

Casterton and District
Historical Society Inc
Newsletter

DECEMBER 2013

Historical Happenings



Casterton Community Museum

NEXT MEETING:

Wednesday, December 18th at the Glenelg Inn - 11am, followed by lunch at the pub at 12 noon.

PLEASE ADVISE DAWN OR ROS ASAP if you are attending the lunch as the necessary confirmations must be made to the hotel.

2014 first meeting: February, a BBQ at Island Park

KENT'S CORNER:

Copies available at the VIC of Volume 2: **Roamin' Round the Town** the Visitor Information Centre: cost is \$25. Ideal for Christmas.

Reminder: membership fees for 2013-2014 are now due and remain the same: \$15 single and \$25 family. Many thanks if you have already sent your remittance.

MILLICENT BIG DAY OUT

Members had a marvelous day out, going via Mount Burr to Millicent, visiting the beautiful man-made lake, **Lake McIntyre**, a native bird and wildlife reserve area. We lunched in Millicent at the SE History Group centre, now in a former school - a lovely old building with a large and excellent historical library.

We saw an amazing collection of vintage clothing and a plus, the horse-drawn vehicles in the workshop. We did not have time to see all the museum and plan to return to do so. We returned, *tired but happy*, and much more knowledgeable. Many thanks go to our Millicent member, Noel Boyle, for his planning and guiding of our day.

South East Family History Group:
<http://www.sefhg.org/>



Sandford shop 1981

Mrs Ida Pfeiffer: pioneer lady traveller

Ida Pfeiffer was born in 1797 in Vienna, as Ida Reyer; she was a born traveler, inquisitive and indefatigable, as this article will illustrate. She had six brothers and was treated by her father as one of the boys. She received the same education and was encouraged to develop physical strength and independence. In 1820 she married Pfeiffer, a widower and a lawyer who held an important position, and had two sons. Her mother died in 1831 and left her a small inheritance. In 1835 the Pfeiffers separated and by 1842 Ida was free to travel.

She went to the Holy Land, as in choosing this destination there would be less disapproval from family, already alarmed at her plan to travel alone. She sailed down the Danube River, via the Black Sea to Constantinople, then to Jerusalem, and Cairo. She went to Suez and took a boat for the return trip via Italy. Her memoirs from the trip, *A Visit to the Holy Land, Egypt, and Italy* were published in 1846.

She travelled next to Iceland, on a tight budget. She made her way on pony carts and lived like the Icelanders. She found local people crude and after a six months, she returned and wrote her observations as *Journey to Iceland, and Travels in Sweden and Norway*. She next planned to go around the world and in 1846 departed for Rio de Janeiro on a Danish ship. Ida was repelled by Rio's filth and poverty. She hired a guide and went into the rain forest to investigate the Indians. She found the beauty of the rain forest enchanting but thought the Puri Indians primitive and savage.

Ida continued on to China. In Tahiti and was scandalized by the carefree, sexual behaviour of Tahitian women. She entered China from Macao, a Portuguese colony, then travelled on a junk, a traditional Chinese cargo boat, to the city of Canton. She made many excursions around the city, often dressed in man's clothing. She observed local people and again, her opinion of them was rather negative.

Ida found India much more to her liking and spent several months there. She carried only a leather pouch for water, a small pan for cooking, some salt, bread and rice. She was often fed and given shelter by the local people. She went on to Baghdad in Mesopotamia and travelled to Mosul and Tabriz in northern Persia. The British consul in Tabriz was amazed - he didn't think it possible for a woman to travel alone in that part of the world



Sacred Heart Pupils c 1911



Henty Street / Tyers Street corner
Glenelg Inn 1873



The Logs gaol, Henty Street, demolished
some time after 1910



without even knowing local languages. She joined a caravan going toward Russia where she was arrested under a suspicion of being a spy. Continuing through Turkey, Greece and Italy, she returned home in November 1848. Her adventures published as *A Lady's Voyage Round the World* made her famous.

She was ready to travel once more in 1851 and took off, ending that long trip in San Francisco, via the Andes of South America. She returned home after a four-year absence. Her book *A Lady's Second Journey Around the World* was a best-seller. She was elected to the geographical societies of Berlin and Paris, but the Great Britain refused to admit her because she was a woman.

Ida Pfeiffer made yet another trip to Madagascar where she found herself a prisoner of Queen Ranavalona for unwittingly taking part in a plot to overthrow the queen. Eventually, she was released but she became ill with a tropical disease from which she did not recover. Ida Pfeiffer died in Vienna in 1858.

Facsimile editions of her books are available from various on-line booksellers.

The Early History of Sandford: as told by Mrs. Grogan

Copy donated to The Casterton & District Historical Society by Carol McKinnon-Ward 2006 (?unreadable in transcript note made by Carol McKinnon-Ward)

Major Mitchell and his party first traversed the undulating country surrounding the present township of Sandford on 11th August 1836. After having crossed the Wannan River to the west of the present homestead on Sandford House Estate, Major Mitchell passed along hills to the west of Sandford and named this part of Victoria, 'Australia Felix'.

