



Series 2. No. 1.

NEWSLETTER - MARCH - MAY 1990

Our ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 11th October 1989 resulted in the election of the following office-bearers:

- PRESIDENT: Mr. Bill Gray
- VICE-PRESIDENT: Mrs. Joan Rocznik
- SECRETARY: Mrs. Judith Fry
- ASSISTANT SECRETARY: Mrs. Beryl Gray
- TREASURER: Mrs. Shirley Barker
- COMMITTEE: Mrs. Joy Kenny / Mrs. Maureen Mason / Mrs. Jess Barnes  
Mrs. Bette Jones / Miss Chris Otterbach

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SUNDAY 29th October was our OPEN DAY with Mitcham Arts Association. Our display of textiles, photographs and archival material interested many visitors, also the paintings by M.A.A. Special thanks to all who assisted in preparation and minding the exhibits. Our stall raised \$178.32.

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Our day-time meeting on 9th December was very successful, with members enjoying an informal lunch, followed by a business meeting.

We were fortunate to have as speaker Mr. Ron <sup>earle</sup> Pierce, a grandson of Mr. Slater. Foundation member, the late Mrs. Pat Faggetter was the first person to research the background of medicinal herb-growing by Mr. Slater, formerly of Potter & Moore in Surrey, England, here in the eighteen-sixties. The land, near Koonung Creek was originally thickly timbered.

As no-one in the family carried on the business, the land was later cleared for orchards, these disappearing after the Second World War when housing needs led to subdivision. Mr. Pierce grew up in this world and presented us with an apple picker's canvas bag (to hold a bushel), a soft fruit container which would hang from a branch and account books of the Blackburn Coolstore.

Victoria was the first state in Australia to have cool storage of fruit and was the first to export pears overseas in 1910. The Blackburn coolstore opened in 1918, the first engineer being the former operator of the Box Hill-Doncaster tram.

In 1930 local growers formed a new company to protect their interests on overseas markets, this later being called the Blue Moon Fruit Co-op. Ltd. Pears and apples were the main exports, with citrus fruit later, and plums and cherries for a short time.

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NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday 11th April at the Archival Annexe. 7.45 p.m.  
Program: Video - "Tunstall to Nunawading" - project of City  
Of Nunawading Bi-centennial Community Committee.

JUNE MEETING: Saturday, 16 June 1990 at 1.30 p.m. Mr. Ken Ewins  
will speak on custom houses along the Murray.

JULY - no meeting

EASTERN REGIONAL MEETING to be held on 7th April at Eltham.  
Several members plan to attend with Andrew Hillier, our representative.

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On 14th February, we enjoyed meeting together again and having tea outside the Museum, followed by a general meeting.

Our Secretary, Judith Fry is in demand at other Historical Societies to speak on her favorite subject, HERBS. Best wishes, Judith.

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On Sunday, 25th February, 29 members and Friends of the Society travelled to Geelong to visit the National Wool Museum situated in the old Denny Lascelles & Co. Woolstore, built in the 1870's when even then it was considered an architectural masterpiece.

One can trace the growth of the wool industry from early days to the present time; wool is taken from the sheep's back until it ends up as an item of manufacture. This is done by use of models, films and various types of equipment used in the wool industry.

All enjoyed their visit and our thanks go to Nick Fry for obtaining and driving the bus.

Beryl Gray

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The Nunawading City Council Family Day was again a success on Friday 26th January, with crowds of enthusiastic people attending to join in the fun and frolics. Our Society had its usual display of documents and photographs in the Arts Centre, and we received many enquiries.

In 1928 and 1929, a Grand Carnival took place in Morton Park, on both the Saturday and Monday of the holiday weekend. As re-printed in our Newsletter No. 31, the BLACKBURN & MITCHAM REPORTER of 3rd February 1928 reported:

"MONSTER CARNIVAL - Attendance of 6000 on Monday (2500 on Saturday) when the park was gay with brightly dressed women and be-flannelled men (any of these about now?), picturesque stalls and festoons of flags." Our own day did not lack anything, but it is interesting to study some of the programs of more than sixty years ago. Incidentally, admission charge then was 1/- adult, children under 14, 6d., the proceeds being in aid of Morton Park improvements and the Scout Hall, and programs also had a charge.

Publicity: PALAIS DE DANSE - opens at 7.30 p.m. in the Blackburn Hall.

Dance to the strains of melodious music, with a confetti battle to complete the evening.

Details of the carnival:

Merry-go-round, Lemon & Orange Tree, Dips, Ocean Wave, Slide for Life.

Tickets 3d. - Try your luck at Saucerette, Diggers' Bagatelle, Checkers, Money-La, Ring-um, Aunt Sally.

Apart from the old and familiar flat races, etc. what about these?

1928. NOVELTY MOTOR EVENT - BLINDFOLDED DRIVING COMPETITION (first prize was a motor tube) - a flag in the centre of the oval - each competitor's car to be drawn up, engine running, at end of oval facing the flag - each competitor is blind-folded - taking his own time, he will drive off in the direction of the flag, but before half-way, he must start to turn around. The object is, after turning a complete circle, to drive in the direction of the flag, stopping as near to it as possible. A steward, who will be an expert driver, will sit beside the competitor in order to take charge of the car should he be about to run into any danger.

1929. NOVELTY HORSE EVENT - MUSICAL CHAIRS, lady or gentleman riders, on horses or ponies.

NOVELTY MOTOR EVENT - MUSICAL CHAIRS, lady or gentleman drivers - lady passenger to run to the chair. SPECIAL Musical Chairs - here gentleman had to run to chairs.



