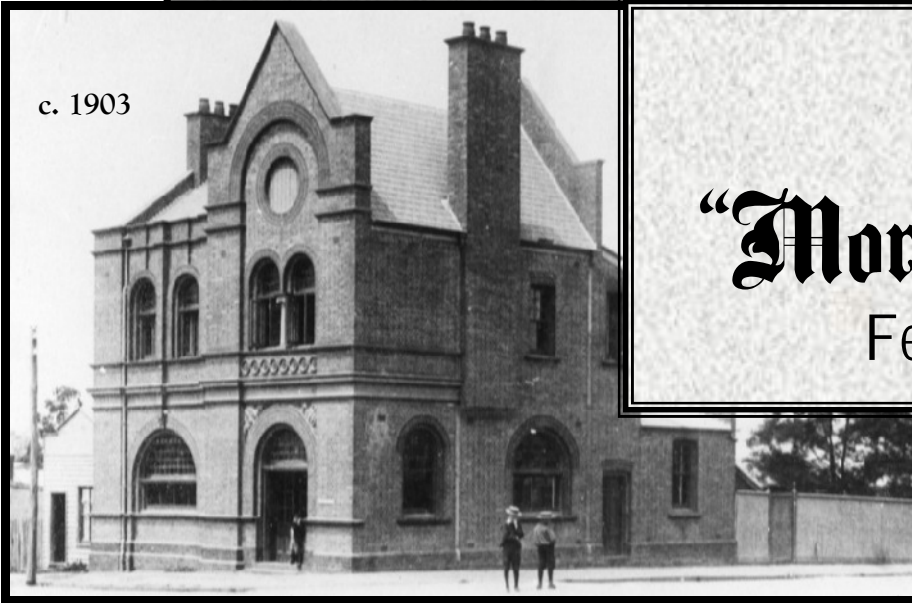


# Morwell Historical Society Inc.

www.latrobeonline.com

c. 1903



# The

AOO 16986 W

# “Morwell Post”

February 2007

Vol. 24 No.1

Secretary: Elsie McMaster  
2 Harold Street Morwell  
Tel: 5134 1149



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Compiled by: Stephen Hellings

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## MEMBERSHIP CRISIS

As our activities for 2007 get under way, we are faced with a dilemma –

### ***How can we increase our membership?***

As Historical Society members, we often have to overcome certain perceptions held by the general public. Some examples:

*“Historical Society members are all old people!”*

*“The meetings are boring – they just talk about how to raise money or how to preserve old papers!”*

*“You have to know a lot about history or you’ll feel ‘left out’ at meetings.”*

Unfortunately, there may be some truth in some of these statements.

Yes ...we do need more young members (if only to help us old fogies up and down the steps!) but we also need more members of ALL ages to bring different ideas and perspectives to our activities.

Yes...meetings can be boring – a certain amount of business must be transacted at them – but it is difficult to make them more interesting by inviting guest speakers and arranging excursions and activities when there is an attendance of only six or seven members.

With more members come more interesting and worthwhile activities.

***However...It is definitely not true that you have to have a knowledge of history to join a Historical Society.***

***An interest in preserving and learning more about our local heritage is all that’s needed for you to be welcomed as a member.***

***We need more members!! Any suggestions?***

***Elsie***

# Making News 100 Years Ago

## Morwell and Yinnar Gazette

22<sup>nd</sup>. February 1907

### New Telephone Lines



A list of telephone lines appeared in the "Age" on Tuesday last, and it became apparent that Morwell had been passed right by, whether for lack of importance or what other reason we are unable to say, but Warragul, Moe, Traralgon, and other towns along the railway line were connected, a jump being made from Moe to Traralgon, cutting out Morwell.

Recognising the injustice done to this town, and also the benefits accruing from such a telephonic service, Messrs FitzSimons and Brown prepared a petition and had it signed by over 30 residents and business people of the town, and the former gentleman forwarded it to the Deputy Postmaster-General, with a request it be favorably received.

The fact that Morwell is so centrally situated, and thereby likely to extensively participate in the benefits of the telephone, was urged on the officials, and there is every reason to hope that the request will be granted. The petition also asked for the extension of the service to Yinnar, Boolarra, and Mirboo North.

In connection with this service it may be stated that a bureau would be established at the Post Office, and a person could be put on to Melbourne, Bairnsdale, or any other town connected under the condenser system.

A charge is made according to mileage and length of time taken at the instrument, ranging from 4d for 1½ miles to 2s 10d for 190 miles, and so on pro rata. The time allowed for these prices is three minutes, and an additional charge is made for every three minutes, or part thereof, over that period. It would be of inestimable value to business people, auctioneers, etc., as they could explain what they required from a distance with much

greater exactness and speed than by telegram, and would in the end be much cheaper.

Private citizens could ring up friends in neighbouring towns, and exchange greetings, and thereby keep in touch with them. Should a businessman require it extended to his establishment, provision is made that he may do so on payment of a certain sum annually, for which he would be supplied with an instrument, and have it kept in good order.

The following is the petition presented to the Deputy Postmaster General, signed by, as was stated above, by over thirty prominent townsmen:-

“Sir, - We, the undersigned, residents and business people of Morwell, beg to request that the Department join Morwell with the telephonic communication established in the district between the towns of Warragul, Moe, Traralgon, Toongabbie, and Mirboo North. We would point out that the residents of this district would be greatly inconvenienced by being connected with the service, and are likely to largely avail themselves of the privileges of it.”

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**Morwell and Ginnar Gazette**  
**10<sup>th</sup> May 1907**

**TELEPHONIC CONNECTION**

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Mr. Fitz Simons, of Morwell, who has taken an active interest in this matter, has received the following communication from the Acting Postmaster General:-

Sir, -- With reference to previous correspondence on the subject of the application of the residents of Morwell for establishment of telephonic communication with that place, I have the honour to inform you that the desired facility has been provided, and commences on 6<sup>th</sup> May. Public conversation may be conducted between Morwell and Warragul, Moe, Traralgon, Toongabbie and Walhalla. Yours, etc.,

J. B. CROSBIE.  
Acting Deputy Postmaster General

# Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

16<sup>th</sup>. November 1928

## Obituary



### DEATH OF MR S. GILL

General regret will be expressed at the passing of another old and most highly respected former resident of the district, in the person of Mr S. Gill, who crossed the Great Divide on Saturday last, at Burnley.

Deceased was for many years proprietor and editor of the "Morwell Gazette" (now incorporated with the "Advertiser") and was a journalist possessing much energy and ability.

He had a long journalistic career and in the early days was at Jerilderie, at the time that town was "stuck up" by the notorious Kelly Gang. Who among other things robbed the Bank there, and afterwards carried on high jinks.

The Gang took possession of the town and at the point of revolvers locked up everyone they could find, in a big hotel. Mr Gill, who was among the few who escaped, telegraphed full details of the "hold up" to the Melbourne papers, and also communicated with police headquarters.

When Ned Kelly discovered what had been done he got into a towering rage, and threatened to murder Mr Gill forthwith.

Ned went to Mr Gill's home, flourishing a revolver, but fortunately, Mr Gill got information regarding the bushranger's intention and went into hiding elsewhere.

Kelly, after almost frightening the life out of Mrs Gill, went in search of her husband, whom he subsequently chased and fired several shots at.

Mr Gill was struck by a number of pellets, some of which were never extracted. He, however, was not seriously injured before the timely arrival of police caused Kelly to depart in haste.

It was a good many years later that Mr Gill settled in Morwell.

As well as being a capable Pressman he was a good townsman, and was held in very high esteem by all sections of the community.

After leaving Morwell he settled in Ringwood for some years and was connected with the Lilydale paper.

Having reached the ripe old age of four score years he retired from active newspaper work and lived privately at Burnley.

His son, Norman, is also a Pressman. He was some years ago proprietor and editor of the "Gippslander," Mirboo North, and subsequently was in business at Lilydale and Seymour.

He is at present part owner of the "Box Hill Reporter." Another son, Harry, is a State School Inspector.

In addition to his two sons, deceased leaves a widow and two daughters to mourn their loss, and much sympathy is felt for them in their bereavement.



# Morwell and Mirboo Gazette

20<sup>th</sup>. March 1888

## MAGISTERIAL ENQUIRY



A magisterial enquiry was held by S. Vary, Esq., J.P., touching the death of Arthur John Jope, aged nine years and six months, son of Richard Jope, state school teacher, residing at Morwell.

Richard Jope, father of deceased deposed.

On Sunday morning last the child took ill, we thought it was a cold or bilious attack and treated him for such, I did not think it was serious until Wednesday morning, when he complained of a sore throat. I then asked Mr. Sharp to come and see him on Wednesday night as there was no doctor at hand. Mr. Sharp thought it was a case of diphtheria: I telegraphed for the doctor on Thursday morning, but the child died before he arrived.

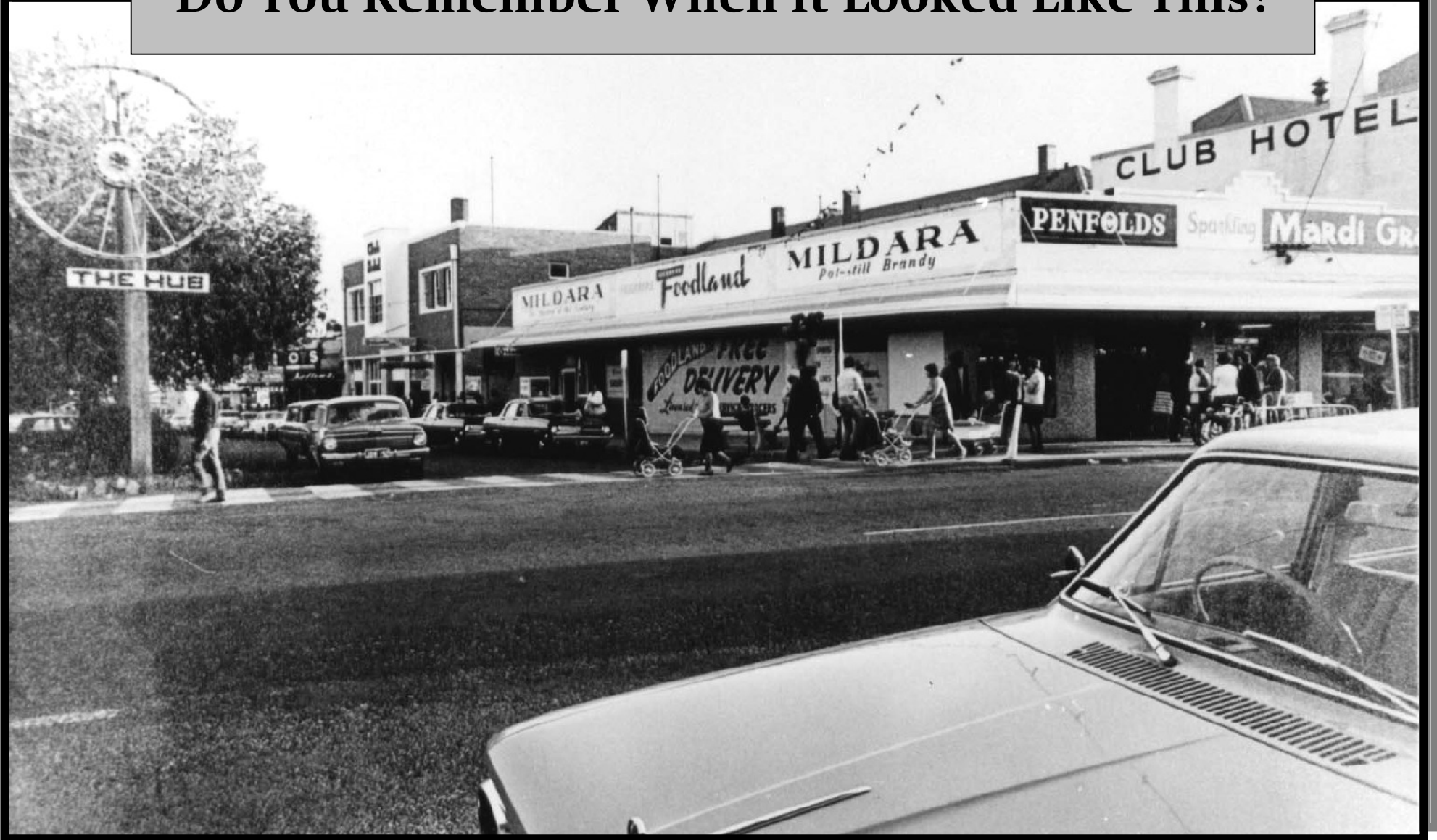
William Sharp deposed. I am a chemist residing at Morwell. On Wednesday evening last, between 6 and 7 p.m., I was requested by Mr. Jope to examine his child; I did so, and found the throat was covered with diphtheria patches, the breathing was difficult, with croupy cough, it was a plain case of diphtheria, and in an advanced state. I saw the child again at 10 p.m. the same evening, and recommended that Dr. Montgomery should be sent for. All the remedies that are used in such cases were actually used in this.

John Park Montgomery deposed. I am a legally qualified medical practitioner residing at Traralgon. I was away from home on 15<sup>th</sup> March last when Mr. Jope telegraphed for me. On my return I immediately started for Morwell, but arrived too late. The child died about half an hour before my arrival. I examined the body and questioned the parents. I am of opinion the child died of diphtheria.

A verdict in accordance with the medical testimony was returned.



# Do You Remember When It Looked Like This?



Commercial Road c. 1970

# Morwell Advertiser and Gazette

5<sup>th</sup> July 1929

## Shocking Tragedy

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### DOUBLE MURDER and SUICIDE

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Quite a sensation was caused in the town when a shocking tragedy, which apparently took place on Saturday night last, was revealed about mid-day on Sunday, when the dead bodies of a man and his wife and child were found in the bedroom of the house occupied by them in Station Street, Morwell.

The victims were -

Alexander James Morris, 41 years

Clarice Elesia Phillicent Morris, 35 years

Thelma Joyce Morris, 2 years

Morris was born in Goulburn Street, Cheltenham, and for the past nine or ten years resided in Morwell. On Thursday, last week, he asked Mr H. Hewitt, a neighbor, with whom he was friendly, if he would lend him his double-barrelled breech-loading gun on following Saturday, and Mr Hewitt agreed to do so.

About 2 p.m. on the Saturday Morris called at Hewitt's place for the gun and at the same time enquired the best cartridges to get for shooting rabbits and appeared quite normal. Mrs Morris afterwards sent a boy to purchase some cartridges. About 3 o'clock Mr Hewitt left home to attend football match, and as he passed by saw Morris chopping wood in his yard. That appears to have been the last he saw of Morris or his wife, and it is evident that he did not go out after rabbits.

When the milkman (Mr Len Davey) called at Morris's on Sunday morning he found the place locked up. The billy - can for the milk was not put out as usual, and he mentioned the matter to Mr Hewitt, but the incident was considered of little consequence as it was thought that Morris and his wife were probably sleeping in. However, about 11 o'clock Hewitt went for his gun, and found the house still locked up, and could get no answer to his knocking at door. He also noticed that the poultry pens had not been opened, and the covering over canary



cage had not been removed. As he thought something may be amiss, he consulted Mr E. L. Vary, J.P., who resides next door, and it was decided to inform the police, Senior- Constable Frowd, accompanied by Messrs Vary and Hewitt, went to the house, and entrance was gained through a window.

The house has five rooms, and in the front bedroom, which faces Station Street, a shocking sight was disclosed. Lying in a double bed in her night dress was the body of Mrs Morris, with her head practically blown off. Beside the bed, in a cot, was the body of the little girl, Thelma Joyce, with head also almost blown away, while lying on the floor at the foot of the cot, was the body of Morris, fully dressed, with the exception of coat and boots, with gunshot wounds in neck and side of face. Beside his body was lying a double-barrelled gun containing two empty cartridges, whilst on the floor near by was an empty cartridge shell. There was a large pool of blood on the floor, and the bed and cot were saturated with blood.

The room, however, was not in disorder, and there was no evidence of any struggle having taken place. An unusual thing, however, appeared to be the fact that a blanket had been hung over the top of blind and window curtains on the inside.

