

TOONGABBIE NEWS

ISSUE 18

SUMMER 2023/24



Image: Four men standing on the platform of the Toongabbie Railway Station, in front of the booking office.

Sourced: www.facebook.com/TraralgonHistory/

Snippet from the Past: Toongabbie Railway Station

In the past at Toongabbie, many people were kept busy with the traffic to Walhalla. Some local men drove horse and bullock teams, taking supplies to the Walhalla mines, and others drove coaches from the railway to Walhalla. The Toongabbie Railway Station had a Station Master and two porters. The goods shed was kept very busy - it was the same size as the shed at Traralgon station and had four doors on each side.

Many men worked in the bush, clearing, while others cut iron-bark sleepers, telephone poles, mill logs and posts and rails. Red-gum wood was carted to the wood mill in the station yard where it was sawn into short lengths, loaded on the trucks and sent to Melbourne for firewood. There were several good-sized fruit orchards in the area; now there are none. Some people had dairy farms and sent cream by rail to Glengarry or Cowwarr as the Toongabbie Factory did not last for long. The ground was chiefly light grey soil, which dried out quickly. Other farms produced wool, wheat or reared cattle.

The timber on the flat ground was messmate and silver top; on the steep stony hillsides, it was iron bark and in the gullies it was chiefly blue gum. In about 1912, a big bushfire came very close to our house and partly burnt some of our flat top pine trees before it rolled on nearly to the town. Fortunately, a sudden change of wind direction drove the fire back into the hills. It came with a wall of black smoke, driving before it huge swarms of large flying grasshoppers, also a large goanna that rushed around the house, climbing up the walls. All around the house we had tins, buckets and tubs full of water and wet bags, but these were

not used. I had my property ready for a quick get-away from the fire if necessary - a green toy railway engine tucked under one arm and a cigarette card album under the other arm.

After the bush fire, thick clusters of black wattles soon grew up. When they were big enough to strip, two families who lived together as a unit in rough camps of bark and tents, gathered the bark until the area was cut out and then moved on to another one. The trees were chopped around at ground level, the bark pulled upwards, bent to form a big bundle and tied with bark. Sometimes they stripped a bit of golden wattle, but that was not quite so good. The bark was sent away from the Toongabbie station by the truck-load. When improved tanning methods came into use, there was no further sale for wattle bark.

We lived near the foothills of Toongabbie, and we could often hear a distant rumble like thunder, but this was the blasting at Walhalla.

Two or three miles from the mill, in a deep gully, there are remains of the "Mountain Queen" mine, dug into the hillside. It was never productive. Almost opposite the entrance, there is a permanent hole in Eaglehawk Creek, over 5 ft. deep and with good fish. This is the perfect place to be on a very hot day; there is a tiny flat where four pear trees grow (probably from seed), but the place is almost inaccessible, even on horseback.

- Snippets from our Bulletins
TOONGABBIE MEMORIES

Contributed by Seddon Scott - March 1983

Article sourced from www.facebook.com/TraralgonHistory/

The Toongabbie News is produced by the Toongabbie Township Group who welcome news and photographs from community groups, clubs and individuals.

Please send text and photos as separate attachments by email to the Editor, Shazelle Witt E: toongabbienews@gmail.com

Clearly written or printed material will also be accepted and can be posted to **The Editor, Toongabbie News, PO Box 44, Toongabbie 3856.**

Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or Township Group. Although care is taken, no responsibility is assumed for any errors which may occur. Submissions may be subject to editing.

THE AUTUMN EDITION DEADLINE

For all contributions is
**FRIDAY 19th January,
2024**

Want to see more community news? Visit the websites below www.toongabbie.vic.au or at www.facebook.com/toongabbievicau

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The Toongabbie Township Group has been successful in acquiring a grant through the Latrobe City Council 2022/23 Community Grant and Sponsorship Round 1—Community Wellbeing Grant Program. We have received \$2,000 which will go towards costs of publishing our quarterly newsletter “Toongabbie News” in 2023. Printed copies of the newsletter are available free of charge from the Toongabbie General Store with all editions uploaded to the Toongabbie website (<https://toongabbie.vic.au/newsletter/>).