NOVELTY MOTOR EVENT - LIQUID RACE. Four lines are drawn - 15 yards, 50 yards and 15 yards apart. Competitor stands at first line, his car at the second line, with engine not running - at fourth line is a table on which is a small bottle of dry ginger ale and an opener. On signal, competitor runs to car, drives to third line, stopping so that front wheels are on one side of line and back wheels on the other. He runs to table, opens bottle, drinks all contents, returns to car, drives in reverse gear to second line, over which his car must stop as before and runs to starting point. Car must be stationary before driver leaves it and door closed.

NOVELTY MOTOR EVENT - SLOW RACE. For 6 cylinder cars, (separate events provided for 4 cylinder cars) - a steward to travel in each car to see conditions are complied with - at second line car must stop in top gear - no clutch or self-starter to be touched now - car taking the longest time wins - (prize a one-gallon tin Firezone oil).

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HERITAGE WEEK in VICTORIA: 22 - 29 April 1990.

RHSV Exhibition will be on the theme: 'INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE', this to be followed by a related exhibition produced by NILLIMBUK Historical Society.

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In Feb - April Newsletter 1988, reference was made to the AUCTION OF TUNSTALL TOWN ESTATE on 20th March, 1926, and the relevant comments . . . . .so some day in the future will have to be built a Tunstall Town Hall, and what better position could it have than the south-west corner of Whitehorse Road and Springvale Road'.

After a previous service station recently this became a CIRCLE K Convenience Store/Service Station for SHELL.

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The WATTS DAIRY formerly in Railway Road, Blackburn.

In 1927 Mr. Watts, Senior, after owning a farm and dairy at Moorabbin, bought a dairy at 20 Albert Street, Blackburn. The business had two horse-drawn carts, all milk of course in bulk, being measured out into customers' containers.

Mr. Watts later bought a house in Railway Road and planned additions for another dairy. Health regulations did not apply then past Box Hill, and it was a few years later before pasteurised milk was introduced here, being supplied first by a Surrey Hills dairy. The Watts dairy continued to give marvellous service to the local people, finally selling out to Ireland's in 1953.

Ireland's Milk Pty. Ltd. in 1972 published a calendar with a brief family history for its centenary. Simon Ireland from Somerset, England came to Australia in 1858. He lived at 'Bellett's Bull Paddock' (now Bellett Street, Camberwell) and he walked to Brighton for three years in his first job at Cheeseman's Nursery. He then worked on Burrige's Orchard on the corner of Burke and Toorak Roads, Hawthorn. In 1872 permission was given to keep cows, and from then on, this dairy business prospered, run also by a hard-working family.

In 1972 there were 56 vehicles operating from dairies at Hawthorn, Blackburn, Glen Waverley, Syndal, Mt. Waverley and Wheeler's Hill. Sale of the property took place in the nineteen-eighties.

Among the papers donated by Mr. Watts are some tenders and quotes for his father for work at the new dairy. Some examples are :

1933 For painting house, kitchen, sleepout, outside woodwork, new iron roof on dairy: £22.

Electrical contractor: 9 lighting points, lamps and shades, wiring three-phase motor - £13-14-0. Installation to consist of nothing else but British material.

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THE ANTONIO FAMILY OF ANTONIO PARK (original research by Phyllis Johnson)

In the late eighteen hundreds, Thomas Antonio from Sandridge (Port Melbourne) purchased a bush block in Whitehorse Road, Mitcham, (where the school is now situated), with the intention of building a week-end shack. The adjoining land, stretching to Deep Creek road, was purchased at a later date. The family would travel by train to spend weekends camping there, while clearing some sections of it and eventually building a shack. This was later destroyed in a bush fire, then re-built and again burnt in the 1962 fires.

A weather-board family home (a typical one of the time, with iron roof, well with pump, fowl pens, fruit trees) was built probably in the early nineteen-hundreds. Water had to be carried from the creek for the garden, but there were some flowers to send to a Melbourne florist. In early years, clearing took place on the present school site (this later donated for the school), and horses grazed there.

The sole family member left in 1963 was the son Ernest, his house fortunately being saved from the bushfires. He lived there until his death in 1963, the land being bequeathed to Nunawading City Council to be retained as public open space.

Ernest Antonio recalled Whitehorse Road as dusty track leading to the 'Coach and Horses' in Ringwood. When road-making works were in progress in Whitehorse Road, Chinese workers camped outside the Antonio property - they were employed by the quarry contractors to break up stones to provide metal for the roads.

He also remembered the steam trains coming slowly up the hill, near the present Heatherdale station, and how it was possible to jump off near Deep Creek Road and so save a long walk home from Mitcham station.

Our present Antonio Park in Springtime has the best display of wildflowers in Nunawading.

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From 'VICROADS', a journal of VIC ROADS, Victoria's State Road Authority.

In July 1989, a new \$7 million highway crossing over the Genoa River flood-plain was opened to the public. The tiny hamlet of Genoa, just 12 kms. inside the State border, celebrated in style when an old bullock dray, pulled by eight beasts and driven by the chief teamster of the East Gippsland Bullock Drivers League, carried local school children across the new bridge to mark the occasion.

121 years ago - The world's first traffic signals were installed near the House of Commons in London. The red and green gas lights were set in a revolving lantern on top of a 7m. high pillar. They operated at night until 1872 when they were pulled down. It was not until the mid-1920's that traffic lights made a re-appearance in London.

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