Casterton and District Historical Society Inc Newsletter

May 2010

Items in our newsletter:

The light on the Hill
by Jim Kentpage 1-3Hugill: thankyoupage 2-3

What's on in May

16th May Field Trip to the South East Family History Group.

Visiting Penola & Millicent historic sites. Meet at railway station at 10am BYO Morning Tea, Lunch & Afternoon Tea

19th May

General Meeting – RSL rooms, Casterton 2.00pm 3rd Wednesday of the month

Mount Gambier History Group 25th birthday celebrations

Sat and Sun 1st-2nd May 10am-4pm

Military collection, photographic displays, veteran and vintage car club display, philatelic rooms open, antique evaluations(Sunday 2-4 only)

Reidy Park Centre , O'Halloran Tce \$5.00 entry per person







Casterton Community Museum

The Light on the Hill at Casterton by Jim Kent

No, this is not another version of the popular song about the lights on the hill as sung by the late and great Slim Dusty. Rather it is, I hope, an enlightenment for those of you who may ponder how such an icon came to be placed on the side of the hill we refer to under various titles such as Shell Spirit Hill, Toorak Hill and Blueberry Hill.

Probably, unknown to me, there are or have been other titles directed toward this large hill. The purpose of this writing is directed toward that massive ornament that fascinates visitors to our town when they first observe it in all its glory, of a dark night.

So effective as an object is this icon it has become synonymous to our township, and is commonly copied on the mastheads of correspondence and in commercial situation.

Yes, I am referring to what some call the Fleur de Lis, or Lys, or the Prince of Wales feathers, or the Scout Emblem, or the Heraldic Lily or the Royal Arms of France. Choose your own title, but for me it is the Scout Emblem, and most assuredly a Casterton icon.

And this is how it came about – read on, my dear readers and like this Casterton icon of a night-time you will be enlightened.

Acting under instructions of the Scout Masters, Jack Peart and Eric O'Connell, the local scout group dug out this outline of their emblem, technically assisted by the girl guides, in the year of 1934 to celebrate Empire Day.

Each year following they would laboriously light up this emblem on Empire evening using tins filled with inflammable rags place in the outline. Cr Tom Howlett is credited with the idea of electric illumination of the outline following the SEC bringing electric supply to nearly Moodie Street.

Page 2 of 3

Casterton New Cemetery Mapping Project



We have now completed all sections just need Jan to finish up doing the bits and pieces on the computer then we will walk the walk again to recheck. Jan will contact all when

ready probably in May.





Casterton Community Museum

Historical Happenings 🔊

The Rotary Club accepted the task of doing just this and from then on each night the outline of the Scout Emblem automatically lights up at sundown.

So there it is, a magnificent emblem, quite startling should you be a stranger to these parts and be approaching Henty Street from a westerly direction on a dark night.

Like the Kelpie dog which is now linked to the township and district of Casterton and the genesis for the Kelpie Weekend and Auction, we can all feel exceedingly proud of our unique emblem on the hill.

The titles directed to this hill call for explanation, as at one time the Shell Oil Company had a large sign advertising their products installed on this hill. The Toorak name is a little derisory, inferring that the residents living on the hill were aligned to those of the upmarket Melbourne suburb of the same name. The Blueberry title came from a popular song referring to hill of that name.

So there you are now as you admire this famous local icon you can reflect upon its origin and give thanks to those whose labours make it possible.

As it is on common ground and under the control of our Glenelg Shire we can assume it will be there for all time.

Joseph Found

In response to the Casterton News clipping of 10 March '*Seeking Joseph*' regarding our family history search into the life in Australia of our Great Uncle Joseph HUGILL, who lived and worked at Ardno East, Strathdownie - thank you all so much for everything!

Thanks for the warm welcome we received in Mount Gambier and surrounds when we arrived and for the three lovely days of catching up! It was lovely to get to know people. To thank Beth Henke for her tireless energy and enthusiasm and for rallying people together and to her husband Keith; to Joe's (step) grandson John Ireland for giving so much of his time, conversation and memories. And to Ardno neighbours the McKinnon family – Leslie who along with reminiscences gave us the Casterton News clipping for posterity and who showed us around the Ardno properties with Neville; to Meryl and Trudy for making us feel completely at home; and to Colin for his recollections of working with Joseph.

Also thanks much to all those who have helped online - in particular The Casterton and District Historical Society's Ros Coventry and Marie Ross and thank you those folk who responded to the March newsletter request for info, including Katie Love, Margaret LaVanda, Sandra White, Debra Vaughan and Jean Astbury (nee Cotter).



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Please contact the VIC if you require any research requirements.

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If you would like to contribute to this newsletter, please contact Jan Lier for further information: ph. 5581 2070 or jlier3@bigpond.com or contact Ros at <u>roscov@iprimus.com.au</u> 5581 2875

We're on the Web!

Visit us at: www.ballaratgenealogy.org.au /casterton/historicalsociety Also to past associate Cheryl Elmes (hoping life's good with you) and to Jim who offered his recollections. Many thanks to Daryl Povey at Ballarat and District Genealogical Society. Also to South East Family History Group <u>www.sefhg.org.au</u> – Colleen and to Jan Lier who forwarded the Border Watch Thursday April 12th 1956 with death notice and report. I know there will be more people who have offered stories and recollections along the grapevine, but with whom we didn't get to speak to directly – thank you for your kind input, it doesn't go without our appreciation.

Further afield, in Joseph's research - thanking the assistance of the State Library of Victoria, Melbourne for Electoral Rolls and news clips; to Tricia Parnell and colleague Linda Gray and to Sheila whom I met a few years back, superbly helpful, at the Australian Institute of Genealogical Studies www.aigs.org.au; to Phillip Lomas at the South Australian Attorney-General's Department of Births deaths and marriages, Adelaide; to the South Australian Genealogy & Heraldry Society Inc. www.saghs.org.au; and to the National Archives of Australia who helped with inbound passenger lists www.naa.gov.au. If I have made the mistake of leaving someone out, I apologise ahead of time. Please remind me, you know who you are 🙂 And so full circle back to that glorious weekend in Mount Gambier and surrounds! The weather was great, we shared some wonderful home baking and fun meals out; and wild life ... even Kangaroos showed up on Beth and Keith's homestead (which for newbies was a real treat!) ... we learned so much. Be in touch anytime and of course further recollections always welcome! It was great to meet you all. Contact Details:

Alison (nee HUGILL) and Frank FLEMING 2802 East Covey Lane, Ozark, Missouri 65721, USA Email: <u>alisonfleming@centurytel.net</u>

Joseph William HUGILL came from the north of England to Australia in 1924 age 18 as a blacksmith, with 'only a bean in his pocket'. His father had been killed the year before in a Mill accident. Joe had worked with his brother (my granddad) with the blind pit ponies down the pit in Sherburn, Co Durham. Nothing is known of his life in Australia from 1924 other than he was probably a shearer; but from 1931-1936 Electoral Rolls show he is a labourer at Wando Bridge. Electoral Roll 1937 has him as a labourer at Ardno and we know while he is at Ardno, for some of that time he lives at a property he names 'Durham' after his home county in England. In 1953 he marries 'Belle' GAMMON (nee PENNY) of Ardno East. He dies age 50 of a self inflicted gunshot wound, after three days in Mount Gambier hospital, on 11th April 1956.