

THEME THREE

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS



3.1 INTRODUCTION

Travelling and communicating throughout Greater Geelong has changed dramatically since the earliest routes for travel and trade were established by the Wadawurrung peoples many thousands of years ago. This theme therefore begins with an introduction of the importance of travel as part of the culture of the Wadawurrung, and documentary evidence of some of the earlier routes used by the Traditional Owners. Transport continues to play a major part in shaping the Greater Geelong environment.

The establishment and development of roads and associated infrastructure (bridges, toll gates and Government agencies) from European colonisation in 1839 to more recent infrastructure construction has had a substantial effect on the Greater Geelong landscape. Technological advancements, and Geelong's place within the major transformation of road travel is outlined in this theme: from the coach, to the bicycle, tram, motor car, bus and taxi. It highlights the transport businesses that contributed to Geelong's economy and social structure as a consequence of these technological changes: coach factories, bicycle manufactories and retailers, motor car garages and mechanics, bus companies, community groups and associated road transport services, such as the introduction of the tram in 1912. It also celebrates locals at the cutting edge of road vehicle manufacture, including the inventive William Humble, who was one of the earliest to build a velocipede in Geelong in 1869, the first to build a motor car in Geelong in 1903 and the first to manufacture a bus in Victoria also in 1903. The importance of the motor car is further explored as part of Geelong's industrial expansion and the establishment of the Ford Motor Company Factory in 1925. The success of Bonnie Bender in running Bender's Busways, and particularly her female business acumen in the provision in 1947 of special 'pram buses' for mothers and young children, is outlined.

Critical to Greater Geelong's progress and economy was its railway network. The opening of the Geelong to Melbourne railway line in 1857 constituted the first country railway in Victoria. It had been surveyed and supervised by Edward Snell, an English engineer who previously been employed on railway construction in Britain. The opening of the Geelong to Ballarat line in 1862 resulted in Geelong being the railway hub between Melbourne and Ballarat (there being no direct railway line between these centres at the time). The opening of the railways brought about considerable infrastructure projects in the construction of bridges, culverts, sidings and embankments. In particular, it brought about the construction of the underground tunnel in 1874-75 that linked the Geelong and South Geelong stations following the opening of the Geelong

line to Colac (opening to Winchelsea in 1876) and later the Geelong to Queenscliff line (opening in 1879). The longest Victorian railway tunnel until the construction of the Melbourne underground railway loop, it remains in use to the present day. On the Geelong to Ballarat line, the construction of the vast Moorabool River viaduct in 1858-1862 brought about another major engineering feat that is extant to the current day. The railway network also became a major employer: during the construction of the lines and as part of their operations, repair and management. In Greater Geelong, the Victorian Railways Department employed numerous station staff and gatekeepers, including female workers. The first station mistress in Victoria, Mrs Jane Rollins, was stationed at North Geelong at Cowies Creek in 1860. A number of single, married and widowed females also kept the gates throughout Geelong.

With its bay foreshore, Greater Geelong has been a centre for maritime transport since the arrival of Europeans at Point Henry in 1836. This theme gives an overview of the early wharf infrastructure at Point Henry and on the central Geelong foreshore (including the first stone jetty built by convict and 'immigrant' labour in 1840-42 which still survives), and following the establishment of the Geelong Harbor Trust in 1905, the creation of Corio Quay at North Shore and the ship building yards at Rippleside. Industrial expansion brought about the construction of further wharfs and piers in the 20th century for major companies including Shell and the Grain Elevators Board. Major land reclamations along the central Geelong foreshore associated with shipping in the 1880s are also explored, as is the dredging of shipping channels (prior to which large ships were prevented from entering Corio Bay) and the role and importance of local shipping agents. Apart from wharf infrastructure, little physical fabric remains of other associated maritime heritage in Greater Geelong, although at St. Leonards the remnants of the early 'social cabin' of the *Edina* steamer that provided regular services between Melbourne and Geelong in the 19th and early 20th centuries, along with the wreck of the *Ozone* that was hulked off Batman Park at Indented Head in 1925. An important landmark at Point Henry also remains: the signal station built in 1939 to control shipping traffic entering and leaving the Port of Geelong.

Although little remains of Greater Geelong's aviation heritage, the Belmont Common was the location of the Geelong Flying Club and workshops of the Pratt brothers: Percy, Charles, and Frank from the 1920s until the Second World War. Charles Pratt operated a charter business from the Belmont Aerodrome as well as pioneering aeronautical education at the Gordon Technical College where his brother, Percy,

was to be appointed an instructor. They jointly and separately operated aviation businesses in Belmont. The extraordinary contribution by Charles Pratt is reflected today in the vast collection of aerial photographs from the 1920s, many of which are now part of the collection of the State Library of Victoria. The theme also provides a brief overview of local airports (extant and no longer present).

The evolution and development of the postal, telegraph and telephone service in Greater Geelong is also considered in this theme. From the importance of the Bihar (messenger) of the Wadawurrung, the theme explores the establishment of the postal service from 1839 when Patrick McKeever, police constable, was appointed the first postmaster from a post office in Barwon Terrace, South Geelong. The theme gives an overview of the installation of pillar boxes from 1870, post office construction in Geelong and its suburbs, there being only four purpose-built post offices remaining (Geelong – built in 1889-91), Geelong West (built 1885-86), Portarlington (built 1888-89) and Drysdale (built 1925-26). Only the Geelong West Post Office continues to serve its original purpose today. The first postmasters – and postmistresses – are also identified. The connection in 1854 of Geelong to the Telegraph service in Melbourne and its expansion and effect on Greater Geelong's progress is examined. The telegraph is physically manifested in the original coastwaiter's building (now a shelter in the Geelong Botanic Gardens) and the former Telegraph Station in Ryrie Street, built in 1857. Geelong was also a leader in the establishment of telephone communication in Victoria through the inventive experiments W.J. Thomas in 1877-78, the first long distance telephone communication in Victoria being made from Geelong in early 1878. The evolution of the telephone in Greater Geelong is traced, culminating in the installation of an automatic telephone exchange in the former Geelong Post Office, Ryrie Street, in 1912, the first in the southern hemisphere.

Newspapers played a significant role in disseminating information to the people in Greater Geelong. The Geelong Advertiser, established in 1840, is Victoria's oldest morning newspaper. Its evolution and first editor, James Harrison, early postmaster and inventor, are outlined. While no built fabric survives of this newspaper business, the former Geelong Times office at 80 Little Malop Street remains extant and a brief overview of this firm is given.

The theme concludes with a brief overview on the development of radio stations in Greater Geelong. The first was owned by the Geelong Advertiser from 1931 and known as 3GL. With a change to FM frequency it continues today under the name of K Rock. Other local stations are also given.

3.2 WADAWURRUNG ROUTES

The earliest routes for travel and trade within the City of Greater Geelong were those known and established by the Wadawurrung People. Inherently interrelated with their beliefs (see Themes 2 and 8), the routes were defined as part of a broader cultural lore.¹ Known as 'songlines', they connected the Creation stories:²

Songlines are a comprehensive knowledge system that can be visualised as corridors or pathways of knowledge crisscrossing the continent. They include all knowledge from the ontological to the scientific and the ancestral to the history. Like the Dreaming, they explain the origin of life and the land and they lay down the laws and customs of a people, which are necessary to sustain life on this continent.³

Songlines included oral maps where important topographical, cultural and other features were used as part of the navigational narrative.⁴

Some historical maps prepared by European explorers and surveyors in the early 19th century also gave an insight to specific routes that may have been established by the Wadawurrung. The Map of Port Phillip from the survey of Mr. Wedge and others (Figure 3.01), dated c.1835, for example, showed 'Mr Batman's tracks.'⁵ These were the tracks used by John Batman as part of his extensive exploration of the Port Phillip area in 1835 (see Theme 2 for further details about Batman's exploration) as outlined in his journal.⁶ At Avalon (following the naming of the inlet, Gellibrand Harbour), his reliance on Wadawurrung routes was made clear. The Aborigines that accompanied him from Sydney:

... beat for their [Wadawurrung] trail, and, having found it, we commenced to follow, and continued on the track for about ten miles, when one of my [Aborigines] caught sight of a [local Aborigine] at the distance of a mile.⁷



Figure 3.01: J.H. Wedge, Part Map of Port Phillip from the survey of Mr. Wedge and others' showing the Greater Geelong area and the tracks used by John Batman, c.1835. Source: MF 821.08 1835 WEDGE State Library of Victoria.

3.3 ROADS AROUND GREATER GEELONG

INITIAL YEARS

It is likely that the earliest roads – or tracks – were those laid out from Point Henry following the arrival of sheep graziers with their flocks in 1836, and who settled in the outskirts of what is now the Greater Geelong municipality (see Theme 2). The earliest formalised roads were those established as part of the Geelong town grid, the earliest 'main road' being Bellerine Street that linked to the two portions of the township at 'north and 'south' Geelong (see Theme 6). It was soon superseded by Yarra Street as the principal street with a roadway constructed through the gully to the foreshore at Corio Bay in 1852. It was in the mid-1850s when the earliest road forming program begun with the forming and kerbing of Malop, Corio, Mercer, Ryrie and Yarra Streets in Geelong, and Autumn, Hope, Spring and Villamanta Streets in Ashby (Geelong West).⁸ Other roads, paths and infrastructure in central Geelong and the suburbs soon followed (see Theme 6 for details).

EARLY ROAD MANAGEMENT

The poor state of the roads and tracks throughout Victoria in the years following European colonisation led to the appointment of a Select Committee of the Victorian Parliament in 1851 to investigate the location and condition of the fledgling State's roads.⁹ It found them to be defective and recommended the formation of a Central Road Board that would formalise and maintain them.¹⁰ The Central Road Board was established in 1853 following the passing of *An Act for making and improving Roads in the Colony of Victoria* by the Victorian Parliament (see Theme 7 for further details). The Central Road Board proclaimed the establishment of local road districts managed by district boards. In the Greater Geelong area, they were the Portarlington Road District (1853); Barrabool Road District (1853); Conewarre Road District (1856); South Barwon Road District (1857) and the Corio Road Board (1861) (see Theme 7 for further details). It was from these Road Districts and Boards where the greatest initial achievements in road-making were made in the early 1850s.¹¹



Figure 3.02: H.J. Woodhouse, 'Old toll gate, Geelong, Barwon Bridge', 1870. Source: accession H9346/6, State Library of Victoria.

In order to fund and maintain roads in each of the Road Districts, tolls were imposed at different locations, including District boundaries and river crossings. Gate-keepers were appointed to take the tolls. One of the tolls closest to the Geelong township was the gate on the south side of the Barwon Bridge at Belmont in the South Barwon District. A fence was erected at the end of the bridge and a toll house constructed in 1859 to a design by the Road District Surveyor¹² (Figure 3.02). Debate had ensued as to whether the gate house be equipped with a kitchen. One Councillor, Robert Tuffs declared that 'the toll keeper should be a respectable man, and as such he should not be bothered by a lot of women "cooking and humbugging him about".'¹³ It appears that a Mr Shepherd was appointed the first toll-keeper until 1861.¹⁴

In 1855, two toll houses and gates had been erected on the Batesford and Fyansford Roads beyond what is the municipal boundaries of Greater Geelong today. They were built by John Cawker.¹⁵ In the Barrabool Road District, three gates were erected in 1858-59 known as Kardinia gate (corner Barrabool and Scenic Roads); Duneed gate (Colac Road, Geelong side of Wauru Ponds Creek) and Mount Duneed Road (Torquay Road).¹⁶

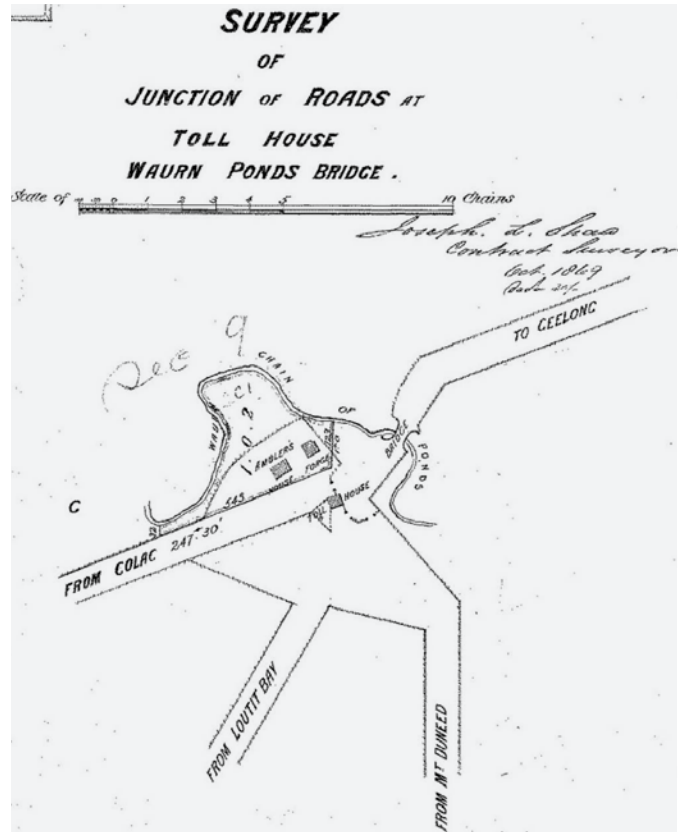


Figure 3.03: J.L. Shaw, 'Survey of Junction Roads at Toll House Wauru Ponds Bridge', October 1869. Source: Put-away plan D133D/4, Landata, © State of Victoria.

Others were built in the South Barwon Road District at the junction of roads to Colac, Loutit Bay (Lorne) and Mount Duneed, Wauru Ponds (Figure 3.03); Mount Pleasant Road, Belmont, and at Breakwater by 1859.¹⁷ In 1875, the Victorian Government contemplated the abolition of tolls, a consequence of growing resentment by ratepayers.¹⁸ Such abolition eventually ensued and all that remains of the tolls today are official records and maps marking their locations, construction and personnel that served them.

MAJOR ROUTES FROM GEELONG

As Victoria's second largest city, several major roads were constructed to outer parts of the Greater Geelong municipality and beyond, connecting Geelong with Melbourne, coastal areas along the Bellarine Peninsula and south-west Victoria, Colac, Buninyong and South Australia. Increasing population and the onset of the motor car in the late 19th century was impetus for the establishment of the Country Roads Board in 1913 and several major roads were either built, reconstructed or widened. This has continued throughout the 20th century to the present day under the responsibilities of the Government authority, VicRoads (see Theme 7 for further details on VicRoads).

GEELONG TO MELBOURNE ROAD

INITIAL YEARS

As early as 1839, the 'great distance by the road' of Geelong from Melbourne was considered as a hindrance to Geelong's prosperity. The provision of a new line of road nearer to Melbourne, and a punt over the Maribyrnong River, were considered 'to bring the townships of Melbourne, Geelong, and Williams Town into a nearer and more profitable contact.'¹⁹ The 'present and proposed lines of Road and the Coast between Melbourne and Geelong' were surveyed and mapped by W.W. Darke, Assistant Surveyor, in 1841.²⁰ These new roads were south of the 'old roads' between Melbourne and Werribee. Both 'new' roads were to traverse Thomas Chirside's land before crossing the Werribee River.²¹ To the west of the Werribee, the road was to extend across the land of William Cherry and James Austin, a portion of the latter's land extending to the shore of Port Phillip Bay.²²

Such anticipation for a new line of road and greater ease of overland access from Melbourne to Geelong was not to eventuate immediately. In 1841, a stage coach service was proposed for the provision of public transport and mail communications. However, the *Geelong Advertiser* quipped that:

The only obstacle to its commencing immediately, is, the bad state of the road between the Little River and the Weirabee [Werribee]. We hope His Honor will send half a dozen men down to Corio, with instructions to pick up the stones by way of amusement as they come along the road; and when they arrive here, they may return by the new line (which is fourteen miles shorter), amusing themselves in the same manner.²³

By 1845, two tracks to Melbourne had been laid out as shown on A.J. Skene's Map of the District of Geelong (Figure 3.04). There was a 'lower road' which traversed the creeks and rivers closer to the western coastline of Port Phillip Bay, and an upper road that passed through the fledgling settlement of Werribee in the north, and the locations of the future settlements of Ripley (at the Little River) and Duck Ponds (Lara). It was near the Duck Ponds where the two roads converged.

At Cowie's Creek, the 'old Melbourne Road' in 1847 crossed the creek into a reserve to the distant north-west of the Geelong township at what is known as Corio today (Figure 3.05). A pedestrian and bicycle path denotes the only surviving remnant of this original road between 257 and 299A Anakie Road, north of the Geelong-Ballarat Railway line and adjacent to the City of Greater Geelong depot. This road appears to have extended south and connected to the Geelong to Batesford Road.

The 'new' Melbourne Road crossed Cowies Creek further east towards Corio Bay, approximately where the Princes Highway traverses the creek today. However, the road was originally intended to extend north-east (as opposed to north today). Construction and upgrades to the road at Cowies Creek were carried out in the 1850s. In 1856, William Owen was awarded the tender to construct 50 chains of the road.²⁴ The following year, Thomas Menzies constructed 250 lineal yards of the road at Cowies Creek²⁵ while in 1858 Allan McDonald worked on the surface of the road, the funds for the works coming from toll revenue.²⁶ Each portion of road was constructed following the Telford pitching method.²⁷

Further north in 1859, James Pettigrew was the successful tenderer in upgrading the Melbourne and Geelong Road between the municipal boundary of Geelong and Rothwell (Little River).²⁸ In 1860, the Geelong to Melbourne Road was proclaimed a Main Road, thereby being subject to the control and funding of the Central Road Board. As outlined in the *Victoria Government Gazette*:

The MELBOURNE and GEELONG ROAD – Commencing at Flemington, on the Mount Alexander road, in the county of Bourke; thence vid the Melbourne Cattle Yards and the Race-course; thence via the Saltwater [Maribyrnong] River Punt; thence vid Wyndham, Rothwell, and the Duckponds (Lara), to Geelong.²⁹

The Geelong to Melbourne Road only remained a proclaimed Main Road for twelve months. In 1861, the proclamation was revoked,³⁰ with responsibility for maintaining and funding ongoing maintenance again transferred to the District Road Boards. This was not well-received and in 1864 the *Geelong Advertiser* reported on the meeting of the Corio Shire in relation to the need for the Geelong to Melbourne Road to be re-proclaimed a main road:

Councillor Morris observed that, being in company some time ago with certain members of the Wyndham Shire Council, a desire was expressed that a conference of the two Councils should be held at an early date at McShane's Hotel, Little River, for the purpose of considering the propriety of having the Geelong to Melbourne road proclaimed a main road; and from the statement of Mr Grant and others that it was the intention of the Government to increase the subsidy on main roads, he thought it very desirable to have the above road proclaimed, in order to have it thoroughly improved throughout its entire length. Another important matter was suggested for consideration, viz—the improvement of the crossings connecting the two districts. As the interests of the two Councils

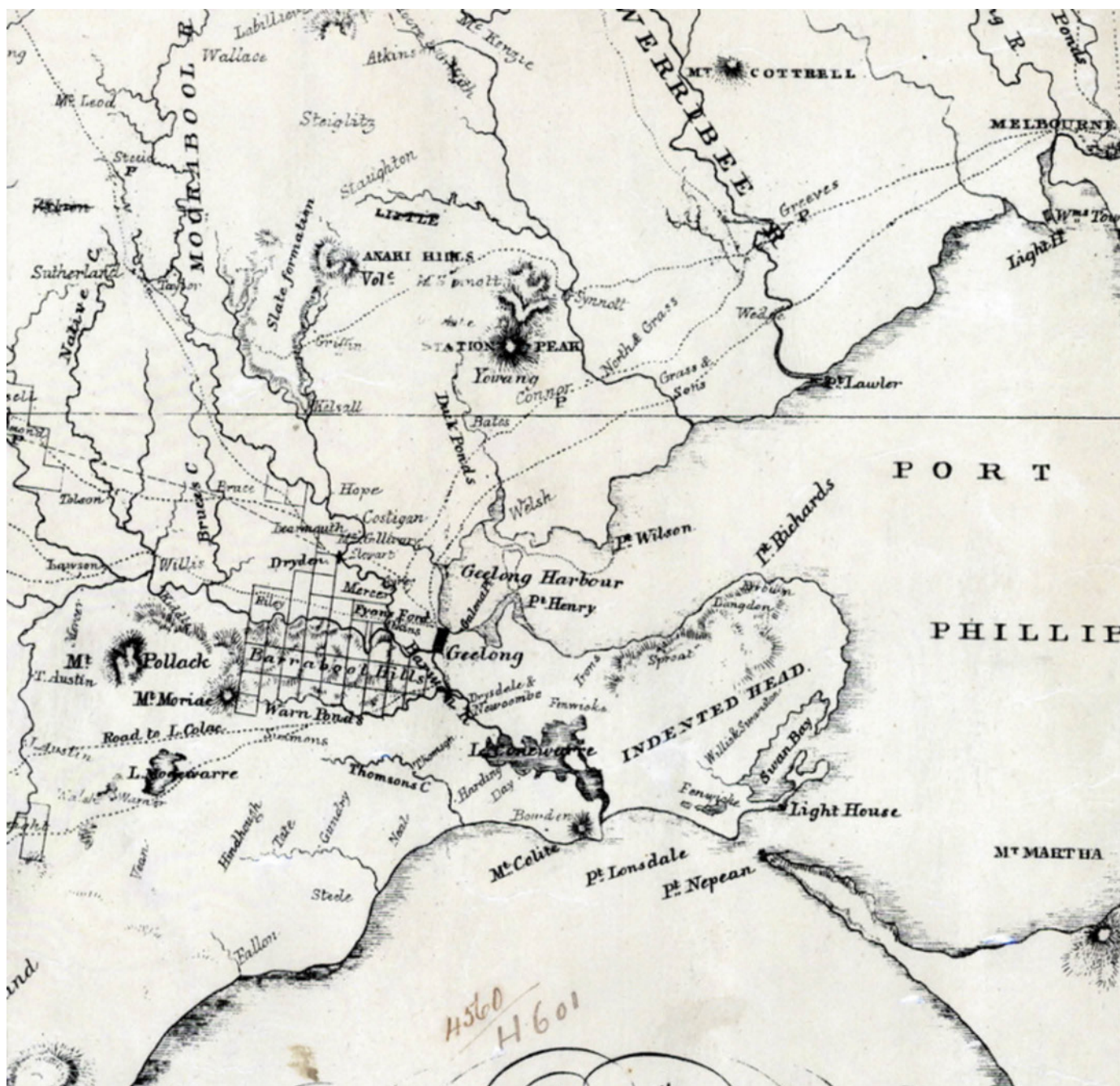


Figure 3.04: A.J. Skene, Portion of Map of Geelong & District, James Harrison, Advertiser Office, Geelong, 1845. Source: State Library of Victoria.

were identical, he would move—That the secretary communicate with the Wyndham Council, and request that a date might be fixed for holding a meeting at the place named.³¹

Although a joint deputation of Wyndham and Corio Shire representations was to be formed in 1865 to 'wait upon the Commissioner of Roads and Bridges,' no immediate proclamation of the Geelong to Melbourne Road as a main road was to eventuate.³²

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE 20TH CENTURY

With the advent of the motor car in Victoria in the late 19th century came the need for improved roads for ease of travel. Additionally, the increase in motor vehicles brought about the deterioration in the Geelong to Melbourne Road. In 1912, the condition of the road was so bad that the Geelong Progress Association wrote to the Wyndham and Corio Shire Councils 'urging the need for repairs.'³³ Western District motorists were bypassing this route given

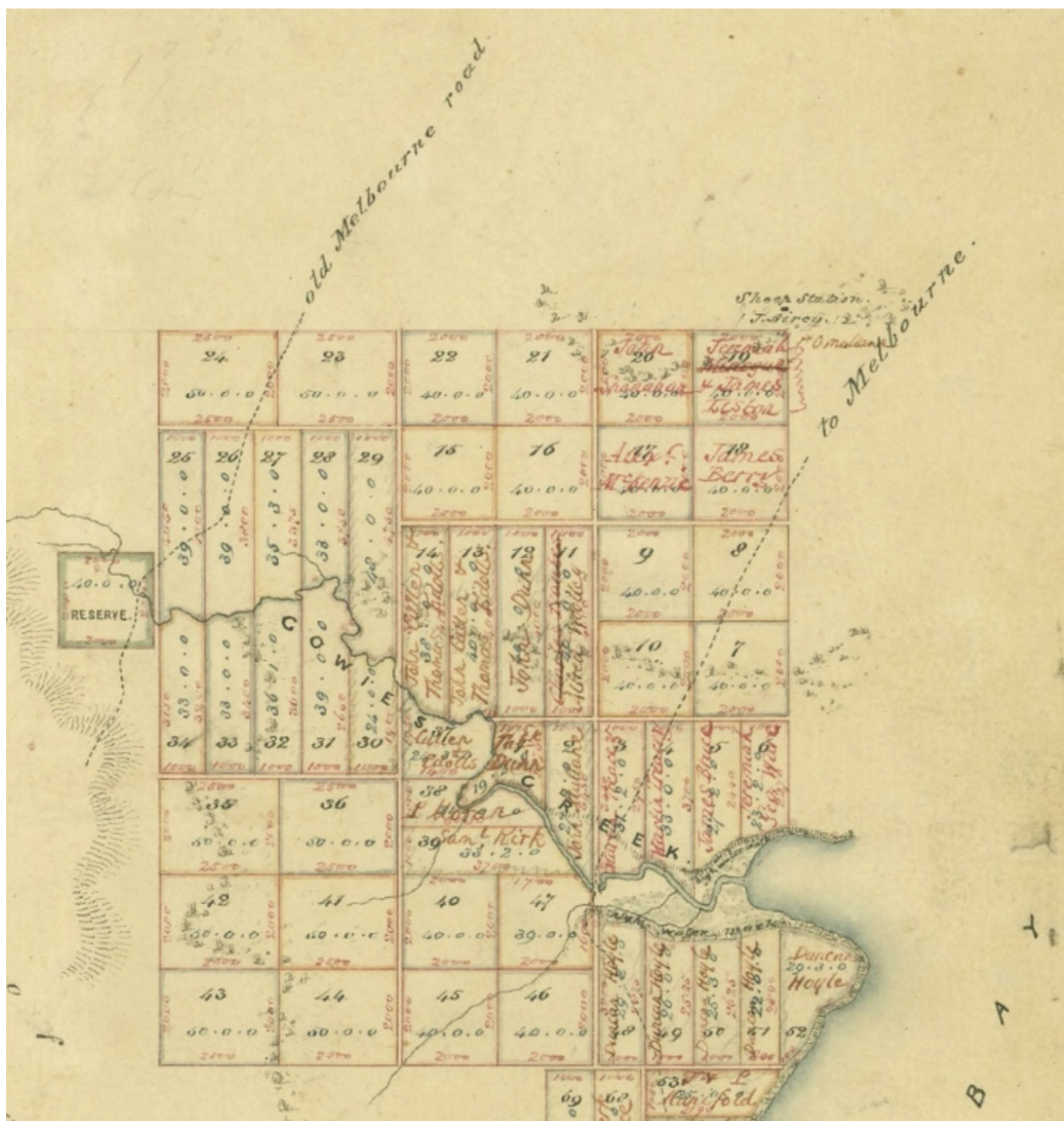


Figure 3.05: W. Pickering, Assistant Surveyor, 'Plan of Allotments marked at Cowies Creek and Corio Bay', 1847. Source: VPRS 8168/P5 Sydney Plans, Sydney C14: Cowies Creek, Public Record Office Victoria.

the dire state of the road. In 1913, the newly-formed Country Roads Board inspected the Geelong to Melbourne Road and concluded that it was in a very bad state and had 'greatly interfered with the motor traffic to Geelong.'³⁴ It found that stone foundations on some parts of the road were exposed due to neglect.³⁵ Some immediate

upgrades were carried out on a stretch of the road in 1913 (Figure 3.06), although the *Annual Report of the Country Roads Board* in 1914 gave the following:

In the case of the Melbourne-Geelong road, however, a short section near Little River appears never to have been constructed, while other extensive sections are in



Figure 3.06: Geelong to Melbourne Road under construction, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1913. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 item 13/00153 Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.07: Geelong to Melbourne Road under construction c.1915, possibly between Werribee and Little River. Source: Accession H372a, State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3.08: Geelong to Melbourne Road, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1921. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 21/00072 Public Record Office Victoria.

such a condition that reconstruction is now necessary, and contracts are already in progress for sections of the road near the township of Werribee.³⁶

In 1915 and 1916, nine miles of road were reconstructed in the Corio Shire portion, while 20 miles of road were reconstructed near Werribee, with three contracts let for the completion of the remaining section between Werribee and Little River³⁷ (Figure 3.07).

World War One (1914-1918) postponed much of the upgrading of the Melbourne Road. Following the conclusion of the war, 'the most important and extensive' work was carried out in 'the completion of the Melbourne to Geelong Road through the Shires of Braybrook, Werribee, and Corio' by 1921³⁸ (Figure 3.08). It was at this time when the Geelong to Melbourne Road was officially declared a Public Highway as part of the Princes Highway, named after the Prince of Wales (later King George VII and subsequently Duke of Windsor).³⁹ The official opening of this stretch of highway occurred in Mercer Street near Railway Terrace, Geelong, by the Mayor Geelong, Alderman Hitchcock.⁴⁰ A year later in 1922, H.F. Richardson was commended in the annual report of the National Roads Association (Victorian branch) 'for the active interest he took in the extension of the highway.'⁴¹ Richardson had 'visited most of the shires along the route, and spoke very emphatically on the advantages which must eventually come to the centres through which this highway passes.'⁴² Stretches of the Highway between Melbourne and Geelong were widened in the ensuing years and by 1930, 47 pipe or box type culverts had been extended or reconstructed to account for the road improvements.⁴³

The 1920s also brought about the widening of the Melbourne Road at North Geelong and Geelong West. In 1925, *The Herald* reported that 'from the Bacchus Marsh junction the road reduces from a three-chain roadway, and eventually becomes bottle-necked.'⁴⁴ This was due to the expansion of industrial and residential development in the northern suburbs. A conference between the Corio Shire and Geelong West Town Council was arranged to investigate the project.⁴⁵ The Geelong West Council was initially resistant to the idea of widening the road between Fishermen's Gully (Rippleside Park) and Glenleith Avenue given that 30 feet of private land for the distance of the road would need to be purchased and this was considered cost prohibitive. The Council felt that if the safety of the travelling public was so paramount then the Country Road Board should 'take the work in hand.'⁴⁶

In April 1927, work began on the widening and upgrade of the Melbourne Road between the Bacchus Marsh Road



Figure 3.09: Concrete section, Geelong to Melbourne Road, North Geelong (note the Ford Motor Company on the left in the background), photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1929. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 28/00087, Public Record Office Victoria.

junction and the railway bridge at Separation Street. As outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The costly scheme of widening the Melbourne Road has been commenced in earnest by Corio Shire Council. Adjustments have been made in regard to compensation, houses and shops have been and are being removed to new building alignments, fences have been removed, and the contractors for the two miles of road work (Victorian Roads Ltd.), commenced last week near the junction of the Melbourne and Bacchus Marsh roads to break it up preparatory to putting down a new foundation.⁴⁷

The new stretch of road at North Geelong was constructed of reinforced concrete (Figure 3.09). The Country Roads Board had experimented with three types of concrete road construction on the Dandenong Road in the Borough of Oakleigh in 1921.⁴⁸ At North Geelong, the road was constructed of the Board's 'second type', being of concrete pavements 20 feet wide flanked by strips of asphaltic macadam 2 feet wide. The pavements were laid on 2-inch-thick clinker beds, the two layers of concrete between reinforced with British Reinforced Company's steel mesh. Each panel was connected with expansion joints held together with steel dowel bars and filled with precast bituminous sheets.⁴⁹

In 1930, this section of newly-built, widened road was formally opened at Separation Street, North Geelong, by Alderman R. Purnell in the presence of a large gathering.⁵⁰

In 1931, the Geelong to Melbourne Road within the City of Geelong was declared a public highway.⁵¹ The road between the Ford Motor Company and the Separation Street bridge was further widened in 1941,⁵² with more

stretches south of the bridge having been widened in earlier years.

It was from the late 1950s and early 1960s when the Princes Highway was upgraded and the townships of Werribee and Little River by-passed. In 1957, work began on the 'widening of the concrete road at Norlane in preparation for duplication and provision of a service road.'⁵³

The duplication of the road into a four lane highway had begun in 1955 at Brooklyn and Kororoit Creek.⁵⁴ In 1959, the highway from Norlane to Little River was duplicated.⁵⁵ Work had also begun with the construction of a by-pass road at Werribee.⁵⁶ Completed in 1961, it was named in honour of Sir Thomas Maltby, local Member of Parliament for the seat of Geelong who had been closely associated with the building of the Princes Highway between Melbourne and Geelong.⁵⁷ From the Maltby By-Pass the highway took a more direct line following the original 'Lower Melbourne Road' to Little River and Lara.

In 2008, in order to ease traffic congestion in Geelong the Geelong Ring Road between Corio and the Hamilton Highway at Fyansford was opened.⁵⁸ The following year in 2009, the extension of the Geelong Ring Road between the Hamilton Highway at Fyansford and Waurn Ponds was opened.⁵⁹ Four years later in 2013, the Geelong Ring Road was linked to the Princes Highway from the Anglesea Road.⁶⁰

GEELONG TO BUNINYONG ROAD (MIDLAND HIGHWAY)

A track, possibly first introduced by the Wadawurrung, was used by European pastoralists as early as 1836 as the transport route to Batesford and beyond to Buninyong. This route gave overland access to Portland Bay.⁶¹ Within the Greater Geelong municipal area today, the track crossed the Moorabool River at what was first known as Manifold's Ford, and later Bates' Ford. In 1840, the Assistant Surveyor, Thomas Townsend, surveyed 'part of the proposed line of road leading from Geelong towards Boninyong.'⁶² The new surveyed road was to cross the Moorabool River further downstream to the north (Figure 3.10).

The alignment of Townsend's survey formed the basis of the road from Geelong to Buninyong today. In 1854, after the formation of the Central Road Board, the road was cleared of timber and portions were macademised through the north-western suburbs of Geelong, including 'the flat

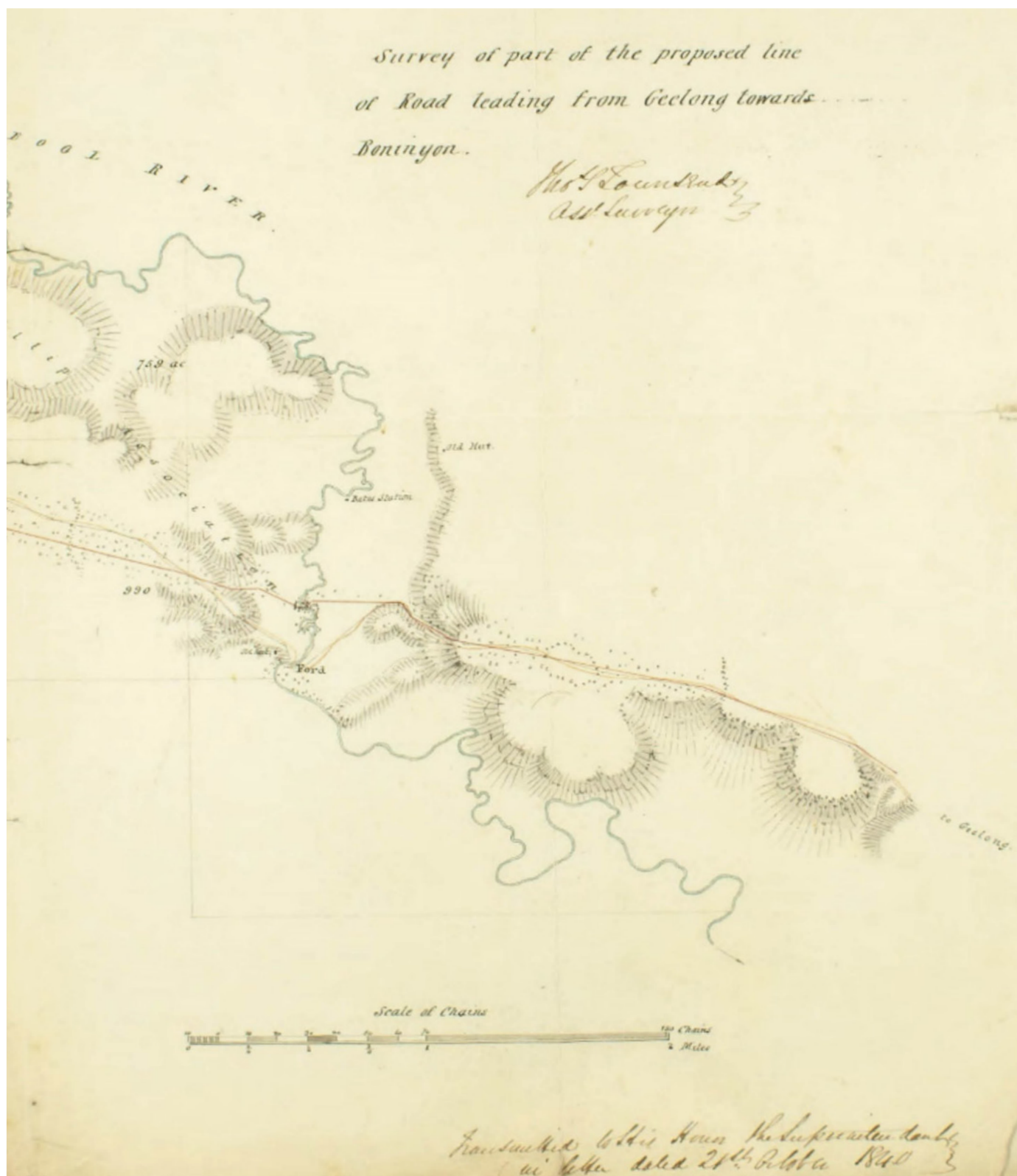


Figure 3.10: T. Townsend, Assistant Surveyor, Portion of 'Survey of part of the proposed line of Road leading from Geelong towards Boninyong', 21 October 1840. Source: VPRS 19/1 it 40/1075a, Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.11: Midland Highway near the Batesford bridge, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1934. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 34/00105, Public Record Office Victoria.

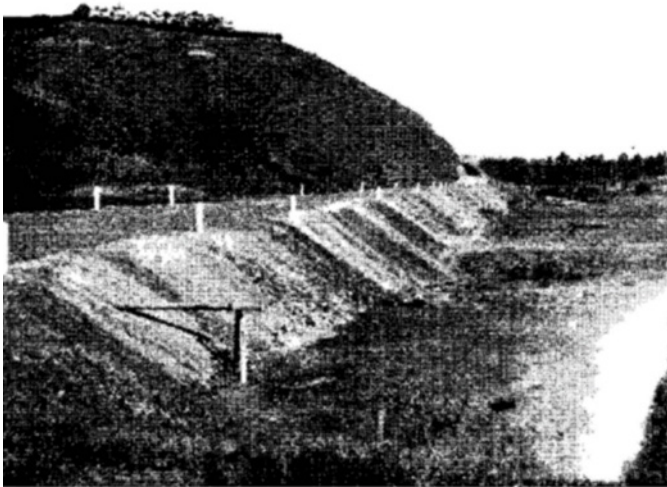


Figure 3.12: Deviation Road, Fyansford, under construction, c.1932. Source: *Country Roads Board Annual Report, 1932*, p.9, Parliament of Victoria collection. Reproduced by permission of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Victoria, Australia.

at Batesford and hills on each side.’ In 1931, the Geelong to Buninyong Road became a State Highway as part of the Midland Highway. Two years later in 1933, the road (Figure 3.11) was improved:

The first section of the Midland Highway, which comprises 48.6 miles between Geelong and Ballarat, was immediately taken in hand by improving the riding qualities throughout. By the addition of gravel, which forms part of the staged construction, a good temporary riding surface has been provided. Approximately 13 miles were re-conditioned ready for sealing early this Spring.⁶⁵

Soon after the completion of the road upgrade, ‘a large volume of traffic from Ballarat and surrounding districts’ was ‘now traversing this highway to Portarlington, Queenscliff and other seaside resorts on the Bellarine Peninsula, where the main roads radiating from Geelong have been placed in good condition.’⁶⁶

GEELONG TO HAMILTON ROAD (HAMILTON HIGHWAY)

Before 1845, a track from Fyansford – which traversed the Moorabool River at Fyans’ Ford – gave access to Inverleigh and beyond to the Western District as far as Mount Elephant (see Figure 7.01). Known as the Lower Leigh Road by 1854, it was at this time when the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* reported that for this road (now Hyland Street) ‘the hills at Fyansford on each side of the river have been cut and improved, and the road metalled.’⁶⁷ It was not until 1931 when work began on the construction of the Deviation Road at the western end of Aberdeen Street to provide alternative access to Fyansford and beyond to Inverleigh (Figure 3.12). The construction of the road was outlined in the *Annual Report of the Country Roads Board* in 1932:

The formation of the deviation of the Fyansford Road near Geelong was completed out of Unemployment Relief Funds. In addition to having provided suitable employment for a large number of men, the new road, besides affording a well-graded access to Geelong from the west side in place of the excessively steeply-graded road previously in use, will provide opportunities of viewing the scenic beauties of the Barwon Valley in the immediate vicinity of the city. Recognizing the value of the new work, the Geelong Town Planning Association has already taken in hand a suitable scheme of tree planting along the sides of the road.⁶⁸

The road was completed in 1932.⁶⁹

In 1941, the Geelong Hamilton Road within the municipality of Newtown and Chilwell, Shire of Bannockburn, Shire of Corio and Shire of Colac was proclaimed a Main Road.⁷⁰ It was later renamed as the Hamilton Highway, many years after the Leigh Shire Council had proposed ‘the road from Geelong through Cressy, Hamilton and Coleraine to the South Australian border be proclaimed a State highway’ in 1925.⁷¹

GEELONG TO BACCHUS MARSH ROAD

The route to Bacchus Marsh from Geelong in 1851 was convoluted but following the goldrush at Mount Alexander it brought about increased traffic. The initial method of reaching Bacchus Marsh from Geelong was described as follows:

Mount Alexander is north by west from Geelong. To go by the Werribee Bridge, on the Melbourne-road is too much to the east, and by far too near to Melbourne Swamp – to go by Ballan is too much to the west.

The nearest and best way [to Mount Alexander] is between the two, by Bacchus Marsh, and this is the way the Mount Alexander coach will run. We [at Geelong] are nearer Bacchus Marsh than Melbourne is, and yet how little we know about it. It is only thirty-three miles from Geelong, and a road almost level, not one boggy place, and yet our letters must lay nine days before they arrive there, if posted here on Thursdays.

The first place is to Cowie's Creek, then pull up Ballan-road by making towards the Anakies, keep that road for five miles, then take Griffin's-road, bearing to the right, which leads between the Anakies and Station Peak; pursue that road through the bush on to the plains; then make for a bald hill – on horseback leave the hill to the right, go through the bush right into the marsh where there is a fine road to the right leading to the marsh.⁷²

By February 1853, a new road from Geelong to Bacchus Marsh had been opened, following a survey by A.J. Skene, Government Surveyor.⁷³ It was claimed that the new road did 'not present a single steep hill or other difficulty.'⁷⁴ The existing Geelong to Bacchus Marsh appears to largely following the alignment marked out by Skene.

GEELONG TO COLAC ROAD (PRINCES HIGHWAY)

The original track from Geelong south-west to Colac appeared to follow the route of the Wadawurrung between 'Jerringot' (Belmont Common), along the north bank of the Waurn Chain of Ponds. At Waurn Ponds, the road separated into two, with one route passing the north of Lake Modewarre, the other to the south of the lake.⁷⁵ In 1853, a new road was surveyed and constructed.⁷⁶ In 1854, it was described as having been 'macadamised as far as the end of what has been termed Denny's line' (at Grovedale).⁷⁷ The road junction at Waurn Ponds was extended to include a road to Loutitt Bay (Lorne). In 1925, the Geelong to Colac Road was proclaimed a State Highway as part of the Princes Highway.⁷⁸

GEELONG TO QUEENSCLIFF ROAD (BELLARINE HIGHWAY)

The first track from Geelong to Shortland's Bluff (Queenscliff) appears to have been established in 1846 when it was proposed to convey the mail from Queenscliff to Melbourne via Geelong.⁷⁹ By 1854, 'about a mile and quarter' of the road had been macadamised 'and the line generally cleared of timber.'⁸⁰ Two years later in 1856, the Geelong to Queenscliff Road was proclaimed as a Main Road to be known as 'The Queenscliff Road.'⁸¹ In 1865, given the intended erection of 'elaborate defences at Queenscliff' came calls from the Queenscliff Borough Council and Indented Head Road Board for the Geelong to Queenscliff Road to be proclaimed a military road. The Borough Council argued:

What will be the use of the fortifications if they are not to be reached speedily, or, as the chairman of the Board remarked, "The gallant volunteers ought to have a means of retreat in the event of their being overpowered by the enemy."⁸²

Part of the stretch of road between Geelong and Leopold, earliest known as the Kensington Road, was planked instead of macadamised. The planks were replaced with metal in 1875 as the *Geelong Advertiser* reported on the work at this time:

The old plank road, which for many years has been an eyesore to travellers in the pretty farming district of Kensington, will be soon among the institutions of the past. The planks were laid for a length of more than half a mile along the main toll road, in the days when metal was scarcer and much dearer than at present. For years they formed a kind of passable bridge over the mud which collected on the flat in winter, but the narrowness of the track prevented vehicles from passing each other without leaving the timber, and this gave rise to frequent complications. In summer when the mud became consolidated the road was disused, and through tear and wear the old planks have recently become dangerous and almost unserviceable in winter. Lately the Bellarine Council determined to abolish the planks, and now they may be seen fairly walled in with substantial heaps of road metal, designed to take their place. During the next few weeks the planks will be removed, and what has for years been a source of complaint among carters and others will be banished from the district.⁸³

By 1927, the Geelong to Queenscliff Road had become 'practically impassable during the winter months.'⁸⁴ In 1928, the Country Roads Board carried out upgrades (Figure 3.13) which were described in its *Annual Report* for 1929:

The state of the road between Geelong and Queenscliff, within the Shire of Bellarine, was the subject of severe criticism by the users, as the result of which the Board, after conference with the [Bellarine] Shire Council, agreed to carry out the work of restoration, and this was put in hand under day labour.

The method of reconstruction consisted of scarifying the base of the old roadway and bringing it to perfect section, spreading 3 inches of local sand, thoroughly rolling and dragging same continuously. At a later date the surface was treated with fuel oil and bitumen primer. Subsequently a seal coat of bitumen was applied and gravel from Gherang rolled into the bitumen surface.

Since the work was completed twelve months ago, it has been kept to a good standard at a very much reduced maintenance cost per mile as compared with the cost of ineffective maintenance prior to reconstruction, although subjected to much heavier traffic, as many as 2,000 vehicles per day passing over the road during the week-end period. The board proposes to further seal the road with bitumen during the coming summer months. The cost of this work was at the rate of £700 per mile.⁸⁵

In 1947, the Queenscliff Road was declared a State highway and was named the Bellarine Highway.⁸⁶ In 1967, work began on the construction of dual carriageways with a 0.2 mile span between Swanston and Myers Streets, Geelong, and an extension of 0.5 mile of the carriageway between Boundary Road and Wilson Road, Newcomb.⁸⁷ By the following year, 0.5 mile of widening at Leopold had been carried out to allow for four traffic lanes.⁸⁸ A further 0.9 miles of dual carriageways were laid out between Wilsons Road and Twitts Road, Newcomb, and parts of the highway were sealed by 1970.⁸⁹ Since this time, the highway has been progressively duplicated as far as Grubb Road at Wallington.

GEELONG TO PORTARLINGTON ROAD (PORTARLINGTON HIGHWAY)

In 1853, the Portarlington Road District was proclaimed. Action was immediately taken in repairing 'about 2000 yards' of the earlier track between Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula (and particularly Drysdale, Indented Head and Portarlington).⁹⁰ The contract was awarded



Figure 3.13: Geelong to Queenscliff Road, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, c.1928. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 25/00024 Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.14: Geelong to Portarlington Road, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1938. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 38/00022 Public Record Office Victoria.

to Thomas Carroll.⁹¹ The road line was cleared, the road formed and drained and planks laid.⁹² By the early 1860s, the road had become impassable during winter months at Moolap and between Drysdale and Portarlington. At Moolap, 55 chains of road were metalled and parts of the remaining plank road were improved. Between Drysdale and Portarlington, the 'worst portion' were metalled and culverts constructed.⁹³ In 1877 and although hardly a highway by today's standards, the portion of the Geelong to Portarlington Road in the Shire of Bellarine was proclaimed a public highway.⁹⁴

Major works and upgrades to the Portarlington Road were carried out in the 20th century. In 1935, a mile of road between Drysdale and Portarlington was upgraded with a bitumen surface.⁹⁵ The poor state of the road, in particularly 'loose road surfaces' led to the death of a woman (with her husband and son badly injured) when their car skidded in loose metal in 1937.⁹⁶ This appears

to have led to road improvements later that year, with a realignment of the road at Moolap to modify 'two awkward turns'⁹⁷ and the sealing of one mile of road 'from the Geelong City boundary.'⁹⁸ The remaining unsealed portion of the road at Moolap (Figure 3.14) was sealed in 1938.⁹⁹

In 1968, work commenced on the construction of dual carriageways for the Geelong to Portarlington Road within the boundaries of the City of Geelong.¹⁰⁰ This began the duplication of the as far as Drysdale. In 2018, work began on the Drysdale Bypass, a six-kilometre-long road from Jetty Road to Whitcombes Road around the central Drysdale township. The Bypass was expected to be completed in 2020.¹⁰¹

GEELONG TO BARWON HEADS ROAD

In 1914, the Country Roads Board declared that the Barwon Heads Road (from Geelong) was one of the district's principal roads.¹⁰² The need for a reliable road originates from 1854 when the Government opened up land in the Connewarre area (see Theme 6). Work was carried out on the road from 1859 when the South Barwon Council sought tenders for one mile of road.¹⁰³ In these initial years, the Mount Colite (Barwon Heads Road) extended as far as the coast near Breamlea, linking to a 'reserved road way' in the sand dunes to the Bluff at Barwon Heads (see Figure 1.07). In 1861, the Connewarre Road Board had surveyed a line of new road (to supersede the 'old road') further north. This new road was to traverse the southern portions of the 'The Great Swamp' (Lake Connewarre) as shown in Figure 1.07. With the construction of the Mount Colite Coffee Palace in 1889 and the opening up of land at Barwon Heads in 1891 by the Barwon Heads Estate Company (see Theme 6), the small village became an important seaside resort requiring a reliable roadway. By 1906, the need for an improved road was so dire that the Barwon Heads Improvement Association began fundraising for half the cost of the road, the balance to be met by the Victorian Government.¹⁰⁴ Little improvement appears to have been made in the ensuing years at in 1912 E. Langridge in a Letter to the Editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* lamented the state of the road:

A pleasure party left Geelong on Saturday afternoon for Barwon Heads in a motor char-a-banc, but the road was "distinctly bad."

Some effort seemed to have been made to improve the road since the writer was last over it, but the present state of the surface does not reflect any credit on the person or persons in charge of the work.

Any vehicle undertaking the journey to Barwon Heads at present has to encounter long stretches of large, sharp metal, just tipped on to the road, and flattened out to fill up the pot-holes.

To the motorist especially these bad stretches are "deadly." A vehicle shod with solid rubber, cannot avoid having large pieces of rubber absolutely chipped out of the tyres, while a pneumatic tyred car (unless light enough to take to the side tracks) cannot avoid punctures.

...Perhaps the deserted appearance of Barwon Heads can be traced to the bad state of the road. Pleasure-seekers cannot be expected to face such fearful road conditions, even for a trip to such a pleasant spot.¹⁰⁵

Although the Barwon Heads Road was declared a Main Road in 1914,¹⁰⁶ it was not until 1917 when work began on upgrading the road by the Country Roads Board.¹⁰⁷ The improvements were noted by the local community in the *Geelong Advertiser* in May 1917:

Motorists, patrons and residents of Barwon Heads are loud in their praises of the road from Barwon Heads recently finished by the Country Roads Board. The crossing at the Big Marsh deserves to be specially mentioned, as it does credit to all concerned.¹⁰⁸

Tarring of the road continued in 1919¹⁰⁹ (Figure 3.15). It was also at this time when returned soldiers were employed to carry out road making at Barwon Heads¹¹⁰ (Figure 3.16).

In 1964, parts of the Barwon Heads Road were widened.¹¹¹ Further widening and improvements were made in the following years and more recently, in the early 21st century. In 2018, the duplication of the Barwon Heads Road was proposed by the Victorian State Government.¹¹²

GEELONG TO TORQUAY ROAD (SURF COAST HIGHWAY)

Before 1861, a road to the quiet settlement of Spring Creek (as Torquay was earlier called) from Germantown and Mount Duneed had been established.¹¹³ However, travel to the coastal settlement in 1892 was curtailed with the loss of the bridge across Deep Creek. A new bridge was erected in late 1893, during which time travellers were reminded that they could reach Torquay 'along a road through private property.'¹¹⁴ In 1895, the Torquay Improvement Association donated £100 to the Barrabool and South Barwon Shires to assist with improvements to the road. It was anticipated that when completed, the upgrade would 'give fully 11 miles of metal road from

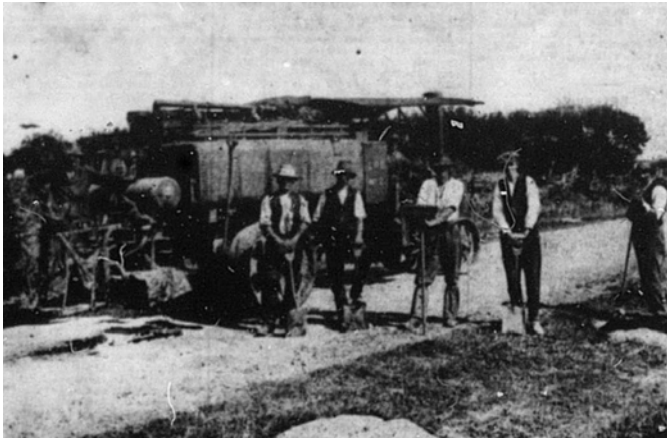


Figure 3.15: Tarring road at Barwon Heads, 1919. Source: *News of the Week*, 22 May 1919, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.16: Road making at Barwon Heads by returned soldiers, 1919. Source: *News of the Week*, 11 September 1919, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.17: Road making, Torquay Road, c.1917-18. Source: GRS 2009/01846/062 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

Geelong', doing 'much to shorten the time occupied in making the journey to Torquay.'¹¹⁵ Further improvements stalled in 1907 when a grant of £100 from the Victorian Government lapsed.¹¹⁶ Criticism of the poor state of the road grew louder in the ensuing years, with one motorist in 1915 describing it as 'disgraceful.'¹¹⁷ While the South Barwon Shire Council had metalled 1200 yards of the road in 1914, growing frustration by ratepayers caused the South Barwon and Barrabool Shire Councils to each take

out a £1000 loan in order to fund the major upgrade.¹¹⁸ Further delays ensued with the improvements not carried out until 1917-18¹¹⁹ (Figure 3.17). In 1930, the Torquay Road was declared a Main Road.¹²⁰ In 1971, work began on duplicate 0.4 mile of the Torquay Road between the Waurrn Ponds Creek and Grovedale.¹²¹ In 1995, the Torquay Road was declared a State Highway and named the Surf Coast Highway.¹²² Work began soon after on the duplication of the road between Grovedale and Mount Duneed.

