



The Morwell Post

Morwell Historical Society

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



Kernot Lake Bridge



See article page 4-5

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Morwell Historical Society Directory 2023/2024

President:	Alan McFarlane Phone: 0448 430 394
Vice-President:	Shirley Prosser
Secretary:	Florence Butcher
Assistant Secretary:	Elaine Andrijczak
Treasurer:	Peter Butcher
Committee Members:	Rosalie Davey David McInnes Laurie Williams
Research Library:	12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell, Victoria 3840
Research Queries:	secretary@morwellhistoricalsociety.org.au
Public Access:	1st and 3rd Wednesday and last Sunday of each month, 11.00 a.m. – 2.00 p.m. Open - February to November
Members' Gathering:	Every two months on the 3rd Wednesday - commencing 21st February 2024, then April, June, August, October, at 2pm (informal get-together and afternoon tea)
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
Newsletter Team:	Fay Thompson, Elaine Andrijczak, Florence Butcher
Research Fees:	\$10.00 per hour or part thereof, and prices for photo prints on application and postage where applicable.
Facebook:	https://www.facebook.com/morwellhistoricalsociety
Postal Address:	12 Hazelwood Road, Morwell 3840 Victoria, Australia

Front page icon is of the old Post Office c1930 which was on the site of the old Commonwealth Bank, corner of Commercial Road and Tarwin Street.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Another year done, and one which has meant lots of things happening at our centre.

A recent visit by CRC delegates (a national power industry conference) was a wonderful success and the display provided by our volunteers excellent. This display will remain for a few months. Well worth a look!

2024 will see us involved in 2 new projects-

-'Step back in Time' cafe, where we will provide an opportunity for the community to pop in at our open days, have a coffee, a biscuit and a chat. A Council grant of \$3,150 will allow for our new kitchen to be decked out with some equipment, including a dishwasher.

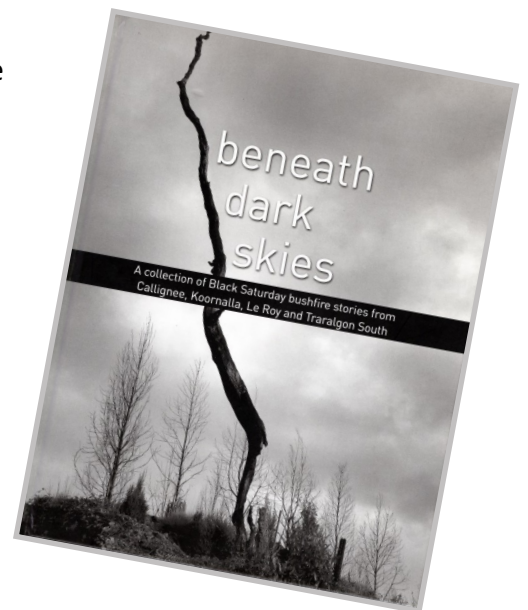
-Halo Halo Gippsland, where we will provide placement for multicultural locals who will assist in our operations. A \$10,000 grant for this project will assist with our debt.

I am pleased to advise that our debt now stands at \$30,000, a wonderful effort, with 15 months left for us to retire the debt.

Thank you to all who assist and the core group of volunteers who give so much of their time and commitment to the Society over the year.

I hope you all have a peaceful, safe and happy festive season.

Alan McFarlane



A new timely reminder donated by one of our members of the volatile area that we live in.

