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Treasurer Liz Chambers: 03 52314572 Annual Membership fee: \$20.00 per person – due in May

Historical Society Meetings are held monthly on the 4th Wednesday at 7.30pm, except in January,
and during *winter* on the 4th Saturday at 1.30pm.

Open Hours for the public at COPACC History Centre: Thursday, Friday and Sunday 2.00pm to 4.00pm

Dates for your Diary

Working Bees at the History Centre are on the 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 10.00-12.00am

Saturday June 28th at 1.30pm Speaker- N. Houghton- *The Economics of the Rail Networks in Colac Shire.*

Saturday July 26th at 1.30pm . General Meeting Speaker- TBA

Saturday August 2rd at 1.30pm .General Meeting Speaker- TBA

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AGM MAY 2014

I have found 2013-14 both challenging and stimulating, but I must say from the outset I would not have been able to perform this role without the support of my wife *Dawn* who has carried much of the load that is expected of your president.

We may not have a large membership, but we do have a very large percentage of active volunteer members who collectively work to maintain and staff the History Centre, attend to the day to day running of the Society and perform the recording, research and displays which make this community a better place. So much happens that I find it is hard to condense this report. Monthly meeting attendance has averaged 14 or 15 with 4 visiting guest speakers scattered throughout the year. Contributions by members have informed and entertained on other occasions as well as the Christmas Dinner and Opening BBQ hosted by *Barry and Jen McDonald*. One of my disappointments is that we have not managed to hold any group excursions and I hope this can be remedied in the year to come.

A highlight of the year was the production and launch of *'The Otways –Through the Magic Lantern'* which brought the glass slides and lecture notes of George Sydenham out of the archives and into the world at large. Special thanks to *Dawn Peel and Dawn Missen*. Barbara Minchinton's address at the launch provided the perfect insight into the life and times of George Sydenham. Sales are going very well. We were also very grateful to Fonterra for donating a considerable number of the *'Cororooke'* book which they commissioned on the closure of that milk processing plant. Quite a deal of the material was gained from our archival and photo collection.

Another highlight I believe is the number and quality of our window displays and thanks go to all those who have contributed time and materials to make them relevant. There have been 4 school visits and thanks go to *John Knight* who does a great job in stimulating the children's interest in our early history – a subject which seems very out of favour in modern school curriculums.

We provided a display at both the Warrion Flower Show and the Colac Heritage Festival, where our new banner was put to good use. Five issues of the newsletter have been produced and thanks go to *Ellise and John Angel* for compiling, printing and distributing these. Newsletter editors are always reliant on contributed articles and snippets of news and I know Ellise would appreciate more of these.

We have maintained affiliation with the Western Victorian Association of Historical Society, Geelong & District Historical Society, Royal Historical Society of Victoria and took part in an initiative of the Colac Family History Group in bringing together the Historical Societies local to Colac. I would like to see members endeavour to

attend some of these events. They are a great opportunity to meet like-minded people and learn how other societies operate and deal with similar issues.

The History Centre has been the focus of much activity in an endeavour to make it more functional, attractive and inviting. Two courthouse benches were sold to create more space and two mobile display cases purchased with other display areas rearranged and renovated. Without our faithful roster volunteers to staff the centre, those who regularly attend working bees, deal with donated material, catalogue books and donated items and attend to the many personal and email requests for information the centre would not function. To all of you I say thank you.

I must make a special mention of *Craig Pink* who has spent many days indexing and digitizing the **Bard-Brucker** photographic collection and *Jane Davis* who has been digitizing our book and photo collection. I believe with space limitations and aging material that this work is essential and urgent.

We were very disappointed early last year at the manner in which the Colac Otway Shire brought in consultants in order to lecture us about the clutter in the Centre and other perceived shortcomings. Nevertheless, it did provide us with the impetus to deal with some of the issues raised and has improved co-operation. Regular meetings with the Shire in company with the Family History Group have enabled better lighting and accessible power points to be installed. Space was made available in the ex-Civic Hardware building to store ex-council items for which there was no room in the Centre. The Shire donated two ex-council computers which were an upgrade on our aged stock.

Where does the future lead us? I think it is time that I stated publicly that I believe this society and the Family History Group would both be more effective if the Colac History Centre was operated as a single entity. Research enquiries regularly involve material from both organizations; we have two libraries, duplication of some records, two desks, two sets of book sales and a considerable crossover of memberships. I have spoken to a number of members of both organizations, I believe that there is strong support and I have been encouraged to pursue this objective. We have had excellent communications and co-operation from the executive of the Family History Group over the past year and our regular joint meetings have been productive. As for the wider community there appears to be confusion and a lack of understanding as to our differences.

If I am to continue as president I need to know from all of our membership whether you are willing to proceed down this track. The endeavours of a hard-working and dedicated membership over the past 60+ years must be respected. However, I do believe that in this digital age to maintain our wonderful collection in the 21st century, it is time to review how this community can best preserve, collect and disseminate our district history which is interwoven with the families that have created it.

Finally, my special thanks to *Secretary Jen and Vice-president Barry McDonald and Treasurer Liz Chambers*. Your loyal support has been much appreciated.

Robert Missen, President, May 2014.

Our Historical Society Treasurer, *Elizabeth Chambers*, is rejoicing in the safe birth of new grandson **Angus Keith** to Belinda and Daniel Chambers, 26.5.'14. Society members know how proud and happy the little boy's grandfather Keith would have been if he was here to greet him. Keith, a long serving past president of the Society for 35 years, passed away in March 2012 and is sadly missed by his family and Society members.

What has been in the News?

Colac Herald.

April 11th 2014- Century of memories for Colac seamstress- Former Colac woman- Eleanora Mason, was born in England on April 13th 1914 and came to Australia in 1923, settling in the Otways. Her father Charles Pyatt found work on a pine plantation at Kennedy's Creek. She met her first husband Alexander Buchanan at a Beech Forest dance and they lived on his family's Wyelangta dairy and potato farm before moving into Colac. She worked at a *Colac district flax mill* then 13 years at *Bilson's department store*. Alexander died in the war and Eleanora later married Gordon Mason. Her granddaughter Sharyn Gibson now owns *Coragulac House* and property where a Birthday party was held for Eleanora's 100th Birthday.

April 11th -Stunning 159-year-old home for sale. *Thornbank* , 44 Moore St, is one of Colac's oldest and most magnificent homes featuring 1855 and 1869 architectural styles and craftsmanship in bluestone and rendered brick. The house is National Trust listed boasting beautiful original iron lacework, terracotta and sandstone tiles and a ballroom with a 4.8 metre high ceiling. The garden has been Edna Walling and William Guilfoyle inspired.

May 2nd – Officials reject council's claim. The State Government has rejected Colac Otway Shire Council's claim over the former Colac High School, refusing to return the site to the community even though they had received documents proving the former council had given the land to the government

May 9th - Anniversary for former shires. 150 years of Colac's local government was celebrated on May 10th having been formed in 1864 with 8 councillors. The *Shire of Colac* extended from the coast to Cressy and from Birregurra to Pirron Yallock. The *Shire of Otway* was formed in 1919 after the Otways opened for settlement and Colac became a borough in 1938, the *Town of Colac* in 1948 and the *City of Colac* in 1960. Issues such as rates, water supply, infant welfare, abattoirs, stock saleyard development and flooding have featured in council matters since the beginning. Argument about shire boundaries, amalgamations and redistribution led to the incorporation, under Jeff Kennet, of the City of Colac, Shire of Colac and the Shire of Otway giving the present council the name *Colac Otway Shire*.

***The Colac and District Historical Society* created a window display dedicated to Colac's 150th anniversary of local government in May.

May 12th - Rail Trail's latest extension opens. A 4 kilometre path, 2 metres wide, paved extension has been completed to the *Old Beechy Rail Trail* between *Beech Forest and Ferguson*. The trails length is now more than 49 kilometres.

May 28th - Council will discuss truck museum plan. A petition of 200 names calling for Colac Otway Shire Council "to provide assistance and support" to relocate a Colac vintage truck collection is unlikely to achieve its immediate aim. Although the council has discussed the issues involved, it will be up to the Service Clubs, a not-for-profit organisation and the *Brunt family* to take the next step.

