

MORWELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Vol 15 No 3

May 1998

Sec/Editor: E. McMaster – Ph.51341149

Welcome to the May Newsletter

Office Bearers 1998-99

At the Annual General Meeting of the Society, held in March, the following were elected:

President: Stephen Hellings **Committee:** Leonie Pryde; Cath McRoberts

Vice Pres: Audrey Conrow Joyce Cleary; Jess Cafiso

Secretary: Elsie McMaster

Treasurer: Dot Bartlett

Acquisitions Committee:

Curator: Bruce McMaster **Chairperson:** Joyce Cleary

Members: Stephen Hellings, Claire Wood.

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED THAT ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NOW DUE - \$10 SINGLE MEMBERSHIP, \$12.50 COUPLE OR FAMILY

Thank You, Eric! 

At our April meeting, a plaque was presented to long-time member **Eric Lubcke** in recognition and appreciation of his outstanding service and commitment to Morwell Historical Society. Eric is a foundation member of the Society and has served as President, Vice President and on numerous committees. Our excellent photographic collection is due in large part to Eric's efforts, both in finding the photos and in copying them and recording information about them. He has also been responsible for acquiring much of our furniture, display materials, filing cabinets etc and, as Archivist, he has presented a number of historical displays for various local organisations. And, as one member remarked, he did all this in his 'spare' time! Thank you, Eric – we really appreciate your dedication to preserving the history of the Morwell area!

Visitors to the Information Centre

Since the Information Centre has been open during the week, quite a few people have been dropping in to see what is on display. We recently had a visit from Mr and Mrs Max Warren. Mr Warren is a grandson of George Dayble, the blacksmith whose forge stood on the site of the present Morwell Post Office. Mr Warren was able to obtain some more information on his grandfather and he has given us a copy of a portrait of George Dayble and also a copy of the Dayble family tree.

Another interesting visitor was Mr. Ted Carr, who was foreman of the builders who erected the Morwell Town Hall in 1937. He also donated some photographs of the stages in the construction of the Town Hall.

*****Thanks to Morwell Art and Framing for donating a quantity of picture wire to assist in hanging our collection of framed photos & certificates***

NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY MAY 19 – 7.30 PM - MORWELL TOWN HALL

COMING EVENTS

Hazelwood Cemetery Walk – Sunday May 24:

Hazelwood Cemetery is a microcosm of the history of Morwell and surrounding districts. It is the last resting place of many of our pioneers and it reflects our multicultural heritage. Its headstones tell many stories – of epidemics, of difficulties and dangers, of tragedies, of lives lived fully and with gusto.

Meet at the Commemorative Gates (Brodrigg Rd) at 2pm.

For those who have difficulty walking, cars can be driven through the cemetery.

Traralgon Historical Society is planning excursions to **Coal Creek on 14 Jun** and to **Shady Creek on October 11**. Further details can be had from Mrs Valma Plant on 51742096.

A new book – *Jericho On the Jordan – A Gippsland Goldfield History* by local author and historian **Gaye Rogers**, will be launched at the end of May or the beginning of June at Gippsland Heritage Park, (Old Gippsdown). Watch the 'Express' for details of the date and time.

The 1998 Gippsland History Conference will be held in Sale on **Saturday May 23**, in conjunction with the Exhibition *Victorian Buildings and Builders - Gippsland* which is currently on display in the Gippsland Art Gallery, Sale. The conference will be held in the **Wellington Shire Offices, Foster St (Princes Hwy) Sale, from 10am to 4pm** and there will be opportunities for participants to view the exhibition, travel down the canal to the swing bridge and look over some of Sale's historic buildings. Registration is \$12. B.Y.O. lunch or buy it at the Gallery Café. Morning and afternoon tea will be available.

At the next meeting of our Society on **Tuesday May 19**, members **Faye and Boyd Thompson** will present a pictorial travelogue of the *Ticino* area of Switzerland, which they have visited on a number of occasions.

ON THE INTERNET

Well, our Society really has joined the electronic age – we're on the *Internet*, as part of the Morwell Chamber of Commerce and Industry's web site. There is an excellent presentation showing Morwell's attractions including some lovely pictures of the Rose Garden, business directory, maps, events calendar and, of course, a brief history of Morwell, complete with photos from the Society's collection. Those who are able can look up the on

www.morwell.latrobe.net.au

The *Advance Morwell* community action group has identified the restoration of the Bridle family home in The Boulevard, Morwell, as its first priority for 1998/9 and has made approaches to LaTrobe Shire for assistance in this project. Our Society has written a letter of support to Council. We await further developments.

Family Photos - Our Society has received a collection of photographs, mounted on display boards, depicting migrant families in the Latrobe Valley. The collection was originally part of the "Snapping Up the Past" Exhibition, staged in 1994 (The Year of the Family) by the Family Research Action Centre. Our thanks are due to the Reverend David Pargeter, who, when the Centre closed, saved the photographs and has donated them to the Society.

THE WONDERS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY

As we reported in our last Newsletter, the cataloguing group is forging ahead with recording data on our *Inmagic* computer program. However, it seems that not everyone is comfortable with the new information technology. The secretary has received the following letter from a reader:

Dear Madam Secretary,

As one of the electronically challenged older generation (that's anyone over 25, these days) I view with some alarm your Society's move to catalogue all your holdings on computer.

As one who can't tell a megabyte from a mossie bite, how am I going to be able to access your records?

A few days ago, I turned on the computer in your Information Centre to be confronted by a message on the screen exhorting me:

"Don't Rush Me, I Get Paid By The Hour".

Well, I'm sure that makes excellent economic sense but it didn't help me much. I was then advised to

"PRESS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE"

Madam Secretary, I have to tell you that your computer keyboard does not have an 'ANY' key!

I need help!!

My philosophy of life is: 'Never trust anything electronic or anything that has a two-stroke motor!' Since I am reliably informed that computers are NOT driven by two-stroke, one source of anxiety is removed. However, the electronic element remains.

It is not only computers which defeat me. I recently tried to re-set the clock on my VCR and accidentally wiped out three television channels. I am completely unable to re-stock the paper tray on the fax machine, let alone actually send a fax – (How do all those pieces of paper fit through the telephone wires, anyway?), and I am terrified to switch on the message tape of the answering machine lest I wipe out some vitally important message before I have had time to absorb it properly. (So I don't listen to the messages – that seems the safest thing to do).

In spite of my deep distrust of all things electronic, I am nevertheless speechless (almost) at the assistance that computers are able to offer those who know how to use them. Having been assured by electronically erudite friends that I could write a letter and be quite certain, by using the spell-checker on the computer, that it would appear in perfect English, I tried it. I enclose, for your edification, a little poem in praise of this wonderful device. It not only corrects one's spelling but offers some truly creative suggestions for replacing words it does not like. For example, for Boolarra it suggests boiler or bolero; for Moe it suggests mow, moo, or mode, and for Traralgon, tarragon! It very wisely remains silent on the subject of Morwell!

Madam Secretary, I was unable to put this letter through the spell checker (I think I must have pushed the wrong key and wiped it out!) so I have had to rely on the spelling I learned at school and, since my computer literate friends assure me that the computer chip is far less prone to error than the human brain, I must apologise for the numerous errors which, I am sure, must have crept into my writing.

Yours sincerely, A.. Nong

P.S. On second thoughts, the keyboard doesn't have a 'WRONG' key, either!

(Mr Nong's poem is reproduced on the next page.)

THE WONDERS OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY (cont)

I have a spelling checker. It came with my PC.
 It plane lee marks four my revue miss steaks aye can knot see.
 Eye ran this poem threw it. I'm sure your glad to no
 It's very polished in its weigh – my checker tolled me sew.
 A checker is a blessing! It freeze yew lodes of thyme.
 It helps me right awl stiles to read, and aides me when aye rime.
 Each frays come posed up on my screen eye trussed too bee a joule.
 The checker pours o'er every word to cheque sum spelling rule.
 Bee fore a veiling checkers, hour spelling mite decline,
 And if we're lacks, oar have a laps, we wood bee maid too wine.
 Butt now, bee cause my spelling is chequed with such grate flare,
 Their are know faults within my site - of nun I am a wear.
 Now spelling does knot phase me, it does knot bring a tier.
 My pay purrs awl due glad den - aye right without a fear.
 To rite with care is quite a feet of witch won should be proud
 And we mussed dew the best wee can sew floors are knot aloud.
 Sow ewe can sea why aye due prays such soft wear four pea seas -
 With such technology eye no my writing's sure too pleas.

Anon.

Acknowledgements to 'Australian Family Tree Connections' - November 1997.

PA'S ROLLS ROYCE

There were probably not too many Rolls Royces around Morwell in the 1940s so the one owned by Ric Butters, (Pa to our member Joyce Cleary), was quite well known.

Joyce has given the Society copies of some of the papers pertaining to the running of the car. Mr Butters bought the cream and brown Rolls from a Mr Mitchell of Mornington in the 1940s and brought it to Morwell, where the Butters family were in business.

Pa used to drive men to work at the Maryvale paper mill and he was able to get a special petrol allowance because the mill was vital to the war effort, making, among other things, paper and cardboard for use in munitions.

Joyce tells the story of Pa and a few friends (one of whom had only one arm) returning from a visit to the Yallourn pub (a popular watering place in the war years, especially since an S.P. bookmaker operated there). As he was turning off the Princes Highway over the Jane Street bridge, the car hit the crown of the road and went over the side of the bridge where, fortunately, it caught on a ledge which prevented it from dropping all the way to the railway line below. Pa got concussion, the passengers were not hurt, but the cloth hood of the car had to be cut to extricate them and the rescuers got quite a shock when they pulled the one-armed man from the car, fearing that he had lost his arm in the accident.

The hood was repaired and the car, Joyce says, ran as well as ever. Even if it had been unused for weeks at a time, priming it with a little petrol ensured that it always started first time.

Cost of registering the Rolls in 1946 was £13/13/- and insurance was £1/7/-

THE CASE OF THE MISPLACED TELEGRAM

The following extract from a local paper, probably the *Advertiser*, is undated but refers to the visit of the Duke of Gloucester to Morwell in 1934:

His Royal Highness, under the guidance of Cr Auchterlonie and accompanied by his staff, Detective Reilly of Scotland Yard, General Blamey (Chief Commissioner of Police) and others, with a large crowd following behind, proceeded down Commercial Road to where there was a big gathering of children from schools within the Shires of Morwell, Mirboo and Narracan. They were drawn up in lines and were in the charge of Mr E..S. Hall (H.T. of Morwell State School) assisted by Mr Earl Pearson of Morwell Bridge School. As His Royal Highness approached the children gave three lusty British cheers so lustily given that they re-echoed down the street, and under Mr W.S. McKenzie's direction they sang the National Anthem in a manner that greatly pleased the Duke, who shook hands with Mr Hall and Mr McKenzie when they were introduced to him. H.R.H asked Mr Hall how many children were in a group: where they all came from: how far they had travelled, and quite a number of other questions in a jovial and friendly way. He appeared surprised but quite delighted when a little girl, Thelma Dodemaide and boy, Roger McMillan of Morwell Bridge school, stepped up to him and presented him with a beautiful fiddle-back walking stick. In making the presentation, Thelma said: "Your Highness, the school children of the district are loyal British boys and girls. We have looked forward for a long time to your visit. We like you because you have come into this country to visit us, and so that you will remember us when you get back to England, we wish to give you a walking stick made in our district out of our own timber. We hope you will accept this present from the children of Morwell schools."

Thelma is a little dot and his Royal Highness stooped down to hear what she had to say. When she had finished, the Duke, who was all smiles, said:

"Boys and Girls, I am very glad to be able to greet you, and am pleased to accept this walking stick, for which I thank you. I have spoken to the Head Master and he has agreed that you have a holiday on Monday."

At this the children cheered lustily and the Duke laughed heartily as he walked off (using the stick) to his car in waiting close by, ready to convey him to Yallourn.

It might be here mentioned that after a fine piece of fiddle-back had been obtained from Mr. Goss of Jeeralang, the walking stick made at the Yallourn Technical School and children selected and prepared to make the presentation, a telegram was received by Mr Hall a day or two before the Duke's arrival, to the effect that the proposed presentation of the walking stick was not to be made. The children who were to make the presentation were, however, not informed about the matter, and when they stepped forward, as had been previously arranged, to make the presentation, a gentleman went up to Mr Pearson and, in rather indignant tones, said to him: "Didn't you get a telegram from me to say that the walking stick was not to be presented?" Mr Pearson informed him that he had not received such a telegram. In the meantime the stick was presented and the Duke's pleasure was so marked, that the gentleman who had complained about the matter changed his attitude and laughingly remarked to Mr Pearson: "You fellows put one over me all right!"

