

Forrest history newsletter



Volume 1, Issue 4

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NEW MEMBERS

As a result of our Yaugher visit we had several new members on the day including what might be our youngest members:

We welcome Roz Turnbull and Nat Brown, Peter and Karen Hunt, Delwyn Seebeck, Mrs Beverley Frizon, Daryl and Heather Jennings, Ted Jennings, Mrs Aileen Larson (Whitehead), and Joan Callahan,

Others to join recently are Cliff Frizon and Brian and Heather Neale bringing our membership to 67. Having in mind many of these are family memberships involving couples the total number is probably nearer 100.

You find Forrest history everywhere.....

At a recent meeting of the new Forrest Horse Riding Club it was mentioned that Ian Thomas Day was a former milliner, in Forrest, and it was his grandfather who was the model for the child in a famous Fred McCubbins painting of an early Australian pioneer family.



Not a Day in Clover

Between the hop picking seasons Bertie Ireland would have the ladies of Forrest picking clover flowers for seed.

Yaugher, we now know it all, well almost !

On Sunday May 27th, under the guidance of Alf and Lorna Wilhelms our members were given a well researched presentation on the former Yaugher township, followed after a barbecue lunch by a walking tour pointing out the sites.



Alf and Lorna Wilhelms

It was thrilling to discover the actually location of the former Anglican Church, the School, the Gate

House associated with opening and closing the gates across Yaugher Road and the site of the old Railway Station.

Around 40 members attended and the Cunningtons', Curtis', Jennings' and Whitehead's, amongst others, were well represented.

Because over 70% of our members live out of town, any event represents a great opportunity to catch up with old friends and recall early days and former acquaintances. (See p2 for full report).

PLEASE COME AND JOIN US AT OUR NEXT EVENT, SUNDAY 14TH OCTOBER

Hop Fields Discovery Day

The hop fields at Forrest played a very important part of town life in the first half of the last century. They provided a very useful additional income, particularly for women, during the picking season and we can well imagine that it was also a great social occasion with plenty of opportunities for town gossip as the work went on. The hop growing ceased when the Geelong Brewery which purchased the harvest was acquired by Carlton United Brewery who drew their hops from Tasmania.

We will gather at the Terminus Hotel at Forrest between 10.30 and 11.00 for morning tea. Our archive and Library will be available for inspection.

Around 11.30 we will view a film on hop growing in the Derwent Valley in Tasmania right from the planting and growing of the hops through harvesting to processing and bailing. This will give us a really good idea of what happened at the Forrest hop fields and will be an opportunity for those who can remember to tell us about how it was here.

We will have lunch at the Hotel. It will be a

set menu and Shane has promised to keep the price as low as possible. However he requires us to guarantee the numbers **so could members please let Ken know that they intend to come along.**

Around 2.00 pm we will go out and have a look at the Hop field sites. We have been fortunate to obtain permission from Beverley Roche and John Gabb, who now own the farm where the hops barn was located for the drying and bailing etc., to visit that site.

Our society is now associated with the Forrest Neighbourhood House under the auspices of Otway Health so we will have access to their mini passenger van. This means we will be able to collect from Colac those older members who would find it easier to come by bus and we will also use the mini bus to tour the hop field sites for as many as the bus will hold. **Would Colac people please let Ken know who needs to be collected?**



