

# The Surf Coast Family History Group

Vol. 67 Autumn, March 2018 Edition

(Sub group of the Anglesea and District Historical Society Inc.)

## Inverlochy Log



*From painting by Geoffrey Soames*

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Quarterly Journal of The Surf Coast Family History Group

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We have a wide range of indexes both Australian and overseas. We have internet access for researching.

Our equipment includes computers, scanners, printers, microfiche readers and an extensive library.

Need help with your research? Call in and we will help.

**Library and Research Facilities**

Tuesday 10.30am - 1.00pm

Wednesday by appointment

Saturday 10.30am - 1.00pm

**Meetings** held on the 2nd Thursday of the month

commencing at 10am at History House

unless an excursion has been scheduled

5a McMillan Street Anglesea 3230

Visitors Welcome

Enquiries: surfcoastfh@gmail.com

Susan Clarke: Phone 0438 070 560

**MARCH: Outing**

Thursday 8 March

Combined visit to

Beeac Windmill

Park Followed by

\* Lunch at the

Farmers Arms

Hotel

\* Talk by local

historian

\* Transport leaves History House 9.30am

\* Cost: \$15 includes transport and morning tea.

\* Lunch extra



**APRIL Meeting** 10.00am Thursday 12 April

Speaker: Maree Davis

Topic: *Researching Your Convict Ancestors*

**MAY Meeting** 10.00am Thursday 10 May

Speaker: t.b.a.

Topic: *t.b.a.*

**JUNE Meeting** 10.00am Thursday 14 June

Speakers: Harry & Marilyn Wendt

Topic: Searching For War-torn Displaced Ancestors

Members and visitors welcome to all activities.

*No activities are held on days of code red or extreme fire danger for the Central Region.*

**Committee Members 2018**

Chairperson  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Committee Member  
Website  
Committee Member  
Committee Member  
Committee Member

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The Surf Coast Family History Group does not hold itself responsible for the accuracy of the statements or opinions expressed by authors of articles published in this magazine

## NEWS AND RESOURCES

### Passengers in History

*Passengers in History* provides a way to explore the history of the people who came to South Australia and Australia. The website combines two resources: a passengers database developed by the SA Maritime Museum, and a list of ships' logs and diaries, titled Log of Logs. See: <http://passengersinhistory.sa.gov.au/>

### Update on Biographical Database of Australia

In December 2017, BDA made another 250,000 records available online. The sets include:

- Convict Indents/Ship Musters NSW: 1829, 1832, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837 & 1838
- Church registers for selected parishes
- Norfolk Island Victualling Book, 1792 – 1796
- Tasmanian Muster of Children 1827
- Tasmanian Victualling Book 1803 – 1804 (original source)
- Convicts and employers NSW 1828 – 1844
- Tasmanian Database 1803 – 1827
- Tasmanian Musters 1814 – 1822

Unassisted Immigrants to Sydney NSW 1842 - 1857      Go to: <https://www.bda-online.org.au/>

### FamilySearch free sign-in

Since 13 December 2017, when visiting the FamilySearch website you will have seen a prompt to register for a free FamilySearch account to continue enjoying all the free expanded benefits FamilySearch has to offer. Go to the following to read about the greater subscriber experiences and benefits:

<https://media.familysearch.org/familysearch-free-sign-in-offers-greater-subscriber-experiences-and-benefits>

### FamilySearch digital records

See *Ancestor* journal (vol. 33, issue 8, December 2017, p. 32) for an explanation of how to locate the digital records in FamilySearch.

### New archival records at PROV

As of 1 January 2018, another set of files has been made available to the public at PROV under Section 9 of the *Public Records Act 1973*. Records include capital sentence and criminal case files, male prison registers, divorce case files and cause books from 1942 as well as children's court registers from 1917 and birth registers 1911 – 1918. See full list at: <https://www.prov.vic.gov.au/about-us/our-blog/new-archival-records-explore>

### Sands and McDougall directories online

The Sands and McDougall directories record commercial, industrial and residential land use in Victoria from 1860 to 1974. These are now available online through the State Library of Victoria. Go to the following to search the directories online: [http://cedric.slv.vic.gov.au/R/?func=collections&collection\\_id=3907](http://cedric.slv.vic.gov.au/R/?func=collections&collection_id=3907)

### Exhibition: Australia Will Be There – Victorians in the First World War (1914-1919)

Shrine of Remembrance Touring Exhibition: 2 February to 29 March 2018 at Deakin University Prime Ministerial Library, Waterfront Campus. The exhibition is free. Open 10.00 am to 4.00 pm, Monday to Friday. The exhibition contains over 100 photos drawn from major collections and from the families of those who served.

