



Coladjins

Colac & District
Family History Group Inc.

Inc. No. A0022664A ABN 29618437272

Summer 2018 Issue 107



1914-1918



Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year



This is a tiny sample of our collection of photographs of weddings, people, family groups, etc. which we are sure most people would have in albums or on display in their homes.

BUT we don't know who or where these people are and when the photos were taken, because that information was never recorded or provided to us.

The Christmas holiday season is the opportune time, if you have similar. un-named photos in your collection, to bring them out and get your family and friends to help fill in the missing details. Don't forget to ask Who the people are, When and Where the photograph was taken and What the occasion was and write all of those details down.

It is also an opportune time to ask those questions that one day you will regret never having asked, "how did you get to school", "how did you and mum meet", "what were your grandparents like?" And remember your siblings, as well as being occasionally irritating, can be an excellent source of information.

INFORMATION

Contents	Page
Merry Christmas	1
Naming photos, asking questions	
Information	2
Contents, Dates to Remember etc.	
Married in Colac	3
Family story by Frank Rose	
A Tray, A Name, A Date and A Place	4
Who did this tray belong to?	
Sharing Your DNA Stories	5
New relatives, but “brick wall” remains	
No answers yet but still hopeful	
Centenary of Armistice Day	6
Sharing stories of loved ones	
Curtain of Tears, Poppies & Crosses	
New Books	7
Särka to Westgarthtown	
Mystery at Moonlight Head	
Camperdown Visit & Christmas	8
November meeting in Camperdown	
Christmas party & Volunteer luncheon	
Bits and Pieces	9
Sad postscript, Seminar review and	
Useful resources	
Memories	10
Weeaprounah State School Christmas	

Contact Information

Colac History Centre COPACC,
Gellibrand St Colac,
PO Box 219, Colac 3250
Phone: 0352315736

Email: media@colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Website: www.colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/
colacdistrctfamilyhistory](http://www.facebook.com/colacdistrctfamilyhistory)

Committee

President: Liz Spence

Email: president@colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Secretary: Norma Bakker

Email: secretary@colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Treasurer: Merrill O'Donnell

Email: treasurer@colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Research: research@colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Almost Forgotten Project

Email: almostforgotten1900@gmail.com

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/
almostforgotten1900](http://www.facebook.com/almostforgotten1900)

Opening Times

Monday & Tuesday 10:00am to 2:00pm

Thursday, Friday 1:30pm to 4:30pm

Sunday 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Closed Public Holidays

Out of hours opening by arrangement



CHRISTMAS BREAK



Centre Closes

Sunday 16th December

and

Re-opens

Thursday 17th January 1:30pm

*If you wish to visit the centre during the holiday period,
arrangements can be made for opening out of hours.*

A fee of \$10 applies.

Email: secretary@colacfamilyhistory.org.au

Norma on ph: 03 52338237 m: 0488 028676

Merrill on ph: 03 52338366 m: 0400 055709

Dates to Remember

Sunday, 16 December 4:00pm

◇ History Centre Closes for Christmas Break

Thursday, 17 January 1:30pm

◇ History Centre re-opens

Tuesday, 12 February 2:00pm to 4:00pm

◇ Annual General Meeting

◇ Guest Speaker - Alan McLean, author of
“Mystery at Moonlight Head” (see page 8)

◇ Afternoon Tea

◇ All Welcome

Friday, 15 March

◇ Autumn Newsletter due

Thursday, 25 April

◇ Anzac Day

◇ Commemorating all of the local men who
died as a result of World War 1

Sunday, 12 May

◇ Mothers' Day

Tuesday, 14 May 2:00pm to 4:00pm

◇ General Meeting

◇ Guest Speaker

◇ Afternoon Tea

*Thank you to all contributors. Deadline for articles for the
Autumn newsletter is 28th February.*

MARRIED IN COLAC BY FRANK ROSE

Alfred Edward Rose and Catherine Ellen Juby were married in Colac on Monday, April 21, 1930 at St John's Church of England.

Both Alfred and Catherine were born in England and had migrated to Australia in 1928 on board the SS Ballarat. After arriving in Melbourne, the couple travelled to Barongarook, where Alfred's older brother, Joseph and his wife Frances, had settled some years earlier.

Alfred served as a Bandboy in the British Army over the latter part of the Great War and was discharged sometime in the early 1920s, without a trade, but with the ability to play a musical instrument! Catherine had been a small child when her mother died and she was placed into care until old enough to enter domestic service, a fate of many young women at the time.

