



# The Faraday Farrago

NEWSLETTER OF THE FARADAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.

ISSUE NO. 7 June 2010

## Faraday School No 797

By Alan J. Elliot

In the 1850's and 1860's in Australia, education was neither free nor compulsory. Two boards of education, the National School Board and the Denominational Board, operated in Victoria.

The National Board system provided a broad general education but owed no allegiance to any church. By 1854 the National School Board had established 'tent schools' in the district at Forest Creek, Fryer's Creek, Campbell's Creek and Milkman's Flat.

The prevalence of Denominational schools depended on the size and influence of local church going communities. As the goldfields opened up, the denominational Board realised the need to place educational facilities within the reach of the miners' children.

To meet this perceived need the Board established 'tent schools' which could also be used as places of worship on Sundays. Thus began the practice of school buildings as places of academic learning during the week and spiritual teaching on the Sabbath, a custom which continued long

after the establishment of more permanent buildings.

By 1856 there were fifty such tent schools scattered across the goldfields with a total attendance of over 3000, which still only represented less than 10% of the children of school age. At this time just on half the children in the colony of New South Wales between the ages of four and fourteen were receiving no education at all.

Dissention between the National and Denominational boards divided public opinion and in 1862 the Parliament created a combined board in place of the two rival boards, by passing the Common Schools Act in June of that year.

The Common Schools Act was later replaced by the Education Act of 1872. This act henceforth ensured free, secular and compulsory education for all Victorian children, and from that date the Faraday School became a State School under the control of the Education Department.

**Faraday School No 797** opened as a Common School in August 1869 with 31 pupils. Each student was charged nine pence per week to cover the cost of their education *and* the salary of the teacher. John Fleming, the first teacher, had

been an Inspector of Schools in Ireland for eleven years.

Construction of the school began under the supervision of a Mr Gibson, engineer of the Coliban Scheme. The original contractor left following the detection of a land surveying error which resulted in a halt to works and a protracted delay.

Ultimately, Thomas Muntz, surveyor for the Shire of Metcalfe and a second builder, Mr W Peucker, completed the building with the assistance of local men working as unskilled labour. This reduced the cost of the building to £140, £70 of which came from a Government Grant.

The local granite for the school building was quarried by William Salathiel from the property of John Musselwhite. (Evidence of this extraction is still visible today on the McCarthy/Matley property in Musselwhite Drive. The Sutton Grange School of similar design, is regarded as the only other school built of granite in Victoria.) The original chimney was extended and the fireplace rebuilt in 1875 to prevent smoking and the shingled gable roof was replaced by iron in 1881.

In the absence of a hall, the school became a social centre and meeting place for the

Faraday community and was the venue for dances, parties and concerts. It continued in this role until the early 1970's, long after classes had ceased.

By 1910 the school was flourishing and thirty two households signed a petition for a residence to be built for the teacher. A drop in attendance led to short closures in 1948 and 1951, but thereafter school continued for a further two decades.

Following the closure of the Faraday Post Office, the school was used as a distribution point for pre-sorted mail.

The windows of the Southern wall are thought by some to have been bricked over since the events of October 1972, which ultimately lead to closure of the school. However this was done in 1908 for relief from the severe summer heat .

It would, and did however provide a perfect screen for a sudden and dramatic entry to the building from the quiet Faraday-Chewton side-road.

Following cessation of classes in October 1972 the building and grounds continued to be used as an outdoor camping venue for primary schools, until its official closure in 1976.

Almost thirty eight years after the closure of the Faraday School as a place of formal education, some questions still remain regarding the precise events of that day in October 1972, and the investigations which followed. However, that is another story!

## Deaths in Faraday By Peter McCarthy

Perhaps the best known memorial in Faraday is to the two Musselwhite children, beside the channel not far from Sutton Grange road. Ten week old Elizabeth died in 1858 of "congestion of the brain". Her mother Mary Ann said "The child had been a little cross for a few days but I did not think she ails any. About sundown she has been in her cot as usual and I went out to put up some clothes. I came in again and took her up to give her the breast. I had no idea that she was ill, her little head fell back, she was always very pale. I felt alarmed and called out to Mrs Bray who was living quite close. She came at once." At the inquest doctor Robinson said "I have no reason to suppose that the child has met with any injury or violence of any kind."

