

The Morwell Post

Morwell Historical Society

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Churchill Town Symbol



See page 8

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Morwell Historical Society Directory 2021

President:	Bruce McMaster Phone: 0428 528 464
Vice-President:	John Willis
Secretary:	Florence Butcher
Assistant Secretary:	Laurie Williams
Treasurer:	Peter Butcher
Committee Members:	Rosalie Davey Shirley Prosser Peter Gitsham
Research Library:	12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell, Victoria 3840
Research Queries:	research@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au
Public Access:	1st and 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 Single Member - \$25.00 Family Membership -Family living at the same address includes children under 18 years old - \$30.00 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

Guest Speaker

For the month of June our guest speaker was one of our members Laurie Williams who is passionate about football. See his reminisces further in this newsletter. Laurie has written 6 books pertaining to Gippsland football and is working on another book. Due to lockdown there was no July meeting.

Treasurer

Carolyn Schopp has resigned from the position of treasurer. Carolyn was appointed Treasurer when Carol Smith resigned from the position. Carolyn has held this position for the last 5½ years and I thank her for taking on the role and her generous contribution to the society. Peter Butcher was elected to the position.

Fund Raising

On June 20th we had another successful sausage sizzle at Bunnings. I would like to thank those who volunteered –Shirley who organised everything, Laurie, Gaye, Dianne, Rosalie, Ray, Reg, Orlando, Lin, Carolyn, Fay and Melinda who worked 2 shifts. They raised \$750 from the sausage sizzle and \$36.55 in donations. All the money will go towards paying off the building.

Our second BBQ on 21st August was terminated suddenly by a 1pm lockdown but we did manage \$429.50 profit and \$36.35 in donations.

Street Names

For the past 3 years Lin has been working on the Society's Street folders. We have 311 streets, crescents, courts, roads, etc in Morwell and each one has their own folder with an index page. The folders occupy six filing cabinet draws. Each street has a number and labelled in a folder and the information will eventually be on the society's database.

Water Meter

The water meter at the front of the building has been lowered to ground level and it has a cover over it. Chris has removed the unnecessary post and chain fence along the footpath.

Newspaper Donation

The society has received a donation of 14 *Morwell Advertisers*. This adds further to our collection of newspapers that are not available on Trove.

Grants

Thank you to the Latrobe City Council for our annual grant of \$500 which goes towards our operating costs for the year.

Earlier in the year we applied for a grant from the Public Record Office Local History Grants Program for a Website Rebuild. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful. We will be able to apply again later in the year.

Congratulations

I would like to congratulate our member David McInnes on being named Morwell Rotary President for the coming year and Morwell Rotarian of the year. Not only does David do a lot of work for Rotary but he also does a large amount of voluntary work for the Society.

Stay well and safe

Bruce McMaster



LAURIE WILLIAMS

Laurie was a former editor of the *Hazelwood Drum*, a weekly newsletter circulated through Hazelwood Power Station for seven years.

He then joined *SEC CONTACT* as a journalist before joining *Perth Glory* as a columnist with their weekly program before returning to Gippsland where he served time as publicity officer with the Mid Gippsland Football League Central Gippsland Cricket Association and the Latrobe Valley Soccer League.

Laurie is also a long-time presenter of 36 years on Gippsland FM 104.7.

He has been a regular contributor to the *Latrobe Valley Express* for over 40 years.

Here's where it all started and his recollection of those early days.

SCHOOL FOOTBALL DAZE

The days I remember most as a kid was playing football with my mates and the Armstrong Court/Stagg St boys at Catterick Crescent in Traralgon. It was organised chaos and we represented every league club in our own way. The scratch matches were organised usually on a daily basis with as many as six a side or as few as three a side. We used jumpers or sticks for one end for goal posts while the other



The football Laurie and his team played with



end (Stagg St) already had real goal posts in a shortened version of the oval.

