

The Western Port Times

Grantville & Districts

Volume 4 Number 4

FREE

August 2021

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This magazine is a continuation of the original Western Port Times, which was published in Grantville from 1898 until 1908 by T. C. Monger, and from 1908 to August 1910 by Harold B. and J. A. Sullivan, at which date the premise is said to have been destroyed in a fire and everything lost. Publication never resumed.

At its peak, the paper was distributed from Flinders and Hastings on the Mornington Peninsula, to San Remo and Phillip Island, Inverloch and the Powlett region, through to Jumbunna and Loch, and as far north as Lang Lang.

This version of The Western Port Times is produced for the U3A Local History Group, based in Grantville.

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The Grantville Racing Club

Though the actual club lasted much less time, the racecourse endured for more or less 25 years. **on Page 10**

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A Passionate Passion Play

A 1953 staging of Christ's Passion by members of the local Italian community. **on Page 14**

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Lightning Strike

Joyce Albon learns the hard way not to stand under tall objects during a storm. **on Page 20**

This is a reproduction of a historical newspaper page from 1898. It features several advertisements, including one for 'GRANTVILLE General Printing Office', 'WESTERN PORT TIMES', and 'PHILLIP ISLAND and Bass Valley Advertiser'. There are also notices for 'POST OFFICE STORE, Grantville' and 'FIRE INSURANCE'. The page is densely packed with text and small illustrations.

This is a reproduction of a historical newspaper page from 1906. It features advertisements for 'GRANTVILLE General Printing Office', 'THE TIMES', and 'BRITISH CREAM SEPARATORS'. There are also notices for 'ADVERTISING MEDIUM' and 'Every description of Jobbing Work done at shortest notice'. The page includes a portrait of a man and various text-based ads.

This is a reproduction of a historical newspaper page from 1919. It features advertisements for 'BRITISH CREAM SEPARATORS', 'J. EASON'S CASH PRICE LIST', and 'FOXES AND DINGOES'. There are also notices for 'ADVERTISING MEDIUM' and 'READ THIS'. The page includes a portrait of a man and various text-based ads.

Dr. DALY,
Having removed from Bass to
QUEENSFERRY.
May be consulted daily at
Queensferry.

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Geoff_Guilfoyle@aanet.com.au

The Bass Valley U3A Local History Group is looking for photos and information on places of significance to our local history.

If you have anything you would like to share with us, we have the facilities to scan or photograph your items so they do not have to leave your possession.

Links to other historical groups

Bass Valley Historical Society: <https://bassvalleyhistoricalsociety.com.au>

Friends of Churchill Island Society: <https://focis.org.au/about-churchill-island/>

Grantville History: grantvillehistory.com.au

Hastings–Western Port Historical Society: <https://www.hwphs.org.au/>

Inverloch Historical Society: cv.vic.gov.au/organisations/inverloch-historical-society/ Also: <http://inverlochhistory.com/>

Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp Historical Society:

kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/

Korumburra & District Historical Society: Janet Wilson 5657 2267

or PO Bo 293, Korumburra 3950

Lang Lang & District Historical Society: langlang.net/historical.html

Leongatha and District Historical society: leongathahistory.org.au

Phillip Island & District Historical Society: <http://pidhs.org.au/>

Phillip Island Nature Parks, Churchill Island Heritage Farm Collection

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/churchill-island-heritage-farm#collection-records>

South Eastern Historical Association: seha.org.au

Western Port Historical Society Inc.: hwphs.org.au/

Wonthagi Historical Society: wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/

Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: secretary@wonthaggienealogy.org.au



From the *Great Southern Advocate*, Thursday 21 April 1898

Local Topics

Special Train.—In connection with the demonstration to take place on the Society's show grounds, Korumburra to day, a special train will leave for Outtrim and Jumbunna about 6 p.m. this evening.

Grand Ball.—The annual ball under the auspices of the Grantville and Jeetho Agricultural, Pastoral, and Horticultural Society, will be held in the Mechanics' Institute, Grantville, on Friday evening, June 3rd. Tickets at 5s. and 3s. 6d. may now be obtained from the secretary, Mr. A. Belfrage, Bass Valley, or any members of the committee.

Mutton Birds.—The season for taking the young mutton birds at Phillip Island has now arrived, as the birds are in full size. They will be cleaned, dressed and smoked for the winter. It is said they are splendid eating, and will come in very opportune in the winter time, when meat and other necessaries are not easily obtained by the Islanders.

Bush Fires Relief.—The total amount advanced by the Government to the sufferers in the recent bush fires is £16,000, distributed among 640 settlers. Applications for loans which were either refused or withdrawn numbered 191, and in addition, 154 were made by persons who did not proceed with them, and failed to offer any explanation to the Government on the matter.

No Potatoes at San Remo.—Potatoes are not to be had in San Remo lately unless by an odd fluke. A few arrived here the other day, and were sold at the rate of 14s 6d per cwt. Cannot anybody (says the Times), feel disposed to send some at a lower price, or are residents to wait until the next growth makes its appearance! There is also a great scarcity of other kinds of vegetables.

Koo-wee-Rup.—The Minister of Lands has arranged to visit Koo-wee-rup on Saturday, 23rd inst., for the purpose of inquiring personally into the claims of the village settlers to be given increased areas of land and other matters. Most of the blocks at present occupied by the settlers vary from 20 to 30 acres in extent, according to the quality of the soil.

Wonthaggi.—Dairying operations are entirely suspended at Wonthaggi. Little or no milking is being earned on, and the consequence is that all the butter factories have had to close. Mr. P. Daly has also suspended milking on his

farm. It will be very late next summer before milking comes into full swing again, as the late drought has had such a depressing influence that it will take a long time for the dairying industry to recover from the very severe losses that have been sustained.

Carriage of Coal.—At present the Railway department receives a bonus of 0¼d. per ton per mile from the Treasury for the carriage of Victorian coal, in order to make the departmental return 0¾d. per ton, the charge against clients for the carriage of the mineral being 0½d. The bonus of 0¼d. per ton was granted for two years, and that period will expire next October. The Railway department does not expect that the bonus will be continued after that date. It is said that the increased consumption of coal reduces the returns from the carriage of firewood, which, being of greater bulk, is a more remunerative article for the department to deal with. In view of the departmental expectation, which might be read to mean a more active interest in the question, the situation is one worthy of note, by those who have at heart the development of the Victorian coal industry.

From the *Church of England Messenger for Victoria and Ecclesiastical Gazette for the Diocese of Melbourne*, Friday 5 June 1891, page 102: Parochial Intelligence

Rev. Potter Injured

Grantville.—A painful accident happened to the Rev. H. Potter a few days ago. The reverend gentleman was riding near San Remo when his horse suddenly swerved, unseating Mr. Potter, whose foot in falling caught in the stirrup; the horse galloped away, dragging the unfortunate gentleman for some distance before his foot became free, the result being a broken arm and three broken ribs, besides other severe injuries about the head. When picked up Mr. Potter was quite unconscious. Dr. Wilson was at once sent for, and under that gentleman's skill and care the patient is improving as rapidly as can be expected under the circumstances. Wide spread sympathy is felt for the reverend gentleman, who is deservedly popular throughout the entire district. It is not likely that Mr. Potter will be able to resume work for some time, and under the circumstances the Bishops in Council has made a grant from the Bishop of Melbourne's Fund, to cover the travelling expenses, and to pay the stipend of a *locum tenens*.

From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 21 November 1917, page 2

State Elections

Mornington Seat

Mr Downward Returned

Majority of 686

The State elections passed off very quietly on Thursday last. The two candidates for the Mornington seat—Messrs A. Downward (the retiring member) and R. M. Anderson, were both liberals, and the result was the return of Mr Downward by a majority of 686. Polling proceeded quietly all day at the various polling centres, and the officials were never rushed.

The voting was as follows:—

	Downward	Anderson
Dromana	... 135	61
Flinders	... 70	63
Sorrento	... 66	71
Rye	... 46	9
Bittern	... 84	40
Red Hill	... 48	29
Crib Point	... 61	5
Poowong	... 41	92
Jumbunna	... 74	27
Loch	... 37	87
Jeetho	... 11	10
Outtrim	... 42	36
Nyora	... 29	30
Bena	... 49	28
Korumburra	... 220	365
Kongwak	... 44	13
Kardella	... 55	38
Mornington	... 328	219
Frankston	... 111	260
Hastings	... 143	68
Sommerville	... 89	132
Tyabb	... 36	46
San Remo	... 30	8
Cowes	... 66	91
Grantville	... 33	18
Woodleigh	... 41	27
Glen Alvie	... 30	9
Bass	... 53	9
Krowera	... 7	27
Lang Lang	... 152	18
Tooradin	... 57	15
Kooweerup	... 144	12
Yannathan	... 84	6
Pearcedale	... 12	39
Archie's Creek	... 48	14
Langwarrin N.	... 13	19
Dalyston	... 87	28
Dudley	... 30	28
Yallock	... 31	15
Kilcunda	... 21	9

Wonthaggi	... 431	440
Glen Forbes	... 14	24
Almurta	... 12	10
Corinella	... 25	2

FINAL

Downward ... 3,384

Anderson ... 2,698

Majority for Downward 686

Voting in 1914 — Downward, 3,735; Murphy, 2,193.

