



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 316 JULY 2023

Enquiries for June

Greg and Pam Rogerson were staying for a few nights in a caravan in Donald. Pam's mother was Mary Ball, daughter of Jimmy and Lavina Ball and sister of Charlie Ball. Greg and Pam were walking around Donald, getting the feel of the place that Pam had heard about many times from her mother. By chance they chatted to "Pickles", who was filling up at the service station and he sent them up to the Buloke Times Office to meet with one of Charlie Ball's Aitken Avenue playmates, Robin Letts. Robin had a lovely day regaling them with the antics and schoolboy pranks of the Aitken Avenue gang, which also included Bill Anderson. Robin referred Pam and Greg to the archives, and we took them through the Courthouse Museum. Pam was very excited to find out that we had a Market gardener called Georgie. She said that her mother often showed them how she could count to ten in Chinese, using her fingers and she said that the Donald Chinese market gardener had taught her! Jimmy Ball and family first lived at Carron, where it is believed that he worked for farmer, Doug Campbell (now owned by Heath and Anne Campbell) or his predecessor. The Balls lived in a house, further west of and one block behind Campbell's house and Jimmy was an enthusiastic vegetable grower. Brian Downes reports that his father often bought pumpkins from Jimmy. In 1938, the family moved to town and lived in a small cottage (no longer there) at approximately 9/11 Aitken Avenue. There was a vacant lot next to it and Jimmy continued to grow his vegetables. Charlie Ball eventually left Donald for Melbourne where he found fame as a very successful footballer. His sisters, Jean and Mary also left Donald.

Barbara Linsell is the great great grand daughter of John and Ann Litchfield. Barbara is researching her family and found that John is buried in the Donald cemetery. She wrote for any extra information that we might have on John and Ann and family.

A new resident asked for the history of his recently purchased Walker St house. His house is one of the nine Railway houses built on the North side of Walker St between 1921 and 1928 to house the workers. It is wonderful for Donald that most, if not all, of the nine houses are

still there and well cared for, making Walker St a pleasing glance into our heritage. The local Archives, at 56 Woods St, will provide the history of your house for a small fee.

Max Henderson from Toowoomba returned for a visit and gave us a pilot copy of his Findlay history book. Max is still discovering more information for the book. The Findlays first settled in Learmonth and then some moved up north to select land. "Findlay Engineering" and "Gull Real Estate" in Ballarat are some of the Findlay descendants and Findlays also married into the McClelland, Dunstan, Edelsten and Barber families. On his way back to Toowoomba, Max visited the Barber family connections at Corowa who are connected to the Corack Barbers. Max has exchanged history with all of these families in his visits to Victoria and has shared it with us.

Louise Nightingale and her husband visited the archives. Louise is a great granddaughter of James Rowe who started the firm "Rowe and Sons" in St Arnaud and Donald. The Donald Hardware shop, now owned by John Richards, was built in 1927 by James Rowe, after the previous building was destroyed by fire. Rowe was in partnership with Walter Golding at the time. Walter soon after took over the building and it became "Goldings" for many years.

Trevor Domaschenz from Edenhope is researching all of the land owned at one stage by his grandfather, Martin Domaschenz. Martin owned contiguous paddocks in Laen and Rich Avon West in about 1902. He moved sheep around the country, grazing them at his various holdings from Robe in S.A., and as far north as Bangerang in Victoria. Martin had great success as a grazier. Trevor visited our archives and departed with two of Ron Falla's selector's books, which he says have sorted out the land in this area for him.

Blasts from the Past- July 1923

July 3. Obituary. The Late Alexander McCubbin. Another of our oldest pioneers, in the person of Mr Alexander McCubbin, died at his home in Campbell Street, Donald on Saturday last, at the fine old age of 83 years. He was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, and arrived in N.S.W. 63 years ago with his wife and daughter, who was born at sea. For a short time he resided in Bathurst, then moved to the Ballarat district. He selected land at Laen 16 years ago and had his house removed by bullock wagon from Addington to his new property. His family then numbered seven, John, his only son, being 17 years of age. The members of the family soon proved themselves workers, and although the deceased gentleman's selection did not increase beyond his original 160 acres he was able to reap the reward of his toil and retire comfortably and happily after selling his land nine years ago. He was a man of quiet disposition, straightforward and honourable in all his dealings, and respected by all with whom he came in contact. As a farmer he had no superior in the district, as is amply evidenced by the fact of his having cleared, fenced, cultivated and reared a family of seven on an area of 160 acres. His wife predeceased him by six years and he leaves one son John, who resides on his farm at Lake Boga and four daughters, viz: Mrs T. Taylor, Donald, Mrs P.

Henderson, Warracknabeal, Mrs T. Aitken, Birchip and Miss Jennie McCubbin, Donald to mourn their loss.

