

# central Goldfields Shire

(Former Shire of Bet Bet)

## Heritage Study 1985-1986

### Volume 1

① Vol 1





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**CONSERVATION STUDY**  
**VOLUME ONE**



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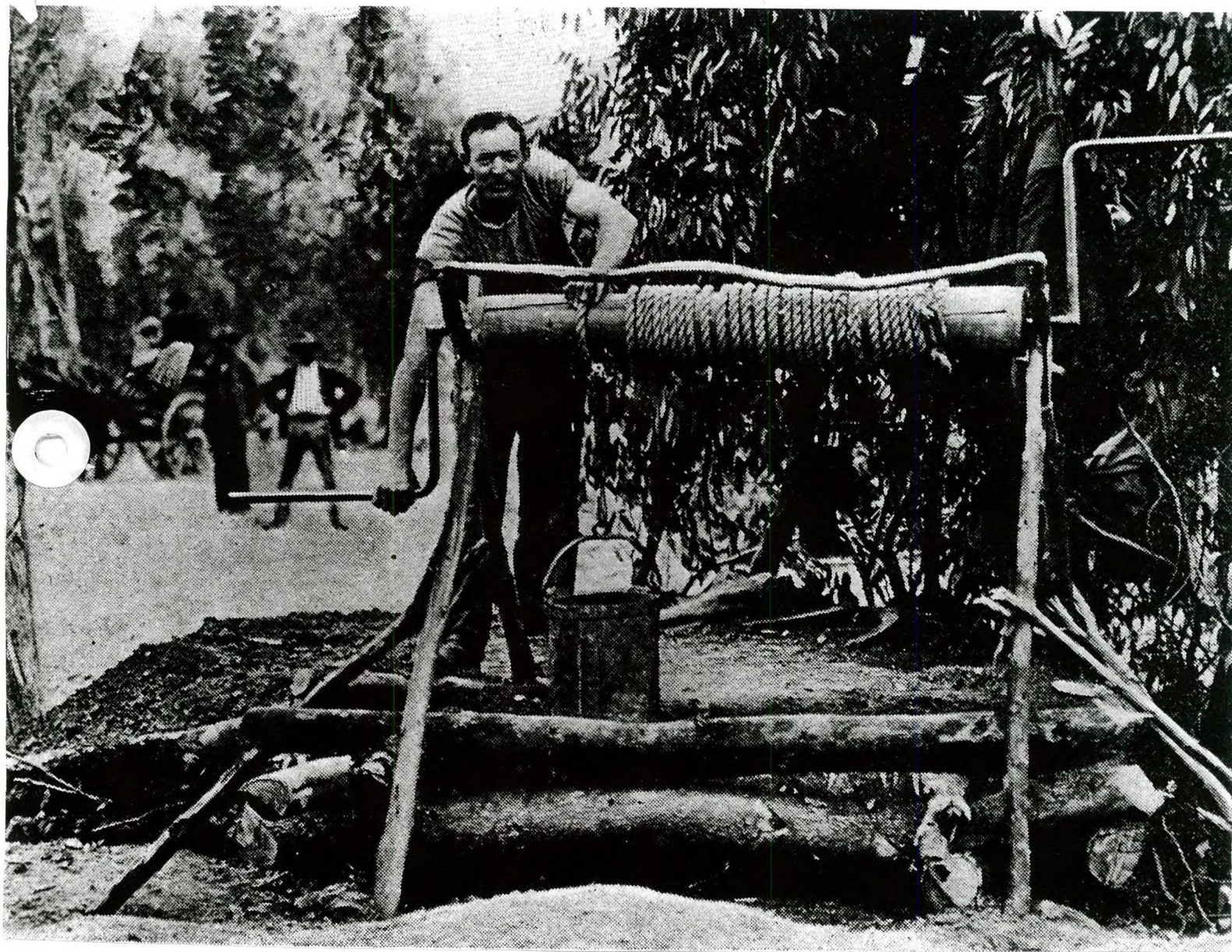
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*SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY*  
*TABLE OF CONTENTS*

<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>WHITE NOMADS: MEN AND SHEEP</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>WHITE NOMADS: DIGGERS AND GOLD</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>GOLDEN COMPANIES:</i>	<i>13</i>
<i>GOLDEN TOWNS: BUILDING</i>	<i>26</i>
<i>CHURCH AND PUB: SOCIAL LIFE</i>	<i>45</i>
<i>THE STATE AND THE SHIRE</i>	<i>58</i>
<i>GOLDEN FIELDS: BET BET FARMERS</i>	<i>66</i>
<i>BET BET: 1914-1986</i>	<i>78</i>
<i>CONCLUSION</i>	<i>94</i>
<i>WELCOME STRANGERS? THE CHINESE IN BET BET</i>	<i>98</i>







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*The report is arranged in three parts:*

*Volume One includes the Environmental History of the Shire of Bet Bet.*

*Volume Two (part one) lists individual sites for which protection is recommended under local planning legislation or under the provisions of the Historic Buildings Act.*

*Volume Two (part two) lists groups of buildings and natural areas designated as Areas of Special Significance. It includes recommendations for planning controls and heritage clauses to be included in the local planning scheme. It also includes comments on management of individual buildings and sites and guidelines for heritage controls. Maps of sites are included in Volume Two (part two).*

*In a broad sense, Volume One presents the historical themes important in the area. Volume two (part one) lists sites which represent these themes. Volume Two (part two) includes recommendations for the protection of these sites and lists areas of special significance.*



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

*Many people aided me in the course of this study. I must firstly thank the members of the steering committee who guided this work to a completion. Their contributions and comments were invaluable. Secondly many local residents gave freely of their time to discuss the character of their area with me. Principal amongst these have been Dave Hickey, Mrs. Brownbill, Howard Lummis, Don Clark and Ron Carless. Others responded in writing to requests for information. Keith Graham and Mr. Bryant gave me information and references. Mr. Beer, a former forestry officer introduced me to aspects of the shire which I would have never discovered without his help. John Hancock, Richard Aitken and Charles Fahey discussed many aspects of this study with me. Members of the Departments of Conservation, Forests and Lands were helpful as were staff in the Ministry of Planning and Environment. I have been assisted by staff at the Victorian Public Records Office and at the State Library. Lorna Goltz at the Tarnagulla Gold Museum introduced me to many local sources. Many others lent a hand and my thanks to them all.*

*Chris McConville*

*January 1988*

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The Shire of Bet Bet lies on the northern fringe of the central highlands of Victoria. Between the peaks of these ranges lies an enormous expanse of what were once some of the richest gold fields in the world. Miners discovered the largest gold nugget ever found in Australia, the Welcome Stranger, in the Shire in 1869 and mining is still a way of life for many. Gold mining threw up a string of once sizeable but now declining towns in Bet Bet. Most Australians in the 1980s probably don't know much about places like Moliagul, Tarnagulla, Bealiba or Dunolly. Yet at one stage these names were familiar to mining investors throughout Victoria, in other parts of Australia and even in London. Giant nuggets like the Welcome Stranger (and then at the turn of the century, the Nick O' Time Nugget) kept alive an image of untold riches in northern Victoria. The present Shire still draws gold-seekers chasing fortune.

Apart from mines which have pitted the countryside, the towns in the Shire still show signs of their birth amidst great wealth. Even small settlements like Tarnagulla and Bealiba are spread around imposing churches, halls and public buildings. The Dunolly Town Hall, the Bealiba Court House and the one-time Colonial Bank in Tarnagulla are all buildings which appear out of place in towns which have grown little in the last century.

Beyond these towns and remnants of mining, the forests and farmlands of the Shire also retain some elements created in the nineteenth century. Although farm sheds have been re-built time and time again, some outbuildings are still thatched; the odd run of post and rail fence survives and some farm buildings, once houses, have lasted since the years of land selection. And of course, on the Loddon River, the Laanecoorie Dam stands as a legacy of one of Victoria's first schemes of river management.

All of these structures make up a varied and unique material environment. The Shire has its own identity in part because of its mining history. Farming, wood-cutting and forestry have all helped shape the present character of Bet Bet. The purpose of this Conservation Study is to trace the history of building and land settlement in the Shire, to distinguish the

more important elements within this and then to propose measures for the management of this environment – measures which might protect these buildings and contribute to the life of residents and the enjoyment of visitors in the future.

The study is presented in two volumes – the first covering the history of the area and summarising significant areas and buildings as well as protection measures. The second volume lists individually significant structures, details mechanisms for planning control, and offers guidelines for infill and heritage management.



## THE MODERN ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

As indicated in the Environmental History which follows, many of the critical historical episodes in Bet Bet are recalled in one or other aspect of the Shire's present environment. Gold mines had the greatest impact on the history of the shire and not surprisingly buildings in all of the townships still reflect some part of the wealth and confidence of the successful gold miner. Churches like the Wesleyan Methodist chapel at Tarnagulla or the Anglican church in Dunolly stand out in the towns and owe their prominence at least in part to the money donated by successful gold hunters. Halls like the Victoria Theatre in Tarnagulla were the work of impressarios hoping to corner some part of the wealth from gold by putting on entertainment.

In many cases colonial architects designed public buildings to match these structures. The Dunolly Court House or the Sandy Creek Post Office are perhaps more modest in scale than similar places in larger towns. Nevertheless anyone crossing Market Square in Dunolly to look for letters at the old Post and Telegraph Office or looking at the tower of the 1890s post office in Broadway which replaced this building sensed some of the opulence of prosperous mining towns. Yet nowhere in the shire could gold provide a constant or reliable income. Even the richest mines at Goldsborough or on the Poverty Reef worked in fits and starts. The promise of fortune quickly sank as miners lost the lead and shafts flooded. Despite the failure of mining in the long term, the enormous enterprise of gold mining has left relics behind, both in the larger public buildings in towns, in the layout and design of the towns, in some private housing and then in the remains of the mines themselves. Mining could require a range of structures and materials, depending on the depth at which a lead might be hit, the capital of the mine operators or the techniques favoured at any one time in the history of the shire. Miners probably scoured more than half of the surface of the shire in

their search for gold. These efforts have left behind a variety of landforms, machinery and building remnants. In the south-west of the shire, the flat horizon is broken by the huge tailing heaps of the Duke Extended and the North Duke mines. Around Dunolly and Moliagul, some shafts from alluvial diggings remain largely untouched and elsewhere the visitor can still see sludge and watercourses shaped by dredging companies. The Burnt Creek mines have left huge heaps in the same way as those in the Timor area. The mining history is also marked in the few remnants of mining machinery - battery footings and a pile of dirt are generally all that remains of once massive and expensive mining ventures. A few unfilled shafts, the remains of puddling machines or chilean wheels remind us that small time operators have always sought to earn a living from gold.

Where miners once spread themselves across huge expanses of Bet Bet, some of these men and then newcomers from other parts of Victoria established themselves on farms especially in the 1870s. During the period of the selection acts and then under later soldier settlement and closer settlement schemes the shire changed. Farmlands began to encircle the old mining townships and to spread into the scrub and forest of Bet Bet. Along the banks of the Loddon River, selectors and the freehold farmers who preceded them were able to build often expansive farmhouses in brick.

Elsewhere the new farmer put up a small simple shelter. Farm sheds were added as time went by. Much of the nineteenth century of farmsteads has all but disappeared from Bet Bet. But there are still some small simple buildings on local farms, many of them dating back to the 1870s and beyond. Changes in the twentieth century in farming drew some small holdings together and these larger, broad-acre farms include many structures from before the Second World War. Farm buildings are spread through the shire and give it much of its present identity. Occasionally on isolated roads in the shire and where roads have to cross watercourses the schools, bridgeworks and remnants of state crushing batteries testify to the



role of the state in shaping local life. Both mining and farming have been key local industries. Both only survived because at critical times they were underwritten by the colonial and later state and federal governments. The railway lines through the shire and then the massive structures of the Dunolly Grain Elevator and the Laanecoorie Dam are the most obvious reminders of just how much the present shape of Bet Bet has been determined by men making decisions from far outside the shire's boundaries. Their appraisals of the shire ultimately led to the foresting of old mine workings. The silviculture of the 1920s and 1930s transformed the surrounds of many towns and old gold fields. Only now are miners with heavy machinery undoing much of this work.

In looking at the modern environment of the shire then we can single out key elements which correspond to those in the environmental history.

In economic change, both small-scale alluvial mining and then capitalised deep lead mining have left their marks. Later phases of mining, especially dredging have contributed to Bet Bet's appearance. Within the towns the social changes which followed the first mining rushes are registered in private, public and commercial buildings. The sense of identity and belonging of local people has found concrete form in parks, sporting grounds and other facilities. Much of the religious building in the shire again suggests this sense of identity and community spirit. Religious buildings also register the ethnic diversity of the shire's past, with structures ranging from the Chinese burial altars to the Welsh church of Tarnagulla. These buildings are not by any means unique in the history of the state of Victoria. Yet they deserve some form of protection for the following reasons.

1. They remind residents and outsiders of the unique history of the shire and its important nineteenth-century role in Victorian history; especially in the history of mining.

2. They meet standards of architectural merit which sets them apart from similar structures.

3. They have a greater degree of information available about occupants or function – these could be information derived from examining the buildings or in written records.

4. The buildings can be used or presented in a way which tells us more than other similar buildings about one of the historical themes listed above.

5. The buildings fits into a more coherent social context, either through their location or through association with key events or processes which have shaped the shire.

In addition to these general criteria, it is recognised in the study that ALL buildings are the product of historical events. The buildings chosen for conservation control may not be any more a part of one historical process than those not listed here. Areas of Special Significance have been selected to protect some groups of structures and landforms and other measures are employed in conservation controls in recognition of this interdependence.

Three measures of control are recommended here.

1. Several structures are recommended for protection under the Historic Buildings Act: they are proposed for listing either on the Government Buildings Register or on the Historic Buildings Register

2. A second group of Buildings are suggested for protection under local planning controls as individual sites.

3. Some buildings fall within the boundaries of suggested Areas of Special Significance.

(additional listings are made from within all of the four key groups above for inclusion on the Register of the National Estate. Suggestions are also made for

the direction of demolition or alteration permits for the whole of the shire rather than for distinct buildings or locations) .



*STRIKING IT RICH  
POSEIDON RUSH*





## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

NICK O TIME RUSH	8
POSEIDON RUSH	11
DEEP LEAD MINE TARNAGULLA	14
MINE WORK FORCE	18
WELCOME STRANGER DISCOVERY	20
MINE SITE	22
MARTIN'S TIMBER YARD	27
BENDIGO HOTEL	29
EXCHANGE STORE	32
EXCHANGE STORE	34
BEALIBA WOODCUTTERS	36
FLOUR MILL TARNAGULLA	38
NEWBRIDGE HOTEL	41
NEWBRIDGE	42
FIRE BRIGADE	44
WESLEYAN CHAPEL	45
WESLEYAN CHAPEL	47
DUNOLLY HOSPITAL	51
FRAYNES HOTEL	54
SOCIAL GATHERINGS MOLIAGUL	56
PUPILS MOLIAGUL	60
SCHOOL CERTIFICATES	62
SCENT FARM	64
RAILWAY STATION	69
TARNAGULLA	72
BARUTO FARM	74
MOLIAGUL ORCHARD	76
SELLING TO MINERS	79
CLOSER SETTLEMENT	81
POSEIDON RUSH	85
DUNOLLY STREET SCENE	89
SHOP AND STORE 1987	93
CLOSED SHOP	95
AH TING'S HOUSE	96
AH TING'S DUNOLLY	99



## INTRODUCTION

The Shire of Bet Bet covers an area to the north of the Great Dividing Range in central Victoria. Bounded on the east and the west by the flood plains of two rivers, the centre of the Shire is broken up by three ranges of low hills. The slopes of these hills are often covered by native trees, sometimes interspersed with remnants of European orchards and farms. On the land between these hills, open grassy plains take up much of the view of any traveller.

Within the limits of the present Shire there are no major towns. The principal urban centres are small by comparison to neighbouring towns. None of them appears likely to rival Maryborough or Bendigo in the near future. Smaller settlements throughout the Shire seem to have little future at all. With few jobs to offer, most have lost residents and services steadily during the twentieth century. Despite that, the towns look as if they have had a wealthy past, with many fine churches, schools and halls, a broad street lay-out and long lines of shops. During the prosperous 1860s one local journalist looked around at all of this town building and predicted a marvellous future. *'Do you see the numerous churches...yon court house [he asked] those villas bearing at once the aspect of comfort and security, those commanding stores that speak of wealth and influence and industry?'*<sup>1</sup> Nowadays, the shops and public buildings which remain look like beached ocean liners – massive structures stuck fast in forests or farmlands with the once-expected industry and activity nowhere to be seen.

The explanation for the character of these towns is not hard to find. In amongst the farms and the forests of the Shire the visitor will come across remnants of a once prosperous mining industry; there are two types of remains. Especially in the east of the Shire the soil often stands in yellow piles alongside what was once a quartz-reef mine. Sometimes the bricks of collapsed mine buildings can be seen at the foot of these huge heaps of sub-soil. In other parts of the Shire, more often in the central creek valley, there are still scars

from an earlier phase of mining. In these remains are the gouges made by individual miners who pegged alluvial claims and moved about the Shire from rush to rush chasing a fortune. By and large the fortunes of the towns and the farms derived from these industries and the environment and history of the Shire depend in the first instance on the nature of mining. Many of the miners stayed on to become small farmers in the era of land selection. Others took a lead in the politics of the towns and their social life. Linking mine sites, towns and farms there are two major rail routes through the Shire and several roads. Bridges cross the main rivers and the many creeks. Engineers have stemmed the flow of the Loddon River at one point to make the Laanecoorie Dam. These elements of the Shire derive from decisions made in Melbourne and not locally. They are no less a part of the local landscape for that.

Much of the Shire looks as if it once had a rich and energetic past. The great years lay in the 1860s and to a lesser extent the 1870s. Then farmers and miners shaped the land and the order of local society. The present character of Bet Bet cannot be explained solely by reference to this period but in the long run these were the decisive years. The key activities were mining and agriculture and the significant people were usually investors in mining ventures, successful farmers and then the colonial officials with whom they dealt.

The chapters which follow seek to explain the actions of these people in order to throw light on the present character of the environment. The themes explored here are essentially related to mining, land selection and town building, with additional reference to minor local industry and to the actions of the colonial government. Conflict as much as harmony shape this history. The present environment of Bet Bet registers the actions of several groups of human beings and in the character of the local environment we can see the divisions as well as the continuities in their actions.

1. Tarnagulla & Llanelly Courier, 20 September 1866.



## WHITE NOMADS : MEN AND SHEEP

Anyone looking at a parish map of the Shire will notice some large pieces of land around the fringes of Bet Bet and one in the centre marked with the initials P.R. These are pre-emptive rights, land granted to the pastoralists who arrived here in the years before the gold rushes. One of the most important of these pre-emptive rights is that at Goldsborough. A small stone cottage still stands on this block, which was once the centre of a large grazing run. One former holder of this land, named Simson, subdivided the town of Goldsborough. In the south of the Shire, the Norwood Pre-emptive Right runs along the Bet Bet Creek. Norwood homestead lies outside the Shire, but the holder of this land was once Alfred Joyce. He kept a detailed diary of his life around Bet Bet and much of what we know about squatting life in Victorian history comes from this record of life along the valley of the Bet Bet Creek.

Gold Rushes shaped the Shire of Bet Bet. Yet in the decade before lucky travellers dug up gold in the Shire, Europeans had invaded the pastures between the Loddon and Avoca Rivers. Ignoring any claims which Aborigines in the district may have had and at the same time caring little for colonial regulations governing land use they perceived the future Shire as a vast stock run. The banks of rivers like the Loddon or Avoca attracted 'overlanders' who followed Major Mitchell's route into Australia Felix. Mitchell passed to the north of Bet Bet and then south of the present Shire on his return journey. Overlanders brought livestock and servants with them and scoured the land on either side of the 'Major's Line' in the 1840s.<sup>1</sup> Many failed to make a living and only half remained by 1845. A second wave of nomadic pastoralists moved into Victoria; amongst them came the men who took up the land of Bet Bet.

The present Shire covers parts of several squatting runs. Archibald McDougall's

Dunolly run lay entirely within the Shire, but for the most part the outlying portions of several runs reached into Bet Bet. In the west, along the Avoca River, the land was broken up between the Bealiba Run, the Sandy Creek Run, the Archdale and Natte Yalloc Runs. In the north, the Kingower and Kingerara Creek Runs reached into the Shire. In the east, Janevale, Laanecoorie, Ravenwood, Rodborough Vale and Catto's Run spread across the Loddon River. The Norwood, Plaistow and Carisbrook Runs took in the south of the present Shire. Between 1848, when the runs were first gazetted, through to the 1870s when several reverted to the Crown, each of these runs changed hands frequently. The Dunolly Run for example was gazetted in 1848 after a licence had been issued to Archibald McDougall in October 1847. Five years later the land passed on to H.N. Simson, then to the Campbells, back to Simson and 1861 to Richard Goldsborough, until it was forfeited in the 1870s.<sup>2</sup> The same names cropped up amongst licence holders on neighbouring runs. Simson and Goldsborough held the Sandy Creek Run for a time and also appeared as licence holders on the Natte Yalloc Run. Amongst other licence holders were men like Hugh Glass who had interests in land claims right across the country.

These constant changes in leasing, with licences passed from one hand to the next amongst a small band of men, indicates little real intent to settle the Shire. But a few of the squatters did stay on.

### Key Squatters

Two of the leading men of the Loddon squatting rush settled just beyond the boundaries of the present Shire. But both held land right across the plains between Bet Bet and the Pyrenees. Donald Simson and Alfred Joyce took up land at Charlotte Plains and Norwood. Simson came into Victoria in the first overland rush in 1838,

1. A. Dingle, The Victorians: settling, McMahon's Point 1984.

2. R.V. Billis and A.S. Kenyon, Pastoral pioneers of Port Phillip, Reprint, North Melbourne 1974, see also Squatting run files, Victorian Public Records Office, series 5920, specific runs located at Unit 189, Bealiba, Catto's 273, Charlotte Plains 275, Dunolly 337, Natte Yalloc 634.



soon after news of Mitchell's discoveries reached Sydney; with his wife and a retinue of servants and shepherds, Simson moved onto the Loddon plains in 1840. His brother took up the neighbouring run at Laanecoorie a year later.<sup>3</sup> Alfred Joyce went on to purchase the Norwood run from its first holders, the Gibbons brothers.

The common picture of squatting life reveals a desultory existence. The squatter, usually young and single, lived in a rough shack and passed his days riding from one of his outstations to the next, checking on flocks. He didn't bother with fences and kept his flocks together at night with movable hurdles. His shepherds lived at a hut or outstation in some distant corner of the property, overlooking sheep.

### Squatting life

Like other squatters, Alfred Joyce regularly did the rounds of his outstations and saw to it that shepherds watched the flocks by day and gathered them together at night; boxing the stock into a tight bunch surrounded by hurdles. Often Joyce took trips to Melbourne to buy equipment and check on markets. Every now and then he called on neighbours who might be as far away as the Pyrenees or Mt. Tarrangower. Joyce turned his rough squatter's life into something resembling European comfort. As he recorded in the 1850s, he was '*making rapid progress in luxurious comfort*'. Joyce boasted of his expertise in slab and shingle splitting as well as in '*the making and burning of bricks*'. He was able to vary the squatter's dull diet of mutton and damper with puddings, vegetables, bread and milk. He visited one neighbour and saw a windmill at work. On returning to Norwood he determined to erect his own device and put up a structure with rails nine feet across. When this failed to give him the power he wanted he set about creating a watermill. On one of the streams which ran across his run he built his mill and was able to grind flour '*day and night*'.

This squatting life looked a model of industry and order and Joyce claimed that his yearly cycle of actions included:

*some slight assistance at harvest but not much, a full share of the lambing and all my other spare time occupied in continuing the improvements till we had around us a commodious store, bachelor's quarters, workshop, granary, slaughterhouse and another large and superior woolshed.*<sup>4</sup>

While Joyce's land spread into Bet Bet, reaching to the foot of Mr. Hooghy, his exertions for comfort were carried on outside the Shire boundaries. The same is true of the Simsons. Their Carisbrook Homestead became a social centre for squatters from distant parts – pastoralists from north and west of Bet Bet travelled through the shire to the Simsons' station. The rolling valleys of the Shire were left as grazing for sheep and posts for isolated shepherds. Apart from the Cochrane brothers at Bealiba and McDougall at Dunolly, none of the local squatters attempted to build central stations within the Shire.

### The Dunolly run

McDougall, like many other squatters, was a Scot. He had been born on the Isle of Islay and he joined the chase after squatting runs in 1842, six years after Mitchell's journey and again after the rural depression which wiped out several of the pioneers. McDougall took his sheep into the centre of the present Shire and built a homestead near what later became Goldsborough. His station became the Old Dunolly Hotel and was destroyed by fire in the 1870s. The first of the gold-diggers over-ran his property and McDougall sold out to the Simsons. Unlike McDougall, other squatters exploited the openings provided by the gold rushes. Hector Simson subdivided the land he acquired from McDougall and tried to sell it off to the diggers.<sup>5</sup> Alfred Joyce conducted a lucrative trade with the diggings. As he pointed out:

*the rushes are very advantageous to me so long as they occur in my own*

3. R. Carless, Eddington reflections, St. Arnaud 1983, pp. 4–8.

4. James, G.F., ed., A homestead history: reminiscences and letters of Alfred Joyce of Plaistow and Norwood, Port Phillip, 1843–1867, London 1942.

5. J. Flett, Dunolly: story of an old gold diggings, Melbourne 1980, ch. 3.

*neighbourhood, as they give me a good market during their prosperity.*<sup>6</sup>

Joyce supplied fresh produce to the Dunolly diggings during the 1850s. This may have been lucrative, but his real business still lay with the wool trade. In any case, gold diggers made an uncertain market. As Joyce recorded in July 1857, his *'digging trade fell of so much some time ago that I have discontinued sending in the market cart altogether.'*<sup>7</sup>

Squatters like Joyce pioneered European settlement in most parts of Victoria and Bet Bet was no exception. Along with them came small armies of other men – shepherds who made up the pastoral work force, servants and cooks and the nomads who travelled from station to station offering to shear sheep, split timber, build fences and drive bullocks. Shepherds and hut-keepers stayed with the one pastoralist, living in out-stations and keeping an eye on the sheep. Often, shepherds were recruited from ex-convicts. Squatters like McDougall made use of another source of labour and paid for the passages of bounty or indentured immigrants. Scottish crofters came to work as shepherds on McDougall's run. There the forested slopes of the Bealiba Range must have seemed strange to men attuned to the bare hills of Scotland.

Few of the squatters made the same efforts as Joyce to reshape this landscape. As they went on subdividing holdings they could point to few real changes in the shape of the Shire. (The exception was probably Simson's town plan for Goldsborough). A stock track and the occasional shepherd's hut were all that showed their existence beyond the stations at Old Dunolly or Cochrane's. They marked land transfers by dominant trees, river bends or mountain peaks rather than by buildings or fences. Their flocks did change the vegetation across the plains and valleys of the Shire. Joyce for example lamented the disappearance of the fine kangaroo grasses which had cloaked the plains around the Bet Bet Creek when he first arrived. Other squatters cleared away trees and bushes around their night shelters. Yet for the most part, it was left to a new generation of

nomads, the gold miners, to put down some permanent marks on the landscape.

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6. Joyce, Homestead history,

7. Ibid.



## WHITE NOMADS: DIGGERS AND GOLD

At the beginning of the 1850s William Westgarth crossed the Loddon River and turned his horses towards a distant range of mountains, the Pyrenees. Westgarth passed along the southern edge of what is now the Shire of Bet Bet. He travelled across the Loddon plains without encountering *'sheep or a bullock or any vestiges of man and his works to diversify the blank face of nature'*.<sup>1</sup> Within a few months of his journey this untouched natural world would be scarred by great hordes of men – the gold diggers who shaped much of the present shire. To a certain degree our picture of these momentous events – the gold rushes – is governed by the activities of miners at Ballarat or Bendigo or Castlemaine where rushes lasted longer and threw up bigger towns. Nevertheless the fields around and along the Burnt Creek or the Bet Bet Creek shaped Victoria in their own way. Some of the largest single nuggets in Australian mining history came from the fields at Moliagul and Newbridge. One of the richest single mines in Australia once operated at Tarnagulla. And the dignified small towns of the Shire are probably more typical of the homes of the miners than cities like Ballarat or Bendigo. These bigger places after all gave people work other than mining. Towns like Dunolly or Bromley or Goldsbrough on the other hand were born, rose and fell on the strength of mining alone.

### Moliagul and the first mines

During 1852 a few of the more adventurous miners at Castlemaine struck out for the Korong – the fields around Wedderburn. From there small bands moved south following creek valleys and the tracks of the squatters. Towards the end of 1852 a party of South Australian miners hit gold at Sandy Creek (Tarnagulla). Then at the start of 1853 several hundred men, mostly from the Korong field, converged on Moliagul. By the middle of the year a few ventured south to cluster together near McDougall's

<sup>1</sup> W. Westgarth, *Victoria and the Australian gold mines in 1851*, London 1851, p. 219.

old station at Goldsbrough. Some struck out for Cochrane's Run at Bealiba or back towards Castlemaine to hunt around the gullies at Jones Creek (Waanyarra).

Within the space of less than six months the *'blank face of nature'* had changed into a backdrop for hectic races after gold. The fields of the valleys of the Bet Bet and Burnt Creeks had begun.

### The diggers

Between 1852 and 1858 thousands of hopeful diggers scoured the land between the Burnt Creek and the Loddon River. Smaller bands spread out to Bealiba and towards Timor. A lot of these diggers just rushed around chasing the latest rumour. Others took their time, checking over different fields until they settled on the one which gave them the best chance of a find. Each few months a rumour of gold raised a new town overnight. Just as quickly miners pulled these apart and headed off to newer and, so they hoped, richer fields. Miners tried their luck in almost all parts of the modern Shire. But up until 1858 the biggest gatherings remained at Moliagul, at Goldsbrough – Old Dunolly, at Burnt Creek (Bromley), at Tarnagulla or at Waanyarra and Bealiba. Numbers rose and fell erratically. Broadly speaking, mining followed the course of the Burnt Creek down from Moliagul to Dunolly and on to Bromley. Miners worked from the north-west of the Shire in a straggling line of diggings along the creek running through to the Shire's south-east border. But gold rushes had no order and stampedes took men back to worked-out ground or off to rumoured finds in the bush. From the south-eastern diggings gangs of miners raced off along creek beds to emerge on the fields around Tarnagulla. Perhaps one hundred thousand fortune-hunters passed through the Shire in those chaotic years. Of those only a few thousand stayed on to raise towns and farm the land.<sup>2</sup>

### The digging fields

All in all mining on the Bet Bet fields presented a confused picture. Rushes had gathered men together at points throughout the Shire. In some places

<sup>2</sup> Flett, *Dunolly*, chs.5-7.



thousands of miners arrived overnight and began digging madly. Within a week they might easily vanish, flocking to a new find to the north near Kingower or trekking across to Avoca. Men who arrived at the first hint of gold in 1853 had moved on to try their luck somewhere else a year later. Then in 1855 a rush at Burnt Creek sparked another crazy scramble. Miners herded together on Patterson's Reef and at Inkerman. These crowds of fortune hunters rushed through the bush at the slightest whisper of gold dug up in the most remote gully. During 1854 and 1855 the biggest local diggings were deserted one after the other. In early 1854 for example two thousand men could be seen strung out in muddy holes along the valley of the Bet Bet Creek. By the start of the following year, in a pattern familiar elsewhere, their numbers were down to four hundred.<sup>3</sup> At other times drought drove men from rich fields. In August 1854, the Castlemaine resident Gold Commissioner inspected Moliagul and recorded that *'heaps of washing stuff are accumulated awaiting rain and the owners are rendered almost destitute in consequence of their want'*.<sup>4</sup>

### The 'rushers'

Some of the miners who had hung on during the drought left on news of rich finds at Fiery Creek in 1855. Many returned in 1856, joining in the most immense rush to pass through the Bet Bet fields. Rumours of two huge nuggets dug up near Dunolly in June 1856 revived flagging dreams. Many men were frightened off fields by drought or by the back-breaking toil of mining or simply because they had not fallen on the giant nuggets of their dreams as quickly as they had imagined. By the end of June fifty thousand miners were jostling for a place along the Old Lead at Dunolly spurred on by stories of immense nuggets hidden just

below the surface. William Kelly recalled the unnerving sight of men racing to the site of these discoveries, forming in his eyes:

*wild streams of diggers more resembling terrorised beings fleeing from a plague than sanguine men hastening to a fortune who might be seen scampering across plains and over ranges to snatch a sheaf of the golden harvest.*<sup>5</sup>

Three months later the Melbourne Argus reported that fifty thousand miners were still at work on the Dunolly fields. One digger had got £500 worth in one day. Another *'fell on'* a 22-pound nugget. Yet according to this journalist, most of the diggers had just gone *'to see'*. After a few days or even a few hours of half-hearted scrounging about in the mud of a creek bed many gave up. The local Argus correspondent looked on in amazement, asking *'how one of these rushers can go for miles, test a goldfield and return before supper is to me unaccountable'*.<sup>6</sup>

The diary of one of the more determined diggers, Ned Peters, was written amidst this furious tacking back and forth across the land. Peters had come from Adelaide to Tarnagulla at the news of the first rush. He then set off for the diggings at Castlemaine and quit after a single hurried shot at mining. Ned Peters took off again from Adelaide and joined in the huge rush to Dunolly. There he quickly sized up his chances and regretted that *'the rush at Dunolly has turned out almost a shyder so that many parties are returning'*. He struck out for Jones Creek only to find once he got there that *'people are leaving Jones Creek for Dunolly'*. So Peters and his mates packed up and raced to join in the Dunolly rush. On the fields around Dunolly rumours of gold came so thick and fast that *'men scarcely knew where to rush'*. Peters, like many other diggers, kept chancing his arm in one likely spot after another until he finally settled for Tarnagulla – and a claim which returned him enough gold to set up in business.<sup>7</sup>

Thousands of men like Peters had coalesced into the streams of *'terrorised*

3. Royal Commission inquiring into the Goldfields. Victoria Parliamentary Papers, 1854-55, vol.2, q.6311, Pridham.

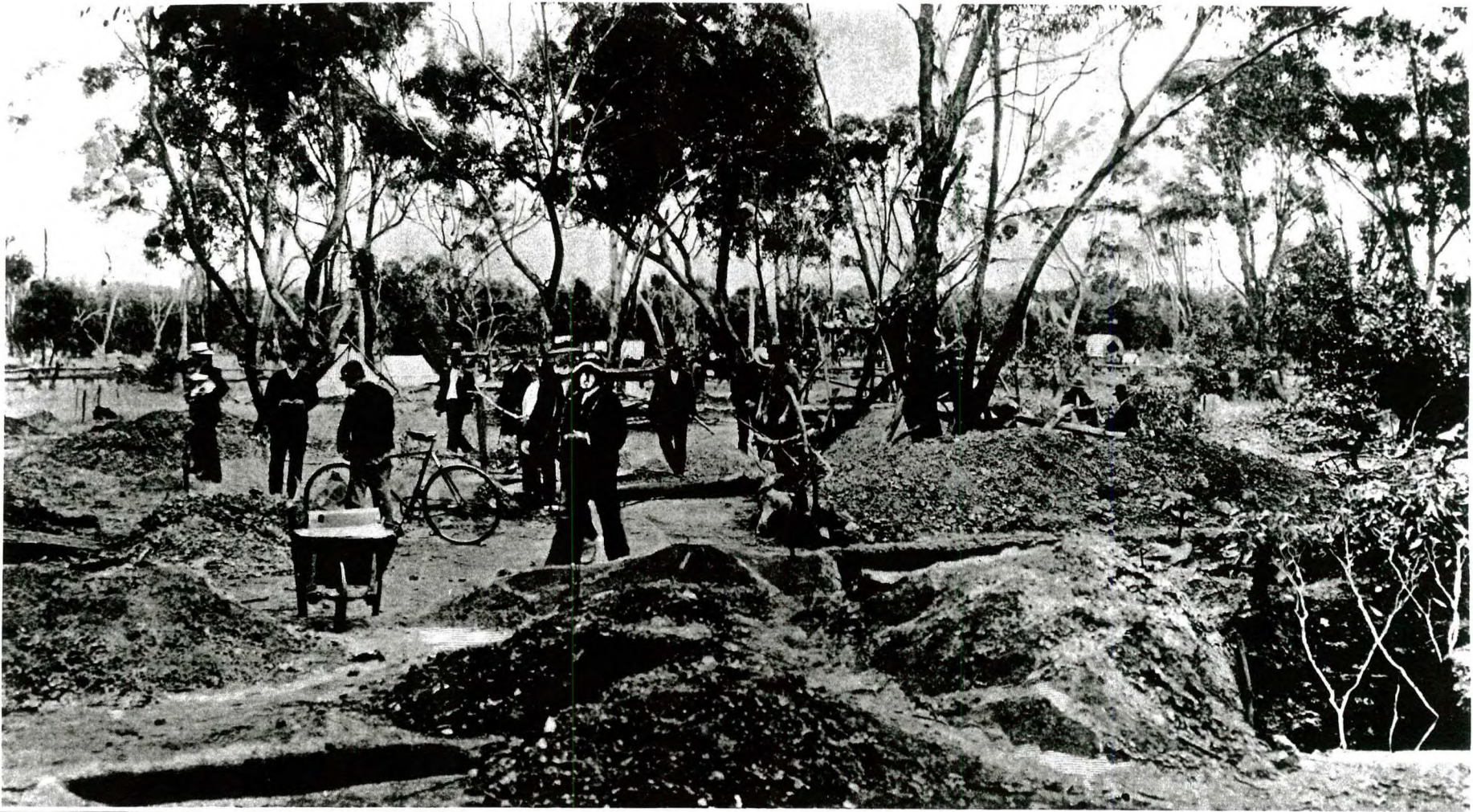
4. Reports of the gold commissioners to the Chief Secretary, Chief Secretary's Correspondence, Inwards, series 1189, unit 491, reports from Templeton, 1854, Victorian Public Records Office.

5. W.Kelly, Life in Victoria, 2 vols., London 1859, vol.2, p. 314.

6. Argus, 11 September 1856.

7. L.Blake, ed., Ned Peter's gold-digger's diary, Newtown 1981.





8  
GOLD FIELD AT THE END OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY  
NICK O'TIME RUSH



*beings' recorded by William Kelly. Right through 1857 these miners scarcely knew 'where to rush' and in October the Argus again reported that 'hundreds of tents have disappeared as if by magic and Dunolly is disgorging by thousands the vast population lately drawn to it'.<sup>8</sup>*

### Declining fields

Thousands had packed up tents and expanded the throng cramped onto Chinaman's Flat by the end of the month. By the beginning of November only five thousand remained on the Dunolly field and numbers fell each day. While men dug their way through holes and dams and puddlings for a mile and a half along the Bet Bet Creek, in Dunolly itself *'trade of every kind – even grog selling was decidedly dull'*. A late rush back to Jones Creek held some of the mass tramping down to Maryborough. But by 1858 the thousands who rushed to the Burnt Creek diggings had ebbed away, many heading to Maryborough or to the Korong fields. Early in 1857 four thousand diggers still worked on the Burnt Creek gullies. In March 1857 men charged to Inkerman. Another crowd surged off to Hard Hills. Then during 1858 Moliagul drew thousands away from the Burnt Creek diggings. Many of these miners were Chinese and for most of the rest of the history of surface mining in the Shire, Chinese miners took the lead.

Before the end of the decade the days of the alluvial miner were numbered in most parts of Victoria. Only rarely striking on a rich lead, the small prospector in Bet Bet stuck to his task. Most of them had little to show for such persistence. The local Mining Surveyor lamented on one desultory field after another in 1859, recording that, *'mining had never been in such a depressed state before'*.<sup>9</sup>

Yet within a couple of years new rushes brought fortune-hunters flooding over the creek beds of Bet Bet. The diggings at Gooseberry Hill and Pound Rush and then at Hard Hills, Tarnagulla, in 1861 and again in 1865 gave a living to persistent miners. Yet the numbers working local fields never rivalled the those of the 1850s. Many old

diggers were to go on mining right up to the end of the century, perhaps trudging off unwillingly to work for a company mine when things got too tough. Finds at the turn of the century near Newbridge brought back memories of the heady years during the 1850s when Dunolly was created overnight and diggers charged up and down Broadway under flaring tallow lamps.

Prospectors kept coming to Bet Bet because the fields promised instant wealth. Whereas in Ballarat and Bendigo the real riches lay far below the surface, only accessible to men with capital, the fields around Tarnagulla and Moliagul could make even a foolish miner rich overnight. The man with some experience and an eye for the land might easily turn over a huge lump of gold. Startling tales of enormous nuggets kept alive the image of Bet Bet as a poor man's field. Probably more exciting than any other find was the discovery of the Welcome Stranger on Bulldog Reef near Moliagul in 1869. Miners hauled this huge nugget into Dunolly and revived dreams of a golden future for the shire. Yet even though crowds of nomadic fossickers trickled through Bet Bet, and although some of the first diggers stayed on to try their luck year after year, the great days of the individual miner ended in 1858. From the 1860s mining companies led the search for wealth, usually at a depth beyond the reach of the small operator. From time to time giant rushes, like that to the Nick O' Time find or to Poseidon or to Puzzle Flat drew in hordes of miners. These men have left their mark on the landscape in the few puddling wheels visible in the Shire's forests, or in the shafts of diggings now filled in or reworked. But the most energetic diggers after 1861 were Chinese miners. In the remaining nineteenth-century surface fields, like that at Wild Dog for example, the Chinese holes (circular not rectangular) cover the diggings.

The rushes of the 1850s funnelled thousands of Europeans and Chinese through Bet Bet. At certain points, usually along the main creek beds, these men spread out across massive diggings. There they erased the natural features of the land. Diggers heaped up the sub-soil on the surface; they changed the course of streams and hacked down forests to line

8. Argus, 22 October 1856

9. Mining Surveyor, Quarterly reports, 1859, Victorian Parliamentary Papers.



their shafts. In places like Nuggetty Gully or Moliagul they made what must have looked like weird moonscapes, with enormous camps of rowdy and rumour-driven nomads huddled amidst the wastes. Fingers of mine workings pointed away from the main creek beds at places like Waanyarra and Cochrane's (Bealiba) diggings. Mines had worked their ruin on much of the natural environment of the Shire and diggers completed the work of the pastoralists by driving local Aboriginals from the land (in 1871 only fifteen Aboriginals survived in the whole of Gladstone electorate).<sup>10</sup> In the space of six or seven years the hordes of diggers carved out a new local landscape. It might be going too far to suggest that their dusty and straggling canvas towns brought civilisation. Yet today the remnants of a tremendous enterprise can still be seen around all of the townships in Bet Bet. Diggers did found these towns and then when laws changed, the remaining miners took to farming, often combining an orchard or a small dairy with a constant hunt after gold. While a few settled down to farming, most remained nomads. Gold diggers arrived in Victoria with little thought of ever staying. Dreams of wealth brought them here. Always at some distant date they envisioned a return to Britain or Europe or North America and many did leave as gold petered out. Of those who stayed on in Victoria only a few of the thousands who had rushed to Tarnagulla or Moliagul or Dunolly chose to make a home for themselves within the Shire. Even their towns were transitory. Diggers never intended their encampments to be permanent. Most disappeared as shopkeepers pulled down stores and folded up canvas, setting out after the rushing diggers to throw up a string of shops in one short-lived town after another.

### Conclusion

Diggers invaded the lands of Aboriginals and the land claimed by pastoralists. They shovelled dirt and stripped the forests in mad haste. Miners carved up Westgarth's *'blank face of nature'* by the 1860s. A few of them made their fortunes; eighty years after the first rushes the fields

around Dunolly had yielded 126 nuggets of more than fifty ounces, most of them dug up from close to the surface of the land.<sup>11</sup> Yet for all this scouring and gouging travellers in that decade could still draw a contrast between Bet Bet and other parts of the central goldfields. One Welsh visitor travelled along the road from Castlemaine to Dunolly in 1862. He remembered passing by scenery *'of the most pleasing description, the road passes through diggings more or less worked out'*. Then looking beyond these mullock heaps and sluicings he saw the native bush and in his mind's eye pictured himself back in Wales *'in the woods of Llanwern with box and stringy bark for oaks and ashes'*.<sup>12</sup>

The forest survived into the twentieth century, as did the remnants of this first phase of mining in the Shire. Bit by bit, though, the scrapings of the first diggers have been flattened and filled. The forest in which they worked has given way to farmland or been cleared by mechanical miners. The few fields which have escaped these changes appear more significant when we recall the intensity of surface mining in the 1850s and the vastness of alluvial fields. The few individual shafts scattered in the bush or the odd puddling wheel which has not crumbled flat seem paltry items in themselves. By remembering that they are not isolated relics but surviving pointers to a giant and complex endeavour they come to seem far more valuable. Today, only a few of the fields from the 1850s and 1860s have not been entirely erased. Around the Burnt Creek at Moliagul there are mine workings from what has been a fruitful alluvial field for more than 100 years. Near to Tarnagulla at Hard Hills, at Tunstalls in the north of the Shire and then at the Wild Dog diggings in the south-east, there are groups of old mine workings in which the efforts of these founders of the European world of Bet bet are recalled.

Alongside the re-working and filling of most of the old alluvial fields, these odd remnants form a central element in the

<sup>10</sup>. Flett, *Dunolly*, p. 8.

<sup>11</sup>. Mines Department, Victoria, *Victoria: gold and minerals*, Melbourne 1935, pp. 25-26.

<sup>12</sup>. J. Patterson, *The goldfields of Victoria*, London 1862.





MINERS AT WORK  
POSEIDON



heritage of the shire of Bet Bet. They seem even more valuable when seen as parts of one massive mining effort. After 1860 the reshaping of the local landscape depended more on company mining and far less on surface digging. Men like Ned Peters took shares in companies. These quartz-reef companies became the next of the forces which have made the Shire which we see today.

## GOLDEN MINES: COMPANIES

Within a decade of the first stampede of diggers through Bet Bet the throng had shrunk to a few thousand hopeful fossickers. In place of the single miner or the circle of mates working adjoining claims, investors went to the banks, raised capital and sunk shafts deep into the quartz reefs of Bet Bet. Mining by limited or no liability companies governed the fortunes of the Shire after 1861. Sometimes men who promoted these mines lived a long way from central Victoria. But for the most part directors of these new companies belonged to one of the swarms of nomadic diggers from the 1850s. Ned Peters who left his account of the digging mania was later to invest in the Queen's Birthday mine. Peters and other Dunolly Wesleyans took shares in the Queen's Birthday Company in the 1860s, a mine located on the Goldsbrough diggings. Other favored sites for company mining were at Tarnagulla and along the Burnt Creek, but smaller concerns worked over almost all of the fields rushed in the 1850s. These mining companies threw up mullock heaps and winding gear alongside boilers and crushers. The waste heaps and the brick footings of boilers and crushers make up the most dramatic remnants of mining still visible.

In each of the principal fields of Bet Bet, company mining began with shafts sunk early in the 1860s. Companies were sinking along Poverty Reef at Tarnagulla in 1861. In 1862 companies worked over the Gipsy Reef at Goldsbrough. In July 1862 miners at Burnt Creek met to amalgamate claims so that quartz reef mining could be extended. By the 1880s many of these early hopes had been extinguished and others struggled to attract capital or else abandoned the local fields altogether. Mining revived in Bet Bet in the 1890s, as it did elsewhere in Australia. New techniques kept local hopes alive into the twentieth century. But the last of the Burnt Creek mines ceased operations in 1913.<sup>1</sup> Mining companies explored several shafts between the wars. But when mining revived in the 1930s the resurgent industry was once again led by the small individual digger – this time he was likely to

be a fossicker on 'susso' rather than a sharp-eyed local mining speculator.

### Mining Areas : Tarnagulla and Llanelly

The main street of Tarnagulla runs past a rise of open grassy land to the south-east. This rough slope from where the whole of Tarnagulla can be seen, is the Poverty Reef – or as it was known locally in the 1860s *'that world-reknowned reef'*. Rising over the shops of Tarnagulla, the winding gear and stampers of the Reef were flanked by the simple shape of the Wesleyan chapel and by the chimney of the gold smelter at the Colonial Bank. From the reef, miners could look across to the old diggings of the first rushes and see churches, a school, post office and court house – all built to serve a small town with huge stores of gold beneath it. Through the later decades of the nineteenth century, miners got together in companies at other local reefs, Corfu Reef for example and the Cambrian Reef at Llanelly.

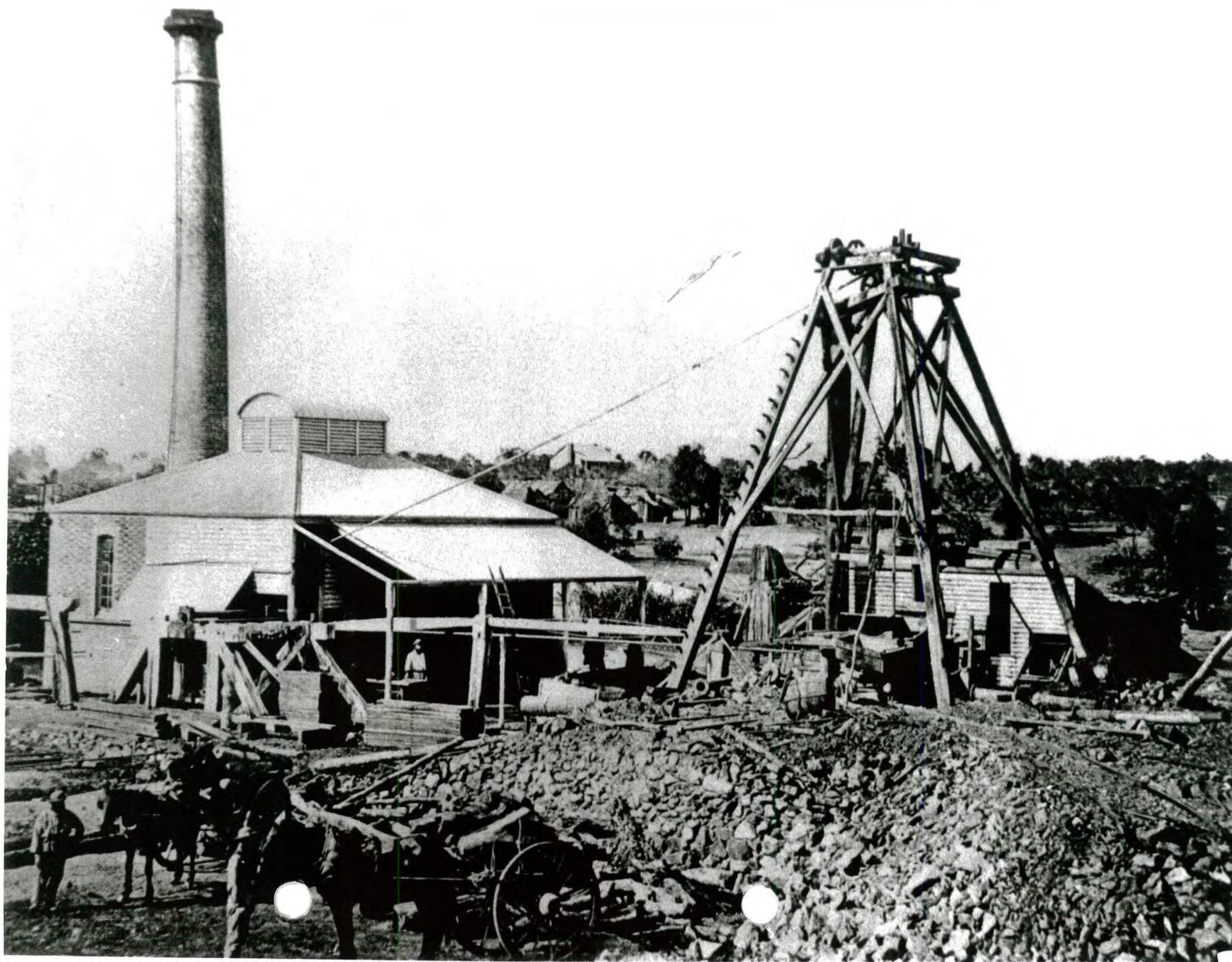
But the fortunes of the town of Tarnagulla rested squarely on the Poverty Reef. Each day townsfolk could walk past the mines and watch to see how often miners in the shafts sent ore to the surface. Coming out of the town's shops they could see smoke from the mine boilers or hear the stampers crushing quartz. When no smoke coloured the sky or when the thud of the stamper stopped they knew that the bright future so often promised by mining investors was once again receding.

During the 1850s the Prince of Wales Company took up a claim at the southern end of this reef and began to erect mining machinery. Then in 1859 the Sandy Creek-Poverty Company took up a 48 acre claim and sank shafts to 470 feet at a cost of 20000.<sup>2</sup> Who could doubt the coming fortune of Tarnagulla when the monied men in town were sinking savings into mines? The Mining Surveyor was able to report in 1860 that while he did not know the yield per ton on the Poverty Reef, *'it was said to be as good as anything that has ever been got on that extraordinary*

<sup>1</sup> Dunolly and Bet Bet Shire Express, June-July 1913.

<sup>2</sup> Tarnagulla and Llanelly Courier, Quarterly mining reports, November 1859.





DEEP LEAD MINE  
TARNAGULLA



reef'.<sup>3</sup> These early claims proved rich at some depth below the surface. Hammond, one of the more persistent of the band of local mining entrepreneurs, pointed out that gold was 'distributed through' the reef.

Irving, stressed that this 'workman's average' indicated that within what was an already rich reef, the deep lead mining firm could strike on some enormously rich veins of gold. But as Thomas Irvine explained to the 1862 Royal Commission: *the men working in the reef say that they took the whole of the reef twenty feet wide somewhere about three ounces to the ton but if they took seven feet it [gold] goes somewhere about nine ounces to the ton.*<sup>4</sup>

Despite this wealth, several companies ran into trouble before the end of the decade. Hammond and King, the investors who took the first gamble and mined deep into Poverty Reef, supposedly took a fortune out of the reef in the 1850s.<sup>5</sup> In 1856 they were taking stone to the first crushing mill on the banks of the Loddon. But although the reef returned astonishing amounts of gold, miners faced problems with flooding in 1865.<sup>6</sup> In 1867 the Poverty Company and the Victoria Company amalgamated to form the United Poverty Company and began fossicking over old ground in the hope that the first prospectors had missed valuable veins.<sup>7</sup> Then, in 1868 the Poverty Reef field was handed over to tribute parties. These still won 'satisfactory returns'.<sup>8</sup> Crashings from the Prince of Wales lease yielded two ounces to the ton

but even that failed to convince the company to reopen their shaft.<sup>9</sup> Despite occasional promising finds the company ceased working in 1874 and was wound up in 1879.<sup>10</sup> Even before the end of the 1860s some local commentators feared that the great days of gold mining were behind them and in 1868 one Tarnagulla resident lamented that

*Some years ago our Poverty Reef was one of the most famous mines in the whole colony. On the hill overlooking our township everything was bustle and activity, today the majority of these claims are idle.*<sup>11</sup>

Optimistic sinking and crushing alternated with stagnant years during which returns of gold fell and share-holders questioned the future of local mines. After the disillusion of 1868 for example mines reopened with a great flourish in 1870. The United Poverty Company resumed work and the new South Poverty Consols turned out to be 'first class mine'. Tarnagulla investors led by the ever-optimistic WM Davies kept on backing new mines throughout the 1870s. Amongst these were the Yorkshire Company's shaft at Watts Reef, the United Specimen and Phoenix, sunk to beneath 300 feet, the Wanda Company, the Caradoc Company and the Old Poverty Reef Company. This last firm had secured rights to the original Prince of Wales claim and had extended the shaft to 530 feet.<sup>12</sup>

Much of the early promise of these efforts remained short-lived. By the middle of the 1880s even WM Davies, chairman of the United Specimen and Phoenix Company, had to report a regrettable 'low average yield'. Old-timers in Tarnagulla insisted that the company had wasted time and money digging over worked-out ground. Instead they ought to have sunk shafts to one thousand feet. As one local chided:

3. Mining surveyor, Quarterly reports, October 1860.

4. Royal Commission on Gold Mining, 1862, Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1862-3, vol.3, evidence, Irvine, q.3578.

5. Historical notes, Tarnagulla Gold Museum

6. Mining Surveyors Reports, 1865

7. Poverty Reef Mining Company, Minutes Books, 1864 and 1865 (held in Tarnagulla Gold Museum)

8. Mining surveyor, Quarterly reports, March 1868.

9. Ibid., 31 March, 1869

10. Tarnagulla and Llanelly Courier, 29 September 1883

11. Ibid., 25 July 1868

12. Mining Surveyor, Quarterly Reports, various dates.



*If Tarnagulla's fame is to be heralded over the world again for the richness of its reefs which we are assured exist these reefs will have to be found at similar depths as in other quartz-reefing districts.*<sup>13</sup>

Only the Yorkshire Company took this advice, sinking to beyond one thousand feet. Their shaft, the deepest at Tarnagulla, was closed in 1908. Optimistic local investors (including Comrie, M Davies, Daniel Davies, James Cheetnam and David Evans) floated the Tappita Gold Mining Company in 1886. Most of these shareholders had worked on the Tarnagulla fields for years. They had promoted successful mines in the past and sat on the town council. Most of them owned shops or businesses in the town. By ignoring calls for deep shafts and by digging over well-tested shallow reefs with inexpensive machinery they hoped to win gold. Their plan met with barely tolerable success.<sup>14</sup>

By the time of the 1890 Royal Commission into Gold Mining most of the local investors were lamenting the loss of the lode, a decline in capital investment and waning enthusiasm amongst local miners. The occasional fossicker still won a living from government subsidies rather than from gold; Joseph William was one. He lived at Arnold Bridge and worked through old fields reporting prospects to the Department of Mines. The gold-mining industry revived nationally in the 1890s, when much of the rest of the economy collapsed. Events in Tarnagulla reflected these national trends and William Davies, Thomas Cheetham and Daniel Davies floated a new company, the Tappit Hen Gold Mining Company in 1891; really their 1886 venture under a new name.<sup>15</sup> Several reefs which had '*not been properly tried*' before 1890 appeared to offer good returns. Prospecting parties reported new finds around Tarnagulla. The Sandstone Company told shareholders of important new discoveries in 1894. At the end of that year reports of a '*phenomenally rich reef*' stirred interest. Brokers displayed

gold specimens in the window of the Union Bank and after rumours of '*stone literally hanging together with gold*', enthusiastic diggers rushed off to Jones Creek while Duggan, who had already purchased the best claim, headed for Bendigo to float a new company.<sup>16</sup>

The expected bonanza looked even nearer in the following year as the Tappit Hen started on a new field of thirteen acres north of the Tarnagulla Railway Station and small prospecting parties sent likely stone from a find near the Tarnagulla-Inglewood Road. The Old Poverty Company's whistle could now be heard throughout the day. In 1896 some local miners began to extract gold using a cyanide process.<sup>17</sup> The Victorian Government ruled in 1896 that a company which had patented the technique would no longer have the right to royalties of ten per cent on all gold won by this method.<sup>18</sup> Around Tarnagulla men rushed to buy up heaps of tailings and work over old claims using cyanide. Many turned to a new form of mechanical roller with which they could crush the tailings before sinking rock into a cyanide bath. Llanelly miners took to cyaniding in 1897, but a rush to the Loddon proved too much. The whole of the Sandstone's Company's new machinery was left idle as employees raced off to join in the Loddon rush. In 1898 an even more ambitious venture began work at Tarnagulla. The New Yorkshire Company leased 57 acres and brought in a crushing mill and cyanide plant.<sup>19</sup>

Some of these firms continued to work profitably into the twentieth century. Old claims were also reworked using dredges and in 1907 dredge mining employed 33 men at Tarnagulla. But the closure of the Yorkshire mine in 1908 destroyed the remaining faith of investors. The Tarnagulla companies had begun by raising great hopes for a glorious future. For years local shopkeepers and town

13. L&T Courier, 8 May 1886

14. Ibid., 14 August 1886

15. Defunct Mining Companies, 567/405/4386, VPRO.

16. T&L Courier, 29 September 1894.

17. Ibid., 5 February 1896.

18. Ibid.

19. Australian Mining Standard, 20 April 1899.



councillors had seen each new float of mining shares as their town's salvation. In Edwardian Tarnagulla the last of the mining companies ceased working. There were by then very few local miners who could remember the heady days of the 1860s. Companies opened small ventures between the wars and tested several shafts. But capitalised mining seemed to have largely had its day by the time of the First World War.

### **Mining areas: Burnt Creek and Dunolly**

Mines at Tarnagulla and Llanelly overshadowed those in the rest of the Shire. But right through the 1860s local investors got together to sink shafts on one or other of the reefs around Dunolly and Goldsbrough or along the Burnt Creek. The first of these companies to be registered was the Caithness mine at Bet Bet in August 1861.<sup>20</sup>

The long list of working mines formed in the 1860s makes an impressive display of local business endeavour. Anyone travelling through the Shire would no doubt have been struck by the surface evidence of mining. Yet, below the spreading pellicle of rock and slate, mines often failed. Some never worked at all and fast-talking promoters sped back to Melbourne or Ballarat with the savings of gullible locals. Often local firms started up with little capital. Unless they had sunk their shaft with exceptional skill or had some luck in hitting gold they folded in a hurry. The Exchange Company, floated in 1867, commenced mining with only £2000 capital behind it. Directors wound up their companies before investors could get any profit. The Belfast Company lasted less than eighteen months before folding. But then along the Burnt Creek and around Goldsbrough, a few firms succeeded beyond all expectations.<sup>21</sup>

Under the direction of a local mining, religious and political identity, WT Hansford, the Queen's Birthday Mine sought to tap a newly-discovered reef at Goldsbrough at the end of the 1860s. Shareholders in Dunolly and Maryborough

raised over £28000 to keep the mine running. Under Hansford's management the mine returned great wealth to its shareholders and by the mid-1880s it employed 250 men. This workforce extracted three tons of gold annually - for a company which had almost been wound up ten years earlier. Hansford had expended £20000 before he could return some of his shareholders' investments. When his miners eventually struck gold, Hansford and other Wesleyan shareholders burst into a Welsh hymn as they came up the Queen's Birthday shaft. In 1881 the mine had produced £60000 worth of gold for a cost of only £29000. Shares purchased in Dunolly for only 22/6 could be sold for £32 each!<sup>22</sup>

In the south of the Shire the Burnt Creek company proved just as successful as the Queen's Birthday. Directors in the Burnt Creek Company were mainly Maryborough men. They worked the Burnt Creek No.1 mine through to 1913. Almost as rich were the Duke Company mines near Timor. The Duke Company mined along the course of the Bet Bet Creek from Timor through to Bet Bet and at one stage proposed a drive under the St. Arnaud railway line! Both companies continued into the twentieth century but failed to keep going during the First World War. Despite the long-term problems of the company, the Duke system of mines spread along the Bet Bet Creek valley from Timor to Bet Bet. The dumps of these mines now stand out over the flat empty plains of the south-west of the Shire.<sup>23</sup>

Smaller companies made a far more precarious investment. By the middle of the 1870s many of those opened in the preceding decade had laid off their employees. Instead they ran their mines on the tribute system - letting out their ground to independent parties of miners who had to share any gold they discovered with the company. In 1871 one of these tribute parties had taken over the Monitor Company's claim on the Sporting

22. Ibid., and Dunolly and Bet Bet Shire Express, 1867, 1881 various days.

23. Defunct Mining Companies, papers, Duke Company Burnt Creek Company, VPRO.

20. Dunolly Mining District Registrar papers, 1633/1, VPRO.

21. Ibid.



WORKING FOR THE COMPANY  
TARMAGULLA





Flat field. At the beginning of the 1870s tribute parties raked over old fields at Chinaman's, Old Lead, Christmas Flat, Berlin, Arvon Reef and Gipsy Reef. Crushing batteries separated gold for these prospectors on most of these fields and even at the end of the decade there were two crushing batteries in Bealiba. But during the 1880s even the tributers grew disillusioned.<sup>24</sup> W T Hansford could still point to the great success of his Queen's Birthday Mine. In 1879 and again in 1890 he took off to England to invite London investors to help keep his company afloat. Nearby, Curran's Freehold Company, with fewer capital resources than the Queen's Birthday, fell on hard times in 1885. Shareholders got together to debate the future of their venture. They had already sunk the shaft to below 400 feet with little return. No prospectors wanted to take the mine on tribute and the mine manager warned that any deeper sinking in the shaft was likely to be a waste of money. Instead he recommended they amalgamate with the nearby Lumm's Freehold and work new ground with joint capital.<sup>25</sup> Some of the remains of their efforts can be seen in the Goldsborough township, only a few hundred yards from the tailings of the Queen's Birthday mine. On the smaller fields of Timor and Bealiba the Duke Company and the Welcome Reef Company kept mines open. Companies working at Burke's Flat and St. John's, Welha stayed afloat during the 1880s by working with few employees and at a shallow depth.<sup>26</sup> They were still going at the end of the century when firms with greater capital reserves and more lofty ambitions had folded.

As in other fields mining revived in the 1890s. But in the years leading up to the First World War, one by one key shaft mines closed, leaving the fields to dredging. The New Birthday Company had taken over ground previously leased to

the Queen's Birthday at Goldsborough. The Burnt Creek Company got some ore from the 800 ft. level in their shaft. But not too many other local firms could look ahead with confidence.

A belated find near Bealiba rekindled hopes in 1913. Two prospectors, Matthews and Ellerton struck gold along a lead which ran five miles from Archdale to Puzzle Flat. At the same time James Montgomery unearthed one of those huge nuggets for which the Moliagul district had already become famous. Once again local shopkeepers, mining investors and journalists looked to a golden future. The frenzy of a gold rush was about to engulf Bet Bet. By July 1913 four mines were at work on the Puzzle Flat lead with a crushing battery extracting their gold near Archdale. Yet within twelve months the last wonderful dreams of gold had been dashed.<sup>27</sup>

The Dunolly Express lamented the '*more or less constant vicissitudes which environ our mining industry*'. It seemed to one journalist that only '*sordid considerations*' crossed the minds of mining speculators. Many of them seemed all too eager to raise false hopes, draw up a prospectus for some phoney company and then vanish from the Shire leaving disillusioned investors behind them. Even the Puzzle Flat find failed to spark off any new bonanza. Matthews and Ellerton continued to work their claim but the other companies formed to work the field quickly handed their claims over to tributers. Then in 1913, the last of the heavily capitalised local mines ceased operations. The Burnt Creek No.1 mine closed down. The company abandoned their shaft and expended its remaining resources on cyaniding through old tailings. The shaft of the Burnt Creek No.1 remains, as do the footings for the boiler, standing in a paddock near Betley. The giant tailings heap overshadows trees and roads nearby. But even the dirt washed out in 1914 is now covered with scrub. Eucalyptus trees have sprung up and cover the the tailings from this once wealthy mine.

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24. Dunolly and Bet Bet Shire Express, 23 February 1882, 25 September 1877, 18 April 1871.

25. Ibid., various dates 1885.

26. Bealiba Times, 18 March 1910, 27 November 1909.

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27. Dunolly and Bet Bet Shire Express, 8 April 1913 and 13 January 1914.



WELCOME STRANGER  
DISCOVERY RE-ENACTMENT





## Structure of Mining

From the 1860s when the first no liability mining companies moved into the Bet Bet fields through to 1914 when their workmen came up the shafts for the last time, these firms shaped local life and local landscape. Right across the present Shire the marks of their enterprise can still be seen.

The investments made by firms like the Queen's Birthday Mining Company supposedly brought order to an unstable local economy. WT Hansford, WM Davies and their partners were local patrons able to give work to neighbours, bring business to shopkeepers and help churches and clubs to prosper. They went on to take a lead on town councils or in the Victorian parliament. To a degree they did bring order into the chaos of the mining scrambles of the 1850s. Later chapters make clear the part they played in sponsoring local societies and clubs. Their mines refashioned the landscape by raising up poppet heads, paying for crushing batteries to stamp away at quartz rock, piling up mountains of tailings and sending men out into the forests to cut down timber with which they lined shafts or kept the fires going in boilers.

