



NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER - NOVEMBER 1992

On Saturday 8th August, Mrs. Marjorie Morgan delighted us with her account of the wreck of the 'CATARAQUI' in 1845, researched with Andrew Lemon for the book: 'Poor Souls, They Perished'. As with other sailing ships of that era, inadequate navigational knowledge meant that numerous wrecks occurred in Bass Strait before the establishment of lighthouses in this area. Out of four hundred passengers and crew, only nine survived on King Island, which, not surprisingly, they assumed to be the mainland of Victoria. Fortunately they were later rescued.

Mrs. Morgan's research took her to England where she visited some of the original 'home towns' of those on board.

We all hope with the authors that a reprint of this valuable segment of Australia's early history will be available again in the near future.

NOTE: NEXT MEETING: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: 1.30 p.m.
Saturday 10th OCTOBER, 1992, at the Archival Annexe.

ELECTION OF OFFICE-BEARERS (See Nomination form) and
ANNUAL REPORTS

With the occasion again of an Annual Meeting, it seems appropriate to mention the names of some former City Councillors who in the past have helped and encouraged our society in its more difficult times:

George Cox/ Graham Walsh/ Noel Webster/ Gavan Oakley/ David Gawler/
Charles McCall/ Ken Barelli/ Valda Arrowsmith.

Sincere thanks to all.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS: Saturday, December 12th, noon.
Please bring a plate of food to share.

Wednesday, 10th February, 1993 - 6.30 p.m.

RECENT ACQUISITIONS FOR OUR MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES

Recently Mrs. Iona Mannix of Buronga, N.S.W. has presented us with an auction post/ of the MASCOT Estate in Whitehorse Road, Blackburn, this development taking place in 1924. Her father, Samuel Graham Davidson, had owned this land, naming one of the streets 'Iona' after his daughter. This area still has King Street, Ceylon Street was originally Simla.

There were fifty charming villa sites, and over one hundred residences had already been built in Blackburn in the previous year. There were three houses on the estate, and also several bungalows opposite. Terms were: £5 deposit, £1 per month per lot. Interest 6%.

The proposed new station between Blackburn and Tunstall (?) would be practically adjoining this land.

Mrs. Irma Steele of Blackburn has presented to our museum a delightful jewellery box, in blue pottery, made in 1938 at the Mont Albert Brick and Tile Works.

Thanks to these generous people.

CENTENARIES

In 1968, the ROYAL ARCADE in Melbourne celebrated its centenary. The original site in 1837 sold for £40 and in 1958 the tenants bought the entire arcade for £541,000.

At one time, a Fountain and an aquarium were situated at the Collins Street end, and later there were tree-ferns in tubs, with seats nearby. From 1900 to 1915, Turkish Baths had premises there also. The clock, still operating today, based on London's Guildhall, was put in place in 1892; the Lion and the Unicorn are on the clock, while Father Time is watching.

Earlier this year, the BLOCK ARCADE also celebrated its centenary. Its original purchase price was £18. The design for the Arcade was similar to that of the Milano Galleria Vittorio Arcade in Italy, though on a smaller scale. The mosaic floor tiles were purchased overseas, costing £700 for the entire 480 yards. This was one of the first premises to utilise electricity on the inside, as prior to this, electricity was used primarily for street lighting. However, only the Arcade itself was lit in this way, the rest of the building having gas lights, being changed to electricity in 1895.

The site for an extension of the Arcade having been purchased, work began on this, and it became another shopping arcade in 1893.

BLOCK COURT was the original home of the Athenaeum Club. In 1929 this site was also converted into a shopping arcade, and at the same time, three bridges were erected to connect the three buildings.

'THE BLOCK' is mentioned in early records as being the fashionable place to parade and indulge in luxury shopping.

AROUND OTHER SOCIETIES [All inc. of course]

Knox Historical Society. The Knox Shire Council has completed work on the gardens of Ambleside Park, and the Society is engaged on establishing a herb garden. Not surprisingly, this venue is a popular one for weddings.

Doncaster-Templestowe. Schramm's Cottage has been re-painted and extra garden planted. Trinity Lutheran Church, which granted the land for the Cottage conducted a ceremony in the grounds to commemorate the centenary of the church. Celebration of Silver Anniversary of the Society to be held.

Monbulk H.S. A small but very busy group focussing on the collection of photographs and memoirs. The first of a planned group of three books has been published, 'Monbulk in Photographs'. The Early Settlers, 1890-1920'. Also 'A Century of Monbulk Jam' has been published.

Waverley H.S. With the assistance of apprentices from the Holmesglen TAFE College the restoration of Old St. Stephen's Church at Mt. Waverley has been completed.

