

# MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

published monthly, except December

The Society meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at  
7.30 pm at Collins Street Primary School

Secretary: Mrs. E. McMaster phone 34 1149

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NOVEMBER 1989

## WELCOME TO THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

The big news this month is, of course, our book launch. After 2½ years of planning, "Glimpses of Our Past" is in the hands of the printers and will be available at the beginning of December, in time for you to give for Christmas. The price will be \$20 ( falsely advertised in the October Newsletter by an errant secretary as " under \$20"), and you can reserve your copy NOW by ringing Elsie McMaster on (051)341149.

A very successful Back - to - Jumbuk was held in October. A report on that event appears inside.

Two of our members are on the planning committee for the Morwell Shire History, to be written in time for the Shire's Centenary in 1992. \$100,000 has been allocated to the project and a professional writer is to be employed.

Four members of Morwell Historical Society, together with representatives of Traralgon Historical Society, Centre for Gippsland Studies and Maryvale Campus were guests of the history faculty at Morwell Heights Campus, Kurnai College on November 8, to view a display of local and personal history projects undertaken by students in years 7 to 10. The authors of the projects, which were of a high standard, were there, and students and visitors spent a pleasant hour or so chatting about the work. We plan to reproduce some of the assignments in our newsletters next year.

Since this will be our last newsletter for 1989, the Editorial Committee takes this opportunity to wish all members and their families a safe and happy festive season. Our next newsletter will usher in the last decade of the 20th century.

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Members came from a wide area to partake of the sport on a Saturday.

The Macfarlanes attended the occasional dances held in the Jumbuk, Jeralang and Jeralang Mt Halls, either riding on horseback or walking. More frequently they had dances in their own home, held in the big dining room which had been added to provide extra space for the growing family. Brother Neil, a self taught violinist provided the music.

The younger members of the family remember helping to make the bricks for the huge fire place in the dining room; they were allowed to puddle the clay with their bare feet! The bricks were made on the property near a spring.

Water for the dairy cattle and horses was supplied by springs in the gullies and house water was stored in a huge underground tank filled from the house roof. Twice a year Finlay made the journey to Morwell for supplies, the journey taking two days. He travelled via the Blow-Fly Road (now Thompsons), a very steep road so named because the horses were able to "fly" going down but tended to "Blow" somewhat coming up and were obliged to take spells.

Prior to the first World War two of the Macfarlane boys conducted the mail run from Yinnar to Jumbuk (not to be confused with the Morwell to Jeralang Post Office mail run). The Jeralang Post Office was in the Macfarlane home which was in Jumbuk!

The four Macfarlane boys answered the call and went to fight for King & Country in 1914. They all returned. The eldest Neil stayed with his parents, Angus & Jack took up adjoining soldier settler blocks in the Mallee and Alex had a soldier settler block at Pearrendale, near Sale. During the war the girls worked hard milking the cows & feeding the pigs & fowls etc as well as knitting for the soldiers on active service.

Eventually four of the girls married and three of the boys married as well. At the time of the disastrous 1939 bush fire only the mother, eldest son Neil & second youngest daughter Agnes were residing at Jumbuk, the father having died ~~in~~ ten or so years earlier.

After the fire Neil returned for a short time

living in a new house built with funds provided by the Bush Fire Relief Fund. Eventually the property was sold back to the Government and it is now growing magnificent Mountain Ash trees once more. The original home was built from timber which was growing on the site and the beautiful black wood furniture was made by Finlay from trees which had been growing on his land. Finlay was a carpenter by trade.

Welcome visitors to the Macfarlane home were the Itinerant preachers who conducted church services, the Macfarlane family being devout Presbyterians. Also welcome were the Indian Hawkers - real gentlemen by all accounts - who asked for a live fowl as part payment for any purchases. The fowl was to be eaten but certain rites had to be performed first before it could be slaughtered.

Descendants of the Macfarlanes make occasional visits to the site of the old home. Various flowers and bulbs still survive and the sight of them rekindles fond memories of an era now gone. A young Laurel tree thrives, a reminder of a much larger one whose branches invited the adventurous young visitors of long ago to demonstrate their climbing ability.

Children of Finlay & Euphemia were

Neil	never married	Abraham	married George Fitch
Alexander	married Flo Gibbs	Ann	George Lindsay
Angus	"	Thos McKinnon	Catherine " Tom Potter
Jack	"	Heather Hepburn	Agnes not married
			Elizabeth married
			Norman Boston

Those surviving  
Ann is 94 years old & Elizabeth is 86 yrs old and both plan to attend the 'Back to Jumbuk' Celebrations in Oct 1989.

Joan Tanner  
Granddaughter of Finlay & Euphemia  
P.T.O →

A SAD POST-SCRIPT to the newspaper item concerning the departure of the Greenwood brothers of Jumbuk for overseas service in World War 1. The following obituary appeared in the local press (date unknown):

"Yet another of our district lads has made his bivouac with the heroic Australian dead in a far-off alien land. This latest victim to the still unsated god of war is Private Frederick Greenwood whose death of wounds sustained in the fierce fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula has been announced by the defence department.

The mournful duty of conveying the sad intelligence to the patriot home at Jumbuk where dwell the fallen soldier's parents, fell to the Rev. A.E. Adeney. The sympathy of the whole district goes out in full measure to Mr. and Mrs. Greenwood in the loss of their son."

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#### HELP WANTED.

A request has been received for information about AGATHA BOLGER of Jumbuk, who married JIM O'RIELLY in the early 1900s. Jim died of peritonitis around 1912-1914 and Agatha moved to Morwell Bridge. It is thought that she reverted to her maiden name of BOLGER and that she may have had charge of the Post Office at Morwell Bridge. If you can offer any information, please contact Secretary Elsie McMaster, or Eric Lubcke, (342203).

DO YOU KNOW:

- Where was Alexandra Park? (Clue: It's in Morwell's central business district).
- For what sport was the Yinnar Cup awarded in 1900?
- Who was Morwell Shire's first President? (Did he wear a beard?).
- Where was the Morwell Flax Mill situated? When did it operate?
- Which football team won the Mid-Gippsland League Premiership in 1934?
- How many horseshoes did blacksmith John Rintoull make in an hour?
- Which famous aviator took Morwell residents for joyflights in 1932?
- Where was Morwell's Mechanics Institute?
- Which town was originally named 12 - Mile - Peg?
- Where was the bauxite mine which operated in the early 1900s?
- What sporting venue is now beneath the waters of Hazelwood Pondage?
- Which member of the Royal Family visited Morwell in 1934?

ALL THIS AND MUCH MORE WILL BE REVEALED WHEN YOU READ YOUR COPY OF

# GLIMPSES OF OUR PAST

## *EARLY MORWELL AND DISTRICT*

PLEASE COME AND HELP CELEBRATE OUR FIRST PUBLISHING VENTURE AT THE LAUNCH

TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

at 2.30 pm

in ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HALL

CHURCH ST. MORWELL



### HOWITT DAY - A REAL WINNER

Saturday, October 14 was Howitt Day for the people who attended the 1989 Centre For Gippsland Studies seminar at Sale.

An impressive list of speakers gave fascinating presentations on various facets of the life and personality of Alfred Howitt:

- Howitt the Anthropologist - Prof. John Mulvaney (A.N.U.)
- Howitt the Geologist - Prof. George Seddon (Univ.of W.A.)
- Howitt the Naturalist - Ian Smith (Vic.Tourism Commission)
- Howitt - Explorer and Bushman - Peter Hiscock (Director, Sovereign Hill)
- The Howitt Family - Marion Le Cheminant (Gippsland Heritage Bookshop)

Alfred Howitt came to Australia on a visit in 1852 and decided to stay. He was a well-educated young man from a literary family and his scientific and enquiring mind found much to occupy it in his new country.

He tried his hand at gold prospecting, farming and droving and made several exploratory journeys before being asked to search for the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition. He found King, the sole survivor, and brought him back to Melbourne, then returned to Coopers Creek to retrieve the bodies of Burke and Wills.

As a reward he was appointed Police Magistrate and warden of the Omeo goldfields in 1863, a position he held for 26 years. Altogether he spent 38 years as a public official, during which time he studied the Kurnai aborigines of Gippsland and the flora and geology of the region.