The remaking of the Bet Bet landscape through mining went hand in hand with the mining company's role in refashioning local society. In the first place these company mines stood at the centre of a conflict between small and large miners. They also introduced the tribute system to Bet Bet and further they brought 'outside' investors into the Shire. The mining firms created some cohesion and shared identity in the Shire. No doubt key investors were held in high repute. Yet at the same time their mines worked amidst a good deal of tension.

## Companies and the gold economy

One of the regular conflicts on the fields of the 1850s had been over the boundaries of claims and rights over new gold finds. Miners took neighbours and sometimes partners to the local Warden's Court to settle disputes. Mining Wardens often had to rule on similar disputes with the smaller company mines of the 1860s. Often these involved companies where a few men clubbed together to pool

resources and only one of them actually worked the mine. Financing members regularly reneged on promises, especially when the mine looked as if it was going to fail. In one case in 1871 a group of share holders fell out and the working miner after getting no money from his partners began working the claim for himself. After a lengthy court battle the sleeping partners had to pay 30/- per week for the whole of the time their active associate had been digging on the claim.<sup>28</sup>

The generous leases taken up by large companies angered the small miners who feared they would be squeezed out of local fields. Quartz-reef investors responded by claiming that they could not attract capital into the district when laws restricted the size of claims. Henry Bristol, an investor in several Poverty Reef mines, complained that the Maryborough Mining Board was ruining local ventures.<sup>29</sup> Small claims, he suggested, were all very well on alluvial fields. But on the Poverty Reef, where gold lay at a great depth, firms needed to get broad leases. Otherwise they would never attract investors prepared to bear the cost of deep sinkings. Without these rights he insisted that no company would want to invest in expensive crushing or sinking machinery. Feuds lasted through to the end of the nineteenth century, pitting small prospectors against company shareholders and managers of large mines. A public meeting in the Victoria Theatre, Tarnagulla drew one hundred miners in 1894. Men like TH Harris from Waanyarra stressed that the fossickers didn't oppose large leases as much as they were upset by the system of mining royalties.<sup>30</sup> But for the most part his fellow-prospectors blamed the depression in mining on the extensive ground leased to large and all too often inactive joint-stock companies. Investors like Duggan and Davies defended their rights to extensive leases – without those, so Davies pleaded, he could not attract

28. Courier, 21 October 1871.

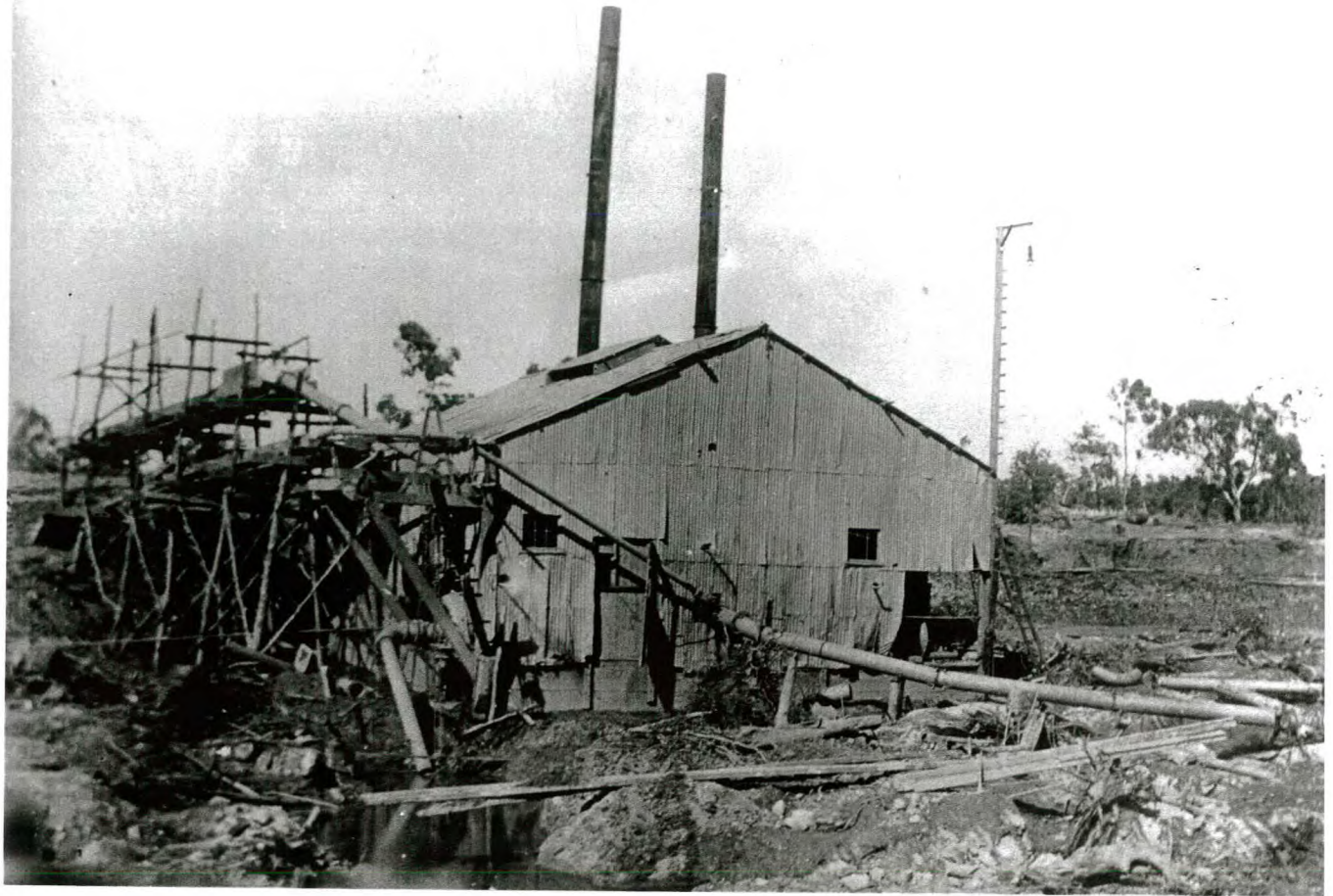
29. T&L Courier 10 June 1865

30. Ibid., 19 April 1894.



22

COMPANY MINE  
TARNAGULLA





outside capital into Tarnagulla.<sup>31</sup> Fossickers kept on sniping at the big companies for several years. These recriminations only died down when, despite large leases, the heavily-capitalised firms abandoned fields in Bet Bet.

As well as battling against the claims of their smaller rivals, the no-liability firms faced regular challenges from their own employees. In 1872 workmen at Llanelly formed a branch of the Sandhurst Miners Association – a defence, so they insisted – against capitalists bent on ‘*seizing the last pound of flesh*’ from the working miner.<sup>32</sup> The men wanted to win an eight-hour day and set up an accident fund. Occasionally these moves of employed miners to organise for better conditions resulted in strikes – like that at Bealiba in 1883. Men working for the George Reef Company demanded higher wages. The working miners claimed that the ground they had to dig through was so wet that they deserved 50/- per week instead of the customary 35/- to 40/-.<sup>33</sup> At other times local miners turned to the mining unions in Bendigo or to the workingmen's organisations in Maryborough for support.

Yet, the nature of mining in Bet Bet was such that a strong union and lengthy disputes with mine managers were unlikely. Men went from working as employees to staking their own claims. The small towns kept them in close contact with local employers – who might often share their church pew or own the local pub (like WM Davies) or else run the general store (all the principal Tarnagulla storekeepers; Duggan, Cheetham and Comrie invested in local mines). Familiarity often bred personal rather than class rivalries. The constant moves from fossicking to company employment and then to labouring on a farm kept miners from thinking of themselves as employees ranged against their employers. Even the disputes over leases pitted small-time entrepreneurs against their larger rivals. Furthermore mine owners and mine

workers were often not directly related as hirer and wage-earner. Most of the Bet Bet mines were let at some time or other on the tribute system by which working miners became tenants rather than employees of the mining companies.

When company shareholders felt that returns from their mines were declining they often asked managers to let out the mine on tribute. A few miners without funds would band together and work the mine, taking out a percentage of any gold found. If they struck a rich lead the company might pay off the tributers and take up the work themselves. One common arrangement was for tributers to keep gold won to a certain depth – sometimes 150 feet and for the company to take any gold found deeper in the shaft. Tributers worked on all of the local fields during the 1870s and as often as not found themselves fighting with the letting company. In one case at Poverty Reef in 1872, a company shareholder was also a member of the tribute party. While working in his own company's claim he had put aside some of the gold in his own home and refused to give it up, either to his tribute partners or to his company's manager.

Miners often disputed rights to gold with the company. Many argued that as they had worked for months perhaps even years on tribute that they must be entitled to a greater share of any gold eventually unearthed. Mines passed from company to tribute party and back again. Such inconsistency rarely made for efficient mining. Tributing seemed often to hasten the demise of mines which had once been profitable, for the tributers had no enduring interest in the venture and let equipment deteriorate around them. Many tributers worked without income and expended their savings going through a mine which had already proved worthless. More often than not they gave up with little to show for their exhausting effort.

If the tribute party uncovered a new seam, company shareholders often turned to their perennial panacea: – the outside capitalist. The strength of local mining depended in the first instance on the pockets and nerves of a few Dunolly or Tarnagulla commercial men. The Queen's Birthday Mine exemplified this local enterprise. But in the same year in which Hansford, Peters and their partners

31 *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, 2 March 1872.

33. *Express*, various dates, 1883.



formed the Queen's Birthday Mine, one local journalist was warning against the inroads of the '*outside capitalist*'. Melbourne investors it appeared were '*very chary how and when they invest their money*'. Only Bet Bet men could be relied upon. Local miners were the only ones who knew the ground well enough to make a go of deep shafts.<sup>34</sup> Local men did go on managing local mines (although some did bring in British mining engineers) but increasingly the local mining investor sought backing in Bendigo or Ballarat. By the 1880s they had turned to Britain. W T Hansford made trips to London hoping to entice British speculators to take a chance with the Queen's Birthday Mine. The New Birthday also relied on overseas capital.

Mine owners introduced this British capital with, as one writer pointed out, '*a great flourish of trumpets*'. By the end of the 1880s the surviving companies with shafts sunk below 350 feet often boasted about their London shareholders. Smaller firms turned reluctantly to investors in Bendigo and Ballarat and eventually in Melbourne. In that way, they found funds to keep up the hunt for riches; they also surrendered control to men with little interest in the Shire or its people. The companies registered in Tarnagulla and Dunolly in the 1860s usually had local directors and maintained offices in one of the Shire's towns. By the end of the decade many of the companies had their head offices in Ballarat. Some mines survived with shareholders from beyond Bet Bet. The Burnt Creek No.1 mine for example operated with a head office in Maryborough. Some shareholders did live in Dunolly but most were from Maryborough. One long-lived local firm the Windmill Reef Company held regular shareholders' meetings in the Bendigo Hotel in Dunolly. But by 1899 the company had no local directors and shareholders were told that in future the company would be conducting its business from Ballarat. Despite the complaints of one investor, the Windmill Reef Company held meetings and rented offices in Ballarat from 1900 onwards.<sup>35</sup>

34. Courier, 16 February 1867.

35. Express, 24 January 1899.

The major period of company mining was drawing to a close by then. Some mines had returned enormous wealth to the Shire. Others struggled on for years with alternately, the company or tribute parties working the mine. As well the mines created an echelon of mining managers and investors, the political men of mark who took it on themselves to guide the destiny of towns like Dunolly and Tarnagulla. But as mining ventures rose and fell nothing could disguise the long slow decline of the industry.

Churches, sporting clubs, hotels and general stores all depended on the fortunes of the company mine. Mining firms offered hope to small towns. They gave work to miners and at the same time terminated their independence. Sometimes conflicts between employers and their men endangered the easy order of small towns. More often than not miners looked to the key investors as patrons who could make whole towns wealthy. But as the century progressed, company managers came into conflict with tributers. More importantly the directors had to turn beyond the Shire for capital. Up to the turn of the century Bet Bet miners were surprisingly successful in attracting outside investors. But after 1900 these distant men of capital offered less and less support. Townsfolk hoped for a twentieth-century mining revival. In due course it came; but only because of another depression. Penniless men revived mining in Bet Bet. The outside capitalist had better things to do with his money.

## Conclusion

In the nineteenth century these outsiders were tightening their grip on an industry in decline. Mines begun with a fanfare in the 1860s often struggled in the 1870s. Many disappeared or were let on tribute in the 1880s. Cyaniding and then dredging revived flagging fortunes in the 1890s.

The whole of the Victorian, indeed the national mining industry, passed through the same cycle. Bet Bet investors went further than others on small gold fields and sank new shafts at the turn of the century. But by the time of the First World War even these ambitious ventures had lost their allure. Between 1860 and the end of the century mining ventures rose and fell. But



nothing could disguise the long slow decline in the industry which had created the Shire.

The physical marks of this enormous endeavour are scattered throughout the Shire. Tailing heaps rise up from the plains to the west of Dunolly. In the forests of the eastern shire these stand near to the marks of surface mining.

Travellers in the forests of the Shire can stumble on the remnants of a once fabulous shaft. But most of the machinery and buildings have gone. State batteries and crushing plants were moved about the Shire and eventually were shifted to other parts of Victoria. A few broken pieces of iron and brick mark the sites of crushing batteries at Moliagul and Tarnagulla. Poppet heads and boilers were sold off when companies wound up. Only the filled shafts, the tailing mounds, overgrown dams and the footings of boilers and engine rooms are left. Perhaps the most eerie structure in the whole of the Shire stands alongside the Burnt Creek where the North Duke mine once promised a golden future for West Timor. In a paddock back from a quiet road the hump of tailings protects the massive basalt blocks of the one engine room wall left standing. Nearby the bricks of footings are covered with fallen branches and leaves. Elsewhere though mines have started up. The Cambrian mine at Llanelly and the Great Western near Tarnagulla may enrich the Shire once again just as they did more than one hundred years ago.



## GOLDEN TOWNS: BUILDINGS

In 1862 a local journalist looked out from Dunolly towards the 'wild uncultivated ridges which though rich in their golden deposits, stretch out in [a] barren waste to pall the eye'.<sup>1</sup> Surrounded by the churned soil of a mining field this writer turned back towards the township of Dunolly, a refreshing 'oasis' in the desert made by miners.<sup>2</sup> Through the rest of the 1860s visitors and local writers together saw Dunolly and other local towns in this way. They may not have expanded rapidly. Yet their sturdy buildings and the rich social life which went on within them more than balanced the ugliness and uncertainties of mining. When townfolk gathered to lay the foundation stone for the Dunolly Town Hall this local journalist reported again on the:

*advance of Dunolly towards that settled condition which brings in its train a prosperity comparatively unknown in places of mere evanescent growth*<sup>3</sup>.

During the next one hundred years Dunolly shrunk from the promise of the 1860s. The towns of the shire remained small, so that the churches and public buildings of the 1860s now seem curiously misplaced. Dunolly, Tarnagulla or Bealiba may have never realised the dreams of the writers and builders of the 1860s. Nevertheless for most of the nineteenth century they remained solid and comfortable towns. They were planned on a generous scale and are graced with many public and some private buildings comparable to those in much bigger settlements. Dunolly hardly measured up against Bendigo or Castlemaine. Nevertheless it was an 'oasis' small though it remained.

By 1858 the numbers gathered around the first rush sites had dwindled. At the same time waves of diggers rolled around the fringes of the Shire. Still, by 1858 some likely sites for a settled oasis stood out. Principal amongst these were the townships of Dunolly and Tarnagulla and

then smaller settlements at Cochrane's (Bealiba), Burnt Creek and Jones Creek (Waanyarra). While the first permanent building in the Shire was claimed to be the Old House at Home Hotel at Goldsborough, by 1858 miners, their families and tradespeople had all drifted to South Dunolly.

### Dunolly

There, along the expanse of Broadway, the town land was surveyed and sold off in 1858 in blocks to the east and west of the main thoroughfare.<sup>4</sup> Goldsborough had already been subdivided by the in 1854, but four years the real hub of local life had drifted south to Dunolly.

Ballooning behind the march of the gold digger, Dunolly extended in a long straggling concourse, looking more like a funfare than a town. At the zenith of the rushes Dunolly was 'canvass(sic.), canvass, nothing but canvass'.<sup>5</sup> Yet a sanguine visitor might have picked out signs of a more permanent township amidst the tents and shacks. Some of the first brick buildings were erected along Broadway from 1857. Amongst them, Simpson's Bendigo Hotel stood out. The hotel was built in brick during 1857 and opened on Empire Day 1858. Simpson took the patriotic anniversary as an opportunity to promote the Bendigo as Dunolly's premier hotel. The local Court of Petty Sessions dealt with cases in the hall attached to the hotel. Simpson dealt with drinkers in the bar and turned the parlour and dining rooms into a calm retreat from the crush of miners in Broadway or the hotel. The publican later added another arm to his enterprise when the Bendigo served as a coaching agency and stop-over. Ernst Erntsen had opened his Criterion Hotel in 1858. By October 1858 a row of shops, banks and hotels lined Broadway. To the banks and grog shops of the gold rush were added drapery stores, butchers and hardware stores.<sup>6</sup> The place grew so rapidly during 1858

1. Express, 24 May 1862.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid. 4 October 1862

4. Kerr, Glimpses of life in Victoria.

5. Ibid., 20 July 1858.

6. Ibid.



that one visitor thought Dunolly already had 'all the elements of a town'.

From 1859 onwards government buildings in brick and stone began to replace portable offices and stores. The contractor TJ Baker began work on a gold office in 1859 to replace the first office more than half a mile away in the bush.<sup>7</sup>

Even amidst this flurry of building some cast doubts on the town's future. As one journalist pointed out, Dunolly 'always seemed on the point of becoming a flourishing township and as often the probability died away'.<sup>8</sup> At one time the Dunolly diggings spread down from Goldsbrough along the creek bed to Bromley. Even after 1854 and 1858 when Goldsbrough and Dunolly were set out to formal plans, the direction of gold digging still shaped urban settlement. Townsfolk embarked on a confident scheme for a hospital in 1859 calling for tenders in November. The eventual building was completed one year later rising above the eastern side of the town. Other civic designs began about the same time with most rising up the higher slope to the east of Broadway. Amongst them were a brick lock-up, built in August 1859 and the gold warden's office. Between Broadway and these new brick buildings lay the market square, designed to become the commercial and social hub of the new town. A market shed filled the centre of the square. Around its boundaries rose the civic edifices of a prosperous mining town. They faced across broad new streets towards some solid private housing. A cottage offered for sale in July 1858 appeared to set the tone. The owner advertised the cottage for sale as:

*most conveniently built consisting of four rooms and kitchen attached, stabling and convenient outhouses, a most desirable opportunity for a gentleman about to marry requiring a comfortable and secluded private dwelling.*<sup>9</sup>

This cottage and its imagined purchaser suggest the impulse behind most of the new building in the town. Dunolly was to

become a steady respectable settlement, led by comfortable married gentlemen. The canvas funfare would vanish and along with it the drifters and gamblers who raced about from pub to pub and from claim to claim.

### The 1860s in Dunolly

As new public buildings reached up from the huddle of tents and huts, Dunolly came closer to this goal. The town hall had struck early problems with tenders but with Isaac Meadows as principal contractor and Charles Thatcher as architect, the foundation stone was eventually laid in October 1862. The new hall stood near to a gold office and residence ~~1861~~ erected nearby in 1861.

At the same time new commercial buildings sealed the change in tone for Broadway. Amongst these was McBride's Ironmongery designed by Tryrer and erected in 1863. McBride used this store until 1875. From there he carried on a trade in everything from cricket bats, balls and stumps to blasting powder. At the same time he launched into local politics and opened branch stores in Tarnagulla and St. Arnaud.<sup>10</sup> In 1865 William Footer completed one of the largest and most unusual private houses in the town ~~1865~~. 'Footer's Mansion' passed to WT Hansford when Footer ran into debt. The Tudoresque design was unusual in itself. Possibly more arresting was the model of the Tower of Pisa which Hansford added to the garden. The two leading hotels, Ernst Ernstsens's Criterion and the Bendigo Hotel both went up in style as brick replaced canvas and dining rooms filled the space once allotted to the bar. George Simpson, proprietor of the Bendigo Hotel, announced his new dining room 'conducted in the most "recherche" style'.<sup>11</sup> Simpson payed the wages of a night porter and ran a carriage-hire business. To challenge the Bendigo Hotel, Ernstsens also threw up a brick hotel. Sober diggers now had to negotiate a precarious course down Broadway. Massive drinking establishments towered over them from both sides of Broadway. Ernstsens informed patrons, that he had

7. Maryborough Advertiser, 29 June 1858.

8. Ibid., 10 August 1858.

9. Ibid., 20 July 1858.

10. Bendigo Directory, 1867

11. Ibid.





BENDIGO HOTEL



reconstituted the Criterion 'at an enormous outlay'. In 1867 another two story brick building appeared in Broadway-the London Chartered Bank.<sup>12</sup>

By the middle of the 1860s, Dunolly had two distinct focal points. The new commercial centre had taken shape along Broadway. State offices and services like the police station were arranged to the east of the Market Square. Religious buildings added a third element to the Dunolly townscape. Wesleyans began holding services in their new church in April 1863. Gradually other structures filled the church reserve. The congregation erected a parsonage in 1880 and then a schoolhouse in June 1887. Under the guidance of Hansford they opened a kindergarten in 1905.

This Wesleyan reserve with its neatly arranged brick buildings is still the largest religious centre in the town, reflecting the leading role Wesleyans played in Dunolly. Churchyards supposedly gave some calming respite from the greed and chaos of a mining field. The Wesleyans certainly created such a haven in Dunolly. Their church reserve encloses exotic trees and a warm brick church flanked by a Sabbath School and the miniature infant school. A Church of England Sunday School had opened in May 1858 and parishioners gathered to lay a foundation stone for their church in 1866.<sup>13</sup> The church opened at the end of 1869, designed by the architects Vahland and Getzschmann from Bendigo. At the time of the first survey land was reserved for Roman Catholics. By 1865 there were enough parishioners to begin a fund for a chapel. The Catholic church was completed in 1871, to a design by D Miller and with Charles Toutcher as clerk of works.<sup>14</sup>

Dunolly in 1871 had acquired an air of solidity which distinguished it from the tent city of the gold rushes. One local directory described Dunolly as a town of 'many fine

buildings' most of them along Broadway: 'one of the finest roads out of Melbourne'. Broadway extended to a width of one and a half chains with sixteen-foot pedestrian walks on either side. A few 'ordinary buildings' along the street hardly matched its grand proportions. At the same time Dunolly could also boast several structures which it was claimed would 'grace the Metropolis'. McBride's Ironmonger's was acclaimed as 'the handsomest and best finished business structure in Dunolly'.<sup>15</sup> The town had two brick banks, the Victoria and the London Chartered and several attractive government buildings. It did seem that within little more than a decade Dunolly passed from a gigantic but transient settlement to a far smaller town. But at least the little town had all the signs of comfort and permanence about it.

In 1861, for a population of 1175 persons, Dunolly had 206 buildings. Ten years later for a population of 1553 persons there were more than 400 inhabited buildings. Probably the last major private dwelling completed before the 1871 Census was Bell House, completed in 1869. The Bell House, which flanked the Market Square brought a decade of building to a close. During the 1860s the town hall, court house and hotels had given Dunolly a solid and prosperous look. This kernel of expensive and well-designed structures remained in the midst of paddocks and forest rather than any spreading city.

### Later building

Some public building continued into the 1870s. Dunolly's first brick post office was finished alongside Market Square in 1872. Yet despite occasional additions, the major phase of town building ceased before 1870. Some new shops, like Walter Skelton's drapery were added to the Broadway streetscape. Rebuilding went on as well. A confident publican remodelled the Royal Hotel in 1896 and another Post Office was completed in the same decade. Both these buildings, built to two storeys differed in style from the designs of the 1860s. In scale they matched these earlier designs and helped make Broadway a much more appealing urban space.

<sup>12</sup>. *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>. R. Winston, 'A history of the Church of England, Church Dunolly', ms. 10597, Latrobe Library.

<sup>14</sup>. R. Carless, Church of St. Mary, pamphlet

<sup>15</sup>. Bendigo directory, 1867.



When the railway arrived it gave the town another centre to the west. Perhaps the principal change in these later decades was in the focus of town life. Market Square proved a dismal failure. The produce shed was dismantled and its bricks used for a pavilion on the recreation reserve. Dunolly came to be more and more centred on Broadway than on the hill to the east. Commercial buildings may have remained intact and used but the number of private dwellings actually declined before the end of the century.

By 1891 Dunolly's tradesmen and civic leaders had long abandoned dreams of some majestic town to rival Ballarat or Bendigo. Instead the expansion of the town had ground to a halt. In some ways Dunolly contracted.

One observer writing for the Cyclopaedia of Victoria in 1904 reflected that the townscape:

*gives you the impression of a place that was once of considerable importance [but] now having suffered a material decline from its former prosperity.*<sup>16</sup>

Although shrinking in numbers of buildings and then in residents, Dunolly retained its pleasant comfortable mien. Alongside the fine public buildings the town could now boast of several churches, many wooden cottages, a few two-storey brick villas, ten acres of public gardens and pines, peppercorns and eucalypts lining Broadway.

Residents in Dunolly at the end of the nineteenth century could look forward to a comfortable urban future. Their town had long since lost the marks of its wild gold-digging birth. At the same time this comfortable little village lost any pretence of ever becoming the great gold metropolis of central Victoria.

### Tarnagulla

The smaller urban centres of the shire passed through the same cycles as Dunolly. Tarnagulla, with its fortunes tied more directly to reef mining disintegrated more quickly even than Dunolly. Though the Sandy Creek diggings never attracted as many miners as did the rushes to Dunolly, residents in Tarnagulla looked

forward to a glorious future. This was especially true after companies tapped the rich ore of Poverty Reef. In Tarnagulla the dreams of grandeur were harder to realise. The mining industry did create some solid public buildings. But by 1901 the town around them had shrunk even more completely than had Dunolly itself.

Apart from the several batteries and crushing works around the town, churches filled any view across the Sandy Creek gold workings. From the 1860s miners and townsfolk could look around them and see the red brick and wood of simple elegant places of worship alongside the crushers and poppets of the gold mines. The first of these churches to open was the Church of the Holy Saviour, Church of England, which stood on the west side of the main mining lead. One local journalist reported at the opening in 1864 that:

*rarely had he seen a building more admirable in its proportions . . . where good taste and appropriate decoration have happily blended.*<sup>17</sup>

This church was to have had a bell tower at its western end for which townsfolk held fund-raising evenings in the Victoria Theatre. In the same year a brick Presbyterian Church opened in the township and a Wesleyan Methodist Church was begun. Again in 1864 the Tarnagulla Baptist congregation converted a brick shop into a chapel. In the preceding year the Welsh Congregational Chapel in Tarnagulla had closed and been moved to Llanelly. Then in 1865 the Catholic Church was opened. As elsewhere these permanent buildings replaced slab, wooden and sometimes portable places of worship.<sup>18</sup>

Alongside these churches, civic buildings stood for the permanence, orderliness and the local responsibility which townsfolk craved. In 1863 a brick courthouse allowed the trials of local miscreants. At last the town had a place in which the recalcitrant remnants of free-wheeling digging days could be properly punished. In 1864 this '*substantial and commodious courthouse*' received weekly visits from a circuit magistrate. The Gold Wardens Office didn't last as long. The

16. Cyclopedia of Victoria, 2 vols. Melbourne 1904, vol. 2.

17. Courier, 19 November 1864

18. Church buildings, historical notes, Tarnagulla Gold Museum.



## TRADE IN THE GOLD RUSH TOWN





warden was ousted even before the building was completed and in 1862 what was supposed to be a gold warden's office opened as the Sandy Creek Post Office. Even at that early stage, the siting of these buildings to the west of the main diggings invited criticism. As in Dunolly these state and civic structures were grouped together so as to create some sort of civic centre. Instead, as the wealth of Poverty Reef began to shape the fortunes of the town, shops and hotels started to straggle along Commercial Road. The churches, then later the school and the post office, lock-up and court were left cut off from the town's business by crushing batteries and the digging holes along the creek bed. The Wesleyan chapel on Poverty Reef proved an exception; built alongside the busiest mines, its place in the town reflected the close ties between mining and the leading Wesleyans of Tarnagulla.

Where the main street, Commercial Road, ran down past the Wesleyan church and the Poverty Reef mines, shops, banks and hotels one by one filled the vacant blocks. The first major building here, and one which for long remained the centre of the town's social and political life was the Victoria Hotel and Theatre. This building was completed for George Barlow in 1861. Barlow held the license from 1863 until 1876 when the hotel was taken over by William Morgan Davies.<sup>19</sup> The Theatre hosted fund-raising drives for church and school and meetings of local mining shareholders. Political campaigns about land selection or mining or for local council or parliamentary seats went on here. Any visiting dignitary sat in the hall to be entertained. When a pillar of the local community left Tarnagulla, his last farewell to the town took place in the Victoria Theatre. Travelling players and entertainers appeared here. Men like Professor Hume, the phrenological lecturer, who felt the skulls of well-known civic leaders and read their characters. Professor Hume's visits were an important occasion for *'all lovers of the marvellous'*. Further along Commercial Road the Colonial Bank filled a site on the corner of Commercial Road and Poverty Street. Like

the London Chartered Bank in Dunolly and the nearby Union Bank this was also designed by Leonard Terry. The foundation stone to the new bank was laid in 1866 and its smelting room and massive chimney rose over the simple wooden and brick shops along Commercial Road. In the same year the Freemasonry of Tarnagulla opened their Masonic Hall on a site at the Dunolly end of Commercial Road. Tarnagulla Masons had the sense to include a pub in their premises.

Along Commercial Road and on some of the cross streets, strings of shops stood between the banks, hotels and the Masonic Hall. During the 1860s, the town boasted several bakers, two butchers, several blacksmiths, four hotels, two chemists, several drapers and a goldsmith. Tarnagulla grew rapidly between 1861 and 1871 with the number of brick and stone houses increasing three times and the number of iron houses doubling. At the same time the size of houses also increased. So when reef mining promised a rosy future, local residents built bigger and more solid homes while they donated to church building funds. During the 1870s the rate of building slowed and in both private and public construction the town entered a long slow decline. Not surprisingly, mining also declined during the decade. Locational changes went along with this. In 1886, as the town shrunk, the Post Office was moved into Commercial Road. In the same year, Lewis, proprietor of the Golden Age Hotel, remodelled his pub, adapting rooms for commercial travellers. Lewis created a *'comfortable sitting room'*, new bathrooms and began boasting of the largest stables in the district as well as a booking office for Cobb and Co.<sup>20</sup>

Even before these changes had gotten underway, old-timers looked back to the heady days when they opened up the Poverty Reef. Within twenty years they were seeing their little town waste away. One old resident returned in 1878 and was saddened to find that Tarnagulla had become almost a *'deserted village'*. Where once crowds of miners trudged off shifts and men and women crowded the shops of Commercial Road, Tarnagulla had become no more *'alert than the grave'*

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<sup>19</sup>. Historical notes, Don Clark collection (in possession of Don Clark, Tarnagulla)

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<sup>20</sup>. Courier, 17 July 1886



## MERCHANTS AND CUSTOMERS





where many of the old faces were lying stark and cold in their coffins'.<sup>21</sup> Another suggested that Tarnagulla people had lost their drive; the town could do with some of the Bendigo spirit. Whereas Tarnagulla was 'poor and needy', Bendigo grew richer all the time.<sup>22</sup> Others reported the 'depressing influence of many large untenanted buildings . . . a sure sign of a town or district's decline'.<sup>23</sup>

None of these failings could possibly be prevented by local pluck or energy. As gold returns diminished and wise investors turned elsewhere, Tarnagulla's fate was sealed. By the end of the 1870s the town needed a massive new gold rush to halt its slide. A rush came in the 1890s but to Western Australia and not to Tarnagulla. In 1893 local miners started to drift off to new fields on the other side of the continent. The local paper complained bitterly, asking why these men must go off wandering after wealth instead of being happy 'with a small income on one of our well-known goldfields'.<sup>24</sup>

Forgetting much of the history of Tarnagulla itself this journalist warned that a regular weekly wage was much better than an uncertain chase after high stakes. 'The Land of Promise is not always the Land of Performance' gravely admonished the Courier. This warning might just as easily have summed up the waning fortunes of Tarnagulla itself.<sup>25</sup>

### Mining and local industry

The rise and fall of gold mines largely governed the fortunes of the towns of the Shire. Even during the years of intensive land settlement, mining still remained central to the local economy. As one farmer pointed out in 1885, Bet Bet was an area where 'mining and farming combined -

nearly half and half'.<sup>26</sup> Mining gave rise to several smaller industries in the Shire. On the one hand profits from mines could be invested in factories in Tarnagulla or Dunolly. On the other, mining demanded certain skills and raw materials. Enterprising diggers who saw the decline of mining also perceived that both materials and skills could be turned to other purposes. Iron foundries for example existed because of the demands of mining companies. Likewise timber cutters savaged the forests of the Shire to provide local miners with shaft timbers. Throughout the nineteenth century small factories and processing plants sustained a local work force and earned an income for the towns of the Shire.

At its most simple and precarious, local industry included the men who carted wood out of the forests of the Shire, supplying the miners with props for shafts and their boilers with firewood. By the 1890s one local farmer acknowledged that there were 'people that make a living at wood-carting - our district is poor and scattered and many men of that class do knock about'.<sup>27</sup> Wood-cutters were often little more than itinerant labourers sometimes with a horse and cart, an axe and a saw but little more. Forests in the Shire, especially around Bealiba sustained this wood-carting. Contracts were let for sleepers once railways reached the area. At the end of the century, local contractors included TW Burge at Emu, J Cunningham at Bealiba, H Ward at Arnold's Bridge and J Neal at Tarnagulla. Bealiba became an important point for delivering railway sleepers for many years.<sup>28</sup> While the broad station yard is now empty, not so long ago a forest of box sleepers and fence posts surrounded the station.

Other local resources were the limestone kilns in the south of the Shire. Limestone had been discovered on Alfred Joyce's Norwood Run in 1858. Nearby, Edward Elliott located a limestone deposit on his holding. By the 1870s five lime kilns

21. Courier, 16 February 1878.

22. Ibid., 18 June 1881

23. Ibid.

24. Courier 3 December 1864

25. Courier, 25 November 1893

26. Royal Commission on waterworks, V.P.P., 1885, evidence, q.4363

27. Royal Commission on fiscal policy, 1894, VPP, vol.2, evidence, q.11170.

28. Railway contracts, Victorian Railways, records, sleepers, series, 3840, V.P. R.O.





WOODCUTTERS  
BEALIBA



operated in this area, employing up to thirty men. Other deposits were mined at Bet Bet on land owned by Goerge Letts.<sup>29</sup>

Apart from mining and wood-cutting other workshops depended on the success or failure of the Shire's house builder. Hargreave's steam saw mills made shingles, joints and weatherboards at Murphy's Creek. These saw mills supplied the handful of local builders and carpenters during the 1860s. Each of the major centres had at least one blacksmith and both Tarnagulla and Newbridge boasted specialist wheelwrights. At North Dunolly, Randall's General Foundry met a local demand from mining companies and later from farmers.<sup>30</sup> Several small local bootmakers found a market in Dunolly and other towns. One unique local venture was Augusto Argnani's '*oleaginous blacking factory*' at Jones Creek. Argnani extolled the wonders of his unique technique for maintaining black surfaces on footwear. His great venture does not seem to have survived beyond the 1860s. Two breweries at Newbridge met a local market. Day's Albion Brewery and Fitzgerald and Co. claimed that their products could match that of breweries at both Bendigo and Ballarat if not Melbourne itself.

A final category of local industry depended on agriculture rather than on mining or the local consumer market. Flour milling attracted great attention during the 1870s. The Tarnagulla Flour Mill was commenced in 1874 under the direction of one mining speculator, Bristol. The mill eventually began crushing wheat in 1882. By then Thomas Comrie, another Tarnagulla mining investor and merchant, controlled the mill. Comrie renovated the plant in 1899. After Comrie's death the mill was closed and moved to Mildura. In Dunolly, M. Sheehan began his Eureka Flour Mills in 1893. Sheehan supposedly produced a first-class flour. His whole mills were '*fitted up with the most complete and*

*modern machinery on the famous Simon system*'.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps the best-known local industry, mining apart, was Peters and Carwardine's Soap Factory at Dunolly. Peters had been a successful miner at Tarnagulla and later a successful investor in the Queen's Birthday Mine. Peters began making soap and candles in 1860. In 1875 his factory burned down. Undaunted, he rebuilt it and commenced work again. In the 1890s Peters sold soap all over the colony and boasted proudly that '*there was not another soap like it in Melbourne*'.<sup>32</sup> Stuck away from the centre of the town, local residents perhaps only noticed this factory when a west wind blew its awful stench over Broadway.

In Tarnagulla, one long-standing local industry was Treloar's Foundry. This had begun supplying miners in 1855. The foundry later made up agricultural equipment for selectors and then even contracted to build railway waggons. It continued into the twentieth century but by the 1950's the weatherboard buildings had been abandoned and council health inspectors condemned them as dangerous. Another local firm, James Bros., turned from making mining machinery to building up a lucrative business in perfecting and selling stump-jump ploughs.<sup>33</sup>

Despite such successful ventures, the Shire supported only a small labour force outside mining. Many of the wood-carters were little more than itinerant labourers. Some of the heavily capitalised local industries (like the Tarnagulla Flour Mills) even found times harder than did the local miners. Local consumption could be met usually by imported goods and several other concerns depended on the strength of either mining or farming. The Loddon River made Newbridge a handy site for breweries. Peters built up his soap works on the strength of his mining success. But many industrial ventures proved precarious. Although they survived through to the end of the nineteenth

29. Limestone reserve, Bet Bet, papers, Lands Department, selection files, 2919/49, VPRO.

30. Newspaper advertisements, *Courier and Express*, various dates.

31. *Australian millers and bakers handbook and trade directory*, Melbourne 1895.

32. *Royal Commission on fiscal policy*, evidence, Edwin Peters, q.11455.

33. Historical notes, Tarnagulla Gold Museum.



THE FLOUR MILL  
TARNAGULLA





century, improvements in transport proved the undoing of many. Others disappeared with the first generation of investors.

By the turn of the century any expansion in local industry seemed a thing of the past. Peters' soap works continued to operate in Dunolly along with several smaller works. In both Tarnagulla and the rest of the Shire only two manufacturing plants survived. Mining provided the capital and the entrepreneurs who began most of these local schemes. As mining companies were handed over to outside investors, other local industries lost their principal backers.

Within the towns of the shire in 1914 stood many fine churches, several cottages and town halls; all built to lavish proportions and with an eye to design and quality. Near to them ran rows of shopping streets in which many small wooden stores were shuttered and dilapidated. On the fringes of these towns a few small industries kept up a trade within and outside the shire. But gradually the manufacturers disappeared, along with the mining company and the local store. commerce.

### Smaller towns

While mining raised up a string of outposts across the shire, few of these had more than a fitful existence. An instant huddle of tents and slab huts might host one or two sudden charges of diggers. Just as speedily they either become completely abandoned or else shrunk to little more than a few houses and deserted shops. Amongst the smaller mining settlements, Waanyarra (Jones Creek), Burnt Creek and Moliagul survived best. For a time Llanelly flourished around the companies working the Cambrian Reef. Newbridge differed from other local towns since it existed as a crossing place over the Loddon and not as a mining town. Bealiba began as a mining settlement (Cochrane's) and then flourished later in the nineteenth century as a centre for farmers and wood cutters.

Some of these settlements survived long enough to have some simple buildings, a surveyed street plan, perhaps a school and a general store. For many, no sooner had all of these been acquired than the town embarked on its long decay. Jones Creek (Waanyarra) survived into the 1860s

with a store, a hall and several hotels. Budding publicans put in for new licenses in the 1860s – men like Thomas Boan who applied to sell beer at Jones Creek from his six-roomed house in 1866. principal hotel, James Burns' Robert Burns Hotel, also did service as a butcher's shop. Locals held frequent meetings in the Waanyarra Hall looking for a way to revive their settlement. By 1890 it looked as if they had just about given up. So the local newspaper correspondent informed readers that:

*As you are no doubt wondering if we are still in existence I can assure you that all are not dead yet...we held a meeting on Saturday evening at the State School with reference to our last resting place...I am sorry to say that meeting was badly attended.<sup>34</sup>*

The cemetery outlasted the town. Only a few crumbling houses are to be seen along the valley of the Waanyarra Creek. But the cemetery with its picket fence still spreads up a slope from the track to Waanyarra. Apart from the stone shed which once served as a pub and a house which was for a time the post office, not much else of Waanyarra has escaped ruin.

Other mining settlements fared no better. During the Gooseberry Flat Rush a string of portable buildings covered the land to the south of Dunolly. Now only Wigham's Junction Hotel marks the spot of one of the most frantic rushes of the 1860s. This hotel stood at the junction of roads from Maryborough and Bendigo. A neat two-storey brick building it faces onto the Maryborough Road and traffic to Bendigo no longer passes the door. Again along the Burnt Creek diggings a school and church marked some more permanent settlement at Bromley and Betley. Church, hall and school are all that remains of this busy gold mining valley. Few towns held together once rushes petered out.

In contrast settlers stayed on at Newbridge, a town free from the glamour and the dangers of gold. As early as 1858 local journalists boasted that Newbridge was one of the '*prettiest spots in the whole colony*'. At that stage the hamlet depended on market gardening. By 1860 a bridge spanned the Loddon River and Newbridge became a stopping place for

34. Courier, 21 February 1891.



traffic between Castlemaine, Bendigo and Inglewood. Together the calmness of the river, the rich market gardens and vineyards struck most visitors with their tranquillity. Newbridge suggested another more gentle way of life to travellers from Tarnagulla where *'the incessant noise of the stampers'* thudded away day and night. By 1865 the town boasted buildings *'that would be a credit to the Metropolis itself'*. Amongst them was Mr. Summer's wonderful villa, two large schoolrooms, Church of England and Presbyterian churches and hotels and factories. Visitors from mining towns were surprised by the luxury of walking on footpaths. Newbridge must surely become *'a place of note'*.<sup>35</sup> The town supported two breweries and a blacksmith as well as a printer, a miller, several stores and an hotel. A second hotel opened in 1870. As farmers travelled across the Loddon in search of selection blocks, the town's reputation as the most solid and prosperous of the smaller places in the Shire seemed assured. Then in the river flooded and washed away several of the town's shops. James McMahon's brick house almost disappeared as did other brick buildings about the town.<sup>36</sup> These setbacks seemed to weaken some of the faith in Newbridge's future. Nevertheless, its position on the river and at a major crossing point ensured that some sort of township would survive. Even with these advantages, it never really grew beyond the limits established in the 1860s.

Unlike Newbridge, Bealiba owed its origins to gold - the town grew up at the site of the first Cochrane's Rush. Several brief surges of mining endeavour passed over this site and even in the 1870s visitors contrasted the line of claims being worked north of Bealiba with the played out diggings around the Moliagul fields.<sup>37</sup> By the 1890s the main street of Bealiba was lined with several buildings. Probably the focus of the *'snug little township'* was the Bealiba Hotel (later the Commercial Hotel) presided over by George Evans the publican (or King George). Evans had been born in Newtown, North Wales. He

arrived in Victoria in 1852 and went to the Bendigo and Korong goldfields. From there he had gone on to the Ovens goldfields and then to Kilmore before returning to Bendigo. He passed through the fields in Bet Bet and opened a hotel in Kingower. In 1857 Evans at last arrived in Bealiba where he built the Commercial Hotel. As a sideline he conducted the refreshment rooms at the Bealiba railway station. While train travellers no longer stop at Bealiba for refreshments, the Hotel still straddles across several blocks in the main street; a long low building which fits the streetscape of Bealiba.

One other town which survived beyond the alluvial rushes, Llanelly, did so because of quartz-reef mining. The Cambrian or New Chum Reef on which Llanelly depended was discovered by Luke Hirst and Peter Mawson in 1860. By the middle of the 1860s, the town boasted two crushing machines, a fully licensed hotel, *'one really good store and others of a minor character'*. Principal public institutions included a school and post office. Josiah Morrow applied for a license for the New Chum Hotel in 1868, a building of weatherboard with fourteen rooms and an iron roof. In 1870, James Joshua opened his new hotel, the Britannia, complete with meeting rooms, stables and a large theatre - where scenery could be hired free of charge.<sup>38</sup> But Llanelly, just like the earlier alluvial towns, also fell on hard times. By the 1890s, the town consisted of a school, a hotel, a store and a string of dilapidated and often deserted houses. Other places shone more brightly but died just as speedily. Tunstalls for example in the north of the Shire attracted crowds of diggers in 1867 and 1868. A town was laid out in the centre of what seemed likely to become the richest mining field in Bet Bet. But by the 1870s diggers had moved on, buildings were taken down and the town ceased to exist. Most mining towns proved themselves little more than overnight wonders. Hard Hills for example never became more than a collection of huts and tents. In 1865 Patrick Healey applied for a license to sell beer from *'a house of slabs which contains three*

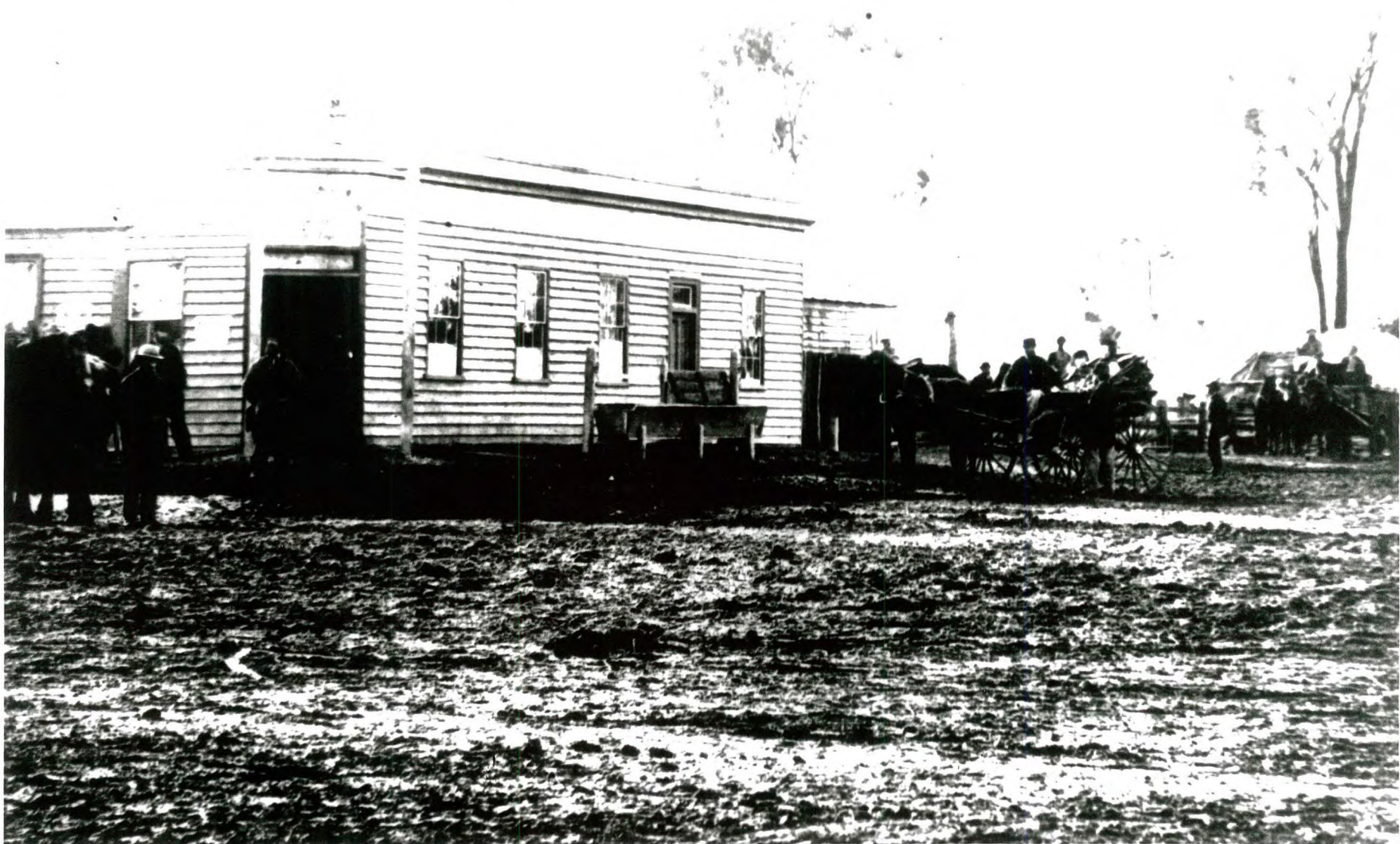
<sup>35</sup>. *Ibid.*, 24 June 1865.

<sup>36</sup>. *Ibid.*, 10 September 1870.

<sup>37</sup>. *Ibid.*, 27 January 1872.

<sup>38</sup>. *Ibid.*, 11 January 1868, 23 April 1870.

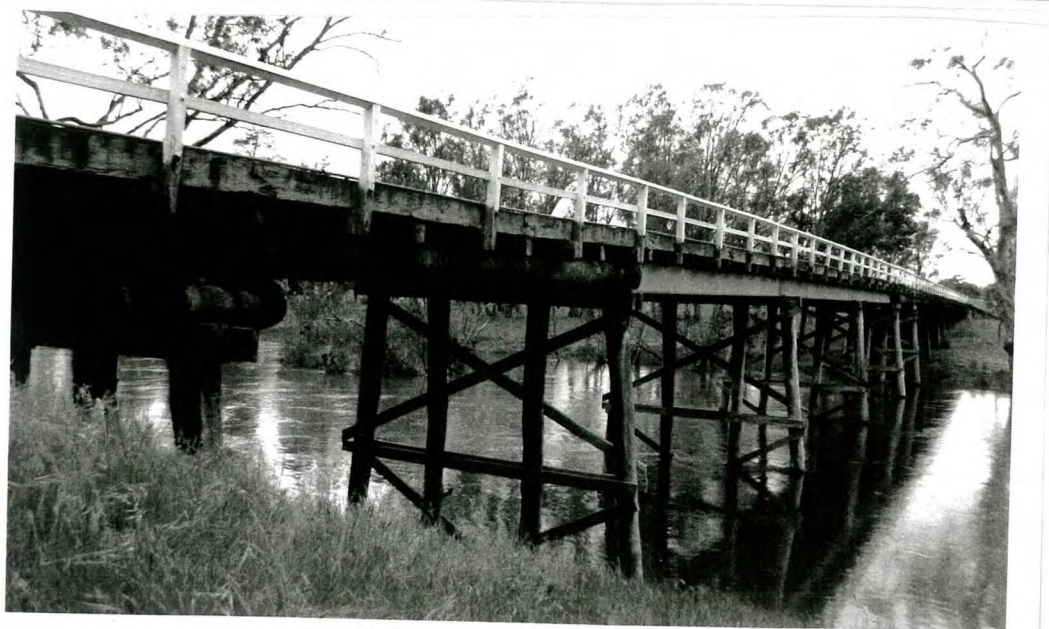
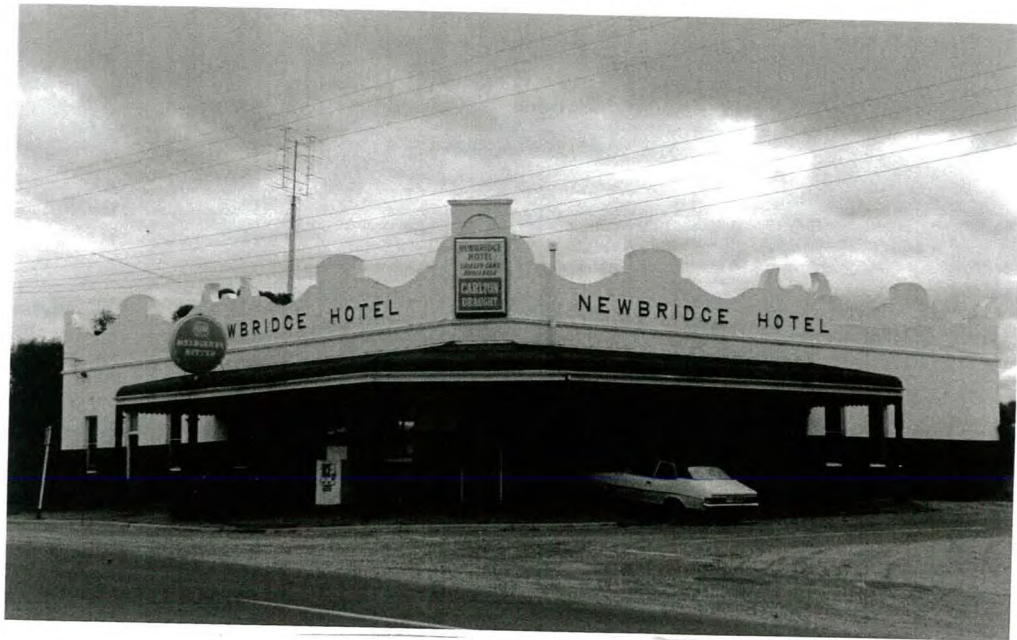




THE FIRST NEWBRIDGE HOTEL



HOTEL, CHURCH AND BRIDGE  
MODERN NEWBRIDGE





rooms', and was quite likely the owner of the principal building of Hard Hills.<sup>39</sup>

In contrast, Murphy's Creek and Irishtown were farming hamlets. A school, hall, and cheese factory made a centre for farm life at Murphy's Creek. At Moliagul, the first mining centre, a store, hotels, church and school once again made up a rudimentary settlement. Around this scatter of buildings miners came and went as alluvial finds drew them from one worked-out field to the next. While a mining town like Tunstalls has disappeared without real trace, Moliagul still can be seen. Even though the school and hotel have closed, the one store still trades and William Hall's Anglican church still holds services. Similarly, Goldsborough survived as long as the Queen's Birthday Mine took on miners. By the twentieth century it too had declined. Today only a closed school, a few scattered houses, a eucalyptus still and the remains of mines face onto the silent streets.

In general, these smaller towns suffered rapid declines before 1900. Only three real urban centres survived into the twentieth century; Dunolly, Bealiba and Tarnagulla. Even these were diminishing in scale and diversity. They all retained a common lay-out. In each (perhaps less marked in Bealiba than in Tarnagulla or Dunolly) religious buildings are clustered together. Government buildings occupy another part of the town. The main commercial street is strung out in a long line, usually closer to the richest mining field. In Tarnagulla the old Sandy Creek workings divide the shops and the Poverty Reef mines from the old post office and the church buildings and school. This townscape was frozen sometime at the end of the 1860s.

About that time the era of hope and expansion came to an end. By then the less resilient diggers had drifted away. The shape of the towns remained fixed from then onwards. Each of them was left with a core of determined commercial men all looking forward to a golden future. Building scales reflected their ambitions. Instead of this future of glorious expansion most towns slowly declined. Yet they retained the generous lay-out brought to them by surveyors at the end of the first gold rushes. While houses and shops

have disappeared, and schools and halls have been shifted, the towns still have many attractive and solid civic and religious buildings. The shopping streets of all the towns are comfortable and varied, even if they have lost the bustle of rich mining days. Houses in these towns might often be small and simple cottages. Occasionally, some larger and more imposing structure remains from the wealth won by a mining investor. Throughout the towns visitors will cross traces from the dreams of the 1860s. One aim of town leaders was to make a comfortable and respectable world from the disorder of gold rushes. In many ways they succeeded. In their broader desire – to establish rivals to Bendigo or Ballarat – they failed. But the many public buildings and solid houses in Bet Bet bear testimony to their ambition.

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<sup>39</sup>. *Ibid.*, 25 June 1865.



*FIREFIGHTERS  
TARNAGULLA*





## The first churches

### CHURCH AND PUB: SOCIAL LIFE

In April 1865 the Right Reverend Charles Perry, Lord Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, visited Dunolly. In a small schoolroom he met Church of England parishioners, proud of the way in which they had brought the word of God into the wilderness. Perry reminded them of three eras in the history of inland Victoria:

*First the settler and sheep farmer scattered over the land; then came the gold discovery, when thousands flocked to the different rushes; and lastly, the gradual settlement and formation of a town by the remnant left from the flood of people who roared over the country to . . . dig for gold . . . the gold fields naturally wanted agriculture and thus the land became settled, storekeepers arose and then [began] the gradual social, moral and spiritual improvement of the people.<sup>1</sup>*

Perry sketched out a tale of moral and institutional change which now appears too simple. As we have seen, gold governed the livelihood of Bet Bet's townships until the end of the nineteenth century. As far as local residents were concerned, a gold-digger might be a church-goer too. At the same time during the frantic days of digging, people moved constantly and money either came in sudden large fortunes or hardly at all. Few religious groups could establish a parish let alone put up a church, school or vicarage. Yet by the 1860s many residents might have agreed with Perry. By then buildings set aside for worship told a story of growing religious faith and a more stable local society. Alongside these churches, the people of the Shire had gone on to found clubs and societies devoted to self improvement. By the end of the 1860s the towns were not only changed by a new array of buildings. But as well the people of the towns used these new churches, halls and schools to create new social groups. New social activities and the buildings in which they were held, together marked the distance which Bet bet had moved from the wild days of the first diggings.

Not much remains in the Shire to show us where the diggers of the 1850s worshipped. In the 1850s local church-goers used whatever buildings they could for their services. The first Church of England services in Dunolly (1856) were held in Woolridges Eagle Saloon in Broadway.<sup>2</sup> Father Richard Fennelly said the first Catholic masses in a back room of the Pick and Shovel Inn.<sup>3</sup> An early measure of the enthusiasm and strength of local Methodism can be seen in the speed with which they formed chapels in the district.<sup>4</sup> A Primitive Methodist chapel was erected in Dunolly as early as September 1856. Built only a few weeks after the beginnings of the first great rush to Dunolly it took a week to erect. In the same year three ardent young Wesleyan miners at Poverty Reef, Tarnagulla – Ned Peters, Walter Peters and David Hall put up a tent near their claim and held services. Ned Peters noted in his diary 'as it began with small beginnings I hope it may go on and prosper for the edification of the semi-civilised Sandy Creekers.'<sup>5</sup>

With diggers constantly moving from one gold field to the next, congregations didn't last for long. When miners left Dunolly in 1854 the first Methodist chapel was sold and worship suspended. Conversely a sudden gold find usually gave rise to a church on the new gold field. In 1858 in Tarnagulla, Poverty Reef began to give good returns. Before long Wesleyans put up a slab and calico chapel. In 1859 they replaced this with a wooden chapel which in turn made way for a brick church five years later.<sup>6</sup>

Along with a floating population of gold miners Bet Bet congregations faced an erratic and insecure life because of the shortage of clergy. Demand exceeded supply and few congregations could boast a permanent preacher. Ned Peter's diary for one Sunday was typical: 'our minister has left so that we have no service'.<sup>7</sup> From

1. Express, 13 April 1865.

2. Flett, Dunolly, p.122.

3. Carless, Church of St.Mary's, p.6

4. Flett, Dunolly, p.122.

5. Peters, Diary, p.166.

6. Rev. C Irving Benson, A century of Victorian Methodism, Melbourne 1935, p.450.

7. Peters, Diary, p.142.







470

WESLEYAN CHURCH  
TARNAGULLA





1856 Dunolly Anglicans had spoken of building a chapel in the town. Up until then they met for worship in a shop in Broadway. With no regular clergyman they relied on the services of Mr R Stephens, a lay reader. When Stephens left Dunolly in 1858 the congregation could find no one to replace him and didn't get a regular preacher until 1863. The Anglican congregations at Moliagul and Bealiba were served by William Hall. Hall travelled as far north as Wedderburn in ministering to his scattered flock. The Catholics of Bet Bet looked to Father Richard Fennelly for pastoral care. Fennelly served a huge mission centred on Carisbrook.<sup>8</sup>

A wave of church building followed these rudimentary beginnings. The religious landscape of the present shire dates from the 1860s. Success in company mining, the high levels of gold production, growth of settled and middle class townfolk living as family groups and not nomadic bands of digging mates all helped the churches to prosper. There were other forces at work too. By the sixties church authorities in Melbourne had recovered from the chaos of the preceding decade. They carved new parishes from the enormous rural missions and packed more clergymen off into the interior of the colony. The Presbytery of Castlemaine (which included the Presbyterian congregations of Dunolly, Moliagul and Bet Bet) was created in 1858. The Wesleyan Methodist Circuit of Tarnagulla and Dunolly was established in 1860 and the Primitive Methodists followed with the organisation of the Tarnagulla district (encompassing Moliagul) in 1862.<sup>9</sup> In addition it was not until the late 1850s when surveyors laid out the local towns that they could make firm plans about where to build churches and start asking colonial governments for land grants.

As churches rose above the towns in the 1860s each of the denominations started to go their separate ways. Before then Protestants were generally content to go along to services of other denominations. Between 1858 and 1861 the only functioning church in Dunolly was the Free Church where the congregation was made

up of Presbyterians, Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists and Congregationalists. The unexpected arrival of the Rev. William Calvert created this church. The Rev. Beer, a Congregationalist pastor replaced Calvert. When Stephens, the Anglican lay reader, left the town, the Free Church was the only one in Dunolly with a resident reader. So proud were the locals of this Free Church that they donated £500 to erect a permanent place of worship. But in 1862 the Free Church began to be referred to as the Congregational Church.<sup>10</sup> In 1865 Congregationalists held a Tea Meeting to mark the anniversary of their church and one speaker recalled that: *'those who had gone away and left the church in debt were under a moral obligation to help discharge the same'*.<sup>11</sup>

During the first half of the 1860s Bet Bet erected at least fourteen stone and brick churches. Most of these are still standing. Reflecting on the prosperity of the town of Dunolly in 1865, the editor of the Dunolly and Bet Bet Shire Express noted:

*Above all the religious element is spreading in our midst – it is true we can scarcely rival Tarnagulla in the number of our denominations but we now have five churches in our midst, a vast improvement on former times.*<sup>12</sup>

These new churches tell a story of moral and civic progress. They became items in which congregations worshipped, but in which all townfolk, pagan and Christian might take pride. Their style was hardly sophisticated. At the same time most were constructed from local materials and through local labour. Parishioners took great pride in these efforts. The bricks used to build the Presbyterian Church at Bet Bet (opened in 1863) were made near the site on the banks of the Bet Bet Creek.<sup>13</sup> The stones of St. Michael and All Angels came from hills near the town. Granite blocks for trimmings were quarried on the northern slopes of Mt. Moliagul. The granite foundations of St. Mary's Catholic Church in Dunolly came from a quarry on the slopes of Mt. Hooghly seven miles to

<sup>8</sup>. Rev. W. Ebsworth, Pioneer Catholic Victoria, Melbourne 1973, p. 445

<sup>9</sup>. Benson, Victorian Methodism, p. 451.

<sup>10</sup>. Express, 3 April 1865.

<sup>11</sup>. Ibid, 2 January 1865.

<sup>12</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>. J. Alderson, The Presbyterian Church, Bet Bet, Havelock 1968, p. 10.



THE WESLEYAN MESSAGE  
TARNAGULLA





the east of the town.<sup>14</sup> Local contractors did most of the work on these churches. The Wesleyan church at Tarnagulla was built by Mr. Nottage of Newbridge. The Anglican church at Moliagul was designed by James Wynne of Inglewood and built by Samuel Robinson, a local contractor. William Footer the local architect designed and erected the Dunolly Presbyterian church. Footer also won the tender for the new Wesleyan church in Dunolly in 1862. The local paper noted this with approval reminding readers, *'we must complement our Wesleyan friends on letting this contract to local artisans although a lower contract was in from a firm in Melbourne'*.<sup>15</sup>

Some of these churches did follow the plans of professional architects but often local churchmen or builders created the designs. William Hall for example followed his own ecclesiastical visions in building Anglican churches at Bealiba and Moliagul.<sup>16</sup>

### Styles and costs

Most of the Shire's churches follow a simple gothic style. The larger the church then the greater the ornamentation. Local people were quick to appreciate the way these churches introduced a more civilised townscape. So the Dunolly Wesleyan church was seen as *'another proof of the advance of Dunolly in its architecture'*.<sup>17</sup> In describing this church the local paper listed its two spires, belfry and windows. At the opening of the church the Rev. JC Symons of Amherst was glad to observe the gothic style of

*... architecture had been adopted . . . the style seemed indissolubly connected with religious edifices and at once to proclaim itself to the world as a house of God.*<sup>18</sup>

In 1865 the new church for the Anglicans at Moliagul won praise not for any outstanding architectural quality but because it was *'a massive and ecclesiastical-like structure and quite*

*sufficient for the requirements of its congregation'*.<sup>19</sup>

While local church-goers had begun by co-operating in the 1850s the spate of church-building in the 1860s led to one denomination trying to outdo their fellow Christians. No sooner was one church finished than another denomination had to build something bigger, more expensive or more beautiful. The new Wesleyan church in Tarnagulla was praised because *'it is a building of which a much larger town than Tarnagulla might well be proud'*.<sup>20</sup> Even the Presbyterian minister had to admit that although his church (built three years earlier in 1862) had seemed a *'masterpiece'* at the time the new Wesleyan church *'cast it into the shade'*.

Churches cost a lot of money. As well, numbers of local people had to work together to create a church. When compared to the suburban churches of Melbourne in the 1870s or 1880s these Bet Bet churches may appear small and austere. In the light of the size of the Shire's towns they seem expensive and difficult projects.

Parishioners usually carried substantial debts to build these churches. On the one hand financial problems restricted poor congregations. At Bealiba local Anglicans began a building scheme with great enthusiasm. Their church, St. David's, was designed to seat 108 worshippers and opened in 1871. But with no money left for the interior the church was only finished in 1876. The chancel, vestry and porch had still not been added when the church held its jubilee in 1918.<sup>21</sup> At the same time fruit soirees, bazaars, tea meetings, lectures and musical performances were all staged to raise funds.

### Church social life

One writer described church bazaars as *'a settled institution'* in Dunolly.<sup>22</sup> Wesleyans used anniversaries of chapel openings to inspire fund raising. And more money came in because these

14. Carless, *St. Mary's*, p.6.

15. Flett, *Dunolly*, pp.195-196.

16. *Express*, 17 April 1865.

17. *Express*, 27 December 1862.

18. *Ibid.*, 3 January 1862.

19. *Church Gazette*, 1 April 1865.

20. *Express*, 17 April 1865.

21. S. Ward, *The Church of St. David, Bealiba, 1869-1969*, Bealiba 1969, p.10.

22. *Express*, 9 February 1865.



anniversaries took place twice a year, sometimes to the chagrin of other religious bodies. At the Wesleyan tea meeting in Dunolly in March 1865 the Presbyterian minister, Reverend Findlay, suggested that the local Wesleyans ought to cut down on tea meetings for a time so as to give the Presbyterians a chance to raise money. These events were understandably popular. They entertained and provided an occasion of mutual support for church groups. Clergymen commonly addressed tea meetings and their audience might easily be drawn from several congregations. Sectarianism seemed to have played little part in local life. The Catholic newspaper the Advocate reported on one ceremony in Bealiba, the successful opening of the Catholic Church and emphasised *'the kindly feeling existing between Catholics and Protestants in this district'*.<sup>23</sup>

### Prosperity and decline

Wealth and religious zeal went hand in hand. When for example, a drought in the mid-sixties hit local farmers, the Presbyterian congregation was unable to pay its minister's stipend.<sup>24</sup> The funds of St. Michael's at Moliagul were tied directly to the fortunes of miners; when gold finds came slowly no collections were taken at the church. The Anglicans at Dunolly were fortunate in having John Deason and Richard Oates as parishioners. These men had discovered the giant Welcome Stranger nugget in 1869. Now wealthy men the partners in gold discovery loaned the church £1000 to complete an ambitious design which included a tower and spire. Their loan though generous never produced these elements of the church which is still without a spire. John Deason also distributed some of his new wealth to the Congregational Church. The church closed in 1869, the year of the Welcome Stranger find. Deason loaned £250 to the congregation so that the church could be refurbished and opened again.<sup>25</sup>

When Bishop Perry addressed Dunolly church goers in 1865 he implied that gold digging and moral life were incompatible. Ironically, his parishioners knew that gold mining financed church building. Most if not all of the leading local Methodists dabbled with gold investments – men like Ned Peters, Walter Hansford and Lewis Harse for example. They saw no difficulty in investing in mining and leading local worshippers. To them, divine providence and not blind chance brought wealth to the diggers. When the miners at the Wesleyan-directed and managed Queen's Birthday Mine finally hit on a rich quartz reef in 1876, the pious company directors gathered in the mine shaft to sing *'praise God from whom all blessings flow'*.<sup>26</sup> Gold seeking remained a constant theme in sermons and public speeches. At the anniversary service for the Dunolly Presbyterian church in 1862 the pastor demanded that Christians demonstrate the same blind faith as gold diggers: miners left *'house and lands, home and comfort ..because they believed in a new El Dorado . . .let Christians do the same'*.<sup>27</sup>

Not all church groups prospered. As the century progressed several congregations disappeared quickly. The Census of 1861 recorded 67 Baptists in Tarnagulla. The Baptists of Tarnagulla had converted a shop into a chapel that year at a cost of 350. Their chapel was supposed to seat 120 people – twice as many as the number of recorded members of the church. By 1879 the chapel was closed. The Baptists sold their church in 1896 by which time the number of Tarnagulla Baptists had fallen to only four.<sup>28</sup> Other congregations fell apart too. There were 114 Congregationalists in Dunolly in 1871 but twenty years later only sixteen remained.<sup>29</sup> The decay of mining partly explains this decline. Catholic parishes grew larger and richer as Irish selectors moved into the Shire from 1865 onwards. In 1861, Catholics made up fifteen per cent of the population outside Dunolly and Tarnagulla. By 1891 their

<sup>23</sup>. Ebsworth, Pioneer Catholic Victoria, p.501.

