

# The Faraday Farrago

NEWSLETTER OF THE FARADAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

A BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 2 - Spring 2009

## Faraday Rainfall

by Alan Elliot

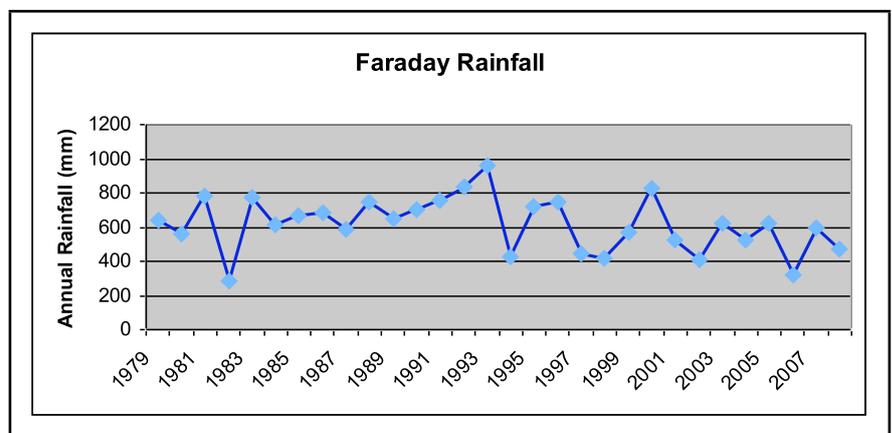
This simplistic graph is drawn from thirty years of daily rainfall data collected right *here* in Faraday. A number of characteristics are probably obvious:

- Our annual rainfall is very variable
- High rainfall years are usually followed by much lower annual rains
- The trendline from 1979 to 1997 shows an increase in annual totals
- The trendline from 1998 to 2008 shows a decline in annual totals.

Now for a few details which may be of interest.

The **highest** rainfall in the thirty year period was 1993 with **964mm**, the **lowest** was 1982 with **288mm**. Not surprisingly this preceded the 'Ash Wednesday' bushfires of 1983, which fortunately spared this area. Zero monthly rainfalls were recorded on nine occasions, five in February, and once each in March, October, November and December. The highest monthly total was **193mm** in June 1991.

The long-term average of **650mm** has been exceeded 13 times, the most recent being 2001, which is the second wettest year in the



period (**831mm**) whilst 2006 was the second driest year with **320mm**.

Rainfall to the end of July 2009 is **225mm** with the highest recording this year being **29mm** on July 12th. We have had many long, hot and dry summers lately; and also frosts one could ski on. Occasionally snow falls but melts

as it hits the ground, but in 1981 we had heavy snow to a depth of about 1 foot, which remained on the ground for several days, and of course also covered Mount Alexander.

(The mean elevation of Faraday is 1,500 feet above sea level).



## School Plantation Opportunity

VicRoads is planning to sell the triangle of land opposite the former Faraday School, including a small *pinus radiata* plantation, and will offer it for sale by public auction 'within the coming six months'. Our association has been registered with VicRoads as an interested party and will be notified prior to any auction.

Ongoing public ownership of the plantation site could be obtained in several ways:

- Request Mount Alexander Shire Council to negotiate with Vic Roads to arrange the transfer of the land to the Council.
- Approach the Minister for Planning to arrange a transfer of the land to public land as a Crown Land Reserve. This would require the establishment of a Committee of Management.
- Determine if Vic Roads would retain ownership and permit us to provide management of the area. The approach to be through the Minister for Roads, Tim Pallas, after seeking support from our local member - Bob Cameron, Member for Bendigo West.

If none of these approaches is successful a grant could be sought through the Local Member and either:

- Trustees are established, or

- A community advancement Co-operative Society is established.

Either option would mean our community is probably responsible for annual costs for rates and public risk insurance.

Another option would be to get the MAS Council to agree to accept the land if we raised the money for its purchase, and then we would not have to face the annual costs.

There is a list of grants given to various Committees of Management of Public Reserves by the Minister for Planning. They range from recreation reserves, camping reserves, public halls, lake foreshore, historic reserve & sports grounds. These grants used to be made on an irregular basis by the old Lands Dept.

Your Committee has discussed the following ideas for this area if we are successful in acquiring it.:

- Retain and conserve the existing plantings, and develop a plan for future plantings
- Establish and maintain a community recreation and BBQ area
- Develop a children's playground area
- Seek appropriate funding to develop and enhance the area

If fund raising is necessary this could be done through a Trust fund. Contributions to such a fund would of course be totally voluntary and at each members absolute discretion, with all monies held in a formal Trust account.

It is important of course to recognise that acquisition of this land is **not** the reason for the formation of the Faraday Community Association. Alternative sites and opportunities may become available for community facilities.

