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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, also during *winter* on the **4th Saturday at 1.30pm.**

Website address: colachhistoricalsociety.org.au

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

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

Forthcoming Events.

Saturday August 27th – 1.30 pm Dawn Peel 'Taking the Census in earlier times'

Wednesday September 28th – 7.30 pm John Callahan 'The Settlement of Barwon Downs – A Family History'

Wednesday October 26th – 7.30 pm Arthur O'Neill 'Early 20th Century Badges & Medallions'

Wednesday November 23rd – 7.30 pm Allan Willingham 'Two Scots in Victoria'- The Architecture of Davidson & Henderson

A Note from the President

It is very pleasing to report that our Society now has its own dedicated website – colachhistoricalsociety.org.au. Please check it out. A short history of Colac and of our Society, plus everything you need to know has been prepared by Dawn Peel, Norman Houghton and Dawn Missen with professional help from Richard Francis. Unfortunately, if you google Colac & District Historical Society you will not find it until near the bottom of page 2. Steps are being taken to improve our position, and if all our members regularly seek it out this will help.

On a less happy note, our dedicated long-serving member Liz Chambers has had a spell in hospital and although recovering at home, has felt it is time to relinquish her position as treasurer. John Angel has assumed the combined role of secretary-treasurer. Our grateful thanks go to Liz for her faithful service. She assures me she will still be helping out, as she has always done and we wish her a full recovery.

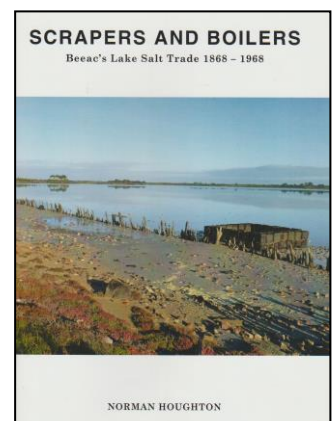
The renewal of the lease of our premises in COPACC was presented to council at its July meeting and received the unanimous support of councillors. After going through the necessary administrative processes it is anticipated that the new agreement will be signed off in mid-September.

I attended the quarterly meeting of the Geelong & District Historical Association at Birregurra on August 13th. The discussion topic was 'Researching Fires'. Ted Stuckey from the Apollo Bay Historical Society showed a wonderful collection of maps and papers dating back to 1851 describing the major bushfires in Victoria with particular reference to the Otway region. He had committed this material to a CD, copies of which he gave to member societies, and we sincerely thank him for this valuable resource.

Copies of the book 'A Further History of Colac – 1830s to 1930s' by Isaac Hebb, are also again available for sale. The book has been reprinted thanks to generous support given by the South West Community Foundation. The South West Foundation provides financial support to many worthwhile local projects but is also dependent on the financial backing of the community as it grows its asset base.

Finally, I would draw members attention to the latest publication from Norman Houghton. Titled 'Scrapers and Boilers' it is a beautifully illustrated and researched account of the Salt Trade of the Beeac District Lakes between 1868 and 1968. Copies will be available from the History Centre.

A comprehensive list of books for sale at the Society, together with prices, can be viewed on our new Society website.



Meetings Report-

May 25th CDHS Annual General Meeting. Elections were held and Committee members re-elected, with the addition of John Angel as Assistant Treasurer. **Membership remains at \$20 - due in May.**

June 25th Keith Walsh – Family Business- Walsh Electrical

Keith was born on 6th Oct 1928. He attended Colac Primary School and then Colac High School. After two years at High School he left school for good. He was asked to deliver telegrams for two weeks by Charlie Brooks. He enjoyed this task. Afterwards, when approached by Bon Ellit, he worked as a roustabout in shearing sheds. This was tough work but he enjoyed it and the camaraderie of the shearers. He possibly would have continued as a shearer but, when he was approached by Jack Menzies to become apprenticed to him as an apprentice electrician his mother encouraged him to take this on. This he did and worked from a shop next to 3CS in Colac.

