



Victorian Collections—it feels like a victory!

It has taken well over a year of hard work by a dedicated team of Society members, but finally the bulk of our catalogue is now listed on Victorian Collections.

Victorian Collections is a digital archive where you can search thousands of items held by galleries, museums, libraries, historical societies and cultural collections across Victoria.

So far, we have only uploaded images for about half the items listed, so please be patient when searching our collection.

Generally, images of books and objects are not yet available, but there are thousands of photographs and postcards across a wide range of topics.

Cite this page

Victorian Collections

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/6678f64ac223dd30c083f042>
Accessed 27 August 2024

This record was last updated 7 days ago

Completeness

If you want to ask a question, or you know something about this item, contact the collector

Lakes Entrance Regional Historical Society (operating as Lakes Entrance History Centre & Museum): [Website](#) | [Email](#)

See the [Valuations](#) page for information on historical item valuation.

While we are working on getting more images online, it will be an ongoing project.

The Victorian Collections program is a partnership between the Australian Museums and Galleries Association Victoria and Museums Victoria.

Funding for the program is provided by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

64

Winter 2024

Inside this issue:

<i>Cemetery Stories: the Blays of Lake Tyers</i>	2
<i>History's Mysteries: Peel's Bait Supply</i>	4
<i>The Amazing Blakemans</i>	5
<i>Our Post Office ...</i>	6
<i>MV Bennelong</i>	7
<i>What's in A Name?</i>	8

4 Marine Parade
Lakes Entrance 3909
0466 980 166
info@lakeshistory.com
www.lakeshistory.com

Incorporation No. A0032639K
ABN 19 930 318 239
ISSN 1036-4951

Photograph, 1938



Untitled image

[Media reuse](#)

Historical information

also b & w enlargement 17.5 x 25.5,)

Physical description

Black and white photograph group of men and boys, members of Life Saving Club sitting on sand dunes, two persons identified as Jack Mitchelson and Tommy Todd. Lakes Entrance Victoria

Share [f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [e](#)

Identifier VTMH03397

Date made 1938

Place made Lakes Entrance, Victoria, Australia

Cite this page

Search by category or go to:

<https://victoriancollections.net.au/organisations/lakes-entrance-regional-history-centre-museum>

Additional information on any item is welcome, so please feel free to get in touch if you know some interesting fact.

Cemetery Stories

Forgotten graves of Lakes Entrance

The Blays of Lake Tyers

by Toni Munday

At first I couldn't find much, but thankfully Kaye Richards of Lake

Tyers had a copy of *Whisper Lake Tyers* by Jack and Grace Whadcoat. (I have since learned that the Lakes Historical Society has a copy in their library too).

Fantastic read, the Jean Cross collection of photos answering all my questions about the Blays, bar one. If I had time I would have requested permission to include some in this small glimpse into their life. I love to put a face to those I research.

There is a photo of John Douglas Blay, the brother of Caroline Bulmer, who was the wife of Rev. John Bulmer. It would have been a lonely place for Caroline, so having her brother close by I am sure would have been a comfort for a city girl..

Like the Bulmers the Blays were heavily involved with the local Gunnai Kurnai people.

John Blay was born on 27 November 1845 in Collingwood to William Blay and Margaret Tedder. In October 1885 he married Elizabeth Kirby, whose parents were William Kirby and Elizabeth Sturt from Essex England. The Kirby family arrived in

Queensland in 1870 before coming to Victoria.

John's Lake Tyers neighbour wrote

into the *Bairnsdale Advertiser and Tambo and Omeo Chronicle* of 5 November 1885 'I must compliment Douglas on his success, for certainty he has drawn a prise.'

In February 1886 John and Elizabeth Blay opened the very first boarding house in Lakes Tyers. In 1903 the Blays were residing in Drawbridge on the Lower Nicholson River, yet still maintaining their Lake Tyers boarding house.



After John passed away in 1914, Elizabeth continued to run the Guest House, with support from her children, until her passing in 1934.

