



Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

Newsletter Volume 12 Number 2 May 2015

Preserving Our Heritage

President: Robert Sage

Secretary: Lyn Skillern Tel 56686304 mobile 0400249048

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

Email: leongathahistory@gmail.com

Website: www.leongathahistory.org.au

P O Box 431 Leongatha 3953

Latest news

Anzac Centenary Exhibition continues.

Our Anzac commemorations started in the week before the Anzac Day..

Firstly the display of the 58 photographs of local men killed in World War 1 was completed and looks fabulous.

From Monday on we had every student from Leongatha Secondary College Years 7 to 10 come to see our display and hear about World War 1 and the impact on our community. St Laurence's School students from Grade 3 to 6 also visited the display.

A number of visitors came in on Thursday and Friday to see our exhibition and enjoyed viewing the memorabilia and photographs as well as finding information about relations. Lola Bailey was here until 5 pm.

On Anzac Day itself our day started very early. Lyn was standing outside the Mechanics' Institute during the Dawn Service. There were so many people around Lyn decided to open the door at 6.15 am. Some 60 people came in before she left at 7 am.

Lyn Skillern was the guest speaker at the service in the Memorial Hall which was a great success.

Lola Bailey opened up the rooms after the hall service and remained until late afternoon. Heather Stone helped Lola and Lyn and Rob Skillern joined them later on. We all went home for a rest.

The Gippsland Association of Affiliated Historical Societies (GAAHS) annual meeting.

This year the meeting was held at Coal Creek Community Park and Museum, Korumburra. Our Society shared the coordination with Korumburra Society. Robert Sage chaired the meeting and Lyn Skillern and Janet Wilson (Korumburra) coordinated the day.

At the meeting each society highlights their activities as well as submitting an annual report. It is great to hear of interesting events going on in the region.

Drouin held a day where various historic buildings in the town were open to the public. This was a great success and the coordinator is going to email us information about how this was organized.

Other good ideas included very specific exhibitions that run for a short time and the making of DVDs of events and changes to the town and district.

At the meeting the Annual GAAHS History Awards are presented and this year three of our members were presented an award for their personal contribution to our Society.



Congratulations to Lola Bailey, Pat Spinks and Ian Lester.

Ian's award also included his contribution to Coal Creek Park. The other recipients were Roslyn Carstairs (Boolarra), Lloyd Wicks (Yinnar), Rob Waycott (Mirboo and District), Louise Hill Coleman (Heyfield), Margery Missen, (Yarram), Lindsay Peddle(Yarram) and Colin Silcock (Warragul). John Adams was not present but he will receive an award for his wonderful contribution to the recording of Gippsland History.

The awards were presented by Cr Bob Newton who is Korumburra Society's President.

Introducing....

I have been asked to introduce myself to you all.

My name is Ruth Caughey and I'm new to the Historical Society, but I have had a passion for research and history for a long time. I have been given the task of putting together the newsletter each quarter.

For me it all started in 2008 when visiting Tullaree in Tarwin and finding out more about the Lady of the Swamp, Margaret Clements. It coincided with receiving a large scroll with the Caughey family tree on it from my Father in Law just before his death. This inspired me to discover more about the history of the Caughey family and Gippsland in general.

I have lived in Leongatha now for nearly 14 years. I came here to live with my parents after working and living in Melbourne and then travelling Europe for 12 months. My 3 younger siblings had already been here for a few years by that time and were attending the Leongatha Secondary College or working locally.

I live in town with my husband Spencer and two children aged 10 and 7. They both attend the Leongatha Primary School and take part in local sporting activities.

My husband runs his own Floor and Wall Tiling business and has been in the area most of his life having been born and bred in Inverloch.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the newsletter, or would like to contribute an article, please feel free to contact me through the Society.

The Work of the Salvos in wartime

On April 8th the Society was fortunate to have Lindsey Cox of the Salvation Army Museum come and speak to us for our special Anzac Dinner.

The role of the Salvos in wartime is perhaps not so well known but the chaplains provided for our soldiers both physically and spiritually.

Salvation Army Chaplain William McKenzie was at the Gallipoli landing. He acquired the name of fighting Mac because he was often on the front line right with the troops. A big strong Queenslander, Fighting Mac preached to the troops and provided comforts. One hundred years ago the men were more religious. Having someone to help them and bury the dead with religious dignity was important.



The Salvation Army provided comforts such as under pants, washers, towels and soap, items not provided by the army. Mac also looked for ways of making life a little easier for men in this terrible situation. The water carriers and stretcher bearers had great difficulty with the hill sides at Gallipoli so Mac cut steps to help these men.