Hillman and Eric Hargreaves, who also worked for Jack Menzies decided to set up their own business and asked Keith to continue his apprenticeship with them. He did in 1944. They were working from Speir's and then took a shop near the Victoria Hall. He later went into partnership with a 25% share in McKenzie's business.

Ron Dare and Keith Walsh set up a partnership and this continued until Ron became ill and then Keith battled on by himself.

Keith's son, Stuart Walsh, undertook an electrical course at Tech. and wanted to work with his Dad. However, Keith encouraged him to take an apprenticeship with Claude Lee. Marie, Keith's daughter, came home from South Africa after 2 years with an Englishman called Tom, also an electrician. She followed him to Port Moresby and later married Tom. They came back from Port Moresby and he worked with Keith. Keith asked Tom and Stuart to come into partnership and they agreed. Reg Hill who ran an electrical business from a shop in Hart St. wanted to retire and asked the Walsh electricians to take over his shop and eight members of staff.

When the building next to Parkers in Murray Street became available for purchase, Walsh Electrical purchased the shop and increased the business and the number of clients.

The worst job Keith can remember was being contracted to maintain the crusher at the West Barwon Dam. This was a 24 hour per day on-call job which meant he could be called out at any time of the day or night and often was! Would I do it again? he was asked– Yes, he would. Over his many years as an electrician he had many different and interesting jobs. He retired at 67. Electricity runs in the family – Keith's son Stuart took over the business after Keith Retired. Stuart's son Ben took over 5 years ago when Stuart retired. Ben has grown the business and now sells white goods while respecting his Grandfather's heritage.

July 23rd - Alan Doyle – Family Businesses in Murray Street, Colac

Alan gave a very interesting talk on his family's connections with Colac which was illustrated by a well thought out and prepared Power Point presentation. The information was the result of extensive research into his and his sister-in-law's connections with Colac. The information included reference to:

- James Hill – General Store 1850 – 1 Murray St.
- Central Stores – next to Union Hotel – Richard Morrison - 1874-95
- J.E.J. Hills & Co Butchery 1895
- Arthur Francis Spendlove - Spendlove the Shoeman until 1913
- Mark Marks – Union Club Hotel from 1892-1912
- 6 family blood lines connected to Colac
- Active in Colac Masonic Lodge and St. Johns Anglican Church.

AT RIGHT - Morrisons Auction Rooms in Bromfield St. in 1902.
Today, this site is occupied by the eastern end frontage of the Union Hotel car park.

(Image courtesy - Alan Doyle)



What Has Been in the News?

Colac Herald, 2016

June 6th Historic donation helps group. Researching family trees could be easier thanks to the donation by Warncourt's John and Bronwynne Calvert of a chart following the history of Colac district's pioneering families- Murray, Robertson, Stodart and Calvert dating back to the 1700s. Right in the middle is a hand drawing of Coragulac House. It was received by the Family History Group and is on display at the Colac History Centre.

June 15th Extra help for district groups. Colac and District Historical Society were among 6 organizations who received grants from South West Community Foundation 2016 Grants, Colac Sub Branch. This grant to the society of \$1000 enabled the reprinting of "A Further History of Colac 1830s-1930s by Isaac Hebb to be undertaken.

June 20th Minister visits new shed. A project to build a larger, purpose-built Men's Shed at Colac Showgrounds is nearing completion. It was visited by Jenny Mikakos, Victorian Families and Children Minister.



July 6th Truck collection remains popular. Merv Brunt says his vintage truck museum is going well. It was opened to the public 2 years ago and contains 38 vehicles, some 100 years old. He began with 3 Brockways. With the help of Jack Le Griffon the museum opens on Saturdays and Sundays.

July 18th Council happy to discuss trucks. Colac Otway Shire Council says it is open to a discussion with Colac's Merv Brunt, aged 81, about the future of his truck museum. He would like to sell the trucks, but to keep them in Colac. The council rejected his suggestion to house them in Colac's former Civic Home Hardware store which the council bought in 2011.

