

FRIENDS AND RELATIONS OF GULF STATION

APRIL 2018

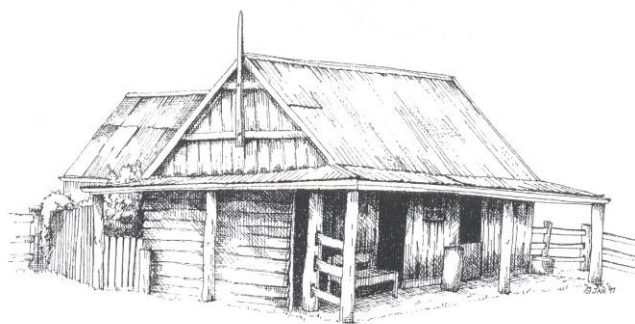
FROGS contact:

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Diary Dates (except if a Total Fire Ban for Central District)

La Trobe Society talks

Details on page 7.

Second Sundays, 2.30 pm

10 June

8 July

12 August

9 September

Tetlow Talk 2018

Details on page 7.

Yarra Glen and District

Historical Society

Second Sunday in October

14 October

Thursday Work

Newcomers welcome, all skill levels, gardening, general maintenance etc. Also visitor reception.

Newsletter arrangements

Emailed to those with email.

Volunteers' copies available for collection at Gulf Station.

There is no longer a subscription for FROGS but each year FROGS will be asked to confirm their wish to remain in the list.

Contributions to the Newsletter are always welcome.

Report from the Work Group

We have a couple of changes at Gulf Station that many of you will know about. **Daniel Ball** is leaving Gulf Station lock, stock and sheep to Gippsland. Daniel has bought an 82 acre farm between Yarram and Sale – a stone's throw from Ninety Mile Beach. Daniel has agisted sheep, and occasionally cattle, at Gulf Station for a number of years now and the arrangement has worked well. The sheep kept the grass to a manageable level and we've managed to bale some feed for the horses. Dan also worked his sheep dogs and sheared on Open Days. We wish Daniel well in his new venture. His sheep leave on ANZAC day. We're in negotiation with a replacement and will keep everyone informed as to any agreement.

Our Open Day on Thursday 19th was a great success: we had around 218 visitors through the gate on a day that couldn't be bettered weather-wise. House tours, Sausage sizzle, Tea/coffee, Plant sales, **Alex'** bush poems and FROGS sales were flat chat all day. An attractive full page in the Trust's Heritage Festival booklet, listing in Leader newspapers and (thanks to **Don**) an item in *Mountain Views Mail* helped us jump over the 200 visitor hurdle. Congratulations to all volunteers and special thanks to Bell descendants **Jenni**, **Lee**, and **Sandra** who came to help. *Photographs next issue.*

Crakka's horses were popular in the paddock opposite the School house – along with Gil. Apparently, Gil wore the collar/harness without any fuss and behaved well. **Steve Price**, our recently re-joined volunteer, first put a harness on Gil more than ten years ago – and Gil hasn't had any training for such a long time -so his memory must still be intact. **Dan's** sheep dogs also drew crowds.

Our volunteers have completed building a horse shelter for protection against wind and the rain (if we have any!) in the upcoming winter. *Photograph next issue.*

The day before the Open Day, our guides found the bakery (behind the kitchen) had a window where once was a wall: the vertical slabs had slumped, falling out of the base plate. Perhaps the previous week's 'Big Wind'? Luckily there was no rain to damage the interior. Another task for the Work Program.

The BBQ at Bunnings on Easter Monday was a great success and we are grateful to everyone who took part

Volunteers' work continues with mowing, fence repairs, gardening, tours and general property maintenance.

Our Open Day on April 19th was a low-key one but a great autumn day. Our plans for an Open Day in October during the Seniors Festival are in an embryonic stage.

