

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. 10

OCTOBER 1993

WELCOME TO THE OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

As the November meeting will be the last for 1993, we are planning a dinner meeting. The date and place will be decided at our October meeting and members will be advised of the details as soon as possible.

The Society has received an original architects' plan of Murdoch's Building, mentioned in Llew Vary's article reprinted in this newsletter. It was sent to Morwell City Council by a resident of Kyneton and Council has given the plan to our Society. It is drawn on linen, hand-coloured, and will make a most interesting addition to our collection.

A set of three display screens has been added to the furnishings of the Town Hall foyer - our President happened to be in the right place at the right time and obtained them for \$5.00!

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19.

Guest speaker will be Mr. Ben Walsh whose family were pioneers in the Middle Creek/Yinnar district.

HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE.

YALLOURN REVISITED

An exhibition entitled 'Yallourn Revisited' opened on Thursday, October 14th at the Centre for Gippsland Studies, Monash University Gippsland Campus, Churchill.

A historical overview of the township of Yallourn from its planning and early years to the final days of its demise, together with recollections of former residents, copies of the 'Live Wire', memorabilia and even gift-wrapped briquettes!! brought back many nostalgic memories to the ex-Yallourn residents at the opening. The exhibition was officially opened by Dr. Geoffrey Serle, and will remain open for several months. The Centre for Gippsland Studies is open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Further information is available from Meredith Fletcher on (051)226356.

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BACK TO YALLOURN NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Celebration of the school's 75th anniversary will take place on Saturday 23rd and Sunday 24th October. A fun weekend is assured - festivities include a ball and a back-to-school roll call. Souvenirs will be on sale. Further information is available from the school - (051) 671233.

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Did you know that in 1752 we lost 11 days?

The Old Style and New Style Calendars

The present system of dating originated as follows:

(a) The Roman Era began with the foundation of Rome in 753 B.C. By 46 B.C., owing to the various imperfections the Roman Calendar had fallen into confusion and Julius Caesar then reformed it.

(b) The year 46 B.C. was therefore made to consist of 445 days, and is called the "Year of Confusion". Thereafter each year consisted of 365 days except that every fourth year was a leap year. This Julian or Old Style Calendar remained in general use in Europe until 1582.

(c) By 1582 there was a difference of ten days between the Julian and the tropical year. In that year Pope Gregory X111 ordered that 5 October be called the 15 October, and that of the end of the century (00) years only the fourth should be a leap year. This Gregorian or New Style Calendar is still in use. It was adopted in

- 1582. Italy, France, Spain and Portugal
- 1583 Prussia, Switzerland, Holland, Flanders and German Catholic States
- 1586 Poland
- 1587 Hungary
- 1700 German Protestant States and Denmark
- 1872 Japan
- 1912 China

- 1915 Bulgaria
- 1917 Turkey
- 1919 Yugoslavia and Rumania
- 1923 Greece

In Sweden the change was made between 1700 and 1740 by the omission of 11 leap year days.

In Britain (including America and the Colonies) the change was made in 1752 (3 September being called 14), and the beginning of the official year was altered from 25 March (which was the date of the vernal equinox when the Julian Calendar was introduced) to 1 January at the same time.

Reprinted from Everyman's Dictionary of Dates (7th ed.) 1987, Audrey Butler

Morwell Advertiser & Gazette

Thursday September 17, 1942

In the late seventies the Government surveyor laid out the township of Morwell, the extent of which was that block between Hazelwood Rd on the west and Tarwin St on the east, while the northern and southern boundaries were Commercial Rd and George St respectively. When the survey was finished a government auction sale was held and most of the lots were sold, each lot had approx. a frontage to Commercial Rd of one chain by a depth of five chains running back to George St.

This block was in Roger O'Flaherty's selection, and when the Government chose this site for a village he (O'Flaherty) was offered the option of taking £200 in cash or two hundred acres in North Hazelwood, now owned by Mr Ted Sanders. He chose the latter.

As I have records, showing the different business houses and their occupants in the year 1878, and then again in 1886, two years prior to the "Great Fire of Morwell" which destroyed all the buildings between the Bank of Australasia and Rintoull's, I will commence from the beginning of the town in 1878, giving the names of the principal citizens in those days and it often occurred to me that many of these would have made excellent characters for such writers as Charles Dickens, especially when one remembers John Rintoull, the Village Blacksmith, whose integrity and ability at his profession was comparable with the character in the poem we so often recited at school.