July 8th Centenary event for War Memorial. Colac district to pay tribute to its past war soldiers when celebrating the centenary of the planting of Eurack's Avenue of Honour on July 24th. School children planted elm trees in 1916 to honour 27 First World War soldiers from the farming community, north-east of Colac. It is considered to be the oldest avenue of honour in Victoria.

July 18th Young visitor finds medals. Lachlan Gaylard, a Melbourne teenager started researching military history and did a family tree. He contacted his grandfather's cousin, Graham Gaylard, and the Colac History Centre and was able to find his great-grandfather Albert Thomas Gaylard's medals and was allowed to keep them.

July 25th Roses enhance shrine garden. Members of the Colac Lake Red Cross unit planted 2 Red Cross Roses in a rose bed in front of the shrine at Colac's Memorial Square on the 22nd. This was to complete the row where 3 Red Cross Roses were planted there last year. The roses are to promote peace. The Australian Red Cross celebrated its centenary on August 13th, 2014.

July 29th Ten-year lamb deal brings 60 new jobs. This new deal is between Colac's Australian Lamb Company and Coles Supermarkets and will boost employment. The company is Australian owned and operated and an investment of \$30 million will expand facilities to continue processing lamb and mutton for Australian and overseas markets for more than 20 years ahead. They currently export to more than 69 countries world-wide and are one of the largest employers in the Colac Otway Shire.

July 29th Call to consider renaming reserve. Civic leaders want to investigate the community's interest in renaming Colac's Central Reserve sporting ground to recognise our indigenous heritage. Councillor Brian Crook said the renaming of Central Reserve provided an opportunity to pay our respects to our traditional custodians. Also there are plans to rename new or existing buildings after high achievers or administrators who had contributed significantly to the sporting community.

August 8th Years of determination pay off for Kawarren. Kawarren Recreation Reserve committee have helped transform the former Kawarren Primary School into a community centre called Echidna House, along with a Eucalypt Conservation and Fire Prevention Nature Walk. The community had been deeply impacted by the closure of the school in 2008, including the groups that had been meeting there. The Education Department had agreed to hand over the site to what is now the Environment, Land, Water and Planning Department. Echidna House will be opened on August 14th by State MP and Regional Victoria Parliamentary Secretary Danielle Green.

August 12th Demolition approved for Colac High School. All buildings at the former Colac High School will be demolished by the State Government except the oldest heritage buildings- the 1912 office and quadrangle. The site is to be prepared for disposal and will be rezoned, then offered for sale first to other government departments and local council ahead of the public. The High School closed in 2009 when Colac's secondary schools were consolidated to form Colac Secondary College.

August 12th Cliffy the pelican finds new home. Cliff Young, a spud farmer from Beech Forest, became famous when he won the Sydney to Melbourne Ultra-marathon and received a large trophy-cup for his amazing effort. After Cliff's death the cup was presented to the Colac and District Historical Society by twins Bridgette and Paula Powers who had been his friends and support crew now living in Queensland. Otway artist Brian Worsley was asked by the girls to make a donation box featuring a pelican to aid their Seabird Rescue work in Queensland. Since Cliff Young had told the girls that he wanted to come back as a pelican they have named the pelican on the box "Cliffy" in his memory. It was recently delivered in person to them by Brian Worsley.

RICHARD BASSETT - FROM FROMELLES TO COLAC

Dawn Peel

On 19 July the Battle of Fromelles, in which so many Australian lives were lost, is commemorated. For Richard Bassett, whose war experiences we have followed through his letters home to his fiancée Irene Sitlington, active engagement with the enemy ended that day in 1916. In the preceding June of 1916, following the months training in the desert after the troops returned from Gallipoli, he had been exhilarated by the beauty of the French countryside seen during the train trip north to the fighting front. There follow some extracts from the long letter he wrote describing this journey.

