

Western Historian

September
2018
No. 220

Newsletter of the

Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Inc.

A0020504K

Societies cost — [Print or PDF, included in annual fee \$30.]

Individual Subscribers \$15.00

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March 2018 W.V.A.H.S. Newsletter

Page 2	President's Report
Page 3.	Report from Horsham Historical Society.
Page 4.	The Oliver Bros. — Founders of Nhill.
Page 5.	Kanawinka Writers and Historians report.
Page 6-7	1904 Jubilee of Maryborough.
Page 7.	Midlands zone meeting invitation.
Page 8-9.	The world's first utility.
Page 9.	Try Facebook for identifying photographs.
Page 10.	Port Fairy A.G.M.
Page 11.	R.H.S.V. — History Week October 7-14.
Page 12-13.	Bealiba Railway Station invites you.
Page 13.	Genealogy and the Victorian railways.
Page 14-15.	Rail-coach tour to Bealiba railway station.
Page 15-16.	Up and coming rail and or coach tours.
Page 16.	The great fire at Inglewood in 1862.
Page 17.	Confession and execution at Ballarat.
Page 18.	Gardens of the National Trust (Victoria.)

The next
WVAHS AGM
will be held at
Swan Hill
Saturday,
March 30, 2019

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Arapiles	Ararat	Ararat Rail Heritage	Balmoral
Barham/Koondrook	Birchip	Boort	Camperdown
Carisbrook	Casterton	Charlton	Cobden
Cohuna	Colac	Coleraine	Dimboola
Derrinallum/Lismore	Donald	Dunkeld	East Loddon
Edenhope	Geelong S/W/Rail	Glenthompson	Goldfields
Halls Gap	Harrow	Hawkesdale	Heytesbury
Horsham	Hopetoun	Inglewood	Kerang
Koroit	Maryborough	Minyip	Mortlake
Nullawil	Ouyen	Port Fairy	Portland
Pyramid Hill	Rainbow	Rupanyup	St. Arnaud
Stawell	Swan Hill	Terang	Warracknabeal
Warrnambool	Woolsthorpe		

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

WVAHS President's Report

Spring is here and the next round of zone meetings will soon be taking place. I encourage all member societies to attend. It is encouraging to see how many societies are represented at most of our gatherings.

One thought that I would like all to consider is promotion of local history book sales. Most societies have published numerous books and booklets on aspects of their local history over the years and some bring them along to the zone meetings and the AGM. I have been thinking that we could provide a 'Bookshop' page in this publication where books for sale could be briefly listed with prices and contact details for how to purchase them. I am aware that some bodies are now heading towards publishing information in electronic form (rather

than printed pages) but that can also be catered for. Unless a wider audience are aware of material that has been prepared and is available it often just circulates in the local community.

Most societies have a website, facebook page or other means of communicating what they do and what they have to offer but a page combining information for sale may assist with making it more widely available. Such a page could also be transferred to our own website. On that topic I hope that we may soon finalise improvement of our website and commence to make regular posts on media such as Facebook so that we may use those resources to inform the wider community about our activities.

Carisbrook Historical Society books for sale

Recent books completed by the Carisbrook Historical Society include Old Maryborough Doings in the 1850s, 1860s and 1870s. Articles found in the Maryborough and Dunolly Advertiser in 1917 and 1918 — averaging 56 pages. — 3 books \$20 each.

The popular Scribe series of books was a much bigger project of original stories found in the Maryborough Advertiser between 1939 and 1967 from memories of original inhabitants of the district — great reading covering all aspects of life on the goldfields and surrounds.

Books vary in size from 48 pages to 120 pages in size. These books sell from \$20. In excess of 1500 pages in the complete set of Scribe books.

**For orders contact Robin Parker on
0459 032 068
or write to Carisbrook Historical Society
19 Bucknall Street, Carisbrook 3464.**



Report from Horsham Historical Society

Our databases (Photo, Museum and Library) continue to increase thanks to some dedicated members and volunteers who have been busy scanning and inputting. The Tuesday morning group has been busy organising hundreds of photos ready for computer input. Volunteers — Cheryl Muir and Stuart Bennett have been assisting.

The Society has received a generous donation from the Estate of Clive Smith. Clive was a former President and a valued member. The donation from his daughters — Jennifer Smith and Diane Dale — will go towards the purchase of video equipment, binding copies of the Wimmera Mail Times and other projects. As recognition the Society has named the Computer/Input room - 'The Clive Smith Room'. The plaque will be unveiled at the HHS Meeting on 8th August.

We have been successful in Grants from — The Horsham Sports and Community Club (HSCC) for a video camera and Horsham Rural City Council - Community Development Grant: for binding copies of the Wimmera Mail Times. President Rod Jenkinson was interviewed by Glenn Carroll, Manager — Horsham Sports and Community Club about previous grants made to the Society. The HSCC is producing a video of some of the recipient clubs and how they have used the grants.

The Society continues to have projects on the go including a monthly history column in the Wimmera Mail Times. May-July articles include: Church of Christ, Wirraway Aircraft and the Butter Factory.

A current project is assisting the Horsham Show to prepare for their 140th Grand Annual Agricultural Show by allowing them to use our photos, films and video footage for an audio visual production to be screened

at the Show in October 2018. The HHS will sell DVDs of the compilation. We are also copying the Show collection and the Lance Trigg collection of photos for our database and to screen at the Show.

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on Wednesday 11 July with a new committee elected but some familiar faces missing. Thanks to all those members who assisted during the last twelve months Dino McMillan for conducting the election and Janet Allan for writing the minutes.

Warracknabeal Herald April 1914

Golden Wedding Celebration at Beulah Mr. and Mrs. Paul Barbary

A unique company assembled at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Barbary "Halton House" Beulah on Saturday afternoon April 11th for the purpose of doing honor to the old couple on the occasion of the celebration of their golden wedding. Both Mr. and Mrs. Barbary are very highly esteemed residents having been in the district close on 20 years. They were married at Salisbury, South Australia, on April 11th 1864 by the Rev. W. Nichols. They followed farming pursuits in South Australia, came to the mallee when it was opened up and successfully farmed at Beulah West until four years ago when they retired and settled in Beulah. Their family consists of three sons and seven daughters all of whom are married and they have 32 grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Toasts suitable to the occasion were honored.

The Rev. Green, in proposing the toast of the bride and bridegroom of 50 years' standing referred to the importance of the occasion. Few couples lived to celebrate such an event and it gave him great pleasure to meet all the members of the Barbary family. He wished Mr. and Mrs. Barbary much joy and happiness with God's blessing during the remaining years of their life.

Mr. Barbary feelingly responded on behalf of his wife and himself. He said he felt very proud of this event in their lives and they were delighted to see all their sons and daughters present.

**WVAHS Southern zone
meeting to be held at
Colac History Centre
Gellibrand Street
Opp. Railway Station.**

**Saturday, October 13, 2018
10am start.**

**WVAHS Midlands zone
meeting to be held at
Carisbrook Fire Station
Cnr. Green and Urquhart Sts.**

**Saturday, October 20, 2018
10am start.**

**WVAHS Wimmera zone
meeting to be held at
Warracknabeal
Agricultural Museum
Saturday, October 27, 2018
10am start
Executive meeting
to follow at 12 noon.**

The Oliver Brothers – Founders of Nhill

By Jan Liddicut, great great granddaughter of Frank Oliver.

When John Melbourne Oliver and his older brother Francis (Frank) Henry Oliver applied for a "rural store site" allotment in 1879 and built a flour mill in Nhill they made a strategic decision. There were no mills between Dimboola and the South Australian border and if growers took grain for milling into South Australia they had to pay a Colonial border tax. Until the railway was extended in 1887 it took at least three days to cart grain to Dimboola and up to five to Horsham. It was hot, dusty and arduous work.

So a flour mill half way between the two was a good idea. It was the catalyst for the development of the ever resilient and resourceful Nhill township.