**As set out in our Application for Incorporation, the aims of our organisation are primarily to provide opportunities for community interaction and social engagement, and to celebrate the people, heritage and history of our region.**

### Advertisement

#### **WALK AND TALK:**

*If you are keen to walk regularly on a week-day basis in the Faraday area - and you're looking for a friend to walk with - I'd be pleased to hear from you. I hope to organise a regular (morning or afternoon) walk, initially for about an hour. Don't be put off if your time (and fitness level) is limited. An hour's walking, every week, is a good start to getting a bit fitter! Please phone if the idea of a regular walk appeals to you.*  
Jill Loorham- Ph 5474 3206

## Our District Before Gold

By Peter McCarthy

Edward John Eyre passed through the Mount Alexander district on his journey from Sydney to Adelaide with three hundred cattle in February 1838. Major Mitchell's report had attracted new settlers who were looking for grazing land and soon Dr William Barker's Mount Alexander run of 30,000 acres adjoined Heape and Grice's Mount Alexander run of 119,000 acres. Other early settlers in the district were Bryant, Cameron and Orr.

These new settlers found a land already occupied by the Dja Dja Wurrung people and many confrontations took place although George Augustus Robinson, the Chief Protector of Aborigines, was present in the district, having left his project at Flinders Island in February 1839. Much of the real work was done by the Assistant Protectors such as Mr Parker.

Near Heathcote, Henry Munro had three serious confrontations with groups of aborigines in the latter part of 1839, on one occasion being severely wounded, and had his station "held up" by a party of 36 in January 1840. At Mt Alexander, Grice survived multiple spear wounds in April 1841.

Alexander Mollison had settled Coliban Station on the south bank of the Coliban River near the present town of Malmsbury in 1837 after

overlanding from Sydney with his employees and stock. Around the same time Charles Ebdon settled on the opposite side of the river.

To the north, the notorious Porcupine Inn was situated north of the present town of Harcourt, just west of the present railway overpass. It was first licensed to Samuel Hawkins, a retired Sergeant Major, in 1846 when the following announcement appeared;

*"Mr Hawkins...has resigned the sword and commenced business as an innkeeper, having opened the Porcupine Inn, at Mount Alexander. From the well known civility of Mr Hawkins, in his military capacity, combined with the convenience of his establishment, there can be no doubt he will receive a due share of public patronage and support."*

Sutton Grange station was settled by Mr Cobb, but by 1847 was owned by W.J. Morton and the famous stallion Electricity stood at stud there. The scientific names in Electricity's pedigree reflect the fascination with science at that time:

*"He is a bright chestnut, of great power and symmetry; was bred by Earl Fitzwilliam, in Yorkshire; was foaled in March, 1836 ; he is by Medore ; his dam Hydrogen,*

*by Comus ; grandam Nitre, by Precipitate"*

In 1848 a regular weekly mail service was established "From and to Mount Macedon and Johnson's Inn on the Loddon River, by way of Mount Alexander and Hawkins Inn, once a week". The north-south road from Coliban (Malmsbury) through the future site of Faraday to the Porcupine (Hawkins) Inn was now well established, with Hawkins appointed postmaster, and the mail route extended to Swan Hill.

Bushrangers were a problem along the route, as in this example from early 1849 that must have happened very close to the future Faraday:

*"On Tuesday last a man was proceeding from the interior, mounted on a horse, and after receiving a few pounds, wages due to him, and when a few miles at this side of the public house of Mr. Hawkins, Mount Alexander, was pounced upon by two ruffians, one on horseback, who presented a pistol at him, and threatened to take his life if he refused to surrender both his money and his horse. The man demurring, he was quickly dismounted, his pockets searched, and a £5 order taken therefrom. Having (what is unusual) an old fashioned gold ring on his finger, it being a family keepsake, this the robbers demanded, but the other*

*refused to give it up. The fellows, after a few curses, carried off his horse, and after ten minutes absence returned, insisting upon having the ring. The other resolved not to part with it, and drawing it off, swallowed it, inviting them to come on if they wanted it, and take it out of his belly. The thieves, after a few more curses, went away."*

Some months later, Joseph Raleigh's store at Sutton Grange was robbed by "three Pentonvillains" who had been working for Raleigh until a few days previously and shortly after Elijah Levi, a hutkeeper for Robert Gibbon, was convicted of absconding and drinking his advance allowance of 24 shillings. In late 1850 John Heading, a shepherd on

Ravenswood Station north of the Porcupine Inn, was found brutally murdered.

But this world changed forever with the discovery of gold here at Golden Point, Faraday in September 1851.

**An extremely enjoyable General Meeting was held in July at the Old School House - now Jill Loorham's home as the following photos will testify.**



**Thank You**

To Strategem Financial Group Pty Ltd for providing the printing facilities for our first newsletter. A brilliant community minded gesture.

The next meeting of the Association will be at 109 Faraday-Sutton Grange Road on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> September at 6:30pm for 7:00pm and everyone is invited. Please bring a plate and drinks.

A fundraiser will be held at Harvey Norman in Bendigo on Australia Day next year. A couple of volunteers will be welcome for a few hours on the day. Details to emerge closer to the event.

BBQ lunch Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> September at 34 Musselwhite Drive from 12 noon onwards. BYO meat, drinks and dessert (if that's your fancy!). Salad bread and sauce will be provided.

**Membership Application: Please cut or tear off and forward, with annual fee of \$10.00 to: Robert English, Treasurer, Faraday Community Association. PO Box 58, Elphinstone 3448**

- Name:
- Address:
- Email Address:
- Phone: