

Western Historian

March
2019
No. 222

Newsletter of the

Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Inc.

A0020504K

Societies cost — [Print or PDF, included in annual fee] \$30.00

Individual Subscribers \$15.00

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

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Our member groups are:-

Arapiles	Ararat	Ararat Rail Heritage	Balmoral
Barham/Koondrook	Birchip	Boort	Camperdown
Carisbrook	Casterton	Charlton	Cohuna
Colac	Coleraine	Dimboola	Donald
Derrinallum/Lismore	Dunkeld	East Loddon	Edenhope
Geelong S/W/Rail	Glenthompson	Goldfields	Halls Gap
Harrow	Heytesbury	Horsham	Hopetoun
Inglewood	Kerang	Koroit	Maryborough
Minyip	Mortlake	Nulawil	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

Local Historical Societies rely on volunteers to carry out virtually all tasks involved in their operation. Some members put in a bit of time; others devote much of their week to the Society of their choice. All provide valuable input and, without them, local history would not be recorded, displayed and published. Local artefacts, images and records would be difficult to locate.

Volunteers do so because they are usually interested in history, enjoy the friendships they establish with other members and, in some cases, researchers or general visitors to the local archive/museum. Most do so with no consideration of any wide recognition or reward but local bodies, often Local Governments, make annual awards or hold special events to recognise local volunteers and their contribution to the local community.

I note that, in January, two volunteers involved with WVAHS member societies received significant recognition. Warrnambool City Council's Australia Day Citizen of the Year is Janet McDonald. Janet is not only

President of the Warrnambool and District Historical Society but was also recognised for her involvement with the city's art gallery and botanic gardens. A little further to the west Moyne Shire awarded the title of Australia Day Citizens of the Year to Hawkesdale couple - Anne-Maree and Frank Huglin. As happens in many small towns and districts they have both been involved in many local bodies and projects over several decades. One of Anne-Maree's interests is the local historical society and she has written some books about Hawkesdale. I found them both very helpful and wonderful hosts when I visited their area with coach tours operated by the Geelong & South Western Rail Heritage Society.

Best wishes to both award recipients and to any others whom I may not have heard about. Thanks also to all those people who are assisting to retain and promote local history.

— Michael Menzies, President.

Bluey Truscott WW II Flying Ace

From the Maryborough Advertiser April 6, 1963

Just twenty years ago last Thursday one of Australia's ace fighter pilots, Keith (Bluey) Truscott lost his life at Exmouth Gulf in North Western Australia. Several Maryborough men witnessed the accident and one of them has penned the following story:

With a few other Maryborough boys we were serving as gunners with an anti-aircraft unit at the gulf. Our job, to help protect the American submarine base.

Bluey Truscott had become known to us personally, when a few days prior to his death, he had called at our army camp seeking assistance in freeing his jeep which after one of the rare rains in those parts has stuck in the clay pan near the rough airstrip.

He was an independent cove though and as we stood by to lift the jeep from the mud, he climbed

aboard and to our amazement and grinning red head reversed the car and literally speaking brought it out on its hind legs with the bonnet pointing to the sky.

Each day, a Catalina flying boat left at dawn to patrol many hundreds of miles of water on the lookout for Japanese submarines and surface craft. It was the practice for two Kittyhawks fighter planes to escort the lumbering by invaluable "Cat boat" from and back to base.

It was approaching 6pm (1800 hours) on the day of Sunday March 28, 1943 that Truscott and Ian Lowden, the escort pilots were having practice runs at the Catalina as it neared the end of its long patrol.

Continued on Page 6.

Boort Historical Society zone report

October 2018 zone report

My apologies to Boort Historical Society for missed publication of this report.

We are pleased to report considerable activity by our group.

We hosted a visit from politicians Hon Peter Walsh MP and Hon Damian Drum MP to unveil a commemorative plaque at Boort Railway Station (provided by V-Line) and also to unveil restored Honour Boards at Mysia War Memorial School.

Re-construction of the Pioneer's Cemetery fence is complete and will be installed in April.

With the closure of Boort's last bank — NAB, we are trying to claim the first ledger of signatures from 1874 for our Museum.

Gordon Lyndon-Smith's Bow Wagon has been beautifully rebuilt, but two of the wheels needed their steel rims shrinking. This work is being carried out by a blacksmith at Sovereign Hill in Ballarat.

We have received permission from Shire of Loddon & Boort Park Committee to occupy a second shed for our Antique Machinery Displays at Boort Park.

Amnesty on loaned/gifted goods has expired and all items in our possession are now the property of Boort Historical Society Inc. Cataloguing of the entire collection is now underway.

Robyn & Jennie found the Zone Meeting in Charlton very worthwhile.

Research work continues to be carried out by Robyn Evans & Gayle Huggett.

The new display cabinets look magnificent — thanks to all who worked on the project but in particular Gayle & Robyn & Val who have re-arranged our exhibits throughout the entire Court House — a huge effort very well done.

Gayle Huggett has completed the copying of every photo in the Museum to USB, lap top, hard drive and USB copies on file — a commendable achievement.

May I thank all Boort Historical Society members for their untiring work on various projects.

Jennie Weaver
Secretary

Maryborough Midlands Historical Society

October 2018 zone report

Our primary focus this year was the Wal Richards Wedding Photographer exhibition held in June/July at the Central Goldfields Art gallery. It was the culmination of six months of hard work by a small group of our volunteers and our inspirational curator Kareen Anchen, of Cascade Art in Maldon. The exhibition, which was made possible through a grant from the Regional Centre for Culture broke all attendance records at the gallery. The success of the exhibition is reflected in our President Irene Oxley's letter to the Maryborough Advertiser:

Wal Richards would have been so proud. So many people flocking to see his precious photographs enlarged and framed as he'd never had the chance to see them and exhibited in the town's art gallery.

Many of Wal's family travelled to the official opening, some from interstate. Brides and grooms and even whole wedding parties turned up to the gallery, some bringing their families. Friends who'd lost contact reunited unexpectedly while visiting the exhibition. Word of mouth and print and electronic media reports brought

curious visitors from around Victoria and interstate.

We are grateful to our local sponsors (all of whom knew Wal personally) and the community members who so generously contributed their Wal reminiscences and identified wedding parties and locations. Our Wal Richards archive is overflowing, and we've been able to document many previously unsourced anecdotes such as Wal's kindness to hospital patients and his two dramatic rescues of children from traffic.

And yes, of course Wal ruffled some feathers. Mostly those of out-of-town photographers who didn't understand that Wal was a part of the wedding package. If they dared to elbow Wal out of the way, the guests made their displeasure clear. As one visitor commented "It was an honour to have Wal at your wedding".

Wal Richards Wedding Photographer has been a wonderful celebration of the Maryborough community, both past and present, with humour, kindness and tolerance at its heart. Entries in the guest book reveal the joy that people experienced and even the tears sometimes.

As the current 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 Helen Curkpatrick on haven273@outlook.com

***or write to 273 Old Hamilton Road, Haven 3401.
In word preferred and any photos in jpg format.***

Donald History & Natural History Group

October, 2018 zone report

The Donald Archives have continued to open 3 days week from 10 – 4 and that arrangement seems to be working well. We have had 80 family history enquiries since last zone meeting.

Recently we have been approved as a Place of Deposit for storage of public records.

We were fortunate to receive a small Bendigo Bank Community grant to purchase storage boxes and photo albums which will be very useful.

Speakers at our meetings which we continued to switch to afternoon during the winter months have ranged from history of a local Lewis cordial factory, 50 years anniversary of the Golf Club House, the progress at the Donald Lakeside Caravan Park by the Donald Football Club, Past & Present Grain Harvesting and to cover the natural History section we learnt of the Avon Plains Lakes Cultural Heritage Study.

During Heritage Week we opened all four of our areas. The Archives, The Museum. The Police Camp and the Agricultural Machinery Museum each day for the week from 10.30 – 4.30 with limited success. Knowone took advantage of us waivering the family

history search fee at the Archives! It took a bit of juggling to have enough volunteers to keep the buildings open for that time.

The Agricultural Machinery Museum was also opened on Donald Show Day.

Our facebook page continues to create interest amongst the younger generation. We have a "Book of the Week" also a photo out of our collection, sporting ones are very popular.

The Court House Committee received a donation of over 100 embroidery articles done by a local lady some 100 years ago. They included doilies, table cloths, table runners, and the like. Some of these were kept in their collection and the rest were sold, during the All Town Garage Sale. Our small Antiques and Collectables shop also did well on that day.

There have been no official trips this year, although some of our members attended various events during the Heritage Festival time. We hope to visit Wentworth Historical Society early next year to catch up with our past Archivist Lil Kirk who has moved there recently.

A Quiz to Australian History

A basic Australian history questionnaire By Noel Jackling with assistance from Peter Reynders. The term 'Australia' is used in a broad sense to include its earlier names.