It appeared that Mrs Morris and the child were shot whilst asleep, and that Morris, who had entered the room with his boots off, afterwards replaced one of the cartridges and shot himself, the trigger of gun having been released with a piece of deal that was found beside the gun.

Morris was a returned soldier, and served abroad with the 37<sup>th</sup> Battalion for about three years, being eventually invalided home. He was since in receipt of a pension. For some years past he was employed at the State electricity works at Yallourn, and was held in high esteem by his comrades. A few weeks ago his only son, a boy four years of age, was removed to Kew Cottage, and since then he seemed depressed and low spirited. He also recently underwent an operation for an abscess in his ear and attended the Yallourn Hospital daily for treatment. He was of a quiet, inoffensive disposition, and he and his wife were much attached to each other and to their children.

Their home was comfortably furnished, and the table had been laid ready for breakfast. On the back verandah, neatly stacked, was a quantity of small pieces of firewood that had been cut up by Morris on the Saturday. On the verandah were also three canaries in a cage, and in hanging meat safe a forequarter of lamb, evidently got in for the Sunday's dinner, whilst in the yard a well cared for dog was tied up. In a back yard were about sixty well-bred Black Orpington and White Leghorn fowls and a number of ducks. Everything about the place was nice and tidy, and the landlord states that Morris was an excellent tenant and regularly paid the rent fortnightly in advance.

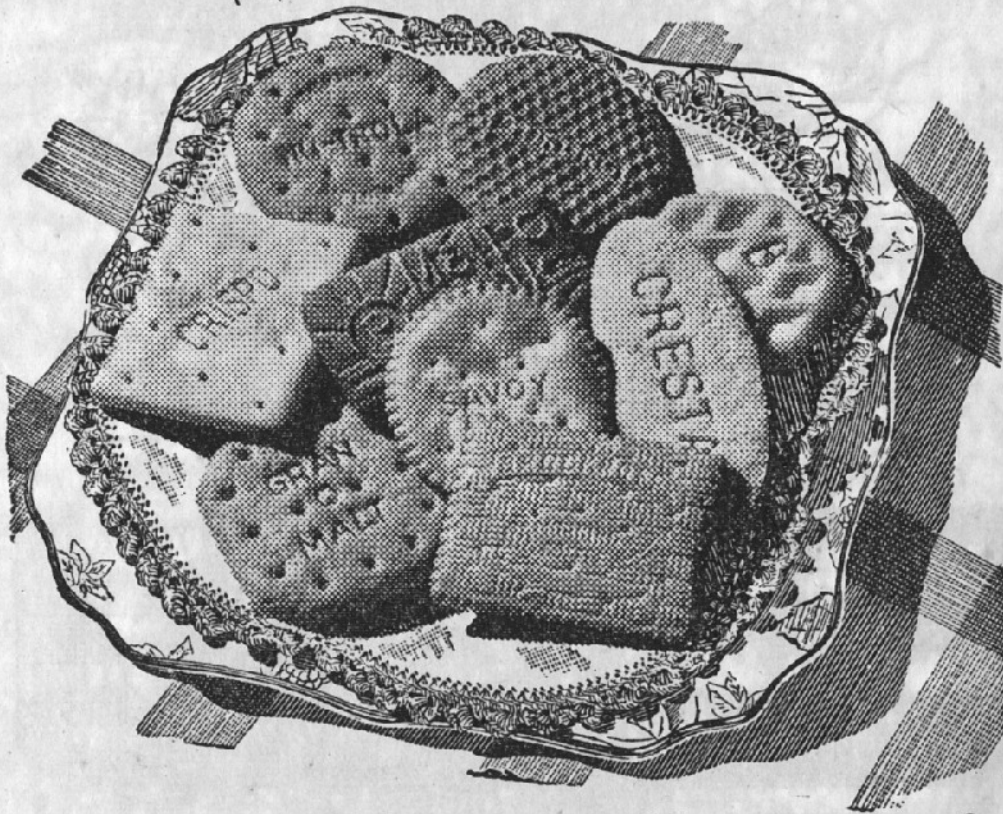
Continued Next Issue

Whatever Happened To....

