



# Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

*Newsletter*

Volume 8 Number 1 February 2011

*Preserving Our Heritage*

President: Jennifer Hamilton

Secretary: Lyn Skillern Tel 56686304

Tel: Society number: 56622492. The Society rooms are open Thursdays and Fridays between 12 noon and 4pm

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Website: [www.leongathahistory.org.au](http://www.leongathahistory.org.au)

## *The latest news*



### *Miss Inverloch in the fifties*

• **The new exhibition.** “Summer Time” is up and running. Please come in and see the display. We have photographs and memorabilia to do with pools, beaches, picnics, harvesting and anything else to do with summer.. As the Leongatha Swimming Club has been going for fifty years and we have a display of photographs and memorabilia relating to this club on display.

## • **Australia Day**

Our Australia Day cemetery walk was very successful and we had around 35 people attend to hear about noted local people buried in Leongatha Cemetery. Thank you to Jennifer Hamilton for giving the talk and her organisation of the day. Thank you also to Lola Bailey for her research and assistance on the day and Geoff Michael for his research. Thank you also to all who helped with the afternoon tea/lunch.

The Australia Day function attracted \$29 in donations for the afternoon tea/lunch after the walk.

## **From Pat Spinks January**

Thank you very much to those people who assisted during January. By spreading our regular Thursday and Friday people through the week and having “irregulars” assist them, we were able to keep the Society rooms open every day from January 3<sup>rd</sup> to Australia Day and at the same time free the “regulars” to finish the “Summertime” Display in time for Australia Day. I didn’t manage to ask everyone for assistance and hope no one was offended. Next time.

Some days were busy and some weren’t. That’s life.

Financially it was successful. The door takings were \$69.25, we sold 17 books, enrolled one new member and sold about \$50 worth of jam.

## **The Cataloguing Team**

We have had two gatherings of the Cataloguing Team and this is going very well. The day has been changed from Tuesday to Monday and we have three new members. They are getting the hang of worksheets, photographing items is next and we will then start entering the data onto the computer. I am looking forward to putting my feet up in future

## **William Highgate**

Late last year we were offered a collection of World War I medals and documentation for them. They belonged to William Highgate who was killed in France in September 1917. William enlisted at the Mt Eccles Hall and is named on the Mt Eccles Honour Board. He actually rejoined the Royal Sussex Regiment with whom he served during the Boar War and was killed serving with the British forces. We were very happy to accept the offer from his nephew and the medals themselves have arrived. A display will be set up when everything is in our hands, so keep an eye out for the next installment.

## **Feature Article By Lyn Skillern**

### **Leongatha Swimming Club, 50 years in the pool, from an interview with Alan Beasley and newspaper articles from *The Star***

It is with great pleasure that I write this article about the Leongatha Swimming Club. This club was part of my life for 13 years and I still spend a few hours a week coaching young swimmers. Leongatha Swimming Club was formed in 1960 and established to be ready for competition in early 1961 following the opening of the new pool in December 1960. The Leongatha outdoor pool opening was the culmination of years of work by the community. The town had long dreamed of a pool. Funds had been raised as far back as 1929 but in the fifties fund raising really began. All sorts of activities were held over a ten year period to raise the money for the pool. Linda and Gordon Watson held a garden party every year, crops of potatoes were grown and sold and a pool month was declared every year when all major functions contributed to the pool fund.

The Swimming Club was formed at a meeting in June 1960. Cr Bob McIndoe chaired the meeting at

Presidents Len Goldsworthy  
Vice Presidents Mr R Vague and Mr A Fraser  
Secretary Daryl Pease  
Treasurer Mr G McAllister  
Hon Auditor Mr C Sutherland

Committee Members Mrs J McMahon, Mrs J Byatt, Mr G Crisp and Mr H Hook

A motion was passed to join the Victorian Amateur Swimming Association and thus enable the club to compete in the Gippsland region and run a carnival for the pool opening. Danny van Der Burgh volunteered to act as coach and it was decided that the club colours would be green and gold.

Most families joined the club and it was a great success with everyone getting on very well. Early families were the Peases Daryl, Jane and Christine, the Goldsworthys Geoff, Frank and Lee, the Leitch family, the Fawcett family, Beasley family, the Symingtons, Christine was a good swimmer, the Mottsons, Val and Rhonda, the Christmas family, the Haywoods, Leamons, the Howards, Kevin, Peter and Chris, the Brunnings, the Bentvelsens, the Forsyths, the Sunds, the Cavills, George Misson, the McCarthys, Brian Longmore, the Fennells and the Van Zuydens. Later came the Sydenhams, Kew Mings, Tonkins, Robinsons, Davies and Coyles. Tommy Sangster was the Treasurer for many years and his girls Bobette and Jane swam. The club started from scratch and they had to learn to swim well. They trained two nights a week and two mornings. In the morning they had to get up at 6 am and many rode their bikes to the pool.



