



Linton and District Historical Society Inc
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150th anniversary of the Linton Anglican Church



Centenary celebration service, October 1962

Photo: LDHS archives

St Paul's Anglican Church, Linton, celebrates its 150th anniversary in 2012. In this issue of *Society Notes*, we will look in detail at the history of the church, as it is one of Linton's oldest and most significant buildings, and the oldest building in Linton that is still used for its original purpose.

St Paul's church, built on 'on the commanding and beautiful site of the south-eastern hill', celebrates its 150th anniversary

This year, Linton's oldest church, St Paul's Anglican church, celebrates the 150th year since its foundations were laid in the position the church still occupies on the hill south east of the town centre. This article traces the history of the church up until its centenary in 1962, and is largely taken from a history of the church published in that centenary year.

The history of the church at Linton began at Linton's Diggings, long before construction of a church was considered. When gold was discovered in 1855 in the hills and gullies around where the present Linton cemetery is located, a school was established at Linton's Diggings by a Mr Hartshorn (which, in 1856, had 56 children's names on the roll). It was here that the first Church of England services were held weekly, probably consisting simply of a layman reading from the Book of Common Prayer and in hymn singing.

Although the first clergyman to be appointed in the Woody Yalloak district was the Rev G. J. Russell in 1856, his headquarters was in Buninyong and his parish so vast (it included Sebastopol, Steiglitz, Carngham, Linton, Happy Valley, Pitfield, Rokewood and Mount Mercer) that he only occasionally visited the 50 places of worship over which he presided.



One of the earliest photographs of St Paul's taken possibly about 1880. Photo: LDHS archives

The building of a permanent church

When the new Linton township began to be established on its present site in 1860, a move to erect a permanent church for Anglican worship commenced, led by Mr Samuel Lewers, who had opened a branch of the Bank of New South Wales in the town in 1860. Special collections were made to meet the expense of the church's construction, and it is said that Mr Lewers 'sent around the hat', described as his 'bell topper', amongst the miners, which was filled with not just coins, but also nuggets and gold dust.

Linton got its first Stipendiary Reader (as he was known) in 1860, Mr Matthew Henry Ashe. These readers were in effect clergymen in training, being candidates for Holy Orders who were required to serve a certain time under supervision, and to study and pass examinations before they could then enter theological college and eventually be ordained. St Paul's had the services of a number of them over the years.

The building of St Paul's church commenced in mid-1862 'on the commanding and beautiful site of the south-eastern hill', and was completed in early 1863. Difficulties were encountered in the process – the original east windows were evidently stolen (but later recovered) as was the communion plate; the first bricks were of poor quality as some 30,000 had cracked when left in the sun, rendering them useless; and there was not enough money collected for the Vicar's stipend – only £14/7/6 for the first quarter – although Mr Ashe politely said that he was 'extremely grateful for the liberal sum contributed'.

The exact date of the church's opening was not recorded although it is believed to have been St Paul's Day, 25 January 1863. It is not known why, curiously, it was not actually consecrated until 27 April 1910, an interval of 47 years. The first church secretary, Dr F. L. Hooper (a local GP), wrote that in 1865, the average attendance at divine

service 'never exceeded forty souls', although the church had a capacity of 140 persons. By 1867, however, he claimed that attendance had risen to an average of 70 to 80 persons at each service.

Highlights in St Paul's first 50 years

The first recorded confirmation service was conducted by Bishop Perry of Melbourne at Easter 1866. And on 20 January 1867, the 'Melbourne Church News' reported the baptism at Linton of an adult Chinese, Charles Albert Ah Ton, an occasion that 'appeared to afford much gratification to the large audience assembled to witness [it].'
The 1870s and 1880s saw the coming of the first ordained priests to the newly formed parish of Carngham, Linton and Happy Valley.



A photo of St Paul's with Rev A. G. Greenwood at the gates, taken about 1910. Photo: LDHS archives

In April 1877, the regular annual Sunday School picnic of St Paul's was held for the first time in the Ballarat Botanical Gardens. About 80 children and their teachers were taken 'in five conveyances', leaving Linton at 8am and arriving at the Gardens by 12 o'clock. The children were 'allowed to amuse themselves sailing in the steamers, boating, swinging, etc.' They were supplied with tea, cake, buns, pastry, etc. ... supplied by Mr Walker, confectioner, of Bridge St. At 4.30pm, with a further supply of provisions, they set off for home, 'which was reached without the slightest mishap to mar the day's pleasure.'

