

*The Argus, 7 Feb 1924*

## **NEW TOURIST ROAD. MARYSVILLE TO WOOD'S POINT MAGNIFICENT FOREST SCENERY.**

### **Official Party's Hardships.**

WOODS POINT, Wednesday - Mud stained and tired an official party that had travelled over the newly cleared road from Marysville arrived at Wood's Point about 8 o'clock last night after an eventful trip. Among those in the party were Mr. Edgar, M.L.C., Mr Everard, M.L.A. , Mr J. M. Reed (chairman) Mr H. R. Reed, and Mr. A. A. Peverall of the State tourist resorts committee, Councillor F. J. Barton (president) and Mr A. F. A. Delarue (hon. secretary), of the Marysville Tourist Association, and Mr. Alfred Kelly, representing the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria. Although owing to a heavy thunderstorm, which had occurred shortly after midday, the members of the party had traversed the road in the worst possible circumstances, were deeply impressed with what they had seen of a little known part of the highlands of Victoria.

### **Arduous Travelling.**

The road passes through about 50 miles of magnificent forest country, and commands a panoramic view unsurpassed in the State. If metalled the road would soon become one of the most popular tourist drives in Victoria. At present, however, it must be regarded as only a dry weather journey. This became evident soon after the party had passed the site of an old hotel, about 10 miles from Marysville. As a result of the rain, the journey of seven miles occupied about two and a half hours, the muddy surface having been made slippery by the rain. Each small rise was found exceedingly difficult to negotiate, because the wheels of the motor-cars failed to grip. Every few hundred yards the members of the party were compelled to leave the cars and either push or tow with ropes. So steep and slippery were some of the slopes that even cars fitted with wheel chains climbed only with difficulty. Intermittent showers added to the discomfort of the party. With the aid of stout ropes and stouter hearts, however, the

Warburton road was eventually reached and from there to Wood's Point good progress was made over a comparatively fair road.

### **Romantic Memories**

The road from Marysville to Wood's Point was built about 60 years ago, when those two townships, then but hamlets, were the centre of a rich goldmining area. For many years the solitude through which the party passed yesterday echoed to the crack of coachmen's whips and the shouts of the miners, who had spent their easily earned wealth at the many hotels which once marked the coach stages. Along the road passed hundreds of gold seekers in coaches, on horseback, or on foot. With the decline of the goldmining industry and the consequent migration of the miners and their families to other parts of the State, the road fell into disuse. About 20 years ago it was closed to traffic, leaving the area which it served in the undisputed possession of lyre birds, dingoes, and wombats. With the object of opening the roads for tourists traffic and making Wood's Point more accessible, the Marysville Tourists' Association induced the State tourist resorts committee to give £200 of the £50 000 which it was granted by Parliament in 1922, to meet the cost of repairing the road, which, in parts, had become overgrown with vegetation and almost obliterated. This work having now been completed, it is the intention of the association to make every effort to have the whole of the road metalled. It is believed that if this is done the drive will prove such an attraction for lovers of mountain scenery that the expense, which will admittedly be heavy, will be justified.

### **Victorian Scenery Unsurpassed**

Leaving Marysville yesterday morning the party reached a spot a few yards past where a track branches off to the Cumberland and the Cora Lynn Trails. Here, in the shade of towering forest trees, and to the music of a mountain stream foaming over its rocky bed, the road was officially opened. In performing the ceremony, Mr Everard congratulated the Marysville Tourists' Association on its efforts to have the road made available for tourists, and said that no similar body had done

more to advance the interests of its district. In striving for the opening of a road which should link Wood's Point with Healesville and Melbourne, members of the association were doing a national work. Instead of talking so much about the beauties of the Blue Mountains of New Zealand, and of other countries, Victorians should realise that in their own State was some of the finest scenery in the world. He had been told by a man who had recently toured America that there was nothing in that country to compare with the Black's Spur and the country around Marysville. The party had just travelled over three miles of a road which the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works was supposed to keep in order but which was a disgrace to the board. Repeated requests that had been made to the board to keep the road in repair had been disregarded. If no action were taken shortly the matter would have to be mentioned in Parliament.

#### **Road Declared Open**

A ribbon stretched across was severed by Miss E. Bolam the vice president of the Marysville Association. A bottle of champagne was broken by Mrs F. J. Barton, and the road was declared open. Mr. Edgar said that nowhere else in the world had he seen such wonderful expansive and comprehensive views as those in the Marysville district. Every pound that was spent on the road would assist the development of the State. Mr J. M. Reed said that the tourist committee was anxious to help the people of Marysville as much as possible because they did so much to help themselves. He believed that the road had immense possibilities for tourists, and that it would become one of the popular drives of the State.