

## Avoca & District



Historical Society Inc

Est 1984

## Avoca & District Historical Society Inc

Inc No. A 5883

ABN 25 815 548 934

Postal: Secretary

PO Box 24, Avoca 3467

Tel: 03 54 653 118

E: adhsinc@bigpond.net.au

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~adhs/ADHSMain.htm>



Target for  
2nd round of  
the  
Digitisation  
Project



**The 2016 Annual General Meeting** was held on Saturday 12th November at the Avoca Golf/Bowls Club and was a joint event with members of the Central Highlands Historical Association also in attendance.

ADHS President, Tony O'Shea, welcomed CHHA President Caroline Haas and members from both groups before presenting his ADHS report for 2015-16 (see P2 ).

Both groups conducted their respective AGM's and then Tony introduced guest Speaker Associate Professor Don Garden, President of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria. Don was asked to discuss the services provided by the RHS.



*Founded in 1909, the RHS was formed to collect and record items and documents from the past as until then there was a lack of organisations doing this. The collection has grown substantially since those early days and maintaining this is a continuing task for the organisation. The society now also prints newsletters, run conferences, workshops and exhibitions during the year, runs a book shop, and manages a Facebook page and other social media. With a membership of 850 and an umbrella body for 340 affiliated societies, the society also assists its members with insurance at reasonable rates, which is appreciated by members. They conduct 4 seminars a year and publications are available online, in hard copy and via 'Zoom'.*



*Like many historical societies, RHS is reliant on volunteers and receives limited Commonwealth funding. Don also discussed the issues of attracting new members, succession planning while also acknowledging the importance of societies and their members in protecting and exhibiting heritage items, working with councils, contributing to the economy, and providing social cohesion while promoting the history of their region.*

*"Volunteers are a National asset and we punch above our weight!" Don concluded.*

Above: Professor Garden is pictured with CHHA President Caroline Haas in front of the new CHHA banner.

Following the delicious lunch, Tony conducted a walking tour of the town, which included the Court House, wide divided main street, heritage buildings, Chinese Garden and Daly's Cottage.

\$2000
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\$100

Help us  
reach our  
target

## President's Report to ADHS Inc 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2016, AGM

In my 2015 Report I made mention of the digitisation of the "Avoca Mail" newspaper, for which this Society paid the National Library of Australia several thousand dollars to prepare and upload the first five years (1863-68) to Trove. This went live eighteen months ago, and has been very well received by many researchers into our local history. From their own resources the NLA also digitised the Avoca Mail from 1870 to 1900 and 1914-1918, plus the Avoca Free Press 1914-1918. Some researchers who have visited the Courthouse in the past year have commented that they did so to follow up on items of interest they had found on Trove. Unfortunately the budget cuts imposed by the Federal Government on the NLA have resulted in an inability to digitise any more years unless we pay for it. We are therefore continuing to seek donations to our Digitisation Fund.

During the past year we have experienced a downturn in the statistics for the numbers of enquirers using the ADHS Inc website. This has been our major source of new members, sales of our publications, and enquiries about paid research to be done by the Society. In consultation with Denis Strangman, our webmaster, we reached the conclusion that the format of the website needed refreshing, and that we needed a back-up person to assist Denis and eventually take on the responsibility of administering the website upon his retirement. Our long-time member Anne Young rose to the challenge, and in recent months has been assiduously working on transferring the content from HTML to WordPress and refreshing the appearance and layout of the data. Anne has been collaborating with Denis and believes that it will be ready to go live any day now. Please look out for it and let us have your feedback about how it can be further improved.

Our Op-Shop/Garage Sale at 182 High Street continues to be our third largest source of income, and we must thank Glenys Allen, Elizabeth Williams and Dorothy Robinson for their efforts in managing that enterprise. We also thank Peter Howell for having agreed to our use of the house rent-free "for at least two years" and we are still there seven years later! It is certainly much less labor-intensive than the old method of running the event at the Court House, and produces more income.

Our newsletter editor, and soon-to-be committee member Margaret Pilgrim recently did a great job on organising the celebration of the Avoca Railway Station's 140th anniversary. Around 150 persons (including pupils and teachers from the Primary School) attended an event conducted in what was the goods yard of the station. It could not be held at the actual station building because that is fenced off as a construction site, with work in progress. Margaret also mounted a display in the Avoca Visitor Information Centre of photos and artifacts and the story of the Official Opening in 1876.

Edna Jarvis has been a long-time supporter of ADHS Inc in many capacities too numerous to mention, and retires from the Committee today.

At the recent Committee Meeting it was decided to award Edna with a "Certificate of Appreciation" for her efforts.