### Quote for this issue

'History is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation.'

Source: Julian Barnes, *The Sense of an Ending*

#### STOP PRESS

##### PROV announces new transfers to its collection

Newly transferred to its collection is a series of early church records of baptism, marriages, and burials 1836-1873. For details including an example from the Wesleyan Chapel Geelong) go to:

<https://prov.vic.gov.au/about-us/our-blog/early-church-records-added-our-collection>

#### CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

The results of the Christmas Raffle held in December 2017 were:-

FIRST PRIZE: Ticket No. A594

purchased by John Grant

SECOND PRIZE Ticket No. A254

Purchased by Marion Shears

# Siloam Bible Christian Chapel at Modewarre

by Susan Clarke

The Siloam Bible Christian Chapel at 440 Considines Road, Modewarre is in a very poor state of repair. So it is timely to acknowledge some of what is recorded about the history of this building, which was at the forefront of the spread of the Bible Christian movement into Victoria from South Australia in the mid 19th century.

The Bible Christian movement started in the west country in England in 1815 when William O'Bryan separated from the Wesleyan Methodists. It spread to South Australia first via Cornish miners. William Hocken was stationed in Melbourne, from South Australia, for the Bible Christians in February 1855. By the time he left in 1860, nine chapels had been opened in Victoria, including Modewarre.

According to McHarg (2011) services were held at a farmhouse at Cattle Station near Modewarre from 1855. James Howe of Modewarre attended services there and began Sabbath school teaching a couple of years later. William Hocken started visiting the Mt Moriac locality soon after he arrived in Melbourne. The Modewarre Chapel was built in 1858 and was part of the Mt Moriac circuit.

The other preaching places in the circuit in 1887 were: Barrabool Hills, Mt Moriac, Bambra, Deans Marsh, Murroon, Pennyroyal, Wensleydale, Yaughar, Gerangamete, Dewing's Creek, Boonah, Wymboliel, and Yeo. In 1902, the Bible Christians joined with other strands of Methodism. As a result, the circuit records indicate that "Modewarre estate sold L16". When Graham Lehmann visited in 2012, he wrote: "The chapel is on privately held land currently used to store hay for the local farmer; if not in use for this, it's used by the Modewarre Football Club (which has its oval across the road) for its changing rooms ..."

The clergy at the chapel were usually assigned to the circuit for three years. The Bible Christians were one of the first Christian groups to allow women to preach. The early preachers were all born in England, predominantly Cornwall, but from 1879 men born in Victoria were being appointed. The financial records from 1887 list some of the congregation, e.g. Mr W Hortip, Mr W Gent, Mr S Danger, and Miss M Jacka. Some of these names are familiar: Hortips Road runs between Considines Road and Cape Otway Road; and the Jacka name is well-known because Albert Jacka was the first Australian to be decorated with the Victoria Cross during the First World War.

The chapel became a centre for temperance activities. There was always an anniversary meeting of the Sabbath School. The *Geelong Advertiser* report of 1877 stated:

"The children having been regaled with a sumptuous supply of tea, cake, confectionery, and fruit, "those of a larger growth" sat down to tables well supplied with all the usual delicacies which were provided by Mesdames Gent, Davis and Shugg". The food was followed by entertainment: "Miss Jones ably presided at the harmonium, which was kindly lent for the occasion by Mr M'Conachy." [Note: see the article on page 6 about this gentleman.]

The Siloam chapel is now the earliest known surviving Bible Christian Chapel in Victoria, and one of only three known surviving Bible Christian chapels in the state. According to the shire's heritage study, it also has significance as a moderately intact example of a Victorian Georgian style, typical for non-conformist churches in the mid 19th century. Beyond its architecture, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Modewarre chapel was a very important part of the life of the community. This fact serves to reinforce its historical importance, and official status of significance at a state level.

