

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

Vol. 6

No. 4

APRIL 1990

WELCOME TO THE APRIL NEWSLETTER.

We hope that there is plenty to interest everyone in this month's newsletter.

The information regarding the World War and Gallipoli is from study material currently available to students in secondary schools. With this year marking the 75th Anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli, the material may be of some interest. Also, our last newsletter contained a "can you help?" request for material relating to World War 1.

The notes on the experiences of May Vinall were obtained by Eric Lubcke. The notes formed the basis of the eulogy read at the recent funeral of May Vinall. These notes tell us a great deal about life from a past era.

Our March meeting had as its guest, Mr. Stephen Legg, the Morwell Shire historian. Stephen's explanation of his work was interesting. The final product will be eagerly awaited.

up to you. There are still a few of them up there". "There used to be no end of mudlarks". "But birds seem to have disappeared there now, where we used to live."

In the early days there were dingoes, packs of them. The settlers would shoot and trap them and yard the calves to protect them. There were two calves, Teeny and Stumpy, with tails bitten off by dingoes. But Jack can't ever remember seeing one himself, "as the country got opened up the disappeared". The children up there had pets. They remember especially a Magpie and a Jackass. "Mum taught the magpie to whistle Tipperary". They remember once when soldiers called to say goodbye because they were going off to war. "As they went he sat on the gate post and whistled". "He could whistle all sort of tunes, but on that occasion he whistled 'It's a long way to Tipperary'." Jack shook his head in remembrance and observed "that you wouldn't read about it". "He just flew out the door one night, we never saw him again after that, he just disappeared."

"All the settlers built their houses out of the timber. There were beautiful Ash trees, they split palings out of them, that's what they used." The Mountain Ash was called Black Butt in those days. It was no good to burn. They would put it in a heap together, it would flare up for a while and then go black. "It was terribly hard to get rid of it when they were clearing the land." "It would flare while there was any sap in it, and then go black." "There were other trees in the forest, Fiddleback or Blackwood, Beech and Sassafrass. There was Musk, Bird's Eye Musk, they made handles for walking sticks out of that". "You'd have a job to find that now, perhaps in the Tarra Valley".

The posts for fences were made from blue gum. The blackbutt was no good in the ground, "it won't stand the wet and the weather", so it "wouldn't last anytime. But there was plenty of blue gum there".

The clearing of the land was "a colossal job". "These big Black Butt trees were the killer because they wouldn't burn, and they were no good much for fire wood either". They were able to sell the timber as split palings, in the early days. "Some of the men did nothing else but split palings especially out at Gonyah. There wasn't very much of it around Johnstone's Hill because there wasn't such good trees in that area". "At Gemell's Hill there was a lot of good paling timber there". "From Gonyah they used to send them to Melbourne for paling fences, there were a lot of paling splitters out there at Gonyah at different times. They used to split blackwood staves for making barrels, Wattie McGowan used to do that."

"But the roads were the killers up there, by the time they were metalled, it was too late, everyone had gone, they metalled them to get out I think". "They were always having deputations to the C.R.B., but they wouldn't do anything about it. It wasn't till 1926 that there was any metal for the roads, not around Johnstone's Hill."

In 1906 George Firman of Yinnar carried timber for the second house. He had a bullock team, but on this occasion the wagon capsized. He was carting the timber, the pine had tongue and groove, and some of it got broken off. There was no getting any more timber, you had to make use of the damaged timber. One or two rooms used to let the breeze through because the tongues were broken off.

That was the only accident up there, mainly because the roads used to go up and over the hills. It was more dangerous when they made the roads go around the hill. Then there was the bank below. Jack told about one of the most dangerous jobs that the bullockies had to do. "When Charlie Snell got that job of metalling the road, it was the first job up there, he ordered a new crusher, and a big engine to drive it. Two bullock teams from Boolarra brought the crusher. There was no other way of getting it out, horses were too dangerous, they went too quick whereas bullocks were slow. They went halfway one day and then the next day they completed the journey. The crusher would be more than ten or twelve tons, it was all steel and metal. A lot of the places were pretty narrow, where there was only 2 or 3 ft margin from the edge. The hopper, it was wide, and the most dangerous. I know they stopped the traffic on the road while they were coming through, there was no hope of anyone passing them. That was Bill Casey and Jim McIntosh, it was one of the most dangerous jobs that the bullockies had to do. Other times they had the wagons, that was different altogether."

"The worst part of the road was Lawless's crossing, it wouldn't be listed on the maps, it's only about a mile long. It's on the Midland Highway, they would never get anything up out of the gully if they had of gone over". "The bullock teams played a hell of a big part in opening up the country. They could go where horses couldn't go. Before the horses and scoops came, they used to work with a delver. A lot of people wouldn't know what that meant now. They'd be a big piece of timber, 10 or 12 ft long, and they'd have another piece about 5-6 ft long which formed a V. They'd pull that and that used to push the dirt over the edge".(2) "The V would shovel the dirt, then plough another lot". "Jack Palmer used to have one, a lot of people now wouldn't have the faintest idea what you meant".

There were fires from time to time, but strangely enough, very few people were burnt. There didn't seem to be the big fires. The 1898 fires, they were proper fires, they burnt out half of Victoria".

