

BUNINYONG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Reg. No. A0030085Y

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

Newsletter

DECEMBER 2011



Opening of 150th Anniversary Dry stone wall gates at the Gong by Simon Ramsay MLA, 13 November 2011. Chairman Peter Hiscock presides, and the Mount Clear Secondary College Band was on hand to lead us in the National Anthem. Front row guests include Don Ogilvie, Frank Ritchie, Derick Leather and Dawn Whykes, all important movers and shakers in restoring the Gardens from the 1970s.

Wishing all members and friends a very Happy Christmas and an enlightening New Year. In January Buninyong will again be highlighted in the Australian Cycling Championships, and we will meet again on the third Thursday of February.

150th Anniversary of Botanic Gardens Celebrations, 13 November 2011

An approximately 150 strong audience of locals, including dignitaries from the Gardens Restoration Group of 1973 (Dawn Whykes and Frank Ritchie), former Buninyong Shire Councillor Derick Leather (who is the genius of the swimming pool redevelopment) and Don Ogilvie, son of the last curator of the Gardens in the 1930s, were seated at the Gong at 2.00 pm for the formal celebrations, chaired by Peter Hiscock, Chairman of the Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens. Official guests were Ted Lovett from the Wathaurung Co-operative, who gave a formal welcome to country; Cr. Craig Fletcher, Mayor of Ballarat, and Simon Ramsay, MLC for Western Victoria, who had the pleasant duty of unveiling the memorial plaque and declaring the gates 'open'.

Students from Mt Clear Secondary College Band were present to play the National Anthem and add to the ceremony of the occasion, as was Romulus, the beautiful Clydesdale from Sovereign Hill who pulled the old Buninyong Merewether fire engine along Forest St. Most important were the children from local primary schools, who constructed wooden wheel barrows under the direction of Dick Patterson, and led the procession from the Gong to the Queen Victoria Rotunda.

The threatened rain held off, and the sun came out later in the afternoon. Everyone was delighted by the speech of Simon Ramsay, with farming and gardening roots in the Birregurra area, who warmly praised the efforts of the Friends group, and also Cr. Ben Taylor, who personally took on this project from its inception.

It was good to meet the stonemason, Paul Middleton of Ballarat, who was commissioned to build the two stone entrances, one at the Gong and one opposite St. Peter and Paul's Church. The work is a compromise between traditional dry stone walling, and modern demands of health and safety regulations. It is a brilliant compromise, with stone provided from the Scott/Burnham family of Scotsburn, in a lovely historical link to our earliest European settlers.

Afternoon tea was served in traditional style in the Queen Victoria Rotunda, constructed in 1901 to cater for 200 people. We didn't get everyone in the Rotunda at once, but everyone was well served, and enjoyed the music provided by students from Mount Clear Secondary College's band.

A special entertainment was provided by members of the Buninyong CFA, who operated the old Merewether Fire Engine, using water from the lake. Romulus, the 17 year old Clydesdale from Sovereign Hill, watched the antics of the CFA, then deftly backed himself into the shafts of the engine with the assistance of Horse Master Alan, and made a striking exit from the Gardens to end a lovely afternoon.

A well deserved tribute to the Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens, especially Peter Hiscock as President, Christina Hindhaugh as Secretary, Chris Hindhaugh, Ian and Jan Selathiel, Anne King, Judith Bailey, Richard and Stephanie Patterson, Russell Luckock and Lorraine Powell. They have graced Buninyong with a beautiful tribute to our ancestors, which draws on the landscape values of our district.

Buninyong Primary School Local History Project

Once again, Doug Bradby worked with Grade 4 children at Buninyong Primary School on a local history project in November-December, resulting in the students choosing a project on a local person or place. The students (and their parents) entered enthusiastically into the project, and were asking searching questions of the staff at the Old Library, and the Historical Society. It was good to be able to help the young people in their projects. A number of students chose the Gardens as their project, and incorporated interviews with Don Ogilvie into their Powerpoint presentations. Doug does a wonderful job of inspiring the students with curiosity about their township, and the Society once again contributed to the book prizes given to outstanding students.

