

Leongatha & District HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Mechanics' Institute, McCartin St., Leongatha

Preserving Our Heritage

Newsletter Volume 17 Number 8 October 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

PO Box 431 Leongatha 3953

Latest News

The Annual Meeting

At the moment the Annual Meeting of the Leongatha and District Historical Society is being set for Wednesday 11 November at 2 pm at the Leongatha Mechanics' Institute. Members will be emailed with details of this meeting when we know we are able to go ahead.

Grant Success

We were successful in receiving a grant from the South Gippsland Shire to purchase an A3 photocopier/printer. This will be most useful in reproducing large photographs and documents.

October is History Month

October is history month but this year we are not having any special event of our own. We are however hosting, on our Facebook page, the South Gippsland Shire poll to discover the most popular Seven Historical Wonders of our Shire. This initiative is explained below.

The Seven Historical Wonders of Gippsland

Which seven historic sites would you choose if you were selecting the seven historic wonders of the South Gippsland Shire? Have your say on this subject by voting in our poll. The historians of Gippsland have come up with the idea of having a region wide Facebook poll to come up with the Seven Historical Wonders of **Gippsland**. The historical networks from each shire in the region have been working to come up with a list of historic wonders for their shire. The nominations will be posted on a history Facebook page related to that

shire and the public has been invited to vote. Unfortunately, due to security concerns only those who are members of the group **Gippsland History** will be able to vote. You can join the Gippsland History Facebook group by applying on that page. The top sites for each shire will then go into a region wide poll from 23 October. The South Gippsland nominations have been posted on the Leongatha Historical Society Facebook page. A form is posted on our page to enable voting.

The South Gippsland nominations are:

- The Wilson's Prom Light House
- The Tidal River Memorial Pillar/ the Australian Commando Memorial
- The Walkerville Lime Kilns
- The Exchange Hotel Foster
- The Port Welshpool Maritime Museum
- The South Gippsland Avenues of Honour at Leongatha, Koorooman East, Wooreen, Berry's Creek and Kongwak
- The Leongatha Heritage Precinct including the Mechanics' Institute, the Memorial Hall, the Post and Telegraph Office, the Court House and McCartin's Hotel
- Knox's Rockhill Farm
- Mossvale Park
- The Korumburra Railway Station
- The Korumburra Primary School
- The Jeetho Hall
- The Wesley Church Poowong
- The Jumbunna railway embankment
- Coal Creek Historic Park and Museum
- The historic buildings in the main street of Mirboo North
- The Mirboo North Memorial Higher Elementary School



Knox's Rockhill Farm



The Commando Memorial Tidal River



The Jeetho Hall

Wal's school story continues

The Victorian Reader was the mainstay for our rudimentary introduction to literacy. From this fine publication, along with the Department's monthly School Paper, came our exercises in reading, grammar, dictation and composition. The reader contained many fine short stories and poems plus a play or two. There were the works by the great English poets, Wordsworth, Longfellow and Mansfield, extracts from Dickens, our own renowned poets and fiction writers, McKellar, Paterson and Lawson. There was "The Men of Whitby", the story of a heroic rescue by lifeboat after it had been hauled overland to an inaccessible bay. And how could a kid forget the frightened occupants in that crude bush dwelling and the affectionate mongrel breed dog as it latched onto the snake in Henry Lawson's classic, "The Drover's Wife".

Morning recess meant playtime – hot cocoa during winter months and playlunch. The school ground was divided with a girl's side and a boy's side. Each side contained a large shelter shed which was a popular venue for eating lunch. If you lived close to the school or owned a bike, you could go home for lunch. Sometimes I would be allowed to buy lunch. A shilling would buy two meat pies at four and a half pence each. With the remaining thruppence, I'd buy an apple or an orange. Lunchtime also saw the occasional fight or dispute and the system was that the Grade 6 boys were the school watchdogs for breaches of any school rules or unacceptable conduct. They had the power to take any kid into the boss. The felon would be unmercifully manhandled into Mr Jenkins' office.

Nature study was a popular subject. Not only did we observe cocoons, saucers of wheat growing in cotton wool and tadpoles at various stages of development, but it was an opportunity to listen in to the wireless for the ABC special school program and to hear noted wildlife man of the day, Crosby Morrison. In conjunction with this talk, a filmstrip would be simultaneously projected on a screen illustrating the subject of discussion. Wildlife films would be shown once or twice a year when we were visited by the Education Department's film unit. Filmstrips were also used in presenting some History and Geography lessons and were a welcome change to copying notes from the blackboard. Many will remember the giant wall maps with many countries shaded in red indicating their allegiance to the mother country and membership of the British Empire.

