

‘White Cliffs’

Journal of THE RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

July-August-September 2014

President: Prue Found 5985 5767

Secretary: Pauline Powell 5985 2797

Treasurer: Danny Jennings 5985 2231

PO Box 65 Rye 3941

<http://ryehistoricalsociety.weebly.com> index.html

Meetings – 8pm, Fourth Monday of each month

Rye Primary School Library

Visitors welcome. Enter from Collingwood Street



Pauline Powell showing Hon Martin Dixon, RHSV President Don Garden and Mayor Celi the items in the Rye suitcase.. (story page 5)

This is the time of year when many of our members are on holiday in warmer places, or are feeling the effects of the wintry weather. Thanks to all those who venture out to support our monthly meetings, especially when guest speakers make the effort to come down from Melbourne on a Monday night.

Our Society has been active in the community over the past few months, which is so important in promoting the work we do. We had a full table of members at the Women of Rye luncheon and it was a very lively affair. Also in May, we held a "Get to know your Museum" afternoon to encourage new and infrequent members to have a good look around the old schoolhouse.

In June, the much anticipated "Postcards of the Peninsula" exhibition opened at the Nepean Historical Museum. This has been two years in the making and is a great example of the combined effort of the Local History Network. Please make a visit to see the exhibition whilst it is at Sorrento.

Recently, Pauline Powell and I represented the Society at a function to meet with our local councillors, Hugh Fraser and Tim Rogers. These occasions provide an informal opportunity to discuss the importance of community groups and their needs.

The acting school principal, Wayne Lovie, has been very supportive of the RHS during his time there. The new principal commences next term and we hope to work closely with her, especially as we undertake the repair of the old schoolhouse.

We will recommence our stall at the Rotary market in September as this promotes the Society and is a way of raising much needed funds. We are very grateful for the award winning jams and preserves made for us by member Wendy Ellis. There is a loyal following for these.

We continue to be very "tinny" at the monthly Happy Hour at the RSL, and I hope our luck and laughter continues. Please start brushing up on your history knowledge in readiness for our Trivia Afternoon on August 24th.

Prue

Vale

We record the death at the beginning of July of long time Rye resident, 93 year old Lesley Howard, the mother of committee member Tony Howard. Lesley was very active in Rye – she ran a girls' gymnasium class, was a member of Blairgowrie CWA where her skills in needlework and making of dolls was legendary, and a Life Member of the Rye RSL Auxiliary – she was an original member when it formed in 1952. She has over the years provided this Society with photographs and information which is highly valued. Our condolences are extended to her family

25th August Bring a Treasure Night The Annual General Meeting will be held on the 25th August. There will not be a guest speaker after that meeting and it is our annual '**Bring a Treasure**' night. Bring along one of your special 'treasures' and tell the history of the item. We all have some special 'things' large or small, expensive or worthless but which may have an interesting history to make it special for its owner.

Nominations and subscriptions Enclosed with this newsletter are Renewal of Membership slips for the year 2014-2015. Membership fees remain the same. Family \$25, Single \$15. Please remit all subs to the secretary or personally to treasurer Danny Jennings. Nomination forms for Committee are also enclosed and to be lodged with the secretary Pauline Powell by the 18th August.

11th October Sausage Sizzle. Our annual Sausage Sizzle will be held at Bunnings on Saturday the 11th October. Keep this date free if you are available to assist on the day. This is always our most successful fund raiser for the year. A roster will be available at our August meeting.

October History Week As part of History Week to be held in October our Society will be setting up a display of toys and books and games from our childhood days and earlier. We are asking members and friends to go through their cupboards, archives, sheds for old toys and games. All items on loan will be well looked after. Bring to meeting or call Prue 0403 470 281

September 6th Market Day Our next market stall will be held on the Rye foreshore on Saturday the 6th September. A roster for helpers will be available at the August meeting.

Australian native plants A selection of our Australian native plants are available at Danny Jennings Garden Supplies Melbourne Road. Price \$3.50

Congratulations to Linda Berndt on the publication of *White Pearls and Jersey Gold* the 330 page history of the Jennings Family. The culmination of eleven years of research was launched at the 100th Anniversary of the arrival of the family in Rye.

