



DONALD HISTORY
& NATURAL HISTORY GROUP



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 283 AUGUST 2020

Enquiries for July:

Enquiries have slowed down markedly for the second lockdown period but there have still been one or two coming through on email.

June James had an ancestor married at Grange farm, Jeffcott in 1881 and wanted to know if there was such a place. Our list of "Property Names" yielded up "The Grange", Jeffcott so that information was sent to June.

Another enquirer wished to be put in touch with descendants of the Merrett family from Massey so that was easily dealt with too.

Maureen Donnellon from the Birchip Society wished to know if we had any write ups of Queen competitions as she had recently written a piece in the "Buloke Times" about one held in Birchip in days gone by. We were able to unearth a couple of treasures for Maureen. Firstly, a splendid poster, reporting on the Queen Competition held in 1924 to raise funds for the building of the Donald convent, complete with photographs of all of the Queens, the committees and Bishops Foley and Mannix who both attended the fund raiser. The poster was printed by the Donald Times. Secondly, Margaret Arnel had donated a small booklet, which had also been printed for the occasion. Maureen did a beautiful job of recreating the story and Shane O'Shea reproduced all of the photos to a very high quality. As Maureen said in her article, most of the people involved are no longer with us but some might be interested to know who the 4 queens were and what became of them.

Molly Power was the daughter of the Donald Police Constable at that time. She had 4 brothers. Molly died in Elsternwick in 1968, aged 66.

Mary Masterson was the daughter of Pat Masterson and Bridget Maloney/Moloney. She was a sister of Samuel Masterson, who worked as a

shunter on the Donald Railways for 30 years, leaving Donald in 1932. Mary Masterson died in Maryborough in 1978, aged 78.

Gladys Ryan came from Thalia/Narraport. She later married Jack Hommelhoff. Mollie Darcy was the daughter of Luke Darcy and Johanna Colbert of Carron. Mollie's father died in 1929 and she and her mother, two brothers and one sister eventually left the district. Another sister, Norah, joined the congregation of nuns who ran the Donald convent from its inception up until 1962. Mollie married a man named Woolfe. Most of the family died in Melbourne. One of Mollie's great nephews visited the Donald Archives in 2018 as he wished to visit the old Darcy farm site.

Danny McGowan wished to know anything about his family, the McGowans who selected land near Lake Buloke. Ron Falla's wonderful Witchipool Selectors booklet was again able to pinpoint the exact time and location of the selection. John and Margaret McGowan came to Witchipool with 6 grown up children and took up their selection in 1873 on the Single Tree Road, not far from the Buloke Railway crossing. Their land adjoined "The Buloke Common", now known as the Little Lake Reserve. Their elder son, James, selected nearby and his land was the first paddock on the corner of the Single Tree road and Sunraysia Hwy, just after the Buloke Crossing. James sold his land in 1886 and the younger McGowan son later selected land at Sea Lake and moved up there. Two of their sisters, Mary and Margaret, moved into Donald in 1918 and took up residence at 51 Houston St where they remained until their respective deaths in 1925 and 1931. The Donald Times Index also has a number of items that will give Danny some idea of the lives that his ancestors led.

Blasts from the Past August 1920

August 3. Preference for Soldiers. At the R.S.A. meeting on Friday night it was resolved to send a letter to the Directors of the Donald Inland Freezing Company expressing satisfaction at the consistency at which the company had adhered to its policy of preference to returned soldiers at the works and requesting that the same procedure should be adopted when dealing with applications for the position of secretary which became vacant through the resignation of Mr R.V. Horsfall.

August 6. The Prohibition Issue. Liquor Traffic Condemned. Address by Chaplin Major Procter. The weather on Tuesday night could not have been more unfavourable for a meeting and this accounts to a very large extent for the small attendance at St George's Hall when Chaplin Major Procter M.A. L.L.B. delivered an address on "Australia and the Liquor Traffic". (*Four columns on Page 1 were devoted to the address*).

August 10. Fishing at Cope Cope. In a recent "Government Gazette" notice was given of the intention to make the necessary steps for permitting the use

of nets all the year round in Lakes Cope Cope and Purrumbeet, Parish of Swanwater.

August 13. The Rainfall General. The splendid rain which fell on Sunday favoured all parts of the country. In the Mallee the fall was the best for years and the season's prospects have reached a practically assured position. This is the part of Victoria where the rain was most needed, because crops were backward and many farmers were still carting water. Now however dams are filled and the ground has received such a soaking that there is little doubt that the harvest will be a good one – subject however always to the weather conditions during the week or two before hay cutting.

Sir John Monash has been appointed manager of the Morwell Electricity and brown coal mine for five years at a salary of 3,000 pounds a year.

August 17. Donald Jockey Club Balance Sheet. The president read the balance sheet which showed that the club had spent 250 pounds in permanent improvements to the reserve. The amount handled by the club over the last Cup meeting was slightly over 500 pounds. After paying all expenses and meeting the costs of improvements there was a debit balance of 44 pounds.

August 20. Royal George Hotel Under new management. J.T. Fitzgerald, late of Willaura, Western District, wishes to inform the public that he has taken over the above hotel and will endeavour, with personal attention to please all. Commercial and Farmers' Dining Rooms. Electric Light throughout. Hot and cold baths, Careful Yardsman always in attendance. Alcock Billiard table. Only the best Wines and Spirits stocked. Cabs meet all trains. Phone 7 Donald.

August 24. The Prohibition Fight. Liberty League meeting in Donald. Last Friday evening a well attended meeting was held in the Soldiers' Hall under the auspices of the Liberty League of Victoria, among those present being a number of ladies. Lead speaker was Major Nugent D.S.O. (*Four columns inside the paper were given to the addresses of the 4 speakers who argued against prohibition and questions*)

August 27. An unlucky footballer. St Arnaud probably has the champion hard luck player in the competition. Last season Ern Cherry, one of St Arnaud's foremost men, came to Donald for the final and lost his pants and false teeth. On Wednesday, on the last match of the competition, he was again in the team against Donald, and for a second time he was robbed, his loss this time consisting of a wristwatch. (*The game was drawn*)