Another unauthorised little incident took place almost immediately after. Just as H.R.H. entered his car and the door was closed, Mrs Gude approached the window and said something. She was, however, signalled by a person sitting next to the Duke, to move away. H.R.H. however, directed the window to be opened....and Mrs Gude said: "Your Highness I have a sprig taken from a tree planted at Kilmany by your father His Majesty the King when he visited Australia and I thought you might like to have it." The Duke said he would be pleased to accept the sprig referred to and thanked Mrs Gude for it. The Royal car then moved off to the accompaniment of Rule Britannia played by Morwell Shire Band, and cheers from the crowd.

FIRST CHURCH SERVICE IN THE MORWELL DISTRICT

A hundred and fifty years ago, on June 4, 1848, the Reverend Frances Hales conducted the first church service in the Morwell district. It was held at Hazelwood Station, the home of the Bennett family.

At that time there were perhaps seventy or eighty squatting runs in the whole of Gippsland, separated by dense forest and roads (if they could be so described) which were just passable in summer and totally unusable in winter.

In 1847, Charles Perry was appointed Bishop of Melbourne, one of three newly formed dioceses, severed from the diocese of Sydney, and one of his first acts was to send Reverend Hales on a visitation to Gippsland to assess the situation there.

Reverend Hales set out on horseback from Melbourne on April 2, 1848. His equipment for the journey consisted of "strong trousers, waistcoat and waterproof frock coat, the skirts of which I was obliged to tie out of the way, a pair of shoes, leather gaiters and spurs, a straw hat fastened to me with black tape. My luggage was a pair of saddle bags containing three shirts, five pairs of socks, three white cravats, a night shirt, which gave me a pleasant change at night and a night-cap to wear in the bush. My journal, memoranda, a few papers, small portfolio with paper, a few sermons of my own, hair brush, razor, comb, nearly a pound of tobacco...as 'bush money', my pocket bible."

He followed the old track, roughly approximating to the old Coach Road, staying sometimes with squatting families, sometimes camping beside the road. He reached Hobson's Station (Traralgon) on 9 April and conducted a church service there, then moved on to Flooding Creek, (Sale), then to the Port Albert district which consisted of a complex of villages, the most important at that time being Tarraville.

Tarraville, as the main port at that time, was thought to be the most obvious place for a church to serve the Gippsland region. On his arrival, Rev. Hales was shown two church doors, prematurely sent down from Sydney for a church building. He stayed at Neilson's Royal Hotel and held Sunday services in an unfurnished room behind the hotel, ordinarily used, as Mr Hales says, "for a drunken room, today used for the service of God, afterwards to be dedicated to the orgies of Bacchus". A congregation of fifty turned up and Reverend Hales says: "I spoke of their drunkenness and sins in plain language." He described Tarraville as "a miserable little place, not more than ten or twelve cottages, a few stores for selling wares of every description, and two inns."

A.E. Clark, in his book *The Church of our Fathers*, says: "...he was an earnest, sensitive and spiritual young man, temperamental and somewhat over zealous in his duties" but that "his mission was always welcome and his efforts were assisted by all. His outspoken exhortations were never resented. Although sometimes disheartened and self-reproachful, his one constant aim was to preach the gospel 'to all sorts and conditions of men', at homestead, inn, or hut, by the roadside or at the campfire."

After Tarraville, Mr Hales moved on to Bairnsdale Station, Eagle Point, Tambo, Calulu and Lindenow, returning to Glenmaggie and Fulham then back to Tarraville, Traralgon and on June 4, to Hazelwood where he held a service at the homestead. He returned to Melbourne, reaching Heidelberg on June 8.

As a result of Reverend Hales' report, Bishop Perry appointed the Reverend Willoughby Bean as the first resident priest of Gippsland. Mr Bean arrived in November 1848 and the Bishop and his wife came to visit them in February 1849. Mrs Perry's account (pages 50 - 52 of *The Church of Our Fathers - Albert E. Clark*) of the journey casts a great deal of light on the difficulties of travel in Gippsland at that time.

Reverend Hales later became Archdeacon of Launceston and Registrar of the Diocese of Tasmania.

.....