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Zone meetings for 2021

Southern

Saturday, October 16 at
Terang History Society rooms.
Time to be advised.

Wimmera

Saturday, October 23 at Dimboola
RSL clubrooms, Lloyd Street
from 1 pm

Midlands & Executive

Saturday, October 30 at Donald
time to be advised

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enquiries for W.V.A.H.S
to the secretary:
Helen Curkpatrick**

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**AGM in 2022 to be held at Warrnambool
Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd April.**

W.V.A.H.S. Executive Committee for 2021-2022

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Our potential member groups are:-

Arapiles	Ararat	Balmoral	Barham/Koondrook
Birchip	Boort	Camperdown	Carisbrook
Casterton	Charlton	Cohuna	Colac
Coleraine	Dimboola	Donald	Derrinalum/Lismore
Dunkeld	East Loddon (Mitiamo)	Edenhope	Geelong S/W/Rail
Glenthompson	Goldfields (Dunolly)	Halls Gap	Harrow
Heytesbury	Hawkesdale	Horsham	Hopetoun
Inglewood	Kerang	Koroit	Landsborough
Maryborough	Minyip	Mortlake	Murtoa
Nullawil	Ouyen	Port Fairy	Penshurst
Portland	Pyramid Hill	Rainbow	Rupanyup
St. Arnaud	Stawell	Swan Hill	Terang
Warracknabeal	Warrnambool	Wedderburn	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 as they become 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

Coping with Covid.

Covid-19 upset our 2020 plans but we were lucky when we took a positive attitude and proceeded with planning for the AGM at Stawell in April. It was great to catch up with so many members in attendance and work through our formal AGM requirements.

I would like to thank our Secretary Helen and all at Stawell who contributed to the planning and operation of the AGM, inspection tour of the venue, Saturday evening dinner and Sunday morning coach tour. I need to thank my employer at Endeavour Coaches for letting me 'borrow' a coach for the weekend and use it for not much more than the cost of fuel - permitting us to provide the transport in comfort but at low cost.

Special thanks must go to the owners of the former Stawell Hospital for use of the renovated Deco Hall for

our meetings and permitting a tour of the old buildings - some currently in fair condition and others best described as a 'restorers delight'. They have certainly taken on a huge challenge to save and find a use for such a large and run down historic site.

Despite current fluctuating restrictions and lockdowns we may gradually get back to a more normal existence later this year. We will hopefully be able to meet face to face for the Zone meetings planned during October: Southern Zone Meeting at Warrnambool on Saturday 16 October 2021, Wimmera Zone Meeting at Dimboola on Saturday 23 October 2021 and Midland Zone & WVAHS Executive Meetings at Donald on 30 October 2021.

Michael Menzies, WVAHS President.

Vale — Gwen Bennett of Portland

Gwen Bennett was a member of the Portland Historical Society for many years and wrote several books about local history.

She was also a member of the Port Fairy Historical Society until 2020. After Gwen completed her nurse's training she worked in outback Australia in the 1950s.

Returning to Portland she married, had a family and became an advocate for local history. Gwen last attended a WVAHS meeting at Port Fairy in recent years.

Her funeral was held in Portland on June 17, 2021 at the time of her 90th birthday.

Judith Kershaw.

**Have you a story
you would like to share?**



Tarnagulla History Archive report

The Tarnagulla History Archive is a repository for all things related to the local history of Tarnagulla and its surrounding district including the localities of Newbridge, Llanelly, Arnold, Laanecoorie, Waanyarra, and Murphy's Creek. The Archive holds photographs, records and artefacts and was established in 2018 with funds from a PROV Local History Grant. Our personnel are: Dr Megan Cardamone – Collection Manager, David Gordon – Resident historian and five other occasional general volunteers.

THA is open to the public on its monthly Open Days at Tarnagulla Public Hall. Currently these are happening on the second Sunday of each month but please check our Facebook page if you are travelling a long way as they may change.

We held a pop-up exhibition of colourised historical photographs (*Old Tarnagulla In Colour*) at our January

and the March Open Days. We planned to do February too but were foiled by the snap lockdown. We received over 60 visitors at the January session and around 130 visitors at the March session.

We continue to receive many research requests — mainly around family histories. David spends a lot of time fielding these and getting excellent information to people.

THA was nominated for a Victorian Museum Award in October 2020 in the 'Cataloguing' category. We have catalogued around 1,500 items using Victorian Collections. 700 of these have also been digitised and the images added to the online catalogue. We are continuing to catch up with the never-ending cataloguing backlog but we are delighted that all of this material is now available to a global audience.

Warracknabeal & District Historical Society report

Since the 2019 Natimuk meeting I have begun to file 3 large drawers of photos that have accumulated over the years at the Historical Centre. At present I'm hopefully about half way through this project.

The Museum held the official opening of the new fire system including the massive tanks. This was done by Dr. Anne Webster MP accompanied by our Mayor Graeme Massey.

The storage and listing of manuals, books etc. at the Museum was also completed.

At the end of 2019 our members joined Dimboola Historical Society for a very enjoyable Christmas lunch at the Dimboola Hotel.

Early in 2020 we installed 4 TV screens at the Museum to show videos. We were able to do this thanks to a grant from the Yarriambiack Shire.

We had planned to feature Case tractors and American engines at our 2020 Easter Rally but of course this had to be cancelled. We also cancelled this year's Rally as the restrictions meant that we just didn't have enough members to carry out the necessary requirements and conduct Rally activities.

Just before lockdown the Historical Centre was visited by a group of ex-State Bank employees — a couple of whom had worked at the bank in the 1960's. They were thrilled that the Banking Chamber had been retained.

The Historical Centre also closed. However there were a huge number of research inquiries so our members were kept quite busy.

Likewise, when the Warehouse closed it gave members a chance to do a lot of sorting, re-organizing and cleaning. When we re-opened in November the whole shop was looking great. Sales for those first couple of months were very good — keeping our volunteers very busy.

At the end of 2020 we held a very successful Christmas dinner — I think most members were very happy to be able to get out and about again!

Because the 2021 Easter Rally was cancelled the Museum members harvested some Pinnacle wheat in March using some of the old harvesters. This caused cars to stop along the Highway to watch the spectacle.

The Museum is planning a portable shearing shed that can be used at Rallies to demonstrate old shearing methods. The Historical Centre is hoping to re-organize the storage in the Bank vault and other storage areas. The Warehouse will, no doubt, remain a great attraction in Warracknabeal, with, hopefully, no more lockdowns.

Best wishes and good health to all Societies for the coming year.

As the editor of the Western Historian I am seeking articles on what is happening in your society or articles from your area of historical interest.

Please contact Robin Parker on robinparker81@hotmail.com

***or write to 21 Fraser Street, Maryborough 3465.
In word preferred and any photos in jpg format.***

Violet Jessop who survived the Olympic, Titanic and Britannic disasters

The amazing stories of Violet Jessop and her multiple brushes with near-death while at sea.

Violet Jessop was an incredibly lucky woman who survived the sinkings of the Titanic and the Britannic as well as a major accident on the Olympic.

Born in 1887 in Argentina to Irish immigrants, Jessop contracted tuberculosis at a young age and was expected to survive only a few months. She somehow recovered and went on to live a long healthy life.

After her father died Jessop's mother moved the family to England and began working as a stewardess on a ship. When she became ill Violet, who was attending a convent school, stepped in to become a ship stewardess herself.

Only 21 years old, Violet had difficulty finding a job as a stewardess as employers feared her youth and good looks would "cause problems" with the crew and passengers. (In fact she did receive at least three proposals including one from a wealthy first-class passenger over the course of her career.)

Violet decided to make herself look frumpy with old clothes and no makeup and, after a short stint on the Orinoco (a Royal Mail Line steamer) she was hired by the White Star Line in 1908 to serve aboard the Majestic.

In 1910 she began working aboard the Olympic. One year later the Olympic collided with HMS Hawke — a ship designed to sink ships by ramming them. Although both ships sustained considerable damage the ship did not sink and made it back to port. Violet disembarked without being harmed.

A couple of years later the White Star Line was looking for crew to cater to the VIPs sailing on the Titanic.

Violet took a job on board the "unsinkable" ship. She escaped the ship's sinking in lifeboat 16.

"I was ordered up on deck. Calmly, passengers strolled about. I stood at the bulkhead with the other stewardesses watching the women cling to their husbands before being put into the boats with their children. Sometime after a ship's officer ordered us into the boat first to show some women it was safe" she wrote in her memoir.

In the lifeboat Violet was handed a baby to care for. When they were rescued by the Carpathia the baby's mother grabbed the baby out of Violet's arms and ran off.

Having survived that disaster Violet decided to serve as a nurse on board the Britannic which was operating in the Aegean Sea just before World War I. The ship sustained damage and started sinking after it ran into a mine that had been planted by a German U-boat.