We would like to acknowledge the Latrobe City for their financial contribution and extend a huge thank-you to the volunteers that make this newsletter possible.

Local Events

TOONGABBIE TOWNSHIP GROUP MEETING

First Tuesday of the Month 7.30pm
Mechanics Hall Meeting Room All are Welcome
email: toongabbietg@gmail.com

Toongabbie CFA Juniors 2024

Every Second Thursday 6 - 7pm
Term 1 Dates: Feb 15, Feb 29 | Mar 14, Mar 28

Toongabbie Mechanics Institute Committee Meeting

2nd Monday of the month at 7.30pm at the Rec Reserve



The Wellington - Latrobe Lions Club meet the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month. The first Wednesday is a dinner meeting. New Members always welcome!

Toongabbie Rose Garden



Image supplied: Toongabbie Rose Garden

Situated at the corner of Victoria Street and the Traralgon-Maffra Road you will find the circular rose garden that is divided into 4 quarters with a gravel path through it and a flag pole in the middle. I am told that a Cenotaph was intended to be situated at this site, thus the flag pole, but this never eventuated due to the amount of traffic on the Main Road and parking problems, perhaps this was the for the best!

Originally a project initiated by the then Toongabbie

Progress Association, the garden was officially opened on **16th March, 1999** by Gladys Coleman and dedicated to the Toongabbie CWA for 60 years' service to the community. Unfortunately the CWA no longer exists in Toongabbie, with the organisation disbanding approximately 3 years ago due to lack of members.

The four quarters of the garden each contain 24 roses. One section has red roses, one yellow roses, one pink roses, the fourth quarter contains a combination of white and mauve roses. Three of the four beds have plaques dedicated to local families who sponsored the gardens – Erma & Les Affleck 1998, The Mitchell family of Oakbank, The Timmins Family and Peter McKinlay.

When spring arrives the roses look and smell beautiful, thanks to a few local volunteers who water, weed and prune. The garden needs invigorating and really struggles with exposure from hot winds and the roots of the gum trees alongside them – a lot of the roses need replacing, this is something we will work towards with the help of the Toongabbie Recreation Reserve Committee. Hopefully the rose garden will flourish and be there looking and smelling beautiful for the next 20 or so years?

We would like to give special thanks to the Hayes family farm from Glengarry for their donation of the recent mulch and Frank Balcombe for the delivery of the mulch.

If anyone is interested and have a small amount of time to assist with this garden it would be very much appreciated.

Please contact Margaret Foulds on 51924083



Seeking Helpers

Can you help care for the Toongabbie Rose Garden?

You can assist at any time that suits you without any formal time commitment.

Jobs include watering, weeding, pruning and general tidying.

Any assistance is greatly appreciated to keep the Rose Garden looking beautiful!

If you can assist please contact Margaret on (03) 5192 4083 (please leave a message)

The rose garden is located on the corner of Victoria St and Main St

Friends of the Toongabbie Wetlands

The 'Friends of the Toongabbie Wetlands' have continued to maintain the site through working bees and a very generous band of 'mowers' who keep the grassed area looking great. Funding for the fuel for the mower has been provided in the form of a Maintenance Grant from the Latrobe City Council. This grant also helps us with other tasks such as controlling noxious weeds and purchasing/servicing equipment necessary for all tasks undertaken.

In addition to our 'Replas' bench seats we have now installed a table/bench seat combo for travellers on the Rail Trail to stop and have some refreshments and to enjoy the surrounds.

We have also had a new 'Toongabbie Wetlands' sign erected on the site of the old sign, acknowledging Toongabbie community involvement and Latrobe City Council's connection to the Wetlands.

We again held a 'sausage sizzle' on November 25th at Bunnings Traralgon. Funds from these days also help to support us with our endeavours.



New sign situated on Traralgon-Maffra Road near Wetlands

As many of you may know Roger Ries, our treasurer, suffered a very serious fall at his home a couple of months ago. Fortunately he is recovering well and we wish him all the best for his future endeavours.

