

Newsletter of the

## Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Inc.

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The next AGM of the  
WVAHS is to be held  
at the  
Alexandra Community  
Complex adjacent to the  
Ararat oval  
1 Waratah Ave, Ararat.  
Saturday 28th and  
Sunday 29th March, 2020.  
**Keep this  
weekend free.**

Please address all  
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### W.V.A.H.S. Executive Committee for 2019-2020

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Our member groups are:-

Ararates  
Barham/Koondrook  
Carisbrook  
Colac  
Derrinallum/Lismore  
Geelong S/W/Rail  
Heytesbury  
Kerang  
Mortlake  
Portland  
Stawell  
Warrnambool

Ararat  
Birchip  
Casterton  
Coleraine  
Dunkeld  
Glenthompson  
Horsham  
Koroit  
Nullawil  
Pyramid Hill  
Swan Hill  
Woolsthorpe

Ararat Rail Heritage  
Boort  
Charlton  
Dimboola  
East Loddon (Mitiamo)  
Goldfields (Dunolly)  
Hopetoun  
Maryborough  
Ouyen  
Rainbow  
Terang

Balmoral  
Camperdown  
Cohuna  
Donald  
Edenhope  
Halls Gap  
Inglewood  
Minyip  
Port Fairy  
St. Arnaud  
Warracknabeal

**Note:** Send me your report [to fit half page ONLY] Word documents only, photographs .jpg (Straight emails can't be edited into the Western Historian either becomes unco-ordinated paragraphs)

For the couple of societies who don't have email — send a hard copy to the Secretary, Western Historian, 273 Old Hamilton Road, Haven, Victoria 3401.

Long reports may have to be edited to fit the space and therefore not contain what you consider to be relevant to your society.

## Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Inc. President's Post.

Despite some fairly heavy work commitments during recent months it was great to attend all three of the spring round of Zone Meetings (although I only just got to Derrinallum.)

The Wimmera Zone meeting at Natimuk on Sunday 22 September was well attended. The Museum and neat main street, with many old buildings, provided interesting viewing after the meeting. A side benefit of my visit was being able to investigate some of the local railway remains as part of planning a tour late next year to follow the former railways from Horsham to Natimuk, Goroke and Carpolac, then south from Natimuk East via Balmoral and Cavendish to Hamilton.

The Southern Zone meeting at Derrinallum on Sunday 20 October was again well attended. A visit to Mount Elephant and its fairly new information centre

was a great conclusion — complete with a talk about aspects of the ancient and more recent history of the Mount and district.

The Midland Zone meeting at Serpentine on Saturday 26 October was also well attended. A bus trip to nearby East Loddon Station to view the huge brick Wool Shed was fascinating and shows what a private owner with some enthusiasm and interest in maintaining and using an old building can do.

Congratulations to all for organising such great gatherings and participating. See you at the next round in autumn 2020. Best wishes to all for Christmas and the New Year.

*Michael Menzies  
President.*

## History Victoria Support Group

The History Victoria Support Group (HVSG) is a committee of the RHSV.

The HVSG committee includes representatives from rural, regional and metropolitan societies.

With their extensive operational and practical experience — the committee are able to provide advice and assistance on a wide range of topic relevant to historical societies and museums.

**These include:**

**Increasing membership of societies.**

**Preparing grant applications.**

**Publicising your society — newsletters, brochures, booklets, calendars etc.**

**Collection management.**

**Computer cataloguing.**

**Indexing.**

**Storage and collection materials.**

**Display techniques.**

**Copyright.**

**Insurance and incorporation.**

**Local history research on the internet and website design and maintenance.**

The HVSG holds events throughout the year in both Melbourne and Regional locations.

Check the RHVS website for resources and presentations on these topics.

<https://www.historyvictoria.org.au>

Email: [office@historyvictoria.org.au](mailto:office@historyvictoria.org.au)

Phone: 03 9326 9288

**Articles wanted of interest from your local area for future newsletters**

# Minyip & District Historical Society report

Firstly our apologies for our non-attendance at the Natimuk meeting. We wish you a very good meeting.

A couple who have been very committed to the society have moved from the area and are now living at Moolap.

Joy & Owen King have moved and we miss the input that they have given to the Society over many years. Both have held Executive positions in the Society and Joy particularly was very involved in the preservation about Minyip and district.

We have several projects on the go now and one involves students at three schools within the old Dunmunkle Shire. Students at Marnoo, Minyip and Rupa-nyup Primary Schools have been asked to write an article for a "Historical Project".

The Society received a grant from the Yarriambiack Shire which we have now made into a Perpetual Trophy which any student from representing their school can win with an essay/story about history of their area.

The school will keep the trophy for that year and the students will receive book vouchers as their prize. The interest from the Head teachers at the three schools has been tremendous. It has not been stipulated what they can write about — family history, history of a building, history of an old car, history about an organisation whatever. The judging will take place after the Septem-

ber holidays and we are looking forward to seeing what the children write about.

Some months ago one delightful student approached one of our members to help her with her family tree. I wonder if she will write about that.

This sparked the interest of our member and he has now researched and completed work on Drum, Funcke, Wood, Liston, White and Boschen family trees. The families have been delighted with the results. Some fine tuning needs to be done on some but the information given is remarkable. More will come.

The Society together with the Lions Club of Minyip, are organising a "Flowers for Fuel" garden day in November. As you may know BP no longer services the fuel situation in the town. So this is our way of helping to put some finance into the project. The Minyip community needs to raise a sizeable amount of money — I am pleased to say that there seems to be some light at the end of the tunnel.

Our President Diane is working to digitize our records onto the computer. So far she is up to "F" in the document family file and has finished the photos from the top draw of the photo file. This is all family photos.

Once again we will conduct a Cemetery Walk at our October meeting. The topic this year is Tragedies and Stories.

## Ouyen Historical Society zone report

Apologies from Ouyen — Our best wishes to Natimuk and all other member groups.

Today I will be meeting with Sue Thompson (Lilydale Historical Society) from the History Victoria Support Group at Ouyen. Earlier this year I contacted the History Victoria Support Group looking for direction and support. It was good to be able to speak openly and honestly to Alleyne Hockley Co-ordinator of the RHSV Support Group.

As our active volunteer numbers were down to three at the start of the year it seemed we would not be able to continue opening every Friday. Articles in the local paper and on Facebook attracted another three volunteers so we have managed to continue to open to the public on Fridays 9.30am to 4pm

This year the Centre celebrates 30 years since moving into the Ouyen Courthouse following its closure in 1989. The History Centre, first established in 1984 as part of Victoria's 150<sup>th</sup> Celebrations.

The Centre is popular as a meeting place for family and school reunions. Another High School reunion (years 1968-1973) is planned for 2 November when

memorabilia will be on display rekindling memories for those returning. .

Our Annual Meeting is at 11am on 25 October. Following the meeting there will be a guided tour of the Courthouse and a luncheon. Cr Helen Healy has indicated she will be attending.

In August we had a visit from Chris Cook and Helen Petschel (both members of the Red Cliffs Historical Society) who were seeking family history. It was good to catch up with like-minded people.

To further promote the Centre an empty Ouyen shop window has changing displays. Our latest theme is 'Remember....Schools of the Past' The official closing of Walpeup Primary School is on 5<sup>th</sup> October.

On reflection the activities covered by our Centre are wide ranging and can be an important positive influence in our community. I believe having a recognized group in the community with knowledge of their districts local history is vital.

So keep up the good work everyone!

**Merle C. Pole (President)**

***As the editor of the Western Historian I am seeking articles on what is happening in your society or articles from your area of historical interest. Please contact Robin on [robinparker81@hotmail.com](mailto:robinparker81@hotmail.com) or write to 21 Fraser Street, Maryborough, 3465. In word preferred and any photos in jpg format.***

# Carry on Matron at Port Fairy

Our thanks for another contribution from Richard Patterson. He has been looking at records from the Port Fairy Hospital.

In July 1919 when Jane Ann Burtchaell resigned as Matron of the Port Fairy Hospital, she had been in the position for some thirty years. She had joined the Hospital in 1889 under an arrangement where she and her husband David had been jointly employed as Matron and Master. They had just one person to assist them (a servant who did the cleaning and scrubbing.) This meant that Matron Burtchaell nursed the inmates, did the laundry and carried out all the cooking.

When a Victorian Royal Commission on Charitable Institutions visited Port Fairy in 1891 David Burtchaell told the Commissioners that he did not think it incompatible with his wife's position that she should also act as cook saying 'At present she is quite satisfied, considering the funds of the institution; they have not much money'. He added that 'If the Institution could afford it she would like a change but she does not press for it at present'. Jane Burtchaell was not asked to give evidence.

