NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Registered by Australia Post – Publication No. VBH 1468.



NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 1985 - FEBRUARY 1986.

PLEASE NOTE: Next meeting: Wednesday 11th December, 7.45 p.m.
in the COURTYARD ROOM, CIVIC CENTRE, Whitehorse Road, Nunawading.

Would each member bring a small plate of supper and any old Christmas cards or decorations to show to the group (or any other historic object).

First meeting for 1986: Please note the date as there is no other newsletter before this:
WEDNESDAY, 12th February, 1986, 6.30 p.m. at the Museum.

Bring your own picnic tea. After this, we will hold our usual meeting.

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ANNUAL MEETING on 9th October, the following office-bearers were elected:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| President: | Mr. Bill Gray | Tel. 874 2731 |
| Vice-President: | Mrs. Teddy Poole | 878 2880 |
| Secretary: | Mrs. Judith Fry | 874 4220 |
| Asst. Secretary: | Mr. Andrew Hillier | 874 3954 |
| Treasurer: | Mrs. Shirley Barker | 878 3987 |
| Newsletter Editor: | Mrs. Doris Mattingley | 878 4630 |
| Committee: | Mr. Alan Poole, Miss Chris Otterbach, Mrs. Beryl Gray | |

Thanks to all office-bearers of 1985, especially Past President Joan Rocznick for her dedication to the Archives project.

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On 13th November, members were fascinated by the collection of glassware brought along by our Mayor, Cr. W. Coyne, and his detailed descriptions of these and their historical backgrounds. Our thanks to Cr. Coyne. (A detailed account is in our minutes).

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EXCITING NEWS: Mr. Peter McArthur of Eastern Community broadcasters at Ringwood recently invited our society to participate in a broadcast during the first week in December. It is four years since the last similar session. Other historical and community groups in the outer eastern suburbs are also taking part, and broadcasts of all their activities will occur each day during this particular week - sorry we do not know exact times. However, if you can listen to F.M. band 90.5 MHz, you may be fortunate enough to hear all about ourselves!

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AUSTRALIA DAY (Formerly A.N.A. DAY)

Each year on Australia Day, our Nunawading Council organises a special Family Festival for the city's residents at the Civic Centre. The Blackburn and Mitcham Reporter of 3/2/1928 described how the local people enjoyed themselves more than fifty years ago on the same weekend (reprinted from our Newsletter of August-September 1970).

## MONSTER CARNIVAL

'The holiday spirit pervaded Blackburn during the ANA weekend to an extent it has never enjoyed before, when probably one of the largest carnivals Melbourne has ever seen was held in Morton Park. That the carnival would be an outstanding success was a foregone conclusion.... .....Attendance on Saturday was in the region of 2500, but on Monday it had swelled to 6000.....Attractions were many and varied: Scout troups demonstrated signalling and rope spinning; St.Vincent de Paul's Orphange rendered selections, and sideshows included ocean wave, merry-go-round, dips, orange tree, slide for life; also included were Highland dancing, a baby show, children's races, whippet racing, motor gymkhana, tennis tournament and athletic exhibitions. Novelty events included an amusing race between draught horses for the BLACKBURN CUP. The Blackburn Hall became a palais de danse on each evening and was packed with dancers, a confetti battle on Monday night ending the programme in true carnival style.'

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## ROADS AND TRACKS

Dictionary definition of 'ROAD': a track suitable for wheeled traffic.

The 'Nunawading Gazette' of 30/10/85 (its happy 21st birthday edition) announced the completion and official opening of the final section of Springvale Road in Nunawading, this road stretching from Edithvale to Donvale. The August-September edition of 'ROADS, Victoria', the official journal of the Road Construction Authority, announced the anticipated completion of this road in November.

In this publication, Peter Alsop contributed an outline history of Victoria's early roads. Almost immediately after the District of Port Phillip became the Colony of Victoria, gold was discovered, and the subsequent increase in population - from about 77,000 to 253,000 at the end of 1854 - put a great load on roads and bridges, especially those leading to the goldfields. Travellers told horrifying tales of quagmires and of coaches, drays and horsemen plastered over with mud. The streets of Geelong in 1853 were so bad that in the evenings men were employed to carry on their backs ladies going from their hotels to the theatre.

