

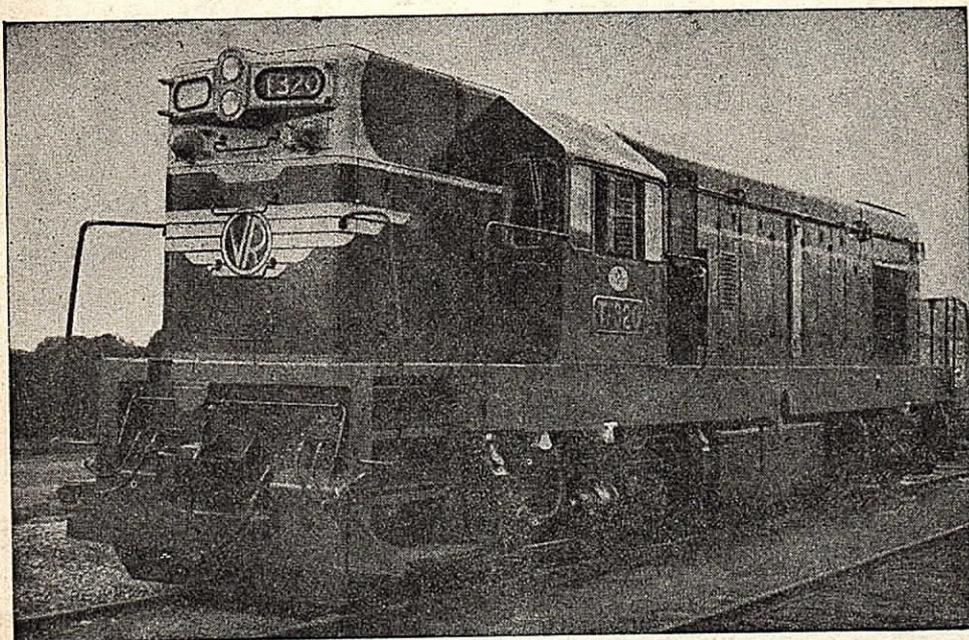
ASHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

**JOURNAL OF THE
TRAIN TOUR**

NOVEMBER 30th — DECEMBER 5th 1970

**THE
ASHWOOD
ROCKET**

VOLUME 3



ASHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

THIS IS THE STORY

OF THE

GEOGRAPHY EXCURSION

MADE BY SPECIAL TRAIN

NOVEMBER 30th - DECEMBER 5th 1970.

This journal, completed on the last day of the tour, includes preliminary instructions, the daily news-sheets published on the train and various other pages of notes and instructions.

ASHWOOD HIGH SCHOOL

"THE TRAIN OF KNOWLEDGE"

"T.O.K." is the Victorian Railways name for our train, which will be your home for a week. Study the following list and the sketch below so that you will be able to find your way about.

Locomotive Although the Diesel locomotive is changed according to the needs of the Victorian Railways it will always carry a large name plate with the title Ashwood High T.O.K.

"Murray" This is the Dining Car, which seats 48 of us in each of two sittings. The kitchen is here also.

"Day Car" Next comes our "assembly room". It is an ordinary carriage with a central aisle.

Car No. 1 Girls' compartments.

Car No. 2. Girls' compartments.

Car No. 3 Mostly girls.

"Carey" The Shower Car.

Car No. 4 Boys' compartments.

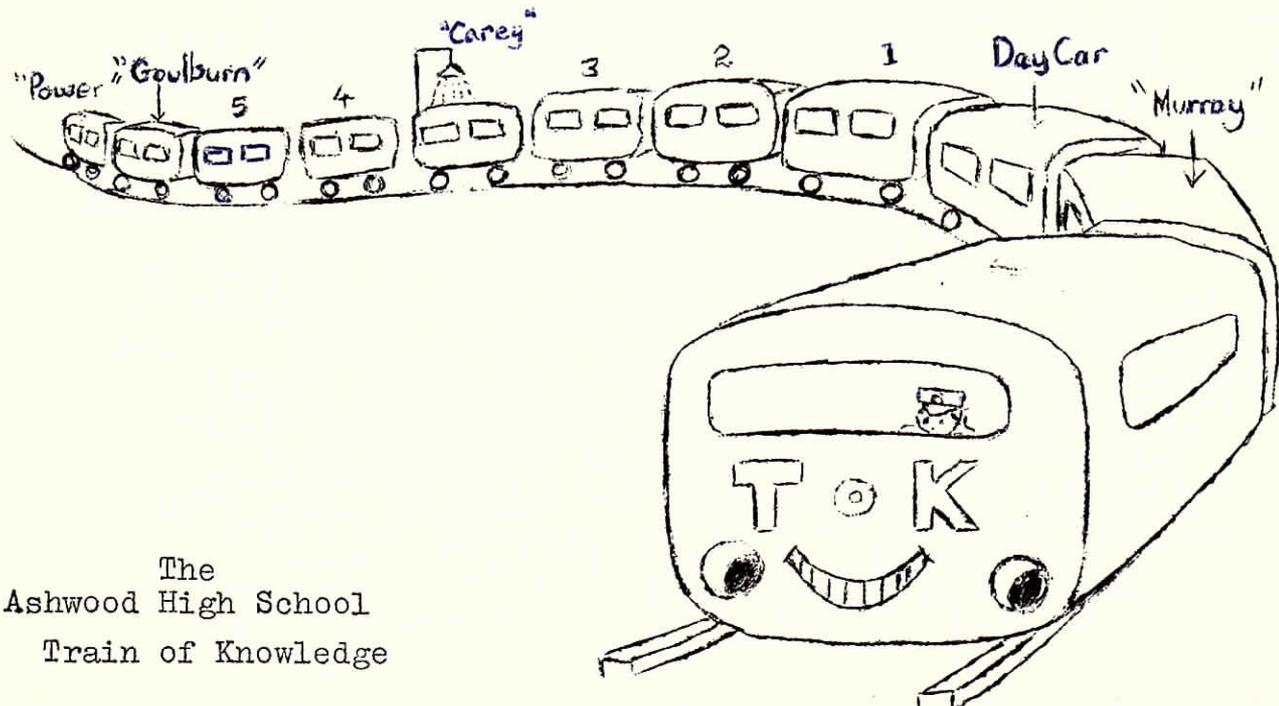
Car No. 5 Boys' compartments.

"Goulburn" This is the car where the train staff will live. It is out of bounds to us.

Power Car This supplies the train with electricity and also serves as Guard's van.

