

# The Western Port Times

## Grantville & Districts

Volume 6 Number 7

FREE

November 2023

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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.



### WOOL ON WHEELS

★ ★ ★

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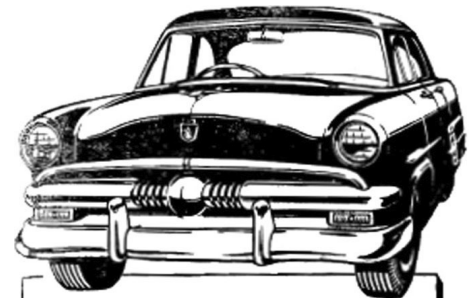
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**C. D. TABERNER,**  
PROPRIETOR,

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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 Inc.: <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)  
 Wonthagi Historical Society: [wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/](http://wonthaggihistoricalsociety.org.au/)  
 Wonthaggi Genealogy Inc.: [secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au](mailto:secretary@wonthaggi-genealogy.org.au)

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From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 5th November 1897, page 2.

## Local and General News

Mass will be celebrated at the Roman Catholic Church, Powlett, on Sunday, November 28th, having been postponed from next Sunday.

The Archie's Creek sawmill have received the order for timber for the erection of the Butter Factory and Creamery at Archie's Creek.

The San Remo Court of Petty Sessions will be held today at the court-house.

The Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai will hold their usual monthly meeting on Saturday, the 13th inst. Various tenders are advertised to be let.

A young colt which Mr. Dwyer, junr., had just purchased from Mr. P. Anderson met with an accident on Sunday last while in the crush at Mr. Anderson's stockyard by falling on its forehead against a fence, inflicting a nasty gash and smashing the frontal bone. Its escape from death was miraculous. It is coming round fairly well considering.

It is quite time something was done in connection with the San Remo Regatta if the committee intend holding their annual Regatta and Sports on New Year's Day, as there will be very little time left to arrange all preliminaries.

Mr. P. Daly is to be sworn in as a J.P. today should the Police Magistrate attend the sitting of the court.

Constable O'Shannassy, of Inverloch, proceeded against John O'Brien for illegal netting at Musk Creek. He was fined £5 or a months' imprisonment. As the money was not paid he was forthwith [*sic*] imprisoned.

Mr. Morgan, of Queensferry, wishes to inform the public that he has come into this district to remain amongst them, and not, as it is represented, for a short season to sell his stock out, and that he will defy anyone to find one article of auction sale goods on his premises.

The fares by the s.s. Argyle from Melbourne to San Remo have been reduced to 5s. saloon and 3s. 6d. steerage. She leaves Melbourne on her next trip on Wednesday, 17th November.

Also

From the *San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser*, 12th November 1897, page 2.

The Shire of Phillip Island and Woolamai will hold their usual monthly meeting to-morrow. Various tenders are to be let.

The Rev. H. E. Potter will conduct Church of England service at the Shire Hall, San Remo,

on Sunday morning next at 11 a.m.

Inspector Connolly made a general annual inspection of the hotels in this district prior to the holding of the Licensing Court on Friday, 3rd December.

The Committee of the San Remo Regatta Club have decided to hold a meeting on Saturday evening to make preliminary arrangements for holding a Regatta on New Year's Day. The public are invited to attend. As there is already a surplus in hand from our last Regatta, and with a few more pounds collected a very good programme might be got up to suit all tastes. The meeting will take place at the Pier Hotel at 7 p.m.

The Genista is expected to resume running on Monday week.

The s.s. Argyle will leave Melbourne for San Remo on Wednesday next (17th November) at 2 p.m.

Mounted-Constable Gibson, who was removed from Grantville to Cranbourne about two years ago, has been transferred to Melbourne. Mounted-Constable Dwyer will fill his place.

The pound under its new management has left the newly-appointed poundkeeper very little to do of late, but [*in*] the last two weeks the record has been over the average for some considerable time, there being about twenty-five impounded in that short space of time.

The last few hot days have brought out the snakes. They are already very plentiful along the roads, and seven of them are to be found laying across the roads killed. It has been stated that as many as six to eight have been killed this week by one person.

Two boats arrived at San Remo on Wednesday night to engage in crayfishing around about here. Another boat arrived here about a week ago, and is meeting with fair success.

Mr. Cleeland's stallion San Remo was swam across the passage to Newhaven on Monday evening for stud purposes at Woolamai.

As the holidays are fast approaching, it would not be amiss suggesting that the council, now that they have got a couple of daymen working on the road, would take steps to have them put on to clear the scrub that is growing on the footpath between the two hotels at San Remo, as it would undoubtedly be a great improvement on its

(continues on Page 4)

*Local and General News (continued from Page 3)*

present state.

Mrs. Victor, of San Remo, has been laid up with a fit of sickness during the last few weeks, but she is now gradually on the mend.

At the sale of the deceased Mr. Stark's estate his farm at the Gurdie's [*sic*] brought, under the hammer, £13 per acre. The sale was well attended, and there was a large number of buyers.

William Spence, aged about 60, residing at Mayfield, near Cranbourne, whilst in a temporary fit of aberration severed the arteries and veins in his left arm in three places, besides inflicting other injuries, from which he had lost a considerable quantity of blood. Dr. Lee Brown, of Dandenong, was sent for, and attended to the sufferer, and he was sent to the Alfred Hospital.

Also

*From the San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 19th November 1897, page 2.*

Mass will be celebrated at the R.C. Church Powlett, on next Sunday week.

The Board of Land and Works invite tenders up to the 24th November for the right to graze on the Racecourse reserve, parish of Woolamai, from 1st December, 1897, to 30th June, 1898.

At the meeting of the council on Saturday Mr. George Durrant, of Cowes, was appointed Inspector of Nuisances and Slaughtering Houses, and Dog Registrar, for the Phillip Island Riding.

We regret to have to record the death of Mr. Thomas Dobbin, late of Kilcunda, which sad event took place at the Winton Hospital, Queensland, about six weeks ago. Mr. Dobbin had an attack of the fever and ague, and after getting over that all right he contracted typhoid fever, from which he died. His death has occasioned general regret in this district, as he was a great favorite with everybody.

The mutton-bird "egging" will start at Cape Woolamai next week, and from the number of birds there this season, some good hauls will be expected.

The grasshoppers are making their appearance already around the district, and unless we have a heavy downpour of rain so as to check their growth they threaten to be very numerous.

Also

*From the San Remo Times and Phillip Island and Bass Valley Advertiser, 26th November 1897, page 2.*

The San Remo Court of Petty Sessions will be held on Friday next at the courthouse, when there is a good many cases listed for

hearing.

The Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire Council will hold their monthly meeting on Saturday, 4th December.

The Rev. H. E. Potter will conduct Church of England service at the Shire Hall, San Remo, on Sunday evening next 7.30 p.m.

The Pier Hotel is just about completed in its general overhaul. The house inside has been re-papered and painted, and the outside is also being painted and picked in quite an artistic style, so that when the visitors arrive (which we hope they will shortly) they will be taken with the appearance of the neatness of the house. The furniture is being all upholstered, and Mr. Heeley, the new landlord, is making the place as taking [*sic*] as possible for the benefit of his visitors, which we hope will also benefit him.

The shearing is just about completed in this district, with the exception of Mr Hoddinott, who expects to finish in the beginning of next week. The clip is not so large as last year's on account of the continual cold wet weather, but the prices are a little higher, so it makes up for the difference in the quantity of the wool.

Our advertising columns announce that Mr. E. Reddy will apply for a license for the Powlett River Hotel on December 3rd, Licensing Court day.

The Council are calling tenders for several works. Tenders are to be sent in before 12 o'clock noon on the 4th day of December. The representative from the Victorian Railway department, who was sent to San Remo to give delivery of the tram rails to the Great Victoria Colliery Company, has started two men on to dig out rails that have been covered with sand. There are a large quantity completely buried, and others just with their ends showing. There will be a great number that will not be found.

The mutton birds are very plentiful this year, and a large number of people are down at Cape Woolamai collecting eggs. They are obtaining a larger quantity than last year, several persons having collected as many as 50 to 60 dozen in two days.

The Lady Loch arrived in Westernport Bay the latter part of last week to make her annual inspection of the Bay, and repaint and refix buoys. She anchored off San Remo on Friday evening and refixed the buoys that had been removed by the tide and wind some time back. She left here on Tuesday morning.

*(continues on Page 5)*

Local and General News (continued from Page 4)

As will be seen by advertisement in another column, a wholesale establishment in Sydney is prepared to place sole agency for specialities, not yet introduced into this district, with [an] active lady having good local business connection.

The steamer running again has a tendency to make things more lively at San Remo and Cowes, as the six weeks she was undergoing repairs the places seemed dead. The mail arrangements were carried out very satisfactorily, the mails being only twice late for the train at Stony Point during the whole of the six weeks.

A man named Brady, employed by Mr. P. Daly, Powlett, as carter, and who was arrested at San Remo on Wednesday night on a charge of assaulting a young man named M'Lauglin [sic], was brought before Mr. Cleeland, J.P., yesterday, and remanded till to-day for the attendance of two magistrates to deal with the case. He was brought up again to-day before Messrs. Cleeland and Hoddinott, J.P.'s, and fined £5 or one month.

Mr. W. H. Richardson, of Rhyll, has secured a Government contract at Kalimna, near the Gippsland Lakes entrance, to repair and extend the jetty. The piles to be used are to come from New Zealand, as the redgum and box in the present jetty are all honeycombed with worms.

Local complaint is made at Jeetho at the action of the Poowong and Jeetho shire council accepting several of the highest tenders for works under special grant. The Public Works department has to endorse the tenders, and the matter has been brought under its attention. Nothing can be said against the lowest tenderers except that "they could not possibly do the work for the money."

Robert Matthew Bartlett, of Outtrim green grocer, a married man, who it was alleged had been guilty of improper intimacy with a girl named Elizabeth Poland, aged 15, at Outtrim on the 2nd March last, engaged the attention of the Chief Justice in the Criminal Court, Melbourne, on Tuesday. The defence was a total denial of the charge. It was shown that the girl had made contradictory statements, and in cross-examination she admitted that she had been out with other young men, although she denied that they had ever been improperly intimate with her. The jury found the accused not guilty, and he was discharged.

## End of the Centurion

From the *Age*, Monday 7 July 1913, page 10

### Schooner On Fire

The schooner *Centurion* was reported to be on fire from "stern to stern" at San Remo yesterday. The schooner was bound from Waratah Bay to Melbourne with a cargo of lime, and she put into San Remo on Friday because of an outbreak of fire in the hold. On dropping anchor in Westernport efforts were made to subdue the outbreak, but directly the hatches were raised dense volumes of smoke burst out from the hold, and it was realised that nothing could be done to save the vessel. The captain and crew stood by the vessel until it was dangerous to remain on board.

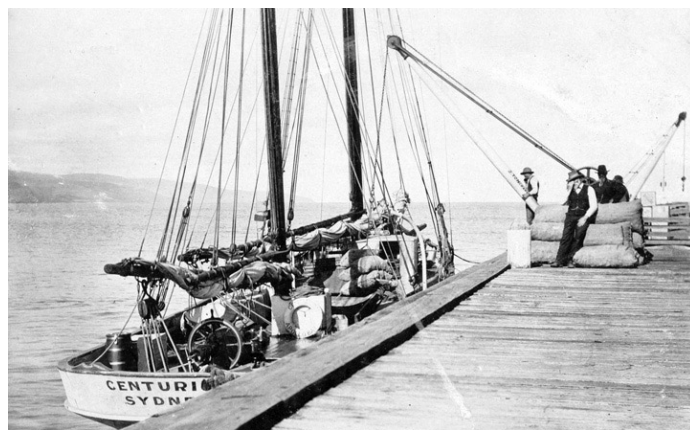
From the *Age*, Monday 8 July 1913, page 9

### The Burning of the Schooner Centurion

San Remo, Monday.

The schooner *Centurion*, which arrived here on Friday morning with her cargo of lime on fire, burst into flames at 11.30 p.m. on Saturday, and continued to burn till 5.30 a.m. on Sunday. All that remains to be seen now is the charred part of her stern.

Captain Olsen and the crew have left for Melbourne.



The wooden coastal trading ketch, *Centurion*. Built at Erina, NSW in 1907. This vessel was purchased in July 1908 by the Apollo Bay Shipping Company for a weekly service between Melbourne, Apollo Bay and Lorne. This photograph, taken before the vessel was re-registered in Melbourne in 1908, was probably taken soon after the vessel was bought by the Apollo Bay Shipping Company. Source: Shirley Jones collection of Victorian postcards. State Library of Victoria.

\* \* \*

Fire stoves mantelpieces, coppers etc., the best in Wonthaggi at Melbourne prices. The Melbourne Furnishing Coy., Graham-street, Wonthaggi.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 30 April 1884, page 3.

## Phillip Island Shire Council

Friday, 25th April 1884

Present: Councillors Turnbull (chairman), Aldridge, Kidd, Duffus and Smith.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

### Correspondence

From Councillor Hayes, asking leave of absence.—To stand over for consideration.

From Dr. F. L. Hooper, offering services as Health Officer to the Shire at £30 per annum.—The offer was declined, and the Secretary instructed to write to the Central Board of Health stating that owing to the fact of there being no medical man resident within 50 miles of the district, that it was next to impracticable to make a satisfactory appointment.

From J. Cleeland, stating that the road formation at approach to New Haven jetty encroached on his allotment of land there, and that he intended fencing same in.—The Secretary was instructed to write to the Shire Engineer requesting that he would make a proper survey of the road in question; and to Mr. Cleeland, asking him not to take any action in the matter for the present.

From F. A. Nowell, for renewal of slaughtering license.—Granted.

From Councillor S. West, forwarding his resignation.—Held over for one month.

From Water Supply Department, stating that the area asked for in connection with the reservoir lately constructed at Kilkunda [*sic*] would be permanently reserved and placed under control of the Council.

From Under Treasurer, forwarding account for first moiety of endowment, £303.—Attended to.

### General Business

Extension of time was granted to Patrick Quinlivan and William Pickersgill, on their respective contracts.

The Clerk of Works reported, relative to the work in progress at Bass Bridge, that he had consulted with the Engineer on the subject, and had been authorised by him to order whatever new timber might be required.—Report received and action taken approved.

The Clerk of Works was instructed to get Walshe's Bridge, on the Griffiths Point road, repaired at a cost of about £2 10s.

Relative to the old material of Bass Bridge,

the Clerk of Works was authorised to have such of it as might be useful removed and stacked where convenient.

Payments were passed amounting to £203 2s. 4d.

R. Galls' tender for contract 326 was accepted at £11 8s. 8d.

No tenders were accepted for contracts 325 and 327.

It was resolved that no claim for extra timber supplied by contractor for Bass bridge should be entertained beyond schedule price.

The Clerk of Works was instructed to have permanent pegs put in for the work laid out by Engineer on Upper Powlett road; also to report at next morning as to cost of repairing Powlett bridge.

The Secretary was instructed to write to Engineer asking whether or not the Powlett bridge is on the proper line of road.

The Council then adjourned till 30th May.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 13 October 1976, page 1.

## Angel Lands On Bass Highway

The Angel of Mercy helicopter ambulance landed on the Bass Highway at The Gurdies, 10 miles from Lang Lang, on Thursday, to pick up two men severely injured in a two car collision.

Shortly before the arrival of the helicopter, the driver of one of the cars, Lawrence Skinner, 27, of Inverloch, died.

A passenger in his car, James McCrae, 40, of Lance Creek, near Wonthaggi, suffered severe head injuries, multiple fractures of the ribs and collapsed lung.

The driver of the other car, Hugh Robertson, 54, of Centre Road, Cheltenham, had a broken leg, chest injuries and severe facial injuries.

Senior Constable H. Wigmore, of Lang Lang, said both driver were trapped in their cars and it took some time for police, ambulancemen and tow truck drivers to free them.

Both cars were wrecked.

Ambulance Officer, Mr Jon Winterton, who accompanied the men in the helicopter, said police blocked off the highway so the pilot, Mr Leigh Hornsby, could land.

The injured men were flown to Dandenong Hospital where Mr McCrae was still in the intensive care ward at the weekend.

His condition has slightly improved.

Mr Robertson was transferred to Prince Henry Hospital for specialists [*sic*] treatment in its facial unit.

## Early Coal Exploration in Gippsland

By Mr. Reginald A. F. Murray, F.G.S.

(Re-paragraphed for the sake of clarity.)

The following reminiscences in connection with the above subject are mainly of a personal character or within my actual knowledge: but as my association with coal exploration only commenced early in 1873 a few outlines of what had been done previously may serve as a useful introduction:—

Early history of Victorian Exploration has it that Hume and Hovell, the first pioneers to cross the Murray, made their way down to the coast in the neighbourhood of Cape Patterson, some 16 miles eastward of Westernport, and there saw the outcropping coal seams exposed in natural section between their containing rock-layers on the sea margin. Be this as it may, anyone who travelled along the shore in that locality could not fail to notice the seams, though of late years they have become less distinguishable owing to excavation and concealment by overlying rubble through sea action.

As far back as the early fifties a sturdy old English (or Welsh) coal miner named George Davis is reported to have carried a small bag of coal on his back from Cape Patterson up to Melbourne to show to the Governor (Mr. Latrobe).

When Mr. Alfred R. C. Selwyn came out as Government Geologist he devoted much attention to the geology of the Cape Patterson coal deposits and their containing rocks as far as natural exposures enabled him, and about 1860 to 1863 some work was done to exploit the seams exposed on the coast (then known as the "Rock" and "Queen" veins) with a view to tracing their inland continuations.

Some hand-boring was also done by a Mr. Seddon, but the work generally was of a desultory character, and a good deal retarded by the faulty nature of the rocks and the occurrence of volcanic dykes, some of large size, found to traverse them.

About this time, too, Mr. Richard Daintree, field geologist, under Mr. Selwyn, investigated some of the country along the Bass River, and found some small coal seams. Subsequently a company was formed to work the Cape Patterson seams, and a mine opened up a little way inland from the coast. Some 1800 tons of coal are reported to have been raised and shipped to Melbourne. The shipping place was a deep gut in the rocks where, under specially favourable weather conditions, a boat could be loaded and take the coal to a

vessel standing outside; but it is a frightfully dangerous place and quite impracticable as a regular shipping place.