The following report was received too late for our last issue:—

“A meeting of the Yannathan branch of the Victorian Farmers’ Union was held in the Yannathan Hall on Friday, 2nd. A motion was unanimously carded by the branch to loyally support the sitting member, the Hon A. Downward and to use its best endeavors to secure his return on polling day. Several members present expressed the opinion that Mr Downward had at all times worked consistently in the House in the interests of the man on the land, and it would be unwise to support an untried city man when the old and tried member was again in the field, and willing to give his services in the producing interests, and the feeling of the meeting was that too many country representatives were city dwellers with large city interests.”

From the *Great Southern Advocate*, Friday 24 July 1891, page 2: Local Topics

Action Against a Council

An action for £3000 damages against the Shire of Phillip Island was concluded in the Second Civil Court on Tuesday last, before Mr. Justice A’Beckett and a jury of six. The plaintiff was Isaac W. Emery, grazier, of Bass, Western Port. Whilst riding along the San Remo road on the 8th July, 1890, his horse stumbled and fell through a culvert. The plaintiff’s ribs were broken, and he also sustained severe injuries to his body. The accident was attributed to the negligence of the council in allowing the culvert to get into disrepair. The defendant denied there had been any negligence on its part, and alleged contributory negligence against the plaintiff, who was well acquainted with the road, and might have avoided the accident by the exercise of ordinary care. The jury failed to agree upon a verdict, and were discharged. Dr. Madden and Mr. Bryant appeared for the plaintiff (solicitor Mr. F. Stephen, junr.); Mr Issacs and Mr. *[unclear surname]* for the defendant (solicitor Mr. H. H. Budd).

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 27 May 1959, Page 1

Kooweerup Theatre Closing

The "Wattle" Theatre in Kooweerup will be closing down after Saturday night's presentation. The management of the theatre has announced that falling attendances has made the decision necessary.

The theatre is conducted by Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay Mortimer of Kooweerup and has been operating for many years. Prior to their management, the theatre was owned and operated by the late Mr. James Mortimer, father of the present owner.

The closure of the theatre seems to be in line with what is happening generally throughout the areas, wherein television is in operation.

The entertainment provided by the theatre will be missed and many will remember meeting there on Saturday nights to discuss sporting topics of the day.

The closure of the theatre has its sad aspects but the relentless march of time has little consideration for the pleasures of a passing era.

Reluctantly we must bow to progress and wish the "Wattle" Theatre a sad farewell.

* * *

But wait!

Talk of the "Wattle's" demise proved slightly premature.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 17 February 1960

Wattle Theatre

KOOWEERUP

Will reopen soon under new management.
Lounge seats have been installed

WATCH FOR OPENING DATE

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 24 February 1960, Page 1

300 attend Theatre opening in Kooweerup

The Wattle Theatre Kooweerup was nearly packed on Saturday night when the theatre re-opened after a closure of some months.

The proprietor said after the show that he had been absolutely taken by surprise by the large crowd who had attended the show.

The show was scheduled to commence at 7.50 p.m. but due to the large crowd the start was delayed for some time.

Pictures will be shown in Kooweerup each Saturday night in future.

From the *Border Morning Mail and Riverina Times*, 28 August 1912, page 5

Lad's Thigh Shattered

Did Not Know The Gun Was Loaded

Wonthaggi, Tuesday.

The danger of persons leaving loaded firearms about was once again shown on [sic] serious accident. The lad, who is about 14 residing at Powlett River, met with a serious accident. he [sic] lad, who is about 14 years of age, and his cousin, who was on a visit to the farm, were playing with the gun on Saturday evening. It was then unloaded. The gun was the property of a farm hand who, anticipating a shot at a fox slipped a cartridge into the breech, but unfortunately did not make any further use of the gun. Next morning the boys again secured possession of the weapon, which, they still believe [sic] to be unloaded. They were toying with it when they were startled by a report, and young Hollope fell to the floor with his right thigh shattered, from the full force of the charge. The lad was immediately removed to the Wonthaggi Hospital. The surgeons are hopeful of saving the limb, but the wound is a most serious one.

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advertiser*, Friday 19 April 1918, page 3

Hospital Sunday Almurta Visited

Success attended the State Mine Band, under Bandmaster Cameron, and the hospital committee on their outing to Almurta on Sunday week. In new subscribers and collections £13 4s 9d was received. Mr J. Sweet was elected "Mayor of Almurta," or chairman of the proceedings for the afternoon. He said, in the course of an excellent speech, that the hospital knew no religion or politics, and all parties should work for its welfare. He compared the band's successful tour of the country to the "march of the Cameron men." (Applause)

Appetising refreshments were provided at Mr Chapman's hospitable home, and hearty cheers were given for Mrs and Miss Chapman, Mrs Sweet and the ladies of Almurta.

Appeals were made by Messrs Strong (secretary), and Asquith and Hasson, who explained fully the needs and requirements of the hospital.

An exhibition of staff-swinging was given by Band Serj-Major Crook.

Next Sunday North Wonthaggi will be visited.

From *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 29 December 1880

Phillip Island And Woolamai Shire Council

Thursday, December 23rd 1880.

Present, Councillors Stewart, Misson, Delaney, Kidd, Aldridge, and West.

Councillor Stewart was voted to the chair on motion of Councillors West and Misson.

The minutes of the annual and ordinary meetings were confirmed.

Outward correspondence was read and other correspondence received. [*sic*]

From Shire of Glenlyon advocating the imposition of a horse tax instead of tolls.—Not entertained, on motion of Councillors West and Aldridge.

From Chief Secretary, requesting returns of ratepayers.—information forwarded.

Government Statist, acknowledging receipt of information.

From Secretary to Flinders and Kangerong Shire, with account of auditor's expenses.—Received.

From Secretary of Public Works, calling the Council's attention to the non-payment of the Government Auditor's fees—Moved by Councillor Stewart, seconded by Councillor Delaney, and carried that Secretary reply to the Department that the payment was withheld pending receipt of a detailed account from the auditor.

Renewal of slaughtering licenses were granted to Messrs Turnbull, West, and Sloss.

Councillor Delaney presented a petition from ratepayers of Jeetho asking that a main road be cleared.—Referred to members for the riding.

The Clerk of Works reported on Swan Lake outlet.—The report was adopted, and to stand over till the fish are put in the Lake.

In re embankment at Nobbie's.—Report adopted, and tenders to be called for the bridge according to report.

On report of Clerk of Works tenders were ordered to be called for widening and deepening the outlet drain at Queensferry on motion of Councillors Stewart and Misson.

The valuer submitted the valuation, which showed a slight decrease on the previous year.—Councillor Aldridge moved that it be adopted, and that a rate be struck upon it at the next meeting.—Carried.

Payments to the amount of £387 4s. 10d. were passed.

The following tenders were accepted in committee:—Wm. Denne, £82 11s. 3d.; Gall and Co, £3 11s. 6d.; G. Coate, £17 1s.; J. Caldwell, £9 4s.

The Council then adjointed.

From the *Argus*, Tuesday 22 March 1927, page 3: Motoring

Road To San Remo

Alternative Road to Tooradin

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

For many years San Remo has been avoided by motor tourists because of the bad roads. Reconstruction work is now going on, and many miles of the road have been improved, but there is still much to be done before San Remo will become popular with many motorists.

After Oakleigh there is now a beautiful road to Dandenong, from there to Tooradin the road is in an exceedingly bad condition. Some repair work is proceeding very slowly at a point two miles from Dandenong, while there are one or two stretches from that point to Tooradin which have been recently repaired, but the remainder is in a neglected condition. From Tooradin to Lang Lang, the road metal is bare of blinding, and the jagged stones are severe on tyres. Considerable relief, however, can be obtained over this stretch by following the tracks motorists have made alongside the road.

From Lang Lang to Grantville the road is undergoing reconstruction, and under dry conditions the temporary deviations are in good order, but there are still some bad stretches before Grantville is reached. Beyond Grantville the road has been reconstructed, and a very fine gravel road is available for several miles, in fact, from where the newly formed portion near Grantville is reached, the road is very fair all the way to Bass.

At present there is a short stretch being remade at a point where the road turns to Corinella, but the temporary deviation is easily negotiated even in wet weather. For the last six miles into San Remo the road is poor to very bad, and the last four miles from Anderson to San Remo is pitted with pot holes, and should be negotiated in daylight.

The rough road between Dandenong and Tooradin can be avoided by travelling to Berwick, and at the foot of the big hill turn sharp to the right, passing the garage easily visible from the Prince's Highway; the hotel is on the left. This is quite an excellent road, and leads into Tooradin at the bridge.

