

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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AUGUST MEETING

Our Annual Schools Night will be on 14 August in the Willis Room, Nunawading City Library, at the Civic Centre. Our speaker will be Dr. Watersun, of Monash University and his subject will be "Rural Industry and Regional Development." This will be a good opportunity for obtaining more serious historical information than usual and promises to open up for us some new aspects of Australian development. The meeting place will, we expect, be an improvement on our usual venue.

SEPTEMBER MEETING

On our programme the September meeting was to be a Work Night. We have now found that many members, including most office-bearers, will be absent. In the circumstances it has been decided to cancel the meeting, and the next meeting will be the Annual Meeting in October.

DECEMBER MEETING

We have usually suspended meetings during December and January, but find this is too long a break, so there will be an additional meeting on December 11. It is intended to make it a more social occasion than usual and two members have undertaken to tell their family histories. This may give others an idea of how to prepare a history of their families.

ABORIGINAL ART

Mr. Alan West, of the National Museum, showed pictures of aboriginal drawings in caves of Victoria and Central Australia, which he has been studying. He is particularly interested in the Pintjinjarra tribe and has spent some time living with them to investigate the meanings of their paintings.

MAYOR'S RECEPTION

We have to thank the Mayor (Cr. N. Webster) for the reception at our July meeting. Members of neighbouring societies were also invited and about 80 were present. After a social interval, films were shown in the Willis Room, including one of Nunawading, made by the local Film Society, and one of Swedish conservation projects. There was then an opportunity for general discussion of what various societies are doing and projects they have in hand, including museums, research and local histories. After the formal discussion talks continued over supper and developed a greater knowledge of people with similar interests in neighbouring districts, and how they work.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The annual meeting and election of officers will be October 9th. A nomination form is enclosed for all members, as it may be difficult to lodge them before October.

EXCURSION TO STEIGLITZ AND BACCHUS MARSH

Our excursion to Steiglitz and Bacchus Marsh on June 8 was a most interesting day. Twenty members were present in spite of a cold day and occasional showers. Steiglitz, in the Geelong area, was a surprise for those who had never visited it. Gold was discovered in the area in 1855, leading to sinking of deep shafts to follow quartz leads. Three or four scattered houses, a substantial but unused Court House, a barn-like structure which used to be a general store, both classified or noted by the National Trust, memorial cairn, mine shafts, mullock heaps, two cemeteries and various other scattered relics cover the site of what used to be a town of 2,000 people. Streets can still be traced through vacant land and an excellent picnic ground was a good place for lunch. After that we went to Bacchus Marsh and met Mr. Payne, secretary of Bacchus Marsh Historical Society, who explained why the town is where it is instead of the planned sites of Maddingley or Darley, then showed us over Holy Trinity Church, Captain Bacchus' grave, the restored Manor House, a tree from which all surveys were made, a chicory kiln, police lock-ups dating from gold rush days, the line of an early irrigation channel and many other interesting places in the town.

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

We have had a request from Mrs. Ellen McCulloch, 6 Bullen Ave., Mitcham, for any information about design motifs in stained glass windows, using Australian animals. Early designs from Europe used European scenes, including birds, flowers and butterflies.

It seems that about 1920 Brooks Robinson began using Australian motifs Mrs. McCulloch would be interested in any photographs, sketches or tracings, but even a brief description or reference would be helpful.

EXHIBITION OF TILES

We have had an exhibition of ornamental tiles and other ceramic goods in the Nunawading Library. The main exhibit was a collection of tiles produced by the Australian Tesselated Tile Company of Mitcham, which were rescued when the company's buildings were demolished a few years ago. They contrasted with some English tiles from a demolished building in the city. Other items were locally produced glaze pots, samples of glazes and documents referring to the companies concerned.

T.R.B. Morton's House for Sale

No. 2 Gordon Crescent, which was built by T.R.B. Morton about 1889, when there were only four houses in the area, was advertised for sale by auction on Saturday, 3 August. Its site was chosen as the best in the district because Morton was secretary of the Freehold Investment and Banking Company, one of the most active Land Boom speculators. The company had bought about thirty small farms in the district and designed the rising ground south of Blackburn railway station as a high-class residential area. Mr. Morton was elected to the Nunawading Shire Council in 1888 and remained a member until his death in 1923, except for a period of two years 1897-9, when he was trying to overcome financial difficulties after the bursting of the Boom. He was president of the Council four times. Owing to the time needed for preparing this Newsletter it has been impossible to include the result of the auction. *Passed in at \$69,000*

VICTORIA THROUGH THE LENS

An exhibition of photographs of Victoria during the early years, and early photographic equipment, is opening at the La Trobe Library on Wednesday, July 31, and will continue until September 29. Most of the pictures have come from the Library's Historical Collection and the equipment from the Science Museum.

SELECTION OF MITCHAM LAND

In 1870, when land selection began in earnest, only a few pieces of land were still unoccupied in Nunawading. One was the triangular piece of land, about 12 acres in area, between Mitcham and East Doncaster roads, Mitcham. Charles Smith, a bootmaker, applied for it and was granted an occupation licence on 12/12/1871. On fulfilling the conditions of fencing the land, living on or near it, cultivating

at least one-tenth, making improvements to the value of \$1. an acre and paying 2/- an acre a year rent within three years, he received a lease for seven years, after which he would own the freehold. His cultivation was mainly planting fruit trees, but within eighteen months of receiving the lease he sold out to John Cook.

WILLIAM WITT, M.L.A.

The first President of the Shire of Nunawading was for a time a member of the Legislative Assembly. He was elected as member for the Murray electorate on 9 April 1874 and served only one term, losing his seat at the next election on 1877.

HOW WRONG CAN YOU BE?

It was about 1879, just as the railway line from Melbourne to Sale was being completed, that two selectors vigorously disputed occupancy of land on the railway in the parish of Maryvale. While they were arguing a surveyor marked out a new town in such a way that one would be prevented from taking the land he wanted. Appeals and arguments followed until one enlisted the support of the local member of Parliament, who wrote on his behalf to the Minister for Lands. The member said that the survey of the new town had been made only to prevent his client from taking up land, adding, "If you knew the country as I know it you would smile at the thought that there will ever be a town at Maryvale." The site surveyed is now occupied by the town of Morwell.

PIONEERS' GRAVES

Here is another selection of graves of pioneers in Box Hill Cemetery.

NameDate of Burial

Matters John Matters came from Box Hill in 1868 to select 25 acres in White Horse road, just east of Springvale road.

Mary	2½years	Nunawading	Independent	1/10/77
Margaret				14/4/87
William	66years	Vermont	C. of E.	9/10/1902.

K. A. PATTERSEN
Editor.