Unable to reach a lifeboat Jessop jumped overboard.

"I leapt into the water but was sucked under the ship's keel which struck my head. I escaped but years later when I went to my doctor because of a lot of headaches he discovered I had once sustained a fracture of the skull!" she said.

After the war Violet left the White Star Line to work for the Red Star Line and worked on a ship doing world cruises for several years. Luckily she was able to avoid any further ship disaster and retired at the age of 61. She died in 1971 of congestive heart failure at the age of 84.

Pictured below from left:

Olympic, Titanic and Britannic.



Inglewood and District Historical Society

Two years of reporting. March 30 2019 in Swan Hill was a decade ago wasn't it? Oh, hang on, no it was only 2 years ago! We missed out on being hosted by Ararat in 2020 — a place my grandmother's family lived (the Tardrews). Apologies that we can't make it to Stawell this weekend. It is a busy weekend for many of our members (and maybe our communication has been a bit lax).

Our Society didn't exactly go quiet during the Covid lockdown. Since the Midland Zone meeting held at Serpentine on October 26 in 2019 the following activities are just some of what we have done or have been involved in (and not in any particular order):

Our last face to face meeting at the Court House was on March 10 2020. We held our AGM in October via Zoom (I was sitting in my car just after my kids had finished cricket training at Kingower). But we have been back meeting face to face at the Court House since Feb 7, 2021.

We had several Court re-enactments booked for 2020 however, after our March 9th performance, we decided to cancel upcoming re-enactments to keep our volunteers safe. I'm not sure if the re-enactments will be back as many of our volunteers have enjoyed their rest (and rightly so) and illness and age has caught up.

People must have had time in lockdown to research their families histories because we were super busy responding to family history enquiries. We had to time our runs to the Court House to gather the required information needed to respond without getting a rap over the knuckles for being out of our homes. Along with book sales, (which were also popular), the family research fees kept our bank account ticking over so it was vital income for us.

We assisted the Inglewood Primary School to run a Historian Hunt around Inglewood which enabled residents to get out and about whilst adhering to restrictions. Every few days for a month a photo of a local resident was put at a prominent location in Inglewood. Clues were then provided and people went out to find the location and take a photo of the local identity. Each person who found a photo went in to a draw for a prize at the end.

In November 2020, as restrictions eased a little further, I conducted a walk of the Inglewood Cemetery to visit the graves of some of our servicemen and women for Remembrance Day and then, in January 2021, I conducted a history walk around Bridgewater.

Much of our communication went online. I tried to post interesting articles, photos and information regu-

larly to keep the engagement with our members and wider followers. For Victorian History Month in October 2020 I posted faces of local people from the 1950s through to the 1990s and asked people to guess the face.

Over Easter this year we supported a joint art exhibition with the Inglewood and Bridgewater RSL showcasing the work of Mal Gilmour and his art class of local residents. They had chosen to paint graves of local soldiers who had red metal poppies on their graves which was a project of the Society a few years ago.

And we did get to get together for Christmas gatherings at Kingower in 2019 and 2020.

So what is coming up? We are planning:

To have an Inglewood themed display as part of the Mary Quant Exhibition currently being held in Bendigo. Businesses in Inglewood have got together in response to promotion from Loddon Shire and Bendigo Regional Tourism to attract visitors to Inglewood.

Our WW1 memorial cenotaph is 100 years old this year so we are putting together a display of photos and information leading up to ANZAC Day.

We have a lady coming to give us her family history talk next week (Leitch family.)

We are planning a Girl Guide, Brownies, Scouts and Cubs display after a Facebook post got a lot of engagement and we received many donations of items and photos.

We are supporting two local Inglewood Primary School children to conduct a history walk to raise money for their school.

We are assisting the Inglewood Primary School to celebrate their 151st birthday (Covid postponed the 150th celebrations last year).

We have begun the digitisation of our photos and documents but this will take some time and is ongoing. Our aim is to have a much better and easier cataloguing system with photos and items that are easy to find.

And we are in the process of updating our out of stock Inglewood Cemetery book which includes adding burials from the years 2008 to 2020. The current book has burials only up to 2007.

So that's just a bit of a run-down of what our little Society has been up to and is planning. We are excited that the Wedderburn and Tarnagulla groups have become very active again and have been engaging with both groups as well as the Dunolly Society.

**Inglewood and District Historical Society
President – Wendy Murphy 2021**

**Have you a story you
would like to share**

Ouyen District History & Genealogy Centre report

This year we are pleased to be open again to the public. Last year (although closed to the public until late in the year) behind the scene work carried on. We were unable to hold our Annual Meeting until the 20th November 2020. Now lots of visitors have returned and taking the opportunity to come and seek help with their family history.

On 4th May 2020 I had the honour of being awarded a Royal Historical Society of Victoria RHSV 'Award of Merit' in recognition of over 30 years of 'exceptional service to history in Victoria'. On Friday 26th March 2021 Professor Richard Broome, President of the RHSV was able to come to the Ouyen History Centre and present the Award in person. Upon receiving this award I acknowledged the over 50 plus volunteers who have supported and volunteered at the Centre since it was established in 1984. Invited guests enjoyed lunch,

a presentation by Professor Richard Broome followed by afternoon tea and later dinner at the Club.

Recently the History Centre purchased a second hand Scan Pro Microfilm scanner. Volunteers have undergone training in the use of the scanner. In the past week the internet has been connected enabling work to be done at the Centre rather than at home.

Empty shop windows in Ouyen continue to have changing displays — the latest being 'Clearing the Scrub' featuring a model Mallee Roller.

The main aims of the Ouyen History Centre is to collect, protect, promote and preserve our Mallee Heritage in all forms while maintaining accessibility to the public. I believe the Centre is still achieving these aims.

Merle Pole (President)

Stawell Historical Society report

COVID Lockdowns have certainly affected our activity over the past few months but, despite this, our team have managed to keep busy.

Research enquiries have increased during the lockdown by email and phone as people have time on their hands.

During a gap in lockdowns we have had quite a few onsite visitors researching their families and visiting our Museum. Some of our visitors have been new residents who have moved to Stawell to escape the city.

A highlight of the past few months was our Museum featuring in an episode of "Who do You think You are". This was the story of Jeff Fatt (the original Purple Wiggle) and his Great Grandfather who was the Chinese Interpreter on the Victorian Goldfields and therefore involved in cases heard at Pleasant Creek Courthouse. Our team conducted a lot of research for Warner Bros

and the day of filming was a lot of fun.

We hold a surplus of old Parish maps from surrounding areas. These are maps created by long retired Surveyors. We hope other societies will find them interesting and useful. These have been sorted and other societies notified. Helen Curkpatrick has been busy distributing these to those interested.

It has been announced by Northern Grampians Shire Council that they plan to move the Visitor Information Centre from its current location adjacent to our Society to the Stawell Library (in the main street). This is causing some concern in the community and could impact on our Visitor numbers for both the area and our historical society.

Let's hope the next few months see some positive outcomes and we can welcome back visitors to our society's rooms.

Surplus Parish/Township maps available

Arapiles	Buckingham	Darkbonee	Heytesbury
Ararat x 3	Bulgana x 2	Darragan	Joel Joel
Avoca	Bunnugal	Dattuck x 2	Jung Jung
Balrootan	Burrum Burrum x 3	Dering	Kanawinka
Banyena	Burrumpeep	Dinyarrak	Kaniva
Banyenong	Cardigan	Donald x 2	Kara Kara x 3
Barkly	Callawadda	Dunneworthy x 2	Katyil
Batichica	Cannum	Durndal	Kellalac
Bealiba	Caramballuc North	Eurambeen x 2	Kirkella x 4
Beaufort x 4	Curchap	Eversley	Kiora
Bellaura x 2	Carncham	Gampola	Koonik Koonik
Bellellen	Charlton	Glenavlin	Laen
Birchip	Clunes x 2	Glendhu x 4	Lake Bolac
Bolangum	Colvinsby x 2	Glenpatrick x 3	Landsborough
Boroka x 7	Coonooer East	Glynwylln x 3	Langi Ghiran
Borong x 2	Corack East	Gorrinn x 2	Ledcourt x 5
Buangor	Crowlands x 3	Haddon	Cont. p. 9

Arapiles Historical Society report

The last year can be described in two halves - Pre and Post Covid. The second half of 2019 saw AHS travelling along quite well with planning for the WVAHS meeting in September and then the Nati Frinj in November. Our Collections team had put together a display of our Woolmer photos and a selection of our Court records for the Court House whilst the Garage saw the mounting of an "early European settler" exhibition. The Arapiles Climbing museum group were for many busy months, putting together a vast collection of climbing artifacts and memorabilia for the grand opening of the Arapiles Climbing Museum at the Nati Frinj opening night. November also saw the launch of the second edition of the popular Natimuk Walking Tour booklet. December was relatively quiet with only a Bunnings sausage sizzle three days after Christmas. February

saw the society starting up again with a digitisation workshop run by Museums Vic. However by March Covid19 had started to impact everyone's lives. Our next meeting was held in July in an attempt to plan the AGM - it was not to be. The planning for our Garage Museum project was still running along in the background and final designs were approved by a small group of members at an outdoor meeting in November. The next stage is to now meet with planners to see if we have any problems with our ideas. A small group put together a calendar for 2021 featuring schools of the district - a great memento for the town put together under difficult times. In closing I must acknowledge the efforts of all the members of Arapiles Historical Society in what will surely be remembered as a year to forget!