Congratulations to Tony Howard on his appointment as President of the Lions Club of Rye

**Rye Historical Society presents
Historical Trivia Afternoon**

**Local History, Victorian History, Australian History
and World history.**

At Stoney's Room at the Rye RSL

on Sunday 24th August 1-30pm and 4-30pm.

Entry \$10. Afternoon tea (Sausage rolls etc)

Drinks at bar prices. Prizes and raffles and lots of fun.

Form your own team (5 max) or just roll up and join a table.

Contact Wayne or Jill Bastow 59857535

Welcome We welcome new Rye Primary School Principal Jacqueline Annable as she takes up her appointment at Rye Primary School in Term 3.

Welcome We new member Joy Kitch, Blairgowrie

Nepean and Rye HS Mid Year Luncheon.

50 people attended the annual first Friday in July lunch at the Rye Hotel Blue Water Room. Pre dinner drinks and canapes were served in the cafe bar, and after all being seated at the tables Patricia Ball, accompanied on the piano by Helen Schneider, sang a medley of songs with memories of the First World War. We all joined in the chorus of each of the last two songs – a nostalgic period for all of us.

After the main course the guest speaker Dr Noah Riseman gave an illustrated talk on 'Looking for the Black Diggers' – Aboriginal soldiers in the First World War. As they were not Australian citizens many were knocked back, but in the end most were accepted when more men were needed. They were keen to be accepted because they were paid more per day in the Army than they received in civilian life in a week. On their return and discharge most again became marginalised members of society. Desserts and coffee rounded off the most interesting day – with many staying on to talk with others.

Saturday and Sunday of the long weekend saw the opening of this exhibition – a combined project of eight historical societies on the Mornington Peninsula. Co-ordinated by Sally Robins the Local History Officer and funded by grants, and work and advice from experts from Museums Australia (Victoria), this was the culmination of three years' work. Each society had a different theme – ours was 'Holidays in Rye'. Using images of postcards in our collection and objects that were significant, they were put together in a 'suitcase', as were all groups. A DVD was also made with 3RPP Host Helen Turner doing the narration of our text. Each group's DVD was combined with the others and played continuously.

Nepean Historical Society hosted the two days – Saturday being the official opening, with Sunday for all those interested. The Mayor Antonella Celi spoke of the value of the historical societies on the peninsula in documenting and recording the diverse histories of the towns, and Don Garden President of the RHSV (and Rye member) officially opened the exhibition. Each society had representatives present to help on both days. The most popular item was the DVD – going through for 45 minutes it covered many themes including the Sorrento Tramway, Somerville/ Tyabb apple industry, Flinders guest houses – each one totally different.

The exhibition will move from Sorrento after 17 August to Frankston and Mornington libraries then Coolart, and will end up in the Royal Historical Society of Victoria's rooms in Melbourne after Christmas for a few weeks. Don't miss the opportunity to visit while it is in Sorrento, open Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

Thanks to Helen Turner for giving her time, to Keith White of Lavenderhill Multimedia for the production of the DVD, and to the Mornington Peninsula Shire.



Rye members Judy Stokes, Alma Grinter and President Prue Found at the Postcards exhibition.

Over the weekend of April 26 and 27th around 150 members of the Jennings family gathered at Rye Primary School to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the family arriving in Rye and launch of 'White Pearls and Jersey Gold – The story Of the Jennings Family of Rye and the Bellarine Peninsula' by Linda Berndt. Family members caught up on family gossip and renewed long lost acquaintances. A book was launched outlining the Jennings family history on the Bellarine Peninsula and Rye from 1848, delving into the agricultural lives of the family and those who knew them. George "Dod" Jennings and sons purchased 221 acres from James Little Brown in April 1914. The women folk and children arrived in March 1915 after the men folk had established themselves. The following article appeared in the Cinderella column of The Leader in 1916 and was written by Cec Jennings' 10 year old daughter Annie. It outlines the adventure of moving from Camperdown to Rye.

