

Leongatha and District Historical Society
P O Box 431 Leongatha 3953



Newsletter

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The “Nothing on a Plate” display and talk by Morag Loh

In March we were able to have on display the “Nothing on a Plate” display from the Australian Union of Women. This exhibition, illustrated with photographs and cartoons, the work of women in Victoria from 1900 and their fight for equity. We also put on display some of our own material on Vida Goldstein and the work of local women in gaining facilities for our community. On March 21st historian Morag Loh the curator of the exhibition spoke at the Mechanics’ Institute in the afternoon and evening.

Notes on Morag’s talk.

Women undertake some of the basic work for the benefit of communities, this work is not recognised and respected. Women receive little credit for raising children and professional women lose superannuation and promotion if they take time off to raise children. While these things have improved in recent times the situation for women is not equitable. The health of a nation depends on food, clothing and housing. In the year 2000 the unpaid work of women was worth over 1 billion dollars, one third of the gross domestic product yet there is no mention of this in any economic reports by the government. The recognition of the work of women over the past 100 years has not been equitable. Women campaigned for baby health centres all over the state in the late 1920’s and early 1930’s, they campaigned for kindergartens in the 1950’s, they raised money for hospitals, schools and all sorts of clubs and associations. In the State schools it was the mother’s club that raised the money. Children need to be know what women have done for society and acknowledge it. It is not well known that many rights women have now have been recently gained. A widow 100 years ago could not necessarily keep her children if a male relative thought he should be their guardian. Equal pay legislation and the right of a married women to be in a superannuation scheme were only obtained in the last 35 years. It is not well known that in 1901 20% of women with children worked. These were generally poor women or widows who had to work to survive. They worked in poorly paid jobs and had to do all their home duties as well. Even research into topics related to women was considered less valuable. Morag mentioned the example of a PhD thesis that was marked down because it was about how house wives spent their money and time. There are many subjects related to women in history that we could research. The

work of the CWA, the running of bush nursing hospitals, the establishing of baby health centres, the work of school mother's clubs, the push for a school in early Leongatha, the women who pioneered local organizations, women teachers especially in small rural schools. The list is endless.

Women have done the things which were vital for family and the community life. This must be recognised for its financial, moral and social importance. Breast milk saves the country money and is important for child health. It is true that our society does not recognise other groups who deserve recognition. Scientists for example are under recognised and sportsmen over recognised. There is in our society a distortion of values. Women have made gains and they want to be able to keep them. Australians as a whole need to protect the rights they have gained and guard them

The History of Sport in South Gippsland

The South Gippsland Shire with the assistance of the South Gippsland Historical Network has obtained funding to have a professionally made movable exhibition on the history of sport in the shire prepared for 2006. A meeting of the network will be held on May 17th to start planning the display with Mark Patullo who will be preparing the exhibition. A sub committee will then be set up to collect and organise the material. It is hoped that the movable display will be a chronological history of sport in the area with reference to all communities made. Once the exhibition is prepared it will tour the shire. When the exhibition is on display in each community it is hoped that additional material will be then put on display to compliment the main exhibition.



Rifle Club Picnic at Mardan c 1900. Rifle clubs were very popular at that time.
Tools of the Pioneers Number 3 *Adzes and Draw knives*
By Ian Lester



Our own Mr Tools, Ian Lester at work at Churchill Island

Adzes The adze was a very popular timber trimming and shaping tool used extensively by the pioneers and most timber workers such as coopers, ship/boat builders, carpenters, wheelwrights, coach/ wagon builders, bridge builders, railway fettlers and others.

As with all sharp edged tools an adze operator must work with great caution and be aware where the cutting edge is at all times. Failure to do so could result in severe injury to legs and feet. The biggest danger was if the edge did not bite and the adze skidded out of control due to bad judgement or a chip stuck on the cutting edge. The danger could be reduced by standing astride the work with the feet well apart or with the wrist of the lower hand against the thigh. Here say indicates that shipwrights could stand on a timber beam while they adzed the surface and were capable of driving a coin under the ball of their feet with the cutting edge of the adze, a good example of skill and confidence. Adze shape varied depending on the task and the build of the operator. These included the curve of the blade, the shape of the head and the shape and length of the handle. Bowl and gutter adze had blades curved in two directions to allow them to form a depression. See illustration below.

Adze were sharpened with a bevel on the inside of the curve or top of the blade, the handle was removed to allow this sharpening which was done on a slow speed manual grindstone with the final honing done with an axe stone.

