

# ORBOST & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

P.O. BOX 284 ORBOST VIC 3888



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## NEWSLETTER

AUGUST, 2007

### NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF ORBOST PART 2

Compiled by Margaret Carlyon, Traralgon - 29/4/1963

These notes, on the History of Orbost, have been divided into a series of articles which will be used over several Newsletters. This is the second of a five part series.

#### MAIL SERVICE

As the settlement grew, a weekly mail service from Cunninghame (Lakes Entrance) was established. The settlers had to carry the mail for three months and each took a turn as mailman during that time. The first coach was driven by Mr Alex Hall. Eventually a daily mail service was set up and many drivers included B. Sutherland, W. Middleton, Jonson Bros., J. Mitchell, F. Newport, J. Geddes, A. Coulson, Bert Cessor, H. Weekes and A. Barthile.



A. Coulson's Coach crossing the Sand Bar at Lake Tyers

#### FIRST ESTABLISHMENTS

The first building erected in the town was a store built by Mr F. Luckins for J. F. Blacklock and his brother, Sam. The first hotel was the "Club" opened by J. P. Maguire in 1884. John Bruce selected in 1878 and commenced the first butchery business, later he farmed hops and maize. Mr J. F. Blacklock opened the first store and Mr J. W. Borland had the first blacksmith's shop. Donald Munro kept the first Post Office and later set up a

shoemaking business with his brother. John Rowe, the first teacher, opened the State School in 1885, with nine pupils in attendance.



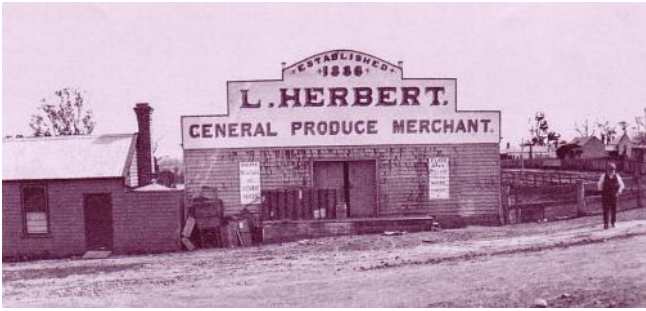
Mr John Rowe, first teacher, Orbost State School

In the late 1880s Nicholson Street held Temple's Store, Hillyard's Bakery, Forsyth's Store, Wehner the Blacksmith, and L. Herbert's Snowy River Stores.



Temple's Store, Nicholson Street

Yorkshireman Lancelot Herbert had arrived in 1886 with his wife and set up partnership with M. R. Coote as grocers, drapers and general merchants. On the death of Mr. Coote, five years later, Mr. Herbert carried on the business.



Mr John Watt set up farming in 1879, he was a native of Port Fairy. He was educated in Scotland and came back to Victoria and selected 320 acres on the Snowy.

Also amongst the early landowners was John Cameron, from Perthshire, Scotland. In 1888 he was averaging 80 to 116 bushels of maize per acre. A large barn, which Mr James Cameron had at 'Lochiel' was the general meeting place for the people and served in many ways. In it, Mr A. B. Munro, conducted the first Post Office east of the Snowy River. It was used in turn for Church Services, Dances, Polling Booth, Concerts and a Hall for Meetings. Munro Bros. also had their first shoemakers shop there. The seats were generally bags of maize.



Lochiel Barn and House

The first white child born at Orbost was Archie, son of Mr and Mrs James Dixon, on August 20th, 1855, and soon afterwards, Mr and Mrs J. Lavell had a daughter called Lavinia. Mr John Loorham, was another amongst those first born at Orbost. The parents of these early children were employed on the Orbost Station, whilst of the settlers, Mrs J. Gilbert (formerly Annie Cameron) was the first infant born.

James Dixon was a native of England, he selected at Toongabbie in 1879 and moved to land on the Snowy River in 1885 and established a sawmill there.

Mr Richardson also had a sawmill at Tabbara on the Brodrigg, a few miles from Orbost. Tabbara played a big part in the lives of the Orbost people when the shipping came into the area. Several

boats were built at the shipyards at Tabbara.



Richardson's Sawmill at Tabbara

Pumpkins grew profusely on the rich river flats of Orbost, yields being 30 to 50 tons per acre, with an average weight per pumpkin of about 68 lbs., although John Johnston grew one 212 lbs.



