

The Morwell Post

Morwell Historical Society

URL: www.morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au

Email: secretary@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety>



"Strzelecki Showtime" Scarf and Badge



See page 12

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Morwell Historical Society Directory 2020

President: Bruce McMaster
Phone: 0428 528 464

Vice-President: John Willis

Secretary: Florence Butcher

Assistant Secretary: Peter Gitsham

Treasurer: Carolyn Schopp

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.

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Postal Address: 12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell 3840
Victoria, Australia

We are taking a long earned rest from managing and monitoring the society and duty roster on Open Days but still continuing to work behind the scenes doing "odd jobs" here and there.
NOTE: Change in membership structure

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

We were just able to have our AGM which was followed by the March meeting when Victoria went into isolation due to the corona virus. With the easing of restrictions we were able to have a committee meeting on 17th June with Peter Gitsham as Assistant Secretary who has taken over from Elaine Andrijczak.

In the four years that Elaine was in this position, she has done an outstanding job not only in taking and recording the minutes for Committee and General Meetings but also Special Meetings. She spent countless hours working with Rob De Souza Daw planning the major event - the Morwell District Boer War Soldiers and Civilians Commemorative Service with the unveiling of the Honour Board at the Morwell RSL and the Graphic Exhibition at the Society's rooms in October 2017 - also our very successful *100 years of Aviation in the Latrobe Valley* display with John Willis. See a list of Elaine's contributions on page 15.

At the AGM, Kellie Bertrand stepped down from being a committee member and Facebook page manager. Her contribution will definitely be missed. Kellie has been extremely valuable and generous with her contributions to the Society - with decision making, as a compere at our events, putting humour into our walking tours of the town and always willing to assist in many areas when needed. Kellie has been a great resource for "contacts" in important places and has had many innovative ideas that have benefited the Society. Thank you Kellie for your contributions.

With a grant from the Latrobe City Council's Community Development Program, Chris Roads, Elaine Andrijczak, Peter Gitsham and Fay Thompson have been updating our 10 display boards by re-covering them with a special velcro-friendly material and adding castors to make them mobile. These light grey display boards will now be a breeze to handle by any of our members as they can be 'pushed' instead of being 'carried'. It would cost approx. \$1,000 each to purchase a display board with these features.

Another member who comes and works when necessary is Peter Gitsham. Peter does an outstanding job at mowing the lawn. Thanks to Chris Roads who gave us his lawn mower and whipper snipper. Also thanks to Chris for carting our large rubbish to the transfer station and to all the members who gave us their unwanted vouchers to drop off the rubbish.

During isolation we have been scanning and recording many photos. We have nearly finished the large framed photos. Our next project is to scan and record Maryvale High School and Kurnai College class photos. If you have any of those photos we would appreciate it if you could loan them to us to be scanned.

Some members may not know that in March 2015 we purchased the Masonic Lodge for \$250,000. As the Society did not have the money, some of the members loaned the money, some for 5 years and the remaining money for 10 years. We have now paid back \$125,000 to some members therefore we still have another \$125,000 to repay.

We are half way there.

The membership fees are now due and payable See page 15 for details.

Keep safe, Bruce McMaster

THANK YOU

- to the **CRRC-Downer Group** at Hazelwood Drive, Morwell, for the donation of several wooden crates - the wood will be used to make shelving at the Society. The factory is assembling the traction equipment needed to power the new trains for the Victorian Government.
- to Peter McCartney of **Boltco**, 541 Princes Drive, Morwell. who has assisted with discounting bolts and screws which are used regularly in maintenance about the building.

St Vincent de Paul Primary School, Morwell East

From the 1950s onward, Catholic schools in Victoria served a proportionally high percentage of the migrant families, especially those coming from non English speaking countries. Consequently, the enrolment at Sacred Heart Primary School in Morwell rose to a maximum of 400 pupils. A second school, St Vincent de Paul, was opened in 1954 when a surplus RAAF building, known as the “Old Tin Shed” from East Sale aerodrome was moved to the corner of Barry Street and Vincent Road. This building became a temporary school and church for the Catholic Community of Morwell East. A Sacred Heart priest used to drive two nuns up each day to Morwell East to teach. One nun taught Prep, 1 and 2 and the other nun taught grades 3 and 4. In the beginning grades 5 and 6 were taught at Sacred Heart Primary School.

In 1955 the present school property between Barry Street and Rowell Street was purchased from the Housing Commission and the building of four brick classrooms and an annex housing the altar and sacristy were started. This building was opened on 3rd February 1957. The “Old Tin Shed” was moved to Sacred Heart school and years later it was moved again to the Sacred Heart Tennis Club. In 1958 two additional classrooms were opened and in the same year the Sisters of St Joseph moved into a newly built convent in Rowell Street.

In 1964 two timber classrooms that fronted on to Barry Street were built by the parishioners and in 1966 they built two more timber classrooms. In 1971 St Vincent’s Parish Church was opened and blessed by Bishop Fox. Next door to the school, in Barry Street, were St Phillips Church of England and some land which St Vincent’s purchased in 1979. In August that year the wooden classrooms were destroyed by fire and new brick classrooms on the site were built and opened on 16th November 1980.

The School Motto “Learn with Love”

The old school bell and 50th Anniversary cake



Source: St Vincent de Paul School, Morwell East 50th Anniversary booklet 3rd February

St Vincent de Paul School Morwell 1965 Grade 4



Back Row L-R: Jeanette Grinpukel, Lisa Zanin, Denise Cox, Pauline Barlow, Sharon Benson, Patricia Muir, Anne McGinn, Beverley Calle, Joan Keighley, Cathy Murphy, Maurene Fogarty,?, Margaret Delaney, Rosalba Forte

Second Back Row L-R: John Kelly, Carmelio Galea, Patrick Ryan, Kevin Rhodes, Raymond Zammit, Ronald Dawes, Phillip Harrington, Robert Poulson, Stephen Trotter, Luke Adrichman, Damien Morrissey, Charlie Cauchi, Ian Malone, Herman Schutte,?

Middle Row L-R: Sharon Calle, Kerrie Bartlett, Joanna Nijboer, Dianne Ireland, Tony Bastin, Warren Wicks, Wolfgang Pelz, Alphonse Govers, John Cain, John Poulter, Linda Thompson, Louise Minneboo, Anne-Marie Miles, Dianne Wood

Third Front Row L-R: Christine Sleswick, Clare O'Brien, Michelle O'Neil, Rosemary McCluskey Tony Barr, Kerry Renehan, Anne Trotter, Anna Govers, Karen Fleming

Second Front Row L-R: Manny De Bono, Freddy Chircop, David Manson, Paul Barr, John Sedunary

Front Row L-R: Mary Pirota, Angela White, Margaret Galea, Helen Carrodus, Loretta Joyce, Kaye Hotten, Anna Horbach, Mary Leslie, Louise Gilmore

Absent: Althea Teuma, Rosemary Goodall

Teacher: Sister Gerardine (Now Sister Helen Barnes)

Total: 69 pupils

Thank you to Maureen Marsiglio (nee Fogarty) for giving us the photo and names

Around the Churches

Morwell Advertiser (Morwell, Vic. : 1888 - 1954), Thursday 26 February 1953, page 12

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

Arrangements are now being made for the official opening of the new Church Hall in Barry Street, Morwell East, at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday, 28th March. The building will consist of a main hall with a screened off sanctuary, a kindergarden room and a meeting room plus a kitchen.

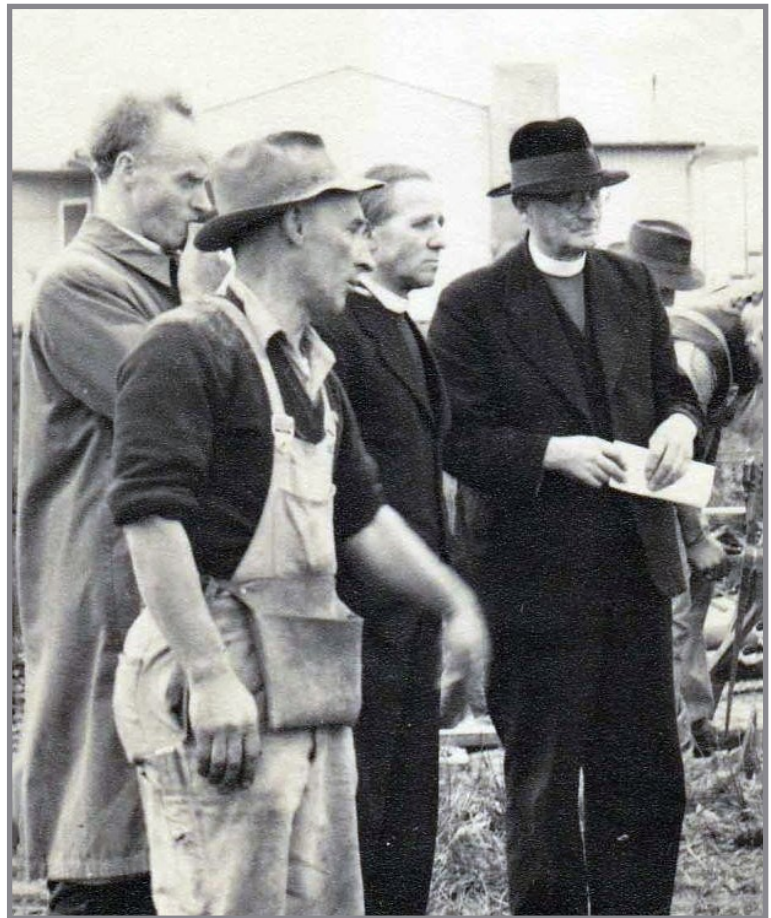
Church services, Sunday School and the meetings of the various activities associated with parish life will be conducted in the building, which will be known as "St. Phillip's on the Hill."