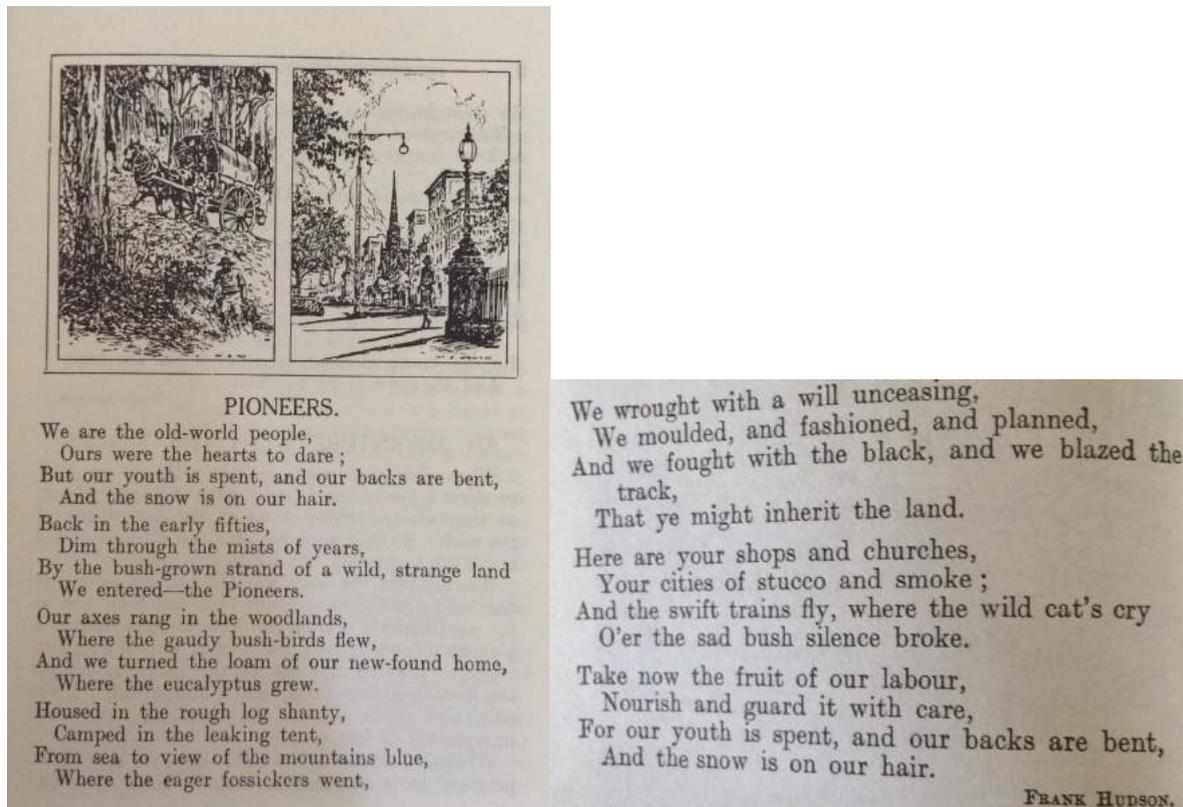
The highlight of the week was the period before sport on Friday afternoon when Mr Jenkins would read a chapter or more of some adventure novel to the class. You could hear a pin drop. When he spoke, he could completely captivate his young audience. Mark Twain's character of Huck Finn and the runaway slave Jim rafting their way down the mighty Mississippi appeared almost to come to life through this fine orator's voice.

The School doctor, School dentist and School inspector all seemed to appear from nowhere and a buzz would go through the school on their arrival. The arrival of the Centenary Jubilee

Train brought much excitement for many of us had never visited the Museum. Now it appeared the Museum had visited us.

This double headed steam train with its freshly painted twelve carriages travelled throughout Victoria in 1951 celebrating 100 years of the establishment of the colony and the 50- year Jubilee of our Commonwealth. The train was parked in the goods siding at the Leongatha railway yards. Each carriage contained an exhibition. We filed through with such exuberance, admiring the military display, models of gold mines, and a replica of the famous Welcome Stranger Nugget. There were replicas of Ned Kelly's armour, paintings, models of ships and numerous displays of guns, swords and the role they played in our colonial past – all appealing to the adventurous minds of country kids.

*We are the old- world people
Ours were the hearts to dare
But our youth is spent
Our backs are bent and the snow is in our hair*
“Pioneers”, Frank Hudson



The Pioneers from Book

Special Australian Expressions

Every generation have special, funny and strange expressions that sometimes continue on but are mostly lost in time. Last week the following expression came up in a phone conversation. *'He has a face like a twisted mallee root'*. We laughed but our daughter in her thirties had no idea what we meant. This led to a discussion on funny expressions. There was *bullswool* and *bugalugs* as terms of affection, a *ripsnorter* for a beautiful girl and *cockies choice/joy* for golden syrup. You could buy something *on the never-never* or *go walkabout* to *Woop Woop*.

Let us all think about some of these once common expressions used by our grand- parents, our parents and even ourselves and share them on the site. Even better, if you have a short memory of a relative, friend or colleague who used these types of expression, please include the story. **Please no rhyming slang.**

An interesting new photograph



Milner's Building

These two shops were built by William Milner in 1890-91. Sometime after this photograph was taken Annie Milner established a bakery in the left-hand shop and the other shop was rented to a photographer, Miss Lyne. A bakery remained on that site up until the 1950s.