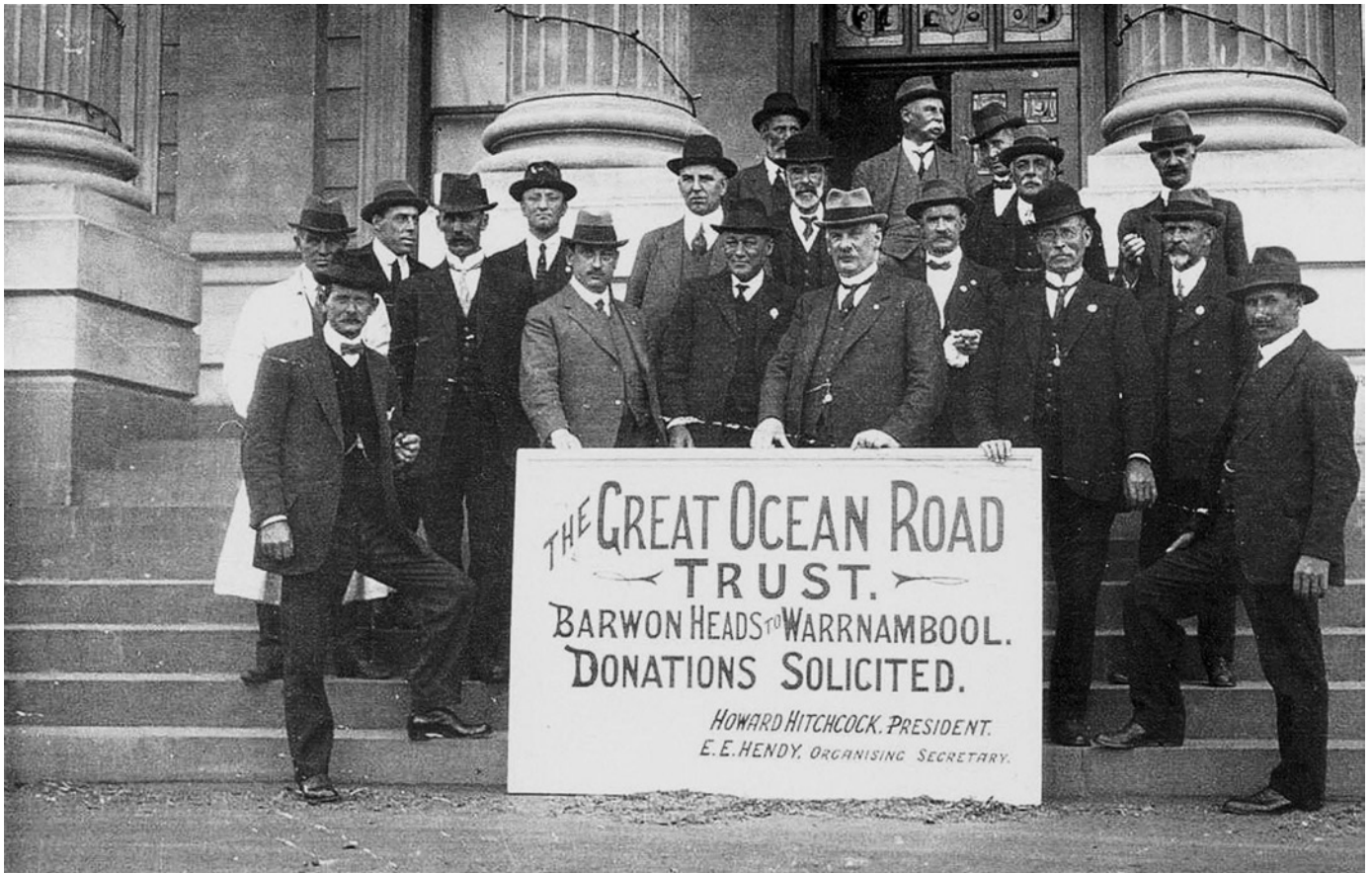


Figure 3.18: The Great Ocean Road Trust on the steps of the Geelong Town Hall, 1918. Source: D. Rowe, *The Pleasure Grounds of the Barwon Coast: A History*, p.46.

GREAT OCEAN ROAD

In 1917, the Mayor of Geelong, Howard Hitchcock, was a leading proponent for the development of a 'By-The-Sea Road' from Barwon Heads to Warrnambool.¹²³ Described as a 'modern coastal highway', Hitchcock was elected the first Chairman of the Great Ocean Road Trust when it formed in 1918. Other members of the Trust included E.E. Hendy, T.K. Maltby, M.L.A., A. Mair, M.L.A., H.H. Smith, M.L.A. and T.J. Buchan, local architect.¹²⁴ To be constructed as a memorial to the soldiers who fought and died in World War One – and to be built by returned soldiers – agreement was reached for the opening of the road with the Country Roads Board and the various local council authorities.¹²⁵ Hitchcock and other members of the Trust travelled the length of the proposed road lobbying for donations for the road. On the steps of the Geelong Town Hall in 1918, they were photographed holding a sign for donations (Figure 3.18), with the road:

... commencing at and including a reinforced concrete bridge over the Barwon River at Barwon Heads; thence proceeding easterly via Torquay, Anglesea, Airey's Inlet,



Figure 3.19: Barwon Heads-Torquay Road (Great Ocean Road), Thirteenth Beach, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1935 [1938]. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 34/00135 Public Record Office Victoria.

Lorne, Apollo Bay, Cape Otway, Glen Aire, Princetown, Loch Ard Gorge, Port Campbell and Peterborough, and thence to Warrnambool.¹²⁶

The first section of the Great Ocean Road was opened at Grassy Creek in 1922,¹²⁷ and not as might have been anticipated, at Barwon Heads. Although a section of the Ocean Road from Barwon Heads was to be surveyed in 1921, there was some anxiety by members of the Barwon Heads Golf Club that the new road might 'connect up with their links.'¹²⁸ It was not until 1935 when the immediate plan of the Country Roads Board was to construct two miles of the Ocean Road from Barwon Heads where 'tourists could secure an excellent view of the ocean.'¹²⁹ Yet, the road was not formed, graded and surfaced and marram grass planted in this two mile section to Thirteenth Beach until 1938¹³⁰ (Figure 3.19).

During the following decades, the Barwon Heads Park Trust (and later Committee of Management) continued to actively support the inclusion of Barwon Heads as part of the Great Ocean Road. In 1962, the Chairman of the Committee visited Lorne and 'agreed to send representative to the next meeting of the Promotion League with agreement to join in the promotion scheme.'¹³¹ In 1978, the Country Roads Board considered the construction of a link road from Thirteenth Beach westwards to Torquay. Because of the fragile sand dunes at Breamlea, the Soil Conservation Authority opposed the proposal. Another attempt was made in 1982 when the Barwon Heads Park Committee of Management gained the support of the Barwon Heads Progress Association, but the linking stretch of road was not constructed.¹³²

OTHER ROAD-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS

PUNTS AND FORDS

The earliest forms of river crossing for overland travel from the 1830s were fords or punts. Although little evidence survives of these fords today, their locations have taken on the names of some of the first Europeans to the area. As early as 1836 a ford had been erected over the Moorabool River near Batesford. It was originally called Manifold's Ford after John and Peter Manifold temporarily grazed sheep there but following the arrival of Alfred and John Bates in 1838, the ford – and small township, Batesford – was named after them (see Theme 6). At Fyansford, the ford was named after Captain Foster Fyans, first Police Magistrate, who arrived there in 1837 (see Theme 6).

From 1840, the breakwater established by Captain Foster Fyans at Breakwater formed an initial important crossing of the Barwon River as well as providing fresh water (see following subsection and Theme 4).

However, when the river was in flood, the breakwater 'was altogether impassable.'¹³³

Punts were also initially used to cross the Barwon River at different localities. From 1842, a punt provided the river crossing at the southern end of Moorabool.¹³⁴ A more reliable service at South Geelong came in 1846 when Benjamin Goldsmid Levien (1806-1890) established a punt service at South Geelong.¹³⁵ Levien was born in London, England, son of Solomon Levien, one of twelve Jewish stock brokers in London in 1803.¹³⁶ Solomon Levien emigrated to Sydney in 1833 and Benjamin followed in 1837.¹³⁷ In 1840, Benjamin Levin transported a punt from Sydney to the Maribyrnong River (then known as Saltwater River), Footscray, where he established a river crossing service associated with his Victoria Tavern in February 1841.¹³⁸ In July 1846, Levien had successfully brought his punt along Port Phillip to Geelong where it was anchored off the jetty. The *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate* reported that:

... the most difficult part of its transit has yet to be encountered – its conveyance overland through the township to its destined berth on the Barwon.¹³⁹

Almost 100 bullocks were yoked to the punt to drag it up the cliff face at the Geelong waterfront and to Corio Terrace, South Geelong.¹⁴⁰ By September 1846, the punt was 'in full work on the Barwon' and was considered to 'prove a source of great accommodation' for the Barrabool Hills settlers.¹⁴¹

With the impending completion of a bridge over the Barwon River next to his punt service in 1848, Levien relocated his punt further downstream to near his Punt Inn beside the stone quarries at the west end of Aphrasia Street.¹⁴²

William Batten¹⁴³ and Patrick Connor also established a punt on the Barwon River at South Geelong in 1852 following the loss of the bridge (see following subsection). In August of that year they were called before the Police Bench to account for the exorbitant charges being levied. In addition to complaints of extortion being made, Captain E.B. Addis, Commissioner of Lands, remarked that refusal had also 'been given to the police to cross free from expense.'¹⁴⁴ A list of prices was subsequently 'laid down for the guidance of the puntmen.'¹⁴⁵

In c.1889, punt services were established at Barwon Heads to provide a river crossing to Ocean Grove. It appears to have been the last punt to be established and operate within the City of Greater Geelong. Until 1906, the punts were operated by private controls and 'would-be travellers between Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove had to signal the ferryman from the bank and if could be located,

would ferry passengers across for sixpence each way.¹⁴⁶ The only physical and associational evidence of previous punt services in Greater Geelong is the former boot room near the Barwon Heads jetty that was built in 1889 for the Public Works Department.¹⁴⁷ The construction of the building had been urged by the Hon. Jonas Felix Levien,¹⁴⁸ son of Benjamin Levien, and it appears to have served as a waiting room for the punt until the construction of the Barwon Heads Bridge (see following subsection).¹⁴⁹ While a Mr Dempsey was proposed to be caretaker of the jetty and shed in 1889, Samuel Challis was appointed instead.¹⁵⁰ The former punt at Barwon Heads is also marked by the name of the local street, Punt Road.

In 1905, the Geelong Harbor Trust was established (see Theme 7) and it took control of the management of the river. Harbor Trust Officers were stationed at both Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove as the first stage in erecting a ferry pontoon that was to be situated on the river close to the Heads.¹⁵¹ Due to a local disagreement, the ferry pontoon never made it to the area. Instead, the ferry was used at the Sparrovale Irrigation Farm at Marshall (owned by the Harbor Trust – see Theme 4) to transport livestock.¹⁵² As an interim measure, a motor launch had been placed on the river in 1909 by the Harbor Trust Commissioners, 'and during the holidays [it] was well patronised.'¹⁵³

The idea of a ferry pontoon was revived in 1923 when the Geelong Harbor Trust and Shires of South Barwon and Bellarine held a conference to discuss the issue. Two years later in 1925, the *Geelong Advertiser* highlighted the necessity for such a service:

While Barwon Heads has become very popular and at holiday-times has large numbers of visitors, Ocean Grove is, in comparison, neglected because of its semi-isolation. If means were provided whereby vehicles could be carried over-stream from the Barwon Heads side it is confidently believed that Ocean Grove would progress.¹⁵⁴

In September 1925, the Geelong Harbor Trust had instructed Mr .E.E. Higgs 'to prepare plans and specifications for a vessel that would meet the requirements of a service that it is anticipated with be greatly availed of by tourists and holiday makers.'¹⁵⁵ Estimated to cost about £5000, it was to be 'one of the greatest benefits' to both Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove as seaside resorts.¹⁵⁶ To be built at the Harbor Trust's workshops at Rippleside, the development never proceeded.



Figure 3.20: Breakwater, 1912. Source: *News of the Week*, 14 March 1912, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

SUBURBAN BRIDGES

The crossing of the Barwon River between the northern and southern parts of the Geelong region, particularly with livestock, was fraught and not possible in times of flood or lack of a punt service. From the 1840s calls grew louder for bridging the river at different locations.

BREAKWATER BRIDGE, BREAKWATER

The first bridge to cross the Barwon River at Breakwater was a ford over the breakwater. Works commenced in 1839 (or possibly in December 1838) under the supervision of Captain Foster Fyans.¹⁵⁷ Completed in 1840 to provide a dam for fresh water for Geelong residents (see Theme 4), the work included a clay bank with large stone floaters and a two-coursed stone ashlar bridging roadway.¹⁵⁸ A flood in 1844 damaged the breakwater and David Lennox, Superintendent of Bridges, prepared a 'Specification of a Wall to be built at the fresh water dam on the Barwon river near Geelong' on 22 March 1845.¹⁵⁹ By April 1845, a wall had been built across the upstream side of the dam and work had commenced on a cut-stone paving on top of the dam wall (Figure 3.20). Work was completed by August 1845.¹⁶⁰ Repairs were carried out in the ensuing years, the breakwater being approximately 352 feet in length and 12 feet wide.¹⁶¹ In 1867, a guide rail was built by the Borough of South Barwon and in 1886, a timber staging was erected to provide assistance to boatmen to drag their boards across.¹⁶² In 1968, a low level concrete road bridge measuring 196 feet in length and 20 feet in width was built on top of the breakwater.¹⁶³

In late 2009, VicRoads called tenders for the realignment of Breakwater Road and the construction of a 60 metre long bridge over the Barwon River to connect to Fellmongers Road, Breakwater.¹⁶⁴ The tender was awarded to McConnell Dowell, with Pitt and Sherry providing alternative design solutions to the original bridge and road design by VicRoads.¹⁶⁵ Costing \$63 million, the project included a 1.3 km long road, with a 635 span of road being elevated over the Barwon River floodplain.¹⁶⁶ The bridge was constructed of 10 metre cantilevered insitu piers and a 40 metre precast concrete beam, together with concrete pole caps, piers, cross heads and insitu deck.¹⁶⁷

BARWON BRIDGE, GEELONG-BELMONT

In February 1847, William Lonsdale, Colonial Administrator at Port Phillip, called tenders 'for the erection of a timber bridge, over the Barwon River, at Geelong.' Specifications and plans were available at the Bridge Office, Melbourne.¹⁶⁸ The contract was awarded to Robert Wayman, a contractor of Little Bourke Street, Melbourne.¹⁶⁹ Under the guidance of the Superintendent of Bridges, David Lennox, construction was beset by numerous delays. Coupled with scarcity of timber (leaving workmen idle), the *Geelong Advertiser* complained that the contractor needed to display 'greater energy.'¹⁷⁰ In May 1848, Wayman disappeared, escaping his impending insolvency:

During the last fortnight there have been strange rumours afloat respecting the disappearance of Wayman, the Road Surveyor and Contractor. We did not think proper to allude to these rumours, so long as there was any probability of his re-appearance; but the application of his creditors to have his estate sequestrated, brings the circumstances with the sphere of newspaper animadversion. He was the contractor for several works now in progress in Melbourne, as well as for the erection of the Barwon Bridge, the Marrabool Bridge, and the improvements now in progress in Yarra-street, in Geelong. On Friday the 12th inst., he received from the Treasurer of the Yarra-street Fund the sum of forty pounds, thirty of which he paid to the overseers of the work for wages, and also left an order for twenty pounds, which was paid on the following day to the overseer. He then started for Bates' Ford, telling his overseer that he would be in Geelong again on Saturday evening. From a house in Ashby he took a bundle of bedding, and carried it before him on horseback to Bates' Ford. Here he gave the men a trifling amount in money and a bottle of rum, and told them he was going next day to see some sawyers near the Yowangs. It is said that on his arrival at Bates' Ford he wore different clothes, at least a different hat, from what he wore when he left



Figure 3.21: Ham Brothers, 'On the Barwon' showing the recently-constructed bridge, c.1850. Source: accession H88.21/2258 State Library of Victoria.

Geelong. On Friday night he slept at the public house at the Ford; and the next morning was up and away before daylight; but which road he went is not known. From that time to this no intelligence has been heard of him. For the first week, opinion was divided as to whether he had absconded, or met with some accident in the bush. The fact of him having paid sixty pounds on the eve of his disappearance, favored the idea that he had not absconded; but others thought that this was a "blind," and if so, it was not money thrown away, for it effectually lulled suspicion, and prevented the hue-and-cry that would otherwise have been immediately raised. The state of his circumstances, which inducted him to bolt, if he has bolted, is not clearly known. It is reported that he lately raised a large sum of money by way of mortgage on an unfinished building; that he was deeply indebted far and near; that some of his contracts would be losing ones, and that on the day before his disappearance he had received notice that his affairs were about to be brought to a crisis by his largest creditor petitioning the judge to place his estate under sequestration.¹⁷¹

By August 1848, a new contract for the completion of the Barwon Bridge had been let to Messrs. Wilson and Anderson.¹⁷² Such was the urgent need of the bridge, that temporary planking was laid down to enable drays to cross before the remainder of the bridge was completed.¹⁷³ By November 1848, the bridge was almost complete as tenders were called for construction of the approaches to the bridge¹⁷⁴ (Figure 3.21).

The bridge was not to endure. In 1852, a substantial flood (see Theme 1) caused its destruction as described in the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*:

The Barwon Bridge stood well on Friday, in the afternoon of which day little damage was observable, save a slight disturbance on the roadway on the southern side, caused by a rush of water, which flooded the plains and country adjacent. The continuous heavy fall of rain soon gave an irresistible impulse to the river's course, and the water, on that evening and the ensuing day made a complete breach over it; but the bridge stood well until about two o'clock on Sunday morning, when it yielded with a crash before the force of the water, and the injury it had sustained from drifting trees and logs. Piles and logs have gone; nothing is left but a post and a few rails, to mark where the bridge was.¹⁷⁵

While tenders were called by the Public Works Department in January 1853 for a new timber bridge, nothing immediately eventuated.¹⁷⁶ Instead, the Government moored two punts in the river to form a floating bridge.¹⁷⁷ It was described in *The Argus* in September 1853:

The two Government punts hitherto plying across the stream, have been placed longitudinally on the river, connected to each bank by a wooden structure, which forms arching, the intervening space in the centre between the punts has been jointed in like manner. The whole being well secured and bound together by iron brackets three lashes thick and six inches wide. The structure rises and falls with the water, consequently the injury from pressure or great weight is much removed.¹⁷⁸

However, the floating bridge soon proved unsatisfactory as 'quadrupeds [livestock] were not permitted to be driven over.'¹⁷⁹

While a new bridge constructed of iron was agreed upon in 1853,¹⁸⁰ like the first timber bridge it was to replace, construction was fraught with delays. As early as October 1853, the *Geelong Advertiser* bemoaned the lack of action:

The facts relating to the Bridge are these. About five years ago, the erection of a bridge across the Barwon at Geelong was undertaken. Without much delay, the work was completed, and a very good, apparently substantial, bridge was opened to the public. The bridge, while it lasted, was all that could be desired. In May, 1852, (seventeen months ago) the bridge was carried away by a flood unprecedented in the annals of the colony. Immediate representations of the urgent necessity of replacing it were made of the Lieutenant-Governor, and the reply he gave was

that, as labour in the colony was likely to continue high, he intended to order a large number of iron bridges. Our impression is that he afterwards said he had ordered, or that he had given instructions to order them. Nothing, however, has ever been heard of these iron bridges, and we are now coolly informed that there have not even been any enquiries into the use of any material except timber, which is too dear!¹⁸¹

At this time, information about the site of the bridge had been sent to the Colonial Agent in London, Edward Barnard, 'so that he could arrange for the design and fabrication of the girders.' Barnard failed to provide regular updates to the Victorian Government on the progress of the work, to the continual frustration of the newly-formed Central Road Board.¹⁸² However in 1854, the Central Road Board announced that orders had been made to England for iron bridges at Geelong and Melbourne:

Remittances have been made to England for the purchase of three wrought-iron arches of 200 feet span each; two of them intended for two-arch bridge over the Barwon at Geelong, and one for a bridge over the Yarra in Melbourne.¹⁸³

By late December 1855, the iron material had arrived and a building was under construction to store small ironwork.¹⁸⁴

Although the iron girders were claimed by the Country Roads Board in 1925 to have 'been originally designed for use in military bridging in the Crimea,'¹⁸⁵ this was not the case. A letter prepared by the manufacturer, William Fairbairn and Sons in Manchester, England, to Governor Sir Charles Hotham in December 1854 clearly revealed the provenance of the design and construction:

We have the honor to recommend to the notice of your Excellency the bearer hereof Mr. John Croll who has been selected by us, with the sanction and approval of the Agent-General for Crown Colonies in London, to superintend the reconstruction of the two wrought iron bridges which we have constructed for crossing the Barwon and Yarra Yarra Rivers.

Mr. Croll has had great experience in works of this character, having supervised most of the great Bridges which we have erected in this country and in Zealand. He is moreover an excellent practical Engineer and we feel sure your Excellency may with advantage to the public service avail yourself of Mr. Croll's practical knowledge and preserving ... [word to recognisable] habits.

We have confidence that the Bridges when completed will be found in every way satisfactory and we now

only regret that we had not at the commencement of our contract more information regarding the localities where they are to be placed and the nature of the traffic they will have to accommodate.

Within the last few days only, we have heard from your Excellency's predecessor, Mr. Latrobe, that a greater width of roadway might have (been) desirable – but we were bound by the instructions upon which we tendered and which fixed this width at 24 feet. Even during the progress of the work we proposed to the Engineer employed by Mr. Barnard, the addition of outside Galleries, which would have entirely separated the (passenger?) and carriage traffics, and thus greatly increased the accommodation of the Public.

But the Agent-General did not we believe feel justified in any departure from the terms of the instructions forwarded from the Colony, and these galleries, which when loaded with (passengers?) would add materially to the load upon the Bridge, cannot now be added with security.¹⁸⁶

Initially, the contract for the foundations of the bridge were awarded to a Mr McKinnon by early May 1855.¹⁸⁷ However, he declined to proceed with the work and further tenders at this time proved unsatisfactory.¹⁸⁸ It was also at this time when Mr Barnard decided against John Croll to superintend the erection of the bridge, preferring Mr Braithwaite instead. Unfavourable reports by Charles Rowand, road engineer (see following) resulted in Croll being appointed superintendent.¹⁸⁹

In October 1855, seven mechanics from England arrived to work on the bridge and that to be built at Richmond, Melbourne. However, the works at Geelong had been delayed and construction could not commence. In May 1856, working drawings for the bridge were completed by Charles Rowand. A month later in June 1856, a contract to construct the abutments and piers was awarded to Cripps and Co. at a cost of £14,564.¹⁹⁰

In October 1856, John Croll arrived after working on the Yarra bridge. He devised the method of construction in that timber falsework across the river spanning between the abutments and the central pier were to be erected so that the girders could be built directly onto it.¹⁹¹

Arguments ensued between Rowand and the contractors, leading to a suspension of works on 7 November 1856. In December 1857, new tenders were called and that of Pettigrew and McCann was accepted to complete the work which involve the foundation and masonry work for two abutments and as central pier.¹⁹²

It was not until December 1857 when tenders were called for the erection of staging for the building of the bridge,

the tender being awarded to David Barry and Co. for £1866.¹⁹³ Additional delays transpired until May 1858 when Barry recommenced work with the laying down of planking in readiness for the erection of the iron plating.¹⁹⁴

The bridge opened In October 1859.¹⁹⁵ It comprised a superstructure of "through" type, in two spans of 208 feet, each consisting of two wrought-iron "box" girders, 13 feet deep, giving a road width of 22 feet¹⁹⁶ (Figure 3.22).

Intimately involved in the design and construction of the bridge (and its approaches) was Charles Rowand (1826-1908), Engineer for the Western District of the Central Roads Board.¹⁹⁷ Rowand was the son of Dr Charles Rowand (born Paisley, Renfrewshire, Scotland, 1787) and Maria Hassells (nee Griffin) (born Whitbourne, Herefordshire, England, 1796).¹⁹⁸ Dr Charles and Maria Rowand had married in Lambeth, London, in 1818, where Charles appears to have relocated as a medical practitioner.¹⁹⁹ Charles Rowand junior was born at Kennington, Surrey, England, in 1826 and by 1841 the Rowand family (then comprising 6 children) were resident in the Town of St. Helier's on the Channel Island of Jersey.²⁰⁰ It was there were Maria Rowand died in 1849,²⁰¹ although Dr Charles Rowand graduated as a Doctor of Medicine from the University of Glasgow in 1844.²⁰² It also appears to have been in Scotland where Charles Rowand junior may have undertaken engineering studies (with Scotland being the centre for engineering, shipbuilding and the production of locomotives).²⁰³ There, he was employed in the construction of the Scottish Central, Scottish Midland Junction, Glasgow, Paisley and Greenock Railway lines.²⁰⁴

Following the death of Maria Rowand, Dr Charles Rowand, Charles Rowand junior and other members of the Rowand family emigrated to Port Phillip on the *Travancore* in 1849.²⁰⁵ The *Travancore* was one of three vessels chartered by the Rev. J. Dunmore Lang, Presbyterian Minister, in bringing 'selected free settlers with some means' to Victoria.²⁰⁶ Charles Rowand junior established a private practice as a civil engineer in Malop Street, Geelong, in 1850.²⁰⁷ It was also at this time when the Rev. A.M. Ramsay, Presbyterian Minister, wrote a letter of introduction to Governor Charles La Trobe on Charles Rowand's behalf, highlighting that his professional services as a civil engineer 'comes highly recommended'.²⁰⁸ The Rev. Ramsay had been 'a little acquainted' with Dr Charles Rowand, presumably in Glasgow where Ramsay was born and had studied at the University of Glasgow.²⁰⁹ Whether Ramsay's letter of introduction had influenced Rowand's appointment as a Road Engineer to the newly-established Central Roads Board in 1853 is unclear, but it was in this position where Rowand was responsible



Figure 3.22: Barwon Bridge, c.1910. Source: GRS 6996/0 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

for the design of a number of bridges in the Geelong district in the 1850s. In addition to his involvement in the iron bridge over the Barwon River, Rowand also designed bridges at Fyansford, Waurnd Ponds and Pollocksford.²¹⁰ From 1853 until 1859, Rowand also provided honorary engineering services to the Barrarbool Road Board, 'through the good graces of the Central Road Board.'²¹¹

Although the iron bridge over the Barwon River served the residents of the Geelong area for 67 years, it became too narrow for increased traffic and the required tram service to Belmont.²¹² In 1921, designs for a new bridge were commenced and in 1922, it was announced that a new concrete and steel bridge was to be erected over the Barwon River.²¹³ However, the Geelong City and Geelong West Councils opposed a complete rebuilding of the bridge.²¹⁴ This was due to the high cost of the work, the Country Roads Board having sought tenders on 'several occasions' which had 'greatly exceeded the expectations of the board's engineers.'²¹⁵ In January 1924, the Country Roads Board (with the approval of the Minister for Public Works) accepted the lowest tender from Armstrong-Whitworth Pty Ltd for £73,9000.²¹⁶ At that time, this was the largest contract entered into by the Country Roads Board since its inception.²¹⁷ The Board gave a description of the new bridge (Figure 3.23):

There are four spans of approximately 14 feet. This number of spans was adopted in order to salvage and make use of the foundations of the pier of the old two-span bridge. For the new superstructure steel-plate girders were used, as this was found to be the most economical form of construction and most suited to the site, which is an alluvial flat subject to great floods that rise within 2 feet of the girders. The new abutments and piers are of mass concrete, and the foundations of the old abutments and pier were utilised, being strengthened with additional piles where necessary. The two new piers rest on ironbark piles. The substructure supports four lines of steel girders, which are arranged in a series of cantilever and suspended spans so as to obtain the greatest possible economy in the steelwork. The reinforced concrete deck rests directly on the top flanges of the girders. It is surfaced with wood blocks.

The bridge is 33 feet wide between kerbs, and has a footway 5 feet wide on each side. The contract included excavation of the river channel so as to provide material for widening the approaches from 40 feet to 60 feet, at the same time straightening the river for rowing. The bridge carries a single line of electric tramway located on the centre line.²¹⁸

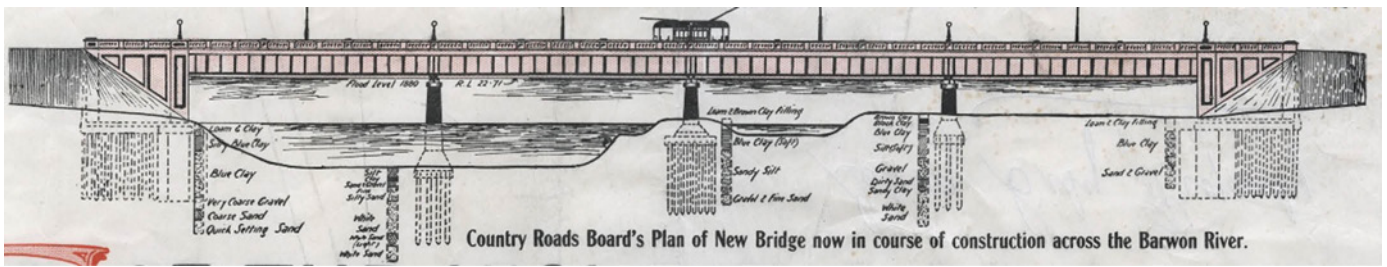


Figure 3.23: Elevation drawing of proposed Barwon Bridge, 1924. Source: Belmont Estate Subdivision Plan, 30 August 1924, GRS 2030/B30, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.24: Barwon Bridge, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1926. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 256/00018 Public Record Office Victoria.

Like earlier bridges at this location, construction was beset with some delays. The Building Trades Federation black-banned construction in early April, claiming that the contractors had not complied with the conditions of the building trades award.²¹⁹ The dispute resurfaced in August 1924,²²⁰ but was resolved. On 18 August 1926, the bridge (Figure 3.24) was officially opened by Lord Somers, Governor of Victoria.²²¹

In 1965, the Country Roads Board proposed to widen the Barwon Bridge to provide for four traffic lanes. In its report on the completion of the work in 1967, the Country Roads Board gave the following description:

The design provided for minor modification of the existing sub structure by the use of post-tensioned concrete crossheads cantilevered from the pier shafts to carry an additional row of welded steel plate girders, on each side of the bridge. The existing piers are founded on timber piles, some of which were driven for the original bridge in 1857. Some details of the construction follow.

The pier crossheads were extended by casting a beam around the top of each existing pier crosshead. The beam is supported on a bearing located at each end of each pier, and is cantilevered 6 feet beyond the outer bearing. The crosshead extension

beams are each prestressed with four BBR CS 150 post-tensioned tendons.

The girders on the existing bridge are 8 feet high riveted plate girders, 104 feet long. The widening incorporates an extra line of girders located 8 feet beyond the existing outer girder on each side of the bridge. The new girders are welded mild steel plate units, each 8 feet high of slender section to minimise weight.²²²

PRINCES BRIDGE, NEWTOWN-BELMONT

Like the Barwon Bridge, there was much deliberation and delay in the construction of the Princes Bridge that provided a river crossing between Newtown and Belmont. In 1855, the Newtown and Chilwell Council supported a petition 'from certain inhabitants' for the construction of a pontoon bridge at Rocky Point 'near Mr Gregory's house' at Marnockvale.²²³ Nothing eventuated and three years later in 1858 a meeting was called at the Duke of Wellington Hotel by the Newtown and Chilwell Council to discuss the building of a bridge. The outcome of the meeting was reported in *The Argus* newspaper on 1 July 1858:

A meeting of those inhabitants of Chilwell and Newtown interested in opening a new communication with the Barrabool Hills district by means of a bridge over the Barwon, was held at the Duke of Wellington Hotel. As in most instances of the kind, a difference of opinion existed as to the proper locality for the new bridge, which is intended to be formed of pontoons. It was finally decided that it should be at the south end of Pakington-street. This will most likely lead to a rumpus between the rival municipalities of South Barwon and that of Chilwell and Newtown.²²⁴



Figure 3.25: F. Kruger, Prince Albert Bridge, Chilwell, c.1866-78. Source: GRS 2009/00645a Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

In October 1859, a Committee was formed by the South Barwon Council in liaising with the Newtown and Chilwell Council on the suitability of constructing a bridge near Captain Fyans' property and linking with the southern end of the West Melbourne Road (Shannon Avenue), this being further west than the intended location at the south end of Pakington Street.²²⁵ The conference of Councils ultimately agreed to the location but further delays ensued when both municipalities could not agree to its funding and maintenance.²²⁶ The timber bridge was then built and funded by the Newtown and Chilwell Council.²²⁷ Seeking an acceptable contractor was an arduous process. The original successful tenders, Rourke and Munro, declined acceptance²²⁸ and in December 1861, the Council accepted the tender of Jonathan Chappell for £3957.²²⁹ Delays towards the completion of the bridge – three refusals to approve extensions of time – beset the Council with unwanted controversy.²³⁰ By November 1862, the bridge (Figure 3.25) was almost complete and the *Geelong Advertiser* gave a detailed description:

About a mile or less above the present Barwon bridge may now be seen a light airy looking structure thrown across the river this is what is to be known in future as the Prince Albert bridge, and has been erected by the Newtown and Chilwell Municipality at a cost of, including the extras, something like £5,600.

Mr Simon Fraser [sic. – Messrs. Chappell and Co.] has been the contractor, and the surveyor has passed the work and expressed himself much pleased with the manner in which the contract has been carried out. The bridge, although finished, will not be open for traffic until the municipality has had the bye-law empowering them to levy a toll on it be confirmed. This will be done and the bridge be thrown open; when no doubt it will prove a great benefit to many who find it at present rather a roundabout way of coming into town by the Barwon bridge. The structure is a timber truss bridge, the piles being brought from Bullarook Forest, and the other wood from Tasmania. It is built on eight tiers of piles, varying from fifty to sixty feet in length, and driven from fourteen to twenty-two feet into the bed of the river. The arch is of 240 feet span,

the roadway being 30 feet, and divided in the middle into two ways by a strong band railing fixed to the projections of the trusses, which have been extended for the purpose. This contrivance will tend to prevent accidents, as it will compel vehicles, on all occasions, to keep their proper side of the bridge. The arch has a camber of five feet in its whole length—the lower portions—the ends, being seventeen feet above the present level of the river, and a little above the level of the great flood of 1852: the crown of the arch being twenty-two feet above the present level of the water. The trusses or girders are of great strength, varying from twelve inches by fifteen in thickness to eighteen by fifteen, and are securely bolted and tied together by strong iron rods of nine to ten feet in length, and varying from two and a half to two inches in thickness. All the superstructure has received four coats of paint—white lead; while the lower timbers have been well tarred. The wood has been carefully selected—not a particle of rot being observable in any portion of it. We congratulate the Newtown and Chilwell Municipality on the manner in which this, their first large job, has been carried out.²³¹

The substantial cost of the bridge forced the Newtown and Chilwell Council to erect a toll gate to raise revenue.²³² Although named in honour of Prince Albert, it became colloquially known as Prince's Bridge.²³³

By 1886, the Prince Albert Bridge was in need of repair and it was closed to traffic.²³⁴ Tenders were called in early 1887 for its reconstruction by the Newtown and Chilwell Council.²³⁵ It was again in a dangerous state in 1888 and closed to traffic.²³⁶ The Borough Surveyor, R.S. Tuffs, prepared drawings for the new bridge and a contract was let to Messrs. J. and W. Tate at a cost of £2,394.²³⁷ Initially, the bridge was to be built of red gum, but approval was given for its construction of jarrah.²³⁸

On the opening of the new Prince Albert Bridge (Figure 3.26) in 31 May 1889, the *Geelong Advertiser* gave a glowing report:

The newly constructed bridge over the Barwon river at the beginning of the West Melbourne road [Shannon Avenue], in the borough of Newtown and Chilwell, and known as the Prince Albert bridge, was formally opened in the presence of about 100 persons yesterday afternoon. The new structure took the place of the old one, which was erected in 1862, but which, through decay, had been condemned a few years since. A great deal of trouble had been experienced in getting a new bridge, owing to the cost and the fact that other local bodies interested in the crossing over the river had declined to give pecuniary assistance ...

Mr R.S. Tuffs, said that as designer of the bridge he felt proud of the work. The contractors were first-class men and erected under a competent clerk of works the bridge over the Barwon river would prove, he considered, to be one of the best constructed in the district ... It is a pile bridge, necessitating the use of piles at least 64ft in length, and most of those supplied were 65ft long ... In the composition of the bridge, which is essentially a wooden one, several tons of superior wrought iron have been introduced, and this work is noticeable in the matter of angle braces, which are shaped obliquely at each angle to the piles and girders, and bolted thereto. These braces have a flange of 4 inches, the material being half inch thick, and after descending each pile about 4ft., continue without interruption along the girder the next pile. This style of truss has been introduced by Mr R.S. Tuffs ...²³⁹

In 1964-65, a five-span reinforced concrete and steel bridge was erected on a realigned northern approach from Shannon Avenue. The bridge was 480 feet long and 28 feet 'between kerbs' and continued the name, 'Princes Bridge'²⁴⁰ (Figure 3.27). It was opened by the Mayor of Newtown, Cr Zillah Crawcour, on 15 April 1965.²⁴¹

QUEENS BRIDGE, NEWTOWN-HIGHTON

Simultaneous to the construction of the first Prince Albert Bridge by the Newtown and Chilwell Council in 1861 was the building of a bridge at the location of B.G. Levien's punt adjacent to Queen's Park at the west end of Aphrasia Street. Initially proposed as a cattle bridge, community opposition to such a limited purpose caused a reconsideration by the Council, as did offers of funds towards its erection.²⁴² D.W. Petrie, Esq., of Moorabool street, offered £100 'towards the erection of a traffic bridge in lieu of a cattle bridge at Levien's Punt; and the Town Clerk was instructed to write to Mr. Petrie stating that the Council had already decided on a cattle bridge at Levien's.'²⁴³ The tender of Charles Ross for £105/10/0 (or £85/10/0 if the piles were not required to be drive into the river bed) had been accepted.²⁴⁴ By 20 June 1861, the Town Surveyor had revised the plan for the bridge so that it would be made available for traffic. The Council accepted the amendment and were prepared to provide an addition £44/10/0 'to make the approaches if the balance were subscribed by the public.'²⁴⁵ By September 1861, the timber bridge (Figure 3.28) had been completed, the *Geelong Advertiser* reporting that 'the new bridge constructed at Levien's; the bridge is now open for traffic, and the ratepayers appear to avail themselves of the facility in getting their cattle to the municipal commonage on the other side of the river.'²⁴⁶ Named 'Queen's Bridge' in honour of Queen Victoria,



Figure 3.26: Prince Albert Bridge, 1928. Source: *Geelong: 55 Photographic Views, Geelong, Victoria, Australia*, The Valentine Publishing Co. Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 1928, p.15.



Figure 3.28: Queen's Bridge, Queen's Park, c.1918. Source: *Geelong for Business Health Pleasure*, G.A. List, Geelong, 1918.



Figure 3.27: Princes Bridge looking north from the south bank of the Barwon River, 2019. Source: David Rowe.



Figure 3.29: Queens Bridge, 1998. Source: David Rowe.

colloquially it was widely known as 'Levien's Bridge' after B.G. Levien. In 1863, W. Stitt Jenkins had taken exception to the use of the name 'Levien's Bridge' and made his concerns clear in a letter to the editor in the *Geelong Advertiser*. The Editor replied that "'Levien's Bridge' is by far the better name of the two, and Levien's Bridge we shall continue to call it."²⁴⁷

In 1871, tenders were called 'for the re-erection of Queen's Bridge', to be completed by the end of that year by Messrs. Martin and Dowie.²⁴⁸ It seems that the bridge was not finished until mid-1872.²⁴⁹

Floods in 1880 forced the bridge from its abutments and carried it downstream.²⁵⁰ Thomas Pescott was awarded the contract of repairing the bridge at a cost of £47.²⁵¹

In 1930, a new Queen's Bridge (Figure 3.29) was officially opened by the Mayor of Newtown and Chilwell. It was the culmination of years of bickering with the South Barwon Shire Council over funding the bridge. Costing £4000, it was comprised of a steel structure and an improved road grade had been excavated at the west end of Aphrasia Street.²⁵² The single lane bridge remains in use. In 1963, a cantilevered footway and 18-inch water main were added while in 1971 the top cord was raised and the deck modified.²⁵³

JAMES HARRISON BRIDGE, SOUTH GEELONG & BELMONT

In April 1987, work began on what was called the La Trobe Terrace Project by the Road Construction Authority, involving the building of a reinforced concrete bridge at the southern end of Latrobe Terrace to provide an alternative bypass of Geelong's central business district. The project also involved the duplication of Settlement Road to form the then Princes Highway.²⁵⁴ Costing \$26 million, the 520 m long structure²⁵⁵ was built as twin parallel double lane cantilever bridges featuring concrete box girder spans. Completed in 1990, it was named the James Harrison Bridge in memory of the founding editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* (see later subsection).

RURAL BRIDGES

Several bridges at river crossings were required to connect the arterial roads from other parts of Victoria. The key road bridges that were constructed in the 19th and 20th centuries were as follows:

BATESFORD

The earliest bridge over the Moorabool River was built by the British pastoralist, William Roadknight in 1836.²⁵⁶ He was assisted by the Wadawurrung in its construction.²⁵⁷ Situated below Bell Post Hill (and not Batesford), the River Red Gum bridge provided easier access to the fledgling settlement of Geelong from the west with Roadknight having first settled on the northern and southern banks of the Barwon River south-west of the Moorabool in 1836.²⁵⁸ While Roadknight claimed in 1841 that this 'was the first bridge erected at Port Phillip',²⁵⁹ it was washed away in a subsequent flood by 1838.²⁶⁰

In c.1845, a timber bridge over the Moorabool River was built by public subscription.²⁶¹ Having stood the test of winter floods, the *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate* lamented its poor condition in 1847:

This erection has been repeatedly patched in former years, but is now in such a precarious state, that the first flood will probably carry it away altogether. This bridge is on one of the highways of the colony – the Port Fairy, Portland, and Adelaide mail being conveyed across it.²⁶²

By September 1847, the bridge had collapsed due to flood with a bullock dray that was crossing the bridge at the time having been 'precipitated into the river.'²⁶³ Although repairs were carried out at this time, tenders were called for a new timber bridge in January 1848.²⁶⁴ The tender was let to Robert Wayman at a cost of £368.²⁶⁵ Wayman was also responsible for the building of the Barwon Bridge



Figure 3.30: Batesford Bridge, 1898-1918. Source: accession H33027/11c State Library of Victoria.

(see earlier subsection) and following his insolvency, the Batesford Bridge was not finished until November 1848 by Messrs, Girvin and Roberts. The total cost of the bridge construction was £491.²⁶⁶

In early 1853 following flood damage, tenders were called for the building of another timber bridge.²⁶⁷ Completed by mid-1854,²⁶⁸ the bridge was designed by Charles Rowand.

It was not until late 1858 when a more permanent stone bridge was proposed at Batesford.²⁶⁹ David Barry was the successful tenderer for the bluestone bridge at a cost of £3886.²⁷⁰ In April 1859, the *Geelong Advertiser* gave a description of the impending bridge:

It is expected that it will be five months yet before the new stone bridge over the Moorabool at Batesford will be completed. The bridge will have five arches, and here ... piles must be driven before the foundation can be laid, as no bottom can be got more solid than mud, without digging to an unreasonable depth. Piles have already been driven for three of the piers and the stonework has been carried above the winter level of the river ... The raised approaches to the new bridge on either side of the river are in course of completion. There are said to be forty men employed on the work. The contract is in the hands of Mr Barry.²⁷¹

The bridge (Figure 3.30) was opened in late 1859.²⁷² It provided a sound and reliable river crossing for over 110 years.

In 1970-71, a new bridge was erected adjacent to the stone bridge, the construction included steel H piles.²⁷³



Figure 3.31: J. Norton, Fyansford Bridge, c.1866-1880. Source: accession H1822 State Library of Victoria.

FYANSFORD BRIDGE

While Fyansford had been served by the ford constructed by first Police Magistrate, Captain Foster Fyans, following his arrival in 1837, the influx of gold diggers to Geelong enroute to the Victorian goldfields necessitated the need for a substantial bridge. On 31 January 1854, the Central Road Board sought tenders 'for the erection of a timber bridge, with stone abutments, over the river Moorabool, near Fyansford.'²⁷⁴ Designed by Charles Rowand and built by Collier and Robertson, the timber bridge (Figure 3.31) was opened on 1 September 1854 amid considerable fanfare in the presence of the Mayor of Geelong, Captain Foster Fyans and a detachment of troopers.²⁷⁵ Called the Fyans Ford Bridge in honour of Captain Fyans, the Mayor remarked that the 'fragments' still remained of the 'humble habitation' commenced by Fyans in 1836.²⁷⁶

By 1888, repairs to the bridge by the Corio and Bannockburn Shire Councils had amounted to £900.²⁷⁷ The tender of Baxter and Sherbourne had been accepted for £255 for additional repairs.²⁷⁸ By 1897, the Engineers for both the Corio and Bannockburn Shire Councils advised that the bridge was 'in such a rotten condition that its collapse at any moment may be expected.'²⁷⁹

In 1898, tenders were called for constructing a new bridge in either steel or concrete. After much discussion between the Corio and Bannockburn Shire Councils, and with financial support from the Victorian Government, the tender from Monash and Anderson, engineers, was accepted for £5309.²⁸⁰ The new bridge was to be erected on the Monier concrete system having been designed by J.T.N. Anderson, engineer, in consultation with Carter and Gummow and Company (agents in New South Wales for the Monier System of reinforced concrete) and with Richard Taylor of the Fyansford Cement Works.²⁸¹ It was one of six bridges designed as Monier arches by Monash and Anderson between 1897 and 1901.²⁸² Anderson's business partner was John (later Sir John) Monash, distinguished reinforced concrete engineer and later revered army officer and first general manager of the State Electricity Commission.²⁸³ By October 1899, the arches for the new bridge had been completed (Figure 3.32) as reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The most important stage in the building of the Monier concrete bridge at Fyansford was successfully passed at 7 o'clock last evening by the completion of the final section of the arches upon which the roadway is to be carried. The principle underlying the construction

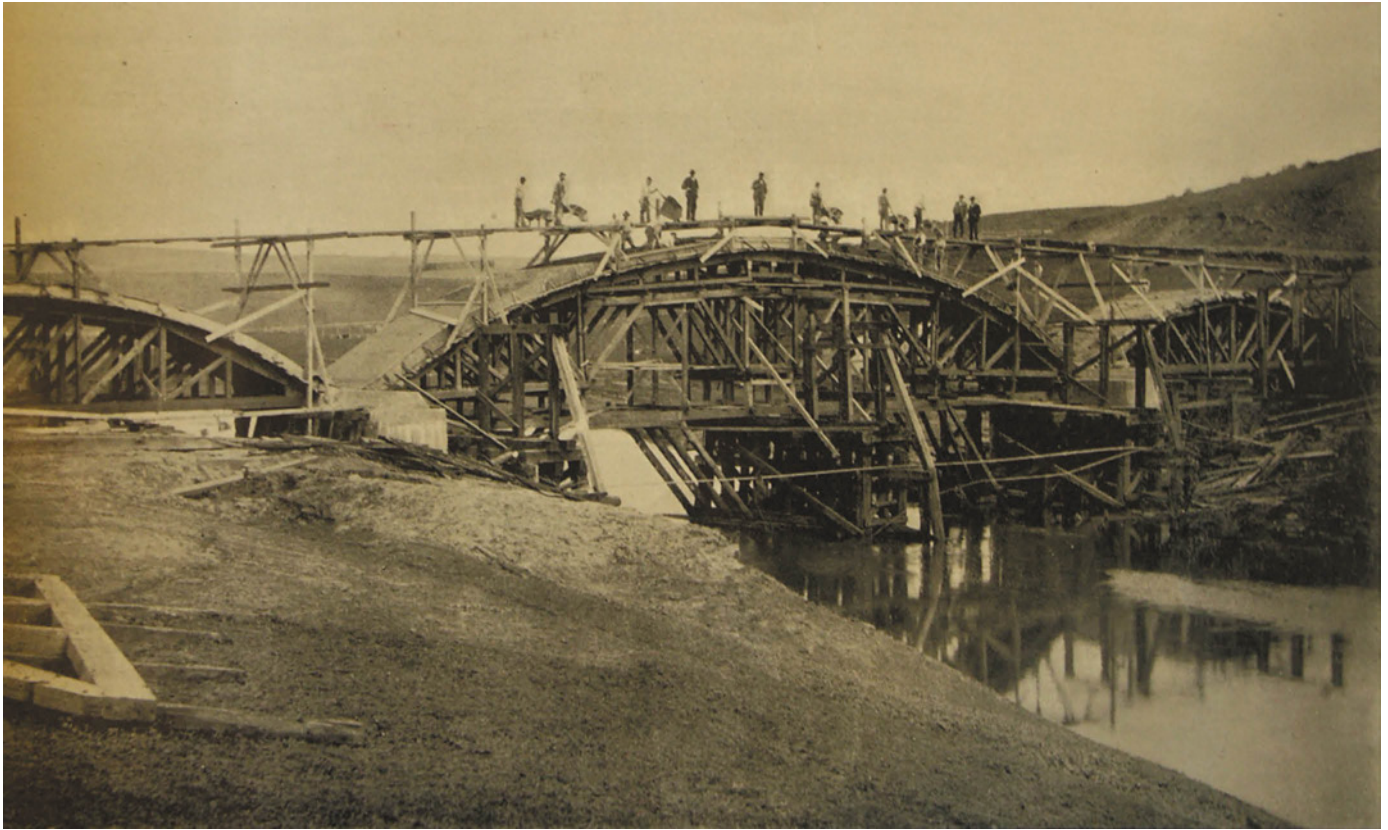


Figure 3.32: Monier bridge at Fyansford under construction, 1899. Source: *Cazalys Contractor Report*, vol.7, no.10, 5 September 1899, lift-out, State Library of Victoria.

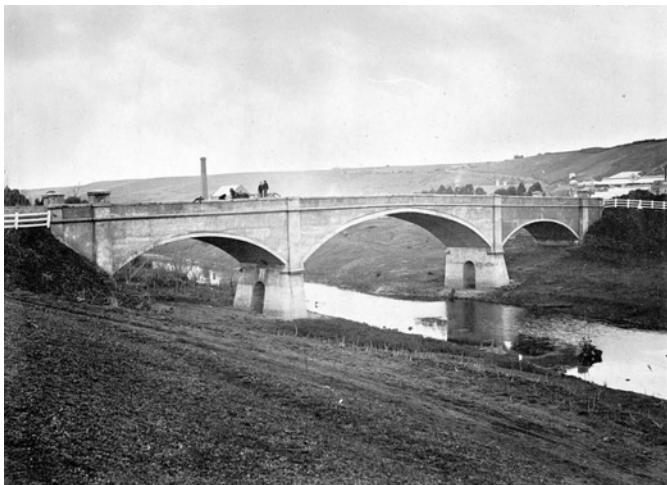


Figure 3.33: Monier bridge at Fyansford, c.1890. Source: Item MM5268 Museums Victoria.

of bridges of the Monier type is simplicity itself, the arches being moulded in cement upon a framework of timber. It is a heavy undertaking, the formation of the curves in which the material is set being prodigious. The formation of the arches was undertaken in two longitudinal sections, the first, which was completed about nine weeks since, being allowed to consolidate

before the commencement of the second, was entered upon. Viewed from the south side it is a noble looking structure, the central span of 107 feet being remarkably airy looking considering the nature of the construction. The setting of the second strip was commenced on Wednesday morning, and continued without interruption till its completion last evening. Fyansford cement was exclusively employed in the preparation of the Monier, and Mr Anderson, one of the contractors, speaks in the highest terms of its quality The Monier basis of the arches is 16 inches thick, and it is clearly defined against the concrete of the superstructure like a curved band. Its tensile strength is 40 per cent greater than that required by the Austrian [sic.] Government tests in connection with bridge work; and a glance at the structure conveys the idea of indestructibility. Messrs Monash and Anderson, the contractors for the work, began operations on March 29th, and the completion of the bridge is due on December 29th. Since they undertook this contract they have secured others for building bridges in various parts of the colony on similar lines, and a rocky formation at Brethen enabled them to put in for the construction of a Monier bridge at that place for a lower price than timber.²⁸⁴

In February 1900, a load test was successfully completed on the new bridge (Figure 3.33) following 'fourteen drays heavily laden with limestone, and representing a total weight of 40 tons' having been situated over the centre arch. After the dead load test, a Corporation steam roller slowly traversed the bridge with minimal deflection.²⁸⁵ Yet, controversy prevailed over the ensuing weeks in relation to the contractors' fees.²⁸⁶ Monash and Anderson took legal action against the Shires of Bannockburn and Corio for recovery of fees and they were successful in receiving an additional £1902/10/- on the claim for extras and breach of contract.²⁸⁷ Nevertheless, the bridge was opened to the public. In 1906, 'an ominous crack appeared' in the new brick warranting a reported by Mr Catani, engineer of the Public Works Department.²⁸⁸ Repairs were carried out in May of that year²⁸⁹ after the Corio and Bannockburn Shire Engineers claimed that 'the condition of the bridge was not so bad as made out by Mr. Catani, the Government engineer' and all that was needed was strengthening of the spandrel walls with iron tie rod.²⁹⁰

In 1969, a new reinforced concrete bridge, being 270 feet long and 28 feet wide (between kerbs) was constructed to replace the Monier arch bridge.²⁹¹ The earlier concrete bridge was retained to the north of the new bridge.

LITTLE RIVER

For some years, and reiterated in 1862 by the inhabitants of Little River, was the need for a bridge or dam over the river.²⁹² Crossing the river over one of the fords was especially precarious at times of flood and in 1863, John Power, while attempting to cross the ford near the Rothwell Hotel, lost his life. The *Geelong Advertiser* scathingly reported the tragedy which it claimed could have been avoided if a bridge had been built:

Neither the Little River nor the Werribee can now be crossed except at the risk of life – a fact which reflects but little credit either to the Road Boards or the Government. Repeated applications have been made to each for a bridge or railway approaches without effect, and at Little River the lives and property of the inhabitants are constantly jeopardized by their being compelled to make use of the rail-track.²⁹³

During the following years, debate continued between the Corio and Wyndham Road Boards and the Victorian Government as to who should fund a bridge and where it should be located. Three road bridges were eventually constructed in the 19th century while new bridges over the Little River in the Little River area were constructed in the 20th century.

ROTHWELL BRIDGE

While the Corio Road Board claimed that the construction of a bridge was outside its jurisdiction, it was prepared to co-operate with the Wyndham Road Board for the building of a bridge at Rothwell once funds became available.²⁹⁴ Corio Road Board Chairman and Member of Parliament, J. Cummins, called for £1200 to be placed as an additional estimate in the Victorian Government budget for 1863 for the construction of a bridge over the Little River at Rothwell. He complained that 'this aid had been promised by successive governments, and the bridge was much needed for the prevention of accidents.'²⁹⁵ However, the motion was not carried and the funds not set aside for this purpose.²⁹⁶ Cummins persevered and was able to secure £600 as a special grant from the Commissioner of Roads and Bridges.²⁹⁷ Further hurdles followed, with the Wyndham Road Board declining to contribute to the cost of the bridge.²⁹⁸

In November 1863, the public works committee of the Corio Road Board were given the task of visiting potential sites along the Little River for the construction of the bridge. As reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Messrs. Wallace, Preston, King, and Garrett went round and pointed out the most eligible points, in their respective opinions – one at the end of Garrett's Road; one near the north side of the Railway Station, near the ballast cutting on the Railway Reserve, and opposite to Mr Wallace's land, near the present railway bridge on its south side, at a spot indicated by Mr Martin, one of the railway engineers, who was commissioned to select a site about two years ago by the railway department. The other site inspected was offered by Mr Preston, on his land, and opposite a water reserve near Mr Francis' property. The committee then proceeded to inspect the Rothwell Ford, and though there appeared some slight difference of opinion as to the best, or at least the most acceptable site for the bridge, there was none whatever as to the necessity of immediate steps being taken to have this crossing on the main line of road from Geelong to Melbourne put in proper repair immediately. It is understood that the surveyor is to prepare plans and estimates of cost of bridges, &c, at the various places pointed out, and have them ready in about a fortnight to submit to a special meeting of the Corio Road Board. After that a meeting of the inhabitants of Little River is to be held, to decide upon the best site. The approval of the Government must then be obtained before tenders can be called for the erection of the bridge. There appears to be a great deal of red-tapeism imported into what should be a very simple affair. Those persons who are interested

in the erection of the bridge, should bear in mind that the special appropriating of £600 will lapse if not expended during the current year.²⁹⁹

With the death of the Corio Road Board Engineer, Edward Prowse, his widow had been allowed to name his assistant, Bartlett to act as Board Engineer, but the Corio Road Board had decided to delay plans until a new Engineer was appointed.³⁰⁰

In December 1863, a special meeting of the Corio Road Board was held at Ashby's Hotel, Rothwell, to discuss the siting of the anticipated bridge. No definitive resolution was to be made.³⁰¹ Debate continued into 1864. In May of that year, a meeting of residents of Little River had sought confirmation that the special grant of £600 would still be available for the building of the bridge, the location desired being 'on the road leading through O'Brien's property', as opposed to 'another site' desired by the Government.³⁰²

At the June meeting of the Corio Road Board, two memorials were presented that had been forwarded to the Government by local residents seeking the bridge to be built on different sites, 'and in some instance the same names appear[ed] on each.'³⁰³ The preferred location by the Corio Road Board was 'where the government road crosses' the Little River 'at the north boundary of the Parish of Murtcaim.'³⁰⁴ Local resident and hotelier of Little River, Michael McShane, objected to this location and 'urged the Council to adhere to their former intention to have the proposed bridge at Little River erected in the immediate vicinity of his property', claimed that 'if the bridge be built on the site lately decided on, the effect would be to render his premises entirely valueless.'³⁰⁵

It was not until January 1866 when construction began on a bluestone bridge at the Rothwell Ford to a design by John Barter (1792-1888), Wyndham Shire Engineer.³⁰⁶ John Berkley Barter was born at Kilmichael, Country Cork, Ireland in 1792, the son of Richard and Elizabeth (nee Berkley) Barter.³⁰⁷ He had been articled to his uncle, John Bennett, a solicitor in Melbourne, 'but ran away and joined the "Queen of Spain's Legion," and served in Belgium under Lord Lyndock in 1814, and with the allied armies under the Iron Duke, in France and Belgium in 1815.'³⁰⁸ Present at the Quatre Bras, and attached to the 6th Brigade of the 8th Dragoons, he marched with allied troops in Parish in 1814. Barter was a personal friend of the Duke of Wellington.³⁰⁹ In the 1840s he worked as an assistant engineer for the Public Works Department in Dublin but by the mid-1850s he was resident in Melbourne where he worked as a surveyor of the Richmond Council before transferring to the Wyndham Council in 1863.³¹⁰ He was twice married – first to Helen Hodder Masters

(1824-c.1845) and then to Helen Sarah Graves (1820-1908) and had 11 children.³¹¹

The contract for the Rothwell bridge had been awarded to Clement Nash of Geelong at a cost of £1100.³¹² Controversy ensued during the completion of the structure when Nash disputed the refusal of the Shire Engineers (Goodall and Barter) to certify the amount owed to him.³¹³ Nash sued the Little River Bridge Committee for £500.³¹⁴ This led to an embarrassing mix up in relation to the official opening of the two-arched stone bridge which did not go unnoticed by the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The Rothwell Bridge was to have been formally opened on Thursday last, but owing to some misunderstanding on the part of the Building Committee only one of the representatives of Wyndham-shire was present. It appears that a resolution was arrived at a previous meeting that the committee would not hold another meeting until the surveyors had passed this work. This Mr Barter refused to do until certain trifling cuttings had been attended to; and as soon as this has been effected the formal opening will take place. There was a re-enactment of *la journe des dupes*, for it appears that semi-official invitations were issued to the Councillors of the Shire of Corio to attend a public dinner at King's Hotel, to give eclat to the event, and consequently there was a strong muster, the only absentee being Councillor Officer; but to their utter disgust not the slightest preparations had been made. As usual in such cases, nobody was to blame; somebody told somebody else to give the necessary orders, and that somebody forgot all about it until it was too late. I trust they will be more fortunate next time.³¹⁵

After years of wrangling and delays, the Rothwell Bridge was to only last 14 years. In September 1880, a substantial flood brought about 'such damage as to cause an almost total wreck of the structure.'³¹⁶ A Bridge Committee was formed comprising the three representatives of the Peak Riding of the Corio Shire, and an equal number of representatives of the South Riding of the Wyndham Shire was appointed. On the recommendation by Mr Nolan, Engineer for the Wyndham Shire Council, it was decided to reconstruct the stone bridge as a four-arched segmental structure (Figure 3.34), doubling the number of arches from the original bridge design.³¹⁷ A Mr Thwaite was awarded the contract at a cost of £1005/8/8 and the bridge was completed in 1881.³¹⁸

The Rothwell Bridge formed the main method of crossing the Little River on the Melbourne to Geelong Road for almost 80 years. In 1957, with the duplication of the Princes Highway, reinforced concrete bridges were built



Figure 3.34: Rothwell Bridge, Little River, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1929. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 28/00073 Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.36: Ripley Bridge under construction, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1928. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 28/00021. Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.35: Grant's Bridge, Little River, 1998. Source: David Rowe.



Figure 3.37: Newly completed Ripley Bridge, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1928. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 28/00022. Public Record Office Victoria.

over the Little River south of the Rothwell Bridge, in the vicinity of the original 'Lower Melbourne Road'.³¹⁹

GRANT'S BRIDGE

During the delays and deliberations in the construction of the Rothwell Bridge, a second bridge was constructed at Garrett's Crossing, Little River, in 1866-67, the preferred location for a bridge by Mr Garrett and other local residents.³²⁰ Tenders had been called in July 1866, and Joshua Metcalf won the contract to construct the bridge at a cost of £1444/18/6.³²¹ As reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*, the bridge had been designed by D.K. Goodall, Corio Shire Engineer (see Theme 7), was to be built in bluestone ashlar and was to:

... consist of a single arch of forty-five foot span, the crown of the arch being thirty foot three inches above the summer level of the river, the pillars, pilasters, &c., rising to a height of thirty-nine feet. The balustrades to be of timber. The width of the bridge to be twenty-two feet.³²²

The bridge (Figure 3.35) was funded by the Corio and Wyndham Shire Councils, the special grant of £600 obtained by M.J. Cummins in 1863, and an additional grant of £200 obtain by the Hon. J.F. Sullivan. It was named Grant's Bridge, presumably after John Grant whose pre-emptive right was to the north of Station Peak.³²³

OTHER ROAD BRIDGES OVER THE LITTLE RIVER

RIPLEY BRIDGE

In late 1872, the Corio Shire Council received a letter from Messrs. Brown, Arnold and Lewis, ratepayers, requesting the construction of a bridge or crossing over the Little River 'on the road north of Mr Fawcett's selection.'³²⁴ Tenders were duly sought in March 1873 for a bridge³²⁵ to provide a safe crossing over the Little River on the Geelong and Bacchus Marsh Road.³²⁶ J.T. Kirk and Son were awarded the contract at cost of £220 to build what was described as 'a neat structure' to 'be substantially built of timber, and 99 feet long.'³²⁷ This bridge was completed in 1874.³²⁸

In 1928, the timber bridge was replaced by a three-span two-pier type concrete structure constructed by the Country Roads Board (Figures 3.36-37). It measured 86 feet overall with a centre span of 50 feet, and a width between kerbs of 20 feet.³²⁹

KIRK'S BRIDGE

In January 1879, the jointed Bridge-building Committee of the Corio and Wyndham Shire Councils accepted the tender of J.T. Kirk to construct a timber bridge over the Little River at what is now known as Kirks Bridge Road at a cost of £561/16/0.³³⁰ The bridge was almost completed by July 1879.³³¹ The bridge appears to have been named after its builder, John Thomas Kirk, inaugural Councillor with the Corio Shire and road contractor who had taken up farmland in the Parish of Murtcaim (see Theme 7).

WAURN PONDS BRIDGE, WAURN PONDS

In September 1851, inhabitants of Geelong petitioned the Geelong Town Council for the construction of a bridge over the Waurm Chain of Ponds.³³² In 1853, F. Murphy, President of the Central Road Board, called tenders for the construction of a timber bridge over the Waurm Ponds on the Colac Road. It had been designed by Charles Rowand.³³³ By August 1854, the timber bridge and approaches had been erected over Waurm Ponds Creek at the junction of the Geelong to Colac and Geelong to Loutit Bay Roads at Waurm Ponds.³³⁴ It was washed away in a flood in January 1868 and the lessee of the toll gate, J. Callaghan, complained of 'the severe loss entailed upon him' as a consequence.³³⁵

By March 1868, the Barrabool Shire Surveyor, Andrew McWilliams had designed a new stone bridge.³³⁶ The tender was awarded to Clement Nash at a cost of £883/8/4.³³⁷ Works proceeded in the ensuing months and in May 1868 the *Geelong Advertiser* gave a glowing report:



Figure 3.38: J.T. Collins, Waurm Ponds stone bridge, January 1970. Source: accession H98.2586 State Library of Victoria.

The new bridge at the Waurm Ponds is rapidly approaching completion, and promises to be one of the prettiest country bridges in the district. The walls are ready, and the arch is about to be commenced, the bluestone foundation, limestone walls, and bluestone "springstone" having a good effect.³³⁸

By July 1868, the bridge (Figure 3.38) had been opened with the Governor of Victoria crossing it enroute to the Western District.³³⁹

In 1954-55, given the unsafe sharp turn in the Princes Highway, the Country Roads Board commenced construction on a new concrete bridge adjacent to the existing stone bridge. As reported in the Board's *Annual Report*:

A scheme for the improvement of the alignment of the highway at this point involved the construction of a new bridge to replace an old stone arch bridge. A contract has been let for the work, and, despite foundation troubles, good progress has been made.³⁴⁰

The bridge was completed in 1956.

BARWON HEADS BRIDGE

Although the initial proposal for the Great Ocean Road in 1918 was for a commencement at Barwon Heads with the construction of a reinforced concrete bridge, it was not until December 1925 when the staunch proponent of the Great Ocean Road, Howard Hitchcock, announced to the Barwon Heads Park Trust of the impending erection of a bridge.³⁴¹ The new river crossing was to be accessed by a road through the Barwon Heads Park and Hitchcock declared that as 'this would mean considerably more traffic over the Park, therefore it would need to be kept in very sound condition.'³⁴²



Figure 3.39: Barwon Heads Bridge viewed from Ocean Grove, photographic collection, Roads Corporation, 1927. Source: VPRS 17684/P3 it 25/00022 Public Record Office Victoria.

In September, 1926, the Country Roads Board called tenders for the construction of the bridge at a cost of £11,726/7/8.³⁴³ The designer and supervising engineer of the bridge construction was Mr. D. Darwin, with the plans being drawn by Mr. W. Galt and the calculations by Mr. J. Masterston of the Country Roads Board.³⁴⁴ Between 1926 and 1927, the bridge was constructed by a company headed by S. Patience.³⁴⁵ Tragically, Patience was killed at the Marshalltown Yard during the building of the bridge.³⁴⁶ According to Les Jennings, Ronald Tait was the pile driver for the construction of the bridge, with other workers being Joe Tait, Jim Cotter, and Jim Jennings.³⁴⁷

Completed by December 1927,³⁴⁸ the Country Roads Board gave a detailed description of the bridge (Figure 3.39) that was to become a tourist attraction as much as an efficient mode of river crossing for pedestrians and vehicles:

The longest timber bridge yet erected by the Board was completed during this year, namely, that at the mouth of the Barwon River. The Bellarine peninsula contains several popular holiday townships, and the linking of these with Barwon Heads and so with the tourist area further along the Great Ocean-road constitutes an important part of the project for providing a continuous scenic highway along the south-western coast of Victoria.

The alignment selected for the crossing is just above the lowest of the small boat jetties and the adjacent

park, in direct extension of the main street of Barwon Heads township, affording easy road approaches at each end, with a good view of the coast, and at the same time at a sufficient distance from the sea to make the structure free from the most severe wave action, whilst given a considerable anchorage area for boats on the downstream side. The bridge contains 33 spans of 30 feet and one of 19 feet at the centre of the low-tide channel, were a lift span may be introduced at some future date. The width between kerbs is 16 feet, and there is a footway 5 feet wide on the downstream side, where there are also four refuge bays for use by fishermen.

To make the bridge as permanent as possible, New South Wales turpentine was used for piles and ironbark for braces and cross-heads of the piers, these timbers being relatively durable in sea water. For the superstructure messmate from Colac District was used. Funds were provided partly by local subscriptions and donations from local authorities and partly by loan funds under Permanent Works.³⁴⁹

In 2006, independent structural engineering reports identified significant deterioration in the timber structure of the bridge. In July 2006, the Victorian Government announced that the iconic bridge was to be saved from demolition but in the following months there was considerable debate about the extent of reconstruction and the construction of another bridge and its potential location.³⁵⁰ In January 2007, an Independent Panel

found that the construction of a new bridge adjacent to the existing bridge was preferable to the construction of another bridge further upstream.³⁵¹ The Panel also concluded that the design and construction of the original bridge needed to be adapted to meet contemporary legislative requirements and vehicular loadings.³⁵² Drawings for the adapted and reconstructed bridge were prepared by VicRoads and Peter Elliott Architecture.³⁵³ Works commenced on the rebuilding of the timber bridge and the construction of the pedestrian bridge in May 2009, with the \$40 million completed and opened to traffic in December 2010.³⁵⁴

ROAD ASSOCIATED EVENTS AND BUSINESSES

COACH MANUFACTORIES

The provision of tracks and roads brought about the need of coaches, carriages and buggies as some of the earliest modes of European transport within the Geelong district. Local coach factories (which not surprisingly also included the blacksmith and wheelwright trades) were substantial employers. From the four coach makers in Geelong by January 1854,³⁵⁵ there were 21 coach making and repair businesses in existence in the Geelong area by 1867.³⁵⁶ A list of the carriage, coach and wagon builders is given in Appendix 3.1. One of the earliest was that of Thomas Stoneman (c.1822-1887), established in 1852-53 at the corner of Latrobe Terrace and Spring Street (see Theme 7 for further details). Another was that of Henry Palmer who first established his coach factory in Malop Street in 1848.³⁵⁷ This business was taken over by Frederick G. Woods in 1853³⁵⁸ and then by G. Milnes by 1855. At this time, the manufactory was located in Corio Street near the Bellevue Hotel.³⁵⁹

By 1873, there was a sufficient number of coach-making manufactories to warrant the formation of a Geelong branch of the Victorian United Journeymen Coachmakers' Society (a precursor to the establishment of a trade union the late 1890s for coach-making employees).³⁶⁰ T. Green was elected the inaugural president, with J. Fare, vice-president, J. Clarkes, treasurer, and J. Gill, secretary. The aim of the Society was outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

That the object of the Society shall be to give mutual support to its members, in assisting them to obtain a fair remuneration for their labor, to afford protection in cases of oppression, to assist members out of work to obtain employment, and as far as practicable to encourage and protect the interests of the legitimate coach-builders.³⁶¹

In 1882, the Society supported and implemented the aims of the Eight Hours League, whereby 'nine hours' pay for eight hours' work' would commence in early 1883 and steps taken to be taken 'to secure a half holiday on Saturdays.'³⁶²

The diversity of employees required by the local coach manufactories, and the complexity of the coach building process, was outlined in the *Geelong Times*. In addition to blacksmiths and wheelwrights, the manufactories required skilled carpenters, spring-makers and painters:

Coach-making is divided into a great many branches of skilled workmanship. These are the body-making, the carriage-making, the wheel-making; the spring-making, the axletree-making, the smithing, the trimming and the painting. Nearly all these various branches can now be undertaken in the colony as successfully as in the older continents, but the materials used in the them have nearly all to be imported.

Axletree-making, too, is not sufficiently developed in this country to leave us independent of home workmen; though, possibly; a little judicious protection in that line might make a difference. The timber used in coachbuilding has to be mostly imported. Ash, elm, and hickory are the imported woods chiefly used.

Our colonial timber does not seem to have found favour with the coachbuilding trade generally as yet. Possibly the quality of our Australian woods has not yet been fairly tested. Full grown and thoroughly seasoned wood is necessary in the construction of coaches. The steel for the springs of coaches used to be all got from Germany. The English article, however, has long since beaten the German, and here in Victoria we are able to make springs as good as any fabricated in London or Edinburgh.

About £1000 worth of ash and hickory is annual imported into Geelong from England and America for the coachbuilding trade.

A great deal of ready-made iron work for coach construction is also imported from England, but all the best iron work used is made in the colony.

The leather used in coach-building comes principally from England and America. It is to be hoped, however, that the magnificent show of colonially prepared leather in the Melbourne Exhibition, will do something towards bringing us the use of Australian fabrics in preference to the imported one. The leathers used are enamelled leather for the heads and knee boots, and spit leather for the dash and wings, also the artificial or imitation leather. All these come chiefly from England.



Figure 3.40: Cobb & Co. Coach, presumed to have been manufactured in Geelong in c.1880. Source: M. Churchward, 'Cobb & Co. Coach, Victoria, circa 1880' in Museums Victoria Collections, <https://collections.museumvictoria.com.au/articles/15079>, accessed 3 January 2019.

The axle-trees are, as a rule, all imported, except when some special size is required which cannot be obtained without making it purposely. Very powerful boring machines are required for making the axle-trees, and the fabrication of this important portion of vehicles is a distinct industry in England.³⁶³

A number of coach manufacturers endured in the Geelong area until the advent of the motor car. In 1910, there were fourteen carriage, coach and wagon builders and dealers in Geelong, and eighteen in 1915 (see Appendix 3.1).³⁶⁴ Although there were still 10 coach builders operating in 1925, by 1935 they had all but disappeared.³⁶⁵

Little physical evidence remains of these once prolific businesses. A Cobb and Co. Coach, presumed to have been manufactured in Geelong in 1880 and part of the collection of Museums Victoria³⁶⁶ (Figure 3.40), is one of the very few known surviving vehicles of the coach manufacturing era.

While limited physical evidence remains, there is historical evidence of the local coach builders. Some of the more well-known are as follows.

W. THORBURN AND SON

Walter Thorburn (c.1805-1985) emigrated from England with his wife, Ellen, sons James, Walter junior and William and daughters Margaret, Mary and Ellen junior on the *Mangerton*, arriving in Geelong in June 1852. He seems to have first tried his luck at the Victorian goldfields as he was listed as returning with 8 ounces in December of that year.³⁶⁷ Before 1854, he had established a blacksmith's shop in Autumn street, Geelong West, and by mid-1854 the business had progressed to a coach building and repair shop which also employed Walter junior (the business being known as W. Thorburn and Son).³⁶⁸ By 1856, the Thorburn manufactory had relocated to the corner of Gheringhap and Little Ryrie Streets, to the north end of Moorabool Street by 1863³⁶⁹ and then by 1868 to Little Malop Street West.³⁷⁰ By this time, their advertisements boasted that they were carriage builders 'by special appointment' to 'His Excellency the Hon. Sir J.H.T. Manners-Sutton, K.C.B., Governor of Victoria.'³⁷¹ With Walter Thorburn's health failing and his retirement in 1880, his coach factory was closed and several wagonettes, 'unfinished vehicles' and '2 sewing machines' were advertised for sale.³⁷²



Figure 3.41: William Carpenter's Coach Factory, Little Malop Street, c.1870. Source: GRS 2009/00700 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

WILLIAM CARPENTER

William Carpenter arrived to Victoria from London in 1852 and first tried his luck on the goldfields.³⁷³ By 1856, Carpenter had relocated to Pakington Street, Geelong West, and it was at this time he first worked locally as a coach builder.³⁷⁴ In October 1862, he opened a salubrious, Palladian styled single storey coach factory in Little Malop Street opposite Market Square³⁷⁵ (Figure 3.41).

Between 1863 and 1870, Carpenter represented the Bellarine Ward on the Geelong Town Council. Having operated a successful coach building operation, business waned in the late 1870s and in early 1883 he commenced the disposal of his property. Carpenter travelled to Sydney to spend his retirement years with his son but tragically he fell from the gangway, suffering a severe head injury and he died a few days later.³⁷⁶

THOMAS WOODWARD

Thomas Woodward (1823-1889) was born in Horsley, Derby, England, the son of Stephen Faulks and Marianne Woodward.³⁷⁷ After his marriage to Agnes Brown at Southampton in 1854,³⁷⁸ they emigrated to Geelong from Hampshire, England, in 1855 on the *Samarang*³⁷⁹ where he was listed as a carpenter. Thomas and Agnes first settled in Chilwell, Newtown, where their daughter, Caroline, was born.³⁸⁰ By June 1859, Woodward had established a coach building business in Moorabool Street, opposite the Geelong Grammar School. He advertised the sale of a 'first class family car.'³⁸¹ In 1862, Woodward became insolvent.³⁸² By 1864, he had re-established his coach building business and relocated to Little Malop Street, opposite McPherson's Livery Stables.³⁸³ He again relocated the business to Moorabool Street (between the Victoria Hotel on the north-east corner of Moorabool and Malop Streets, and the Chamber of Commerce)³⁸⁴ (Figure 3.42). There, he had 'a large and useful assortment of buggies and other kinds of useful traps,' including the Excelsior jump-seat (capable of seating four people),



Figure 3.42: T. Woodward Coach Builder, Moorabool Street, signage, n.d. Source: GRS 2009/1999/014 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.43: J. Norton, Pantheon coach built by T. Woodward, n.d. Source: GRS 2009/1999/015 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

a 'turn-over of the most approved pattern', a 'double Concord' described as 'a splendid piece of coachbuilding' and a spring wagon 'of a pattern in which neatness and strength are nicely combined' (Figure 3.43). Each of these vehicles took first prizes in the Geelong Agricultural Show in 1875.³⁸⁵ In 1882, part of Woodward's coach factory was

partially destroyed by fire.³⁸⁶ With Woodward's death in March 1889, his coach factory was sold.³⁸⁷

HARGREAVES AND NOTT

The coach building partnership of Solomon Simon Hargreaves (1846-1925) and John Nott (1848-1920) commenced in 31 July 1877 when they advertised that they had worked for 16 years for both Messrs. Woodward and Carpenter and that on sale at their Ryrie Street premises (Figure 3.44) was 'one highly-finished turnover-seated buggy.'³⁸⁸ This began a successful coach building business, with Hargreaves taking on the construction of the coaches and Nott responsible for the coach painting. Within 10 years, they attracted influential and wealthy clientele as noted in the *Geelong Advertiser* in 1883:

At the present time there is quite a rage among sporting men in the metropolis to possess smart two-wheeled conveyances, in which to drive to race meetings and other descriptions of sports gatherings. Many of them have, of late, appeared



Figure 3.44: Hargreaves & Nott Carriage Manufactory, Ryrie Street, c.1880. Source: GRS 2055/15 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

in the streets of Melbourne in smart-looking vehicles, and their displays have attracted attention. To the credit to the local coachmakers, it may be stated that Geelong workmanship has not been overlooked, for Messrs Hargreaves and Nott, of Ryrie-street, have just completed the manufacture of a four passenger dog-cart, and a Stanhope gig, for Mr W. Branch of Melbourne, and Mr Jas. Wilson, of St. Albans, respectively. The object of the sportsmen named is to drive tandem teams, and the "traps" made to their order are in every way well calculated to show that the tradesmen of this town can furnish a superior article. The dog-cart is an elegant piece of workmanship, and is built on the "square" principle, which makes it a showy two-wheeler. Both vehicles are of hickory and ash, and all the ironwork of the undercarriage of the gig is supplied with steel bearings. The dog-cart is fitted with adjustable box spring cushions on a new design, so that they may be easily arranged in balancing the weight on the wheels. The trimmings are of maroon-colored Russian leather, and are very handsome. The vehicles are painted a purple lake color, picked out black with fine lines of red, so that they have a neat appearance. The upper portions of the framework are close-plated. On the side of Mr Branch's trap his crest has been artistically painted by Mr Nott. It shows the head and neck of a fowl resting on a gold crown, and holding in the bill an olive branch whilst underneath there is a blue ribbon scroll bearing the words "Bonne Fortune."³⁸⁹

In 1890, the business of Hargreaves and Nott was dissolved and their stock in trade, machinery and plant sold.³⁹⁰ Solomon Hargreaves subsequently went into partnership with James Armstrong as Hargreaves and Armstrong, Coach Builders, until 1912,³⁹¹ while Nott continued under his own account.³⁹² By 1912, the iron

building of the recently dissolved firm of Hargreaves and Armstrong in Ryrie Street was demolished to make way for a theatre.³⁹³

Solomon Simon Hargreaves (1846-1925) was born in Tasman, Tasmania, the son of Simon Solomon Hargreaves (1811-1884) (a convict of Halifax, Yorkshire, England, transported to Tasmania in 1830 and granted a ticket of leave in 1841) and Mary Ann Gordon (1821-1891).³⁹⁴ By 1852, the Hargreaves family had relocated to Geelong where Simon Hargreaves had established a wheelwright and blacksmith business with James Helling in Malop Street, Market Square.³⁹⁵ Solomon Hargreaves may have worked with his father, Simon, before being employed by Woodward in 1861.³⁹⁶ By 1914, Solomon Hargreaves had retired to 'Kerangville', Noble Street, Newtown.³⁹⁷ He died in Sydney, New South Wales, in 1925.³⁹⁸

John Nott was born in Bristol, Gloucestershire, England, in 1848, the son of Robert Nott (contractor) and Willmot Greenoff. They emigrated to Geelong in 1855.³⁹⁹

John Nott followed his father into the painting business.⁴⁰⁰ It seems that Nott was employed by William Carpenter prior to Nott's coach building partnership with Solomon Hargreaves.⁴⁰¹ In 1871, Nott married Martha Ann Windsor and they had five children.⁴⁰² In 1901, John and Ann Nott returned to England to visit Ann's relatives.⁴⁰³ John and Ann Nott subsequently emigrated to Troyeville, Johannesburg, South Africa, and John Nott died at the residence of his son in law, F. Moulton at Waldeck's Plant, Barkley West, Kimberley South Africa, in August 1920.⁴⁰⁴

WILKS FAMILY

One of the more rural coach manufactories was that of the Wilks family at Fyansford (Figure 3.45). It was first established by James Wilks by 1855 as it was at this time when he advertised the need for a wheelwright, blacksmith and hammerman.⁴⁰⁵ It was also in 1855 when James Wilks' brother, Joseph (1824-1876) arrived from Essex with his wife, Ann (1825-1870) and their four children (a fifth child was born at Fyansford soon after their arrival, the Wilks having a total of 10 children by 1866).⁴⁰⁶ Joseph Wilks was a wheelwright and he took over the business of James at Fyansford, with James relocating to Ballarat where he established a Hay and Corn Store (including coach building) and was later a hotelier.⁴⁰⁷ At Fyansford in 1856, Joseph Wilks was credited with making and perfecting a bullock dray wheel in ten hours and five minutes.⁴⁰⁸ Working with him was his other brother, William Wilks. The motto of the business was "Thorough" and the Wilks brothers became well known for the quality of their wagon and coach building.⁴⁰⁹ After the death of

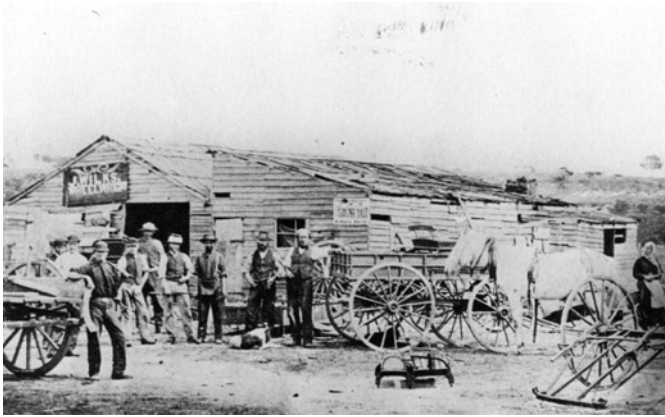


Figure 3.45: J. Wilks Wheelwright & Carriage Manufacturing, n.d. Source: Late J.C. Wilks, Ancestry online at <https://www.ancestry.com.au/>.



Figure 3.46: Grote's Coach Factory, 71-73 Gheringhap Street, n.d. Source: Christine Hughes, Little River.

William in 1860, Joseph fell on hard times in 1861, being declared insolvent.⁴¹⁰ His son, James Wilks, became a coach builder, being employed by the Western Stage Company and later with Hargreaves and Nott, and then Thomas Woodward before entering employment with the Geelong Tramways.⁴¹¹

AUGUSTE GROTE

Auguste Grote (c.1826-1929) was born in Brunserauk, Gernersheim, Rhineland-Palatinate, Germany, the son of Charles and Catherine Grote.⁴¹² Prior to his emigration to Victoria, he married Louise Edelmann. They first settled in Melbourne upon his arrival in 1866.⁴¹³ In 1870, Grote purchased William Gaulton's coach building premises in Ryrie Street opposite the Post Office.⁴¹⁴ Four years later in 1874, he relocated to the south-east corner of

Gheringhap and Little Ryrie Streets, where he established a coach factory, show room, workshop and forge at the south-east corner of Gheringhap and Little Ryrie Streets (71-73 Gheringhap Street)⁴¹⁵ (Figure 3.46). The following year, he was noted as having 'a selected collection of vehicles of different descriptions.'⁴¹⁶ Grote maintained his coach building business at this location until 1915, when it appears he was forced to close due to his German descent, with Britain at war with Germany in World War One, although he had become a naturalised British subject in Geelong in 1894.⁴¹⁷

GREEN AND EVERETT

In 1882, Thomas Green (1832-p1892) joined Joseph Everett (1850-1917) in a coach factory business in Mercer Street, Geelong.⁴¹⁸ In September of that year, they advertised the following in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Green and Everett, Coachbuilders, Mercer-street, are now prepared to receive orders for Carriages and Buggies, and every other description of vehicle. New and second-hand buggies and express wagons for sale. All kinds of repairs, painting, trimming, etc., done at shortest notice, and lowest rates.⁴¹⁹

The partnership was not to endure as Green and Everett advertised its dissolution in the *Victoria Government Gazette* in 1885.⁴²⁰ Both coach builders continued under their own accounts with Everett retaining the factory in Mercer Street (Figure 3.47).

Thomas Green was born in Seymour, England, in 1832 and emigrated to Victoria in c.1850.⁴²¹ In 1860, he married Margaret Fleming.⁴²² For several years, Green was employed by Thomas Woodward, rising to the position as foreman in the drafting of designs and in the construction of carriages.⁴²³ Following the dissolution of his partnership with Everett in 1885, Green continued working from Swanston Street where he died in 1892 at the premature age of 45 years.⁴²⁴

Joseph Everett (Figure 3.48) was born at Hinxton, Cambridgeshire, England, in 1850, the son of Thomas Everett and Eleanor (Ellen) Brack Robinson.⁴²⁵ In 1855, the Everett family emigrated to Victoria on the *British Empire*. Thomas Everett's occupation at this time was an agricultural labourer.⁴²⁶ In 1856, the Everett family were resident in Wellington Street, Geelong West, where Thomas Everett was a carter.⁴²⁷ He later became a brickmaker when the family lived in Britannia Street, Geelong West.⁴²⁸ Joseph Everett spent two short periods at Shelford and Carlton before returning to Geelong.⁴²⁹ By 1877, Joseph Everett had entered into a coach building partnership with Robert Kitchen (under the name of



Figure 3.47: J. Everett, coachbuilder, blacksmith, wheelwright, agricultural implement maker, Mercer Street, c.1885. Source: Item MM7255 Museums Victoria online.



Figure 3.48: G.L. Massingham, Joseph Everett, 1896. Source: accession H11608 State Library of Victoria.

Kitchen and Everett) in Mercer Street.⁴³⁰ It was at this time when Everett married Miss Emma Mary Elliott.⁴³¹ The partnership of Kitchen and Everett was dissolved in 1879⁴³² and Everett continued the business under his own name until he was joined by Thomas Green in 1882.

By the early 1880s, Joseph and Ellen Everett lived at 21 Weller Street. Everett also owned neighbouring allotments.⁴³³ Houses were built for Joseph Everett's children, possibly to designs by a son of Joseph and Ellen, Percy, in the early 20th century. They included the Late Victorian timber dwelling at 17 Weller Street for Emma Margaret Everett (built 1902-03) and 'Nyora' at 19 Weller Street for George J. Everett, blacksmith, in 1910-11.⁴³⁴ By 1903, Joseph Everett's son, Joseph Arthur Everett, had joined his father as a coach painter,⁴³⁵ the firm being known as J. Everett and Son. By 1910, another son, Ernest Harry Everett, coach builder, had also entered the firm, the name of the business then known as J. Everett and Sons.⁴³⁶ They were also joined by another son, Geoffrey J. Everett, blacksmith. By this time, in addition to coach building given advances in technology and the rise of the motor car and motorcycle (see following subsection), Everett and Sons offered motor car body making services.⁴³⁷ In 1912, Everett and Sons manufactured the first 'torpedo' designed motor body fitted with a La Buire

chassis. According to the *Geelong Advertiser*, 'several motorists have expressed their opinion that it is better than imported bodies as Australian woods suited to the climate have been used.'⁴³⁸ The car was on sale at J.C. Brown and Co.'s motor garage in Geelong⁴³⁹ and by 1915 Everett and Sons had made several timber car bodies.⁴⁴⁰

In 1913, Joseph Everett publicly farewelled his son, Percy Edgar Everett (1888-1967) who at that time was part of the Building Construction and Architecture Instructional Staff at the Gordon Technical College and was departing on a 12 month tour to England and Europe 'to gain experience in his architectural profession.'⁴⁴¹ Percy Everett was to become Chief Architect of the Public Works Department of Victoria in future years and design several public and government buildings throughout the state (see Themes 6, 7 and 8). In addition to his working life as a coach builder, Joseph Everett was heavily involved in the Primitive Methodist Church, Pakington Street, where he was a regular attendant for 63 years.⁴⁴² As part of the Church, he was a member of the Gospel band, district evangelist, teacher, and singing conductor at anniversaries.⁴⁴³ Joseph Everett died on 23 December 1917.⁴⁴⁴

FRANCIS BENT

One of the later carriage factories to operate in Geelong West was that of Francis Bent (1866-1936). He was the son of Francis Bent (who arrived from England with his parents and siblings at Point Henry on the *Sir George Seymour* in 1849, aged 2 years) and Katie Stroud Whitten.⁴⁴⁵ By 1905, Francis Bent junior had established the Geelong West Coach Factory in Pakington Street.⁴⁴⁶ The workshop, blacksmith's shop and a two roomed weatherboard building was owned by the Estate of the late William Barnes.⁴⁴⁷ On Francis Bent's death in 1936, the business was continued by Leslie Bent.⁴⁴⁸ By the Second World War, the business had closed.⁴⁴⁹

CYCLES AND CYCLE BUSINESSES⁴⁵⁰

THE INITIAL YEARS OF THE BICYCLE

As early as 1817, the forerunner to the modern bicycle was launched by Baron Karl von Drais, a German, with the unveiling of his *Laufmaschine*, a kick bicycle.⁴⁵¹ However, it was in the 1860s in France and America, when the self-propelled bicycle and tricycle 'by means of feet driving pedals rather than running along the ground' were first manufactured with great interest. In the early 1860s, Pierre Michaux in his blacksmith's in Paris commenced building bicycles with pedals while a former employee, Pierre Lallement developed an improved version) in Connecticut in 1865.⁴⁵² A year later in 1866,

Lallement patented his bicycle invention.⁴⁵³

It was not until April 1869 when the *Geelong Advertiser* gave an insight into the velocipede – the latest mode of road transport:

Anybody who has visited Paris within the last few months cannot have failed to notice the large number of velocipedes going to and fro, especially in the evening; indeed, the number that may now be seen any evening in the Champs Elysees is so large that a recent police edict compels the riders to affix a lamp to them in consequence of the accidents that have happened from their use. According to some investigations that have been made, it has been ascertained that on a good road, where the gradients are not much greater than on railroads, the rider may travel from 80 to 100 kilometres in a day, which is about the same speed as the mail coaches used to attain in France; and that this may be done several days in succession, without over-fatigue, by a moderately strong man. Very much, however, depends on the perfection with which the machine is constructed. If it is unskilfully made, the fatigue of working it is so greatly increased that it ceases to be a pleasure and becomes an exceedingly laborious exercise. It is not exactly the ease, as has been stated, that the rate of speed is an exact proportion of the force employed. On a hard, level road the traction is so small, owing to the narrowness of the wheels, that it runs along with great rapidity by the momentum given to it, and with the expenditure of very little force on the part of the rider. Of course where the roads are soft, or there is a steep hill to ascend, the labor of propelling it is increased in proportion to the depth and nature of the soil and the steepness of the ascent. The cost of the best of the velocipedes in France is about £12, but they will probably be manufactured at a much lower price in England if they come into extensive use, as it is not unlikely, considering that they afford opportunities for vigorous exercise, in addition to the facility with which long journeys may be accomplished by them ...⁴⁵⁴

By the end of April 1869, velocipedes were being built by coach builders in Ballarat and the *Geelong Advertiser* quipped that 'the road near Geelong area, we imagine, [would be] suitable for such locomotion.'⁴⁵⁵ In May 1869 even the Geelong Literary and Discussion Class held a *conversazione* on 'Velocipedes'.⁴⁵⁶ A month later in June 1869, this new mode of transport made its debut in central Geelong, the event not being missed by the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The appearance of three velocipedes, two tricycles, and one bicycle in Moorabool-street and other principal streets on Saturday evening was the cause

of considerable commotion. The drivers were unable to show the speed they could attain owing to the crowd of boys and men by whom they were followed during their travels. There were one or two narrow escapes from accident owing to the unseasonable hour the drivers selected to display their skill, and although, of course they could hardly be held responsible for the "boy nuisance" again presenting itself as usual on the appearance of anything novel, yet there were decidedly wrong in selecting a dark night, and one when the street is usually filled with people for the display. The crowd had the effect of almost suspending traffic for a time, and even the velocipedists themselves nearly met with accidents. We should recommend them in future to confine themselves to the day-time, or to select some of the back streets where they were not much traffic.⁴⁵⁷

The novelty of the bicycle, velocipede and tricycle was not to be confined to the male population. Changes were made to women's skirts in New York in June 1869 to allow them to take part in the latest craze:

The problem for a lady's attire for the velocipede appears to be in fair way of solution. A party of young ladies have taken up the matter in New York, preparatory to making their debut in the approaching summer, and the "Velocipedist" thus describes their dress:- "Let the outer dress skirt be made so as to button its entire length in front. The back part should be made to button from the bottom to a point about three-eighths of a yard up the skirt. This arrangement does not detract at all from the appearance of an ordinary walking costume. When the wearer wishes to prepare for a drive she simply loosens two or three of the lower-buttons at the front and back, and bringing together the two ends on each side separately, buttons them in this way around each ankle. This gives a full skirt around each ankle, and, when mounted the dress falls gracefully at each side of the front wheel."⁴⁵⁸

By 1878, the velocipede had been surpassed by the bicycle as the most popular cycling machine. This was highlighted at this time in the *Illustrated Australian News*:

The clumsy lumbering contrivance which a few years ago was the only form of velocipede in actual use, and which was then regarded as a wonderfully clever contrivance, has completely dropped out of existence, and were one to traverse the main thoroughfares of the present day upon such a machine he would probably be treated in much the same way as Tom Hampden was on introducing his umbrella, and be greeted in no very complimentary terms by the precocious small boys that throng our streets. The introduction of the bicycle speedily swept away its three and four wheeled predecessors, and opened up a new era of this description of locomotion. The two wheels were originally made the same size, but now the driving wheel is in most cases the only one worthy the name, the hind one being a mere roller intended to assist the rider in maintaining his equilibrium. In England and on the continent the bicycle is quite a recognised institution, and is largely patronised by all classes. Its introduction into Australia has been very slow work, which is doubtless explained by the fact that here the vehicles are the property of the rider, while in other countries thousands are hired out by persons who make it their business at so much per month; a would-be bicyclist has therefore an easy opportunity of ascertaining whether the amusement is in accord with his inclination without having to incur the cost of purchasing a bicycle for himself. Slowly but effectively, however, the innovation has gained ground ...⁴⁵⁹

As the popularity of cycling grew so did improvements in cycle design and technology. In 1885, the Englishman, John Kemp Starley, created the "Rover" 'safety bicycle' which featured a rear chain drive and steerable front wheel.⁴⁶⁰ A version of the safety bicycle was exhibited at the Geelong and Western District Agricultural and Horticultural Show in November 1886.⁴⁶¹ In Geelong in 1891, the safety bicycle was augmented by the arrival of the 'new' pneumatic tyre.⁴⁶² The ride considered to be 'more easier and enjoyable.'⁴⁶³ Of the pneumatic tyre, the *Geelong Advertiser* gave the following:

Riders of bicycles will be pleased to learn of another improvement in the locomotive powers of the safety machines. Mr H. Hawthorne, of the cycle depot, in Gheringhap-street, has just received one of the new pneumatic-tyred safety bicycles which contains a number of improvements, and which has beaten all the world's records for time. The bicycle has a pneumatic tyre, which is composed of a rubber tube about 1 ½ inches in diameter, filled with compressed air, which is bound to the rim by a linen easing, and protected by rubber thickened at the wearing part. The air is pumped in through a nozzle with a special blower, and a patent non-return air-valve prevents its escape. The advantages of this tyre upon a roadster cannot be thoroughly understood except by a personal trial. Should the tyre get pierced or the valve damaged in any way, either can be repaired at a very small cost and within a few hours' time.⁴⁶⁴

This newer and improved version of the bicycle included models for women, where a version known as a 'step-front frame' was created with the top tube (or cross bar) absent.

Other improvements and modifications were made to the bicycle in the following years.⁴⁶⁵ One of the more novel and localised variations was a 'yacht-bicycle' or 'land yacht' developed by Roy Holden at Barwon Heads January 1911. Photographed at this time (Figure 3.49), Holden gave the following description:

My land yacht at Barwon Head 1911-12. Return trips to Point Lonsdale were sometimes made from Ocean Grove along the hard sand at low tide. Tacking against the wind was quite easy and speeds of twenty miles per hour were obtained in good conditions. Leaning out to windward with a side breeze easily counteracted any tendency for the ship to capsize, in fact I don't remember ever coming a cropper in that way. The sail and spars had been made at Hong Kong Naval Dockyard ... silk of some kind and bamboo for the mast and boom.⁴⁶⁶



Figure 3.49: Roy Holden driving his land yacht, Barwon Heads, 1911. Source: GRS 2009/2007 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

THE ADVENT OF THE MOTORCYCLE

The popularity of the bicycle in the 1890s brought about a new invention: the motorised bicycle. In 1896, the *Geelong Advertiser* announced that there were two motorcycles in course of construction in Melbourne and that they were almost ready for a trial trip. In addition, the newspaper article made mention of news in the *English Cyclist*, whereby the Riley Cycle Company were experimenting 'with something quite new':

The new machine is a safety bicycle with an auxiliary motor, which is so small and neat that it only occupies about as much room as a gearcase, and can, indeed, be fitted inside one. It is said that in an experimental run 16 ½ miles were accomplished within the hour.⁴⁶⁷

The following year in 1897, C.E. Charity exhibited the 'novel' motor cycle at a local bicycle show in the Exhibition Buildings in Moorabool Street.⁴⁶⁸ This was followed by the exhibition of a motorcycle by the Austral Cycle Agency Pty Ltd at the Agricultural and Horticultural Show by the Austral Cycle Agency Pty Ltd.⁴⁶⁹ By 1903, the motorcycle, along with the motor car and traction engine, had become so popular that representatives of the district Councils in the Geelong area called a meeting to investigate measures for controlling motor traffic.⁴⁷⁰



Figure 3.50: Cr William Humble, c.1888. Source: GRS 1947/23 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

CYCLE BUSINESSES

INITIAL YEARS

The earliest cycle enterprises in Geelong emanated from the inventive coach builder, William Gaulton and iron manufacturer, William Humble, in 1869.⁴⁷¹ It was at this time when the *Geelong Advertiser* gave an insight into Humble's and Gaulton's velocipede achievements:

We may shortly expect to see plenty of velocipedes travelling about this district, two of these much lauded vehicles having been made by Mr Humble and Mr Gaulton. Mr Humble's is a three-wheeler, and met with an accident whilst crossing the channel on Monday. Mr Gaulton's is a two-wheeler, very light and easy to drive. A considerable amount of practice in balancing will, however, be required before a driver will be at all sure of keeping his seat in the saddle, the front having a nasty knack of swerving and causing the machine to "buck up."⁴⁷²

William Humble (1835-1917) (Figure 3.50) was from Richmond, Yorkshire, having been apprenticed as an agricultural implement maker before working for

Hornsby and Sons, Grantham, and Bates and Vaughan, Middlesborough.⁴⁷³ Humble arrived in Victoria in 1858 and worked at Fulton's foundry, Melbourne.⁴⁷⁴ He soon relocated to the Corio foundry in Geelong and assisted in casting postal pillar boxes for Melbourne streets.⁴⁷⁵ In 1861, he commenced business with John Simmons and Ward Nicholson at the Western foundry, Geelong, under the name of Messrs. Humble and Simmons, until Simmons' death in 1864 when Humble and Nicholson continued in partnership, initially under the name of Humble and Co. and from 1877 as Humble and Nicholson.⁴⁷⁶ The partnership lasted until 1900.⁴⁷⁷ In 1866, they had purchased the Vulcan Foundry in Little Malop Street, Geelong,⁴⁷⁸ and it was from here where Humble invented a velocipede and later motor vehicles (see later subsection) as well as manufacturing iron works and refrigerators (see Theme 4 for further details).⁴⁷⁹ Humble contributed much to community life, including serving as a Geelong Town Councillor from 1869 until 1889 (with a term as Mayor in 1888-89), first treasurer of the Gordon Technological College; trustee of the Geelong Free Library, board member of the Geelong Hospital, director of the Geelong Coffee Palace and ardent member of the Methodist Church.⁴⁸⁰

William Gaulton (1831-1909) was born in the Isle of Wight, England, son of George Gaulton, coach painter who, with Mrs Gaulton and one sibling, emigrated on the *Winwick* from London to Hobart, Tasmania, in 1841, as part of Tasmanian Colonial Government's bounty (assisted immigrant) scheme.⁴⁸¹ The Gaulton family was one of four immigrants from the English coach building trade on board the *Winwick*.⁴⁸² In Hobart, William Gaulton served an apprenticeship with Alexander Fraser, coach builder of Hobart, before relocating to Melbourne in 1850 and to the Castlemaine goldfields in the early 1850s.⁴⁸³ In 1853, he married Jane Davies.⁴⁸⁴ In c.1860, they went to New Zealand before returning to Victoria where their son, William George Gaulton, was born at Forest Creek in 1861.⁴⁸⁵ In 1865 with George Chapman, he acquired S. Stoneman's coach and carriage factory in Gheringhap Street, Geelong.⁴⁸⁶ In addition to making and repairing coaches, Gaulton continued to manufacture velocipedes.⁴⁸⁷ He was associated with the Methodist Church, being a Sunday School teacher with the Ashby Wesleyan Sabbath School for four years until 1870 when the Gaulton family went to Kyneton and eventually returned to Castlemaine where William Gaulton purchased a coach building business which had become the largest in the Castlemaine district by 1888.⁴⁸⁸ Gaulton was a Councillor with the Castlemaine Borough Council and served as mayor in 1885-86.⁴⁸⁹ He died in Burwood, N.S.W., in 1909.⁴⁹⁰



Figure 3.51: Wm. Box & Sons, Granville Cycles Agents, Moorabool Street, c.1897. Source: E.A. Vidler, *The Book of Geelong: Its People, Places, Industries and Amusements*, Henry Franks & Co., Geelong, 1897, p.42.

THE BOOM YEARS OF THE 1890S AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY

It was from the 1890s, when bicycles were mass-produced when the boom in bicycle trade began. In 1895, there were 220 articles, advertisements and detailed lists in the *Geelong Advertiser* under "cycle". In 1896, this had increased to 1,067 entries.⁴⁹¹ Initially, existing retailers – including ironmongers and sewing machinists – together with avid bicycle sportsmen became bicycle agents. In 1896, they included William Box and Sons ironmongers and tinsmiths which had been established in 1874 and from their new store in Moorabool Street they sold Granville cycles, as proudly advertised on the parapet of the premises⁴⁹² (Figure 3.51). A Mr Robertson was the agent for Wertheim and Electra bicycles at his Sewing Machine Depot in Moorabool Street.⁴⁹³ Beeston Humber bicycles were sold by Alex McRae at his store at 150 Ryrie Street.⁴⁹⁴ This brand was also available from the Austral Cycle Agency in Ryrie street.⁴⁹⁵ Winter Wilson had available the Raleigh and Sparkbrook cycles at his cycle depot at 95 Malop Street.⁴⁹⁶ He was a representative for the Scott and Morton agency and a month after his commencement he was replaced by Jim Carpenter, a 'colonial rider of great stature.'⁴⁹⁷ The Word, Quinton, Jimmy-Mascotte, Tourist and Princess Mary bicycles were available at William Gurr's Exhibition Exchange,⁴⁹⁸ Massey-Harris bicycles from Canada were offered by a Mr Galbraith at his sports depot at 175 Ryrie Street,⁴⁹⁹ while C.E. Charity was the agent for Nimrod-Zimmy bicycles at his Piano and Fine Art Gallery, Malop and Moorabool Streets.⁵⁰⁰ It was also at this time when J.A. Price, general merchant took delivery of a

shipment of bicycles and Herbert Yeoman, 'a local racing man,' advertised as a bicycle repairer, machinist, locksmith and perambulator repairist.⁵⁰¹

According to Rod Charles in *A Whirr of Many Wheels*, the bicycle mechanic pioneers in Geelong at this time were Will Calder and Percy Whitfield:

Two local men, however, sowed the seeds for other bicycle mechanics to set up business on their own accounts. Will Calder and Percy Whitfield were the first bicycle builders in Geelong since William Gaulton. Several days after the sports of March, a note in the *Advertiser* reported that Mr Will Calder, older brother of Andy Calder, winner of the first Scott-Morton road race and then with the Austral Wheel agency, was about to set up in business building bicycles. He was building racing machines and had just built 'a ladies' machine for a local gentleman who intends presenting it to his wife as a birthday present.' By October it was reported, Calder intended 'to build machines on a large scale. He is daily expected to hand over 100 sets of parts and has taken the flat over Dalgety's corner to manufacture the Pivot Cycles.' In September Mr. Percy Whitfield, builder of the local triplet, with assistance from Mr. W. Calder had just completed the building of a racing machine for his own use. Mr. Whitfield, it was said, was one of the 'cleverest mechanical engineers in the colony.' He also sold Circe and Alexa cycles.⁵⁰²

Born in 1866, the son of John Anderson Whitfield and Sarah Part, Percy Whitfield married Ellen Lilian Taylor in 1895.⁵⁰³ He was one of the first motorcycle mechanics in Geelong, advertising 'Cycles and Motor Cycles built and repaired' from his Little Malop Street depot in 1904.⁵⁰⁴

By 1905, there were 10 bicycle manufacturers, importers, agents and repairers in Geelong (see Appendix 3.1).⁵⁰⁵ This number had increased to 15 in 1910 and 16 by 1925.⁵⁰⁶ Like Percy Whitfield, a number of these cycle manufacturers and repairers also offered mechanical and sales services for motorcycles although it was not until 1910 when motorcycle services were separately listed (along with motor cars) in the Geelong section of the Sands and McDougall *Directory of Victoria*. By 1950, the popularity of cycling and cycle racing was reflected in the continued high number of bicycle retail outlets (there being 14 in total). Only L.F. Pratt Motor Cycles Pty Ltd at 231 Moorabool Street specialised solely in motor cycles, although it had competition by 1955 when K. Dangerfield moved from cycles and motorcycle repairs.⁵⁰⁷

Of this contextually large number of cycle retail and mechanical outlets, a limited number were to endure throughout much of the 20th century. They included



Figure 3.53: Former Balfours' building, 45-47 Malop Street, Geelong, 2018. Source: David Rowe.

the following:

BALFOUR BROTHERS

Stuart Hamilton Gordon (1867-1942), John Thomas ("Jack") (1878-1962), Thomas Robert ("Robert") (1880-1961) and Victor (1882-1916) took an active interest in the cycling industry, as noteworthy race competitors, cycle club committee members, cycle agents and mechanics. It was as cycle mechanics and agents where the success of some of the Balfour brothers endured most. They were the sons of Captain John Balfour (1823-1899), a mariner from Fife, Scotland, who arrived in Victoria after 1851.⁵⁰⁸ He married Miss Eliza Hamilton in 1859.⁵⁰⁹ Captain Balfour was Master of the schooner, *Flora* (formerly *Henrietta Helena*), shipping goods between Melbourne and Geelong.⁵¹⁰ By 1890, he was shipping agent for the Australasian United Steam Navigation Company Ltd.⁵¹¹

The Balfour brothers appear to have gained experience as cycle mechanics from the late 1890s. Robert Balfour had commenced work as a cycle mechanic in 1899, joining the Geelong branch of the Ballarat-based firm of Davies Franklin in c.1901.⁵¹² Jack Balfour also worked for Davies Franklin in Geelong by 1903⁵¹³ although he later became a timber clerk.⁵¹⁴ Victor Balfour, best known in the early 1900s as a 'trick rider' at sports gatherings and other events, was a local cycle mechanic while his brother, Stuart, was a cycle builder.⁵¹⁵ It was also about 1903 when the Balfour brothers: Robert, Victor and Stuart established a cycle agency at 61 Malop Street under the name of T.R. Balfour, cycle manufacturer of Federal Cycles⁵¹⁶ (Figure 3.52).

