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Western Historian

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The Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies (WVAHS) acknowledges the traditional owners of country on the land on which we are meeting throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, culture and community.

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Potential Member Groups

Arapiles (Natimuk)
 Ararat
 Balmoral
 Birchip
 Boort
 Camperdown
 Carisbrook
 Casterton
 Charlton
 Cohuna
 Colac
 Coleraine
 Dimboola
 Donald
 Derrinallum/Lismore
 Dunkeld
 East Loddon (Mitiamo)
 Edenhope
 Geelong & South Western Rail
 Glenthompson
 Goldfields (Dunolly)
 Halls Gap
 Harrow
 Heytesbury
 Hawkesdale
 Horsham
 Hopetoun
 Inglewood
 Kerang
 Koroit
 Landsborough
 Maryborough Midlands
 Minyip
 Mortlake
 Mount Rouse (Penshurst)
 Murtoa
 Nullawil
 Ouyen
 Port Fairy
 Portland
 Pyramid Hill
 Rainbow
 Rupanyup
 St Arnaud
 Stawell
 Swan Hill
 Terang
 Warracknabeal
 Warrnambool
 Wedderburn
 Woolsthorpe

President's Report 2021/22

During the past two years we restricted our lives and activities while ways and means of dealing with COVID-19 were developed and implemented. Hopefully, we have now learned how to live with it and are able to gradually get back to undertaking most of the activities that we used to enjoy. Some things will need to be carried out differently or with more care and precautions, but events such as our AGM and Zone Meetings may resume.

It was fortunate that we were able to hold the AGM at Stawell in March last year and that so many attended. Again, I would like to thank all involved in planning during the months leading up to that event and also those undertaking the tasks during the weekend to enable it to proceed. Thanks also to the hosts for providing the venue and permitting us to inspect much of the property. Thanks also to Richard Broome AM for attending as guest speaker.

Sadly, the ongoing COVID-19 conditions resulted in cancellation of the three Zone meetings due to be held during spring 2021.

Robin Parker continued to produce quarterly issues of the *Western Historian* on schedule throughout the year and his efforts are greatly appreciated, particularly as it was not easy for him to do so for part of the year. He has now handed over his editorial duties to Craige Proctor and I thank Craige for taking up that vital task. I hope that you all continue to forward information for inclusion in our publication.

Carolyn Olive has maintained our website and Facebook page. I thank her for doing so. Both are important for promoting our name and activities. They and the *Western Historian* are all avenues available for members to utilise in promoting their existence and activities. Make use of them.

Thank you to all Office Bearers, Committee and members for their involvement throughout the past difficult twelve months, particularly our hard-working Secretary / Treasurer Helen. It makes my role easy when the administration is so well run.

Michael Menzies
 President

This issue of *Western Historian* comprises mainly Reports from member groups submitted at or to the AGM on 2 April. As Newsletter Editor I have found compiling my second issue of the newsletter highly rewarding and enlightening. I consider myself privileged to read about what so many member groups are achieving through their ongoing work but also through their many projects, all of which have a common theme: working to chronicle, showcase and promote the many aspects of local heritage in so many diverse locations, from the coast to the Murray, from the border to the Midlands. While compiling each issue involves many dozens of hours, I am finding the experience stimulating and thought-provoking. I have also spent much time exploring member groups' social media pages and websites and have included in this issue these links for those groups from whom we have received Reports. It is also a great opportunity to liaise with people I would not otherwise get to communicate with. The next issue, due out in September, will not have member groups' Reports so this is an advance call for items. Promotions for local events, notifications of new publications, book reviews and reports on special projects will all be gratefully received and included.

Craige Proctor

Historic scrapbook found in Birregurra book shop makes its way back to Warrnambool

Warrnambool Standard, 2 April 2022; article by Madeleine McNeil

A scrap book, found in a second-hand bookshop in Birregurra, detailing much of Warrnambool's early history has been presented to the Warrnambool and District Historical Society (W&DHS).

Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies president Michael Menzies bought the book, while browsing in Birregurra about five years ago.

He later realised it was compiled by Edmund Vidler who played a significant part in Warrnambool's early history.

The book, which he presented to the Warrnambool group on Saturday, features south-west news clippings and letters to the editor - providing a timeline of Mr Vidler's role in the region from 1906 to 1909.

Mr Menzies said Mr Vidler, a journalist and author, advocated for Warrnambool to have its own factories, mills, a progress association and a direct railway line to Ararat.

The scrap book also includes an original prospectus from the Warrnambool Woollen Mill and a separate director's report, both from 1909.

"It's really interesting to see how someone came in from out of town and he said 'Start making the most of your resources.'" Mr Menzies said.

"Get yourself a dairy factory, get yourself a woollen mill - you're shipping bales off to be processed and you're sending out the dairy product'.

"He was saying there should be a dairy factory and of course Nestles turned up a few months later and the harbour and the railway development.

"It's significant for Warrnambool's history because he really did shake the place up a bit" Mr Menzies said.

"He really did wake-up Warrnambool and get it to make some progress and get some more industry and improve the rail connections from the hinterland to the port."

Mr Menzies, who is also the Geelong South West Rail Historical Society president, said while Mr Vidler had historic connections with the Geelong Art Gallery the scrap book was "far more relevant and he's more significant in Warrnambool because of what he advocated for in the early part of the last century".

W&DHS president Janet Macdonald said it was a timely presentation as members were currently working with the Warrnambool Family History Group to prepare a book about the city's Pioneer Board which she said "was very much the brainchild of Edmund Vidler's time in Warrnambool".

The 114-year-old [Pioneer Board](#) is pride of place at Warrnambool's History House and features 204 of the city's earliest pioneers.

Ms Macdonald said the scrap book would help the group fill in some gaps in Warrnambool's history.

"We know he (Mr Vidler) didn't really get on with some of the people here and it gives you much more of a picture why. He was too radical for them." Ms Macdonald said.

"We're eager to learn more about the man from reading his letters to editors of newspapers and other material he collected now contained in the scrap book." she said.





The interior of Christ Church, Warrnambool, adjoining the Hammond Centre, venue for the 2022 W.V.A.H.S. AGM on Saturday 2 April. The building is undergoing restoration.



On Sunday 3 April W.V.A.H.S. members had the opportunity to take part in a tour of the site of the original Warrnambool Woollen Mill in South Warrnambool. The site is now a residential estate. Left: the original building.



Check out the excellent website on the history of the Woollen Mill at <https://warrnamboolwoollenmill.com.au/>

Mortlake & District Historical Society Inc.

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



All members of community groups are well-aware of the difficulties experienced during the last year in particular.

In addition to those issues and constraints, we at MDHS Inc. have also lost several highly-esteemed, long-serving members and with each such passing we as a group and as individuals feel that loss but also recall with gratitude and respect their contributions to our group over many years. Consequently, our membership base is diminishing, something we are attempting to address now and in the future.

Behind the scenes several of our members have continued to work on their own research and projects including Florence Charles publishing her book on Mackinnon's Bridge as well as the publication of 'Mount Violet: Hope and despair on an Australian farming settlement'. Profits from both books have topped up the Society's coffers nicely. These endeavours should remind us that there will always be new stories to be recorded, shared and promoted and this valuable work needs to continue.

Kudos to Sue Potter for continuing to serve not only as Secretary and Treasurer but also as Newsletter Editor. Every issue of the newsletter under Sue has been fresh, diverse and enriching in the stories they have told especially the profile of people still very much with us and who have been willing to tell Sue, and a wider audience, their stories. We are mindful of capturing people's recollections of the past while they are still among us rather than focussing on recording only people and events in the distant past.

Our focus in 2022 must be on regrouping as best we can, hopefully with an increased local membership but also doing what we can to promote MDHS among the broader community, a challenge facing most Societies. Our Facebook page continues to be a significant 'port of call' for people seeking information and for offering contributions and this resource needs to be harnessed in various new ways.

Now that I am Newsletter Editor of the WVAHS's *Western Historian* I hope to be a useful conduit between that group, other historical societies and our own. Being involved with and communicating with other bodies is key to constantly rejuvenating and even reinventing MDHS Inc.

Craige Proctor
Vice President

Kerang Historical Society Inc.

<https://www.facebook.com/Kerang-Historical-Society-and-Museum-811315905595197/>

There is an air of excitement around the museum at the moment as the new building has been completed and is looking great, compared with what previously stood in the same place.

Many volunteer hours, under the watchful eye of Bill Hastie, have gone into erecting this building which is fully insulated and lined. Now more volunteer hours, under the guidance of President, Colin Day, are being utilised, cleaning and placing items within the building. These items mainly depict the social history of Kerang and district. Planning is now under way to have an official opening day.

In our previous report we mentioned that there was a lot of work going on in the workshop with a '28 standard Six Dodge. From the pile of pieces on the back of a truck, there is now a vehicle at the painting stage.