When travelling from Tooradin to Berwick the motorist is likely to be confused where the road forms a "V"; for a short distance both roads are gravelled, but take the one bearing to the left. A signboard should be erected at this spot. The deviations adds little to the total distance between Tooradin and Melbourne, and is practically unknown except to local motorists.

From the *Wonthaggi Sentinel and State Town Miner*, Friday 21 October 21 1910, page 2

Meanwhile at Wonthaggi....

Local and General

A public meeting of all interested in the development of the State coal mine will be held in the Lyceum hall this (Friday) evening. Messrs. Prendergast M.L.A., and Jones M.L.C., will be present.

A miner named Thos. McCallum sustained concussion of the spine through a fall of coal in No.8 shaft on Monday last.

The "Star Serenaders" will make their first appearance at Henry's Hall on Friday evening next, under the management of Mr. Horace Lingard. Patrons are assured of a first-class performance, and the latest songs and dances will be introduced. An entire change of programme is announced for the following evening.

From 28th October till 3rd November inclusive, tickets at holiday excursion fares will be issued to Melbourne from all stations on the Nyora-Wonthaggi line. The tickets will be available by all trains and are for return by any train from 29th October till 26th November inclusive.

Many complaints have been made of late regarding thefts of timber and iron from buildings in the course of erection. Mr. Matthews, contractor for the Government cottages, has been a heavy loser in this respect, and many other builders have also suffered considerably. We have been informed that a number of prosecutions are contemplated.

Our stock of Men's Clothing is Large, our Quality Good, our Prices Low. Wishart's Universal Providers, bottom end of Graham-street.

At a meeting of the Powlett branch of the P.L.C. on Friday evening last, the question of holding meetings on Sunday was discussed. Eventually it was decided that Sunday should be the day of meeting, and that meetings should be held in the open air during the summer months.

Abrahamson, Crocker and Hangar report the following market quotations:—Butter 10 ³/₄d per lb., bacon 8d per lb., larger qualities pork [unclear amount] per lb., veal 3d per lb., potatoes 5s 7d per cwt. At Thursday's sale the supply of produce was poor owing to the continuous bad state of the roads, producers being unable to forward the usual consignments. A quantity of furniture and effects was sold at low prices.

The Minister of Mines stated on Tuesday that extensive boring operations are now in progress in the Kirrak basin, east of the State Coal Mine reservation, with a view to ascertaining the extent of the coal reserve in the area. The engineers are now boring within two and a half miles of Inverloch. When the ground has been thoroughly tested the Government will determine its policy with regard to the question as to whether these coal deposits shall be worked by the State or by private enterprise.

Mr. J. Visbord, the Graham-street tailor, is now offering a special sale of gentlemen's high-class materials at prices ranging from [unclear amount] upwards. A perfect fit is guaranteed with every suit.

The officer in charge of the Department of Mines laboratory (Mr Bayly) has furnished the Minister with a progress report on the result of a number of boiler tests which he has been carrying out to ascertain the heating values of the Powlett River coal in the form of briquettes. In the course of his remarks Mr. Bayly says — "With regard to the briquettes made from slack, tests have proved an unqualified success for boiler use. The figures given here show that in three cases the evaporative value obtained is higher than that of the carefully screened coal. All the tests have been made as far as possible under the same conditions, and every caution taken to ensure accuracy."

Particulars of a mishap that occurred at 10 minutes past 10 o'clock a.m. on Saturday at Mackenzie, on the Powlett line, were received on Monday at the Spencer-street headquarters of the railway department. It appears that as the engine of the 9.30 a.m. mixed train was settling back, after taking in a supply of water, it bumped into the carriages with some force. There were 20 passengers on the train. Mrs. Briggs sustained a severe bruise on the back of the head, and Mrs. Birch received a shock in consequence of the [unclear word] of a package from the rack of the car. The driver explains that the collision was due to the wheels of the engine skidding when the Westinghouse brake was applied.

A general meeting of members of the Wonthaggi Racing Club will be held this (Friday) evening at 7 o'clock in the Lyceum

(continues on Page 8)

Meanwhile in Wonthaggi... (continued from Page 7)

Hall, Graham-street.

At a meeting of the Presbyterian Ladies' Committee held on Wednesday last at Mrs. John Mckenzie's residence. Final arrangements were made for the social to be held in the Lyceum hall next Monday evening. It was also decided to help the church building committee by holding a Xmas Fair on the three first days of December.

The Traders' Association first annual plenum will be held on November 9th. at Daly's paddock, close to the Powlett river and near Heslop's farm. An auction sale of refreshment booths, fruit and lolly stall [*sic*] will be held on Friday next.

A communication dealing with the observance of the Wednesday half-holiday has been forwarded to us for publication. It has reference to the hours worked by a number of hairdressers' assistants and bears three signatures. While we are willing at all times to use our column in the interests of the workers, we must decline to publish the letter at this time.

A meeting of members of the State mine cricket club was held on Tuesday evening last. It was decided to put down a concrete wicket on the recreation reserve and gravel practice pitch on the practice ground, at the west end of Graham street.

On Tuesday evening last at Anderson's Corner Mr. Sweatland delivered his well known lime light lecture on "How a great newspaper is produced." The lecture was held in the Y.M.C.A. field tent, under the chairmanship of Mr. Daileyshire Roberts. The audience was a most appreciative one, and the lecturer held their interest from start to finish and dealt with the secrets of newspaper production from the unapproachable editor down to the poor little "devil."

A contract has been let for the erection of a residence for the general manager of the State mine. Mr. G. S. Matthews, who erected the miners' cottages, is the successful tenderer, the price being [*unclear amount, looks like £2590*]

At the Progress Association committee meeting on Monday evening the secretary was asked what amount of money the Association had in hand. Mr. Mesley said he could answer that question without consulting his books—the amount was nil. He said the Association had not received sufficient support for the amount of business transacted on behalf of the public. During the past fortnight he had written 32 letters on public business. The

total number of financial members was only 25 out of a membership of over 100, and he thought that unless more interest was taken by the members it would be useless trying to carry on. The subscription was 1s per quarter, and if members would not pay that amount voluntarily he could not be expected to "chase them up" for it. Unless more support was forthcoming in future he would resign his position as secretary. After several suggestions had been made as to the best method of raising funds, the matter dropped.

Wishart's universal providers, bottom end of Graham-street, is the place for Stoves and Ovens.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 19 March 1919: Corinella

Meanwhile At Corinella...

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

The youngest son of Mr E. Albon fell from a tree and fractured his arm whilst playing at school. He was driven to Loch, 20 miles, but the doctor there sent him to the Children's Hospital, Melbourne, [*Editor's note: the next two sentences are placed out of order in the original. Corrected here*] where by means of the x-ray it was found that a small bone in his arm had been broken also. It is expected that about four weeks will elapse before he can leave the hospital.

Mr Freane, a returned soldier, and his wife had a narrow escape [*sic*] last week. The horse shied at some sheep on the road, capsizing the jinker and smashing it. Luckily for them, they both fell in the hood which saved them from getting much hurt.

Dr. Ruddle and his wife, from Dalysesford, have been spending their holidays at Melrose farm, Corinella.

Mr J. Caughey is building a kiln at Corinella for drying chicory. There are some good crops here, but the acreage is less than usual. At one time chicory was grown on Phillip Island only, but now it is grown on French Island; in fact, most of the settlers there depend on it for their main crop, the price ranging from £20 to £40 per ton dried, and a fair crop will yield about a ton and a half to the acre of dry chicory.

Two persons escaped last night (Sunday) from the Penal Settlement at French Island in a dinghy, which was found on the beach near Lang Lang. They took a rudder from a motor launch so that it could not be used. The warders made a makeshift one and went in pursuit of them.

From the *Frankston and Somerville Standard*, Friday, 20 January 1922

The Early History of Westernport

(Written Specially for "The Standard.")

In order to fittingly commemorate the early settlement of Western Port, a movement has been inaugurated to erect a memorial cairn at Rhyll, the scene of the first definite settlement by Captain Wright, on 3rd December, 1826, and an energetic committee is endeavouring to materialise the scheme.

To this end, on the 11th and 12th inst., illustrated lectures were delivered in the Hall at Cowes by Sir James Barrett, chairman of the National Parks Association, and Mr. Chas. Long, M.A., senior inspector and publication editor of the Education Department.

His Excellency the Governor occupied the chair, Lady Stradbroke also being present. His Excellency was received at the Hall by a guard of honor consisting of the Dandenong troop of Boy Scouts, and opened proceedings by introducing the lecturers in a brief but comprehensive speech, in which he expressed pleasure at being present upon what should prove to be an historic occasion. The Governor emphasised the necessity for establishing memorials of this nature, as otherwise the noble work done by early pioneers would soon be forgotten by succeeding generations.