We would be keen to welcome any new members to our group, which meets at 2p.m. on the second Thursday of the month at the Mechanics Institute.

If you are interested or want further information you can contact:

Philip O'Malley (President) on 0419110057 or

Barbara Fulton (Secretary) on 0428924718



Picnic table located at the Wetlands

Friends of Toongabbie Wetlands

Meet at 2pm

2nd Tuesday of the month
at the Mechanics Institute
New Members Welcome



Toongabbie Wetlands



Toongabbie Primary School

Victoria Street Toongabbie PH: 0351924384

toongabbie.ps@education.vic.gov.au



Hello everyone, it is wonderful to have this opportunity to share what the school has been or will be doing with our community.

Improvements to the school.

At Toongabbie we have a very dedicated and hardworking group of parents who continually provide support in providing a neat and orderly learning environment and activities that connect the children to the school and their peers. Throughout this year our school council has worked tirelessly in continuing to upgrade our facilities. There has been a redevelopment and improvement of our vegie patch, with the building of new beds and raising others, the continual mulching and weeding of gardens and the commencement of the redevelopment of our Amphitheatre area. Along with this they have been able to upgrade our old solar system and install additional panels to double our capacity. This has really impacted on our cost for electricity. We have also installed new hot water systems and CCTV surveillance. An amazing effort from all involved.

Wear it Pink



On Friday the 27th October we held Wear It Pink Day to support anyone who has been affected by breast cancer. The children looked amazing in the sea of pink. Throughout the day they participated in a number of activities, that showed

acknowledgement and built understanding of the impact that illness can have on families. All children and staff signed a piece of material, then Di took it and created it into a wonderful rug to present to our business manager Julie, who has had her own journey with cancer.



This day was also World teachers Day. We were surprised by our school community as many of the children brought along something for us for morning tea. There was so much that all of the school enjoyed the delicious spread. It was a fabulous feeling to have our community appreciate all that we try to do for the children.

Community Involvement



Throughout the past two years we have seen a significant rise in the number of the children at the school who are becoming involved in various community activities. Some of the activities include: tennis, football, netball, cricket, dance, basketball, martial arts and swimming. Other activities include Junior Fire brigade, Joey's, Cubs and Scouts. One of the students independently took on the challenge to do the walk for epilepsy. Ava walked 100km and raised \$511. Having young people actively involved with the community builds connection and self-worth. We thank everyone who provides the opportunity to enable these connections to happen.

On **Thursday 30th November**, we are held a **School Concert** that showcased learning that the children have been doing with German language and performance. We invited community members to join us at **11:30 at the Mechanics Institute** for our matinee performance. Monies raised on the day will be invested in further community activities.

We also be performed at the **Toongabbie Township Carols on Friday 15th Dec.**

Toongabbie Golf Club News

Coming into Summer Toongabbie Golf course is in really good condition. Spring was pretty kind with rains spread out just nicely to keep the course green. We had our annual tournament over the 17th-19th November and the visitors from other clubs were glowing in their compliments.

Our small band of volunteer workers should take a bow, as the grass grew at a staggering rate and the seemingly endless strong winds kept strewing the course with anything that wasn't tied down.

Our Spring inter club and invitational events were successfully run and, again, were a credit to those who put in the hard yards organising everything, chasing up sponsors, organising catering, having the clubhouse in tip top condition, and so on. There is so much work that goes into running these events and it is only possible with the wonderful club spirit that we have.

We continued to have a pretty good run with green fee players with many people finding that our course is a pretty good option for a comparatively cheap round of social golf. The course is virtually always available - even during club competitions!

It was a good thing we had the green fee players as we had a very expensive Spring. As we all know, fuel is pretty expensive at the moment, and we certainly used a fair bit keeping the grass under control. Then we had to install a new septic system which set us back nearly \$10,000, which is equal to several months' income for us.