A Youth Tea will be held in the Community Hall at 5.30 p.m. on Sunday, and all young people are invited. The Rev. R. Elliott will be the guest speaker.

St. Mary's Ladies' Guild will conduct a Market Stall tomorrow and would appreciate donations of suitable goods which may be left at the stall.

The Gilbert Memorial Pulpit will be dedicated by the Bishop at the evening service on Sunday, 15th March.

The St. Mary's Tennis Club will hold its monthly meeting on Monday next, at 8 p.m. and the Vestry meeting will be held on Tuesday at 7.30 p.m.



Builder Stan Winchester in discussion about the St Phillips Church progress with Bishop Blackwood & Rev. Burgess??

Source: Betty Woolley and S.G. Winchester's work record books



Interior of St Phillips Sanctuary

Exterior of St Phillips Church from the Sanctuary end of the church



Opening Ceremony for St Phillips Church on the 28th March 1953
From left - the Ministers present - seated in the Sanctuary ? & Rev. L. W. A. Benn, standing ?, then Bishop Blackwood and extreme right Cannon Phillips.

COPY OF LETTER SENT
in RESPONSE TO REQUEST (TO WRITE A
BOOK ON CHURCHES IN GIPPSLAND)

Mr.T.Gibson,
P.O.Box 637,
Bairnsdale. 3875.

59 Kipling Ave,
Mooroolbark.3138.
5.5.1996.

Dear Timothy,

Please find enclosed various items in regard to St Phillips On The Hill, Anglican Church, Barry Street Morwell, I hope it is the sort of information you want?

My father Stan Winchester was the builder, of this church, and so began our association with St Phillips. As a family we belonged to St Marys Anglican Church in Morwell, and it was not until I was attending the Young Anglican Fellowship, that St Phillips became an integral part of my life.

I do remember a little about the church being built, but was only a young child at the time, the photograph of my father talking to Bishop Blackwood, has an amusing story to it. Apparently the Bishop had an idea to change some aspect of the construction, and it was hard to dissuade him from the notion. In my father's frustration explaining it was not possible, he is alleged to be saying in that photo, "You cannot B... well do that." The Bishop took the hint and left things as they were.

The men employed by my father during the building were Dave Medew, Col Howes, George Williams, Alf Hinchcliffe, and Ike ?. Ken Medew did the plumbing work, Jack Walsh did Joinery work, door frames etc, J.Jeffreys supplied sand to mix with cement. This information comes from my fathers book work recording the building, unfortunately the page giving final costs is lost, but I do have some wage figures. The hall took several months to complete, church folk also helped with the work, which because of their own employment, would have meant some limitations on how quickly progress was made. From 9.6.1951 to 28.11.1951 wages paid for four men, were £254.00.00. (\$508.00) From 1.12.1951 22.1.1952 wages for four men, were £265.10.00. (\$531.00) From 27.1.1952 to 17.3.1952 wages for four men, were £388.10.00. (\$777.00) From 18.3.1952 to 16.4.1952 wages for seven men, were £397.10.00. (\$795.00) Material costs from 9.6.1951 to 7.4.1952 were £1350.7.00. (\$2701.40)

The photographs of the building were taken at the time of the opening, and some of the congregation can be recognised, you may be able to put names to clergy not known to me. Archdeacon Leslie William Alfred Benn, who is in the Photo, and had been vicar at St Marys in earlier years, was my mothers brother.

It is a pity that the Bishops prediction of a Cathedral did not come about, as is reported in the newspaper article.

