

BUNINYONG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2012



Continuing our series of views of the Gong, this postcard in our collection from 1906 has some fascinating features. Firstly the name 'Gong Gong' is used! Then note the very tidy wooden fence that has been erected between the brewery and the Gong. The water level is quite low, as this photo was taken soon after the long Federation drought of 1895-1903. The brewery, operated by Thomas Sheppard from 1857-1873, had been re-opened in the 1890s as the Temperance Crystal Malt Ale Company, but it closed in 1900.

We meet again on Thursday 16 February, then the third Thursday of April, June, August, October and December.

NEWS BRIEFS

New Book on Nineteenth Century Victorian Gardens will be published by Australian Scholarly Publishing later this year. The publishers have asked permission to use two of our photos of the Gardens.

150th Anniversary of the Geelong-Ballarat Railway will be celebrated on 10 April 2012 and the following weekend, all along the line. Anne has been attending meetings of the planning committee, and making contact with enthusiastic groups at Bannockburn, Lethbridge, Meredith, Elaine, Lal Lal, Navigators and Warrenheip. Look out for the program of activities on weekend of 14-15 April, and we will have a special display for Saturday 21 April. Our April meeting will be devoted to the topic.

Australian Cycling Championships in January was again a great success, especially the long race round the Mt. Buninyong circuit, which was covered live by SBS TV, sending beautiful views of Buninyong to the nation.

The first Buninyong Marmalade Fair was held on Sunday 5 February in the Town Hall, and drew a good crowd to taste the 100 entries, and hear the judges' comments. Many visitors to the Court House, to see the Marmalades which we are storing for the Committee. The Australian 11 jars were selected to go to Cumbria, to compete against the best marmalade makers in England.

BUNINYONG HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Recent research has taken the date of formation of this society back to the 1850s!

1859 – A report in the *Ballarat Miner and Weekly Star* of 2 December 1859 records the first annual exhibition of the Buninyong Agricultural and Horticultural Society held last Wednesday in the large room of the Royal Exchange Hotel in Learmonth St. Buninyong. Mr. Goode was the secretary, and the committee was composed of Messrs Sheppard, Bradshaw, Biddle, Chesney, Moss, Eason and Marsden as judges. Prizes were awarded for floral exhibits of roses, cut flowers and bouquets; for soft fruits including strawberries, cherries and gooseberries; and for vegetables including Rhubarb, carrots, turnips, onions, potatoes, cauliflowers and cabbages.

At around the same time a report appeared in the same newspaper describing the state of Buninyong in 1859. It is fascinating for its use of the term 'ancient village', and also for its high praise for the quality of houses and gardens in Buninyong:

Miner and Weekly Star, 6 January 1860

Article headed '**Buninyong**'

We spent a few hours on Friday in the 'ancient village'. Its delightful quietude is a wonder, beside which that of the 'pivot' is a frenzy. The casual visitor from Ballarat delights in the calm beauty of the old township...The population of the municipality is estimated at 2000, but the number of substantial residences is far greater in proportion to the total number of dwellings than is the case in Ballarat. The homes of Messrs Bradshaw and Allen, Dr. Rankin, Mr Cogdon, Mr Shepherd, the Rev. Mr Russell and others, are such as Ballarat would be proud to number amongst its ornaments. Then the gardens full of flowers, vegetables and fruit trees,,,

BIOGRAPHICAL QUERIES

December 2011-February 2012

BIGNELL – Alfred Charles Bignell was born in 1890, orphaned soon after birth and fostered out to a Mrs Williams in Buninyong soon after. From a grand-daughter in Melbourne

CHAPMAN – Thomas, bootmaker, and his wife Elizabeth lived in Herriott St. Buninyong when they died in the first decade of the twentieth century and were buried at Buninyong. Their daughter Elizabeth was apparently a teacher at Buninyong in 1908.

EMERY – Thomas Emery was in Clarendon by 1859, and raised a large family there, in the little cottage beside the former Wesleyan Church, that became the Clarendon Post Office from 1920 to 1976. From a descendant

HARTLEY – William and his wife Margaret came from Tasmania at the beginning of the gold rush, and tragically the parents and one child were dead by 1854. The orphaned children attended Rev. Hastie's school.

JACKSON - Joseph, Scotsburn, Born Barley, Herefordshire, 1834. He appears in the first rating of the Shire of Buninyong in 1863, having tenement and land at Scots Marsh. Gardener, grew vegetables on the slope behind the Scotsburn Hall in second half of the nineteenth century.

LAWLER- Captain Henry Lawler was the captain of the steamer *Aphrasia* that plied between Melbourne and Geelong in the 1840s and 1850s. He held the license at the Golden Fleece Hotel at Meredith in 1846, and gave his name to a street in Meredith.

RONALDS – Alfred Ronalds was an important nurseryman in early Ballarat, and the family later settled in Buninyong. From a descendant in WA.

RYAN – Patrick Ryan (1805-1860) was a blacksmith at Warrenheip from the early 1850s until his death in 1860. Patrick married Sarah Ryan nee McInerny. From a great great grandson.

SAUNDERS - William (1827-1903), brewer, Buninyong 1850s-1870s. By 1894 was manufacturing his famous 'Saunders Malt Extract' in Richmond. From a descendant in London.

SAUNDERS MALT EXTRACT

Do you remember taking Saunders' Malt Extract as a child? Did you like it? It is still available, and was developed by the brewer William Saunders in Melbourne in 1893. William migrated in the 1850s and by 1859 was at Buninyong, his occupation being tallow-chandler.

He had no background in the brewing industry, but his father-in-law James Howie was a maltster who joined his daughter and son-in-law in Buninyong, and together they may have developed the expertise to open a soda-water manufacturing business in Learmonth St. Buninyong by 1862 (1862 Directory). Seven years later, the directory listed him as 'brewer, soda water and cordial manufacturer'. His address is given as 'suburban', which means he was on the outskirts of the township boundary. In the year 1868-9 Saunders was Mayor of the Borough, and had been appointed a magistrate. He was listed as a councilor in 1873, but he left Ballarat soon after and became a brewer in Richmond, where he developed his Malt Extract.

COMING EVENTS

16 February General Meeting, Buninyong and District Historical Society. 7.30 p.m.

18 February Open House, Court House to 1.30 pm.

March – excursion to be planned.

April 10 April – Geelong-Ballarat Railway 150 celebration, and following weekend celebrations at Navigators, Yendon and Lal Lal.
National Heritage Week 16-23 April

May – 12-13 May Ballarat Heritage Festival