

# The Morwell Post

Morwell Historical Society

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Princes Drive and Latrobe Road roundabout - Celebrating 50 years of Rotary



See page 6

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# Morwell Historical Society Directory 2020

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| President:              | Bruce McMaster<br>Phone: 0428 528 464   |
| Vice-President:         | John Willis   |
| Secretary:              | Florence Butcher  |
| Assistant Secretary:    | Peter Gitsham   |
| Treasurer:              | Carolyn Schopp  |
| Committee Members:      | Rosalie Davey<br>Shirley Prosser<br>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.<br>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<br>Single Member - \$25.00<br>Family Membership -Family living at the same address includes children under 18 years old - \$30.00<br><br>Application Forms available on our web site for you to print and send.<br><br>For a print copy of “ <b>The Morwell Post</b> ” - \$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:               | <a href="https://www.facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety">https://www.facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety</a>   |
| Postal Address:         | 12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell 3840<br>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

After many months of being closed we are now open again to the public. Our first **Open Day** was February 3rd. All our open days are from 11 am until 2pm. I would like to see more members help out on open days. Don't be concerned if you do not know where anything is or you cannot answer visitor questions as you can pass them over to more experienced members. Most people come in for a look and we need people to meet and greet them.

**Displays:** Thanks to Chris the two outside walls of our Office have been covered in blue display material the same colour as our display boards and Fay is working on displays to put up. At present the north wall has a sporting club display, eventually the west wall will also have pictorial material attached. Chris has put up the Rotary Club wheel that used to be up in Savige Street pointing to Golden Hill. It is planned to have Rotary Club photos to put up next to the sign.

The Morwell Shire display area has also been renovated. Fay has also been busy putting up displays on the display boards in our front room. One interesting display that she has put up is a wedding photo display along with a veil and wedding dress. The two oldest wedding photos in the display are that of John Koenig and Anne Cameron in 1883 and William Bond and Nellie O'Hara in 1891.



**Toilets** We received a \$1,000 grant from Yallourn Energy and so we have been able to finish having the toilet floor covered with Mipolam Ambiance Ultra by Bruce Paull of Choice Flooring Moe. In layman's language it is a not slip lino that does not have to be polished and it is very hard wearing.

**Thanks** I would also like to sincerely thank Russell Northe MLA for Morwell and his staff for not only printing this newsletter but also our other incidental general printing.

**Bunnings** On the 6<sup>th</sup> February, eight of our members gave up a few hours of their day to sell sausages at Bunnings. I thank our volunteers –Shirley, Elaine, Rosalie, Laurie, Kellie, Orlando, Lin and Fay. We made \$630 plus \$32 donations from 26kg of sausages, 26 loaves of bread and 9 kg of onions. All the money goes towards paying off our building debt. I would also like to thank Brendan from Zio's Pizzeria in George Street for slicing the onions for us.

Thank you Shirley for organising the fund raiser.  
Our next Bunning's BBQ is Sunday March 21st.

Stay safe, Bruce McMaster, President

## MORWELL CBD REVITALISATION

In 2019 the State Government funded \$2 million and the Federal Government funded \$1.75 million dollars to the Latrobe City to revitalise Morwell. For many, many months the entire road and some of footpaths were replaced on Commercial Road (mainly from Hazelwood Road to Tarwin Street) and walking and driving down the street was noisy, dusty and often difficult. We all wondered whether it would ever be finished and what the street would eventually look like.

This photo has been downloaded from the Council's web site - Morwell CBD Revitalisation Project June 30th 2019.

The below photo was taken on a Sunday morning 31 January 2021 when only the Newsagent and Subway were open.



There are 15 parklets and in most parklets there is a bottle tree planted.

The Society was asked to supply History Points to significant sites along Commercial Road as part of the Revitalisation project. These History Points are only accessible by reading the displayed QR Code on your mobile phone at the actual site but will eventually be available on the website at a later date.



Bruce putting up a History Point QR code in the ANZ bank

A lady in Speed Web at 215 Commercial Road putting up a History Point QR code for Legacy Place.



# FUTURE MORWELL REVITALISATION PROJECT LAUNCH

11 March 2021

Tarwin Street Gathering Place

This sign is located at the Hazelwood Road intersection outside the Latrobe City Offices. The other sign is located opposite Tarwin Street Gathering Place at the east of Commercial Road. The sign gives a short history of this part of Commercial Road from the Braiakaulung people to the population in 1910 having grown to 1365.

