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Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Inc.

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The next
WVAHS AGM
will be held at
Swan Hill
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
Mt. Rouse (Penshurst)	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

Our AGM and Zone Meetings were held at Port Fairy on Saturday 21 April 2018. It was great to see such a large attendance and with most member societies represented. The formal daytime meetings were followed by much discussion over afternoon tea. Many then took up the offer of guided walking tours of the town. It was great to be shown and told about aspects of the history of so many of the old buildings and sites in Port Fairy.

The day culminated in a pleasant formal Dinner overlooking the beach. Not much could be seen due to the darkness, but the sea could be heard! Our Guest Speaker imparted an interesting outline of his life and farming pursuits and seemed to still have further projects in mind to keep him active and innovative. Some lessons to be learned from his zest for innovation.

Congratulations to Port Fairy & District Historical Society members and local volunteers for being good hosts and ensuring that our event was well run and enjoyable.

We need to make progress with 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. I again commend the efforts of our Secretary Helen, for liaising with Regional ABC Radio at Horsham and broadcasting regular items regarding local history and events. Please take up the opportunity to participate in those broadcasts.

Thanks to retiring Committee members and welcome to the new Office Bearers and Committee for 2018-19.

Michael Menzies President.

Geelong & South Western Rail Heritage Society Inc.

Our tours and events program for 2018 is proceeding well.

Saturday 21 July 2017: Birregurra 'Christmas in July' rail tour and lunch *.

Travel by 1930 vintage Diesel Electric Rail Motor from Melbourne and Geelong to Birregurra Station for Christmas lunch and drinks in front of the open fire in the station building. This has booked out eight weeks in advance of the date!

Saturday 8 September 2018: North Geelong – Fyansford & Queenscliff.

We will walk parts of the former broad gauge railway from North Geelong to Fyansford, visit remains of the private cement works narrow gauge railway, remains of the Belmont Common Railway and then go to Queenscliff to view the surviving Fyansford steam locomotives.

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). A day tour by coach from Geelong, picking up at Wendouree Station, following the line to its terminus and returning to Ballarat and Geelong.

Saturday 17 November 2018: Nyora – Wonthaggi: 40 years since closure.

The railway from Nyora to Wonthaggi opened in 1910 and was 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.

Contact: Michael Menzies, President. 0419 546 251. railexp@bigpond.com

All events and tours are open for public bookings. Like us and view updated event details on Facebook: Birregurra Station or look at www.geelongrailheritage.org.au

Goldfields Historical & Arts Soc. report (Dunolly)

In the last six months at the Dunolly Museum we have organised an historical tour of Bealiba. We run two tours per year and these are well attended by members of the public. It gives us a good profile and we usually get extra members as well as raising about \$500 for the society.

Recently we were donated a series of photos of Dunolly & district taken in 1868. They are good clear photos and have details not seen in other photos.

This current weekend we are holding an enquiry into the location of the Monster Meeting site at Chewton. This was one of the first mass meetings of miners

against the government. Heritage Victoria had purchased land without doing an historical survey and are claiming this as the correct site. We intend to look at the evidence for and against.

(See article on page 9.)

Next Saturday at Dunolly we are holding a short film night showcasing two short films on the Chinese and Aborigines. Both have local content and we supplied information and images to the film makers.

John Tully, President

Goldfields Historical & Arts Society (Dunolly Museum)

Arapiles Historical Society report

The Arapiles Historical Society owns both the Masonic Hall and the old garage service station and manage Natimuk's Court House.

The Court House is now fully restored and we are developing a research and archive centre in the Masonic Hall. The old garage will be home to a museum for the display of larger items.

We have held three exhibitions in the Court House.

+ Clothing through the ages (I can't believe she wore that)

+ 100 years of sewing

+ Maternal healthcare in Natimuk

Our research centre is open on Tuesdays for public enquiries and we are progressing with electronic cataloguing of our collection.

We run historical bus tours of the town and surrounds and have done three so far this year.

Our calendars have proved popular - we use old photos of the area from our collection.

We are seeking tax deductible status (DGR – deductible gift recipient) which is proving difficult to navigate.

Recruiting new members is critical to our future. Any suggestions?

Swan Hill Genealogical & Historical Society

Swan Hill has been fortunate to have the recent display of Women of the River Country which is a travelling exhibition showcasing the stories of 19 women from up and down the Murray River from the 1800s to present day. A further 12 local women were also included having been researched by our group. Some of the intriguing stories were about midwives, a riverboat captain, sports women, the creator of Murray Grey cattle and of course Swan Hill's Jessie Dunstone from the Pioneer Settlement and well known on the radio's Australia Allover for the saying "Well, I love it."

Our Christmas breakup luncheon was held at the Lake Boga Catalina Flying Boat Museum which will soon include a café. A tourism museum is always of great interest especially to be so close to a mighty Catalina.

A very successful day last October was an open day at the local historical Tyntyndyer Homestead – this followed years of continual hard work by volunteers to bring back part of the Homestead and massive gardens

to a very presentable condition. During the day Swan Hill member Ian Itter launched his recently transcribed 1862 book 'John Fairfield the Overlander' written by Peter Beveridge of Tyntyndyer Station.

Another book launch was conducted in Swan Hill by Pat Gillingham from Kerang whose grandfather wrote many poems during the 1940s and published them anonymously in the Swan Hill Guardian. Pat transcribed these poems and included snippets of extra information to create a very well presented historical book. On the same day (with assistance of Swan Hill Neighbourhood House) we launched the HistoryPin Website which features old photos superimposed over current images of Swan Hill.

Recent guest speakers have been a photographer offering many hints to improve taking photos and an avid bottle collector who showed a variety of old bottles including some of stunning value.

This winter we will once again change our meeting days and times from Friday evenings to 2pm Sunday as this proved rather popular last year.

Lyn Cunningham - President

Cobden & District Historical Society

thanks Judy Healey of Carisbrook for the donation of a microfiche/film reader for their society.

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HAVE YOUR SAY

Warracknabeal and District Historical Soc. report

Our Society finished 2017 with a visit to the Longerenong Homestead. Most members travelled by bus from Warracknabeal while others met us at the gate. We were very capably hosted by Helen Curkpatrick who told us much of the history of the wonderful building. We also enjoyed afternoon (or "high tea" as several members commented!). The owners permitted us to inspect all of the homestead which they have preserved in keeping with the original design. This was a wonderful way to end our year.

On 10 February the Museum ran a Harvest Day. This was well attended and featured a Mitchell header, a Premier header (that was made in Charlton) and several other very old strippers and harvesters. Unfortunately the one day of rain we have had this year was on our Harvest Day. However the men were able to work throughout the morning and harvested quite a bit of Pinnacle wheat. After lunch the rain set in but by 3 o'clock the sun was out and harvesting resumed to a limited degree. The day was quite successful with visitors able to move near the machinery as it worked.

The Museum has also held its annual Easter Rally – this year featuring Chamberlain tractors and Ronaldson and Tippett engines. The highlight was the presence of a "Hawker" car which was a prototype made by Chamberlain. This car drove in the street parade and was on display at the Rally during all Easter. There were demonstrations of baling, chaff cutting, axe handle

making, tractor parades, the vintage tractor pull and an Easter egg hunt and Wheatland's Walkabout for the children. With ideal weather the Rally was a great success, good crowds and plenty for the public to do and see.

All committees (except the Rally committee) have had their AGM's. There were several changes in office bearers as well as many retaining their positions. The Rally's AGM is in May.

Our warehouse has remained very busy. One member has taken on the task of improving displays of items and is doing a magnificent job. The front office has had a necessary makeover and is now a much better work area. Another area of the building needs a new roof and this will be done soon. The warehouse is still a popular stopover for many travellers.

At the 150th celebrations last year a capsule was dug up. It had been placed in the ground during Australia's 1988 bi-centenary. The contents proved to be very interesting with coins, school work, sporting teams, newspapers and photos inside. Members of the Historical Centre are working on putting numerous items back into the capsule and it will probably be placed back into the ground on the long weekend in June. It is to be opened for the town's bi-centenary in 2067.