Local news in the 'BLACKBURN & MITCHAM REPORTER' 12/8/1927

TUNSTALL (now Nunawading)

'Walker's Road, at the side of the Tunstall store and Post Office, at present resembles a morass, and during the past fortnight two large motor vehicles have been bogged there. The first one managed to manoeuvre its way out without assistance, but the second on Monday was so imbedded it had to be dug out, and then towed by another wagon. The local Progress Association applied to the local Shire Council for several loads of broken tiles for the road, and offered to supply the labor, but this request was refused, and it seems as if such incidents will be a common occurrence while the wet weather lasts.'

The Roads and Bridges Department, the Central Road Board and the Board of Land and Works were some of the early road and bridge authorities. We remember the Country Roads Board of more recent times, now the R.C.A. This present body states that it 'creates and maintains the principal road system in Victoria within the overall context of the transport needs of the community.'

We may well rejoice that we live today with our many fine 'tracks suitable for wheeled traffic.'

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Editor: Mrs. Doris Mattingley.
Prepared for posting by Beryl Gray and Val Riches

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NEWSLETTER - MARCH - APRIL 1986

Next meeting: Wednesday 12th March, 7.45 p.m.

Christ Church C. of E. Hall, Edward St., Mitcham.

Mr. Wal Ashton, F.B.H.I., F.H.G.A., Life Member Horological Guild of Australia, will speak to us on 'CLOCKS and WATCHES'.

Please note that the speaker will be first on our program and our business meeting will take place afterwards.

Wednesday, 9th April: Program not yet finalised.

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We had a very good attendance at our February meeting, with several new people, at the Museum.

At the City Council's Australia Day Family Festival, many visitors inspected our photographs and commented knowledgably on some, so we felt it was a successful day for us.

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Joan and Jan Roczniok and their daughters came to Australia in 1964, and have been associated with our society since 1965.

Joan and her family extend warm thanks and appreciation for the help and sympathy shown by society members in the form of a beautiful flower arrangement and by the presence of several at the Requiem Mass for Jan. Vale Jan.

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Our Honor Board in the Museum now has a third plaque for our 'craftsman and friend', Harold Bakes. A well-deserved honor.

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HOPPER'S CROSSING - a suburb of Werribee or a township in its own right? Why this name?

In the nineteen twenties, a family named Hopper lived near a level crossing about two miles from Werribee. As numbers of fatal accidents occurred there when cars and trains collided, the highway was eventually diverted, thus avoiding a crossing in this area.

Now, Hopper's crossing has extensive shopping facilities and its own column in the real estate advertisements in the Saturday newspapers.

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From the 'BLACKBURN & MITCHAM REPORTER' of 3/2/1928.

New Water Main. The new water main through Mitcham, Waverley and Notting Hill was completed last month. The work consisted of the laying of 4 miles 18 chains of 46 inch main from the Mitcham Reservoir to provide for increased supply of O'Shannassy water to the extent of 32,000 gallons a day more than could have been delivered from Mitcham Reservoir last summer. The 30 inch branch to Notting Hill Reservoir, consisting of 2 miles 34 chains in length, is also finished and will place the supply to that reservoir in an entirely satisfactory condition.

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More about Victoria's early roads, from the RCA Journal 'ROADS' by Peter Alsop.

The Central Road Board was created by an act of the Victorian Parliament (Royal assent Feb. 1853) for the purpose of making and improving roads in the Colony of Victoria. By 1869, 106 road districts had been formed, with many of these now shires. The Road Act Amendment of 1854, among other laws, formalized the British tradition of driving on the left side of the road and provided a penalty of £5 maximum for those who were convicted of ignoring the convention.

Charles Gavan Duffy was extremely active in the movement for federation and also in the land question. He saw the building of more and better roads as part of the struggle to break up the large holdings of the squatters and to settle the diggers from the gold fields on the land.

From 1856 to 1860, more than 1.4 million pounds were spent on roads and bridges. Melbourne and Geelong had most, with Ballarat, Castlemaine, Wangaratta, Western District and Beechworth all sharing. Alas, Gippsland obtained only some logged roads.

