

ANGLESEA & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

NEWSLETTER No. 36 - OCT. 1996

PRESIDENT
Val Amery
(052) 631852

SECRETARY
Shirley Forsyth
(052) 631430

TREASURER
Loris Pavia
(052) 631529

A.G.M.

You will be aware that our Annual General Meeting took place on October 5th with about 25 members present and a large number of apologies recorded, a current virus taking its toll being one of the reasons. However, all present gave President Val due thanks for an excellent year following the reading of her annual report, excerpts of which appear below and her re-election was enthusiastically received. Stan Stott capably handled this job and the following members are to guide your Society thru' the next 12 months.

PRESIDENT:	Mrs. V. Amery	COMMITTEE:	Mrs. B. Lloyd
VICE;PRES:	Mrs. E. Lawn		Mr. A. Poigndester (Maintenance)
HON.SEC:	Mrs. S. Forsyth		Miss E. Samuel (Publicity)
HON.TREAS:	Mrs. L. Pavia		Mrs. Myrle Smithwick (Tea Roster)
Assist,	Mr.. E. Pavia		Mr. A. Stanley (Angair liaison)
PHOTOG./SCRIBE	Mr. K. Cecil		Mrs. J. Wendt (Speakers)
RESEARCHER;	Mr. L. Braden		Mrs. J. Murch - ex officio

Please give them your support by accepting responsibility for any little task that may be asked of you.

President Val thanked Nancy McDonald and Beth Marsh for their contributions as outgoing committee members and also expressed regret at the passing of long-time member Richard Marsh.

From Val's report: "We acquired through an Arts Council grant the bookcase now housing a well catalogued collection of books. (Please members, avail yourselves of this facility!) Edith Lawn has presented us with a projector screen, Len Newman with circa 1800 opera glasses, Cameron Moodie with roofing slate tiles which were cargo from the "Victoria Towers" wrecked off Torquay, and Mavis O'Donnell a box camera. Keith Cecil has produced two new books in his series "Along the Great Ocean Road, Oil and Mining. Lindsay Braden has recently completed two booklets, "Early Anglesea Houses and Structures" and "Loveridge Lookout"- both are welcome additions. We gratefully acknowledge a bequest from the estate of the late Norman Must.

Once again Oberon High School VCE students resourced material from our Society. I got personal satisfaction from taking some photos and memorabilia to the Adult Day Care Centre."

Following formalities Ken de Garis gave members an interesting sidelight into the Cameron family three members of which had come from Scotland to Glenroy (now a Melbourne suburb)-there was Alexander, Duncan and nephew Alexander (Black Sandy). From there they moved to Hamilton following the good pasture land, then across the border to an area known as Penola by the local aborigines which meant Swamp/Stringy Bark. Interesting that Anglesea was also first known as Swampy Creek. Ken also gave other examples of the links with the Camerons and de Garis families with Geelong and his home territory in Penola.

We have a new roof courtesy of maintenance of the Surf Coast Shire tho' members were left wondering on the night of the AGM as to how close the 'resident' possums were! What a noise! Subsequent investigation showed that the trouble spot of entry into the roof area had been boarded up so we hope the intruders have found another home!

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We are still on the lookout for new chairs and hope to have the matter resolved soon. Some doubt was expressed about the model on show. A price has been obtained from a supplier for the proposed plaque to be placed on the Loveridge Lookout. Again more on this after consultation with the Shire when a date for the 'dedicating' ceremony will be announced.

ANNUAL DINNER- NOVEMBER 1st FRIDAY - 6.30p.m. for 7p.m.

A great night is anticipated so be sure you are with us. The Anglesea Hotel Management has an excellent meal planned and savouries will be served with a complimentary sherry or juice from 6.30p.m.

We are honoured indeed to have Professor Weston Bate, President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria as our guest speaker. We consider this a coup so please come and hear what he has to say. An acceptance slip is enclosed for your convenience. Treasurer Loris would appreciate you sending your cheques in advance, but if this is not possible please ensure that on the actual dinner night you have your sub. and/or meal money in an envelope clearly marked on front. Receipts will be issued at the December meeting or with the next Newsletter. This will avoid a crowded queue when folk are anxious to proceed into the dining room to enjoy themselves and also eliminate a good deal of hassle for our Treasurer and her assistant.

DECEMBER MEETING - SATURDAY 7th at 8p.m. (DST)

Cath Longman will be guest speaker at our Christmas meeting. Most appropriately, she will talk about Prague, Good King Wenceslas' domain!