1. Who was the first known European skipper to reach Australia? What was the name of his ship and which part of Australia did he touch upon? In what year? Dutchman Willem Janszoon Duyfken (little dove) West coast of Cape York Peninsula, not far from the present Weipa. March 1606 Quite likely Janszoon thought it was an extension of New Guinea.

2. Who was the second known European skipper to reach Australia? What was the name of his ship and which part of Australia did he touch upon? In what year? Spaniard Louis Vaez de Torres Ships San Pedro and Los Tres Reyes From 1–9 October 1606: sailed through the Torres Strait, east to west. Torres probably saw Cape York, but did not land on it. The route he took through the strait is a matter of debate. It is considered possible that he landed on Dungeness Island, a coral island that is part of Queensland and Yama Island, also part of Queensland, both a significant distance north of the tip of Cape York. It is a moot point as to whether he 'reached' Australia. But it is safest to say that the third known European skipper to reach Australia was: Dutchman Dirk Hartog Eendracht Shark Bay, WA. The island is now known as Dirk Hartog Island. Hartog inscribed a pewter plate, which he left nailed to a pole at Point Inscription. The area came to be known by the Dutch as Eendrachtland. 25 October 1616. 400th anniversary was in 2016. The King and Queen of the Kingdom of

the Netherlands came to Australia to commemorate the occasion.

3. Who was the first European to circumnavigate Australia? Dutchman Abel Tasman. 1642-43. Abel Tasman reached parts of the west and east coast of what he called Van Diemen's Land, named after the Governor-General of the Netherlands East Indies. A flag was planted and the territory claimed for the Netherlands.

4. What is the oldest European structure built in Australia and where is it located? The oldest surviving building in Australia is Wiebbe Hayes Stone Fort on West Wallabi Island, an island in the Wallabi Group of the Houtman Abrolhos, in the Indian Ocean off the west coast of mainland Australia. It was built by survivors of the Batavia shipwreck and massacre in 1629 as a defensive fort and shelter against mutineers from the Batavia shipwreck.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiebbe_Hayes_Stone_Fort

5. Was Captain James Cook's Endeavour: (a) The first European ship to reach Australia? (b) In the first 10 European ships to reach Australia? (c) In the second 10 European ships to reach Australia? (d) In the third 10 European ships to reach Australia? (e) In the fourth 10 European ships to reach Australia? (f) Beyond the first 40 European ships to reach Australia? The Endeavour was about the 45th European ship to reach Australia.

See: <http://www.australiaonthemap.org.au/landings-list/>

Continued on Page 11.

Wreck of the Tayleur on maiden voyage

The Tayleur was a full rigged iron ship built at Bank Quay, Warrington, Cheshire, England in 1853.

She was 1750 tons, 230 feet in length and 40 feet in breadth with a cargo hold 28 feet in depth.

Reportedly she was the largest merchant vessel that had been built in England at that time.

Built for the White Star Line, like that of her famous successor Titanic, she was lost on her maiden voyage with great loss of life.

The Tayleur had to be towed very carefully down the Mersey, particular care being needed to get her past the sand banks at Fidler's Ferry. She was destined for the trade to Australia, and her owners boasted that she had been built expressly for speed, and would prove to be faster than any of her prospective rivals.

The Tayleur left Liverpool on January 26, 1854 bound for Melbourne with 581 passengers and 71 crew. Her compasses were faulty, her steering defective and the vessel undermanned and her inadequate crew inexperienced.

Encountering fog of the Irish coast, the vessel was stranded on Lambay Island and 380 passengers were drowned. The following newspaper articles reveal the story.

From "The Illustrated London News," January 2, 1854.

The Tayleur was designed expressly for the Australian passenger trade, to form one of Messrs. Pilkington and Wilson's celebrated White Star Line.

She was 2500 tons new measurement, and was capable of carrying 4000 tons of cargo.

No expense had been spared in her construction and fitting up and the general opinion was that she would prove a fast and safe sailer.

Had justice been done to such a fine vessel, these expectations would probably have been realised but if the prevailing statements are correct the ship was undermanned when she left Liverpool and to that fatal error the sad catastrophe we have this week to relate, must have been attributed.

The Tayleur sailed from Liverpool for Melbourne, at five minutes to twelve on Thursday, January 26 with 652 persons on board, including the crew, and about 8pm was off Holyhead.

After nightfall it began to blow strongly and during all of the next day the ship struggled with an adverse wind.

By the time the more intelligent of the passengers became alarmed on account of the evident incompe-

tence of the crew to manage the vessel.

A number of the crew were Chinese and Lascars who hardly knew the English language and were consequently unable to understand the orders given by the captain.

Throughout the whole of Friday the weather was thick and hazy also, so that no observations could be taken.

Early on Saturday morning the ship was under full sail, for which the captain was blamed by some of the passengers, who remarked that the crew could not take in so much sail on an emergency.

As the day wore on the weather became boisterous, and about ten a.m. land was in sight.

In order to avoid any possible danger the ship's course was altered about half past eleven and she was hauled up to points to windward.

It was whilst on this course, and about half an hour later, that the man in the bow on the lookout on cried out, breakers on the starboard, the sheets of head sail let go and every means was taken to bring the ship round on a course free from the threatening danger.

It was then impossible to see a cable's length from the vessel, and in about twenty minutes more she struck with great violence on the reef of rocks running out from a creek right to the eastward bluff of Lambay Island.

The shock was tremendous, shaking the vessel from bow to stern. She rose on the next wave and drove in rather broadside on and when she struck again still heaving, the sea made a clean breach over her midships, setting everything on deck afloat. After two or three more shocks, the ship began to sink by the stern, and a scene of confusion and dismay that defies all description; the passengers rushing up the hatchway husbands carrying their children, and women lying prostrate on the deck with their infants, screaming and imploring help.

The ship's quarter drifted on towards one side of the creek; and one of the assistants (a black man,) two Lascars and three seamen contrived to jump across on shore, and thus saved their lives.

A rope and spar were afterwards got across on shore, and by this means a number of lives were rescued, chiefly through the activity of devoted gallantry of two or three young male passengers, whose exertions in saving the lives of their fellow sufferers deserve the highest praise.

Article from editor's historical collection.

**W.V.A.H.S. A.G.M.
SWAN HILL — SATURDAY MARCH 30
SEE YOU THERE**

Bluey Truscott WW II Flying Ace

Continued from Page 2.

The gulf is a strange place, at times beautiful and at others held in the grip of mighty cyclones that invariably create havoc to the town of Onslow across the bay. The light is intense with distance hard to define. The sea and horizon seem to blend and this was Bluey's undoing.

Hit the water

Attempting a pass beneath the low flying Catalina his plane hit the water and burst into flames and slowly sank to a depth of 36 feet to the seabed beneath a film of blazing oil.

The U.S.S. "Child" and "Whipperwill" patrol boats had their divers promptly at the scene of the crash but the plane was not found until 10am (1000 hours) the following morning thence brought to the surface and lowered to a waiting barge.

Later that afternoon, Bluey's fellow officers carried his body ashore to the American base.

At 9.30am (0930 hours) on the morning of March 31 (although the airstrip was announced to be out of bounds to the troops) a few of us managed to see the sad finale of a gallant man.

His embalmed body with the flag draped coffin was carried shoulder high from an open truck before a line of Australian officers and American navy personnel and the grief stricken members of his squadron to the Avro Anson which flew the body to Perth for burial.

This plane was escorted for many miles by the pilots of the Kittyhawks.

It could well have been the care of his superiors which wished to give Bluey the protection that was unknowingly to lead to his undoing.

He would attack Japanese shipping in the islands at almost mast height and possibly this recklessness brought about the move to the greater theatre of war; who knows.

Thus at the age of 26 years and ironically in the Bay of Rest, Battle for Britain hero, followed his mate Paddy Finnicon and many others to their Valhalla.

Bluey Truscott is virtually unknown to many of the younger generation, but to the fellows of World War II vintage he was a legend and the 28th day of March in each passing year in the day that several Maryborough lads will never forget.

— "Abra"

Trial and prosecution of Montgomery Brown

The Edinburgh Advertiser, July 31, 1812.
Carrickfergus Assizes. July 24, 1812, Carrick, County Antrim, Ireland.

This day Montgomery Brown, 39 years, master of coal vessel between Irvine, Ayrshire and Belfast was tried for the murder of Charles Moore a butcher of Belfast on September 3 last by giving him a thrust with a large knife in the thigh of which he died nine days after.

The fact was distinctly proved and the defence set up for the prisoner was that he was insane. His insanity however was proved to be only the effect of intoxication. He was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged on Monday.

His daughter was produced to prove his insanity and stated that when he got liquor he was very violent, abused the whole family and turned them out of the house. At one time he seized his son of 8 years of age and about to strike off his head with a hatchet. This was when he was with much liquor.

Brown was a native of Irvine, Ayrshire, where he usually resided. The unfortunate man was executed on Monday, July 27, 1812. He was affectionately attended by his wife and daughter to face his condemnation.

