

BUNINYONG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Reg. No. A0030085Y

Web Site <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~buninhis>

PO Box 98, Buninyong, Vic. 3357.

Newsletter



1 July 2017; Crowd outside the Town Hall to mark the re-dedication of Buninyong Avenue of Honour.

October 2017

Our 35th AGM takes place on 19 October 2017 at the Court House History Centre. Our guest speaker is Vic Schledko former owner of *Brim Brim*, who will speak on the history of the house, and its first builder, Judge Warrington Rogers.

Photo Scanning Day – As part of History Week, we invite visitors to bring in photos that contribute to documenting Buninyong's history, that can be scanned and added to our photo collection. It is amazing how much can be gleaned from one of those little box brownie photos from the 1930s; capturing domestic work, farming practices, streetscapes, community events etc. Members will be on hand from 9.30am to 1.30pm.

The Buninyong Festival will take place on Sunday 29 October, and we will be open to welcome visitors, with an exhibition of photos from past festivals. We will also be offering a walking tour of Buninyong leaving the Town Hall steps at 11.00am.

Open Gardens weekend 11-12 November. The Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens are involved in opening a number of local gardens, including the very historic *Mount Boninyong* garden. On Sunday 12 November we will open the old Court House in support of activities in the Gardens.

Old Court House

There has been much activity this year behind the scenes in planning for the future of the old Court House in the Gardens, which this Society cares for on behalf of the City of Ballarat. The City of Ballarat's new heritage adviser, John Dyke, met the Secretary at the court house and he approved of the plans for reinforcing the roof of the old butter factory and improving drainage around the building. Roger Permezel, President of the Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens, was instrumental in seeking a Federal Government *Stronger Communities Grant* through local MHR Catherine King. Working closely with Bob Skewes, and supported by the Buninyong Men's Shed, an application has been made for a grant of \$8,750 to allow these works to proceed.

Avenue of Honour Buninyong Re-dedication 1 July 2017

Saturday 1 July was a great day for Buninyong, when the whole village came together to celebrate the restoration and re-dedication of the Buninyong Avenue of Honour. About 600 members of community groups marched in the procession from the Golf Course to the Town Hall, on a fine frosty morning, led by the Creswick Light Horse and the Creswick Brass Band. The Historical Society marched behind our new banner and flag, a gift of the Buninyong RSL. Our Society contributed many hours to researching the names to be placed on the new plaques. We have still not solved the mystery of what happened to the original plaques, which were removed from the trees and put in a shed behind the Town Hall, then disappeared. The new plaques honor the 167 servicemen from the old Buninyong Shire who made the supreme sacrifice during the war. The short address made at the dedication by Secretary Anne Beggs-Sunter is reproduced elsewhere.

U3A Buninyong History Group

This class, under the direction of John Olsen, has continued to meet in Buninyong fortnightly during 2017, and has gathered new members, who demonstrate their enthusiasm for researching the history of Buninyong and district, and members continue to contribute valuable new research to our records. Glen Wood has been engaged in a detailed history of the Scott family of Mount Buninyong and the Wimmera, and is hoping to publish a book as the fruit of her research. We thank the members of the class who have contributed to our events, notably joining us in the march at the Avenue of Honour re-dedication.

Magpie School celebrates 160th anniversary

The Magpie School opened on 31 August 1857. It is celebrating its special anniversary, and is flourishing today, after sometimes suffering ups and downs of population in the past. In fact the school was closed between 1894 and 1914, and in the 1930s was at one stage down to just eight pupils. The present handsome school building was constructed of brick in 1879-80, to the design of Education Department architect Henry Bastow. The anniversary will be celebrated on 1 September, and our member Jeanette Skrokov is a proud ex-pupil with many memories of the old school.

Gold Discovery in Buninyong 1873 style

Star, 7 June 1873

NEW RUSH AT BUNINYONG.