July 6. The Band Ball. Another Successful Event. Recalling the generous support recorded last year, and bearing in mind that the Donald Citizens' Band is an institution, which in Donald is maintained principally by public contribution – hence the designation – it was only natural that the committee responsible for the management of the Annual Ball should anticipate success. That their confidence was in no wise misplaced was amply evidenced on Tuesday evening, when a splendid attendance filled the Soldiers' Hall. The sharpness of the night added further allurements to the ballroom, with its prospect of an enjoyable evening's rhythmic exercise. Once inside, the first impression was fully maintained, the dictates of feminine fashion being instantly apparent by the bright frocks of the ladies, colour, and plenty of it, being not the exception but the rule. The Hall decorations, while not profuse, were effective. The whole function from the point of view of the dancers, left nothing to be desired. It was noticeable that the programme was so framed as to include an adequate number of the "old" dances, a course to be commended in view of the growing tendency to completely confine the evening's dancing to the trot and the slide or variations thereof. The music, supplied by the Band hidden from view behind a screen at the end of the Hall, was all that could be desired, and it was not until after supper that the arrangements, in this respect were handed over to the capable attention of Mrs Ditchburn and Mr J. Hickey. The floor, waxed to a remarkable degree by Messrs Morrison, I. Henderson and S. Henderson, cast countless colourful reflections as the dancers passed to and fro. Perhaps the sole blemish, and it is one that should be easily removed on future occasions, was supplied by isolated instances of smoking within the precincts of the ballroom, between dances. However, this can hardly be called the fault of the committee, as it is generally left to personal recognition of what constitutes good taste. The following ladies, who were engaged in the preparation and serving of supper, are deserving of the best thanks of both committee and dancers – Mesdames Hearn, Martin, I. Walker, W. Muir, J. Power, V. Bourke, Ditchburn, W. Grey, Austin, Cantillon, J. Moore, senr., and C. Bull and Misses Ralston, Bull, Hearn, Small and Hornsby. Mr Arnel was in charge of the ticket window, while Messrs J. Martin and J. Porter faithfully maintained the watch on the door and dispensed to patron the dainty programme provided.

July 10. Successful Hare Drive. At last Thursday's night meeting of the Donald Enclosure Coursing Club, the secretary, Mr G.C. Gummow, reported that the Club was in a very strong position financially, there being a substantial credit balance in the bank. It was decided to hold a week-end hare drive, and to arrange an attractive programme for the meeting to be held at the end of the present month. As arranged, the drive was held, the result being that 16 strong hares were added to the fine lot already in the enclosure. Another drive will take place this week, when it is hoped to obtain a sufficient supply of hares for the rest of the season. The Enclosure has never looked better, and it is in the finest possible condition for the holding of a successful meeting.

July 16 New Presbyterian Church. An important meeting is to be held in the Donald Presbyterian Church on Saturday, July 21, at 2 p.m., the object being the inspection and approval of the plans submitted in connection with the proposed building. It is estimated that the building will cost £3,500, and the sum now available, including promises, is about £1,800. Judging by the plans, the new Church would, from a building point of view, be a decided acquisition to the town.

July 17. One of the pioneers of agriculture in the Wimmera, Mr J.T. Murphy of the Warracknabeal district, has died at the age of 54 years. He was the first man in that portion of the Wheat Belt to use the roller for the clearing of the mallee land and he also pioneered the stump-jump plough.

July 24. Buggy Accident. Mr H. Bouchier of Kellalac had a painful experience last weekend. He, in company with a lady, was driving in a buggy and pair, when near the Corporation saleyards the iron ring at the point of the pole broke away, allowing the pole to fall to the ground. The horses immediately became uncontrollable, and galloped madly for some distance with Mr Bouchier clinging to the reins. With the terribly uneven condition of the roads, the runaways did not go far before the buggy overturned throwing out both occupants into the mud. With the exception of bruises and shock, both Mr Bouchier and the lady escaped serious injury.

July 27. P & A Society Meeting: General Business. Mr C. Dunn reported having noticed at a recent football match that boards were being taken off one of the old gates by boys who were attempting to gain free admission. Children were also climbing all over the Band rotunda, scratching and chipping the paintwork. Mr Geo. Pope expressed the opinion that the Football Club should be held responsible for any damage to the property of the Society during the progress of a match or training operations. The Club should appoint someone to see that spectators did not interfere with the improvements on the ground.

July 31. Obituary. The Late Mrs Catherine Byrne. Yet another of our old and beloved residents has passed from our midst in the person of Mrs Catherine Byrne, who died at the home of her daughter, Mrs Donnellon, on Saturday last at the age of 78 years. Born in County Cork, Ireland, the deceased lady came to this country when only a girl. She was married in N.S.W., and, with her husband, the late Mr John Byrne, kept the Junction Hotel in Balranald, in that State. She came to Mt Jeffcott thirty years ago and has remained there ever since. An illness of six weeks duration preceded her demise, the news of which will be received with sincere and widespread regret, she being respected and honoured by all with whom she had been brought into contact. Three sons, John (Donald), Richard (Corack) and Daniel (Melbourne) and one daughter, Mrs Bridget Donnellon of Jeffcott, are left to mourn their loss. The funeral, which, considering the state of the weather, was very well attended, took place yesterday at the Donald Cemetery, the Rev. Father Coughlin officiating at the graveside. The coffin bearers were Messrs J. and M. Donnellon, John and Joseph Brennan, P.

Meyers and J. Conlan. The pall bearers were Messrs. J. Nolan, I. McKenna, W.G.Pearse, G.A. Pope, G.F. Oakley and W. Brennan.