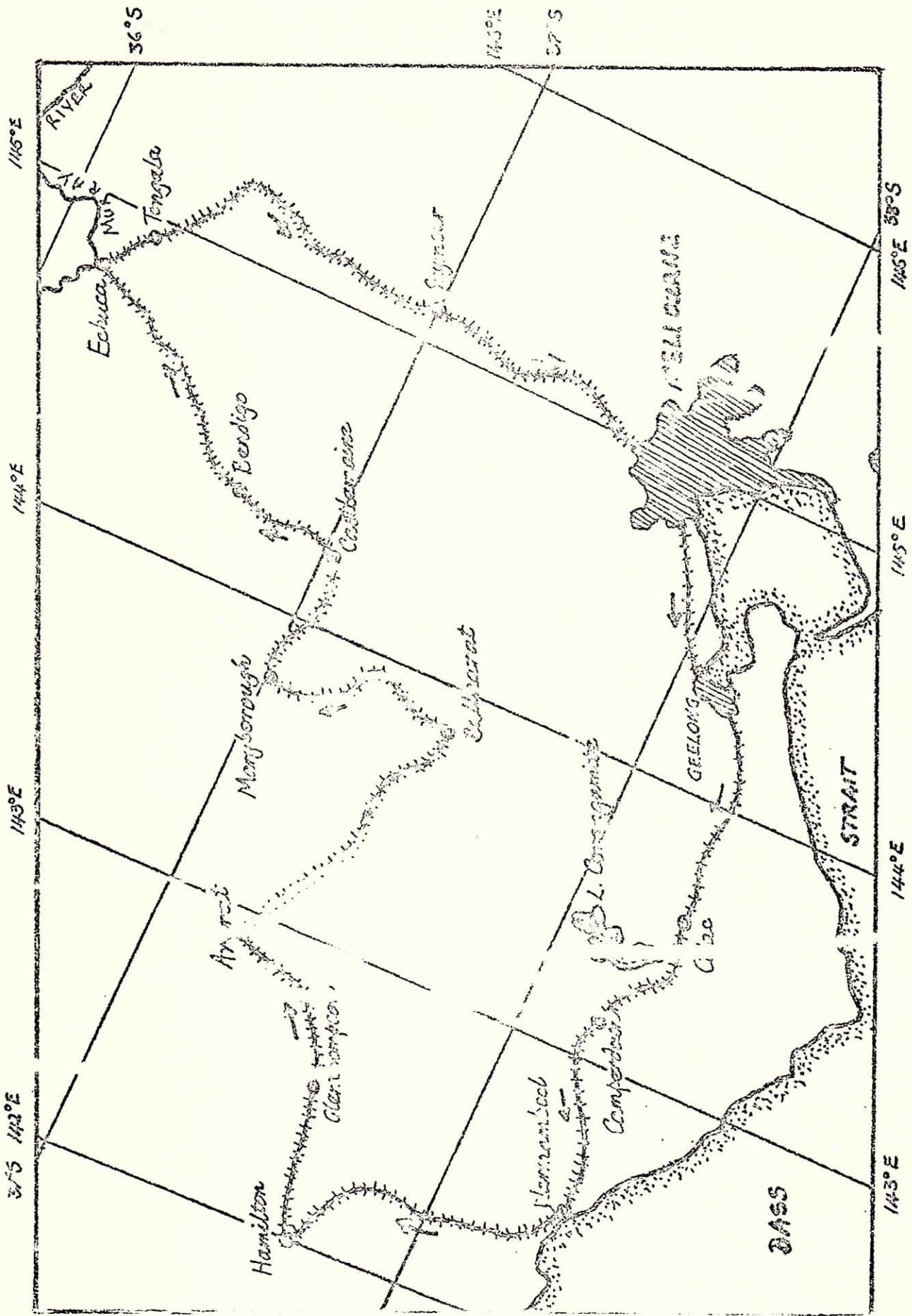
THE "TRAIN OF KNOWLEDGE" The "T.O.K." was first made up for Macleod High School, but these students did not sleep on the train and they had their meals at various towns. Mt. Waverley in May 1965, was the first "T.O.K." that accommodated the tourists for both meals and sleeping, though they had to make up their beds rather uncomfortably in ordinary second-class carriages. Since then, other schools have used the "T.O.K."

The train, as now assembled, is very similar to the "Reso" train that, years ago, used to take parties of farmers on tours of Victoria. Many members of the crew serve on the Governor's train and the Commissioners' train when their special tours are made.



The
Ashwood High School
Train of Knowledge

OUR ROUTE



ITINERARY

1971

MONDAY, November 30th *29th*

Spencer Street, No 8 ✓
Corio

Dep 8.40 a.m.
arr 10.00

~~8.40~~

Travel by buses
around Geelong
Lunch on the train
Bus to Tower Hill

Geelong
Warrnambool

dep 11.55 a.m.
arr 3.25 p.m.

TUESDAY, December 1st *30th*

Warrnambool
Glenthompson

dep 6.00 a.m.
arr 10.20

Buses to "Neerim .
Beek"

Ararat

dep 3.30 p.m.
arr 4.40

Hamilton 4.10 ?

WEDNESDAY, December 2nd *61*

To Warrnambool
Ararat
Ballarat
Eureka siding

Warr ?
dep 6.20 p.m.
arr 8.25 p.m.
dep 9.00 p.m.

Full day tour of
the Grampians

THURSDAY, December 3rd *2nd*

Ballarat

arr 8.15 a.m.

Bus tour of the
city

Bendigo

dep 10.15 a.m.
arr 2.10 p.m.

FRIDAY, December 4th *3rd*

Bendigo
Echuca
Tongala

dep 7.15 a.m.
arr 8.45 a.m.
dep 2.00 p.m.
arr 2.30 p.m.

SATURDAY, December 5th *4th*

Tongala
Spencer Street, No 1 ✓

dep 11.45 a.m.
arr 4.10 p.m. ✓

This itinerary may be varied slightly in regard to times of arrival and departure to meet any special circumstances arising.

WHAT TO BRING AND WEAR

Small suitcase
School-bag (or smaller bag)
for daily needs
Sheets
Pillow-slips
Towels
Toilet bag, with soap, toothbrush,
nailbrush, comb, hairbrush, etc.
Raincoat, preferably plastic
Pyjamas
Slippers or moccasins
Coat hangers
Mending kit
Writing materials & stamps
(special envelopes supplied)
Shoe-cleaning materials
Something to read
Note-book or exercise book
Pencil and ball-point pen
Bathers

GIRLS

School summer uniform, including
blazer and summer hat
Another dress
Dressing gown
Shorts, if desired

BOYS

School uniform, including blazer,
~~short-sleeved shirt~~, teteron shorts,
black shoes, spare shorts

BOTH

Spare underwear, socks
Handkerchiefs
Thongs or sandals

IF DESIRED (not necessary)

Camera
Torch
Board games

DO NOT BRING

Blankets	Transistors	Crockery
Frocks for "best" wear		Cutlery
	Sleeping bag	

NOTES Shirts, etc., should be packed separately in plastic bags so that you can find what you want without disturbing other garments.

