

Casterton and District  
Historical Society Inc  
Newsletter

**FEBRUARY 2012**

*Items in our newsletter:*

What's in a name by Jim Kent  
Tom Cue of Casteron by Jim Foster

**NEXT MEETING**

We will meet on **Wednesday, February 15th**, for an informal welcome back BBQ at the Visitor Information Centre at 7 pm. BYO drinks and salads/plate. BBQ snags provided.

***KENTS CORNER BOOK - AN OUTSTANDING SUCCESS***

Due to the great interest in Jim Kent's book published November last, all copies were sold by Christmas. However, copies can be ordered at the Visitor Information Centre or by contacting the Historical Society direct.

Happily, Jim's wealth of material means a new follow-up edition will be published later this year.

Thanks go to all for the support shown for this fascinating and unique book. Many locals have embraced it enthusiastically and have contributed to a great success.

**Casterton New Cemetery Mapping Project:**



# Historical Happenings



Casterton Community Museum

## What's in a name

by Jim Kent

Casterton and district have in the past had many notable happenings occur within its confines some tragic, some humorous, some worth looking back on. Within my lifetime I have known or known of some rather peculiar surnames of people which had relativity to various other items. Read on and you will see what I mean.

Surnames relative to articles or things; Barr, Button, Bell, B all, Bates, Booth, Buckle, Boon, Block, Baggs, Bridges, Barrow, Brain, Cross, Cole, Cool, Calendar, Cue, Chambers, Chapel, Crutch, Cain, Dart, Elms, Grass, Grummet, Gamble, Garrett, Hedge, Heaps, Hay, Hall, Kitchen, Kettle, Mills, Moss, Potts, Peate, Penny, Pitt, Rivett, Reid, Stone, Steele, Schrapnel, Sprigg, Speirs, Stooke, Trap, Twig, Tyre, Warren, Wall, Winch, Webb.

Surnames relative to occupations: Cooper, Plummer, Sawyer, Miller, Shepherd, Piper, Gardiner, Fidler, Butler, Carter, Skinner, Taylor, Porter, Walker, Hunter, Painter, Cutler, Fowler, Tyler.

Surnames relative to titles: Abbott, Baron, Bishop, Constable, Dean, Earl, Deacon, King, Parson, Squire.

Surnames relative to colours: Black, Brown, Dunne, Grey, Greene, Pink, White.

Surnames relative to animals: Bunny, Bull, Baugh, Dobberman, Collie, Dear, Fox, Hyde, Lamb, Hack, Hart, Steed, Wulff, Withers, Stock.

Surnames relative to birds: Partridge, Nightingale, Gull, Wildgoose, Crowe, Rhook, Byrd, Couts, Sparrow, Finch.

Surnames relative to food and drink: Baker, Bean, Beer, Cook, Currie, Herring, Fennell, Mead, Rice, Salt, Shanks, Sherry, Tucker, Pepper.

Surnames relative to geographical feature and thoroughfares: Bush, Dale, Downs, Forest, Fields, Fell, Heath, Hill, Moore, Lane, Rhodes, Woods.

Odd sounding surnames: Cowland, Cox, Cantor, Bridgeman, Beaglehole, Brilliant, Beard, Butt, Day, Earnest, Fellows, Fry, Guest, Inkpen, Jolly, Jelly,



Merino Downs in 1920



Koopman, Koch, Knight, Henegg, Merry, Kneebone, Shoebridge, Storie, Sparke, Sleep, Standing, Speed, Shipman, Uphill, Younghusband, Widdicombe.

At one time there was a Partridge, Hawke and Nightingale family all living down on the Dartmoor Road at Killara near Casterton.

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### Tom Cue of Casterton by Jim Foster

Tom Cue was born in the western district town of Casterton, Victoria in 1850\*, one of two sons and eight girls born to Thomas George Cue and Maria (nee Collins). Given a sound education, Tom excelled at sports and was a well set-up young man.

Working for a time at his father's general store T.G. Cue and Company, Tom soon decided being a counter-jumper did not suit him and he left looking for adventure. Tom worked for a short time at Castlemaine in a Saw Pit, then on the opal fields of South Australia.

By the early 1890's Tom was on the rich Western Australian goldfields and doing well. He was involved in many of the better gold finds and in 1892 the town of Cue was named after him. He was soon very well off and always stayed in the better hotels when in town. His prospecting outfit was of the best equipment and his trap could often be seen loaded high with provisions and mining equipment making its way to the latest strike.

In the late 1890's the Murchison district was largely unexplored. It was a dangerous desert wilderness where water was so scarce it often cost more than gold. Many men perished of thirst or were killed by the hostile natives of the area. It took a tough man just to survive there; to survive and prosper was an achievement indeed.

In 1895 Tom Cue made his richest find at what was to become the town of Agnew, ten kilometres north of Lawlers. Naming his gold mine *The Woronga* he then took on two further leases and the area became known as Cue's Patch, (referring to the rich patch of shallow alluvial gold there) a name that was to stick until the Post Master General pointed out that there was already a town named after Tom and there couldn't be two towns in W.A. named after the same man.

Cue's Patch eventually became known as Agnew. Tom stayed on at the Woronga for about eighteen months at the end of which time he was awarded a Finders Reward of one hundred pounds for the finding of the Cue goldfield. Selling his claims, Tom said he was tired of prospecting and was reported to have said. "Give me 300 pound a year, a horse, a gun and a fishing rod in Gippsland and I could ask for nothing more."

**Casterton Community Museum**



Kim Family - Yvonne, Ethel May, Jamie, Gai Meng, Steve, Yvoni, Fie

The Kim family of Casterton



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Tom then spent a year in Queensland at Cloncurry and Chillagoe before returning to Victoria in early 1900. But unable to settle down he became involved in an expedition up the Amazon River travelling to London to help organize and finance the trip. Even in his sixties he remained restless, journeying through the inhospitable wilderness of the Yukon to search for gold.

On the fourth of September 1920 he died at the age of seventy in Vancouver, British Columbia. Even today there is not a lot known about Tom Cue. In 1894 the Murchison Times described him as a fine burly fellow nearly six foot tall. The only known picture of Tom came when in 1991 a couple were fossicking for gold near Cue and found a metal printers plate with an illustration of Tom filling his pipe.

While almost unknown in his home state Tom Cue is one of the legendary figures of the Western Australian Goldfields and particularly in the Murchison district. His name is as well known as Paddy Hannan who founded Kalgoorlie, and Arthur Bailey and William Ford of Coolgardie fame.

Acknowledgments: Much of the material for this article came from the excellent book "Agnew", by Alex Palmer, published by Hesperian Press

*Jim Foster: I was born and raised in Casterton. I left at the age of 16 to work and travel all over Australia, but with frequent trips home. My Father, Tom Foster, had a farm at Corndale where I learned to shear enabling me to earn a living almost anywhere in the country. Upon retirement dad and mum, Joan Foster, sold the farm and returned to their home in Russell Street. I now live in semi retirement, in Proserpine in central Queensland. As a freelance writer while in WA I came across references to Casterton born Tom Cue. 2005*

\*Casterton birth records indicate that Tom Cue was born in 1861, not 1850.

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### **Become a Public Record Office of Victoria Wiki Warrior**

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