He was conveyed to the fatal tree escorted by the Pembrokehire Sharpshooters. He addressed the spectators a very large crowd and desired them to be aware of the sin of drunkardness (an inlet to every crime) and particularly to guard against passion — for it was drunkardness and passion that has brought him to his present ignominious state.

Jean Brown daughter of Montgomery Brown and Elizabeth Reid and granddaughter of Montgomery Brown married Charles Sharp at Dregghorn, Ayrshire on February 19, 1843. Charles Sharp was a son of William Sharp and Janet Banks of Irvine Ayrshire.

Janet's sister Margaret Parker nee Banks was my ggg grandmother. Charles and John Sharp and family went to America in 1849 with cousins Charles and Archibald Parker with Alexander Fulton of Kilmaurs, a cousin of the Parker boys. Charles and Archibald Parker returned to Ayrshire after a couple of years as did Alexander Fulton. In 1852 Archibald Parker sailed for Australia with sister Jean and brother-in-law Andrew Watson. Alexander Fulton married in 1852 to Margaret Gardiner Stewart and family later returned to America from Scotland.

Another sister of Janet Banks was Mary who married Charles Cousar and was a gg grandmother of Doreen Fergeus of Carisbrook, another Society member.

Article from editor's historical collection.

*Wanted
articles of interest
for future newsletters*

Federal Government Cockatoo Ban

Sydney Morning Herald — Thursday, July 12, 1923
By a Southern Correspondent

The proclamation issued by the Federal Government on May 11 prohibited the export of birds from Australia has caused some uneasiness in the minds of wheat growers who have to endure the ravages of Cockatoo's and Galah's.

Interviewed upon the subject Mr. Joe Thomas of Corowa who is amongst the most successful bird catchers in the State expressed himself in a forceful language. Mr. Thomas catches large numbers of Cockatoo's and Galah's for export.

He works mainly between Albury, Corowa and Wangaratta, but has also gone as far as Hay. During the past 35 years his total captures for export, he estimated at no less than 56,153 Cockatoo's and Galah's.

I have seen paddock's newly sown with wheat almost white with these pests which growers have practically lost the whole crop through their depredations. The quality they can consume may be judged when I tell you that I have counted 1670 grains of wheat in the crop of the bird.

Whilst the wheat crop is growing the birds subsist on the roots of certain grasses and they dig up large

areas of land in search of the roots thereby reducing the carrying capacity of the land. As the grain ripens they return to the crop and destroy immense quantities. They will attack the hay stooks and bags containing wheat. They will tear the latter open to get to the grain.

The only remedy the farmers has is to use poison, but this causes the mortality among the useful birds. I have seen many Magpies lying on the ground poisoned but not a great many Cockatoos. Poisoning will cause a lot of harm. I estimate that each Cockatoo costs the farmer at least 5/- per annum for food.

Cockatoos are an undoubted pest and are the only birds which can be sold at a price to pay the handling, then whatever reason there may have been for this prohibition as far as our useful birds are concerned I can see no reason why Cockatoos should be included.

Mr. Thomas went on to say that it was a remarkable fact that different shire councils had proclaimed the Cockatoo's a pest and yet the Federal Government has in a measure to protect it. They cannot both be right.

Article from editor's historical collection.

Koroit & District Historical Society

Vale — Wilfred Patrick Amaran O.A.M.

On December 5, 2018, aged 87 years, local identity and icon of Koroit, Wilf Amaran died. Wilf was born in Richmond, Victoria. He was a gifted student and through gaining several scholarships was able to pursue a career in Pharmacy. He worked for a local Richmond pharmacy prior to coming to Koroit.

A keen sportsman Wilf played football with CYMS for Burnley and also participated in many athletic carnivals as a foot runner. Unfortunately an earlier sports injury prevented him from ever taking the field for Koroit.

In 1957 Wilf purchased Corson's Pharmacy which was in a shop next door to the Koroit branch of the State Savings bank. Wilf made Koroit his home and he built a new shop in the present position in 1962 and a house next door in 1967. He was the chemist in Koroit until 1999 when he sold out to Deidre Baker. He also owned a pharmacy in Warrnambool for 10 years. He was a member of the Pharmacy Guild.

In 2004 Wilf was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for service to the community and local Government. He had been involved in many organisations as he wished to see the community grow.

His list of achievements include: Twenty years in major country football. In 1957 he was President of the Koroit Football Netball Club when it joined the Western

District league, then President when Koroit entered the Hampden league also serving as treasurer and committee member.

Wilf was 21 years as a Municipal Councillor. He served twelve years in the Borough of Koroit and Mayor 1978-1980, before the council joined the Shire of Warrnambool from 1984 to 1994 where he was again councillor and a Shire President. He was a member of the Koroit Racing Club Committee for 20 years serving as Vice President in that time.

Wilf was also involved in management the Koroit District Memorial Hospital and Nursing Home being a board member, President seven years and treasurer for four years. He also served as President of the Koroit Cricket Club and on the committee of The Koroit Theatre Group.

Wilf was awarded a Centenary Medal for service to Australian society in 2001 and as well as the above Wilf was an Honorary Justice of the Peace for more than 25 years

Wilf was also a past member of the Koroit Historical Society. Wilf made Koroit his home and his life. He always thanked his wife Phyllis and their four children for their support in allowing him to be involved in his many pursuits. Thank you Wilf for your work in and for the Koroit Community. — *Margaret Trotter*

It's your newsletter — have your say

Family connection to Balmoral Castle

Robin and David Coutts have operated their family farm at Moolort near Maryborough and follow in the footsteps of several Coutts generations there since about 1900

Robin provided biographical details of the Coutts family in Australia since 1852.

Alexander Coutts migrated to Victoria in November 1852 from Scotland where his family had a long term connection with the royal family at Balmoral Castle. On a visit there Robin and David found that the Coutts connection only ceased in 2002. They visited the local church yard to trace many generations of Coutts' family in that district.

Alexander (Sandy) Coutts and other members of his family who migrated here settled in Waubra and Wattle Flat. He had four sons who became landowners and farmers.

A part of family history related to the visit to Victoria by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1867 — his mother — Queen Victoria — set him the task to make contact with Alexander and his family. The outcome was that the family was invited to attend the Prince's Ball in Ballarat where the acquaintance with the Farquharson clan was renewed.

David outlined the Coutts farming history at Moolort since their arrival there in 1900.

They originally took up a lease of an area of Bryants' "Plaietow" at Moolort and in 1910 they purchased their first small freehold from the Bryants at Cairn Curran. David's father was born at Moolort in 1905 and later married a daughter of the Bryant family.

David was born in 1940 and attended many local State Schools as these opened and closed because of small enrolments. These schools included Moolort, Cotswold, Baringhup, Newstead and Majorca. In 1952 he was enrolled at Geelong College and after finishing his schooling he went into the Geelong Wool Stores for eighteen months before returning to the farm.

From the purely sheep grazing practices his family moved into more intensive farming by clearing paddocks with bulldozing and cultivating pastures. By the 1950s the Coutts went into share cropping with the Pollocks' and Gervasonis. This required investment in more and larger machinery.

In 1963 David and Robin married and took up a five year lease on a property in Plumpton Lane Carisbrook where they grew irrigated lucerne for fodder production. In 1969 they built their present home working with his father undertook small farming practices with cropping and a stud Shorthorn enterprise. This had success at the Royal Melbourne Show.

Following his father's retirement in 1975 David and his brother — Jim — went into partnership on the farm. During the early 1980s drought they drilled bores to set up a centre-irrigation system on the property to produce lucerne for feed and for sale. David and Robin's sons Simon and Alistair — became involved in selling the cattle. In 1991 their partnership with Jim was dissolved.

The Coutts went into a partnership with Richard Bucknall to raise ultrafine shedded wool with the shed located on David's property. This was profitable but very time consuming. Some of this clip was used to produce a fine-wool suit for the then Premier of Victoria — Jeff Kennett.

This saw an expansion in the enterprise to gain economies of scale. They leased more farming land from the Robertson family at Moolort and the Dowie and Rinaldi families in Freehold Lane. They also purchased some of the Robertson's family land.

As Jim scaled down, the house block went back to David and Robin and they bought some of the Dowie and Plaistowe land which they used for more intensive cropping.

At the same time there were big changes in farming practices. From multi-tilling for crops, they moved to minimum or no tiling and to the use of GPS for machinery operations. These systems made cropping more viable, especially during the long periods of drought when pressure was of reducing production costs. As well this made machinery operations much easier and more efficient.

David then went on to describe social and infrastructure changes in the Moolort district.

The facilities at the Moolort rail siding are still in use, though the railway station building and permanent staff were removed decades ago. The silos are still used for export grain, though transport is now by road rather than by rail. The weighbridge was built by a local farmers' co-op and remains in use.

Close to that site in Moolort North there is a cricket pitch, where the local team played until about 1910 when the gold mines closed and the township disappeared. The Moolort Football Club had a similar history until it amalgamated with Carisbrook. Support from Moolort and Carisbrook FNC remains strong.