By the time Matron Burtchaell left Port Fairy her husband had been dead for twelve years and the Hospital employed four nurses, a cook and a washerwoman and was still desperately short of money. It was also "blessed" with an accident-prone committee that had no ability to manage its way out of 'chaos' (its own description).

At the start of 1919 Peter McBeth had been President of the Hospital for eleven years and L.W. Earle was Secretary and Collector for fifteen years. Early in 1919 Earle resigned and moved away from Port Fairy soon being pursued by a letter from his successor threatening legal action if he did not explain a deficiency in the Old Age Pension fund of £6-8s. The denouncement of this intriguing matter was not recorded. The Medical Superintendent then resigned followed by Peter McBeth and Matron Burtchaell who had to attend to 'family matters requiring her presence in the homeland' — Tipperary.

An advertisement for a replacement Matron elicited just two applications and Miss A. M. Simpson of Wagga Hospital was appointed. In November 1919 the minutes of the Committee show that the new Medical Superintendent (Dr. Hartridge) submitted a report on Matron Simpson's 'conduct' that resulted in her being asked to leave the hospital within 24 hours. Her offence was never explained. The Gazette merely commenting that 'The institution appears to be very unfortunate of late'.

While these events were taking place, the idea of reducing the nursing staff from four to three was seri-



**Port Fairy Hospital and Asylum c1870.**

ously canvassed but dropped when Committee members were reminded that the nurses were struggling with an influenza epidemic! The Building Committee came up with the idea of selling the Stack Ward but then decided against it because 'the ward was a memorial to the late Father Stack' who in 1877, had left the Hospital £1000 in his will. Other money-saving ideas included closing the hospital altogether and persuading the Government that the Benevolent patients should be accommodated elsewhere.

In December 1919 a Miss Armstrong was appointed Matron but she resigned two months later. The turnover of employees was constant and it is likely that there were calls on the Matron's time day and night because of the lack of experienced staff. The Committee, meanwhile, was entirely reactive and had no plan for securing and retaining medical staff. Moreover when the Secretary N. Guyett resigned in January 1920 (because his 'private work did not allow him sufficient time to attend to the needs of the Hospital') the Committee set about appointing his successor at twice the salary it had been paying its Matrons.

In some desperation the Committee decided to revert to the idea of appointing a married couple as Master and Matron but had just one application from a Mr. and Mrs Wilson of Sunshine who were appointed. Mrs. Wilson being offered the position of Matron sight unseen — but resigned just five months later.

During the next two-and-a-half years another four Matrons came and went: Teresa Fulton — a Kirkstall native who had trained at the hospital and spent much of World War I nursing in India; Rosa Snodgrass; May Alphonsus Boland and Miss M. McIntyre.

When the Committee appointed Matron McLay in April 1923. The Gazette referred to her as a 'courteous, capable and kind lady'. But Matron McLay lasted just three months before she, too, was on her way — no doubt glad to be rid of the worry of the constant

turnover of nurses, probationers and domestic staff along with the inability of the Committee to make even the simplest decisions quickly. She was succeeded by Miss Kinsey who is memorialised in the Committee's Minutes as follows:

'The House Committee appointed Matron Kinsey who took charge on the June 29. Since taking charge Matron Kinsey has done excellent work. She has brought order out of chaos, has had the institution thoroughly cleansed and taken a firm grip on all its activities in all departments and though the nursing staff is very short-handed (she ought to have the aid of a staff nurse) and a pupil nurse she has done more than her share in attending the patients. I regret to have to report that Matron Kinsey has sent in her resignation.'

Matron Kinsey lasted a bare fortnight! As in all instances where the Committee did not actively seek to dismiss the Matron, no apparent attempt was made to persuade her to stay.

She was succeeded by Bessie Stewart who was Matron from August 1923 until December 1924 and then by Lena Josephine Lyons (who had been born in Port Fairy and served in the World War) and held the position of Matron from December 1924 until October 1927. But her tenure was not altogether happy. When in September 1926 she applied for two months holiday, (having had no break for 22 months.) Robert Stephen a member of the Committee moved that 'in future all hands at the hospital be made to take their holiday each year or forfeit same — which was agreed by all present! The idea that the Matron was regarded as just another 'Hand' speaks volumes as does the idea that working in wretched circumstances without a holiday for almost two years should merit punishment.

In September 1927 Matron Lyons was asked to do night duty because of the perennial staff shortage. She

refused and so was given one month's notice by the Committee. In the following month the President, T. H. Storey (a gents outfitter) said he 'was sorry she had not sent in her resignation and he was sorry she was going as he had always found her courteous and obliging and hoped we would get as good again'. The notion of 'cause and effect' was clearly a foreign one to some of these 'committeemen'.

Between November 1927 and January 1941 the Hospital had another six Matrons. These were Matron Kathleen Mary Scanlan who lasted over nine years but in September 1936 resigned; Matron Dorothy M. Jones who was effectively dismissed; Matron A. Short who lasted just six months; Matron E. M. Doyle, whose arrival on 29 October 1937 seems to have triggered the resignation of three nurses within a week; Matron F. McDonald; and Matron Gertrude O'Laughlin. A total of seventeen matrons had charge of the Hospital in just twenty-two years.

The Hospital's problems did not end there. In March 1947 four nurses resigned from the hospital simultaneously — triggering a crisis that saw most services suspended. In June 1950 the Matron, Miss Scanlan, reported that the staff position was so bad that the hospital could take emergency and maternity cases only. By the following April Matron Scanlan was considering resignation on medical grounds because of the 'continual worry and work'.

Admittedly the nursing shortage was just then a national problem but Port Fairy had been struggling with it for over sixty years.

Article from the Port Fairy  
September newsletter.

## WVAHS Western zone meet at Natimuk



Arapiles Historical Society hosted a well attended WVAHS meeting of the Western zone on September 22.

— Photo by Robin Parker

# “Digger” James another Douglas Bader

*By Alan Dower, publicity officer,  
Defence Department Directorate of Recruiting*

Not even the saga of Douglas Bader can outclass the long fight back of Australia’s “Digger” James.

He is a quietly-spoken hero from a country town who also has proved what enduring courage and a steadfast woman’s faith in man can do.

The modesty of Major William Brian James, M.C. has hidden his soldier’s struggles and triumphs since his feet were blasted off during a furious night battle in the Korean winter of 1952.

## **Marched Back**

And it comes sharply into focus now only because he has marched – yes, marched back to Duntroon on metal feet to: be the Regimental Medical Officer for the Royal Military College that trained him as a first-class fighting leader 16 years ago.

Encourage others to believe that you “don’t need toes to balance, walk, march or even dance.”

Above all things he was voluntary coach for the stalwarts of Duntroon’s Rugby team.

The inspiring story of this decorated “Man Who Fought Back” began in 1948 when, after being educated at the local high school he left home at Shepparton (Vic.) to become a Duntroon staff cadet.

He graduated there before Christmas 1951. He was about 21 and — he says — “not outstanding academically.”

## **Ruckman**

But he held the President’s Cup for Australian Rules. He had been ruckman for the First, breakaway for the Rugby 15, captain of the tennis team and leader at broad and high jump and hop-step and jump.

During the night of November 7, 1952 Lieutenant James was in action with the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment against Chinese in Korea.

With only two corporals and 10 men he assaulted Calgary feature.

A land mine explosion suddenly shattered them. The signaller was killed and others wounded.

“Digger’s” left foot was blown off and his right leg broken and badly mangled.

“But he refused to relinquish command of his patrol” his citation states.

“He organised the evacuation of others less seriously wounded . . . cheered and encouraged his men to engage an enemy observation party . . . remained to the last – for over 30 minutes — in great pain . . . and only then allowed himself to be taken to the rear.

## **Self-Sacrifice**

“His devotion to duty, self-sacrifice and extreme fortitude . . . in great personal distress . . . are an inspiration to his battalion”.

“Digger” was awarded the Military Cross.

After surgery in Japan and Australia he was posted to the Armoured Corps at Puckapunyal (Vic) as adjutant for two years.

There he qualified at gunnery and driving schools.

But advancement there was doubtful for an amputee. So, for the next two years he served as adjutant of the 12-16<sup>th</sup> Hunter River Lancers in N.S.W. — “a cracker bunch.”

“But wanted so badly to get back in the field,” he told me at Duntroon. “I tried hard for intelligence work but couldn’t get a start.”

In 1956 I ended up in the Repatriation Hospital at Heidelberg. There I heard of the Commonwealth Rehabilitation Scheme.

“I recalled my rather woeful academic record but decided to have a bash”.