*Quality you can  
really Taste!*



Here is a selection of delicious "oven-crisp" Brockhoff Biscuits to please everyone. They are unsurpassed in tempting taste and wholesome goodness, so keep plenty of Brockhoff Biscuits in the house.



*Oven-crisp* **BISCUITS** *baked by*  
**BROCKHOFF**



B151-12

# Did You Know That?.....

## • Myer Emporium Ltd.

In **1952** Myer Emporium Ltd. introduced to Morwell shoppers the novel idea of a direct ordering system by “Teleprinter”.

Customers perused catalogues and selected their purchases.

The orders were then transmitted directly to Melbourne and within a few days they were delivered free of charge to the customers’ address.

The delivery service applied to residents of: Morwell, Yallourn, Newborough, Morwell Bridge and Herne’s Oak.

The Myer Emporium Teleprinter service operated from 208 Commercial Road, it shared a portion of the premises of ‘**Clematis Art Florists**’. The teleprinter operator was Miss. **Laxon**. The service began on Monday, **March 31st. 1952.**

Moved to new premises at 22 Commercial Road on Friday **5th. December 1952.**

## • Railway Services.

In **August 1952** the following passenger fares applied: Morwell to Melbourne- First Class: Single 22/3, Return 29/6  
Second Class: Single 17/9, Return 23/8

On Monday, **1st. September 1952** the trial run of a diesel locomotive operating on the Melbourne to Bairnsdale line took place. The locomotive (B60) arrived at Morwell at 10.20 a.m, nearly 30 minutes late!!! The train consisted of eight empty carriages (including a restaurant car) and a guards van.

Monday, **17th. November 1952** saw the implementation of a “two division” timetable on the Gippsland line, the new diesel- electric locomotives hauled the “first division” from Melbourne to Bairnsdale, while the “second division” from Melbourne to Traralgon was hauled by steam locomotive.

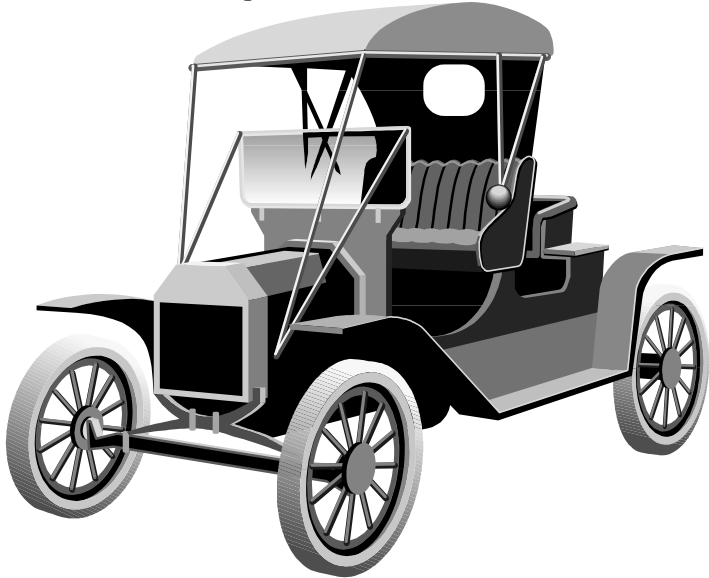
## Next Meeting:

**Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2007.**

(Apologies for wrong date in last issue!)

**7.30 p.m.**

**44 Buckley Street (Next to TAB)**



**Buckley Street or  
Buckl**

The answer to our  
**December** quiz question  
was:

**Hazelwood Ridge School**

**Morwell Historical Society  
Inc.**

**Annual Subscription Rates:**

**Single: \$17.00**

**Family/Double: \$20.00**

**Our Internet Address is:**

**[www.latrobacityonline.com](http://www.latrobacityonline.com)**

*Our sincere thanks to Ben and Mary for  
their continued support and technical  
expertise*

**~~Classens Computers~~**

**Kelleher,**



## Who's Who:

**Edmond Kelleher: (1850-1911)**

**Born in Ireland, arrived in Australia in 1871**

**Hotelier: "Club Hotel" – Commercial Road (retired in  
1896)**

**Appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1888**

**Member of Morwell's first Council in 1892**

**Morwell Shire President: 1895-1896**