



DONALD HISTORY
& NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



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The family hunters are back again!

Louise Devine's husband is a descendant of the McNamaras who were here briefly, and she and her husband came here to pick up the few pages and Witchipool book I had for her. It came to \$30, but husband produced a \$100 note and said "Keep the rest for the research work!" I haven't struck such generosity since very early days in the old Archives building when somebody sent us £100.

A man strolled in through the door and queried idly if we knew anything about the Connellans of Watchem? His wife joined him while I photo-copied information from the files and he paid the \$4.50 – didn't offer any extra this time, but then they came from Noorat so I wouldn't expect it, as we know how the dairyfarmers have been going.

Alan Rhodes asked about Jeffcott selectors John Dew, James Ponting and Beckhams, all inter-related, and I was anticipating quite a bit of work, but in the end he only wanted the first two, because they went to Charlton, and he had obtained some general information there. But he praised the work of the Group and will come soon to look at the area.

Jessie Peake wanted to know when the Salvation Army first came to Donald, and was happy to get what we found.

Today we have a query from West Australia about Gilchrists and we have some early information that will be welcome. I have found that all but one family went to West Australia after the mother died in 1890, and my enquirer is descended from Francis Gilchrist.

Next week a Tim Harris, from Albany WA will come to see the old Harris home, "Kinfaun". Max and Verna will take him in hand and show him the home, which Verna tells me is now inhabited by a nice young couple and is being renovated.

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

October 3, 1916: Coming by two special trains! Wirth Bros Ld. Circus & Menagerie. Greatest Show on Earth coming to Donald. Capt. Huling’s Seals: the only troupe of Riding, Wirewalking and Music Playing Seals in the world. The RIOKOKE JAPANESE FAMILY, Seven supreme incomparable Gymnastic Stars in wonderful Risley and Aerobatic act. The Loretas, electric sparks on the horizontal bars; Ernestonians and Novikoffs, the human Aeroplanes in thrilling trapeze act. Fiden, the Charlie Chaplin Clown. And a host of others.

Oct. 6: Rev. H. Bodley, appointed to St. Paul’s Church, Birchip, when recently driving from Quambatook, accompanied by his wife and child, got bushed at Chum Lake, four miles out, and was compelled to camp in the rain all night. In the morning he was on his way back to Quambatook when he met the mailman, who put him on the right road.

Oct. 12: Another business establishment is to be added to the directory of Donald. Mr Brownbill, dentist of Maryborough is opening an up to date dentistry in McCulloch Street. He will be a big asset in sporting circles, he being connected with most of the sporting institutions at Maryborough at the present time. He is very keen on coursing.

Oct. 13: Six o’clock closing for hotels comes into force in Victoria on 25th October. On and after that date no intoxicating liquor may be sold on licensed or club premises after 6 p.m. Hotel bars must close at that hour. The Premier proposes, before early closing operates, to make a statement regarding the compensation proposals to be embodied in the second bill.

Oct. 17: Owing to very heavy rainfall over its watershed, the Murrumbidgee River is greatly swollen and there are fears that the floods will be disastrous. All the creek and billabongs are flooded and hundreds of miles of country resemble huge lakes. The Murray continues to rise steadily and another 5 to 7 feet rise is expected.

Oct. 20: The fact that marriage does not secure exemption for those who married for that purpose is causing much heart-burning among those astute young gentlemen who were far-seeing enough to recognise the advisability of becoming Benedict immediately. One bright youth proposed to three young women within seven days and was rejected. The fourth accepted him. Alas! The splendid effort was all in vain: the declaration went forth that all those men married after the date of the Prime Minister’s publication of the policy were to be regarded as bachelors in the eyes of the law.

Oct. 24: At the concert and bazaar held at Laen for Minyip Red Cross and State School Patriotic Funds, Mrs Duncan, president of Minyip, brought a relic from Egypt to show people. This was a beautiful sheepskin overcoat, taken off an Austrian officer who was taken prisoner by the Australian Light Horse. It belongs to Lt. S. Pender, who sent it to Mrs Duncan for safe keeping.

Captain Page and J.R. Henry, authorised officers of the Defence Department will attend at Donald and Watchem to purchase suitable cavalry horses. They must be well bred, active horses, short backs, good rein and shoulder, deep girth and chest, and the height must be 15 to 15.5 hands. Capable of carrying 16 stone; age, rising 5 to 8 years.

Oct 27: At a meeting re conscription: Mr W.G. Pearse: Does conscription apply in France?. —It applies for Home Service, but if a Frenchman is wanted outside, he is only asked to volunteer.

Mr W.A. Morgan: Does conscription apply to women? —Yes, they are liable to conform to the obligations of the military. If they are put to a trade they have to receive a permit before they can leave or else they are refused work elsewhere. They are bound similar to men.

Oct. 31: Some weeks ago it was decided that Donald should inaugurate a Queen competition, and with tickets at 1d., £94 was raised for patriotic purposes. The crowning was held at St. George’s Hall. Miss Lamplough (Queen of the School), was first with 5023 votes, from Miss Pope (Agriculture) 4945, Miss Schafer (Allies) 4575, Miss Wilkinson (Soldiers) 4391 and Miss Ditchburn (Sport) 3656. She was presented with a neatly bound volume as a memento of the occasion. All the Queens were prettily attired in white, each carrying a wand decorated with pink flowers with streamers to match.