Despite weather conditions we would play after school and usually rolled home covered in mud and bruises or the often blood spillage. None of us had "proper" football boots we just played in whatever we had. We had team names and recorded scores and one year we actually had a final, hand written notices were delivered to the neighbourhood advising them of a "grand final". Aygee donated soft drinks (thanks to Ray Graham whose dad owned Aygee Soft Drinks), Bennie Dunk's dad brought his fish and chip van to feed the "spectators". Parents brought along oranges and "Chewies" (which was an important part of our game). We bought a football from proceeds of a raffle (the ball was the raffle prize). A couple of dads became instant goal umpires with my mum making four white flags for them.

We never needed a field umpire (until the Grand Final) as we used a self-umpiring system which usually worked well during our years of playing. For our Grand Final we had two teams of eight players,

Laurie (front) and friend Benny Dunk kitted out in T shirts, a red team and a blue team about 30 spectators turned up. We asked Traralgon football club to send us a player to umpire our Grand Final and they sent us the legend Ron Hore, we were rapt. Everyone looked up at him as a STAR, stories about him were often featured in the Traralgon Journal and once the Sporting Globe came to interview him. No one remembers who won the Grannie but there was a great party afterwards with Pies (Ray's Dutch bakery), fish and chips (Dunk's) and drinks (Aygee). Parents bought cakes and biscuits and it was the best party ever held at Catterick Crescent. We did this for just on two years until a regular competition for our age group started in Traralgon and many of us drifted off to join the local clubs. Often I would go across the park and watch Traralgon Tigers Soccer team train and would join in kicking the ball around. Bennie Dunk's brother Wim was a top goal-keeper for the Tigers and we acted as ball-boys when the ball was kicked over the road at Catterick Crescent.

IN OUR NEW JUMPERS



Back: Chris Peck, Peter Rintoul, Ed Woodcroft, John Hardie, John Dixon, Dennis McGrath

Middle: Ben Dunk, Ray Graham, John Cairns, Bill Heaney, Laurie Williams, Mick Rossiter, David O'Brien

Front: Darryl Patterson, Graeme Robbins, John Althuizen, Mick McDermott, Tony Sullivan, Paul Brown

School football was played in Traralgon (grades 5/6) with inter-school matches arranged on Friday afternoons. Schools that played were Grey St (Maroon/green sash), Kosciusko St (yellow), Stockdale Road (Blue/red), St Michaels (Green/gold vee) and Liddiard Road (Tigers). Usually played against each other once. Grey St were always the top team and the St Micks boys always got plenty of notice from the State school kids.

At St Michaels we played other catholic schools in the district, we bussed to other schools such as Sacred Heart (Morwell), St Michaels (Heyfield), St Kierans (Moe) and St Joseph (Leongatha). The bus trips were eagerly awaited with the highlight the after match party with soft drinks, cordial, cakes, sandwiches and biscuits.

As matches were played on a Friday we (the Catholics) were not allowed to eat meat (no pies)-that was a mortal sin according to the nuns. Some of us rebels broke the curfew on pies and bought them from Ray's Dutch bakery on Franklin St and took them to the games (they were eaten cold). As the nuns didn't go to the Friday games some parents would supervise the games, recording scores and making sure we all turned up (we had to walk to the grounds). We had a few stops on the way, a shop on the corner of Loch Park Rd and Kay St was frequented on the way to the footy for an icy-pole, lolly bag or broken biscuits. In my first year as a school player (grade 5) we didn't have proper football jumpers, just school jumpers with numbers on the back (why I don't know) as there was never any team sheets to worry about. I think our "coach" was Terry Dixon who was a dad of the John Dixon who played in the team.

In Grade six, Les Davidson, a Traralgon businessman donated 20 new football jumpers (green with a gold vee) and sox. These jumpers became “sacred” to our team and we had to return them on Mondays all cleaned and ironed.

When year six was completed there were teams in Traralgon where you could play football, most of the catholic kids went to play with St Pauls but others went to Cumberland Park, Traralgon Juniors or Police Boys (who were regarded as the “bully” boys). From St Michaels in my day there were two players who went on and became VFL stars in Anthony (Tony) Sullivan 1967-79 (Melbourne-191 games) and Graham Robbins, 1969-71, 13 games (Richmond).

