

# ORBOST HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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## NEWSLETTER

'Snowy River Mail', Wednesday, June 26, 1957:

### From Orbost to Eden 51 [100] years ago

On Monday, January 7th, 1906, Messrs James and Bird, of Orbost, were about to send a cargo of maize to Eden, N.S.W., in their trim little boat, the "Stormbird", when some of the Orbost citizens thought it a good opportunity to make the trip and try their luck on the Twofold Bay fish with the result shown in the following narrative.

Incidentally the maize was sold to Mr Diversi, of Eden, and payment made by cheque. Mr Bird went into the matter of exchange with the local banker, not too successfully, and finally decided to take gold (oh! for the good old days) much to the chagrin of the bank official, who pointed out that the boat might sink, and he would lose the lot.

J.W.B. reckoned if it did he would not be quite so worried as the banker. Anyhow a pleasant trip was made and J.W.B. shot the shark that followed Jack Burton's fish on his line to the surface.



S.S. Stormbird at Marlo Jetty 1911

The story of the trip was related in an article which appeared in the "S.R. Mail", in January,

1906, contributed by a member of the party, Mr J. F. Meagher, now living at Canterbury:

On Monday, 7th inst the SS 'Stormbird' crossed the bar on the Snowy River on what proved to be one of the most successful excursions that have been made from Orbost, and was organised by the Orbost Anglers' Association.



Rocks at Cape Conran

The steamer in charge, of Captain Mill, one of the oldest and most skilled masters along the coast, made splendid headway in spite of an exceptionally rough sea, and by daybreak had reached the much dreaded Beware Reef.

From this point onward the scenery was delightful. The fleece-topped breakers dashing with mighty strength against the rocky cliffs sending up an unceasing spray; the bush background rising from plain to mountaintop, forming a magnificent combination of land and seascape.

On a chain of rocks standing out from Cape Everard numerous seals make their home, and

were little disturbed at the approach of the steamer, which passed within 150 yards of them.

On arriving at Mallacoota a party of visitors from Melbourne who had been staying at Marlo, disembarked for a few days shooting and fishing at the inlet and on leaving expressed great pleasure at having made the trip and made the acquaintance of the trippers.



*S.S. Stormbird on the Bar at Mallacoota*

On leaving Mallacoota the next port of importance is Tallaburga Island, where in 1853 the Monumental City, the first steamer to leave Melbourne with gold for England, was wrecked, and 150 lives lost; the gold, worth £25,000 has never been recovered.

Heading from Tallaburga we passed Gabo, and on nearing that point one of the first objects to meet the eye is a huge monument, erected on the side of the island by the Governments of N.S.W. and Victoria to the memory of those who perished in the Monumental City.

Passing Gabo and Cape Howe, Green Cape is reached and from here to Twofold Bay the scene becomes more beautiful than ever. The sea is enclosed by cliffs 50 to 60 feet high, and observing these from the steamer one can hardly realise they are rock.

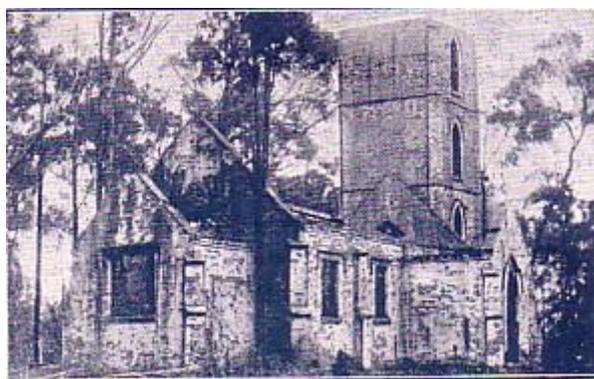


*VIC-NSW Border Cairn, Cape Howe*

From water's edge skyward are displayed all the colours of the rainbow, beautifully blended with the rock, which is of the most irregular formation, which adds greatly to the beauty of colouring and the general aspect of the scene. This

picture continues along the coast and enters with us into one of the finest harbours and prettiest of bays – Twofold Bay, crossing which, we arrived at Eden at 8 p.m. and at 8.15 the entire party was safely housed in the Great Southern Hotel, the genial proprietor of which is Mr Haugh.