Frank Oliver was born in Sithney, Cornwall in 1837. His father John Duncalf Oliver was a skilled miller in a family of millers and all four of John's sons became millers. He migrated to Adelaide with his wife Maryann and year old Frank in 1838 and their daughter Sarah was born off the coast of Western Australia a week before landing in Gawler Bay. But there were no mills in South Australia until 1842 and in 1840 the family tried their luck in Van Diemen's Land.

There were nine mills in Hobart, but economically, things were grim and in 1844 the family relocated to Melbourne with their second son Frederick Thomson Oliver. They lived in Melbourne for a number of years and welcomed two more sons and another daughter to their family – John Melbourne, Orlando and Susan Annie.

By the time John Melbourne and Frank Oliver settled in Nhill the family had been involved with a number of mills in Port Arlington, Geelong, Mount Bolton, Coghill's Creek, Ararat, Horsham and Longerenong. Frank was the entrepreneur and during the 1870s he also built three grain stores in Ararat, Horsham and Stawell.

The Olivers believed in the grain growing future of the West Wimmera but, being at the mercy of the seasons, grain prices, labour costs, pests, rabbits and wild dogs meant life was economically uncertain. Millers also acted like bankers. Paying farmers in advance for their grain, taking risks and assuming crops would be successful.

The mill built in 1880 at what is now 34 Victoria Street the site of Oliver's Restaurant. A three storey timber building with a large chimney and a slab hut at the rear. The initial licence for the three acre site was taken up in the name of John Melbourne Oliver because Frank Oliver was in financial strife. Until 1884 all advertisements were in John's name but once Frank's bankruptcy was cleared, all advertisements were in his company name — F. H. Oliver and Co.

Within two years the town had a saddler's shop, black smith shops, two butchers, a state school, post and telegraph office, a bank, police quarters and two churches as well as the mill. Frank Oliver in particular was instrumental in the development of the Mechanic's

Institute, a school, the hospital. The Masonic Lodge and the Methodist Church serving on the committees of these organisations. He also led the lobby for the railway extension from Dimboola. J.M. Oliver also served on some of these committees but he was more interested in farming his selections.

In 1885 Frank Oliver was elected as Councillor for the new Lowan Shire and was nominated as Shire President. He worked tirelessly for road and infrastructure improvements, rabbit and vermin control and the Nhill Hospital. He worked hand in hand with William MacDonald who, despite his initial scepticism of the mill's development, went on to become a leading light of the town.

In 1886 known as 'the big man in town' Frank Oliver again went bankrupt as the Victorian Colonial economy became increasingly fragile and drought hit. A victim of the world wide depression that lasted throughout the 1890s and his own business decisions. Frank Oliver lost everything, left the town and moved to Goroce where he had the role of supervising the building of a new mill and became its first manager.

In 1897 a freak cyclone destroyed Frank's mills in Nhill and Goroce and much of the townships.

In the following years Frank built and managed mills in Cootamundra and Wallendbeen, N.S.W. before the family moved to Western Australia to take advantage of the Kalgoorlie gold rush. He was employed by various business interests to establish community co-operative mills in Northam, Wagin and Geraldton and for a time owned the flour mill in Williams. In total he built 17 mills in three Colonies.

Frank Oliver died in Geraldton on 24 April, 1915. His wife Emma moved to Narrogin to live with their daughter Annie Hoffman. She died on 31 May, 1923. John Melbourne Oliver sold his farm in Nhill in 1903 and with wife Annie moved back to Geelong where Annie died in 1904. John returned to the Wimmera and lived in Horsham where his son, John Duncalf Oliver Jnr was manager of Noske's mill before moving to NSW where he died at John's home in Albury on 23 September, 1916.

Their lives were never easy.

Jan has put all of this information into a book entitled "Grist for the Mill". She left two copies of this book with the Nhill Historical Society and she plans to leave more copies for sale in Nhill as well.

Compiled by Robin S. Parker for the
**Western Victorian
Association of
Historical Societies.**

Mar. — Jun. — Sep. — Dec.

Kanawinka Writers and Historians report

On Saturday June 30th and July 1st 2018. I attended the "Writing the Past" held at Naracoorte Sheep's Back Museum Naracoorte which was both inspiring and educational. Rosalie Triolo (Award winning Melbourne History Educator) spoke on planning a publication project, Liz Harfill (Best Selling author (Almost an Island, Story of Robe, Blue Ribbon Cookbook spoke of background research, reading, organising the material and creating the initial structure of a book.

Anthony Laube (Newspaper Curator, Mortlock Library and Trove Specialist) was most interesting with how writers and historians can get the most from Trove. Marion Hextall was very informative with her comprehensive knowledge of the online sources of value for South Australian and Victorian related research.

The two workshops Saturday and repeated on the Sunday were interesting, informative and interactive along with inspiring.

Workshop A.

Kristin Weidenbach engaged those present in bringing history to life — how to write engaging history, building writing skills covering the tools writers can use. She gave an inspiring address about the challenges and joys of engaging history, current trends in creating non-fiction writing and why it's important to tell local stories.

Workshop B.

Rosalie Triolo spoke of broadening perspectives featuring a series of practical exercises, exploring diverse perspectives and sources, interpreting material and paying attention to detail considering alternative structures to standard chronological approach.

Judy Murdoch (president of Kanawinka Writers and Historians and Author) spoke of recognising what makes a community individual; looking for cause and effect; and respecting the lives of the people we write about.

There were speakers who spoke about publishing and production. The costs, time-frame and expectations, working with a publisher or self-publishing and open book advice when creating family trees and histories.

What did I enjoy the most..

The two day workshops were very helpful to my personal story writing. I learnt how important it is for future generations to write the past. Don't rely on memory — cameras, interviews, newspapers and oral histories are best. Always find the fact not the fiction when producing non-fiction stories. To cap off the two days I was intrigued, inquisitive, excited to have a tour of the World Heritage Blanche Cave by Geologist Ian Lewis. In chapter 6 of J.C Hamilton's — Pioneering Days in Western Victoria — [My great great grandfather] speaks of the petrified Aborigine in the cave. My curiosity is why when one has a tour of the cave it's not spoken of unless a tourist who has knowledge of him asks the question? What of the missing Aborigine was found and lost again. Around 1861 Father Julian Tennison Woods, a priest, geologist and naturalist found the body and

wrote a book "Geological Observations" but before the book was printed the body was stolen and was later found in Mt. Gambier. It was returned to the cave to its original resting place but enclosed behind bars, by 1862 he was stolen again and exhibited in Sydney. The exhibition never lasted long and then he popped up in the Mme. Tussaud's exhibition London. In 1868 the body was sold at auction in England. Nothing more is recorded of the body. However when the Aboriginal cricketers visited England in 1868, one of the team named "Tiger" (*Bonmbarngeet*) claimed to be a son of the dead Aborigine. The intriguing label of "**Petrification**" was nothing more than journalistic sensationalism. The bars where the Aborigine was found remain secured to the spot in the Blanche Cave today. It worth a tour for those interested. It certainly interested me with my recent book "Bringalbert Bat and Ball" and the Aboriginal Cricketers of 1868.

Sunday 9th September 2018



You are invited to the
Bealiba Railway Station
140th Birthday
Celebration



Go to page 12 for details.
Come and make a day of it.

MARYBOROUGH'S JUBILEE — EARLY DAYS ON SIMSON'S DIGGINGS.

From the Melbourne Argus, Saturday May 21, 1904

Maryborough will celebrate the jubilee of its foundation in July. It is just 50 years since gold was discovered on Simson's run. The news spread quickly and, in a few months 50,000 diggers were on the field, a canvas town sprang up as if by magic and Maryborough's career began.

We are left in no manner of doubt as to how the town received its name. In the town clerk's office is a neatly written letter, still well preserved, though 50 years old which explains this. It is dated "Camp, Maryborough, 10th July, 1854" and addressed to Mr. Macnamara, Melbourne.