Obtaining employment around Colac from 1928 and into the depression years was not easy, but Alfred found work on a farm in the Beeac area owned by the Ackerleys and was self-employed as a door-to-door salesman of Rawleigh products.

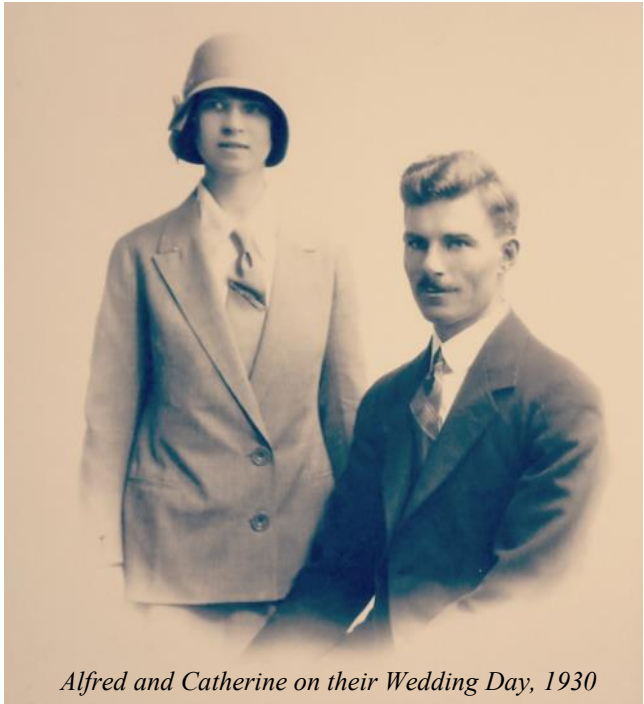
Alfred played trumpet in a local dance band with Eric Foley, whose parents Charles and Mary Foley befriended the young couple.

Catherine obtained work through a lady who conducted an employment agency from the haberdashery store she owned in Murray Street. She was hired as a "live in" domestic servant by Mrs Charles Darcy, of Woolfield, Wool Wool. She had one day off each week, Thursday, market day. Catherine was driven into Colac in the morning, left to her own devices for the day, possibly spending time with the Foleys and then driven back to Woolfield in time to prepare the evening meal.

Alfred was at Beeac and Catherine at Wool Wool and they were separated for more than 18 months when, pondering what the future might hold, she suggested that they should marry. The couple were married on Easter Monday, 1930 in a "low key" service at St John's, Colac.



Mrs Darcy, who was almost seventy years old at this time, kindly paid for the wedding cake, the reception, which was held in a cafe in Murray Street and a week-long honeymoon for the newly-weds in Geelong. She also provided cutlery and



Alfred and Catherine on their Wedding Day, 1930

crockery for the couple who set up house in Miller Street, Colac.

In 1931, their first child, Frank Edward Rose, was born in Dr Brown's Private Hospital in Gellibrand Street. Mrs Darcy paid the hospital fees and helped with the purchase of baby clothes, a cot and a pram.

As the Depression deepened, Alfred's income from door-to-door sales declined and Catherine returned to work at Woolfield. Mrs Foley looked after baby Frank, who by this time called her Nanna and Mr Foley, "Cuncle".

In December 1932, another son was born who only lived for a few hours. He was buried in the Foley family grave in the Colac Cemetery. There were no more children.

Hoping to secure more lucrative employment, Alfred and Catherine left Colac a couple of years later and settled in the Caulfield, Carnegie area.

Frank Rose contributed this story and photographs of his parents.

Recently, with the help of Diana McGarvie, daughter of Nancy Foley, a memorial plaque was organised for Frank's baby brother and placed on the Foley grave.

Frank, who was living in Camperdown, came to Colac to see the plaque in place.

A short time afterwards, he passed away. He would have been proud that his parents' story is remembered here.



A TRAY, A NAME, A DATE & A PLACE

The inscription on the metal plaque on the tray read “Presented to the Webb Family by the residents of Stonyford as a Token of esteem” and the date 14.8.14.

Curiously, the tray was among the belongings of Clive and Marion Willmott (nee Curtis). Marion died in 2003 and following Clive’s death in 2018, the tray came into the possession of their niece.



*Clive and Marion Willmott of Colac
The tray was among their possessions*

According to the inscription, the oak tray which was on a decorative silver mount, had been given to William and Jessie Webb by the Stonyford community, “As a Token of esteem”, possibly when the family left the district.