Charlton Golden Grain Museum gains museum accreditation

The Charlton Golden Grains Museum has gained Accreditation by Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria.

A professional panel of museum experts has made a final assessment and compiled a positive report on the museum's operations.

The Museum has worked hard to meet set criteria from the National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries and joins the 83 Victorian collections Accredited in Victoria

The Charlton Golden Grains Museum Committee was formed in 1973 and by 1974 the Committee had a permanent display and space for research and meetings in the former Mechanics Institute building (1882).

In this time and largely due to the generosity of the local community the Museum has developed a collection over 3,000 artifacts and photographs focused on the districts First Peoples and Charlton's early pioneers through to today.

Local family history research is also available from the museum's extensive collection Of resources. At the time the Museum enrolled in the Museum Accreditation Program (MAP) the Museum had recently completed renovations after a major flood and were still recovering from the natural disaster.

The flood had not only devastated the Museum building and collection but also eighty percent of the town. The Accreditation panel acknowledged that the Museum should be proud of the proven resilience of volunteers, the professionalism of their activities and high volume of achievements.

The panel was impressed with the volunteers' determination to operate a professional organisation and strong focus on continual improvement — commenting that the Museum undertakes an extremely high workload for the number of volunteers at the organisation. An already strong and successful Museum, (through

the ongoing commitment of its dedicated volunteers) the Museum has made impressive improvements to the preservation and interpretation of the collection — particularly in the collection storage spaces.

The Victorian-based MAP is now in its 28th year and is run by Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria — the professional association for the museum and gallery sector.

There are currently 83 Accredited cultural organisations and a further 2 working towards this goal. To become Accredited museums spend 2-3 years developing procedures and policies and practice to meet recognised museum standards.

Training, advice and other resources are made available to assist museums in meeting these standards. Sherryn Vardy, Co-Manager, Museum Accreditation Program, Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria, says "We are delighted to recognise the hard work and commitment shown by the team at Charlton Golden Grains Museum.

Caring for our shared heritage is an important task and by becoming accredited, Charlton Golden Grains Museum has proven to be a leading museum in Victoria." A formal presentation of Charlton Golden Grains Museum's Accreditation certificate will be made at the 2021 Victorian Museum treasures: <https://amagavic.org.au/> and www.victoriancollections.net.au • For an interactive map of Victoria's Accredited museums: https://amagavic.org.au/museum_accreditation_program/victorias-accredited-museums

MAP is funded by Creative Victoria.

Have you a story you would like to share

Waubu Debar — Aboriginal heroine

Little is known of Wauba Debar other than tales of a daring rescue at sea. Though variations to her story can be found it most frequently details her long swim and lifesaving efforts in stormy conditions. As one version tells it:

The boat went under; the two men were poor swimmers and looked set to drown beneath the mountainous grey waves. Wauba could have left them to drown and swim ashore on her own. But she didn't.

First (the man who had first captured her), she pulled her husband under her arm — and dragged him back to shore, more than a kilometre away. Wauba next swam back out to the other man and brought him in as well. The two sealers coughed and spluttered on the Bicheno beach, but they did not die. Wauba had saved them.

Death at sea

Sadly no one was there to rescue Wauba when she needed it. Her demise (during a sealing trip) was at the hands of Europeans.

According to a sailor's account to Cotton, Wauba was one of the "gins" captured to take along on a whaleboat sailing from Hobart to the Straits Islands (Furneaux Group) as "expert hunters, fishers and divers as, in most barbarous tribes, the slaves of the men".

The sailing party camped at Wineglass Bay but woke to find the women and dogs had vanished. A group set off to pursue those who'd taken them. In his 1893 account Cotton speculated in *The Mercury* newspaper on the likely cause of her death:

Waubu Debar had, I suppose, been captured in like manner ... and possibly died of injuries sustained in the capture which no doubt was not done very tenderly.

The crew interred Wauba at Bicheno and marked her grave by a slab of wood with details inscribed.

Accounts differ as to when this actually took place. In 1893 — elderly Bicheno residents said Wauba was buried 10 years before the date on the headstone placing her death around 1822.

However, in his diary entry on 24 January 1816, Captain James Kelly described how he hauled up in Waub's Boat Harbour due to the heavy afternoon swell. Considering the area was already named after her it can be concluded that Wauba was likely buried before 1816.

Cotton's report imagined her burial:

Waubu Debar did not live to be a mother of the tribe of half-bred sealers of the Straits which became a sort of city or refuge for bushrangers in aftertime ... But she, poor soul was buried decently, perchance reverently, and I suppose other of the captured sisters would be present by the graveside on the shores of that silent nook near the beached boat.

Here lies Wauba

Waubu's reputation was such that in 1855 the public of Bicheno decided to commemorate her by erecting a railing, headstone and footstone (paid for by public subscription) at her grave with "Waub" carved into it.

John Allen, who had been granted land nearby, do-

nated ten shillings towards the cost of the gravestone — notwithstanding his involvement in a massacre at Milton Farm, Great Swanport, 30 years earlier.

The inscription reads:

Here lies Wauba Debar. A Female Aborigine of Van Diemen's Land. Died June 1832. Aged 40 Years. This Stone is Erected by a few of her white friends.

Whether prompted by a sense of loss, guilt, or admiration the community memorialised Wauba and, by extension, the original inhabitants of the land.

Yet by the late 1800s European demand for Aboriginal physical remains for "scientific investigation" was high. In 1893, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery was determined to procure the remains of Wauba.

Waub's Bay, Bicheno, is named after Wauba Debar.

The prevailing ethnological theories believed that the study of Australian Aboriginal people (and particularly Indigenous Tasmanians), would reveal much about the earliest stages of human development and its progress.

Waubu's grave was exhumed, put into a box, labelled "Native Currants" and dispatched to Hobart.

The locals were outraged. An editorial in the *Tasmanian Mail* newspaper condemned the act as "a pure case of body snatching for the purposes of gain and nothing else" that "the name of Science is outraged at being connected with".

Snowdrops bloom

Waubu's memorial is the only known gravestone erected to a Tasmanian Aboriginal person during the 19th century and she is the only palawa woman known to have been buried and commemorated by non-Indigenous locals.

In 2014 Olympic swimmer and Bicheno resident Shane Gould dedicated a fundraising swim to Wauba Debar's swimming abilities and memory.

The European styled memorial serves as a reminder of the more turbulent interactions between the two peoples that shaped Tasmania's history from the 1800s onwards.

Waubu's empty grave is Tasmania's smallest State Reserve. Her remains were returned to the Tasmanian Indigenous community in 1985. Snowdrops are said to bloom around the grave every spring.



Waubu Debar headstone — photo courtesy of Takver.

Swan Hill Genealogical Historical report

In the past 12 months our group has been relatively inactive until restrictions eased in 2021 and, even then, plans have been hesitantly made not knowing the future. Online meetings were not held but we did receive some family history enquiries online or by the phone. The Swan Hill Regional Library (where our room is) was very supportive and co-operative during this time.

I think an important part of our activities was keeping our newsletter going and trying to keep membership interested.

Due to Swan Hill's location on the Victoria-NSW border we did have some benefit with being able to have meetings at Murray Downs, NSW when Victoria had restrictions. While governments received criticism over the borders, it took us back to the days of pre-Federation. One member, Jim Strugnell, took the opportunity to re-enact a scene from the 1919 Spanish Flu border closure when the local barber, Mr Kimm, cut hair on the Swan Hill bridge between states. Jim's son was the barber on this occasion and Jim was later interviewed by ABC Western Victoria about the history behind the event.

A bonus during the year was being able to participate in a RHSV forum online. For rural members, especially when working full-time, it is difficult to attend these forums so I appreciated the opportunity. GSV also held an online session featuring Swan Hill on the 15th April with other regional groups having them as well.

In 2021 we received a grant from Swan Hill Council to have some film from the 1960s and 1970s digitised.