When St Paul's was closed for a time in 1887 for 'much needed repairs', services were held in the Shire Hall. At its re-opening in October, the congregation 'made merry ... with a splendid Tea.' St Paul's had had 'a thorough overhauling, inside and out, and now looks fresh and bright.'

Missionary Service for the Chinese of Linton

In May 1891, a Missionary Service for the Chinese of Linton was held and addressed by Cheok Hong Cheong, Victorian Superintendent of Chinese Missions. 'At the conclusion of the English service, Mr Cheong addressed the thirteen Chinese present in their own language on the love of God'.

Early in 1901 it was found that the bricks in the church were crumbling and these were cement-faced, giving the building its present appearance.

Building of the Parish Hall

In 1909, 'a great advance was made at Linton' with the erection of the Parish Hall at a cost of £400. The ceremony of laying the foundation stone, fixed for 19 August, was postponed due to floods, but the photograph taken on the new date still shows the assembled crowd of 200 people sheltering under umbrellas. The design of the Hall was innovative for its day, being built with concrete blocks and having no frame. With an ornate pressed metal ceiling, a stage and later a kitchen, it quickly became a central meeting place in the town, hosting concerts, meetings, dinners, and balls. After the demolition of the old Shire Hall in 1939, and its replacement with the present Shire Office, the Parish Hall was the main venue for major town events throughout the twentieth century.



The ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone at the Parish Hall in 1909. The innovative construction method, using concrete blocks and no frame, can be clearly seen in this photograph. Photo: LDHS archives

A resident clergyman

Linton did not have a Church of England vicar living in the town until 1911, which is why there wasn't a vicarage as such until well into the 20th century. From 1873 to 1882, Linton was part of the parochial district of Carngham, Linton and Happy Valley, under the care of resident clergymen usually living in Carngham.

In 1882, due to an increasing decline in the goldfields population, this district became merged with the Parish of Smythesdale, and the Vicars were resident at Smythesdale. This arrangement lasted for almost 30 years. The last vicar of the Parish of Smythesdale, Rev. A. G. Greenwood, lived in Linton for some months before he left in 1911, boarding with a Mrs Bass.

It is indicative of Linton's relative importance as a population centre in the district at that time, that, in 1912, it was decided to shift the Anglican headquarters for the district from Smythesdale to Linton. Due to population declines in other centres, particularly those with limited agricultural backgrounds, including Smythesdale, Linton offered the best prospect of permanence at the time. As the Parish was now to include Skipton, Linton's centrality was also considered the most effective means of working the parish. So, on 2 April 1912, the Rev. Joseph Best was inducted at Linton and the parish became the Parish of Linton.

The second 50 years: 1912-1962

Purchase of the Vicarage

In 1913, a house not far from the church that was owned by the Bolte family, who were parishioners and at that time owners of the Linton Park estate, was purchased to be a vicarage. The sale price was £550, £300 of which was raised from the parishioners themselves (the other £250 came from the sale of the Smythesdale vicarage).

Rev. Best, who resided at Linton from 1912 to 1915, later reflected on his time there: 'At Linton I first used a horse, and it got tired; then I got a push bike, and I got tired; finally I got a motor cycle and used the three means of transport, and enjoyed living in the Linton parish immensely.'

The impact of World War I was felt deeply amongst the church's congregation, with forty of its young members enlisting for service. In 1920, a new altar was given to the church by the parishioners, in memory of the soldiers who had died in the conflict. And in 1921, Mrs G. L. Dean of Emu Hill presented St Paul's with an Honor Roll of names of parishioners who had fought in this war.

In 1925, Skipton became disassociated from the Linton parish and became a parish in its own right. However, in 1949, it was rejoined to Linton.



St Paul's vicarage, purchased in 1913 from the Bolte family.

Photo: LDHS archives

A new Ladies Guild, formed in 1927, held many successful fundraising events in the 20s that 'relieved the vestry at a time when money was tight.' During the Depression of the early 1930s, the church became involved in ministering to the unemployed who were living and fossicking in the bush surrounding the town. Also at this time, the Linton Boy Scout Troop was promoted by the Vicar, Rev Gooden, who was also Scout Master.

'Unseemly' behaviour in the Parish Hall

In the later 1930s there was much concern about 'unseemly' behaviour at the Parish Hall. By this time the Hall was let to 'visiting Picture Show managers' who, according to the Ladies Guild, left it in a 'dirty, unsatisfactory state.' But not all the offenders were from out of town. The general behaviour of some of the young people at various functions was noted in Parish minutes (eg. 'the disgusting behaviour at the Church's Harvest Social'), as was the pollution of the Hall water tank by local school children. The Police Constable was to be asked 'to attend at the Hall with a view to checking unseemly behaviour.'

New windows and electricity

In 1938, two new East windows, depicting the Nativity and the Ascension, and designed by stained glass artist, Christian Waller (wife of Napier Waller), were placed in the church by the Lewers family in memory of Samuel and Annie Lewers and other pioneers of the church. And in the next year, Linton's Centenary year of 1939, electric lighting was installed in St Paul's when the town, amidst much fanfare, was itself connected.

During the years of the Second World War, many parishioners were again in the services and the Vicar, Rev H. D. Scott, remembered them as 'sad and anxious days,' with much of his time occupied 'in working for the Red Cross and other war services.' In January 1943, St Paul's celebrated its 80th anniversary with Thanksgiving services and the compiling of a short history of the church to that date.

The Church of England Men's Society was revived in Linton in 1949, which organised Parish Picnics at Lake Burrumbeet and cricket matches, and was, in the opinion of the Vicar, Rev Gray, 'a wonderful unifying agency.' At the picnic on 4 November 1951, the Parish Paper reported that there were 'well over 300 persons present,' and that the men 'carried the day through with nothing but credit to themselves. All the ladies had to do was to enjoy themselves – and they did.'

In 1956, the Parish headquarters changed yet again, this time to Skipton, which was growing proportionately faster than Linton and contributing more financially, and interest and involvement in St Paul's was at a low ebb in Linton. The Linton vicarage was sold for £2000, the proceeds going towards the building of a new vicarage at Skipton.

Despite the decline in the importance (and the size of the congregation) of St Paul's, the centenary of the church's foundation was celebrated on 14 October 1962 with thanksgiving services and the publication of a Centenary History written by Rev Sydney Smith, who himself had a family history with St Paul's.

Linton families who have been parishioners of St Paul's

During the preceding 100 years, many well-known Linton families had been associated with the church. Those prominent in the life of the church, some for generations, included: the Lewers family, Dr Hooper, the family and descendants of George and Emma Smith, the Boltes, Bennetts, Todds, Berseys, Roberts, Keys, Murrells, Wisharts, Cottons. Whites, Downings, Sherwoods, Nicols, Griggs, Knights and Nelson families, Lionel Sparrow, Wiliam Hall, H. J. McDonnell, A.W Chasey and Mrs W. Hart. These are just some of the names that regularly appear in the church records.

St Paul's Sunday School

The Sunday School in St Paul's began in 1863, although there were two earlier ones in Linton in 1861 before the church was built, one at the Diggings and one at the site of the new town (with 39 and 33 children respectively). Enrolments in 1863 were 64 children and 7 teachers, in 1867, 85 children and 8 teachers, and in 1884, 50 children were on the roll. Evidently, enrolments remained stable at about 50 pupils into the twentieth century, but declined along with the town's population after the First World War. By the 1950s, the Sunday School had lapsed, but in 1960, it evidently began again with an enrolment of about 20 children.

The third 50 years: 1962-2012

Unfortunately, the Historical Society's records have little information about the church after 1962. We know that on Easter Sunday in 1985 a special service was held on the occasion of the 'Back to Linton' weekend. And in 1991, the church gates were restored 'as a monument to the memory of the early settlers of St Paul's'. The Church continues to hold services with a small congregation as part of the Skipton parish on the first and third Sundays of the month.

If any readers could provide us with historical information about the last 50 years of St Paul's, we will publish it in a subsequent issue of *Society Notes*.