May 30th - Push for public toilets at Lake Corangamite. A community plan by the *Red Rock District Progress Association* to improve a reserve on the edge of Lake Corangamite, known as the "Lake Corangamite Bathing Boxes", has Colac Otway Shire Council support but no funding commitment. The RRDPA will be respectful and protective of this Aboriginal heritage site and plan extensive revegetation and reinstating of a toilet block for public use. The lake is the largest permanent saltwater lake in Australia.

June 9th - Gardens a fertile story source. *Mrs Paatsch*, as a member of the *Friends of the Colac Botanic Gardens*, is writing a book to commemorate 150 years since the gazetting of the gardens. It will be launched on May 23rd 2015. The garden was designed, with the carriageway, by Daniel Bunce, curator of the Geelong Botanic Gardens. The Colac Lake foreshore had its heyday when hundreds of people gathered for boating regattas, patriotic events during WW1 and Sunday School Picnics. In the 1950s there was a swing large enough to seat 30 children. The use of the gardens has changed during the past century.

June 11th - Historic Society donates book. Colac's Arthur Grant will travel to France for a ceremony honouring his great uncle Corporal Joseph Edward Lee, whose grave is at a military cemetery at Fromelles near the Belgian border. He will take with him a book- *The Road to Fromelles*, a gift from the Colac and District Historical Society written by *Dawn Peel and Andrew McIntosh* which details the experiences of 2 Colac soldiers from WW1- Alan Sitlington and Richard Bassett.

June 11th - Colac's motoring history goes under the hammer. *Colac's Parker Brothers* was one of Colac's premier dealerships for 88 years, starting as a bicycle sales and repair shop by Arthur and Percy in 1919, before moving into selling motorbikes and cars. John Parker took over his father's business in the 1940s selling Holden motor cars. His sons Graeme and Chris managed the business until the business was sold in 2007. Auction items at Parker's included Indian motorcycle parts from the 1920s, vintage wheels, and lights, oil tins, old signage and vintage car parts.

June 16th - School site not for sale. *Kawarren* residents were relieved that the Education Department confirmed their former primary school remained under community control and should not have been included in a list of former Otways primary schools "declared surplus to educational requirements." The Kawarren Recreation Reserve Committee is working to revitalise the site for Kawarren residents.

June 18th - Colac district groups benefit from funding. Two new, glass display cabinets for the *Colac and District Historical Society* will protect pieces of Colac's history for future generations thanks to a \$2,783 grant from the South West Community Foundation.

BUILDING UP TO BRYAN BROTHERS

THE UNTOLD STORY OF ARCHIE BRYAN'S ORIGINAL WINDMILL DESIGN - AND ITS SUCCESSORS - C. 1888 TO 2014.

By Craig Pink.

"Mr. Archie Mark Bryan... was the founder of Bryan Bros.' windmill and engineering firm, which he owned for half a century. This successful industry not only assisted in the progress of Colac, but had been the means of making the town known throughout Australia.... he truly played his part in the industrial progress of Colac, and that he had "done the State some service"....." (Colac Herald, November 20th 1953).

Born in 1870, Archibald Mark Bryan's parents were Orchardists in the local Warrion area, and were amongst the regions earlier settlers. At a young age, Archie displayed great aptitude not only for the construction of machinery, but also to its improvements. With the usual way of pumping water for domestic/stock purposes at the time being mainly by hand, Archie went on to conceive and develop the idea of a cheap and effective windmill that would be in the reach of anyone requiring water. Archie made his first windmill at around age 17, and in the succeeding years started the commercial manufacture of windmills in Colac with his oldest brother George Bryan as a partner. The early era saw the business on the corner of Hart and Murray Street, shifting later to leased premises in Gellibrand Street. Ernest Jones became an additional partner in 1892, trading as "BRYAN & JONES" the business now became prominent. Considerable praiseworthy comments came from the "BRYAN & JONES" windmill display at the 1892 Colac Show where it competed for sales alongside the Robert Brown windmill from Beeac, as well as the Alston windmill from Warrnambool.

