

ORBOST & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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NEWSLETTER

APRIL, 2009

ORBOST AGRICULTURAL SHOWS - PART 2

Further information on Orbost Agricultural Shows which, due to a lack of time and space, was not included in the March Newsletter.

This information, consisting of extracts from the 'Snowy River Mail', relates to the various locations where the show has been held as well as other events which have had an influence on the conduct of the shows over the years.

The first show was held in March 1892 on part of the Orbost Homestead property just to the west and north of the present Murray Goulburn Trading Pty Ltd Store in 'B' Road. This land later belonged to Messrs J. Bird and J. Eppelstun, and more recently by Mr C. F. Marshall and Mrs E Eppelstun.

Subsequent shows were held here and on the Recreation Reserve up to 1903.

'Snowy River Mail', Saturday, March 7, 1903:

NEXT week will no doubt be a busy one for the people of Orbost. There will be the races on Tuesday and a number of important sales on Wednesday, while last, but by no means least, the local Agricultural Society, besides having a bazaar during the week, will on Thursday hold its annual show. . . .

Hitherto the local agricultural society has held its exhibitions on grounds, which, fitted up with temporary buildings from time to time, have answered the purpose very well. This procedure, however, entail every year an expense that it is very desirable to avoid; hence, the general opinion that the society should bring the new show ground up to date by furnishing it with equipments of a permanent character. By doing this the expenses incurred in the erection and repair of temporary buildings will be done away with, though, on the other hand, a large outlay will be necessary for the carrying out of permanent improvements, and it is with a view to providing the funds for this initial outlay that the

committee have decided to hold a bazaar. The bazaar will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings of next week. A very large assortment of useful and ornamental articles will be offered for sale, and there will be side shows of all descriptions, the bazaar committee having done their utmost to cater for the wants and the amusement of all who are expected to put in an appearance.

'Snowy River Mail', Saturday, March 14, 1903:

THE ORBOST SHOW

Orbost had established a good reputation for its agricultural shows, but it must be admitted that the show on Thursday was not up to the ordinary standard. On the whole the exhibits were not nearly as numerous as they were at the previous show, though in quality they were in many cases quite as good. The attendance was rather smaller than usual, though it seemed to comprise a very large number of visitors, who came from Cuninghame, Bruthen, Bairnsdale, Sale, Bendoc, Bonang, Delegate, and from centres even more remote. In the matter of weather the committee were not very fortunate. Light rain fell in the morning, and there was also a little in the afternoon. The day was certainly cool, but the wind blew rather strong at times, and taking the weather conditions altogether they were not favourable to a successful show.

Several side shows were in evidence on the ground, and they attracted a good deal of attention. Trade seemed to be fairly brisk at the publican's booth, but

not so brisk at the refreshment booth. For the judges and stewards an excellent luncheon was provided at the Commonwealth Hotel.

In the exhibition shed there is generally a very large and brilliant display, but there was not that on Thursday. The exhibits were few compared with those of former years, which is to be accounted for partly by the fact that the attention of some of the ladies, who usually come well to the front with exhibits that are displayed in the shed, had been taken up largely with the bazaar. However, if the exhibits were poor in point of number, they were on the whole exceptionally good as far as quality was concerned.

On 3rd March, 1904, the Society conducted its show on land which had been given to the society by Sir William Clarke. This land was located on the south side of Jarrahmond Road to the north of Pardews Lane. It was later owned by Messrs A. E. and J. T. Pardew.

'Snowy River Mail', Saturday, March 5, 1904:

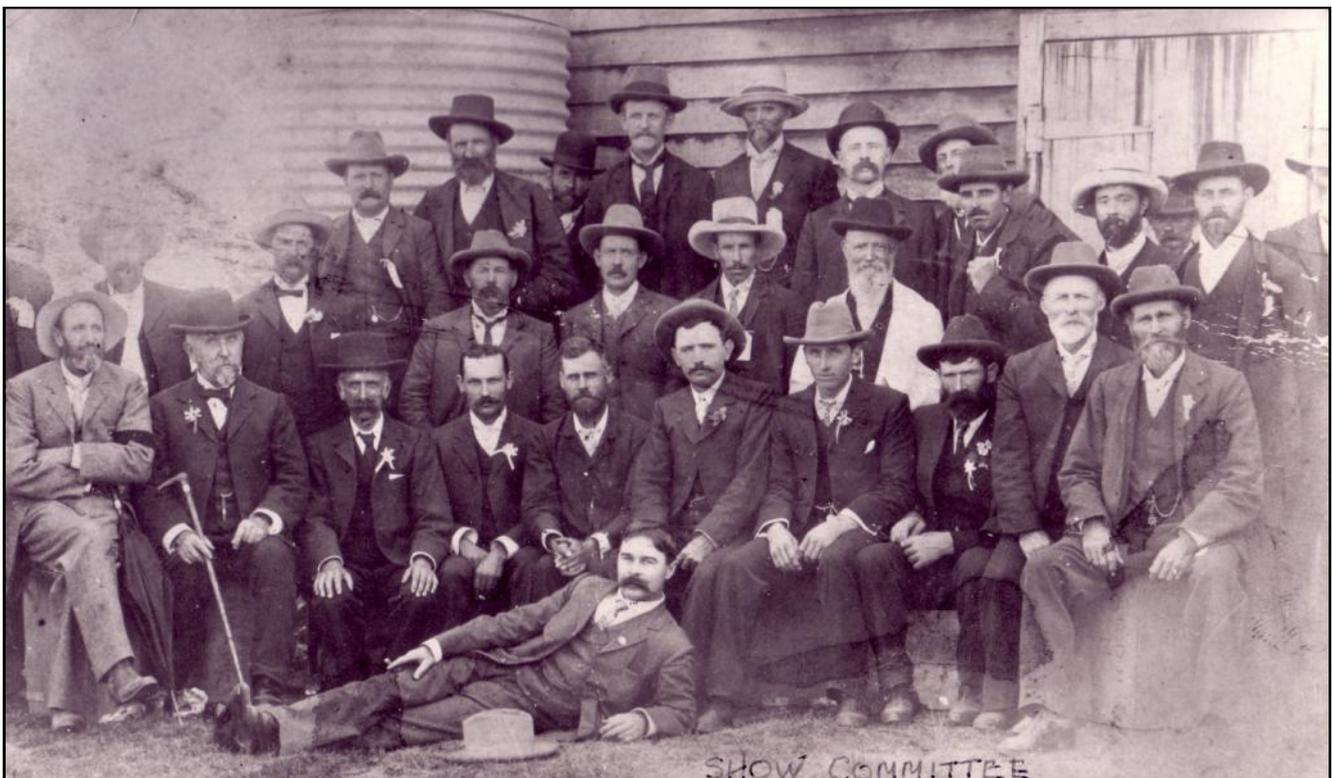
THE ORBOST SHOW

The reputation that Orbost had established for its agricultural shows was fully maintained on Thursday, when the twelfth annual exhibition was held. Indeed the show appeared to be generally regarded as the record one from almost every point of view.

Speaking generally, circumstances were very favourable for a successful show. The season has been no better than usual, but there had been a

general determination for some months to make the best of everything and achieve a brilliant success. The committee worked hard, and to their energy in filling up the new show ground, which occupies a good position and commands a very nice view, and in erecting thereon a commodious building admirably adapted for the display of exhibits, should be attributed a good deal of the enthusiasm with which many of the exhibitors were inspired. In the matter of the weather, the committee were very fortunate. The sun shone brilliantly, but a nice breeze was blowing, and the weather was all that could be desired. In the circumstances it is not surprising that local residents mustered in strong force and that over £27 was taken at the gate. As for visitors a much larger contingent than usual came from Bairnsdale, while there appeared to be about the usual number from Cuninghame, Bruthen, Bendoc, Bonang, Delegate, and more remote centres. Mr Murray, Minister for Lands, Mr Jas. Cameron, M.L.A., and Messrs Pearson and Vary, M's.L.C., were on the ground, but the Inspector-General of Public Works, Mr Davidson, and the Minister for Health and Public Works, Mr E. H. Cameron, were prevented from coming any further than Cuninghame.

There were several side shows on the ground, and these attracted a good deal of attention and enabled many to spend a more enjoyable time than they would otherwise have spent. The luncheon booth and the publican's booth catered amply for the requirements of both sexes, and appeared to do a very good trade. The only thing that appeared to be wanting to ensure complete enjoyment by all was a brass band, which can under ordinary circumstances enliven materially the proceedings at an out-door demonstration.