As I have mentioned, as a teenager I belonged to St Mary's Y.A.F., our group did attend gatherings a few times, at St Phillips with their group, until the time came that our members had to transfer to be with them permanently. We had no one to lead us at St Mary's, Reverend Danny Teed was unable to continue with us. Reverend Brian Kyme had been our leader earlier on, and still conducted St Phillips Y.A.F, so we joined forces, and had many good times up on the "Hill".

The Reverend Singleton replaced Brian Kyme, and he continued leading us. I left at 18 years of age, to work in Melbourne, having enjoyed good fellowship on each Friday evening, trips to Mt Baw Baw in the snow season, socials and speakers, visits to Yallourn Y.A.F. etc. Each Friday we had Compline before we left to go home, and it was a special end to the week for me.

Some of the members at different times, were Victor and Michael Dragon, Adrian and Jan Milner, David Swainsbury, Geoff Padfield, Willemina and Michael Stewart, Kieth, Rodney and Ian Walker, Gilbert Julin, David North, Janice Bartlett, Carol Hedley, Bruce Connan, Janet Healy, Lynne and Cheryl Offord, Irene Jegarow, Rosalie Deering, Beth Townsend, Ruth Richards, Susan Pearce, Jan Lancaster, Keith Singleton, Graham Woolley, Roger Dean, Michael Dragon, Ollie McLeish, Wayne Knibbs, Peter Rich. Not all were Anglicans, just young people having a good time together.

My husband Graham Woolley, and I struck up a friendship when we were both Seventeen, through Y.A.F. and eventually married 5 years later at St Mary's. Graham was a server at St Phillips and would have been about 16 years in the Confirmation Photo, and his parents Joan and Jim Woolley, had been associated with the church since they came to Morwell in 1951.

Names of people I recall being strongly associated with St Phillips, were John and Rene Matthews, (who I think had been secretary to the Bishop or his assistant, at one time) Ray and Eileen? Pearce. John Matthews was a lay reader and also conducted the C.E.B.S, which Graham had belonged to, and has memories of a camp with them one Easter at Wilsons Promontory. Mr Walker, father of Keith, Rodney, and Ian, was the cook for the camp.

The ministers who would have served St Phillips were Rev. Ray Phillips, Rev. Ken Raaf, Rev. Prosper Pickburn, Rev. Arnold Weston, Rev. James Knife, Rev. Fred Morrie, Rev. Brian Kyme, Rev. Daniel Teed, Rev. Frank Lowe, Rev. Singleton, and that would be as many as I can think of. Graham and I have lived in the Metropolitan area since 1971, and so we are not as in touch with later information.

Midnight Eucharist at Christmas was a highlight of the year, there was something special about that service, and the good will everyone showed each other.

A Housing Commission home opposite the church was the vicarage, and before St Phillips had a minister needing to use it, Ken and Nancy (Deering) James lived there for a short time.

I do hope you may find some of this information of use, and I look forward to publication of your efforts. I have copies of these photographs, so please keep those enclosed for the archives. God Bless.

Yours faithfully

Mrs. Betty Woolley.

OPENED 28th MARCH 1953
AT 2.30 P.M.

"St. Philip's-on-Hill" Opened.

Making History in Latrobe Valley
—Bishop Blackwood.

THE new Church of England St. Philip's-on-the-Hill situated in Barry St., near Vincent Rd., Morwell East, was dedicated and opened on Saturday afternoon by the Bishop of Gippsland, Rt. Rev. D. B. Blackwood, M.A., Th.D., M.C., V.D., in the presence of a gathering of 200 people.

This new church, the forerunner of the many to be erected in the Housing Commission Estate, has been planned with vision. The main hall 45ft. x 25ft., primarily designed for services (with a sanctuary 18 ft. x 12 ft.), may be curtained off to allow of its use as a social centre.

Provision has also been made for two other meeting rooms, 25ft x 20ft. and 20ft. x 20ft., both provided with serveryes from a modern kitchen. An entrance porch and passageway gives ready access to all parts of the building.

Economical Construction

The structure, of a substantial nature in weather-board with tile roof, was designed by Mr. S. P. Ashton, of Maffra, and built by Mr. S. G. Winchester, of Morwell. The faithful discharge of their obligations by both was the subject of warm commendation by speakers, who ventured the opinion that the whole building project had been handled on a most economical basis, and substantial savings as against normal building practice, had been made.

The church is sited on a reservation of approximately two acres, purchased from the Housing Commission at a cost of £2,600, including street construction on its frontages. The building cost approximately £5,000, which sum represents the Church's present indebtedness on the whole venture.