After friendly greetings, the letter proceeds: - "I have been a sort of itinerant commissioner for the past five months knocking about from stations on the gold-fields. I am just after forming a new camp of my own to which I have given the name of Maryborough and expect to be fixed here for some time." The writer was Commissioner James Daly.

The borough council, which is arranging for the jubilee celebration, has received several interesting historic relics of the early history of the town. One of these is a copy of the circular issued by the first vigilance committee formed for maintaining law and order on the field. It sets out that "the committee is not in favour of lynching"! Members of the committee were required to promptly report bad characters who might be met with and stand by each other in time of need. The document was forwarded by Mr. Charles Tattam of South Yarra who was a member of the committee. Mr. Tattam wrote as follows:- "When you have read the names of the committee there may be some alive you know which I hope there is, besides myself. The D. H. McDonald may be Dr. McDonald who I believe is living at Sale. He is a Canadian and was an active man in the early days. Dr. Barrett broke his neck when 'Nobbler' fell. He lived several days in great agony. Dr. F. H. I. Laidman, who was digging or shepherding a claim at the time, came into Maryborough and attended to Dr. Barrett until he died. Three diggers, a doctor, and two others who came from Mount Moliagul to the White Hills were the real openers of Maryborough.

They were there several months before they were discovered. Mr. Hector Norman Simson frequently had a talk with them. They always said they were not doing much. They kept a matchbox with a little gold in and showed that. Simson said. 'You would never waste your time here for that little gold.' He then put up a notice on the bridge 'This way to the new goldfield.' At the first of the rush some new chums had come up from Melbourne straight from the ship'. All ships brought mails then. I immediately walked down to Melbourne as my letters were addressed to the post office Melbourne and walked back with my letter which I have yet. It has a postmark on it. That was before envelopes came into use."

The president of the vigilance committee was Mr. D. K Campbell, the treasurer, Mr. Burchett and the members of the committee Messrs. J. P. Armstrong, Barne-ton, Dr. Barrett, H. Benjamin, Bingay, C. Cameron, Campbell, R. Campbell, Cate, Chalmers, Coulter, W. P. Davis, Dawson, Fitzpatrick, R. Fullerton, Gardiner, R. Gow, J. Hastie, Hooper, Howard Kitching, Kerr, H. Levi, McLandress, D. H. McDonald, A. McCleary, D. M'Kay, M. Mitchell, T. Norton, E. Prince, Ritchie, Roberts, Solomon, B. Spears. Stephenson, Dr. Stilwell, Triggs, A. Wills, and Wingfield.

A hospital was established in Maryborough's first year of its existence. It was a crude slab structure with a canvas roof and earthen floor and provided 11 beds. Dr. Robert Dunn became surgeon in 1857 and retained the position until 1902 — a long unbroken record of 44 1/2 years. He is still a resident of Maryborough and his reminiscences of the early days are deeply interesting.

"When I took charge of the hospital," he said during a recent chat, "I had just got my diploma. My life's work has been put in here and I have seen many changes both in this district and in the state. There was no other hospital then outside of Ballarat, and we used to receive cases from the surrounding diggings right away up to Pleasant Creek (as Stawell was called in those days), Ararat, and Avoca.

They were mostly broken limbs, not infrequently broken backs and burns. Tents so easily caught fire. The hospital was a slab-sided building with a canvas roof and fly. The earthen floor was covered with a bit of matting. My quarters were a slab hut of two rooms, lined with hessian. The bedroom was just about big enough to hold the bed. The slabs warped and gaped so that I could see what was going on in the street when lying in bed. I managed in time to plaster up the cracks with clay. You had to help yourself in those days. I remember a laughable incident in connection with my house decoration. Mr. (afterwards Sir John) O'Shanassy a great political gun at that time had promised to visit the town and as the hospital was one of the showplaces, I knew he would be brought to see us. I thought my quarters looked rather shabby so I bought some gay wallpaper — a bright green, by the way — as a compliment to O'Shanassy. I got the help of a ginger-beer manufacturer who had been a paperhanger and we got to work in great style on the job. We had got the walls done and then cut out the ceiling and had it all pasted together on a couple of rickety tables on which we were mounted ready to put it up when a great shout arose in the street that the cavalcade which had gone out to meet the visitors were streaming in across the lead.

In our haste to get a look we crashed through the tables with the pasted paper on top of us. We had to pick it off in bits, and as all the shops were closed, we had to make the best of it. In spite of the mishap I thought the rooms next morning looked rather swelly.

O'Shanassy after inspecting them thought so too!

The district became a municipality in 1857 and it really acquired this distinction through a curious mistake of the Government. Some time previously De Pas Bros. had established a grocery business (which the late Mr. 'Mat' Mitchell managed.) They had applied for and obtained from the public offices in Melbourne a wine and spirit license. But soon after the license was issued the Government officers found that a license could not be issued in a district that was not within a municipal boundary. They wanted the license returned but De Pas Brothers would not give it up. In the end the difficulty was got over by proclaiming the district a municipality. Mr. Alexander McLandress was the first mayor."

One of the early municipal councillors, Mr. T. Casey, is still hale and hearty, and still in office. Mr. Casey was elected in 1859 and, with one short break of a year he has sat at the borough council table ever since and has thus a record of 44 years service. When the fire brigade was established in 1861 he was elected first captain and has held the position without a break to the present time.

"I am a Canadian" said Mr. Casey "and shortly after my arrival in Victoria I made my way up to Maryborough arriving here at the end of 1854 — the year the rush took place. There were between 50,000 and 60,000 diggers on the field. The whole town was canvas and it was a lively centre. The road up through the Black Forrest to Castlemaine and then on to here was streaming with traffic — coaches, drays, waggons, wheelbarrows and foot passengers. Freight was £10 per ton from Melbourne and flour was at famine prices. Mutton however was cheap. The whole population lived on damper and mutton before the bakeries sprang up.

Water had to be carted from the Deep Creek at Carisbrook five miles away and sold at 1/6 a bucket. The lead extended over eight miles. A great deal of it was surfacing and very rich gold was obtained. The great drawback was want of water. The wash-dirt had to be stacked till rain came or carted to the creek at Carisbrook. The population was unstable and continually shifting.

Rushes broke out all over the place. At night a rumour would come that gold had been found in some distant gully and in the morning hundreds of tents were folded and their owners streamed off to the new find. Then they would surge back again just as suddenly. Doctors, lawyers professional men, business men, clerks, labourers, all sorts and conditions were out with pick and shovel, hunting for gold.

One of the stirring incidents of the early days was the capture of Black Douglas the bushranger. He was taken by the diggers some miles out and brought into the town. A big police camp had been formed in the town for the gold escort. The four horse coach which carried the gold was flanked with a line of mounted troopers.

Travelling in those days was slow and mostly by waggons. Men preferred to walk and thought of tramping to Melbourne and back. I did the journey in this way on several occasions. Our town remained under canvas for a considerable time. There was nothing else to build with. The surrounding country was covered with a fine forest of ironbark but it did not split into good shingles or building timber. At Ballarat the shingling industry became quite an important one as the timber there was suitable for the purpose."

Midlands zone meeting invite

Carisbrook Historical Society invites members to attend the Midlands zone meeting to be held at the Carisbrook Fire Station on October 20, 2018.

Meet and greet at 10am followed by meeting at 10.30. A tour of the town's places of interest will follow the meeting for those interested.

Lunch can be provided at the Britannia Hotel, Green Street Carisbrook at members expense.

As the current editor of the Western Historian I am seeking articles of up to a half page on what is happening in your society or articles from your area of historical interest.

Please contact Helen Curkpatrick on haven273@outlook.com or write to 273 Old Hamilton Road, Haven 3401. In word preferred and any photos in jpg format.

The world's first utility built in Geelong



This 1930 Ford Model A Utility was one of several prototypes produced by Ford Australia in 1932.

When the Maryborough Advertiser researched the story on Daryl Maffescioni's ZA Ford Fairlane it didn't take us long to discover Daryl's love of all things Ford and his knowledge on virtually any Ford product.

One particular vehicle in his collection has a huge historical significance — both to Ford Australia and the Australian motor industry.

