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Historical Happenings



Casterton and District Historical Society

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Meetings: Please see back page for days, dates and times.
Held at the R.S.L rooms, 158, Henty Street, Casterton.

Welcome to the March Edition. This month we continue with the article on Hawkers, we have the last instalment of "Kent's Corner" and we continue Des Murphy's "Changes in Time" and "The Waines Murder" by the late Jack Gorman.



"The Casterton News" 2nd June 1891

"This District seems of late to have received particular attention from Indian Hawkers, whose interesting looking swarthy faces and bright picturesque turbans have become quite familiar objects in

the streets. No sooner does one batch of the wandering foreigners leave the town, than another arrives and pitches camp on the site just vacated by his predecessor.

By all accounts they are not all teetotallers, and to this fact may to a certain extent be attributed the unearthly shouting and singing with which on a few occasions some of these strangers disturbed the peace of many of the townspeople.

Accusations are constantly being levelled against the Hindoo's for frightening women and children to buy their wares, in lonely bush houses to which they come while the men are away at work. This is no doubt a frequent mode by which these hawkers disperse their goods."

Extracts from the minutes - September 21st 1994

Guest speaker Mrs. Eileen TIERNEY

Mrs. TIERNEY spoke of early recollections of her mother about the Indian Hawkers, before the turn of the century.

Her grandfather owned the Commercial Hotel in Hamilton which was diagonally opposite the Melville Oval. This oval was known as “Market Square” or “Billy Goat Hill” and it was here that the Indian Hawkers would come to get their licenses. They congregated here and drank wine until they were at the stage where they wanted to fight – this they did with sticks. Eileen’s mother could recall running up the stairs in the hotel and watching from the balcony.

Lucca SINGH, along with Kasetta SINGH, Karem SINGH, Kisin SINGH and many other Indian and Chinese Hawkers who go unnamed, camped there.

In the early years when Eileen’s grandparents sold the Hotel and moved to Balmoral, her mother could remember the Hawkers walking about the countryside with a swag on their back. Lucca had a horse drawn van pulled by two black horses, and a side which dropped down and formed a counter. He carried everything imaginable from materials, mouth organs, needles and cotton, work clothes, socks, utensils and boots, to name but a few.

When he camped at Eileen’s place, he always insisted on cooking the dinner at night – this consisted of curried chicken and Johnny cakes. As soon as Lucca was spotted coming up the drive way, Eileen’s father would run out and kill a fowl for him to cook. He also used to camp at CUYUAC (EDGARS) along with MULGA FRED and their Chinese gardener. Eileen’s father called it the “League of Nations”.

Lucca loved cards and would insist on playing with Eileen’s family until he won - no matter how late it was and as soon as he won it was time for bed.

He had 2 long plaits which reached the ground and as soon as he put his turban on, he twisted them into the turban.

Eileen then read from the Shire of Glenelg Centenary Book about Lucca dying in the Casterton Hospital and being cremated – his ashes were then scattered on the Glenelg River at Moree.

Peter AHMED – Itinerant Hawker – 1930s and early 1940s

BY GORDON MALEE

Peter Ahmed, in his horse drawn covered wagon would camp between HOGBEN & ATCHISON blacksmith’s shop and the rustic iron and stone bridge on Racecourse Road which took traffic on to the Noss Road before the present concrete bridge and roadway were built. In the present day, the site would be opposite the Tourist Centre, Racecourse Rd. The Hawkers would camp along the roadside near the Blacksmiths; an ideal spot as the nearby river and billabongs provided water – the Blacksmiths shop nearby if horses needed shoeing or if in need of a wheelwright.



Peter Ahmed

On the opposite side of the road probably called Shiels terrace facing the entrance to the Blacksmiths just near the end of the wooden bridge which took traffic to Henty Street was McPherson's Chaff Mill; the site now occupied by Byjoke timber. This area was only a stone's throw across the bridge where bread could be obtained at Stewarts Bakery.

Adjoining Little and Kent's Garage and across Henty Street there were two shops next door to the Glenelg Inn hotel where the Motel Units are. One shop was occupied by a lady hairdresser (Lucy STEED) and the other was a grocery run by Harry COULSON where supplies could be had. It was a compact area for anyone camping with horse drawn wagons.