The international B414 tractor, also mentioned in previous reports, is now running on four cylinders! This tractor is one of the four tractors donated by the family of the late Kevin Makeham. Kevin had restored two of the other Internationals to a very high standard so the bar has been set very high to restore this tractor.

So, despite the restrictions of COVID, interesting things have been happening at the museum and we are now looking forward to the doors being opened to many visitors, including a group of seventy-four school children coming in very soon!

Sandra Westblade
President

Ouyen District History & Genealogy Centre Inc.

<https://www.ouyen.vic.au/history/>



At our last Annual/General Meeting held in November 2021 I presented my 20th Annual Report. Following the meeting John Burch, author of 'Returning the Kulkyn', gave a short talk about the print 'Mallee Scrub, River Murray' which was donated to the Centre. It is a hand coloured engraving by Russian artist Nicholas Chevalier who worked in Australia from 1854 to 1868. We believe it is an original Forest Virtue print.

The Centre is open to the public on Fridays 9.30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Requests for family history and other information mainly via emails, Facebook, phone calls, letters and in person continue to keep volunteers busy. Items donated to the History Centre require cataloguing, display or storage. A recent donation of clothes of local interest is now on display at the Centre.

The secondhand Scan Pro Microfilm scanner purchased last year is a wonderful asset enabling the scanning and emailing of articles from microfilm. After trying various sources, the internet has finally been connected by our Treasurer Colin via a wireless modem that was donated by one of our volunteers.

During the past year several groups visited the Centre including Hopetoun Historical Society.

The Centre continues to place displays of historic interest in empty shop windows giving an opportunity to showcase to the public items from the collection and promote our area's rich history. The current display is entitled 'Home life in the Past - A Mallee Kitchen'. Items in the local paper including a weekly "100 Years Ago" also help raise the profile of the History Centre.

In October this year as part of History Week and in conjunction with the Mildura Rural City Council Library Service, we are planning a History Trail around Ouyen township which will include the History Centre. A display will be created at the History Centre with past photos of Ouyen.

I am planning a training day for our newer volunteers to familiarise them with the collection.

Merle Pole
President

Inglewood and District Historical Society

<https://www.facebook.com/IDHS3517Victoria>

The biggest achievement has been the resumption of our Court Re-enactments. We held two performances in mid-March. We have been able to recruit some new volunteers to help in our performances which we appreciate very much. Volunteers are a little hard to come by at the moment which makes us appreciate them even more.

In February we had a tour of the Rheola-Moliagul-Orville area. This was led by Glenn Catto, who grew up in Rheola with his family descendants being one of the first families in the Rheola district and owning Zonnebeke Orchard, producing apples that were exported right across the world in the early 1900s.

A lot of our time has been assisting with family history enquiries. The fees we charge for completing these enquiries have assisted in keeping our bank account in the black and allowing us to pay the bills. Lockdowns seem to have spurred people into seeking information on their families which is great.

We also updated our Inglewood Cemetery Record book. We had run out of these books and worked with the Inglewood Cemetery Trust and the family of Arthur Treble who compiled the last book to extend the records from 1862-2009 to 1862-2020.

We are still in the process of digitising our collection. It is a slow process. I was hoping to use the AGM weekend to network and ask other societies which programs and systems they use and also ask if other groups have more modern microfilm readers that enable printing and where they have been sourced from.

Wendy Murphy
President



Swan Hill Genealogical and Historical Society

How happy we were to achieve a day trip during the year to a Sculpture Park and dairy farm at Tragowel. We quite enjoyed bouncing along in a trailer while we watched and learnt.

Lake Boga hotel was the venue for one meeting with a guest speaker informing us about her detailed family history.

There were many weeks of publicity about our group via ABC Mildura/Swan Hill radio, plus a display in shop windows using postcards from our collection.

The 'Who Do You Think You Are?' program was of particular interest for us last year when we discovered Denise Drysdale's mother's family came from Swan Hill. Uncle Jack Charles found out his father was from Swan Hill and had spent time in Swan Hill himself when he was young. Also, Grant Denyer had a connection to the emu farm we learnt about at Tragowel.

We are extremely fortunate to have two members who recently completed a mammoth effort to record and photograph almost 12,000 grave sites at the Swan Hill Cemetery. At the touch of a few buttons we can now immediately view details and photos. These cemetery records will soon be available for sale on USB.

Lyn Cunningham
President

Charlton Golden Grains Museum

<https://charltongoldengrainsmuseum.webs.com/>

The big news for our museum was that we received accreditation with AMaGA. After a long four-year process we finally got the tick of approval. There were very few things we had to change and the list of things to do for reaccreditation isn't overwhelming either. We have already made a start on these.

We have been accepted into the AMaGA digitisation program and are looking forward to leaning how to take better photos of our collection.

We received a CHART grant to buy another showcase to extend our military display. We have a number of other grant applications in the pending pile: a Local History Grant to have a taxidermy bird display inspected and preserved; a large grant to open up a new display area in the old Wesleyan Chapel; and a small Dyson grant to purchase a Square payment terminal so we can accept electronic payments.

We have partnered with other community groups on several projects. These include a Sir John Monash memorial at Lions Park. The disused water tower in the park was designed by Monash and his company. It will involve historical panels exploring his Jewish heritage, military career, and working life; a painted piano, a telescope, and chess boards etc. We are also part of a working group involved in developing a First People's Art Trail. Exploring the cultural heritage of our local indigenous community, the Dja Dja Wurrung, is long overdue. We are nearing the completion of a history project at Yeungroon which will incorporate a marble war memorial and thirteen large storyboards detailing the history of the area. Our archive of newspapers and photos has been used extensively for these projects.

Keeping people informed about what we are up to is so important. Regular museum updates appear in the monthly community newsletter and Anne, our President, submits information from 100 years ago to the local newspapers. Of course, with social media the dominant form of communication these days, our volunteer, David, is producing a digital strategy and before long we'll be tweeting and twitching all over the place.

Keep these dates free!

Advance notice that the 2023 W.V.A.H.S. AGM will be at Charlton on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 April. The W.V.A.H.S.'s 60th Birthday is on 28 September 2023 and we hope to be able to do something to mark the occasion at both the Charlton event and later in the year.



Birchip Historical Society Inc.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UyUoAJey5vs>

Although COVID curtailed Open Days and visits, members have been constantly researching for locals and those from afar with connections to Birchip.

Our Archivist Elaine has continued with a column entitled 'Birchip 100 years ago' with snippets from the *Buloke Times* of the same month and week 100 years previously. She has just finished re-cataloguing on a different programme all our local newspapers from 1891 through to 1972, a most time-consuming task. Elaine has also catalogued and filed over 100 photos and caught up on the filing of all artefacts during less interrupted days while COVID restricted the museum.



It was interesting to read about the sporting quests, triumphs and disappointments of the past. Secretary Maureen and Elaine continued with articles for the *Buloke Times* on Birchip Convent, Fund Raising for churches and halls, entertainment through the ages, trophies and different colours and league combinations of football and basketball, small schools, and soldier settlement is a continuing research topic. Dorothy, our Vice President, painstakingly continues family research.

We were happy to receive through a grant a new computer which has now been attached to the members' honour board wall which has been updated plus the Young Farmers' Honour Board.

Secretary Maureen researched suitable photos to be reproduced as wall murals for the newly renovated hospital, photos for a cricket reunion, a football re-union, updating all the netball premiership information and information about the large lemon scented heritage Lockwood tree which was planted in 1895.

Information was found for the updating of tourism brochures, Golf Club Life members, History of Bowls Triples, Indian and Afghan hawkers, Russell Street bombers for a film crew, the history of the Birchip Agricultural Show and lots of historical street photos showing shops, cars and other transport for the artists involved in our seven street murals for the recently painted walls as part of Mali Heart Streetscape festival.

Old photos of several town buildings now under a cloud by a Shire team of consultants for re-development or demolition has caused a lot of angst as the historical significance is not known by the city yuppies who drive these campaigns with saving money on building with the dubious employment of expensive city consultants to do the chopping. I'm sure you are familiar with these tactics. Two former channel ditchers once used to make the channels to bring water from the Grampians water system to our arid area have had research done on them as they will be part of the "Mounted Machinery Museum" Trail which will have an ancient town artefact from each of the ten towns in the Buloke Shire mounted on a pole, platform or concrete slab to form a new tourism attraction in Buloke Shire and attract more visitors. Our President Warren and Shire Councillor Graeme from Watchem are very involved with this project, driven by Buloke Tourism Board and of particular interest to Graeme, the driver of the project.

Insurance, power and all costs have increased and ways to raise money have been hampered with COVID but an Open Day as part of the Mali Heart Festival and a dinner-for-four raffle raised a good amount this month.

