

# The Faraday Farrago

NEWSLETTER OF THE FARADAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.

A BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 3- Summer 2009

## Faraday Becomes a Town By Peter McCarthy

Back in 1825 King George IV issued instructions to Governor Darling to divide the Colony of New South Wales (which then included Victoria) into counties, hundreds and parishes. The “hundreds” have dropped from use but the counties and parishes are still used to define property under our land titles system. The parishes for the settled regions were first proclaimed in 1835 but the subsequent sequence of division and the reason for the choice of names is often obscure.

The Parish of Faraday, within the County of Talbot, extended about 1.5 kilometres beyond the current Expedition Pass Reservoir toward the Parish of Chewton, and included the Welsh Village. To the south it was bounded by Bubb’s Lane and Pollard’s Road from the Parish of Elphinstone. The eastern boundary with the Parish of Sutton Grange was Green Lane, and the northern boundary with the Parish of Harcourt was Milford Road. Most of Mount Alexander itself lay within the parish of Sutton Grange.

The world of the Mount Alexander squatters was

turned upside down with the discovery of gold at Golden Point, within the Parish of Faraday, when this letter appeared in the Melbourne Argus:

*DEAR SIR,-I wish you to publish these few lines in your valuable paper, that the public may know that there is gold found in these ranges about four miles from Doctor Barker' home station, and about a mile from the Melbourne road ; at the southernmost point of Mount Alexander, where three men and myself are working.*

*I do this to prevent parties from getting us into trouble, as we have been threatened to have the Constables fetched for being on the ground. If you will have the kindness to insert this in your paper, that we are prepared to pay anything that is just when the Commissioner in the name of the party comes.*

*JOHN WORBEY.  
Mount Alexander Ranges,  
Sept. 1st, 1851*

Thus Faraday was the centre of gold discovery in our district and one of the richest surface gold discoveries in the history of the world.

By late October 1851 the discovery of gold at Bendigo

had been announced and soon the road through Taradale and Sawpit Gully (Elphinstone) to Bendigo was well established. A good creek crossing was established at the head of Expedition Pass. The road along Golden Point ran on the southeast side of the gully, joining the Melbourne road south of the crossing, while the road to Sutton Grange started north of the crossing, to avoid the need for a second crossing. Thus the dog-leg across the Calder has always been there.

Nearly all of the towns along the roads to the gold diggings were established at creek and river crossings because there was a need for water supply and accommodation (and a grog shop) when the creek was running, or bullock teams were bogged in the mud. At Faraday, Short’s Coffee Tent operated about where the Methodist Church stands today. This was a euphemism – unlicensed grog shops were usually called coffee shops.

In 1855 the Victorian government arranged for the survey of many new settlements and Faraday was surveyed by Henry Morris, assistant surveyor in the Surveyor General’s office, with his plan of Suburban and

Country Lots dated 1<sup>st</sup> June. The proposed blocks were marked out with stakes and trenches. On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, 53 lots varying from 5 to 280 acres were offered for sale at the government auction room in Market Square, Castlemaine, at an upset price of one pound per acre. The land was described as being of good quality, suitable for agricultural purposes.

Henry Morris's map showed a town centre of small blocks, with larger blocks surrounding it. Many of the blocks were bought by the same people and never separately developed. The proposed town centre never fully emerged but homes and business premises were built on various blocks along the Bendigo road and on farm-sized blocks further out. Faraday had become a town.

**PIONEER FAMILIES**  
By Alan Elliot

**The Ellerys**

Charles ("Charlie") and Sylvia Ellery are the most "senior living pioneers" of Faraday.

Charlie's great-grandfather, John Ellery and his wife Ann, from Truro, Cornwall, came to Australia on assisted passage, sailing on the "Prince Alfred", from Plymouth, in November 1853, arriving at Brighton, Victoria on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1854. A three month trip, which today takes 22 hours by

plane. They subsequently moved to this area, and had nine children, the sixth of whom, Josiah, (Charlie's Grandfather) married Elizabeth Ann Bolitho from Campbell's Creek, and lived and farmed at Faraday. Josiah and Elizabeth had thirteen children, the twelfth of whom was Charles Harold Bolitho Ellery, Charlie's Father, who was born in 1889. He married Francis Ernestine Bassett, and they

(Juniper) lives in Faraday, and Christine (Mitchell) lives at Harcourt. Christine was one of the pupils kidnapped from the Faraday School.