All clothing and other property must be clearly marked with the owner's name. Be sure to name (not merely mark) towels, sheets and pillow-slips. Put labels on suitcase and bag.

Slacks or jeans may be worn only in the evenings or on farms.

POCKET MONEY

This amount (about \$2) is to be sealed up in an envelope, with the amount and your name clearly printed on the outside, and handed to one of the train teachers on the Friday morning before we leave. Enclose silver, not notes. In addition, take with you enough for the first two days - not more than \$1.

IMPORTANT NOTES

DEPARTURE Our train leaves from No. 7, platform, Spencer Street, at 8.40 on Monday morning, November 30th. Be there by 8.25 at latest. Some photographs for the press will be taken then. Wait at the door nearest to your compartment, but do not enter the train until you receive instructions from a teacher.

ARRIVAL HOME No. 1 platform, Spencer Street, about 4.00 p.m. Saturday.

CONCERT On Monday evening we will have a program of musical and other items provided by you. Bring instruments if you are ready and willing to play them and leave them in charge of a teacher. Prepare some entertaining short sketches, also song lists. The "stage" is only five feet square!

IF YOU MISS THE TRAIN (It must leave at 8.40 sharp.)

Go to the Man-in-Grey and enquire for the Station Master. He will arrange for you to catch a later train and meet us at Geelong.

ADDRESSES FOR MAIL All letters to passengers on the train should be addressed as follows: Ashwood High School T.O.K., Railway Station, Bendigo (or other station). Use these addresses only: ARARAT 3377 (post Monday); BENDIGO 3550 (post Tuesday); TONGALA 3621 (Thursday).

Leave this page at home with your parents.

RULES AND INSTRUCTIONS

Before being finally accepted for the tour, each boy and girl must promise to obey all rules cheerfully and carefully, including the following:

1. Evenings. Observe "Lights Out" instructions strictly. There will be no games or jokes or even talking between "Lights Out" and "Reveille" and no unnecessary movement in the corridors. Compartment doors must be unlatched at all times.
2. Travelling. Passengers must never open carriage doors (those leading to platforms) except when instructed by teachers. Do not put your head or arms out of a window at any time as this is very dangerous. Conduct must always be quiet and orderly.
3. School Uniform is to be worn whenever you appear at a main town or city.
4. Soft footwear and comfortable clothes should be worn while you are travelling in the train. Save your better clothes.
5. Do not move about the train unnecessarily; otherwise we shall have to make rules restricting your movements.

EN VOYAGE!

As you students of French will know, "voyage" in that language means "journey". I hope that your very special journey through a large part of Victoria will be truly educational, thoroughly enjoyable and an experience that you will remember all your lives.

It will be rather like living at a boarding school for a week, and yet something like a family camp too. To enjoy it fully you must always be considerate of other people - the other pupils, the teachers and the train staff. Don't selfishly think of your own welfare first, but make it your business to see that others are happy. There will be plenty of people trying to make the trip pleasant and valuable to you.

Remember that the teachers are giving you a great deal more than their ordinary teaching time. All their "after hours" time is an extra service to you, given freely. Ask your parents how they would like to look after a family of 20, each, for a week! The train crew, too, will take a close interest in your welfare, and will do many little things for you that are not their paid duties. Repay the courtesy that you will meet everywhere by your own pleasant manners.

Help me, by doing this, to make the tour a great success.

M. McKay,
Principal.

.....
PLEASE RETURN this part only to one of the train teachers tomorrow.

INDEMNITY

To the Principal:

I give full permission for my son/daughter to take part in the Train Tour and authorize you and the other teachers to act on my behalf in all matters concerning his/her welfare. I have instructed him/her to obey all rules and instructions and he/she has promised to do so. I will not hold you or any teachers responsible for any expenses, medical or other, that may arise unexpectedly, and authorize you to obtain any medical treatment that may be necessary.

PHONE

PARENT'S SIGNATURE

DIRECTORY

Cars and Compartments are numbered from the front of the train.

SLEEPING CAR No.1

1-2	Rhonda Bann & Suzanne McPhee
3-4	Debra Brien & Andree Chapman
5-6	Janne Brookman & Jennifer Graham
7-8	Gail Braybrook & Marion Lang
9-10	Mrs. Abbott
11-12	Joan Bunting & Elena Dronseika
13-14	Pauline Chamarette & Lorraine Dunn
15-16	Penny Chugg & Debra McPaul
17-18	Leanne Connally & Joanne Hayes
19-20	Margaret Connerton & Terry Jordan

CAR No.2

1-2	Leslie Crosbie & Sandra Horwood
3-4	Carol Davidson & Caroline Vrbaneč
5-6	Jannette Dodd & Judith Hawke
7-8	Belinda Heathcote & Lynda Simpson
9-10	Mrs. Moore & Miss Goodman
11-12	Wendy Heil & Susan Pearce
13-14	Sharon Jeffrey & Rhonda Spark
15-16	Heather Luxford & Kristina Sipek
17-18	Christine Powell & Annette Williams
19-20	Carol Power & Cathie Kennedy

CAR No.3

1-2	Linda Rankin & Pamela Williams
3-4	Wendy Oldham & Pamela Shearer
5-6	Julie Sharpe & Jo-Anne Tait
7-8	Janet Whitfield & Prue Wraight
9-10	Betty Pimm & Julie Watson
11-12	Deirdre Williams & Julie McIntyre
13-14	Denise Brown & Kaylene McPherson
15-16	Mr. Thompson & Mr. Nicholson
17-18	Michael Rea & Gregory Ross
19-20	Steven Massie & Kim Zegenhagen

SHOWER CAR

CAR No.4

1-2	Hugh Johnson & Leslie Green
3-4	Ian Godfred & Greg Hatcher
5-6	Chris Dalton & Stephen Pierce
7-8	Mark Butson & Tony Quinn
9-10	Robert Knights & John McPhee
11-12	Robert Slapar & Peter Young
13-14	Robert Adcock &
15-16	Gavan Newstead & Graeme Smith
17-18	Graham Parry & Peter Stubbings
19-20	James Connell & Stephen Joyce

CAR No.5

1-2	Peter Thatcher & Geoff Nicholls
3-4	Mr. McKay
5-6	Greg Brooks & Russell Black
7-8	Andrew Kerr & Garry Prout
9-10	David Payne & Alan Fairthorne
11-12	Russell Gascoigne & Bruce Gibbons
13-14	Stephen Burt & Frank Horvath
15-16	Brian Carroll & Eric Kotoukis
17-18	Russell George & David Mauger
19-20	Martin Leahy & James Taylor

THE VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

To assess the importance of railways in the life of a nation, let us consider a few statistical figures.

Australia's railways represent a capital asset of \$1745 million -- about six times that of the country's largest private company. The railways systems of Australia, seven of them combined, therefore, represent the number one item on the list to make up the wealth of the nation.

A few more figures: The railways earned \$474 million in 1965-6 employed 186,000 railway men and women who earned and spent \$3420 million in the Commonwealth. The railways carried 465 million passengers and 64 million tons of goods last year. The trains covered a mileage of 96 million miles last year-- two million miles longer distance than the distance from the earth to the sun. This was achieved by 2,560 locomotives, over 7,000 passenger carriages and 89,000 freight vehicles, in round figures

The Victorian Railways with its 4,210 miles network plays an important part in the railway operations.

The first railway line in Australia was opened in 1854 between Melbourne and Port Melbourne. By now, there is in Victoria hardly any appreciable area of arable, pastoral, or non-mountainous land more than eight miles from a railway line. A remarkable performance in a hundred years. Considering that the railways have been and always will remain the main means of bulk transport for important materials and long distance and suburban passenger transport, it becomes easy to accept the Victorian Railways as the most important organization of our State. Without the Victorian Railways our industry would quickly come to a standstill, and Melbourne's two million people would be paralysed in their daily working life. Modern economy cannot exist without an efficient railway network. Admittedly we need other services, such as the supply of power, water and oil, etc., in order to carry on life in Victoria but neither of these require an expensive and widespread organization comparable to the railways, our biggest asset.

We can be proud of our railways. The "Spirit of Progress" was the first all-steel streamlined, air-conditioned train in the Commonwealth, and this was the first air-conditioned train in the whole British Commonwealth. The Victorian Railways were the first in the southern hemisphere with rail welding, ran the first electric train in Australia and the first dining cars in Australia. The Victorian Railways were responsible for converting the Mallee, previously regarded as worthless, into a prosperous area covered with thriving settlements and farms. This is only an example. The benefits flowing from railway operations cannot be measured in simple terms of money. Mass movement of passengers, goods and livestock as well as many other tangible and intangible benefits come to us Victorians through our railways.

WELCOME ABOARD!

This is the first issue of your daily newspaper, "The Rocket". News will be published every day of your tour, and you will receive a bound volume of "The Rocket", with copies of all the other sheets given out, at the end of your journey. Therefore you need not keep this sheet, and we suggest that you post it, and all the other issues of the daily "Rocket", home on the day you get them. This will make your letters home much more interesting.

Our first message is - safe and happy travelling to you all! Settle down now to enjoy the first part of your trip, and leave the exploration of the train until after lunch. Make your own compartment comfortable; it is to be your home for the next six days.

Soon we will be at Geelong, where we will have a bus trip around the city, the waterfront and other places of interest.

Lunch will be served on the train.

DID YOU REMEMBER?

To change into soft footwear - or none.

To change your clothes. Casual clothes all day.

To hand in your pocket money? If you have more than \$1 with you now, you must hand in the surplus to a teacher.

Is your luggage safe? A falling case can do a lot of damage.

NEWS FLASH THE TOUR BEGINS

What a scene on Platform 8 this morning! Everybody looking unusually smart and clean; parents everywhere; piles of luggage to fall over; and late arrivals getting us all worried.

Some of the photographs that were taken at the station will appear, we hope, in a later issue of "The Rocket". There might be one in tonight's "Herald".

Were those tears that we noticed really tears of sadness or tears of joy? One Dad-and-Mum pair seemed to be doing a Snoopy-type happiness-dance as the train moved off.

INTRODUCTIONS

We hope that you will soon know all members of the train crew. Each day we will introduce them to you in this news sheet. There are twelve altogether. Please remember your manners when talking to them. They are all members of the staff and are all "Mr." to you.

Mr. Bob Napier is the Railways man who has done much of the planning of the tour, and all previous tours too. The Train of Knowledge is one of his specials.

TONIGHT WE SEE THE 'BOOL

The 'Bool is what most Warrnambool people call their city. It is one of the largest country centres in Victoria, also one of the oldest and one of the most interesting. As soon as you arrive you will go on a bus trip to Tower Hill, an extinct volcano and national park. When you return from that (about 5.30) you will leave the buses in the centre of the city and will buy your own tea there with 50c supplied from tour funds. Don't forget the Singalong and Concert at night.

CANTEEN

Sweets

Drinks

Biscuits

OPEN AFTER MEALS

As announced

by

The Dining Car Manager

(Advt.)

"THE 'BOOL"

You can call it 'Bool
To rhyme with "cool"
Or 'Bool to rhyme with "wool",
For the breezes cool
And merino wool
Are the pride of Warrnambool.

THE FIRST DAY

Much to our surprise everyone arrived more or less on time. The last two figures seen scurrying across the platform were Christine Powell and Annette Williams who arrived with only a couple of minutes to spare.

GEELONG

The train glided into the station at Corio at 10 a.m. dead on time. The group split into two for the buses which were just arriving. These groups were our subdivisions for the two meal sittings in the dining car.

Our tour of Geelong was short but very interesting. Passing through the grounds of Geelong Grammar School we had an opportunity to compare it (unfavorably, of course) with Ashwood High. From there we drove along the coast seeing the port installations and many industries such as Alcoa, the Shell oil Refinery and the fertilizer factory, which depend on imported raw materials. After a quick visit to the salt works and the lookout tower we returned to the station eager to put the information we had gathered on our first question sheet.

WARRNAMBOOL

After our first meal on board the train we just had time to digest our salad, especially the radishes, before the train arrived at Warrnambool. The buses were again arriving for another very interesting tour. The first stop for some of us was the entrance to the Hopkins River with its interesting coastal formations. This group met the other one at the factory of Fletcher Jones and Staff, one of Warrnambool's industrial establishments. After a short but impressive walk through the gardens we jumped on the buses again and left for Tower Hill. This turned out to be a volcano, which fortunately for Hugh Johnson, is now extinct. After scrambling up and sliding down layers of tough, scoria and pumice (we did learn a lot of technical terms today didn't we) we travelled back to Warrnambool for tea. There are some emus in this sanctuary but they were sensible enough to stay well clear of the Ashwood invaders.

After tea we all piled into the dining car for our big concert. There will be a full report of this concert in tomorrow's issue.