The *Courier* says that the most recent novelty in gold mining is a rush which set in on Saturday morning last, almost in the centre of the town of Buninyong. The particular spot is situated about 200 yards on the opposite side of the road to the new post and telegraph office. About a dozen holes have already been sunk upon washdirt. It is stated that House and his mate washed on Saturday about half a pennyweight to the bucket, or 6 dwts. This agreeable surprise in the present depressed times had quite a magical effect on the Buninyongites generally, and was the cause of some acres of the hill being pegged out. Unluckily, the greater part of the ground is private property, belonging to the Rev. G. J. Russell (incumbent of the parish church). Terms, however, have been come to, by which the claims can be worked, by the payment of a small sum weekly as rent. The hill — which is a spur of the White Horse Range — has for years been regarded as auriferous. Nuggets, up to half an ounce, have been occasionally found in the gravel taken from the hillside for making roads. Several quartz reefs also run through the ground, and these are of gold-bearing character.

LAL LAL ANZAC MEMORIAL PARK UNVEILED

On Sunday 23 April 2017, a large gathering took place at Lal Lal to unveil the new Soldiers' Memorial opposite the Lal Lal Memorial Hall. In an impressive ceremony, full military honours were accorded by members of the 7/8th RVR Catafalque Party, with a Scottish piper to lead a procession from the school to the new monument initiating proceedings. The Hon. Catherine King, MHR for Ballarat, spoke during the proceedings, and unveiled the monument with the help of Pat Dobbin and Pauline Holloway, senior Lal Lal identities.

The children of the Lal Lal School were prominent in the procession, and in singing the National Anthem. It was pointed out that most of the names on the new memorial were provided from the Lal Lal State School Honor Roll, compiled in 1917, which tells the stories of the 29 former pupils of the school who volunteered to serve during World War One.

The handsome black granite monument contains the names of those who served in the Boer War, World War One and World War Two. Appropriately the new memorial park sits beside the

main road, where in 1917 an Avenue of Honor of Cyprus trees was planted to honor these who served.

After the official proceedings, lunch was served in the Hall, built as a Soldiers' memorial in 1956. Some interesting memorabilia was displayed by descendants of those whose names were engraved onto the new memorial.

Vale Former Members Frank Louden and Roy Huggins

On 18 April 2017 Frank Louden died in Ballarat, aged almost 90 years of age. He took a keen interest in Buninyong affairs over the years, having been brought up in Buninyong as a young lad in the 1930s, and was closely associated with the Burke family, at the time when Bill Burke was the village blacksmith. We recorded an oral history interview with Frank in 1996, when he shared vivid memories of Buninyong in the 1930s, school days at the Buninyong School where 120 children attended, local characters and the football team. His son gave us a painting of the Buninyong Town Hall that had been in Frank's possession.

Roy Huggins, of Gordon, died in May 2017. Roy was a very active member in the 1980s and 1990s, and had been a leading figure in indexing Buninyong Shire Rate Books, and made our old display boards.



Roy Huggins indexing Buninyong Shire Rate Books, with Beth Ritchie, in 1993

Centenary of Buninyong's Avenue of Honor

(Address by Anne Beggs-Sunter, 1 July 2017 at dedication ceremony.)

This is a great day in Buninyong's history and I acknowledge the spiritual presence of the father of Buninyong, Derick Leather, who was a champion of restoring the Avenue of Honour long before anyone else.

The earliest suggestions for living memorials to honour the service of Australian volunteers in the Great War seem to have appeared in 1915. The Lal Lal State School took up the idea, and began planting its Anzac Avenue on Arbor Day 1915.

One hundred years ago, the war was at its height, with continuing carnage for the AIF forces on the Western Front. The State Recruiting Committee recommended the planting of avenues of honour as an inducement to recruiting, with the promise that every soldier would have a living memorial planted to honour his service, and tell future generations of his patriotism.