To-day, of the 160,000 km of Victorian public roads, there are RCA declared roads, state highways, freeways, main roads, tourists' roads and forest roads.

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## ANOTHER LINK WITH ENGLISH HISTORY

The 'ROSE HOTEL' at Bunbury, W.A., built in 1865, was nearly a 'temperance' hotel as the first application was refused, because of the two hotels already in the town. A petition to the Governor resulted in a reversal of the earlier decision.

There is beautiful cast-iron lacework on the verandas, and inside, the public rooms are still preserved in decor, furniture and ornaments reflecting the early nineteen-hundreds era.

In the courtyard is a statue of Henry II, one of the Plantagenet Kings of England (1154-89). This same statue once stood with statues of other Kings in alcoves around the main door of the Westminster Houses of Parliament in England. During the 1941 blitz, these were dislodged by bomb blast and were eventually replaced by fibreglass replicas, All the originals were sold to a collector in Canada, except one - Henry II, and the 'ROSE HOTEL' is now its last resting place. Exactly how this happened, no-one seems to know!

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NEWSLETTER - MAY - JUNE 1986

MEETINGS: Christ Church C. of E. Hall, Edward St., Mitcham. 7.45 p.m.

Wednesday, 14th May: Mrs. Christine Fensham, Nunawading City Councillor will speak on her experiences in China.

Wednesday, 11th June: Mr. Len Elliott will speak. He is an antique restorer and conservator, and was formerly curator of a museum in New Zealand.

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## CONFERENCE 1986

Saturday, 19th April was the twentieth anniversary of the formation of the Committee of Eastern Historical Societies, and the second oldest such registered group in Victoria, the first being the Western District Committee, based at Warrnambool.

Nunawading was the host society, and, while attendance was less than anticipated, ten societies were represented and all appeared to find the experience both rewarding and enjoyable. The venue of Nunawading Council's Horticultural Centre was an ideal choice. Visitors were able to enjoy the surroundings from both inside and outside, including the viewing of one of the hothouses.

President, Mr. Bill Gray welcomed those present and then Miss Gray presided over the meeting. On incorporation - a much-discussed topic today - it was reported that some societies have completed this step, while others are in the process of so doing. The RHSV had suggested an 'umbrella' type policy, but this has yet to be discussed further.

Because of information on the present brochure of Eastern Historical places becoming outdated, suggestions were sought as to the best solution for this. To re-issue an updated version would be very expensive; perhaps a body such as the RACV would undertake some publicity; or perhaps all societies could contribute towards some regular advertisement in the 'Age' Weekender (or similar paper) - but much investigation will be needed first.

On the constant requests from schools for INSTANT information, a suggestion for a reference brochure was made, participants perhaps to include Eastern Regional Societies, Education Department and local schools. This will need further discussion, however, we all hope that some feasible solution may be worked out.

The visiting delegates presented their reports from their societies, and Miss Gray gave a reminder of the Maryborough excursion 24-26 October.

After a delicious lunch, the visitors came to see the Schwerkolt Cottage complex and of course, our Museum. The fine weather meant that the afternoon tea could be served out of doors. We were delighted to have with us again Mrs. Nancy Leach and Miss Kitty McGaw and Mr. Harold Bakes. Later Andrew Hillier led a group of walkers to Yarran Dheran.

Many thanks to all those members who assisted in catering for the meals during the day.

If 'Meeting Place' is the meaning of 'Nunawading', the day's events were a happy contribution.

(Thanks to Andrew Hillier for this report - he has detailed notes on the meeting if any members wish to study these).

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SPEED - A Problem now and also in former years.

One problem for all councils today is the excessive speed of many vehicles in residential streets. Roundabouts and raised pavement slow points have been installed in some places in Nunawading in an attempt to counteract this.

More than fifty years ago, there was also trouble in regard to speed - as it was defined then.

In the 'Ringwood Borough News' of 30/1/1931, the Box Hill Police Court news was :

Thirty miles an hour.

On a charge of having driven a loaded truck at a speed of 30 miles per hour, on Dec. 29th on the Whitehorse Road, Ringwood, William Tortice appeared before Mr. Wade on Thursday, January 29th. Constable Godfrey of the Police Patrol, said: "I asked him why he was travelling so fast," and he said 'he did not think he was doing more than 30 miles per hour.' The truck was loaded with bags of flour.