MEET THE STAFF

In this daily news sheet we will introduce the train staff to you. Perhaps the first one to attract your attention was Mr. Ron Williams, the chief steward, who organises the serving of your meals. He is ably assisted by two waiters who shall be introduced at a later date.

ITEMS FOR THE NEWS SHEET

Can you write limericks, songs, poems or articles relating to the tour? Do you know interesting bits of information about things that have happened, or the people on the train which we don't? In either case we will be glad to receive any contributions. Remember, your own items make this paper more interesting.

REPORTERS WANTED

To get to know the staff of the train and other interesting people that we meet we need reporters. Any interested students to see Mr. Thompson today.

MEET OUR TRAIN

Our special train is hauled by a 'T' class diesel-electric locomotive. This locomotive has a large diesel motor which turns an electric generator. The power created (950 B.H.P.) by the generator is fed to electric motors coupled to the axles. This locomotive is capable of 60 m.p.h., weighs 68 tons, is 44' long and cost 140,000 dollars. You will have an opportunity to have a look at this locomotive later in the tour. This train is used by the Governor when he travels.

This news sheet has mistakes in either the typing or spelling. A prize will be given by Mrs Moore for the first reader to spot the secret mistake.

F.F.A.H.S.T.T.

Today's "rocket" was duplicated by courtesy of the staff of the Glenthompson Brickworks.

OUR DAY AT NEERIM BEEK

We left Warrnambool at 6 a.m. on Tuesday while the girls were having showers. Then breakfast while the train was moving, first sitting at 7 a.m. and second at 7.30.

At 10.20 we reached the pretty little town of Glenthompson, north of Hamilton. Buses were waiting there to take us out to Mr. Lex Brooks's sheep property called "Neerim Beek". This is one of the model farms described in our Geography text-book, so we already know a bit about it.

Neighbours had come in to help give us a shearing demonstration, and this was very interesting. Two of the girls nearly fainted and Robert Adcock nearly got shorn too.

On Saturday, the "Rocket" will publish a "Neerim Beek Special".

ARARAT

At 4.40 p.m. we reached Ararat, and the weather was hot! Tea in town again, and the chips were beautiful! It's a hilly town, with a winding main street and the Grampian mountains not far away.

That night we all saw the film "Woodstock" at the Astor, a sort of documentary about an American pop music festival. Some of us liked it, some thought it was boring and young Andrew Abbott thought it was the funniest film he had ever seen. (It was his first.) Certainly, it was colorful.

Then back to the train by bus, and the boys had their showers as usual before getting to bed at 11.45. Mr. McKay said later that they were all asleep by 11.47.

Today (Wednesday) this paper is being printed while we are away on a long bus trip and sight-seeing in the Grampians. Then tea on the train and on to Ballarat this evening.

RAILWAY REVELS

That's the name of the Revue we staged in the Dining Car on Monday night. Many thanks to Mr. Williams and the waiters who gave us this privilege and were caused a lot of extra work.

Our Guest Artist was Mr. Reg. Walton, the Engine Driver. He is an expert with the mouth-organ and played us several tunes and accompanied other songs. Thank you! Mr. Russell Wallace the young Fireman (Assistant on the locomotive) was also on the program, but there was some yarn about him losing his voice because the train whistle had broken down and he had to scream at every crossing. (Today's tall story.) "The Three Russells" took his place and sang well.

Wendy Heil and Susan Pearce opened the program with an original Introduction - very good. Then came a little play By Russell George, Peter Thatcher and Darryl Mauger. With Peter Stubbings they did another one later on. Both were quite entertaining. Gary Prout and Stephen Pierce did a sort of Tiny Tim number and Leslie Green recited one of his favourites. Robert Slapar did a solo act, too, but took two parts - very difficult! Sharon and Rhonda sang "Sadie" (the best singing item) and Brian Carroll's team did a good comedy act called "It's a Free World". The longest and one of the best items was the play "The Mystery of the Bloodstained Putty-knife" with Hugh Johnson, Brian Carroll and Geoff Nicholls.

TRAIN CRIMINAL QUESTIONED BY POLICE

One of our boys seemed likely to be arrested at the entrance to the Astor Theatre. Two very burly policemen spoke to him and on being told that he came from Ashwood, they suggested that he had run away from home! It turned out that they had mistaken him for a boy suspected of breaking into an Ararat shop earlier in the week.

SHEEP DIPS AND SHOWERS

Mr. McKay must have learned the Shower Drill at Neerim Beek. The boys (40 of them) are in and out of the showers at the rate of two per shower-room every four minutes - all 40 in less than half an hour. The showers are very good - plenty of hot water, one tap for pressure and another for temperature, and each cubicle has a little dressing room as well as the shower recess.

WHAT TO WEAR

Wear "train clothes" (no slacks) to breakfast on Thursday, and change to school uniform just in time for lunch.

ARARAT AND GRAMPPIANS

At 9 o'clock this morning we set off in buses to Ararat to explore the Grampians, famous for their rugged cliffs and the wild flowers that grow everywhere. After a quick visit to Stawell, where the famous Stawell Gift is run, we set out for the Grampians proper. Our first main stop was at MacKenzie Falls where we clambered down a very steep rough path to the bottom of the falls. Here a few of us bathed our feet in Stawell's water supply. If an epidemic goes through Stawell in the near future, we'll know why, won't we Mrs. Abbott? After a visit to the canteen we journeyed on to Reed's Lookout from where we obtained a truly magnificent view of the Grampians.

After lunch we continued down steep winding roads to the Bellfield Project which supplies water to much of the Wimmera. Next stop was Hall's Gap. We piled out of the buses only to be told that Mr. Thompson was cruel enough not to let us go to the shops until we had all exhausted ourselves climbing along precipitous tracks. Only about 25 of us managed to reach the top of Mackey's Peak. This magnificent effort will be rewarded by a certificate explaining this difficult and dangerous feat.

After a welcome break in the milk bar it was back on to the buses and at last back to the train. After a beautiful roast dinner we all retired for an early night.

A POEM by Wendy Heil and Susan Pearce.

At last we are on the train tour,
We really wanted to come,
We left behind old Ashwood High,
And all our Dads and Mums.

We are going to have a wonderful time,
Without a tear or sigh,
To guide us all along the way,
Our principal Mr. McKay.

Mrs. Abbott wanted a holiday,
Mrs. Moore and Miss Goodman too,
And we are all going to be so very good,
Rest is all they'll have to do. (They would have to be kidding!)
Mr. Thompson and Mr. Nicholson don't need a holiday,
They are both so fit already. (Huh!)
They can go, go, go all the day.

So get together,
Let's have a wonderful time,
Let's show the people wherever we go,
The manners of Ashwood High. (We're not sure whether that's good or bad.)