Some of the old mooring rings were to be seen when I last passed the place some 35 years ago. From data at that time available Selwyn was unable to report hopefully on the field, though the quality of the coal was good, if inferior to that of New South Wales as a gas producer; nevertheless, he indicated the advisability of extended search inland towards the Strzelecki Ranges.

Of developments from 1862 to 1873 I have no personal knowledge beyond the facts that the Kilcunda seam was found and also the Sandy Waterholes seams between Kilcunda and Westernport, but towards 1873 one of the many spasmodic movements in Victorian coal development took place, and Mr. McKenzie, chief coal viewer for New South Wales, was engaged to report on the prospects.

The Geological Survey Department, under Mr. Selwyn, had been abolished in 1868, and he and his staff of assistants, including myself, dispensed with, but subsequently, under Mr. Brough Smyth, Secretary for Mines, and Mr. Couchman, Chief Mining Surveyor, I had been re-engaged as a geological surveyor, and it fell to me to take charge of a party of men to open up the exposed coal seams at Cape Patterson for Mr. McKenzie's inspection.

At this time, too, the Kilcunda mine had been opened, a company having been formed to work it. Messrs. Latham and Watson, Bendigo mine owners, seem to have been the principals, and a Mr. Thomas was mine manager. A shaft had been sunk to cut the coal seam on its dip inland from its exposure along the cliffs, and a heading driven along the coal for some distance, the thickness being 20 inches to 2 feet, and the quality excellent. A tramway was also laid to the jetty on the eastern passage of Westernport, near Griffith's Point, now known as San Remo.

My party was composed of Cornish miners engaged from Clunes, splendid lode miners, though not experienced in coal; however, that did not matter, as they had only to sink and costean where I told them. We tackled the "Rock" and "Queen" veins at their outcrops, sinking various holes and cuts through them so as to get sections of the seams. In

*(continues on Page 8)*

*Early Coal Exploration... (continued from Page 7)*

some places work could only be done at low tides, the holes having to be baled out at the next ebb, and so on.

While camped in this locality in a ti-tree shaded hollow behind the sand hummocks, two little incidents occurred of a somewhat amusing character. The party, as before said, consisted of Cornish miners who had, it appears, come direct from the old country to Clunes and had no experience of bush life. On my return one evening I found them just back from work much excited about a monkey bear which they had found wandering on the seashore in the morning. They had kept him surrounded at a safe distance till one of them went back to camp for a gun and shot the poor brute, taking his skin as a trophy.

On my laughing at them and assuring them of the animal's harmlessness, one said: "When we seed un first we thowt un was a say beer (sea bear)." Another remarked, "We thowt un was a brave beast."

The storekeeper at San Remo used to send down fortnightly with our food supplies, but one Saturday he sent everything except the meat, and great was the tribulation of those sturdy miners, who assured me they could not work properly without meat. I chaffed them and told them that in their own country they only saw meat once a year, but that I would get them some, so, going out by early dawn with my rifle, I soon got a big kangaroo and brought back its hind quarters and tail, which were cut up and made into a steamer or sort of big Irish stew with potatoes and onions, for the Sunday's dinner. The majority of the party relished this all right, but two or three "passed" the kangaroo, which they considered to be among the animals forbidden in the Bible to be eaten. In vain was it pointed out that the kangaroo was not mentioned at all in the Bible, that it chewed the cud, and that as regards the cloven foot, it went one better than the sheep or bullock, having three toes instead of two. No use! Prejudice was too strong. Happily the arrival of the meat next day ended the difficulty.

While the men were carrying on the work of making excavations on the exposed coal seams and on sinking a shaft inland (where the continuation of one of them was cut), I was engaged in examining the features of the rocks generally along the coast towards Anderson's Inlet, and also went to see the Strzelecki or Coal Creek seam, which had not long previously been discovered, and at which

Mr. Seddon (already mentioned herein) was engaged with a party boring.

This seam had been found by a prospector named James Brown, who made his way from Stockyard Creek, past Anderson's Inlet, and thence northward into the Strzelecki ranges. He found the coal exposure in Coal Creek, and after a week's travel without food emerged from the forest at Bunyip. He was evidently a good bushman, being able again to locate his discovery. A group of lease blocks were taken up (by whom I do not know), and a connecting traverse to them from Anderson's Inlet surveyed by Mr. Turner, mining surveyor at Stockyard Creek (Foster).

In due course Mr. McKenzie arrived and inspected the coal seams at the various points where my party had opened them up; he also went up to see the Coal Creek seam, and went through the Kilcunda mine. His report to the Government was by no means encouraging: he evidently simply pronounced on the evidence brought before him, which certainly was at the time rather meagre.

"Coal existent certainly and of good quality, but not in commercially workable thickness," may be given as an epitome of his expressed opinion.

He made no suggestion as to larger possibilities or the directions in which to look for them; he spoke simply as a coal viewer, not as a geologist. Now I had not forgotten the views of my old chief (Mr. Selwyn) as to the possibilities of coal further inland from the coast; the Coal Creek discovery tended to strengthen those views, and being fond of exploration generally I asked Mr. Brough Smyth to let me make further geological examinations, which he did, giving me a free hand as to methods.

Coming down to Gippsland about the middle of 1873, I began with a preliminary tour of the country, and then settled down to the area occupied by the coal bearing (or possible coal bearing) rocks, commencing with short incursions into the foot hills of the ranges from points in the settled country from Sale to Port Albert, Foster and Anderson's Inlet on the southern or coastal margin, and along the Latrobe valley to Moe, and thence along the Moe valley to the Kooweerup on the northern flanks. These lines represent roughly the boundaries of the carbonaceous area (except an occurrence on the north of the Latrobe valley at the Tyers).

*(continues on Page 9)*



Early Coal Exploration... (continued from Page 8)

Geologically the granites and Silurian rocks of Cape Woolamai and the Mornington Peninsula and those extending along the north of the Kooweerup, Moe and Latrobe valleys constitute the western and northern boundaries, while on the south we have the silurian and granite of Cape Liptrap, Wilson's Promontory, the Hoddle Range, and Foster; how far the carbonaceous rocks extend under the sea between Capes Woolamai and Liptrap or eastward of Corner Inlet is unknown, but the boundary must be under Bass Strait between the mainland and Tasmania.

Excerpt from *Land of the Lyre Bird: A Story of Early Settlement In The Great Forest Of South Gippsland*, published for the Committee of the South Gippsland Pioneers' Association, 1920. Reprinted with the kind permission of the Korumburra Historical Society. This book is still in print and available from the Korumburra Historical Society (see Page 2 for contact details) or from the Korumburra Newsagency.

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From the *Lang Lang Guardian*, 18 March 1914, page 3.

## Nyora

The much-needed State school at Nyora is nearly completed, and residents are loud in their praises of the large and commodious building that has been erected. Mr Neville, of Melbourne, is the builder.

Mr J. Y. Davis, of Nyora had the misfortune some time ago of having his hotel and private premises totally destroyed by fire, the buildings being only partly insured. Notwithstanding this, he has decided to build again, and he is erecting what will be a fine and ornamental building. Under the Licensing Act, a licensee must have his temporary saloon on the same spot as the former licensed premises were. The building, which is expected to be completed in about two months' time, comprises twenty-two rooms. The builders are Messrs Whale and Ross, of Melbourne.



The pre-fire Nyora Hotel around 1910. Photo taken from *Powlett Coal Fields and Coal History of Victoria 1825-1910*. Published by Rae Bros., The Strand Publishing House, 1910.

From the *Age*, Wednesday 2 June 1926, page 9.

## Wonthaggi

As a result of the visit of Captain M. Chellew, assistant chief inspector of the Country Fire Brigades Board, it is expected that in the near future tenders will be called for the erection of the station keeper's quarters.

At the last meeting of the Wonthaggi council a letter was read from Rev. A. Gearing, secretary of the Ministerial Association in Wonthaggi, requesting the council to take steps to stop the Sunday pictures in Wonthaggi, and to have a stricter censorship on the pictures shown. The council decided to refer the matter back to the Ministerial Association, and the town clerk was instructed to point out that on two occasions a referendum had been taken on the question, which resulted in favor of the continuance of the Sunday pictures.

The Wonthaggi Caledonian Society has decided to assist with the queen carnival in connection with the recreation reserve, and Messrs. Bentick, Watt and Vincent have been appointed delegates to the general committee. It was also decided to hold a grand Scotch concert on a date to be fixed after the strike ends.

The Union Band will hold a concert on Wednesday night in the Union Theatre for the establishing of a distress fund, to be used during the industrial unrest in Wonthaggi.

The domestic arts section of the Better Farming Train, consisting of two lecture cars, will visit Wonthaggi on Friday week. Four lady experts will accompany the train and give demonstrations on cookery, needle work, child welfare and mothercraft.

The Loch Progress Association is writing to the Country Roads Board to urge that the unmade portion of Sunnyside-road be completed. If this section, which is only a mile and a half in length, were gravelled, this road will be completed, and Loch will be provided with an outlet that is badly needed.

