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Wandong History group
Quarterly newsletter free with your "what's news"

"WHAT'S OLD"

Email: wandonghistorygroup4@gmail.com

FROM THE EDITOR

Half the year has whizzed past, hard to believe we are well into 2018. The History Group was pleased to be part of another beautiful ANZAC Day service at our wonderful Memorial park, what a fantastic community event this day is for our towns and the increasing crowds show how much these events mean as years pass. This year's event was even more important as it marked the last year of the 100 years of ANZAC commemorations.

Our "Walk Through the Wars" display was a great success, with over 500 people attending over the five days. The Bendigo Bank was the major sponsor of the event and we have to thank them so much for the help they give the local community. To all those that helped on every way big or small, thank you, what a truly remarkable community we live in.

Throughout the event there were many calls for the exhibition to be displayed on a longer or more permanent basis, something we would love to do if we had a facility that could house it. Unfortunately in Wandong Heathcote Junction we just don't have that sort of capacity, however we will continue to explore options as we would like to see the display on show again.



Editor: Karen Christensen

The Witch's Song– Ruth Bedford.

Hoity-toity! Hop-o-my-thumb!
Tweedledee and Tweedledum,
All Hobgoblins come to me,
Over the mountains, over the sea.
Come in a hurry, come in a crowd,
Flying, chattering, shrieking loud.
I and my broomstick figet and call,
Come hobgoblins, we want you all.
I have a pot of mischievous brew,
You must do what I tell you to:
Blow through the keyholes, hang to the
eaves,
Litter the garden with dead brown leaves:
Into the house, hustle and run,
Here is mischief, here is fun!
Break the china, slam the doors,
Crack the windows and scratch the floors.
Let in the cockroaches, mice and rats,
Sit on the family's Sunday hats.
Smashing everything thin and brittle,
Teasing the children, tickling their heels-
Look at them jumping! Hark to their
squeals.
Pinch their elbows and pull their hair.
Then out again into the gusty air.
Flutter the birds in their sheltered nests,
Pluck the down from the ducklings
breasts,
Steal the eggs from the clucking hen,
Ride the pigs round and round the pen.
Here is mischief to spare for all,
Hoity- Toity come at my call
Tweedledum and Tweedledee
Come at my summons, come to me.
Thus said the witch on a windy night,
Then sailed on her broomstick out of
sight.

(Hope you are enjoying stepping back in time with these old poems.
This is another from the grade five reader)

Ed

GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOUR

Each issue we will talk to a local identity, this edition it's Allen Ryan.

Allen tell us about your early days at Wandong.

Well, my father purchased the Burnside property, it was a substantial farm in those days, we ran a small dairy and supplied milk to the locals.

Yes, I can remember walking down the lane behind the hall to get our billy of milk from him. He used to line us up and squirt milk straight from the cow into our mouths., that's fresh milk!

I went to Wandong State School and that was the only education I had. One regret I have is that I couldn't go further, I would have liked to have learned more. Saying that, I did have the chance to go on with my schooling but dad said to me, "if you want to go to Assumption (Kilmore) you can ride your bike in and home each day, or you can come cutting wood with me". I didn't like the idea of riding my bike over that rough road to Kilmore every day, so I went wood cutting. We cut firewood and brought it down in 8 foot logs then had a saw bench where we cut it up into foot blocks and loaded it on the railway trucks. Firewood was in great demand in those days especially in Melbourne.

I started shearing, first using hand held blades and later electric, I remember the day I shored my first 100 sheep in a day, everyone was clapping and dancing round, I didn't think it was that exciting. I'd spend three months of the year shearing, then come back and cut wood with dad.

I suppose the next major point in your life was your marriage.

I married Jean Faulks, her parents owned the "Viewbank" property at Wandong. A small farm at Caveat in the Highlands near Seymour came on the market and we bought that and moved up there. We liked it up there, made some lifelong friends it was a good life. We had five good years there but we sold up and moved back to Wandong, so Barry could get medical help and we needed to be closer to Melbourne so he could access the hospital.

You eventually moved into earthmoving, how did that come about?

I was always friends with the Keith's, they had earthmoving equipment, one day Dave Keith said to me to come down to where he was working for a holiday, he had a caravan there, I was about 19. So I go down there and Dave tells me to get up in the dozer and have a go, I spent the day pushing dirt around and it was getting dark, so I thought better knock off, no sign of Dave. So I went into the caravan and knocked up a bit tucker, next day Dave turned up. I said where have you been, he said I went home: best way for you to learn is to leave you to it. From then I stayed with them working the machinery for about 15 years. After we moved back to Wandong we worked on the roads around the town, the freeway was a big job. I partnered with Laurie Davern and we kept the business going until I eventually bought him out. By then Greg left school he worked with me until the work started to cut out, he went to Queensland and I sold up and retired.

