



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 309 NOVEMBER 2022

Enquiries for October

Whoops! A mistake was made in Last month's history write up. Greg Sellick's mother, Mima Collins attended the Avon Plains School in 1922 not the Swanwater school.

Peter Dial, the grandson of Peter (head teacher at the Donald School 1877-1900) and Mary Dial, visited the Donald Primary School a few years ago. He has written to us to find out when the Donald State School opened. A quick look through the records gave us a timely reminder. The St Arnaud Mercury allegedly reported on 21/10/ 1874. "New School House. Where is the Schoolmaster?" A search of the relevant newspaper has so far not managed to find this article but we can assume that at some time next year the Donald Primary School will be 150 years old. Peter would love to be informed if any celebrations are to take place. It will be 11 years since our last town "back to" so perhaps a big town celebration might be in order. Any volunteers?

Sue and Graham Carmichael and their New Zealand cousin, Nelson, visited the Donald History archives on the 18th of October. Graham and Nelson are descendants of Dugald and Margaret (nee McPherson) Carmichael who were original selectors at Laen and then Watchem before finally settling at Avon Plains. Dugald and Margaret Carmichael left Scotland in the late 1840s bringing with them their eldest four children. Three more children were born in South Australia. One son, John eventually settled on the land at Watchem. He married Janet Reid and they had 10 children. One of their sons, John Jr. married Eliza Ann Ackland and they raised two daughters, Gweneth and Joan at Carron. Joan was appointed to teach at the Massey School in 1944 and 1945. John Jr died in Ballarat in 1952 and was buried in Watchem. Eliza Carmichael retired to Donald in 1956 and built the house at 9 Cave St Donald. She died in Donald in 1977.

Another Carmichael child to remain in the area was Catherine who married James Cumming. One of their daughters, Margaret Cumming, married R.W. Reseigh. Robert Reseigh is a grandson of this couple and he met with his Carmichael relatives and took them to see places of interest. Harold Flett took the visitors to the Laen cemetery where they checked out the Carmichael graves and made

plans to restore one of them. The youngest of Dugald and Margaret's children, Colina, married in New Zealand and presumably, Nelson is one of her descendants.

Bob Abbott brought in a treasure he has had for a number of years. Bob was helping with refurbishing the Mt Jeffcott Hotel circa 1980. He pulled up some carpet and found a document. It is written on a piece of cardboard possibly with the idea of having it framed. We are still looking to see if we have a copy of this letter but it seems like it might be a very exciting find. We have taken a copy and will have it framed and placed on the wall next to the photo of J.A. and Charlotte Meyer.

J R

Publicans License.

To the Bench of Magistrates at St Arnaud.

I Johann August Meyer, Storekeeper
now residing at Mount Jeffcott, in the
Police District of Troca, do hereby give
notice, that it is my intention to apply to the
Justices sitting at the Court of Petty Sessions to be
holden at St Arnaud on the 16th day of August
1864, for a Certificate authorising the issue
of a Publicans License for a house situated at
the Richardson Bridge, Mount Jeffcott.
The house is of wood and bricks and covered with
Iron, contains two sitting & four bed-rooms.
It is my property, has not been before licensed,
and I propose to call it the Mount Jeffcott Hotel.

The second day of August, one thousand eight
hundred and sixty four.

Johann August Meyer.

Oliver W Collins
Clerk to the Bench.

Court House St Arnaud.

2nd August 1864.

Blasts from the Past; November 1922

November 3. Sad Accident. A youth of 16 named L. Whittaker while working at Jeruk on Thursday evening, had his arm and leg broken under circumstances of a most distressful nature, and is now in the Wycheproof Hospital in a very serious condition but not absolutely beyond hope of recovery. He was employed by Mr Bruce Sutton of Riverside and at the time of the accident was attending to a heavy type of steam engine and 11-inch centrifugal pump irrigating portion of the land with water from the Avoca River. This was on Thursday evening, and about midnight, when oiling the crank of the engine some of his clothing blown by the wind, got caught on the eccentric and he was hurled round and round the revolving shaft till his clothes were stripped completely off him. Hearing his heart-rending cries Mr Sutton immediately shut off the steam, but some time before the engine stopped the poor lad was hurled with great force some distance into the river. Mr Sutton experienced some difficulty in recovering him, and when he succeeded in bringing him to the bank found that his left arm was badly mangled and broken near the shoulder and his left leg fractured below the knee. Mrs Sutton, who had not retired for the night, heard the cries for help, and aroused another employee, and with him hastened to the river. The injured lad was attended to with first aid, and was taken in a motor car, with the assistance of Messrs Stewart and Harry Elder, to the Wycheproof hospital, where Dr. Rail is hopeful of saving the young fellow, although so badly broken and mangled. – “Tribune”.

November 7. Cricket. Laen defeats Donald. The above match was played at Laen on Saturday last and resulted in a win for the home team, who batted first compiling 132 runs. The chief contributors were J. Westerland 55, H. Westerland 15, H. Dickerson 15 and H. Flett 13. The wickets were secured by Stephenson 6 for 58; Golding 3 for 54 and J. Crocker 1 for 6. Donald responded with 64, the top scorers being Stephenson 21, Golding 12 and Cameron 11. For Laen the bowling was done by Westerland 3 wickets, Clifford 3 wickets, and F. Dickerson 2 wickets.

