



The Wandong History Group Inc. Quarterly Newsletter FREE with your What's News

"WHAT'S OLD"

Issue 12—December 2019



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FROM THE EDITOR

What a year for the History Group, it has certainly had highs and lows, not getting the grant for the church was a great blow but we have new hope as we negotiate with the Kilmore parish that another application may be possible.

The absolute highlight was the Heritage Council award, for our group to be picked over all the other hardworking history groups and societies in Victoria is a huge honour and we are very grateful to receive it.

We had applied to have the interment hut moved under a veterans grant but we did not win the grant so are looking at other ways we can achieve this. We would like to thank all those who supported our application and hopefully next year we may be able to get this project off the ground.

2020 is the 75th year of the end of World War Two and commemorations will be held all around the nation. We are looking to have our History Week display themed around this event and we are working on more soldier profiles such as the ones we used for the Walk Through the Wars Exhibition.

The RU Ready event was a great success and we thank everyone who made the day happen. There was a huge amount of work that went into the planning and logistics of putting the event together and it was great to see the various groups at one event. Hopefully all those who attended found the day to be useful in the planning of their fire preparations.

We also ran a workshop with several of the other local societies sending members along to learn about managing collections and cataloguing the day was useful and has helped us to work on our collection and learn how to preserve and keep it safe for the future.

So we are looking forward to another big year, from all of us have a Merry and safe Christmas. Our next edition will be in the March What's News.

Karen Christensen

Christmas Is Coming

Garnett Ann Schiltz

Hustle and bustle, hurry and haste,
Never a moment that we might waste;
Shopping and wrapping, ribbons and bows,
Christmas is coming as everyone knows.

Trimnings and candles, wreath on the door,
Secrets and laughter, gladness galore,
Starlight and carols, bells ringing clear,
No other reason: Christmas is near.

Jolly Old Santa, reindeer and elves,
Presents all hidden away on the shelves,
Cards to be written, mailings to do,
Much in excitement, worries so few.

Love more abundant, peace in our heart,
Giving, remembering, smiles to impart,
Cookies and fruitcake, the fragrance of pine,
Christmas is coming to your home and mine.



GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Each issue we talk to a local identity, this edition it's Heathcote Junction resident Sharon McCarthy (Costanzo)

What brought your family to Heathcote Junction?

My family was very familiar with the area as my Great Grand Parents Charlie and Florence Simmonds lived in View Road and ran a boot repair shop, my Great Uncle Henry and Auntie Florrie Ross lived in Range Avenue. Uncle Henry worked for the Forest Commission, he found the missing pilot and plane that crashed in Mt Disappointment during WW2.

School Memories at Wandong

My family moved to Heathcote Junction in the 60's, we lived 4 miles from the school. Until Mum got her licence we would have to walk. A year later Dad built our home in Messmate Avenue, which was a much closer walk. You could cut through McDonald's paddocks, which is now built up with homes. My siblings Shane, Marcus, Lisa and Colleen all attended Wandong. I had already met my school teacher Miss Pat Rhodes as she boarded with my relatives in Range Avenue. Mr Jim Rogers was the Head Master. I have very fond memories of School Days at Wandong, the feeling of belonging, the smell of the old timber, breathing in the chalk dust and using an old ink pen and inkwell, and finally graduating to the biro in grade 4. A start to the school day was the ringing of an old bell as we assembled outside. Mondays were extra special as we sang "God Save the Queen" with hands on our hearts. Games played during recess were Charlie Over the water, hopscotch and the boys kicked the footy, besides that we had the log swing, slide and monkey bars to play on. Small bottles of milk were given out at playtime, sometimes these were left in the sun and used to make me feel sick.

Sports days were a highlight, especially when we competed against other local schools. My siblings always did well and returned with lots of ribbons. A cricket pitch was dug into the side of a hill in the bush paddock next door to the school, this was also a nature reserve for us.

What was the Social Life like back then?

The first Friday of every month a dance was held at the Wandong Hall, always something to look forward to. Lottie Campbell played the piano. We watched the grown ups dance and sometimes joined in on the barn dance. Angus McDonald called out the Square dance, while us kids danced in the corner. Supper was well worth the wait. A box of cups would go around for each person to take and a huge teapot, jug of milk and sugar followed. A scrumptious supper of homemade cakes, scones and Joan Ryan's jam tarts.

The School Christmas Concert was the event of the year, the classes put on plays and sang Christmas Carols.

Later years in 1975, us local schools girls started the first Wandong Netball Club, playing against local towns.

What do you love about living here?

The Country atmosphere where most people are friendly and have respect for their local community. Wandong has a rich and interesting history which my great grand parents were part off. My husbands family were also from Wandong, his family were residents, workers and pupils at the Comet Mill at Heathcote Junction. My grandchildren now go to Wandong Primary school, a bit like history repeating itself.



Thanks for your time Sharon and for sharing your memories of your times spent living at Heathcote Junction

WANDONG POLICE STATION

The Wandong Police Station operated for fifteen and a half years before closure. The station and residence was located on the Magpie and Stump Rd, the property being owned by R. A. Robertson. The former residence has now been replaced with a new home.

Constable Galvin was stationed there for four and a half years before being transferred to Melbourne in 1891, he was replaced by Constable J. J. Wilcox who took charge of the station on the 11th day of the 11th month. Due to the decision of the chief commissioner to close down the Wandong Police Station, Wilcox was retrenched after serving at Wandong for eleven years and departed on the 11th day of the 11th month of the year, receiving notice as he put it himself, at the 11th hour.