Peter Ahmed stayed in this area when he came to Casterton selling his wares. A small man in stature, he was a quite person of Lebanese nationality. He was a devout man as a Lebanese catholic. He would walk up the hill to Sacred Heart Church for Sunday mass as well as morning mass on weekdays. In our Western world the Irish are known for their faith, likewise, Lebanese Catholics are also known for their strong faith in God and are called the Irish of the East. I think there is a monument erected in memory of Peter Ahmed in one of the small Wimmera townships.

The hawkers when setting up camp would hobble their horses and put a nose bag on them filled with chaff and set up a campfire beside the wagon for cooking meals. Mulga Fred, an aborigine, would visit the area cracking his whip, throwing his boomerang and spear.

Extracts from the minutes - 20th September, 1978

Graham LAWRENCE once again spoke to us and entitled his talk "Industry and Commerce in Casterton last century".

The first business in Casterton was the Glenelg Inn which opened its doors in 1846. There was a blacksmiths building attached.

In 1852, township allotments were made available and soon all types of businesses were opened.

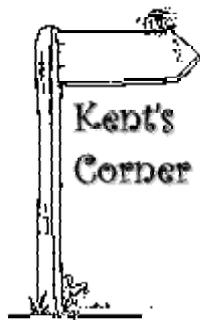
Hawkers with their horse drawn covered wagons arrived in the district in 1861. They were well patronised but often carried inferior quality goods; however they were always welcome at the stations.

Also in 1861 a tannery started business on the banks of the Glenelg River and in 1865 the Presbyterian Church was built. In 1867 James PEDEN opened a general store. The first baker, J ROWLEY commenced business in 1867.

By the 1870s Casterton was a flourishing town there being five general stores and competition was keen. One of the largest and most prosperous businesses would have been ILLINGSWORTHS where horses were shod, drays wagons and buggies made. They sold carriage lamps, wheels, tools, timber and leather.

Mr. J F BLACKBURN was the first chemist here commencing business in 1875.

The town was described by Julian THOMAS as clean neat and prosperous the western terminus of the train and the prosperity of the town was an inducement for others to settle here.



A History behind the names conferred on thoroughfares in and around Casterton.

Well, we are on the last round up of the thoroughfares dividing up our little town, and now we are going to look in this issue are on the south side of SHIELS Terrace. Starting as we ascend the side cutting in the hill is an unmade lane way called after a Carapook family of very early settlers called HOLZGREFE, one J.H. served as a Glenelg Shire Councillor from 1896 to 1905, being a Shire President in 1904.

I very much doubt, owing to topography of this lane way that it will be ever anything different. About its only claim to fame is it has a red gum tree located in it which bears the scar of where an Aborigine at one time levered off a sufficient slab of bark to make either a canoe or shield, or some other useful item for his use.

Running to the east, just opposite the house in which I spent my childhood, is ROSS Street. It runs parallel to Sheils Terrace. Again, we see a civic minded gentleman, one James Ross, and the street was named after him. He was a Councillor for Glenelg Shire from 1899-1917, and was Shire President on several occasions. His son, Hugh Ross, was a founder member of the Casterton Historical Society.

Branching off Ross Street, we have Little Koch Street which runs into the "Larger" Koch Street. Again, we find this name among early councillors one C.J. Koch serving the shire from 1880-1892. His brother and his descendants also serving as Councillors, for services rendered, these streets bear their name.

Robertson Street runs into STEWART Street and Stewart Street runs into STEWART LANE, again a very early pioneer family of blacksmiths and coach builders, saddlers, bakers and so on are remembered by having streets named after them.

The next street has steadied me. Called SPRING Street, I can't put forward any explanation. Is it after the season of spring? Or perhaps some long time disappeared family of that name? In my youthful days it was covered in tall fern, and its exceptional sandy nature made it impossible to use by wheeled vehicles, so this one I don't know.

Spring Street runs into HOWLETT Street; confidently explained as being called that after a very early family of that name who lived in it for a considerable period of the embryonic days of Casterton and after a member who served as a Councillor from 1896-1909.

We are fast running out of streets roadways, lanes, terraces, crescents etc. Howlett Street runs into ENSCOE Street. Again we find the origin in the Shire Council, one Cr. W. Enscoe serving the rate-payers from 1880-1889. No doubt to appreciate his municipal efforts, this street was named after him. Quite a long one, Enscoe Street joins up the Cemetery road on the eastern side of the race course, with SALE YARDS Road, which comes in from the Portland Road to RHODES Street.

Without doubt, there will be some who don't agree with my assumptions. This worries me not one whit. I am only too pleased to hear your explanations, should they differ from those that I have expressed. I am always available for consultation on this or any other historical matter.

With that paragraph we have run out of street to look to finding the origins of their naming.

Now, thank you to our Typist, Editor and printer of all my previous ramblings. Hopefully before too many degenerative problems prevent me, we shall record some more facts relating to our town.

James P Kent, March 2006.

THE CHANGES IN TIME
by Des Murphy
Part 7

When I started in late 1941, in the war, Mum and I were milking cows and fattening pigs on the dairy farm. We separated the cream from the milk, the cream was trucked to the Coleraine Butter Factory and the skim milk plus pollard was fed to the pigs which fattened them. When fat they were collected in small tray trucks at the pig yards at Casterton, and then trucked by rail to the pig sales at Ballarat every two weeks.

At that point of time, Casterton was a big dairying district; all the heavy country was used for dairying. In the area there were three butter factories, Coleraine, Casterton and Merino and the butter was sold overseas.

Later on, the trend was to change to whole milk. The price of pig meat was low and whole milk prices were good so we changed to whole milk. With the pigs gone, there was less work, no pig sty to clean! The separator was gone as well.

We gravelled around about for the truck and trailer and a ramp to store the milk, level with the truck.

As time ticked by, the farmers were going out of dairying and going to wool, fat lamb production and veal and beef production.



The Butter Factory at Merino

The three milk factories of Coleraine, Casterton and Merino are closed. The Nangeela and Dunrobin area were all dairies; there is now only one large operation left. Their milk goes to Koroit by tanker.

Fewer than half the people live in the area. We sold the dairy herd in 1950.

Continued next month

“THE WAINES MURDER”

By the late Jack Gorman

Taken from, “Tales of Casterton, the Waines Murder and Other Stories”

Part 3.

Despite an exhaustive enquiry throughout the Colony, and the hand of suspicion being still pointed at George WAINES, the whereabouts of the HUNT couple remained as big a mystery as ever. Although constantly in the WAINES’ company, never once in the hotel bar or at their home did Charles BROWNE ever elude to the HUNTS.

On January 9th, 1860, a bombshell fell on the little town. Charlie BROWNE, by now something of a social lion, was arrested by the local police as a Ticket of Leave absconder, and placed in the local Logs. The following day WAINES was also arrested by Constable DESMOND for further questioning, and was placed in the cells joining Charles BROWNE.

Despite his second arrest, George WAINES remained unmoved by the local police questioning, and was delighted to have as his cell mate his former drinking companion, Charles BROWNE.

Each day, Charles BROWNE was taken out of the cells by Constables DESMOND and AHEARN and employed with other locals to search WAINES farm. Here the only thing they found, deep down below the stubble, was the grim remains of "Tiny" the HUNT'S pet dog. Its throat had been cut.

As he returned each night to the cells, WAINES would ply his cell mate with news of the search. The quest had now been switched to the river near "The Watering Place". There were three police engaged in the probe, a number of volunteers and Thomas PEAT and Charlie MULLALLY who were strong swimmers and good divers.

Charlie BROWNE suggested to WAINES they should try to escape from the Logs. He said when came back next day he would bring a hacksaw blade to cut the bars in the logs. Nothing came of this.

That night, Charles BROWNE made an attempt to break out of the goal, but was foiled in the attempt, and returned to the Logs. Now fully into the confidence of his cell mate, Charles BROWNE told WAINES some of the crimes he had been charged with. He also told WAINES, the police were bringing in the Blacks to search the river. On the 16th January, WAINES broke down and confessed to BROWN that he had committed a terrible crime. He told BROWNE the exact spot in the river where the bodies were. He asked BROWNE to look for the bodies when searching and place them in the Ti-tree scrub where they would never be found. He offered BROWNE, if he would do this for him, the sum of three hundred pounds, and when he was acquitted, a passage to New Zealand and a fresh start for both.

To be continued

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE:

Casterton Historical Street Walk from Flour Mill to Glenelg Inn - \$10.00
Extracts from the Casterton and District Historical Society Inc. 1966-1996 - \$10.00
Corndale State School Honour Board Booklet - \$7.00
Casterton Cenotaph WWI soldiers - \$20.00
Casterton Cenotaph WWII soldiers - \$10.00
Major Norman McDonalds Photograph Album CD - \$20.00
History in the Depths – Gallipoli - DVD - \$20.00
Vern McCallum's CD's – Casterton High School - \$20.00
Vintage Tools of Trade - \$10.00
News clippings from the Casterton News VP Day Celebrations 1945
Newsletters of the Casterton and District Historical Society 2005 Booklet Indexed \$10.00
Extracts from Gleanings – \$1.00

Phone Jan on 55 752578

A Brief AFL History.

A.F.L. starts this month so here is a short history, nationally and in Casterton.

In 1857, Tom Wills, one of the founders of Australian Football, returned to Australia after schooling in England where he was football captain of Rugby School and a brilliant cricketer. Initially, he advocated the winter game of football as a way of keeping cricketers fit during off-season. The new game was devised by Wills, his cousin H.C.A. Harrison, W.J. Hammersley and J.B. Thompson. The Melbourne Football Club was formed on August 7, 1858 – the year of the code's first recorded match between Scotch College and Melbourne Grammar School.

The game quickly blossomed. The Geelong Football Club was formed in 1859 and in 1866 an updated set of rules was put in place and competition started.

The Victorian Football League was established in 1896 and the following year the League's first games were played among the foundation clubs – Carlton, Collingwood, Essendon, Fitzroy, Geelong, Melbourne, St Kilda and South Melbourne.

In 1908, Richmond and University joined the competition. But after the 1914 season, University left the League. In 1925, Footscray (now the Western Bulldogs), Hawthorn and North Melbourne (now the Kangaroos) joined the VFL.

This line-up of 12 clubs would remain unchanged until 1987 when the competition expanded to include the West Coast Eagles and the Brisbane Bears. BY 1997, the competition comprised 16 clubs after Adelaide (in 1991), Fremantle (in 1995), and Port Adelaide (in 1997) joined the now Australian Football League and foundation club Fitzroy merged with the Brisbane Bears to form the Brisbane Lions (after the 1996 season).

From the Minutes:

18th July 1988

Mr. Peter MCCALLUM of Casterton, for some years has been gathering information relating to the local football scene. He has been a member of the Casterton Football Club since 1953 when he first played for the 3rds. He retired as a player in 1975.

The club was first established in 1875 with the first match played between 2 local scratch teams on Wednesday June 9th 1875. In the late 1880s and 1890s there were two local teams – Casterton Football Club and Casterton United Football Club (later Parkville F C). Clifton Hill Football Club was in existence around the time of the Great War. After the war the clubs in Casterton were the Rainbow and Federal Football Club.

Frank GILL, regarded as the best footballer that Casterton has produced, appeared on the scene in the late 1920s. After a few seasons with Casterton, he went to Carlton where he played 205 games, mainly at full back. He became captain of Carlton and played in the 1938 premiership side. He also represented Victoria.

After the 2nd World War, Casterton joined the Glenelg Football League and won the premiership. With Jack DOUGLAS as coach, the club also won the 1949 flag.

The C. R. GILL Clubrooms were opened in 1956, the same year the club changed to the present colours. During the decade of the 1960s the Club won 5 flags. Four players made VFL teams.

History of the Commonwealth Games

The Concept

The concept of a united Commonwealth sporting event had been talked about amongst Commonwealth nations since the rebirth of the Olympic Games. A sporting competition bringing together the members of the British Empire was first proposed by Reverend Astley Cooper in 1891, when he wrote an article in The Times newspaper suggesting a "Pan-Britannic-Pan-Anglican Contest and Festival every four years as a means of increasing the goodwill and good understanding of the British Empire".