We wish all Societies a good year of preserving, conserving and restoration.

Carisbrook Historical Society Inc. report

Well another report we have made it again Our group is small but the dedication of the members both new and old is astonishing. They are now up to 159 years of our newspaper index of the local paper, They are updating the local cemeteries with new photos, a group of members are preparing a show for next year about the homecoming and subsequent events in the lives of our returned soldiers,

The new members are adding to the Photo index, the plan is to be able to produce at the flip of a mouse a photo pertaining to the person, place etc that is required by the researcher,

All our projects start off small and then like Topsy they grow but it seems to be worth it

Another little gem is the potted histories of families that were here. Mainly for our reference to know what the researcher is seeking then we can print out the relevant piece of information.

Our WEB Mistress has the face book page up and running , we decided that at this time it is a better way to go and the input is amazing old photos that people

do not require any longer or are willing to share come our way all grist for the mill.

The phone contact and referral is working well at the moment I am doing it but it can be transferred to any member willing to take it on and it makes the networking between societies much easier,

Best of Luck to you all keep on plodding it is worth it in the end.

Judith Healey, President.

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Birchip and District Historical Society report

The Birchip Historical Society continues to be a resource for family researchers from afar, who appreciate the value of historical societies more than the local communities appear to. Consequently we struggle to have a quorum but at a recent working bee to sort out some files, three extra people who came were of great assistance.

Recently, through the mail, a package of documents arrived from a person who was distantly related to a Birchip connection. The documents were about a 1909 murder on the W.A. goldfields of the Birchip relative. The sender was cleaning out his "stuff" and we were happy to add it to our archives.

The documents are so old that some of them were carbon copies, historic artefacts themselves.

We have recently had an honour board updated.

A group from Wycheproof recently visited the Museum, Archives and Railway Station but missed out on buying the famous vanilla slices. If anyone is visiting or passing through the area it pays to book ahead to Sharp's Bakery to keep some back for you.

We wish the Port Fairy Society all the best and have a successful A G M weekend.

Dorothy Reid, Secretary.

Minyip Historical Society WVAHS report

2018 has started off as a very busy year for us. Late last year we were successful in receiving a grant for over \$16,000 to build a Memorial Wall to residents of Minyip and District who enlisted and went to World War 1. As I write this report it is still not finished but the bricklayer has assured us that it will be finished in time for Anzac Day. Of course, the further we looked into the information, the bigger the list of men got. Each person is listed on a brick so, instead of the names only being on the wall, they now are being laid on the floor as well. We are very happy with the result and it is a very fitting memorial to the men from our area.

The Executive of the Minyip R.S.L. Sub-Branch are also very happy with the project. It will be dedicated at Anzac Day.

One thing led to another. As Trove has documented all Newspapers from 1914-1918, our President Diane Connolly decided to do some more research. It was decided that all articles in *The Minyip Guardian & Sheep Hills Advocate* relating to our 'boys' going to WW1 be printed and that we produce a booklet. At the time the paper reported on everything - when they enlisted, the evenings given to them to send them on their way, any news from them, letters they sent home, if they were wounded (or worse - if killed) and then the welcome home. It was not our intention to produce a big book, nor to publish many copies. However, as it turned out, it is larger than we thought. The decision was made to only produce 4 (four) copies. We applied to the Yarriambiack Shire for a grant to have them hard bound and we were very fortunate to receive the funds to do that. One copy will be given to Yarriambiack Shire, one to the Minyip R.S.L. Sub-Branch and two copies to be retained by the Society.

It was always our intention that we would produce an e-book to sell to the public. This has been done and included in the CD is the 1st page of the men's enlistment document. The plan is to sell the CD for \$25.00

We invited the Mayor of Yarriambiack Shire Cr. Graeme Massey and members of the Minyip R.S.L.



The new War Memorial Wall at the Minyip Recreational Reserve — ANZAC Day 2018.

Sub-Branch to attend our meeting on Tuesday 17th April when we presented them with their copies of the book.

Cr. Graeme Massey, Mayor Yarriambiack Shire, Diane Connolly, President Minyip Historical Society, Mr. Michael Krause, President of the Minyip R.S.L. Sub-Branch

One of our members is now working on the next project - that is to name and document all the children buried in the Minyip cemetery. This is a work in progress and a mammoth task. Unfortunately, early cemetery records were destroyed in a fire - we presume it was a house fire. Births, Deaths & Marriages were very helpful and, for \$100.00, agreed to supply names only of children buried here. We are now in the process of applying for a grant to cover the cost of Death Certificates of children buried in the Minyip Cemetery for whom little information is known.

**Shirley Smith – Secretary
Minyip Historical Society.**

Edenhope Historical Society WVAHS report

150 YEAR EDENHOPE EASTER CELEBRATIONS OF THE FIRST XI TO TOUR ENGLAND IN 1868.

The focus of the weekend was about the teams' efforts of 1868 and the first team 120 years on that followed in their footsteps.

Leading up to the celebrations it must be said how supportive ABC Western Victorian radio announcer Dave Lennon and his team were. There was an outside broadcast in front of the Opportunity Shop in the main street of Edenhope on the Thursday before Easter which included local historian Alec McDougall, school children and locals involved in the history of the first indigenous cricket team to leave Australia under difficult circumstances back in 1868.

The Edenhope celebrations for the 150th was a huge success with 10 of the 1988 Aboriginal cricket members returning to renew their friendships and memories. It was a very emotional weekend - particularly for the team. Pius Gregory from Broome, who is very traditional, connected deeply with the story. Elder Vince Copley AM dedicated a plaque for the 150 year celebrations at the Cairn situated on the Edenhope College grounds in the vicinity where the first XI practiced and played. ABC Western District radio announcer Dave Lennon and Jessica Black (along with her film crew) were present to capture the event which has been aired on the ABC News, NITV and SBS.

The discussion with the 1988 team members over the weekend was the need to be recognised for being the first team to tour England over 7 weeks and play at Lords.

Their most talked-about subjects were past Prime Minister Mr Bob Hawke (who rang and thanked the committee for inviting them along) and their visit with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth.

Closing the Gap after 30 years was very much on the minds for Indigenous cricket players and being recognised for their individual efforts. The committee presented the team with a medal with the Edenhope Logo "The Home of the First Eleven" along with a special T Shirt. They also re-enacted the game of cricket against some of the opposing team of '88 (which was very entertaining).

The other matches were local cricketers who played against the Wimmera Indigenous side along with Peter Sleep ACA and past player who conducted cricket clinics for the junior members interested in cricket. He is a great ambassador for junior cricket and one of the players who played against the indigenous team of '88.

The other significant event for the weekend was to recognise Tom Hamilton's association with the Aborigines from 1864 leading onto the first XI leaving Australian shores in 1867 and making history in 1868.

I have written a book about Tom's history and the beginnings of the game of cricket at Bringalbert with his best friend Jellico (*Unamurrimin*). Tom died prematurely



First Australian XI aboriginal team of 1868

at the age of almost 30 years and is listed in the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame for his 12 month journey to Darwin to sell his own bred horses to the Indian Army. I am Tom's great-great niece and believe he has been forgotten for his efforts related to the game of cricket.

Included in the book Tom's elder brother James Charles Hamilton's (my great-great grandfather) narrative of "*Pioneering days in Western Victoria*" which he wrote in 1914.

The Bringalbert site was dedicated to the Hamilton family by Mr Les Knox of the Goomilaroi People, North West NSW who was the assistant manager of the 1988 team to tour England. There are two panels with the Pioneer Hamilton family's history along with Jellico (*Unamurrimin*) who didn't make the 1868 team. The panels are located in the vicinity of the original site where the Aborigines were taught to play cricket.

A bus tour to Tarpot (Apsley cemetery) and Redcaps' (Glenelg River Dergholm) memorial was especially emotional to the Indigenous players present. A stop over at the Dergholm hotel was also a highlight of the trip. Visits by bus to Johnny Mullagh (Harrow) and Dick-a-Dick's memorial near Goroke were offered however, due to minimal numbers and peoples times, they made their own way to those sites.