Edmund Kelleher, a typical old English Inn Keeper.

E. Rowell, the tailor, sitting cross-legs on the counter plying his needle and thread.

Geo. Holloway the bootmaker, with his sign - a wooden boot hanging over the footpath - and whose tap,tap,tap, well into the night, disturbing the slumbers of his neighbours and further adding to their discomforture by burning the scraps of leather, which permeated the air for miles around making the odor of the paper mill of today appear infinitesimal. And what a character would J.H.Buckley have been as "Dad" for Steele Rudd. But here again I am wandering and must get back to the inhabitants of Commercial Road.

Commencing at Henry's Coffee Palace on the corner where the Town Hall now stands. On the opposite corner of Commercial Road stood the Cricketer's Arms Hotel. The first licensee was John Collier. The licence was after held by William Murdoch, Roger O'Flaherty, Henry Breed, P.Donovan, Geo. Millett, Chas Smyth and Don McKay, in that order.

HARKING BACK (cont)

Murdoch's Hall, where A.L.Hare's garage now stands was built by Wm. Murdoch in the days when he conducted the Cricketer's Arms and was the scene of many hilarious gatherings.

R.Stephenson, saddler, was where Les Hare has his office.

Next the Colonial Bank, now the National. Mr Henry McIntosh was the first manager.

Then John Rintoull, who bought the first township allotment.

After this came Tonkin the baker and next door was Plumber the butcher who managed for J.Pruden of Sale. This business was later conducted by Thomas Theobald, who was followed by C.W.Howlett, father of Ern and Harry Howlett of the Latrobe Jersey Stud.

Still going eastward was Martin the bootmaker, Carl Haiz the saddler, adjoining whom was the Bank of Australasia (at that time a wooden building). Between this and the hotel right-of-way, a Mrs Wilson kept a newsagency and fancy goods shop. Beside this, Fitzpatrick built his hotel, which was afterwards bought by William Murdoch, a very enterprising townsman, as is shown by the fact that he rebuilt the hotel in brick, and also those shops known as Murdoch's Buildings, which stand between Nash's grocery shop and Bill Davey's Hairdressing Saloon. This, of course was after the Great Fire of Morwell, which destroyed the old wooden buildings in this section.

Passing the hotel, we come to the Railway Store and Post Office, conducted by Charles Oxtoby Gilbert, father of the two highly respected residents of the town in the persons of Messrs Arthur and Percy Gilbert.

This was the first Post Office and the post mistress was Miss Holland.

The Railway Store was situated where Sharpe's Emporium now stands. Later occupants of these premises were Tinker and Hutton.

John Quigley, already mentioned in the article on Scrubby Forest, first owned the Club Hotel, and sold to Edmund Kelleher who reconstructed it of brick.

Kelleher was a very popular host who, it was said, conducted his house very creditably.

Next was Donaldson's Store and Drapery, now conducted by D.C.Mills and Co. Pty.Ltd. This business was purchased in 1894 by John Hall, who was considered one of Morwell's most generous townsmen, and the avenue of trees in Hazelwood Rd stands as a monument to his memory.

Across Tarwin St. on the opposite corner where the Post Office now stands, was Callaghan's Hotel, afterwards delicensed, and became a boarding-house, conducted by Mrs.Gadd. Portion of this was used as a Court House.

HARKING BACK (cont)

In passing I might mention the present Post Office was built in 1891 and the first post mistress in this building was Miss Vigar.

Continuing along Commercial Rd was a vacant block of land owned by John Kelleher, a brother of Edmund Kelleher, which was in later years purchased by Angus McDonald.

Then came Lewis Samuels' bakery, later owned by McDonald and Hone, Bakers and General Storekeepers.

Lower down the street was John English's store, which later became Cavanagh and Harris. Attached to this was a shop where E. Rowell tailored the suits for all and sundry. These shops were on the site now occupied by Peirson Bros, butchers, and McRoberts' produce store.

Next was the "Morwell Advertiser" and C.P. Nind was the Editor. This Journal was first published at the rear of John Rintoull's shop by W. Kemp and his brother-in-law, W. Secombe. The latter did not carry on long and William Waldon took his place. The proprietors then became Waldon and Kemp.

Next to the paper office was a vacant block of land. Then our first medical man, Dr Moir built a residence.