There are 18 sites along Commercial Road from Hazelwood Road to Tarwin Street. Two are destined for vacant premises and two are waiting for permission from their headquarters offices. We are hoping that the traders are cooperative and aware of the significance of these signs in relation to the valuable history of Morwell.

Photo below: Federal Member for Gippsland, Darren Chester MP opened the nearly \$3.75 million revitalisation of Commercial Road and Tarwin Street, as part of the Future Morwell project. Seen here with the Mayor Sharon Gibson and members of the Future Morwell Committee.

Source: Latrobe City Council Facebook page



This is the History Point for Legacy Place in the window of Speed Web.

## Morwell Rotary Club

### Morwell Rotary Club 1946 meeting at the Masonic Lodge



L-R Back row: Bruce Vary, Perce Kelly

Middle row: Bill Shaw, Roy Payne, Dave Scammell, William Macdermid, Stan Winchester, Bill Firmin,  
Fred Jenkins, Gerry Haugh, Reg Davey, Alf Ronald, Bill Ferguson

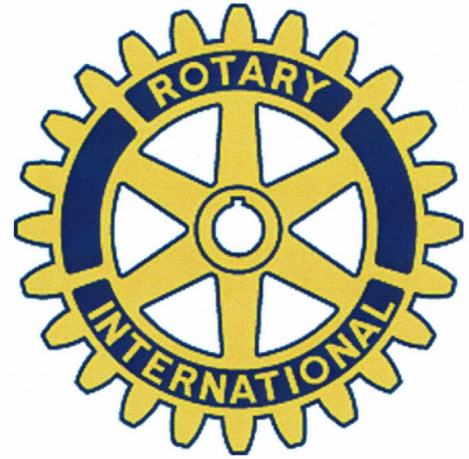
Front row: Jim Bush, John Goyen, Dr Hugh Mitchell, Len Trigg, Jack Lawless, Rev Ray Phillips

Insert: Jim Catterick

Note the rose bush to the right of the photo, maybe one of many.

Rotary Clubs begin when an established club sponsors a new club. In 1945, the Traralgon Rotary Club, which had been in existence for five years, sponsored the Morwell Rotary Club as a Provisional Club until the charter of full membership was issued by Rotary International and presented to the Club. This ceremony was carried out in the Morwell Town Hall on Tuesday March 12th 1946 in the presence of leading Victorian and Tasmanian Rotarians. Altogether the Morwell Club entertained over 200 guests who were welcomed by the Morwell President Mr Len Trigg. President Burgess Watt of Hobart, who held the position of Governor in Morwell's foundation year, presented the Charter to Morwell and the Club now belonged to Rotary International along with 5,650 other clubs scattered throughout the world with a membership of 260,000 from 60 countries. As the members of the Morwell Club came forward to receive the Charter of their admission to membership of a great organised movement, history was made in Morwell.

The purpose of the organisation is to bring together business and professional leaders in order to provide humanitarian service and to advance goodwill and peace around the world. It is a non-political and non-religious organisation that was founded in 1905 by Paul Harris, a Chicago attorney.



Source – *The Morwell Advertiser* Thursday 21 March 1946 p 5

The following are some of the community service activities of the Morwell Rotary Club since 1946

- Planted trees, provided children's play grounds and sporting facilities
- Established Guide and Scout halls
- Welcomed workers from Germany and Italy who were living in local camps
- Took part in the Rotary International Student exchange and arranged for students to spend a year or a term in another country
- Helped build the swimming pool in Mc Donald Street
- Helped the Senior Citizens to form a club in George Street and when Coles developed their supermarket Morwell Rotary then helped them move to Maryvale Crescent
- Also helped Morwell East Senior Citizens with their club rooms
- Built the amphitheatre at Gippsland Institute (Federation) using bluestone from Yallourn
- Provided a rest shelter for travellers on the Princess Highway near Latrobe Road with tables, seats, barbecue and toilet. (Recently Latrobe City have replaced the toilet)
- In 1996 erected the clock on the corner of Princes Highway and Latrobe Road to celebrate 50 years of Rotary in Morwell
- In 1989 provided Morwell Community Health Centre with a bus
- Supported Mitchell House and Heritage Manor
- Kurnai College Scholarships
- Painted the fence around Maryvale Reserve
- In 1965 established the much loved Valstar Traffic School for children
- Provided books and sound equipment in the young adults section of the Morwell Library
- Each year The Rotary Club used to hold a "Bargain Bonanza" sale of used goods
- In the past they ran a very successful Latrobe Valley Festivals
- Gave Christmas Hampers to needy families

Source – our files, and further information was sourced from documents supplied by our member Gloria Auchterlonie. In 1989 Laurie Wilson was President and he invited Gloria Auchterlonie to accept Honorary membership. Gloria was the first women to be accepted into the Rotary Club when President Phil Jones nominated Gloria for full Rotary membership in 1991.

Incidentally in November 1978 Morwell Rotary Club sponsored Hazelwood Rotary Club

## DREADFUL DISASTER AT TRARALGON

Railway Truck Crashes into Motor Car Returning to Yinnar

Five Deaths

Seven Injured

This is an extract from the *Morwell Advertiser* 30 October 1931

Residents throughout the district were greatly shocked and much upset when word came to hand early on Friday morning last, that a dreadful disaster had happened to a party of young people who left Yinnar on Thursday evening to attend a dance at Le Roy, which is some miles to the south of Traralgon.

When the party set out from Yinnar they were a very happy lot, and composed of –

Mr Alex. McFarlane, motor garage proprietor, Yinnar (Driver)

Mr Lindsay Scarlett, motor mechanic, Yinnar, son of Mr and Mrs Thos. Scarlett of East Malvern, but formerly of Yinnar.

Messrs Gordon and Lewis Williams, and their sister Miss Beulah Williams (sons and daughter of Mr and the late Mrs Arthur Williams of Yinnar).

Mr Jack Quigley, son of Mr and Mrs Paddy Quigley, Yinnar.

Mr Frank Bond, son of Mr and Mrs W Bond, Yinnar.

Mr Eric Hopkins, son of Mr and Mrs J Hopkins.

Miss I Laidlaw, employed at the Yinnar Hotel.

Miss Davies, employed at the Yinnar Hotel.

Miss Dorothy Gannon, daughter of Mr and the late Mrs Gannon of Maffra.

Miss May Cook, daughter of Mr and Mrs Cook of Narracan and in the employ of Mrs E L Vary, Morwell.

Mr Jas Keating, Yinnar.

On arrival at Traralgon, Mr Keating got out of the car to attend a dance at Traralgon, whilst the others proceeded on their way to Le Roy, on the understanding that Mr Keating would be picked up at Traralgon on the return journey. After spending a very enjoyable time at Le Roy, the party set out for home about 3.30 am. and all went well until the railway crossing on the west side of the Traralgon Railway Station was reached when a railway truck crashed into the car with tragic results.

At 4:10 am the Fire Bell rang out an alarm, but there was no sign of a fire and at first many thought it a false alarm.

The news quickly spread, however, that a terrible accident had happened on at the level crossing and those who answered the call were shocked to see a 16 ton l truck standing on top of an overturned motor car with people pinned underneath. The truck contained 2 tons of potatoes.

Mr Hutton, Stationmaster, was notified of the accident some little time before this, and promptly sent for assistance.

Subjoined is a list of the killed and injured. KILLED - Mr Lindsay Scarlett, garage assistant, Yinnar. Miss B Williams, Yinnar. Miss H Davies, employed at Yinnar Hotel. Miss I Laidlaw employed at Yinnar Hotel. Miss Dorothy Gannon, Maffra, broken pelvis (died in hospital).

INJURED – Mr Alex McFarlane, garage owner, Yinnar, shock and abrasions. Mr Gordon Williams, Yinnar, shock and abrasion. Mr L Williams, Yinnar, shock and abrasions. Mr Jack Quigley, Yinnar, small bone in left leg broken. Mr Eric Hopkins, Yinnar, abrasions and shock. Mr Frank Bond, Yinnar, abrasions and shock. Miss May Cook, Morwell, shock. Miss Gannon was sent by special train to the Gippsland Hospital after being given first aid locally, and the bodies of the killed taken to the mortuary to await interment. One of the ladies killed had her head smashed in while the others were badly knocked about.

How it happened. From what we can learn, it appears that shunting operations at the railway yards were in progress and a rake of 12 trucks, which had been released on the West side of the crossing came down the incline by gravitation just as the car was going over same, and crashed into it. The impact tore the corner post and a panel of fencing from the fence, and one of the wheels of the truck came to rest on the middle of the car, which was turned upside down, with some of the occupants underneath and others pinned by the legs. The car was thrown over the cattle pit.