## **Graduated**

Rehabilitation sent “Digger” to Sydney University. He graduated in medicine in 1963 was at Ryde Hospital for a year, rejoined the army in 1964 and until late last year and served two years at the Ingleburn Camp Hospital (N.S.W.)

“Digger’s” wheel had now made a slow but full turn. The night before he had left Duntroon for the Korean War he had vowed to try and march inside again one day as an instructor officer with battlefield lessons to pass on.

That he can do from both sides now — how to harass or how to heal — because he lives there now as its R.M.O.

But the story does not end there.

What else happened in the years in between?

“I owe everything — repeat everything to Barbara my wife” said “Digger” James. “We had very little money. She stuck through thick and thin and never faltered.”

They were not lush years of study the basic income was about £9 (\$18) a week.

But the couple began to raise their family during this time — two boys and two girls — while “Digger” met the budget needs by selling secondhand refrigerators every Saturday morning for four years.

## **Always “Digger”**

By now it should be clear why — right through the army the doctor is always known as “Digger” James. Yet it is not a new title. He has held it more than 30 years.

When pressed he says: “That’s over to my brother Jack. He was 10 years older than I. He was killed in the 450 Squadron R.A.A.F. Hurricane in the Western Desert in 1942 when Rommel was trying to reach Cairo.

One night somewhere in 1934 when I was only four or five, Jack joined the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion (militia) at Shepparton and came home proudly with his new uniform.

He put his big slouch hat on my little head — It slid right past my ears.

“Well you are a real Digger now” Jack laughed.

And I have simply been known as “Digger” since. That hat didn’t fit then but none can wear it more nobly now.

Article from the Maryborough Advertiser 1967.

# Bealiba Railway Station is an important asset — to railways, town and State

To some it's a mere name on the map to others a little more than a whistle stop but the facts show clearly that railway station No. 182 is an important asset to the railways, the town and State . . . the station is BEALIBA.

Bealiba, 137 miles from Melbourne on the main Melbourne line about half-way between Maryborough and St. Arnaud is a big rail centre for wheat and oats.

A record 150,000 bushels of wheat were loaded at Bealiba this year. Sent mainly to Geelong for export and some to the Dunolly storage.

There are two wheat storages at Bealiba. The recently installed single bin steel elevator holds 75,000 bushels and the Behlen storage 33,000 bushels.

The Behlen storage is actually a third of a prefabricated pressed steel Behlen shed of 100,000 bushels capacity brought from the U.S.A. by the Grain Elevators Board some years ago. The remainder of the shed was erected at two other stations. The walls are supported with steel tie-rods inside to resist the outward pressure of the wheat.

The new elevator has a longer life and lower operating cost than the Behlen shed. Both storages serve the same purpose of receiving, storing and unloading wheat.

Bealiba district had its biggest season this year. About 200,000 bushels – the second highest quantity in the State — were progressively delivered to the 60,000 bushel bulk storage bin adjacent to the wheat storages. The storage overflow of oats was railed to Portland and Geelong.

The haul of wheat and oats was handled with machine-like efficiency by the railways. During one week in January over 100 wagons were loaded and despatched from Bealiba.

Firewood and sleepers were prominent in the stations outwards goods tonnage of 4,497 last financial year. There were also 1,540 bales of wool railed from Bealiba. Inwards goods tonnage last year was 1613.

## Quality Sleepers

Some the best quality railway sleepers in the State are supplied from the Bealiba district. The Department has contracts with eight cutters who supplied 11,480 grey box sleepers at Bealiba station last financial year. Sleepers are inspected and bought every two weeks by the Department's timber inspector who pays cutters on the spot.

Station master Harold Schranz and Assistant Stationmaster Frank Kupke are justly proud of their station. "The population of Bealiba is about 350 yet this station had a total revenue of \$25,341.87 last year." Is a typical remark from Mr. Schranz.

Bealiba is well served with passenger trains – two trains to and from Melbourne four days a week and one on the other three days. Most of the local poultry farmers send their eggs by passenger train to the Egg Board

in Maryborough.

The name Bealiba comes from two native words – Beal, (the red or flooded gum tree) and Ba, (a creek.)

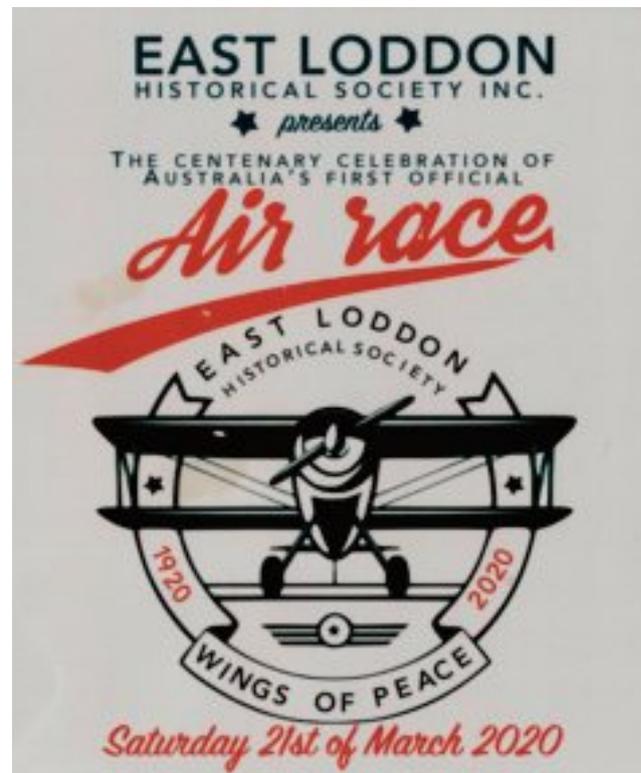
Bealiba station became part of the Victorian Railways in 1878 when the 32 mile section between Dunolly and St. Arnaud was built by contractors Monie and Matkinson at a cost of £483.

However it was in 1879 before J. Summerland completed the passenger platform at a cost of £545/10/0. This and the town's public library built the same time were Bealiba's first public buildings, both still standing today.

Track gang No. 9 stationed at Bealiba under the control of Ganger Algy Whitford won the award for the most improved length in the Midland district last year and all five members of the gang were given the usual cash awards by the Commissioners. Their 12-mile length extends four miles on the up side of Bealiba and eight miles towards St. Arnaud.

A highlight for the town comes each year when the Commissioners make their northern and midland visit of inspection – one night of the five-day tour is spent at Bealiba.

From the Maryborough Advertiser 1967.



LODDON VALLEY HIGHWAY  
**SERPENTINE**

VICTORIA

Contact: Elizabeth McGauchie 0427 840 139  
elhs@bigpond.com

# There's a story behind Lone Pine planting

There is quite a story behind the recent planting of the Lone Pine by Legatee Harold Krutli in Maryborough.

The planting is one of 250 trees and is part of a story — a piece of living history.

In the ANZAC sector of Gallipoli in 1915, there was a solitary stunted pine growing on scrubby plateau. The tree was of a species, indigenous to the Mediterranean, known botanically as *Pinus Brutia*; but more popularly called Aleppo Pine.

This particular lone specimen was very conspicuous and served to provide name for the plateau Lone Pine.

The fighting was so tough that the locality became symbolic of bravery in this campaign, where pre-eminently the Australian spirit proved itself and the world came to realise that a new nation had come into being.

Later Lone Pine was the scene of one of the most critical rearguard positions of the Gallipoli campaign enabling the withdrawal of the main body to take place in security – a defeat which was indeed turned into a victory.

After a half century the Lone Pine tree itself was dead. But it so happened that at the time of the withdrawal an Anzac, the late Eric Watson of the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion, picked up a cone from the now famous tree and carried it away as a souvenir. That was in December 1915. Some twelve years later a party of 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion diggers which included the late Legatees Stanley Savige and Robert Irvine both foundation members of Legacy were reminiscing at the fireside of the owner of that unusual souvenir.

The idea of raising some seed from the unique cone of the mantelshelf was explored

They tried and they succeeded; four seedlings were raised and one became the first tree planted at the Shrine of Remembrance – the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion tree. In Australia the Lone Pine of Gallipoli lived again.

In 1964 Legatee Tom Griffiths then President of the Warrnambool Legacy and Frank Doolin of Melbourne suggested that seedlings should be raised in the jubilee year of Gallipoli. The object to planting memorial trees throughout the Commonwealth to remind the new generation of the sacrifice made by comrades-in-arms in a campaign which was virtually the birth of our nation as a power.

The project was outlined in a paper presented to the Perth Conference in 1965 and was strongly supported. Melbourne Legacy then undertook the propagation and distribution of the seedlings through the Legacy Clubs of Australia.

