



Korumburra & District Historical Society

Newsletter Issue 59 • Autumn 2026

Established 1967
**Korumburra and District
Historical Society Incorporated**
A0034717Y
ABN 76 768 108 144
Korumburra Community Hub
Little Commercial Street
Korumburra

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Monthly Meetings
Public meetings of the Society are held on the first Thursday of the month. New members are welcome.

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From the Secretary

Members are back to work in the room after a well deserved time off over January, and are looking forward to a year of discoveries, challenges and hopefully, solutions.

At the February meeting the state of the railway precinct was discussed. Members along with residents of the town are not happy with the state of the area, with work having ceased, leaving an unsightly and unsafe situation.

We're looking forward to the Heritage Festival to run from 18 April to 18 May. We hope to be able to show films taken by the late Archie George who was a keen photographer. He recorded many aspects of the life of the town and district, and the society has been privileged in being able to have guardianship of this wonderful resource. We will have a program setting out when sessions will run.

The Korumburra Show provided an opportunity for the society to display some of its photographic treasures. Thank you to those who manned this display which included the sale of publications of the society.

We have a new schedule of charges for research and the sale of photographs which appears on page five in this newsletter.

We're looking forward to more interesting talks on our history as we go into this new year. Doug Boston spoke and showed photos at the February meeting. Doug told us of his mother's sister, Fanny whose husband managed the Loch Butter Factory in the early 1900s. He later managed a factory in South Africa but tragically the Spanish Flu claimed Fanny's life.



The Loch Butter Factory manager's house at Mary Street, Loch.

Newsletter Contributions

Do you have any contributions, stories to share, or feedback for this newsletter? Contact Janet Wilson:
secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au

Society Meetings

The next meetings of the society will be held in the Korumburra Hub building on Thursday 5 March, 2 April and 7 May, at 1:00pm.

These times may change, so please could you confirm the time with us if you wish to attend. Visitors are always welcome, and we would really welcome new members.

We are more than happy to help people researching their families or seeking help in finding information on the history of Korumburra and the area of the former Korumburra Shire. Contact secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au. It would be good to make this contact to make an initial enquiry or to check that there will be people available at the Historical Society room.

Loch 150th Anniversary

From Bob Newton's Notebook

These stories are taken from historian Bob Newton's extensive notes on the history of our region. They are subject to copyright and are not to be used without permission of the author.

Loch's Eucalyptus Oil Factory

From the Loch Express 155, April 2025

Australia's first export! Australia's Eucalyptus Oil product began in 1860 in an area near Melbourne. Distilled from gum leaves, the fragrant cure-all oil was Australia's first indigenous export. Our oil was soon exported to Europe, Asia, and North America. Shortly thereafter, seeds were distributed globally, but particularly to China, Portugal, and South America. Before European settlement, Eucalyptus oil had long been valued by indigenous Australians who used the leaves for various medicinal purposes. Eucalyptus oil is extracted from eucalyptus leaves through a process called steam distillation, where steam is passed through the leaves, releasing volatile compounds that condense and separate into oil and water. Eucalyptus leaves are placed in a distillation apparatus, and steam is passed through them. As the steam carries the volatile

oil and water which is then separated, with the eucalyptus oil floating on top of the water. The eucalyptus stew pot is the first way they made eucalyptus before the steam boil came to fruition. Loch had one of the early Eucalyptus Factories and the old brick stew pot still exists. Whilst distillation of oil ceased many years ago we can still see a part of Loch's part in this historical export.