<sup>24</sup>. Alderson, Presbyterian church. Bet Bet, p.15.

<sup>25</sup>. Flett, Dunolly, p.106, p.124.

<sup>26</sup>. Ned Peters, diary, p.176.

<sup>27</sup>. Express, 15 November 1862.

<sup>28</sup>. Courier, 22 July 1896, Victorian Freeman, December 1879, p.15, Census of Victoria, 1861, 1871.

<sup>29</sup>. Census of Victoria, 1871, 1891.



share had risen to twenty-three per cent.<sup>30</sup> The surge of church building that took place between 1861 and 1871 formed one strand in a broader pattern of urban construction. New churches did appear after 1871, but the great phase of religious expansion in bricks and mortar was over. The Bealiba Catholics opened their new church in 1881.<sup>31</sup> New Wesleyan buildings followed in Bealiba in 1886 and in 1905 in Dunolly. By the first decade of the twentieth century several parish halls like that next to St. David's, Bealiba had been completed. The porch of St. David's (part of the original design of 1869) was finally built at the end of 1919.<sup>32</sup> As the population kept declining after the war few congregations could afford to add new buildings.<sup>33</sup> Tennis courts or stained glass windows commemorated military actions of church members are the major legacy of the inter-war years.

As a result the centenary publications of each of the churches in the 1960s universally deplored the loss of community feeling. They looked back to an era when Sunday church brought residents together for worship and social activity and when a two mile walk to Sunday School was accepted without question. Along with government buildings, the churches remain as the principal structures left from the nineteenth century. Some have been moved from place to place because of the instability of local populations - the Welsh Church at Tarnagulla became the Anglican Church in Arnold for example. But despite the instability of communities based on gold mining the desire for permanence and continuity in nineteenth-century Bet Bet is visible in the churches which parishioners laboured to construct.

### Other Institutions

From the late fifties onwards the people of Bet Bet raised up a number of other important institutions. Mechanics' institutes and public libraries were relatively new institutions in the mid-

nineteenth century. The earlier institutes had been founded in Britain in the 1820s; they aimed to instruct skilled workmen in the scientific principles underlying their trades. By the 1840s the activities of these institutions had broadened to encompass literary discussion and the maintenance of libraries of fiction and newspapers. They were no longer concerned exclusively with scientific or vocational training. Hence they appealed to a range of social classes. Many gold rush immigrants to Victoria were already familiar with mechanics institutes' and it is not surprising that they sought to establish them in their new communities. They offered one of the few ways whereby many of humble origins could attain some education and learning.

The mechanics' institute was a mark of a town's civic status. Like churches, the institute with its reading room and evening lectures gave a measure of civilisation and permanence. Hence when in 1864 the Tarnagulla Courier called on townspeople to establish a mechanics' institute, it appealed both to the cultural and the civic advantages which would accrue:

*It is really surprising that a town so advanced in other respects should be without that common thing a public reading room....the public know well enough how to estimate the advantage of literary research and conversation and how these objects be promoted better than by the establishment of a public library and reading room? Those who are jealous for the status and reputation of our Borough should go in for this project. Mechanics' Institutes are all around us and we should be lowest in social standing as long as we remain without one.*<sup>34</sup>

The first institute to be formed in the district was at Dunolly. It was established after a public meeting at the Bull and Mouth Hotel on 26 June 1858. Among its promoters were the printer Thomas Page and the popular publican Peter Frayne. The official opening of the institute took place in the following month and by the end of the year the library, housed in a shop in Broadway, boasted 150 volumes.<sup>35</sup> This first institute didn't last

<sup>30</sup>. Census of Victoria, 1861, 1891.

<sup>31</sup>. Ebsworth, Pioneer Catholic Victoria, p. 501.

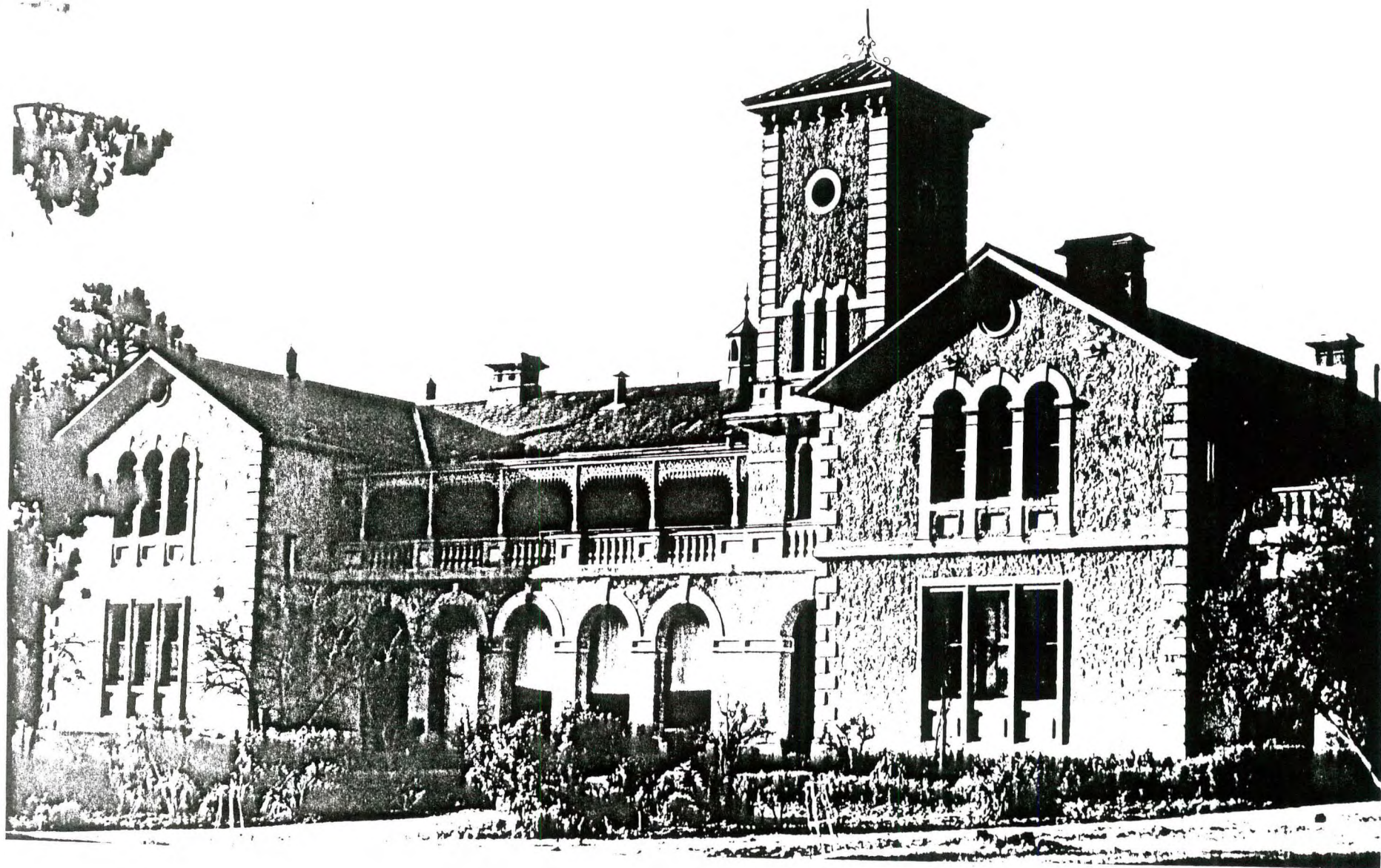
<sup>32</sup>. Ward, St. David's, pp. 6-11.

<sup>33</sup>. Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>. Courier, 26 November 1864.

<sup>35</sup>. Maryborough Advertiser, 29 June 1858, 27 July 1858.





(prior to loss of second storey)  
HOSPITAL  
DUNEDIN



long. It did though succeed in arousing the jealousy of the citizens of the rival town of Maryborough.<sup>36</sup> By 1860 the Dunolly mechanics' institute was pronounced officially defunct. Within two years townspeople were trying to replace it with a public library. These efforts coincided with the creation of the town hall in Dunolly and the new library was allocated one of the small rooms in that building. The Public Library was a popular place in Dunolly. More than 450 people visited the library between December 1864 and March 1865.<sup>37</sup> By 1869 there were 302 volumes in the library and by 1890 there were over one thousand books. In that year there were 6968 visits to the institution – on average, 124 each week.<sup>38</sup>

The Tarnagulla mechanics' institute was established in May 1865, persistent after constant appeals from the local newspaper editor. The office bearers included J. Ray, draper and local councillor (later Mayor), and James Cheetham, prominent councillor, storekeeper and mining broker. Within a few weeks the committee reported that some 97 residents had become members of the new institute.<sup>39</sup> A Moliagul progress committee campaigned for a mechanics' institute as part of a broad movement for civic uplift. In 1863 this committee successfully applied to for a government reserve as a site for the new mechanics institute.<sup>40</sup> By 1890 most settlements in the Shire supported a library or institute.<sup>41</sup>

Unlike the institutes in the larger mining towns of Ballarat and Bendigo, the local mechanics' institutes had neither the personnel nor the financial resources to mount courses of lectures or conduct classes of instruction. Occasionally local worthies with a talent for elocution – men like James Robertson, engineer and architect of Dunolly, gave readings from the works of Shakespeare or Charles

Dickens.<sup>42</sup> Yet, even though they were hardly hives of intellectual activity, the libraries and institutes pleased local people. Here was the measure of civilisation and progress. The town with a church, a library and a mechanics' institute had progressed beyond the confusion and chicanery of a mining frontier. The highest peaks of learning could be scaled in Tarnagulla as easily as in Ballarat, or even Melbourne or Birmingham for that matter. Local people had good reason to feel proud of their efforts.

Gold towns could boast a string of such self-improving societies. Most towns supported an amateur harmonic society, dramatic society, temperance society and mutual improvement society. Then they sustained protective organisations like the Dunolly District Hospital, the fire brigades and friendly societies and benevolent associations. The friendly societies were of some importance in a community based primarily on gold mining – a notoriously unsafe way of earning a living. Accidents in shafts, cave-ins and dangerous machinery all took their gruesome toll. Ned Peters noted in his diary in April 1857: '*the accidents seem never to have done on Poverty [Reef]. It is [a] thorough settlement of invalides (sic.) and wounded*'.<sup>43</sup>

The Dunolly District Hospital reported in 1863 that in the previous year fully one quarter of the patients treated had been accident cases.<sup>44</sup> Between the years 1861 and 1869 seven friendly society branches were established in the Shire, including the Ancient Order of Foresters (Tarnagulla), the M.U.I.O.O.F. (Tarnagulla and Dunolly), the Rechabites (Tarnagulla, Dunolly and Moligaul) and the Sons of Temperance. In 1873 these branches claimed over 240 members.<sup>45</sup>

Just to be on the safe side, a local miner might join several of these societies; once he had paid his dues, he went along to regular meetings, put on the society sash for parades and drew sickness or injury benefits. He also strove to protect the moral order of his little mining town.

<sup>36</sup>. *Ibid.*, 6 July 1858.

<sup>37</sup>. *Express*, 27 March 1865.

<sup>38</sup>. *Statistical Registers of Victoria*, 1870, 1891.

<sup>39</sup>. *Courier*, 3 June 1865.

<sup>40</sup>. *Express*, 5 January 1863, 28 March 1863.

<sup>41</sup>. *Statistical register of Victoria*, 1891.

<sup>42</sup>. *Advertiser*, 26-29 October, 5 November 1858.

<sup>43</sup>. *Peters, Diary*.

<sup>44</sup>. *Express*, 31 January 1863.

<sup>45</sup>. *Statistics of friendly societies*, 1873, V.P.P., 1874, vol. 3.



Friendly societies did battle against poverty, fire and drink, but more importantly, the activities of these societies reflected commitment to some idea of community and civic duty. The status of a citizen was gauged by his involvement in local institutions.

When in 1865, Richard Charter of Dunolly announced his intention to leave the town after a residence of seven years, the citizens presented him with an illuminated address and a purse of sovereigns. Charter had thrown himself into the uplifting works of the local Dramatic Society and Public Library. When he left the town he emphasised that *'what I have done in Dunolly has been from a feeling of duty.'*<sup>46</sup> Not all residents were active in local societies. The respectable storekeepers, publicans, professionals, manufacturers and mining managers and directors filled the roles of secretary, treasurer and president.

These men were also the leaders of local churches and stood for local office on councils – a local oligarchy. Yet if they did wield most of the power in towns then they could justify their prominence by referring to ideals Christian stewardship and obligations of citizenship. The permanent and harmonious social order they wished to create was always fragile.

Their churches still stand in the towns even though many congregations have vanished. In Tarnagulla, visitors to the Wesleyan chapel can still stand at the church door and look out across the mining town. In Dunolly the Anglican and Methodist churches, the hospital and town hall give the town much of its character. In the 1860s local people strove to cover the disorder of digging with the harmonies of church-going and civic life. Their determined bid has left obvious marks on the Shire's towns.

#### Drifting In and out of Bet Bet

During the years in which the good citizens of the Shire raised up their churches and went out to buy up books for their libraries, other sorts of people came into Bet Bet. At least that was how it seemed to the local paper. In January 1865 when Protestant congregations started to hold services in their new

churches, the Express reported on a new mining rush to the south of Dunolly: *a crowd of doubtful characters [were] thus brought to the very edge of the town . . . the scum of society which is most certain to be scattered amongst the population of Gooseberry Hill.*<sup>47</sup>

This crowd of drifters, gamblers and wasters might not have been all that different from the people who created the town of Dunolly ten years earlier. Nevertheless it did seem to the townsfolk of the 1860s that they had come some way from the dangers of gold rush days and churchmen, newspaper reporters and promoters of mechanics' institutes and debating clubs didn't want to slip back again. The chaos of a gold rush had to be kept firmly at bay.

Most of these townspeople no doubt remembered with a shiver the brutal murders at Dunolly in the 1850s. In 1856 the bushranger Gypsy Smith had slipped away from police on his way to the Castlemaine lock-up. Smith, born James Turner, had been shipped to Tasmania as a convict. From there he escaped in a whale boat only to find himself captured and sent to Norfolk Island. He got away to the Victorian gold rushes and after thefts at Yackandandah he set up camp at Mt. Moliagul. From the mountain, he descended to robb diggers on the road to the Korong fields. Smith played a part in shooting a policeman and when recaptured received a sentence of fifteen years. Even decent mining partners often fell out over winnings. Sometimes a simple dispute ended in an horrific murder. In 1861 Joe Watson had been drinking at the Company's Hotel in Tarnagulla. On his way back to his claim someone hit Watson with a lump of quartz, dragged his body into the bush and dumped the corpse down a mineshaft. Watson apparently had hit on a nugget and went off to drink to his fortune with the wife of another miner. The jilted digger was hung at Melbourne gaol later in the year.<sup>48</sup>

Murders like these shook the nerves of lonely miners stuck out in the dark bush. The speed with which they put up churches and libraries probably stemmed from their fear of falling back into the dangers and disorderliness of the first

46. Express, 24 April 1865.

47. Express, 5 January 1865.

48. Flett, Dunolly, pp.100-125.





FRAYNE'S HOTEL  
DUNDY, N.



rushes. Murderers were only one threat to lonely miners. Thieves remained a real menace throughout the 1850s. So did claim jumpers. And a good deal of cheating was sustained by unscrupulous gold buyers and shop keepers. The regular hearings of the Dunolly Court catalogued the misdoings of miners and other townfolk. In 1862, for example the local paper exposed the '*deeds of darkness*' which made the diggings such a dangerous place. John Clown came before the court. Police had found him stumbling about the banks of the Loddon River in a crazed state of mind; '*induced by hard drinking*'. After him appeared Samuel Hodgson and James Jenkins; these two had gone to a house in Burnt Creek owned by Anne Parsons, a prostitute. They had kicked and banged on the door in the middle of the night and once inside they began to drink Anne Parson's port and break up furniture. Although they had arrived with two other prostitutes they became increasingly '*abstropoulos*' (sic.) as it got closer to dawn. Eventually Anne sent for the police and had the men arrested.<sup>49</sup> One miner came into court to charge a prostitute and her daughter with stealing his new boots and another woman, '*Slippery Poll*', stood in the dock to be sentenced for drunk and disorderly behaviour.

Avid church-goers no doubt felt scandalised by the goings on in Dunolly. There, brothels sprang up in the miners' camps, grog shops flouted the law and at night miners gambled and caroused in the streets or in hotel bars. There in front of a rowdy audience, young women showered their limbs with talcum and stood exposed in '*Poses Plastiques*'. Others sang bawdy songs while barmen poured cheap alcohol into thirsty miners. There were good reasons for Dunolly people to rush to build churches.

Yet for each church, the towns and mine fields supported a string of hotels. Dedicated Christians gathered on Sunday mornings in the very pubs where the preceding evening, the young ladies of the gold field had displayed themselves in *Poses Plastiques*.

But townfolk could distinguish the majestic hotels like the Bendigo or the Criterion in Dunolly or later Evan's Hotel at

Bealiba or the Victoria in Tarnagulla. These buildings, often brick with dining rooms, livery stables and even night porters and foreign chefs had little in common with the slab drinking sheds of the diggings. The simple stone remains of Morton's Hotel at Waanyarra look nothing like the enormous piles of the hotels left in the main street of Dunolly. These massive hotels took pride of place in local life. Publicans sponsored sporting clubs and stood for parliament or got onto council. Men for example like WF Tatchell for a time licensee of the 'Bendigo Hotel', James Ray of the Royal, or Ernstsen of the Criterion took their role as recreational patrons seriously.

Whereas the first grog sellers dispensed cheap liquor from tents and moveable huts these publicans put up buildings which they hoped would be a credit to the town. They traded on their social standing with church goers and members of mechanics' institutes. In 1863 when Ernst Ernstsen extended his Criterion Hotel a crowd of the town's leading citizens gathered to celebrate this new addition to the Broadway streetscape. Ernstsen celebrated his hotel opening with a ball and supper attended by twenty couples and twenty '*gentlemen to spare*'. The forty by twenty foot ballroom stayed open until six in the morning with couples and single gentlemen eating, drinking, singing and dancing.<sup>50</sup> Equally popular was the Windsor Castle where the Dunolly Fire Brigade held meetings and from where the Dunolly Brass Band sallied forth to entertain the town on special occasions. Such august bodies constantly proclaimed their worthiness and the sense of civic duty which directed their endeavours. No doubt the weekly gatherings in comfortable hotels also played a part in attracting members too.

As the century progressed the hotels began to sponsor sporting clubs. Both Tarnagulla and Dunolly had race clubs and publicans saw to it that race meetings were planned in their hotels. By the 1880s football teams and cricket teams owed their income to the support of publicans. Even the celebrated visit of an English cricket team to Dunolly in 1882 was in part the result of endeavours by local publicans.

<sup>49</sup>. Express, 24 May 1862.

<sup>50</sup>. Express, 10 January 1863.



SOCIAL OUTINGS  
MOLIAGUL





The leaders of churches and mechanics' institutes may have filled prominent positions in the commercial life of the towns. But churches and hotels survived by appealing to a wider audience.

### Conclusion

The rise of a farming community probably spelled the end for the ordered institutions of self improvement which mine managers and schoolteachers had set up. Not that farmers were bored by libraries and debating evenings. But the rhythms of the farming year probably prevented any regular involvement in these activities. Saturday afternoon cricket, but more especially football, which didn't clash with the more demanding times of the farm year, attracted rural families. Reading, music and all those self-improving activities were increasingly relegated to the home and school rather than to the mechanics' institute's clubrooms. For while the mining towns were predominantly male (Bet Bet had one of the lowest female to male ratios in Victoria in the 1860s) farming was essentially a family occupation. Husbands and wives, sons and daughters selected land together. Their social life was turned inwards on the family, at least until they had established themselves on the land. The churches survived into the twentieth century. Not so many of the other societies which local residents struggled so hard to create. In Tarnagulla, brass bands continued as a favoured recreation. The first bands were formed in 1867 and in 1882 members put up a rotunda at the corner of King and Poverty Streets. During the 1880s members drifted off and in 1890 Treleor reformed the town band. Once again it seemed to have disappeared and was reformed in 1904. In 1918 the band still entertained local people with concerts.<sup>51</sup> But from then on travelling entertainers and radio challenged even that local activity. In the twentieth century even cricket and football clubs began to disappear.

The social organisations of the nineteenth century no doubt meant a lot to their founders. They often appealed to the local pride of residents as well. Each

town still has its churches, its hotels and its halls. Sports grounds still exist though several are hardly ever used. The shapes which recreational life brought to the local townscape are by and large still visible. But what remains is only a part of a sustained endeavour in which parishioners, club members, publicans and interested townsfolk banded together into formal society and created material shapes in which to live out their ordered social life. Not much is left to mark the actions of the drifters and gamblers who passed through Dunolly and Moliagul during the richest years of the gold rushes. Perhaps the dangers posed by prostitutes, murderers and gamblers hastened the spread of churches and clubrooms. At the same time many supposedly dangerous miners and camp followers settled down to a more regular and orderly life from the 1860s onwards. Churches and some clubs have continued in several of the towns. But for many of the societies of the nineteenth century the buildings are all that is left. They still remind us of the ambitions of the people who stayed on in the shire when the hordes of gold diggers pulled up camp.

51. Historical notes, Bands, Tarnagulla Gold Museum.



## THE STATE AND THE SHIRE

In the centre of the failed Market Square of Dunolly stands a small monument celebrating the anniversary of the Borough of Dunolly. This simple centrepiece to what are now the town gardens once figured more highly in the lives of local residents. For a long time members of this borough council made decisions of great moment. The local councillors decided on critical questions shaping the appearance of Dunolly and impinging on the daily lives of miners, farmers and townsfolk. Later the Borough was surrounded by a new Shire of Bet Bet and some of what is now the North Riding of the shire was originally a part of the Borough of Tarnagulla.

The Shire of Bet Bet and the urban Boroughs of Dunolly and Tarnagulla owed their existence to a broad movement for municipal independence which began in the suburbs of Melbourne in the 1850s. Patrons of local self-government stressed the strength of their area's political networks, its economic prospects and its social unity. But in the long run the character of local life and the shape of much of the local environment depended on what went on outside the local area. Colonial governments regulated squatting runs and then tried to impose some order on gold fields through Commissioners and then Wardens and local Mining Courts. A town could often live or die simply by convincing members of parliament that the best site for a court, police station, railway line or land office could be found in the heart of their community. Hence the three-cornered contest between Dunolly, Carisbrook and Maryborough for a prison and so a district court and police headquarters.<sup>1</sup> The roads and later water supply and rail networks of the Shire took shape because of successful lobbying in Melbourne by local members of parliament, men like James Bell or John Duggan. While the squatters, miners and shopkeepers tried to put their stamp on the goldfields and farmlands of the Shire, they often did so within limits set down by one or other branch of the colonial government. Local

and colonial politicians between them shaped much of the Shire.

## Roads and bridges

Colonial officials set down the surveyed limits to each town in the 1850s. The other step in shaping towns came when surveyors laid down road reserves. Broadway, the main street of Dunolly, was set out with generous dimensions in April 1857. In June in the following year, contracts were let to remove the remaining stumps and trees from the roadway.<sup>2</sup> Once control of the roads passed to the local council in 1858, they and not the central government had to deal with the next pressing problem – diggers had begun to undermine the street surface. Householders and shopkeepers sought some agreement between the council and the gold field wardens by which diggers would be restricted to one side of the street only.<sup>3</sup>

From then onwards local councillors took most of the decisions about roads. Sometimes simple choices about where a road could run split towns – as when roads to Llanelly were considered in 1866. Tarnagulla residents favoured one route and Newbridge and Dunolly travellers another. At other times roads brought local authorities into dispute with the Victorian government. At the end of the 1870s for example, a Royal Commission took the Shire president to task for his lax attitude to closed roads.<sup>4</sup> In the north-west of the Shire, large landholders had fenced across roads. This meant that they could deny small farmers access to water. At the same time they were able to extend private grazing rights over what was supposedly public land. The Shire had begun to close roads after the 1869 Land Act. Between Natta Yallock and Archdale, the Shire closed 34 miles of roads. Large landowners like Chirnside and Cameron weren't even queried from the council when they expropriated public rights-of-way. The Royal Commissioners demanded to know the

<sup>1</sup> B. Barrett, *The civic frontier*, Melbourne 1979, pp. 237-242.

<sup>2</sup> Maryborough *Advertiser*, June 1858.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 October 1858.

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the Royal Commission on Closed Roads*, 1879, VPP, 1879-1880, vol. 3, qs. 11135-11178.



what steps council would take to resume the public roads.<sup>5</sup> Some years later the Marong Shire waded into battle against the Tarnagulla borough council. Apparently Tarnagulla councillors intended to allow a deviation of the Maldon-Laanecoorie railway 'towards Eddington. Irate landowners called public meetings on the issue in an attempt to force Tarnagulla to join with Marong and challenge the colonial government's plans.<sup>6</sup>

Railways reached into the Shire during the 1870s, first of all from the south with the Maryborough line reaching Dunolly and then Bealiba in the early 1870s, a route set down largely without local influence. Later the Inglewood line extended through Tarnagulla and Llanelly to Dunolly. In these decisions it seemed as if local politicians had a greater say. The fortunes of towns often hinged on the path chosen for a railway and local railway leagues bombarded members of parliament and municipal officers with schemes for grandiose 'Grand Trunk' railways through the Shire. The great railway routes never appeared but Dunolly, Bealiba, Bet Bet were linked by the north-western line and in the 1880s the Inglewood line cut across the Shire, joining Tarnagulla to Dunolly. Lines changed local life, bringing farmers closer to markets in Melbourne. The whistle of trains became a sound familiar to townsfolk. The stations and goods sheds also created new hubs for town life, often away from the old commercial parts of the towns. Railways not only linked towns with the outside world. They also disturbed the rhythm of daily life and changed the way in which townsfolk used the space of their settlements. Shops and the early public buildings gave two basic elements to the shaping of towns. The railway station added a third.

In a Shire bounded on three sides by rivers and a creek, bridgeworks directed traffic and so urban settlements. The Loddon had been crossed by a ford at Newbridge in 1852 and then by a bridge from 1861.<sup>7</sup> This ensured the survival of Newbridge where other small towns faded away. In 1861, Simor Fraser contracted

for a bridge on the Maryborough Road at Burnt Creek. A local contractor finished a bridge over the Avoca River at Archdale at about the same time. The Avoca had proved a formidable barrier to travellers. In 1861, the mails were held up between Maryborough and St. Arnaud. The 'venturesome traveller' reported the Maryborough Advertiser had to either 'face the chasm of the Avoca River' or meander through 'the marches and fens of Natte Yallock'. The St. Arnaud District Road Board pushed hardest for a bridge. When seen from Dunolly of course links across the Loddon to Bendigo or Castlemaine were more important than those to the west over the Avoca. But, from the other side of the Shire, one journalist reported that 'what people here want is to get to the other side of the Avoca in the first place and anywhere their business takes them afterwards'. The bridge opened in 1863, reflecting 'great credit on the workmen who erected it'. One Maryborough hotelier even moved to open a hotel at the bridge so as to 'welcome Dunolly sightseers who make a holiday to come and see the bridge at Archdale with the classic Avoca flowing so grandly under it'.<sup>8</sup>

Over the following decade many of the other local watercourses were spanned by bridges. In 1871 the bridge on the north side of Bealiba opened. Later bridges at Laanecoorie and at Natte Yallock determined the movement of traffic to the east and west of the Shire. As engineers threw wooden frames across rivers and streams the Shire was bound more and more into the life of nearby towns. As well, each bridge and roadway chained the fortunes of Bet Bet to the wishes of civil servants in Melbourne.

### Health

When it came to transport routes, men outside the Shire took most of the decisions. At the same time central colonial authorities decided on the quality of life in local towns. The Central Board of Health took an early interest in Dunolly. Just as well, or so it seems from their reports on the town. Health officers complained about filthy conditions in several butcher's yards. One

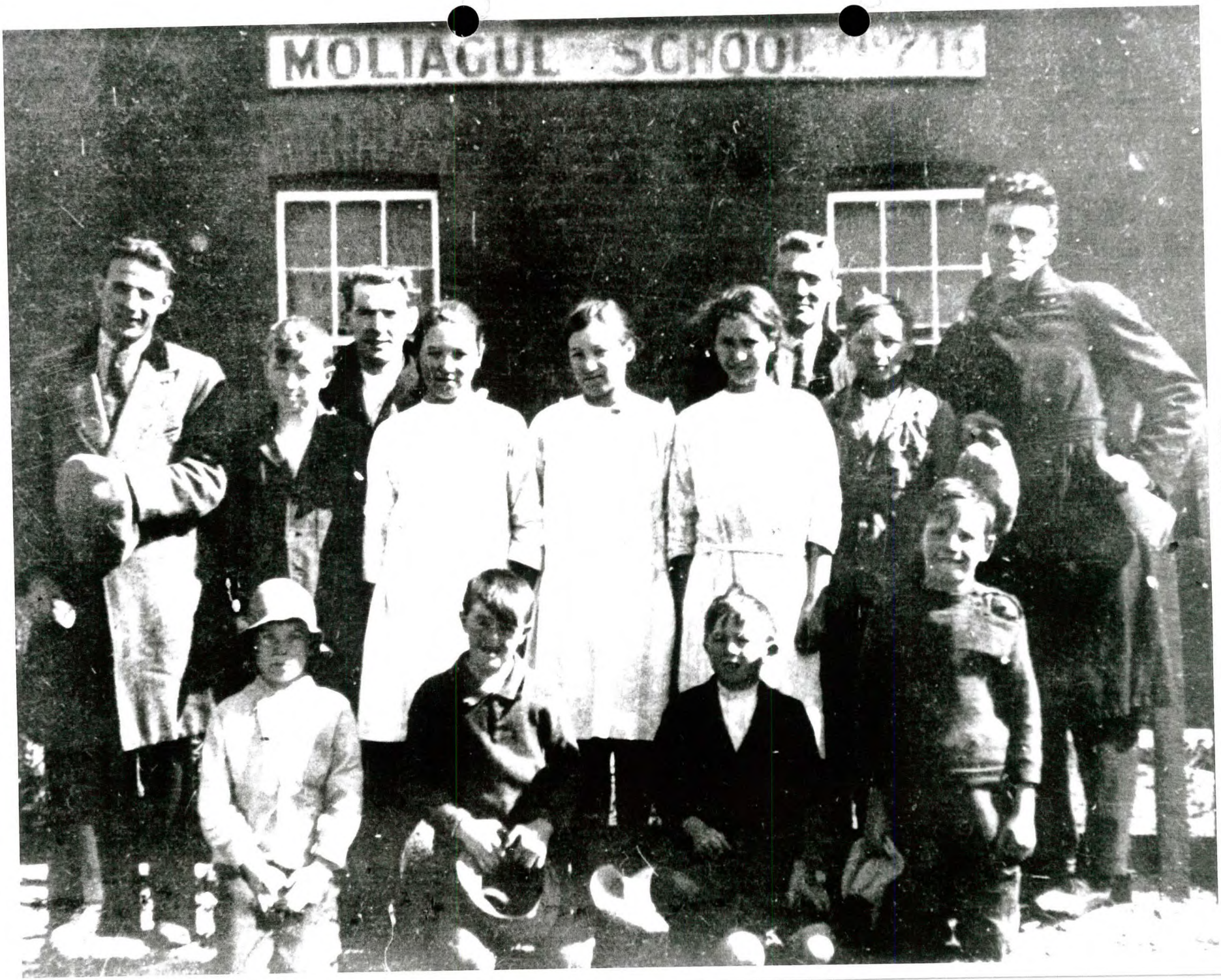
5. *Ibid.*, q.11737.

6. *Courier*, 17 April 1886.

7. *Courier*, 17 May 1895.

8. *Advertiser*, 26 October 1861, 18 April 1863.





SCHOOL CHILDREN  
MOLIAGUL



yard, crammed with eighty pigs had 'reached a climax of filth' in 1862, spreading a vile odour over half the town.<sup>9</sup>

Apart from that nuisance, health officers pointed to one local unregistered boarding house and problems with water supply; miners had destroyed water quality by mining along the Burnt Creek. Some years later officials pointed to another lot of problems at Tarnagulla. There, the council made no attempt at all to control butcher's shops and refuse had piled up in yards. Quartz burning still went on at the western end of the town and there were no-one bothered to manage cesspits. The Board expressly condemned cesspits which were no more than holes in the ground.<sup>10</sup>

### Schools

While the Board of Health sought to protect the bodies of the Shire's people, civil servants in education authorities cared for the intellectual and moral character of the Shire's children. During the 1860s and 1870s they erected schools in the settled parts of the Shire. The Burnt Creek school began to take in students in 1868, while the Llanelly school began in 1869. The Moliagul school was finished in 1872 and the school at Dunolly a year later. During the 1870s, other schools opened at Tarnagulla, at Arnold, Arnold West and at Bet Bet, Murphy's Creek and at Mt. Hooghly. Sometimes public schools replaced earlier common schools. And frequently these common schools had been at the centre of extended wrangles. At Llanelly for instance, residents raised a fund for a common school which would double of the same time as a Wesleyan chapel. In 1867 a few in the Wesleyan congregation disputed the rights of the townsfolk to use their chapel as a school-room. Later when a new public school opened, residents had a problem of a different order. It seemed that the newly-appointed schoolmaster, EH Emmett, left the doors open at all hours, so that children and the local herd of goats wandered in and out as they pleased. Townsfolk found this

particularly galling. The school had cost £500. Designers had concentrated their efforts on problems of light. Eventually they decided to locate windows only in the eastern wall so as to admit light but not the glare of the summer sun. This left the western wall free for hanging maps. After all this careful planning an uncaring teacher allowed goats free access to the new building.<sup>11</sup>

Schools made lively centres throughout the Shire. As well the schoolchildren played their own part in shaping the environment. By the end of the nineteenth century they regularly took part in Arbor Days, travelling from one point or another in the Shire, planting trees. Schools in rural Bet Bet generally survived up to the time of the First World War. Because of the schools, local people drew together with a common interest; often battling to improve the resources of the school or even to fight for its very survival.

The school often brought life into quiet corners of the Shire. In Waanyarra correspondent for the Tarnagulla *Courier* routinely forwarded accounts of the '*usual dull routine of this dullest of dull places*' – with rare magic moments; the only bright spot in one week had come with the annual school picnic.

Common schools like that at Timor West often educated the children of farmers rather than miners. Parents who petitioned for the school at Timor West either worked in lime kilns or on local dairy farms. The school opened in May 1869 with a head teacher, Michael Moroney, in a single-roomed building. During 1871, as more farmers entered the district went the 50 pupils expanded to 120. Their simple brick school didn't change much. Educational designers merely drew plans for a verandah to run down one side and allowed students to plant a row of trees along the school's yard.<sup>12</sup>

### Water

From the first European settlement another issue caused dispute, an issue to do largely with material well-being. Gold field wardens had reported as early as

<sup>9</sup> *Central Board of Health Annual Report*, 1862, *VPP*, 1862-1863, vol.3.


<sup>10</sup> *Courier*, 30 December 1865.

<sup>11</sup> *Courier*, 23 April 1870.

<sup>12</sup> West Timor, building file, Education department records, 795/2051, *VPRO*.



## THE GOALS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN


 No 157327

Education Department,  
VICTORIA.

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**MERIT CERTIFICATE**


This is to Certify

that *Annie Wharton*  
has completed satisfactorily the Course of Study prescribed  
for *Elementary Schools.*

Dated at *Cochranes Creek* School  
this *23rd* day of *September* A.D. 19*22*


Head-teacher's name *H. Robertson*  
*Inspector of Schools.*

  
**YOUNG WORKERS' PATRIOTIC GUILD**



THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT  
 DURING THE GREAT WAR  
*Conrad Gray*  
 A PUPIL OF *Woolagool*  
 SCHOOL No *746*  
 QUALIFIED AS AN EFFECTIVE MEMBER

*H. J. Harrison* MINISTER  
*P. Tate* DIRECTOR  
 HEADMASTER *T. L. Marshall* 1913

  
 24,363



1858 that the shire was 'indifferently supplied with water'. The Avoca gold office listened to a string of requests from people wanting to build private water races. Understandably, no official wanted to hand over the right to control water supply to any one miner. Instead the gold field commissioners supported initiatives for public water supplies in Dunolly and Tarnagulla. The Victorian government controlled the Tarnagulla Reservoir from its opening in 1861 until 1890. A local contractor, AH Amos, dug the Dunolly dam in 1860.<sup>13</sup> Other gold fields reservoirs were at Timor and Bowenvale. In 1865 a local contractor, John Watson won the contract to construct box drains from Tarnagulla's dam. Soon after Dunolly residents met with the Board of Lands and Works to ask for something to be done about water left to stagnate around old mining leads. At one end of their town shafts had filled with water and become:

*a concatenation of holes and rives full of . . . stagnant water with decomposed animal and vegetable rubbish poisoning the air right through the township.*<sup>14</sup>

By the turn of the century water attracted the interest of state authorities. Dreams of irrigating central Victoria had first inspired politicians in the 1870s. At one time some of them envisioned great canals dug from the Loddon and the Goulburn down to the coast of Western Victoria.

The Goulburn River was dammed, but for water supply rather than inland shipping and with the success of the Goulburn Weir behind them, engineers turned to the Loddon. They finished the Loddon Weir near Laanecoorie in 1891. This restraining wall quickly became a measure of man's powers over the natural world. The splendour of the Laanecoorie weir partially made up for the decay of mining. To one overjoyed writer the local lake looked just like 'a magnificent plateau of shimmering sapphire'. The dam's floodgates became a 'Niagara of the Loddon Valley'. This excited journalist imagined a day on which the the water at Laanecoorie would be covered with steamers and pleasure boats and when the lagoons and billabongs of

the Loddon would bring tourists from Melbourne.<sup>15</sup> If the Shire wasn't to grow through an expanding gold industry, perhaps the lake and its tourists would save Bet Bet. In these dreams, the practical role of the lake in controlling water flow seemed largely forgotten. The dam wall was swept away in floods within twenty years of being built. Now rebuilt it has become a place for tourists to stop. The dam wall and the nearby monument to its builders remind these transients of what the nineteenth-century saw as a great engineering triumph. Further downstream, visitors can cross the river at another structure built to replace a bridge destroyed by the same flood. The Janevale bridge is in concrete not wood or iron like other local bridges. The Janevale bridge is to a design of Sir John Monash and even today it links the Shire to Bendigo and Melbourne.

### Perfume

One final initiative of the central government promised much for Bet Bet. When local wine-making collapsed late in the 1880s one vigneron, François Mellon, proposed that herbs might replace his withered grape crops. In 1889 Mellon convinced Department of Agriculture officials to locate an experimental herb farm in the Shire. Initially, this venture came under the control of the Board of Viticulture. Then, in 1891 the Department of Agriculture took over. By 1894, under Mellon's direction, the Scent Farm or Perfume Farm encompassed twenty acres of plantings. Many both within and outside the Shire saw great hope in the herb farm. The Argus for example commented in 1890 that

*the wheat grower with his 320 acres will be in debt to the miller and the . . . storekeeper his whole life long . . . the clever man with ten acres of pansies, camellias and roses will live a good . . . and easy life and in ten years secure an independence.*<sup>16</sup>

By 1893 Mellon had planted more than 35 acres with 'perfume yielding plants'. To extract this perfume the scent farmer placed petals along the floor of a glass

<sup>13</sup> Gold field commissioner to Chief secretary, report from Avoca district, 1189/1858, VPRO. See also, Flett, Dunolly, pp.83-85.

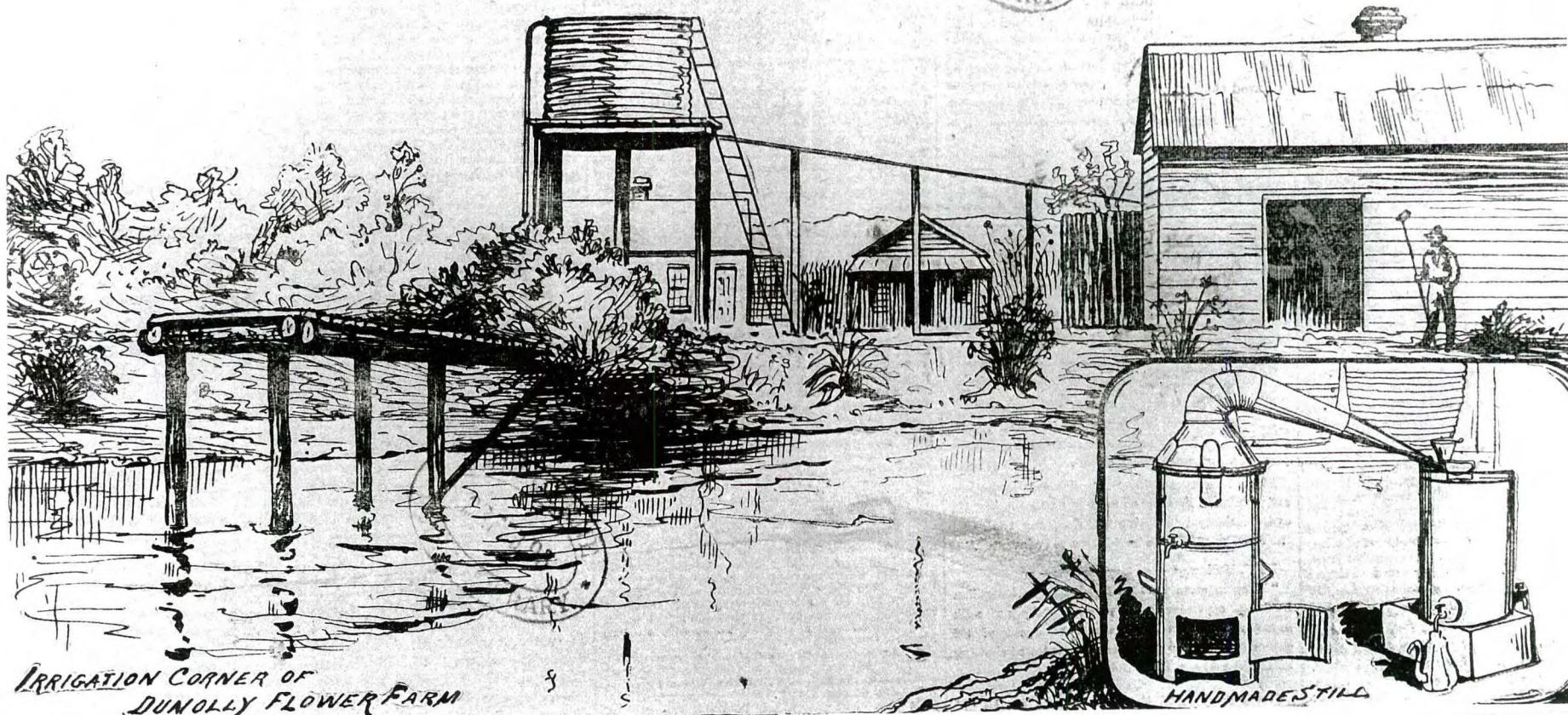
<sup>14</sup> Courier, 10 December 1868.

<sup>15</sup> Courier, 14 February 1891.

<sup>16</sup> Argus, 14 July 1890.



OUR  
24 FEB 1905  
LIBRARY



IRRIGATION CORNER OF  
DUNOLLY FLOWER FARM

HANDMADE STILL

THE PERFUMED DREAM  
SCENT FARM, DUNOLLY



case smeared with lard (*enfleurage*). In a short time the perfume passed from petals onto lard. Alternatively the scented plants were passed through a distillery.<sup>17</sup> All plants on the farm yielded up some sort of perfume – except for *'the king of scent bearing plants, the boronia'*.

Mellon persevered and two years later he put more stress on distillation rather than *enfleurage*. This French ex-vigneron held out the greatest hopes for lavender and pointed out that with its perfume worth 60 for each pound any farmer could make a living from what was a hardy and prolific plant. And if lavender perfume sounded a bit too exotic, Mellon also promised that he could extract perfume from oranges.

Great dreams for a perfume-led recovery from the depression of the 1890s never bore fruit. For all his enthusiasm Mellon found it difficult to convince local farmers. The farm hosted a string of visitors, many of them women, but the commercial growers he hoped to inspire never appeared. Dreams which called for the Darling Pea, the Wattle-bloom and the Eucalypt to establish the base for a Victorian perfume industry appeared even more far-fetched.<sup>18</sup> At one stage Mellon's supporters even envisioned Dunolly as a centre for a coca leaf industry! But parallels with Columbia and the South of France didn't count for much with local selectors, most of whom had only just won freehold to their land. In 1899 the stills for the scent farm were broken down and moved to the Leongatha Labor Colony.

Now even the farm buildings have gone. Yet for long after farmers and the Department of Agriculture lost faith in perfume industries, Mellon's lavenders, imported as seed from his native Grasse in the south of France, still grew each year. Mellon's favourite plant grew wild beyond the failure of his dream, colouring the borders of Scent Farm Road and brightening the long empty view across from the old farm site towards the Bealiba Range.

In the scent farm the nineteenth-century state sought to reshape the Shire for the last time. This effort failed. In their other works, engineers and administrators from

the city helped to shape local life. They directed patterns of movement, education and the health of towns. In the rural Shire, works of these nineteenth-century administrators have largely disappeared. Schools have been broken up, roads remade, bridges largely replaced and water supply modernised. The few reminders of these efforts (the Archdale bridge or the West Timor school for example) are all the more important for the unusual fact of simply having survived.

<sup>17</sup> *Illustrated Australian News*, 1 December 1893.

<sup>18</sup> *Town and Country Journal*, 16 March 1895.



## GOLDEN FIELDS: BET BET FARMERS

From 1860, more and more land was opened up for cultivation throughout Victoria. The farmers who moved onto the plains and river banks of the Shire of Bet Bet during the 1860s and 1870s changed the appearance of the Shire. While the old mining towns continued to stagnate, farmers hacked into what was left of the forest. They put up simple houses and tried to fence in farmland. Many of them lived on tiny blocks and eked out a living by occasional fossicking. Many others took to dairying and orcharding to become comfortable farmers by the end of the 1880s. Later they turned to raising sheep or growing wheat and oats. These farmers, the selectors, changed the face of Bet Bet. In the first years small farmers concentrated on raising stock and supplying local markets with fruit and vegetables. As they were brought closer to Melbourne markets by the railway they often turned to wheat and oats. Some failed in this venture. But many others succeeded so that by the end of the nineteenth century they could move out of small huts and into rambling and comfortable farm houses. By then the Shire had been transformed. Ordered farmland spread from town to town. More than one-third of the Shire remained as forest, but by the time of the First World War, the farmer had ousted the digger as the principal maker of the landscape.

### Selection Acts

During the 1860s a series of Selection Acts attempted to provide more of Victoria's population, already swelled by the gold rushes, with access to land. Compared to the Western District, the arguments between squatters and selectors in the Shire were minor but they did occur and they influenced the pattern of settlement. Other factors also contributed to the Shire's landscape – the decisions of government surveyors and bureaucrats determined the position of roads and land boundaries. Selectors also contributed to the building of the environment of the Shire. Many properties in the Shire retain the original shacks, houses, stables and sheds built by the first farmers. Along the Newbridge-Bridgewater Road, for example, the works of

both selectors and their squatting enemies can still be seen. To one side is a fine homestead on a property originally owned by J Catto. Diagonally opposite Catto's land, midway down a long sloping paddock, the remains of a house and sheds face towards the Loddon River. This land was first selected by Charles Morton in the early 1870s. After a long battle with Catto and other neighbours he eventually won rights to this land. His struggle typified changes going on throughout the Shire. Small agriculturalists moved onto the broad pastoral runs of squatters or fenced in land around gold fields. By the end of the nineteenth century, cleared fields, small cottages, orchards and dairies pock-marked the Shire.

### Background

To explore the impact of selection upon the Shire we need to understand something of the legislation on which it was based. In 1860 land was opened for selection under the Nicholson Act, the majority being in the Western District. Under the act there were two categories of land: special country lands which were sold at \$1.3.6 per acre and lands which were sold at \$1.0.11 per acre. The special land was within one mile of land purchased prior to 1860. It had to be close to a township of at least 200 inhabitants or stand along existing roads and water frontages. Blocks were surveyed in allotments of 80 to 640 acres, each being sub-divided into equal portions. One portion could be purchased and the other could be rented at 1/- per acre for seven years, with a right to purchase at any time. Selectors were limited to buying 640 acres a year. Elsewhere in Victoria squatters got around this provision, employing dummies to take up land. By 1861, 900 000 acres were selected under the Nicholson Act, five-sixths of which was owned by squatters.

The 1861 Census indicates the extent of occupied land in the West Loddon district, part of which became the Shire of Bet Bet, but it does not show the legislation under which the land was occupied. The various Government Gazettes indicate when land was offered for sale, who bought it and how much they paid. It does seem that little farming land in the present Shire was sold or selected under that Act. At the same time, the Act provided for the establishment of



commons and several were proclaimed in Bet Bet.

### Commons

Nicholson's Act allowed land to be set aside as Farmers' Commons, Town Commons and Goldfields' Commons. The commons were intended to benefit small settlers and they were usually established near towns. More than any other part of these first selection laws, the farmers' commons changed farming in the Shire of Bet Bet. Farmers' commons could be proclaimed upon the petition of ten or more occupants of not less than five hundred acres of freehold land. Their petition was only accepted if the common was within five miles of their land. All neighbouring occupants of freehold land who cultivated at least one quarter of their holdings could also make use of the land.<sup>1</sup> Farmers who took up this option were required to pay 4/- per horse and 2/- per head of cattle per year. They could graze their horses and cattle at the rate of one head of cattle for every acre, or one horse for every two acres of purchased land cultivated.<sup>2</sup> Sheep however were not permitted on the Commons.

Farmers' commons were proclaimed near to Tarnagulla and Bet Bet in March and June 1861. At Tarnagulla (where there were 1265 acres of occupied land in that year) the common was established to the south-east of the town. Broadly, it occupied much of the land between the town and the Loddon River to the extent of 4395 acres. At Bet Bet one common of 3036 acres extended to the north of Timor and was bounded by the Bet Bet Creek on the east and Wareek farmers' common on the west.<sup>3</sup> The other Bet Bet farmers' common extended along the northern banks of the Burnt Creek near Bromley. It covered an area of 5120 acres.<sup>4</sup>

Gold Fields' Commons were also proclaimed in the Bet Bet Shire. Although larger than farmers' commons, they usually covered less than 10000 acres. Under the legislation, a licence could be taken out by miners, tradesmen, carriers and other residents living within five miles of a proclaimed goldfields' common. The licence

entitled holders to depasture up to fifty head of stock at the same charges applied to the farmers' commons. Dairy farmers could run up to one hundred head of cattle on the common at the same rate. A gold fields common of 5000 acres was established east of Dunolly in March 1862.<sup>5</sup>

By the middle of the 1860s huge expanses of the Shire had come under the loose control of commons-keepers. Miners ran goats and cattle in corners of these sprawling reserves and townsfolk kept their dairy cattle within walking distance of shops, churches and schools. But by and large the commons failed. If they wished, the government could resume a portion of the total area of a common at any time. It was also difficult to enforce the regulation regarding use of the land. Farmers who had previously pastured their cattle on squatters' land were not going to pay to put their stock on Crown Land. Yet for struggling miners with only a few acres, the commons made the difference between survival and failure. Many ran goats and cattle on the commons. Occasionally a local squatter's stock was swallowed up on one or other of these vast tracts of Crown Land. The cattle or sheep occasionally re-appeared in distant butchers' shops. There were continued disputes about the management of the commons. Public meetings in all the towns generally pointed to commons-keepers who didn't keep an eye on stock or to farmers who ran stock and failed to pay fees. Despite these weaknesses, the miner grubbing for his very existence could keep himself alive in lean times through rights to use common land. Not that this success pleased government administrators. J Thorold Tulloch, the collector of statistics in the West Loddon region, reported in 1862 that farmers were avoiding paying the cost of pasturing on the Commons. He suggested that *'very little, if any, benefit accrues to the state for their privilege of depasturing upon crown lands'*. At the same time these commons have left few traces on the surface of the land. After all, with commons-keepers who didn't keep their eye on stock and townsfolk who used the common but took no responsibility for it, these broad reserves hardly changed the appearance of the Shire.

1. Paper 53, VPP, 1860-1861, vol.3.

2. Ibid.

3. Parish maps, B325(5) and B 355(6).

4. Parish maps, D125(10), D125(11).

5. VPP, 1862-3, vol.4



## The first selectors

In 1862, Charles Gavan Duffy mounted one of many attacks on the rights of squatters. Armed with new laws he tried to place more small farmers on Victoria's public land. Duffy's Land Act of 1862 sought to remedy some of the failings of the Nicholson Act and offered holdings from 40 to 640 acres at \$1 per acre. Half the allotment could be purchased over 8 years at instalments of 2/6 per acre. Under this act, land south-west of Dunolly, west of Bet Bet extending to the Avoca River and north-west of Newbridge was to be opened for selection, as well as millions of acres throughout the rest of Victoria.<sup>6</sup> Rather than welcoming this change, Dunolly council in 1863 argued that there was nowhere between Archdale and Bet Bet fit for cultivation. Councillors did though consider that there was good land around Dunolly. Locals thought that 30000 acres near the Avoca River and 36000 acres near Natteyallock could be opened up under Duffy's Act.<sup>7</sup>

Between 1862 and 1865 Duffy also opened the common land for selection. The Bet Bet common, for example, was subdivided and sold in June 1864. Parts of the Tarnagulla common were sold in the same month. The remainder of the Tarnagulla common was not sold until later selection acts and the soldier-settler legislation of the twentieth century.<sup>8</sup>

The people who selected on the commons established a pattern repeated elsewhere in the Shire. Amongst them were farmers who had first selected in 1861. C Cameron, whose family took up land throughout much of the Shire, bought 199 acres on the Bet Bet common and J Costello, whose family was later to be involved with the local wine industry, purchased 99 acres. Another pattern evident on the commons and elsewhere in the Shire were elongated blocks along creeks and rivers. On the Bet Bet common, the smallest blocks of ten acres clustered around Timor while those between 40 and 80 acres were near Emu Creek. Approximately half of the Tarnagulla farmers' common was sub-divided under the Duffy Act. Land along the Loddon River was sold first in blocks ranging in size from approximately 60 acres to 300 acres. The

largest of these elongated river-front blocks, 116 acres, was bought by JS Simpson and W Irwin. T King purchased a total of 1241 acres in the area west of the Laancoorie-Newbridge Road and north of the Tarnagulla-Poseidon Road. Another large property to the south of the King's land also derived from the Duffy Act.

Charles Gavan Duffy opened more land for selection in the Shire of Bet Bet than had been previously available; but no great rush of aspiring agriculturalists flooded into the Shire. Between September and October 1862, only five selectors took up land in the district controlled by the Dunolly Land Office. One was a farmer, another a brickmaker, one was a miner and two were described as '*professional and official persons*' who were engaged in pastoral pursuits. Of the 16417 acres available for selection in the Dunolly district, these five selectors got hold of 1097 acres.<sup>9</sup>

In the south-west of the Shire, near to the Avoca River, oblongs of between 44 and 74 acres were selected on either side of the Bealiba-Avoca road by Messrs. Friche, White, Glass, Mason, Gardiner and Davis during November 1862.<sup>10</sup> So, by the middle of the 1860s, patchworks of cultivation were superimposed on the wild landscape of commons and pastoral runs. Along many of the creeks of the Shire, canny selectors grabbed elongated blocks. Over the remainder of the decade, these first land selectors reworked the land through their determined clearing and building.

## The later land acts

Land laws allowed farmers to purchase half their allotment and rent the rest. Such laws made for some curious patterns on the land. In a few places, families and friends were able to buy close together. Near Bromley for example, several blocks were selected between 1863 and 1864 by Adam Boyd, W Scurry, J Ferguson, J Irwin, C H War necke, J Howard and P McPherson. Boyd and Ferguson had earlier bought land fronting onto Burnt Creek and the names of other early landowners continued to reappear in the same district. Later in the century, many took up land quite close to their original purchases. Families often occupied land in

6. C.G.Duffy, Guide to the lands of Victoria, Melbourne 1862.

7. Express, 31 January 1863.

8. Parish maps, B325(6) and T 173(10).

9. Progress Report of Proceedings under the Land Act, 1862, VPP, 1862-1863.

10. Parish Map, N36(3)



RAILWAY STATION  
TARNAGULLA





the same area for a number of generations as was the case with the Howard family who selected 55 acres in 1864 north of Betley. In 1944 they completed the purchase of a further 137 acres of adjacent properties.

Land selected under the Duffy Act in the Shire of 'Bet Bet' lay generally along river or creek frontages and was usually taken up in lots of less than 100 acres. Farmers took up land near Moliagul and to the west of Dunolly between 1862 and 1864. The greatest concentration of selection remained on land which had been established as farmers' commons. In this early period it seems that locals didn't see their Shire as a farming area. Many miners feared the spread of agriculture into 'Bet Bet'. At the same time a few could perceive the inevitable decay of the mines. In January 1863 the local newspaper cautioned its readers that *'the prosperity of a district cannot always depend on its mining'*. Miners were advised by the paper not to oppose the sale of land. Instead of preventing land sales on the grounds that the land would be better used for mining, gold-seekers were encouraged to see themselves as farmers as well. Of course during the 1860s the reef mines continued to promise great things. Moliagul diggers found the Welcome Stranger in 1869. What man in his right mind was going to throw up the chance of a sudden fortune at Poverty Reef or Moliagul for the prospect of a lifetime of back-breaking work in the bush, trying to plant crops on soil which might just be hiding a giant nugget? The Grant Acts of 1865 and 1869 probably changed the minds of many miners.

### 1865 onwards

New controls in the 1865 Act ensured that squatters could no longer monopolise farmland. As before, speculators working for squatters benefitted but the salvation of the 1865 Act was Section 42 which placed thousands of miners, labourers and tradesmen on small holdings. Under this section, annual occupation licences were permitted for units of 20 acres within 10 miles of a goldfield.

Men who feared the toil of clearing and planting holdings of several hundred acres took up these small blocks, often trying to earn a living by working in a nearby town as well. The new flood of selectors into northern Victoria upset larger land-holders in 'Bet Bet' and elsewhere. Section 42 caused a

dispute between J Catto and a selector, Charles Morton. Morton, a traveller for Day's brewery, had applied to take up 29 acres of land. Catto claimed that the land, described as a *'reserve below Mr. Day's brewery'*, lay across the route which his stock took to the river. Morton was able to select, but only on condition that the road along the east boundary which led from Catto's land to the river was left open.

Another Newbridge selector, Ramsay, had a similar problem with Catto. Ramsay had selected sixty acres with a river frontage on the eastern side of the same road. This river frontage, of 33 acres, was taken away when Lands Department officials surveyed the land. As nearby properties had river frontages, Ramsay protested that *'I cannot see any other reason for taking it from me but to favour Mr. Catto's sheep'*.

Selectors under the 1865 Act faced problems apart from resistance by squatters. One Chinese miner, Ah Choey worked a market garden at a bend on the Burnt Creek, opposite the township of Bromley. His application in 1867 to purchase five acres of land was rejected because the land was near old gold workings. He had a hut, piggery and three acres of garden. Although neighbours were similarly placed on former gold workings, they had been able to take out licences for their properties. After repeated applications and refusals, Ah Choey approached a Dunolly lawyer in 1876. As a result he finally got his licence, but only after ten years of dispute.<sup>11</sup>

Joseph Hicks, a blacksmith, struck the same trouble as Ah Choey when he attempted to take up land in 1869. Although he was refused five acres adjacent to Burnt Creek, he was able to select two blocks totalling 25 acres next to Ah Choey's market garden. When not at work at his smithy's forge, Hicks cultivated this orchard. In 1891 he wanted to expand his orchard and applied to select the block which had been refused him in 1869. On this occasion he won, but the long battles fought by Ah Choey and Joseph Hicks demonstrate some of the obstacles to land selection in the Shire. In particular, they indicate the way that gold mining determined the areas which could be selected. In both cases mentioned, the shape of the blocks

<sup>11</sup> Selection files, 9318/31 and correspondence 627/108, Lands department records, VPRO.



was determined by the position of old gold workings along Burnt Creek.

Many selectors didn't survive long enough to fight the drawn-out battles of these men. One historian has suggested that many selectors who sold out did so because of debt. At the same time he pointed out that many were speculators rather than farmers. A miner with a small block along the Burnt Creek at Bromley could make a few improvements to his land, sell out, and then take up a larger block in the northern parts of the Shire or beyond. These men used the acts as a source of capital.<sup>12</sup> Joshua Irwin, for example, took up 19 acres in 1866. He built a house, sank a well 45-feet deep, and cleared and cultivated 10 acres. Irwin had previously bought 2 blocks, each of 28 acres, across the road from his property between the Bet Bet farmers' common and Burnt Creek in 1864. In 1871 he requested permission to transfer his licence to James Bell, the Dunolly grocer, wine and spirit merchant and politician (and owner of Bell House in Dunolly). Bell and his family held a string of farms throughout the Shire. Although some doubt existed at the Lands Department whether a large land owner such as Bell should have a licence, the land was transferred to him at 10 per acre in 1872. Irwin claimed he had to sell because he was leaving Victoria.

Sections 19 and 20 of the 1869 Act gave more people a chance to try farming. After three or six years, the new selector was supposed to take out a lease under section 20 of the Act. But the Shire of Bet Bet was still a district pre-occupied with mining. In 1878, a report from the Dunolly Land Office suggested:

*The exemption of such large areas in this district retards the operation of the 19th Section, and compels small holders to sell out and go to other districts....*<sup>13</sup>

Charles Morton was one selector who was unable to take up land under the 1869 Act due to opposition from the Mines Department. Morton had previously taken up land under section 42 of the 1865 Act despite opposition from Mr Catto. In 1872 he

applied for 299 acres of land on the Newbridge-Bridgewater Road which at that time was 'the main Swan Hill road'. After his application was rejected, Morton moved to Melbourne and lived in Ascot Vale. In his absence Andrew Mitten and John O'Neil applied separately to select the land. O'Neil wrote to the Lands Department claiming that Morton had previously selected 30 acres, fenced it, cultivated it for two years, rented it to Mr Day who employed him at the brewery, and then sold it for 224. Morton was, according to Mr. O'Neil, 'not a bona fide selector but a mere land speculator'.<sup>14</sup> Following a meeting of the Land Board at Inglewood in 1874, Morton was given permission to take up his selection.

Morton's victory is worth noting, because unlike the many selectors, who left no physical trace of their presence, his house and stables still exist on the Newbridge-Bridgewater Road. Morton moved back to his property in January 1875 and by 1877 had spent 137 on fencing, 45 cultivating 30 acres of wheat, 145 on buildings and 25 on a reservoir 8-feet deep, measuring 30 yards by 10 yards. His house of four rooms, 32 feet by 15 feet cost 100 and the kitchen, measuring 22 feet by 14 feet cost 14. His sheds and out-houses cost 20. After surviving several crop failures, dying cattle and falling prices, Morton finally paid off his farm in 1894.<sup>15</sup> On this block of land much of the story of land selection in Bet Bet can be seen. The house, separate kitchen, well, orchard and outbuildings together make up the items by which small farmers sought to keep alive. Their farms differed from those of the present Shire in their mix of crops and livestock. The well, kitchen, bed rooms and parlour of the little house indicate the way in which selectors and their families sought to bring a domestic comfort to the wilderness; a comfort and order centred on the home rather than on the formal associations of the mining towns. And in the protracted battles which Morton fought with rival selectors and the local squatter we can sense some of the tensions masked by the present peaceful valley of the Loddon River. The windows of Morton's cottage look down on the Loddon and towards the broad bend where the river sweeps past the site of Day's brewery.

<sup>12</sup> C. Fahey, 'The wealth of farmers: a Victorian regional study, 1879-1901', *Historical Studies*, vol. 21, April 1984, no. 32, pp. 36-37.

<sup>13</sup> *Report on the Land Act, VPP*, 1878, vol. 3.

<sup>14</sup> Correspondence, Lands Department, 626/720 and selection file, 541/19.20, VPRO.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*





STREET SCENE  
TARNAGULLA



Renting his land to Day and then working as a traveller for the brewery, Morton was probably able to survive on his selection where others failed. While selection acts changed the land, at the same time they reinforced the prominence of entrepreneurs in the Shire's towns; men like Day or James Bell. They used selectors rather than the land acts to extend their control over the rural parts of the Shire.

### The farming landscape

Grant's acts succeeded in the long run in placing the small farmer on the land. They changed the surface of the Shire through regulations which demanded that small farmers put up fences and build some form of house. Typically the first selectors put up simple slab or mud brick huts often with dirt floors and without glass in the windows. Their little clearings in the bush were surrounded with post and rail fences and their thatched sheds covered milking pens and some pitiful farm implements. Over the rest of the nineteenth century these selectors moved one by one out of their slab and earthen huts and into comfortable weatherboard and in some cases brick farmhouses. The nineteenth-century design with broad verandah and double front with rooms on either side of a central passage was followed in the Edwardian period by a few asymmetrical houses; these often look as if they have been transplanted from a prosperous Melbourne suburb to the bush – a sharp contrast with the first simple huts of the selector. One of the best preserved of these homes is that of the Hickey family at West Timor.

Martin Hickey emigrated from Derrygoolin, Whitegate, Co. Galway in 1859 as part of a chain migration of the Hickey family. His first selection - 8A Parish of Wareek – was only fifteen acres. By the time he died in 1905 he had acquired nearly six hundred acres. Hickey married Ann Mulcahy an Irish girl from County Kerry and together they pushed for a school at West Timor (which opened with an Irish teacher – Michael Moroney). The Hickeys took a leading role in creating a Catholic Church in the district. Their farm seemed to depend on dairying rather than wheat or sheep. Like other farmers Martin Hickey put up straw-roofed stables with the thatch supported by forked poles. Alongside this the Hickey family built a chaff house made from sawn timbers. When not

working this farm, several of the Hickey boys turned to football. Cornelius Hickey went on to become a stalwart of the Fitzroy Football Club, resigning from the post of secretary in 1911 because he '*was opposed to professionalism in football*'. Another son, Patrick Hickey, also played with Fitzroy and moved to Werribee where he took up land. A third son, Martin Hickey jun., again went off to play football for Fitzroy and moved to Berrybank in the Western District to continue farming. John Hickey took over the Timor West farm and kept up the family role in local politics (and football). He became President of the Shire of Bet Bet and captain of the Dunolly Football Club. The Hickey family replaced the original homestead the 'Old Peppers' with their 'New Peppers' in 1916. The house still stands on the Hickey family property in West Timor.<sup>16</sup> Solid and comfortable in its design, this Edwardian villa indicates just how far one selector's family had moved. For the Hickeys, some of the rigours of life in the 1860s gave way to security in the twentieth century.