Seedlings were raised from seeds taken from the 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion tree at the Shrine of Remembrance and germinated and established by the Forests Commission of Victoria at the State Nursery at Macedon during 1965.

The distribution of seedlings has now been completed and standard bronze plaques are ordered so that in due course — the trees can be identified as Lone Pine Memorials.



Lone Pine seedling

In all locations Legacy Clubs have launched this project with due reverence and in a spirit of re-dedication to the Legacy concept of service, have planted second generation descendants of the lone Piner.

From the Maryborough Advertiser 1967

**Book Launch Invitation**  
Ouyen District Historical &  
Genealogy Centre  
and Monash University Publishing are  
delighted to invite you to the launch of

**Mallee Country**  
**Land, People, History**

**Saturday, December 14, 2019**

**Roxy Theatre**  
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**RSVP by December 10, 2019**

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# News of Nhill & District Historical Society Inc.

We held the Annual General Meeting in August and John Deckert was elected to the position of president. John thanked all of the members present for the opportunity to carry on the good work done by past presidents of the organisation. He especially thanked Valda Deckert for her dedicated work during the past few years and hoped to enjoy her support into the future. He stated that her effort and knowledge were two attributes that the Society did not want to lose.

John has given a great deal of thought into what he sees for the future of the Nhill and District Historical Society Inc and a letter from him to this effect follows.

## From the President

I've been a member of the Nhill Historical Society for more than half my life — probably the longest term of membership ever. I used to think that it was an impressive record until now. The record may be OK but never before have I realised how little I really knew about the workings of this organisation. It has been a huge learning curve. Where do I start?

I decided to look at the Society as a new business of which I had just become manager. The first thing to do is a stock-take to accurately determine the assets of the business. It sounds easy. In a business, according to the tax law, a stock-take must be done every year. In the Nhill Historical Society, during its 58-year history, I doubt that there has ever been a stocktake done.

This could be a daunting task but we don't have the time constraint of a tax return and there is a lot of work already done in the past and more recently by Kay and her volunteers. There are various lists and catalogue entries, groupings of books, organised filing cabinets etc. etc. So then where do I start?

My hobbies as far back as I can remember have been books, maps and photographs so without any conscious thought it became apparent to me that the Nhill and District Historical Society has two main sections — records and artefacts.

I am interested in the records; early maps of the town and district, books related to the area, records researched by numerous past members, and especially my own passion — historical photographs.

That leaves only the artefact side of the Society and it is obvious that the artefacts are being well looked after by Kay and her volunteers. My interest, particularly in wedding dresses, is practically zero. However I do realise that the Society has an excellent collection and there must be ways that we can benefit from that.

Enough of my ramblings. It is time to let members know the outcome of a few events that have happened since the last meeting.

1. Our main printer came up with an error message. The problem appeared to be with the ink cartridges but unfortunately, after considerable expense, the printer is now off to E-Waste.

Does anyone use Epson ink jet cartridges Numbered 81N? We have a full set never been used.

2. We did have a small win out of the printer problem. We installed a very efficient black only laser printer for the cost of \$100 and installed the scanner that has been idle for sometime. We also have a colour printer on "Kay's computer so our needs are well covered at present.

3. To say we did this and that may imply that Kay and I did this computer set up is not the case at all. We used the services of 'Spiro' the computer expert who comes to Nhill every Thursday and Friday. He works fast, he does the repairs on the spot and knows more about computers than Kay and I will ever know.

4. Kay has convinced me that an A3 scanner capable of scanning our last ten years of Nhill Free Press papers would be a good investment. The fact that it will also scan maps and large photos seems to be a good feature. We will be keen to apply for a grant in the hope that we can get enough money to cover the cost of a scanner and accessories.

My first two months as president have been interesting, almost exciting. I have some wild ideas for the future.

Please come along to the next meeting to keep my enthusiasm in check.

**John Deckert.**



**While at the Derrinallum Southern zone meeting on October 20 I met up with Elizabeth O'Callaghan author of the book "Around the Elephant." Elizabeth is a member of the Warrnambool Historical Society.**

# Is the Bealiba Beast a Tasmanian Tiger

Is the Bealiba Beast a Tasmanian Tiger or Thylacine?

Perhaps some day soon the question will be answered.

This question has been asked following the description given by Mr and Mrs John Clayton of Golden Square (Bendigo) who saw a peculiar animal between Dunolly and Maryborough recently.

According to reports and nature articles the Tasmanian Tiger or Thylacine is thought to be extinct but at present a search is being carried out in the Naracoorte district of South Australia following the reported sighting of a peculiar animal there.

The Thylacine is reported to have stripes across the rump and a very long tail.

## Loping Action

The animal seen by Mr and Mrs Clayton was stated by them to have a very long black and white ringed tail – to have had a shaggy golden coloured body and to have a short head. It ran with a peculiar loping action.

The strange animal seen near Naracoorte is re-

ported to have had an easy lope with blackish marks or stripes across its rump quite undoglike in form being very leggy with low hocks and with a tapering long tail.

## Don't Shoot

There appears to be some strange animal wandering the country in the Bealiba-Rheola-Dunolly districts. Other sightings have appeared in Gippsland.

Wildlife Department officials have asked that people do not shoot it. They would much prefer to have the animal taken alive.

The Tasmanian Wolf or Thylacine is a native of Tasmania and it was thought to be extinct on the island and the mainland.

Naturalists agree that the chances of one being found are very unlikely – but they would certainly hope that one would be.

Any person who sees an unfamiliar animal in this area is asked not to shoot or molest it — but to report to the Advertiser, Mr Jack Rogan at the Post Office or to their nearest Forests officer.

From the Maryborough Advertiser 1968

# Rainbow Historical Society zone report

## *A busy year at the Rainbow Archives*

The following is the Rainbow Archive and Historical Society President's report for 2018-19 presented by Diane Wall at the recent Annual General Meeting.

What a year it has been. Let me begin by acknowledging the passing of two of our most valued members Marjorie Wallis and Warwick Frazer.

Marjorie was an inaugural member — very hands on in the early days of setting up the archive; a wise mentor and most knowledgeable about local history and people.

Warwick was a godsend when he joined the Archive. His knowledge of computers, sound and film was wide and experienced; he was a wonderful fit for the Archive objectives and will be sorely missed.

This year has been really busy. My special thanks go to the volunteers who packed up the library books and shelved and transported them to the Oasis and Ruth Gosling who helped sort and cull those books no longer required.

Thanks also to Bill Stirland and Steve Lees who rebuilt and installed the shelves in the Bell Room at the Oasis and where the library is now located and opened for business. It was a huge task at short notice and I am sincerely grateful for the effort.

Our Secretary, Peter Ralph, has put in a steller year — not only for his contribution to Archive matters but also his involvement with the Back to School Committee for this coming November.

I note with thanks the presence of his Chief of Staff, wife Denise assisting with sorting of newspapers and donations to the Archive collection; and at our Film Afternoon. His collecting of items and production of historic photo folders for the Bowhaven residents and available at the 50s Café have stirred up a lot of favourable comment among locals and visitors to the town.

Peter has also been very involved in the selection of material and presentation of our film afternoons which have been very well attended. Smith family photos, local waterway photos, 2018 E duro film, Mal Drendel's slides and Claire White's early Yaapeet photos. Thank you to all those who made their photos and slides available.

Treasurer Ruth Gosling also deserves a mention not only for her fiscal role (she keeps a firm eye on our bottom line) but has handled research on the film side of things and family history too and stepped in to take on the computer role for the Yaapeet presentation.

All the members bring their own special expertise to the Archive and I thank them most sincerely — they are always ready to take on a task or help with another.

Our collection keeps growing, we need more members as always and the richness of our local history is such a pleasure to learn about and preserve.

From the Rainbow-Jeparit Argus Sept. 26, 2019

It's your newsletter— have your say

# Warracknabeal and District Historical Society zone report

Last May members travelled down to Ballarat, had lunch at the Beechworth Bakery and then headed to Buninyong to visit the homestead known as Boninyong (where the Scott family originally settled). Celia and Graeme Burnham greeted us — Celia is a direct descendant of the Scott Bros. who were the first settlers in Warracknabeal. We were welcomed into their drawing room where Celia told us about her family's journey from Scotland until they finally settled at Buninyong with the men of the family herding huge numbers of sheep all the way to where Warracknabeal is now located. Celia showed us the large paintings of the early settlers and then several other rooms in the house. Graeme explained about the necessary maintenance to the home. The garden plantings have been kept (as much as is possible) as it was originally. There are two magnificent magnolias that were planted by Mrs Scott who had brought the plants from Scotland. These trees are now Heritage listed. We all had a wonderful day.