Teacher: Thomas Crabb.  
Back: E. Brown, E. Cabb, Clovelly Ellery(14), L. Howarth, A. Crabb.  
Middle: J. Howarth, Charles Ellery(12), W. Brandt, A. Ralph, Silas Ellery(12).  
Front: Raymond Ellery(9), A. Brown, S. Ralph, N. Brown, Keith Ellery.



Back: M Carr, Kevin Ellery(11), Carol Ellery(8), Nola Ellery(9), R Carr, L Salathiel  
Front: J Carr, R Howarth, L Carr, Christine Ellery(5).

had six daughters and two sons, one of whom is Charlie.

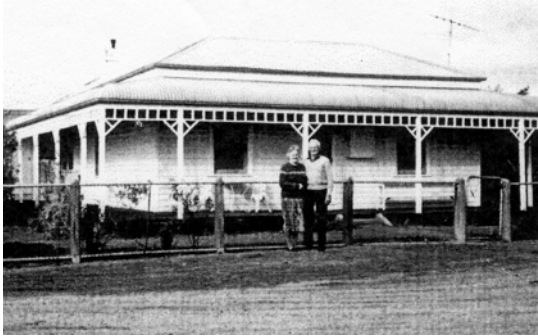
Charlie Ellery was born in Castlemaine in 1920 and has lived and farmed at Faraday all his life. He married Sylvia (Streader) from Boort, and they had five children, all born locally. Daughter Nola

The family had some 1350 acres of land at Faraday and Redesdale, and ran beef cattle and sheep, in addition to a fruit orchard.

As a boy Charlie attended the Faraday School and was taught by headmaster Tommy Crab. He remembers many pleasant school picnics and sports days held at Dunstons' Flat, known as the Faraday Common. Dunstons' Flat is on the south side of the Faraday-Chewton road (now known as Golden Point Road) adjacent to the small bridge East of Exhibition Pass Reservoir.

Charlie left school after completing his Merit Certificate (Year 8)). Not

because he **HAD** to, but because he **COULD**, and **WANTED** to. Charlie was very keen to work on the family farm, which he has done continuously since, for over seventy-five years. At just on ninety year's young, he can be seen almost daily on one of his two quad bikes, dog on the back, checking fences or moving and feeding sheep and cattle.



"Redruth" 1999 - Moon's Lane, Faraday

Their home, Redruth (a Cornish District name) was moved to the present site around 1930, from their property at Pryors Paddock, Faraday. This was accomplished by moving the house intact with the aid of fourteen horses. It is still in very sound and original condition, on their farm in Moons Lane Faraday.

The Ellery farm has always produced wool and beef cattle, and also included some thirty acres of apple and pear orchards. In early years, premium fruit was transported by rail from the Elphinstone Station to Melbourne markets, and also for export. Charlie and Sylvia also had storage in cool stores in Harcourt.

Sylvia recalls early challenges for a farming wife in Faraday. Mail was delivered to the Faraday School. Bread from the Taradale bakery, whilst Stonemans delivered groceries by truck from Castlemaine (the late Stuart Stoneman's father). Later, grocery orders were delivered to

the kitchen tables of Faraday homes from the Chewton Store. The first family car was a T-Model Ford, prior to 1920, and was one of the first cars in the Faraday district.

Our Shire has a policy of not naming places and roads after living persons, however, Faraday has an Ellerys Lane (adjoining Moons Lane) and a Charles Lane, named after Charlie's late father.

Charlie's sisters were all married at the Faraday Methodist Church and a number of deceased family members are buried at the Chewton Cemetery.

In 2007 the new wing at Mt Alexander Hospital was named Ellery House after Charlie's cousin Henry James "Jim" Ellery, a considerable benefactor of the hospital. Jim served in the RAAF during the second world war.



Opening of Ellery House, Mount Alexander Hospital, August 2007  
Photo: Henry James "Jim" Ellery.  
Foreground: Sylvia Olive Ellery (78) and Charles Harold Ellery (87).

For many years the Ellery family also owned the former Boyles Inn and all the land between there and the Faraday-Chewton Road on the west side of the "Old

Calder". They named this property "Hillsborough".