May can remember that she was three years old when they burnt out. "I remember Dad carrying me on his shoulders down through the fire while we went over to one of the neighbour's places. Their farm had been burnt but not the house, and we went to their place. Our house was burnt down while we were away, because we'd moved off and left, I suppose it was the only thing to do. And how this Mrs. Chilvers accomodated us all? Then the Pennycuiks at Budgerie, they had a house, and we moved down there until Dad built another house, and Mum was six months pregnant with his Lordship here. You wouldn't read about it would you?" "And then Jack was born in that little Pennycuik school, up at Budgerie East.(3)

It still amazes May that they "went through two houses" because of fires. Once their sister rode from Johnstone's Hill to Madalya School. "One night she didn't come home because there was a fire on the road. She had stayed at the McGowan family's home for the night. (4) "I suppose next day Dad went looking for her. There would be fire on the road and he wouldn't be able to get through. That's just one of the sad things that happened with Kiddies going distances, but she'd have to ride through the bush tracks to Madalya on her own."

"We never knew what it was to be short of food". "We lived off the land. Everyone came to us and got vegetables. We had our own meat, eggs and butter. We put down about two to three boxes of butter for the winter. Women made their own bread, we were fair lumps of kids before we tasted a loaf of baker's bread. We reckoned that was great"(5). "Mum used to make haggis, black puddings and white puddings,(6) and all those things being Scotch. She would use every part of the animal. All our groceries came up from Yarram. When I go to the shop now and buy a little packet of bacon my goodness me, I think of the bacon we used to have hanging up in the kitchen. Dad would kill three or four pigs for the winter". Pigs were for selling as well. They'd be carted on a sledge, alive to Yinnar, and then later to Boolarra. "What a journey, going from way up there. Later they'd go in a wagon, but the roads were the killer up there".

Jack spoke about the cream cans. He remembered seeing cream cans being taken out to meet the wagons(7). They'd have two sledges, one on top of the other to keep them out of the mud, it was that deep(8). At one time they were milking about thirty cows. The children would all help before they went to school. Their father "had milking shorthorn, and they would rear everything. In those days there was wild oats in the bush, and they'd turn the cattle out and they'd come in much fatter". They came through the winter in good condition. In September the butchers used to come out from Morwell, Boolarra and Yinnar to buy them. There were cattle yards at Scanlon's Budgerie Hotel, and people took their cattle there for the cattle sales. "Once the wild oats disappeared, that was the end of the cattle surviving in the winter. Cattle died. In the shelter of the bush they had plenty of food. There was not much hay cut up there Dad used to cut what we had with the scythe".

"Stanford was the first school teacher, Mum had him boarding there". There were thirty-two children at the school at the time. It was Stanfords first school, and Jack remembers that "he was a terror for falling trees. He was used to the bush, he came from Beech Forest". All the children walked to school. May remembers the distance that some of the children had to walk particularly the Smiths and Townsends. There was a story they both told of "a man in the bush". It was the sort of thing "that scared hell out of everyone", because they were not used to having strangers about. "The Townsend children discovered him as they were walking to school. They had to jump over a log, and they nearly jumped on top of him. They got a hell of a fright, he was lying asleep on the track. He came up through our place and Dad went and spoke to him, nothing would frighten or bluff him. Mum gave him some food and then he went on his way. He had escaped from some mental home, but they reckoned he wasn't that mad. I remember Bessie out of breath, she ran all the way."

There were very few accidents, which seems rather amazing. May said "So many lives were given to those hills", but Jack added that "not many got killed there". There were only three accidents, Bill Scanlon from the Budgerie Hotel was killed, Jim Bean was hit with a limb and Reg Page was lucky.

There were many storms and you "had to keep looking up all the time, you never knew when bits would break off the trees".

They never saw a doctor "seeing a doctor was a thing of the past. You had to be pretty sick. Once Jim Cranly rode ten miles from Budgerie East to Boolarra in twenty-six minutes after an accident. But the horse was done in afterwards,.... no good for anything".

They had six horses in their family, the children all had ponies and there were two draught horses. The children rode their ponies to the dances. They'd all meet at the halls and often the dances were held on moonlight nights.(9) The Ryton Hall was built later than their hall at Johnstone's Hill. It was noted for its beautiful floor, made from Jarrah wood from Western Australia. People would "come from everywhere to have dances". "There were a lot of people living up there in those days. There were people on every block, though some people had a lot of blocks and they didn't do much on them, they'd be away somewhere".

After World War 1 started " a lot of people got out and went to other places. They left the banks with the land". "Our family stayed too long really".

Jack thinks that he was the one who caught the first rabbit up in the hills. He set traps for hares, and one day he caught "the funniest thing." He'd never seen a rabbit before but he remembers his father saying "that's the end of the hills". "They were at Budgerie first, and when they came in, there was no end to it". "You couldn't grow anything, you'd put a paddock of oats in and they'd eat it off. We used to trap them and shoot them, it was hard, you were uphill. Even poisoning them we couldn't cope with them". "We used to trap them and sell them. A rabbit buyer came around. All along the road they'd put up a forked stick and a stick across. You'd see the rabbits or hares waiting for the rabbit cart to come along". "We'd cart them from English Corner to Johnstone's Hill to Ryton Junction for 8d (eight pence), then it went up to 10d (ten pence). And when it was 1/- (one shilling) we reckoned that was great."

In 1927 fifteen Italians came in as contractors for the quarry. Some of the men thought their ways were rather strange, and commented on their different ways of speaking and their different food preferences. Jack remembers hearing an Italian order "six pounds of sheep meat". But May spoke in their defence saying that they always paid for goods and didn't like owing anything. The road metal was found on English's place, and they got 8d(eight pence) a yard Royalty on it. It was usual to get 3d (three pence) a yard. "Charlie Snell had the sole right to it while he wanted it. He was a big fella, he had been in the Tour de France and was a long distance rider. He did all the metalling up to 5-6 mile"

Another financial help must have been the Post Office. Their mother had the Post Office at Johnstone's Hill. The mail run was from Toora to Christie's, then from there to Johnstone's Hill.

Jack worked in the bush for many years with the Cauldwells, after the three girls married and left the hills. Sometimes on Sundays he used to go up there and see eagles flying about. He still believes "they never should have opened those places up there. They destroyed millions of dollars worth of timber. They ringbarked them and they died."

Jack English and May Vinnall Notes

1. The Satin Bowerbird.
2. The Delver. Jack hasn't ever seen a restored Delver - there's not one at Gippstown, yet they were a very useful implement.
3. "Bounty" helped build the second house.
4. "McGowans had been early settlers there".
5. Jack speaks about the bread.
6. May speaks about the bacon.
7. The Creamery Wagons were driven by Tom Pike and Stan Clark.
8. Jimmy Bruce of Devil's Hill used to do this.
9. The only light we ever saw when we were growing up was the "Cliffy Light House" on Wilson's Promontory.
10. Dyers of Boolarra got the logging contract after World War I.

...CONCLUSION...

I am sure there are many more stories waiting to be told. Already I have the names of other people who would like to tell about their early days in the forest areas. There is a certain responsibility in this. As the psychologist Ernest Schachtel writes, "each genuine recovery of forgotten experience, and with it, something of the person that one was when having the experience, carries with it an element of enrichment, adds to the light of the consciousness, and thus widens the conscious scope of one's life". (1)

I still regret the passing of the great forests, as Alan Marshall did.... "Here we had one of the world's great forests, and we cleared the lot to make way for hundreds of farms that nobody wants now". (2) Tarra Valley and Bulga Park are just "a tiny remnant of the magnificent forests which once covered these ranges". (3)

It has been magnificent, however, to look beyond the tragedy, and to find out a little about some of the families who have survived. All express something about the quality of 'community' that existed there, about the nature and satisfaction of work. There is more to be told about the role of women, and it would be good to explore May English's view "that the real pioneers were the women."

....NOTES....

1. Jonathan Cott
"Pipers at the Gates of Dawn".
The Wisdom of Children's Literature,
G.B. Viking 1983
pp. XIX
2. Edward Harding (ed) Melbourne
"Alan Marshall Talking"
Longman Cheshire, 1978
3. Michael Morcombe
"Australia's National Parks"
pp 161

25-4-15. Red letter day. Shells bursting all round, we are off Gaba Tepe. The soldiers have commenced to land, there are Men of War, & Transport Boats, in every direction round us, an occasional shell bursts quite near us. The wounded commence to come on board about 9 a.m. four die in the first boat, that comes over, the patients just pour into the Wards; from the barges & boats. The majority of patients have first aid dressings, & quite a number of the boys are soaked through; the R.A.M.C. & Indian orderly between them, get the men's clothes off, & I start straight away at dressing; I'm responsible for about 76 patients in the Ward, & about 40 which I have on mattresses on the fore-deck, with the assistance of a medical student, we get through all the dressings by 2.a.m. have quite a number of compound fractures, which I put up temporarily, I apply pressure in other cases, where necessary, hoping that Colonel Hugo, will soon finish the Officers, & get down to my Ward; but we ~~are~~ he is working hard in the theatre; so I dress on with many anxious looks at the paler faces down the long lines of bunks, in fear that haemorrhage might pass un-noticed, several times I go back along the lines of dressings, & find a dressing saturated, & have to apply more dressing & pressure, the boys are bricks, they smoke on, & patiently wait their turn, they think the old ship is heaven after the peninsula, all this time we can hardly hear ourselves speak, with the banging which is going on outside, the ship just shivers with the extra heavy reports, but we are much too busy to think of what is going on even forget that we hav'nt had a meal, till the steward says there is a cup of tea in the pantry sister - about 6 o'clock, the last dressing is finished about 2.30 a.m.; & the men are nearly all sleeping. Matron comes into the Ward, and absolutely bundles me off to bed; at 5-30 a.m. up, and in the ward again; the Orderlies look after the feeding of the patients, we can't attempt to wash them, or make their beds. I commence straight away at dressings, & go on solidly till 10-30 p.m., there are 557 patients on board & only 7 nurses, so that we can't attempt to do anything else for the men, except their dressings, it nearly breaks your heart, to see them lying, looking hot & dirty, & not be able to sponge them, & make them comfortable.

