



# Korumburra & District Historical Society

Newsletter Issue 55 • Autumn 2025

Established 1967  
**Korumburra and District  
Historical Society Incorporated**  
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ABN 76 768 108 144  
Korumburra Community Hub  
Little Commercial Street  
Korumburra

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**Monthly Meetings**  
Public meetings of the Society are held on the first Thursday of the month. New members are welcome.

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## From the Secretary

*We're hoping for rain and cooler weather with the coming of autumn.*

Our first meeting for the year was on one of those warm afternoons at 5.30 p.m. on 6th February. We're hoping that this time might suit those who would find it difficult to attend in the evening. We will see how this goes, and if you are reading this, and wondering about joining us, well please, yes we would love to have you with us. 5.30 p.m. at the Hub on the first Thursday evening of each month.

We are excited and pleased to have our heritage table installed. Much work has gone in to restoring this piece of furniture which was originally installed in the shire building in Commercial street, and was where the councillors sat during meetings of council. It is in an altered form now, but no less grand. Thankyou to Perry Neil and Helen Comer for

the work that has gone into having this all come about.

There is good progress being made by our members of the Rail Trail signage group.

Some descendants of Gabriel Pam are looking for information about the Pam family. An article in a local paper from 1920, tells us that Mr. Gabe Pam, a hairdresser, had installed an apparatus for electric face and scalp massage. The business was located in the bottom section of Commercial Street. Ray Walls, himself quite a musician, discovered that Gabe Pam played the drums, drums being a defining feature of jazz bands. He and his wife lived at "Bowendale" in Guys Road.

*Here's to a good year ahead.*

## Society Meetings

The next meeting of the society will be held in the Korumburra Hub building on Thursday 3rd April at 5:30 pm.

Visitors are always welcome, and we would really welcome new members.

We are more than happy to help people researching their families or seeking help in finding information on the history of Korumburra and the area of the former Korumburra Shire. Contact secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au. It would be good to make this contact to make an initial enquiry or to check that there will be people available at the Historical Society room.

## Remembering Mr Robert Campbell Edwards

By Dennis Conn

It would seem that due to the mists of time, the passing of a generation and population change, knowledge of this man in South Gippsland has all but been lost.

A memoir of him by author Oswald Stuart Green – “The Ensign Bearer” – Businessman-Churchman- Philanthropist, gives a detailed account of this man and his contribution to Victoria’s development and social history. The Ensign Bearer can be found on Google by typing in the name of that memoir, where a most informative and interesting read is to be found. While the memoir mentions his purchase of properties in South Gippsland, his contribution to the improvement of those properties and the business arrangements between himself and individuals, mostly those having shown initiative and hard work in order to better their own lot in life is not mentioned therein. That aspect is to be found in the verbal history of a man known to a generation of local and regional residents as Mr Edwards. Their business experiences and knowledge of that man being passed down to family members by those who had engaged with him, especially during a period of our history that was blemished by economic down turn i.e. the Great Depression and the 2nd World War.

The following are just a few of the details known about Robert Campbell Edwards, other than his time in South Gippsland, for which acknowledgment must be given to The Ensign Bearer, published by The Campbell Edwards Trust in July 1981. After being widowed, his mother encouraged by her brother who was living in Melbourne, emigrated to Australia as the effect of the potato famine in Ireland was still being felt. With her came, Robert then aged fifteen years and his younger brother Thomas aged fourteen years. The three of the afore mentioned emigrated to Australia in 1877 and lived in the Melbourne suburb of Richmond. Robert gained employment with a wholesale grocer in Bourke Street Melbourne, where he



*“Surely the memories of this man in particular should not be allowed to disappear into the mists of time.”*

worked in the tea and coffee department tasting and blending tea.

In 1881 he established his own tea and coffee business which thrived, Edwards and Company Ensign Tea had the slogan, “there is only one T in Australia”, one of his tea tins with that slogan on it, is in the Echuca Wharf Museum. The first five story building erected in Flinders Street Melbourne housed Edwards and Co. He purchased a great many metropolitan properties, both business sites and private homes. Robert Edwards was an outstanding business man and also deeply religious, he used his wealth to assist his church and those less fortunate than himself. The Burwood Boy’s Home (later

becoming the Burwood Children’s Home) was founded by Robert Edwards in July 1895. In 1922 the Edwards family set up the Robert Campbell Edwards Charitable Trust. Still active today as it continues to benefit many charitable organisations.