By 1909, T.R. Balfour was the sole agent of the Triumph motorcycle under the auspices of the Triumph Motor Cycle

Depot.⁵¹⁷ In 1911, Victor Balfour purchased Norrish's boarding house at 45-47 Malop Street and he engaged the Geelong architects, Laird and Buchan, to design commodious two storey brick shops.⁵¹⁸ Completed in July 1912, the new building (Figure 3.53) – and its use – was described in the *Geelong Advertiser* at this time:

On the site of Norrish's boarding-house in Malop-street, Messrs Balfour Bros. have erected two well-appointed shops with plate-glass windows, and every convenience. They are an acceptable addition to the street architecture. One is used as a cycling depot, and a good show is made of bicycles and parts; machines are built on the premises, and repairs carried out by competent workmen. Go-cart tyres are fitted by the latest method. In the other shop tailoring in all branches is executed and everything turned out is guaranteed.⁵¹⁹

It appears that by this time the partnership of Victor, Robert and Stuart Balfour had been formalised as Balfour Brothers – Cycle Manufacturers and Agents, Locksmiths and Gunsmiths. On Victor's untimely death in 1916, his share of the partnership, and his building at 45-47 Malop Street, were bequeathed to Robert and Stuart.⁵²⁰ Two years later in 1918 Robert and Stuart Balfour acquired Dennys Lascelles brick motor garage at 155 Mercer Street (corner of Mercer and Gheringhap Streets). They continued to occupy the building at 45-47 Malop Street until new workshop additions were completed in late 1919.⁵²¹ While ownership of the Malop Street building was retained until 1949,⁵²² it was at the motor garage at 155 Mercer Street where the Balfours Brothers continued the cycle business in addition to the repair of motor cars, selling Victor Federal roadsters and Biplane racing cycles built by the Biplane Cycle Manufacturing Company.⁵²³ The Balfours Motors business name at 155 Mercer Street was to last for almost 90 years (see following subsection for further details).⁵²⁴

M.J. HEDE AND SON

Michael James Hede was born in Carlton in 1878, the son of Thomas Hede, a policeman, and Winifred O'Brien.⁵²⁵ Thomas Hede's brother, Patrick, had opened the Cash Inn in Little Malop Street, Geelong in 1847 (see Theme 5 for further details).⁵²⁶ M.J. Hede's infancy was spent at Abbotsford and following his father's transfer to Mt Egerton, he attended the local school there.⁵²⁷ Hede first took up employment with a wholesale grocery firm in Queens Street, Melbourne before joining the cycling firm of Davies Franklin in Ballarat.⁵²⁸ It was in Ballarat where Hede participated in several cycling races.⁵²⁹

In 1901 with H.J. Ross and Peter Grant, Hede established Diamond Cycles Pty Ltd in Geelong. The business was

FEDERAL CYCLES.

T.R. BALFOUR.

CYCLE MANUFACTURER.

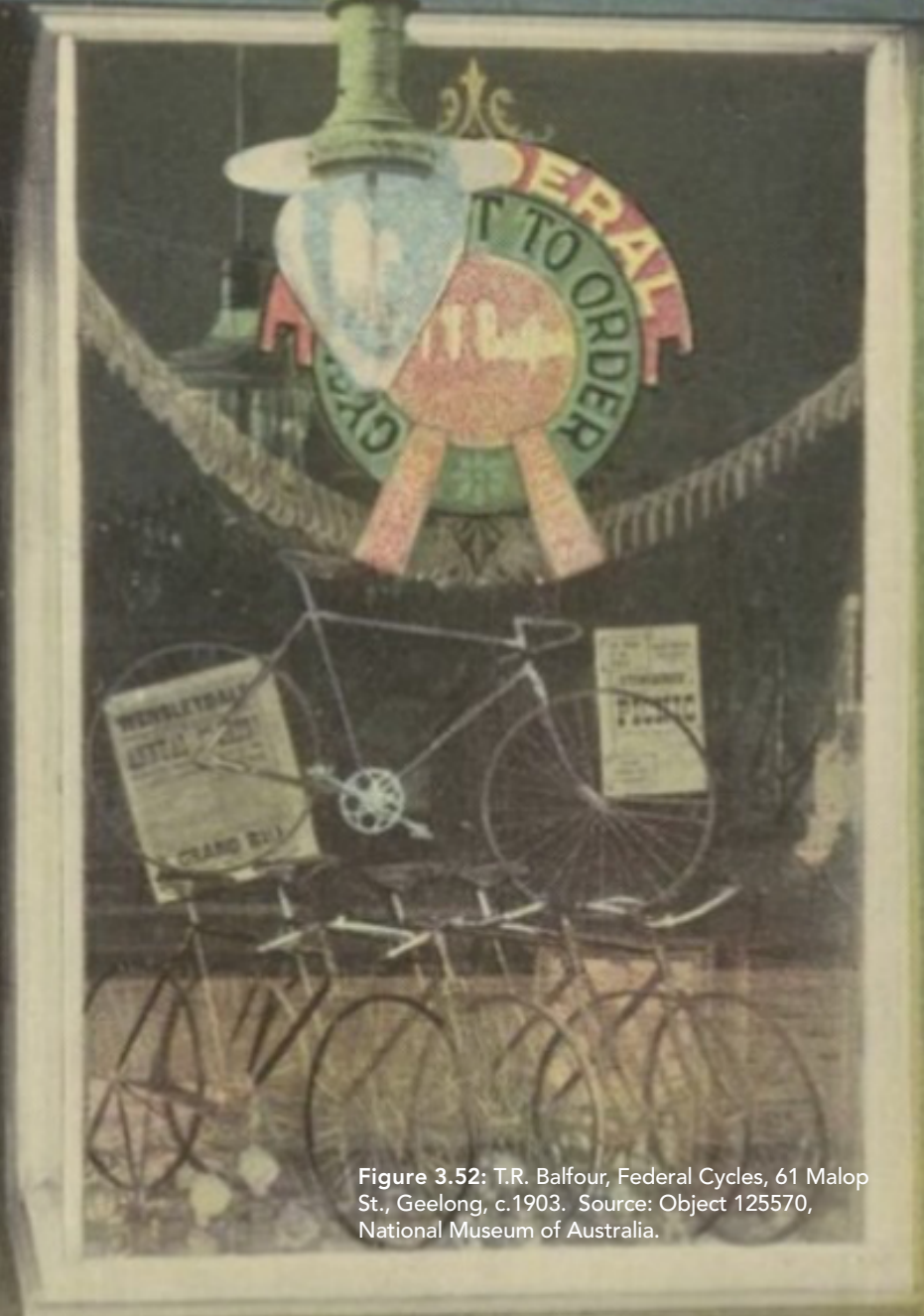


Figure 3.52: T.R. Balfour, Federal Cycles, 61 Malop St., Geelong, c.1903. Source: Object 125570, National Museum of Australia.

not to endure, in 1902 it went into liquidation.⁵³⁰ Hede subsequently established a cycle business in Ryrie Street. On 14 January 1908, he married Annie Jane Boyd and they had a son, John Douglas Hede, in 1917.⁵³¹ In 1926, Hede sold his cycle shop in Ryrie Street⁵³² and established a partnership with Eugene Cowley (1872-1959),⁵³³ cycle agent, as promoters of cycle and foot races during the summer months at Kardinia Park (which was to become known as the Geelong Drome) (see Theme 9 for further details).

After the partnership ceased in 1936 Hede and Cowley re-established their own cycle businesses.⁵³⁴ M.J. Hede opened a store at 192 Ryrie Street and by 1940 he had relocated to 167 Ryrie Street⁵³⁵ (Figure 3.54). After the Second World War, M.J. Hede was joined by his son, John (returned soldier), the business then being known as M.J. Hede and Son.⁵³⁶ Following M.J. Hede's death in 1959, J.D. Hede continued the business into the 1960s although it had closed by 1970.⁵³⁷

ELSWORTHY BROTHERS

Also involved in bicycle racing and local bicycle club were the brothers, John (Jack) H. Elsworthy (c.1912-2004) and Alfred Henry Elsworthy (c.1914-1992).⁵³⁸ In 1937, Jack Elsworthy took over the cycle business of Alfred Jorgenson at 464 Moorabool Street.⁵³⁹ By the early 1940s, Alfred joined his brother in the business, it being known as Elsworthy Brothers.⁵⁴⁰ They relocated to 446 Moorabool Street in 1953.⁵⁴¹ From this location (now 399 Moorabool Street), the business was expanded into the sale of white goods and electricals and it continued at this location as Elsworthy's Retravision until it closed in 2013.⁵⁴²

L.F. PRATT MOTOR CYCLES PTY LTD

Leonard Frank Pratt (1901-1957) was born in New Zealand, the youngest of seven children to Justin Percival Pratt (a carpenter) and Elizabeth Margaretta Pellatt (formerly of Folkstone, Kent, England).⁵⁴³ With his older brothers, Percival (1888-1968) and Charles (1892-1968), Leonard (or Frank as he was known) became well-known pioneer aviators in Australia, based in Geelong. Frank Pratt emigrated to Geelong in c.1923 and was trained as a pilot by Charles, and joined his brother's aviation business, the Geelong Flying School (see later subsection for further details). Frank's next role as mechanic as part of a charter business for Lieutenant Parer in New Guinea was cut short in 1928 when he contracted malaria and he and Charles returned to Geelong.⁵⁴⁴ On his return in 1929, the business C.D. and L.F Pratt Pty Ltd was formed 'for the encouragement and development of aeronautics.'⁵⁴⁵

Frank Pratt's enduring interest was motorcycles. While initially retaining his partnership with Charles in the local



Figure 3.54: Hede Cycles shop, 167 Ryrie Street, Geelong, c.1940. Source: accession H32492/4850B State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3.55: Motorcycle race entrants (presumably Frank Pratt on left and Percy Coleman on right), Phillip Island, c.1931. Source: accession H2016.296/156 State Library of Victoria.

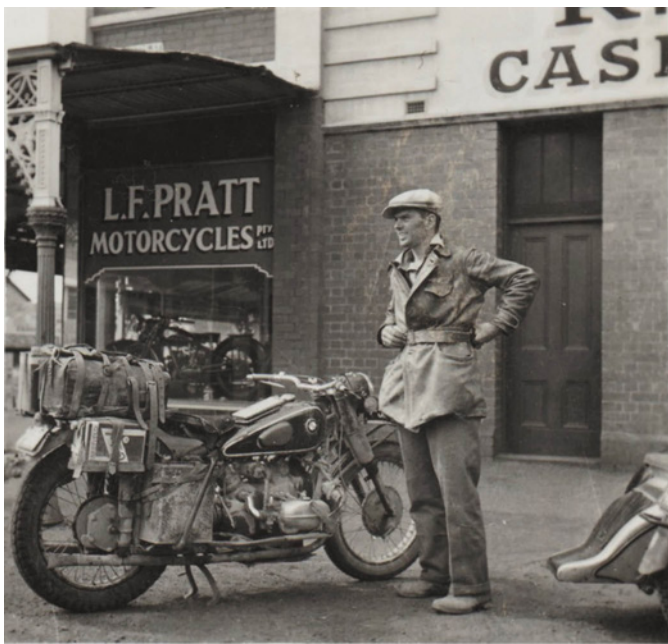


Figure 3.56: L.G. Pratt Motorcycle shop, 131-133 Moorabool Street, possibly with Frank Pratt standing, c.1950. Source: accession H2012.126/867 State Library of Victoria.

aviation business, Frank's interest in motorcycles was heightened after his experience at the motorcycle race at Phillip Island on Boxing Day, 1928.⁵⁴⁶ An 'excellent mechanic who could repair planes, cars and motorcycles', Frank's passion for tuning and repairing motorcycles progressed to him establishing a sub-agency business for Sunbeam motorcycles.⁵⁴⁷ He combined this with motorcycle racing, entering the sidecar event at Phillip Island with Percy Coleman in 1931⁵⁴⁸ (Figure 3.55). Finishing second, it was in 1932 when Frank (together with passenger, Alick Smith) won the Australian Grand Prix at Phillip Island on 1 February 1932.⁵⁴⁹

It was after Pratt's Grand Prix win in 1933 when L.F. Pratt Motor Cycles Pty Ltd was established at 245a Moorabool Street. The directors were Frank Pratt, Arthur Leonard Royce and Robert Charles David Warne-Smith.⁵⁵⁰ Pratt continued as an agent for Sunbeam motorcycles.⁵⁵¹ A former bakery, the shop was small and so motorcycle parts were stored in the former bakery ovens.⁵⁵² He also helped to establish the Geelong Motor Cycle Club (see earlier subsection). He also helped establish the Bonnyvale Racing circuit at Ocean Grove, the property of James Wilson.⁵⁵³

In 1934, the motorcycle business was relocated to 225 Moorabool Street, allowing Pratt to expand his agency to include Sunbeam, MW, DKW, Utility, New Imperial and Coventry Eagle motorcycles.⁵⁵⁴

In the 1940s, Pratt acquired the two storey building at 231-233 Moorabool Street (Figure 3.56) that had been built in 1911-12 and had been partly occupied for many years by McMartin and Sons, butchers (see Theme 5).⁵⁵⁵ Norm Osborne joined the business in 1948 and became a partner, the firm being known as Pratt and Osborne.⁵⁵⁶ He also competed in motor cycle races under the name, "Reg East".⁵⁵⁷ By 1954, Pratt had also opened a motorcycle shop in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne.⁵⁵⁸ Following Frank Pratt's death in 1957, the business continued at 231-233 Moorabool Street until the building was sold in 2007.⁵⁵⁹

G. DE GRANDI CYCLES

In 1929, George De Grandi (1884-1957) acquired George Hose's cycle business at 72 Mercer Street.⁵⁶⁰ Born at Meredith, George Arthur De Grandi was the son of Louis Arnold De Grandi and Louisa Croft.⁵⁶¹ and grandson of Felix and Franzisca (nee Dreher) De Grandi, Swiss immigrants who settled at Ararat.⁵⁶² George De Grandi's interest in cycles emanated from his father opening a cycle shop in Warrnambool in the late 1890s.⁵⁶³ In 1911, George De Grandi married Annie O'Rouke when he was working in the Valley Cycle shop in Kyabram.⁵⁶⁴ He returned to Warrnambool in 1915 and established a cycle shop with a friend, Claude Eagles.⁵⁶⁵

De Grandi continued to trade from his Mercer Street store throughout the 20th century, advertising Valencia Cycles in 1930 and the Healing Bicycle in c.1940.⁵⁶⁶ (Figure 3.57).

George De Grandi's son, Norman, also entered the firm, the business becoming known as G. De Grandi and Son in the 1950s.⁵⁶⁷ After George De Grandi's death in 1957, Norm, had success in growing the company in his own right.⁵⁶⁸ In 1994, De Grandi's cycle store relocated to 437 Moorabool Street, Geelong, where it continues as De Grandi Cycle and Sport under brothers, Damian, Shane, Peter, Tim and Dominic, the third generation of the De Grandi family.⁵⁶⁹

CYCLES FOR BUSINESS

The growth in the popularity of the bicycle as a mode of road transport for sport and recreation was also exploited for business. One of the earliest was Dr Sidney Rudge Robinson (c.1817-1898) in the 1870s and 1880s.⁵⁷⁰ In 1865, he had taken over the medical practice of Dr Teague in Ryrie Street before relocating to Myers Street by 1886 (the location of the Geelong Homoeopathic Dispensary) and later to Fenwick Street (see Theme 8 for further details).⁵⁷¹ Dr Robinson became well known in Geelong, not only as one of the town's local medical practitioners, but because he carried out his daily rounds to patients by riding his Singer Omnicycle tricycle.⁵⁷²



Figure 3.57: G.A. De Grandi, advertisement for the Healing Bicycle, c.1940. Source: GRS 2067/77 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

By 1900, the efficiency of the bicycle was seen as a valuable addition to the post and telegraph service. At some suburban Post Offices in Melbourne, bicycles were supplied for the messengers of telegrams 'in order to save time.'⁵⁷³ It was not until 1911 when four bicycles were provided for postmen at the Geelong Post Office 'in order to facilitate deliveries.'⁵⁷⁴ So successful was the innovation that two extra bicycles were ordered in 1912.⁵⁷⁵ A new garage and 'bicycle stables' (Figure 3.58) were subsequently erected at the rear of the Post Office in Ryrie Street (now demolished). Bicycles were also later provided to suburban Post Offices,⁵⁷⁶ and the bicycle comprised the main mode of suburban postal delivery until it was replaced with the motorcycle in the late 20th century.

In 1915, the *Geelong Advertiser* reported on a 'novel sign' of 100 cadets mounted on bicycles:

They rode in splendid order in a column of fours down the hill to the banks of the Barwon, and one would have thought that a bicycle corps had been established, and that the youngsters were out for their first exercise.⁵⁷⁷

Several years earlier and by 1897, the Military Bicycle Corps had been recognised of growing importance to the modern armies in Germany, Italy, Austria, and United States National Guard.⁵⁷⁸ However, it was not until 1916 when the Australian Cycling Corps was formed in Egypt as part of the Australian Imperial Force, fighting on the Western Front in France and Belgium during World War One.⁵⁷⁹ The key functions of the Bicycle Corps were as despatch riders and for reconnaissance and patrol missions.⁵⁸⁰ Geelong was associated with the Bicycle Corps, holding a camp in 1916.⁵⁸¹



Figure 3.58: Geelong Post Office, 'Garages and Bicycle Stables', April 1942 (now demolished). Source: NAA: B5919.13/227, National Archives of Australia.



Figure 3.59: Fireman Smith Despatch Rider, Geelong City Fire Station, 1942. Source: accession H99.201/2746 State Library of Victoria.

The efficiency and quickness of the bicycle for despatch, postal and telegraphic services progressed further in the early 20th century. By the early 1940s, motorcycles were used by despatch riders at the Geelong Fire Station (Figure 3.59).

ARRIVAL OF THE MOTOR CAR

By the early 1890s, numerous experiments had been carried out on the production of the motor car. In 1891, the *Oakleigh Leader* declared that the 'electric storage battery car is the prettiest example of the class', the 'ordinary steam engine' being the most 'objectionable on account of noise and smoke', while 'motors burning oil have been tried but do not give satisfaction as yet for various reasons.'⁵⁸² Other experiments had been made with chemical and compressed air motors.⁵⁸³ By 1896, *The Age* declared 'that latest product of mechanical invention, the autocar, or horseless carriage, will soon be running in the streets of Melbourne.'⁵⁸⁴ At the turn of the century, the first steam car had arrived in Geelong on order from E.H. Lascelles, senior partner of the firm, Dennys Lascelles, Austin and Co., woolbrokers, and stock and station agents. Built in 1899 by the Locomobile Car Company of Bridgeport, Connecticut, U.S.A., it was powered by a 6 horse power marine engine of two cylinders with a chain driver, rear boiler and tiller steering⁵⁸⁵ (Figure 3.60). It survived until at least 1955 in Norman E. Preston's car wrecker's garage.⁵⁸⁶ The first motor car built in Geelong was in 1903, when William Humble and Ernest Schultz of the Vulcan Factory designed the body and chassis and fitted a one cylinder De Dion engine⁵⁸⁷ (Figure 3.61). According to the *Geelong Advertiser*, 'several well-known citizens worked on the job, and for a long time the car excited much curiosity.'⁵⁸⁸ In this same year, George Jones of Lara filled his spare time by constructing a motor car following several parts being made to order in Geelong. Just days away from being finished, a fire broke out in Jones' shed and the car was destroyed.⁵⁸⁹

Initially, ownership of a motor car in the early 20th century in Greater Geelong was confined to the upper and middle classes.⁵⁹⁰ Tom Hawkes of 'Llanberris', Western Beach, was one of the earliest residents to own a motor vehicle in Geelong. He acquired a Benz in c.1907 and employed a chauffeur to drive him and his family⁵⁹¹ (Figure 3.62).

It was at this time when Councillor H.F. Richardson (later first president of the Geelong Road Users' Association and the local branch of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria) was critical of motor vehicles and called for the need for regulations at a district municipal conference. As reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

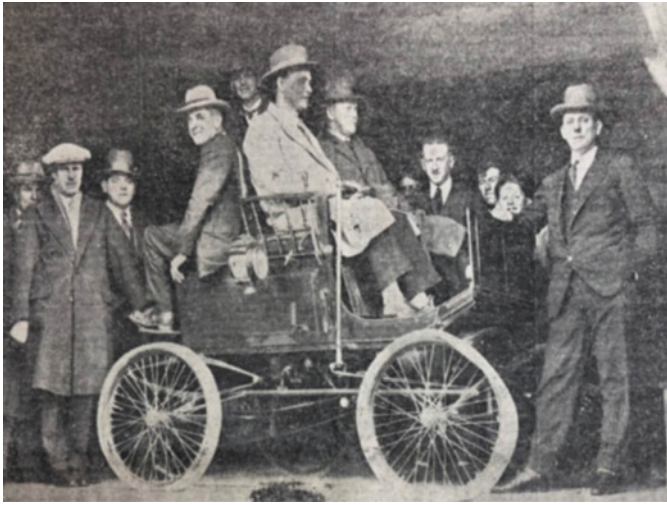


Figure 3.60: First motor car in Geelong. Seated included members of Geelong's first Motor Show Committee, E. Lanbridge, chairman (right) & Ernest Smith, secretary (left). Source: *Geelong Advertiser*, 11 June 1927, GRS 2050/159 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

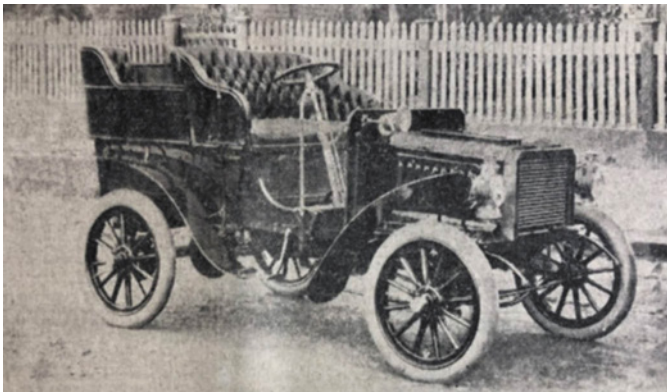


Figure 3.61: First motor car built in Geelong in 1903. Source: *Geelong Advertiser*, 4 June 1927, GRS 2050/159 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

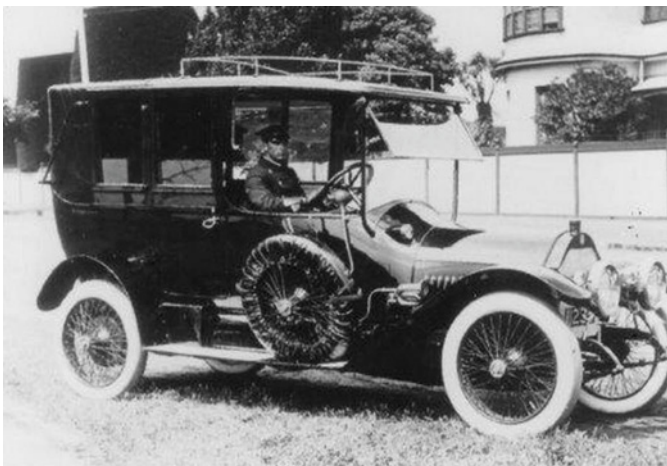


Figure 3.62: T.S. Hawkes' Benz (with chauffeur) outside 'Llanberris', Western Beach Road, c.1911. Source: Sue Richardson, Geelong.

At the close of the district municipal conference on traction engine traffic yesterday, Cr. H.F. Richardson drew attention to the motor-car traffic, which was almost as big a question. In the old country much damage was done to the roads by motors, chiefly through the blinding being sucked off the surface. The Government of Victoria had brought in a bill two sessions ago to regulate the traffic, but opposition was raised by the Labor party, who wanted a minimum wage for drivers, and the bill was withdrawn. He moved that the Ministry be urged to re-introduce the measure. He remarked that many country women were afraid to drive into town alone, and he considered there should be some regulation in regard to racing. It was practically of no value to prove that a car could travel 50 or 60 miles an hour, and it was an absolute necessity that such scorching should be stopped. Mr. Meaden, secretary of the Municipal Association, stated that the president and himself had waited on the Chief Secretary on the previous day to urge legislative action, and a resolution passed by the conference would strengthen their hands. The motion was seconded by Cr. McGuinness. He remarked that most of the cars appeared to be owned by the rich class, and he considered them profoundly ignorant and wanting in manners. Farmers who had only the smattering of education the State could afford them, observed the rules of the road, and pulled half off the road to let even a bicycle pass, but motor car owners would drive everybody off the road. The motion was carried.⁵⁹²

MOTOR GARAGES AND BUSINESSES

The early 20th century brought about rapid progress with the importation and local manufacturer of the motor car in Geelong. Some coach builders and cycle agents soon provided motor car repair services. In 1910, there were three dedicated motor car and motor cycle repairers in Geelong: Everett and Sons in Mercer Street (who also continued their coach factory business at this address) and new-comers, J.C. Brown and Co., of Malop Street (Figure 3.63), and Winter and Taylor of Little Malop Street.⁵⁹³ This latter firm was to become one of the most enduring car businesses in Geelong. A list of Motor Garages and associated businesses is given as Appendix 3.1.

WINTER AND TAYLOR

Former employees of the well-known Melbourne firm of Kellow Motor Company,⁵⁹⁴ Messrs. Winter and Taylor had commenced their business in Little Malop Street in 1908.⁵⁹⁵ In 1910, they engaged the local architect, T.D. Slevin to design a new motor garage (Figure 3.64) (now demolished) immediately east of the London Chartered Bank in

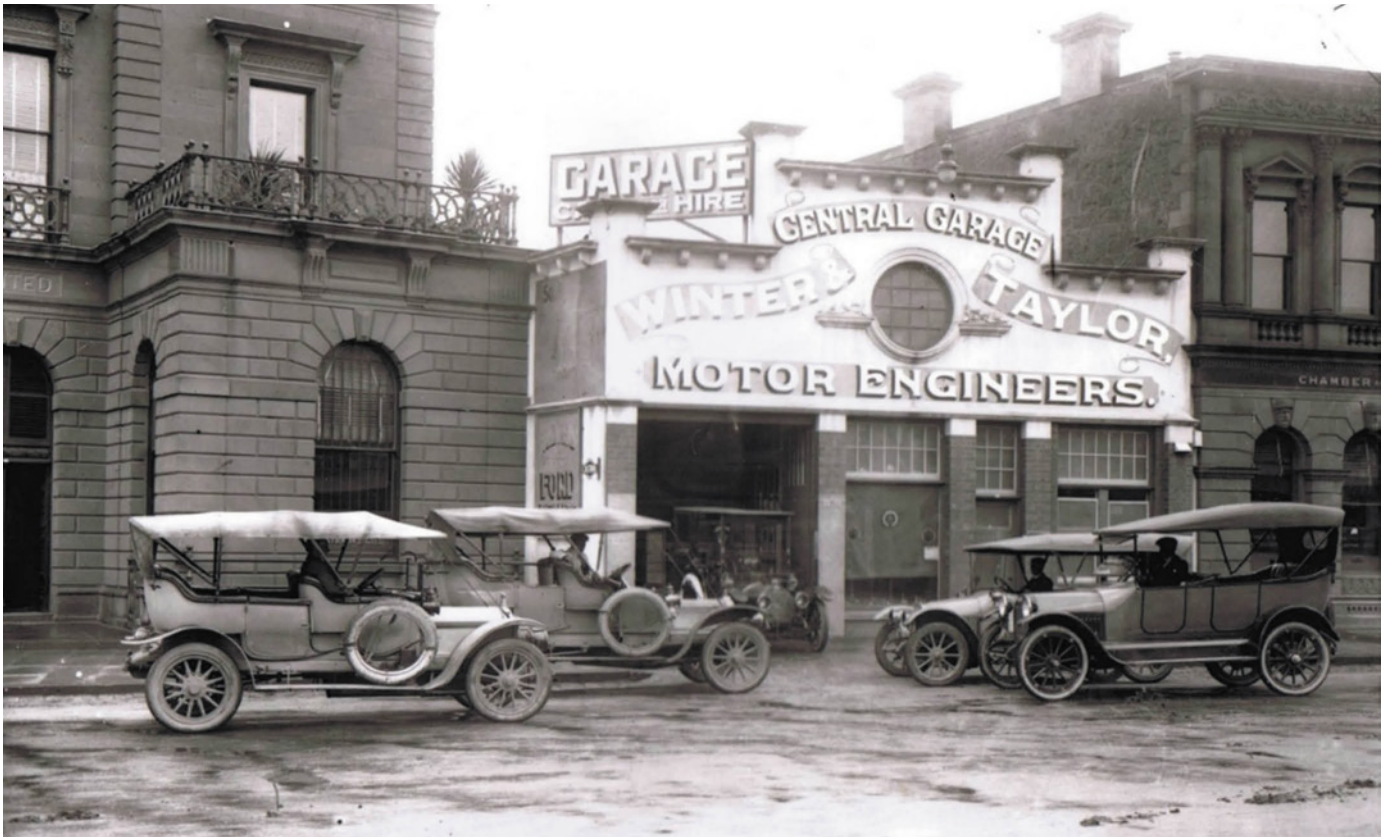


Figure 3.64: Winter and Taylor's Central Garage, Malop Street, Geelong, n.d. [c.1925] (now demolished). Source: Davies collection, Lorraine Huddle.



Figure 3.63: Brown's Motors Geelong Pty Ltd, 147 Malop Street, advertisement, 1938 (now demolished). Source: *Geelong Advertiser*, 8 October 1938, p.31, GRS 2050/205 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

Malop Street. The new garage soon boasted a display of Napier and Buick motor cars and Preston motor cycles.⁵⁹⁶ Business was so successful that additions were carried out to the garage in 1913 to a design by T.D. Slevin.⁵⁹⁷

In 1915 at the height of World War One, one of the directors, John Henry Winter, went to England to assist in making munitions for the war effort.⁵⁹⁸ This gave him the opportunity to experience 'the latest ideas and modern methods' in manufacturing and in 1916 he predicted a 'great revolution' in Commonwealth industries at war's end.⁵⁹⁹ In 1926, Winter and Taylor

were appointed as General Motors Holden Dealers which continued throughout the 20th century.⁶⁰⁰ The firm was taken over by the Morphy family in 1948, with Shelley Morphy as managing director.⁶⁰¹ This was the year when General Motors Holden unveiled the first all-Australian motor vehicle (Figure 3.65). Winter and Taylor relocated to 101 Mercer Street in 1974. In 1981, Shelly Morphy's sons, Ron and Brom Morphy, took over the dealership and in 2001 the third generation of the Morphy family, James Morphy, took over the firm.⁶⁰² In June 2018, the Winter and Taylor Motor Group was acquired by the Blood Motor Group.⁶⁰³

LONDON PIONEER MOTOR COMPANY

Continued progress in the development of motor garages was made in Geelong after 1910. In 1913, the *Geelong Advertiser* reported that 'still another motor garage is to be built in the city; this time the London Pioneer Company.'⁶⁰⁴ Seeley, King and Everett, Architects, had been engaged to design the single storey Federation Free Style building at 210 Moorabool Street (Figure 3.66), it being built by Harry Beach and Son at a cost of around £1000.⁶⁰⁵ By c.1930, the business was operated by Harrison Motors.



Figure 3.65: Inspecting the first all-Australian made Holden, 1948. Source: *Geelong Advertiser*, 4 December 1948, GRS 2050/232, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

DENNYS LASCELLES MOTOR GARAGE (LATER BALFOURS MOTORS)

One of the largest motor garages to be constructed in early 20th century Geelong exists at 155 Mercer Street. The single storey brick building (Figure 3.67) was designed by leading Geelong architects, Laird and Buchan in 1913 as a motor garage for the woolbroking firm, Dennys Lascelles⁶⁰⁶. It was this building that was acquired by the Balfour Brothers in 1918⁶⁰⁷. After workshop additions were carried out in 1919 (to the original design of 1913),⁶⁰⁸ further extensions were built to a design by Laird and Buchan in 1926.⁶⁰⁹ By this time, Thomas Robert Balfour had retired from the company and his interests in Balfour Motors were taken over by Eric Vaughan. Stuart Balfour remained with the firm, presumably until his death in 1942 at the age of 56 years.⁶¹⁰ The Balfour Motors Pty Ltd continued at 155 Mercer Street until the early 21st century.



Figure 3.66: Harrison Motors Garage, Moorabool Street, c.1920 (now demolished). Source: Item MM6786, Museums Victoria.

HENRY G. RICHARDSON MOTOR GARAGE

Another motor garage established in the early 20th century was that of Henry George Richardson (c.1883-1971). A previous employee of the neighbouring Balfours Motors garage, Richardson commenced business in his new two storey brick garage in 1921⁶¹¹ (Figure 3.67). Business was so successful that Richardson extended his motor garage to the identical design as the original wing in 1927⁶¹² (Figure 3.68). Richardson continued his motor garage business at this location until the late 1930s.⁶¹³ Richardson's garage still exists at 151-153 Mercer Street.

MOTOR GARAGE EXPANSION IN THE 20TH CENTURY

By 1925, there were 26 motor depots and garages in Geelong which testified to the growing number of residents that had acquired a motor car (see Appendix 3.1). This number of motor engineer, depot and garage businesses was to reach its peak in the mid-1930s when 47 garages were operating in Geelong.⁶¹⁴ The construction of the Ford Motor Company's factory in North Geelong in 1926 and particularly the mass production of Model A fords from 1928 (see following subsection) was a key factor in the explosion of local motor garages.

The contextually high number of motor garages and motor mechanical businesses in central and suburban Geelong continued into the late 20th century (see Appendix 3.1). One operator was B.W. McConachy at 50 Little Ryrie Street (Figure 3.69). The success of these businesses further supported Geelong's reputation of one of the pre-eminent car manufacturing hubs in Victoria.



Figure 3.67: C. Pratt, Balfours' Garage, Mercer Street, c.1925 (right). Also note Richardson's two storey garage (original wing) on the left. Source: accession H91.160/838 State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3.68: C. Pratt, Richardson's Garage (including two storey addition) (left) and Balfours Motors Garage (right) c.1927-54. Source: accession H2009.50/245 State Library of Victoria.

FORD MOTOR COMPANY

Ford's interest in Australia began in 1909 when Robert Durance established a network of dealers throughout the country and began the assembly and sale of Ford vehicles through them. With stronger competition by 1923, Ford Canada sent two executives, H.C. French and M. Brooks, to Australia on a reconnaissance visit.⁶¹⁵ The consequence of this visit was to establish a Ford Motor Company plant in Australia.⁶¹⁶ In November, 1924, P.W. Grandjean, secretary of Ford Canada, returned to Australia to choose an appropriate site.⁶¹⁷ A single central plant based on the Canadian model had been ruled out due to the lack of uniformity of railway gauges.⁶¹⁸ Nearly four months later, the decision was made to build in Geelong, on a 100 acre North Geelong site sold by the Geelong Harbour Trust.⁶¹⁹ A single storey brick factory (Figure 3.70) covering 200,000 square feet was to be erected and when completed would employ 5000 people.⁶²⁰ French was appointed general manager, R.A. McFarlane sales manager, and E.F. Hughes secretary.⁶²¹ Branches in Brisbane, Adelaide, Sydney and Fremantle would assemble parts from Geelong and overseas.⁶²² Construction commenced on the Ford Motor Company complex on the Melbourne Road, North Geelong, on 22 May, 1925, to a design that had apparently been imported from Ford's



Figure 3.69: B.W. McConachy's R.A.C.V. Service Station advertisement, 1954. Source: GRS 1623/10 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.70: Ford Motor Company, North Geelong, 1928. Source: *Geelong: 55 Photographic Views, Geelong, Victoria, Australia*, The Valentine Publishing Co. Pty Ltd, Melbourne, 1928, pp.12-13.

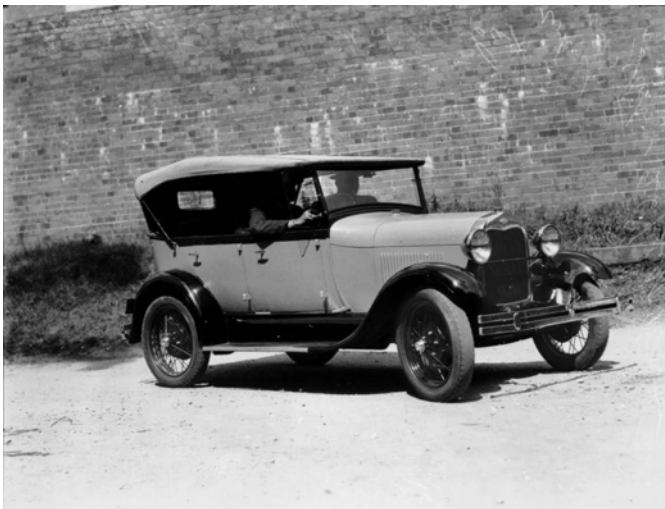


Figure 3.71: Model A Ford, 1928-29. Source: Negative 104912, State Library of Queensland.

latest Canadian (Toronto) works.⁶²³ The design engineers were Fyffe & Stewart, in association with W.J. Grassick of Melbourne.⁶²⁴ The major contractor was Concrete Constructions Ltd of Sydney and they used Johns & Waygood steel procured locally from BHP and from the UK.⁶²⁵ Ford's American architect (and the designer of the North Geelong complex) was Albert Kahn. He had been commissioned by Henry Ford as early as 1908 to design the Ford Highland Park Plant, Detroit, U.S.A.⁶²⁶

In 1928, the first Model A Ford cars were produced at Geelong (Figure 3.71) and by 1932 the factory had manufactured over 32,000 of them.⁶²⁷ Military vehicles were developed for the Defence Department.⁶²⁸ After World War Two, there was an expansion of manufacturing and in 1960 the first fully Australian Ford, the Falcon,

was produced.⁶²⁹ An assembly plant at Broadmeadows had been built especially as an assembly plant for this model, while the Geelong plant concentrated on engine manufacturing.⁶³⁰ One of Geelong's largest employers throughout the 20th century, the Ford Factory at North Geelong closed in 2016.⁶³¹

ROAD TRANSPORT SERVICES

COACH SERVICES

THE EARLY YEARS

European colonisation, and the establishment of the Town of Geelong and its suburban and rural centres, required transport services for the public and for mail communication. In 1839, William Wright commenced a mail cart between Geelong and Melbourne.⁶³² He had procured a coach from Tasmania which he called 'Tulip'.⁶³³ Wright's competition from 1841 was Henry Field. In June of that year he advertised the following in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Overland Conveyance, between Melbourne and Corio. Henry Field respectfully announces to the inhabitants of Port Phillip generally, that he has entered into arrangements by which he will be able to guarantee the greatest regularity in running a commodious vehicle between the two townships, and from his long experience on the road, and a proper attention to the comfort of his passengers, he confidently expects to merit their patronage.

The Conveyance will start as follows: - From Mr. Mortimer's, Crown Inn, Lonsdale Street, Melbourne, every Wednesday morning; and will arrive at Corio



Figure 3.72: 'Malop Street, Geelong: Departure of the mail for Ballaarat', 1861. Source: *The Herald*, March 1861, accession H4203 State Library of Victoria.

on the evening of the same day. From Corio, every Saturday morning, and will arrive in Melbourne on Saturday evening. Fare 30s. Passengers from William's Town will have an opportunity of taking their seats at Mr. Levien's, Saltwater River.⁶³⁴

The Victorian goldrush in the early 1850s brought with it the need for a more expansive and reliable road coach service. One of the earliest and most popular was the firm of Cobb and Co., founded in Melbourne in 1853 by the American, Freeman Cobb and his partners, John Peck, James Swanton and John Lamber.⁶³⁵ Between Geelong



Figure 3.73: J.W. Lindt, *Barwon Heads coach*, n.d. [c.1901]. Source: accession H33027/1b State Library of Victoria.

and Ballarat, two teams were established to offer the coach service.⁶³⁶ The opening of the Melbourne to Geelong railway in June 1857 expanded Cobb and Co.'s services from Geelong to Ballarat, with passengers availed of train travel from Melbourne to Geelong and then connecting to the Ballarat goldfields by coach from Geelong.⁶³⁷ The coach service became so well patronised that in January 1860 Cobb and Co. updated its vehicle between Geelong and Ballarat with the 'Leviathan' coach that could carry almost 100 passengers driven by a team of eight horses.⁶³⁸ In Geelong, the Cobb. and Co. booking office was at 31 Malop Street in a commodious two storey building (Figure 3.72) (now demolished).⁶³⁹

Cobb and Co. mail and coach services were extended to Hamilton and Mt Gambier, covering the Western District from Geelong. By 1860, several of the Cobb and Co. coaching firms in the Western District of Victoria had been taken over by the Australian Stage Company.⁶⁴⁰ In 1866, the Western Stage Company was established and it provided services throughout the Western District.⁶⁴¹ The directors of the new company included Thomas Stoneman who was later to become the first Mayor of the Borough of Geelong West (see Theme 7). By 1896, the head office of the Western Stage Company was in Geelong, the extent of the services offered being outlined in the *Weekly Times*:

The Western Stage Company, better known by the name of Cobb and Co., has now fine livery and letting stables in Warrnambool, at the Western Hotel, situate at the corner of Timor and Kepler streets. The extent of the business of this company may be inferred from the fact that it now possessed, in addition to its head office, which is at Geelong, no less than seventeen branches, at the following place: - Ballarat, Egerton,

Gordons, Bacchus Marsh, Hamilton, Warrnambool, McArthur, Coleraine, Port Fairy, Koroit, Queenscliff, Drysdale, Ocean Grove, Barwon Heads, Portarlington, Steiglitz, and Rokewood. Telegrams are promptly attended to, and special conveyances can be obtained at all hours, whether day or night. Relays of horses can be obtained throughout the Western District, and express conveyances are furnished to all parts of the colony upon the shortest notice. The firm keeps a large number of horses in its stables, and all sorts of conveyances, including buggies, carryalls, waggonettes, private coaches, carriages and omnibuses. The requirements of commercial travellers are specially studied, and picnic parties can be supplied with equipages at very short notice. During the season Cobb and Co. will have cabs running to the principal sights of the district of Warrnambool. Their telephone number is 65. The charges made by the firm are strictly moderate. The district manager is Mr Thomas Vines.⁶⁴²

The Western Stage Company had commenced a Cobb and Co. coach service to Barwon Heads in 1889 (Figure 3.73). Travel could be directly to Barwon Heads from Geelong, or 'by way of Ocean Grove and the Wallington'.⁶⁴³ At Barwon Heads, the Cobb. and Co. stables were located at the north-west corner of Hitchcock Avenue and Bridge Road. At Ocean Grove, the Cobb and Co. depot was in The Parade. The service ran twice daily and took around 3 hours.⁶⁴⁴

In 1919, Cobb and Co. was purchased by H. Womersley, motor car proprietor who offered 'an up-to-date motor service' twice daily during the summer season to the 'favorite seaside resorts of Barwon Heads, Torquay and Ocean Grove' and Anglesea and Airey's Inlet.⁶⁴⁵

CABS AND TAXIS

FIRST CABS

A cab service began in central Geelong in January 1848. However, the *Geelong Advertiser* claimed that it was 'made available only as yet by disreputable men and females, who may be seen riding about in all directions through the town, and at all hours of the day and night'.⁶⁴⁶ Such negative depiction of the first cab in Geelong continued in the following months, to a point where the *Geelong Advertiser* labelled it 'the cab nuisance':

As an offensive adjunct to the several houses of disreputable character in Geelong, about two months since a cab was brought into requisition for the sole purpose of being employed in driving females of questionable notoriety about the town and suburbs, an annoyance to the respectable portion of the community of no trifling nature.⁶⁴⁷



Figure 3.74: Line of Hackney Cabs, Malop Street (outside Market Square), n.d. Source: Wynd collection, Authentic Heritage Services.



Figure 3.75: Opening of Victoria Cabmen's Shelter, 1906. Source: *News of the Week*, 4 January 1906, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

HACKNEY CABS

In 1850, a Bill was passed by the N.S.W. Legislative Council allowing the provision of a bye-law for the licensing and regulating of hackney carriages in the City of Melbourne. The *Geelong Advertiser* lamented the lost opportunity for a similar by-law to have been afforded the Geelong Town Council.⁶⁴⁸ However, it was on 7 March 1865 when the bye-law no. 27 was passed by the Geelong Town Council regulating hackney cabs⁶⁴⁹ (Figure 3.74). Between this time and 1869, the responsibility for the regulation resided with the Town Inspector.⁶⁵⁰ He was relieved of his duties in January 1869 as the regulations were considered to be 'defective' and the Hackney Carriages Committee had been constituted by the Council to frame new regulations.⁶⁵¹ Comprised of members of the Town Council, the improvements included more rigorous license management, including annual inspections, licensing of carriages and providing governance in relation to complaints made against or by

drivers, fares and carriage stands.⁶⁵² The new regulations were not passed by the Council until 1872.⁶⁵³ Minutes of the Market and Hackney Carriage Committee revealed the names, numbers and addresses of the cab drivers in 1877 after the name of the committee had changed from the Market Committee. There were 48 cab licenses issued to cab drivers mainly resident in Geelong, Geelong West and Newtown and Chilwell.⁶⁵⁴ By 1903, the number of licensed cabs had swelled to 70 and there were 9 licenced buses.⁶⁵⁵ By 1929, motor taxis were in competition with the traditional horse-drawn cabs.⁶⁵⁶ Ironically, the motor cabs were also licensed as Hackney Carriages, indicating that technological progress had overtaken the traditional governance of the Council's license system.⁶⁵⁷ The Council had however established separate cab stands for horse-drawn and motorised cabs in 1926.⁶⁵⁸ While most of the cabs were replaced with motorised vehicles in the ensuing years, there was at least 'one drag' operating in 1940.⁶⁵⁹

HANSOM CABS

A number of the cab drivers owned Hansom cabs. Designed and patented in 1834 by Joseph Hansom, an architect from York, England,⁶⁶⁰ the horse-drawn carriage was not introduced to Geelong until 1887 when a Mr McMullen, 'a well known wagonette proprietor', acquired a cab 'specially built by Mr Hackett, of Melbourne, at a cost of £120.'⁶⁶¹ McMullen found business so successful that he procured another. A third was manufactured by August Grote of Gheringhap Street in 1888 for A. Farrell and it was described as being 'constructed of most substantial material, besides being neatly and pleasingly colored.'⁶⁶² The cabs operated from specific locations known as Hansom cabstands, the first being located in Malop Street for Mr McMullen.⁶⁶³

CABMEN'S SHELTERS

In 1903, the Geelong Council Surveyor reported to the gardens committee on the cost of erecting a shelter for cabmen in Market Square.⁶⁶⁴ It had been instigated by local cabmen following a similar movement in Melbourne which called for shelters to be erected for cabmen while waiting for a fare (the first being erected next to Parliament House in Melbourne in 1898), with the origins of the movement the Cabmen's Shelter Fund having been established in London in 1875.⁶⁶⁵ Known as the Victoria Shelter in memory of Queen Victoria,⁶⁶⁶ it was built in Malop Street (near Moorabool Street intersection) in 1905 (Figure 3.75) while a second structure was erected in Ryrie Street (near Moorabool Street) in 1906⁶⁶⁷ (Figure 3.76). This shelter was named the King Edward VII Memorial Shelter.⁶⁶⁸ Both shelters were designed



Figure 3.76: The Rose Series, Ryrie Street (looking west) showing Edward VII Cabmen's Shelter east of Moorabool Street, c.1920. Source: GRS 2009/053400, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.77: Relocated Edward VII Cabmen's Shelter (location unknown), Public Works Department photograph, c.1940. Source VPRS 10516/P3, Unit 10 Public Record Office Victoria.

by William Cleverdon, the genesis of the designs of the gambrel-roofed timber structures being the distinctive forms in London and Melbourne (including the crowning lantern). The shelter in Ryrie Street was described as being 'designed on ornate lines' with 'seating accommodation for a number of the men.'⁶⁶⁹ Both shelters accommodated telephones and subscribers to the Telephone Exchange were 'able to get a cab at a moment's notice.'⁶⁷⁰ Shelter committees were formed to manage and regulate the use of the structures. Controversy ensued in 1911 when the Market and Gardens Committee proposed to debar certain cabmen from using the telephones. This decision was overturned.⁶⁷¹

The expansion of the Geelong tram system to East Geelong along Ryrie Street in 1922 (see later subsection) necessitated the relocation the King Edward VII shelter.⁶⁷² It was subsequently removed to the Post Office site with a frontage to Gheringhap Street. The relocation and changes to the shelter were outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The shelter shed has been placed on a vacant allotment belonging to the Postmaster-General's Department, and has been structurally altered so that the entrance is no longer at the side, but at the front, facing the street. The telephone, in some measure, will compensate the cabbies for their compulsory transfer from so central a position as Ryrie street. The average daily attendance at the new stand will be about six or eight cabs.⁶⁷³

In 1938, the King Edward VII shelter was privately sold for £8 and relocated elsewhere⁶⁷⁴ (Figure 3.77). In 1926, the construction of shops at Market Square required the relocation of the Victoria Shelter in Malop Street but the City Council would not approve its continued use in a new location in the same street but further east.⁶⁷⁵ In January 1927, the Council proposed the sale and removal of the shelter.⁶⁷⁶ On 26 January the shed was sold at auction to local merchant, Harry Hooper for £36/10/, who outbid the Eastern and West Beach organisation who sought to retain the shelter in public ownership.⁶⁷⁷ Built by public subscription, it seems the concept of private ownership was not well received and instead the shelter was purchased by the Citizens' Beach Improvement Committee for initial use as an office for a beach carnival at Eastern Beach.⁶⁷⁸ It was anticipated that after the completion of the carnival, the shelter would be moved further east and used by the Open Sea Bathers' League.⁶⁷⁹ In subsequent years the shelter was relocated to Eastern Park and in 1988 it was again removed to the Geelong Botanic Gardens and substantially restored and adapted for use as a garden shelter.⁶⁸⁰

MOTOR TAXI CABS

Horse-drawn Hackney and Hansom cabs were phased out in Geelong in the early 20th century. In 1913, 'two modern taxi-cabs of the laundaulette type, with folding roof', were serviced at Winter and Taylor's garage.⁶⁸¹ This was the beginning of the firm's venture into the taxi business, with a further three vehicles to complete the fleet. A separate company was formed in January 1913 in order to operate the business and was known as the Geelong Taxi-cab Company. Cars for hire were also made available.⁶⁸² This began the local taxi and car hire services in Geelong.