Defendant, who pleaded guilty, was find £2.

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In the 'Blackburn & Mitcham Reporter' of 3/2/1928: Motor Cycle Nuisance.

The motor cycle nuisance in Central Road was the subject of a complaint by a resident of Central Road, Tunstall, to the Blackburn-Mitcham Shire Council at its meeting on Monday evening. It is stated that almost every evening, from about 7 p.m. until midnight, Central Road becomes a race track for youths on motor cycles, who go backwards and forwards at top speed, with exhausts open, and sometimes without lights.... It was decided to refer the matter to Blackburn and Mitcham police, and to provide a stop-watch to the Blackburn police for the purpose of checking speeds.

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CENTENARY

DOOKIE Agricultural College in north-eastern Victoria opened in 1886, the second such college in Australia, the first being Roseworthy in S.A. It began with 21 students but today 195 follow full-time courses with 150 part-time. Over the years, the college has produced almost 3000 diplomates, some of whom have later held significant positions in private industry, small business and the public service.

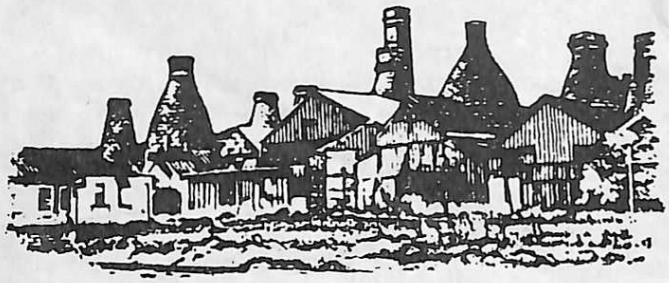
Now titled the Dookie Campus of the Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture, this institution celebrated its centenary on April 12-13, with many former students and staff gathering for the exciting event.

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NEWSLETTER - JULY - AUGUST 1986

MEETINGS: Christ Church of England Hall, Edward St., Mitcham. 7.45 pm.

Wednesday 9th July. MISS RACHEL FAGGETTER, Director of the Children's Museum, Museum of Victoria, will address our Society at 8.30 p.m. Miss Faggetter is the daughter of the late Mrs.Pat Faggetter, one of our foundation members and well-remembered for her Herb research and Slater family history. Members' business meeting 7.45 p.m.

Wednesday 6th August. Please note this date, a week earlier than usual. We plan to go to Schramm's Cottage (Melway 33J10) to participate in the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society meeting, and to hear more of the early German settlers there. Details: July Meeting.

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In May, Cr. Christine Fensham told us about her interesting cycle trip in China, and in June, Mr. Len Elliott enthralled us with his stories of restoration and conservation of 'old things.'

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The Royal Historical Society of Victoria feels that, to carry out its functions effectivelyit needs to increase the number of its members throughout the State. Annual subscription is $25. More details from Secretary.

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MORE LOCAL HISTORY.

The railway line was extended to Blackburn and Mitcham in 1882, with subsequent great expansion in local industries, particularly brick works and potteries. The system was electrified in 1923. One of our foundation members, the late Mr. G.H. Neve, was working as a student at the General Electric Company at Schenectady, U.S.A. in 1922, and he handled the contract for the supply of automatic equipment for the Mitcham (Vic.) sub-station. At that time, this was one of the most advanced sub-stations in the world, because it was fully automatic. Previously, such installations required someone in attendance at all times.

**********

One of our earlier members related to us the story of his grandparents, who lived in Hawthorn, in the era of the late eighteen-seventies and early eighteen-eighties. They grew grapes on their property, which was situated in the area now bounded by Lisson Grove, Power Street, Riversdale Road and Glenferrie Road. The trip there from Melbourne meant travelling by horse-drawn tram to the river at Burnley, where the crossing was accomplished by ferry. Travellers then had to complete the journey on foot.

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Some years ago, an early resident of the district used to describe how he cut timber and carted it by dray to the brick-works in this area, in the late eighteen nineties and early nineteen hundreds.

