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Western Historian

Newsletter of the Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies

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Editor: Craig Proctor wvahsinc@gmail.com

The Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies acknowledges the traditional owners of country on the land on which we are meeting throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, culture and community.

Please address all enquiries to W.V.A.H.S. to the Secretary,
Helen Curkpatrick
273 Old Hamilton Road,
Haven, Vic., 3401
Ph: 03 5382 7227
E: wvahsinc@gmail.com

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W.V.A.H.S. Executive Committee for 2024-2025

President: Michael Menzies, Geelong (S)	0419 546 251	railexp@bigpond.com
Vice-President: Brett Leslie, Landsborough (W)	0404 813 997	bleslie@bigpond.net.au
Secretary/Treasurer: Helen Curkpatrick, Stawell (W)	0413 382 567	haven273@outlook.com

Members:

Carolyn Olive, Charlton (M)	0418 361 971	c.olive@bigpond.com
Robin Parker, Maryborough (M)	0459 032 068	robinparker81@hotmail.com
Kate van Dyck, Stawell (W)	0428 841 011	katiejvd@iprimus.com.au
Bob McIntosh, Terang (S)	03 5592 1354	macmarbob@hotmail.com
Craig Proctor, Mortlake (S) and Jeparit (W)	0408 311 302	craige@iprimus.com.au
Tracey Potatau-Wright (Glenthompson) (S)	0438 774 215	glenthompsonhistory@hotmail.com
Robert McLaren, Mortlake (S)	0407 530 030	mclaren55@bigpond.com

Please email your report or any other contributions for publication as Word documents with images as jpgs to Craig Proctor, wvahsinc@gmail.com

Member Groups

at December 2024

Arapiles (Natimuk) Ararat

Balmoral Barham-Koondrook

Birchip Boort

Camperdown Carisbrook

Charlton Golden Grains Museum

Cobden Cohuna Colac

Coleraine Dimboola Donald

Derrinallum/Lismore Dunkeld

East Loddon (Mitiamo)

Edenhope

Geelong & South Western
Rail Heritage Society

Glenthompson

Goldfields (Dunolly)

Halls Gap and Grampians

Harrow Heytesbury

Hopetoun Horsham

Inglewood Kerang

Koroit Landsborough

Macarthur

Maryborough Midlands

Minyip Mortlake

Mount Rouse (Penshurst)

Nhill

Nhill Silo Heritage Project

Nullawil Ouyen Port Fairy

Pyramid Hill Rainbow

St Arnaud Stawell

Swan Hill Terang

Warracknabeal

Warrnambool Wedderburn

Wimmera Mallee Pioneer
Museum (Jeparit)

President's Post

Strength in numbers

In recent months we have held our three Zone meetings.

The Wimmera Zone and Executive meetings were held at Minyip on Saturday 14 September and the Midlands Zone meeting at Birchip the following day. Both were well attended and well run by the host societies. Following the meetings, there was a guided street walk of Minyip and exploration of the collections and displays at Birchip.

A month later the Southern Zone gathered at Colac on Saturday 12 October. Another good gathering, well attended, well run and with a lengthy walk around the Colac Botanic Gardens, adjacent streets and notable buildings during the afternoon.

Well done to all involved in organising and running these events. More details and some images are in following pages.

It was good to see some new faces and societies attending after, in some cases, several years of non-attendance. Some member societies battle to survive, usually due to small and aging memberships, but it is good to see some reviving, such as Cobden.

By gathering at our twice-yearly events and sharing our achievements and challenges, either face to face at such meetings, or via this publication, we all potentially gain new ways of carrying out tasks or gaining assistance to do so.

Please share your successes and problems with us all via this newsletter and never hesitate to ask committee or Executive members to help you or ask us to source assistance with your tasks. That is why we exist.

Best wishes for the remainder of 2024 and the New Year.

Michael Menzies, President



W.V.A.H.S. 2025 AGM, Zone and Executive Meetings

Saturday 5 April

National Wool Museum, Geelong

Full program will be provided in the March issue of *Western Historian*, via email and [our Facebook page](#).

Proposed Zone name changes

At the Executive Meeting on 14 September it was proposed that we change the name of the Wimmera Zone to the Wimmera Mallee Zone to be more inclusive of several member groups in the Mallee region, specifically Ouyen, Hopetoun and Rainbow. It was also moved to change Midlands Zone to the North Central Zone to better reflect the location of some member groups.

W.V.A.H.S. Member Groups' online presence

Click on the hyperlinks to go to the sites.

Websites

Arapiles (Natimuk)	Geelong South West Rail	Port Fairy
Barham Koondrook	Heritage Society	Pyramid Hill
Birchip	Goldfields (Dunolly)	RHSV History News
Camperdown	Halls Gap & Grampians	St Arnaud
Charlton Golden Grains Museum	Harrow	Stawell
Cohuna	Hopetoun	Swan Hill
Colac	Horsham	Terang
Derrinallum Lismore	Macarthur	Warracknabeal
Dimboola	Maryborough Midlands	Warrnambool
Donald	Mount Rouse (Penshurst)	Wedderburn
Dunkeld	Nhill Silo Heritage Project	WVAHS
Edenhope	Ouyen	

Facebook pages

Arapiles (Natimuk)	East Loddon (Mitiamo)	Nullawil
Ararat	Edenhope	Ouyen
Balmoral	Glenthompson	Port Fairy
Barham Koondrook	Halls Gap & Grampians	Pyramid Hill
Boort	Hopetoun	Rainbow
Camperdown	Inglewood	RHSV
Carisbrook	Kerang	St Arnaud
Charlton Golden Grains Museum	Koroit	Swan Hill
Cobden	Landsborough	Terang
Cohuna	Maryborough Midlands	Warrnambool
Colac (NEW)	Minyip	Wimmera Mallee Pioneer
Donald	Mortlake	Museum Jeparit
Dunkeld	Mount Rouse (Penshurst)	WVAHS
Goldfields (Dunolly)	Nhill Silo Heritage Project	

Spring Zone and Executive Meetings

Minyip - Birchip - Colac

Twenty-nine people attended the successful Wimmera Zone Meeting and Executive Meeting hosted by the Minyip and District Historical Society on Saturday 14 September.

Representatives from the Minyip, Dimboola, Nhill, Horsham, Arapiles, Ouyen, Warracknabeal, Stawell, Halls Gap and Grampians and Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum at Jeparit attended. Reports were submitted by a number of other groups who were apologies.

Dr Rosalie Triolo OAM FRHSV presented our Secretary/Treasurer Helen Curkpatrick with her RHSV Award of Merit. Helen had chosen to have her award presented at the Wimmera Zone Meeting instead of in Melbourne. President Michael Menzies had received his award at the RHSV AGM in Melbourne in May. We also acknowledged Rosalie being conferred with the Order of Australia Medal in the King's Birthday Honours List.

The Executive was pleased to have new member Robert McLaren of the Mortlake and District Historical Society attend for the first time.

Among issues discussed was the idea of renaming our Wimmera Zone to the Wimmera Mallee Zone as a concession to some of our northern-most members who are clearly in the Mallee region rather than the Wimmera and renaming the Midlands Zone to the North Central Zone. We resolved to canvass member groups' opinions on this.

Following the official proceedings attendees were treated to a most interesting street walk led by Minyip President Wayne Jackson. This was very well-received and highly engaging with many interesting anecdotes peppering the talk.



Most of the WVAHS Executive meeting at Minyip: L to R: Robert McLaren, Mortlake; Robin Parker, Carisbrook; Helen Curkpatrick; Michael Menzies; Craig Proctor; Tracey Potatau-Wright, Glenthompson; Carolyn Olive, Charlton. Photo: Tracey Potatau-Wright.



Helen and Michael with their Awards

Elaine's Big Day at the Midlands Zone Meeting, Birchip, Sunday 15 September

Zone meetings of Historical Societies are always important gatherings held twice a year to hear from the twenty groups which comprise our Zone. Some groups were there in person, others sent reports and all of us benefited from hearing of the activities and problems solved by museum caretakers from Donald, Charlton, Nullawil, Birchip, Swan Hill, Pyramid Hill, Dunolly, Wedderburn, Carisbrook, Maryborough, St Arnaud, Wycheproof as well as snippets of news from Lake Boga, East Loddon, Kerang, Cohuna, Kerang, Boort, Serpentine, Inglewood and Barham/Koondrook. Our area is very wide.

Our special guests included Michael Menzies, our President, Helen Curkpatrick, our Secretary/Treasurer, and Dr Rosalie Triolo OAM FRHSV. All three were present for a special award segment for Birchip Historical Society Archivist Elaine McCallum.

Michael and Helen had also received similar awards earlier at other functions and then we heard that Rosalie had received an OAM for her work for Research and History Education too.

Our day began with greetings and setting out of the amazing local history books for sale from towns then lunch to which several members of Elaine McCallum's family were invited, unbeknown to Elaine. Dorothy Reid, Birchip Vice President, welcomed all and the presentation of Elaine's special Award of Merit took place with Rosalie reading the citation and presenting the award.

Historical societies and the preservation of the past in documents, photos, flora and fauna and our farming heritage is certainly far from dead if our museums have anything to do with it. Volunteerism is alive and well in all our towns.

Maureen Donnellon

ELAINE'S CITATION FOR HER AWARD OF MERIT

"Elaine became involved in 1992 when she returned to Birchip to care for her mother and began typing up the history of the Railways begun by our first President Rob Sanders who died before all the documents could be typed up. Once she finished that, she typed up all the material collected by the late Cr George Gould for his book on the Shire for the Centenary in 1995 while he was undergoing dialysis. In 1994 she became archivist and has continued in that capacity ever since - indexing newspapers for various computer systems, cataloguing and cleaning artefacts, labelling, filing and displaying, researching and sorting, supervising people on work for the dole programs, working with students on research work and attending to all the tasks involved with research and preservation of photos, newspapers, files and artefacts. Much research is done for sporting reunions as well as family research and Elaine has given countless hours of her time as a volunteer so is a very worthy recipient of her award. This is the highest award given by the RHSV."



Right: Elaine with Dr Rosalie Triolo and, left, some of Elaine's family who attended.



Southern Zone Meeting

On Saturday 12 October the Colac and District Historical Society hosted the Southern Zone meeting at their magnificent rooms. We were pleased to have twenty-two representatives of our Camperdown, Colac, Cobden, Glenthompson, Heytesbury, Koroit, Mortlake, South-West Rail Heritage, Terang and Warrnambool members attend.

Five members of the W.V.A.H.S. Executive were also in attendance along with the RHSV's Dr Rosalie Triolo who spoke on the services the RHSV and its Historical Societies Support Committee can offer groups. As always, we benefited from hearing the reports from all the attending groups and some from members who could not attend. Interesting discussion topics included the role of cemeteries and their records and Bills horse troughs.

Following the meeting our Colac hosts provided us with a heritage walking tour of part of the town and the Colac Botanical Gardens. Yet another successful, genial and, above all, informative day of networking for members.



*Southern Zone Meeting at Colac.
Photo: C. Proctor*



The tour of the Colac Botanical Gardens led by Robert Missen. Photo: Tracey Potatau-Wright.

RHSV Seminar Day, Melbourne

On 18 October the RHSV ran its second metropolitan Seminar Day for the year, the focus of which was *Practical strategies for a successful, vibrant organisation*. This was the fourth such Seminar Day for 2024, the other events being held at Mortlake and Leongatha and the Network Leaders Day in Melbourne, each being organised by the RHSV's Historical Societies Support Committee. This event was also available to participants via Zoom. Attendees came from mostly metropolitan Societies but there were also participants from Macarthur, Euroa, Wodonga and AMaGA.

Dr Rosalie Triolo OAM FHRV and Chair of the HSSC presented on 'New visitors, members, volunteers, leaders: Positive approaches to finding all'.

Graham Goulding OAM offered his presentation on 'Going for grants: Helpful hints'. Graham has had great success in soliciting grants for a variety of organisations and his years of experience in submitting applications provided worthwhile discussion points.

Craige Proctor presented on 'Requiem for the newsletter? Does the newsletter still have a role in the social media world?'

Rosemary Cameron, the RHSV's Executive Officer, focussed on 'Creating engaging events'. Rosemary's presentation covered the whole gamut of planning, organisation and successful staging of an event and the takeaway documents are valuable resources for any group planning an event.

The forum at the end of the day was stimulating with topics being broad-ranging from historical societies becoming charities to enlisting the support of younger members including Youth Councillors in some LGAs. All participants received, as always, the valuable Powerpoints and other documents provided by presenters.

Consider hosting an RHSV HSSC event!

The RHSV's Historical Societies Support Committee is keen to hear from any Historical Society with a view to hosting a Regional Seminar Weekend event in 2025 or beyond. The HSSC aims to stage three regional events annually, one in the West/South, one in the East and one in the North-East/Central areas of the State.

The RHSV provides the host Society with a great amount of support including all publicity, bookings and ideas for presenters so the host Society does not have to do all the work. This is important to remember as even a small group in a reasonably small town can 'pull off' a successful event with the level of support offered by the RHSV and HSSC. Additionally, as someone who oversaw the organisation of the Mortlake event in May as well as a member of the HSSC, I am more than happy to provide advice and support to a potential host group. It is a great initiative to be involved with!

Should any WVAHS member group be interested in hosting an event next year Dr Rosalie Triolo would love to hear from you – rosalie.triolo@monash.edu – or, in the first instance, feel free to approach me informally at craige@iprimus.com.au

Craige Proctor, HSSC member

Memorandum of Understanding between Mildura Rural City Council (MRCC) and Ouyen District History and Genealogy Centre (ODH&GC)

The following has been submitted to *Western Historian* and hopefully will be of interest to some other groups.

In March 2024 I, as President of the ODH&GC, together with our Secretary and Treasurer, signed a Memorandum of Understanding between MRCC and the ODH&GC. In setting up this memorandum the MRCC formalised the existing relationship and acknowledged the important and valuable service the ODH&GC provides for our community.

This memorandum was set up to bring Historical Societies in the MRCC area into a similar arrangement with Council and set out the roles and obligations of both Council and the History Centre. Council had become aware that municipal charges applied to Historical Societies have been inconsistent in the past. To ensure equal treatment, all groups will be charged standard fees. An annual support payment of \$2,000 from MRCC to assist with the payment of expenses associated with Council such as lease fees, lease agreement related expenses and waste and fire service levies. Once these expenses have been paid any remaining funds can be expended on general operating activities.

Some of Council's roles outlined include the following.

- Providing Council staff to encourage and support continued historical information sharing and education to the community.
- Provide assistance to the group to access and support to identify appropriate alternative funding for activities, events and projects identified by the organisation itself.
- Provide relevant staff to attend committee meetings when invited and available.
- Provide timely responses to requests for information and guidance.
- Work actively to provide clear and concise communications, feedback and close the communication loop when working with the group.

The roles and obligations of the ODH&GC include the following:

- The ODH&GC is to abide by the Rules of Incorporation and is required to have Public Liability.
- Comply with Council's financial management requirements by providing a copy of the report tabled at the Annual Meeting including the Annual Financial report.
- Actively encourage a local communal investment relating to historical activities and priorities.
- Be inclusive and encourage broad community participation in the function of historical research and information provision.
- Actively participate in and support the preservation of the history of the community.
- Be proactive in inviting relevant Council staff and councillors to committee meetings when appropriate.

This MOU is to be reviewed in two years.

Merle Pole, President, ODH&GC

Exciting times for Jeparit and District Historical Society

[Facebook page](#)

The Jeparit and District Historical Society is *not* currently a member of W.V.A.H.S. although it used to be. This is a brief update mainly for other member groups in the region on what is happening with the Society.

Sadly, for some years there has only been one member of the Society who has retained the role of President. On becoming involved with the Jeparit community three years ago, I offered to 'lend a hand' to the Society to see if it could be rejuvenated but mainly to help organise the collection which has never been catalogued. The collection is housed across the entire upper floor of Jeparit's 1924 Memorial Hall so access can be 'challenging'.

Jeparit being the birthplace of Sir Robert Menzies (130 years ago this month), the Robert Menzies Institute at the University of Melbourne has taken an interest in lending much-needed support to the Society. The Institute secured funding through the PROV to engage a heritage consultant who has made several visits to Jeparit to complete a Survey of the collection, its significance and to advise on critical conservation processes. Worryingly, the entire collection of *Jeparit Leader* newspapers has never been microfilmed but the originals are still on site. Obviously a future goal for the Society will be to have many of these digitised, but small steps!

As a result of the generous support of the Hindmarsh Shire Council and the Jeparit Township Advisory Committee, significant funding has resulted in the purchase of a vast amount of archival storage materials. The heritage consultant and several local volunteers have been working to organise and securely store the vulnerable collection of photos, documents, textiles and ephemera. This will obviously be a long-term process.

We have formed a committee of five and I have produced a Facebook page for the Society. Our goal is to do what we can to encourage a few more local people to join the group. Hopefully the J&DHS will also resume its membership of W.V.A.H.S. So, watch this space!



Craige Proctor on behalf of President Wendy Zanker

Have you ever wondered about the evolution of the Australian Accent?

By Craig Proctor

Have you ever wondered *why* you speak as you do and how you *acquired* your accent? That's right: you *do* have an accent. We all do. As someone with a passion for history and genealogy but also a professional background in teaching English and other languages as well as linguistics, I would like to take you on a short journey into the past which for quite a few of you will be more relevant than you realise.

For those with ancestors who came to Australia in the nineteenth century, these forebears sounded very different from how you speak. In fact, chances are that if you could meet them you wouldn't understand them. With my own ancestors coming from various regions in England, Scotland and the Isles and from what today is Northern Ireland, not only would I not have understood their speech but they certainly wouldn't have understood each other well.

In the years post-settlement – so around 200-240 years ago – many of our ancestors who arrived here came from very different backgrounds. There were the English speakers from dialect regions throughout England, the Scots, the Irish and others. Some spoke Gaelic as their first language. The Cornish spoke a very different variety of 'English'. Let's not forget Welsh. Regional dialects had remained largely unchanged for generations because people generally didn't move far during their lives. The first challenge many arriving in the new colony had was actually *understanding* each other when they interacted; dialects and languages provide identity, of course, but they can also divide and inhibit the development of community. Someone from Yorkshire spoke 'English' differently from someone from Somerset or south-east England or Cockney speakers in the east end of London. The more limited their understanding of other accents, the more limited the interaction was and this could inhibit trade and thus economic and social advancement. Colonial Australia was a melting pot of regional dialects and accents. Something had to be done!

The first generations of native-born English-speaking Australians – the children and grandchildren of those earliest arrivals – quickly developed their own, *new*, accent. This was essential as it stimulated communication and economic advancement. This had become, for many, an issue of survival. Linguists, who refer to this quickly evolving accent as 'levelling', don't know what this brand-new Aussie accent sounded like as obviously there are no recordings. We can only guess at its nature. For those who had ancestors here during this period, most would have spoken with this new accent which differed significantly from their parents'. Visitors from the old world to the 'new' colonies remarked that they were hearing the 'purest' form of English ever spoken. It seems that this rapid evolution of the 'new' accent ditched the regional peculiarities in pronunciation and vowel sounds and even vocabulary and phrasing for a more uniform speech which soon spread

throughout the developing colonies. If only we knew *how* it sounded! Linguists do believe, however, that it was not the 'Aussie' accents we know today.

In time there was a backlash against this new identifiable Aussie accent; some thought it crude and primitive; they were embarrassed by it and wanted rid of it. So the push was on to refine the Aussie accent to make it more 'respectable', reflecting the socio-economic progress people had made over several generations and this was the Australian English promoted in our school system in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Come World War 1 and the accent evolved even further, becoming identifiably 'Australian' to the point that today, instead of one Aussie accent, there are many; there's Broad Australian, Cultivated Australian and General Australian. The theory goes that in far-off Europe our soldiers altered the way they spoke to distinguish themselves more clearly from the British – there was rivalry between the groups – and that this more distinctive accent returned to our shores with its speakers. Cultivated Australian, which is becoming rarer, is the 'highbrow' variant many of us recall from radio and the early days of television. It is modelled on formal British English. Whether you realise it or not, you most likely speak General Australian while others you know will speak Broad Australian which equates mostly with 'ocker' English. But be aware that Broad Australian is, for many reasons, disappearing and in a few generations it will likely be spoken by only small numbers in isolated pockets of the country.

Your own accent can even differ from others close to you including family members; siblings can produce sounds and pronounce words differently. Go into a pub and you will hear Australian English being spoken differently. Education can have a strong influence here as can social connections, the groups we belong to or associate with. Our 'accent' can even vary depending on the situation we find ourselves in. If addressing an audience we may well produce speech differently from when dealing with a tradie, for example. Put it to the test by actively listening to the sounds and pronunciation used by your partner, a parent, children, friends or acquaintances and see whether you can detect the differences. Some will be subtle while others will be obvious.

Let's not forget that we also have migrants who bring their own ethnolects to Aussie English; we have English with Greek and Italian, Arabic and Chinese influences; their speakers don't all produce sounds the same way. Aboriginal English is another variant and we would be more aware of this if we lived where Aboriginal English is spoken more widely. The story of Aboriginal English as a variant is fascinating and complex and is now an important topic in the Victorian Certificate of Education English Language syllabus (which I have had experience in teaching to VCE students).

So there are forces at work – constantly – which are impacting on the Aussie accent. But irrespective of the accent with which we speak our Aussie English, we are all part of a rich and varied speech community or, more accurately, speech communities.

The Macarthur Cup comes home



[Website](#)



The Macarthur and District Historical Society is delighted to receive a donation of the 1940 Macarthur Cup. It washed up in the wonderful Terang Community Op Shop and they thought it might be connected to Macarthur. The Court House Museum already has quite a few sporting trophies including an impressive Olympic Hunt perpetual trophy 1960 & 1961 from the days of the Macarthur Pastoral and Agricultural Show.

But which sport is the Macarthur Cup? I took a punt on the Racing Club. The minutes of the Racing Club mentioned the donation of a trophy from the Whiskey distillers John Dewar and Sons, Scotland. The cup was valued at £5/5/0. The Cup is inscribed "Presented by John Dewar and Sons Ltd, Distillers, Scotland".

The historians at Dewar's distillery in Aberfeldy, Scotland are excited to research a possible connection with our town. Where was it made? Were their representatives present at the Cup meeting? Indeed one could imagine a bottle filling up this large vessel and a communal sip passed around. The Racing Club Committee had agreed that all profits from the meeting would go to the local Patriotic Fund, it being wartime.

And the winning horse? A 5-year-old gelding, Triuncius, owned and trained by Mr D. S. Forbes of Hexham, won the double – the Macarthur Cup and the Eumeralla Welter. In the Welter he carried a 15-lb penalty and got up in the last stride to beat the odds-on favourite Loch Levan by a head. The *Weekly Times* correspondent seemed to think Forbes had yet to live up to his sire Trivalve who went on to win the 1927 Derby and Melbourne Cup; see the Melbourne Cup finish at right.



The Macarthur Cup is on display at the Court House Museum, 31 High Street, Macarthur. The Museum is open Sundays 1-4pm. Gold coin donation, members free.

Wendy Black, Macarthur and District Historical Society

Remember...

Western Historian serves its member groups by offering a widely-distributed means of not only promoting groups' events, publications, success stories and requests for support but also of sharing stories which may be of interest to other groups and sometimes individuals. Items in our newsletter can be 'harvested' by other groups including the RHSV so everyone is encouraged to submit items for inclusion just as the Ouyen and Macarthur groups have done for this issue.

wvahsinc@gmail.com

...and Thank You.

