



Foster & District Historical Society Inc.



PROM COUNTRY NEWS

FEBRUARY 2019

Office Bearers:

President: Meg Rogers
Vice-President: Mike Heal
Secretary: Kerry Corcoran
Treasurer: Noela Cripps

Curator: Jennifer Jones
Archives: Noela Cripps
Research: Nola Taylor
Maintenance: Reg. Williams



Howard Plowright replacing the signs.

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President's Report

Welcome to 2019 to all members . We hope it will be an enjoyable and productive year. We were saddened with the passing of Robin Taylor, we will miss his gentlemanly manner and wit – and we convey our sympathy to Jessica and family. In October we saw the launch of Cheryl Glowrey's book " South of the Strzelecki Ranges" which has been very well received.

In November the Society was active in finally being able to erect and unveil the Honour Board in the Foster War Memorial and Arts Centre in memory of all the men who enlisted in WW1 from the Old South Gippsland Shire – a four year project. We wish to thank the Foster RSL and Hall Committee for their co-operation. Mike McCarthy gave another well attended address on the Tramways at Port Franklin. The amount of research Mike has conducted on the Tramways is incredible and his ability to pass it on made it all come alive.

In December we celebrated the end of the year with our Xmas break-up, which was very well attended and thoroughly enjoyed by all.

In January we kept the Museum open till 6-30 pm on the day of the Musical Festival and entrance was by gold coin. Thanks to all those Members who helped on the long day.

On Australia Day we were fortunate to receive the 2019 Corner Inlet Community Award which was unexpected, but a lovely reward for all our members who work so tirelessly for the Society. A big thank you to all.

We were also very fortunate to again receive a cheque for \$500 from the Yanakie Camp Draft in their annual dispersement of profits from the Camp Draft and we thank them for including us once again.

History Does Matter.

Meg Rogers

President F&DHS

WHAT'S ON

March meeting – Tuesday 4 March at 7.30 -members to preview the new exhibition.

Prom Coast Festival – March 15,16 and 17. Check out the website:

<https://www.promcoastfestival.org>

April meeting – Tuesday 2 April. 7.30 pm

5 April- 22 April – Term 1 School holidays

Easter break – Friday 19-Monday 22 April.

May meeting – Tuesday 7 May, 7.30 pm.

**New Exhibition at the Museum- Saturday 9 March-31 January
2020.**

**Corner Inlet through the lens - the life and works of John Gunn,
Photographer**

Over the past ten years, the Foster & District Historical Society has presented a number of short-term focused exhibitions looking at various aspects of local history – the dairy industry, one-teacher schools, the development of Yanakie, Wilsons Prom during WW2, the district's contribution to the First World war and, more recently, the State's first hydro-electric plant on the Franklin River. In each exhibition we have drawn on the substantial photo resources held by the Museum. One name has continually featured in these photographs - J R Gunn.

John Gunn was a builder in Melbourne until he moved into South Gippsland after the 1890 Depression. He and his wife Jeannie bought a property on Mt Best and for nearly twenty years scratched a living in the hills through droughts and bush fires, before moving into Toora in 1919. He took up photography, initially as a hobby but subsequently as a means of additional income. Over the years he recorded life in Toora and the surrounding district, photographing the changing landscape and industry developments, including the construction of the Tin Mine at Toora. Social events like balls, flower shows and the Peace celebrations at the end of the First World War, all became subjects of his camera.

The Society's new exhibition "Corner Inlet through the lens - the life and works of John Gunn" opens at the Foster Museum on Saturday 9 March 2019 and will run until the end of January 2020. Apart from displaying examples of his work and looking at his family and business life, the exhibition will demonstrate the kinds of equipment that would have been available to him and describe the processes of photography in the early 20th century.

Curated by Jennifer Jones, with contributions from Julie Constable on the bush, Cheryl Glowrey on other photographers operating in Gippsland at the time and Charles Envall on the photographic equipment and processes available, the exhibition is being set up by Rob Pritchard and Richard Jones.



February Meeting Speaker – Dr Cheryl Glowrey

Our Speaker at the First meeting for the year, was Cheryl Glowrey, who discussed the process of adapting her PhD thesis ‘An Environmental History of Corner Inlet’ into the book entitled, *South of the Strzelecki Ranges: An Environmental History of Corner Inlet*, Melbourne: Anchor Books Australia, 2018. Her thesis was an investigation of how the people and the natural environment shaped each other. As an environmental history, Cheryl adopted a multidisciplinary approach, which included anthropology, archaeology and geology. She explained that she did much rewriting for the book. She then discussed some of the sources she used for her project, which included Chief Protector of the Port Phillip District George Robinson’s diaries and those of Lavinia Hazel Bennett of the first overland trip into Corner Inlet in 1844.