The TDJFL clubs would advertise in the Traralgon Journal for players at the start of the season and would put on “pie-nights” to attract new players. My earliest recollection was a pie night put on by Police Boys at Fred Parker’s house and just about every kid in Traralgon went and put away over 20 dozen pies (240) which were the big pies, not the piddly party pies of today).

St Pauls had strong footy teams, supplemented by Morwell boys who played in the LVJFL, they regularly beat other schools and won many Catholic Championships. Many of their players went on to play AFL football.

I started in the TDJFL with Police Boys in under 16 but I was too small and young to get a game in the Under 16’s so I went and played with the St Pauls Saturday team playing in the under 14 B team, but when I left St Pauls school to go to Traralgon High School the team wouldn’t let me play so I transferred to Cumberland Park Blues where I played for many years graduating to the Under 16’s where I played in two Grand Finals in 1965 (winning-2nd best) and losing one 1966 (best player).



Traralgon Thirds: 1966 Gary Talbot (4th top), Laurie Williams 2nd middle, John Bartley (5th middle), George Brayshaw (6th middle)

After junior league I went to join the Traralgon Thirds (under 18) but found it a bit daunting as the players there were all experienced and it was difficult to get a game even though I trained every session. I didn't even make it to the practice matches, the coach was ex Geelong's Peter Ryan who I didn't get on with as he had his own elite group, but I still turned up at games with my kit hoping for a chance to play a game. My chance however came when Sale visited Traralgon and due to "flu" they were two boys short so me, being a spare was asked to play with Sale on permit for the day. I took my chance-any game is better than watching over the fence. Although unfamiliar with the Sale players they welcomed me and their coach put me in the back pocket against the best rover in the league at that time in George Brayshaw. It was strange playing against my team-mates but Sale had faith in me and I was going to show the Traralgon coach I was a worthy footballer. Luckily for me George Brayshaw was injured early in the game and didn't return after quarter time. I enjoyed the match, picking up plenty of kicks (defender) and taking a few marks. Traralgon won the match but I thought I'd put in a good effort even though I was in defence. Sale voted me as their best player and I was surprised to receive their award (sports bag). The Traralgon coach never acknowledged my game but on the next Tuesday training session he approached me and told me that I would be picked for the next game. I played alongside Gary Talbot who was for his age the top full back in the competition. I played every game after that and picked up various best player awards. Traralgon eventually went down to Sale in the Grand

Final.

The following year I joined Cowwarr in their under 18 team but only played four matches before being selected in the seniors. It was a struggle to get to Cowwarr as I didn't have a licence but had to hitch-hike to most games until I got a ride with a Traralgon based player. Cowwarr was interesting and playing "seniors" at 17 was a lot different than junior football. There were places I'd never been such as Newry, where the clubrooms was a converted farm shed, Nambrok, a beautiful ground stuck in the middle of nowhere and of course Cowwarr where at times the water channel near the oval would flood and coat the ground in a sheet of water. One match at Boisdale I was sandwiched between two players and in deep pain, I was rushed to the Sale Hospital and X-rays showed a broken rib. My Dad was informed and he came and picked me up. I missed five matches due to the injury but came back to finish the season in the under 18's.



Cowwarr Football Club

LAURIE'S BOOKS

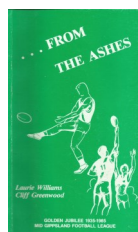
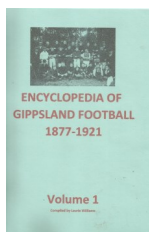
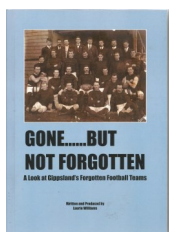
Gone but Not Forgotten—A Look at Gippsland's Forgotten Teams 2020 A4 167 pages. Cost \$20 (Morwell Newsagents in Commercial Rd/Variety Books Moe)