If I live to four times my present age I will never forget that journey along the valley of the Rhine. I would not believe there existed such a beautiful place on earth if I had not seen it for myself. The houses are always of brick with tile roofs, sometimes covered with thatch. The roads are exquisite and appear to have grown there when the grass, trees and hedges came into being. The river is also glorious. It is very wide and fringed with trees and undergrowth, though there are no logs in it as there are in the Gellibrand. They are nothing like our bush scenes but they are something better – a civilisation so old that it has grown to be part of nature itself.

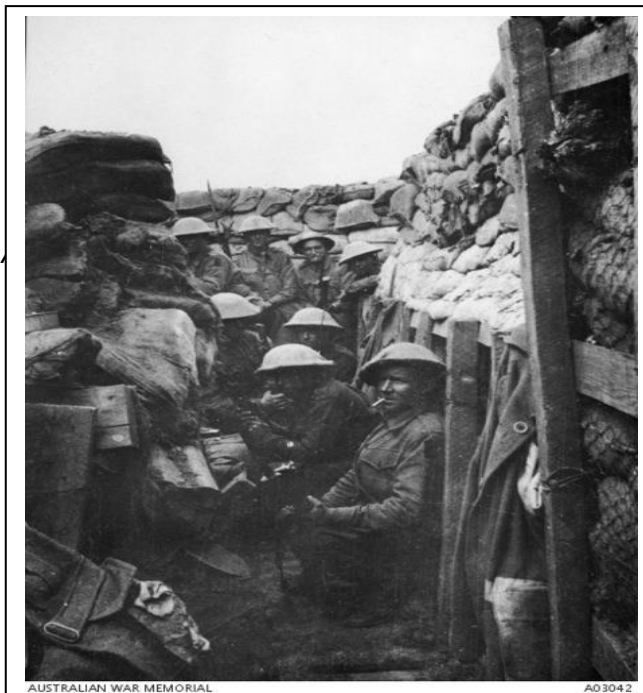
There are several further pages describing this trip. But then the letter ends, with their arrival in northern France and their engagement against the enemy at Fromelles on 19 July 1916:

We finally came to the end of our train journey. We marched to our billets which were in a pretty village a good distance from the firing line. We were there for a week and had a fine time. Then a march for a day and we were in new billets nearer to the enemy. A few days there and we were moved to supports. Three or four days later we went into action and a day later I was in hospital with a slight bullet wound in my forearm. Another few days there and we crossed the channel to Dover and straight to the hospital just near Sheffield.

From here he wrote describing his experience of the battle:

On July 19 we were in the firing line by 5 p.m. and were to go out over the parapet to make the closer acquaintance of Fritz at 5.45. At that time the shellfire slackened, and, with a cheer over the parapet went our first line. Our section was to go in the fourth wave, and by the time our turn came the rifle and machine-gun fire had become intense. High explosive shells were screaming over and tearing up masses of earth, and shrapnel was sweeping the ground like a storm of hail lashed by a mighty wind. The bullets were just grazing the top of the parapets with a vicious crack, and it seemed almost impossible that anyone could go over and live. The whistles sounded, and over we went, climbing on to the parapets by means of short ladders. No one faltered, though at the ladder next to mine the first man who put up his head fell forward. But by that time I was over, and the air seemed to be alive with bullets; I tripped over a piece of wire and fell flat. Hastily picking myself up, I was off again. A shell hole I hadn't noticed brought me down on my knees again, but I scrambled up and was off again. By this time the men began to fail. Through the gaps in our barbed wire the men streamed. Two of our company went down together. A few yards further a couple more were down, but the rest of us raced on. Another one down, and we had only gone 100 yards. I was just wondering whether there was anyone left, when I felt something like the kick of a horse, and my rifle dropped from my hands. I followed the rifle, and being in the vicinity of a shell cavity, I crawled in and examined my arm to ascertain the nature of the damage. It was bleeding, but was not broken, so I considered the advisability of going on. However, as I considered I would be useless in a fight, I decided to wait and see how things went. I was fairly secure from bullets, but shells and shrapnel were rather dangerous. The shells seemed to be falling everywhere, and there must have been at least fifty fell within thirty yards of me in about five minutes. I was covered with dirt, and thought I would be blown into the air any minute. The shellfire slackened after a while, though the shells were passing very close, and falling just on our parapets. I could feel the wind from them as they passed. I began to feel drowsy, so tried to have a sleep, but it was rather too noisy. I had decided to make my way back to our own trenches as soon as things quietened down. After lying there about four hours I decided to try it. There was still a lot of rifle fire, but, by keeping low and making use of a fold in the ground, I was able to get within about ten yards of our parapet, and there I came on a hollow, about two feet deep.

