

ANGLESEA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc

NEWSLETTER No 26 - MARCH-APRIL 1994

PRESIDENT
Val Amery
631852

SECRETARY
Shirley Forsyth
631430

It has often been claimed that Autumn is the best season in our State and one certainly cannot dispute that whilst we continue to enjoy such balmy weather conditions, i.e. at the time of compiling this newsletter - one can only hope that these lovely days will continue thru' the Easter break - and could we be so lucky to have a perfect day for our proposed trip to Otway Roses and the Apollo Bay Historical Society Museum at the old cable station. Details are: Private cars for transport (arrangements to be finalised at the April meeting).

Monday April 18th Morning tea at Otway Roses, old Wormbete Station Road, Winchelsea, then on to Apollo Bay for a picnic lunch (BYO) then visit the Museum.

ACQUISITIONS

1. A prepaid Toll Voucher for crossing the Westgate Bridge (doesn't that seem long ago - not history).
2. Receipt for two grave sites at the New General Cemetery, Geelong - £4 for graves and £1 for sinking! (from Joan Cameron Murch).
3. Greeting Cards - from Mrs Peg Cockerill (consistent benefactor)
4. Photo-copy of autograph album from "Cambridge House" (home of the Mawsons) Christmas 1910 - 1914 - from Keith Cecil.
5. Wall cabinet to be installed in Museum foyer with the intention of using same to display smaller items from shipwrecks. From Mrs E Lawn.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Speakers at our monthly meetings have provided members with insights into lives and cultures of New Guinea (Mr Murray Anderson) and, closer to home, outback Western Queensland (Mr Keith Cecil). Both addresses created interest and we are grateful to our speakers for the time and care they spent in their presentations.

In keeping with the Australian Heritage Week theme - Heritage on the Move - we shall be arranging a display on Easter Sunday of photography of early forms of transport in this district. In conjunction we shall also feature photographs of old buildings.

APRIL MEETING - On April 9th at 7.30pm (note change of date because of Easter) Mr Alan Willingham will be our guest speaker, his subject 'Old Friends - Old Buildings', also carrying thru' our photographic display. Mr Willingham is a noted architect and radio personality (3LO Saturday AM "Do It Yourself" program) whose speciality is the restoration of old buildings.

MAY MEETING - May 7th at 7.30pm for 8pm. Mr John Claude Rowland will present his stunning 'Visions of our Coastline' set to music. To follow will be another segment 'Impressions of Victoria' which will include a fascinating portrayal of Puffing Billy which should have wide appeal - this too will have appropriate music accompaniment - one can only ponder what composition will be chosen to highlight that little train puffing up and down hill. We are moving to the Lions Village Hall for this presentation - a charge of \$5 will be made. We are using the opportunity to make a modest donation to the Day Care Centre appeal. A light supper will conclude the evening - no formal meeting to take place but perhaps dealing with any urgent correspondence or accounts paying will be dealt with between 7.30 and 8pm.

MEMBERS - We'd like to welcome new members Joan Forster, Julie Holloway, Max and Marg Lee, B Robinson & Dick Weigall.

Please check that your sub has been paid - we have to pay at least half of it for insurance purposes - so we don't want to be out of pocket.

BOOKS - Members are reminded of Books and Videos for sale - also Melba Scott's witty summary of the 'Year That Was - 1993' The Society benefits from all sales. Whilst going through what must be one of the largest sources of historical material outside the National Museum/Library etc, Keith Cecil unearthed this interesting article and poem written in the late 1920's by F.J.Harvey.

BEAUTIES OF ANGLESEA -

Sir, Reading some interesting letters in The Herald re the claims of various beaches and surroundings, may I say I have been an ardent motorist for the past 15 years, and have visited all the beaches of any note, inside Port Phillip Bay and on the Southern Ocean. Anglesea, 23 miles from Geelong, is my choice. A most beautiful and safe surfing beach, backed by glorious and majestic cliff scenery. Sufficient to say that our Governor (Lord Somers) has selected this very lovely spot as the camping ground for the Boy Scouts in January: Yours etc.

ANGLESEA

SUNSET AT ANGLESEA RIVER - ARGUS Camera Supplement - 11/2/1929

A golden strand in silver set
A sky of rosy hue;
Two points of land like arms outstretched,
Twin bays of deepest blue.
A silver stream that cleaves the vale,
Like a shaft of aquamarine;
Verdure clad e'en to its brink
Adds beauty to the scene.
A winding road comes from far up in the hills
From the land of "I don't know where,"
It brings tired folk to this haven of rest,
It's boundless beauties to share.

The Lorne hills veiled in purple mist,
A sunset glorious gold;
And league long billows foaming in,
From distances untold.
A fiery cloud with edge sunkissed,
The ocean deep vieux rose;
As the evening shades come gathering in,
And day fast to its close.

How fortunate can one Society be to have not one, but two members so interested in our town's past - Lindsay Braden has compiled this vignette of Anna Mackay. In recent times the Society conducted a pilgrimage to Agnes Murray's grave at the Eastern Cemetery - perhaps we should pay Anna Mackay due respect and visit her resting place at Bellbrae sometime.

THE MYSTERIOUS ANNA MACKAY

Why in 1883 would a lady aged 65 bother to open a boardinghouse in a remote seaside hamlet some 25 miles from Geelong, called of all things "Swampy Creek" ?. In those days what we now know as Anglesea could only be reached by a bumpy journey along some very rough two wheeled bush tracks that gave very little inducement for anyone to go out there and make a living. Yet a very determined Annathaize Marja Mackay did exactly that.

About three years before Anna appeared on the scene, word got around Geelong about this new found haven for fishing and hunting. Shortly our Miss Mackay was amongst a handful of adventurous pioneers arriving to open houses that would cater for the needs (fishing) of sporting visitors, and give alternate upmarket accommodation to those who originally camped in tents on the mosquito infested banks of the Anglesea river. She acquired from James Munro lot 2 (3+ acres with house of 9 rooms) fronting the then main road into town, and also lot 6 (16 acres) on the opposite side of this thoroughfare now known as Camp Road, and soon established a boardinghouse business. In 1885 Anna did a generous thing. She subdivided her vacant lot 6, and donated four acres at the eastern end to the Presbyterian Church. The intriguing thing about this, was why she gave four acres when half an acre would have been more than enough.

A historical record dated 1/6/1886 notes that the Rev A. Stewart reported that he had visited Anglesea River and conducted a service in the home of Miss Mackay, and that things were proceeding satisfactorily towards the erection of a Church. Miss Mackay and Miss Ormond collected funds for the building that was finally opened in the area between today's Allen, MacDougall and Wray Streets on January 2nd. 1887.

Controversy was aroused during August 1900 when the Rev. Burns on behalf of Anna Mackay applied to the board of health and also the Shire of Barrabool, to have her remains, on her decease, interred in the ground adjoining the first Presbyterian Church. Nearby neighbours Geo. Green, Sharpe Brearley and eight other residents protested against either burials or the formation of a Cemetery in the township of Anglesea. In retrospect it would appear that Anna donated this extra large site to the Church with the idea of a future adjoining Cemetery in mind.

Anna Mackay died in 1901 aged 83, and was buried at the Bellbrae Cemetery. Inscription on her headstone reads "she has done what she could", which was a popular saying of that time. After Anna's death her property was either left to or acquired by her next door neighbour and friend Agnes Murray.

The 1908 bushfire destroyed the first Presbyterian Church high on the hill, and it was rebuilt on a smaller site situated on the corner of today's Camp Road and McRorie Street, where the Primary School is today. As you know the Presbyterian (now Uniting) Church is now in Murch Crescent, and the structure has just been demolished and rebuilt.

Now Anna Mackay had no family, and was the prime mover to establish the first Presbyterian Church in Anglesea. I wonder how many local people have visited her grave at Bellbrae since she died on 14/2/1901, to acknowledge the useful work that she did. Anniversary flowers would be a nice idea. L.B.

If you wish to learn more about Anna Mackay, try reading Keith Cecil's "Coastal Christianity" or Lindsay Baden's "Early Anglesea Families", both available at our Anglesea and District Historical Society.

Don't forget the Lorne Historical Society Photographic Exhibition at the RSL Lorne from April 5th to April 10th. Over 1800 mounted photographs will be on display, including over 200 brides from the past.

WORTH NOTING - From RHSV History News -

- March 6th 1944 Sydney waiter Antonio Agostini was arrested and charged with the murder of his wife Linda, "The Pyjama Girl", found dead ten years earlier, following evidence of her true identity.
- March 8th 1894 Melbourne's streets were lit for the first time by electricity from the new power station in Spencer Street.
- March 10th 1794 Rev Samuel Marsden arrived in Sydney on the "WILLIAM" to be assistant chaplain for the colony. The ship brought beef and pork, but no flour for the starving settlement.
- March 22nd 1894 Frederick Gonnerman Dalgety, pioneer wool merchant, founder of Dalgety's, died in England, aged 76 years.
- March 29th 1944 "Pay As You Earn" income tax was authorised in Australia with the passing of the Income Tax Assessment Bill, to come into force on 1st July.



ANGLESEA SURF CLUB MARCH PAST - BOXING DAY 1929