

Linton and District Historical Society Inc
Inc.No. A 6421B

Society Notes

Sept 2012
Published Quarterly

Number 276
ISSN1033-9582

The Journey from Jellies and Jams to Cappuccinos: A New Life for one of Linton's Oldest Buildings



Photo: From the LDHS collection

The reinvention of old buildings is a common theme in Australian country towns in the twenty-first century, as modern trading conditions lead to the closure of traditional stores, whilst opportunities open up for new businesses with a different function. The above photo from the 1930s shows the old Linton Economic Store, at 80 Sussex Street, which in July 2012 began a new life as a café. See inside for details.

80 Sussex Street: from Jellies and Jams to Cappuccinos

The enticing odours of freshly brewed coffee and delicious cakes are wafting into the middle section of Sussex Street now that the new **Café 80** has opened its doors on the site of the old Linton General Store. The café's owner is Deanne Jackel, who purchased the building, and then carried out extensive renovations to prepare it to operate as a modern café where meals are served at tables. Deanne spends much of her time in Linton, but also has a busy lawyer's practice in Melbourne.

Linton is now well-catered for with regard to prepared foods, as the Take Away at the eastern entrance to Linton, operated by Kris and Malcolm is open seven days a week. Their fish and chips are very popular, and they also provide other hot and cold takeaway foods, as well as groceries and news and stationery items. The Railway Hotel also serves fine meals on Friday and Saturdays in the dining room and the bar, and pizzas on other nights.

Café 80's day-to-day management is in the hands of Linton residents Ken and Matt. They are open four days a week – Thursday to Sunday from 10:00 am until 4:00 pm. The menu includes sandwiches and focaccias, as well as winter "tummy warmers" such as soup, spaghetti bolognese and tuna puffs. A range of coffees, teas, other beverages and cakes are also available.



Photo: Joan Giles

The transformation of the interior of 80 Sussex St.: Deanne serving customers, with Ken at the espresso machine.

History of the building

This building dates from the 1860s. Henry Nicholls ran a general store here until his death in 1889. His bachelor son, Ed, took it over until 1894. Much of the fruit, and many of the jellies and jams sold in the shop at this time originated in their home garden, 'Sutton Grange,' which stood on the pumping station block in Clyde St.

J H. Morgan bought the shop from Ed Nicholls in 1894. Originally from Glasgow, Morgan came from Pitfield and already had stores in Smythesdale and Skipton. He retired in 1930 and his son, Harold Morgan, took over until

1939. In turn, his son Selwyn managed it until 1964, when it was sold to Wilhelm Ver Doorn. The Ver Doorn family, father and sons, were the proprietors until 2008. Then under new owner Jean Evans the store operated as an earlier era country store selling groceries and collectables. During the post 1946 era, Alwyn Roberts worked there (see article on Alwyn Roberts life on page 4).

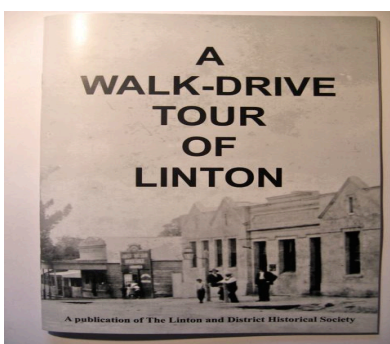


Photo: LDHS collection

The above photograph shows the store in about 1900 when it was owned by J. H. Morgan. That could be Mr Morgan in the doorway wearing the long apron, although the photo does not have any information accompanying it.

The building on the left was the Surface Hill Hotel, a two storey timber building with a verandah. Meetings of the Irish Constitution Lodge and the Ancient Order of Foresters' Court Lodge were held there. It was empty for many years, then demolished in 1961.

On the right, some well-established trees can be seen. They are at 76-78 Sussex St, which was the site of the original Wesleyan Methodist church, which opened on 11 March, 1860. The first wedding took place in June that year. However, following the first Government survey of the new town, Sussex Street was widened, and the church was moved to Grantley St in 1861. Joseph Shepherd, a Grenville Shire Councilor from 1870-1915, erected his house on this site in the 1860s, next door to his shop at 74 Sussex St (now the site of *Susie's on Sussex* recycled clothing shop). 76- 78 Sussex St later became a shop and tearooms, before reverting to a private residence. So in 1900, this could have been the site of a shop and tea rooms, or a private residence. For further details on the shops in Sussex St, see *A Walk-Drive Tour of Linton*.



