

The Morwell Post

Morwell Historical Society

URL: [www .Morwell historicalsociety.org.au](http://www.Morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au)

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Some of the people who attended our Town Walking Tour

See page 3



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Morwell Historical Society Directory 2019

President:	Bruce McMaster Phone: 5134 1149 – 0428 528 464
Vice-President:	John Willis
Secretary:	Florence Butcher
Assistant Secretary:	Elaine Andrijczak
Treasurer:	Carolyn Schopp
Committee Members:	Kellie Bertrand Rosalie Davey Shirley Prosser
Research Library:	12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell, Victoria 3840
Research Queries:	research@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au
Public Access:	3rd Wednesday and last Sunday of each month, 11.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m. Not open - December & January
General meetings:	3rd Wednesday February to November – 2.00 pm
Annual General Meeting:	3rd Wednesday of March each year
Membership Fees:	Due 1st July each year Ordinary Member \$25.00 Couple – at same address \$30.00 Dependants – at same address \$5 each Application Forms available on our web site for you to print and send. For a print copy of "The Morwell Post" - \$10.00 per annum
Editor:	email: morwellpost@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au
Research Fees:	\$10.00 per hour or part thereof, and prices for photo prints on application and postage where applicable.
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety
Postal Address:	12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell 3840 Victoria, Australia

Front page icon is of the old Post Office c1930 which was on the site of the now Commonwealth Bank, corner of Commercial Road and Tarwin Street.

All photos, unless indicated, are from our archives.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING—20th March 2019

Office Bearers duly elected for the coming year

President: Bruce McMaster

Vice President: John Willis

Secretary: Florence Butcher

Treasurer: Carolyn Schopp

General Committee Members: Shirley Prosser; Kellie Bertrand; Rosalie Davey

Assistant Secretary: Elaine Andrijczak

Membership Secretary: Shirley Prosser

Thank you to our many volunteers who have contributed to our activities throughout the year. Our success is due to the willingness of so many people to help us out with their special skills when needed. Thank you all.

- Sausage Sizzles at Bunnings BBQ continues to be a successful fund raiser. Thanks to those members who make this happen.
- Corporate Sponsor and Business Supporter Project is still attracting support.
- Our first Latrobe Valley Authority funded project – the re-roofing and painting of the Exhibition Space (front room) is now completed. We were fortunate to be able to also replace the overhead lighting in the Exhibition Space.
- Our second Latrobe Valley Authority funded project – the installation of 4 airconditioning units to allow for heating has now been completed, and the Everhot 5 Litre hot boil unit in the kitchen and a power point has been installed. We are still awaiting the upgrade of the Switchboard.
- Three glass display cabinets have arrived and will be a great addition to allow displays of our artefacts. A grant was obtained from the Public Record Office Victoria to allow this purchase.
- It should be noted that most applications for grants require a Local Contribution from the Society to be successful. In particular the LVA grants require a 25% Local Contribution of the project cost plus payment of the GST.
- The Mezzanine floor is almost completed and will provide an ideal space for storage.
- Rob de Souza-Daw announced that his long awaited book launch of *"Morwell District Boer War Soldiers and Civilians"* will be Wednesday, 29th May 2019 at 10.30am at the Morwell RSL.

Historic Walking Tour of the Morwell CBD - Sunday, 31st March

We had a tremendous attendance of more than 70 people joining in our Walking Tour on Sunday, 31st March.

Thank you very much again to Kellie Bertrand and Bruce McMaster who provided the history of the shops/offices/shopkeepers/post offices/houses and to Kellie who shared stories she had heard over the years from her Nan, Joyce Cleary.

There was also great contributions from participants who shared their memories of some of the old

"Mock chicken legs" - some people may remember these being available in the Butcher's shop in Church Street. Kellie is seriously trying to replicate the recipe and she and Jim Morris have committed to testing and trialling a few recipes so that this favourite can be shared with everyone. We are also going to look at making copies of the guide available in the near future.

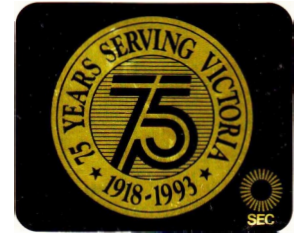
Bruce McMaster
PRESIDENT



100 Years Ago

At a recent open day a commemorative ball point pen was donated to the Society by John Devries. The pen was inscribed:

*SEC - 75 years
1918-1993*



So, 100 years ago, through the Electricity Commissioners Act of 1918 we saw the foundation of an organisation which played a significant role in the development of Morwell in particular, the Latrobe Valley to a greater extent and the State of Victoria in general.