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MORE ABOUT RAILWAYS.

In the eighteen-fifties, road cartage costs from Melbourne to the gold-fields of Ballarat and Bendigo were incredibly high, with extra charges for police protection against bushrangers. These costs and those of road-building, with high wages and expensive fodder for the horses, all led to the idea of railways. The first steam-train in Australia ran in 1854 between the city and Sandridge (Port Melbourne). A group of Geelong business-men had received a charter for a railway in 1853, but the first train did not run until 1857, from Geelong to Greenwich (Newport). From here passengers changed to a steamer to complete the journey to Melbourne.

However, two small early railways had interesting links with road-builders. One was built by Richard Wayman, road and bridge contractor in 1846; it was 200 yards long and carried stone from Wayman's Quarry to the banks of the Yarra River. Another in 1846 was built by David Lennox on his Portland Pier. This 3 feet gauge line was in position when 400 feet of the piers were finished in December 1845, but rolling stock was not in use until late in 1846.

From 'ROADS' (Vic) RCA Publication.

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ANOTHER Forest Hill.

When the surveyors were marking the Victoria-New South Wales border in mid-nineteenth century, they commenced their survey at the source of the Murray, and they built a cairn on the first hill-top, which was called Forest Hill. This cairn is still in existence today, more than a century later.

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EXTRACT from 'The Illustrated Magazine of Art', Vol. 1, 1853, Castells London.

A machine has at last been invented which promises to make the wrongs of distressed needlewomen a matter of historical record, instead of living a painfull reality...

Every minute a yard of cloth is sewn in a style far superior to that of hand-sewing. It will prove invaluable, as it does the work of twenty hands, and will undoubtedly cheapen clothing of every kind greatly. Immense numbers of the sewing machines are disposed of every week, however, the price £30, will of course for the present, place it out of the reach of most, but that it will one day be an essential article of furniture in every well-regulated household, we have no doubt...

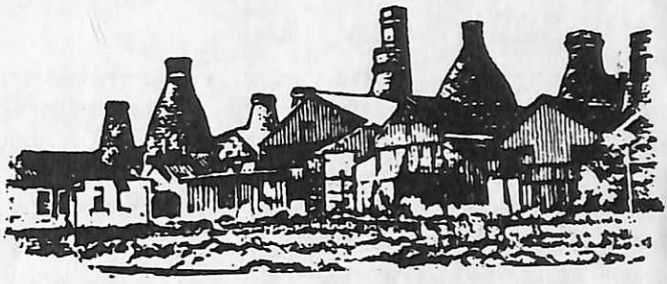
You ask what will become of the poor needlewomen? This will ruin them? Nothing of the kind. Much misery may no doubt result from the suddeness of the change, but the result will in the long run, be the overthrow of a system which disgraced our civilization, and the rescue of thousands of mortals from misery and degredation. Every triumph of machinery over manual labour is a gain to humanity.

(From Shirley Jones)

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NEWSLETTER - SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 1986

MEETINGS: Christ Church of England Hall, Edward St., Mitcham. 7.45 p.m.

WEDNESDAY 10th September. Will each member bring along a 'treasure', (however small) to talk about, or a brief historical anecdote to read or relate.

WEDNESDAY 8th October. ANNUAL MEETING. Election of office-bearers, Annual Report, Treasurer's Report. etc.

Story of MALCOLM STREET, BLACKBURN SOUTH, compiled by MR. O.S. GREEN.

**********

In July, Miss Rachel Faggetter addressed us on Museums, and we had an enjoyable and informative evening with her.

In August, several members attended the Doncaster-Templestowe Historical Society meeting at Schramm's Cottage. Andrew Hillier gave a brief account of Schwerkolt Cottage, and then we heard the story of German pioneers in the Doncaster district. We appreciate the kindness of our host society.

**********

Members who have known Miss Kitty McGaw during her years with our society were sad to hear of her death. However, we were so pleased that we had her with us in the afternoon of the Regional Society meeting, as we know what great pleasure it gave her. Our sympathy was conveyed to Kitty's sister, Mrs. Blackwell.

Our sympathy also to Mr. & Mrs. Leach and Mr. and Mrs. Patterson for recent bereavements in their respective families.