Three years later, twenty months old Ann Musselwhite drowned. This time Mary Ann said "I was indoors and the deceased went out. I missed her only for a few minutes and thinking she had gone in the direction of the cattle yards. I went towards a waterhole where we get our water to put something to soak. I was surprised to see my child on the surface of the water. There is a little path down to it and not above ten yards from the door. I gave the alarm to the men in the yard, where I thought my child was. They came at once and my husband caught the child but she was dead."

The Melbourne Argus newspaper is searchable on line. The death notices give us

snapshots of Faraday history. In September 1891 a tragedy visited the McMahan family. Michael McMahan, a farmer, caught a bad case of the flu while visiting Melbourne and came home to be nursed by his family. His wife, son and daughter all caught the flu and the wife and 17 year old daughter died of pneumonia within a few days.

In December 1898 Joseph Ellery's daughter Elizabeth fell into a dam while drawing water for the flower garden. Her young brother found her floating face down and called for help. The father and an older brother worked for two hours to revive her, but without success.

When Ann Turner died of severe burns in November 1899, the verdict was accidental death. Mrs Jane Thomas died of heart disease aged 81 years in May 1901 - the Argus noted that she never in her long life had to call on the services of a doctor. Later that year Mrs Eliza Dainty died in Albert Park at the age of 78 years, and the paper noted that she was one of the earliest residents in Faraday. In May 1903 John Thomas, who for nearly half a century carried on grazing and dairying at Faraday, died at the age of 75 years.

A shocking accident occurred in December 1903 to a young man named McLean from Harcourt. He was working on the harvest at Faraday and standing on top of a high load of hay, receiving sheaves from a man on the ground. The horse in the wagon suddenly became restless and swerved and McLean fell onto a hay fork which had been left nearby with

the prongs pointing upward. He fell right on top of the fork and its prongs penetrated his body. He was described as being in a very critical condition, but there seems not to be a death notice.

In June 1906 Henry Jarvis, an old man, who lived alone at Faraday, was found dead in the fireplace of his cottage. His face and body were burned almost beyond recognition. It was thought Jarvis must have been seized with a fit, and fallen into the fire. His body was discovered two or three days later. For some reason this made the wire service and was reported nationally as "an old man's lonely end".

Archie Regamonte, an Italian charcoal burner, was found dead in his tent in December 1925. He had tied a string to one of his toes and to the trigger of a breach-loading gun, shooting himself in the head. He left a letter for his aunt in Italy.

Of course not all of the news was grim. As a follow up to the story of Boyle's Inn in our last edition, we find John Boyle and his wife celebrating their diamond wedding at their residence "Faraday" in St Kilda with a large number of friends and relatives. Both now in their nineties, they had come to Australia in the sailing ship Marco Polo and lived in Faraday for sixteen years before moving on to Mysia near Boort, where they raised three sons and farmed for 40 years.

---

## Dustan's Flat

By Ian Johnson

It is a place where people of the community will get together to preserve and maintain a historical reserve. It used to be a common and therefore was available for grazing but not tree felling and in

modern times not even firewood gathering.

If you want a block to build a meeting place on, you must buy the block. It may be possible with much arm twisting to build an open sided shelter close to the gate. The inset part should be big enough to park about ten cars.

It is a place to be managed or improved and it is already in good condition and has been well maintained.

I am on the Kaweka Wildflower Management Committee and our management plan is ten pages long.

It has these sections:

1. Beginnings - historical
  2. The Role of the Reserve
  3. The sources of finance to run it
  4. Maintenance, which in our case is a monthly working bee and individuals doing other work on an ad hoc basis
  5. The Special Features
  6. Wildlife found there and ways to keep it
  7. Fire prevention
  8. Safety
  9. Publicity meaning pamphlets to read before exploring the reserve
- on foot with dogs on leads with poo bags etc.

The main tasks as I see them are making a simple map, identifying the flora, which is mainly trees and some grasses. I saw very few signs of wildflowers or fungi. The weeds are widespread but have been managed, particularly blackberries. Cassinia (coffee bush is not a weed but disturbed soil coloniser). The area is granite bordering on metamorphics and the soils are much impacted from decades of animal trampling of the usual stock.