### Crops and livestock

Under the 1869 Grant Act, land under tillage increased throughout the Bet Bet Shire. In 1871, 9090 acres were under the plough, producing wheat, oats and other grain crops. There were also 33 acres of vineyards, 14 acres of market gardens and 120 acres of orchards. By 1891, 14122 acres was under tillage in the Shire although the decline around Tarnagulla and Dunolly suggests a move by farmers to grazing.<sup>17</sup> Vineyards in the Shire had increased to 42 acres, market gardens had more than doubled to 34 acres but the area devoted to orchards had fallen to 79 acres.<sup>18</sup> Most of the vineyards appeared to be in the Dunolly district which accounted for 45 acres. The wine industry continued to prosper throughout the 1880s and by 1891, 211 acres were under vines in the Shire.<sup>19</sup>

Viticulture enjoyed a boom in the 1880s. Wine could be sold legally and local wines had won prizes at several Melbourne Exhibitions. Dunolly wine-growers exhibited

<sup>16</sup> C. Mackinley, *O'Hickey: Martin Hickey and Ann Mulcahy: family history*, n.d.

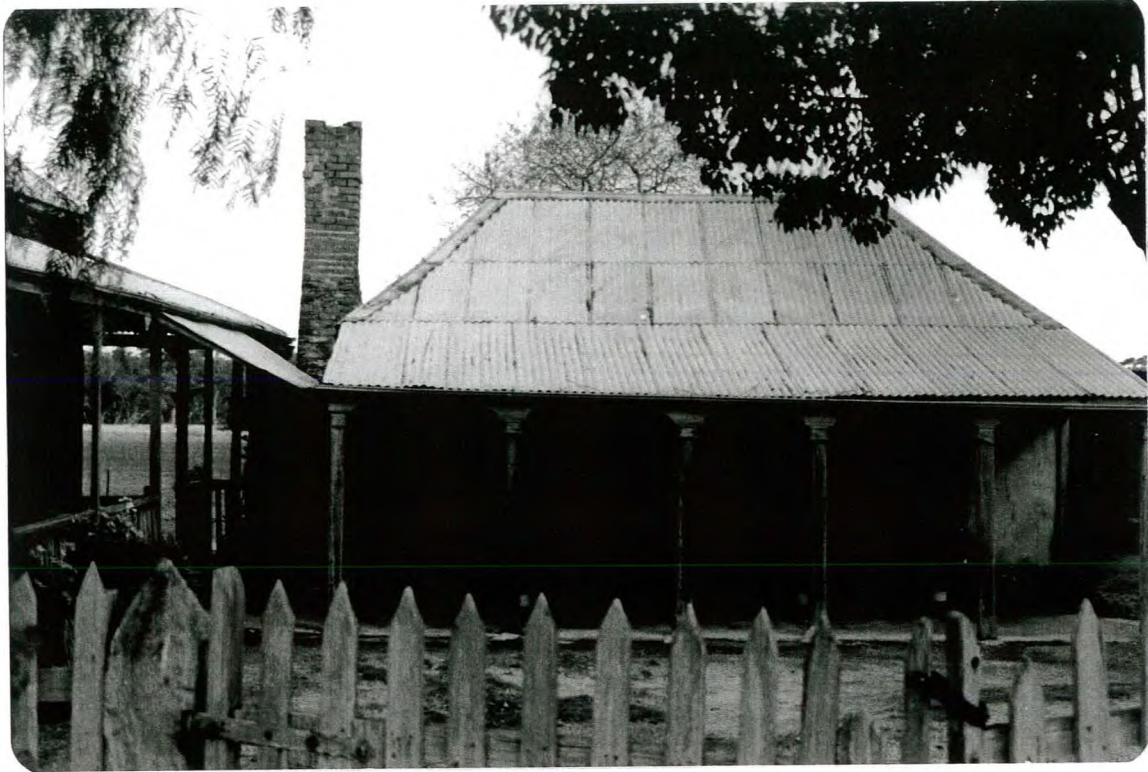
<sup>17</sup> *Agricultural statistics*, 1871, 1881.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> *Agricultural statistics*, 1891.



EARLY FARM BUILDINGS  
BARUTO FARM  
BEALIBA





at the Centennial Exhibition. Messrs. Peters, Mellon, Argani, Polinelli, Costello, Faux, Hedgson, Gianetti and Daly were long-term residents interested in the wine industry. But the Victorian wine industry collapsed in 1893 when vines in Victoria were destroyed following the discovery of the phylloxera aphid at a Strathfieldsaye vineyard. Before that collapse several local farmers had planted at least part of their holdings with vines. Amongst them was François Mellon, who at the end of the 1880s turned to scent farming rather than wine growing. One of the men he interested in wine growing was Henry O'Brien Daly.

Daly had been born in 1820 in Aughamullen, County Monaghan, Ireland. Along with Irishmen like Martin Hickey, Daly emigrated in the 1850s, escaping the ravaged countryside of post-famine Ireland. Daly's first venture in Dunolly was to open a store on the gold fields. Sometime in the 1860s he moved his grocer's shop to Broadway, in Dunolly itself. The store in part of the Bendigo Hotel building has been kept open by the Daly family to the present day. During the 1880s François Mellon exhorted Bet Bet farmers to take up viticulture. While many farmers ignored him, the storekeeper Daly saw the advantage in wine growing. After all, regulars used to stop each day on their way along Broadway to take a glass of wine in Daly's store.<sup>20</sup> If they drank wine which he produced then business might look up. Daly planted his vines near to the new Dunolly cemetery and called the vineyard 'Dalysville'. He went on to become president of the Dunolly Vine and Fruit growers Association. His 1879 Red Hermitage gained a fifth-grade ranking at the 1881 Exhibition in Melbourne while Mellon's 1877 Reisling was awarded a third ranking and his 'pineau' a fourth grade. In 1888 Daly entered a Dalysville Claret for the Fifty Guinea Burgoyne Prize. Although unsuccessful he still managed to sell gallons of his wines locally – a lot of it at a few pence a tippie in his store. Daly found time to play a key role in the local Catholic Church, to serve on the Dunolly Town Council and to stand unsuccessfully for the Victorian Parliament. And although his vines have made way for sheep, the simple stone winery of 'Dalysville' still sits near to the Dunolly cemetery. Townsfolk buried Daly in

the cemetery in 1896, soon after the Victorian wine industry collapsed. Mellon, whose Tivoli Vinyards had inspired other local wine growers had by then gone on to devote his energies to perfume making.

Other farmers tried fruit-growing in parts of the Shire. The earliest orchards appeared along the Loddon near Tarnagulla, where there were 4 acres in 1861.<sup>21</sup> Other pioneer orchardists included William Abell who planted trees at Inkerman, between Moliagul and Dunolly. Another early fruit grower was L Bannister who established a cherry orchard at Mt. Moliagul on land bought in 1862. Right on the boundary of the Shire, this orchard stands in a bare and rocky fold of the mountain. Surrounded by a stone wall, its trees spread into bloom each year because of the natural springs in amongst the rocky slope. Bannister's orchard has been a successful farming venture for more than one hundred years. As well, the orchard became a favourite spot for outings in the later nineteenth century. So popular were the orchard and nearby springs that in 1871 a petition reached the President of the Lands Department. Petitioners from Moliagul, Inkerman, McIntyre and Berlin wrote objecting to John Deason's application to select land at 'Rocky Hill'. The land encompassed natural springs, *'which cannot be surpassed in the district for domestic purposes'*.<sup>22</sup> Just as users of the commons petitioned against land selection, so miners asked that hills, springs and orchards ought to be kept open for public recreation. Prospective farmers and sharp businessmen may have welcomed the land acts. Amongst miners and other townsfolk they must have seemed a mixed blessing.

The Moliagul cherry orchard survived into the twentieth century. But from 1871 to 1891 the number of orchards in the Shire declined. Some Bet Bet farmers let their orchards run to seed as they turned to grazing. Many small farmers did plant fruit around the farmhouse and some still sold the produce locally. But grazing and then crops attracted most attention late in the century.

There were several further land acts in Victoria during the nineteenth century. Acts

<sup>20</sup>. See records of Daly's store, Melbourne University Archives.

<sup>21</sup>. *Agricultural statistics*, 1861.

<sup>22</sup>. Petition to lands department, 20 September 1871, M131/6, 15531/19.20, lands department records, series 625/263, VPRO.



*TREE AND SHED  
MOLIAGUL CHERRY ORCHARD*





in the 1870s and 1880s were aimed at keeping small selectors on the land. They provided struggling farmers like Charles Morton with the chance to finally purchase land. In addition non-resident licences were introduced which encouraged larger farms owned by fewer people. The extension of grazing properties usually meant that the old slab and bark huts disappeared. New weatherboard houses with their iron roofing, neat boards and straight verandah posts replaced the first huts. The characteristic chock and log or fork and sapling fences began to vanish as well. In most cases the physical reminders of the selection era lie in the shapes of properties where land has been carved up to meet with the demands of a particular land act. In some places, fence lines still follow divides where farmers split properties to resolve a dispute. Writing of this period one historian has suggested:

*Patterns of settlement and land use were in large measure the product of a complex of error and ignorance intrigue, opportunism and honest endeavour.*<sup>23</sup>

Certainly opportunism, intrigue and endeavour are recurring themes in selection era in Bet Bet. These qualities are registered in the pattern of land holdings.

Of the many attempts at farming in Bet Bet, most traces are gone. Here and there in the forest a broken fence and a few fruit trees are the only markers of the futile efforts of some miner who turn his hand to farming. But in other ways the work of the first selectors changed the Shire. The countryside would never look the same after 1871 as fences and houses encroached on the mining fields. Farmers, unlike many of the miners, brought their families with them. From the 1870s onwards the life of the Shire became centred on the family home of the farmer rather than on the pub or the municipal hall where the miner passed his free time. First of all along the creeks, selectors threw together slab or earthen huts. The surviving selectors moved out into bigger farmhouses at the turn of the century. Around these they put up sheds and barns. They sank wells and planted fruit trees. Their crops, cattle and sheep began to reshape the Shire. By the turn of the century, while some Bet Bet townsfolk still longed for a revival in gold mining, the future of the Shire

had come to depend more and more on farming. Later changes to the land law, new farming techniques and machinery have altered the routines of farm life. But the marks of the nineteenth-century farmer can be seen in parts of the Shire. Some of the first farmhouses still stand. Several of the larger homes of the later nineteenth and early twentieth century are visible. Runs of fences, wells, overgrown orchards, but most of all the pattern of cleared land and forest, trace the path of the first generation of farmers in Bet Bet.

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23. J. Powell, The Public lands of Australia Felix, p.81.



## BET BET:1914 - 1986

*'Our horizons were very very narrow when we were growing up . . . if you went more than five miles you were gone'.*<sup>1</sup> So one Timor West farmer recalled childhood in Bet Bet before the Second World War. A woman who grew up in Dunolly recollected that trips away from home meant a *'day out to Laanecoorie to see the water'*, or less often a train ride into Maryborough to the pictures and only once every few years, a holiday in Melbourne.<sup>2</sup> Since then the motor car, the television set and even overseas travel have broken up this self-contained world. People who grew up on farms early this century recollected that they seldom ventured into Dunolly or Tarnagulla. Someone who lived in Dunolly never went to Tarnagulla and boys and girls from Bealiba in the north of the shire never set foot in the lower reaches of Timor West.

In towns and farmlands divided into small intimate localities by creeks and forest, the people of the Shire put much of their energies into the school, the church, or of the nearest sports club. By the 1980s the buildings which formed the centres of these small settlements had often disappeared. Local industry grew more precarious and at the same time the motor car, radio, television and the supermarkets of Bendigo and Maryborough have taken their toll on the towns of the Shire. This chapter explores these changes.

### Post-war agriculture

After the war, few major new projects altered the character of the towns or the countryside. Elsewhere in Victoria soldier-settlement schemes introduced small farmers on to unused Crown Land or led to the breaking up of large estates. In Bet Bet very few soldiers attempted to create farms from scratch.

The first post-war soldier settlement acquisitions were made in 1920. By the middle of the year four freehold estates were available for soldier settlement in the Shire as well as one Crown estate - the Tarnagulla Racecourse reserve. Within the Shire some smaller blocks were opened up as returned soldiers' orchard

allotments. Approximately twenty allotments were taken up between 1920 and 1921; usually the applicants were returned men from local families rather than newcomers from the city. For several, soldier settlement meant a chance to step up from the duties of farm labourer to become, eventually, a freehold farmer. Few survived that long. Many worked by outmoded and laborious techniques. Often the land released to soldier settlers simply could not support them. Soldier settlers changed a part of the landscape, extending small-farming into what had been forest blocks. Some lived in houses which differed from the designs of the earlier cottages of selectors. The Soldier Settlement Board (Closer Settlement Board) provided a farmhouse of basic, simple weatherboard design on some blocks.<sup>3</sup> When Jim Gordon returned from his four years with the AIF he and his brother George took up adjoining soldier settlement blocks at Dunluce. The family survived on the block and in 1924 Jim and his wife Grace moved into a five-roomed Closer Settlement Board farmhouse.<sup>4</sup> On the other side of the Shire at Betley, W Birkett took up land as a soldier settler. In the north of Bet Bet Shire members of the Deason family also extended their landholdings through soldier settlement. The few houses left from this period of farming follow a standard pattern for the most part. While these designs can be seen through most of Victoria, the survivors are important to the Shire. They can be compared to earlier selectors' homes and to later farmhouses, indicating changes in the domestic life of rural families. As well, in Bet Bet, some soldier settlers were encouraged to return to the techniques of the first selectors and build mud brick and pise homes.

The war left other marks on the face of the Shire. On the slopes of Mount Moliagul some hopeful miners decided to do their bit for the war against Germany and began digging for molybdenite.

3. On Soldier Settlement generally, see S. Yelland, 'Soldier settlement in the Shire of Bet Bet from 1919 to the 1930s', Monash University, 4th. year History in the Field Project, 1986.

4. From research notes prepared by Ms. S. Yelland (after interviews and letter from Colin Gordon, Dunolly).

1. Interview with Dave Hickey, April 1987.

2. Interview with Mrs. Brownbill, April 1987.





LAST BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY?  
SELLING TO DIGGERS  
POSEIDON RUSH, 1906



During 1915 both Australian patriots and the Imperial government sought to limit Australian exports of molybdenite, a mineral which could be used in making hardened steel. After a visit to Beechworth, the secretary of the Victorian Trades Hall Council called for unemployed miners to be given jobs on molybdenite mines in the north-east of the state.<sup>5</sup> Then, in June local miners read of English calls for increased molybdenite exports from Australia. In 1916, John Dunn and WP Ogilvie took out leases on the slopes of Mount Moliagul. As the Victoria Gold and Molybdenite Mining Company they spent £900 on sinking shafts into what they thought was an ore body of the precious mineral. In the following year they apparently abandoned this scheme and turned to open-cut mining as the Mount Moliagul Molybdenite Syndicate.<sup>6</sup> During 1917 and 1918 the company employed a handful of miners, apparently without finding any molybdenite. By the end of 1918 had Germany surrendered without even knowing of the threat from Moliagul molybdenite. The Moliagul miners had abandoned their patriotic venture before the end of the war. Molybdenite apart, Bet Bet's war effort depended on the local men who volunteered and who are recalled in the memorials in several parts of the Shire.

Soldier settlement went on alongside other changes in local agriculture. Some of the small farming allotments around the gold fields either disappeared or were built on by newcomers to the Shire. The old miners cottages were swept away to be replaced by houses looking much like those in a Melbourne suburb. Here and there across the Shire the abandoned houses of selectors fell into decay. Around them the blocks of struggling nineteenth-century farmers merged into the broader holdings of successful and more heavily capitalised farmers of the twentieth century. Visitors in the 1870s and 1880s had delighted in the orchards and vineyards of the Shire. A few winegrowers continued past 1914 and fruit trees still stood in neat rows on some larger properties. But increasingly the Shire has become the home of wheat and

sheep farmers; little different from the rest of north-central Victoria. Some families in Bet Bet made a living from the same mixture of dairying and stock raising as the first selectors. In the twentieth century when more and more of their neighbours swung over to a single cash crop these small-holders became known as the '*billy can farmers*'. Around Timor West small farmers kept enough dairy cattle to send cream off to the butter factory in Maryborough. As one local farmer recalled:

*When I first started farming around here thirty or forty years ago there were four or five just milking a few cows . . . making enough to run the car and buy a few groceries . . . and the car was not use that often . . . then when the 'roaring fifties' as I call them came along they all switched over to growing crops.<sup>7</sup>*

At Betley too, local farmers depended on dairying in the twenties. Most of the families living on small allotments kept a few cows, fowls and perhaps a goat or pig. Many still churned their own butter. Before the Second World War a group of farmers around Timor West made money from sheafed hay. As one farmer explained sheafed hay was an oaten hay which was let mature and cut before it was fully grown to make '*little bundles*' of sheafed hay. The Hickeys used the whole of their farm except for 80 acres on Mt. Hooghly for sheafed hay. This sheafed hay not only supported farmers but also a casual labour force in the shire. Dave Hickey recollected how his family took on one hundred hands at harvest time. The workers raised up huge stacks of hay '*more resembling a ship on the ocean than a haystack*'. These labourers were recruited from amongst the last of the miners living on small gold field plots. Talking about the farming life of his father before the Second World War, Dave Hickey recalled that, in his father's time, '*there was plenty of labour about ... men with a house and a little bit of a garden... they mainly looked forward to that harvest.*'<sup>8</sup> Since then factories in Maryborough have lured away most of the remaining farm laborers. Hay-cutting like dairying disappeared from the Shire.

While wheat may have appeared as a salvation to struggling farmers in the

<sup>5</sup>. *Argus*, 29 January 1915.

<sup>6</sup>. Mount Moliagul Molybdenite Mining Co. N.L., Mining lease files, 602/M2, VPRO.

<sup>7</sup>. Interview with Dave Hickey, farmer at Timor West, conducted April 1987

<sup>8</sup>. Interview with Dave Hickey



*CLOSER SETTLEMENT  
CLOSER SETTLEMENT BOARD HOUSE ('34) AND NEW SETTLER AT WORK  
1947*





1950s, farmers twenty years earlier found that crops hardly paid for their own planting. As Howard Lummis recalled, even *'bags got up to two bob each then. . . a lot transferred over from wheat to sheep'*.<sup>9</sup> Whereas the West Timor farmers made a living from sheafed hay, farmers at Murphy's Bridge around the Lummis farm turned to fat lambs as a staple.

But these new markets for farmers in the twentieth century have not reshaped the Shire. The real change in farming took place not by remaking the physical environment but by using scientific techniques and agricultural machinery. Farmers began to use tractors and after the Second World War ~~and~~ many bought trucks. Harold Lummis brought the first tractor into the district just after the First World War.

*one man could drive a team of horses and took two men to drive a tractor and a combine so I crossed that out . . . I had reins on it . . . reins for the clutch, reins for the accelerator, reins for the brake.*<sup>10</sup>

Besides this new machinery, farm buildings changed. Iron outbuildings replaced wood and thatch. By the end of the nineteenth century, local farmers had begun to copy urban styles in building new farmhouses. After the Second World War, several of these were abandoned. Across the Shire farming families now live in brick houses which look little different from those which can be seen in Preston or Springvale or Balwyn or any other Melbourne suburb of the 1950s and 1960s.

### Towns In Bet Bet 1914-1986

With a flourishing gold industry still a dream and with nearby provincial centres offering a wider range of services, the Shire's towns went on shrinking after the First World War. Around them the minor hamlets which once hosted great rushes of gold diggers all but disappeared. A traveller who now crossed the Shire by car would often pass deserted buildings and closed shops where once a small mining hamlet had survived.

As they slowly contracted, the towns could offer fewer and fewer services to the people who stayed on. In 1920 a walk down the main street of Tarnagulla would take the visitor past a string of shops, banks and services. As well as trades like a chaff-cutting works and a wood merchant, the little town had a couple of butchers, a cycle agent, a solicitor, a blacksmith's store and a bootmaker. By 1957 many of these had disappeared.<sup>11</sup> But the chaff-cutting works survived as did the garage and one of the butchers. One hotel alone stood in the town and much of the trades which served the people of Tarnagulla had gone. Over the last three decades, most of these remaining businesses have also closed their doors. Dunolly had more commercial activities in the 1920s with a flour mill and a cordial factory, soapworks and a coachbuilders. Around these enterprises several fruiterers, butchers and grocery stores competed for business. In the years which followed many of these closed as well.<sup>12</sup> As recently as 1957 the coachbuilder's still existed and a branch of Maryborough Knitting Mills employed a local workforce. Certainly many local shops survived; just as many had gone. Between 1920 and 1957 the number of businesses in the town fell by half. Elsewhere even fewer local shops survived. In Bealiba in 1920 any resident could shop at several stores, a bootmaker's, a butcher's and a baker's shop. The town even supported an undertaker's and a couple of local storekeepers were agents for British and American motor cars. By 1957 two motor garages had gone and only one kept going. The once lively shopping street had dwindled to the hotel, general stores, one butcher and a drapery.

Alongside this steady decay, the towns lost housing as well. New buildings were put up in each but these did not balance the numbers of wooden mining cottages which fell to pieces, the brick shops and public buildings which crumbled or were taken apart and loaded onto trucks to be carted off to some other part of Victoria. In smaller settlements like Moliagul, miners' cottages were loaded onto trains and

9. Interview with Howard Lummis, December 1986.

10. Interview with Howard Lummis, December 1986

11. Post Office

Directories, 1921, 1928, 1957.

12. Ibid.



taken to Mildura where they formed part of a new farming frontier.<sup>13</sup>

Hotel keepers too, suffered a fall in fortune in the twentieth century, through the work of the Licensing Reduction Board. The once famous Windsor Castle Hotel in Dunolly lost its license and did service as a doss-house for travelling labourers and fruit pickers. Under licensing regulations enforced from 1906 onwards, the number of hotels in any part of Victoria had to be measured against population. Old gold centres like Dunolly inevitably had more than their share of hotels. Public houses licensed in more liberal times found their bars closed and customers driven down the road. Even the great hotels of the nineteenth century, like the Bendigo Hotel in Dunolly, had to close their doors. In 1861, the Dunolly Licensing Court had heard application from at least ten publicans in Dunolly and several scattered through the Shire. By the 1920s very few of these houses still served local drinkers. Between 1897 and 1957, fourteen hotels in Dunolly surrendered their licenses. One of the last to disappear was the Terminus Hotel, delicensed in 1956. *'You had to put too much money out and you couldn't get it back in those days'* claimed Mrs. Brownbill whose mother and grandparents had run the hotel.<sup>14</sup> Four pubs closed in Tarnagulla between 1888 and 1920 and sixteen in the remainder of the Shire, the last of these, the Mt. Moliagul closed at the end of 1962. In many cases the shell of the pub survives. But bar fittings and sometimes the side walls have gone. As pubs became homes, residents took down leaning walls and replaced them with new materials. The Terminus Hotel and the Mt. Moliagul hotel are both probably more interesting for their facades than for anything else.

The few local manufacturers felt the same steady decline. In Dunolly, Peters and Carwardine's Soap Works kept up a trade into the 1920s, alongside a cordial factory and a chaff-cutting works. But Sheehan's flour mills burned down in 1925 and other small local concerns struggled. Many disappeared during the depression. The Dunolly Progress Association secured a branch of the Maryborough Knitting Mills

for the town.<sup>15</sup> In 1943, a local industrial committee tried to get a boot factory for Dunolly. The biggest industrial structure of the twentieth century was of course the Dunolly grain handling terminal. This opened in 1943 when it was reputed to have the largest roof area in the southern hemisphere and led to the quip that Dunolly was a *'silo with a town attached'* <sup>16</sup> This enormous iron structure supported on a *'stick'* frame remained a local landmark until demolished by the Grain Elevators Board over the Christmas-New Year holidays in 1986-1987. The shed was originally designed as wartime storage in 1941-42. An emergency Grain Elevator (Financial) Act had allowed for a special loan to fund the project. Victorian Railways labourers did the work of putting up the shed, which took longer than expected because of several strikes over the dangerous working conditions. The shed was extended in 1943 to become what many assumed to be the largest such structure in the world. Iron sheets hung from a frame of more than one thousand yellow or grey box trunks brought from the forests of Gippsland. While the town of Dunolly has now lost this landmark, more recent wheat handling silos still stand alongside the railway to the south of the town and remain as the largest buildings in Bet Bet.<sup>17</sup>

Apart from the grain silo and several farmhouses, there are few places in the Shire which reflect the social changes of the last fifty years. Yet over that time, new communications have extended the worlds of townsfolk. The Dunolly telephone exchange listed thirty subscribers by 1925. Several promoters showed films in the town hall until warned about safety and health regulations.<sup>18</sup> Local newspapers listed ABC radio programmes after the First World War.<sup>19</sup> In Edwardian Bet Bet they might have reported on an amateur theatrical society instead. One local farmer reflected on the

<sup>13</sup>. Interview with Ron Carless, 1986.

<sup>14</sup>. Interview with Mrs. Brownbill, April 1987.

<sup>15</sup>. Shire Minute Books, various dates, 1925-1928, books held at Shire offices, Dunolly.

<sup>16</sup>. Express, 7 December 1943, St. Arnaud Mercury, 8 September 1980.

<sup>17</sup>. Argus, 25 January-18 February 1941.

<sup>18</sup>. Shire Minutes, various dates.

<sup>19</sup>. Newspaper advertisements, Bealiba Times and Express.



part which radio played in his life in the 1930s:

*We did have a radio and it was battery operated - wet cell battery. . . we used to have to take the battery to Maryborough to be charged. . . dad had control of the wireless and it would only be used for the news and Dad and Dave, Martin's Corner and that was about it. . . only if you were assured of a good battery would you listen to the cricket.*<sup>20</sup>

In the face of such new entertainments, old centres of town life were lost. The Gordon Gardens had once covered Dunolly market square. Trees grew untended and flowerbeds ran to seed in the twentieth century. By the 1920s townsfolk complained that paths in the gardens were flooded and broken up in winter and that in summer the long grass and weeds were likely to catch fire.<sup>21</sup> Trees planted in the gardens began to die and were cut down. Then in 1938 the Council let the Ladies Basketball Club take over part of the gardens for asphalt courts. The gardens in the 1960s seemed a greater failure than the market square had been in the 1860s. On the other side of town the 'Station Lake' fared better and new plantings were placed along its shore with an island in the centre. Despite the sorry state of the Gordon Gardens, many parts of the Shire were replanted in the 1920s. The decline of mining offered something of a respite in which trees could be planted around old mine workings and in front of the solid public buildings of the nineteenth century. Then, a revival of mining at the end of the 1920s turned many back to this local staple.

### Gold Mining

In 1931, Mr. E. J. Dunn, a former director of the Geological Survey, stirred old dreams of fortune by suggesting that plenty of gold was still to be dug out in Bet Bet. The 86-year-old Dunn warned that prospectors had to know how to follow indicators but if they could find slate rock in any direction within forty miles of Dunolly then they might expect rich returns. There was, he reminded his audience, 'no record of money making . . . in the history of the

planet' to compare with the riches of local fields.

The Depression turned local men back to fossicking in much the same way as their parents had gone back to old diggings in 1890s. Some mines had been assayed during the 1920s but with little real attempt to work them. Howard Lummis was one who turned from farming to mining. As a young man between the wars he worked on mines around Tarnagulla, hauling up rock samples for testing. He and his partners took samples from the Yorkshire Mine where 'although it was thirty or forty years since that was worked you could swear those footmarks and tracks were just done the day before'. The re-opened Yorkshire mine drew investors to the shire. Howard had the task of working with two other men and going to the mine each Saturday with a horse when he would:

*pull up the week's work of these other two . . . we tipped the dirt out of the leather bag . . . we had an old railway tub and we used to tip it into that and get the gold that had fallen out . . . it was very very good.*<sup>22</sup>

Depressed prices turned farmers to gold digging and the failure of international trade brought new investors into the gold market. In January 1931, Bendigo mining men visited Moliagul hoping to revive interest in local reefs. During that year small prospectors took more than 82 tons of rock to the Government Crushing Battery, from which they got 18 ounces of gold.<sup>23</sup>

During 1931 and 1932 unemployed workers from Melbourne converged on Dunolly. In November 1931 a Tarnagulla man, Stanley McNamee, found several nuggets in Hayes Gully.<sup>24</sup> With these he kept his family farm together. This find sparked off a short-lived rush to Tarnagulla. Miners some time before had dug up nuggets in a disused orchard at Waanyarra. Several hundred men pitched tents around the site and set out fossicking. Further strikes followed, one at Newbridge and another at Robertson's Claim near Moliagul.<sup>25</sup>

The catastrophe of a world depression had thrown men out of work in Melbourne

20. Interview with Dave Hickey.

21. Council Minutes, 1931, 1935-1937.

22. Interview with Howard Lummis.

23. Bealiba *Times*, 16 January 1931.

24. *Express*, 17 November 1931.

25. *Ibid.*, 28 April 1931.



THE LAST BIG RUSH  
POSEIDON





and threatened farmers with ruin. In Bet Bet, harsh times turned men back to the golden dreams of the previous century. Local farmers, old-time prospectors and hopefuls from the city joined together in rushes to new fields. Generally much smaller than the great stampedes of the 1850s, these new rushes gathered together men even more desperate than the miners who flooded the shire in the middle of the nineteenth century.

At each strike hundreds of men would gather and start to peg claims. Just as in the 1850s few of the gold-seekers stayed for long. Many turned back to Melbourne or else rushed from one promising find to the next without ever beginning any real digging. One camp of unemployed diggers drew men to Hard Hills outside Tarnagulla. Howard Lummis remembered the scene on this field in the 1930s when:

*there were a crummy lot that lived about there . . . there were about six or eight camps of them, they used to get on what they called sustenance wine —methylated spirits . . . when there were two or three bits of trickles up there they'd be in their element . . . they'd get the washing dirt and they'd put it in gutters and as the rain come down it would wash it all for them instead of putting it through the puddling machine.<sup>26</sup>*

Other men had kept at mining since long before the depression. John Rockford, for example, had worked his claim near Moliagul for decades. Seventy-five years old in 1931, Rockford broke two tons of rock each day, never finding a great nugget but gleaning enough to survive.<sup>27</sup> Alongside him in the 1930s desperate men on unemployment relief began to dig. The state government granted each man a free pick, a free shovel and five shillings a week. After blundering about in the bush and striking aimlessly at the occasional rock, the disillusioned digger often drifted towards Dunolly. Many had blunted picks and some had got no money from the Unemployment Fund. Old miners from the Shire took pity on these newcomers and together they formed a Prospectors Association. At the first meeting only twenty men claimed to have ever dug for gold and only six knew anything about the local fields. Altogether there were over

150 men from Melbourne digging around the town and several hundred on relief funds. Few of them knew the first thing about hunting for gold. As the local paper reported, '*many men had not washed a dish of dirt until they came to Dunolly.*'<sup>28</sup>

One local miner, C Barrett, insisted that without locals to guide them, newcomers would never make anything from mining. Instead of sending men out on a wild goose chase he argued that the government ought to invest in one or two large-scale mining ventures. Many of the sustenance men did not even have a pick or a pan and several had not received their five shillings relief money. The Dunolly Prospectors Association came to their aid and offered to lay and sharpen their picks free of charge. The Shire council opened the town hall and council chambers for dances and a sing-a-long every Friday. Prospectors organised their own '*fancy dress football matches*' to raise money. Most rushed off to Waanyarra later in the year where one lucky man unearthed a 59-ounce nugget in a garden and many dug for gold near finds at Murphy's Creek. But, by the end of the year several had given up and drifted back to the city.<sup>29</sup>

The depression revived interest in mining. But these rushes were more desperate than hopeful and most miners probably had no real chance of success. But at least their efforts did turn local men to mining again and several fossickers kept digging long after the depression ended. The sustenance schemes probably did little for the unemployed men shoved on trains to Dunolly with a few shillings in their pocket. One or two may have made a living out of mining. But from most local accounts it appears that only men with some experience in mining got anything out of the sustenance schemes. Probably they served a purpose for Unemployed Relief Agencies in Melbourne. Sending men out into the bush to hunt for gold shortened the dole lines in the city. The fossicking schemes dispersed some of the angry, frustrated and challenging men

28. Express, 7 August 1931.

29. Express, 13 January 1931, 17 March 1931, 5 June 1931.

26. Interview with Howard Lummis.

27. Times, 16 January 1931.



thrown out of work through no fault of their own.

At the same time men with money looked to larger mining ventures. Investors raised capital so they could re-open old shafts at Moliagul. The Britannia and the White Hope No.2 were worked by local syndicates in the 1930s. Experienced miners started working through tailings at Timor. J Scantlebury had spent enough of his life in local mining to know *'we are not going to make a fortune in a few days'*.<sup>30</sup> With his partners he re-worked several mullock heaps. Nearby some locals began puddling and cradling in the hope of picking up gold which nineteenth century miners might have missed. Experienced miners probably had some success. Altogether, Dunolly banks purchased 3344.0.0 worth of gold during 1931. In 1931 the CBC Bank dealt with 244 gold transactions, double the number of the previous year. From then onwards the returns from fossicking seemed to decline as many of the sustenance men left the district.<sup>31</sup>

Gold mining failed to reach the levels of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, these few new finds inspired the local member of Federal Parliament to announce that *'in his generation gold had saved Australia and it could do so again'*. Dunolly and the Shire failed to save Australia from the depression but old gold fields did keep some men going. And the early 1930s added new sites to the long list of abandoned gold workings in Bet Bet.<sup>32</sup> The unemployed men of the 1930s worked over the ground tackled in the 1850s and later. The scratchings they made on the surface are less dramatic than the scars created by the men of the 1850s. Nonetheless their mostly hopeless quest for gold left behind another layer of pits, shafts and sluicings around Tamagulla and Moliagul in particular.

### Forestry

Mining brought money and people into Bet Bet. When the miners drifted off and their fortunes were spent, their digging left behind bare earth, demolished forests and

muddied and stagnant creeks. In the last decades of the nineteenth century many local people asked for tailing heaps to be flattened and for new trees to be planted over the old mine workings. Nobody followed up these ideas and at the end of the First World War much of the Shire appeared to outsiders as little more than a *'wild waste of old mining land and sluicings'* – once thriving hardwood forest had degenerated into *'stunted growth'*.<sup>33</sup> Much of this landscape was reshaped by Forestry Officers between the wars. By 1925 they planted 20000 acres of native forest around Dunolly, Tamagulla and Bealiba. The barren wastelands left by miners was becoming; *'practically a model forest'*. During the 1920s the Forestry Commission continued to plant grey box and ironbark throughout the Shire. These plantings took the form of extensive forest reserves and small coppices alongside cleared farm blocks. In 1925 the Tamagulla State School took up a forestry allotment. School students planted 6000 trees and by the end of the decade teachers claimed that their pupils had developed a strong *'forest conscience'*.<sup>34</sup>

Aided by sustenance workers, the local forestry officers had extended plantings during the 1930s. In 1931 one thousand acres of forest were planted in the Dunolly district, almost half of it at Waanyarra.<sup>35</sup> By 1933 more than 200 relief workers and 31 temporary employees were planting and cutting in local forests. By 1936 numbers had fallen and only fifty relief men carried on the task. Forestry Officers concentrated on coppicing. Dry spells undid much of their efforts and wiped out stands of young grey box. Foresters faced continual enemies in the form of rabbits, mistletoe and stinkwort.<sup>36</sup> Nonetheless their efforts had transformed much of the Shire.

Forestry enabled other industries to revive. Wood cutting had employed several local men in the nineteenth century. Forestry officers helped local

30. *Ibid.*, 13 January 1931

31. *Ibid.*, 5 June 1931.

32. Shire minutes, 27 April 1927.

33. *Express*, 17 February 1925.

34. *Ibid.*

35. Annual reports of the Forests Commission, 10368/1/31/2153, papers for Dunolly and Tamagulla, VPRO.

36. *Ibid.*, Annual reports for 1936, 10568/2/2193/36.



wood cutters to find new markets in the 1930s. Gangs worked under sustenance schemes to get firewood for Melbourne's unemployed. Others cut timber for railway sleepers, for fencing and telegraph poles.<sup>37</sup> To the local member of State Parliament these timber cutters were the *'hardest working men in Victoria [who] earn every penny they get'*.<sup>38</sup>

Perhaps less exhausting was the second industry based on forestry – eucalyptus distilling. The Forest Commission licensed one distiller, JB Reid, to operate in the Waanyarra forest. In dry years he could not distill efficiently as water in his dam fell below the level of his condensing pipes. Then his chimney pipe rusted through and collapsed. Other plants seemed to have more success. Distillers worked at Emu in the 1920s, along Tarpaulin Creek, and later at Goldsborough and near Rheola. Although the Waanyarra plant closed down in 1938, new distillers began work during the Second World War. At least one survived during the 1950s. The Britten family began distilling at Goldsborough in the 1920s. In 1929 their Cornish boiler exploded killing one of the family. The distillery continued under H Britten into the 1950s.<sup>39</sup> It is still run as a small distillery by Pat Martin. The boiler, vats and drains stand in a clearing in the centre of what is left of the town of Goldsborough. The simple but imaginative mechanisms of the distillery provided an income for a handful of men and as well an unsophisticated but relatively harmless way of taking wealth from the forest. During the depression these distilleries had employed twenty men. In the 1950s only a few stalwarts continued the trade. Perhaps inadvertently the forestry officers had helped the decline of the industry. Most agreed that scraggly mallee scrub suited distilling best.<sup>40</sup> In reforesting much of the Shire, the Forests Commission narrowed the scope for distilling.

During the nineteenth century and even up to the Second World War, the forests around Dunolly, Bealiba and Tarnagulla

had played a role in Victorian and not just local industry. Until the fires of 1939 few forest roads gave access to the wooded peaks of Gippsland and the central highlands provided much of the timber for the whole of Victoria. Most of this went in firewood, railway sleepers, building materials or telegraph poles. The task of controlling this work fell to local forestry officers. They divided up the forest into blocks and allowed cutting in the better blocks.<sup>41</sup> Amongst timber cutters local contractors had to wait to obtain contracts to cut railway sleepers. At other times forestry workers marked trees to be retained and allowed contractors to take the rest of the timber on a block. By the 1950s, at least one forestry officer, Harold Beer, had extended the interests of his department to recreational uses of the forest. Along with members of the Field Naturalists Club from Ballarat he led nature walks to some of the incomparable growths of wildflowers within the forest.

In 1925, as Forestry Officers set out to cloak old mine sites with new greenery, Dunolly residents embarked on their annual Wood Bee. They began with May Day celebrations – axemen jumped into a maypole dance around a tree which they then felled. Once the men had hacked down a swathe of forest, the matron of the Dunolly Hospital challenged other women in a race *'slaughtering forest giants'*. Annual wood bees were only one way in which local residents used the forests of the Shire. They could hardly fell trees as speedily as they were planted by the Forestry Commission. But constant attacks through ring-barking suggested that the *'forest conscience'* of Tarnagulla's State School pupils had not reached their parents. The council issued permits for ring-barking along road reservations. In some parts of the Shire, the ring-barkers killed off trees indiscriminately, changing the character of farmlands and roadways.<sup>42</sup> While forestry plantings began to cover mine workings, enthusiastic ring-barkers seemed bent on denuding road reserves.

## Roads

37. *Ibid.*, reports for 1933 and 1938.

38. *Express*, 25 August 1925.

39. Shire minutes, 23 April 1958, Bealiba *Times*, 4 June 1920, discussion with Pat Martin.

40. St. Arnaud *Mercury*, various dates, 1980.

41. Interview with Harold Beer, Maryborough, June 1986.

42. Shire minutes, various dates, 1936 and 1938.



*THE MOTOR CAR COMES TO DUNDOLLY*



The motor car changed the character of the Shire more completely than either the ring-barker or the forestry officer. The first smoking cars and rumbling trucks broke into the quiet of the Shire soon after the First World War when storekeepers in Dunolly, Tarnagulla and Bealiba offered deals on new models. Stores began putting petrol pumps in front of their doors, raising the ire of Melbourne firms who wanted to keep petrol sales in the hands of automobile dealers.<sup>43</sup> As the car slowly made its mark on the shire's towns, it turned interest back to the shire's roads. During the 1920s, councillors argued about which roads ought to become major routes through the Shire. Some supported a highway through Eddington and Dunolly. Others wanted through traffic to go via Tarnagulla and Moliagul. In 1928 the Dunolly Progress Association asked council to push for a national highway. They hoped for a major highway running through Castlemaine, Maldon and Dunolly.<sup>44</sup> In the following decade residents in the north of the Shire demanded a better roads linking Bet Bet with Inglewood. When east-west traffic no longer appeared likely to bring new business to the district, Dunolly shopkeepers asked for an upgraded north-south route linking the town with Maryborough and Inglewood.<sup>45</sup>

The Country Roads Board continued to seal roads in the Shire and Public Works Department engineers rebuilt several bridges. Eventually in 1938 a local deputation met with CRB officials and demanded a major highway through the Shire. Most wanted a better north-south route. CRB officials steered clear of local rivalries and instead promised that a new flow of traffic would find its way into the Shire. They explained that the Murray Valley was about to become the most densely-settled part of Australia! From there an *'enormous Loddon valley traffic'* would find its way to Melbourne. A great new highway would have to be built but no-one in the CRB could predict the

route.<sup>46</sup> Councillor Reid from Tarnagulla pointed out that this highway would be his last chance to compete with chain stores in Bendigo and Maryborough. Dunolly councillors wanted to know if roadways into their town could be linked more directly with the north of the State. But no new highway was to cross the Shire. The CRB went on improving roads and rebuilding bridges. In 1963 the Board set out a list of local works to be completed over the following decade. Yet by then local trade had declined beyond even the level of the 1930s. Few looked forward any longer to the day when fast cars and jammed highways would bring big-spending travellers to the Shire.

In a national survey in 1962 there were nearly one thousand cars and trucks within Bet Bet. Local shopkeepers had looked on the motor car and the national highway as a great boost for their trade. The automobile age promised to bring wealth as the railway age had done in the 1870s. Instead, by the 1960s almost all farms and most households in the towns had cars. Unlike the railway, these cars took people down new roads and away from the Shire. Perhaps in the future the tourist in the automobile will bring money back into the towns of Bet Bet. But between the 1930s and the 1960s the car killed small towns and hamlets just as it thrust Dunolly into a battle with Maryborough. Instead of arresting the decline of local towns the motor car hastened their demise. The car meant other changes to the landscape. Problems with ring-barking had troubled councillors as early as 1907 when many claimed that licenses had been given out too freely.<sup>47</sup> Random ring-barking made some roads dangerous while other routes were stripped of timber. Before council could do anything about ring-barking the Shire lost control over some roadsides. Local forestry officers claimed that they had powers over all timber cutting. In 1927, councillor Duggan had put two council workers to cutting timber around roads in Tarnagulla; only to be told that council had no right to remove anything, even timber blown down in storms. Then control over major roadways passed to the CRB. The Shire lost other powers in 1931

43. Advertisements, Bealiba *Times*.

44. Shire minutes, 28 March 1928.

45. Newspaper cuttings, Shire minutes, 12 July 1938.

46. Shire minutes, various dates, 1938.

47. Shire minutes, 26 November 1907, 21 September 1907.



when the State Electricity Commission took over the Dunolly electrical supply. But water continued as a local matter and in 1962 the Shire reviewed its responsibilities. Dunolly's first water had come from a storm water reservoir near the hospital. In 1911 the Old Lead Reservoir still supplied the town. Tarnagulla's water came from a reservoir to the south of the town. In 1945 residents could use water pumped from the Loddon. In all of these services local control had been usurped to some extent.

Even as the Shire tried to grapple with a basic issues like water, Bet Bet had to defer to greater authority.<sup>48</sup> Central bodies like the SEC, the CRB and then the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission oversaw local services. The shape of nineteenth-century goldfields had been in part determined by regulations laid down in Melbourne. Land selection was circumscribed by the colonial government's laws. But in the twentieth century statutory authorities shaped the Shire in a more direct manner. As towns battled to hold onto their residents and with no sign of any broad revival of gold mining, the real architects of the local environment came increasingly to be officials of one or other state agency, from forestry officers to CRB engineers.

### The modern landscape

Many in the district had continued to hope for a much different future. Occasionally successful local ventures held out a chance for the Shire to grow as it had in the days of gold. During the 1960s tourists turned to Laanecoorie Dam in a manner not all that different from the schemes envisaged in the 1890s.<sup>49</sup> A boat ramp and camping grounds were built on the banks of the lake. But for most of the modern period agriculture sustained the local economy. During the 1970s, for every 100 workers in agriculture, 37 worked in construction, 26 in manufacturing and 18 in retail.<sup>50</sup> With the great days of mining long behind them and with farming as their only future, the people of Bet Bet nevertheless kept up a

deep attachment to the dreams of the gold digger and, less often, to the material remnants of the mining years. By the 1950s public buildings and hotels had vanished. Even private houses had gone since the first days of gold mining. In the 1850s, as diggers chased around after gold, so temporary buildings went with them. But in the post-war period, even solid public buildings began to crumble and disappear. Halls, courthouses or schools faced destruction long before the Second World War. The Education Department closed and dismantled small schools before 1939. Others struggled on after the war. The Bet Bet school which had drawn protests because of overcrowding in 1911 had only seven pupils in 1948. In 1949 the school closed despite the complaints of parents and a handful of children set out each day on a bus trip into Maryborough; to another overcrowded classroom.<sup>51</sup> As schools closed, church halls were dismantled and shifted to one spot after another. The storekeepers and clergymen of the 1850s relied on movable churches and stores, so the journeys of country buildings in the twentieth century hardly introduced a new note into the Shire. It did though reflect the slow but seemingly irreversible disintegration of small towns and farming localities. As the historian of the town of Bet Bet recalled:

*with the closing of the Church of Christ the last social link which made Bet Bet a community vanished . . . newcomers now occupy Bet Bet . . . they have yet to forge a new Bet Bet identity and this will be hard enough with no centre whatsoever around which to build.*<sup>52</sup>

By the 1920s not only isolated bush schools and churches but the halls and meeting places of the towns started to disintegrate. Tarnagulla no longer needed a town hall after the Shire of Bet Bet absorbed the Borough of Tarnagulla. Bet Bet council called for tenders to remove the building in 1925. One local resident, conscious of the history of the place, complained about the loss to his little town. Any 'proposal to destroy an historical building requires careful

<sup>48</sup>. Shire minutes, February 1962.

<sup>49</sup>. Shire minutes, 23 January 1963.

<sup>50</sup>. Census, 1976.

<sup>51</sup>. J. Alderson, Bet Bet: the growth and withering of a rural community, Havelock 1984.

<sup>52</sup>. Ibid.



consideration' he warned in the local paper. Why demolish a part of the town's past when all that was needed was new spouting? Moreover, he continued: *'the building even in its neglected state is*

*an ornament to the town and reminiscent of Tarnagulla's early days of prosperity. Why destroy an interesting historical landmark? It is easy to destroy but difficult to replace'*<sup>53</sup>

His appeal failed to save the town hall and from that point onwards much of Bet Bet's history did disappear. Private houses fell into disrepair. Some were lost in fires or just crumbled in the streets and paddocks where they stood. As mining companies closed their batteries they sold off winding gear and the Department of Mines pushed tailings and rock into shafts. Halls, shops and even council chambers had no obvious use and became a burden on ratepayers and private owners. But alongside this almost continuous tale of destruction and decay, people did look back with pride to the history of the Shire. In 1931 Tarnagulla residents held a 'Back to Tarnagulla' Celebration. The Dunolly Brass Band met them at the station and the five hundred visitors danced and cheered as for the first time, an electric generator lit up the streets of their old home town.<sup>54</sup>

For these old residents, the history of the Shire lived on in their friendships rather than in buildings or landscape. But just as surely as the buildings vanished, so one by one, old-timers faded away. By the 1960s after an approach from the Goldfields Historical Society, the Shire council set aside land at Moliagul for an historical reserve. Houses, streets and old gold fields began to fill a few of the many voids left by the deaths of old friends or by the loss of families who shifted to the city.

The drawing of shapes familiar to European eyes took up much of the story of the Shire before 1914. From the First World War onwards this landscape decayed. By the 1960s some locals demanded that the few remainders of the nineteenth century Shire ought to be preserved. Up to 1914 local dreams had all been turned to the future. Since the 1960s, the mind's eye began to see the past and not the future of Bet Bet.

If we were simply to count up buildings created, towns and farms laid out and mining reefs opened, most of the Shire of the 1980s seems the work of settlers before 1914. Since then mining fossickers have reopened old gold fields and more recently corporate miners have cast eyes over the Shire. Mining is once again changing the face of Bet Bet, this time with enough force and speed to annihilate the remnants of the past.

Before the mining revival of the 1980s, agriculture had driven the local economy and given a shape to the land of the shire. But apart from the wheat terminal, modern farming has not marked the Shire in any dramatic manner. Even the new farm buildings of the twentieth century have been widely scattered. In the towns infrequent public buildings date from the inter-war and post-war period. Private housing did change in appearance after 1914 and the Housing Commission created several rows of new housing in Dunolly. But for the most part while many buildings have disappeared there have not been many additions to the townscapes of the Shire. The real change in their appearance has come through tree plantings (the Shire regularly received trees from the Nature Conservation Society) and reduction in the numbers of nineteenth-century buildings about the towns.

'Back to ' celebrations and calls for old buildings to be cared for are signs of a strong sense of tradition in the Shire. Perhaps that sense of the importance of the Shire's history will help shape the future environment of Bet Bet.

53. *Express*, 8 September 1925.

54. *Express*, 17 July 1931.



*PLACES WHICH DISAPPEAR AND THOSE WHICH SURVIVE*



## CONCLUSION

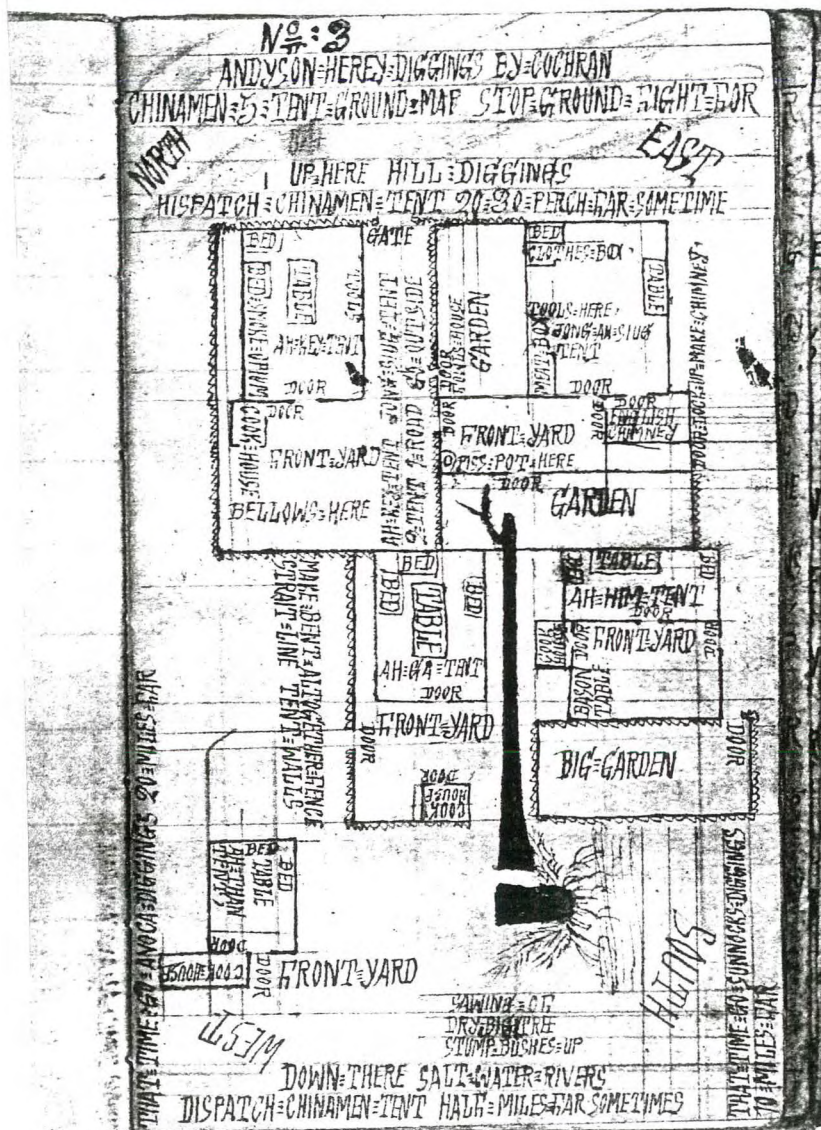
This history has traced changes in the material world of Bet Bet during 150 years of European settlement. The first white settlers saw in the land around the Loddon no more than the *'blank face of nature'*. In the next 150 years the landscape interpreted by the aboriginals vanished. Even the forests which still cover one third of the Shire are managed by forestry officers. Along the creek valleys where the first selectors battled to make farms, only a few of their fences, homes and barns remain. Within the forest and on some of the plains of the Shire mounds of mullock mark a few of the spots in which miners have chased fortunes from gold. In the towns, the churches, halls, hotels and gardens remind us of their efforts to recreate a European civilisation in the Shire. A few private homes still stand as reminders that every now and then a miner did strike it rich. Some who did, chose to display their wealth in bricks and mortar. A large part of their social, economic and spiritual life is registered in buildings, town designs and farm lay-out.

The people of the district placed great store in the number and strength of their churches, friendly societies and community gatherings. These measured the distance which they had travelled from the unruly days of the first gold rushes. Most clearly in churches and then in other public buildings, the energy and initiative of the Shire and towns of the 1860s and 1870s can still be seen. Indeed the court houses, churches schools and post offices of Tarnagulla and Dunolly make up a townscape which reflects the ambitions of the 1860s. Few small towns in Victoria are so completely identified with this immediate, post-gold-rush period of the state's history.

The present landscape reflects the way in which the Shire has earned a living, the manner in which it has been directed from Melbourne and perhaps most significantly, what the people of the place saw as important in their own lives. Most of the way in which they altered the world around them reflected one over-arching ambition. Gold miners and squatters may have been nomads thinking of little more than a quick profit. But after them came determined farmers, miners and townsfolk who strove

for a lasting, ordered and independent community in what had been a wilderness. This was always a difficult task. All gold diggings drew an array of wild men and women. By the middle of the twentieth century it must have seemed as if a lot of the work of church-builders and civic leaders was in vain. Yet, despite the dwindling numbers in towns, the shrinking of gold production and the passing of power to those outside the Shire, many of their material works still stand. They still can tell an important story to both locals and outsiders.







95

DYING TOWNS?  
CLOSED SHOP  
TARMAGULLA





## Appendix: WELCOME STRANGERS? THE CHINESE IN BET BET

The Wild Dog Diggings follow the slope of a forested ridge in the south of the Shire. Here, hundreds of shafts pock-mark the land. Many of these shafts are dug in a rectangular shape with straight walls running down for up to thirty feet. Alongside them though are shafts with round holes. Chinese miners created these shafts. For while the buildings of the Shire are largely modelled on what miners and farmers could remember of England, or Ireland or Scotland or often of Wales, the mines at Wild Dog and in other parts of the Shire were dug by Chinese gold-seekers. These emigrants had come from Canton during the 1850s and joined in the last of the great alluvial rushes. In Bet Bet they hung on, mining into the 1880s or selling vegetables from market gardens or running stores or hotels. While they may have left few material marks behind them, the Chinese played an important part in the mining history of the Shire.

The first Chinese in Bet Bet began to stake claims in 1857, when they joined in a rush to Inkermans.<sup>1</sup> Old residents can still remember Chinese hawkers and storekeepers like Ah Loy at Moliagul, a survivor from amongst several thousand Chinese (almost all males) who lived in nineteenth-century Bet Bet. As far back as 1855, Maryborough mining officials were writing to the Chief Secretary pointing to the need for a Chinese Protector and Interpreter.<sup>2</sup> The Chinese were painted as *'inoffensive and industrious people'*. But instead of welcoming these strange newcomers, European miners bullied them. *'In the event of its being known that they are working a rich claim they are frequently compelled by threat or violence to abandon it'*, wrote the Maryborough Warden.<sup>3</sup> The Chinese *'continued to pour in'* in the middle of 1858, most of them making their way to the Burnt Creek

diggings.<sup>4</sup> The camp at Dunolly swelled to accommodate nearly four hundred Chinese, most of them buying the required Protection Tickets through the village headman Ah Sum.<sup>5</sup> Lines of Chinese miners could be seen headed across the Loddon River, on their long walk from the Ovens gold fields into Bet Bet.<sup>6</sup>

Once settled in Bet Bet, the Chinese stuck at alluvial mining for much longer than did Europeans. Numbers of Chinese on alluvial claims rose in 1861 and 1862 and then from time to time in the 1870s. Even as late as 1880 there were still nearly three hundred Chinese alluvial miners on the Dunolly gold field. In 1861 Chinese miners grouped along the Burnt Creek *'paddocked out a large area of the shallow wet ground'*.<sup>7</sup> These men later extended their claims despite the wet ground. They seemed to do well as *'the great number enabled them to overcome [that] obstacle'*. Burnt Creek continued as the favourite Chinese mining field during the nineteenth century, although smaller parties struck out for Moliagul and Tarnagulla whenever the fields looked promising. Observers were constantly struck by *'the steadiness of the Chinese work'* so much so that it seemed that they *'must be making the ground pay'*.<sup>8</sup>

The Chinese largely stayed in alluvial mining but a few did try deep reef mines. In 1863 European diggers gave up their right to dig at the Queen's Mine near Moliagul. A band of Chinese diggers under Ah Moy reoccupied the mine and from their crushings got five ounces of gold to the ton.<sup>9</sup> Yet by the end of the 1860s most of the Chinese had gone back to fossicking in old ground, *'with what results it was difficult to ascertain.'*<sup>10</sup> Others did work as tributers, but not for long. A Chinese tribute party worked on the Prince of Wales alluvial claim near Dunolly in 1878 but soon abandoned their

1. Flett, Dunolly, p.35.

2. Goldfields commissioners to Chief secretary, Maryborough, Chief Secretary's correspondence, inwards, 3 September 1855, 1189/ 101, VPRO.

3. *Ibid.*

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Ibid.*

6. Advertiser, 6 June 1858.

7. Quarterly reports. Mining surveyor. Dunolly district, February 1861.

8. *Ibid.*, July 1863.

9. *Ibid.*, June 1868.

10. *Ibid.*



digging.<sup>11</sup> Sometimes Chinese miners found gold where Europeans had given up. In 1878 Chinese diggers unearthed a nugget on the Old Lead near to the Dunolly Hospital – in a spot tried over and over again by white miners. Flett recalls that successful miners on this lead let off fireworks for a week after one huge find.<sup>12</sup>

Many Chinese had moved from mining into supplying food or drink by the last decades of the nineteenth century. At least four Chinese men held licenses as publicans in the 1870s. Best known was David Ying who ran the Terminus Hotel in Dunolly. Chinese hawked vegetables and fruit door to door in the towns and farmlands of the Shire – sometimes to the annoyance of local shopkeepers. In 1865 merchants complained that the Chinese were '*coming in, some in carts and some with bamboos hawking in Broadway*'.<sup>13</sup>

Some Chinese no doubt succeeded in gold mining. For Europeans, mining success usually led to a career in local politics. The Chinese seemed to be largely excluded from any such role. On occasions they faced threats from angry and frightened Europeans. At Tarnagulla in 1857 for example, Welsh and Cornish miners gathered for a meeting to protest at the crowds of Chinese beginning to compete for gold in the district. Soon after they took law into their own hands and burned the Chinese camp. Sometime later Chinese and Irish miners joined in an ugly brawl over rights to a source of clean water near the town. Even after blatant attacks ceased, Chinese miners and market gardeners were still kept apart from the rest of the local community. In 1888 the whole of the colony was gripped by fear of renewed Chinese immigration. These fears touched Bet Bet and more of the local Chinese miners found themselves targets for abuse and ridicule. In 1891 a lone Chinaman was brought into Tarnagulla Court. Ah Ting passed his days '*knocking about the lower portion of the town annoying people*', or at least so magistrates thought. Ah Ting spoke in court pleading that no one ever stopped to buy his vegetables and that he had '*no money, nothing to eat, no friends*'. The

magistrate sent him off for three months in the Melbourne Gaol.<sup>14</sup>

Chinese could suffer worse fates than a short prison spell. Jong Ah Sing, another Dunolly Chinaman, was sent to the Yarra Bend Lunatic Asylum. Ah Sing had struck a rich find near his camp at Moliagul. He had '*gold in pocket: good*' – enough gold he thought to '*Take: gold: go home: China*'.<sup>15</sup> But Ah Sing set off for Dunolly to the Chinese camp and sought out an opium seller. With three or four other men he went back to his tent, smoked his opium, strolled out into his yard to look at his melons and got into a fight in which someone was stabbed. Ah Ting appeared in the Dunolly Court where a '*Queens Concelor (sic.) tell my too much smokeing*'. Instead of returning to his village with gold in his pocket he was sent down to Melbourne and life in a ward of the lunatic asylum.<sup>16</sup> There he passed his time writing and drawing in a small, intricate diary.

Loneliness, opium, the strain of sifting through old gold workings day after day, year after year, no doubt drove bright and artistic men like Ah Ting to the edge of madness. A few Chinese made a place for themselves beyond the isolated Chinese camps. David Ying was probably the best known of the Chinese community in Bet Bet. Ying arrived in Dunolly to help a cousin run a store. Soon after he settled into his new life the store burned down. Undaunted, Ying turned to running an hotel. When the railway reached Dunolly his Terminus Hotel welcomed arrivals from right next to the station. Ying as well invested in mining and employed parties of Chinese miners along the Burnt Creek.<sup>17</sup> He married a European woman and made enough from his mines and hotel to visit China and then come back to Dunolly. Most of the Chinese, though, stayed on in the segregated camps. The Dunolly camp stood away from the town across the railway track. The camp at Tarnagulla lay to the north of the town near

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, June 1878.

<sup>12</sup> Flett, *Dunolly*, p.159.

<sup>13</sup> *Express*, 5 June 1865.

<sup>14</sup> *Courier*, 15 January 1891.

<sup>15</sup> Jong Ah Sing, diary, Latrobe Library, manuscript no. 10B2/11.

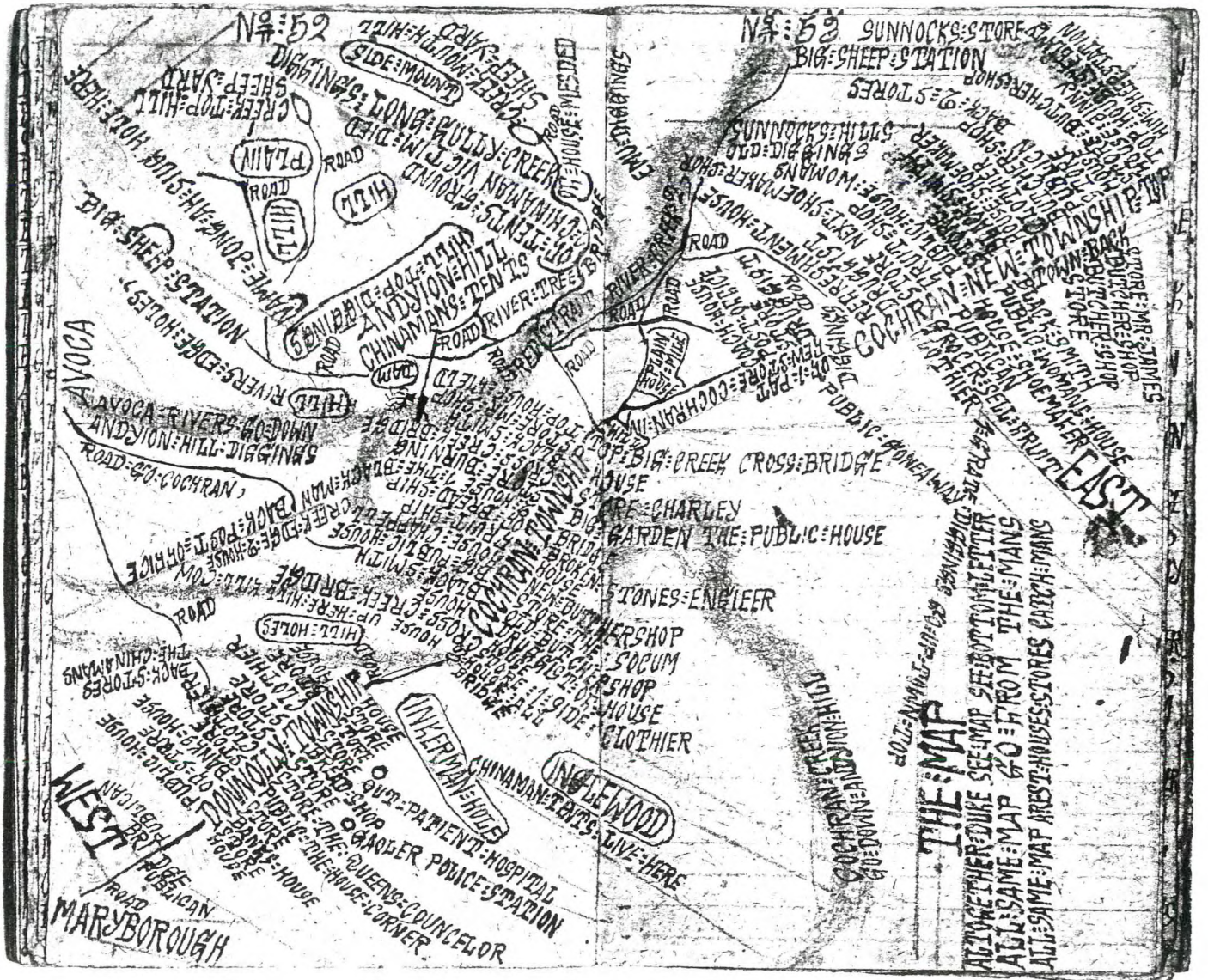
<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Papers of David Ying, in possession of Mrs. Brownbill of Laanecoorie. Information from Mrs. Brownbill.



CHINESE VIEW OF THE GOLD FIELDS

AH TING'S MAP OF DUNOLLY





to the Hard Hills rush. In Burnt Creek once again the Chinese lived across the creek from the main European settlement. In 1861 as Chinese poured into this camp, a local journalist cajoled Europeans to make a trip to the exotic settlement. Amongst the huts and vegetable gardens they would have seen a Chinese theatre. The journalist had come across the theatrical company on its first day:

*On Monday a Chinese theatre arrived and was erected near Russel's Store to which we paid a visit last night, and were much pleased with the performance which consisted of operas . . . the dresses are very handsome and a visit will repay anyone if only to give them an idea of the manners and customs of a people so little known by Europeans.*<sup>18</sup>

No doubt a few took this advice and later in the century, once Europeans faded from many alluvial fields, a few Chinese came closer to European neighbours. From the few who remained at the end of the nineteenth century, Moliagul residents remembered Ah Toy who gave treats to children walking past his store. In Tarnagulla two Chinese still sold vegetables up to 1920.<sup>19</sup>

Yet, the Chinese remained more or less apart from European neighbours. Several Western women married Chinese men and some European miners worked with Chinese partners. Others saw them as threats to morals, as economic competitors and curious heathens. In the 1890s many of the Chinese left gold towns to live in the expanding Chinatown in Melbourne. In the Shire, tidy Europeans erased traces of Chinese settlements. Just as with the first Chinese camps, the last huts of Chinese hawkers at Tarnagulla were burned down.<sup>20</sup>

The Chinese made industrious and efficient miners. As market gardeners they surpassed their European competitors easily. Most of them were kept apart from white neighbours and so played little part in the social life of the towns. A few stood out as men of enterprise and wealth and so earned widespread respect. David Ying

was the best known of these. His hotel drew European customers and his knowledge of mining and business acumen impressed the traders and merchants of Dunolly. The Chinese left behind the round shafts scattered through several mining fields in the district. David Ying's Hotel still stands near to the Dunolly Railway Station. Apart from these few reminders the cemetery at Dunolly includes a Chinese burial urn and a few worn and untended headstones set apart from those of wealthy European miners. Other isolated Chinese graves can be seen at Moliagul and Tarnagulla, some cared for, some neglected. The Chinese were central to alluvial mining in the Shire. But apart from these few relics their presence in Bet Bet has largely been erased.