## Sources

Travis McHarg (2011) *The Bible Christian Church in Victoria, 1850s – 1902*

Graham Lehmann, 'Modewarre Bible Christian Siloam Chapel', *Proceedings of the Uniting Church Historical Society (Vic & Tas)*, vol. 19, no. 2, December 2012, p. 64 – 65

*Farmland, Forest & Surf: Environmental History*, Surf Coast Shire Heritage Study Stage 2B, 2009



*Siloam Bible Christian Chapel at Modewarre. This photo from the Lindsay Braden collection was taken ten years ago. The Chapel has fallen into further decline since.*

## Labour Day – a local connection

by Susan Clarke



Plaque above: Sponsored by  
CFMEU (Construction Union)

As we approach the Labour Day holiday on 12 March, it is timely to recall the influence of the builder of the Split Point lighthouse, Robert Anderson. Anderson was the stonemason who built the lighthouse in 1891, and he also built 'Kontiki', the house in Bambra Road, Airey's Inlet. Anderson's business was based in Richmond. In 1856 he had been one of the leaders of the Eight Hour Day marches in Victoria. On 21 April 1856, stonemasons stopped work to protest that employers would not reduce working hours, which were considered too long in the Australian heat. It was also argued that labourers needed time to develop their 'social and moral condition' through education, and that workers would be better husbands, fathers and citizens if they were allowed adequate leisure time. An agreement was reached whereby stonemasons worked no more than an eight-hour day, and this was a significant milestone in the recognition of workers' rights.

The Victorian Heritage Database regards the lighthouse as significant in part because of its association with Robert Anderson. In 1994, in addition to the installation of a plaque on the lighthouse, a monument was built to recognise the work of Robert Anderson. The monument is on the Great Ocean Road in front of the Lightkeepers Inn, Aireys Inlet. It carries the following plaque:

THIS MONUMENT WAS ERECTED TO PAY TRIBUTE TO THE BUILDER  
OF THE SPLIT POINT LIGHTHOUSE AT AIREY'S INLET  
STONEMASON ROBERT ANDERSON  
WHO BUILT THIS LIGHTHOUSE IN 1891 - (L8,300)  
TO GIVE SAFE PASSAGE TO ALL THAT SAIL THE OCEANS  
AND WAS ONE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF THE  
EIGHT HOUR WORKING DAY IN VICTORIA - 1856

UNVEILED BY:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE RICHARD McGARVIE  
GOVERNOR OF VICTORIA

IN THE COMPANY OF:

JOHN HALFPENNY SECRETARY  
VICTORIAN TRADES HALL COUNCIL

14TH MARCH 1994

ERECTED BY:

LABOUR HISTORICAL GRAVES COMMITTEE WITH THE SUPPORT  
OF INCOLINK AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT



Above: Monument dedicated to those who lost  
their lives on the Victorian western coastline

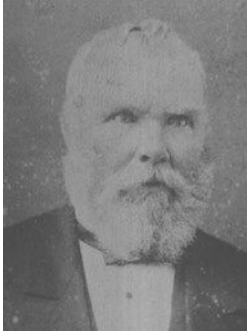
At the same site there is a monument dedicated to all seamen, passengers and rescuers who lost their life on the Victorian western coastline. One plaque includes the following quote from Jack Loney, foremost historian of Australian shipwrecks: 'More large ships have been wrecked along Victoria's west coast than on any comparable stretch of coastline of Australia and the stories of their loss are woven into legend and romance which surrounds the golden years of last century'. It was unveiled by His Excellency Dr Davis McCaughey on 26<sup>th</sup> May 1991. The monument also includes a plaque with a chronological list of wrecks throughout the nineteenth century to 1958. The third element of the monument is a tablet with the words: 'This monument was erected to honour the memory of immigrants who perished at sea on their way to settle in Australia'. It was unveiled by Hon. Gerry Hand MP, Minister for Immigration, 29<sup>th</sup> November 1992, on behalf of the Prime Minister.

### Sources

- Victorian Heritage Database: Split Point Lightstation Complex <http://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/4943>  
Monument Australia: Robert Anderson  
<http://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/people/industry/display/100880-robert-anderson/photo/1>  
National Museum Australia: Eight-hour Day [http://www.nma.gov.au/online\\_features/defining\\_moments/featured/eight-hour\\_day](http://www.nma.gov.au/online_features/defining_moments/featured/eight-hour_day)  
Monument Australia: Immigrants Monument  
<http://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/landscape/settlement/display/96733-immigrants-monument>  
Monument Australia: Seafarers Memorial  
<http://monumentaaustralia.org.au/themes/disaster/maritime/display/30003-seafarers-memorial>

## George McConachy - Skillful or Deceitful?

Jan Morris



George McConachy  
1835-1901

George McConachy was always on the lookout for an opportunity. He knew that leaving Ireland before the potato famine had been a smart move by his father. George was just six years old in 1841 when he landed at Geelong to start a new life. There were only 454 people living in Geelong when George arrived. It had only been declared a town three years earlier in 1838.