Rescue work. The railway men, Firemen, and many willing workers assisted in jacking up the truck to extricate those underneath, while Dr McLean did all he could to assist and took a great risk in getting underneath the truck. Dr Rees was also present and did all he could to assist. It was a long and tedious job as the only way was to lift the truck off the overturned and smashed car and it was 20 minutes to 6 am before the survivors were extricated.

Red light waved. Mr J Best, who was on duty at the time, waved the red light when he saw the car approaching to warn it of the danger but evidently the signal was not seen. Mr Best also waved his arms to try and stop the car when he realised an accident was eminent.

Car lights burn. A remarkable feature of the accident was that one of the front lamps of the car - a Dodge - as well as the tail light kept burning and this constituted a grave menace as there was a danger of the wrecked car catching fire. Fortunately the petrol tank was not damaged.

Other cars cross safely. Several other car loads of persons returning from the dance at Le Roy passed over the crossing safely and without mishap. Messrs Blair and Denmead passed over about a quarter of an hour prior to the accident. The fact, however, that the wrecked car contained no less than 12 persons - it is said that there were five in the front seat - must have interfered with the driver's view, and prevented him from seeing properly ahead. It is said he swerved to try to avoid the accident but it was too late.

Shortly after the smash, Mr Keating arrived on the scene and telephoned as soon as possible to Mr Chandler at Yinnar, and he notified Messrs Vinning, Bennett, Bond, Williams, Quigley, and others of the awful disaster, and it was not long before motor cars were speeding to Traralgon, and all the injured, with the exception of Miss Gannon were brought to Morwell and admitted to St Hillary's private hospital, where they were further treated by Dr Mitchell. Subsequently, all were allowed to go home, excepting Mr Jack Quigley and Mr Frank Bond who, however are now progressing favorably.

The inquest. The Coroner (Mr Bond, P.M.) came to Traralgon by the train from Sale and opened an inquest on Friday night where evidence of identification was taken and an order given for the burial of the dead. The Inquest then adjourned to a date to be fixed.

#### Interment of the Victims

The remains of Miss Beulah Williams (who was to have been married in a few weeks time) was interred in the Hazelwood Cemetery on Saturday.

The remains of Miss Davis were interred in Foster and Mr Scarlett at Brighton on Saturday. Miss Laidlaw's body was conveyed by train to Warrnambool. Miss Gannon succumbed to her injuries on Monday and her remains were interred in the Maffra Cemetery on Tuesday.

The fatality was the talk of the whole district for some days and wide spread sympathy is expressed for the parents and other relatives of all the victims, and it is hoped that other members of the party will make a speedy recovery.

The level crossing For many years this crossing has been considered a most dangerous one and has been subject of conversations between the Traralgon Shire Council, local bodies and the Railway Commissioners. It crosses the main road leading to the Recreation Reserve, Traralgon South, Gormandale, Callignee and other places. As a guard against an accident while trains are in the station yards or shunting operations are in progress a gate should be erected in this place or the crossing closed.

Source - *Morwell Advertiser* 30 October 1931 p 4

- *Heart of the Valley* by Stephen Legg p 188

Source - *Morwell Advertiser* 27 November 1931 p 4 and continued on p 10 if you wish to read the lengthy Magisterial Inquiry and the Coroner's Report that took place at the Traralgon Court

As a result of the accident Collins Street, Traralgon, just east of the station, was closed at the railway line so that no further accidents could occur.

## MORWELL STATE SCHOOL CHOIR

In October the Society put up a shelf to display some of the trophies that we have in our rooms. Among all the trophies we have three of the five school choir trophies that Morwell State School won in 1934-1935 on display.

### **Morwell School Choir Win Competition in the Melbourne Town Hall**

Once again the Morwell School Choir has come to the fore. This time it came to the honours of winning first place in the Rural Section at the annual State School Choral Competition held in Melbourne on Tuesday last. These competitions are held under the auspices of the Victorian State School Choral Choir Association and since their inauguration, marked strides have been made in the advancement of school choral work. The Morwell Choir was number two in order of competition but had to break the ice as choir one did not appear. This of course was rather an ordeal but they acquitted themselves splendidly and sang in their top form. Proof of this lies in the fact that they were several points in front of last year's winning choir. Thanks is due to the Mothers' Club for their assistance in making it possible for the local choir to compete and also to the Rev LWA Benn and Messrs J Elder Berwick, W McRoberts, WS McKenzie and E Hall for making their cars available and drove the choir to the city. Under the arrangement with the management of the Victoria Palace, Melbourne, lunch and tea were partaken there. After lunch the choir had a short practice in the Chapter House, St Paul's Cathedral. Members of the choir are not only to be congratulated upon their excellent performance but special credit is due to their capable conductor, Mr McKenzie, who is mainly responsible for the success achieved.

