

Morwell Historical Society Inc.

www.morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au

c. 1903



A Merry
Xmas
To All Our
Readers

Compiled by: Stephen Hellings

The

AOO 16986 W

“Morwell Post”

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Bonus Holiday Reading Issue!!



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2008 IN RETROSPECT

As the end of another year approaches, we look back at our Society's activities and ask ourselves "What could / should we have done differently?"

Faced with dwindling attendance, we have changed our meetings to Wednesday afternoons, which makes things easier for those who find attending night meetings difficult, but limits those who have jobs and young families. We will continue with daytime meetings for the time being and review the situation mid-year in 2009.

We bade a sad farewell to three of our staunchest members in 2008 - Will McRoberts, Muriel Feehan and Graham Gordon were all well-known and loved members of the Morwell community and of our Society - but we were delighted to welcome nine new members during the year and we look forward to their company and their contribution to the growth of the Society.

“The Post”

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Some members will recall the horse trough which was formerly located on the median strip of Hazelwood Road near the Commercial Road intersection. It was erected in the 1930s or earlier with funds donated by George and Annis Bills, animal lovers who gave money to country towns to provide drinking facilities for the horses and dogs of farmers and others who relied on their horses for transport.

Cont. P 2

2008 IN RETROSPECT (Cont. from page front page)

Bills horse troughs are now items of heritage value and we are hoping to restore Morwell's Bills trough to its original location as a memorial to the pioneers of the district. (It was moved to the Pony Club's grounds some years ago but the Club has no further use for it).

Our Society, in co-operation with Latrobe Council and the other Historical Societies in the municipality, is planning to install interpretive signage indicating sites and buildings of heritage significance in the towns of the area.

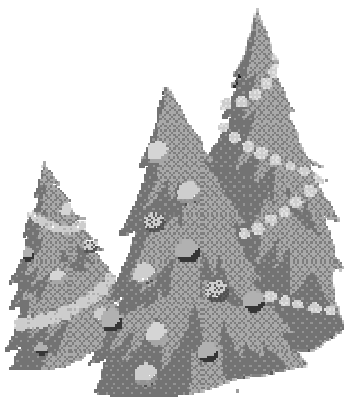
We are hoping for funding from several sources which will allow us to proceed with this in 2009. We have also worked with the wider association of Gippsland Historical Societies to produce a brochure (enclosed) to publicise our activities. Latrobe Council's Arborist is establishing a register of significant trees on Council-owned or Crown land. If you have any knowledge of such trees and their background (age, reason for planting, etc) please let us know and we will pass it on.

We have continued to supply information to people researching family history, students doing school projects and businesses planning to build in the district, who need an environmental history of the planned site - e.g. might there have been chemical contamination of the ground; are petrol tanks still buried there from a previous garage etc?

Work also continues on the recording, cataloguing and safe storage of our collection of photographs, family histories, municipal records, Council memorabilia - to name just a few categories. Our archivist will be working on these and numerous other jobs over the next two months. If you are able to assist, even for a short time, please let me know - you don't have to be an expert!

Finally, the members of the Committee wish you and yours a very happy and peaceful Christmas break. Our next meeting will be on **February 18th, 2009 at 2.30 pm**

Elsie



Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

22nd. September 1916

MORWELL TENNIS CLUB



The annual meeting of local Tennis Club was held in Mechanics' Institute, on Monday evening, and judging by the large and representative attendance the club should have a very successful season. The president for past year (Mr **Aherin**) presided and minutes of last annual meeting have been read and confirmed, the secretary (Mr **J. Ward**) read balance-sheet showing a credit balance of £1 14s 4d, which was considered highly satisfactory, and duly adopted.

The following office-bearers for ensuing year were afterwards elected:

President: Rev. Father **Hayes**.

Vice - Presidents: Mr **Aherin** and Dr. **Sutcliffe**.

Secretary and Treasurer: Mr **G. Watson**.