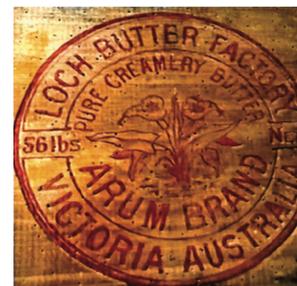
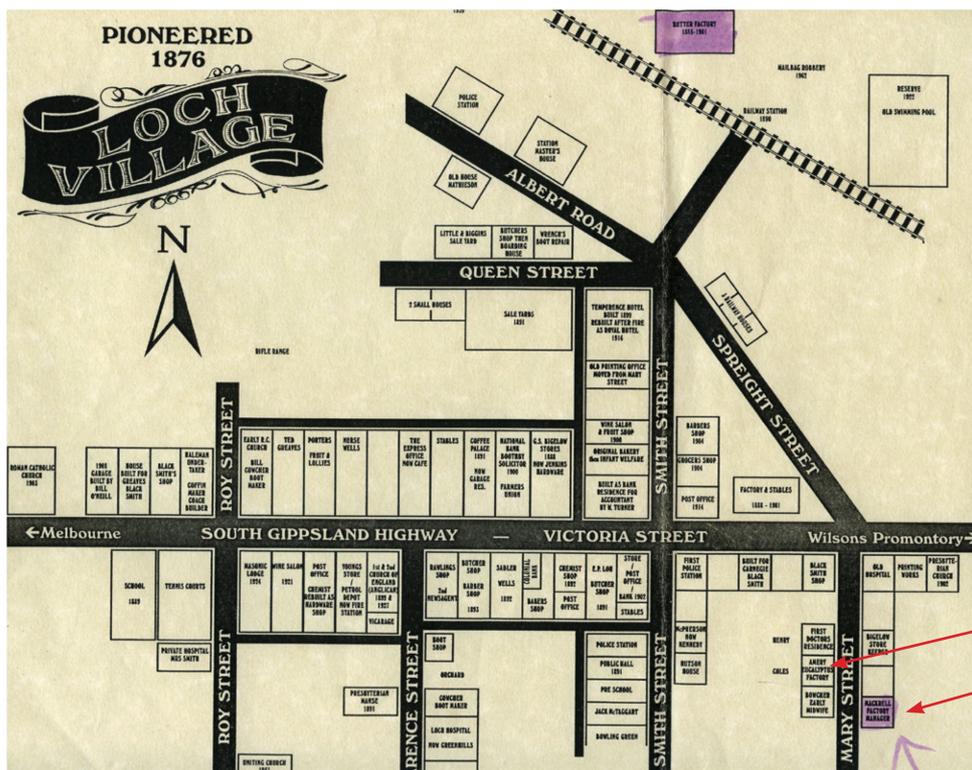
Editors Note: The factory owners were the Averys. The small cottage connected with the factory still stands in Mary Street. The factory was a shed with a pit at the back of the cottage. The factory required about 30 tons of leaves weekly, which provided employment during the depression.



At the February meeting of the Historical Society Doug Boston gave an illuminating talk about his aunt **Fanny (Tolson) Mackrell** and her family. Here is a short overview of the family and of the Loch Butter Factory from Bob Newton's notes.

Fanny was the third eldest child of Joe and Mary Tolson of Jumbunna, she spent her early days at Kardella and afterwards entered the Education Department, being a teacher at Kardella and Loch in 1908, Fanny was the sister of Mrs Violet Boston of Korumburra, she married Mr Alex Mackrell, Alex was the Loch Butter Factory manager, it was called the "Fresh Food and Frozen Storage Co." At one time, it was located off Loch Poowong Road beside Alsop Creek between the Creek and the railway station. Opened in 1900, the first manager was Mr Teeha; it was recorded that amongst its first suppliers was the Leongatha Labor Colony. There was a domed underground water tank in this location, it was used by the butter factory.

Alex later accepted an appointment as manager of the Bethlehem butter factory in South Africa. Alex and Fanny had three children: Violet May, Fanny May and Elva the youngest being only a fortnight old when they left Australia. Sadly Fanny died of the Spanish Flu in 1918.



Eucalyptus Factory

Butter Factory manager's house.

A Tribute to Andrew O’Keefe — Builder of the South Gippsland Rail Line

During a recent clean-out at home I came across a book “Railways and Pastures—The Australian O’Keefes”. I had seen the book before but never got around to reading it. As I flicked through the pages I was surprised to find references to the South Gippsland rail line.

In view of the work being undertaken by members of the K&DHS who are designing information signage to be placed along the rail trail, I thought that you too might enjoy this fascinating read.

Gerald Brocklesby

Written by Mary Healey, who was born an O’Keefe, the book gives a comprehensive account of the family of Edward and Ellen O’Keefe and their family’s activities in Australia. Originally from Tipperary, Ireland they settled in Bendigo in 1854. While the book spends some of its time recounting the activities of patriarch Edward O’Keefe, a railway man himself and responsible for constructing other public works including the Coliban Reservoir system, it is more about the various achievements of his son Andrew. Besides being a land owner, Andrew was a “prodigious worker, contracted for the Laanecoorie Weir on the Loddon River, coping with tremendous obstacles, a typhoid epidemic and twenty-five floods in the course of two years, which repeatedly destroyed much of the work”.

The book details his contracting for the construction of the railway line from Heathcote to Bendigo, and later we learn about his building of the 45 mile section of the Great Southern Railway, between Whitelaw’s Track (Korumburra) and Toora. The following is an abbreviated extract from this section of the book. It is a testament to the ingenuity of the country’s pioneering families, and to Andrew O’Keefe’s part in the opening up of the South Gippsland region.

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“Railways and Pastures—The Australian O’Keefes”

Chapter Fifteen

The Great Southern Line

Undaunted by the bad luck with the natural elements at Laanecoorie, Andrew confidently approached the mid-section of the Great Southern Railway. Perhaps, he believed he was more than due for a smooth run.

The contract of 31 December, 1888, *Number 3349* was accepted by the Railways and by 7 February, 1889 the cash deposit of £16,135 had been lodged. Within the contract Andrew O’Keefe agreed to build the railway to connect Whitelaw’s Track (Korumburra) and Toora, a distance of 44.732 miles costing £315,212-12-10 if bluegum or messmate were to be used or if Redgum, Ironbark or Box be used for the various works described the sum of £322,693-17-10.

The contract price was about £7,000 per mile. The contract documents contained such estimates as ... 800 hours for fence building, 1599 hours for boilermaking and 1600 hours for trade assistants while the allocation for horse and cart work was 1605 hours.

Before the railway there were no formed roads, and bullocks, which were very slow, were the main means of transport. Generally butter had to be taken by pack-horse or sledge over the hills to the railway at Drouin or Morwell or to ships and then often sold for 3d [pence] a pound, the low price being caused by the rocky ride to market.

Settlement in South Gippsland had begun 20 years earlier as David Henry and family first arrived in Ruby, South Gippsland during 1868. He was “a bullocky, [who] arrived in a bullock waggon [with] a dray and two horse buggy.” He used materials provided by the bush for their hut having brought only two windows and a handful of nails with him. Self sufficiency was the key to survival during the early years. An early report of life in the intermediate years related how...

We cleared the scrub within our holdings, which all know was dense. We sowed grass, began to dairy, but found to our cost that the summer was too much, with the roads, our own butter being melted before it reached market. We tried cattle and pigs, but found our area was too small for these. We tried sheep, but wild dogs were too destructive. We were driven back to dairy produce, which does not keep our families and pay the rent. We have been driven into the hands of the banks or private money-lenders, on purpose to hold on until we could get roads or railways... after bringing a family into the world and working ourselves almost into the grave, using all our best days in trying to leave something for our children that our families could not leave us, we find that we have spent our strength for nought better than either the hospital or benevolent asylum for ourselves and orphanages for our children. (*Argus*, 7 October, 1889)

With this life-style before the railway came one can imagine how enthusiastic the campaign for the new line really was. Thus, the contractors

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were welcome as their work provided an alternative occupation as well as opening up great tracts of land with a reliable transport system and the solution to the problems associated with the sending of produce to market. The ready made market of workers on the line was an immediate boost to primary industry as nearly two thousand workers were employed using two hundred horses and seven hundred bullocks.