Alf's fascinating research



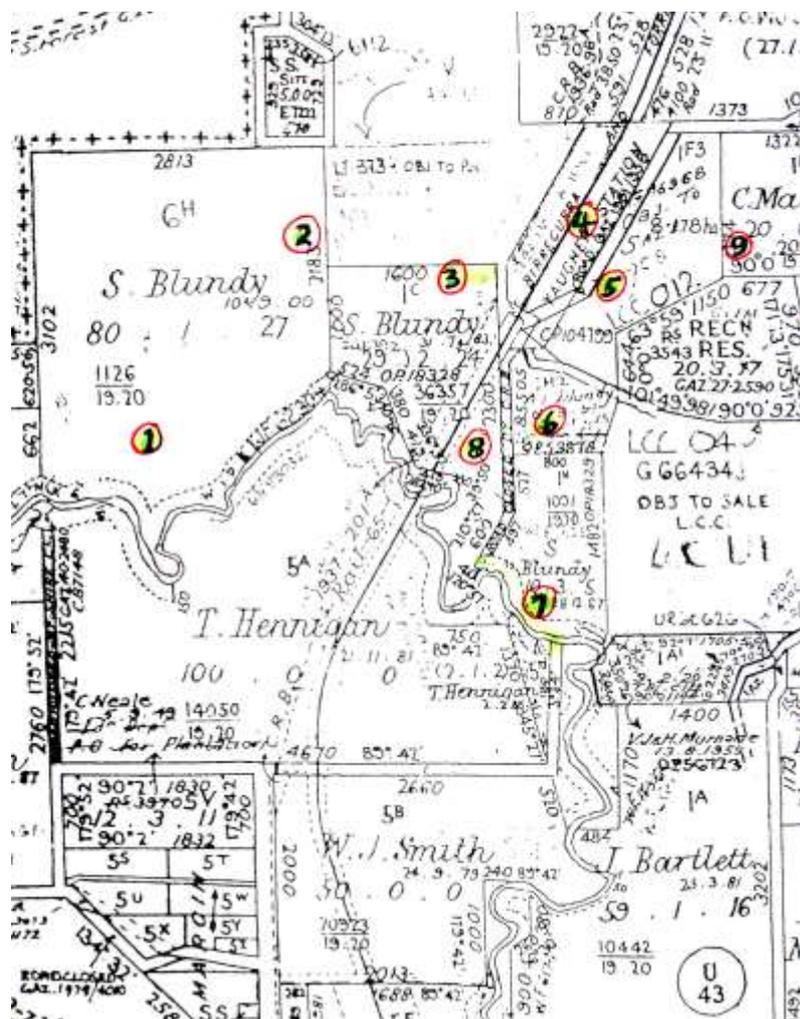
Yaugher is not an aboriginal word as we might have thought but appears to be named after an area in Kent between Rainham and Hartlip. Significantly Stephen Blundy, who took up land in the area, was born at Rainham Kent.

Stephen Blundy's brother in law, Edward Usher, also from Rainham, lived on an adjoining block to the Blundy selection which became known as Ushers.

An overgrown well and concrete slab is all that remains of the **Slaughterhouse** (see plan).

Soon after settling at Yaugher in about 1880 Stephen Blundy made an acre of land available for the erection of the **Anglican Church**. Mr and Mrs Paddy Whelan were the last people to be married in the Church before it was destroyed in a bush fire in 1906.

In addition to the **railway station** platform there was a siding, a cattle yard and a gatehouse occupied by a person who opened the gate for the train to cross Yaugher Rd.



The **sawmill** was probably built in the 1960's and the power pole can still be seen.

The **Yaugher School** was located just past where Michael Scott's house now stands. It was moved to Forrest in 1906 as the population there began to outnumber Yaugher's.

The above map shows the Yaugher area. The number 5 is the present Horse riding Club and next to it can be seen the Rec. Reserve. The present road is absent but the former one can be seen going around the Hennigan property and crossing the river at 7.

The sites identified by Alf and visited during our walk around are numbered on the map as follows:

1. The site of Usher's Cottage
2. The Slaughterhouse
3. Yaugher Anglican Church
4. Yaugher Railway Station
5. The Sawmill
6. Yaugher School
7. The Old Road
8. An old Blundy Shed

The only place we could not identify was the Store but 1892 rate records mention a Charles Malhoff, Storekeeper with 20 acres and a dwelling. A Malhoff property is marked 9 .

Copies of all the handouts at the Yaugher visit is available on request.



Nostalgia at old Yaughner

Our society events are often a cause for nostalgia particularly for those members now living away from Forrest. Members who come to our events often take the opportunity to visit the old family home in Forrest and call in at the cemetery before going home to pay their respects to departed relatives.

It was no exception for Jenny Cunningham when she took part in the Yaughner visit. When we walked through the scrub and stood at the site of the old Yaughner Railway Station it almost brought tears to her eyes when the most vivid memories came back of the access road to the Curtis property which ran behind the station and her use of the rail service. Jenny writes:



Jenny Cunningham (nee Curtis)
My Memories of the Train & Tiger at

Yaughner:

I can remember the train coming past our farm at Yaughner and I was always out to give the driver a wave and was always rewarded with a couple of whistles from the old steam train.

The Tiger was used to transport passengers from the train in Birregurra to the Yaughner Station. My memory was of going to the Station to meet my Auntie and Uncle from Melbourne. To this day the memory is so clear in my mind of them stepping onto the Yaughner Station from the Tiger.

I rang my Aunty, now 94, to asking if she had any input just this week, when I asked "Was it comfortable to ride on?" her reply was "We didn't look for comfort in those days, just a way to get around".

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

We do not have an Alf Wilhelms to produce his excellent research for our Hops Discovery Day. (Can you believe he googled Yaughner and scored!)

So we need your help to make the day a success.

Could you please contact Ken at the addresses on the back of the newsletter as soon as possible and let him know if you worked on the hop fields at any stage and have any memories that can be contributed at our event.

