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NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
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NEWSLETTER - MARCH - MAY 1989

We held our February meeting at the Archival Annexe, sharing a picnic tea first. Among other subjects, arrangements were discussed for the Blackwood trip.

NEXT MEETING: Saturday, 15th April, at the Annexe, 1.30 p.m.
The Secretary, Judy Fry will talk on Herbs of Nunawading's early settlers.

JUNE MEETING: Wednesday, 14th at the Annexe. 7.45 p.m. Mrs. Barbara Rogalski will tell us of the History of the early settlers of Flinders Ranges.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Next meeting at the Annexe on Saturday 8th April, 1.30 p.m.

WORKING BEE: in May, date to be announced at the next meeting.

URGENT: Some member has borrowed the First Minute Book of the Society and has not returned it - would everyone please search his or her special 'safe' out-of harm's way shelves? This is a very worrying problem.

HERITAGE WEEK 16th-23rd April 1989. The National Trust has planned a number of events in conjunction with St. Kilda Council, with the Premier, Mr. John Cain performing the opening ceremony on Sunday, 16th April at noon in the Palais Theatre. St.Kilda Historical Society will conduct free bus tours and walks of historic interest (Information 531-6702 - Nancy Newell). The RHSV will this year have its exhibition entitled 'BY THE SEASIDE', concentrating on the history of seaside resorts in Victoria, also there are organised tours and lectures (Phone 670-1219).

VISIT TO BLACKWOOD - Sunday 26th February 1989. In delightful weather, 32 members and Friends travelled to Blackwood, 100 kms. N.E. of Melbourne in the Wombat Range. After morning tea at the home of Jess Barnes, a Blackwood H.S. member and of Nunawading H.S. committee, everyone visited a very small house (Doll's House it is referred to), then on to the cemetery, where a local member spoke about some of the early settlers whose graves were there. Then a short visit to the old stables on the former police property, where some of the Society's treasures are stored. After lunch (Cobb & Co. Tea Rooms) the beautiful Garden of St. Erth (4 hectares) - history recounted by Mr. T. Garnett, part owner - site of store and Post Office of Simmons Reef and old Wesleyan Church also here. Afternoon tea in Jess's garden. Many thanks to Jess Barnes and the Blackwood Society for the day's outing, also to Nick Fry, driver.

[Beryl Gray]

COMMITTEE OF EASTERN HISTORICAL SOCIETIES TOUR 1988.

On the weekend of 6th-7th November last year, ten members of our Society participated in the annual tour, this time to Camperdown. In a wonderful guided tour, the group saw a very large number of places of historical interest - several Western District family homes, all meticulously cared for; St. Paul's Church of England (built 1864); a Youth Hostel once a Grammar School; a restaurant once a steam laundry; slides of historic Camperdown, with local members reminiscing of early days. On the return journey, the geological formation of the 'floating islands', and afternoon tea at a Geelong Motel with a theatre restaurant, a recital being presented from a show 'A Tribute to Peter Dawson'. A most enjoyable weekend for all.

[Andrew Hillier]

AUSTRALIA DAY - 26th January 1989.

At the Annual Family Day of Nunawading City Council, many visitors commented very favorably on our display of nightwear and underwear, arranged by Bette Jones. It has been very pleasing to be able to show these articles at this time and also at the November display, when they are of necessity packed away most of the time.

Our congratulations and best wishes to loyal member Harold Bakes for his wonderful work in raising money for the Alzheimers Disease Wing at Strathdon, as reported in the Nunawading Gazette on 15th March.

BLACKBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS - 29th - 30th April 1989.

There will be special activities on both days; fun activities, interesting displays, music by Nunawading City Band, a parade of fashion through the ages, and the burying of a time capsule in the grounds. Highlights on the Sunday will be a thanksgiving service at the Church of Christ, Blackburn, conducted by Rev. Ted. Keating, and a BYO picnic and basket lunch in the schoolgrounds. Our society will be mounting a display.

Special thanks are due to the members who always carry the burden of setting up and later dismantling these displays at so many local events.

Other local school celebrations - Blackburn Lake Primary, 25 years old and Springview Primary, also 25. Congratulations to them all.

Remember the GREAT AUSTRALIAN ART EXHIBITION 1788 - 1988, open till 30th April at the National Gallery of Victoria.