The name Webb was not familiar to the current owner and did not in any way seem connected with her family. Interested to learn the origins of the tray, she sent a message through our facebook



page, seeking help. A breakthrough came when the current owner was also able to provide the information that the maiden name of her aunt’s next door neighbour was Webb and the married name, LeBatt. A check of the family history

group database showed that Gladys Glover Webb had married Vernon Clive LeBatt in 1926.

The next avenue to explore was who were Gladys’ parents and had they live in Stonyford.

We found that William Webb and Jessie Glover Smith were her

parents and a search of Trove provided this lovely article with an account of where and why the tray was presented.

The intention of the current owner was that the tray should go to a member of the family if one could be found.

Unfortunately it was discovered that

Gladys had been William and Jessie Webb’s only child and there were no

living descendants of Gladys and Vernon. There had only been only one child of that marriage, a daughter who had sadly died as an infant.

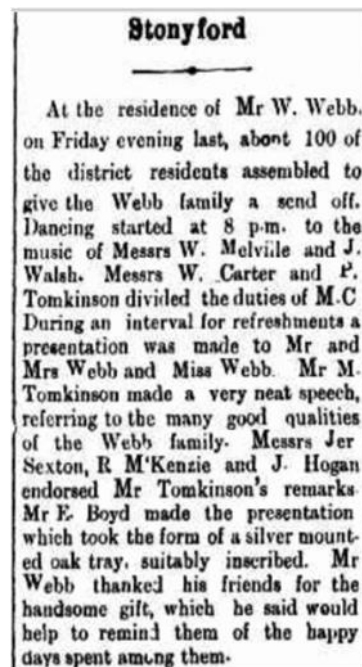
Gladys Le Batt died in 1982 and Vernon died in 1985; perhaps that is when the tray came into possession of their young friends and next door neighbours, Clive and Marion Willmott.

We have been able to find and contact a distant relative of William Webb who is a descendant of one of his brothers. We also have learned that there are several families in the western districts who could be related to Jessie Webb, a daughter of Thomas Smith and Mary Ann Glover.

The death notice of her brother George Smith in 1933, a long time resident of Garvoc, listed their siblings as: Thomas, James, Andrew and Arthur Smith and sisters, Mary Baird of Geelong, Ellen Norris and Johanna Davey, of Camperdown.

We are still hoping to be able to contact relatives of Jessie. If any of those names are familiar, please let us know or pass on our contact details. (see contact details on page 2).

A huge thanks goes to Norma and her team of volunteers who put in many hours each week. Recently the entries on our database exceeded 320,000. It is a valuable resource for anyone wishing to research the history of people who have lived in Colac and surrounding districts.



SHARING YOUR DNA STORIES

NEW RELATIVES FOUND, BUT THE BRICK WALL REMAINS

As is the case with most people researching their family history, I had hit a brick wall. The only information I had about my great, great grandfather, James O'Brien, was that he was born in Ireland. I decided to have a DNA test done in the hope that a relative with more information may show up. I am still waiting and hoping... I have, on the other hand, heard from family of my great, great grandmother Esther Truman. A descendent of her brother, George, has been working on the family history and he contacted me. With the wonders of the internet and Dropbox I immediately had access to a 152 page family history commencing with John Truman born in 1735. This confirmed a lot of my research



and gave me further information such as the fact that Esther's uncle, William, had been transported to Maitland, NSW some twelve years before she and her husband John Mason emigrated to Victoria. Sometime after he was transported, his daughter and son-in-law also emigrated to Maitland and so I have discovered family living in New South Wales.

Keith, the relative in England who had compiled the history, had no idea what had happened to my branch of the family. Needless to say there was an exchange of information, the family history updated and added to and whilst this was happening there was yet another contact made from that side of the family. This time from a cousin living in Mildura who had emigrated from England in the 1960s. So yet more information and updating has been done.

Whilst I haven't broken through my brick wall yet, I have had a lot of my research on other branches of my family confirmed and more contacts made and more information added to the never ending story. A worthwhile experience.

