

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

October-November 1975

Price 5 cents

Number 57

Registered at the G.P.O. for transmission by post as a periodical

Category B.

Pres. Mrs. J. Webster	Sec. Mr. C. Tilson	Tres. Mr. I. Barker,
674 Canterbury Rd.	8 Pearcedale Gve.	14 Tortice Ave.,
VERMONT. 3133.	NUNAWADING. 3131.	NUNAWADING. 3131.

CONVICTS IN AUSTRALIA

Schools supported the August Schools Night strongly. Prof. A.G.L. Shaw spoke of convicts in Australia. He said the British government's aim was to get rid of them. The hulks on which they were housed were becoming crowded and America, after it became independent, refused to accept them, even as cheap labour. The decision to send them to Australia was one of expediency. They were not meant to secure the territory against other claimants because the military force with them was too small for defence and lacked weapons for major fighting. Apparently they were not expected even to raise food for trading or even to feed themselves because they had no equipment for farming and agreements with the East India Company forbade trading with other countries. There was so little interest in the transportees that they were sent from England without records. Some in fact had completed their sentences before arriving in Australia. They could not be released until confirmation was received from England. On the other hand, conditions on the transports, although crowded, were as good as they could be. They were under naval command and the Navy was very efficient. Health was generally good and death rates were much lower than on many emigrant ships.

SHOW AND TELL

Members had a chance at our September meeting to see the photographs we hold and discuss changes which have occurred in the district. Several people brought interesting books and other items for inspection and discussion.

ANNUAL MEETING

Mr. Alan West, of the National Museum, will be the speaker at the October meeting, Wednesday, 8th October, at Nunawading Methodist Church.

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He will describe his experiences with aboriginals in Central Australia.

There will be annual election of officers. All positions are vacant and nominations are invited for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer and 6 committee members. Nomination forms are enclosed.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER MEETINGS

The speaker at the November 12th meeting is expected to be either Mrs. P. Faggetter or Mrs. J. Field. The speaker at the December meeting will be announced later.

VISIT TO MUSEUM

Arrangements are being made by Mr. Tilson for us to visit the Museum on Saturday, October 25th. As it will be a conducted tour we expect it will include parts which are not normally open to the public. Members who intend to go should let Mr. Tilson know and meet in the Foyer, Swanston Street, at 1.45 p.m.

VISIT TO YARRA JUNCTION

Upper Yarra Historical Society is well on the way to developing a first-class local museum in the old railway station. A number of our members were impressed by the range of exhibits and the way they were presented. Some of their methods may be useful for us. The station itself is the only one left between Lilydale and Warburton. Since the line was dismantled all the others have been either demolished or destroyed by bushfires. It was the original Lilydale station, built in 1882 when the railway was built, and shifted to Yarra Junction when the line was extended in 1902. There are the usual exhibits of household goods and clothes, an excellent presentation of a Victorian drawing-room, photographs of houses and scenes in the district, panels of illustrations of the timber industry and associated tramways, as well as a representation of a mining shaft. They have a number of farming implements, most of which need restoration, and several engines and tractors, including one which pulled timber trains from Powelltown. We were shown over the museum and served with tea by members of the society. The museum is open on Sunday and holiday afternoons. They have also invited us to an evening on Saturday, November 22nd, when a film of the timber industry in their district will be shown.

TRAM TOUR OF MELBOURNE

Some of our members accompanied the Box Hill society on a tram tour of Melbourne. The tour visited several parts of Melbourne, where

local residents pointed out interesting features.

INDEX OF RATE PAYERS

Mrs. Morgan of the Box Hill society has prepared an index of all rate-payers of the Shire of Nunawading during its early years. This gives a complete record of all property owners. She has offered us the opportunity of making a copy of it. All interested in helping should meet at Box Hill library at 11 a.m. on Saturday, October 11th, to see the records they hold, then go to Mrs. Morgan's home, 18 Jan Street, Box Hill. Bring lunch and be prepared to write out index cards.

SMOKE-HOUSE AT SCHWERKOLT COTTAGE

It is hoped that a re-constructed smoke-house at Schwerkolt Cottage will be ready for the 10th anniversary of the opening of the cottage. There was one on the site and the new building, made of rough stone, similar to the cottage, has been designed from a photograph of the original.

PROPOSED NEW SUBSCRIPTION

A proposal will be placed before the annual meeting that the annual subscription be raised to \$2.50. for individuals and \$3.50. for families. The present subscription was fixed ten years ago, and the reason for the increase is rising costs, particularly in printing and posting the Newsletter.

CHRISTMAS AND GREETING CARDS

Knox Historical Society has prepared Christmas and Greeting Cards for sale at 15 cents each. There are 30 different designs, including such items of historical interest as the Cardman Cottage, Olinda. They can be obtained from Mr. G. Hansen, P.O. Box 230, Ferntree Gully. Phone: 758-6985. The society will make a profit of 5 cents on each card.

PETTIGROVES LEAVE BLACKBURN

Pettigrove Breeding Farms Pty. Ltd., Fulton Road, Blackburn, is moving to Somerville. This ends an era of poultry farming in South Blackburn, which had been set aside as a poultry-keeping area by the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham. At one time there were more than a dozen farms, two large hatcheries raising thousands of birds and some smaller ones. Pettigroves was established there in 1941 and Mr. Pettigrove recalled that Sutherlands had a large farm on one side of him and on the other was another which ceased operations five or six years ago. Further along the road were Caves and in Holland Road one farm of 2,000 to 3,000 birds had a gun club at its rear. Opposite was another which combined pigs and

poultry. In Blackburn Road Barnes had a large hatchery and Reid and May smaller ones. Several poultry-keepers between Blackburn and Middleborough Roads included Fulton, Reid, May and Bird. In other parts of Blackburn Sjorgrens had a farm off Wellington Avenue, which they sold to Musgroves, who have now moved to Wonga Park. Gedyes had a large farm and hatchery in Whitehorse Road. When they sold the property to Cottees they were for some time in Orchard Grove. There were others along Surrey Road. Johnstons had a large hatchery there until about 1950 and Taylor had a smaller one until more recent times. Poultry keeping and hatching is no longer practicable. Land is becoming too expensive and vandalism is a problem. Mr. Pettigrove said that after a week-end he is likely to find \$400 or \$500 of damage done to the property.

POTTERIES AND BRICK WORKS

Brick, tile and pottery works began in earnest in Nunawading after the railway was built in 1882. Development was very rapid and in 1889 there were five works, employing 267 men. Four of the works were driven by steam engines and one by horse-power. The engines had a total of 332 horse-power. Twelve machines were used for preparing clay and 18 to make bricks and pottery. Thirty million, out of a total for all Victoria of 276 million, were manufactured that year. The buildings had cost \$25,950 and machinery \$38,700.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS, 1889

Although State Schools were established in 1873 a few private schools were able to start and survived. In the Shire of Nunawading in 1889 Miss Brown had 2 boys and 4 girls in Blackburn Road, Miss Conway 6 boys and 19 girls at Air Hill, Mitcham. Some idea of the population of other parts of the shire can be gained from attendances at Mrs. James' school, Surrey Hills, 7 boys and 37 girls; Mrs. Gresham's, Windsor Cres. Surrey Hills, 4 boys, 6 girls and Mrs. Newton's, Ashted Road, Box Hill, 1 boy, 12 girls. Mitcham Catholic School had 20 boys and 24 girls and Surrey Hills 24 boys, 23 girls.

K. A. PATTERSON
Editor.