The Precursor

In 1911, the 'Festival of Empire' was held in London to celebrate the coronation of King George V. As part of the festival, an Inter-Empire Championships was held in which teams from Australia, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom competed in events such as boxing, wrestling, swimming and athletics. A trophy in the form of a silver cup, 2ft 6in high and weighing 340oz, the gift of Lord Lonsdale, was presented to the winning country, which was Canada.

The First Games

No further development took place until 1928, when the Olympic Games were in progress in Amsterdam. The splendid feelings of friendliness between the Empire athletes at that Olympiad re-vitalised the idea for the revival of Empire meetings.

The first Commonwealth Games, known as the British Empire Games at the time, were held in Canada in 1930 in Hamilton, Ontario. 'Bobby' Robinson, who was a major player within athletics in Canada at the time, was the driving force behind the event. The first Games included 400 athletes from 11 countries. To help cover the travelling costs for the visiting nations, the City of Hamilton provided \$30,000.

Support for the concept was forthcoming from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, with the result that strong teams were sent to Canada. Teams also came from Australia, New Zealand, Bermuda, British Guiana, Newfoundland and South Africa. The events at this meeting comprised track and field athletics, swimming, rowing, boxing and wrestling, and lawn bowls. While no points were allotted, it was fitting that Great Britain filled the premier position.

Ongoing Games

The success of the first Games at Hamilton in 1930 provided enough incentive to make them regular. Since 1930, they have taken place every four years except for 1942 and 1946, when they were disrupted due to World War II. The Melbourne Games are the 16th to be held. From 1930 to 1950 the Games were known as the British Empire Games, then the name was changed to the British Empire and Commonwealth Games until 1962. From 1966 to 1974 they had the title of British Commonwealth Games and from 1978 onwards they have been known as simply the Commonwealth Games.

Host Cities

After the 1938 Games in Sydney, the British Empire Games Federation allocated the 1942 Games to Montreal, Canada. The Games were officially abandoned following the outbreak of World War II. Canada was given the first option on the 1950 Games but declined.

Perth hosted the games in 1962, Brisbane in 1982, and as we all know, Melbourne has the games this year, 2006. The M.C.G was the main stadium at the 1956 Olympic Games and will be the main stadium for this year's Commonwealth Games.

More information can be found at:

<http://www.topendsports.com/events/commonwealth-games/history.htm>

Historical Society Presentations to ABC Radio Horsham - 0615 Mondays

3rd April 2006	Balmoral
10th April 2006	Casterton
17th April 2006	Public Holiday
24th April 2006	Coleraine
1st May 2006	Harrow
8th May 2006	Balmoral
15th May 2006	Casterton
22nd May 2006	Coleraine
29th May 2006	Harrow
5th June 2006	Balmoral
12th June 2006	Public Holiday
19th June 2006	Casterton
26th June 2006	Coleraine

***Society Meeting Dates and
Guest Speakers for 2006/7:***

Wednesday, 15th March 2006 at 7.00 pm

Wednesday, 19th April 2006 at 7.00 pm
Ms. Ann Grant - Portland History House

Wednesday, 17th May 2006 at 7.00 pm
Helen Moore and **Ian Black** - Hamilton History Centre

Monday, 19th June 2006 at 2.00 pm
Mr. Ray Welsford - Warnambool Family History Group

Monday, 17th July 2006 at 2.00 pm
Mrs Pat Hein - Mount Gambier Heritage and History Society

Monday, 21st August 2006 at 2.00 pm
Ms. Jenny Fawcett - Genseek Genealogy

Wednesday, 20th September 2006 at 7.00 pm
Jim Kent - Local/Family History Researching

Wednesday, 18th October 2006 at 7.00 pm
To be advised.

Wednesday 15th November 2006 at 7.00 pm
Dinner Meeting - **Ms. Joan Hunt**.

December 2006 and January 2007 - No meeting

Wednesday 21st February 2007 - **AGM** at 7.00 pm

Any material for inclusion can be left at P.O. Box 48, or passed to Basil Stafford or Jan Lier.
Any ideas or comments can be left at P.O. Box 186.