In the former township settlement of Moolort on the Pyrenees Highway the Community Hall, the Post and Telegraph Office, State School and the tennis courts have disappeared as the local population declined and improved transport led to new patterns of trade and allegiances.

There is a new Fire Brigade Station at Moolort, replacing the shed on Coutt's property. The Brigade is part of the CFA Goldfields group rather than the Moolort and Joyces Creek Fire Prevention Association.

Robin and David were warmly thanked for their presentation and it raised the possibility for our Societies members to conduct interviews with other local residents to record their reminiscences for posterity. We do have a digital recorder, donated to the Society when we attended a workshop with Robin Ballinger at Newstead in early 2018.

Robin and David Coutts were guest speakers at Carisbrook Historical Society November meeting

Article from the Carisbrook Logs newsletter.

JOYCE'S CREEK TRAGEDY. — MAGISTERIAL INQUIRY.

Creswick Advertiser, Friday 5 July 1918,

Mr Coutts J.P. conducted an inquiry in the Joyce's Creek public hall last Friday afternoon, into the circumstances attending the drowning fatality at Joyce's Creek, whereby Mr H. Judson, one of his sons and two daughters of Mr and Mrs J. Sullivan lost their lives and another son of Mr and Mrs Judson's had a very narrow escape.

Claude Watts a schoolboy said on the 18th ult. he was near the footbridge when Mr Judson came along; with him were his two sons and the two Sullivan girls. The horse became restive about the middle of the crossing. He heard Mr Judson call out "Help!" He tried to turn the horse round but failed and the horse, gig, and occupants went down stream. The horse then tried to get up the bank, but the gig capsized. Witness went a little distance away and called for help and Willie McDonald came.

J. Caulfield, State school teacher said on hearing screams in the direction of the creek he ran down and asked one of the boys present who was in the water and was told that Mr Judson, his son, and the two Sullivan girls had been capsized into the creek. The gig having been overturned witness saw the youngest boy Judson in the water about 50 yards downstream. He saw the horse and gig in the stream behind the boy he was following. Mr McDonald crossed over the other side of the creek, and caught the boy as he was floating down.

William Crowhurst, a railway employee said he assisted in the search for the bodies on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. He found the body of Mr Judson on Thursday at 6.50 a.m. It was lying face downwards on a bed of silt.

James Nokes said he assisted in the search and recovered the body of the boy Judson at Lancaster's bridge on 20th ult.

Harold McLay of Moolort stated he assisted in the search and recovered the body of Ethel Sullivan a short distance from the railway bridge on 25th inst.

Constable Ellis said at about nine o'clock a.m. on the 18th ult, he was informed of the fatality and proceeded to the spot. The Creek near the school is crossed by a very much exposed and dangerous crossing. A footbridge is built across the stream on the side of the road in such a way that little protection is offered. The bridge itself is not safe for children to cross. It appears that when half way across the stream, the horse became frightened. At the side of the road downstream, there is a deep hole and no fence to protect any persons crossing.

The horse when it turned to go back fell into the hole and the gig and occupants were thrown into the water. He considered the occurrence was purely an accident.

Henry McDonald said he saw Mr Judson driving through Joyce's Creek and spoke to him before the ac-

cident. Shortly afterwards, he heard screams and ran down and crossed the footbridge. He could then only see the horse's head some distance down the stream. He ran past the gig and horse and then saw Mr Judson in the water but he immediately disappeared. Witness continued running towards the railway bridge and saw two children in the water, one in the middle of the stream and the other on the opposite side. A little further on Mr Caulfield joined him and they threw a log into the water in the hope that someone might catch hold of it. He then left Mr Caulfield, and ran across the railway bridge to get near the children. He was then able to rescue Thomas Judson.

A verdict was returned that the deceased persons came to their death on the 18th June from drowning and that the occurrence was purely accidental.



This old posting box was located on the corner of Main and Patrick Streets Stawell for over 100 years and was recently donated by Australia Post to the Stawell Historical Society. It was necessary to relocate it so the refurbishment of Main Street could be carried out. It is the intention of the Historical Society to fully restore the posting box. The posting box can be seen in the right hand corner of the early photo of Main and Patrick Streets taken around 100 years ago. The Historical Society would like to thank Australia Post, The Northern Grampians Shire and Mr Paul Cuffe for their assistance in the installation of this piece of Stawell's history

First gold discovery drew 30,000 men to diggings Roaring Days of the 1850's

Sporting Globe Wednesday 21 December 1938.
By J. J. MAHER

Canvas town, with 30,000 miners in the district, an abundance of gold that lured thousands in search of fortune and many dramatic happenings on the fields calling for strict police supervision and discipline — such were the conditions in Maryborough in the early 50's. Today with the gold rush ended, Maryborough has built up on those Golden Leads a thriving township that proudly boasts of being one of the most flourishing provincial centres in the Commonwealth. It has many important industries, "fathered" by the Maryborough Municipal Council, members of which have shown themselves to be men with the interests of Maryborough at heart and insistent on preserving those fine traditions of the pioneers.



The original tent Post Office at Maryborough 1854.

The arrival of the Simson brothers in 1839 is regarded by Maryborough as marking its birthday. Maryborough was then wild, undeveloped country with somewhat rich pastures for sheep and cattle and the Simsons established themselves on a station which they called Simson's Ridge.

Not many years later Maryborough proved a Mecca for "gold diggers"—the genuine diggers who were prepared to endure all sorts of privations in the hope of discovering the precious metal.

Australian history is bristling with goldfield incidents following the discovery of rich "finds" and the consequent invasion. Maryborough can claim to have contributed many illuminating and exciting chapters to the historical records of Victoria. We are told that in the early days squatters apprehensive of wild stampedes on to their pastoral areas took precautions to keep gold finds a profound secret.

Bullock Driver's find

Historians relate that as far back as 1848 a bullock driver in the employ of the Simson brothers discovered a nugget about 10 miles from the homestead. He handed it to his employers who decided to remain silent about the matter for obvious reasons. However in marked contrast to his attitude of some years earlier Hector Norman Simson on learning from three young men working a hole at White Hills that they had discovered gold soon broadcast the matter. "THIS WAY TO THE NEW GOLDFIELDS" was the notice that was erected on a log bridge over the Deep Creek bridge. Like magic, miners found their way to Maryborough and within a few weeks a canvas town was established. With several thousand men on the field, Acting quickly in the interests of law and order the Government of the day took charge of the field and appointed Mr James Daly as gold commissioner with a staff of police and other

officials to supervise matters was on August 6, 1854 that the first Government proclamation of the issue of gold licences was made. This tax was considered to be iniquitous and it was not until a Royal Commission following the Eureka Stockade at Ballarat in December, 1854 suggested an alteration that the Miner's Right was substituted.

Within a few months after gold had been discovered between 25,000 and 31,000 men were on the Maryborough fields. Gold was in abundance, and with many rich nuggets discovered, interest was at fever point. The peak was reached about 1885, when the population on the goldfields had reached to 53,000. With the jumping of claims, rioting occurred and police had to be called in to quell matters. That was part and parcel of the exciting times of early days in the battle for gold. Then came the romantic coaching days of Cobb and Co. whose coaches were synonymous with mining throughout the State. A line was inaugurated in the district, and held sway until there came a bigger invasion — the opening of the railway to Castlemaine in 1874. Municipal Control In 1857 the Municipality of Maryborough was created, the first members being: Councillors D. K. Campbell (general merchant), D. Taylor (grocer and draper), — Fowler (ironmonger), — M. Garland (wine and spirit merchant), — Levy (wine and spirit merchant!), — Roberts (draper), — A. McLandress (boot merchant), chairman of the Council, with Mr J. C. Hooper (Shire Secretary). Two years later, Maryborough reached the status of a borough, with Cr. A. McLandress elected first mayor, and Mr Thomas Gardiner as town clerk. Over the years the "civic fathers" have comprised a body of men whose chief concern has been to see that the town progressed, and that Maryborough was well on the map — in politics, professional business and sporting affairs.

A Quiz to Australian History

Continued from Page 4.

6. In what ship and in what year is the first European woman known to have reached Australia? There are no crew or passenger lists for the Duyfken or the Eendracht. In 1623, Dutchman Claes Hermanszoon in the Leijden landed south of Dirk Hartog Island, and Australia's first European baby was born there. And 'where there's a baby born a woman is often not far away'.

See: <https://www.australiaonthemap.org.au/landings-list/> The name of the woman and the baby are not known. There were women aboard the shipwrecked Batavia in 1629. Much has been written about that horrendous event.

See: <https://tinyurl.com/yaszmwsn>

7. What was the airline company that made the first commercial passenger flight from Europe to Australia? KLM Royal Dutch Airlines Douglas DC-2 Uiver, which departed Mildenhall just out of London on 20 October 1934 and arrived at Laverton, Melbourne on 24 October 1934. The Uiver was the 46th aircraft to fly to Australia. The first Dutch aircraft to fly to Australia was the Fokker trimotor Abel Tasman in 1931, which was the 18th aircraft to fly to Australia.