Following the religious ceremonies connected with the dedication of the church hall, the sanctuary and font, the Bishop, introduced by Canon R. W. G. Phillips, referred to the recent death of Queen Mary and said that the hearts of all loyal British people, in association with other nations, would grieve for a great and good woman, gone to be reunited with her loved ones.

"Our hearts are also touched with sympathy for those who suffered in the recent tragedy at the Yallogrn Briquette Factory, when one of our citizens

had been called Home, and others were still being treated in hospital.

Advocates Illuminated Cross

In both the happenings, said the Bishop, something of the common victory of the Cross of Christ could be seen. Such a cross illuminated at night would carry from the hill a message of faith over the miles of country from where it would be seen. A church with the same name in Sydney dominated the south entrance to the Harbor Bridge.

Cathedral Will Rise on This Hill

"History is being made in Morwell today, and with the eyes of faith I can see a great cathedral rising on this hill in 50 years' time," said His Lordship.

Comparative Costs

Dealing with more mundane things, Bishop Blackwood compared the original cost of St. Mary's (£330) with £5,000 for St. Philip's. He praised the untiring energy of Canon Phillips, who had done so much for the Church at Morwell. The Community Hall had been bought and paid for, and now the Church Extension Fund was loaning Morwell £2,000, free of interest, towards St. Philip's. The balance of the money required (£3,000) had been provided through a bank.

Scope For Youth Teaching

He pointed out that the development at Morwell East would provide problems for the Churches, but all denominations appeared to be on the job.

The building would provide a means whereby youth would be taught Christian ideals.

"They are the citizens of tomorrow and the future of Gippsland is in their hands. This is the only St. Philip's in the diocese and it is fitting that it should be at Morwell, which is the centre of the Latrobe Valley," the Bishop concluded.

Social Gathering

At the conclusion of the services in a social atmosphere the Bishop presented to Canon

Phillips the first religious picture for hanging in the hall.

Thanking His Lordship, on behalf of the congregation, Canon Phillips said he did not propose to make any appeal because he had faith in the people contributing in due course to the liquidation of the debt, and he was confident they would not fail.

Apologies had been received, he said, from Mr. G. Brown, M.P. and Mr. G. Bowen, M.P., also Sir Herbert Hyland, M.L.A. and Mr. W. O. Fulton, M.L.C.

He thanked the architect and the builder, the many people who presented articles of furnishings or had helped in other ways, particularly the very active Women's Guild recently formed.

Recalling his experiences while rector at Morwell from 1928-35, Archdeacon L. W. Benn, said that the progress of the Church at Morwell seemed to him to fall into three stages—(1) from 1877 to 1930, in this period St. Mary's was built, (2) 1930-1952 when land was purchased on Princes Highway and the Community Hall erected, and (3) opening with the extension of activities to Morwell East, and the building of St. Philip's.

For the laity, Mr. T. G. Littleton expressed the view that the church had now provided a hall where the spirit of love could be built up within the community, and where people, getting to know one another better, would find the finer things of social life in the friendships made. He congratulated Canon Phillips and his people on the substantial progress made in providing a building which must inevitably have a tremendous influence on the social life of Morwell East.

Congratulations from sister Morwell Protestant Churches were conveyed by Rev. R. Hunt. He stressed the feeling of friendly co-operation within the churches which he said was in no sense competitive. He congratulated Canon Phillips on the size of his overdraft and said it took courage to incur a debt of £5,000. He hoped that some day the Bishop's prophecy of a future cathedral would be realised.

Speaking for the councillors and citizens of the Shire of Morwell, the shire president, Cr. Alan Hall, said there had

always been the closest co-operation between the churches and the Council. He believed that the churches, the Shire Council and the people, one and all, were making history in the Morwell area, which was facing into a very bright future.

Tim Tams - Australia's Favourite Biscuit

The first Arnott's bakery opened in 1865 and was located in Newcastle, NSW. Today Arnott's have bakeries in Sydney, Adelaide and Brisbane. The Tim Tam biscuit was created by Ian Norris who was the director of food technology at Arnott's.

During 1958 he took a world trip looking for inspiration for new products. While in Britain he found the *Penguin* biscuit and decided to "make a better one". Ross Arnott had a plan for the new biscuit but he needed a name to call them.

In 1958 he had attended a Kentucky Derby in Louisville, Kentucky and Tim Tam was the winning horse. The first Tim Tam went on the market in 1964. Tim Tams are produced at the Huntingwood Bakery in Western Sydney.

