school that not only had she been a pupil, then a student teacher, but her mother had also been a pupil and President of the Mothers' Club for such a long time.

Dorothy married John Buchanan in 1947 and had three children, Dianne, our mother in 1948, and two boys Malcolm in 1950 and Ross in 1955. Dorothy returned to teaching after her marriage.

Dorothy later married Allan Fogarty and lived in Bemm River for a while. Dorothy once again is back in Morwell playing an active role within the community.

Our mother Dianne and our father John (Red) Moore married in 1967 and live in Churchill with us, their three daughters - Tracy born in 1971, Krysten born in 1973 and Sarah born in 1975.

### Koenig - Cameron Line

Johann Gustav Koenig our great, great, great grandfather, a cabinet maker, arrived in Victoria from Bohestan, Germany on the "Wappaus" in 1849. He had two children with him, Henry then 7 years and Lydia 4 years. (His first wife's name was Susannah Weidenberg)

In 1850, when he was 32 years old Johann Gustav Koenig married Christina Henrietta Finger aged 26 years in the Independent Church Melbourne. Two children were born to them whilst they lived in Richmond Melbourne - Emma Bertha and Gotthelf Paul, then the family moved to Berwick in 1854. Seven other children were born to them whilst they lived in Berwick - Trangott Paul, Gattfried Johannes (our great grandfather) Anna Maria Elizabeth, Ernst Gottlieb, Joanna Martha, David Lebercht and Christina Maria.

Christine Henrietta Keonig (nee Finger), our great, great, grandmother died in 1863 aged only 39 years. Henrietta Janchke then helped to mother this young family.

Johannes Gustav Koenig died in 1887 at the age of 70 years.

The fourth child born to Johann Gustav and Christine Henrietta Keonig was Grattfried Johanna or Johannes Augustus Koenig on May 12th 1855, our great, great grandfather. We know very little about his childhood but know that in 1883 he married our great, great grandmother, Ann Cameron, from Valencia Creek.



Now the Cameron family's entry in Gippsland firstly came about when our great, great, great grandfather's brother Jack Cameron came to Australia from Scotland in the 1840's. Jack Cameron travelled through Gippsland with Angus Mc Millan's party in the 40's - Late in the 1840's Jack persuaded his brothers Thomas and Charles to come out from Scotland to this "Land of Opportunity". They came out on the "Andromachi" in 1848. They settled in Ballarat when the gold era was in full swing. Another brother Dugald came out three years later. Jack was the first to move permanently into Gippsland when he selected land in Valencia Creek in 1860. In 1869 Thomas Cameron, our great, great, great grandfather and his brother Charles both took up land in Valencia Creek.

Thomas Cameron, who was born in 1823 in Scotland had married Mary Ann Hodge before coming out to Australia in 1848. Thomas and Mary had six children born in Australia. Mary Ann, Margaret, Ann, Donald, John and Charles. Their 3rd child Ann was our great, great, grandmother - she was born in Gisborne, Victoria in 1860, and was just on ten years old when the family settled in Valencia Creek.

Now, Johannes or John Koenig went to Valencia Creek with his father Gustav, buying horses for the Indian Army. Ann and John were married in 1883. After their marriage John and Ann went on to a farm at Narracan, up in the hills, and stayed there for eight years.

In 1891 John and Ann Koenig took up land at Jumbuk - a large hilly area deep in the Strzelecki Ranges at a cost of One pound per acre, on a low deposit. The journey to the new land was made by simple horse buggy, travelling via the very swampy Trafalgar Flats. The going was hard and the three older children Mary, Matilda and Annie often had to get down and walk through the boggy patches and up the hills. The family lived in a tent in Jumbuk until a slab hut was built. (Thomas was only one year old at the time).

Later on more settlers arrived and with the help of neighbours they built a small house.

Four more children were born to John and Ann after settling in Jumbuk, Charles our great grandfather in 1892, Margaret, Jack and Janet. When the land at Jumbuk had been cleared, up to 60 cows were milked in the good times and a few sheep were run.

The children all helped their parents with the work on the farm. From 1884 until 1915 some 20 families selected land in the Jumbuk area under the 1869 Land Settlement Grant of 320 acres.

John and Ann Koenig's children and those of the other settlers had no school until 1900 when a school was built by Mr W Ritchie, assisted by our great, great grandfather John Koenig and other settlers on property in Ritchies Road.



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Our great, grandfather Charles grew up in Jumbuk helping his father on their farm and working for various other farmers in the district. Charles and his brother Thomas joined the services on 9th July 1915. Charles was 23 and Thomas 25. They both were original members of the D Company of the 31st Battalion (part of the 8th Brigade of the 5th Division).

Unfortunately Thomas was killed in action and Charles our great grandfather was seriously wounded in April 1917. His right leg was amputated below the knee and the left knee was removed.

On returning from the war Charles did a rehabilitation course in boot repairing at the Melbourne Working Mens' College. He then opened a boot repairers shop in Morwell in 1920.

In October he married Ruby Lowe (daughter of John Lowe, a wheelwright and coachbuilder in Morwell) Charlie and Ruby bought a house in Station Street Morwell (where the Ampol Service Station is at 233 Princes Hwy Morwell). This was his only home in Morwell where he lived with his wife and later his three daughters, Gwen (Mrs Medew) Dorothy our grandmother (formerly Dorothy Buchanan now Dorothy Fogarty) and Lorna (Mrs Williams).

Charles always played an active role in the community. He was a member of the Morwell R.S.L., a welfare officer with the R.S.L during the depression years, a member of the Presbyterian Board of Management and served on it until his death in 1952; a member of the Commercial Road Primary School Committee whilst his daughters were in attendance there; office bearer of the Morwell Scout Committee; a member of the Australian Natives Association and uncle to many nieces and nephews in Morwell & District.

As mentioned earlier Charles' second daughter Dorothy became our grandmother (Dorothy Buchanan who taught in Gippsland Schools for 38 years) - she is now Dorothy Fogarty. Dorothy had three children Dianne, our mother and two sons Malcolm and Ross Buchanan.

We three children-

Tracy, Krysten and Sarah Moore  
and our cousins  
Ashley, Christopher and James Buchanan,  
are proud to call ourselves

**7th Generation Gippslanders**