

June 1968

Newsletter No. 12

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, 12th June, 1968

8 p.m. at the Auditorium, Old Orchard Shopping Centre, cnr. Williams & Springfield Rds., Blackburn North.

Guest Speaker: Mr. P. Jackson

Subject: 'HISTORICAL RESEARCH'

ABOUT MEMBERS: Our membership is now 36, including two student members. However, we still need more, so what about bringing in some friends?

Treasurer: Mr. I. Barker, 14 Tortice Avenue, Nunawading. 3131

Last year's members will recall our 'youngest member'. We now have pleasure in welcoming a new 'youngest member' - Michael, son to Mr. and Mrs Barker.

Our liason officer with the City Council, Cr. Geo. Cox, has recently been in Brisbane on a Council assignment, attending a Social Welfare Convention.

OUR THANKS to Mr. E. Roberts of Nunawading for his donation of "A Centenary History of Mt. Pleasant Church, Forest Hill."

We are also grateful to Mr. L. Blackburn of Yarra Glen for his gift of the local history, written for the centenary of the Yarra Glen School. Mr Blackburn is fifth in line from the Blackburn who planned Melbourne's first water supply and whose son was the surveyor after whom our suburb was named. We hope to have Mr. Blackburn as a guest speaker next year.

We are indebted to Mr. A.A. Hooke of Blackburn for naming the dates of some of the sub-divisional sale notices in our Archives, and for his gift of some more recent brochures. While these are interesting now because of the comparisons to be made the older papers, they will be specially valuable in later years when they have themselves become History.

SWAN HILL CONVENTION 28-29th September, 1968.

Total fee for meals, excursions, etc. for weekend: \$10.

This is in addition to accomodation which participants arrange for themselves. ALL NAMES to Secretary please.

WILLIAMSTOWN TOUR Sunday 23rd June.

While it was decided at last meeting that members and families would travel by private cars, since then, enquiries have established that a local bus is available at a reasonable cost (seating 37.) arrangements now as follows: The bus will leave the Civic Centre, Nunawading, where cars can be parked, at 10 a.m. Fares: 80 cents each, 40 cents for under-fourteens. To be paid on departure.

Names, if not already given, MUST be handed to Secretary at the meeting or telephoned. Those planning to go by private car also give names. Members take their own lunches - these to be eaten at the Mechanics' Institute where Williamstown H.S. will provide hot drinks.

REMEMBER Numbers must be finalized by June meeting night to facilitate the host society's arrangements. Sec. Tel. 878-4630

MAY MEETING: ARCHIVES

Mr. Patterson showed some of the local historic documents which are in our possession, and also the film of the widening of Burwood Road.

(More about these documents in future newsletters)

Mrs. Leach read extracts from a Mitcham newspaper of 1938 in which Mr. Nathan Spielvogel, H.T. of Mitcham S.S. from 1914-8, recalled this time on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the school. She also had some interesting photographs, including one of the train derailment at Mitcham in the early 1940's; for some time, passengers had to transfer to a steam train to go further east.

Mrs. Maggetter described the reminiscences of a Mitcham resident who also donated some books and a wooden stool from an early pioneer's home. Another gift was the land-title and subdivisonal notice of Scott's Garden Estate. This was seven acres, approximately south of the O'Shannessy water-main as far as the bend in Rooks Road, and eastwards from the present hostel site. The sale took place in 1915, and the notice stated that this land was

When the land had been bought originally, the coach-fare to Melbourne had been 10/-, now the workman's weekly ticket cost only 2/6.

Other items in our archives include photographs; the official photographer, Mr. Gray, is adding to these all the time. There is also a considerable collection of brick and tile samples in our possession.

Mrs. Boxshall presented an interesting account of a recent Brighton H.S. meeting, when members brought along their treasures.

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CASTLEMAINE FIELD DAY 19th May, 1966

A cold wet day failed to dampen the enthusiasm of more than 150 people from various historical societies, including 9 from Nunawading, who attended the Field Day run by Castlemaine Historical Society.

The town's population today is approximately 7,500; a census of the Castlemaine Goldfields District on 14th March, 1857 revealed a population of 31,331. It is known that at Goldfield, in the height of the gold-rush, 8-10,000 Chinese were working.

Various buildings seen by the visitors included the Theatre Royal, now with a new facade, but still the original building. Lola Montez performed here in the town's heyday, when the Royal had a bar at one end and a stage at the other.

The old market, classified as "A" by the National Trust, is to be restored and developed as a future goldfields museum. Used as a market until a few months ago, this building has the first laminated wooden beams in Australia and its original statue still above the entrance. In 1857, the Duke of Edinburgh was wine and dined at a banquet here.

The Court House, erected about 1875 was opened for inspection opposite it is Becks Imperial Hotel, with fine cast-iron grilles around the verandas.

Lunch was taken at the Botanic Gardens where many magnificent old trees were seen, including one planted during his 1867 visit by the Duke Baron von Mueller, assisted with this project by supplying trees and seeds from Melbourne, including a number of cork oaks, upon which it was hoped to found an industry to complement the extensive vineyards present in those days.

A visit was also made to the Powder Magazine, the stone residence of the officer-in-charge of this and the former residence of the Governor of the Gaol.

The H.S. has been presented with a magnificent bluestone vault left after demolition of one of the early banks.

Back to the Art Gallery and Museum for an inspection of these, after which Society members served afternoon tea. Mr. Don Grant, Past President of the Society, gave an address on the early history of the town, and the original benefactors of the Art Gallery, Sir John Higgins and his sister, Katherine.

Our congratulations to Castlemaine Historical Society for an excellent field day, informative and well-run.

K. Farr.

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OTHER NEWS FROM THE MAY RHSV NEWSLETTER

Wangaratta. In mid-April, about 1000 people inspected Eldorado's historical gold-dredge, and a profit of about \$500 was made, which will be used to convert Eldorado's old State School building into a museum for items of local historical interest.

Berriwillock H.S. Following the society's co-operation with ex-students of Kangra West S.S. to remove the old school to the Swan Hill Folk Museum and there restore it, considerable interest has been aroused in other schools that once existed in the area. As a contribution to the Education Department's centenary publication, Berriwillock H.S. is devoting this year's program to writing the histories of eight schools that served the area, plus the present Berriwillock School. The histories will be presented to meetings of the society, before handing on to the District Historical Committee of the Education Department.

The trustees of the disused church at Franklinford have decided to create out of the property a memorial centre to the life and work of Edward Stone Parker, an early protector of the aborigines. Daylesford H.S. have been assisting with this project for some time.

On Easter Monday, Miss Marcia Ferrier (Director RHSV) unveiled for the Goldfields Historical Society the anvil on which the Welcome Stranger Nugget was broken up.

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More about this nugget This story is from a Ment Albert resident: Her grandfather owned the general store at Wedderburn in the late 1860's. Two prospectors had already had a large amount of credit from him, with no luck in their searching. Finally, he told them that this must be the last time he could

The two men went off and shortly afterwards found the tremendous nugget later called the Welcome Stranger. They carried it into the store, dumped it on the counter and told the storekeeper to take what was owing to him. Accordingly he chipped off and weighed gold to this amount.

Extract from Brough Smyth's 'GOLDFIELDS OF VICTORIA' (Published 1869)

'Large nugget found near Dunolly.

On 5th February 1849, there was unearthed by John Deason and Richard Oates a nugget called the 'Welcome Stranger'..... a number of specimens and pieces of gold were detached from it before it got into the hands of the bank manager!.....

However, the value even then at the Bank of England was £ 9,534 - a huge amount in those days.

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MORE PLACES TO VISIT

Among other things, the awakening interest in History today means the restoration and preservation of agricultural machinery of the past, and collections of these are now appearing in various country towns.

Displays at Swan Hill and Donald have been mentioned recently.

In Jeparit, a museum of farm machinery of pioneer days was begun some time ago.. and the committee of this Southern-Mallee-Wimmera **Agricultural Machinery Museum is** still working on collection and renovation of equipment.

At Warracknabeal, a similar project is to be called the North-Western Agricultural Museum, and sixteen other Wimmera centres support this regional effort. After an intensive search, one of H.V. McKays's original harvesters was found and this, with other machines, was on display during Warracknabeal's centenary celebrations in 1967.

The Historical Society has been collecting furnishing, utensils and linen for their planned 'pioneer way of life' project.

Nhill is also preparing a museum; Natimuk has a red-gum 'Mallee Roller', which, pulled by a bullock team, cleared much of the local scrub.

Echuca has a huge red-gum log on display; in its heyday this river-port supplied red-gum blocks for paving the streets of Melbourne.

The Institute of Applied Science, Melbourne, has many of these old agricultural machines in its keeping, but what a delight there is in store for these country centres which are working on their own collections.

D. Mattingley,
(Editor)

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Horsham.

On the completion of the Mibus Memorial Cultural Centre, the Regional Library will be moving into this building. The Historical Society has applied to the City Council for the use of the Mechanics' Institute for a historical museum, when the Library vacates this.

Some historic items have already gone to Hamilton and Swan Hill because Horsham had no room for them. All other societies wish Horsham H.S. luck with their application for much-needed space.

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Street Names

Have you ever wondered why some streets in the south of Mitcham, west of Mitcham Road, have Indian names? Mrs Faggetter states that the late Mr. Walker, first director of the Tesselated Tile Company, once visited India. He was fascinated by this country, and, after his return, he gave Indian names to the streets.