MEET THE TRAIN CONTINUED.

Some of the cars have a story to tell.

1. Melville (power car).

This car supplies power to the dining car, acts as a storeroom and contains berths for some of the train staff.

2. Murray (dining car).

This car was built as part of the Spirit of Progress in 1937 and weighs 60 tons. It is a heavy car because of the kitchen equipment.

3. Carey (shower car).

This car was first built as a guard's brake van and was later used as a horse box. About 5 years ago it was converted to a shower car.

4. Goulburn (crew car).

Built in 1910 as a dining car, this is now the staff car and is out of bounds to you.

COMPETITION.

There is a valuable prize to be won by the first person who can correctly spell the name of the town in which we spent Wednesday night. See Mr. Thompson.

NEERIM BEEK SPECIAL

COMPETITION

"I want to get an idea of how much these students are learning when they visit my place", said Mr. Brooks. In order to find out, Mr. Brooks is sponsoring an essay competition. All students are expected to submit essays.

There will be a prize each for the best boy's essay and the best girl's essay. The prize will in each case be a trip to the 1971 wool sales at Mr. Brooks's expense. The winner will be given time off from school to make this trip.

The essay topic is "Neerim Beek - My Impressions". Mr. Brooks is issuing two words of warning. He says that he does not want the material in the text book repeated even in your own words and that he is not so much interested in the quality of your expression as in your ideas and your understanding of his property and his business.

Length: 250 words. Due in to Mr. Thompson at the end of next week.

BACKGROUND

Mr. Brooks has been farming this area since 1949, when he was allotted 804 acres by the Soldier Settlement Commission. The early years were very difficult as Mr. Brooks fought against many hardships to establish and develop his farm. The pastures were poor and overrun with rabbits and the return from wool sales was very low.

Over the years he has slowly built up the farm through the addition of larger sheds and yards and better machinery, together with intensive improvement of pastures. Today he makes an important contribution to Australia's leading primary industry.

OUR VISIT

We arrived in the shearing season but Mr. Brooks had had to postpone this for a week due to rain. As a special favour each of the three groups was given a display of shearing by Mr. Davis.

While one group was being towed around the paddocks behind a tractor another group was being shown all the machinery used on the farm and then the way the sheep are herded through the sheep dip.

The third group were shown the way the fleece of the sheep is treated straight after shearing. Mr. Johnson, a research officer from the agricultural research station, then showed this group how the bales of wool are compressed. We were also told what a sheep farmer must do during the year.

Not only does Mr. Brooks farm sheep but also cattle, of which he has about 100 at the moment. Whilst touring around the farm we noticed a large number of bales, which we were told is only half the number normally expected, this being due to the lateness of the spring rains.

It was noticed during the shearing exhibition that some girls were overcome by the heat (or was it the blood). Some of the boys did not look the best either.

Mr. Nicholson's day was made by a dazzling run on Mr. Brooks's motorbike.

Lunch was taken by the train staff and we ate it on the farm.

The all too short visit was completed by a short oration given by our star Brian Carroll who thanked Mr. Brooks for his kind permission in allowing us to visit his farm.

GOLDEN CITY QUEST

In the time you have been given find out the answers to the following questions. Remember it is a special competition.

1. How much is the first class return fare to Melbourne?
.....
2. Which Australian explorer is remembered through a statue, outside the Church of England buildings?
.....
3. What is the name of the present Mayor of Bendigo?
.....
4. What is the population of Bendigo?
.....
5. What is the name of the largest gold nugget found in the Bendigo Area?
.....
6. When was the Bendigo School of Mines and Industries (Bendigo Technical College) established?
.....
7. What is the name of the local newspaper?
.....
8. Which large department store had its beginning on the site where Drug Houses of Australia now stands?
.....
9. Go to the Post Office and find out what the hours for telegrams are.
.....
10. Climb the Lookout in Rosalind Park and find out how far it is to Mt. Alexander.
.....
11. What are the buildings to the North-East of the High School (not in the High School Grounds)?
.....
12. Go to the Art Gallery. Find the names of the two paintings of W. Dargie.
.....
13. Name two (2) industries now found in Bendigo.
.....
.....

(Cont.)

Golden City Quest

14. Who was the mayor when the fountain was built in 1881?

.....

15. Obtain the signature of a person who has lived in Bendigo for more than thirty years and write down a fact about Bendigo that he/she told you.

.....

.....

.....

16. Catch the Golden Square tram to the Discovery of Gold Monument. When was gold discovered in Bendigo?

.....

BALLARAT

After arriving in Ballarat on Wednesday night at 9.05 p.m. we all had an early night. In the morning, after a short walk through Eureka Park we boarded buses to journey to Sovereign Hill. On this site a fascinating replica emulating the Ballarat of the 1850's is being gradually built. Perhaps the most interesting part of our visit was not the old buildings or the poppet head but the wading pool in which Mrs. Abbott struck silver, a whole 20 cents of it. Unfortunately this ended all too soon and we had to go back to the train.

BENDIGO

Bendigo greeted us with 98 °F. temperatures. We went straight to the city hall where the mayor, Councillor Oliver greeted us with bottles of soft drinks. He then gave a short but interesting history of Bendigo, including the origin of the name. Russell George then presented a letter from the Mayor of Waverley to Cr. Oliver and Leanne Connally presented an Ashwood High School souvenir spoon to the mayor for his wife.

After a brief appearance on movie film we set out on the Golden City Quest. Many of us thought of ingenious ways of answering the questions. Most of us found talking to the local people an enjoyable experience. Tea at Favalaro's Cafe followed, and then most headed to the baths. At 7.30 we returned to the train for a brief exercise in fancy dress and then it was off to bed while the poor teachers worked.

THURSDAY'S MENU

Breakfast

Pineapple juice
Corn Flakes
Baked Beans on toast
Toast & jam
Tea or Coffee

Lunch

Fricassee of Rabbit
Pineapple Gloop
with cream & 100s & 1000s
Fruit
Tea or coffee

Tea

Fish and Chips
or Pie 'N' Sauce
Fruit salad & ice
cream
Tea or coffee.

WE WANT TO KNOW

Who had a broken heart at Woodstock?
Who is Andrew Kerr currently in love with?
Who got lost on Wednesday?
Who tries to tell weak jokes?
Who likes Camels?
Who falls over every time she goes for a walk?
What member of staff missed lunch in sympathy?
Who sells his kisses at a cent a time?



BENDIGO PUBLIC BUILDINGS

A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN OF BENDIGO

It was hot enough in the daytime at Bendigo (99°), but the night seemed worse. The temperature was never below 80° and actually rose to 83° at 1 a.m. Sleeping clothes were very informal.

ALL ABOARD P.S. "CANBERRA"

At Echuca this morning we admired the old "Adelaide", stranded forever for people to look at, also the ancient timber-jinker with solid red-gum wheels, but it was the more modern paddle-steamer, "The Canberra", that we liked best, because on it went for an hour's cruise up and down the Murray.

Captain Freeman and his father, also the Manager, looked after us very well and all of us helped to steer and won a helmsman's certificate. The last two at the wheel were Debbie McPaul and Garen Fewstead, who seemed to have different ideas about which was port and which was starboard. Anyway they steered us straight for the 302 (river miles from Mildura) tree on the N.S.W. bank and for a while it looked as though we were going to be wrecked on a foreign shore.

We saw other river boats and the remaining part of the wharf, a reminder of the time, about 1880, when Echuca was Victoria's next best port to Melbourne. Nearby was Evans' saw-mill, in action cutting up red-gum logs. Red-gum is one of the best hardwood timbers in the world. It lasts indefinitely, even in the ground, and is so heavy that it won't float.

AND NOW TONGALA

By 2 o'clock we were off to Tongala and arrived here at 2.30. Dozens of Tongala people met us and we were "sold" to them by Mr. McKay in ones and twos and taken off to farms all around Tongala for tea and to help (?) with the milking.

As this news sheet was being typed the cars had begun to bring back the returning guests. Robert Slapar and Peter Young brought news of a fabulous time helping to use the milking machines and then swimming in a channel. Then came Mrs. Mather (who was the organizer of the catering and placements) with Mr. Mather, Ron & Warren, who had looked after Andrew and Mrs. Abbott.

More news of these visits tomorrow.

Martin and Jamie went swimming too, and Martin got stuck in the mud with leeches attacking from all directions. Kim and Steven went to the Lloyd's and helped saw wood with a power saw. Greg Brooks and Sandra went to the Pool and also played basketball. Alan and Frank went to the Allan's, where they milked cows, rode in a tractor with Vincent and explored the farm on bikes. David Payne damaged a finger-nail and had to go to the doctor. Sharon and Denise went to the Carsons "Jamedon", named after their children James and Donna, where they tasted really fresh milk.

T.O.K. MENUS

	<u>FRIDAY</u>	<u>SATURDAY</u>
<u>BREAKFAST</u>	Orange Juice Cornflakes Scrambled Eggs Toast, Butter, Jam Coffee Tea	Pineapple Juice Rice Bubbles Bacon and Eggs Toast, Butter, Jam Coffee Tea
<u>LUNCH</u>	Fillet of Flounder Potatoes Vegetables Plum Pudding & Cream Orange or Banana Bread, Butter Tea Coffee	Pork Strasburg Garden Salad Mashed Potatoes Jelly Trifle Apple or Orange Bread, Butter Tea Coffee

AN ECHO OF THE 1965 TRAIN TOUR

It was the time of the first "T.O.K.", Mt. Waverley H.S., when Anne de Boer and Denise Jones visited Mr. and Mrs. A.J. McGregor and their Denise. Since then several visits have been exchanged and recently the Mount Waverley Denise was a bridesmaid for the Tongala Denise. Some of this year's visitors will make lasting friendships. After you get home, some of you will write to Tongala to thank your hosts and some may invite Tongala boys and girls to Askwo 1. Don't forget to get addresses.

NEWS FLASH Small Andrew rode a cow. He liked it. We don't know about the cow. Brien and Lennie helped him save a bird from drowning and he climbed a haystack.

TO THE SHIRE OF DEAKIN - OUR THANKS

These last pages of "The Rocket" could not have been published without the help of the staff of the Shire Office. The Shire Secretary, Mr. Bruce Pearl, who is a friend of Mr. McKay's, was as busy as any of the "Rocket" staff on Saturday morning, and with his help we got through the rush job of duplicating. Many thanks - and for the Deakin brochures, too.

TONGALA SCOUTS

There are two Scout Groups in Tongala, and it was the families of the Scouts, with some other supporters, who were our hosts yesterday. Special thanks to Vice-president, Mrs. Matthes, Mr. A. Twyman, G.S.M. 1st Tongala and Mr. Jones, Secretary (Box 60 Tongala), also to all the others who helped. Here are some of their names:

(Mr. and Mrs.) Warren, Munro, Connally, Pol warth, Newman, Laity, Hayden, Maughan, Mulholland, Tinning, Briggs, Dunstan, Owen, Archibald, Martin, Marshall, Roberts, Wheeler, McGann, Walden, K. Tinning, Healy, Moore, Walkley, Allan, Blake, Andrews, McGowan, Murray, Pankhurst, Lloyd, Madill, Carson, Sinn, Cantlin, Vick, Miglarini, Cahill, Hipwell, A. Twyman, Cooke, Jones, Craig, Snowball, J. Madill, Nurse, Hacon and Dr. Morton. Please gorgive any omissions, also inaccuracies in spelling and the "Mr. & Mrs." part: this list was made up in a hurry.

We thank you all, and we think that Tongala is a terrific place to produce kind people like you.

THE CONDENSERY

Northern Dairy Company buy up whole milk all around the district and deliver it to the huge Condensery of Tongala Milk Products, quite near the Station. This service reduces labor for the farmers, gives them a firm local market and has helped to build up the town. The Goulburn Valley, of which the Shire of Deakin and the town of Tongala are parts, is one of the best dairying districts in all Australia, so the local people feel much more confident than dairy farmers in many other parts.

MORE ABOUT THE TRAIN CREW

by Wendy Heil & Sue Pearce

Our Guard, Mr. Archie Burton, is the train chief. He has been in the Victorian Railways for 25 years, and is now the Commissioners' Guard.

Mr. Reg Walton, the Driver, has been even longer with the railways. He is married, with two sons, one in training as a teacher. His hobbies are fishing and boating. His assistant, Russell Wallace is still studying. One of hobbies is growing Bonsai trees.

Mr. Jack Neve is our Electrician. He looks after the lights, hot water, air-conditioning in the dining car and our water supply. He likes reading, photography and radio work.

Our First Chef is Mr. Harold Dixon, who has two daughters, Marilyn and Wendy. He is often Chef on the "Southern Aurora". The 2nd Chef is Mr. Lorne Parry, who comes from England. He has some more looking around and photography to do before he thinks about getting married. Michael Whitehouse is in the kitchen too. He is English - and eligible! He enjoys surfing, swimming, skiing and bird-watching. Alan Stewart helps mainly in the pantry. He has two children Debra and Shane, and he likes boxing and running.

