

# The Western Port Times

## Grantville & Districts

Volume 5 Number 9

FREE

January 2023

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.



**WESTERNPORT MEMORIAL HOSPITAL LADIES AUXILIARY** will hold a **Public Meeting** in the Memorial Hall, Kooweerup **TUESDAY, FEB. 9th** at 8 p.m. to finalise arrangements for the Hospital Garden Party on Feb. 27th. **B. CAHILL, Hon. Sec.**

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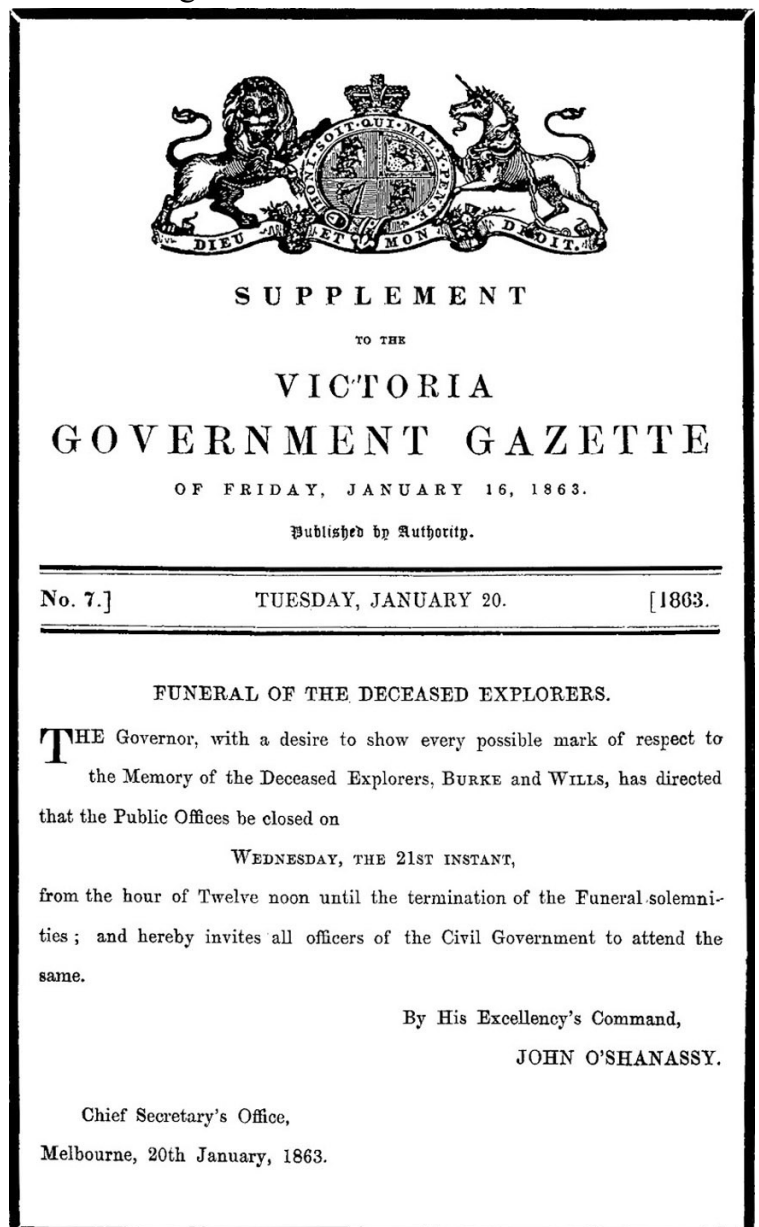
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160 Years Ago...



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**Links to other historical groups**

Bass Valley Historical Society: [www.facebook.com/groups/bassvalleyhistoricalsociety](http://www.facebook.com/groups/bassvalleyhistoricalsociety)  
 Friends of Churchill Island Society: <https://focis.org.au/about-churchill-island/>  
 Hastings–Western Port Historical Society: <https://www.hwphs.org.au/>  
 Inverloch Historical Society: <http://inverlochhistory.com/>  
 Also: [cv.vic.gov.au/organisations/inverloch-historical-society/](http://cv.vic.gov.au/organisations/inverloch-historical-society/)  
 Koo-Wee-Rup Swamp Historical Society: [kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/](http://kooweerupswamphistory.blogspot.com.au/)  
 Korumburra & District Historical Society: [www.korumburrahistory.com.au](http://www.korumburrahistory.com.au) or PO Bo 329, Korumburra 3950  
 Lang Lang & District Historical Society: [langlang.net/historical.html](http://langlang.net/historical.html)  
 Leongatha and District Historical society: [leongathahistory.org.au](http://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](http://seha.org.au)  
 Western Port Historical Society Inc.: [hwphs.org.au/](http://hwphs.org.au/)  
 Wonthaggi Historical Society: [wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/](http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/)  
 Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: [secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au](mailto:secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au)

Masthead design by Trish Hart

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# AN URGENT MEDICAL WARNING FOR WOMEN

This is a public service announcement from Dr. Sullivan, based on totally legitimate medical precepts and not at all bogus interpretations of medical scans using that newly discovered diagnosis wonder – Rontgen Rays (X-rays).

From the *San Remo Times*, 18 December 1896, page 2: Cycling By Ladies.

*Dr. O'Sullivan, the retiring president of the Medical Association, gave a lecture on Wednesday. One thing, he considered, made the year memorable in the annals of the profession was the most extraordinary development of physical inquiry, made possible by the Rontgen Rays. This was the most important discovery of the century. He also, in his address, condemned lady cyclists. No female should work a sewing machine, and most certainly not a bicycle. It would bring on spinal female ailments. Nerve strain, when running the machine, was certainly at its highest. In proceeding along the streets the brain, the eyes, the ears, the hands, and the feet, must ever be on the alert, and act in harmony. Remembering the close kinship existing between the brain and the general organs, the most inevitable result must be of course instability of nerve power and derangement of the uterine functions. He also referred to other ailments of women, the most serious of which, he said, was now practised in all classes of society.*

So there you have it. Ladies, if you wish to avoid instability of nerve power and derangement of the uterine functions, don't ride a bicycle!

From *The Argus*, Tuesday 10 August 1954.



**Mr. V. J. A. de Merlo, Grantville, writes:**

As a father of six children, living on a main highway in the country and a car driver for 25 years, I applaud the Government's action in imposing a speed limit of 50 m.p.h.

I consider 50 not enough; 40 m.p.h. would be better.

Cars and trucks of all makes and vintage speed past my place two and three abreast at 60 m.p.h. and more, not knowing there is a dangerous intersection 400 yards past my gate.

The move is not panic legislation: it is a wise one.

From the *Age*, 25 December 1926, page 10.

## Car Turns Somersault

Woman in Critical Condition

Wonthaggi, Friday.—A serious motor accident occurred on the Almurta hill. Mrs. Nellie Dalton, 47 years, and her son, Thomas, 18 years, were motoring from their home at Kongwak to Tooradin. The steering gear of the single seater car, which was driven by the son, became jammed, and the car turned a complete somersault down a 5-foot embankment pinning Mrs. Dalton and her son underneath. The car burst into flames.

Young Dalton managed to crawl from underneath the car, but he was unable to lift the car off his mother, who was pinned by the neck. Mrs. Dalton was very badly burnt about the legs and body. She lies in a very dangerous condition in the Wonthaggi Hospital. Little hope is held for her recovery.

### BLUEY and SOL

### Sol as a "Socialbe-ist" Gets Over All Obstacles.



From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun* and *Lang Lang Guardian*, 19th November 1936.

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 8 June 1900, page 3.

## The San Remo Whale Episode

By A Special Reporter

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

During the early part of last Friday week, the residents of "Sleepy Hollow" were verging on the brink of excitement, owing to a report becoming current that a large whale, measuring some 70 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 20 feet high, had been washed ashore between Powlett River and Cape Patterson. Competition became keen as to who would be the first to secure this wealthy prize, by arriving on the scene, and placing their name upon this mammoth sized monster of the deep.

After the "Sleepy Hollow" reporter for the Melbourne dailies had sent in a carefully worded report, special instructions were issued to procure a photograph of this wonderful specimen [*sic*], but, alas Tommy knew how many shekels made five, by not chasing imaginary pictures on our rocky coast to catch a snap-shot but await facts before incurring unnecessary expense. However, one old time whaler decided upon walking to the scene of operations, but, upon reaching the hills at Kilcunda, our worthy old son of the deep had to abandon all idea of ever reaching the supposed wealthy prize, owing to the fact that corns and bunions don't agree with long walking; therefore our friend was quite content to sit upon the hill top, and survey the coast with longing eyes and a sad heart, praying for better luck next time.

Daylight Saturday morning two eager young veterans, well mounted, and led by Captain Weight, equipped with a small tomahawk, and a bottle of Hennessy's best, priding themselves that they had stolen a march on their friends in Sleepy Hollow, ride along steadily, on through Kilcunda, over the Powlett River bridge, thence along the river flats opening out on to the ocean beach, where the sea is running mountains high; here a bitterly cold S.E. gale, accompanied by heavy showers of rain, have to be combated with. Nothing daunted the fearless young veterans push forward, eager for battle.

About a mile and a half from the Powlett River entrance, a change is noted upon Captain Weight's face, who discerns a dark object in the distance. Supposing this to be the object of their search, rapid progress is made towards the rich prize, but, alas, horrors upon horrors! what do they behold? Nothing

less than the relics of an old sun-fish, measuring some 15 feet long, 5 feet wide, and 3 feet high, which had presumably been dead some six months or more. A short consultation led Captain Weight to believe the object of his search was further ahead.