The following two items from those early years highlight the role of the Electricity Commissioners in establishing what was to become the State Electricity Commission of Victoria.

Firstly, we have an extract outlining the authority of the Electricity Commissioners taken from their report 7 March 1919 to 30 June 1920

“Pursuant to section 25 (b) of the Electricity Commissioners Act of 1918 (No 2996), we beg to submit herewith our report for the period from the 7th March, 1919, to the 7th June 1920, together with statement of accounts showing expenditure during the same period.

The Electricity Commissioners Act 1918 received the royal assent on the 7th January, 1919, and pursuant thereto and by the order of the Governor in Council, dated 4th March, 1919, ...”

Secondly, ~~Morwell Advertiser~~ *Morwell Advertiser* Friday 9 July 1920, page 3

Formal approval has been given by the State Executive Council to the scheme framed by the electricity commissioners for securing an ample supply of electricity energy and brown coal for the use in Victoria. The scheme provides for the opening up of the Morwell brown coal field and the establishment of a power house of an initial capacity of 50,000 kilowatts, with the necessary transmission line, cables and substations. The total cost of establishing the undertaking was estimated at £3,917,382 which included the cost of building a model township and the provision of a plant for the manufacture of briquettes, to be used for industrial and domestic purposes. The Electricity Commission propose to call for tenders for the power house plant at an early date, but as applications will be invited from firms in all parts of the world, six or seven months will elapse before tenders are accepted. Despite the world competition, the Commissioners hope that local manufacturers “will rise to the occasion”. Allegations that avoidable delays in connection with the Morwell scheme have occurred are refuted by officials, who contend that every progress is being made. It is pointed out that for an early beginning of the general scheme it is imperative that the construction of the proposed railway deviation from the main line to the power house site and mine should be begun. The whole length of the deviation will be 8½ miles, but the commissioners are pressing for an early commencement of a section of 2 ½ miles and it is expected that the Government will soon come to a decision on this matter.

We have *Victorian Municipal Directories* in our library and the 1970 edition, page 66 also records the following:

The State Electricity Commission of Victoria was constituted by Act of Parliament of the State of Victoria in 1918 as a body corporate with perpetual succession, whose principal duties are to co-ordinate and extend on an economic basis the supply of electricity throughout Victoria.

For this purpose the Commission with power to erect, own and operate electrical undertakings, brown coal open cuts and briquetting works and to supply electricity either retail to individual consumers or in bulk to any corporation or public body.

The existing established undertakings owned and operated by the Commission comprise the Yallourn, Morwell and Hazelwood power stations in the Latrobe Valley; thermal power stations in Melbourne (Newport and Richmond) and in Ballarat, Geelong and Red Cliffs; hydro-electric power stations at Kiewa, Eildon, Rubicon- Royston and Cairn Curran, and an electrical transmission and distribution system comprising nearly 59,000 miles of high and low voltage power lines, 25 terminal receiving stations and over 59,000 transformer distribution sub-stations. The steam power station at Spencer Street, Melbourne owned by the Melbourne City Council operates as part of the Commissions State wide system. Under agreements, Victoria is entitled to one third of the output of the Snowy Mountain Hydro- Electric Scheme and shares equally with NSW the output of the Hume hydro-electric Power station.

The Commission owns and operates the Yallourn and Morwell open cuts, the Morwell and Yallourn briquette works, the Yallourn North extension open cut and the tramway systems at Ballarat and Bendigo.

Serving about 99 per cent of the population of Victoria the Commission now supplies from its system over 1,200,000 consumers within Victoria.

*The Commission administers the *Electric Light and Power Act 1958*, the provisions of which control the use and supply of electricity throughout the State.*



Source: "Yallourn Power Station
— A History 1919-1989"
Colin Harvey

THE VICTORIAN CABINET WHICH INITIATED THE SCHEME

Hon. Donald MACKINNON Hon. FRANK CLARKE
Hon. J. McWHAE Hon. S. BARNES Hon. H.J.M. CAMPBELL Hon. M. BAIRD Hon. W.M. McPHERSON
Hon. D.S. OMAN Hon. HUTCHINSON Hon. A. ROBINSON Hon. H.S.W. LAWSON Premier

Norman Sharpe 1905-1987

Norman Sharpe was born near Smolensk in Russia and he arrived in Australia in 1923 at the age of 18 years. In 1925 he started to tramp the country towns from door to door carrying a suit case and travelling between the towns on the train. Business flourished and he bought another suit case to increase his stock. He found Morwell to be a kind town and in 1926 chose it out of all the towns that he had visited to establish his business.

He bought a Chevrolet car on time payment and purchased McClenchy's mercery stock and began trading in a tiny shop in Commercial Road em-



ploying one girl and one boy. Business continued to flourish and he secured larger premises where Evans old newsagency was located, finally establishing the well known Sharpe's Emporium. It is fondly remembered as a miscellaneous random collection of everything imaginable in the rag trade to which

everyone all over Gippsland came to explore. Not only the tables but the floor was crowded with merchandise and little children enjoyed hiding amongst the materials while the mother browsed.

SHARPE'S
EMPORIUM - MORWELL

Exactly 26 years ago

THE NAME OF SHARPE'S EMPORIUM appeared over a small shop of little dimensions in Morwell. The business commenced with a staff of two, a girl and a boy about 14 years, just left school.

FROM A HUMBLE BEGINNING, with courage and tenacity of purpose and by presenting dependable merchandise at prices comparable with the great stores of the City of Melbourne, giant strides have been made.

KEENLY INTERESTED in the progress of Morwell and District, Sharpes have ever been watchful to expand, with the result that they now own the premises and land with a frontage of 66 feet, to a depth of 368 feet, and the little shop of 26 years ago has been enlarged to employ 22 saleshands.

AT ALL TIMES during the past years Sharpes have endeavoured to cater for the public with a class of merchandise to suit their needs.

AND NOW, more than ever, in conjunction with Headquarters, Norman's Corner Stores, corner of Bourke and Russell Streets, Melbourne, — whose great buying experience and expert advice is always available — we are able to offer the public a service that is incomparable.

SHARPE'S EMPORIUM. MORWELL
for
Value, Quality, Courtesy and Service

In 1932 Norman Sharpe purchased a valuable property on the corner of Russell and Bourke Streets in Melbourne and started another Drapery business. He added 3 additional storeys, additions and alterations to the building which he called Norman's Corner Store. In less than 3 years Norman Sharpe added another 5 floors with 2 updated elevators.

Norman married Rosalind in 1941 and they had 2 daughters Pamela and Barbara.

He had lived permanently in Morwell from 1925 to 1931 but in the following years he lived in Caulfield. Some days he travelled by train to tend his business in Morwell and the other days he would be found at his corner store in Melbourne CBD. Norman operated Sharpe's Emporium in Morwell for nearly 50 years until ill health forced him to retire in 1983 and his 2 daughters took over the running of the store. In 1987 Norman Sharpe died and his daughters were in charge of Sharpe's Emporium closing down sale which attracted bargain hunters from far and wide. The property at 188-190 Commercial Road was sold and Spotlight became tenants. When Spotlight opened a new store in Traralgon Anglicare moved from Church Street to rent the Commercial Road building.

Norman was very generous to the Morwell community organisations. He purchased a hall for the local Scout group, donated money to the football, cricket, bowling and tennis clubs and the fire brigade. Norman Sharpe also ran balls to raise funds for the hospital and the Bush Fire Relief fund.