(We know of a certain Brucie Neale, as a boy, wagged school and worked at the hop fields for the pickers who would give him the most sweets. He made a full confession at the recent interview conducted last year at the Primary School!)

Does anyone have photos of the hop fields which have not already been submitted? Does anyone have dates for when the hope fields started and finished? The output produced or how it was organised? This will be a very interesting day and we look forward to you coming along.

The Black Sisters Photo Album

In the April issue of our newsletter (page 4) we asked if there was any way of finding Carlene Alexander, Nan Lidgerwood's daughter, who was believed to have the superb photo album of Ethyl and Doris Black which contained a wonderful collection of early Forrest photos. With Pam Jennings help we have located her (believe it or not she simply googled the name and Carlene appeared as a school teacher).

We have been in touch with Carlene and she would be interested to attend

our next members function and bring



A photo from the Black sister's Album along the album to show people and possibly make copies for those interested.

Family Histories now in our Archives

One of the most important features of our Forrest History Archives has turned out to be our collection of **family histories** of local families, thanks to contributions from Nora Potter and Pam Jennings.

In some cases this includes family histories which go right back to the original founding members who came out from England and in one case even an entire diary of the passage by sailing ship.

Our family history records include the following families;

BLACK
BLUNDY
FRIZON
GOURLEY
HALLIDAY
HARLOCK
LIDGERWOOD
MALHOFF
NEWCOMB
PENGILLEY
TREW
WHELAN
WILHELMS

these will be available for inspection at our next meeting.

WW11 Plane Spotting

Further to Gill Neale's article in the Feb. edition of the newsletter about WW11 Plane Spotting at Forrest, an interesting exhibition in the foyer at COPAC describes Portland as being

a potential landing site for the Japanese. It describes how a submarine surfaced in that vicinity unloaded a sea-plane, with specially designed folding wings, which undertook a reconnaissance flight up into Port Phillip Bay and back

without being intercepted. Perhaps this was the plane which was spotted by our Forrest watchers? We have written to the Australian War Museum for further information but have not had any reply as yet.

FORREST AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Total	\$4229.70

Expenditure

Computers and Printer	\$1888.46
Software	228.00
Society Registration	52.50
Photos for history walk	125.75
Books for resale	217.00
Society functions	170.00
Printing newsletters	708.50
Postage	100.00
Books for library	120.65
Stall charge	15.00
Membership Birregurra HS	<u>5.00</u>
Total	\$3630.86

Funds at Bank \$598.84

Letters to the Editor

Please let us have your comments, memories and stories.

Thank you for sending me your recent Newsletter re the Forrest & District Historical Society.Let me fill you in on my connection with Forrest:-

My maiden name is Yvonne Kendall. I attended the Forrest Primary School I in the 1950's and lived just down from the Forrest store with my parents and two sisters. My father worked for Alf Frizon at Frizons Sawmill (which has now ceased to operate). I went on from the Forrest School to attend Colac High School

and then left the area in my early twenties.

My sister Mary married Kevin Harrington and I married Bernie Harrington in 1977. The Harrington family lived in Barra-munga (13 in all). My husband Bernie died in 1994 and I remarried in 1998. My current husband is Bryan Hunt who is President of the Forrest Football Netball Club Inc. (2007 will be Bryan's 8th year as President)

We have recently sold our business in Melbourne and hence in the process of moving to our house in Colac (address as above).
Yvonne Harrington- Hunt

Historic Rail Trail Walk

Our society was invited by the Lions Club to participate in the recent Barwon Downs Soup Fest by providing an historical guide to a **rail trail walk** which



was conducted from the site of the Yaugher Railway Station part way to Barwon Downs.

Over 100 people joined the bus shuttle and undertook the walk. They were able to see some interesting culverts and the remains of an old timber bridge and the worst affected valley when Lake Elizabeth spilled in 1953 . For those who took the first walk, there was still a fog in the valley and it was quite atmospheric walking through a superb stand of white gums shrouded in mist. We were grateful to Rosalind Terry for allowing us to conduct the rail trail walk through her property.

Forrest History Walk Now Ready

The last of the plaques and the town map showing their location has now been installed, so the Forrest History Walk, on which we have been working for the last eighteen months, is now ready for use. Information guides to the walk are available at Rose's General Store so we are ready for the summer tourist season.



The Primary School students have already tried the walk and had a conducted tour by Ken Widdowson which also included a visit to Kerry and Mark Jennings' new café being developed in town. Students were able to see a building in the process of renovation with the walls cut away to show the historic early construction including old newspapers and the use of rough sawn timber from the sawmills.



Treasures from our Collection



The bush tramlines and their rail trolleys were an import means of visiting friends and relatives living at the bush mills, especially on Sundays.