

Korumburra and District Historical Society Inc.

NEWSLETTER No. 35

June, July, Aug. 2020

Do you remember our last meeting? It seems like such a long time ago now, and in speaking to Elini Coursivanos towards the end of May, the realisation came that our last meeting was in March, the one that Elina attended. We all went home on a high I believe, encouraged to think that there is some hope for our heritage being supported by our Shire.

Elini has had the term of her employment extended to September, so that is good news. Let's hope that there can be a further extension to her time in the Heritage Officer role with the South Gippsland Shire. Elini rang to let us know that while the Shire has in place restrictions as to where roadside signs are applicable, she said that if the funds for a 'Whitelaw' sign can be raised, that Shire personnel would install them. The cost for a sign is \$65. Whether that includes installation is something we didn't discuss. That seems to be a 'no' you cannot have a Whitelaw sign, but a 'yes' you can, if you stump up the funds, and funding to that degree seems achievable.

That's two meetings that we have missed, and it is really something still to be determined as to when we can gather again, given safe distancing, and the fact that there is not a vaccination available, and also that we have a number of older people who might be more susceptible to the Corona Virus. We just have to be responsible and careful.

There have been some enquiries since we last met. These include:

- Presbyterian worship at Jumbunna. There is no reason to think there was a church; perhaps there was a visiting minister.
- The Jeetho Railway station. Sue Ritchie is drawing on the memories of Maggie Hunter to recall stories of the station, and the wider Jeetho area.
- Likewise, Sue is hoping to see what she can encourage Bob Barnes to recall about his family's time at the gatehouse at Whitelaw, and the wider Whitelaw story. Bob is a resident at Alchera House, as is Maggie Hunter.
- President Bob, has found a wonderful photo of Jumbunna showing the hotel with the hall at the rear of it, many tall tree trunks in the background. The photo was taken by John Henry Harvey (1855-1938). Bob wonders whether it is in the collection, but there is also the question as to what is known of John Henry Harvey. We have discovered that he was an architect who lived for many years in central Melbourne. There are some wonderful early photos of Sydney taken by this man.

- Annette Kennedy is seeking information on one of her forbear Thomas McCrorie, who was an underground manager at the Outtrim Mine. This man left his homeland of Scotland and spent some years engaged in mining in New Zealand. His wife died in the early 1890s, leaving Thomas with four young daughters. Not long after this Thomas came to Outtrim; he had remarried and there was a son from this marriage, born after his death in 1897. It seems that Thomas McCrorie was the first person buried at the Outtrim Cemetery, however the information board has on it the name Thomas McCrae as the first person buried there. Annette was further disappointed to find that she would not be able to locate the exact burial site.
- Maria Vogt has been searching for information on the family of Ernest Nicholl Kurrle, a man connected to the local Kurrle family. Ernest and his brother Geoffrey both studied pharmacy and later both studied medicine at Melbourne University. Geoff later became a leading cancer specialist at Peter McCallum. Our member Tony Ware in W.A. has done a considerable amount of research on the family.
- There has been an enquiry relating to Robert Adams Anderson who lived in this area and was buried at Nyora. He died in 1996.
- Bob Newton wonders whether there is anything known of the Demuer family at Arawata, and he is also wanting to know more of the Pippen family, as to whether they had a garage or blacksmithing business in Korumburra.
- Tom and Sylvia Fowler have visited Korumburra looking for family information. They have a photo of Thomas Fowler with two men and their horses and wagon unloading goods at the goods shed at the railway station in Korumburra. Thomas had a carrying business. There is a remarkable story of Thomas' heroism in stopping a runaway train in Dr. Keith Bowden's book on the history of Korumburra. The Fowlers lived in Bena Road for a time, and also at "Fordell" in Queen Street. *Is there anything known of "Fordell" in Queen Street?*
- Do any of our members know of the list of shopkeepers in the town that was printed in the "Korumburra Times" in 1894. The article about Arthur Ashwood in the 1955 series which appeared in the paper at that time mentions the 1894 article.
- Leslie Manifold James was a teacher at Loch, and probably also at Jeetho West. He was the father of Robert James who would like to know more of his father's time in this area. The family was in this area in the 1930s, listed at "Lyndhurst", Loch during that time. It is interesting to know that Leslie Norman James was teaching at Krowera at around this same time. Leslie Norman had quite a Bena connection, a hero of the Bena football team, and quite involved in the community there.

Along the way we've found two interesting and revealing pieces of information, one relating to Robert Kurrle leaving Sunbury to settle at Jumbunna, the other concerns Thomas McCrorie and pigeon shooting at Outtrim. Just small snippets maybe, but each find adds a little colour to the historic landscape we continue to embroider into our knowledge base.

From the 'Sunbury News & Bulla Melton Advertiser' comes the following. The paper is dated 12th. May 1894.

"DEPARTURE OF MR. R. KURRLE - Sunbury will shortly see the departure of Mr. Robert Kurrle, who will be leaving for Jumbunna, where he has built a large hotel and intends to carry on the business. During his residence here, extending over twenty years, he had taken an active interest in the affairs of the place, and is a trustee and member of the committee of the Mechanics' Institute, and a vestryman of the Church of England, and was formerly a councillor of the Melton Shire. We learn he is to be entertained by a few friends previous to his departure. His Rosenthal vineyard will be managed by his son, Mr. Ernest Kurrle."

Great Southern Advocate, Thursday 10th. September 1896

"PIGEON SHOOT AT JUMBUNNA

On Saturday last a large number of persons visited Outtrim for the purpose of being present at the above match held under the auspices of the newly formed club. The shooting took place on the top of the hill known as Mount Misery, but why such a splendid piece of country should get that name is one of those things a person cannot understand. There is no sign or shape of misery on the mount, but on the other hand well built miner's houses. Certainly the trip up the "golden stairs" as the walk up the hill is familiarly referred to at Outtrim, is not so pleasant as walking down the main street. Nevertheless, it is a splendid lung tester, and weak parts in a man's anatomy are quickly discovered. The shooting commenced shortly after two o'clock, in a nicely selected place on the top of the hill, away from the houses. At times a heavy wind was blowing, which was greatly against competitors. Once a bird took away and went with the wind it invariably fell out of bounds. In the chief handicap, a five bird match, Pitcairn opened fire, and his second barrel brought down the first bird. He was followed by Harris, who missed. Lucas followed with a very hard bird to shoot and missed also. A specially trained "ring tailer" dodged Fisher's first barrel, but he hit him hard with the second. The bird was too high up in the air, and the wind carried it out of bounds. McCrorie, who eventually won, missed his first bird. O'Shannassy and Galloway grassed their birds with the first barrel. In the second nomination Harris and Fisher had four kills on their fourth shot, but retired and left third place to O'Shannassy."

This places Thomas McCrorie at Outtrim in 1896; owing though to his short time in the area, there doesn't seem to be anything else to find. Barry Sykes tells us that there were golden stairs and silver stairs; one set in the direction of the town the other to the mine.

For more information please contact secretary, Janet Wilson, (0409 248 603) janet.wil@outlook.com or P.O. Box 329, KORUMBURRA. Vic. 3950.

President: Mr. Bob Newton Treasurer: Mr. Alwyn Michie Archivist: Mr. Doug Boston