OMNIBUSES

FIRST OMNIBUS SERVICES

Omnibuses came into service in Geelong in the 1850s for transporting larger groups of people. These services were separate to the mail coach runs until the establishment of Cobb and Co. Within the Geelong township, Thomas Ogilvie owned an 'omnibus travelling carriage' before 1853⁶⁸³ while A. Atkins of Mack's Hotel provided an omnibus service from Mack's Hotel in Brougham Street to the Geelong Railway Station after the opening of the railway line in 1856.⁶⁸⁴ In 1872, there were two omnibus businesses. One was James Doull's bus 'Express' which operated from Jeffrey's Hotel in Shannon Avenue, Newtown to Ashby (Geelong West) and the Barwon Bridge and Chilwell.⁶⁸⁵ The other was operated by W. Lane who had acquired a Perseverance omnibus.⁶⁸⁶ The *Geelong Advertiser* gave a report on the opening of the service in December 1872:

Mr Lane's new omnibus started running yesterday, and appeared to be well patronised considering that it was the first day, and people had not had time to fully appreciate the advantages offered by a cheap and easy mode of transit. There are always some who dislike being seen riding about in a span new conveyance, especially if different in style to those to which they are accustomed, but there is little doubt as the comfort of Mr Lane's omnibus becomes better known, he will have no reason to complain of want of patronage.⁶⁸⁷

WALKER'S OMNIBUSES

The most expansive omnibus service established in Geelong was that by William Walker (1846-1922) in 1886. Born in Grantham England, Walker had emigrated to Victoria in 1849 on the *Larpen* with his parents, Thomas and Catherine and other family members.⁶⁸⁸ After 16 years working for Joseph Kerley's carrier business from 1860, he acquired Jean D'Helin's tobacconist business in 1874, the year he married the wealthy widow, Jane Kishere (nee Clydesdale).⁶⁸⁹ They also established 'Pleasant Bank Farm' at Moolap. In 1884, Walker commenced business with a Mr C. Dalwood, leasing livery and bait stables in Little Malop Street.⁶⁹⁰ This was Walker's first venture in the transportation business which formalised into his omnibus business with the purchase of 'The Pivot' omnibus in 1886. According to Enid Shann in a Walker family history:

It [the bus service] began from the Market Square in Moorabool St. at 8 a.m., and travelled to Newtown at the corner of Aphrasia Street and Shannon Avenue, then called West Melbourne Road. There was an old stone inn there with a tall wooden viewing tower

called Jeffrey's Fernery. The bus made four trips a day ... This was so successful that William bought two more buses in Ballarat, and made three trips a day to Belmont, with another route to Pakington Street in West Geelong. Next came services to Herne Hill, and the Gardens in East Geelong.⁶⁹¹

In 1888, Walker relinquished his livery, letting and bait stables in Little Malop Street, to his brother in law, John Clydesdale.⁶⁹² This was to enable Walker to establish a public company with a Mr Frederick Bryant for the purpose of erecting a grand concert hall in Market Square fronting Malop Street.⁶⁹³ Designed by the architect, J.S. Jackson, T.F. Seeley was Clerk of Works.⁶⁹⁴ To cost £15,000, the main walls were completed by April 1889.⁶⁹⁵ However, Walker and Bryant had difficulties in raising the necessary capital and the substantial edifice was never realised.⁶⁹⁶ Walker became insolvent in 1890.⁶⁹⁷

Following the resolution of its financial difficulties, the firm of Walker and Bryant continued, but as omnibus and livery stable proprietors at its substantial stables between Corio Street and Corio Terrace.⁶⁹⁸ The partnership was dissolved in April 1895 and an extensive clearing sale of horses, vehicles and harnesses ensued.⁶⁹⁹ The ending of the business appears to have weighed heavily on Frederick Bryant. A former successful miller in Collingwood and Mayor of Collingwood, he took his own life in Eastern Park on 17 April 1895.⁷⁰⁰

With the sale of the Corio Street business, William Walker established his omnibus premises at the corner of Shannon Avenue and Leslie Street in 1895.⁷⁰¹ He acquired a new omnibus called 'The Sunbeam' (Figure 3.78) which received glowing reports in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Travellers on the Newtown 'bus route will be pleased to learn that a special effort has been made by Mr William Walker to study their convenience and comfort. The omnibus which has performed such good service for the past few years is to be supplanted by a new, handsome and commodious vehicle, specially constructed upon modern improvement lines. It will be found not only an attractive conveyance, but one possessing all the conveniences of an elegant and comfortable tramway car, being one of Andrews' patent safety 'busses', which was shown in the Melbourne Exhibition a few years since, but never used on Victorian roads. The vehicle was imported from Cardiff, where it was specially constructed to compete with the electric tramway system in vogue there, and it has remained in bond until recently, when Mr Walker purchased it, and since then it has been prepared and fitted up for the Newtown and Jeffrey's Fernery 'bus route. The vehicle has been



Figure 3.78: Walker's omnibus outside Jeffrey's Fernery Hotel, north-west corner of Shannon Avenue and Aphrasia Street, c.1895. Source: GRS 2009/0113, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

named "The Sunbeam" after Lord Brassey's steam yacht now on its way to Victoria with the new Governor and his family. It is built upon the tramway principle, with stout springs on the outside, weight 39 cwt. and runs with freedom, ease and comfort. The interior, which is designed to accommodate 15 passengers, is nicely fitted up with velvet pile seats: fixed windows of thick plate glass form the upper sides of the conveyance, and there are special methods of ventilating the omnibus which will be found in every way commendable. The roof of the tramway car is provided with seven garden seats, affording accommodation for 15 passengers, and it is reached by means of a staircase rising from a platform at the rear of the vehicle.⁷⁰²

Walker continued to operate his omnibus business in Newtown until 1901 when he sold it to John Stokes.⁷⁰³ William Walker died at Cheltenham on 26 September 1922.⁷⁰⁴

ELECTRIC TRAMS

In 1888, Abraham and Sutherland, brokers for the Electric Light, Tram and Omnibus Company and James Henry, broker for the Geelong and District Electric Tramway Company Ltd were behind a proposed venture to establish 'tram-cars' in Geelong and suburbs.⁷⁰⁵ Approved by the local Councils in 1890, the Tramway Syndicate (as it was called) sought an extension of the terms of the commencement of the works.⁷⁰⁶ The Syndicate ultimately forfeited its preliminary deposit following the Tramway Conference committee cancelling the tram agreement.⁷⁰⁷



Figure 3.79: Moorabool St, looking north-east, showing cast iron & timber electricity poles for tram service at the centre & sides of the street, c.1930. Source: GRS 2009/1304a, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

In 1909, the directors of the Melbourne Electric Supply Company in London approved an electric tram system for Geelong and suburbs and proposed the deferment of the construction of the line to the Barwon Bridge given the difficulty with the level railway crossing in Moorabool Street.⁷⁰⁸ In 1910, Government acceptance of the proposal by the Melbourne Electric Supply Company was given to construct and operate an electric tram service in Geelong.⁷⁰⁹

Much discussion and debate transpired about the proposed tram routes in relation to safety and infrastructure. Two routes were first settled upon to Newtown and Geelong West, with two city termini at the Wharf and the Geelong Railway Station, with both linked to the Newtown and Geelong West termini.⁷¹⁰ The Newtown line extended from Ryrie Street, Aberdeen Street and south along Pakington Street to Aphrasia Street, and west to Shannon Avenue.⁷¹¹ The Geelong West took in Ryrie Street to Pakington Street as north as Church Street. Initially, a motor bus service was provided for the proposed East Geelong route along Ormond Road, terminating at the Boundary Road intersection.

Work began on the construction of the overhead tram cables in Aberdeen Street in January 1911, but there was a delay with the commencement of the laying of rails due to the late arrival of the rail shipment from New York.⁷¹² In central Geelong, the rows of poles were made with timber uprights in cast iron bases (Figure 3.79), which the *Geelong Advertiser* declared were 'not altogether without embellishment.'⁷¹³ Suburban poles were solely of timber.⁷¹⁴ Rails began to be laid in February 1911. They were set in concrete, causing 'a good length of the track in Pakington

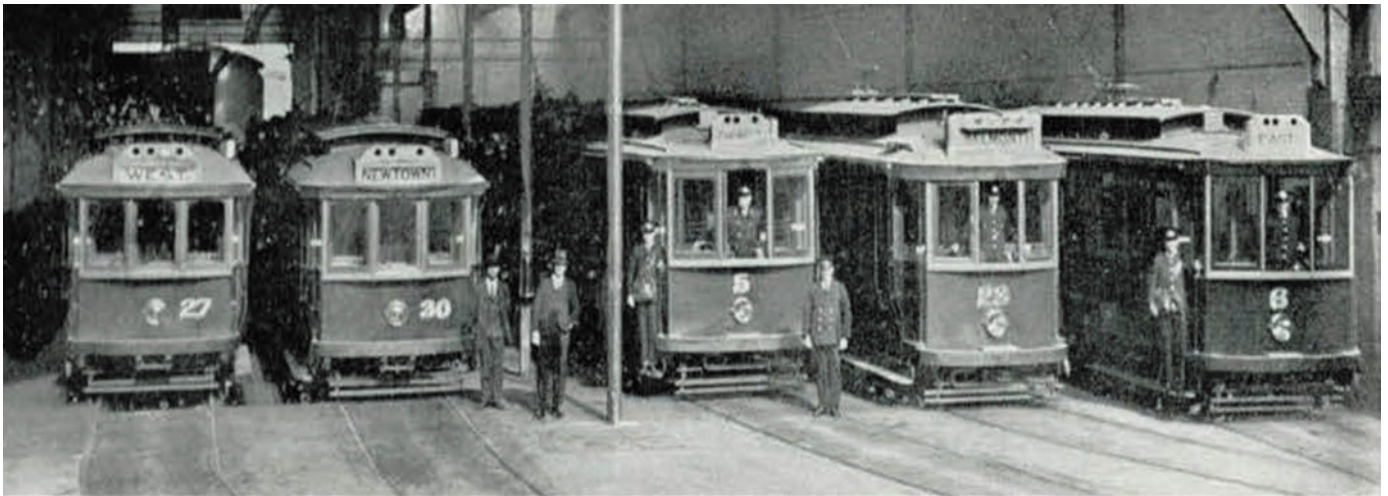


Figure 3.80: Tram Shed, c.1930. Source: *Geelong: Its Advantages and Opportunities*, Geelong Publicity Council, Geelong, 1930, p.36.

Street' to be roped off.⁷¹⁵ By April 1911, considerable progress had been made on the laying of the tram lines as reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Practically the whole of the tram line from the City terminus to the northern end of Pakington-street, Geelong West, has been laid; and the Newtown line is slowly being extended to the west of Pakington-street hill before turning west to Aphrasia-street terminus. Yesterday the track to the railway station from Moorabool-street was pegged out and grades laid for the route to the wharf and power station.⁷¹⁶

Land for a tram depot was acquired by the Melbourne Electric Supply Company in 1910.⁷¹⁷ Designed by local architects, Tombs and Durran, tenders were called for the construction of the tram office in January 1911.⁷¹⁸ The local building firm of Tingate Brothers was awarded the construction in March of that year.⁷¹⁹ Tombs and Durran had also designed the first section of tram sheds and workshops and the tender of Drew Brothers and Ebbels was accepted for this work in May 1911.⁷²⁰ By August 1911, six additional workmen had been employed to construct the tram office.⁷²¹ The tram shed (now demolished) was doubled in size in 1913 with the 'roofing over the space between the exiting depot and Blakiston's stables'⁷²² (Figure 3.80).

In 1911, the first quantity of wheels, undergear and other parts for the tram cars (based on the California model) arrived from Melbourne on the steamer, *Coogee* for the initial fleet of seven cars and four trailers.⁷²³ They had been manufactured overseas⁷²⁴. The car bodies (Figure 3.81) were made by Duncan and Fraser in Adelaide. This firm had previously manufactured tram car bodies for the Malvern line in Melbourne and the Adelaide system.⁷²⁵

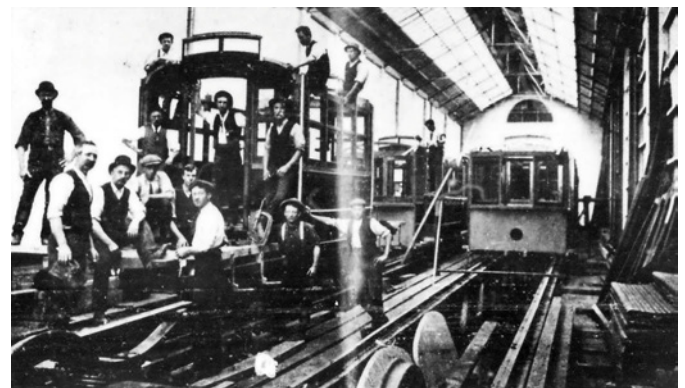


Figure 3.81: Geelong tram cars under construction, 1911. Source: *News of the Week*, 7 December 1911, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

These cars were known as 'Butterboxes'.⁷²⁶

For the East Geelong line not yet constructed, three single deck Milnes-Daimler bus chassis were fitted to saloon bodies (Figure 3.82) manufactured by Duncan and Fraser.⁷²⁷

On 14 March 1912, the Geelong tram service was opened with a gala attended by various Commonwealth, State and local dignitaries.⁷²⁸ The official opening was especially marked by the involvement of the Mayoresses of the Geelong, Newtown and Chilwell and Geelong West. Three tram cars – signifying each of the local Councils associated with the tram service – and a further car representing the Melbourne Electric Supply Company, were decorated under the direction of the Mayoresses as outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The four cars which made the official circuit of the routes were admirably decorated. The civic fathers had entrusted the task to their ladies, who are to



Figure 3.82: Geelong Tramways motor bus for East Geelong Route, c.1912. Source: accession H2008.28/2 State Library of Victoria.

be complimented on evolving pretty schemes of ornamentation. The city car had lattices of white entwined by artificial white blossom. The front panel had the city coat of arms, and white streamers waved from the sides of the car. Newtown and Chilwell had a blending of pale blue and green. Evergreens formed the background for festoons of pale blue flowers, unique trumpet lilies, silken blue flags were clustered on the canopy of the car front and back, and the borough name was emblazoned on either side. Geelong West's color scheme was red and white. Artificial blossoms (They might have been cherry and pear blooms) were daintily set amongst asparagus fern and similar light foliages; over all red and white ribbons were prominent; and this car too, had its own name badge. The company's car ... was a modest decoration in green and gold – the uprights and windows picked out in columns of foliage studded with miniature sunflowers, Japanese marigolds, etc.⁷²⁹

Female involvement in the opening ceremony went beyond mere decoration. Each of the tram cars were driven by the three Mayoresses led by Mayoress

Williams (Geelong) and followed by Mayoress Clutterbuck (Newtown and Chilwell) and Mayoress Dickins (Geelong West) (Figure 3.83). Following was the Melbourne Electric Supply Company car. It was driven by Miss Jobbins, daughter of G.G. Jobbins, company manager for Geelong (in 1930 Jobbins became an engineer and manager for the State Electricity Commission and later its chairman).⁷³⁰ In Moorabool Street next to Queen Victoria's statue in Market Square, Mayoress Williams cut the silk ribbon in the company of the Mayor and the Hon. Agar Wynne. Similar ceremonial ribbons were cut by Mayoress Clutterbuck in Pakington Street and Mayoress Dickins in Aberdeen Street.⁷³¹

A bus shelter shed was constructed in McKillop Street (corner of Ormond Road) in 1917 for the East Geelong route⁷³² (Figure 3.84). The gabled design of the small waiting room was based on an earlier shelter built at the southern terminus in Moorabool Street near the Barwon Bridge.⁷³³ This earlier shed was subsequently relocated to the corner of the Colac Road (High Street) and Mt Pleasant Road, Belmont, in 1936.⁷³⁴

STARTING GEELONG'S ELECTRIC TRAM SERVICE.

W. H. Watts, photo.



MAYORESS WILLIAMS DRIVING THE FIRST CAR



THE CARS IN MOORABOOL-STREET.



SOME GUESTS AT THE WORKS



MAYORESS OF NEWTOWN AT THE WHEEL



VIEW OF CROWD IN PAKINGTON-STREET, GEELONG WEST.



MAYORESS OF WEST GEELONG AS DRIVER



AT THE POWER HOUSE



GUESTS RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES BY TRAM.

"S.O.W." photo.

Figure 3.83: W.H. Watts, Selected scenes at the opening of the Geelong Tramway, 1912. Source: News of the Week, 21 March 1912, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.84: Geelong Tramways bus shelter, East Geelong, c.1920 Source: Item MM6840 Museums Victoria.



Figure 3.85: Ryrie St (between Moorabool & Yarra Streets), with tram line under construction, c.1922. Source: McDonald collection, Kevin Krastins, City of Greater Geelong.

Expansion of the tram service occurred in the following years. The southern route along Moorabool Street was extended to Fyans Street in 1913, following the excavation of a subway in Moorabool Street and the construction of an overhead railway bridge in 1912 (see later subsection).⁷³⁵ The east line was opened in Ryrie Street between Moorabool Street in 1922 (Figure 3.85) and extended along Ormond Road to Humble Street in January 1923 and to Boundary Road in March 1912.⁷³⁶ Other major extensions included the line to Belmont (terminating at the High Street and Roslyn Road intersection) in 1927 and in the north, from Mercer Street to Bell Parade in 1928, Bell Parade to Victoria Street in 1929 and Victoria Street to Separation Street in late 1929.⁷³⁷ In 1948, a report by the Melbourne Tramways Board recommended the replacement of trams with buses and a suburban tram service using the existing rail network.⁷³⁸ In 1956, the tram network in Geelong was officially closed.⁷³⁹

MOTOR BUSES

The first motor bus manufactured in Victoria was at the Vulcan Foundry of Humble and Sons in Little Malop Street in 1903 (Figure 3.86). As outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The credit of manufacturing the first motor bus in these states belongs to Messrs. Humble and Sons, of the Vulcan Foundry, Geelong. Recently the firm named received an order from the Albion Cycle Works, of Melbourne, for two of these buses for use in Tasmania, and the first bus was sent away from Geelong on Saturday. It is a highly finished vehicle of attractive appearance, and was favorably commented upon as it passed through the streets on Saturday on its way by road to Melbourne. The bus has been subjected to a thorough trial prior to leaving, and was found to be in first-class order and well up to the standard of efficiency required for such a conveyance. The whole of the machinery and gearing worked smoothly and effectively from the outset, and the long run from Geelong to Melbourne was successfully negotiated, a telegram being received, by Messrs. Humble and Sons to the effect that the bus reached its destination in thorough order after a highly satisfactory run. The proprietor of the Albion Cycle Works was a passenger by the bus on its trip to Melbourne, and expressed his pleasure and satisfaction at the satisfactory nature of its maiden journey. The body of the bus is well made of seasoned timber with open sides to roll up when required, the interior being nicely upholstered and carpeted. The top is railed round to carry half a ton of luggage, and the motive power is derived from a double cylinder engine worked by petrol, in connection with electric batteries. Machine-cut steel gearing is used throughout, and heavy chains are employed connecting from the gearing to the rear wheels. The wheels are of the heavy artillery pattern with channel steel rims and solid rubber tyres, these latter ensuring the easy running of the vehicle. The bus is tastefully painted, lined and varnished, and altogether presents a striking appearance, and runs with an amount of freedom from friction and noise that reflects very much credit upon its producers. The carrying capacity is 16 passengers, besides the luggage already referred to. The second bus is now in course of construction at the Vulcan Foundry, and will be completed shortly after the new year.⁷⁴⁰

It was another nine years before the first formalised motor bus service was introduced in Geelong with the commencement of the Melbourne Electric Supply



Figure 3.86: 'Progress' bus manufactured by Humble & Sons, Geelong, c.1903. Source: accession H99.10/70 State Library of Victoria.

Company's temporary bus service to East Geelong between 1912 and 1923 until the tram line was laid (see earlier subsection). A number of private bus companies were also established in Geelong and outer areas, providing a public transport service that complemented the Geelong tram service, and filling a market beyond the extent and capacity of the tram system.

WISE FAMILY BUS SERVICES

In the 1920s, John M. Wise, a conductor (and later driver) on the Geelong trams, established a bus business with a Model T Ford. He had the car fitted with a saloon body with rear access for the passengers.⁷⁴¹ Initially Wise's service operated between the city and Geelong West but he later expanded to include services from Minerva Road, Hamlyn Heights to the city; and from Geelong West to the large employers of the Ford Motor Company at North Geelong and International Harvester at North Shore.⁷⁴² Wise's brother, Tom, also established a bus service in the early 1920s, taking on the route from Geelong West to the city.⁷⁴³ He later commenced a charter service for Ford Motor Company employees at North Geelong.⁷⁴⁴

BENDERS BUSWAYS 1926

In 1926, Ernest and Aimee (Bonnie) Bender obtained a Hackney Carriage license from the Geelong City Council to operate a bus service between Geelong and Chilwell.⁷⁴⁵ Ernest Bender (1888-1967) was born in Drouin and had been driver mechanic for the Divisional Supply Company in the Australian Imperial Force in World War One.⁷⁴⁶ Aimee (Bonnie) Annie Gwendoline Pretoria Bender (nee Lyons) (1901-1967) was born at Mitcham, South Australia, the product of a relationship between Catherine Hogan and Goodman Lyons.⁷⁴⁷ She seems to have been raised by Thomas Davidson.⁷⁴⁸ Ernest and Aimee married in East Melbourne in 1923.⁷⁴⁹ They had one son, Norman Ernest Bender in 1924.⁷⁵⁰ In Geelong, their initial fleet was a Reo Speed wagon and a Willys Knight.⁷⁵¹ In May 1930, the Geelong City Council approved a new motor bus route for Benders Busways, it being between Gheringhap Street (opposite City Hall) and Minerva Road, taking in Railway Terrace, Gordon Avenue, Spring, Pakington, Gertrude, Coquette and Aberdeen Streets, Shannon Avenue and Upper Skene Street.⁷⁵² In 1936, previous war injuries prevented Ernest from continuing to work and so Bonnie

Bender continued on her own account.⁷⁵³ Making the most of Geelong's industrial expansion, she doubled the bus fleet to four in 1937 with Ford buses made locally and by 1945 she had 14 Ford V8 buses operating from three routes to North Shore, Newtown and Chilwell from the company's base at Newtown (adjoining the Bender residence).⁷⁵⁴ In 1945, recognising the need to cater for the postwar baby boom, and following the innovation of the Melbourne Tramways Board with its Northcote-Clifton Hill bus service for infants in 1941,⁷⁵⁵ Bonnie Bender value-added to the business with the introduction of a 'pram bus'⁷⁵⁶ (Figure 3.87). The vehicle had been modified with a widened front door and a swivel seat for the driver to allow for the manoeuvring of prams. The Special Pram Bus as it was called accommodated 15 prams and up to seven pushers in addition to passengers. A hostess was also employed to assist with the prams and children.⁷⁵⁷ Further details were given in *The Advocate*:

Bender's Ford V-8 Bus Service has prepared a converted bus for the transport, to and from the city, of mothers with young children. The bus, which made its initial run on Monday, takes aboard perambulators and their occupants, kindergarteners and other youngsters, and the juvenile passengers already are finding their new mode of transport one of enjoyment and interest. The interior and exterior of the bus have been appropriately decorated with nursery motifs. The bus makes four trips daily to and from the Newtown terminus at the corner of Minerva-road and Aberdeen -street. The picture shows some of the perambulators and babies being taken aboard. The interior decoration of the bus shows highlights in the career of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.⁷⁵⁸

The pram bus service was expanded in 1947 with an additional service to Manifold Heights.⁷⁵⁹

In 1948, Norman Bender was made a full partner in the family business which acquired the passenger service of H.C. Thompson at this time, expanding its routes in the Newtown area.⁷⁶⁰ Further expansion continued in the postwar years and with the closure of the Geelong tram service in 1956 Benders Busways acquired the North, Chilwell and Newtown runs.⁷⁶¹ Further services were added to meet the demand of the industrial workforce in Geelong's northern suburbs and a daily service was offered to Ballarat.⁷⁶² In 1965, Benders Busways acquired Corio Bus Lines, which added the Belmont, Highton and Geelong West routes to the Benders service.⁷⁶³ In 1983, the Geelong Transit System was created with the co-operation of the four operators and local councils, which included Benders Busways (the other major operators being McHarry's I.J. Cook and Trans Otway).⁷⁶⁴



Figure 3.87: Benders Busways 'pram bus', 1945. Source: Geelong Advertiser, 22 November 1945, p.1, GRS 2050/226, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.88: John McHarry (left) & Norman McHarry (right) outside the depot in Kooyong Road, Drumcondra, 1932. Source: Ashley McHarry, McHarry's Buslines Pty Ltd.

The business of I.J. Cook and Son was added to the Benders service in 1987.⁷⁶⁵ In 2000, Norman Bender died. After 75 years as a family business, Benders Busways was sold to the Kefford Corporation.⁷⁶⁶ A Hockey and Tennis Centre at the Geelong Grammar School's Corio campus was built and named in memory of Norman Bender (a former student and School Councillor) in 2001 through a generous benefaction of his widow, Helene Bender.⁷⁶⁷

In 2009 the Kefford Corporation that had acquired Benders Busways was sold to ComfortDelGro and Cabcharge (CDC) and the name of Benders Busways was rebranded to CDC Geelong.⁷⁶⁸

MCHARRY'S BUSLINES PTY LTD 1925⁷⁶⁹

Impetus for the establishment by McHarry's Buslines came in 1925 when John McHarry (1876-1940), master builder, was transporting his employees to building works at the Ford Motor Company at North Geelong and was inundated with requests from Ford employees for a ride to work. McHarry purchased an International bus from the Victorian Railways in 1927 and commenced his first service between Geelong and Highton. In 1933, John's son Norman (1910-1975) commenced with the firm and he provided the service for Ford Motor Company employees (Figure 3.88). Norman's wife, Alice, became an active part of the business following their marriage in 1935. Just five years later in 1940, John McHarry was killed in an accident at the bus depot. The business was continued by Norman and Alice and in 1951 it amalgamated with the Green Star Passenger Service that operated to coastal areas. The name of the firm became Geelong Associated Buslines and at this time the East Geelong-Breakwater route service was acquired from the Kenny family. In 1953, the Geelong Associated Buslines – as one amalgamated operation – was dissolved and McHarry's recommenced business as a single operation. The former Corio Buslines depot was purchased in Catherine Street, Geelong West, in 1965 and the surviving Geelong Associated Buslines operation was purchased, doubling the McHarry's fleet to 36 vehicles.

In 1975, following the untimely death of Norman McHarry, Alice McHarry was assisted by their children, John and Corinne. McHarry's formed part of the Geelong Transit System of bus operators in 1983 and a year later in 1984, McHarry's acquired the addition of the East Geelong service as well as the Geelong West route, requiring an additional 17 vehicles as part of the fleet. The Trans Otway bus terminal in Ryrie Street was leased and it was from there that the business operated. With 67 buses and 86 employees by 1988, a new depot was built at Breakwater. The fourth generation of McHarry family members entered the firm in the 1990s. The Bellarine Buslines and Advance Coaches company was acquired in 2000 and an additional 49 buses increased the fleet to a total of 125 vehicles, creating the largest bus company in Geelong. McHarry's Buslines remains a family-owned and operated company to the present day with a fleet of 210 buses, employing over 300 staff.

TRANS OTWAY 1948

In 1948, Trans Otway Ltd was formed following the amalgamation of three existing operators: Ocean Road Passenger Services (under Eric Batson), Port Fairy Service Cars (under Allan Cobbledick) and the transport service of Keith Quick.⁷⁷⁰ These operators had provided passenger



Figure 3.89: Trans Otway building, 34-66 Ryrie Street, 2005 (now demolished). Source: Wendy Jacobs.

and freight services between Melbourne, Geelong, Lorne, Apollo Bay, Warrnambool and Port Fairy.⁷⁷¹ Confidence in establishing the Geelong-based Trans Otway firm came from the impending closure of the Geelong tram service. Initially, an office was established at 32 Gheringhap street, Geelong and the fleet comprised 19 passenger vehicles.⁷⁷² Allan Deacon was the first managing director.⁷⁷³

In 1949, with an expanding fleet, Trans Otway had a depot constructed at the south-east corner of Ryrie and Fenwick Streets (Figure 3.89). The site had been acquired by the Ocean Road Passenger Services Pty Ltd during the period of company amalgamations to form Trans Otway Ltd.⁷⁷⁴ The firm engaged the Geelong architect, J. Gordon Williams to design the new terminus. Costing £35,000,⁷⁷⁵ three steel prefabricated military huts formed the basis of the construction. Sourced from Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea, they had previously accommodated American soldiers during World War Two. The design prototype was a larger variation of the Quonset hut known as a Warehouse, Elephant or SAAR hut.⁷⁷⁶ Quonset huts developed in the 1940s by George A. Fuller and Co. in the U.S.A.⁷⁷⁷ A shortage of materials after the work is likely to have led to the recycling of these structures (and an uncommon example in Australia of repurposed army huts used for a commercial purpose).⁷⁷⁸ In Geelong, the roof structure of the Trans Otway terminal was set on concrete pillars. A loading platform was provided, while the building also accommodated bedrooms and shower rooms 'for drivers who bring buses in late at night', a 'comfortable rest lounge for passengers' as well as a café and bookstall.⁷⁷⁹ The terminal was proposed to provide accommodation for 500 passengers an hour and handle up to 1500 passengers and 20 buses a day.⁷⁸⁰ The new terminal was opened on 12 October 1950 and was claimed to be the largest and most up-to-date in Australia.⁷⁸¹

In 1953, the local architectural firm of Buchan, Laird and Buchan designed additions to the terminal.⁷⁸²

Business increased for Trans Otway Ltd following the purchase of Tom Wise's bus service,⁷⁸³ Geelong West, and the closure of the Geelong tram service in 1956. The firm took up the franchise for the East, Eastern Park and Geelong West routes.⁷⁸⁴ In 1969, Trans Otway offered tour services for school and other groups to major venues in Victoria and interstate.⁷⁸⁵ The year 1983 brought about major change to Trans Otway. The East Geelong, Geelong West, Corio Village and North Shore bus routes were sold to McHarry's Buslines, with the charter and tour services and travel agency interests were acquired by Lenmera Pty Ltd (a group of local businessmen) and the head office and terminal in Ryrie Street to a consortium. The terminal continued as the headquarters for Lenmera and McHarry's Bus Lines.⁷⁸⁶ In 1984, Trans Otway became one of the four major operators of the Geelong Transit System. A year later in 1984 the Trans Otway name was acquired by Lenmera Pty Ltd and the business continued to trade under this name.⁷⁸⁷ The terminal was used by McHarry's until it relocated to its new office and depot in Breakwater in 1988. The terminal has subsequently been used as a furniture outlet. The only surviving bus terminal in 2018 original to a local Geelong bus company, the building was demolished in 2019 to make way for a commercial and apartment development.

CORIO BUSLINES

In 1950, the Chisholm family purchased J.M. Wise's Geelong West bus service. The business was named Corio Bus Lines.⁷⁸⁸ Following the close of the tram service in 1956, Corio Bus Lines took up the Belmont route franchise.⁷⁸⁹ The firm soon expanded to include Highton, Corio and also a service to Barwon Heads. The depot was situated in Catherine Street, Geelong West. The business was acquired by Benders Busways in 1965.⁷⁹⁰

I.J. COOK AND SON

In 1917, Ivan James Cook purchased a motor bus to continue a service between Geelong and Herne Hill first established by his father, John, with a horse drag in the early 1900s.⁷⁹¹ In 1957, the business acquired the Eastern Park service from Trans Otway.⁷⁹² The business was formalised as a company under the name of I.J. Cook and Son in 1963, 10 years after Ivan Cook's son, Ross, became manager in 1953.⁷⁹³ Following Ross' death in 1975 his widow, Noele took over control of the business with assistance from her son, Jonathon. In 1987, the company was sold to Benders Busways.⁷⁹⁴



Figure 3.90: Woolnough's first bus with drag body fitted, Portarlinton, c.1921. Source: Image 1891, Bellarine Historical Society.

DISTRICT AND OTHER BUS SERVICES

One of the earliest district bus services in Greater Geelong was operated by George Woolnough (1883-1971) of Portarlinton. In 1904, he took over the Cobb and Co. Portarlinton to Geelong service his father, Stephen, established in 1900.⁷⁹⁵ The original Concord coach was replaced with a four-horse drag and over time the fleet expanded to three drags, three wagonettes and six buggies (the latter largely used to deliver the mail to St. Leonards and Indented Head).⁷⁹⁶ In May 1921, Woolnough announced to the public that he would bring 'an up-to-date Motor Service between Portarlinton and Geelong in place of Coach' and he 'kindly requested a share of the public patronage.'⁷⁹⁷ Woolnough's Model T Ford (Figure 3.90) was just the beginning of his motorised passenger vehicle fleet. With his son Arch (who had joined the business as a driver in 1927), by 1953 the fleet totalled 10 buses.⁷⁹⁸ Arch Woolnough continued the business after his father's death until 1980 when it was sold to John and Brenda Masterton. It was named the Bellarine Bus Lines.⁷⁹⁹

Throughout the early 20th century, a number of bus operators provided passenger services to areas beyond suburban Geelong. In the 1920s, these businesses included the Geelong and District Motor Transport Service (Queenscliff service), F.J. Menzies (Ocean Grove to Geelong service), and John Hazel (Geelong to Barwon Heads service)⁸⁰⁰ There was also a larger number of firms which operated a Geelong to Melbourne service. They included Hudson and Preston, All Red Motor Carrying Company, and Pickett's Motor Service.⁸⁰¹

The large number of bus operators providing multiple services to Melbourne was due to the upgrades to the Geelong to Melbourne Road in the 1920s, having been



Figure 3.91: First Victorian Railways Geelong Bus, 30 November 1925. Source: accession H1077 State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3.92: Geelong Branch of the Road Users' Association dubbed 'The Geelong Motor Drivers' Own Picnic of 18 Cars to Torquay', 1919. Source: *News of the Week*, 20 February 1919, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

declared a public highway (Princes Highway) in 1921 (see earlier subsection). It was also a result of insufficient trains between Melbourne and Geelong.⁸⁰² The proliferation of private bus operators subsequently resulted in a financial deficit for the Victorian Railways in 1924.⁸⁰³ In order to compete with the private bus companies, the Victorian Railways Department established its own Geelong to Melbourne bus service in 1925⁸⁰⁴ (Figure 3.91). The *Werribee Shire Banner* gave a report on the impending service:

Commencing next Monday, 30th November, the railways will operate a road service between Melbourne and Geelong by a luxurious motor limousine, capable of carrying 28 passengers, with accommodation for luggage. The fare will be 5/- each way, and arrangements have been made for two trips each way every day, including Sundays. Booking at Melbourne may be done seven days in advance, either at the Tourist Bureau or at the Flinders Street Station booking office, and on the day of travel at the car. At the

Geelong end the advance booking arrangement will be conducted at the Savoia Café, Moorabool Street, and on the day of travel at the bus.

The car will leave Flinders Street, near the Swanston Street entrance to Flinders Street station. The corresponding point in Geelong will be outside the Savoia Café, in Moorabool Street. The departure time from Melbourne on week days and Saturday at 9.50 a.m. and 1.45 p.m. for Geelong, and on return will leave Geelong at 11.30 p.m. [sic.] and 4 p.m. Passengers will be landed in Melbourne in time for luncheon and dinner respectively. On Sundays the bus will leave the stand in Flinders Street at 10.40 a.m. and 3.30 p.m., and on the return journey will depart from Geelong at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.⁸⁰⁵

While the service offered by the Victorian Railways provided much promise with its luxurious vehicles and convenient departures, it was not to endure as operations ceased in June 1931.⁸⁰⁶

MOTOR CAR CLUBS & ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS

The growing popularity and ownership of the motor vehicle in the early 20th century led to the formation of motor car clubs for enthusiasts and commercial businesses. They included the following.

ROAD USERS' ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA (GEELONG BRANCH)

In 1917, a Geelong branch of the Road Users' Association was formed. One of its aims was to lobby for the improvement of Geelong's roads. The inaugural President was H.F. Richardson and the honorary secretary was E.E. Hendy.⁸⁰⁷ In September 1917, he advertised for a 'Lady Canvasser to obtain new members at 5/- per annum' and applications from 'suitable your ladies' were invited.⁸⁰⁸ Social activities were also part of the Association, including a picnic to Torquay of 18 cars in 1919 (Figure 3.92).

ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF VICTORIA (RACV) (GEELONG BRANCH)

In 1921, a meeting was held at the Exchange Building, Little Malop Street, to form a Geelong branch of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria.⁸⁰⁹ A local branch was subsequently established, the benefits for membership being the provision of 'direction boards and danger signs' on Victoria's roads erected at the expense of the RACV, and 'legal defence in any individual or criminal court of members of the club free of charge.'⁸¹⁰ More particularly, the club offered members opportunities to contribute



Figure 3.93: Balfours Motors Garage, Geelong headquarters of the R.A.C.V., 1932. Source: *Geelong Advertiser*, 20 April 1932, p.39, GRS 2050/179, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

to the community in the provision of car trials for fundraising causes (the first being a motor run from Geelong to Queenscliff in aid of the Blind Appeal) and voluntary passenger services for community and charitable organisations. The inaugural committee comprised Mayor Howard Hitchcock (president), Dr Grimwade and Messrs. J.G. Laidlaw and H.J. Storrer (vice presidents), P.J. Baxter (secretary) and Messrs. Basil Collins, G.G. Jobbins, J.P. McCabe Doyle, M. Jacobs, A.J. Holden, D.F. Griffins, George McFarlane and Dr. Chapman.⁸¹¹

In 1932, the Geelong headquarters of the RACV was relocated to the motor garage of Balfours Motors Pty Ltd. (Figure 3.93). The new headquarters – and the services offered by Balfours Motors – featured in the *Geelong Advertiser* in April 1932. The feature article included the following:

Recently Balfours Motors Pty. Ltd. took over the headquarters of the Geelong branch of the of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria, and again alterations had to be carried out on the premises. A pleasant sitting room, with a writing room and waiting room attached, was built for the benefit of members of the Association, and these rooms are always available.

The Royal Automobile Association of Victoria has carried out wonderful work in the past in the interests of motorists, and it has been pleasing that motorists in Geelong have realised how much they owe the

Association. This has been proved by the large number of members of the association who reside in Geelong and district. Apart from the many benefits that are available to members, the fact that the Association is always striving to protect the motorist is something that should weigh strongly with those motorists who have not joined up. The R.A.C.V. roadside service station is also established at the garage, and from this centre the district patrol officer operates.

As Geelong is recognised as the hub for the seaside traffic, and thousands of motorists pass through the city at holiday time en route to the various seaside resorts scattered along the bayside and along the southern coast of Victoria, the services of the patrol officer are greatly availed of.

To encourage country motorists to join the Association there is a reduced membership fee available for those living outside a certain radius of Melbourne. All particulars of membership and free service for members can be obtained from Balfours Motors.

One of the advantages of membership of the Royal Automobile Club of Victoria is the privilege of using the club's headquarters and spacious rooms in Melbourne. When touring in other States it is an advantage to be a member of the Victorian body as many benefits are available.⁸¹²

COMMERCIAL MOTOR USERS' ASSOCIATION (GEELONG BRANCH)

In 1928 a Geelong branch of the Commercial Motor Users' Association was established as a reaction to the Victorian Government's *Motor Omnibus Act* and the *Highway and Vehicle Act* amending Bill which gave more stringent regulation to private commercial vehicle businesses that was considered (by commercial motor users) to favour railway transportation.⁸¹³ The Motor Omnibus Act was to provide for legislation to meet the contemporary commercial motor user businesses (the first Omnibus Act had been passed in 1924). At issue to local commercial operators were the fees. Each motor vehicle was required to pay the annual registration under the *Motor Act Car 1928* as well as an additional fee for a motor omnibus 'for which a "regular services" licence' was granted. The fee depended on the type of tyres used.⁸¹⁴ In Geelong, the first committee of the Commercial Motor Users' Association comprised J.R. Henderson (president), F.W. Webb (secretary) and members M.A. Kaye, M. Evans, J.M. Wise, Kenny, and Bender.⁸¹⁵ The Association folded in subsequent years and in 1937 there was a proposal for form a new Motor Users' Association.⁸¹⁶

OTHER CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Several enthusiast and interest groups relating to motor vehicles were formed in the 20th century. They included the MG Club Geelong, Geelong Classic Car Club, Western District Historic Vehicle Club and the Geelong Museum of Motoring (see Theme 9).⁸¹⁷

3.4 RAILWAY NETWORK IN GREATER GEELONG

Soon after European settlement, the provision of a railway network within and beyond the Greater Geelong area was considered essential; for providing greater opportunities for trade and commerce; and ultimately for the survival of Geelong, given the challenging river crossings and poor roads to Melbourne and the Western District. The earliest proposed line was in April 1846 when a private company proposed a 200-mile horse-drawn tramway from Geelong to the junction of the Wannon and Glenelg Rivers in the Western District, the line to be known as the Geelong and Glenelg Railway.⁸¹⁸ The venture failed. Success came in the 1850s with the construction of two principal train lines: Geelong to Melbourne in 1857 (and later extended to Winchelsea in 1876 and eventually beyond to Warrnambool), and the Geelong to Ballarat in 1862. A number of branch lines were also key to the development of other areas and activities. The earliest was the Cunningham Pier line that was built from 1854 in conjunction with the Geelong to Melbourne line. It was followed by the branch line to the first Geelong Race Course at Marshall (now Charlemont) in 1878 and the Geelong to Queenscliff line that opened in 1879. Lines were also proposed to Torquay in 1888 and Barwon Heads in 1889 (as an extension of the race course line).⁸¹⁹

Major infrastructure works were carried out which included the building of culverts, bridges, a tunnel, subways, stations and signal boxes. The provision of the railway network also led to the employment of station masters and others to manage the rail system.

THE MAJOR RAILWAY LINES

GEELONG TO MELBOURNE LINE

GEELONG AND MELBOURNE RAILWAY COMPANY & THE OPENING OF THE RAILWAY LINE

In September 1852, the prospectus of the proposed Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company was issued. There was to be £350,000 of capital in 17,00 shares of £2 each.⁸²⁰ The provisional committee consisted of John Henry Mercer, James Ford Strachan, Alexander Thomson, John Sleath Hill, George Thomas Lloyd, William Harding, Edward Willis, T. Maher Sparks, Charles Nantes, Silas Harding, Charles Nuttall Thorne, Patricius William Welch and James Harrison.⁸²¹ In February 1853, the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company was incorporated.⁸²²



Figure 3.94: E. Sasse (artist) & C.E. Winston (engraver), 'Geelong Railway 1853'. Source: accession H23920 State Library of Victoria.

In October 1852, the engineer, Edward Snell (1820-1880), accepted the contract to provide 'the whole of the civil engineer's work required' for the Geelong to Melbourne line. He was later publicly described as the engineer and architect for the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company.⁸²³ Snell was born in Barnstaple, Devon, England, the son of silversmith, jeweller, watch and clockmaker, Edward Snell, and Elizabeth (nee Stothert) Snell.⁸²⁴ He was later apprenticed to Stothert's iron foundry in Bath that had been established by his great uncle, George Stothert.⁸²⁵ He 'played an important role in encouraging and helping' Snell in his engineering career.⁸²⁶ At the foundry, Snell worked under his other cousin, Henry Stothert.⁸²⁷ After the completion of his indenture in 1842, Snell took up a position at the Avonside Ironworks in Bristol (the business of his uncle,

George), and after only three weeks he left and joined the Swindon workshops of the Great Western Railway Company in 1843, following an introduction from George Stothert who used his influence with the Locomotive superintendent, Daniel Gooch.⁸²⁸ Snell took up the position of head draughtsman and was later promoted to deputy works manager.⁸²⁹ The Great Western Railway had been established in 1833 and engineered by the eminent, Isambard Kingdom Brunel. This railway linked London with the south-west and west of England, including Snell's birthplace of Devon.⁸³⁰ Immediately prior to Snell's emigration to South Australia on the *Bolton* in 1849, he was briefly manager of the Devonport Foundry.⁸³¹ He arrived in South Australia with his friend, Edward Prowse in December 1849.⁸³² After a time of surveying and painting (including a Plan for the Grand

Junction Canal between Adelaide and the North Arm in 1851), Snell was lured to the Castlemaine gold diggings in 1852 where he amassed £341 worth of gold in just five months.⁸³³ It was as an architect and engineer in Geelong where Snell amassed a greater fortune in private practice (including partnerships with Frederick Kawerau— see Theme 2), in addition to other business ventures. In 1858, Snell returned to England with his wife, Charlotte (nee Bayley) (whom he married in Geelong in 1853) and their children and enjoyed a life of retirement.⁸³⁴

By November 1852, Snell had completed the survey for the Geelong to Melbourne railway line.⁸³⁵

On 20 September 1853, in the presence of the Governor of Victoria, Charles La Trobe, Mayors and Councillors of the Corporations of Geelong and Melbourne, Members of Parliament, Directors and Shareholders of the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company, Chambers of Commerce, Officers of the Army and Navy, Bishops and Clergy, Snell and Kawerau, and other distinguished guests, the foundation stone was laid for the station building and the turning of the first sod at Geelong.⁸³⁶ The celebrations also included an inauguration fete and a banquet held at Hooper's Royal Mail and Family Hotel, Yarra Street.⁸³⁷ The significant event was illustrated by the artist, Edmund Sasse (Figure 3.94).

Prior to the foundation stone celebration in 1853, the building of the railway line had begun in earnest. Tenders had been called for the beginning of works at the Geelong end of the line, including the timber for cutting and splitting 75,678 railway sleepers.⁸³⁸ This contract was let to the Apollo Bay Timber Company who was also successful in obtaining the contracts for the timber piles for the railway pier on the Corio Bay foreshore (see later subtheme) and road bridges over the railway crossings at Mercer Street and the 'Bates Ford' Church (later replaced with the Telegraph Bridge at the east end of Church Street).⁸³⁹ By 1854, other contracts either completed or in progress included the construction of Good's Office (awarded to Cakebread) and workshops (including the terminus, awarded to Gray) at the Geelong terminus; formation of the mainline between the terminus at the Ocean Child Hotel at North Geelong (by Russell and Hobson); construction of a culvert (subway) at the west end of Brougham Street; construction of a small stone culvert near Fisherman's Gully (North Geelong) (awarded to Russell and Hobson – it was completed by Adam Brown in 1860 and the associated timber bridge was built by G. Walker), and formation and cutting of an embankment at Cowie's Creek (by Musson and Cutter).⁸⁴⁰ Within the central Geelong township, a stone culvert was constructed by Munro and Ross to connect a branch

line to the Railway Company's pier on the foreshore.⁸⁴¹ G. Walker was awarded the contract to build 'the bridge over the incline to the Company's Pier, in Mercer-street.'⁸⁴²

Snell's foresight in the design process of the original terminus (a consequence of his British railway experience) brought with it necessary economies. As he outlined:

The carriage shed has been converted into workshops, forges have been erected, and the building will now be made available for this purpose until the line is opened, when it will be appropriated to the uses for which it was originally intended.⁸⁴³

Extraordinary progress had also been made in procuring other infrastructure for the line in 1853. Snell had appointed his cousin (and former employer), Henry Stothert of the Avonside Iron works, Bristol, as Agent in England on his behalf 'to examine everything ordered' which included two thousand 18-foot lengths of foot rail, 300 tons of Barlow's patent rails, 500 tons of Smith's patent arched rails, two passenger engines, sundry first, second and third class carriages, tilt and box wagons for goods, stone truck, parcel vans and platform roofs for the terminus.⁸⁴⁴

Rapid progress in 1853 and the early part of 1854 was thwarted by a slowdown in Geelong at this time, a lack of funds and shortage of labour due to many workmen going to the goldfields.⁸⁴⁵ To overcome the labour shortage, the Victorian Government hired 100 prisoners to the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company at £5/- each day.⁸⁴⁶ The prisoners were accommodated in a penal hulk brought from Williamston and moored in Corio Bay.⁸⁴⁷ In early 1855, Snell despaired about the railway being met 'with a great deal of opposition from some of the Townspeople' who thought it 'would ruin Geelong.'⁸⁴⁸ Yet, work continued throughout these quiet times. A steam locomotive was built locally by Walker, Munro and Company and was named "Ariel", with two steam engines (for the locomotives named "Typhoon" and "Sirocco") being acquired from Snell's cousin's firm, Stothert, Slaughter and Co. of Bristol.⁸⁴⁹ Another six were ordered from R. and W. Hawthorne of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and another two from Robert Stephenson locomotive, these latter locomotives being named "Titania" (no. 34 train) and "Oberon" (no. 36 train).⁸⁵⁰ "Titania" was the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company's first yard shunter.⁸⁵¹

Major railway bridges were constructed over the key river crossings at Little River and Werribee. Built between 1856 and 1857, they had also been designed by Snell. The *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* gave a detailed description of the proposed structures:



Figure 3.95: E. Snell (artist) & C.E. Winston (engraver), 'Opening of the Geelong and Melbourne Railway for Public Traffic, June 25th 1857'. Source: VPRS 12903/P1, Box 523-15 Public Record Office Victoria.

In the engineer's office we noticed a wooden model of a bridge (also to be constructed of wood), and which is to connect the two banks of the Little River where the railway crosses it. at a distance of 15 miles from Geelong. The model is a beautiful piece of workmanship, on the scale of an inch to the foot, prepared by Mr E. Snell, the engineer to the company. The bridge will be 80 feet in span and 25 feet in width between the inside of the parapets, giving space for a double line of rails. The contract for its erection has been taken by Messrs Craig and Dale, who have been the contractors for many of the buildings attached to the terminus. The small model of the bridge has borne a weight which would show the bridge itself to be capable of bearing 1300 tons, according to the scale; but as the bridge when erected will be much more substantially fixed and supported than this little model, it is calculated that it will bear at least ten times that weight in reality. Some estimate of its strength may be arrived at by bearing in mind coincidentally with the above calculation, that the weight of a line of engines placed all along the bridge would be only 160 tons. There is in the same room a model of the Duck Ponds bridge. and drawings of two other bridges, - one to be erected where the railway passes over the Exe or Werribee River, twenty-five miles from Geelong. (This bridge is of a construction similar to the one above referred to, and has 100 feet span), the other is to cross Cowie's Creek. This last mentioned bridge is also of wood; the frame has the appearance of lattice work, but it is said to be very substantial.⁸⁵²

Amid great excitement, the Geelong to Melbourne Railway line was officially opened on 25 June 1857 in the presence of the Governor, Sir Henry Barkly.⁸⁵³ It was a significant event as it constituted the opening of the first country

railway in Victoria.⁸⁵⁴ A temporary stage had been erected with timber flooring over the four railway lines between the arrival and departure platforms⁸⁵⁵ (Figure 3.95). The new luggage room was the location of a banquet, a highlight of the day following the running of two trains from Geelong to Greenwich (Williamstown) and return (for this was as far as the train line originally extended given that the Government had not completed the final stretch to Melbourne).⁸⁵⁶

The Wadawurrung people were invited guests at the opening ceremony and banquet. The four Aborigines that attended were supplied with new blankets, and performed a corroboree.⁸⁵⁷ Indigenous culture formed part of a celebratory display in the banquet room as detailed as part of a report on the festivities:

The room in which the banquet was held was the luggage-room at the railway station—a very extensive building, exact proportions of which, how-ever, we regret to acknowledge our inability to procure — and a most suitable room for the occasion. The pillars and cross-beams were decorated with numerous flags and streamers, and the Royal Standard of England hung on the wall immediately behind the chairman. The walls were also tastefully panelled for the occasion with pink and white cloth, and green boughs and various devices, composed of native flowers and evergreens, were placed at intervals. To give a martial air to the whole, at one end of the room there were two or three stars formed of bayonets and swords of the Volunteer Corps of Geelong, and at the other end several native war and hunting implements, mingled with others from the South Sea Islands, were formed into other devices. The words (in the language of the Aborigines) 'Ghego magi uri uri,' with their translation — 'Go along, quick, quick,' were displayed in large letters at each end of the room, and in still larger letters over the entrance, the words 'Lead on,' surrounded by an olive wreath. The military band was stationed in a commodious orchestra, and played several appropriate and favorite airs during the repast. A dais was raised about the centre of the room, on the left hand, for the accommodation of the chairman and some of the most distinguished guests. Charles M. Thorne, Esq., President of the Company, occupied the chair. He was supported on the right by his Excellency the Governor and the Hon. the Chief Secretary; and on the left by Dr Thomson, (the Mayor of Geelong), and the Rev. Dr Perry. Several members of both Houses of Parliament were present at different stages of the proceedings. Our own reporter having reached the banqueting hall just in time to be too late, the following report of the speeches delivered on the occasion we

extract from the *Geelong Advertiser*. Taking the report as a whole it is correct, though from what we did hear, there are several portions that we entirely dissent from, both as regards statements of facts and in respect of language. After the usual loyal and patriotic toasts had been proposed and responded to. Just after the toast of the Queen, Prince Albert, and the Royal Family had been duly honored, the chair-man rose and informed the guests that another train had that moment arrived from Williamstown with four hundred and fifty additional visitors from Melbourne. He said he feared from the already crowded condition of the hall that there would not be room for these guests. Room, however, he suggested, might be made if those gentlemen present who were shareholders would vacate their seats in favor of the Melbourne guests. This request on the part of the chairman was immediately complied with, and the visitors from Melbourne were speedily seated and served.⁸⁵⁸

The late arrival of the second train was the result of the accidental death of Henry Walters, superintendent of locomotives who drove the first train carrying the Governor. A description of the fatality was given in *The Age*:

The first train started at half-past ten, taking these persons and a large number of others, to the number of six hundred, to Greenwich [Newport] Station, his Excellency and suit occupying the first carriage. The train proceeded at an easy rate till it neared Cowie's Creek, when Mr Henry Walters, superintendent of locomotives for the company, was standing on the engine looking after something connected with the carriages, and not observing his vicinity to the wooden bridge under which the line passes, he unfortunately, in an unguarded moment, came into contact with one of the beams. He was struck on the head and stunned, and in falling his head again struck against the iron steps of the first carriage, and the corner of the post. The train was at once stopped, and the unfortunate man picked up quite insensible. Medical assistance was immediately in attendance, but the poor fellow had received such severe injuries in the head and spine that no hope was entertained of his recovery. He was taken to town with the greatest care, but he died in the course of the afternoon. This sad accident cast gloom over the minds of all who heard of it. The train proceeded on its journey, stopping only at the Exe [Werribee] River, while his Excellency inspected the bridge. On arriving at Greenwich, as before mentioned, it stopped for about three quarters of an hour and then returned to Geelong.⁸⁵⁹

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS COMMISSIONERS & CHANGES TO LOCAL RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

A number of changes and improvements were made to the Geelong to Melbourne Railway line over the following years. A notable change came 1861 when the Victorian Government acquired the Geelong and Melbourne Company at a cost of £529,663/9/-.⁸⁶⁰ Responsibility for the railway network was given to the Victorian Government Railway Department as part of the Board of Land and Works.⁸⁶¹ The Government had paid for the railway network.

SIGNAL BOXES

In 1883, Victorian Railways Commissioners were appointed 'to make better provision for the construction, maintenance and management of the state railways.'⁸⁶² Locally, one of the first projects undertaken was the erection of a gabled timber signal box in 1884 (later known as Signal Box C) near the Geelong Station. The signal box made provision for 25 lever frame and controlled the southern end of the line beyond the station.⁸⁶³ Railway signals displayed instructions or warnings to the train driver. A second signal box was erected in 1903 (known as Signal Box B) and a third (Signal Box C).⁸⁶⁴ Other signal boxes were also built on the Geelong to Melbourne line including two at North Geelong (1879 and 1903) (Figure 3.96), Lara (1899) and Little River (1899) and Corio (1914).⁸⁶⁵

RAILWAY YARD EXTENSIONS AND LOCOMOTIVE DEPOT

In 1908, the Victorian Railway Commissioners proposed an extension of the railway yard to the west of the Geelong Station terminus (in the location of the existing car park). The acquisition of the site required the demolition of buildings fronting Latrobe Terrace (Figure 3.97). There was also consideration given to the purchase of the St. Paul's Church site. As reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Following on the visit of the [Railway] departmental engineers to Geelong some months ago, when levels were taken and other points noted, the department has entered into negotiations for the purchase of the strip of land to the west of the railway line, running from a point just below the Latrobe Terrace crossing to the Brougham Place subway. If this extra territory is acquired, it will largely increase the railway facilities, and should tend to prevent the congestion of traffic that occurs pretty frequently under existing conditions. The purchase of the block by the department will mean the removal of the houses thereon, and, we understand,

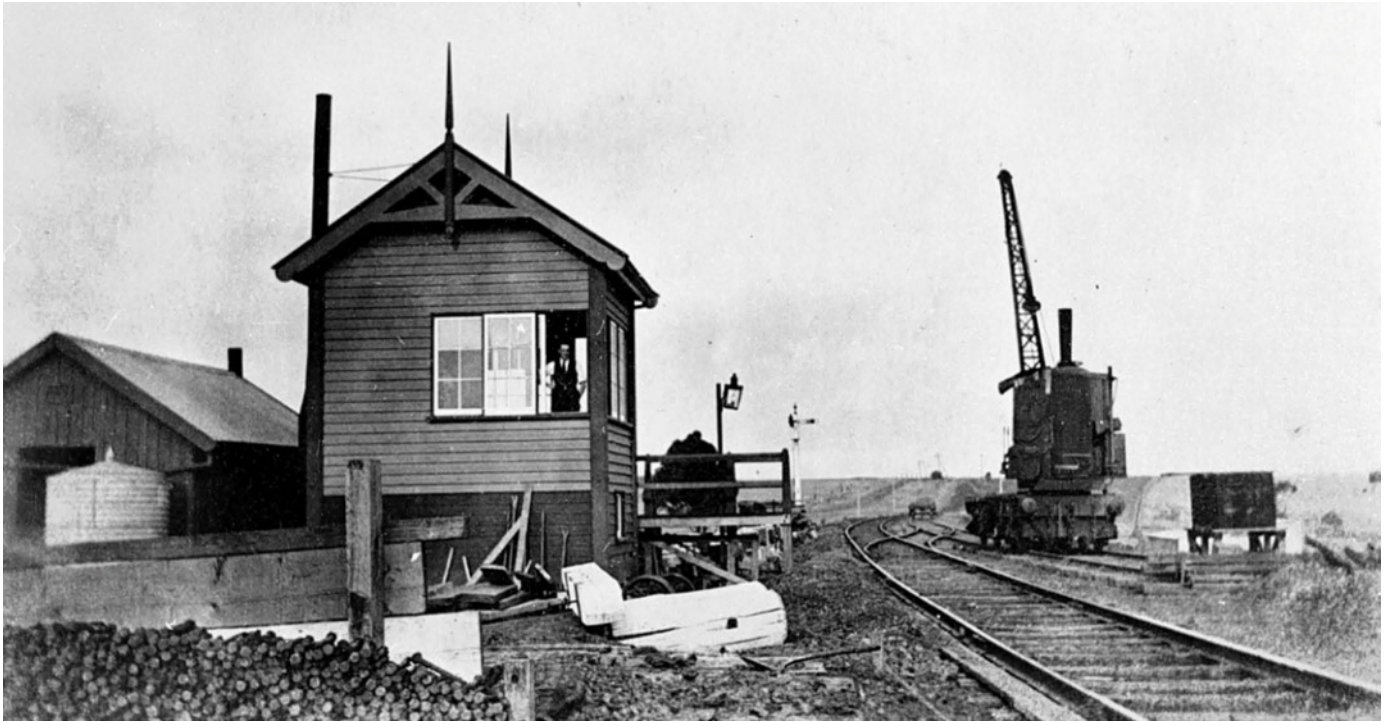


Figure 3.96: Signal box, North Geelong, c.1915. Source: Item MM7020 Museums Victoria.



Figure 3.97: Buildings to be demolished in Latrobe Terrace for enlargement of railway yards, 1908. Source: *News of the Week*, 18 June 1908, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre.



Figure 3.98: R. Pockley, aerial view of Geelong West showing railway round house, c.1950-54. Source: accession H2007.25/23, State Library of Victoria.

the department is prepared to consider an offer for the acquirement of the whole of the grounds on which St. Paul's vicarage, school buildings and church now stands. If this be arranged, it will mean the re-erection of St. Paul's Church on another site, and already an elevated position, centrally situated, is mentioned. Portion of the church ground, at any rate, is required by the department, and there is a feeling that the whole site should be disposed of, as the running of trains to and fro would be likely to affect the church building in the course of time.⁸⁶⁶

St. Paul's Church site was spared from the demolisher's hammer as part the yard extensions and improvements. However, St. Paul's Vicarage and the dwellings fronting both sides of Latrobe Terrace were acquired and removed as part of the scheme.⁸⁶⁷ On the west side, this included private land between Wellington and Preston Streets. This was to allow the Railways Department in 1915 to construct an engine shed (for 36 engines), 70 feet turntable and an elevated coal staging area on newly-acquired land between the railway line and Pakington Street⁸⁶⁸ (Figure 3.98). Opened in 1917, the railway round house

was unique to Victoria, the boiler working plant the first of its kind in the state and the coal stage was the largest outside Melbourne.⁸⁶⁹

RAILWAY TERRACE SUBWAY

Another key work as part of the Geelong Railway terminus improvements was the construction of a subway and railway bridge at Railway Terrace, south of the Geelong Railway Station. A level crossing had been established with the construction of the Geelong to Colac line in 1879 (see following subsection). Significant vehicular and pedestrian congestion at this crossing posed a public danger.⁸⁷⁰ In 1911, the Geelong City Council petitioned the Railways Commissioners for the construction of a subway and rail bridge to alleviate the problem.⁸⁷¹ Surveying and construction commenced in 1912 involving 95 workmen for the excavation of the subway (Figure 3.99) and building the brick retaining walls (of Melbourne bricks) and steel structure for the bridge.⁸⁷² An opening in the centre of the structure was 'to admit the light and fresh air.'⁸⁷³ The subway (Figure 3.100) officially opened in December 1916.⁸⁷⁴ and it continues to operate to the present day.

INDUSTRIAL SIDINGS

With industrial expansion in Geelong's north came the need for rail connections. Sidings were subsequently connected to the Geelong to Melbourne railway network for the Western and Wimmera districts of Victoria Freezing Company in 1899, Harbor Trust at Corio Quay from 1909, Oriental Timber Company Mill at Corio Quay in 1909, Vacuum Oil Company at North Geelong in 1920, Phosphate works at North Shore in 1924, Ford Motor Company at North Geelong in 1925, Corio Distillery at Corio in 1928, International Harvester at North Shore in 1938, Shell Refinery at Corio in 1954 and Elders IXL at Lara in 1986.⁸⁷⁵

A siding was also established at Corio in 1912 for the transportation of building materials used in the construction of the Geelong Grammar School.⁸⁷⁶

LATER 20TH CENTURY IMPROVEMENTS

In 1953, diesel locomotives replaced the old steam engines.⁸⁷⁷ A commencement was made in duplicating the railway line in subsequent years, with the new duplicated line between North Geelong and Corio opened in 1959. The automated signalling for both-way trains was a first in Australia.⁸⁷⁸ In 1981 and 1982 the Corio to Little River line was duplicated.⁸⁷⁹



Figure 3.99: Subway under excavation, 1912. Source: *News of the Week*, 22 August 1912, GRS 2009/01404/029, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.100: Subway, c.1930. Source: Holmes collection, Authentic Heritage Services.

GEELONG TO BALLARAT LINE

EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT

In 1855, the Victorian Royal Commission on Transport (which had been appointed by the Victorian Government in the previous year) gave recommendations on the required actions for removing any restrictions that would prevent the Government from building a railway network throughout the Colony.⁸⁸⁰ The Commission further recommended that surveys and cost estimates be prepared for railway lines from Melbourne to Bendigo; from Melbourne towards Sydney; and from Geelong to Ballarat.⁸⁸¹

It was during 1856 when a separate Railway Committee recommended that the Government raise funds for the construction of the Geelong to Ballarat railway line, at the same time as the line between Melbourne and Echuca (the Melbourne to Geelong line had already commenced as a private enterprise).⁸⁸² Public pressure had increased for the commencement of the Geelong to Ballarat line. By 1857, Edward Snell had been engaged to survey

the route for the line although he soon relinquished the project.⁸⁸³

On 26 August 1858, the Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Barkly, turned the first turf for construction to begin.⁸⁸⁴ The contract for this mammoth task had been let to Evans, Merry and Co. Main depots were established at the Geelong end at Moorabool, and at the Ballarat end at Warrenheip.⁸⁸⁵ Over 3000 men were employed to construct the railway line⁸⁸⁶ which involved the laying down of 200,000 sleepers.⁸⁸⁷ Throughout the following years, progress was laborious and slow, resulting from a number of strikes and the financial difficulties of the contractors, Evans and Merry, who transferred the responsibility for building the line to Williams, Little and Co.⁸⁸⁸ In April 1861, *The Argus* gave a detailed description of the disruptions to the work, together with the progress that had been made:

It is with regret that we now proceed to disillusionate our readers, and check the pleasant anticipations to which that announcement gave birth [opening of the railway line], for it is scarcely to be hoped that even this year will see trains running from the Geelong and Melbourne and Ballarat junction to the great centre of the industry of the western districts. Various causes have brought about this untoward conclusion, not the least of which is the fact that, through some mismanagement, the material expected from England is all behind. Miles and miles of line duly formed and levelled, surmounted by a straight and comely ridge of regularly-laid blue metal, beside which are great stacks of sleepers, await the rails, which have to arrive and be properly fixed before the way can be opened.

... As our readers might have expected from our last description of the line from the junction at Geelong West to the Moorabool, that portion may be looked upon as completed, for both lines are permanently laid, and a settled aspect pervades the whole. ... The only station between the [Geelong West] junction and the Moorabool is to be erected at the Stieglitz-road crossing, which is about a mile from the Moorabool viaduct, on the Geelong side, and this will, of course, serve to connect this tolerably important agricultural district with the principal markets. ... Proceeding at the present rate, the [Moorabool] viaduct will scarcely be finished this year, but that is a matter of small consequence, considering the condition of the line near the Ballarat terminus, and, moreover, Mr. Williams, the contractor by whom the railway works are being managed, has professed himself ready, for a consideration, to so add to the staging that the bridge would be completed in four months.⁸⁸⁹

On 10 April 1862, the railway line was officially opened by the Governor of Victoria, Sir Henry Barkly.⁸⁹⁰ A special train had carried Councillors and passengers from Ballarat in the morning. However, all did not go completely to plan, as the train was delayed for half an hour at the Caledonian Bridge as it had difficulty climbing the steep gradient to Warrenheip.⁸⁹¹ Firewood had been exhausted by the time it reached Meredith, which caused another delay.⁸⁹² Eventually, the train arrived at Geelong 4.25 hours after leaving Ballarat, where the Governor boarded, the train returning to Ballarat by 2.45 pm.⁸⁹³ The day had been declared a public holiday in Ballarat and it was celebrated with a public dinner at the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute.⁸⁹⁴

It was not until 1903 when a loop line was laid out to connect the Melbourne and Ballarat lines at North Geelong.⁸⁹⁵

RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

The design and construction of the Geelong to Ballarat railway line was tasked to George Christian Darbyshire, Railways Department Engineer-in-Chief, and his deputy, Robert Watson.⁸⁹⁶ Darbyshire was born at sea in 1820, the son of George Darbyshire senior, a civil engineer who worked for George Stephenson in Darby, England, and Elizabeth Darbyshire (nee Smith).⁸⁹⁷ George Darbyshire junior appears to have trained as both a surveyor and engineer, first appearing to have been employed by his father's firm of George Darbyshire and Son.⁸⁹⁸ He later entered into a partnership with his brother, John, where in c.1839-41 they prepared a number of surveys for Tithe maps. As an engineer, Darbyshire gained experience under Robert Stephenson on the Midland Railway, England.⁸⁹⁹ Darbyshire married Maria Wragg in 1846 and in 1853 they emigrated to Victoria where Darbyshire was appointed Engineer of Construction and District Surveyor for the Victorian Government at Williamstown.⁹⁰⁰ In 1857, he was appointed Deputy Surveyor General of Victoria. Between 1856 and 1860 he was Engineer-in-Chief of the Victorian Railways.⁹⁰¹

Darbyshire was responsible for the designs of nine bluestone culverts and two bridges in 1857 in the Geelong section of the line to Moorabool.⁹⁰² They were constructed by Evans, Merry and Co. Partially completed by May 1859, a detailed description of the new infrastructure was given in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

With a rather rapid incline (which will be corrected when the rails are laid permanently) the Geelong and Ballarat line branches off to the North-west from the



Figure 3.101: Railway bridge, Rollins Road, Bell Post Hill, 1998. Source: David Rowe.



Figure 3.102: Railway bridge, Moorabool, 1998. Source: David Rowe.



Figure 3.103: 'Craigton', original residence of Mr Duxbury, Moorabool, 1998. Source: David Rowe.

Geelong and Melbourne line of railway, at a point a little nearer town than the West Geelong Station. The new road curves away from the Melbourne line along a track sufficiently level naturally without any imported cuttings or embankments, and for a considerable distance flush with the level of the land which it traverses ... Further on a heavy embankment has been made across a portion of Cowie's Creek, and is drained by a bluestone culvert about seven feet in height and eight in width ... The Ballan road, near the old "Fountain of Friendship" (Warren's), is crossed by an embankment which is continued over another arm of the creek, drained by a culvert of the same dimensions as the first-mentioned. Another cutting, and then a steep embankment with a bridge in the middle. The rails (single line) are laid along the whole of the distance traversed, but only with a pro tempore durability, to serve merely the purpose of a tramway for the trucks of materials and ballast. The permanent line of rails will be laid alongside the present line, and will be heavily ballasted with broken blue stone. There have been several good quarries opened along the line. After passing the last-mentioned embankment, there is a very deep cutting, along which the rails are not continuously laid. With this exception and that of a short break in the embankment on the further side of the Cowie's Creek bridge, the rails are laid from West Geelong to the camp at the Moorabool ...⁹⁰³

Today, the bluestone Cowies Creek culvert survives at Corio Quay (albeit altered with a new deck), as do the double-arched and single arched bridges respectively at Bell Post Hill (crossing Bluestone Bridge Road) (Figure 3.101) and Moorabool (crossing Cowies Creek) (Figure 3.102).

MOORABOOL VIADUCT

The railway workers' camp for the Geelong end of the line construction was situated at Moorabool, at the location of the construction of a viaduct to traverse the substantial Moorabool River valley. A community of 1,400-2,000 was employed on the construction of the viaduct and this section of the railway line.⁹⁰⁴ Hotels, a post office, a literary institute, a Protestant church, a National school, a temperance hall, and a hospital were all established at the fledgling, temporary settlement.⁹⁰⁵ Of more permanent bluestone construction was the residence of Mr Duxbury (Figure 3.103), superintendent of works and a nearby lockup (see Theme 7).⁹⁰⁶

Work began on the construction of the viaduct in 1858 under the direction of Darbyshire.⁹⁰⁷ Nine monolithic bluestone piers and two bluestone abutments supported



Figure 3.104: 'Moorabool Viaduct, c.1880s. Source: Wynd collection, Authentic Heritage Services.



Figure 3.105: Moorabool Viaduct, 1998. Source: David Rowe.

ten deck type warren iron trusses, the whole structure being 396 m long. Bluestone was procured from the Moorabool valley hillside, the *Geelong Advertiser* reporting in 1859 that 'the whole of the ground on the hill appears to be one vast quarry'.⁹⁰⁸ This was supplemented by stone from Lethbridge. The immense scale of the construction was outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser* in 1860:

Unquestionably the greatest of our colonial engineering works which have as yet been taken in hand is the construction of the Moorabool Viaduct. Everybody who has inspected this work must have been struck with admiration at the massive and finished manner in which the piers are being erected, every stone being perfectly dressed on the bed. There will be in all nine of these magnificent pieces of masonry, ascending 85 feet from the base course, each being at a distance of 130 feet from centre to centre, making with the abutments a length of 1300 feet across the

valley of the Moorabool. These piers, three of which are in a forward state of progress, are constructed upon a foundation of piles, filled in with concrete. The stonework rests on a platform on the top of the piles and is thence carried up to the level of the surface of the ground. The majority of these stones are at least 6 ft. long, 3 ft. wide by 2 ft. deep. Arriving at about 4 feet from the surface, the top course of stones is wreathed off and axed in the most workmanlike manner to form a base course. The dimensions of the plinth are 14 feet 3 inches by 32 feet 3 inches by 32 feet 3 inches diminished to 10 feet by 28 feet. The height of the stonework from planning to plinth in piers No. 1 and No. 2, is 15 feet; Nos, 2, 4, 5, 67, the height is 20 feet; and in No. 8, 18 feet, 3 inches. The stone is supplied from the Lethbridge quarries, at the rate of 40 cubic yards per day, and there are already 1000 cubic yards of stone on the ground and ready to be set.⁹⁰⁹

Completed by July 1862, it was regarded as the greatest engineering feat in Australasia as the largest metal truss bridge in the Colonies⁹¹⁰ (Figure 3.104).

In 1918, given concerns by W.C. Kernot, Professor of Engineering at the University of Melbourne in relation to the structural capacity of the viaduct and the weight of locomotives, A. Goudy, Engineer of the Victorian Railways, designed structural modifications and additions.⁹¹¹ They included the provision of open steel trussed pylons between the stone pier spans, and the replacement of the iron girder spans with a steel superstructure⁹¹² (Figure 3.105). The steelwork was fabricated by Dorman, Long and Co. Ltd.⁹¹³ In 1983, a new concrete deck was installed.⁹¹⁴

GEELONG TO COLAC LINE

EARLY EVOLUTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Known today as the Geelong to Warrnambool line, agitation for a railway connection from Geelong to the Western District had continued following the collapse of the initial venture to construct a tram line from Geelong to the Wannon in the 1840s (see earlier subsection). At issue was the location of the line from the Geelong township given the steeply-sloping topography south of the Geelong Railway Station. One early proposal was a bayside route from a new terminal at the Geelong waterfront. This was to avoid the need for tunnelling. In 1866, the local Member of the Legislative Assembly, J.H. Connor forwarded a suggestion for the bayside route to the local Traders and Citizens' Association which had it published in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The vacant piece of ground between Yarra and Bellerine-streets, close to the wharf, would be a good site for the new terminus; and taking that as the terminus, the line of railway might go across Bellerine-street on a level crossing close to the battery [see Theme 7] and along the base of the hill, winding round Limeburner's Point, between the beach and the powder magazine, across the flat at the cricket ground, and across the Portarlington road on a level crossing from Geelong East to the Breakwater, via Germantown [Grovedale], Lake Modewarre, Winchelsea South, on the South side of the River Barwon to Birregurra, thence along the South boundary of Irrewarra to Colac. The line at the terminus to be connected with Railway Wharf, so as to give facilities for the shipping of wool and other produce.⁹¹⁵

While the Select Committee on the Colac Railway in the Victorian Parliament advocated an alternative eastern route along Brougham Street 'in front of the Custom-house' and south-east to Sydney Place and beyond to the Breakwater,⁹¹⁶ this never eventuated. Instead, a southern connection was adopted involving the need for a tunnel under Ryrie and Myers Streets.

Simultaneous to the discussion of the best outlet for the line from Geelong, considerable debate had also ensued on the overall railway route to Colac. In 1870, Thomas Higinbotham, Engineer-in-Chief for the Victorian Railways Department, presented the Victorian Parliament with a Map of Victoria with proposed routes in different colours:

From Geelong, by way of Colac, Camperdown, &c., to Hamilton; this is commonly known as the "Black" line.

From Ballarat, by Beaufort and Ararat, to Hamilton; this is commonly known as the "Pink" line.

From or near to Meredith Station, on the Geelong and Ballarat Railway, by Rokewood, Skipton, Streatham, and Wickliffe to Hamilton [the "green" line].⁹¹⁷

Of the "Black" line, Higinbotham gave the following analysis:

If the "Black" line were made, goods could be carried between Geelong and places on the route of the "black" line at lower rates than they can be taken for at present. Camperdown is the farthest point to which the trade with Geelong now reaches; but the railway would probably extend this limit, and enable Geelong to trade beyond Camperdown with places which are now supplied by way of Warrnambool and Belfast.⁹¹⁸

Further years of debate followed Higinbotham's proposals. The "green" line was favoured by some with a connection

on the Geelong to Ballarat line at Bannockburn.⁹¹⁹ While the most expensive option at a project cost of £1,192,176, the "black" line was eventually adopted in 1874 which included a tunnel below and railway cuttings within Johnstone Park.⁹²⁰

Thomas Higinbotham (1819-1880) was born in Dublin, the son of a Henry Higinbotham, a merchant, and Sarah Higinbotham (nee Wilson).⁹²¹ Following his education in Dublin, he relocated to London in c.1839 and was initially employed by a firm that promoted railway companies. He subsequently worked for many years as an engineer on the British railroads and in 1854 was elected a member of the Institution of Civil Engineers.⁹²² Higinbotham emigrated to Melbourne in 1857, and following a short period in private practice, he joined the Victorian Railways in 1860 as Engineer-in-Chief.⁹²³ He held this position until 1878 when he and other senior public officials were removed from office by the Berry government. Reappointed in March 1880, he died on 5 September of that year, having 'left a profound influence on the development of Australian communications in the second half of the nineteenth century.'⁹²⁴

Permanent surveying of the new railway line began in 1874. Loftus Jones of the railway Survey Department established an encampment at the Belmont Common from which the survey could commence.⁹²⁵ By June of that year, nineteen miles had been completed and the camp was relocated near Winchelsea.⁹²⁶ With a contract having been let to Overend and Robb at a cost of £49,612/5/8 for the first 12 miles of the line,⁹²⁷ the turning of the first sod was officially carried out by the Mayor of Geelong on 23 October 1874 and reported in the *Geelong Advertiser* the following day:

The place where the first sod was turned was on the embankment of the old quarry immediately opposite the Railway terminus, a space, twenty yards broad by a hundred long having been roped in. This space it had been intended should be kept apart for the mayor, the members of the Town Council, our representatives in the Council and Assembly, members of Parliament, the members of the League, the contractors, and the representatives of the various public bodies ... for an hour or more [the crowd] waited with exemplary patience, under a hot sun, for the arrival of the Mayor, the only break in the monotony of the proceedings being the arrival of a handsomely polished cedar wheelbarrow and a spade, with which the sod was to be turned.⁹²⁸

The official ceremony was complemented with a banquet held in the Town Hall amid 150 invited guests.⁹²⁹

RAILWAY INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CITY OF GREATER GEELONG

The construction of the first 12 miles of the Geelong and Colac railway line from the Geelong terminus was fraught with complications. The works involved the construction of a tunnel between Ryrie and Kilgour Streets, two bridges, embankments, sidings and stations.

GEELONG TUNNEL

Work began on the 422.45 m long tunnel below Ryrie and Myers Streets on 15 October 1874 when the first sod was turned prior to the official railway sod turning ceremony several days later.⁹³⁰ As outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The first sod of the Geelong and Colac Railway was turned yesterday morning, at 8 o'clock, without the assistance of the Hon. Commissioner of Railways or any other magnate, in the presence of three burgesses and sundry small boys, drawn together by the novelty of seeing about 30 stalwart fellows, with picks and shovels, muster on the sloping ground leading down to McKillop street, at the south end of the tunnel. The ceremony observed was somewhat peculiar, and would doubtless have astonished the demonstration committee. About half the gang, armed with round-nosed shovels, stood in a circle, while the rest, each with a pick on this shoulder, stood in a circle outside the shovel men. At a given signal from the foreman, each man in the inner circle lifted his foot and pressed the point of the shovel into the soil, while the pick men formed into line across the ground to be broken up, and drove their picks into the ground; then off came coats and waistcoats, and, in some instances, the outside shirts of the navvies, and in a few minutes the spot which were was as quiet and dull as possible became a scene of bustling activity, and during the day several hundreds of "Dobbin" loads of earth were taken over the south side of McKillop-street, and there utilised in filling up some low-lying building allotments. At noon another gang of men were started to open up the cutting leading to the tunnel at the north end, and by 5 p.m. many loads of earth were deposited on the extensions of Fenwick Street.⁹³¹

Four shafts had been dug to assist tenders to determine 'information they required as to the nature of the ground they have to go through',⁹³² and to provide access in putting in drives to connect one shaft to another.⁹³³ There were two central shafts in the Matthew Flinders School reserve, a northern shaft on the north side of Ryrie Street, and a southern shaft at the proposed tunnel outlet 'at the rear of Dr Robinson's residence' in Myers

Street.⁹³⁴ Constructed of bricks supplied by the Geelong Brick, Pipe, Tile and Pottery Company Ltd.,⁹³⁵ the northern and southern portals of the horseshoe-profiled tunnel also included bluestone from Clement Nash's Lethbridge quarry. Gravel was sourced from the Belmont Common and gravel pits were established along the Barwon River at South Geelong (which appears to have led to the origins of the name of the thoroughfare, Gravel Pits Road).⁹³⁶

The construction of the tunnel and associated cuttings brought with it some other notable changes. It required the demolition of 'all the Shops, Dwellings, and other Erections now on the ground in Ryrie-street, in the occupation of Messrs. Lawry & Adamson, Foster, Wilson, and Tinney.'⁹³⁷ More controversial was the northern extension of Fenwick Street carried out by the Geelong Town Council as part of the building of a culvert in the Western Gully, the spoil of the railway tunnel being used to form the road that punctuated Johnstone Park.⁹³⁸ The railway cutting through the west portion of Johnstone Park was also contentious in that it divided Maiden's Walk (laid out in 1866 with trees funded by local single females – see Theme 9).⁹³⁹ It was recommended that a timber footbridge be erected to provide continued access.⁹⁴⁰ Further debate ensued as to whether a level crossing or bridge be erected at Little Malop Street. Despite the Resident Engineer, Robert Watson, believing that the road should be closed, an iron girder bridge was erected.⁹⁴¹

Robert Watson (1822-1891) was born in Devonshire, England, and was employed in railway construction works in Wales before emigrating to Victoria in 1854.⁹⁴² There, he was as associate to George Darbyshire as an assistant surveyor in the railway surveys carried out by the Crown Lands Department.⁹⁴³ One of Watson's earliest works under Darbyshire was the survey of a road from Melbourne to Ballarat via Ballan, and soon after made a preliminary survey of the Melbourne to Ballarat railway line.⁹⁴⁴ Watson was responsible for the survey of the Geelong to Ballarat railway line and the survey of the Geelong to Queenscliff, Melbourne to Bendigo, Bendigo to Echuca, Essendon to Wodonga and Gippsland lines.⁹⁴⁵ The construction of each of the railway lines were personally superintended by him, as was the railway tunnel at Geelong.⁹⁴⁶ Watson's clerk of works – or site engineer – for the construction of the shafts of the Geelong tunnel was Mr Burton. He was later transferred to the construction of the railway bridge at Breakwater.⁹⁴⁷

The construction of the tunnel brought with it injuries to the workmen and the death of Thomas McDonald, a labourer at shaft 3 in 1874.⁹⁴⁸ He accidentally fell to the bottom of the shaft, the jury at the inquest into McDonald's death were 'further of opinion that a light



Figure 3.106: Geelong Railway Tunnel, northern portal (below Ryrie Street), c.1890. Source: Item MM5267, Museums Victoria.

should be kept at the mouths of all such shafts and that the ropes uniting the sling or chain to the main rope be made a fixture.⁹⁴⁹

On 16 November 1875, the tunnel (Figure 3.106) was completed.⁹⁵⁰ Watson was given the honour of laying the last stone in a ceremony at the northern end of the tunnel. He was presented with a silver towel following the striking of the stone.⁹⁵¹ A celebratory banquet was held in the tunnel catered by Messrs Bennett and Son, the tunnel for the occasion being described as follows:

A portion of the tunnel, some sixty yards in length, had been blocked off by means of tarpaulins and the space so enclosed converted into a decidedly substantial banqueting hall; this was festooned with flowers and evergreens, and the effect was very good.⁹⁵²

Until the construction of the Melbourne underground railway loop, the Geelong tunnel was the longest on the Victorian railway network.⁹⁵³

BREAKWATER AND WAURN PONDS BRIDGES AND EMBANKMENTS

Further infrastructure was required for the railway line to the south of Geelong. Raised earthen embankments and a timber pile bridge over the Barwon River above the breakwater, and a small timber bridge further south-west over the Waurn Ponds Creek, were required. Works were advanced by February 1875 when the *Geelong Advertiser* gave a detailed report:

The Breakwater is a sort of beehive of industry, some scores of men being constantly employed there making the embankment across the river flat and constructing

the pile bridge over the Barwon. The piles are of redgum and ironbark shod with iron, well driven and stayed so as to withstand any possible strain to which they will be subjected. Over a dozen piles have been driven, together with a number of stay piles along the bed of the river. Some of the former have been surmounted with caps of iron, on which rest substantial wooden sleepers designed apparently to carry the rails. From its present appearance, it may safely be presumed that when completed the bridge will be far more utilitarian than ornamental, the style of its architecture will be highly characteristic of the colony and its present rules. In making the embankment across the flat the earth alongside from the river's margin has been excavated to a depth varying from four to five feet, and between one and two chains in width. This will form of itself a commodious channel in times of floods, and will serve greatly to relieve the earthwork and protect it from injury. At the junction of the Waurm Ponds creek with the river a bridge is being made of sufficient span to enable a very large volume of water to escape in case of any heavy inundation. Already the larger portion of the embankment has been raised to its required height ...⁹⁵⁴

Costing £3,000, the Breakwater bridge (Figure 3.107) was 610 feet long with 20 spans of 30 feet each.⁹⁵⁵ This and the Waurm Ponds bridge and associated embankments were completed on 13 January 1876 and a special train conveyed Messrs. Ford, Martin, G.V. Jones, and Maddern, Government engineers; Mr Overend, contractor, Mr Burton, construction supervisor and other 'practical gentlemen to test the completed works.⁹⁵⁶

OPENING OF THE GEELONG TO COLAC RAILWAY LINE

On 24 November 1876, the line from Geelong to Winchelsea was formally opened by the Hon. Joseph Jones, Commissioner of Railways follow a special train of six carriages from Geelong to Winchelsea where there was a banquet in the Winchelsea Shire Hall.⁹⁵⁷ Commencing at the Geelong railway station, the official party continued through the newly-built tunnel, the line being curved at the southern tunnel portal and traversed through South Geelong, the view from the line at this location being described in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

A very agreeable view is afforded the traveller by train on emerging from the tunnel at Maude-street, for below in the valley the several factories on the banks of the Barwon River give a thriving look to the approaches to Geelong, whilst the picturesque spots about



Figure 3.107: Breakwater Rail Bridge, 1911. Source: *News of the Week*, 6 July 1911, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

Highton, and the well laid-out streets of Chilwell, and a portion of Newtown, are seen to advantage.⁹⁵⁸

Further work on the railway line brought about extensions to Colac in 1877, Camperdown in 1883, Terang in 1877 and Warrnambool, Dennington and Port Fairy in 1890.⁹⁵⁹ Today, the line terminates at Warrnambool following the closure of the line further south-west to Port Fairy in 1977.⁹⁶⁰

LATER IMPROVEMENTS

A number of improvements were made to the Geelong to Colac railway network within the City of Greater Geelong in the early 20th century. Two of the more substantial was the construction of a bridge over Moorabool Street, and upgrades to the bridge at Breakwater.

MOORABOOL STREET BRIDGE

Until 1913, the railway line between the Geelong and South Geelong stations included a level crossing over Moorabool Street. With the proposed tram network in 1911, the Railway Commissioners 'refused to allow trams to pass over the level crossing.⁹⁶¹ To overcome this concern, a subway at Moorabool street, regrading of the line from the tunnel to South Geelong, together with earthen embankments and an iron bridge were constructed.⁹⁶² By May 1912, the embankment opposite Kardinia Park had grown apace but 'was not yet up to the standard level of the work.⁹⁶³ Rail lifting had also commenced on the section of line between Moorabool and Yarra Streets.⁹⁶⁴ The proposed bridge was to be constructed of wrought iron girders with brick abutments. They were placed in position in November 1912:

Blocks and tackle and wooden skids are used to place in position the wrought-iron girders which in the near future will carry all railway traffic above the Moorabool-street crossing, South Geelong.



Figure 3.108: Moorabool Street Railway bridge nearing completion, 1912. Source: *News of the Week*, 12 November 1912, p.14, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

The girders on low sideless trucks were backed on to the new embankment from Yarra-street, and were unshipped edge down alongside the brick piers. Between these a stout wooden beam held up on temporary stays was placed and along it on small rollers the 40 ft. girder was hauled by tackle manipulated from the opposite end of the cutting. There is little hope of the road grading being started till the end of the year.⁹⁶⁵

Sleepers were laid on the new embankments from January 1913 and the bridge opened a month later⁹⁶⁶ (Figure 3.108).

UPGRADES TO THE BREAKWATER BRIDGE

In the early 1940s, the Victorian Railways Board carried out a track relaying and brick renewal program. By mid-1974, works were under way with the replacement of the timber railway bridge at breakwater with concrete pylons and steel superstructure.⁹⁶⁷

GEELONG TO QUEENSLIFF LINE

While a railway line between Geelong and Queenscliff was first mooted in the 1850s,⁹⁶⁸ it was not until 1873 when a meeting of the people of Queenscliff and the Western Railway League lobbied for the 'black line' of

railway proposed to the south-west of Victoria from Geelong.⁹⁶⁹ Nothing eventuated and in July 1877, a deputation of Councillors of the Geelong, Queenscliffe, Newtown and Chilwell, South Barwon and Geelong West Councils, together with other local influential men made a deputation to the Ministers of Railways lamenting the exclusion of a proposed Geelong to Queenscliff railway line.⁹⁷⁰ The Mayor of Queenscliffe, Mr Admans, referred:

... to the immense number of persons who now visit Queenscliffe, Sorrento, and Portsea, by steamers, which would be considerably increased if they had railway communication. He also pointed out that Drysdale and the Clifton Springs were attractions of themselves sufficient to induce the Government to construct the line. Then, Geelong, which was insufficiently supplied with firewood, could receive some thousands of tons yearly, and the mails as they arrived from the mail steamer could be delivered in Geelong two hours earlier than at present.⁹⁷¹

In late 1877, a railway line to Queenscliff was approved, the *Geelong Advertiser* reporting that 'two Surveyors are on the ground; one will commence from Geelong, the other (Mr Loftus Jones) from Queenscliffe.'⁹⁷² The survey work commenced in the following January of 1878, the starting point from Geelong being 'at the foot of Garden-street, at the point where the Colac line makes a sweep towards the Breakwater.'⁹⁷³ In September 1878, a contract for the 20 mile line was let to Topham, Angus, and Smyth at a cost of £58,977/7/6.⁹⁷⁴ Work commenced from both ends and on 29 April 1879, the line was joined at a ceremony performed by Robert Watson, Engineer-in-Chief:

Plate-laying on the Geelong and Queenscliffe line of railway is now all but accomplished. For some time past the process has been carried out simultaneously from both termini, and this (Saturday) evening the ceremony was performed of formally uniting both ends by the Engineer-in-Chief, Mr Watson. A silver spoke was provided for the occasion by Mr W. Simpkin [Queenscliff engineer and blacksmith], to the order of Mr Smith, one of the contractors, and at about a quarter to six the spike was driven, in the presence of the Mayor and several of the Councillors, and a numerous crowd of spectators.⁹⁷⁵

The route of the new railway from Geelong passed through Newcomb, Moolap, Leopold and Drysdale, where a railway station was erected. From Drysdale the line extended south-east, taking in Bellarine, Marcus Hill and Mannerim before arriving at Queenscliff.

Considerable infrastructure was built as part of the line. At Queenscliff, low lying ground was raised 'between



Figure 3.109: Railway Bridge, Geelong to Queenscliff line, photographic collection, railway negatives, 1885. Source: VPRS 12800/P1, H 4666, Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.110: Opening of the Geelong to Queenscliff Railway by the Governor at the Queenscliff Railway Station, 1879. Source: *Illustrated Australian News*, 7 June 1879, accession IAN 07/06/79 State Library of Victoria.

Mrs Wakefield's property and Off-street above the level of the centre of that street,' while 14 fishmen's residences required relocation to make way for the railway yard.⁹⁷⁶ The deepest cutting for the line was near the Queenscliffe station where 35,000 yards of earth were removed, while the longest cutting was made at the hill at Leopold. More complex was the crossing of 41 'occupation and carriage roads', construction of 40 timber pile bridges (Figure 3.109) (the largest at Bellarine, being 75 feet long and 18 feet high) and building of 74 culverts, the more substantial being near Lake Lorne, Drysdale. A water reservoir for supplying the locomotives was constructed at Yarram Creek near Queenscliff.⁹⁷⁷

On 21 May 1879, the Geelong and Queenscliff railway line was officially opened at Queenscliff following a ceremonial train service from Geelong.⁹⁷⁸ A festive display greeted the 300 special guests upon arrival at Queenscliff:

A novelty in arches was erected at the entrance gate to the railway station by the fishermen of Queenscliffe. They had obtained the masts and spars from some of their boats, formed a scaffolding of them, and artistically decorated the poles with flowers, shrubs, etc. In the centre of a large circle formed of leaves there was the model of a full-rigged ship, the letters "R.R." being on either side of the vessel, whilst underneath were white flags bearing the words "Welcome," the whole scaffolding being lined with bunting. Emblematical of their occupation, the fishermen displayed two enormous schnapper, and two equally large yellow tail fish, which were slung lengthways across the archway, and from the tops of the small arches were dangled a couple of unfortunate crayfish.⁹⁷⁹

At the platform, the Hon. George Constantine, Marquis of Normanby and Governor of Victoria declared the line open (Figure 3.110) before alighting a carriage to attend a celebratory banquet at the Royal Hotel.⁹⁸⁰ The rail service between Geelong and Queenscliff was not to endure. In 1931, passenger services ceased (primarily due to bus competition) although goods trains continued to operate until the line was closed in 1959.⁹⁸¹ It soon reopened in late 1959 to service the conveyance of shell grit from Lakers Siding to Spotswood for glassmaking, the service operating twice weekly until 1973.⁹⁸² Excursion trains operated during this period as well as a freight train to Cheetham's siding until 1978.⁹⁸³ Today, tourist trains operate on the Geelong and Queenscliff line between Drysdale and Queenscliff, while much of the remaining line to South Geelong is now a walking and cycling trail known as the Bellarine Rail Trail.⁹⁸⁴

NORTH GEELONG TO FYANSFORD LINE

In 1918, a railway line was constructed from North Geelong to Fyansford, opening in September of that year. It provided rail transport for the Australian Portland Cement Company's operations at Fyansford⁹⁸⁵ (Figure 3.111).

RAILWAY STATIONS AND STATION SIDINGS

To service the railway transport required for passengers, goods and crops, several railway stations and associated sheds and yards were constructed on the Geelong and Melbourne line from the 1850s, Geelong to Ballarat line from the early 1860s, Geelong to Colac line from the early 1880s and the Geelong to Queenscliff line from the late 1870s. Today, few railway stations of the 19th and early 20th centuries survive.



Figure 3.111: W. Langford, Locomotive near the cement works silos, Fyansford, on the North Geelong – Fyansford line, 22 June 1975. Source: Weston Langford Railway Photograph online <https://www.westonlangford.com/media/photos/113417>, Creative Commons license.

STATIONS ON THE GEELONG TO MELBOURNE LINE

In addition to the construction of significant 19th and early 20th century infrastructure – some of which remains physically present to the current day – the Victorian Railways Department was a notable employer. A list of early railway employees on the lines associated with Geelong is given as Appendix 3.2.

GEELONG

FIRST STATION COMPLEX

Key infrastructure in the formation of the Geelong to Melbourne line was the construction of the railway terminus at Geelong. Designed by Snell and Kawerau, the foundation stone of the station building was laid by the Governor on 20 September 1853.⁹⁸⁶ The contract for the construction of the stone buildings was awarded to William Cakebread at a cost of £4000.⁹⁸⁷ A carriage shed was first built and converted into workshops and forges installed to assist in the construction of the railway system.⁹⁸⁸ Most of the station building was completed by early 1854.⁹⁸⁹ By August 1855, Messrs. Craig and Dale had won the tender for erecting the iron roofs over the arrival and departure passenger platforms.⁹⁹⁰ This work was finished by May 1856 when the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* gave a description of the terminus complex:

... we proceed to the station proper, to have a look at the engines and the carriages which are already marshalled at their posts. The station is roofed with corrugated iron. A platform of 20 or 22 feet in width runs along either side of the station, for the



Figure 3.112: Plan of Geelong Railway Terminal complex, 1854. Source: J.H. Taylor, *Map of Geelong*, Surveyor-General's Department, Melbourne, 1854. Source: VPRS 8168/P2, Unit 5416, item Roll 39 Geelong, Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.113: E. de Balk, Geelong Railway Station terminus, 1866. Source: accession H87.251 State Library of Victoria.

accommodation of passengers arriving and departing. Doorways open off these platforms, which will give access to the refreshment rooms and waiting rooms adjoining.⁹⁹¹

The complex of terminus buildings was shown in Taylor's *Map of Geelong* in 1854 (Figure 3.112) and in a photograph by Eugene De Balk in 1866 (Figure 3.113) and Charles Nettleton in the c.1870s.

The first stationmaster at the Geelong Railway Station was William Cadwallader (1822-1904).⁹⁹² He was born in Birmingham, England, the son of Oliver and Mary (nee Baughan) Cadwallader.⁹⁹³ William Cadwallader worked as a coachbuilder and in 1845 he married Miss Hannah Pipe at St. Paul's Church, Birmingham.⁹⁹⁴ In 1855, Cadwallader emigrated to Victoria on the *Donald Mackay*, bringing out first rolling stock for the Hobsons Bay railway on behalf of the Birmingham engineering firm that manufactured it.⁹⁹⁵ Prior to his arrival, he had commenced negotiating an agreement with the Geelong and Melbourne Railway Company as stationmaster at Geelong.⁹⁹⁶ Cadwallader had commenced duties at the opening the Geelong to Melbourne Railway line in 1857.⁹⁹⁷ He was reunited with his wife and three

sons when they arrived in Geelong in 1859. With the take over the Geelong to Melbourne Railway line by the Victorian Railways in 1860, Cadwallader was reappointed stationmaster.⁹⁹⁸ He remained as Geelong stationmaster until 1874 when he took up the position of district superintendent for the Victorian Railways Department.⁹⁹⁹

SECOND STATION COMPLEX

The construction of the Geelong to Colac line necessitated changes at the south end of the terminus. In 1876, it was decided to construct new station buildings, in keeping with Geelong's status as an important regional city. Surveying work commenced in May of that year.¹⁰⁰⁰ A design was prepared by G.W. Sims, engineer and assistants of the works branch of the Victorian Railways Department in late 1876, the new station building to be situated on the site of the old goods shed, in line with the newly-completed tunnel to the south on the Geelong to Colac railway line.¹⁰⁰¹ A detailed description of Sims' proposed station complex (Figures 3.114-115) was given in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The building, which is to cost £8758, is to be located between the present station and the goods sheds. It will harmonise in accordance with the latter building, being of course, more ornamental. Like the sheds, it will be built end on to the railway terrace, the frontage of the station facing the sheds. Passengers will enter the station from a broad pathway at right angle with the street, and the platform will be on that nearest Latrobe-terrace. The station will be built of dark Geelong brick, with white brick dressings. The verandah on the frontage near the goods shed, will occupy about a third of the entire frontage, being in the centre. It will be 53 ft. 6 in. long and 13 ft wide, and will be supported by four iron columns, on two of which will be drinking fountains. The remainder of the frontage will be flush up to the footway, the length of the whole building being 181ft. Arriving at the verandah, the passenger will enter the booking lobby and walk from thence on to the platform which will be about 500 ft. long, one end of it reaching to Railway-terrace. The verandah protecting the platform will be 196 ft. long and 15 ft. wide. It will be supported by 10 iron ornamental columns, six of which will have small fountains similar to those of the exterior of the building. At the northern end, nearest to the railway crossing at St. Paul's church, will be the stationmaster's quarters, consisting of a drawing-room, dining room, bedroom and kitchen. At the verandah frontage portion, it should have been mentioned, will be the booking, ticket and parcels offices, entered by two doors. At the side of the verandah nearest to Railway-terrace, there will be two bath rooms and a lavatory for the use of passengers; and the engineers,

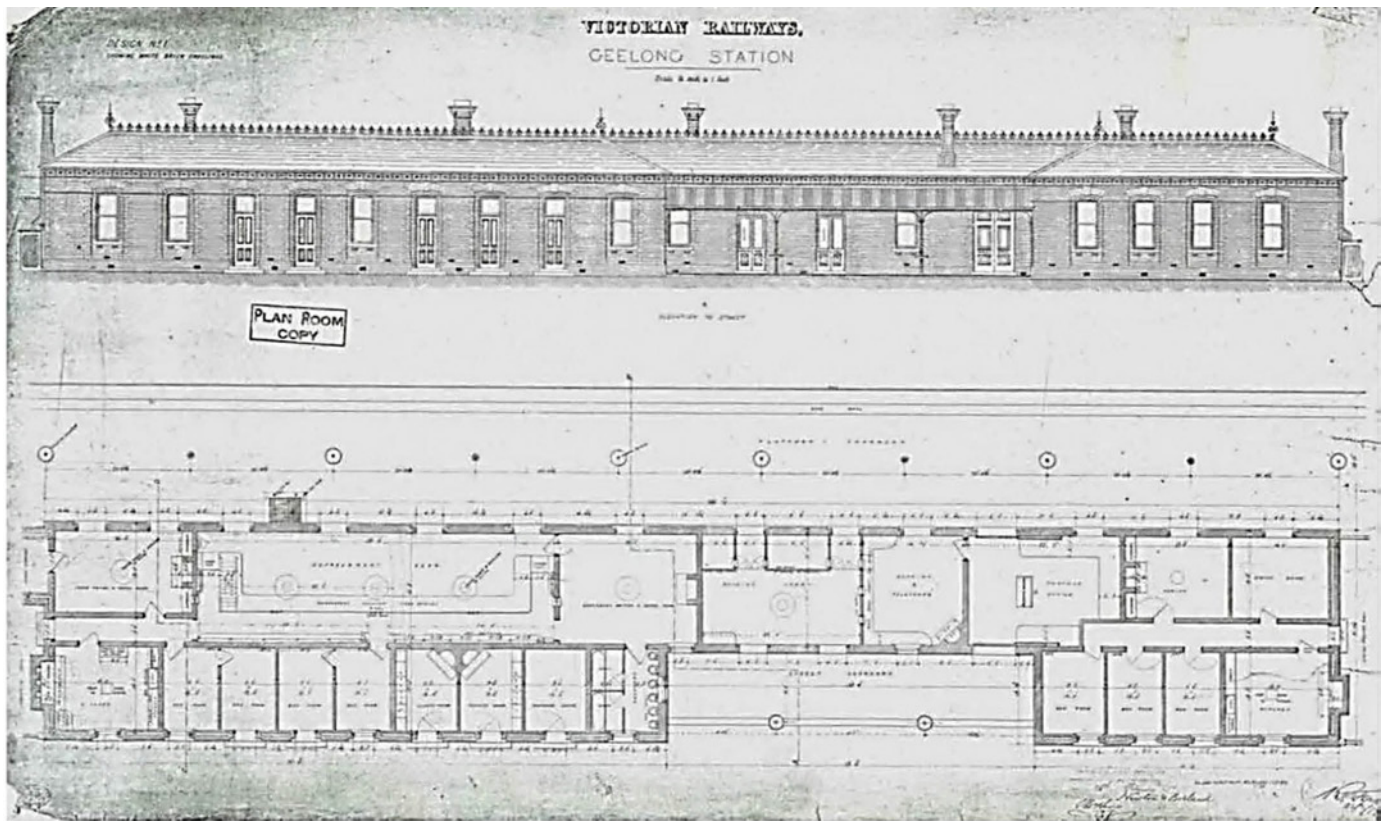


Figure 3.114: G.W. Simms, Victorian Railways Geelong Station, 'Elevation to Street & Floor Plan', 1879. Source: GRS 3133, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

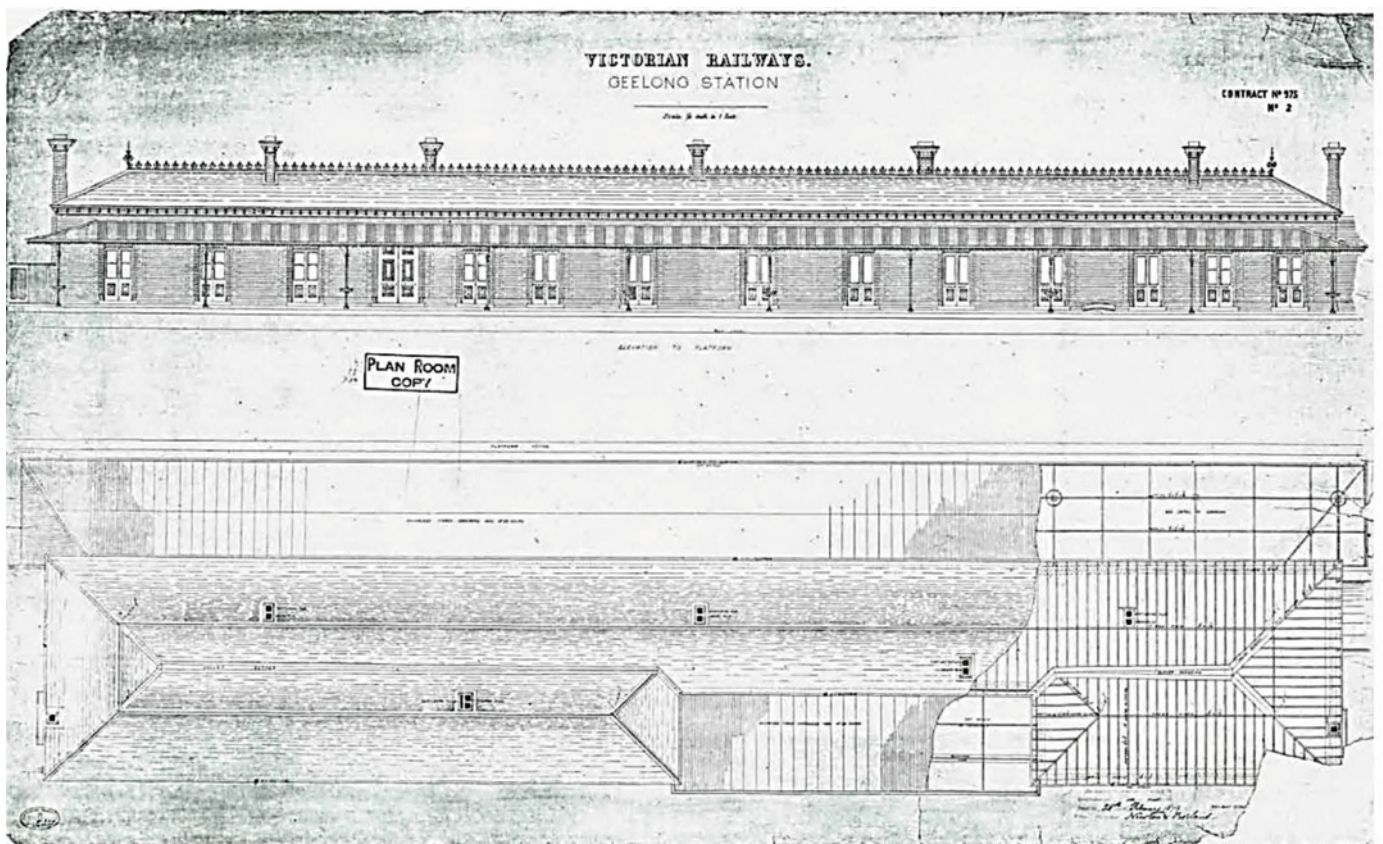


Figure 3.115: G.W. Simms, Victorian Railways Geelong Station, 'Elevation to Platform & Roof Plan', 1879. Source: GRS 3132, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

porter's and guards' rooms, and purveyors' quarters will take up the remainder of the frontage. Next to the booking lobby, or centre, on the platform side the building, will be a gentlemen's waiting and coffee-room, 20ft x 16ft, 3in. This will open into the general refreshment room, the dimensions of which will be 52' x 16ft. 3in. The room will be fitted up with counters and shelving in the ordinary manner, and underneath is to be a cellar, which the workmen are engaged in digging. The ladies coffee and waiting rooms, opening off the booking lobby, will be comfortably fitted with patent tip-up lavatories. All the rooms will be ventilated with Sted's and Murphy's ventilators, and the large rooms are to have cornices with cement skirtings.¹⁰⁰²

Tenders were called for the construction of the new complex in June 1878.¹⁰⁰³ The contract for the goods shed was awarded to Messrs. Sutherland and Pickering at a cost of £9997/15/-, with the building of the passenger station being carried out by Messrs Newton and Borland at a cost of £8,758/14/10.¹⁰⁰⁴

While the *Geelong Advertiser* had detailed the promise of a well-designed station complex, towards its completion there was wide criticism on its appearance, location and interior planning.¹⁰⁰⁵ Even the Mayor of Geelong, J.M. Garrett was staunchly opposed to the new structure, declaring it 'a wretched apology for a railway station', and that it 'would be a disgrace to a roadside township.'¹⁰⁰⁶ Completed in November 1879, there was no fanfare for its opening, the gloom aired by Geelong's civic fathers and others apparently sufficient to quell any formal celebration. The lavish opening of the Industrial and Juvenile Exhibition in Market Square by the Governor (Marquis of Normanby) on 18 December 1879 provided an opportunity for the Governor's carriage to be the first to arrive at the newly-completed railway station. The only hint of celebration for the opening of the new station was a salute of 21 fog signals that exploded as the train entered the northern entrance to the terminus.¹⁰⁰⁷

The loud criticism afforded the design and function of the new railway station did not fall on deaf ears. On 21 May 1881, G.D. Langridge, Commission of Public Works, J.B. Patterson, Commissioner of Railways, Mr Elsdon, Engineer-in-Chief of Railways made a visit to Geelong 'to ascertain the actual requirements of the railway station, approaches thereto, and adjacent crossings of the line, and also any other public works the Corporation might invite their inspection of.'¹⁰⁰⁸ By September 1881 drawings (Figures 3.116-117) for altering and extending the station had been completed by Samuel Bindley, architect of the Department of Education. A detailed description of the changes was given in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The plans of the proposed improvements to the station, as prepared by Mr Bindley, an architect from the office of the Education Department, are indeed of a very attractive kind. If carried out, the present station – which is one of the most inconvenient that could have been constructed – will be made one of the handsomest on the Government lines of railway. It is proposed to widen the platform from 18ft. to 29ft., by cutting off the line of useless small rooms from the northern to the southern end. At the southern extremity, and facing Railway Terrace and the tunnel of the Colac line, there will be a two storey structure to be used as a dwelling for the stationmaster. Below the dwelling apartments, that is on the ground floor, a spacious booking lobby, 31 feet by 16 feet, is to be provided affording communication with the approach to the station and on to the platform, and there is to be a booking office, 31 ft. by 14ft., attached. In front of the same building, and facing the platform, will be the stationmaster's office, 16 ft. by 13 ft. in dimensions, and the whole structure will be surrounded by an ornamental verandah. The present booking office and lobby, both of which are narrow and draughty, will be abolished, and the room formed into a large vestibule leading on to the platform. The present limited refreshment-room is to be increased in size, from 52 ft. by 16ft. to 72ft. by 19ft., a large space being provided for the bar attendants. This will be done by extending the building towards the goods shed. Better luncheon rooms are to be provided for ladies and gentlemen; the former's will be 26ft. by 15ft in dimensions, and the gentlemen's 18 ½ ft. by 16ft. Between the stationmaster's house and the ladies' room, there is to be a waiting room 24ft. by 18ft., for use by the general public. At the rear of the ladies' and refreshment rooms there will be bath, yard, and other accommodation, and at the southern end guards' and porters' rooms will be provided. A second storey is to be placed on the refreshment rooms, which will be utilised for bedrooms, parlor and dining room, and for a kitchen, the latter being increased in size from 15ft. by 12ft., as at present, to 25ft. by 15ft. The cooking is to be performed upstairs, and the catables, etc., required by travellers by the train will be lowered by means of lifts at both ends of the kitchen apartment to the dining rooms on the ground floor. These additions to the buildings are to be ornamented in the same style as the present white and red brick fronts. Both the platforms at the station are to be used for the reception and despatch of trains, so as to avoid, as far as possible, the shunting across Railway Terrace, which has been the cause of so many complaints. In order to effect this, a footbridge will be constructed across the three