Available from the Post Office, the Take Away, *Susie's on Sussex* and the Historical Society. You can order by writing to the Secretary (Town Walk Book), Linton & District Historical Society, PO Box 41 Linton 3360, enclosing \$7 for purchase and postage.

Vale Society Member Alwyn Roberts: 1925 - 2012

In the last issue of *Society Notes* we mentioned the sad news that Alwyn Roberts had recently died. Alwyn lived in Linton from childhood through to his late twenties, and, and with his wealth of memories of Linton from the 1930s onwards, was a great contributor to the Historical Society.

Alwyn was born in Adelaide on 18 February 1925. His earliest schooling was in Gardenvale, but from 1935 Alwyn was a pupil at the Linton State School. He completed his formal education in 1941 at the Ballarat School of Mines. With the entry of Japan into the Second World War in December 1941, Alwyn soon found himself in an RAAF uniform. By the end of the war in August 1945, he was serving as a records clerk with 70th Squadron, based on Admiralty Island in New Guinea.

After the war, Alwyn returned to Linton, and took a job at H. R. Morgan's Economic Store (see article on pages 2-3). He worked there for eighteen months. In an interview with the *Woody Yaloak Herald* in March 2010, Alwyn explained that the hours worked there were very long: 7:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays, and 7:00 am to 1:00 pm on Saturdays, for a weekly wage of five pounds.

Alwyn eventually moved to Ballarat, and married, but retained his contact with Linton, particularly through his membership of the Historical Society. Several years ago, *Society Notes* published Alwyn's memories of Linton in the 1930s. They provided a lively, interesting and detailed account of that era, and we will republish them in a future issue of *Society Notes*.

[At the time of printing *Society Notes*, there was not available a photo of Alwyn clear enough for reproducing in print. We hope to have a suitable photo to accompany his memoirs when they are republished.]

Society Notes

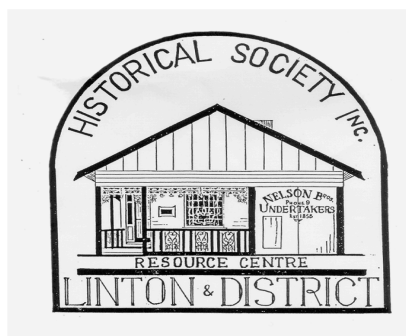


Society Notes is now a quarterly publication. The next issue will be published and posted to you in November 2012. Contributions are welcome – photos, articles stories. Please contact Drew Hopkins 0439 895 007 email: drewhopkins47@gmail

Subscriptions Due



Society membership subscriptions for 2013 will become due at the AGM. Please see the enclosed membership form. Prompt payment would be appreciated.



The Annual General Meeting
Of the Linton and District Historical Society
will be held on

Monday 17 September, 2012, 7:30 pm

at the Shire Offices, Sussex Street, Linton

Guest Speaker:

Dr. Fred Cahir

**Indigenous Studies Coordinator
School of Education and Arts, University of Ballarat.**

“What did the Wathawurrung think of the white fellas?”

Dr. Cahir will talk about what the archival records tell us about how Aboriginal people perceived the white colonisers, focusing on Linton and the wider district. Fred has discovered some humorous, unsettling and intriguing insights that reveal much about relations on the frontier.

Other Business to be conducted:

- *Presentation of Annual Report by the President*
- *Presentation of Financial Report by the Treasurer*
- *Election of Committee of Management for 2012 – nomination forms are enclosed with this issue of Society Notes.*

All welcome. A supper will be served after the meeting

History Night: Joan and Gary Hunt spoke on “Exploring Local and Family History in England”

Our *History Nights* have been very well attended and the June meeting was no exception with 21 people squeezed into the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre, including some new local faces and several visitors from other Societies. Our guest speakers were long time members Joan and Gary Hunt, who had recently returned from a 13-month stay in the small town of Southam in Warwickshire in the United Kingdom. Their topic was *Researching Local and Family History in England*, and Joan spoke about a local historical research project she had conducted in their village, Southam, as well as research she and Gary had done into the history of their respective families.

