

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

published monthly, except December

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

Vol. 9 No. 11

NOVEMBER 1993

WELCOME TO THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER

IMPORTANT NOTICE: OUR November meeting (the last for 1993)
will be held at
MORWELL HOTEL-MOTEL (Top Pub)
on MONDAY NOVEMBER 15
at 6.00 pm in The Green Room.

***** PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF DATE!

We will have a counter meal followed by a meeting.
Member Claire Wood will speak about her research
into the history of Hazelwood Cemetery and she would
appreciate feedback, comments and further information
from members.

Morwell Historical Society has been given custody of a
Minute Book and banner belonging to the now defunct Morwell
Caledonian Society. In a future newsletter we hope to give
an account of the history of the Caledonian Society and any
information from readers would be appreciated. (Contact
Elsie McMaster - (051)341149)

HISTORICAL WALKS IN MORWELL

Students in Grades 5 and 6 at Commercial Road State School have compiled a book of four historical walks around Morwell. With their teacher, Debbie Edwards, and accompanied by Elsie McMaster of Morwell Historical Society, they walked around the town, taking notes on their travels and, on their return to school, entered the information gathered on computers before producing a very impressive booklet, illustrated with photographs from the Morwell Historical Society's collection.

The book, which directs walkers to points of interest around the township of Morwell with brief historical notes on each, was launched on Wednesday, November 3 at Commercial Road School. Members of Morwell Historical Society, representatives of Morwell City Council and Morwell Library were invited to the launch, which was organised and presented entirely by the students of Grades 5/6. We were all impressed by the confidence and aplomb of the students who welcomed visitors, served afternoon tead, introduced their work and made presentations of the book to Morwell Historical Society, Morwell City Council and Morwell and Commercial Road School Libraries.

The students, and Debbie, their teacher, are to be congratulated on an excellent production which will be of interest not only to local residents but also to visitors to the town.

HERITAGE WEEK 1994

The theme of the 1994 Victorian Heritage Festival is 'HISTORY ON THE MOVE'. The 'movement' theme is wider than you might at first think, including such things as

- transport of all kinds
- migration - movement of people
- architecture - moving of buildings; portables& pre-fabs
- arts and entertainment - dance, moving pictures, travelling exhibitions.
- machinery and such things as irrigation systems, wind-mills, Furphy water carriers.
- sports of all kinds.

The opening event will be "a genteel tour of some of Melbournes' historic properties" on foot or, if you prefer, on vintage bicycles!commencing a at Latrobe's Cottage and proceeding to Rippon Lea via Como and Labassa, on Sunday 10th April.

On Sunday 14th April the National Trust will feature a self-guided walk around some of Melbourne's historic buildings, with maps and notes available.

Morwell Advertiser & Gazette

September 24, 1942

We have now reached Chapple St., and on the opposite corner the new State School was erected. The first head master was John Irvine(sic)but in the writer's day the master was Mr. Tom Ferguson, with Gerald Gilbert the assistant. The sewing mistress was Miss Haiz and later Miss O'Toole, and the junior teacher, Miss Nellie Gay.

This finished Commercial Road so we must now return to the P.O. corner to glance down Tarwin Street. But before doing so I would like to mention the auctioneers in business at this time were Marriage, Orr & Co., whose business was later taken over by Geo. Earl, the mention of whom reminds me of a little incident that occurred in those days which might interest the sedate readers of today. Dick Fitzgerald and Geo. Earl (both quite respectable residents) each owned a racehorse and a friendly argument started as to which was the faster; as the discussion advanced a match was arranged and the race was to start from the Ridge and to finish at Murdoch's Cricketers Arms Hotel, down Commercial Road. Geo. Earl was to ride his horse and my brother Alf. (then 15 years old) Fitzgerald's. Just prior to the race a thunderstorm transformed the dust into mud. When the flag dropped, Bro. Alf shot to the lead and so plastered the man following with mud that he could not see and consequently had no hope of getting the lead. When the race was finished, Fitzgerald rushed Alf round the back of John Rintoull's blacksmith shop and filled his pockets with old iron, so as he could make the correct weight. I might here mention that this Rustic Hamlet had no police protection at this period.

Tarwin Street could boast of several buildings, first Donaldson's brick store room as it was called because it was the first brick edifice erected in Morwell. Previous to being rebuilt, Henry Breed used it as a butcher's shop for a time, and after that it was used as a school room while the present State School was being constructed. The Gippsland Furnishers premises are now on this site.

Next came Sharpe the Chemist, Frank Holmes, the jeweller and locksmith. Somewhere jambed in here was a small shop where Geo. Holloway conducted his business as already mentioned.

After this came the post office store, so named when the postal department had been induced to transfer from the Railway Store in Commercial Road. What influence was used to bring about this transfer is not recorded but it was generally spoken of as a shrewd move on the part of the store keeper, thus making sure of some customers if it was only to purchase postage stamps. The post mistress in these premises was Miss Murray.

Crossing to the opposite side of Tarwin Street was Green's Drapery House managed by Mr. A. Gay whose son, Mr. H. W. Gay, is one of our well-known business men. On the death of Mr. A. Gay, the present Mr. A. A. Green took over the business and rebuilt the shop in brick and made it the up-to-date premises it is today.

A baker's shop owned by a Mr. Pierce was on the site where Mr. W. A. Young's residence now stands, but this has long since been removed.