THE GIPPSLAND LAKES.
LAKE TYERS.
Accommodation for Tourists and Visitors at
MRS. BLAY'S, "ALBERT PARK," LAKE TYERS (via Cunninghame).
Letters requesting information will be promptly attended to. Terms 30/- week.

Albert Park, Lake Tyers.
MR. J. D. BLAY has now OPENED a NEW BOARDING HOUSE at the above place, which offers special advantages to Tourists, Artists and the public. Pleasure Boats always on hand.

John and Elizabeth had two boys and two girls to mourn them. The Blay girls, Alice and Margaret, married into the Cross family and Northrope families and the boys Clarence and William married into the McMahon and Blyth families respectively.

That one unanswered question... while I found a picture of John Douglas Blay and the guest house 'Albert Park' there was no image of Elizabeth Blay née Kirby. Hopefully this small piece jogs memories and can shine more light on John and Elizabeth Blay, and especially unearth any pictures that can be shared with the Society for others to appreciate over many years to come.

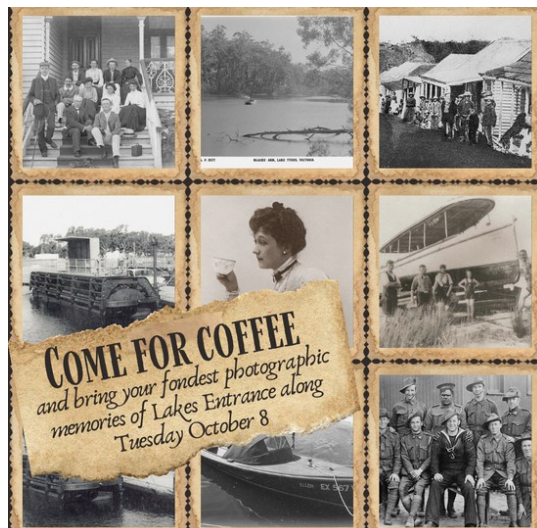
Come 4 Coffee—8 October

... and bring your oldest photo and/or your fondest memory of life in Lakes Entrance and we'll have a good chat.

As part of Seniors' Week, we're inviting you for coffee on Tuesday, 8 October.

It's a great opportunity to meet the History Centre team and get a demonstration of how to maximise access to Victorian Collections.

4 Marine Parade—between 10.00 and 3.00



COMMUNITY EXPO



Sunday 6th Oct 2024

10am - 2pm

Mechanics Hall, Lakes Entrance

Come along to our Community Expo where we're bringing together local service, clubs, groups and community members for a day of discovery and fun.

Volunteer Expo—6 October

We'll be there, with lots of information about Lakes Entrance History Centre: what we do and how you can help in preserving our heritage for future generations.

Organised by the Lakes Lionesses group, there will be live entertainment and refreshments are available.

At the Mechanics Hall from 10.00 to 2.00

Our Big Book Sale is back...

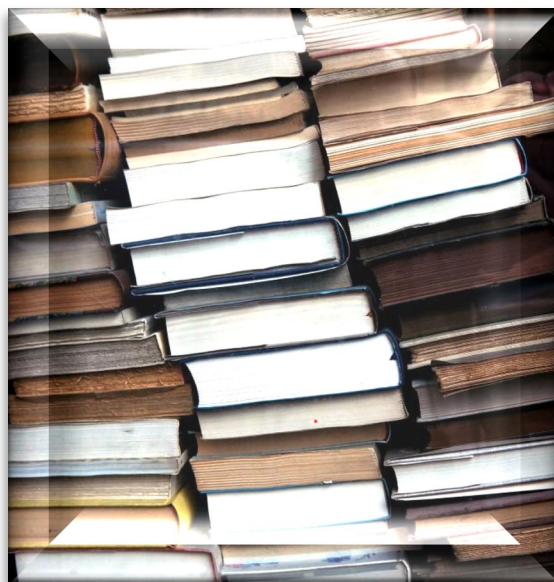
on Sunday, 3 November (Cup Weekend) at the History Centre.