BENEATH DARK SKIES - A collection of Black Saturday bushfire stories from Callignee, Koornalla, Le Roy and Traralgon South

Published by Andrea Gordon 2011

SOME OBJECTS IN OUR COLLECTION

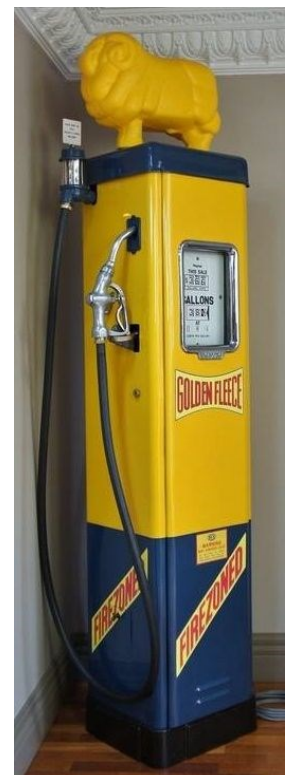


Golden Fleece Mascot

52cm x 37cm x 18cm

A particular treasure for collectors are the globes (in the shape of the Golden Fleece ram) that sat atop the company's pumps until the 1970s, when the pumps were standardised.

Example of a petrol bowser of the 1950s (not in our collection)



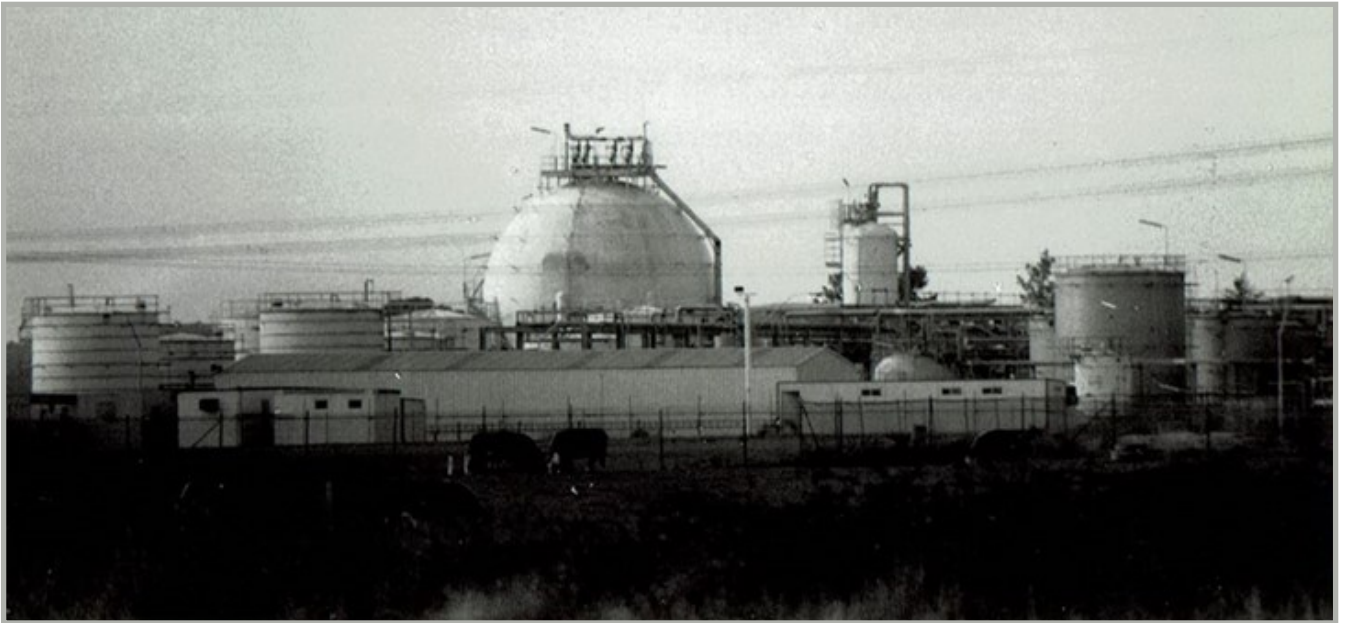
JAPANESE SCHOOL 1982-1991

In 1982, an experimental plant for the BCLV (Brown Coal Liquefaction Victoria) was constructed in Tramway Road in Morwell under the joint patronage of the Australian and Japanese governments, for the purpose of developing new technology to produce oil from brown coal. While the 200 fathers worked at the plant the children attended a Japanese school at the Commercial Road Primary School. The wives took care of the home and shopping, took the children to school or kindergarten, interacted with the local people and attended English classes.