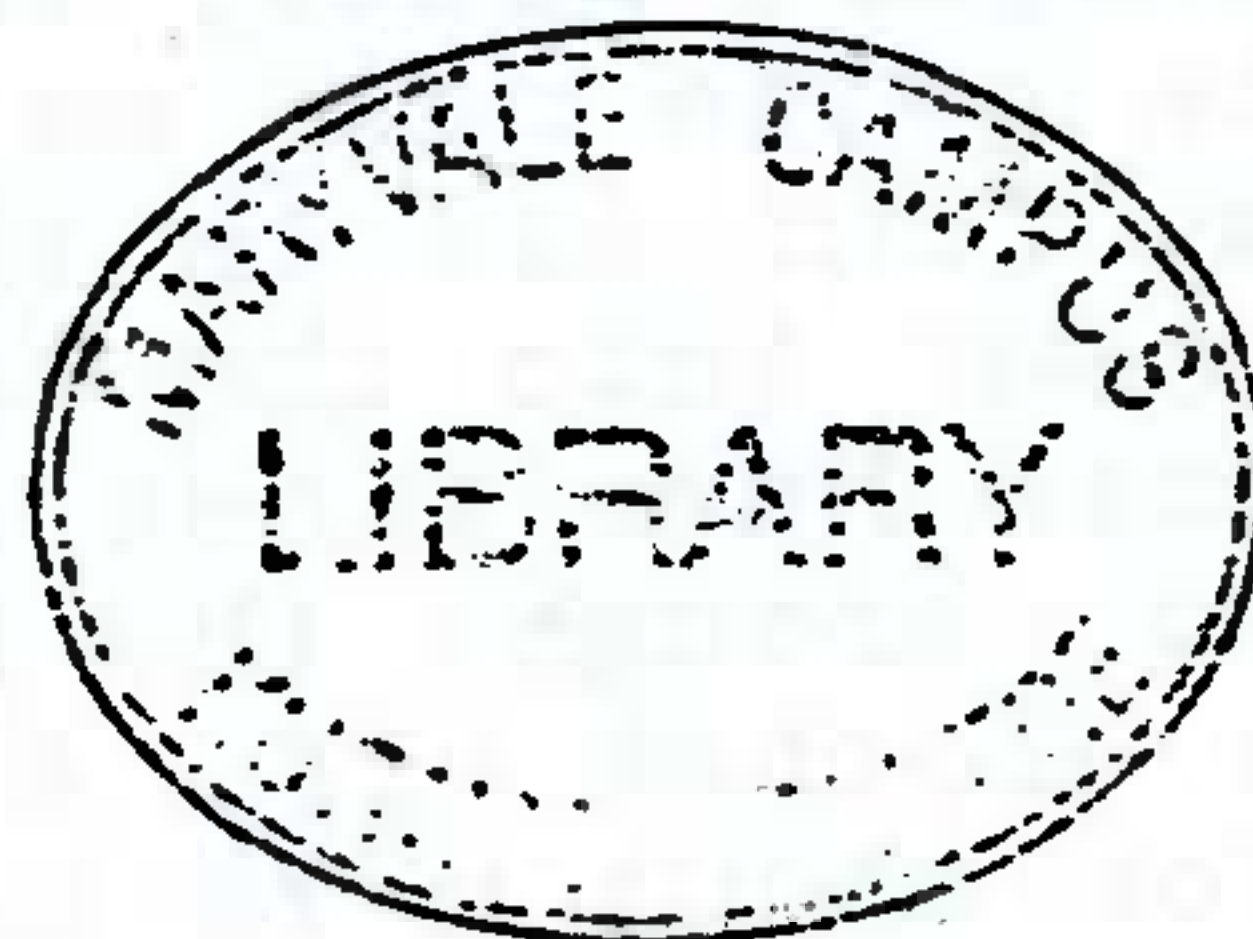
26 April - We stayed in Lemnos Harbour nearly all day, in the evening sailed for Alexandria, reach there 11 p.m. Thursday 29th; each day passing much like the preceding one. Friday we dis-embarked our patients, most of them go to Cairo, the worst being kept at Alexandria; we coal, take in water, & are ready to sail at 6.p.m. It was pathetic seeing the walking patients go off the ship, some with half their trousers torn, others with great dry blood stains on their khaki.

On the return journey to Gaba Tepe, we work hard getting our wards ready, can't get clean pyjama suits; pick out the cleanest, & about 40 pairs of blood stained ones, with the orderlies assistance, we do our best to wash in Salt water, and then dry on the deck, every spare minute is spent in cutting up dressings & padding splints which the ship's carpenter is making for us; we are two days anchored off Gaba Tepe, taking on patients, mostly at night; we had not so many this trip, but they were very severely wounded, had over 40 deaths on our 3 days trip; arrive at Alexandria on the 9th & once again unload our boys, & return the same day.

AUSTRALIAN & NEW ZEALAND ARMY CORPS

K.236
F.2

HEADQUARTERS,
July 10 1915



As a member of the Inventions Board I have been studying a fly-killer brought us from Alexandria. It consists for ornamental reasons of a painted shallow tin box, with six holes in the lid, one being stopped by a cork and five by yellow blobs of wool, representing the centres of daisies. The box is filled with water containing arsenic, which moistens the yellow blobs. The fly is a thirsty creature, sucks the water and dies almost at once. This morning I must have swept 300 out of my bedding, and, as a rule night is bad for fly hunting.

Now, in the trenches the fly is thirstier than anywhere, which is why he crowds into tunnels.

I suggest your making up several dozens of bottles or tins with an arsenic dope, stuffing a pad of cotton or cotton wool in an ink well, a sucker down into the water and dotting these wherever most flies are in the trenches. I am sure it will relieve the fly plague greatly. The only danger, arsenic assassination or suicide is unlikely with the extra possibilities of bullet ditto!

