

NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Registered by Australia Post - Publication No. VBH 1468,
(Society Incorporated - December 1986)



NEWSLETTER - JUNE - JULY 1989

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, 9th AUGUST 1989 at the Archival Annexe.
Meeting 7.45 p.m.
SPEAKER: 8.30 p.m. Mr. John Frost will address us on
the subject of 'TRAMWAYS'

On 15th April, Judith Fry gave us an interesting afternoon on her great hobby 'HERBS'. She entitled her talk 'Herbs of Nunawading's early settlers'.

The hardy pioneer women brought in their luggage cuttings and seeds because of their uses for either culinary, medicinal, beauty or for dyeing cloths. The medicinal herbs treated headaches, colds, fever or childhood complaints, some plants provided flaxlike threads to weave into cloth which was then dyed yellow with herbs, such as the tansy flower

In 1877, Dr. L.L. Smith's Model Farm was put up for sale, boasting an orchard of 2000 fruit trees, paddocks sown in English grass, gooseberries, beet, peas, oats, marigolds and a new food, comfrey, in full leaf, yielding 180 tons to the acre.

When Schwerkolt arrived in the 1860's his farm consisted of fruit trees, vines, dairying, poultry and beehives. In 1882 he won a prize for the best colonial wine in an Exhibition in Amsterdam. Viruses killed off his vines a few years later and these were replaced by an orchard.

Slater. In 1865 also William Slater arrived and set up his home called 'Mitcham Groves' between Surrey and Middleborough Roads. Having worked at Potter & Moores, Surrey, England for 16½ years he set up the first Herb Farm in the Colony. He distilled eucalyptus oil, the O'Possum brand and he exported this with herbs he grew to Europe and Nth. America.

On 14th June, Barbara Rogalski told us something of the pioneers in the Flinders Ranges region where some MAA members recently travelled and painted.

The tragedy for the early settlers in this part of S.A. was that the green-grassed areas of the 'good' years were fleeting and years of drought invariably followed.

Barbara told us of many interesting places - Seven Hills with its monastery and wine-making; Kanyaka, once a thriving community in itself and at one time, a nearby town with a luxury two-storey hotel, today a fascinating ruin; the extensive Merna Mora station which still survives; Beltana where crews on the old 'Ghan' changed over, and various other towns one can still visit.

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE:

\$8 for Family / \$5 for Single [inclusive of Newsletter]
\$ 2 Newsletter only.

Please forward subscriptions to the Secretary, M/s J. Fry,
10A Alexander Street, Mitcham, 3132.

NOTE: ANNUAL MEETING - Wednesday, 11th October.

A newsletter will be printed before this date.

We plan to have another OPEN DAY on 29th October at the Museum, in conjunction with Mitcham Arts Association.

Also we hope to have Mr. Pearce, a grandson of Mr. Slater of the Herb Farm, to speak to us at an afternoon meeting on 9th December.

The planned trip to Geelong to visit the WOOL MUSEUM is tentatively arranged for 24th February next year.

WANTED URGENTLY BY Joan Rocznick, any memorabilia concerning St. John's R.C. Church, Mitcham during the era 1890 to 1926 for a proposed history. Joan will be delighted to hear from anyone able to help.

Another anniversary - Wattle Park Primary School recently celebrated its 75th birthday with a splendid historical display and happy 'get-together' for many people.

Special thanks are due to various people for recent donations; Nunawading City Council for a CANDON Photocopier - a very valuable asset for us now and in the future.

Mr. Os Green who has helped us in many ways over the years has presented to our Museum some beautiful fifty-year old trousseau underwear, formerly belonging to his late wife, Bobbie. Her wedding dress was cut up to make a wedding dress for someone else in those difficult 'coupon' days.

Mr. Green has recently published another book on more of our Australian history - 'THE SNOWY' - Its Gattlemen, Rivermen and Engineers. (Acacia Press, Blackburn).

Miss Meda Chester of Heathmont has donated photo-copies of some title deeds in early Mitcham (bounded by Victoria Avenue, Whitehorse Road and Mitcham Road) and Miss Evelyn Crean delivered these at our last meeting.

Various documents with information about the McGlone family have been passed on to our archives by Mrs. Waugh, a descendant of William John McGlone. He was at one time a policeman in Mitcham, and he also owned the Harvest Home Hotel, just west of the present St. John's R.C. Church. Later he donated this land for the church building.

Harold Bakes and Family have donated a leather-bound book in which to inscribe the names of members who have contributed valuable service to our Society.

Recently, Andrew Hillier was able to obtain the old BRITANNIA STREET road signs for the Museum.

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PETTIGROVES LEAVE BLACKBURN: (Newsletter Oct-Nov. 1975)

"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."

Petrol prices today are a topic frequently discussed by all car drivers. It is not generally known that for three years from 1932, an oil tanker was anchored off Hastings on Western Port Bay by the Pacific Oil Company as a floating petroleum storehouse. Oil in drums was ferried ashore and tankers replenished the bulk supply.

PORT ALBERT is rightly regarded as the most important town in Gippsland history - it was the supply port for the pioneers for many years, before the advent of roads and railways made communication easier.

Many cattle were shipped to N.Z. during the Maori Wars in order to feed the British troops there, also a similar trade was established in shipping fat cattle and sheep to Hobart.

Some of the original buildings still stand, proudly bearing Bi-centennial plaques. The former Bank of Victoria, a fine building, houses the Port Albert Maritime Museum. The hotel, first licensee in 1844, with a number of later modifications is believed to be the oldest hotel still operating in Victoria. The original store is still in use as a store for the locals and holiday makers.

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