St Paul's today

Photo: LDHS archives



CHRISTMAS DINNER

The Society's Christmas Party this year will be a dinner to be held on

Friday, 7th December

At the Railway Hotel, Sussex Street Linton

**7:00pm for 7:30pm
Dinner: \$25 per person.**

For our Kris Kringle, would you also please bring
a present to the approximate value of \$5 and mark your gift with
'F' for Female, 'M' for Male or 'U' for Unisex

Hope to see you there for a fun evening and to support a local business



The hotel needs accurate numbers, so please let us know by Monday 3 December if you are coming. Phone or email Jill Wheeler 9489 5939 jillianleawheeler@gmail.com or Jan Cooke 5342 8554, email piggoreet-west@bigpond.com.au

Celebrating 150 years of the Torrens Title System: Golden Plains Shire presented with copy of original title to the Shire Offices

A ceremony was held at the Shire Offices on 23 October at which the Shire of Golden Plains was presented with a copy of the original title to the land in Sussex Street on which the Shire Offices stand. This land had been transferred to the Shire of Grenville in February 1863, and has been owned by the Shire since that date. The presentation was made by Mr Chris McRae, who, as Registrar of Titles, is effectively the CEO of the Victorian Titles Office.

The ceremony was part of celebrations for the 150th year since the introduction of the Torrens System of land registration in Victoria. Under the Torrens system, an honest purchaser of property acquires good (inalienable) title to property once it has been registered at the Titles Office in Melbourne. Any prospective purchaser of property is able to search the Title Office's registry to establish who is the registered lawful owner of that property, and whether the property is subject to a mortgage or any other restrictions on its sale. The purchaser can then be confident when handing over the purchase money that the registered owner is in fact the lawful owner of property, and hence able to sell it. Before this system was introduced, good title to property could only be established by a slow, cumbersome and expensive process. This involved examining a series of deeds showing the history of

transfers of the property (usually done by lawyers), in order to establish that there was a lawful chain of title leading to the current owner of the property.

Following the introduction of the Torrens system in Victoria in 1862, Chris McRae explained at the Linton ceremony that ‘the first title, Volume 1, Folio 1, was issued to a “dairyman” in Ravenswood in January 1863. This property remained in its original configuration until 2004, by which time it had passed through 16 different owners. In February 1863, Volume 1 Folio 7, a title to the land on which the Shire Offices now stand, was provided to “John Joseph O’Meara, Timber Merchant of Linton in the Parish of Argyle and County of Grenville.” The original grant of the land to Mr O’Meara had been made in May 1861. Mr O’Meara transferred the land in October 1863 to a Mr Samuel Lewers, who is simply described as “Esquire”. In January 1865, the land was transferred to “The Shire Council of Grenville”, where it has remained as the property of it and successor organisations ever since. So the last transaction on this land occurred almost 148 years ago and it stands now as the oldest Torrens title in the state where the land remains in its original configuration.’

The President and Committee of the Historical Society were invited to attend the ceremony and address the audience on the history of the town, and the Shire Offices in particular.



Displaying the framed copy of the original title to the Shire Offices land in Sussex Street. L–R: Councillor Kevin Knight, Mayor Geraldine Frantz, Historical Society President, Jill Wheeler, Registrar of Titles, Chris McRae.

Photo courtesy of Golden Plains Shire

Historical talk to Neighbourhood Watch group at Café 80

In August, Society President, Jill Wheeler, was asked by local policewoman, Janine Walker, to address a Neighbourhood Watch group from Ballarat at our new Café 80 in Sussex St. Jill spoke about the history of the building and a little about the history of policing in Linton, and showed old photographs of the town. The group of about thirty retired folk, some of whom had personal history in Linton, were an attentive audience for this informal talk given by Jill. Janine expressed her appreciation for the input of the Historical Society for this occasion.

***'What did the Wathawurrung think of the white fellas?'* The guest speaker at our Annual General Meeting provided a fascinating account of interaction between Aborigines and Europeans on the goldfields**



Dr
Fred Cahir addressing the Annual General Meeting and showing PowerPoint reproductions of goldfields paintings
Photo: Joan Giles

At the Society's Annual General Meeting on Monday 17 September in the Shire Offices, those present enjoyed a most interesting and thought provoking presentation by our invited Guest Speaker, Dr. Fred Cahir, who is the Indigenous Studies Co-ordinator, School of Education and Arts, University of Ballarat.