8. Imperial Airways and Qantas Empire Airways combined to provide the first scheduled air service from Europe to Australia. What company/companies provided the second scheduled air service from Europe to Australia? KLM Royal Dutch Airlines flew the Amsterdam (Schiphol) – Batavia (Jakarta) sector. KNILM (Koninklijke Nederlandsch-Indische Luchtvaart Maatschappij or Royal Netherlands Indies Airways flew the Batavia – Sydney sector. The first scheduled KLM–KNILM service to Australia from Schiphol to Sydney, was inaugurated by a KLM flight in Douglas DC-3 PH-ARE Emoe (Emu) 28 June–3 July 1938 from Amsterdam (Schiphol) to Batavia (on Java) with a connecting KNILM flight in Lockheed 14-WF62 Super Electra PK-AFM 3–5 July 1938 from Batavia to Sydney. KNILM was the first foreign airline to receive permission from the government of the Commonwealth of Australia to operate a scheduled service into Australia. The second pilot on Emoe was Swedish Count Carl Gustaf Ericsson von Rosen, Von Rosen was a nephew of the wife of German Herman Göring, an ace during The Great War and later head of the Luftwaffe in World War II. Von Rosen's interest in flying machines was partly influenced by Göring.

9. In World War II, which were the two countries that provided the greatest assistance to Australia in stopping the southward thrust of the forces of the Japanese Imperial Army in New Guinea? USA and the Netherlands. I am not an expert in this area, but the following will give a broad picture. Advice on any inaccuracies would be welcome. The Dutch played a major role in the tragic Battle of the Java Sea in February–March 1942, which was a major loss for the Allies. Such air cover as the Allies had was substantially eliminated in the first few days of the battle, leaving allied war ships exposed to attack from the air by the Japanese.

See:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Java_Sea

The Netherlands East Indies (the Dutch were our nearest neighbours) was overrun by the Japanese, except for the southern part of Dutch New Guinea. Australian-based Dutch operations followed. These included:

- Three old submarines in Fremantle used for training.
- RAAF Squadron 18, RAAF Squadron 19 and the reformed Squadron 120. These were Dutch squadrons.
- 500 KNIL (Dutch army) troops at Merauke, Dutch New Guinea stopped the Japanese advance similarly to the Australians stopping the Japanese at Port Moresby.
- over 70 KPM {Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij} merchant ships that handled 100,000 troop movements to New Guinea and over 1,000,000 tonnes of guns, ammunitions and supplies.
- Dutchman Flight Lieutenant Gus Winckel is famous for having shot down a Japanese aircraft at Broome on 3 March 1942 from the ground using a machine gun, and is credited with having bombed and sunk a Japanese submarine off the east coast of Australia on 5 June 1942.

10. Which company is the oldest airline in the world still flying under its original name? KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij—literally, Royal Aviation Company) formed in 1919. This year is therefore its centenary. Qantas is the oldest airline in the English speaking world (formed in 1920). Avianca Columbia can trace its origins back to 1919 but under a different name.

— Courtesy of the Royal Historical Society
of Victoria.

Reminder:

***A.G.M. at Swan Hill on March 30
— make a weekend of it.
Accommodation still available.***

COOTER BUTCHER EMPIRE

From the Meat Industry Digest — August 1982

Just 13 years after the foundation of South Australia, butcher John Cooter 1809-1877 and wife Mary Ann Hall 1813-1877 and seven children Elizabeth 1837, Fanny 1839-1916, William 1843-1862, Sarah Ann 1845-1893, Maria 1846-1849, Ebenezer 1847-1903 and Naomi 1848-1929 (Naomi Cooter was my great grandmother) set sail from England for South Australia, three more children were born in South Australia, Emily 1850-1854, John 1852-1919 and Matilda 1854-1855.

Elizabeth and Fanny were daughters of John Cooter's first marriage to Eliza Hother

That was in July 1849 — seven months later in February 1850, John set up shop in Rundle Street, Adelaide as one of the State's first butchers. It was the beginning of an era that was to span four generations and 132 years ending on Saturday, July 3, 1982 when John's great grandson Bruce Cooter retired. To the best of our knowledge no other butchering family has traded continuously in South Australia for so many years.

John Cooter was an enterprising man and as South Australia grew so too did his retail outlets. Two at Thebarton and another at West Mitcham. When John Cooter died on September 15, 1877 nine days after his wife Mary Ann his son Ebenezer, who two years earlier opened his own shop at North Adelaide, took over the West Mitcham business which he ran until 1888. The following year he opened a shop on Port Road at Hindmarsh and two years later another one on Osmond Street. In 1892 the family business transferred to Light Terrace, Thebarton, and this became the new headquarters for a rapidly expanding enterprise. Ebenezer controlled operations until his death on January 5, 1903, at which time his wife Louisa, took over the reins until 1907 when sons Isaac and Robert joined the trade.

By 1920 some seven shops were registered under Robert Cooter's name. The next major change to occur was in 1937 when the headquarters shop was transferred from Robert's name to those of brothers Edwin, Isaac and Ebenezer Jnr. The deaths in 1959 of Isaac and Ebenezer Jnr. Saw their sons, Bill and Bruce come to the fore. Both had worked in the shops since they were 14. Bill retired in 1976 aged 69, leaving Bruce to carry on the business in Light Terrace until he too, retired a few weeks ago aged 60.

And so the saga of the Cooters. Bruce and wife Helen have three sons, but none wanted enter the trade

to carry on the tradition; Colin works with the Department of Housing and Construction, Rodney is studying Medicine and Craig works with B.H.P. Bruce has retired with mixed feelings; sad, that there is nobody to carry forward the tradition — proud that he has been part of one of the great butchering families of South Australia.

Bruce entered the trade in 1936, working out of the family shop at the corner of Rankin Road and Henley Beach Road, Torrensville. His first pay packet was 15 shillings and he earned every penny of it. Aside from learning the butchering trade he was also the delivery boy and that meant pushing a bike many miles a day. Baskets laden with as much meat as he could carry. In 1939 he was moved up to Light Terrace and there the deliveries were made by horse and cart. It was a big step up for Bruce who secured the "uptown" rounds of hotels and cafes. And there was more to those horses that met the eye, too. The Cooter family liked a gamble and their delivery horses were something of a safe bet. The fact is they were trotters and the streets of Adelaide were their training track. All week long they hauled loads of meat but at the weekend they could be found on the race track — firstly at the Jubilee Oval, later at Thebarton and Wayville. In those days trotters were ridden and after having hauled carts all week — the weight of a rider in the saddle on Saturday night must have seemed insignificant.

In any event the Cooter horses certainly paid their way and the records show that One of them, Racing under the unlikely name of "Ginger" scored an upset win in the Royal Show Trot at the Jubilee Oval in 1928!

Hopefully, the day will come when the full history of the Cooter family of butchers will be recorded for posterity although in a larger sense it will not merely be the history of one family— it will be a history of South Australia.

In the meantime, we wish Bruce Cooter a long and happy retirement. Footnote; In case you are wondering whatever the Cooter Women did, we can tell you that one of them, Isaac's daughter, Audrey, was the cashier for 25 years at Light Terrace and she "retired" along with Bruce in July, 1982.

John Cooter was the editor's gg grandfather.

**It's your newsletter
— have your say**

The Sisters' Rocks — Stawell

After viewing a family photo taken at the Sisters' Rocks c1950, a visit to the area sparked my interest to discover the history of these interesting Granite formations. The rocks are spectacular and have been a popular tourist and picnic destination since settlement in the area during the 19th century. People have been painting graffiti on Sisters' Rocks for at least 120 years.

The Horsham Times - December 1940

Tablet proposed at Sisters' Rocks

In the early days the Sister Rocks at Stawell were saved from demolition by the action of Mr Davidson in fencing them in when an agitation was in progress to break them up for road metal. Lady White, widow of the late Sir Brudenall White is a relative of the late Mr Davidson and there was a movement on foot to have Mr Davidson recognised in a tablet on the rocks but the matter was deferred when Sir Brudenall lost his life in the air crash some months ago. It has not been lost sight of, however and on the motion of Crs. Waterfield and McCracken it was decided to consider the matter at the next meeting of the Borough Council.

Other newspaper items were headed:

1930 — Deplorable Vandalism.

1937 — Beauty of Grampians - Sister Rocks defaced — Professor deplures practice.

1939 - The Sister Rocks — how they were saved from demolition.

1941 — Vandalism at the Grampians.

History of The Sister Rocks

Many thanks to the Stawell Historical Society for the detailed History of the Sister Rocks and the photo below right .

Sisters' Rocks

Western Highway — 3km south of Stawell, towards Ararat.

