

Dave Mickle then found an advertisement for *Dandenong House*. From there we again worked back until we found Fenton's first advertisement which read:

South Bourke and Mornington Journal
 April 13, 1911
 Cook wanted, must be good, for 'Dandenong House'.
 State Wages.
 J.F Andrews, Keysborough, Dandenong.

This suggested to me that Fenton was still living at Keysborough at that time and must have been building *Dandenong House* in 1910

The next article we found was in the Council Notices on May 11th, 1911, stating:

'There was a notice from J.F. Andrews, Keysborough, asking that the footpaths and roadway opposite 'Dandenong House', Foster street, be repaired, and a first class lamp was necessary at the entrance of the Railway Station, where a number of accidents were reported. This matter was referred to Centre Riding Court (councillors) and Engineer.'

I wonder what temporary walkway Fenton provided for his prospective customers. He could not have tolerated muddy shoes in his new boarding house. Everything had to be the best for Grandfather; he imported furniture and decorative items from overseas. Apparently there was a fair bit of show at the boarding house as well. Everything had to be scrubbed and polished. His second wife, Marie, was an exceptionally good cook and did a lot of the cooking and seeing to. She was known far and wide for her delicious tomato soup that she regularly served and her recipe was later handed to me by a long time friend of the family.

Marie and my mother and the other sisters did most of the physical work such as cleaning, organising and running the household. But poor Marie was pregnant at the time and her first son Alan was born in 1911 so it must have been a hectic year for the Andrews family. Mum told me a few stories about the boarders but I can't remember any in particular. I think in those days people were more reserved and sedate and I think Mum would have been too busy to bother with gossip. There was one boarder who, if she saw the young sisters talking to Leo Mathews, the butcher's handsome young son, would report it to Fenton and they probably got growled at for unbecoming behaviour. Another

story was when the cook did penance by nibbling dry bread under her bed. She sounded like a mouse and caused a riot of laughter from the younger children. However, too much enjoyment and laughter would quickly bring their father's stern response.

Maple, the eldest daughter looked after the little ground floor coffee shop on the external corner of the building. I remember it as tiny, about four tables with ten or twelve chairs. You could buy coffee, cakes, sandwiches and ice cream there. I believe the formal dining room was something to see with its wood carving and decorative cornices, resplendent in its table settings and embellishments, as was the whole of the boarding house. I remember my mother saying the bedroom drapes and furnishings were very nice and that they had the best of linen throughout, products of importation through American catalogues. Fenton mixed frequently with wealthy city gentlemen and was aware of fashion and quality. *Dandenong House* became a grand reception centre catering for weddings and large functions of the day.

Another few paragraphs discovered about *Dandenong House*:

The palatial Edifice erected at the entrance to the Dandenong Railway Station, by Mr. Fenton Andrews, is now getting into working order, several boarders already being in residence. The furnishings and fittings are being rapidly completed, and the place is sure to command attention. The rooms have been planned with regard to convenience and comfort, and the arrangement of smoking and Ladies rooms, as well as general conveniences, leaves nothing to be desired. The dimensions of the building have been given in a former issue (which I could not find) but the Dining Room, 40' x 30' deserves a special word. Mr. F Andrews intends to build a garage for Motor Cars, and is very sanguine of the success of his venture.

You must remember here, that there were no building permits or building inspectors in country towns at that time so buildings were built as you liked regardless of safety or convenience to staff. The kitchen was underneath the house in a basement and there was a very steep ramp leading from the Kitchen up to the Dining Room. Carrying food up and down all day was a hazardous transaction as well as back breaking. Care in handling the trays and dishes must have been rather trying because my Grandfather was so particular and everything had to be spotless, but of course his family never complained.