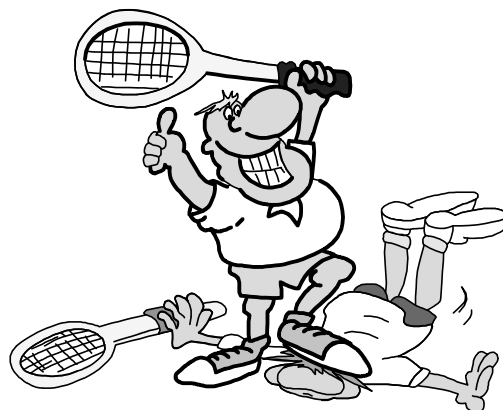
Committee: Messrs **Evans, Headdey, Ward, Bristol**, Misses **Rintoull, Dickson** and **Lemcke**.

Match Committee: President, Secretary and Mr **Evans**.

Members subscriptions were fixed at: gents, 10s; ladies 5s.

It was resolved to open the season with a day on the courts on Saturday, 30th inst, when a mixed tournament will take place among members and visitors.

Other details were arranged after which meeting adjourned.



With apologies to Morwell Tennis
Club and members S.H.

Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

7th. March 1919
Benzine Explodes

CR. D. MCKAY SEVERLEY INJURED

The many friends of Councillor D. McKay will regret to learn that he was severely injured on Monday evening last, and it will be some time before he is himself again. The injuries, which were of a painful nature, were caused by a tin of benzine becoming ignited and suddenly exploding beside him.

At about 7 p.m. Mr McKay was doing something to his motor car that was in shed at rear of his hotel. In the same building were some tins of benzine, one of which had been leaking, the contents running onto the floor of shed. Whilst engaged on the car Mr McKay dropped a nut off a bolt, and not being able to find the missing part, struck a match to look for it.

No sooner was the match struck than the benzine on floor caught alight and there was a sudden blaze. Mr McKay called for help and at the same time ran for something to smother the flames when a tin of benzine exploded with a terrific report, and at the same time Mr McKay was enveloped in flames, the result of which he was severely burned about face, hands and legs.

It looked as though the shed would be burnt down as the flames were leaping to the roof, and notwithstanding his painful injuries, Mr McKay jumped into motor car and attempted to back it out. Help, however, soon arrived and the flames were quickly subdued without any damage to property having been done.

Unfortunately, it was not so with Mr McKay, for skin was peeling off his hands and face, his hair was scorched and he was in great pain. Dr. Sutcliffe was however, quickly in attendance and did much to relieve his sufferings.

It will, however, be some time before he is himself again, but at the same time those who witnessed the occurrence state that Mr McKay was very lucky in escaping with his life.

The hotel referred to in the article is the "Cricketer's Arms" S. H.

Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

14th. February 1919

Fighting Influenza



PREPARATIONS IN MORWELL

STATE SCHOOL CONVERTED INTO HOSPITAL

There is an old saying that “prevention is better than cure,” and our local Health Officer (Dr. Sutcliffe) is to be commended for the prompt measures he has taken to fight the influenza scourge should an outbreak occur in our midst.

The Health Department urge that efforts be made to congregate patients in one centre as far as possible in order that they may receive the best attention that can be given, and with that object in view the Morwell State School has been converted into a temporary hospital for influenza patients, and the services of Nurse Mayall and Nurse Kjellgrer have been secured, and they have taken up their residence in Morwell.

At a public meeting, convened by the president of the Shire, held at Mechanics’ Hall, on Tuesday afternoon, the necessary furniture and equipment for hospital was promised, with the exception of bedding, which will be supplied by Red Cross Society of Melbourne.

The Railway Department has sent an emergency van to Morwell for the purpose of bringing patients from Mirboo and stations along the line to “hospital.” A landing has also been made on railway line, opposite the “hospital,” and gates erected by Shire Council, so that patients brought in by van will be conveyed in same to within two chain of hospital.

Messrs A. McDonald, R. Noy, F. Lee, R. Hentschel, Bert Fisher, J. Miller, J. Lowe and J. Ward have volunteered to act as stretcher bearers.

The “hospital” has also been connected with telephone, and members of local Red Cross Society have offered to do sewing and render assistance in other directions.

The whole scheme as arranged by Dr. Sutcliffe, has been submitted to Public Health Department and they have heartily approved of same.

We understand that the Morwell and Mirboo Shires are co-operating in the matter and sharing in the expense. Patients who are able will, however, have to pay a certain fee.

There was a good deal of adverse comment by a few local residents against proposal to treat patients (if any) from Mirboo in local "hospital," but from enquiries made, together with information supplied us by Health Officer, we are satisfied that the scheme is a wise one. The idea is to stamp out the disease in all parts of the State, and there is little use one district taking every precaution, if patients and contacts in an adjoining shire cannot be properly dealt with.

The Mirboo Shire is without a doctor, and should there be an outbreak there the disease would be likely to spread rapidly for lack of attention and proper supervision. The fact of patients being brought into Morwell is not at all likely to spread the disease in the town for patients will be brought here in emergency van and kept isolated. The nurses and others connected with hospital will also be isolated, whilst stretcher bearers will wear masks and gowns when removing patients.

The influenza germs are unlike most germs owing to the fact that they live on nothing but human beings and can only be transmitted from one person to another by close contact. The germs quickly die in an unoccupied building and will not live on clothing or any such material. Consequently there is no fear of school children or others contracting the disease at a later date on account of school having been as hospital.

If the Mirboo Shire was not allowed to co-operate with Morwell, it is quite likely that should an outbreak occur there persons suffering from the disease would come to Morwell to consult doctor, and in doing so come in contact with scores of people on train and elsewhere, and there would be no end of contacts. As a matter of fact such a thing happened quite recently, but fortunately it turned out to be only a case of ordinary influenza.

This man not feeling well, came from Mirboo to Morwell by ordinary train to consult Dr. Sutcliffe. On arrival here he went to an hotel where he had tea and remained in the presence of a number of persons.

After "knocking about" the street for a time the man consulted Dr. Sutcliffe who informed him that he had symptoms of influenza. There being then no Influenza Hospital here, the man was told to get home as soon as he could and isolate himself as quickly as possible. As before

mentioned, it fortunately turned out to be a case of ordinary influenza, and the man is now convalescent, but is only goes to show what may easily happen.

At the present time there are no cases in either the Morwell or Mirboo Shires, and it is to be hoped they will continue to be free from the disease, but at the same time it is gratifying to know that complete arrangements have been made to deal with any cases should they occur.



**Morwell's Influenza "hospital" photographed in
1919**

Photograph: "Glimpses of our Past"

Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

11th. October 1918

UNSATISFACTORY POSTAL FACILITIES



If there is one department more than another under the control of Federal Government that is managed in a manner that gives the greatest dissatisfaction to the public, it is the Postal Department.

The facilities now afforded by this department are – as far as delivery of letters, etc., are concerned – far behind what they were over thirty years ago, and still we say “Advance Australia,” and talk of decentralisation. It would appear that in order to encourage centralisation in Melbourne (where half the population of Victoria reside) and give employment to men there, the mails are sent from the country to be sorted there, the result being that a letter posted say at Sale or Traralgon for Morwell passes through the town one day, is sorted in Melbourne, and comes back the following day; a letter posted at Traralgon for Morwell, thereby travelling nearly 200 miles, instead of only about nine.

If a person is in a hurry to have a letter delivered it would be advisable for them to walk with it, if they could get no other way of transmitting it, rather than send it through the post. This applies to letters that are conveyed by the morning train on which there is now no mail van, which was taken off because it appears the State, through the Railway Dept., got a few pounds that the Postal Dept. saw fit to save at the inconvenience of the public.

As far as the mail brought to Morwell from Sale way by evening train is concerned, it is not sorted for some hours after arrival and too late for reply to be sent by return train.

For some years the practice was to have the mail sorted after arrival of train and placed in private boxes or delivered over the counter about 6.30. This was a very common sense and satisfactory arrangement, but common sense and satisfaction now seem to be unknown or at least not put into practice.

One or more officials have to be in attendance at the local post office till 8 p.m. to attend to telegraphy and telephone, and why they should be

instructed not to sort the mails referred to on arrival, is beyond our comprehension.

The existing unsatisfactory condition of postal facilities was brought under the notice of the Shire Council at meeting on Wednesday, last week, by Mr. George Watson, who in referring to the matter said he felt sure members of the council would endorse all he said from their own personal knowledge.

The President, Cr. Hall and other Councillors endorsed Mr. Watson's remarks, and the Secretary was instructed to write to Mr. G. H. Wise (Assistant Minister of Defence) drawing his attention to the unsatisfactory state of affairs and asking him to do his best to bring about desired alteration.



Morwell Post Office – photographed c 1903

Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

25th. October 1918

LOCAL POSTAL FACILITIES



SERVICE TO BE IMPROVED

At meeting of local Shire Council held on 2nd inst., Mr G. Watson brought under notice of the Council the inconvenience caused business people and the public generally by the very unsatisfactory existing postal facilities, and asked that Council take steps to have something done to improve the state of affairs.

The Council took the matter up, and got Mr Wise (Assistant Minister for Defence) to urge the postal authorities to make alterations that would give a better service and cause less inconvenience.

It will be learned with satisfaction that the representations made have borne some fruit and as a result alterations are to be made that, although not all that is desired, will be a big improvement on the conditions that have existed for some time past.

The following letter received by Mr Wise from the Deputy Postmaster-General gives details of alterations to me made:-

Postmaster-General's Department,
Melbourne, 18th October, 1918

Sir, - Adverting to your representations relative to the communication from the Shire Secretary, Morwell, regarding the local mail service, I beg to inform you that, in order that the delivery of correspondence addressed to Morwell and arriving by the evening train from Post Offices on the Mirboo North line, might be delivered earlier than at present, instructions have been issued for such correspondence to be sorted into the private boxes at the Post Office, Morwell, as soon as possible after 7 p.m. daily.

As regards the complaint that letters, etc., for Morwell from offices on the Mirboo North line are frequently sent on to Melbourne and returned to Morwell the following day, it may be stated that definite instructions have been issued that such mail matter is to be placed in the Morwell van letter bag which is opened on arrival of the train at Morwell by an officer from

the local Post Office. There should not be further cause for complaint in this respect.

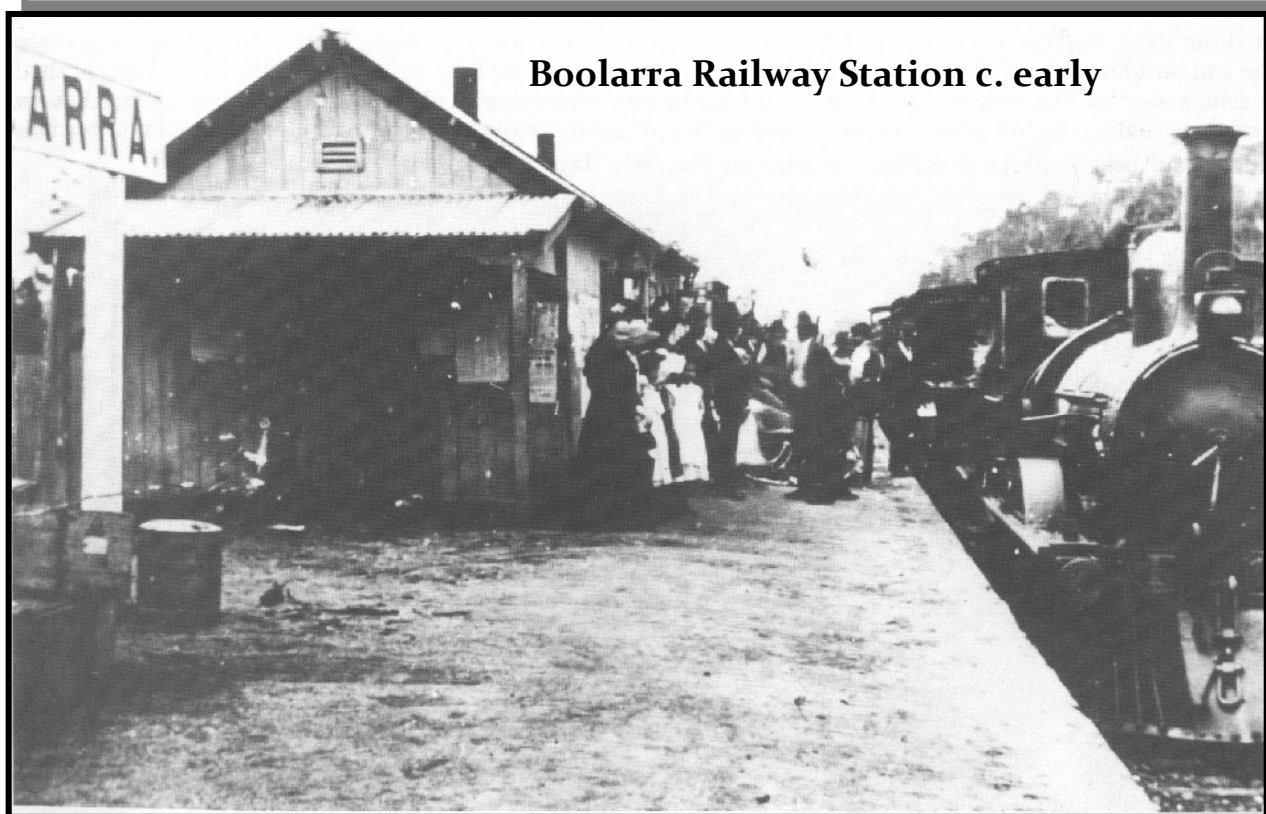
Yours faithfully,
(Sgd) CHAS. E. BRIGHT

Mirboo North Railway Station c. 1905



Photographs: R. K.

Boolarra Railway Station c. early



Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

25th. October 1918

State Governor



Visits Morwell and Inspects Brown Coal Mine

His Excellency Sir Arthur Stanley (State Governor) paid an unofficial visit to Morwell on Friday last, travelling in State car, attached to ordinary passenger train which arrived here shortly before 9 p.m. His Excellency was accompanied by his private Secretary (Mr Neil Smith), Mr S. Barnes (Minister for Mines), Mr Livingston M.L.A. and Mr Herman (Director of Geological Survey).

On arrival at Morwell the car in which the party travelled was taken off and shunted on to side line. In the meantime the Governor, who got out on to platform, was met by the President of the Shire (Cr. Dunbar), Cr. Hall, the Shire Secretary (Mr Sinclair) and a number of townspeople. As the Governor's visit was an unofficial one there was no formal welcome, but His Excellency entered into conversation with several and shook hands with quite a number who were introduced to him by Mr Livingston.

He was plainly dressed in a grey sac suit, as is his usual custom, and his friendly manner and interest displayed in local matters won for him here, as in other parts of the State, the esteem and respect of all the people. After expressing a desire to inspect the brown coal mine the next morning, His Excellency jumped down off the platform, without any ceremony, and entered the car, where he slept for the night, but he was served with breakfast at Conlan's Club Hotel, next morning.

Early on Saturday the town was astir, and before 9 o'clock the main street was lined with motor cars ready to convey His Excellency and party, shire councillors and others to the mine. The Governor travelled in car belonging to President of Shire, and driven by Mr Isaac Billingsley, who, by the way, drove His Excellency to Gunyah about three years ago, when he visited this district on a previous occasion, shortly after he came to Australia.

During that trip the Governor lost a valuable pair of field glasses that had been presented to him prior to his leaving the Old Country.

The glasses were subsequently found by Mr Ike Billingsley who returned them to the Governor on Saturday. Needless to say His Excellency was very pleased to receive the glasses again.

Dr Sutcliffe, who accompanied the party, drove his car and took a passenger.

Mr J. McGauran, who drove his car, left shearing operations in order to convey some of the party to the mine.

Other cars were driven by Messrs R. Hentschel, L. Hare and J. Flavelle.

The morning was rather cold and a keen wind was blowing.

Everyone appeared well wrapped up in overcoats excepting His Excellency who did not seem to feel the cold and simply carried a walking stick.

On arrival at the mine the Governor displayed a keen interest in the operations being carried out, and after Mr Herman had explained to him much that it is proposed to carry out, expressed himself as being greatly impressed with the possibilities of the field, and predicted big things in the future. The spot on which it is proposed to erect the power house on south side of Latrobe River was shown to His Excellency and the coal bed stretching away almost as far as the eye could reach pointed out.

Mr Herman explained that allowing for a power station with a capacity of 100,000 kilowatts, which is double what it is intended to instal – at any rate, for some time to come – there is enough coal in square mile of adjacent flat land to supply the station for over 100 years. He added that the square mile had been closely bored and that the coal is from 150 ft to 200 ft thick, of very even quality, and practically free from dirt bands.

Mr Herman also explained that a ridge of old rocks crosses the Latrobe just above the power house flats, and offers a splendid site for an immense dam, so that the water supply is assured.

Mr Herman mentioned that while only part of the area had as yet been closely bored, there was very little doubt that brown coal covered completely or almost completely, an area of 100 square miles in the Latrobe Valley. At one point “Buckley’s paddock,” near Morwell, the coal was proved to be 780 ft in thickness.

After inspecting site of power house the party retraced their steps to the open cut where from a safe and elevated position they witnessed the explosion of eight blasting charges that were inserted about half-way up the open face. The explosions, which could be heard for a considerable distance, brought down tons of coal including one immense piece fully a ton weight.

The Governor and party afterwards walked up to the “township” where His Excellency and others were very kindly provided with a sumptuous lunch by Mrs Clifford.

Motor cars met the party at the township and the homeward run was made along the “back road.” A short halt was made on the way to inspect drill in charge of Mr Clifford at work on the roadside.

A great black snake 6ft 6in in length that had been killed the previous day by Mr Sam Farran was placed across the track, but His Excellency did not seem anxious to make its acquaintance. It was not so however, with a pet kangaroo at Mrs Farran’s, further along the road, where the Governor got out of the car and tried to make friends with the “Australian Native,” Miss Farran, who gave the ‘roo some cake and bread out of her hand, informed His Excellency that her pet was thoroughly domesticated and in addition to dining at the table, would comb her hair and pay her other attention.

As the Governor was due to leave by the mid-day train for Traralgon for the purpose of unveiling honor roll, his time here was very limited, and after bidding adieu to Mrs Farran’s ‘roo, the party had to hasten to catch the train.

Before taking his departure from Morwell, His Excellency mentioned that he had greatly enjoyed the trip to the mine.



Sir Arthur Stanley



Mr H. Herman
(In later years)

Images obtained from Internet resources

Morwell Advertiser

24th January 1957

Reprieve for Tarwin Street trees

TWO oak trees on the eastern side of Tarwin Street in front of the new Commonwealth Bank and Coles Stores, have been reprieved.

Morwell Shire Council yesterday unanimously rejected a suggestion that the trees be removed.

Suggestion came from the Morwell branch of the National Safety Council and shire engineer, Mr. **J. W. F. Connan**, reported that:

trees were too big for the altered conditions of intense traffic and increased business:

tree roots caused damage to road and footpath pavements:

position of trees was such as to unduly interfere with the parking of motor vehicles:

size of the trees was such that it was necessary to periodically cut off the tops to prevent interference with overhead wires.

Typical comments of councillors were:-

Cr. **Bush**: There are so few examples of mature trees in Morwell that I would hate to see them go.

Cr. **L. Bond**: They are landmarks and there would be a public outcry if we decided to shift them.

Cr. **M. F. Walker**: Wait until the other trees in the area attain more growth.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday

18th February at 2.30 p.m.

44 Buckley St. (next to T.A.B.)



Morwell Historical Society
Inc.

Annual Subscription Rates:

Single: \$17.00

Family/Double: \$20.00



Local History On-Line

Our Internet Address is:

www.morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au



Bennett, Phil.

Who's Who:

Phil Bennett:

**Sergeant of Police
Stationed at Morwell.**

1965-1971