Encyclopedia of Gippsland Football 1877-1921—Volume 1 A4 200 pages. (pre-production orders taken)

Maryvale Football Club Reunion 2017 A4 173 Pages. Out of Print

From the Ashes—Golden Jubilee 1935-1985 Mid Gippsland Football League A5 120 pages. Out of Print

Mid Gippsland Football Leagues—Grand Finals 1935-2019 178 Pages A4 (pre Production orders taken)



CHURCHILL ... a short history

In the 1920s, the State Electricity Commission of Victoria built an open cut mine and power station at Yallourn along the banks of the Latrobe River. After the Second World War, when the demand for the power surged the SEC began building an open cut mine and briquette factories to the south of Morwell and then announced to build a mammoth new power station, to be known as Hazelwood Power Station.

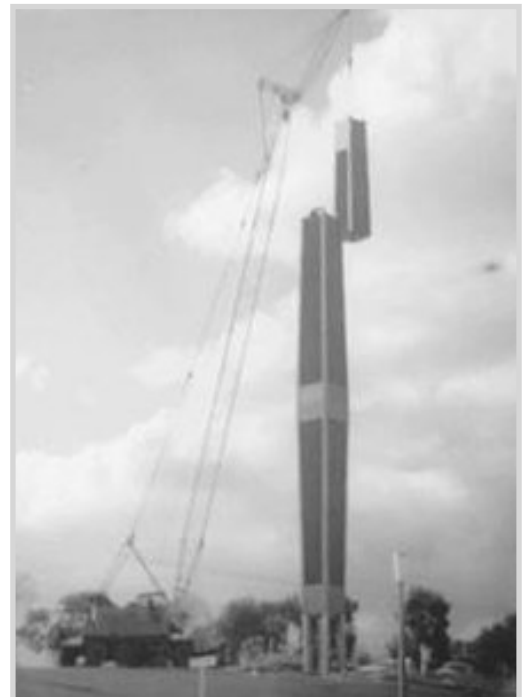
The Latrobe Valley was booming in 1961, the SECV anticipated that 60,000 new residents would come to live in the area over the next 40 years. Where would they live? Building a new town was the solution. The Housing Commission was in charge of developing the model town and had chosen Hazelwood, in the foothills of the Strzelecki Ranges, as the best site where 3,000 hectares of farmland were compulsory acquired. Pipes had been laid and road building was underway when it was announced in January 1965 that the new town of Hazelwood would be renamed Churchill in honour of the British wartime Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill who had recently died. This was a controversial decision.

In 1965 and 1966, a network of crescents and courts soon appeared. Graham and Gwen Ayres and their five children moved into Churchill's first house on the corner of Howard Ave and Switchback Road in October 1965 and they gave Churchill a population of seven. By early 1967, the town had a population of 800. Most of the residents came from the Latrobe Valley and worked for the SEC. They were young and had young families. Each household was welcomed by Reverend Peter Arch of the Cooperating Churches or a member of the welcoming committee. Early issues of the Churchill News were delivered with the milk by John Koedyk and it was a vital way of keeping residents informed of organisations, social events, bus times, and progress of the shopping centre, working bees, school news and building developments. Churchill was a town of children. The streets were full of them during school holidays. The Shopping Centre opened in 1967 and Churchill Primary School opened in 1968 and Hazelwood South Primary School closed. Watson Park Preschool also opened in 1968.

Yallourn Technical School began in 1928 in order to train SEC workers for the Yallourn Power Station and it became Yallourn Technical College in 1958. The Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education (GIAE) took over the College courses after it was formed in 1968 in Churchill. The Binishell, a hall for GIAE, opened in 1979 and demolished in 2009. The GIAE amalgamated with Monash University College in 1990 and a few years later became a campus of Monash University. In 2014 it became the Gippsland campus of the Federation University of Australia.