Another Bi-Centennial Exhibition, at the Museum of Victoria ; - GOLD OF THE PHAROHS, from 22nd March.

The Annual INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS DAY will be held on 18th May, but the whole week will see displays from many museums at the Information Centre, 318 Little Bourke Street.

Melbourne's newest park is on the Maribyrnong River, below Highpoint City, the PIPEMAKERS' PARK - its unique history includes a boiling-down works in the 1840's, a meat cannery 1860-1880, and in 1911 the concrete pipe works of the Hume Company. This project, developed as a park by the Board of Works will have the Living Museum of the West at its site. A major focus will be the industrial history of the park, with visitors having the opportunity to follow a Meat Trail and a Pipe Trail. Perhaps a possible future tour for us?

THE SOUTH AUSTRALIAN MARITIME MUSEUM at PortAdelaide, recently declared a joint winner of the Westpac Museum of the Year National Awards 1988, is one of the most rewarding places to visit.

It is a working record of South Australian maritime history. You may climb the 1869 lighthouse, see traditional boat-building, explore the replica ketch 'ACTIVE 11' in the Bond Store, with light and sound effects; there you see fishing, a penny arcade, the Gulf Trip, the beach and its past amusements, computers and passenger lists and a section on migrant voyages.

Most of us have seen sketches in history books of the steerage accommodation on board ship in early days of travel to Australia. The reality strikes the onlooker when he is viewing the crowded bunks, re-created exactly to scale - it seems impossible to us today that people could survive months in those conditions, but of course they did. Not far away are reproductions of cabins in later times, and oh! the contrast!

EARLY SUBDIVISIONS. [Researched by the late Keith Patterson who was our archivist at the time].

Several of the early buyers of land in Nunawading were optimistic enough to sub-divide their allotments into smaller townships and try to sell small building blocks as early as 1859 and 1861. In some cases the sub-divisions have left their mark on the present street plans, although none seems to have been a success and few, if any, building blocks were sold. Norwich, for instance, can be located by the peculiar right-angle turns of Morack Road, Vermont. It was originally intended to be a ring road around a small village, which was to be surrounded by vineyards.

William Morton sub-divided an area between Whitehorse and Central Roads long before the railway was built, and named the proposed town "Studley".

Morton also had another village site, which he did not name, along Creek Road, Mitcham. The long road, without cross-streets, reflected the town-planning concept that the area should consist of small farms, extending from one road in front to another road in the rear. "New Brunswick", also on land bought by Morton, was on the west side of Heatherdale Road. Brunswick Road led in its direction. Another un-named village was planned for the north-east angle of the intersection of Mitcham and Canterbury Roads. This area was originally bought by Nelson Polak.

On Whitehorse Road, in the north-west angle of the intersection with Springvale Road, was the planned village of "Springfield". The sub-division, made by Patrick Riley, is much the same as the present streets between Nunawading State School and Whitehorse Road. It was intended that it should be partly surrounded by small farms on both sides of Springfield Road, stretching down to Junction Road, and extending along Whitehorse Road.

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.

A QUARRY IN BORONIA ROAD:

What do people near the junction of Morack and Boronia Roads think of their land?

When land in that area was selected during the late 1860's an allotment of about 30 acres was left. The Nunawading District Roads Board asked in March 1869 that land be reserved for a quarry. A note was made on the Lands Department's File, "Mr. Bage's assistant laid out four 80-acre blocks under 42nd section, leaving an allotment of 30 acres in the middle, which is not likely to be taken up by anyone on account of its stony nature. He was informed it would not be any use to anyone unless it was taken up for quarrying purposes. I suggest the Board have it pointed out to them as the one that can be temporarily set aside for quarrying purposes." Two or three years later this allotment was selected by John Brown, the first head teacher of Vermont State School, who tried to combine teaching and farming. After three years he had to make a declaration of what he had done with it. He said he had cultivated only one or two acres because the soil was very light and needed trenching and manuring before anything could be done with it.

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.

<u>Editor:</u>	Mrs. Doris Mattingley	Tel. 878-4630
<u>Prepared for Posting by</u>	Mesdames Beryl Gray and Val Riches	
<u>President:</u>	Mr. Bill Gray	Tel. 874-2731
<u>Secretary:</u>	Mrs. Judith Fry	Tel. 874-4220
<u>Treasurer:</u>	Mrs. Shirley Barker	Tel. 878-3987