



Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

Newsletter Volume 12 Number 1 February 2015

Preserving Our Heritage

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Latest news

The Exhibition The current exhibition, which was set up in January, relates to World War 1 in general. On show are photographs of the building of the Leongatha Memorial Hall (Woorayl Shire's War Memorial) and the murals that covered the walls from 1926 until the late 60s. A display of items relating to the Light Horse is in the hallway together with artefacts concerned with war bonds. The centre cabinet has memorabilia related to local men and a set of photographs of the destruction of the French town of Albert. The exhibition will change as the centenary of other battles and events occur.

The soldier's photograph project.

We received a grant to have soldiers' photographs printed and mounted. These photographs are of the men from the Shire of Woorayl who died as a result of World War 1. These photographs will form the main part of our centenary of the Gallipoli landing display to be opened in April.

Over 80s morning tea

Jan Stewart had the idea of having a get together for local over 80s. We decided to have a morning tea on 17 March^{at} 11 am. We hope to gain some valuable information from the chat that will no doubt occur. Our members are invited to attend, over 80 or not. Jan is organising the other participants and a good day should be had.

The Anzac Dinner This year our annual Anzac dinner at the RSL will be on our regular meeting night Wednesday 8 April. John Hyett has organised Lindsay Cox from the Salvation Army museum who will talk about the Salvation Army's role in World War 1. The dinner will be at 6.30 and this will be followed by the talk by Lindsay. Please let Lyn know if you are intending to come, as we need to know numbers.

Visit to Cluanie Koonwarra

Margaret Stokes has organised for the Society to pay a visit to 'Cluanie' the property of Anne Vale at Koonwarra. Anne has offered to open the renovated house, garden and out buildings of us to see and for this we are very grateful. The visit will take place on Saturday 18 April at 2 pm. We are supplying afternoon tea and will be charged \$7 each for the visit. The funds will go to charity. Some years ago we visited the property which was then in a rather derelict state. Some members may have photographs or slides taken that day. If you have these please let us copy them for Anne. It is essential that those attending book before hand so arrangements can be made. Please contact Lyn 56686304

Last year Anne won the main prize at the Victorian Local History Awards for her book 'Exceptional Australian Garden Makers'

*'Exceptional Australian Garden Makers' is an exciting new volume which 'Makes the Connections' between Australia's early garden making pioneers, the mid century natural style landscapers and the generation of modern garden makers that evolved from the 1980s onwards. Popular garden writers Tommy Garnett, Kevin Heinze and Trevor Nottle built on the work of their predecessors Edna Walling, Millie Gibson and Olive Mellor. A passion for Australia inspired Gordon Ford, Ellis Stones, Glen Wilson and Paul Thompson to create natural style landscapes. Large romantic gardens such as those created by Dame Elisabeth Murdoch and Lady Law Smith stand testament to their ongoing appeal in the 21st Century. With stunning images captured by award winning photographer Simon Griffiths and others, this seminal text takes you on a voyage of discovery into the lives and legacies of influential Australia's garden makers of the 20th century. **If you have ever wondered how garden making in Australia developed from our early pioneers to the garden installations of the 21st century this book leads the way.***



A photo taken by Lyn Skillern on our last visit

Something about ‘Cluanie ‘

‘Cluanie’ and its accompanying sheds are listed with the local council to be of ‘Local Significance’ only. The bulk of the house was constructed in 1895, significantly extending the 1876 cottage. The McDonald family, who purchased the property in 1905, retained ownership until 2003. The next owner, who purchased the property in 2003, saved the house from near dereliction. They re-fenced the garden, restored the verandas and the fabric of the interior walls and the floors.

Michael and Anne Vale-Sidell purchased ‘Cluanie’ in 2009. They have built on the work of the previous owner continuing with restoration and redecorating the interior of the house. The latest project has been to replace the original lace work on the formal veranda. Michael has made significant improvements to the farm with new sheds, fencing and water troughs.