In the Dining Car we see, as well as the Chief, Mr. Ron Williams, two others who have been teaching us better manners and looking after us very well. They are Mr. Bill Rhode, who likes travelling and cruising, and Mr. Stan Murphy, who is interested in horse-racing. He is married, with two boys and two girls.

The train people have asked "The Rocket" to give to the Ashwood High girls and boys their best wishes for a Merry Christmas, and in return we thank them and send our good wishes too.

MORE NEWS ITEMS

Our thanks to the Train Hairdresser, Wendy Oldham. She even got Greg Ross, Michael Rea and Robert Adcock to have their hair trimmed!

News Flash! We keep the swimming trophy for another year. The races were close, and we were worried when we lost the first.

Carolina and Carol saw a 4'6" snake - slightly dead. Gavan rode a pig and the same two girls nearly caught a piglet. Debbie and Sandra got bucked off horses (or fell off), Pauline also rode, more successfully, and Graham and Peter climbed Mount Scobie, the only hill in the district and probably the smallest mountain in the world. Janne has two damaged kness, obtained either while chasing someone - or running away!

GOODBYE TONGALA! You were good to us and we will remember.

THE STATE SAVINGS BANK OF VICTORIA

A Brief History of Victoria's oldest and largest bank.

The State Savings Bank of Victoria is almost as old as Victoria itself. Just seven years after the rival parties of Batman and Fawkner pitched their tents on the banks of the Yarra in 1835, the Port Phillip Savings Bank - which was the original name of the State Savings Bank - opened for business.

On that New Year's Day in 1842, there were about 18,000 people living in Victoria, or - as it was then called - the Port Phillip District of New South Wales. Some two-thirds of them were assisted migrants, most of them poor, and hoping to find in this new land better conditions and opportunities than they had left behind them.

The lack of any safe place where these poor people could safely deposit their meagre savings led to agitation for the opening of a savings bank. The prime mover in persuading the Governor and Council of New South Wales to pass the legislation permitting the establishment of the Port Phillip Savings Bank was Charles Joseph La Trobe, who came to Port Phillip as Superintendent of the District on October 2nd, 1839.

La Trobe not only took the leading role in bringing the Savings Bank of Port Phillip into existence, he was also its first President.

The bank opened in an obscure little room on the upper floor of the Melbourne Fire and Marine Insurance Co. building on the corner of Collins and Queen Streets. Deposits were accepted Saturday nights between seven and eight and both deposits and withdrawals could be made on Wednesday afternoons between one and two.

Even these adverse conditions did not prevent people using the facilities of the Bank, so desperate were they to find a safe place to deposit their money.

After a few years of steady progress the Trustees opened their first branch at Portland in 1848. This was 14 years after Edward Henty had landed in Portland Bay, after a boisterous passage of 34 days from Launceston. When the bank opened there, Portland had a population of over 2,000 in a mainly farming community.

Six months later (July 1848) a second branch was opened in the township of Geelong. The third branch (18 months after this) was established at the port of Belfast, now known as Port Fairy.

These and succeeding branches opened were all named after the locality in which they were situated, such as "Savings Bank at Portland" and were administered by local trustees, under the overall control of the "Commissioners of Savings Banks in the Colony of Victoria" with headquarters in Melbourne.



Port Fairy Branch (then called Belfast) opened in 1850.

After eleven years of service and slow but steady progress the Bank had some 2½ thousand depositors with total funds of £142,655.

But the face of Victoria was changing rapidly. The discovery of gold in 1851 followed by new fields being discovered in bewildering succession, put the new colony in a frenzy. In the ten years from 1850 to 1860 Victoria's population increased from 76,000 to almost 538,000. It was during this period that the Bank built its first permanent Head Office. It stood at the corner of Market Street and Flinders Lane. Completed at a cost of £10,800 and built of stone brought from Kangaroo Point, it became a landmark in the district and served the Bank from its opening in 1858 until the present building in Elizabeth Street was opened in 1912.

During the 1880s the bank, like Melbourne itself, expanded and prospered. This was the time of the land boom, which was followed by the disastrous crash of 1893. During this crisis, which brought ruin to many and suffering to most inhabitants, twelve trading banks closed their doors, but the savings banks weathered the storm. Our present notice to depositors telling of the Government guarantee dates back to this period.

In this same year, 1893, authority was given to make long term mortgage loans, despite much newspaper criticism. These Credit Foncier loans proved an outstanding success from the beginning. Today, although the Bank has nearly \$400 million out in housing loans, the demand continues to exceed the supply.

It was not until 1912 that the title "The State Savings Bank of Victoria" was bestowed on the Bank and local savings banks became branches as we now know them. In that year the Commonwealth Savings Bank was established and presented what appeared to be formidable competition to the Bank. However, rallying from the blow, the State Savings Bank accepted the challenge and opened 37 new branches, increasing its representation by 50 per cent.; and extended its services to include Deposit Stock which permitted the wealthier depositors to earn interest on amounts up to £1,000 on stock units which could be withdrawn by giving notice varying from a few days to six months.

In that same year, 1912, the school banking system was established in Victorian schools. From a modest beginning the system flourished and at the 30th June 1970 was established at 2,538 Victorian schools and pupils have over \$9 million to their credit.

Through the grey years of the depression, the Bank managed to avoid dismissing any of its staff, but new appointments were few and far between. It also showed the utmost tolerance to mortgagors who found it difficult to meet their instalments of principal and interest.

In 1956 Federal Legislation was introduced which enabled trading banks to enter the savings bank field.

It was obvious that competition from the new banks was going to add to the challenge the State Savings Bank had encountered from the Commonwealth Bank since 1912. As had happened in 1912 the challenge was met with a determination to maintain the Bank's pre-eminent place in the Victorian savings field.

In 1957 the Victorian Government passed an Act allowing the State Savings Bank to open cheque accounts and so put it in a more favourable position to compete with the trading banks.

In 1962 the State Savings Bank became the first bank in Australia to install a computer. This was a major development in the programme of mechanization begun in 1957. A further development since, known as the centralized accounting system links many of the city and suburban branches with the computer.

The installation of the computer enabled another type of special savings account not previously available in Australia to be introduced. Known as the Christmas Club, it commenced in 1964 and became an immediate success. Members save by means of a book containing 25 or 50 coupons in different denominations.

Since the Bank's foundation, its funds have played an important part in the development of Victoria and the welfare of its citizens. Today as it approaches its 129th year it still maintains this tradition. Over the years the Bank has lent nearly \$800 million to house more than a million Victorians, and has on loan to municipal and semi-governmental authorities almost \$400 million.

With deposits in excess of \$1,150 million and 2¾ million accounts held at over 500 branches, the Bank ranks as the 11th largest savings bank in the free World.