



DONALD HISTORY
& NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



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How things can change! Just when we thought the flow of inquiries had dried up, and were blaming the programs available on-line – they all came at once.

First was Jacqui Wirthensohn, wanting something about her ancestor S.H. Patterson, and this was duly despatched by email. Then Christine Christopher, one of many with Corack forebears, who wanted all about the Laverys and the Nichols. The Lavery story was quite a long and interesting one, and fortunately she is going to do more research on her own behalf so that she can give us precise details on the Nichols, because it is difficult – Nicols and Nicholls abound in the days when spelling of names was not as important to the paper as it is now – and anyway, it was not possible to telephone someone and ask how to spell a name!

Vicki Shuttleworth is another who is interested in the Warren family, coming down from a different branch from Marge Cameron, and she visited to see us, Marge – and the Godkins. That is because she is writing the story of one of the large mansions that once occupied a whole block of Melbourne space, and Greg's grandfather once worked there. Next was Margaret Lavery – no, not for Laverys, but for a Francis Clarke who might have been here; but unfortunately, although we had someone of that name on the index, he married the wrong girl! And a couple from West Australia visited on their way to find the resting place of various relatives, the Donald ones being George and Martha Willey, so material for them was quickly photo-copied.

Three years ago Alan To asked us for anything referring to Willie Dark, a Chinese ancestor who was here in the early 1920s, and wanted to come up with a number of his extended family – but he picked a weekend when both Mary and I, unusually, were away at the one time. It has taken him three years to gather the family members together again, but he has selected another weekend – September 26-28, when I will be at Portland Field Nats and Mary overseas! Something had to be done, and Ann Dunstan has come to the rescue and will be available for him and his family. There is very little about Willie Dark, and he is just too early for Ron to know where he lived, but we will show him possible sites for his garden.

Another to book a time for a visit is Harvey Waddell, who will be here (for Waddell info) in early October. There should be no problems this time.

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

September 1, 1914: Sidney Kidman, "The Cattle King", presented to the Federal Govt. 200 horses and 1000 carcasses of beef to aid the Australian contingent, and let it have 1000 horses he had got together for India at the price he had paid for them.

The long spell of dry weather was broken on Sunday, when at Donald 30 points were recorded.

Sept. 4, 1914: For some years past residents at the western end of Woods Street have been periodically put to considerable inconvenience through their olfactory organs being assailed by the stench arising from a drain in the vicinity of the Anabranch. The Engineer had previously reported on the matter. The Council was at a great disadvantage owing to a want of water for flushing purposes. Cr. Lavery remarked that personally he thought he was a pretty large order. It would be as well for the people of Donald to carefully watch the country towns' sewerage proposals.

Sept. 8, 1914: At the instigation of the Donald branch of the A.N.A., Wattle Day will be celebrated here on Wednesday next (show day). The representatives stated that they thought show day would be a good opportunity for the sale of the bloom to augment the Lord Mayor's Patriotic Fund.

Flying is not really expensive, according to Graham White. You can get an 80-h.p. two-seated monoplane, or a three-seated biplane for a trifle like £1200, of which perhaps one-third must be written off per annum for depreciation. Running expenses are only about 5d a mile, to which add, every three months, £36 for mechanics, £12 for storage, £50 for repairs, and £10 for insurance.

Sept. 11, 1914: Donald Show, 35th Annual Gathering. It is to be regretted that the entries for indoor sections have not come up to those of previous exhibitions, but doubtless the falling off is only temporary, and to some extent accounted for by the fact that the ladies, most of whom are engaged in patriotic work of some kind in connection with the making up of articles for the soldiers, may not have found time to devote to show work.

Sept. 15, 1914: An amusing incident was witnessed in Donald last week. A well-known townsman with decided pro-British leanings, and another of German extraction were wending their way home arm in arm after a convivial evening, when an altercation arose re the war. The German was heard shouting "Dey vill vin! Dey vill vin!". The arm of the Briton shot out, and the last scene was Germany in the gutter, while the offended Briton proceeded homewards.

Doubtless owing to the protection afforded by the Government, possums are becoming very numerous. A few days ago one was seen in the main street. After an interesting chase a local billiard marker captured "Joey" while making his escape up a verandah post at the Royal George. The much surprised possum was given its liberty and disappeared somewhere in the vicinity of the Shamrock Hotel.

Sept. 1i, 1914: Among the prize-winners at Birchip Show was a black Orpington cock belonging to Mr M.J. Bourke of Donald. This bird has never been beaten, Mr Bourke also won 1st and 2nd in black hens. We learn that the eggs are in great demand locally.

Sept. 22, 1914: The 4.30 down goods train which arrived in Donald on Friday was unusually lengthy, containing 55 sheep trucks which were intended to be used for conveying starving stock from various stations along the line.

Set. 25, 1914: [From Regulations for Care, Protection and Management of the Reserve for a Public Park in the Township of Donald] -- No person shall put in the Park any cattle, goats pigs or other animals without the permission in writing of the Committee of Management. Provided always that the moneys received for agistment shall be expended in the maintenance and improvement of the Park.

Sept. 29, 1914: The contract for the new Methodist Church is progressing satisfactorily. The walls are now up about five feet.

The Donald Waterworks scheme is being pushed on with and is now well on its way to completion. The large concrete tank of 600,000 gals. capacity is now finished, and one windmill and an Austral engine attached erected, and men are now employed on building the engine house. A start has been made on laying wood pipes in Blair Street.