His topic, entitled 'What did the Wathawurrung think of the white fellas?' looked at the history of the relationship between the Aboriginal people of the Wathawurrung tribe in the Central Highlands region of Victoria, including the Linton district, and the white settlers. In particular, he focussed on the role and presence of the Aborigines on the gold fields.

Some misconceptions

Dr Cahir pointed out that it has been a misconception that needs to be addressed, that during the period of early settlement, particularly at the time of gold discovery, Aboriginal people had been on the periphery, or were bewildered onlookers, or were perceived negatively during these events in our shared history. However Dr. Cahir suggested that nothing could be further from the truth.

The Wathawurrung, unlike some Aboriginal tribes in northern Australia, were not nomadic but lived in substantial dwellings using local materials to build their homes, and had knowledge of mining of metals, crystals, ochres, green stone and kaolin. They also practised aqua culture and had a vast knowledge of native bush foods, which was of vital importance to local squatters and their families who were very often dependent on Aboriginal men and women for their survival. However it is important to note that, with the introduction of cattle and sheep, a very valuable food source for the Wathawurrung, the murrnong (or yam daisy), was decimated as it was eaten by these new animals. Murrnong was a staple food for the Wathawurrung, having a flower resembling a dandelion and a root consumed much like the potato was in England, Ireland and Scotland. The result was a huge reduction in readily available food for the local indigenous people.

Police and trackers

On the goldfields Aboriginal trackers were utilised by the Establishment as the first Police Force, greatly assisting in law enforcement, particularly with accompanying the gold escorts, and with communication and promoting understanding between the two cultures. These men were respected and sometimes feared as they were very capable and conscientious members of the Force.

Aboriginal people were also instrumental in the discovery of new gold fields, and water and food sources for the white population. The 1830s had seen the Aboriginal Protectorate set up by the British Government to oversee the wellbeing of indigenous inhabitants, but by the 1850s, this was declared a failure and a period of 'Laissez Faire' prevailed. At the same time, there was a huge increase in the local population due to the gold rush, mining had degraded the environment, and social disruption due in part to the effects of alcohol began to erode the health and social fabric of society in general.

A curtain drawn on Aboriginal History

Dr. Cahir referred to a curtain having been drawn on Aboriginal history in Australia, particularly in relation to the interaction between the Aborigines and the early white settlers, and the need for greater knowledge and understanding about the co-operation between the Wathawurrung and the white settlers of this region. It was the task of Historical Societies such as ours to make sure that this part of our local history is known.

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.

NOTE: This meeting will be held in the Shire Offices, Sussex St, Linton, 7.30 pm

Supper will be served at the end of the evening.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR TO SEPTEMBER 2012

The Society's President, Dr. Jill Wheeler presented the following Annual President's Report at the Society's Annual General Meeting, which was held in the Shire Offices, Linton, on 17 September 2012.

This is my second year as President of the Linton and District Historical Society. While I think it would be fair to say that the first year was one of busy consolidation, the past year has been one of considerable progress and development. Our major achievements have been the securing of two grants to further our work, and the creation of a website, about which you will be hearing more in a moment.

What I plan to do here is summarise our major activities and achievements, and then give some time to our concerns, hopes and plans for the year ahead.

Membership

We were saddened by the deaths of three of our long-standing members, **Marie Grigg, Alwyn Roberts and Alex Lyne**. Marie and Alwyn both spent their childhoods in Linton, and were valued contributors to the Historical Society over many years. Alex Lyne, one of our Melbourne members, was 102 and a half years old when he died in May. He was a great-grandson of Mary and Joseph Linton, being the grandson of their seventh child, Caroline, who was born in 1845. So Alex was a very special member who remained interested in Linton and the Society until his death.

Society memberships are looking healthy, with 77 memberships currently as against 71 at this time last year. This is a net gain of six new memberships over the course of the year, which we are delighted about, particularly as three of our members passed away during this time.

Meetings

Since this time last year, we have had four **History Nights** - in November, February, April and June, plus a **Christmas break-up dinner** at the Linton Railway Hotel in December attended by 21 members.

The **November History Night** was one of our popular 'Secret Life of Things' evenings when members bring old and interesting objects and tell us the stories behind them.