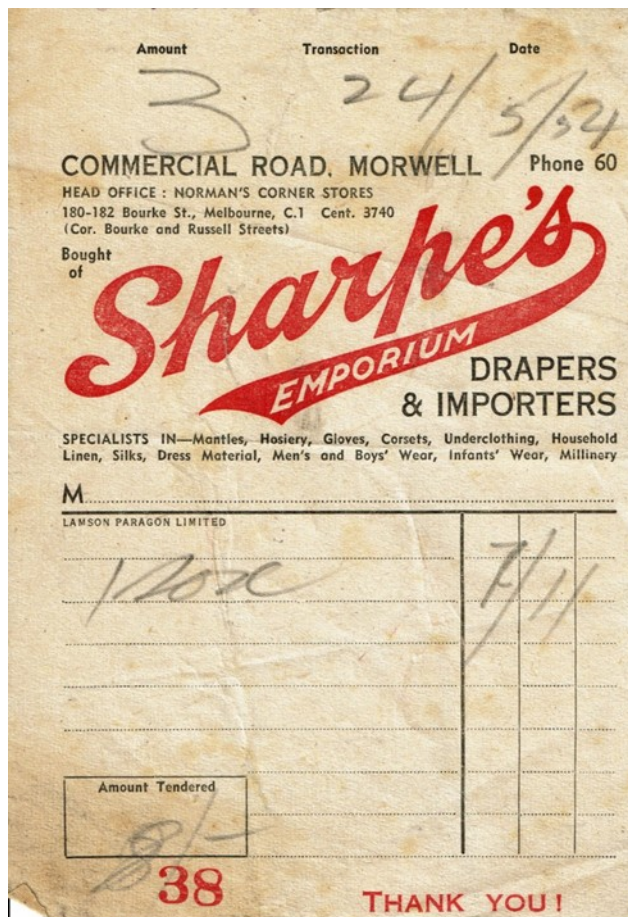
The Argus July 2 1953

"An Argus Souvenir of the Latrobe Valley"

In 1976 the Rotary Club of Morwell in co-operation with the Shire of Morwell named an area of Crown land between Avondale and Maryvale Roads, (formerly the Mirboo North Railway line), the *Norman Sharpe Reserve*. In 1991 this reserve which now abounds with many gardens of colourful roses is called the Morwell Centenary Rose Garden. A wonderful mark of respect to a man who contributed so much to the town of Morwell.



Morwell Centenary Rose Garden



Socks was usually written "sox" and she would have received a penny change.

Sources:
The Argus
 Morwell Centenary Rose Garden
 Our Society's Family Files

Agnes “Mother” Buntine

pastoralist and bullocky - the mother of 11 children

Agnes Davidson was born in Glasgow in 1822. She married Hugh Buntine in Melbourne in 1840 the year that she arrived in Melbourne with her parents and 6 siblings. Hugh’s first wife had died and left him with 5 children so at the age of 18 she became the mother of 5 step children.

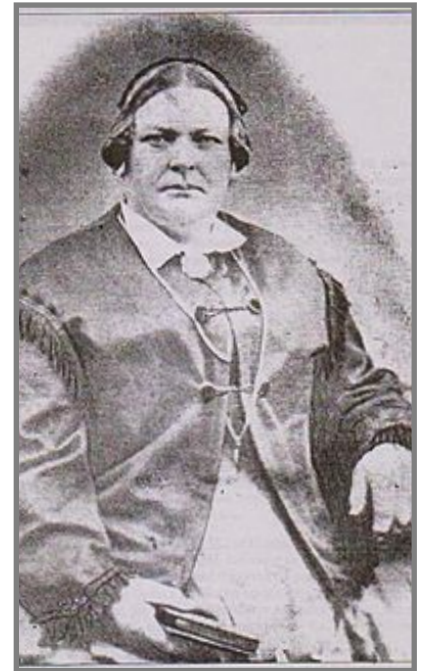
In 1841 the Buntine’s took up a large run on Bruthen Creek between Carrajung and Port Albert. This area was prone to bushfires and tremendous morasses which often made overland trips to Melbourne impossible. The best way was to go by ship from Port Albert.

Agnes and Hugh had 6 more children. The first child Albert, born in 1841, was the first white child to be born in Gippsland. From 1845 to 1848 they ran the Bush Inn at Bruthen.

Agnes expanded the business into carting and while Hugh looked after the store, she took an active part in the transport business.

When her husband became ill and could not work it was up to Agnes to be the bread winner. Initially Agnes carried goods from Port Albert to the Sandhurst (Bendigo) gold fields. When gold was discovered in Walhalla in 1862 Agnes turned to driving bullocks from Port Albert over the hills to Rosedale and on to Walhalla transporting the goods to the goldfield. This journey, of about 80 miles, took many nights and she would roll herself up in a blanket and sleep under the wagon. She was a remarkably interesting woman with an indomitable Scottish spirit. Working with men, as a man, she gained their greatest respect.

On her fourth trip to Walhalla she drove a mob of cattle and when she reached Walhalla she slaughtered two beasts to feed the starving miners. She did these trips whilst bringing up a large family, bearing 6 more children and looking after an ailing husband. She gave all the 11 children a good education. She always carried a gun and a stock whip which she used both when necessary. Once she whipped a man that was molesting a young girl.



Agnes was unconventional in many ways. She was a big woman who dressed rather eccentrically. Refusing to be hobbled by long gowns, she cut her skirts short and wore long leather leggings. On her feet were a pair of mens blucher boots and her top half was covered by a large jumper with a hankchief tied around her throat. She was also known for smoking an old black pug pipe. She was able to ride a horse like a stock rider, cut trees and split posts like a woodchopper and wield a stock whip like no other woman. In fact, in one story about her exploits it was said that she took her stock whip to a drunkard who was being offensive to a young lady and she “whipped him sober”.

“Odd Australian History” by Annie O’Reilly

At the age of 51 after Hugh had died, she started a new life by marrying 29 year old Michael Hallett and they lived on a property near Rosedale. Agnes died in 1896 in Gippsland Base Hospital, Sale and is buried in Rosedale Cemetery beside her first husband Hugh.

This is just a short narrative of the extraordinary life of Agnes “Mother” Buntine.

Headstone of Hugh BUNTINE in
Rosedale Cemetery
1804-1867



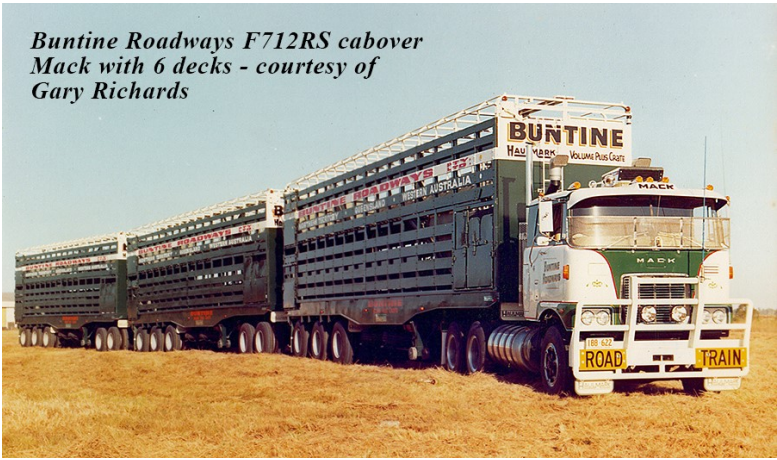
As for Agnes, her carting business went on until her death aged 74 in 1896. But 100 years after Agnes started, out of the blue came another Buntine, her great-great- grandson Noel who, at the same age she had been, started a transport business in the Northern Territory called Buntine’s Roadways.

While looking for a link between Agnes and the famed BUNTINE cattle haulage business across Northern Australia I finally came across the connection.

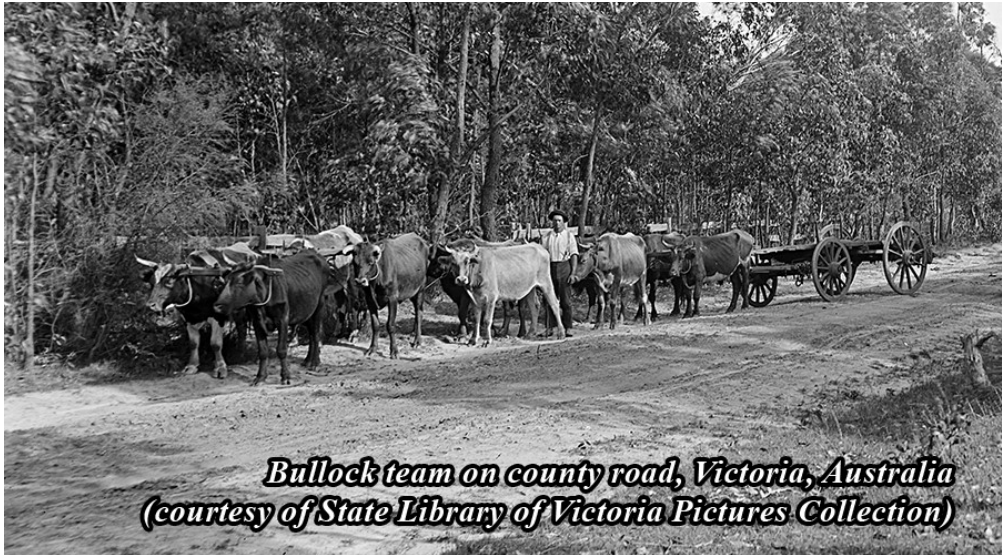
Sources: Our Society has Family History records on the Buntine family.
For further research on this remarkable woman:

“Australian Dictionary of Biography”
“Odd Australian History” by Annie O’Reilly
TROVE:
<http://tinyurl.com/y53p7w72>
<http://tinyurl.com/y6safmr5>