A pal of mine was there also, a Sergeant, who has been with me right from the start, through Gallipoli without a hit, and we must have been wounded at the same minute. It was dangerous to go on, as the Germans were sniping the wounded trying to get into the trench. A couple of hours later it grew darker, and we crawled up to the parapet and made a rush over the top. Our wounds were bandaged by one of our own men. We had only spent about five hours out there between the trenches, and it was quite enough for me. Some of our men were out about thirty hours, as they were unable to crawl in. The sergeant and I walked to our billets next morning, and at night, as our wounds got very sore we went to the dressing station to have them attended to. From there we were sent to a clearing hospital at Calais, where we stayed five days, and then boarded a hospital ship for England.



AT LEFT – Fromelles - 19 July 1916. Men of the 53rd Battalion waiting to don their equipment for the attack at Fromelles. Only three of the men shown here came out of the action alive, and those three were wounded. (Image courtesy - Australian War Memorial)

A later letter from England further described the engagement at Fromelles: It was a very hot engagement and there were only 53 left out of a battalion of nearly 500. I have since learned that 400 of the casualties were killed outright so you can judge how severe it really was. Those of us who got back were lucky and I gave up all hope several times when I was lying out in front with the ground being torn up all around by shells and with the earth tumbling as with an earthquake. The worst part of it was that I was alone for a couple of hours as I had got out rather further than the others.

I have come to a training battalion on the Salisbury Plains and it is dreadfully monotonous. There is no one here I know and I feel more lonely than at any time since I left home ... I seem to be always hearing about people who have been killed or wounded lately. There do not appear to be many of our old men living now I am afraid.

His days at the front were finished. Despite his requests, Richard Bassett was not returned to France, but was to spend a dispiriting two years attached to the postal division, located on Salisbury Plain.

And in another letter:

I feel unspeakably lonely. All the old friends are going one by one, and I am feeling very much alone nowadays. There are no pals like the old men who have been with me through such a lot of rough times. I can't help missing them.

Richard Bassett was quickly repatriated following the armistice in 1918, and arrived home in January 1919, after which he and Irene were soon married.



AT LEFT – Irene Bassett (nee Sitlington) with her daughters, Bronwen, born in 1920, and Valerie who was born in 1921. For this family, each Anzac Day and 19 July, the anniversary of Alexander Sitlington's death, were solemn occasions. Irene had been a milliner before her marriage, while Bronwen did office work in Colac and Melbourne before returning to Colac to care for her widowed mother. Irene died in 1983. Valerie, after a time in professional opera became, in her role in Clark Rubber, one of the first women in Australia to be a company director. She died in 2013, and weeks later, in early 2014 Bronwen died.

(Photo courtesy – Stephen Brooks)

Mr and Mrs Bassett became early members of the Historical Society, and from a past newsletter we learn that Richard Bassett, who died in 1970, became a journalist, working firstly as a reporter for the Colac Reformer, and later as editor of the Colac Herald. He also wrote nature notes for these papers under the nom-de-plumes of "Poondarrigal" and "In the Open" and "Observer". The compilation of the shire centenary book "The Shire of Colac 1864-1964" is a worthy testimonial to his professional abilities. Mr Bassett served on the Water Trust for fifteen years, which included a term as president. He was a member of the Colac Tennis Club and the Colac Golf Club. He was justly proud of his membership of The Gallipoli Legion of Anzacs and of the Original Anzac Association of Geelong, of which he was president for a term.

