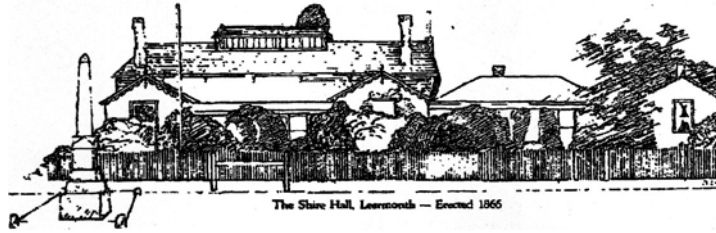


LEARMONTH AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

AUGUST, 2006

FOUNDED 1983. INCORPORATED 13/10/1986. INCORPORATION No. A 11213. ABN No. 22 133 588 072.

MEETING DATES

AUGUST - *Already held.

SEPTEMBER - Tuesday, 19/9/06.

OCTOBER - Tuesday 17/10/06.

NOVEMBER - Tuesday, 21/11/06.

All meetings at old Shire Hall,
commencing time 8 p.m.

*Because a number of committee members were going overseas in August, the August meeting was brought forward to July 25th.

The November meeting will be the final general meeting for the year.

FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

**October 15th, old Shire Building,
commencing 1.30 p.m.:**

1. The 150th anniversary commemoration of the founding of the Roads Board.
2. A display of photographs depicting sporting activities in the district in the early days.

All welcome. Additional photos for the sports display would be welcome. Ploughing matches, for instance, were

very popular contests and spectacles and any photos would be welcome. All care taken with photos. Please contact Bill Loader, on 5334-6330, if you can help.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Thank you to all those who have renewed their memberships and to those who have joined the society this year. A reminder that fees for this year are now due. Single \$10, Family \$15, Single concession \$7.50.

BEREAVEMENTS

The society extends its condolences to the families of Bill Heard and Jean Pump, both of whom passed away recently.

THE AUGUST GENERAL MEETING

We have never held an August meeting in July before but such was the case this year. Our president and her husband, our treasurer, and committee member Claudette Crick are all overseas and none will return before September, hence the reason for the early meeting. All are enjoying themselves over there, we are told.

THE ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

We had another good attendance at this year's dinner and all appeared to enjoy themselves. The catering was first class, as usual, and turkey was a welcome addition to this year's menu.

Our guest speaker, Phil Roberts, who is writing the 150 years history of the Ballarat Agricultural and Pastoral Society, told of how he researched the society's origins, and its connections with Learmonth. He felt it started on 8/6/1856, at a meeting held at the George Hotel to organise a society and conduct a ploughing match at Mount Hollowback on 10/7/1856. The next key date was 15/8/1856, when another meeting was held to distribute prizes from the ploughing match the previous month. Also on the agenda were the strengthening and development of this infant agricultural society and the formation of a Roads Board, so it can be seen that the Agricultural Society and the Roads Board had much to do with each other in their formative years.

What was not so well known was that there was also a separate Burrumbeet-Learmonth Agricultural Society in the district at that time. Phil displayed a trophy from this organisation, which was won in a ploughing match in 1859. In 1860, a meeting was held at the Stag Hotel, chaired by Thomas Learmonth, at which the 2 societies amalgamated. It was resolved that the secretary be located at the Roads

Board building. The Roads Board honour board of 1856-1863 has 7 names, 6 of whom were presidents of the society at some stage.

The word "Pastoral" was added to the society's name in the 1870s and its annual reports in 1874, 1882 and 1884 suggested this was the premier show society in the land.

The society originally owned the land on which the Learmonth Bowling Club is situated. Its shows were held for many years on land at Lake Wendouree and moved to the present site, Ballarat Showgrounds, in 1933. Moves are now afoot to relocate to the Victoria Park region, a move which Phil feels will be a good one.

Phil has written several histories of Ballarat organisations, including the Ballarat Golf Club, Ballarat and Clarendon College, North Ballarat Football Club, and Royal Tennis in Ballarat (20 year history). He is sure to be asked to write a few more in the years to come.

BALLARAT CITY COUNCIL GRANTS

We have just been advised by Ballarat City Council that we have been chosen as one of the successful applicants in its annual Community Grants Program. The grant money is to be used for the purchase of a computer, scanner and digital camera, all of which will be of immense help in cataloguing, restoring old photographs, etc. More later.

ANOTHER FOOTBALL TEAM PHOTO

We reprint another photo from Fred Wren's collection of his football playing days. This one is of the Waubra team of 1950, which won the premiership under the captaincy of Kevin Dean. Kevin, who lives opposite the entrance to the Learmonth Oval, said he played in 13 premiership teams in his career. There would be few people who could make that boast in any football club of any code in the whole country.