<http://www.tenfourmagazine.com/2015/02/special-features/outback-legend/>
<https://www.tenfourmagazine.com/2015/01/special-features/agnes-the-bullock-driver/>
<https://www.scottishfield.co.uk/outdoors/scotswoman-who-braved-the-wilds-of-australia/>

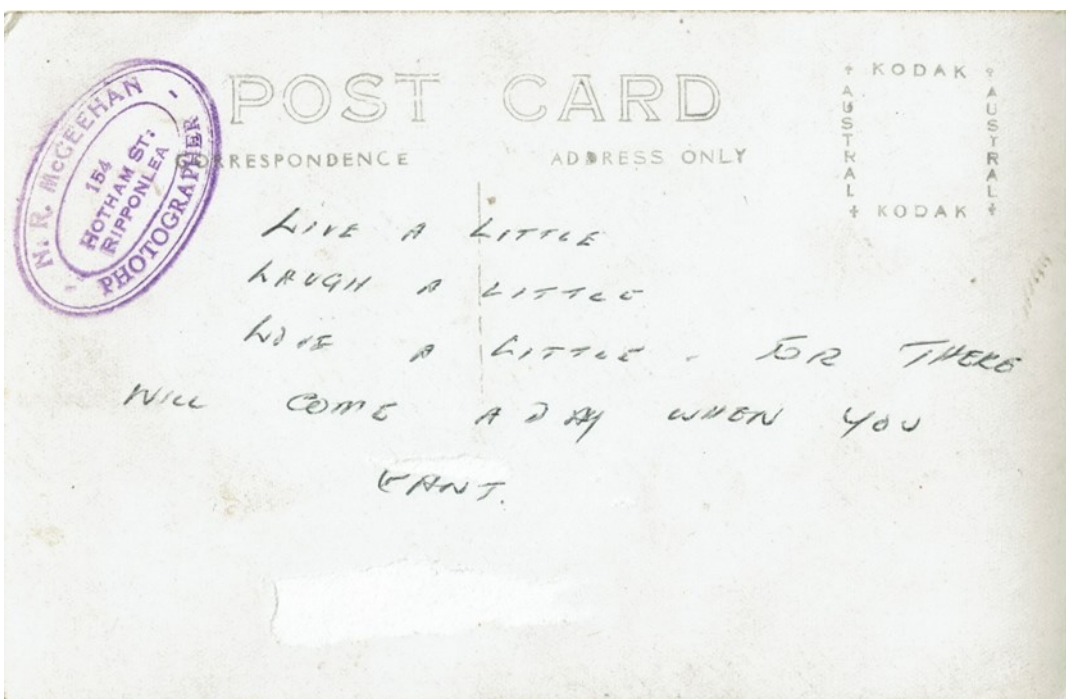


*Buntine Roadways F712RS cabover
Mack with 6 decks - courtesy of
Gary Richards*



*Bullock team on county road, Victoria, Australia
(courtesy of State Library of Victoria Pictures Collection)*

Those were the Days - 1935 Brown Coal Mine Post Card



*"Live a little
Laugh a little
Love a little For there
will come a day when
you cant."*

The Census taken in June 1935 shows that Yallourn, including the Brown Coal Mine, Haunted Hills and Morwell Bridge has a population of 4,561 of whom 3,148 reside in the Yallourn area, 912 in the Brown Coal area, 221 in the Haunted Hills area and 280 in the Morwell Bridge area. There are 2,705 males and 1,856 females. Of these figures there are 1,860 adult males and 1153 adult females. An increase of 722 residents since the 1934 Census.

"Australian Bureau of Statistics"

A.P.M. transit cottages, Derham's Hill, late 1940s. These cottages provided temporary accommodation for APM workers and their families during the post-war housing shortage.



GLIMPSES OF DERHAM'S HILL

Following on from February's newsletter regarding the concrete foundations recently uncovered, here is the Derham's Hill water tower actually under construction.



688 TRANSIT COTTAGES
TOWER FOR WATER SUPPLY



OPEN DAYS 2019

3rd April / 17th April / 28th April
1st May / 15th May / 26th May
5th June / 19th June / 30th June
3rd July / 17th July / 28th July
7th August / 21st August / 25th August
4th September / 18th September / 29th September
2nd October / 16th October / 27th October
6th November / 20th November / 24th November

OPEN DAYS 2020

5th February / 19th February / 23rd February
4th March / 18th March / 29th March

Please deliver me to:

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