Image sourced from pixabay.com



Nevertheless, we still want the course to be as good as it can be so, despite the setbacks, we're still going ahead with coring and sanding the greens and replacing the turf on the 6th green. Latrobe City has provided the club a grant to cover most of the cost of the new turf and Toongabbie Golf Club is extremely grateful. Given the other expenses we've had, we could never have gone ahead with the new green without Council's support.

Summer brings wonderful long days and both early mornings and late afternoons are great times to have a round of golf. If you're looking for a relaxing round where you can take your time without feeling overly pressured to hurry up, Toongabbie is the place to play.

And we are still keeping our green fees at \$15 per player as we want to stay as affordable as we can possibly can.

Men's competitions continue throughout the Summer while the formal women's comps take a break until February.

If you think you'd like to join our club and be a part of the warm camaraderie that we have, as an added incentive we offer pro-rata discounts on our already low membership fee. We're half way through our membership year, so we cut about half off the cost of joining.

For any enquiries about the club, our events and functions or about joining or playing, you can email us at **tgc3856@gmail.com** or give us a call on **5192 4755**. If we aren't there, leave a message and we'll get back to you.

Hopefully, we'll see you sometime soon.

Australia Day

Friday

26 January 2024

TOONGABBIE

Village Green, Toongabbie

9.00 am – 10.30 am



Australia Day in Toongabbie will be a fantastic day. We invite you to celebrate Australia Day with your community, so bring along your picnic blanket and sit on the Village Green and enjoy a cooked breakfast with us.

Tables will be available for those who need them.

Flag raising ceremony at 9.00 am with the community barbecue breakfast and presentation of the Toongabbie Citizen of the Year at 9.30 am till 10.30 am.

Singing will be led by Tineke Westwood and the renowned Latrobe Valley Choir!

Contact: Chris Gardner, Lions Club of Wellington/Latrobe on 0400 672 739



Toongabbie & District Men's Shed News

The past few months have been busy for the members of the Toongabbie & District Men's Shed with members in the wood section of the Shed creating an assortment of products to sell on our stall at the Wellington / Latrobe Lions Club Twilight Market on Sunday, 10th December 2023 at the Village Green.

In the metal section of the Shed, Paul and Ian with advice from Mark are refurbishing the MYFORD Super 7 metal lathe that once belonged to Nevil Shute, the noted novelist that wrote many books including, **A Town Like Alice**, **Trustee from the Tool Room** and **On the Beach**, just to name a few. Numerous books were made into films or serialised for television.

Nevil Shute was his pen name and born Nevil Shute Norway, was also a noted aeronautical engineer in England, as well as a pilot. He worked on the development of airships that is detailed in his autobiographical work, Slide Rule. His aircraft construction company also developed the Airspeed Oxford at the beginning of Second World War, used as a trainer for the RAF. After the war, Nevil emigrated to Australia, settling in Langwarrin with his wife and daughters. Margaret Foulds, treasurer of the Shed, her father was his farm manager and purchased the lathe that Nevil used to make small aeroplane parts. Margaret ended up with the lathe and has given it to the Men's Shed to bring it back to life.

This lathe featured in Nevil's novel, Trustee from the Tool Room, parts are available in England for the lathe and Paul has been in contact with suppliers. Nevil certainly was a remarkable man and we appreciate our piece of his story.



Pictured: Paul at the lathe gearbox

The garden has been supplying vegetables to members through the winter and is now flourishing with the warmer spring weather, thanks to our experienced vegetable growers.

Through the Latrobe City Council, Emergency Recovery Victoria funded the purchase of battery-operated power tools that could be used to assist in clean up and support the local community in the event of an emergency.

Our thanks to the Latrobe City Council and Emergency Recovery Victoria for the grant payment that supports the Men's Shed and the community.

We are very happy to welcome two new members to the Shed recently. New members, male and female are always welcome, drop in, have a chat and see what there is to offer. **Membership is still \$52.00 per year.**



Pictured: Ian working on lathe parts

Toongabbie Men's Shed

The opening times of the Shed are every

Wednesday 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm, Friday 2.00 pm till required.

Any other time by arrangement.

For more information please contact Colin on 0427 489 349.