On Sunday October 15, a group of 30 or so gathered in the Mitchell River National Park for a walk to the Den of Nargun. Howitt is thought to have been the first white man to see the Den, a large cave into which, according to aboriginal legend, a mysterious creature called a nargun, would drag unwary passers-by. The nargun was all stone, except for its breast, arms and hands. If you threw a spear at it, the spear would turn back and wound the thrower.

The walk to the Den was a delight with Professors Mulvaney and Seddon explaining the various physical features along the way and Albert Mullett, representing the Kurnai people, pointing out sacred areas, trees from which weapons were made etc.

At the seminar a small but fascinating booklet was launched. "The Battle of Bungil Bottle" prepared by Prof. George Seddon, contains Howitt's account of his trip by canoe down the Mitchell River in 1875, which ended at the Den of Nargun.

Altogether this was a most absorbing, informative and enjoyable weekend which maintained the high standard set by previous C.G.S. seminars. If you missed this one, make sure you don't miss the next!

ROBERT TURNLEY was a colourful journalist who owned the "Morwell Advertiser" in the 1890s. He was a Traralgon shire Councillor, representing West Riding (Morwell) in the last year before the separation of the two municipalities. He often wrote poems about newsworthy events for the "Advertiser". Here are two of them.

#### SHIRE SEVERANCE.

The following verses appeared in the "Morwell Advertiser" on July 18, 1890.

"There is some talk of the West Riding going in for severance from the Central and East Ridings of the Traralgon Shire. We will suppose them to be three sons and that the West Riding, the biggest and ugliest, is appealing to "Daddy" Traralgon."

1. Dear Father, listen to the prayer  
Of your ever grateful boy,  
For all that you have ever done  
To fill his heart with joy.  
Your dear old face will always shine  
Before my life forever  
But Daddy dear, I've come of age  
And you and I must sever.
2. You're getting old and feeble, Dad,  
You've lost your youthful dash,  
I cannot bear to see you plunge  
In speculation rash.  
Calignee trams are right enough  
But pay you they will never;  
I cannot face insolvency  
So you and I must sever.
3. My wayward brother, Central,  
Will cling to you through life,  
And with his weaker brother, East,  
May help you face the strife,  
Whilst I, your West, your biggest son  
Am straining at the tether.  
God bless you, Dad, I wish you luck  
But you and I must sever.
4. Father dear, I won't complain;  
Let past injustice rest;  
You could not help it but you know  
You loved your Central best.  
You shielded him from sleet and cold  
In wet and muddy weather,  
You gave him money meant for me  
So you and I must sever.
5. Our dear old tutors - Jim and Mac -  
'Twould cruel be to scold,  
Because you know, my darling Dad,  
They did what they were told.  
They made the boot to fit the foot  
Regardless of the leather,  
But since I've grown, I dropped to this  
And you and I must sever.
6. I've got the pluck, the wealth and dash,  
I'm broad and stout and hearty;  
I'll constitute myself a shire,  
Without respect to party.  
Abuse me not, oh Daddy dear  
For now I'm in high feather;  
I'm "jack" of loans and trams and lords  
So you and I must sever.

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#### A CELEBRATION

The following poem was inspired by the birth of a son to John Rintoull, Morwell's popular blacksmith, after seven daughters. The township really celebrated. Flags were strung across the street, Mr. Fred Rollason was engaged to beat the big drum and Robert Turnley wrote: (April 25, 1893) -

1. Bang the drum and blow the horn,  
Away with every care.  
Fill your glass and drink the health  
Of Rintoull's son and heir.  
The town can go insolvent,  
The banks may have a run,  
And cattle may go down in price  
But Rintoull's got a son.
2. You may talk about inventions  
Of flying in the air,  
Of gallant expeditions  
To find the polar bear.  
They may be very startling,  
But this must take the bun-  
Jack Rintoull is the father  
Of a noble little son.
3. God bless his tiny offspring,  
And when he grows a lad  
We'll often hear his cheery voice  
As now we hear his Dad.  
Tug the blooming joy bells  
For well they may be rung.  
Hoist the flags aloft, Fred  
For Rintoull's got a son.
4. Home Rule can go to Jericho,  
Let Gladstone go to pot;  
The Ulstermen can go to war  
And most of them get shot.  
Jack Rintoull's gained a conquest,  
The victory is won,  
And now he is the daddy  
Of a sturdy little son.
5. The world may end for what we care, since we have lived to see Jack Rintoull with a baby boy a-dangling on his knee. What matter now how soon for us this earthly race is run? The blooming Universe can bust for RINTOULL'S GOT A SON!