George watched his father Thomas obtain a squatting licence for a small squatting run at North Geelong. Thomas was frustrated that he could not buy farming land, as everything was administered from Sydney. So he bought town blocks and had cottages built that he rented out. He was also employed as herdsman at the town common (now Eastern Park and beyond).

By the time George was 13 his father had bought land at Modewarre. One 50-acre block was given to George. By 1853 George had moved to Modewarre and looked for ways to make money. He farmed his fifty acres, opened a small wooden store and married a local girl Elizabeth Ewart.

George purchased another 47 acre paddock and obtained 187 acres following the death of his father-in-law, James Ewart. He still kept the store and opened another one at Moriac. He continued mortgaging one paddock to buy another until he and his sons were farming 715 acres at Modewarre. The area was developing quickly and George was going to make money from the development. He purchased three blocks of land at the newly laid-out township of Layard. He hoped to sell them at considerable profit in a few year's time.

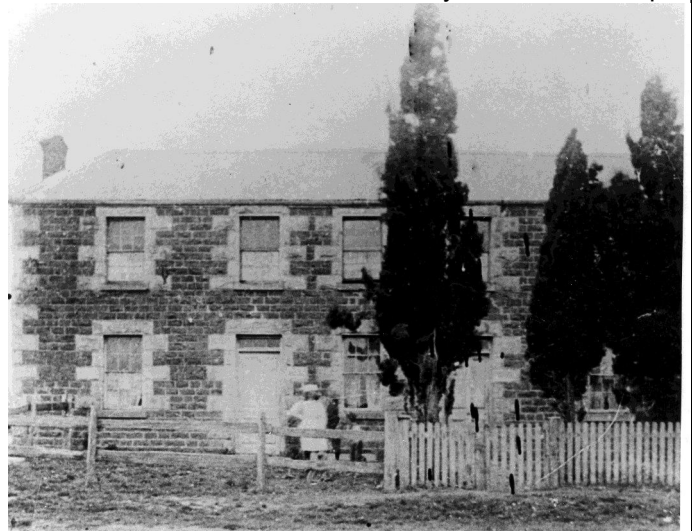
George's main community involvement was at the Bible Christian Chapel built in 1858. He became a local preacher. His brother in law's father, Peter Clark built a substantial, two storey, blue stone hotel nearby on Cape Otway Road, the main road to the west. A school was built and George was correspondent (secretary) of the school committee. In 1862 he became a trustee of the Modewarre Lakeside Common. In 1870 he stood for the Barrabool Shire Council. He was defeated by 33 votes. When his widowed aunt Mary Smallwood arrived in Australia in 1854 with her three children George took them in and helped them become established.

Through the Bible Christian Church George was instrumental in introducing the Temperance Society to the area. The society encouraged people to abstain from alcoholic drinks. Consequently business at the Bridge Inn was greatly reduced. Then the building of the Princes Highway as an alternative route to the west sent the Bridge Inn bankrupt. Peter Clarke had paid £669 for the business and then rebuilt the inn in bluestone. George purchased the delicensed hotel in 1872 for just £340, moved his store into the lower floor and his family onto the second floor.

Ploughing competitions were becoming popular, so in 1865 George organized one in his paddock opposite the Bridge Inn. He had both bullock teams and horse teams competing. At the end of the competition, shrewd George had his paddock ploughed free of charge.

George McConachy was the brother of Robert McConachy who built the bark hut at Aireys Inlet. Another brother David, farmed nearby at Wensleydale. His sister Margaret Clarke and Eliza Lighton both also resided at Modewarre for some time.

George left Modewarre for Echuca in 1879 after 26 years. He continued to buy land, leave a son on it and move on. He bought property at Modewarre, Echuca, Colac and Cobden. In Cobden, George was an inaugural director of the Cobden Butter and Vegetable Drying Factory. George had a considerable number of shares in the factory which he sold just prior to the factory closing down the vegetable drying section, thus depleting the value of the shares. When George died in 1901, several of his sons inherited a farm, but with its considerable mortgage..



The former Bridge Inn at Modewarre