Orbost Show Committee - Year not known

Includes: Phil Nixon, John Johnston, Percy Morris, Harry Richardson, Arthur Saunders, Archie Rodwell, George Nixon, J. Warren, John Draffin, W. Fisher, D. R. Morris, Paul Hocking, James Hossack, James and John Cameron.

In the exhibition shed the exhibits were a considerable advance upon those of former years both in point of quality and quantity, and were arranged in a much more attractive way. In preserves, the display was magnificent, the exhibits being very numerous and of exceptional quality. The ladies who came prominently to the front here were Mrs J. Stirling, Mrs J. Fisher, Mrs Rowe, Mrs G. Ross and Miss Munro. In the class for provisions there were not very many exhibits; the most attractive of these was a beautiful assortment of cakes shown by Mrs G. Ross.



*J. W. Lynn riding over the jumps.
In background: First motor car in Orbost - 1912.*

The Snowy River Mail

FRIDAY, JANUARY 25, 1918.

THE ORBOST SHOW.

THE ORBOST SHOW will not be held until 7th March, but there are good reasons for calling public attention to it in this issue. The show is made up mainly of exhibits, and it is not too soon for farmers and others interested in the welfare of the district to give the matter of providing exhibits due consideration. Orbost agricultural shows have usually been well supported, well attended, and worthily representative of the district, and it is highly desirable that the efforts to ensure success on the occasion of the next show should be greater than ever. The net proceeds of the show of 1916 were devoted to patriotic purposes, and a large donation was made by the society last year towards patriotic funds. Moreover the society has suffered indirectly on account of the war, having been deprived of a considerable amount of support it would otherwise have received. It is also well to remember that the society has incurred a good deal of expense of late in the purchase of land required at the show ground and in the establishment there of urgently required improvements. This expenditure has been absolutely necessary in order to bring the show ground up to date and enable it to fulfil adequately the purposes for which it was intended. It is therefore evident that during the last few years the society has had to make the best of an unfortunate combination of circumstances, and that in any case it would be

entitled to increased support in view of the expense involved in enlarging and improving the show ground. Needless to say the committee is striving hard to ensure the success of the coming show and is anxious to receive the whole-hearted support of the public. What is most important at this juncture is that all should realise the importance of exhibiting. Every class should attract some competition, but on the last few occasions the display in the exhibition shed was not up to previous standards owing to the heavy demands made upon the time of the ladies by the Red Cross work. While it is not suggested nor expected that the Red Cross appeals should be disregarded it is hoped that the ladies will recognise that the society is in need of their support and that the show will be far from successful if it lacks the beautiful exhibits that they alone are able to provide. As for the farming community, they will have an important duty to perform, and it is hoped they will realise that the society is more than ever in need of their encouragement and support. The tide of events has of late been rather against the local Agricultural Society and has reduced the enthusiasm at one time taken in its affairs, but it is hoped that a big revival of interest will take place and that the approaching show will be seized upon as an appropriate occasion on which to give expression to it.

The Sir William Clarke donated land off Jarrahmond Road was considered to be unsuitable without a great deal of expense so the Society decided to sell it and in conjunction with the Golf and Racing Clubs purchase 100 acres from Mr Isaac Perry and transfer to the site of the present Golf links.

'Snowy River Mail', February 2, 1927:

THE SHOW GROUND

PROPOSED NEW SITE.

The matter of purchasing land from Mr. Isaac Perry for a new show ground that would also serve the purposes of a golf ground and race course, was considered at a meeting of the committee of the Agricultural Society on Tuesday evening. The president, Mr. Alex Rodwell, occupied the chair.

A meeting of delegates representing the Agricultural Society, the Race Club, and the Golf Club advised the purchase of the land on the following basis:—

- (1) That the Agricultural Society contribute two fifths of the cost of purchase, the Race Club two fifths and the Golf Club one fifth.
- (2) That each body be responsible for raising its quota of the cost of purchase in any manner it may think fit.
- (3) That the Race Club and the Golf Club pay the Agricultural Society a reasonable rental for any of its buildings they may use.
- (4) That any rents received for the use of the ground only be divided between the contributing bodies in the proportion of their contributions.

President's Report.

The president reported: Our reasons for changing

our ground are:—

(1) There is not enough accommodation since so many cars have come into the district.