THE DEACONESSES OF GIPPSLAND

On October 10, a large cross hanging in the Lady Chapel of St. Paul's Cathedral, Sale, was dedicated by Bishop Colin Sheumack. The cross, made of blackwood, by local craftsman Roger Lanford, honours the work of the Anglican deaconesses of Gippsland.

The first deaconess was Rev. Deaconess Winifred Shoobridge who was licensed by Bishop Cranswick on December 16, 1918. She travelled long distances on horseback to minister to the outlying farms and settlements of Gippsland and served until her health failed in 1926. Mary Grant Bruce wrote: "She knows the loneliest and farthest corners of the Diocese and she seeks for the lonely women and children of the Diocese."

Deaconess Shoobridge organised the first women's group, "The Battalion of Gippsland Mothers" and established links with the Mothers' Union in England. She also introduced Sunday School by correspondence which had 2000 scholars by 1958.

The early deaconesses went to the loneliest places to bring the ministry to isolated women and children, often taking over districts which could not afford a deacon.

Bishop Sheumack said at the dedication service: "The Australian church is struggling to come to grips today with what has been a quiet but normal part of Gippsland church life for all but 16 years of its history." He also said: "Our church today is locked in a heated debate over the ordination of women to the priesthood of the church. Gippsland pre-empted this debate some 71 years ago, and proved the undoubted worth of women in full-time ministry of the church."

Taken from an article by Audrey Matthews,  
"Gippsland Anglican", November 1989

DEACONESSES OF GIPPSLAND:

- Sister Winifred Shoobridge
- Sister May
- Sister Marie Maud
- Sister Winifred Holten
- Deaconess Sheila Payne
- Deaconess Lucia Koska
- Deaconess Mavis Rogers
- Deaconess Georgie Harvey
- Deaconess Nancy Drew
- Deaconess Sheridan Hannah
- Nursing Sister Dorothy Allmond
- Nursing Sister Catherine Bennett



## BACK TO JUMBUK

Eric Lubcke

A very successful gathering of about 450 former residents, their families and friends met at Jumbuk school No. 3349 on the weekend of 21st/22nd October 1989 to have a reunion and celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the local Jumbuk Hall.

This school was moved down from Callignee Sth in 1948, being transported on a truck by Bill Duff, with many other helpers. The trip took three days.

The first school No. 3349 was built on Ed Hams' property about one mile down off Ritchies Rd. in 1900, but disappeared many years ago. This second school is not used as a school now, being used as a recreational outlet for the Churchill Primary School. As the school had been knocked about by vandals over the past five years, quite a lot of restoration work had to be done to make it presentable and we thank that valiant band of workers who put in many hours of arduous work to give the area a facelift.

On the Friday before the celebrations a large gang of men and ladies gathered at the school to prepare everything for the big day. It was raining, windy and cold but it did not deter them as they knew that Jumbuk was noted for rain. As someone said, it wouldn't be Jumbuk if it wasn't raining!

So the show went on and what a lovely day the next day turned out to be. The sun came out with just a few intermittent clouds floating by making it ideal.

From about 10 am the people started to roll up and it did not take long for the organisers to see that their labours had not been in vain. It did not take long, either for the past residents to meet up with old neighbours and friends they had not seen for maybe forty, fifty or sixty years or more.

The display of photos of the early settlers who blazed their way into these virgin hills in the 1890s and after was very popular. The school room was soon packed with people trying to relive memories of the past, looking at these photos of past eras and trying to identify people and places. It was good to be able to see some of the very nice farms these early settlers were able to make out of the virgin bush and there were others that showed the hardship that some of these men and women had to shoulder to make a living in this very heavily timbered country.

There were also maps of the Jumbuk area showing names of the early settlers who pioneered this area.

There were wood-chopping contest being held in the school grounds which gave people something to watch when they were not discussing old times with old friends they met up with.