Recently I sent an email to all member groups on behalf of the Nhill and District Historical Society as they are seeking advice on digitising items in their collection. Around a dozen groups responded with really useful advice and even names of companies doing such work. These responses were not only welcome but also demonstrate the generosity and collegiality among our member groups willing to share their knowledge.

Zone Meeting Reports

Birchip and District Historical Society (M)

[Website](#)

It has been a year that has had a lot of family research work which has added to our finances as well as some research for the school, RSL and sporting clubs. Our school display that we put up for the Mali Heart Festival to coincide with the centenary of the brick buildings at the school, built for the first Higher Elementary School in 1924, is still on show.

We have been very happy to be working with some students from the school magazine class who are researching some articles for the school magazine on the first schools, fires, some pioneers, the importance of Debutante balls and their origin and early Birchip. We visited the school and answered questions and then the students came to our archives to follow up research.

Junior students have been visited to talk about early school days and the beginnings of the town and then they are to visit and see the school display with their teachers.

We are happy to have a new Campbell's Tank memorial replaced with new signage and replica pump after it was vandalised two years ago and the pump and trough stolen. The Phelps plough and the Phelps memorial have been refurbished and relocated to the median strip in the main street, Cumming Avenue, with help from a Shire Councillor, Community Forum and Men's Shed as well as local businesses. The Bills' Trough is also being repaired and will be replaced soon.

Our archivist Elaine has continued indexing newspapers as well as providing weekly information for the Buloke Times for the section 100 years ago, begun during Covid, while Secretary Maureen has contributed several articles to the Buloke Times on the importance of our town trees. We have worked with the RSL in the restoration and storage of their artefacts.

Elaine and Dorothy have applied for grants unsuccessfully for digitising photos and members have attended Zone meetings. President Warren has exhibited his classic car successfully and Helen has successfully managed to find homes for an extensive collection of framed embroidered paintings we were given to display in Birchip. Some will be in our museum. Our highlight of the year is the news that Elaine will be presented with an Award of Merit for her many years of archival work for our Society. Although we are a small group, we soldier on doing our best to promote our history, preserve our history and discover more of our history.

Maureen Donnellon, Secretary

Arapiles Historical Society (W)



[Website](#)

It has been another year of a great activity and achievement for AHS. Highlights have been many and varied.

- From completing the first stage of the QR codes on the Heritage Trail and the securing of funding for a second round earlier this year.
- Many members spending huge amounts of time researching for families and grant applications.
- Organising our first very successful car boot sale and Open Day, with another just recently completed and the next scheduled for Saturday October 26th to celebrate History Month.
- The AHS Arapiles Climbing Museum "branch" devising a competition to design promotional Tee shirts with coffee mugs to follow.
- A concerted effort to establish and achieve a useable museum space in the old Garage.
- Participation and leadership in the Horsham Home of History Group (HHOHG) group in the hope that "our" building project may gain traction.

It has been quite apparent that much of these activities have been the result of renewed enthusiasm brought about by many new members which has been great to witness. Please note change of leadership following the AHS recent AGM.

Vice President: Elizabeth Both

Treasurer: Jennette Sudholz

Secretary: Dianne Ellifson

Research Officer: Gianna Sudholz

Media Officer: Brigitte Muir OAM

Climbing Museum Manager: Keith Lockwood

Pat Ford, Incoming President

Landsborough and District Historical Group (W)



[Facebook page](#)

Time is going by very quickly and we have been busy with various projects in the past six months or so. Besides the new books released recently, we have also reprinted some books that were long out of print including “Dummys Ditties” and Diane & Tim Western’s book from 2006 “100 photos”. We also made up a booklet with many of the photos taken at the 150th anniversary event back in 2012. Thanks to the support of the Larder (now sadly closed) and more recently the Post Office, we have been able to stock our range of books for sale and the response has been excellent. Promotion on our Facebook page has also meant ongoing sales and funds for the group. Thanks to the work of some locals we are hopeful the community centre may re-open as a coffee shop to replace the closed Larder. Negotiations with the Pyrenees Council are ongoing. The rail heritage signage project, for which we received a grant from Pacific Blue Wind Farms last December, has been delayed while waiting for final approval from Northern Grampians Shire Council, in which four of the seven signs will be located. Things are finally proceeding though and the signage company based in Ararat has commenced design work. We are hoping for a pre-Christmas unveiling with the locations being Amphitheatre, Elmhurst, Crowlands, Joel, Landsborough West, Tulkara and Navarre and these will form part of a circular historic trail designed for a tour with a supporting pamphlet, based around Avoca as a start and finishing point.

At the recent AGM the committee was elected as follows:

President: Brett Leslie; Vice-President: Gary Leslie;
Secretary & Treasurer: Diane Western; Research Officer: Simon Jeffery. We would like to again thank Snr. Constable Diane Grant for chairing our AGM. Our Secretary Kaye Daly has had to resign her position due to family commitments. She took up the role back in 2021 and has been of immense help to our small group over the three years. We thank her for all her work and passion for the role; she is well-respected throughout the community. We wish Kaye and Pete all the best and hope to continue seeing you both at our meetings and social events.

Work is proceeding on the large 160th anniversary book - very much a “work in progress” – but we are hoping to see some results in 2025 and hopefully publication of our major history.

The Pyrenees Shire is working on a collaboration with the various Historical Societies in the area (Landsborough, Avoca, Beaufort, Snake Valley, Navarre Museum and Moonambel Arts & History precinct) in order to provide support and to enable us to all meet at regular intervals to discuss items of common interest and the challenges we face, which are common to us all.

Brett Leslie, President

Swan Hill Genealogical and Historical Society (M)

[Facebook page](#)

Since the April meeting we have seen two very successful events led by Steve Pentreath. The first was a Lake Boga Cemetery Walk and then an evening Town Walk around Swan Hill highlighting some of the early businesses. Both events were very well attended, received a lot of positive feedback and, as a bonus, were also good fundraisers.

Over the winter months, with our meetings on Sunday afternoons rather than Friday nights, we have heard from a variety of guest speakers. Rodney Peirce from our Swan Hill Library spoke of his visit to the Commemoration of the Vyner Brooke and Bangka Island tragedies. These are not well known but are a fascinating insight into some of the lesser known hardships of World War 2. Our new head of the local Salvation Army told the story of his life from childhood to the present and detailed the many challenges he has faced. These included the work to trace his own family after he was adopted and his experience of being home-less in Sydney when young. In July we heard from Leeta Rutherford about how she was able to research family members from a single piece of information and also what advice she was able to give about the use of DNA. For our last afternoon meeting in August we were entertained by Daryl “Mully” Pearse who gave a very frank talk about his rise from a raw beginner as a technician at our Town Hall after the amalgamation of the Shire and City Councils to his retirement in 2016 as the Town Hall Function Manager with the Council Café at the Town Hall named in his honour.

Our research work has continued with many varied requests and we continue to receive many donated items but, with limited space, we sometimes need to find alternative homes for them, especially old photos which have been sent in by family members. We have started a new project in trying to collate information about the many community groups being aware that many of these are now starting to fold and will be forgotten in later years unless this work is done.

Leone Walbran, President

Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum, Jeparit (W)

[Facebook page](#)

The Museum is a Hindmarsh Shire Asset staffed exclusively by volunteers who, during the past year, have 'clocked up' 4,000 hours of time - the equivalent of 166 days.

We continue to make progress with implementing some of the recommendations of the Hindmarsh Shire Council Masterplan, specifically through the development and erection of storyboards (see below).

We continue to forge partnerships with other individuals, bodies and organisations including the Menzies Institute, Federation University at Ballarat (with the Secretary participating in six-weekly webinars), the Royal Historical Society of Victoria with Dr Rosalie Triolo OAM FRHSV visiting the Museum in April and two Committee members, Craig Proctor and Wendy Werner, participating in monthly Cataloguing Clinics hosted by the RHSV. We have established links with Matthew Polack, a film maker in Horsham, who is keen to produce videos on aspects of the district's history for his YouTube channel and with a technical writer in Melbourne who is producing a Welcome document for visitors (a voluntary initiative) and a jigsaw producer in Ballarat. The jigsaws ordered will hopefully enhance our merchandising potential.

We have attempted to promote the Museum through producing car decals which four Committee members display wherever they travel throughout Victoria. This is an inexpensive way for any group to promote itself and the decals are frequent talking points beyond the local area.

For six months four members of the Committee of Management, along with two community members, met regularly to organise the usual Rally over two days in June but organisational and logistical challenges meant that these plans were abandoned. While the Rally did not eventuate, having two community members involved with the planning was a new initiative and beneficial.

To support our digitisation and cataloguing goals we have purchased a laptop which will enable us to store images and descriptions and potentially upload these to the Victorian Collections portal.

The Committee was successful in receiving in the Hindmarsh Shire Council budget allocation funding for curatorial assistance, storyboards and website production – a future goal.

Several Committee members have been liaising with personnel from the Grampians Wimmera Mallee Tourism Visitor Engagement Partnership initiatives.

At our recent AGM Wendy Werner resumed the role of Chair for the coming year.

Craig Proctor, Secretary



Jeparit's Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum has taken delivery of fourteen new storyboards to enhance its display, bringing to thirty the number of storyboards produced recently. The latest storyboards include four relating to the Museum's H.V. McKay Sunshine collection, two on Mallee Rollers and clearing the land, three on pioneering women, three on grain cleaning and pickling, one on the role of horses and another on blacksmithing, all of which we hope will add to the visitor experience. The WMPM Management Committee is grateful to the Hindmarsh Shire Council for its ongoing support with the development of these storyboards which have been produced by a Horsham firm.

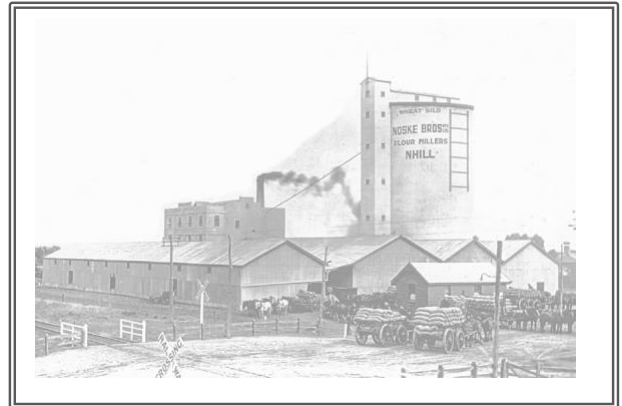
Nhill Silo Heritage Project (W)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

The Nhill Silo Heritage Project (NSHP) recently held its third AGM, an event well supported by members of the community. The executive was re-elected along with minor changes to the general committee.

During 2023/2024 we were fortunate enough to be successful in our Local History Grant application. The amount of \$3,300 was awarded for the purchase of archival storage files and boxes as well as the acquisition of a plan storage cabinet. These will be used for the safe and secure storage of a large amount of archival material obtained from Noske Bros. which includes, amongst other things, the original 1908 ledger from Noske's Horsham Mill and around 200 blueprints and technical drawings from Noske facilities throughout the country.



The dedicated team of volunteers continues with the never-ending task of breathing life back into the structure that dominates the Lowan skyline. Looking to the future, the NSHP is engaged with the Hindmarsh Shire in submitting applications for permits to develop the site to highlight the history of Noske Bros., flour milling and the development of the local grain industry and agriculture.

Another initiative about to be undertaken is the building of a post and rail fence across the front of the site. This will better protect the site from further unnecessary use by heavy vehicles and to better define the front boundary. To this end, a public appeal will soon be launched encouraging the community to purchase sections of fencing. A local woodworker has undertaken to record donors' details on the rails of fencing.

The NSHP is very conscious of the potential issues surrounding access to a previous industrial site. Consequently, an access policy was adopted which defines the minimum safety standards required for everyone when working on or accessing the facility above and below ground level.

I would like to take the opportunity on behalf of the President and members in thanking everyone who attended the WVAHS AGM in Nhill in April. Thank you also for the kind words following the event.