In **February, as part of a *Stories from the Elders* series**, we had ex-resident of Linton, **Mr Jim Stapleton, aged 98**, come all the way from Echuca to talk to us of his memories of Linton in the 1920s and 30s. Jim had a remarkable memory and shared with us first hand a wealth of Linton history. Over 50 people packed the Shire Offices, including many people who are not members of the Society and a number of Jim's extended family. We made a video recording of the talk, which is available for \$10 plus postage. If you would like to order a copy, see Joan or Jan in the foyer.

At the **April History Night**, I was the Guest Speaker and related one part of my family's history in a talk entitled from *Lancashire to Linton: Explorations in Family History*. This was the story of how Drew and I had visited the cotton mill towns of Lancashire in 2011 and explored the circumstances that saw my mill-worker ancestors emigrate to Linton in the 1800s.

In June, we had local historian Joan Hunt and her husband Gary as guest speakers on the topic '**Researching Local and Family History in England.**' Joan and Gary are members of the Society and had just returned from living in England for the past eighteen months. They shared their experiences of researching family history in that country and their talk was supported by some wonderful photographs taken by Gary over the period of their stay.

The everyday business of the Society has been handled by the **Committee**, which has had seven meetings in the last year and reported back to the members at History Nights and via *Society Notes* on any matters of general concern to the membership. The amount of business being handled at these meetings is enormous, and meetings typically go for four hours each time.

Cataloguing, sorting, scanning and storage

The fact is that much of our collection of photographs, papers, maps, and files of individual family histories, is not yet stored electronically, as the task of correctly cataloguing it is so slow and time-consuming, the collection is vast, and we have had our challenges with the cataloguing software. However, the cataloguing, sorting, scanning and storage of our collection are some of our regular, rather mundane tasks that have continued throughout the year.

Town Walk Book

At our AGM last year, we launched our Town Walk Book, which has proved to be a very popular publication. Since then, we have sold a total of 205 copies, which at the bargain price of \$5 per copy, has netted us over a thousand dollars (\$1025). Since the book was produced with the assistance of a grant from the Holsworth Trust, that sum represents a clear profit for us.

Website

We are delighted to announce that we now have our own website, which we will officially launch a bit later tonight, although it has been up and running for about two weeks now.

This was one of our plans for this year at the last AGM, so we are pleased to report that it has come to fruition. The website will allow us to more easily reach the many people out there who are researching Linton family history, and of course, better involve our members who don't live in Linton. Roughly half of our membership lives beyond the Linton-Ballarat district – in Melbourne, in other places in Victoria, and interstate.

The website is not quite finished, for example, it is yet to have a password-protected members section where members can (amongst other things) access back copies of *Society Notes* electronically. We are going to have lessons in how to maintain it so that it is always up to date. And we will be adding more historical information, for example, about some other settlements in our district, such as Happy Valley, Piggoreet and Mannibadar.



The Linton and District Historical Society is now on the World Wide Web.

Check out our website at www.lintonhistory.org.au.

Features include:

- Upcoming news and events
- Brief History of Linton
- War remembrance in Linton
- Information about the society and what it does

Please note: the Members Only password-protected section of our site is not yet operating. When it does, it will contain back copies of *Society Notes*

Grants

Local History grant: In June, the Society was awarded a State Government Local History Grant via the Public Record Office of Victoria 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.

Community Grant: in August, we received a Golden Plains Shire Community Grant to help preserve our archives and prevent their deterioration through damp, or their loss through fire. This grant will pay for a range of acid-free storage materials plus electrical work to upgrade our old switchboard to meet current regulations. The Society will

match the grant with the cost of new bookshelves that will enable us to move our paper archives away from damp in the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre and the voluntary labour involved in this undertaking. We are conscious that it is our responsibility to preserve the historical records in our care for the Linton community

Donations

In February, the Society had the great pleasure of receiving a very generous donation of \$500 from the Mannibadar Soldiers Memorial Hall Committee. The money represented part of the proceeds from their Garden Day fund-raiser held in November 2011. This wonderful donation has helped to fund the establishment of our website.

We have also received a couple of other donations that I wish to particularly mention.