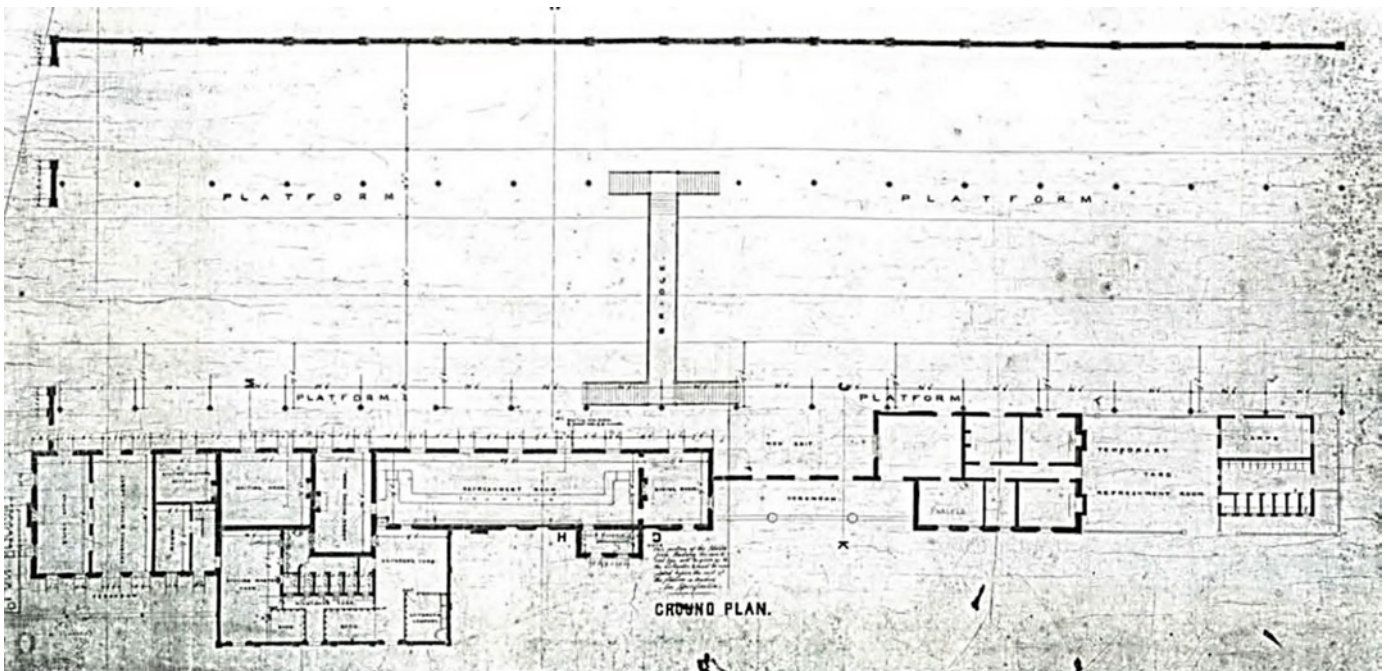


Figure 3.116: S. Bindley, Geelong Railway Station Ground Plan, 1881. Source: GRS 3149, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

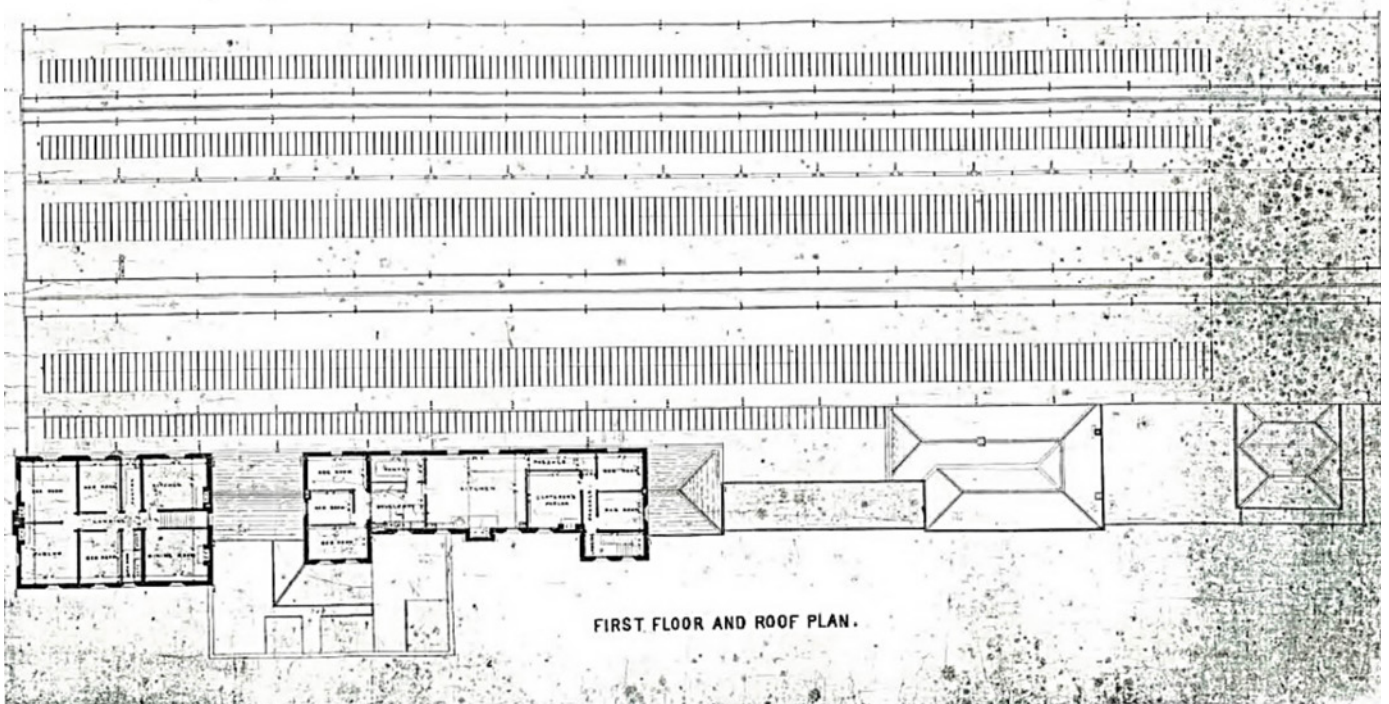


Figure 3.117: S. Bindley, Geelong Railway Station First Floor & Roof Plan, 1881. Source: GRS 3148, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.118: Geelong Railway Station, east and south elevations, photographic collection, railway negatives, c.1900. Source: VPRS 12800/P1, Unit 195 Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.119: Geelong Railway Station Train Hall & Platform 1, photographic collection, railway negatives, c.1920s. Source: VPRS 12903/P1, it 261/05, Public Record Office Victoria.

lines of railway, to what is termed the central platform, that is, the narrow causeway between the main platform and the old and disused platform. There will be two flights of stairs at each end of the bridge, which is to be an ornamental one, springing from the vicinity of the refreshment room. It is proposed to construct a corrugated iron archway over the bridge and the lines, in order to protect the platform from the effects of the weather. To do this a retaining wall is to be constructed parallel with the old station and locomotive shed. One arch will span from the western wall of the new station, rest on ornamental columns at the central platform, and then stretch across to the retaining wall. In order that traffic may not be interfered with, it is intended to first construct the retaining wall, and cover the railway lines, and also to build the new dwellinghouse, etc., for the stationmaster, and the booking offices. The present

unsightly structure formerly used as the stationmaster's residence, is to be cleared away.¹⁰⁰⁹

On 6 December 1881, tenders were called for the works.¹⁰¹⁰ The contract was awarded to Newtown and Borland (the contractors responsible for the earlier station building) at a cost of £12,539/9/0.¹⁰¹¹ The altered and extended station was opened for business on 21 May 1883, and again no formal ceremony was observed.¹⁰¹² While the new station (Figures 3.118-119) was 'found to be most commodious for the public', the lobby had been sealed up on one side and used as a parcel offices, creating discontent with the cabmen that paid for the privilege of waiting in the yards for passengers (who were consequently prevented from exiting from the station through the lobby).¹⁰¹³ Further disquiet came when the lifts from the upper floor kitchen 'were found to be altogether inadequate, the ordinary crockery employed for keeping chops, steaks, joints, etc., hot being too large for the limited spaces left in the "trays" attached to the lifts.'¹⁰¹⁴ The *Geelong Advertiser* noted that 'a prompt remedy' was needed for these considerable inconveniences.¹⁰¹⁵

In 1887, a new locomotive shed was constructed at the railway station. It was described as 'a rather curiously shaped building', presenting an appearance of 'one-fourth of a circle', the building accommodating 'a gigantic turn-table' for the locomotives¹⁰¹⁶ (Figures 3.120-121). This turntable was removed and relocated to Newport in 1917 following the laying of additional railway lines and other improvements to the west of the station building (see earlier subsection).¹⁰¹⁷

In 1952, a contract was let for the construction of a new goods shed and offices after the previous building had been destroyed by fire.¹⁰¹⁸ A new loading platform was also constructed.¹⁰¹⁹

SUBURBAN STATIONS

CORIO

Two suburban stations were built on the Geelong to Melbourne line in 1857: Cowies Creek and West Geelong.¹⁰²⁰ The Cowies Creek station was half a mile north of the creek. It was known as a flag station – where the train would only stop when a flat or other signal was displayed. Of interest is that Mrs Jane Rollins (nee Robinson) (c.1836-1904) was station mistress from September 1860.¹⁰²¹ The earliest and only female station mistress in 1860 in Victoria,¹⁰²² Mrs Rollins was also a mother of very young children, with her sons, Frank and George born at Cowies Creek in 1859 and 1860 respectively.¹⁰²³ After her resignation on 30 September 1861,¹⁰²⁴ Jane later established a farm at Bell Post Hill

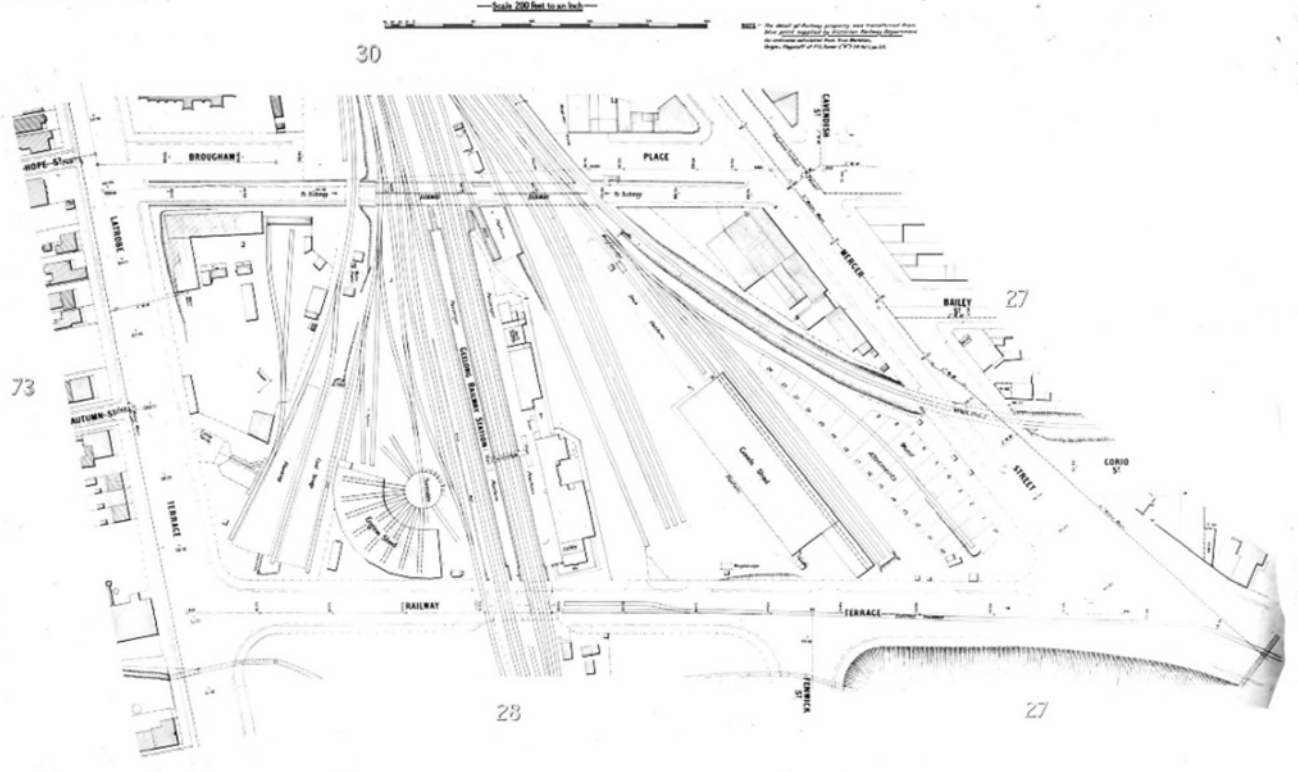


Figure 3.120: Geelong Waterworks & Sewerage Trust Detail Plan No. 29, n.d., showing layout of Geelong Railway Terminus including circular locomotive turntable & engine shed built in 1887. Source: Barwon Water.

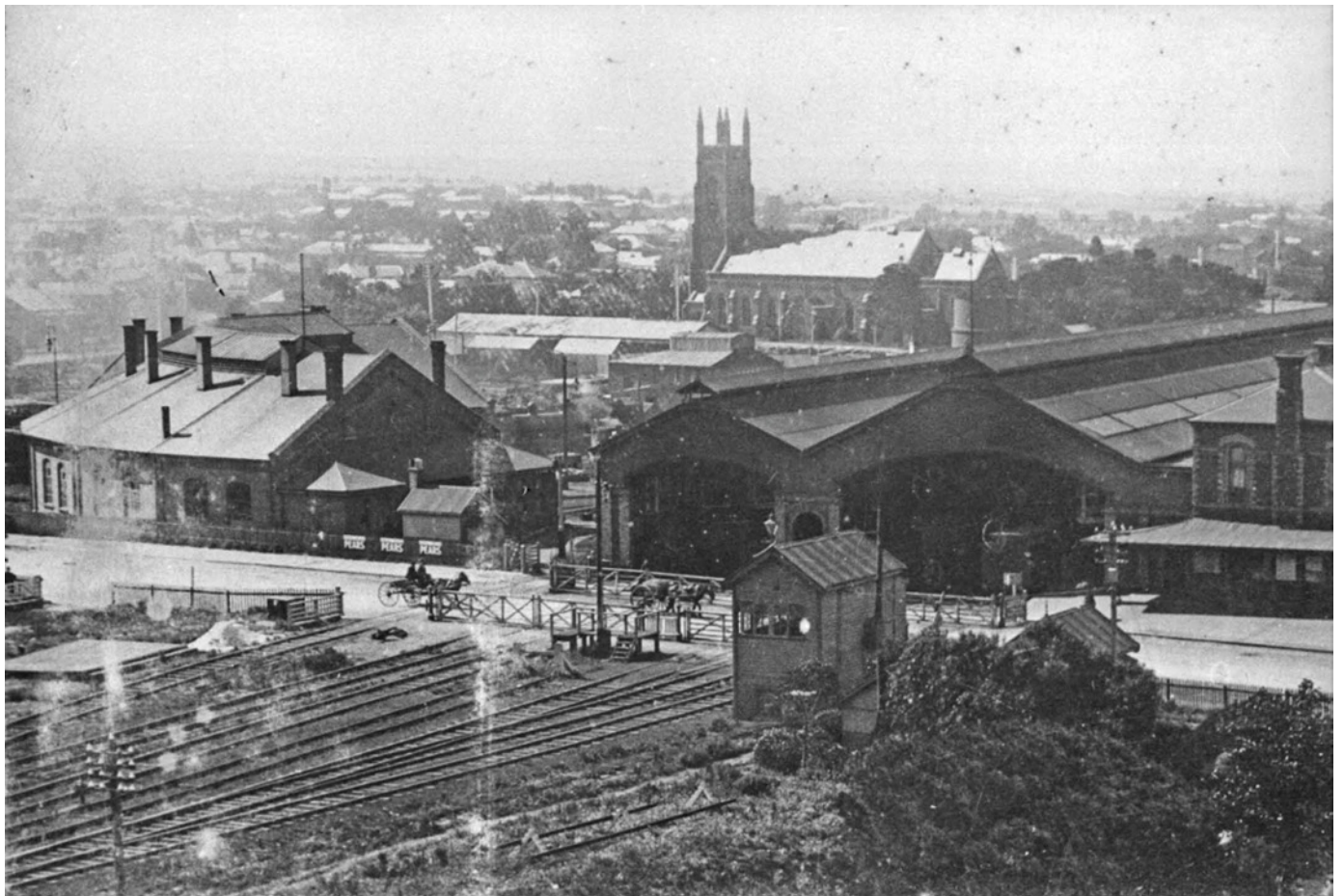


Figure 3.121: View looking north-west to Geelong Railway Station, showing the station building and train hall (right), locomotive turntable & engine shed (left), & level crossing prior to the construct of the subway, n.d. [pre 1912]. Source: Wynd collection, Authentic Heritage Services.

with her husband, George, where Rollins Road was to be named after their son, Frank (see Theme 6). Cowies Creek station was not to endure as by 1882 it had been removed and the station reserve (planted with wattles) had been mistakenly sold by the Lands Department (the sale subsequently found to be illegal).¹⁰²⁵ A new flag station was built in 1890 'at a point six miles from Geelong' and it was named the Cowie Station.¹⁰²⁶ The station was renamed Corio in 1913.¹⁰²⁷ The old flag station was replaced with the existing station in 1981.¹⁰²⁸

NORTH GEELONG

At North Geelong, the 'West Geelong' Geelong Railway was situated on the east side of the line, opposite the intersection of the Melbourne Road and Swinburne Street. With the opening of the Geelong to Ballarat line in 1862, the station grew in importance, being at the junction of the Melbourne and Ballarat lines. The first stationmaster was Benjamin Tertius Scott (1827-1867), a Canadian who had emigrated to Geelong by 1854 at this time he was listed as a merchant.¹⁰²⁹ Scott remained at the Geelong West station until he was transferred to the East Ballarat terminus in 1864¹⁰³⁰ and subsequently to the Kyneton station.¹⁰³¹ He died in 1867, the *Geelong Advertiser* describing him as 'gentlemanly, always kind and always obliged, and highly respected by all whose avocations caused them to pay visits to Melbourne.'¹⁰³²

In 1877, the Geelong Town Council lobbied for a cattle siding at North Geelong to service its nearby saleyards. Sites at the north end of Pakington Street and near the gasworks were considered.¹⁰³³ While the Minister of Railways was open to the proposal, there was debate between the Geelong and Geelong West Councils in relation to the proposed site, with the Borough of Geelong West opposing the Corporation's suggestion that it be situated near the gasworks. So heated was a discussion between Council representatives in the Minister's office in 1878 that the Minister quipped that 'his room was not the proper place for disputes, and besides, they were unnecessarily occupying his time.'¹⁰³⁴ In October 1878, the Minister approved the site for the new siding next to the gasworks,¹⁰³⁵ immediately north of the Victoria Street and Melbourne Road intersections. It appears that in 1882 a new passenger station was built further south of the original station near Victoria Street and the new cattle yard siding adjacent to the gasworks.¹⁰³⁶ Situated on the east side of the line, it was an elongated hipped roofed timber building with a gabled wing at the north end, and a post-supported platform verandah on the west side. The name of the station was changed from West



Figure 3.122: North Shore Railway Station (background), c.1926. Source: Bay View Estate Plan, n.d., Special Collections, Deakin University Library.



Figure 3.123: Lara Railway Station, n.d. [c.1900]. Source: K. Eastman in *From Duck Ponds to Lara*, p.60.

Geelong to North Geelong in early 1886.¹⁰³⁷ In November 1920, work commenced on the construction of a new gabled timber station building on the west side of the railway line.¹⁰³⁸ It survived until 1990 when a new station was erected, followed by a passenger shelter on the east of the line in 2008.¹⁰³⁹

NORTH SHORE

In 1895, the Victorian Railways Department constructed a new platform and station at North Shore (Figure 3.122). This outlying fledgling suburb north of Geelong was steadily growing and the nearby freezing works also created demand for the service. However, the approaches to the station were yet to be completed and were 'knee deep in mud.'¹⁰⁴⁰ The name of the station was changed to Corio in December 1908 before returning to the name of North Shire in 1913.¹⁰⁴¹ A new island platform erected in 1959 and supplemented by a small waiting shed. It was replaced by bus shelters by the 1990s.¹⁰⁴²

LARA

Originally known as Duck Ponds, the terminus at Lara was the first to be completed outside Geelong in 1856. In May of that year, the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*

reported that 'great activity is being manifest at present in order that the line may be opened before July as far as the Duck Ponds.'¹⁰⁴³ A station had been erected by 1857.¹⁰⁴⁴ A small gabled timber flag station appears to have been the first station erected, followed in later years by a picturesque, gabled station with post-supported verandah (Figure 3.123).

The first stationmaster at Duck Ponds was William McElwee (1826-1882).¹⁰⁴⁵ Born in County Derry, Ireland, he arrived in Melbourne in 1858, having worked as a labourer.¹⁰⁴⁶ He married Miss Emily Goodall shortly after in 1858.¹⁰⁴⁷ At Lara in 1861, McElwee was appointed Deputy Registrar of births and deaths.¹⁰⁴⁸ The high esteem held by McElwee by the Lara community was highlighted in 1864, on his departure for Lancefield. The *Geelong Advertiser* gave an account of the presentation of a gold watch prior to McElwee's departure:

On Friday evening some of the leading farmers and gentlemen residing at the Duck Ponds met at Bragg's Hotel for the purpose of presenting to Mr William McElwee a token of the respect in which he was held by the inhabitants of the district, prior to his taking charge of the Lancefield Road Station to which he has recently been promoted. The testimonial, which cost about £1.25, consisted of a very handsome gold watch with all the recent improvements, and a massive solid chain. On the inside of the watch the following inscription had been engraved:—

Presented to William McElwee, Station Master, Duck Ponds, by the inhabitants, as a token of respect. August 5, 1864.¹⁰⁴⁹

At Lara in 1886, pressures mounted on the inadequacy of the local railway to cater for the burgeoning local lime industry (see Themes 5 & 6 for further details on the lime industry). A deputation of lime burners met with the Commissioner of Railways seeking the erection of a siding about three quarters of a mile from Lara, in the vicinity of the kilns.¹⁰⁵⁰ Instead, in the following year, the existing lime shed at the Lara station was extended by Parker and Vickers.¹⁰⁵¹

The railway station was subsequently destroyed by fire and the existing brick station building and platform were built in 1926, as outlined in *The Argus*:

A commencement has been made with the erection of a new railway station at Lara. The new platform will be 400ft. longer than the existing one to cope with the long trains now run on the Geelong line.¹⁰⁵²

In 2007, major alterations were made to the station building and improvements to the platforms.¹⁰⁵³

In 2015, work began in extending the car park at the Lara station.¹⁰⁵⁴

STATIONS ON THE GEELONG TO COLAC LINE

MARSHALL

On the Geelong to Colac line, three stations were erected in the Geelong area in the 19th century. The earliest was at Marshall in 1879 when a modest gabled timber flag station was opened as the Connewarre station.¹⁰⁵⁵ It seems that the stationmaster combined the role with that of postmaster and gatekeeper in subsequent years. Mrs Jessie Glossop was in charge at Marshall between 1917 and 1920 (although the Electoral Rolls only identified her husband, John, as a railway employee).¹⁰⁵⁶

The flag station had relocated to the front of the gatekeeper's cottage in Marshalltown Road by the mid-20th century where it served as the local post office.¹⁰⁵⁷ Closing in 1979, it was donated to the Bellarine Railway by Postal agents, Angus and Elsie Taylor, and removed to the Drysdale Railway Station.¹⁰⁵⁸ It was relocated again in 1989, to Lakers Siding, and restored by volunteers in 2007 with funding from the Australia Post Philatelic Museum.¹⁰⁵⁹ It now forms part of the Bellarine Rail Trail.

In 2004, a new station was opened at Marshall, the demand for the service so great that the carpark was extended and a second platform added in 2010.¹⁰⁶⁰

SOUTH GEELONG

In May 1882, a site between Yarra and Bellerine Streets at South Geelong for a timber station (to originally also serve as a post and telegraph office) was visited by railway officials. It was 'considered most central for persons residing at Geelong East, South Geelong, and Chilwell.'¹⁰⁶¹ However, the visit – and particularly the proposed site – was hotly debated by some locals in attendance. As noted in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The mere mention of the site, however, caused great excitement, and a few hot-tempered individuals almost settled their disputes by a display of muscular Christianity. The division of opinion was as to sites close to Moorabool, Yarra, and Bellerine-street



Figure 3.124: South Geelong Railway Station (now demolished), c.1983. Source: VLine, South Geelong Railway Station (with permission from Larissa Scanlon, Regional Manager, South West, VLine).

crossings, and, on the engineers finding that the residents who are likely to be befitted by a station at South Geelong were at loggerheads, they sprang into the special train, and sped away to the Breakwater township, leaving the people indignant, excited, and quarrelsome.¹⁰⁶²

The site between Yarra and Bellerine Streets was officially settled and in October 1882 F. Holyoak won the tender for the erection of the station, platform and other buildings at a cost of £1165/1/10.¹⁰⁶³ Completed by mid-1883, tickets could be purchased at the station by November 1883, although it was not officially 'opened for traffic' until a month later.¹⁰⁶⁴

The first stationmaster appears to have been Charles Wells (c.1854-1901),¹⁰⁶⁵ his appointment at South Geelong being a promotion from the position of porter he had previously held with the Victorian Railways Department.¹⁰⁶⁶

The railway station (Figure 3.124) continued in use until it was demolished in October 1983 to make way for the existing brick station that opened on 30 September 1984.¹⁰⁶⁷

RAILWAY DWELLINGS AT SOUTH GEELONG STATION

In 1911, the Victorian Railways Commissioners proposed the construction of a new timber stationmaster's residence, the *Geelong Advertiser* declaring that it 'would be a decided improvement of the present low-built and badly placed structure.'¹⁰⁶⁸ The new dwelling had a frontage to Yarra Street and was situated in the south-west corner of the railway site, adjacent to the side street of Verner Street. Comprising a standard gambrel-roofed design of the Railways Department, the timber dwelling was constructed in 1912 by local contractor, Charles Stock of Geelong West, at a cost of £102/10/9.¹⁰⁶⁹ The dwelling was demolished in 2015.¹⁰⁷⁰

In 1949, the Victorian Railways Department ordered 1,000 pre-cut dwellings from W.J. Simms, Sons and Cooke Ltd. In England. A further 500 houses were ordered in 1950-51.¹⁰⁷¹ Postwar materials shortages and the large numbers of immigrants employed by the Railways Department required innovative solutions to meet the Department's housing demand.¹⁰⁷² It appears to have



Figure 3.125: Map showing the locations of first and second railway stations at Grovedale, Railway Construction Branch, Board of Land & Works, Melbourne, July 1874 (the Torquay Road is shown by the broken line, the route to Geelong being at the bottom of the map). Source: VPRS 5751/P1 Unit 23 Public Record Office Victoria.

been in the 1950s when one of these imported pre-cut houses were constructed at 221 Yarra Street, immediately north of the existing stationmaster's residence.¹⁰⁷³ It was demolished in 2015.

GROVEDALE

A gabled timber station opened on the east side of the Torquay Road at Grovedale on 8 September 1890.¹⁰⁷⁴ Known as the Germantown Railway Station (after the name of the suburb that Grovedale was then called – see Themes 6 & 7), the gabled timber building was originally situated on the east side of the Torquay Road and in 1913 it was relocated to the west side, where new sidings were constructed¹⁰⁷⁵ (Figure 3.125).

The first stationmaster appears to have been Jenkin Edwards (1862-1919).¹⁰⁷⁶ He was born at Cochrane's Creek, Bealiba, Victoria, the son of Morgan and Johanna (nee Lynch) Edwards. He married Miss Emma Elizabeth Thomas in Ballarat in 1891.¹⁰⁷⁷ Edwards was later to be transferred to the Winchelsea and Armytage railway stations before returning to Grovedale by 1919 where he died after a short illness in April of that year.¹⁰⁷⁸

The Grovedale Railway Station closed in November 1952 and no longer survives.¹⁰⁷⁹

BREAKWATER AND SHOWGROUNDS (EAST GEELONG/BREAKWATER)

In 1889, work began on the construction of a small flag station opened at Breakwater following years of lobbying by local residents. In August 1889, the *Geelong Advertiser* reported that work 'was steadily progressing' and that a 'special effort' was being made to have the siding completed for the Geelong Racing Club's winter race meeting.¹⁰⁸⁰ The station opened in December of that year and was described in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The siding is what is known as a flag station and is to be used in the picking up and setting down of passengers as may be required and signalled. In addition to the passenger traffic it will be used also for light goods, that is that no package shall exceed 5 cwt and all goods will be received and despatched at the risk of the owners.¹⁰⁸¹

In 1895 the station was closed.¹⁰⁸²

Another siding was opened on the Geelong to Queenscliff line at Breakwater in 1891 to service the newly opened showgrounds on the north side of the line.¹⁰⁸³ It had been designed by L.A. Laird as part of an architectural for fencing, a grandstand, stock sheds and other infrastructure for the Geelong and Western District Agricultural and Horticultural Society (see Theme 8). The platform was condemned by the Railways Department in 1910, at which time the a new siding and flag station was built on the Geelong to Colac line at Breakwater, south-west of the race course (this also being the location of the showgrounds by this time).¹⁰⁸⁴ It was named the Geelong Showgrounds platform until it was renamed the Geelong Racecourse station on 3 May 1915.¹⁰⁸⁵

PETTAVEL

In 1878, a meeting was held at the Scotch School, Pettavel Road, by residents of Pettavel, Waurnd Ponds, Paraparap and 'all parts of Duneed' to 'consider the best means of obtaining further railway accommodation' in the form of a flag station.¹⁰⁸⁶ A 'site known as Dulhunty Gate, near Fox's, on Victoria road' was that chosen by those in attendance and lobbying began to have the station realised.¹⁰⁸⁷ A flag station including a passenger platform and goods siding were not erected until 1882, at the Petteval Road crossing.¹⁰⁸⁸ The station was officially named Pettavel Road until it was changed to Pettavel on 5 December 1904.¹⁰⁸⁹ The station closed in 1952.¹⁰⁹⁰



Figure 3.126: Remnant reserve of the former race course railway line lined by gum trees, 2014. Source: David Rowe.

DUNEED

In 1913, a new station was opened 'between South Geelong and Moriac' and named Duneed.¹⁰⁹¹ Trucking yards were erected at the station in the following year.¹⁰⁹² It was closed in subsequent years.

WAURN PONDS

In 2014, a new railway station was opened at Waurnd Ponds at a cost of \$25.9 million. Constructed as a single platform station, it included a booking office, passenger amenities, road bus bays, bicycle storage and parking for 200 cars.¹⁰⁹³

OLD RACE COURSE BRANCH LINE

Impetus for a railway line to the Marshalltown racecourse (established in the 1850s – see Theme 9) came in 1876, following the opening of the Geelong to Colac line as far as Winchelsea. A platform was built at Marshalltown and the first race trains stopped there for the meeting held on Friday 26 January and Saturday 27 January 1877.¹⁰⁹⁴ It was anticipated that race meetings could attract larger crowds if the trains could transport passengers to the racecourse itself. Surveys were subsequently carried out and construction commenced on the branch railway line throughout 1877.¹⁰⁹⁵ On 12 January 1878, an inspection of the line and the racecourse was made by Mr. Robinson, secretary of the Geelong Racing Club, Alexander Davidson, architect, and several officials from the railways who made the journey by train.¹⁰⁹⁶ The branch line curved away from the main line into the race course grounds and it was formally opened on 22 January 1878.¹⁰⁹⁷ A special train, conveyed the Hon. John Woods, Commissioner of



Figure 3.127: Drysdale Railway Station, n.d. Source: Image 0482, Bellarine Historical Society.

Railways, Geelong Racing Club officials and other guests from the Geelong Railway Station to the new siding at the racecourse.¹⁰⁹⁸

The branch racecourse line at Marshalltown was closed in 1909.¹⁰⁹⁹ Material that was recovered from the line at this time included points and iron and steel rails. The racecourse railway reserve to the south east of the Geelong to Colac Railway line was used as a storage yard (with narrow gauge tracks laid) for the concrete pipes manufactured by Stone and Siddeley for the Geelong Waterworks and Sewerage Trust's ocean outfall sewerage scheme between 1912 and 1915 (see Theme 4).¹¹⁰⁰ Today, evidence of the Marshalltown racecourse railway line is identified in the narrow, curved and slightly elevated land lined with gum trees to the south of the existing Marshall Railway Station and east of Drews Road (Figure 3.126).

GEELONG TO QUEENSCLIFF LINE

DRYSDALE

In 1878, the Victorian Railways Department approved the location of a railway station at Drysdale to be situated near Lake Lorne. Such a site was a concern to local residents given its distant location from the Drysdale township and

the potential for a new township to develop adjacent the station. The preferred location was 'within six chains of the Shire Hall, which abuts the main road to Portarlington.'¹¹⁰¹ Concerns of the local residents fell on deaf ears at the location next to Lake Lorne was finalised.¹¹⁰² Tenders were called for the construction of the passenger station in February 1879 and the contract was awarded to T. Cowley.¹¹⁰³ By early May 1879, the *Geelong Advertiser* reported that the station was almost completed:

Good progress is being made with the railway. The new station, although not very pretentious, is a substantial weatherboard building, and is now approaching completion.¹¹⁰⁴

The Drysdale station (Figure 3.127) was opened as part of the formal opening of the Geelong to Queenscliff line on 21 May 1879. The special train enroute to Queenscliff from Geelong stopped at Drysdale where 23 members of the Drysdale contingent of the South Grant Artillery Corps and a number of other local residents alighted the carriage.¹¹⁰⁵ The broad gable roofed timber building featured decorative bargeboards and a post-supported verandah. Other station buildings flanked the main building which survives in a partly altered state today.

The first stationmaster (head porter) at Drysdale did not commence duties until after the opening of the station. In late 1880, Emil Berbling (c.1849-1903), a Prussian immigrant who had arrived in Australia and married Miss Julia Roache in 1873, became a naturalised British citizen in 1878 when serving as a porter at Inglewood.¹¹⁰⁶ Berbling's tenure at Drysdale was short-lived as he was transferred to Trentham in 1881.¹¹⁰⁷

OTHER STATIONS

A small number of sidings and modest stations were erected along the Geelong to Queenscliff line but there is no evidence of their existence today. The first was a portable station on top of the hill at Leopold (then known as Kensington) in 1880.¹¹⁰⁸ It was relocated to the flat in 1881 (it closed in 1961).¹¹⁰⁹ Others established included those at Moolap (opened in 1881 with a shelter shed and office constructed in 1887 – it closed in 1936), Marcus Hill (opened as a platform under the name of Ocean Grove in 1883 with a platform station building and good shelter erected in 1887 – the station was renamed Mannerim in 1890 and removed in 1950), and Curlewis (opened in 1914 with the relocation of the portable station from Scarborough near Queenscliff – it closed in 1961).¹¹¹⁰

STATION ON THE GEELONG TO BALLARAT LINE

MOORABOOL

In 1861, the Victorian Railways Commissioners chose a site next to the level crossing on the Steiglitz [Ballan] Road upon which to erect a railway station given 'the agricultural character of the district.'¹¹¹¹ This caused unrest among some locals who petitioned Ministers and public works officials for the station 'to be erected as near as practicable to the Moorabool Viaduct', in close proximity to their vineyards.¹¹¹² After further debate, the Steiglitz Road site was settled upon. In January 1862, a contract was awarded to John Campbell and Co. for the construction of the bluestone buildings at a cost of £2,954/11/0.¹¹¹³ A month later, the *Geelong Advertiser* reported that 'the station at Steiglitz road, a fine bluestone structure, is in course of erection and will be finished by the line is completed.'¹¹¹⁴ Yet, the station (Figure 3.128) was not completed at the time of the opening of the Geelong to Ballarat line in April 1862 and the positive newspaper description of the station in February had dissipated at this time when the new building was described as follows:

It is composed of a rather pretentious pile of substantial blue stone buildings, with a commodious platform, most of which are so far advanced as to be roofed in; but certainly there is nothing about the look

of the place to justify the large expenditure incurred by its erection.¹¹¹⁵

The first stationmaster was P. McDowall, with John Weaver possibly as gate keeper.¹¹¹⁶ McDowall's tenure at Steiglitz Road station was to be short-lived as he appears to have transferred to Meredith in 1863.¹¹¹⁷

In 1863, the name of the station was officially changed to the Moorabool Railway Station.¹¹¹⁸ By 1868, the promise of a bustling station at Moorabool had not come to fruition. The *Ballarat Star* reported on the intention of the Railway Department to lease the stationmaster's residence 'for a term' given that trains had 'ceased stopping there to take up or set down passengers.'¹¹¹⁹ Such closure was controversial and an application was made to re-open the station in 1869.¹¹²⁰ It was also at this time when details came to light of staff rationalisation as a consequence of the closure of the station but the need to man the railway gates at the Steiglitz Road crossing:

The gate and station are only about 60 yards apart. On two occasions during some years past it was sought to make the station-master or porter in charge to act as gateman, as well as live in and work the station. Each time this attempt failed in consequence of the difficulty in making the porter hear while he was within the walls of the stone building, and proportionately more so at night when the man was asleep. The result was that two men were put on – a porter in charge of the station and a gateman at the crossing.¹¹²¹

The station was subsequently re-opened, the stationmaster in 1878, John O'Connor, passing away at his post, the reason given as being as a consequence for 'suffering from gout in the knees for twenty years.'¹¹²² In 1904, the two-roomed portable timber gate keeper's cottage was destroyed by fire.¹¹²³ A substantial garden was laid out at the station during the tenure of M.C. Austin in the early 20th century. Upon his departure for Lubeck in 1918, it was reported that he had 'converted an unkept waste into a beautiful and delightful garden,' including the planting of 200 trees in the station premises.¹¹²⁴ In 1976, the Moorabool station closed to all traffic and the station building was sold the following year and converted into a dwelling.¹¹²⁵

KEEPING THE GATES

Ubiquitous throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries along each of the railway lines to and from Geelong were gate keeper's cottages. At each major level road crossing, gate keepers were appointed by the Victorian Railways to operate timber railway gates that were closed to vehicular and pedestrian traffic to allow trains to pass. Cottages



Figure 3.128: Moorabool Railway Station, 1998. Source: David Rowe.



Figure 3.129: Railway Gates, McKillop Street (looking west), photographic collection, railway negatives, 1961. The gatekeeper's cottage was on the right (now demolished). Source: VPRS 12800/P1, H2956 Public Record Office Victoria.

were erected adjacent to these roadside gate crossings (Figure 3.129).

Between 1859 and 1876, 64 gate keepers had been appointed by the Railways Department for the main Melbourne, Geelong and Ballarat lines.¹¹²⁶ With the construction of the Geelong to Colac line, 27 additional gate keeper's cottages were erected by the contractor, John Foot in 1877.¹¹²⁷ A further 19 cottages were built by W. Quayle and D. Spence on the Geelong to Queenscliff line in 1879.¹¹²⁸

In the central Geelong area, gate keeper's cottages included those erected at Victoria Street, North Geelong; Maitland, Wellington and O'Connell Streets, Geelong West; Kilgour, Maud and McKillop Streets, Geelong; and Bellerine Street, South Geelong. The latter crossing was closed in 1914 and the gate keeper's cottage removed.¹¹²⁹ It was to allow for the provision of new yards.¹¹³⁰ New hand gates were erected at the Swanston Street level crossing with a gate keeper appointed in 1914.¹¹³¹ A cottage was built at this time south of the line at 162 Swanston Street (Figure 3.130) to a standard



Figure 3.130: Former Gate Keeper's Cottage, 162 Swanston St, South Geelong, 2019. Source: David Rowe.



Figure 3.131: Former Station Master's & Gate Keeper's Cottage, 57 Marshalltown Rd, Marshall, 2019. Source: David Rowe.

Victorian Railways Department design. This cottage is one of only two known surviving in the Greater Geelong area today, the other being at 57 Marshalltown Road, Marshall (corner Station Road), built in 1913¹¹³² (Figure 3.131).

The task of the gate keeper was a tedious operation. It required the management of the gates through the day and into the evening. With the growth in population in Geelong in the early 20th century, the closure at some of the gates at night was controversial. In 1916, the Geelong City Council complained of the closing of the Swanston Street crossing in the evening, causing an inconvenience to road traffic.¹¹³³ Open until about 8.45 pm each evening, the Railways Department argued that 'they were promptly opened for the public at any hour required.'¹¹³⁴ The Department also stated that:

The Yarra-street gates [which had also been installed at the opening of the Geelong to Colac line in 1876] were closed at night, but there was always someone on duty at the South Geelong station during the whole 24 hours, and there should be no difficulty in having the gates opened when desired for road traffic.¹¹³⁵

Hand gates continued to be operated at several crossings in Geelong until the introduction of flashing lights in the late 20th century. Gates were removed at the Woods Street crossing in South Geelong in 1967, at Victoria Street, North Geelong, in 1973 (with Victoria Street closed and access replaced with an overpass at Margaret Street), at Swanston Street in 1976 and as late as 1986 at Yarra Street.¹¹³⁶

The work of the gate keeper was also dangerous, with several gate keepers either injured or killed while on the job. In 1881, Robert Fogarty, a 73 year old gatekeeper at Kilgour Street was killed when he was hit by a gate after failing to open them in time for the locomotive to pass.¹¹³⁷ In 1909, the gate keeper for the Wellington Street crossing, James Boxell, was run down and killed by a goods engine. He too, was too late opening the gates, the engineer striking the gate upright and hurling Boxell onto the track.¹¹³⁸

Several of the gate keepers employed by the Victorian Railways Department were women: either single, married or widowed. Of the latter, some had been married to railway workers who had been killed while in the employment of the Department.¹¹³⁹ The employment of married women by the Victorian Railways Department (a Government agency) throughout the 19th and early 20th century was also unusual (the Post Office and Telegraph Department also employed women). Not all the public supported the Department's agenda in the employment of women, with one local particularly critical of the situation at the Maud Street at in 1911:

Being a constant traveller through this gate, I am disgusted with the Railway department in appointing another woman to take the responsibility which should be entrusted to a man, making matters worse, they have put a repairer's wife there with less pay than the ordinary woman gatekeeper receives, and, worse still, the repairer is out earning his seven shillings a day. Why not put the proper gatekeeper there and do away with sweating? I am informed that the young man that has been stationed there is a relieving hand, and thoroughly understands his work. Why not put him back there, and work eight hours, the same as was worked with the gatekeeper just gone out, which would ensure public safety, and which will be a great danger if the present way is kept going?¹¹⁴⁰

The editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* responded to the complaint by indicating that 'the slightly lower rate paid to the gatekeeper is compensated for by a special rent allowance. The ganger is paid 1/less per day than other men in the section.'¹¹⁴¹

Possibly the earliest female gate keeper in Victoria was Mrs Ann Treves (nee Wood) (1836-1905) who had been appointed on the Geelong to Melbourne line on 1 September 1860.¹¹⁴² It is likely that Mrs Treves was a gate keeper at Werribee, as it was there where her daughter, Rose, was born in 1861.¹¹⁴³ Ann Treves was married to Thomas Treves (1832-1917) who was employed by the Railways Department for 37 years.¹¹⁴⁴ Ann and Thomas Treves later settled at Leopold where they had a farm.¹¹⁴⁵ Ann Treves died in Geelong in 1905.¹¹⁴⁶

Locally, female gate keepers included Mrs Catherine Large, widow, at St. Albans, East, Geelong in 1881 (her husband, Robert, had died in 1878); Miss Stuart at Cowies Creek in 1890, Mrs Mary Ann Morgan, widow, on the Queenscliff line in 1891, Mrs Mary Wakefield at Maitland Street, Geelong West, in 1883 (Mary Wakefield's husband, Alfred was also gatekeeper at this location).¹¹⁴⁷ Miss Lizzie Drew and Mrs Nolan, gate keepers at different crossings at South Geelong in 1894.¹¹⁴⁸

RAILWAY GARDENS

By 1910, the Victorian Railways Department had established a garden nursery at Kensington, Melbourne. The purpose of the nursery was given in the Department's *Annual Report* in 1910:

The work of improving the appearance of a number of the suburban station grounds and railway lands adjoining the suburban lines, and of country station grounds, by tree-planting and the formation of gardens and lawns, has been continued. About 70,000 ornamental and shade trees, obtained from the Departmental nursery at Kensington, were planted on railway land alongside the lines.¹¹⁴⁹

In an effort to promote the importance of garden and landscape settings for railway infrastructure and properties, the Victorian Railways Department established an annual garden competition 'for the most neatly kept gardens and residences,' provoking 'a spirit of emulation' among railway employees.¹¹⁵⁰ In 1919, Mrs Caroline Askew, wife of Michael Askew, line repairer and gatekeeper at the Victoria Street crossing, North Geelong, won third prize in the Western District section of the annual Victorian Railway garden competition¹¹⁵¹ (Figure 3.132). In 1930 and 1935, the South Geelong Railway Station won first prize in the South-Western

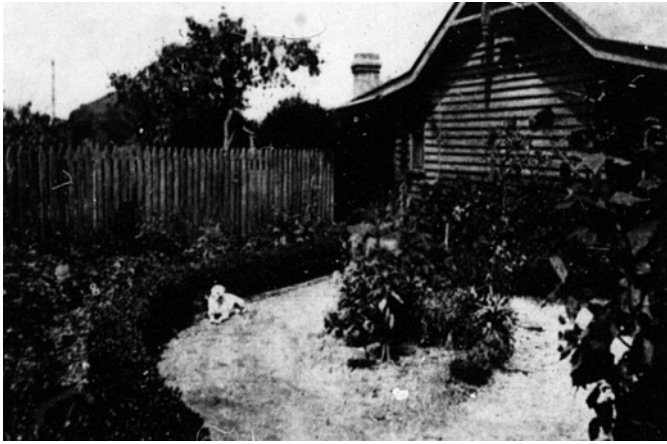


Figure 3.132: Mrs Caroline Askew's garden, North Geelong, 1919. Source: *News of the Week*, 6 March 1919, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.134: Victorian Railways Institute, Geelong West, photographic collection, railway negatives, c.1920. Source: VPRS 12903/P1, it 009/14 Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.133: A. Newman (stationmaster) and J. Branagh (railway worker) amongst the chrysanthemums and dahlias in the South Geelong Railway Station garden, 1930. Source: *Weekly Times*, 13 June 1931, p.34.

District section for best maintained garden.¹¹⁵² The railway yard featured a landscape of chrysanthemums and dahlias (Figure 3.133) which has been replaced with carparking. Similarly, nothing remains of the Askew garden, although the Askew name continues in the street in Geelong West being named in memory of Michael and Caroline's son, Alfred William Askew, who was killed in action in Belgium in World War One.¹¹⁵³

LOCAL RAILWAY ORGANISATIONS

VICTORIAN RAILWAYS INSTITUTE (GEELONG BRANCH)

In 1899, the Commissioner of the Victorian Railways, John Mathieson recommended the formation of an Institute 'with accommodation for classes on technical subjects connected with railways working' as part of providing technical education in a systematic way to railway employees.¹¹⁵⁴ It was not until 1909 when the first meeting of the Institute was held at the Masonic Hall in



Figure 3.135: Billiard Room, Victorian Railways Institute, Geelong West, c.1925, photographic collection, railway negatives. Source: VPRS 12903/P1, it 009/15 Public Record Office Victoria.

Collins Street, Melbourne.¹¹⁵⁵ In January 1910, the Institute was officially opened at a meeting in the ballroom of the Flinders Street Railway Station.¹¹⁵⁶

In 1914, a Geelong branch of the Victorian Railways Institute was established to provide educational classes and social activities for railway employees stationed in Geelong and surrounding districts.¹¹⁵⁷ A temporary classroom was created in the Ways and Works Building at the Geelong station complex from which classes in 'engine working and Westinghouse brakes, elementary electricity and magnetism, general education, safe working, typewriting and shorthand' were held.¹¹⁵⁸ In 1916, classes were held at the nearby Gordon Institute of Technology.¹¹⁵⁹



Figure 3.136: Victorian Railways Institute building, Latrobe Terrace, 2017. Source: Jennifer Bantow.

From the time of its instigation, a permanent site for the Victorian Railways Institute in Geelong was mooted. In 1917, the 'newly-formed Railway Athletic and Social Club' was the first to lease a just-completed building on the Moorabool Street pier, the upstairs having been fitted out as a general recreation room for boxing and punching ball, and other games, with the intention of another room used for amusements following the purchase of a piano.¹¹⁶⁰

It was also in 1917 when the Railway authorities approved the construction of a purpose-built building 'for billiard, reading and meeting rooms' on newly-acquired Railways Department land at the corner of Preston Street and Latrobe Terrace.¹¹⁶¹ The *Geelong Advertiser* reported on the site being between Wellington and O'Connell-streets, but an aerial photograph by Charles Pratt, dated c.1927, showed the Institute building at the corner of Preston Street and Latrobe Terrace.¹¹⁶² The six-gabled, modestly-scaled building (Figure 3.134) was subsequently built of rudimentary corrugated galvanised steel and cement sheet construction. The Institute building was

formally opened with a ceremony in the billiard room in July 1919 by George Lorimer, superintendent of the Locomotive Department and President of the Institute.¹¹⁶³ At this time, the Institute boasted a library of 260 books which had been informally opened a few months earlier.¹¹⁶⁴ There was a subscription fee of 6/- entitling members 'to all privileges, including the attendance and instruction at classes in typewriting and shorthand, safe working of trains, and telegraphy.'¹¹⁶⁵ Then comprising 21 members, social activities were also available, with the provision of a billiard table (Figure 3.135), accommodation for card playing, an area for reading and a piano was on order.¹¹⁶⁶ Rules of the club included that it 'be run on strictly tee-total lines' and gambling was prohibited.¹¹⁶⁷ Growth in membership in 1923 forced the acquisition of a second billiard table.¹¹⁶⁸

In 1924, lobbying began for the construction of a new Institute building.¹¹⁶⁹ The Institute had been fundraising to assist with the project.¹¹⁷⁰ A site fronting Mercer Street on Railways Department land was mooted but seven

years later in 1931 a site on the railway reserve at the north-east corner of Latrobe Terrace and Gordon Avenue was confirmed.¹¹⁷¹ A portion of the offices of the Signal Shops at Newport were relocated to the new Institute site and adapted for Institute purposes.¹¹⁷² According to the *Annual Report of the Victorian Railways Commissioners*:

Class rooms, a social hall, and billiards room, with good lighting and ventilation, are provided, and there is sufficient area around the building for an ornamental garden.¹¹⁷³

The new building was officially opened in September 1934.¹¹⁷⁴ It consisted of a broad gabled hall wing with secondary gabled, hipped and flat-roofed wings addressing the corner location at the front (Figure 3.136). At the rear were separate, modest gabled buildings that accommodated billiards and a library. While substantial additions were proposed in 1947 to a design by L.E. May, Chief Architect, they did not proceed.¹¹⁷⁵ Throughout the 20th century, the Institute building served the community for other recreational activities, including dances.¹¹⁷⁶ Today, the Institute building is occupied by different community groups. In January 2019, part of the building suffered fire damage.¹¹⁷⁷

RECENT RAILWAY ASSOCIATIONS

GEELONG STEAM PRESERVATION SOCIETY

The Geelong Steam Preservation Society was established in 1970, the first Society of volunteers in Victoria whose aim was to preserve historic steam engines. Trains were originally run from the Belmont Common until the Society relocated to the Queenscliff-Drysdale section of the former Geelong to Queenscliff line in 1976. The Society now operates and maintains the Bellarine Railway.¹¹⁷⁸

GEELONG AND SOUTH WESTERN RAIL HERITAGE SOCIETY

The South Western Railway Society was established in 1995 to foster the restoration of the Birregurra station and associated infrastructure on the Warrnambool line.¹¹⁷⁹ The Society was dissolved in 2006 and in 2007 the Geelong and South Western Heritage Society Inc. was formed to continue much of the original work of the previous Society.¹¹⁸⁰ Its aims included the retention and enhancement of railway infrastructure and rolling stock for the Geelong and South Western Railway, fostering an interest in railway history, encouraging liaison with railway operators and the promotion of general railway activities.¹¹⁸¹

3.5 SHIPPING

The earliest and most reliable form of transport to and from Geelong for immigrants, tourists, commuters and the mail service were ships and steamers in the 19th century. Pier and wharf infrastructure, and the excavation of channels in Corio Bay, were required to service this industry, and associated businesses followed to manage it, including ship builders and shipping agents. Regulation of port and maritime trade required the establishment of Government services, such as customs (see Theme 7).

MARITIME INFRASTRUCTURE IN GEELONG¹¹⁸²

The arrival from Launceston of the brig, *Henry*, to Point Henry in June 1836 with the first Europeans to disembark at Geelong (see Themes 2 & 6) brought with it the need for maritime infrastructure. A sand bar prevented large ships from entering Corio Bay and hence Geelong's first port was located at Point Henry. A jetty and anchorage ground were soon established on the western shores of Point Henry.¹¹⁸³ In March 1840, the *Port Phillip Gazette* gave a description of the harbour:

Point Henry to the left, gives an indented profile to the coast, in the deepest part of which and rather on the Southern shores, lies Kohrio Bay. On the highest cliffs of this secure bight stands the present small and scattered township of Geelong; the approach, however, to the immediate beach is prevented by a bar of sand and oyster shells of small breadth but great consistency except to vessels not exceeding ten or eleven feet draught of water. Large ships, therefore, laid on for wool, have been hitherto compelled to anchor off Point Henry, where the loaded teams are driven direct from the country, or the warehouses of Geelong; distant half-a-mile, and the bales taken off by ship's boats or those supplied by the agents. A preventive or boarding officer is stationed here, through whom ship's papers may be forwarded by the overland mail to Melbourne, and a clearance obtained, a measure which is preferable to returning to Melbourne for the sole purpose of clearing a vessel out at the custom house established there. For coasting craft, a channel well beaconed has been marked off through the bar and into Kohrio Bay itself, where the depth of water within the bar would allow the largest vessel to ride within ship's length of the shore. Geelong, by its position, naturally forms a trading depot to all the country which comprehends the central district of Port Phillip, and has this year stored sufficient wool to load two ships for London direct.¹¹⁸⁴

A customs house and officer (John McKenny) were stationed at the Geelong foreshore from August 1839, months prior to the erection of a permanent stone jetty from 1840 using convict labour.¹¹⁸⁵ Known as Queen's Wharf, it was centrally located between Moorabool and Yarra Streets and was accessed by a gully in the high limestone cliffs.¹¹⁸⁶ This began the landing of small vessels to the central Geelong foreshore, with other customs infrastructure erected in subsequent years (see Theme 7). The harbour was also policed by a Harbour Master from 1841, the first being Captain Charles Ferguson (see Theme 7 for further details).