Agriculturally yours,
Daryl Meek, Vice President

Cohuna & District Historical Society (M)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

The Society has recently completed an extension to our archive building. As a result we are very busy filling the extension with new displays and rearranging the old displays. It has doubled our compactus area and we have nearly filled it already.

We are busily trying to digitise our collection but it is going to be ongoing for many years.

Cohuna is having its 150th Anniversary along with our 55th birthday next year. The new extension will be officially opened in late March or early April 2025.

The Trash & Treasure is booming and is a great contributor to the Archives. We currently have approximately 30 volunteers, some more active than others.

Several years ago one of our volunteers - who is an avid VFL enthusiast - started a collection of the local district's Football memorabilia. This has now exploded to almost fill one room with sports memorabilia. We have many visitors who come specifically to visit this area of our facility.

We are very proud of our facility and encourage all to visit and browse through the Museum and the Archives.



Jeanette Kline, Secretary/Treasurer

Wedderburn Historical Records Museum (M)

Website

The year so far has once again been busy converting more records and newspapers into digital format and referencing all of the names in those articles. The database now comprises almost 120,000 records and over 1 Terabyte of disk storage.

The Loddon Shire has confirmed the purchase of the old court house and police station from the State Government and we are scheduled to move into it once the purchase has been completed. This building is much larger, has better facilities and ample parking.

The QR codes installed at the Wedderburn Cemetery last year are now proving to be popular. YouTube video statistics show that to date there has been over 1,500 hits on the videos. These videos can also be seen on our web site at <https://wedderburnhistorical.com.au/>

Additional QR code badges can be installed upon request from the community.

Darryl (president) is currently working on a project to create two plaques for Soldier's Memorial Park. The first one is to commemorate all of the horses that were sent to WW1 from the district and the second one to acknowledge Sgt. Colin Cameron who was killed at Singapore in WW2 whilst single handedly fending off the Japanese, to allow his men to escape. These plaques will be installed in the vicinity of the statues of VC winners Albert Jacka and Albert Borella.

Member Geoff Arnott has released a new book entitled *War Veterans from Wedderburn and District* which has proven to be very successful.

I am still working on digitising and referencing the *Wedderburn Express* newspapers and to date have done all the editions from its start in 1888 up to 1932. Darryl has already digitised editions from its closure in 1996 back to 1956 and is now working on issues of the now defunct *Loddon Times*.

We currently have 25 members although many of these are no longer capable of taking an active part in the operation of the records museum due to age/health. Once the move has been made to the new premises, we intend to carry out a recruiting drive to attract younger members.

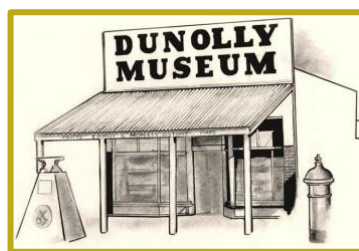
Darryl Arnott, President
Alan Mulraney, Secretary

Ararat and District Historical Society (W)

Facebook page

- Our newest display, which runs until the end of October, is the Russell Rachinger Antarctic Expeditions display. Russell was a highly accomplished local identity.
- Gum San Museum Ararat has kindly donated \$1,800 for the replacement of cabinet glass that was smashed during a recent break-in. Langi Morgala is very grateful for this support from another Museum in Ararat. We aim to collaborate more with Gum San in regard to promotions etc.
- Numbers have been slow over Winter which is understandable and common for that time of year.
- We are investigating marketing/promotional options to ensure more people know about the wonderful items we have in the Museum. We will be seeking a community grant to fund this idea.
- We are designing a new quarterly newsletter and will circulate it when it goes out in October.

Goldfields Historical and Arts Society (Dunolly Museum) (M)



Website

Dunolly Museum Facebook page

The Goldfields Historical & Arts Society has produced a booklet to celebrate 150 years of railway in Dunolly.

We have also erected signs at the 1874 cork tree in Dunolly and at the Havelock Avenue of Honour. We became aware only earlier this year that Havelock was the first Avenue of Honour planted in Australia.

We held a popular tour in April called Dunolly's Murder Sites.

Our secretary has spent considerable time trying to understand Land Tax Exemption and Charitable Status of the historical society.

John Tully, President

Warracknabeal and District Historical Society (W)

Website

The Historical Centre has recently received a 90+ year old child's dress worn by a Warracknabeal lady when she entered elocution competitions when just a child. She also supplied a photo of herself wearing the dress. Members are working on tidying our obituary and research records. They are combining these and placing them in a section of the Centre for easy access.



We recently located a large collection of photos from the 1967 Centenary celebrations. It was decided to place these in an album rather than in the photo collection.

We are looking forward to having a new fence at the Centre's entrance to replace the old deteriorating one.

Another member has recently published a book recording the history of our Post Office. The book is called "Everything Comes to him who Waits" and was written by Ian Wright who has always had an interest in stamp and postmark collection. It has proved very popular with locals and ex-pats.

The treadle sewing machine that we were donated has now been placed on display in the north end of the Warehouse where it was originally used in the clothing factory in what was McCombe's Hall. The Warehouse has had a change of some staff members, retirement for a long-time member and several others.

It is still very popular with visitors to the town.

Members at the Museum have been extremely busy. They have re-erected the bus shelter that was at the Secondary College. The grounds have been top-dressed in preparation for planting lawn. Trees and shrubs have also been planted and the area prepared for a playground. A BBQ will be installed in the shelter and seating placed in the shade.

The skillion behind the workshop has been prepared for a cement floor to be installed. We are planning a cabinet to house the official weights and measures collection. Beans have been planted in the adjoining 30 acres and oats have been planted near the Museum in the hope that they will be ok for next years' Rally.

Just last weekend our members planted potatoes again, using a potato plating machine. The ground, just near the Museum, had been prepared using a disc plough that had also recently been restored. The potatoes will be sold as baked potatoes at next year's Rally.

Recent acquisitions include a large collection of model tractors, a full set of AFDJ magazines, a large collection of tractor brochures, a front-end loader and backhoe and another tractor,

Planning is underway for our 2025 Rally. We will feature 100 years of Caterpillar and also American machinery. William Adams is kindly giving us some support.

The Society members have recently taken part in several meetings to do with tourism and advertising. We hope that these will assist us with publicity and promotion of all of our venues.

Our Secondary College is about to celebrate its centenary and our Primary School will celebrate 150 years.

We will be working with these schools to supply information and photos for their big weekend.

Lesley Stephan

St Arnaud Historical Society (M)

Website



A Historical Permanent Information Centre was erected at the mine shaft of the Lord Nelson Mine close to Lord Nelson Park. The mining trail marks the mine sites around the hinterland of St Arnaud and it takes about two hours to walk around the 21 mine sites.

We were fortunate to receive a bequest to be used to buy a house-shop-building. We first approached Logan Homes for a purpose built two roomed building. Fortunately, before any money was exchanged, they went into receivership. We then decided on a cheaper option of a Colourbond shed. The shed has now been completed and is about to have a locally built McGlashon Wagon and other historic farm machinery displayed in it.

In January this year an accident occurred at the intersection of Wimmera Highway and Napier Street. A car travelling from the Wimmera highway failed to stop at the Stop sign and ran into a car traveling south in Napier Street, spinning the car into our Museum verandah. Although we had increased the insurance last year the company classed us as being under-insured. The insurance company are paying only a third of the cost. We have to find the \$35,000. We are applying for grants and are in the process of setting up a Go Fund Me. Insurance companies have a clause that only pays a percentage if you are under-insured.

We are supporting a member who is compiling a book, "St Arnaud Then and Now". It has been sent to the printers and will be available in November – just in time for Christmas.

Acquisitions are continuing to be deposited at the Museum, Giving our Past a Future.

Mervynne Dunstan, President

Hopetoun and District Historical Society (W)

[Webpage](#)

[Facebook page](#)

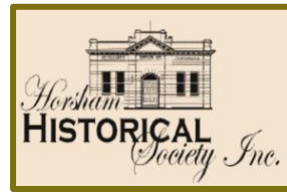
These past twelve months have been filled to the brim for us with an eclectic assortment of visits, exhibitions, seminars and rostered duty over our three locations here in Hopetoun.

- Inaugural exhibition in the Old Scout/Guide Hall which we now lease, comprising the early years of Scouting, the Story of Cropping and an extensive research project commemorating six sibling Pioneer Settlers from 1891 to date.
- Subsequent exhibition of Freemasonry in Hopetoun, 100 years of Yaapeet and a display of hats across the ages from our recently collated Clothing and Textile Archives.
- We shall be launching a new exhibition at the Old School on the "Schools of Karkaroc Shire".
- At the launch of this we shall be unveiling a major project which has been two years in the making. We received a grant from ICON UK to restore an original Shire of Karkaroc Map. Conservators have painstakingly preserved and repaired this map which will be housed in our Old School Museum. To our understanding this is the only surviving map from the beginnings of the Shire.
- We have visited other societies to brainstorm and glean ideas on how we can improve the archiving within our collection.
- We acquired an 8-bay compactus which is now being restocked with archival boxes and ephemera.
- We had a serious case of white ants in our research/archive room which required floor replacement and much upheaval of moving the collection.
- Our monthly meetings are a wonderful opportunity to touch base, plan and keep abreast of goings on.
- We open the Lake Corrong Homestead each Friday morning and have had a working bee recently.
- We attended a recent seminar on the possibility of creating a Yarriambiack Heritage Trail to showcase the region's Historical Voluntary Groups.
- Our foray into the "digital world" is increasing our Digital Library and expanding our Catalogue. I have been maintaining the Society's Facebook Page which continues to grow and reach out to people and places that are hard to fathom.
- We recently had digital backups done of early oral and VHS history. Part of an extensive collection donated last year, we hope in time to replicate all the VHS tapes.
- We continue to do research as requested which can be rewarding for the recipients. More voluntary hours are needed to make this service ongoing.
- Recruiting new members presents a challenge (as I am sure it does for us all).

Thank you for providing me with this opportunity to allow you a glimpse.

Jenn Stephens, President

Horsham Historical Society (W)



[Website](#)

This is my first report as new President of Horsham Historical Society. I was introduced to the Society a few years ago as I went about researching the history of my favourite local footy team, Taylors Lake. I am pleased to take on an official role as the Society continues to evolve and adapt to the challenges of preserving its town's history amidst an era of change and electronification.

A child of the 1970s, I was born in Horsham, and after moving about a few times during my youth, as my father was transferred, I returned to Horsham some twenty years ago for a business opportunity.

I'm pleased to report that in recent times Horsham Historical Society has been the recipient of grants which it has utilised to replace signage, digitise Super 8 footage, bind newspapers and replace chairs.

One of our major current work efforts is cataloguing many of the images produced by legendary former *Wimmera Mail Times* photographer, Ian Ward.

We continue to explore the possibility of securing more space and look forward to having discussions with Council in the near future.

The Society has embarked on succession planning in various ways, having seen some committee renewal, and through the training of a new assistant researcher. We are keen to attract new and younger members although we face the likelihood that history doesn't necessarily get interesting until one has built up a history of their own, through age and experience although we do intend to explore ways to grow and diversify our membership and maintain our relevance to the community.

I acknowledge the efforts of our Immediate Past President Rod Jenkinson, who attended many Zone meetings across a number of years. As well as being an external representative, Rod was a strong internal contributor and advocate and was awarded Life Membership of the Society in 2019.

Finally, to celebrate History Month, Horsham Historical Society will hold an open afternoon on Sunday 20 October, from 2 to 4pm, and members of the public are welcome to explore our rooms and learn about our work.

Stuart Hall, President

Donald History Society (M)

[Website](#)



[Facebook page](#)

Since our last zone meeting we have completed a totally upgrade of our computer system at the archives. The purchase of a laptop for the museum has allowed us to begin the transfer of catalogue sheets to the Filemaker Pro program we also use at the archives. A huge task but we have to start somewhere.