After his death in 1970 Mrs Irene Bassett and her two daughters maintained the family interest in the Historical Society. For many years Bronwen Bassett, born in 1920, typed the wax stencils from which the society's newsletters were duplicated on a manual Gestetner copier.



AT LEFT – From the Colac Herald 2nd September 1966, Richard Bassett planting a four inch high seedling from Gallipoli's Lone Pine, behind the War Memorial in Colac's Memorial Square. Mr R. A. Bassett said: *It is a tree with a history, and that history is an amazing one.* Richard also stated – *it was remarkable that after 52 years, he and three other men who were in camp at Broadmeadows in 1914, and sailed to Gallipoli on the same ship should be gathered together again.*

(Both photos from Bela Bard Brucker collection)



AT LEFT – From the Colac Herald 2nd September 1966 – *These four men served together at Gallipoli in 1915 ... Yesterday they were together again at the planting in Colac's Memorial Square of a seedling from Gallipoli's Lone Pine.* Mr. R. A. Bassett, of Colac (left), Mr. C. Hough of Camperdown, and Mr. K. McGarvie of "Greenwood Park", Pomborneit, shared the same tent while they were in training at Broadmeadows camp. Mr. L. Swayn, of Colac (far right) also landed at Gallipoli with the first Anzacs. The RSL was represented by Mr. Neil Mathews, and about 30 ex-servicemen and members of Legacy also attended.

Bronwen and her sister Valerie also gave permission for their father's wartime letters home to their mother, which; respecting their parents' privacy they had not read themselves, to be used for the society's publication "The Road to Fromelles". They were both able to attend the launch of this book at the History Centre in 2010, a final tribute to the life of their father, Richard Azariah Bassett.

THE LIFE OF VR STEAM LOCOMOTIVE - J536

By Craig Pink

Introduced into service by the Victorian Railways in 1954, the "J" class was the last new steam powered locomotive class to be delivered to the VR network. The "J" class was essentially a modernised version of the immensely reliable and successful "K" class steam powered locomotive, which dated from its first introduction by VR in the 1920s era.

The "J" class was intended and used as a goods locomotive, its lower speed rating not being suitable for mainline passenger timetables of the era. Specification criteria of the time set out by VR engineers stated the intended "J" class had to meet several new conditions, the most important - a statement by VR management that any new locomotives purchased at the time in question required the ability to be readily converted from broad gauge (5ft 2') wheel track, to standard gauge (4ft 8') wheel track. This was certainly a challenge, and difficult to achieve - the lower firebox section of the boiler on the "K" class was in the way of having the narrower standard gauge 4ft 8' wheel track, so conversion to standard gauge of the "K" class was not possible. Previous locomotives such as the VR "N" class steam powered locomotive (*also based on the "K" class*) had attempted to overcome this shortfall, but in turn created more problems than it solved as the lower firebox section of the boiler was set behind the driven rear axle set, making the locomotive too long for turning on the VR 53ft turntables. (*largely because of this design shortfall, ten of the VR "N" class locomotives were sold to South Australian Railways in 1950/51, and became their 750 Class*).

The solution on the design of the "J" class was to lift the boiler up higher, having the lower firebox section of the boiler above the driven rear axle. This made the locomotive look marginally bigger (*and obviously taller*) than it really was, but put the length suitable for use on the 53ft turntables of the VR system, so the "J" class did not suffer from the inability to be converted to standard gauge.

Despite the introduction of the hugely successful diesel/electric "B" class locomotives by VR in 1952, VR purchased 60 of the new "J" class steam powered locomotives from the Vulcan Foundry in England, for delivery from 1954. A brief description of the time stating – "*Compared with other goods classes they are rather ungainly looking machines with high pitched boilers and "German" type smoke deflectors*". The VR "J" class locomotives were numbered J500 to J559, the first 30 being coal burners, the last 30 being oil burners. The class remained intact until November 1967 when J523 was the first of the class to be condemned.