A Japanese school with 3 teachers, Takeshi Komori (far left), K Iiyama (2nd from Left) and H Mabuchi (on the right) was established at Commercial Road Primary School. In the morning the Japanese students attended classes in the school and in the afternoon the students studied mathematics, literature and Japanese language in the Japanese school which was in a portable building in the grounds of the school. Mrs Haruko Okura worked as a volunteer teacher for 3 years.



1989



A view of part of the BCLV coal to oil plant in 1981 in Tramway Road

In 1986 the plant was quietly turning 100 tonnes of Loy Yang brown coal a day into 100 barrels of oil. The project was successful in converting brown coal to oil, but it wasn't commercially viable.

In 1991 the project staff planted two rows of cherry blossom trees beside Lake Kernot before returning to Japan. The bridge over Lake Kernot was paid for by BCLV.



Both photos taken by Boyd Thompson 30 September 2023



DONALD (DAN) McDONALD 1856-1912

Donald McDonald the son of Archibald and Marion McDonald was born in 1856 in Flemington. In the 1870s he came to Gippsland with his mother and siblings – Neil, Flora, Ann, Malcolm and Angus. His father Archibald had died in 1867. His mother was the sister of Donald Shaw who was Morwell's first Shire President. Donald worked at various places including the Gippsland railway line. In the early 1890s he purchased the general store and bakery at 214 Commercial Road from the late Louis Samuel. (2023 Stockdale and Leggo, Real Estate Agents)

Shortly after Donald purchased the property he entered into a partnership with the local baker Alfred Hone. This partnership ended when Donald died in 1912.



The above photo was taken in the 1920s and shows the butchers cart that belonged to Harry Butters. He is probably the man with the apron in the centre. Hone and McDonald would be the other two men in aprons.

Donald McDonald was one of the founders of the Morwell Branch of Australian Native Association and was often the president. He was a member of the local Rechabite Lodge and for many years the Secretary. He was a member of the Morwell Mechanics Institute and at times the president. Donald was also on the Board of Management for the Morwell Presbyterian Church.

Donald is buried in Hazelwood Cemetery with his mother Marion and sister Flora who had married John Fraser.

Source *Morwell Advertiser* Friday 30 August 1912 p 3. Death of Donald McDonald

Article: McDonald and family of Jeeralang and Morwell
The advertisement and docket from our Streets File

HAROLD VEREY 1904-1967

Harold Verey the son of Adolphus and Sophia “Emma” nee Clark was born in 1904 in Castlemaine.

In 1938 Harold married Doris Amy Ennos.

In 1949 Harold Verey bought Les Finlay’s Bootery business at 196 Commercial Road, that was next to D.C. Mills.

Mr. Verey was the original lessee of the Town Hall Pictures (1936-40) and for the following eight years, of the Yallourn Theatre. In view of the current leases of the Morwell Halls in which he is at present interested for pictures, he intends to continue with these activities.



Photo of the store taken 1954



Source: *Morwell Advertiser* Thur 8 Sep 1949 p 1

Morwell Post February 2017 page 4

From Betty Woolley

In approximately 1958/59 when Hustlers closed its business in Morwell, Mr Verey relocated his shoe business to the vacant shop in Commercial Road.

Morwell Post January 2016 page 6

Extract from Robin Fletcher’s *Early Memories*

We used to go to the Saturday afternoon films at the Town Hall and then later at the Paramount Picture Theatre in Buckley Street which. in those days was next to the sale yards at the rear of Kelly Bros. This building later became a “night club” and was used for cabarets, weddings etc and I think had a few other uses before becoming an army disposals outlet.