**********

Following the recent opening of our versatile Arts Centre in Nunawading this extract from the 'BLACKBURN & MITCHAM REPORTER' of 5/8/1927 is specially interesting from the historical viewpoint: (Reprinted from Newsletter 31, Aug-Sept. 1970).

## PROPOSED NEW SHIRE OFFICES

### Lively Meeting at Mitcham

A large number of ratepayers attended the Memorial Hall on Thursday, 28 ult. to hear the views of Crs.Lawson and Halliday regarding the new Shire premises. About thirty motor-cars conveyed residents from Blackburn, who made their presence heard in the course of the evening meeting. There were also a number of ratepayers from Tunstall, many of whom it is feared, were anything but dumb....

Cr.Lawson then exhibited a plan of the proposed buildings as they will appear upon the completion of the scheme, although it was intended to now build only shire offices. The plan would allow of additions to be made without violating the original plan.....The plan set out a lawn at the front entrance to the hall, with curved driveway. Provision is suggested for cloak-rooms on either side of the main foyer; the main hall

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is shown to be 96' by 52' to seat 800 people, also stage and dressing rooms, kitchen and supper room, and attached, a baby health centre building. Over the main entrance door a gallery to accommodate 200 people is provided for. On the left side of the building, the plan sets out an entrance hall of 24' by 12' to the Shire offices. On the left of this entrance are the rate collector's office, shire secretary's office, inspector's office, and to the right of the entrance, the engineer's office and waiting room, and draughting room of 20' by 10'. This portion of the building would be of two stories, to provide for a council chamber on the second storey of 40' by 30', to seat 29 persons. The approximate cost of the whole of the buildings would be £4500...Cr. Lawson proposed that swimming baths also be erected in the future, adjacent to the hall site, the water from which could be used for gardens adjoining both the baths and the municipal hall. If the ratepayers liked to organise properly and give combined voluntary help, the baths could be built for £500.

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## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

1986 is the year of 150th anniversary celebrations, with many events taking place in small towns as well as cities. ROBE Primary School had its centenary in April, amid great excitement.

Guichen Bay, about 350km. S.E. of Adelaide was visited by sealers, whalers and sailors long before the settlement of the State. In 1856 Governor Robe selected this site for a town and it was later proclaimed a port. Many Irish migrants and Scottish families arrived in the eighteen-fifties, to be followed by thousands of Chinese en route to the Victorian gold-fields. Landing here meant avoidance of the Victorian 'landing tax' of £10, then a large sum equivalent of the fare to Australia for each man. Ship owners then naturally sought cargoes for their return voyages. Soon the Robe district supplied horses for the Indian Army and wool, tallow and sheepskins for Europe. After peak prosperity in 1864, the place declined into a fishing port only. However, today much of the town remains little altered, with its 19th century buildings, similar in a way to our Victorian town of MALDON.

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(Reprinted from Newsletter No. 23, July 1969)
(From VICTORIA AND ITS RESOURCES. Ed. E.J. Dyer. 1893).

Scent and Herb Farming.

The Government itself established a scent farm of 20 acres in extent at Dunolly a few years ago...The largest and almost the only other scent farm in the colony is situated at Mitcham in the Shire of Nunawading, about 20 miles east of Melbourne. It was established about 25 years ago by Mr. W.H. Slater (a native of Mitcham, near London) who carried on the business of growing, distilling and otherwise preparing herbs and flowers for commercial purposes and who has found an excellent market for all he could produce. The extent of his herb garden is only 5 acres, but he is an orchardist as well.

Mr. Slater has found the business highly profitable, as for instance in the case of mint, has obtained 4 tons per acre, yielding 6 lbs. of oil to the ton or 24 lbs. per acre, value 35/- per pound, equal to £41 from an acre of land, while lavender has yielded oil to the value of £117 per acre- results which clearly show the suitability of the soil and climate for their culture.

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NOMINATION FOR OFFICE BEARER / NUNAWADING HISTORICAL SOCIETY 1986.

..............................nominated for the office of............

by...........................seconded by...........................

signed by...................(signature of person nominated)

Please cut off at dotted line if wishing to submit a nomination at A.G.M.