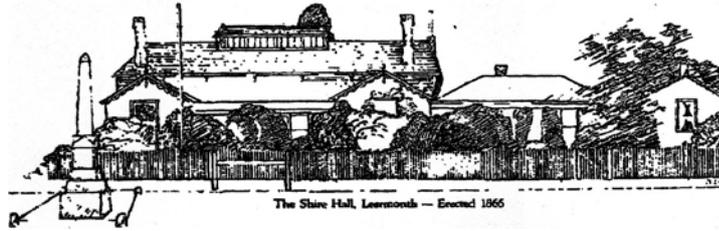


LEARMONTH AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

JANUARY, 2006

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MEETING DATES

FEBRUARY: Tuesday, 21/2/06.

MARCH: Tuesday 21/3/06.

APRIL: Tuesday 18/4/06.

All these general meetings are to be held in the old Shire building, commencing at 8 p.m.

TWO IMPORTANT DATES

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11th: The Ballarat Historical Society is holding its general meeting in the old Shire building on Tuesday, 14/2/06. We will be holding a working bee on Saturday, commencing at 1.30 p.m., to ensure the place is in order for that meeting. We hope you will be able to assist.

BUS TRIP, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25th: Our annual bus trip this year will take us to the Daylesford area. We will depart Learmonth at 9 a.m. and our first stop will be Cricket Willow at Shepherds Flat, famous for making cricket bats. It is likely that we will have both morning tea and lunch there. We will need to bring our own food and drink. At Shepherds Flat, we will be given a comprehensive talk on the

history of the place by Ian Tinetti. There is also a museum there, which will be open to us. The proposed charge of \$20 for the trip includes \$6 admission to Cricket Willow. We will not see bats being made, nor will we be able to walk around the trees grown to manufacture the bats as that is an extra charge and we want to hold the cost at \$20.

From Shepherds Flat, our tour will be focussed on the Daylesford-Hepburn area. We are hoping to secure a guide for this part of the trip.

APOLOGY FOR LATE NEWSLETTER

This edition of the newsletter normally goes out to members in December. However, due to uncertainty about arrangements, and the date, for the bus trip, it was decided we should hold the presses until the bus trip was more organised. We apologise to those who were wondering if they'd been left off the mailing list in December.

While it's too late to extend compliments of the season, we hope your festive season was a happy one and that this year will be a good one for you and your loved ones.

HISTORY UNDER THE LINOLEUM

During a recent renovation of a district house, a local builder discovered some newspaper pages from 1932 and passed them on to the society. There were several references to this district, surprisingly a couple of them in The Sun News-Pictorial. This first one, from The Sun, Friday, 10/6/1932, is actually about Ballarat, but worth passing on to readers. The headline read:

FISHMONGER WHO LEFT WIFE 5/-

"When Edwin William H....., fish-shop proprietor, late of Dana Street, Ballarat, died in July, 1931, he left a will in which he bequeathed to his widow, Marion, "Five shillings to buy a book in which to write down all the lies she has told me."

He directed that his estate should be used for the benefit of three of his four children, and ultimately distributed amongst them. The widow began legal proceedings to test the validity of the will, and a compromise was arranged with the executors.

This provides one third of the estate to the widow and two thirds to the children. The executors stated they had made enquiries into allegations made by H....., against his wife, and found there was no truth in them."

Windermere also made The Sun on 14/6/32 with the election of office bearers of the Mechanics Institute. These were:

"President, Mr. J. A. Charles; vice-president, Mr. T. A. Fletcher; Secretary, Mr. W. Burrows; assistant secretary, Mr. R. Walton; treasurer, Mr. W. Walton."

A report in The Courier of a cricket association ball at Evansford on 11/5/1932 was far too long to include here, but there are many well known names in the article and we will pass it around at the next meeting.

From The Courier 21/5/32:

25 Years Ago (1907): "The Learmonth bowling green was formally closed for the season on Thursday when the president, Mr. A. D. Stewart, entertained the members and presented the season's trophies to Messrs. Mac Stewart, Geo. Dean, J. P. Spiers, J. B. Butterworth, and A. J. Spiers. Subsequently, at the instance of Mr. Ryan, supported by Rev. J. Smiley, Messrs. W. Hunter, W. Rain, W. D. Sara, A. Robbins, J. Dickie, H. Dwyer and Dr. Courtney, the president was thanked for his excellent work during the season. "

This last one was from The Sun of 14/6/1932 and is of significant interest from an historical society point of view:

"HISTORIC BALLARAT RELICS FOUND FIDELITY BOND DATED 1856

BALLARAT, Monday. - Unearthed today among old papers at the Shire Hall, Learmonth, was a fidelity bond dated December, 1856. It was guaranteeing the collector for the Ballarat Roads Board to the extent of £100, and the guarantors were J .H. Cooper Alley and Dr. Hobson, both of Ballarat.

The document was drawn up by Henry Cuthbert, solicitor, afterwards Sir Henry Cuthbert.

Another interesting discovery was a ticket of admission to the opening of the Ballarat School of Mines in 1870, when the opening address was delivered by Sir Redmond Barry.

A card issued by William Irwin, of the Provincial Hotel, giving times of the departures of coaches was also found."

Interestingly, the Cuthbert's firm had its 150th anniversary in 2005 and Bill Loader was able to lend them an old legal document (not the abovementioned fidelity bond) for the occasion.

These items were found in just a few pages of old newspapers and, while it may not be very hygienic, it shows it pays to look through the old newspapers when you pull up the linoleum.

