



Castlemaine Pioneers and Old Residents' Association Inc.

Reg. No. A 0006803 W Est. 1880.

Faulder Watson Hall & Old Telegraph Station 208 Barker Street, Castlemaine.

• President: Graeme Barry 5472 3768 • Secretary: Wilson Bunton 5472 3186 •

All welcome to meetings held on third Thursday of each month at 7.30 pm. Annual Subs: \$30.00.

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Newsletter – August 2020. & the COVID 19 LINGERS ON.

The Old Telegraph Station Castlemaine 7/7/ 20. A real winter's day, bitterly cold, snow nearby. Covid 19 is monopolising the conversation. The radio, papers and T.V. have very little else to talk or write about. I am glad I am not the Prime minister, a State Premier or a Chief Medical Officer, no matter what they say, the so called experts are there, ready to tear them to bits and spread fear, confusion and panic into the community. To lighten the mood and to let you know that life still goes on in the Old Telegraph Station, here is our monthly newsletter reporting. The train, I report that a Driver Experience train ran on the 1st of July. This is after some money changes hands, a man or woman is allowed, under supervision, get up steam and drive the train to Castlemaine. Once there they uncouple the engine, park it on the turn table, turn it around, couple it back on the train and return to Maldon. It was great to see the J class steaming by, hauling a mixture of wagons and listening to an enthusiastic whistle blower. Lots of work has been done on the line, and a lot is happening in the sheds at the Castlemaine end, and all is well. I can report that the painting of the meeting room is completed. The painters have done a great job. However a big (very big) problem has surfaced. The table! The next step is the sanding and polishing of the meeting room floor. To do this the floor must be cleared. The table is too big to go through the door or window. The problems the "hard working secretary has to grapple with. I am working on a scheme of sky hooks. The lower level of spouting has been done. There is an upper level of spouting and flashing on the south wall of the hall to be done soon. It will need someone, experienced with working on a slate roof. There are chairs, tables, display cases and stuff everywhere, the place looks like a dog's dinner. But the secretary will handle it. On the office side, things are ticking along nicely. It gives me great pleasure to report that just about everyone has renewed their membership. The attention seekers, the 3 or 4 who haven't will find

the **Dreaded Black Spot**, of Long John Silver at the top of this newsletter to jog their memories. Rotary have contacted me re- their Annual Truck Show. They have decided not to conduct a full scale Castlemaine Truck Show this year on the 28th-29th November, due to the virus uncertainty. They are exploring **online and smaller local activities** (regulations permitting). We have been approached to work with them to produce an, on line presentation of extracts from our postponed exhibition **Transport in the Mt Alexander Shire** from when Major Mitchell first passed through this area in 1836, up until the present day. The co-ordinator Kerry Anderson and I quote "*I can give you any required assistance with the technical side of things*". It seems as if fate is determined to drag me kicking and screaming, into the 21st century. So folks, "watch this space". Last month I was at one of our members place, borrowing an old photo to add to our collection. Over coffee and fresh home made scones, the conversation got around to the "age" of our membership. The host, whose family goes back a long way in the district, and is a long time member suggested that we, suggest in a nice, but firm way to our children and grand children "*that they join our organisation to help keep those old lines and names that connects us to those "old Pioneers and their achievements alive*". I thought what a great idea. We, and all the other groups of history lovers, I believe do have an obligation to keep the culture of those early days alive. To pass on the stories of our culture to the young and newcomers. Did you know that up until the mid 60's, students from some of the state schools used to come down to the Telegraph Station once a week, to learn about "Old Castlemaine" from some of our old members? Who now have sadly have passed on. Anyway folks think about tapping the shoulder of children and grand children. There is a certain amount of kudos in belonging to such an old continuing historical organisation. Lets all get together and lower the average age of the organisation.

100 YEARS AGO 29th August 1920.
(there is not much to report on, for 29/8/1920 ed.)
General Business: It was resolved to forward a letter of sympathy to Mrs. Cook relating to the death of her father, who was a life member of the Association. (I have no idea what the maiden name of Mrs Cook was ed).