Each minute the production line turns out 3,000 Tim Tams and uses 20 tons of biscuit cream filling and 27 tons of chocolate coating each work day. The biscuit dough containing sugar, flour, colours and flavours is mixed for 20 minutes. The biscuits are then cut to 1mm thick and 11 holes are punched into them. They then go into the gas ovens and are baked for 90 minutes. When they are removed from the oven they are cooled by freezing air before they are flipped and two biscuits are filled with a light chocolate cream. These biscuits are dunked in chocolate and cooled again.



Tim Tam:1958 Kentucky Derby winner
Jockey: Ismael Valenzuela



Arnott's history is Australian history: <https://www.arnotts.com/our-story>

Garage Sale held on Saturday, 29th February 2020

A very successful Garage Sale was held in the Society's rooms on Saturday, 29th February commencing early at 8am with a continued interest from visitors until approx. 3.30pm.

Chris Roads reported that \$1,400 was raised with the funds being allocated towards paying off the Building Loan. Chris thanked the helpers on the day - Fay Thompson, Bruce McMaster, John Willis, David McInnes, Peter Gitsham, Shirley Prosser, Elaine Andrijczak, Lin Starke and Lesley Scanlon.

Most of the remaining items were donated to Lifeline in Morwell with some items stored for a future Garage Sale as due to the success of the day it is intended to have another one next year.

Congratulations to Chris Roads and Fay Thompson for their major work in organizing the Garage Sale and to David McInnes for organizing the BBQ on the day.

Thank you to everyone who donated items for sale on the day



Ray Beebe of Churchill was recently awarded the Order of Australia Medal recognizing his contribution to the community with his service to youth through Scouting Victoria and by volunteering at Maryvale Probus and Hazelwood Rotary clubs.

Since he joined as an 11-year-old at 15th Caulfield Scouts, Ray has participated in the scouts in many roles. Over the years Ray has been recognised with top scouting awards including a Silver Emu, a Silver Acorn, a Medal of Merit for Outstanding Service, and a National President's Award for Eminent Achievement and Meritorious Service.

Ray now has a reduced involvement with the Scouts but is still involved with Maryvale Probus and Hazelwood Rotary Club.

Ray is a member of our Historical Society and we congratulate him on his well-deserved Award.

Ray has said one of his proudest achievements was establishing the Strzelecki Showtime Revue in 1969 which is still running today.

Source: Latrobe Valley Express June 8 2020

STRZELECKI SHOWTIME – the Starting Story

In 1959, Melbourne Gang Show had offered to 1st Yallourn Group to stage a show in Yallourn, but no records exist that it occurred.

Ray Beebe had been in 15th Caulfield since 11 years of age. His Group Leader was a big influence in his life and was disparaging of Gang Shows as “not really Scouting” so Ray had never been to see one. Working in Yallourn from 1964, Ray was ASL 1st Yallourn but effectively ran the Troop as the Scout Leader was ill for much of the year. He became friends with Rex Masters, who ran the Newsagency in Yallourn.

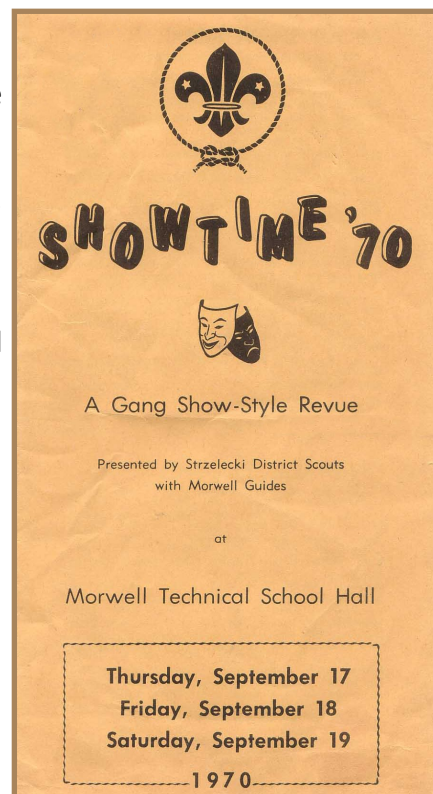
During that year, men were needed for the cast of *Naughty Marietta*, the second show of the Latrobe Light Opera Society (now the Latrobe Theatre Company) and Ray got a phone call from his boss’ wife, Joan Gregory, its lead soprano. Ray enjoyed the stage experience: Keith Taylor was also in the cast (Keith much later was Keith “Fingers’ Taylor and the Showtime pianist).

Ray also saw *Casper’s Capers* staged at the Yallourn Theatre with Rex and 1st Newborough playing the lead part in running it.