Sent to Bentham & Farleyth private, 10/7/15

2.5

GENERAL ROUTINE ORDERS

by

GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON, G.C.B., D.S.O., A.D.C.,
 Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS.

Mediterranean Expeditionary Force,

17th October, 1915.

QUARTERMASTER GENERAL'S BRANCH.**567. PRISONERS OF WAR—SCALE OF RATIONS FOR.**

G.R.O. 90 of April 27th, 1915, is cancelled, and the following is substituted:—

The scale of daily rations for prisoners of war is as follows, in addition to which there will be two issues of lime juice per week:—

Half pound fresh or preserved meat.
 Half pound flour or biscuit.
 Quarter pound rice (when available).
 Five-eighths ounce tea.
 Three ounces sugar.
 Two ounces jam.
 Half ounce salt.
 Half pound fresh vegetables or potatoes (when available).

**568. CLOTHING—PRISONERS OF WAR.**

It is notified for general information that the following is the scale for the issue of clothing to Prisoners of War:—

Jackets	1	Forks	1
Trousers, pairs	1	Spoons	1
Greatcoat	1	Soap, carbolic, pieces	1
Boots, ankle, T.P. pairs	1	Soap, Minerva "	1
Drawers, flannel "	2	Combs, hair	1
Bags, clothes	1	Fez	1
Shirts, flannel	2	Brushes, tooth	1
Socks, worsted, pairs	2	Razors	1
Towels	2	Plate, enamelled	1
Braces, pairs	1	Mug, "	1
Knives table	1		

16th November, 1915

649—Postal—Field Service Post Cards.

G.R.O. No. 623, of 3rd Nov., 1915, is republished for information:—

The words "Best Wishes for Christmas and for the New Year" may be added to the Field Service Post Card (A.F. A.2042) in the space allotted for the signature.

650—Rations—Scale of.

The following scale of rations will be issued from 1st December, 1915, and will replace the scales that are now in use:—

Fresh meat	1 lb.	Dried fruit	3 ozs. (when fresh vegetables are not issued).
Or Preserved meat	1 ration.	Dried vegetables	2 ozs (when fresh vegetables are not issued).
Bread	1 lb.	Tea	5/8ths ozs.
Or Biscuit or flour	3/4 lb.	Salt	1/2 oz.
Bacon	4 ozs.	Mustard	1/50th oz. 6 issues a
Milk	1/8th tin.	Pepper	1/36th oz. week.
Rice	4 ozs. (5 issues a week)	Curry Powder	1/8th oz. -1 issue a week
Oatmeal	4 ozs. (2 issues a week)	Lime Juice	1/10th gill -2 issues a
Jam	3 ozs.		week.
Sugar	3 ozs.		
Cheese... ..	3 ozs.		

Tobacco or cigarettes 2 ozs weekly.

Fresh vegetables, when available at the rate of 1/2 lb. instead of dried vegetables and dried fruit.

Rum 1/2 gill (at the discretion of Corps Commanders).

1 1/2 ozs. cocoa or chocolate may be issued instead of rum for those who prefer it.

EXTRAS FOR TROOPS ON THE PENINSULA—DAILY.—1 oz. pea soup or oxo., 1/8th oz. tea., 3/4 oz. sugar.

TWICE A WEEK.—2 ozs. butter or margarine.

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING

TUESDAY APRIL 10 7.30 pm

ST. ANDREWS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HALL

CHURCH ST. MORWELL

*** Please note date and venue.

In this issue, we record with sadness the passing of our member, Jean Rodgers. Although unable to attend meetings, Jean was one of our staunchest supporters and she will be sadly missed.

On March 20, members had a most enjoyable meeting with Morwell Shire Historian Stephen Legg who outlined his plans for the book he is writing for the Shire's Centenary in 1992. With the working title "Heart of the Valley", this will be a far more comprehensive history than any previously written about this area. Stephen has promised to write an outline of "Heart of the Valley" for publication in the May newsletter.

— INVITATION —

Members are invited to attend the launch of the Centre For Gippsland Studies' latest publication THE KOENIG LETTERS to be held in the

MORWELL R.S.L.HALL at

7.30 pm on

FRIDAY, APRIL 20th 1990.

Please let Elsie McMaster know by April 16 if you will be attending

Phone (051)341149

FROM THE DIARY OF A.L. De VINE, 4th BATTALION

23/5/15 - Sunday: Landed one month today. Exceptionally quiet day. A Turkish officer came in today along the beach with the necessary credentials to make arrangements for the burial of the dead which are now in a most shocking state and a menace to health. The stench has been simply awful this last day or two after the rain. Arrangements are eventually made and agreed to - Tomorrow from 7AM to 4:30 PM all firing is to cease, parties are to be sent out to collect and bring in the dead for burial, during the armistice no military work of any description may be undertaken or any guns removed or troops reinforced etc, both sides agree.

24/5/15 - A few sniping shots were fired before 7:30 AM. At 7:30 AM everything is ready and red cross flags are hoisted on both sides. We all lay down our rifles. The arrangements are first that the Turks may only approach not more than half way across "no man's land" towards our trenches. We are bound in a similar way in regards to theirs. The halfway line is kept by a row of small white flags. All of their dead that we find on our half we hand over to them & they hand over ours which are taken away on stretchers for burial after being well sprinkled with clorate of lime. All rifles that are found are to be handed back without the bolts. All men engaged in this work are to wear a white band on the R arm. We collect a huge pile of Turkish dead and hand them over on the half way line. We collect more than 3000 bodies. Our boys are very friendly with the Turkish soldiers and exchange buttons, cigarettes and other souvenirs with one another.

Many of their officers are moving about among their working parties. The German officers do not appear to treat the Turkish soldiers too well. Some of the Turks speak a little English and tell us that the German officers and NCOs are very cruel to them. I saw myself a German officer kick a Turkish private for something he had done.

Once during the day things began to look pretty ugly. A few shots were fired on our side but before anything developed they were quickly stopped. Otherwise everything worked smoothly. I was out in "No man's land" most of the day and had a smoke and a yarn with a group of Turks. Our work being completed before 4:30 the rest of the time was taken up by making friends with the Turks, who do not seem to be a very bad sort of chap after all. They all hate their German officers. I formed the opinion that they would rather surrender as they cannot understand why they are fighting against England who has always been a good friend to them. After today most of our opinions on the Turks were changed. They certainly play the game better than the Germans do.

On completion of truce we all scrambled back to our lines dead on time. Then the Turks opened fire again and kept it up at intervalls all night.

A TRIBUTE TO JEAN RODGERS

By Jessie Cafiso

We regret to report the death of Mrs. Jean Rodgers (nee Hunter) on February 11th this year. Although she had been an invalid for over 25 years, Jean still took a very active interest in all, people, community affairs, charities etc. From the time she joined our Historical Society in 1985 she contributed many items to our newsletters. In our September 1985 newsletter we printed the first of 115 names of the 1944 Voters' Roll which she lent us, and continued the rest in succeeding newsletters. If you like to refer back to that issue you can read why a copy of this roll was issued to her husband, Mr. Bill Rodgers, and also how the couple met and decided to make their home here.

Before her marriage, Jean's home town was Traralgon. The Hunter family was renowned (and are still remembered) for their musical talents. In our newsletter of June 1989, we reproduced an item from the "Traralgon Journal" 19/7/1937. This is a report of Jean's Kitchen Tea and is headed "A Popular Young Lady", which she undoubtedly was.

Our newsletter of July 1986 contains more of Jean's reminiscences. Here she notes the names of some of the people who occupied houses and businesses in Tarwin and Wallace Streets from 1937 onwards.

Jean's cheerfulness and concern for other people in spite of her considerable health problems, made it a pleasure to visit her and endeared her to all, young and old. She gave practical support to Red Cross and other charities.

She was very enthusiastic about our book "Glimpses of Our Past" and gave us a donation towards its publication at a time when the funding of the project was causing us some concern. She was one of the first to buy several copies and was full of praise for it.

Jean will be sadly missed and we extend our sympathy to her two sons and their families. We hope that the many happy memories they have of her will be of great comfort.

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RHSV CONTRIBUTION TO HERITAGE WEEK 22-29 APRIL

The highlight of the RHSV contribution to Heritage Week will be a talk by Professor Boris Schedvin "Our Industrial Heritage" which, as already noted, will be given in the Bullion Room at 7.45 pm on Tuesday 24 April. This will be followed by light refreshments. There is free car parking in the Mint car park until 10.00 pm.

From Monday to Friday of Heritage Week, although not on Anzac Day, the Society will be mounting an exhibition to illustrate the theme of Professor Schedvin's lecture, drawing on our own collection and those of neighbouring societies. This will seek to illustrate various aspects of our industrial heritage. Organised tours of the RHSV collection at the Royal Mint will take place as follows:

Monday 23 April — 12.00 noon

Thursday 26 April — 2.30 pm

Friday 27 April — 10.00 am

Places on tours should be booked in advance. Priority will be given to members and member societies. Member societies wishing to arrange group tours can, if they wish, request a particular time outside those notified. Early application is, however, needed.

From R.H.S.V. HISTORY NEWS

March 1990

OPEN DAY AT THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LAVERTON

On Sunday 22 April the Public Record Office will open to the public its repository at 57 Cherry Lane, Laverton North. There will be a wide range of activities throughout the day—displays, talks, and the opportunity to look around the main storage area, where about 40 kilometres (more than a million boxes and volumes) of the State's archives are stored

A special emphasis will be placed on the conservation of records. A new Conservation Centre for the repair and treatment of both the State's archives and other material—books, pictures and other works of art—will be officially launched on Open Day.

Any inquiries about Open Day should be made of Bronwen Merrett or Tony Marshall, on 369-3244. Further information will be available in the April issue of History News.

RHSV publications will be on sale.

THE KOENIG LETTERS

The Correspondence of Charles, Thomas and Tillie Koenig
during the First World War



Centre for Gippsland Studies

Tom and Charlie Koenig enlisted in 1915 from Jumbuk, steep hill country south of Morwell. The letters they wrote regularly to their sister Tillie have been reproduced in The Koenig Letters. The book is a moving series of letters, very simply expressed, which records the initial excitement of enlisting through to the horror and relentlessness of trench warfare. Adding a special dimension to the book are the letters Tillie wrote to Tom, which were returned after Tom's death in 1917.

The Koenig Letters is a rare collection that combines home and battle front.

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In the following article, written in 1985, Mrs. Dorothy Murray, (nee Turvey), reminisces about her years in Yallourn. The article came to us via member Prue McGoldrick and is printed here with Mrs. Murray's kind permission.