18. Advertiser, 15 January 1861.

19. Information from Ron Carless and notes in Tarnagulla Gold Museum.

20. Notes on Chinese camp, Tarnagulla Gold Museum.



SHIRE OF BET BET  
CONSERVATION STUDY

VOLUME TWO  
PART ONE





SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY  
2 VOLUMES  
1987

STUDY NUMBER  
203  
NATIONAL ESTATES  
PROGRAMME  
1985/86

CHRIS MCCONVILLE & ASSOCIATES  
19 HOTHAM ST. WILIAMSTOWN  
3016



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BEALIBA COURT HOUSE**

LOCATION: COCHRANE ST., BEALIBA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT. 10/9

GRANTEE: POLICE RESERVE

BUILDERS: SCARF AND SON

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

DATE: 1913

**DESCRIPTION**

Weatherboarded, Dutch-hipped form with side porch supported on grooved timber posts, with Chinese brackets and multi-paned windows. Of modest proportions when compared to the Dunolly and Tarnagulla designs. The building once possessed a simple court room and attached office with a separate rear exit for the judge. The roof pavilions have the appearance of the contemporary rural schools rather than the traditional 19C court house designs. A similar design was used for other contemporary courthouses.

**HISTORY**

The police camp was established on this site by the 1850s and this building adjoined the police station when it opened in January 1913. Scarf and Son were the contractors and their price was £394-10-0. The contract was signed at St. Arnaud six months before the completion of the building. The Attorney General (Brown) performed the ceremony with due majesty given that the first action heard before the new court was a school case. This case was adjourned to the hotel where more serious consideration was given to its contents by the assembled local magistrates (Berriman), JPs (Pennington, Cameron and Hayes) and O'Grady and Norris, clerks of courts. The Minister for Mines (McBride) arrived in time to join a rousing song to the 'Ministry' and a succession of toasts to each dignitary in attendance.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

One of the town's established public buildings, of high integrity given its wall material and like the railway station one of the few public buildings (in particular courthouses) to be built in timber. This is reflected in turn in its architecture.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Express, 7 January 1913.

PWD drawings.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BEALIBA COURT HOUSE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BEALIBA RAILWAY STATION**

LOCATION: COCHRANE ST., TOWNSHIP OF BEALIBA

ALLOT: 13/16

GRANTEE: VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

DATE: 1878

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

BUILDER: J SULLIVAN

**DESCRIPTION**

Bealiba railway station - a distinctive timber station with a transverse gabled main roof which extends over part of the platform as a canopy. Brick chimneys have been painted but wall colours are sympathetic. Remnant cast-iron fringes to gable fascias hint at former ornamentation to verandah columns (capitals) and finials to gable apices. The station contains the T&G pine-lined station master's office and attached residence at the rear. A booking lobby has been added to the east end, the residence extended and the original booking office (adjoining the station-master's office) has become part of the ladies' waiting room. A van goods shed and cart dock to the west end were part of the original complex.

**HISTORY**

When the Dunolly-St. Arnaud railway arrived in the late 1870s, Bealiba was described as a postal and money-order township, at Cochrane's Creek. It served the nearby (and declining) mining areas such as Mt. Moliagul and the growing numbers of selectors at the mount's fertile foothills. West of the town were large tracts of wheat and some vines. To the north, two sheep stations represented the town's early history as the former centre of the Bealiba and Cochrane's pastoral leases. Community facilities, such as the Mechanic's Institute and Free Library were beginning to establish themselves in the gradual move away from gold, to a more permanent agricultural economic base. Another industry, saw-milling, had received a recent boost from the ironbark sleepers needed for the new railway. Tenders for a passenger station and goods shed, called mid-1878, were won by J Sullivan and J Foote for £547 and a little over £474 respectively.

When the line opened to Bealiba in September 1878, the line construction contractors (Morrie & Mattinson) suffered through the celebratory banquets. After only one and a half miles of line had been extended from Dunolly, the contractors had acquired a miniature engine in which, after the christening ceremony, they had carted a merry crowd of public figures to the limits of their great work and back again, drinking to the success of the venture. John Woods (Victorian Railways Commissioner) had already given support to the venture, a scheme which he initially resisted. The line was heralded as a much-needed link between markets and producers although the station was dismissed as 'small but convenient' - a building which would soon require extension. The whole line and its buildings formed part of the new 'light line' policy adopted by the railways after mounting public pressure to reduce construction costs. The north-eastern railway extension had been the first of these new schemes. But the Bealiba railway station best exemplifies this type. The design was later used in more extensive construction programmes; the Rosedale station, 1881-3 best expresses



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

this stage of building. There are six examples of the Bealiba substyle and twelve of the Rosedale substyle.

The timber construction and relatively high integrity (cast-iron ornaments) are the essential elements of the Bealiba station. Other examples of the substyle have not survived as well. Bealiba has been judged as of premier importance in the 1981 study 'Victoria's Railway Stations' by Ward and Donnelly

## SIGNIFICANCE

Cited as the best example of the general Rosedale style group of railway stations and of the Bealiba substyle. It is also unusual as a 19 C. timber public building.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Argus, 22 May 1878 - 27 September 1878.

Express, 24 May 1878, 6 September 1878.

BEALIBA RAILWAY STATION



## SHIRE OF BET BET: VOLUME TWO

**BEALIBA GROUP OF BUILDINGS**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF BEALIBA

SEC: 9 AND 8 BEALIBA

BETWEEN GRANT AND COCHRANE STREETS FACING DAVIES AND MAIN STREETS

**DESCRIPTION**

This compact group of buildings includes two churches, the Uniting and the Anglican Church, an Anglican wooden hall and the ~~17~~ Bridge Primary School. Along Main Street are several shops with verandahs and original store windows as well as Evans Hotel. These buildings. Several private residences complete the group.

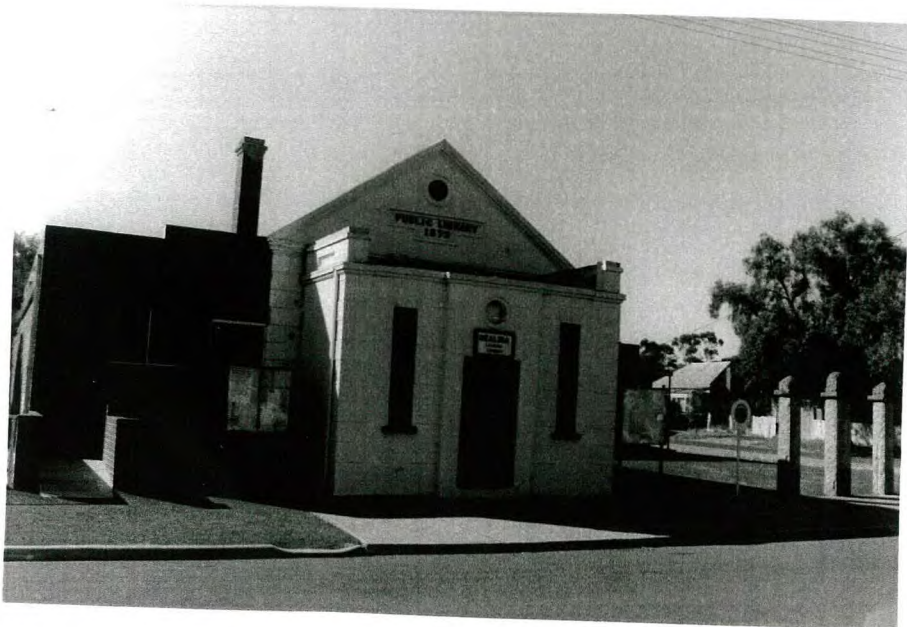
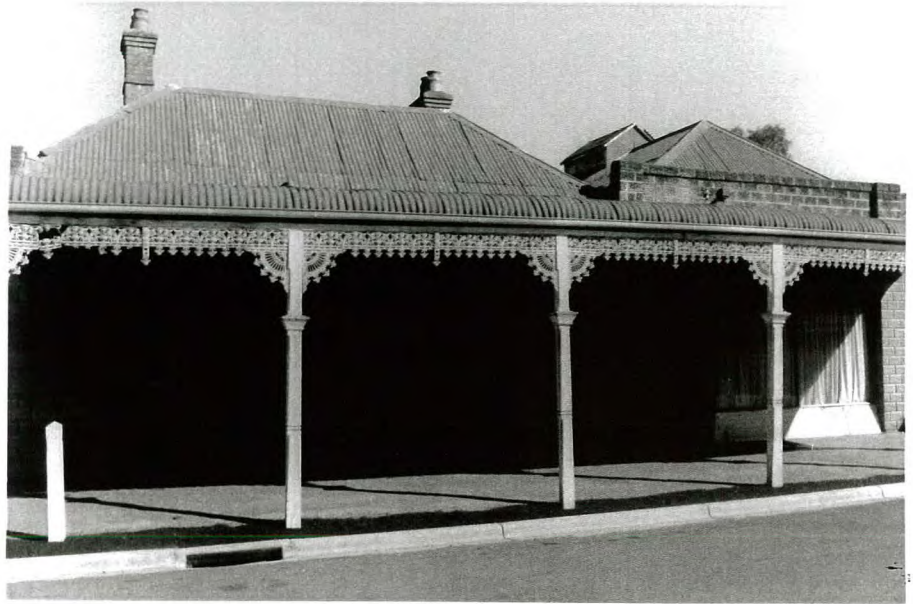
**SIGNIFICANCE**

Individually, several of these buildings may not rank highly in conservation terms. However as a group, this is an extremely significant collection of structures. The scale and material uniformity of the churches and the shops give a unique quality to the group. As well the private dwellings add to the significance of the group. (see part two Areas of Special Significance)

**LOCAL IMPORTANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET: VOLUME TWO

BEALIBA GROUP OF BUILDINGS



## SHIRE OF BET BET: VOLUME TWO

**BEALIBA CEMETERY**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF BEALIBA

## DESCRIPTION

Well maintained nineteenth century with many headstones in largely simple arched pattern Graves of leading townspeople including Evans family. An entrance way and treets on the site

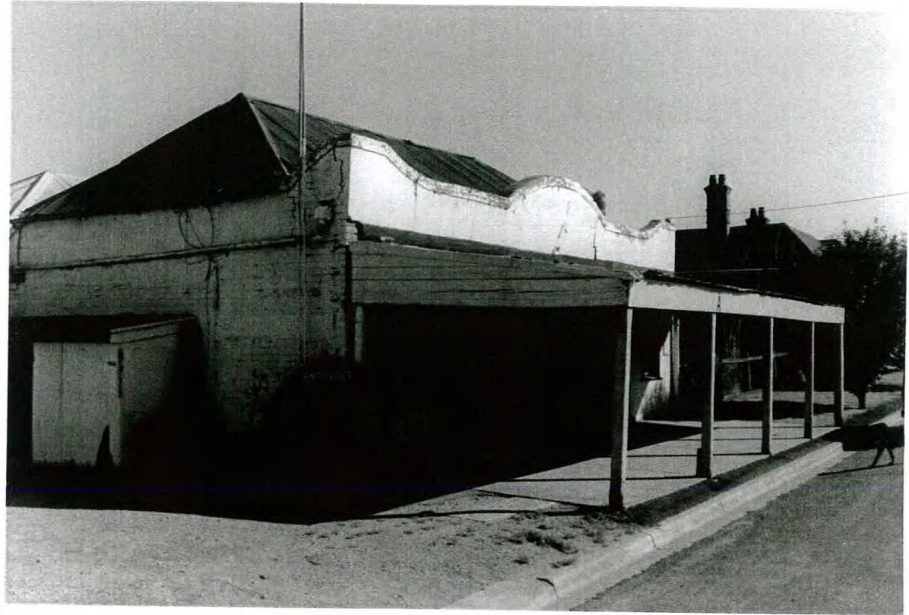
## SIGNIFICANCE

As with other cemeteries in the Shire, this is a register of the history of the town. Memorials and inscriptions are vital clues to nineteenth century town life





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

ARCHDALE BRIDGE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH**

LOCATION: BARKLY ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT. RES/24

GRANTEE: ANGLICAN CHURCH, DUNOLLY

DATE: 1863

MAJOR OWNER: ANGLICAN CHURCH

ARCHITECT: YAHLAND &amp; GETZSCHMANN

BUILDER: FAULKNER, NOTTAGE, RUSSELL AND HARTIGAN

**DESCRIPTION**

Anglican church built from freestone rubble with granite footings, brick pillars and buttresses with cement cappings. It is more notable for its moulded brickwork which includes conical bartizans at the gables. It has a simple Gothic revival style with details such as the timber tracery, bell tower base (incomplete) and faceted apse combining as a design which was potentially superior to the town's other churches. This design remains unrealised. The Catholic Church is a similar more complete concept and its recently defaced spire is all that prevents it from being a far superior work to St. John's. Recent work includes reroofing using an inappropriate gutter form.

**HISTORY**

The site of the church was belatedly gazetted in June 1863, three years prior to the laying of the foundation stone and only four years after the first church in the town was completed. Completed in December 1869, the second church was elevated to a design by Bendigo architects, Yahland & Getzschmann, built by subcontractors, James Faulkner of Dunolly (walls) John Nottage of Newbridge, J Russell and T Hartigan. The freestone and bricks were obtained locally as was the clerk of works, Thomas Tyrer. An extra £1000 was lent by Deason and Oates, the discoverers of the 'Welcome Stranger', for the completion of the project. Ten years later George Fincham's pipe organ was installed in the north-west corner of the church by a Mr Grounds. This rare instrument remains today, in remarkably unspoilt condition with its crenelated oak-grained case.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

An incomplete design. It is thus inferior to the many Gothic Revival parish churches throughout Victoria. But given its prominent status as a public building in the town's key years of expansion, its contribution to a broader ecclesiastical complex and its use of local materials (especially the stone) it has a high local importance. The organ is of high individual significance.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

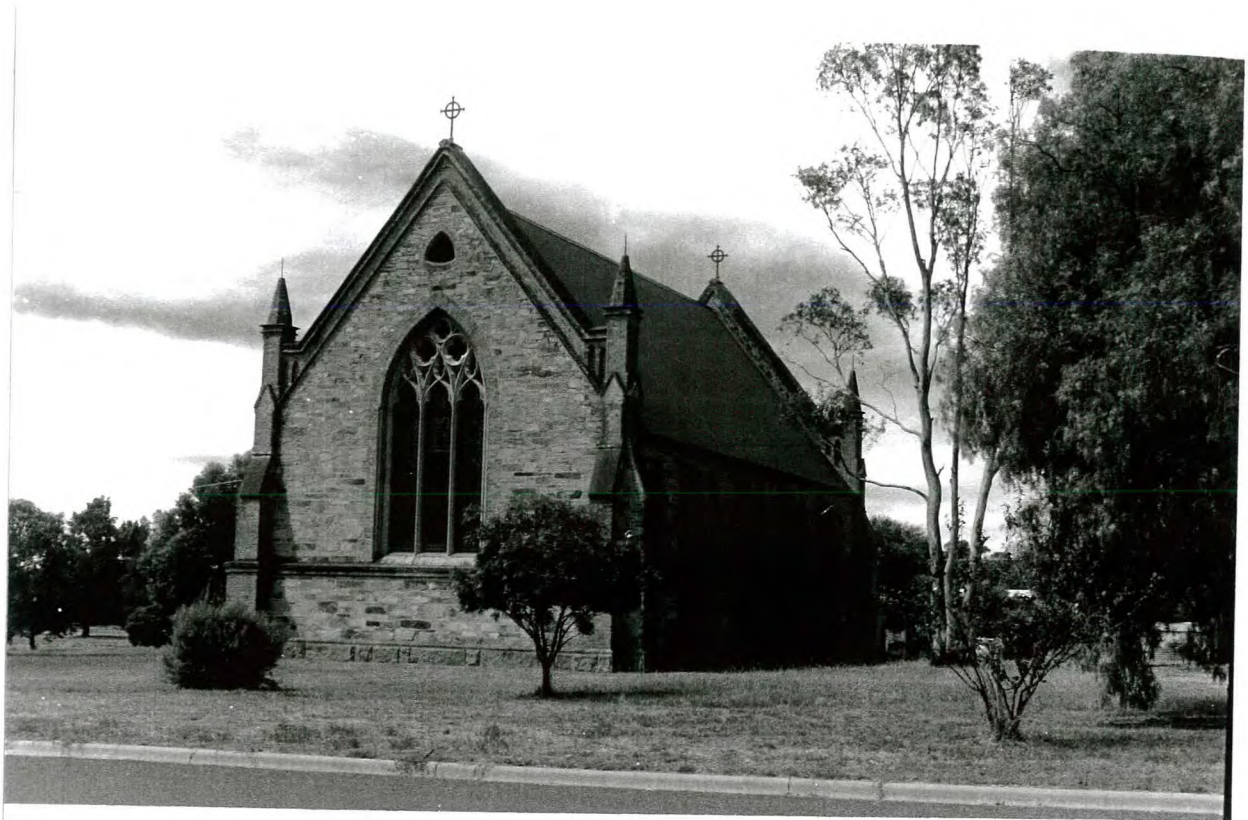
Source:

National Trust file.

Express, 25 November 1879.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

ST JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH, DUNDOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ST. JOHN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL**

LOCATION: BARKLY ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: RES/24

GRANTEE: ANGLICAN CHURCH

GRANT DATE: 1858

MAJOR OWNER: ANGLICAN CHURCH

BUILDER: GEORGE LETTS AND CROSSLEY BROS.

**DESCRIPTION**

An early Anglican hall (former church) of a plain Gothic revival style. The face brick has been stuccoed over, joinery details have been removed; the chimneys appear added and window details altered. The complex has no fence.

**HISTORY**

Opened in May 1858, ten years after the first Anglican services were held in Woolridge's Eagle Saloon (Broadway). The first stone of this church was laid by Bishop Perry in mid-1857. The contractors were George Letts and the Crossley Brothers but the designer is unknown. The roof had been completed by May 1858 and as one observer noted 'from its high position it is the first object seen on entering the town and is decidedly an ornament'. With its face brick walls and shingled roof it was no more than a plain building but it did remind one correspondent in the Maryborough and Dunolly Advertiser of 'many village churches in the old country'.

One of the Charles Dicker ambrotypes of 1861 shows the church surrounded by a tall paling fence and adorned with a fine scalloped Gothic barge board to both church and porch. As was the custom, the bell hung on a free-standing scaffold in front of the church while a picturesque louvred roof vent was placed forward on the ridge.

It remained briefly as a centre of Anglican worship until the second church opened in 1869. Sir Henry Barkly attended services there in October 1861. Joshua Thomas (grandfather of Dean Thomas, Melbourne) used it as a school in later years.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This is the oldest surviving church in the shire and dates from the alluvial mining period. It has a simple early form but notable joinery and other details have been removed and any external expression of age has been consequently obscured.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Advertiser, 4 May 1858.

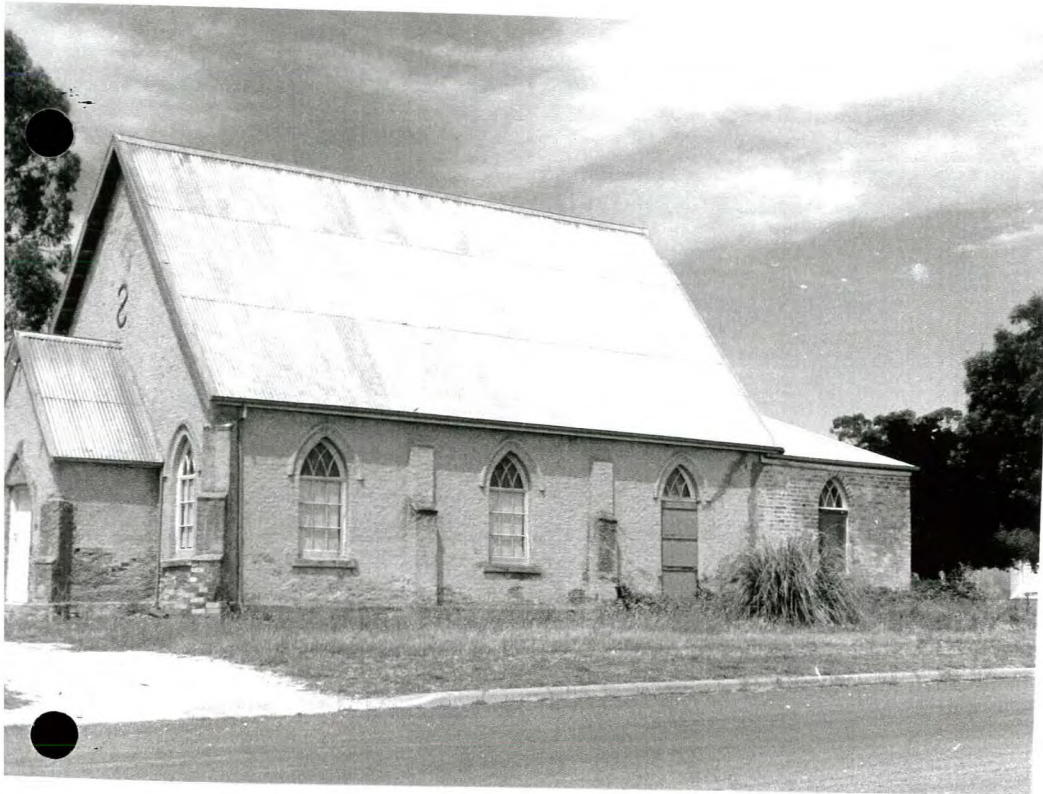
Nantional Trust file 2081, after J Bell, Sth. Yarra, 1966.

Conservation study vol. 1.

Flett, Dunolly, p.113.

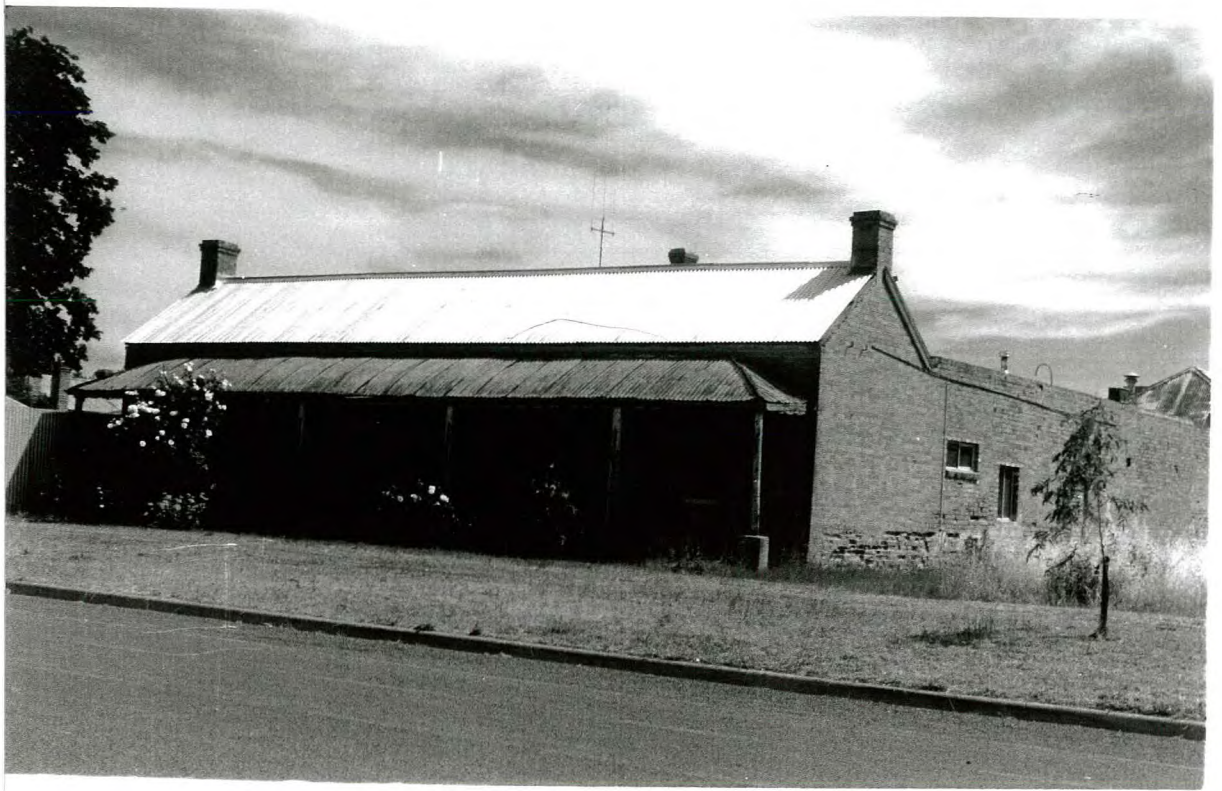


## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

ANGELICAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL, DUNDOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

HOUSE AND OFFICE, DUNDOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HOUSE AND OFFICE**

LOCATION: BARKLY ST., TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY

ALLOT: 8/14 PT

GRANTEE: HARPER J

DATE: 1865(?)

MAJOR OWNER: HAYES, WILLIAM

**DESCRIPTION**

A brick house or office with a long street frontage built of Flemish bonded tuck-pointed brickwork, the roofline is gabled and the plan is an L-Shape. The convex roof verandah has an early pierced valence and rare panelled columns. There is no fence.

**HISTORY**

James Harper purchased this town lot in 1857 as one of many in the Dunolly-Maryborough area. Three years later he sold this and a number of other allotments to a storekeeper, James Grieg, for £500. Grieg in turn sold the site and part of allot. 9 to William Hayes and Pat Dunlea in 1866 for £400. In view of the depressed economy of the period this price perhaps indicates the extent of improvements on the block. Grieg had already established a store at the other end of the block, facing Broadway.

As partners, Hayes and Dunlea ran general stores in Dunolly, Inkerman and Moliagul. William Hayes Jnr. inherited these lots and their improvement in 1899 after his father acquired Dunlea's share in 1869. William Barker, a Dunolly butcher, owned this house and the store fronting the Broadway, purchasing from Hayes in 1932. Neither Grieg nor Hayes are cited in the Dunolly directories, 1866-1867. Hayes and Dunlea both appear in 1867. Grieg worked through a Melbourne solicitor (John Collins) and may have been a speculator. It is possible that the store and house were built soon after Dunlea and Hayes bought the block in 1866 and were occupied by Hayes for much of last century. They may have been Hayes' office. Burglars entered Hayes' office in the 1890s by getting in through a rear window. Hayes put up bars after that incident. Hayes reputedly became a rich man through mining, in particular through his holdings in the Goldsbrough Company. Dunlea however committed suicide at the Graytown Rush in 1869 not long after a disagreement with Hayes ended their partnership.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Relatively high integrity with details (verandah posts) which are at once rare and expressive of an early Victorian period of domestic architecture. It is the only site in the study area known to have a long association with one of the most prominent personalities from local commerce and mining; a man who won community recognition by serving as a JP and councillor.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:  
RGO Memorials.

**SITE LISTINGS**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**WESLEYAN CHURCH, DUNOLLY**

LOCATION: BARKLY ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 1/25

GRANTEE: WESLEYAN CHURCH

DATE: 1863

MAJOR OWNER: WESLEYAN CHURCH

ARCHITECT: CROUCH &amp; WILSON

BUILDER: FOOKER &amp; GRINDLEY

## DESCRIPTION

Church of simple brick Gothic revival design with cement details and stone rubble footings with a central bellcote and spirelets to each buttress in the main elevation, windows are leaded lights. The main light is a trefoil motif set in a roundel above three pointed lights. The fence has been replaced in the 1920s-1930s.

## HISTORY

At the time of the Dunolly Rush, a group of Wesleyans, including Ned Peters erected a tent church on the Dunolly goldfields, c. 1857, as Peters described it 'the little chapel is finally erected after the colonial style having been built in a day'. Two years later, when mining declined the chapel was sold to a Dunolly stationer, William Vesey for one pound. Peters and others preached in the earliest Wesleyan meetings of the Avoca circuit after 1855, but Dunolly was apparently attached to the Carisbrook circuit at the time of the sale.

Another more substantial brick church was erected at Goldsbrough and opened in 1861 by Rev RS Bunn. In Dunolly Wesleyans leased a temporary meeting place in Broadway before acquiring the present site on the government reserve. The church opened in April 1863. Crouch & Wilson were the architects and the local contractor and architect, William Footer was clerk of works. Fooker & Gindley were the builders. The church cost an estimated £800. Rev. John Mewton circuit superintendent and Rev T Pybus conducted three very crowded opening services. Amongst those attending were Job Hansford and Peters (both directors of the rich Queens Birthday Mine) and the first society convenor Isaac Nonmus. The church was declared an 'ornament' to the town and the Wesleyan effort a model for the district's other faiths. The church was the first structure in what is today a virtually cohesive ecclesiastical complex.

The Jubilee Sunday School fronting Tweedale St., opened in June 1857 designed by Melbourne architect, Evandor McIvor. The school had commenced in the church during the 1860s under Hansford as superintendent aided by Edwin Peters and George Stafford as teachers. Crowding in the church was at first resolved (1870) by extending 18 feet to house a vestry and Sunday school classroom and finally, by the erection of a separate school building by contractors, Phelan Handcock & Taylor. Dunolly monumental mason, James Faulkner, carved two foundation stones each laid by the society's founders Hansford and Peters. The nearby infant school or kindergarten school of 1905 was the gift of WT Hansford and his sister. The parsonage in Tweedale St is thought to have been built c 1880.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

## SIGNIFICANCE

More than any other building in the study area, this complex has the closest affiliation with mining activity and thus has a direct link with the Shire's essential economic force. Judged as a single building, the church is not outstanding in architectural terms. It relies for its significance on its position as the centrepiece of a group of buildings which have high stylistic and physical homogeneity. They are physical chronology of Wesleyan endeavour in the town. In an historical sense the site is extremely important. It represents the continuity in Wesleyan life, the dominant role of key Wesleyans (especially Hansford) in Dunolly's religious and economic life, and the manner in which gold mining underlay the fortunes of church congregations well into the twentieth century.

The Wesleyan church complex of buildings and the plantings around them reflect the central part played by Wesleyans in small mining towns like Dunolly and the manner in which they sustained church life during the rich years of gold mining and the leaner times which followed.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Benson, A century of Victorian Methodism p.450.

Flett, Dunolly, p.198,p.199.

Argus, 28 November 1862, 28 November 1863

Rev R Ower in Tailings, January 1972.

WESLEYAN CHURCH BUILDINGS, DUNOLLY

## SITE LISTINGS



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

WESLEYAN CHURCH BUILDINGS DUNDOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**LONDON CHARTERED BANK OF AUSTRALASIA**

LOCATION: BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 17/15

GRANTEE: LONDON CHARTERED BANK OF AUSTRALASIA

GRANT DATE: 16 JANUARY 1861

BUILDING DATE: 1867

MAJOR OWNER: LONDON CHARTERED BANK OF AUSTRALASIA

ARCHITECT: TERRY, LEONARD

**DESCRIPTION**

Two-storey former London Chartered Bank designed in an austere Renaissance revival with impressive red brickwork (especially in the convoluted arched openings at ground level). Restrained cement ornamentation consists of flat pediments over windows and the cornice is dentilated. Wrought iron ornamentation is used in the upper windows which also retain their blind hoods.

**HISTORY**

Of the many Victorian banking companies formed to accommodate the gold era, two opened at Dunolly during the rush period: the Bank of Victoria and the London Chartered Bank (established in Victoria in 1852). Established in 1857 in a leased part of Solomon & Levey's store (under manager HB Anderson) the bank also housed a Union Bank gold-buying agency from June 1858. A photograph of 1861 shows a prefabricated iron building in use for the bank (probably a part of Levey's store advertised in 1865 as of iron 30 ft by 60 ft. Reputedly a timber building was erected on this site in 1862. It was replaced within five years by the present brick building. The Dunolly bank of Victoria also occupied a 'substantial' brick building by the mid 1860s.

Terry previously designed other bank branches at Melbourne and Geelong (1859) Maryborough (1861) Talbot (1866) Ballarat (1866) and Ararat (1867). He designed Union Banks at Portland, Castlemaine (1859) Ballarat (1863) and Clunes (1865). Between 1861 and 1871 Terry is known to have designed at least 17 banks for companies including the National, the Colonial, the New South Wales and the Union.

Early staff members included JE Eddie and D Myers (manager and accountant) WS Puckle (later of Moonee Ponds) and WG Banfield. Most managers were valued by the town even when their stay was short. Puckle for example received a glowing testimonial when he left Dunolly. Deason and Oates took the Welcome Stranger to this branch in 1869 receiving from the bank £9534 for just over 2268 ounces of gold.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Of the many banks designed for gold towns, this is one of a small number with a brick finish. Hence in architectural terms it expresses both the region's resources (good bricks were readily available) and as well an unusual combination of high-style architecture and typically low style (Victorian period commercial context) materials. As a composition type (see Trethowan's analysis)



SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO  
it is unmatched by any known bank design.

#### STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Trethowan, 'Banks of Victoria'.

Argus, 9 May 1867.

Flett, Dunolly, p. 42, p. 162, p. 49, p. 142.

Dicker Collection, SLV.

Express, 13 February 1865, Butler, 'Banks of Victoria' abstract.

LONDON CHARTERED BANK, DUNOLLY





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ROYAL HOTEL, DUNOLLY**

LOCATION: BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT. 18/14

GRANTEE: RAY, J

DATE: 1894

OWNER: RAY, JANE

ARCHITECT: RAY, GEORGE

**DESCRIPTION**

Isaac Ray, a Maryborough hotel keeper, purchased this site at the Dunolly town allotment sale of 1857. He already owned a hotel at the Ararat Rush and his split-slab 'Live and Let Live Hotel' graced Maryborough's High Street. Ray had wide sporting interests and social contacts in Dunolly and in the 1850s he put up another Live and Let Live, supposedly on this site. In recalling the Dunolly rush, Ray told of his arrival at the diggings in 1853 and how he set up a Dunolly hotel in 1856. He also told of pistol practice in which his top hat served as a target. His first hotel burned down in 1857. The Royal replaced it and this was altered in 1894, owned and conducted by Jane Ray.

George Ray, then of Maldon, called for tenders to remove the old hotel early in 1894 followed closely by calls to contractors to erect a two-storey brick hotel in February. The local paper was struck by Mrs. Ray's confidence in the town's future. She planned to rebuild 'the old hotel...one of our best known hostelries' in financially troubled times. Mrs Ray made all the usual claims for her new hotel. It supposedly offered first class accommodation 'commodious' facilities and handsome architecture. Its great advantage over rivals was the upstairs balcony.

The verandah ran the full width of the building and allowed cooling breezes into the upper floor. The building was supposedly up to the mark in the latest architectural trends but while being 'chastly adorned' there was a 'massive' balustrade to the parapet.

Inside on the left of the wide entrance hall was a bar with a parlour attached and behind that a large billiards hall. On the other side was a large dining room and behind that a traveller's room. At the rear of the traveller's room was a private bedroom. Commercial travellers could use the traveller's room to display the latest goods carted around on their travels. On the upper floor a large bedroom opened out to the balcony and across the corridor was a commercial room. The rest of the new building consisted of bedrooms and service areas, with the stables at the rear, reached through a broad archway under the hotel from Broadway. At any time in Dunolly's history, this project would have been considered a giant undertaking. Mrs. Ray had the courage to begin the project one year after the bank moratorium.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Compared to the grand highly decorated hotels of the boom and post-boom period (Shamrock, Bendigo or the Yacht Club (Williamstown)), the Royal is modest in design and has regional interest, especially since the warm red brickwork has been painted over. It is the shire's largest 19c. hotel.



SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO  
LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Flett, Maryborough, p.29.

Flett, Dunolly, p.59.

Flett, Old pubs, p.58.

Express, 16 January 1894, 16 February 1894, 20 February 1894.

ROYAL HOTEL, DUNOLLY





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BENDIGO HOTEL AND COACH OFFICE**

LOCATION: 82 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 13/14

GRANT DATE: 9 JULY 1857

GRANTEE: SIMPSON, G

DATE: 1857-58

BUILDER: WITTACKER, ROBERT

**DESCRIPTION**

Parapetted and stuccoed brickwork with two signs on the parapet - 'coach office' and 'billiards'. Double panelled doors, flanked by pilasters, reinforce the expression of the former hotel use. Paint colours appear to be early and despite the cracking much of the structure is intact. A stable, hall and residential wing are at the rear and the hotel has a dilapidated but original (post 1861) street verandah. Much of this hotel was reputedly built by Robert Whittaker, a co-founder of the Dunolly Brewery.

**HISTORY**

George Simpson had both allotments 13 and 14 after 1857. He had been on the site since 1856. Born in Lincolnshire, Simpson had joined the emigration to Victoria in 1852, trying the Bendigo and Beechworth fields. He opened a restaurant while at Bendigo. After his 13 years in Dunolly, Simpson returned to Bendigo as an auctioneer and later retired to Stawell. During that time he improved the hotel. He opened a large hall in May 1858 and leased it as the Court of Petty Sessions and later the Dunolly Town hall. The hotel opening coincided with the May 1858 Queen's Birthday Ball. Observers noted that Simpson had progressively added to his hotel complex and expressed surprise at the size of the hall itself: - 'it would be for a long time to come the best in town'. The hall was of brick and plastered throughout. A photograph of 1861 shows the Broadway hotel facade much as it is now (without the verandah) and with a date of 1857 on the facade. A Cobb & Co. coach can be seen outside the hotel. After the Bull and Mouth was demolished and James Lyle left Dunolly and Simpson took over as coaching office for Cobb & Co. The company ran coaches between Dunolly and the rushes at Back Creek and Inglewood. Not long afterwards the Inglewood railway was built and coaching declined. Simpson arranged a ten year lease at £250 a year to William and T Tatchell (hoteliers in Inglewood) Tatchell had rights to purchase the hotel for £2250. The right was taken up to 1873. William Tatchell later sold to William jnr. in 1893. William R Somers purchased the building in 1898. Eventually the hotel became a store under Patrick J Daly who purchased the site in 1922. Somers retired to Middle Brighton. Simpson and William Hayes (qv) opened the Pound Rush Gold Mining Company in 1865. They tried to lease the diggings at Pottery Hill which aroused popular resistance backed by the Mayor, Henry Daly, of the family who eventually bought the hotel.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Many early hotels survive from both the gold and pre-gold eras. Of these simply-designed hotels, few have the same integrity as the Bendigo. (see the Oddfellows, Little Lonsdale St., 1854). As well as this integrity, the building faces



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

onto a period street setting and the permanent signs on the building describe its several functions (coach office and biliards for example). These establish the

buildings link to the post-rush but pre-rail life of Dunolly. In terms of construction technique, no older building has a parapeted roof line instead of an exposed hip roof with fascia gutter. Interiors in original condition survive. It is the oldest community centre in Dunolly, indeed in the shire and it was a setting for major public occasions until the town hall was finished in 1862.

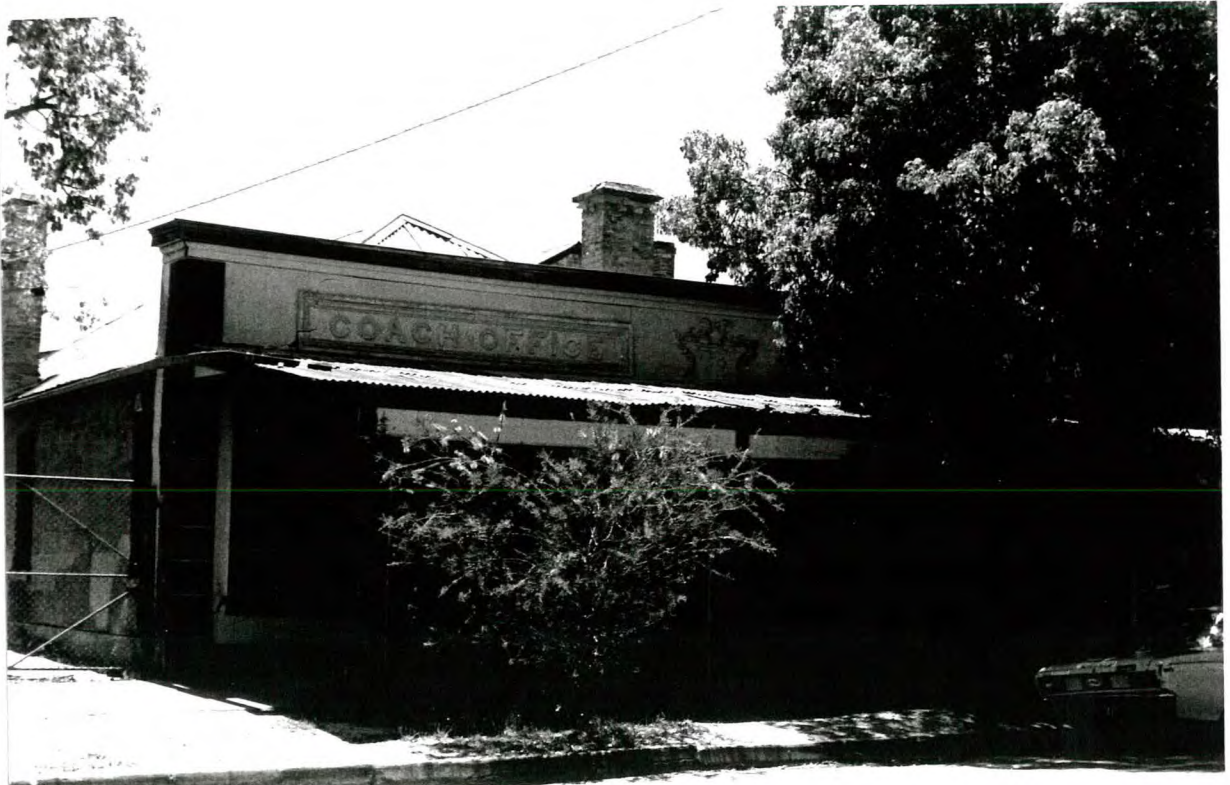
## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Flett, Maryborough, p.143, p.76.

Flett, Old Pubs, p.58.

RGD.

BENDIGO HOTEL DUNOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

REAR, BENDIGO HOTEL



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BET BET SHIRE TOWN HALL, FORMER DUNOLLY COURT HOUSE**

<sup>66</sup>  
LOCATION: 83 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

GRANT DATE: 10 SEPTEMBER 1907

DATE: 1884

OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECT: BASTOW, HENRY; PUBLIC WORKS CHIEF ARCHITECT

**DESCRIPTION**

Built as a court house and bearing a memorial stone dated 22 June 1897 and the inscription 'erected by the Burgesses of Dunolly in affectionate loyalty to the British throne and empire and in commemoration of the 60th year of the illustrious reign of Victoria'; name of Mayor VP Morris attached.

Design is of an Italianate form in Venetian Gothic mode with three-colour brickwork, terracotta mouldings and cementing over the tripartite entrance to the porch. Similar designs exist in Camperdown and Warragul; unlike these, Dunolly town hall has a gabled pediment with oculus over the porch. Some internal fittings and finishes are notable.

**HISTORY**

The various courts (County, Mining, Petty Sessions) held in the Dunolly circuit shifted from from the old Commissioners Camp site at North Dunolly to Simpson's Hotel (qv) in Broadway in 1858 and again to the 'new site' fronting the Market Square. They were shared between the County Court and the Petty Sessions Court (1860 demolished) for the next 26 years. Despite the concentration of civic buildings around the Market Square they were then moved to Broadway to be closer to the railway. The building follows the typical lay-out with arcaded porch, an ante-room and the main court room flanked by rooms for jurors, witnesses, judges and barristers. Other rooms served the Clerks of Courts and the court of course had a cell for prisoners. Most rooms had fireplaces (except the cell). Judges and clerks could enter through separate doorways on the rear verandah and trussed ceilings of the main chamber towered 26 feet above the floor. Handwritten on the corner of one of the contract drawings is the following comment: 'this building was exchanged with the Borough Council of Dunolly for a building near the police station in 1890'. The Borough planned to add a town hall wing at the rear, to plans from SE Bindley, a Melbourne architect.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Victoria has at least three other examples of this type of building. This one has high integrity, notable ornament and composition and like other 19 C Bet Bet shire offices it has been a major public building in the shire for more than 100 years.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Flett, Dunolly, pp. 68-75.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

DUNOLLY TOWN HALL AND COURT HOUSE (2ND.)



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**RAILWAY HOTEL (FORMERLY CRITERION)**

LOCATION: 101 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 5-7/15

GRANTEE: DE PASS J, NUTTALL, EH

GRANT DATE: 9 JULY 1857

DATE: 1863

OWNER: ERNST ERNSTSEN

**DESCRIPTION**

Stucco-fronted brick hotel of two storeys. It is designed in an imposing Italian Revival manner with Ionic order trabeation, a smooth rusticated ground level and alternating segment arch with gabled pediments over the upper openings. Chimney cornices have deep brackets and at ground level the deep keystones to the rustication are distinctive as is the carriageway linking the stables at the rear. Side walls have Flemish bond brickwork.

**HISTORY**

Foos & Fitzpatrick supposedly erected a large canvas and timber hotel (Golden Age) here in the 1850s and the adjoining grant went to Edward Nuttall (prinre, Dunolly) for 3/15/- in 1857. These two occupations (hotelier and printer) are shown on the Flett 1856 plan with the Golden Age on allotments 8 & 9 to the south of Nuttall. Ernstsen announced in June 1858:

*this hotel has just been finished at an enormous outlay and is replete with every convenience for visitors, travellers of every class... [it had] private sitting rooms and bedrooms... fitted up in a most elegant style.*

His advertisement referred to the first Criterion Hotel pictured in 1861 in Flett's Old Pubs as a timber single-storey hotel with what appears to be a cemented pilastraded facade, resembling the Bendigo Hotel. Nuttall sold his lot to Ernst Ernstsen in 1859 for a modest £200 while the owner of the adjoining allotments (Fitzpatrick, Ashton and Coates) subdivided, each selling their portions to Ernstsen between 1858 and 1861 for a total value of £252-10-0. At the beginning of 1863 Ernstsen announced that he was going to put up a 'first class' hotel which would have no rival outside Melbourne. The hotel opened with a grand ball in a new ballroom (40 by 20 feet) two weeks later. A photograph (dated by Flett as 1866) shows the hotel much as it is today with a parapeted and probably pilistraded facade. Ernstsen made his money on the Belgian Reef in the late 1850s and 1860s. His new hotel was unmatched in Dunolly. The tale of a planned marble facade, lost at sea en route to Dunolly, indicates the grand vision of the gold era and the reputedly unfinished state of the building.

Ernstsen mortgaged lots 7-9 for £600 in 1865 to the Maryborough merchant William McCullough. Some improvements may have been made then or else recent expenditure began to tell. Mortgage transfers followed up to 1882. Meanwhile Ernstsen's property (including the Railway and Harris Haddon Hotels) were assigned to trustees for the benefit of his creditors in 1870. Francis Fearn the



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

new licensee of 1873, renamed the hotel for the opening of the Castlemaine-Dunolly railway in the following year. Meanwhile the trustees and

Ernstsen negotiated a five-year lease from mid-1881 to Edwin Nicholls until the hotel's sale to Anne Wigham, a Dunolly hotelkeeper for £1550. Her executors (James Wigham and Richard Harry) mortgaged in 1885 for £1000. They sold to lessee, Edward Nicholls, in 1886 and re-borrowed £1500 from a building society in 1887. Nicholls announced 'great improvements' and a new billiards room in the 1890s.

## SIGNIFICANCE

When compared for example to Beck's Imperial Hotel in Castlemaine, the Railway seems styled in a less ornamental Renaissance revival manner. But it is on a grander scale. The massive two-storeyed parapeted form is only matched in early hotels of this style by buildings like the Globe Hotel 230 Swanston St., (1858), the Red Lion in Kilmore (1859) and possibly a part of Ballarat's Craig's Hotel (1862). Most of these have been altered at ground level. It appears that the Railway has not. Again the Railway survives in a better period streetscape.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Flett, *Dunolly*, p.153.

Flett, *Old Pubs*, pp. 57-58.

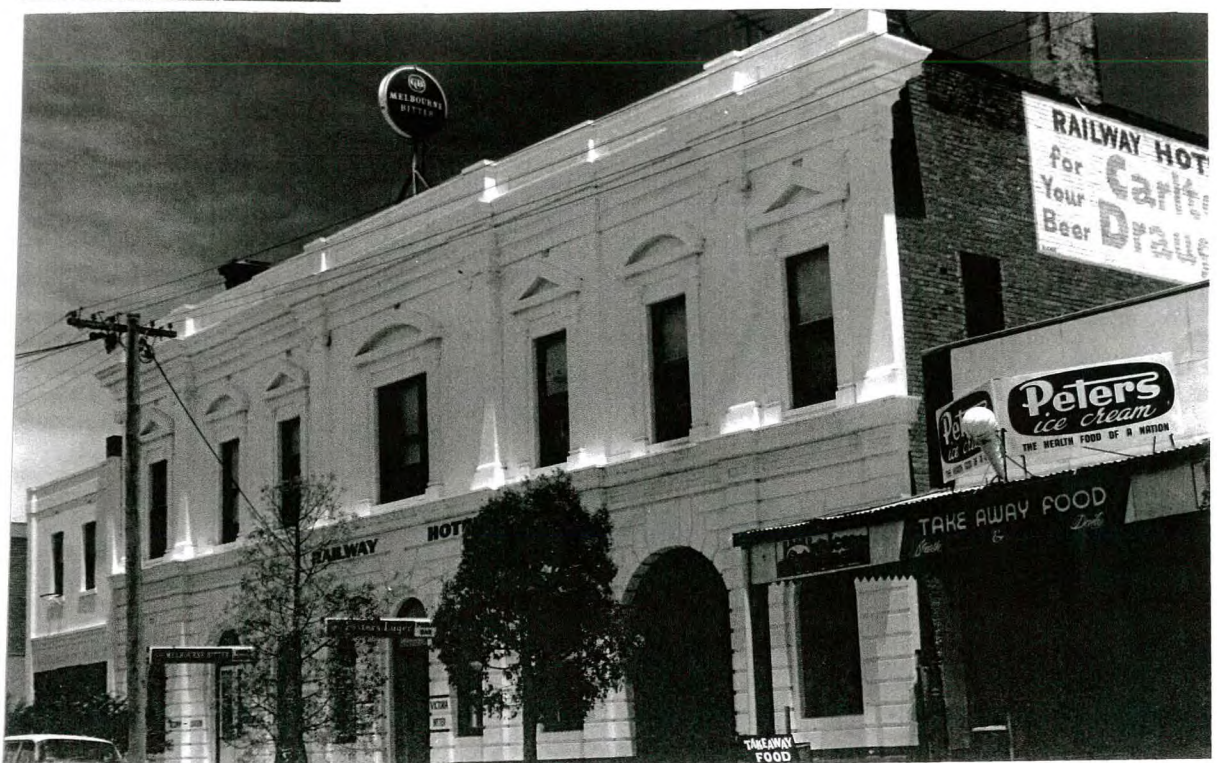
RGO.

Dicker collection, SLV.

*Express*, 5 December 1893.

*Advertiser*, 8 May 1863.

Butler, 'Victorian hotels', data abstract.

RAILWAY HOTEL, DUNOLLY

## SITE LISTINGS



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DUNOLLY POST OFFICE (2ND)**

LOCATION: 102 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 6/14

GRANTEE: JACKSON, J

GRANT DATE: 8 JULY 1857

DATE: 1891

OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECT: BASTOW, HENRY

**DESCRIPTION**

A two-storeyed, towered and stuccoed Renaissance revival form with distinctive two-level arcading, balustraded parapet and clocktower with dome and lantern supported on Corinthian pilasters. Colours are sympathetic but brickwork has been painted on side elevations.

**HISTORY**

Preceded by a number of official and unofficial sites, the first major post and telegraph office structure faced Market Square from 1872 (qv.). An earlier weatherboarded telegraph station stood on that site from the date of the first telegraph link to Castlemaine in 1859. With the arrival of the railway on the western edge of the town in 1874, new civic sites were selected along the main street. The drawings for this building were prepared in mid-1890 and the contract was signed in Ballarat by William Morris in 14 August 1890 for a cost of £2467. On the ground level fronting the arcade there was a mail and money order office separated from the public lobby by a long counter. The arcade sheltered letter-posters approaching the central letterbox. Service rooms and dining room of the residential section took up the rear of the building. Upstairs were bath and bedrooms. The building remained the town's showpiece for many years, always featuring in views of the district in illustrated periodicals.

The design departed from the usual conservative Italian Renaissance palazzo style developed by Wardell. It is comparable to a small number of major offices including the Fitzroy Post Office (1888) in its ornate use of the Italian High Renaissance manner.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Compared to regional post offices built at the same time in towns of the same size, this building has few rivals and is superior to most in its well-executed style and scope. The tower is a fine distinguishing feature. It has also functioned as one of the town's key public buildings for nearly 100 years and is still an important meeting place for old residents.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

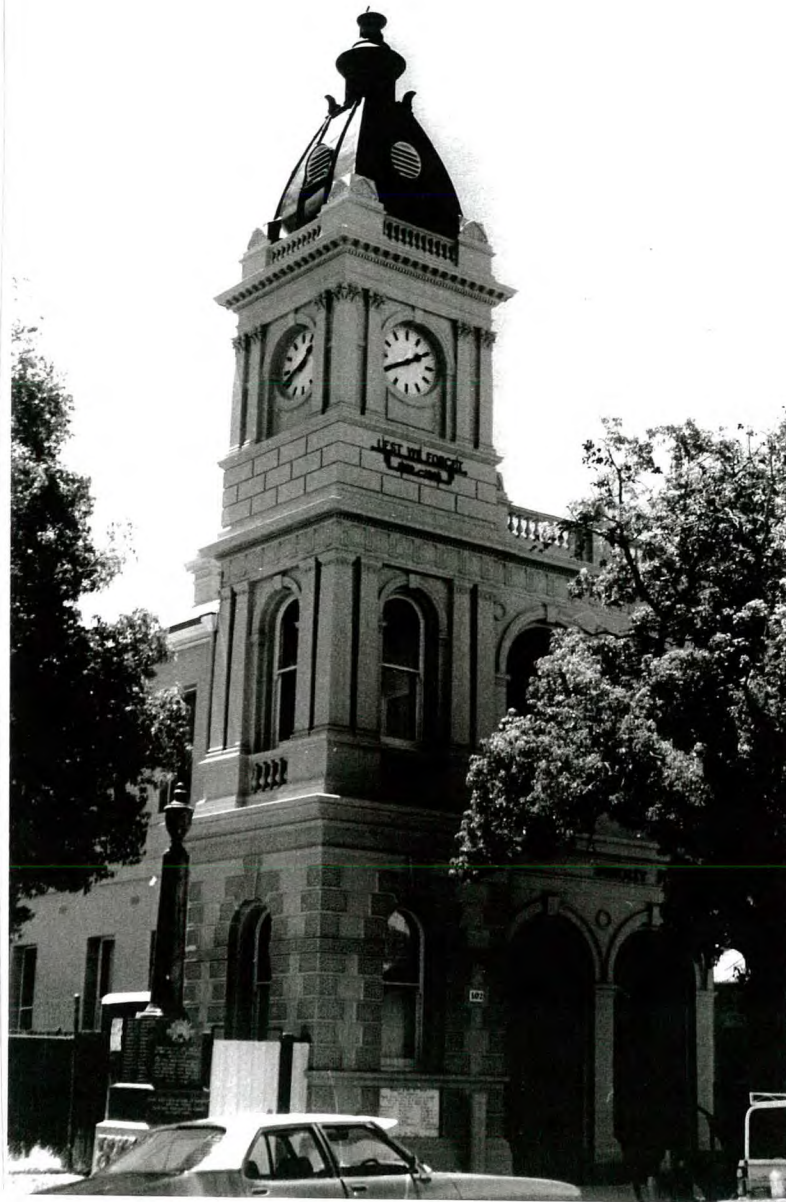
Flett, *Dunolly*, p.49, pp.75-75.

National Trust 2735, D Baker.

Post Office reports, 1889-1890.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

DUNDOLLY POST OFFICE (2ND)



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SHOP AND RESIDENCE**

LOCATION: 116 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 14/13

GRANTEE: MORRISEY, M

GRANT DATE: 8 JULY 1857

DATE: 1860-1865

MAJOR OWNER: YEZEY, WILLIAM

**DESCRIPTION**

A parapeted brick shop with timber framed shopfronts on either side of double panelled doors. The shopfronts are framed with colonettes and the verandah survives but the brickwork has been painted. Joining to the north is a double-fronted weatherboarded house with an elegant concave verandah, timber posts, with capitals and the remnants of a picket fence which extends to the north in a substantially reduced form. The house appears to have had alterations at the rear, carried out in the 1920s.

**HISTORY**

Michael Morrissey, a draper was the grantee of this site in 1857. It was then a canvas structure occupied by one T Laurie. The newsagent William Yezey purchased the lot to the south also shown occupied on the 1856 plan by Hussey (perhaps a corruption of Yezey). Morrissey sold to Yezey three years later with 'appurtenances' cited as part of the property. It cost £30. Yezey and later Elizabeth Yezey then owned and occupied the site until they died. Mary Pelletier then owned the site and also owned lots 15, 16 and part CA 3/25. She obtained the property through Elizabeth Yezey's will because of a debt to Walter Skelton, draper. Mary Pelletier advertised early in 1889 that she had taken over E Yezey's business and still a stationer mortgaged the lot in 1909 finally selling to Alice Peart a widow. Mary advertised as a Fancy Goods Warehouse. She was a bookseller, stationer and newsagent and in the lead-up to Christmas 1892 she stocked cards, prayer books and bibles for all denominations. She also sold cards for weddings, congratulations, condolences, albums, inkstands, the latest music sheets, toys and ample stocks of the popular Moody and Sankey Hymn Books.

Flett refers to an 1866 view of Dunolly which includes Yezey's Argus office at the corner of Bull Street and describes the building as having a high gabled roof, shingled and with a library on the side verandah. Flett claimed that this was the same newsagent's shop later taken up by Pelletier and Peart. There is a newsagent's on the site today to the south of the original building. It has a gabled roof profile (hidden behind a more recent parapet) and may include part of the structure described in 1866. Yezey owned all the lots (and shops) south of this to Bull Street, as did the owners who followed him.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Without precise details of construction date etc., the worth of this building derives from its integrity. The house form is similar to the Fyfe house in Tarnagulla and the shopfront seems original. The shop and that adjoining to the south seems to have been the printed word centre of the town from the gold era to



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

the present. Shop and residence alongside each other gives the site a special quality.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

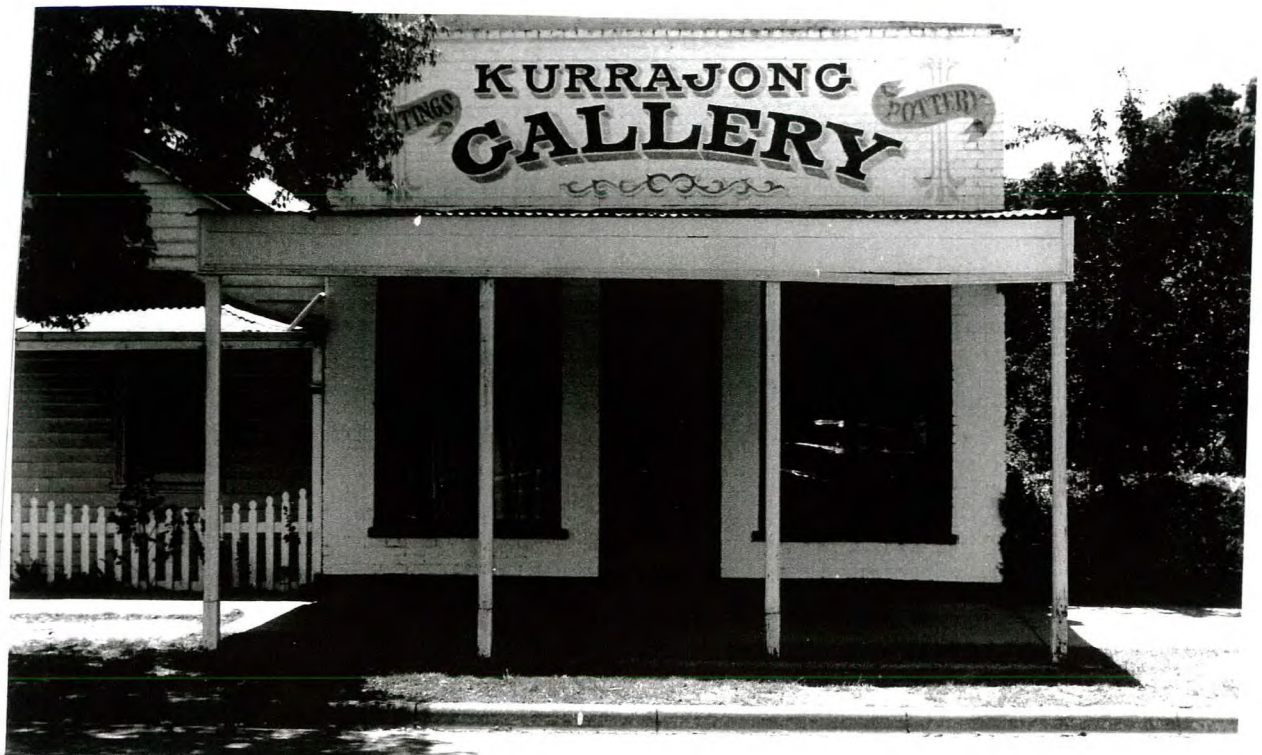
Source:

Flett, Dunolly p.146.

RG0; D1867, WD 1899, WD 1895-6 WD 1884-5, BD 1880-1, BD 1875, BD 1870.

Express, 1 November 1892, 8 December 1893.

SHOP AND RESIDENCE, DUNOLLY





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MCBRIDE'S IRONMONGERY**

LOCATION: 129 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 7/12

GRANTEE: MCBRIDE P

GRANT DATE: 8 JULY 1857

DATE: 1863

OWNER: MCBRIDE

**DESCRIPTION**

A two-storeyed and tuck-pointed face brick shop and residence with a parapeted form and stucco quoining. A shallow pediment is topped by an anthemion or honeysuckle motif at the centre whilst distinctive squiggle patterns exist on the cement quoins on the upper level and some simulated axing at the lower level. The street verandah, double entry doors and the timber framed shop front are intact. The stone plinth has been painted. A photograph (dated by Flett as 1866) shows the building much as it is now with the exception of carved timber brackets to the street verandah.

**HISTORY**

Peter and Catherine McBride came from Scotland in 1851 and purchased this and other lots in Dunolly in 1857. At the same time Peter began his ironmongery business. He advertised his stock of iron as either flat bars or corrugated, steel in sections, sporting and blasting powder for shooters or miners or both, firearms and fire irons, table and pocket cutlery, ploughs and churns, cricket bats, balls and stumps, window glass of all sizes, oil colours and paper, sash and panel doors, American and Baltic timbers (softwoods) and household furniture.

Dunolly ironmonger and tobacconist, later architect and surveyor, Thomas Tyrer, is said to have designed McBride's new Dunolly store in 1863 and tenders were called in May of that year for a two-storeyed brick building in Dunolly. Tyrer is also credited with designing James Bell's house at 8 Bull St. McBride had another store at Tarnagulla in the late 1860s. He sold his Dunolly store to Rachel Watson for £1500 in August 1874. McBride left for St. Arnaud in 1875 where he took his third son Peter into partnership. By the late 1880s, the St. Arnaud store had expanded into one of the largest in the district selling timber, ironmongery, grocery, glass, furniture and grain. McBride jnr. boasted that he had an oilman's store, a carpenter's shop a stock and station agency and an auction mart attached.

Peter jnr. was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1897 and served on the Royal Commissions examining railways and forests. He also earned a reputation for his interest in yachting, restaurants and the theatre. As Minister for Mines he legislated for the opening of the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi in 1909. The Creswick Forestry School took shape under his ministry as did the new electric rail system of Melbourne. Before he launched into politics, Watson and Ballantine had mortgaged his old home to the City Bank in 1889.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

## SITE LISTINGS



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

An early and externally complete shop (and residence?) with a street verandah. It began to serve expanding gold fields and was the first step in the McBrides'

successful careers in commerce and politics.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Sutherland, Victoria and its Metropolis, Melbourne 1888, 2 vols. vol. 2, p.223.

Flett, Dunolly, p.27, p.140, p.152

Express, 1868.

RGO, V10, p.205f.

MCBRIDES IRONMONGERY





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HOUSE**

LOCATION: 172 BROADWAY, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 7/9

GRANTEE: ERNSTSEN, E

GRANT DATE: 7 JULY 1857

DATE: C1865

OWNER: FOOTER, WILLIAM; HANSFORD, WALTER

ARCHITECT: FOOTER, WILLIAM

BUILDER: FOOTER, WILLIAM

**DESCRIPTION**

A two-storeyed red brick and stucco Tudor revival house on the traditional E plan with distinctive gabled entrance porch (with oriels, towers and Tudor arched doorway) carved barge boards, truncated finials and grouped chimney stacks. Details include castellation, lancet vents and quatrafoil ornament set in cement panels while the use of hinged casement sashes follows the Tudor style. The iron and stone double pallisade fence at the front is notable as is the mature and sympathetic garden.

**HISTORY**

The local hotel-keeper, Ernst Ernstsens, bought this lot for 11 guineas in 1857; the adjoining lots (6 and 8) went to Walter Borthwick an auctioneer. The Flett 1856 Dunolly plan shows Ernstsens's first Criterion Hotel on this site. Yet Ernstsens sold the lot to William Footer for only £25 in late 1863. Footer mortgaged to mine manager, Walter Hansford in October 1864, losing his right of redemption after his further borrowings in the next five years. The total sum borrowed was £425 and by 1869, Footer was dead and his wife Mary Anne passed the title to George Candy (possibly the Collingwood mason). Candy held the lot for a few months and the Hansford obtained the title at the end of 1869. Hansford by then owned the adjoining lots. Dr. Crook of the Dunolly hospital was a later resident.

Footer advertised as an architect and builder and the building date was put at 1865. Both Footer and Hansford played roles elsewhere in Dunolly. Footer was clerk of works for the Dunolly Presbyterian church and Hansford was in turn, Shire President, Borough Mayor, director of the Queen's Birthday Mine and a patron of the Wesleyan church. He was supposed to have erected a model of Pisa's leaning campanile in his garden and signalled the fortunes of his mine by raising and lowering a flag on the model.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Not a common style especially in rural Victoria, this Tudoresque house compares well with Barrington, Hargreaves St., Castlemaine (c. 1866-1869) and even more clearly with the picturesque Farnsworth House, Farnsworth St., Castlemaine (c. 1867); John Robinson's house, High St., Maldon (c 1866); and JA Doane's house Seymour Crt. Ballarat (1862). Of these it has the most extensive use of the parapeted two-storeyed style. Hansford's residence in the house and his political and mining ties to the district give the house a direct link



SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO  
to the social fabric of the shire.

STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:  
RGO 6378  
Flett, Dunolly, p.136,p.201  
Bendigo Directory, 1868





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DUNOLLY PRIMARY SCHOOL 1582**

LOCATION: ELGIN ST, DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP  
ALLOT: RES  
MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT  
BUILDER: MEADOWS, ISAAC  
DATE: 1875

**DESCRIPTION**

Red brick gabled school with evidence of later restructuring. Built originally in three rooms

**HISTORY**

This school was to replace the Common School in 1873. Extended battles over the site delayed construction. In 1915 the school was extensively remodelled.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

An important focus for local life over more than a hundred years, then original form and appearance have been largely altered. It still represents an important part of the town's history.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****DUNOLLY SCHOOL**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HOUSE**

LOCATION: 8 BULL ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

GRANT DATE: 17 FEBRUARY 1859

GRANTEE: PRENDERGAST, L.