NO ANSWERS YET... BUT STILL HOPEFUL

I have had a feeling for some time now that my paternal grandfather, as I knew him, might not have been my dad's natural father. Of course I never would have raised that suggestion while dad was still alive, but it is now several years since he died. Born in the early 1920s dad was very old fashioned about children being "born out of wedlock". He would have been devastated if he was to learn that the mother he adored had not been married at the time of his own birth. Or that the person he had always thought of as his father, might not have even been related. It has always been a puzzle why dad was born in a country town in north western Victoria, some distance from both of his parent's homes. There is no evidence that dad's "father", a farmer, ever lived further than a mile or two from where he was born and his mother spent her early years in a border town in New South Wales. It was confusing for dad when he tried to enlist in the army during the second World War and was not able to obtain a copy of a birth certificate. His

parents explanation for the absence of evidence of his birth was "bureaucratic bungling".

At the time, his mother apparently asked his "father" to go and register the birth, which he did. The birth certificate that was subsequently issued had a different given name and date of birth, which was also very puzzling.

The parents named on the certificate were the people dad had grown up to know as his parents, so he had no reason to suspect anything different. Last year I was given a DNA kit for my birthday to try to help solve the mystery of my paternal grandfather. After all, I had grow up with a surname that might not really belong to me. The DNA test has so far come up with a lot of connections for the family lines of my three other grandparents, but not my paternal grandfather. Dad has four brothers, or perhaps half-brothers, still living and my dilemma is whether to talk to them about my suspicion and ask if they will do a DNA test. I am not quite sure if it is fair to ask, just to satisfy my own curiosity.

Do you have a DNA story? If you have taken a DNA test, what did you hope to find? We often hear how the test has connected families or helped to "break through brick walls". Please let us know what your DNA has uncovered, or if it has just confirmed your own research.

CENTENARY OF ARMISTICE DAY

FAMILIES SHARE STORIES OF LOVED ONES LOST

The Family History Group combined with the Colac RSL to commemorate Armistice Day and the servicemen who lost their lives during WW1. Some of the local families of the men who died were invited to an afternoon tea at the RSL to share stories and talk about the men's lives before the war and the loss felt by the people they left behind.

Service records told how and where they died. The Family History Group's war service photo files also showed photos of the men and information about them. I spent the afternoon with two 93 year old cousins Lexie and Gwenda who both lost their



uncles.

Gwenda's uncle Thomas Gordon Inglis died at Lone Pine after just 12 months fighting. Gwenda showed us a memorial certificate given to the family as a "Tribute to His Memory by the People of Alvie".

Lexie's uncle Oliver Gainger died in France only 8 months after he left Australia. He was sent to have his wounds dressed and never returned. Although we never knew Oliver he is remembered by stories told about him and the tradition of passing down names through the generations. The last descendant to have his name was born in 2008, five generations after Oliver's death. There is a wonderful family photo of the Gainger family that includes Oliver, Lexie's mother, my dad and his parents and grandparents taken in December 1913. Photos bring home the reality of the great losses due to war. *Contributed by Liz Spence*



CURTAIN OF TEARS, POPPIES & CROSSES



The moving "Curtain of Tears" was on display on Colac's War Memorial, leading up to the Armistice Day this year. Previously used only on Anzac Day, the curtain was installed to mark the centenary of this historical event and as a poignant reminder of the number of local men who died as a result of the Great War. Constructed by local women under the direction of Lyn Russell and Heather Green, the curtain is made up of more than 400 knitted and crocheted poppies that were made by members of the community.

A team of volunteers also placed almost 200 crosses in the rose garden in front of the memorial and scattered hundreds more hand made poppies around them.

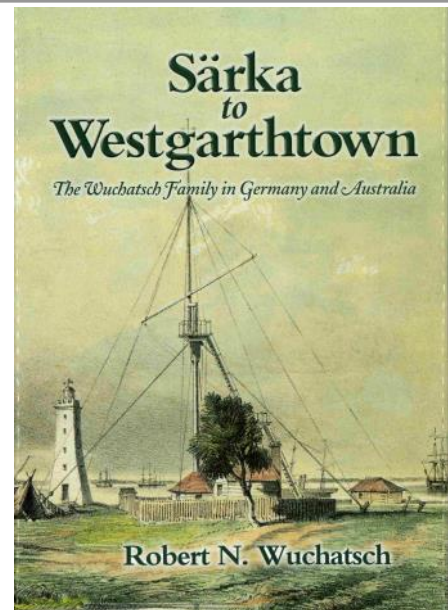
Main photo: Curtain of Tears. Small photos left to right. Some of the volunteers who helped on the day. 1. Beryl arrives with the crosses to be placed in the rose garden. 2. & 3. Norma, Lyn and Harry placing the crosses and poppies in the rose garden.