Mike Ridley
for the Work Group

FROGS news

Another 80th to be celebrated, this time **Peter**, with cake at morning tea. **Pam** withstood six frustrating post-operation weeks of reduced activity but is now back to full speed. **Alan's** post-operation return at first was limited to light duties but, during that time, he achieved miracles clearing out the Croydon Cottage; now he's back to full duties. We send best wishes to **Marion's** son **Justin**. **Lesley** has been able to visit occasionally when lifts are organised, recently when **Paula Herlihy** brought a friend - good to see **Paula** again.

Inspired by Gulf Station

A recent exhibition at the Waterwheel Gallery, Warburton, of works by **Cathie Berry**, **Kevin's** wife, included several inspired by Gulf Station. One depicts **Marion** in the garden, another **Harvey** repairing a fence. Another work (right), of a garden gate, beautifully captures all that Gulf Station means. All beautifully framed by **Kevin**.

A plan is being developed for an Open Day in October: **Cathie** is willing to exhibit her work (for sale) in the large room of the Croydon cottage. In the small room, we'd have a *loan* exhibition so if you have a painting or framed photograph, or other artwork, inspired by Gulf Station that you'd be willing to lend for the day, email Irene.



Image: Irene Kearsey

Bunnings BBQ



Our Easter Monday BBQ made a profit of just over \$1,400, thanks to the hard work of **Stan** and **Alan** who did all organising and worked the whole day, helped for some of the time by **Jenni Bell** (a welcome new sizzler for Gulf Station), **Alan's** brother **David**, **Carina**, **Kevin B**, **Mike** and **Irene**.

It was warm work but plenty of customers - the last sausage was sold just before 4pm (the earliest Bunnings allow the BBQ to finish). One (adult) customer said he'd been to Gulf Station on a school visit and another adult said her parents had been married there.

During the day, we presented Bunnings representative **Debbie** with an official Trust certificate of appreciation for Bunning's magnificent donation of a post-hole digger, to replace the one Gulf Station had been using which was stolen.

Stan, Irene and Debbie

Image: Mike Ridley

Any bakers out there?

Bunnings now offers the opportunity to run a cake stall. Our regular BBQers don't bake but perhaps there are other FROGS who do and would like to run a stall? It would need two people to run a stall. Contact Irene to discuss.

Ward off dementia at Gulf Station

The best research (ARC Centre of Excellence in Population Aging in *The Age*, 11.4.2018) identifies what you should do to improve resilience to dementia, and many factors are available in volunteering at Gulf Station: volunteering itself is one factor, learning something new, being physically active, and spending time with friends. Gulf Station volunteering has them all!

Can you find new volunteers among your friends? The gardeners could do with help; more tour guides are needed; with more people willing to be receptionists, we could plan some Sunday openings in spring.

Fruit rustlers strike AGAIN

For at least six years, all fruit (even the topmost) has been stolen from the orchard, including unripe quinces, and this year yet again. Fruit on our trees "dresses the set" although surpluses are shared among volunteers.



Images Carina Harding

Above, a pomegranate and some apples before the theft



One fruit not stolen is enjoyed by visiting gang gangs



Garden news From Louella

*We received some very welcome rain on 24 March after many dry weeks. Our precious garden survives so well due to our Thursday watering regime - a special thanks to **Carina** who arrives early to get the sprinklers on. There are only splashes of colour now in our garden, just enough for Pam to gather a bunch for her vase in the house. At present, we are busy weeding and dead-heading. The garden should be looking good for our Open Day.*

Trust help in the garden



A team of Trust garden staff put in a shift at Gulf Station recently. One much appreciated achievement was trimming the box-hedges.

Thank you, Trust gardeners! And thank you, **Justin**, for organising this.

Morning tea, **Justin** on the right

Image: Irene Kearsey

Fine books to own

A set of encyclopaedia and year books, to grace any bookshelf, owned by Bell descendant.

Contact the Tomlinsons 0245 731 565.

Work around the site

There's no end to the fencing work completed and still needed, but gates have had special attention recently.



Thanks to **Barry** and **Ian**, the barnyard gate (above) no longer requires weightlifter's muscles to open.



Ian worked on a set of gates behind the calf shed (above).

Don renovated a garden fence and its gate (below).