An adze is normally used cutting with the grain but will cut across the grain (like a broad axe). In the hands of a skilled operator an adze can produce very good results. Most of the trades mentioned earlier would require a relatively smooth accurate finish. The preparation of a split fence rail is a good example of adze use. After splitting, the surface a log often has long splinters and other blemishes which spoil its appearance and present a danger to animals and people. These can be removed using an adze using a rapid jabbing type action. When shaping the ends of a rail to fit the post mortices (as in a post and rail fence) heavier strikes are required. Heavy strikes would also be required when making an animal feed trough or water trough or a dugout canoe.

Adze work requires a “good eye” and good judgement to ensure straight edges, even curves and accurate dimensions. This is usually done by observing the job from different location and making judgement about the depth of cut etc. When preparing split rails which often have a slight natural twist, the ends must be in the same plane to eliminate the twist. This is achieved by regular visual checks.

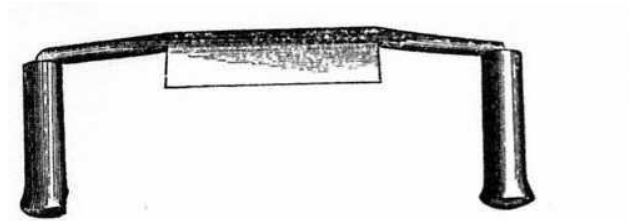


Aboriginal canoe shaped with an adze

Draw knife/shave

This tool was used for timber shaping. Its areas of use are similar to an adze. The basic design was a steel bar sharpened to a bevel on one edge with a handle on each end. The design varied to suit the task eg a straight or curved blade, blade length and handle angle.

In use the draw knife was placed on the work and drawn towards the operator. The depth of cut was controlled by rotating the blade. It has been replaced by the spokeshave.. In pioneer building where small round spars were used (as poles, plates, rafters etc) the draw knife was the most suitable tool to remove bark. It was also useful for making furniture and tool handles.



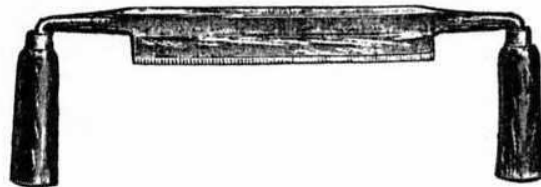
Backing Knife



Heading Knife



Hollowing Knife



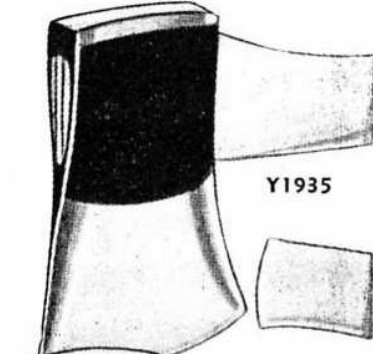
Hoop Knife

A Selection of Draw Knives

A X E S

**Y1935—PLUMB'S
TASMANIAN PATTERN
AXES**

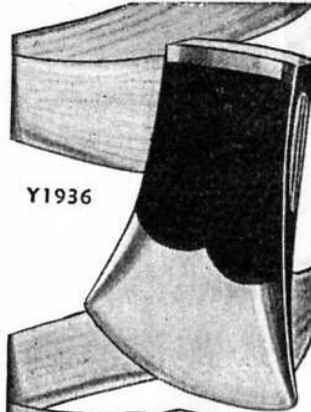
With 32 in. handles. 4½ lb., 5 lb.



Y1935

**Y1936—KELLY DANDE-
NONG TASMANIAN
PATTERN AXES**

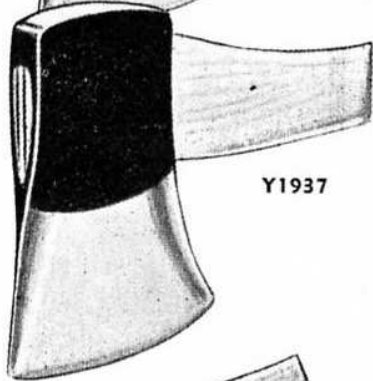
With extra quality handles. 4½ lbs.



Y1936

**Y1937—BRADE'S
COCKATOO AXES**

32 in. handles. 4½ lb., 5 lb.



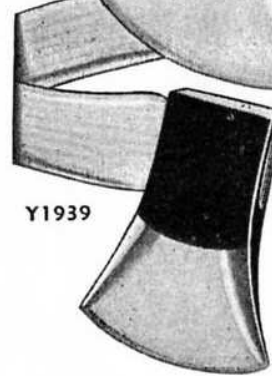
Y1937

Y1938—"HYTEST" AXES

4lb., 4½lb. and 5lb.

**Y1939—HUNTER'S
PATTERN HATCHETS**

Weight 24 ozs., 28 ozs.



