



# Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

*Newsletter*

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## *Preserving Our Heritage*

**President:** John Hyett

**Secretary:** Lyn Skillern Tel 56686304

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

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### **Latest news**

<sup>a</sup> **A centenary plaque** for the Leongatha Mechanics' Institute will be unveiled at 11.30am on Thursday November 15<sup>th</sup>. Please come along to this event. The ceremony will be followed by a light lunch. Please let Lyn know if you are coming.

#### **• Christmas/end of year celebration. All welcome**

On Sunday November 25<sup>th</sup> the Society's end of year celebration lunch will be held at "Hollyside" the home of Pat and Jim Spinks at 12 noon. We would like those coming to commit to bringing a salad, meat platter or a dessert and let Pat Spinks know by Sunday November 18<sup>th</sup>. This would help Pat make sure the menu is balanced and they have enough cutlery and chairs etc. Those attending are asked to bring their own drinks RSVP Pat 56686365

#### **• Vic Roads**

Vic Roads is celebrating its centenary in 2013. The Country Roads Board was formed in 1913 and it has a wonderful collection of photos and memorabilia. Vic Roads selected our Mechanics' Institute to be the venue for their moving exhibition in June and July 2013.

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

In 1918 the community of Koorooman East honoured the local men who enlisted for The Great War (World War One) by planting an avenue of honour. They also had an honour board made. Originally there was one tree per man. Ian Lester convened a public meeting to discuss restoring the avenue. David Shambrook, who has a relation with the same surname on the board, took on the work of researching the names and applying for a grant to have a plaque made. Steve Missen from the South Gippsland Shire organised the restoration of the trees. The plaque containing the names of the men will be officially unveiled on Remembrance Day, Sunday November 11<sup>th</sup> at 2.30 pm. All members of the historical society and family and friends of the men on the honour board are invited to attend the

ceremony. Below are the names of the men honoured. Please let Lyn know if you are attending  
56686304

### Roll of Honour WW1 (1914-1918)

### Residents of Koorooman East who served in the Great European War

ABERDEEN, A.H.M.		McDONALD, J	
ABERDEEN, K.G.M.		MATTHIES, T.	
BARRETT, E.I.	#	MUNRO, R	
BELLINGHAM, E.A.		MUNRO, E.T.	
BELLINGHAM, P.J.	#	O'CONNOR, J.M.	
CHALMERS, D.M.		O'LOUGHLIN, M	#
CHALMERS, H.B.		O'LOUGHLIN, W.L.	
CHENERY, A.G.	#	PORTER, F.G.	
CURNICK, D.J.		REEVE, T.A.	
CURNICK, G.S.		RICHARDS, A.H.C.	
CURNICK, H.R.		SHAMBROOK, T.	
DAVIS, R.L.		SPROULL, R.	#
GARVIE, W.E.	#	SMITH, J.	
GRAY, T		SMITH, R.	#
HOBLEY, J.		SMITH, W.C.	#
HOBLEY, R	#	WATSON, G	
HOGAN, J.C.		WATT, C.A.	
HULLS, G.C.		WIGHTMAN, M.	#
HYDE, T	#	WHILLANCE, H.J.	#
# Fallen			

### The Victorian Community History Awards



**Lyn Skillern with Professor Weston Bate after receiving the award**

On October 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Victorian Community History Awards “*From Inkwell to Internet: a century of State Secondary Education in Leongatha*” won the collaborative community history section. These awards are organised by the Royal Historical Society of Victoria and The Public Records Office of Victoria. They celebrate and reward the people involved in community history projects that are dedicated to telling important local stories

The book was written by Lyn Skillern with Clive Lynn and Ian Snell writing the Leongatha Technical School section and Gaye Hutchinson writing the Leongatha Secondary College section.

From the citation: -

“Leongatha’s story is one that tells us about change in school education, community involvement, interaction between students and teachers and much else. It is clearly written, based on solid research, well illustrated and comprehensive of the whole period. Its several authors and use of student memories makes it a community collaborative project. This is a welcome addition to Victorian educational history, where so much of the publication has been about non government schools”

One of the judges commented that this book showed the writers and the community have a real passion for the school and its history.

The book is available from the Society for \$40 plus postage

## **Feature Article**

### **Our Pioneers Number 1 The Hamanns**

We can only look back in wonder at the lives of our pioneer ancestors. How did they do it? They worked really hard, lived in small houses with few facilities, had many children, limited health care and communications, atrocious roads and very basic education. These pioneers however created the communities we now call home and provided many of the facilities we use everyday. To those people who gave us the butter factory, the recreation reserve, the Mechanics’ Institute, Leongatha High School, all our local primary schools, halls and churches and much more, we salute you.

So it is that 2013 will be, for the Leongatha Historical Society, the year of the pioneer settlers.

The first family to be recognised will be the Hamanns for it is this family of pioneers that gave us, amongst other things, Hamann’s Bush.



**Carl Hamann Snr**

Carl Hamann was born in Sandhurst in 1863. In 1883, at the age of 19 he selected crown allotment 25 in the Parish of Koorooman. His father paid for the land and signed the lease. His brother William (Hans Wilhelm) selected the block next door. As there was no grass to feed animals on the young selectors

were taken to their blocks from Poowong by horse and then returned back to the town. The brothers then had to return to Leongatha North on the rough and difficult bridle track on foot. Carl was known to have carried a 70-pound side of beef, a grand stone to sharpen axes and 4 gallons of kerosene the 15 miles from Poowong. Surveyor Lardner had sited the towns on the ridges and the good land was left for farms. This explains the location of Mirboo North and Poowong. The other ridge town was to be Koorooman at Leongatha North. This did not eventuate, as the town's site was inappropriate for the construction of a railway. The town was moved to the present site of Leongatha.