Dear Cinderella,

This is the second time I have written to you. I will take for my subject our trip to Rye. We left Camperdown on the 23rd March 1915. We went down to the station in Mrs. Bamford's buggy. Mrs. Bamford took the women first and then the children. Then we got our tickets at the ticket office. Then we said good-bye to Mrs. Bamford and we got into the train. A lot of people were waving to the people in the train. We stopped at all the wayside stations, but Colac was the first big station we stopped at. It was stony to Colac, and there were many trees. We got to Colac at 10 o'clock. We got out of the train at Geelong. We went and had a ride in the tram to West Geelong. Then we went and bought some fruit and some ice-cream at a fruiterer's shop. Then we went into the Coffee Palace and slept there. Next day we went to the station in the tram. We got to Queenscliff at 10 o'clock, and went to see grandma. Aunt and grandfather bought us some figs, and they made me ill. Then we went and caught the boat at 1 o'clock in the afternoon. Next we got to Sorrento and our Uncle came and met us, and drove us to Rye. When we got to Rye Dad was in the dray. We were all glad to see them again. Our house was a mile and a half from Rye. Well I suppose that I had better finish the letter now. I will close with best love to the little ones in the cot, not forgetting yourself.*

I am your new friend. Annie Jennings. Age, 10 years 11 months. (I am sorry the figs had such a bad effect on you Annie, but perhaps it was the ice-creams after all. Cinderella)

*Mrs Bamford possibly the mother-in-law of Bernard Jennings, George and Hannah's youngest son.

Linda Berndt

Jennings Family 100th Anniversary



Lorraine Byrne, Jack Silva and Brian Haddow cutting the Anniversary cake



Jennings family at the Rye P S hall.



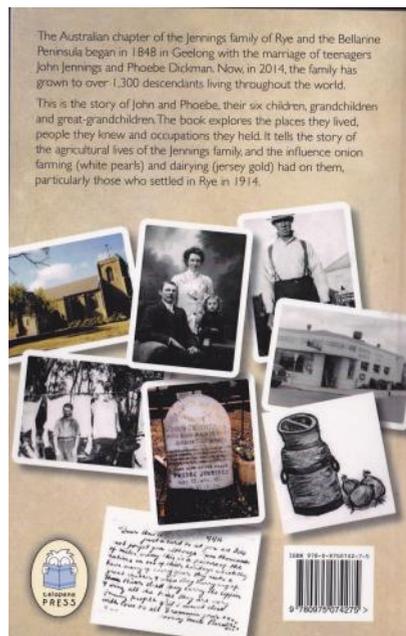
Jennings family cemetery tour

White Pearls and Jersey Gold tells the story of the Jennings Family of Rye and their roots on the Bellarine Peninsula. Beginning with the marriage at Geelong in November 1848 of teenagers John Jennings to Phoebe Dickman the book covers the stories of their six children, grand-children and great-grandchildren, the areas they lived and those they met, briefly touching on the historical events of the times.

The book also tells the story of the agricultural lives of the family and the influence white pearls (onions) and jersey gold (dairying) had on the extended family, particularly those who arrived in Rye in 1914. The little village of Rye is described extensively in the book thanks to the writings of Norman Hall and Vic Tyler.

The book took a total of eleven years to research and write taking Linda and her young family on several journeys throughout Victoria tracing the family tree. Many Historical Societys, cemeteries and family haunts were visited in the process. Extended family members were happy to share stories and family heirlooms to see the story told.

White Pearls and Jersey Gold may be purchased from the Society for \$30



As part of the Shire of Flinders Shire Steering Committee for the celebration of Victoria's 150th Anniversary, a Rye-Tootgarook Area Committee was formed. This committee (1984/5) decided that one of its projects should be the publication of a record of organisations, businesses and the people who settled and led to the development of Rye and Tootgarook. Nothing in any depth had been written of Rye, and it was important to get it down before any more time was lost. Most people were willing to talk of their families and businesses. The churches and organisations were included, giving a view of the whole community. The result was the publishing of '*Rye - A Book of Memories*' compiled and edited by **Nell Arnold**. Now, thirty years later, how important that was! Nell Arnold (now 103) put it all together – she was a pupil at the Rye School in 1923 when the new concrete building was erected – this is a testament to her dedication in arranging it.

