



DONALD HISTORY
& NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



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Only two family names were researched during the month – Onley and McPhee

Onleys had been “done” quite a long time ago, when the work was being done on a typewriter in No 58 Woods Street, and these pages, from continuous stationery, were unnumbered and some missing, so the whole was done again and re-organised, and brought up to date.

Marie Jackson-Nation requested something about Neil McPhee, who had a farm at Cope Cope in the early days of selection, and there was some information. It was also a Mcphee (or McPhie, the spelling is variable in each case) who ran a Cobb & Co coach from Ballarat to Cope Cope, but he turned out to be no relative.

Incidentally, when Mrs Nation came to pick up her information she remarked, “I have this already.”(Although she still took and paid for it). Mary asked when was she here before and she answered, “Oh no, I found in in Trove”. So that is the reason why there are very few requests coming through on our email or phone lately. (Of course, no one writes letters, now!). People generally are becoming computer-literate and think that all possible family information can be found in Trove or Ancestor.

There’s no doubt that the computer has made our work at the archives much easier, and email is certainly the way for instant communication – but it can work against us, too, and lose us an important source of revenue.

However we have managed to sell some books lately. Odd copies of Ann Walshe’s “Now and Then” are still selling, as she works hard on the next volume, and three of Florence Breed’s have gone – “Gallipoli” and “France”, as might be expected, but also “A Devonshire Lad” for a Tasmanian lady whose ancestors are connected with the Coatses. A man who brought a football book looked on our website and found “Railways to Donald” and was also talked into the shire history!

But most interesting was the email from the Conservation Library, Science Division of the Department of Parks and Wildlife in Western Australia. Again the librarian said one of the scientists found Ron’s “Flora and Fauna” on the website, and on being told about “Great Snakes” was keen to have that too.

ITEMS MAKING NEWS IN "THE DONALD TIMES" 100 YEARS AGO.

April 3, 1914: On Wednesday evening April 1st a very fine concert was held at St. George's Hall to an appreciative audience. The male quartette consisting of Messrs Horsefall, Impey, Moore and Williams sang "I am Wandering Down" and this item might well termed the gem of the evening. It was very nicely rendered and the voices were in harmony with one another.

Mr Skewes explained that the proceeds were to be expended on good books for the benefit of the public generally, and urged people to become members. He stated that out of a population of about 1000 inhabitants the Donald Mechanics Institute could only boast 75 members, which was far too small.

April 7, 1914: Mrs Calhoun, wife of Dr. Calhoun, has the distinction of being the first lady driver of a motor, as far as we know, in this district. Mrs Calhoun has driven a single seated Hupmobile car for some days past, and has proved to be a most cool and capable driver.

April 10, 1914: Cr. Green put up a record this year fallowing, in ten days with three teams of six horses, fallowed 300 acres.

A proposal is under consideration to erect a telephone line from Donald to North Laen, via Sheep Hills Road.

Necessity is the mother of invention. The old, slow style of pickling wheat has been overcome by the invention of Mr McCabe (a farmer) of a machine that will pickle wheat quickly and better; by pouring the wheat direct into the solution the rubbish floats on the top and can be skimmed off. These machines are extensively used in New South Wales and South Australia.

April 17, 1914: The works for the regulator of the Avon River, in the Wimmera District, which is to be used to fill the new Batyo Catyo storage, are well forward. This storage will retain approximately 5000 acre feet, and by means of it two-thirds of the district now adjacent to the Avon River can be served. It is expected to be a valuable adjunct to the reticulation system in the whole Wimmera district, which now runs for some 6000 square miles.

April 21, 1914: We are pleased to state that the Donald State School has won the A.N.A. prize for best school garden in the district. This is something to be proud of, considering that there are 160 schools in the district, and reflects the greatest credit on the headmaster (Mr Skewes) and his assistants.

A very pretty wedding took place at the Methodist Church, Fitzroy on the 25th, when Mr Samuel S. King (son of the late John King of Banyena) was joined in the bonds of matrimony with Miss Alethea Arnel Iv, daughter of the late Mr Fred Arnel of Donald. The bride was given away by her uncle, Mr Joseph Arnel and looked charming in a beautiful white embroidered muslin dress, trimmed with medallions and lace edging.

April 24, 1914: The bitter jealousy of the various States of the Commonwealth so manifest a few decades ago, has left an aftermath gigantic, stupendous and costly. The position of the Australian States each having a different railway gauges almost comical if it were not for the vast amount of money that will have to be expended to bring about unification. It is essential on broad national lines that one uniform gauge connecting the various capitals should be constructed, and the sooner the better. Apart from public convenience, it is essential for our national safety and well being that the rapid transport of our defence forces is assured.

April 28, 1914 : W.H.Gray, under instructions from Mr Chas Byrne, will sell by public auction his well-known farm: 734 acres or thereabouts of freehold land, Parish of Jeffcott, on which is erected a splendid 5-roomed house, 2 stall stable, men's hut, machinery shed, chaff house and stockyard and other outbuildings, splendidly fenced, subdivided into 8 paddocks and watered by 2 dams.

The annual meeting of the Donald Progress Association was to be held on Friday night, but only a very limited number-four-put in an appearance. After waiting for about half an hour to see if any more would turn up, it was decided to abandon the meeting, so practically the Association is non-existent.

A Progress Association is a very useful body in a town, and perhaps in the near future the residents will realise its usefulness and resuscitate it once again.