*Tony O'Shea* 12/11/2016

**Moonambel Mechanics Institute [hall]** The Committee of Management has commenced planning activities to celebrate the 80th Anniversary of the hall in November 2017. The committee has established a Celebratory Town Committee to ensure that all the town takes the opportunity of sharing the load to organise this event as was done in **1975**, which was the Centenary of the Primary School, and again in **2000**, which was the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the school, and then once again in **2010**, when they celebrated 150 years since the discovery of gold in **November 1860**, by John and James THOMAS.

The first Moonambel Mechanics Institute built in **1901**, appeared to be the social hub of the growing township according to all the newspaper reports of the day. It is pleasing to note that subsequent headlines from the Avoca Free Press dated **Wednesday November 24<sup>th</sup> 1937** stated.....

**'Spectacular Opening of New Moonambel Mechanics Institute Hall--between 3 and 4 hundred people join Celebration.....'**

### Planned activities Include:

Friday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2017- Special show by Moonambel Community Theatre Co.

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>- Market @ Moonambel Primary School & Tour of school for those interested.

Unveiling of MIV Historic Plaque @ hall 3pm, historic display at the hall and Cabaret in evening with band *Seriously Sixties*

Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> Ecumenical Church Service @ Recreation Reserve [Pavilion] 11am Light lunch. More details to come.



## "Our Gem has been Re-polished"

- On Saturday 25th March 2017, the Avoca Community Arts & Gardens Committee, together with Victrack and the Pyrenees Shire, hosted the Official Opening of the refurbished Avoca Railway Station and newly formed Avoca Community Arts & Gardens Precinct.



The Maryborough & District Pipe Band entertained the gathering of 200 + local and visiting patrons prior to the arrival of Queen Victoria (aka Rachel Buckley). Her Majesty eloquently MC'd the proceedings and introduced Minister for Regional Development Jaala Pulford who officially opened the Precinct and unveiled the new Gallery 127 sign.



Following speeches by Victrack and Pyrenees Shire Mayor Ron Eason, Arts & Gardens President Hugh Forster responded on behalf of his committee and members. He thanked all those responsible for making the project a reality and explained the naming of the new art gallery. After much consideration *Gallery 127* was chosen as it is representative of the rail connection—the 127 mile post (the rail distance from Melbourne) is still located on the platform.



The crowd was then entertained by local poet Martin Wynne who wrote and recited a poem especially for the reopening of the station building.

The Pyrenees Choir then performed a rendition of *Here Comes the Train*, a song written by Shire Secretary Henry Hall especially for the opening of the Maryborough – Avoca Rail Line 140 years ago. Those present were then encouraged to give a cheer for the station and pose for a group photograph.

Minister Pulford and President Hugh then opened the *Gallery 127* front door and those present eagerly entered the gallery to view the two exhibitions on display.



The new plant nursery was also open during the day for garden lovers and there was a variety of activities for the young and young art heart, including the whimsical Dunolly Street Band, portraits by Dawn Lim, children's garden and art activities, model train display by enthusiast Geoff Loosmore and relaxing with a tasty BBQ and wine from neighboring Taltarni, Bigibila and Wimmera Hills wineries.



After many, many years of isolation and neglect, it was wonderful to see the platform come to life with people sharing stories, viewing artists at work and visiting the new art gallery and Mal Gilmour exhibition.



A special feature of the refurbished building is the inclusion of the History Room in one of the original, small bedrooms.

The Avoca & District Historical Society committee is delighted to have access to the room to display not only historical photographs and items about the station, but it will give the society the ability to display many items from its vast collection in another venue. Currently the society has limited space in the Court House and is only open to the public on Wednesdays 10:30am to 4pm. The society will also be able to display some of our publications for sale. A feature of the early railway memorabilia is the jacket, hat and tie worn by Station Master, Ivan Redpath. Thanks to Bev Redpath for allowing us to display the special items,



**Gallery 127** will be open to the public Friday— Monday 11am to 4pm—it's well worth a visit!

**Woodend and Women's Rights** (excerpt taken from article from Heritage News, Woodend Oct 2016)  
 Sometimes, because we live in a small rural community, we forget that we are affected by, and can also affect, the outside world. The women of the district, like women in Britain or its colonies, were constrained in the early days by the lack of women's rights.

Before the Norman Conquest in 1066, women in the Anglo-Saxon Britain enjoyed legal and customary rights, including land ownership. Marriage and child custody, professional opportunities, political leadership, and participation in the legal system. During this period women exercised great control over their own destinies as did their counterparts in Wales. Where marriage was considered an agreement, not a holy sacrament; divorce was permitted by common consent with the wife having right to divorce the husband under certain circumstances, including if he was unfaithful to her.