From 1893 to 1896 Percival Brett became a 4th partner in the business, trading under the name of "BRYAN JONES & BRETT" (*at least one windmill survives locally with "BRYAN JONES and BRETT" on its tail*). Display stands such as the "BRYAN JONES & BRETT" feature at the 1893 Geelong Show were amongst the earlier praiseworthy comments for the simplicity, easy turning nature of the "BRYAN JONES & BRETT" windmill. At the 1894 Colac Show, "BRYAN JONES & BRETT" exhibited 2 sizes of Colac "CYCLONE" windmills, being of their own design/manufacture. The smaller Colac "CYCLONE" windmill used a 7 foot wind wheel, and was capable of pumping 200 to 300 gallons of water per hour under suitable conditions. The larger Colac "CYCLONE" windmill model used a 9 feet diameter wind wheel, which under suitable conditions was capable of pumping up to 400 gallons of water per hour. The windmills were also "*Patented by a self regulator which as the wind becomes too strong throws the wheel out of gear (off the wind) and thus saves it from destruction*".

In August 1898 Ernest Jones dissolved his partnership in what had previously reverted back to "BRYAN & JONES", going into business in his own right, and becoming well known over the ensuing years for the reliability of his own manufacture of "ERNEST JONES" windmills in Colac. Another older brother of Archie Bryan - Thomas Pearce Bryan also became a partner in Bryan Bros. around the time Ernest Jones left the partnership, and the trading name of the well-known today former name of "BRYAN BROTHERS" remained from mid-August 1898.

"An owner of a windmill, with a good well to draw upon, is absolutely independent of any other scheme of water supply. There is no cheaper or more effective means of lifting water, and the windmill has come to be recognised as indispensable on farm and stock run since Messrs. Bryan Bros. commenced the manufacture in Colac of a pattern, meeting all requirements.... The first mill made by the firm was purchased by Mr. John Stone, of Irrewillipe, where it is still working to that gentleman's satisfaction. He has since purchased several more of the same manufacture. The business was started in a small way, with little capital or machinery, but perseverance, economy, and good workmanship have developed it into one of the largest of its kind in the colonies. Since commencing Messrs. Bryan Bros. have made many improvements in the construction of their mills, and the "Cyclone" windmill is now well known all through the state." (Colac Herald- 2nd April 1902).



AT LEFT - Looking North East over Corangamite Street, showing the old Brewery premises some years before the site which Bryan Bros. acquired and built new premises on. Shifting into new premises on this site in 1902, the Bryan Bros. business grew steadily over the ensuing years. Advertising from Bryan Bros. early days at Corangamite street states they were situated opposite "THE BREWERS ARMS" (today's - "AUSTRAL HOTEL").

(Photo from Historical Society files - "Photo card - 029")

When the Colac Brewing Company ceased operations in Corangamite Street, the Bryan Bros. secured the site, which they demolished and built new premises on. The firm of Bryan Bros. shifted into the new Corangamite street premises in 1902. The last remaining partner Mr. George Bryan left the partnership in June 1904, leaving Mr. Archie Bryan left as the sole proprietor of "BRYAN BROS."



LEFT & RIGHT - These 3 photos from 1911 show the strength of the business after the steady growth of Bryan Bros. Corangamite street premises. Advertising and Bryan Bros. catalogues of the period stated they supplied only one class of materials - "THE BEST". As well as supplying the local region, windmill distribution was a regular site on railway goods carriages leaving Colac, and even by this stage, were dispatched to all portions of the Commonwealth. The Bryan Bros. open geared design windmill (closest 3 at right), was also proving popular and reliable by this time, the design allowed lower gearing which increased the power obtained from the wind, meaning water could be pumped in very slight breezes.

