



NEWSLETTER MAY - JUNE 1985

The Hall of
Anglican Church, Edward St
MEETINGS: Christ Church, Mitcham, ~~School Hall~~ 7.45 p.m.
Wednesday, 8th ~~June~~ ^{May}. Teddy and Alan Poole will tell us about
their Heidelberg Museum visit.
Wednesday, 12th June. Members' contributions - anecdotes,
reminiscences, personal treasures, etc.

Harold Bakes has again contributed to our Museum. He has prepared and hung on the west wall a fine Honor Board, and so far this displays two plaques, for our Honorary Architect, John Armstrong, and our former custodian, the late Frank Bawden. Thank you again, Harold.

Members will notice with pleasure the splendid board prepared for us by Rotarian Ian Armstrong (of Drake & Co. Pty. Ltd.) labelling the agricultural section of our Museum. We are very grateful for this contribution. Ian's family is of long standing in this district and when he looked round the Museum he commented that he came face to face with his grandfather! [Council photograph].

The "Museum of the Year" judges visited the Cottage and Museum on Monday, 22nd April. Phyllis Johnson, Teddy Poole and Judith Fry were there to represent the Society; we also gratefully acknowledge visits by Cr. Valda Arrowsmith and a representative of the Westpac Bank who are sponsoring the competition. Your president Joan was only able to spend 15 minutes there but was impressed by the friendliness of the discussion which was taking place in the Museum, and feels that many constructive hints and suggestions will give fresh impetus to the enthusiasm evident among members. It was pleasant also to see Ann Creber, there on behalf of the Cottage.

It is fitting to remember that we have our Council-donated Museum through the initial efforts and enthusiasm of former Councillor Noel Webster. We send Noel best wishes for his health after his recent sojourn in hospital.

Joan and Jan Rocznick did their bit for the 150th celebrations by singing (alto and bass) in the 1,000 voices choir, conducted by Richard Divall in the presence of the Governor of Victoria and Lady Murray, in the Exhibition Building on 31st March. One item in the programme was an edited version of the "Victoria" Cantata composed by French migrant Leon Caron for the opening of the Exhibition Building in 1880. It was a thrilling and memorable experience to see an audience of over 5000 people (sold out) stretching the whole length of the building, and to be supported by the orchestra of the Victorian College of the Arts and the Central Band of the R.A.A.F. But the highlight for the young in spirit would be the two brass naval cannons which were made to "appear" to fire (and the sound was deafening!) during the "1812" Overture. The theatrical effect was magnificent! Patriotic fervour - although Australian - demanded an encore for "Land of Hope and Glory" and the afternoon seemed to be enjoyed by audience, conductor, singers and instrumentalists.

We are sorry that Mrs. Joyce Barton is leaving us because of a clash with another meeting. We hope that perhaps she may be able to return later, but in the meantime, we thank her for past help -keeping the scrap-book (a successor is needed!), working bees, supper, in short, Joyce was an ever-ready-to-help member.

Many historical anecdotes will be re-told in the next few months, because of the 150th State Birthday celebrations. In the recent newsletter 'ROADS', publication of the Road Construction Authority, Peter Alsop presented some interesting facts:

The First Road, 1801. In 1801, Governor King sent Acting-Lieutenant John Murray in the 'Lady Nelson' to Bass Strait to continue survey work begun earlier by James Grant. The ship reached Western Port and anchored in Elizabeth Cove on 12th November. The party soon visited Churchill Island, finding the wheat and vegetables planted by Grant flourishing. Soon after, a spring was found 'that proved equal to the watering line of battleships. Pleased with this circumstance, took a gang of hands on shore and made a good road.' Thus began, in this simple manner, the era of European road-building in Victoria.

The First Jetty. December 1803 - January 1804. The expedition, under Lieutenant-Colonel David Collins, settled at Sullivan Bay, Sorrento, but soon received permission from Governor King to move to Van Diemen's Land. This decision initiated what can be regarded as the first bridge erected in Victoria, as Collins put a gang of convicts to erect a jetty 380 feet long which was to be used to load their ship, the 'Ocean'. A jetty is essentially a bridge, and jetties have approach roads to them, and, for many years until the coming of railways, Victoria's roads would be focussed on the principal points of arrival and departure for people and goods: jetties, wharves and quays on harbors and rivers.

Far away from here, a centenary has recently been celebrated. 'THE LADY' - (A JOURNAL FOR GENTLEWOMEN) began publication February 1885 in London. Unlike many other magazines, this one has survived and the Editor states proudly that it has remained a private company in the hands of the same family throughout its life.

Its founder was Thomas Gibson Bowles - a journalist, a master mariner, a M.P. in 1892, and a correspondent in Paris during its siege in 1870. He founded a magazine 'VANITY FAIR' in 1868, its chief currency being political satire and commentary. 'The Lady' was in enormous contrast to the former magazine, but Bowles had perceived a distinct gap in the market for a magazine for intelligent women - and a century later, happily, it is still with us. Perhaps our [great]-great-grandmothers were early subscribers!

Harold Bakes [and doubtless other members too] recalls flower farms on the right-hand side of the railway line, between the present-day Heatherdale railway station and Ringwood in 1933, and as many as one hundred boxes of flowers for dispatch at Ringwood station.

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