VARIOUS ARTICLES FROM THE MORWELL ADVERTISER

Harold screened pictures at the Morwell Mechanics Hall. Harold was a keen supporter of the Morwell Football Club and in September 1932 he had a movie picture taken of portions of the grand final football match between Warragul and Morwell. This was later screened at the Mechanics Hall where players were clearly seen in action on the field.

Morwell Advertiser (Morwell, Vic. : 1888 - 1954), Thursday 22 September 1932, page 2

When the Morwell Town Hall was opened on 27th October 1936, days later Harold provided to a full attendance, a preview of the picture entertainment which could be provided at the Town Hall. The Shire President Cr. D. J. White, congratulated Mr Verey upon the capable manner in which he was managing the undertaking and declared the Town Hall open for pictures.

Mr. Verey responded that he was very gratified at seeing such a large attendance, and thanked the Shire President for coming along, performing the opening ceremony and for his encouraging remarks. He added that it was his intention to secure the very best pictures obtainable and provide a good entertainment each night. He was not out to make a lot of money and would be content if he paid his way as the picture business was simply a hobby of his.

Morwell Advertiser (Morwell, Vic. : 1888 - 1954) , Thursday 5 November 1936, page 4

By September 1947, Harold Verey had adapted the Morwell Market building in Buckley Street, an unlined galvanised iron structure to the requirements of a modern picture theatre to be called 'The Paramount Theatre'. A concrete brick annexe was added to the front of the building and was used as a foyer. Shire President, Cr. J. H. Catterick, officially opened the Theatre on Saturday, 27th September 1947. A preview had been held on the previous Thursday night and the theatre was filled to capacity.

Morwell Advertiser (Morwell, Vic. : 1888 - 1954), Thursday 2 October 1947, page 1

In July 1951 the picture rights of the Paramount Theatre were transferred from Mr Harold Verey to Mr Rex Hamilton who was already the lessee of the Morwell Town Hall Pictures.

Morwell Advertiser (Morwell, Vic. : 1888 - 1954), Thursday 5 July 1951, page 1

Skating Rink to be Opened

With the completion of the laying of a special new jarrah floor at the Paramount Theatre, Mr Bruce Vary has now announced next Tuesday, the 12th of August as the opening night of the Paramount Skating Rink. The floor has been specially sanded and will be in first class skating order. Experienced skaters have signified their intention of being present, but beginners will also be provided for by the presence of a competent instructor. Skates are available for hiring.

It was noticeable during the pictures on Saturday night last that the new floor has introduced an element of cosiness into the theatre, which will be further improved when the plans for air conditioning, which the lessee Mr Harold Verey, has now in hand, are implemented.

Morwell Advertiser (Morwell, Vic. : 1888 - 1954), Thursday 5 August 1948, page 11

VEREY'S
Footwear Store
196 COMMERCIAL ROAD, MORWELL.

COMPLETE NEW STOCKS OF MEN'S FOOTWEAR BY TRESKO, SPICERS, STAFFORD, RAOUL MERTON, YEOMAN, PARKSIDE AND DEIREX.

GOLF SHOES styled in Plain and Moccasin, in Tan and Black, Numerous brands, including the famous Niblick.

FULL STOCKS OF SPORTS SHOES, include Carubo Bowling Shoe, Dunlop and Hardie Badminton Shoes for Ladies and Gents, Full Crepe Tennis Shoes and Boots; also New Stocks of Football Boots to hand.

LADIES' CREPE RUBBER SHOES and CASUALS -various Designs and Colours.

LADIES' DRESS SHOES IN SEUDE AND KID, IN LATEST DESIGNS AND FASHIONS.

FULL STOCKS OF CHILDREN'S SCHOOL FOOTWEAR, SLIPPERS AND RUBBER SANDALS.

A FULL VARIETY OF LADIES' AND GENTS' SLIPPERS; also a Complete Range of RUBBER KNEE AND ANKLE BOOTS from Toddlers to Ladies and Men's.