Source – *Morwell Advertiser*. Thursday 19 July 1934 p.3



The Morwell State School Choir that won the Rural Section in Melbourne Town Hall 1934-35

**Back row** -Stewart Berwick, Bill Davey, Jack Pavit, Bill McRoberts, Melton Harding, Ross Berwick

**Middle row** -Ena Stubbs, Dot Hewat, Peg Stubbs, Mary Minor, Cath Ellis, Jean Klein, Flan Shaw, Hazel Lubeck

**Front row** -Mr Edgar hall (Principal), Shirley Harding, Marion Duncanson, Merle Brinsmead, Marg Limbrae, Chrissy Stubbs, Marj Billingsley, Rita McKay, Mr McKenzie (Choir Master)

## THE PALM TREE

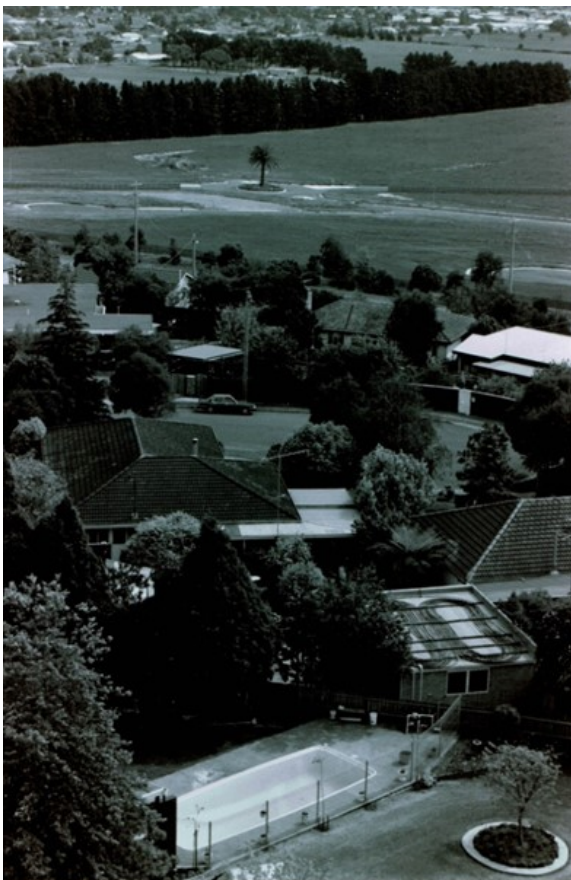
The palm tree in Heritage Manor Estate, now called Heritage Manor Boulevard came from opposite the Hazelwood Cemetery.

The Estate was developed by Sid Payne of Traralgon and some of the names of the streets were inspired by James Herriot's books and television series, "*All Creatures Great and Small*" set in the Yorkshire Dales.

Ashley Avenue, Whitby Avenue, Pickering Avenue, Brampton Avenue, Scarborough Crescent, Sheffield Street and Sowerby Road being some of the towns in Yorkshire County UK.

Skeldale Way comes from the name of Sigfried Farnon and James Herriot's Veterinary Practice which was set in the town of Thirsk. Manor Rise and Heritage Boulevard are Estate names.

The black and white photo was taken in 1991 by Stan Wright from the top of the water tower looking south west with Foster Ave houses in the foreground.



At present, 2021, a further 34 acres, which will contain 350 homes, is being developed by the Sowerby Family and others.

Source – Stockdale and Leggo



Looking west along Heritage Boulevard from Maryvale Road



## OPEN DAYS 2021

Please check the current Covid-19 restrictions before attending.

3rd March || 17th March; AGM || 28th March  
 7th April || 21st April || 25th April  
 5th May || 19th May || 30th May  
 2nd June || 16th June || 27th June  
 7th July || 21st July || 25th July  
 4th August || 18th August || 29th August  
 1st September || 15th September || 26th September  
 6th October || 20th October || 31st October  
 3rd November || 17th November || 28th November

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