We will from time to time include excerpts from it in our newsletters. In this newsletter there are two extracts from *Rye - A Book of Memories*, the **Rye Post Office** and the story of **Transport** in the early days.

Rye Post Office

OFFICIAL records show that the first Post Office was opened 18th January 1858 as Tootgarook Post Office using number 165. There is, however some possibility that the Post Office operated for a time from the school or teacher's residence of what was known as the Tootgarook Common School with the teacher Thomas W. Courtney acting as post master as well as school master. This cannot be verified.

The name was changed to Rye 1st September 1870. At this time a Mr Mitchell was in charge and that year was paid a salary of £15 p.a. and the next year it was increased to £20. In that year also the records show that 1639 letters and 1160 newspapers were handled in the office. In 1883 the estimated population was only 68. Thirty years ago the Rye Post Office was



Point Nepean Road 1934
Old Post Office corner

situated on the corner of Lyons St and the highway. It had been in that location for at least another 30 years before that. The building then was a small two roomed weatherboard with the entrance in Lyons St. The main office had a single wide counter and behind it lots of pigeon holes into which the mail was sorted. As roads

Continued ...

were at that time only sand tracks no mail was delivered. Locals called for their mail. Telegraph boys, on bicycles, travelled the rough tracks to deliver what, at the time, was the common and cheap way to get a message through quickly. Each telegram had to come by telephone to Sorrento as did trunk calls in the reverse way. Outside the office in Lyons St were three telephone boxes. To ring Melbourne one had to book the call in the Post Office from where it would be plugged into a line through Dromana.

In 1962 the office was moved from Lyons St to the corner of Hunt Av and the highway. During this time Rye was known as an unofficial office, a privately owned business, supervised by official inspectors. The era ended when, in 1970, Rye became an Official Post Office with yet another change of residence, to its present location almost opposite the Rye Pier. In due time it is proposed to build in front of the Telecom Exchange in Lyons St opposite the original site.

The first paid postmaster's name recorded is T. W. Courtney, others following include Fitzmaurice, Dalton, Mitchell and others with some large gaps in the records. In the early 1900s Harry Starling was in charge and handed over to Mrs Hill about 1907 or 08. Mrs Hill is still remembered by older residents. Others since then have included Mrs H Armstrong, W. A. Harris and Dorothy (Toodie) Earles (Hill) who was in the office until it became an Official Post Office. On 4 May 1988 the new Rye Post Office was officially opened by Australia Post Commissioner Mr Roger Beale. The Postal manager was Norman Watson

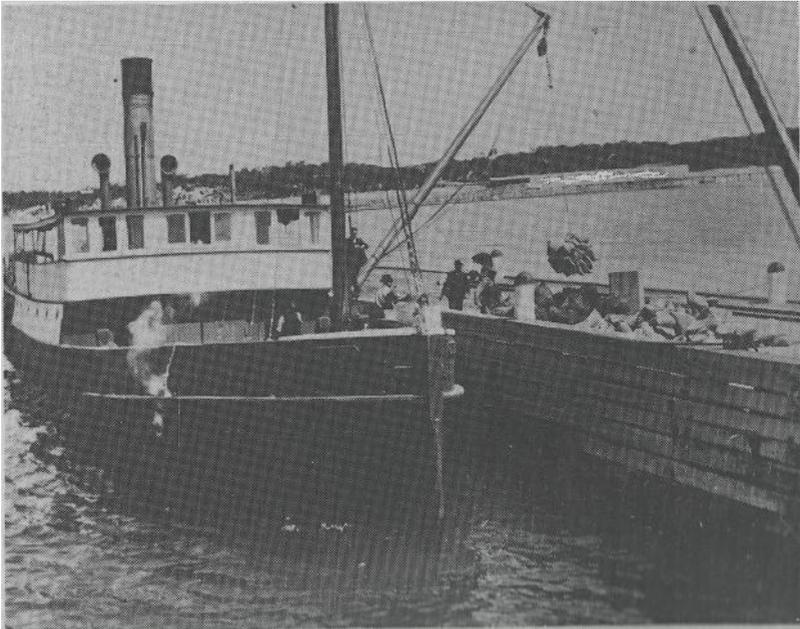
Hundreds of Rye residents lined the pier to view the Tall Ships Bicentennial spectacle during the sail past on their way to Melbourne on New Year's Eve 1987 – a reminder of the post's early shipping connections.