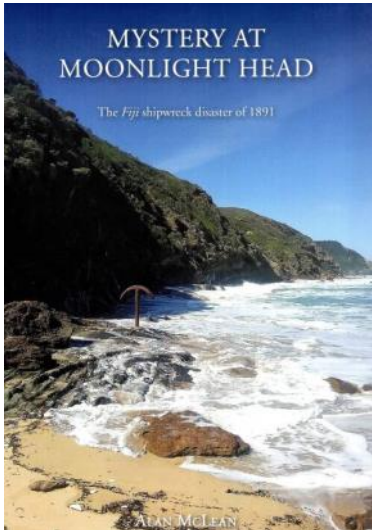
SÄRKA TO WESTGARTHTOWN

The Wuchatsch Family in Germany and Australia - *Author Robert Wuchatsch.*

Robert Wuchatsch commenced researching his family history in 1970, discovering in 1985 that there were still relatives living in East Germany. Since that time Robert has made several overseas trips to visit his relatives and continue his research. Robert was fortunate to find a lady in his ancestors' village who kindly transcribed baptism, marriage and death particulars from local church records. The hand-written transcriptions arrived in Australia by mail some time later. What a boon that was. Photographs, maps and documents, such as visas, passports and Naturalization certificates compliment this extensive history. A clear account of the early history and changing borders of the German states, gives the reader a good understanding of the roots of his family. The book is divided into sections tracing the chronological journey of Robert's Great-grandparents in 1850, Upper Lusatia in Saxony to Westgarthtown, Victoria's first German settlement. The subsequent family branches are set out in a family tree section. This is followed by 185 pages written in German, enabling Robert's German speaking relatives to enjoy it too. Each section is fully referenced with end notes, and there is an extensive Bibliography. A full index completes a well collated history of which Robert and his whole family must be justly proud. Well done Robert, an inspiration to us all.
Diana McGarvie (Robert has donated a copy of his book and it can now be viewed at the family history group)



MYSTERY AT MOONLIGHT HEAD - *Author Alan McLean*



The Argus newspaper on Wednesday, 9 September, 1891, carried a report of a terrible catastrophe at Wreck Reef, off the Victorian coast east of Moonlight Heads.

The Barque Fiji had hit the reef, in squally, hazy conditions. Eleven of her crew had died and Arthur Wilkinson, a young settler, had died while trying to rescue some of the survivors.

Only fifteen of the twenty-six man crew survived and they were taken to Mr Evans' Rivernook Guesthouse where they were fed and well looked after. Boots and clothing for the men were obtained from Mr Lord's at Port Campbell.

The remains that were recovered of Arthur Wilkinson and the crew members were buried on top of the cliff immediately above the wreck in coffins made by local men in the days following the incident.

Locals erected a marble monument in the memory of all of the men who perished that night and in the 1960s the anchor of the "Fiji" was

cemented to the reef near the wreck site and is visible in low tide.

Alan McLean, amateur historian, discovered the monument at the Moonlight Heads Cemetery more than a century after the event and was determined to ensure that the stories of the men who died that fateful night would not be lost.

Alan will be the guest speaker at our Annual General Meeting in February.

**SAVE THIS
DATE
AND BRING A
FRIEND**

ALAN MCLEAN - GUEST SPEAKER

at our

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY, 2019 2:00 TO 4:00

HISTORY CENTRE COPACC

Followed by Afternoon Tea - All Welcome

MEETING AT CAMPERDOWN

Our November General Meeting was held at Camperdown Heritage Centre, kindly opened for the occasion by the Camperdown & District Historical Society. Following the meeting, Bob Lambell gave a very informative talk on the history of Camperdown and surrounding district. Some of



Bob Lambell (centre) and Maree Belyea (in red) provided a history of the Camperdown district before giving our group a tour of the Heritage Centre

the topics covered included a background of the local indigenous people, early white settlement and the Scottish connections. Bob also discussed the history of the Heritage Centre, how it had evolved, recent developments and upgrading their facilities and displays. He indicated that although visitors find the displays interesting, the majority of enquiries and the main interest is in family history research.

The talk was followed by free time to look through the collection and the new facilities. Bob and Maree were on hand to bring out particular items of interest, such as this 100 year old scrap book (right) of Camperdown Chronicle cuttings which was of particular interest to Diana. Discussions and detailed demonstrations were provided on how the Camperdown group is currently recording items in their collection, including the program being used to digitise and tag their large range of local historic photographs. Afterwards the group enjoyed lunch at the Hampden Hotel before making our way back to Colac.