Love or hate it, the "Cigar" is a feature of Churchill, a tall square "golden" tower. The Housing Commission called for tenders for its design and construction in 1967. It was not designed with any intention of referencing Winston Churchill's famous cigar, but merely as an item of interest. Near its base is a commemorative brick wall built by the Rotary Club of Hazelwood which gives the names of the first families to move into the town. The structure was unveiled in 1967. Many residents would have preferred a swimming pool. In the 1990s the shopping centre was extended when a new complex Hazelwood Village opened.

Close to the Churchill Hotel are two large pine trees remaining from the site of Eel Hole Creek School which opened in 1900 and was built on land owned by Thomas Northway but it didn't remain Eel Hole Creek State School for long and was renamed Hazelwood South State School. William Loftus served as the first Head Teacher -1900-1901.



Erection of Churchill Town Symbol
Photo 17 December 1967, Ross
Ollquist



Back row - 4 Lucy Silcock, 6 Francis Silcock

Middle row -1 Jack Howard, 5 Jack Silcock, 6 Jane James, 7 Murray James

Front row -1 Annie James, 2 Mary James, 3 Margaret Silcock, 6 Betty (Lizzie) Deitrich Teacher—William Henry Loftus (on the far right)

Photo 1900 or the first half of 1901

John Flynn, later known as Flynn of the Inland, taught for a few months here in 1901. John Flynn founded the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

In 1926, a slightly bigger school consisting of a classroom and a store room was built on a new site where the Glendonald Estate is now. During 1951, a residence for the head teacher was built on the school grounds. The school started with a healthy enrolment of 36 pupils. As people began to occupy the new town of Churchill, close by, during 1966-67, five portable class rooms were added to accommodate the increased enrolment which grew from 27 pupils in February 1966 to 218 in November 1967. With the opening of Churchill Primary School in February 1968, Hazelwood South State School closed.

Source –*Churchill's 40th Anniversary* -Margaret Guthie, President Churchill & District Community Association 2005.

Front Cover—Churchill Town Symbol

Photo 10th July 2007 by Rob de Souza-Daw



Churchill Town Symbol

Photo 23/2/2010 by Ken Harris

WALSH-SILCOCK WEDDING

A pleasing ceremony took place on the 20th November 1920, in the Sacred Heart Church Morwell, when Mr Thomas Walsh, of Yinnar and Miss Margaret Mary Silcock, eldest daughter of Mrs Silcock of Hazelwood South, (her father, Charles, had died in 1910), were at nuptial mass united in the bonds of wedlock by the Very Rev. Father Hayes assisted by Father O'Connor, in the presence of a large gathering of family and friends.

The bride, who was given away by her uncle, Mr John Silcock, looked charming in a dress of cream crepe de-chene trimmed with Maltese lace and stitches. She also wore customary wreath and veil and carried a pretty bridal bouquet of white roses and lilies.

The bridesmaids were Miss L. Silcock, (sister of the bride) and Miss F Mackey, (cousin) who were becomingly gowned in cream gabardine costumes and black tulle hats. They carried pretty pink and lavender posies.

Mr J O'Brien was best man and Mr J. M. Silcock, groomsman.

As the wedding party entered the church, which was beautifully decorated for the occasion by girl friends of the bride the Wedding March was played by Miss Olive O'Rourke and the strains were repeated as the happy couple were leaving the building. During the ceremony the choir sang, and a solo "God be with You" was nicely rendered by Mr Furlong.

As the bride was leaving the church, she was met by little Vera Lawless, dressed in white satin, who placed a white satin horse shoe, tied with ribbons, on her arm.

Subsequently a reception was held at "The Willows" the residence of the bride's mother, where a large assemblage sat down to a sumptuous breakfast, at which the usual toasts were duly honoured.

The bride was the recipient of a host of handsome and costly presents.

Mr and Mrs Walsh left by motor amid showers of confetti and good wishes, for Melbourne, en route for Tasmania, where the honeymoon is to be spent.

Source - ~~Morwell Advertiser~~ **Morwell Advertiser** Friday 22 November 1918 p 3

Margaret's parents, Charles and Catherine (nee O'Shea) Silcock had 6 children:

John born in 1891

Margaret born in 1893

Francis born in 1894

Lucy born in 1896

Charles in 1897

Jane 1903



JOHN DUSTING

Janet (Jessie) Jenkinson White was born at Portland in 1856 to Scottish parents and it was there that she married John Mathews Dusting in 1873. The Dustings had one son, Robert Adam in Portland in 1875 before they decided to move east. They spent some time at Woodend where John Arthur was born in 1878 and Mabel was born in 1879 but these children died a few months after their birth. Agnes Sarah was born in 1880 and Charles Herbert (Bert) was born in 1882. Louis was born in Trafalgar in 1884 and John and Jessie Dusting decided to move to Morwell with their 3 children Robert, Agnes and Louis in 1885.

The Dustings took up land from the Crown in the east end of Commercial Road for residential purposes. In Morwell Jessie gave birth to four more children -Euphemia (Effie) Hume in 1886, John (Jack) William in 1889, Jessie Ellen in 1891 and Henry Edwin (Harry) Edward in 1895. John Dusting conducted a saddler business in Morwell and the children attended the Morwell State School. The photo was taken c1908 at 214 Commercial Road (currently the site of Stockdale & Leggo).



Henry went to WW1 in 1914 and he was killed in France by an explosive shell in 1916. In 1915 Charles also enlisted and he was in the 4th Light Horse Regiment and returned in 1919 but died in 1922. Bert and Jack went to WA, Louis and Effie went to Sydney and Jessie went to Dimboola. In 1919 John Dusting went for a holiday to Kooringa, near Burra, in SA and died there of the Spanish Flu. That left only Jessie and her eldest daughter Agnes, who had married Thomas Pritchard, living in 79 Elgin Street, Morwell.

In 1947, Jessie celebrated her 90th birthday and she had lived in the same four-roomed weatherboard house in Commercial Road for 63 years. The following year Jessie moved in to live with Agnes and Thomas Pritchett and Thomas died in 1950 and Jessie died in 1951 aged 94. The following year her unoccupied house in Commercial Road was being used by itinerant workers and one night in 1952 the house burnt down and two men that were camped there died. Agnes died in 1967 aged 86.

Incidentally, Agnes Dusting married Thomas Pritchett who did a blacksmith, wheelwright and coach painting apprenticeship in Bairnsdale and when he was 20 years old he came to Morwell to work for Dayble, the Blacksmith, on the site of where the Post Office is today, the corner of Church Street and Princes Drive. After 13 years in Morwell, Thomas opened a blacksmith shop in Mirboo North and during that time he lost the sight in one eye due to an accident. After 5 years in Mirboo North he returned to Morwell and obtained a position with the SEC. Agnes and Thomas Pritchett had 10 children and 5 of their sons enlisted and went to WW2.

Source:

- Morwell Advertiser* Friday 17th July 1916 p 3
- Morwell Advertiser* Thursday 11th Sep 1947 p 8
- Morwell Advertiser* Monday 3rd August 1950 p 4
- Morwell Advertiser* Thursday 10th May 1951 p 1
- Morwell Advertiser* Thursday 24 April 1952 p 7

- The Late Corporal Dusting*
- Ninetieth Milestone is Past*
- Obituary Thomas Joseph Pritchard*
- Mrs Jessie Dusting*
- Two Fatalities in House Fire*



OPEN DAYS 2021

Please check the current Covid-19 restrictions before attending.

1st September || 15th September || 26th September
6th October || 20th October || 31st October
3rd November || 17th November || 28th November

OPEN DAYS 2022

2nd March || 16th March; AGM || 27th March
6th April || 20th April || 24th April
4th May || 18th May || 29th May
1st June || 15th June || 26th June
6th July || 20th July || 31st July
3rd August || 17th August || 28th August

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Morwell Neighbourhood House



We sincerely thank Russell Northe, MLA for Morwell and staff for printing our Newsletter