



BULOKE BULLETIN NO. 341 FEBRUARY 2026

November and December Enquiries

Hugh Basset called at the archives wanting information on some of the Basset houses and the Laen Cemetery. He will return this year for a longer visit.

Judy Beckworth visited Donald and brought with her an historic Rocking Chair for the Donald Museum. The chair, is supposedly made in Megavissey, in Cornwall, and is an heirloom of the Whatty/Letcher family of Donald, and Judy has returned it to its rightful place. An article about the rocking chair appeared in the Buloke Times accompanied by a picture of Judy Beckworth and Clive Barrance, whose mothers were very close friends.

Tiahn Wright, who is the CFA Social Media Adviser, contacted us for information on the Donald Fire Brigade and their historic involvement with Fund Raising for the Royal Children's Hospital. At the same time, the Hospital had contacted Brigade Captain, Dale Anderson, re the same matter. Between everyone, the story has been uncovered along with a number of photographs and we hope to see it in print or online sometime in the future.

Peter Barkla from Barkla Ag in Queensland was in Donald for a few weeks in December as he was organising Contract Hay Baling in the area. He is the grandson of Ernie Barkla who visited Donald in 1969 when aged in his 90s. Ernie also attended a Back to School at DPS in 1974 where he was photographed and recorded in the Donald Times as being the oldest ex pupil present. Peter Barkla called at the archives as the Barklas were original land selectors at Donald before they left in 1896, firstly for Corowa and then Queensland. We were able to show Peter that the original selection was the land either side of the Sunraysia Highway, just past the cemetery. In fact, the house built by Poddy and Ruth Bywaters about 20 years ago is probably very close to the original house site of the Barkla family. Mrs. J Barkla advertised in the Donald Express in 1887 giving her address as "Park Hill". This seems a fitting name for a house on that site. The main entry in the Donald Times indexes about the Barklas was to do with a Butcher shop that they opened, next to the Egyptian Hall on McGrath St in 1881 and remained until 1888. McGrath St is one of three names given, at different times to the street which ran, parallel to Woods St and between the McCulloch st Shops and Michael's

garage. This is now the McCulloch St entrance to Weirs Carpark. The picture of the lithograph in 1891, shows a small building at the front of the Egyptian Hall (now Michaels' workshop), facing McGrath St and occupied by E.W.C. Towers. This was probably built as the Barkla butcher shop. Peter was unaware of the Barklas' butchering exploits.



Tricia Linehan is a grand-daughter of Dr James Calhoun. She called in at the archives to say "hello". Tricia had heard that there may have been a plaque for Dr Calhoun somewhere, perhaps at the hospital. We were unable to help but if someone knows that there is such a plaque we would love to hear from you.

Neville Bothe, a former railwayman from Dimboola, attended Peter Barbetti's funeral and called in for a copy of Peter's article about "Reminiscences of a Train Driver" which was published in the Buloke Times a couple of years ago.

Colin Gilmour wanted any information that we have on the Services Cricket Club.

Barry Donnellon sent copies of Historical documents for the late Jack Paino, his father-in-law. The copies were beautifully presented and comprised Jack's boat ticket from Italy and his and his brother Bob's Naturalisation certificates. Barry was married to Jack's daughter, Mary Paino, who died last year.

Blasts from the Past. February 1926

February 2. Unfortunate Accident. The friends of Miss Dorothy Reseigh, daughter of Mr and Mrs Edward Reseigh of Birchip, will regret to hear of the serious accident which involved her on Friday, January 23. During the previous week she had journeyed to Tasmania to take part, as a soloist, in a concert tour of the island. Six concerts were to be

given, Launceston and Hobart being included in the itinerary. With her was Miss Lois Craw, violinist. On the day aforementioned the young ladies were travelling by motor when a mishap occurred, the car turning completely over, and the back wheels collapsing. Miss Reseigh received a broken collarbone and abrasions. Miss Craw was dragged by the car and received a badly cut face, and the three other occupants escaped injury.

Latest advice indicates that the patients are progressing favourably, and that Miss Reseigh should be completely recovered in about five weeks. It was, of course, found imperative to cancel the whole tour, this unfortunate but necessary course being a great disappointment to the young ladies and to the Tasmanian public.

In referring to Miss Reseigh, one of the metropolitan weeklies recently wrote :- "Last month this young Australian completed her examinations for the second year diploma course at the University Conservatorium gaining first class honours, also a coveted position in the class lists, and honours in every individual subject.