Guest speakers at our monthly meetings since April have included Jim Petrie, the stonemason masons trade; Peter Barbetti, recollections of an engine driver; Sam Goldsmith, organizing festivals and events; and Brian Brasier, the lead up to the 1924 football grand final.

Two meetings have been held at different venues. In April we travelled out to Corack to view the Sands memorial plaque placed at the site of their original selection before returning to the Corack Hall for our meeting. This was followed by a scrumptious afternoon tea provided by local residents. In August we met at the Donald railway station. Our archivist, who is researching Donald's railway houses, spoke following our meeting. We then walked along Walker Street to view some of these houses.

A generous donation from a descendant of the Meyer family will allow us to erect an information board at the front of the Courthouse Museum describing the role played by pioneers Johann August Meyer and his wife Charlotte in the development of the Donald township. We have also rescued and relocated the old memorial cairn which marked the site of Meyer's original "shanty" after it was moved to make way for agricultural purposes. The donation will also allow signage to be placed at the memorial cairn.

At the end of April we hosted a Pole family reunion. James Pole selected land at Avon Plains, south of Donald, in 1873 and Henry Pole in 1877. The day began with morning tea at the Courthouse Museum before taking descendants on a tour of the Archives and Old Police Camp Museum. Several publications were sold and information on their various lines of the family supplied. A Pole Family publication was also presented to the Society.

Our archives, open three days a week, regularly sees visitors calling in. Some leave with more information on their families or the district and sometimes we are gifted with information or items we didn't have.

Recently a visitor arrived with a fabulous story. Her father had just died aged 102. He and his wife met at a boarding house in Donald in the 1950s whilst they were both staying briefly for work reasons. His wife was performing in a travelling singing group. They later returned to Donald for their honeymoon and when their eldest child was born they named him "Donald".

Another visitor wanted information on the former school sites in the area. We were able to sell him two copies of the fine work completed by two of our members where every rural school site is shown on a map. The visitor, also a book binder, returned one of the purchased copies to us, beautifully bound, as a thank you.

We are also in the process of assisting the Swanwater West Cemetery Trust learn more about the many pioneers of the Avon Plains, Cope Cope, Swanwater West and Traynor's Lagoon districts buried in the Swanwater West Cemetery as part of a project they are undertaking.

Although we have 35 paid up members at present - with an average of 15 attending our meetings - we have only a very small number of dedicated volunteers. A problem, unfortunately, we are all too familiar with.

Ann Dunstan, President

Boort Historical Society (M)

[Facebook page](#)



The Boort Historical Society has had to close the Museum for the past three months as a new galvanised iron roof has been installed. We are very thankful to the Loddon Shire for this major upgrade. Sadly, however, the old slate roof is gone but now we don't have to worry about its many leaks. While this was happening our members were able to keep up with the family research at home and requests for information on local properties.

There has been a continual run of donations of artefacts and memorabilia coming into the Museum. We are very thankful that people choose to donate their cherished belongings to the Boort Historical Society.

Our membership, unfortunately, still remains small but all members have an enthusiasm for the preservation of our local history and that is why we can still continue. This falling membership is very concerning for the long term viability of our Museum and we are struggling to find a solution.

My sincere thanks to all members who work tirelessly for the preservation of our local history.

There is always plenty to do at the Museum and I and our members look forward to the year ahead.

Robyn Evans, President

Stawell Historical Society (W)



Website

Our new website is active online and linked to other sites for maximum exposure.

We held our AGM on 12 September when all Office Bearers were re-elected to their roles and, in line with our discussions about succession planning, two new roles have been created: Assistant Museum Curator and Assistant Chief Researcher.

Jim Melbourne, our Vice President and Chief Researcher, announced he will be retiring by Christmas. Jim has devoted many years to our Society and we will be sorry to see him go.

Digitising of our Newspaper Collection is now complete and will ensure preservation of local news into the future.

A hard copy folder of our fantastic Panorama of early Stawell has been created with our Cataloguer adding ID indicators of each of the main buildings and sites.

History Month is coming up in October and we are planning an open day. A post and story encouraging people to visit our Museum will be on our Facebook page in the next couple of days. Open Day will probably be either Sat 12th or Saturday 19th. I will notify everyone once finally decided on.

We continue to be very busy responding to the number of family history enquiries we are receiving from across Australia and the entire team is assisting with research as it is too much for one or two people to manage.

Kate van Dyck

Balmoral Historical Society (W)

The Society bunkered down over the winter and what was discovered in the archives was quite a surprise!

It was found that there is no record of what is actually in the archives and where they are located which is rather frustrating when trying to do research. So, a number of us decided to work through the boxes and itemise the contents. The discoveries were very surprising i.e. the original minutes of the first meeting to establish the Presbyterian Church in Balmoral in 1860 and subsequent minutes, all on lovely blue paper in rather elegant sweeping handwriting; the case of a rather nasty gossip-mongering Reverend and many letters from fathers consenting to their daughters marrying as well as the plans and specifications of the manse and church. All these need to be carefully preserved. So that is what has been occupying us through winter.

The Society does have a programme for recording digitally but currently that is concentrating on the photographs in the collection. This all takes many hours and, being a small group who have many commitments in a small town, it is a slow process.

So I am sat here wondering what else to write....not much has been happening really but, **THEN**, an email arrives in my inbox.

Headline: Congratulations !

The Society many years ago saved the Balmoral Lock-Up. Past members had done a fantastic job raising the funds and purchasing this unique building. The major concern was the water damage to the stonework and foundations because of rotting gutters and downpipes.

Through the Southern Grampians Partnership Grant Programme the Society has again been successful in its application to carry out the second stage of work needed to keep the building structurally sound. The first phase was to replace the guttering and downpipes so that water could be directed away from the building. This has been achieved but the damage to the stonework was major on the lower half of the building. This recent grant was for the restoration of this area. Along with the Courthouse the Lock-Up has become a big draw card on our Open Days and Fundraising efforts.

So again we are in restoration mode.



[Facebook page](#)

Denize Raggatt

Dimboola & District Historical Society (W)

[Website](#)

We have been relatively quiet the last couple of months although research keeps us busy. Visitations are down and we would expect this to improve along with the weather. Our caravan park from this month onwards is heavily booked with caravan and car groups along with other groups that are touring. We hope to pick up tours for the print museum and already have two in line. Warracknabeal Rotary visited the print museum a few weeks ago and the feedback was very positive. Raymond and Dale and Don Schultz, a former printer at Nhill and Horsham, have been busy perfecting the proof printing of a rare, letterpress map block, about A3 size, of Australia Felix 1847, taken from the Garravembi Press publication "A short History of Port Phillip" by George Arders. The large print block was donated to the Print Museum some years ago by Peter Marsh who ran the Garravembi Press. Peter became our advisor when the Print Museum was being established. The block depicts very early settlement. The results are extremely good and these maps will be for sale and already we have orders to fill.

We recently had some remedial work carried out at the Courthouse by Council with 70% of the ramp leading to the rear archive and meeting room being replaced. We also asked for an appropriate handrail to aid people up the two steps onto the front verandah. You would have thought, as this is a historically listed building, that would be taken into consideration. Not surprisingly, we got a small shiny chrome handrail that you use inside a shower recess! Some rotted boards have been replaced on the front verandah and painted, the bulk have yet to be sanded and painted so it all can match. We will most likely do this ourselves so that it will be done. Having said that we are grateful for Council's small mercies and hope in the near future the entire Courthouse will be painted as the paint is peeling off everywhere and looking quite unloved. The NBN is finally coming to the Courthouse which will be a huge improvement on our little dongle. Our archive room has been completely re-arranged and working well although we cannot seem to find anything anymore (obviously we have to acclimatise).

It is fantastic to see some of our town's historic shops being recently purchased and, more importantly, they will become new businesses for the town and not left idle. The former secondhand shop which is our biggest premises in Lloyd Street with huge glass front-ages is to become a very high end vintage emporium. The new owners from Adelaide have six online shops and import and export primarily to the USA. They are very selective on what they sell. Already we had a snapshot of a temporary fabulous window display as a taste of what's to come. The building is one of our eldest surviving from the 1880s and has been in continuous operation from its establishment.



Our CFA shed and newish extension to the rear in the middle of the main Street has been purchased by a ceramicist from N.S.W. He intends to use the front as a studio and retail outlet while the rear is fit for a residence. The owner is keen to conduct ceramic classes as well. Another shop in our CBD is to become a quality book shop. Again there is a flat to the rear, making it rather appealing.

You may recall at the last Zone Meeting at Nhill I spoke about the goings on with our enormous 100 year plus ancient olive tree and the fact that it resides at the rear of the Senior Citizens building which is destined for public sale within the next couple of months. Council asked DDHS to provide a history of the tree and area so they could decide on its relevance and future. A substantial report was forwarded to council with a recommendation from DDHS that the tree was indeed extremely significant on many levels, age, integral to our town's heritage, its social, environmental, cultural, recreational values and would be best if the ongoing management could remain in the hands of Council and listed under the local heritage plan. We went further and suggested quite practically that the area where the tree is at the very rear of the Senior Citizens could be easily sub-divided as the area is an open area including Crown Land and this would enable the community ongoing access to the tree and community seating. Well no – the result is the tree will be included in the sale of the building and will have private owners who will be responsible for the tree, with conditions under an interim local law of 273? The property may be fenced off, more than likely, and the community will no longer have access to the tree. Not what we had hoped for at all.

Our Masonic Lodge building, a little worse for wear, is rumoured to be coming up for sale or likely to be demolished as well. The building is very quirky internally for those who have been able to have a look. Well worth saving but the question remains: for what purpose? The Gerang Gerung Hall, near Dimboola and Council-owned, is for sale. Whether it be Council budget constraints or town organisations feeling the pressure of declining numbers, volunteer availability, insurances and relevance, we can only hope that whoever becomes the owners of these properties can repurpose them so they have a second life otherwise we stand to lose a great deal of our local history. In the past couple of weeks we have been asked if the historical society could save them. Unfortunately, it is not that simple as everyone here knows.

Evelyn King, Secretary

Nhill & District Historical Society (W)

The active staff of the NDHS have been working tirelessly for over twelve months updating the Nhill Cemetery records: Wendy Rethus has taken photos of every grave at the cemetery and in doing so had made a mud-map of who lies beside whom. Wendy has also been adding birth, death and burial dates to a spreadsheet along with parents' names and nicknames if available. This information has been gathered from the details on the head-stones, searching the newspapers and PROV for Wills & Probates and inquests so the death date is accurate plus checking family tree books we have on file. David Brown has been working with Wendy to add the name and grave number to the large number of photos that Wendy has taken. This project may still take until the end of the year to complete. Once checked over and formatted the cemetery records will be available for a price yet to be determined by the Committee.

We have others working on updating some of the smaller cemeteries, taking photos etc.

Daryl Meek & Fiona Lane are working on next year's small fundraiser "Prominent Women of Nhill".

The Society is producing a calendar again this year which contains photos from our photographic collection of scenes looking over Nhill over the years. These will be for sale hopefully by the end of the month.

Hindmarsh Shire has just spent \$80,000+ of grant money on giving the Lowan Shire Hall (our Society rooms) a new roof, gutters, decorative timbers and finials, repaired the old verandah posts and given the place a fresh coat of paint.

Earlier this year we were given an eight-bay compactus from the Horsham Fire Brigade which is marvellous. It isn't set up in our main storage area as yet but that will happen once we can determine the best spot and clear the way for it and, of course, get enough people to help with the re-location.

The Nhill hospital held an auction/clearing sale and the Society has managed to purchase some new file cabinets, a large variety of vintage and modern picture frames for mounting items for display, a large amount of Perspex document display holders which hang on three roll-around trolleys, a water cooler/dispenser for staff and public use and other odd bits for quite a bargain price.

We had our AGM in August and have new committee members and if your group hasn't received an email from me with the details please give me your email address and I'll send these through to you.

With that in mind, the Executive Committee would like to thank Kay Scott for her eighteen years on the Executive Committee. Kay has now taken on the role of Collection Coordinator. Thank you, Kay.

