



DONALD HISTORY
& NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



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The promise of Spring has not been fulfilled— it's colder and bleaker than the winter was, and people have not been out and about seeking ancestors, but those who have are enjoying their new information.

James Cottingham explained that his great-great-grandmother, known as Matilda Parker, was born an aboriginal of the Dja Dja Wurrung language group, but she was immediately taken away and given to a white family, whose name appears on her birth certificate.

Frank Griffin, relishing the stories of the Daltons, Hehirs and Leahys, said he has become very interested in the history of the places and people of the towns where they lived, so he bought some of the other books he found mentioned on our website.

Neville Bertalli was also happy with the budget of information about Roulston and Bertalli, which he wanted in full.

There was one new query –Sarah Neilson said that an ancestor named Harrison Geoffrey Nicol, had been a dentist in Donald between 1913 and 1916, when he enlisted. The name was not familiar – but there he was, on the index, taking over a surgery in Woods street and shifting it to his house in Blair street. He involved himself in the community very well for the short time he was here – became secretary of the Mechanics Institute and the Croquet Club. Perhaps he was a man who couldn't say "No"? And he played cricket for the Methodists in the church cricket competition, and was in a beautifully clear photo of the team. Sarah had not been able to find a photo of him anywhere, so as you could imagine, she was overjoyed. Proves it is always worth asking!

Bruce Hancock had an hour to spend on Tuesday, and came in to get out of the cold, to read what we had about Avon Plains. He also enjoyed the file of his own family, asking occasional questions to clarify points, which the index was able to answer.

Items from the "Donald Times" a hundred years ago:

September 4, 1917: Another attempt is to be made to secure for the sporting community and incidentally for the charities, the honest and wholesome advantages that are to be derived from legislation of the totalisator. A private bill is to be introduced in the Legislative Assembly by Mr Bayles. It will probably aim to give the control of the totalisator over to a racing body.

Sept. 11, 1917: A moderate number of shooters attended the Cope Cope Gun Club's £10 sparrow match last Wednesday. It was intended to use starlings for the contest, but owing to the unfavourable weather for catching, a sufficient number was not secured, so sparrows were substituted, and the supply ran out at the sixth round, so the four marksmen left agreed to divide the money.

Sept. 14, 1917: Private Arch Green, son of Cr. Green, was recently severely shell-shocked. It appears that he, along with three other mates were standing together when a shell landed among them, killing three and severely shaking Private Green, who had his rifle smashed in his hands.

Sept. 18, 1917: The efforts of the Red Cross ladies on Show day brought an amount of £67 14s 10s. The stall was kept busy, and they had 30 raffles, of such donated things as a lamb, perfume, cushions, bedspread, silver salt cellars, thermos, supper cloth, table covers, jewel case, wedding cake, turkey, chair, carvers, shortbread, teaspoons, suit case and a Charlie Chaplin ornament.

Sept. 21, 1917: Messrs Steve Lance and Hartley Lloyd killed a brown snake in a paddock east of the township yesterday. Mr Lance noticed the snake run into a log, so he promptly blocked the openings and the following morning, the two visited the spot and extracted the snake by way of cutting a hole in the log. It measured 5 ft. 3 in.

Sept. 21, 1917: Considerable interest was centred in the marriage of Miss Elsie Prentice with Mr T. Seel, in the Presbyterian Church on Wednesday. The bride wore a dress of white crepe de chine in pinafore style, hand embroidered, with the customary wreath and veil. She carried a bouquet of white violets and fern with white streamers. Miss M. Prentice, sister of the bride was bridesmaid and was attired in white crèpe foam and ninon, with heliotrope tagel hat.

Sept. 25, 1917: To welcome Private E. Trollop, who has been invalided home with wounds in the legs, as the train drew into the station, the Military Band, and the local band, played "Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue" and marched to the Shire Hall, where an official welcome was extended by Cr. Wortley.

Sept. 28, 1917: Wirth's Circus arrives on October 5. Attached is the menagerie, comprising elephants, lions, tigers, leopards, bears, monkeys and seals.

The Riogoken Family of Japanese acrobats are wonderful and are far ahead of anything ever seen in Australia. Toney Transfield and Fred Freeman, the double jockeys, give a good exhibition. A troupe of six lions which were born in 1914 give a fine performance in a caged arena. Admission 1s, children 6d.