

# Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

*Newsletter*      Volume 7 Number 4 November 2010

## *Preserving Our Heritage*

**President:**            Jennifer Hamilton

**Secretary:**        Lyn Skillern      Tel 56686304

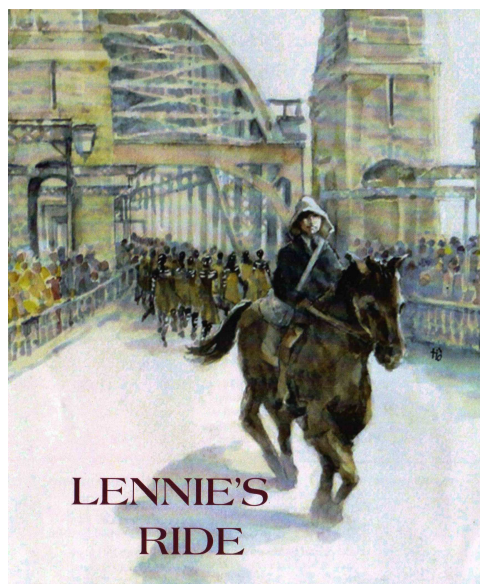
**Tel: Society number:** 56622492. The Society rooms are open Thursdays and Fridays between 12 noon and 4pm

**Email:**            [leongathahistsoc@yahoo.com.au](mailto:leongathahistsoc@yahoo.com.au)

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

### *The latest news*

**Lennie's Ride** The launch of the book *Lennie's Ride* by Mary Small was *magic* according to our president Jennifer Hamilton. There was a good crowd including Gwyther family members and those present enjoyed the afternoon. Lennie Gwyther was nine years old when he rode his pony "Ginger Mick" from Leongatha to Sydney for the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1932. His story is beautifully told by Mary Small and illustrated by Marion Wilcocks. The book is designed for children but it is a wonderful read for any age. *Lennie's Ride* is available from our Society and costs \$15. Mary has written four other wonderful books for young people and we will take orders for these if members would like them. An article on these books appears later in this newsletter.



.Lennie's Ride

**A Special Meeting on November 10<sup>th</sup>.** Marion Wilcocks, the illustrator of *Lennie's Ride* will be our guest on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Our meeting will begin early at 7.30 pm and Marion will talk about her work. Please come along and enjoy hearing and meeting our guest. **On Thursday November 11<sup>th</sup>** Marion will be at the rooms. Johanna Haasjes has personally been to all the schools and invited them to send along a small group of students to meet with Marion and see her work. This event will be at 10.30 am.

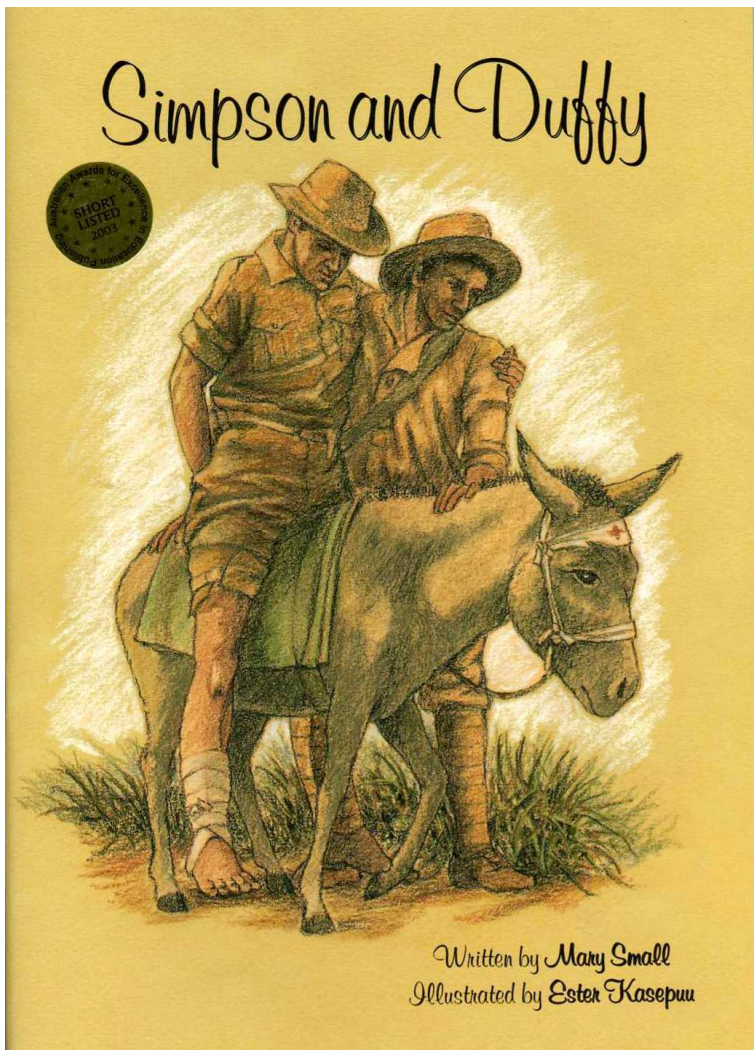
**End of year celebration.** Our Christmas break up will be held on Saturday December 4<sup>th</sup> at the home of our Treasurer and Archivist Pat Spinks and he husband Jim commencing at 11.30 am. All members are invited to come along and share a pleasant afternoon. Members are asked to bring some cold meat, a salad, or a sweet. Drinks are BYO. Please contact Pat on 56686365 by Monday November 30<sup>th</sup> and let her know if you are coming and what you will bring to our celebration. To members who have not joined us for this event please consider coming along.