(2) The ring is no good, as it is dangerous in the jumping and trotting events.

We have had the present ground surveyed, and levels taken. The cost of putting the present ring in order would be about £300. To do this a cutting would have to be put in about 3 feet in the high portion, and the earth would form an embankment on the low portion. Down under the hill is the only available space for cars, and that would obstruct the view altogether. The cattle pens would all have to be re-modelled and re-built, as they are not safe at present. The boundary fence on the lower side is almost done. The only two really good assets are the pavilion and the luncheon booth. The grandstand is of very little value. The publican's booth would have to be moved if we had the ring made.

In shifting to a new ground the building would have to be removed, which could be done for £250. The clearing of the new ground would be an item, but could be done for £6 an acre.

We have an offer of £500 for our present ground, and the society's share of buying the new ground would be £400.

Mr. Davey has kindly offered to do all surveying and laying out of the new ground free of charge.

Committeemen have had many discussions on this matter, but since they have visited the new ground I think I can safely say they are unanimously in favour of buying it.

The president said the area of the new ground was about 120 acres. The cost would be about £1000.

Messrs. J. Russell and John Johnston, two trustees

of the present show ground, said they had no objection to its disposal. Mr. Russell was very pleased with the new site. Mr. Johnston thought some difficulty might be experienced in finding the money required to make a fully appointed show ground of the new site, which was an ideal one. He would like to see the present ground put up at auction.

The president did not think any difficulty would arise in the matter of finance. Sports, gymkhanas, &c., might be got up from time to time. It would be very difficult to make the present ground a good one.

In reply to Mr. Tomlinson, who asked if the idea of the society purchasing a ground for itself had been thought of, Mr. Williams explained that that had been gone into very fully.

On the motion of the president and Mr. Williams it was decided to bring the matter before a meeting on 15th February, of financial members of the society for 1927.

'Snowy River Mail', February 27, 1929:

SHOW JOTTINGS

WHAT THE NEW GROUND IS LIKE

What a fine landscape scene? is the inevitable first comment of the visitor to the new Show Ground, Race Club and Golf Club! and rightly so as, the sweep of vision is from the Brodribb round to Marlo, across the hills rampant at Newmerella, and higher up the Snowy River towards Pumpkin Point; and with the cutting away of a small section of saplings on the Bendoc road near the gate leading to the enclosure the view would be further enhanced by the inclusion of the beautiful valley of Bete Bolong South and on towards Buchan.



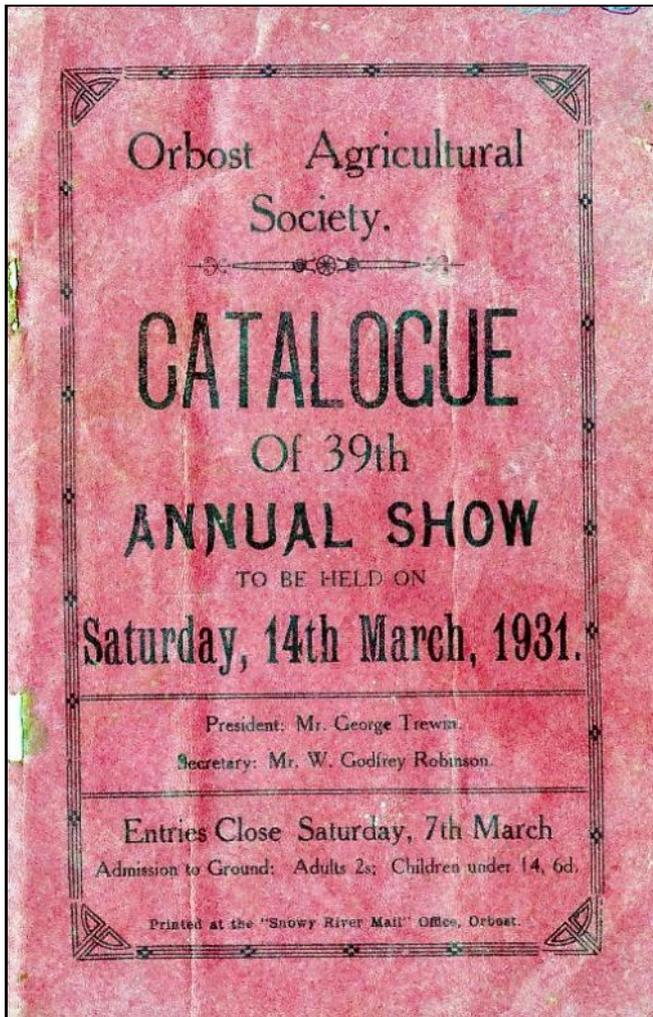
Orbst Show Committee - 1931

Back: Jacob Perry, Albert Lind, Jack Irvine.