In 1932 a farmer's wife wrote to Ford Australia complaining she was fed up with arriving at church on Sunday because the family had to ride to church on a farm truck.

According to records back in 1932 banks would only lend money to farmers for farm trucks — not for the purchase of a car.

"Her request was simple" Daryl said.

"Why don't you build people like us a vehicle to go to church in on a Sunday and which can carry our pigs to market on a Monday?"

Her letter arrived on the desk of Ford's managing

director Hubert French who, instead of dictating a polite dismissal letter, passed it on to sales manager Scott Inglis.

He, in turn, passed it to the plant superintendent Slim Westman and the two of them took it to Ford Australia's design department which (in 1932) consisted of one man. Lewis Thornet Bandt was 22 years old and had already been singled out for bigger things from Ford.

"Lewis Bandt was born in Moonta, South Australia and he has family at Redbank near Avoca" Daryl said.

"He, like countless others in this country through their skill and ideas have made a difference."

Bandt told Inglis and Westman that he could design a vehicle to double as a farm workhorse and a weekend touring vehicle.

On a 10 metre blackboard Bandt began sketching the front, side and rear elevations and, when seen by superintendent Westman some weeks later was told to build some prototypes.

Daryl's vehicle (featured on this page) was one of those prototypes built by Bandt in 1932.

"The prototypes were made from 1929-30 Fords" Daryl said.

"They were born on a 112 inch wheelbase with a cargo payload of 1200 pounds.

They were the very first vehicles of their type with an all weather cabin."

On seeing the prototypes Scott Inglis authorised a start up production of 500 vehicles.

"The very first production Ford utilities came off the Geelong line in 1934."

"That farmer's wife letter led to the birth of the Coupe Utility" Daryl said.

The utility was initially viewed as a luxury but was quickly accepted and is now viewed as a necessity of



A beautifully restored Model T Ford delivery van. This is one of identical vehicles restored by Daryl Maffescioni.

life for farmers and tradesmen around the world.

According to Daryl “the Americans call them pick-ups and we call them utes.”

Lewis Bandt remained with the Ford Motor Company until his retirement in 1976.

In March 1987, in an accident near Geelong between a truck and the vintage Ford ute that Bandt had restored for himself, he died.

Looking through Daryl’s large collection of photographs and memorabilia is a small booklet that was pro-



All Ford vehicles restored by Daryl carrying the business name, Maffescioni Bros. — Bernie, Albert, Jack, Dave and Lou whose father Bernardio (Bernie) Maffescioni started the saw milling business at Bealiba during the late 1800s.

duced entitled “Ford Australia Rules and Regulations”.

This little book belonged to a Ford employee Daryl said.

“Every Ford employee got one because it sets out every regulation that had to be followed by workers at Ford.”

It sets out when work was to start, meal breaks, overtime, holidays and punching the time clock.

“Ford was one of the biggest companies in the world so everything was done professionally based on the American model.”

Daryl produced some photographs of a Model T Ford van which he says was one of the most pleasing restorations he has carried out.

“These Model T’s are very rare” he said.

“To help me restore them I employed a coach builder who painstakingly restored every part of the vehicle.

“After completing the restoration I was so impressed with his work that I decided to find another one to make a pigeon pair.

“They are currently on loan to two car museums where members of the public can enjoy them” Daryl said.

Article courtesy of the Maryborough Advertiser

Try Facebook for lost and unidentified family photographs



Recently while browsing on Facebook I came across this photograph submitted on “Lost Horsham” by Lyn MacKenzie of Horsham looking for the identity of these ladies. I instantly recognised them as my grandmother and her two younger sisters daughters of George and Naomi Blythman nee Cooter late of Beulah. Pictured from Left are Nellie, later Mrs Albert Box of Moonee Ponds, Emily, Mrs Harry Schlichting of Ararat and May, later Mrs William Blackie of Ararat. Such sites can be great for finding and identifying family photographs — Give it a try.

WVAHS annual meeting at Port Fairy — 2018

The Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies grew from origins in the Wimmera in 1963 and has more than fifty Member Societies. These are grouped into three zones (regions), "Midlands" to the North, "Wimmera", and "Southern" for the Western District.

It is usual for zone meetings to be held every six months. Members report on their activities and this has become an important sharing of news and ideas. On 21 April zone meetings were scheduled in the morning with members coming together for the annual meeting business in the afternoon.

There were more than seventy members registered for the meetings with Member Societies represented by Arapiles, Ararat, Carisbrook, Cohuna, Colac, Camperdown, Donald, East Loddon, Edenhope, Geelong and South West Rail, Glenhompson, Hopetoun, Horsham, Koroit, Maryborough, Mortlake, Nhill, Ouyen, Port Fairy, Portland, St Arnaud, Stawell, Swan Hill, Terang, Warrnambool and Woolsthorpe. Apologies included Boort, Charlton, Minyip, Mt. Rouse, Warracknabeal and Heytesbury.

As host society Port Fairy President Judith Kershaw welcomed their visitors and outlined the program for the day including street walks after the meeting on Saturday afternoon, an evening dinner at "Charlies on East", and an invitation to visit the museum on Sunday morning. She commented on the many places available for lunch and invited visitors to show themselves around town using information on Port Fairy buildings and features described in the booklets provided.

The Dinner Meeting on Saturday night saw 64 in attendance, better numbers than we have seen in recent years. The guest speaker was Roger Haldane. We asked him to continue the stories he started at a recent Port Fairy Historical Society meeting.

At the earlier meeting Roger talked about his early life when his father and uncles were based at the lighthouse on Griffiths Island. Roger's grandfather was lighthouse keeper and harbour master for more than 30 years. The families were involved with fishing and boat-building. They built the "Tacoma" in Port Fairy and launched it in 1951. The Tacoma then took the families and all their possessions to Port Lincoln where the ship is celebrated for its important part at the start of the tuna industry there. The family saw success with salmon, tuna, and prawn fishing.

At the dinner Roger gave some further information about his grandfather and the family enterprises from Port Lincoln, then moved on to describe the efforts he was involved with in establishing the first successful alpaca enterprise in Australia. After overcoming many problems with restriction on sales from South America, and difficult import conditions the animals were established near Lismore about 1990.

Roger is an entertaining speaker and we hope we can be lucky enough to hear his stories move on to take

in his buffalo cheese industry at Yambuk, and his work on Icelandic Ponies.



Michael Menzies from Geelong and SW Rail, and Helen Curkpatrick from Horsham were re-elected to their positions as President and Secretary/Treasurer at the Annual Meeting.



Members at the Annual Meeting

The visitors enjoyed the facilities at the Senior Citizens Club, and many members have to thank large number of Port Fairy Historical Society members for outstanding support on the day.

The next Southern Zone meeting will be at Colac on Saturday October 13, 2018. Midland Zone meeting is at Carisbrook on Saturday, October 20, 2018 and Wimmera zone meeting is at Warracknabeal on Saturday, October 27, 2018 along with the Executive meeting at 12 noon. The WVAHS Annual General Meeting is at Swan Hill on Saturday, March 30, 2019.

The editor is currently looking for a photograph of the Carapooee railway station which was situated between Bealiba and St. Arnaud. Several stations along this line were identical with Bealiba.

Robin can be contacted on robinparker81@hotmail.com or 0459 032 068



ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.

239 A'Beckett Street, .Melbourne 3000

HISTORY WEEK SUN. 7 - SUN 14 OCTOBER 2018

www.historyweek.org.au

History Week was an initiative of the great community historian Weston Bate, when he was President of the RHSV. Weston Bate (1924-2017) whilst a history teacher, accepted a commission to write the history of Brighton. This became his MA thesis and this project shaped his life and that of the community history movement. His book with its expansive research, deep sense of place and vivid writing, encouraged many historians to see local history as valuable, and helped to inspire the creation of a hundred new historical societies at that time. Weston was a dynamic energiser of people and associations. He inspired hundreds of historical societies to pursue history with more skill, passion and tenacity (adapted from Richard Broome's obituary in *The Age*).

It is important that we keep the flame alive and continue our work to promote the importance of, and sheer pleasure to be found in, community history. In today's global world, local stories are becoming more important.

Please put up the History Week posters and distribute the postcards - maybe it will be more effective to put these in your local library, shops or school? If you'd like more please ring Amy on 03 9326 9288.

We have good web-based PR material too — ring and we'll email this to you. It can be used as email signatures, on Facebook and other social media.

Remember to upload your History Week events to the dedicated website. The RHSV publicist, Magda Petkoff, will be publicising the week and we need good stories!

The History Teachers' Association of Victoria has some great ideas for creating events in partnership with your local schools:

<https://www.htav.asn.au/htavnews/history-week-ideas-for-your-school>

If you have any queries about History Week please do not hesitate to ask and we look forward to hearing about all your fabulous events,

Rosemary.cameron @ historyvictoria.org.au

FOR THOSE WHO LIKE TO PLAN AHEAD ...

HISTORY WEEK 2019: 13-20 OCTOBER

Tel: (03) 9326 9288 Find out more www.historyvictoria.org.au

Email: office@historyvictoria.org.au

ABN 36 520 615 411

**You are invited to the
Bealiba Railway Station
140th Birthday celebration
Sunday, September 9th 2018**

10.30am Display:

Opens Bealiba Station Master's Room

11.00am Movie Time

The Titfield Thunderbolt: A riot of fun and laughter hides the truth that scrapping railways in this little English village can be disastrous.

All Day Display:

Railway details from local families, former railway employees. Frank Kupke Assistant Station Master (60's) tells it how it was. The timber mills information, train photographs, memorabilia, timetables, Station Master's duties. View the station.

2.30pm:

Acknowledgement of Country, Flag Raising Ceremony and Birthday Cake.

Acknowledgement of Djaara Country.

We would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Djaara Country of the Dja Dja Wurrung. We acknowledge that their forebears are the Traditional Owners of the area we are on and have been for many thousands of years.

Aboriginal Flag raised.

Union Jack raised by Queen Victoria.

Australian Flag raised by Louise Staley, M.P.

Anthems played by St Arnaud Pipe Band.

The history of the Bealiba Railway Station is the history of railways. As caretakers of this building we felt duty bound to inform as many people as possible about railway history and its role in the development of our district, our State and our country. We desired to share our pride in the history of the people of this district, both past and present who have sustained a life here.

The Mildura line was opened from Ballarat through to Maryborough and Dunolly in 1874/5 and continued onto St Arnaud in 1878. A light line was chosen because of the urgency to service the expansion to Donald and districts further north. There were 30+ station buildings needed to be constructed to allow the careful supervision of what was to become a very busy line. Remember communication before electricity was people power.

"The Bealiba Station building is still substantially intact as an example of the Rosedale style of building. Elements of the Bealiba style are: an oblong single-storey plan timber construction with bisecting longitudinal corridor which terminated in a porch. The combined station and residence (two bedrooms, parlour and kitchen — in 1930's a larger kitchen and a bathroom were added) and two for railway purposes — the Booking Office and the Ladies Waiting Room. The four



Bealiba Railway Station midway between Melbourne and Mildura.

corner rooms all had fireplaces. The lamp room and toilets were in the station yard. Copying the diminutive Dooen Style the bargeboards were fringed with cast iron lace work." From: Andrew Ward — Wimmera..way back when — www.wimmera-w-b-w.blogspot.com.au

NOTE. Andrew Ward helped Robert locate a piece of the original lace work. Robert took this piece to the Billmans foundry in Castlemaine where each replacement piece was cast in a bed of sand. The reinstalment of all 22 3ft length pieces has enhanced the appearance of the station. This work was funded by the generosity of visitors, Bealiba Historic Society, Bealiba Progress Assoc., Andrew Ward and the Coopers themselves.

On 3rd September 1878 "The Age" reported today, the opening of Dunolly and St Arnaud line to Bealiba was commemorated by a banquet at Bealiba to which all the leading men of the adjoining townships were invited. A bullock was roasted whole and several casks of ale presented by some of the residents for the refreshment of the masses.

Birthdays are celebration times — so amusement and enjoyment will be the focus of Bealiba Railway Stations 140th. We had the cake, the decorations and the locals for the 130th but this time.....

The Station Birthday Celebration program begins with the hilarious film "The Titfield Thunderbolt" which will entertain the younger and less serious train enthusiasts. Meanwhile the display at the station will enthrall the rail tragic. Collections of tickets, maps, rail plans and wonderful photos of the locos that have worked this line. Descriptions of the hand moved turntable that added a little engine to the main loco as it huffed and puffed up the Bealiba Bank — the steepest incline on the whole rail line. Safe working schedules, photos of those so tough gangers and much more rail history will be on display.

One of our special guests will be on hand to remind us of how the water buckets were measured to be exactly 3 inches from the top so as not to spill. He has shared with us a very official document showing how he received a fine of \$2 (one pound) for holding up the Mildura train for 12 minutes because he and the assistant had fallen asleep at 4am. The story reminds us of the vital role of rail employees. Their responsibility did not end there; don't forget the beer for the hotels was delivered by rail!

The Birthday Program also includes a lecture titled "The Vision and Courage of a Railway line to Mildura

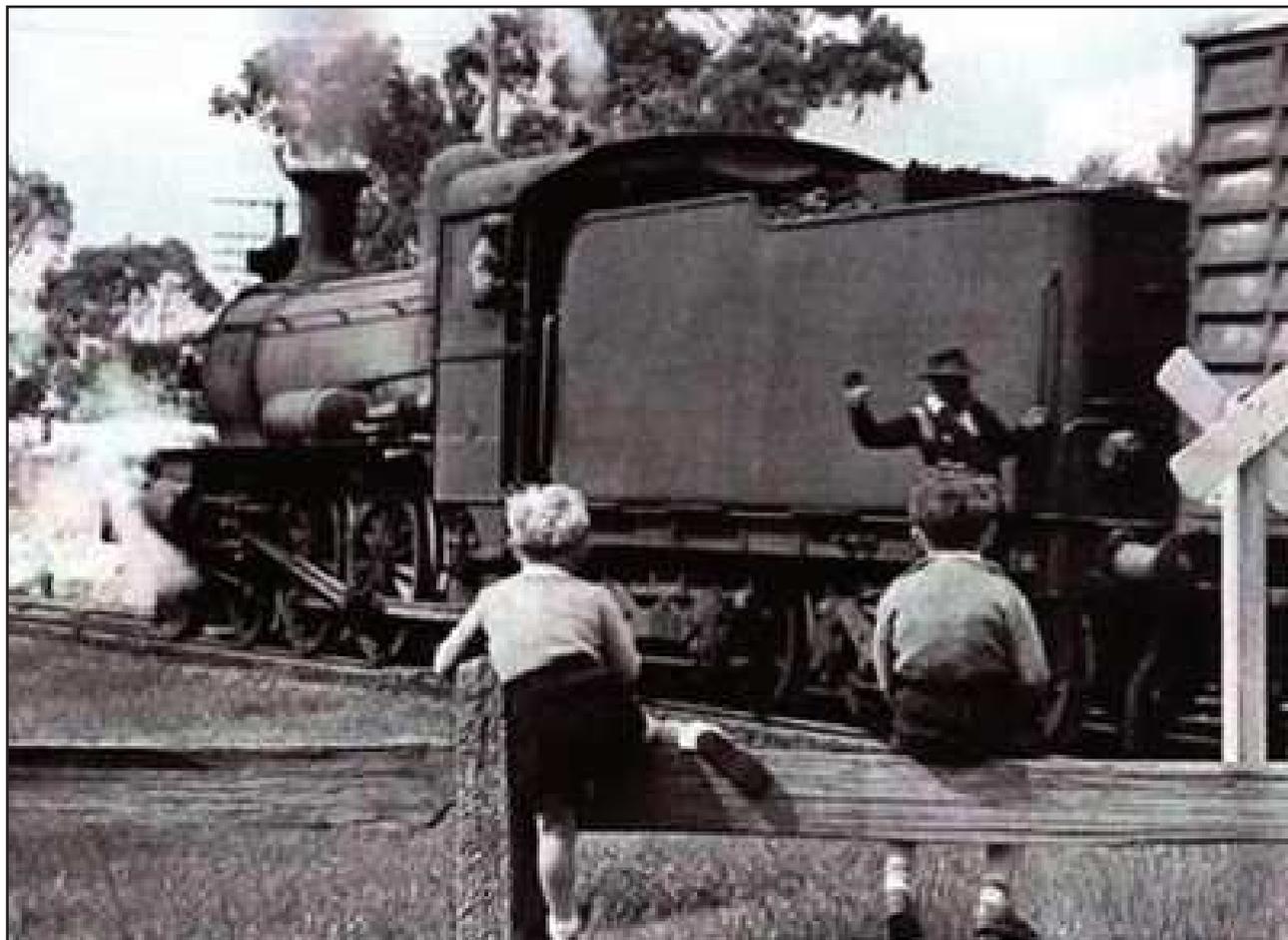
1878". There will be flag raising by "Queen Victoria" and a birthday cake. Lunch can be purchased – pizza, roast on a roll plus the famous CWA all day teas.

Today the Station is the most prominent historic, rural building in the community attracting over 450 visitors' signatures over the past two years, particularly train photographers and artists. The Standard Gauge alterations are still being fine tuned but the trains rush past at 80km with a cheery toot as they pass even at 3am. Although they no longer stop at Bealiba Station it

is encouraging to see three locos and over 90 wagons, "carrying freight of export grain, containerised wine, grapes, citrus, dried fruit and juice totalling around 1.5 million tons per year." Mildura railway line. www.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mildura_railway_line

When one of these trains pass through Bealiba Station there will be waves and cheers on September 9th 2018.

Article by Robert and Heather Cooper
of Bealiba Railway Station.



Every childhood memory comes alive with this photograph.

Genealogy and the Victorian State Railway

Reply from *Western Historian*, June 2018, P 13.

G'day Robin, Interested to see that my ancient database is still maybe of some use...

"There is at least one index to railways employees: an index to Victorian railway employees of the 19th century, compiled by Bob Thornton; published Melbourne, Library Council of Victoria, 1988. This is available to members of the Genealogical Society of Victoria and may be in public libraries"

The database was created in a pre-internet age — a time when one had to go and actually 'look things up'...

In this day and age its relevance is somewhat reduced as it was based on printed data that is now largely available via the wonders of the internet. The

base documents are the printed lists of VR employees from the Victorian Government Gazettes, viz: 1884-64, 1899-11, 1890-30, 1893-12, 1896-16, 1899-11, 1902-123, 1905-142, 1908-51, 1911-31, 1914-115, 1918-30, 1921-57, 1924-81, 1926-54 and 1929-79.

These lists do not include all employees and the later issues were not incorporated into the database.

Some minor additional source material is in the database — but, as indicated, the bulk is readily available on line and only requires interpretation to sort out who's who from issue to issue.

Just a few words for your readers to clarify the current situation.

Bob Thornton

[President, Skipton & District Historical Society]

Bealiba Station 140th birthday railway tour

Sunday 9 September 2018

Join us on a coach tour from North Geelong (or Wendouree), for a visit to Bealiba Station for its 140th birthday celebrations.

We will follow the railway from Maryborough to Dunolly and Bealiba, briefly viewing former station and siding locations along the way. Return via the recently restored Avoca Station for a late afternoon tea.

The first main line railways in Victoria were opened between Geelong and Melbourne in 1857 followed in 1862 by Geelong to Ballarat. In the same year, a line from Melbourne reached Castlemaine and Bendigo, extended to its objective, the Murray River at Echuca, in 1864. A railway from Castlemaine to Maryborough opened on 7 July 1874 and, on the same day a railway from Ballarat to Maryborough was opened as far as Creswick. It was extended to Clunes on 16 November 1874 and through to Maryborough on 2 February 1875. A line from Maryborough to Dunolly was opened on 6 October 1874.

The railway from Dunolly to Bealiba was officially opened on 3 September 1878 (and extended to St. Arnaud on 23 December 1878). The position of Stationmaster at Bealiba was removed on 26 February 1968 and it ceased to be used for train operational purposes from 19 March 1989. The station building has been beautifully restored by a couple as their residence and is surrounded by pleasant gardens. 140th birthday celebrations have been organized and we should attend as it will be a nice day out showing support of these local activities.

A day tour by coach from North Geelong Station at 08.15, picking up passengers from Melbourne and en-route at Wendouree Station (10 am) and then driving to Bealiba via Maryborough and Dunolly. There will be an all-day display of railway history at the station, a luncheon of local delights available to purchase (at own expense), an illustrated talk about local rail history and other activities till mid-afternoon. We will return via Avoca station for afternoon tea and then drop passengers off at Wendouree and North Geelong stations.

Passengers from Melbourne and elsewhere may travel to Wendouree by V/Line train at their own expense and join the coach tour there. A Myki card is valid for travel to and from Wendouree. The coach will transport passengers from and to North Geelong.

OUR TOUR: For Melbourne based passengers, travel by the V/Line Ararat train departing Southern Cross at 08.16 or intermediate stations to Ballarat due to arrive Wendouree 09.49.

For Geelong and district passengers, the coach will depart from North Geelong Station (service road adjacent to Melbourne Road) at 08.15 travelling directly to Wendouree Station where the passengers arriving there by rail (or road) will be collected. The coach will then depart Wendouree at 10.00.

We will stop briefly at the magnificent Maryborough

Railway Station and then follow the railway closely via Dunolly to Bealiba arriving around midday. A variety of displays and activities are taking place at and adjacent to the Bealiba station. Lunch is available (at own cost) with a variety of food available — hot spuds, pizza, roast rolls, tea or coffee, etc.

We will depart Bealiba at 15.30 and travel via Archdale Junction to Avoca. The station building there has been restored in recent years and during previous tours we have seen it prior to the work commencing (November 2015) and during repair (October 2016). Now open as a community Art Gallery, we will be dropping in for a late afternoon tea and inspection. The previously derelict rail tracks past the platform are now also re-laid and back in use since early this year. We will drop off at Wendouree Station connecting with the 18.06 V/Line train to Melbourne, due to arrive at Southern Cross 19.40. The coach will return Geelong passengers to North Geelong Station around 19.15.

We suggest that you wear suitable footwear and bring a hat and coat in case of sunny weather, cold winds or rain!

TIMES: North Geelong Station (service road adjacent to Melbourne Road) depart 08.15. Passengers from Melbourne and intermediate stations travel by the 08.16 V/Line Ararat service to Wendouree, where you will join the coach tour on arrival at 09.50. On the return journey we aim to arrive at Wendouree Station to connect with the 18.06 V/Line service to Melbourne due Southern Cross at 19.40. The coach will then return to North Geelong Station around 19.15.

BOOKING AND FARES: Adult \$54, Concession \$49, Child under 16 years \$30.

The fare includes coach travel from North Geelong or Wendouree Station, coach tour, brief notes and afternoon tea. Passengers from Melbourne and other stations must use a Myki, other ticket or valid free rail pass for travel by V/Line to Wendouree Station to join and return from the tour at your own expense.

Bookings are to be made preferably via the online booking service Trybooking. The tour booking code is: www.trybooking.com/XSAZ

For those unable to use that facility, please contact us first to confirm that seats are available and then post the attached form to the Booking Officer, Bealiba Tour, P O Box 1953, Geelong 3220, or by email to railexp@bigpond.com

Final information will be forwarded during the week prior to departure, by email if you have indicated that option, or by mail. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed DL size envelope with your booking only if you wish to have final tour information mailed to you.

ENQUIRIES: Phone enquiries may be made to Michael Menzies on 0419 546 251, preferably between 7.00pm and 9.30pm weeknights or leave a message and I will return your call when available.