AN INQUEST IN 1863

We tend to think that government departments, in relation to legal matters, moved very slowly in the early days, but inquests were actually organised very efficiently back then and were often held on the same day as the subject person's demise. The following is such a case, with the inquest held on the day the body was found. Our thanks to Gail White of Boronia for both the inquest and newspaper report on the death of an ancestor at Burrumbeet:

INQUEST INTO DEATH OF HENRY MOUNTSTEVEN PAYNTER.

Inquest was held by Dr. John Creelman, Coroner and a jury of 12 men (the same day the body was found, 6 days after he disappeared). The verdict was "the deceased Henry Paynter was found dead on the 4th March 1863 and that his death was caused by drowning on 26th February last.

Evidence of James Paynter"

"I am a farmer residing at Lake Burrumbeet and brother of the deceased. I remember the 26th day of February last. I went to the residence of deceased and learned that he had gone over in a boat to my place across Lake Burrumbeet.

On looking over the Lake Burrumbeet I saw the boat deceased went out in about half a mile from land. I then went to help a neighbour named Usher to get out his boat as he was going to the boat race that day. I was occupied with Usher for about 2 hours and kept looking out towards the boat the deceased was in to see how it was going on. I could observe there was a reef in the mainsail and she seemed to be going all right. The last time I saw the aforesaid boat she appeared to me to be nearly across the lake and on looking again I could not see her. I thought at first she had run in towards the land at my residence. I then went across the Lake Burrumbeet towards my residence with Usher in his boat and we could not see any thing of the aforesaid boat. I felt uneasy and went to my place, where I ascertained that deceased had not been there that day. When I found deceased was not there, I sailed across to the Picnic Hotel across the lake but found he was not there. Myself, Usher and my brother Francis then sailed towards Picnic Point, when, about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from that point, we saw a boat bottom upwards. Having no oars we put back to get them. Myself and the persons aforesaid went to Mr. Miller of the Burrumbeet Hotel, got a boat from him and went on to the Lake Burrumbeet and fetched the boat in to land, bottom upwards. We found on looking that both gunwales were broken. The masts, sails and rudder were gone. The two oars were in the boat.

I have seen the body of deceased and recognise that to be the body of my brother."

Evidence of James Edward Paynter:

"I am a labourer and a cousin of the deceased. I remember the 26th day of February last. I went down to Lake Burrumbeet about 8 of the clock in the morning, when I saw deceased go out in a boat by himself, which he had got from Mr. Miller of the Burrumbeet Hotel, to visit his

brother who lives on the other side of the Lake. Deceased appeared to be in good health when he started.

The boat is generally termed a small gig boat, capable of holding 7 persons. It was rigged with a jig, mainsail and 7 ????. After she sailed I went up to the hut of the deceased about 400 yards from the edge of the Lake, where I remained for a few minutes, and then went down to the watering place of the Lake. I saw the boat the deceased was in and thought he was all right. In the afternoon of the same day I went down to that part of Lake Burrumbeet where a boat race was to take place that day. I found that the boat deceased went out in was not there. I then came back to see if deceased had returned and found that he had not.

Shortly afterwards I met two brothers of deceased, named James and Francis Paynter, who told me they had seen the boat deceased went out in, bottom upwards in Lake Burrumbeet. In company with James and Francis Paynter I got a boat and went in to the Lake Burrumbeet and brought the boat upwards on shore.

On the evening of the same day I found the rudder washed on shore; I found the masts and sails of the boat were gone and both gunwales were broken. There were two oars at the bottom of the boat and some loose boards .

I have been searching for the body daily since the accident took place. I was walking around the corner of the Lake Burrumbeet this morning. I saw a dead body floating in the water back upwards about a yard from land. I have seen the body this day and identify it to be the body of Henry Paynter.

It was blowing a very stiff breeze at the time deceased went out in the boat. He had on a shirt, trousers, shoes, souwester hat and a bit of flannel around his neck When I found deceased this morning he had on trousers, waistbelt and flannel around his neck that he had on when he went out, but the shirt and boots and hat were missing."

**REPORT IN "THE STAR", FRIDAY,
27/2/1863**

"Another sad accident, resulting in the loss of life of one of the Bros. Paynter, occurred on Lake Burrumbeet on Thursday morning. It seems that Mr. Paynter, who is a farmer in the locality, took the sailing boat "Vivid", belonging to Mr. Miller of the Burrumbeet Hotel, for the purpose of paying a visit to his brother, who resides on the opposite side of the lake. Nothing further was heard from him until about half past three yesterday afternoon, when three boats started for the sailing match announced to come off. Mr. Usher, the occupant of one of the boats, was the first to observe the "Vivid", in which Mr. Paynter had started early in the morning, turned keel upwards, and suspecting that an accident had occurred, he and the other persons engaged in the match, made all sail for the capsized boat, but could discover not trace of Mr. Paynter. This circumstance, combined with the squally state of the weather, put an end to the match and after some difficulty the various boats were got alongside the jetty, when enquiries were made from Mr. Paynter at his brother's house and it was found he had not been there, so that there can be no doubt that he has been drowned. The rowing matches, and other aquatic sports of course, under the melancholy circumstances, did not take place. Search will be made for the body of the deceased, who was much respected in the neighbourhood."

GLIMPSES OF A PAST ERA

Because this book sold out so quickly, it has been decided to reprint it this year. We should be in a position by next newsletter to advise exactly when it will be available, but if you would like to place a firm order now, please let Ilma Bridgewater know.

THE LAST WORD: Please remember these dates:

FEBRUARY 11TH - working bee at Historic Centre.

FEBRUARY 25TH - bus trip to Daylesford area, leaving Learmonth at 9 a.m.

