



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 307 SEPTEMBER 2022

Enquiries for August. The editor of the Buloke Times, Robin Letts, was very excited by our article in the August newsletter about Jack Moore. Robin remembers Jack visiting Donald, after a 45 year absence, in 1972 and asking whether “The Bullock’s Head” was still on the tree in the river!!!!!! Up until then the growth on the old gumtree was known to few Donald residents (the then Donald Times Editor, Goff Letts, was unaware of it) and it certainly wasn’t the well-known symbol of Donald that it has become today. Robin and his Times photographer wife, Shirley, accompanied Jack to the river to find and photograph the tree. Robin says that it was well hidden by the peppercorn trees and took some finding. He published a story about it on the front page of the Donald Times the following week and the rest, as they say, is history.

To quote from Robin’s article:

“Certain it is that the “bullock’s head” has been watching over its Richardson River for at least half a century because as far back as 45 years ago youngsters like Charlie McCredden, Gordon Jones, Jack Moore, George and Arthur Basset used to swim there. In those days it was exactly as it is today _ we have Jack Moore’s word for that He and his Higher Elementary school mates used to determine the height of the river by its proximity to the ‘Bullock’s head’.”

Robin’s article goes on to say that Jack attended school in Donald until he was 14½ years old. He then worked at Forers (now Weirs Supermarket) for a year and then at Bolden and Lance’s garage, now owned by Robert Burton. Jack Moore left Donald for Gympie, Queensland in 1928 and was residing in Mt Gambier at the time of his visit to Donald in 1972. We hope to one day find out how his Gladstone bag ended up in Bairnsdale. One also wonders that if Jack hadn’t made that trip to Donald in 1972 and then to have the story taken up by the Donald Times whether the Bullock’s head would have become what it is today, complete with the amazing infrastructure which has recently been built with an impressive viewing platform and tourist BBQ area. It is more than likely that the town of Donald owes Jack Moore a HUGE debt.

Ronald Gilchrist from Buninyong has sent us a beautiful collection of Gilchrist family photographs and War history. Relatives of the Gilchrist family have enjoyed looking at the collection which will be stored in our archives and possibly displayed in a special exhibition in the near future.

Nancy O'Toole from Fitzroy Nth wished for information on Thomas and Martha Connelly who selected land at Cope Cope in 1874. There were a few articles in the Donald Times about the Connelly children in their time at school and playing sport. The land was transferred to W. Hodgson in 1899 and the Connelly family moved elsewhere.

Residents of Donald are thrilled to see the Scilley's Island Bridge finally being repaired. It has been closed for almost two years and this has disappointed many regular walkers. Tim Heydon from the Buloke Shire wished to know any history of the bridge. His first lesson was that the name is pronounced SEELEY. The people who bore the name insisted that it was so. Keith and Mona Scilley operated the BP garage at 4 Woods St and lived in the house next door at 2 Woods St. These were the two properties next to the bridges on the left coming from Litchfield. People always remarked on the neatness, freshness and colour of the two properties after the Scilleys took them over in 1951 and painted them up in BP colours. Small wonder that the "Island in the river" on the opposite side of Woods St was firstly described as being opposite the splendid looking Scilleys garage and eventually became known as Scilleys Island. Before that it was probably just "the island" and, like the "Bullock's head", was only known to town kids who roamed the town and river freely after school and during the holidays. One such kid told me that they never went near the island as it was treeless and people grazed their milking cows on it, walking them back and forward across a rough bridge of railway sleepers behind Shilton's garage. The O'Connell family who lived in the delicensed Racecourse hotel in Hammill St were one such family. Throughout the 1960s Nell O'Connell still walked her milking cow back and forth across to the island daily.

James Considine of Swan Hill has requested information on his ancestors, Patrick and Mary Considine who selected land at Dooboobetic in 1873 and 1874. Their daughter, Susan Considine married John Clements and remained in the district. Clements descendants still own land in the Jeffcott area today. Susan's parents, Patrick and Mary, sold out in 1888 and moved up to Culgoa with sons, Michael and Thomas and daughter, Annie. Michael, Thomas and Annie also sold substantial Dooboobetic and Jeffcott land about the same time.

Blasts from the Past -September 1922

September 1. Postal Extensions. A sum of about £816,000 is to be spent on postal works in Victoria this year. There will be new telegraph construction between Dunolly and Mildura and new trunk telephones include Maryborough – Donald, Ouyen – Mildura and Ballarat – Mildura. Telephone extensions will be made at St Arnaud and a number of other towns. In the Loan Authorisation Bill £1,000 pounds has been allotted for a new Post office at St Arnaud.

September 5. Exciting Bolt. Shortly before midday on Friday, people in Hammill Street were startled to see a team of five horses, harnessed to a wagon belonging to Mr Sam Coats, bolting along the road in the direction of Woods street. The wagon had been standing outside the flour mill when the horses took fright at a passing train and made off careering into the weighbridge, taking with them the end wall and portion of the doorway of the office. Travelling along the footpath they passed between Mr Geo. Lovett's fence and the electric light poles. Striking the latter very hard, the wagon was relieved of its load of three large cases of griffinoid on the footpath and roadway. All went well until, in trying to take the turn into Woods Street, with a full head of steam, the skating rink surface of the road brought them to grief against a sturdy sugar-gum opposite Les Harrison's shop. The horses came down and the wagon came to a standstill, facing in almost the opposite direction from which it came. A large crowd soon gathered and the horses were released uninjured, the wagon being only slightly damaged. Fate seemed to be dogging the progress of these three cases of griffinoid, which were on order by Messrs Stafford & White, contractors, and were on order for a considerable period. It was then ascertained that they had had a tour of the Mallee and reached the capital of the Mallee – Ouyen. Finding no claimants there they came back to Donald, and even the horses driven by Vin Coats did not like taking them to their destination. However, after re-loading, it was found that little damage had been done to the material.