(Photos from the 1911 booklet - "Prosperous and Progressive Colac")



(Continued on next page) ↘

BUILDING UP TO BRYAN BROTHERS (Continued from previous page)

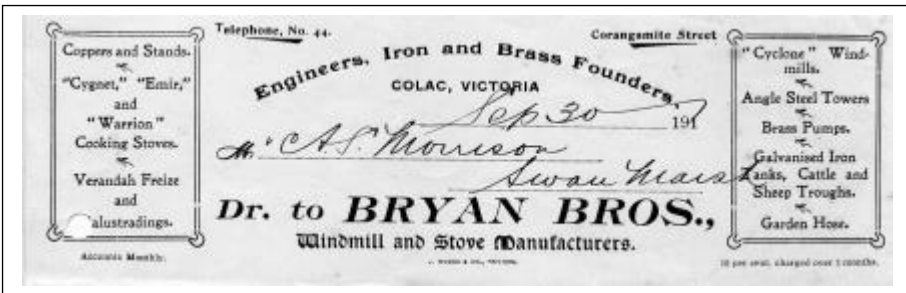
THE UNTOLD STORY OF ARCHIE BRYAN'S ORIGINAL WINDMILL DESIGN - AND ITS SUCCESSORS - C. 1888 TO 2014.

By Craig Pink.



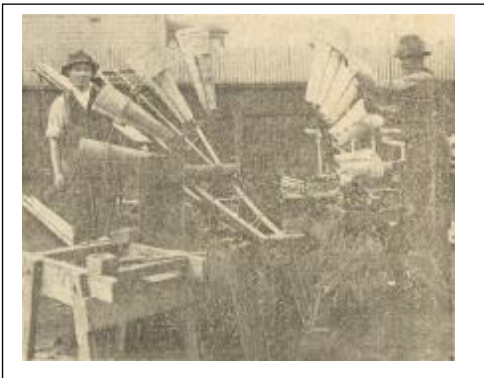
LEFT & RIGHT – Two Interior views of the Bryan Bros. Works in 1911. Some 30 employees were engaged at the premises by this time, as well as a suction gas engine which was being replaced by a new larger one which was 5 times more powerful than the previous one that had been in use.

(Photos from the 1911 booklet – “Prosperous and Progressive Colac”)



AT LEFT- Bryan Bros. monthly account docket from 1911. As well as windmill manufacture the business also had first class Iron and Brass Foundry capabilities. Note the cast iron cooking stoves – “CYGNET” “EMIR” and “WARRION”, which were all cast on the Corangamite street site.

(Docket from “Historical Society Files”)



AT LEFT – Windmill assembly at Bryan Bros. Corangamite street, Colac, September 1924. At this time the premises were well capable of producing up to twelve windmills per week in times of peak demand. All plant was very well up to date for its time, including – a large 17h.p. suction gas engine which ran all the machinery, as well as the blast for the foundry. There were three electrically driven forges, a lathe, six power drilling machines, and a hole punching and shearing apparatus which cut steel bars up to half an inch thickness as easily as a scissors cuts paper. Also recently released was the first Bryan Bros. enclosed geared oil bath windmill. Part of the explanation read - “This economic mill automatically lubricates the bearings in a sparing, but sufficient, manner, that would move a Scot to envy, and cause him to believe that he came of a wasteful race”.

(From “The Melbourne Sun News Pictorial Supplement”, September 1924)

Archie Bryan remained the sole proprietor of Bryan Bros. and went on to open factory premises at West Footscray (suburb of Melbourne). The West Footscray premises traded from 1922, the depression years of the later 1920's and early 1930's took its toll, the West Footscray site ended up being sold to the S.E.C. in the mid 1930's.

The Bryan Bros. single acting open crank design windmill was always well suited to the shallow wells/bores/dams around much of the Colac area, especially North of the Highway. As the water is mostly pumped to a tank close by the windmill which is not a great height, less power output is required of the windmill. The Bryan Bros. open geared design windmill saw a major improvement in 1924 with the introduction of the enclosed geared oil bath Bryan Bros. model. The early enclosed geared models are easily recognisable by the heavy cast lid on the top, later models use a galvanised tin top cover. A different design enclosed geared oil bath windmill was also introduced in the 1930's by Bryan Bros., this model used a heavy casting, which accesses the internals by a heavy cast side cover instead of from the top. The Hamilton Pastoral Museum has one of these side access enclosed geared oil bath models displayed on the Hamilton/Glenelg Highway corner frontage of their Museum complex.

