



FOSTER & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

PROM COUNTRY HISTORY NEWS



VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2 JULY 2012

YANAKIE VISIT

Our May meeting was held at Yanakie. 27 members visited the burial ground near the site of the Old Yanakie homestead near the entrance of Wilsons Promontory National Park. Mike Heal gave a highly informative and interesting talk about the settlement

and the inhabitants of the graves, including one grave yet to be found.

Mike has a detailed knowledge of the history of the area and is actively involved in the search and restoration of the area. After the talk the Society held a bbq at the Yanakie

Hut where members swapped tales and memories of the area.

Our thanks go to Mike for a great meeting and also to John McAinch who kindly drove people up to the site.



QUILTING EXHIBITION

The Quilters Group who meet in Crawford Hall every Monday, exhibited their work at the Museum over Easter.

The exhibition was a great success with many visitors applauding the handiwork and craft that goes into creating these beautiful pieces of work.

The Quilters Group donated \$746.00 to the museum which has been used to buy a data projector for speakers and presentations.

Our thanks go to the group for their generous donation.

Thank you Meg Crawford and Noela Cripps for managing the event.

REMINDER

Tuesday 7th. Aug

A.G.M.

Membership subscriptions for 2012-2013 are due

1 July 2012

You must be a current financial member for insurance purposes.

MEMBERS MEETING 3 JULY 2012

Our June meeting had to be cancelled due to inclement weather, blocked roads, power outages and sickness.

Marjorie Thorburn will now speak with us on the history of Welshpool including a presentation of photographs at the July meeting.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Revised volunteer roster for June plus August & September volunteer rosters now out
- Tuesday 19 June Ghost Research Crew spending evening at museum
- Monday 18 June - Sunday 24 June Information Centre operating at Museum
- Tuesday 26 June Network Cataloguing Meeting at Museum
- 1 July 2012-2013 membership subscription fees due and payable
- 3 July Guest Speaker Marjorie Thorburn - Welshpool
- 7 Aug A.G.M.
- 4 Sep Guest Speakers Ghost Research Crew - their activities
- 2 Oct Guest Speaker Bill Gurnett -The Rail Trail
- 6 Nov Cup Day - No meeting
- December - Christmas Breakup

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NO MORE THAN FIVE MILES: SCHOOL DAYS IN THE PROM COUNTRY A CELEBRATION OF ONE-TEACHER SCHOOLS



Jennifer Jones with Mayor Warren Raabe, Cr. Jeanette Harding and Foster Primary School Captains - Jayde McGlead & Xavier Duursma

Our major exhibition for 2012-2013 is focused on the next story in the development of South Gippsland; with settlement comes the need for education!

Communities converted old cottages/barns/halls for school buildings. Families struggled to keep the buildings maintained and to keep

teachers, many of whom were young, with no experience of country life and who found accommodation either poor or totally lacking.

Gradually, due to the persistence of the communities, one-teacher schools were established. In the old South Gippsland Shire there were 39 such schools, only 5 remain. Not all schools were fulltime, many shared their teachers between 2 and 3 schools.

The Education Department declared 'no child should

have to walk more than five miles to school' this didn't take into account the terrain, weather conditions, or wildlife!

There are many accounts of children dodging falling trees/branches in high winds, snake, bull and dingo encounters, not to mention fire and flood!

2012 an American woman was sentenced to 10yrs imprisonment for allowing her 11yr old child to walk five miles to school, alone!

AGNES SCHOOL CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

'NO CHILD
SHOULD HAVE
TO WALK MORE
THAN FIVE
MILES TO
SCHOOL'

The Education Exhibition also celebrates the centenary of the official commissioning of the Agnes School building now situated at the museum.

The Agnes School commenced life as Agnes River in 1890 principally for railway construction families. It closed in 1893 and reopened as Agnes in 1905 only to be burnt by bushfires in 1906. The school was then housed in a 2-room

cottage leased in Gassons Road.

The building was not officially commissioned as a school until 1912 when it was converted into the one-room classroom with porch you see today.

In 1968 a new school was constructed to im-

prove conditions and the old school became the storage shed. Agnes school closed in 1973.



STAND & DELIVER!



BY
DICK
STRAW

During the 1960s the State School at Grassy Spur was one of the few remaining one-teacher schools that still had a pony paddock where the horses ridden to school by the pupils, grazed during school hours.

No school 'bus in those days, pupils either walked, rode a pony or were driven in the family car.

As part of the timetable one day each week was set aside for Religious Instruction. A volun-

teer would drive from the nearest town to conduct a bible lesson for the children whilst the teacher hovered in the background to keep order if it was required.

The pony borne children had come prepared; they secretly brought water pistols or toy revolvers to school. During recess, the children re-saddled their ponies, tied handkerchiefs over their faces and rode out abreast across the road. They

'bailed up' the Religious Instruction teacher who, at that time, was the Presbyterian Minister Rev. Tom Waters from Meenianyan.

I was never told whether the 'highway robbers' took any of the Minister's worldly possessions as a ransom, but with some help from the teacher, he was released and able to deliver his message to the 'highwaymen of Grassy Spur'!

EDUCATION WEEK

At the end of May Grades 3 & 4 from Foster Primary School and Year 7 from South Gippsland Secondary College visited the Museum over 2 days as part of their focus on 'Change Over Time' and 'People Changing Community'

They were fascinated to learn of the differences between their schooling and the one-teacher schools, such as:-

~ going to and from school barefoot with shoes tied

around the neck, to ensure they were clean. Feet were wiped on the grass before the shoes were put back on
 ~ children riding on horseback, often 3-4 to a pony.
 ~ only one teacher and often 10-20 children in the school.



The children really enjoyed seeing the whole museum and the photos and comparing the changes over time.

All years were extremely responsive and it was a pleasure having them all. The newspaper reports were very encouraging and expressed the children's enjoyment of the visit.

Overheard: 'We had to walk from school but that wasn't far - not like the No More Than Five Miles'!

LOCATION GUIDE FOR CLOSED FOSTER & DISTRICT STATE SCHOOL SITES



Pick up a brochure and take a wonderful drive through the district!

NEW RAMP TO OUTSIDE AREA

During January of this year, Foster Rotary Club held a bbq in the Museum grounds, hosting Phillip Island Rotary Club. We opened the Museum for the visitors .

As a result of the evening Foster Rotary raised \$1000.00 which they donated to F.D.H.S.

The project chosen was a new ramp from the main building to the external area to allow better access for

those with disabilities, particularly in a wheelchair. The ramp rails will provide space for information plaques in the future.

The money also covered the rebuilding and strengthening of the wall between Lasseter's boat and the walk up to the back of the Museum.

Thanks to Reg Williams and associates for the construction and painting.

Jennifer Jones was guest speaker at a recent Foster Rotary Meeting. The Club was thanked for their generous donation and a presentation was given on the immediate past and present exhibitions plus where the museum is going in the future .

The brochures put out by the Museum were also highlighted resulting in a number of Rotarians undertaking interesting walk and drives!

FOSTER ROTARY

DONATION
TO

FOSTER &
DISTRICT
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY INC.

INFORMATION CENTRE

Monday 18 June -Sunday 24 June the Information Centre will be using the Museum whilst their floor is being retiled. The museum will be open on each of the days with volunteers to cover requests and taking money. The hours will still be the same with Marion Haupt opening each day at 9.00am.

GHOST REVIEW TEAM

This group have requested the opportunity to spend an evening at the Museum to investigate any possibilities of a 'presence'.

They will report their findings and what they do at our September meeting.

G.A.A.H.S.

Marion Haupt & Jennifer Jones attended the Gippsland Association of Affiliated Historical Societies (GAAHS) AGM at Warra-gul recently. It Included an interesting tour of historic buildings and the museum.

The 2013 AGM will be held at Foster.

CATALOGUING NETWORK

meets regularly at different museums to see how each museum operates and manages its cataloguing, to assist members with problems and to listen to experienced speakers.

The next meeting will be held at Foster Tuesday 26 June at 9.30am.



FOSTER & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

PO BOX 231 Foster VIC 3960

Emails:
secretary@promcountryhistory.org.au
enquiries@promcountryhistory.org.au
research@promcountryhistory.org.au

WE'RE ON THE WEB!!

**WWW.PROMCOUNTRYHISTORY.
ORG.AU**

President: Jennifer Jones
 V. President: Noela Cripps
 Treasurer: Norman Sparkes
 Secretary: Dr. Liz Rushen

PROM COUNTRY HISTORY



RESEARCH

Since we have been on the web book sales and research requests have increased considerably. Some of the requests are for the families of :-

- ~ William Robert Jackson
- ~ Walter Samuel Jackson
- ~ John Gunn
- ~ William Leslie Blanton
- ~ Frank Lyon(s)
- ~ Dutton St. Toora

Can anyone help with information/photos of any these families please?

In particular the Lyon(s) family and the naming of Dutton Street



FRANKLIN RIVER



FRANKLIN RIVER BY WILL RUMBLE

Have you ever seen the Franklin
 Where it tumbles wild and free
 Through forest covered mountains
 From Gunyah to the sea.
 Where the banks are clothed with wattles
 And the lyrebirds dance and call
 Where at night a ghostly silence
 Casts a weird spell over all.
 Far away the inlet beckons
 And the Prom lifts high its head
 But the river never heeding
 Ships and frolics in her bed.

The miles slip by and changes come
 The forests drop behind
 Through pastures green the river flows
 Her face benign and kind.
 So goodbye to the hills and glens
 The wattles and the birds
 Now from her waters cool and sweet
 Drink the thirsty dairy herds.
 Then slower still with sober mien
 She meets her destiny
 To softly link with one last sigh
 In the arms of mother sea.

The Foster & District Historical Society Inc. is a member of the South Gippsland Historical Network, an affiliated member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, has been appointed by the Public Record Office of Victoria as a Place of Deposit for non-permanent public records and is an accredited museum through Museums Australia (Vic).