Mounting once more, progress is made as far as Cape Patterson, and still no whale appeared; after scanning the coast away to the eastward, Captain Weight cries a go, and they retire to a distant kopje, where they bivouac for a few hours, and discuss the merits of the sad expedition. After thoughtful consideration, our three brave heroes arrive at the conclusion that the author of the whale episode had been deceived through an optical illusion, or the air had been strongly tainted with the best "mountain dew." Just as the shades of evening began to fall, our three brave heroes are seen in the distance returning to Sleepy Hollow in "Chow fashion," sad and disconsolate, feeling that it would be far wiser to procure authenticated facts, and not waste time in chasing imaginary visions such as the one just described, or the San Remo Whale Hoax.

From *The Western Port Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 31 August 1900, page 2.

## Love and Mud

A prepossessing young gentleman hailing from near Queensferry, proceeded to Corinella on Monday night last, to see his lady love. Subject to spending the evening with her, he turned his horse into a small paddock. About 11 o'clock he bid his own one goodnight, and went to seek his horse. He wandered up and down the paddock for about an hour, but could not find it, so he made up his mind to walk home. The night was dark and the road knee deep in mud so he thought it advisable to try the paddocks. He entered McNabb's nearly opposite the P.O., and found himself amongst the briars; turn which way he would he came up against a bush. After about an hour he managed to make the main road again, and struck a bee line for home falling over stumps and into gutters, arriving home at daylight. So strong is his attachment to Corinella that it does not prevent his visiting there again.

## Natural Deaths? (Well, maybe...)

From the *Evening News*, (Sydney), 27 November 1885, page 4.

### Bark Death

(From Our Correspondents.)

Victorian News. Melbourne, Friday.

James Egan, a farmer and blacksmith, residing in Corinella, was killed by the storm on Wednesday. As he was leaving his premises a sheet of bark was blown off the roof of the shop, the end of which struck him on the head, inflicting injuries which speedily proved fatal.

From the *Argus*, Wednesday 12 July 1939, page 2.

### Man Drinks Poison In Mistake For Tea

Cowes, Tuesday.—Thomas Joseph Albon, aged 24 years, single of Corinella, who was employed on road construction work, died at Warley Hospital this afternoon after having drunk a mouthful of a poisonous solution in mistake for black tea.

Albon was working at the sandstone quarries at Rhyll where blasting was being carried out. A solution used in blasting work was left in a billy. Albon was rushed to the hospital, but he failed to respond to treatment.

From *The Western Port Times*, 6 February 1903, page 2.

### Bathing Fatality

About noon on Sunday a young man named Thomas Jarran was drowned in the Bass River, near Loch. In company with two or three others he went in to bathe, and almost at once sank in deep water. Assistance was obtained as soon as possible, but the body was not recovered for over an hour. All means to restore animation was tried, but they were unavailing.

From the *Argus*, Saturday 4 January 1938, page 14.

### Fatal Fall On Pole

Korumburra, Friday.—Mr. Trevor Nicholls, single, of Woodleigh, received internal injuries from which he died when he fell from a hay-stack on to a pole, which pierced his body. He was aged 39 years.

From the *Bendigo Advertiser*, 4 January 1909, page 4.

### Boy Drowned

Grantville. 31st December.

Leslie Milne, aged 11 years fell into the Bass River and was accidently drowned. The body was recovered after being in the water for about 15 minutes, but life was extinct.

From the *Age*, 23 April 1889, page 5.

### Fatal Bathing Accident At San Remo

[By wire.—From Our Correspondent]

San Remo, Monday.

George Buckle, while bathing on the Kilcunda shore with some other young men at noon to-day, was carried out to sea by a receding wave, and was never seen after. His companions, William Dobbin and David Pilling, narrowly escaped the same fate.

From the *Argus*, 22 December 1910, page 8.

### Drowned In A Well

Loch, Wednesday.—A magisterial inquiry was held at Grantville on Saturday, before Mr. M'Owan, J.P., touching the death of John Hade, a well-known resident, whose body was found in a well at the rear of unoccupied premises the previous day. It was shown in evidence that deceased had been on several occasions sent to an asylum, and that he had recently stated that he would rather take his own life than go back again. A verdict was recorded of "suicide during a fit of temporary insanity."

From *The Western Port Times*, 15 January 1904, page 2.

### Sudden Death

A man named John Malone, employed on the farm of Mr McGinn, of Lang Lang, expired very suddenly at 6.45 a.m. on Wednesday. Deceased was in the act of milking a cow, when he was seen to fall off his stool by another employe named Joe Foster. Deceased, who had only complained of having a sore throat, died instantly without speaking to anyone. He was about sixty years of age, has no relatives, and will have to be buried by the Government, as he has no property.

From the *Age*, Saturday 31 December 1910, page 10.

### Poisoned By Mushrooms

Loch, Friday.

A farmer named William Long, and old and respected resident of Woodleigh, died on Tuesday night from ptomaine poisoning, the result of eating mushrooms, which were used for tea on Sunday evening. Other members of the family also partook of the dish, but with no ill-effects.

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

## French Island's Big Two Years

A Power Plant (Likely Nuclear)

A Causeway To The Mainland

Joining the Shire of Cranbourne

And Massive Industrial Development

An Island Transformed?

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, Wednesday 15 December 1965.

### French Island To Be Part of Cranbourne Shire?

#### Moves on Causeway

The French Island Causeway and Development Committee has asked the Cranbourne Council to reopen negotiations regarding the admission of French Island to the Cranbourne Shire. In support of their claim, the committee said that they felt that sufficient progress had been made with the Government Causeway Investigating Committee and that further discussions with the Cranbourne Council would be welcome.

The investigations into the possibilities of putting a causeway across to the Island started seriously about two years ago and since that date more and more interest has been taken in the matter.

Representatives of the Cranbourne Council visited the Island last year and had talks with the local committee. It was decided to allow the matter to settle for a time before seriously considering the admission of French Island to the Cranbourne Shire.

The Council in originally discussing the matter was of the opinion that rate revenue from the area would be low in comparison to the work which would be required in the initial years.

Although French Island is only a short distance from this area, little is known of its potential for development, either on the rural side or in relation to being built up into a holiday resort.

At the weekend, several locals were asked if they had ever been on the Island and only one had seen the area immediately around Tankerton, which is at the Cowes end.

Certainly the development would help this end of the Shire, as the causeway would come in the Lang Lang Shire and as a consequence all the trade would be done in the Lang Lang and Kooweerup areas.

On the debit side would be the amount of money involved in building roads on the Island. At the present time residents do not pay rates and as a consequence depend on small government grants for whatever work

is done.

As there is no road or bridge transport to the mainland few cars are used on the Island and the demand for roads is not important. However immediately the causeway is put in the demand would be there overnight. The only solution would be a guarantee that the government would meet the initial capital expenditure and that future works would not weight too heavily against other road-works in the other parts of the Shire.

Its interesting to note that the Kooweerup Riding is always "broke" due to the number of roads in its immediate area.

The French Island Causeway and Development Committee passed the following resolution, "That negotiations be reopened with the Cranbourne Shire for French Island to become part of their Shire, when the building of the causeway is approved by the Government."

The secretary of the Committee, Mr. K. C. Gartside concluded his letter to the Shire by stating that his committee was looking forward to a discussion on these matters at early date.

The Council resolved to contact the Department of Local Government and ascertain more details on the administration of French Island.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 30 August 1967, page 1.

### Power House To Be On French Island

#### Will Causeway Come next?

It was announced yesterday the the *[sic]* State Electricity Department had asked the Lands Department to reserve a four hundred acre site on French Island for "possible developments needed after 1974." The decision to reserve this land will no doubt push the proposed causeway to Lang Lang more into the governments eye. It is reported that a Commission official stated that no decision had been made on the type of power station and it could be operated by natural gas or nuclear energy.

The 400 acres of land is situated on the south eastern part of the island close to the boundary of the penal establishment which is roughly opposite Corinella.

(continues on Page 7)

*French Island's Two Big... (continued from Page 6)*

The establishment of such a power house on the island would make the construction of the causeway to Lang Lang absolutely necessary and would open up the whole of French Island and Lang Lang.

The power station if constructed would become part of the interconnected generating system which supplies power to the whole of the State of Victoria.

It may well be that power could be farmed out to Tasmania from this part of the State.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 6 September 1967, page 1.

### **Causeway To French Island Within Six Years**

#### **Would Open Up Whole Area**

A causeway to French Island from the Lang Lang end seems most likely within a six year period. A report circulating in this area that the tender has already been let has no foundation but reports from Government circles indicate that moves are afoot to have the work carried out within the six year period.

The Cranbourne Shire Council has had no official word *[on]* any immediate moves to call tenders for the work but some reports have been received of more than passing interest in the matter by representatives of the government.

Without quoting the exact source, one man in "the know" said that it seemed certain that the causeway would be put in within the next six years.

The advent of the bridge would open up the whole of French Island, (except the prison farm) and would have far reaching beneficial effects on this section of Gippsland.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 27th September 1967, page 1.

### **Atomic Power Station Could Be A Reality — Mr Hunt M.L.C.**

Mr. Alan Hunt, M.L.C. speaking at the meeting at Kooweerup last Thursday said that the Government was looking at the possibility of establishing an atomic power station on French Island. He said that if this eventuated it would have a marked effect on the area and also provide additional supplies of water.

Mr. Hunt said that on present indications the site on French Island was highly suited to the establishment of an atomic power station. The water was there in Westernport Bay and this water when used in the production of power became pure water and could be used for domestic use.

Mr. Hunt said that the growth of Melbourne would also affect this area.

He said that it had taken 132 years for the population of Melbourne to reach 2.2 million but in the next 30 years the population was going to "explode" to 5 million.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 6 December 1967, page 1.

### **Big Land Deal On French Island**

A big land deal has taken place on French Island. A stock firm was reported last week as having purchased land to the value of \$400,000 and paid the high price of \$200 per acre. The firm did not say what they intended doing with the land and whether it was purchased on behalf of other interests.

Another very high offer was made for a tract of land in the Warneet area.

The land deal is causing a lot of speculation in the area particularly as it comes at a time when the advent of a causeway to the island seems fairly imminent.

Only a short time ago land could have been purchased for a "song" on the island but that has passed now.

The fact that the Government has reserved a section of land on the island for consideration for a power station in *[sic]* yet another factor pointing to a marked advancement for the island.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 13 December 1967, page 1.

### **More Big Deal On French Island Where Will Causeway Be?**

Big news of this week was the announcement that the Australian industrial giant B.H.P. has purchased 2000 acres of land on the west side of French Island. Although no direct announcement has come from the company it has been suggested that the site may eventually have a large steel works in operation.

Moves are coming fast in the Westernport area as land deals of a big magnitude are becoming commonplace.

More than 500 acres of waste land on Westernport Bay has been sold to make way for further industrial development. It is reported that this land brought in the vicinity of \$800 per acre. Cresco Fertilisers Ltd. and John Lysart, steel makers also hold land near Hastings.

Elder Smith one of Australia's largest stock and station agencies are reported to have bought a large tract of land on French Island in recent weeks. No details have been given

*(continues on Page 8)*

*French Island's Two Big... (continued from Page 7)*

on the purchases of land.

Many people in this area confidently expect that the causeway to French Island will be a reality in three years and that it will be in the Lang Lang area. It may well be in use in [unclear word] but there is no certainty that it will be the Lang Lang area. A causeway from Cannons Creek has been submitted for consideration and it has a large number of supporters.

The development which is taking place is certainly going to benefit this area but to what extent depends on local planning and the ability to go with it.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 20 March 1968, page 1.

### **French Island Want To Join Cranbourne Shire**

The French Island and Causeway Development Committee has again asked the Cranbourne Council to consider their admission to the Cranbourne Shire. The Council formed a subcommittee to meet the French Island organisation to discuss their request. In debating the request at last Friday's meeting of the Council, it was made clear that substantial Government grants would have to be forthcoming for roads on the island.

It was agreed by the members of the Council that the matter was of great importance due to the developments in the Westernport Bay area, both at Hastings and on French Island itself.

Cr. Thwaites, the President of the Shire of Cranbourne said that he had been in contact with the Minister for Local Government, Mr.

Hamer and had been advised that several locations were under discussion for the causeway to the island but no decision had thus far been reached.

Cr. Thwaites said that the Council could agree in principle to the request but a final decision would rest on the location of the causeway. If it was to be constructed in another Shire this would change the matter considerably.

Cr. Dore said that this was one of the big matters to be considered by the Council. He said that when the original application was made French Island was purely rural, but a lot had changed since then and now industrial development was probable.

Cr. Dore said that the Council should discuss where the causeway should go immediately. "The Islanders seem to have a leaning to the Cranbourne Shire and of the four possible sites, three are in the Cranbourne Shire."

Cr. Dore moved that a committee be formed to meet the Island committee to discuss the matter.

Cr. Thwaites said that substantial assistance was the first requirement. He said that large grants of government money would be needed to develop the Island.

Cr. Fechner said that the Council should be right behind the move as the area was going to develop.

Cr. Ridgway said that he was sure the development on Westernport would force the causeway through much sooner.

A committee was formed to meet the French Island committee and will comprise Crs. Dore; Lawrence; Bethune; Marriott, Cr. Thwaites and the Shire Engineer.

### **We Don't Want To be Pushed Around**

The President of the French Island Progress Association was asked why the application had been made to join the Cranbourne Shire. He said that he thought the causeway would be going to the Lang Lang side of the mainland and the people on the Island wanted to be incorporated in the nearest Shire, which was Cranbourne.

He said that his Association did not want to see the island "pushed" into some shire well away from the mainland link.

He said that reasons could be given that the island may be better suited in another shire, because it would help build up the area of the existing Shire. His Association did not want this.

Mr. Thompson said that the Minister for Local Government, Mr. Hamer had visited the

*(continues on Page 9)*





*French Island's Two Big... (continued from Page 8)*

island some time ago and he had a plan from the Hastings Shire, showing a causeway going across from Tooradin. Mr. Thompson said that this was the first he had known of any plan.

Mr. Thompson said that ninety percent of the islanders were very happy with the idea of being joined to the mainland. He said that it would help with the transport of cattle and supplies.

### Land Values Up

Mr. Thompson said that prices of land on the island had jumped in an amazing fashion. Land of fairly poor quality was up to \$200 an acre, a price which would have been thought unobtainable a few months ago.

*From the Koo Wee Rup Sun, 17th July 1968, page 1.*

### Delay In Causeway Development

The causeway to French Island may not become a reality until industrial development on the Island becomes known. A meeting of the Westernport Officers Co-ordinating Committee last week revealed that the Inter-departmental committee investigating the causeway had ceased to operate.

The reason given was that the whole complex of the island development and requirements had altered since the investigations had been started.

The causeway instead of serving a rural community would in all probability have to serve a major industrial complex.

In this case a multilane highway would be required.

Figures were given that the number of families on the island had been reduced from 15 to 4.

The report continued and indicated that the possibility of a causeway to French Island would now be governed by the industrial development.

### Sub-Committee To Meet Islanders

A Sub-committee of the Council will meet representatives of the islanders on Thursday next to discuss an application by them to join the Cranbourne Shire.

Cr. Lawrence said that it seemed that the Council would be meeting the four families on the island on Thursday.

Cr. Dore said that the requirements for the island had obviously changed from rural to industrial.

Cr. Lawrence queried the figures given in regard to the number of rural holdings on the island saying that they were very small.

*From the Koo Wee Rup Sun, 14 August 1968, page 1.*

### Meeting Of Islanders With Cranbourne Shire

### Island Residents Not Happy

A committee of residents from French Island has been critical of the handling of the proposed causeway to French Island. Main objection was in relation to the ambitious plan put forward by the Hastings Shire for a causeway which it was considered would take thirty years to be fulfilled. A sub-committee from the Shire met representatives from the Island to discuss an application to have the Island incorporated in the local Shire.

The sub-committee met at the Shire Hall on 18th July and the French Island people disputed the figure previously reported that only four farmers remained on the Island. They listed around twenty farmers still operating farms on the island.

The Shire President, Cr. Thwaites asked the people if they were agreed on a possible place for the Causeway. They said that 98 per cent favoured the siting of it at Stockyard Point.

### Critical Of Plan From Hastings

The people on the Island were very critical of the plan put out by the Shire of Hastings. They considered that their causeway could have been on the drawing board now had Hastings not submitted their spectacular plan for development of the sea area.

Cr. Thwaites said that it was clear that the residents of the island did not wish to be linked with either Phillip Island or Hastings Shires.

The French Island residents submitted that the latest estimate they had was for \$2 million for the Bass Highway to Tankerton. They believe that this is a practical link where as the Hastings plan is so vast that the possibility of them getting the causeway in the next 30 years is very remote.

The sub-committee decided that the best course to be taken was a letter to the Premier seeking a deputation to discuss the causeway and what stage had been reached by the special committee set up by the Premier himself in 1964.

**TENDERS** invited for Digging Corinella Cemetery, about one acre, at per square chain. Tenders to be lodged with Secretary on or before 17th April, 1897. Further particulars from Jas. Gray, Bass, hon. sec.

# The Hotels At Bass

## Part One: The Bass Hotel

by Geoff Guilfoyle

### Feehan's Hotel.

Richard Feehan sounds like an interesting character, and as a Melbourne hotelier (City Arms Hotel in Elizabeth Street) for nearly three decades (roughly 1860 to the late 1880s),<sup>1</sup> clearly would have had a tale or two to tell, indeed, had far more than two. Robbery, suicide, fire, and more.<sup>2</sup> What a pity that he has nothing whatsoever to do with any hotel at Bass, apart from, maybe, having stayed at one on the occasions he visited the area.

Whoa! But doesn't Joseph White or somebody say he built the Bass Hotel, or owned

it, or ran it...or something?

From Joseph White's *100 Years of History*, page 36...

*After the completion of the township survey the first of the allotments offered for sale on the 26th March 1863 were purchased by Richard Feehan who purchased allotment 5 of section 7. The price paid was £3-10-0. R. Feehan was a hotelier from Melbourne.*

The allotments were actually offered for sale on 27 February 1863.<sup>3</sup> No Crown land appears to have been sold anywhere on the eastern side of Western Port on 26 March 1863. Feehan purchased two blocks on 27 February: Lot 4 (future Lot 5) in Section 7 and Lot 1 in Section 1.<sup>4</sup> He also at various times owned (as can be tracked in the Phillip Island rate books) the Kilcunda, South Powlett and Wild Cattle Runs, and after the dissolution of the cattle runs, continued to hold land in the shire. On his death in 1898, however, according to the rate book for that year (entry 525) he owned only the 50 acre Lot 1 in the Wonthaggi area.<sup>5</sup>

Not even White says he was involved in a hotel at Bass in any way. No, the true builder of what became the Bass Hotel was according to Joseph White...