Unfortunately, one of our local monuments to honour the water brought by train and stored for farmers in Campbells Tank just outside the town was vandalised recently with the small hand pump welded on a pole as part of the monument being cut off and stolen. Thirty-five years plus years standing on the road's entrance to town and not one problem until now.

We enjoyed the annual Christmas Dinner at Donald in November, our one and only outing for 2021 and since COVID we have been able to swap several items from each town to be housed in the correct place of origin.

Warracknabeal and District Historical Society Inc.

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

The previous year unfortunately saw us having to cancel several meetings, Committee meetings, restoration, guest speakers and the Easter Rally. Between lockdowns, however, we managed two excursions, one to Woods Farming & Heritage Museum at Rupanyup and the other to the Nhill Aviation Centre, both very enjoyable days.

We were fortunate to be successful in applying for two grants, one to purchase archive material to file photos and the other for archive boxes to store items such as local organisations' minute books in the bank vault at the Historical Centre.

Our Warehouse now continues to be very busy. During lockdown members tidied, sorted, cleaned and rearranged much of the stock so that when we could open the whole shop was well organised and looking great. The first few weeks after re-opening were very busy with locals buying up and bringing in items to sell. Gradually visitor numbers increased as people had confidence that there wouldn't be another lockdown. Vendor numbers and buyers are now increasing again.

Our Historical Centre has had a difficult year because of COVID lockdowns. Visitor numbers have been very low. However, we have recently seen an increase in people coming to visit and we hope this will continue as more people are moving around the State. Research has continued throughout the year with our members investigating all requests with the resources available. Some repairs and painting have taken place at the front of the building. Several more plaques have been installed on shops, informing readers of the history of the building.

The Machinery Museum has also had very low visitor numbers for the whole year. However, like The Centre, these have also been improving recently. We are able to hold an Easter Rally this year. Hooray!!! We have been really busy organising this event as the decision was made only a few weeks ago and there is a huge amount of work to do. Members have been wonderful, going beyond their usual commitments to do extra work. We will feature Case tractors and American engines. We will also celebrate 101 years of Lanz Bulldog tractors as we have one of the original models on display. All we need now is people and good weather!

Members at the Museum have restored several tractors during the year but their main project has been the building of a new 'old shearing shed'. It should be finished by Easter and we will be able to demonstrate shearing using some of the shearing gear we have and, if we can find a blade shearer, they can demonstrate this skill.

Plans are in place to extend the plumbing at the Museum so that rain run-off will go to the nearby dam. When this is completed we have plans to construct more buildings to extend our display areas. These, of course, will depend on grants being available.

Like everyone, we hope that 2022 is a much better, healthier and more productive year. Best wishes to all Societies for the coming year.



Wheatlands Warehouse,
Warracknabeal

Minyip and District Historical Society Inc.

<https://www.facebook.com/Minyip.Historical/>

Once again, our Historical Society activities for the year have been controlled by COVID. HOWEVER - and this however in capitals - a lot has been achieved during the year by our members.

Research continued for the new historical book, now titled *Minyip – Towards 150*. Many hours were spent compiling the year-by-year records as well as documenting businesses, organisations, and events for the previous thirty years. Local historian and Councillor Graeme Massey launched *Minyip – Towards 150* at the opening of the 150th Celebrations event on 11 March.

In addition to the new book, an updated edition of the John Cromie book, *Minyip – 100 Years Young*, was also undertaken. Both books were completed in time for the 150th celebrations that occurred 11-14 March.

The proposed Open Garden Day in October 2021 was cancelled due to possible changes to the COVID restrictions. Everything has been so uncertain for the last few years that it is hard to plan events such as the Garden Day in advance.

One of our members, Wayne Jackson, led a wonderful cemetery walk at the Banyena Cemetery in October 2021 with many people from the surrounding district in attendance. In addition to the walk, the Trustees were presented with a scaled map of their Cemetery that was gratefully received.

The Memorial Gates gained evening lights, seating and stone surrounds courtesy of the Victorian Government grant received in the previous year. Apart from two replacement named bricks, this concludes our involvement with the Memorial Gates.

Our Secretary Shirley Smith was awarded OAM in the Queen's Birthday honours list in recognition of her services to the Minyip community. Well done and well deserved.

The Society has applied for an FRRR grant to replace the Heritage Plaques around town as many have weathered and some are even unreadable. Last week the Society was advised that our application was successful.

The Society has raised the required funding for the Children's Memorial that is installed at the Minyip Cemetery and was unveiled during the 150th Celebrations. The Memorial records the names of the children and young folk who lay at rest in the cemetery who are without a headstone or a known place of burial. There are over two hundred names recognised on the Memorial.

Now that the 150th Celebrations are over, it will be back to our 'normal' activities. The printer/scanner is again scanning to the computer so archiving records will commence again. Planning for the Open Garden Day will be brought out of hiding and most of the planning for this event in 2021 will suit for 2022. Consideration is being given to a dinner event early in 2023. The research for our next cemetery walk has commenced for Sheep Hills cemetery later in the year.

The sale of books and other items both online before the 150th and on the weekend achieved sales of over \$8,000.00 with expenses still to be deducted. The Society needs to order a further print run of *Minyip – Towards 150* as there are over sixty outstanding orders to be filled with some still to be paid for.

We are a small group but we have achieved above and beyond expectations. All Societies need to talk to friends, neighbours and new residents of their towns and districts to encourage them to participate in their Societies. The old adage of 'Many hands' is still true today.



Diane Connolly
President

Dimboola & District Historical Society Inc.

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

We are very pleased to now be able to open our doors and welcome everyone. The enforced hiatus gave us time to do a little rearranging of displays and conduct a general clean up. What didn't alter, however, is the constant number of research inquiries coming in and we are honestly a little snowed under with only one dedicated researcher at the moment. However, we have had some new members come on board who are keen to learn the "forensic art". Saturday mornings are very busy with steady streams of people coming in to visit, our position in the main street, now a bit of a tourist hub these days, sees us included in the vibe.

A bit of overwhelming news from our society is that Dimboola & District Historical Society is a beneficiary in a will of the late Mr Marvan Haby who died nine years ago. It's complicated but suffice to say we have been dealing with the news and all associated legal matters for well over twelve months and now the settlement is near. It's rather substantial and we owe a great debt of gratitude to Marvan who was involved with the Society in the early days from its beginnings in 1968.

Marvan was a descendant of the Haby family who came across from South Australia in the late 1880s and settled at Lochiel, a few kilometres from Dimboola. Marvan grew up in Dimboola and was to become a familiar figure, first by his long association with the local picture theatre where he worked for forty years as a projectionist. He also ran the theatre's small sweets shop called "Vanmar's". He was rather quirky but in a good way as he would be open at movie intervals, it was also an ice-cream and confectionary shop although he opened only very late at night at around 10.30pm until midnight. He had a dedicated group of friends who would come for a chat and buy South Australian Ice-cream, Amscol; even farmers in the district would drive into town. (The writer of this article remembers buying ice-cream very late one night and came home with the ice-cream in one hand and a tiny kitten in the other, compliments of Marv. Patchy became a beloved pet.) Marv's other passion was the Lochiel cemetery, where all Marv's family and ancestors are buried. He was a familiar figure on his pushbike, with yellow helmet and trouser clips and rain, hail, or shine he would ride out the highway to Lochiel and tend to the cemetery, almost an everyday ritual. He developed the Haby cookbook and was instrumental in the Haby Family history book. He loved history and was passionate about Dimboola and its heritage. Our aim is to honour Marvan's memory and legacy in the most appropriate manner.

The print museum has conducted quite a number of working tours, with three coaches from Melbourne along with local and regional small bus groups. Dimboola is on the Silo Art Trail and to add variety to these Melbourne-based travel groups, The Print Museum at Dimboola, the Pink Lake at Lochiel and the Stick shed at Murtoa have been part of their itinerary. We do, however, have some serious remedial work to carry out at the print museum due to white ants, and at some stage sooner rather than later the flooring will have to be re-done.

Lastly, we have welcomed three new people into the executive and committee which is fantastic and who bring a wide range of much-needed skills to our group.



Evelyn King
President

Glenthompson Historical Group Inc.

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

Since we all got together last, not much has happened in Glenthompson.

We are so close to reopening our little history centre but with a combination of all the COVID restrictions and currently having only five active members, it has been ridiculously difficult to get people together to assist in moving the larger display units back in for the unpacking to begin.

I am away interstate right now but have finally managed to tee up a few strong backs to get this dealt with. In saying this, I expect to have the doors open for the Easter weekend, even if we are still unpacking.

The centre is looking terrific with its new flooring and blinds, new free-standing shelving and some new glass display cases. We look forward to giving the place a whole new feel and attracting people in to visit us.

To start with we will be open over the Easter weekend and then, hopefully, Sundays from 12-2 p.m. or at other times by appointment. The frequency of the Sunday openings will be dependent on the availability of our few members. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates.

The main thing that has been happening through COVID has been our fundraising efforts. We decided to trial selling pens with our name on them. We also chose to put them out there for only \$2.50 each and the local Roadhouse has been generous enough to allow us to have a selection available there. With having truckies coming in all the time, this has proven to be a perfect combination of goods and locale. The truckies are buying them two and three at a time and we are about to put in our third order for more with the suppliers, National Pens.

Something we are looking into is whether the group can provide enough hours to make it worthwhile applying to Services Australia to become a recognised Volunteer option. If we can offer enough hours, it would be a boon for people in our area who currently are forced to travel to Hamilton or Ararat to meet their Centrelink obligations. This could be a way for us to gain a few new members, too.

We look forward to members of WVAHS dropping in for a visit anytime.



Tracey Potatau-Wright
Secretary

Ararat and District Historical Society

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

As it has been a relatively short time since the last AGM and President's Report, most of it spent in lockdown, this report will therefore be brief.

It was good to see some new faces during the year and we hope to see more of Tammi, Rhonda and Carmel as we re-open before and after Christmas. Good also to see Bob Sanders at our meetings and we hope this augurs well for our relationship with the Ararat Rural City Council.

We seem to have weathered the COVID pandemic better than many others, remaining financially solvent and still providing minimum services for the public. Cabinet lights are now nearly complete and a new project has arrived, the Dobie Toll Gate. New donations continue to come in, new avenues to increase income are explored – all these things tell me that Langi Morgala is alive and well.

Many thanks to Sandy, Jane, Greg, Fred and Geoff for keeping our Museum and Society going through these difficult times. Our finances are stable, our clients are returning and groups are starting to book again, so I think I can safely say we are open for business.



Gerry Bolt
President

Pyramid Hill and District Historical Society

<https://www.pyramidhill.net.au/pyramid-hill-museum/>

Our history of the Caledonian Society and the Pipe Band at Pyramid Hill has been printed and a launch was planned but the week before another lockdown was announced so it was cancelled and has not happened yet. We are hoping that it will happen later in the year.

Margaret Williamson is still researching the *Pyramid Hill Advertiser* for Clearing Sales, Welcomes and Farewells. She is enjoying her time in retirement at the Blue Cross Retirement home in Box Hill near her daughter.

Carol Spowart has been researching irrigation in the area. The first sod was turned by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Loch, on 2nd July, 1886 on a property two miles west of Pyramid Hill township and the day was proclaimed a public holiday for the whole district, including Kerang and Swan Hill.

A grant has been received from the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal (FRRR) to put plaques around the town listing businesses in the shops over the years. A plaque recording the Mechanics' Institute has already been done.

Our new members are very interested in the machinery stored in sheds. The new project to build sheds with one side open to the public so our old tractors can be viewed by interested folk passing is progressing and plans have been approved by Council. Money in the form of grants is now required to continue. The Ruston Hornsby engine that was a backup plant at the Butter Factory, then the Pet Food Factory, has been removed, shed and all, to be re-housed on the new site.

Plans are also afoot to enlarge the storage area and the workroom at the Museum. We are fast running out of room.



Helen Stevens
Archivist

Hopetoun and District Historical Society Inc.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Local-service/Hopetoun-and-District-Historical-Society-Inc-107594888047205/>

Corrong Homestead is open on Fridays, including a display on McGinnis and Bell establishing Corrong Station in 1846, and there have been regular visitors.

The members have been cataloguing and preparing the Museum to be open later in the year in the Limestone School donated by Lascelles in 1893.

We have a regular column in the *Courier* concerning matters: Local families, Edward Lascelles' role in settling the town and district, Vera Molnar, research scientist in the 1960s who contained Skeleton Weed and Silver Leaf Nightshade.

Activities:

We received a Local History Grant for archiving and a touch screen.

The continuation of digitising the *Hopetoun Courier*.

Ongoing research for visitors.

Signage for equipment and also for the original Lake Corrong Run.

Applying for grants to erect housing for early agricultural machinery.

Visiting surrounding Societies to glean understanding of how others display and archive.

Kerry Conway

Balmoral and District Historical Society

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

As with all clubs, groups and associations the past couple of years have been confusing and exhausting. Trying to follow all the COVID plan restrictions certainly hampered many activities that clubs had planned.

The Balmoral Society basically shut its doors. We are a small group with elderly members so any form of a Zoom meeting was not viable. Therefore, the Secretary and President kept things ticking over.

With the lockdowns, the Society received many enquiries regarding people, events and properties in the district. Through these enquiries the Society did manage to sell some books.

What was pleasing was the completion of the restoration of the Balmoral Courthouse. After many attempts to restore and finish the floor within the guidelines, a skilled person was finally found and the work completed. Boy, this has taken its toll. Trying to find appropriate people to carry out heritage work and travel to a small country town can certainly be exhausting when constantly being rejected or let down.

However, there still needs to be a considerable amount of work to be done around the outside of the building. A huge amount of earth was disturbed and some removed at the base by the builders to aerate under the courthouse. So, with funds running low and having no fundraising of late, the opening will remain on hold.

But now, with the easing of restrictions and the Balmoral Easter Market going ahead, the Society is holding a "Garage Sale". So, if in the area come and visit and help a small Society and township get back on their feet.



Edenhope and District Historical Society

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

<https://edenhopehistory.wordpress.com/>

During the past twelve months our activities have continued to be restricted by COVID.

Edenhope's Henley on Lake Wallace event which is held in February each year was to have celebrated its centenary in 2021 but unfortunately has had to be cancelled two years in a row.

Our Historical Society was planning to hold a display of historical memorabilia but this has been put on hold for twelve months. Hopefully the event can be held next year without any restrictions.

The Edenhope Cemetery project has advanced a step further with the installation of row markers and we thank the West Wimmera Shire Council for helping complete this stage.

The cemetery now has a shelter, a list of the known burials which commenced in June 1889 and, the latest addition, row markers. Our Society has been involved with all these improvements over a period of time with which we are pleased to have been able to assist.

We hope to continue with one of our other projects which to identify some of the former businesses that have been conducted in Edenhope back over the decades.

We wish our fellow Historical Societies good luck with their projects and best wishes for 2022.

Geoff Langsworth
President

Horsham Historical Society Inc.

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~hhs/>

The Horsham Historical Society maintained a low profile during the COVID restrictions but still managed to add to the computer database throughout the year. Council ownership of our rooms required us to make sure that everyone attending our rooms was double vaccinated against COVID.

Sixteen members travelled to Nhill in September 2021 and visited the interesting Nhill Aviation Centre. Rob Murphy and John Deckert told us the history. They have a great opportunity to add to the experience in the future with an audio-visual show. After lunch at Mr Le's Cafe, we visited the early colonial council building housing the Historical Society collection. We were greeted by Kay Scott and other members.

In November ten members drove in convoy and visited the site of the old Murra Warra township, the Wallup East state school and were given a guided tour of Glenwillan homestead by Rob McRae before lunching at the Creekside Hotel in Warracknabeal. We then visited the Warracknabeal Historical Society building and collection in the old State Bank.

The facade of the Horsham Mechanic's Institute at 33 Pynsent Street, home to the Horsham Historical Society, Wimmera Legacy and Genealogy was repainted, and the raised lettering was covered in gold leaf. The painting was overdue and the proximity to high voltage power lines had delayed repainting.

Films are currently being digitised by DVD Infinity in Sydney. One of the films was taken of the Horsham Centenary Show in 1974 on super 8mm film with sound. Another was taken of the demolition of the prominent landmark Georgian-style Post Office with a four-faced clock and bell tower. A new Post Office was built on the site. Both films were taken by member Ian Ward, a former photographer at the *Wimmera Mail Times* newspaper. Other films are also being digitised.

Applying for grants has been a time-consuming business.

The *Wimmera Mail Times* articles researched by members Peter Ackroyd and Wendy Donald about Horsham hotels has now concluded and the Horsham Hospitals series has begun.

The Christmas breakup dinner was held in the Bull and Mouth Hotel. No meetings were held in January. Slide/video nights have been held showing videos of interviews conducted when opportunities arose. These videos have helped when guest speakers have not been available.

Storage space is an issue and solutions are being sought. Succession planning for the future and training and guidelines to assist newer members is important to maintain and add to our collection.

Rod Jenkinson
President

Stawell Historical Society

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~shsinc/>

After a tumultuous two years we are happy to be welcoming Volunteers and Visitors back onsite. Despite the lockdowns our research enquiries continued to pour in and Volunteers have been working on these, many offsite. Our Facebook page and Articles in *The Stawell Times News* have continued during this time with good response.

We have located many errors in various independent online travel promotions (items out of date, incorrect details etc.). Currently we are trying to contact and notify promoters, with a poor response from some.



Due to illness Carol, our Website Administrator, is unable to continue in her role. We are in consultation with an external expert and potential new Member who has offered to take it on.

Since re-opening we have welcomed a number of new Active Volunteers to assist with research and cataloguing. While we value the work everyone is doing, we are at a point of not being able to accept any more Volunteers at the moment as unfortunately there is no more room for anyone else to work.

Recently the Biarri Genealogy Group has had to vacate the room members were working in at the Stawell Library. They have joined us at SHS and a large amount of work is under way combining, sorting and filing duplicate records. They have contributed a large collection of records, books and other material. A number of these books do not have links with Stawell. These are available for other Societies who may find them a useful addition to their collections.

We were recently visited by four Councillors from Northern Grampians Shire who spent an afternoon with us. They were very enthusiastic and complimented us on the work we do. They were given a guided tour of the Museum and Research Centre and expressed their support.

Northern Grampians Shire is currently trying to negotiate yet another move for the Visitor Information Centre located next door to Stawell Historical Society. This would result in it having no presence on the Highway. It is currently open only two days a week due to staff unavailability. In order to prevent the move and ensure it retains a highly visible presence, several of our members have volunteered to undertake additional shifts and enable it to be open at least five days a week.

One of our members, Ron Coward, is restoring and installing large historical items outdoors. These are starting to attract visitors and extending our collection of significant historical items.

Northern Grampians Shire Council removed all historical interpretive plaques to be renewed. These have still not been replaced due to the contracted company having folded. The issue has been raised with Council.

Our large collection of original photos has been digitized and the images are online through Victorian Collections.

We were approached by Council to create a window display of photographs relating to the Stawell Easter Gift for Easter. We have spoken to real estate agents re the possibility of this but have had very little response.

Kate van Dyck

Camperdown & District Historical Society Inc.

<https://camperdownhistory.org.au/>

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

2021/22 has been another disrupted year, caused mainly by COVID-19 and partly by health problems of committee members and volunteers, or their families. But a quick glance at our four *Past Matters* newsletters during 2020/21 shows what has been achieved, as well as activities which have had to be postponed, such as the Robert Burns lectures.

Highlights for 2021/22 include:

- A Commonwealth *Stronger Communities Programme* grant for landscaping works and plantings in the backyard of the Camperdown Heritage Centre. Our Vice-President Bob Lambell prepared this successful application and supervised the implementation of the project. Our volunteers now have a pleasant outdoor place to sit and relax.
- A very successful Natural History Seminar and bus tour was held at Mount Elephant in May 2021 and an Aboriginal History and Culture Workshop and bus tour at Camperdown in March 2022. Bob Lambell arranged these events in conjunction with the Camperdown Community House.



- The second successful event in this series, an Aboriginal Seminar and bus tour, was held in March 2022. Two more, European Settlement and Built Heritage, are planned in coming months.
- Talks by Lyle Tune on *The Fascinating History of the Camperdown Public Park* (March 2021); Jennifer Rabach on *Search for the First Australian Theatre Sister* (August 2021); and Pat Walsh on *Milking our Memories: The Rewarding Experience of Writing a Local Memoir* (February 2022).
- Over twenty new members have joined the Camperdown & District Historical Society during the last year with one, Maureen Hemley, now serving on our committee.
- Many well-researched and written articles in *Past Matters* which have added to our knowledge and understanding of the Camperdown district's history, for example Jackie Clark, the champion Camperdown-born cyclist, by Clive Allen Paisley; Quinton Bone and his family by Jan Whamond; and Maree Belyea's article *Every Picture tells a Story*, based on a 1892 photograph of Camperdown.

Projects:

- Our volunteers continue to transcribe nineteenth century petitions from residents of the Camperdown district.
- A successful CHART grant has enabled us to replace our outdoor signage
- We have applied for funds to digitize our holdings of the *Camperdown Chronicle* for 1875 & 1876 from a Community Bank grant
- A PROV Local History Grant application has been lodged for digitization of the *Western Press* (June 1866 to Jan 1867 and 1870) and *Hampden Guardian* (Jan 1871 to May 1877, except 1874)

Coming events include an evening with Ted Egan on 23rd May, running the popular Lecture Series at the Robert Burns Festival on 2nd July, and a presentation by Laura Flanagan, PhD student at Texas Tech University, on *Changes to the Sonic experience at Camperdown Theatre from the introduction of talkies*, on 19th July.

Maree Belyea
Secretary

Landsborough and District Historical Group

<https://www.facebook.com/Landsborough-District-Historical-Group-Victoria-101447951423197/>

Another year has moved on and hopefully the difficult days of lockdowns and restrictions are behind us. 2021 was another year in which our group was unable to hold any meetings or receive visitors for a number of months, but we did manage to hold our AGM as scheduled in between lockdowns, and we then had our next meeting in November. We enjoyed our Christmas gathering at Bakers Gin Distillery in Elmhurst with some wine tasting and an enjoyable luncheon.

Our "School on the Hill" history of the Landsborough State School continued to sell steadily, and we also reprinted our "Lost Railway Stations of the Pyrenees" book, a second edition with thirty extra pages of photos and information along with a new front and back cover. This came out in late June and had completely sold out by the end of the year. It has been a real success for us. We also printed a small book, "No Honey No Money" about local beekeeping by our long-term member Max Jeffery, from an old Landsborough family, and it has sold well. Our next book project is a detailed history of Landsborough to coincide with both the centenary of our hall in October, and the 160th anniversary of the town. It is based on diaries kept by long-term residents Beth Hodgetts and the late Nancy Friend in which they kept meticulous information about all the significant events that took place in Landsborough over so many years. It will be accompanied by many old photos and a section on local family histories.

Social media continues to be an important way of maintaining our relationship with the wider community, in particular all those with family connections to the district, and our Facebook page is very popular and we continue to provide our monthly articles to the "Landsborough & District News" which are



always appreciated by our community which takes in many of the surrounding areas of Navarre, Barkly, Joel and Landsborough West.

Sadly, we lost our Vice President Michael Coughlan who suddenly passed away in August. It was a sad loss to his family, our group, and all the people of Landsborough. People like Michael are irreplaceable.

Outdoors we have had work completed on our 120-year-old police stables and we are planning to organise more material in storage to be displayed in the coming year with further working bees, something that hasn't been possible in the past couple of years. Thanks to all our committee, our volunteers and the community who continue to provide us with so much support.

Brett Leslie, President
Kaye Daly, Secretary
Diane Western, Treasurer

Maryborough Midlands Historical Society

<https://www.facebook.com/Maryborough-Midlands-Historical-Society-Inc-1112221202132701/>

http://home.vicnet.net.au/~mbhs/Worsley_Cottage/Maryborough_Midlands.html

Hand sanitiser, QR Codes, vaccination certificates and masks became second nature. Our visitor numbers plummeted and email enquiries dwindled to a trickle. COVID restrictions meant that our working and research sessions and even committee meetings were held intermittently or even postponed or cancelled. Our COVID 19 file, which documents the effects of the pandemic on the town as well as our volunteers, is now overflowing.



Two years since its forced closure for health and safety considerations, historic Worsley Cottage is still propped up with reinforcing brackets and closed to all visitors pending repairs to the foundations and Bristol Hill side wall. Tenders have been advertised (March 2022) by Central Goldfields Shire Council for the second time, so we're hoping that repairs might commence within the next few months.

Despite the numerous setbacks, our volunteers have soldiered on, maintaining the much-admired cottage garden, sorting and indexing donated maps, cataloguing and scanning our existing photograph collection plus recent donations, indexing newspaper articles and maintaining membership records. One of our biggest tasks has been the sorting and filing of the two extensive research collections left to us by the late Betty Osborn (author and co-author of our two town histories) and Margaret Walkley who for many years was our family history researcher. The Osborn family has also donated Betty and Bruce's impressive book collection.

It's pleasing to receive family history enquiries once again, both via email and personal visits. Many newcomers to town seek information about their house or a business. We're fortunate, too, that so many community members (both local and even interstate) resist the temptation to condemn photographs, documents and memorabilia to the tip and are interested enough to send them to us. We've received a variety of images, ranging from sporting teams to moustache growing competitions to 1920s postcards.

We were delighted to receive notification in August that the Society had been awarded a Local History Grant through the Public Record Office Victoria. The project involves photographing, digitising and restoring Rosa Outtrim's photograph album, which is in very poor condition. The images were taken by local photographer James Weller who operated a studio in Maryborough from the late 1860s until the 1890s. They depict buildings, work scenes, mines, homes, businesses and groups in Maryborough and surrounding towns. The album was donated by an Outtrim descendant. Three of Rosa's sons had distinguished careers in Victorian public life, particularly Alfred Richard (Councillor, Mayor and M.P.)

Barbara Nielsen

Warrnambool and District Historical Society

<https://warrnamboolheritageworks.org.au/home/>

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



In the pre-COVID world our research centre HeritageWorks was open to our membership five days per week, the roster being shared with Family History Group members. Re-establishing of our routines has been a gradual process and lately we are back to four days per week. It is heartening to see the volunteers returning and also a smattering of new ones have joined us recently.

Some highlights of the year:

The launch of the fourth book in member James Affleck's series on the history of Soldier Settlement communities. This was a mega event, held over two days in late April. The book *From Tents and Tin Hats to Timber Houses & Tiger Snakes* sold out quickly and had two reprints. Meanwhile James got to work compiling Number 5 in the series, *Settling Among the Red Gums in the Shadow of Mt Sturgeon*, which will be launched at Dunkeld in April.

In late 2021 we received a donation of over 6,000 legal documents which had been stored in a basement of one of the old legal firms in Warrnambool. This pile of grotty documents was set upon by volunteers who worked throughout the latter part of last year to unbundle them, clean them up and list them for a database. Elizabeth O'Callaghan has done the bulk of the work and the treasure trove of information is already proving very useful for research.

We received a Community Development Fund grant from City of Warrnambool for the purchase of four large lockable metal cupboards which will be used for storage of our photos and small collection items. Last year's CDF money went towards shelving which Glenys has now filled with boxes of *Standards*.

We have been participating in public programs offered by the city library in preparation for the move to the new shared TAFE/city library when it opens later this year. The *Blast from the Past* series of monthly activities, consisting of talks, street walks & activity sessions has been a good source of new members and volunteers. This is an ongoing program with the next three month' sessions planned.

Janet Macdonald
President

Port Fairy Historical Society

<https://portfairyhistoricalsocietyinc.org.au/>

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

This past year has been an emotional rollercoaster with highs and lows. We started the New Year exhibition program for 2021 with social distancing and new COVID-19 rules. However, we soon had to close our doors to visitors.

In April Judith Kershaw and Lynda Tieman attended the WVAHS Annual Meeting in Stawell, always an interesting time to find out about projects that other historical societies have achieved. Some we can adapt for our own use.

Volunteer Mondays and Archive Thursdays usually see 7 to 10 people working in the museum with routine jobs only able to be done at odd times as restrictions continued to change. The main spreadsheets were again updated with the Archives, Photographs and small, useful documents combined, which make the search for information so much easier. Without the lockdown this would not have been achieved so quickly.



The library has been consolidated and cataloguing is in progress. More materials were purchased to make specific boxes to conserve our first editions, while a small freezer has been acquired to kill pests in books, paper and textiles.

Most new acquisitions need unique boxes and conservation, all time-consuming. We were offered local maps, a map case and a bookcase of law books from Taits Legal when they moved to smaller premises. These were gratefully received, and our old map case was given away on Facebook. The law books are being assessed for names of very early Port Fairy/Belfast solicitors, which will need to be researched. We have received much material about families in the district, including photographs. A bid at auction for a local sports medal dated 1890 was successful and this is now part of a temporary exhibition.

When the Port Fairy Vintage Weekend was cancelled, we decided to postpone 'A Port Fairy Childhood' until October 2022. The *Tacoma* Preservation Society, Port Lincoln, also decided to delay the return of the vessel to Port Fairy until the end of this coming year. An exhibition in the Powling room about prominent women in Port Fairy and District has been very well received. Unfortunately, the travelling exhibition 'Remarkable Australians and their Boats' arrived late, and we had only a few days open to the public before closing again in early January.

Eighteen months after her election, our president resigned last September. Vice President, Debra Walker, ably assumed the role until the AGM, when Margaret Whitehead accepted the position in February 2022. Our Newsletter Editor, Richard Patterson, edited a large, incomplete manuscript by the late Stan Evans, donated to the Society by his family. With the aid of a Moyne Council grant, the book *The Casino Story* was published in 2021. Early this year *Gentlemen, Ghosts & Grand Designs*, researched and written by secretary, Teresa Murphy, was published.

In October Judith Kershaw was honoured by AMaGA with the Victorian Award for Excellence (Volunteer), a fitting testament to her twenty-five years on the committee of our Historical Society, and her work in our achieving accreditation and keeping it for the past twenty-four years. Unfortunately, in January we lost one of our long-term dedicated members, Margaret Collins; she is greatly missed by the many who knew her quick mind and happy nature.

Despite practically no admissions income for most of 2021, membership fees and book sales have helped to maintain funds and to avoid serious money losses. Extra newsletters, Zoom meetings, Facebook and Web Pages allowed members to continue their work, to learn new skills, and to engage with other members affected by the restraints of the pandemic.

The Port Fairy Historical Society has weathered the events of 2021, thanks to the dedication and resilience of the workers in the Society; now we look forward to a more normal existence in 2022-23.

CHANGE OF OFFICE BEARERS

At our annual general meeting on 1st March 2022, the Port Fairy Historical Society office bearers for the coming year were appointed as follows:

President: Margaret Whitehead 5568 1443 margaretawhitehead@gmail.com

Vice-President: Debra Walker 0497 525 129 djw7126@gmail.com

Treasurer: Graeme Kershaw 5568 2791 gke64584@bigpond.com

Secretary: Teresa Murphy 0417 195 920 teresafmurphy@bigpond.com

Collections Manager: Lynda Tieman 5568 1432 lindatieman01@icloud.com

Other committee members are Carol Heard, Heather Templeton, Jan Willey, Peter Grenfell and Richard Patterson. Lyn Brown will continue as our first contact for family research and other research enquiries.

[Teresa Murphy, Secretary, pfhsmuseumandarchives@gmail.com](mailto:pfhsmuseumandarchives@gmail.com)

Can you help?

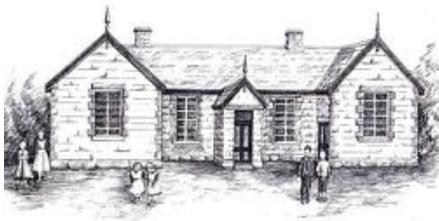
The Inglewood & District Historical Society is trying to source a Microfilm Reader with printing capability. I have contacted a few companies without luck. We have an older Microfilm reader but it doesn't have printing capability so our research officers have to hand write the details. Any assistance or recommendations would be appreciated.

Please contact Wendy Murphy at I&HS if you can help.

Koroit and District Historical Society

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

https://www.koroit.org.au/listing/305/Koroit_and_District_Historical_Society_Inc.html



I'm sure I speak for most of you when I say the last couple of years have been quite stressful. Our meetings have been held on an *ad hoc* basis when lockdowns allowed. Fortunately, our members have been able to avoid the COVID virus and we are hopeful of better times ahead. Obviously, our activities have been curtailed but we have still made some gains.

We have a few new members who are hands-on and they are keen to take on projects or pick up a project like Vic Collections again.

We finally have an internet connection at the Old School. It is not perfect but we had a number of obstacles to overcome so we have a mobile phone as a hotspot.

We assisted the Moyne Shire with their new walk map and information brochure for Koroit.

Visitation to our Museum fluctuates but is quite good whenever there is an event in Koroit so we are hopeful of a few visitors over the Koroit Irish Festival in late April.

We recently had a visit from the Macarthur Historical Society and we enjoyed that immensely.

Family history inquiries have remained strong right throughout the pandemic and have meant that some income was coming in for the Society.

An ongoing problem for us is lack of storage space. As our building is a registered historic building we cannot extend it or even add a storage space within the confines of our boundary fences. We will find a solution somehow.

Best wishes to all member Societies.

Andrea Lowenthal
President

Colac and District Historical Society Inc.

<http://colachistoricalsociety.org.au/>

Our AGM in **May 2021** was preceded by a light meal and an excellent presentation by author and historian Jennifer O'Donnell who had recently released her book *Coragulac House*.

A presentation of Life Membership to Norman Houghton followed.

Twenty-one members were present and despite COVID we were able to hold monthly meetings throughout the year with the exception of July and August.

June 2021 – Visit to Birregurra Historical Society

September 2021– Luke Phillips – History with a metal detector

October 2021– Darren Allen – Cycling History in Colac

November 2021 – Mark Beasley – Geelong Heritage Centre

Colac-Otway Shire have left the Corangamite Regional Library and joined the Geelong Library Service giving us access to the resources of the Geelong Heritage Centre.

January 2022– Bus Trip to Cressy Historical Society and WWII Aircraft Base Restoration

February 2022 – BBQ – 'Airdrie House' – Lovingly restored home of J G Johnstone

Member Dawn Peel has written a biography of J G Johnstone which was published by the Society in conjunction with the now-completed digitisation and indexing of our large collection of Sale Posters and Documents from the Stock and Station Firm – J G Johnstone & Co. established in 1883.



Copies of Sale Posters from areas outside the Colac district have been passed on to other Historical Societies.

March 2022 – Dr Brian Timms – Our Salt Lake Heritage

A steady flow of research enquiries dealt with in co-operation with the Family History Group often turns up new information. Both librarians are working towards integrating the two libraries.

We have received a Shire Grant towards the purchase of a shipping container to store artefacts and large items which would be displayed if we had a suitable building. We have contributed to Shire Workshops looking at the future needs of the City as it develops a strategy for future needs of the growing city, particularly within the Civic Precinct. A purpose-built Art Gallery and Museum to replace the History Centre demolished in 1990 is what's required.

Meanwhile, our lease for the History Centre situated in COPACC has been renewed for a further five years with two further five-year options.

Recently, possession of copies of glass slides of Gulidjan tribal members held by the Society has seen us drawn into a disputed native title claim over our region. Our Society has adopted a neutral position but will not allow any material to leave the History Centre while this matter is under mediation.

Our large collection of clothing items is currently being scrutinised, catalogued and boxed with disposal of surplus items.

Local Studio Photographer Wal Slow has given us his store of photographs and negatives taken over the past 40+ years. Some of these are valuable additions to our collection, while others will be of value to the Family History Group.

Book sales continue to be a strong source of income and one of our members is currently reviewing and revising 'Street Names of Colac' published in 2008 with a view to reprinting.

Robert Missen
President

The AGM Report from the Terang and District Historical Society Inc. will be held over until the September issue.

From the most recent issue of *Tailings*, the newsletter of the Goldfields Historical and Arts Society Inc., Dunolly (John Tully, Editor):

THE WEEKEND PROSPECTOR

The Weekend Prospector TV series was in Dunolly during March. They spent two days filming in the Dunolly Museum and out in the Long Bush Forest. This whole half-hour episode is based on Dunolly.

Geologist Andrew Bales is the host of The Weekend Prospector. Andrew is a regular visitor to Dunolly where he holds geology courses. This show is now in its fourth series and has worked its way up to be one of the most popular programs on 7mate.

Andrew intends returning to do another Dunolly-based story in the next series.



Andrew Bales and John Tully in Dunolly Museum.

Upcoming Events

“TALKIE” SILENCE: Laura Flanagan The Changing Soundscape of Camperdown’s Mechanics’ Theatre A special presentation by Laura Flanagan, Texas Tech University

Laura studied her subject, in depth, over the past 18 months and will present her paper to the Historical Society during her visit from Texas, USA on 19th July.

The story, uncovered from a myriad of sources, brings into focus the changes in society from the silent era to the arrival of ‘Talkies’.

Don’t miss the opportunity to meet Laura and discover why, or how, she chose her subject, the journey and results of her research.



Tuesday 19th July at 7.30 p.m., Heritage Centre

ALL WELCOME

SAVE THE DATE!

**2022 FESTIVAL
1-2-3 JULY**

*Camperdown Robert Burns Scottish Festival
proudly sponsored by Bendigo Bank & Corangamite Shire*

CAMPERDOWNBURNSFESTIVAL.COM.AU

CELEBRATING OUR
LOCAL CONNECTION
TO THE BARD!

**ROBERT BURNS
SCOTTISH FESTIVAL**

Upcoming events at Camperdown. See the event program on the following pages and for further details please contact the Camperdown and District Historical Society at camperdowndhs@gmail.com
Remember to make use of our *Western Historian* by promoting your upcoming events in our newsletter.

Camperdown Robert Burns Scottish Festival 2022

LECTURE PROGRAM

A fantastic line-up of speakers. Please give this event your support!

Saturday 2nd July, 10.30 am - 4.30 pm

Killara Centre, Camperdown

Day ticket \$25.00 (Available online)

Bookings: <https://camperdownburnsfestival.com.au/>

10.30 am

Dr Andrew Lemon

The Manifolds, their horses, and the Scottish connection

The first generation of English Manifold brothers in Australia did not go in for racehorses. The second generation did, with a vengeance. The third generation included ‘the Father of the TAB’, Sir Chester Manifold, owner-breeder of Arbroath and the champion steeplechaser Crisp. Racing historian Dr Andrew Lemon will explore this trajectory and consider the extent to which neighbouring Western District Scots played a role in developing the Manifold family passion for the horse.



Andrew is consultant historian to the Victoria Racing Club. He has served on Victoria’s Heritage Council, the State Library of Victoria Board, and is a past-president of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

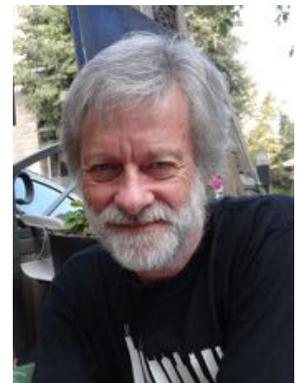
11.30 am

Dr Iain Buckland

Dealing with the De’il – Robert Burns as the Exciseman

In 18th century Scotland alcohol consumption, often in large quantities, was an integral part of all aspects of life for rich and poor. After the union between Scotland and England in 1707, tax was imposed by Westminster on all forms of alcohol, administered by a Scottish Excise Board in Edinburgh. In 1725 a very unpopular malt tax was introduced across Britain increasing the price of malt whisky and ale. An outcome for Scotland was a huge increase in smuggling of illicit whisky from the Highlands to the Lowlands and to England.

Robert Burns, known for rousing drinking poems such as John Barleycorn Must Die and Scotch Drink, opposed these taxes on whisky and wrote a piece including the famous line, “Freedom an’ whisky gang thegither!” It is therefore strange that Burns, who lambasted excise officers in his song, The De’il’s awa wi’ th’ Exciseman should apply to be appointed to that role in 1789.



This paper examines the growth in illicit whisky distilling and smuggling in Scotland in the late 18th century and Robert Burns’ role in attempting to prevent it.

1.30 pm

Dr Ruth Pullin

Subject: Vision and patronage: von Guérard and the Scots of the Western District

Dr Ruth Pullin is the leading world expert on the paintings and sketch books of the artist, Eugene von Guérard.

Ruth is an independent art historian, curator and von Guérard specialist. She has curated two major exhibitions of von Guérard's work: the Art Gallery of Ballarat's 2018 exhibition, *Eugene von Guérard: Artist-Traveller*, and, as co-curator, the National Gallery of Victoria's 2011 travelling exhibition, *Eugene von Guérard: nature revealed*. She was the principal author and editor of the catalogue, *Eugene von Guérard: nature revealed*. Her most recent book, *The Artist as Traveller: The Sketchbooks of Eugene von Guérard* was published by the Art Gallery of Ballarat in 2018, along with, as co-author, an annotated collection of von Guérard's letters, translated from Old German.



2.30 pm

David Jellie

Two Scottish engineers - Telford and McAdam - and their legacy to the World's roads.

David Jellie commenced work as a structural design engineer with the Victoria's Country Roads Board in 1961. During his early career he managed the design of bridges on the Monash Freeway and the Western Freeway, before he moved to Orbost in East Gippsland to supervise the construction of the bridges across the Snowy River. After this he was appointed the Resident Engineer Bridgeworks on the Hume Freeway between Seymour and Euroa.

He then moved back to Melbourne in 1978 and was appointed the Project Manager of the West Gate Freeway - Victoria's largest infrastructure project at that time. After completion of West Gate, he started on the Western Ring Road.

David also participated in the development of Australian design codes and has written many papers and books – mainly relating to construction and safety in construction. He was appointed an Adjunct Professor at RMIT University.



3.30 pm

Dr. Ian D Clark

“Some rambles with the Campbells” – The life and times of Western District pastoralist and politician, Colin Campbell (1817-1903) and his family.

Dr Ian Clark has a doctorate in Aboriginal Historical Geography from Monash University. He was born in Ararat and his family has been associated with Djabwurrung country since 1854.

Ian has been researching and publishing in Victorian Aboriginal history since 1982. He has been the Centre Manager of the Brambuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Halls Gap, and Research Fellow in History at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra.

In his lecture Ian will take us on a ramble with the Campbells through the Western District highlighting Scottish elements and people and events as they occur in the regional landscape.



New publications

Colac tale is pure gold

By Greta Lanwen

Colac Herald, 18 March 2022



A new book delves into legendary Australian gold prospector Lewis 'Harold' Lasseter's time living in Colac – a previously unexplored chapter in his life – providing a new twist to a well-told tale.

Alan Doyle's book *Lasseter: A Gold Legend Begins in Colac* shares Lewis's Colac years from 1890 to 1896.

Alan's research of the mystery takes a different perspective from the many countless books and articles on Lasseter and his apparent discovery of gold in Central Australia – Lasseter's Reef.

"I feel Colac is very central to the tale. It's information that can't be ignored" Alan told the *Colac Herald*.

"I realise it's only six years (his life) but it is the first stepping stone to understanding what's been going on for the last 90 years of this myth of gold rush."

Alan said that it was commonly acknowledged that Lewis lived in Colac during the claim that he found a gold reef in Central Australia.

"He lived in Colac and was looked after by the Sydenhams, he broke into a store, was sent to a boy's reformatory and went on with his life from there," he said.

"I've delved deeper because it's a family interest and I thought I'd just tie up a few loose ends."

The Lasseters arrived in Colac in 1890 where Lewis's dad Johnny started work as a vermin inspector.

"Johnny was a hard man, a drinker. Lewis was the middle child and copped a fair bit of abuse, Alan said.

"Lewis got an opportunity to live with a family in Colac, the Sydenhams. They were teetotallers, totally different lifestyle, very religious people.

"He was champing at the bit to get away at the age of 16, for what reasons we don't know," Alan said.

"Lewis broke into one of the stores in Colac's Murray Street, stole various goods with another accomplice who was 25. Lewis was 16 and was the instigator," he said.

Alan has found links between Lewis and Cororooke House and its former owner.

"In 1894 when the Sydenhams took Lewis Lasseter on, Cororooke House had a change of ownership which brought in Everard Browne," he said.

"Everard Browne was about 26, married and made his fortune over in the Western Australian goldfields in Coolgardie."

Lewis worked at the *Colac Herald*, cleaning the office and equipment.

"Lewis had a good understanding of engineering concepts and his sister who hated him said he was a genius, he had a lot of good ideas," Alan said.

"Lewis claims to have been the actual real designer of the Sydney Harbour Bridge and Doctor Bradfield took his idea and never gave him credit, and he was always bereaved by it."

Alan's book was a two-year project during COVID-19 lockdowns and he said he had enjoyed getting to know Lewis from a younger age.

"I had it on the backburner, because you find history and put things aside and say 'I'll get to that one day'," he said.

"I never envisioned putting it into a book, it's just that I found too many things that haven't been discussed in any other book.

"I feel it's a good story and by sheer luck, Colac has Kana Festival with the theme Heroes and Villains, this fits into the very own Colac hero or villain," Alan said.

Alan is a member of the Colac District Historical Society and said he was grateful for the society's support in his research as well as the Colac Family History Group.

The book also includes a trail of various sites Lasseter lived, worked or visited.

People can buy Alan's book at Blanes Newsagency, Cow Lick Bookshop and Colac District History Centre.



Lewis 'Harold' Lasseter

An Ethnohistory of the Djargurdwurrung people of Camperdown by Dr Ian D. Clark Book Review by Maureen Hemley.

Dr Clark has patiently researched and compiled a collection of records of the early history of the Camperdown District at a time when the Djargurdwurrung people faced the conflicts of European settlement and countless changes to their way of life.

Although not overly illustrated, the book is an account of Djargurd customs, language and place names in the area we know as Corangamite Shire.

It has references to megafauna and volcanic eruptions as well as early records of European-Aboriginal interactions including accounts of the horrors of mass murders.

It also documents James and Isabella Dawson's early advocacy for indigenous rights and reconciliation. James Dawson was appointed local guardian of the Aborigines in the Camperdown district in 1876.

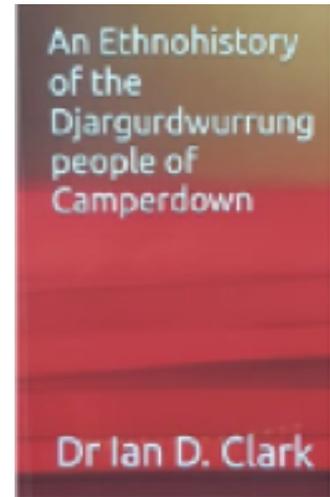
Through authenticated Aboriginal descriptions and stories, newspaper articles, reports from the Board for the Protection of the Aborigines, letters and journal entries of early travellers to the area and pioneers, the story of the eventual decline of the Djargurdwurrung people unfolds.

Dr Clark is well qualified and has a Doctorate (PHD) in Aboriginal Historical Geography and has been researching and publishing on Victorian Aboriginal history since 1982. Born in Ararat, he has been the Centre Manager of the Brambuk Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Halls Gap, and Research Fellow in History at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra.

I learnt a lot from this thought-provoking book. It reflects attitudes of a century long gone but these stories need to be told, recognised and understood if we are ever to move forward in reconciliation as a Nation today.

The book is concise, easily read and records are set in chronological order, making it a valuable reference tool for local history buffs, students and people open to discovering the rich history of the Western Districts of Victoria.

Now available from the CDHS for \$21.95



James Dawson (1806 – 1900). Reminiscences and Correspondence.

by Dr Ian Clark

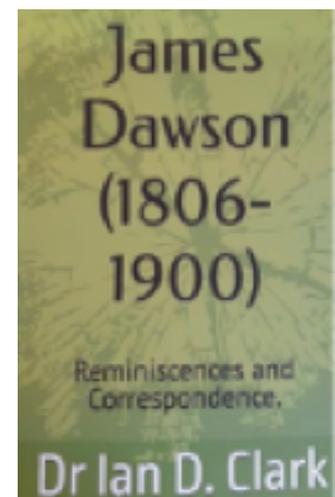
Article by Gillian Senior.

Hot off the press we have received many copies of this book by Dr Clark for our own reference and for sale to the public.

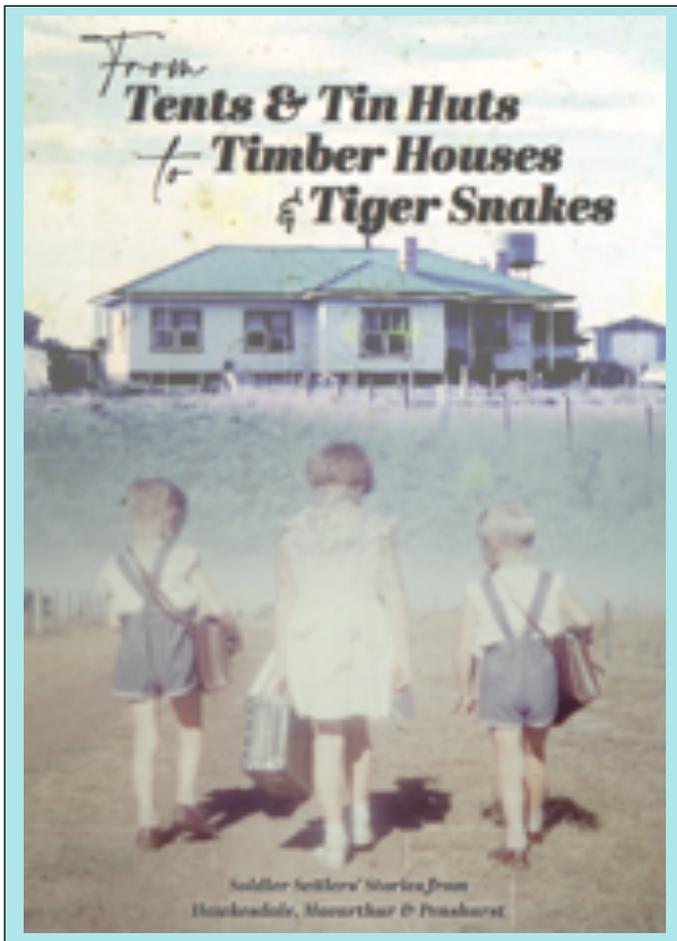
As with his *Ethnography of the Djargurdwurrung*, this is a compilation of all the letters, articles and reports by – and concerned with – James Dawson. It is incredibly valuable to have all the records of Dawson's contribution to the Victorian community together in one volume. He was a steadfast supporter of the Aboriginal population in South Western Victoria, made friends with many and wrote extensively about their culture and language.

His other interests were wide-ranging, from animal welfare to engineering, from the naming of landmarks to the history of steam engines.

The book is a revelation about such an interesting and unique individual. It can be purchased from the Heritage Centre for \$38.50.



Both items supplied by the Camperdown and District Historical Society.



Two books by James Affleck. The Warrnambool and District Historical Society has copies of *From Tents & Tin Huts to Timber Houses & Tiger Snakes* plus James' other books on Soldier Settlement at Woolsthorpe, Tarrone and Caramut for \$30 plus postage. Please contact Dunkeld and District Historical Museum

<https://dunkeldmuseum.org.au/shop> for details on James' newly-released book *Settling amongst the red gums in the shadow of Mount Sturgeon*.

Consider notifying the wide readership of *Western Historian* of new publications relating to your district or wider area – a great way of promoting what's 'out there'!

Submit notifications to craige@iprimus.com.au

Items for the September issue of *Western Historian* should be submitted by mid-August.

