

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 9th July, 1969. 8 p.m. in the Coffee Room, Civic Centre, Whitehorse Road, Nunawading.

Dr J. M. POWELL, Lecturer in GEOGRAPHY at MONASH UNIVERSITY will speak on: 'THE STATE AND THE PIONEER FARMER IN THE WESTERN DISTRICT'

Dr Powell will discuss the documents available for this type of study and present some of the results of his own investigations.

JUNE MEETING

Members participated in a most successful WORK NIGHT and it is hoped to repeat this in the future.

HISTORY OF LOCAL SCHOOLS

Our Society has requested a copy of the history now being compiled for each of the thirty State Schools in the City of Nunawading, and also of the independent schools. These will be kept in the Society's Archives.

Acknowledgment is hereby made to the following schools for their histories:

Forest Hill S.S.	Eastmont S.S.	Laburnum S.S.
Mitcham S.S.	Blackburn East S.S.	Blackburn North S.S.
Blackburn Lake S.S.	Mitcham H.S.	

City of Melbourne Tour Notes — now available from Secretary Price 10 cents

PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN BLACKBURN — From the Council of Public Education Register.

Several attempts have been made to establish private schools in Blackburn.

Miss Mildred Jeffrey made the first attempt in September, 1908, when she registered a school of nine day-pupils at 'Chislehurst', Central Road. It was described as a primary and sub-primary school, teaching English, Arithmetic, Geography, French, Drawing, Needlework and History. Apparently it was not successful, as in April, 1909, Miss Jeffrey wrote from Nowa Nowa to notify its closing.

Blackburn College, whose proprietor was Marian Beetson, began in February, 1914. It met in Mrs Barnett's Hall, and began with an enrolment of 26. Subjects taught, up to Merit standard,

PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN BLACKBURN (contd)

were Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Algebra, French, Drawing, Singing and Drill. Another Marian Beetson, apparently a daughter or niece, was a teacher, and Estelle Beetson visited to teach some subjects. Miss Corr joined the staff in 1915. This school closed early in 1919, when an attempted sale fell through. After some months, Mrs Jessie Penfold took over the remnants that were left.

Mrs Penfold described her school as meeting in Sword's Hall, (late Murray's), Blackburn Road, and named it Blackburn Preparatory School. She had only nine day-pupils when she opened on 30th September, 1920, teaching Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. Her daughter helped by supervision at recess times.

Edith Kate Downing, formerly of Lyndhurst College, St Kilda, took over the school in September, 1923 and re-named it Lyndhurst Girls' High and Boys' Preparatory School. Although she had only eight pupils she planned to teach English, French, Arithmetic, Nature Study, Geography, Geometry, History and Algebra to Intermediate standard. Miss P. Woolsworth was teaching and Miss Gardiner visited for Physical Culture. It was still held in the same hall until March the following year, when it closed for lack of pupils.

Winnington Grammar School of Ringwood conducted a branch in Sword's Hall from April 1926 until May 1927. It was only a kindergarten, with nine pupils, who were taught by Grace Lyingstone. The proprietors, Misses Irene and Ethel Hall, visited it for some classes. It was closed when the hall was no longer available.

'Newark' School seems to have been the most successful. It was opened by Miss Alice Osborn in the Masonic Hall, Clarke Street, in 1930, as a primary and kindergarten, with twenty pupils. Subjects taught were Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar, Geography, History, Nature Study and Drawing, from Kindergarten to Junior Public Examination.

A report of 1937 said the school was in two divisions. Miss Hooke taught thirteen pupils under six years of age at the Presbyterian Church and nineteen older ones were at the Masonic Hall.

Miss Vera Sheeran, who had been on the staff of Ivanhoe Grammar, took over in February, 1938, when attendance was reported to be small. Mrs Mabel Bodger, formerly of Allendale School, Horsham, took over in September 1939, and the school closed at the end of 1940.

However Miss Osborne later continued the kindergarten class, which finally closed in December, 1948.

Note: Barnett's, Sword's, Murray's Hall mentioned, is the one described in the May Newsletter. For a short time, this was also a billiard saloon.

One of the owners built the two-storey shop and dwelling still on the corner of South Parade and Blackburn Road. This was at first two connected shops, a newsagency and a sweet shop.

The building in South Parade now housing the Blue Door Library and the men's wear store was originally a large billiard saloon and dwelling.

Extracts from VICTORIA AND ITS RESOURCES Edited by E. Jerome Dyer, 1893.

A great impetus was given to the planting of fruit and grape vines a few years ago by the offer of a bonus by the Government of the day . . . when a sum of £ 233,000 was granted by Parliament to promote fruit-growing and other industries . . . Another sum was made available for persons who, between 20th May 1890 and 30th June 1895, sow or plant and cultivate vegetables to be used for the manufacture of fibre, paper, oils, syrup, sugar, tannin, drugs, dyes, scents, insecticides and such other things as may at any time be approved by the Governor-in-Council . . . Very little has been undertaken in these branches of culture.

Scent and Herb Farming

The Government itself, however, established a scent farm of 20 acres in extent at Dunolly a few years ago . . .

The largest and almost the only other scent farm in the Colony is situated at Mitcham in the Shire of Nunawading, about 20 miles east of Melbourne. It was established about 25 years ago by Mr W. H. Slater, (a native of Mitcham, Near London) who carried on the business of growing, distilling and otherwise preparing herbs and flowers for commercial purposes and who has found an excellent market for all he could produce. The extent of his herb garden is only 5 acres, but he is an orchardist as well.

Mr Slater has found the business highly profitable, as for instance in the case of mint, he has obtained 4 tons per acre, yielding 6 lbs of oil to the ton or 24 lbs per acre; value 35/- per pound, equal to £41 from an acre of land; while lavender has yielded oil to the value of £117 per acre—results which clearly show the suitability of the soil and climate for their culture.

More extracts from the 'Ringwood Borough News.'

12/12/1930 Rain causes damage. Subway flooded.

The heavy continuous rains during last weekend caused considerable damage and inconvenience throughout the district. Many low-lying parts were flooded, and metalled surfaces of roads washed away. A good deal of injury to fruit and other crops has resulted.

Railway passengers inconvenienced

Owing to the inability of the water tables in Railway Road to carry the volume of water, the overflow crossed the footpath and rushed down the subway at Blackburn railway station on Saturday. The subway was soon filled to the roof, and caused communication between the 'Up' and 'Down' platforms to be cut off. Passengers were considerably inconvenienced, those desirous of reaching the platform opposite being compelled to make the journey via the crossing at Blackburn Road. The excess water from the subway emptied into South Parade, covering the footpath and causing many cases of wet feet among adventurous passengers. It was fully two hours before the subway was cleared sufficiently to permit of traffic being resumed.

BLACKBURN CHORAL SOCIETY 26/12/1930

The Blackburn Choral Society, which gave such excellent renditions of the items programmed for them at their social last Monday evening, has only recently been formed, and under the able leadership of Mr P. C. Josephs, is making rapid strides towards competency. Membership has now reached the half-century mark, and there is the keen enthusiasm of the true music-lover amongst the members for the work they are doing. The Society is at present rehearsing an oratorio which is nearly completed, and it is hoped that in the near future the Blackburn Choral Society will rank among the foremost of Melbourne's Choral Societies.

HEALTHY RINGWOOD 9/1/1931

Remarkable Statistics.

The vital statistics for the year just ended give remarkable evidence as to the suitability of Ringwood as a residential suburb from the important standpoint of health.

For the whole year, the deaths numbered only 14, representing a percentage of less than five for every 1000 inhabitants; apart from the demise of two infants, only three persons did not reach the allotted span of 70 years, while the aggregate age of the six eldest totals 504 years,

HEALTHY RINGWOOD 9/1/1931 (contd)

or an average of 84 years at the time of death.

The number of births registered for the same period totalled 81, 44 males and 37 females.

BLACKBURN RAILWAY PROPERTY 9/1/1931

Improvements Needed.

The completion of the pipe drain on the south side of Blackburn railway station opens up great possibilities for the beautification of this portion of the town. The situation lends itself to the formation of gardens that would convey a good first impression to the visitor by train. Doubtless the Commissioners would welcome any offer to improve what at present is rather an eyesore. It is to be hoped that some responsible body will take this matter up, and investigate its possibilities.

BOX HILL POLICE COURT 30/1/1931

Thirty miles an Hour.

On a charge of having driven a loaded truck at a speed of 30 miles per hour, on Dec. 29th on the Whitehorse Road, Ringwood, William Tortice appeared before Mr. Wade on Thursday, Jan. 29th. Constable Godfrey, of the police patrol, said: "I asked him why he was travelling so fast, and he said he did not think he was doing more than 30 miles per hour." The truck was loaded with bags of flour.

Defendant, who pleaded guilty, was fined £2.

D. Mattingley

Editor

Hon. Sec.

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