The Mechanic's Institute was on the corner of George and Tarwin Street, and the choosing of this site caused a good deal of hostilities, but as the ground was given by a generous donor, who had interests at this end of the town, and a Government Grant was procured, all opposition was swept aside and the building was erected and served as a place of amusements and edification until a few years ago when a mysterious fire reduced it to ashes and the Town Hall was constructed. That stately edifice now stands as a monument to the committee, who fought so hard to raise the funds and make the necessary arrangements to have it erected.

Crossing over the railway line, Richard Date had a blacksmith's shop on the corner opposite the Methodist Church, having moved from George St. behind Murdoch's Hotel.

William Tulloch had a carpenter's shop where Trembath's Garage now stands, and between Angus' Timber Yard and the Latrobe Road, Thomas Theobald (the butcher) had his first slaughter yards. The first races were held adjacent to these yards.

Guthridge & Co. stock and station agents of Sale, built the sale yards in Buckley Street, and were later taken over by Mathieson & Davis. Apart from the brick yard in Jane Street the rest of the north side of the railway was open paddocks.

C. W. Howlett had his slaughter yard in Parnell Park, the land that is situated between Avondale Road and Commercial Road (west) and was so named by Mr. Jeremiah Ryan, who later subdivided it into building blocks.

A few scattered buildings were along Hazelwood Road. Dobie's cordial factory and some dwelling houses. Ann Street as it is now called, was known as Old Maid Street, owing to the number of spinsters residing there. When the street was officially named this was thought to be too harsh and accordingly changed. The R. C. School and Church was first built in George Street, on the site where McLean's sale yards are. This building was removed when the present church was erected.

It is interesting to note the number of sale yards that have been built in this town. The first was behind the Railway Station on the corner of Collins and Station Street. Next was in Hazelwood Road, between Campbell's Cafe and Les Hare's residence.

HARKING BACK (cont)

Still another was erected on the south side of George Street, and later one was on the site of Mr. Ern Nadenbousch's residence in Hazelwood Road and the two yards, one in George Street and one in Buckley Street which are occupied at the present time.

I must not forget one man whom I remember in my school days and who was one of those characters which small boys got a good deal of amusement from, especially if he had been partaking too freely of the beverage that maketh glad the heart of man. His name was Tommy Hill. Tom was a well educated man who used to supplement his remittance by doing the local ~~storekeeper's~~ books at the end of each month. This done and his pocket lined he would adjourn to the nearest tavern and make merry. Like every other resident, Tom owned a pony, which he called the Goat, and on one of these occasions he was fondling the pony and expounding its good qualities in front of the Club Hotel during a busy period. Some youths began to tease him and he became a little more cantankerous than usual, when the local arm of the law came on the scene. After remonstrating with him, which only made him worse, the officer bundled him onto the pony and commenced leading him down to the lock-up. After proceeding some distance, Tom began to suspect where he was going so he leaned forward and slipped the bridle off and set the pony at a hand gallop, leaving the ~~astonished~~ policeman with the empty bridle in his hand. His freedom was short lived as on reaching the corner the pony turned sharply and Tom slid into the dust. Before he could regain his equilibrium he found himself again in the hands of the law, and on his way to a free night's lodging at the government's expense.

(To be Continued)

INVITATION

Members are invited to the opening of the JOHN IRVING ARCHIVES BUILDING at the Port Albert Maritime Museum on Sunday 28th November 1993 at 2 pm. Please contact Elsie McMaster on (051)341149 if you would like to attend.

'S.E.C. NEWS' BOWS OUT.

After 57 years, a magazine which has been familiar in many Latrobe Valley homes has produced its final edition. The editorial says that "the decision has been taken, reluctantly, to cease publishing the magazine, as it is felt it no longer has a place in Victoria's restructured electricity supply industry." The final issue contains a reprint of the first edition of June 1936.

THE WALSH FAMILY

Guest speaker at our October meeting was Mr. Ben Walsh, whose grandfather, Patrick Michael Walsh, came to Australia from Ireland in the 1860s. He married Ann Hickey and after farming around the Ballarat area, took up a selection of 1000 acres at Middle Creek in 1887.

Ben's father, Tom, recalled accompanying his father to inspect the Middle Creek selection - the journey from Ballarat took three weeks including being bogged for a week at Brandy Creek. (Tom was a boy of seven at the time.)

Patrick and his family (there were eight children in all) cleared the steep hills of timber and established a dairy farm. Milk was set in pans, the cream skimmed and made into butter and this, together with pigs was taken to Rosedale for sale. Later the Walshes had the first cream separator in the district and set up a creamery for the use of local dairy farmers.

Tom Walsh bought a property known as 'The Poplars' in the early 1900s. It had been first selected by a man named Sullivan, who sold it to a Mr. Morris. He named the farm 'Seafield' after his home town in England. Mr. Morris built a new house, which was a real showpiece for many years, and planted a hundred and fifty poplar trees along the boundary of the property, which led to the change of name. He also planted a thousand fruit trees in such a way that, no matter from which angle you viewed them, they were in straight lines. The poplars were planted in 1879 and some are still standing.

"The Poplars" was used first for grazing, then later for dairying, by the Walsh family. Tom married Margaret Sillcock, daughter of a pioneer family in the Hazelwood district.

Ben started school at Yinnar but transferred to the Hazelwood Estate School when it commenced in 1926. This school was one of those which was recently closed.

THERE WILL BE NO MEETING AND NO NEWSLETTER IN DECEMBER.

THE PRESIDENT AND COMMITTEE WISH ALL READERS A SAFE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON. SEE YOU IN 1994!