



# Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

## Preserving Our Heritage

*Newsletter*      Volume 17 Number 9 November 2020

**President: Robert Sage**

**Secretary: Lyn Skillern    Mobile: 0400249048**

**Society rooms number: 56622492**

**The Society rooms are open Thursdays and Fridays between 12 & 4pm**

**Email:        leongathahistory@gmail.com**

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

**PO Box 431 Leongatha 3953**

### Latest News

#### **The Annual Meeting**

Thank you to those who attended our annual meeting or apologised for not attending. We were able to conduct a meeting and meet our legal requirements.

The executive remains the same:-

President : Robert Sage

Vice President : John Hyett and Rob Williams

Secretary : Lyn Skillern

Treasurer : Alan McGuinness

Archivist : Pat Spinks

**President's Report** - Robert Sage presented the report outlining the 2020 year.

2019-2020 has been a difficult year in the life of our Society, and it appears that next year will also have problems as we learn to live with Covid 19.

To start this report, I must mention the loss of two of our most valued members, Wal Cayzer and Ian Lester. Both of these gentlemen were legends of our community and our Society. Both lived in this community all their lives and thus had an enormous amount of knowledge of the district's history. Because of this knowledge and their great enthusiasm, they have been able to serve this Society with distinction over many many years. They will be sadly missed. Although our year was cut short by the virus, we enjoyed a number of speakers at our meetings.

At the annual meeting last year John Hyett spoke of 'The life and loves of a lanternist', an insight into the early days of the 'Magic Lantern'.

David Webster, a long- term resident of the Middle Tarwin district, gave an interesting talk about his life and some history of that area.

This year we ventured out and held a Sunday afternoon meeting, where over 60 people came to hear Neil Breeden speak about the 'Tracks of Gippsland'. This address was the result of many years of research into the surveying and construction of the early tracks into this part of Gippsland, which enabled the area to be opened up.

For the Christmas 2019 social event we went to Bair's Hotel for lunch. This was a hassle-free way to socialize at this crazy time of the year.

During the year we have been able to purchase a new lap top computer as a result of a grant from the Public Records Office. With money left over from this, we were able to purchase a projector for the Society's use.

We also received a grant of \$4000 dollars from the Department of Veteran's Affairs. This grant will enable us to place stories of the lives of the men and women from Woorayl Shire who died as a result of WW11 onto our website and also make a photographic display of the same.

To conclude, I will take this opportunity to thank all members of the Society for their work throughout the year. From the office bearers to those who have in any way assisted with the day to day running of the Society, thank you very much. To Lyn a special thanks for her dedicated work as our secretary and for keeping us all connected with her work in the production of the newsletter during this very difficult period of our lives. Hopefully there will be better times ahead.

### **Next meeting**

It was decided at the meeting on 11 November to hold a general meeting on 13 January at 2pm. We need to do some planning for the future at this meeting and we need your help. We have a simple Covid plan. Sign in, use a mask if you can, social distance and use sanitizer. The mask wearing rule may change by then of course.

### **Roc Kirby**

Sometimes you discover a subject worth researching. Olivia Skillern was casually researching online, looking to see if anyone notable came from Leongatha who she knew nothing about. The name of Roc Kirby, who was born in Leongatha in 1918, came up. Roc was the founder of Village Roadshow cinemas.

Hubert Roscoe Kirby was born in Leongatha in 1918. He was the son of George Alfred Kirby and Rosa June Kirby nee Smitt. George Alfred was listed as farmer from 1909 until 1927 Frederick George Kirby owned Lot 80 in the Parish of Leongatha consisting of about 318 acres fronting on the Bass Hwy and Landry's Rd Leongatha South.

By 1931 George Alfred had moved to 196 McKillop St Geelong and is listed as garage manager. In 1934 he is at Sunshine as a manager.

Hubert Roscoe (or as listed later Roscoe Hubert) had 2 siblings Kingsley Ivan (1914) and Wanda Ludea (1916).

On 26 April 1941 Roc enlisted in the RAAF and was a leading Aircraftman Mechanic. He left the RAAF in December 1941 and joined the army. His residence was given as Sunshine. He was a member of the Australian Special Wireless Group until the war ended.

Hubert Roscoe married Beatrice Lily Bickley in 1942 and in 1949 they were living at Sunshine. His occupation was secretary and hers a weaver.

Roc Kirby died on 25 January, aged 89. His personal and family's wealth was estimated at \$325 million. He founded Village Roadshow as a single drive-in cinema in Croydon, Victoria in 1954, and built it into an entertainment empire that produces films, distributes them, owns cinemas and theme parks on the Gold Coast.

Any more information on Roc Kirby would be most welcome.



**Roc Kirby**

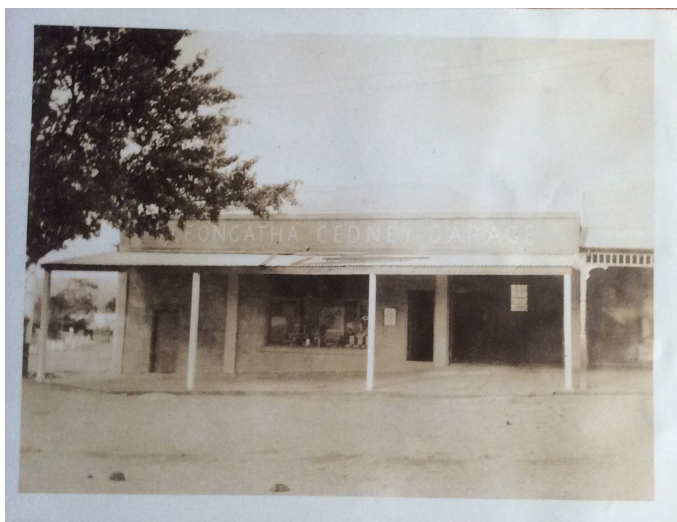
**The Society received an email on Monday 16 November regarding Edney's car dealership being members of the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce for 100 years.**



### **Edneys Leongatha turns 100**

On the occasion of Edneys' 100<sup>th</sup> year of unbroken membership with the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, a presentation to Darryl McGannon, the proprietor of Edney's Leongatha, by the VACC President and VACC CEO, will occur at Edney's 1 Roughton St at 11.15am for 11.30am on Friday 27 November 2020.

**Background:** Edneys Leongatha is VACC member number 3, having joined on 27 November 1920. VACC was founded in Bendigo on 20 September 1918. Member number 1 is Wilson Bolton & Co of Horsham, which joined VACC in early 1919. VACC has many long-standing members, with several over 75 years and numerous over 50 years. Fifty percent of VACC members are located in Regional Victoria.



**The first Edney's Garage**

### **A recent addition to our collection.**



This small but special item was donated to our Society by Alison Marshall of the South Gippsland Genealogical Society. It is a milk bottle cap from Leongatha's Bridge Dairy. This dairy was run by Dick Murphy, brother of historian John Murphy. Alison found it on eBay and purchased it for us.

### **The seven historic wonders of Gippsland. Results of the final vote held on the Gippsland History Facebook page**

1. Walhalla Historic Area
2. The Bataluk Cultural Trail East Gippsland
3. The Mountain Cattlemen's huts
4. Port Albert Township and Gippsland Maritime Museum
5. Noojee Trestle Bridge
6. The Walhalla Goldfields Railway
7. The Swing Bridge Sale

From our Shire, The Light House at Wilson's Prom came in 10<sup>th</sup>, The Walkerville Lime Kilns 18<sup>th</sup> and Coal Creek Park 19<sup>th</sup>. From Bass Coast, the Kilcunda Bridge was 9<sup>th</sup> and The State Coal Mine 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Special Australian expressions**

Here are some more :

*to fly off the handle* - to get really angry a yell

*shemozel* - a real mess

*dosh* - money

*Buckleys chance* - no chance at all. This I believe is often considered as being associated with William Buckley, a convict who escaped from the 1803 settlement at Sorrento and thought he might walk to China. Buckley lived with the local indigenous people and came into the new settlement of Melbourne when it was established in 1835. Apparently, the saying is really associated with the department store Buckley and Nunn in Bourke St Melbourne. If you have Buckley's chance, you have none as in no chance at all. Now people just say, 'oh you have Buckleys' meaning you have no chance of success.

*Daks* - used for trousers. Daks was a brand of trousers from the UK.

*chocka block* - absolutely full, shortened to chockers

**To all our members and friends, have a very merry Christmas and we all hope for a better 2021. See you in the new year.**

**Membership Form. For the Year 2020-2021**

A reminder that your annual membership is now due.

\$30 for individuals                      \$40 for Family

A direct deposit may be paid into the society's bank account at National Bank, Leongatha:  
Leongatha & District Historical Society  
BSB: 083 735                      a/c: 51588 3922  
(Please include your name as reference,  
and notify us by e-mail to leongathahistory@gmail.com)

or post to  
PO Box 431                      Leongatha 3953

**New memberships** are welcome or update your details by completing the form below:

Membership type:                      Single \$30                      Couple/Family \$40

Name:  
.....

Address:  
.....  
.....

Telephone: .....

E-Mail:  
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