

Leongatha and District Historical Society
P O Box 431 Leongatha 3953



Newsletter

Volume 3 Number 2 May 2006

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Secretary : Lyn Skillern Tel 56686304

The latest news

- Kath Murphy :- Kath is now at home at Leongatha North. It was great to see her at our April meeting.
- The launch of John Murphy's latest book "The First Century" a history of the Leongatha Butter Factory was held in the Memorial Hall Leongatha on February 22nd. The launch was well attended and those present were treated to an excellent talk by John. A magnificent display of photographs and memorabilia on the history of dairying was set up and well worth a look. The book is available from the society for \$15
- Our migrant experiences project has started and coordinator Johanna Haasjes is very pleased with the results so far. Many members of the migrant community have attended our afternoon teas and we have recorded some fascinating stories. The project will be on going as Johanna and her team intend to visit people and add to the information already collected. The results of the research will be presented in a computerized visual and audio display and a publication recording the migrant stories.

Guest Speaker for May. Our guest speaker at the meeting on May 17th will be Lyn Skillern who will give a presentation on her research on the Leongatha High School Honour Roll. Twenty one ex students lost their lives in World War One and Two and Lyn is researching what happened to them. The story of the World War One fallen is included in this edition of the newsletter

Anzac Day by Lyn Skillern

Congratulation to Jillian Durance of Moyarra on the launch of her book " Still Going Strong the story of the Moyarra Honor Roll". Lorna Dowel and I went to Korumburra for the launch and enjoyed it very much. The speakers were relations of the men on the roll and were very emotional about the whole occasion. The book was officially launch by handing Jillian's mother the first copy. Lorna even met up with a cousin she had not seen for many years. The book is available from the author Jillian Durance 56573322

I spoke at the Leongatha Secondary College Anzac Day service on Monday April 24th I told the stories of some of the ex students of the school killed in World Wars One and Two. The talk was well received by students some of whom spoke to me afterwards. Here is just one of these stories

Leongatha High School was founded in 1912 and it had 20 ex students participate in the First War. There were 2 students and 1 teacher killed in action. After the Great War the school had a wooden carved honour board made containing the names of all ex students who served. This was lost in 1933 when the school burnt down. After World War Two the present Honour Roll was made and lists all those ex students killed in both wars. I have been researching those 21 servicemen and their stories, while sad, are quite remarkable. We are indeed fortunate to have a photograph of the wooden honour board. One of the names on the board is that of Bill Colvin who is remembered in an Education Department publication which recognised those teachers who died in the Great War

The Original Honor Board made by Arthur Butler Hogan



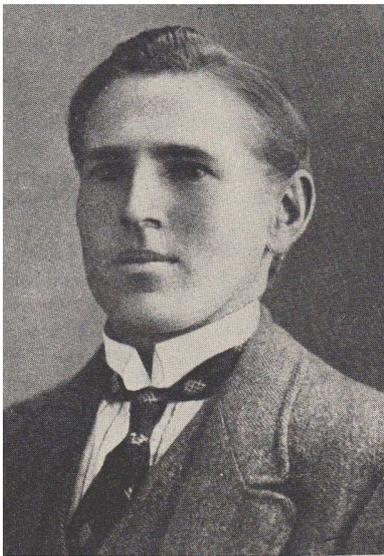
Here is the story of one young man who had a short association with Leongatha before going to war. William Colvin

He was a Second Lieutenant in the 8th Battalion 1st A.I.F. Bill was born in 1893 and died on July 25th 1916 aged 23. He was the son of James and Elizabeth Colvin of Norong, near

Rutherglen and brother of Miss J Colvin of Rosebury East School. Bill attended Melbourne High School 1909-10, and passed through the Manual Arts College Melbourne in 1911-12-13. He then taught woodwork at Leongatha High School before joining the army. He had gained some fame as an athlete and was a bright and sympathetic teacher

Bill was one who joined the army very early (on August 18th 1914 in fact) and was placed in the 8th Battalion as a private. He was 5' 8" tall, weighed 173 lbs, had light blue eyes and fair hair. Bill left Australia as a corporal on the *Clan McGilvay*. and arrived in Alexandria on April 5th 1915. He was at the Gallipoli landing and while at Gallipoli he became ill and was sent to Lemnos. On returning to Gallipoli was also wounded twice. After being evacuated from Gallipoli he arrived back in Alexandria on December 29th 1915. Promotion was quick as he was made a Sergeant on February 10th 1916 and a Second Lieutenant on February 20th. The Battalion was then shipped to Marseilles where they disembarked on March 31st. After a train trip to the Western Front and some further training the 8th Battalion was sent in to the attack on Pozieres in the Great Somme Battle. Bill was wounded before the final objective was reached at Pozieres but was carried on to the objective where he died almost immediately. He was buried at a place just north of Pozieres but now rests in the magnificent Villers- Bretonneux War Cemetery. His Leongatha High woodwork (Sloyd) room still stands but is now a canteen. Two ex students Alan Russell and Jack Daniell were also killed in action on the Somme. Jack was a junior teacher at Leongatha State School before joining the army.

Bill Colvin 1914



Jack Daniell 1915



The People behind the street names

Howard Street. Howard Street is located at the back of Leongatha Primary School and was created when the school was built in the 1950's. It is named after the Howard family who owned the land on

which the school now stands. The family occupied two houses in Brumley St and the land behind these was used for the growing of onions and vegetables. The Howard family at the time ran the Commercial Hotel (McCartins). The Jeffrey St site of Leongatha State School was became too small and a new site was needed. Jim Howard Snr sold the land for the school to the Education Dept. The Howard family then donated the land for Howard St so a back entrance could be created for the new school. This is not a big street but it honours a family who made a major contribution to the town.

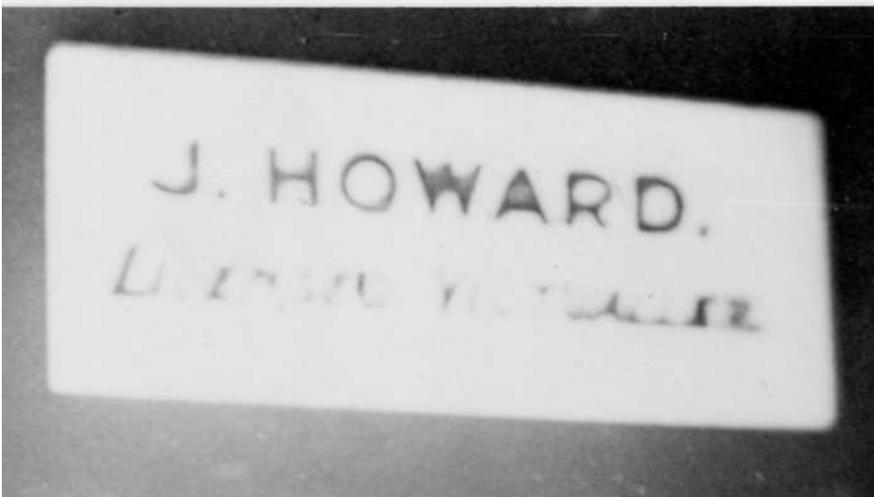
Jack Howard the son of Jim Snr served in the 2/22 Battalion at Rabaul in World War Two. He was taken prisoners of war in early 1942. On July 1st Jack together with other Leongatha men Fred Broadbent, Fred Ketels Tom Sangster were lost at sea when the Japanese ship they were being transported on was torpedoed by the Americans. Jack was a notable sportsman and had coached the Leongatha football team to a premiership in the year before he joined the army.



Jim Howard 1940



Jack Howard 1940



Door Sign Commercial Hotel

The Tools of the Pioneers *Number 7* By Ian Lester

Tools for measuring, marking out and testing.

The ability to measure distances was very important to the early pioneers. They had to work out the boundaries of their selections, erect buildings and construct furniture and other items. Rough measurements can be made using the human pace, foot and hand span. These of course vary from one person to another and are not accurate or reliable. So measuring devises were used to give better results. Other devises were used to check levels, flatness and whether items were plumb or square