DATE: C1869

MAJOR OWNER: BELL, J

ARCHITECT: TYRER, T

**DESCRIPTION**

James Bell (1836-1908) arrived in Dunolly in 1857 and took up a business. He entered public life in 1861 and became mayor in 1862. He served as mayor for five years and as a councillor for ten. From 1882, Bell represented the North-West Province in the Upper House, espousing faith in free, compulsory and secular education, protection, federation and 'promotion of government assisted schemes for water conservation'. The son of a storekeeper, Bell was born in Dumfriesshire, Scotland and entered mercantile trade. He first worked in Dunolly for Turnbull and Co. During his career with the firm, his infant daughter, Jane, died in tragic circumstances. Her mother smothered her in trying to protect her from the cold. Bell expanded his own business to St. Arnaud in 1862 and then to Burnt Creek. He was involved in flour milling and grain buying as a chief shareholder in Malcolm and Co., St. Arnaud. By 1861 he had sold his two stores and become director of the Belgian Reserve Quartz Mining Company at Goldsbrough. He had over four thousand acres of land around Dunolly. His political career took him to Melbourne where he held cabinet posts for mining, defence and water supply. He became chairman of Swallow and Ariel biscuits and by the late 1880s he was a director of the ill-fated and infamous Melbourne Mercantile Bank. By 1900 he was one of Victoria's chief grain exporters and his firm had branches in Melbourne, Adelaide and Sydney. His Bull St. residence stands on Leonard's Crown grant and was bought in 1859 for £48-5-0. Leonard sold to Bell in 1865 for £1000. Flett dates the house from 1869, despite the improvements listed in the 1869 sale.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

It is one of only a few gold field residences with any pretensions to architectural style. Amongst others is Ferndale Manor, Ray St., Castlemaine (1860). Amongst commercial buildings the Bank of Victoria, Moyston St., Castlemaine (1856) stands out. By building next to the Market Square and the former town hall, Bell obviously wanted to impress his constituents with his wealth and social standing. His political and business interests give the building state importance even though he left Dunolly to pursue his career. The house expresses the reaction of a public figure to success and wealth derived largely from gold.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Flett, *Dunolly*, pp. 27-28, p. 98, p. 140.*Australian Dictionary of Biography*, v3, p. 134.

RGO.

Sutherland, *Victoria*, p. 461 ff.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BELL HOUSE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SECOND COURT HOUSE (TOWN HALL) DUNOLLY**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY

BULL ST AT THE MARKET SQUARE

ALLOT: RES/29

MAJOR OWNER: BOROUGH OF DUNOLLY, VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

DATE: 1862

ARCHITECT: TOUTCHER, CHARLES

BUILDER: TYRER, T

**DESCRIPTION**

Red brick and stone court house with classical decoration including doric pillars at the entrance. Wings built initially as library and reading room.

**HISTORY**

One of the many buildings to be put up around the Market Square after the decline of alluvial mining. The town hall was too small for the purpose and in 1887, rather than enlarge the building, the town hall was exchanged for the court house in Broadway.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Probably the finest public building in the town and one of the outstanding designs of the shire. The history of the building also tells something of the later history of once-prosperous gold towns and reflects the change in focus of Dunolly away from the Market Square.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE****DUNOLLY TOWN HALL (FIRST)**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

DUNOLLY COURT HOUSE (1ST)  
 LOCATION: BURKE ST; DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP  
 ALLOT: 13/29  
 GRANTEE: SUTHERLAND, JA  
 GRANT DATE: 13 APRIL 1886  
 DATE: 1856  
 MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT  
 ARCHITECT: MERRETT, SAMUEL H  
 BUILDER: NICHOLS, JAMES

## DESCRIPTION

Former court house now a masonic temple which shows original gabled form with pedimented entrance. It has been given a stucco finish over the original freestone rubble and has the openings blinded. Simple hipped roof wings wings (altered) on the north and south date from its use as a court house. Siting on the axis to Market Square and its elevated position indicate its former use.

## HISTORY

In 1857, the first public buildings were erected at North Dunolly. Amongst them was a Court House for which tenders were called in December 1856. This court commenced in January 1857 and became a Petty Sessions Court in the middle of 1857. Judge John Forbes was appointed to the Dunolly County Court at the start of 1858. In August, hearings began at the Bendigo Hotel. In June 1858, tenders were called for a new Court House. Although built as a County Court, this also served as the Mining and Petty Sessions Courts until in 1860. A new Petty Sessions Court was built facing Market Square and then in 1884 the Court House in Broadway was completed. Police Inspector Francis Hare announced the construction of three local court houses in May 1858: Maryborough, Carisbrook and Dunolly. All were designed along identical lines and were patterned on the Melbourne Supreme Court. Each was to have an upper level public gallery, an eight-foot wide verandah encircling the building externally and the usual ancillary rooms inside, for judges, barristers, sheriffs and jury. The work was supposed to take four months. George Henry Cox successfully tendered for £2000 but new tenders were called for within a month. An 1861 photograph shows the Dunolly Court House built in coursed rubble freestone, with carved stone overdoors, a tall gabled profile, a circular gable vent and flanking timber verandahs along the two sides. These verandahs were built-in as rooms, towards the rear.

## SIGNIFICANCE

This is the oldest government building in the area and suggests the manner in which the state stamped its authority on the unruly crowds of the gold fields. After the first Castlemaine Court House (1852) this is amongst the oldest surviving court houses in Victoria. It has been defaced, but fortunately not beyond reclamation.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Advertiser, 1 Jun 1858, 20 July 1858, 21 May 1858.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

FIRST COURT HOUSE DUNOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH, DUNOLLY**

LOCATION: HARDY ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: -/36

GRANT DATE: 1863

GRANTEE: CATHOLIC CHURCH

MAJOR OWNER: CATHOLIC CHURCH

ARCHITECT: DOWDED, RA

BUILDER: FAULKNER, JAMES; CONDY &amp; STUBBS

**DESCRIPTION**

A typical early English Gothic Revival parish church built of coursed freestone rubble, tuck-pointed, with quarry-faced granite quoins. A gabled porch and corner bell tower lend distinction to an otherwise pedestrian design. The spire roof (formerly in broach form) has been rebuilt during 1980 in an unsympathetic form. The original spire is supposed to survive in South Dunolly. Compared to a photograph taken soon after its completion, the present church is virtually unchanged with the exception of the spire. The setting blends with the surrounding forest and the former picket fence has been replaced.

**HISTORY**

In the usual gold era manner, early Catholic services (1856-8) were held under canvas in the incongruous surroundings of the Pick and Shovel Hotel (Bull St., and Broadway). Crowded services often overflowed from the large room hired for the occasion and into the bar. Rev. RF Fennelly celebrated these Masses until the canvas and timber hostelry was literally blown away in a 'cyclonic storm', never to be rebuilt. A timber church was erected on the present reserve by 1861. The lot was permanently reserved in 1863 under trustees, Rev Fennelly, HB Daly, P Purcell and J Costello. Two years later, Catholics held a public meeting to erect a permanent church, one which might match the Wesleyan and Presbyterian buildings in the town. Tenders were called for the new church in May 1868 and architect, R Bowden's design materialised slowly from the labours of several contractors, eventually opening under the supervision of Bishop Goold in September 1871. Local stonemason, James Faulkner, began the stone walls but by October 1868 another contractor, Thomas Thackery, agreed with Faulkner and the church committee to carry out the work for £170 more than Faulkner's original quote of £751. The basecourse and dressing stone is Mt. Hooghly granite and the main walling of 'greystone' was taken from a nearby quarry. A later document cites William Condy and Stubbs of Ballarat as the main contractors by 1870 with Charles Westman as the mason. Morris Moore completed the internal plastering, flashing and drainage in 1871. He also inscribed the date on the tower. Once opened the church was described as 'the most elegant sacred edifice in Dunolly'. It stood on the highest ground in the town and its handspome broach tower could be seen at a great distance. By 1873, the church and the Inglewood mission which it served had been incorporated into a new Ballarat diocese.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

In its original external form, the church was potentially of high comparative



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

importance. Its stone work and broach tower elevated the building from an otherwise architecturally repetitive medium. Today the changed spire has lent a top-heavy French Chateau character (see Fontaine-Henry chateau, Calvados) to the stoic English base. Given the possible existence of the old spire and photograph evidence it is possible that the church's former distinctive character might be restored.

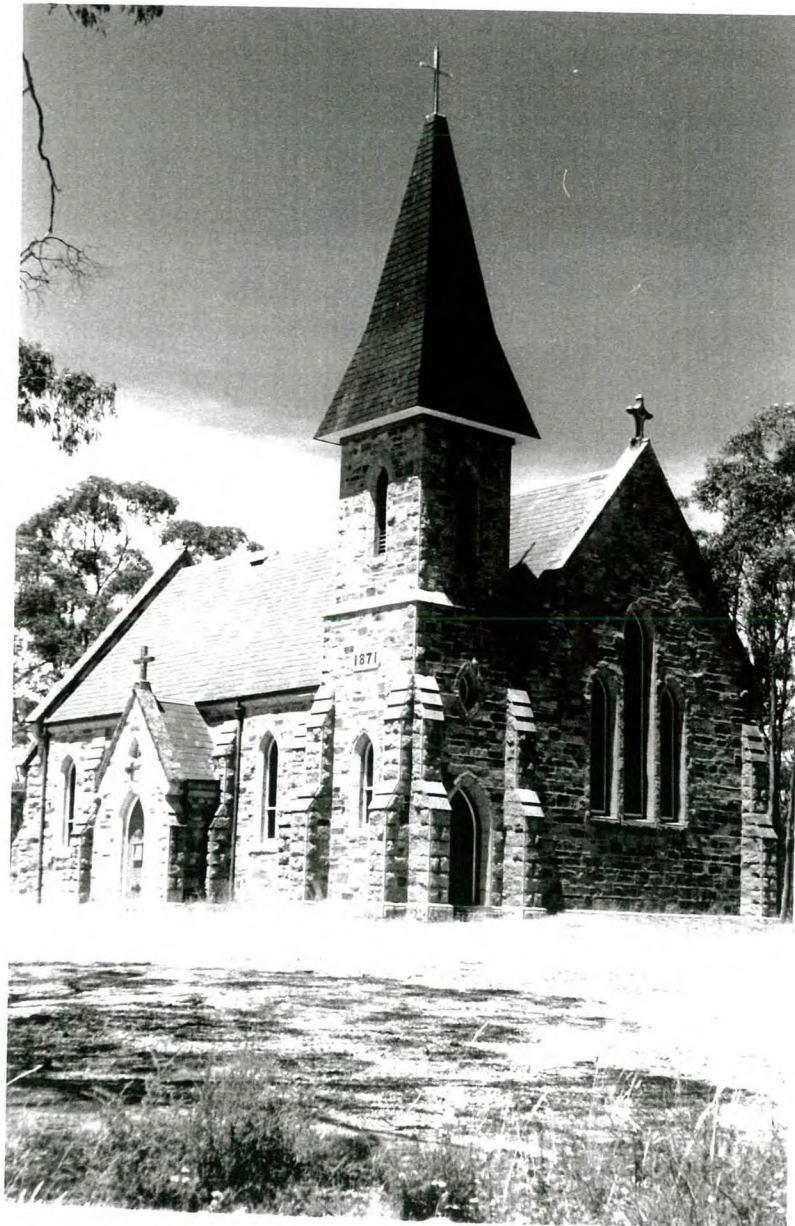
## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

National Trust file.

The church of St Mary Dunolly, pamphlet.

Flett, Dunolly, p.197 ff.

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH DUNOLLY



**DUNOLLY HOSPITAL**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY

HAYLOCK ST

ALLOT : RES /33

BUILDER: WATTS, T

ARCHITECT: ROSS, C

DATE: 1859-1862 AND LATER ALTERATIONS

**DESCRIPTION**

Single storey building with two wings on either side of a broad main wing which has arched verandah colonnades running to either wing. Rendered and tiled roof.

**HISTORY**

The Dunolly Hospital was once a much grander building with two storeys and a tower, (See history) It was the result of early co-operative endeavours on the goldfields:- mining was a dangerous occupation and accidental injury frequent. The hospital was built in stages over several years and outbuildings have been added in the twentieth century. The upper storey has been removed.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The hospital is an important part of the townscape. Although much reduced in significance by the loss of the upper storey and by additions it is still a reminder of early co-operative endeavours in the town.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HOUSE**

LOCATION: HAVELOCK ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP  
 GRANTEE: CHAUNCY, P  
 GRANT DATE: 14 JULY 1863  
 DATE COMPLETED: 1863  
 MAJOR OWNER: CHAUNCY, P

**DESCRIPTION**

A freestone rubble house with brick quoining, shutters and entry fan and side lights, which is set on an asymmetrical plan with a gabled roof form, indicating sequential construction. The verandah has a carved timber frieze but the balustrade is incomplete. A sign attached says 'Chauncey House 1856'. Additions are being carried out at the rear.

**HISTORY**

Chauncy was appointed Acting Surveyor to the Victorian Colonial Government in 1855 after two years work as a civil servant. He took charge of the Dunolly district in 1860 and first resided at Ernstsens's Criterion Hotel. He moved to a timber house and then to this building

*A substantial stone house unfurnished which had been built for an inn and was in a municipal street. My wife with her characteristic energy began at once without waiting for it to be finished, to remove into it, but while we were getting in the furniture it was jumped by a 'pettifogging' lawyer. The fact of my having bought the house gave me no title to the ground on which it stood.*

Chauncy contested the lawyer's claim, re-surveyed the street so as to exclude the house from the road reserve and purchased its title in July 1863. The house stood in a position *'beautiful and commanding . . . I subsequently erected four more rooms of brick and stone, stable, outhouses, brick tank and made an ornamental garden and winery . . . the recollection of the happy time we spent in this place moves me as I write'*. He stayed until 1867 when his family moved to Melbourne and Chauncy went on to act as Chief Surveyor of the Castlemaine district. In carrying out this early survey work, Chauncy left physical traces still visible today. He died in Ballarat in 1880.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The freestone rubble construction gives this house special qualities when compared to similarly finished houses (see the freestone rubble powder magazine keeper's residence, Farnsworth St., Castlemaine, 1867). Its association with Chauncy was brief but allows documentation of the unusual nature of its acquisition. This exemplifies some of the common difficulties of gold town design in the midst of rushes.

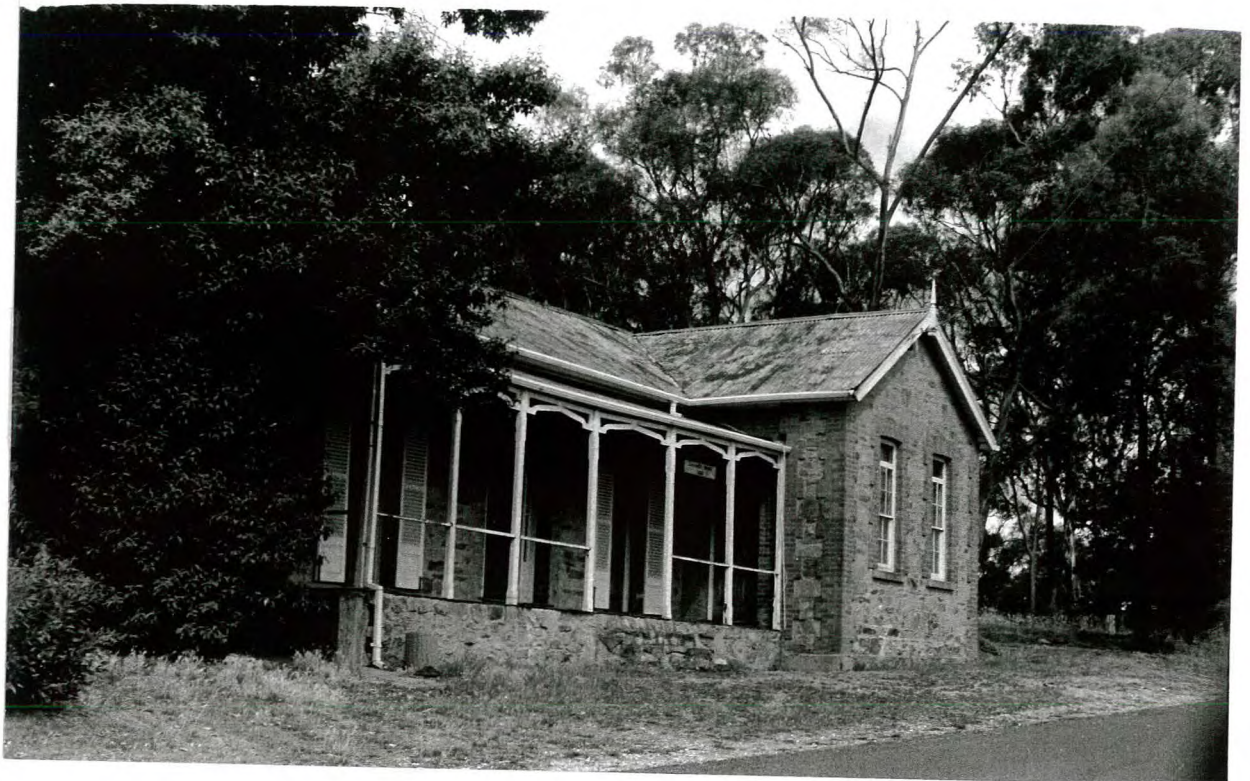
**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:  
 Flett, *Dunolly*, pp.136-140.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

RGO.  
Civic establishment, 1856.

CHAUNCEY HOUSE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ST JOHN'S ANGLICAN PARSONAGE**

LOCATION: 13 MARKET ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: RES/24

GRANT DATE: 29 JANUARY 1866

GRANTEE: ANGLICAN CHURCH(63.1304)

DATE: 1865

OWNER: ANGLICAN CHURCH

ARCHITECT: YAHLAND &amp; GETZSCHMANN

BUILDER: GIDLEY, T

**DESCRIPTION**

Face brick (now painted) Tudoresque former parsonage with a high intersecting gabled roof visible on all elevations and a timber post side verandah which was once more extensive. It possesses stepped label moulds at openings, a blind oculus and a finial at each gable. The house is recognisably of ecclesiastical origin and thus relates strongly to the adjoining Anglican church despite its current private ownership and the high metal fence between the two buildings. Other elements concealed by the fence include the side verandah and porch. There is as well a tiny gabled chapel attached across the rear of the house. Similarly the interplay of gabled roof forms between this and the twin gabled rear elevation is also obscured. The brickwork has been painted and parts of the formerly picturesque timber verandah is enclosed.

**HISTORY**

The first Anglican services were held by the Rev McJemmett and then regularised by the opening of the first permanent Anglican church in 1858. Permanent reservation of the existing temporary reserve near Market Square in 1863 occurred with the appointment to Dunolly of a former missionary, Rev George Despard. A fund-raising committee was formed early in 1864. A grand fancy bazaar was held in September to raise funds for th parsonage. Bendigo architects Yahland and Getzschmann, submitted a design in July and estimated the cost at a maximum of £500. Eddington builder, Thomas Gidley, tendered with a quote above the estimated £95. This was accepted in expectation of savings being made on the house fittings (an additional £135-10-0). Alfred Martin acted as Clerk of Works. In February 1865 tenders were called for a split paling fence to surround the building and the work was completed in June 1865. The Rev Despard moved in and stayed there for three years. The vicarage passed into private ownership in 1922.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Judged against othe Tudor or Gothic houses of similar size (South Lodge, Were St., Brighton, 1860s; Roseneath, Pakington St., Kew; St. Peter's Vicarage, Ross St., Mornington; Coryule Homestead, Drysdale; 596 Queensberry St., North Melbourne; 116 Tanner St., Breakwater, 1870) this appears closest in appearance to the North Melbourne building but with a three-dimensional articulation. This building may be the best three-dimensional expression of the Tudor/Gothic revival in a single-storey suburban scale dwelling in the state (despite the fence and the painted bricks). It is also enhanced by its proximity (on a near island site) to the two churches. It has a great local importance because it expresses the immediate post gold-rush prosperity of the district and is the most



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

salubrious ecclestical residence in the shire.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

## Source:

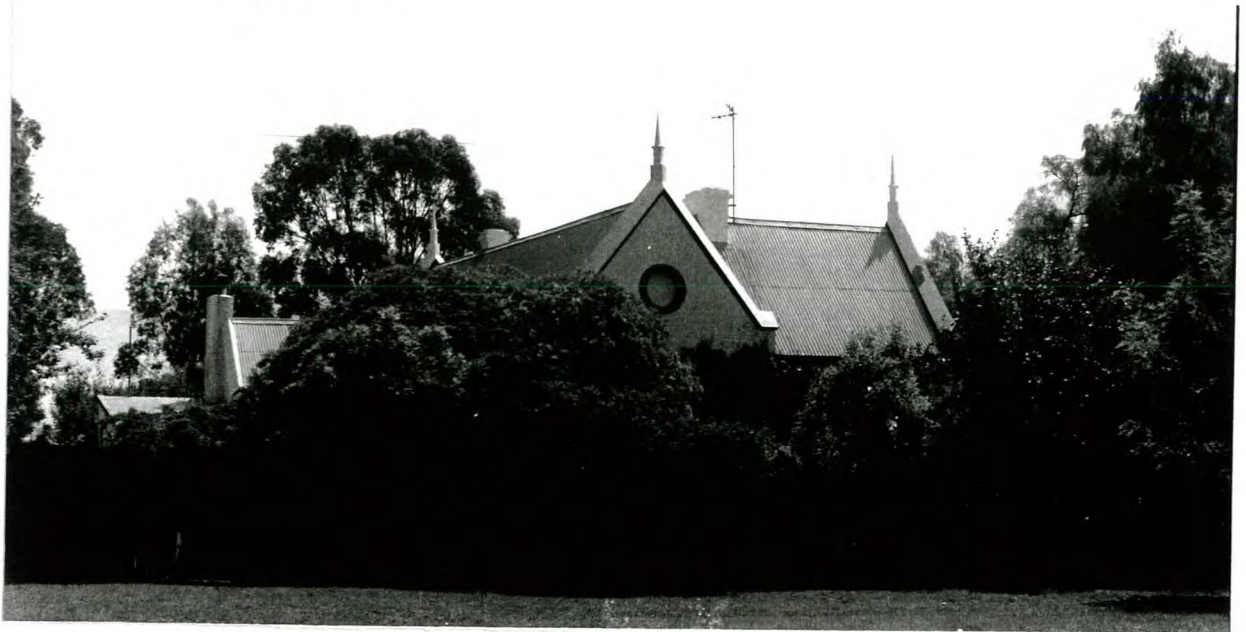
Flett, Dunolly, p.192 ff.

National Trust file 1047.

Advertiser, 24 June 1864.

Express, 9 February 1865.

ANGLICAN PARSONAGE, DUNOLLY





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DUNOLLY POST OFFICE (1ST)**

LOCATION: MARKET ST., DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: RES/22C

GRANTEE: PUBLIC BUILDING RES.

DATE: 1872

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECT: WARDELL, WILLIAM (CHIEF PUBLIC WORKS DEPT. ARCHITECT)

**DESCRIPTION**

Surprisingly intact former post office using a standard government design which includes a cruciform plan and a protruding gabled and verandahed wing at which postal business was once enacted through the window. The fence has been replaced in part but a simple arrowhead picket section remains on the south of the verandah. Details include panelled cast iron, timber verandah post capitals and the brickwork is Flemish bond. The main roof is slated but the verandah roof has been altered.

**HISTORY**

Preceded by a number of official and unofficial sites, the first major post and telegraph office structure was facing the Market Square from 1872. The contractor was C Walker of Maryborough, the post master HF O'Connell and the opening date 15 January. Blocks of granite from Mt Hooghly arrived on site in April 1871. An earlier weatherboarded telegraph station had stood on the site since Dunolly was linked by telegraph to Castlemaine in 1859. Opening hours of the 1860s were from 9 a.m. until 5.30 p.m. every day except Sunday when only the receiving box was left open. When the railway reached the western edge of the town in 1874, the post office along with other civic structures around Market Square stood apart from the town's centre of activity. The removal of the post office function from the building only 19 years after it opened ironically has left it with an unusually high external integrity. The building has escaped the ravages of new marketing concepts, savings bank expansion and the changes due to telephones.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Among the identified Victorian post offices of this period, few have the same integrity. The Maldon post office (1870) has similar design and materials but has lost its verandah. The Port Albert post office is an early example of the type (built 1864) but has been altered in finish and detail. With the high architectural integrity goes the successful expression of early post office functions.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Flett, Dunolly, pp.75-76.Express, 18 April 1871.Jacob Lewis and Vines, Maldon Conservation Study, p.39.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

FIRST DUNOLLY POST OFFICE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**OLD CEMETERY DUNOLLY**

LOCATION: PAINKILLER GULLY, TOWN OF DUNOLLY  
DATE: 1854(?)

**DESCRIPTION**

Cemetery set in bushland, with wire fence and scattered graves. Several headstones still bear legible inscriptions. Some of the graves still have iron surrounds and there is one grave with an iron surround and a wooden headstone.

**HISTORY**

Cemeteries were created under cemetery trusts throughout Victoria during the 1850s. Many were poorly planned and maintained, especially where there were no resident clergymen and a mobile population. This early and primitive burial ground was closed later in the century and most burials in Dunolly from the 1870s onwards took place in the new cemetery.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

An important item in the history of the town. The few remaining headstones testify to the character of goldfield life. The wooden headstone is a rare survivor.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****OLD CEMETERY DUNOLLY**



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**WITTACKER'S CORDIAL FACTORY MANAGER'S RESIDENCE**

LOCATION: DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP RAVENS LANE 31/B  
MAJOR OWNER: WHITTACKER FAMILY

**DESCRIPTION**

An unusual face-red brick cottage (English bond) with distinctive dog-tooth patterned brick string moulds and gabled parapet with truncated piers at either end of the gable. It abutts a more simple gabled and verandahed brick cottage with a third cottage perpendicular in axis to these structures. This is altered but appears to be of some age.

**HISTORY**

The Whittacker brothers, Robert, Joseph and William began a soft drink business at North Dunolly in 1863. Robert was a major builder in the town and had a hand in the Bendigo, Windsor Castle and the Red Lion Hotels. The business was expanded to Tarnagulla and became a source of pride amongst townsfolk. It seemed proof of the coming prosperity of Dunolly. The cordial factory has been demolished and only wells remain.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Since the cordial factory no longer exists, this building is the only link with a key 19C industry. It is also a reminder of the actions of an important local family. The age of the rear building and the distinctive style of the main house give an added significance.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TERMINUS HOTEL, DUNOLLY**

LOCATION; TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY, CORNER OF THOMPSON AND MCKENZIE STS  
 ALLOT: 14/34A  
 DATE: 1875(?)  
 MAJOR OWNER: YING, DAVID

**DESCRIPTION:**

Double fronted hotel with broad verandah reaching across footpath. Rectilinear form. Has a parapet rising in a triangular arch. Wide central doorway flanked by two windows. In one, writing possibly original, advertises liquor. Side wall replaced and additions at rear.

**HISTORY**

Built to capture the trade from the new railway. The hotel was run for its whole life by David Ying and his descendants. Ying had come to Dunolly to live with relatives. he worked in a relative's grocery until it burned down and then turned to hotel-keeping. He was a wealthy man with succesful investments in mining and export; succesful enough to visit China and return to Australia. Ying's wife ran the hotel after he died and then the daughter became the licensee. She abandoned a promising career as an artist to keep up the hotel business. the ghotel was a favourite haunt in Dunolly but was closed in 1956.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Mainly important for its ties with David Ying, a successful and respected Chinese member of the Dunolly community.

**Source:**

Information from Mrs Brownbill

**TERMINUS HOTEL**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**WIGHAM'S JUNCTION HOTEL**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY

NATMAP: 45.1/15.7

ON WEST SIDE OF THE DUNOLLY-MARYBOROUGH RD. , 0.5K. SOUTH BRIDGE ON BURNT CK.

PRINCIPAL OWNER: WIGHAM FAMILY

DATE: 1862

**DESCRIPTION**

Two-storey brick building with a simple hipped roof and a central double door entry indicating the position of the bar room. Single door entries on either side are interspersed with multi-paned, double-hung windows. Lintels appear to be of stone, recessed within the stucco and part of the stucco (ruled as stone) has been removed at the lower level exposing English bond brickwork (220m X 70 X 105mm.). Some of this work is in poor condition through rising damp. The elevation is symmetrical with chimneys (now extended) at either end and at the rear there is a steeply hipped single storey wing which is probably of similar or earlier age. On the south side it seems that a low skillion wing has been removed. A distinctive part of the elevation is the etched glass design in the toplights to the southern two doorways containing roundel motifs and stylised thistles. Some upper windows have been sheeted over; the chimneys have been extended, the northern chimney by having a corbelled cornice added. Stucco and stuccoed sign panel have been painted over at a later date. Immature Silky Oak trees at the front are sympathetic to the period.

**HISTORY**

Built between 1862 and 1867 to serve the Gooseberry Hill rush. The hotel is sited in almost the centre of the rush and would have afforded a lucrative trade. The hotel survived as a centre for several years until it was extensively damaged in a severe storm in 1910. By then miners had long since drifted away and the numerous hotels in Dunolly had drawn in local drinkers. The Junction had to rely on passing trade rather than local townsfolk or miners. As a result, the hotel was one amongst many which failed to convince licensing authorities of its necessity. The Junction was closed by Licensing Reduction Board in December 1912. It was later associated with the Polinelli family

**SIGNIFICANCE**

An important building in its siting on the main road. Its design departs from both that of the simple low 'grog shops' of the first rushes and from the elaborate and decorated palaces of later years. The broad central entrance way and the equally space single doorways on either side add to this unusual appearance. One of the few permanent structures which survive from the Gooseberry Rushes. It has an added significance in the role it played as a centre for the mining population south of Dunolly. Its appearance testifies to the role of the hotel in local social life.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Licensing Reduction Board records held at the Liquor Commission.

## SITE LISTINGS



SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO  
Express, 1868.

WIGHAM'S JUNCTION HOTEL





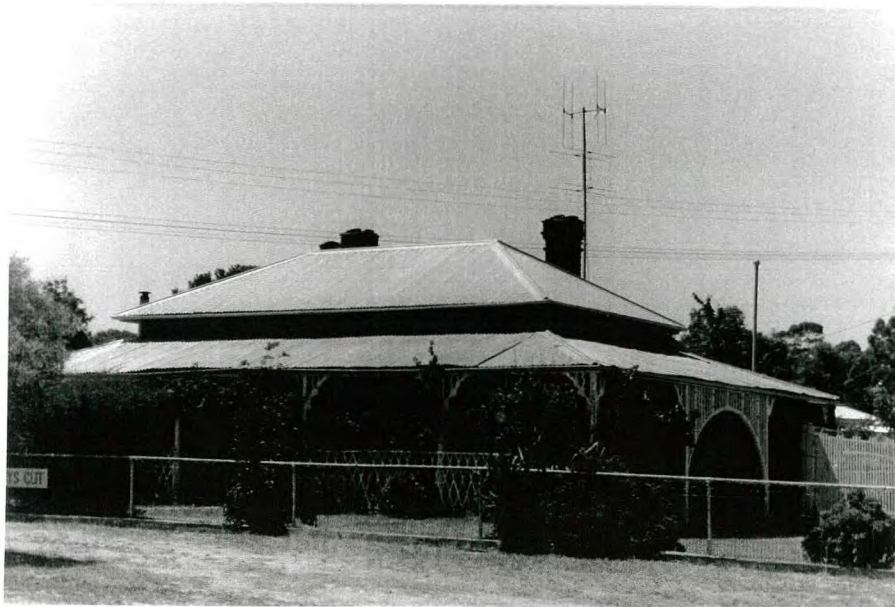
## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HOUSE****LOCATION: DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP ELGIN ST****DESCRIPTION**

A double-fronted face-red brick house with return verandah which is distinguished by its unusual fretted timber ornamentation to the verandah posts in the form of brackets and arched valences. The house carcass itself appears to be possibly of the late 19th century and some of the timber work may date from this period. Verandah posts are Edwardian. They stand on the side elevation and provide the dominant period expression. Other elements include a finely picketted garden and a pergola gateway. Part of the verandah has been bricked in with matching brick and minor alterations to the openings made in the rear wings.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Dating from a later period than most of the other substantial private dwellings in the town, this building represents an unusual style for Dunolly and the quality of the decorative work makes it significant in a stylistic sense.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DUNOLLY RAILWAY STATION**

LOCATION: DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP 35 A, FACING HARDY ST  
 ALLOT: ON RAILWAY RESERVE/35A  
 MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN RAILWAYS  
 BUILDER: WEEKES, ST  
 DATE: 1874

**DESCRIPTION**

A red, tuck-pointed brick station building. It has attached wrought iron and cast iron verandah associated gabled brick and stone goods shed (now altered) and adjoining double-fronted weatherboarded hipped roofed residence with cast iron verandah frieze. The station follows a typical Italianate style and the verandah is elegantly hipped. The booking window and booking hall seats all appear to be original and have interesting details. An underground dome-topped well and a mature cork tree are associated with the complex.

**HISTORY**

Contracts for the station were let in March 1874, the same year in which the line from Maryborough to Dunolly was started. As with the Bealiba station, Dunolly lay along the course of the new 'light line' experiment. Contracts had already been let for a link between Castlemaine and Dunolly. Dunolly was to be the connecting point between at least two local lines with more grandiose proposals constantly being put forward. The railway age in Dunolly lasted until at least the Second World War. Now passenger services bypass Dunolly and even the grain terminal will no longer play the role which it has in the past.

**HISTORY**

The railway station and associated buildings form an important group of structures in the town. The railway in fact altered the whole layout of Dunolly. The station is a fine and well-preserved example of mid-nineteenth century public architecture and appears more distinguished because of the associated structures, the station yard and plantings. An important complex for the town and beyond.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**



**DUNOLLY CEMETERY 'NEW CEMETERY'**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY  
ON THE CEMETERY RESERVE TO THE NORTH-WEST OF THE TOWN ABOVE THE  
DUNOLLY TO MOLIAGUL ROAD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Small cemetery with many pedimented and obelisk grave markers. Plantings of pine and other exotics. Chinese section in one corner and Chinese burial urn.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Varied collection of memorial architecture, though none of it is grand. Well maintained rural cemetery with significant section of Chinese graves and burial urn.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DALY'S WINERY**

LOCATION: DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP 9-10/F

NATMAP: 19/42.2

ON THE WESTERN EDGE OF THE DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP AND OPPOSITE THE 'NEW' DUNOLLY CEMETERY. THE SITE LIES 0.4 KS. NORTH-WEST OF THE DUNOLLY RD. AND 1K. NORTH-EAST OF THE DUNOLLY-INGLEWOOD RAILWAY.

**DESCRIPTION**

Freestone rubble winery. The winery is low-walled and rectangular with high gable. Red bricks are used to trim openings which include vertical T&G boarded loading doors and a loading platform at the gable end. On the north face is a small brick window opening. An adjoining house is partly demolished and consists of a pair of gabled brick bays, attached at one corner. They are built using colonial bonded brickwork in the distinctive bright red brick of the area. Ogee guttering survives on parts of both house and barn and the attached gabled wing at the rear is built from cavity hand made brickwork. It is now badly eroded at the base. Openings are built with segment -arched voussoirs, spanning a timber lintel with brick filing between. Mature pines and cypress species surround the house and provide an avenue to the west. The rear gabled wing attached to the house appears to have been a kitchen with a baker's oven and main fireplace in the north wall.

**HISTORY**

The winery is one of only a few structures remaining from Dunolly's adventure into viticulture. It was once the flourishing business of H O'B Daly. Daly was born in 1820 in Monaghan, Ireland and emigrated in the 1850s. He started a store in Dunolly in 1856. Encouraged by François Mellon, he planted a vineyard. This ran from the present winery down to the Dunolly Rd. For several decades he produced and sold his 'Dalysville' wines. One of a small band of wine enthusiasts in the shire, he gave garden fetes each year and for a time was President of the Dunolly Vines and Fruit Growers Association. He exhibited his wines in the great Melbourne exhibitions of 1880-1 and 1888-9. Daly went on to a career in local politics and was prominent in church and civic affairs for many years. His wines were drunk locally but failed to capture the interest of judges in Melbourne exhibitions.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Daly's winery occupies a prominent site near to the town of Dunolly. The partially-demolished house nearby and the plantings add to the interest of the site. The winery itself is a unique building in the shire. It is an industrial building dug into the slope of the hill and built in an attractive combination of rubble and red brick. It evokes some of the ambitions of last century's wine-frowers and dreams of one local burgess, Henry O'Brien Daly, whose family went on to take charge of the Bendigo Hotel (qv).

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:



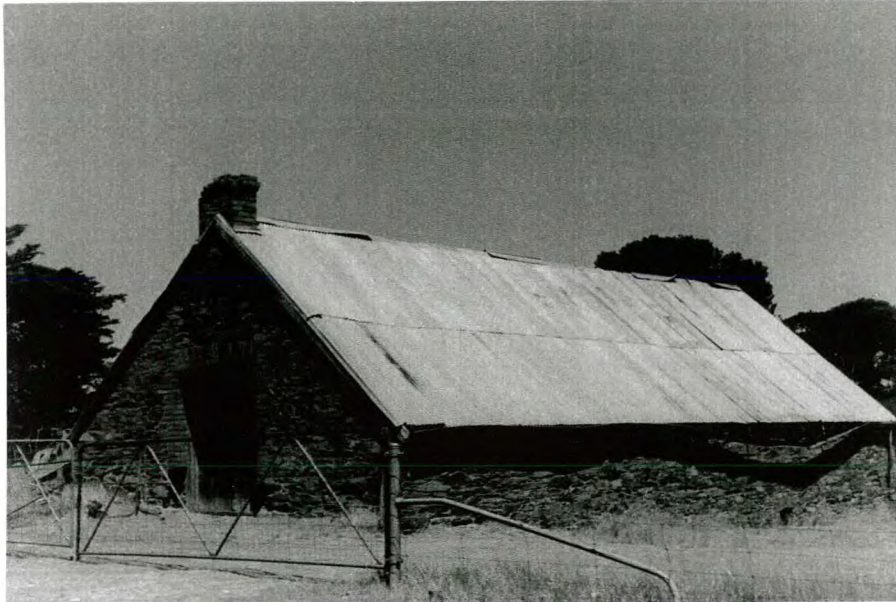
## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

Royal commission on vegetable products, 1892, handbook no. 3.

Official record of the Melbourne international exhibition, 1880-1.

Official record, Melbourne centennial exhibition, 1889.

DALY'S WINERY





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ST. MICH AEL'S AND ALL ANGELS ANGLICAN CHURCH**

LOCATION: HIGH ST., MOLIAGUL TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 1A/F (?)

GRANT DATE: 1864

GRANTEE: STOCKTON, THOMAS

DATE: 1865

MAJOR OWNER: ANGLICAN CHURCH

ARCHITECT: HALL, REV WILLIAM

BUILDER: ROBINSON, SAMUEL

**DESCRIPTION**

Built of freestone rubble with granite caps and buttressing in a simple Early English Gothic revival mode with lancet windows (diamond pattern leading) and an implied porch with herringbone panelled door. The bell hangs in an adjacent timber frame and simple arrow head pickets have been used for the front fence.

**HISTORY**

As religious congregations were formed after the gold rushes, churches began to dot the land through Bet Bet in the 1860s. Tenders were called for this church in December 1864 and the first stone was laid by its co-designer the Rev William Hall. Sam Robinson used Mt Moliagul granite and local freestone to build the church. James Wynne of Inglewood prepared detailed plans from Hall's concept. In January 1865, tenders were called for boarding and plastering the interior.

The church opened on 14 March 1865, with sermons from the Archdeacon of Castlemaine, Rev G Vance of Kyneton and the Moliagul pastor, Rev Hall. The Wesleyans kindly allowed the congregation to take tea in their hall and a more spirited celebration took place in Robert Leck's 'large store room'. In 1899 the church reopened after damaged stonework along the eastern wall was replaced by timber. Local dairy man, Thomas Stockton, had been granted the land in 1865. The Presbyterians had obtained a reserve to the south along High Street. As with other local towns, the Wesleyans were first to build a church and in May 1864, they opened a 'neat and commodious weatherboard church' sited on a hill with a pleasant view. Rev William Hall who designed the church, acknowledged that his influences came from the nineteenth century ecclesiastical movement in which spiritual and architectural inspiration were synonymous. As he wrote while still in England

*I have bought and nearly read through Bloxam's Gothic Architecture . . . I learn from him that the term Gothic was a nickname given to Ecclesiastical Architecture generally by Sir C Wren who was anxious to revive Grecian and Italian in its stead . . . an attempt which has most significantly failed in producing anything almost worthy of being in the same day with what he called Gothic - our ugly modern buildings being all a mixture of debased Grecian and Italian . . . when I go on to one of the British colonies as Bishop I shall be my own architect after the example of old Ecclesiastics*

Hall had a hand in establishing and designing several churches beginning with that at St. Arnaud in 1864 and ending with the church at Kingower in 1871.

**SIGNIFICANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

The church has little architectural sophistication (on an architectural typological basis). No doubt Hall would approve of that judgement since as an Evangelical he deliberately chose to eschew sophistication and grandeur. The church expresses clearly and directly the theological (and as well the design) principles of a low church clergyman. Parishioners at Moliagul, drawn from among Cornish miners, shared this belief in the most simple and austere expressions of religious faith. In addition to its bushland setting and the charm of its rough rubble walls, the church is significant as a direct and accurate expression of the simple and unostentatious beliefs of the clergyman and congregation.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Flett, Dunolly, pp.194 ff.

Courier, 13 May 1865.

ST. MICHAEL'S AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH, MOLIAGUL



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MCCOY'S GENERAL STORE**

LOCATION: CHAPEL ST: MOLIAGUL TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 4/E

GRANTEE: EASSIE, C

GRANT DATE: 1862

DATE: 1865

MAJOR OWNER: EASSIE, CHARLES

**DESCRIPTION**

Charles Eassie, who also had land at Maryborough and Inglewood obtained the freehold to this property in 1862. The store was supposedly on the site seven years earlier and was shown on Fraser's 1856 map. Chapel St., was lined with stores and hotels. Amongst those storekeepers remaining in the late 1860s were Henry Benaim, Alex Bell and Robert Leck. A local poet described the storekeepers and their homes during 1865, listing five in all. Taking them in order, Robert Leck was 'smart and quick'; Mrs. Hall's low wooden store could only be reached by crossing a bridge; Alex Bell's post office and store was next and after that 'Harry's'. A blacksmith, baker, two butchers, a shoemaker, newsvendor, schoolmaster and two chapels and a church made up the rest of civic and commercial Moliagul. Leck, the most active of the five, also applied for a publican's license. he listed his premises as of wood and iron with two sitting rooms and two bedrooms for visitors. His large store room was used to celebrate the opening of the Anglican church.

A weatherboard and slab hotel, store and residential complex was sold at Moliagul in 1856 then occupied by S Biggs and sold by direction of Crabbe a solicitor of Dunolly. By 1890, Benaim, James Shay and Thomas Stockton kept general stores and JE Matthews of Inkerman offered this complex for sale in 1912. Apparently unsuccessful, Matthews continued in business until 1913. James Shay appears to have run the business before 1898 when Matthews took over. John McCoy gave his name to the store after a tenure lasting since the 1920s.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The store dates from after the first gold rushes into the area and so cannot be identified with this major period in local history. Nevertheless it is significant in its age, especially for a commercial and weatherboarded building. It also is significant for its surviving internal fittings and its survival at the centre of the collection of buildings which make up modern Moliagul.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE****SOURCE:**

CPO GF 17.

RGO D 1867.

Bendigo directory, 1868.Express, 2 January 1865, 23 July 1912.Directories, 1903, 1905, 1910, 1913, 1916, 1923, 1925, 1930, 1940



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

MCCOY'S STORE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MOUNT MOLIAGUL HOTEL**

LOCATION: CHAPEL ST., MOLIAGUL TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 12-13/C(?)

GRANTEE: MORRIS, SAMUEL

GRANT DATE: 1862

DATE: 1859-1862

MAJOR OWNER: MORRIS, SAMUEL

**DESCRIPTION**

A multi-fronted face brick and pilastraded building with typical double bar doors under a street verandah which possesses a saw-tooth end boards and ogee spiked spouting. The parapet is simple with pediments marking the roof gables behind. The bricks have been painted, side wall is now asbestos clad and the window details altered.

**HISTORY**

Named from the nearby schist outcrop, this hotel reputedly existed before the crown grant was issued to Samuel Morris in 1862. In January 1853, the first gold finds occurred at McIntyre's Run. A commissioner's camp followed one month later. With each successive rush, temporary town centres were set up and to accomodate the legal sale of liquor, licenses were issued for the area in 1854. Two hotels received licenses at Moliagul - JS Edwards' Mt Moliagul and John Eddington's National. An 1855 report of the Mt Moliagul diggings noted a street of shops and saloons a mile long on the Moliagul Road: over 16000 diggers were working on mines and as well 'a large street has been formed and public houses and stores rapidly erected'.

Hugh Fraser's 1856 plan of the Mt Moliagul goldfield and the Dunolly to Bealiba Rd shows the Mt Moliagul Hotel then occupied by H Edwards. To the south was Conolly's National Hotel. Both were located at the crossing of the Kingower and Avoca Roads. A demented female was supposed to have burned down this building and the hotel was rebuilt in its present form. Samuel Morris held the license in 1861 and freehold in 1862. By 1864, Thomas Llewellyn held the license and stayed in the pub until the 1870s. Chapel Street was by the the commercial centre of Moliagul. John Douglass had the hotel in the 1880s and William and Margaret Stott were later licensees for a long period. In early 1894, when Ah Sing, Moliagul's oldest Chinaman, died of starvation, an inquest was held at the hotel. Margaret Stott remained there into this century. During the First World War, Florrie Martin and Septimus Wilson held the license. The hotel had been closed before the war ended. The hotel closed again in 1962 after a brief reopening in the depression (presumably to satisfy the thirsts of sustenance fossickers). Edward Montgomery held the license. A photograph c1880 shows the hotel as it is now but then with unpainted brickwork and no verandah.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The hotel has importance because of its early construction and the earlier siting of a hotel on this block, dating from the first gold rushes. It has been altered but the facade still survives with minor changes. The building is one of the few left in the old commercial centre of Moliagul and is significant both because of its connection with almost the entire history of the gold rush town and more importantly by the



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

fact that it has survived where so many other Moliagul structures have not.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

## Source:

Flett, Dunolly, p.33.

Flett, Old Pubs, p.56, p.63

RGD.

CPO GF 17.

Express, 13 February 1894.

Carless, Son of the Mount.

Directories, 1940, 1930, 1925, 1923, 1916, 1914, 1905.

MOUNT MOLIAGUL HOTEL



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MOLIAGUL COMMON SCHOOL (SS 746)**

LOCATION: HIGH ST., MOLIAGUL  
 ALLOT: 3-4/2  
 GRANTEE: COMMON SCHOOL RES.  
 GRANT DATE: 1871(?)  
 DATE: 1872  
 MAJOR OWNER VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT  
 BUILDER: FAULKNER, JAMES

**DESCRIPTION**

Built in English bond red brickwork in a simple gabled style with end parapets and bellcote at the north end. The design resembles a scaled down version of the early brick churches of the area. Some mature exotic landscape and an octagonal timber trellised and a boarded shelter shed are in the grounds.

**HISTORY**

Royal Flying Doctor Service founder, Rev. John Flynn was three years old when his father, Thomas, was transferred from his eleven year posting as the school's first teacher in 1883. Completed by James Faulkner for a little over £324 in June 1872, this school replaced the Primitive Methodist chapel as an educational building. It was built at the same time as schools at Newbridge and Tarnagulla. In 1859 a school stood just north of the Mt Moliagul Hotel. Another opened in canvas goldfields form during December 1861; classes moved to the former Primitive Wesleyan Chapel in 1863 as Common School 165. A new site was gazetted in February 1871 when the present school began. Five years later the grounds were fenced and planted with both exotic and native shrubs; some still survive.

The Moliagul School only vaguely resembles Yahland & Getzschmann's Kangaroo Flat special school (1870) which has a similar form but more ornamentation. A plainer example, the Evansford Common School (801), was built in 1867 of bluestone and altered. It has the same gable parapet and single room plan. The nearby Newbridge school is similarly gabled and parapeted and originally possessed a similar rectangular plan; but this has gone to make way for a portable timber schoolroom. Unlike many government schools, Moliagul is externally intact (no window replacement but a skillion porch added). Internally, superficial damage has occurred in the simple brick-faced school room with a boarded gambrel-form ceiling.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Few of the simple rural common schools remain unaltered or without additions. Compared to the huge building programme after 1872, those which have survived intact from the previous period have become comparatively rare.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:  
 National Trust file 4940.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

R Carless, Son of the mount.

MOLIAGUL SCHOOL





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**NEWBRIDGE COMMON SCHOOL, SS 457**

LOCATION: RAGLAN ST., NEWBRIDGE TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 3/12

GRANTEE: STATE SCHOOL

GRANT DATE: 1873(?)

DATE: 1867

OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

BUILDER: BUCKLEY, BRIDGE AND CO.(?)

**DESCRIPTION**

Newbridge school is elevated on a cruciform plan, as if a church, and the style adopted is also of a simple gabled Gothic revival, built in three colour brickwork. Openings have been bricked up and added, ad-hoc plumbing and end additions are all intrusive. The fence may have been replaced.

**HISTORY**

Anthony Lester opened the first Newbridge school in January 1861, at the beginning of a growth period for the town. This left many other substantial brick buildings besides the school. Amongst these was the St. John the Evangelist's Sunday School (1865 east of the river) which when completed was offered to the public for use as a common school. This offer was accepted in November 1865 with the townsfolk expecting that their new brick school would be started in four months. Tenders had already been called in June by Buckley, Bridge and Co. of Newbridge. The opening (of the north wing) took place in March 1867. Standard alterations were proposed for the school in 1915. These included enlarged windows, removal of the stepped gallery and its replacement in the two main rooms by a teacher's platform. Not all of these changes were carried out. Drawings for this contract show the present brick schoolroom connected by a porch to a lower gabled brick room (classroom 2). This appears to be the earlier of the two and has since been replaced by a timber portable. Like Moliagul, Evansford and Kangaroo Flat Common Schools, the original Newbridge schoolroom expressed its own regional character within the simple form of the common school. The gabled parapet was common but the second Newbridge classroom's cruciform plan was not often repeated. The only exception was the Essendon National School of 1862. (since demolished)

**SIGNIFICANCE**

More data is needed on the construction of the surviving wing prior to any fundamental conclusions. However judged as an architectural form type and a known public building from the boom period of the town, the school has importance to the shire and potential importance to the region on the basis of form or use.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Vision and Realisation, vol.2,p.443.Courier, 24 June 1865, 11 November 1865.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

NEWBRIDGE SCHOOL



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**STEWART'S GENERAL STORE**

LOCATION: LYONS ST., NEWBRIDGE TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 3/1

GRANTEE: ELLIOT, J

GRANT DATE: 30 APRIL 1856

DATE: 1865; 1906

MAJOR OWNER: PEARSON, HUGH

BUILDER: NOTTAGE(?)

**DESCRIPTION**

A weatherboarded corner store with unusual scrolled and arched boarded parapet and central exposed roof gable. Timber-framed show windows survive and a detached brick chimney (extended) has been absorbed by a domestic character side verandah. The chimney extension and adjacent old but much altered brick house (1865?) suggest extensive renovation of an earlier store which probably included raising the roof line.

**HISTORY**

John Elliott of Melbourne was granted this site in 1855 for £18. Other lots purchased by Elliott included the adjoining allotments in this section and three in section 6. Hugh Pearson, a former Edinburgh grocer, was the next owner in 1861. After a short stay in Carlton, Pearson had opened stores on the goldfields (Chinaman's Flat, Havelock and Inglewood) and finally, after his Newbridge land acquisition, on this site as well. The Courier of June 1865 described improvements in Newbridge and noted Pearson's near completion of a 'large two-storey brick store'. The next month, Hugh Pearson applied for a publican's license for a brick house containing eight rooms. Pearson's holdings on this corner were worth at least £600 in 1873, the amount of his mortgage to Sam Warnock. He also got the Newbridge post office agency in the same year. The property passed to James Hugh Pearson in 1906, coinciding with extensive renovations to the building.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Judged purely on architectural standards, the intact show windows and the distinctive scrolled parapet lend significance to the building. As well it has a t less distinct relationship with the Pearson family. The building is significant in the local history of the area, since it has functioned on this site for 123 years. Newbridge was a major crossing point on the Loddon and the store was sited to trap some of this passing trade. The wide entrance way to the bridge over the Loddon, with the store, pub and remains of a mechanics institute reflect some of the bustle and movement which characterised Newbridge in the 1860s, when this store was first built.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Sutherland, Victoria, p.228.Directory, 1867, 1899.Tarnagulla Courier, 24 June 1865, 22 July 1865



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

STEWART'S STORE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**NEWBRIDGE STATE SCHOOL TEACHER'S RESIDENCE**

LOCATION: RAGLAN ST., NEWBRIDGE TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 14

GRANTEE : STATE SCHOOL

GRANT DATE: 1906(?)

DATE: 1906

OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECT: MARSDEN, JH, (PWD ARCHITECT)

BUILDER: BOLGER &amp; SON

**DESCRIPTION**

Two-storeyed Swiss Chalet style weatherboarded teacher's residence, with asbestos(?) upper level cladding and simulated half-timbering, a steeply gabled main roof, simple hipped verandah at ground level. Multi-pane windows and slatted balustrading as detail.

**HISTORY**

Newbridge school opened in 1861 under head teacher Anthony Lester. Six later the first brick schoolroom was erected. A three acre site was reserved to the west of the old school in 1906. The residence was erected on this site, apparently under the direction of Arthur Otto Sachse, Minister for Public Instruction (1902-1908) and member for north-east province (1892-1920). Sachse's involvement appears to date this building to c1906-1908. It was one of three schools in this style. It originally had more ornamentation of a Northern European style in half-timbering etc. The house contained a diningroom, sitting room and bathrooms on the ground floor as well as a rear kitchen, scullery and pantry. Two bedrooms with plenty of built-in storage, a box room and a balcony were on the upper level. A sleepout and a new floor to the verandah were added in 1934. The upstairs strapping (roughcast and timbering replaced with asbestos and strapping) may have occurred at this time. Sachse was an engineer and manufacturer. He patented several steam-powered inventions. As well he took an active interest in the battle to end the slave trade in South-East Asia.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This house may be compared to the picturesque Mediaeval revival style of Desbrowe Annear's chalet style house at Eaglemont. It is a more modest but similarly inspired experiment in a domestic style which had been used in America (as a craftsman bungalow variant) but not in Australia until the turn to American Bungalow designs in the 1920s. Although altered in detail, the upright 'doll's house' form is distinctively of the Swiss Chalet mode and hence is a rare style shared with the nationally known work of Annear.

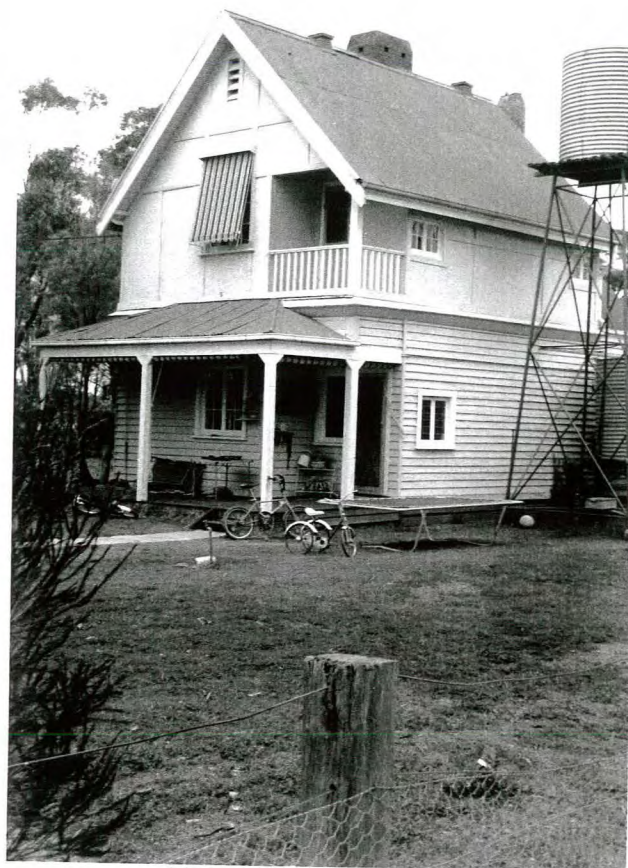
**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Vision & Realisation, vol. 2 p.443.100 Years of responsible government in Victoria, 1856-1956.Courier, 11 November 1865.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

NEWBRIDGE STATE SCHOOL TEACHER'S RESIDENCE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

HOUSE  
 COMMERCIAL ROAD TARNAGULLA  
 GRANTEE FYFE, GEORGE  
 GRANT DATE 6 APRIL 1864  
 DATE 1865  
 OWNER FYFE, GEORGE  
 BUILDER FYFE, GEORGE (?)

## DESCRIPTION

An early broad-gabled, beaded-edge weatherboard house with valuable scrolled valances, double or divided panelled doors, spade-headed picket balustrade cum fence and detached brick chimney with simple cornice. The yard fence extends in arrow-headed picket. Another early timber structure is at the rear, gabled with chimney attached.

## HISTORY

George Fyfe, a carter and contractor, was the grantee for this lot in 1864. Fyfe was partnered by Christopher Metelman until January 1866 when he continued the business in his own name. Another of Fyfe's activities was as host at the newly-formed Tarnagulla Mechanic's Institute from mid-1865. He provided the Institute with reading rooms (18 by 14 feet) and a library -cum-committee room (14 by 11 feet). Both rooms were furnished, well-lit and had fireplaces. They may have been in this building. Fyfe is listed in Tarnagulla commercial directories until c1871. James and David Fyfe, farmers of Newbridge, were also listed in this period. Towards the end of the 1860s, Fyfe's baby daughter was thrown from a cart and killed on a routine outing with her mother.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The building has regional importance because it is an early and intact timber house and because it contributes to the gold era character of Tarnagulla.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

## Source:

Bendigo Directory, 1868, 1871-2, 1875.

Tarnagulla Courier, 3 June 1865, 9 February 1865.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BOWMAN'S BAKERY**

LOCATION : COMMERCIAL ROAD, TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 4/18

GRANTEE: BOWMAN, G

GRANT DATE: 1 SEPTEMBER 1861

DATE: 1861-5

MAJOR OWNER: BOWMAN, GEORGE

## DESCRIPTION

A masonry shop with a parapeted and cemented facade and original shopfront (timber framed) with storm shutters intact and panelled plinth. A street verandah was once attached to the southern half of the building. The sign 'Fancy Bread G Bowman Biscuitmaker' survives on the board directly under the verandah. The side brickwork has been painted and one window opening has a cemented architrave.

## HISTORY

Frederick George Bowman, a baker, was granted this lot in 1861 for a little over eight pounds and appears to have erected this shop and residence soon afterwards. This bakery is listed in Tarnagulla commercial directories from 1865 to the 1890s whilst several other Bowmans lived in the Shire, at Bet Bet and near Mt Hooghly. Frederick Bowman, a Tarnagulla bootmaker, purchased this shop from Frederick Snr's estate in 1906 but it is Fred Snr's sign which survives over the show window today.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The age of the building, its rare old sign and its part in the Tarnagulla townscape give it an important place in the identity of the town and the region.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

RGO.

Bendigo Directory, 1868.Directory, 1893-4.Tarnagulla Courier, 1865 onwards.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BOWMAN'S BAKERY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HOUSE**

LOCATION: COMMERCIAL ROAD, TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP  
 ALLOT: 4/13A  
 GRANTEE: BOUSFIELD, H  
 GRANT DATE: 1 NOVEMBER 1864  
 MAJOR OWNER: CHEETHAM, T  
 DATE: 1865

**DESCRIPTION**

Double-fronted weatherboarded house with high gabled roof line, gable finials and elegant cement and stone chimney cornices with twin terra-cotta pots on both. The house has an elegant concave verandah but the posts have been removed. The fence has also been replaced. A pine species, obviously of some age, is the major contributor to the extensive garden although challenged by a Moreton Bay fig in its growth.

**HISTORY**

Henry Bousfield was granted this site in 1864 but was never listed as a Tarnagulla resident. Instead in 1868 he was cited as an engineer in the now declining mining centre of Maidentown. Seven years later, Bousfield, Madgeson and John operated a crushing plant at Maidentown. In 1880, John Bousfield conducted an iron foundry at Laanecoorie in 1880. This was moved to Eaglehawk in 1900. Only this firm and a Henry T Bousfield, farmer of Natimuk, were listed as Bousfields in commercial directories in 1900. The house was supposedly pre-fabricated and owned for a long period by James Cheetham, a storekeeper and mining investor and local councillor. Cheetham was born in Lancashire and apprenticed to the cotton trade. He arrived in Tarnagulla in 1857 and began quartz mining, managing a string of claims in the area. Cheetham worked as valuer and collector for the Shire of Bet Bet in 1870 and eventually became Shire secretary. Soon afterwards he served as a Tarnagulla borough councillor and was elected as mayor in four consecutive years. Given their common interest in gold mining, Bousfieldd may have sold this house to Cheetham.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Cheetham was one of the key figures in the commercial and mining life of Tarnagulla. He built on his business success to become a political leader. His house, somewhat larger and more elegant than those around it, testifies to his local status. It is significant in its contribution to the character of Tarnagulla and in its links to one of the men who pioneered mining and took a lead in local politics.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

CHEETHAM'S HOUSE, TARNAGULLA



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

### VICTORIA HOTEL AND THEATRE

LOCATION: COMMERCIAL ROAD, TARNAGULLA

ALLOT: 5/16

GRANTEE: BARLOW, GEORGE

GRANT DATE: 1 AUGUST 1861

DATE: 1861-2

OWNER: BARLOW, GEORGE

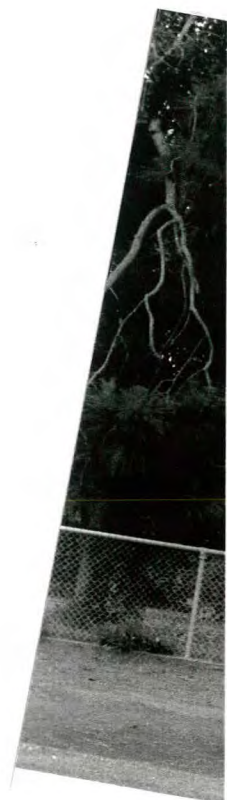
### DESCRIPTION

A former face brick and cemented structure with a parapeted facade in two parts. The former Victoria Hotel to the south has two entrance doors and the theatre to the north, one central entrance to Commercial Road. Both buildings have similar segmented, arched-raised entablature and distinctive exaggerated keystone and quoining around doorways. The north wall painting and instillation of pipe balustrading have been carried out since 1979.

### HISTORY

George Barlow, a Tarnagulla butcher, acquired the grant of allotment in 1861 and the freehold of allotment 6 from Adam Nuttall in 1862. Barlow mortgaged the property twice, in 1876 and 1882, prior to sale to Emma Davies in 1890 for £600. A string of hotels lined Commercial Road after quartz reef mines opened on Poverty Reef. These hotels included the Sandy Creek, the Golden Age and the Company. The Victoria was one of these, rising in 1862 and surviving under licensees, Ashworth, Frank Fearn, Barlow (owner) Sam Ellis and William Morgan Davies. Davies, a Welshman had come to Tarnagulla in 1858. Drawing on his experience in the Cyfartha mines he became a partner in the Prince of Wales Mine (on Poverty Reef) and managed the Cumbrian Mine (New Chum Reef). He finally held the license for the Victoria from 1876. Barlow was also involved in the Cambrian mine; he ran the Manchester Saw Mills at Corfu Reef as well. Davies was a borough councillor, mayor (1870-1878) and served as a magistrate from 1870 to 1876. His wife Emma conducted the hotel after his death and eventually acquired the freehold. The Victoria Hotel and Hall (60 by 40 feet) was the focus for many of Tarnagulla's social and civic pursuits. Mining company meetings, commemorations for the Presbyterian clergy, with a 'fruit soiree' for 400 people in 1863, with regular lodge meetings (the Garibaldi Lodge memorial board is still on a wall inside the theatre) brought Tarnagulla residents into the hall on almost any week in the 1870s and 1880s. Barlow modestly advertised his theatre as 'one of the best in the country' in 1864. Sam Ellis advertised an evening's entertainment in 1867 as a 'comic and sentimental songs, breakdowns, burlesques . . . the whole to conclude with a screaming farce'. The entertainers were the Apollo Minstrels and their programme followed the extremes of goldtown life.

In 1912 the Licensing Reduction Board visited the district and looked closely at the Victoria. Police assured the Board that the hotel had good accommodation, good stabling and that it was well conducted. It had fourteen brick rooms and eight of other construction types. The owner, Mrs. Davies, had spent most of the profit on upkeep. The hotel had five permanent boarders. The town clerk and other leading figures spoke highly of the hotel and pointed out that with the Poseidon rush, numbers in the town had risen by 200 in five years. So much did this solidarity impress the board that they allowed the Victoria to keep its license. The pub only survived for another four years and in 1916 it closed. It became a residence for





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

the Davies family and the hall continued as a meeting place. HG Turner wrote that the gold rushes brought to Victoria a new era in theatre. The stage became 'a lavish and vulgar symbol of their golden colony'. Every large hotel had a room for a theatre in which travelling troupes would lampoon the pretensions of colonial society. Not many hotels had a separate theatre like that at the Victoria in which a programme was maintained totally separate from the hotel. The Chiltern Star Theatre survives as a simple face brick hall without ornament attached to the former Star Hotel and is referred to by Ross Thorne in Theatres in Australia as the oldest known theater attached to a hotel in Australia.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The Victoria Theatre is probably the oldest known purpose-built theatre (attached to a hotel) in Australia. It evokes the heady days of the gold rush stage. Architecturally, the strongly moulded opening architraves are typical of early architectural detailing (compare with the former Union Bank) and the external fabric is surprisingly complete. With the absence of a similarly intact gold era hotel in the town, The Victoria survives as Tarnagulla's social heart and not just as relic of the past. It is still, as it has been since the 1860s, the central community building of the town. This continuity of use makes it valuable beyond its stylistic distinctiveness.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Flett, Old Pubs, pp.61-62.

RGD 33125.

Directory, 1899.

Courier, 19 November 1864.

VICTORIA HOTEL AND THEATRE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**COLONIAL BANK OF AUSTRALASIA**

LOCATION: COMMERCIAL ROAD, TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 1/15

GRANTEE: FOOS, JOSEPH

GRANT DATE: 1866

MAJOR OWNER: COLONIAL BANK OF AUSTRALASIA

ARCHITECT: TERRY, LEONARD

**DESCRIPTION**

Former Colonial Bank – a two-storeyed stuccoed brick building in a conservative Renaissance revival manner with smooth rustication on the ground level, a fluted string mould at the first floor level and dentilated cornice at the top. The openings have architraves on the upper level and bracketed pediments on the lower (doorway). A Tuscan order entrance porch and balcony combination is adorned with wrought iron balustrading which uses the saltire cross motif. There are traces of an early colour scheme but the diverse signs across the facade are intrusive.

**HISTORY**

Gold-buying agencies and bank branches were set up near the diggings in the late 1850s and the 1860s. The Bank of Australasia was established in Dunolly in 1856. In the same year, the Colonial Bank was established in Victoria and had erected only few known and purpose-built branches ( amongst them Geelong, Kyneton and Ballarat )when this building replaced an earlier branch office in 1865-6. The land purchase and intention to build were announced in the Courier in June 1865, followed by a detailed account of the design, in August. The bank was to have two levels, with an iron balcony over the entrance and a comfortable suite of apartments for the manager on the upper level. There was the public office with desks for teller and accountant, the manager's room and of course the smelting room with its tall chimney. Smelting gold at the point of purchase supposedly prevented adulteration of gold, especially after the beginnings of quartz mining. By late 1865 the foundations had been excavated and dressed granite carted in from Harcourt to line the basements. The manager's wife, Mrs. AH Willis laid the foundation stone in November and apart from a few decorative touches, the bank was completed in July 1866. The bank closed in 1888 and its neighbour the Union Bank (qv) purchased the building and took over the branch. The two banks are shown in an early photograph. The Colonial Bank and its towering smelter chimney dominate the corner. The Union Bank looks like a toy alongside. Between them is a brace of swagged pickets and a capped corrugated iron fence.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Using the Trethowan facade composition typology, there is no known 19C. equivalent. The design evokes its early date and the architect's skill by the restraint and balance of its palazzo revival mode and the tall smelting chimney. These give a clear expression to the gold- mining character of the town. The corner siting and its location next to the Union Bank are key elements in the townscape.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

## Source:

ANZ Archives.