During his long association with the windmill industry, Archie Bryan developed many improvements to meet the varying conditions in different parts of Australia, and under his guidance the firm built up a reputation as one of the leading windmill manufacturers in Australia. He had numerous Patents covering his improved designed windmills, including oil bath enclosed geared windmills, and each year sent hundreds of plants into every State in the Commonwealth. Archie Bryan was a man who made work his hobby, and was always known as a great boss, and many of his staff gave him upwards of 40 years service. Archie was regarded as one of the best pattern-makers in Victoria, and spent long hours in his wood working shop designing and turning patterns which were so important in the final production of castings from his foundry. Windmills up to a 16 feet diameter wind wheel, and stands in excess of 40 feet high were made by Bryan Bros., which were to Archie's designs. Archie Bryan retired around 1942, and sold the Bryan Bros. business to “R.A. (Dick) Borch”. Archie Bryan married later in life, and died in November 1953, aged 83, leaving wife Lorna and 2 daughters. Archie's parents were William and Susan (nee Kells), they had 5 children, – (George Bryan, born Fyansford, 1860), (Hector Henry Bryan, born Geelong 1861), (Matilda Kells Bryan, born Fyansford, 1866), (Thomas Pearce Bryan, born Batesford, 1868), (Archibald Mark Bryan, born Warrion, 1870). The Melbourne Museum acquired an earlier style Bryan Bros. windmill which has been on display along with other early Australian and overseas windmills since at least the 1970's era. Archie Bryan was also remembered very well locally for his scale model of an early Bryan Bros. enclosed geared oil bath windmill, which still took pride of place on display in the Corangamite street premises showroom window up to the demise of Bryan Bros. and Borch. The model was originally painted Heritage Green, in later years it was repainted Red (it was equipped with stand/pump/tank stand/piping etc. all mounted on a wooden platform). The late Vic Middleton from West of Cororooke also made several models of Bryan Bros. windmills, he sold one to the Melbourne Museum in 1993, two of Vic's Bryan Bros. models survive locally, and were a working exhibit at the February 2014 Colac Heritage display.

(Part 2 of the story concludes next issue with the “BRYAN BROS. and BORCH” era, and to the present day production of “BRYAN” windmills).

2014-15 COMMITTEE:

At the Annual General Meeting held on Wednesday May 28th 2014 the following members where elected:

President: Robert Missen

Cyber Committee: Jane Davis, Dawn Peel, Dawn

Vice-president: Barry McDonald

Missen, Jen McDonald.

Secretary: Jen McDonald

Librarian: Diana Cowen

Treasurer: Elizabeth Chambers

Vertical File: Gwentyth Knox, Gwen Bray

Newsletter: Ellise Angel, Assistant: Craig Pink

Photo Officer: Craig Pink

Manuscript Officer: Dawn Peel,

Acquisitions: John Knight, Andrew McIntosh, Craig Pink

Assistant: Margaret Saddler

Wardrobe: Gwen Bray, Ann McKenzie, Sandra Splatt,

Recorder of B. D. M.: Margaret Facey

Ellise Angel

Window: Gwen Bray, Jane Davis, Sandra Splatt



CRAIG'S CONUNDRUM - WHERE IS IT ? CLUE- Colac, they sold Petrol, and it's 1968.

Answer next issue.

COLAC and DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ROSTER 2.00 to 4.00 pm

Month	Thursday	Friday	Sunday
July	3 rd D. Missen 10 th I. Barlow 17 th G. Splatt 24 th J. Knight 31 st Committee?	4 th C. Pink 11 th G. Bray 18 th E. Chambers 25 th B & J McDonald	6 th A. McIntosh 13 th D. Cowan & M. Facey 20 th N. Houghton 27 th D. Cowan & M. Facey
August	7 th D. Missen 14 th I. Barlow 21 st G. Splatt 28 th J. Knight	1 st C. Pink 8 th G. Bray 15 th E. Chambers 22 nd B. & J. McDonald 29 th Committee	3 rd A. McIntosh 10 th D. Cowan & M. Facey 17 th N. Houghton 24 th M. Facey & D. Cowan 31 st Committee
September	4 th D. Missen 11 th I. Barlow 18 th G. Splatt 25 th J. Knight	5 th C. Pink 12 th G. Bray 19 th E. Chambers 26 th B. & J. McDonald	7 th A. McIntosh 14 th D. Cowan & M. Facey 21 st N. Houghton 28 th M. Facey & D. Cowan