Y1939

**Y1940—CARPENTERS'
BENCH AXES**

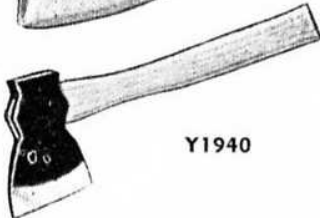
No. 1 — Weight 24 ozs., width 4 ins.

No. 2 — Weight 28 ozs., width 4½ ins.

HURD'S.

No. 3 — Weight 34 ozs., width 5 ins.

No. 4 — Weight 40 ozs., width 5½ ins.



Y1940

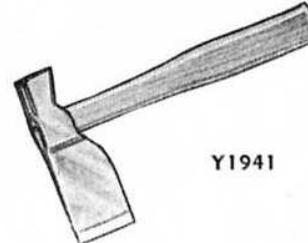
**Y1941—LATHING
HATCHETS**

Weight 14 ozs., width 2¼ ins.

**Y1942—JARRAH
JACK SQUARING AXES**

Without handles.

11 in., 12 in., 13 in.

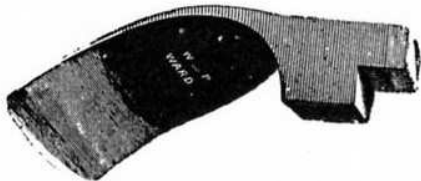


Y1941

**Y1943—CLAW
HATCHETS**

No. 1 — Weight 19 ozs., 3½ ins. wide.

No. 2 — Weight 25 ozs., 4 ins. wide.



**Y1945—BRADE'S SQUARE POLE
ADZES**

No. 1 No. 2 No. 3



Y1946—BRADE'S PIN POLE ADZES

No. 1 No. 2 No. 3

Y1947—STEEL SPLITTING WEDGES

Sizes—	5	6	7	8	9	10	11 in.
Approximate weights—	1½	2	3	4	5	5½	7½ lbs.
	Price, 9d. lb.						

Ask for particulars of the latest range of the articles shown on this page.

Jillian Durance Guest Speaker in April

The Moyarra Honour Roll by Lyn Skillern

Jillian has been researching the soldiers named on the Moyarra Honour Roll from World War One and gave us a very interesting and moving talk on her findings.

The present Moyarra School (which is now closed as a school) will be 100 years old in 2007. It was a school, a Sunday school, a church and a community meeting place. The building is still used as a community hall and is the focus of the Moyarra community. There are 28 names on the honour roll which has been in the school since November 1917. Behind every name on the honour roll there is a story and it has been Jillian's aim to unearth these stories and tell them to a new generation.

The community suffered heavy losses in The Great War. Of the seven young men who joined up from the one road where the Robinson and James families lived, four were killed. Those who returned were never the same and those who went back to farming rarely farmed beyond their early 40's.

Jillian referred to a number of individuals but one family was of great interest because of their writings. Jillian quoted from these writings. Arthur Elms wrote in *Land of The Lyrebird* and described in detail the hard life of the pioneer. His son George wrote of the trenches and mud and horror of the Western Front. George was in the 60th Battalion and served under the famous general Pompey Elliott. His son Ron wrote of his young life growing up with a father who had suffered so much during the war. Ron described his father a good provider but not a man who could show affection to his family.

Other names mentioned were James Matheson who enlisted on 17/8/1914, the Dowels, the McLeans who had a proper log cabin home, William Grant Ritchie who was in the Light Horse and the Collins boys, the sons of a share farmers. The church at Coal Creek has plaques for the two Robertson boys killed and one for their father who died soon after. Roy Robertson won a Military Medal in 1917 at Ypres. Private Robertson attended and protected the wounded under fire. Alan Robertson enlisted in 1914, fought at Gallipoli and was killed in May 1918 at Hazebrouck. Sgt Robertson made a German machine gun work and continued firing while wounded until he was finally shot in the head. He should have received a Victoria Cross according to witnesses. Another interesting man was Ray Gardiner who was the Moyarra school teacher. He complained about having to walk 3 miles to school from where he boarded and enlisted in 1915. He died at Passchendaele.

The Great War made an enormous difference to Australia and especially to small rural communities. Often a whole generation of young men were lost. Moyarra is but one of these communities and they had an Honour Roll made to remember their young men. It is now nearly 100 years later and Jillian is bringing these names to life. She went on the Battlefields Tour run by the Australian War Memorial and recommended it. A special highlight was the evening service at the Menin Gate in Belgium where the last post is played and a wreath laid every night. It was inspirational listening to Jillian and it has made me want to double my efforts in the research I am doing on the Leongatha High School Honour Roll which lists those ex students killed in World Wars One and Two.

Guest speaker. Harold Verdon, former coal miner will speak at the May 17th meeting

Membership \$15 single, \$20 family and \$5 for the newsletter for non members.