



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 311 FEBRUARY 2023

Enquiries for December/January

Julie Heywood from Sydney wrote for information on her ancestors, John Cannard and Thomas Griffiths.

Peter Hockley is descended from Ephraim Orlando Knee, the Methodist minister in Donald from 1893 to 1896. Peter was intrigued that there were so many articles on his ancestor, many of which seemed controversial. The answer was in the articles. On arrival in Donald the Rev. Knee established a debating Society, which was reported on "word for word" by Daniel O'Leary, the editor of the other Donald newspaper of the day, The Donald Express. O'Leary loved the controversy that the articles provoked, even commenting himself at times.

Joanne Brown wanted information on her ancestors Richard Fitzgerald Sherwood and his wife Emma Griffiths, nee Strickland. They married in 1876 and had a son, also Richard, born in Donald in 1877. The Sherwoods lived at Jeffcott but left for Coonamble, NSW in 1894.

Helen Smith wanted information on her great-great-grandfather George Smith, supposedly born at Donald in 1842 and buried at Hopeton in 1926. 1842 is too early for our records but later entries in the Donald Times show George living and buying land at Watchem in the 1890s so he may well have been born on one of the surrounding pastoral runs, perhaps even at Banyenong Station, which was owned by William Donald.

Sandra (Pemberton) and John Morss called at the archives seeking information on the Pemberton and Bryant families. Sandra is also descended from the E. S. Moore family who ran a large carrying business in the earliest years of Donald. Sandra intends to deliver historic photographs into our keeping on her return trip.

Robyn Barber, daughter of Jim Barber from Minyip, donated some interesting "war" books which had been owned by her father. These books are of interest to collectors and can be viewed in our "Antiques and Collectibles" Shop.

Ian McBurney emailed for information on his ancestor Michael Hogan who selected at Dooboobetic.

Jo Sherrin (nee McNabb) emailed us for a digital copy of the article from the 1984 Donald Times Article "Watchem and Birchip welcome NT students". Jo was the teacher who brought the students, 6 aboriginal girls from Lajamaru (Hooker's Creek) NT, to the Watchem School for a visit. We were able to oblige with a photograph of the article from the 16th November, 1884 Donald Times.

Elizabeth Cook (nee McLeay) contacted us by email, requesting a copy of "The Cream of Corack" History. Elizabeth's parents, Colin and Una McLeay ran the Corack East Post Office and Mail runs from 1947 to 1956. Elizabeth has two other friends who are former Corackites, and who are descendants of Madders and Carlyons so in the end 3 copies of the book were required. Elizabeth sent a photo of the old Mudbrick Corack Hall being used as a Polling Booth. There was an election in November, 1947 so we think that the child that Colin McLeay is holding is Elizabeth's then 2 year old sister. Would anyone be able to guess the identity of the second man?



The old Corack Hall c. 1947. Colin McLeay and daughter, Unknown.

Ellen Sykes Jennings contacted us. She is a descendant of John Henry Onley and John Pittard. We now have a fairly extensive tree of this family thanks to Helen Ritchie of Maryborough.

Neil Hartley saw our mention of the Beseler name on a previous newsletter and was hoping to be put in touch with some Beseler family members. We have none but we referred him to Ancestry where there are about thirty public "Beseler" trees, each of which has a contactable author. If anyone is connected to the Beseler family and would like to be put in touch with Neil please let us know.

Blasts from the Past; February 1923

February 2. Secretary and Engineer appointed. Before the reception of correspondence at yesterday's meeting of the Shire Council, Cr. Lavery intimated that the committee appointed to consider applications in connection with the above dual position, had met on several occasions and had appointed Mr Rigg of the Karkaroc Shire. Mr Rigg had subsequently forwarded his resignation, with the result that Mr Kelly of Preston had been selected. Mr Kelly was with them that morning and they had much pleasure in welcoming him to the Shire and trusted that he would have a long and successful residence here. Cr. McNab moved that the action of the committee be endorsed and also extended greetings to the new secretary. Cr. McEwen seconded and the motion was passed. Mr Kelly thanked the Councillors for their good wishes and for the confidence they placed in him, at the same time assuring them that he would spare any effort to give satisfaction to both Councillors and ratepayers.

February 6. The Donald Park. A Plea for Improvement. The chief business of the delegation which waited on the Shire Council on Thursday was to urge that, in the interests of public health, something be done at once in order to render the fever bed at the anabranch innocuous. One other request, however, was made in the interests of public pleasure, attention being directed to the state of the public park. Mr Gray asked if it were possible for the Council to spend a larger amount per annum on the beautification of the Park. Everything was there for the making of a fine beauty spot and playground for the children. The Park was well fenced, water laid on, paths were formed and they had plenty of ground to work upon. It was a shame to see the reserve going to ruin, when, by the expenditure of £200 to £300 per annum, it could be made into a fine little park. Cr. Coats- "That extra expenditure is alright for the park, but what about the many potholes in our country roads? There are many things which we could do with that amount of money". Mr Gray "St Arnaud has a fine park". Cr Adams "Of course. St Arnaud is a Borough".

February 9. Gypsum for Wheat. The remarkable increase in wheat yields obtained as a result of the use of gypsum with superphosphate has been given wide publicity, the Victorian Government tests having given most positive results. Messrs Wiley and Son, local agents for A.P. Hassel, whose advertisement appears in this issue, have on hand a large supply of gypsum identical with that used in the tests and can furnish full particulars with regard to same.

February 13. Obituary. Two deaths occurred on Saturday night at the St Arnaud Hospital, one being that of Eric Prentice, aged 10, who is the second member of the Prentice family to succumb to fever, and the other of Dorothy Marshall, aged 3 months, the daughter of Mr and Mrs F. Marshall of Donald. The remains of both were interred in the Donald cemetery on Sunday afternoon, the Rev Crean officiating at the graveside. The school children were represented. Mr W. Bandy had charge of the funeral arrangements.

(The fever referred to was typhoid and there were a number of cases in Donald at the time)

February 16. Health Officer's Annual Report to Council. (Dr Flanagan's report on State Schools in the Shire). I have inspected the State Schools in the district. With regard to the Donald school, it was found necessary to condemn two of the classrooms. The Education Department was communicated with by the council, but so far no material move has been made towards rectifying the matter. These two rooms are certainly not fit to teach children in, and I should like the council to again take up the matter with the Education Department. Also, I would like to point out that no school officer of health has visited his district for a very long time.

February 20 Watchem. A happy occasion, in the form of a kitchen tea, was recently celebrated in Watchem on the eve of the marriage of Miss S. Moore of Massey to Mr Vincent Colbert of Watchem. The function took place at the residence of Mr J. O'Connor, who is a cousin of the guest-of-honour, and a large assemblage of young people attended to do honour to one whom they had known from girlhood. Cards and dancing played an important part in the evening's programme. After refreshments had been served Mr James Green was called upon to make the presentation, on behalf of the numerous donors of a splendid collection of kitchen utensils. He also made eulogistic reference to the many pleasing qualities of the bride-elect, and was ably supported by Mr Geo Richards. Mr P. Connellan, uncle of the guest, responded on her behalf, the evening ending with the singing of "For she's a Jolly good Lassie".

February 23. Soldiers' Hall to be Sold. In accordance with the wishes of the district returned soldiers, the premises formerly known as St George's Hall will be sold by auction on Friday, March 16. The present owners have found that the building is unsuitable for its original purpose, and that it is intended to build an up-to-date hall on a new site. There is sure to be keen competition for the old premises which are very substantially built and occupy the best business site in Woods Street. Full particulars of the dimensions of the building and land are given in an advertisement today. Owing to the steady development of Donald, the business sites in Woods Street are now practically all utilised; the hall is the only central position that is on the market, and it represents the last chance for the businessman or investor to secure property in the commercial centre of the town.

February 27. Fire Alarm. At about 5.40 last evening the fire-bell was sounded and a crowd quickly gathered in Woods Street and filtered through to the rear of the premises occupied by Mr Syd Blay, fruiterer and confectioner. It was discovered that in some manner a fire had started in a heap of bags parked ready for sending away. The heap was quickly scattered, and the danger of further damage was obviated. Had the outbreak not been opportunely noticed, a large pile of fruit packing cases would have been destroyed in addition to the fencing in the vicinity. The brigade was soon on the spot, and it was not long before a few charred remnants of sackcloth and ashes and an alluring aroma of burnt banana were all that remained to indicate that any untoward happening had occurred.