Timeline for Victorian Railways Steam Locomotive - J536

1953 – Built by Vulcan Foundry of England and allocated Builders No. 6082.

1954 – (20th July) arrived in Melbourne on the ship MV Irish Hayel.

1954 – (26th August) – entered service on VR network.

Depot allocations – (26th August 1954 – North Melbourne), (19th November 1954 – Traralgon), (10th October 1965 – Ballarat).

1963 - (May to September) - Undergoing major overhaul at Ballarat North Workshops, including boiler re-tube and major examination.

Storage Periods – (26th October 1966 to 3rd May 1967 – Maryborough), (3rd May 1967 to 2nd July 1972 – Newport Workshops - Melbourne), (2nd July 1972 to 22nd July 1972 - Geelong).

1972 – (23rd July) - Taken off Register and delivered to Colac City Council for \$650 plus \$140 transport costs, and to be put on display outside the Colac Railway Station (*local railway enthusiasts had played a major role in its acquisition*).

1988 – (July) - In honour of Colac resident Claude Lee's role as one of the main people responsible for originally getting retired locomotive J536 to its site outside the Colac railway station, the area around the locomotive was named (*and appropriately sign posted*) the "**Claude Lee Reserve**".

1994 – (10th October) – West Coast Railway keen to remove and restore locomotive J536 from the Claude Lee Reserve outside the Colac railway station. At this point, the Colac Otway Shire had already agreed to donate the locomotive.

1997 – (6th July) – J536 towed from Colac to West Coast Railway Workshops at Ballarat east by arrangement with Colac Otway Shire for intended restoration to operational condition (*local railway enthusiasts including Kevin Kerr and Pat Bonner put in many weeks voluntary work freeing up suspension components, along with other repairs in readiness for J536's trip by rail – to be towed to Ballarat*).

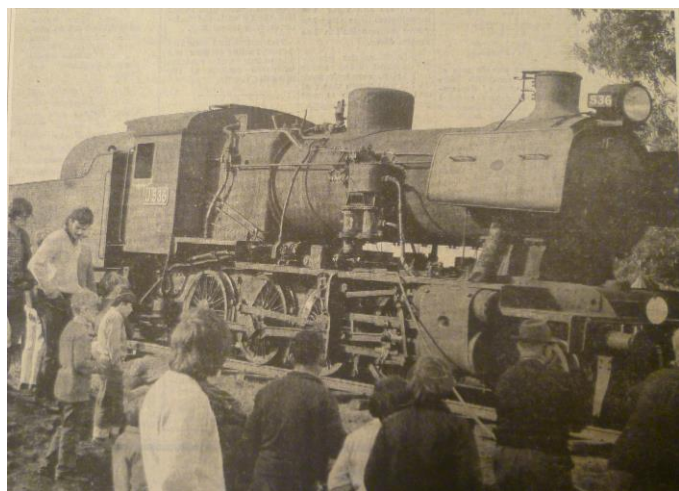
2004 – After the collapse of West Coast Railway - purchased by 707 Operations (*a steam preservation group*).

2005 – (12th February) - After first being moved to the Steam Rail compound at Ballarat east for asbestos removal and considerable maintenance required to obtain a Roadworthy certificate, J536 was towed to Newport West Workshops for restoration by 707 Operations. Throughout 2005 locomotive J536 was dismantled further, but no further progress made due to lack of resources. A 707 operations document reads – "*A recent inspection of J536 indicated the following major items – The firebox is probably beyond economic repair and should be replaced. The barrel is*

restorable. The frames are distorted and need to be dismantled and straightened. The cylinders require repair. New drive wheel (steel) tyres are required. The tender requires extensive repairs. The cost of restoration to operational condition is expected to exceed \$1,000,000".

2010 – J536 offered to other rail heritage groups for restoration to running condition – no offers received.