After Lone Pine Mac buried 467 men of his 4th Battalion. There were 800 killed on that one day, August 7th. Mac also wrote to the next of kin of all the fallen from the 4th.

After Gallipoli the 4th Battalion went to France and Mac went too. During the battles on the Somme he organised open-air concerts for the Anzacs, to which the British troops were also invited. He also made sure he was with the frontline troops, and commanders sometimes found they had to order him to go to the rear. During the worst of the fighting Chaplain McKenzie wrote many letters to the families of soldiers killed in action, and it was estimated that he had written thousands of letters. When the men had been in the trenches provided.

The Chaplains did foot inspections and tried to keep the men healthy.

Mac served with the troops for 4 years and was given a full Battalion Parade when he left. He returned to Australia and received a great welcome home. Some 7000 people came to meet him. Because of his work in the campaign General Booth of the Salvation Army promoted him to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and he was awarded the Military Cross as well as the William Booth Medal for his service. Mac suffered badly from the war but eventually became the head of the Salvos.

The new padre, Robert Henry, was just as good. He also became a commander.

William Orams was another Chaplain who buried soldier after soldier

In WWII, the red shield design had to be changed because it was too much like a Nazi symbol. There were women involved looking after women in WWII. The salvos also started to get purpose built vehicles

William Tibbs died at El Alamein and he was the only Salvation Army Chaplain to die.

Another man, John McCabe, walked the whole of the Kokoda track and Albert Moor was in Syria and had donkeys. Later in New Guinea he had a food station set up at Kokoda.

Officers of the Salvation Army went to Japan then Korea, the Malay/Indonesian confrontation, Vietnam, Cambodia, Somalia and East Timor.



Something I did not know was the story of the SAO biscuit so I tell it as it was told to us by Lindsey. Arthur Arnott, of the biscuit family, joined the Salvos. The SAO biscuit was named after 'Salvation Army Officer'. Profits from the sale of SAO biscuits once went to the Salvos but since Arnotts now belong to a foreign company they get nothing. Lindsay was a very good speaker and we certainly gained much from his talk.

Koonwarra Excursion

On Saturday the 18th April our excursion to visit the restored house, gardens and out buildings of Cluanie at Koonwarra was a lovely afternoon.

The home has been owned by Ann and Michael Vale Sidell for the last 6 years and during that time they have continued the restoration and redecorating of the exterior and interior.

Throughout the house, each room has been furnished as much as possible in the period of the early 1900's.

The ceilings are quite high and have been panelled with wood rather than plaster. There is some typical wooden furniture pieces such as an arched back chair alongside some more modern pieces such as an office swivel chair and some very comfortable looking leather chairs.

The floors are wooden and have been partly covered with some lovely patterned rugs and the fireplaces are decorated with old lamps, small statues and a vase or two.





The original iron lace work that had been found in a shed has been successfully sandblasted clean, painted and then placed on the veranda. It makes a lovely addition to the corrugated iron roof.



The gardens have been designed by Ann who knows a lot about the early pioneers' gardens. She has managed to create picturesque courtyards and garden beds that are full of colour and different species of plants.

The Bellingham Family and “Adelong”

Research conducted by Norma Bellingham and Nancy Dodd.

Gold was discovered in Ararat in 1857 and Edward and Lucy Bellingham left Leven Oakes in the UK to come to Australia.

They were married in London 23 February 1852 and arrived in July of 1853 on the “Albemarle” and went straight to Ararat. Lucy and Edward left the ship at Geelong and travelled by dray to Ararat where they dairied. Ararat was a canvas town of 20,000.

Edward and Lucy were Anglican. At one time their prayer books and a daily devotional book with Edwards name in it were in existence, but the current whereabouts of these precious belongings are unknown.

When Lucy died in Ararat around 1868 her sons Edward (Ted) was 15, Phillip was 12, Frederick was 8 and Lionel (Joe) was 6.

What a fantastic job Edward did on his own bringing up those 4 boys.

Edward died in 1894 on Phillips Ruby farm otherwise known as “Bellingham Farm”.

The coffin was carried across the land to the Leongatha Cemetery and was buried. More recently the location of the grave at the Cemetery was unknown for some time. There was no headstone and it took 3 years for the mistake to be corrected.