Ballarat seriously took up the matter in May 1917, spurred on by the local Progress Associations and Mrs Tilly Thompson of the Lucas Clothing Factory, which put its more than 300 female employees to the service of the cause. On the King's Birthday, 4 June 1917, the first 500 trees of the great Ballarat avenue were planted.

Meanwhile, Buninyong was gearing up for action on Arbor Day, when a Buninyong Avenue would be planted along Learmonth Street, and 40 pine trees would also be planted on Mount Innes reserve.

Exactly one hundred years ago, on Saturday afternoon, 150 trees were planted along Learmonth Street in honor of the lads who have gone to the front. The citizens turned out in full force, and the trees were set and guarded within the space of three hours. Mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters as well as friends of the boys assisted. For a payment of four shillings, a plaque would be set in front of each tree engraved with the soldier's name.

The Buninyong Fire Brigade also requested permission to plant an Avenue of Honor in Inglis Street in honour of 22 members who had volunteered.

An article in the *Courier* on 16 July 1917 refers to the Buninyong Soldiers' avenues as having been formally named Kitchener and Birdwood Grove by the Shire President, Cr. Fiskien.

Some years ago the original plaques on the avenue trees disappeared. This required a complex research task by the Buninyong RSL with assistance from the Historical Society, to establish a new list of plaques, honouring the 167 soldiers from the old Buninyong Shire who gave their lives in the service of their country.

Buninyong Brass Band

(contributed by Simon Dennis)

An early mention of bands in the Buninyong area came in October 1873, when the Buninyong United Friendly Societies Demonstration was held in aid of local charities at the Highland ground. The newspaper report mentions the Cambrian Hill brass band, and the Buninyong drum and fife band. (*Ballarat Star*, 31 October 1873)

On 23 September 1890, the *Ballarat Star* announced rather vaguely that “there is some talk of initiating a brass band here” in Buninyong.

The *Buninyong Telegraph* of the same date explains it a little more. A Mr Chris Haines, recently arrived in the area, is taking steps to set up a brass band, a man described as having “had a large experience in the musical line.”

He certainly didn't waste any time. Two weeks later there was a meeting of members of the band, at which office bearers and committee were elected, and a list of players was announced. Perhaps coincidentally, more than half of them were also members of the Fire Brigade. The band consisted of 7 cornets, 3 tenor horns, 3 baritone, 1 euphonium, 1 bass, 1 piccolo, and 1 side drum. Two or three members had not decided what instrument to take up. A number of donations had already been made, and Dr. Longden had agreed to act as Honorary President. A list of rules was drawn up, the most significant being that only playing members be allowed to attend practice.

The members had spent about £60 of their own money on instruments, which were due to arrive the next day from Suttons Music Warehouse in Melbourne, and the first practice was to take place that evening in the old police court.

Perhaps most significantly, it was also announced that Mr. Fred Haines had been engaged as band-master. He was well qualified - Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music, graduate of the Royal Military School of Music, he had already published several arrangements of popular music for brass instruments and was a noted clarinettist. He went on to become Bandmaster for the 1st Life Guards in London, and the N.S.W. Police Band.

In October the Band negotiated a reduction in rent for use of the old Police Court, down to one guinea per quarter. Shortly after, the Ballarat Curlew Band gave a benefit concert in the Temperance Hall for the Buninyong Brass Band, and a full house netted the Band some £2.12s.1d.

On 29 January 1891 the Band gave its first public appearance, at the Temperance Hall. They followed the Buninyong Salvation Army Band, which consisted of two “young lasses” playing a drum and a timbrel. The report states “The men played well, keeping excellent time and exhibiting a fair share of musical taste. They answered for ever the croakers who objected when the band was initiated that “it was all a flash in the pan, a mere nine days wonder.”” Not bad, considering most of the members had their first musical instruction only four months previously.

On 6 March the band published a Financial Statement for their first four months, duly audited by the manager of the National Bank. Income totalled £32.7s.10d., of which £29.5s.9d. came from the members in fees, equipment costs and tuition. After all expenses were taken into account, including £10 tuition fees to Fred Haines, they were left with 9s.9d. in hand.