These huge granite boulders have been formed by the exposure and erosion of a granite mass which intruded overlying sediments of Ordovician age (approx 300 million years).

They take their name from the three sisters of the Levi family. The immigrant Levi family disembarked at Port Fairy and proceeded by bullock wagon to the 'diggings' eventually arriving on the Stawell field. They made a camp at the rocks which became known as the home of the three young sisters. The girls married and with husbands became pioneering settlers. Descendants still live in Stawell (when this article was written).

The story of the preservation of these rocks is told in 'Stawell Past and Present' by Maynard Ord which was published in 1896. These big rocks as natural cu-

riosities excited little attention during the feverish rush after gold they were almost hidden by the surrounding timber and seen by very few. After the formation of the Roads Board (1861) it so happened (in 1866) that the services of a photographer named Armstrong were secured to take views, representative of local scenery and objects of interest to be sent to a distant exhibition, and the 'Sisters Rocks' were pointed out to him and formed the subject of one of his best pictures, the whole series of which were later hung in the Shire Hall.

By this time buildings of a permanent character were in the course of erection at the 'Reefs' (Stawell) and stone was wanted for the foundations and other purposes. The rock jutting out of the ground offered an easy means of obtaining the material required, and Mr Armstrong fearing that the 'Sisters rocks' might be demolished by someone in search of building stone, protested to the local body against such possible vandalism, and asked that they be protected in the interests of the public.

Consequently one of the members, the late S J Davidson, took up a small piece of ground under the 42nd section of the then existing 'Land Act', and enclosed the rocks with a rough fence at his own cost. This saved those natural attractive objects from demolition at the time, yet very few young people who have since found coolness and enjoyment under the shadow, are aware to whom they are indebted for the rock's preservation. Davidson's application for 10 acres of land was dated 30 January 1867 and a title was issued in his name on 21 October 1873. Stawell Borough Council offered £20 for the land which was finally purchased by them on 28/8/1887.

The preservation of the 'Sisters Rocks' must rank as one of the first attempts at nature conservation in Australia. Left:

Below: Paintings on the Rocks today.
(Photos: Wendy Donald.)

Article sourced from Horsham Historian.



Story courtesy of the Horsham Historian.

Camperdown grandstand restoration — What a task

From Camperdown newsletter "Past Matters"



Seeing the newly restored Camperdown grandstand shining in the sunlight and surrounded by glorious green grass one can only admire the huge amount of work put in by the Camperdown Grandstand Restoration Committee. Formed in 2004, the committee members have worked tirelessly over the years to reach this final success.

The grandstand was built in 1903 but was closed to public use and earmarked for demolition in 2004 when it was deemed to be structurally unsafe. Most of the following article comes from the committee's webpage which details the planning, fund raising, and discussions with government departments and ministers. Parts of this comprehensive record are reprinted here with the permission of Committee Secretary, Mary Hay and acknowledging reference to the Camperdown Chronicle.

Camperdown Grandstand Restoration Committee Inc.

Chairman: Peter Burke, Vice Chairman: Peter Hay
Secretary: Mary Hay and Treasurer: Tim Harris. Committee Members: Philip Ayres, Jock McArthur and Stuart Harrison.

The Restoration Project (from the committee's website) The deterioration of the Racecourse Grandstand prompted a community meeting in 2004 to discuss the future of the historic structure. The committee consists of Camperdown and district residents. The committee has an ambitious, million-dollar plan to completely restore the Grandstand under the guidance of Heritage Victoria.

Stage 1: Removal of existing cladding and rear posts. · Cutting out of new internal footings. · Provide new steel posts. · The "Getting Involved Grants Program Category 6 - Looking After Our Heritage Infrastructure" awarded by The Office of Commonwealth Games.

Stage 2: Replacement of front columns. · Repairs to turret. ·

Gayle Tierney MP Member for Western Victoria when handing over this grant stated: "The Camperdown Grandstand reflects the complexity and richness of the State's heritage. These people and organizations are

today receiving recognition and support for their passionate commitment to our shared history".

Stage 3: Removal of existing roof. Fitting of new roof. · Bracing gutters and downpipes. · General Painting · Planning Minister Justin Madden when announcing this grant said — "The Camperdown Grandstand Project demonstrated the important role of the grants program in supporting the local heritage custodians. The grandstand committee and the local community have put enormous energy into saving this building". Mr. Madden also said. "It's very important we support groups like this as, without their passionate work, our heritage would be worse off."

Stage 4: Stabilising the retaining wall. · Replacing the front poles. · Completion of roof bracing. Restoring the stairways. · Minister for Racing Martin Pakula said — "The restoration of this iconic grandstand will preserve its history and ensure it continues to be a drawcard for the Camperdown Turf Club". He also said "I want to congratulate the Grandstand Committee and local committee who have put enormous energy and effort into preserving this historic building". Member for Western Victoria Gayle Tierney said — "The Camperdown Grandstand is a beautiful building that captures Camperdown's distinctive history and the importance of horse racing in Western Victoria". President of the Camperdown Turf Club Laurie Hickey said — "We're absolutely thrilled with the support we have received from the Victorian Government to save and restore our historic grandstand. The funding, announced by the Minister for Racing today, will ensure that this 113-year-old beauty can be returned to her former glory and enjoyed by locals and visitors alike for many years to come".

The History of the Grandstand

The current grandstand is actually the third constructed at the racecourse. The first was a small building erected around 1886 which was replaced in 1888 by one designed by Warrnambool architect, James McLeod.

Racing in Camperdown had been developing since around 1866, generally on the same site as the current

racecourse. By February 1888, after representations from the Camperdown Turf club, the Victorian government declared the venue as a permanent reserve for racing and recreation. Racing continued to prosper in the town and surrounding district and by 1901, the year of Australia's Federation, the existing grandstand was proving inadequate and a new larger structure was proposed.

Michael O'Connor McCabe, designer of the Camperdown Clocktower and many other local buildings was commissioned by the Camperdown Turf Club to design a larger grandstand to seat up to 800 people.

Construction by a local firm, McCrae and Husband began work in 1902 to a design by McCabe. The tender of £2026 was subsequently amended to £1671 by reducing the length of the proposed stand by 60 feet. It provides an elevated vantage point for race officials and spectators alike. It is built on a post and beam grid. It is of architectural significance as a substantial and intact example of a Federation era grandstand with a spectator mound skilfully integrated into the design. Muscular cast-iron balustrades and columns enhance the structure. The lacework and pillars are features of the design and the main structure is timber with corrugated iron cladding and roofing. The front of the stand has elegant cast iron columns and a patterned cast iron balustrade with the letters CTC (Camperdown Turf Club) featured in the design of the iron lacework.

The grandstand is a rare, surviving example of an early twentieth century country race track structure. It is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria as one of the largest racecourse grandstands in rural Victoria. Because of its architectural and historical significance, the grandstand was added to the Victorian Heritage Register on 9 March 2006. The grandstand is of great historical significance to Camperdown and the Western District sporting and social heritage, recalling the district's boom years in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The grandstand is classified by Heritage Victoria as a building of significant historical value, being the only federation Grandstand left in country Victoria.

Camperdown Cup Day — January 2019 open at last

The day was sunny, the grass was green and the sparkling white iron lace of the restored grandstand formed a smart background to the line-up of dignitaries. Once declared open, the stand was quickly filled with eager racegoers who were rewarded with a grand view of the whole course.

At last the day arrived. On 19th January the grandstand was formally opened and the Restoration Committee must be extremely proud and satisfied with the result of all their work. On 8th January 2019, Secretary Mary Hay met with Heritage Victoria and had the final approval of the work signed off by them — an endorsement of the quality and meticulousness of the restoration. Through the support of the State Government and the Minister for Racing, Martin Pakula, Heritage Victoria was able to provide continuing funding of the project which has now finally reached its goal. The Restoration

Committee contributed \$54,000 to the work, the result of raffles, race-day fund raising, donations and support from local businesses and organisations.

Mary Hay was quoted in the Camperdown Chronicle in October 2018, saying: "We hope people understand that this just isn't a grandstand 'fix'; it is a total restoration. Expert engineers have been involved in drawing up plans and Heritage Victoria has had to sign off on every single aspect of the work, right down to the type of screws used. It's been a huge undertaking but seeing it now, I hope the community agrees that it's all been totally worth it."

Judging by the crowds attending this year's race day, the community has shown not only their agreement but their appreciation of being able to once more make use of such a very special and historic building. c 1920s

A different sort of Cup

Once upon a time, back in 1965, an impromptu horse race was run at 'Meningoort', the McArthur property outside Camperdown. It was one of those odd happenings that "seemed like a good idea" late at night at the end of a big party.

On the morning following that great idea, fifteen 'jockeys' all a little 'tired and emotional' after the night before, rode horses from the property in the first "Meningoort Cup".

Word of the local race got out, and by the same time the following year, there were 30 or 40 participants — as well as their supporters and backers. A year later, 800 people turned up. They came from all over the district, some even from Melbourne. From then on, those yearly race days were an extremely popular and legendary occurrence, looked forward to with great anticipation by locals and visitors alike — not only for the racing but also for their party atmosphere.