### The Two Hotels of George Withers

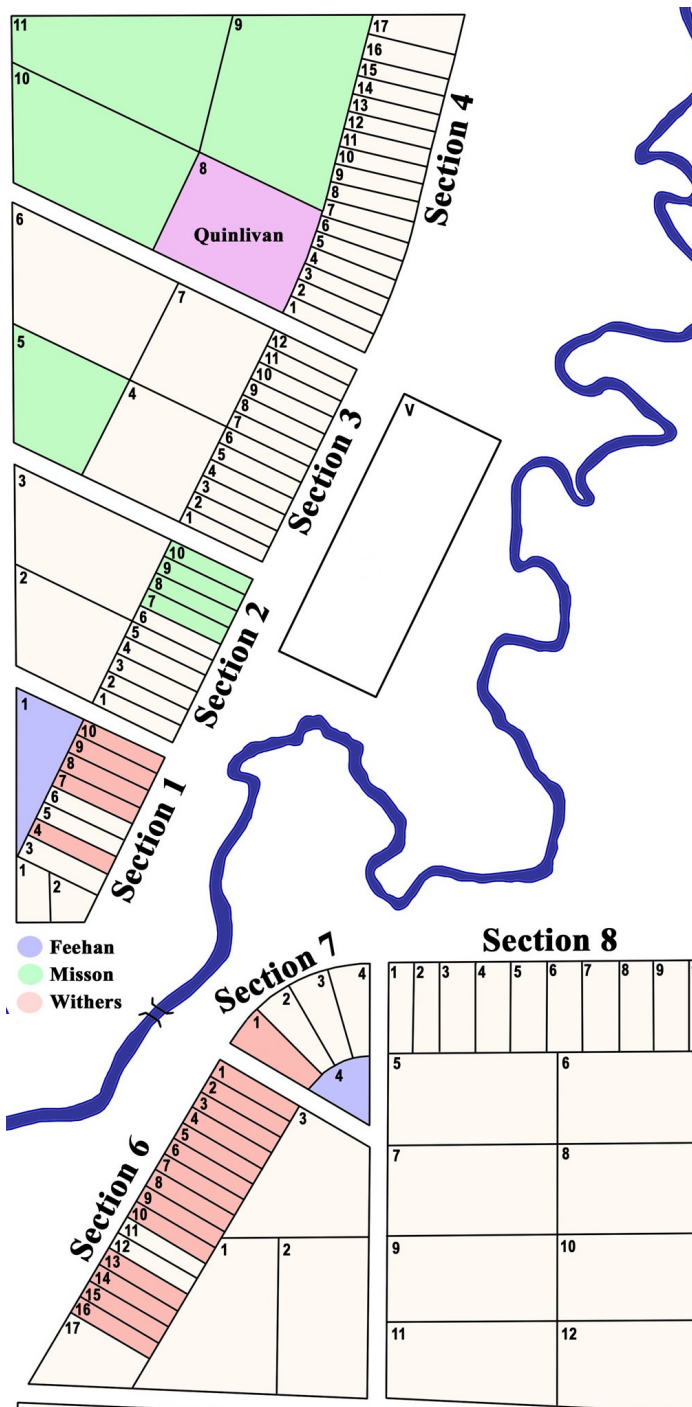
From *100 Years Of History... Allotments one to ten of section 6 were purchased by George Withers from Williamston. The original Bass hotel was built by him in 1882 and leased to John B. O'Meara in the same year.*

Those of you reading ahead or are cognisant with my feelings about Mr. White, will at this point be automatically inserting my favourite comment in regard to his writings: *White is fumbling around the edges of what is going on.*

He is also being disingenuous, implying that Withers made a single purchase at the same time Feehan did in 1863. Withers actually bought Lots 1-7 in Section 6 at Bass on 22 August 1866, 8-10 on 9 October and 13-16 on 18 April 1871. Over in Section 1 (current general store and CFA area), he purchased Allotments 4 and 7-10, and Lot 1 in Section 7, also in August 1866.<sup>6</sup>

However, by the mid-1870s he had disposed of nearly all this land. The 1875 Phillip Island rate book (entry 440 and 442) shows him

*(continues on Page 11)*



*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 10)*

retaining just Lots 4 and 7-10 in Section 1 with a combined net annual value of £4. So, no hotel; just vacant land. Curiously, the rate book has him as J. Withers, a mistake which isn't rectified until 1885.

In the 1876 book (entry 406 & 408), 1877 book (entry 404) and 1880 book (entry 497) he is listed as a hotelier, though this is not backed up by the net annual value on the land. The 1878 book (entry 482 & 484) still shows him possessing Lot 4 and 7-10 in Section 1. This doesn't change until after March 1885 when he, inexplicably, buys Lots 13-16 in Section 6, the same blocks he purchased in 1871. They are undeveloped, having a N.A.V. of £4 in 1886 (entry 426).

Just why he repurchased these blocks is unknown, but he held on to them until his death on 24 May 1892. The disposal of his estate, it seems, was disputed as it isn't until January 1897 (rate book entry 853) that a new owner is listed: George Withers, his youngest son, who only keeps the land for a year, selling it all after November 1897.<sup>7</sup>

So why in the rate book is George Withers listed as a hotelier when there is no evidence that he built or leased a hotel anywhere in the Bass area? Because, like Feehan, he *was* a hotelier, but like Feehan, in Melbourne. During much of the period under discussion Withers first owned or was the licensee, or both, of the Steampacket Hotel in Cole Street, Williamstown, and later owned the Commercial Hotel in Queenscliff which he

sold in 1878, though the resultant court case wasn't resolved until 1880.<sup>8</sup>

So, in summary, neither Feehan nor Withers had anything to do with a hotel at Bass.

Well...Withers didn't. Put a circle around Feehan's name. We will return to him later.

Back to Joseph White...

*The hotelier's licence was granted at the Griffiths Point licensing court on the 13th December 1882, to J. B. O'Meara. J. B. O'Meara held the lease of the hotel until the 24th April 1896. He then transferred to George Howell. The land on which the hotel was built was sold to George Mayfield of Hotham. He became owner on the 13th March 1885 (C.T. 1678-527). The property was sold again in January 1886 to Samuel Isaac Laycock, then to Janet Lyne of Tooradin on the 15th November 1889, who retained ownership until her death on the 11th October 1903. The Lyne family disposed of the land and hotel on January 1919 to William C. Quinlivan.*

Joseph White is doing more than just fumbling at the edges here. If you ignore most of the dates (as you should when dealing with Joseph White), and George Mayfield, he now has all the players in place, well, most of them.

It is time to build the Bass Hotel.

## The Bass Hotel

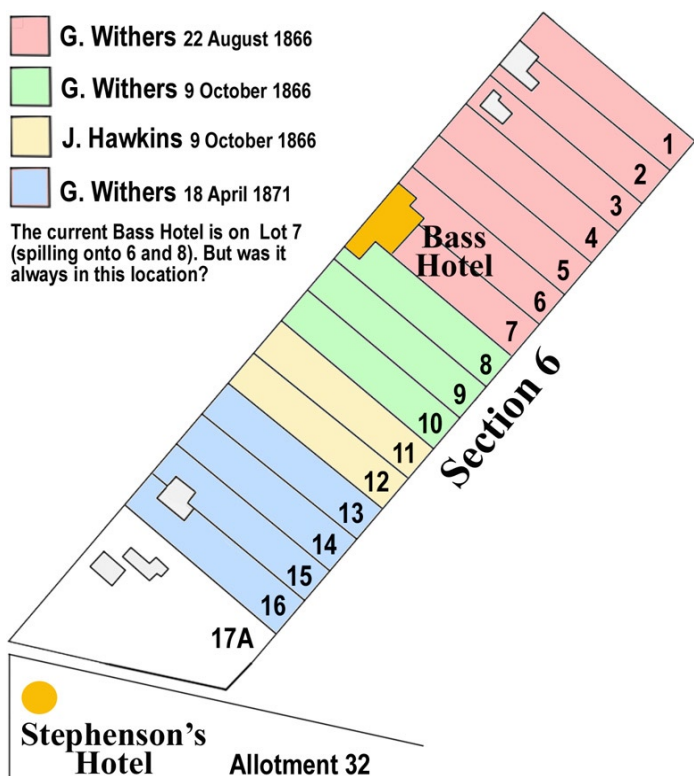
On 29 December 1870, on page 8 of the *Argus*, Samuel Isaac Laycock, "store keeper, now residing at Bass" gave notice that he was applying for a publican's license for a house at Bass containing four sitting rooms, seven bedrooms, with bathroom, stable, and outhouses. This could be a general store converted to a hotel, some six years before John Dickins at Grantville did the same with his establishment. Or Laycock was a storekeeper elsewhere but has moved to Bass and built a hotel. Or purchased a house at Bass and converted it to a hotel. Or someone else built and owned the hotel and Laycock is merely going to be the publican.

The evidence just isn't there to say one way or the other.

Where was the hotel built?

With the possible exception of 1932 (to be looked at later) there are only two other hints in the primary sources (also to be looked at later) that the Bass Hotel has changed location since first constructed, which means the current hotel is probably more-or-less in the same

*(continues on Page 12)*



*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 11)*

spot as in 1870. It is reasonable to assume (given what the rate books later show) that the hotel owner (probably Laycock) purchased Lots 1-10 from Withers, and perhaps even 11 & 12 from Hawkins, and not just one or two blocks for the hotel and ancillary structures.

Laycock was still the publican (and probably owner) of the Bass Hotel in October 1872. We know this from a story in the *Argus* of 24 October 1872 on page 4. It is too fine a tale not to recount in full:

*News reached us last night of a fatal boat accident in Bass's Straits. On Sunday afternoon Samuel Isaac Laycock, a publican at the township of Bass, was out in a new whaleboat, built for him by Mr. Jones, of the Lower Yarra, along with two boatmen, named Wm. Langdon and Thos. Bryant. They had made an excursion to the Tarwin River, also known as Anderson's Inlet, and on Sunday were coming away in the whaleboat to return to Bass. A reef stretches across the inlet, but there is a channel through which boats can be navigated. It was such a clear calm day, however, that an attempt was made to get over the reef where there was no channel, but just enough water for the boat. Unfortunately, just as the boat was passing over the reef a heavy roller caught her, and broke, at the same time swamping the boat, which was upset. All three men were good swimmers, and kept afloat for some minutes, when Laycock and Langdon managed to get upon the boat. When upon her they saw Bryant, who was considered the best swimmer of the three, sink. Bryant was drowned apparently at once. Laycock and Langdon were washed off the boat several times, but ultimately managed to reach the shore after seven hours' exposure, much battered and shaken, and utterly exhausted. Bryant was a young man, a fisherman, son of a boatman on the Yarra, and well known to watermen and others in the same line in Melbourne.*

In December 1872, Laycock gave notice of intention to apply for a colonial wine licence for a house at Bass (see advert, right). This is puzzling for two reasons. Firstly, he continues to label himself a *storekeeper, now residing at Bass*. More pertinently, why would he need this license?

The answer has to be that it isn't for the hotel. Maybe it was applied to a building elsewhere in Bass which Laycock set up as a sort of very basic and thus cheap bar. Whatever use he put it to, if any, it doesn't appear to

have lasted beyond his tenure as licensee of the Bass Hotel.

The *Argus* (1 September 1973, page 8) has a notice by William Langdon (almost certainly the same one as involved in the 1872 boating tragedy) that he intends to apply to be the licensee of the Bass Hotel at the next meeting of the Licensing Magistrates at Cranbourne. The same ad also appears in the same paper two months later, on 28 November (page 8).

The Phillip Island rate books come into play from 1875. In April 1875 (entry 454) William Langdon is the licensee and Samuel Isaac Laycock now owns the hotel (if not before) plus Lots 1-16 in Section 6 (thus the entire row) and the larger adjoining Allotments 1, 2 and 3. (George Withers is yet to re-acquire Lots 13-16).

Via the Phillip island rate books we learn that William Langdon remained licensee until at least April 1877 (entry 476), after which, according to the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal* (2 January 1878, page 3) someone named William Sugden took over.

Sugden didn't last long or was merely a placeholder, for the same reference has John Bernard O'Meara becoming licensee on 29 December 1877. He would remain licensee of the hotel until 1896, and was also for a short time the owner, purchasing it and all of Section 6 from Laycock sometime in 1880 (entry 392 in the 1881 rate book).

The actual owner in 1882 and 1883 is unclear, but probably O'Meara. If so, he sold out to W. Wrigley, an investor in Melbourne, sometime in 1883 or early 1884, returning to be solely a publican by February (entry 407).

Samuel Laycock at this time was living at Tarwin River (at the eastern edge of Anderson's Inlet). We know this because of a letter he wrote to the *Australasian*, published on 10 February 1883 (page 5), extolling the virtues of the Waratah Bay area. But rather than move to Waratah Bay, by early 1886 Samuel

*(continues on Page 13)*

**NOTICE of APPLICATION for a COLONIAL-WINE LICENCE.—To the Licensing Magistrates at Cranbourne —I, SAMUEL J. LAYCOCK, storekeeper, now residing at Bass, in the county of Mornington, do hereby give notice that it is my intention to apply to the justices sitting as licensing magistrates at the court of petty sessions, to be holden at Cranbourne on the 29th day of December, 1872, for a certificate authorising the issue of a COLONIAL-WINE LICENCE for a house situate at Bass.**  
**The 4th day of December, A D. 1872.**  
**SAMUEL J. LAYCOCK.**

From the *Argus*, 11 December 1872, page 8: Advertising. Interestingly, it is signed as Samuel J. Laycock

*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 12)*

Laycock was back as owner of the Bass Hotel and Section 6 (rate book entry 896-898). However, he soon put it on the market, with adverts in both the *Australasian* on 7 January 1888 (page 4) and the *Leader* on 14 January (page 3). Campbell and Sons carried out the auction on 19 January. It wasn't just the hotel, but most of the row in Section 6 (1-12) plus the three adjoining blocks.

(Lots 13-16 – the southern end of Section 6 – are, of course, absent, having been bought by George Withers from whoever owned the hotel and land in 1885 or 1886. Again, why Withers repurchased this land is unknown, and he doesn't seem to have done anything with it).

From the hotel sale advertisements we have a description of the hotel at this stage... *substantially built weatherboard house, nearly new, containing six bedrooms, two sitting rooms, bar, bathroom and store, all protected by a verandah 9 feet wide; also detached kitchen and two servants' bedroom...*

The interesting phrase here is "nearly new." Is this just advertising blather for a building under 20 years old or should it be taken literally, that is, it had been rebuilt recently? Or maybe extended to the extent that it

THURSDAY, 19th JANUARY.

**KIRK'S BAZAAR**

SALE

Of

The BASS HOTEL,  
With Adjoining Land.

**CAMPBELL and SONS** (late Campbell, Pratt and Co.) are instructed by Mr. Samuel Isaac Laycock to sell by auction, on Thursday, 19th inst., at 12 o'clock,

All that piece of land, being Crown allotments 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, section 6, township of Woolamai, and Crown allotments 1, 2 and 3, all in the parish of Woolamai, county of Mornington, containing 18 a. 3 r. 27 p. (more or less) of rich agricultural or grazing land,

Whereon is erected  
The BASS HOTEL,

a substantially built weatherboard house, nearly new, containing six bedrooms, two sitting-rooms, bar, bathroom and store, and protected by a verandah 9 feet wide; also detached kitchen and two servants' bedrooms, good stabling and buggy house.

This property is beautifully situated on the Bass River, to which it has a large frontage. The surrounding scenery is charming, and the climate delightful and exhilarating. The position of the hotel is well suited for conducting a very profitable business, and an enthusiastic proprietor could easily make it a very fashionable summer resort.

Title perfect. Terms at sale.

For further particulars apply to the auctioneers.

might be considered new. In the absence of any evidence, the answer for now is real estate agent's blurb, all the more so as there is no reason to think that real estate agents and auctioneers were any more honest in their descriptions of property a hundred years ago than they are today.

From 1888 until February 1890 (rate book entry 608, 520 and 576 respectively), just who owned the hotel and land is unclear. Probably Laycock (if the hotel didn't sell) but it could be O'Meara again. The compilers of the rate book give the address of the owner as "Bass", not a guarantee that this was actually the case, but it does point to O'Meara. While he stayed on as licensee, by February 1891 ownership of the hotel had passed to Janet Lyne (entry 744), though she potentially could have been owner from 1888.

Joseph White styles them as the *Lyne family*, with justification, but offers little detail which is odd given that he clearly had access to, and used, though not very well, the probate documents for both Thomas and Janet.

Thomas Lyne was a prominent investor from "Westbourne" Tooradin who, along with his wife (Janet) and children, owned or leased property in the area. For instance the 1898 Phillip Island rate book shows Thomas, James, William and Charles all leasing considerable chunks of grazing land near Wonthaggi and Kongwak (entry 643-646).

In regard to the Bass Hotel and the accompanying land, various members of the family held ownership over the next 25 years. Janet Lyne was the first, followed by Thomas Lyne in 1895 (entry 702-703 in the 1896 rate book), E. Lyne, which could be either his son, Ethelbert or daughter Elizabeth, around 1897-1898 (entry 575-576 & 560-561), then back to Janet who was the owner until her death on 11 October 1903. Her husband, Thomas, inherited the hotel. He died on 6 January 1908 and the hotel and land passed to his daughter Agnes Mabel Lyne. She married William Prossor on 25 November 1909, becoming Agnes Mabel Prossor, a change the Phillip island rate books didn't pick up until 1915 (entry 410). Sometime between late December 1916 (entry 762) and October 1917 (entry 748), perhaps not coincidentally coinciding with a change of address from Mooropna to Trevelyan Street, Elsternwick in Melbourne, Prossor sold the hotel and land to the husband of the current licensee.<sup>9</sup>

The list of assets in the probate documents

From the *Leader*, 14 January 1888, page 3: Advertising.

(continues on Page 14)

*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 13)*

for Thomas Lyne provides a description of the hotel in 1908: 3. *A piece of land at Bass River containing 18 acres 2 roods and 27 perches having erected thereon the "Bass Hotel" – built of wood and iron roof – containing 8 rooms – Billiard Room and Bar also detached Kitchen and Servants' room. Let with Real Estate No. 4 @ £103 per annum – Municipal Assessment per annum – Valued by Mr. McCallo @ 1150.0.0.*<sup>10</sup>

Note that No. 4. Presumably, Lot 4 in Section 6. In other words, not the current position.

This, however, may be deceptive. The address of the Bass Hotel today is 5 Hade Avenue; in 1880 it would have been 7 Hade Avenue. But over time land size, usage and designation can change markedly, especially if unused streets or previously reserved Crown land is absorbed into properties or turned into separate blocks.

Thus that Lot 4 may be the equivalent of today's Lot 5. Or it may be exactly as it says, in other words, not the current position.

Time to return to John B. O'Meara and the licensees. He transferred the license of the Bass Hotel in May 1896 to George Howell, becoming a grazier (and Shire Councillor, May 1897-1907).<sup>11</sup>

Joseph White confidently states the date of this transfer as 24 April 1896. For once, the source of this information is clear: *The San Remo Times*, 24 April 1896, page 2, in which notice is given by O'Meara and Howell for the transfer to take place on the 8th of May. White clearly saw this advertisement but either missed the actual date or wrote down the wrong one. A trivial matter – a difference of a fortnight – but once again it highlights the

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## BASS HOTEL.

Under New Management.

:: :: :: ::

**Mrs. WHITE, late of Longwood.**

:: :: :: ::

Ales, Wines and Spirits of the Best Brands and Quality.

Good Accommodation for Travellers,

At the most reasonable terms.

A Good Table Kept. A First-class Billiard Table.

—:—

**Mrs. WHITE, Proprietress, Bass.**

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From the *The San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 15 April 1898 page 2.

need for scepticism when dealing with any date presented by him, even when you suspect he is using an actual primary source.

*On the application of George Howell for a renewal of his licence Inspector Connelly opposed the licence on the objection of Constable Neil that the licensee [sic] was not a fit and proper person to hold a licence. He had been fined for having drunken people on his premise. (The San Remo Times, 10 Dec. 1897, page 2: Licensing Court)*

Gosh! Who would ever have thought it. Drunken people in a pub. Howell's license was renewed anyway, though relations between he and Constable Neil were probably never very friendly afterward.

This may have been a factor in Howell's departure in April, *The San Remo Times* advertising on 15 April 1898, page 2, that Mrs White, late of Longwood, was now the proprietress. The 1899 rate book lists her as Catherine White (entry 801).

Her tenure lasted under two years. *The Western Port Times* has this to say:

*The Bass Hotel has changed hands, and Mr. Williams, from Melbourne, has succeeded the White's, who, it is rumoured, were not cousins with everyone, but it is impossible to please everybody. (29 September 1899, page 2: Bass).*

*E. B. Williams applied for a transfer of the Bass Hotel from Mr. White to him. Mr. Cook appeared for the applicant. The transfer was produced... The bench asked Inspector Mahony if he had any objection. He stated that already there was a decided improvement in the house. (27 October 1899, page 2: San Remo Courts).*

Apart from the implication that the Whites weren't popular and/or the hotel was not well managed, is that Mr. White was the licensee, not Catherine as per the rate book, or owned the hotel (which we know he didn't). On balance, the rate book is probably more accurate than *The Western Port Times*. Mr. White probably acted as manager and host but Catherine White was the actual licensee.

Heber Baker Williams leased the hotel and accompanying land (most of Section 6) until 1909 before moving on. Elisabeth Adams had a fairly short tenure as licensee (1909-1910), followed by William J. Bates until 1915, after which the most famous of the owners/licensees took centre stage – the Quinlivans.<sup>12</sup>

Patrick and Margaret Quinlivan were early  
(continues on Page 15)

*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 14)*

settlers at Bass, buying Lot 8 in Section 4 on 11 March 1863. They had a least six children who reached adulthood, but it is William Charles who is the most relevant. In 1900 he married Mary Ann Bates, the daughter of Christopher Francis and Agnes Bates, and likely the niece of future Bass Hotel licensee, William J. Bates. It was probably through this connection that William Charles first took an interest in the hotel and accompanying land, Mary taking over as licensee in late 1915.<sup>13</sup>

It is at this point that the Phillip Island rate books, as is their wont, become quirky, the 1916 to 1921 books (inclusive) recording the licensee of the Bass Hotel as both William C. and May Quinlivan, presumably meaning Mary. As there can be only one, the Licensing Court recognised Mary as the licensee, though the locals probably didn't make any distinction. The rate book compilers certainly didn't.

As mentioned when discussing the Lyne family, Agnes Prossor (nee Lyne) sold the hotel to the husband of the current licensee (unnamed, but now revealed as William and Mary Quinlivan) sometime between December 1916 and October 1917. Maybe. The entry (748) in the 1918 rate book, compiled in October 1917, has in pencil *Quinlivan now owns* above Prossor's name. The problem is that the 1919 rate book (compiled in November 1918), has the same pencilled *Quinlivan now owns* above Prossor's name (entry 748). On balance, William Quinlivan probably did buy the hotel and land in 1917.

Mary Quinlivan (or May if you are the rate book compiler) ceased being the licensee sometime after September 1921 (rate book entry 742) and before September 1922 (entry 643) with William Hitchen taking over. William Charles Quinlivan remained owner.



The Bass Hotel, circa late 1910 to 1915. William J. Bates, licensee. Agnes Mabel Prossor (nee Lyne), owner. Caption reads: *William and Margaret Bates standing in centre with their daughters Doris and Dot. Gordon Hade is on horse on far right.* In reality, the three children (in white) are, if Births Deaths and Marriages, Victoria is correct, Doris Christabel, Margaret Frances and James. If that is James, then the photo was taken in 1910 or 1911.

And, yes, this William Hitchen was probably the same Hitchen who was the butcher at Bass (with a branch office at Dalyston after mid-1915). The 1925 Phillip Island rate book records (sort of) a change in licensee from Hitchen (entry 733). In thin pencil above Hitchen's name is Roy Quinlivan, presumably the new licensee.

So who is Roy Quinlivan? There is only one candidate: William Quinlivan Junior, the son of William Senior, but whose second name is Roy and this is the one he used. Hitchen is absent from the 1926 rate book and Roy Quinlivan is now recorded as licensee (entry 733). The father and son duo continued to run the Bass Hotel until...

*Lang Lang, Wednesday.—The Bass Hotel, a landmark of the district, dating back to the days of the bullock waggon and stage coach, was burnt down during the recent bush fires.* (Age, 11 February 1932, page 8: Historic Hotel Burns).

The previous year the Licensing Court of Victoria approved a plan to rebuild the Bass Hotel, at an estimated cost of £3000. As with the proposed Grantville Hotel upgrade at the same time, this was not a voluntary change. Neither establishment had aged well and badly

*(continues on Page 16)*

## THE BASS HOTEL,

. . BASS . .

IS situated on the Main Coast Road from Wonthaggi to Melbourne, amidst picturesque surroundings of hill and river scenery. It is an ideal resort for the week end and holiday maker. There is splendid shooting in the vicinity, and anglers will be delighted with the sea and river fishing.

Only the Best Brands of Liquors are sold

All communications by letter or wire receive prompt attention.

**M. A. Quinlivan, Proprietress.**

From the *Powlett Express and Victorian State Coalfields Advocate*, 8 October 1915.

Bass and Dalyston Butchery.

## W. HITCHEN.

Wholesale and Retail General Butcher,

HAS opened a Branch at DALYSTON and he is prepared to deliver meat of the best throughout the district at LOWEST CURRENT RATES.

SMALL GOODS A SPECIALITY.

run to Kileunda, San Remo, Corinella, Queensferry, Grantville, Almurta Glen Forbes, and throughlackwood.

From the *Powlett Express and Victoria Coalfields Advertiser*, 6 August 1915.

*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 15)*

needed refurbishment. G. A. Rundle, acting on behalf of William C. Quinlivan, observed that the “demolition of the old building has, however, been accomplished for us very cheaply.” Quinlivan applied to the Licensing Court – and was granted – permission to conduct a temporary bar in a shed on the Melbourne side of the building. Quinlivan quickly exceeded his temporary license, being fined £10 for disposing of liquor during unlawful hours, and William Roy £2 for disposing of liquor, not being the licensee of a hotel (it having burnt down).<sup>14</sup>

Question: Did the Quinlivans take this opportunity to rebuild the hotel slightly along the row from Lot 4 to its current position? If that *Let with Real Estate No. 4 @ £103* in Thomas Lyne’s probate documents is Lot 4, then...possibly. (See discussion on page 14).

But the bigger question is this: is the current Bass Hotel in the same place as Laycock’s original hotel?

### One Bass Hotel? Two Bass Hotels?

The 1872/73 Krause map excerpt (below left) carries the notions POST OFFICE and HOTEL. The former has no accompanying mark, but the latter does. Given this is a geological map, land division is simplified and Krause simply shows all of Section 6 in 4 lines. The ‘blob’ which seems to mark the place of the hotel is on Lot 3 (later Lot 22) in Section 6.

This block was purchased on 27 February 1863 by R. Gardner. Interestingly, this is close (over the road) to Feehan’s Lot 4 (later Lot 5) in Section 7, purchased at the same time. Could this mark have been misplaced slightly and actually represent a Feehan hotel on Lot 4?

This small (¾ acre) triangular wedge of

land would have been a decent place for a hotel. But the 1875 rate book (entry 455) has it carrying an N.A.V. of £1 10s. So a vacant piece of land. Furthermore, 1875 seems to have been the final year of Feehan’s ownership of the block.

There is another reason why there wouldn’t be a hotel there. It would mean there were four hotels at Bass all operating, more or less, at the same time. Grantville and Queensferry together, serving a larger population, managed three. What the hell was going on at Bass in the early to mid-1870s to warrant four – count ‘em – four, hotels? The answer is...Nothing!

And here is where Mr. Feehan finally exits the story. Time to bring Laycock back into it.

The 1882 Krause/Murray map (bottom, right) carries the same Post Office and Hotel notation as the original, but without any indication where either are located. It is possible that the mark on the 1872/73 original is simply a smudge and all Krause was originally saying is that there is a post office and hotel at Bass without pointing to a location.

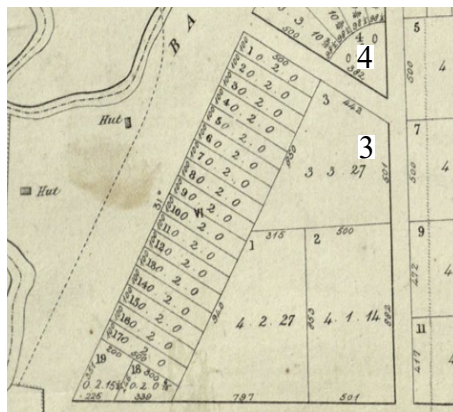
Question. What if this isn’t a smudge and is actually indicating the precise location of a hotel?

Given that in 1875, Laycock owned Lot 3 (rate book entry 454), and likely did so in 1870, could this be the first iteration of the Bass Hotel?

Apart from the 1872/73 Krause map, there is only one other piece of evidence in its favour – but it is a BIG one: Laycock’s 1870 and Langdon’s 1873 applications for licenses.

From Laycock’s 29 December 1870 notice of application describing the Bass Hotel: *...for a house at Bass containing four sitting rooms, seven bedrooms, with bathroom, stable, and outhouses.*

*(continues on Page 17)*



Geological map of the Western Port and Cape Patterson coal fields [cartographic material], Ferdinand M. Krause, mining surveyor, Melbourne, circa 1872 (or, more likely, early to mid-1873).

Town and Suburban lots in the Township of Woolamai, parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], Dept. of Crown Lands and Survey, Melbourne, Feb. 9th 1863, T. F. Bibbs.

Geological map of the Western Port and Cape Patterson coal fields [cartographic material], first prepared by F. M. Krause with additions and revisions by Reginald A. F. Murray under the direction of Thomas Couchman, Secretary for Mines and Water Supply, December 13 1882.



*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 16)*

And here is William Langdon's 1 September 1873 notice of application: ...containing five rooms exclusive of those required for the use of the family...

Talk about downsizing!

Was Laycock's original Bass Hotel the 'blob' on Lot 3 in Section 6 on the Krause map and Langdon's new and inferior Bass Hotel (but nevertheless built and owned by Laycock) in roughly the position it is today?

So what happened to the original? Perhaps a fire destroyed it and a cheaper one was built in the new location. Or it always was in the current location (or on Lot 4), was consumed by fire and a cheaper structure built on that spot, only to burn down again in 1932?

Small unintended and meaningless splotch or the position of the original Bass Hotel? Take your pick.

Either way, Laycock's hotel was in the current row of blocks (either on Lot 4 or 7) from at least 1873 until the 1932 fire...and on Lot 7 (today's No. 5) after that date (if not before).

Additionally, the discrepancy between the description of the hotel in Langdon's 1873 ad and Laycock's 1888 auction one does strongly suggest the hotel had been substantially added to at some stage, making that "nearly new" less blurb and partially true.

## The End of the Quinlivan Era

In November 1935 the father and son team was broken by Roy, who took over as licensee of the Lower Tarwin Hotel. However, there was another Quinlivan ready to run the Bass Hotel, Roy's younger brother (by 8

**TO the BENCH of MAGISTRATES at CRANBOURNE.—I, SAMUEL ISAAC LAYCOCK, store keeper, now residing at Bass, in the county of Mornington, do hereby give notice that it is my intention to APPLY to the justices, sitting at the Court of Petty Sessions to be holden at Cranbourne on the 14th day of January, 1871, for a certificate, authorising the issue of a PUBLICAN'S LICENCE for a house situated at Bass, containing four sitting rooms, seven bedrooms, with bath oom, stable, and outhouses.**

December 24, 1870.

From the *Argus*, 29 December 1870, page 8: Advertising.

**APPLICATION for PUBLICAN'S LICENCE.—To the Licensing Magistrates at Cranbourne.—I, WILLIAM LANGDON, of Bass, do hereby give notice that I desire to obtain, and will at the next licensing meeting apply for, a PUBLICAN'S LICENCE for a house situate at Bass, parish of Woolamai, county Mornington, containing five rooms exclusive of those required for the use of the family, and be known as the Bass Hotel.**

The 22nd day of August, 1873.

WILLIAM LANGDON.

From the *Argus*, 1 September 1873, page 8: Advertising.



Feehan's Lot 4 in Section 7 and Laycock's Lot 3 in Section 6. If the Bass Hotel sat on Lot 3 it would have done so for only three years, thus there is no trace of it today.

years), Colin John Quinlivan, the application for the transfer of the licence lodged on 28 November 1935. Roy's move to the Tarwin might have been prompted by his marriage to Daisy Sara Hade earlier in the year. Colin held the licence until October 1940 when it was transferred to Mary F. Briggs.<sup>15</sup>

It appears that Briggs also purchased the hotel along with the licence, as when she died on 18 April 1948 she left the Bass Hotel to her husband, Thomas Henry Briggs, and the Ocean View Hotel at Kilcunda to her daughter, Catherine Mary Carew. Sometime in 1947, probably due to ill health, she surrendered the licence to former police officer, Charles Grummich. He remained the licensee for an impressive 36 years, retiring on his 85th birthday in 1983.<sup>16</sup>

The Bass Hotel is still around today and celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2020 – or would have if anyone had realised it turned 150 that year. You could, however, argue that it celebrates its 150 birthday this year (2023) if it was, indeed, moved to, or rebuilt, in the current location in 1873. Or you could make the case that it's 90th birthday was in 2022,

*(continues on Page 18)*



Unidentified members of the Quinlivan family outside the Bass Hotel. Date unknown. Could be anywhere from 1917 to 1932 and the burning down of the hotel. However, the *W. & M. Quinlivan* visible in the middle photo says 1917-1921.

*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 17)*

dating from the move to the current location from Lot 4 (if it was there) after the 1932 fire.\*

My best guess?

The evidence suggests that Laycock's original 1870 hotel, probably called the Bass Hotel, was on the 3-acre Alotment 3 in Section 6. It likely burnt down and was rebuilt in 1873 in a more basic form on or close to its present position. If not called the Bass Hotel previously, it now became so. After the 1932 fire it was either rebuilt on the same spot (the current position) or was moved slightly south to the current position from, most probably, Lot 4.

However...

### Primary Source Conflict (Part 1)

There is a problem with putting the Bass Hotel on Lot 4 in Section 6. This comes via the *Victorian Government Gazette No. 21*, 15 February 1878, pages 360 & 361, advertising

\* Samuel Laycock's original 24 December 1870 application was to be heard and granted (which presumably it was) at the 14 January 1871 Court of Petty Sessions at Cranbourne. Thus, from a legal point-of-view, the hotel turned 150 in January 2021 not December 2020. Of course, it was built and ready to go well before the December application, and had probably passed official inspection in preparation. So...choose which of the two dates you prefer and, if necessary, adjust everything accordingly.

**LANG LANG.**—How members of the police gaming squad laid bets with marked coins and later raided the hotel and charged the licensee with allowing betting to take place on the premises, was related when Colin J. Quinlivan, licensee of the Bass Hotel, was charged with the offence at Lang Lang police court. After police evidence had been given defendant pleaded guilty, and was fined £22 by Mr. Wilkins, P.M.

Like his father and brother, Colin Quinlivan also found himself in trouble with the law. From the *Age*, 26 January 1939, page 15.

a March auction involving various blocks in Sections 4-7. It is the list for Section 6 that is the problem in regard to the Bass Hotel. Lots 1-5, the offered land (represented in the day's sale as Lots 40-44), are each, with the exception of Lot 1, listed as 1 rood in size, half the real amount. More importantly, these are five of the seven lots Withers purchased at the August 1866 sale, which was advertised as a sale of Crown land. This 1878 advert also lists them as Crown land. Further, as previously mentioned, according to the Phillip Island rate books, Withers had disposed of Lots 1-7 by 1875 and at the time of the auction they were owned by Laycock (and later the Lyne family and William Quinlivan).

Nothing about this advert makes sense.

### Joseph White & the Bass Hotel (Liar! Liar! Pants on Fire!)

When writing *100 Years Of History*, Joseph White was clearly under both a time constraint and the limits of his competency. He also obviously received minimal help from the Shire of Bass and even less from the Shire of Phillip Island. True, he had access to sources not available today, but many of these were manifestly inadequate, contradictory or wrong. All this, and it being written in 1974, today makes his book (excluding the sections on Phillip Island and Wonthaggi, and some of what he writes on the schools and cemeteries, which are just out-of-date) a secondary source of dubious merit. However, unlike some amateur historians and too many professional ones, particularly the ideologues, White is not deliberately dissembling.

The most popular form of lying by historians and journalists alike, is the "lie by omission." This is the leaving out of critical information that the reader/viewer should have because it contradicts or diminishes the author's (usually

*(continues on Page 19)*

*The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 18)*

political) assertion or pet theory.

Joseph White doesn't do this...

Oh. Wait.

He has, at least once; when discussing George Withers and the Bass Hotel on page 36: *The original hotel was built by him in 1882 and leased to John B. O'Meara.*

Further on, in the chapter on *Hotels in the Shire Past and Present*, he says this on page 94... *In 1882, J.B. O'Meara was granted a license for a hotel at Bass to be known as the Bass Hotel.*

So, George Withers built a hotel in Bass in 1882 to be known as the Bass Hotel with J.B. O'Meara granted the publican's license.

And for once – a rare instance – the source Joseph White uses is clear though White himself doesn't refer to it by name: the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, which in 1927 became the *Dandenong Journal*.

The *South Bourke and Mornington Journal* (13 December 1882, page 3) does indeed have John B. O'Meara among the list of licensees.

It is interesting that it isn't listed as a new license, though it must be, because...

From *100 Years Of History*, page 94:

*The licensing Court sat once a year at San Remo in the month of December. These court sittings were reported in the Dandenong papers and for 1881 the following licenses were renewed:—*

<i>Francis Bauer</i>	<i>Isle of Wight Hotel, Cowes.</i>
<i>Jas. Wood</i>	<i>Woods Hotel, Cowes.</i>
<i>William Fraser</i>	<i>Pier Hotel, Griffiths Point.</i>
<i>Thos. Bergin</i>	<i>C.P. Hotel, Griffiths Point.</i>
<i>Jas. Carew</i>	<i>Kilcunda Hotel, Kilcunda.</i>
<i>Jas. Stephenson</i>	<i>Woolamai Inn, Bass.</i>
<i>Lyson Williams</i>	<i>Victoria Hotel, Queensferry.</i>
<i>Jas. Dickens</i>	<i>Grantville Hotel, Grantville.</i>
<i>Adolph Janssen</i>	<i>Prince Alfred Hotel, Grantville.</i>

*A new colonial wine license was granted to David McIntosh of Queensferry.*

*These were the hoteliers in the shire for 1881.*

This list is straight from the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 21 December 1881, page 2 (even if White labels Lyson Williams as Lyson and Thomas Bergin is running the C.P. Hotel instead of G.P. Hotel).

You'll notice no J.B. O'Meara. I guess the Bass Hotel was named and licensed for the first time in 1882 after all.

Except...in the actual paper, the one Joseph White has to have taken his list from, you see *John O'Meara, Bass hotel, Bass* between the Stephenson and Williams entries.

Instead of realising that his timeline was askew and researching further, Joseph White simply removed O'Meara from his 1881 list because it didn't fit his Withers/O'Meara 1882 scenario.

After all, who was going to contradict him?

### Part 2 Preview...

In the February edition, the two rivals of the Bass Hotel will be looked at, as well as some odds and ends. Joseph White's account of the Woolamai Inn is examined; however, the highlight is the tragicomic story of Patrick Shannon.

*(continues on Page 20)*

### GRIFFITHS' POINT LICENSING COURT.

Thursday, December 15th.

Before Messrs. Panton, P.M., and Alex. Stewart, J.P.

The following were all granted —  
Francis Bauer, Isle of Wight hotel,

Cowes.

Jas. Wood, Woods' hotel, Cowes.

Wm. Fraser, Pier hotel, Griffiths Point.

Thos. Bergin, G. P. hotel, Griffiths Point.

Jas. Carew, Kilcunda Hotel, Kilcunda.

Jas. Stephenson, Woolamai Inn, Bass.



John O'Meara, Bass hotel, Bass.

Leyson Williams, Victoria hotel, Queensferry.

J. Dickens, Grantville hotel, Grantville.

Adolph Janssen, Prince Alfred hotel, Grantville.

#### NEW LICENSES.

David McIntosh, Queensferry.

Colonial wine renewal — David McIntosh, Queensferry.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 21 December 1881, page 2: Griffiths' Point Licensing Court.



Outside the Bass Hotel, circa 1920s.

The Hotels At Bass (continued from Page 19)

## BASS HOTEL

**J. B. O'MEARA**

**I**S PLEASED to announce to his Friends, Travelers, Families, Visitors, and the General Public, that he has taken the above hotel, and trusts that by strict attention to all their wants he will merit their support.

*The Best Wines, Beers, and Spirits procurable will always be kept.*

In conjunction with Mr. George Usher's line of coaches from Melbourne to Dandenong and Grantville, the proprietor runs Coaches as follows:—

Leaving Grantville for Bass on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, at Five o'clock.

Leaving Bass at 6 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, 15 May 1878, page 1: Advertising.

Footnotes:

1. *Victorian Government Gazette No.92*, 27 July 1860, page 1380: Licenses; *Age*, Thursday 19 April 1860, page 7: Annual Licensing Meeting; *Argus*, Wednesday 4 May 1864, page 7: Annual Publicans' Licensing Meeting; *Herald*, Tuesday 19 December 1871, page 3: The Melbourne Licensing Bench; *Advocate*, Saturday 21 November 1885, page 15; *Kyabram Union*, 16 December 1887, page 7.

2. For instance, see *Argus*, Wednesday 6 November 1861, page 5: City Court; Tuesday 9 December 1879, page 6: Fire in Elizabeth Street; *Herald*, Wednesday 25 January 1865, page 3: Inquest; Tuesday 22 June 1875, page 3: City; *Leader*, Saturday 18 March 1865, page 14: County Court; *Mount Alexander Mail*, 31 August 1878, page 3: Hotel Robberies; *Age*, Tuesday 6 May 1879, page 3: Sudden Death.

3. *Victorian Government Gazette No.8*, 20 January 1863, page 162: Suburban Lots.

4. Township of Bass, Parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], B5053, B800 (formerly TP5), Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, 1958; Town and Suburban Lots in the Township of Woolamai and in the Parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], L1575, W189(A), 8th February 1862.

5. Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, No.1053/1898; *Argus*, Tuesday 8 March 1898, page 1: Family Notices; Wednesday 9 March 1898, page 1: Family Notices. In regard to Lot 1, other sources – the Wonthaggi W345(13) map, for instance – show it as 55 acres.

6. **August 1866 Auction:** *Victorian Government Gazette No.79*, 20 July 1866, page 1509; *Age*, 18 August 1866, page 8; 20 August 1866, page 8. **Auction Results:** *Age*, 23 August 1866, page 22: Crown Land Sale; *Argus*, 23 August 1866, page 6: Crown Lands Sale; *Australasian*, 25 August 1866, page 22: Crown Land Sale. **October 1866 Auction:** *Victorian Government Gazette No.99*, 7 September 1866, page 1509; *Age*, 6 October 1866, page 2: Advertising; *Argus*, 3 October 1866, page 6: Advertising. [Note: the *Age*, 6 October 1866, page 8: Government Notices and *Age*, 9 October 1866, page 8: Government Notices also advertise the 9 October auction but mistakenly list Allotment 1-16 for sale instead of 8-16]. **Auction Results:** *Age*, 10 October 1866,

page 4: Crown Lands Sale; *Argus*, 10 October 1866, page 1: Crown Lands Sale. **Title Deeds:** *Victorian Government Gazette No.118*, 23 October 1866, page 2307; *No.16*, 5 February 1867, page 290. **April 1871 Auction:** *Victorian Government Gazette No.18*, 10 March 1871, page 416; *Argus*, Saturday 1 April 1871, page 6: Government Advertisements. **Cartographical material:** Township of Bass, Parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington, [cartographic material], B5053, B800 (formerly TP5), Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, 1958; Town and Suburban Lots in the Township of Woolamai and in the Parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], L1575, W189(A), 8 February 1862.

7. *Australasian*, 28 May 1892, page 42; George Withers: Grant of Administration. Public Records Office: VPRS 28/P0000, 49/889; Phillip Island rate book 1898 (compiled in November 1897) entry 842 and 1240. This is the last Withers entry.

8. *Williamstown Chronicle*, 5 February 1870, page 6: Williamstown Police Court; 25 December 1875, page 3: Renewals; *Age*, Wednesday 13 May 1874, page 4; *Australasian*, 23 March 1878, page 22: The Courts; *Herald*, Friday 19 March 1880, page 3: Sittings In Equity.

9. Janet Lyne: Grant of administration. VPRS 28/P0002, 89/108. 1903-11-05; Thomas Lyne: Grant of probate. VPRS 28/P0000, VPRS 28/P0002 and VPRS 7591/P0002, 106/259. 1908-04-03; *Argus*, 11 October 1905, page 1: Family Notices; 7 January 1908, page 1: Family Notices; *Punch*, 30 December 1909, page 24.

10. Thomas Lyne: Will; Grant of probate. VPRS 28/P0002, 106/259. 1908-04-03.

11. *The San Remo Times*, 24 April 1896, page 2.

12. Phillip Island rate book 1901, entry 812; 1902, entry 835; 1903, entry 845 & 846; 1904, entry 852 & 853; 1905, entry 801 & 802; 1906, entry 795 & 796; 1907, entry 760 & 761; 1908, entry 770 & 771; 1909, entry 809 & 810 (Elizabeth Adams is written in pencil over the crossed out name of Herber Baker Williams); 1910, entry 381; 1911, entry 349 & 350 (6A is the old Bass showground directly across the road from the hotel); 1912, entry 388 & 389; 1912, entry 400 & 401; 1914, entry 408; 1915, entry 410. For some reason there seems to be two 1912 rate books but no 1913 rate book. The cover of the second rate book says: Extra Rate Book 1912.

13. Township of Bass, Parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], B5053, B800 (formerly TP5), Department of Lands and Survey, Melbourne, 1958; Town and Suburban Lots in the Township of Woolamai and in the Parishes of Woolamai and Corinella, County of Mornington [cartographic material], L1575, W189(A), 8 February 1862. [Both maps misspell Quinlivan as Quindlan]; Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages Victoria, 18167/1939 (Daniel); 384/1904 (Jonathan); 21236/1867 (Thomas); 21134/1875 (William Charles); 7186/1877 (Edward); 14038/1872 (Mary); 707/1900 (Bates, Quinlivan marriage); 10146/1878 (Mary Ann birth); *Lang Lang Guardian*, 22 December 1915, page 3: Licensing Court.

14. *Construction and Real Estate Journal* (Sydney), 29 April 1931, page 2; *Age*, Tuesday 9 February 1932, page 7: Wonthaggi District Fires; Thursday 21 July 1932, page 13: Wonthaggi.

15. *Argus*, Wednesday 27 November 1935, page 12: Other Districts; Friday 29 November 1935, page 17; Saturday 12 October 1940, page 17: Advertising; Tuesday 22 October 1940, page 2: Licenses Transferred; *Age*, Tuesday 22 October 1940, page 9: Hotel Transfers; Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Victoria, registration no. 19339/1900; 643/1908; 8526/1935.

16. Le Serve, Tanya. *Back to Bass*, The Bass Valley Community Group Inc., 2012 (Book shows photo of Sun News Pictorial story on Grummich's career and retirement, with hand-written date 22 November 1983, on page 38); *Herald*, 2 September 1948, page 3: Two Hotels In Will.