Three days later Dr. Longden appeared before the Borough Council, requesting a reduction in rent for use of the old Police Court, pointing out the members were trying to “manage with

their own money, rather than constantly running to the townspeople for cash.” Council agreed to cut the rent by half, down to 10s.6d. per quarter.

There were further performances in July at the A.N.A. Anniversary Concert, and in August at a Temperance Social in Buninyong and at a Bazaar in Scotsburn. But finances appear to have remained a problem, despite a donation from Mr. J. Eason, and two donations from the A.N.A. Another concert was given in September, and in October they held their first Annual Meeting. Their cash balance has risen to £4.17s.11d., but the alarming news was that Mr Fred. Haines had tendered his resignation as bandmaster. The Secretary’s report states that they had given eight performances and he gives a list of donations and subscriptions – a total of £18.19s.6d., from 44 donors, that’s 8s.6d each.

On December 8 that year the Band accompanied the Fire Brigade in a torchlight procession through the streets of Buninyong, and then played at the Concert in the Temperance Hall, for the benefit of the Fire Brigade. It was their first appearance under the new bandmaster, Mr. Penhall.

February 1892 saw local elections, and the Band again played in the streets of Buninyong.

Finance again appears to be an issue, as at a meeting in June 1892 it was decided to request certain gentlemen, whose names were not revealed, for financial assistance.

They were still holding on in October, when there was a burlesque football match. The *Ballarat Star* advised a procession was to set off from Buninyong station after the arrival of the 2.40 train from Ballarat. “The local menagerie will be there, as also will Chinamen, darkies, ladies (for this occasion only) darktown fire brigadiers, red indians . . . it is whispered that Mephistopheles himself has decided to take part . . . in addition, clowns, policemen, with the red hot poker and rabble, and every local youngster who can wheedle 6d from his fond parents.” The football match between Ballarat and Buninyong followed, and “No-one seemed to know who were the victors and no-one seemed to care.” The occasion was for the Buninyong Relief Fund.

Eight months later, in June 1893, a rather enigmatic statement in the *Star* - “The attempt to resuscitate the brass band has failed.”

However, 12 months later the Buninyong Brass Band were asking for use of the old council chambers to practise in. Council agreed on condition the bandsmen supply their own lights.

On 26 December 1894, the Band played at the Buninyong Boxing Day Sports at Royal Park. At the moment that is the last reported performance I can find.

Buninyong's Population

The release of the 2016 Census figures provides us with some pertinent statistics on the growth of the township of Buninyong. The following table shows the rapid growth of the township in the 1850s, to a peak in 1890, and then a steady decline until the 1960s, when the population again began to increase. In 2016, Buninyong was one of the fastest growing areas of the City of Ballarat, and also one of the wealthiest. (Thanks to the *Buninyong and District Community News* September 2017 for an insightful review of the 2016 Census.)

Buninyong's Population

Year	Buninyong	Source
1842	About 12 families	
1857	1619	Census
1871	1981	"
1881	1416	
1890	1450	"
1911	1183	Census
1954	750 (according to Lil Corner, census taker, within a one mile radius of Buninyong)	
1966	811	Census
1986	1307	Census
1991	1400	
1996	1791	Census
2004	1,800	
2008	3,158	
2011	3214	Census
2016	3714 (a rise of 15.6% since 2011)	

COMING EVENTS

19 October Annual General Meeting, 7.30 pm

21 October – Photo scanning day, Buninyong Court House

29 October – Buninyong Festival Day – Walking tour at 11.00am from Town Hall steps, one hour duration. Court House History Centre open

11-12 November – Open Gardens Weekend Buninyong. Old Court House open at the Botanic Gardens, where there will be market stalls on Sunday.

Membership dues fall due at the AGM. For the 2017-2018 year. Subscription attached, and your renewed membership is vital to our future plans. Thank you in anticipation.