During the afternoon's proceedings, Barry Gemmell and committee members called the people together to give all the old residents with their families and friends a big welcome to Jumbuk, hoping they had a most enjoyable time. Mr. Bill Mele, who had been a teacher at the Jumbuk school many years ago was asked to say a few words and declare the Back to Jumbuk Celebrations open. This he did very well, relating a few experiences he had in those days. He finished off by reading some poetry he had written.

The secretary of the committee, Gwenda Husson, said a few words of thanks for the help she had from many people in preparing for the big day. Gary Tregenza, the president of the committee, also passed on his thanks to those who had helped in various ways and to those who had given donations.

Mr. Tom Lawless, Morwell Shire councillor, gave a very good speech, thanking the committee for the invitation to be present and stating that the Shire's policy was that it was always willing to help those who get in to help themselves on occasions like this.

A very good lunch was provided by a band of young Venturers from Traralgon who always had a hot cup of coffee or tea available when needed.

Mr. Doug Wilkinson, the photographer, was busy taking group photos of the old pioneers and school groups and also ordinary groups of people who were enjoying the day.

There were three very old pioneers who came back. Miss Agnes Ritchie, 94 last January, was the oldest pupil to return to school. She was one of the first children to attend the school when it opened in 1900. She was also the first white child born in Jumbuk. She had the honour of planting a tree in the school grounds to mark the Back to Jumbuk celebrations.

BACK TO JUMBUK (cont).

Another returnee was Mrs. Ann Lindsay, also 94. She was Ann McFarlane before she married. Her parents were early settlers on the Jeeralang West road. The Jumbuk Rifle Range was on their property.

Mrs. Greenwood, 93, was another old resident who returned. She is the daughter of Mr. William Ritchie, an early settler.

A dance was held in the present Jumbuk Hall on the Saturday evening when about 150 people, old and young, joined in a lovely social evening. Novelty dances and competitions were held. They also had Mr. Bill Bryant and Mr. Bill Mele play an old time dance on the accordion, as they used to years ago, which was very much enjoyed by the patrons. Dancing finished about 2 am and all agreed they had had a good time.

On Sunday morning at 10.30 am we gathered at the jumbuk Hall again for a church service, which was conducted by Mr. Allan Linton and Mr. Don Gibson who had been previous ministers in the parish of Yinnar and Bolarra several years ago. About 100 gathered for the occasion and Mr. Les Kite from Churchill brought his portable organ and played for the hymn singing. The service and singing of the hymns went very well. After the service, many of the people renewed their friendships with many old friends that they met.

A barbecue lunch was held after the service and again the honours went to the Traralgon Venturers for looking after our needs.

Shortly after 2 pm the party was breaking up with the various people wending their ways to their respective homes.

All in all I think the committee of the Back to Jumbuk celebrations could be proud of the effort that was put in by all and sundry, as many of the people who were mixed up in the Back to werenew residents who had come into the area since a lot of the old residents moved out, which speaks volumes for those country people who are making their homes in these hills again.

I might mention in conclusion the names of some of the old residents and families who returned:

Jim Brown, Jim Duff, John Koenig, Ed Hams, Bill Ritchie, Andy Ritchie, Moysey, Drayton, Bolger, Moran, Monteith, Cahill, Greenwood, Chamberlain, Blucher, Taylor, Bright, Ryan, Rendell, Coleman, Temple, Cook, Chitty, Canavan, Robinson, Cole, McFarlane, Braniff, O'Rielly, Black, Inger, Bissell, Bates, Campbell, Brill, Byl, Langford, Foster, Gilbert, Hodgins, Turner, Coates, Clarke, Forsythe, Summerfield.

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On the following pages we reproduce a letter from Mrs. Joan Tanner of Tyers, concerning the McFarlane family of Jumbuk, which gives a picture of the life of settlers in the hill country early this century.

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The following report appeared in the local press, date unknown but obviously 1914-1918:

DEPARTING SOLDIERS

On Friday evening last, at short notice, the residents of Jumbuk assembled in the Jumbuk Hall to say goodbye to Messrs. Fred and Arthur Greenwood, who are off to the Front with the Second Expeditionary Forces. The two soldiers had been granted a few days leave in order to allow them to see their relations and many friends before taking their departure.