The country was occupied by tribes of aborigines until 1837. Messrs. Edward, Frank and John Henty came from Portland on the advice of Major Mitchell and settled on the three chief stations of the district, Muntham, Merino Downs and Sandford House. Muntham Estate comprising some 77,000 acres of rich pasture land, according to Cuthbert Featherstone-Haugh in *'After Many Days'* averaging about £2 per acre, when Mr. Edward Henty purchased it and settled there.

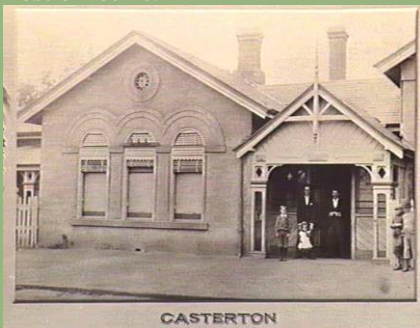
Merino Downs contained approximately 16,000 acres and was the home of Mr. Frank Henty, whilst Mr. John Henty with 6,000 acres settled at Sandford House. The name Sandford was given to the little village when it was surveyed in 1856 by the late well known surveyor, Mr. Lindsay Clarke.

Early residents say it was so named because there was a sandy ford at the Northern boundary of Sandford estate, but late enquiries seem to indicate that the village was named after the station which John Henty had, in all probability, named after a place in England. The Hentys came out on the ship with friends who were named Sandford, so the name may also have come from there.

On 11th June 1847, Sandford House was taken over by Mr. J.H Jackson, who came from his uncle's station at Sunbury with a sound knowledge of sheep breeding- this was indeed most useful, for all the surrounding stations were specially suited for the production of wool and sheep-rearing.



Post office 1897



Casterton Historical Society 50th Anniversary, 2014

In 2014 CDHS will celebrate fifty years. Any members who have ideas and suggestions for ways to mark this occasion of the fiftieth anniversary are encouraged to do so. All suggestions / contributions most gratefully received and discussed.

CDHS is located at the **Casterton Visitor Information Centre**
e-mail: castertonhistorical@hotmail.com

PO Box 48
Casterton 3311
Phone: 5581 2070

To visit the Casterton Community Museum:
call **David Coventry** on **5581 2475** or email at davidcoventry@yahoo.com.au

To contribute to this newsletter, please contact Ros at the Visitor Information Centre on 5581 2070 or e-mail at roscov48@bigpond.com
H tel 5581 2875

After the passing of the Land Act in 1861 a land board met in Casterton, and an influx of settlers shortly after brought about an increase of trade and business in the little township which came into existence in 1857.

That year Messrs. Waddley and John Scott Grant each built an hotel, the former naming his Sandford Hotel and the latter calling his public house Caledonia Hotel. Mr. Charles Grinham also opened a store that year and Mr. Thos. Somerville with his wife and family arrived from Wando Vale at the end of 1857.

The blacks about that time were very troublesome and a shepherd on the 'Murdering Flat' was murdered. This was avenged by the early settlers following the mobs of blacks to the 'fighting water-holes' near Coleraine and there a great massacre took place.

After that, there were only a few scattered blacks in the neighbourhood. They became friendly and worked for the early settlers. Yorkie, Peter, Tiger, Jim Powers and his lubra, Louie, are still well remembered by many old residents. The last corroboree was held on Craig's Hill and the final co-campment of mia-mias was near the bend of the Railway Line now coming into the village on the north-side.

The most important event in the history of the little community was the opening of the Common School in 1863. It was built on the sandhill to the south of the town. The money for the purchase of the land and the erection of a substantial brick school and a two roomed dwelling was donated by private subscriptions from all the residents –the late Dr. Russell & Mr. J.H.Jackson being the principal movers in the matter of education.

Each pupil was charged the rate of six pence, nine pence or one shilling per week, according to the class, as his/her education advanced. The first teacher was Mr. Holt. He was followed by Mr. C Radford, son of Dr. Radford, who had settled in a practice hereabout that year. Shortly after Mr. T. O. Evans was appointed to the position of school master, and during his regime the Common School merged into the present State School system with the introduction of free education in 1872. *To be continued/...*

Back in the 16th Century: Dead Ringers

In the sixteenth century lead cups were used for ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock drinkers out for a couple of days. Someone would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. From this arose the custom of *holding a wake*.

England started running out of burial places, so they began to dig up coffins and take the bones to a bone house, then re-use the grave. When reopening the coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside – they realized that they had been burying people alive. It became the custom to tie a string on the wrists of the corpse, lead it through the coffin above the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit in the graveyard all night on the "Graveyard shift", to listen for the bell: thus someone was "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".

CDHS WEBSITE: we are the Web, visit us at
<http://www.swvic.org/castertonhistoricalsociety.htm>