In addition to their present home property, Charlie and Sylvia still own the large paddock on the east between the "Old Calder" and the new freeway. This still has evidence of the original Faraday schoolhouse where the teacher lived and lessons were held while the permanent school was being built. Foundation rubble is still visible, along with the ancient cypress tree, a large mulberry tree and some tall poplars.

The Ellery family are in many ways synonymous with our district, and including Charlie and Sylvia's adult children, **FIVE** generations of this pioneer family have lived in Faraday.

Long may the Ellery tradition continue.

### RAINFALL DATA

Submitted by A. Elliot - local readings  
Sept 2009 84mm 17 rain days YTD 382mm  
Sept 2008 14mm 4 rain days YTD 331mm  
From the Weatherzone Web site: Redsedale, nearest recording station to Faraday:  
Sept 2009 80mm 18 rain days YTD 348mm

### Advertisement

#### Walk and Talk

*If you're free on Thursday afternoons and you would enjoy walking for about an hour with other people, then this little group is for you. A regular walking group on Thursday afternoons, has begun. The walk begins and ends at the Chewton pub and is definitely of the 'easy' variety. The 'talk' being just as important as the 'walk', the pace is easy and having company to enjoy the scenery, is lovely. If you're interested in participating, please be at the Chewton Hotel on Thursday afternoons at 4.30pm sharp. The walk is for about an hour and (so far), has ended with a celebratory dinner and drink after the first walk - and a longish drink, after the second one. It's good fun. Please phone if you're interested in joining in. Jill Loorham:Faraday : ph: 5474 3206*

## **SOME MUSINGS ON FARADAY**

by Ian Johnson

### **MAJOR MITCHELL AND FARADAY**

Mitchell was looking for good agricultural land on his trips and noticed an abundance of salt lakes and saline waters. He had asked Michael Faraday (who was described as one of the greatest agricultural chemists of his age-Ed) to assess the probable salinity in his travelled areas and its effect upon grassland, as most native grasses can cope with some salinity and saltbush a great deal.

From the Mount Cole area to Mt Byng Mitchell passed through some areas that are too saline for plants to grow near. At Lexton and near Campbelltown are parts of two such bands of saline country. As he became bogged at Faraday (probably near the new freeway), he would have noticed that the ground was saline too and he was getting a bit fed up with Inland Seas in the paddocks! It had been quite rainy and bogging was commonplace.

The new settlers did not know about anything much and let all the resistant grasses be eaten away by sheep and chopped down the trees which kept the water table low. Then they whinged that clover would not prosper! Recently Vic Roads sprayed the embankments with sterile rye grass whereas they could have planted what grows well, that is Common Wheat Grass, a native. There was a great deal of not wanting to

know and it has gone on for over 100 years.

If your garden is over-run with violets and blackberry bushes, it is not saline, but with gorse and spiny rush it probably is. However if neither prospers it is really saline. The garden plant that is most salinity resistant is broccoli, which is being promoted widely, and tomatoes. Olives are fairly resistant. Strawberries are not.

### **THE GREAT PLANT ANOMALY**

Fogs often arise from cool air flowing downhill from the east, but fogs RISE from the south west and are very dense along the freeway line at times. The area around Expedition Pass Reservoir has a great range in growing conditions and thus has a range of native plants not found elsewhere and is not all exotics. Bananas were grown here once and the Faraday Tea Gardens grew strawberries, cherries and grapes. It was on the alluvial ground at Barkers Creek where pears grew the size of cabbages, although I suspect the alluvials were filled with miners and their livestock's excreta.

### **THE GREAT LAKE**

Once a surveyor came our way looking for Mount Faraday and I was able to enlighten him, but he had never heard of Mount Ivor. It looms above Expedition Pass Reservoir in a low sort of way although Mount Faraday is a bit higher at a great 477m. Mount Ivor is west of the reservoir and just east of the pines. The marker was placed in the last months of the reign of Queen Victoria.

The Great Lake is somewhat older as it formed before the blocked water-course eventually broke through at Expedition Pass. Just run round along the 415m contour to find the edges. It seems a good place for a decent sized reservoir with the dam at the narrow part of the pass, but now it will never be made one. Why irrigators never used Expedition Pass water and instead had a reservoir at Golden Point with water from the Coliban to irrigate the Northumberland Pleasure Gardens may have been a bit of corrupt dealing. Possibly it was the Faraday Tea Gardens. Unusually for a gold mining town, the Ladies of Pleasure are not mentioned in all the histories.