The main reel included the Queen's visit to the Pioneer Settlement in 1970 — a significant event in Swan Hill and Australia's history. There is something special about seeing family members in footage rather than photos that we become accustomed to as historians and, significantly, the late Prince Philip features.

During 2020 I was asked to do historical segments on ABC Mildura-Swan Hill which has continued in 2021. This is also a benefit to me as I re-visit past research and is a good refresher.

As well the Swan Hill Library co-ordinated a 75th anniversary of WW2 project which our group assisted with. An excellent DVD was produced along the same lines as the Kerang DVD for WW1 and included a broad variety of involvement.

Thanks to Helen and those who assisted in making the AGM happen this year. It was a treat being able to tour the old hospital site, a building many only get to wonder at from a distance. The guided tour topped it off! Our guest speaker in Richard Broome was a passionate and knowledgeable session and, for me, the decline in students studying history at years 12 level in past years is a concern. Thanks to Richard for taking the time to travel to us.

Of course the group discussion is always a drawcard for these meetings and to find out what other groups are doing. Many, it appears, remained active in the past 12 months as well.

**Steve Pentreath, President
Swan Hill Genealogical & Historical**

Surplus Parish/Township maps available

Cont. from P. 6.

Leeor x 2
Lexington
Lexton
Lorquon
Lowan x 2
Muhkwallok x 2
Malakoff
Marma
Marnoo
Maryborough x 3
Meereek
Mellier
Miram piram
Mokepilly
Moolerr
Morrl Morrl x 3

Mortat
Moolort
Moyston
Muntham
Murtoa
Narraport
Narrawaturk
Natimuk
Navarre x 8
Nekeeya
Nullan
Parupa
Raglan
Rich Avon West
Riachella x 4
St Arnaud x 2
Tarranginnie

Toonambool
Tottington
Trawalla
Trentham
Turandurey x 2
Vectis East
Wallaloo
Wallup
Warngar x 3
Warrak x 3
Warranook x 5
Warragul
Warra Warra x 3
Watta Wella x 3
Watchem
Watae Poolan
Watgania

Werrap
Werrigar x 4
Wickliffe North
Wickliffe South
William
Willenabrina
Winiam
Winjalock
Wirchilleba x 4
Witchpool
Yanipy
Yangerahwill
Yaramba
Yarrook
Yearinga
Yellangip
Youpayang

Interesting account of early Carisbrook

If one has an hour or two to spare (and wants to hear something about the early days of Carisbrook when that township was at its zenith) he has only to get into conversation as did a representative of the "Advertiser" this week with Mrs. Grace Herd of McLoughlin Street, Carisbrook (relict of the late James Henry Herd) who, despite the fact that she has seen 83 summers, enjoys good health, is surprisingly active and alert, has a very retentive memory and has the faculty of telling her story in a most interesting manner.

The old lady is a native of Maryborough having first seen the light on Gaol Hill on October 12, 1854 but went to Carisbrook with her parents (they were born in Scotland) in May, 1862 in a bullock dray. With the exception of one very brief period Mrs. Herd has lived in Carisbrook ever since. She was married on July 17, 1877 in Carisbrook by the Rev. Onions and of a family of nine (five girls and four boys) all are living except one boy. Her husband died a little over three years ago.

Of her schoolmates at the old Common School at Carisbrook Mrs. Herd knows of only three still residing about here, viz., Annie Linton and Nicholas Wight, both of Carisbrook and William Durbridge sen. of High Street, Maryborough.

First Residence — A Tent

Our first residence in Carisbrook, said Mrs. Herd in opening an interesting chat, was a tent which her father had pitched on the site of the shop at present occupied by Mr. B. Bland in Bucknall Street. There were several other tents between there and the town bridge. She well remembered the blackfellows and their lubras (the latter with blankets wrapped round them) throwing boomerangs. Later on Chinamen came to the creek and threw wheelbarrow tracks across it. On these the boys used to tease the Celestials and while doing so one boy (George Aston — a brother of Mrs. John Linton) fell in and was drowned.

Another thing she remembered was when, on the occasion of a royal wedding, a bullock was roasted at the market, plum puddings supplied and oak trees planted (she believed) in front of the Shire Hall which at that time bore a much better appearance than it now does having a front verandah with four large pillars.

In those days the residents used to get their letters at Cambridge's store in Green Street — but, later on, what is now the library, was the post office. A Mr. Smith, who married Lizzie Chalk — of a familiarly known family in Carisbrook — was the postmaster. The police residence and stables were all brought from the police paddock (where the State school now stands) and rebuilt on their present location in Bucknall Street.

A foundry was then in existence close to the market — the chimney stack is still to be seen as evidence of the fact. The high fence that enclosed the market came from the show grounds. Oh, yes, said Mrs. Herd, Carisbrook had a show grounds which was situated to the left of where the railway station is now on the road towards Chaplin's brick yard.

When she read, a little while ago, in the "Advertiser"

of the proposal to erect a cairn to perpetuate the memories of the Simson family. Mrs. Herd said it put her in mind of the time when standing at the flap of their tent, she saw ladies and gentlemen on horseback coming up the road from a north-easterly direction. The ladies, who rode side saddle, were dressed in black or blue riding habits almost touching the ground.

School Days

The first school at which she was a pupil was the Common School at Carisbrook — the head teacher being a Mr. Clark who was, of course, followed by others. Her schoolmates were Fanny Peacock, Mary and Ann O'Kelly, Annie Stockton and others. What is now known as the Parish Hall was the Common School building.

Canes and Crinolines

Mr. O'Kelly had a farm at Woolbrook which we girls visited every Saturday afternoon. Before going there, however, we called at the Chinamen's and got from them hoops of cane out of their old baskets. When we got as far as the police paddock (where the logs are in Bucknall Street) we put the canes in the hems of our flannel petticoats. Every woman and girl wore crinolines in those days. After spending three or four hours at the farm we used to have something to eat and then, on the way home, we pulled the canes out of our petticoats so that our parents would not see them.

Although the Methodist and Roman Catholic Churches were there from the earliest days the Church of England and Presbyterian came later — the last-named holding its services for a period in the Town hall.

First Wedding in Anglican Church

She saw the first wedding in the Church of England in 1865 when there was no flooring on it and its walls were not plastered. The marriage was that of Miss Hull (daughter of the poundkeeper) and a Mr. Smith of Ballarat.

Industries

When questioned whether she recollected any early-day industries in Carisbrook Mrs. Herd said there was a brewery, a tannery and Webb's flour mill which was destroyed by fire. Mr. Webb then lived at the house later occupied by Mr. Jas. Nicol, the Shire Secretary, before he shifted to Maryborough.

Of hotels she could still visualise Kirk's where Mr. Wright now has the blacksmith's shop. It was burnt in 1874 and not rebuilt. Then there was O'Kelly's Carisbrook Hotel (now the Egg Receiving Depot) also one close to the Castlemaine Road bridge, first known as the British American (afterwards rebuilt and renamed) and latterly called the Railway Hotel, (destroyed by fire a few years ago.)

Violet Hill

Mrs. Herd next spoke with much personal interest of Violet Hill in 1868 and 1869. This is the eminence on which the Misses Bucknall now have their home. As she remarked "It awakened memories of long ago." She remembered the toll gate on the road bridge over the creek. There were not many houses on Violet Hill but

among them were those of Mr. and Mrs. Rhoda, Mr. and Mrs. Hudson, Mr. and Mrs. Dolby (until quite recently before he died Mr. Walter Dolby lived in Maryborough), and the Tullaroop Hotel (a two storey building with a large wooden bar attached) of which Mr. and Mrs. Hudson were the licencees. The wife attended to the hotel business and the husband spent most of his time on a farm which is at present occupied by Mr. Small. In the place where they went to live on the Hill were five furnished rooms — two upstairs and three downstairs — with an attached kitchen used by the two families who baked bread in the large brick oven.

Each batch of bread was identified by a distinctive mark. The Dolby family also baked their bread in this oven.

The blacks were still then about Carisbrook and, one day when Mrs. Hudson had cooked chops for two of them what fat was left in the pan they rubbed on their heads of curly hair. Other residents of this particular locality were Mr. and Mrs. Angus Kennedy, Harry Moss and Mr. W. Holliday's parents. The last named and myself have often spoken of the large hobs in the fireplace at Holliday's home — they took up half the space of the room.

Others that she remembered were Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Kennedy, the Jessops and Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Kelly. Mr. Kelly was a witty and jolly Irishman of whom it could be truly said

“He loved the little Shamrock,
From dear old Erin's isle,
The pride of all true Irishmen.
Look on it, boy, and smile.”

Mrs. Herd added that she knew of five generations from Kelly's home.