The yearly race ran for ten years (often with 'jockeys' who had been partying well into the night before!) until the fateful year when somebody decided that a steward should be appointed. The race then came to the attention of the authorities as 'an illegal race meeting', and it was brought to a sudden stop.

Meningoort had been the home of race-horse breeding and training since 1896 when the timber racing stables were first built by John Neil McArthur, son of pioneer Peter McArthur. The most famous winner of that era was Marmont, which won the Victoria Racing Club Grand National Hurdle and the Victorian Amateur Turf Club Australian Hurdle in 1903, and the Australian Cup in 1904.

Sir Gordon Stewart McArthur — father of the current owners — owned prize-winning racer, Chicquita, which won 16 races including 8 in succession in Melbourne. Jock McArthur, one of the current owners, in his younger days rode as an amateur over jumps and on the flat, and between 1963 and 1997 has trained 200 to 400 horses. Jock may not have had a horse in the Camperdown Cup for 2019 but, as a long serving member of the Restoration Committee, he was certainly there at the track, enjoying the weather, the crowds, the horses and the atmosphere and being justly proud of the newly restored grandstand.

The Welcome Stranger 150 years celebrations

150 years celebrations were held on the first week-end of February this year to mark the 150th anniversary of the finding of the Welcome Stranger nugget near Moliagul. Our Committee Member Margaret Deason's late husband Robert was a member of the famous family and she drew our attention to the anniversary/celebrations. Note that the surname Deason (of Isles of Scilly origin) has been spelt incorrectly throughout the reports.

The great Moliagul nugget

The Dunolly district, after having turned out a multitude of nuggets that puts every other gold-field in the colony in the shade has at length in the words of the Melbourne journals, "beat the world" in producing the largest mass of gold on record [in modern times].

The "Welcome Stranger" was found by two men, named John Deason [sic] and Richard Oates on Friday last, February 5, near the Black Beef, Bulldog Gully, Moliagul, a short distance from Wayman's Reef and only about a mile from the celebrated Gipsy Diggings. Deason and his mate have been working on the ground for several years past and as is well known, had got, in digging parlance, so "hard up" as to have been refused credit for a bag of flour a week or so ago and we believe the very day before the discovery were reminded by a tradesman that they were indebted to him a few shillings.

Still they persevered until on the day named, Deason in working round the roots of a tree at about two inches below the surface, struck something hard with a pick and exclaimed, "D--n it, I wish it was a nugget, and had broken the pick." On stooping down to examine the obstacle, he found that the object of his dearest wishes was lying at his feet and it seemed as if the monster was so large as to be immovable. It was however at length released from its virgin soil and carefully removed. The question then arose as to what was to be done with it and the first intention was to convey it to Melbourne.

When the men got to Dunolly with their prize, they were advised to take it to the bank and forthwith carried it to the London Chartered. The news of the discovery soon spread and the bank was crowded with eager spectators amongst whom was a number of Chinamen; and a constable was sent for to guard the prize. The weight in the gross was then found to be 210lb. troy and preparations were at once made to break the mass to pieces and smelt it. The appearance of the "Welcome Stranger" in its pristine state was something wonderful and it seemed impossible to realise the fact that so great a mass of gold could be collected in one lump. But so it was.

Many efforts were made to lift it and many exclamations of surprise expressed at its immense weight and compactness. A sledge-hammer and cold chisels were brought into requisition and several of the latter broken in the attempt to reduce into fragments the "Welcome Stranger." It was found to be as solid as it looked, and

as chip after chip and piece after piece was dissevered from it, its appearance was as clean as a well cut Cheshire cheese. At length after no less than five hours' hammering, the monster was pounded up and smelted; the result being 2268oz. 10 dwt. 14 gr. of solid gold, exclusive of at least a pound weight, which was given by the delighted finders to their numerous friends who were each anxious to retain a piece of the largest mass of gold the world has yet seen.

Over £9,000 were advanced on the nugget by the bank, the final value awaiting the result of assay. Several interesting incidents might be published in connexion with the finding and finders of the nugget. Oates has we believe neither kith nor kin with whom to share his prize but probably soon will have. Deason has a wife and family at Moliagul, where he holds eighty acres of land under the 42nd section, which, we believe, he intends still to settle down upon and cultivate. Oates, we understand, intends shortly to visit his home at the Land's End.

Since writing the above we have visited the locality to be henceforth rendered world-wide in its fame. The spot where the nugget was found is marked by a post, and was pointed out to us by the two fortunate finders of this truly "Welcome Stranger". Messrs. Deason and Oates inform us that they came to the colony in the year 1854.

On the 19th February in that year they reached Bendigo, and from that time have been engaged as working miners with the varied successes and difficulties appertaining to digger life. On the whole they have just managed to make a living by dint of hard work and thrift. About seven years ago they settled down at Moliagul and have been steadily working there ever since, chiefly washing about nine inches to a foot of the surface soil in an old fashioned horse puddling-machine.

Mr. Deason informed us that they had many times washed a whole week for half an ounce of gold, while at other times they were very fortunate. Within about a hundred yards from the spot where the "Welcome Stranger" was unearthed they some time ago found two nuggets, one weighing 108 ounces and the other thirty-six ounces. They have stripped and washed the surface soil from several acres of land, and their workings are easily traced by the red clay they have bared.

They informed us that this red clay contained a little gold, but not enough to pay, consequently they do not wash it. They pointed out to us a peculiar kind of red clay, similar to half burnt brick, which they regard as indicative of gold, and which has always been found associated with their larger finds, and particularly so with the immense mass of gold found by them on Friday last.

Diggings February 2019.

Vale — Robin Clyde McCullough

27.11.1928 – 19.11.2018

Article with thanks from Warracknabeal Historical Society

As most of you will be aware already the Warracknabeal Historical Society has recently lost another of our tireless and innovative volunteers. Robin left us on 19th November after a couple of months of ill health.

Though Robin was not born in Warracknabeal he certainly earned the title of one of the town's 'legends.' His family moved to Warracknabeal when Robin was 7 or 8 years old. His father worked for the local butcher, later buying the business. Robin worked in the butcher shop, on the family farm and also for Thornley's soft drink factory. He later owned the butcher shop that many of us remember, only giving up work when he sold the shop and retired.

Robin's association with the Historical Society began in 1962. Though he did not attend the inaugural meeting he was a regular attendee following that meeting and was elected President in 1968. He was also President in 1978 – 1980 and 2001 – 2002.

Robin's interest in machinery took him to the Machinery division of the Society where he was President in 1967, 1969 and 1970 before the Museum was built. In the early days of the Museum he was involved with many trips to farms near and far to acquire machinery for the Museum. His dedication to the job was displayed by the fact that he was the Museum's Management Committee President from 1977 to 2000. During that time he oversaw many of the developments that we now see at the Museum.

Showing an amazing amount of initiative in 1998, Robin suggested that we set up a shop to sell off surplus items from the Museum. He thought that 16th October till Christmas would see this project completed.

Twenty years later we have Wheatlands Warehouse that is known Australia-wide and brings visitors to our town regularly. Robin was the initial President and held that position for several years.

Robin made an amazing commitment to the Warracknabeal community throughout his lifetime.

For several years he served our community as a Shire Councillor. He was a dedicated member of Rotary for 49 years, an active member of the Uniting Church and assisted many other community groups such as Probus and the Men's Shed.

Those of us who work at the Warehouse and Museum will always remember Robin for the contribution he made to their success. Every day we see the trolleys and other items he made, all helping with the day to day running of the business. At the Museum there is "Dick the horse" that shows how a horse was harnessed, along with the beautifully restored butcher's cart.

But most of all we will remember Robin for his sense of humor, his willingness to always have a chat, his friendliness, his initiative and his dedication to our organization and the way he would get a job done efficiently without too much fuss. (and his 1972 sausages for BBQ lunches!)

Our thoughts and sympathy to Robin's family. He will be sadly missed by all Society members and shall always be remembered with affection throughout the whole community of Warracknabeal and District.

How typical! And just the way we will all remember Robin.

Arapiles Historical Society summary of activities

For our collection we have met on a weekly basis continuing to sort through items that had been stored in a container and private residences since the closing of the Court house Museum which has now reopened. It's refurbishment has taken another step with the oiling of the furniture and fixtures. Over the road in our Research and Archive Centre we have filled up a number of shelves with books and objects. The compactus has been moved into our new archive room, which is in the ongoing process of being organised.

An exciting development is that from our grant from Holsworth Local Heritage Trust, we printed our Natimuk self-guided walking tours booklet which had its launch along with an exhibition of photos at our Court house during History Week.

Our Research Manager has continued to carry out research for individuals interested in family histories around Natimuk. We have updated our website and gained a Communications and Publicity Officer. We've also had a number of tours of our facilities by interested parties.