Paddock of Pumpkins on the Snowy River Flats

One of the early settlers on what is now known as the Bonang Highway was a Dane, Peter Jensen, who with fellow countryman, Henry Gangelhoff, travelled to the Martins Creek area, about 34 miles from Orbost, they had been told the area would eventually be the centre of a very busy road between Orbost and New South Wales. When Mr Jensen first came, they travelled over the mountain to get to Orbost, by packhorse, later a track was opened along the present road to Sardine Creek, 22 miles from Orbost, but they still had to cross Martins Creek, 13 times.

After the track was formed, Jensen chose this spot to build an accommodation house, known as the Danebo Hotel, which soon became well-known to travellers on the road from Orbost, including goldminers at the B. A. Creek and Mt. Ellery areas.



Mr Peter Jensen's Danebo Hotel at Martin's Creek

As many as nine horse teams would camp there for the night as well as bullock teams.

Mining went on in the Club Terrace area, and other areas within a 30 mile radius of Orbost.

### SHIRE OF ORBOST

During the early years Orbost formed part of the Tambo Shire, but on May 30th, 1892, it was severed and created Croajingolong Shire, and on February 17th, 1893, the name was changed to Orbost Shire. For some years Lakes Entrance was part of the Orbost Shire, but was later attached to the Tambo Shire.



Orbost Shire Council Chambers

### AS A TOWNSHIP

Originally Orbost was proclaimed a Township on 17th April, 1885, but the first land sale of building sites took place on the 4th March, 1881, the second on the 4th July, 1882, the third on 8th April, 1885, and the fourth on the 16th June, 1885.

Some further business people were:

Agents - Ernest Watt and H. James.

Butcher - G. P. Morgan.

Music - I. Perry and Miss Story.

Printers - Reece and Ross.

Jeweller - James Hocking.

Plumber - Colin Forsythe.

Saddlers - Dan Ward and Geo. Ross.

Highly respected Doctor (Mr J. Kerr) came in 1889.

### FOUNDATION BUSINESSES.

The very first to establish each class of business in the town were:

Post Office and Master, Newmerella, Alan Burn, 1880.

Minister, Church of England, Robert Martin, 1883.

School, Newmerella, Wm. Ballantyne, 1884.

Carrier - Bullock team, G. P. Morgan, 1884.

Justice of Peace - C. N. Henderson, 1884.

Sunday School - C. H. Grove, 1884.

Storekeeper - Blacklock Bros., 1884.

Hotel - Club, T. Maguire, 1884.

Punt - Puntman Abe Ward, 1884.

Butcher - Fred Mundy Snr., 1885.

Police - Mounted Constable Alf Clarke, 1885.

Mechanics' Institute - President C. H. Grove, 1885.

Police Court - Alf Clarke, 1885.

Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages - Mr. J. J. Thompson, 1885.

Baker (with Camp Oven) - Mr. Lamond, 1886.

Bank - Colonial of Australia, J. McLeod, 1886.

Blacksmith - J. Russell, 1886.

Saddle and Harness maker - Dan Ward, 1886.

Confectioner - Mrs. W. W. Waller, 1886.

Coffee Palace - Mrs. Henderson, 1886.

Fruiterer - E. J. Pardew, 1886.

Express Wagon - Orbost to the Lakes - E. J. Pardew, 1887.

Doctor - James Kerr, M.B., 1889.

Undertaker - John Talbot, 1889.

Bacon Factory - W. Borland, 1889.

Jeweller - J. Hocking, 1889.

Bandmaster - G. L. Austin, 1890.

Paper (Snowy River Mail) - Reece and Ross, 1890.

Lamplighter (kerosene) - R. P. Williams, 1891.

Butter Factory - Manager, J. Scouller, 1892.

Butter Factory - Chairman Directors, J. Nixon, 1892.

Chemist - H. C. Cottman, 1897.

Auctioneer and Commission Agent - E. Watt, 1898.

Rifle Club - Captain, H. Behan, 1899.

Solicitor - R. J. Mosley, 1898.



Orbost Club Hotel 1889 - T J P Maguire, Proprietor



Mr Edward Pardew - Early teamster, fruiterer and councillor

### Correction to July Newsletter:

Photograph labelled Sir William Clarke is in fact William John Turner Clarke. Thanks to Rae Wilkinson for pointing out this inaccuracy.