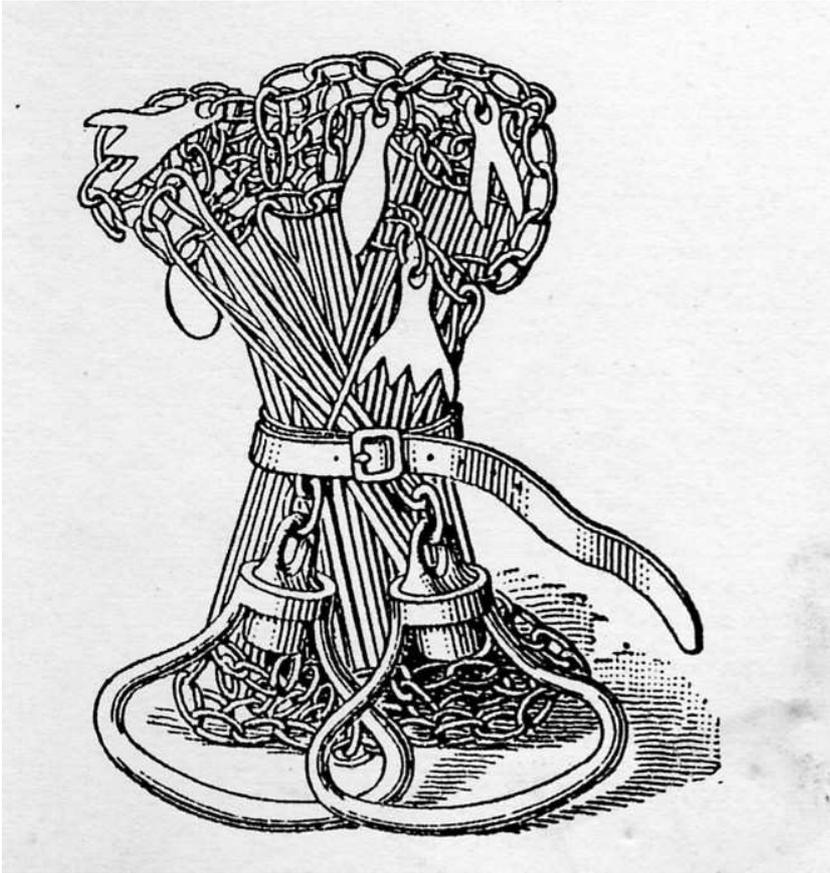
The selectors first task on arrival was to mark out the borders of their chosen block, to be confirmed later by official survey. The main tool used for this was a surveyor's chain.

Surveyor John Lardner's chain is to be seen in the Mechanics' Institute Leongatha. One chain

was 22 yards or 66 feet (20m) long. It had 100 links each .792 inches or 20 cm long. And was made of steel. The chain had a small handle on one end to assist in dragging it on the ground and over obstacles. The largest selections in South Gippsland were 320 acres (128 hectares) which meant that the chain would have to be laid out many times to measure such an area. The chain could cope with this treatment fairly well but over time the joints would wear out and the measurements would be inaccurate. If used for progressive measurements the cumulative error would be significant. If each link got .005 inch longer the effect over 100 links would be ½ an inch. High air temperature also make a chain longer than normal which is why chains and tapes used for official purposes were checked at a particular temperature. When not in use the chain was folded into a bundle and stored in a bag or box.

Other distance measuring tools were tapes and rules. Tapes were made of steel or fabric in a range of lengths up to 100 feet (30m). Most in the pioneering days were “chain” tapes one chain (22 yards, 66 feet, 20 m) long marked in graduations of yards, feet and inches. Steel tapes were usually 3/8 inch or 10mm and fabric tapes were 5/8 inch or 16 mm wide.. They were used for many tasks and often had a loop at the free end so that they could be used by one person. Rules came in a range of forms and often had other features in their design such as straight edges and squares. Hand saws sometimes had graduations on the back of the blade for measuring. The school chalkboard rule is an example of such a combination in the form of a rule and straight edge. The most common form was a four fold rule made of box wood and 3 feet or 90 cm long. It folded in half and half again to be 9 inches or 23 cm long. The rule could be used full length or folded as required. In later years workmen’s overalls etc had a special pocket for such a rule.

Tools for setting out and testing included stringlines, straight edges, plumb bobs, levels, squares, measuring tapes and rules all of which need a “good eye” to obtain accurate results. Having a “good eye” means having the ability to visually judge distance, alignments, straightness and flatness. The point of observation had to be chosen carefully to avoid error. Often one eye had to be closed to avoid double image. The best accuracy was often achieved after long experience and practice and using as many observation points as possible. Any



A surveyor's chain

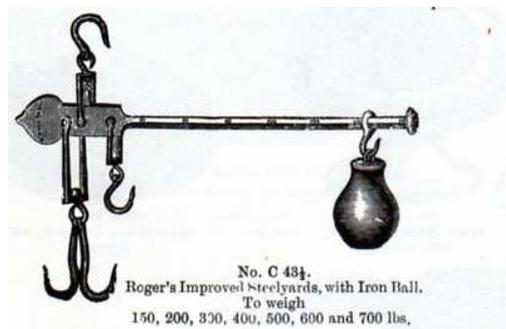
length of flexible material held under tension will form a straight line between the anchor points. This simple method was used in the past and is still used to set out and test on a large range of building projects. Strong string or cord was normally used and was 50 yards or 46 m long. This was wound around a spool or stick to prevent tangling when not in use. If the string was impregnated with chalk, the line if flicked when under tension, will mark a straight line on the surface. This procedure was used extensively when broad axing timber. A straight edge can be made from any rigid stable material such as steel, aluminium or wood. This could be short or long and used for marking and checking straight lines, the flatness of a surface and as a guide for other tools.

A plumb bob is a symmetrical metal weight about the size of a hens egg to which a string can be attached. There is a long tapered point on the opposite end to the string. When the string is held suspended and the bob allowed to swing freely the string will eventually become perpendicular (vertical) and other objects can be checked against it. A plumb bob used with a square can check horizontal alignment. The level, sometimes called a spirit level is a beam ranging in length from a few inches to several feet (approximately 20 cm to 1 m). Built into its body are 1 - 3 glass vials containing a coloured liquid (usually green). In the vial is an air bubble which when aligned with marks on the frame indicate that the level is either horizontal or vertical depending which vial is used. If a level is too short for a task it can be used with a straight edge of suitable length.

The square is used to set right angles (90 degrees). Mitre squares are used to do 90 degree or 45 degree angles. Variations to square designs include try squares, roof squares and features to be used with a plumb bob to check horizontal and vertical surfaces

As the pioneers became more successful they began to solve one of their main problems, lack of income. As more saleable produce became available the ability to calculate the quantity became more important. The principal method was to weigh the produce prior to sale by either the producer or the processor. Two types of equipment were available. The spring scale worked by stretching the load on a spring. This extension was transferred to the face of the scale where the weight was read. The other was a balance scale where the weight was placed on one side of a fulcrum and balanced by weights placed on the other side. By varying the ratio between the load, fulcrum and weights quite heavy loads could be balanced by relatively light weights. One to one balance scales were used for household and light commercial use up to about 4 lbs or 2 kg. For heavier loads unequal ratio scales such as steel yards, platform scales and weigh bridges were used.

The steel yard was a portable scale which was attached to an elevated suspension point. The load in this case had to be in a container such as a bag or bucket and was hung under the scale. Most steel yards were dual range and could handle loads up to about 300 lbs (150 kg) Platform scales were normally scales in a fixed position and the load was brought to it. The larger of these had wheels but were still difficult to move

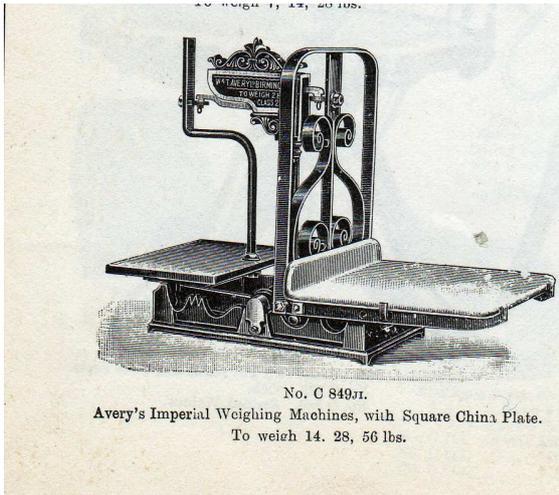


A steel yard. One of these can be seen at

the historical society

Weigh bridges were used for heavy loads on wagons or trucks. They were set up in a pit with the platform at ground level to allow the vehicle on and off. There was also a shelter to protect the mechanism and operator from bad weather. The load capacity of a weigh bridge was up to 50 long tons The usual practice for commercial weighing was to weigh the container and contents or vehicle and load (gross weight) empty the contents and re weigh the container or vehicle (tare weight). Many vehicles were marked with their tare weight which made the second step unnecessary. By subtracting the tare weight from the gross weight the load could be calculated.

Most towns with a railway station had a public weighbridge for this purpose. Leongatha's weigh bridge was beside the road in the rail yards between apex park and Edney's garage (now the saddle shop). It operated for many years weighing produce entering and leaving the railway station. In later years it was operated by Mrs Wisdom who also ran a small shop off the foot bridge leading to the railway station. It was probably closed in the 1970's as the trucks became longer and it became unnecessary.



a weighing machine

Comparison weights

1 pound (lb) = .45 kg

2.2 lbs = 1.00 kg

1 short ton = 2000lb

1 long ton = 2240 lb

1 hundred weight cwt = 112 lb

1 quarter = 28lb

1 metric tonne = 1000 kg

Stop Press The details regarding our Shingler Memorial Lecture will be sent to members as soon as possible.

Membership Details

\$20 a single

\$25 a couple

\$5 to receive a copy of the newsletter only

