



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: Russell Sheehan 54723285. • Secretary: Wilson Bunton 5472 3186 •

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

W: www.castlemaine pioneers.org E: castlemaine pioneers@gmail.com

Newsletter – March 2024 *Celebrating our 144th Birthday.*

The Old Telegraph Station Barker St Castlemaine
A fine autumn day with the first autumn leaves falling to the ground. 17th March 144 years ago almost to the day, the inaugural meeting of the "Castlemaine Association of Pioneers and Old Residents" took place in the old Town Hall, Mr. Robert Mitchell (Mayor) was elected First President of the Association, and the rest as they say is history. The annual February excursion was a great success. Keeping it local this year, saw us visit the Chines Museum, the New Law Courts and the R.S.L. museum all in Bendigo.



At precisely 8-30am the coach pulled away from the curb outside the Old Market building for the start of a magical tour. First stop the Chines Museum, more & photos inside.

On the home front so's to speak, things are plodding along as usual. Bills are still being paid, Greg is beavering along with the sporting exhibition, it would be a nice think to do, if everyone were to let Greg know the days and times you are available to man the ramparts over the three days. (man the door, sell raffle tickets and merchandise, keep a friendly eye on the hall etc). The window display is paying a very unexpected dividend, apart from lots of nice comments, and we all like to preen ourselves from time to time. People are visiting the telegraph Telegraph Station and donating items to

our collection. The current display *The Castlemaine Rifles* has attracted, so I have been told *likes* (whatever they are) on *facebook* (what ever that is) from Queensland. The display has also connected with a few locals chasing their old relies. Yesterday the Pioneers played host to the Humber Car Club of Victoria, more about that in next months newsletter when some photos of some magnificent cars are available. Our next outing to Rochester, to visit the Historical Society has been put on hold for a short while, Marli has had a fall, suffered a bit, now recovering. When fit again the trip will be on. We have gained a few new members over the last few months, a few of them have a common interest in the Great War. They have been discussing aspects of the First World War, for more than 10 years and have never had difficulty finding subjects of interest to discuss. As members of the Pioneers they hold a monthly meeting in the Telegraph Station on the second Thursday of the month at 1pm. The next meeting of this group is April 11th and members are most welcome to join the group. It is not necessary to have any expertise regarding the First World War, have an interest in the subject, a great grandfather, uncle or perhaps a family mystery or you are just interested. We, that is the Pioneers have an interest, our unique (I don't make the claim unique, experts have Ed) Montage in the Faulder Watson hall. If you are interested please contact Tony Millar at tonymillar@mmnet.com.au By the way Tony was one of the main drivers behind our work with Olivet College students research into the montage As I sit here at the computer musing, the 144th birthday keeps flashing on my inward eye telling me something. What? I don't know, other than we are old. That we have a penchant for collecting old things. The number of octogenarian members in the organisation is growing and long may they live. Also the number of nonagenarians is increasing, a new one joining soon. More next month. **Now is the time to get serious about getting some new young blood into P.&O.R.A This years Major Project.**



Arriving at the Chinese Museum we had time to view the various courtyards, gardens pagodas and dragons situated around the main building. The main doors were opened and we were greeted by the two dragons and an official guide see front page. Our guide really knew his subject delivery style. The vibrant colours, really professional displays and layout immediately grab our attention, one and a half hours simply flew. There was one drawback in my opinion, is lack of seating oldies like us when listening to the guide. Nevertheless a great experience.

Next stop The New Bendigo Law Courts. For most of us our knowledge of the law comes via T.V. that has little resemblance to real life. Catering to our ageing years our coach driver drove us to the new Law Courts, and what an eye opener. After negotiating security two guides took us into their care. After an introductory talk about the old law courts and its short comings in today's society, they moved on to the building we were standing in. The building was designed around the local environment, the two words I use to describe it are Elegant and Beautiful. The courts can handle a wide range of cases, from minor to the very serious, and do. Starting on the top floor, our guides gave very detailed explanations on how our justice system works. Of how every effort is made to see that everyone gets a fair go. How everyone prisoner, witnesses, jurists, public and lawyers feel safe. The aboriginal court room was especially interesting, both aesthetically, its architecture and the way it operated. Before leaving we all travelled back up to the fourth floor for a group photo in front of a huge picture window which has a huge outline of the local aboriginal totem on it. The Wedge Tailed Eagle.

We are four floors high in a building, built to the highest possible standards. Also with the highest amount of local materials and labour. It came in on time and under budget. A great wrap for keeping local.

Names of the members in the picture below. Left to right, f = front b = back.
 Greg Plancke, Tony Millar, Mary Pomfretom f.
 Vin Cappy b, Jeanette Dawson f, Melva Graham
 Barbara Bunton f Wilson Bunton b, Marge
 Edwood f, Eric Edwood b, len peeler,
 Lyn Timmins f, Russell Timmins b, Lois Barry f
 Graeme Barry b, Jocie Sheehan f, Gary Hood b,
 Russell Sheehan b, Judy Eastwood f, John
 Leavesly b, Geoffrey Fairbairne f, Susan
 Fairbairne b, Ruth Giddings. (Some members
 missing, pick them up in the last photo)



LUNCH TIME

Our trusty coach captain in his trust coach whisked us to our dining venue the Botanical Hotel at White Hills, where a large table was ready and waiting for us. The menu was extensive in choice, the prices very moderate and the service fast. The squashes, beer, white wine and champagne cold, the red wine delectable. The service was good, we left well food and watered, ready for our next venture, Climbing aboard our trusty ship of the road we were treated to treat of exceptional coach driving skill. Our driver had entered the hotels car park designed for cars, so that we oldies did not have to walk to far on very full stomachs, bless him. We then watched him with casual nonchalance extract the bus from the a fore said car park, no sweat. The we were off to venue 3.



THE R.S.L. MUSEUM IN PALL MALL.

What a magnificent building situated in the centre of the city. On entering the museum which incidentally has been full re- furbish recently (local historian, museum curator Kirsten McKay designed the layout and was in charge of its implementation). Two very dedicated and knowledgeable guides splits us in two and off we went. The stories the exhibits told, from the very mundane but vital to the heroic parts of warfare, for every man / woman in the front line, there are many, many more behind the lines supporting them. They are just as important in getting the job done. The layout is patron friendly, the staff very knowledgeable and there is a good data base. As I walked around I saw a lot of the weapons I had been taught to use in my six years in the early sixties. Compared with the later ones I saw on display, I was stone age time. It made me realised even more so, if there comes a time to fight for our loved ones and way of life, we need to educate our young in the use modern technology used on the battlefields of today and pray they never have to use them. The whole day was great, good company, an eclectic selection of places to visit. Barbara the lady who organised this day and made sure it ran so smoothly deserves a big Gold Star, from everyone, a very big thankyou. Now folks this is not the end of the story because there is more, much more to come. Jeanette and George Dawson suggested that as we were in Bendigo, why not call in at their place on the way home for a cuppa and chat amongst ourselves? And that folks was just what we did. George set too on the Monday sweeping, cleaning, dusting and polishing. Jeanette it was acase of on with the pinny, out with the cake and scone pans, light the oven and set to work. What a lovely couple the are. After a nice drive through parts of Bendigo most of us were not familiar with, we pulled up

outside George's Man Cave. A large spotless forecourt greeted us. The doors of a very large shed were wide open showing Jeanett's contribution, several trestle tables laden with afternoon tea. Most of the members present were not aware of the Dawson's hobby and background, they were blown away. George is a Castlemaine boy, living at the foot of M,Kenzie Hill. Jeanette is semi local coming from a rural / gold mining background. After they married they they moved to Raywood, about 18 miles from Bendigo, buying the general store come local garage. Over a number of years their lives took a very exciting path. The story of their journey is set up around the walls of the shed, and what a story it is. Also it is a time capsule of an Australian way of life that is fast disappearing. It was a fabulous end to a perfect day. A Gold Star to George and Jeanette. One final word, the coach pulled up outside the Market as the Post Office clock was striking 5pm, exactly on time.

Back to everyday life.

After such a good excursion now is the time for someone to tack the baton and start planning next years February excursion. It is not hard. Step 1. Pick a destination, preferably with a historical theme, run it past the members. 2. Get cost of transport. 3. Plan morning tea and lunch stops and meal price range. 4. Organise some publicity. There Easy Peasy. The guest speaker at the last meeting was a Blast from the Past. A Mr. Blume. Over the years some of our guest speakers talks were recorded, and they are stored in our archives. A lot of them are of poor quality, background noise, lots of umming and arrhing etc. Slowly I have been having them cleaned. up, Mr. Blume was a brilliant speaker (I say was because he has since passed on), his diction and delivery is perfect. One side of a tape is 30-45 minutes long, our hard wooden seats have a comfort level of about 45 minutes(I have noticed some of our less padded members are bringing their own cushions), I was very surprised when no one started to wriggle in their seats and let the tape run out. It was obvious that Mr. Blume loved our town its people and surrounds very much. Side one covers his early years growing up in the town, early working life before settling in at the foundry. Side two takes a walk along Barker St. Next meeting we will walk with him.

Confirmed Meeting held in Town Hall 30th April 1880.

Minutes of the last meeting Confirmed. (March 1880 144 years ago Ed).

A large number of Gentlemen wer present including Messrs Mitschell, Wayne, Holmes, Seedorf, Leversha, Barnes, Cornish, Dunston, Courtney and many others (there were 50 gentlemen present at the inaugrial meeting Ed). The rules were read to the meeting and various suggestions and alterations were adopted, it was then moved by Mr. Wayne that rules 1 to 27 be read and adopted globo, seconded by Mr. Yandell and carried. Moved by Mr. Wayne that Mr. R. Mitchell be elected first "President" seconded by Mr Holmes, carried. Moved Mr Seedorf that Mr. Cornish be elected Vice President seconded Mr. Barnes and carried. It was the resolved that the following Gentlemen be elected as the committee.

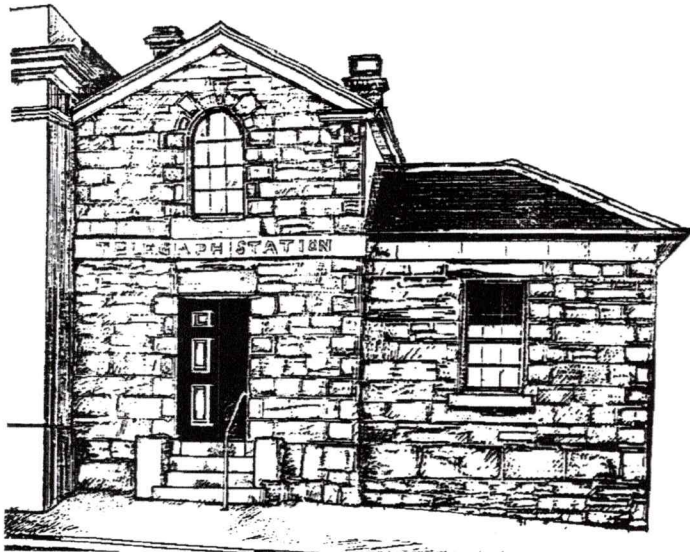
Messrs Yandell, Dunstan, Heath, Rogers, Leversha, Holmes, Barnes, Seedorf, Hodgeson and that Mr. Hodgeson be secretary. Moved by Mr. Holmes, seconded by Mr Cornish that the accounts of the Association be with the Colonial Bank.

Well Ladies and Gentlemen there you have it, a first hand account taken verbatim from the first Minute Book of our Associations Big Bang moment. Its birth, just after it took its first breath of air and started on its journey through life. And what a life it has been, and just how much the Association has contributed to the society we are part of, financially and socially. Long may it continue.

There are still a lot of members with serious health issues, either themselves or husbands, wives, partners, the whole organisation is with you and we sincerely hope you enter calm waters soon.

SITUATION VACANT. LIBRARIAN.

I don't think we have ever had an official librarian before, you could be a trail blazer. Set your own salary and conditions. Apply to the secretary who will introduce you to his generous salary package.



Castlemaine Pioneers and Old Residents Association Inc.

At the Old Telegraph Station 208 Barker St. Castlemaine.

Guest Speaker.

Family and friends welcome. 7-30 pm.

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



The Magnificent Dawson's Shed