There will be local history, biography, travel, crime, children's stories, DVDs and audio books along with heaps of the great fiction that you love.

Come along, browse and buy to help us raise urgently needed funds.

Donations of books in good condition will also be gratefully accepted. Phone 0466 980 166 to discuss prior to the sale.

4 Marine Parade—between 10.00 and 2.00



And watch out for our exhibition: 'A Journey of No Return: Shipwrecks on the East Gippsland Coast' which will be held during the January holiday period at the Lakes Entrance Coast Guard facility on the Esplanade.



Our 2025 Calendar will be available soon with lots of fabulous images from around the district in days gone by.

Order your copy now:

- email info@lakeshistory.com
- or phone 0466 980 166

Still only \$15!

History's Mysteries

Peel's Bait Supply

Sometimes an image gets posted to our Facebook page and we pick up snippets of information from the comments made by members.

Older residents quickly identified the location of Peel's Bait Supply as the corner of Esplanade and Carstairs Avenue, and that the man standing in the front was Bob Peel.

Bob later moved to Mallacoota, as skipper of the *Loch Ard*.

Rosemary Kavadis volunteered that her parents owned that shop for a few years in the 1950s, when it was called the Duck Inn.

She added that her father installed two large pool tables and the fishermen came in to play pool when they were onshore.

Thanks to all our Facebook members for their comments and contributions.

Keep 'em coming!



Brian Hancock and Rosemary were quick to point out that the building next door was the Bamboo Coffee Lounge. Run by the Varney family, it was aptly furnished with cane chairs and tables.

Con and Dot Coucoulas later established the Bamboo Inn motel on the site.

The Annual General Meeting of the Lakes Entrance Regional Historical Society was held on Saturday, 10 August.

The office bearers were all re-elected: Anne Macarthur (President), Joy Wilmshurst (Vice President), Judy Davies (Secretary) and Gary Burnett (Treasurer). Jenny Mays, Toni Munday, Andrea Court, Marion Holding and Marie Fish were elected to the Committee.

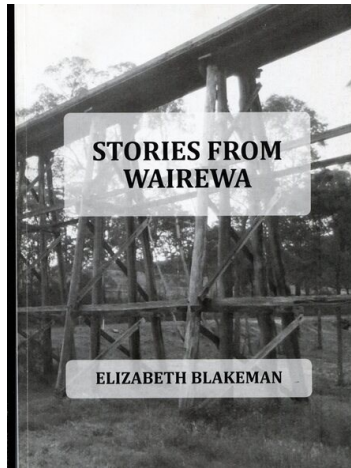
Membership fees remain unchanged: \$25 single and \$35 couple/family.

Subscriptions for 2024-2025 are now due and can be paid to our Bendigo Bank Account: BSB 633 000 A/c No. 176 755 155

The Amazing Blakemans

Many people will remember hearing Brian Blakeman reciting bush poetry or going for a ride on one of his vintage carriages.

Elizabeth, of course, is well known for her books on Nowa Nowa and Wairewa, and prior to her retirement, as one of the best doctors in Lakes Entrance.



Their peaceful life at 'Lemon Hill' went up in smoke when most of Wairewa was in the path of a devastating bushfire on 30 December 2019.

The CFA told them they should leave their hilltop home, but Brian and his brother Chris stayed and managed to save the house using hoses and sprinklers.

Everything else went: outbuildings, caravan, boat, tractor and the coaches! Brian also lost all his tools and his saddles and other equipment. The orchards and trees were lost, and sadly so were the horses.



All that remains of Brian's prized horse-drawn carriage. The plaque notes that the frame was welded by the late Jim Mitchelson.



*Brian and Elizabeth with the burnt out wreckage of their prized carriages and the newly donated shipping container.
Image: Rachel Mounsey*

The Blakemans built their bluestone house at Wairewa nearly forty years ago. It was off-grid, as they'd chosen to live a long way from mains power.

In the early days they had to crank up the generator just to do some vacuuming, so don't know themselves now with lithium batteries and high wattage solar panels providing enough electricity to run all the usual household appliances, as well as heavy-duty tools in Brian's big shed.

Before they moved to Wairewa, the Blakemans ran a sheep farm at Deddick, near the New South Wales border, so though well on in years, they are resilient, and they have rebuilt.



Life returns to Lemon Hill—fresh growth on the hillside in December 2023.

A donation of a small shipping container after the bushfire has been transformed into the cheeky little 'Lemon Hill Gallery' which has become a regular venue on the local arts calendar, fulfilling one of Elizabeth's lifelong ambitions.

The gallery celebrates creativity, resourcefulness and the human spirit.

Our Post Office has been around since 1870 ...

will it still be part of our lives in another fifty years?

Dahlsen, Bliss, Coate, Fish,

The first post office was non-official, but was included in the total number of 677 then established in the Colony of Victoria. William Roadknight was the postmaster, earning a salary of £10 per annum.

In 1875, the year that telegraphic services to the town were established, Jane Roadknight took over.

The mail was brought from Bruthen on a weekly basis by private contractors until 1879, when a twice-weekly service from Bairnsdale commenced and our post office became 'official'.

Until then the post office had been located at the Roadknight residence 'Merrangbaur' but it now moved to rented premises.

The first official postmaster and telegraph manager, Ernest Blake, was paid £104 a year.

A centrally located site was purchased and a purpose-built post office opened in 1892, by which time services had been expanded to include money order facilities and a Post Office Savings Bank.



Lakes Entrance Post Office c1900

In the early years, the mail was carried to and from the town by a huge variety of contractors, covering a myriad of ever-changing routes as more of the neighbouring settlements obtained a regular service. At one time in the early 1890s, it was brought into town by steamer, but soon reverted to the land route.

Some well-known names in Lakes Entrance's history had a contract to carry the mail at some stage: Staunton, Foley, Roadknight, Laughton, Ray, Durham, Sutherland, Murray,

Women's work

Lakes Entrance boasted a string of post-mistresses: Isabel Clinton, Matilda Rockstroh, Mary Ann Dermody, Clara Burns and Nellie Saunders all held the position around the turn of the 20th century.

Alice Scott took over in 1907, followed by Sarah West from 1917-1925.



Lakes Entrance Post Office c1975

and Deppler are just some of the names on the list.

Planning for the construction of the current post office building began in 1978. The contract, for \$134,807, was awarded to Danpro Industries Pty Ltd.

The much-altered 1890s building on the corner of Barkes Avenue and the Esplanade was demolished and the operations of the Post Office temporarily relocated to the Mechanics Hall.

The current building has also been altered and added to over the last fifty years, but still serves the community well.

Core postal services have changed considerably with the advent of electronic mail and other digital programs and our post office has adapted to remain relevant while meeting the community's needs.

We are told that demand for regular letter services has decreased to the extent that deliveries will revert to the 1880s schedule, but shop purchases, parcel collection and passport photographs ensure that there is still a need for the Post Office—and there is always a queue!

How often have you walked along the North Arm and wondered about that unusual vessel moored mid-stream?

MV Bennelong

The story of *MV Bennelong*, is that she was supposedly a former Sydney Harbour ferry, built in 1952 by the New South Wales government.

After being retired, she was apparently transported down to Melbourne, where she worked as a party-boat on the Yarra River for some years.

She is 14.5 metres long, weighs 14 tonnes and draws just one metre.

The little ferry somehow found its way to Yaringa Marina on Westernport, and languished there on a cradle for seven years, having already been out of the water for twelve years.

The wheelhouse had been removed and the superstructure was rotten, but *Bennelong* is made of Queensland kauri and worth restoring, thought Peter Payne when he bought her at a Sheriff's auction for just \$500.

After a lot of work and a lot of help from friends and fellow boatowners, Peter got the vessel back in the water and steamed down to Paynesville, where he lived onboard during holidays for a number of years before selling her on.