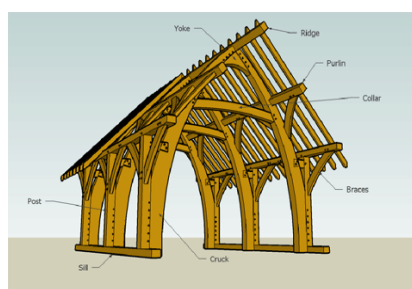


Photo: Joan Giles

LDHS members, and some friends from the Skipton Historical Society, plus Joan Hunt (standing) looking at Gary Hunt's photos

Local History Project

Whilst in England, Joan enrolled in an Advanced Diploma in Local History at Oxford University. A major project undertaken as part of the course was to uncover the history of the cottage they lived in (21 Oxford St., Southam), and twelve other old houses remaining in the street. Their cottage had a “cruck frame” (see diagram below). The use of this construction method meant the building had been constructed no later than 1600. Building a cruck frame cottage involved felling a tree with a natural curve to suit the shape of the cottage, and securing beams with wooden pegs.



The cottage now has brick walls, which Joan said would have been added later as the original cottage would have had wattle and daub walls. With the assistance of a power-point presentation, Joan and Gary explained how the other buildings had altered over the centuries with additions and new facades, etc. There is now a heritage overlay in place, and this is strictly adhered to when any restoration is undertaken.

One restored house in the town, now a chemist shop, was only “discovered” when a modern façade was removed to reveal a half-timbered Tudor House, which it was thought might have been where Charles 1st had stayed the night before the Battle of Edgehill, in 1642, during the English Civil War.

Family History

To help locate information on Joan’s ancestors, the Hitchins family, who eventually came to the Linton district, Joan visited the National Archives in Richmond (just outside London), and also the Society of Genealogists in London where there are four floors of records and information. Joan found that a Hitchins ancestor, a doctor, had lived in Bath . With the help of the Google internet search engine, Joan located other Hitchins family members who had an album of Hitchins family photographs. Since promoting the album via the internet, these Hitchins descendants had been contacted by others who had more photos of Hitchins ancestors.

Research into Gary’s family revealed that they came from the village of Horsebridge in Devon. From studying the UK census records, they were able to find the house where Gary’s family had lived. During their entire stay in Britain, Gary and Joan travelled about 20,000 miles to trace their ancestors, and generally enjoy the sights and entertainment on offer. At the end of the evening Gary presented a slideshow of many of the beautiful photographs he had taken during their travels.

For Joan’s final project in the Advanced Diploma in Local History, she is researching the Springdallah region, and is examining how deep lead mining affected the Piggoreet community.

Next History Night: Monday 19 November, 2012, 7:30pm

Joan and Rod O’Beirne: A Family History in Linton



Linton and its district’s long-term residents are a rich source of the district’s history. Each has their own particular stories to tell, and their own unique perspective on how the district has evolved over the years, and influenced the lives of its residents. As part of our **‘Stories from the Elders’ series**, we invite long-term and former residents to tell their family’s Linton story, and answer questions about what happened in the district in “the old days”.

The O’Beirne family has been part of Linton’s history for several generations, and Joan and Rod will tell their story at our next History Night.

At the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre, Sussex St, Linton, 7.30 pm
Supper will be served at the end of the evening.

Vale Alex Lyne, 1909-2012: Descendant of the Linton family

The following is Jill Wheeler's report on our oldest member, John Alexander Lyne (known as Alex), who passed away suddenly and peacefully in Melbourne on 20 May 2012, aged 102 ½ years.

Alex was a great-grandson of Mary and Joseph Linton, two of the original European settlers in this district, and after whom the town of Linton was named. Their seventh child, Caroline, born in 1845, was his grandmother.

He was born in Kew on 23 October 1909, and was educated at local state schools and later at Scotch College from 1924-1928. In his final year he was equal Dux of the school. He was a resident of Ormond College from 1929-1932 at the University of Melbourne, where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English and History and a Diploma in Education. He later obtained a Diploma in Geography from London University.

After teaching at Brighton Grammar School for eight years, he returned to Scotch to become a longstanding and popular teacher of geography from 1942 to 1974. He was in charge of the Dramatic Society there from 1945 to 1967, secretary and treasurer of with Scotch Scouts. He was nicknamed 'Tiger' by the boys and remained Tiger to generations of his students who remembered him with affection.



