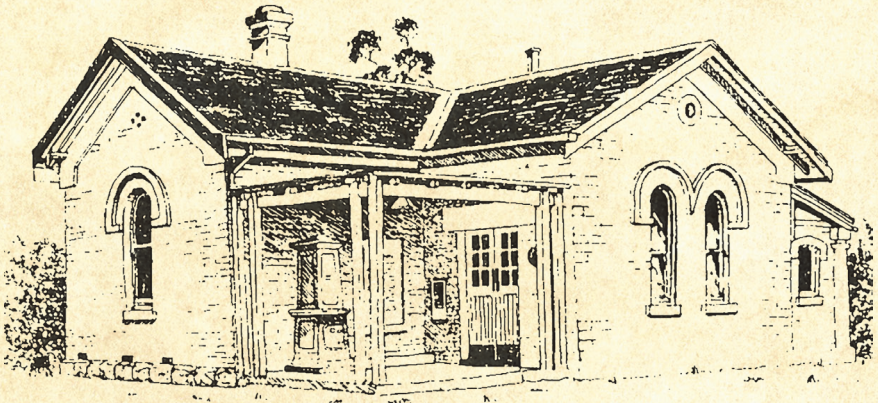


# MORNINGTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC



Corner Main Street and Esplanade, Mornington 3931

## NEWSLETTER

May 2023

Newsletter No. 299



# President's Report

Maintenance issues on our lovely old building are a continuing problem. As it is a Council building, we are at their behest to have rapid action taken. This sometimes takes years unfortunately.

We have been in discussion with Council regarding the Bills' Horse Trough. This is located on a corner of the entrance to the car park on Esplanade, opposite the Bay Rescue building. It has looked rather unloved for some time. The Council have had heritage advice on this and this gives us something positive to work towards. In the meantime, Val and Edna have cleaned it up and planted some bright flowers to give it a lift. We are hoping we can have an interpretive sign there to explain its presence.

You will notice that the building on the corner of Queen Street and Waterloo Place, Darriman will be demolished. This was built for the Downward family with the proceeds of a win at the races. In the 1950s the building was used by the CWA for a nursing home for elderly Mornington residents. This was one of the earliest nursing homes in Victoria, if not the country. Since then, it has been used by Council for various activities but it has always been on the cards to be removed for car parking. We are hoping to have an interpretive sign nearby to inform people what was there.

Always at this time of year, membership fees are due. Last year, after looking at our finances, we reluctantly decided to increase our fees. We do hope you understand. Fees are due by the end of June as you will see by the enclosed reminder.

*Diane White*



Bills' Horse Trough.



Darriman, on the corner of Queen Street and Waterloo Place.



# Memoirs of Rose Wilmshurst - *Lady's companion*

by Rose Wilmshurst (continued from the February 2023 Newsletter)

I well remember spending one of my “weeks” living it up at the Federal Hotel.

## The Daily Routine:

Miss Quarterman (Miss Beatie, I called her) was a wonderful housekeeper. She was responsible for the running of the household, and she had the loyalty of all the household staff. I remember that she had a very persuading way with the Cook, who was regarded as a “special person”. No one ever invaded her territory—the kitchen!

The general routine required the constant maintenance of the elaborate tableware and finely-crafted ornaments that were a feature of daily life.

All the fireplaces had fireguards and fenders of brass, while the steps of the grand staircases were edged with solid brass plates. All of these had to be polished every day; also the vast stores of silverware which were kept in the silver pantry.



Moondah c1920.

There was no gas or electricity. For lighting, kerosene Miller lamps were the order of the day for large rooms and halls. Some were hung from ceilings (as in the great hall) and worked on chains to raise or lower.

The Miller lamp consisted of a brass bowl which held a quart of kerosene, a round wick and funnel lamp glass fitted to the bowl. A brass hood threw the light down into the room. These also had to be polished every day, as also were the brass candlesticks.

Candles were the main lighting in the individual rooms. These were taken every morning, polished and refilled, and placed on a table in the front hall. At 5 PM each evening the lamps were lit and turned low; and as each person retired for the night they lit the candle and wended their way up the stairs in a candlelight procession.

Carpets (rich red) were cleaned by pieces of wet paper torn up and scattered over the floor to keep down the dust, then swept with a strong millet broom.

Hot water came from the big range in the kitchen, with a large fountain for kitchen and scullery use. There were chip heaters in the bathrooms, and jugs of hot water were taken to the various bedrooms at appropriate times.

...continued on page 5.

MORNINGTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

# Dates for Your Diary 2023

Website: [www.morningtondistricthistory.org.au](http://www.morningtondistricthistory.org.au)

Follow us on Facebook    Museum Phone (03) 5976 3203

*Visitors warmly welcomed*

All of these coffee mornings will be held at St. Marks Church Hall, Cnr. Barkly Street & Waterloo Place

**Tues 9th May @ 10.30am - \$10**

Julia Young speaking on her observations on Historical Societies on the Mornington Peninsula and what her job entails.

**Tues 13th June @ 10.30am - \$10**

Treasures - bring something with a story to tell to share. It can be a family heirloom or a photograph or a book.

**Tues 11th July 2 @10.30 - \$10**

Leonie Marshall and Lynne Emblin *The Street Names of Mornington*

**Tues 8th August \$10.30 - \$10**

Anthony Knight and Kate Klytie Pate's ceramics. A collection of these is held at Beleura.

**Tues 12th September - 10.30am (AGM)**

Our official reporting of the years activities and presentation of audited accounts. Election of office bearers and a cuppa afterwards.

## Seniors month and Victorian History Week

**Tues 10th October 10.30am \$10  
LESLIE MOORHEAD LECTURE**

Lorraine Smith *Journey of a lost Manuscript.*

Lorraine and her husband ran a bookshop in Warrnambool and this is the story of an unpublished manuscript found. The research took her overseas

*When an old parchment was found inside a copy of 'Alice in Wonderland' in a second-hand bookshop, everything about it was a mystery. Discovered to be an Elizabethan manuscript on vellum, this is the enthralling story of its travels from a hamlet in Yorkshire in 1583 to Warrnambool in 2013.*

*It is a journey with so many twists and lucky escapes it should be a novel – but this is a true story.*

**Sun 22nd October 10.30 from the Museum \$10  
A Township Walk with Janis**

**Sun 29th October 1.15 for 1.30 departure \$10  
Val's Cemetery Walk.** This takes about 1 and half hours. Recommend good walking shoes and appropriate clothing.

Museum open free for seniors on Sunday 22nd and 29th October.

No coffee morning in November, but December is members luncheon.

...continued from page 3.

The laundress had two 12-gallon coppers boiled by fire in a grate underneath, a mangle for bed linen and flat irons to do the ironing, which consisted of starched table linen, shirts, blouses etc. All this kept her fully occupied every day of the week.

Miss Beatie (the housekeeper) and I spent a lot of time together in between my duties with Nancy. Next to Sir James' morning room was Miss Beatie's storeroom and workroom, where we did the

flowers for the main rooms and vestibule (as it is now called). We made butter in an old hand churn (I was good at that). We made jam from the orchard fruit and took stock of stores, as everything that was ordered was sent to Frankston station and brought to Moondah by the head groom. He drove in every day and brought mail and stores.



*Moondah Gatehouse* a replica of the former Governor's residence in Parramatta NSW.

## **Changes Changes!**

From what I saw on my visit recently, I doubt if Moondah can ever be restored to its original dignity, as when I was there 74 years ago. I'm sure Mr Lauderdale would groan, too, if he saw it now!

It is a great shame the arched pillars and magnificent fireplace have been removed from the great hall. It has taken away the Spanish look

And of course the billiard room has lost its majestic appearance with huge windows, fireplaces and table taken away-but at least it still has a view of the sea.

Upstairs is a mess; the whole area has been torn apart. I am sure it could never be restored. But of course it all serves a different purpose now. Yet how one regrets the passing of that tranquil quietness, the soft carpets and the candlelight!

Then that outside painting! Whoever was responsible for covering it in that dirty grey?

Please-let it be repainted to its original virgin white! Then Moondah will surely rise, like Phoenix, from the dead grey ashes of its present desecration.

...Continued on the next page.

*...continued from page 5.*

*Dear Mr Osborne,*

*I thought this letter might explain the life as it was in my time there from 1908 to 1912. I was sad to leave when I did, but I went to Queensland with my sister who was being married-it was within the year 1913. I was also married, it was a case of two sisters married two brothers. I spent the next 30 years in Queensland. If you would like I could give you an account of the building upstairs and down as I knew it. If you're not interested please return this pamphlet.*

*Yours truly*

*Rose Vockensohn etc*

## **From the pages of *The Peninsula Post* 1928**

*We received a cutting from The Post from the Hobans and thought you may like to read it too.*

Dr. J.L. Edgeworth Somers, Medical Officer of Health to the Shire of Mornington, presented his annual report at last Thursday's monthly meeting. It read:

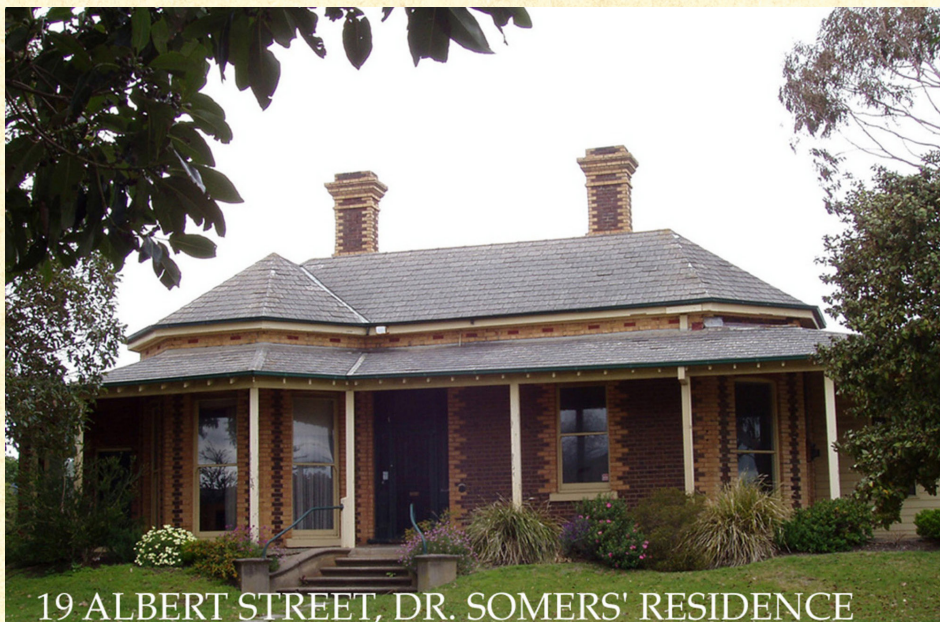
*The Shire Secretary, Mornington,*

*Sir, I have the honour to submit my medical report for the Shire of Mornington during the year ended 31st December, 1927. During this period there were 44 births, 23 males and 21 females. There were no multiple births and this fact may be taken as indicating a retrogressive tendency on the part of Mornington as in former years there has usually been at least one set of twins, and the high distinction of producing triplets has been achieved on several occasions in the past.*

*The psychology of parenthood is now being closely studied and it can be regarded as an established fact that the individual children of large families are better developed, healthier and more likely to be successful in life than those of smaller and one-child families.*

*This should give encouragement to parents who have to practice so much self-denial and self-repression in order to do justice to a number of children; and atone in some degree for numerous sacrifices and unavoidable tribulations.*

*The deaths of twelve persons occurred during the year, one of these being death by drowning (accidental), two were those of infants within a month of birth, and there was one death of a person living outside the shire, but whose death was registered in Mornington. Of the eight remaining deceased persons the oldest was 87 years and the youngest 57 years; only two were under 70 and one under 65 as above stated. Of the total deaths 7 were females. Cancer of the stomach caused one death, and there was no adult death from acute disease, nor was*



there one due to preventible disease.

*This somewhat crude analysis of the mortality figures shows a quite exceptionally low death rate for the population (3200). We have no tuberculosis in any form that I am aware of at present in our shire. The general health of the people may, without exaggeration, be described as magnificent. During the year there were six cases of Diphtheria (three in one family) and one of scarlet fever contracted, it is stated, in Rutherglen. There were no deaths.*

*There is nothing mysterious or even recondite about the laws of health; simplicity in living, moderation, in the widest sense of the word, and sobriety, are all that is required for the individual. The guarding of the health of the community taken as a whole is an equally simple matter (if the money is available). Good housing, pure air, pure watering food and the destruction all offensive matter, or at all events its removal, are the essentials of a healthy community life.*

*Signed J.L. Edgeworth Somers*

Food or thought and discussion as to what has changed.

- Diane

## **FOR SALE - Please contact the Museum:**

### **FIFTEEN YOUNG MEN**

*by Paul Kennedy* - Published by  
Penguin Random House \$25

### **THE WOLFDENE STORY -**

**The Families and Functions of a  
Mornington Historic House**

*by Joy Cullen \$10*

**A JOURNEY ALONG BALCOMBE  
CREEK** *by Winty Calder \$30*

**READY AND WILLING,  
WE STRIVE TO SAVE -**

**The story of the Mornington Fire  
Brigade 1917-2017**

*by Colin Fisher \$5*

**OUR BOYS AT THE FRONT -  
from the pages of *The Peninsula Post*.**

This award winning book including DVD  
disc on World War 1 is now reduced to \$25

**THE NAMES ON THE MORNINGTON  
HONOUR ROLL**

**Who were they?** *By Val Wilson \$15*

*Special Offer - Both Boys at the Front  
and Honour Roll \$30 together*

**WORLD WAR 1 POEMS**

*Selected from *The Peninsula Post* \$10*

**REV GEORGE COX - A MAN OF  
MANY PARTS** *by Joy Cullen*

*\$10 per copy plus postage.*



## **MEMBERSHIP FEES**

*Always at this time of year, membership fees are due. Last year, after looking at our finances, we reluctantly decided to increase our fees. We do hope you understand.*

*Fees are due by the end of June as you will see by the enclosed reminder.*

*We offer our respect to the First Peoples. The members of the Boon Warrung/  
Bunurong, past, present and future, the custodians of this land and waters.*

*Thanks to the Mornington Peninsula Shire for their support.*

Mornington & District Historical Society Inc. A00041916W

ABN 7515 1057 105 - PO Box 71 Mornington 3931

Museum: Corner Main Street and Esplanade

Open 1.30 - 4.30 Sundays or by appointment

Donations to the Historical Society of \$2 or more are tax deductible

### **Banking Details:**

Bendigo Bank BSB – 633 000

Mornington & District Historical Society Inc.

Account Number: 162 405 427

Please say what the payment is for.