Mr Edwards was known to have purchased rural land in a considerable number of districts throughout South Gippsland and when he sold those properties, they were reputed to have been in a far more productive condition than when first purchased. Weeds such as blackberries, ragwort and thistle having been brought under control. He owned properties in the Nyora, Loch and Whitelaw districts to name just a few. At that particular time the greatest challenge came from the wild rabbits that were in plague proportions as they consumed pasture in massive amounts. Mr Edwards made every effort to poison rabbits on his properties but it was not until much later, rabbit proof fencing and biological control became available and rabbits were depleted.

Of particular interest to my wife Val’s parents was his ownership of several Whitelaw properties Stanley Ricardo spent much of his youth on a property near to the end of Sullivans Road, a property with a title of approximately eighty acres covering both sides of the ridge that the road followed. Mr Edwards owned and named that property Emerald Hill, a wooden home stood atop the hill, just a few metres south of where our brick home now stands. The property was never owned by the parents of Stanley Ricardo but most likely was used to share farm on. Unfortunately Stan’s mother passed away while they were living on Emerald Hill.

Stan and Dorothy nee Clark married at Loch in 1934; during the fifth year of the ten year long global economic depression that ran from 1929 to 1939. They took up share farming for a living, doing so on several South Gippsland properties. Stan and Dorrie were share farming

at Mount Eccles when Stan's father approached them asking them to come and live with him and work the Emerald Hill property at Whitelaw. That property had a cow shed, however the cows were milked by hand as electricity was not available during that time at Whitelaw.

Stan Ricardo's reply to his father was "only on condition that he could buy the property from Mr Edwards", and so an approach was made by Stan which resulted in a mutual agreement between himself and Mr Edwards which resulted in Stan and Dorrie's purchase of Emerald Hill. Stan built a new larger more modern milking shed when the electricity became available. It was during those years when they first dairy farmed on Emerald Hill that Mr Edwards owned an adjoining property to the south-west of Stan and Dorrie. His property was rather steep but had a hut built on the only flat area near the western arm of the Foster creek.

During that same period, being the later years of Mr Edwards life, he would come from Melbourne by train to the Whitelaw station. His son Campbell would phone Stan and Dorrie to ask if they could collect his father from the station and take him up to his property, which Stan did gladly. Campbell also asked if Stan would check each morning to see if smoke was rising from the chimney of his father's hut which would indicate that his father was active and OK, as he was no longer a young person. During those years of fiscal difficulty and the war time period when there was a shortage of fencing materials and some food or cooking items while many other items were rationed, Dorrie found it near to impossible to buy enough sugar to in order to bottle fruit. Mr Edwards would on occasions bring a bag of sugar with him from Melbourne for her and also fruit which was more affordable at the Melbourne markets. His generosity was much appreciated and never forgotten by Stan and Dorrie.

Stan and Dorrie always spoke very highly of Mr Edwards, they said although a frugal person, his preparedness to sell them their first property during such difficult times and gain ownership of a dairy farm that was to secure their future within the local dairy industry was greatly appreciated.

The passing of Mr Edwards in 1946 was lamented by local and regional residents who knew him, or had done business with him. His improvements to the rural properties he owned then later sold, or opportunities given by him to

those who laboured long and hard to purchase their own property during those demanding or difficult times and conditions, all served to enhance some aspects of the then local and regional rural industries. He through his actions and business arrangements provided greater employment opportunities and security for a number of people who were then part of a generation striving to build a secure future for their themselves and their young families.

I urge all Historical Society members and others to search on Google for the 'The Ensign Bearer' there one may read a very detailed and interesting memoir of the life and times of Robert Campbell Edwards 1862 – 1946, a man who left a legacy that remains and is ongoing today. The life and times of Robert Campbell Edwards and his contribution to our then growing rural industries in particular, the opportunities he had provided and the properties he improved, is not readily acknowledged within our recorded history. Verbal history is not looked upon as having unquestionable veracity as did the contents and publication of *The Land of the Lyre Bird*. Those who hold memories of having been given a verbal history of events regarding people and places, not only in South Gippsland but other regions, should look to recording those family histories and stories and pass that information down to following generations.

Surely the memories of this man in particular should not be allowed to disappear into the mists of time, and should be available within our Historical Society's records. There may well be other regional families that hold within their historical knowledge, a favourable acknowledgment of this man who was generous of spirit, hard working and made a significant contribution to the development of rural industries in South Gippsland. A man known by a generation of the Ricardo family as Mr Edwards, one who gave them their first opportunity to purchase their own property, to improve on and further develop their own dairy farm, while always remembering Mr Robert Campbell Edwards.

## A story from Bob Newton's Notebook

This story is taken from historian Bob Newton's as yet unpublished book. It is subject to copyright and is not to be used without permission of the author.

**James McConnell** was a returned soldier from the 1st World War. He had a blacksmith shop in Korumburra, about one kilometre down Shellcot Road on the left. His blacksmith shop was later set up in Coal Creek Historical Village then sadly was destroyed by council. James was the Blacksmith at the Sunbeam Coal Mine and also at the Austral Coal Mine; he is listed in the, 1926, 1927, 1943, and 1967, Land Rates.

I recall, as a kid, riding my horse into Korumburra to James McConnell's forge to get shod and, that my father sold hay rake tynes to James for 1 shilling a piece to make horse shoes.

## The Korumburra Bachelors' Club

This article was written by Tony Ware, formerly a resident of Korumburra, he now lives in Western Australia. He writes of the antics of a little known organisation.

### “KORUMBURRA BACHELORS' CLUB”

The initial version of same occurred in September 1923 with the Hon. Secretary, H.A. Johnson aka Benjamin Harold Agar Johnson. Agar was his mother's maiden name.

An inaugural ball was held on Tuesday night 9 October 1923. Tickets were, Double 10s, Single 7s and Ladies 4s. According to the GSA, despite inclement weather it was a great success, and included attendees from Kongwak and Leongatha. The music was supplied by Max Rankine's Jazz Band from Melbourne. This band which often appeared on 3AR, featured Tom Bexley (Violinist), Jack Healy (Saxophone), May Healy (Banjoist), Hal Rankin (Drums) and Max Rankin (Pianist).

At 11pm, balloons tumbled down for the ladies and, noisome toys given to the men.

Another function, a dance and novelty night was held in the Mechanic's Hall on Tuesday 6 November 1923.

The club then took a dive, and was resurrected in February 1926. In reporting this the GSA. noted, ' the previous club soon collapsed', ' president and secretary got married soon after it was formed', ' big chance the one just formed will go the same way' and that 'the bachelor's club is like the Inverloch races in that the scratching pencil is freely used among nominations'.

The office bearers were: President Mr. J.S.T. Moody, Vice President Mr J.L. Burnet, Committee, Messrs E.M. Lyne, A.E.N. Craven, D.H. Ferrier, R.B. Cope and D. Healy. Secretary and Treasurer, Mr. J.P. McGann.

In March 1926 the club held a dance in the Mechanic's Hall, a very enjoyable social in May, and in June formed a dramatic society. Mr H.E.L. Jones M.A. who has much experience in dramatic societies signified his intention of directing. The first performance, for which seats could be reserved at Hughan's shop, played to practically a full house despite wet and boisterous weather and was held in the

Mechanic's Hall on Tuesday 12 October 1926. Hughan's Newsagency doubled as a booking agent. Mr Hughan who took over the shop from W.A. Mackay, was an expert at repairing fountain pens. He was also president of the Traders' Association.

A complete list of acts can be found in the GSA, however, a couple of highlights were, Miss Gladys Hopkins performing the overture 'Country Garden' and 'Bachelor Gay', rendered by a number of bachelors. A farce by Mr W. Simpson as hypnotist 'Mr Koo-Wee-Rup-Ski', was performed. He had the assistance of Mr V. Gannon as 'Mr Leon Gatha' a hayseed back from the Royal Show who under 'hypnotic influence', played the piano as Percy Grainger.

At the conclusion lady members received pretty bouquets and the bachelors bouquets of mostly carrots, cabbages, cauliflowers and other greens. Cast and attendants then gathered at the Speedwell Cafe.

Just as an aside, in February 1926, the Speedwell Cafe was purchased by Mr A. E. Sponge of Kilcunda from William Henry Sandon, who then purchased Lehane's Ham and Beef shop at the top of Commercial Street. Sale was effected by H.A. Johnson. Then in July 1926 the Cafe was taken over by Mr A. Edwards. He did not have it for long as in October 1926, Mr T. N. Harlow of Warragul bought it, and finally in January 1928, Mrs McIntosh became the proprietress.

In early September 1932, William Sandon broke a leg and was admitted to hospital. A few days later he died aged 59 due to a blood clot on the brain. He was buried in Fawkner. His wife Emily passed away in Brighton East on 28 June 1949 aged 68.

Back to the Bachelor's Club, on 11 December 1926 a play 'The Private Secretary' was performed at the Bena Hall. Proceeds went to the South Gippsland Hospitals Fund. 23 August 1927 saw a meeting to consider reorganisation of the club's dramatic society. December 1927 they had a fundraiser for the ambulance.

In May 1929 they donated a guinea to the Korumburra & District Ambulance. August 1929 saw a Bachelors' Ball at the Loch Hall.

There is no more mention of the club until July 1935 when the third version was formed. Office Bearers were: President, Mr G. Fitzgerald, Vice Presidents, Messrs J. Burnet and F. Hicks, Joint Secretaries, Messrs J. Foley and C. Amos, Committee, Messrs L. Telford, J. Henry, F. Juratowitch, W. Garside, W.L. Proud and D. Fitzgerald.

On Tuesday 25 August 1936, the club entertained nearly 400 guests at their annual 'At Home' at the Korumburra Theatre. Guests came from Melbourne, Foster, Wonthaggi, Warragul and Leongatha. Fitch's a well known Melbourne band supplied the music. Unfortunately a car load of the musicians did not arrive until nearly midnight as they had taken the wrong road. (shades of the wedding party in the series Leongatha).

## Corduroy Roads

By Marion Shuttleworth

“Corduroy roads”, named for their resemblance to the fabric, have been around since Roman times or earlier, and have been utilised across the world. They consist of lengths of wood placed horizontally across a road to improve the surface. Here, in South Gippsland, they were used to keep the early settlers out of the mud. Pack Tracks were cut through the Great Forest, and this meant there was a ready supply of timber that could be used for this purpose.

The pack tracks and roads of South Gippsland were notorious for mud. Corduroy was often employed to manage this but, inevitably, huge muddy holes appeared at either end of a stretch of corduroy which caused more challenges for the traveller. The stretches of corduroy could be anything from a few yards to a mile in length. The mud was such that often sleds were employed instead of carts to transport goods as these could glide over the mud and corduroy better than wheels.

In “The Land of the Lyrebird”, Mr. T.J. Coverdale wrote “Spars of six or eight inches in diameter were cut into lengths of eight or ten feet, and laid close together, transversely to the road, along the worst stretches. The result as a liver stimulant was hard to beat, but as a road it left much to be desired”.

Such was their significance to the development of Australia that remnants of corduroy road have been listed on state heritage registers:

The Corduroy Road Ruins Historic Site, East Coonamble Road, Curban, Gilgandra Shire, New South Wales.

Corduroy Road, Toowoomba-Ipswich Road, Laidley, Lockyer Valley Region, Queensland.

Further afield there are multiple images of corduroy roads available to view on the Australian War Memorial website. They were constructed on the Western Front during World War I, and across South-East Asia during World War II.

Back in South Gippsland it is easy to understand why the pioneers fought so hard for a railway. In the early days goods were brought into the area via the pack tracks, but it was a slow and uncertain process. The ability to send perishable produce to Melbourne and beyond was limited due to transportation time. Anyone unlucky enough to suffer serious illness or injury faced an agonising journey to access healthcare. The arrival of the railway brought certainty and prosperity as journeys that had previously taken many days could be completed in hours - and in much more comfort. However, pack tracks and ‘corduroy road’ continued to play a role in the area for many decades as roads were gradually formed and metalled.

It is interesting to reflect on the fact that we still complain about the ‘state of the roads’ to this day!



1892 Commercial Street, Korumburra Source: K&DHS



Bullock team pulling a wagon or sled along a corduroy road. Location: unknown Source: K&DHS



1945 Bougainville Island. Pioneers of the 9th infantry battalion building a corduroy road through the jungle Source: Australian War Memorial

## Jean Davies ... her story

From "Took Testament Story Literally"

South Gippsland Sentinel Times, 30 May 1995

**Korumburra's first Presbyterian minister, the Reverend George Davies, was so deeply impressed by the story of the rich young ruler in the new Testament who was asked to sell all his possessions give the money to the poor and follow Jesus ... that the Reverend Davies did what Jesus had asked of the rich man ... he sold all his possessions, including his and his wife's wedding presents and gave the money to Korumburra's poor, leaving his family in very straightened circumstances.**

Reverend Davies came to Korumburra in May 1893, to set up the first Presbyterian ministry in the rough embryo coal mining town of that day.

The youngest of his three children, Jean Davies, who later became a doctor in Korea wrote a small history of the family's stay in Korumburra and her childhood in the growing township. The account was recently presented to us by Dr. Keith Bowden, well known historian and author of *The Great Southern Railway – Early Days of Korumburra*, and several other historical publications.

Dr. Jean Davies' story of her family begins with her grandfather in New Zealand. Her words follow:

My paternal grandfather who was practising as a lawyer in Wanganui in New Zealand came to live in Melbourne with his fourteen children where he thought their future prospects would be better than if they remained in New Zealand. My father joined the ES&A Bank and studied at night, graduating in Arts and Divinity at the Melbourne University.

His first charge in the Presbyterian ministry was at Allansford near Geelong where he married Anne, a daughter of the Reverend Thomas Hastie of Buninyong, whose long ministry there was famous. At Allansford my older sister Margaret was born. I was born at Buninyong in 1889 where my father had become assistant to the Reverend Thomas Hastie.

In 1893 my father, the Reverend George Davies, was sent to Korumburra to establish the Presbyterian Church there. On a Saturday morning of May 27 he arrived at the Korumburra railway station where he was met by a resident of Moyarra, formerly Jumbunna East, and with him



*Jean Davies (centre) photographed with two other members of Korumburra pioneering families, Ethel Shellcot (left) and Margaret (Maggie) Langham (right).*

rode out to Moyarra in pouring rain to conduct the church service the following morning in a log hut styled "The Academy". It was attended by three men. Back in Korumburra that evening he conducted his first service there in semi darkness in the unheated Mechanics' Hall on the Station street hill. The congregation comprised three men, two women and three children. It was an inauspicious start ...without a manse, without a church building, with a wide parish to cover on horseback. He rode about the parish on a pony until the district was opened up and some 'roads' were carved out of the bush and a buggy was provided.

My father later welcomed his wife and three children at the railway station where we walked across the tracks and descended the

steep stairway into Commercial street where a spring cart awaited us opposite Radovick's hotel. We were bundled into a cart and driven down Radovick street to Guys road where a house was provided. We lived there for nearly twelve months until a manse was built in 1894. Sunday School was also conducted there. The Presbyterian Church, the Church of England, forward looking, had purchased a block of land in the original land sale.

The Mechanics' Hall and the police station were also located on the hill as it was thought that the township would develop in that direction. The State School held its classes in the Mechanics' Hall. It was approached by a track that threaded its way up the hill through a sea of mud between tree stumps. In winter children were sometimes literally stuck in the mud and had to be pulled out.

Behind the manse there was a vast forest where we as children roamed, pretending we were pioneers until the great fires of February 1898 swept the trees away and Cooke's Hill became visible for the first time. A five acre paddock was cleared behind the manse where a cow was kept. We were taught by a governess, a Miss Henderson until we were of school age. School for us was not rigorous, but we were made to do the washing up.