NEW STOCKS OF WORK BOOTS TO HAND, including the popular MOTOSOLE BOOT at 24/6.

VEREY'S
(LATE FINLAY'S)
Modern Footwear Store — Morwell.

O'ROURKE'S COFFEE PALACE

Thomas O'Rourke who was born in County Tipperary came to Morwell when he was a lad and for 50 years he worked for the Railways department. Originally he was a ganger on the first section of the Mirboo line and afterwards he worked on the station yard length of the main line.

Thomas married Mary Connelly in 1892 and they had four daughters –Jean, Olive, Kathleen and Elizabeth (Bessie) who were all born in Morwell.

In 1910 Thomas died and to make ends meet Mary took over the Morwell Coffee Palace on the south-west corner of Commercial Road and Hazelwood Road that had been owned by Mrs Keegan. A Coffee Palace is a boarding house that does not sell alcohol. Mrs Henry had opened this Coffee Palace in 1888.



From left 2nd Olive, 4th Kathleen, 7th Mrs Mary O'Rourke. c1920

In April 1927 residents were once again woken from their peaceful slumbers when about 1.20am in the morning the local fire bell pealed forth its alarm. Within a few minutes, men and women were hurrying down the street in all sorts of attire towards O'Rourke's Coffee Palace.

Members of the fire brigade were soon in action but found it impossible to save the building but they prevented it from burning the adjoining buildings. In about half an hour the fire was under control but the Palace was reduced to ashes. There were twenty boarders on the premises who were all asleep when the fire started. Several had a narrow escape and most boarders lost some of their belongings.

Mrs O'Rourke was away in Melbourne and her daughter Olive and her husband who were looking after the boarding house lost some of their belongings. Another daughter, Kathleen Maxfield, who was also in the building, also lost some of her belongings. Owing to lack of accommodation in Morwell the boarders had difficulty in finding new accommodation.

When the Mechanics Institute burnt down in January 1935 there were heated arguments as to where to build the new Town Hall. Some councillors wanted it on the same site (south-west corner of Tarwin and George Streets) and some councillors wanted it on O'Rourke's corner. The rate payers were also divided as to where to build the Town Hall and Municipal Chambers.