Advantage was taken of the time and at 9 o'clock dancing commenced and was kept going until 12 o'clock. during the evening several songs were well rendered and many expressions of good luck and safe return tendered the guests of the evening. Refreshments were then handed around in the good old fashion and a collection amounting to £3.10s was taken up in the room and handed to the two gallant defenders-to-be by Mr. William Ritchie who tendered them some good fatherly advice. On went the dance and joy was unconfined until it was nearly daybreak before the singing of Auld Lang Syne and the National Anthem was the signal for a general dispersion of the gay revellers.

# The Macfarlane Family of Jumbuk

Descendants of Immigrants from the Isle of Skye

The Macfarlane Family came to Jumbuk from Brasby Bridge near St Arnaud where their parents Finlay and Euphemia had settled on considerable acreage after their marriage. The older members of the family were born there. For some unknown reason Finlay decided to bring his family to Gippstead, and he rented land at Ruby near Leadgatha for a few years. It was during this time that he purchased the property at Jumbuk. A Mr Bullock had been the previous occupier and he had apparently found the task of developing the property too arduous and had left owing rent money to the Government of the day. They in their wisdom considered it quite in order that the next occupier make good the arrears. This Finlay agreed to do, but in his own good time and he spent many many years protesting that for various reasons it was not yet possible to do so. A succession of bad seasons, crop failure, fire, drought, insect infestation etc., and the need to feed and clothe a large family were some of the reasons for his inability to meet fully his financial commitments.

While living at Ruby Finlay & some of the older boys used to travel to Jumbuk to commence developing the property. They erected a four roomed home with a verandah front and back for the family. A lean to was added for Finlay's ageing mother and a detached room for his Uncle Neil who travelled with them. An outdoor brick oven was used for bread baking and such things and the rest of the cooking was done over the open fire in the house. The Macfarlane property was situated in the North East part of Jumbuk on the border with Geeralang. Finlay had Block No 13 and later acquired for his eldest son Neil Block No 50 which was adjacent to the East. Later on he bought 2 separate blocks in neighbouring Geeralang for his sons. There was quite a community around the Macfarlane Property - among them the Draytons, Duffs, Youngs, Laubs & H. Ferris in Jumbuk and the Jarvis, Fox family, Guntylus, Summerfields, Elstons & Clerk George in Geeralang to name just a few.

When the family moved from Ruby in 1900 they spent

the last night of the journey with the MacFarlane family of Hazelwood (No Relation). The families became very good friends.

Ann who was born in St Arnaud in 1895 started going to school in Ruby and after coming to Jumbuck she and her younger sister Katie were among the first students who attended the first Jumbuck school when it opened. They had to walk 4 miles through the bush, up hill and down dale, no mean feat for two little girls. It is assumed their youngest brother also attended this school for a short time. The only days they did not attend school were when the snow fell or illness prevented attendance a rare occurrence - Once Katie suffered from severe chilblains and Ann made the journey on her own for six weeks. She says her mother did worry about her and on one occasion when a severe storm erupted her eldest brother came to meet her. She was greatly relieved to see him and he carried her home on his shoulder. Many were the times when the girls heard the dingoes in the bush behind them and they hurried their footsteps homeward.

Arbour days were held in the early days of the school and Ann planted a Maple tree - perhaps the ancestor of the numerous seedlings currently growing there - Katie planted a different type of tree perhaps one of the pines still surviving.

Agnes was born in Ruby and Elizabeth was born in Jumbuck and they both made the same journey to the same school some years later.

In common with other pioneering families the MacFarlane were self-reliant, the women folk becoming excellent seamstresses and home makers and the boys working diligently beside their father clearing & developing their land. The men were frequently soaked to the skin but always when the new day dawned they had dry clothes & boots to don once more. Thanks you, girls.

The early settlers appear to have been a close knit community and frequently helped each other by having working bees on the different properties. These occasions would have also provided social contact, photos of such occasions show men women and children present.

Jumbuck had a Rifle Club and the Rifle Range was situated in a gully on the southern side of the MacFarlane property. The Rifle Club Room was on the side of the road near Youngs place which was just over the road from MacFarlane.