Passed by the Way

There passed by, on the Castlemaine Road, close to her home, at 9 o'clock every morning, Cobb & Co's coach from Maryborough, en route to Castlemaine, returning the same evening — also the mail coach from Maryborough to Baringhup and Maldon — the mailman, in his red coat, sitting alongside the driver. In addition there was the gold escort, also from Maryborough, with its four or six mounted outriders. There was no railway line from Castlemaine to Maryborough until about 1874.

There were no houses opposite this hotel on the Hill and waggoners and bullock drivers used to camp there. “No tinkle of the bullock bells and no horses with hobbles on now” remarked Mrs. Herd in a somewhat regretful tone.

Continuing her narrative the old lady mentioned that in those days Mr. Hull (the poundkeeper) lived where Mr. Harold Bucknall now has his home in Urquhart Street. He also owned several racehorses — their stalls being along the high street fence.

Beautiful Fruit Gardens

Between the property (now Mr. A.H. Dowie's) and the Castlemaine Road (on the bank of the creek) was Attwood's beautiful fruit garden in which were several summer houses and a booth where soft drinks were obtainable at the gate.

There was another hotel (the Farmers' Arms — now

gone) in the hollow on the Castlemaine Road just before coming to the Big Hill.

Many farmers used to pass by in their spring carts — no motor cars in those days. Among them were Gamble, Meredith, James and the Dowies and others from out Moolort way and from the direction of Charlotte Plains, the Harses, McDonalds, Cameron and Berridge and others whom, just for the moment, it is difficult to recall.

The “Thistle” Brand

Mrs. Herd recalled an incident in this connection. Her mother sent her to Cambridge's store in Green Street for some butter. “Be sure you get Berridge's butter”, commanded the mother it has got a “Thistle” branded on it a flower immortalized in the lines —

“Scotland's bonnie monarch, the thistle in full bloom.

The foe that dares to tread on it will quickly know his doom.

Should auld acquaintance be forgot.”

And so on.

Visit to Melbourne

About the end of 1869 I was asked to go to Melbourne with another family. My mother thought that, as I was only 15 years of age at that time, the distance was a bit too far.

Eventually she decided to let me go but with one bit of advice which I never forgot. It was this: “Don't speak to any man in Melbourne but a policeman.” We rode to Castlemaine — some in a gig, others in a dray. There we picked up a train for Melbourne.

That was my first ride in a railways train! We went to Cheltenham to live. By arrangement Mr. Kennedy took me to my grandmother's place at Cecil Street, Emerald Hill (now South Melbourne) and, when there she visited Sandridge (now Port Melbourne) then noted for its heavy sand on all sides. Crossing the old Falls Bridge near Flinders Street, Melbourne she saw below the water rippling over the stones. How different now with the wide river Yarra and the several spacious bridges which span that stream!

Call again in ten years' time

In March 1870 Mrs. Herd returned to Carisbrook, and has resided there continuously ever since. Besides rearing a family of nine — the youngest is now 42 years of age — Mrs. Herd took her share and played her part in no small way in most of the public activities of the township. Particularly was she keenly interested in the annual hospital carnival. She has seen Carisbrook's rise and fall but what she said in this interview related solely to what had come under her notice in the years 1862 to 1870.

Call Again in Ten Years' Time. With that cheery optimism which seems to pervade her very nature the old lady, in bidding our reporter “Good afternoon” pleasantly said: “Call again in ten years' time, and perhaps another instalment will be given you.

**Mrs. J.H. Herd's interesting account of
Carisbrook's early days**

**Transcribed as published from the Maryborough
Advertiser November 5, 1937**

Heroism remembered from The Union Jack Club Victoria Cross Roll of Honour

This came through on the members weekly newsletter from the Union Jack Club

Joseph Trewavas VC CGM

b: 14/12/1835 d.20/07/1905

Seaman, HMS Agamemnon, attached HMS Beagle, Royal Navy

Joseph Trewavas was born at Mousehole, Cornwall the oldest child of Joseph Trewavas and his wife Ann Roose. At the age of 18 he joined the Royal Navy and, after less than a year, found himself involved in the Crimean War landing with the Naval Brigade serving in the trenches at Sebastopol and taking part in the Battle of Inkerman in 1854.

Trewavas was loaned to the gunboat HMS Beagle for operations in the Sea of Azov where the orders were to destroy everything of value to the enemy. A large floating pontoon bridge had been built by the Russians and was the main supply route to Sebastopol. The destruction of the bridge would force the Russians to travel an extra 120 miles to deliver their supplies and two attacks to cut the floating bridge's hawsers had proved unsuccessful, alerting the Russian garrison. A third attempt was made on 3rd July 1855.

In Trewavas own words "As we paddled out of sight of our ship on a little mound we could see the Russians motioning the soldiers on shore... I was pulling the bow oar and when we were near the floating bridge I leapt onto it cut the hawsers and jumped back in the boat again and shoved off... The Russians then let fly. For some time we could not get away as the water was so shallow and the shot came at us like hailstones, wounding three men and riddling the boat with shot. Reaching safety and the protection of our ship our boat was sinking and full of water."

Citation "Particularly mentioned as having cut the hawsers of the floating bridge in the Straits of Genitchi under a heavy fire of musketry on which occasion he was wounded."

Trewavas was present at the first investiture at Hyde Park on 26th June 1857 and received his medal from Queen Victoria. He served for another seven years in the Royal Navy before returning to Mousehole where he married Margaret Harry in 1866. They had three chil-



Joseph Trewavas VC winner

dren and following tradition, he bought a fishing lugger naming it Agamemnon after his first Navy ship.

Late in life in early 1905, Joseph suffered a stroke and fell into depression which sadly led to him taking his own life. Lest we forget

Source VCGC.ORG.UK

Scotland's Greyfriars Bobby

This is a new sculpture of Greyfriars Bobby — created to mark the 150th anniversary of the little Skye Terrier's death on 14th January 1872. The sculpture is made from granite and has been placed in Greyfriars Kirkyard in Edinburgh near the memorial stone that many people will already have seen. Greyfriars Bobby was the little dog that became famous for guarding the grave of his master, John Gray, for 14 years until Bobby himself died. Whether the story is true or a myth it's a tale of loyalty and love that touches many people.



Lieutenant Colonel William McKenzie

William McKenzie was born on 20 December 1869 at Biggar, Lanarkshire, Scotland to farmer Donald McKenzie and his wife Agnes. He was the third of nine children. In 1884 at fourteen years old they migrated to Australia and settled near Bundaberg, Queensland. There, he and his siblings worked for his father on their sugar cane farm and smallholding. In July 1887, after several encounters with members of the Salvation Army and a deep personal conviction, William McKenzie became a devout Christian at the age of nineteen.

In January 1890 he received his first appointment as a Salvation Army Lieutenant and, by October that year, was promoted to Salvation Army Captain.

On 21 June 1899 William McKenzie married fellow Officer Annie Dorothea Hoepper in Horsham, Victoria. By 1911 William and Annie had four children and had settled in Bendigo where William was a Salvation Army Brigadier.

After the outbreak of the First World War William McKenzie was officially appointed as chaplain to the 1st Brigade of the Australian Expeditionary Force on 25 September 1914. He embarked on the Euripides on 19 October 1914 as the chaplain attached to the 4th Australian Infantry Battalion arriving in Alexandria on 3 December 1914. On 25 April 1915 McKenzie arrived at Gallipoli with the first troops to land however stayed on the boat helping doctors attend to wounded men. On 10 May 1915 he was allowed to disembark and, in his first ten days ashore, McKenzie buried approximately 170 men, often while under fire.

McKenzie was with the 4th Battalion as they took part in the Battle of Lone Pine in early August 1915. By this time McKenzie had earned the nickname "Fighting Mac". With the evacuation of Gallipoli in December 1915 McKenzie travelled to France. Throughout all of his war service McKenzie buried the dead and helped the wounded. He also held services in the trenches when possible. McKenzie became known for his efforts to uplift the spirits of the men across Egypt, Gallipoli and France through organising large concerts and meetings in which songs (some of which were composed by McKenzie) were performed.

McKenzie was mentioned in despatches and later gazetted a Military Cross on 3 June 1916. With the strain of his immense work load McKenzie suffered many bouts of ill health and depression. He was requested to return to Australia and did so in early March 1918.



Lieutenant Colonel William McKenzie.

Upon his return William McKenzie spoke in many Memorial Meetings with high attendance — largely from men who served with him and the families of fallen soldiers. However, after his return from the war, he continued to have poor health and suffered from nightmares and memory loss. William and Annie resided in the Sydney suburb of Earlwood from 1938 and he formally retired from active ministry on 1 March 1939. McKenzie's long illnesses ended on 27 July 1947. He died at the age of 77 and was buried in Rookwood Cemetery, Sydney.

Article and photograph from Australian War Memorial.

