


Newsletter Number 8
AUGUST 1991

MUNDARING  **and Hills Historical Society**

The AIM of the Society is to preserve and record the HISTORY of the
SHIRE of MUNDARING
NEW MEMBERS WITH AN INTEREST IN LOCAL HISTORY ARE
WELCOME TO JOIN

* NEW MEMBERS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.
MEETINGS ARE HELD ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF
EACH MONTH AT 7495 GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY,
MUNDARING, AT 8 P.M.

* A RESEARCH MEETING IS ON EACH 3RD
THURSDAY AT 7495 GREAT EASTERN HIGHWAY,
MUNDARING, AT 7.30 P.M.

BRINGING YOU UP TO

DATE.....

1.

Several meetings have now been in our new headquarters, kindly loaned by Mr Andy Keefe. Our temporary home is superb for meeting and research and storage purposes - 5 rooms (including bathroom and kitchen), beautifully restored by the Keefes, and itself historic - previously it was a boarding house run by Mrs Luhrs ; the history of this building and our first oral history recording , (which gave information about it), are projects already completed by M.H.H.S.

Though we are very happy about our HQ, this doesn't mean we have forgotten about our quest to establish a museum for this Shire ...but

2. On June 5th Mr Max Williams (Manager, Shire of Mundaring) and Councillors Atkins and Ellery and a good crowd of MHHS members and community members met to discuss a range of possibilities for this eventual museum.

We were heartened by this support and left feeling that the long-term plans of Mr Williams , aided by local support and enthusiasm, will ensure that the goal is reached within ten years.

Several of our members have inspected and used the Archives of the Mundaring shire and found them well kept and ordered. (Members of the public get information from these on written request and by payment of a fee to a Shire Officer, who actually handles the archival material). It is felt that these archives will be very valuable for research.

3. OLD MUNDARING PRIMARY SCHOOL - UPDATE.

In April, as a result of a display at Mundaring Shopping Centre and canvassing by members, nearly 400 signatures were appended to a petition to Mr John Mair (owner of the site on which the school stands) and the Mundaring Shire, requesting them to

- * Allow the building to remain on site.
- * Assist its passage into the care of MHHS.
- * Let the community make it into a living museum as a tribute to our pioneers and their descendants.

We have had contact with Hon. Gavan Troy M.L.A., Hon. Ian Thompson M.L.A., Hon. Mr David Smith M.L.A., Hon. Jim McGinty M.L.A., the Heritage Council, the National Trust of W.A., our colleagues in local Historical Societies and the Royal W.A. Historical Society about the building.

The nett result sofar is that everyone awaits the decision of Mr Blair as to when and how (and perhaps if...) he will proceed with the development of the site in the current economic climate. But we are heartened by his apparent recognition of the classrooms' local heritage value and his statement to the Shire that he plans to keep the building, probably to restore it (but not necessarily right where it has always stood..... and plans to rent it out).

We will keep the old building in everyone's minds.

4. ACTIVITIES

PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION.

Our collection of photographs continues to grow - once they are properly indexed and stored and copies can be shown to the public in a future museum, we think they will be both fascinating and useful to researchers.

MEMBERSHIP.

Several new members have been acquired lately, but we are sorry to lose Jan Lyon in the nicest way, by marriage and by her moving to Mogumber. She promises to keep in touch.

GUEST SPEAKER - LEN TALBOT.

Len was a recent guest speaker and he gave us many stories from his inexhaustible supply.

We were interested to hear about Lt. Laurence Domenic Mc Carthy of Lion Mill- the almost unknown second VC winner from this area (Hugo Throssell, the first winner is better known). The Mundaring shire Archives has Mc Carthy's name on an Honour Board, and his bravery on the Hindenburg Line plus the "Croix de Guerre" awarded to him by France is well documented in military history, but what happened to him after W.W. 1 is not on public record.

Len is an avid researcher into the Police Occurrence and Day Books, which give many insights into early days in our Shire, along the Old York Road. He recounted fascinating stories of police escorts, of early investigations into stealing, bushfire causes, and traffic "crimes" such as "riding whilst asleep without reins..... or on a horse wounded or sore."

An account which we found particularly relevant in view of our July bus trip was the story of convicts in 1859 giving evidence to a court that their soldier guards used them to cut wood for the soldiers to sell (illegally) in their small business.

Len also gave us details which lead him to believe that his Great -Grandfather, J.S. TALBOT of Mulline, has claim to be recognised as the one who, in 1894, first mooted the idea which eventually grew into the reality of the Mundaring Weir and Pipeline to Kalgoorlie.

It is clear that the history of the Mundaring Shire offers lots of interest for us to record and research.

ORAL HISTORY RECORDING.

We are becoming quite anxious that the stories of so many of our senior citizens in the Mundaring Shire may be lost to us if we don't vigorously record them now. So many are anxious to record for us.... but we lack the necessary equipment. The expertise and the willingness to spend time on this is already growing in our Society.

In connection with this, Mrs Islay Kelly has already attended and graduated from a training course held under the auspices of the Battye Library.

At our last Research Meeting (these are held on the 3rd Thursdays each month), Mrs Kelly showed us what she has learned.