YALLOURN LIFE IN THE 20s, 30s AND 40s

DOROTHY TURVEY - born at Morwell hospital - came home from hospital in our Overland Tourer car- to our home in Hillside - a small weatherboard cottage where we boiled the copper to have a bath. Baptised by Reverend Bright-Parker before St Johns was built. Commenced school with Ann Drummond as teacher, then followed Miss Babington who wore button-up boots and tapped out the tables with her cane. Later we moved to Meadow Lane.

My father, John Edward Turvey, was a Turbine Driver. He played Tenor Horn in the local band and many hours were spent at Band Practice with Peter Cameron, Bandmaster. Usually we spent Sunday afternoon in the gardens listening to the brass band playing in the rotunda.

One brother worked in the hardware department of the General Store- later he was apprenticed to Mr Jock Lawson at the nursery. The other brother worked at the briquetting [factory]. Alan Turvey was in the Scouts and Rovers and my sister and I belonged to the Girl Guides. Mrs Dann was Captain of the Guides, and many happy times were spent hiking in the bush and making damper on an open fire. Later Win Drummond (Ashmead) replaced Mrs Dann. There was an annual birthday party - each patrol would decorate their tables in the colours of their emblems- Rose, Wattle, Kookaburra and Heath. How the mothers worked to decorate the tables! Mrs Iris Sutton was an expert at cake decoration. We attended a Guide Camp at the Tarago River in 1936. Many guides from Gippsland, as well as Melbourne, came.

We cooled off in summer in the river. Harry Nairn was local president of the Herald Learn to Swim campaign. Later it was a pleasure to have the swimming pool to use. School competitions were held there. My mother was on the committee of the Mothers' Club - as Treasurer, she also worked for the scouts, who held dances in the Scout Hall and also balls. I remember peeping through the door of St Johns Hall watching the girls parade for the Belle of the Ball. Mrs Spencer played the piano for the scout dances, before she was crippled with arthritis.

My mother was a very keen bridge player, often winning prizes with Amos Wood as partner. One local man did fretwork carvings which were given as prizes.

LIFE IN YALLOURN (continued)

There was always a grim feeling when we heard the siren go for fire, flood or missing persons. Everyone dropped whatever they were doing and rallied to help.

I lived with a widow after my parents died, Mrs Martin had lost her husband the previous year. He died by electrocution on a job he had only just started. We again lived in Hillside and I attended High School. Headmaster Mr A. Hewitt, then Mr D. Lindsay. We enjoyed school socials, tennis, baseball and basketball - competing with other schools. Miss Hooper and Miss Craig come to mind and a Miss Una Thompson who taught commercial studies.

I went to work at the Main Office as a calculator operator with Mr S. Hannon and Mr Bill Betts. I played tennis with the Methodist Club and Technical School Club. It was a very happy time and no problems of walking home alone after a church choir practice or rehearsing for the church concerts or from games of table tennis at the church.

Annual holidays were spent camping at Inverloch and Lakes Entrance but school holidays were spent just walking and gathering wildflowers. Later we rode bikes to various interesting places.

Dr Andrew was a tower of strength to our family, especially when mother was ill. He was always on hand to listen. Rev. Howie from the Methodist church, Rev. Benjamin and later, Rev. Small played a big part in our lives.

It would not be possible to repeat the community spirit that was Yallourn - it was a wonderful way of life. My children cannot understand my feelings for the town and only ex-Yallournites would feel the emotion that we had when Auld Lang Syne was sung at the end of the reunion in 1976.

WORLD WAR 11 RELIC REDISCOVERED AT YALLOURN RESERVOIR

By Tom Adams.

(This article, which appeared in "Coach News" March 1990, is reprinted here with The kind permission of Moe Historical Society.)

In an effort to re-photograph, from the same spot, the area where the Yallourn township once existed, an area which is, of course, now included in the open cut workings, and of which I took photographs over 20 years ago, I found that the nearest suitable vantage point was in the vicinity of the Yallourn Reservoir.

After obtaining permission to enter the area and taking the desired photographs I discovered what has to many people probably become a forgotten relic of World War 11.

This relic is in the form of an old air navigational aid, well overgrown, located approximately 90 metres west of the surge basin. It consists of three main items:

Firstly - the word YALLOURN

Secondly - a directional arrow

Thirdly - a numeral figure 4

These items were all made of concrete and set in an area of levelled ground. After clearing and removal of all grass and small scrub growth they were measured, with the following results:

The word YALLOURN is 58 feet in length and consists of letters 10 feet high by 15 inches in thickness and averaging about 6 feet in width.

The arrow is made up of two sections, the tail section being a triangle measuring 10 feet from tip to tip, and the arrow shaft measures fifteen feet in length by two feet in width, with the arrow head measuring 7 feet 3 inches across.

The third item, the figure 4, is, like the letters, 10 feet in height by 15 inches in depth with the cross bar of the 4 measuring 9 feet across.

When originally installed, each letter and figure was individually floodlit by its own light and even today many of the lamp standards are still in existence although the actual light fittings are long gone.

In searching for the reason behind this unusual installation many stories were forthcoming from various people with whom it was discussed.

Included in these discussions were Messrs. Bernie Hansford and Herb Hill, both retired S.E.C. surveyors formerly located at Yallourn - and Con Darragh, who at the time of the installation was resident caretaker at the reservoir. Con today at the age of 81, still has very clear recollections of those events.