The water supply in these parts has always been polluted with corruption. The original funding was to provide water for mining but water race rates also piped clean water to Castlemaine residents at twopence a thousand gallons.

In 1908, the Watt Government with Harry Lawson, an active local member, got fed up with the corruption payments being made from Government coffers, so they started the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission to take over most Country Water Boards which were losing vast amounts from people not paying and from actual theft. The Forests Commission was started for the same reason. However, all the citizens wanted more money spent so there were ways of stopping illegal and inadvertent leakages, which made some people unhappy so more ways were made to steal water and

were ongoing until very recently and used some imaginative processes to fill dams. (for the definitive story of our water supply read *Water for Gold*, by Geoffrey Russell – Ed)

The State Rivers and Water Supply Commission became established in 1911 and the Faraday Tea Gardens with all its fruit gardens with strawberries and the Northumberland Hotel closed in 1913. This also was the time most local gold mines shut down, as did mines across Victoria. There was good rain from 1906 to 1909 in these parts, and there was a war on in 1914 when the next great dry started. But the war eventually led to unemployed soldiers planting the pines.

It has always been us against them with one side the very honest Cornish and German miners and their churches of common people and on the other the wilder mob. Carefully read the *Diary of a Welsh Swagman* for personality insights of the common masses.

**SLATE MINING**

It is interesting to follow the slate mine line from Mosquito Gully Road to well south of Expedition Pass and see all the dozens of them as well as building stone pits. They often start at the site of a gold mine and then spread out, with one mine being found looking for the restart of a slate mine line. The level of expertise in the slate mines in Specimen Gully led me to research in old encyclopedias about slate mining in Wales and Cornwall for paving slabs.

One mine at Debole 26km West of Launceston fitted the bill. It had

been producing heavy paving since 1580 or thereabouts. Launceston Gully in these parts was the Cornish diggings, not that of wild Vandemonians. There is a slate mine close to the Nimrod mine, and later mining produced decorative slate behind Northumberland and Reef. There are vast numbers of pits for decorative slate and a few pits for slabs like building stone. However most Faraday houses and the Faraday School were built from surface-quarried granite.

**ODDMENTS**

Many bent horseshoes were on my place and a blacksmith's fire was found 20cm under the ground surface. Most of the big red gums on my place grew after about 1909 and nearly all have died due to dry conditions due to no seepages from the hillside. It is possible there was some heavy erosion during the great rains particularly the one of Jan 1<sup>st</sup> 1889 which started in these parts and dropped about 170mm in two hours. In Chewton no one wanted to know as a Mr Musselwhite came galloping downstream like Paul Revere telling the people the British were coming. It wasn't raining in Chewton and no one was looking at the lightning flashing - they were probably all drunk or recovering. The horseshoes were probably from where small boys took some of the high grade saddle horses for forage in the early days on the Colonial Oats, or kangaroo grass. (the story of John Musselwhite will be told in a future issue – Ed).



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**The next meeting of the Association will be held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November at the Red Hill Hotel at 6.30pm.**

**FARADAY FROLICS** Saturday 12th December, end of Faradale Drive. From about 7:30pm.  
 Bring meat, salads, drinks, chairs. BBQs, Portaloos, lighting and tables provided. Outdoors, with plenty of parking. The wet weather option (unlikely, but needed last year) is "Minto's" big shed which has power, water, lighting, fridge (2801 Old Calder Hwy).

An enjoyable casual general meeting was held at Therese and Brendan's home and an equally enjoyable bbq was held in September at Musselwhite Drive.



### Thank You

To Strategem Financial Group Pty Ltd for providing the printing facilities once again for our second newsletter. Another welcome and appreciated community minded gesture.

### Editor's Disclaimer

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**Deadline for articles to be considered for inclusion in the next (Autumn) newsletter is February 13<sup>th</sup> 2010. Please forward c/- PO Box 58, Elphinstone 3448 to the attention of the Editor. An email address is to be advised.**

**Membership Application: Please copy 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:

NUMBER OF CURRENT MEMBERS: 22