GLIMPSES FROM THE PAST

Members will be aware that we subscribe to both "The Investigator" published by the Geelong Historical Records and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria which publishes a monthly bulletin. The following two articles have been taken from the September and October editions respectively for which acknowledgment is given,

FROM OUR ARCHIVES: WINCHELSEA TO COLAC WITH THE VAGABOND is taken from Picturesque Victoria, Argus 24th January 1895 which presumably is the Argus newspaper most of us will remember! I'm sure you will enjoy reading this extract from the RHSV News.

"We crossed the Barwon once after leaving Geelong and we strike it again at Winchelsea 25 miles off. To the right is the Barwon Park Estate, for ever celebrated, not only because the late proprietor introduced rabbits to the Western District, thereby providing the Duke of Edinburgh with some excellent shooting and earning the everlasting gratitude of hundreds of labouring men employed at a heavy cost to exterminate them but also that its present noblehearted mistress founded the Austin Hospital. (sic)

Winchelsea is built on both sides of the river, being in two countries, Grant and Grenville. The first land sale took place in 1850; since then the place has slowly progressed till it contains a population of some 450 with over 3000 in the district. It possesses a telegraph station, money order office, and savings bank, a branch of the Colonial Bank and a fine and commodious hall where petty sessions are held, a state school, Episcopal and Presbyterian Church, a public library, police station, two hotels and several good stores. The public park, recreation reserve and streets are nicely planted with trees. There is a good racecourse where every Boxing Day a popular local meeting is held. Really a nice country town is Winchelsea, proving the prosperity of the surrounding district, which is mainly pastoral with patches of agricultural land. About 15000 acres are in "cultivation" of which more than one half is laid down in English grasses, the rest being principally in oats & potatoes.

The copestone of the fine stone bridge across the Barwon was laid by the "Duke" in 1867. The river, which here flows between steep banks, has been known to rise 40 ft. But ordinarily, it is a shallow fast running stream interspersed with deep pools and rocky boulders. just the locale for English trout some of which were turned out here a dozen years since at the instance of Mr. W. Robertson who imported them, but they have not been actively heard of since. It is 13 miles from Winchelsea to Birregurra across a level plain with fine natural grass, a good sheep country, the soil only partially fitted for agricultural purposes. Near Birregurra it is of a richer quality. Messrs, Armytage and Hopkins have their stations on this plain, and their merinos and crossbreeds are well known for the weight of their wool and the quality of their flesh. Birregurra is famous for cattle and dairy produce and is a thriving and most charming little township nestled in a hollow on the banks of the Barwon, the Church of England showing out prominently on the elevation above the river. Here for many years Sir Charles Sladen worshipped, his estate (Ripple-Vale) being within a few miles. From Birregurra a rail line is projected through the Otway forest to the Gellibrand River in a southwesterly direction. It is to be hoped that the track will be taken as near as possible on the road to Lorne, that most primitive and charming watering place, the Tenby of Victoria, which I hope soon to visit. Daily coaches now start from Birregurra to Lorne. We are now in a splendid fruit country, Irrewarra, the next stopping place, having as fine orchards and producing as fine English fruits as in Tasmania. Thence to Ondit-road which will be the junction with the new line to the fertile district of Beeac. From this point all the cattle and sheep from the Colac station is reached at last after a journey of 50 miles from Geelong which takes two hours and a half. This is as bad a record as on the Goulburn Valley line. When the railway is opened to Warrnambool it is to be hoped that the line will be improved."

It is interesting to compare today's Winchelsea to the township of more than 110 years ago. Population now 1800 approx. (Shire figs.): still 2 hotels.. The commodious Shire Hall very much downgraded with the recent closing of shire facility and would Lorne care to be referred to as 'primitive'? Still it does make for interesting reading!

And now a snippet from "The Investigator" entitled THE STOCKS> we tend to associate the use of stocks as a punishment with England rather Australia but they were used in this country. Geelong had its set in the early days of its existence. J. McCann, writing in the Geelong Advertiser of February 12th, 1916, gives some details of the erection of this instrument of punishment 2 in Geelong.

He goes on to say that one of his father's first jobs in Geelong in 1841 was to act as foreman in the erection of the first court houses and stocks at the top of Swanston street. His father had several humorous anecdotes about these stocks. One was that Captain Fyans, who controlled the early expenditure of Geelong, when the works were completed, had to signify his approval. On examining the stocks there was found to be one odd hole. After musing for a while, the captain said in his abrupt way. "Oh, it is alright McCann, let it go; it will do for a wooden leg man"! The writer goes on to say that he didn't know whether a wooden legged man ever suffered this indignity, but he was provided for! There were several wooden legged men in Geelong at the time.

In Brownbill's HISTORY OF GEELONG AND CORIO BAY he relates that the stocks were dismantled at some time in the 1840's when the Chief Constable found that a man who had been put in the stocks sober was very drunk some hours later, having been supplied with liquor by his friends. They were re-erected in 1849 and used mainly to punish those who had been arrested for drunkenness, especially on the Sabbath. Brownbill does not record the final dismantling of the stocks. Another story for someone to pursue?!

EARLY ANGLESEA HOUSES

SICHLAU'S 'NORSEWOOD'

As you wind your way into Anglesea via the old Geelong track (Camp Road) a BMX complex appears on the left hand side. If you look closely there is a feeling of sensitivity about this particular sector. A little distance in from the front gate an old orchard struggles for life, nearby some aged hand made bricks nestle into the soil, a row of ancient pine trees mark the perimeter of the property - all these signs are nostalgic remnants that point to a bygone era.

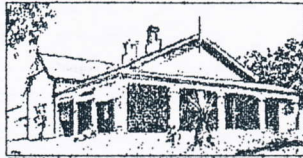
In 1886 one Emil J. Sichlau purchased this undulating site (originally 32 acres), and built a large residence to establish the 'Norsewood' property. This became a landmark as you approached from Geelong in Cobb & Co's coach drawn by 5 horses (3 leaders and 2 polers). Emil was born of Danish parents in Norway in 1845, and after emigrating to Geelong in 1866, soon became a leading figure in Colonial Insurance.

He married Louisa Janet Goddard (from Adelaide) and acquired some 5 acres above the Hotel on Belmont hill, where he established his first property 'Wyuna.' From here he firmly incorporated his well known poultry yards and annually dispersed young stock throughout the Colony. *A long row of pine trees marked the boundary of his excellently organised Belmont equity.*

Emil first came to Anglesea on a fishing expedition in 1871, and liked the remote area. He was a member of the Exhibition Club, an association which catered for Geelong businessmen. Here he met John S. Jackson, the Architect who designed the 'Norsewood' residence. If you compare a photo of this with that of the second Anglesea Hotel, the Jackson influence can be easily identified.

His sons Louis and Harvey, trained at Dookie and Longerenong in fruit culture, grazing and general farming. Just after the turn of the century they settled on the 'Norsewood' property at Anglesea River (by

then increased to 1,700 acres with freehold and leasehold land). The natural conditions of the forest land were found to be ideal for breeding A.B. Turkeys, and suitable for the limited grazing of sheep. *As with the Sichlau tradition a row of pine trees marked the edge of the homestead block.* A long driveway traversed it's way through an orchard and formal rose-garden, before reaching the large timber home.



■ 'Norsewood' homestead

Emil Sichlau passed on in 1910, and some 3 years later his son Louis died at St.Kilda. His second son Harvey, who boarded at the Hotel, married Alice Parker Jackson (daughter of the Licensee) in 1914, and they established a smaller property 'Bon-Air' just above today's 4 Kings Corner. *'Norsewood' was sold to Alex. McDonald, a Wool Classer from Belmont.*

A little bit of drama came to 'Norsewood' in 1919. The homestead was occupied by Dr Kent-Hughes and family, who were spending a holiday there. On February 16th a bushfire swept towards the property. Mrs. Harvey Sichlau raced up and urged them to make a hasty departure.

They fled for their lives, taking a small amount of luggage with them. This gear was dropped as they hurried along the unmade track into town. 'Norsewood' was ablaze by the time they reached the shelter of the Hotel. The late 'Doc' Bingley once mentioned to me of walking towards the smouldering ruins of 'Norsewood' during the next day, and finding cutlery with the handles burnt, in the middle of the road - apparently from the Kent-Hughes abandoned bags.

'Norsewood' homestead was not rebuilt after the 1919 fire. By late 1923 the property was sold to the Forests Commission, who later used it as a plant nursery in conjunction with their ill-fated Pine Plantation project. Alcoa now has the land □ *Lindsay Braden.*



■ Harvey Sichlau at the 'Norsewood' gate