The Linton and District Progress Association donated \$262.92, which represented the shared proceeds from the Fashion Parade held last November in the Blue Room. And Susie's on Sussex, Linton's own recycled clothing store, donated a total of \$200.00 over the year.

We were also fortunate to receive a couple of generous donations from individuals towards our work with family heritage in Linton. However, as well as these substantial donations, since we obtained tax deductibility status last year, we have received a steady stream of smaller donations, that have all added up, and will be used to better preserve and present our archival resources.

Maintenance issues

The maintenance of the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre and the Library continue to be issues about which we are concerned. Despite inspections by the Shire, repairs to both these buildings, such as replacement of rotting window frames, spouting, and weatherboards, and damp-proofing, are still urgent. Apart from our electrical upgrade, for which we obtained a grant, nothing has changed with regard to this issue.

Linton Involvement

In the course of the year, the Society has been involved in a number of ways with the Linton community:

The Linton State School Council requested any reports or photographs relating to Principal Allan McKinnon who was retiring from the school after 19 years. We were able to provide copies of photographs from our collection and of newspaper clippings from our scrapbooks, which became part of a power point presentation and a display at a farewell function for Allan that took place in February 2012.

A representative from the Linton **Bowling Club** asked us for any historical information or photos we might have of the Linton Bowling Club, in particular of the foundation members, for a display they were creating.

For many months, we have worked with the architect for the **Linton Community Precinct**, where the Rail Trail meets the Glenelg Highway, providing historical information and photos for the 8 interpretive boards that will be part of this project. These will cover various aspects of Linton's history, for example, the gold rush, civic development, the Linton family, the Chinese settlers, etc. Visitors who stop here will hopefully learn something of the town's history while they pause for a rest, and this might also encourage them to explore a bit more of the town.

On **Anzac Day** this year, the Historical Society laid a wreath at the war memorial, as it always does, in memory of all the local men and women who served in both World Wars.

Research requests

In the course of the year, in my role as Research Officer, I have responded to 16 individual requests for help with local and family history research. Some of these have been straightforward and not involved much work, others have been complicated and involved ongoing correspondence with the person who has inquired. In the latter cases we charge a \$20 fee for research assistance because of the time commitment involved. Interestingly, the majority of these requests have come from non-members of the Society who don't live in Linton, but who have family heritage here. All of these requests are over and above the enquiries we get at Open Days when visitors to the Resource Centre can do some research themselves, with the guidance of the volunteers on duty that day.

Society Notes

Our newsletter, *Society Notes*, underwent a major facelift this year under the editorship of new committee member, Drew Hopkins. Now with 12 pages in an A4 format, with colour photographs, the newsletter includes historical news items (often including articles reproduced from old Grenville Standards), regular reports on Society business, summaries of talks by guest speakers at meetings, notices about upcoming events, and lots of photographs, both

historic and contemporary. It also became a quarterly publication, with editions now coming out in February, May, August and November.

We have had a lot of positive feedback about *Society Notes* in the course of the year. Our sincere thanks to the Society members who have contributed copy, typed envelopes, folded and put newsletters into them and posted them.

Plans for the year ahead

The Society plans to present and record other talks from senior current and ex-Lintonians as part of a ***Stories from the Elders series*** in order to preserve for posterity these stories from the early twentieth century in Linton. Our next one is in November, when we will have Joan and Rod O'Beirne speaking about their family history in Linton.

We have applied for a Commonwealth Government Volunteers Grant to buy a new digital projector and a screen so that we can reliably have power point presentations at History Nights, and in other venues in the community, particularly when we have guest speakers.

We are going to overhaul our museum display at the Resource Centre and make it more interesting and accessible for visitors. We will be working away on our photographic history, our cataloguing and the scanning of our photograph collection.

At some point in the next year, we will have to work on and adopt a new constitution. This is because a number of changes have been made to the *Associations Incorporations Act*, and new *Model Rules* are being drafted for all incorporated associations. It is likely that within the next twelve months associations will have to alter their constitutions to comply with these new *Model Rules*.

We will continue to try to attract new members, and hope for more members who have time to become actively involved with the Society. Essentially the business of the Society has been done by seven people, with the back up of about another seven who help with a range of important individual tasks. We are enthusiastic – still - and have plenty of plans and ideas to continue to make the Society relevant to those who live in Linton or whose ancestors once did.

Thanks

As I come to the end of my report, I would like to thank everyone on the committee for their hard work and diligence throughout the year:

Alan Giles, for his role as Vice-President, but also for being our handyman, and consultant on technical matters, and at times a community liaison person, to name just a few of his jobs in the past year.

Jan Cooke, for continuing to do a brilliant job in the rather thankless role of Treasurer. But also for her efforts at *Susie's on Sussex* over the road, which has in effect operates as a branch office of the Historical Society, enthusing locals and visitors alike about the Society and its activities. She and Susie also direct some of the profits of their recycled clothing shop to the Society, and I would like to thank them both very much for this once again. Jan and Susie also regularly clean the Centre and the Library, and have done a myriad of other organising and sorting tasks around the Centre.

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.

Drew Hopkins, for his production of Society Notes and for taking the minutes at all our committee meetings throughout the year and for doing so again tonight. His advice and experience have been important, particularly on legal issues, but in many more ways throughout the year.

Deirdre Nicol, who has collected, sorted and listed our mail for committee meetings and written a report on Society activities for the Linton News every month. She has contributed to the sorting and organising of our collection, as well as doing a lot of tea and supper making.

Warwick Madden, who has continued working on our photograph collection, and our computers, which has often been a frustrating job.

I also want to thank very particularly **Joan Giles**, who as Membership Secretary, has continued dealing with all the administration associated with our members, as well as many other admin tasks besides. She has done hours of work on cataloguing, sorting, filing, and generally keeping our affairs in order, and is a wise and willing helper around the Centre.

As well as these people, I would like to acknowledge the support of others who have taken on specific jobs around the Society. To Tim Cooke for lawn mowing and wood supplies, to Chris Grigg for lawn mowing, to Jenny Stuart for typing the envelopes for *Society Notes*, to Kath Blackwell for help with computer cataloguing, for doing the gardening, as well as advice in her capacity as Cemetery Trust Secretary, and to Del Atkinson for her efforts with our cataloguing tasks.

Finally, I want to finish by stressing the vital role of local historical societies as the custodians of the history of a community. I said this last year, but I think it bears saying again. We are the repository of the memories of the people of this town and district, both past and present. A community with a strong collective memory, a robust sense of its past, will have a strong sense of its own identity, which will lead to a more viable and confident future.

In order to do this task we need all of you. So, a big thank you to you all for coming out tonight to our Annual General Meeting. Your interest and support for the Linton Historical Society is much appreciated and is vital for its prosperity.

Do you have a red dot on your Society Notes?

Have you paid your membership subscription?



If your copy of *Society Notes* has a **red dot** on the front page, this is a reminder that you have not yet paid your annual subscription. Please forward your Renewal Form, with payment, to Joan Giles. **Linton & District Historical Society, PO Box 41, 69 Sussex St., Linton 3360.** Family subscription: \$25; Single subscription: \$20. Please make cheques payable to: Linton & District Historical Society. Any queries? Please contact Joan Giles: 5344 7424.

the Bulletin board

- **Next Open Days** – Sundays 11 November and 9 December 2012, 10 February 2013
Please Note the new opening times – formerly from 1:00 – 4:00 pm, but now 2:00 – 5:00 pm.
- **Monday 19 November** is our next **History Night** – **Joan and Rod O’Beirne will speak on their family’s memories of old Linton.** Please note the meeting will be held in The Shire Offices, Sussex Street, Linton (opposite the Letty Armstrong Resource Centre), at 7:30. Join in the discussion and supper.
- **Christmas Dinner**



Please see our notice on page 6 regarding the Christmas Dinner on Friday 7 December

- **Society Notes** is now a quarterly publication. The next issue will be February 2013.

- **Welcome to new members:** Merle Hathaway, Gabrielle Keating, Ken McLachlan, and Cliff, Julie and Travis Sinclair.

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)

Secretary and Editor Society Notes: **Drew Hopkins** (5344 7386; 0439 895 007); email: drewhopkins47@gmail.com

Correspondence Secretary: **Deirdre Nicol** (5340 3507)

Membership/Subscriptions: **Joan Giles** (5344 7424)

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

Society Address: PO Box 41, 69 Sussex St., Linton 3360. **Website** www.lintonhistory.org.au

(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.



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