The new owner sailed her around to Lakes Entrance, where she was moored on the Post Office jetty for quite a lengthy period before moving to the current swing mooring on the North Arm.

MV Bennelong was named for the indigenous man who was brought to the settlement at Sydney Cove in November 1789 by Governor Arthur Phillip, in order to establish relationships with the local people.

He learned to speak and write English, and in turn taught George Bass some of his people's language.

He visited England in 1792, returning to Australia three years later. It is said he met King George III, but this cannot be confirmed.

An important figure in Australian history, his name is remembered at Bennelong Point, the site of the Sydney Opera House.



MV Bennelong at Lakes Entrance
Image: Jo Robertson



MV Bennelong on the North Arm—with birdnetting
Image: Judy Davies



Can you help? We're looking for information on this photo of two men in a bush camp—the only identifier we have is 'Camp Cunningham'.

The origin of our street names is a part of our history, but some people take it more seriously than others.

What's in a name?

On 14 December 1953, Miss Louisa Campbell-Coulson of 'Ardencaple' wrote to the Tambo Shire Council:

I believe the road at the back of my property was named recently 'Hazel Road'. There was a fingerpost with 'Hazel Walk' on it erected near the North Arm bridge, pointing in the direction of the track at the bottom of the hill ... (but) some vandals pulled it down.

The late Miss Campbell, Captain Rannolt and Mr Winter having bought the road, agreed with the vendor who wished it to be called 'Howlett Avenue'. Later the Council took over the road.

I really don't mind what the road is called, provided it is nohow coupled with names, but I have just given you the facts.



'Ardencaple' - the first house at Kalimna Heights

I would like to suggest the track in front of my property be called 'Campbell Parade'. Miss Campbell was the first person to build on Kalimna Heights—there were no houses nearer to Kalimna then. Mr Cowlshaw had a cabin near where 'Gainsborough House' now stands and there was a hut on Mr Broome's property.

The Campbells first came to Lakes Entrance in 1858 and the Eastern part of where the village is now (nearest to 'Merrangbaur House') was originally called Campbell Town.

Mr Malcolm Campbell brought the first schooner from the sea into the Lakes in

Malcolm Campbell arrived off the Entrance (which was then around Lake Bunga) on the morning of 13 April, 1858. It was a beautiful morning and a fair wind, the schooner *Georgina Smith* was drawing 7ft 5in and went in without a hitch. They sailed up the Tambo River as near Bruthen as possible, where the cargo was unloaded with the greater portion going on to the goldfields at Omeo.

Source: Excerpt – Gippsland Farmers' Journal (Traralgon, Vic) – Article 'The First Navigator of the Gippsland Lakes' – published 13 August 1895

1858. I have the newspapers explaining his achievements.

I hope you will accede to my request and not adhere to such a banal and commonplace name as 'Sea View Parade'.

This lovely site deserves a more appropriate name.

Despite her position in Lakes Entrance society, Miss Campbell Coulson's wishes did not change the mind of Council and the 'track' in front of where 'Ardencaple' stood is still named Seaview Parade—as is Hazel Road.

There is a Campbell Grove at Lake Bunga—but apparently this was named for a totally different family.

OBITUARY MRS. GEORGE CAMPBELL COULSON At "Ardencaple," Lakes Entrance, on Thursday last, the death occurred of Mrs. George Campbell Coulson, of "Glencoe," Sale. Although she had been ill for several months, she had reached the convalescent stage and was sufficiently recovered to go to the Lakes last Monday. She was a daughter of the late John Campbell, of Glencoe, one of the earliest Gipps-land pioneers, whose family has been associated with this province for al-most 100 years. Her husband, the late George Campbell Coulson, was well known in journalistic and racing circles in Melbourne many years ago. and also in Gippsland where he man-aged Glencoe, and lived for the greater part of his life.

Source: 'Gippsland Times' 1 November 1937

Note: 'Mrs George' Campbell Coulson was Annie—Louisa's mother.