Her successful appearance at the concert in the Auditorium recently conducted by Professor Laver was most favourably received. When a student at the Methodist Ladies' College, where she matriculated, her musical abilities were first discovered. Miss Reseigh distinguished herself in the early part of 1924 by being the most successful singer in a Board Exhibition examination at the University Conservatorium. Previously she had qualified in singing, piano, harmony and counterpoint tests.

With an unaffected and pleasing manner and unbounded enthusiasm for her work, this clever girl should someday become a distinguished singer." (*Dorothy Reseigh was the daughter of Edwin Jr. (not Edward) Reseigh and he was the eldest of the 10 children of Edwin Sr. and Janet Reseigh who selected at "Oakdale", Rich Avon East, near Banyena. Edwin Jr. left his land near "Oakdale" and bought land at Berriwillock (not Birchip) when his sons were grown*).

February 5. Personal. Mr Alf A. Madder, who recently sold his property at Corack East, is reported to have purchased about 800 acres of land from Mr A. Dunstan of Wycheproof South at £11 an acre.

February 9 Racegoers deal with fire. Shortly after the first event at the St Arnaud races on Wednesday afternoon last, a grass fire started in a paddock adjacent to the racecourse, and fanned by the wind, spread rapidly. The large crowd at the races did not appear to be alarmed at such a happening, in fact, many went into the grandstand to view the fire's progress. However, after it had been burning for about half an hour, and when over 100 acres of grass had been destroyed, some alarm was felt, as there was a possibility of the flames crossing the St Arnaud- Navarre road and setting the young timber alight. It was feared that if the wind changed the racecourse property would be endangered. An appeal was made for volunteers to fight the fire, it being announced that 600 valuable sheep were in danger. There was a ready response and several car loads of men were conveyed to the fire which was quickly beaten out,

February 12. Watchem. At the annual meeting of the Watchem branch of the V.F.U., the chair was occupied by the vice-president, Mr. H. Borden, in the absence of the president Mr. I. McKinnon. It was reported that last year's membership had been 64, while an increase of six had been effected this year. The following officers were elected:- President, Mr. H. Borden; Vice-President Mr. John Blair; Auditors, Messrs F. Connellan and J. Rodgers; Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. A. J. Mullane; Delegates to conference at Ballarat; Messrs H. Borden, L.C. Belleville, J.A. Colbert and A. J. Mullane. Mr. H. Glowrey was nominated as one of the three representatives of the Wimmera district on Central Council.

(The V.F.U. was the Victorian Farmers' Union which became the Country Party)

February 16 Donald Land A.F. Cleary, auctioneer, Donald and St Arnaud, reports having sold by private treaty, on account of Mr. Chas. Hollis, his superior farm located at Laen, about 9 miles from Donald, and comprising 800 acres of black land at a record price of £20 per acre, which price is understood to be the highest yet paid in the Donald district. The purchasers, Messrs George Raynes and sons are well known and highly respected farmers of Traynor's Lagoon where they have a very fine property of some 1700 acres.

February 19. The late Mrs. A.E.M. Impey. Residents of Donald and district were shocked to learn of the death of Mrs. A. E. Maud Impey, beloved wife of Mr. Frank Impey, on Wednesday evening. The deceased lady had not enjoyed good health for a number of years, but her death took place very suddenly. She was born in Dunolly forty years ago, and was the daughter of Mrs. C. and the late J. Steele of that town. She came to Donald from Tarnagulla and since her residence here had established herself as the centre of a large circle of friends, who later marvelled at the fortitude with which she had borne her troubles. To the last she maintained a bright and cheerful spirit and the deepest sympathy is felt for bereaved husband and her daughters, Misses Bessie and Jean Impey.

February 23. Donald Ambulance. Little Demand for Service. At the last meeting of the Donald Shire Council, the following report was received from the committee in charge of the Motor Ambulance. The figures are those for the year ending December 31, 1925.

Expenditure. Insurance £10; registration £4; four quarterly payments at £7/10/ each £30; garage fees, petrol, oil £10; Total £ 54.

Revenue. Income £9/15. Loss £44/5/

The district appears to be so well supplied with cars that there is little demand for the services of the ambulance_ H. J. Green, R.A. Adams, W. G. Pearse.

Councillors were generally of the opinion that there was much in the committee's contention that the district's needs were well supplied in the way of motor conveyance, and it was finally decided, on the motion of Crs. McPherson and Sproat, that the Victorian Civil Ambulance Service be given three months' notice that the Council had decided to dispense with the service of the vehicle, as it was felt that its services were being kept from other districts, which might be more in need thereof.