The weekend was a huge success economically, socially and emotionally for the Edenhope township and surrounding towns and lakes.

Congratulations to the Edenhope Aboriginal Cricket Committee for their dedicated hard work and support to make the week end the success it was.

Regards Helen Mulraney-Roll
Edenhope Historical Society.
Edenhope 3318

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

Mar. — Jun. — Sep. — Dec.

Charlton Golden Grains Museum report

We've had a busy few months at the museum. Our president Anne Kenny has decided this is the year of cataloguing photos so has already made great progress in this area. We have about 3000 already done but there are many more still to do. To enable us to source these photos easily when doing family history research, we have recruited a young person who completed Year 12 last year. Apryl is putting our photos and accompanying details onto Collections Victoria. She is doing it at home in her own time using copies of catalogue sheets and photos.

We finally have a new archivist. This position has been filled by default by our secretary, Carolyn, for several years. Markus is new to town and is very enthusiastic. At this stage he is working his way through our resource cupboard to index what we have available. Eventually he'll attack the filing cabinets and will also learn how to conduct research.

Our secretary, Carolyn, has been working on content for a number of signs. The Bills' trough located near the Driver Ed Centre will have interpretive signage shortly. As it turns out, it was produced by a local builder and concreter and is a rare trough. Carolyn has also been researching environmental, indigenous and recent history for signs at the Wooroonook, Watchem &

Green lakes. In an effort to work in a coordinated manner, Carolyn has been in contact with the Mallee CMA who are working on signs for Lakes Tchum, Marlbed & Tyrell. The Dja Dja Wurrung & Barengi Gadgen Land Councils have also been very involved. We are hoping this is just the start of getting more Cultural History out there to the general public.

We are holding a Bridal Parade fundraiser in August in partnership with the Charlton CWA. To be held at the Rex Theatre, rather than describing the dresses, we will be showing wedding photographs on the movie screen and telling a little story about each dress and the bride who wore it.

Work has begun on a book to celebrate 100 years of the Charlton Bowling Club. The museum will provide most of the research for the written content and Carolyn will be putting the book together. This will be her 5th book in 5 years – a great effort.

Our regular Sunday openings are still working out well with visitors coming on most Sundays. Our new Family History Group has about 15 members with a few regulars who never miss a meeting. We mostly help the newbies with researching their family histories using online websites that some of our members have subscribed to.

Stawell Historical Society report

Stawell Historical Society is continuing to develop and implement programs such as "A living history" project to encourage older citizens of Stawell and surrounds to tell us their story on video.

We are involving students from Stawell Secondary College as interviewers so the younger generation can learn from the history of the participants.

At this stage we have conducted test videos, spoken to the participants regarding the filming process and will be meeting with the school regarding suitable dates. The end result will be the finished videos being shown on a wall mounted screen in our museum with the videos being put online in the future.

Our museum has benefitted from a bequest which has enabled us to purchase three display cabinets to allow us to securely store our items.

We continue to attract visitors both to our research centre and museum with constant measures being put in place to attract more people - not only as visitors but also as potential members.

We have a new Cataloguer, Catherine Radnidge, with Wendy Melbourne retiring not only from the position of Cataloguer but also from the Society; we thank Wendy for her many years as Cataloguer.

As part of our community involvement we are putting on a display regarding H.M.A.S. Stawell at 108 Main Street, which is a community / council display area over the ANZAC day week.

Stawell Historical Society has engaged local stonemasons to completely renovate and renew the grave of local identity William McLachlan, founder of alluvial gold in Pleasant Creek / Stawell. The generous bequest of an ex- Stawell resident, Mrs Burgess, has enabled us to carry out this work.

Stawell Historical Society is not only continuing to evolve within itself but also as a relevant and important part of our community

**Carol Jones, Publicity Officer,
Stawell Historical Society**

**IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER
— Have your say**

Barham-Koondrook Historical Society, Inc. report

The past twelve months have been almost a carbon-copy of the previous year with the usual ups-and-downs in volunteer activities and attendances once each week. But this is typical of all similar Societies and somehow we manage to complete most of what we set out to achieve.

Research enquiries still take up a lot of time and volunteer efforts, but the returns certainly make the work worthwhile - and supplying information is, after all, a major reason for our Societies' existence.

It's common knowledge that grants are currently thin on the ground and we've had no luck in the past year. Fortunately though, we've been able to supplement our operating costs with the odd street raffle and the very welcome funds generated by a meat raffle at a local hotel once every five weeks. A car-boot sale held in the grounds of our rooms in Koondrook also produced some useful income.

Our A4-sized Pictorial Calendar (which we've produced in-house each year since 2011) again proved to be a good seller and provided some handy profits. This year we're working on re-printing some of our out-of-print publications, using our latest high-quality photocopier for the bulk of the work.

Our rooms are housed in the old Myall School building which was moved to our present site in 1995 and is sorely in need of re-painting. The local Lions have agreed to help with part of the cost and we're working on trying to get other local organisations to pitch in for the balance (in the absence of current government grants).

In closing, please accept our good wishes for all the Zone Societies' prosperous future activities and for a successful meeting this month.

Allan J. Tompkins, President

Mortlake & District Historical Society Inc. report

MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS:

Slow decline in the last 2 years due to the passing of some of our long-standing and valuable members. Membership now stands at approximately **90** (made up of local and interstate members).

NEWSLETTERS:

Currently issued every 2 months instead of monthly due to cost constraints (postage and printing) and numbers on the ground to assist with production.

PAST EVENTS:

MARCH 2018 - OLD COLONISTS' TEA PARTY.

Recognition of members in the district aged 90 plus. A chance to get this age group together to re-collect memories and celebrate their efforts in the community.

CHRISTMAS FUNCTION DECEMBER 2017

Christmas celebrations for all members of the society at the notable Montgomery Pavilion - Tea Tree Lake - Mortlake. An opportunity to reflect and enjoy the companionship of members in a lovely garden setting.

CHRISTMAS PARADE WITH LIONS CLUB

This was a chance to join in the local Street Parade and represent the Historic Society. A few members dressed from various Australian eras to join in the fun of the occasion.

FLORENCE CHARLES BOOK LAUNCH OCTOBER 2017

Society member Florence Charles launched a new book "DARLINGTON" at Darlington.

Many from the local area (and some from interstate) came to support Florence and hark back to the years the book covered. A very sociable and enjoyable time by all who attended.

Women of the Mount and Families of the Mount both produced by Florence Charles and Craig Proctor also continue to sell well.

DEBUTANTE DISPLAY - AUGUST 2017

This was a display of debutante gowns covering not only some modern dresses but back to around the 1920's. Townspeople were very generous with assistance and dresses. Many visitors to the display assisted with putting names to faces in the old photographs and the Society benefitted from photographs not previously seen.

AGM - AUGUST 2017

The society had an early AGM due to the resignation of the Secretary.

Public Lecture
Melbourne Museum
Wed. June 13, 2018 5.30-6.30pm
Deep Lead goldmine investment
in 1890s
Bookings 13 11 02 Admission \$8
How British investors lost millions
of pounds, including Moolort mines in
the central goldfields of Victoria

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Monster Maldon Meeting enquiry at Dunolly

On 21st April 2018 the Goldfields Historical & Arts Society (Dunolly Museum) held an enquiry into the location of the Monster Meeting of miners held at Chewton on 15th December 1851. The enquiry was prompted after Heritage Victoria purchased a nearby parcel of land and started saying the meeting was held there.

The Heritage Council Registrations Committee held their own enquiry last year and agreed with their parent body, Heritage Victoria. Two of the witnesses, David Petrusma and Glenn Braybrook stated afterwards that pictorial evidence had been discredited for no good reason, statements were made by Heritage Victoria that were not backed by evidence and that Heritage Victoria purchased the wrong piece of land.

The witnesses Petrusma & Braybrook felt that part of Golden Point Rd and some allotments on the east side of Golden Point Rd should be added to the Monster Meeting site as that was where the drays were that the speakers stood on. Petrusma felt that Heritage Victoria had purchased the nearby paddock as it was largely undisturbed, which fulfilled a requirement needed for World Heritage status.

The Heritage Council also claimed the Monster Meeting to be the first protest meeting of miners against the government. Another point to justify World Heritage Status. However, there had already been meetings in Bendigo, Geelong, Ballarat, Buninyong and Chewton. The Heritage Council discredited the earlier Chewton meeting as being merely 'preparatory'. This is changing history simply because it didn't fit their agenda. The first Chewton meeting was bigger than Eureka Stockade, there were 3,000 present, a committee elected and resolutions passed. Yet they describe this important part of our history as 'preparatory'.

There are two known sketches of the Monster Meeting. These are the David Tulloch sketch (SLV) and the Great Meeting sketch (NLA). The Heritage Council discredited both sketches by saying they were both done later from memory. Both sketches are far too accurate to have been done later. They must have been done on site.

The hills in the background of the Great Meeting sketch do not match when looking from the land purchased by Heritage Victoria. But the hills are correct when viewed from Golden Point Rd.



Tulloch sketch overlaid on a modern photo — David Petrusma.
The meeting is on the high ground on or east of Golden Point Road.
The land purchased by Heritage Victoria is on the extreme left of the image.

The Tulloch sketch has many detailed that are correct.

The shepherd's hut was known to be a single room with slab walls, bark roof and stone chimney. These are all present in the sketch.

Bark has been removed from trees for the roof of the shepherd's hut

The cart is on the high ground.

There are flags flying.

There are men climbing trees.

The length and direction of the shadows generally match what would be expected at Chewton on 15th December between 2.00 and 4.00 pm. This is unlikely to be correct if the sketch was done later from memory.

Both sketches show the meeting to have taken place on or east of Golden Point Rd. This would be an amazing coincidence if the sketches were done later from memory.

After discrediting both sketches the Heritage Council were left with only vague written descriptions as to where the meeting took place. So when they said the meeting took place on the land purchased by Heritage Victoria they didn't back it up by any actual evidence.

The Monster Meeting Enquiry held at Dunolly agrees that the Monster Meeting site is of cultural heritage significance.

The Tulloch and Great Meeting sketches must have been drawn on site and could not have been drawn later from memory.

Heritage Victoria not only disregarded pictorial evidence that showed the meeting was on or east of Golden Point Rd but failed to produce evidence that showed the meeting was on the land they purchased.

Both sketches show that the epicentre of the meeting (the dray), was on the high ground either on or to the east of the Golden Point Rd. This ground should be included in the Monster Meeting site either physically or in signage at the site.

*As the editor of the Western Historian
I am seeking articles of up to a half page on what is
happening in your society or 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 oldest colonist

To the editor of the Argus

Sir, the colony now has something to tell of quite surprising for a settlement that is celebrating on our Jubilee Exhibition. The end of the first half century only.

We have a colonist amongst us a century and two years old. The Melbourne Benevolent Asylum among its applicants today, has an old lady of that age and honoured the application, and the institution is admitting her as an inmate. There were many other applicants whom it was heart-breaking to deny admission to, but there was but one vacancy for females, and one bearing the burden of 102 years was unanimously held, entitled to the vacant place.

As I have no doubt that she will excite much interest with the public, I may mention that this Mrs Agnes Smith is an intelligent and superior looking woman, wearing no spectacles, and having good hearing faculty. There is that, however, in the much furrowed face that speaks of great age, but there is nothing of senility about her. To the questions put by the chairman of the committee as to some old colonist, her answers were clear and satisfactory, dating back to nearly 50 years. She described herself as a native of Glasgow, the daughter of a solicitor, long time a widow, and arriving here with one son who has since died. It is easy to read her endorsement made on her application paper, that this relict of the past century, whose youthful days were also of Bonaparte and Wellington, was suffering only from "old age and debility."

Now that Great Britain is so jubilant over Sir Moses Montefiore's completed 100 years, we, of Victoria may be, in sporting language, proud of beating that record in this case of our oldest colonist.

The Melbourne Argus, Friday February 26, 1892.

A REMARKABLE CENTENARIAN

Mrs Agnes Smith, a widow who claims that she will be 109 years of age on Tuesday next, was a few days ago admitted into the Benevolent Asylum. Her maiden name was Mann, and she was born in Glasgow, in which city, she avers, her father occupied a prominent position. His office was in the gaol, and he kept a couple of clerks. She avers that she left Greenock in 1833 for Tasmania in the ship Eldon (Lord Eldon), the name of the captain being McAlpin, and her brother and his family were fellow passengers. Those were not the days of steamships, so that under fairly favourable circumstances, the voyage would have been a long one, but the captain had the misfortune to mistake his course, and it was not until six months after the voyage had been commenced that the vessel arrived at its destination. The party lived at Hobart, and whilst there Miss Mann was

married to a farmer named Smith, and who she alleges, was the first white farmer in the colony, she herself was the first white woman. Her brother was subsequently murdered in Hobart by his own servant. After staying in Hobart for some time, Mr and Mrs Smith came to Victoria. At this time of course, Melbourne was not in existence. The presence of the newcomers did not meet with the approval of the blacks, so hostile being their attitude, that, according to Mrs Smith they contemplating burning her and her husband and child (a son). A long time passed and many white people come to the colony, she herself being the first white woman. Mrs Smith conceived the idea of getting a school and commenced on a very unpretentious scale, having only one scholar, this being a half-caste girl. The state of affairs for a considerable time in the colony must have been far from comfortable, but when the police came into the country, the blacks became quieter. The aborigines had not always lived on the most amicable terms between themselves. On one occasion Mrs Smith saw about 400 of them. There had been a great fight between two parties, one of them being from Geelong and the Geelong party proved the victors. She once had an unpleasant experience, being attacked by five natives and violently seized by the throat. Twice she raised the cry of "Murder" and this fortunately was heard by a Mr Thompson, who in consequence of the alarm, put spurs to his horse and rode to the rescue, the animal when he arrived was covered in blood. The blacks made off, and though a reward of £200 was offered for their capture, they were never brought to justice. Mr Smith purchased 12 acres of land. In addition to farming, he sold wood, a load which could fetch 2/6d a load and Mrs Smith would cut up to two loads a day. Mr Smith died a good many years ago, his death taking place in a lunatic asylum after a paralytic stroke. His widow sold her interest in the farm, and subsequently she and her son went to the diggings, but if they had visions of great fortunes, they were not destined to see them realised. On the contrary, they quickly lost all the money they possessed, which amounted to £200. Later on however the son prospered. The latter married and dwelt at Shepparton, his mother living with him and assisting to bring up his family until his death, which occurred between nine and ten years ago. After this Mrs Smith lives at Dr Singleton's remaining there for some years. Subsequently she was admitted into the Benevolent Asylum. This institution she quitted in order to go and live with friends at Shepparton, but now as already indicated, she has again become an inmate of the Benevolent Asylum. Not withstanding her great age she retains her faculties. She is capable

of holding quite a long conservation, and is by no means confined to a bed or even her ward. She is able to walk around the garden of the institution without assistance, but finds it necessary to stop for a rest now and again. As for sight she can write a letter and thread a needle without glasses. Indeed she asserts that she cannot use glasses now. Mrs Smith is not the only member of the family who has lived to a centenarian, for she states that her father's mother reached the age of 105.

The Melbourne Argus, Thursday November 3, 1898
DEATH OF A VERY OLD WOMAN
A claimant to 116 years.