Sir James Barrett commenced his address by contrasting the terms upon which a party immigrated to Van Diemen's Land in 1816 with those that prevail now, and pointed out that we who have entered into the heritage left by the pioneers should be grateful and do something to perpetuate their memory. He was glad that so much had already been done under the auspices of the Education Department and the National Parks Association in placing memorials along the routes of the explorers of Victoria. The war had interfered with the movement, but the time had come for continuing it.

Sir James Barrett then showed lantern pictures of the various memorials that had been erected to commemorate the discoveries of Flinders and Mitchell. He advocated the doing of something in the same way for Hume and Macmillan. The immediate object, however, was to commemorate Bass, Grant, and Murray by the erection of a cairn, bearing a tablet at Rhyll, the north-eastern extremity of Phillip Island, which was closely identified with the visits to Western Port of those early navigators.

Mr. Chas. Long, M.A., who stands in the first rank as an authority upon Australian history, aptly elucidated his lecture by the use of a series of charts and maps, showing both the progress of the discovery of the various settlements and the charting of the coastline.

"In the most wonderful voyage that was ever undertaken," Dr. George Bass, on 5th January, 1798, in a whaleboat with a crew of six blue-jackets, first discovered Western Port. Following this, in March, 1801, Lieut. Grant, in the "Lady Nelson," planted various products on Churchill Island, some of which grew well. On 5th January, 1802, Murray discovered Port Phillip Bay, having previously entered Western Port, where he found Grant's "garden."

The French captain, Hamelin, next visited the port in "Le Naturaliste," after which a very good French chart was published.

Others whose journeys brought them to the spot were a party from Collins' camp in 1803; Surveyor General Oxley in 1804; Dumont d'Urville, a French captain, in 1826. Governor Darling, aroused to action by the fear of French occupation, sent Captain Wright, with 20 convicts, who founded Fort Dumareque (now Rhyll) on 3rd December, 1826, on the north-east of the island, and later at Corinella on the mainland. When fear of a French invasion had passed, the convicts and soldiers were withdrawn in 1828.

Amongst the charts and maps shown on the screen were Bass's route in the whaleboat; Grant's eye sketch of the south coast; Grant's chart; Murray's route to Western Port; Murray's chart of Western Port and Port Phillip; and a modern map of the same. Lantern slides were also screened of early Sydney Harbour, the "Lady Nelson" entering Port Phillip, Sealers' House on Phillip Island in 1826, and the well at Rhyll, which is to be the site of the proposed monument.

At the conclusion, a vote of thanks was moved by Mr. McPhee, President of the Shire, including his Excellency the Governor and the two lecturers. The lantern was manipulated by Mr. Noel Barrett.

Mr. Long expressed his thanks to Mrs. A. Smith in supplying him with material for very many of his slides.

The Grantville Racing Club

by

Geoff Guilfoyle

For a sporting event which lasted so long and proved so popular, very little is known about the Grantville Racing Club and race-track, though no one questions William Lang, owner and licensee of the Grantville Hotel, being the leading light in its establishment and operation.

*Mr. W. B. Lang, of Grantville is energetically pushing on with the formation of his racecourse. In addition to clearing and fencing all round the ground, Mr. Lang has had the course ploughed, which is to be laid down with grass. The opening meeting will likely be held about the New Year.*¹

In September 1895, the Grantville Racing Club was registered with the V.R.C. and on the 30th a meeting of the newly formed club was held to elect stewards and office bearers.* The first race meeting was fixed for Monday 30 December 1895.²

The program consisted of 7 races: Hurdle Race (1½ miles); Maiden Plate (six furlongs, weight-for-age); Pony Race (six furlongs); Grantville Handicap (1½ miles); Members' Welter Handicap (one mile); Westernport Handicap (five furlongs), and a Hack Race (no details provided).³

Joseph White, in *100 Years of History* [Shire of Bass, 1974] provides what is probably an accurate description of the new course, though his source is unclear: *...five furlongs in circumference. One feature was that the horse could not run off as the track was fenced in on both sides. The inside fence had a top rail with sloping sides – easily erected brush fences and hurdles were provided. It is said that this course was the best for miles around. The track was well graded and drained.*

The *Great Southern Advocate* detailed the runners and race results of the inaugural meeting, including the unexpected victory of Moonlight over Millicent in the Members' Handicap: *The secretary, Mr W. B. Lang, as previously notified in these columns has gone to a great deal of expense in preparing the course and accessories, and he has no reason to feel disappointed with the way the public*

treated the first meeting. Everything worked smoothly, and the racing was good.

*And further on... All the officials worked well together and the day's racing passed off splendidly.*⁴

The unexpected victory of Moonlight over Millicent had a post-race sequel in the banning for life of the jockey of Moonlight, James Quinlivan, for (unspecified) malpractices. A December 1896 application to the V.R.C. by Quinlivan for a removal of the ban was unsuccessful. Advised to wait six months, he tried again in August 1897 and this time succeeded in having the ban lifted.⁵

The Grantville races became a feature on the country racing calendar. Racing seems to have taken place around four times a year, the dates varying from year to year.

April 1899 saw some significant changes to the office bearers with local M.L.A., Alfred Downward, filling the role of president of the Club and Councillors Bowman, Sloss and Anderson becoming vice-presidents. Andrew Belfrage assumed the job of assistant secretary to William Lang's secretary. Local G.P., Dr. Healy, joined the committee. Only Anderson and Bothwell and, naturally, Lang, remained of the original stewards and officebearers.⁶

That the course was said to be "the best for miles around" and the track "well graded and drained" may have been a tad disingenuous.

*...and the day would have been most enjoyable had it not been for the numerous falls at the eastern corner of the course, where either the turn was too sharp or the ground not sufficiently leveled. Out of the eight horse events there were falls in three of them, one jockey, named W. Brace, was rather severely injured in the hack race, but is now nearly right again. It was freely expressed that something ought to be done to the course before next meeting, so as to prevent accidents occurring in future.*⁷

It appears nothing was done as 13 months later the first and only race-related fatalities took place, when on Wednesday 1st March 1905 a jockey riding a pony named Addie, owned by Charles McLaughlin of Jumbunna, was killed. An inquiry held before J. T. Paul, J.P. on 3rd March ruled it an accidental death.

Constable Stephenson in his testimony deposed: *I saw four ponies start in a race*

(continues on Page 11)

* Stewards: E. M. Dixon J.P., S. Wilson, C. Williams, P. Le Roux, C. Jackson, F. Gibson, C. Anderson, S. Keys, George McGowan. Judge: E. M. Dixon, J.P. Starter: T. Horner. Clerk of Scales: John Payne. Clerk of Course: J. Bothwell. Secretary: William B. Lang.

*The Grantville Racing Club (continued from Page 10) and after going several furlongs one [unclear word] pony ran into the fence and saplings. I proceeded to the place and found a jockey hurt. I had him conveyed to the Grantville Hotel. His name was Henry Colin Adkins. About 7 p.m. I was informed he had died. I examined the body. I found the left eye and forehead bruised; the skull had a fracture on the left side of the head near the left ear. There was also a fracture at the base of the skull admitting two finger points. The body had no bruising. On the left thigh was a large bruise, but the legs were not broken... He concluded with, I have previously reported the course being dangerous to the turn where the deceased pony ran off as too sharp.*⁸

It seems the pony also perished, but little thought was given to poor Addie.

Presumably this prompted a change in the course to improve safety. Given the nature of the sport, however, even the best designed track can't prevent all accidents.⁹

It isn't clear if the racecourse was used for local athletic competitions or gymkhanas. Grantville already had an existing recreational ground, so probably not. However, there is on record an occasion when a less formal contest took place, and doubtless not for the first or last time:

*The challenged foot race between B. Eden and C. Emery, came off on Tuesday afternoon on the Grantville race course, and resulted in a win for the former. At the start Emery ran in a zig-zag fashion but came along better at [the] finish. Eden ran a good straight race and beat his opponent by about two feet.*¹⁰

The coming of the Nyora-Wonthaggi railway and the rapid decline of Grantville coupled with the start of the Great War saw the suspension of racing and the disbanding of the Grantville Racing Club.

Racing started again sometime after the mid-1920s, becoming an annual event. The Grantville Racing Club was refounded (without W. B. Lang) around this date.

On Saturday 7 January 1928 racing took place at Grantville hosted by the Grantville Racing Club, in aid of the Wonthaggi District Hospital.¹¹ Another race meeting was held at Grantville in January 1929, but it isn't clear from the sources whether it was carried out under the auspices of the Grantville Racing Club or the South Gippsland Racing Association. The *Age* says the former whilst the *Argus* backs the latter.¹²

Matters were clearer with the 1930 races. From the *Age*, 20 January 1930, page 5: *The*

Grantville Race Club held its annual race meeting on the Grantville racecourse to-day. The racing was conducted under the South Gippsland Racing Association. The attendance was small.

The club existed in diminished form as a subsidiary of the S.G.R.A. It didn't help. Australia was now entering the first full year of what would be known as the Great Depression and there would never be another annual race meeting. The Grantville Racing Club, it seems, fell at the last hurdle.

