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NEWSLETTER

No. 123 NOVEMBER, 2015

*A REMARKABLE AND DEDICATED TEACHER
FORCED TO RETIRE AT 76 YEARS OF AGE —*

MRS EVELINE TREVASKIS

'The Snowy River Mail', Wednesday, July 4, 1956:

Sixty-two Years of Service

— WAIREWA'S LOVED SCHOOL TEACHER RETIRES

LONG YEARS of service in the Education Dept. is the proud record of Mrs. E. Trevaskis, of Wairewa, who can look back with distinction and a pride of achievement in the dedication of her life to the welfare of the children in her charge during this long period of service.

At the end of June this year [1956] the Education Dept. will require teachers of 70 years of age and over to retire. Among those many worthy men and women who will then make their last entry in the time book is Mrs E. Trevaskis, of Wairewa.

Born at Elmhurst, in 1880, Mrs Trevaskis, then Eveline Holmes, matriculated at the age of 14. This qualified her for entry into the Education Dept., and a few years later she received her first appointment as temporary teacher at State School Krambruck North, near Apollo Bay. Following the example of teachers of those days, she studied by correspondence till she had gained the first-class certificate — the necessary qualification for permanent appointment.

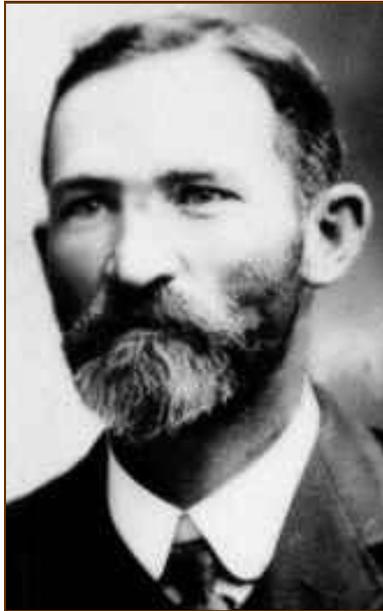
While at Krambruck North the young teacher met her husband, Mr Mark Trevaskis, who was then Methodist Home Missionary at Apollo Bay.



Mark TREVASKIS
b. 5-7-1876
Tongala
d. 1-10-1946
Bairnsdale

married
12-1-1911

**Eveline Bessie
Orlina HOLMES**
b. 5-9-1880
Elmherst
d. 2-10-1966
Bairnsdale



youngest child, Ritchie, with her to take the classes at Doctor's Flat where they rented a furnished house for 4/- per week.



Doctor's Flat School, No. 3771, near Ensay, where Mrs Trevaskis taught in 1927.

In 1911 they were married at Mt. Sabine, where they conducted a dairy farm for three years. Then they sold out and moved to Wairewa, where Mr Trevaskis had a selection on Bill's Creek.

In 1919 when a party of tourists, including Mr Frank Tate, then Director of Education, visited the district, Mrs Trevaskis interviewed Mr Tate and asked permission to teach at the local school. Despite the fact that it was not Departmental policy to employ married women the Director was so impressed by the request that permission was granted and for the following three years, Mrs Trevaskis drove her three little children, three miles daily to the old hall at Upper Hospital Creek.

At the end of that time a law, enabling junior teachers to apply for small schools was passed, and Mrs Trevaskis lost her position to a Miss Rendell. However, Mr Tate, one of the greatest educationalists Victoria has had, was mindful of the sterling services that had been rendered, and offered Mrs Trevaskis another appointment. When this could not be accepted on account of the remoteness of the new school, Mr Tate took the step, unique in the Department of giving Mrs Trevaskis a reference.

Some years of hard work on the farm followed, Mrs Trevaskis giving her all to the task of raising her family and helping wrest a living from the land.

The Education Department then began accepting married women as temporary teachers, and in 1926 Mrs Trevaskis applied for and received an appointment. Her family responded by attaching the following to a table cloth:

"We, the undersigned, give our permission to Mum to go teaching, providing she gets a school near home as soon as possible. Signed: Joy Trevaskis, Birdie Trevaskis, Archie Trevaskis."

To allow the plan to operate the three eldest children went to live in Bairnsdale, where they rented a house, batched, and attended High School. Mr Trevaskis sold the dairy herd and concentrated on clearing more land, and Mrs Trevaskis took her

From Doctor's Flat Mrs Trevaskis was transferred to Tostaree, by the Chief Inspector, Mr G. Osborne who appreciated her desire to be nearer home. As the school was six miles from Wairewa, Mrs Trevaskis made her home in a large tent in the school ground. From there she used to travel home on Wednesdays and at the week-end. A year later, Mrs Trevaskis was appointed to Moe West. Here she and Ritchie lived in a furnished house, at the rental of 2/- a week, two miles from the school.