When purchasing provisions Andrew O'Keefe is reputed to have negotiated good prices for whole flocks. Some sheep would have been brought from *Adelaide Vale*, too. Fishermen from Toora, a fishing paradise, were also pleased with the increase in population. A report at that time stated...

At Toora Fishermen have told O'Keefe that if he runs them a train they will guarantee 1,000 baskets offish a week. (*Bendigo Advertiser, 10 July, 1891*)

Corner Inlet was known to be alive with fish and the navvies enjoyed fishing, sailing and shooting on Sundays. Andrew believed a nutritious food supply for his camps was essential for a good day's work.

The three sections were built concurrently. Messrs. Falkingham and Sons constructed the section from Dandenong to Korumburra, Andrew O'Keefe the mid section and Buckley Bros. the Toora to Port Albert Section. The mid section posed extra difficulties as there was no direct connection with any form of transport, whereas Buckley Bros. were able to land supplies on the coast and the Falkinghams used the rail to Dandenong. The problem of transport did not perturb Andrew O'Keefe for long, as in no time he had constructed his own wharf at the mouth of the Franklin River near Rennison.

For eighteen months two steamers and fifteen schooners were constantly employed carrying materials to Bowen. (*Bowden, K., The Great Southern Railway, p. 16*)

Small amounts of material were also landed at Stockyard Creek by the *ssRose* of Sharon and *ssQueenscliffe* which were used constantly during the contract. The *ssQueenscliffe* was a 23,080 ton ship of 120 horse power, 120 feet long and 16 feet wide and 8 feet 6 inches deep. This boat was registered in 1868 and sold to a New Guinea Company after leaving Gippsland. Altogether, Andrew O'Keefe unloaded four locomotives there. It was at Port Franklin that he landed his Hobson's Bay United Co., Locomotive and a 90 ton load of coal from Newcastle was also landed there. Fortunately, coal from Korumburra proved satisfactory for the engines on the steep grades in the area. Actually, Andrew O'Keefe was the first to test and use Victorian black coal which had been discovered by T.W. Horsley during November, 1870. He was so impressed with its quality that he used all the coal mined there until 1892. It was not until after the line was completed that the coal was marketed elsewhere. Andrew O'Keefe built a special stage so that the coal could be loaded into ballast trucks. Later, one of his foremen, Michael Starr, built a ten chain tramway for the Jumbunna Coal Co. in which Andrew O'Keefe was a shareholder. At the completion of the contract he sold two locomotives and the other two were stored in the sheds at Foster. It is more than likely Andrew O'Keefe removed them to Adelaide at the time of his Outer Harbour- Largs Bay Contract during 1902. After a ten year break he and the engines steamed into action again. In Gippsland Andrew O'Keefe had built a private port and two miles of his own railway line between Bowen and Bennison for

transporting sleepers, rails, and all the necessary materials to build the railway line. Fishermen, subsequently, took over this broad gauge railway line. This port he constructed must have saved him a good deal in transport costs.

It is possible that the contractors of the other sections had tendered lower prices, believing that Andrew would be paying them for transporting goods on their sections, but he built a corduroy road (soil surface with sticks laid across) linking Foster and Fish Creek, thus making supply and delivery easier for his activities. The settlers, although desperate for the railway, looked forward to the £25 rent which accrued annually from the contractors if their run was crossed. Andrew zig-zagged his work track to save costs, but Messrs. Amey and Dickenson collected rent from him. This set of agreements did not give the contractors permission (unlike those of the Heathcote contract) to carry goods officially; but permission was soon granted when sought out, and Andrew O'Keefe quickly attracted passengers. He always expected market prices and apparently he made money by transporting beer. Andrew asked for three pence, but the beer owner was only prepared to pay two and, before reaching agreement, both men spent a whole evening discussing price!