Footnotes:

1: *Mornington Standard*, 3 October 1895, page 2: Phillip Island.

2: *Great Southern Advocate*, 10 October 1895, page 3: Sporting.

3: *Great Southern Advocate*, 5 December 1895, page 2: Advertising; 19 December 1895, page 3: Grantville Races.

4: *Great Southern Advocate*, 9 Jan. 1896, page 3: Grantville Races.

5: *Weekly Times*, 28 March 1896, page 19: Sporting Notes; *Evening Journal*, 22 December 1898, page 3: Victoria; 4 August 1897, page 3: Intercolonial Sporting.

6: *Great Southern Advocate*, 14 April 1899, page 3: Sporting.

7: *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 5 February 1904, page 2: Grantville Sports.

8: Paul, J. T., J.P., Magisterial Inquiry, 3 March 1905, Proceedings of Inquiry, Crown Law Offices, 7 March 1905.

9: For instance, see *Argus*, 15 March 1910, page 4: Grantville Races. A horse, Plain Tom, fell and the jockey received a severe shaking.

10: *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 27 March 1903, page 2: Local and General News.

11: *Great Southern Advocate*, 22 December 1927, page 2: *Age*, 9 January 1928, page 6: Grantville.

12: *Age*, 17 January 1929, page 6: Handicaps; 21 January 1929, page 6: Country Race meetings; *Argus*, 21 January 1929, page 14: Grantville Races.

Lord Grey

Not content to stick to the local racetracks, William Lang ran his horses on metropolitan courses – with some success.

*...The defeat of Gangway in the Jumpers' Flat Race at Aspendale yesterday, when he started a warm favorite, was not palatable to a section of the onlookers, who continued hooting as the horse was ridden back to scale. Gangway won so easily at Sundown on Saturday that, even with an extra 14 lb., the race looked a good thing for the New Zealander. He was half a dozen lengths in front entering the straight, but, in the hands of R. Lewis, he died away in the run home, and Lord Grey, finishing fast, won by two lengths... The winner, Lord Grey, is owned by a good sportsman, Mr. W. B. Lang, of Grantville, and is by Friar Tuck from Lady in Grey. He was ridden by G. Grace, who has been out of luck for a considerable time. (The *Age*, Thursday 4 September 1913, page 11: To-day's Fixtures.)*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 25 June 1921, page 4

The Rural World

Productive Powlett River District

Dairying Activities
Marked Success On Small Areas
by "Agrestic"

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

Taking into consideration its comparatively rugged character, one of the most closely settled portions of the State is that generally designated the Powlett River district which is occupied by about 500 farmers, the great majority of whom are engaged in the dairying industry.

Sheep raising also receives attention, but is confined almost exclusively to the larger holdings along the coast, or, as it is more popularly known, the front. The principal sheep breeders are Messrs Hollins Bros., P. J. Daly, Hodnott, *[sic]* Dwyer, Carew, and, further out, Alexander Scott and Co.

The flocks consist of crossbreds, on which are used Lincoln, Border Leicester and other rams of the English breeds. The aim of the breeders is twofold. They want to secure good fleeces of wool, and, at the same time, produce carcasses which will appeal strongly to the butchers.

Early Days

The opening up of the district was begun between 40 and 50 years ago, when the conditions were vastly different from what they are today. The present facilities in the way of railway communication with Melbourne, good roads, bridges, and so on, were, of course, non-existent, and practically the only manner of entering the locality was by taking the coach from Frankston to Hastings, thence proceeding by boat to San Remo, and, after that, pushing along as best one might.

The district was open right down to Cape Patterson, there was very little fencing, and all the back country was a virgin forest. Among the earliest settlers were Messrs John J Daly, who arrived on the scene about 44 years ago; K. Kent, H. and J. Holle, Cock and M. Griffiths.

Mr Daly, only a fortnight ago, had a clearing sale, and intends to make his future home at Oakleigh. A few years after he had taken up land in the district he was visited by his brother, Mr P. J. Daly, who was then residing at Dandenong. So impressed was the latter by the stock raising possibilities of the country that he determined to establish himself in it,

and, for 33 years, he has been one of the most enterprising and valued settlers.

It is to men of his type that the State owes much of the success which it has achieved. Many of the movements designed to promote the advancement of the district were initiated by him, and at all times he has labored enthusiastically and unselfishly to bring about happier conditions for his fellow men. Nobody in the whole of the Powlett River area is held in higher esteem than Mr Daly, and, in recognition of his generous public services a few years ago, he was made the recipient of a beautiful illuminated address.

Progressive Settlers

On the whole the local settlers are a progressive community, and there are indications that the future is going to be particularly bright. Many of them are quite young men, possessed of plenty of energy, and an evident desire to make the best possible use of their opportunities.

For example, at a largely attended meeting held in the public hall at Dalyston – so named, by the way, in honor of Mr P. J. Daly – on June 17, it was decided to inaugurate a local herd testing society and a committee was appointed to organise monthly educational gatherings under the auspices of the Agricultural Society on the lines of those conducted by the branches of the Agricultural Bureau in South Australia.

For a long time the district was held back through the lack of rapid and cheap transit to the metropolitan area, and it was not until after 20 years' ceaseless agitation that the railway was continued from Nyora to Woolamai. The settlers, with Mr Daly at their head, had to put up a guarantee of £600 against loss, purchase the land through which the line was to run, and hand it over free of charge to the Government. Then, about 11 years ago, with the exploitation of the coal fields at Wonthaggi, the railway was carried on through Anderson, Kilcunda, and Dalyston to the first-named place. In

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The Rural World (continued from Page 12)

the meantime the settlement of the district has proceeded steadily, and it is stated that practically the whole of the productive land has been taken up.

People from other parts of the state are constantly inquiring for holdings, but few, if any, are offering. In some cases there are blocks which would readily find new owners if only there were houses and outbuildings upon them.

Generally speaking, the properties range from 80 to 120 acres in extent, and remembering the insignificant amount of cultivation done on many of them their productiveness is really surprising. During the spring and the early summer the countryside presents a most pleasing appearance, and even at the present time there is abundant and convincing evidence of the fertility of the soil and its fodder-yielding capabilities.

A Wider Range

The average rainfall in the district is between 40 and 50 inches, and it is rather more than sufficient to meet requirements, especially in the winter months, when the ground becomes saturated. On the higher land the drainage appears to be good, but, unfortunately, the superabundant moisture gradually carries away with it those elements which are necessary to keep the soil sweet and productive. Hence, it has been found that there is a tendency for the land to become sour, and *[unclear words]* headway.

These undesirable conditions, however, it has been conclusively demonstrated, can be easily overcome by liming occasionally, rotational cropping, and judicious manuring. So far the settlers have not properly realised the importance of liming, but the day is not far distant when they will, and then the carrying capacity of much of the land will be increased considerably.

At present it costs £2 10s a ton to land lime at Dalyston. This is regarded by some of the land holders as prohibitive, but the more astute men have ascertained that it pays handsomely, even at that figure, to apply (say) 5 cwt. of lime an acre once every two or three years.

Not only does the lime sweeten the soil and improve its mechanical condition, but it enables the fullest benefit to be obtained from any artificial or organic manure which may be distributed. Oats are the principal cereal crop grown, and where the soil conditions are satisfactory, they do very well. Rape

produces a big bulk in propitious seasons. Millet is another popular crop. Mangolds and swede turnips thrive amazingly except, in the case of the former, when the late autumn is very dry, as it was this year, and the aphides get busy. The various clovers, cocksfoot, rye and other imported fodders also do splendidly.

Methods of Production

Rape and millet are grown largely for topping off lambs, and serve the purpose admirably. Just now there are some capital stands along the "front." As a rule the seeding for swedes is done in January. The land is worked down to a very fine tilth, and the richer it is the better the crop is likely to be. The seed is sown through the ordinary drill, in rows about 2ft. apart, as this enables the soil to be kept loose and open, and the weeds to be destroyed with the scarifier. The thinning is performed by hand and is rather a tedious job, but it is well worth while. Returns of up to 50 tons to the acre have been harvested.

Mr T. Mesley, from half an acre, obtained ample to meet his own needs, and, in addition, sold £40 worth. Many of the roots went four to the hundredweight. Pigs, sheep and cows all have a hearty appreciation for swedes, and do well on them. Sheep will clean up the last vestige of them in a field. Cow peas have been tried by Mr Mesley, and he observed that they had a marked influence upon the flow of milk.

Different settlers who were asked by the writer why the cultivation of swedes and mangolds was not undertaken more generally, referred to the extra work involved by the hand thinning, and, in respect to the swedes, the possibility of aphides wiping out the crop. When further pressed, however, they agreed that where the land was suitable, it would pay every farmer to put in small areas, and that, no doubt, the principal reason why they were not grown more extensively was that the imported grasses and herbage did so happily that the folk were disinclined to be bothered with the roots.

"As a matter of fact," remarked one wise and shrewd pioneer. "Nature is altogether too kind to us here. Crops grow so freely that we are too lazy to exert ourselves so that we might secure still better returns from our land and our herds. It would be a good thing for us as individuals, and for the district as a whole, if nature, as it does in Canada, the southern portion of New Zealand and

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The Rural World (continued from Page 13)

in other parts of the world compelled us to make special and adequate provision to carry our animals through the more trying period of the year."

In the Hills

For the opening up of the back country Messrs P. J. and John Daly were primarily responsible, and, naturally, they have watched the process of settlement there with the keenest interest. A tract of approximately 3000 acres four miles from Dalyston was handed over to the Agricultural College Trustees, and, in due course, was subdivided into areas of about 100 acres each, which were leased to various tenants who desired to engage in dairying.

Most of the lessees were men having plenty of grit and determination, and, by working hard a number of them gradually put by sufficient to enable them to purchase substantial holdings elsewhere. These included Messrs Alf Ellis, Green Bros., O'Halloran, Ed. Hayes, T. Truin, and D. and J. Milne. Among the present block holders are Messrs Nugent, Oakley Bros., J. Daly, Hunt, Graham, Anderson and Hall.

Owing principally to the broken nature of the country the amount of cultivation done is not great, and the lessees rely almost entirely for the sustenance of their cows on the introduced fodders, including cocksfoot, rye, clovers, etc.

The herds average from 25 to 30 head each, and are of mixed breeds. The animals, the writer was informed, are milked for between eight and nine months annually, and are spelled during the latter part of the winter. So deep and fatherly is the interest taken in these settlers by Mr P. J. Daly that they have come to be known as his "family."

Practically all of the cream produced in the district goes to the Co-operative Butter Factory at Archie's Creek, which is co-operative in the truest sense, and during the flush of the season puts out about 18 tons of butter a week. The factory has been in operation about nine years. It is managed by Mr T. Stephenson, and the directors are Messrs W. J. Hollins, D. M'Rae and C. F. Sibley.

Mr Stephenson is fully alive to the importance of herd testing, and never misses an opportunity to impress upon the suppliers, who number approximately 350, the desirableness of regularly weighing the milk yielded by their animals, and having the butter fat content determined.

The factory, at all times, is ready to undertake the latter work. A good deal of testing is now being done, but nothing like so much as there ought to be, and as there would be if the dairymen were properly alive to their own interest.

* * *

From the *Advocate*, Thursday 16 April 1953, page 23

A Passionate Passion Play

New Australians Stage
Passion Play At Wonthagga

A Passion Play, staged by members of the Italian community in St. Joseph's Hall, on Good Friday night, attracted a large and enthusiastic audience.

The various scenes of Christ's Passion were portrayed from the triumphal entry into Jerusalem to the Resurrection.

The role of Christ was played by Michele Morfea with dignity and restraint, his well modulated voice and clear diction adding conviction to his performance.

An unforgettable interpretation of Judas was given by Franco Terranova, the scene of his final despair and suicide being an outstanding piece of acting.

Domenico Gatto gave a satisfying performance as the self-righteous, hypocritical Caiphas, while Georgio Smania brought an authentic mixture of authority and vacillation to the part of Pontius Pilate.

In the part of the Blessed Virgin, Maddalena Zappa was sincere and appealing, while the parts of the Apostles, Peter, James and John, the Roman guards, etc., were competently acted.

There were some clever stage effects, notably in the scene of Judas's suicide, and the Resurrection.

The performance was ably produced by Mr. Domenico Gatto, assisted by Gastone Capovilla.



**For bronchial coughs, take
Woods' Great Peppermint Cure, 1/6**

From the *Argus*, Saturday 12 July 1890, page 4

On and About French Island A Chapter of Sport (So Called)

by Telemachus

My instincts do not ring true to the sportsman's many tests. The cold of the long night watch is to me vexing, and the patience which sits monumental at the end of a rod is incomprehensible; the cry of hare – or even rabbit – and the mute appeal of drying eyes ever painful. Pigeon shooting is bird-murder deprived of all the virility of true sport, made easy to suit an effeminate time. And it is quite impossible to shoot and think, or rather to shoot, think, and remember.

And yet we went a-shooting, and on French Island of all places in colony or continent, and if it please you I will tell the story of that shooting. The game was described as various. There were ducks, teal, widgeons, and “hard-heads” innumerable in the swamps and “splashes.” There were rabbits everywhere, hares occasionally, no foxes so far, no quail or snipe either, but wild cattle for those who sought big game and hard scrub riding, and fish in the waters all round about.

It is something in the way of hunting to most folks even to run down French Island—the wild waste no man's land, round which the fast tides of Westernport ebb and flow. Only fifty miles from Melbourne, yet quite off the telegraph and telephone, with only a weekly mail, and never a chain of made road or a single bridge. No church, no school, no courthouse, no local jurisdiction or taxes or rates. A few old time memories about the shores, and round cannon-shot dug out occasionally, mementoes of the old days when the question of who should have and hold Australia was not quite settled and the Frenchmen robbed Flinders of the best of his life and his life's labours, and fixed or left their name to this waste island. So at least the local traditions though it is quite possible that some one or other of the numerous class of French and Firench may rise up and dispute the claim of the nation.

There is a salt manufactory on the island, a big establishment, with hopes and prospects, and the ruins of an old wild duck decoy, in plan something like an immense and intricate drafting yard, but never, I believe, roofed in so as to be of any practical use. And, more important, there is the hospitable home of the Messrs. Blake, who practically possess the island. They hold some preemptive and

acquired freehold rights, also the pastoral lease of the island generally, broken into by only two or three good folks of hermit tendencies. Captain Christopherson, once a name to conjure with wherever riflemen assembled, has his dwelling on the island. Mr M'Laughlin, a retired coasting skipper, and one or two others, have their separate points and bays. Scores, hundreds of city folks, have come down through various periods of earth hunger and selection fever, have pegged out, and paid up so far as survey fees and preliminary deposits went, and then have allowed things to lapse, for the island did not seem to “come.”

The Messrs. Blake have the old place, the station-house that has been, since the earliest days, down on a low shore looking oceanwards, with fair green hills above and around. Great, broad-limbed cypress trees overshadow the house in the summer time and screen it in the winter from the blasts off the sea, which nip and pinch everything.

But the house is cheery and warm within; wonderfully cheery on a wild wet wintry night after a three-hours' sail and a two-mile walk across unknown country whereon is no track found.

“We can get a boat.”

It was Thursday afternoon. “But do they know we are coming?”

It was making yeasty foam on the shallow flats and white caps on the channels, and seemed blowing just from the very point we desired to make. But down we bundled, and over a heap of mullet and seaweed-clogged nets in one boat to another that was tugging at her anchor tow, feeling the strong flow of the tide off the pier head. In two minutes the two stout fishermen had her under weigh, wind, currents, waves, and everything else seeming to obey them, and we bore away down channel, sailing very close to the wind. Oilskins were served out off Coolamadoo, for they talked about a tumble in the channel, and then we stood right across. There was not much of a sea, a half-dozen whips of spray lashed across us, but the good stout boat bobbed and danced and kept her nose up gallantly, and in less than an hour we were well under the lee of the island and

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On and About French Island... (continued from Page 15)

beating down to our jetty.

There, as in very perverseness, the wind began to whisper instead of blow, an icy cold sort of whisper that would not fill the sails, but effectively chilled one's marrow. We put out the sweeps, we showed every inch of canvas, we sneaked along feeling for rocks and shoals, and getting an awful understanding of the cold. There seemed a big blow hanging out to seaward, and rain and wind squalls were ruffling the water above and below us. Twilight came, and darkness, and still we toiled along. The jetty was near; we could dimly see the monkey, pile driving at its further end. We would put about in a few minutes and pull in. And even then a squall came and hit us—wind and rain and driving sea and darkness all together. Lord! what a helpless thing a landsman is in such a bit of a muss as that! How the seas seem to slap you in the face as with intent of insult and derision, and the sails buffet you, and the ropes tangle your feet, and the whole boat becomes like some infernal net contrived by malignant power to drag you down to the deeps! But the water man sends out his voice like a warrior when the ranks join, and heaves here and lets go there, and manages the tiller with a couple of fingers, so that in about two minutes you are as comfortable as when a horse breaks from pig-jumping into a steady gallop, making use of every breath of the wind that two minutes ago seemed specially ordained for your destruction.

We were alongside the new jetty an hour after dark. Our boatman said if we had had the wind from the start we should have made it easy by daylight.

And what were we going to do then?

"Look here, do you think they got your letter?"

He had us on the island now, and answered straight, "No, I don't."

"Then they won't be there to meet us?"

"No, we shall have to walk."

"How far is it?"

"Oh, a mile or two."

"Any track?"

"No, but I know the lay of the country."