The Historical Centre continues to provide family research facilities. This will be made somewhat easier with a new computer to replace the one that was dying. We are able to achieve the replacement thanks to a grant from the Horsham Sports and Community Club. We have a major pigeon problem which, hopefully, has been solved (with water being sprayed on the offenders!).

Our machinery rally for this year was a great success. There was a large number of International tractors lined up on the tarmac in order of their age — providing quite a spectacle for our visitors.

Museum members have attended rallies at Jeparit, Murtoa, Heywood, Barham, Rupanyup, Waikerie, Loxton, Wedderburn and the National Rally at Murray Bridge. Restoration continues with a Wallis tractor and C Model Case being made ready for next year's rally.

We discovered that a painting we have in the Museum foyer has quite a history. It depicts Mallee rollers clearing land and was painted by Ramon Horsfield (who was quite a well-known artist last century). It was featured on the Jubilee Train (or Education Train) that travelled around Victoria in 1951. In 2005 the painting was donated to the Society after having been found under



**Boninyong home of the Burnham family at Buninyong.**

**Photo courtesy of State Library of Victoria.**

tiles in a bathroom. It was restored by a local artist and then hung in the Museum.

Our warehouse continues to expand with 1,600 active vendors. We will celebrate 21 years with a dinner in October. The front entrance has been paved and made a pedestrian only area (which has greatly improved access). The volunteers do a marvellous job with the every-day running of the store.

We have been very fortunate that the Shire (using a grant from the Federal Government) have financed the fire services tanks that had to be installed at the Museum. There is to be an official opening of them by the local Federal MP on 24 September.

Our new website is still a project on the drawing board and hopefully will be completed soon.

Several members have been busy making flowers to display as part of the local agricultural shows feature.

Happy preserving and conserving to all societies in our area.

***Articles wanted of  
interest from your  
local area  
for future newsletters***

# Koroit & District Historical Society report

At our annual meeting all office bearers were returned to their positions.

We still have a team approach to research and newsletters and do the best we can with small numbers and welcome any new members to our group. We continue to open on the second Sunday of the month from 1 - 4 pm and have a work session most Mondays from 10 am – 1 pm. On days where special events are held in Koroit we open our rooms.

Like many of you space is at a premium so we have started to investigate the possibility of a shed in the backyard to store some items such as a lawnmower and cleaning equipment - but not items from the collection.

Recently we were asked by the Lake School of Music to keep their records so we have been busy filing these and continue to add photos to our catalogue.

The NBN has come to Koroit and we have con-

tacted the Council and an internet provider to see if it can be installed in/on our 1857 building.

Around a year ago a sundial that once stood in our Botanic Gardens came to light. A couple of members have worked towards having this item reinstated in the gardens. Sounds easy but it required a permit from Heritage Victoria and the Council who are making sure it is safely restored. Lots of issues but we hope it will be on site before Christmas.

To all those interested in attending - on Saturday 10 November there will be four gardens open in an event we are running with the Rail Trail volunteer maintenance group.

Good luck to all our member societies for the coming year.

*Cheers from Marg*

# Port Fairy Museum & Archives zone report

The Port Fairy Museum and Archives have had a fantastic but frantic year.

Accreditation took place in November last year and we were informed in January that we had been approved accreditation for the next five years. There are always things to be attended to within a time frame with this program so we have been busy revisiting some of these items.

We received funding from The Moyne Shire Council, Pacific Hydro, The Uebergang Foundation, Port Fairy Branch of the Bendigo Bank and the donation of professional services by Martina Murrhy and Ron Cashmore to build a much needed storage facility. This was completed in June this year and we received another grant from the Public Record Office to fit out this area with a compactus, shelving and metal cupboards. We now face the task of moving our collection into it.

We were notified in September of our successful bid to take part in the Digitisation Project being run by the Museums Aust. Vic Team. This is to be run over two and a half days but the dates have yet to be finalised.

An initiative by the Visitor Information Centre to introduce many of the Port Fairy businesses and tourism enterprises to each other was run again this year it was quite successful for us because as small as our town is, many still do not know we exist.

The Exhibition team has been busy and for the Vintage weekend at the end of September we opened a new Exhibition "Port Fairy in the Fifties" fashion, accessories and toys and the Lillian Powling 1950's photographic collection which will run until the end of January. During that weekend we also held a big book sale to clear a surplus we had acquired due to donations and some of our own we have published. This was a very successful enterprise — both monetary and clearance.

Facebook has been very successful in spreading the word about all the exhibitions, book launches and

sales — our tech savvy Carol makes all the difference.

In June we installed credit card facilities as more and more of our visitors arrive cashless at our doors. This seems to be working well.

The photograph cataloguing team have compiled an album of early photographs and presented it to the residents of Moyneyana house to help start conversations with family and friends regarding times past. We have had some positive feedback from this enterprise.

To keep our presence in front of the public we will hold a stall at the Port Fairy A.P. and H. Society's show. We usually sell some books, photographs and acquire a new member or two.

July saw the end of auditing our family research files, together with our history files this job has taken over three years to complete.

We are now working toward changing our indexing system to a more usable digital system — hopefully this will be completed by the end of the year.

We are launching a new book on Friday 25th October for which we received a grant from the Department of Veterans Affairs. The 311 page book by Richard Patterson called "Port Fairy Wars" relates to how the Boer wars, First and Second World Wars affected Port Fairy and tells the stories of some of the men who fought in them.

**Due to editor being on holidays in mid February deadline for newsletter is end of January**

*Articles wanted of interest from your local area for future newsletters*

# Glenthompson History Group report

Our History Centre has actually been closed since late May pending major repair works. Those works have finally been finished this past week and we are now in the process of getting quotes for new floor and window coverings.

There were quite a lot of areas needing repair, the floor had been damaged by white ants and had become dangerous to everyone coming into the building. Sadly, this required the removal of the entire floor and our status as one of the few that still had original flooring. But the boys doing the works found a few pieces that were unaffected by the ants and cleaned them up and glued them together so we can put them on display. We were also having a serious issue with rising damp and

a new damp causing layer was inserted into the brickwork. Along with drainage works, cleaning and repair of the roof slates and gutters, we are looking to re-open once we have the floor coverings down.

So stay tuned for our re-opening notice.....

*UPDATE: (19/12/2019) We have obtained quotes and are now trying to secure funding to help not only get our flooring finished but some new display and storage units plus block out blinds. We hope to secure this asap and look forward to a grand re-opening when it's all completed.*

***Cheers, Tracey Potatau-Wright Secretary  
Glenthompson Historical Group Inc.  
(AKA Glenthompson History Group)***

# Carisbrook Historical Society zone report

Here we are again and it's lovely to share all the interesting things that has been happening here at Carisbrook. We are still very busy indexing and sorting photos that people have given to us. We have done a few local tours to old places to which opens up more questions for me (I am a new comer to the area — 13 years I've been here and still regarded as a "newbie").

Oh how wonderful if we could only see what it was like back in the gold rush days — all those people living in the local districts compared to now — so hard to imagine how they survived all the things that we today take for granted. Talking to local people — the memories they share are just amazing.

We have also been busy with people contacting us for their history on some of their relatives that once lived

here — all very interesting and a source of learning how life was then.

We are very busy helping Alex with his next display which is quite interesting on Soldier settlers. He has worked so hard to get all the research done and it's a credit to him. We look forward to seeing the display next month.

Well it's almost the 'silly season' again so I would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe holiday time.

***Regards  
Nancy Egan, President  
Carisbrook Historical Society.***



**Members of the Midlands zone about to inspect the East Loddon shearing shed near Serpentine which was built in the 1870s requiring 250,000 hand-made bricks which were made on the property. The shed is believed to be the oldest shearing shed in Victoria still in use.**

— Special thanks to the East Loddon Historical Society for a great day.

# Charlton Golden Grains Museum report

Again we have had a busy six months. We were closed for a few of months while a new ceiling and roof was put in a section of the building. The Museum paid for a quarter of the repairs and the Shire covered the rest (for which we are very thankful.) We have been undergoing constant building repairs due to white ants since 2007 and since then have had two new floors, a new ceiling, roof, rewiring plus other flood repairs. Finally we have turned the corner and hope we don't have to pack up our collection ever again!

We took a coach full of museum members and friends to the Bendigo Art Gallery's Tudors to Windsors exhibition. Fortunately our member Diane is married to a bus driver who sometimes works for free! So we only have to cover bus hire and fuel. We also had a lovely excursion to Inglewood to look at the Eucy Mill Museum, Courthouse, Town Hall and antiques shops.

