



DONALD HISTORY
& NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 245, SEPTEMBER, 2016

No workable family history requests this month. One woman had been told that we could find family members – but not that they must be local. Unfortunately she, as an adopted baby, wanted to find the name of her natural mother – and she was born in Gippsland. A man came hoping that he could find something of his mother, who was born in Donald in 1905 – but she was born to a single mother (who went on to have 14 more children, he said!) – and as such, did not feature on the index in those days.

Most of the month has been taken up with the request of Tim Scott, from the ABC, Melbourne, for details of a man who was drowned while fishing in Lake Buloke in 1976. A documentary is being made about one of the sons of this man, and that story came into it, although the son, then only 6 years, did not come with the fishing party. The story was easily available, but he also wanted a photo of someone fishing, from a boat, preferably in Lake Buloke. It was strangely difficult to find a photo of a fisherman from a boat in any lake, but Maree Sands supplied one of her grandfather and a friend. That was submitted to the designer of the documentary, and no more has been heard, so apparently they either accepted it or changed the format of the story.

The garage sale and book fair, during Donald's big market and garage sale day, was quite successful, and allowed the treasurer to smile a little. Some others of the Group's books have been sold at the Archives, and Florence Breed continues to print and sell her books of the First World War, and "Cornish Tales".

As usual, some of the Year 9s of Donald High School came to the Archives during their Community Week, and showed interest in their jobs of photo-copying and scanning photos. It is interesting that this year, those who chose that option were all boys.

Meanwhile the newspaper index grows slowly, with two welcome helpers.

Items of Interest from the “Donald Times” 100 Years Ago”:

September 5, 1916: One of the effects of the war has been to create an extraordinary scarcity in printing paper, with a consequent rise to famine prices. Newspaper proprietors throughout the world are feeling the pinch, and many old-fashioned periodicals have ceased production. Thus three-line advertisements in “The Times” now cost 10/6, as compared with 7/6 for four lines in pre-war days.

For the annual show, the exhibition will comprise not only a display of livestock and agricultural products of the district, but is intended to be in the nature of a grand patriotic demonstration, the whole of the proceeds to go to patriotic funds.

Sept. 8: A football match was played on the local showground last Wednesday afternoon between Jeffcott and Donald. The match was closely contested, the former winning by the narrow margin of four points. The ire of some of the ‘ballers was raised during the fight for supremacy, and the game showed a tendency to be like one of those in which the umpire is lucky to get out of the arena in one piece instead of “instalments”. Mr McConville umpired.

Sept. 12: Mr J.H. Bolden, a leading proprietor of the Donald blacksmithing and coachbuilding works, has just completed a fine table-top wagon, with 6ft wheels. Notwithstanding its immense proportions, it runs surprisingly light. It was forwarded away yesterday to N.S.W. The brake, one of the main features of a wagon, is of the screw pattern and operates on the boxes of the rear wheels; it is simplicity itself and very effective.

Sept. 15: Compare the farmer with his prototype of 50 years ago. In 1855 what a necessity the old bullock dray used to be. Some farmers only had a sledge, and wooden ploughs and harrows. Others did their harrowing with brush boughs cut from green trees. Fencing wire was too expensive and most fences were constructed of posts and rails, logs or brush. Buildings, in places where stone was available, were roughly constructed edifices; in other parts split slabs, mud or “pug” made of clay and straw or rushes, served as a home for many farmers. The sheaves were cut very short, with sickles, and most of the straw was left standing. A few farmers had horseworks for threshing, with a drum. Some untied the sheaves and laid them in a circle, with the heads on top, and pulled a roller over them with bullocks. Of course a few had strippers and other mechanical improvements, but these were very primitive. The stripper was more like a house on wheels. Some farmers only had one horse to ride. Others had none at all, and drove their families to church on Sunday in a bullock dray.

Sept. 19: Mr Thos Maloney, an old and respected settler of the Witchipool district, met with an accident which, fortunately, was not attended with very serious consequences. It appears he was driving to his home from Donald in a gig and was leading a horse. The horse pulled back and dragged the old gentleman over the back of the seat on to the ground. He sustained a heavy fall and severe shaking. He was brought to Donald and put under the care of Dr. Lewis, but was able to leave for his home yesterday.

Sept. 22: An interesting marriage was celebrated in the Laen district at the residence of Mr and Mrs John Coats, on August 23, when their youngest daughter, Elsie Muriel, was united in matrimony to Mr Walter Young, second son of Mr James Young of Natta Yallock.

Sept. 26: Last week the Defence Department published the list of soldiers who have been awarded military honours for valour at the front. Among them are Lance-Corporal P.R. Schafer and Private H, N. Small, both local lads, who have been decorated with the Military Medal. Hec Small, prior to enlisting, was working at his trade with Mr Lederman, formerly a coachbuilder in Woods St. and afterwards went into the butchering business with his brother.

Sept 29: Incalculable good will be done by the general rain which for the wheat crop has come at the right time. The whole of the state was beginning to feel the effects of the dry, withering weather of the past three weeks. On a rough estimate the wheat crop for Victoria in the coming harvest should be at least 40,000,000 bushels. The area under crop is considerably less than last year.