

INVERLOCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY Inc.

Newsletter No. 255Jan./Feb. 2021



Following the 1996 Olympics at which Inverloch's Drew Ginn won gold, the Bill Ramsey building of the 1930's, was painted up suitably to celebrate his victory and town visit. The building has had many frontal changes, registering the many business usages it has undergone.

FROM THE PRESIDENT.

Despite the fairly torrid time all Victorians have had in the past twelve months, the year 2021 still seems filled with apprehension, questions and doubt. If we had a crystal ball, I'm sure we'd better plan our new New Year. Here in Inverloch our last General Meeting was in February last year, when we met at the Anglican Church to hear the two lady representatives from the Amazon preservation group tell us of their plans and hopes for the future.

Because further meetings could not be held in 2020 last year, it was impossible to hold our Annual Meeting, so the current office bearers have continued on with the business end of the Society.

Our first General Meeting for the year to be held on Wednesday 24th. February at 2pm. will also be our Annual Meeting. This will fulfill our legal obligations. It will be held at the Inverloch RSL.

All positions will be declared vacant, and every member will be entitled to stand for any position. Our Secretary Lynn Kirk will not be seeking re-election, and it is hoped Lynn will continue with the great work she has commenced in the Green Shed in organizing and the listing of the contents. I have been highly appreciative of the secretarial work Lynn has done, and the Society must be grateful for the organized and proper manner she has conducted her stewardship. Thank you Lynn!

Looking ahead to this year - under normal circumstances, the Annual Meeting for 2021 will be held in the period around July / August. If I am re-elected President this February with Harry Dunn as our Treasurer, we will not be standing for office at the July/August meeting. I have been your President for five years, and the time has come for a new President. I wish to move on to other matters and activities.

Both Harry and myself are stating our intentions early to allow every member to consider their position. Hopefully in the fullness of time, we will see new blood, new efforts and a new direction in the further promotion of the Inverloch Historical Society, its objectives and activities.

Since our last Newsletter the following items of news are recorded :-

(1) All Historical Society material stored at Terry Hall's farm for many years has now been moved to the Green Shed. We are appreciative to Terry for storing such a large quantity. The material now stored is still to be examined, stored correctly and recorded.

(2) At very late notice, the Manager of The Hub asked if we would mount an exhibition under certain, strict COVID conditions for the whole of January. There would be no floor displays as in previous exhibitions, but simply exhibits on the wall. This was agreed to, and with the help of Ray Burt, Harry Dunn and Lloyd Bennetts, a

pleasing and visually interesting exhibition was achieved. We were not permitted to supervise the exhibition, as is our usual way. All display pictures were offered for sale. The display will be removed at the end of the month.

(3) Despite COVID 19, the RSL asked if we would like to make a presentation on November 11th. - Remembrance Day. This was completed using totally Australian flowers. Thank you to my wife for her work in this particular effort.

(4) Because of COVID 19, the Society were not involved in three activities and displays that usually accompany the December/January holiday period - namely displays at the Angling Club, the Wooden Boat Groups Australia Day Weekend and the opening of the Rocket Shed. The Rocket Shed display has still to be arranged, but this will be completed during 2021.

(5) In preparation in the days before the unexpected January Exhibition, a tremendous amount of work was completed by Ray Burt at the busy time of Christmas. This involved 23 new picture frames and the selection of new pictures from our rapidly increasing catalogue. The presentations at the exhibition are for sale at \$65.00 each, whilst the larger canvas prints at \$180.00 each.

(6) In furthering the storing and preservation of items stored in the Green Shed, we have purchased 3 large steel cupboards. The Leongatha Newsagency have been most cooperative in their supply, which included delivery to the shed door!

Finally - following the meeting at the RSL on Wednesday 24th. February 2021, the Green Shed will be open for inspection by members. We would like all members to see how far we've come in the storage and preservation of all our important materials. The Bass Coast Council are to be thanked for the availability of the storage to us.

JOHN HUTCHINSON.

"RICKETY ROCKETS"

The Inverloch ROCKET SHED near the Glade, has long been commented on.....

The following portion from a newspaper article, was taken from 'The Wonthaggi Express' - December 21, 1953.

"For six bob a day (60 cents), at the turn of the century (20th), men who had never been closer to the sea than to wash their feet on a hot day, became experts at maritime rescue work!

Under the captaincy of the late Tim Keyes, a well known figure on the waterfront, practice was held once or twice a year. Old residents chuckle at the thought of those practice days.

** One day a rocket, towing a rope and screaming like a jet, landed BEHIND its launchers, in a back yard in the town!*

** Tethered horses with harness trailing, galloped off, and were pursued by owners muttering profanities against the rescue brigade!*

But the 1928 New Year's Day Carnival sealed the Rocket's doom for all times. Instead of heading seawards, it charged at right angles towards the pier packed with people. Onlookers fell on their faces as the smoke-belching rocket roared towards them. It just cleared the pier railings. Four people were treated at the Wonthaggi Hospital for rope burns.

Since that memorable afternoon, apart from a periodical police inventory, the gear has remained untouched. If it's ever called upon the rescuers will be in greater danger than the rescued!

The 'report' from the paper makes interesting reading. Numerous stories exist about the Rocket, and as the years roll on, one wonders of their credibility. One story claims that the Rocket was fired during a practice, and instead of heading in the correct direction, it managed to pass through a house, down the long Edwardian passage, out the back door, and hit a boat resting in the house back yard!

A real mystery in Inverloch relates to what has actually happened to the original Rocket and its equipment that was housed in the Rocket Shed. The Society would welcome any clues or knowledge of where it actually is. Now there's a good mystery to solve!

Right now, after considerable expense and the practical work of the Inverloch Men's Shed, our model of the Rocket along with the rocket man, will eventually sit in the Rocket Shed as part of a permanent display.

SUBSCRIPTIONS 2021

We've had a welcome response from many old members. I would urge everybody to continue their membership. Remember our next meeting on the 24th. February 2021 at the RSL at 2pm.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP (Individuals) - \$20

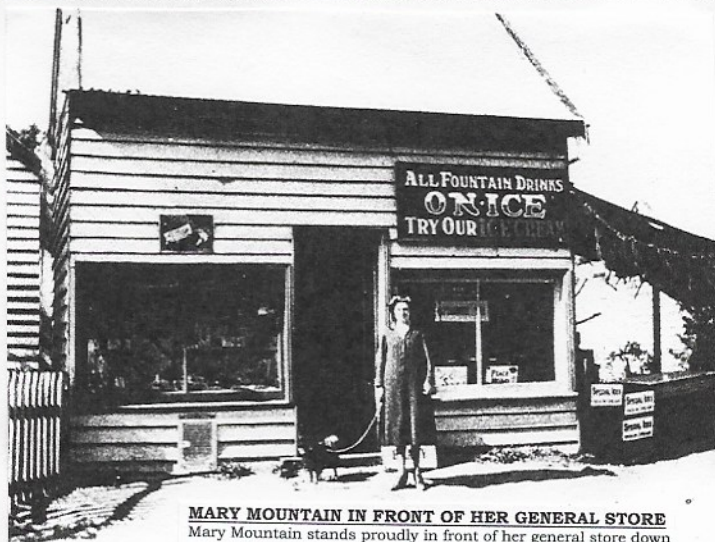
COUPLE MEMBERSHIP - \$32.00

Please send your subscription to our Treasurer C/- Box 46, INVERLOCH, 3996. Please clearly mark your name and any update in your address or e-mail address. **THANKYOU!**

FROM ONE 'BARD' to ANOTHER!

"Treasurer Harry likes doing the books, 'Doing figures', he says, 'is great fun'. He works through the night to make everything right, Till finally all's dusted and Dunn".

Submitted by an appreciative fellow 'Bard'.



MARY MOUNTAIN IN FRONT OF HER GENERAL STORE
Mary Mountain stands proudly in front of her general store down near where The Esplanade is today.