The treasurer reported a credit balance in the current account of £6-6-1d. With the following accounts to be passed, Mr. Mitchell £2-10-0 for 5 weeks salary. (?????ed.) 5/6d secretary's petty cash, (again, ????? ed.) 18/6d Gas. 14/- load of wood from Taylor Bros.

50 YEARS AGO 13 August 1970.
(Again not much to report, ed.)
Meeting opened at 8pm with President Mr Hall in the chair and 9 members present. The treasurer reported, Money in, Rent \$15. Subs \$10-20c. Donation \$5. money out, S.E.C. \$17-92c. Hall Keeper \$16. Bank Balance \$226-58c.



General Business. Mr J. Gaulton was elected secretary for 1970/71. Moved J. Wilson sec by E. Hardwick, that raffle books be obtained for the Annual Picnic and that Mr. G. Stevens be contacted re- books. Meeting closed 8-45pm.

VALE

Once again it is my sad duty to report not one, but two deaths of our members.

Jack Polinelli a Thompson's man and a long time staunch member of the Pioneers. Jack did not enjoy good health in his latter years and our thoughts and sympathy go out to his wife Cath his wife and family.

Colleen Smith. A recent member who along with husband Allen, quietly provided solid and dependable support wherever the organisation needed it. Her knowledge of the Arts will be sadly missed. Such a young age to go. To Allan and family, we are thinking of you at this sad time.

**Castlemaine Pioneers
and Old Residents' Association Inc.**

Next Monthly Meeting

CANCELLED AGAIN DUE TO,

*"The Dreaded Lurgy Min, still The Dreaded Lurgy"
But we live in hope!*

Pioneers and Old Residents' Association
208 Barker Street, Castlemaine 3450



Pioneers and Old Residents Association of Castlemaine Inc.
Presidents Annual Report:- 2019-20.

This year's report covers another month (August), due to the fact that the July Annual meeting was cancelled and we proposed to have the Annual meeting in August, but alas, this has also been cancelled.

During this report period, the Association was to celebrate 140 years of continuous service. Not many organizations can say they have had continuous service for this length of time. The Committee endorsed Wilson's plan to celebrate this achievement with a Historic Transport Display in the Town Hall, together with our Monthly March Meeting to be held also in the Town Hall with Invited Guests. The Meeting Date would have been the 19th March, our actual 140th Birthday. The Display and Meeting had to be cancelled due to government restrictions for public attendances at functions due to the Covid 19 Virus. Apologies to Wilson and his helpers for the late cancellation. The Association ran as normal up until the middle of March when restrictions were imposed.

I am pleased to report that this year, the Association has increased its membership slightly, however, I wish to stress that myself and the Committee hope that you all re-new your membership for the coming year and not let the interruptions caused by the virus to not re-new your membership. When the restrictions are lifted, we will return to our monthly meetings and other excursions. We must continue to pursue new Members, we desperately need an influx of younger Members. I sincerely hope we can continue for many more years. We are fortunate that we have large attendances at our monthly Meetings, the advent of a microphone, light supper of tea /coffee and biscuits and hall heating in the winter has definitely proved a winner, together with interesting Guest Speakers.

During the past year, we regret that Keith McShanag, Les Chapman, Jack Wilson, Reg Forster, Jack Polinelli, John Graham and Colleen Smith passed away. They all contributed to our Association in many ways during their time with us, they will be sadly missed. However, I must comment on the excellent service that Jack Wilson and Les Chapman provided to our Association. Jack was a past president, and he also devoted many hours of maintenance work to our buildings in his trade as a builder, he also was the main organizer of many functions held by the Association, while Les was an authority on the History of Guildford, Tarlta and Vaughan and usually had an interesting question for our Guest Speakers.

This past year has seen projects carried out mainly to do with the Association itself. Our Secretary, Wilson deserves to be complemented on the Christmas Break-up, once again held at member Peter Bottomley's Run Rabbit Run Venue. This consisted of a 2 course meal with nibbles, squash, tea and coffee. Wilson also distributed to all members present a Note Pad with the Association's name on the front cover. All agreed it was again a great night. This Christmas the break-up for 2020 will depend on the state of the Virus. All other projects have been in relation to the upkeep and maintenance of the Telegraph Office and the Faulder Watson Hall. A huge thank you to Cass Ewing for her excellent work she did setting up our web site (www.castlemainepioneers.org). please have a look at this excellent site.

Once again we had our usual excursions this year, Members who took part in our excursions this year reported that they were as good as the past excursions. As is customary, our January Meeting is held at a historic place within the vicinity of Castlemaine. On a very warm, but wet night, members met at the old information centre opposite the Castle Motel, where we made car pools and headed off to Chewton. First stop was by the Chewton Oval where Keith and Joy White were waiting for us. They pointed out some interesting sites, then we drove to the railway overbridge in Railway Street where there were round Chinese mine shafts. We then drove past the richest alluvial gold area in the world before heading to the Chewton Town Hall where the White's and Elaine Appleton gave a talk on the History of Chewton and displayed their many books illustrating the area. Our February excursion was capably organized by Wilson and Barbara once again. This year we had a full size Bus, so comfort was enjoyed by all. First stop was a tea / coffee stop at Creswick, then off to our excursion in Ballarat. First stop was at the Eureka Stockade, where we were able to walk around the area, then a lady gave us a talk on the original Eureka Flag, next was a visit to the Gold Museum near Sovereign Hill, we had free time to explore the Museum at our own pace, plenty of lovely exhibits there, some from the Castlemaine area. Lunch was at the Nort Ballarat Sportsmans Club, very well organized and a good menu to choose from, served quickly. Lastly we visited the Ballarat Mechanics Institute in Sturt Street. A lovely old building with period furniture and fittings, the Library we saw was rather unique with all the old books available for Members to read. Back home by 5-00pm.

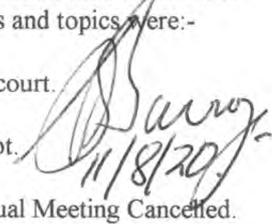
A successful exhibition was held during Heritage Week, the Telegraph Office was open on 3 days with Russell Sheehan displaying his old radio's and also his details and location of Castlemaine's early Hotels, as well some of our own items were displayed.

The past year has seen once again a great array of Guest Speakers, talking on a wide range of interesting topics. The knowledge these speakers have on their topics is amazing. This year in some instances we had a video presentation as well, when question time occurs it is most interesting to hear the related questions raised by our members that arise following these talks. Monthly details and topics were:-

July:- Annual meeting, no speaker.	August:- Cass Ewing. The launch of our Web Site.
September:- Wilson Bunton. Old Minute Book tales.	October:- Jill Willoughby. The Symes Family and Harcourt.
November:- Marjorie Theobald. Lost Castlemaine.	December:- Christmas Break-up at Run Rabbit Run.
January:- Visit to Chewton.	February:- Anne Rittman. Her father, the Spitfire Pilot.
March:- Meeting Cancelled.	April:- Meeting Cancelled.
May:- Meeting Cancelled. June:- Meeting Cancelled. July:- Annual Meeting Cancelled.	August:- proposed Annual Meeting Cancelled.

I also wish to thank all Members of the Association who have made any contribution to the success we have achieved during the past year, to those who attended our monthly meetings and other Committee and Executive Meetings that were held. I now declare all Executive and Committee positions vacant, and call on a member to conduct the Election of Office Bearers for the year 2019-2020.

Graeme Barry. President. 20th August 2020.



WSpecial supplement

A Castlemaine Pioneers & Old Residents Association 21st Century Collectors Piece. 10th August 2020.

For the first time in our 140 year history has the Annual General meeting had to be postponed. Not by flood, or fire, nor two world wars but by an invisible in all senses virus. But we are soldering on, with the Captain steering the ship through uncharted waters, with well trimmed sails and "steady as she goes". To keep you, the loyal, staunch and trusty crew in the picture, here are the 2019/2020 President, and Secretary/Treasure reports.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Our ship seems to be in a sound and seaworthy condition. Maintenance is under control, although a blocked storm water drain has just popped up seeking attention. Security window screens are under way. We are waiting for a report from a Stone Mason on the crack high up on the east wall of the telegraph station.

Archiving and digitising are progressing well, with new material appearing all the time. A couple of months ago I reported about a hand written letter by Lord Hopeton, to the Pioneers. The committee of that time according to the minutes of the day, resolved to have them framed and to put on display. Guess what, I found them unframed the, other week. Another job to go on the agenda, albeit a hundred years later.

The web site has been in operation for a year now, proving to be a success, both financially and in getting us, "out there" into the public eye. We are very fortunate to have a very generous member, who wishes to remain anonymous, who covers all the costs of running and maintaining the web site. Many thanks Mr, Mrs, or M.S. ? Anonymous. (the correct title?). The site has fielded inquiries and questions from all states except the N.T.

Being members of The Royal Historical Society of Victoria and the Mechanics Institute, enables us to see how other societies, State, Australia and World wide, are functioning in these trying times. It gives me great comfort, encouragement and ideas to know we are not alone. Our social life has had to be put on hold since February, and there is a "Lot of Living" to do", when the new world emerges. Prepare yourselves.

£££. Treasury. All bills are being paid as they come in and this will be continued. The investment interest fell due at the beginning of July. This was drawn down to pay the plumber, painter and the floor sander, leaving the principle untouched and enough in the working account, to avoid putting us on short rations, (in other words can still afford chocolate biscuits). When we can hold an A.G.M. A full report will be tabled. Over & Out.

Continuing on ...

Now something lighter. At our 'Show & Tell' night some 3 or 4 years ago, one of our members Libby Luke told a story that stuck in my mind. The story had two principal characters, Peter Moyle 1842-1890 miner (one of her ancestors who lived for a while at Vaughan) and a solid gold pen, pictured below. Libby passed the gold pen around for us to see, touch and hold. Pictured below. Actual length 23 centimetres.



The workmanship was exquisite and its beauty, breathtaking. "We do not have a lot of detailed information on the pen", Libby told us, "but from mum who had the pen, came this following information". *Peter Moyle miner was asked to take over as Manager when the Manager became ill. Peter managed the mine successfully for some considerable period and on the return of Manager was presented with this gold pen.* Unfortunately we can not decipher the jewellers marks. The mine from which the gold came from is unknown. The pen is great testimony to the great skills of the tradesmen spread across the Goldfields. They must have thought a lot of him, to have given him such a handsome and expensive gift, crafted by such a highly skilled tradesman. What is a tradesman? Tradesman: "a skilled worker". It was the tradesmen who built the strong industries we all once knew and enjoyed here in Castlemaine. Thompson's, Vivian's, a couple of foundries, along with shop keepers, clerks, journeymen, civil servants, artists teachers lawyers and doctors, all using so many different skills. All building the town and area we enjoy today. Below, how much they earned.

From a government magazine, Australia To-Day 1923. the official weekly wage paid to some tradesmen and are shown in shillings 1/- per 40 hour week. There are 20/- in a £1 and £1 = \$2 in today's money.

Baker. 105/6d Boilermaker. 107/8d. Bootmaker male. 95/9d female 46/9d.
Brass Moulder. 100/3d. Brewer. 90/6d. Labourers. 93/-. Butcher. 107/-
Carters. One horse. 89/6d. Coach Painters, & Coachsmiths 101/-. Coopers. 110/-.
Dressmakers. 46/6d. Blacksmiths. 126/5d. Coppersmiths. 126/5d. Fitters. 126/5d.
Pattern Makers. 135/11d. Cabinet, Chair makers, along with French Polishers, Upholsterers and
Wood Turners all earned 101/6d. Monumental Masons. 106/9d. Pastry Cooks. 98/-
Shipwrights. 130/-. Shop Assistant. 96/6d. Watch & Clock Makers / Repairers. 100/-.

From the November 1917 edition of the same magazine. Imperial Rabbit Purchase.

In February, 1917 the Commonwealth Government, as agents for the British Government, who wished to be ensured of supplies of white meat for their sick and wounded, contracted with the rabbit exporters of the Commonwealth for the whole of their 1917 pack. So far rabbits to the value of £425,000 have been shipped, and there are in store awaiting shipment rabbits to the value of £600,000. This total value of over £1,000,000 and represents 30,000,000 rabbits. The British Government has agreed to purchase 12,000,000 lbs of 13 varieties of jams at 5d lb, The balance of 50,000,000, lbs to the Government of the United States. A small glimpse of an industry in 1918.

Continued,

In last months news letter the President floated the idea of changing the date of the A.G.M. From the 3rd Thursday of July to the 3rd Thursday of March, our Foundation month. Your thoughts on this matter were sought by mail, phone or email, the response was almost zilch. One email reply from a Geelong member suggesting we try to arrange a Zoom meeting. Now I know that the newsletter is widely read, by your responses to other questions in the past, and also by the speed my many mistakes are corrected.

From the silence I take it, I can tell the Boss, you don't care one way or the other and he has Carte Blanch on the matter.

If you do have an opinion, Express It, mail, phone or email. From my phoning around I can report members, that apart from the odd sniffle, small aches & pains and the occasional off day, you seem to be in fine fettle, with no sickies to report. **But! Members**

But!,..... from an article in the M.A.M. 28th June 1884, "*Pioneers & Old Residents Association. The annual meeting of the above Association was held last night in the Town Hall; Mr. Gaulton president in the chair. Mr. Ottey read the fourth annual report, from which we take the following extracts: (the association was considered to be very important in those days and a reporter was sent to cover our meetings) - "Death has been very busy wit our members, since the formation of the society four years ago. Thirteen Foundation members have gone the way, all have to go". As you read in the Presidents report, in the last few months quite a few of our members, have gone the way we shall all have to go". Since becoming secretary 10 years ago, I have sent 24 condolence cards and written 24 Death Notices for the local papers, an average off almost 3 a year. So folks, in these very dangerous times, **Take Very Good Care of Your selves and Loved Ones. You are all Very Special.** Still on the same subject, I put a death notice in the Castlemaine Mail for John Graham. John was no longer a member, resigning several years ago due to ill health and old age.*

When he was a younger member, he was one of those people who contributed fully to any organisation he was in. Never a passenger. I knew John from our interest in aircraft and couple of other organisations He will be sadly missed and mourned by a lot of people he touched in life. At the one and only meeting we have been able to hold this year, February. The guest speaker Anne Rittman spoke to us about her father Flight Sergeant Harold Murray Rittman, Spitfire Pilot in W.W.2.. One of the youngest recruits to Spitfire Squadron 683 Reconnaissance. He flew an unarmed spitfire (unarmed, they fly faster and for longer distances) 90 times over heavily fortified Europe unveiling Hitler's secrets. Anne told us she was writing a story about her father, that when it was published she would let us know. Well folks it's finished, and what a great read. Skilfully told, it tells the story, of how an ordinary young farm boy from Casterton won the Distinguished Flying Cross. It takes the reader on a journey that starts with his grandfather, hard to put down. \$25 posted. **0407765963**. Coincidentally the day before Anne delivered my copy of her book, I read something from our collection called Australia Remembers a list of Servicemen who lost their lives 1939- 1945 in the Castlemaine Area. It is a sad read, so many dead and most buried in foreign lands. Another coincidence, August 15th marks the 75th Anniversary of **V.P. DAY**. . We owe so much to those brave men and women who risked and gave their lives for us. We owe it them that we keep their memory alive, making sure that their stories are passed on. Our generation has lived in very good times and I really do thank those who have gone before us for making it all possible. Well folks, the lesson is over, buy the book, stay safe and well and keep in touch with friends and loved ones. *The Editor*. **Do you have a black spot?**