The former Tostaree School, No. 3944, now located at Nowa Nowa, next to the Hall.

Her next move was to Nilma North, near Warragul, where home was a tent in a big iron shed, owned by Mr H. R. Jones. This appointment entailed a daily walk of one mile to school.

Then came the depression and with it the "cuts in expenditure", which resulted in the services of temporary teachers being dispensed with.

In 1942 the Department was again desperately short of teachers, and Mrs Trevaskis, although 62 years of age, volunteered to fill a gap. Her

appointment was to Buchan East 24 miles from her home. To reach there she had her son break a riding horse into the jinker, and every week for 3 years, she drove to and from the school at weekends. In order to be at home as long as possible she experimented with different times of departure, and on one occasion she left at dark, with a lantern tied to the shaft, "but the landscape looked so different in the darkness that I was sure I was travelling to Gelantipy until my pony ran me off the road into the gate at Slocombe's, where I then boarded."



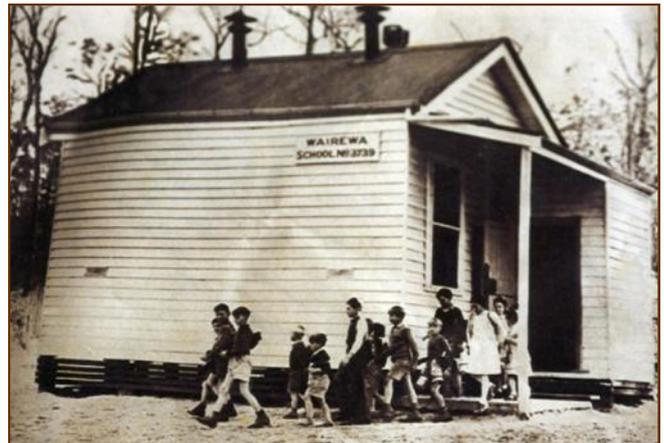
Driving away from school after a day of teaching. Mrs. Trevaskis on her way home from the Wairewa School with two of her grand-children, Ted and Gwen Trevaskis. She lived three-quarters of a mile from the school.



Buchan East School No. 3809. This building was replaced in about 1951 and the school closed in 1962. Mrs Trevaskis taught at Buchan East from 1942-1944.

Eventually Mrs Trevaskis decided that 4 a.m. was the best time for departure, as this allowed her to reach the school at 8.30 a.m. Mrs Trevaskis says of those days: "I enjoyed those early morning drives immensely though I did break a shaft one morning in the scrub and had to return to have it fixed. This meant I did not get to school till about 10 a.m. Every misfortune that could happen to one driving a horse and jinker has happened to me, but I was never injured. I am using my third jinker. The first one caught alight from a spark from a small bush fire, whilst I was in school. Once I was hit by a truck, the bumper bar of which caught under a hub of the jinker and lifted the vehicle sideways. At the same time the horse slipped sideways so we were not hurt in any way."

As Mrs Trevaskis' health began to fail, Mr F. Whelpton, the then District Inspector, arranged for Mrs Trevaskis to transfer to State School Wairewa where she taught from 2-2-1945 until her retirement on 29-6-1956. She retired from the Education Department temporary staff, aged 76, when the Department required all teachers of 70 years and over to retire. In all, her teaching service extended over a period of 23 years.



Wairewa State School, No. 3739, built in 1923. The school closed at the end of 1973. Mrs Trevaskis was the teacher at Wairewa 1919-22 and 1945-1956.

Of her long experience, Mrs Trevaskis says: "I have always been loathe to leave a school, because I thought I knew the children's abilities, and could help them, but I have always found that my successor could teach them as well or better. I shall miss the children because of their quaint sayings and the freshness of their remarks. I don't think that country children of today differ from country children of 50 years ago."

When Mrs Trevaskis signs off for the last time, the Victorian Education Department will lose one of the many teachers who, with "Service" as their motto, have dedicated their lives to the welfare of the children in their charge. To such as these one can in all sincerity say the simple, but grand and impressive "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

'Snowy River Mail'
Wednesday, January 24, 1945.

WAIREWA

(From Our Own Correspondent)

Miss Askew has been transferred from this school [Wairewa] to Yarragon South and Mrs. Mark Trevaskis from Buchan East to Wairewa. Miss Edna Slocombe has been appointed head teacher to Buchan East.