Alan Beasley receiving his life membership from Jim Coyle

They had an intra club competition at first before they started to compete in the regional competition against Warragul, Drouin, Moe, Morwell, Traralgon and Sale. They ever went to Bairnsdale and swam in the Mitchell River. Sundays meant time trails and they took along time to finish. They swam in a good competition and did well. The club had annual club championships which were keenly contested. Leongatha ended up in a C grade competition against Trafalgar, Yallourn, Poowong, Yarram, Korumburra and Toora. The club developed a relationship with Ashburton Club. The Leongatha swimmers would go down to Ashburton and be billeted out and then Ashburton Club would come to Leongatha and do the same. They would have a carnival and then go to a beach for a picnic. Joan Sydenham made a great contribution as an official and life saving instructor. Roy Harn was a good

teaching of beginners and his contribution to the club. Sue Kew Ming was outstanding as a young swimmer and won State Championship medals, Cameron Coyle, Melinda and Lucy Bissett and Jane Meiers had success as a relay and Cameron Coyle won events as an individual in the State All Juniors. Steven Robinson was also very good. The most outstanding swimmer for the club was Murray Leitch who could swim 100m freestyle in 60 seconds and did well at the State Country Championship. The Club now awards the Murray Leitch trophy to the outstanding swimmer of each season. In the eighties the South Gippsland Association was formed and Leongatha has competed in this competition ever since. The club is successful and continues helping young swimmers achieve their goals.

## Silver Medal for Sue



▲ Sue, a pupil at Leongatha South State School, had her eighth birthday last week.

Sue Kew Ming, aged 7, March 1970

## Danny Van der Burgh

Danny van Der Burgh was born in Jakarta, then called Batavia, Indonesia in 1933. The Dutch ruled Indonesia then and Danny's father was the harbour master at the port of Tanjung Priok.

His early life was spent with his family in Indonesia and he seemed to enjoy swimming and going to swimming pools. The Japanese occupation of Indonesia in 1942 saw Danny and his mother interned in a prisoner of war camp. Conditions were terrible but they survived. After the Indonesians gained their independence Danny and his family went to live in the Netherlands. He could not settle there and migrated to Australia as a young man in 1952.

Danny worked in Melbourne and became a competitive swimmer, water polo player and surf life saver. When he came to Leongatha, he worked in the local area before taking on a position with the Woorayl Shire. This enabled him to be the manager of the Leongatha Pool in the summer months. He was also the first coach of the Leongatha Swimming Club in 1961 and competed very successfully for the club in Gippsland and Melbourne.

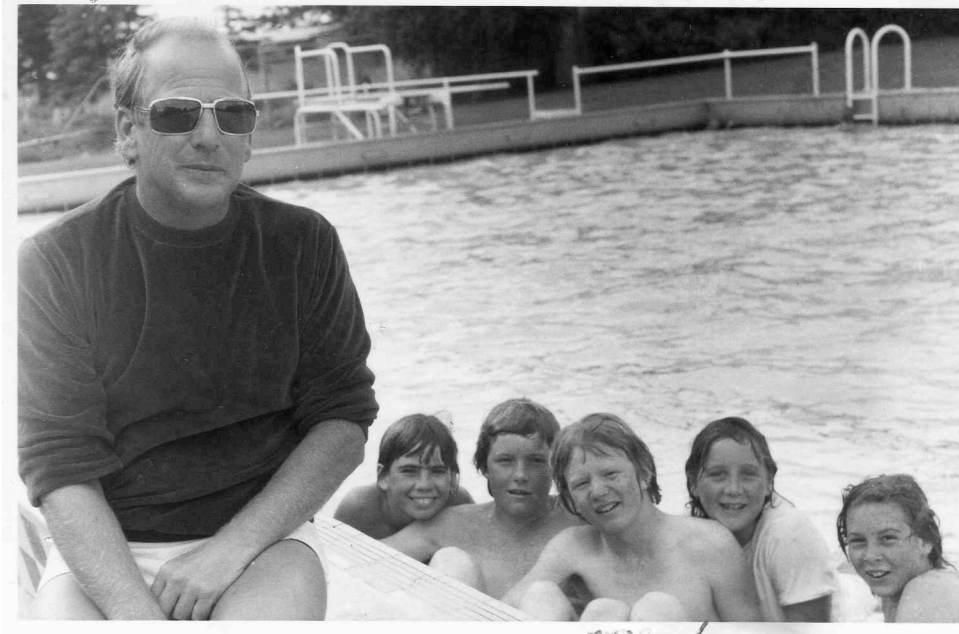
*The Star* of February 14<sup>th</sup> 1961 reported that Danny Van der Burgh broke the record in the 220 Yards (200 m) breaststroke at the Gippsland Championships. *The Star* also reported that Danny was an

Olympic hopeful in 1956 but had not lived in Australia long enough to be eligible for the Australian team.

Danny lived, with his family, in Leongatha for the rest of his life.

It was in his role as pool manager that Danny became so well known in the area. He ruled the pool so well that families felt safe leaving their children there to swim.

Danny managed the pool and the kiosk, did all the maintenance, and kept the plant working at the Leongatha Outdoor Pool for 43 years. Sadly, Danny was too ill to attend the opening of the new indoor pool. The photo below is Danny at the pool in the 1970s



### **From the Great Southern Star**

Advertisements in *The Great Southern Star* show us much about the change over time in society. The following are advertisements for Edney's and Morris car dealers in the 1920s and radios from C Edney in 1925

**Radio** Reaches Out and Brings Home the Fun to You. There is enjoyment in the Air.  
LISTEN IN.

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**Tunaphone** Wireless Receiving Sets.

FROM 22/10/.

8-VALVE SET COMPLETE WITH LOUD SPEAKER, 900.

GUARANTEED TO RECEIVE ALL INTER-STATE STATIONS

5-VALVE SET 250. (LOUD SPEAKER AND BATTERY EXTRA)  
RECEIVES ALL INTER-STATE STATIONS ON LOUD SPEAKER AND  
IS CAPABLE OF RECEIVING AMERICA.—SIMPLE TO OPERATE

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Demonstrations with Pleasure      Performance Counts.

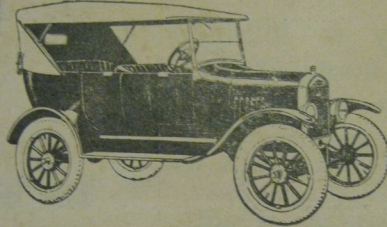
FOR PARTICULARS APPLY.—

**C. EDNEY,**  
**LEONGATHA.**

Phones 27 & 94.      P.O. Box 72.

## You can easily buy your Ford Car, NOW!

The new low prices of the Ford Touring Car and Single Seater bring a Car within the reach of every man. Never were Ford Cars so handsome, or so well equipped—never could you buy the world's most reliable and economical Car under such advantageous conditions. The present low prices and the Ford Easy Purchase Plan provide an opportunity for every man to secure the New Ford Touring Car or Single Seater under conditions that are without parallel in Australia. A small cash payment will secure immediate delivery.



**New Ford Touring Car**

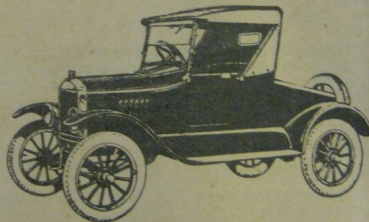
Nickel fittings throughout. Body colours, cobalt blue, imperial buff or empire grey. Four cord tyres, windscreen wiper and rear vision mirror are standard equipment. Complete with electric lighting and starting equipment, F.O.B. Ford works in each State.

**£169/10**

**Ford Single Seater**

Nickel fittings throughout. Choice of cobalt blue, imperial buff or empire grey. Four cord tyres, windscreen wiper and rear vision mirror are standard equipment. Complete with electric light and starting equipment, F.O.B. Ford works each State.

**£169/10**



See nearest Ford Dealer without delay

**Ford**

CARS - TRUCKS - TRACTORS

40 FORD CARS AND TRUCKS ARE BRITISH EMPIRE PRODUCTS

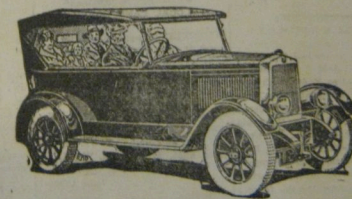
**The New MORRIS**  
**Perfected Driving Comfort**

The New Adjustable Clutch and Brake Pedals

Tall men and short men—the comfort of all is equally well provided for by the adjustable brake and clutch pedals of the New "World" Morris. Adjustment is so simple that it can be made in a few moments to meet almost any requirement.

This is just one of the many comfort features of this new British Car—the "World" Model Morris

The **NEW MORRIS**



STANDARD ROADSTER  
**£215**

STANDARD TOURER  
**£220**

Free Demonstration without Obligation

Local

F. W. MORISS'

Agent,

Leongatha

“The Kalgoorlie Miner” and a local gold mine which was still using steam powered winches to move the cage in the shafts. We also visited a local market garden which grew excellent vegetables in the red soil using water piped across the ranges from near the coast and a sheep station. The holding paddock near the homestead was a square mile. We were driven around the property on the back of the owner’s Morris Commercial and we were allowed to shoot at waterbirds on the dam using the owners .22 rifles. During our time in Kalgoorlie, we stayed at *The Exchange Hotel*, one of many in the town. The intersection on which *The Exchange* was situated had a hotel on all four corners. The hotel had two stories and a number of students were observed whistling at some local girls from the upper story veranda and received a whack on the hand with a case strap. This trip was the highlight of my five years at Leongatha High, it certainly opened my eyes to the world outside South Gippsland.

### Form V 1958



Back row Bluey Aeshlimann, Clenton Rowland, Graeme Jeffrey, Ian Lester, Graham Spencer, Ian Pyle, Ken Richards, David Butler, Gordon Schmidt Russell Riseley

**We need you !!!.** Your historical society needs your help. We cannot continue to open on Thursdays and Fridays without some more support. Please give us some of your time.

• **Help wanted By Lyn Skillern.** Can you help with the names of Leongatha High School students (1912 to 1933) and staff from 1930 until 1934. I also need some first names identified for those on the lists with only initials. Contact Lyn on 56686304 or at the rooms.

Address of the LDHS  
P O Box 431  
Leongatha 3953