November 10. Lest We Forget. (Editorial) In accordance with the usual procedure, the petition which was presented to the Shire Council at its October meeting, with reference to the application of the name Belgrave Street to that portion of the Donald-Morton Plains Road running north from the town bridges, was held over for a month and came forward for consideration on Tuesday last. Cr. Sproat moved that the petition be referred back to the petitioners, with the suggestion they chose some other name, as several people, whose names were on the petition, had declared that they had not signed it. Cr McPherson seconded and the motion was carried. Apart altogether from the latter contention, the Council's idea of suggesting a reconsideration of the name is certainly a good one. Although a flourishing and growing township, Donald is not yet in a position to boast of having more streets than it knows how to name. Being the centre of a district founded and raised to its present affluence by the toil of countless pioneers would it not be far more fitting if some recognition were made of their work by perpetuating their names in the modelling of our

town, instead of choosing names promiscuously, without regard to any special significance. The names of such men as Macredie, Anderson and Aitken, who first took up and worked that portion of the district known as Banyenong West should not be overlooked, and there are scores of others.

November 14. Another Pioneer Passes. The ranks of the old original pioneers of the district are gradually being depleted and thinned out, the latest to depart being Mr Jas. McGannon, who selected land at Litchfield over 47 years ago. The deceased gentleman was as well known in the district as the proverbial Town Clock, and although he would not allow himself to be nominated for any public position, he was keenly interested in all local and district movements for the benefit of ratepayers and residents generally. The Donald P. & A. Society, more particularly in relation to its early stages, has a lot to thank the late Mr James McGannon for, with his death, which occurred at his son's residence in Watchem on Friday night last, one more of the few remaining foundation members of the society passed away. He was president of the society for the year in which its annual show was under the patronage of the late Sir Henry Lock, then State Governor of Victoria. Born in County Clare, Ireland, 78 years ago, he came to Australia with his parents, and at the age of 10, settled in the Ballarat district, where he married Mary O'Hehir, and selected land in the Litchfield district 47 years ago. His wife predeceased him about two years ago, and since that date he has resided in Watchem with his son John, until his death. He and his wife reared a family of five, John and Mary (Watchem), Mrs P. Bourke (Warracknabeal), Mrs E. O'Meara (Melbourne) and Mrs E.M. Dyer (West Australia). The funeral, which was one of the largest seen in the district for many years, took place in Watchem on Sunday afternoon, the Rev. Father Barry officiating at the graveside.

November 17. Police Court. John Turnbull was charged with having allowed cattle to wander in the streets unattended. Mr G. F. Oakley appeared for the prosecution, and Mr C.J. Robinson for the defence.

Wm. Cameron, inspector, deposed that on 25th October he found two cows belonging to the defendant and put them in a yard. He saw the defendant later and he refused to pay the pound fee, holding that the witness had no right to put them in a yard.

In answer to Mr Robinson, witness said the defendant had given no previous trouble, and said that the nuisance had to be stopped, as there were too many stray cattle about.

Mr Oakley did not press for a heavy penalty, but pointed out that wandering cattle were a danger and the practice would have to cease.

A fine of 5/- per head was imposed with 23/- costs.

November 21. Accident. While Mr A. McCreddin was driving along Woods Street at about 7.30 on Saturday evening, portion of the horse's harness became detached, and the cart tilted forward, throwing the driver out in front. Luckily Mr McCreddin was able to scramble out of the way before the horse bolted, or he would have been run over by the wheel. As it was, he fortunately escaped with a few bruises.

November 24. Wheel Tax Bill. The question of the destruction of main roads by the traffic of heavy motor lorries was discussed in the Legislative Council on Tuesday last. Mr Clarke, Minister for Public Works, said that the remedy was to construct heavier roads, for it would not be possible to stop motor traffic. Main roads should be under the control of the Country Roads Board. Another remedy was to make vehicles that used the roads pay according to weight and width of tyres. The Minister said he intended to introduce a Wheel Tax Bill during the present session. The railways deserved to lose traffic seeing the way they dealt with country traders. Freights and fares could not be reduced, but something must be done. He thought that a wheel tax was the only remedy.

November 28. Where's Your Light (Ed.) The time is not far distant when the foolish practice, at present all too existent in Donald, will, if persisted in, claim some unfortunate victim, and add still further to the district's lengthening list of serious accidents. It seems incredible that, with the ever increasing traffic on the roads, some people should still remain foolish enough to constantly travel by night without lights or any sort attached to their conveyances, be they horse-drawn vehicles or motors. In light of recent unrecorded happenings, it would appear that drivers of buggies and kindred conveyances are the worst offenders in this respect. Moonlight furnishes no excuse, as on the brightest night the vision of the driver of an approaching motor car becomes limited to the area covered by his head lights, and the combined rate at which the vehicles approach one another leaves scant time for action. Even a hurricane lamp attached to a vehicle gives a driver coming in the opposite direction some intimation that another vehicle is on the road and saves many an awkward situation, particularly in a district such as this where, in many cases, the customary track lies off the metal, on one side of the road only. Quite recently there have been several instances in which escapes from death have been nothing short of marvellous, and one can only guess at the number of unrecorded incidents of this description which have occurred of late. Look to your lights!