Above images: Irene Kearsey

Ian has been recycling some metal sheets into tailor-made protective caps for posts.

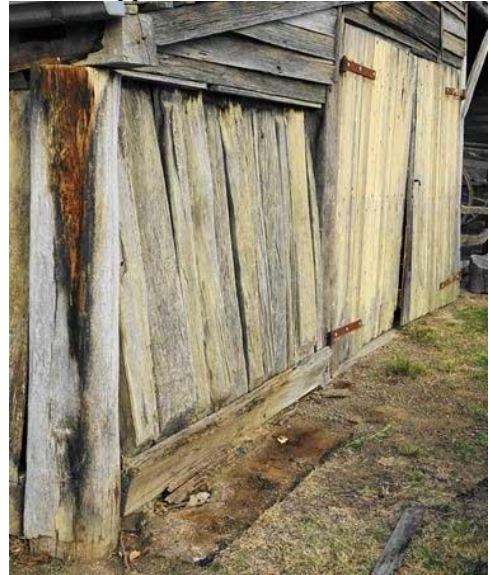


Ian and **Alan** completed work on the door to the barn annex (below).

Ian says:

The wall of the barn annex had begun to fall out on to the road. Alan and I dismantled the old wall, replaced the rotted stumps holding it up [left] and fitted new stumps before reassembling the wall up straight again. I reckon it'll now see us all out!

Like the best restoration, it's only in before and after photographs that the work is apparent.



Above images: Ian Gaff

Ian and **Stan** blitzed an untidy spot behind the calf shed revealing some old broken machinery - perhaps the original horse-works, brought back in 1852 by Thomas Bell and Francis Rogerson when they made a trip 'home' to purchase farm equipment. More investigation needed.
Evelyn Observer and Bourke East Record 16.6.1911 p2

In the year 1852 Messrs. T. Bell and J. Rogerson sailed for Scotland, and were instrumental in importing a number of ploughs and harrows, as well as horse-power threshing machines. Some of the latter are being used on the Ground to this day.

Tours and School visits

Thanks to the dedication of Pam and her team of guides, Thursday openings are proving very popular, also group bookings are picking up. This message came from the Year 2/3 teacher following a visit from Yea Sacred Heart School in March:

I just want to say thank you for your help with organising our Prep to Year 3 excursion to Gulf Station in Yarra Glen.

Also to say what a great time the children had. The volunteers were terrific and our children thoroughly enjoyed the day.

There was lots of learning going on, lots to see and hear about. The children had a lot to share with their families too, which is always a good sign.

Goodbye and thanks, Dan

As reported by Mike, **Daniel Ball** is moving to his own farm in Gippsland. In addition to the grass control performed by his sheep, Dan has contributed to our Open Days by demonstrating shearing and working his sheep dogs, always to appreciative crowds. While we're happy for Dan and his family in their exciting new venture, we'll miss him and his friendly sheep. All the best, Dan, and please keep in touch!

Dan's friendly sheep always came for a chat

Image: Irene Kearsey



Gulf Station goes to the Garden Show

The National Trust had a "stand" at the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, put together with a very short lead-time. Designer (and Trust member) **Paul Bangay** took a drone aerial photograph of Gulf Station as inspiration for a cottage look, and Trust head-of-all-things-horticultural **Justin Buckley** worked miracles organising it all. He borrowed some Gulf Station artefacts for set dressing and a life-size photograph of the School House fronted a marquee, creating a stunning effect. You'd swear that veranda is sticking out, but it really is a flat canvas.

Louella and **Irene** each did a shift and spruiked Gulf Station in particular.



Images: Irene Kearsey

The Trust was pleased with the number of new members signed up during the Show (and **Justin**, now his heart-rate has returned to normal, is dreaming up ideas for future years).

Above: Items from Gulf Station

Plant list: Chinese plumbago; Bluebeard; Anemanthele; Agastache (Sweet Lili and Blue Boa); Jerusalem sage; Pink, Red and Purple dahlia; Michaelmas daisy; Red great masterwort; Red Penstemon; Salvia; and Small, Medium and Larger Maiden grass.