There was a lovely garden at Kilynon, the home on Cooke's Hill, which was often visited. We had holidays at Inverloch, Buninyong and Ivy Hill, the Langham's selection at Ranceby. Mrs. Langham was our aunt. She was a daughter of Thomas Hastie of Buninyong. At Langham's place we learnt to play tennis and became familiar with farm life. Langham's house possessed a very good bathroom.

In 1895 I started school, attending the state school that was opened in Mine road in 1895. The Mechanics' Hall had been removed from Station street to its present position in Radovick street. The subway connecting Station street with Commercial street was a great boon and made the state school much easier to access. The children went home for lunch. Mr. Williamson, the head teacher, was a strict disciplinarian. He

# History News

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stood in front of the class with his cane tucked under one armpit and this attitude on his part was due to one of his favourite pastimes. It left his hands free to twirl the ends of his beloved moustache. This occupied a good amount of his time. Other teachers at the school were Miss Paliser whose subject was arithmetic, Miss Devlin, Miss Sevon and Andrew Bell who was an assistant. I had no aptitude for mathematics and was always a slob at sums. When Mr. Bothroyd the district inspector was due, the girls were asked to plait their hair and wear their best ribbons.

In 1905 the Presbyterians bought Woolf's auction rooms and converted the building into a place suitable for church services. It was situated on the railway side of upper Commercial street close to the entrance to the railway yards. Erasmus Williams had a smithy nearer the gates of the entrance to the yards and the trucking yards were situated on the upper side. Woolf was prosecuted for burning a large stump in front of his premises in Commercial street and endangering his neighbouring businessmen. The Presbyterians held their services there until 1900, paying the annual rent to the railways department during their stay. My mother used to put her infant son to sleep behind the organ which she played for Sunday services.

After school my sister and I were given piano lessons in what became known as the Central Hall by a Miss Macrae, who had her own piano there after the Presbyterians sold the building and built and opened their own church in Radovick street in 1900. I remember carrying a bucket of milk down Station street, through the subway and down Radovick street to use for the numerous cups of tea drunk at the celebrations.

In 1899 my mother was not well. She was suffering from headaches, severe enough to disable her. Dr. Strahan prescribed a sea voyage for her, a common prescription in those days. My father resigned his appointment for supply and took my mother for a trip to England. In the interval, Aunt Mary came to Korumburra and managed the household.

One of my uncles had gone to Korea as a missionary. It had been his ambition to be the first white missionary in Korea, but some Americans preceded him. His sister, Mary, went to Korea to look after him. Disaster struck and when he had been in Korea about six months he undertook journey with two ponies 330 miles

to Fuson. He arrived there ill and was taken to a Japanese hospital where he died two days later from smallpox. Aunt Mary came back to Australia and returned to Korumburra where she entertained our family with endless stories of her time with her brother in Korea.

I obtained my Merit Certificate in Korumburra and won a scholarship there in 1900. My sister and I were sent to Clarendon College in Ballarat where our mother had been a pupil. I was not very impressed with my stay at the college, as there was too much discipline and too much learning by rote.

My father was outspoken about several issues and his parishioners sometimes differed strongly with his views. He did not follow the usual routine adopted in a Presbyterian service at that time. He did not approve of the collections being taken up during the service and replaced it with a plate at the door for contributions. On one occasion he was talking to the congregation about the importance of children in the church and referred to them as the cream of the church. One of the mothers went to him to discuss the matter. If the children were the cream, was he inferring the parents were only the skim milk. "Oh no" he replied "you are the butter."

Having learnt to play tennis in Korumburra I had no difficulty in becoming a member of the school tennis team. We usually lost our matches against Methodist Ladies' College, as they had some outstanding players at the time. I also played in the school cricket team on the Melbourne Cricket Ground. It while I was at Presbyterian Ladies' College that I decided to be a doctor and spend my life in Korea as a missionary. I decided on medicine to be different from my sister, Margaret, who had a brilliant career in Arts and Education at the Melbourne University. More seriously, I wanted to find out what doctors knew. My former headmaster at Korumburra, Edward Williamson, was transferred to the Caulfield district where I met him one day. He asked what I was going to do with my life and when I told him I intended to be a doctor, he replied, "Doctors are no better than butchers."