**Centre: Alaster Cameron, Roy Nettleton, Frank Cowell, Carl Drevermann, Jim Hossack, Fred McCoy.
Front: Doug Russell, Jim McKinnon, Godfrey Robinson, Alec Rodwell, Francie Robinson (Secretary),
George Trewin (President), Harry Cameron, Thorold Bartold.**

'Tis the highest point in the neighbourhood of the township, and certainly deserves the fullest attention and financial recollection of all, as it is 95 acres in area, and stands for the future ideal sporting arena of the district. With regard to the saplings on the road, most of them will have to be taken off to minimise traffic danger at the entrance gates, so it would be wise to raze the small plantation in entirety.

The first official use of the ground will be made by the Orbost Agricultural Society on 7th March, and a visit there at once impresses one with what work has been carried out in practically a short space of time.



OFFICE-BEARERS 1931
PRESIDENT—MR. G. H. TREWIN
Vice-Presidents—Messrs A. Rodwell and R. J. Mosley.
Treasurer—Mr. C. N. Tomkins.
Shed Supervisor—Mr. Jas. Hossack.
Assistant Shed Supervisor—Mr. Alex. Cameron.
COMMITTEE—Messrs. W. Cowell, F. Cowell, H. Cameron, Alaster Cameron, J. W. Morgan, B. E. Gibney, J. Hossack, J. Irvine, C. Cross, R. J. Mosley, J. Mackinnon, J. Russell Jnr., Dr. Nettleton, J. Perry, Alex. Rodwell, R. W. Hosking, C. H. Tomkins, J. S. Tomlinson, G. H. Trewin, A. Trewin.
SECRETARY—W. GODFREY ROBINSON, Box 61, Phone 12 Orbost.

It seems only a few weeks ago when Mr. Shanahan was in mud and slush tearing out stumps and giving the area a general clean-up. Now it is evident that the ground is ideal for show purposes, and a substantial ring fence is already in position. The ground has a natural drainage, a slight slope from the centre, giving courage to carry on with improvements.

The show area has been planted in millet, and since the rain this crop has come on well, and a heavy rolling of the whole enclosure has made underfoot conditions very desirable. Shade trees are also to be planted.

When all is complete for the show it is estimated that the Agricultural Society will have laid out £500 to £600 in transference and improvements on the old order of things.

Another important factor is that water is laid on to the cattle yards, and to a large trough in the assembling yard. New cattle yards have been erected along the Bendoc road side, the water trough being in the receiving yard; provision also being made for water at the sheep and pig yards. The accommodation for the cattle is more compact, and stalls have been provided for the dairy cattle.

Internally the show shed shows great improvement, which will be welcomed by exhibitors, judges and stewards alike.

A lean-to to the whole outside length of the show shed has been provided for the exhibition of grains.

New poultry pens, detached from the main shed, will delight the poultry exhibitors, and public alike.

When one comes to the luncheon room, admiration is expressed at the completeness of arrangements, not the least being their roomy nature. Particularly noticeable in a special room is the huge cupboard of 12 compartments, and fly proof. On the floor of the whole structure has been strewn 150 bags of sawdust from the Brodribb, provided at "ticket cost." If the ladies are called upon to help in the refreshment room their troubles will be ameliorated by the fine conditions now obtaining. The buildings have been painted, and reflect credit on the energy of what has proved an up-to-date body of officials working under a good president and secretary.

The Publican's booth has been shifted holus bolus from the old site and stands in a prominent position.

With a fine show ring and up-to-date equipment it now but needs good entries and fine weather for substantial success, and a good "hop off" to prosperity.

The officials are sanguine that the show will be a success as many entries from outside districts, even very far away, have been promised, especially in the ring events.

The committee of the society having shown their confidence in the district, it is to be hoped that the fulfilment of purpose will be achieved.

[To be continued in our May Newsletter].