"Tarrone Estate Soldier Settlement"

Book available from
Koroit & District Historical Society Inc.
P.O. Box 118, Koroit Vic 3282

Florrie Hodges fire heroine

There has been a lot of talk about heroes this year — whether they be firefighters, front-line health workers, teachers, one-hundred-year old ex-soldiers walking to raise funds for Great Britain's National Health Service or just ordinary folk doing their best to make the best of 'interesting times'. This post makes public some of my recent thoughts about the way this talk is gendered, and sometimes careless, through the telling of an historical story.

Before the global pandemic re-framed all our working lives I'd been thinking about what it means to be a hero and released some of my musings to the public at an International Women's Day event at Public Record Office Victoria in early March. (It seems a world away — a time when events with real audiences took place but it was only two months ago!) I was angry about a social media post from Bettina Arndt who, in order to make the point: "As always, it's usually men who do the really dangerous, difficult work protecting everyone else" had neglected to check if the firefighter depicted in the image she used was, in fact, a man. She wasn't and the follow up comments were scathing. Thank goodness for an immediate feedback system to set the record straight.

This got me thinking; in an age before social media and quick responses, short concentration spans and even shorter news cycles, how many stories have been written over? How many courageous acts committed by women are forgotten? In the spirit of the Australian Women's Register's (AWR) core business, to research and publish the stories of women that might not otherwise get told AWR co-editor Helen Morgan went searching.

A story from 1926 caught her eye. On February 14 1926, a date now known in Victoria as Black Sunday, 31 men, women and children were burnt to death in the region around Erica, Noojee, and Powelltown. At that time it was the worst bushfire disaster in the history of Australia but, as John Schauble's excellent article about these 1926 fires reminds us, it's amazing how quickly events can be forgotten when bigger, seemingly more catastrophic, events happen subsequently. The 1926 fires in Gippsland have been 'jettisoned to a more distant past' he says barely memorialised in art, literature or history — despite killing more Victorians, proportionately, than any fires before or since except the 1939 fires.

Schauble points out the various social and political lessons we learned (and forgot?) from these fires but we should also remember the 1926 fires better because of their human cost. They devastated small communities in Gippsland and the impact of that trauma is a living memory for descendents of some survivors. Through the story of Florrie Hodges, a teenager who survived the fires and became a celebrity for her heroics, we can explore themes that resonate nearly one hundred years later such as the nature of celebrity, gendered narratives of heroics and the intergenerational impact of unresolved trauma. It is the latter of these

themes I'd like to reflect upon here — with passing reference to the gendered nature of fame and heroics.

Florrie Hodges was a fourteen year old girl from a mill settlement near Powelltown whose heroics captured the national imagination. On Sunday February 14, 1926 she was at home with members of her family when the fire exploded about them. Instructed by her mother to take the children to safety — she walked for some miles with her three younger siblings — Rita, Vera and seventeen month old Dorothy — finally lying down on a train track and shielding them with her own body when there was nothing to do except allow the fire to burn over the top of them. They all survived but Florrie received horrific burns to her legs and back. She was hospitalised for several months and was left disabled and disfigured.

Stories of the heroics of 'the little bush girl of Powelltown' emerged quickly after the fires were put out and Florrie Hodges became something of a celebrity. Her bravery was recognised far and wide; she was awarded a Royal Humane Society medal and a testimonial fund launched and administered by the Timber Worker's Union raised some £1000 to be placed in trust until she was 21 (her father being very anxious about her future and the need to make sure that the funds were to be clearly available for her own use.) Politicians, unionists — even famous actors were keen to share the stage with Florrie at various events held in her honour. Important labour figure Jean Daley spoke at an event held in May and the actor, Louise Lovely, appeared at one in September along with a range of other artists and the Returned Soldiers Memorial Band.

Schauble suggests that the 1926 fires produced little in the way of cultural product but maybe the issue is that what little emerged was focused on a fourteen year old girl. A souvenir booklet was published, 100,000 photographs distributed to schoolchildren across the nation, Queen Mary and the Duchess of York proudly received photographs of the 'Australian Heroine', a special gramophone recording of Florrie telling her story was released and Mary Grant Bruce wrote a special version of her story that was published in the School Magazine. She, through her deeds, was variously described as 'carrying the spirit of many a pioneer mother exhibiting 'the endurance of a Spartan and the pluck and fortitude of Nurse Cavell' and equalling the heroics of soldiers in the Boer and Great Wars. 'The battlefields of South Africa, Gallipoli and Flanders' said Jean Daley at her testimonial 'had not furnished a braver deed than the act of heroism performed by the little bush girl of Powelltown.' Florrie was very proud of the various honours and accolades she received but using a modest heroes' refrain familiar to all of us when asked to speak told people 'she thought that any Australian girl would have done what she did'.

And despite a small glitch with a poorly attended Sydney event (organised by the Feminist Club and the League of Child Helpers) after which Sydneysiders were scolded for rushing to greet 'every visiting

celebrity' but not the girl 'descended of the race that gave the world the Anzacs' who exhibited 'the most outstanding act of heroism of the year — if not the decade' — Florrie's story still resonated some years after the events. In a 1931 issue of *The Freeman's Journal* children's submissions were published under the title 'My Favourite Heroine'. Ten year old Enid Casey asked her readers 'Do you remember the story of Florrie Hodges' and explained why she was 'her favourite Heroine'. And, during 'fire season' in 1934, the story of 'the 'Heroine of Black Sunday' was retold in the wake of severe fires in Tasmania and Victorian timber country. After this there is little to be found about Florrie and her life after the fires. Perhaps, after the 1939 fires, all other fires paled into historical insignificance.

Perhaps there are other reasons to explain Florrie's loss of celebrity over the years that relate more directly to her own life experiences after the fires? Finding an online image of her bravery award and the purse presented to Florrie at the testimonial in her honour created a chain of correspondence between Helen Morgan and a member of Florrie's extended family Joy Welch. Helen found the name of the donor of the purse to Museum Victoria via their website and this act of curation provided her with a contact to Joy.

Joy offered to collect stories at a family gathering to be held in early February. Florrie passed away in 1972 but several elderly relatives who remembered her were willing to talk about what they knew and remembered. Many of them became very emotional while doing so but persevered because they wanted Florrie's story better known. 'They thought the importance of remembering and recognizing her bravery, [talking about] what had happened to her goes quite a way to explaining her life after the event' said Joy. It had not been a particularly happy one.

A nephew, now 87, remembers her well and speaks of his visits to her house in Lyonville near Trentham. Florrie married her cousin, Bill, (soon after the accident), when she was sixteen. Bill worked in the timber mill and he had a couple of serious injuries so both he and Florrie would have been in constant discomfort or pain. They lived a very simple life. Florrie was remembered as a tough, no nonsense woman who didn't talk much. She never spoke of the fire, the attention afterwards or the impact it had on her or her body. Her preference was to seek company at the pub where she was seen regularly an uncommon sight in those days. Most other women were at home with the children but Florrie was often to be found at the local — drinking with her husband. Due to the couple's history it seems that the extended family looked out for them as much as possible. Everyone knew they both had alcohol issues and everyone attributed that to the trauma they experienced.

They had six children, (with only four living to adulthood) and the trauma was intergenerational. Their daughter Nancy had a number of children who were mainly placed in care mainly due to her alcohol issues. Their son Bill did not have children but he passed away in a Salvation Army home as a chronic alcoholic. Little

is known about the two youngest children but it is known that all of them had been in and out of care due to Florrie and Bill's inability to care for them. The extended family tried many times to take them all in (especially the two little ones) but the State judged their own families to be too large to permit them taking in any additional children. Some family members who Joy spoke with still got emotional when they spoke about their parents not being allowed to take care of them — they didn't want the children to be placed in an orphanage. They were acutely aware that if it hadn't been for Florrie their mothers would have perished in the fire and they would not be there, in 2020, telling her story.

It is important to Florrie's nephew that Florrie be remembered because the past lives on in the present. His son, a Country Fire Authority (CFA) member, rescued people in the 2009 Black Saturday fires. He suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) so the family's knowledge of Florrie's story helped him to understand the impact similar trauma could have on his own son. He knows how trauma unresolved or dealt with can continue to play out for years to come. It has made a difference to them as they create a pathway to recovery for their son.

In her email Joy Welch sadly noted that 'in saving others Florrie lost herself' and talking about it now we can see the far-reaching implications for Florrie, her children and her grandchildren. Even at the time there were commentators who recognised that risk. Dr Irene Stable, the Medical Officer for the Victorian Education Department, observed with some foreboding that:

The child will bear the marks of the fire throughout her life as an external manifestation of her suffering; nothing will ever reveal the deep scar which this terrifying event has left on her memory; nothing will erase it...

It's fair to say that nothing ever did.

