

# BUNINYONG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Reg. No. A0030085Y

Web Site <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~buninhis>  
PO Box 98, Buninyong, Vic. 3357.

## Newsletter



Destructive fire in Warrenheip St. Buninyong circa 1930. Note the Eagle Hotel, which has survived the fire on the site of the present garage.

## April 2010

**Our next meeting is on Thursday 15 April 2010, at 7.30p.m. at the Court House History Centre. David Senior will address us about his experiences at the old Eagle Store, dealing in antiques and collectables.**

**The Buninyong Garden Harvest Lunch** held in the Gardens on Sunday 14 March, was a brilliant success, with a sell-out crowd of 600 people enjoying the perfect weather, great local food and wine, and musical entertainment in the beautiful setting of the Gardens, which were looking very well after recent rain. A percentage of profits on the day will go to the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations in 2011.

Representatives of the Friends of the Buninyong Gardens and the Historical Society had a useful meeting with Cr. Samantha McIntosh, to showcase the Gardens and interest her in the heritage issues surrounding the old civic precinct in the Gardens.

The Buninyong Uniting Church **Car Boot Sale** on Saturday 20 March, drew many visitors, and we had many visitors at the Court House, including a talk by the Secretary for the benefit of new residents.

## **FAMILY HISTORY ENQUIRIES**

**March-April 2010**

**COLLINS** – Hugh Collins sold his property ‘Collinsgrove’ at Garibaldi to the Whykes family in the 1930s. From Patricia Dorz, Gippsland, a member.

**POWER** – Richard and Mary and family. Dr. Power was the first doctor who set up practice in the infant township of Buninyong in 1842. He came from Dublin with his wife Mary and family. Query from a descendant of Henry Powell, in Bodalla, NSW.

**RAVA** – Michael Rava married Susan Lockyer and they settled in the Durham Lead area in the late 1860s. We were contacted by John D. Rava, who is a grandson of John (or Jack) Rava, who says that many of John’s siblings were to be found in the Riverina district

**RYAN** – ‘Paddy’, reputed to be a market gardener, arrived circa 1855 and settled in Buninyong area. There is a grave in the Buninyong cemetery.

**THIESSEN** – Anna Magdalena Hocking was the daughter of John and Isobel Thiessen. Her birth was registered in Buninyong around 1870. She was the daughter of Johann Thiessen, who was at Scotchman’s Lead as early as 1866.

**WALKER** – William was a farmer at Napoleons, who died in 1890. From Coral Walker-Smith, WA, a member who recently visited .

**WISE** family from Magpie and Enfield, are holding a family reunion at the Buninyong Town Hall in May.

**WYATT** – Henry and Lydia were associated with the Eagle Hotel in the nineteenth century, and their large family married into many local families. Visit from Bruce Wyatt of Adelaide,

Readers who know anything about any of these names, and can help, please contact the secretary [a.beggs-sunter@ballarat.edu.au](mailto:a.beggs-sunter@ballarat.edu.au)

## **FLOUR MILLS IN BUNINYONG**

In the 1840s, the Learmonth Brothers had a horse-powered flour mill at their Boninyong property. It is the only horse-powered mill listed in the Victorian Government's *Blue Books* between 1851 and 1856. When the Learmonth property was advertised for sale in 1851, it was noted that there was a 'two-storied mill house with four-horse flour mill'. (M. Kiddle, *Men Of Yesterday*, p. 172)

John Smith NICHOLSON and Sarah Jane NICHOLSON were born in Buninyong in 1871 and 1873 respectively, the children of John NICHOLSON, miller, born in 1843. The children were baptized at Holy Trinity in Buninyong.

The 1875 Bailliere's Victorian Directory lists several millers in the Buninyong area: it is likely that these were all working at Nicholson's Flour Mill:

- John Gillispie, Inglis St.
- John James, Eyre St.
- John Nicholson, Glencoe Gully
- Alexander Robertson, Palmerston St.

By 1882 John Nicholson was a miller in Ballarat, operating the newly built Ballarat City Roller Flour Mills in Armstrong St North. It was an impressive concern until 1892, when Nicholson died. (L. and P. Jones, *The Flour Mills of Victoria*, p. 138)

It is interesting that Buninyong's flour mill only operated for a few years in the 1870s. After that, supplies would have come from Ballarat.