It has been affected long ago by channel leakage, but the channel

now is not used as far as I can see. It can be used for pedestrian activities, and benches could be placed in places of interest and walking routes could be made without any earthworks. It is suited to bushwalking on a minor scale, bird watching and the like.

We run our Kaweka reserve on what most sporting clubs deem is a pittance. Our total financial state varies between \$200 and \$400. The financial outlay varies between \$50 and \$80 a year.

---

We had a response to our article "Why do you live in Faraday" from Mark and Jan Dunn who have had a 22 acre property in Bubbs Lane since 2004. They have industriously revegetated it with 3,500 tube stock, combined with direct seed plantings. The property is solar powered and tank watered. They are setting up an environment in which they can live permanently when they retire. In reply to Mark's query "Where did the name Bubbs Lane come from?" Peter McCarthy has responded that Bubbs Lane was named after Isaac Bubb. He and his wife Mary built a granite house there in the 1850s.

---

## WANTED

Short or long lengths of used plastic or metal pipe (any dimension)- bricks and stone. Required for remedial earth works of gouged out gully alongside Faraday School Road.

Contact Jill: 5474 3206:Happy to collect.

Recent Event: Good food and company were enjoyed at the Elphinstone Hotel by some 15 members on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> May. We plan to do it again in August!

**LIST OF MEMBER’S GOODS AND SERVICES**

**Support these members who support our Association**

- Terry Collins..... Plumber, Faradale Drive.....0438 504 353
- Ray Fowler.....Master Painter, Faraday-Sutton Grange Road.....54743109
- Brendan McCarthy.....Photographer, Faraday-Sutton Grange Road.....0402 077 137
- Anthea Matley..... Granite Springs Olive Oil, Faraday-Sutton Grange Road...54742601
- Simon Moten.....Sanctuary Ridge Wines, Faraday-Sutton Grange Road..0431389201

**Wildlife Emergency.....13000 94535 or 13000 wildlife**

**Any financial member who wishes to be included in this list is asked to contact the Editor: ph:54742601 or email: faradayfarrago@yahoo.com.au. Members Products and Services will be included without charge in each issue provided membership is current.**

**Why do you live in Faraday?**

We want to know!

Just as we are interested in the historical records relating to Faraday, we also want to learn about our undocumented living history, past and present.

What’s your story, long term resident or tree changer, why do you live here?

Do you have any records that can help us find out more about this area, such as journals or letters?

We are very conscious that such a small community as Faraday with no town centre will easily be lost to memory if we don’t record our experiences and those of our long term residents and send them to a central archive for posterity.

(All copies of the Faraday Farrago are sent to State and National libraries.)

If you wish to contribute to your newsletter or even meet with one of our intrepid journalists to record your memories let us know by mailing to **PO Box 58, Elphinstone 3448 to the Editor or to our email address: faradayfarrago@yahoo.com.au**

**The next meeting of the Association will be at the Elphinstone Hotel Friday 6<sup>th</sup> August at 6.30pm.**

**Thank You**

To AMC Consultants for providing the printing facilities for this edition of our newsletter.

We welcome three new members:

Lynda Andrews, BJ Andrews and Brian Andrews.

**Editor’s Disclaimer**

While The Faraday Farrago makes every effort to maintain accuracy, the information contained within this newsletter may contain errors or omissions. To the extent permitted by applicable law, The Faraday Farrago disclaims all warranties, express or implied, as to the accuracy of the information contained in any of the materials in this newsletter.

Furthermore, The Faraday Farrago gives no warranty as to the content, sequence, timeliness or completeness of the information contained herein and that the service will be uninterrupted or that any defects can be corrected.

**Deadline for articles to be considered for inclusion in the next newsletter is August 13<sup>th</sup> 2010. Please forward c/- PO Box 58, Elphinstone 3448 to the attention of the Editor or to our new email address: faradayfarrago@yahoo.com.au**

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE 30<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

**Membership Application/Renewal: Please copy and forward, with annual fee of \$10.00 to: The Treasurer, Faraday Community Association. PO Box 58, Elphinstone 3448**

Name:

Address:

Email Address:

Phone:

NUMBER OF CURRENT MEMBERS: 35