Oral family history has convinced us that the most substantial period for the garden was the 1920s through to the 1950s. From glimpses in family photographs the garden appears to have been a simple family-orientated country garden comprising easily grown shrubs bulbs and roses. A lilac, the trumpet creeper and a Eucalypt were all that remained from the substantial 1930s garden. The garden has been replanted with hardy shrubs, trees and ground covers. It is designed to be a garden more for pleasure than for show; a garden in keeping with the homestead’s original purpose. Our intention is to do our part in continuing to seek out evidence of past occupation of this gracious survivor of the Victorian era and, most importantly, faithfully to record our own endeavours.

Anne and Michael Vale Sidell

The Streetscape Project.

This ongoing project involves researching the use of sites in the Leongatha town centre over time. Ian Lester is currently organising a folder, with a pocket for each site, in which to store information collected. We hope to obtain some information at the Over 80s morning tea.



The site of the Rusty Windmill site in McCartin Street, 1973



The site of The Rusty Windmill in McCartin Street, 2014

Feature Article, stories from World War 1

The Carmichael sisters

Ruby and Mary Carmichael were from Stony Creek. They attended the Dumbalk East School, which was later known as Stony Creek School.

The girls had been nursing for three years when they passed the Royal Victorian Trained Nurses' examination in 1915. Ruby enlisted in the Australian Nursing Service on 4 May 1917. Mary enlisted on 5 June of the same year. It was reported in the *Great Southern Star* that both young women were at a euchre party and dance at the Dumbalk Hall on Friday 8 June 1917. Members of the community gathered to say farewell to the girls who were to leave the following Tuesday to take up their duties in Mesopotamia and then France. They embarked on the "Mooltan" on 12 June and disembarked in the Middle East on 19 July. A German U boat sunk the "Mooltan" on 26 July, so they were very lucky. By 14 August both were working in the British hospitals in Salonika Greece. The area was freezing cold in winter and burning hot in summer. There were flies, lice, ants, centipedes, scorpions and mosquitos to contend with. The Australian nurses at Salonika were the only Australians to be involved in that lesser known campaign.

Many of the nurses suffered from diseases and a shortage of food and water.

Ruby seemed to have worked mainly in the 43rd and 52nd hospitals. After the war she went on leave for a week in Athens before going to England where she was admitted to hospital from April 19th until May 6th. She left for Australia on 19 May 1919 and was discharged as medically unfit after she arrived home. She died in 1990 aged 100 years.

Mary served mostly in the 43rd and 52nd hospitals until 10 September 1918, when she married Major Edward Gunson. He was a New Zealander who studied medicine in Edinburgh and joined the Royal Army Medical Corps and served in France and the Middle East. Mary returned to Egypt and then Australia. They lived in New Zealand, had a family and then moved to Australia. Mary died in 1977 aged 84.

The Light Horse

Soldiers who were in the Light Horse were in something very special. They were mounted infantry not cavalry in the true sense. These men worked in groups of 4; they rode up to an engagement and dismounted. One man would hold the horses while the other attacked as infantry. The Light Horse spent the war in the Middle East in Egypt, Palestine (now Israel) Lebanon and Syria. They fought against the Ottoman Turks who were the rulers of that area at the time. Some Light Horsemen did fight in France but were very few in number. One of the saddest stories connected to the Light Horse relates to their time in the Gallipoli campaign. At Gallipoli in 1915 the casualty rate was very high. The Australians were in desperate need of reinforcements. It was decided to send the Light Horse in as infantry and leave the horses in Egypt. The 8th Light Horse had amongst its ranks a number of South Gippslanders. These were fine horsemen and they came from the militia group known as the South Gippsland Mounted Rifles.

On that terrible day 7 August 1915 the 8th Light Horse attacked the Nek. Tom Murray and Ernie Barton of Buffalo, Robert Beilby of Leongatha South, Oscar Matthies of Koorooman East, Ed Larkin of Tarwin Meadows and Morton Cakebread who worked in the area as a boundary rider, all lost their lives. The community was devastated to hear the news of their deaths.



Ed Larkin Tarwin Meadows



Tom Murray Buffalo

Cousins in Arms

The Hogan family in the Great War from both sides of the Tasman

By Lyn Skillern Leongatha Historical Society and Leongatha RSL
Written for Keith Hogan, nephew of Arthur.

Arthur Moore Hogan of Mt Eccles near Leongatha in South Gippsland Victoria Australia and George Reginald Hogan of Grey Lynn in Auckland New Zealand were first cousins. Neither soldier knew of the other's existence and they never met. They did, however, serve their respective countries and are buried in France. Arthur is in Villars Bretonneux and George in Dantzig Alley Military Cemetery Mametz. This is a real Anzac story.

Brothers Arthur Butler Hogan and Edward Butler Hogan grew up in Melbourne. Edward married and soon after moved to a new life in New Zealand. There he had a family of 10 children one of whom was George.

Arthur Moore Hogan was the son of Arthur Butler Hogan. Arthur senior was a famous wood carver and was responsible for some magnificent carving at the Melbourne Town Hall. He moved to Mt Eccles, South Gippsland, and became a farmer. He is noted in the region for the beautiful Honour Boards he made. His boards all contain a signature design consisting of gum leaves with gum nuts and crossed rifles at the top of the board. One of these can be seen at the Leongatha Historical Society rooms.

The Great War for George started early as he was part of the New Zealand military expedition sent to capture German Samoa in August 1914.

On Saturday August 29 soon after daybreak the residents of Apia Samoa saw smoke on the horizon. Soon 4 ships were visible and then the white ensign came into sight and the residents knew the fleet was British. The ships dropped anchor just outside the harbour and steam launches were lowered. The harbour was then swept for mines. The Germans would not surrender so the New Zealand soldiers travelling with the small fleet had to land and takeover the island. None of the soldiers knew they were going to Samoa. There was little or no opposition and the streets were controlled in half an hour. George Hogan had been part of this.

In September an Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force went to New Britain (now in Papua New Guinea) to take over the strategically located German wireless station, which was part of a network of wireless stations serving the German East Asiatic Squadron. The powerful German naval fleet threatened British interests in the region and the capture of wireless stations was a high priority for the British, Australian and New Zealand Governments. The take over of the Rabaul area was known as the Battle of Bita Paka and was the first action of Australians in the war. The action in September 1914 concluded with the surrender of the German garrison and the Australian Occupation of New Britain.

Arthur Moore Hogan was in the 21st Battalion and he joined the army in Leongatha on 1 March 1916 at the age of 38. He had a wife Grace and a son Ray. Arthur travelled from Melbourne on the HMAT Ayrshire in July 1916 arriving in Plymouth in early September. After training on Salisbury Plain he went to France. In February 1917 he was ill in hospital and then returned to his unit in August. On 4 July 1918 Arthur went into action against the Germans near Vain Wood. He died instantly when hit by a machine gun bullet. His brother Les Hogan served with the 9th Light Horse ifrom 1914 until 1919. He served at Gallipoli and in the Middle East and returned safely home.

George transferred to the New Zealand Expeditionary force and was a member of the Auckland Infantry Regiment. He died of wounds in France on 15 September 1916 at the Battle of Flers–Courcelette. Launched on 15 September 1916 the battle went on for one week. Flers–Courcelette began with the objective of cutting a hole in the German line by using massed artillery and infantry

attacks. This hole would then be exploited with the use of cavalry. A breakthrough never happened; however tactical gains were made in the capture of three villages. George did not see the battle out as he died on the first day. He had three brothers in The Great War who survived.

These two men, who even looked alike, lost their lives and they rest in France.



The raising of the Union Jack in Apia after the take over by the New Zealanders

Coming events

The Gippsland Association of Affiliated Historical Societies.

GAAHS will hold its annual meeting at Coal Creek on May 16th. We are the co-chairs of the day with Korumburra Historical Society. The meeting will be in the morning and the presentation of Gippsland Local History Awards will follow the meeting before lunch. In the afternoon there will be some interesting activities at Coal Creek.

Leongatha Historical Society Monthly meeting

At our **March 11th meeting** speakers will discuss the land uses in the town centre. Meeting starts at 8pm. Come and share your recollections.