Mrs. Higgins, who is making her home at present with her father, Mark Trevaskis, is at present with Geoffrey and Yvonne enjoying a holiday at Lakes Entrance.

'Snowy River Mail'
Wednesday, October 12, 1966.

PUBLIC NOTICES Death

TREVASKIS: At Bairnsdale on October 2, Eveline Bessie, late of Wairewa, loved wife of Mark (dec.) loved mother of Joy (Mrs. T. Higgins, Nowa Nowa), Birdie (Mrs. H. McDonald, Forge Creek), Archie and Richie (Wairewa). In God's care.

TREVASKIS: On Oct. 2, Eveline Bessie, dearly loved Granny of Geoff, Yvonne, Bethne, Elsa, Jean, Ian, Margaret, Dorothy, Les, Ted and Gwen. Loving memories of Granny.

GRANNIE'S SCHOOL IN THE BUSH

Children in Gippsland logging country have a 75-year-old schoolmistress

SEVENTEEN pupils at the little white bush school at Wairewa, 216 miles from Melbourne, have a 75-year-old grandmother as their teacher. She is Mrs. Eveline (*Bessie*) Trevaskis, who settled with her husband at Wairewa, a tiny dairying and logging hamlet in eastern Gippsland, 41 years ago.

Mrs. Trevaskis taught school from her early 20's in different parts of Victoria. She gave it up to get married, has four children and 11 grand-children. Four of her grand-children are at Wairewa school. In school hours they call her *teacher*, outside, *Grannie*.

Mrs. Trevaskis went back to teaching during the wartime teacher shortage. She relieved at Buchan East State School for two years, getting up at 3.45 am to drive the 24 miles in pony and jinker. She transferred to Wairewa school 11 years ago, intends to keep teaching as long as she is able. Former pupils help with sports but she takes grades 1 to 8 in all subjects.

HOMELY atmosphere is preserved in the tiny one-teacher school as Mrs. Trevaskis gathers a little group of her pupils around for person-to-person instruction in sums and spelling.

PIX—Page 11—December 19, 1955

'Snowy River Mail'
Wednesday, December 7, 1949.

THANKS TO DONORS

The Wairewa School Committee wish to thank the people who generously gave donations towards the purchase of a Radio Set for their school.

Donors were — Mrs. Trevaskis Snr. £1, Archie Trevaskis £1, Richard Trevaskis £1, A. R. Hardwidge £1, Eric Answer £1, James Henderson £1, Mrs. Stinten £1, T. Appleby Jnr. £1, A Cella £1, M. Camalleri £1, James Stoit 10/-, Gwen Coutts (Nowa Nowa) 5/-, Robert Hodder (Nowa Nowa) 5/-.



ABOVE: Mrs. Trevaskis surrounded by her four grand-children. They are (left to right) Gwen, Ian, Margaret and Ted Trevaskis. Margaret and Ian are brother and sister, so are Gwen and Ted.



'Snowy River Mail'
Wednesday, July 4, 1956.

WAIREWA

(From Our Own Correspondent)

SCHOOL TEACHER OF 76 RETIRES—

On Friday afternoon last, Mrs Trevaskis was presented with a rocking chair by the people of Wairewa on the occasion of her retirement from the Education Department temporary staff.

During the afternoon reference was made to her personality and initiative and to the splendid work done, especially with the tiny tots. Many small ones will later recall happy years at school with Wairewa's "Granny".

It was made clear that the rocking chair was only for moments of relaxation.

On Monday, the children will have Mr McMahon, of Orbost and latterly Geelong, as teacher. He is assured of a hearty welcome and later on his wife and small family also.

Well-earned Holiday—

Mrs Trevaskis, lately retired teacher at Wairewa, left last Monday for a well-earned holiday at Apollo Bay.

Mr Casey McMahon, mentioned in the above newspaper report, completed his teacher training at Geelong. A lecturer at the Teachers' College, a former local District Inspector, alerted him to the pending vacancy at Wairewa. Casey took up the position at Wairewa in July 1956 and remained until the end of Term 1, 1960, when he was appointed to the Sarsfield State School. This was followed by teaching appointments at Dunrobin and Hoptoun in the west of the State before returning to Gippsland and completing his teaching career at Maffra Primary School.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Sincere thanks to Stephen and Ted Trevaskis, Coreena Healey, Gwen Baulch and Casey McMahon for their assistance with information and photographs for this Newsletter.