In 1887 Carl married Johanna Wendel and they had 5 children. The eldest Dora was born in Korumburra and the others in Leongatha. By 1894 Carl had taken over the block of his brother and later acquired others too, at one time he was to own 1000 acres. He built his home "Melinda" in 1890. This is now the home of Stuart and Trudi Haw on the Ruby-Fairbank Rd.

On June 20<sup>th</sup> 1890, Carl Hamann reported to the Lands Department.

"He had constructed 7 chains of post and rail fence, 27 chains of stud and picket fences and 41 chains of chock and log fencing". A chain is 20metres.

"He managed to cultivate 50 acres of grass in his second year, in his fourth year another 50 acres and in his sixth year another 40 acres. The total being 140 acres cleared and cultivated."

"His dwelling was a 29 feet by 45 feet hut made of timber palings and shingles."

"He also constructed a pig sty, a cow yard and a shed"

Carl Hamann had left a portion of land some 10 acres at the junction of Leongatha North Road and Wild dog Valley Road uncleared. He never wanted it to go under the axe and placed a clause in his will to that effect.

Carl Hamann's son, also Carl Hamann, gave the land we know as Hamann's Bush to the Woorayl Shire. It was Carl Hamann Junior who wanted more of the bush preserved for good and he purchased 44 acres from his sister Mabel (May). This then enabled him to sell that land to the Woorayl Shire for a nominal sum. Thanks to Carl Hamann Junior we have this beautiful piece of bush to enjoy.

The Society is fortunate to have photographs, clothing and house hold items once belonging to the Hamanns in its collection and this will form a major part of the exhibition opening on Australia Day 2013.



**A chock and log fence**

# **The Leongatha Court House Centenary**

## **In late October 2012 Leongatha celebrated the centenary of its Court House**

### **The Significance of the Court House**

The former Leongatha Court House, constructed by Frogley & Smith in 1912 at 2 McCartin Street, Leongatha is part of the most important heritage streetscape in the town

Why is it Significant?

The former Leongatha Court House is of local historic, social and aesthetic significance to South Gippsland Shire.

Historically & Socially, it was the first permanent Court building to be constructed in Leongatha and only the third in the Shire. It is therefore highly important in demonstrating the development of public institutions in the Shire and the growing importance of Leongatha as a commercial and civic centre in the Shire in the early part of the 20th Century. (AHC criteria - A.4 and D.2) Aesthetically, it is a notable example in the Shire of Federation Freestyle design by the Public Works Department and is an integral part of the highly important group of civic buildings that are an essential part of the historic character of Leongatha



After the courthouse was closed in the 1980s, it was left unused. Fortunately, it was restored and became the home of the Brass Band, which celebrated its 120th anniversary this year.

## Program for 2013

**The rooms will be open on Thursdays and Fridays except for December 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>**

- **From** Wednesday January 2nd the rooms will be open from Monday to Friday for the month
- January 9<sup>th</sup> a planning meeting will be held at 8 pm
- January 26<sup>th</sup> Australia Day

Display subjects Roads and Transport and the Hamman Family.

### February

February 6th committee meeting

February 13th Monthly meeting speaker meeting Robert Sage

### March

March 13<sup>th</sup> General meeting

March bus tour to The Boer War exhibition at Kilcunda or Norm Geary

### April

April 10<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting

April 24<sup>th</sup> join us for dinner at the RSL and then enjoy a talk by Richard Lester Vietnam veteran

April 28<sup>th</sup> Tourist Railway walking tour

### May

May 8<sup>th</sup> General meeting

May 12<sup>th</sup> Tourist Railway walking tour

### June

June 5<sup>th</sup> Committee Meeting

June 6<sup>th</sup> opening of Vic Roads exhibition

June 12<sup>th</sup> Speaker meeting guests regarding roads in the district over time

### July

Vic roads continues until July 27th

July 10<sup>th</sup> general meeting

Shingler Lecture to be arranged

### August

August 14th Annual meeting with speaker

August 7th committee meeting

August exhibition on pioneers and local roads and bridges

### September

September 11<sup>th</sup> general meeting

### October

Bus tour

October 9<sup>th</sup> speaker meeting

### November

November 13<sup>th</sup> general meeting

### December

December 11<sup>th</sup> committee meeting

## Ideas for 2013

- The main theme will be settlers and settlements. The first display will be on the Hamanns and we will continue with other families. Some to be included: - the Sage and Le Maitre family, Colin Arrott Watt, William Bawden, William Turnbull Johnson, Jeremiah Riseley, The Beards of Fairbank, The Beggs and owners of that land (Tarlton Rayment, James Haw, John Murphy). Pioneer women will most definitely be included.

- Roads and bridges will also be important for displays as we will be having the Vic Roads Centenary Exhibition on display in June and July. In the collection we have many photos on this subject.

### **January Roster**

**We are attempting to keep the Historical Society open from Mondays to Fridays in January. Each day requires 2 volunteers. Pat Spinks is preparing a roster and is asking local members to commit to one day in January to assist our regulars in keeping the rooms open. At the same time we will be working towards the new display for Australia Day. Pat is hoping to have the roster organised by the end of year celebration so they can be distributed. Please contact Pat and volunteer (56686365)**



**Road making in the pioneering days**