WANDONG

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

Constable Galvin who has been stationed here for four and a half years has been transferred to Melbourne. The residents have started a testimonial on his behalf. He will be replaced by Constable Wilcox.

The Broadford Courier and Reedy Creek Times
Friday, November 20th 1891

WANDONG

It is reported that the Wandong Police Station is to be closed, and that Constable Wilcox is being removed to Stanley. Many will regret Constable Wilcox's removal from the district. He has been a courteous and efficient officer indeed, we think every effort should be made to have him retained, as closing the station is false economy.

Kilmore Free Press, Thursday, November 6th.



Lock-Up Neerim South Police Station
Quite possibly the one sent from Wandong

WANDONG

Owing to the retrenchment the police station here has been closed. Mr J.J. Wilcox has been transferred to Stanley, the lock-up being sent to Nerrim South. On Friday evening last a farewell social was tendered in the Public Hall to Mr J. Wilcox police constable who has been in charge of the local police station for the last 11 years, prior to his departure for Stanley where he has been transferred. Mr G. E. Thompson occupied the chair, and there was a large attendance. The chairman in an appropriate speech referred to the regret which was felt at the departure of Mr Wilcox. During the time he has been here he had given every satisfaction and gained many sincere friends. On behalf of his friends at Wandong. The chairman then presented the guest with a handsome tea and coffee service, which bore the following inscription. "A souvenir to Mr and Mrs Wilcox as a token of esteem and regard by the residents of Wandong and districts." Messrs C. Daley, H. McDonald, C. Williams and G. E. Hall also testified to Mr Wilcox being of a courteous and agreeable manner in carrying out his duties. In returning thanks Mr. Wilcox stated that he regretted leaving Wandong and that he had always endeavoured to do his duty without fear or favour and was grateful for the token of esteem. The proceedings were enlivened by songs and dances.

Broadford Courier and Reedy Creek Times
Friday, November 14th 1902

POLICE ECONOMY KILMORE

The decision of the Commissioner in closing up the Wandong Police Station has given rise to serious complaints. Within a few miles of the township there are over 100 miners employed, and it has been the custom to employ the local constable to act as an escort when bringing the gold in from the mines. The Golden Dyke extended claims both wash-up next week, and no police protection can be granted in conveying the gold from the miners over the lonely mountain track.

The Argus, Wednesday, November 12th 1902

DID YOU KNOW? - Di Vidal

On April 22nd 1910, my Great Great Grandparents William & Margaret Smedley celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary in the Wandong Hall with over 200 guests in attendance. How did they all fit? Today's regulations wouldn't of allowed this.

History Matters

In this column we will try to keep abreast of the things that affect our town and its historical links.

The Wandong History Group's charter is to protect and preserve the history of our area. As we are within the Mitchell Shire, we need to be informed of happenings within the shire that may affect us.

Mark down this date March 22nd for the Annual "Back to Wandong Luncheon" This event has been running for many Years and we invite anyone with an interest in our history and meeting local townsfolk to come along. It is a great day and the team at the Australiana always look after us.

We are still working on the Derill Mill site, hopefully the on ground work will soon be complete and the site card can be prepared.

Trevor Viniet hosted us for a trip around Mt Disappointment, several members took advantage of the kind offer to show us some interesting sites including the gold kilns, the old Germantown site, Tunnel hill and the quarry. We then went on to the Comet Mill site and spent some time looking around this area.

It was disturbing to note some of the damage occurring though and we hope that DEWLP can take action to prevent the damage that is occurring, after all this is our backyard.

On the back of our successful railway display for History Week 2017 we are putting together a book on the rail history of the area. Dave Moran is researching the book and would appreciate any information or photos anyone may be holding.

Contact:

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BACK TO WANDONG ANNUAL LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, MARCH 22nd 2020

VALE - Janette Boulton (Christensen)

With a very heavy heart I announce the passing of my cousin Janette Boulton. Janette's primary education was at Wandong State School. She married her sweetheart Bill Boulton in St Michael's Catholic Church, now home of the History Group. Our Deepest Sympathy to Janette's Family, My Aunty Kath and Cousins. R.I.P - Di Vidal

BOOK SALES

There Was a Soldier—Karen Christensen

(A history of Wandong at War) \$20

From Lightwood Flat to the Forest—Lynne Dore

(A history of our schools) \$20

WANDONG IN PICTURES

Book (1-5) \$7 each or \$25 the set.

Wandong War Memorial

Wandong Seasoning Works

Wandong in Business,

Wandong Timber Mills and Tramlines

Wandong Buildings

**All books available at the Wandong Newsagent or
contact the History Group.**

Donations

The Wandong History Group accepts donations of any Wandong/ Heathcote Junction, Clonbinane related historical artefacts. All items will be kept and displayed sharing our past and preserving it for the future generations.

2019/2020 COMMITTEE

President: Karen Christensen

Vice President: David Moran

Secretary: Di Vidal

Treasurer: Sandra Moran

Newsletter: Karen Christensen & Di Vidal

Committee Meetings will now be held bi-monthly on the first Thursday of the month 7.00pm. At the Wandong Public Hall. Next meeting February 6th 2020.

THANK YOU

A big thank you to Sue Marstaellar for her donation of all the early copies of the "What's News" for our collection.

DISCLAIMER

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