But most of this came to an end with the Norman Conquest and its introduction of the European version of Christianity, where women were considered inferior to men, were owned by their fathers and husbands as chattels and were regarded as sinful tempters of men. English law defined the role of a married woman as being subordinate to her husband, and as being under his protection and influence. Once married, a woman's property belonged to her husband and her legal identity ceased to exist. A married woman was unable to draft a will or dispose of any property without her husband's consent.

Women were limited in what they could inherit and the eldest son had the right to all real property; the daughter only inheriting in the absence of a male heir even if he was a distant cousin. These laws remained on the statute books in Britain until 1925. In contrast to wives, women who never married or who were widowed maintained control over their property and inheritance, owned land and controlled property disposal. However in reality, any property or inheritance was usually under control of a male family member or male trustee. Once married, the only way that women could reclaim property was through widowhood and that only if her husband's will allowed it.

After years of lobbying, Victoria followed England in passing the Married Women's Property Act in 1884, altering the common law to include the wife's right to own, buy and sell her separate property. Wives' legal identities were also restored, as the courts were forced to recognise a husband and a wife as two separate legal entities. Married women's legal rights included the right to sue and be sued, be liable for their own debts, to be subject to bankruptcy laws and hold stock in their own names.

Of course success achieving that measure of women's rights led to women addressing the unfairness of being denied the right to vote. Arguments in Parliament against women having the vote ranged from destroying the motherhood ideal and family life, immorality, employment displacement and the dangers of introducing biological weakness and feminine attitudes into public life. Some even argued that it would give married men two votes as their wives would obviously vote as their husbands directed. In a piece of faulty legislative drafting, the Victorian Electoral Act of 1863 enfranchised all ratepayers listed on local municipal rolls, forgetting earlier local government legislation had permitted women to be added to the municipal rolls for local government elections. Those women therefore now had their vote and proceeded to use it in the general election of 1864.

Outraged that women would dare such effrontery, and embarrassed by the legal oversight, the Legislative Assembly hastily amended the offending clause early in 1865 by restricting the vote for parliamentary elections strictly to male ratepayers. In an effort to gain the right to vote for all Victorian women, a handful of dedicated women took to the streets in 1891 to collect signatures for a petition to present to the Parliament of Victoria. The result was an impressive collection of close to 30,000 signatures from women from all walks of life. Tabled in Parliament in September 1891, with the support of then Premier, James Munro, the petition sought that 'Women should "Vote on Equal Terms with Men"'. Now one of the state's archival treasures, the Women's Suffrage Petition of 1891 earned the name of the 'Monster Petition', being approximately 260 metres long and 200mm wide and rolled onto a cardboard spindle which rests on a Perspex stand. The approximate 30,000 signatures vary in quality and colour inks, even pencil.





### Order Form for Publications

Name:.....

Address:.....

State:..... Postcode:.....

eMail address .....

1. "Moonambel Then & Now" \$15 + \$3 P&P

Total \$.....

2. "Moonambel Heritage Walk" \$5 + \$1 P&P

Total \$.....

3. "Pioneers of the Pyrenees" \$30 + \$5 P&P

Total \$.....

4. "Pubs of Lamplough" \$10 + \$2 P&P

Total \$.....

5. "The Invisible Thread" \$20 + \$3 P&P

Total \$.....

6. "The Barkly Story" \$20 + \$3 P&P

Total \$.....

7. "Avoca Mail 1<sup>st</sup> Edition" \$2 + \$2 P&P

Total \$.....

8. "Ghosts of the Glen" \$20 + \$5 P&P

Total \$.....

9. "Postcards from Avoca" \$30 + \$5 P&P

Total \$.....

10. 2006 ADHS Calendar \$5 + \$2 P&P

Total \$.....

GRAND TOTAL \$.....

Prices are subject to review from time to time.

(For cost of postage outside Australia please contact the Society for a quote.)