A very old woman, probably the oldest in Australia, died at the Benevolent Asylum yesterday, where she has been an inmate, off and on since December 4, 1884. She was Mrs Agnes Smith, who claimed to be 116 years old, though, when she was interviewed some years ago by a representative of the Argus, the statements she made were so ridiculous and confused as to render her claim open to grave doubt. Her knowledge of life in the early days of the colony was romantic. Nevertheless, if not quite 116 years old, Mrs Smith must have attained a very great age, for there still living in Cobram, on the Murray, a Mrs Lee, who in her infancy by Mrs Smith. Mrs Lee states that she has frequently heard by relatives refer to the great age of Mrs Smith and avers that they stated she was an old grey haired women at the time she acted as the nurse. Mrs Smith arrived in Australia with her husband in 1830 and is said to be the first white woman who undertook the task of educating and christianising the aborigines. Her husband died 50 years ago, and subsequently one of her sons was murdering in the bush.

Mrs Smith's father was a Glasgow solicitor, named John Mann, who left a family of 21, the youngest of whom was 74 at the time Mrs Smith first entered the asylum.

The Melbourne Argus, Tuesday November 8, 1898
CLAIMANT TO 116 YEARS
Letter to the Argus

Sir, I note in your issue of today the death of Mrs Agnes Smith, who claimed to be 116 years of age. Seeing you express doubt of her getting to great age as claimed, some of your readers may

be interested to learn the result of enquiries made by me 11 years ago when Mrs Smith was an inmate of my home in Brunswick. I traced out her brother, who was then living in Hobart, a retired bailiff and he ridiculed the idea of her then being 105 years of age. Proving from various family circumstances that she would at that time be more than 90 years, if as much, assuming the brother's statement being correct. It would make her 101 or 102 at time of death, an age justified by many statements made by her when cross-questioned by me. That Mrs Smith was of great age possibly 100, their need be little doubt, but her memory was often at fault.

Yours etc. A. Rivett, Beachworth, Victoria

The Melbourne Argus, Thursday, November 3, 1898
Death Notice

Smith: On November 2, 1898, at the Benevolent Asylum, Agnes Smith, aged 116 years. Supposed oldest, as well as one of the oldest colonists, and opened the first Wesleyan Sunday School in Brunswick.

From the death certificate of Agnes Smith it states age as 116 years and daughter of John Mann and Agnes Patterson.

On Familysearch the only marriage for John Mann and Agnes Patterson was on July 28, 1806 at Cathcart, Renfrewshire and believe Agnes was born after this date if I have correct parents.

Searching the Tasmanian Pioneer Index I found no trace of a marriage for Agnes Mann, but did find a marriage for Agnes Anderson (widow of James Anderson) to Isaac Smith in Hobart on April 14, 1834 and have a death at Shepparton Victoria in 1884 for John Anderson aged 50, son of Jas. Anderson and Agnes Mann.

WVAHS Western zone meeting to be held at Warracknabeal Agricultural Museum Saturday, October 27, 2018 10am start

WVAHS Midlands zone meeting to be held at Carisbrook Fire Station Cnr. Green and Urquhart Sts. Saturday, October 20, 2018 10.30am start

WVAHS Southern zone meeting to be held at xxxxxxxxxxxx xxxxxxxxxxxx Saturday, October xx, 2018 10am start

Midlands Historical Society (M'borough) WVAHS report : April 2018

Our museum complex has been the focus of intensive activity. Following an exacting process of review and inspection, we have been successfully recredited for a further five years by Museums Australia (Victoria). A maintenance team from Central Goldfields Shire Council repaired a section of damaged floor and repainted an entire room in our 120 year-old Worsley Cottage, and our dedicated volunteer gardeners created a brilliant Spring display in the cottage garden.

An active research program occupies many volunteer hours, especially the detailed family history enquiries. We have processed a number of interesting donations, ranging from handwritten diaries to paintings and historic photographs. Volunteers are working on projects such as digitising photographs, creating data bases of factory and council records and researching possible names for newly created streets.

Members attended a range of professional development activities organised by Museums Australia and

the RHSV (History Victoria Support Group) as well as WVAHS meetings. Fundraising activities continue to remain a vital issue as our Society, like many others, battles rising administrative and insurance costs. We remain afloat through the efforts of a small group of dedicated members.

A highlight this June will be an exhibition, made possible through a grant from Creative Victoria, of a selection of photographs taken by the late Wal Richards, a Maryborough amateur photographer whose passion for photographing local weddings in his own idiosyncratic style has made him a local celebrity. From Wal's legacy of thousands of photographs created over a period of 50 years, a selection of images representing each decade will be exhibited. The exhibition opens on June 23 at the Central Goldfields Gallery and runs for a month.

Barbara Neilson

Nhill & District Historical Society news

January to March at the Nhill and District Historical Society Inc.

The highlight of this period was the meeting held at the museum on Tuesday 13 February when we were pleased to welcome so many people to hear Graham Douglas and Dale Conway tell us about the isolated graves in the district. What an interesting evening it was! Graham and Dale have spent many hours visiting and recording these graves and then trying to find out information about the people who were buried at these lonely sites.

Graham says that he has been conducting this research for the past six years and gets to know about the graves from elderly citizens and farmers in the area. Dale has joined him in the last few years and together they visit the sites and document the information. It was interesting to note that they do this research mainly in the cooler weather as they are not fond of snakes. Who could blame them?

They told us of the pioneer grave of Mrs Jardine and her child located on the edge of Lake Hindmarsh near Rainbow. The grave is clearly marked and has an inscription on it. This is a very sad story of a pioneer lady who went into labour many miles from the nearest doctor. There were complications with the delivery and both a doctor and midwife were sent for. Unfortunately the mother and baby both died. Her husband was taking her to Dimboola for burial when they experienced more misfortune - the wagon's axle broke. So Mrs Jardine and her baby have a lonely grave by the lake. You can read more about this story if you go online.

They then told us of the two graves in the township of Dimboola and the story behind these deaths.

We heard of the relatively large graveyard on Yarrock Station (which was once owned by the Affleck

family) and who had many connections throughout the Wimmera and Western Districts and went onto become very successful.

Everyone in attendance agreed that this was a most informative and enjoyable evening and we thank Graham and Dale for both their impressive presentation and agreeing to be our guest speakers.

The Oliver's of Nhill

So successful was the evening that we plan to have more of these evenings throughout the year. Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday 8 May, 2018 at 8.00 pm at the Historical Society. (Note we have moved our April meeting to this date as our guest speaker, Jan Jozsa, is not available until this time). Jan, a descendent of the Oliver family, has been researching them for many years and will tell us about the Olivers and their mill.

In Newsletter No 49 I wrote about how the township of Nhill might not have existed if it had not been for Messrs Frank and John Oliver. It was their decision to build a mill on virgin scrub country beside the Dimboola-Lawloit Road. They built their mill by the creek that ran across this road. It is now a concreted drain and the road is known as Victoria Street.

The mill attracted other people and businesses to the area and soon there was a hotel and a general store and thus our town was established.

The Oliver family became very active in the community and Frank and John and were well known throughout the area. Ada, their sister, was the first Post-Mistress.

The mill was one of many structures destroyed across the region in the great cyclone on Friday 19 November 1897.

Kay Scott

Genealogy and the Victorian State Railways

Railways played an important part of the development of Victoria. The first railway, (a private company) in Australia ran from Melbourne to Sandridge (renamed Port Melbourne) in 1854.

There are books written about the Victorian Railways and I am sure your local library will have at least one.

A timeline history is at:

www.railwaymuseum.org.au/history.html

Some key dates are these for the opening of the early railway lines: 1857, Melbourne and Geelong; 1859, Melbourne to Williamstown and to Sunbury; 1862, Geelong to Ballarat; also in 1862, Melbourne to Bendigo.

In 2004 the Public Records Office (PROV) developed an exhibition dubbed "Making Tracks" for the railway's 150th anniversary in which Susan Priestley noted that "Women from the railway family might also take on caretaking/gatekeeping work at minor suburban and country stations".

As the government took over the early privately owned railways and extended the rail lines throughout the state, the number of railways employees working for the Victorian Railways (VR) increased. Concurrently the VR began to make records, which included, of course, employees names and where they were stationed (pun intended). Bear in mind that employees such as Station Masters were posted around the state and track layers were something like itinerant workers. Families moved as they were posted to keep the VR network operational. In the 1950s there were around 30,000 VR employees around the state.

These VR records are useful for family historians. Obviously the basic information about names can be important. Sometimes marriages can be deduced merely from the employment records. Families can be traced as they moved around the country. Ancestors who are lost after they arrived in Victoria might have joined the VR and moved as their job required and sometimes settled in the country after retirement.

Remember this important rule for family historians: if the government is involved there will be a record. If you have a family member who worked for the VR then you have the opportunity to see records made of all of his, or her employment; if they were posted around the state the details of those travels; and seeing photographs and paintings of VR history that relate to your ancestors. From that you may be able to follow the education of their children through school records also held at PROV.

Also remember that Victorian State Government records are archived by the PROV. The Royal Historical Society of Victoria has many photographs and some paintings of railways installations.

There is at least one index to railways employees: an index to Victorian railway employees of the 19th cen-

tury, 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 book *Railways of Victoria 1854-2004* by Robert Lee is available in the Genealogical Society of Victoria Book Shop.

The Genealogical Society of Victoria helps members find the many useful sources for family history worldwide and provides help for members in their quest of their family. See www.gsv.org.au for more information, email gsv@gsv.org.au or phone 9662 4455 for information about the Society.

June 19, 1884

DEATH OF AN OLD PORTLAND RESIDENT AND VICTORIAN PIONEER. (Belfast Gazette.)

Last week a very old colonist peacefully passed away, in the person of Mr George Osborne. He was born in Sydney, and at the time of his death was over seventy-five years of age. The father of the deceased was one of the earliest colonists, having been an officer in the 45th regiment. The subject of this notice learned the trade of a boat builder in Sydney, and after he had completed his apprenticeship, in the year 1830, went away for several years on a whaling cruise as ship's carpenter. In the early days whaling was a most profitable undertaking, whole fleets of vessels being engaged. During one of his voyages the whaling vessel struck a sunken reef and sank, when many of the crew were lost. The deceased, with others who were excellent swimmers, succeeded in securing one of the boats although badly damaged, and after much deprivation were picked up by another whaling vessel. In the year 1840, his brother-in-law, Mr George Lily, determined to open up a business in Portland (which was then better known in New South Wales than Melbourne) and chartered a vessel named the *Sir Francis Feeling* to convey his merchandise. The deceased, with his wife and only child were on board in company with Mr Lily. The late Mr Osborne then went to Melbourne, where he remained for a short time, and subsequently settled down at Portland, which in 1841 was a prosperous whaling station. He remained at Portland about 25 years, since which time he had been living with different members of his family. The deceased was a man who believed in the biblical injunction "owe no man anything," and during the active portion of his life was noted for his strict business punctuality.

**IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER —
HAVE YOUR SAY**

Frightful murder and attempted suicide

The inhabitants of Back Creek Talbot were startled on Monday after noon by the intelligence that a man had murdered his wife and had afterwards cut his own throat.

On proceeding to the spot about a mile distant from Scandinavian Crescent, a dreadful tragedy was disclosed. A few yards from a small tent, the body of a woman as lying quite dead, with her throat and face terribly cut. At a short distance a man was supported up against the trunk of a tree, whilst his throat which was severely cut, was being sewn up by a medical man in attendance.

It appears from the evidence on the spot that the woman was living with a bullock driver, who had left the tent only a short time when the murderer, supposed to be her husband, rushed in and attacked her with a razor. She rushed out of the tent, where he followed her and got her on the ground, and cut her throat so as to sever the cartoid and cause almost instant death.

The man almost immediately drew the razor across his own throat twice apparently without doing himself much injury. He then stooped down and kissed the murdered woman, and again cut his throat this time more severely.

Two men passing by attempted to interfere, when the man threatened them with the razor and they desisted.

This version is from a woman named Combe living in the neighborhood, who from a distance saw the whole affair. A little girl about four years old daughter of the deceased woman was present at the time.

Mr. O'Hea a chemist from Castlemaine, was soon on the spot and after examining the woman and finding that she was beyond the reach of human aid turned his attention to the man and skilfully sewed up the wounds in his throat.

Shortly afterwards Dr. Candiottis arrived and between them he slowly regained consciousness. He then signed to the bystanders to bring his child; which, after a short interval was done. When the little girl was brought, she cried out "Will you kill me, Daddy?" The man seemed much affected.

The child was left in the charge of a benevolent neighbour and the man and his ill-fated victim were removed to the Daisy Hill Hotel.

The woman was about twenty five years of age and of rather prepossessing appearance. She came of a very respectable family. At the early age of nineteen she was married at Adelaide to a man named John White. A year or two after their marriage she discovered that he had a wife still living.

She left him taking with her the child she had borne him and went into service. We do not know how she became acquainted with Johnson (the man who murdered her) but at any rate she had been living with him some time. The unfortunate woman told some neighbours that she had supported him for upwards of twelve months by a sly grog shanty, which she kept at Ballarat.

They were very unhappy together, and he left her at the time of the rush to Chinaman's Flat, but returned to her after a month's absence. She described him as an idle, dissolute fellow. A short while back she went with him to the rush at Crowlands. There she met Higgins, the bullock driver, with whom she was living at the time of her death.

At Crowlands she was in great distress, and had to pawn some of her dresses for 15/. Johnson then appears to have left her, or she him, and she came to Back Creek with Higgins, about a fortnight since.

Nothing was heard of Johnson till Saturday last, when he came to the tent as soon as he ascertained, by waiting, that Higgins had left it. When she saw him the woman ran away, and took refuge in a Mrs. Combe's tent. He followed her, and threatened to "Do for her." The unfortunate woman cried out: "My God, he's come," and ran into her bedroom.

Johnson then left taking with him the woman's child by her putative husband, White. When she told the circumstances to Higgins afterwards, he said if she wished to go back and live with him she could. She answered that she would sooner go to service.

On Monday Johnson watched him go away to his work, and entered the tent. She endeavoured to get away, but he overtook her, and knocked her down with his fists. Kneeling upon her he deliberately inflicted upon her the wound from which she died.

One of the wounds on the cheekbones was fully two inches and a half long. The woman seems to have struggled desperately, one of her hands were very much cut. Johnson, against whom a verdict of willful murder was returned, died on April 5, 1859, at the Maryborough Hospital.

Argus (Melbourne) Tuesday 29 August 1893. AN EXTRAORDINARY EXPLOSION. NARROW ESCAPE OF TWO YOUTHS. ST. ARNAUD, MONDAY.

Two youths named Frederick Watson and William Schlichting on Saturday evening placed an old quicksilver bottle on the fire of a blacksmith's shop attached to some old pyrites works, wishing to remove the stopper. One was blowing the bellows and the other standing in front of the forge when the bottle exploded with a tremendous force, heard over the greater part of the town. Many people rushed to the depot, thinking it was a boiler explosion. Fragments were blown between the two youths, but they miraculously escaped injury. One piece of the bottle crashed through the end of the building, and was picked up 220 yards away, on the Lord Nelson mullock heap. The opposite end of the building was completely blown out.

William Schlichting was a son of Wilhelm Justus Schlichting the manager of the Lord Nelson Mine at St. Arnaud.



History Victoria Support Group

Please join us for a Seminar Day

23

SATURDAY
JUNE 2018

9am – 3pm

Hosted by
Nagambie & District
Historical Society

Housing our Societies

Location Event to be held at
Tennis Club Pavilion

Off: Marie and Glass Streets, Nagambie

- 9.00am Arrival, registration and a cuppa.
- 9.30am Introduction of RHSV attendees, HYSG attendees, host group, and members of visiting groups.
- 9.45am **Christine Worthington**, RHSV Collections Manager – 'Digitisation and Historical Societies': This topic will cover a range of things (outreach, capped by building, access, streaming) and emphasize the need to digitise for preservation.
- 10.20am **Caitlin Mitropoulos**, Community Advocate – Built Heritage at the National Trust of Australia (Victoria), will speak to a range of issues, including how to care for heritage buildings, the responsibilities of buildings occupied by Historical Societies, and funding streams that can be pursued.
- 11.00am Morning tea
- 11.30am **Dr Andrew Lemon**: on The Blaster Gardener, T. R. Gamett of The Age and The Garden of St Erth - and why gardens, parks, reserves and national parks matter, now even more than ever.
- 12.30pm **Panel of three**: Judy Richards (owning a building), Laina Struach (occupying a Local Council building), and Alleyne Hookley (occupying a State Government Building).
- 1.00pm Lunch
- 1.45pm **Rosemary Cameron** EO RHSV will highlight how societies can run successful, interesting and engaging walks. Rosemary was previously the Administrator for the Professional Tour Guide Association of Australia and is highly qualified and experienced to enlighten us on how to run and improve our walks.

- 2.30pm **Question and answer time**
Opportunity for attendees to ask questions and share their concerns.
- 3.00pm **Finish** – Visit to Nagambie & District Historical Society Museum, 344 High Street Nagambie.



BOOKINGS

Bookings
<https://www.ttybooking.com/USRL>

Cost
\$20 per person
(includes morning tea, lunch and visit to museum)

Contact
office@historyvictoria.org.au
or 9326 9288

Come and join us for a dayfull of tips, inspiration & useful ideas to help your historical society

It's your newsletter — have your say



WRITING THE PAST

JUNE 29 - JULY 1, 2018

SHEEP'S BACK MUSEUM, NARACOORTE

A weekend of inspiring speakers and practical workshops for local and family history writers

Presented by
Kanawinka
Writers and
Historians



Bookings and prepayment essential via
www.kanawinkawh.com.au.

Bookings close June 24. Limited places

Featuring...

* Kristin Weidenbach - best-selling author (*Mailman of the Birdsville Track, Growing Up Moonta*)

* Dr Rosalie Triolo - award-winning Melbourne history educator

* Lainie Anderson - *Sunday Mail* columnist and author

* Anthony Laube - newspaper curator, Mortlock Library and Trove specialist

* Liz Harfull - best-selling author (*Almost an Island: the Story of Robe, The Blue Ribbon Cookbook*)

* Expert advice from publishers, local printers, historians and authors

Full Weekend - \$95*

Saturday only - \$75*

Sunday only - \$50

Saturday Dinner \$ 30

*Includes morning and afternoon tea, light lunch.

Excludes Saturday dinner.

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[kanawinkawritershistorians@](mailto:kanawinkawritershistorians@gmail.com)

gmail.com or phone Penny

Richardson 0401000089

Wal Richards exhibition — June 23

The opening date (June 23rd) is approaching rapidly, and planning is in full swing. Our wonderfully creative curator Kareen Anchen of Cascade Art in Maldon, assisted by archival framer Jeff Gardner, is narrowing down the collection of scanned photographs in order to make her final selection of Wal's images to be framed. She's also planning how best to use the art gallery space.

Historical Society volunteers have been providing background information about Wal and his family and friends, and seeking out artefacts for display such as wedding dresses from the era and camera identical to Wal's original box brownie, and collecting local residents; reminiscences of Wal.

We're delighted that generous local residents with memories of Wal will join in the wedding-themed celebration at the exhibition opening. Bent Stems florist will be supplying decorations, Jenny Kerr (whose wedding Wal photographed) is lending one of her faux wedding cakes, and Maryborough IGA have donated the champagne. Max and Margaret Finch very kindly transferred tapes of Max's Southern Cross band to CD so that music can be used as background on the iPad selection of Wal's photographs, which will be on permanent display in our Resources Centre after the exhibition closes.



Kareen Anchen and Irene Oxley show off the two wedding dresses that will be incorporated into the exhibition.

Exhibition begins June 23, 2018 at the Maryborough Art Gallery, Clarendon Street, Maryborough..



Arriving at the Anglican Church circa 1940s.

Curator Kareen Anchen's thoughts on the project:

The exhibition is a fresh look at Wal Richards' sentimental journey into the weddings of the late 40's, 50's and 60's in black and white photography and then through the explosion of colour through the 70's, 80's and 90's.

It is about fashion, portraiture, cars, bridesmaids, after parties, bridal parties, flowerchildren and of course the brides. He loved photographing the brides.

This project has been a joy to work on — the black and white photos are true vintage. There are fabulous images of classical cars, extraordinary wedding costuming, hair, hats, bouquets and candid happy snaps of people we may never know, which all make for a great imaginative narrative. Richards' images are a treat; he saw the world in an unaffected way, not posed or overly style conscious. You cannot help but smile when you view memory lane through the camera lens of Wal Richards.

MEMORIES OF WALLY

When Wal died in 1997, his family wanted to thank the many people in the Maryborough community who had supported him in so many ways. His sister-in-law Roma Richards prepared this obituary, using what she imagined to be Wal's own words. The tribute was read out at his funeral and reprinted in the Maryborough Advertiser on August 12 of that year.

With Roma's permission we've printed the obituary in full (including annotations to explain local places and personalities to readers who may be unfamiliar with Maryborough at that time

Horsham Times Tuesday 28 March 1911.

Obituary - Mr. Carl Schmidt, who has been ailing for a considerable time, died at his home, "Carlsruhe," Natimuk on Tuesday evening. Mr. Schmidt was one of the pioneers of the Natimuk district, and was widely known and highly respected. He was a native of Mecklenburg, Germany, from which place he emigrated 56 years ago, being then only a lad. He spent some time in Mount Gambier, where he was intimately associated with Mr. G. F. Haustorfer, now proprietor of the Horsham brewery. In 1870 the deceased came to the Wimmera, there being at that time a rather extensive pilgrimage from the central State. Deceased took up land at Natimuk and farmed a big area with conspicuous success. He was twice married and leaves a large grown up family. He was 72 years of age.

Obituary for Mr Wallace Richards

Given at his funeral by Mrs Roma Richards (sister-in-law)

Published in the Maryborough Advertiser, Tuesday, August 12, 1997

If Wally could stand where I am today and look out at all his friends who are here to say goodbye, he would get that special grin on his face, the one that came when his heart was really touched, and he would say 'Good funeral, good funeral, lot of people, popular.' For once George, [George Wardrop, Anglican priest] you may have been overtaken down that isle as Wally led us to his wake over in the hall.

As we all know, Wally came into this world marching to the sound of a different drum. The beat that Wally heard all his life was soft and gentle. It didn't include envy, greed, malice or unkindness in any form. There was never a beat that included snobbishness or bigotry, hate or lied [white or otherwise.] But what that soft and gentle beat didn't include was the ability to read or write or communicate as you or I take for granted. Because of that, Ian [brother] and myself and our children . . . have written a letter to the people of Maryborough on behalf of Wally to try and express his and our thanks for his 66 years and eleven months among you. I hope he approves of it, otherwise I will hear him at my elbow saying "Not good, not good."

Dear friends: the ones here today and the ones I've gone ahead to meet again. My faith is such that I believe there is a celestial Moore's Corner [former menswear shop, north-east corner of High and Nolan Streets] in heaven, and we are now sitting in sunshine with me catching them up on our Maryborough news and footy scores.

To all of you I thank you, and even if I'd been allocated tree score and ten, it wouldn't have been enough time to thank you all personally for the part you played in giving me such a life of fulfillment. Not every person who is different gets the love and respect that this town has given me. It was also my good fortune to be born in an era when people had time to care.

I guess I was lucky to be born with a happy and outgoing nature, and Lil Manton tells me that when she worked at Moore's they would hear me singing as I came around the corner. Much as I loved her, she did embarrass me in later life by telling people that I had a good singing voice. That has been verified by older relatives, otherwise would you believe the word of someone who for years told me that double-yolker eggs from the Egg Board [local industry] were "guaranteed laid by big roosters." Mum never enlightened me otherwise!

I came into the world in Melbourne, and lived for a while at Camperdown. However I can only remember three homes — here in Maryborough. One behind the shop in High Street [family pharmacy A. T. Richards,] Moore's corner, and my cottage in Waters Street. I went to school for a short while, but in those days when you heard a different drum beat they did not have any way to encourage you to stay at school. I guess you could say I was the original dropout who ended up being a self made man and smarter than some of the teachers. Look around you! How many teachers have a funeral this size and can say that, to their knowledge they have never been short changed,

even with all their learning?