## **Chemists in Buninyong.**

The first chemist is recorded in the 1857 Census. In the 1858 Directory, James C. Bernard was listed as chemist and druggist. It is worth noting that in the same Directory for Ballarat, Poynton and Sheppard, chemists, were in Main Road and in Geelong, and Henry Brind was operating as a storekeeper in Main Rd. Brind was trained as a chemist, and later opened his Distillery at Warrenheip. Thomas Sheppard later set up the Buninyong Brewery beside the Gong.

The 1861 Census listed 2 chemists. James Bernard was still there in 1862, in Warrenheip St. Dr. Rankin was also listed as having a dispensary in Learmonth St.

Edward Newman became the leading chemist in Buninyong from 1862. He arrived at Ballarat on 3 May 1853. (*Roll Book of Ballarat Pioneers*, Ballarat Historical Society, 1874.) By October 1854 he was established as a chemist at Pennyweight Hill, when he advertised in the Ballarat Business Directory. In the 1862 Ballarat Directory he is listed as a chemist in Sturt St., Ballarat, and the *Grenville Advocate* of 12 March 1862 records Edward Newman as a chemist in the Smythesdale area, but according to the entry in *Victoria and Its Metropolis*, Newman went to live in Buninyong in 1862. Certainly he appears in the 1865 Directory as 'chemist, Warrenheip St.' Newman's chemist shop shows up in photos of the block between Learmonth and Forest Sts. He continued to practice there until his death in 1903.

Dr. Frank Longden, appointed medico to Buninyong in 1888, had a dispensary attached to his house in Learmonth St. when it was built in 1896.

In 1920 Mr Eva was the chemist, with young Stanley Coates as his very junior assistant. (Memories of Ann Lippiatt, *Buninyong News* Dec. 1988, p. 23)

The Porter family were involved with homeopathic medicine and dispensing, and John Porter and his daughter Annie, who was a trained nurse, had a collection of medicine boxes that were in the collection of our late member, Stuart Skewes. One of the bottles had a label stating it was dispensed by the Buninyong Chemist, W. O. Straede (This is a mystery – no other reference to this name could be found)

Another famous (or infamous) chemist in the district was William Pearse of Durham Lead – He was Cornish, and advertised his own patent medicine, Pearse's Specific Remedy, available from the Post Office. In 1873, he advertised his remedy in every issue of the *Buninyong Telegraph*, claiming it as a cure for dysentery and diarrhoea, as well as many other things. Dr. Richard Brown gave his testimonial. However it was a dubious remedy, because the good doctor died soon afterwards.

In December 1987, the Buninyong United Friendly Society Dispensary opened in Warrenheip St, with Murray Felstead as manager. Since then it has provided a very valuable service to the local community.

## **Disastrous Fire at Buninyong 1876**

*The Argus*, 6 November 1876

(from the Ballarat correspondent)

A messenger arrived here (Ballarat) about 5 o'clock this morning with news to the effect that a large fire was raging in **Buninyong**, and asking the fire brigades to send help, which caused the two fire bells to peal out loudly. From the reports to hand it appears that the fire first broke out in the shop of Mr. Harrison, ironmonger, between 2 and 3 o'clock this morning. From thence it communicated to the premises of Bradshaw, butcher and grocer, and Dooley, baker. After that it laid hold of the premises of W. Hannah, shoemaker, Caffey, blacksmith, Sleeman, baker, and the shop of Mr. Greaves, draper. Here a brick house, belonging to Mr. Greaves and Hedrick's store stopped the progress of the fire ; but between Greaves's shop and Hedrick's store there were some unoccupied houses which fell a prey to the flames. A horse was burnt alive, which gave rise to the painful rumour after the first portion of its roasted body was seen that a human being had fallen a victim. Several of our firemen went down, and did good service in helping to check the progress of the fire. Most of the property destroyed is insured. The cause of the conflagration is not known.

## **Real Estate Prices in Buninyong, 1876**

*The Argus* on 20 January 1876 reported that 'property in Buninyong is getting very cheap, because of a number of miners leaving for Newcastle in NSW. Last week a four-roomed house and fruit garden sold for £11.

## **COMING EVENTS**

April 15 – BDHS Meeting Guest Speaker

April 20 – AGM of Friends of the Buninyong Botanical Gardens, 7.30p.m., Town Hall.

May 7-8 Buninyong Film Festival, Buninyong Town Hall.

May 8-9 Ballarat Heritage Festival. Buninyong will participate with walking tours each day at 11.00a.m., and open buildings.