Recognising Florrie's story is to recognise the damage that continues to be done when past trauma is not acknowledged. It's not just about celebrating bravery as achievement — it's about remembering that for very many women (and men) bravery as 'achievement' has come at a significant cost. Honouring the stories of brave women like Florrie helps us to reimagine what it means to be brave and how careful we must be with our heroes.

This post could not have been written without the extraordinary research skills of Helen Morgan whose contribution kick-started the process.

The author also extends her gratitude to Florrie Hodges' extended family (particularly Joy Welch) for so generously sharing their stories.

**Have you an interesting
story to tell.**

Contact editor on robinparker81@hotmail.com
or snailmail to
21 Fraser street, Maryborough 3465.

Ann McDonald (nee Maxworthy) 1859-1949

Moolort Post Mistress

Ann was the second child of Fanny Lock and George Maxworthy. She married Walter McDonald after spending all her childhood and youth in Moolort. In fact her whole life was spent in Moolort. Walter the son of Walter and Charlotte McDonald, (local farmers) had the nickname of "Nipper" because he was a small lightly built young man — but he was also described as a "lovely little man with a pointed black beard" something like Sir Walter Scott — that other famous Scot. This Scot's ancestry was evident when, each New Year's Day, the Highland Sports at Maryborough brought out the kilts for Walter and his brother Bill. They dressed in the tartan kilts — Bill with the bagpipes and Walter with his dancing — were a part of the festivities.

Walter could turn his hand to anything. He cracked blue metal with a napping hammer for the Castlemaine Maryborough road — long before the days of stone crushers. At another time, when the plains and Loddon flats north of Bendigo were being opened up for smaller farmers, Walter drove a bullock team and wagon from Maryborough to Pyramid Hill on a regular weekly run — carrying stores and requirements for the new farmers and carrying wheat, wool and other farm produce on the return. He slept under the wagon or the stars and lived on wild turkey and damper.

The Moolort Post Office had been in the Lock - McDonald family for 66 years. Ellen Maxworthy was Post Mistress from 1880-1882 then following her marriage with James Griffiths she continued in 1883-85. It was then transferred to Henry McMeekin and, in 1891, transferred to Ann McDonald who was Post Mistress until 1949. Quite a notable contribution to the Moolort community by Lock descendants.

For many years Walter McDonald met the 11.00 am train from Melbourne to collect the mail bags (which were not large or heavy) on his push bike but in bad weather he would use the horse and gig. There was not a great deal of mail but all of those farmers who received a daily paper had it mailed under separate cover. He went again to the Station with the outward mail for the 4.00 pm train to Melbourne.

The Post Office (which was a room in the McDonald residence) was on an acre of land adjacent to the Moolort School — sufficient land for a small orchard. The fruit there is still delicious and grazing for a horse and a cow — though the cow mostly was tethered on the roadway or in the "long paddock" as the road was

known to the locals.

Post Office records of the period (received from Australia Post in 1984) make very interesting reading. The Post Office, which opened on 1st June 1870, had been operating for 10 years before Ellen Maxworthy was appointed Post Mistress her initial salary being £12 (\$24) but in 1885 this had been increased to £24.

On 12th February 1889 Rebecca Wyley the eldest daughter of Fanny Maxworthy's marriage to William Wyley, became Post Mistress and on 26th May 1891 it was transferred to Ann McDonald (the eldest daughter of Fanny's marriage to George Maxworthy.) The letter from Australia Post stated that "We have included details of the early Post Mistresses. There is no information for the period 1891 (that was when Ann McDonald became Post Mistress) to 1926 but this seems to be because the same Post Mistress held the position during that time.

The Post Office became a Telegraph Office on 21st January 1926 (modern inventions at last caught up with Moolort). The hours of opening were 9.00 am to 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm to 8.00 pm with an opening fee of one shilling and six pence (15 cents) — This being the cost of making a phone call outside the hours of opening. In 1944 the Post Office sold Federal Tax Stamps. This was part of the War effort.

It is not certain when daughter Anne took over the responsibility for the Post Office (the only official documentation is the 1949 death of A. M. and transfer to Miss Anne McDonald".) But Anne must have been acting in that capacity for several years as, by 1949 mother Ann was 89 years of age. The next recorded detail is 9 March, 1949 transfer to Mrs Margaret Elizabeth Lee on 1 April, 1949.

Modern telecommunications caught up with the Moolort farming community and, in 1967 the old manual exchange of the McDonald's was up-graded to a Rural Automatic Exchange. The Post Office closed in June 1973 after 103 years service to the Moolort community.

There were 10 children in the family of Ann Maxworthy and Walter McDonald - Ellen 1881, Harry 1882, Elizabeth 1883, William 1884, Margaret 1888, George 1891, Florence 1894, Colin 1896, Annie 1900 and James in 1904.

All of these had children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and great, great grandchildren.

Adapted from the book "Lock Living Legend"
By Alan W. Lock

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

A new lease of life for derelict pub

Take a short drive anywhere around the outskirts of Maryborough and they are not hard to miss. Crumbling blue-stone walls — remnants that hold the memory of a time when the central goldfields was a thriving frontier outpost, bustling with gold-fevered miners, store owners, bakers, butchers and — most common of all — pubs.

Much of the past is now hidden by trees and long grass or serves as shelter for local livestock. But some, like the pub at Red Lion, have been offered a new lease of life as they are restored to homes for a new generation of owners.

Lisa Vuillermin never intended to buy a tumble-down 1850's era pub. She came to the area about five years ago to look for a house for her sister and as they were looking through a local real estate magazine Lisa came across an adv. for the old pub at Red Lion.

"I said to my sister 'I'd love to go and look at that — that looks really interesting,'" Lisa said.

"So we went and looked at it and it was a little bit romantic. I just sort of fell in love with the idea of the project and, actually rang the agent on the way home and made an offer.

"I saw it that day without any intention of buying anything but made an offer the same day."

Although few people would impulse-buy a derelict pub Lisa was not totally naïve about the work involved in restoring the building back to its former glory. For many years Lisa worked as an 'apprentice' to a woman whose passion was restoring old homes and buildings.

Eve Hayman was an extraordinary woman with an extraordinary amount of knowledge. She restored a number of Victorian homes in Melbourne and she also did a beautiful stone property in Kyneton.

She was the foreman on all of her jobs — very hands on. She managed every tradesperson; she didn't employ a builder to oversee it.

Working with her there was lots of sweeping floors and painting walls but also helping her source materials; going out and finding that one place in Melbourne that sells that particular skirting board from that particular era."

One of the first things Lisa needed to do was rebuild the walls ready to install the roof and protect the building from the weather.

"It was starting to crumble; the rain had got down in all the walls and was starting to effect the mortar. With old buildings there's a point where you can't bring them back. The pub was at that point where I thought if someone doesn't do this it will be gone."

Lisa's mentor's son, Mark, is partnering with her on the project and together they are working on a vision for the old pub that is beginning to take shape. They have intentionally used local tradespeople and suppliers since the project began. Local stone mason Paul



The old Red Lion Hotel during the renovations.

Middleton completed the work needed on the walls and the roof trusses were completed by builder Tim Carroll.

One person who has a particular interest in the pub is local resident Carol Pascoe. Carol's family go back for generations in the goldfields and her ancestors once owned the Red Lion pub.

"Back in those days there were over 100 pubs in the goldfields," Carol said.

"This was just one more pub on the road between Clunes and Maryborough and like all pubs it has its share of stories."

While Carol has no specific memories of tales told at the pub she has a few family photos taken back in the 1800s when it was a thriving business. One image shows the Nicholson family (of which Carol is a descendant) standing proudly outside the premises in their finest clothes.

Like many families stories have been passed down the generations and Carol says it is difficult to know what is true and what isn't. At one stage there was talk that the pub was being run as a house of 'ill repute'; another story has babies born to female staff that may or may not belong to the family's many sons.

Whatever the past held — as the new owner Lisa is determined the future is a bit more certain for the beautiful bluestone building.

"We will soon be at the stage of making it a habitable building" Lisa said.

"Whether we use it as a weekend or a home — we're both very keen to get it finished so that it is a livable house. We are also in the process of restoring the garden. Mark is very busy planting about 100 trees on the property.

"Or we have talked about potentially selling it when we finish and doing another one because we have both enjoyed the process so much — most days!

"I drive past those buildings and think 'It's so beautiful if someone doesn't take it on it will be gone forever'.

"I like making things beautiful again."

March 31, 2021
Goldfields Getaway

Dust storms and puddlers

Local historian Judith Healey shares her memories of growing up in an extended family in regional Victoria and reflects on the challenges faced by her ancestors as they raised children at the height of the goldrush in the Central Goldfields.

Mildura

My father died when I was little and my mum worked at the hospital as a theatre sister and worked different shifts. So, until I was about 10, I was raised by my grandparents on a farm in Mildura. I can remember Mum coming home at different times and she always had these lovely soft cool hands.

My grandparents were the complete framework of my life when I was little. They were really ordinary, old fashioned people. There were certain things you had to do and it was part of the whole fabric of life.

Growing up with them is where I got the values and social moves that have stayed with me my whole life. You didn't discuss money and the only people you didn't mix with were people who drank and didn't behave themselves in public. Even today, at my age I still feel guilty going into a hotel because I think Granny will tap me on the shoulder and tell me off.

We thought it was a wonderful childhood — we didn't know that there was a difference in people being poor, that was never discussed.

Although they had electricity Granny always had the wood stove because we had the Mallee roots to burn in Mildura.

All the cooking was done on a wood stove. Granny had a large pot she would make soup in — so nearly all the winter you would be able to have a bowl of soup whenever you wanted. By putting the pots in certain places on the stove they stayed warm or boiled madly — whichever. Women had the arranging of the fire down to a fine art. They knew if they put a certain size log on at whatever time how long it would stay hot for and what they could cook. The wood stove would have been going all winter and we had the wood fire in the lounge.

All of the washing was done in a copper and a wash trough. Granny would light the fire underneath a big copper bucket and fill that with water and soap. When the copper boiled she put the clothes in. Then she would haul the washing out, rinse them off and the special whites — going-out whites like shirts and blouses — used to get this blue put in them. Then Granny would rinse again, hang them to dry and iron them. And woe betide if there were any marks!

Granny had flat irons and then she got one they put coals in. You would get the coals out of the fire and open the lid and fill it full of coals — that was a bit flash.

Groceries and meat would be delivered. A man would bring the groceries like biscuits, tea, coffee and sugar and the butcher would come in a little covered car. He had all the animal carcasses hanging in the back of the van and he'd chop off the leg or whatever you wanted then Granny would have it on a plate covered in a tea towel and put it in the ice chest.



Judy Healey Carisbrook historian.

We had an ice chest that was a bit taller than table height. They were generally made of wood and you lifted the lid up; the top was lined with tin and holes in the bottom. A man would come and put a big block of ice in it and you would shut the lid and it would last about a week before it melted. Us kids used to get into trouble because we'd drink the water.

I remember some wonderful teas on a Saturday night when all the different aunts would arrive. I realise now it was mostly aunts because the uncles were away at the war.

The table would be full and there would be about four stands with cakes on them — big cream cakes, and scones and two big legs of lamb. In the summer they were served cold and we'd have wonderful salads.

Another time the women would all get together was to pick the fruit. In those days most of the farmers had fruit trees — almonds, apricots, plums, olives — around their fence line. When it was time the women would come together and help each other pick all the fruit. Some of them dried the fruit and some of them packed it in boxes and sent it to Melbourne and that was their personal 'pin' money.

They grew grapes and fruit on the farm and Grandad didn't have a tractor. He had a horse and cart and we'd go into town every so often and get bags of chaff and stuff for the horses — all that heavy farm stuff. We thought it was wonderful — you were really grown up when you were allowed to hang your legs over the side.

I can remember Uncle Reggie came out to visit with his first motor car. That would have been in the mid-40s. He came out with what I know now was an Austin

7 — a little green thing. We thought it was the funniest thing when Grandad got in it — he was six-foot-five and he was all folded up in this little car.

Another exciting thing I remember was the dust storms. It was a big deal; everyone would run around saying “There’s going to be a dust storm”. We would have to get busy putting towels and blankets on the doors and windows. It would get dark in the middle of the day and the sky would go red.

I don’t know how long it would last but Granny used to play the gramophone to keep us amused — so we didn’t mind it at all — we weren’t frightened. Then, when it was over, we had to go outside and sweep all the dust off the veranda. We used to take the mats outside and beat the living daylight out of them with this special shaped stick.

We had a radio and it was a big deal to sit on Grandad’s knee and listen to the news — the whole world had to be quiet while he listened. He’d growl about the different politicians the same as the grandads do now.

The next-door neighbours were Italian/Australian and weren’t allowed to have guns during the war so when they wanted to kill a pig, they would ask Grandad. Of course us kids weren’t allowed anywhere near it so we’d get up on the roof of the shed and lay down and watch.

We thought it was marvellous. We would see the grandfathers and the husbands and men all running around chasing the pig. Then Grandad would shoot it and the Italian grannies and women would butcher it and hang up all the sausages and salamis.

Although times were hard people didn’t know any different.

The Goldfields

Many years later, when my children were grown and raising their own families, I started researching our family history. I got back as far as Ann Smith (nee Hemp-sall) — my grandad’s grandmother. By going through the church records, rates and newspapers at the time I have put together some of the life of my grandmother three times back.

Ann came out here as a migrant to Western Australia in 1841, got off the boat and got married. It didn’t seem to be very long before she had a baby — my great grandmother. Between the time she was married until 1851 she had five children and then moved to Victoria.

The family came by boat from Western Australian. Another baby was born when she got off the boat in Melbourne. Then the whole family trundled up here to Central Victoria.

They had to walk as there were no trains or buses in those days. They had six children and she was pregnant again. They stopped in Castlemaine for a little while because the priest there did the baptism for a few of the children.

She was one of thousands of people who travelled to the goldfields in the 1850s.

Near the railway crossing by the old mill in Maryborough, off to the side it looks like a little lane but it’s ac-

tually a creek. And that creek goes right out nearly to Talbot. Ann, her husband and all the children followed the creek out Amherst way to Blackman’s Lead and stayed there for 20 odd years.

The family lived there in a tent and the husband and oldest son became prospectors. They also had a puddling machine. Prospectors would pay them to wash a load of dirt in the puddler to get the gold.

Everybody lived in tents for about 25 years. On the rates it says ‘wooden walls’ or ‘mudbrick walls’ and brush roof — what we would call a tent but was probably oiled sail cloth. That was all there was — were no sheets of tin and no Mr Mitre 10 to go to.

So Ann raised her children there and half the town now is related to one of her daughters. One daughter made my lot, the other daughter made a lot up at Charlton and the other daughter made a huge family in NSW.

We can only imagine what life was like as she raised her family although there are some written records that have survived. We know that none of her children died of starvation which was a common cause of death in those days. On the rates notice it says the house was mudbrick walls with a tarp roof. They didn’t have what were called American stoves inside the house so she had to cook outside.

There is also a record of her being asked to testify at the inquest into the death of a neighbour who got drunk and beat his wife. His adult son saw what was happening and clouted him over the head with a lump of wood. The man then went to bed and died. The son got the blame for it but the inquest found he didn’t deliberately try to kill him.

Ann gave evidence that she ‘took the children for a Sunday walk’ while the row was happening. The descendants of that man still live in Maryborough today.

Ann died in 1875 in Blackman’s Lead. She is buried in Maryborough Cemetery along with some of her daughters. Her husband and a few of the children packed up and went up to Charlton.

Unless they wanted to work in the deep lead mines there weren’t all the factories and things to work in. The main objective was to earn enough money to buy land unless they were involved in a town type of business — butcher, baker, dressmakers, furniture shops and things like that.

When I started doing my history I asked Grandad why he never went back to the area where he grew up. He said “Oh no, it’s full of holes, terribly dangerous”. At the time I didn’t know what he meant. I know now. Even in recent times there have been terrible accidents — not just people falling down the holes but being overcome by the gas.

In the 60s they were putting sewerage into Maryborough just near the railway crossing. The workers parked a bulldozer and left it overnight when they came back the next day it had gone — fallen in a hole.

It just shows that the history of the goldfields is still there. You might not be able to see it straight away but sometimes you just need to know where to look.

**From Maryborough Advertiser April 30, 2021
Article written by Judy Healey and Deb Bennett.**

**EXHIBITION & TOURS
CARISBROOK & DISTRICT'S BLUESTONE HERITAGE
SATURDAY 27th AND SUNDAY 28th NOVEMBER, 2021
10 am TO 3.30 pm DAILY**



Exhibition
Photo Display
& History & Heritage
\$5 Admission
(inc. Exhibition brochure & cuppa)

Guided Tours:
Walking tour of
Bluestone heritage
in Carisbrook : 11 am daily
\$5 each*
(including brochure and map)

Driving Tours of district
Bluestone heritage:
Different each day
1 pm Saturday 1 pm Sunday
\$10 each
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Full details inside

Contact Alex Stoneman
04818 151 845
<alson@iinet.net.au>

***BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL**
Bookings open August 1
Bookings close September 20th

**CARISBROOK SENIOR CITIZENS' CLUB HALL
cnr. Urquhart & Powlett Streets, Carisbrook.**

***Wanted: Articles of interest from your
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