The new Committee, taking the work done on the Lowan Shire Hall as a fresh start, is taking this opportunity to freshen the Society and encourage the public to visit and join us. It will take time, we know, but we are all driven to get the Society back into the public eye.

Colleen Forbes, Secretary/Researcher, Helen Woodhouse Herrick, President

Nullawill Historical Society (M)

[Facebook page](#)

Thank you for the opportunity to present our report to this meeting. We have noticed a decline in visitations to our museum in 2024 which seems to be a trend among similar organisations. However, we are utilizing this change to focus on our administration and maintenance work at the museum.

Administration: Some of our team members have dedicated their efforts to areas of their particular interest such as technology and cataloguing our collection of photographs and documents. This is a very long and slow process. As a result of both these endeavours, our computer and scanning equipment are fully operational and will be ready for the digitisation of some of our collections.

Maintenance: We have been diligently maintaining our 23 buildings and our efforts were validated during recent wind and storm events when not a single sheet of iron was flapping in the wind. Other members continue to keep our surrounds in tip-top order. It's a constant job!!

Enhancements: Our team is continually working to enhance our displays and improve the overall visitor experience. We have even prepared a preamble for tour operators to help guests make the most of their visit considering the limited time available for tours. Furthermore, we are thrilled to have acquired a stunning Ronaldson and Tippett stationary engine thanks to the generous donation from the Watts family.

Relocation: In a remarkable effort, one of our members orchestrated the relocation of a large stable from his farm to our museum. This additional building will now be used to house the Ronaldson and Tippett stationary engine, chaff cutter and other related displays. The stable comes with genuine and real atmosphere. To stand



in the stable with the stalls and horse feed troughs is quite the experience. You can almost hear the horses shuffling and snuffling!!

Mural - Room of Remembrance: A beautiful mural has been designed by our more talented and artistic members. The mural is soon to be painted by a couple of new residents to Nullawil and is scheduled to adorn the east-facing wall of our building. We are all eagerly anticipating this addition.

Memorable Visitors: We were honoured to host the visit of Warwick and Diane Archer to the museum. Warwick's mother Constance May Peters (known as May) was posted to the Nullawil West Primary School during the 1930s. From Nullawil West she was sent to the Culgoa Primary School. Warwick shared his mother's memoirs with us. A very interesting visit.

Additionally, Mrs Valda Hateley and her daughter Helen Smith made a special trip from near Horsham to visit us. Valda was tracing her family's very impressive and strong connections to the Nullawil area and particularly the former Winston and Nullawil Methodist Churches. Valda is a very spritely 97-year-old lady who was eager to share her mother's connections to the Nullawil area.

It is these types of visits that encourage us to continue doing the things we are doing. It's important, enjoyable and very rewarding for our members.

In conclusion, we encourage everyone to visit us and, even if you have visited us before, our exhibits are continually expanding as we are committed to providing an enriching experience for all visitors, new and returning.

Wendy Spry

Warrnambool and District Historical Society (S)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

Another busy year with many highlights. It is always a good feeling to have major projects done and dusted so the mid-year launch of *The Story of the Board* - a joint project which the Family History Group and W&DHS members have been working on for many years - has been the major event of our year. The launch of the book was held on the centenary of the board's public unveiling in 1924.

We have been informed by the National Library's Trove services that the first batch of master tapes of Standard newspapers (1872-mid 1879) have been sent to their contractor for re-scanning for OCR and eagerly await their appearance online. We applied to the City Council for a grant to send the second batch to Canberra and received \$5,000 for this purpose to which we will add some of our own money with the aim of adding the 1880s papers to the queue at the NLA as soon as the 1870s become available online.

And while on the subject of digitisation, as of next week the Warrnambool Library & Learning Centre's 'preservation station' will be operational, providing the community with access to equipment for converting old media formats (VHS, DVD, Super 8 and cassette) to digital. The new lab in the library will offer demonstrations and hands-on training so we will be lining up for that.

Some of the old films which we had digitised by a Melbourne company several years ago featured in the film night in June which was held as our contribution to the 4th Storytelling Festival. We seem to always get a full house when we have a film night, proving the popularity of the old films despite the sometimes degraded quality of the film stock.

Our Annual General Meeting is planned for the end of this month. We have an interesting guest speaker travelling from Queensland so members and also the public are invited to come along to hear Annabelle Brayley talk about her book *Our Vietnam Nurses*, the permanent photographic memorial to the nurses established recently at the Morven Museum, Qld.

Our resident war historian James Affleck has had a busy year and his seventh book in the Soldier Settlement series is currently in the capable hands of Star Printing. *A Tale of Two: Injemira & Maes-Y-Porth* is eagerly anticipated as it relates the history of two local schools/communities; Grassmere and Cooramook, as well as telling the personal stories of the families who settled on the soldier settlement blocks carved from the eponymous properties. The launch will be held at the Cooramook hall on 16 November.

No good news yet on our accommodation problems although we feel that there has been progress on that front. We have held several discussions with Council officers and councillors and are at the stage of exploring options. Council set aside some money in the current budget for a business case to investigate possibility of rebuilding on the current site but other options have been canvassed. Activity has currently ground to a halt as council entered caretaker period but we are certainly more hopeful than we were twelve months ago.

Janet Macdonald, President



Heytesbury District Historical Society (S)

The Heytesbury District Historical Society is continuing its monthly meetings with occasional guest speakers, the last being Ian Digney whose family were early pioneers and hops growers around Timboon.

We have resumed opening our museum in Port Campbell every weekend and one day a week. The museum will be open more days a week during the Summer and holiday periods. It is also open by appointment per request.

The last major project we have been involved in was the restoration of the Timboon district World War 1 soldiers' memorial board. The original was lost in a hall fire. We could not locate any photos of the board and had only a newspaper article about its unveiling with a list of names.



Three of our members - Nancy McAdie, Marg Magill and Peter Younis – took on the task of scrutinising and verifying the names in the article. Turned out to be quite a task wonderfully done. A local artisan made the board and it was hand written and painted. The board was unveiled before an appreciative audience in April. Our next project will be trying to tidy up the Loch Ard Cemetery - the site having been used to inter victims of the shipwreck in 1878 - and to memorialise those not found with a headstone. The Cemetery was gazetted for public use for a period then no longer used. With the proclamation of the Port Campbell National Park in 1963 the Cemetery came under the trusteeship of Parks Victoria. Over the years it has become overgrown and unloved. We hope to have this redressed and get it fixed to reflect its cultural, historical and maritime significance.

Photo: The World War 1 Memorial Board unveiling with Local Member Richard Riordan and Corangamite Shire President Ruth Gstrein.

Gavan Deppeler

Ouyen District History & Genealogy Centre (W)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

October is History Month and the exhibition 'Ten Treasures from the Archives' is ready to be launched at our Annual General Meeting on 4th October. Items from the collection have been selected and researched to reveal their untold stories. The following Friday the exhibition will be part of the MRCC Seniors Festival in keeping with their theme 'Explore Engage Evolve'. Guest speaker at the Annual General Meeting is John Burch, author of the award winning book 'Return of the Kulkynne'. John will be speaking about Aboriginal Land Use in the area focusing on the Tiega and Yellumjip areas. There is a Meet and Greet to start the day with a luncheon to conclude.



In July a presentation was made at the History Centre at the Northern Mallee Leadership Ouyen Regional Day. The young future leaders appreciated the presentation and learnt about our local history.

Research has been completed on Lancashire House, built in 1924 by E H Lancashire, and now the beautifully restored home of the Ouyen Gym. The research and photos have been published in the local paper. Current research being undertaken is to tell the story of the Walpeup Lake. The Lake was created in 1952 by utilising excess channel water. Since the end of the Channel System and the coming of the pipeline, changes to the Lake took place which ultimately led to the creation of the Ouyen Lake. The recent digitisation of the early newspapers on Trove has facilitated and enabled research. Very exciting times!

The timeline for Ouyen and District is being updated. It is interesting to note that although drought years are prominent in people's minds there have been just as many wet years and average years in between.

One of our members has been scanning old photos to prepare a Powerpoint presentation for visitors.

A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between Mildura Rural City Council and the Ouyen History Centre which sets out the roles and obligations of both Council and the History Centre. This Memorandum was set up to bring all Historical Societies in the MRCC area into a similar arrangement with Council.

Merle Pole, President

Maryborough Midlands Historical Society (M)

[Website](#) [Facebook page](#)

In 2024 Maryborough celebrated two important anniversaries: the completion of the railway link from Castlemaine 150 years ago, and the naming of the town 170 years ago by Assistant Gold Commissioner James Daly. This year also marks the 130th birthday of our historic Worsley Cottage, constructed by Arthur Worsley, born in Maryborough in 1861, one of the contractors for the town's Main Drain. The stone was quarried locally and the initial two room structure was added to gradually when time and money permitted. A separate timber kitchen stood at the rear of the house.

In recent years the building unfortunately began showing its age with rising damp, bowed walls and severe cracking rendering it a safety hazard. Central Goldfields Shire, which owns the property, came to the rescue with a budget allocation and a fortuitous grant. A specialist company from Bendigo spent most of 2023 restoring the cottage. During that time we had no access to buildings or grounds.

We somehow imagined in January 2023 that packing and shifting the entire Worsley Cottage collection out and into temporary storage in preparation for the renovation would be the most time consuming and strenuous task we'd recently undertaken. We had to rethink that when the time came to set up the Cottage again!

It seemed important not to restore the "same old same old". Over the years and despite careful maintenance, the interior had become cluttered and displays and signage needed updating and perhaps even re-interpreting. This takes enormous amounts of time and thought.

Another time consuming task has been the restoration of the garden. The dedicated and hard working members of our Garden Committee have braved the winter weather to do battle with the jungle that grew up during last year's renovation and extra wet winter, when we didn't have access to the property.

The "to do" list for this group of multi taskers has included brick cleaning, weed control, shoveling gravel and soil, pruning and garden design. As Spring finally approaches, new plantings are under way. Much of the cost of the garden renewal has been covered by a grant from The Bendigo Community Bank. The Society is grateful for the Bank's support. When the garden has begun to grow back we plan to hold a community open day.

Throughout the year visitor and researcher numbers have steadily grown and we've received some significant donations from local residents. One family donated an entire metal quilt archive, including photographs, a trophy, press cuttings, Highland Gathering programs listing quilt events and even the metal quilt itself. And yes, we still produce our newsletter "*Diggings*" four times a year which is distributed widely. We aim to highlight local history issues and events and to encourage research into the town's history. We're often approached by the Council, local newspaper, Art Gallery and community groups for details of the town's history. Our society was represented on the community committee for the Heritage Review and on the working group to preserve the Pioneer Memorial Tower on Bristol Hill.

Barb Nielsen

Terang and District Historical Society (S)



[Website](#) [Facebook page](#)

Our Society is ticking over as usual.

Our Museum is quite active with regular working bees where two members are sorting and cataloguing our photos, another is indexing various books and ledgers and another is updating our scrap books with various articles from newspapers.

We have had quite a lot of donations from various members of the public and also a number of researchers visiting from around the state and interstate. Just recently a group of fourteen on a men's bus trip visited and enjoyed remembering their youth in Terang.

Membership remains stable despite the fact that a few of our members have moved into care.

The school has handed over the complex to the relevant government department and they are now controlling the complex including maintenance of the grounds. We expect to have an occupancy agreement with them shortly.

We have been able to purchase more archive boxes and photo pockets thanks to a generous donation from our local op shop – always welcome.

After our Christmas break up in late November we will take a break until late January.

Roybert McIntosh, President



Cobden and District Historical Society (S)

[Facebook page](#)

Over the past year our membership has increased from 7 to 19. Not all members are active but their membership helps us financially. Like every other organisation we would love to find more active members so we can fast-track our projects.