Clydesdale news

In April, Diesel, one of **Matt's** four beautiful Clydesdales was found by **Hannah** dead in the paddock, apparently from a snake bite. With Matt away at the time, **Hannah** undertook all the sad tasks this involved. Diesel was only nine years old, a beautiful horse and very special for Matt's young daughter **Maddie**. Gulf Station's volunteers know how much Hannah cares for *all* the horses at Gulf Station and we thank her especially for handing this sad matter.

A week or so later, Matt loaded up two of his horses to go to an event up-country, and Pride (now alone in the paddock) was very distressed. Hannah agreed to try moving Gil in with Pride: Pride was immediately calm and the two started to stroll around, shoulder to shoulder, like old mates.



After various consultations on design and collecting appropriate materials, the team has built a horse shelter in the front paddock. Below: early days, **Ian** and **Alan** at work



Donations received

Several generous donations came from the last newsletter's appeal including a branch lopper (**Lesley**), a brushcutter (**Jenni Bell**) and a brushcutter (**Keith Montell**) who also passed on some antique tools.



Images: Irene Kearsey



Above: The brushcutter, **Mike**, **Keith** and **Peter**

Left:

The combined expertise of the team identified these as:
Tine straightener, Saw setter, Ear tag clipper, Circlip remover

Spelling for family historians

An item in the last newsletter (variations in spelling of names) resonated with John Hobson who wrote:

You may be interested to know that back in that era spelling was not of particular concern; e.g. in my own ancestry I have some 5 different spellings (at least) for 2 or 3 of those names.

Irene is currently researching John Dickson, the founder of Gulf Station. Sometimes it's Dixon (as in the official name of the creek) although the local paper *Evelyn Observer* always knows better. The only other spelling variation found so far has been the ship bringing John's fiancée Alice Dalrymple to the Port Phillip District in October 1843: *Frances* or *Francis*. The *Frances*, in addition to Alice, brought John Wroe, founder of the Christian Israelite Church, and instead of returning to England, the ship sailed on to Valparaiso with 135 emigrants escaping unemployment in Australia and hoping for work rebuilding the city recently damaged by fire. Which illustrates another trap for the researcher - getting sidetracked.

Historic image

Alan Bell responded to the pig picture in the last newsletter:

I assume they're Uncle Jack's Berkshires. We have quite a few records of Jack's pig enterprise, including prizes at the local and Royal Melbourne shows and stock sale listings. Among the latter is documentation of his sale of Berkshire pigs to the newly established Gatton Agricultural College in Queensland not long after it was founded in the late 1890s.

Thank you, Alan. The photograph (right) is from a cutting in Gulf Station's archives - newspaper unnamed (and not yet in Trove). It shows "J T Bell" (handwritten against man second from right) herding Gulf Station's Berkshires to their enclosure at the 1924 Royal Melbourne Show. What happy looking pigs and one of the sows won first prize. The judge found "the first and second prize winners ... were among the best sows he has ever handled and would hold their own ... against leading females that were exhibited at the 1923 English Royal show."



Quote from *The Age*, Friday 19.9.1924, p12

La Trobe Society 2018 winter talks - program details

Held in Mueller Hall (near the Shrine), 2.30pm, second Sunday of the month. Entry last year was \$5.

Booking are essential, by the previous Wednesday please:

Email to talks@latrobesociety.org.au; a webform at www.latrobesociety.org.au/talks18.html; or leave a message on 9592 5616.

Sunday 10 June **Speaker:** Dr Rosemary Richards

Subject: Georgiana McCrae's Favourite Music

Sunday 8 July **Speaker:** Davydd Shaw

Subject: Edward Byam Wight: Enterprising Pioneer in the Port Phillip District

Sunday 12 August **Speaker:** Peter Hiscock AM

Subject: La Trobe and his Horses – Testing Times

Sunday 9 September **Speaker:** Irene Kearsey

Subject: Gulf Station was established by John Dickson in the 1840s. It was then owned by the Bell family for the better part of 100 years until 1951. The talk will concentrate on the early days of the station in the La Trobe era, following the story of Dickson and the Bells.