The South Gippsland Coal-Mining Co., at Kilcunda, worked 9½ days last fortnight for an output of 583 tons. The new tunnel has been advanced 80 feet, and it is now possible to drive without the use of timber. All the faces are showing a good thickness of coal, ranging from 27 inches to 50 inches.

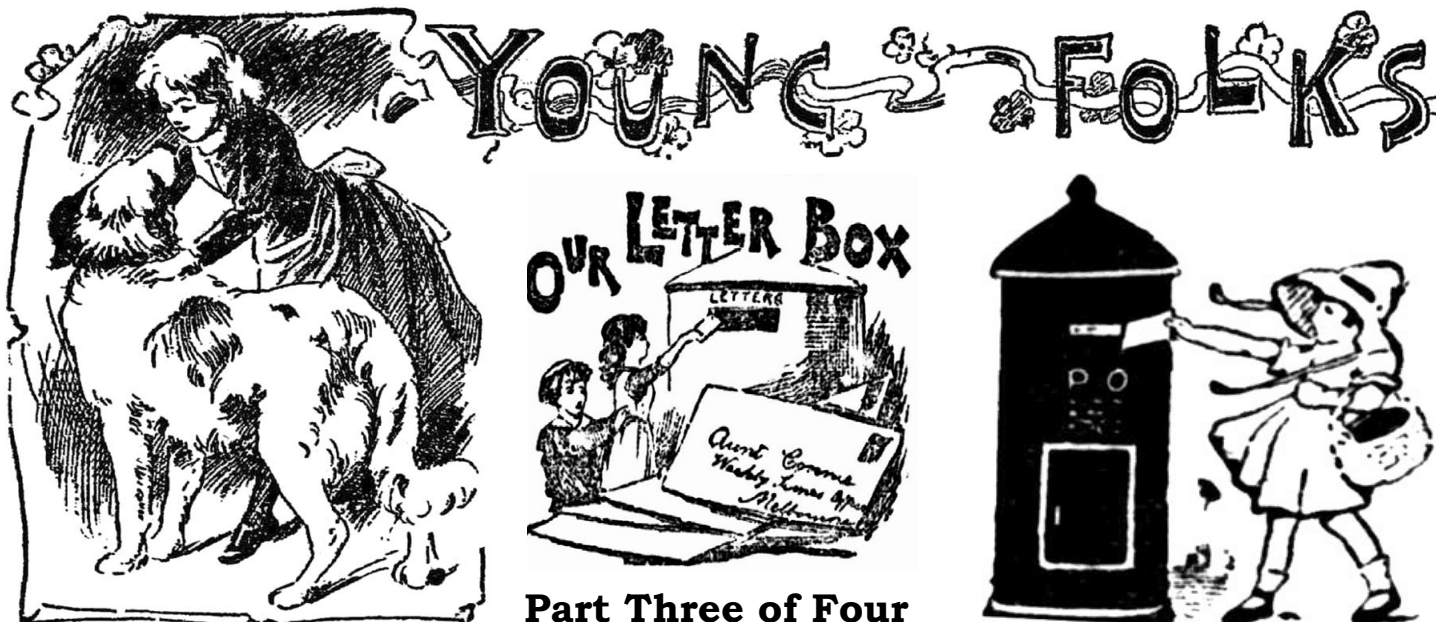
### SUMMERLAND Golf House, Ventnor

AT THE SURF BEACH.

IN THE CENTRE OF NATURE'S WONDERLAND.

Penguins, Mutton Birds, Seals and Relics of the Stone Age Man.

SURFING, FISHING. — PHONE, VENTNOR 9.



### Part Three of Four

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 10 June 1905, page 31.

#### Western Port Bay

Flinders, Western Port, May 27th 1905.  
Dear Aunt Connie.—As I have not seen any letters from Flinders, I thought I would write one. We are having a nice lot of rain lately. There was a trip to Phillip Island, and I went across Western Port Bay. My uncle gets "The Weekly Times" every Thursday, and he has been a subscriber for five years. We live near the cable station, which is between Western Port Bay and the South Pacific ocean. It is a most beautiful place. I have three brothers, but no sisters.—With love, *[unclear words]*, your would-be niece, Florrie Gregory, aged 10 years and 2 months. May I write again?

*[Yes, Florrie.— Aunt Connie.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 3 March 1906, page 34.

#### Katie's Pets

Woolamai Sawmills, Bass, 19th Feb., 1906.—Dear Aunt Connie,—This is the first time I have written to you, and I hope you will accept me as one of your many nieces. My favorite games are cricket, rounders, tally-ho, and hare and hounds. We have escaped bush fires very well so far, and the rain we had on Saturday will help to stop any more fires that would break out again. Snakes are very numerous in these parts. We have seen two or three in a dam near the house. We have two pet wallabies. We have two dogs, and neither of them will touch the wallabies. We have also a cat and a dear little parrot. My brother Tom is such a funny little fellow. He is always after the fowls with his whip. The other day he was explaining something to me, and I said to him, "Oh, Tom, you're

getting quite a philosopher." And he said, "I'm not a philfossicker; I'm a boy." I like reading Hilda Russell's letters; they are so nice and interesting. With love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, Uncle Ben and yourself.—I remain, your would-be niece, Katie Fitzgerald.

P.S.—Please, may I write again?

*[You are accepted as a niece, Katie, and may write again.—Aunt Connie.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 24 March 1906, page 34

#### On The Bass River

Blackwood Park, Bass, 12/3/06.—Dear Aunt Connie,—This is the first time I have written to you, and I wish to he made one of your many nieces. Bass is a pretty place. We live near the Bass River, and my brother has a boat on the river. I have three brothers and three sisters. I go to school with my two sisters. I am thirteen years old, and in the fifth class at school. My little brother is six years old, and he can play any tune he hears on the piano. My eldest sister and myself are learning music. My favorite books are What Katy Did and Grimm's Fairy Tales. We have a pet foal and two calves. We have had no bush fires this year. I like reading Hilda Russell's letters. They are so interesting. With love to Cousins, Uncle Ben and yourself,—M. Robinson.

P.S.—Please may I write again?

*[I am pleased to add you to our big list of nieces, Marguerite, and you may write again.—Aunt Connie.]*

*(continues on Page 11)*

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**RUBBER Pillows** are just marvellous. **McLeod's, Kooweerup.**

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*Young Folk (continued from Page 10)*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 16 November 1907, page 37

### The Bass Bends

Blackwood Park, Bass 22nd October—Dear Aunt Connie,—I saw you were offering a prize for the best written letter this month, so I thought I would try. I am going to give a short description of the Bass Bends. They look lovely. Every bush is covered with clematis, and English ivy. Near the river slopes is covered with ferns, and maiden hair fern. Then all the ti-tree is out in blossom, which makes them look as if they were covered with tiny snowflakes. All the trees have their fresh spring leaves on. The sweetbriar is out, and its bloom is like a small rose. The blackberry and raspberry are climbing up the gum trees [*sic*]. I am sure you would think it nice if you could see it. With love to Uncle Ben, and all my cousins, not forgetting yourself. I remain, your loving niece.—Marguerite M. Robinson; aged 15 years.

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 24 October 1908, page 37

### A Great Success

Grantville, South Gippsland.—Dear Aunt Connie,—This is the first time I have written to you, and I hope you will accept me as one of your nieces. I am going to school, and I am in the third class. I have two brothers going to school with me—one is in the fifth class, and the other is in the first class. I have also a little sister and brother not going to school. Our school is in Glenalvie and we have about two miles to walk. We live about nine miles from Grantville, and the mail is brought to us three times a week. On August 14 we had a cantata in aid of a library. It was got up by our schoolmaster. It was a great success. We had it again in aid of the Children's Hospital, and it was a success also. I am glad it was for the Children's Hospital, as I have got a dear little cousin there. She has been there about two months. I am glad it is coming fine weather for going to school, as I like going to school very much. I have been going about three years last July. My granddad has been to England for a trip, and my grandma went to Melbourne to meet him. Please may I write again?—From your would-be niece, Maud Trewin, aged 10 years.

*[Yes, Maud, you are accepted as a niece, and may write again.—Aunt Connie.]*

**For Chronic Chest Complaints, Woods  
Great Peppermint Cure. 1s. 6d.**

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 7 November 1908, page 37

### A Dairying District

Glen Forbes, via Grantville. Dear Aunt Connie,—As I have seen letters from some of my school mates, I thought I would try to win a prize. I will tell you something about Glen Forbes. There is no township here, our nearest township being Grantville. It is seven miles away, and is on Westernport Bay. We can see the bay and French Island from our school. We often see the boats passing by. We can also see the Southern Ocean and Wilson's Promontory. We can get a very pretty view of Kilcunda, and we can hear the breakers roar, although it is ten miles away. It is very hilly about here, and there are many pretty ferns in the creeks. There is a creek just about five chains from our house. Most of the people about here are dairying. We are milking 22 cows, and we send our cream to the Archie's Creek butter factory. A carrier comes nearly every day. I was ten years old last Sunday, and I have three sisters and one brother. I hope you will accept me as one of your nieces. I am very fond of the "Young Folks" page. With love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, yourself and Uncle Ben.—I remain, your would-be niece, Annie Jackson.