**Our members working hard for you and our community.** Thank you to our hard working members who keep our rooms open and make our resources available to the public. Pat and Johanna have been doing a sterling job and have been supported by Ian, Jennifer and Margaret. Joan Michael has been in hospital with a serious attack of cellulites and we have missed her in recent weeks. Joan is now recovering well. More help is needed and it would be wonderful if anyone out there could give us a bit of his or her time. Your help will also be needed if we are to open over the summer holiday time in January.

Please contact the organisers with offers of help.

#### **Books by Mary Small**

It was delightful to receive copies of Mary's wonderful Anzac Committee books and I read them with great interest. I was especially taken with *The Unknown Australian Soldier* because I saw in this book a way to tell stories about our country's history that need to be told. As a writer of articles about Australians at War, I was moved by a story in which the ghost of the Unknown Soldier takes two children on a journey to see what World War One was all about. The writing is so clear, the words so well chosen. The story is also beautifully illustrated with the Unknown Soldier and the children shown as on lookers watching the dreadful scenes below. The scenes are photographs in black and white and the drawings include the soldier and the children in colour. The book is a gem and would be a great gift for any child. I read about Simpson and his donkey Duffy. I thought I knew this story but Mary's book taught me more. Duffy was named and given more credit for his work. The Indian army mule handlers were also mentioned. How many people know that there were Indian troops and Indian mule teams at Gallipoli? The other two books are, *Feathered Soldiers*, about the pigeons that served in World War Two and *Seek* about the dogs that served in Vietnam.



The cover of *Simpson and Duffy*

These books are available for purchase and we will be sending in an order very soon, orders must be in and paid for by Thursday November 25<sup>th</sup>. The books can be viewed at the rooms on Thursday and Friday afternoon.

*The Unknown Australian Soldier* \$10.95

*Simpson and Duffy* \$10.95

*Feathered Soldiers* is an illustrated tribute to Australia's war time messenger pigeons \$10.95

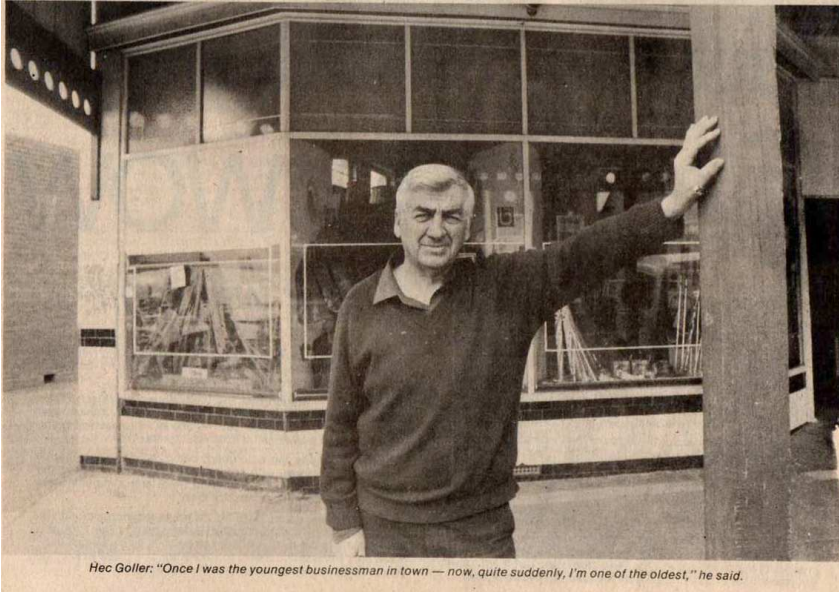
*Seek* an illustrated tribute to Australia's tracker dogs in the Vietnam War \$12.00

### **Koorooman East Avenue of Honour**

Ian Lester organised a public meeting to consider the restoration and recognition of the Koorooman East Avenue of Honour. There are two rows of large trees, one along the side of the road and one in a paddock and the trees are in good condition. The trees need some work done on them and signs to indicate the location of the avenue need to be placed in the area. There is an honour board in the historical society from Koorooman East and therefore we know the names of those men who served in the Great War and for whom the trees were planted. A plaque listing the names of the men is also needed. Other meetings have been organised by Ian and he is being assisted by David Shambrock, who has a relative named on the honour board. Steve Misson from the Shire is looking into land ownership and the possibility of Shire funds being made available. Grants are available from Veterans Affairs for some of the project also. The wheels are turning.

## Special people who helped make Leongatha unique

A new series by Lyn Skillern It is my intention to highlight some of the business people who made our town what it is



Hec Goller: "Once I was the youngest businessman in town — now, quite suddenly, I'm one of the oldest," he said.

### Hec Goller

Hec Goller is shown standing in front of his sporting goods shop in McCartin Street in the 1980s. Hec's father, Harris Goller came to Leongatha after World War One. He had been a Saddler Sergeant in the Light Horse. Harris ran a saddlery and sports store just up the street from where he built Goller's Store in 1929 on the corner of what is now called Goller's Lane. Hec ran the business until he retired and the store is now a florist



Nick Vitetta and part of his greatly enlarged stock of jeans. His motto of always trying to be the cheapest attracts shoppers to Leongatha from beyond Gippsland.

### Nick Vitetta in the 1980s



