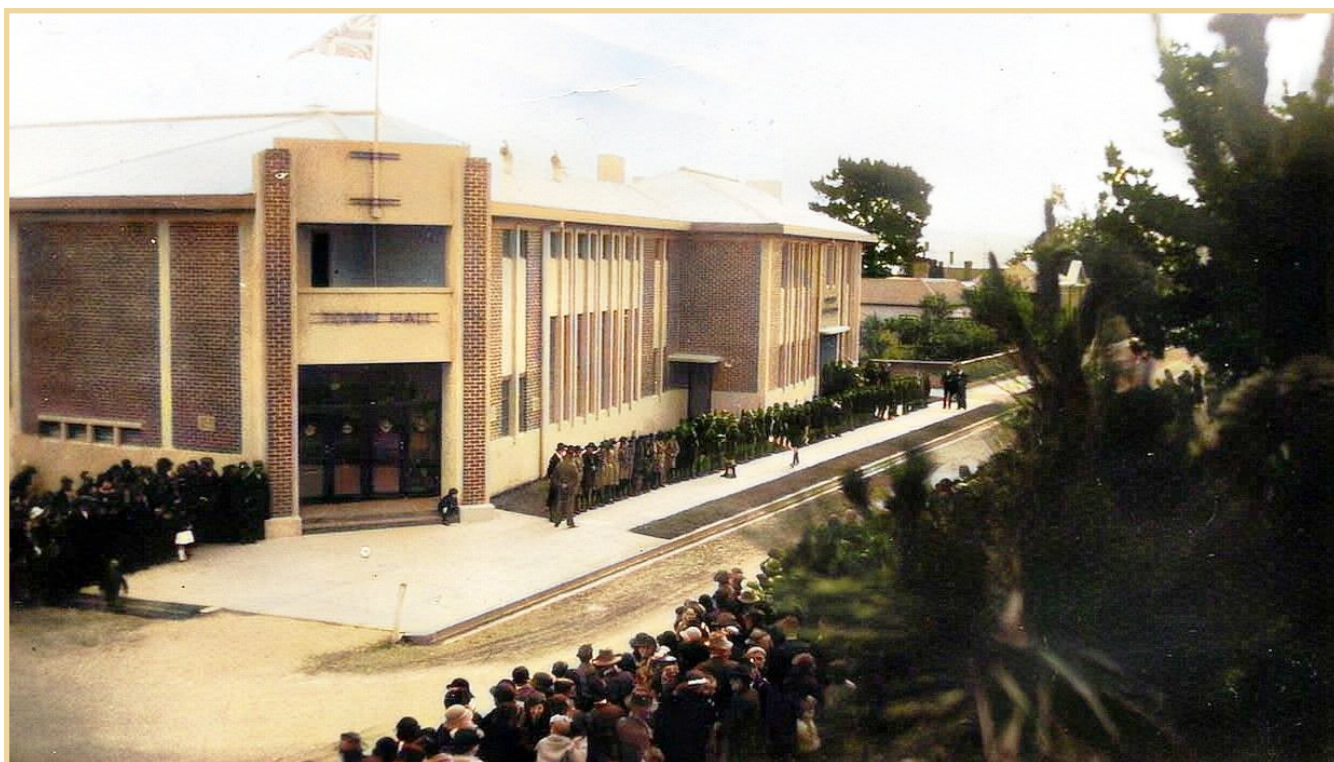
O'Rourke's corner was successful and the Town Hall was built for £7,328 with bricks to come from both Morwell and Yallourn. The foundation stone was laid by Shire President Cr Alan Hall. On July 27th 1936 Lord Hutingfield, Governor of Victoria opened the Town Hall and Lady Huntingfield opened the Infant Welfare Centre.

A grand ball was held that night and twenty debutantes were presented to Mrs White, the wife of the Shire President, David White.

The Debutantes were –Joyce Watson, Joyce Wilson, Poppy Clarke, Jean Stubbs, Marjory Billingsley, Marion Duncanson, Marjory Mackenzie, Kitty Budge, Ina Vinning, Merle Hickson, Lillian Purvis, Ella Kaye, Mary Bulger, Hazel Lubcke, Merle Brinsmead, Fitty Smidt, Marion McGowan, Jean Kleine, Lorna Vary and Queenie Bolding.

Their partners were –W Henrickson, J Brittingham, H Butler, W White, K Billingsley, G Barry, L Roberts, C Budge, L Welsh, G McLaverty, D McArthur, K Godridge, E Vinning, W Davey, C Amiet, F Dempsey, R McGowan, J Kleine, G Vary and G Bolding.

The Society has many Deb photos but unfortunately not this one.



Opening of Morwell Town Hall 1936. Old Shire Offices in background.

Source: *Morwell Advertiser* Fri 11 Nov 1910 p 2 Death of Thomas O'Rourke

Morwell Advertiser Fri 30 Nov 1928 p 2 Death of Mrs O'Rourke

Morwell Advertiser Fri 29 April 1927 p 2 *Another Fire*

Morwell Advertiser Thur 29 Oct 1936 p 3 Morwell's Gala Day and p 11 *Town Hall Opening Ball*



OPEN DAYS 2024

7th February || 21st February || 25th February
 6th March || 20th March; AGM || 31st March
 3rd April || 17th April || 28th April
 1st May || 15th May || 26th May
 5th June || 19th June || 30th June
 3rd July || 17th July || 28th July
 7th August || 21st August || 25th August
 4th September || 18th September || 29th September
 2nd October || 16th October || 27th October
 6th November || 20th November || 24th November

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We sincerely thank Harriet Shing, Member for Eastern Victoria and staff for printing our Newsletter