WAUBRA FOOTBALL CLUB 1950



Back Row:

M. Gorman, T. Wren, P. McDonald, J. Cameron (Treas.),
D. Ryan, J. Fraser, N. Dean.

3rd Row:

M. Gallagher, M. Ryan, R. Lavery, E. Yates (Sec.), D. Fisher (Pres.),
J. Flynn, L. Bandy, T. Mollay.

2nd Row:

K. Lavery, H. Harrison, K. Goldsmith (VC), K. Dean (C), L. Harrison,
F. Wren, G. Robertson.

Front Row: P. McDonald, Alister Fisher (Mascot)

No doubt, most of these players will be known to members, some even related, very closely.

Old age is like everything else. To make a success of it, you've got to start young.

Theodore Roosevelt, President, U.S.A.

LIFE IN THE 1880'S

Our favourite retired Shire Engineer, Rex Hollioake, has generously handed over to the society much memorabilia from his working life with the Shire of Ballarat. Naturally, members have taken the opportunity to look through most of it and found it to be of great interest. One member drew our attention to a Victorian Municipal Directory of 1888 and pointed out many items of interest in that publication. The main purpose of the directory was the listing of all shires, councils and boroughs in Victoria, together with names of councillors and officers. In addition, it also had an almanac which contained lots of useful information and advice.

In 1883, the Shire President was William Henry Uren. Councillors for the East Riding were Francis Edwards, John Dalgleish and James Baird, for the West Riding John P. Speirs, George Rennie and Alexander Findlay and for the South Riding Michael Feery, John Innes and William Uren.

Louis Bregenzer was a versatile man, holding down the positions of Secretary, Treasurer and Shire Engineer. A prominent man in Learmonth's history, William Rain, was the Local Auditor and Sessions Clerk at Learmonth Court. G.G. Morton and Thomas Bath were two of the ten Justices, along with most of the Councillors.

Coghills Creek's population was 600, Learmonth's 500 and Miners Rest 489, while Burrumbeet had 150 people, but about 2000 in the immediate neighbourhood.

THE ALMANAC SECTION

In the almanac, there are such gems of information as sunrise and sunset times in Australian, and New Zealand capital cities for at least 3 days each month, while Melbourne sunrise and sunset times are given for every day of the year. Month by month gardening and farming advice appear at the foot of each page which lists the sunrises and sunsets. There was also a perpetual calendar, a long-winded explanation about how leap years are calculated, and a list of all Members of Parliament in Victoria, a parliament whose speaker was Peter Lalor, of Eureka Stockade fame.

MAIL ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

DATES: Possibly the most appreciated information for people of that time was the arrival and departure times of mail to and from Britain. The dates mail was to leave London were given for the entire year. The first for the year was to leave on January 12th and arrive in Melbourne on February 21st, a delivery time of 40 days. Despatches of mail from London occurred every fortnight. The situation was the same for mail to London, mail taking 40 days from Melbourne and despatched fortnightly. One could imagine the crowds milling around post offices on the days that the sorting of the overseas mail was completed.

PLACES WORTH VISITING: The almanac also told us of places in Melbourne worth visiting. Many of these no longer exist, but the Zoo, Botanic Gardens and several other Gardens were on the list.

DISEASES: Medical advice was given in great detail on the diseases prevalent in those times. These included Typhoid Fever, Scarlet Fever, Measles, Diphtheria and Croup. Sadly, many children fell victim to these diseases, with fatal consequences.

ADVICE: Dr. Marshall Hall's "Rules for the Treatment of the Apparently Drowned" was a good read, and sunstroke, snakebite, treatment of poisoned persons all were explained. The evils of tobacco smoking were well-known even then, also.

You could find out how to make a will, how to read your gas meter and how to make oatmeal drink.

How to deal with fire was given a good coverage. Published statistics from the London Fire Brigade revealed that curtains catching fire to be the source of more fires than any other cause. Some of the more unusual causes included a jackdaw (bird) chewing with wax matches, a rat doing the same thing and a monkey upsetting a clothes horse.

All in all, it's a most interesting book!

AUSTRALIAN HERITAGE

MAGAZINE: Have you caught up with this superb publication yet? It contains many fascinating articles on Australia's history, written by the foremost historians in the land. It is on sale at all newsagents, published quarterly.

GOOD HEALTH: Former president Marie Loader has recently undergone a serious operation. We wish her a speedy and complete recovery.

THE LAST WORD: Remember October 15th, 1.30 p.m., old Shire Building, Sports Expo and Roads Board 150th anniversary.