**Geelong & South Western Rail Heritage Society
Inc. IAN: A0049909K
P. O. Box 1953, Geelong 3220.
Bealiba station 140th tour.
Sunday 9 September 2018**

**The Booking Officer. Date: / / 2018 Bealiba Tour.
PO Box 1953, Geelong 3220**

Please find set out below my booking requirements for the above tour. ___ Adults @ \$54 ea. \$ ___
Concession @ \$49 ea. \$ ___
Child under 16 @ \$30 ea. \$ ___
TOTAL: \$ _____

Payment may be made directly into our bank account over the counter or by internet banking. **Bendigo Bank: BSB 633 108, Account Number: 130308083** (Please identify your payment as 'Bealiba Tour' and include the surname of the person making the booking). Make cheques/money orders payable to Geelong &

South Western Rail Heritage Society Inc. Payment may no longer be made by MasterCard or VISA, as we no longer have access to those facilities.

Name of person making booking:

Address:

Postcode: Phone:

Email:

I will join and leave the tour at North Geelong / Wendouree (please advise). Names of others in party (show age if under 16):

Please confirm this booking by email or enclose a business-sized (DL) stamped self-addressed envelope for details to be posted to you.

Signed:

Date / / 2018.

Up and coming Rail/Coach Tours

**Geelong & South Western Rail Heritage Society
Inc. IAN: A0049909K P. O. Box 1953, Geelong 3220.**

— Rail/coach tours 2018/2019/2020. The events below are as at 15 August 2018. Day tours and events currently planned for the remainder of 2018 and for 2019 are set out below.

Dates beyond March 2019 are tentative but will hopefully stay firm.

Saturday 6 October 2018:

Waubra Junc.-Ballarat Racecourse-Waubra.

The railway from Waubra Junction to Waubra opened as far as Ballarat Racecourse on 11 August 1881 and to Waubra on 1 October 1888 (130 years ago). It closed from 31 January 1968 (50 years ago this year). A day tour by coach from North Geelong (approx. 08.30), picking up at Wendouree Station 10 00 (connect 08 16 train from Melbourne). We will follow the line, view all station and siding locations and enjoy lunch and afternoon tea at suitable venues! Return to Wendouree (or Ballarat) Station and North Geelong.

Saturday 17 November 2018:

Nyora-Wonthaggi: 40 years since closure.

The railway from Nyora to Wonthaggi opened in 1910 and was officially closed from 21 November 1978. We will explore this interesting railway and its coal mining sites to mark the 40th anniversary of its closure. A day tour by coach from Geelong, picking up at Melbourne and Cranbourne. Morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea will be supplied. Drop off at Cranbourne and Melbourne on the way back to North Geelong station.

2019

Sunday 17 March 2019:

'Pitfield Thunderbolt' railway tour.

Late in the 19th Century, gold mining activity was underway in the area south-west of Ballarat. Plans were prepared to construct a railway connecting with the Linton railway at Newtown and head generally south to serve Cape Clear and the goldfields out on to the western plains at Pitfield. The railway was surveyed but the local council would not support formation of a Railway

Construction Trust to acquire the land reserve for the railway and its construction lapsed in 1903. In 1909-11 the first few kilometres of the surveyed line was constructed as part of a railway to Cressy and on to Beeac, to provide a long talked about Ballarat – Colac rail link. It closed in 1953 and was the focus of one of our first tours in November 2011. A day tour by coach from North Geelong Station (approx. 08.30), picking up passengers at Cape Clear (approx. 10am). We will follow the rail alignment south from Newtown, viewing remains of the section built in 1910-11 then detour to Happy Valley for lunch. We then follow the rest of the planned rail alignment to the terminus at Pitfield. It is amazing how you can just about visualise the railway being there! Local mining and district history will also be a feature of this tour. Lunch and afternoon tea will be included. We may explore some more of the remains of the railway that was actually built on our way back to drop off at Cape Clear and then return to North Geelong station.

Saturday 18 May 2019:

South Geelong-Queenscliff 140th.

The broad gauge railway from Queenscliff Junction to Queenscliff opened on 21 May 1879 (140 years ago). It will also be 40 years since the Belmont Common Railway was relocated to Queenscliff to form what is now the Bellarine Railway. We will follow the former broad gauge line, visiting the site of all former stations and sidings.

Saturday 8 – Monday 10 June 2019:

Dimboola-Jeparit-Yaaapeet & Yanac.

The railway from Dimboola to Jeparit opened on 19 June 1894 (125 years ago), to Rainbow on 2 November 1899 (120 years ago), Jeparit to Lorquon on 10 December 1912, Rainbow to Yaaapeet on 26 June 1914 and Lorquon to Yanac on 27 June 1916. A visit to all of these remote railway lines during the Queen's Birthday weekend will coincide with the 125th anniversary of the 'main' line, be not far off the 120th anniversary of the remaining track still in use from Dimboola to Rainbow,

plus not far past the centenary of the two 'branch' lines! We will follow the currently open and also the closed lines and visit the site of all former stations and sidings.

**Saturday 14 September 2019:
Ballarat East to Buninyong.**

The railway from Ballarat East to Buninyong opened on 12 September 1889, 130 years ago. This short line has been on our list to visit for a long time, so this anniversary seems an appropriate occasion to do it. The coach will depart from North Geelong station and pick up and set down passengers at Ballarat. We will follow the former line (closed beyond Eureka on 28 February 1948), visiting the site of all former stations and sidings. We may add a few other locations of rail interest nearby to fill out the day.

**Saturday 16 November 2019: Yea to Alexandra,
plus Kerrisdale Mountain Railway and Alexandra
Timber Museum.**

The railway from Tallarook to Yea opened on 16 November 1884. It was extended to Molesworth on 12 November 1889, 130 years ago. The following year, the line was extended to Cathkin and Alexandra Road. Fi-

nally, on 28 October 1909 (100 years ago), the railway reached Alexandra. That centenary is a good excuse to visit the line, the Alexandra Timber Tramway and Museum plus the spectacular Kerrisdale Mountain Railway. The coach will depart from North Geelong station and pick up and set down metropolitan passengers at Broadmeadows and/or Tallarook. 2020

**Saturday 14 March 2020:
Moriac-Wensleydale, plus gravel pits
and coal mine.**

The railway from Moriac to Wensleydale opened on 17 March 1890 (130 years ago). We will follow the line visiting the site of all former stations and sidings. There will be an opportunity to walk some sections of the old formation. We will also follow the proposed extension towards Airey's Inlet and inspect some of the remains of coal mines and gravel pits served by the line. Contact: Michael Menzies, President. 0419 546 251. Email: geelongrailheritage@gmail.com Like us and view updated event/tour details on Face book: Birregurra Station. www.geelongrailheritage.org.au

The great fire at Inglewood in 1862

The most extensive fire that has ever occurred in the colony took place at Inglewood on Wednesday night (December 10, 1862). Property for the most part uninsured to the amount of £100,000 has been consumed. Sixty-three houses, the Bank of Victoria and the London Chartered Bank, four or five of the largest hotels, the Theatre Royal, and some of the largest stores in the town, have been completely destroyed.

About 6 o'clock in the evening the barman of the United States Hotel in Commercial street observed smoke issuing from the drapery premises of Mr. Harley on the opposite side of the road. He immediately gave the alarm and every available hand was employed in conveying water in buckets to the burning building.

No one being resident in the store they had to break open the doors and windows to get to the place. All their efforts however proved unavailing. The flames rapidly seized hold of the wooden materials of which the place was composed and in a few minutes was on fire from end to end. Water was scarce even if there had been a fire engine in the town to render it of any service and what little was brought by one or two water carts was not of the slightest avail in arresting the flames which spread on either side of Harley's store. The line of fire rapidly extending as though a match had been applied to a piece of paper.