Our accreditation visit was scheduled for September but was postponed due to our building repairs. However our paperwork was submitted and they appear to be happy with our efforts. Preparing all our policies and procedures was time consuming but well worth the effort. And it gave us a move-a-long to sort out our storage area and make some progress with our uncatalogued items. Ninety percent of our collection is now catalogued (not including photos.) Our indigenous collection was assessed by staff from the Dja Dja

Wurrung Corporation and Aboriginal Victoria. This was an interesting experience and they were very thorough. Our timber shield, clubs, boomerang and spear were of particular interest. We have no provenance for these but are now confident they came from the Dja Dja Wurrung area.

We continue to fundraise with Bingo trips to Donald and are producing our annual museum calendar in time for Christmas. We will also raffle a large photo on wood which is always popular.

We have moved into our new storage facility at the Uniting Church after installing a new floor. This will free up room for our archive which was ridiculously overcrowded. The Uniting Church catering ladies donated \$5,000 towards floor repairs in the old 1876 Wesleyan Chapel which we hope to turn into an additional display space.

Carolyn, our Secretary, completed the Anniversary Bowling Club book in time for the reunion. A big relief! It contained 100 years of the Bowling Club and 60 years of Indoor Bowls. It was launched by the granddaughter of the first Club Secretary, George Day, who was also the first Life member and Club Champion. He was the Charlton postmaster at the time and referred to as the Father of Bowls in Charlton. Next year the Croquet Club turns 140 so another book is in the pipeline.

# Donald History Group zone report

The Donald History Group has enjoyed a range of talks and activities this year. Average attendance at our monthly meetings was 17 with numbers boosted by the attendance of visitors on several occasions. The talks this year have covered a wide range of topics including recollections of working in the local Telephone Exchange, family histories, memories of Georgie Ah Ling our Chinese Market Gardener, establishment of environmental water holes and creation of a tourist destination around an historic Woolshed.

Our August meeting was replaced by a very interesting tour of Watchem area which was led by local farmer David Nicholls. This was to include a visit to Sammy's Lake and the property of Arthur Johnson and his daughter Ruby Goodwin after whom the Johnson Goodwin Aged Care facility in Donald is named but, because of rain in the preceding days the road was impassable. We were however able to visit the local cemetery and the former Watchem Catholic Church which is now owned by the community. There was, of course a sumptuous afternoon tea back at the Watchem Hall.

In September we arranged a film afternoon which was held in the Litchfield Hall which included a variety of photos (taken by Ron Falla) of events linked to the Litchfield School and community plus some Donald films donated to the Group.

A generous request in Ron Falla's will has enabled the Group to upgrade our computer network and install a split-system air conditioner in the Archives.

After a request from the Group the Buloke Shire have erected suitable signage pointing to the Dunstan Memorial Gates at Cope Cope and the site of Sammy's Camp to the east of Donald.

One of our members, John Kumm, is working to put podcasts of talks presented at our Group meetings on to the Website which is a promising way of extending the audience for our activities.

Archivist Anne Walsh and her two assistants continue to deal with a steady flow of enquiries from near and far. We have three volunteers working on indexing past copies of the Donald Times and are progressing through the 1980's.

Two members attended the meeting at Wycheproof conducted by Sue Thompson of the History Victoria Support group. They wanted to know what areas we needed support for either in the Archives or Museum sections. RHSV are interested in organising more workshops or Seminars in the country areas.

To celebrate Heritage Week we had a marquee at the Donald Show showing our publications, album of photos, demonstrating our web site, museum items and a raffle of five framed original postcards of Donald.

# Local soldier settlers exhibition held at Carisbrook



*By Alex Stoneman*

The story of the local WWI soldier settlers was held in an exhibition curated by Carisbrook Historical Society (CHS) on Saturday, November 16 and Sunday, November 17 at the Carisbrook Senior Citizens Hall.

The display was inspired by the exhibition, *From Battle to Farm* which was held at the Old Treasury Building in Melbourne in 2016.

The Federal Government funded the digitisation of the complete official documents held at the Australian National Archives making these freely accessible on the Public Record Office of Victoria website.

Unfortunately some of the records were lost or destroyed by mould.

Over 17,000 soldiers applied for farms in Victoria and 11,000 of them were awarded blocks — mainly in irrigated country such as the Goulburn and the Murray valleys, the Mallee and in Gippsland.

The CHS exhibition included the stories of 60 WWI settlers at Carisbrook, Moolort, Baringhup West, Joyces Creek, Rodborough, Strathlea and Glengower and included documents, letters from settlers and their wives, maps, inspectors' letters and a few photos.

The exhibition highlighted five detailed settler stories and the chequered history of one farmer; block 45 at Glengower.

Quite a few settlers come from the local area but

many were not and some local soldiers took up blocks elsewhere in Victoria.

The exhibition told their stories of acquisition, struggle and eventful success or failure.

Members of the CHS have contributed detailed research on some of the settlers to provide through this exhibition stories which those who came to see the exhibition found fascinating, sad, enlightening, challenging and somewhat confusing.

The documents show the steps discharged soldiers and nurses had to go through to acquire a farm block, the terms and conditions applied by the Australian and Victorian governments to settlers and how they fared in their efforts to prosper.

CHS has contributed over \$1,000 of its own funds to mount this exhibition.

They think it helps to preserve local heritage and enables this history to be shared with the community.

Entry was a gold coin donation and the exhibition was very well received.

Two local guest speakers were in attendance Terry Alan and Fred Seers (both descendants of local WWI soldier settlers.)

The exhibition was an interest to people from all over Victoria as well as locals

*from the Carisbrook Mercury  
October 24, 2019*

## Arapiles Historical Society zone report

The last six months has been a busy time for AHS members.

Easter saw the opening of our ANZAC exhibition in the Court House featuring uniforms, photos and other memorabilia from Natimuk and district participants in the conflicts of the 20th century. The exhibition was again opened for viewing for viewing on Anzac day.

Our sound archivist, Brigitte, has been seeking out the more senior members of our community to record their stories. We see this as a vital role for the society as so much of our early history is now confined to a handful of souls.

This being the year for the Natimuk Frinj festival (Nov 1, 2, 3. our members have been especially busy curating exhibitions for the Court House and, at last, an exhibition for our Garage space to be titled "The Fourth Wave" - depicting the trek and arrival of the first German families to the Natimuk district.

The Frinj will also see the opening of The Climbing Museum in the front room of our Research building. It has been quite an achievement for our climbing committee to bring together memorabilia and equipment from many parts of the country.

**Continued on back page.**

# Midlands Historical Society zone report

Alexander Hugh (Alec) Chisholm, born in Maryborough in 1890, became famous Australia-wide as a journalist, newspaper editor, nature writer, historian, encyclopaedia editor and conservationist. Since his death in Sydney in 1977 his reputation has unfortunately faded from public view.

With just basic primary school education Chisholm spent hours in the local bushland educating himself about the local wildlife. His first job was as a journalist on the Maryborough & Dunolly Advertiser. In later years he was initiator and patron of the town's Wattle Festival.

To preserve his memory our society set up a display in the local Resource Centre as part of the National Trust Heritage Festival in April/May of this year.

One of the most difficult issues is pest management in the buildings (such as the machinery shed and the squatter's hut) which cannot be completely sealed. An interesting complication has developed recently since our gardeners identified an antechinus nest in the grounds. We are taking great care not to injure the tiny native "mouse" and its family.

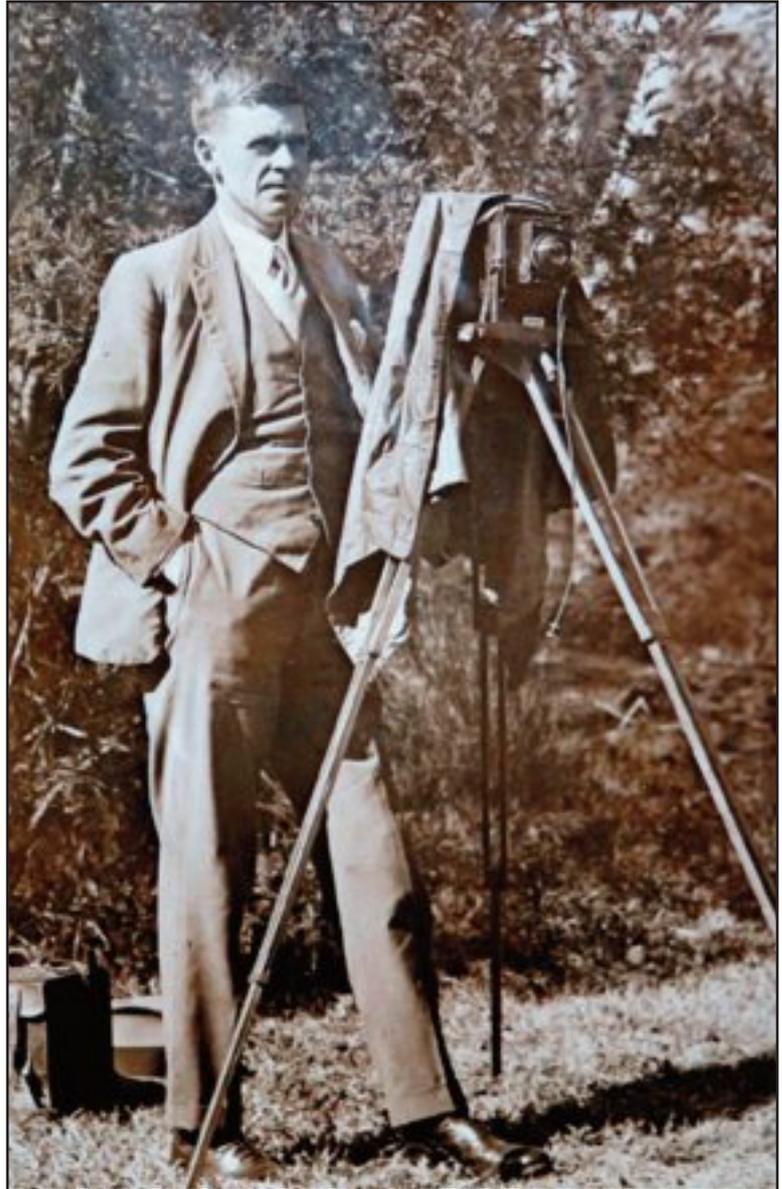
In March our Society was approached by Amelia Marra, Museum Accreditation Program Manager, and invited to contribute to a Key Document Scheme designed to guide organisations through the initial steps of the Accreditation process.

Worsley Cottage was one of five MAP Museums chosen as a potential site for filming a video to highlight the diversity of MAP Museums. The key document to be used in the production was our Statement of Purpose.

Filming took place on April 30 fortunately a warm sunny day. Shooting included a short interview with one of our volunteers along with various activities of the group – this part to be filmed without a soundtrack to enable a voice-over commentary to be added later.

On Friday August 24 more than forty people attended the official launch of a Public Record Office funded TROVE program. This event, held in the Maryborough Library was part of National Family History month.

With the assistance of a Local History Grant from the P.R.O. the Chinese Australian Family Historians of Victoria organised for the digitisation of the Maryborough & Dunolly Advertiser 1857-1867 — a significant period in Maryborough's history. Maryborough Midlands Historical Society co-hosted the event and had previously provided a letter of support in association with the



**Alexander Chisholm at work in the Maryborough bush.**  
original application.

A plaque commemorating the enormous contribution made by Betty and the late Bruce Osborn to our society and to the preservation and recording of Maryborough's history is ready for installation beside the Crepe Myrtle that was planted last year in the Worsley Cottage garden.

Our society recently provide a written response to the Central Goldfields Shire Draft Policy which seeks to regulate the leases that apply to council owned properties. We're hoping to re-negotiate our lease on Worsley Cottage and the Resource Centre in the near future.

Margaret Walkley is doing an incredible job on research and we have Shirley Shultze helping with inputting data.

**Barbara Nielsen, President.**

**Articles wanted of interest from your local area for future newsletters**

# Horsham Historical Society zone report

On 11 September 2019 Rod Jenkinson was made a Life Member of Horsham Historical Society. Rod has been a member for 21 years and he has been scanning and improving photographs, as well as digitizing donated 8 mm and 16 mm films. Rod videos our guest speakers and edits these recordings as well as interviews with local identities as part of Horsham's history. These projects will see him occupied for many years to come.

The committee has one new member this year. At present there are three committee members over 80, one in the 45 – 60 age group and the rest are 60 – 75. We are seeking younger people to see the society survive into the future. All committee members work actively for the society.

In the last two months we have gained the support of two new volunteers Kylie Moore and Robert Lowe.

There are 14 members who are multi skilled and active.

6 people trained to write up input sheets for the photo database

7 people trained to scan photos and negatives

5 people trained to operate our dbtext databases

8 people who carry out various jobs

The Horsham Historical Society rooms are busy every Tuesday and Wednesday afternoon when we are open to

the public. As well there are volunteers working every morning from Monday to Thursday when the ROOMS are closed to the public.

Our files were not in strict alpha order which led to files not being returned to the correct position. The 1,906 files have now been numbered and catalogued by drawer and file number on our database making them easier to locate. We were given 1,575 files by the Wimmera Mail Times when they downsized. These files cover the period 1980 to about 2005 and were in alphabetical order, and are also catalogued.

An audit of our library of 3,345 books, reports and maps etc. has been carried out. Three books were missing so we need to improve management of this area.

On 18 October the Society held events for History Week. A Pub Walk covering the history of the hotels had great support with 25 people attending. This event was under the control of Wendy Donald, Helen Curkpatrick and Peter Ackroyd who all did an excellent job. In the afternoon we offered two sessions at 2pm and 3pm of a talk and tour of the Society rooms. These events were well supported by the committee and one member, but just three community attendees. This approach will need to be rethought in future.

Lindsay Smith, President.

## Proposed WVAHS Incentive Award

*The purpose of the award is to recognise and encourage a WVAHS member group for a project conducted in the previous year.*

A group may nominate their project at a date specified by board

The award will be decided by the WVAHS Executive prior to the AGM or alternatively voted on by members at the AGM (up to 2 votes per club) with a presentation by each nomination or finalists if too many.

### The \$100 award will be awarded at the AGM

#### Guidelines for nominations

What was your project?

When did your project take place?

How did it feature your community?

How many members were involved?

Where did your group source the information?

Did it have public display or involvement?

How many people or groups were involved?

Have you an interesting story to tell. Contact editor on [robinparker81@hotmail.com](mailto:robinparker81@hotmail.com)

# Barham-Koondrook Historical Society zone report

Time once again to report on our Society's activities as the year rapidly draws to a close. Hopefully we'll complete just a few more projects in the time available to add to successes for the year. But it's a good thing that our volunteers are prepared to invest many of their own personal hours outside of our one working day each week!

In addition to the many research enquiries that we've been able to handle in the usual flow of activities we've been heavily involved in three projects which have proved to be very time-consuming. Two are on-going and revolve around organising material for separate displays relating to the tramway precinct here in Koondrook; the other was to research, plan and set-up the display needed to support the 2019 Melbourne Cup tour of country areas. This was successfully completed in time for the tour in mid-July.

Grant money has again proved to be a win-or-lose proposition with several smaller grants being denied. However we were fortunate enough to receive funding for some additional computer equipment (including an A-3 colour printer and scanner) and for some much-needed shelving and storage items.

Our 2019 A4-sized pictorial calendar — featuring River Boats — proved to be a good seller and provided some handy profits. And again we have been able to supplement our operating costs with a couple of street raffles and the very welcome funds generated by a meat raffle at the local hotel once every six weeks.

Our rooms in Punt Road (housed in the old Myall School building) have been re-painted with some financial assistance from the local Lions. We now need to look at some minor re-stumping for the School building. And, because of problems getting funding for bulk renovations for the Baptist Church building, we have made the decision to break the project into several stages. Re-stumping is the initial important step and we're heading towards target on getting this work financed. Hopefully obtaining funds or grants for the work needed in the next stages will not prove to be so difficult.

In closing I'd like to extend best wishes to our fellow Zone Societies - to your committee members, donors, visitors, customers and, most of all, your dedicated volunteers - the amount of time and effort they contribute is invaluable and noteworthy. Thank you all.

**Allan J. Tompkins, President**

## Swan Hill Historical Society zone report

Firstly, thanks to all those who attended the Western Vic AGM in Swan Hill. We appreciated the excellent numbers who attended and feedback we received.

Over winter we held weekend meetings which has received good attendances but unfortunately our committee meetings have struggled with numbers over the past few months. We are considering different approaches to make the committee meetings successful in the new year.

For the winter meetings we try to visit outlying towns so Piangil and Ultima were our places of choice. Member Jeannette Mathews conducted considerable research and, combined with her local knowledge of Ultima, provided an interesting tour - talking on a town that opened up the Mallee with the railway. Jeanette's collection of photos helped paint the picture.

Following the donation of the Dunoon Mitchell photographic collection we have had a 'slide night' showing a selection of the hundreds of photos which have been

digitised. We hope to have an exhibition soon.

Local GP Dr Stewart Booth provided an informative talk on death certificates and the processes involved. He had comprehensively researched the topic going back centuries and provided up to date information as well.

Research enquiries have become a bit slower of late but have given some of our newer volunteers a bit more time to learn.

