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has the greater effect on society?", and on that hardy perennial - "Is Australian youth deteriorating?".

Though the A.N.A. was an exclusively male organization women seemed to have hovered on the fringe of it. A motion sent to conference suggested that a "benefit Society for Australian Females" should be established and this was formed but apparently lapsed, perhaps because so few women then were employed outside the home. A letter from the Women's Franchise League asked the Branch to put on its next syllabus a debate on the subject of women's rights. But the debate was not held. At "Pound Nights" members brought a pound of food for supper; on "Ladies Nights" they paid 1/- and brought the ladies (who brought the supper.). There was occasionally a "Cinderealla Dance" where men paid a shilling and ladies came free. In 1899 a motion allowed women to take part in a card tournament; another in 1902 excludes them!

There is pathos in these early records. Many appeals from other branches asked for help for distressed members or for widows of deceased members. One appeal of this kind from a country branch had to be rejected because of shortage of funds. At one meeting the secretary reported that he had not written as instructed to the Board of Directors asking for permission to appeal for the widow of a Cheltenham member "because there were so many appeals under their consideration and he thought it would be useless". However the Branch was sometimes allowed by the Moorabbin Council to hold a "benefit concert" for a member's widow and her family.

There is one surprising record in 1899. The secretary read a letter from an American Tobacco Company saying that it was forwarding some cigarettes to the Branch! Was this the beginning of the Great American Invasion - the tip of the long shadow of the future?

Two hand bills survive which are very intersting today. One is of the "Fifth Annual Musical and Elocutionary Competitions" conducted by the Cheltenham Branch in the Mechanics Institute on April 29th, 1908. Items included pianoforte solos, vocal solos, duets and quartettes, humorous songs "in character" or "without makeup" (but not perhaps in the modern sense of that phrase), dancing by boys or girls of the Sailor's Hornpipe, the Irish Jig and the Highland Fling, collective action songs and a competition for an essay on "The Many Advantages of the A.N.A." for a trophy of £1-1-, donated by Mrs. Keys of the Exchange Hotel. Another item is a "coon song" - "coon" was a joke word for "negro". That one would not appear today.

The other hand bill is for an A.N.A. "fete and sports demonstration" on the afternoon and evening of Saturday 28th and Monday 30th January, 1911 at the Exhibition Building. There was a merry-go-round, Punch and Judy, Maypole and national dances (one wonders what these were like). Hot water, tea and milk were provided free.