Rye Post Office 1950s,
corner of Lyons St and
Point Nepean Road

In the early days of Victorian settlement transport, in most areas, was very difficult and slow, with bullock wagons or horse drawn vehicles toiling along bush tracks providing the only means of transporting goods or passengers to their destinations. The Peninsula could, perhaps, have been thought fortunate in having an alternative –the sea. So, in those early years, travel from Melbourne to Rye was often by sea. There were the lime boats, then the ketches as an alternative to the slow journey by wagon around Anthony's Nose or on horseback over Arthur's Seat.

Then there came a period when there were other alternatives, by train to Mornington and coach from there, or by paddle steamer to Sorrento and a cab from there or, direct to the Rye Pier by the S. S. Reliance.



The Reliance which called at Rye

Perhaps the most colourful period was that of the paddle steamers Weeroona and Hygeia which brought thousands of holidaymakers to the bayside resorts each summer. These boats did not call at Rye but Rye people watched eagerly each year for the first sight of them, as it marked the beginning of summer, and it was a fine sight to see them speeding by leaving a long foaming wake.

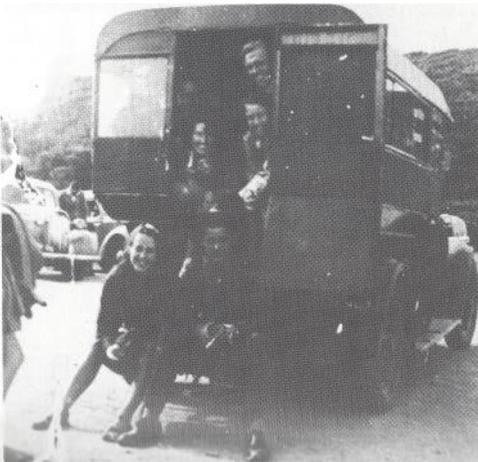
The advent of the motor car changed all that. Soon it was possible to travel all the way to Melbourne and back in one day by car. Stringers of Sorrento started up a service, picking up passengers all along the Peninsula, travelling to Melbourne and returning the same day. This was very popular and continued for many years.

The first Rye based service was run by Mr Tom Baker who, when he won a Morris Minor in a raffle in 1934, decided to start his own service in competition with lower fares. He was only licensed to carry three passengers, one in front with the driver and two in the back, but sometimes squeezed in extras if they were small enough. He picked people up at their homes and delivered them (within reason) to their destinations in the suburbs of Melbourne. His father then bought another car which carried four passengers and together they continued the service for about six years. However difficulties arose because their competitors increased and had larger cars enabling them to cut fares so when one car was lost by fire the project was abandoned.

Since that time private cars have taken over the roads. It became uneconomic to run the steamers on the bay, electric trains made Frankston a better place to transfer passengers than Mornington and so in 1985 public transport on the Peninsula is by bus to the Frankston Station and fast train from there to the city. However, there are signs that transport by sea may become an alternative very soon.

Many older Rye residents will remember the various means of local transport that existed at different times in the past. Perhaps the best remembered will be the little bus, operated in the 20s by Mr Tommy Short, which carried passengers from the boats at Sorrento, took movie enthusiasts

to the picture theatre on Saturday nights, cricket teams to away matches and was available for many other purposes, even though, sometimes, passengers were required to get out and push. Mr Short was a versatile character, known to everyone. He played the fiddle for dances and was also the local photographer.