CHRISTMAS DINNER & VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON

December is the time for Christmas parties and the family history group is no exception. Each year we have two celebrations, dinner with the historical society for a at a local restaurant (right) and on the last working day of the year, our volunteers bring something to share for lunch. We celebrate what we have achieved in the past twelve months and ponder a little on the work that remains. There is always time for lots of laughter.



Combined annual Christmas dinner at a local restaurant



Harry, Margaret and Lynette at the volunteer luncheon



Some of the delicious food provided by members of the group to share

BITS & PIECES

SAD POSTSCRIPT

In our last newsletter, Tony Mahoney wrote about his “first timer” family reunion. He had travelled to Yengarie near Maryborough, visiting the property connected to the Mahoney clan. The school house remained and there were



The schoolhouse before the storm

remnants of some of the old buildings visible. At Tony’s suggestion, the family were planning a working bee on a return visit to preserve what was still standing.

After sending Tony a copy of the newsletter with his story in it, we received this response:

“Last weekend a wild storm devastated the site. The schoolhouse has been all but destroyed and much of the old mill wall knocked down. Very sad news”.



It is a very timely reminder to all of us that we never know what the future holds. Although there would be huge disappointment now, in the future the family will be thankful that they took the opportunity to travel to the reunion, meet with their relatives, exchanged stories and take photographs.

(Thank you Tony for sharing this update)

SEMINAR REVIEW - DIANA MGARVIE

A few months ago I attended one day of a two day seminar in Melbourne, organised by UTP/Gould Genealogy. Titled, “Exploring Family and Local History”, the topics included German & Scottish immigration, Midwives/ Nurses Convicts, Newspapers (more than just Trove), Beyond indexes (source records), Freemason ancestors and World War 1 & World War 2.



Diana McGarvie

More than one of these topics covers my family research interest, so it was well worth attending. The presenters, including Susie Zada and Rosemary & Eric Kopitke, were well prepared, knew their topic well and were very informative. The seminar followed the excellent presentation and intriguing research story from Robert Wuchastch, the guest speaker at our May general meeting. These two events have made me really enthused and excited to discover more about my German forebears.



Speakers Rosemary & Eric Kopitke

USEFUL RESOURCES BY ROBYN CURRIE, LIBRAIAN

Raye, one of our regular volunteers, has recently completed an audit of the resources held by the family history group. The result of the audit is a “Collection Index” which provides information on what is currently in the collection and which items have already been digitised and are searchable on CADInfo, the C&DFHG database. The Collection Index will also be used in the future as a guide of priorities for our volunteers to index next.

NEW ADDITIONS, INTERESTING ARTICLE AND USEFUL WEBSITE:

FAMILY HISTORIES: Wuchatsch family; Kervin Family (thank you for these donations)

LIBRARY: Scotland to Australia Felix; founding Scots of Victoria’s Camperdown district. Memories; Victoria 1920-1960.

ARTICLES: In Ancestor (GSV Journal) v.34, n.4, Dec 2018 “The conflict between a complete record and a ‘non-boring’ family history”. An interesting article for those writing their family histories.

WEBSITE: The Surf Coast Heritage Group has listed schools that were opened in the early days of development across the Shire. The entries include a brief history, location, pupil register and some school photos. The site is at <https://surfcoastheritagegroup.wordpress.com/closed-schools/>

Memories...



This photograph of the Weeaprounah State School seems to have been taken at Christmas celebrations in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Along with Santa, there are several adults, possibly Mothers' Club and School Council members. Please let us know if you have any information about this photograph.

WE THANK THESE ORGANISATIONS FOR THEIR ONGOING SUPPORT



Cnr Rae & Gellibrand Streets Colac
Ph: 03 5232 2077



Colac Otway
Shire
2 - 6 Rae Street Colac
Ph: 03 52339400



The Colac Herald
37 - 41 Bromfield Street
Colac Ph: 03 52315322

PRINTING OF THE NEWSLETTER

This newsletter is kindly printed by the staff at the office of Richard Riordan MP, member for Polwarth.



RICHARD RIORDAN MP
MEMBER FOR POLWARTH



Jiffy Services

Colac's best Lawn Mowing and Car Detailing
House Cleaning Colac • Dog Wash Colac
Test & Tag Colac Ph: (03) 5232 1506

DISCLAIMER: Contributions to this newsletter are accepted in good faith and the committee does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of information of submitted articles nor opinions expressed