

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

M.H.S.

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

President: Stephen Hellings

Welcome to the May Newsletter

*The *Centenary of Federation Parade* on April 1 was a great success. A number of our members and their families, with two members from Traralgon Historical Society, carried placards outlining the main events of each decade of the century and a large and appreciative crowd lined the streets of Morwell to cheer on the floats (more than seventy) and other participants as they made their way from the Town Common to the Morwell Football Ground.

* *Office Bearers for the coming year* were elected at the Annual Meeting of the Society held on March 20. They are
President: Stephen Hellings *Vice President:* Leonie Pryde
Secretary: Elsie McMaster *Treasurer:* Dorothy Bartlett
Executive Committee: In addition to President, V/President, Secretary and Treasurer – Joyce Cleary, Mavis Coleman, Flo Lamb, Muriel Feehan.
Acquisitions Committee: Bruce McMaster (Curator), Joyce Cleary (Chairperson), Eric Lubcke, Stephen Hellings.

***Membership Fees** remain the same as last year – \$13 Single member, \$15 couple or family – and members are reminded that these are **now due**.

**Celebration of Women's Work* – a display illustrating some of the work done by women of Gippsland over the past century will be presented at Mid Valley Shopping Centre, Morwell in the week May 21-26, as part of the Centenary of Federation celebrations. Members of Morwell, Yinnar, Yallourn North and Boolarra Historical Societies will set up a kitchen containing many of the tools and utensils used by local women over the years and illustrating some of their skills such as spinning and rug-making.

*Four of our members attended the annual meeting of the Gippsland Historical Societies in Lakes Entrance last weekend and three members attended a reception at the Latrobe City Offices to honour the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Joseph Latrobe, after whom our Valley is named.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, May 15 – 7.30pm – 21 Church St Morwell

MORWELL - FORTY-EIGHT YEARS AGO

Member Marion Holding has given us a supplement from the Melbourne 'Argus' of Thursday, July 2nd, 1953, which gives a very interesting picture of life in the Latrobe Valley in the 'fifties. Following are some extracts:

CAN YOU KEEP A GOOD TOWN DOWN?

“Morwell – busy, bustling, capital of the shire of that name, within the Latrobe Valley and a few miles from Yallourn – has had a meteoric rise.

The census of 1947 revealed that its population was about 3,000. Within the next three years it rose to 9,000.

The impelling influence was firstly in the Morwell project of the State Electricity Commission – the project to erect great briquetting factories wherein the wealth of the Latrobe Valley's vast brown coal field could be exploited.

There were – and still are – other great works in the area – the huge mills of Australian Paper Manufacturers Ltd., the works of the Gas and Fuel Corporation designed to pipe gas extracted from the brown coal to Melbourne; light industries established to integrate the Valley's economy and to be a factor in decentralisation.

And now, for lack of loan money, work on the great briquetting factories has almost ceased. At its peak, the S.E.C. payroll in Morwell was 1,500; today it has dwindled to 200 or 300.

But notwithstanding the Commission's tremendous economic significance, Morwell's population has not declined. Yet the Ridge Hostel, near the briquetting sites, that once housed 1200 men, is empty; emergency houses built by the Commission have, for the very great part, known no occupiers.

All this would seem to build into a picture of depression and gloom. But – and here is the mystery that no-one in Morwell can solve – there is no unemployment. All the men who once worked for S.E.C are employed somewhere – but where?

No-one knows.

Still, the very fact that they have been absorbed indicates the resiliency, the strength, the versatility and the buoyancy of the district.

Everyone at Morwell knows that the halting of work on the S.E.C's four projected briquetting factories is not merely a local, but a national tragedy; the great dredges and scoops that rear into the sky, resembling nothing so much as the turrets and superstructures of huge battleships, are cold and solitary monuments to a lost activity – but, for the state and national welfare, it is to be hoped that the loss is merely temporary.”

WOULD YOU BUY THIS PRODUCT?

Definition: (from the Macquarie Dictionary):

Hyperbole n. an extravagant statement not to be taken literally.

The advertisement below appeared in the Latrobe Valley supplement of the Melbourne 'Argus' on July 2, 1953.

— DOSEY-DO —

50,000,000 DOSES (3 Puffs to a Dose)

of Aspaxadrene are inhaled yearly, all over the world (near enough) from Peru right around to Perth; letters of appreciation (full name and address published in monthly leaflet) have actually (literally actually) been received (unasked for) from over 47 countries:—

ENGLAND, IRELAND, SCOTLAND, WALES, SWEDEN, HOLLAND, BELGIUM, FRANCE, ITALY, JUGOSLAVIA, CYPRUS, ISRAEL, PERSIA, GOLD COAST, PORT SAID, EGYPT, UGANDA, KENYA, RHODESIA, CAPETOWN, PAKISTAN, INDIA, CEYLON, ASSAM, MALAYA, BORNEO, VIETNAM, KOREA, CHINA, HONG KONG, JAPAN, PHILIPPINES, INDONESIA, NEW GUINEA, PAPUA, NAURU, OCEAN ISLAND, TONGA, SOLOMONS, FIJI, U.S.A. (Ca., Arizona, N.Y., Mass., Conn., Mich., Ia.), SOUTH AMERICA, LIMA, PERU.

Not one penny spent on advertising except Australasia. Proving indisputably, undoubtedly, incontestably, the efficacy of time-tested, seconds-acting, harmless-proven, atomized inhalant Aspaxadrene for the relief from the bronchial spasms of asthma and the congestion and discomfort of bronchitis, nasal catarrh, hay fever, 'flu, etc.

Incidentally

Aspaxadrene earns thousands of dollars yearly for Australia.

Australian and New Zealand testimonials now over 30,000.

Used by everyone from Vice-Royalty to descamisados (shirtless ones) and sans culottes (trouserless ones).

Same spray and liquid babies and adults—guaranteed free from ephedrene, pituitary scopolamine, cocaine, morphia, papaverine or any other opium drug.

S'no Use if you are an abominable NO man—don't try this treatment.

Above figure could probably have been much improved upon, but we've been so awfully modest; however, we've awakened up to ourselves and at last have had a good old "bash" —(we're telling you).

The price ? ? ? — paltry 12/6 (5000 doses).

ALL CHEMISTS OF PERSPICUITY AND PERSPICACITY.

A. H. Crundall, Box 58, Prahran, Vic., Australia

LITTLE COULD GO A LONG WAY

“Throughout the Valley, the belief is general that the work on the Morwell coal project, now held up, will soon be resumed. Perhaps, say the people of the Valley, it is not possible for the government to go ahead with building all four of the briquetting factories, but it may be able to finance the construction of one. This alone would be of tremendous benefit.

If it encouraged more heavy industry to avail itself of the opportunity that exists in this rich, almost self-contained area, light industries would follow, helping to integrate the economy of the entire Valley.

Apart from its industrial quality and richness, the Latrobe Valley has many other advantages.

Its dairying lands, the experts say, are equal to any in Australia; its dairy cattle, its fat lambs, sheep and bullocks are topping Melbourne's markets. It has, in this shire of Morwell, rich bauxite deposits. It has fine rivers.

Its people have a record of social service that is not surpassed by that of any other community in Australia.

But, what the Valley has done, it has done largely by its own efforts. Its history seems to be one of struggle against neglect. For example, there is neglect of hospital and school construction.

There are more community efforts in this area that, perhaps in any comparable area in Australia. Actually, the Valley is so versatile that it is difficult to see where its possibilities could end.....

Only is the picture shadowed by the fact that its greatest resource, its vast area of brown coal deposits, is now relatively untouched. It would be well for Victoria and for Australia, if the Latrobe Valley were given the opportunity to yield its riches more fully.”