The truth of the simile may be relied on when we state that all the houses destroyed were composed of wood and after such a very dry and hot day would ignite like matchwood. The want of water and the spreading of the flames seemed to paralyse those who assembled to render what assistance they could but it was soon evident that unless prompt measures were resorted to the whole town would be destroyed.

The efforts of the men were then directed to pulling down some of the houses on the side of the street and this arrested the fire on that side but not before between

thirty or forty had gone. The danger however was only half over as the great heat and flames from one of the larger stores communicated with one of the places on the other side of the way and it soon became apparent that the line of houses on that side would be destroyed.

In a few minutes this proved to be correct the fire laying hold of the houses on this side even more rapidly than on the other. So rapid indeed was the fire altogether that with the exception of a few portable articles saved from one or two of the houses the whole contents of the sixty-three houses were consumed.

On the second or opposite side of the street about five and twenty places were destroyed. These included the United States and Golden Age Hotels, the Theatre Royal and "Inglewood Advertiser" at the end of Chancery lane. This lane causing a break in the line of fire. was the only cause of it being stayed, both the aid of water and the pulling down of houses proving alike ineffectual. Some scenes of disorder occurring at the fire in consequence of the free use of stimulants it became necessary to embody a number of special constables to preserve order. Sergeant Acton was knocked down by one man and was very severely handled before he was rescued.

Our informant states that water being so scarce a storekeeper broached four or five hogsheads of ale and with the contents endeavoured to stay the progress of the fire. It appears that the store in which the fire originated was closed for the night and that no fire had been alight therein all day. This of course has given rise to all kinds of ugly rumors as regards the origin of the fire. It is a most singular feature in the circumstances connected with the fire that a preliminary meeting had been called for that evening for the purpose of organising a volunteer fire brigade.

Mary & Dunolly Advertiser December 12, 1862.

Confession and Execution at Ballarat

The dread penalty of the law was carried into effect on Monday (March 19, 1864) on the person of Alexander Davis who was found guilty of the murder of George Sims, at Smythesdale on May 31, 1863.

The hour of execution was fixed for 9 o'clock but by about 8 o'clock a number of people had begun to assemble in the vicinity of the gaol. The sheriff had adopted the precaution of allowing no one to enter except on the production of a written order but some extra amount of latitude must have been exercised for a few minutes before 9 o'clock, the inner yard was occupied by about fifty persons of all classes from professional men downwards. At 9 o'clock the inner doors were opened and the spectators were admitted to the main corridor where the ghastly instrument is permanently fixed.

The unhappy culprit was in the upper condemned cell, with the Rev. Mr. Potter and the Rev. Mr. Hollis and their voices administering the last religious services could be distinctly heard. In a few minutes the sheriff entered the cell and produced the Governor's warrant. The executioner then commenced the operation of pinning and the unfortunate man was led to the scaffold — his face being turned away from the spectators. In the midst of prayer, to which he listened attentively, the bolt was drawn, a heavy thud was heard and the sentence of the law had been fulfilled. A few convulsive motions could be observed, the executioner was once obliged to pull the legs of the deceased and all was over.

From the statements made by those who attended the man in his last moments he died perfectly calm and reconciled to his fate. His last words were "I am truly happy." Before he died he made the following confession: "On Saturday, May 31, 1863, between half past four or five, I left my work, going in the direction of home. I saw Sims go into a little store and stood and looked at him for a little while. I then went into another store to purchase groceries. This was at Scarsdale. I presented a £1 note to the man and as he had no change I promised to call and pay him on the following Monday.

When I went out of the store I saw Sims going down in the direction of Creswick. I followed him for some time. He turned off the road towards Browns. I saw him then go into his tent. I had a stick in my hand. I stood and looked at his tent for five minutes. I then walked to my tent without anybody seeing me. Had my supper, went to bed and got up at a quarter to twelve. There were in my tent some pieces of green wood about three feet in length, three inches thick and two inches wide. I cut one of these to a point in the shape of a club. I had the same clothes on in court as I had at the time of the murder, except the shirt and waistcoat, which had blood on them and which I burnt. When I got to Sims tent I stood for about five minutes. I saw some men and boys coming along the road. I went from the tent towards the fire and it was me the boys saw lighting my pipe. When

I thought the boys were far enough away I went to the tent and cut the strings of the flap with a knife. Sims was in bed. I raised the club to strike him. He cried out "Murder" about a second before I struck him. The blow did not stun him. Then, as he rose from the bed, he caught me by the hair and fell just outside the tent door. I was on top of him. He received two or three blows about the thighs, which caused him to jump up and fall on the spot when he was found, and again cried "Murder." I then beat him whilst he was lying on the ground several times with the club which I afterwards burnt to ashes. I then left him.

The stick and stove produced at the inquest were not used by me for a month and the evidence given about them is incorrect. The trousers I now wear are those I had on at the time and I washed them on Sunday morning. The evidence about my boots is incorrect. I had washed them. I wish to make a few remarks about the evidence given against me.

The conversation stated by Hudson as having taken place with me is false. His manner was such that I declined to say anything to him and I did not show him the way to my tent. Jackson's evidence was correct. I made the statement he made against me. Daly's evidence was false. Mr. Dent, the publican, stated that Cox was in his bar at between 9 and 10 o'clock and another witness Neale Maguire made the same statement. I swear that Cox was in his bed at the time. Mrs. Cunningham's statement was correct so was that of the boys."

The witness Neale Maguire in the last paragraph was the editor's great great grandfather.

**The "Western Historian"
compiled by Robin Parker
for the
Western Victorian Association
of Historical Societies.**

**For content suggestions
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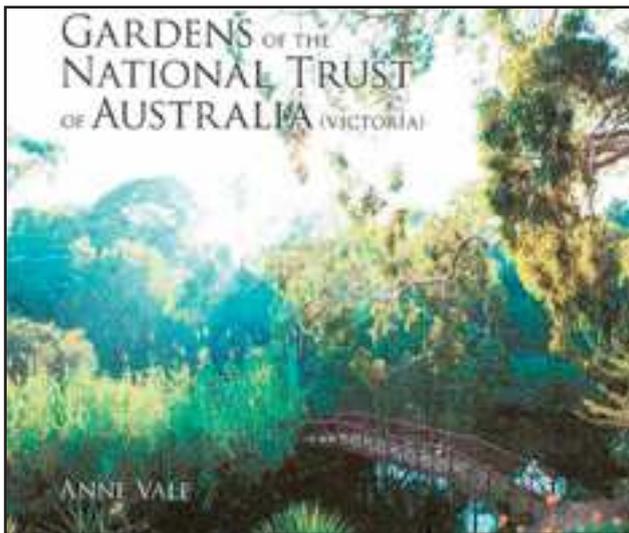
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Book release



GARDENS OF THE NATIONAL TRUST OF AUSTRALIA (VICTORIA)

Anne Vale, Author The National Trust is delighted to announce the forthcoming release of Gardens of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), an illustrated book on a selection of our gardens by acclaimed garden historian Dr Anne Vale. Anne is a writer, garden historian, garden photographer, public speaker, a past chair of the Australian Garden History Society's Victorian branch, and a retired university lecturer. She is the author of Influential Australian Garden People: Their Stories (2016), the sequel Gardens of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Anne Vale to her award-winning

Exceptional Australian Garden Makers (2013). Well versed in the recording and assessment of gardens with history, Anne operates the consultancy practice Heriscapes. Having written garden guides and histories on significant Australian heritage gardens, we were pleased to have worked with Anne on the publication of this book.

Anne has expertly woven together the stories of Trust gardens in Victoria by using the rich collection of primary sources held by the Trust and by drawing on the wider scholarly community to which she belongs. The narrative of the book makes use of gardens as sites linking people and cultures across various time frames and places. Connections extend out into the community, with public and private plant material and collections shared and celebrated between multiple generations, cultures and locations. The book also draws on the role of our volunteers in the ongoing custodianship of our historic gardens and landscapes. Gardens of the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) is an important instalment in our evolving knowledge of our properties, unlocking their natural and environmental history, which is often overlooked in architecturally based studies.

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