Recently we held a successful launch of the William Orton Glass Negative Collection with about 25 guests and members present including William's granddaughter and great-granddaughter. William's glass negatives were donated by his family many years ago and they were just sitting loosely in an old box. We approached Grimwade Restoration Services who informed us they could be restored. We applied for a grant from PROV and received it to restore and digitise the negatives. This wonderful collection of photos is of early Cobden dating back to at least 1891 and shows Cobden's early social history. We printed and mounted the photos and ran a slide show. It was lovely meeting William's granddaughter who is in her late eighties. She has a great memory and was able to give us some names and places of the photos even though both her Orton grandparents died before she was born.

On this day we also welcomed three of our members as Life Members of the Cobden and District Historical Society. We were fortunate to have our only life member – Alan Hart – present who very willingly presented the members their certificates and a posy of flowers. Jennifer Kripp and Elizabeth Wilson were inaugural members of the Society which was formed thirty-nine years ago and Judith Gribble has been a long-standing member and our current President.

In the past few months we have been very busy refurbishing our back room which was an old hall kitchen into our archival centre. We have received grants for paint, steel cupboards for storage, a high low desk and chairs, a scanner/printer, an IT system and part digitisation of the *Cobden Times* micro-reel collection. To complete this project we need to install a kitchen cabinet which we are saving for.

We have "Pop-Up" displays all year round which we change every two or three months depending on the public interest. We also decorate a shop window in Cobden and many of the locals look forward to our next creation. This display gets lots of attention as it is situated beside the Tourist Centre.

We welcome group visits and last month we opened for three organisations. We can now let them know what our "Pop-Up" displays are as they are always looking for somewhere to take their clients.

We have begun recording people's experiences in life which is as interesting as it is challenging. We are yet to work out how to keep these digitally.

Overall, we have had a very busy year with all of this as well as many requests for family history assistance and inquiries about the town's past buildings and businesses.

Delia Kerr, Secretary

Port Fairy Museum and Archives (S)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page](#)



In May we conducted another free 'walk through time' for which we had some 70 participants, concentrating on the main business area, Sackville Street. The events committee spent a lot of time researching the several businesses and finding contacts who know more about each enterprise. This project was shortlisted for an award in the AMaGA Victoria awards. These events now take the place of general meetings and we find we have more people taking part.

Lynda attended the Mortlake Seminar held by RHSV, a wonderful exercise with great speakers.

In July we had a lunch at Charlies on East instead of meeting in the Museum.

Heather Sheard, our Secretary, has been writing the history of the first 100 years of the Port Fairy Hospital and gifted us the rights to print the book the launch of which will take place on Sunday 13th October and a new display will accompany it. It will be launched by Peter Yule and Kerrie Robertson.

To try to engage our schools more we instituted a historic photographic competition instead of providing money at the end of the year to a student from each school. One school wanted it adapted to a drawing and a few paragraphs as they had already started a project so we agreed to that but there was no reply from the other school. We may try to convince them to add it to their agenda for the coming year and see what happens.

In November we will commemorate the sinking of the *Coramba* and hopefully the unveiling of a plaque in remembrance which will be attached to the *Casino* cairn as many of the crew survived the sinking of the *Casino* only to die on the *Coramba*.

We received a lovely donation of two more ship models from a retired fisherman, Brian Newman, one a cota boat and the other a half model of the *Coramba* in a beautiful wood and glass case. Both required some restoration and fortunately retired boat builder and fisherman Tony Ketelaars was able to do a great job on both. The *Coramba* model will be on display for the November event.

Small booklets are still being printed by the publishing committee, the latest being 'Memories of Port Fairy'. This will be the last of the memoir booklets and will hopefully be ready for the APH show in November.

Everyone has worked very hard this year but there are always challenges ahead we just hope we can deal with them as they come towards us!

Lynda Tieman, Collection Manager

Mortlake and District Historical Society (S)



[Facebook page](#)

This last year has been a year of reinvigoration for the Mortlake and District Historical Society. At our AGM in November 2023 a new President, Robert (Rob) McLaren, was elected. Rob grew up near Ellerslie, along with relatives and friends in nearby Ballangeich and The Sisters. He attended Mortlake High School and played sport with several local clubs. Rob recently retired from his teaching career and is dedicating more time to his interests in history and writing. His latest publication is about Reverend Kay. Rob has brought a renewed sense of purpose to the Society and we have been able to achieve several milestones this year.

A major event for the Society this year was hosting the RHSV Historical Societies Support Committee (HSSC) Seminar weekend in May. A very successful event was held with over 45 attendees and interesting speakers presenting on a variety of subjects related to history and the work of historical societies. It was a great opportunity to showcase Mortlake with an afternoon walk on Saturday around the historic blue-stone precinct guided by Craig Proctor and Rob McLaren telling a few interesting local stories on the way.

A very convivial dinner was held at the local Mac's Hotel on Saturday evening and then the seminar day was held in the RSL Hall on Sunday. Grateful thanks go to our stalwart Mortlake and District Historical Society members who helped with setting up the hall, doing catering, serving food and cleaning up afterwards. Without this support, events like this could not be held. Our thanks also to the RHSV and our representative on the HSSC, Craig Proctor, for promoting and coordinating the event. We hope this encourages other Southern Zone historical societies to 'have a go' and host a seminar weekend themselves. It is well worth it.

This year we successfully applied for a funding grant from Moyne Shire to update our computer system at our archive, The Ark. Our old computer and printer/scanner were fifteen years old and so well overdue for an upgrade. We are now also connected to the internet and will be able to deal with queries from the general public in a more timely and easier way. We are finally moving into the 21st Century!

We have begun a review of our policy documents which govern the Society's work and behaviours. The Statement of Purposes policy, Code of Conduct policy and Borrowing policy have all been successfully completed. Only the more complex Publishing Guidelines policy and Donations policy remain to be completed. We felt it was important that these governance documents were brought up to date to ensure our committee members are aware of their obligations and to put the Society's work on a more professional footing.

We recently published a revision of the *Dundonnell Victoria, A History of the District* booklet. What was a 70+ page booklet written in the 1980s is now a 200+ page book titled *Dundonnell Victoria – Revisited 2023*. The book was rewritten and compiled by Florence Charles who has also co-authored several books for the Society with Craig Proctor. A book launch was held on 22 September at the newly built CFA Station and Community Hall at Dundonnell. Amazingly, for a town that is virtually non-existent today, we had over sixty people attend this launch. Many were from families who had grown up in the area but now live elsewhere. A timely reminder that the work historical societies do to record local history still resonates very strongly with people.

Finally, a couple of upcoming items. In November we will help commemorate the centenary of the Montgomery Pavilion located in the gardens at Tea Tree Lake in Mortlake. The Society plans on giving a plaque to be attached to the Pavilion detailing the story of Thomas Montgomery, long time Mortlake resident and Councillor who left money in his Will for a gift to benefit the Mortlake community that he loved. The Pavilion, or Pagoda as it was originally named, was opened in November 1924 and has been well used and loved over the last 100 years by the local community.



In December we are hoping to publish a revision of our 2009 publication *Women of the Mount*. We had run out of stock of this publication and our all-round superstar researcher, writer, WVAHS and RHSV representative, Craig Proctor, decided it was time to add a few more stories and correct some of the original stories of the pioneer women of the area. Hopefully this will be as popular as the first edition and earn the Society a few needed funds.

Jillian Clingan, Secretary

Camperdown and District Historical Society (S)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page](#)

The first weekend in April I had the pleasure of representing our group at the 2024 Western Victorian Association of Historical Societies Annual General Meeting and weekend gathering of Societies in Nhill. Over the weekend, Nhill members took the opportunity to showcase both private and community collections of local history.

On 16 May, Secretary & President attended a regional seminar hosted by the **Royal Historical Society of Victoria** in Mortlake. The full-day event, part of a series held in regional areas, featured four guest speakers who shared insights on preserving and promoting local history and recruiting support for historical societies.

On 25 May members and friends visited the Langs' property, **Titanga at Lismore**. We enjoyed an informative tour that covered the history of the property as well as details about the historic buildings, farm operations and tree plantings in the immediate surrounds of the homestead. Initiatives in land preservation and tree plantings began at Titanga in 1886, exactly one hundred years before Landcare Victoria kicked off near St Arnaud in 1986.

In June our committee and member volunteers were actively involved in preparing for and helping with the many activities across the **Robert Burns Celtic Festival** weekend from the 21st to 23rd. Although we do not run the festival, our involvement greatly enhances it, though it does stretch our resources. Once again Bob Lambell coordinated and arranged four high-quality speakers for our trademark **History Talks** on the Saturday.

We also contributed to the festival's promotion with reprints of the 'Robert Burns Statue' pamphlet and, also this year, we did a reprint of the 'Our Inspiring Women' pamphlet.

Connecting with local secondary schools, we were able to facilitate visits and presentations on the First Nations People of our region. These educational sessions assist students with valuable insights and will help us to foster a deeper understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the First Nations communities in our area.

Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers our centre remains open every Tuesday and on the first Sunday of the month. While entry is now free, we maintain a donation jar and the contributions received have maintained the previous level of income. During open days volunteers are actively engaged in sorting, researching and recording sourced information to ensure it is stored and accessible to everyone. We welcome visitors to explore our resources and collections at any time. A heartfelt thank you to our volunteer helpers always goes a long way too - boosting our energy and enthusiasm.

Keeping our equipment up-to-date is a priority. We have recently added another computer and light boxes to assist with copying of negatives and also replaced two printers. A Shire grant was used to partly cover the costs.

At our AGM committee member Gillian Senior who, at over 90 years of age, has decided to step down after thirteen years' dedicated service - eight of which were spent as our newsletter editor and five more as part of the newsletter team with Angela Preiss and Rob Wuchatsch. Maree Murray, wife of Treasurer Kevin, has now joined our Committee.

Guest Speaker at our AGM was Laura Flanagan a PhD student from Texas with Irish & music interests. Laura gave an update on her research for her thesis which documents music and dance in the Camperdown/Cobden/Terang area between 1955 and 1980. Part of her study involves recording stories from local people about music during this time. Some of these will be lodged with our group following the completion of Laura's thesis.

Lyle Tune, President



SAVE THE DATE!

*Should we
independence to prove
will never forget to hand
years of between us
O my love's face
like a red rose
red rose O
Free spring in the shy
is a bottle and an honest friend
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on some distant shore
is all cold duty now allows
© my love's face
O my love's face
is all cold duty now allows*

ROBERT BURNS CELTIC FESTIVAL

27-29 JUNE 2025 Camperdown Victoria
Australia

camperdownburnsfestival.com.au

To see a few of our favourite photos from 2024 please visit: camperdownburnsfestival.com.au
2024 was a weekend full of music, history, dance, choirs, food and fun... celebrating our Celtic connections, Burns beyond Scotland... and getting excited about choirs with our first mass choir of 130+ voices led by Kym Dillon and with six visiting regional choirs, as well as headlining The Melbourne Welsh Male Choir. There was also a lot of dancing and ceilidh action for all ages! 2025 promises to offer even more - so please save the date!

Glenthompson Historical Group (S)

[Facebook page](#)



Our little group has been quietly plodding along, much the same as most groups, until very recently when things suddenly hotted up.

A resident who has only recently moved away thought it would be a good thing to mention the placement of a couple of time capsules she remembered. Her simple message telling of a capsule buried at the old school site near the flagpole, and one at the former Uniting (Presbyterian) Church, which is now in private hands, was the start of a bit of publicity for the town.

The suggestion of these two capsules was first put out to the community via the History Group and Community Group Facebook pages looking for one or more people to confirm their existence before we looked at gaining permission to dig them up. This was when it started to snowball.