My visit to the Genealogical Society of Victoria AGM was a very rewarding experience to learn more about the society, the people involved and the projects they conduct. As a result Michael Rumpff will be visiting Swan Hill on Sunday 24 November to talk on German research. Any groups are welcome to attend this free session. Enquiries to myself on **0428 584 325**.

**Steve Pentreath, President**

**Swan Hill Genealogical & Historical Society**

## Goldfields Historical & Arts Society (Dunolly Museum) zone report

The Goldfields Historical & Arts Society is not present today as we have our own celebration. This is being held at Moliagul to honour Rev John Flynn's new image on the \$20 note. John Flynn was born in Moliagul.

At Dunolly our major project has been the lining and insulating of the museum ceiling. The final section was completed in August and funded to the amount of

\$6,500 by the Bendigo Community Bank. The museum is now cleaner, brighter and has less dust.

We held two tours for the year. One was to the former Greek Village in the forest near Carisbrook and the other to Murphy's Creek where we visited sites of former buildings, a cemetery and a volcano.

**John Tully, President**

# Camperdown & District Historical Society Inc. zone report

Since our report in March this year our Society has retained strong membership numbers, has added a few more volunteer workers and is financially healthy.

All members of the executive committee chose to continue serving in the same positions as for the previous year.

Book sales, research requests and photograph sales all remain strong.

Recent major acquisitions include a significant amount of records and memorabilia from Camperdown Hospital including a display and storage cabinet. Two new volunteers (highly qualified in health records) are in the process of recording the many and varied records. We need to be mindful of privacy laws relating to some of these records.

We have also received memorabilia from 'Talindert' (a property sold this week) after being in the Manifold family since settlement of this district. Another new volunteer has been instrumental in identifying the compre-

hensive saddlery items received. When sorted and catalogued some of the items will form part of a planned display on the Manifold family. Some of the items will feature in our late October newsletter.

The society once again ran the well attended 'Lecture program' at the Robert Burns Festival in July and speakers are now being sourced for next year's event.

An enjoyable visit for members to the Cole family property 'West Cloven Hills' was held in May and a bus trip to Budj Bim for 24 members will be held this coming Thursday.

Our end of year BYO picnic dinner will be held at 'Chocolyn Homestead' in December.

Our quarterly newsletters for members, regular Facebook posts and monthly 'Pictured Past' photos in the Camperdown Chronicle result in the community being aware of our existence.

*Maree Belyea, Secretary*

## Birchip Historical Society zone report

Birchip helped with the research of some WW1 and WW2 soldiers for the Centenary of the RSL in Birchip celebrated on the ANZAC weekend this year. Our Museum has a specific War Room of artefacts and uniform pieces plus several Honour Boards from halls and schools in the area.

We are working on funding for fencing and erecting the former GWM ditchers which were once used to dig the channels and open up our part of the Mallee. We have the once well used QBM (Queen's Bridge Motors) ditchers. The biggest is 17 tonnes and was once used to build the Waranga Channel. Two smaller ones were used on local farm channels. We have applied for unneeded cyclone fencing from Mt Wycheproof area to help secure these machines at Sunset Taylor Park on the edge of town.

School students have visited the museum this year looking for replacement photos for the Curyo Fire shed. We were able to photocopy what they needed showing the early township of Curyo.

We have received and displayed a beautiful silver trophy from the Morton Plains Tennis team from the 1930's.

We found that we once had a clothing factory which made men's coats and waterproof jackets from 1946 to 1949.

We have recently acquired the Young Farmers' Honour Board. The group ceased to exist in the 1990's.

Several family research projects have been done during the year and visits from several former town residents who were very happy with research done.

A successful hamper raffle to raise funds and we are also going to have funds donated to us from the local

B and S Committee who are a wonderful asset to our struggling organisations.

Two members attended a very interesting meeting run by the RHSV History Support Group on 26 September and were able to tell them the names of a treasured photo that had been in the Wycheproof log cabin collection and now in the museum. It was a photo of Joseph Lockwood and family. We have had very good interaction and help from our neighbouring societies at Charlton, Donald, Wycheproof, Watchem and Nullawil.

We supplied photos of Premiership teams for the Birchip Watchem Football Club for the reunions of 1959, 1969 and 1999 years.

Our secretary has been to Wycheproof Shire Office recently to check out Shire record books that have been stored under the stage. They are available for us when they have been scanned if we are a registered POD.

If not then they will be destroyed. How ridiculous as they have been under the Hall stage since amalgamation of the Shire or before. Ours stored there are ledger books, Country Roads Board loans and works and various other Shire loans books. We have others from earlier times. Some towns have three times as many as our 10 to check out.

Our archivist has been re indexing some of our earlier newspapers as they were no longer compatible with the computer programme being used now.

Members are going to go to Nullawil next month for a day about digitising photos.

We are still short of members but have one new one since our AGM.

*Maureen Donnellon, Secretary.*

# Pyramid Hill & District Historical Society zone report

Greetings to you all

We farewelled Margaret Williamson who is now a resident in a Nursing Home in Box Hill and near her daughter. She will be greatly missed as her life was the Museum and the Historical Society. She became less able to do house work and gardening so kept busy with the computer compiling information from the Pyramid Hill Advertiser. Her eyes have been troubling her more of late.

We are hoping to attract some younger members by changing our meeting time back to 7.30 pm. We changed to 10 am when our President Cliff lost his licence and was able to be brought in to town on Tuesdays to work at the Museum and do shopping.

We are still working on the history of the Caledonian Society and would like to obtain the services of a Pipe band and launch the book next year. It has been a very interesting exercise researching how the Scots all got together for Sports Days with Highland dancing and Piping contests — Burns' nights and concerts went on for years. Representatives attended meetings of the Victorian Caledonian Society.

We have had several enquiries — photos of railways for a history of railways and family history (one in particular was from descendants of a WW1 returned soldier who was granted closer settlement land). I asked for information in the local paper, searched a number of years through the Pyramid Hill Paper and found land that had been sold to the Soldier or Closer Settlement Board Committee. I was unable to find any reference to soldiers who had been chosen to go on the land. Research was done at PROV by one of the

relatives who found out the Parish and allotment number so I arranged with a local couple to take them out to see the land. They travelled by train from Melbourne in the morning and returned in the afternoon after having a great day. The folk who own the land were very interested to see them, showed them the site where the house was and a photo of it. The gentleman who took them out enjoyed the day too. The returned soldier, William Henry Goedecke, had done a number of improvements to the land but health problems, saffron thistles and rabbits were a big problem so he was on the land for almost 12 months.

Another interesting phone call was asking when the Colonial Bank closed at Pyramid Hill. Tungamah folk are researching WW1 servicemen and discovered one had enlisted from Pyramid Hill - he was working in the National Bank. Apparently the National Bank took over the Colonial Bank about 1918 however, recorded in our book 'Portrait of Pyramid Hill 1890 to 1909' from the Pyramid Hill Advertiser, the Pyramid Hill Colonial Bank closed in 1895. On his enlistment paper he worked at the National Bank at Mt Pyramid. The old town at the Hill was known as Mt Pyramid but when the town moved across the Bullock creek to the railway line the town was known as Pyramid Hill. The National Bank was in the new town in 1915 when he enlisted.

Before the school holidays we had four students from the College volunteer to help at the Museum with cleaning in the annex and gardening.

Many thanks to East Loddon Historical Society for organising Midlands zone meeting — it was thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

## Arapiles Historical Society zone report

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Also, as part of the Frinj, two theatre groups will be conducting performances in the old gaol and at the Natimuk cemetery. Another artist has gathered stories from rural women of the district for a show titled "Voices from the Land".

We have revitalised our website recently and it is steadily gaining more attention.

Our research team is now working on the second edition of our Walking Tour of Natimuk booklet including an index (which should be a great addition to this popular publication.)

We have been successful with a couple of grant applications recently with funds enabling us to purchase another split system for our research room and to paint the room housing the Climbing Museum. The Natimuk Lions Club has again supported us with funds to purchase dividing screens for the Garage space.

As has been the case for some years now we have again committed to another year of Bunnings sausage sizzles.

These have been a great source of reasonably reliable income for the society.

*Peter French, President  
Arapiles Historical Society*

Thanks to Swan Hill Genealogical Historical Society and the the Genealogical Historical Society of Victoria for the wonderful afternoon on November 24 with Michael Rumpff of the G.S.V. give a talk and powerpoint presentation on German research which I found of immense interest.

In the next issue of the W.V.A.H.S. newsletter hopefully will include some internet addresses on the subject.

Besides the G.S.V. another useful group is the International Settlers Group with meetings in Feb., May., Aug. and Nov. Annual membership \$11, newsletters, Jan., Apr., Jul. and Oct.

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Editor.