Trethowan, 'Banks of Victoria'.

Directory 1868.Tarnagulla Courier, 3 June 1865, 12 August 1865, 11 October 1865, 7 July 1866.COLONIAL BANK, TARNAGULLA



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**UNION BANK**

LOCATION: COMMERCIAL ROAD, TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 2/15PT.

GRANTEE: MCMULLEN JF

GRANT DATE: 1861

DATE: 1859

MAJOR OWNER: UNION BANK OF AUSTRALIA

ARCHITECT: TERRY, LEONARD

**DESCRIPTION**

'Lochcarron' the former Union Bank has the date 1859 on a simply gabled pediment. Formerly face brick but now painted, it has quoining and exaggerated vermiculated keystones over the entrance and windows. Jacobean strapwork patterns are also used in the stucco and at architraves. The door has been replaced.

**HISTORY**

John F McMullen, Inspector of the Union Bank, purchased this lot and put up the present building in 1859. This was part of the Union Bank's attempt to corner some of the revenue from gold exchanges, already a lucrative avenue for other banks. Within twelve months, the London office of the bank began to demand economies as gold production went into steep decline. The Union and the Bank of Australia agreed to close branches together, so that when the Union branch at Back Creek closed, the Tarnagulla branch of the Bank of Australia also closed. But when company mines opened on Poverty Reef, the branch remained profitable, especially after legislation in 1858 which permitted firms to mortgage plant and moveable assets. In 1890 after the bank moved into the former Colonial Bank headquarters(qv) these premises were sold to Thomas Comrie. The Comrie family sold to Hamilton Stobie in 1928. After his death it was sold to George Bailey in 1935. An early photograph of the bank shows face brick wall construction (since stuccoed) and cemented dressings to the main building and an attached hip-roofed and verandahed residence at the rear.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Among other purpose-built Union Banks, this appears to be the earliest rural example, older than either the Clunes (1865) or Ballarat (1863) branches, both designed by Leonard Terry. The unusual ornamentation is typical of early commercial designs. The building went up during the early gold boom in Tarnagulla and expresses much of the optimism of these years. Its siting near the central intersection of the town and adjacent to the other major bank branch are key factors in the historic landscape of Tarnagulla.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

RGO 49374.

Butlin, Australian and New Zealand Bank, p.129.

ANZ archives.

Directory, 1868.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

UNION BANK, TARNAGULLA



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TARNAGULLA**

LOCATION: GLADSTONE ST., TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 16/9 RES.

GRANTEE: PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (70.252)

GRANT DATE: 1870

DATE: 1864

MAJOR OWNER: PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

BUILDER: DAVIS &amp; TREVASCUS

ARCHITECT: AUSTIN &amp; ELLIS

**DESCRIPTION**

Former Presbyterian church built in two-colour brickwork in a simple Gothic revival manner but with notable brick detailing around a central implied bell tower with associated bellcote, iron cross and main nave window. Edwardian church hall(?) with gabled roof adjoins and the fence around the complex probably dates from the period. Sited near the government square and the Anglican church, this church, its materials and form coincide generally with the brick civic architecture around it.

**HISTORY**

Almost within the one year, 1864, the three churches of Tarnagulla appeared as if in a unanimous sign of faith in the town's future prosperity. Among them was this church, built by Davis & Trevascus, designed by Melbourne architects, Austin & Ellis and presided over by Rev TA Hamilton. Early in 1863, the Tarnagulla Presbyterians celebrated the anniversary of the induction of the clergy to the town; the Rev TA Hamilton addressed his congregation in the Victoria Theatre. Rev JA McLellan was a later minister to the church. The church hall is thought to be the Laanecoorie church moved onto the site in June 1926. At the opening of the Wesleyan church in 1865, Rev Hamilton commented that the Presbyterian church had been completed. He thought it was a 'masterpiece' though clearly 'cast in the shade' by the Wesleyan church.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The church is architecturally-modest and its significance lies in its relation to nearby religious and civic buildings.

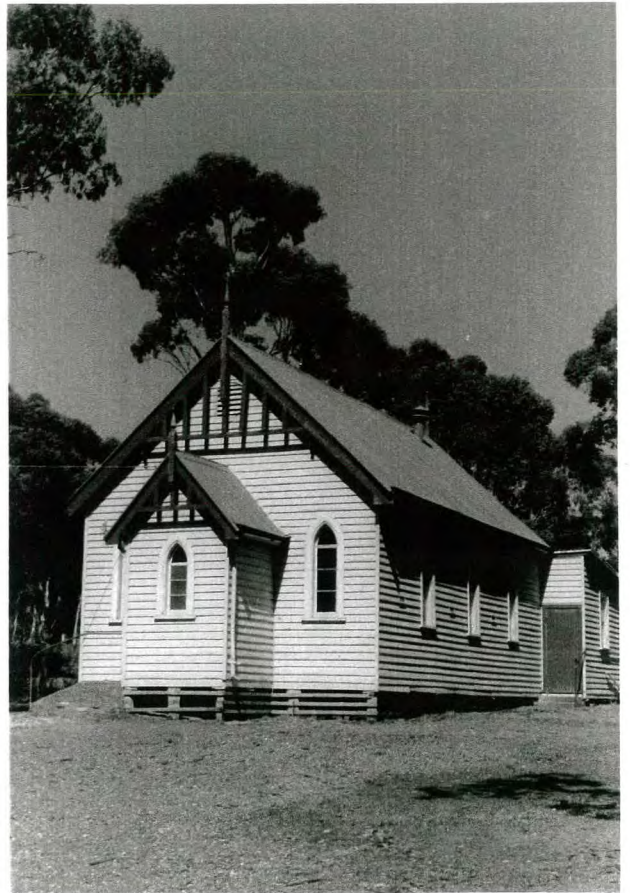
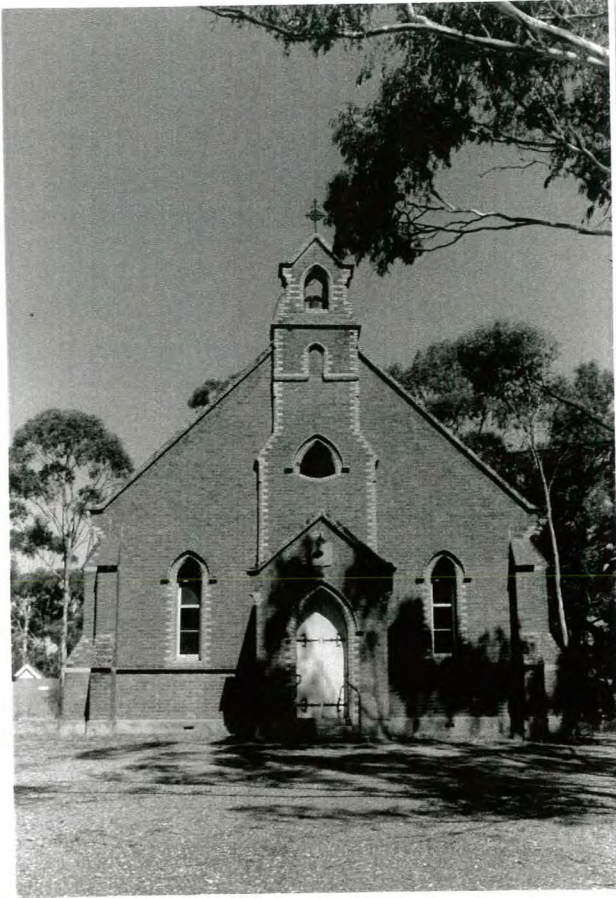
**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Tarnagulla Courier, 15 April 1865.Argus, 2 June 1863.Bendigo Directory, 1868.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, TARNAGULLA







## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TARNAGULLA COURT HOUSE**

LOCATION: KING ST. TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP  
MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT  
DATE: 1863

**DESCRIPTION:**

Small gabled building in a simple rectilinear form. The building is has render recentlyb painted. The simple appearance is relieved by an oculus above wtin doorways which are arched and recessed. Heavy panelled wooden doors in both entrances.

**HISTORY**

The growth of population in Tarnagulla because of the gold rush had taken place without any presence of police. The rioting of diggers after the Sandy Creek Rush brought police and later magistrates to the town Tarnagulla seemed to fail to win any consideration as Carisbrook and Dunolly battled for the siting of a court in their town. Eventually this courthouse opened in 1863. It later seemed, like the nearby Sandy Creek gold warden's office, to be badly sited for such an important building. As well there had been problems with foundations. However plans for a court on Commercial Rd. were never followed through.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

A key building in the civic and religious sector of the township. This is a dignified building and its simple yet elegant lines express much of the broader character of the town. Essential to the character of the town.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH, TARNAGULLA**

LOCATION: KING ST., TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP  
 ALLOT: RES/15A  
 GRANTEE: WESLEYAN CHURCH  
 GRANT DATE: 1864  
 DATE: 1865  
 MAJOR OWNER: WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH  
 ARCHITECT: CROUCH & WILSON  
 BUILDER: NOTTAGE, JOHN

**DESCRIPTION**

Former Wesleyan Methodist Church - a simple Gothic revival church with spirelets, stop piers, marking the nave and side aisles in a traditional way and built with two-colour Flemish bond brickwork with cemented crockets on each of the spires and the main gable. The main window has stone tracery in a tre-foil pattern with four lights underneath, the other windows are leaded lights. The bell has been strung in a gum tree and nearby surrounding Monterey pines do not appear to be of any great age. They do relate to the church period. The interior has some notable details and includes a basement.

**HISTORY**

Irving Benson wrote of Jonothan Falder's arrival from California Hill and his sermons to Wesleyans from a tree stump at Sandy Creek in September 1858. Other services followed in more comfortable surroundings in a private house. From 1859 there had been a timber Wesleyan church at Tarnagulla, appearing a year prior to the formation of the Dunolly and Tarnagulla circuit under the Rev Robert Bunn. Rev Mewton and Mr King are credited with creating the church. Planning began in 1862, aided by J Falder and Edward Davies, both mining investors and tenders were called in August 1864. Prolific designers of brick Wesleyan churches in Victoria, Crouch and Wilson were the architects and John Nottage, the builder for a contract price of £1408. Government and private contributions cut back this amount and when the church opened, the debt stood at only a few hundred pounds. Major contributors included S Hatt who discovered Poverty Reef.

Meanwhile Nottage and the church committee were at odds over payments, with Nottage accusing the committee of unfair treatment and Henry Bristol accusing Nottage of bad management. The opening of the church in April 1865 was as usual a popular event in Tarnagulla with sermons by Rev W Hill of Castlemaine and Rev sayer from Dunolly. Even the Presbyterian minister was forced to admit that the new church cast his own into the shade. The pulpit drew attention for its cedar and crimson velvet. The communion table was surrounded by polished cedar and had bronzed rails and behind it on the wall was a small niche. The pine trusses were exposed below a paneled and plastered ceiling and the 300 comfortable seats were well finished. The whole church was lit by kerosene standard and bracket lamps fixed to the seats.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Among the district's Wesleyan churches, it does not measure up to that at

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

Castlemaine but compares more than favourably with those at Maldon and Dunolly. It is the most architecturally pleasing of all the Tarnagulla churches and is enhanced by its hillside setting. It is again an example of the consolidation of the town after the first gold rushes. While the Victoria theatre provided one focus to local life, this church provided another. The Wesleyans involved in its history often worked on the neighbouring Poverty Reef and took a lead in political life in Tarnagulla. Its form, location and history together represent the essential character of life in a small gold town.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

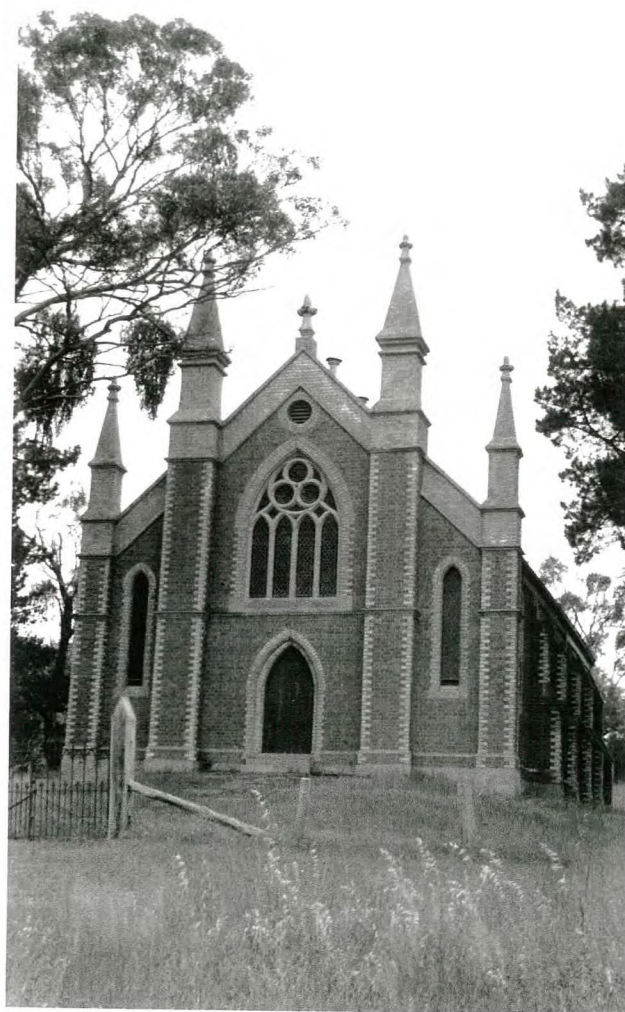
Source:

Jacobs, Lewis and Vines, Maldon.

Courier, 15 April 1865, 29 April 1865.

Argus, 1 August 1864.

Wesleyan church committee books (at Tarnagulla Gold Museum).

WESLEYAN CHURCH, TARNAGULLA



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BELL COTTAGE**

LOCATION: MITCHELL LANE TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

DATE: 1935-40

MAJOR OWNER: BELL, HERBERT

BUILDER: BELL, HERBERT

**DESCRIPTION**

A cottage built from local stone of various descriptions in a typical Californian Bungalow form with brick quoining, Japanese-style verandah and bracketed and trussed gables.

**HISTORY**

Herbert Bell arrived in Tarnagulla during the economic depression of the late 1920s after serving in the First World War and subsequently in the Merchant Navy. Like many of the depression's itinerant gold-seekers, Bell fossicked on the Tarnagulla field and built his house over a period with stone and bricks, collected on his bicycle from around old mining dumps. He served again in the Second World War and on his return established an orchard and poultry farm on a nearby block. He died here in 1975 aged ninety. This is the most substantial of the depression-era fossicker's huts in the shire.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Important as a relic of the fossicking years of the depression and also significant as a unique example of local enterprise and dedication. The solid, imaginative and tasteful design make this a fitting testament to the ingenuity and endeavour of Bell's generation - men who fought in two wars and who struggled through the catastrophe of the Great Depression.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

D Horsfall, in Bendigo Advertiser, 30 May 1985.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BELL COTTAGE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ST FRANCIS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TARNAGULLA**

LOCATION: STANLEY ST TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: RES/10

MAJOR OWNER: ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

ARCHITECT: KEOGH &amp; AUCTIN

BUILDER: WILSON, F

DATE: 1911

**DESCRIPTION**

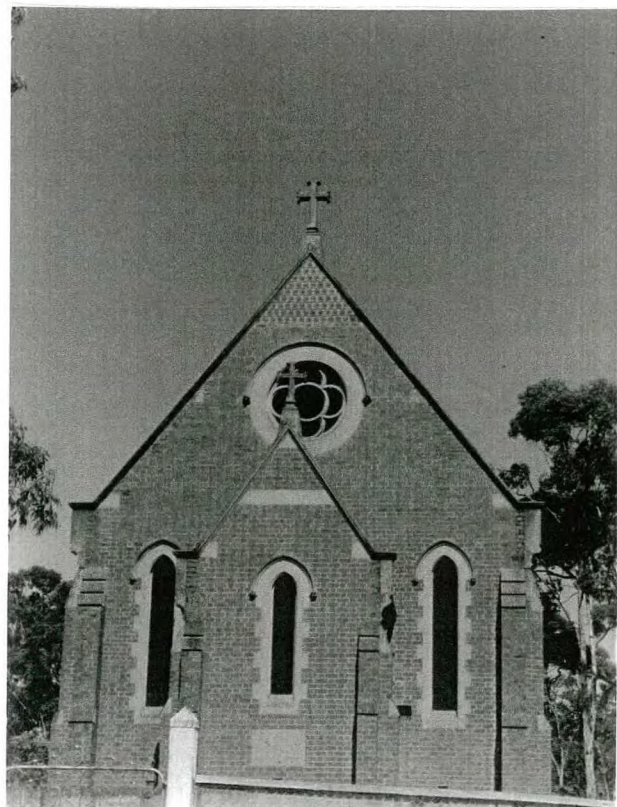
Plain red brick church with contrasting light brick diaper work above oculus on facade. Built in a Gothic style with porch at front. Crosses as finials on main building and on porch. Cement copings and light facing on openings contrast with dominant red brick.

**HISTORY**

Roman Catholics like most other denominations celebrated their first religious affairs in a local pub. In 1865 they erected a wooden church. The present building dates from the early twentieth century, when although mining was in decline, small farming flourished. The largely Irish congregation were more likely to be farmers than miners, hence the ability to build this church as others around declined. This success was short-lived. In 1923 the Tarnagulla Catholic school closed. The church itself is now closed.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The church has a character superior to others in the district and its location within the religious precinct of Dunolly makes it an essential element of the townscape.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**TARNAGULLA CATHOLIC CHURCH

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TARNAGULLA SCHOOL 1023**

LOCATION: STANLEY ST TARNAGULLA  
MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT  
DATE: 1874  
BUILDER: HUTCHINSON AND HAMILTON

**DESCRIPTION**

Red brick and gabled school built in three separate sections with double, small paned windows asymmetrically placed in the facade of one wing. Elegant and well maintained wooden lunch shed in school yard and small gabled wooden structure hides the facade of the brick ortion of the school.

**HISTORY**

Plans for this school were drawn up in 1873. In June 1874, the school opened with 236 children. At that stage the school had a shingled roof. The school was used for a time for Catholic church services. Its appearance was markedly altered in 1965.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Not as unusual as the earlier comon schools in the rest of the shire. It has also lost much of its nineteenth century character in alterations. Nevertheless it is an essential element in the character of the town and fils one corner of the religious and civic sector of the town.

Source:

'Tarnagulla: a history' brochure.

**TARNAGULLA SCHOOL**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**FORMER GOLD WARDEN'S OFFICE TARNAGULLA AND SANDY CREEK POST OFFICE**

LOCATION: STANLEY ST., TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 7/9

GRANTEE: DUGGAN MT

GRANT DATE: 14 MARCH 1898

DATE: 1861

OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

BUILDER: CROSS &amp; NOBLE

**DESCRIPTION**

Former gold warden's office and post office, constructed in brick in a typical Italianate villa mode. Brick mouldings are distinctive over windows encasing rubbed bricks. The fence has been replaced and the bricks part-stuccoed. New flashing also applied.

**HISTORY**

A tenfold increase in numbers in one year gave Tarnagulla (Sandy Creek ) a permanent look in 1858. Earlier in that year the Maryborough and Dunolly Advertiser had called for police to control the dangerous mob of gold-seekers. There had been a recent ' disgraceful incident ' in a public house and to add to that, the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages had gone missing. A police camp was eventually located near Tarnagulla in 1859 and a gold escort commenced from there in 1861, coinciding with the erection of this building by Cross and Noble for a warden (Mr. Orme) in 1861 for a price of £540. As the number of local claims rose from twelve to 176 in the space of a year, the Warden's Court grew busy. Yet the warden's office was supposedly not needed and the building became the Sandy Creek post office. This decision coincided with the connection of the electric telegraph to Dunolly in 1860. As Tarnagulla's commercial section expanded, the post office moved to a more central site in Commercial Road in 1886. The site was eventually sold to a private buyer, the dairyman MT Duggan, in 1898.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

An early government building and unusually well preserved for its age. It is also one of the few buildings designed as gold warden's offices to survive in near intact condition. It can be compared to only one other example, the portable warden's office at Ararat(1857). The building also contributes to the gold-inspired civic precinct of Tarnagulla.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Flett, Dunolly, p.76.Heritage Australia, vol. 3, p.138.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

SANDY CREEK POST OFFICE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TARNAGULLA RECREATION RESERVE GRANDSTAND AND RESERVOIR**

LOCATION: STANLEY ST. EXT. TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP

ALLOT: 7

GRANTEE: PUBLIC PARK RESERVE

GRANT DATE: 1880(?)

DATE: 1860, 1882

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT, TARNAGULLA BOROUGH

BUILDER: AH AMOS

**DESCRIPTION**

Recreation reserve and pavilion entered by a substantial picket gateway flanked by Aleppo pines (?). Further along the unmade track is a corrugated iron-clad booth with stop-chamfered and capited main posts with angle brackets to one side (possibly reroofed or reclad). Another raised and hipped roofed bandstand-like pavilion (incomplete) is near the main pavilion which is gabled, weatherboarded and possesses early details in the form of saltire cross balustrading and shaped timber valence to the upper verandah.

**HISTORY**

A water supply was an early priority for Tarnagulla. Assistant surveyor Henry Morris laid out the scheme in May 1860, incorporating a seventeen feet high and three-foot thick dam wall of puddled clay which extended some 376 feet across a minor valley. Its earth walls battered down either side of the dam core to a supposed bed of sandstone. Contractor AH Amos constructed the reservoir that year. Five years later miners and townspeople battled over the use of the reservoir. A mining company led by John McPhearson had obtained from the gold warden (Orme), six inches of water from the reservoir to serve the company mine during the height of summer (February 1865). Tarnagulla Council objected to the unchecked power which colonial officials held over the fate of the town. Several miners on small claims supported them since their claims lay on the route which the water had to take to reach McPhearson's mine.

Ultimately, the long-awaited storm water channel (one main channel of 100 chain length and superficial or 'scratch' drains) was cut by John Watson through the garden reserve at the western side of Commercial Road. Suggestions for improving the purity of the water varied from schemes to plant trees, securing the reserve from animals and putting in paling and not post and rail fences. Pollution of the supply was a constant threat to the reserve keeper H McMillan who gave notice that he would shoot 'indiscriminately' any goats found near the water. McMillan was at the same time accused by miners of fomenting attacks on their use of the dam water.

Once established as a reserve and hence one of the few places safe from mining, the ground was cleared by the Tarnagulla Cricket Club in 1862. Ten years later a more substantial boundary fence was erected along with a properly graded and drained cricket oval. A pair of handsome gates graced the reserve entrance by 1878 presenting to one observer, a 'really neat appearance'. Work was being carried out on flower beds and general clearing. The pavilion and booths were erected in 1882 by Roper. Within fifty years of the Tarnagulla Borough so vigorously fighting to control the reservoir, the Bet Bet Shire was granted title to the reservoir in 1908.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

## SIGNIFICANCE

The grandstand is the oldest known surviving in the state and expresses this by its timber construction and verandah detailing (grandstands at Benalla, Beechworth and Melbourne date from the late 1880s and 1890s); booths survive at Tarnagulla which are rare. Often flimsy temporary shelters disappeared elsewhere. The reserve is entered through a grand (at least for its period) timber gateway. Not directly a part of the sporting functions of the reserve, but essential to its existence is the dam. This could be compared to railway reservoirs such as that at Everton (c1875) and that at Chiltern (1860s) which served for washing both gold and railway engines.

## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

## Source:

Courier, 11 November 1865, 4 July 1866, 14 January 1865, 25 February 1865, 11 March 1865.

Crown Land Reserve File, 80 T 14731.

Express, 4 January 1878.

TARNAGULLA RECREATION RESERVE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

ST. SAVIOUR'S: ANGLICAN CHURCH TARNAGULLA  
 LOCATION: STANLEY ST: TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP  
 ALLOT: 5/10  
 GRANTEE: 1869  
 DATE: 1864  
 MAJOR OWNER: ANGLICAN CHURCH  
 BUILDER: DAVIS & TREVASCUS

## DESCRIPTION

St. Saviour's Anglican church - built in a gothic revival manner with added porches to create a cruciform plan. Coloured brickwork, cement cappings, corner buttresses and three-light windows (leaded and stained) comprise the details. Remnants of a substantial (picket) fence exist including corner posts with scrolled iron frieze and caps plus orbs. The belltower is detached and iron framed also the manse, now altered and from the Edwardian period lies to the south together with some pine trees.

## HISTORY

Like the church at Moliagul, this was commenced in 1864 by builders Davis and Trevascus with bricks made by John Theobald. The Rev W Chalmers directed its construction and yet another successful miner, Robert Hammond was the major benefactor. Hammond (with Bell) had pioneered the rich Poverty Reef after it opened in 1855. He and Edi Summers presented the church with a 'very fine toned bell'. The opening took place as a gentle breeze calmed the blistering summer heat. Onlookers noted the church's elevated site (west of the main lead) its attractive appearance and it was of course claimed that it surpassed anything else in Tarnagulla. The church was distinguished by 'good taste ... admirable proportions and appropriate decorations'. All this blended happily with the early English architecture.

Inside the chancel was eleven feet square with a handsome three-light Gothic window (frosted with stained margins) the nave was 47 by 22 feet and the roof was raised on three exposed trusses, seated on stone corbels and formed in a Gothic pointed arch. Resembling the summer sky above, the ceiling lining was painted blue (with contrasting brown rafters) the walls were plastered and the aisles laid out in red and white tiles. The seats were totally modern in concept (open bench rather than boxed) and the church had a carved reading desk, four raised choir seats and Gothic chandeliers suspended from the two end trusses. Accompanied by Mozart's 'I will call upon the Lord' a succession of reverend gentlemen read opening services. The Rev Chalmers was lauded as the inspiration of the three handsome churches in the area. A proposal was made in 1870 to construct a parsonage.

## SIGNIFICANCE

An architecturally undistinguished design but nevertheless an expression of the sense of identity and security of the gold-field community of Tarnagulla. Combines well with neighbouring buildings.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

Source:

Courier, 19 November 1864.

Advertiser, 23 April 1870.

ANGELICAN CHURCH, DUNDOLLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**POVERTY REEF FIELD, TARNAGULLA**

LOCATION: TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP - /15

TO THE WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF COMMERCIAL RD AND POVERTY ST BORDERING ON POVERTY ST AND THE REAR OF COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS FACING COMMERCIAL RD. AT THE NORTHERN END OF THE SITE IS THE WESLEYAN CHURCH

**DESCRIPTION**

Area of mine workings with shafts filled. One shaft has recently operated and has a frame above the shaft opening. Some brick footings left on the surface and several mounds of waste material taken from shafts. . Some remains of brick footings from earlier mine workings. A Monument marking the reef is visible from Commercial Road.

**HISTORY**

The Poverty was a key mining field in the Shire through the 1860s and continued to be worked intermittently after then. The reef was located in 1853 and mining began in 1854. Two New Zealand miners worked a claim in 1855. These miners Hatt and King were followed by Bell and Hammond who took £70 000 worth of gold from the reef in 1858. By 1862, shafts reached to 300 feet on the Poverty Reef. In 1864, Thomas King's Company were still crushing quartz from below 300 feet and getting more than an ounce to each ton of rock. Soon afterwards all work on the Reef was suspended while miners arranged new leases and put up more expensive machinery. By 1868 most of the claims on the reef were let on tribute with some tributers getting more than 2 ounces to the ton. Soon afterwards, when several of the companies on the reef had amalgamated, shafts reached to nearly 500 feet. However while this ground proved 'exceedingly rich' miners struck trouble with water in shafts. In 1869, the Poverty, Central and Victoria Companies amalgamated and after pumping water for three months began mining again. Companies reported good finds in 1872. Then, despite deep sinkings over the following years, yields declined. By the middle of 1876, crushings were only 10 dwts. per ton. The mines were left unused in the late 1870s and then in 1880 the Old Poverty Reef Company began sinking again. By 1882 shafts reached to 700 feet. Yet even with these new sinkings yields never matched those of the 1860s. Mines were let on tribute and closed at the turn of the century.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Poverty Reef was one of the key mining fields of the Shire and known as an exceptionally rich reef even when compared to Ballarat and Bendigo. The field was crucial to the survival of the town of Tarnagulla. Most of the principal political and commercial figures in the town made money from the field. Its location alongside the major commercial area of the town is an essential aspect of the character of Tarnagulla and a reminder of the connections between the town and mining activity.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.Courier, various dates.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TARNAGULLA CEMETERY**

LOCATION: CEMETERY RESERVE TARNAGULLA

NATMAP: 52.8/27.7

FACES TARNAGULLA-BRIDGEWATER RD. SITUATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE ROAD AT THE NORTHERN FRINGE OF THE TOWN OF TARNAGULLA

**DESCRIPTION**

A cemetery with memorials dating back to the 1860s. The cemetery includes several grave sites of the principal mining families of the town. One of these has a Welsh inscription. Several Chinese graves are segregated from the remainder of the plots. The memorials are by and large simple and follow the standard forms of nineteenth century memorialism. Several are constructed in an obelisk form and many have ogee-arched form. Some more elaborate headstones mark the burial plots of wealthy mining families.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The cemetery reveals much about the social character of the town of Tarnagulla. While the lay-out does not appear to follow a clear denominational pattern, the memorials themselves point to the religious make-up of the town and the arrangement of plots suggest something of the social relations of Tarnagulla. The cemetery is a clue to the way in which people in the town saw themselves and each other. Most of the key mining investors are buried here. The existence of Chinese graves gives the cemetery an added significance. An important indicator of the character of life in a small mining town.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****TARNAGULLA CEMETERY**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

POVERTY REEF



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**PUZZLE FLAT BATTERY FOOTINGS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF ARCHDALE 28B/A

NATMAP: 24.6/21.3

ONE HUNDRED METERS TO THE SOUTH OF TROWERS LANE, APPROXIMATELY 1.2 KS. FROM THE INTERSECTION OF TROWERS LANE AND THE ARCHDALE-BEALIBA RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Brick footings of crushing battery set in centre of paddock. The materials are concrete and brick and the remains are approximately 1.5 meters in height and two meters by five meters in length. The remnants form box like shape visible from Trowers Lane.

**HISTORY**

The area near Bealiba was first rushed in the 1850s in the Cochrane's Creek Rush. The Puzzle Flat was located in 1913 by a party of miners led by Ellison. The party followed this lead five to six miles into Archdale. They took up 1000 acres on leasehold and were followed by the Britannia Company who set up a crushing battery on the flat. These remains are regarded by some as the remnants of this battery. The rush stimulated mining in other parts of the shire and for a time the first miners to stake claims on Puzzle Flat were able to extract rich returns. Yet within a few years most of the miners had moved on, leaving little trace of their activities apart from this small site. Most of the other mine workings around Bealiba have been worked over and the course of the Puzzle Flat lead runs through farmland with no signs of mining activity visible from the roadway.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

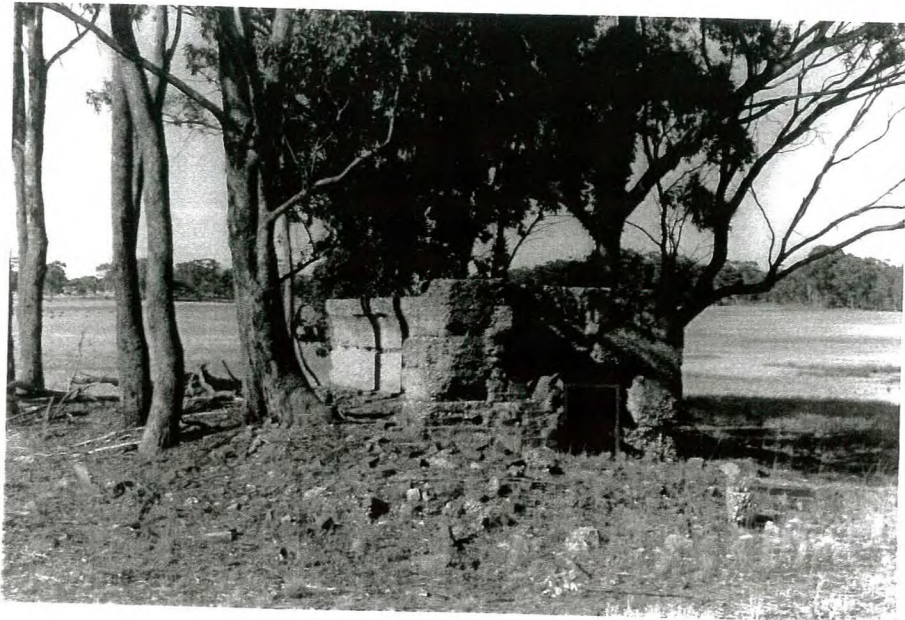
Important as a reminder of one of the last major rushes in the shire. Also one of the few built items from mining around Bealiba and the old Cochrane's rush area. This is a reminder of the sometimes intensive mining activity in the west of the shire; most of the mining relics are located to the east of the shire of Bet Bet.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Express, various dates 1913-1915.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

PUZZLE FLAT BATTERY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ARCHDALE BRIDGE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF ARCHDALE

NATMAP 23/20.8

RUNS WEST FROM THE JUNCTION OF THE ARCHDALE-DUNOLLY RD. AND THE  
AYOCA-BEALIBA RD.

BUILDER: EDWARD BUTCHER

DATE: 1863

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

**DESCRIPTION**

Spans the Avoca River on the St.Arnaud - Dunolly Road (the Stuart Mill Road at Dunluce). Crosses the river at Archdale. Humped bridge with long graduated approach from both the Bet Bet and the Kara Kara ends. The bridge has wooded decking and wooden rough-hewn supporting frame. Side rails are also in wood and there are decorated entrance posts at the entrance to each end of the bridge.

**HISTORY**

The Avoca proved a formidable to both farmers and miners in the 1860s. Local residents in Kara Kara more often than in Bet Bet attacked local political leaders for their failure to create direct links with the outside world. Agitation resulted on plans for a bridge in 1861. The building was commenced in 1862 by contractor Edward Butcher of St.Arnaud. The bridge was declared finished in April 1863. The principal carpenter had been a Mr. Gouge. Philip Chauncy applied for a license to run a store near the bridge and Nicholas McGreevy of Cochranes Creek intended to build a hotel. The town of Archdale sprang up around the bridge. Yet it never became as important as other crossing points since later bridges upstream provided a more direct route to Maryborough and downstream travellers could go via Moliagul or Bealiba on their way to Bendigo.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

One of many bridges with wooded decking in the state but one of the few with raised or humped form. The bridge has evidence in its supports of hand construction by broad axe. One of the essential works for towns in the area were bridges across principal streams such as the Avoca River. This bridge formed an important link between the shire and St.Arnaud. In later years of land selection it filled a great need. As one correspondent for the Maryborough Advertiser pointed out 'roadless, bridgeless, newspaperless' communities need such links to survive. The correspondent went on: 'what the people want is to get to the other side of the Avoca in the first place and anywhere their business takes them afterwards'. The early form of local government were often Road Boards and the St.Arnaud Road District Board had been elected expressly to construct such a bridge. The bridge then stands as a remnant of this early local endeavour and local political life.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Maryborough Advertiser, 1861-1863

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

ARCHDALE BRIDGE



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DISCHARGED SOLDIER SETTLEMENT HOME**

LOCATION: PARISH OF ARCHDALE - /90A

NATMAP: 29.1/17.2

LOCATED 0.3 KS. FROM THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE ALLOTMENT TO THE SOUTH-WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE ARCHDALE-DUNOLLY RD AND THE BEALIBA STH RD.

DATE: 1924

MAJOR OWNER: GORDON, JAMES

**DESCRIPTION**

Single-storey, five roomed timber house. Verandah on three sides. The house has a brick chimney and is built to one of the larger closer settlement designs. The house is set in a garden of exotic shrubs. Several original farm sheds are in evidence. The house is built to a standard design.

**HISTORY**

The homestead was built on only one of two allotments into which the 'Benjamin Estate' was subdivided. The Closer Settlement Board acquired the estate in 1921. Brothers George and James (ex-AIF) negotiated for this land and after taking up the farm, George sold out to James.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The house is only one of two such purpose built soldier settler's houses in the shire. It represents a movement which while minor in this shire, was one of the key events in twentieth-century Australian land settlement. It is significant as a local reminder of this broader process.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Soldier settlement files.

Information from Gordon family.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BELGIAN/PERSEVERANCE MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BARP

NATMAP: 38.4/19

REACHED VIA THE BELGIAN TRACK WEST OF THE INTERSECTION WITH PHELPS TRACK. THE SITE LIES IN THICK FOREST TO THE SOUTH OF GOLDSBOROUGH MID-WAY BETWEEN GOLDSBOROUGH AND THE STUART MILL RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

A small dam lies nearest to the road. On a steep wooded slope running to the south of the dam are remnants of other mine workings. The principal amongst these are scattered and re-worked tailings, an open cut area and smaller shafts partially filled.

**HISTORY**

The Belgian Rush brought miners into this area in the 1850s. By 1860 many had moved on and less than ten claims were worked successfully on the Belgian and Perseverance Reefs. A rush took place in 1865 and 1866 with several large nuggets being uncovered. Small parties continued to work on the Belgian and Perseverance Reefs in the following decade. Amongst them were Pike and Co. who had crushed 300 tons for 60 ounces in March 1872. In 1881 and 1882, the Belgian and Perseverance Company took up much of the reef on lease and in 1882 sank a shaft to 120 feet, with a second shaft to a depth of 65 feet at the south end of the Perseverance Reef. Most of the visible remains seem to be the results of the work of this company. The mine appeared to be worked for several years after that date but with little real return. Later attempts at open cutting kept some return coming in but by the end of the 1880s it appeared that mining operations here had ceased.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The importance of the site derives from the range of mining relics visible in the one location. The mine site reveals evidence of varied attempts at winning gold and represents, probably more than other sites in the shire, the changing techniques applied to the one lease over the later decades of the nineteenth century. The dam gives an added interest to the mining landscape.

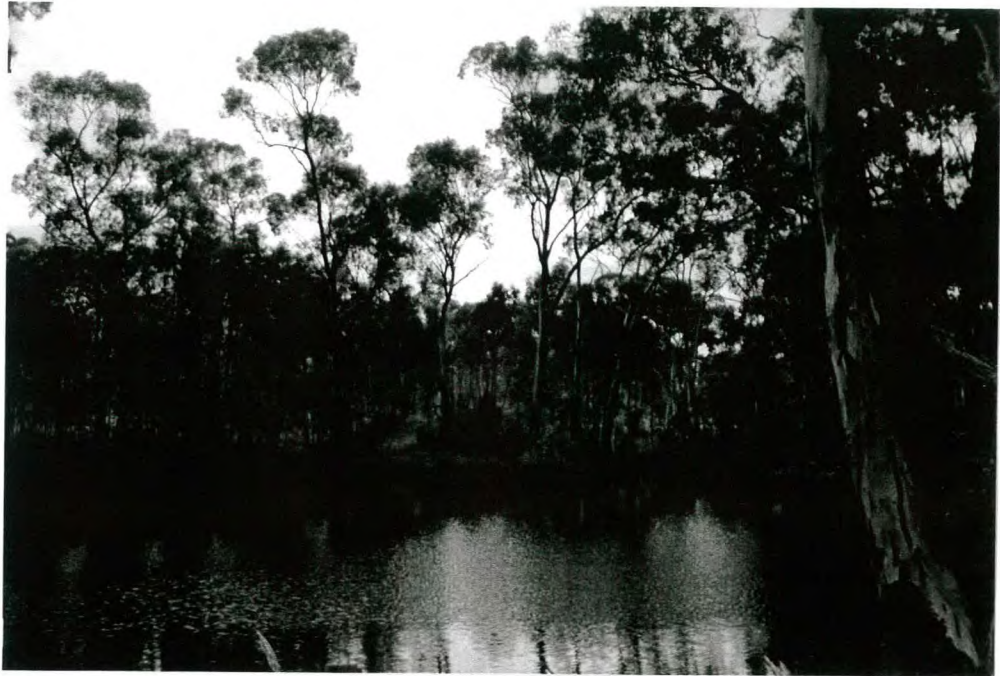
**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BELGIAN PERSEVERANCE MINE

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SCENT FARM**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BARP 13/E

NATMAP: 35/16.5

ON THE WEST SIDE OF SCENT FARM RD. AT THE JUNCTION WITH  
DUNOLLY-STUART MILL RD. AND ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE DUNOLLY-STUART  
MILL RD.

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

DATE: 1891

**DESCRIPTION**

Nothing remains of the Scent Farm . The site is now open farmland with no machinery or building remnants visible. Occasionally remnants of the plantings flower by the roadside. The area does have some signs of lay-out of beds even though built remnants have gone.

**HISTORY**

In 1889 François Mellon a local wine-grower convinced the Department of Agriculture to locate an experimental herb farm within the shire. By 1894 twenty acres of the original 1000 acres had been planted with a range of herbs. Mellon continued to experiment with techniques for extracting perfume but the scheme never won support from small farmers. In 1899 the vats and distilling equipment was broken up and moved to the Leongatha Labour Colony.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Scent Farm was an innovative attempt to diversify the products of local and Victorian farms. The failure of the scheme notwithstanding, it reflects the imagination of some local men and the willingness of government officials to experiment with new products. While nothing survives to be protected on the site, it ought to be recorded by signposting and the plantings which have grown wild ought to be protected.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Town and Country Journal, 16 March 1895.Illustrated Australian News, 1 December 1893.



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**FARMHOUSE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BEALIBA

NATMAP: 28.2 26.2

TO THE NORTH-WEST OF THE TOWN OF BEALIBA ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE ST ARNAUD DUNOLLY RD APPROX. 0.75 FROM BEALIBA

DATE: 1918

MAJOR OWNER: RINALDI

**DESCRIPTION**

Large farmhouse in brock, iron roof, verandah on two sides. Wooden fretwork on upper pillars of verandah supports. Largely obscured by garden.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

A large farmhouse built to a bungalow design. The verandah decorative work is unusual for the shire. the general style is one unusual in the shire and in most of rural Victoria. its significance derives from this stylistic rareness.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****FARMHOUSE BEALIBA**

**BARUTO/KIDSTON FARM COMPLEX**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BEALIBA

NATMAP: 26/25.6

TO THE WEST OF BEALIBA, ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE ST. ARNAUD - DUNOLLY RD. TO THE EAST OF THE JUNCTION WITH THE EMU-ARCHDALE RD

**DESCRIPTION**

A varied farm complex with two houses, one timbered with return verandah and iron verandah work. The second and older dwelling mud brick or pise with render. Well kept garden and farm yard, with drop slab barn and log sheds. Pise milking shed and ond. Several fences in slab and rail. The farmhouse has a cellar and winery

**HISTORY**

Originally selected by Kidstons in the 1860s. Their house burned down and was rebuilt by the Baruto family who operated the farm as a winery and built winery sections of the complex.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

An exceptionally well maintained farm complex. the construction of the older house is interesting and unusual especially with the addition of the winery. More significantly the range of sheds and fencing on the property are extremely unusual, especially as they are kept in a good state of repair.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**



## HISTORY OF HOUSE AND LAND

Selected early 1860's by Kidstons who built the cellar approx. 60' x 15' and dairy (hulfellar) - planted vines. The old stone chimney of their house still stands - 1991. Kidstons sold to Gianetti in 1866 and he took possession in 1867.

He built the stone and mud kitchen p.118 and 5 roomed house with verandah all around. This part burned down and was rebuilt approx 1904.

The shed p.117 was also built by Gianetti. The timber sawn by Wharton Bros., Cochranes Creek. The left hand end skillion type housed a dougle seater buggy. The high gable roof comprised stable for horses and chaff shed. Chaff cut by horseworks chaffcutter. (The lower upright shed built 1920)

The horseworks of the chaffcutter and woodheap were in front of the shed on the roadside.

History of house and land. Type <sup>up</sup> Rail - 44

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BARUTO/KIDSTON FARMHOUSE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TUNSTALLS TOWN**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BEALIBA NO. SEC.

NATMAP: 25.2/28

LOCATED ON A TRACK RUNNING NORTH FROM THE ST. ARNAUD-DUNOLLY RD., 0.3 KS FROM BRIDGE OVER COCHRANES CREEK. TUNSTALLS IS 3.5 KS. FROM THIS ROAD JUNCTION.

**DESCRIPTION**

Tunstalls township no longer exists. Yet there are signs in the clearing of the bush and indications of building and street lay-out of a small settlement. Around the town site are many remnants of alluvial mining activity. These include several unfilled shafts perhaps 9 to 12 metres deep, heaped soil extracted from these shafts and signs of trenching and puddling.

**HISTORY**

In March 1867, 1500 miners worked on the fields at Tunstalls. Mining surveyors reported that returns from this field were patchy and that while some miners got good wages other were struggling. By the end of June the rush only supported 800 miners and by December only 400 were left on the field. Tunstalls declined quickly after that and apart from a few prospectors was deserted by the 1870s. Miners returned to the area in the later nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Significant as a rush dating from the 1860s rather than the 1850s. This history is recollected in the remnants of alluvial mining around the township site. The township site has a significance especially as there is little physical evidence left. The very absence of building remains testifies to the overnight character of the town, typical of so many alluvial mining towns in the shire.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.

SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

TUNSTALLS TOWN





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BEALIBA RANGE-MOUNT BEALIBA**

LOCATION: PARISHES OF BEALIBA AND PAINSWICK AND BARP

NATMAP: 31/23 TO 37.5/17.5

RUNS NORTH-WEST TO SOUTH-EAST BETWEEN SCENT FARM RD. AND ST.ARNAUD RD., GENERALLY PARALLEL TO SCENT FARM RD. THE NORTHERN PEAK OF THE RANGE LIES 4.4 METERS SOUTH-EAST OF BEALIBA. THE SOUTHERN END OF THE RANGE LIES 5.6 METERS WEST OF DUNOLLY.

**DESCRIPTION**

Landform feature which which has shaped settlement patterns within the shire. The Bealiba Range rises to 446 meters at its northern-most point. The ridge runs south-easterly at 400 meters and falls to 328 meters above the Dunolly-Stuart Mill Rd. The range is heavily wooded for most of its length.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Along with Mt. Hooghly this range is a principal land-form feature in the shire. It has been historically significant in that the road pattern of the shire and the links to the west have been largely governed by this landform. The ranges around the peak have been used for wood gathering and sleeper cutting since the nineteenth century. The peak is important for its dominant presence in the landscape. the forests are important because the part they have played in local industry. The scenic importance of the St. Arnaud-Dunolly Rd. largely derives from the nearby Bealiba Range.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****BEALIBA RANGE**

## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

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**DUKE EXTENDED MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET 14,13/4A

NATMAP: 42.8/7.6

AT THE INTERSECTION OF MCKENZIES ROAD AND THE BET BET-BROMLEY RD.  
SITUATED ON THE SOUTH -WESTERN CORNER OF THE INTERSECTION**DESCRIPTION**

Mining dump covering the largest area of any in the shire. It extends along McKenzie's Road for several hundred meters and is visible for some distance on the flat plains of this part of the shire. The tailings have been re-worked several times and there are remains of cyaniding vats in the centre of a largely re-worked area. Parts of the mine dump have been removed and within the centre of the surviving heaps there is a large hollowed-out area.

**HISTORY**

The Duke Company were involved in several mines in the Timor area. The principal interest of the company appeared to lie outside the shire and shareholders played a far less significant part in local life than directors of mines in Tarnagulla or Goldsborough. The Duke Extended mine continued to operate into the twentieth century. The mine was referred to as a deep alluvial mine which is unusual for this shire. At one stage the mining company wished to dig a drive under the main Maryborough Railway line but went out of business before doing so.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Duke Extended is significant in the dominance of its landform; it is the principal landscape feature in the south-west of the shire dominating the flat approaches to Dunolly. Its cyaniding remains add to the importance of the site.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.

Defunct company papers.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**NORTH DUKE MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET 1/7A

NATMAP: 42.8/06

TO THE SOUTH OF THE BET BET-BROMLEY RD. AND ON THE BANKS OF THE BET BET CREEK. THE MINE SITE IS 200 METERS FROM THE ROADWAY APPROX. 1.6 KS. SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE BET BET-BROMLEY RD. AND MCKENZIES RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Several tailing heaps with evidence of reworking. There are brick footings possibly of crusher or boiler. The principal feature of the site is the bluestone wall with arched window supported by remains of side walls. This is possibly the surviving wall of an engine room. It is approximately ten meters in height and is formed from large bluestone blocks. The entrance to a mine shaft is visible nearby, even though the shaft has been filled. Some brick and metal fragments scattered on the site.

**HISTORY**

The North Duke Company (Lease no. 4441) was formed in 1890 and continued operation through to 1900. While not one of the most important mines in the shire, this nevertheless formed a part of an extensive system of mines following the course of the Bet Bet Creek. The principal mine on this field was the Grand Duke which lies just outside the boundaries of the shire.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This is a later example of local mining and so is significant in representing the last era of nineteenth century mining in the shire. It is the only mine in the area with such substantial building remains and is significant because it allows us to get some insight into the quality and extent of buildings erected by mining companies. While other mines in the shire once had extensive structures around them, much smaller remnants remain. The North Duke mine is important because of the remnants of mine buildings and the proximity of the tailing heaps which permit some sense of the scale of mining endeavours, even those dating from the end of the nineteenth century.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Defunct company papers.

26435 . 0236 .  
 @ GRAND DUKE MINE RD  
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## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

NORTH DUKE MINE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BET BET SCHOOL**

LOCATION: BET BET TOWNSHIP

NATMAP: 45.5/10.4

APPROX. 200 METERS TO THE EAST OF THE DUNOLLY-MARYBOROUGH RD. AT THE BOUNDARY OF THE SHIRE IN URBAN BET BET

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

DATE: 1913

**DESCRIPTION**

Former school: an unusual construction type which appears to be pipe or concrete, distinguishes this typical Edwardian Dutch-hipped schoolhouse from may similar usually weatherboarded schools elsewhere in Victoria. Minor details such as chimney caps suggest the date of the building.

**HISTORY**

The Bet Bet school opened at Grant's Bridge in 1875. It opened during the period in which the Bet Bet township was still an important mining centre and when the town and the local farms could sustain the school. The first classes were held in the Bet Bet Hotel. From 1888 a government portable was used. The present building described as concrete was erected in 1913. In 1911 the school attracted attention because it had become overcrowded and this building was no doubt the result. Yet, by 1948, enrolments had dwindled to seven pupils. The school closed in 1948.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Important as a remnant of a once flourishing township. Only two other structures survive on the Bet Bet side of the township. It is a remnant of a once flourishing mining and farming community.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

J Alderson, Bet Bet: the growth and withering of a rural community, Havelock 1984.

SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BET BET SCHOOL





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**OSAGE ORANGE HEDGE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET 9F, A/7B

NATMAP: 38.9/06

ON EAST SIDE OF CUSHENDON LANE TO THE SOUTH OF WATER COURSE (EMU CK.); 1 K. FROM INTERSECTION WITH TIMOR-DUNLUCE RD.

PRINCIPAL OWNERS: MCKINLEY FAMILY

**DESCRIPTION**

Thick hedge of osage orange ( *Maclura aurantiaca* ) trees surrounding field. Entrance gate in the North-west corner. The hedge is planted closely and forms a wind break or barrier to stock. Few gaps in the plantings.

**HISTORY**

Thought to have been planted at some time in the nineteenth century as a hedge surrounding a new planting of vines. The McKinleys along with other local farmers took an interest in wine- growing. The nearby land-owner Patrick Costello was a great promoter of the wine industry in the shire.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Surviving remnant of an important local industry. It is one of the few links with nineteenth century vigneron to survive in the shire. As well it makes an unusual landform feature and a unique element in local exotic plantings. The Osage Orange is no longer a common garden species. Even in the nineteenth century, extensive plantings such as this were not common. This hedge is larger than many other Osage Orange plantings in Victoria. The plant has been identified in Maldon and some parts of suburban Melbourne. Yet the design of this hedge appears to be exceptional.

*Also at Bookie College.*

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****Source:**

Botanical information, Botany School, Monash University.

Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, Trees and gardens from the goldmining era, n.d. Melbourne.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

OSAGE ORANGE HEDGE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**LIMESTONE RESERVE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET

NATMAP: 39.5/11 TO 42/9.7

ALONG THE COURSE OF THE BET BET CREEK BETWEEN 7C/7B, 12,13B/3B

RUNNING ALONG THE COURSE OF THE CARMANUEL CREEK FROM THE BRIDGE ON THE DUNOLLY-TIMOR RD. TO THE BRIDGE ON THE BET BET-MT. HOOGHLY RD. AND FOR 200 METERS ALONG THE CREEK BED TO THE NORTH-WEST OF THIS BRIDGE.

**DESCRIPTION**

Picturesque creek valley running through open farming country with Bealiba Range to the north-east and Mt. Hooghly to the north-west. At points along the creek are a few scattered remains of lime-burning beds.

**HISTORY**

Limeburning was carried on by selectors in the area for some time during the 1860s and 1870s. Several lime kilns in the Timor area supplied mortar for buildings in Dunolly. The Reserve gave rise to a bitter dispute at the end of the 1870s when its industrial use ceased and local selectors squabbled over the right to farm the reserve.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

While there are few material remains of the local lime industry, the location itself is important as a reminder of a local industry and one which played some part in shaping buildings in the shire. It is secondly important as an example of the way in which selectors extended their work into industrial pursuits. Arguments over what was to be done with the land after the decline of lime burning indicates something of the rivalries which could arise between farming neighbours. Its history after lime-burning ceased tells us something about the friction within small intimate farming communities. It has an added interest as an area of natural beauty set between the two dominant landforms of the shire.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Lands Department, 2918/49 and 2919/49, YPRO.





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**FARM AND FARM OUTBUILDINGS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET 5/3A

NATMAP: 42.1/9.6

ON THE EAST SIDE OF THE DUNOLLY-TIMOR RD. TO THE SOUTH OF THE BRIDGE  
OVER THE CARMANUEL CK.**DESCRIPTION**

Timber farmhouse, with verandah in poor condition, windows removed and damage to cladding. The building has a brick kitchen at the rear and on the site are several farm outbuildings in reasonable condition, although none have been maintained for a considerable time. Some farm machinery (disused) in the site.

**HISTORY**

On a block first selected under the 1865 land act. the property passed through several hands before being acquired by De Gourlay, one of the farmers who acquired a string of smaller settlement blocks in the western parts of the shire.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The collection of buildings represents a phase in land selection. The common practice in the shire of building brick kitchen and rear to farmhouses and timber front rooms can be seen in this building. As well the range of outbuildings represent some of the character of farming in the period immediately after the passing of acts governing land selection. This is one of only a few ensembles of farming structures in the shire which reveal the range of elements buildings and building techniques which were used by small farmers prior to mechanisation and the consolidation of small selection blocks.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****FARM, CARMANUEL CK****SITE LISTINGS**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**STATE SCHOOL NO.949 TIMOR WEST**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET ALLOT. 6A /7B

NATMAP: 39.5/5.1

APPROXIMATELY 2 KS. NW. OF THE TOWN OF TIMOR AT THE INTERSECTION OF THE BET BET-TIMOR WEST AND DUNLUCE ROADS. IT STANDS BETWEEN THE BET BET AND LIME KILN CREEKS, ON THE ORIGINAL SHEEP RUN OF ALFRED JOYCE

KEY OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

DATE: 1869

**DESCRIPTION**

A red-brick single storey building built to a form similar to that of other common schools. The main classroom had several windows and a blackboard. Part of one wall has collapsed and apart from the blackboard most of the interior fittings have been removed. Windows and the doorway have been removed. A stand of eucalyptus trees runs alongside the school. It is now used as a farm storage shed.

**HISTORY**

Early in 1868 a committee of Lower Wareek residents applied to the Board of Education for a grant to assist them in establishing a common school. Most of these parents worked in dairying or lime burning in the six kilns in the area. Plans for a school were approved in 1869. The building (35 x 18 ft) was opened in 1869 and Michael Morony began teaching classes in May 1869. The school was described as as a single- roomed building with one door, brick chimney and fireplace. The Board of Education purchased land for a school house in 1873 and later purchased land for tree planting. While the lime kilns created the initial demand for the school, local farmers like the Hickeys were instrumental in promoting the early interests off the school. The Hickeys were amongst the last pupils in the West Timor School. Declining enrolments at the end of the Second World War meant that parents were asked to send pupils elsewhere and the school closed in 1943.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

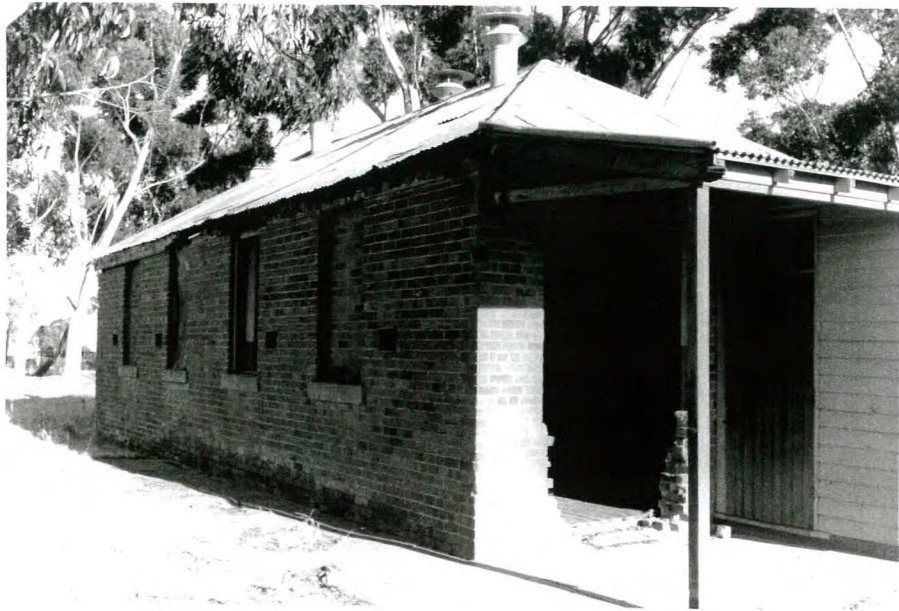
Common schools survive in several parts of Victoria. There are some in a better condition than the West Timor school. Yet despite the deterioration of the building, the school still serves as the last surviving landmark of the small industrial and farming locale of West Timor. This colonial common school building is a fitting symbol of a once thriving settlement of young families. It is a survivor from amongst several rural school buildings in the shire and as a common school design the building dates from an early phase in the shire's history. Age and the buildings community function make it an important part of the shire's heritage.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

School files, education papers, Victorian Public Records Office, 795/449.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

TIMOR WEST SCHOOL



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MT HOOGLY**

LOCATION: PARISH OF BET BET 29,32/7B

NATMAP: 36.8/10.5

TO THE SOUTH OF DUNOLLY-AVOCA RD. SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION OF  
DUNOLLY-AVOCA AND MT. HOOGLY-TIMOR RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Natural landform. Bare mountain rising to a peak of 373 meters with a second rise to 300 meters to the south-east of the main peak. Several rocky outcrops on the slope to the south.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Significance as the principal landform feature in the west of the shire and visible through most of the parts of the shire to the west of Dunolly.

MT HOOGLY



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MODEL FARM**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY F20/NO SEC

NATMAP: 48.5/17

ON MODEL FARM RD APPROX 1.5 KS NORTH FROM THE INTERSECTION WITH THE DUNOLLY-EDDINGTON RD.

MAJOR OWNER: HANCOCK FAMILY

**DESCRIPTION**

A farm complex of buildings in several materials. At the centre of the complex is a broad gabled brick cottage with wide bull-nosed Edwardian verandah on the south side. This is ornamented with a scalloped timber valence. Post and rail fencing survives around much of the house yard. There are several vertical slab buildings on the property. At the rear of the main house is a smaller and lower gabled kitchen wing. This is almost completely detached and has two broad chimneys attached.

**HISTORY**

The Model Farm was developed by the Hancock family, local contractors, in the 1870s. The farm supplied the surrounding district with primary produce. As well, in a decade in which farming techniques were often rudimentary, the Model Farm seemed to be run on far more efficient lines than neighbouring selection blocks. The Hancocks developed a local reputation as tidy and efficient farmers, successful at intensive agriculture in an environment where so many others failed, hence the name, 'Model Farm'.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Model Farm is important as a unique collection of farm buildings. It is also important in that it demonstrates an unusually successful effort in nineteenth century farming. Its local reputation gives the site an added importance.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**TOPPE FAMILY FARM**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY

NATMAP: 47.5/16

ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE DUNOLLY-EDDINGTON RD, 0.5 KS TO THE WEST OF  
THE INTERSECTION WITH MODEL FARM RD**DESCRIPTION**

Hipped roof, possible mudbrick or stone cottage, with a deep verandah on the east face and on the west a gabled brick and mudbrick attached wing which graduates to a timber skillion. At the rear is a gabled mudbrick outbuilding. Palm trees on the east face provide some exotic character to an otherwise native environ. What distinguishes the house is the fine pierced and scalloped valence to the verandah. Further to the east, more exotic garden remains and a rubble freestone and pise outbuilding.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The building is significant because of the verandah detailing. The gardens and outbuilding add to the interest of the arrangement of buildings and land. An unusual building in an interesting setting.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

3F  
stumpy tail rd**WILD DOG DIGGINGS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY. AREA TO THE WEST OF 9/B

NATMAP: 46.5/15, 46.9/14

THE SITE LIES TO THE SOUTH OF DUNOLLY-EDDINGTON RD. AND APPROX. 2 KS. WEST OF JUNCTION WITH MIDDLE RD. THE AREA RUNS SOUTH IN SECTION 3-4C TO THE BURNT CK., INCLUDING 1C.

**DESCRIPTION**

Series of shafts and tailings through forest most of which have not been filled and which have not been worked since originally dug. Several of these are round shafts indicating that they have been dug by Chinese alluvial miners. The shafts continue across the whole of the site. For the most part they are less than 8 meters deep and earth extracted from the shafts is still heaped alongside the shafts. The area is lightly timbered and in some parts these shafts have been reworked. This has occurred less frequently on this field than in other parts of the shire.

**HISTORY**

In August 1860, the Dunolly mining surveyor reported a small rush to the Wild Dog area. The field remained small with only 70 miners as against 400 at Tarnagulla and 500 at Dunolly. Later, diggers returned to the field and in the 1870s it appeared to have become one of the key Chinese mining areas of the Shire. The Wild Dog lead had been followed by Chinese miners from the large camps which had sprung up along the Burnt Creek during the 1860s. Many Chinese miners appeared to work claims at Wild Dog while continuing to live in the Chinese camps near Bromley. The field does not appear to have been especially rich. Compared to other local prospecting areas, the Wild Dog diggings attracted little attention from European miners and as the Chinese left the shire towards the end of the nineteenth century, many of their claims were left untouched. Nevertheless, if shafts with a rectangular form are the work of European miners, perhaps one third of the field was worked over by non-Chinese.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The spacing of shafts and lay-out of this field reflect the intention of the 1854 Mining Legislation. These regulations established the right of small individual operators or partnerships to mine a claim, 24 feet by 12 feet; for two men, 24 by 18 feet; for three 24 square feet. Whereas most shallow diggings in the shire have been filled or re-worked, these diggings remain much as they were when originally dug in the 1850s and 1860s. Many of the shafts are circular indicating that they were dug by Chinese. The diggings demonstrate the lay-out of early mining fields which played so great a role in not only shaping this shire but forming the history of the state of Victoria. They are also an important reminder of the role of Chinese miners in Bet Bet. In addition, while the shire constantly attracted the small prospector, few of these surface diggings remain in the condition of the unfilled shafts and surviving tailings of Wild Dog.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

C.F. &amp; L. file, 85/3743.

Express, 1863-65.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

WILD DOG DIGGINGS

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**OLD LEAD-GERMAN GULLY MINE WORKINGS AND OLD LEAD DAM**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY, PARISH OF PAINSWICK DUNOLLY 15C/F;  
PAINSWICK 8,9,9A, 11, 12, 13,18,21/13

NATMAP: 43.6/18.8 TO 44/20

TO WEST OF DUNOLLY-RHEOLA RD RUNNING NORTH FROM THE CROSSING OVER  
THE DUNOLLY-INGLEWOOD RAILWAY LINE. THE NORTHERN END , OLD LEAD DAM  
IS IN THE PARISH OF PAINSWICK

**DESCRIPTION**

Series of shallow diggings along roadway with signs of mounds and remains of other forms of alluvial gold workings. Old Lead Dam consists of earthen embankment with concrete spillway and water race leading under roadway.

**HISTORY**

The German Gully and Old Lead areas were amongst the first of the major rushes into the Shire. Miners worked the area in large numbers travelling to the Wet Diggings at Avoca before returning in 1856. At one stage 7000 men worked on this field. For much of 1856, large nuggets were found here and out of this scramble for gold emerged the town of Dunolly. By the 1860s this Old Lead area had become a Chinese mining field. In 1864 there were still 122 miners on the Old Lead. In 1866 this number had risen to 400. The Old Lead Dam was the first attempt at providing a water supply for the township of Dunolly. The contractor AH Amos built the dam in 1860. Water was taken from here into Dunolly by cart.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Significance lies in the relatively intact remnants of landforms created by these rushes and the role of this field in creating the township of Dunolly. The field also retains some of the mounds and shafts from the 1850s diggings and so are important for their place in the history of the Shire and for these remaining remnants of an early alluvial field. They do not have the same degree of intactness, nor are they as extensive as those of Wild Dog. Yet in terms of their role in shaping local society they are more significant. The Old Lead Dam itself is an important reminder of the early efforts at civic improvement. It suggests some of the constant difficulties with water which plagued mining fields.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

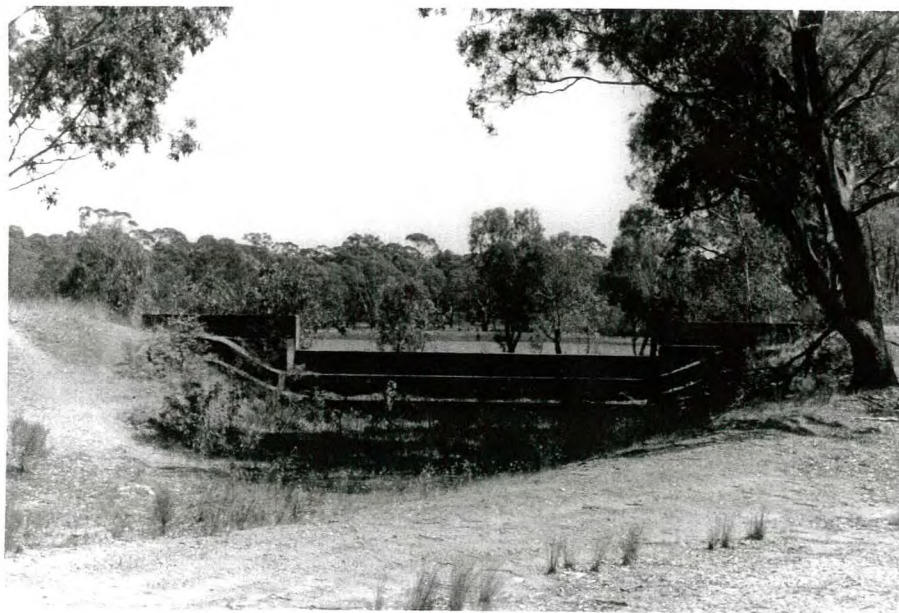
source:

Mining surveyor, quarterly reports



SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

OLD LEAD-GERMAN GULLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HICKS FARMHOUSE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY

NATMAP: 47.1/13.6

ON SOUTH SIDE OF THE BETLEY ROAD APPROXIMATELY ONE K. SOUTH FROM BRIDGE AND DREDGING DAM. ABOVE THE ROAD ON A SLIGHT RIDGE. THE BUILDINGS ARE TEN METERS BACK FROM THE ROADWAY

**DESCRIPTION**

Two farm houses and attached well and sheds. One of these farmhouses is weatherboard and the second and older building is mud brick. This mud brick building has ruled stucco over the mud brick walls. Both are formed on a simple rectilinear plan. The mud brick building has remnants of a verandah, with rough cut posts. A verandah surrounds the weatherboarded house on three sides. The posts remain on the timber cottage and these now support elaborate metal ornamentation between each post. The older building is of mud brick with rough cut verandah posts. At the rear of the timber house is an early rubble stone cottage, with simple gabled roof and broad rubble chimney. Further to the rear, remains of a rubble stone base and mud brick upper walls indicate that an outbuilding has been rebuilt. An outbuilding moreover of an early date compared to other structures in the shire.