Cheryl is a lively and entertaining speaker, who has made a groundbreaking contribution to Australia’s environmental history.

IT News

The Foster and District Historical Society website has been redesigned and can be viewed at <https://promontoryhistory.org.au>



President Meg Rogers accepting cheque from with Yanakie Camp Draft committee representatives, Bec and Lauchie.

Community Service Award

Bruce McMaster was born at Toora Hospital in 1937. His family lived on McCartins Road, north of Foster at the time.

On Australia Day 2019 Bruce received the Latrobe City Community Service Award. Bruce and his wife Elsie(White from Foster), moved to Morwell where Bruce immersed himself in Shire affairs and local history. He pushed for the purchase of the old Masonic Lodge building on Hazelwood Road, and with several other members of the Morwell Historical Society, turned it into a museum well worth visiting. For many years Bruce and Elsie were members of the Foster and District Historical Society and travelled back and forth from Morwell to do their roster days.

In part of his speech, Bruce stated that ‘a lot of people are doing family history and come in and say, Grandpa was here, where did he live?’ His grandsons know where Bruce lives...at the museum! Well done Bruce.

From the Archives - Foster - Our Early Doctors.

In the early days of settlement on Australia the vast majority of the population made their appearance into the world, and their departure from it without the aid of medical assistance.

It was many years before a medical school was established in Australia, so any medical men in the colonies had come from overseas and not many had sufficient spirit of adventure to attempt it.

The pioneers, with unquenchable spirit managed as best they could with bush remedies, and the parents of ailing children at Stockyard Creek were no better off than those in other districts.

One of the first doctors in this area was an unregistered practitioner named Dr. Hutchison, who came here during the 1870s, and at much the same time a Dr. Renard arrived on the scene.

As Dr. Renard had staked claim on New Zealand Hill, it is reasonable to presume that he spent more time at a more lucrative enterprise than that of healing the sick.

Dr. J Augustus Haydon was the first regular doctor to settle in Foster. He lived in a four roomed house at the foot of Kaffir Hill in April 1889, and planted a willow tree in his garden which survived until it was removed many years later when the corner adjacent to the present art centre was developed. He was devoted to his cat, and kept two ponies for his personal use. He became a J P and deputy coroner for the Eastern Bailiwick, and the town plans of the day show him as owning several blocks of land in the Wood Street area.

Dr. Hayden contracted pneumonic influenza during the epidemic and died in 1896 and a tomb stone was erected in his memory by public subscription. On his death the government sent a relieving doctor for a month in a temporary capacity to cope with the epidemic.

This was possibly Dr. Rudell, but a Dr. Skinner was also in the area at the same time and a Dr. Wood is recorded as submitting a report on the influenza epidemic, and also the state of the towns drainage system, which was in deplorable condition.

Applications for the position of Medical Officer of Health was received from both Dr. Gimelin and Dr. Skinner, on 22/ 8/ 1896 and in November 1897 Dr. Gimelin opened a practice in W. J. C Hardy's shop, then later, moved to surgery in Station Road.

On 31/5/1901 Dr Thomas Osmond Fabian Alsop succeeded to the practice of Dr Gimelin. He was born in Adelaide in 1852, educated at Melbourne Church of England Grammar School and sent to England, aged 14 to study his chosen profession. He graduated in Edinburgh in 1872 and worked in

Europe until 1877, when he returned to Australia and practised in Hobart and then Hawthorn for many years. In 1910 he came, with his wife and family to settle in Foster and established a practice here.

A Dr. Gerald Walsh came to Foster on 18/10/1908, and Dr. Naylor and Dr. Howard worked here for short periods, until Dr. H C Wilson arrived on 24/6/1909.

From then until January 1952 Dr. Wilson maintained a high standard of professionalism in one of the longest one man- medical -practices ever recorded in Victoria.

Foster & District Museum Opening Hours

**11.00 am - 3.00 pm, Saturdays and Sundays; daily during school holidays.
Closed Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and Good Friday.**

Other times by appointment (03) 5682 2101; (03) 5682 2297.

Admission fees: This is a volunteer run and maintained museum and FDHS relies upon the small admission fee to run and maintain the museum on behalf of the Foster & District community.

Adult: \$5.00.

Concession (senior, pensioner & student over 15 years): \$4.00

Children: (5-15 Years) 0,50 cents; under 5 years – free

Family: \$10.00

Membership: Becoming a member helps us to preserve and present the district's history. You receive free museum entry, newsletters and invitations to events and new exhibition openings.

Single: \$20.00

Family: \$35.00