September 8. Petitions. Two petitions were dealt with by the Council on Tuesday last, the first being in connection with the linking up of the formation from M. Donnellon's residence to the Charlton Shire boundary and the second requesting that the subdivided portion of the Banyena road between Langleys and Mulligans be named McCracken Avenue. The engineer was instructed to inspect and report on the first at the next meeting of the Council, with regard to the latter, the secretary was asked to take steps to have the request acceded to.

September 12. CRUDE OIL (advertisement) 5/5 d per gallon.

The Jelbart Tractor operates on this fuel. It consumes approximately 1.5 to 2 gallons per acre of ploughing work.

It pulls 8 or more furrows at a depth of four inches requires only one man to manage it, the pilot wheel in the furrow steering the tractor.

We claim to be able to pull twice as much as any other tractor in the district at less cost.

For particulars for our 2/- per acre guarantee, see BILL MERRITT'S GARAGE

September 15 School Committee. The monthly meeting of the above was held on Monday evening last, when the principle business was the opening of estimates for the building of two shelter pavilions for the school, the Department having agreed to grant pound for pound. The lowest price was that of Mr B.M. Basset at £79 and 10/- per shed. This price will be submitted to the Department for approval or otherwise. It was resolved to hold a school effort on similar lines to that of last year, on Saturday, November 4th and that a meeting of ladies be called for Saturday afternoon next at the school at 3 o'clock. It was expected that the remodelling of the school proposal advanced another stage in that the Wesley Hall had been engaged by the Department as a temporary building during the building operations.

September 19 Cricket. The annual meeting of the Donald Cricket Club is advertised to take place at the Mechanics Institute tomorrow (Wednesday) evening at 7.30 p.m., when it is desired that all

cricket enthusiasts will be present. It is understood that the club intends to compete in the old Association with Traynors, Laen, East Laen and Cope Cope and if sufficient members are enrolled, the club will seriously consider running a second or junior eleven. The position is that if the young enthusiasts intend to take an interest in the club they will receive every assistance. Now is the time to get going, and much depends on the attendance at Wednesday's meeting.

September 22 Menace of War. Turkey Causing Trouble. During the last few days, the Federal elections, the sugar question and all other questions have faded into insignificance, beside the rumour of war with Turkey and possibly Russia. The terror of the Smyrna catastrophe was dismissed with barely a thought when the graver intelligence that the crisis in the Near East had resulted in a very real menace of war was made known. Fearing the entire loss of the results of the Allied victory over Turkey, the British Government issued a gravely worded announcement to the effect that it had invited the Dominions to be represented by contingents in defence of the Allie's interests. The likelihood of the Kemalist forces attacking the declared neutral zone had prevented the sitting of any conference upon the allocation of Constantinople and the position was that something more than diplomatic action was necessary. The British forces entrenched at Chanak as a precaution against attack and from Australia and New Zealand, individual and national support were quickly forthcoming. The danger of a world-wide war, involving white and coloured races was widely discussed, but the latest news is to the effect that the situation, though still grave, is greatly improved and that war is now most unlikely.

September 26. School Excursion. Friday October 6th Jubilee Exhibition. (Ad.)

Time Table – Train leaves Watchem 8.40 am; stopping at Massey, Litchfield, Lake Buloke, Donald, leaves 9.50 Cope Cope, Sutherland, St Arnaud, Carapooee, Emu, Bealiba, 11.55 am arriving in Melbourne at 5.54 pm. FARES – Junior Scholars, under 16, 5/2; bona fide senior scholars over 16 years ,20/2; Adults 26/9. Duration of tickets, 7 days. H. E. Carter, H.T. , Donald H.E. School

September 26 .School Excursion. Arrangements have been completed for the running of the State schools excursion to Melbourne in connection with the Schools Jubilee Exhibition. The excursion is being run in conjunction with the St Arnaud School, the guarantee being shared equally. The train will run from Watchem to Melbourne, picking up passengers as far as Bealiba. The train is sure to be well patronised, and there will only be a limited supply of tickets, so that it will be necessary for those intending to take advantage of this cheap trip to make early application to the schools for tickets. It is expected that these will be available in a few days. An effort is being made to secure permission for excursionists to return on the following Friday (13th). Passengers by this train are not allowed to return by express. Besides the exhibition, an additional attraction on the day following the excursion is the final of the Melbourne League premiership. The timetable and particulars as to fares are published in an advertisement in this paper.

September 29. A Woman Candidate. During the morning session of the Farmers' Conference at Ballarat on Friday, the chairman (Mr H.W. Pickering) announced, amidst laughter, that a telegram had been received from Mildura to the effect that Mrs E.A. Collins O.B.E., a Nationalist organiser, was going to stand in the Nationalist interest for the Wimmera Federal Electorate against Mr Stewart, the Country Party sitting member. Mr Pickering added that the lady conducted the Canary Cottage tea rooms, Melbourne.