SOME EARLY INVERLOCH HISTORY BY WILMA HOPPEN, THE DAUGHTER OF BILL RAMSEY & MARY MOUNTAIN.

My grandmother and grandfather went to Korumburra where he was an undertaker. The marriage split up after five or six years and my mother, Mary Mountain, was the only child of that marriage.

My mother and grandmother came to Inverloch and opened or bought the shop down the road to the jetty in 1904 and she had it until the 1930's. She then sold it to Mrs. Donahue and from there it was given to Mrs. Myrtle Nelson, who was Mrs. Donahue's eldest daughter. They constructed the Tarax Bar next door and it was there until the 1970's. My mother went to school in Inverloch and I went to school in Inverloch and then taught at the Inverloch School. My son also started his schooling in Inverloch. I think we were the only ones, along with the Cuttriss's to have three generations attend the Inverloch school.

My father (*Bill Ramsey*) came from Wonthaggi after working at the Co-op store. He opened a grocery store in Hans Fischer's building and then in 1933 he built the shop which is still standing (*corner of William and Hopetoun Streets, facing up A'Beckett Street*), and remained in that store until 1948 when it was sold to Hingston's who only had it for a short time and then sold it to Stan Freeman and then to the Banks brothers - Rob and Bernie.

In the wartime (1939-1945), my father was in charge of manning the Aircraft Spotting which was up on the top of the Esplanade Hotel. You had to climb the stairs on the outside of the building. It had to be manned 24 hour a day. My mother, father and myself spent an enormous number of hours there when no one turned up. I was about six or seven then and used to do 3 to 4 hours in the daytime and they did the night



A 1933 photo of the new RAMSEY'S GENERAL STORE which included a bakery, delicatessen, farm supplies, petrol, oil, garage and estate agent. The butcher's shop opened by the Banks brothers is far right.

time. One heroic rescue occurred when we spotted a plane which was being flown by a young airman who had lost his way from Sale - we spotted him and redirected him back to Sale because he was flying in the wrong direction. This was the only exciting moment out of all those hours spent on top of the pub roof.

Of course, the other dramatic thing that happened was the murder in Inverloch. I was a baby in those days, and Soderman (*who was charged with the murder*), was actually working on the Sustenance in Inverloch, and Dad was the one in charge of the Sustenance Group. They were planting marram grass and doing little jobs like that. Soderman used to come into the shop and spend some of his money, and often after hours. Afterwards my mother was always horrified that he had nursed me on several occasions and always had to know where I was because she had been so closely connected with him. New Year's Day was always very busy and you all know the story of what happened.

Dad was the local Justice of the Peace (JP), the only one in Inverloch. And he ran the Magistrate's Court and did the sentencing of people who were drunk and disorderly, so he was closely connected with the Police because most of them who came to Inverloch had no idea of boats and the sea and in most of those years when I was young, there was always a drowning at Inverloch. In those years, coming in and out of the Inlet was much more dangerous, especially the rip tide. Dad used to be in charge of the searches and viewing the body when it was found. So he was quite in with the Police and was involved with some of the stories and read the manuscripts from those days for the interviews with the young bloke they suspected. They caught Soderman in Leongatha eventually, and was caught for several murders. It was a traumatic time for Inverloch - no one believed it could happen!

** To be continued in our next Newsletter.*

INVERLOCH SUPPORTS AUSTRALIA DAY & REMEMBRANCE DAY.



ABOVE - Children at the Inverloch Primary School waiting to make their contribution to Remembrance Day by the singing of an appropriate song.

BELOW - A group of Inverloch local people get together to make music for Australia Day back in 2017. Outdoor music always inspires a happy time, what's more, the weather was fine!



NEWSLETTER EDITORJohn Hutchinson.

Reg No AOO33738Z / ABN 79652 460 / PO BOX 46 INVERLOCH VIC 3996 / 5674 6159 (Pres)

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION \$20 (Individual) - \$32 (Couple)

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