2012 – (October) – J536 sold to Locomotive Restoration Group as a source of parts for their "N" Class project. Some parts retained for "R" Class locomotives. Locomotive Restoration Group to make parts available to other Heritage Rail Groups.



AT LEFT – *"THIS ONE WILL PUFF NO MORE"* - stated the front page headline on Monday 24th July 1972 edition of the Colac Herald – *"Only minutes after this old steam engine arrived at its final resting place [the previous day] near Colac station, dozens of kids were climbing over, under and in it"*.

Also on same front page is announcement of the new Colac & District Historical Society building ready for opening, just across the road from the railway station.

Countless hours of voluntary cleaning/painting went into the appearance of this locomotive over its years sitting outside the Colac railway station.



ABOVE – September 1979 showing street view to Colac railway station entrance.

AT LEFT – January 1978 photo showing children sitting happily on the front of locomotive J536 – NOTE - no sign of a fence at this time.



ABOVE – April 1977 - Preparations underway for painting J536, outside the Colac railway station.

AT LEFT – J536 outside the Colac railway station C. early 1980s, before the fence got put up to stop accidents/children falling from heights.

(All above photos from Historical Society files)

AT RIGHT – J536 in green, red and black livery as a static display (*mid 1980s*) outside the Colac railway station. NOTE – the oil tank clearly visible at front half of tender, which had a carrying capacity of 1,500 gallons of oil. The water tank, which also shared space in the tender, carried 4,200 gallons of water.
(Photo courtesy – Doug Kirkman collection)



AT LEFT – mid 1997 - J536 has been towed onto the old turntable and has taken a ¼ turn in the direction of being towed to Ballarat. NOTE - the Historical society building in background, which had a similar life span to J536's stay in Colac. In operational condition J536 weighed over 112 tons.
(C. Pink photo)



AT RIGHT – A former VR T class diesel electric locomotive operated by West Coast railway - hooked up, and ready to tow J536 very very slowly to Ballarat on Sunday 6th July 1997. NOTE – it was the T class which took over the majority of the J class's roles, they were both of similar power output. Records show J536 had a working life which spanned some 12 years, and travelled a little under 115,000 miles in those years of service.
(C. Pink photo)





CRAIG'S CONUNDRUM

LAST ISSUE ANSWER - (Above left) - The newly laid railway line outside the Colac Railway Station, awaiting the arrival of the retired J class locomotive in July 1972 – see further explanation about former steam locomotive J536's life and preservation on previous page -

ABOVE AT RIGHT – Where is this Murray Street scene? The date is February 1970. At this time, the main area behind the school crossing is occupied by Parr & Spencer's Used Cars & Trucks. Two of the buildings pictured still stand today.

ANSWER – NEXT ISSUE.

COLAC AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY ROSTER 2016 - 2.00 PM – 4.00 PM

Month	Thursday	Friday	Sunday
September	1 st D. Missen 8 th I. Barlow 15 th G. Splatt 22 nd J. Knight 29 th R. Osborne	2 nd C. Pink 9 th G. Bray 16 th E. Chambers 23 rd M. Saddlier	4 th I. McIntosh 11 th D. Cowan & M. Facey 18 th B. McDonald 25 th M. Facey & D. Cowan
October	6 th D. Missen 13 th I. Barlow 20 th G. Splatt 27 th J. Knight	7 th C. Pink 14 th G. Bray 21 st E. Chambers 28 th M. Saddlier	2 nd A McIntosh 9 th D. Cowan & M. Facey 16 th B. McDonald 23 rd M. Facey & D. Cowan 30 th L. Spence
November	3 rd D. Missen 10 th I. Barlow 17 th G. Splatt 24 th J. Knight	4 th C. Pink 11 th G. Bray 18 th E. Chambers 25 th M. Saddlier	6 th A. McIntosh 13 th D. Cowan & M. Facey 20 th B. McDonald. 27 th M. Facey & D. Cowan