**HISTORY**

These buildings appear to date from early in the shire's history and they are in an area where land was acquired before the land selection of the 1860s. Principal owners of the building in later years included Adderton and Hicks. The iron work on the verandah of the weatherboard house is attributed to Hicks. Hicks was a local blacksmith.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Taken together the two buildings form an interesting contrast suggesting the improvement in quality of life and changes in building techniques of small farmers during the nineteenth century. The iron work on the verandah is a unique example of local ingenuity and the well and outbuildings make up a complex significant as a reminder of the lifestyles of the first farmers in the shire. The early date of some parts of the complex add to the significance of the site.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Lands dept. parish plans and road maps.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

HICK'S FARMHOUSE

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BURNT CREEK NO. 1 MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY 21,22/2

NATMAP: 49.5/12.2

TO THE EAST OF HOWARDS LA. AND ONE KILOMETRE TO THE NORTH OF BETLEY TOWNSHIP.

**DESCRIPTION**

Large dump of tailings and shale visible from Betley Road. Vegetation growing on part of this heap. Some areas have been reworked and reveal a different, flatter rather than heaped landform. The opening of the shaft is still visible with brick foundations alongside. A track leads into the site from Howard's La.

**HISTORY**

The Burnt Creek Company was formed in 1879 and in 1888, the Burnt Creek No. 1 mine began to work on lease no. 4097. Most of the principal investors in this mine were men in Maryborough. The mine was worked through the 1890s and into the twentieth century. While the directors always promised good returns, by the turn of the century they had begun to expect more from the Burnt Creek No. 2 mine. By 1913 work in the shafts at the No. 1 mine ceased and the company concentrated on reworking tailings in 1914. Even this activity seemed to have ceased within a few years.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The mine dump and other remnants are important landmark features. They are a reminder of the rich alluvial and shaft fields along the Burnt Creek and so form an important element in the local landscape and a symbol of the mining history of the shire. The location of the remains make them visible and identifiable for some distance.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Defunct company papers

Quarterly reports, Mining Surveyor





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**DREDGING DAM, BROMLEY**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY 4C

NATMAP: 45.6/14.2

ON THE BETLEY RD., SOUTH OF DUNOLLY TOWNSHIP AT NORTH SIDE OF BRIDGE.

**DESCRIPTION**

Dam with some evidence of mine workings in surrounding forest.

**HISTORY**

Dredging became a common means of extracting gold at the end of the nineteenth century. Dredges operated in the shire in the years up to the First World War. Favoured locations were along the creek beds which had earlier been worked over by alluvial miners. This dam is the result of dredging activity along the Burnt Creek in the early twentieth century. The Burnt Creek Hydraulic Sluicing Company dredged on the north side of Kirk's Bridge between 1905 and 1912. Thompson's of Castlemaine worked a small dredge in the area which was later taken over by Collicoats. This was worked until 1919 when the dredge was dismantled. The dam was built to assist this dredging and was filled by a water course running from the Bet Bet Creek.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The dredging dam is important because of its role in the later stages of mining. This dam is one of several such landform features in the shire which remind us of this late phase of mining.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

R. Carless, State school, no.55 Bromley 1868-1968**DREDGE SITE, BROMLEY**

SITE

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BROMLEY STATE SCHOOL**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY 4A

NATMAP: 45.4/15

TO THE SOUTH-EAST OF TOWNSHIP OF DUNOLLY TOWN BOUNDARY. BETWEEN MIDDLE RD. AND BETLEY RD. IMMEDIATELY WEST OF THE JUNCTION OF THESE TWO ROADS.

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

ARCHITECT: FOOTER, WILLIAM

BUILDERS: FUNNEL, P DUNNE AND T VAUGHAN AND CALLAGHAN

DATE: 1868

**DESCRIPTION**

State school no. 55 is a simply-gabled rubble freestone schoolhouse with red brick quoin surrounds to openings. These openings have generally-segmented arched tops and include the new Tudor style main windows in the east and west face. One pointed arched opening survives next to the porch and chimney. An old Monterey pine in the corner of the site suggests the site of an earlier planting in an otherwise bare school yard. Windows were altered and a timber porch added in 1916. Windows have been blocked on the south face and there is a weatherboard addition to the north face.

**HISTORY**

After opening as the Burnt Ck. Anglican school in 1857, this non-denominational Common School opened in 1868. The school closed in 1976. Amongst the principal figures associated with it was Thomas Flynn who taught here between 1883 and 1886.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Bromley State School, despite its alterations is still a fine example of the building styles of the Common School period. It stands at the centre of what was once a major gold-mining area and has been for a long a social centre in this part of the shire. Its age, styling and communal associations make it one of the more important buildings in the area and significant at a broader level.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

National Trust file 3096.

Vision and realisation, vol.2, p.431.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

BROMLEY STATE SCHOOL

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SCHOOL RESIDENCE BETLEY(MIDDLE BRIDGE) 774**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY

ALLOT: 31/A BETLEY

OFF BETLEY RD TO THE NORTH WITHIN 20 METERS OF THE PARISH BOUNDARY

DATE:1913

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

**DESCRIPTION**

Weatherboard and gabled residence with attached verandah. Has distinctive carved brackets. Some old plantings.

**HISTORY**

Middle bridge opened in 1864. This building replaced the original teacher's residence in 1914. The school closed in 1971.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

A building in the same style as the residence at Goldsborough. This is an interesting example of twentieth century public architecture and a survivor from the once thriving town of Betley.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****BETLEY TEACHER'S HOUSE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MINER'S COTTAGE BROMLEY**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY

ALLOT: 136/3

NATMAP: 46.5/13.3

APPROX 0.2 METERS SOUTH OF THE BETLEY RD TO THE SOUTH; LOCATED ON THE WEST OF THE OLD BROMLEY TOWNSHIP

DATE: 1890 (3)

BUILDER: MELTON, JOHN

## DESCRIPTION

Four-roomed, gabled timber cottage. Has two chimneys of mud brick. Stands in an orchard of some age.

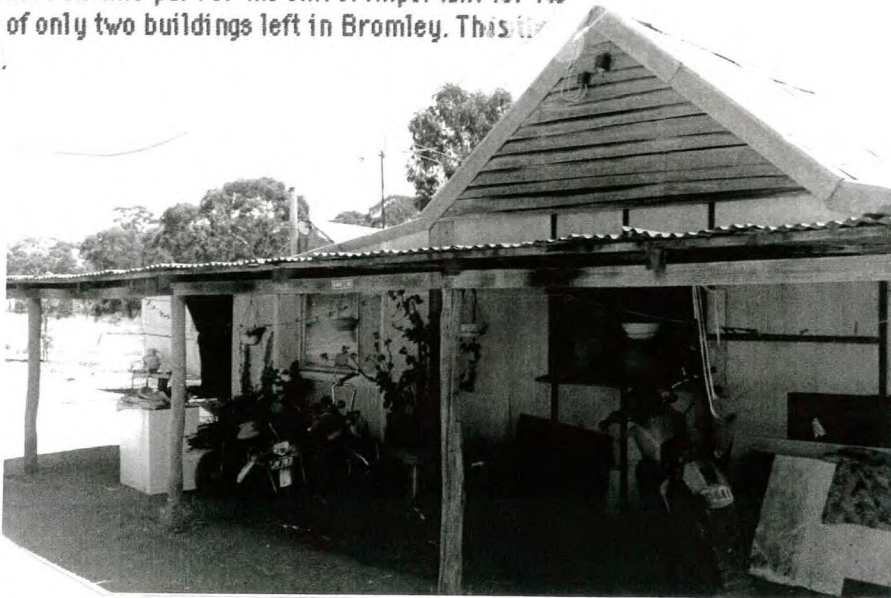
## HISTORY

Built by John Melton early this century. A miner, he was inspired by François Mellon to take up orcharding on his gold field block.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Significant as a last creation of miners in this part of the shire. Important for its links with orcharding as well. One of only two buildings left in Bromley. This is older but has been much altered.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

BROMLEY COTTAGE

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BROMLEY CEMETERY**

LOCATION: PARISH OF DUNOLLY

NATMAP: 45.5/14.5

TO THE SOUTH OF THE BROMLEY RD AT THE BRIDGE OVER THE BURNT CREEK. THE CEMETERY IS TO THE SOUTH-EAST OF A TRACK LEADING OFF THE BROMLEY RD

DATE: 1854(?)

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

**DESCRIPTION**

A small cemetery fenced but now surrounded by excavations. Bare soil and scrub in most of the cemetery with some massive native trees. Only a few headstones but those that survive are in surprisingly good condition.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

A small cemetery but one which forms an essential link with the gold-mining past of this area.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

*BROMLEY CEMETERY*





## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SLAB HUT MOLIAGUL**

LOCATION: PARISH OF MOLIAGUL 9

NATMAP: 37/30

SOUTH SIDE OF THE BENDIGO-ST ARNAUD RD, TO THE NORTH OF THE MOLIAGUL TOWNSHIP AND TO THE WEST OF BEALIBA; TO THE WEST OF THE INTERSECTION WITH THE BEALIBA-MOLIAGUL RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

A simple hipped two-roomed paling clad hut, with detached stone and brick chimney. The cladding consists of vertical slabs, nailed with large-headed hand wrought nails. Later sawn palings cover straps nailed over the joints. Adzed rectangular section posts trim the doorway. The dressed joinery around the windows has been badly eaten by white ants.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

At one stage these simple dwellings were much more common in the shire. Canvas, pise and slabs were common building materials in the gold rush and land settlement period. Canvas structures were the first to disappear and several pise or mud brick buildings remain in the shire. These simple slab cottages are now rare. The location of this building near to the key fossicking fields of Moliagul gives it an added interest.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**FARM SHEDS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF MOLIAGUL 1/8

NATMAP: 38.8/30

LOCATED TO THE SOUTH OF THE BENDIGO-ST. ARNAUD RD. TO THE WEST OF MOLIAGUL

**DESCRIPTION**

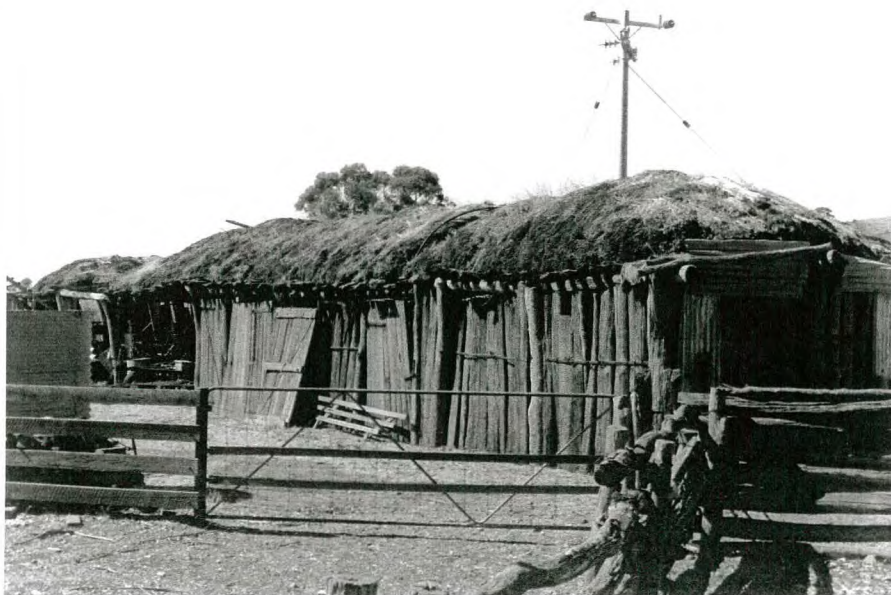
A row of thatched and open-sided farm sheds supported on pole frames. Thatch has been replaced and structure braced.

**HISTORY**

Throughout the shire and indeed in most of rural Victoria, farm sheds like these were a common site. Selectors and owners of large property used this sort of simple structure for a variety of farm purposes – as barns, storage sheds and milking shelters. Several of these sheds are still visible in the shire but the ease of corrugated iron construction has led to most of them being abandoned. In several areas of Bet Bet the remains of shed can be seen leaning precariously with the thatch blackened and falling. These once common elements of the farming landscape are now largely redundant.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Whereas these sheds were once commonplace they are fast disappearing. While many stand neglected, the sheds on this property are maintained and form part of an the operating environment of a farm. They are an important reminder of the character of nineteenth-century farming.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****FARM SHEDS, MOLIAGUL**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MOLIAGUL MOLYBDENITE MINING CO. LEASE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF MOLIAGUL MINING LEASES 6032 AND 6036 23 C /16

NATMAP: DUNOLLY 36.5/33.0

TO NORTH-WEST OF TOWNSHIP OF MOLIAGUL, NORTH OF THE SUMMIT OF MT. MOLIAGUL, 1 K.  
OFF THE MOLIAGUL-RHEOLA RD.

DATE: 1916

**DESCRIPTION**

Remains of excavations at various points on the lease, trenches and shallow shafts spread through the site. The shafts are in parts beyond the border of the shire, but sufficient remains survive within the shire to warrant consideration for conservation controls.

**HISTORY**

Represents an unusual venture in mining associated with the First World War. Pure molybdenum is one of several rare minerals used as hardeners in making 'special steels' for armaments. Between 1914 and 1918 this metal was valued at £600 per ton. J Nankerville Dunn and WP Ogilvie pegged leases in 1916. By 1917 they employed six men at the site. By 1919 the company was declared void without having found molybdenite. The material was intended for use in war materials and by 1919 the end of the First World War made the venture redundant. Yet, even before then miners found a better supply of the mineral in north-eastern Victoria.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

These mine workings never made the same economic or social impact on the shire as did gold mining. Nevertheless they are significant for two reasons. First of all they show the manner in which former gold miners attempted to continue their mining operations and employ long-standing skills once the source of gold in the shire became more difficult to locate. At the same time they indicate the extent to which small communities like that at Moliagul were caught up in the enthusiasm of the struggle to defeat Germany between 1914 and 1918. They are also in a sense a testament to some of the follies and delusions of war hysteria.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Defunct company papers

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

MT MOLIAGUL MINING SITE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**WELCOME STRANGER MONUMENT AND SITE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF MOLIAGUL

NATMAP: 36.7/28.1

WITHIN THE MOLIAGUL HISTORIC AREA, THE WELCOME TRACK LEADS DIRECTLY TO THE SITE. THIS TRACK LEADS OFF THE DUNOLLY RD. TO THE SOUTH FROM OPPOSITE THE FLYNN MEMORIAL AND TURNS WEST TO LEAD DIRECTLY TO THE MEMORIAL.

**DESCRIPTION**

An open cleared area within the forest approximately fifty meters square. Within this cleared area stands the Welcome Stranger monument. This is a stone obelisk with surrounding iron railings with stone corner obelisks of a smaller dimension. The memorial refers to the find of the Welcome Stranger nugget. To the East of the monument the ground slopes up to a ridge along which are several relics of alluvial mining. The shafts cut here were intended to tap the Bulldog Reef on which the Welcome Stranger nugget was found.

**HISTORY**

The Welcome Stranger Nugget was discovered on this site in 1869. It was regarded as the largest single nugget discovered in the world at the time. It revived interest in mining in the shire after some years of poor alluvial returns. So excited were some investors that one Melbourne mining speculator suggested that the whole of Victoria, from the seaboard to the Murray ought to be puddled. John Deason and Richard Oates discovered the nugget on 5 February 1869. The nugget weighed 210 pounds gross and when smelted yielded 2269 ounces of gold. The nugget was taken by the lucky finders into Dunolly to the London Chartered Bank (qv). Occasionally, money from the find was donated to one or other worthy cause in Dunolly. The monument was erected by the Mines Department in 1897, largely through the instigation of J.L. Duggan, a member of the Duggan family, local merchants and mining speculators and for a long time a champion of the local mining industry.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The site of the discovery and the reef (Bulldog Reef) are important as places central to Australian mining history. The Welcome Stranger discovery renewed local efforts at mining and at the same time attracted world-wide attention to the Shire. The monument erected in 1897 testifies to this importance and at the same time is itself a part of the shire's history. It is an early example of attempts to commemorate the endeavours of local miners. The surrounding gullies and mine workings still reveal some of the shape and character of a nineteenth-century mining field, even though they have been worked over several times. The monument and the discovery of the nugget are significant to the character of the shire and are also central to Victorian mining history.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Flett, Dunolly.Express, 1869-1870, 1897.

## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**QUEENS MINE AND DREDGING DAM**

LOCATION: PARISH OF MOLIAGUL, WITHIN THE C.F. & L. HISTORIC AREA

NATMAP: 37.6/28.4

APPROXIMATELY ONE K. TO THE SOUTH OF MCCOYS STORE IN MOLIAGUL AND ONE K TO THE EAST OF THE WELCOME STRANGER MONUMENT. WITHIN ONE K. TO THE WEST OF THE DUNOLLY RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Remains of dredging dam and shaft, some signs of open cut working near to the dam and remnants of mullock. The few remains are scattered in a broad area across a ridge with several hundred meters lying between the open cut, mine shaft and dam. These remnants lie to the north of the track leading to the Welcome Stranger Memorial and can be reached by foot from the location of the Welcome Stranger find.

**HISTORY**

This mine was first opened on the Bulldog Reef in 1864 (mining lease 4368) and at one time paid 20 oz. to the ton. The gold here was first discovered by two Chinese miners and William Nutt working to the south of Moliagul. For a time the reef which they tapped was the only paying reef on the Moliagul field. It proved an exceptionally rich and exciting find in a period when miners had begun to drift away from nearby alluvial workings. The success of the Queen's Mine stimulated interest in re-working other areas around Moliagul at a deeper level. By 1867 returns were lower and the mine was not worked until 1868. The mine was let on tribute for several years in the 1870s; amongst the parties who worked it were a Chinese group led by Ah Moy. The Queen's Mine was left idle again in 1879; after that date the site was worked over with dredges and some of the original shaft was expanded into a small open-cut mine.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Queen's Mine and dam lie within the crucially important Moliagul mining field and so form a part of one of the key fields in the history of Australian gold mining. The remnants themselves exhibit a range of mining activity and are set in attractive bushland. They are also unusual in the association with Chinese miners working on capitalised deep lead mines. Most of the Chinese miners in the shire were of course alluvial prospectors. They played an important role in keeping the Moliagul field alive and in its proximity to the first mine workings in the field and to the Welcome Stranger site it represents an important stage in the mining chronology of the shire and indeed in Australian mining history.

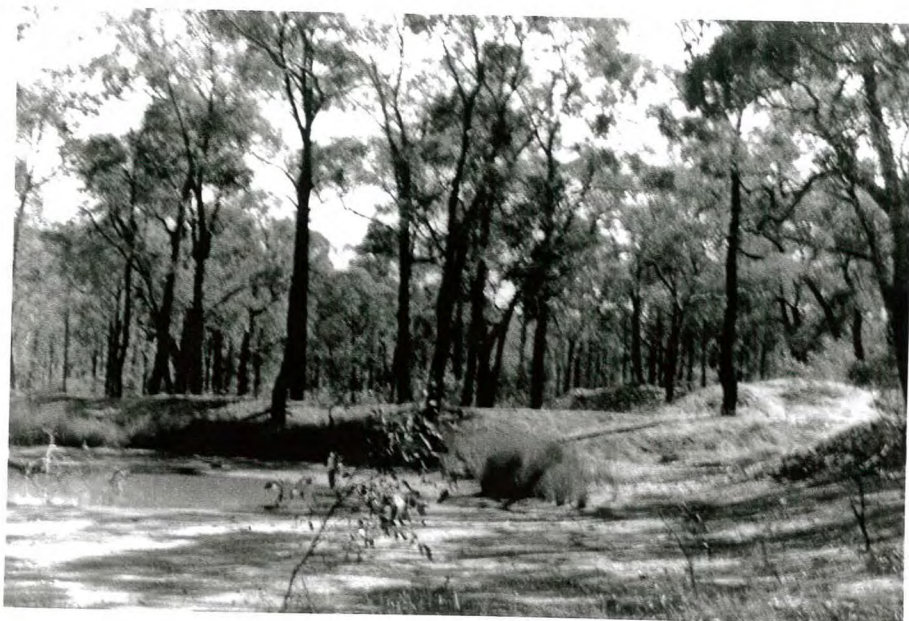
**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Mining surveyor reports.

mining pamphlets, State Library pamphlet collection

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

QUEEN'S MINE AREA



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MOLIAGUL CEMETERY**

LOCATION: CEMETERY RESERVE , MOLIAGUL - PAINSWICK PARISH BOUNDARY  
 NATMAP: 38.4/27.4

ON THE DUNOLLY\_MOLIAGUL RD. ON THE WESTERN SIDE FACING THE ROADWAY  
 AND SURROUNDED BY FOREST. THE CEMETERY LIES ON THE MOLIAGUL PARISH  
 BOUNDARY

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

**DESCRIPTION**

Extensive and well-maintained cemetery. Most of the headstones date from after the gold rushes. But names familiar in mining history appear on memorials. Amongst them are the names of the Deason family including John Deason discoverer of the Welcome Stranger nugget.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Important as an index of life in the gold field of Moliagul and of the sentiments which bound and still bind local residents together.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****MOLIAGUL CEMETERY**

## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**CLOSER SETTLEMENT HOUSE, NATTE YALLOCK**

LOCATION: PARISH OF NATTE YALLOCK 33A

NATMAP: 25.3/15.8

SITUATED 0.25 KS. FROM THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE BEALIBA STH. RD.

DATE: 1933

MAJOR OWNER: MORTLOCK, WILLIAM

**DESCRIPTION**

Weatherboarded house with three chimneys and iron roof. The site includes several original outbuildings. The house is a standard Closer Settlement Board design.

**HISTORY**

Only a handful of soldier settlers moved into the shire after the First World War. Amongst them was John Cornthwaite who farmed on this block. He was preceded by selector George Bennett. Cornthwaite apparently had limited success with this block and was succeeded by William Mortlock who took up this land under closer settlement legislation. The Closer Settlement design was built for William Mortlock.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

While closer and soldier settlement were not major influences on the shire's history, the area did attract some of these farmers. This house is one of the few in the shire which represents that phase of farming and is significant because it links Bet Bet to these broad movements in twentieth century farming.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Closer settlement files.





## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**COTTAGE: GOLDSBOROUGH PRE-EMPTIVE RIGHT**

LOCATION: PARISH OF PAINSWICK PRE-EMPTIVE RIGHT GOLDSBOROUGH  
 NATMAP: 39.2/21.6

TO THE SOUTH OF THE DUNOLLY RD., 0.5 KS. WEST OF THE INTERSECTION OF THE  
 DUNOLLY RD. AND THE ST. ARNAUD-DUNOLLY RD. SET SEVERAL HUNDRED  
 METERS TO THE SOUTH OF THE DUNOLLY RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

A farm complex consisting of two houses, one freestone with red-brick trim to openings, the other weatherboarded with verandah on one side and gabled bays extending to the rear. The first of these buildings has a double-hipped roof and double-fronted elevation to the east. The second is a double-fronted building with distinctive verandah brackets, saw-toothed verandah endboards and red-brick chimneys attached on the west side. To the north-east of the two houses is an extensive thatched barn now serving as a hayshed. Another two smaller thatched barns survive to the north of the complex. The stone house has an added verandah to one side and the window has been taken out. The timber house is generally original. The two houses presumably represent two construction periods: the stone house.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The two houses cannot be linked directly to the pre-gold rush period in which the Goldsbrough run and the local squatters forced their way into Bet Bet. The stone cottage seems to be a relic of the later gold rush period. The adjacent timber house dates from the 1890s. The freestone building has a simple but elegant hipped roof form and like other buildings in the shire it combines freestone with red brick facing in a typical local style. Its importance lies in these materials, the simple and well balanced dimensions and the location on the Pre-Emptive Right.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**GOLDSBOROUGH STATE SCHOOL SS 321**

LOCATION: PARISH OF PAINSWICK SS RESERVE

NATMAP: 38.6/21.5

AT THE NORTH- WESTERN CORNER OF THE GOLDSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP, 0.5 KS. SOUTH OF RAILWAY LINE.

BUILDER: HARRISON, AINSWORTH

**DESCRIPTION**

Former school and residence. The school is tall and steeply gabled with weatherboard cladding and trussed gables on a cruciform plan. Pediments are created at windows and doors and a chimney provides the main feature of the east elevation, stepping up to an Elizabethan cornice with a stop-chamfered shaft. The external fireplace is an unusual feature. The residence is simply gabled to a common government design (see Betley school residence). The residence also has a distinctive Elizabethan chimney.

**HISTORY**

The first government school in the area opened at Inkerman in 1860 and lasted until 1863. A decline in gold at Inkerman soon after meant that the school moved to the present site. The school was built to accomodate 140 children. In 1888 the school changed its name to Goldsbrough and survived until 1959.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The school is distinctive amongst local schools in form and in materials. It has significance as one of the handful of buildings surviving from the days when Goldsbrough was a flourishing mining town.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## *Goldsborough School*

The site of the present school, three acres on crown lands, was eventually chosen at Goldsborough without any consideration for Inkerman, whose population had shrunk as Goldsborough mining had gone ahead, and was gazetted on 26 August 1881. The Inspector for the Education Department advised that the school be built of wood for possible removal later on. It was to accommodate one hundred & forty children and to have two rooms fifty feet by twenty feet and twenty feet by twenty feet.

Tenders were called for the new school on 7 March 1882 and the tender of Ainsworth Harrison of Dunolly for £559 accepted. The contract for the school residence also went to Harrison for £256, who completed the school on 1 November 1882. However, as Mr Harrison became insolvent, it was left to Mr Thomas Laing to build the residence.

The new school was opened on about 16 November 1882. The opening however, was held up and the children had a week or so holiday while contractor, inspector, master and Department cleared up a misunderstanding re the passing of the building. The old building at Inkerman gradually fell into disrepair after it was closed and W.J.Parker of Dunolly bought it for £5.

John Kirkaldie, the veteran teacher of Inkerman-Goldsborough School, remained there until 4 November 1888. Teachers after John Kirkaldie were N.W.Watts (1889-90) Patrick Collins (1891-97) and E Williams who began later.

Extract from ***Dunolly – Story of an Old Gold- Diggings* by James Flett**  
(First published 1956)

## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SLAB COTTAGE, GOLDSBOROUGH**

LOCATION: TOWNSHIP OF GOLDSBOROUGH PARISH OF PAINSWICK

NATMAP: 38.1/21.2

ON THE WESTERN EDGE OF THE ORIGINAL TOWNSHIP SUBDIVISION. FACES THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY MINE ACROSS THE ORIGINAL COMMERCIAL STRIP OF GOLDSBOROUGH.

**DESCRIPTION**

A double-fronted prefabricated drop-slab cottage, now derelict; comprised of seven panels across the facade, each alternated pane containing a window or a door. Windows are double-hung and multi-paned. The door is four panel with no top light. Verandah posts are fine with stop-chamfering and slim sections. The verandah floor survives in derelict state.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The unusual construction of the cottage and its survival as one of the few buildings dating from the mining era in Goldsbrough give it importance. As well it is located in what was once the commercial centre of the town.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**QUEENS BIRTHDAY MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF PAINSWICK 11A /13

NATMAP: 38.1/21.2

THE REMAINS OF THE MINE LIE WITHIN THE AREA OF THE GOLDSBOROUGH TOWNSHIP AND ARE REACHED BY FOLLOWING A ROAD SOUTH FROM NEAR THE JUNCTION OF THE ST. ARNAUD RD.-DUNOLLY RD. AND THE DUNOLLY RD. THE MINE DUMP STANDS ON THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF THE FIRST INTERSECTION SOUTH OF THE RAILWAY LINE. REMAINS OF WATER RACES ARE LOCATED A FURTHER 60 METRES TO THE SOUTH OF THIS INTERSECTION.

**DESCRIPTION**

Large mine dump on which some vegetation has grown. There are signs that some parts of these tailings have been reworked or removed. The remains of other local mines can be seen nearby. These too have been either re-worked or removed. Dam and sluice gates still visible near to the mine dump. Several water runs leading into and out of these sluice gates. There is little remaining of mining machinery or buildings.

**HISTORY**

The Queen's Birthday Company worked ground initially leased by the Goldsbrough Company. The company was formed in 1867 and continued operation into the 1880s. In 1868, the company set up a crushing plant but found that they were crushing very poor stone. From that point the firm began to extend its shaft in late 1868 and early 1869. Returns appeared poor for several years until in 1873 an extension to the shaft reached potentially rich ground. Drives were extended to the south during 1875 and in 1877 the company purchased the plant and mine of the neighbouring Goldsbrough Quatrz Mining Company. The company erected two crushing mills and took up a new 15 acre lease. By then the Queen's Birthday was probably the richest single mine in the shire and comparable to succesful mines elsewhere in Yictoria. The major find occurred in 1876, bringing a good deal of wealth to the town of Dunolly and to the Methodist community in particular since the mine's principal shareholders were members of the Dunolly Methodist Church. Several of the original shareholders were influential in local politics and were closely connected to the Dunolly Methodist Church, amongst them were Peters and Hansford and Harse. In 1877 the company still recorded good yields and paid dividends of £1-6-0 per share. The mine continued to promise great things during 1878 when from 4000 tons of rock crushed, the firm obtained nearly 5000 ounces of gold. Over the following years, the company extended the main shaft to beyond 500 feet and erected new steam-powered crushing batteries, as well as sinking a new shaft. In 1880 WG Couchman, the local mining surveyor, could report that the mine 'looks splendid and has every appearance of permanency'. By 1883, when the shaft had been sunk to greater depth the mine still returned good quantities of gold, but with none of the enormously rich finds of the 1870s. By the end of the year the company had run into problems with water in the shaft. By 1884, the crushings were no longer returning payable gold and the company leased part of their site to tributers. In 1887 the mine still seemed to promise rich returns and the company extended the main shaft to 800 feet. Then in 1889 the company confined operations to pumping water and directors sought investment from England to keep the mine open. While the site was worked for several more years the great days of this key mine in the shire were over.

**SIGNIFICANCE****SITE LISTINGS**



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

The Queen's Birthday was for a time the richest mine in the shire. It was central to the fortunes of Dunolly and especially to the character and importance of Methodism in the town. While little remains of the mining machinery, the mine dump and the nearby waterworks indicate some

aspects of mining activity. It also forms a central element in what remains of the Goldsbrough township and is a reminder of the ties between small mining towns and one key mine. The decline of the town can be seen as a product of the failure of the Queen's Birthday Company to find new resources in the late 1880s.

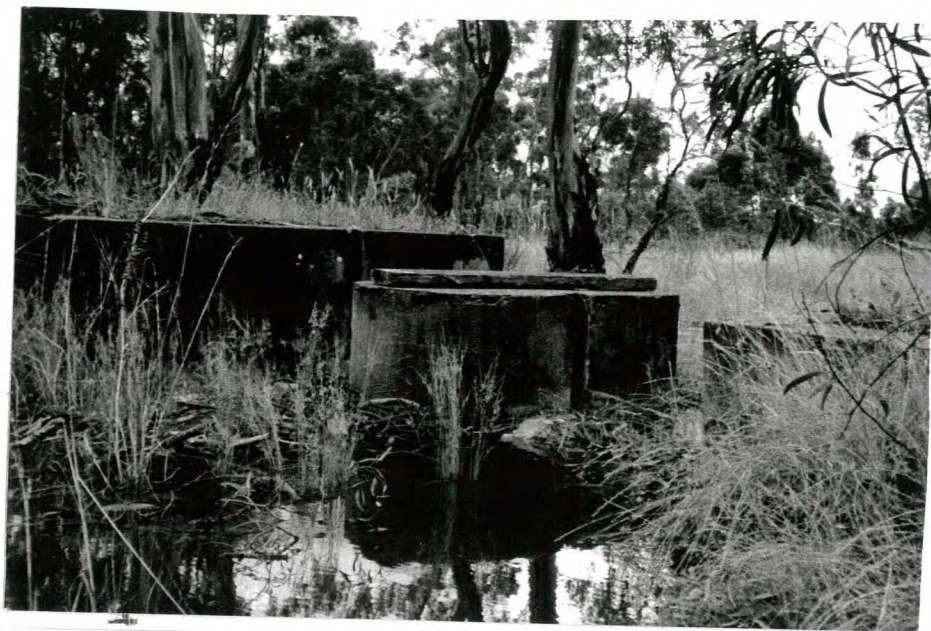
## STATE SIGNIFICANCE

## Source:

Queen's Birthday Mine papers, State Library of Victoria.

Express, various dates.

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY MINE SITE



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MARTIN'S EUCALYPTUS PRESS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF PAINSWICK, SECTION 13

NATMAP: 38.5/20.8

WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP AREA OF GOLDSBOROUGH ADJACENT TO THE QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY MINING SITE.

**DESCRIPTION**

The site consists of a large boiler within an iron shed. Alongside are concrete vats embedded in earthen surrounds. A concrete seal for the vats and a hand-operated hoist for moving it are also adjacent to the boiler. From the vats a series of drains lead to a small iron and wooden shelter with bench and pit for separating the oil.

**HISTORY**

The only functioning works which survives from an important local industry. This distillery was originally used by the Britten family and is now operated by Pat Martin. The distillery operated during the 1920s and was one of several operating in the forests of the shire at that time. The present boiler replaces an earlier Cornish boiler destroyed in an explosion in 1929. The Britten family were still involved in the distillery during the 1950s. It is now run occasionally by Pat Martin. But with portable distilling equipment being taken into the forests on trucks, low-technology operations like that at Goldsborough are becoming rare. Pat Martin now only works this distillery on a part-time basis.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

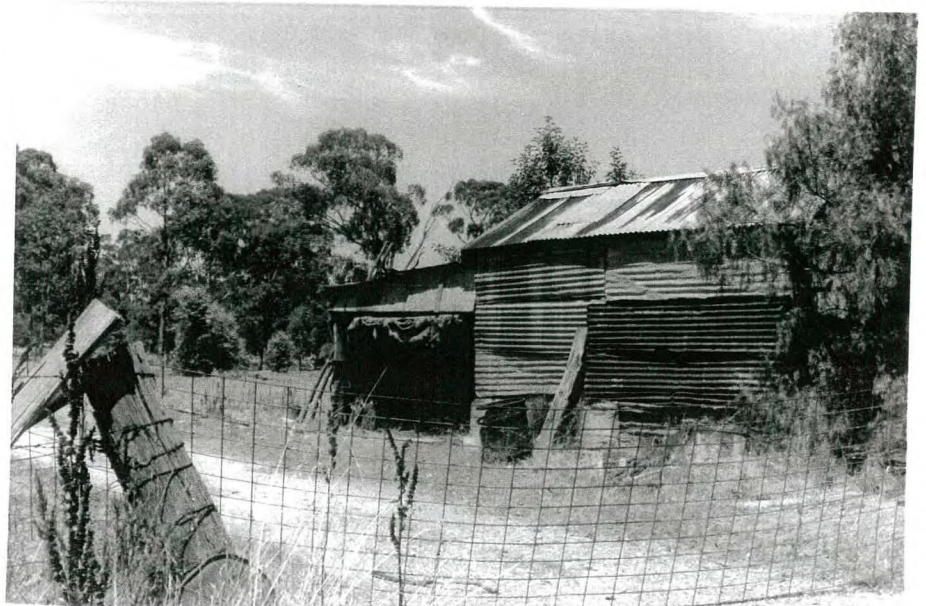
The workings make visible the process of small-scale distilling, a mainstay for men at different times in the shire's history. They are a working example of a significant local industry and an unusual survivor from the pre-war years when simple technology supported many local operators.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Discussions with Pat Martin.

Shire of Bet Bet council minutes.





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

~~RECENT TOPOGRAPHY~~**HARVEST HOME DREDGING DAM AND MINE WORKINGS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF PAINSWICK, 10

NATMAP: 42.7/22.3

ON HARVEST HOME TRACK AT A DISTANCE OF 3 KS. TO THE EAST OF THE JUNCTION OF THE HARVEST HOME TRACK WITH THE DUNOLLY-MOLIAGUL RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Dam of several hundred meters circumference formed by an earthen embankment to the west of one to two meters in height. To the west and to the north of this dam are several tailing heaps marking the sites of quartz lead mines run by local companies. Remains of a split rail fence can be seen near to the south side of the dam.

**HISTORY**

Dredging and small-scale company mining went on in this area from the 1870s through to the 1890s though it never developed into one of the major local fields. Several companies began to take an interest in this site in 1880. These included the Harvest Home Company, the North Harvest Home Company and the South Harvest Home Company. However shareholders were also interested in leases closer to Goldsbrough. Shafts in the area reached depths of up to 200 feet and in the early 1880s these companies reported good prospects for mining. Early promises appeared to be short-lived and by the end of the decade it seemed as if these companies had ceased operations. The area was later worked for dredging.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The site is significant because it includes several items from local mining. The dam and the remains of the several company mines in the area together indicate some of the range of activities associated with mining in the 1880s, long after the initial enthusiasm for company mining in the area had waned. It is worthy of protection because of the scenic interest of the dam and surrounding forest as much as for historic qualities. Indeed the dam is used as a recreation area for local families.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Mining surveyor quarterly reports.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**HARD HILLS MINE AREA**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA C/21, 98A, RES., A3, A1, 114

NATMAP: 52/31.5

TO THE WEST OF LLANELLY TOWNSHIP AND TO THE NORTH OF TARNAGULLA. SOUTH OF RHEOLA-LLANELLY RD AND ON EITHER SIDE OF THE WESTERN END OF HANGMAN'S LANE.

**DESCRIPTION**

Area of shallow shaft mine workings some of which have been re-worked but many which remain unfilled. Some of the surface workings have been removed and parts of the site have been used as a rubbish dump. On parts of the site some mine workings remain closer to the state in which they were left in the nineteenth century.

**HISTORY**

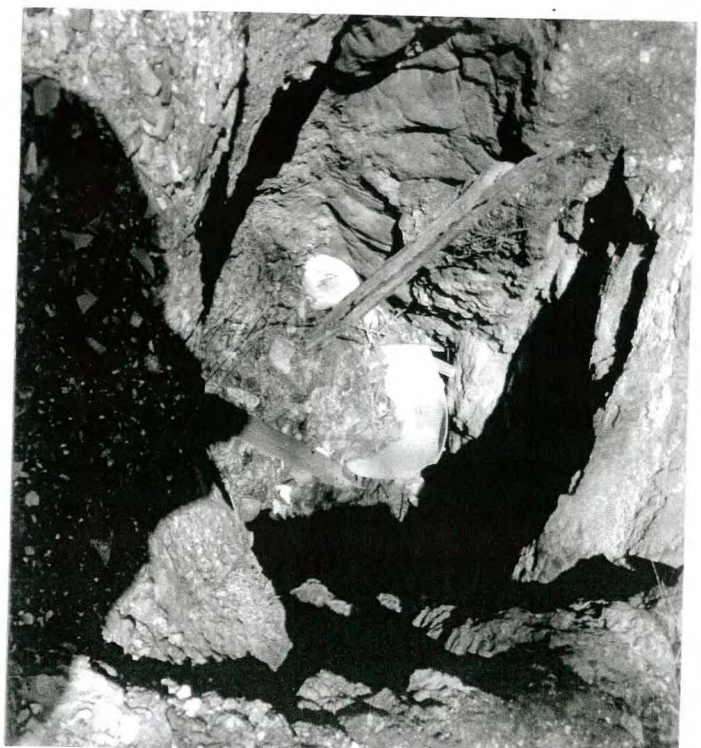
In September 1859, miners rushed the Hard Hills area. Diggers kept on in the area during 1860. Then, numbers fell so that by March 1865, only 90 miners still worked on the field. By the end of the year another rush to Hard Hills brought more than three hundred miners onto the field. By the middle of 1866 these numbers fell. Chinese miners then took up several of the claims. Smaller numbers returned during the 1880s and then in the 1930s unemployed men on sustenance revived the field with some mixed results. The field became known as 'Sustenance Hill' during the 1930s Depression and was a favourite camping spot for men drifting about looking for work or gold.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Importance lies in the several phases of reworking-it is an area has been almost continuously mined, several remnants of shafts remain and as such it is a sign of the continued role of mining in the shire.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:  
Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.  
Courier.  
Express.





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**YORKSHIRE MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA, NO SECTION

NATMAP: 53.6/29.8

TO THE NORTH OF TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP DOWN TRACK RUNNING WEST, 2.5 KS. NORTH OF TARNAGULLA TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY. TO THE WEST OF THE TARNAGULLA-BRIDGEWATER ROAD AND TO THE WEST OF THE TARNAGULLA - BRIDGEWATER RAILWAY LINE

**DESCRIPTION**

The remains of the Yorkshire mine consist of scattered and re-worked remnants of tailing heaps. As well the site includes the brick footings of a former boiler. Other parts of the site have scattered concrete remnants of mining machinery. Several parts of the site have been re-worked at various stages and the mine shaft has been capped. A small dam marks the entrance to the site.

**HISTORY**

One of the last major shafts dug in the Tarnagulla area. In September 1880 a shaft on the site had been sunk to three hundred feet. Later, the shaft was extended to over 1000 feet. During 1881, the company crushed stone from the 305 foot level to the 330 foot level. In March 1882, the local mining surveyor reported that the lode was 'seven feet thick showing gold freely in the stone'. By 1883 the company had crushed over two thousand tons of stone for a yield of 112 ounces of gold. The company discovered a new shoot of gold in 1884 and made good returns during that year. In the later 1880s the profits fell and the mine seems to have been let on tribute at some stage. It continued operating into the twentieth century when because of the depth of the shaft it was seen as the most likely source of a revived gold industry in the shire.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Significance lies in this late attempt to revive mining and the continued attempt to find payable gold in the twentieth century. Remnants of materials and the dam have survived in parts, as have some tailings and the dam. These are important in that they can suggest some aspects of local mining operations and raise questions about the manner in which deep lead miners operated at the end of the nineteenth century.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor,  
Courier





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**NUGGETTY GULLY**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA, NO SECTION

NATMAP: 52.8/24.3 - 52.8/26- 54/25- 54/24

LOCATED TO THE SOUTH-EAST OF THE TOWNSHIP OF TARNAGULLA AND TO THE WEST OF THE TARNAGULLA- DUNOLLY ROAD. FROM THE INTERSECTION OF THE TARNAGULLA-LAANECORIE RD. AND THE TARNAGULLA-DUNOLLY RD. THE AREA LIES TO THE NORTH-WEST OF THE ROADWAY TO THE JUNCTION WITH THE TARNAGULLA-EDDINGTON RD. IT IS BOUNDED ON THE NORTH BY A TRACK RUNNING SOUTH-WEST FROM TARNAGULLA TO THE JUNCTION OF THE EDDINGTON-LAANECORIE RD. AND THE TARNAGULLA-LAANECORIE RD. THE WESTERN BOUNDARY OF THE AREA LIES 2 KS. ALONG THIS ROAD FROM ITS JUNCTION WITH THE TARNAGULLA-DUNOLLY RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

An area of forest in which there are countless shafts (mostly filled) trenches and mullock heaps, mainly from surface workings. The area is forested but within the forest are remnants of generations of surface mining. Within this area there are also larger heaps left from deep lead mines in the nineteenth century. These heaps reach to ten meters in height and are for the most part shrouded by vegetation. The area extends across reefs which have been worked with such deeper shafts, amongst them, the Wanda Mine was perhaps most successful.

**HISTORY**

The longest lasting 'small man's field' in the shire and amongst the key fields in Victoria for fossicking. Since 1853 when the first nuggets were found there, the Nuggetty Gully field has been famous for the constant supply of large nuggets it has provided almost at random to individual miners. It covers Ironbark Gully which was rushed in the 1850s, later in the nineteenth century and again in the 1930s. By 1859 the reefs through Nuggetty Gully supported small groups of miners, but gradually these men drifted off to work on one of the deep quartz leads. A newer find at Nuggetty Point brought many back to the field at the end of the year when miners reported yields of more than six ounces to the ton. Mining on the field increased in 1865. Miners were still working over the field in 1870. From 1870 onwards, small mining companies concentrated on Ironbark Gully and several shaft mines got good returns for most of the decade. Miners have constantly returned to the field. In the 1930s, men on sustenance schemes reworked the field after several large nuggets were found. Nuggetty Gully has remained a site for fossickers right through to the present day. The deeper shafts were worked intermittently and at times they returned good profits to investors. Reef mines in the area won great faith from among local people but gave poor returns. The importance of the field lies in its worth to the small miner, especially to fossickers.

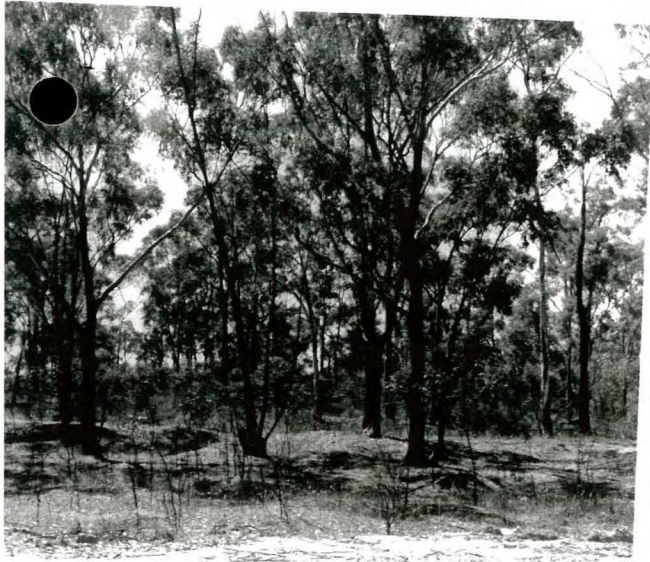
**SIGNIFICANCE**

A field in which generations of miners have left their mark. Unlike the Wild Dog diggings, which reflect a short span in mining history, this area reflects the efforts of miners in the 1850s and 1860s as well as in the 1930s. It is still a favourite place for fossickers to try their luck. The remains of larger concerns alongside the remnants of small workings give the field an added interest. Nuggetty Gully is finally significant in that it is part of a tradition of prospecting which is very much alive in the late twentieth century.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****SITE LISTINGS**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

Source:  
Reports, mining surveyor

NUGGETTY GULLY



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**MORTON HOMESTEAD**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA 27/F

NATMAP: 59/35.5

AT INTERSECTION OF NEWBRIDGE-BRIDGEWATER RD. AND GRAHAM'S LANE; AT THE SOUTH-WEST CORNER SET ON A SLOPING SITE 0.2 KS TO THE WEST OF THE NEWBRIDGE-BRIDGEWATER RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

A deserted farm dwelling, orchard and sheds. The house is a singlefronted cottage with verandah. It has weatherboard cladding in the front section and is constructed of brick in the central section. At the rear the construction is of horizontally-placed logs. Several original outbuildings of slab and board are on the site. A well and orchard complete the complex.

**HISTORY**

Charles Morton was the original selector of this block. He worked as a traveller for the nearby brewery and after a dispute with the neighbouring squatter, Cato, he abandoned his selection and moved to Melbourne. Nearby farmers attempted to convince Lands Department officials that he had forfeited the block. Morton returned to his land and built up the present complex to satisfy improvement demands of the Lands Department.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The cottage is important because of the sequence of styles in building. These demonstrate the means by which land selectors sought to satisfy the Lands Department and the increasing comfort of farm dwellings over the years. The outbuildings and wells are important because they show the arrangement of a homestead in the nineteenth century. The complex, unlike many in the shire has had no recent additions. The site reflects another aspect of local life in that Morton was engaged in a long battle with neighbouring squatter Cato, demonstrating a process common to the agricultural history of the state and one of the few battles in this area for which detailed documentation has been discovered. The site illustrates social, political and economic aspects of land selection.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Selection files and Lands Dept. Correspondence, Selection 541, clause 19.20.

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO





## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**CORFU-GROWLERS REEF MINING AREA**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA, NO SECTION

NATMAP: 53/28-55.9/28-52.8/26.8-55.9/26.5

FROM TARNAGULLA-BRIDGEWATER RD. APPROXIMATELY 2 KS. NORTH OF THE TOWN RUNNING EAST TO THE TOWN BOUNDARY AND THEN TO THE TARNAGULLA-POSEIDON RD. AND THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE TARNAGULLA URBAN AREA.

**DESCRIPTION**

Remnants of various stages of mining are scattered at various points through this area. In the north of the site are the iron and concrete remnants of the state battery site. To the west are smaller mine workings and the Growlers reef open cut. In the south-west are remains of shafts and damworks associated with mining on the Corfu and Garibaldi Reefs. Within the site are scattered remnants of various phases of mining, including heaps from deep leads associated with several of the key mines in the Tarnagulla mining district and evidence of surface mining. Much of the area has been reworked.

**HISTORY**

These fields lie to the east of the Tarnagulla township and were opened up by miners searching for new leads near to the Sandy Creek find in the 1850s. By the end of the 1850s several rich leads had been discovered on the Corfu reef, supposedly named for a party of Greek sailors who discovered rich nuggets there. In September 1859, the Antrim, the Durham, Montebello and the Hellas mines all obtained good returns from the reef. The names of the mines suggest the ethnic diversity of the diggers on the reef. By 1861, the Corfu Reef Company worked a lease with an average yield of more than one ounce to the ton. Six years later, Frazer and Williams were working a mine on Growlers Reef from which they had extracted a total yield of 12 ounces of gold. The Garibaldi Company commenced work on the Corfu Reef at the same time. They were followed in 1868 by the Last Chance Company. In the following year, several of these mines were flooded and the companies ceased work. By 1872, the Corfu Company had pumped out the mine and had nine men at work repairing the shaft. By June of the following year, the mine was once again abandoned. The reef was tackled by several later parties and attracted miners in the twentieth century. But returns have not matched those of the 1850s and 1860s.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The remains of several phases of mining are scattered through this site. The state crushing battery, the open cut at Growlers Reef and the remnants of several mines on the Corfu (and its extension the Garibaldi Reef) as well as shafts and dumps from other mines make this area an important site for the mining history of the shire. The Corfu Reef in particular attracted miners over several years. There are sufficient remnants from each of these stages of mining to illustrate much of the history of mining in the Tarnagulla area. Principal elements within the site are

1. Corfu Reef workings and dam site
2. State battery remains
3. Growlers reef open cut.

**SITE LISTINGS**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyorCORFU MINE AREA



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**ROTHWELL**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA 7/B

NATMAP: 58.8/27.

TO THE EAST OF LAANECORIE-NEWBRIDGE RD. IN A BEND OF THE LODDON RIVER.  
THE SITE IS 2.5 KS. SOUTH OF NEWBRIDGE.

**DESCRIPTION**

Large farmhouse set in garden near banks of the Loddon River. Face-red brick, large ornate Gothic revival house with distinctive scalloped barge boards, multi-gabled elevation and return bull-nosed verandah. Remnants of picket fence and old plants in the garden. Wall is built in Flemish bond and some remnants of ogee spouting. Planting nearby includes fruit trees, Lilac, Acanthus plant and Fatina. The house is approached by a driveway lined with peppercorns and is situated on a picturesque bend of the river.

**HISTORY**

The house has been associated with some of the key figures in local orcharding and is generally in an original condition. The principal name associated with the house is Mr. E. Kemers, who took a lead in local agricultural societies.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This building is important because of its scale and elaborate decoration. It is also significant as a survivor of the once famous orchard properties which lined the banks of the Loddon River. The Newbridge area was once renowned for orchards and this building was set at the centre of a local orchard. It is a product of an innovative and lucrative era in local farming and as such provides a contrast with most other farmhouses in the shire, products of the land selection period. Its general style and the decoration distinguish it from more simple farmhouses in the rest of the shire.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****ROTHWELL**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BENYON FARMHOUSE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA 9/A

NATMAP: 58.6/28

ON THE BANKS OF THE LODDON RIVER, SOUTH OF THE TOWN OF NEWBRIDGE.  
REACHED BY A LANEWAY LEADING OFF THE LAANECORIE-NEWBRIDGE RD.

MAJOR OWNER: BENYON, J

**DESCRIPTION**

Large brick farmhouse on the banks of the Loddon River. Extensive hipped roof, the house is built in Flemish bond of clinker bricks. It has an encircling timber verandah and unusual timber valances and brackets. Another distinctive element of the outside elevation is the segment-arched cemented architraves with their vermiculated keystones set above and shallow brackets below the sills. The main entry is fully arched and segmented architraves are used on the two sides of the building the other openings are plain with arch-bar heads.

**HISTORY**

The building was the original home of John Benyon. It was originally named Cardigan Villa and probably built in 1870. Benyon was a miner born in Cardigan Wales in 1832. He arrived in Victoria in 1853 and struck gold at Tarnagulla (he was one of the four Welshmen who had a share in the Poverty reef:- he Welshmen's Claim). Benyon made £40 000 from the claim and built this house. He went on to play a role in public affairs, importing Welsh ponies and establishing Welsh and Anglican churches at Newbridge. His fortunes tumbled later in the century when he held a license in Melbourne (the Railway Club Hotel in Spencer Street). Benyon went bankrupt and retired to Bendigo where he was given a grace and favour position with the railways.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Important because of the scale and quality of design. It contrasts with the many smaller and simple wooden buildings on farms within the shire. The building tells something of the story of the miners who came to Tarnagulla from Wales. Benyon is an important character because of his ties with the Poverty Reef, his role in local church-building and his long-standing Welsh connections. His house is a rare reminder of the many Welsh miners who left their mark on the shire. Like Benyon, some made fortunes large enough to leave their mark on the countryside.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Information from present owners and descendants of the Benyon family.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

*BENYON FARMHOUSE*

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BREWERY SITE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA 16 Ares/ F

NATMAP: 59.5/34

OCCUPIES A HIGH BANK AND PART OF A FLOODPLAIN ON A BEND OF THE LODDON;  
TO THE EAST OF THE BRIDGEWATER-NEWBRIDGE RD., 4KS. NORTH OF  
NEWBRIDGE.

**DESCRIPTION**

Open land on bend of Loddon River. The only remaining evidence of the brewery is the stone and brick footings which stand some 100 metres from the entrance to the site. A few exotic plantings are visible on the banks of the river.

**HISTORY**

Brewing became an important industry along the Loddon River at several points. By the 1860s at least two breweries operated at Newbridge and sent their products to various parts of Victoria. The site of this, Day's Brewery, was apparently flooded at one stage and this may have contributed to the demise of local brewing. Day the brewery owner had several other interests in the town of Newbridge and the brewery was a staple of local employment as well as contributing substantially to the wider reputation of Newbridge.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Important as a reminder of the extent of industrial activity in small towns like Newbridge. As well the site has become a popular recreational spot for local people and so has a place in the social life of the area.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****BREWERY SITE**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**IRISHTOWN BRIDGE WATER RACE**

LOCATION: TARNAGULLA 98A, 98B/C

NATMAP: 51.8/31.3

ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF IRISHTOWN BRIDGE OVER BULLABUL CK. ON RHEOLA-LLANELLY RD, ON LLANELLY SIDE OF BRIDGE.

**DESCRIPTION**

For approximately 200 meters this timber-lined water course runs parallel to the roadway before joining Bullabul Creek at Irishtown Bridge. Mainly formed of rough timber, in parts the lining of the race is in dressed timber. As well, in parts a stone causeway appears to have been laid. Some vegetation has grown through the race at certain points.

**HISTORY**

Thought to be associated with the Cambrian Mine workings in Llanelly.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

This is an unusual remnant from the period in which Llanelly was a major gold mining centre. The race probably ran from the mines on the west side of Llanelly. Water in shafts and then lack of water for washing alluvial dirt were constant problems for local miners and during the nineteenth century they constructed several of these water races within the shire. This is one of the more substantial remnants of water works in the mining era and is an interesting example of the subsidiary works on which mining depended.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE****IRISHTOWN WATER RACE**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**SANDSTONE MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF TARNAGULLA - /G

NATMAP: 55.6/31.6

TO THE NORTH OF LLANELLY (0.6 KS NORTH) ON THE EAST SIDE OF BRIDGEWATER-DUNOLLY RD. SITUATED ALONGSIDE RAILWAY LINE AND REACHED BY BULLDOG LANE.

**DESCRIPTION**

An extensive and largely reworked mining field. The site includes a dam and tailing heaps scattered over the site. Some remnants of mine structures, although these are in a degraded state. Some of the tailings have been reworked and it appears that others have been removed from the site.

**HISTORY**

During 1864, John Davies crushed ore obtained from the Sandstone Reef. He continued with this work until 1866 when Bousfield's Company began crushing. However they obtained a yield of less than half that obtained by Davies in 1864. In 1867, the South Sandstone Company had sunk a shaft to a depth of 120 feet. By the end of 1867, the South Sandstone Company and the Victoria Company shared the reef. The Victoria Company seemed to have secured the richest lease and after crushing 200 loads of ore they had obtained an ounce of gold from each crushing. In the following year, the South Sandstone Company had also hit upon a rich vein and in June crushed quartz which yielded 1 1/2 ounces per ton. By 1869 the South Sandstone Company had ten men working on their mine and had sunk the shaft to 170 feet. A third company, the Princess Royal had also begun operations on the field. By 1871, the rich returns of the South Sandstone Company had declined and the mine was let on tribute. Other companies on the reef had suspended work until water could be cleared from shafts. During the 1870s several of the companies on this reef amalgamated their claims and sank shafts to 500 feet. Leases changed hands several times and occasionally during the decade, companies paid out dividends and promised rich returns. However by the 1880s the reef returned little gold and most of the shafts were left idle.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Sandstone Reef was one of the reefs in which locals saw a revival of mining in the early 1870s. While the dam is the principal remnant of this mining activity, there are sufficient elements left from the 1870s to suggest something of the importance of the site. While much of the area has been degraded by recent activity, it is still worthy of protection because of these links with the richness of mining in the district in the 1870s.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

SANDSTONE MINE

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**JANEYALE-LAANECOORIE BRIDGE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF WAANYARRA

NATMAP: 58.4/20.4

CROSSES THE LODDON RIVER JOINING BET BET AND MARONG ON THE TARNAGULLA  
- MARONG ROAD

DATE: 1909-1911

ARCHITECT: MONASH, SIR JOHN

OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

**DESCRIPTION**

A concrete and steel girder bridge about 13.7 metres high. Ten spans each of 12.8 metres with spans 8 and 9 of one continuous construction. Roadway of 5.1 metres. The roadway is supported by concrete piers of unusual design.

**HISTORY**

The connection between Tarnagulla and Laanecoorie was always important to the shire. For a time the northern link through Newbridge drew most traffic, but the extension of farming across the old common lands and the increase in population in the south of the shire around the Burnt Creek field made the Laanecoorie a major link with Bendigo in the first instance and then Melbourne. This bridge was erected to replace an earlier structure swept away in disastrous floods in 1909. It was designed by Sir John Monash to a novel pattern. Monash made innovative use of new materials. The only real alteration in the design has been in the replacement of wooden handrails by metal guards. In 1939 additional stirrups were added.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The earliest example of a reinforced concrete beam and slab bridge construction in Victoria. Important on a state wide basis for its innovation in design. As well it is important locally because it reflects an important co-operative effort by the shires of Bet Bet and Marong. The two councils got together almost immediately after the floods and pushed hard for completion of this new structure.

**STATE SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Ministry of Planning and Environment file.



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

JANEYALE BRIDGE

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**LAANECOORIE DAM**

LOCATION: PARISH OF WAANYARRA-EDDINGTON. DAM WALL ON LODDON RIVER BETWEEN THE SHIRES OF BET BET AND MARONG.

NATMAP: 59.9/19.5

ACCESS VIA ROAD OFF THE EDDINGTON-LAANECOORIE RD., 0.5 KS. SOUTH OF THE INTERSECTION WITH TARNAGULLA-LAANECOORIE RD. THE RESERVOIR ITSELF EXTENDS SOUTH ALONG THE COURSE OF THE RIVER TO THE EDDINGTON BRIDGE

MAJOR OWNER: VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

DATE: 1891

**DESCRIPTION**

The Laanecoorie dam wall and reservoir are situated on the Loddon River north of the town of Eddington and near to Laanecoorie township. The banks of the reservoir include a camping ground and a nature reserve (Brownbill Reserve). Near the Eddington Bridge stored water has created backwaters which run under the Eddington-Laaneoorie Road. The dam wall consists of a main embankment of earth and a concrete spillway with 24 floodgates. Near to the spillway is a small cairn of rock commemorating the efforts of the workmen who laboured on the site.

**HISTORY**

The Laanecoorie Weir was completed in 1891 at a cost of more than £132000. It created a lake more than five miles long. A parliamentary inquiry investigated some of the land transactions associated with the building of the dam and several Eddington residents were accused of collusion with Lands Department officials in inflating land values in areas to be flooded by the dam. In 1909 a huge flood filled the dam and burst the retaining wall. Water from the dam swept away the Laanecoorie bridge and damaged bridges further north. The dam wall was rebuilt and then in 1948 the floodgates were also reconstructed. These additions were completed in 1957.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The Laanecoorie dam was constructed as a retaining dam to regulate river flow in the first instance. Irrigation was a secondary aim. Nevertheless it was constructed at a time when irrigation and the uses of inland water were attracting a good deal of attention in Victoria. The Lannecoorie project was part of this broader movement. Indeed it was one of the earliets ventures of this sort. Its significance lies in its early date of construction, its impact in creating a new micro-environment in the shire and its uniqueness as the only large work of this type within the shire.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

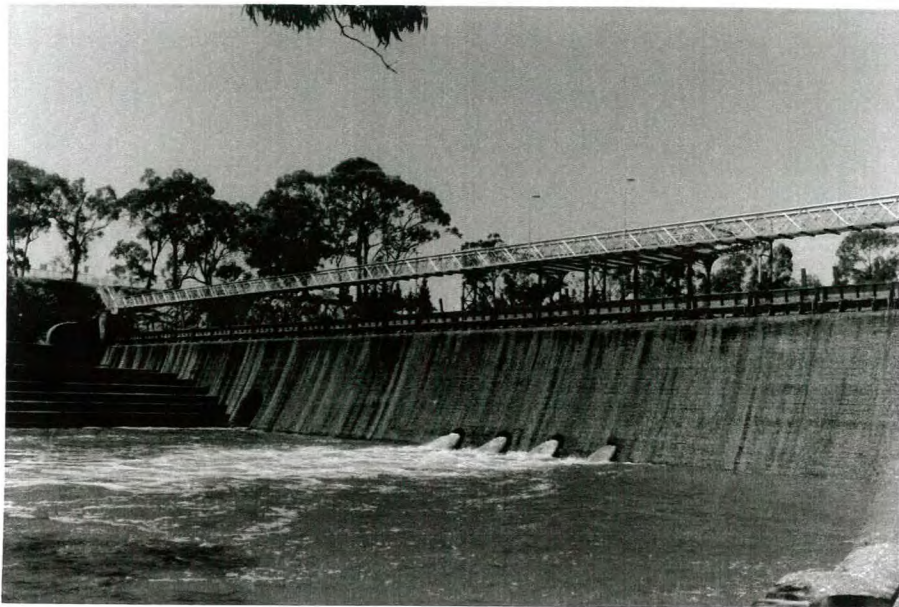
R. Carless, Eddington Reflections.

Report of the Select Committee on the purchase of land for irrigation purposes at Laanecoorie Weir, Victorian Parliamentary Papers, 1891, vol.1.



SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

LAANECDORIE DAM



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**WET GULLY TRACK - ALAMEDA TRACK MINING AREA**

LOCATION: PARISH OF WAANYARRA AND PARISH OF DUNOLLY

NATMAP: 48/19-49/19-4918-48/18

AT JUNCTION OF WET GULLY TRACK AND ALAMEDA TRACK EAST OF MODEL FARM RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Extensive area of remnants of alluvial mining within forest. Puddling wheel within the area as well as some tailings and filled shafts.

**HISTORY**

The Little Chinaman's and several later rush brought diggers into this district. The area lay between the rushes at Wild Dog and Burnt Creek and those at Sandy Creek and Waanyarra. The nearby 'Shoots' area also attracted miners. As a result the ground in this area was tried several times by miners from both these neighbouring areas with occasional rich finds.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

Significant as a remnant of one of the alluvial fields worked over on several occasions during the nineteenth-century. The remnants of puddling wheels and other signs of mining techniques give the area an added interest.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Flett, Dunolly.Quarterly reports, mining surveyor.**WET GULLY TRACK****SITE LISTINGS**



## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**POSEIDON MINE**

LOCATION: PARISH OF WAANYARRA,  
NATMAP: 58.5/25.5

TARNAGULLA-POSEIDON RD. AND EDDINGTON-NEWBRIDGE RD. INTERSECTION. ON  
SOUTH-WEST CORNER OF INTERSECTION.

**DESCRIPTION**

A small dump of soil and scattered bricks are the only remnants of this mine. These stand by the roadside and are visible from the road, however much of the soil has been removed through wind and human action. The mine is marked by a signpost at the roadside.

**HISTORY**

The Poseidon rush occurred in 1906 through this area with diggings running from near the Loddon River along the Tarnagulla- Poseidon Road. The rush was sparked off by a find made in a shaft by J Porter on Melbourne Cup Day, 6 November 1906 (hence the name 'Poseidon' - the Melbourne Cup winner of that year). The first discovery was made on Crown land near allotment 14 A, in Tarnagulla parish. The largest nugget found was the Poseidon nugget, weighing 953 ounces and discovered on 12 December 1906. The rush created an instant town in the area and a number of small shaft mines operated for some years after the rush faded. Other shafts dated from a rush in 1903 after the discovery of the 'Nick O' Time' nugget. Among the mines in the area were the Newbridge United, the Star of Loddon and the Homeward Bound, all located on the Nick'O Time lead. The Poseidon was one of the principal mines in this system.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

There is little left of this mine to compare with the remnants of those in other parts of the shire. It does not make a dominant landform feature in the manner of the Burnt Creek No. 1 mine for example. Nevertheless this is an important relic in that it registers the last of the major rushes through the shire. It is a remnant of a gold rush more than fifty years after the first rushes to Bet Bet and so reminds us of the long association which this area has had with small-scale mining. It is also one of the most visible remnants of mining in this part of the shire and so reflects the broad impact of mining right through Bet Bet.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:  
Historical

**SITE LISTINGS**

## SHIRE OF BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**BRIDGE WAANYARRA**

LOCATION: PARISH OF WAANYARRA

NATMAP: 54/19.5

ON TARNAGULLA-EDDINGTON RD AT WAANYARRA CREEK

## DESCRIPTION

Basalt masonry bridge abutments now serving to support a steel framed concrete deck bridge from c 1950. The abutment walls are typically flared in plan and upper stone masonry quarry-face with a string mould with drafted margins, extending at deck level. Typical angle-cut timber rail and post balustrading is used between abutments.

## SIGNIFICANCE

While the bridge itself has been altered, the basalt work is unique in the shire. The are an interesting and unusual element in the local environment.

## LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE

WAANYARRA BRIDGE



## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

**THE NEW PEPPERS**

LOCATION: PARISH OF WAREEK 8A/2

NATMAP: 40/4.2

APPROX. 0.5KS. NORTH OF THE BET BET CREEK, 0.75 KS. TO THE SOUTH OF TIMOR-DUNLUCE RD DOWN TRACK 0.75 KS. TO THE EAST OF THE JUNCTION WITH THE BET BET-TIMOR WEST RD.

**DESCRIPTION**

Double fronted Edwardian farmhouse. With half-timbered facade. Verandah and verandah posts in original condition, two chimneys. Materials well-maintained. Little evidence of alteration or additions after the date of building.

**HISTORY**

This house was built in 1916 by Martin Hickey, one of the original selectors in the Timor area and a patron of the local Catholic church and a promoter of the West Timor school. The house was a second stage farmhouse into which the Hickey family moved after living in a smaller and more simple dwelling on their original selection. By the time this building was completed the family had expanded their holdings and become one of the more successful farming groups in this part of the shire.

**SIGNIFICANCE**

The house represents the rising fortunes of farmers who survived the early days of selection. It is as well a well-maintained example of a common building style from the early twentieth century.

**LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE**

Source:

Hickey Family History

## BET BET CONSERVATION STUDY: VOLUME TWO

THE NEW PEPPERS