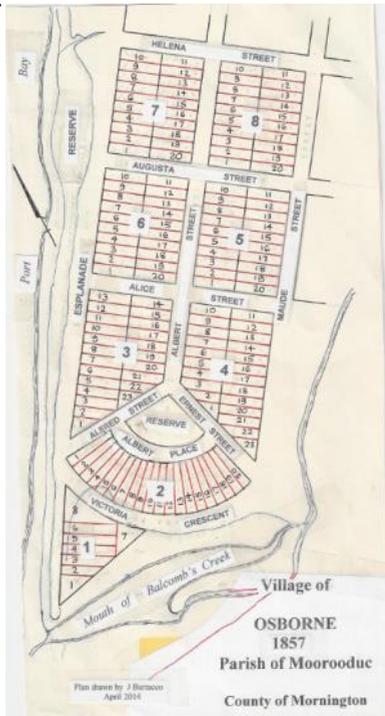


Tommy Short's bus

A look at Map 145 in the Melway Directory, to the east of Mount Martha, shows an area marked Osborne, Post Code 3934. A study of Lands Department records shows a plan named the Township of Osborne (previously called Green Island) as covering the area. Within the township is an area called the Village of Osborne. See map this page. The Village of Osborne was planned as a model seaside town by Government Surveyor Thomas Hanbury Permein (1819 – 1877) in 1854, and laid out in 1858. It was one of the first suburban size (small lots) subdivisions south of Mornington. The majority of the lots had an area of 1687 square metres, which was more or less twice the size of modern suburban lots.

The subdivision is unique in its use of curved boundaries for the lots bordering Albert Place and Victoria Crescent, and the three long (30.18 metre wide) boulevards, namely, The Esplanade, Albert and Maude streets. The use of curved boundaries was a feature of the design, a feature seldom evident in land subdivisions of that era. Permein named the town after Queen Victoria's summer residence, and the streets were named after her children. Some of the streets have since been renamed and some of the lots have been further subdivided.

Not much is recorded about the Lands Department surveyors who surveyed Victoria around the 1850s. Permein was one such surveyor. There is very little written about Permein's time in Victoria. The only records being a number of survey field books and accompanying maps in the Public Record Office of Victoria. Permein was of Irish decent and was born in India in 1819. He gained his surveying experience working for the East India Company and the Indian Government. He had health problems, having experienced jungle fever, and decided to move to Australia in 1850. He was a skilled surveyor, and as surveyors were badly needed in the young State, he was readily appointed as Assistant Surveyor in the Public Lands Office, Melbourne (later to become the Department of Crown Lands and Survey) where he carried out a number of surveys around the Mornington Peninsula and Gippsland areas. He prepared the first



subdivision plan of the Mornington Peninsula in 1854; the first land auction taking place in September 1854. As previously mentioned, he set out the Township of Osborne, the settlement at Snapper Point (Township of Mornington (1854)), and the Mornington Cemetery (formerly Mt Martha Cemetery and Moorooduc Cemetery). No records could be found that his activities extended as far as Sorrento. A street (named Permien?) in Dromana, is named after him. Records show that he and his family went to Queensland on the ship SS Havilah in October (1869?). More likely it was in 1859. He was employed as a surveyor with the Queensland Government Survey Office and was subsequently involved with the laying out and settlement of a considerable portion of Central Queensland. He was the officer who undertook the first survey of the lands on the Dawson and Mackenzie Rivers, then a very dangerous undertaking in consequence of the hostility of the blacks to white people.

At that period the duties of a surveyor were extremely arduous, for not only had he to contend with unhealthy conditions in some portions of the bush, where food was scarce and medical aid impossible to obtain, but he and his assistants, in isolated spots, became targets for marauding blacks. Permein also surveyed and laid out North Rockhampton, giving the name of Kalka to a portion of it. The meaning of the word in Indian being "village".

After a residence of ten years Permein joined the South Australian Government to work in the development of the Northern Territory. He moved to Palmerston (Darwin) in October 1873, where he was engaged in a mixture of land surveying, exploration, and trading with the Indian islands. Whether it was his eccentricity or the danger involved, few were willing to accompany Permein on an expedition to Port Essington. He eventually persuaded a reluctant Edward S Borradaile to join the team. They left Palmerston in June 1874, travelling via Pine Creek to Port Essington. The expedition ended in tragedy with Permein, Borradaile and the party being murdered by the blacks. The bodies were never found.