My art class at Methodist Ladies' College was instructed by one of Australia's most celebrated artists, Walter Withers. His teaching about nature made a lasting impression on me and so did his reply to a question he asked me when we met one day in the Fitzroy Gardens. When I told him I intended to study medicine and go to Korea as a

missionary Mr. Withers said women doctors were no better than nurses and in his opinion no-one had the right to convert people of other nations to their way of religious thinking. Undeterred by the opinion of Mr. Williamson and Mr. Withers I set about trying to raise the necessary funds to pay for my university education.

I took the position of a housemaid at my home on the provision that I was paid the equivalent of a housemaid's wages. With additional finance from some relatives I eventually qualified at Melbourne University in medicine in 1915 and obtained a position on the staff of the Children's Hospital. The First World War was in progress. In Korea, a regiment of Chinese was raised to join the Allies in France. Dr. Maclaren who was in Korea, volunteered to go with them as the regimental medical officer. I was asked if I would take Dr. Maclaren's place in Korea and this I readily agreed to do.

In 1905 Japan had defeated the Russians in Manchuria and Korea became part of the Japanese empire. When I arrived in Korea I found I could not practise medicine until I passed a medical examination in Japan. Travelling to Japan by sea, I found myself in a six berth cabin, sharing it with five men some of whom were Russians. I was asked, "Weren't you afraid a man would run off with you?" To which I replied "No such luck". Armed with a long hat pin I considered I was able to look after myself, and as an added advantage I had inherited a sense of humour and quick wit from my father.

In Japan, along with some American doctors who were also required to pass an examination, I went before a Japanese professor to be examined on the subject of diseases of the eye. The Japanese professor was weak in English but we managed to understand one another. I was finally given a certificate stating that I was qualified to practise medicine any where in the Japanese empire.

Then followed a long career in medicine, not only in Korea, but also retirement there, work on a leprosy survey in the New Hebrides for the New Zealand church and work among the Aborigines in outback Australia.

# History News

## 100 years ago: 1925

- April 9 will see the centenary of the unveiling of the Strzelecki memorial cairn. It is interesting to know that a new plaque has been put on the cairn.
- The Strzelecki South School, the Poowong South School and the Burndale school all began in this year.
- The mechanics' hall was demolished in readiness for rebuilding.
- The Kongwak Butter Factory opened.

## Bookshop

The following books are currently available for purchase from the Historical Society by contacting the Secretary by email: [secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au](mailto:secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au)

The Land of the Lyre Bird	\$40
The History of the Shire of Korumburra by Joseph White	\$20
A Gippsland Union, the Victorian Coal Miners Association 1893-1915 by P.D. Gardner	\$5
Coal Creek Miners Memorial, Compiled by Doug Boston & Janet Wilson	\$10

## Membership Application

2024-2025

From 1st October 2024 to 30th September 2025

I/we .....

Of (address) .....

Phone Nos .....

Email .....

Agree to comply with the Rules of Korumburra & District Historical Society Inc. and support the purposes of the Association.

Signed .....

Date .....

**Fee for 2024-25 Financial Year is \$15.00.**

**For direct deposit of Fees our account is:**

Commonwealth Bank, Leongatha

BSB: 063 515 Account Number: 10014263

Please use your name and membership in the reference.

**Either post this completed form to us at the postal address above or submit it online.**

**To submit online:** scan and email this form to [secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au](mailto:secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au) along with a copy of your bank deposit receipt.

**New memberships received between 30 June and 30 September will expire on 30 September the following year, i.e., up to 15 month initial term.**

The committee would like to know if you have any particular interest, experience or qualifications.

**Find us on the web:** [www.korumburrahistory.com.au](http://www.korumburrahistory.com.au)

**For queries: Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/korumburrahistory](https://www.facebook.com/korumburrahistory)

**Email:** [treasurer@korumburrahistory.com.au](mailto:treasurer@korumburrahistory.com.au)

## Newsletter Contributions

Do you have any contributions, stories to share, or feedback for this newsletter?

Contact Janet Wilson, [secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au](mailto:secretary@korumburrahistory.com.au)