Back in Caulfield in 1965-66, Ray was in the cast of Caulfield Showtime, produced by Graham Hall, Caulfield DSL and a Melbourne Gang Show stalwart, whose brother was in Ray’s Troop. Ray also helped David Jefferson with Melbourne Gang Show PR.

Ray moved to the Valley permanently in 1966 to become DSM Strzelecki and also SM 3rd Morwell. Traralgon Groups had just separated to form Traralgon District and staged *Scoutabout* in 1967, in the old Town Hall. Gordon Row of 3rd Traralgon is a name that comes to mind.

Ray thought no more about Gang Show until he took the Patrol Leaders down to see the Melbourne Gang Show in 1969. They talked about having a show in our District – and at interval mentioned this to Peter Hart, then MGS Production Secretary. At the end of the show, he was waiting in the foyer to give us a letter offering to lead a version of the 1969 show in Morwell! All we needed was a pianist and 50 people for cast supporting roles, as the MGS people would take all the lead parts.



We decided to accept, and chose to call it *"Showtime"* because the *"Gang Show"* term was tightly reserved for MGS alone (although not in other States). We chose a gold scarf, to be distinct from the red of Gang Show and the turquoise of Camberwell Showtime.

With Edna Swindon (then DCM), we called for volunteers, and collected the LP records from Bob Barrow, who each year recorded and produced a double LP set of Melbourne Gang Show. He was a Caulfield Scouter, and at that time was working at Brighton Grammar School camp in central Gippsland. So, the LPs had to be collected at the Bunyip greengrocer near his School's camp! Our initial pianist offered to play for rehearsals, but as we started off, he suddenly stopped, and said that he could only play by himself and was unable to play in front of others! We tried to make do with the records – not very well. Disaster faced us!

Our then District Commissioner, Cliff Atkinson, found Stephanie Rickard, who ran the Yamaha organ shop in Morwell. She was very talented, and could pick up the tunes from Ray's singing. We changed the words of *"Touch of Silver"* from *"scarlet"*; *"London GS boy"* to *"golden"*; *"Strz'lecki Showtime gang"*.

The weekend of the show arrived. The Melbourne team dished out costumes, set up lighting, sound etc. in the old Morwell Town Hall. In the afternoon, we were led through the show, as we were only chorus people.



The show went well – so well that Alan Murray, SM 2nd Morwell, and Ray talked about running our very own show in 1970. "I will if you will" was our deal, so he became Producer and Ray the Director. Alan, Stephanie and Ray are in the photo left.

The District Executive had to approve money, and take the risk, but the Chair, George Bates, said that he felt that a one-off show was OK, but another???"Anyway, you need to draw up a budget". So that was done, we got the OK, and we started off on our own. We borrowed costumes and some props from Gang Show and Camberwell Showtime. We were to be the first show in the new Morwell Technical School Hall, and hoped that the

curtains would arrive in time. The Principal was also anxious about the floor being scratched.



This time the cast numbered over 100: 10-year old Cubs, Scouts, Seniors, Rovers, Leaders and some Morwell Guides – after the Guide Commissioner gave her permission (this was well before the time when girls could join Scouting).

The Stage Manager we had in 1969 was not available in 1970, so Ray asked Norm Bailey, who did it for over 35 years. One of the Scouters in the cast came to me and said that he was thinking of dropping out – as there were too many adults in it! There were only four, and he stayed in. Just as well, because in 1971, he and another Scouter were a scream in togas in a sequence of tabs sketches. The highlight for me was meeting Barbara, an ACM from Yinnar who came to help with the typing. We were later married.

We had to get the piano from the 2nd Morwell Hall and it was heaved on to Alan's trailer! Pianos are heavy beasts!

The first night for the 1970 show came – and there was George Bates, sitting in the middle of a small crowd, with 15 minutes to go! Then, the people streamed in, to make an audience of 300. At the interval, George came backstage, grinning, and told me that he had been quite wrong and that the show was worth having after all. Ray says that he had learnt two major lessons from George to apply in life in general and has never forgotten them.

In 1971, we used the slogan “ It’s finger clicking good”, inspired by the opening of KFC in Morwell. Another publicity idea was to make up a slide that could be projected free at the Yallourn cinema. We made one by handwriting on a piece of clear vinyl cut from an overhead projector sheet.

The first item was the “Old Fashioned Opening” and it required Ray as an old crusty Commissioner type to jump out of the audience and rush up calling out “stop, stop” whereupon the half-stage curtains opened up to reveal couples dancing gracefully to waltz music! An empty seat had to be kept so that he could sneak to it in the dark after the start of the show.