The contributions of Permein and Borradaile must have been highly regarded by Northern Territorians, for Mount Permein (Permain) and Mount Borradaile (north of Oenpelli on the Cobourge Peninsula) were named in their honour.

John Bertacco. Formerly Senior Lecturer RMIT

The Australasian. 27th January 1883

TO " HUMMING BEE."

Dear Madam, -In last week's Australasian there is an article, written, I presume, by you, respecting the different townships, &c., on the bay; and as the remarks you make respecting the above place are not very flattering-for it appears you are even not quite sure of its existence-I have taken the liberty of addressing these few lines to you with a view of making you slightly acquainted with the geography, &c., of the place. Rye, a very old township, is situated on Port Phillip Bay about six miles from Sorrento, and six miles from the Rosebud. It contains about 60 inhabitants, chiefly fishermen. There is one hotel (the Gracefield), one store, post-office, state school, and church, besides several private houses. The jetty extends a considerable distance, and is going to be extended further this year, so as to enable passenger steamers, lime and wood vessels to load, which at present they are unable to do on account of the shallowness of the water at the extreme end. The scenery about the neighbourhood is very pretty, and the back beach is easily reached on foot in about three-quarters of an hour. By referring to the Handbook of Victoria, published by Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, you will see a description of this place.

Apologising for troubling you, I am, H. J. HOKNEMAN.

(H J HORNEMAN was Head Master Rye School in the 1880s. Ed)

'Humming Bee' was the pseudonym used by a journalist with the Australasian from 1872-1875. It appears she made some disparaging remarks in an earlier column.

Mornington Standard 31//1/1891

RYE

At a meeting held at Sullivan's Gracefield Hotel on Wednesday last, it was decided to form a cricket club. The meeting was an enthusiastic one, and the following office bearers were appointed-President: Mr WV. Hodgson Vice Presidents: Messrs O. Cain and D. Swan, Secretary: Mr Tas. Cain,; Treasurer: Mr J. Sullivan; Committee: Messrs Jas. Cain, J Marshall, A Campbell, Cain, W. Rowley, John Sullivan and Alfred Maxwell. Match Committee: Messrs D. Swan, A. Cain, J. Marshall, A. Campbell, Tas. Cain and S Lloyd. It was also resolved that the club proceed to clear the cricket ground immediately.

Meetings and Guest Speakers.

Monday 28th July **General Meeting.** Guest speaker. **Peter Morgan,** Guiding at Cook's Cottage and the life and family of Captain Cook.

Monday 25th August **Annual General Meeting.** Followed by bring a treasure night and by wine and cheese supper.

Monday 22nd September **General Meeting.** Guest speaker Peter Munro – The story behind the Boer War Memorial at Sorrento Cemetery and Pte William Croome's journey from Sorrento to Mudgee.

Coming Events

Sunday 24th August. Trivia Afternoon at Rye RSL 1-30 to 4-30pm

Saturday 6th September. Market Day Rye foreshore 8am to 12md

Saturday 11th October Sausage Sizzle at Bunnings 8am to 4pm

Last Friday of the month. Rye RSL **Happy Hour. 5-6pm**

Home Page. <http://ryehistoricalsociety.weebly.com/index.html>

Several past issues of our newsletter may now be viewed in color on the Society's website. Google '**Rye Historical Society**'. Members may like to send our newsletter on to friends or review past editions. Go to our site and then click on '**Newsletters**' then click on the '**Download File**' icon. The latest newsletter will be uploaded within a couple of weeks of it being posted.

An aged Soviet citizen went into a government office to fill out relocation forms. He was given a questionnaire to fill in.

Where were you born?	Answer	Saint Petersburg
Where did you go to college?	Answer	Petrograd
Where do you live now?	Answer	Leningrad
Where do you want to live?	Answer	Saint Petersburg !!