Next morning at 10 o'clock the party started out in an oil launch, whose owner is Mr Davidson, a resident, for a day's fishing which proved to be the most enjoyable and satisfying. Drawing out a mile or two from shore, lines were cast from all quarters, and all hands were kept busy landing fish until 12.30, with the result that two fish boxes were filled, with twenty different kinds of fish, after which the company sailed for Boydtown, named after its founder, Benjamin Boyd, who arrived there more than 60 years ago and built the settlement which now lies in ruins.



*Church Ruins, Boyd Town*

Arriving there, lunch was partaken of in the deserted gardens surrounding Boyd's House, the walls and roof of which are today as solid as when erected.

After inspecting the settlement the details of which were interestingly explained by Mr Davidson, visit of inspection was made to the whaling station, of which he is owner. This was most interesting and instructive, with the methods of whaling being fully explained by the station owner.

The next visit was no less interesting and satisfying than those already mentioned. It was to the mouth of Kiah River, where, thanks again to Mr Davidson, the trippers were given access to the oyster beds which were attentively inspected by the party, which required no instruction in the methods of oyster fishing, which certainly proved most satisfying.

Arriving back at the Great Southern there was a unanimous expression of the greatest satisfaction at having spent a completely instructive and pleasant day.

After a sumptuous repast in fact a banquet, provided by our genial host Mr Haugh all went in excellent humor and after the usual after dinner

smoke an impromptu concert was organised which was greatly appreciated especially by the residents of Eden, many of whom were present.



Light Tower, Twofold Bay, Eden

Most of the following day was again spent in Mr Davidson's launch, fishing, bathing and exploring remaining spots of interest around Boydtown. In the evening another impromptu concert was arranged and residents were very appreciative of the efforts of the visitors.

When leaving for home, a large crowd of residents assembled on the pier, and as the Stormbird steamed away gave three hearty cheers for Victoria and the Orbost visitors.



Eden Steamer Wharf on Twofold Bay

On arriving at Mallacoota, again on the return journey an exceptionally, heavy sea was encountered and Captain Mill decided to put back to Gabo Island and take shelter in the bay until the following day. This decision was greeted with pleasure by the excursionists who were anxious to explore the island and the lighthouse which is the second highest in the world (175 feet) and by kind permission of the master, Capt. McDonald, were shown over the station and the lighthouse.

This exploit was also extremely popular and much appreciated. After tea that evening, fish-



Gabo Island Lighthouse

ing operations were again commenced and a good haul taken, including an 8ft. 3in. shark, which followed the bait on one of the lines to the surface and received a well directed charge from a breach leader, and with assistance of a boat hook stuck in its mouth and the strong arms of a sailor, was hauled aboard and measured. That evening, the excursionists at the invitation of Capt. McDonald, spent a pleasant time at his quarters where they were cordially entertained by the captain and Mrs McDonald and their daughter.

Returning to the steamer, about a mile across the island from the quarters, great care had to be exercised to avoid walking on the penguins, which abound there in thousands.

Next morning, Friday, 11th, the Stormbird steamed away from Gabo with a party unspeakably pleased with the excursion and only regretting it could not be prolonged.

The Orbost members of the party were: Messrs H. Young, J. Bruton, J. Drew, J. F. Meagher, A. Clemens, J. Bird, Max Stewart, C. Dreverman, A. Saunders, N. Gunn, J. Nixon, H. Richardson, W. Gluth, F. Nixon, and H. Cameron who were all landed at Marlo safe, sound and happy at 4 p.m. on Friday, and in whose minds will ever remain the happy thoughts of their first visit from Orbost to Eden.

The men who joined us at Marlo were Mr H. E. Starke, barrister, later Sir H. E. Stark, Judge of the High Court; Mr Charles Gavan-Duffy, now Mr Justice Duffy of the Victorian Supreme Court; Messrs Agg, McComes and Crespin, barristers and solicitors.