[Irene has been invited to give a version of this talk for the Yarra Glen and District Historical Society's 2018 Tetlow Talk, 14 October.]

Cheese muffins

Paula Herlihy shares this recipe (from Louise Lang – Anglicare). Paula says, nicest when fresh, but can be split and buttered.

1 cup SR flour

1 cup grated cheese

1 cup milk

(I add chopped parsley)

Mix – the mixture is very wet. I put about half a tablespoon to a mini muffin or half round non-stick pan (sometimes I put a squirt of olive oil in first).

Cook - in a moderate oven (160°–165°) 15-20 minutes (I use a fan forced oven and cook half way for half the time, then near the top for the second half of cooking time til golden brown). Turn upside down on a cooling tray and place on a tea towel to absorb moisture if you like.

Louise makes a slimmers' version with low fat cheese and skim milk; I have used up ends of cheese including parmesan, but usually use pre-grated pack cheese as easiest.

My Satnav

Author unknown, sounds like Pam Ayres but it isn't.

[Hope it won't cause any domestic arguments at your house...]

I have a little Satnav,
It sits there in my car.
A Satnav is a driver's friend:
It tells you where you are

I have a little Satnav.
I've had it all my life.
It's better than the normal ones:
My Satnav is my wife

It gives me full instructions,
Especially how to drive.
"It's thirty miles an hour." it says
"You're doing thirty five."

It tells me when to stop and start
And when to use the brake
And tells me that it's never ever
Safe to overtake.

It tells me when a light is red
And when it goes to green.
It seems to know instinctively
Just when to intervene.

It lists the vehicles just in front
And all those to the rear
And taking this into account
It specifies my gear.

I'm sure no other driver
Has so helpful a device,
For when we leave and lock the car
It still gives its advice.

It fills me up with counselling:
Each journey's pretty fraught,
So why don't I exchange it
And get a quieter sort?

Ah well, you see, it cleans the house,
Makes sure I'm properly fed,
It washes all my shirts and things
And keeps me warm in bed!

Despite all these advantages
And my tendency to scoff,
I only wish that now and then
I could turn that Satnav off.

The Bells' mousetrap

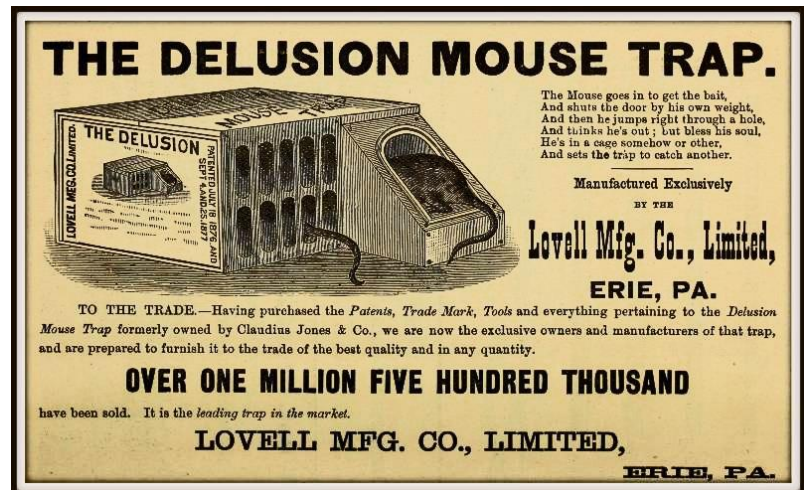
Previous newsletters have featured the Bells' kind-to-mice mousetrap (it imprisons mice intending for a kind human to take the trap outside and release them). See the Trust's web site:

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/collections/mouse-trap-gulf-station/>

Alex has been researching and has found one videoclip demonstrating such a trap in action. Three mice are caught in this experiment and the resulting crowding leads to cannibalism so don't watch if you're squeamish:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqj7NqzXsmg>

Alex also found an advertisement:



The traps were advertised in Australia: they are the fourth item in this advertisement, *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney) 10.7.1888 p8:

