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CITY OF MOORABBIN HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

AFFILIATED WITH THE ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA AND THE CHELTENHAM ARTS AND CRAFTS SOCIETY.

President
Mrs. N. Blackman
93-6232

Secretary
Mrs. F. Neville
57-2965

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The Society meets at the State School, Charman Road, Cheltenham on the third Thursday of each month. Next meeting Thursday November 17th.

EARLY DAYS OF THE CHELTENHAM A.N.A.

The Australian Natives Association, first called the Victorian Natives Association, was formed in Melbourne in 1871. It probably owes its origin to the growing sense of nationalism among Australians at that time. It was and still is a friendly or benefit society, one of its aims being to provide some security against illness for members and their families. Ordinary people at that time lived in great insecurity; there was always the fear of unemployment, the phrase "social service" did not exist, and pensions were only on the horizon. In days of low incomes a man must have found it a comfort to belong to an organization which provided financial help in illness for himself and his family. Each member paid a sum quarterly into the funds of the Branch; the Branch paid a regular sum to the doctor of his choice who gave medical attention when required to the member or one of his family. Sick pay was also given to members too ill to work. Later pharmaceutical and funeral benefits were added. (Recently the basis on which medical attention was financed was altered to agree with the principles of the National Health Scheme.).

But the A.N.A. in its early days had other aims beside those of providing benefits. It wished to stimulate patriotism in the native-born and was particularly interested in federation which in 1871 was little more than a budding idea; it also aimed to provide "mutual improvements", to satisfy the mental and cultural needs of its members.

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