Strzelecki Showtime has gone on and on – and soon became independent of Gang Show assistance. It is little known that Rex Masters got much help from Melbourne Gang Show resources. Many youth and adults were involved. Later Directors were Adrian Adams, May Sennett, Reg Kemp with so many others have been involved in backstage and stage roles.

Initially, material written by Ralph Reader was the basis, but that became no longer free. Ken Bayly of MGS also wrote many of the musicals. Increasingly, much of the material was written by our people, initially Barry Lawrence and Chris Beamish, who grew up in the show from cast as Scouts, and later, when they had moved on, a team of others. The show is now completely written by the team and has involved hundreds of young and older people over the years – much to their benefit. Long may it continue!

The term “Producer” is now used for the role we called “Director” initially, and the job has been capably filled by Fiona Flanigan for years. In the early years, Ray was involved in managing and also on stage, and after a gap of several years was Treasurer from 2005 up to 2019.



PRODUCER of the Melbourne “Gangsters”, Mr Ken Bayley, and his crew were in Morwell this week for rehearsals of Strzelecki Showtime. Showtime is a bright, fast moving variety production presented by the Boy Scouts Association to be staged at the Town Hall on August 16. About 60 local boys assisted by 50 Melbourne Gangsters will give the public a real family night’s entertainment.

The Gangsters are a group of scouts and scouters from Melbourne who tour Victoria staging gang shows or assisting districts to produce shows of their own.

● Pictured at rehearsals are musical director, Mrs Stephanie Rickard, producer, Ray Beebe, Melbourne producer, Ken Bayley and his assistants, Alan Murray, Eric Carew and Graeme Hall.

“THE GANG’S IN TOWN”
publicising the first show
1969 Unknown Newspaper



Ray in “The Mikado”



Right: Jenny Kellaway and Ray in a tabs sketch

Elaine Andrijczak - Society Volunteer Profile

In March 2016 Elaine took on the role of Assistant Secretary/Minute Secretary and stepped down at the Annual General Meeting this year.

Over this period, Elaine, with assistance from Kellie Bertrand, submitted 13 grant applications with 8 applications being successful.

A great deal of work was involved in seeking quotes and completing each application, arranging delivery of the projects with other members and submitting subsequent Acquittal Forms on completion of each project.

Major grants from the Latrobe Valley Authority included \$40,146 towards the re-roofing of the building and the painting of the front room – our “Exhibition Space”. The other grant was \$12,538 towards the installation of 4 Daikin Split System units for heating and upgrade of the Switchboard Panel. Other grants totalling \$14,481 were received – two from Latrobe City Council, another grant from the Latrobe Valley Authority and grants from the Public Record Office of Victoria, Energy Australia and Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

Elaine has been involved in organizing:

- Morwell High School 60 Year Diamond Reunion in November 2016
- Morwell District Boer War Commemorative Service/Unveiling of Honour Board and the Graphic Exhibition in October 2017
- Launch of the publication *Morwell District Boer War Soldiers and Civilians* in May 2019
- *Celebrating 100 years of Aviation in the Latrobe Valley* in September 2019
- L M Ericsson Reunion in February 2020

In 2017 Elaine prepared an 18 page Business Plan for the Society which was adopted and which at this time needs to be reviewed.

In 2018 and 2019 Elaine and Shirley Prosser spent many hours promoting a sponsorship program to connect with local businesses to become Corporate Sponsors and Business Supporters of the Society. This resulted, with support from Bruce McMaster, Kellie Bertrand and John Willis, in \$3,100 in 2018 and \$3,350 in 2019 being received and allocated towards paying off the Society’s outstanding short term loans.

Elaine is taking some “Time-out” to do personal family history, catch up with family, some sewing, gardening and other personal activities.

Thank you Elaine for your time and expertise.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES ARE NOW DUE

Annual Membership Fees are due on 1st July 2020. Could you please complete a **Renewal of Membership Form** and forward with your payment. This form is online at our website under ‘Membership’.

<http://www.morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au/documents/memberrenew2020.pdf>

Post or email to: secretary@morwellhistoricalsociety.com.au

Note that on the website, Digital Forms are now available where you have the ability to fill out and sign your **Renewal of Membership Form** online and send to us by email – no paper and no posting!

All Renewals to be accompanied by a form

These forms are important as it gives Shirley the opportunity to make sure all your information is still correct and we can ensure you receive all our information.



OPEN DAYS 2020

We are closed until further notice.

We will monitor the health professional and government advice and open as soon as we can.

Please deliver me to:

If not delivered please return to 12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell 3840

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