Ringwood Historical Research Group. This society is to have a new storage room and a work room built for the members, also the services of an archivist when necessary.

Box Hill City H.S. The City Council has appointed a Community Historian part-time to assist in dealing with the many requests for information on local historical matters.

Croydon H.S. The Senior Citizens' Club has been taken on local history tours, all very popular. A hand-made tapestry is being made by Mr. Peake, with some photos for reference being supplied, the insignia of the City to be included also.

Shire of Eltham H.S. A museum is planned and a Shire Cultural Heritage Study is also keeping members busy. This society recently celebrated its twenty-Fifth anniversary.

Warrandyte H.S. This group has much in its archives of the past goldfields era. The newsletter announces the centenary of the Kangaroo Ground Fire Brigade, with a recently published book.

Several years ago Christine Gray suggested hiring a coach for 2 weeks to follow the River Murray - from source to mouth. Knowing how well Christine organizes our November weekends, there was instant positive response.

In May 1992 we finally joined with 24 members from other Eastern Historical Societies to learn about, and enjoy this Great River.

John our capable and humorous driver had his patience tried with our requests, mainly to keep the river in view where possible - not an easy task to follow a waterway for 2,560 kms.

From a shallow stream at Geehi we were soon to realize the diverse ways the river serves so many communities. As the River Murray has been flowing through the land for 40,000 years the early inhabitants used it for their many requirements. Modern lifestyles in the last 150 years have utilised the river for irrigation, industry, livestock, household and recreational pursuits.

We appreciated the knowledge Christine and other members shared, and were able to gain a finer understanding of the bird life and varieties of trees which rely so much on a "clean" river.

As with all good holidays time went too quickly, soon the River Murray was flowing into Lake Alexandrina. The fun and companionship during those 12 days will remain as special memories, and no doubt when we meet again there will be photographs and anecdotes to share. Thank you all.

Betty Muckleston

REMINDER: Subscriptions are due and payable to the Treasurer, Mrs. I. Barker, 14 Tortice St., Nunawading, 3131. Family \$8, Single \$5, Newsletter only \$2.

NOMINATION FORM

NOMINATION For

PROPOSER:

SECONDER:

NOMINEE'S SIGNATURE

One of our foundation members, the late Mrs. Hilda Boxshall, in 1962 wrote some of her recollections about Mitcham; these recalled from her childhood here from about 1913.

'Looking Back Fifty Years'.

Mitcham had a very small shopping centre, although I was told that the suburb had been quite a large place with good shops back in the late eighteen-hundreds. People talked about the time 'before the boom bust broke' and before a lot of houses had been shifted away. Where the reservoir stands, I believe there had been a large terrace of two-storey houses. Certainly by 1914 there was evidence of many houses having been moved, because the whole plan was dotted with the domes of underground tanks - many of these still remain.

In the centre of the suburb there was a grocery, hay and corn store where Mirama Court is today, the corner opposite was vacant land, then came a very old shop owned by Mr. Miles, boot repairer, whose wife sold sweets, soft drinks and ice-cream (made by herself, the season being from Show Day to March), also stationery and school requisites.

Next was a tiny drapery and dressmaking shop, then a large two-storey brick building with a grocer's shop, a newsagency, then a hay and corn store, and a bakery, where Mr. Barelli began his business.

Patrick McDonnell had the Reserve Hotel on the south-eastern corner of Whitehorse Road and Mitcham Road - a low rambling building with lots of doors opening to the veranda in front. From Mitcham Road to Station Street was vacant land where the locals played cricket and it was the spot for travelling circuses and other shows. Then came the 'Hill' kept by Mr. Thomas O'Callaghan, also a long wooden building with doors and windows on Station Street and also on Whitehorse Road.

In Station Street there was a big whitewashed chimney and a horse trough in Whitehorse Road between the hotel and the Red Store, then being built as a grocery. There was a very good small orchard belonging to the hotel. From the Red Store to St. John's Church was vacant land, then the police station, this later at Albert Street, then back to Whitehorse Road. More vacant land, then a ham and beef shop with a small boot repairer business in the front of a house, then the Post Office. Station Street had two small timber shops next to the Station Master's residence, these later being occupied by the Bank of Victoria and Mrs. Galvin's milk round and dairy, with sweets, ice-creams and soft drinks. The owner of these shops lived next door and ran a livery stables with cabs for hire. Mr. Fred Drake had a small brick office used as an estate agent's, on the west side of Station Street.

St. John's Roman Catholic Church was a small wooden building at the eastern corner of Whitehorse Road and Richard Street, and it had a tiny cemetery. The Church of England had a wooden church also, with an unlined vestry on the corner of Whitehorse Road and Edward Street.

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