Using a loaned double microphone Marantz CP430 Tape recorder (and for transcribing, and a Lanier Voice Writer 100 with footpedal control and headphones)--- which we all practised on --- Mrs Kelly let us hear our first oral history tape for this Shire, which is of some memories of Mrs Turner (daughter-in-law of Mrs Luhrs

who ran the boarding house which is now our HQ at 7495 Gt Eastern Highway). Mrs Kelly and Mrs Maureen Tye had led Mrs Turner through the recording and in it she particularly recalled the W.W. 2 period, when Mrs Turner assisted Mrs Luhrs and frequently provided accommodation and sometimes meals for allied servicemen on brief leaves. Local families offered a great deal of hospitality, we learned. Mrs Turner recalled kitchen battles with the old wood stove and the frozen meat which first made its appearance during war time .

The value of these recordings to local history has impressed us all. We are keen to begin - but the cost of the necessary equipment has depressed us. We feel that we must use first class equipment for the tapes to be clear, and to last for posterity.

GRAHAM PITTS Actor and writer, currently working under a grant from W.A. Dept for Arts and the Australia Council and working with Mundaring art Centre and Katharine Susannah Prichard Writers' Centre, requested a meeting with representatives of MHHS in order to begin background research which will assist him to write a play set in the Hills area . The idea is that this play will be performed with local expertise next year.

We were pleased to discuss the project with him and look forward to continuing the association. The number of requests for historical material which reach us is growing, and we feel that once we have assembled and ordered the fund of knowledge which is our aim, the MHHS will show itself to be invaluable to the public in the shire.

HERITAGE LISTING OF SITES IN MUNDARING SHIRE.

At the request of the REPOL Committee of the Shire, members are listing man-made and natural sites(and buildings) which are worthy of protection in each of the Shire's localities. These lists are nearing completion and will soon be handed on to Mundaring Shire.

COLLECTION OF HISTORICAL MAPS OF LOCALITIES IN SHIRE.

This is well underway, and will be used by MHHS Members in their general research and also for acquisition of background material before doing oral history interviews.

We have a great need for office-type storage units to enable us to readily access the fund of information we already have.

FIRST EXCURSION OF HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

On 29th June, in a coaster bus admirably driven by President Jeff Murray, and following a lot of preparation and research which he gave to us as guidelines to follow as we went along, we visited 9 important local historical sites. Ian Elliot and Peg and Frank Dinsdale of Woorelec were our guides also.

The history of the early settlers and explorers of our area came home to us very vividly as we visited a giant jarrah tree, Chauncy Spring and Biringining Well (both first recorded as good water sources in 1846), Ngangaguringguring Hill (where we saw the cairn surveyor Chauncy set up in 1846 whilst surveying the second of three attempts to set up a good all-weather route to York) and the ruins of Horton's 1857 "Travellers' Rest" Inn at The Lakes.

The Dinsdales gave us an excellent commentary as we toured the former (1915) Wooroloo Sanatorium for TB and lung complaints - this is of course now the site of the Prison Dept's Training Centre. The Wooroloo cemetery offers proof of the loss of life from gassing during WW1 and from serious lung conditions of miners from Kalgoorlie, as well as deaths from TB. Peg told us of treatment for TB before the days of lifesaving antibiotics. Later we visited Beechina, interesting for being the (gazetted) town that never was, finishing up at Chidlow Tavern with its cosy atmosphere and many relics and photos of its lively railway days.

Members feel this is only the beginning of many tours we will make to familiarise ourselves with the history of our Shire, so that we can equip ourselves to introduce the sites to interested members of the public.

AND NOW.....FOR THE FUTURE !

We had valuable advice at our June 5th meeting with Mr Williams and the Shire Councillors to the effect that MHHS should now set goals for the future.

Accordingly, a sub-committee met and has come up with a number of topics which will be discussed at the August meeting. When thoroughly reviewed, these will form the basis of our efforts to set the Society on a firm footing so that it does useful work for the community.

ANY IDEAS???.....as to how we can raise \$725 (Sales Tax Exempt) or \$949 (With Tax) for the Marantz Tape recorder and \$679 (Sales Tax Exempt) or \$739 (With Tax) for the Lanier Voice Writer we need for the Oral History project ?

A.G.M.

To be held on August 7th, with the production of this newsletter.

Elections have resulted in the Office Bearers for 1991-2 being :-

President;-

.....
(Phone).....
Vice-President.....
.....(Phone).....
Secretary;-

.....
(Phone).....
Treasurer;-

.....
(Phone).....

ROSTERS.

Now that we have become proud householders, there are several necessary (but light) chores to be done. Members will be rostered to do these each month-

* Supper at regular meetings (1st Wednesday each month)

* Supper at Research meetings (3rd Thursday each month)

* Cleaning of house (suggested it be done prior to regular meeting)

* Light gardening -(Cleaning up of front of house) - as it is found necessary.

(THE CLEANING AND LIGHT GARDENING ARE THE ONLY THINGS MR KEEFE ASKS OF US).

SEPTEMBER ROSTER

SUPPER ,REG MTG _____

SUPPER, RES. MTG. _____

CLEANING _____



Grave Inscription - Wooroloo Cemetery



Historical Society members at Chauvey's