The railways, of course, had to approve each section before a train could run over it and, as usual, Andrew O'Keefe became impatient with the Victorian Railways administration, as was shown when one of his workmen was injured. To overcome the lack of a hospital bed in Foster, he simply arranged for one of his engines to take the injured man to Melbourne. As the line had not been approved by the Engineer in Chief Andrew O'Keefe was asked to explain his actions. This was not the last reprimand he was given.

Another instance of his ability to think and act quickly was when his ballast train was on a collision course with a mob of bullocks on the Tarwin Bridge. Having calculated that a collision was imminent, he shouted for all to remain seated and, consequently, no-one was hurt. On another occasion, luck did not go his way when a group of ballast waggons rolled from the Brickyard area into O'Keefe's locomotive at Leongatha. The foreman, Starr, was not able to brake and the stationary locomotive was almost wrecked. The damages bill ran to over £1,000. To everyone's surprise O'Keefe managed to purchase a replacement train from the railways, despite their shortage of rolling stock and had it in work within four days at Leongatha. Some criticism was heard of the railways for having made this engine available. Perhaps, O'Keefe cleverly told them how the Great Southern Railway would be further delayed if he could not have another locomotive immediately.

Fortunately, for Andrew, the weather suited fast progress. Residents of Foster and Toora were delighted when their towns were connected by rail in October, 1890 and the *Foster and Toora Mirror* commented, "It is a pity that the other contractors of the Great Southern Railway are not pushing on with their work as energetically as Mr. O'Keefe."

Mr. O'Keefe was always on the job even as late as 10 p.m., often only standing around the camp fire but genuinely encouraging those warming themselves of the need to complete some small task quickly in the morning.

The extreme gradients in South Gippsland made for great engineering feats. The most difficult section was the 14 miles between Bena and Leongatha which took 12 men two years to survey. One part required

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eleven bridges within two miles, and the Chantanque Creek alone needed seven bridges within a mile. The longest bridge was over the Tarwin River, Mr. Jones successfully carried out the pile driving with a pile engine and a 123 hundred-weight monkey, pile rings, cross cut saw, jiggers and wedges, sheave blocks, hammers and a long handled shovel.

These were just a few pieces of equipment on hand at the Tarwin site. Clearing costs varied from £1,400 per mile where the bush was thin and up to £2080 in dense areas. Ganger Cochrane and his large clearing team were followed closely by Mr. J. Lynch's team whose speciality was to establish drainage along this newly cleared bush.

To be continued

Our display at the Korumburra A & P Society Show



The Historical Society was well represented this year at the Korumburra A & P Society Show. The display incorporated both visual and static displays and included photos and books for sale. People were able to peruse extensive scrapbooks of newspaper articles through the years created and donated by the family of late member Nance Brown.

Thank you to Marion Shuttleworth, we had rotating photograph images of the local area on the television as well! The versatile display represented the Historical Society's involvement within the community, and I know the effort was well received and appreciated by all. I would like to personally thank everyone who helped compile, set up, and assist on the day and also the packing up at the end of the day.

Thank you everyone for your support this year. **Helen Comer**



VALE

Betty Wilson

Janet Elizabeth (Betty Wilson) (nee Hickey) who passed away in December 2025, was a member of the society for almost 35 years. She began her association in the days when meetings were held on the Shire Council building in Korumburra. Those were the days when as we arrived at meetings, we heard the cattle calling from the saleyards which along with the shire building are no longer a part of our town. The archives of the society were stored in a room at the rear of at the church building at Coal Creek. She worked on the archives there along with Cath Ritchie, a long time president of the society. Another activity that members undertook was cleaning rooms in the buildings at Coal Creek, and regularly she worked in keeping the church building clean and tidy. Some of the fittings there came from the Presbyterian Church at Bena, where she was an enthusiastic and devoted member. Over the years she was involved in attending meetings and other activities of the society. She had many stories to tell of her life at Bena when it was lively community, and had wonderful memories of Korumburra in a time when there were a great variety of shops and businesses.

She was born at Leongatha in 1920, at the Stradbroke Hospital, now the site of the IGA store there. Her parents at the time lived in Lalbert, but shortly after Betty's birth, the family moved to a home still standing in McCartin Street, Leongatha. She could remember horse drawn hearses travelling past their house on their journey to the cemetery, she had memories of the opening of the Memorial Hall, and a fire in the vicinity of Smiths' Timberyard. The family moved from the town to a property at Gwythers Siding Road, and from there came a move to New Gisborne where her father ran a butchery business.. The next move was to Lance Creek where she spent most of her school days, days of which she had very fond memories. and at the age of twelve Betty moved with her family to Bena. That was 1932, and the next almost 94 years were spent at Bena. She married James Wilson, a Scotsman in 1945, and there were two children, Janet and Ian. Tragically her husband James died in a car accident in 1957, leaving her a widow and Janet and Ian without their father. A long life of 105 years, well lived, overcoming many obstacles graciously.

History of Korumburra & District Historical Society

Compiled by Janet Wilson, this is the second instalment of a comprehensive account of the history of the Korumburra and District Historical Society.

1973 April Bus trip to Phillip Island arranged.

1973 September Annual dinner to be held at Loch Haven, 2nd. November.

1973 September Vintage train in Korumburra in November, society to cater for this event. Trade fair also coming up, decision to have a stall there.

1973 October More emphasis to be placed on the collection of historical material.

1973 October Bus trip to Walhalla arranged.

1974 February Council's Coal Creek Committee prepared to incorporate the Historical Society as a house furnishing sub-committee. Buss trip to Port Albert and area.

1974 March Thanks to all for their efforts involved in the opening of the park. Concern in relation to lack of fire fighting preparation at the park.

1974 June Preparations beginning for visit of vintage train on 7 July.

1974 July Possibility that old Jeetho school building would go to Poowong.

1974 August Need for a written history from 1926.

1975 February Working bee arranged for 13 February at Coal Creek. Query to be made of RHSV re matters involving preservation of documents, classification, etc.

1975 March Regular newsletter to be instituted. Richard Opie presented a paper on Whitelaw. As a secondary teacher he indicated that he would be introducing local studies, and a visit to Coal Creek for his students.

1975 July Members asked by Coal Creek to assist in selling yearly passes to the park. Total of \$6,000 now given to Coal Creek. Request from park to assist in setting up the Jeetho School, now located at Coal Creek. This request was adopted. Former students still in the area to be invited to the next meeting to give reminiscences. The whistle from the Butter Factory had been given to Mr. Ken Wallace-Dunlop, by Mr. McKenzie (manager), also an early photo and a

prize certificate. Mr. McKenzie to be asked to the speaker at the next annual dinner meeting.

1975 September Members agreed to accept responsibility for furnishing and equipping former Jeetho school now located at Coal Creek. Mr. Steilow's time at Jeetho was discussed with former pupils in attendance. Quite some detail contained in these minutes.

1975 October Total of \$6,000 given to Coal Creek by the historical society, the total over the years since inception that is. The first copy of "Flashback" has been produced, and the president commented that if it continued, it could provide the challenge that the society needed. Copies of "Flashback" to be sold on street stall and at Coal Creek for 50c. per copy.

1975 December Minute of appreciation for the contribution of the Late Mr. Hugh Brown was placed on the books. As a former miner he had contributed to the first issue of "Flashback". Catering for the visit of the vintage train was discussed.

1976 February Membership drive to take place. Second copy of "Flashback" to be produced.

1976 April Mr. Joe White congratulated on his book released for the Outtrim Back-To and thanked him for documents and photos which he had given to the society.

1976 July Members to attend a meeting called by the shire to discuss use of the old post office building. Mrs. Stevens and Mrs. Lane to attend. Date for Back-To Korumburra discussed. First settlement 1878, township survey and land sales not until 1887 or early 1888, and first post office not until 1889. The need for an updated version of "The Land of the Lyrebird" to be discussed with the Shire. Jury room at the old court house had been granted to the society for the storage of historical material.

1976 August Kardella hall now situated at Coal Creek. Agreement to set up a shop at Coal Creek's general store. Inspection to be made however before final decision to be made. Annual

dinner dispensed with for the current year, guest speaker arranged for annual meeting. Decision to place a memorial stone at Coal Creek bearing the names of all miners who lost their lives in Korumburra mines.

1976 September Meeting had taken place with the shire re the writing of a history of the shire.

1976 October \$6,250 now given to Coal Creek.

May 1977 Historical display in Old Post Office to complement Dahlia Festival. Valuable documents of the society to be kept in a locked cupboard at Coal Creek. Members to meet at the park and discuss the setting up of the dress shop. The Tarwin Lower bell to be positioned between the church and the school. Members listened to a taped interview with former miner, Dick Burgess.

July 1977 Edition of "Flashback" intended for print in July or August. 750 copies to be printed and made available at 70c. per copy. Possibility of a booklet to detail all buildings at Coal Creek, with members to gather material on particular buildings, also to include details as to the origin of Coal Creek village.

August 1977 Mrs. Edith Lucas thanked for her work in the making of old style dresses for display in the almost completed dress shop. The wishing well at Coal Creek had brought in almost \$400.

October 1977 It was reported that a study group from Melbourne University had toured Gippsland. A photographer was said to have accompanied the tour group.

1977 November 2nd. edition of "Flashback" ready in fortnight's time. Sentinel-Times to meet the cost of work that has gone into the production. Society to pay for paper and printing.

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February 1978 Ten members present at the meeting. Hist. Soc. to prepare and provide a tourism booklet for Coal Creek Park. Discussion as to involvement in Karmai parade.

May 1978 A vestry built at rear of church at Coal Creek, and made available to Historical Society for storage purposes.

June 1978 Program for next meeting to centre on early farming years. Mr. S. Miles who had prepared tape recordings to be asked to share in the meeting program.

August 1978 Eight members present.

October 1978 Tributes paid to Ken Wallace-Dunlop president for more than ten years. "The society, the district and the Historical Park owe him gratitude for much that has been achieved in matters of historical interest, relating to this shire". Annual membership raised to \$2, life membership raised to \$20. Mr. Joseph White was the speaker, detailing his work in collection, presentation and publication of his work. The talk was recorded.

1979 April Next meeting to be forgone instead members to gather at records room at Coal Creek and members work on records held there.

1979 May Dr. K. Bowden is reproducing his book "Early Days of Korumburra" and "The Great

Southern Railway", and will be available at Coal Creek. Members listened to a tape recording of a conversation recorded by the president with Mr. "Stag" Garrard on his recollections of earlier days of Korumburra.

1979 September Support for Council in its endeavour to acquire small area of land which contains railway reservoir between Poowong and Nyora and that it be named in memory of the Littledyke family. Barry Sykes spoke on the history of Jumbunna and Outtrim, the mines and the railway.

1979 October Records now stored in vestry at the church in Coal Creek. Some storage equipment had been bought, and work commenced on listing documents held. Meeting held at Uniting Church, also that of November. February meeting also held here. Municipal meeting room had not been available over this period.

1980 August Committee appointed to set up a memorial to miners killed in local mines at the Coal Creek Historical Park

October 1980 Request made by Coal Creek for suggestions as to names for street within the park. The names of former mines were listed, with these suggested as possible street names. Mrs. M. Stevens and Mrs. B. Lane had chaired

meetings in the absence of chairman, Mr. B. Blake for an extended period.

July 1981 Meeting held at Poowong Library. Report of planting of oak tree in Botanical Gardens from Korumburra Advocate in 1911.

November 1981 Brian Blake stepped down as president after serving as secretary from 1966 until elected as president in 1978. A wonderful contribution to the life of the Historical Society. Membership fees to be \$2.00, life memberships \$20.00. Miners' memorial plaque had been unveiled at Coal Creek during the year. A Sub committee formed at Poowong, a matter of special concern is the preservation of the old Wesleyan Church. As in past years members have maintained their interest and involvement at Coal Creek. Ken Wallace-Dunlop represents the society on the committee of management. Concern as to low attendance at meetings. Records stored at Coal Creek in the Jessie Ludge Room, the vestry of the church building.

June 1982 Poowong Wesleyan Church added to the National Trust list of recorded buildings.

April 1983 "Heritage Week" display to be set up in municipal library with primary school children to attend each day.

Janet Wilson, July 2023

Schedule of charges for research and the sale of photographs

The Korumburra and District Historical Society is a not-for-profit organisation, totally run by volunteers. Previously we have relied on funds from membership fees, sales of books, and donations. These funds are no longer covering our overheads.

As members will be aware the Historical Society has for many years provided a research service free of charge to anyone with an enquiry. The digital age has seen these enquiries change from members of our local community simply popping into the rooms to requests now being received via email and our website from all over the world. The volunteers who undertake the research do so very diligently, often spending a considerable amount of time to ensure accuracy and completeness.

To encourage new members to join and to recognise the significant value of our research service the decision has been made to introduce a research fee, something many historical societies have already done. It will remain a free service for members undertaking personal research.

For research enquiries:

- For private individuals undertaking personal research the fee is \$20/hr and for information being sought for commercial purposes \$45/hr
- Our fees cover the first hour of research. If your requested search is likely to take longer than this then we can provide an estimate of the research cost.
- Photocopying charge (B&W): 30c per side
- We will advise if images are available (low resolution only): \$5.00 for personal usage and \$30.00 for commercial usage. (For copyright reasons images taken after 1955 are only available as photocopies for research purposes).
- We will provide a written report on completion of our research. This will be provided once payment has been received.
- If no information is found there will be no charge.

'Keeping 219,360 toes warm in trains'

Herald, June 1939



"5,484 warmers were in continual use. There was an art in preparing a foot warmer and a special plant in West Melbourne was set aside for the work. Each warmer was filled with 14lbs of acetate of soda and two cast iron balls about the size of billiard balls. Before they were put in canvas bags the warmers were boiled in water for more than an hour to melt the crystallised sods. The sods tended to solidify as it cooled so that two iron balls moving as the train rolled prevented it from setting. The warmers retained their heat for twelve hours. A shaking prolonged their lives for another eight hours. Special furnaces were set up at principal stations."

Note they were introduced in Victoria, May 1923.

Bookshop

The following books are currently available for purchase from the Historical Society or by contacting the Secretary by email: secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au

The Land of the Lyre Bird	\$50
The History of the Shire of Korumburra by Joseph White	\$20
A Gippsland Union, the Victorian Coal Miners Association 1893-1915 by P.D. Gardner	\$50
Coal Creek Miners Memorial, Compiled by Doug Boston & Janet Wilson	\$10

Membership Application

2025-2026

From 1st October 2025 to 30th September 2026

I/we

Of (address)

Phone Nos

Email

Agree to comply with the Rules of Korumburra & District Historical Society Inc. and support the purposes of the Association.

Signed

Date

Fee for 2025-26 Financial Year is \$15.00.

For direct deposit of Fees our account is:

Commonwealth Bank, Leongatha

BSB: 063 515 Account Number: 10014263

Please use your name and membership in the reference.

Either post this completed form to us at the postal address above or submit it online.

To submit online: scan and email this form to secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au along with a copy of your bank deposit receipt.

New memberships received between 30 June and 30 September will expire on 30 September the following year, i.e., up to 15 month initial term.

The committee would like to know if you have any particular interest, experience or qualifications.

Find us on the web: www.korumburrahistory.com.au

For queries: Facebook: www.facebook.com/korumburrahistory

Email: treasurer@korumburrahistory.com.au