I didn't need figures to be a storeman in a pharmacy. I just went around with a pencil and pad and made strokes, and from an early age I kept those shelves filled without a mistake. I didn't have to know how to read to be able to collect parcels from the railway station. My eyes could pick out the goods, and sometimes I had them loaded in my cart behind my bike before the attendant knew I was there, but given the reputation of the railways in those days, that wouldn't have been hard. I could always get a job without having to write a job application form. I just knew which butcher needed a load of papers, which older ladies needed messages done, and when I needed more money, Marie Malone would write out an ad for the "Addie" [Maryborough Advertiser] telling every one of my woodchopping skills. I never needed to fill my mind with union rules, the CPI or hourly rates. I got the pay I asked and ran a good business until I retired at 65.

Another thing I managed without being able to read or write was finding out when and where were the weddings. Perhaps the greatest joy of my life was photographing weddings, and I rarely missed one. I rode the bike to Dunolly and Avoca. I followed weddings to Eddington, Majorca and Carisbrook. That bike has seen more weddings that you and I have had hot dinners. Be it in Bendigo or Ballarat, I got there. Most brides thought it bad luck if I didn't turn up, but some brides; mothers thought the reverse. They never wished me harm; just a flat tyre ten miles away and five minutes before the wedding started! The only wedding I went to without my camera was that wedding in St. Kilda when someone stole my camera as I paid for orange juice. Upset as I was, I found the police station and reported it for insurance cover. But my being upset was nothing to the bride and her father when they pulled up in front of the church with a police car on their tail and me hitching ride inside.

Since I became ill, there has been much concern as to what is going to happen to all my wedding photos. Because they have become of great historical value to the community, my nieces and nephews will catalogue the photos of about 2000 weddings and prepare them for display, hopefully in the new year. Thank you to the Ross family for all the work you did.

Of course having weddings on a Saturday in inter was always a bugbear because they often clashed with the footy, and I loved the footy. From an early age, when by brothers played football for Maryborough, I got a great kick out of being under the grandstand with the other players'. All my life, Horrie Hubble has been my ideal Best Player. Almost my last outing was to the footy, and I was sorry that I was not well enough to stay long. However the last big grin and signs of animation that anyone got out of me was after that last big win, and for days, I'd tell anyone who would listen "Top four, top four." [Luckily Wal was unconscious when Maryborough lost last week.]

There have been so many wonderful things happen to

me through people's kindness, but the one that stands out is my twenty-first birthday. Frank Moore's Corner and my favourite High Street traders banded together to put on a party at the Railways Institute, and a great crowd came. The radio you gave me still works. I have never forgotten that night and how overcome my father was that people thought so much of me. I remember all this, and told Ian about it on our last drive together.

Ian also took me on my last bus trip — the Barham pokie trip in May. And those bus trips over the years were nearly as addictive as the weddings, but I never got addicted to the pokiers, just the shopping. It was the company and the shopping that I went for, which was a little disloyal to all my retail friends in Maryborough, but I did help the economy Australia-wide, and in doing so earned my black belt in shopping. Thank you to all the people on those trips for their acceptance of me, and especially the drivers who had such patience and always got me back safely and many times shared a room with me.

However there is a place in High Street which will attest to the fact that I didn't spend all my money out of town, and that is the cake stall in Fridays. Their taking care of me all down since I have been ill. Maryborough is renowned for its abundance of good cooks, and I did justice to them all.

Rumour has it I joined the Church of England because of the coffee and cakes, but the regular church-goers will know I have always taken my faith in God very seriously, and have been a regular church-goer for a long time. Thank you for the support you have always given me to enable me to attend my church right up until just recently.

Finally, I have to give my very special thanks to two exceptionally wonderful women. Not too many people have been fortunate to have had tree mothers, but I have been truly blessed to have my own mother and Mrs Clare Moore and Mrs Jean Chadwick of Clarendon Street.

For over thirty years you two wonderful ladies have taken me into your homes and under your wings, and loved me. By your kitchen stoves you have read every Advertiser to me, written my letters and read my mail. Your calendars are marked with my appointments and trips and reminders of daily things. By one kitchen stove I ate Sunday roast dinners, by another I was nursed through my illnesses. At both I was comforted through bouts of loneliness and sadness, especially when my older friends began to die, and although I hate to admit it, as I have become deaf and my speech got harder for people to understand. In a world that was changing so fast these two caring and lovely ladies were my anchor, and we will miss each other terribly.

There are so many people who have helped me along the way. I have memories of my times at the Railway Hotel [now demolished] and Park Hotel. For the car rides given to me by so many people to so many functions, to the football and netball clubs and the C.W.A. ladies, my grateful thanks. Those of you who are here today will remember many other happy times. I hope you will talk about them and remember me for a long time. To all of you, thanks and goodbye.

Wally.

TRIVIA-AU-GO-GO

**Join us!
Beat us!**

**22 June 2018
6:30pm**

**Royal Historical
Society of Victoria**

**Bookings:
trybooking.com/VWCW**

Fancy yourself a bit of a history buff? Of course you do! Time to get competitive and pit yourself against all those other history buffs at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria's annual fabulous TRIVIA-AU-GO-GO.

Put together a table of friends or join one of our RHSV tables. There will be a cash bar and you are more than welcome to bring your own nibbles.

Tickets \$20pp

Lots of prizes and games (and it's not all history, we promise).

Where?

The Drill Hall

239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne
(opp Flagstaff Gardens station. Trams: 58 and those that go along La Trobe St)

Charlton Golden Grains Museum

presents

MUD AND BLOOD

Monday July 2nd, 12:30pm & 6pm


Charlton, birthplace of WWI hero, **General H.E. Pompey Elliott**, stages *Mud and Blood*, a compelling six-actor play by Meg McNena, directed powerfully by Alice Bishop with a stellar professional cast and innovative sound and light designers. Set 1914-1921 in battle and at home, Pompey (played by Darren Mort) inspires as husband, father, brother, general, Anzac veteran, and leader. He and a soldier's mother deal with his vow to look after his boys in war as if they were his own. Potent themes of family, duty, loyalty, trauma, betrayal, legacy and grief vividly unfold during world-changing times.

Meg McNena is an awarded writer, including an Amnesty International Freedom Writer Award. Director, Alice Bishop, who runs two theatre companies and has directed for many of

Melbourne's companies, including Redstitch, LaMama and Essential Theatre, has been nominated for a Green Room Award for best director. The lead male, Darren Mort, has many film, plays, and television credits including *Utopia*, *Dr Blake Murder Mysteries*, *Neighbours*, with international film awards for a recent movie he produced. For twenty-five years, the lead female, Anthea Davis, has worked with most of the television networks, toured extensively, appeared in films and at Melbourne's theatres. The other actors, Lauren Bailey, David Kambouris, James Bolton, and Matt Connell have an impressive list of film, television and theatre credits.

The *Mud and Blood* team brings exquisite theatre to The Rex Theatre on 2 July 2018.

**Tickets \$30,
students \$15 or
\$25 for groups 8+**



MUD AND BLOOD

WW1 takes more than sons
and leaves more than graves

An unforgettable play by
Meg McNena about local
WW1 hero Pompey Elliott
Directed by Alice Bishop

At the Rex Theatre
30 High Street, Charlton

Monday 2 July 2018
Matinee 12:30pm
(Guest speaker,
Ross McMullin afterwards)
Evening 6:00pm

Bookings online at
live.rextheatre.org.au
or by email to
boxoffice@rextheatre.org.au
Group discounts available

VICTORIA

ANZAC -2014-2018-
CENTENARY
Sharing Victoria's Stories & Making Connections

For Bookings: live.rextheatre.org.au or email: bookings@rextheatre.org.au or phone Caroline Olive on 0418 361 971
Times: 12.30pm and 6pm Ross McMullin will speak after the 12.30pm matinee