First, people started to comment that, yes, there was one at the school near the flagpole and that it was placed when they were at school. When asked when that person was at school, we found that we had a number of different eras. Next, I received a phone call from the local paper. The reporter had seen the notice on Facebook and wanted to do a story on our hunt. This resulted in a half-page write-up with a photo of the History Centre. The notice was also added to our town newsletter as more locals rely on it than Facebook. Before long, I received yet another phone call, this time from ACE Radio. This reporter wished to do a short blurb on radio and add it to his podcast. Local Church elders were contacted but weren't able to recall any time capsules going down there. It certainly got people talking but still no absolute confirmations. It did, however, elicit the notification of two other time capsules in the town, one of which most of us were aware and which was buried under our Year 2000 arch, due to be dug up around Australia Day next year, and one at the Anglican Church which the elder thought might not be due up for another forty years. A couple of former students recalled a time capsule buried near the front of the school under what was then a new school sign but this was recovered a number of years ago in poor condition and its remains are now part of the History Centre collection. A former teacher recalled a capsule being removed from near the flagpole around 2000

but apparently this one had not survived the moisture.

The hunt is still on with the new church owner thinking over our request to see if we can find the old church one and a couple of our members about to go over old school council minutes to see if there is anything to confirm the location of any of those we have now been told were laid over the decades.

It has brought to light the importance of all groups keeping records of these types of things and not leaving it to the collective memories of the townsfolk.

In other news, our group recently received a \$3,000 grant from AGL Windfarms which has been earmarked to restore an old single-horse drawn tipping cart which is approximately 100 years old. It was first owned by one of the landowners of the area but later became the means by which a local contractor laid out much of the gravel on roads in and around our little town. A working party is to be organised and we hope to have the restoration done before Christmas.

A men's group from Terang made the trip last month for a look through the History Centre. Many commented that it was one of the best days out they had had and that they really enjoyed looking over our collection. As many were former farmers, they loved the farm equipment collection even though it is 'squashed' in the goods shed. These fellas educated me on many of the items. We have another group coming over to visit in a few weeks, this time from Hawkesdale. They plan to visit the History Centre, Church murals and the cemetery where one of them will give a short talk on a former resident and doctor who lived in both towns but who is buried here in Glenthompson. They plan to finish off their day with a high tea at our annual town Art Show. Should be a busy but great day out for all concerned.

Tracey Potatau-Wright, Secretary



Colac and District Historical Society (S)

[Website](#)

[Facebook page \(NEW\)](#)



Our Annual Meeting in May saw little change in office-bearers but made a costly constitutional change to make July our AGM to coincide with end of financial year. This makes life simpler for our treasurer to comply with incorporation requirements. Also, acceptance to ACNC (Australian Charities & Not for Profit Commission) now allows us GST concessions.

We were delighted to receive a grant from the South Western Community Foundation to purchase another upright mobile display case. Two horizontal showcases have been re-purposed to the Colac Farm Heritage Group.

Some small agricultural implements unable to be displayed in the History Centre can be securely displayed in their rooms at the Showgrounds.

A further grant from the Colac Otway Shire Community Grants program will be used to improve the storage capacity in the controlled atmosphere archives room.

A highlight has been the setting up of a Facebook page with member Paul Constantidis as administrator. Please share and follow.

Meetings with a guest speaker are now bi-monthly. Recent speakers have been:

Alistair Tune spoke at our AGM on dry stone walls.

Maria Letteri – Experiences as an Italian migrant in the 1950s.

Laurence Towers – Curator of Colac Botanic Gardens, reserved on the shores of Lake Colac in 1865.

We are now belatedly sound recording the addresses of our guest speakers to preserve the historical record.

In June we hosted a school visit and a visit to our centre by the Geelong Rail Society who had been inspecting the remains of the Alvie branch line.

The Apollo Bay HS has approached us as to initiate a joint Historical Societies liaison with Colac Otway Shire on heritage matters which has been put on hold until after the forthcoming municipal elections.

Closer co-operation with the Colac & District Family History Group continues with our libraries and physical family files now fully integrated.

Robert Missen, President

Koroit and District Historical Society (S)



[Facebook page](#)

We were represented at the Mortlake seminar in May and the launch of History Month at Parliament House this month.

We have updated a sign in front of our building and also made and attached one to the "Bills animal trough" in Garden Street.

After much thought, we have reprinted *A Green and Pleasant Land* which is often requested by those trying to fill in gaps in family history.

Despite quieter months over Winter, Koroit members have continued to record past history. A member has diligently been digitising newspapers and rate books from microfilm while others have catalogued our maps, updated our library and photograph collections and checked files.

As well, we follow up research enquiries into family history and properties. We are always busy yet there is still much to be done with filing and recording contents of cupboards and donations.

Visitor numbers have been fewer on open days but we still have others by appointment or drop in when they see the centre open on workdays.

The traditionally November Koroit Show has been moved to a two-day event in February so we will be very busy as we open for all events, the Lake School, Truck Show, Sheep Dog Trails are also held at the start of the year.

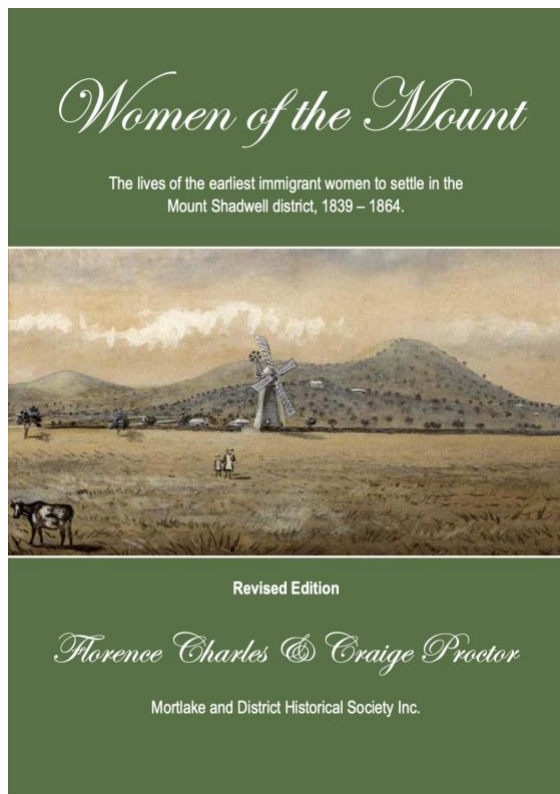
As with all groups we would love some more volunteers.

Our recent success stories have been the sale of early photographs of Koroit and district at the local markets which two members have undertaken and the other is the many compliments we receive on the newsletters which has resulted in more online memberships.

I am wondering if anyone can advise on a good photograph cataloguing application? Ours is now very large as all photos are saved together and information is in a separate Excel file. Any ideas would be helpful but costs must not be overwhelming.

Margaret Trotter, President

Publications and Upcoming Events



The Mortlake and District Historical Society has republished its 2009 book *Women of the Mount* which proved highly successful following its launch fifteen years ago.

Fifty of the district's pioneer women who arrived in the area between 1839 and 1864 are profiled through detailed stories. The book also captures snapshots of many other women settlers.

These are the stories of entrepreneurial women who became property owners in their own right, wives of small farmers and tradesmen, dairy maids and shepherds' wives, businesswomen and some women who had commenced their lives in Australia as transportees to Van Diemen's Land.

\$40
plus P&P

Enquiries: Mortlake and District
Historical Society
mortlakedhs@gmail.com

We have a history book!

We are very excited to announce that local historian and journalist, Tammi Sladdin-Munro has written

'Moyston Primary School 150 years 1874-2024.'

The book will be available from 1st November at our 150th celebration for **\$20 per book**.

Pre-ordered books will be available to pick up at all three of our 150th celebration events on **1st and 2nd of November**.

Books will be available to purchase at the events (cash or direct transfer only, sorry no EFTPOS facilities)

If you would like to pre-order a copy please make payment to -

MOYSTON PRIMARY SCHOOL OFFICIAL ACCOUNT

BSB: **063 500**

Account: **1004 3733**

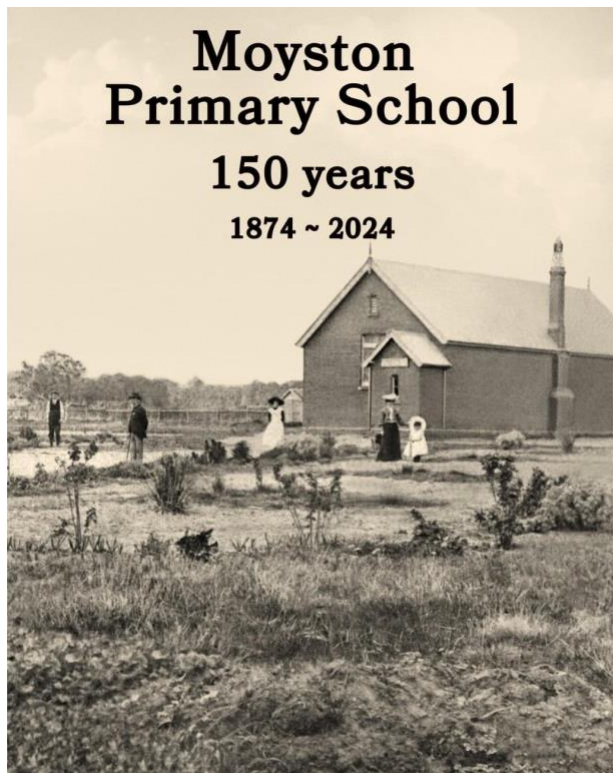
Please provide a clear reference.

Please email or text the school to confirm your order - moyston.ps@education.vic.gov.au or **0402 340 601**

Moyston Primary School

150 years

1874 ~ 2024



TAMMI SLADDIN-MUNRO

Nhill and District Historical Society Inc.

Prominent Women of Nhill inaugural presentation

Saturday 1 February 2025, 1.30 p.m.

104-106 Macpherson Street, Nhill

Lindsay Russell: a notorious novelist

Presented by Craige Proctor

In 1883 Ethel Stonehouse was born at Nhill in the Wimmera. In the 1900s Ethel was working as a journalist in Melbourne but by 1912 she had reinvented herself as 'Lindsay Russell', novelist. Her first novel exposed what she believed to be an abusive Catholic Church and propelled her into a celebrity and she was off to London.

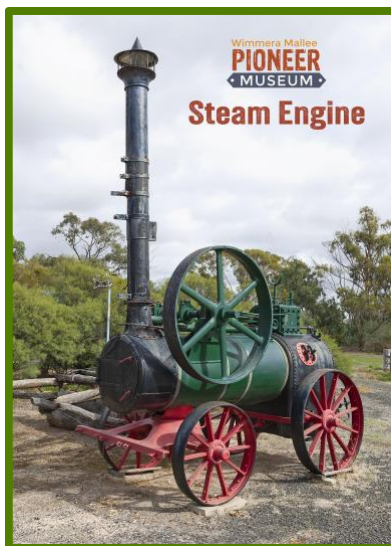
Meanwhile, in a small town in south-western Victoria, copies of her book were publicly burned and she was denounced as a villain. Her celebrity – and notoriety – continued. In 1920 Lindsay Russell arrived in that small town in which she had been denounced and where she would spend the next 44 years and is still remembered by some locals. This presentation focusses on the girl from Nhill who was catapulted to fame more than 100 years ago.

Craige Proctor first heard of Lindsay Russell from his mother and grandmother; it was simply too enticing a story not to pursue when he was older. Craige will have copies of Lindsay Russell's novels on display at this presentation.



\$5.00 admission

RSVP to Colleen Forbes directly, N&DHS: nhillhistorical@gmail.com



Here's a novel idea!



As stated elsewhere in this issue, the Wimmera Mallee Pioneer Museum at Jeparit has commissioned a number of jigsaws to add to its merchandise. Perhaps this is something other Historical Societies and Museums might consider in order to promote themselves? The jigsaws are designed and manufactured here in Victoria and the creator can provide custom-made designs ranging from small-sized (for children) to much larger and more complex puzzles as well as in a variety of shapes. WMPM has ordered twelve different jigsaws just two of which are shown here. An added bonus is that the creator – a professional photographer – can take all the photos and the group merely has to fund the final production....less complex than producing a book and something different to promote an area's history.

Contact WMPM – wmpmjeparit@gmail.com – if you'd like further details.