Dr Moir started practice here in 1872, doing his own dispensing. He was a very capable medico and was a great acquisition to the district, as previously a doctor had to be brought from Traralgon or elsewhere. Like the proverbial Scotchman he had a slow sense of humour, but nevertheless he caused many a laugh especially with some of his antics on horseback. The doctor was by no means a finished horseman, and on more than one occasion when cantering along Commercial Road his cunning bay mare would turn sharply into Tarwin St to go back to her stable, while its rider wanted her to go straight ahead, with the result that the doctor would slide off, at the same time clinging to the mare's neck to save his fall. He did not lose his temper on these occasions, but with a very Scotch accent he would remark, "She's a knowing brute; do you know she can even turn the water tap on when she wants a drink, but she doesn't turn it off."

(To be Continued)



R.H.S.V. HISTORY NEWS

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NOVEMBER EVENTS

Evening Meeting. after A.G.M.
Speaker: Dr. Malcolm Kennedy
Subject: 'Working Horses in Victoria'
Date: Tuesday 23 November
Time: 5.15 pm drinks, then A.G.M. and speaker
Place: Bullion Room, Royal Mint



Carting horse feed in the Mallee, 1921. From *Having a Go: Bill Boyd's Mallee*, one of a series of books in the Museum of Victoria's Photo Archive Project.

CELEBRATE BIRD WEEK

At the Royal Botanic Gardens the Voluntary Guides are offering two special early morning walks . . . Wednesday October 27 at 7 am & Sunday October 31 at 8.30 am. Walks begin at 'F' Gate, near the corner Birdwood Avenue and Dallas Brooks Drive, South Yarra. The walks are free, but bookings are essential. Phone: (03) 655 2341, 10am - 4pm. A Continental Breakfast is available at the Gardens' Tea Rooms after the walks.

HELP WANTED

Michael Joseph FITZGERALD D.C.M.
32nd Infantry Battalion- 1st A.I.F.
Neil Smith 555 - 5401

Former Creswick State School pupils who served in WW I
Ben Lockyar RMB 274 CRESWICK 3364

Deaths, funerals and commemorations within the Colac district,
1837 - 1933 AND lives of residents over 60 years of age, 1837 -
1933.

Dawn Peel 33 Grant Street COLAC 3250

Did you attend an educational institution in Ballarat? If so, you
may wish to assist the Ballarat H.S. by recalling your school days
or an unsung educationalist who deserves to be recorded.

Ms K.A.Kelly c/o Secretary Ballarat H.S.
421 Lyons Street South BALLARAT 3350

THE CELEBRATION OF A COACH SERVICE CENTENARY

Johnson's Cunninghame to Orbost service, via the Lake Tyers sand bar, will be commemorated on Sunday 31 October by Brian Blakeman's stage coach.

Celebrations and rediscoveries, 9.30 am to whenever (after a 6 pm barbecue). Enquires, Jim Henderson: (051) 557 208 (evenings).

See Tambo Shire Historical Society notice in "Around the societies".

GIPPSDOC VOLUME 4

The Centre for Gippsland Studies at Monash University, Gippsland Campus, Churchill, 3842 is making a pre-publication offer of \$15, including postage. There are 350 pages and 1,000 well indexed entries covering books, articles etc. on Gippsland in *Gippsdoc*, Volume 4. Contact Meredith Fletcher: (051) 226 356.

OUR BIG FUNDRAISER

During the Heritage Festival in April 1994 the Society will hold another Fair. Books of all kinds are needed. It has been suggested that we should also have stalls selling plants and preserves. Any offers?

If you can help with stock, please let Susan Priestley know.

GENEALOGY TODAY

New leads for the family detective

Three sessions, two combining informal lecture and discussion, and one open form session covering questions on notice and questions from the floor, will be held in the Box Hill Library theatre of Wednesday evenings from 8.00-9.00pm as follows:

13TH OCTOBER, *Introduction to genealogy*

Faye Guthrie helps genealogists to clarify their goals and provides an overview of the resources available to family researchers in Victoria.

20TH OCTOBER, *Reporting your research for posterity*

Dom Meadley explains the techniques involved in producing a successful family history.

27TH OCTOBER, *Brick walls in research: a problem-solving panel*

Frances Brown, Jenny Carter, Faye Guthrie, and Marjorie Morgan place their expertise at your disposal to provide guidance for those who are not sure where to go next in their search for that elusive ancestor.

Enquiries to Therese Robin, Australiana Librarian, on 890-1002. Bookings are required.