We entered in to the Pick My Project grant to help us open our Museum but were unfortunately unsuccessful. We also applied for a grant to make a concrete walkway for all abilities access. Although we didn't get the grant we went ahead with the project and have a lovely side entrance to our Research and Archive Centre now.

Recently we sent our Calender for next year to the printers. It focuses on Mt Arapiles this time with climbing pictures as well as scenic portraits.

We have been continuing with our sausage sizzle fundraisers at Bunnings, Horsham and the Trash and Treasure market has been held on Farmer's Market days. A monthly article has been published in our local newsletter, The Progress Press.

We have also been accepted as a Class B POD with PROV.

Have you an interesting story to tell.
Contact editor on robinparker81@hotmail.com

Vale — Ronald Peter Falla O.A.M.

Ronald Peter Falla, O.A.M. Graeme Pearse officiated at the funeral service for the late Ronald Peter Falla, held on Thursday, February 14, at St. Andrew's Church, Donald, prior to a private burial. Ron was born on May 8, 1920, and died on February 10, 2019.

Volumes could be written about a man renowned for his contribution to his community and his country, through his own detailed recording of history, his service in World War II and his membership of worthwhile progressive organisations. Knowing Ron, the last thing he would want would be people "making a fuss". That being so, the "Times" thanks his family for the following no-frills details of a life so positively lived for almost a century.

Ron was born in Donald, the fourth child to John Falla (stock and land agent and property owner) and Mary Bolding who was born in Hazlewood, Gippsland. When Ron was born his brother George was nearly 15, Jack was 10 and Hazel 5. They lived at "Bristol Park", a house still standing at 23 Aitken Avenue.

In 1924, Ron's father and two of Mary's brothers went on a six month overseas trip to South Africa, Rhodesia (to visit his brother who had emigrated there), Guernsey (where the Falla family originated), and visited relatives. They also travelled through England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Italy, Canada and America. Mary and George were left in charge at Donald. In December, 1933, John Falla had a fatal heart attack and as this was during the Depression the business had many creditors and money was scarce.

Ron left school with his Merit Certificate, and helped his brothers on the farms. In September 1937, Mary, Jack and his fiancé Phillis, Hazel and her husband Len, and Ron went to Toowoomba via Gippsland and Sydney. They pulled a trailer and camped on their journey. The purpose of their month-long trip was to investigate the possibility of buying land on the Darling Downs. They decided not to buy in Queensland and to stay in Donald.

The Army In June 1939, Ron joined the 26th Machine Gun Regiment for militia training in Donald, then after a training course at Warracknabeal he joined the Light Horse camp at Torquay. In June 1940 he joined the A.I.F. at Caulfield. He became a Corporal in August, and in September, 1940, left for Palestine. He attended a Weapon Training School in the Middle East and was proud of his Distinction Pass. There were 100 officers and N.C.O.s from mainly British units and only six distinguished passes were awarded; four Australians, one New Zealander and one local Jewish soldier.

While attending this school he had his 21st birthday anniversary. A Middle East Small Arms School was established in Mughazi, Palestine and Ron instructed there until he returned to Australia in April, 1942. He then went to Bonegilla as an instructor, until he left the Army in February, 1946, as a Lieutenant. He was in the Army for 6 years and 20 days. In 1947, with the help of a Soldier Settlement Loan, he purchased the home block of

633 acres. In March, 1949, he married Honor John, from Yeungroon, and they purchased another 320 acres. In 1981, Ron and Honor went on a three month trip to United Kingdom, Guernsey, Europe, Hong Kong and China. They searched and found relatives in Guernsey and Wales and visited other towns in England and Ireland where their ancestors had lived. This was their only long holiday, but on other trips, they saw quite a bit of Australia and New Zealand. In 1997 Ron and daughter Alison had a three week holiday to visit relatives in Guernsey and Zimbabwe, where he met a first cousin for the first time. They were the same age and had corresponded all their lives, and at Christmas, they would speak on the telephone. It was a wonderful experience for him to actually meet her.

The Family Alison Faye Falla was born on May 7, 1950, one day before Ron's 30th birthday anniversary. Peter John Falla was born on February 28, 1953, and David Lindsay Falla on October 24, 1955. Alison married Phil Lipshut in 1972, Peter married Liz Pallane in 1977, and David married Marj Roddick in 1990.

Grandchildren started arriving with Angela in 1977, Sam 1979, Simon 1980, David 1981, Matthew 1983. Christmas Day, 1990, was a very sad day for the family, as Honor died from breast cancer. On a more cheerful note, more grandchildren arrived – Andrew in 1992, Catherine 1994 and Lisa 1996. Ron was thrilled when great grandchildren were born; Albert, Olive, Benjamin, Louis, Phoebe, Patrick, Harriet, Lily, Jack, Riley, Penny, and another expected in March.

Activities Ron was involved with many clubs and activities during his lifetime. At Litchfield he was a member of the Fire Brigade, and tennis team, and was involved with the children's schooling at Litchfield and the Litchfield Hall Committee.

In Donald he was awarded Life Membership of the P. & A. Society, Life Membership of the Donald History and Natural History Group, and was involved with many other organisations including Camera Club, Uniting Church, Donald High School Council, Returned Servicemen's League, Donald Rifle Club and Donald Landcare. He was a trustee of the Nursing Home Committee, on the Jeffcott Reserve Management (now known as Friends of Mount Jeffcott) and a foundation member of Donald Field and Game.

Ron was also involved with other Historical Clubs and received an award of merit from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, and Life Membership of the Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies. Wyperfeld National Park was another one of his interests and he was a founding member of the Committee of Management.

Ron received an O.A.M. in 1990 for service to the community and the preservation of local history. In 2006, Ron was chosen as both Donald and Buloke Shire's Citizen of the year.

From the Buloke Times— February 22, 2019

**Western Victoria Association of Historical Societies
Annual General Meeting Saturday 30th March 2019
Hosted by the Swan Hill Genealogical & Historical Society Inc.**

Venue: Stradbroke Hall

Stradbroke Ave, Swan Hill 3585

AGENDA

Saturday 30 March

Registrations 9:30 am
Welcome 10:15
Zone Meetings 10:30
Lunch 12:00 noon- \$10 per person
Executive Meeting
AGM 1:30 pm
Afternoon Tea 3:00
Afternoon Tour 3:30 - depart from Stradbroke Hall

Complimentary cruise aboard a paddleboat courtesy of member Peter Morton. (Subject to river level and weather). Limited numbers so first to book will have preference.

Dinner 7:00 pm Stradbroke Hall

Two course alternating menu - \$32 per person at a licensed venue.
The guest speaker will be Mark Smith from the Pioneer Settlement talking on Paddle Steamers.

Sunday 31 March

Tour 9:30 am

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is still available to rent at Stradbroke Hall for the Friday and Saturday evenings.

It will be \$100 per room per night.

People booking two nights' accommodation will have priority. preferred

Registration and payment is required by 3rd March 2018.

Tour of Murphy's Creek

Monday April 15, Dunolly Museum will be holding a tour of Murphy's Creek. Bring your own lunch, chair and transport, car pooling is preferred. Cost is \$15 or \$5 for members. All proceeds to the Dunolly Historical Society. The tour will cover some early squatting History, gold rushes, unusual geology and sites of some of the former buildings at Murphy's Creek. — Details John Tully 0428 178 669.

Welcome Stranger nugget 150th Anniversary — 1869-2019



Descendants at 150th Celebrations

On 5th February 2019 some 250-300 people gathered at the Welcome Stranger monument at Moliagul to celebrate 150 years since the discovery of the largest gold nugget in the world. The event was held by the Goldfields Historical & Arts Society without any outside funding. There were numerous descendants of both John Deason and Richard Oates as well as others involved in the discovery. These included Edward Eudey, John McCoy, Archibald Walls and John Jesse the bank manager. Two different people brought along a brooch and a ring both made from pieces of the Welcome Stranger.



John Tully of Dunolly Museum with replica of the Welcome Stranger nugget.

We gave people a guided tour of the walk at the monument. It was our society that designed and put in the walk 30 years ago. This was followed by a talk about the lesser known facts about the Welcome Stranger and debunking a few of the myths that have built up over the years.

Philip Ashton then organised a group photo of descendants. He also got people to recreate the three William Parker re-enactment photos of 1869. These photos were taken for Deason & Oates who included in the photos their friends involved in the discovery and transport to Dunolly. Many of the visitors chose to stay and have their lunch at the monument.

We should be proud of the way our members pulled together to put on such a day and to give our historical society good publicity. The finding of the

Welcome Stranger is a feel good story that has wide appeal. It was picked up by the BBC who at 19 minutes gave it more air time than any other.

There was an incredibly friendly atmosphere on the day. There was an announcement that the local authority would not be cleaning up afterwards it would be left to the historical society. It was a credit to such a crowd that there was not a single piece of rubbish left behind.



Ring made from the Welcome Stranger given to John Jesse.