Summing up, it seems that the most likely reason for its construction arose from an incident which occurred during World War 11 when a flight of several Avro Ansons on a training exercise from Bairnsdale or Sale became lost due to heavy fog one night and were flying in a circle over Morwell.

THE YALLOURN MARKER (continued)

The local postmaster, quickly realising what was happening, signalled with lights and at the same time the local policeman quickly assembled a number of cars with headlights on to light up a suitable emergency landing ground north of the Morwell township. This quick thinking resulted in all aircraft managing to land without loss of life. An article recalling this incident was published in the "Latrobe Valley Express" within the last year or so.

After this incident and with the possibility of similar happenings occurring, the authorities decided to have a suitable navigational aid installed. This was done, according to Mr. Hill, head surveyor at Yallourn at that time, in the years 1943 or '44.

Some discussion took place as to whether the marker should be painted yellow or white. Con Darragh recalls that initially one half was painted white and the other half yellow. The R.A.A.F. then conducted two tests at 5000'. The result was that, under night flying conditions, yellow proved to be the better colour, so the whole sign was then painted yellow. When first uncovered recently, small patches of yellow paint were still adhering to the concrete.

Con tells us that the lighting installed was only to be used in an emergency. Fortunately such never occurred and the lighting was never needed.

I would like to thank the following members of the Moe and District Historical Society for their help in the clearing operations to uncover this relic, namely Stan Matthews, Col Manley, Harry Lane, Bill Ringin and Andy Ringin.

Also, on behalf of the Society I wish to express thanks to the following: Mr. Jack Vines, Coal Production Manager (retired), Graham Pontin, Supervisor of Security S.E.C. Yallourn, and also the men on duty at the reservoir. Their willing co-operation made easy access to the area possible.

We would of course welcome any further contribution on this matter from our readers.

P.S. Since writing this story the S.E.C. kindly made available an Abbey truck for the purpose of providing a vantage point high enough to take photos from. Tom has presented an excellent series of these to the Society.

Editor's Note:

Since receipt of the original material we have received per courtesy of Mr. Bob Peters, (former chief surveyor for Victoria for the S.E.C.V.) a surveyor's "set-out" drawing dated 10.10.1946, titled "Sign for Aircraft in Distress". This was signed by S.E.C. surveyors Mr. Reg. McConnell and Mr. Lou DaCosta. In addition, Mr. Tom Adams has obtained for us a copy, per courtesy of Yallourn General Services, of the specification and working plan drawing of the "aircraft in distress" sign, dated 12.3.1947 and signed by Mr. Arnold Sambell on that date. These later dated drawings would seem to indicate a much later construction time than was at first thought.

Once again, we would welcome further information on this subject.

Mr. Jack English and
Mrs. May Vinall

Mr. Jack English and Mrs. May Vinall of Morwell spent all their childhood years up at Johnstone's Hill. Jack speaks of "the tough trail up there", their sister Peg talks about "those cursed hills", and yet May remembers their family life with great affection.

Their father Walter English selected the land in 1898. He had married one of the Campbell clan, Mary Jane Annand from Joyce's Creek, Castlemaine. Walter died in 1927, but Jack and his mother stayed on up in the hills until 1932. Jack suggests that the family stayed too long really, "a lot of other people got out and left the banks with the land".

We talked first about the native animals up in the hills. In the early days the men used to trap possums and wallabies. There were black possums with beautiful fur, and they were sold to Kennon and Sons, and Houghton, in Melbourne, for fur coats. The possum skins were the main source of income, though Jack can't remember seeing a black possum in his time. He explained that you seem to get black animals when a species "gets really thick; with rabbits you used to see black ones and yellow ones."

There were Koalas who lived in the gum trees. They lived in the same area, they didn't seem to move around. "When mother first went up there as a bride she used to hear them calling out at night. And she used to think it was a child crying. The 'monkey bears' made this screaming sort of noise. She was scared of them until she found out just what they were." "There was one old fella who lived in the tree at the gate and he lived in that tree for years and years. Then someone came around and shot him". They both thought about that for a moment and then May turned her thoughts to other 'monkey bears', there were plenty of Koalas with little ones hanging on their backs".

They talked about lyrebirds. The children would find the lyrebird mounds in the bush. "The lyrebirds used to meet together, they'd make a mound where they'd dance and whistle. The cock bird was a sight to see, this beautiful tail comes down over him". Jack says that the lyrebirds are still there, "you can hear them, they'll mimic anything. We've been splitin' in the bush and they'll mock a cross cut saw. Anything, wedges. As you dropped a steel wedge they'd imitate that too." As children "we all knew the bush so well, we never got lost, but then we were taught not to go in places that you didn't know".

There were many other kinds of bird up there, "every kind of bird you can mention. Parrots, jackasses, Derwent Jackasses, Jays, Grey Jays, Cockatoos - black ones, but there were no crows. There were hundreds of little birds, Tom tits, Blue Wrens. Now you go up there and you hardly see one, what's happened to them? I don't know. I think the 10.80 poison has something to do with it, but you wouldn't think every bird would eat that. "The satin bird, they were an interesting bird. They used to make a bower. They'd gather any bit of china, glass, bead or blue, they'd scatter them all around their bower where they used to dance. Thrushes used to get pretty quiet, they'd come right