"Lucky for you that nobody else knows it, or we would kill you and bury you, and swear you fell overboard and forgot to come up again." For it is not a nice thing to walk a mile or two or a mile and a bittock through scrub, and round swamps and under rung timber with the rain sputtering about, and the moopos hooting, and the curlews wailing,

and the night hawks calling above, and the penguins quacking away on the surface of the water. Carrying, too, all the necessary swags of travel and the cumbersome impediments of sport-guns and hundreds of cartridges. The man that undertakes to write in proper time about an affair like this and doesn't write ought to be hanged. Such was the opinion of all save one. Nevertheless we all got over and met with a good bush welcome, and lightened the larder considerably and went to bed.

The wind blew itself out through the night; the morning dawned without a cloud. Innumerable brilliants flashed along all the sward, sparrows and waxeyes chirruped in the ti-tree clumps, the magpies sang on the gums. Far away the strip of beach on Phillip Island shone like a band of exceeding fine brass. On all the green sea floors left bare by the tide the swans and pelicans stalked and fished, and the world seemed as happy in the sunshine as the cold moon folded in Endymion's warm embrace.

"What are we going to shoot? What about the bulls, the wild cattle?"

"They are at the other end of the island, 15 miles away, in the scrub. You might get a shot at one if you camped out for a night or two, but it is cold weather for that."

"Yes. Are there any ducks?"

"Generally get some. We will have a try."

We armed and equipped ourselves and sallied forth. The day was delightful now—as near England's later October, perhaps, as is ever experienced in Victoria. We walked briskly for five miles through a very poor country. Long coarse grass, flags, rushes, scrub, heath, low gnarled timber, and sandy hills occasionally, where the coneys had made their homes. Yet some few thousands of the all-enduring merinoes [*sic*] seemed thriving well enough, and they had been brought down from Tellamenta Station, which is forty miles north of the Darling or the Barwon rivers, near to the borders of Queensland. One would have expected to see quail rise on these low, dry downs, and the wetter flats seemed the natural home for snipe. But there are no quail and no snipe on French Island.

We are coming near the ducks. "Stop all talking, and tie the old horse with the billy and pannikins and luncheon swag up to the tree there. And now, just on the brow of that little hill, like the crater of an old volcano, there is a long lagoon; reeds in the centre and

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about the banks, and generally a good mob of ducks at one end or the other. Spread yourselves round the lagoon, but below the brow of the hill. One man will sneak in and put them up, and all the others will get a chance as they make away."

Those were the orders, and we spread. I went right away to the farther end and waited there, and crept up close (against orders) and peeped over the edge of the scrub. It was a very pretty sight. There was a broad patch of water, perfectly still, and mirroring the steely blue of the wintry sky. A clump of tall reeds beyond, tall reed-stalks ragged but rich with a pale brown. The drooping flags were grey, sere, dead-looking. There was a riband of sedge on the bank, but all the scrub was vivid green, shot through with sunlight. And on the water or emerging from or entering the reeds was a flock of swans, a dozen always visible. Their dark plumage and bright red bills made happy contrast of colour with reeds and water and scrub. They talked gravely, fished demurely, and plumed themselves in the sunshine on the water. It was winter with them, and not mating time, and they pursued an even and calm and sedate swan life. I had rather have painted than shot them, and feel some consolation in the fact that they were within 20 yards of me for a full quarter of an hour and got no harm. I could hear ducks quacking far away, and a couple of coots whose remarkably quick perception had detected a *[sic]* something wrong, rose up heavily, and made short flights, as if to reconnoitre, settling again with a heavy flap.

The mosquitoes began to bite. I allowed two to take their fill, trying to understand what sort of a life that man has who feeds the performing fleas, but executed the third, and then looked about the bush. The prickly mimosa screened me – "prickly Moses" the bushmen call it – and long straggling boughs of gums webbed the sky above. There was a last year's magpies nest in one tall tree. A crow came and horned it, to see if a lizard had made a home amongst the dry sticks. Where do the crows build? I don't seem to remember a "clanging rookery" in the breeding season in any of my Australian travels.

What is that shining silvery-grey through the heath yonder? A white and a pink heath side by side, and some strange new growth on the ground. What is it, fungus? No, it is moss. A rare and beautiful growth perhaps. Can I reach it without breaking a twig?

There would be an awful row if I risked it and failed. What a host of strange leaves there are on and just above the ground. What a succession of leafy firmaments an ant must look through when he casts his wicked eye aloft. As I live, there is a bulldog, two inches long, trying to make his way between the laces of my boot. If he had got in and set to work I should have broken twigs and boughs, and one scriptural command at the least. Poke him off with a stick, and tease him into fighting for a bit. Kill him for spite at last, and then – what about a smoke? Could I venture to light a match, and would the ducks smell smoke? Not safe to try. Contemplate the herbs of the field again, and wish I could get up a passion for botany. The man who goes duck shooting ought to be a botanist, or else he should carry a book in his pocket.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang! Heavens! how all the spirit of Cain jumps up within one. Here they come, a close packed cloud of a hundred, with a half dozen stragglers. There is speed and terror in the wild whistle of their wings. "Kwook! kwook!" say the swans, lifting to their full height their long, graceful, foolish heads. "Tweet! tweet!" call the parrots, flashing away their glorious colours lightening through the air. "Hullabaloo" shouts the jackass, and flies to a dead limb overlooking the scene, and the magpie scuds away fast and silent, for this sort of work disturbs though it seldom hurts him. Here they come. They turn; they are right away to sea. Bang! bang! They are stopped again. They wheel away round my station, and I deliver also. One of the covey comes tumbling down, and some of the others are staggered, but they were too far away, at least we will say so. Two more shots, but the ducks follow a wild, straight flight now, and the shots are not seen to tell.

Then, save for some painful fluttering amongst the reeds, all the swamp is still once more. A sulphurous smell hangs about, and nobody seems very well pleased. We expected a dozen ducks, and – it is just as well to tell the truth – we got two. There were plenty more killed, of course, but they got away somehow. We will have better luck in the next swamp. The next is called the Shag; this is the Black Buck.

The Shag is a mile ahead, and we walk towards it, talking of what might, could, would, or should have been. We surround "The Shag." Our advance guard creeps down. We endure another twenty minutes of suspense,

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and then from the other end comes a loud "Ah, hoo!" We know what it means. There are no ducks—the only occupant apparently a big swan floating securely in the centre of the waters. As there were no duck [*sic*], it was reasonable to speculate on the peculiar formation – the central crab like depression on the sandy soil, not more than a hundred feet from the sea level, itself thirty feet deep in the centre. But I think sportsmen, as a rule are rather prone to curse bad luck than to meditate on remote causes.

And we had more bad luck. For there was another haunt of the wild fowl ahead—a long lagoon, about whose origin there was no mystery, for a pretty deep ravine on one side led down to the sea, and a creek was always running. It seemed like the first home of all the wildfowl, a place where one might reasonably expect to put up a bunyip, not to speak of a wild duck. Dark, deep, overshadowed with ti-tree, dotted with tiny islands, and fringed with thick reeds. How carefully did we set our forces about, creeping along, afraid to knock off a mosquito lest his death groan should make a disturbance. And when all was done that lagoon was as empty as the cart.

Duck shooting is not much after all, said one and another as we went home with our one poor brace of birds, two or three swans tied up with them just to make a show. We'll go at the bulls or the rabbits tomorrow. The rabbits were chosen, the bull hunting being too remote and doubtful. And now, if there is any redeeming merit in pretty good sport, it must be allowed that there is an excuse to be found for those well-cursed people who first brought the rabbit to Australia. We went out with a troop of dogs. We were to work right about a paddock which had been fenced in against the rabbits. Unluckily a few had been fenced in as well as out, and they, according to the habit of their kind, had increased and multiplied exceedingly. The bulk of this paddock was fairly well cleared, but there were scrub belts about the sides, and patches in the corners, and burrows in the hills. Our hosts, who had enough of rabbit-shooting at all times, undertook to do beaters' work. They went behind the scrub with the dogs, and the shooters took up their position in front. Very soon the yelping and barking began, with an occasional shot as one of the vermin sought to make back. A few minutes more and they began to break out, trying to escape to the burrows. And then there was

shooting enough. Four guns in light scrub along a line of about 10 chains, and rabbits coming between them two or three to the minute—coming and dodging their fastest, too, and as often turning back as making right forward. There was no difficulty in shooting plenty of rabbits, but a good deal of danger of bagging one another. You don't always pause to consider where your mate is when a rabbit has escaped one barrel and is dodging like the deuce while you try to cover him with the other.

We shot a waggon-load, and no swan amongst them, and we made home by the sunset. We saw another glorious sunrise, and drifted home through a lovely winter but we were not satisfied with the ducks. Five guns and two ducks. It required a little courage to carry them home. Should we soak all our clothes and tell a tale of shipwreck? That, on such a day, would be to confess to either folly or incompetency more disgraceful than any bad shooting or bad luck. We didn't go to the right place, that was the best excuse. We would go out another night and bring home a boat load.

Heyday, I shall never make a sportsman. "You were fools," said the people who know (there always are people of that sort), "you were fools to go to the island for ducks. You only get them about 'the splashes' this time of the year.

"What do you mean by 'the splashes'?"

"They are patches of shallow water just inland from the beach, long chains of them. The ducks come in there to sleep or to feed when the tide is full. You are bound to get ducks there. I got fifty in a night. I believe I have seen two hundred killed one tide [*sic*]." Another got to [*sic*] thousands, and then the landlord was told to bring in drinks in the interests of a decent veracity.

A party was speedily made up, and early in the afternoon of a lovely day they set sail across the rippling waters. They were as a black dot set in a silver sea as the sun went down, and they vanished quite out of sight at the twilight.

Now there was a night of that week where of the Government astronomer made record. It was the coldest of the whole year. The thermometer went down to 37deg. That was the night of the shooting and the watching. The tide had nearly ebbed when the shore was reached, but the boat was beached, and without getting more than knee-deep in mud, the party got ashore. They were laden with

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their tucker, their guns, their multitudinous cartridges, their coats, and one or two rugs. They made up to the scrub, lit a fire and boiled the billy, put on game-bags and well-filled belts there, and went down to the first splashes, did a walk for a mile or two, but no ducks. "The tide is out, they are feeding," was the explanation. "Wait till it rises, and they will be coming in every few minutes." The moon rises gloriously. It was a perfect night—still, clear, and cold. It was tolerable enough for a couple of hours, though no ducks rose or came down. The long sea meadows, which some misguided folks call mud flats, seemed to reach almost to the horizon. Only the glint of water was visible beyond. The tall forms of cranes, pelicans, and swans could be seen, and the ducks heard plainly enough quacking and feeding. Nor even these the only sounds. Crabs and all manner of queer sea things were moving about seeking their meat, and there was unceasing motion in the air aloft. Great flocks of swan are always crossing and recrossing the peninsula from Westernport to Port Phillip, as the fishermen or sportsmen disturb them on one feeding ground or the other. They could be heard descending on the dark meadows, making their "kwook, kwook!" to acquaintances already settled to work, and beginning with their own proper business amongst the grass. Now also began to be felt, rather than heard, the incoming tide. The big birds came closer in. The water could be seen distinctly shimmering white. The louder boom of the ocean surges on the rocks came up with the wind which always accompanies the tide, and the cold increased apace. And now did the more thoughtful of the company begin to reflect and to understand how it is that kindly duties and beneficent powers are generally attributed to the stars by watchers in warm lands. The man who lies out in the cold for half a night and gets no ducks believes firmly that there is more deity in one gleam of blessed sunshine than in the starlight of a century

But who said there were no ducks? Frequently enough their wings went whistling over head, but too far aloft. A few low birds splashed down on the water, but it wasn't worth spoiling the night's sport for a single duck. At eleven two shots shook all the stillness. Plenty of birds were there, but all too far away. Swans thrashing the shallow water with their long wings, making a tumultuous sound: duck and widgeon and whatnot whistling

and whirring away. But nothing within gunshot. Another hour was passed, and then one fellow gave up the "sport," raised a weird hulloa, went away and kindled a fire. He had more sense or less of the true sportsman's instinct than any of the others. He heaped up the handy boughs of dry ti-tree and spread his hands and held up his toes, and very shortly was prepared to say "Ha, ha! I am warm, I have seen the fire." Heavens! what a luxury a fire is after a four hours' watch with the thermometer at 37 deg. But where is that fellow who got the shot? He came along last of all, and really he looked more shamefaced than all. For all that he carried was a little scrubby teal, an awfully big-headed teal; it looked like a deformed teal.

"It must have been crippled before you shot it."

"Was it a pot-shot? Hanged if I think that creature could ever fly."

He would have pitched it into the fire, but they said, "No; we will take it home and—stuff it."

"How long will it take us to make home?"

"About an hour and a half. We shall have to pull, but the tide is full now, and we have strength enough."

"Can't we stay by the fire till morning?"

"Let us get home and get to bed."

The boat was pulled right up; it was easy to slip on board; sails were all stowed, the sweeps put out, and away she went into the almost motionless water in the lovely moonlight. Pleasant was the pulse of the rowlocks for a full half hour. The farther shore could be dimly seen. Home would be reached in less than an hour, when a something was felt approaching. Felt first. An icy breath of wind. And following it along the face of the water was quickly seen a ghostly presence. A dim grey wall advancing from the seaward. It was the sea fog coming on with the tide to fill all the bay. "Are we heading straight for the jetty?"

"Yes."

"Keep her so then." A compass would be worth more than a boatload of ducks now. And the cold sea fog came whitening in, a few fleeces at the first, a solid wall next, and then a dense canopy over all; a close tabernacle around a boat with a bare pole and a glimmer of red fire in a nail-can in the centre. Two men in wet gleaming oilskins pulling on the long sweeps, one freezing at the tiller. An hour thus and no jetty, no lift, no rift

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in the fog. The influence of the bright moonlight made all the vapour a pale lustreless grey, something the colour and density of steam, but so cold, so cold. "How is the boat drifting?"

"In, I think."

Where is in and where is out? Where is the jetty, where is the village, where the ocean, where the bay's head? Were they pulling in a circle, were they drifting out to sea? Was there any chance of dropping the anchor, and waiting till the morning? Try for bottom with the long boat-hook. No bottom to be got, but the rapid current seemed almost to snatch and carry it away. The tide must be turned; it is running out fast. Keep on sounding, then, and as soon as you get bottom let go. There it was at last, and shallow enough. The anchor was dropped, the boat swung round, and it was 4 o'clock in the morning. No more charcoal for the nail-can, and not more than enough blankets for two. A good deal of wakefulness, therefore a good deal of shivering, a good deal of smoking. Some little spasmodic dreaming, wherein that single teal came down on the weary sleeper like the Roc of the Diamond Valley, or the Ugly Duckling.

And fast the tide streamed outward now, bearing to the depths again all the mighty and mingled sea flock. With a whistle and plunge the porpoises went past, and the shark shot along like a torpedo. Shoals of mullet made ripples like cat's-paws. Huge shadowy bulks could be seen at times, and long arms reach waving net-like. The "stingaree" may have been the dark shadow, that armed monster, gigantic water scorpion, whose barbed tail will strike fairly through the timbers of a boat. Weird tales tell the fishermen of these monstrous "stingarees." They are ugly to net, rending and tearing everything, and never in any particular hurry to get away. The octopus drifts along, his arms extended, forming a perpetual net, and the curved beak, cruel as a hawk's, ready to rend and devour all they bring in. What a marvellously strange deposit would there be if the waters of such a bay as Westernport could be suddenly exhausted. Who can imagine the sea floor which would then be disclosed? The tides are the vehicles in which the great sea-flock ride in to feed in all the innumerable bays of the world, day by day. Inward and outward. How multitudinous, how strange they drift past the solitary, silent boat now. Strange mysterious process this of the tides.

"The moving waters at their priest-like task,
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores."

"I wish they'd wash the world in warm water, though," comes from the bottom of the boat, through chattering teeth and oilskins, rattling from the shivers below.

"The sun will warm them by-and-by." But it was full 8 o'clock before the sun dispersed the fog, and somewhat past 9 when the five men with one duck, which wasn't a duck but only teal, walked up the steps of the pier after a night of "sport."

* * *

From the *Dandenong Journal*, Thursday 30 November 1933, page 4: Lang Lang

Lightning Strike

While Joyce Albon, aged 16 years, the daughter of Mr. J. Albon, a warder at the McLeod settlement, was standing near a high post, about 5.15 p.m., when a violent thunderstorm broke out. A huge flash of lightning struck the post and her, and rendered her unconscious. She was removed to the Lang Lang private hospital in an unconscious state, and remained in that state till just after 5 a.m. next morning, over 12 hours. Dr. Appleford, who attended her, stated that she was now out of immediate danger, but until she had fully recovered he was unable to determine whether paralysis had set in. It was stated that only the fact of the post being considerably higher than the girl saved her from death.

Lang Lang Talkies

SATURDAY, APRIL 26. SATURDAY, APRIL 26.

JOHN ARCHER and WARNER ANDERSON in—
DESTINATION MOON

A Challenge to Your Imagination!

DON CASTLE and ELYSE KNOX in—

I Wouldn't Be In Your Shoes

Programme suitable for general exhibition.

SHORTS and NEWS.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29. TUESDAY, APRIL 29.

ROBERT TAYLOR and PAULA RAYMOND in—
DEVIL'S DOORWAY

A Great Drama of Flaming Frontiers!

GLORIA DE HAVEN and WALTER SLEZAK in—
THE YELLOW CAB MAN

Ride and Roar With Red Skelton!

Programme suitable for general exhibition.

SHORTS. NEWS.

Koo Wee Rup Sun and Lang Lang Guardian, 23 April 1952