Durham Lead Walk November 2011

Our November excursion was a very pleasant afternoon for those who attended. We began at Buninyong, and drove to Green Hills to inspect the old alluvial diggings of 1856, assisted by the expert local knowledge of Kevin Bott and Kath Chapman. Next we visited the Durham Lead School site, and spotted one old and exotic pine tree that interested us all. Then down to the township of Durham Lead, where we ended up at Jeanette Skrokov's beautiful garden, on the site of the old Durham Lead Methodist Church. The tea and scones provided by Jeanette were a lovely finale to the afternoon. On the way back we stopped at Slaughterhouse Road to inspect the old Whykes slaughterhouse, and also looked out over the original Learmonth Pre-emptive run and homestead site, and the remains of the Buninyong Gold Mining Company. Two new photos came to light via Frances Winnell – one of the Durham Lead school circa 1900, and one of Payne's Grocery Store from the same period.

The Ancient Village

Ballarat *Star*, 2 December 1858

AN ACCOUNT OF THE COACH TRIP FROM GEELONG TO BALLARAT

A SPELL OFF

Soon we enter upon the outskirts of **the ancient**, and slow but fertile and pleasant **village of Buninyong**. Garden after garden, cottage after cottage, field after field, meadow after meadow, betoken the early settled nature of the locality.

Star, 27 June 1863

The hounds met at Buninyong on Friday morning when about twenty sportsmen, principally from Ballarat and **the ancient township**, put in an appearance.

Argus, 13 December 1867 – describing the visit of the Duke of Edinburgh, Prince Alfred, to Buninyong on 12 December 1867. referred in its report to the '**ancient township**'.

On 19 April 1876 the *Ballarat Star* carried a report of a hunt at Burnt Bridge with Clarke MLA.'s harriers. There was 'a cavalcade such as never before visited the district. There were buggies and carryalls filled with ladies and their knights, with

some 25 sportsmen on horseback, nearly all from the ‘**ancient village**’ and Clarendon... A hare was found in Mr Ealgeson’s paddock and was chased by half-a-dozen Kelsalls, a trio of Scotts, any number of Hedricks and Sellicks, with Master Hastie on *The Doctor* and Mr Whykes on *Butcher*’. They chased the hare to the Blue Bridge, then back to Burnt Bridge and then through Kelsall’s paddock until they lost the hare in the Lal Lal Ranges. Host Mr Campbell of Burnt Bridge provided a ‘capital dinner’ at the end of the day. There were only three spills and no one was injured, and one dog was lost, for whom a reward was offered.

Interesting to notice that the reporter uses the term ‘the ancient village’ for Buninyong,

Clarendon, Corduroy Bridge, ‘a rising and important township’

A description of Corduroy comes to us from an account of the coach trip from Geelong to Ballarat, published in the *Ballarat Star* on 2 December 1858:

We now drag through bog holes on to the Plank Road, and pass through another heavily-wooded country, to Burnt Bridge, and thence to Corduroy, where we change horses again. Corduroy is a pleasant place, has a good hotel, with a fine large garden attached, some comfortable cottages, a store or two, and forest all round everywhere. At Corduroy we take in six horses, the same number we had on leaving Geelong, having run the intermediate stages with five only. We now begin to anticipate the end of our journey.

When the government announced that it would build a railway between Geelong and Ballarat, the citizens of Corduroy were alive to the costs and benefits. The *Star* of 29 November 1858 reports a meeting at the Corduroy Bridge Hotel to discuss the issue, and call for a deviation of the route to make a station close to Clarendon, Corduroy Bridge, ‘a rising and important township that may hereafter rank as a municipality.’ The memorial of the inhabitants was of no avail, as was the appeal of the citizens of Buninyong.

The railway proceeded through Lal Lal, with a huge impact on the coach trade and the hotels in particular.

Coming Events

Australian Cycling Championships, Buninyong, 8-9 January 2012.

Sunday 5 February 2012 – Buninyong marvellous Marmalade Fair. Beginning with Bunny Cricket at 11.00 am in the upper gardens reserve. Then from 12.30 pm in the Town Hall the Marmalade viewing and judging will take place. Check the website at www.buninyong.vic.au/marmalade

Thursday 16 February, at 7.30 pm – our first meeting for 2012.

Membership renewals now due for 2011-2012.

Please detach this section and return with your subscription to:

The Buninyong and District Historical Society Inc., PO Box 98, Buninyong, 3357.

Subscriptions are due at the AGM October each year.

Subscription

Ordinary Members	\$25
Families	\$30
Students and Concession Card Holders	\$20
Corresponding Members	\$20

(A Corresponding Member is unable to attend meetings)

PLEASE PRINT

Name(s)-----

Address-----

Post Code..... Phone No.....

Email Address.....