Please forward this Order Form together with payment to:

**The Treasurer, ADHS Inc., PO Box 24 Avoca VIC 3467.**  
or pay by electronic funds transfer to: Bendigo Bank  
BSB 633-000 A/c No. 116634510

Avoca & District Historical Society Inc., and email the  
completed form to: [adhsinc@bigpond.net.au](mailto:adhsinc@bigpond.net.au)

## Ring The Bell Watchman

Words by Henry Hall, Avoca Shire Secretary  
(to the tune of "Click go the Shears")



Here at the Railway, we State Scholars stand,  
Schoolmates enclasping, with hand joined to hand,  
Eastward our young eyes we eagerly strain,  
Waiting for the welcome cry of, "Here comes the Train".  
(Chorus of Scholars)

Here comes the train, boys, sing, sing, sing,  
Send forth the glad news afar on the wing,  
O'er hill and valley, boys, shout the refrain,  
Glorious and happy tidings, "Here comes the Train!"  
(Adults repeat the chorus)

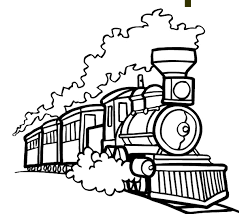
Hark! In the distance the first signal gun  
Tells each glad heart that our Governor has come,  
Off with caps, boys, and give him a cheer,  
Loyally and heartily we welcome him here!  
(Cheering and chorus of scholars)



Ring the bell, Rail-guard, ring, ring, ring,  
Send forth the glad news afar on the wing,  
O'er hill and valley, boys, raise the refrain,  
Glorious triumphant tidings, we have the train!  
(Adults repeat chorus)

Light up the bonfire, let the rockets ascend,  
No meagre triumph such token portend,  
Shout, shout for gladness and echo the strain,  
Letting all Australia know that we have the train!  
(Chorus of scholars)

We have the train, boys, sing, sing, sing,  
Send forth the glad news afar on the wing,  
O'er hill and valley, boys, shout the refrain,  
Avoca's gained her turning point, now we've the train.  
(Adults repeat the chorus)



**Henry Hall** was also a miner and  
editor of the newspaper.

He married Elizabeth Bethell and a son  
Henry Lyall was born at Homebush near Avoca, Victoria  
in 1861. Henry was a member of the Avoca District  
Roads Board, which held its first meeting on February  
14<sup>th</sup>, 1862 at Ransom's Telegraph Hotel.

Avoca was proclaimed a Shire on December 28<sup>th</sup>, 1864.  
It was a combination of the Boroughs of Avoca and  
Moonambel and the Avoca District Roads Board. Henry  
Hall was the first Shire Secretary after the amalgama-  
tion, and succeeded C.E. Pascoe, who had been Town  
Clerk.

He was Manager of the Slaughteryard Reef Gold Mining  
Company at Moonambel in 1867, and Manager of the  
Golden Lake Mining Co., Homebush in 1870.



<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~adhs/ADHSMain.htm>

President : Mr Tony O'Shea  
 Vice President : Vacant  
 Secretary: Mrs. Jill Hunter  
 Treasurer: Mrs. Dorothy Robinson  
 Committee: All of the above, plus  
 Mrs. Elizabeth Williams, Mrs June Bruce,  
 Mrs. Glenda Williams, Mrs Cheryl Mallinson  
 Research Officer: Mrs. Dorothy Robinson.  
 Editor: Mrs. Margaret Pilgrim.

Meetings of the **Avoca and District Historical Society Inc.** are held approximately quarterly, and vary between excursions to places of interest and Guest Speaker occasions.

Members receive four Newsletters each year and have free access to the Court house when open for normal hours. Non-member visits to the Court House are \$5 per hour, whether to carry out research with our assistance, or to view the current exhibition.

Special Openings of the Court House can be arranged on other days by appointment, for a fee of \$30.00, plus cost of any copying required. If you are travelling some distance, this is possibly more satisfactory, as you get our undivided attention to assist with your research. On open days you may be sharing our attention with a number of others.

Enquiries re guided tours of places of Historic Interest in the District, including the Avoca Cemetery & Daly's Cottage, may be directed to the President, Tony O'Shea [adhsinc@bigpond.net.au](mailto:adhsinc@bigpond.net.au)

The Society charges a moderate fee for these services. Ask us for a quote!

**Next Meeting : Monday April 3rd 2017**

The March Newsletter was printed at the office of Louise Staley, Member for Ripon

**Membership Fees:**

~ **Joining Fee \$5.00**

~ **\$20 single**

~ **\$25 family at same address.**

**These prices apply if you are willing to receive the newsletter via email; or plus additional \$5 if you want it sent via AustPost.**

**Membership remains current for 12 months from date of joining. Donations of \$2 and over to the Court House Restoration Fund, the Avoca Cemetery Fund, the Daly's Cottage Restoration Fund (pictured above) & digitization of Avoca Mail are tax deductible.**

**New membership or renewal of membership forms can be downloaded from our website; the address of which is at the top of page 6 of each edition of the newsletter and on page 1.**

If undelivered, return to  
 PO Box 24, Avoca VIC 3467

1 PYRENEES PIONEERS  
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