Photo: Jill Wheeler

Alex Lyne, pictured in his living room in Box Hill, 2010.

Alex was a founding member of the Geography Teachers' Association of Victoria and its first President. He was regarded as an innovative teacher of geography who stressed the importance of fieldwork, a new idea in the 1960s. He married Frances Dawson, his second cousin, later in life (1974). Although he had no children of his own, Alex was close to many in his vast extended family. He was particularly interested in the history of the Linton family

and in 1997, he self-published *Memories of the Linton Family*, an extensive family history with details on a vast array of descendants of the Lintons, many of whom Alex knew personally. Although he had never met his grandmother, Caroline, who died in 1889, Alex did know well several of the other Linton daughters, who were his great-aunts.

In 1983 he provided information for, and indeed came to, Linton for the large local history exhibition at Linton Park organised by the Historical Society, and remained in touch with the Society over the ensuing years.

I met Alex in 2003 when I conducted three interviews with him as part of my PhD research into the history of Linton. We met at his grand old house in Box Hill, which was like a museum, unchanged since the early twentieth century, and full of antiques and keepsakes handed down from Linton family members. He was a quietly spoken, gracious and dignified 94 year old, with an active mind and a phenomenal memory. Each time I went, Alex made tea, which we drank out of china cups, and he served cakes and biscuits that he had usually made himself. I spoke to him several times since then and he remained interested in Linton and its history until his death.

His funeral was at St Andrew's Uniting Church in Box Hill, a church in which he had been actively involved since the 1940s. The congregation filled the church, quite a compliment for a 102 year old, and the eulogies paid tribute to man whose intelligence, kindness and quiet integrity had touched many along the way.

A Word from the President

Although we have been on our two-month Winter break during July and August, much has been happening behind the scenes.

Successful Grant Applications

We are delighted to report that we have received the two grants that we applied for!

(1) Photographic History

The first is a **Local History Grant from the State Government via the Public Record Office of Victoria** for \$4,522 to produce an A4 size book, entitled *Linton: a Photographic History*. The grant will pay for the printing costs and the production of an accompanying CD of photographs. The Society will match the grant with the voluntary labour involved in accessing, selecting and scanning the photos, writing an accompanying history and captions for each photo, and compiling an index. The whole project is estimated to take two and a half years. While this will be a lot of work for us, it will be very much worth it as this book will fill a gap in publications about Linton's history. The 1989 *Pictorial History of Linton*, a book that previously published some of our historic photographs, has been out of print for many years, and apart from our *Town Walk* book, there are no other histories of Linton in print at the moment.

(2) Electrical Switchboard and archival storage

The second grant is a **Golden Plains Shire Community Grant** for \$1754 for a project we entitled 'Preserving Linton's Historical Archives.' This will provide for an upgrade of the old electrical switchboard at the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre to meet current regulations and for additional power points to prevent overloading, both of these measures being aimed at the prevention of fire that could potentially damage or destroy our original and irreplaceable paper archives relating to Linton's history. The grant also includes a sum for acid-free storage boxes to store archives away from damp conditions at the Resource Centre. Our matched contribution will be our in-kind labour plus the cost of new bookshelves (see page 11) that will house these archives in a drier place at the Centre. Work is already underway on this project.

Need for a projector

Meanwhile, we have applied for a **Commonwealth Government Volunteers Grant** for \$1422 for a digital projector, spare projector lamp (worth \$334) and a projector screen. In our application we argued that this 'would enable the Society to do PowerPoint presentations at community gatherings, to other local groups, and at Society meetings. The Society needs a reliable and efficient means of doing this that will encourage more volunteers to have a go at doing these presentations. It will also mean that we can attract more guest speakers, which will potentially increase attendance and involvement with the Society. This will not only enhance the accessibility of Linton and district's history but promote the activities of the Historical Society and encourage more volunteers to get involved with the Society.' (The Society already has a secondhand projector, but this unfortunately broke down

when it was most needed at our June History Night!).

Building maintenance

Regarding the maintenance of the two Shire buildings that we occupy, we have been advised by Golden Plains Shire that since Council adopted the Golden Plains Shire Heritage Study in March, the 'Linton Precinct' is now included in a Heritage Overlay, thus making it possible in future to apply for grants for upgrade works through the Department of Planning and Community Development, Victoria. So, while this is potentially good news for us, it means that it will still be some time before any repairs to these buildings can occur.

We had another well-attended and successful **History Night on 18 June** (see report elsewhere in this edition), and two more busy **Open Days** in May and June.

Now attention is turning towards our Annual General Meeting on 17 September. Details are elsewhere in this edition, so please take note, renew your Society membership, and come along to hear our terrific guest speaker, Dr Fred Cahir, and hear something of the Aboriginal history of the district.

Jill Wheeler
August 2012.

Research Report to August 2012

Since May, we have had the following research requests:

MADDEN James – member Elaine Lucas from Queensland requesting we search the *Grenville Standard* for 1895 obituary of this man who died in Skipton. Information found, scanned and sent, plus scans of photographs.

KING Maria and Ah King – Kevin Esmore from Strathdale inquiring if we had a marriage certificate (approximately 1856) for this couple. We had no information but offered advice on where to seek further.

CHINESE in Linton – Hong Tan from the Victorian Chinese Memorial Foundation (who were responsible for putting the new memorial in the Chinese section of the cemetery) requesting some stories about some of the Chinese who lived in Linton. This was for a magazine that his organisation were producing that would have some information on all the memorials they had erected in Victoria. Information supplied.

EMMETT Robert and wife, Margaret Godfrey Emmett - Jill Evans from Heyfield researching this family who were in Happy Valley from approximately 1860s-1880s. Five children were born in Happy Valley. Inquiring whether their burials were in Linton cemetery. Referred to the Secretary, Linton Cemetery Trust. Photocopied and posted pages in file on Emmett family.

THOMAS William and Anne – Ross Barnes of Grass Flat requesting information on this family who lived at Happy Valley in 1860s and 1870s. Although we have a Thomas family file, they did not appear to be related to William or Anne Thomas.

KENNEDY and O'BEIRNE – Bill Smith of Geelong asking when the partnership between these two families began. Information for a book he is writing on the tannery business in Breakwater, Geelong. Referred to the O'Beirne family for advice.

If any readers think they might have further information on any of these families or topics, please let us know. The Society charges a \$20 fee for detailed research, plus small fees for copies of photographs and other documents.

Applause: A Big *Thank You* to all our Donors



Now that donations to the Society are **tax deductible** (receipts issued on request), many of our members have responded generously to assist us with new projects for preserving and displaying our precious collection of artefacts, photographs and documents. If you would like to make a donation, please contact our Treasurer, Jan Cooke (5342 8554), or post your donation to the Society's address: PO Box 41, 69 Sussex St., Linton 3360

Improving our archival storage



Photo: Joan Giles

Volunteers Drew Hopkins, Warwick Madden and Alan Giles installing the new book shelves at the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre (see President's report p.9 for details). Below, the shelves are beginning to fill.



Photo: Jill Wheeler

the Bulletin board

- **Next Open Days** –Sundays 9 September, 14 October, 11 November, 9 December. **Please Note the new opening times – formerly from 1:00 – 4:00 pm, but now 2:00 – 5:00 pm.**
- **Monday 17 September. Annual General Meeting – To be held in the Shire Office, Sussex Street Linton, at 7:30 pm. See details enclosed.**
- **Monday 19 November is our next History Night – Joan and Rod O’Beirne will speak on their family’s memories of old Linton** (see details on page 5).

History Nights commence at 7:30 in the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre. Come along and be with us to hear the speakers, join in the discussion and share the supper.

- **Society Notes is now a quarterly publication. The next issue will be in November.**

Welcome to new members: Del Atkinson, Lesley Cairns, Keith Smith, Judy Woolard.

Society contacts:

President, Research Officer, Grants Officer: **Jill Wheeler** (5344 7386; 0439 895 939); email: jillianleawheeler@gmail.com

Vice President: **Alan Giles**

Treasurer: **Jan Cooke** (5342 8554)

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Photographic collection: **Warwick Madden** (0457 025 353)

Society Address: PO Box 41, 69 Sussex St., Linton 3360.

(Nelson Bros. Undertakers building, but now the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre)

Society Notes contributors and helpers: Jan Cooke, Susie Cooke, Alan Giles, Joan Giles, Deirdre Nicol, Jenny Stuart, Jill Wheeler, Warwick Madden.

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