*[You are accepted as a niece, Annie, and may write again.—Aunt Connie.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, 16 November 1907, page 37

### No Paper Like "The Weekly Times."

"Fernleigh" Ryanston, via Grantville, South Gippsland, 22nd October.—Dear Aunt Connie,—We have been living at Ryanston for about twelve years, while my two eldest brothers have been living here thirteen. Ryanston is a very pretty place. There is a range of hills around the western and northern parts of our place. The creeks run north and south. Along the banks the wattle tree is growing. During show time we went down to the creek to get some blossom. After getting as much as we could carry, my sister put it under a bush and went to have some fun. On coming back what should we see but an old cow eating it. She had eaten it up when we got to the place where she was. We have been taking "The Weekly Times" for a number of years, and think that there is not any paper like it. Hoping you will accept me as one of your many nieces—I remain your loving would-be niece, Dora Grayden.

*(continues on Page 12)*

*Young Folk (continued from Page 11)*

P.S.—May I write again.

*[We are glad to have you for a niece, Dora, also to hear that you think there is no paper like "The Weekly Times." Yes, dear, you may write again.—Aunt Connie.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 16 January 1909, page 37

### **A Dairying District**

Loch.—Dear Aunt Connie,—As I have never seen any letters from Loch in "The Weekly Times." I thought I would write and tell you a little about it. The first settlers came to Loch in the years 1875 and 1876, but the town was founded some time before the railway line was built, and was never very large until it was made... *[what follows is either a scanning error or an error in the original paper]*... The railway line was until the lint was made. The railway line was... *[From hereon it resumes correctly]*... population is about four hundred and fifty. Loch is a very pretty place, surrounded by hills, and situated on the Bass and Alsop rivers. There are lovely tall tree ferns, small ferns, maiden hair, and a great many other kinds. In the scrubs *[sic]* you can hear all the different kinds of birds whistling, which sounds very pretty. Dairying is the principal industry around Loch. Love to Cousins Connie and Florrie, not forgetting yourself.—Jennie Furze. P.S.—Please may I write again?

*[I shall be glad to hear from you again, dear.—Aunt Connie.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 17 July 1909, page 37

### **Empire Day At Grantville**

Glen Forbes, Grantville.—Dear Aunt Connie—I will take for my subject Empire Day. When we got to school in the morning we hoisted the flag, and sang Unfurl the Flag and God Save The King. Then we went inside and had a talk about Empire Day. At 12 o'clock our parents and a lot of other people came, and we had dinner. After dinner I won a race, and came second in another. We also had skipping competitions. One of my school mates skipped 2100, and another skipped 1923. I hope to be accepted as one of your many nieces, and please may I write again?—Vera May Jackson, aged nine years.

*[You have been added to our list of nieces, May, and you may write again.—Aunt Connie.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 4 June 1910, page 37.

### **Powlett River District**

Dalyston.—Dear Uncle Ben,—I will take for my subject "The Powlett River District." I have only been living here about six months. When I first came here there were no tents or houses where the State mines are now situated. At present it is like a city. All classes of tradesmen are fully represented, as well as miners. My father is a builder and contractor. He has been kept going all the while. One great thing, there are no rabbits here to destroy grass. There are plenty of hares, and fish are plentiful in the river. The railway (which has been constructed since I came here) is a great help to the district. We often go for a day's outing to the beach. It is good fun paddling in the water, and playing on the sand. It is a pleasant sight to watch the breakers rolling onward. They strike the sand and rocks with such force, that it would dash you to pieces if you were in them. I am in the sixth class at school. I have one brother and one sister. I wish to be accepted as one of your many nephews. My age is 14 years. May I write again? With love to yourself, Aunt Connie and Cousins Connie and Florrie.—I remain your loving nephew, Edward Smithwick.

*[Glad to hear from you, Edward. You have been accepted as a nephew and may write again.—Uncle Ben.]*

From the *Weekly Times*, Saturday 8 July 1911, page 38.

### **Enjoyable Holidays**

Glen Forbes.—Dear Aunt Connie.—I lived in Melbourne all my life until last November. My father and I were going to Krowera. We left Melbourne about 5 o'clock in the evening. I watched the scenery until it was dark. The train stopped at one station for twenty minutes. We reached Loch and went to a hotel, where we slept. In the morning I rose early and went for a walk. I went to a cliff by the station to pick some grass. While I was there a gentleman called to me. I felt afraid at first to go, but I changed my mind and went. He asked me my name, and I told him. He said he knew my father, and knew me, too. I then went with him to where he lived, which was next door to the hotel. He then drove my father and me out to Krowera. I have five brothers and sisters. I am the youngest, and the only one that is going to school. About a week after I was in Krowera

*(continues on Page 13)*

*Young Folk (continued from Page 12)*

I went to school. There were only seventeen children going to school. They had a pony each on Boxing Day. My sister, cousin and I went to have a look at the waterfall. We took our tea with us. My sister and I bathed in the fall. I enjoyed myself very much. Next day my sister and I went to Melbourne. I stayed in Melbourne until last Good Friday. My cousin and I came to Glen Forbes. He had to go back to Melbourne on Easter Monday. On Monday we went out shooting, and only shot one rabbit, which he took to Melbourne. I have one mile and a half to walk to school. I am 12 years and nine months old.—I remain, Daisy Luke.

From the *Weekly Times*, 20 September 1913, page 39

### A Little About San Remo

Beryl Heazlewood, who lives at Manuka House, San Remo, writes:—Dear Aunt Connie,—I was very pleased to see my last letter in print. I have been away for about a year, at Portland, which is a very nice place. I went to school while I was there, and I got my qualifying certificate. San Remo is near Griffiths' Point. It is situated on the mainland. Fishing and farming are the chief industries. San Remo has three beaches near it—the Back Beach, Shelly Beach, and Baw [*sic*] Beach. Many pretty shells are found on Shelly and the Back Beach. On a moonlit night it is very pretty to see the waves breaking near the rocks on Baw [*sic*] Beach. Arbor Day was on July 4. We planted a great number of trees in the school ground. The busiest time at San Remo is when the muttonbird egging season starts. It is about the end of November, and the beginning of December. A great many people come down to go over to Cape Woolamai (on Phillip Island) to get the muttonbird eggs. San Remo is also busy at Christmas time, when the people come down for their holidays. There are two ways of getting to San Remo. One is by taking the train to Stony Point from Melbourne and then taking the steamship (Genista) to San Remo. Another is to take the train from Melbourne to Anderson's Corner, and then take the coach to San Remo. There are two boarding-houses, two hotels, a school, a post office, and a store. I am 13 years and 1 month old, and I am in the seventh grade at school.

Mrs. Jones got all her furnishings for her tent at the Melbourne Furnishing Co., Graham St., Wonthaggi.

From the *Weekly Times*, 15 November 1913, page 39.

### Something About San Remo

Mollie Kelleher, who lives at the Police Station. San Remo, writes:—Dear Aunt Connie—I saw my friend's letter printed so I thought I would write, too. It is the first time I have written to you. San Remo is situated on Western Port Bay. It used to be known as Griffith's Point, but on account of the tides here corresponding with the tides at San Remo, in Italy, the people changed the name. San Remo is a very small town, consisting of two hotels, a store, a police station, two or three boarding houses, two churches, a shire hall (used as a school), and a few private houses. San Remo has two beaches, which are both nice. Our township is about 8 miles from Bass, a small town on the Bass River. Kilcunda is passed in the train to Wonthaggi. It has an ocean beach, and many picnic parties go there by excursion trains for a day's outing. Dalyston is also a place 12 miles from San Remo. San Remo is 17 miles from Wonthaggi, which is now the fifth largest town in Victoria. It has the State coal mine. Only four years ago Wonthaggi was all bush, and there was no railway there then. There are some fine buildings. The State school is a large school with a lovely garden attached to it. The steamer Genista runs daily from San Remo to Stony Point, calling at Newhaven, Rhyll and Cowes on the way. Newhaven, Rhyll and Cowes are on Phillip Island, and the latter town is a great holiday resort. Newhaven is a picturesque little place, as there is a lot of bush there. The birds, too, are numerous, for they build their nests without being disturbed. I am 13 years and two months old, and I am in the seventh grade at school. We had no school during September, on account of having no teacher. Hoping that I may be accepted as one of your many nieces.

*[I am very pleased to add you to our list of nieces, Mollie, and hope you will write again. — Aunt Connie.]*

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## S.S. GENISTA.

### Regular Service.

LEAVING	RETURNING
San Remo (daily) 7.45 a.m.	Stony Point, 11.40 a.m.
Newhaven, 7.50	Tankerton, (Tues, Thurs, Sat) 12 noon
Rhyll, 9	Cowes, 12.40 p.m.
Cowes 10 a.m.	Rhyll, 1.25 p.m.
Tankerton (Mon, Wed, Fri,) 10.30	Newhaven, 2.30
Connecting with 8.0 a.m. train from Melbourne and 11.30 a.m. from Stony Point	San Remo, 2.45
All further information—Offices. S.S. GENISTA, 421 Collins Street Melbourne, or Cowes. Phones—Central 8608, Cowes 1.	

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# The McLeod Prison

## Part Three: 1923-1926

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 1 March 1923.

### Among The Gaol Birds

#### A Visit to French Island

(by John F. Peters, in the "Herald.")

From the little fishing village of Corinella on one of the points within Westernport, you may look over the bay to where a cluster of white patches shows up against the barren-looking hills of French Island.

"Government penal colony," says some one, and you decide that the place may be worth visiting.

It is. A little fishing boat skims over the bay, and makes the landing stage. One or two men in grey sit fishing at the end of the pier.

"Gaol-birds," says the skipper. "They are all serving indeterminate sentences here."

Near the beach, the bed of a dried-up creek has been transformed by the prisoners into a kitchen garden. It produces potatoes, cabbages and beans with a profusion that a suburban householder might well envy.

#### The Iron Hand

Warder T. O'Toole, a big, stern yet genial man does the honors at headquarters, in the absence of Mr. James Quirk, superintendent of the prison. A magnetic glance from steel-blue eyes, and a hand-shake of iron make one realise that prison management is no weakling's job. There are thirty-eight prisoners on French Island at the present time, yet only three officials are necessary to control them.

"What do you do with them when they are unruly?" asks someone.

"Send them back to Pentridge," says Warder O'Toole significantly. "They know they are on a good wicket here. They enjoy a free, open-air life, no excessively hard labor, and no irksome confinement. They know also that escaping is not of much use. There have been 27 escapes in ten years. Of these, 26 escapees have been re-captured, and we know where to lay our hands on the other man whenever he is wanted. Besides the certainty of recapture there is always the certainty of being returned to Pentridge. So most of them are content to remain where they are."

#### The Human Touch

Each prisoner has a plain, whitewashed cubicle to himself, furnished with a stretcher, a rough table and other necessary conveniences. He may, moreover, construct other furniture in the carpenter's shop nearby. Much ingenuity

is shown by some of the prisoners in this way. Peep into one cubicle and image yourself in a picture postcard shop. The walls are covered with pictures—popular actresses, racehorses, a full-page picture from the "Weekly Times" depicting the final thirty in the "Herald" beauty competition, and scores of others.

#### Proud of His Home

"Some of them," says one intelligent-looking old convict, indicating his fellow prisoners, 'like to keep a bit of order in their cubicles, and decorate them. Others are too dog-souled to care. They can't rise above their situation."

One evidently believes that cleanliness is next to godliness, even in a prison. He was mending a tear in a work shirt with needle and thread. He indicated a cubicle behind him.

"That's mine," he said, with evident pride. "Take a look into it."

He was another pictorial enthusiast, but he had varied the monotony of lithographed faces with a dado of seashells arranged in rows around the walls. Two or three mirrors; so clean that they would not have disgraced a lady's boudoir, suggested that he was either not superstitious or exceedingly vain. In spite of the bizarre, almost ludicrous effect, one could not help complementing him on his skill.

#### "Pleasant Trip Gentlemen!"

Our skipper looks at the sky, and indicates that we must be going if we don't want to run into dirty weather.

At the pier, the same three convicts sit dangling their legs over the edge. One is a big, powerful man in the prime of life, of a very determined, sullen cast of countenance. He pulls up a young gummy shark, and dashes its life out with slow, measured brutality. Then, re-casting his line, he sits motionless again, crouching his shoulders, staring over the sea at visions one could only guess at.

We are given a push off by one of the other convicts. "Pleasant voyage, gentlemen!" he says respectfully, though perhaps not without a touch of sarcasm, considering the state of the weather. As the mutter of the impending squall grows louder, the sky becomes darker, and the frown on the big man's face grows deeper. Soon the three figures dissolve into the landscape, and we leave them to their fate.

(continues on Page 15)

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**QUALCAST** Lawn Mowers are the best. McLeod's, Kooweerup.

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*The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 14)*

From the *Ballarat Star*, Tuesday 10 July 1923, page 1.

## **Escape From French Island**

### **Two Men Apprehended**

Melbourne, Monday.

Two prisoners attempted to escape from French Island on Sunday last. The boat that is used by the Forestry Department was missing, and the fact of the attempt was communicated to Russell street. The consequence was that the men were apprehended when they landed at Grantville. It is stated that the Penal Boat is always well secured and that in every attempt that has been made to escape the prisoners have somehow become possessed of the boat that is used by the Inspector of Forests. The prisoners were Thomas Norton, aged 26, and Frederick Smith, aged 40.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 23 August 1923.

## **Re-making Men**

### **French Island Industry**

#### **State's Prodigal Sons**

(By "Penologist," in the Melbourne "Sun.")

The dark dungeons of the Inquisition, the squalid chambers into which the early kings of England cast their prisoners, justly or unjustly, the cells which Dickens described, fearsome from their very bareness, are fading into the past, mere historical exhibits of the temper of previous generations. Reform, the keynote of real civilisation is blotting out such unsavory landmarks of time, for ever.

The whole foundation of the system which is being improved in Victoria, is change of environment. From the slums of the city, from the low quarters of the towns, from the scrum of the bush, the raw material is drawn. For a lifetime, probably, the prisoner has lived in his scurvy surroundings. His father and mother lived there before him. He has never known anything better.

Crime, to such, is almost ingrained in the soil. In many cases it is merely "following in father's footsteps, following the dear old dad." These are the delight of the Indeterminate Sentences Board. Here they have material for carving new lives.

### **Three Classes of Offenders**

The board deals with three classes of offenders. First offenders from 16 to 25 go to Castlemaine. Declared habitual criminals are dispatched to Pentridge and French Island reformatories, where the discipline is slightly more strict. The other class is comprised of

young offenders who, after serving a fixed sentence, are sent on to make good in the reformatories.

First, they are sent to Pentridge. If they make good, as in the majority of cases they do, they are moved on to French Island. The board contends that no ill effects arise from their association with "habituals." A man must prove his character before he is allowed to leave.

Stories that read like extracts from Sunday School literature are common products of the system. The tales that the chairman of the board (Mr S. Mauger) can tell would make the material for a novelist to work upon.

In a pamphlet he has issued on the reformatory system, he quotes several cases which are good patterns of numerous others. The idea of a former indeterminate man bringing his old mother to his best friend, the secretary of the board, may seem laughable. Yet it is a fact, and the late prisoner is proud of his acquaintance. That man is back at his trade now, earning £8 a week.

### **"Habitual" Regeneration**

The despair of society, a man to whom house-breaking was the only aim in life, was caught. He was a man of brains and initiative, with a forceful character. The judge declared him an habitual criminal. At French Island he was treated, not as a prisoner, but as a man. His evil instincts left him. When released he rejoined his union, not the burglars' union, and he is now a happy and contented worker, who has earned the respect of his fellows.

One of the most prosperous business men in a city of another State can lay claim to being an "old boy" of French Island. He writes frequently to the superintendent in affectionate terms. As a criminal he specialised in false representations, forgery, etc., and was declared an habitual criminal for his trouble.

A reunions [*sic*] with his wife and family followed his release on parole, and he declares that the freedom and trust placed in him in the institution were his redemption.

### **Desire For Work Reborn**

The board's system aims at creating the work habit in prisoners, and giving a reward in relation to production. Individual efficiency is recognised, and this tends to raise the self-respect of an inmate and heighten his status among his fellows.

"Plenty of fresh air, hard work and exercise, in the open gives the prisoner a love for the clean

*(continues on Page 16)*

*The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 15)*

life. Idleness breeds crime and crime breeds prisoners," says Mr Mauger. "Compulsory idleness in prisons makes the habitual prisoner. You can reclaim even the habitual criminal by teaching him habits of industry."

Good conduct, good work and the cultivation of the proper spirit ensure promotion and early release. When parole is obtained many inmates leave the prison with as much as £20 to their credit – the reward of industry. For three years after release the board keeps in touch with the former prisoner, assists him to start life afresh, and invites him to correspond showing how he has progressed.

Delinquents are encouraged make restitution to those they wronged when they trod the path of crime. One youth which the board quotes is paying off his debt at the rate of 5/ a week from his wages. Already he has returned £10. That is the effect of the trust placed in him while at the reformatory.

On the Victorian statue book there is one of the most advanced indeterminate sentences, parole and probation laws in the world. At least, that is what expert criminologists say.

### Law Not Yet Complete

The law is not complete. The foundations only of the coming system have been laid. The aims of such men as Samuel Mauger are for facilities for examination of prisoners by psychologists and medical experts. Better educational facilities, more lectures and entertainments, they contend are necessary.

During the last two years the board has released 228 on parole. Of these 180 are doing well, 20 have reverted to their old habits, and 20 are in the doubtful stage.

Figures for 14 years show that 73 per cent. of these released from Castlemaine have reformed. The figure for Pentridge was 55 per cent. reformations. French Island has only been in existence for seven years, but shows that 78 former prisoners have taken the straight and narrow path.

*From the Koo Koo Wee Rup Sun, 27 September 1923.*

### No Prison Bars

#### Mr S. Mauger's Plea

"There is no such thing as a born criminal," says Mr Samuel Mauger, at the Collingwood Town hall last week, when he lectured on prison methods. He urged that men should be given a chance, and not be treated as if they were worse than brutes. In his opinion, any man should have reached all the reformation

possible after five years' detention.

The good results of the system adopted at French Island were mentioned by Mr Mauger. There were no bolts or locks. The men were put on their honor, and 75 per cent. had made good. They had to work at something useful, and work had a good moral and physical effect. When they left they were not without money. Some carried away £10, £15, and even £30.

A man detained at the island had sent £1 a week to his wife out of the money he had earned after the ordinary working hours. He made an altar for a Catholic church and a communion table for another. One, classed as an habitual forger, with several offenses against him, who appeared to be absolutely unreliable, was now, thanks to the more humane treatment, leading a new life, and earning £750 a year.

He wished the Government would give him £3000 to purchase or establish a farm. He would raze to the ground every prison that was occupied by young people, and put them out to mend their ways under more humane principles, which he had found to work so well. It would be money well spent in the interest of the community.

*From the Herald, Saturday 8 December 1923, page 4.*

### Three Convicts Escape

#### Dash From French Island

#### Telephone Wire Cut

Dr. Argyle, the Chief Secretary, was informed this morning that three prisoners, under the control of the Indeterminate Sentence Board at French Island Penal Settlement, had escaped. They are:—

JAMES CAMPBELL, alias Augustus Campbell, alias A. E. Jones.

ALFRED FRASER.

THOMAS NICHOLLS, alias Harry Jones.

The verbal report to the Minister added that the police had been informed and were co-operating with the Penal Department officers in searching for the escapees.

Campbell is 36 years of age, 5 ft. 5½in. in height. He has dark hair, blue eyes, and has an anchor tattooed on his left arm. He has previously escaped from prison, and was sentenced for the breakaway to six months' imprisonment.

Fraser is 33, 6ft. 10in. in height. He has dark hair, grey eyes, and an injured nose.

Nicholls is 40 years of age, 5ft. 10½in. in height, and is tattooed on the left arm with the figure of a footballer.

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*The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 16)*

An official report to the Penal Department stated that the three men were missed between midnight and 1 a.m. The telephone line with the mainland had been cut. As the Penal and Forestry Department boats were in their customary places, they could not have been used to aid the prisoners. While not regarded as dangerous, the men are of the criminal type, and had been on the island for a few months.

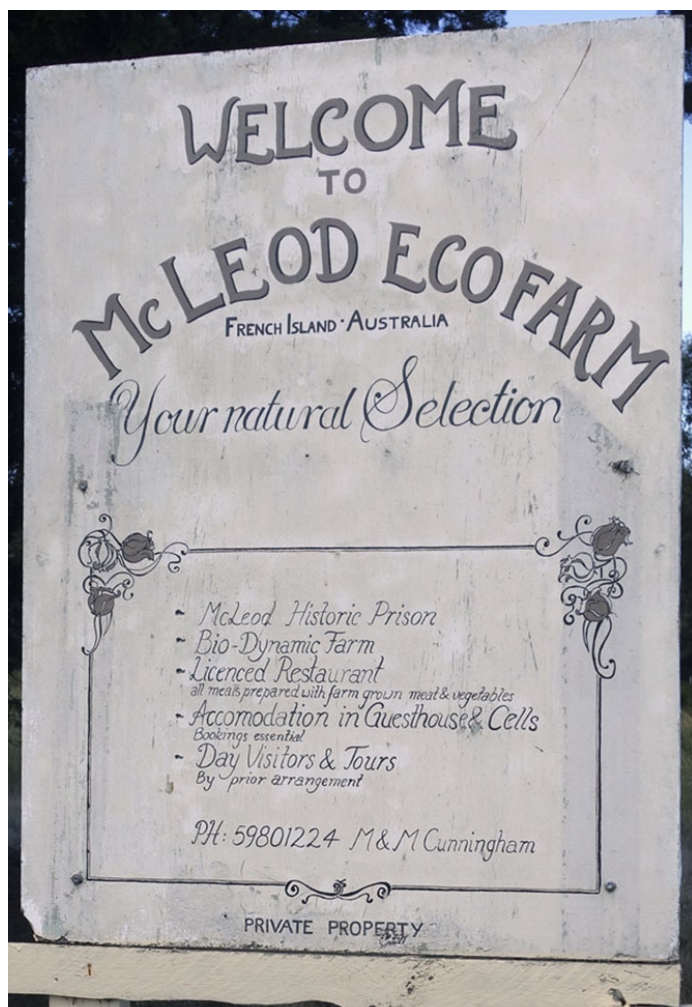
From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 20 Dec. 1923.

## French Island Prisoners

### Escaped Men Recaptured

Augustus Campbell, one of the prisoners who escaped from French Island, was arrested at Morwell on the 12th inst. by the Morwell police. Harry Jones who also escaped from the island, was recaptured by the Morwell police last Thursday.

Both men were brought before Mr George Watson, J.P., and remanded to appear at the City Court, Melbourne, on December 21. They were taken to Melbourne by the evening train in charge of Detectives Lynch and Webster.



Taken by editor in 2014 when the former prison was the McLeod Eco-Farm.

On Wednesday evening last week the police at Sale received word that Alfred Charles Fraser, one of the prisoners who escaped from French Island, was probably on the train that was due to arrive at Sale at half-past 11 o'clock that night. Constable Gray met the train and found Fraser on board. Fraser was lodged in the lock-up and was brought before the Sale Court the following day and remanded to Melbourne.

An inquiry into the administration of the French Island penal settlement was held on Monday at the island by the acting inspector general of penal establishments (Mr C. S. MacPherson).

The recent escape of prisoners from the settlement has decided the department to tighten up the supervision without, if possible, neutralising the best features of the honor system in vogue there.

It is not contemplated to withdraw the proved advantages of this system simply because a small percentage of the men have broken their parole.

From the *Koo Wee Rup and Lang Lang Guardian*, 1 May 1924

## Reforming Prisoners

### Work At French Island

At the conclusion of an informative lecture on "Penal Reform," delivered to Hawthorn branch, A.N.A. on Monday evening by Mr Bruce Morris, B.A. (junior), Mr Morris (senior), secretary of the Indeterminate Sentences Board, said the results of the treatment of habitual criminals at French Island were very gratifying to the board. Certainly there had been 33 escapes in eight years, and there would be escapes in the future, but 32 of these had been recaptured. On the other hand, he had hundreds of letters from grateful ex-prisoners who, after some years on the island, had been released and were making a living working steadily in civilian life and becoming good citizens. He believed that the worst prisoners had a soft spot somewhere. By kind, considerate treatment in pleasant surroundings and employment in useful work, the latent good points in a prisoner's character were developed. Investigation of the history of many of these men showed that in early life they had usually lost one or both parents or the parent had been divorced. French Island was now the most self-supporting prison in the State, and the reforestation work being done there by the prisoners would in time provide a valuable source of revenue.

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*The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 17)*

From the *Argus*, Thursday 2 April 1925, page 11.

## **Concealed In Scrub**

### **French Island Men Still Free**

From Lang Lang a report has been received at the detective office that a house was robbed on Saturday. In spite of the fact that police at Lang Lang and near towns have been searching for some days for Victor Hoare and Victor Harvey, who escaped in a rowing boat from the penal settlement of French Island, no trace of the escaped prisoners has been found. Two constables from Wonthaggi have been ordered to assist in the search, which will extend over the thickly wooded and scrub country in the Almurta, Nyora, and Lang Lang districts. Hoare and Harvey were undergoing sentences imposed upon them for stealing.

From the *Argus*, Friday 3 April 1925, page 11.

## **French Island Fugitives**

Referring to the escape of Victor Hoare and Victor Harvey in a rowing-boat from the penal settlement of French Island, Dr. Argyle said that additional police would be sent to Lang Lang to scour the scrub country in the Almurta, Nyora, and Lang Lang districts, in which the men were believed to be hiding. The men had escaped in a forester's boat. When dual control was abolished, as it would be shortly, such escapes would be impossible. The Penal department would have sole control of the part of the island now used for indeterminate sentence prisoners engaged in forestry work with the assistance of the Forestry department. He did not suggest that there had ever been any collusion between prisoners and any forestry officer, but it had been the forestry boat which had been the means of escape in almost every instance. When the Penal department obtained sole possession, the island would be used for first offenders. It was proposed to remove the indeterminate sentence men to Beechworth gaol.

From the *Koo Wee Rup Sun*, 23 April 1925.

## **Reformatory Escapers**

### **Imprisoned For 6 Months**

The two escapers from French Island reformatory, Victor Harvey and Victor Hoare, appeared at the City Court on Friday. Evidence was given that when the muster of prisoners was made at French Island at 5 p.m., on 23rd March Harvey and Hoare were there, but at the 9 p.m. muster they were missing, and a boat had also disappeared. At 11 p.m.

the boat was found on the shore of the mainland.

Senior Constable Johnson, of Nagambie, stated that, with Constable Hogan, he arrested the two accused about three miles from Nagambie on 7th April. They were arrested on other charges, and gave their names as George Murray and George Dawson. Later they admitted they were the escapers from French Island.

Questioned by Mr Knight, P.M. as to why they left the island, they said they have nothing to say. In sentencing them to six months' imprisonment, Mr Knight said the conditions on French Island were ideal, and he could not understand why the prisoners should run away.

From the *Argus*, Friday 31 July 1925, page 17.

## **Escaped Prisoner**

### **Surrender to Police**

Arthur John Lucas, alias Jordan, who escaped from the French Island penal settlement on Tuesday morning surrendered to the police at Bass, on the main road, yesterday. Later he was brought to Melbourne, and was lodged at the Metropolitan Gaol, Coburg, on a charge of having escaped from custody. Lucas was serving a sentence of three years' imprisonment for housebreaking in 1923, and had been declared an habitual criminal. The Indeterminate Sentences Board had decided that Lucas should be given his liberty on October 10.

According to a report made to the inspector-general of prisons (Mr. Akeroyd.), Lucas was engaged with several other trusted prisoners in the work of dismantling a jetty at Bass. The party was camped on the mainland under the supervision of a warder. Early on Tuesday morning Lucas rose and, after breakfast, left the camp. After swimming a creek, it is alleged, he lost his way and returned to the camp, which had, in the meantime, been dismantled. Accordingly Lucas went to the Bass police station.

From the *Age*, Friday 31 July 1925, page 13.

## **French Island Prisoner**

### **Escapes and Surrenders**

Arthur John Lucas, alias Jordan, the latest French Island escaper, gave himself up to the uniform police at Bass the day after his escape.

Reports received by the Penal department state that Lucas had been under the control

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*The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 18)*

of the Indeterminate Sentences Board for two years. He bore a high character, and was due for discharge in October next. With other prisoners, he was employed dismantling a jetty at Bass, on the mainland. The party camped out at night, under the supervision of a warder. Only men with good characters and whose date of discharge was in the immediate future were so employed.

On Tuesday morning Lucas rose very early, lit fires and prepared breakfast. Apparently yielding to a sudden impulse, he "bolted." His escape was discovered at 6.30 a.m. After spending the day searching for the missing man, the camp was broken up. On Wednesday morning Lucas returned to the camp, found it abandoned, and gave himself up to the police at Bass. He was brought to Melbourne yesterday, and a charge of escaping from legal custody preferred against him. He was later removed to the Metropolitan Gaol, Coburg.

*From the Koo Wee Rup Sun, 15 April 1926.*

## **French Island Prisoners Escaped Men In Court**

A statement in which he set out his reasons for his escape from the French Island Penal Settlement was produced at the City Court last week by Ernest George Uren, aged 29 years, who, with Albert J. Coburg [*sic*], aged 27 years, and Hector McDonald Bridgeford, aged 24 years, was charged with having on or about March 25, at the McLeod Settlement Reformatory, French Island, being deemed incorrigible rogues, escaped from legal confinement. Each man pleaded guilty.

John Joseph Bowen, superintendent of the McLeod Settlement Reformatory Prison, French Island, said:—Coburn, Bridgeford, and Uren are Prisoners at French Island. On March 23 I left the settlement at half-past 7 o'clock in the morning, and the three men were there then. Next day I received word that they had disappeared. They are indeterminate sentence men on their honor and not locked up.

Detective Milne said—About half past 11 o'clock on the night of March 27 I arrested Coburn at Aspendale. He admitted that he had escaped from the McLeod Reformatory Prison with Bridgeford and Uren. I arrested Bridgeford at a house in Church street, Flemington, about half-past 6 o'clock on the evening of March 28. He admitted his identity. Uren was brought to the detective office on March 29 by Mr Bowen. In a statement Uren

said—After muster on March 24 I decided to get away from the island. I forced the lock of the boatshed and sank the boat. I then got another rowing boat, and with Coburn and Bridgeford rowed across, and landed at Stony Point. I left Bridgeford and Coburn then and walked to Melbourne. I went to my sister's house. I gave myself up at the Penal department next morning.

Portion of the written statement by Uren, which was read by Sergeant O'Reilly, was as follows—"I am a man who has always led a good life. This is my first time in gaol. I want you to understand that this escape was prompted on the spur of the moment. I have had great trouble. My mother is very sick, and will not be long on this earth. I wanted to see her before she passed away, and I decided to leave the settlement. I rowed across to the mainland in a boat. When I had seen my mother, whom I dearly love, I realised the seriousness of my action, and then handed myself over to the Penal department to avoid any trouble."

Mr Grant, to the secretary of the Indeterminate Sentence Board (Mr G. Dicker)—If, as Uren says, his mother had been very ill, would it have been possible for him to have seen her?

Mr Dicker—Yes. In such circumstances we have made special arrangement. I have seen Uren's mother, and the ground that she is very ill does not exist.

Mrs Ellen May Uren said—I am Uren's mother. I suffer from very bad heart attacks. About two months ago I had a particularly bad attack. I later received a letter from my son saying that he was feeling very "blue." On the night of March 28 he came to see me.

Bridgeford said that he had already done 21 months in the reformatory.

Coburn had nothing to say.

Mr Grant to Uren—In extenuation we are talking in account that you had some thought for your mother. You will be sentenced to imprisonment for one month. Coburn and Bridgeford will each be sentenced to imprisonment for three months. There appears to be no extenuating circumstances in their cases.

*From the Townsville Daily Bulletin, 7 July 1926, page 16.*

## **Prison On French Island**

French Island Penal Settlement, from which three prisoners escaped recently, is regarded, both by experts in this State and by visitors from abroad, as one of the most advanced

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*The McLeod Prison (continued from Page 19)*

institutions in the world for the treatment of criminals (says the Melbourne "Herald").

On the eastern half of French Island the Government holds between ten and twelve thousand acres of land, of which the actual settlement in the south-east corner is in effect a homestead.

The accommodation consists of wooden cubicles about 8ft. by 6ft., built by the prisoners themselves in the first days of the experiment. Each cubicle is occupied by one man, and there is accommodation for about 40 in all.

The cubicles form three sides of a square, of which the fourth side is occupied by the kitchen, messroom, and officers' quarters. The courtyard is not fully enclosed, however, and there is a wide unbarred way of entrance—or exit.

The cubicle doors are never locked, and the windows, opening on the outer side of the square have no bars. There are five roll calls or musters during the day, and one inspection at night, but it is not imagined or intended that this will suffice to prevent the escape of any man who has a mind to try and get free.

To keep the men in the settlement the authorities rely partly on the fact that the settlement is on an island and partly on the honour of the men all of whom are serving [an] indeterminate sentence, a considerable proportion being habitual criminals.

The conditions of work approach the ideal. Some of the men tend the garden, the pigs, and the poultry near the settlement and for its use, a few grow potatoes, but the majority are engaged in afforestation [sic] work under the charge of the competent officer. They must have to walk anything up to three miles through open country to their work.

They are able to earn more money than prisoners in other institutions in the State, and have the privilege of spending small sums on "extras" including tobacco.

The results of the experiment have fully justified its making. Only 31.1 per cent. of those who have passed through the settlement have been re-convicted or returned, while nearly 69 per cent. have not been again convicted or are on parole.

These figures are the most satisfactory in the State, including in the comparison the Castlemaine institution where only youthful offenders of a picked class are detained. The percentages of reconviction among Pentridge and Geelong men is 50.

From the *South Bourke and Mornington Journal*, Wednesday 14 February 1883, page 2: Local Intelligence.

## Regatta Origin

The inhabitants of that charming little watering-place, Cowes, Phillip Island, are determined to emerge from the obscurity in which they have so peaceably reposed during the past, by entering into some of the national sports of the day. To this end a public meeting was held at Cowes on Tuesday evening, when it was unanimously resolved to hold an annual regatta and sports at Cowes, the inaugural meeting to take place on Easter Monday, 26th March. A large and influential committee was formed to carry the affair to a successful issue. Mr. Robert Blaikie was elected the hon. secretary, and Mr. H. F. Norton, J.P., hon. treasurer. The committee are very sanguine of success, and they anticipate raising about £70 for prize money. As Western Port Bay (especially at Cowes) is admirably adapted for a [unclear word] sports, there being a wide and smooth expanse of water, it is confidently expected that yachtsmen from all parts will participate in the regatta.

A meeting of the residents of Phillip Island was held Tuesday evening (6th February) at Cowes, to initiate a regatta. It was unanimously decided to hold a regatta and Easter sports at Cowes on Easter Monday next, (26th March). The names of about twenty residents in Western Port were proposed to act as a committee, and as soon as they have consented a meeting will be called to complete the necessary arrangements. It is proposed to hold the regatta and sports annually, and to collect sufficient money in order to purchase a handsome cup with a view of inducing some of the Victoria Yacht Club boats to compete for it. Mr. Norton was elected hon. treasurer, and Mr. Blaikie hon. secretary. The sports will include land and aquatic sports. Messrs. J. D. Nichsolson, H. F. Norton, W. Savage, J. West, R. Blaikie, agreed to act as a provisional committee, who will meet again on Wednesday the 14th at 7 p.m., at the Cowes Free Public Library Room. It is to be hoped that the public will subscribe liberally, as there is not a finer bay than that of Western Port for holding a regatta.

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Window Blinds for the summer, at sorts, at the Melbourne Furnishing Coy., Wonthaggi.