Edward and Lucy Bellingham had four sons: Edward (Ted), Phillip, Frederick and Lionel (Joe)



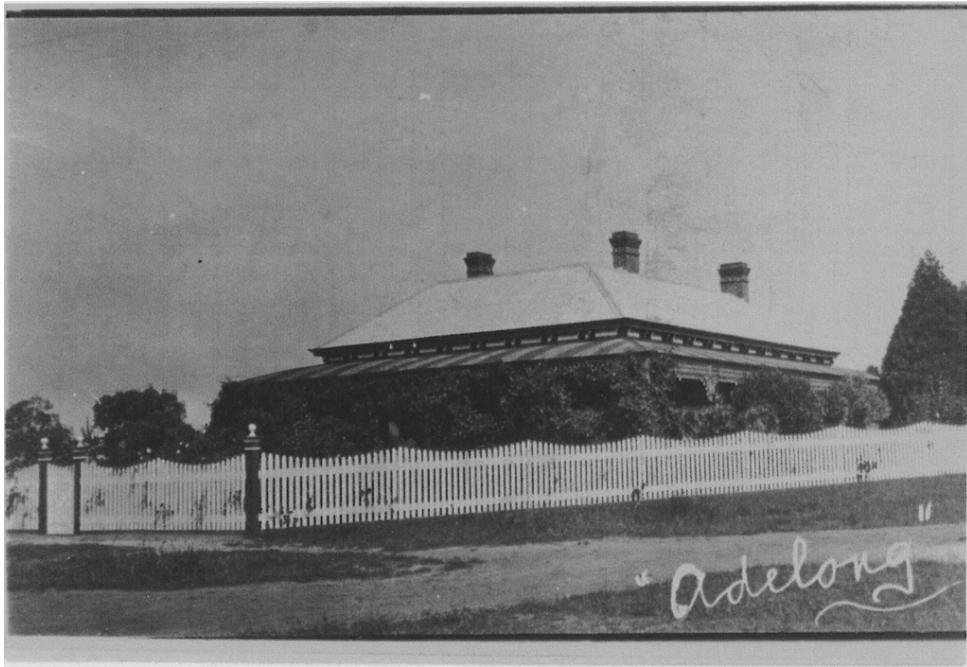
Phillip Bellingham was born in Ararat in 1857.

Phillip came to Gippsland first and walked in on the Southern Gippsland Railway Line He was one of a batch of Pioneers who worked their way over the mountains from Yarragon and Traralgon. He then worked on the Southern Railway Line. They walked in from the north and Phillip picked out his land he wanted at Ruby.

Phillip used to tell his Grandchildren stories of his early life. He emphasized the thickness of the forest, the depth of mud and the difficulties of finding direction. Phillip married Elizabeth Ann Prowse in 1893 in Adelong NSW. Elizabeth had been born on the 26th June 1867 and was the fourth child of John and Matilda Prowse.

When Phillip chose the land at Ruby, Edward his father came to live with him and his wife Elizabeth before they moved to “Adelong” in Leongatha. The other 3 boys eventually came to Leongatha too and some of their descendants still live here.

Phillip saw an opportunity to cater for the needs of the workers and established a small butchering business stocked with his own animals for the meat. The business later moved to the town of Leongatha but the farm was always Phillips main interest.



The house now known as the Jeffrey Street Clinic was named "Adelong" by Elizabeth Bellingham after her home town in NSW.

"Adelong" was built when it was time for the girls to go to school. Phillip and Elizabeth owned a number of blocks of land in Leongatha as discovered in the Rates Book at the Shire. There were two Currajong trees one each side of the front gate that Elizabeth brought from Adelong NSW and also beautiful gardens of 4 acres with an orchard and wonderful buggy sheds.

Phillip and Elizabeth had 3 children: Lucy May b 1894 d.1979. Lavinia Mary b. 1897 (called Bin) and John Phillip b. 1904 who became ill in later years.

Both Elizabeth Ann and Phillip John are buried in Leongatha Cemetery. Phillip died on the 24th March 1937 and Elizabeth died 26th December 1949.

After the deaths of Phillip and Elizabeth "Adelong" went out of the Bellingham family and has had a number of owners since, each changing and adding their own ideas and requirements, so that only the front façade and roof shape remains as it was when originally built.

Coming Events

- Our World War 1 exhibition will be continuing. From August we will be including a special display on the battle of Lone Pine and The Nek.
- The Annual Meeting of the Leongatha Historical Society will be held on the 9th September at 8pm.
- The Daffodil Festival this year will be on the 11th 12th and 13th September. This will be the National Daffodil Festival with exhibitors and visitors coming from other parts of Australia and New Zealand.
- The Shingler Memorial Dinner will be held on Saturday October 24th at the Dakkers Centre. The speaker will be Dr Michael Bourke. More information about the dinner will be in the next newsletter.
- Lyn Skillern is still working on her Anzac Project. This involves telling the stories of all the men on the Black Marble Honour Roll in the Memorial Hall, and those who have been left off the roll. This information will be on our website later this year.