Allen I know there's lot's more to tell but thanks for giving us an insight into your life story, and congratulation on your Australia Day award.



The Travellers Rest

Part 1

While the exact date of the first Travellers Rest Hotel has not yet been determined we know that in January 1876 David Pickup become the licensee of the hotel. One can imagine the hotel in those early days, no more than a rough shanty, but travellers weary from a long and arduous ride over the rough hills of the Plenty Ranges, arriving in Wandong, perhaps the horses trotted a little faster with the promise of a rest in the, "large accommodation paddock" or even better the "commodious stables" of the Travellers Rest hotel.

By 1884 David Pickups son, Charles had taken over the licence due to the death of his father. Change was just around the corner as Charles began to expand the hotel, was this the addition that became the two storey building that met an untimely demise in 1933? Old photos show both buildings but without a date we cannot determine the construction time of the two storey building, which was a huge improvement on the original building.

By 1887 George Clayton had become the proprietor, applying for a Victuallers licence for a 6 roomed establishment, but he was soon in trouble with the law. He appeared before the Kilmore Licencing Board charge with "having the door open on a Sunday, and "being drunk on licenced premises. After paying the fine adjudicated George was free to return where he and his wife Margaret continued to run the hotel which was the hub of the town. Matters such as meetings to choose candidates for local council, a gentlemen's group to arrange a social evening and with the advent of the Robertson empire making its presence felt in Wandong the hotel was used to conduct magisterial enquiries

into deaths and accidents that occurred in conjunction with the sawmill operations, usually with Robert Affleck Robertson sitting as the local Justice of the Peace; the finding most often "accidental" but I am sure there was no prejudice shown by the owner of the operations. Margaret Clayton was a great poet, writing verse for the local papers, describing local events in prose while caring for seven children and running the hotel, George and Margaret would have had busy lives .

George and Margaret's daughter Rosa, made Wandong history when she wed Mr Archibald Spicer, on March 6th 1894, the first wedding of the district. It was held in St Johns Church which was located next to the Fairholm homestead. We believe this photo to be of that occasion.



The First Travellers Rest Hotel

Part 2 coming in the next edition, when a scandal causes a great conniption in the town.

Did you know?

How Leslie Siding was named?

The name was given by Mr Robert. A Robertson, proprietor of the Australian Seasoned Timber Company at Wandong. The property passed into the hands of David Beath, of Beath Schiess and Co, Chairman of the Australian Seasoned Timber Company who was born at "Leslie" Fifeshire, Scotland. This led Mr. Robertson to submit the name "Leslie: for the railway station.

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.

We recently made a submission to the Ministerial panel set up to adjudicate on the structure plan. We wait the result of this which should be published in August.

There are several projects in the wind for our area that may impact upon the township that people should be aware of. One is the fast rail, a rail link that will be built on the western side of the freeway, also the heavy freight line which will use the existing standard gauge line but will require some infrastructure changes. The bypass is still an unknown and Vic Roads were not prepared to answer questions on the Wandong end when pushed at the panel hearing. The proposed Rail Trail may be an opportunity for Wandong Heathcote Junction to build on our heritage, however we need to ensure the council includes us in the proposal, as so far that hasn't really occurred in a meaningful way. So, while all these issues are around we will do our best to ensure we preserve as much as of our past as we can, always a challenge in the sort of fast paced environment we find ourselves in.

We are currently undertaking a study of the Derril Mill site with the aim of having the site added to the Heritage Inventory, which will afford it some protection in the future.

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 anyone may be holding. Contact him on 0409164660 or email: mountview@ssc.net.au.

We have applied for a grant to restore the Catholic Church, this is becoming more urgent as the condition of the building is deteriorating.

History Week 2018

We are beginning our plans for History Week 2018, the event will most likely be on the 13th October at the Wandong Public hall. Plans are to feature the local sawmilling history, the Mount Disappointment State Forest was one of the biggest suppliers of timber in the early days, with many mills operating. Early history of sawmilling in Victoria is not well documented so researching this project has its challenges.

More information in the September What's Old.

Donations

The Wandong History Group accepts donations of any Wandong/ Heathcote Junction related historical artefacts. All items will be kept and displayed sharing our past and preserving it for the future generations. Thanks to Allen Ryan for his recent donation.

History Group books For Sale.

There Was a Soldier, Who Wandered Far away.

**Karen Christensen (A History of Wandong at War)
\$20.00**

**From Lightwood Flat to the Forest—Lynne Dore (A
History of our Schools) \$15,00**

Wandong In Pictures— Book 1-5 \$7.00 ea

**Wandong War Memorial, Wandong Seasoning
Works, Wandong in Business, Wandong Timber
Mills and Tramlines, Wandong Buildings**

All books available at the Wandong Newsagent or

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