As early 1855, a petition was put to the Mayor of the Geelong Town Corporation for the provision of wharfage accommodation as part of the establishment of a local Harbor Trust.¹¹⁸⁷ This was considered 'perhaps, the most important topic that ever affected the interests of Geelong and the Western District'¹¹⁸⁸ given the sandbar that prevented easy access to the Geelong town port, and that Geelong was becoming the wool capital of Victoria. A Geelong Harbor Trust Committee was constituted in September 1854 and included the Mayor of Geelong, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and the Collector of Customs.¹¹⁸⁹ The aim of the Committee was to request the Victorian Colonial Government to enact 'a local popular elective board' to manage the harbour.¹¹⁹⁰ Nothing eventuated from this initiative and again in 1889 a meeting of locals met at the Geelong Mechanics' institute to propose the formation of a Harbor Trust.¹¹⁹¹ Those present lamented that the previous harbour committee had 'done very little' and that 'the port was going back in the way of shipping facilities instead of progressing.'¹¹⁹² They desired the removal of the sand bar at the entrance to Corio Bay 'to secure free and safe passage of steam and sailing vessels.'¹¹⁹³ For the next 16 years, the desire of Geelong residents for the establishment of a Harbor Trust continued to fall on deaf ears.

The Geelong Harbor Trust Commission was established in 1905 to manage and regulate activities at the port of Geelong and within Corio Bay, the outer Geelong harbour and coastal ports at Queenscliff, Barwon Heads, Lorne and Apollo Bay (see Theme 7 for further details). It was reconstituted as the Port of Geelong Authority in 1981. The Authority had the same responsibilities as the former Geelong Harbor Trust.

MAIN PIERS AND WHARFS

QUEENS WHARF-CUSTOMS WHARF-STONEY PIER-EASTERN JETTY

The first jetty to be constructed on the central Geelong foreshore east of the end of Yarra Street was Queens Wharf (Figure 3.137). Work began on the erection of the first section by convict labour in 1840, although it was to take some months to be fully completed.¹¹⁹⁴ Beset by a number of difficulties, the *Geelong Advertiser* argued in January 1841 that 'it should be made double the width, and run into two fathoms of water.'¹¹⁹⁵ This was not to transpire. In early 1842, unemployed 'immigrants' in Melbourne were sent to Geelong to assist in the erection of the final stages of the structure, replacing the convict labour of earlier months.¹¹⁹⁶ Three of them drowned 'while assisting to place a large block of stone' in the jetty's construction.¹¹⁹⁷ By May 1842, the *Geelong Advertiser* cast scorn on the structure and the Government's handling of its construction:

It is a pity that this structure should be rendered almost useless to the public, by the way in which it is kept unencumbered and blocked up by the government. The lazy, lumbering movements of the men employed, would be less provoking if they did not interfere with the more important avocations of those who pay for the use of the wharf. The jetty is more than thirty feet wide, and yet there is seldom room for two carts to pass on any part of it; the entire surface being strewn with immense boulders of stone, weighing about half-a-ton each. There can be no reasonable excuse for the continuance of this nuisance; as there is abundance of room near the wharf without lumbering the most valuable part of it. The stubborn and insolent behaviour of the convict overseer is another ground of complaint. The appointment of such a man to an office of authority over free labourers is a crying shame, and would not be tolerated even in the penal districts of the colony.¹¹⁹⁸

The jetty was completed later in 1842.¹¹⁹⁹ Rules and Regulations were gazetted 'for the maintenance of good order on the Jetty' in 1843. They included:

No person allowed to loiter on the Jetty after sun-set.

No nuisance to be committed, and no rubbish or filth to be landed on the Jetty.

Boats are not to be permanently stationed at the Jetty, and only to be there for temporary purpose.

Goods or timber landed on the Jetty, to be immediately removed.



Figure 3.137: F. Kruger, Customs Wharf, c.1880-81. Source: accession H33802/9 State Library of Victoria.

No cattle, sheep, horses, pigs, or goats are suffered to remain on the Jetty, except for the purposes of landing or embarking.

... Vessels or boats alongside, or made fast to the Jetty, are to make way for the Steamers when required.¹²⁰⁰

By 1847, further extensions to the jetty were required and tenders were called in February that year.¹²⁰¹

The substantial workload required of the jetty continued to take its toll and in 1849, David Lennox, Superintendent of Bridges, sought tenders for repairs 'to Corio Jetty approaches.'¹²⁰²

A 'custom house shed' was erected 'at the beach' in 1853 adjacent to the stone jetty at a cost of £500.¹²⁰³ Associated with Customs and the harbour master, the stone jetty was officially proclaimed as the Customs Wharf in 1856.¹²⁰⁴

In 1905, the maintenance and management of the Customs Wharf was handed over to the Geelong Harbor which added a slipway by 1937. In 1959, the site was acquired by the Royal Geelong Yacht Club and the club rooms were built over the slipway which remained underneath the building.¹²⁰⁵

Further alterations and additions were made to the wharf in the ensuing years, including a side pier added by 1880.¹²⁰⁶ A cargo shed designed by Percy Everett, architect for the Geelong Harbor Trust, was erected at the end of the pier in 1908.¹²⁰⁷ Known by this time as the Eastern pier, further improvements were carried out in 1915 and in 1921 beams and decking on the timber portion were renewed in 1921.¹²⁰⁸ In 1959, the northern timber portion of the Eastern jetty was removed



Figure 3.138: Eastern Pier with original Queens Wharf in foreground, 1959. Source: Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners Annual Report, 1959, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

and replaced with a concrete slab on timber piles (Figure 3.138). The then L-shaped pier included protective berthing facilities for the Geelong Harbor Trust's small craft.¹²⁰⁹ Today, the original stone jetty of 1840-42 survives and is surfaced in bitumen. It is a rare legacy of wharf infrastructure at the beginning of European colonisation in Geelong.

STEAMPACKET JETTY

In 1847, the *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate* announced a proposal to establish steam communication with the Australian colonies. Superior classes of vessels 'with screw-propellers' were anticipated to travel between London via the Cape of Good Hope; and 'the other by means of packets to run (in correspondence with packets from England to Alexandria), from Suez to Ceylon, and thence to Sydney by way of Singapore.'¹²¹⁰ These steam packets (derived from 'packet boards' that originally carried mail) were to transform marine travel to Geelong.

By 1849, passenger steamers were frequenting Geelong in significant numbers to warrant a new jetty. Initially, the Government proposed a site near the end of Bellerine Street before resolving that it be constructed at the end of Moorabool Street. Eventually, a site west of Queens wharf between Yarra and Moorabool Streets opposite Mack's Hotel was fixed¹²¹¹ (see Figure 3.139).

Designed by the Superintendent of Bridges, David Lennox, tenders were called in November 1849.¹²¹² A year later in November 1850, the new jetty was open to the public, the east side 'to be exclusively used by the steamers', the west side 'reserved exclusively for lighters employed in the export trade.'¹²¹³



Figure 3.139: Locations of wharfs on the Geelong foreshore in 1854. Left to right: Moorabool Wharf, Steampacket Wharf, Yarra Street Wharf & Queens Wharf. Source: J.H. Taylor, *Map of Geelong*, Surveyor-General's Department, Melbourne, 1854. Source: VPRS 8168/P2, Unit 5416, item Roll 39 Geelong, Public Record Office Victoria.

On 12 November 1850, the jetty was opened, a significant event in that the first steamer to be berthed there brought with it the news of separation of the Port Phillip from the colony of New South Wales. As reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Tuesday last was the first time the steamers moored alongside the New Jetty. On that evening a large concourse of spectators were assembled anxiously awaiting the approach of the vessels which were seen across the tranquil waters of the bay with their streamers flying, in token, as it was afterwards ascertained of the joyful intelligence of which they were the bearers. As soon as the *Thames* came alongside the rush was tremendous and questions in rapid succession were put to the different passengers, as they leaped ashore, as to whether the "Bill had passed or not." The poor news vendors were besieged by successive enquiring coteries and it was with the utmost difficulty that they threaded their way through the anxious besiegers. One urchin who had a package of papers under his arm as soon as he saw an opening in the crowd "bolted" with the speed of "Pagasus" [sic.] up the hill and didn't slacken pace till, all puffing and blowing like a "Newmarket roarer"

he deposited our complement of our hundred eyes contemporary. It was rather a memorable circumstance that the steamers should be moored to the new jetty for the first time on the occasion of bearing the tidings of Separation – the time and circumstance were auspicious.¹²¹⁴

The structure was variously named Steampacket and Steamboat jetty although in 1856 the Government proclaimed the name as Steampacket Wharf.¹²¹⁵

The Steampacket wharf was not to endure. In 1872, the *Geelong Advertiser* reported that its 'condition is becoming more and more unsafe, but whether it will be repaired or rebuilt seems doubtful.'¹²¹⁶ In 1875, the wharf was abandoned and around three years later, the footbridge that connected it to Queens wharf was dismantled¹²¹⁷ (Figure 3.140).

Ninety years later in 1985, homage was paid to the former Steampacket wharf when the Geelong Regional Commission transformed the central foreshore area between the Moorabool and Yarra Street piers and named it Steampacket Gardens.¹²¹⁸



Figure 3.140: F. Kruger, Yarra Street, wharves, Geelong (the ruinous former Steampacket Wharf is shown on the left, with remnant piles extending to Yarra Street Wharf on the right), c.1878. Source: accession PH208-1979, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Gift of Mrs Beryl M. Curl, 1979.

YARRA STREET PIER

Repairs to the approaches of Queens Wharf and the construction of the Steampacket Wharf were insufficient to meet the demands of the Geelong township's berthing needs. In August 1849, it was the opinion of Captain Foster Fyans, Police Magistrate and Commissioner of Crown Lands that 'liberty might be given for a jetty in front of the Custom House, and to prevent timber boats and other vessels having access.'¹²¹⁹ The Superintendent of Bridges, David Lennox, was subsequently instructed to prepare a design. Tenders for the building of a stone jetty were called in March 1850.¹²²⁰ It was not until April 1851 when the last pile was driven and the jetty was completed a few days later to service the influx of vessels to the Geelong port.¹²²¹ A jetty had also been built between the Steampacket and Yarra wharves for the convenience of passengers.¹²²² In 1856, the jetty was officially named the 'Yarrow [Yarra] Street Wharf'¹²²³ (Figure 3.141).



Figure 3.141: F. Kruger, Yarra Street Wharf, Corio Bay, Geelong, c.1886-87. Source: Accession PH326-1979 National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Gift of Mrs Beryl M. Curl, 1979.

Improvements were made to Yarra Street wharf in the 19th and 20th centuries. Various extensions were made to the platform and jetty in 1858, 1859 and 1863. A crane was installed in 1866.¹²²⁴ More significant changes were announced in 1928 (when the wharf was widely known as the Yarra Street pier):

The Yarra street Pier, which was originally built for the accommodation of small barques many years ago, has undergone many improvements since it was first constructed. Further improvements are now being carried out to the pier by the Geelong Harbor Trust. The loading platform on the east side of the pier has been raised, and new piles driven. Old and faulty piles have been replaced, and, where needed, repairs have been effected to the cross-heads and decking. The Harbor Trust has fenced in a large area of the reclaimed land near the stevedores' storage shed, and has installed a saw-bench and plant, where timbers for wharf repairs and for the construction of the barge for the Barwon River dredging are being prepared.¹²²⁵

In 1937, *The Herald* reported on a proposal to reconstruct the Yarra Street pier 'to provide for discharging sheds and more space.'¹²²⁶ In 1943, the Geelong Harbor Trust proposed works at a cost of £1,441,880 for revitalising the port of Geelong following the conclusion of World War Two.¹²²⁷ Five years later in 1948, the Geelong Harbor Trust used its newly-acquired 48 ton floating crane to lift and relocate a former cargo shed (built in 1938) from the Moorabool Street Pier to the approach at the Yarra Street pier.¹²²⁸ The shed was lifted in sections and rebuilt on the Yarra Street pier site where it served as a cargo shed until it became derelict in the late 20th century. In 1988, much of the Yarra Street pier was destroyed by fire.¹²²⁹ In 1998 after a transformation, the cargo shed was opened as a restaurant and café.¹²³⁰

MOORABOOL JETTY-MOORABOOL PIER

Calls for the construction of a jetty at the end of Moorabool Street began as early as the 1840s, and in 1849, the Government had resolved to build a wharf there before reconsidering and building the Steampacket Wharf further east.¹²³¹ In January 1853, tenders were called for the construction of a 'Stone Jetty and Embankment opposite Moorabool-street, Geelong.'¹²³² It appears that the structure was designed by Charles Rowand, engineer (see earlier subsection for details).¹²³³ While construction commenced by Messrs Cutter and Musson, contractors shortly after,¹²³⁴ progress was slow and the jetty was then already inadequate to meet the growing demand. As outlined in *The Banner*:



Figure 3.142: Moorabool Wharf, c.1910. Source; GRS 2009/00436 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.143: Widening of Moorabool Pier, 1913. Source: *News of the Week*, 1 May 1913, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

At present there is a small jetty being constructed, opposite the foot of Moorabool Street, but it is progressing at so very slow a pace, that no one knows when it possibly will be finished; and when finished it will be only able to give berth to ten or twelve vessels at most.¹²³⁵

Slow progress continued throughout 1854 although it was 'advancing towards completion' by September of that year.¹²³⁶ By December 1854, cargo vessels were being berthed at the new wharf although the *Duncan Hoyle* had docked there in August for the Governor's official visit to Geelong.¹²³⁷ In 1856, the new wharf was officially proclaimed as the 'Moorabool Wharf.'¹²³⁸ The wharf was extended in 1857¹²³⁹ and almost 20 years later in 1878 major repairs were carried out when the western side was removed and replaced with new piles, the old timber had been 'seen swinging about, only secured by the planking at the top.'¹²⁴⁰ The work included half of the wharf being erected level with the road allowing drays to back in opposite the vessels.¹²⁴¹

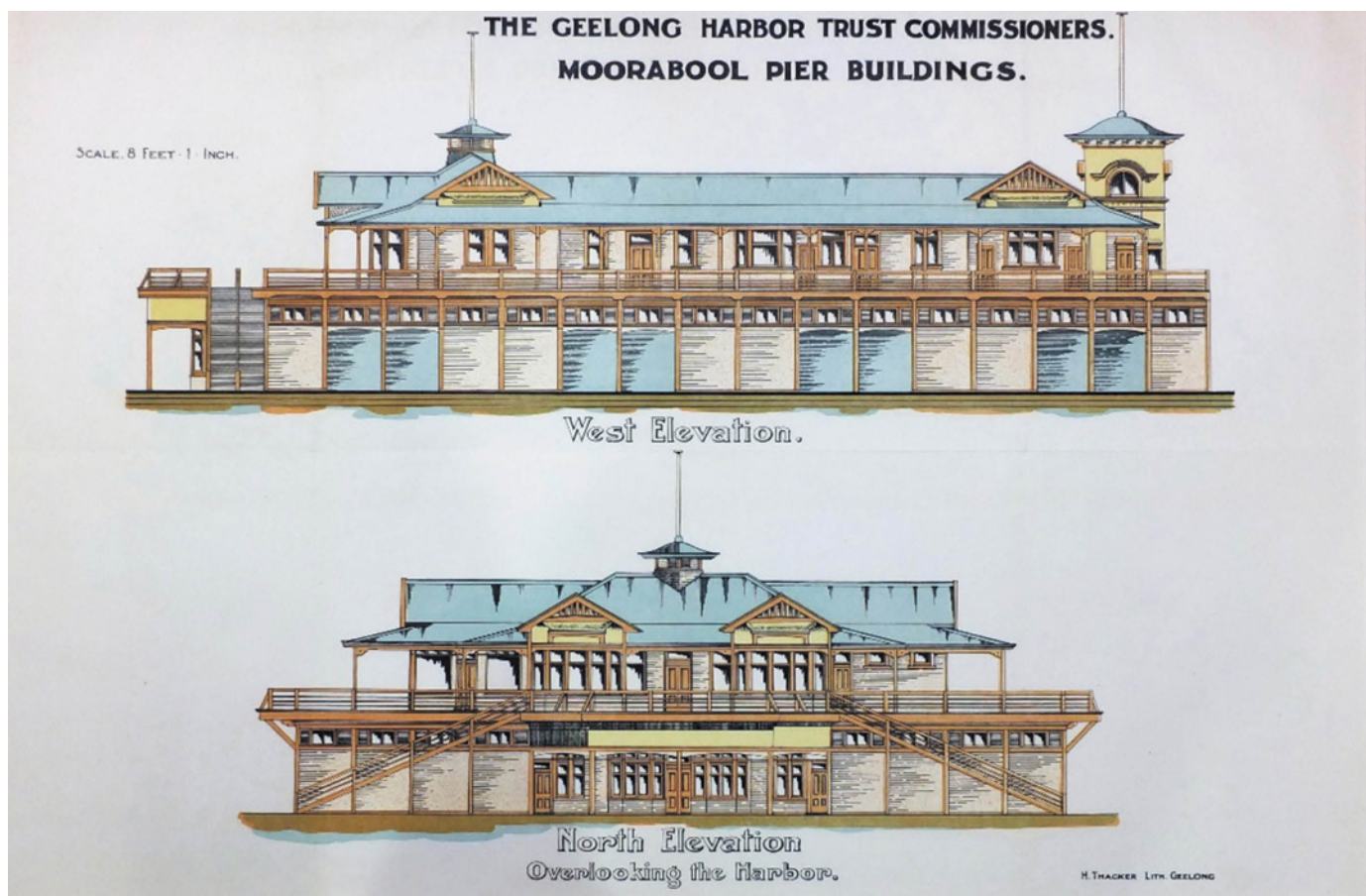


Figure 3.144: Moorabool Pier Buildings, West & North Elevations, H. Thacker lithographer, Geelong, c.1912. Source: Special Collections, Deakin University Library.



Figure 3.145: Moorabool Pier & Two Storey Pavilion, 1920. Source: *News of the Week*, 11 March 1920, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

In 1904, a year before control of the Moorabool Wharf (Figure 3.142) was vested in the Geelong Harbor Trust, investigations were carried out by Mr McLean, Engineer for Ports and Harbors for the purpose of having a cargo shed constructed on the Moorabool pier 'in which to store valuable packages.'¹²⁴² It appears that the small shed was erected as an interim measure soon after.¹²⁴³

A proposal for larger cargo and passenger sheds at the Moorabool Wharf was vexed. For many years, there was debate and dispute between the Geelong Harbor Trust, Customs Department and shipping agents, principally in relation to the responsibilities as to who should fund it.¹²⁴⁴ The work involved a 70 feet widening of the western side of the pier (Figure 3.143), together with a two storey pavilion and cargo shed.¹²⁴⁵ In 1912, the *Geelong Advertiser* announced that 'at last':

Preparations are being made by the Harbor Trust Commissioners to put in hand this month the erection of a two-storey pavilion over the whole of the Moorabool-street pier. The pier floor will be devoted to cargo traffic, and passengers will be able to move about on the upper floor without fear of being hustled by trucks and trollies! While the work is in progress the bay steamers will go to the Yarra street pier.¹²⁴⁶



Figure 3.146: Geelong waterfront from Sailors' Rest roof showing Moorabool Street Memorial Pier Wall (centre, middle ground), c.1997. Source: Kevin Krastins.

Possibly designed by the Geelong architects, Tombs and Durran (the turreted design had a similarity to the recently-constructed Solomon's building in Moorabool Street), or the Harbor Trust's previous architect, Percy Everett (the domed corner bay of the nearby Sailor's Rest building have an affinity with the proposed building), approximately 50 men were employed by the Harbor Trust in the construction of the pier extension and new building¹²⁴⁷ (Figure 3.144). Nearing completion in February 1914, it was intended to lease several apartments 'for the purposes of book-stalls, refreshment rooms, billiard room, etc.'¹²⁴⁸ It was first occupied by the Railway Athletic and Social Club in 1917 (see earlier subsection). The pier continued to provide an important berthing location of passenger steamers while the new cargo and passenger shed became landmark on the Geelong waterfront at the end of Moorabool Street (Figure 3.145). It was also the location of a Royal Australian Naval depot in the 1920s.¹²⁴⁹

A damaging fire on the Moorabool pier in January 1933 was the beginning of the end of the two storey pier building.¹²⁵⁰ In 1938, the Geelong Harbor Trust demolished the cargo and passenger sheds and commenced construction on two new single storey hipped roofed cargo sheds each measuring 185 feet by 30 feet.¹²⁵¹ They had been designed by local architects, Schefferle and Davies, in association with J. Gordon Williams.¹²⁵² Completed by March 1938, the Moorabool Street pier was considerably shorter and became the berthing location for smaller interstate vessels.¹²⁵³

The cargo sheds served the Moorabool Street pier until 1948 when a floating crane dismantled the sheds, with one of them relocated (in parts) to the approach of the Yarra Street pier (see earlier subsection). In 1949, the

Geelong Harbor Trust demolished the Moorabool pier¹²⁵⁴ and by early 1950 a look-out platform had been built at the approach to the former pier. Designed by architects Leith and Bartlett,¹²⁵⁵ it was reported in *The Argus*:

The Geelong Harbour Trust is building an observation platform overlooking Corio Bay at the foot of Moorabool st., following the removal of the pier.

The platform is semi-circular, with an ornamental stone wall and a flagstaff in the centre.¹²⁵⁶

The wall with flagpoles and platform (Figure 3.146) were part of a movement to beautify the Geelong foreshore. The wall became a memorial to the Moorabool Street wharf and its contribution to Geelong's maritime heritage.

In 2000, considerable excavation of the former approach to the Moorabool pier was carried out as part of a waterfront redevelopment.¹²⁵⁷

RAILWAY/CUNNINGHAM PIER

A key part of the construction of the railway network by the Geelong to Melbourne Railway Company in the early 1850s was a jetty at Corio Bay. This infrastructure was considered vital in yielding an immediate return on the capital expended by the Railway Company for the railway network if anticipated improvements were made to the sand bar in Corio Bay.¹²⁵⁸ Consequently, the Geelong Town Corporation attempted to thwart the building of the jetty as according to its architect, Edward Snell, it would 'probably monopolise the great part of the [shipping] traffic.'¹²⁵⁹ Approved by the Colonial Government, tenders were called for the supply of 600 piles, beams and planking for the timber jetty in October and November 1853.¹²⁶⁰ By January 1854, excavations and embankments had 'been rapidly proceeded with.'¹²⁶¹ The timber was supplied from the Apollo Bay Timber Company while Mala bar teak was cut and delivered for the superstructure of the jetty by Macindoe, Taylor and Co.¹²⁶² Messrs. Ross and Munro had also been engaged to form and construct 'the incline' between the Geelong terminus and the Company's jetty, and built a culvert at Corio Terrace (Brougham Street).¹²⁶³ By early January 1855, the jetty was almost completed (Figure 3.147). Built with raised platforms, the Company's President, Charles Thorne announced that:

The pier, one thousand feet in length, is in active progress, and will be completed during the next month, in accordance with the contract. Some difficulty was at first experienced from the softness of the bottom, in securing the piles efficiently; but this obstacle has been completely overcome by affixing a large additional bearing for each pile, as required. The branch from Corio Bay to the station will be ready for use within



Figure 3.147: Plan showing railway pier branch line and curved pier extending into Corio Bay, 1854. Source: J.H. Taylor, Map of Geelong, Surveyor-General's Department, Melbourne, 1854. Source: VPRS 8168/P2, Unit 5416, item Roll 39 Geelong, Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.148: C. Pratt, Geelong Harbour, 27 September 1927, showing Cunningham Pier (right). Also note the other major piers: Moorabool (with two storey pavilion) and Yarra Street Pier (left). Source: accession H91.160/802 State Library of Victoria.

three months; and the directors are happy to inform the shareholders that the Government has been pleased to grant a piece of land for the erection of suitable warehouses in the immediate vicinity.¹²⁶⁴

By 1862, the railway jetty was in a dilapidated state. A deputation from the Geelong Chamber of Commerce

waited on W.F. Mitchell, Commissioner of Railways (given that the jetty had been purchased by the Victorian Government in 1861) to have it rebuilt to a different design. Thomas Higinbotham, engineer-in-chief of the Victorian Railways Department, found that the curved layout of the jetty meant that it was not in sufficiently deep water. He proposed a straight pier that would extend into a depth of 22 feet of water, the raised platform being removed on one side to allow a railway to 'run alongside the ship, in order to facilitate the discharge of the inward cargoes of coals, timber, &c., at once into the railway trucks; and to leave the raised platform on the other side, which would accommodate vessels loading wool.'¹²⁶⁵ Tenders were called for the removal of the old jetty and construction of the new pier structure in December 1862,¹²⁶⁶ the contract being awarded to H. Dalrymple at a cost of £17,416/16/2.¹²⁶⁷ Works had been completed by 1864.¹²⁶⁸

In 1908, improvements were made to the pier to enable the handling of grain traffic.¹²⁶⁹ Twenty years later in 1928 reconstruction works were carried out by about 60 workers to provide a coal berth at the pier.¹²⁷⁰ By this time, the railway pier had been renamed the Cunningham

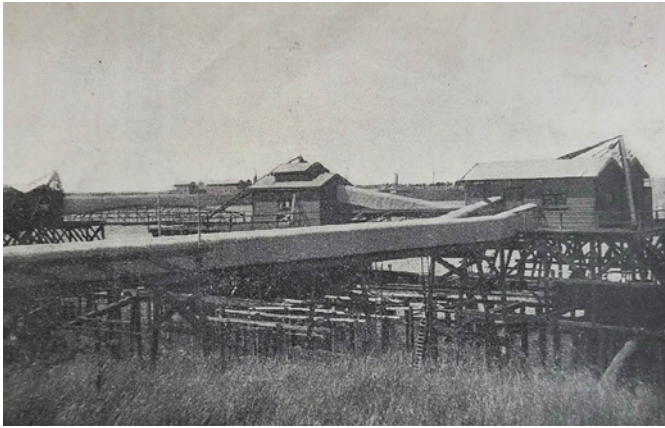


Figure 3.149: Enclosed wheat loading jetty, Corio Quay, c.1926. Source: Bay View Estate Plan, n.d., Special Collections, Deakin University Library.



Figure 3.150: 'Paddocking the Logs', Oriental Timber Corporation's Log Pond, Corio Quay, 1911. Source: *News of the Week*, 14 September 1911, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

pier (Figure 3.148), after the nearby Cunningham Street that had been named in honour of George Cunningham M.L.A.¹²⁷¹

In 1946, iron and timber buildings at Cunningham pier were offered for sale.¹²⁷² Re-decking in concrete was carried out in 1962 and work commenced on a new cargo shed on the outer eastern portion of the pier.¹²⁷³

In 1996, Cunningham pier underwent a \$10 million redevelopment with a family restaurant, café and function room provided in addition of berthing facilities for larger vessels.¹²⁷⁴ These works were complementary to the redevelopment of the central Geelong foreshore, including a baywalk with bollards capturing the local history of Greater Geelong, the artwork of Jan Mitchell. West of the Cunningham pier forecourt, a children's playground was constructed following the theme of the *Voyage of the Poppykettle* by local author and artist, Robert Ingpen.¹²⁷⁵

CENTRAL GEELONG FORESHORE LAND RECLAMATIONS

To assist with increasing demand by shipping and stevedoring companies and the Customs department, work began on the reclamation of the foreshore east of the Moorabool pier in 1883. The *Geelong Advertiser* declared in August of that year that 'the reclamation works opposite the custom house, we may point out, are now almost completed.'¹²⁷⁶ However, no start had been made on the land reclamation and construction of a sea wall between the Moorabool and Railway piers.¹²⁷⁷ While the reclamation was long desired, when work began in 1884¹²⁷⁸ it was subject to staunch criticism.¹²⁷⁹ This was especially highlighted in the *Geelong Advertiser* in August 1885:

It is gratifying to us to find that the remarks we have made from time to time in our leading columns, on the foolish piece of reclamation work being carried out between the Railway and Moorabool wharves, have at last attracted the attention of the Hon. Commissioner of Public Works. We have always insisted that the stone wall should have been continued from the Moorabool wharf to some distance westward of the Railway wharf, thereby doing away with about 70 yards of pile railway wharfing, and giving splendid shunting ground for trucks east and west of that wharf. We condemned the stone wall running parallel with that wharf, north and south, as wasteful and useless expenditure, and Mr Cunningham writing last night from Melbourne, tells us that this wall is to be taken up, and the stone used in continuing the wall underneath the Railway pier, and beyond it westward. This work will considerably extend the reclaimed foreshore, and materially improve the Western Beach.¹²⁸⁰

CORIO QUAY

Impetus for a new cargo port at North Shore came following the dredging of the Hopetoun Channel in 1893 (see following subsection), allowing larger ships into Corio Bay for the first time but shallower water at the central Geelong waterfront prevented them from berthing there. A port location in Geelong's northern suburbs also offered opportunities to be connected to the railway network at a time when the city was on the cusp of industrial expansion. The first jetty at North Shore was to the north of the Cowies Creek inlet. It was built in 1895 'into the deep water in Corio Bay' for the Western and Wimmera districts of Victoria Freezing Company 'at which vessels could safely call for the purpose of taking to England and elsewhere the frozen products.'¹²⁸¹ In 1901, the Western Wimmera Districts of Victoria Freezing Company went into liquidation and was wound up voluntarily.¹²⁸² The company

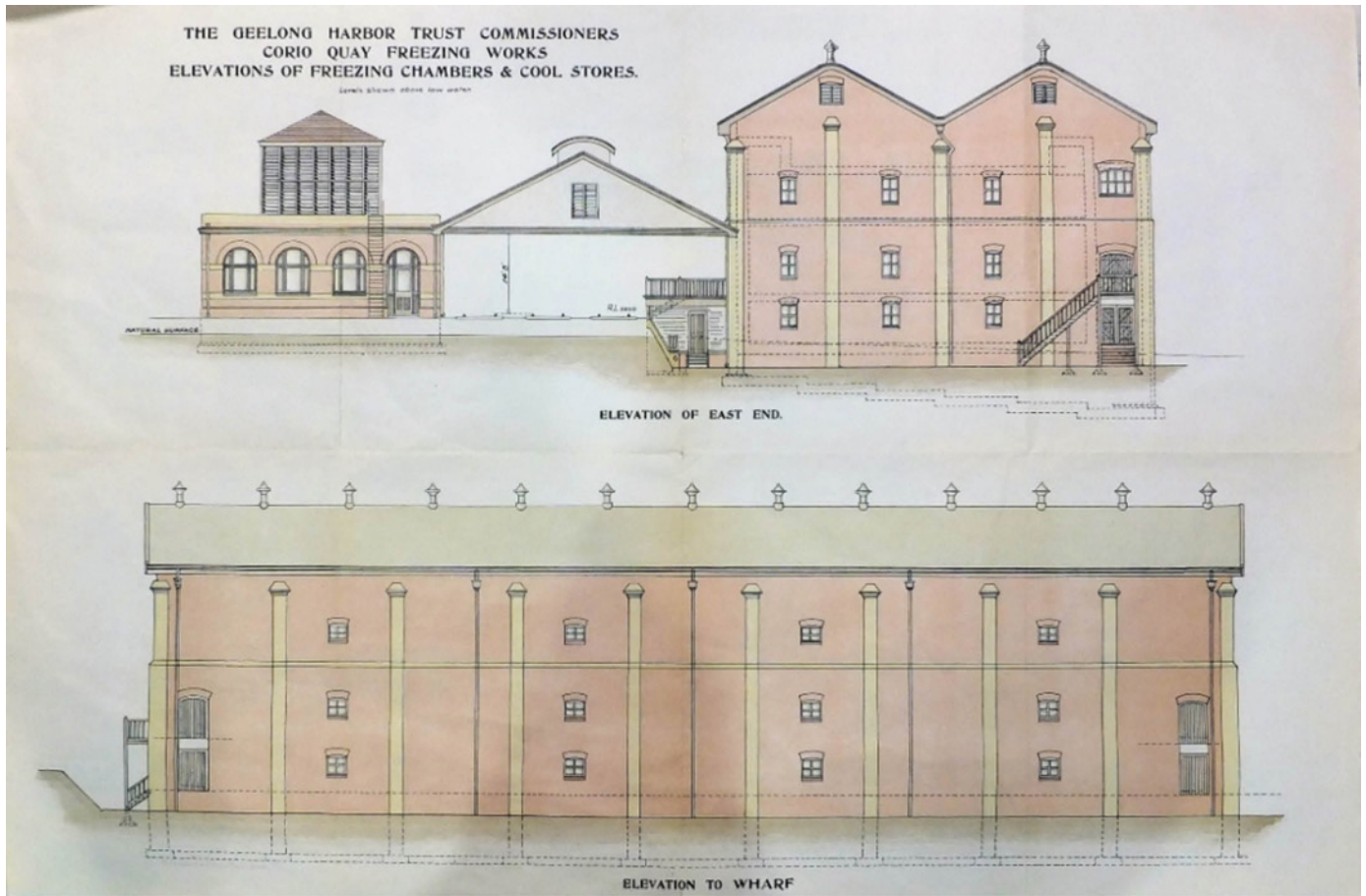


Figure 3.151: Corio Quay Freezing Works, Elevations of Freezing Chambers & Cool Stores, The Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners, 1909. Source: Special Collections, Deakin University Library.

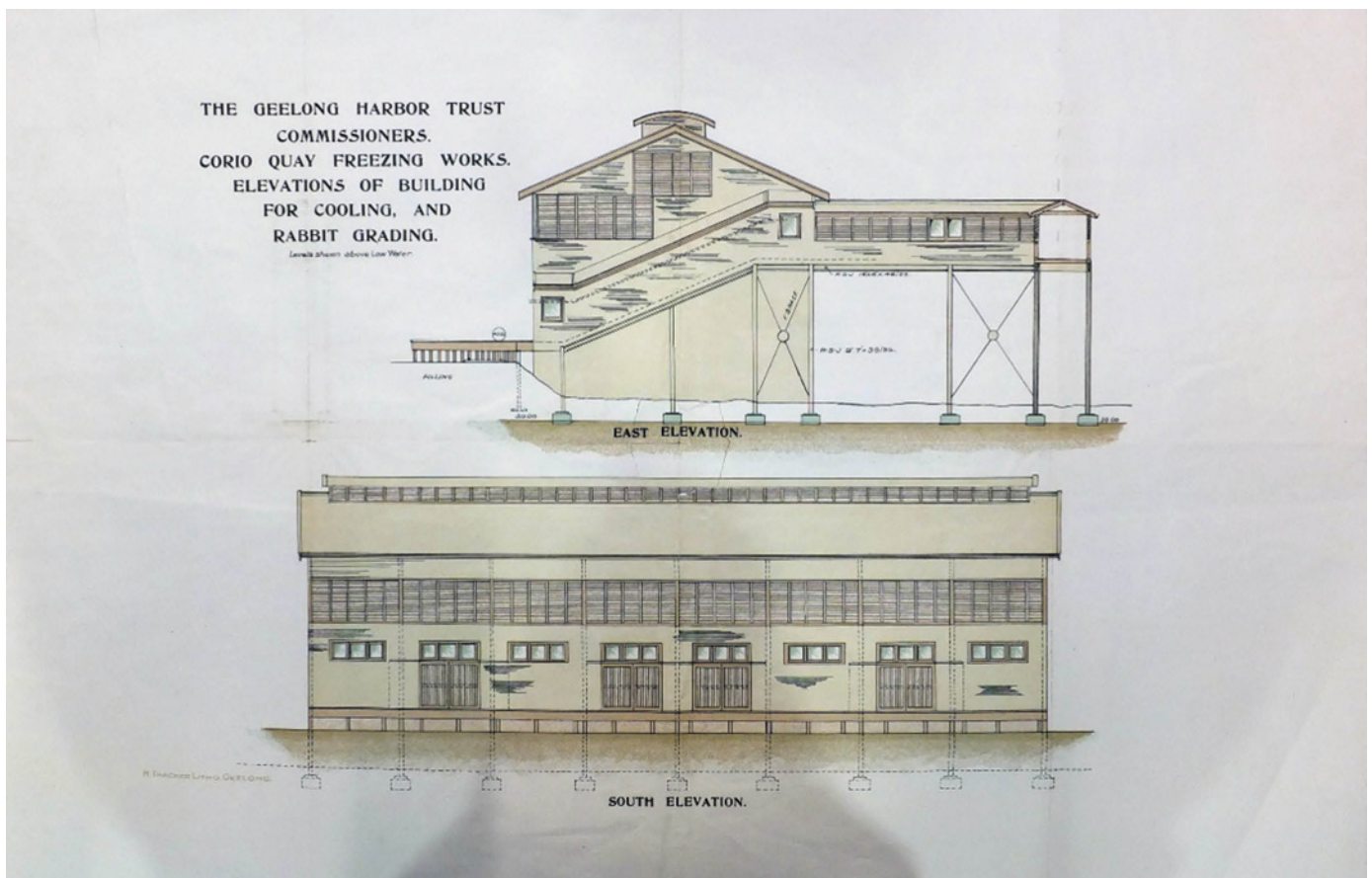


Figure 3.152: Corio Quay Freezing Works, Elevations of Building for Colling, and Rabbit Grading, The Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners, 1909. Source: Special Collections, Deakin University Library.

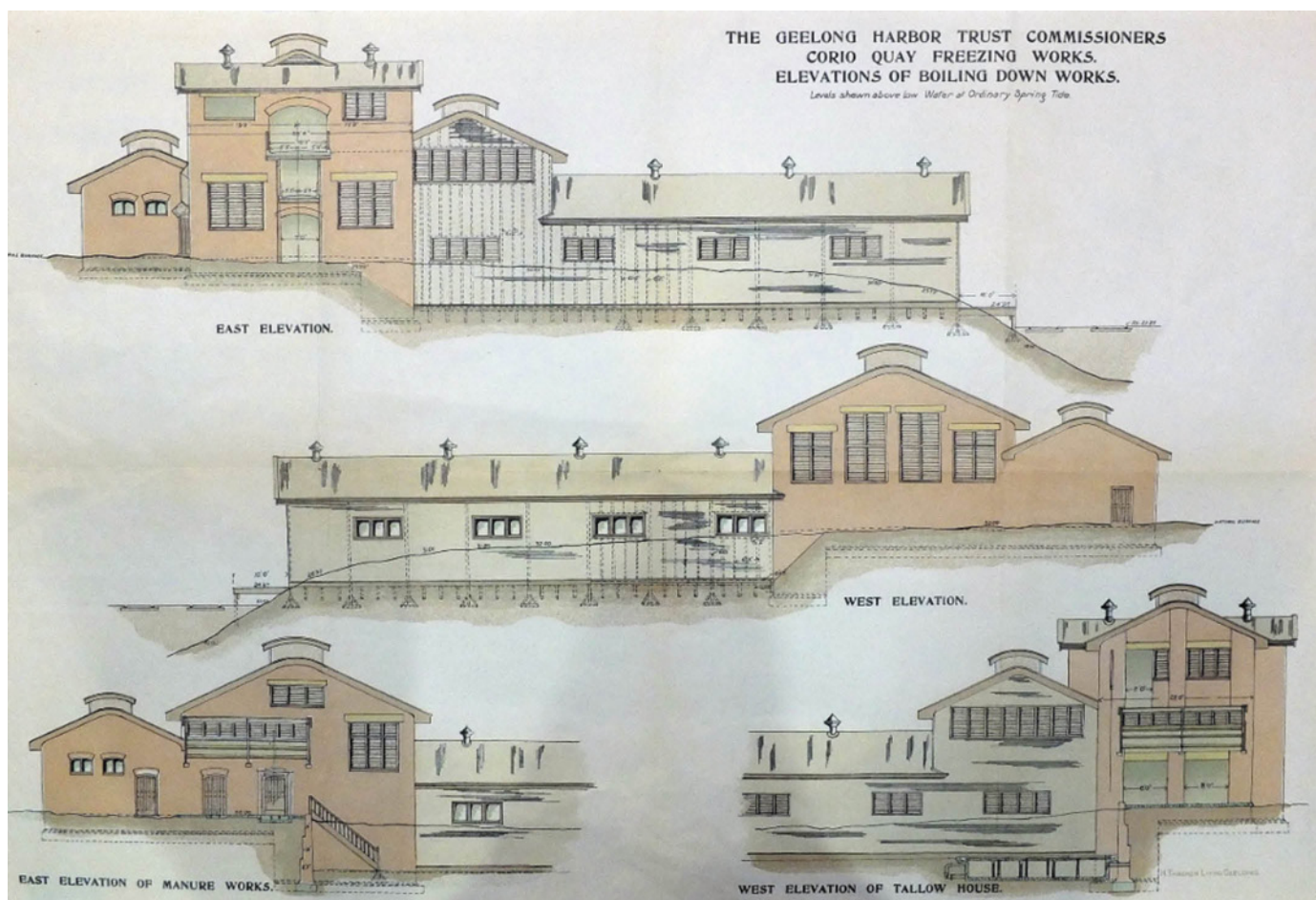


Figure 3.153: Corio Quay Freezing Works, Elevations of Boiling Down Works, The Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners, 1909. Source: Special Collections, Deakin University Library.

and lease of works at North Shore were acquired by Messrs. W. and R. Fletcher Limited.¹²⁸³ Much of the jetty was demolished in 1953-54 given that it 'had been out of commission for many years.'¹²⁸⁴

It was following the creation of the Geelong Harbor Trust in 1905 when major redevelopment of the North Shore foreshore into Corio Quay was carried out including the redevelopment of the Freezing Works. In 1908, the Harbor Trust began the construction of a wharf on the south side of Corio Quay where wheat could be loaded from railway trucks¹²⁸⁵ (Figure 3.149). A *Royal Commission* in 1902-03 had highlighted the 'adaptability of the projected high-level pier at the North Shore, Geelong', to loading in bulk' and in particular grain by the elevator system.¹²⁸⁶ The Harbor Trust's grain scheme at North Shore was comprehensive and the *Geelong Advertiser* argued would 'give to Geelong shipping facilities of no mean order.'¹²⁸⁷

It was also in 1908 when the Geelong Harbor Trust signed a 21-year lease with the Oriental Timber Corporation Limited of Australia.¹²⁸⁸ This involved the construction of a log pond in the inlet to Cowies Creek and dredging works¹²⁸⁹ (Figure 3.150).

In 1909, the Geelong Harbor Trust established the Corio Freezing Works complex on the northern shores of Corio Quay (the site of the earlier Freezing Works) (Figures 3.151-153). Duncan Urquhart of the Smithfield Freezing works at Timaru, New Zealand, was appointed the inaugural manager.¹²⁹⁰ The foundations for the new freezing chambers had been completed by March 1909, the building constructed of brick and three storeys to accommodate the 'latest type' of refrigerating machinery.¹²⁹¹ Dredging for a berth for vessels to take cargo of frozen produce was almost completed in June 1909¹²⁹² and work commenced on the construction of the jetty in September of that year.¹²⁹³ Sheep receiving yards had also been completed by 1911 following a request from the Geelong Woolbrokers' Association.¹²⁹⁴

Several improvements and additions were made at Corio Quay throughout the 20th century. In 1953-54, reclamation works began in the northern portion of the Quay to enable the addition of berths and the construction of roads, storage areas and cargo sheds.¹²⁹⁵ The new facilities were completed in 1961, a year after a new cargo berth had been created at Corio Quay South.¹²⁹⁶

OTHER INDUSTRIAL WHARFS

The interwar and postwar eras witnessed substantial industrial expansion and the need for further wharfage accommodation on the shores at North Geelong and North Shore. Those constructed during this period were: Lascelles Wharf at North Shore for the Co-operative Phosphate Company of Australia (1927-28, it was extended in 1951 and 1959 and known as King's Wharf); Ford Motor Company at North Geelong (1928); Bulk Wheat piers at Corio Quay for the Grain Elevators Board (1935 and 1938); and the Refinery Pier at Corio for the Shell Oil Refinery (1953 – it was duplicated in 1956).¹²⁹⁷

TOURIST PIERS

Jetties and piers were erected at tourist destinations on the bay foreshore and coastline in Greater Geelong to cater for visitors, commuters and the shipping of cargo and produce. They included those at St. Leonards (1857), Portarlington (1859) and Clifton Springs (1873 and 1890).¹²⁹⁸ The jetties at St. Leonards and Portarlington were also important for transporting produce and other goods., the former first being partly constructed from a hulk scuttled by Captain George Ward Cole at the end of Murradoc and Harvey Roads.¹²⁹⁹ On a smaller scale, a jetty was also erected for fishermen at Barwon Heads in 1889.¹³⁰⁰

BAY CHANNELS

Thwarting Geelong's development throughout much of the 19th century was the sand bar between the inner and outer harbours near Point Henry. It prevented large ships from entering the inner harbour to the central Geelong foreshore. Smaller craft could navigate a natural channel (known as the North Channel) near Bird's Rock which had a maximum depth (after dredging) of 13 feet.¹³⁰¹ In 1839, three buoys were requested to assist vessels navigate the small channel. Their arrival was delayed because the original vessel engaged to bring them from Sydney was too small and they subsequently arrived on the *Louisa*.¹³⁰²

The anchoring of buoys was only a small measure in alleviating the channel problem. In 1841, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Melbourne-based Committee of Exchange petitioned the Governor, Sir George Gipps for:

... the navigation of the outer and inner harbours of Port Phillip and Geelong; and in submitting to your Excellency's judgment, the insuperable necessity of surveying and buoying the various channels that run through the banks on the directions which have been instanced ...¹³⁰³

In 1847, a Geelong Harbour Committee was established to pursue the 'clearing of the channel leading into the harbour, to a depth of 14 feet.'¹³⁰⁴ However, the Governor would not commit to the immediate dredging of the channel because £5000 had been placed on the estimates for a steam dredge at Port Phillip and until such time as this dredge was acquired, the clearing could not be carried out.¹³⁰⁵

Notwithstanding the need for dredging, Charles La Trobe supported the idea of a survey of Corio Bay being carried out 'if a competent person for the undertaking' could be found.¹³⁰⁶ Under the superintendence of Henry Ginn of the Colonial Architect's Office, Messrs. Garrard and Manton were engaged to carry out the survey. They proposed a new channel from Port Phillip Bay to the inner Harbour of a breadth of 264 feet and a depth of 18 feet (Figure 3.154). It would traverse the south-west portion of the existing 'boat channel' and provide a more direct route between Port Philip Bay and the inner harbour of Corio Bay.¹³⁰⁷ The channel was not to be immediately realised.

In July 1853, the *Duncan Hoyle* dredge was towed from Williamstown and anchored in Corio Bay. The *Geelong Advertiser* and *Intelligencer* quipped that it 'brought ease to the long vexed question of deepening the Channel into our inner Harbour.'¹³⁰⁸ Such positive expectations of a deep and reliable channel soon evaporated. The lean years of progress in Geelong in the late 1850s brought with it loud criticism of further Government inaction on the matter and the formation of a local Bar Committee to press for the removal of the bar to which it would assist with funds. At its first meeting, the following was resolved:

That a league be formed for the removal of the bar; that the subscription to the league be 5s. each half-year; that a paid collector be appointed; that the amounts so raised be expended in forwarding the removal of the bar, and that any surplus funds be divided between the Geelong Hospital and the Geelong Orphan Asylum; that all members be admitted free to all meetings; and non-members pay 6d. each admission to any such meetings; and that the members of the Committee collection subscriptions, and that each member of Committee pay £1.¹³⁰⁹

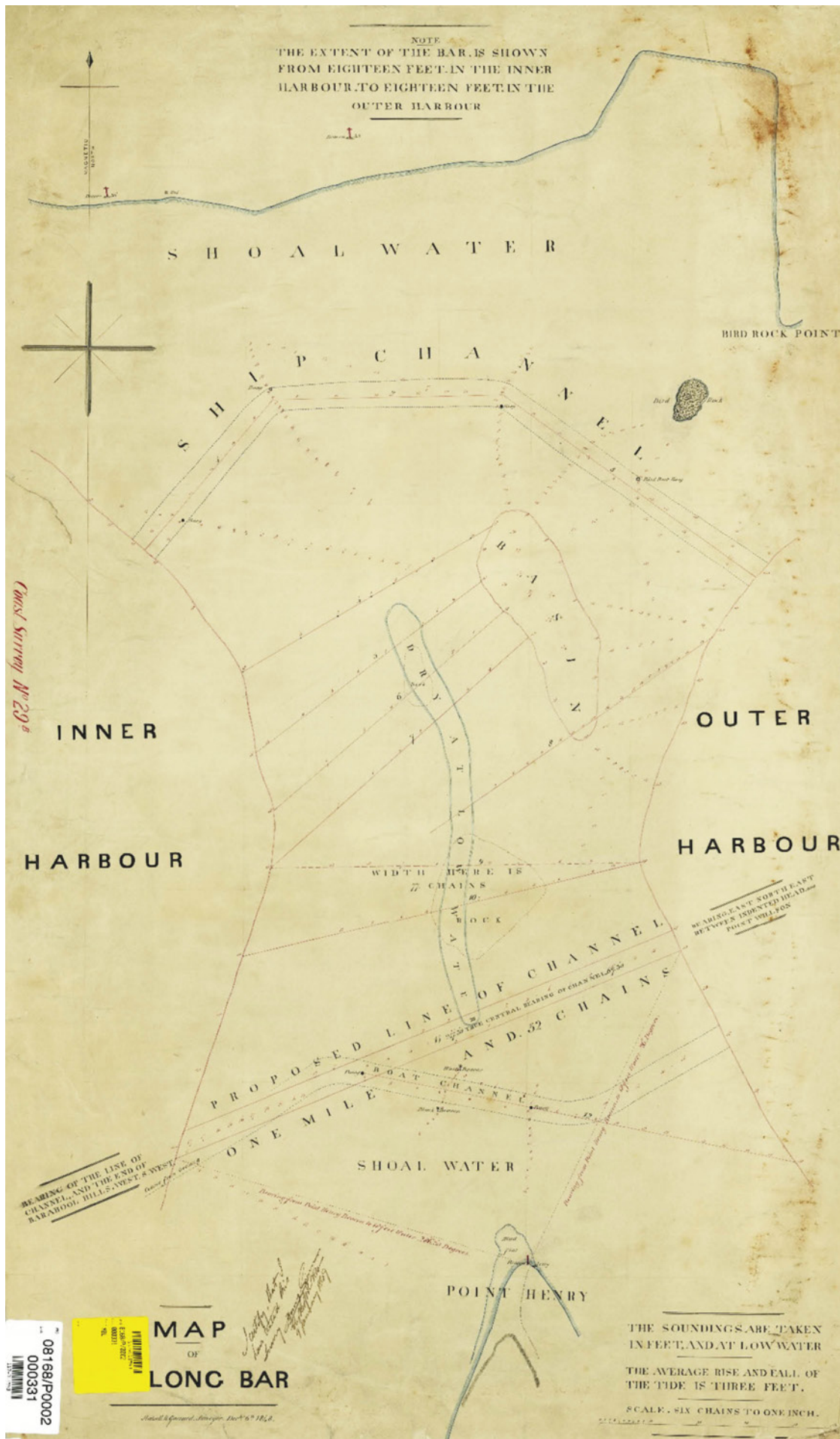


Figure 3.154: H.H. Garrard, Surveyor, Map of Geelong Bar, 6 December 1848. Source: VPRS 5168/P5, Sydney Plan, CS298 Public Record Office Victoria.

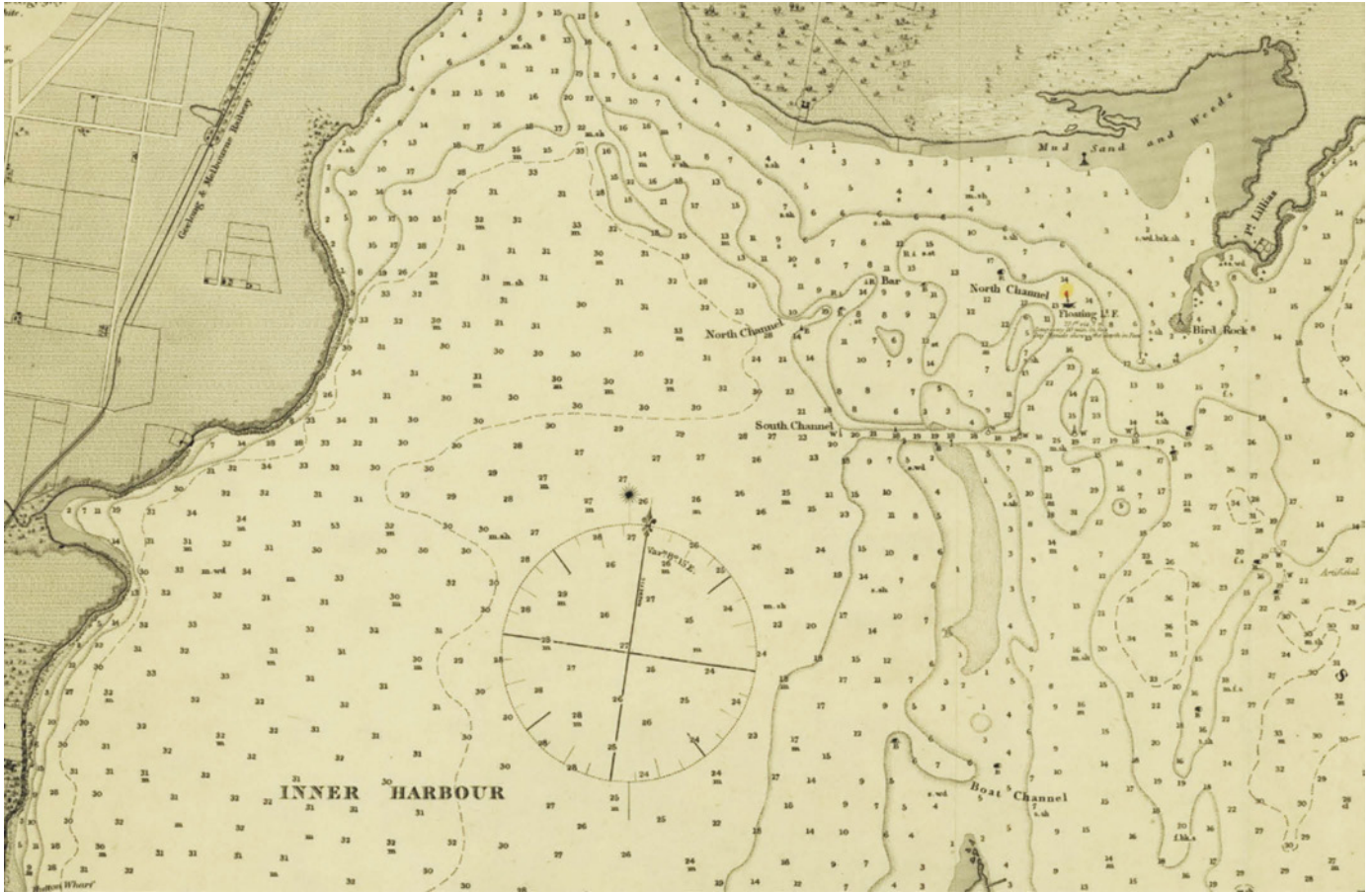


Figure 3.155: H.L. Cox (assisted by T. Bouchier & P.H. McHugh), Survey of Geelong Harbour 1864 showing North & South Channels (the point of Point Henry is shown at the bottom of the map). Source: Source: VPRS 8168/P5, Sydney plan, item MCS 76, Public Record Office Victoria.

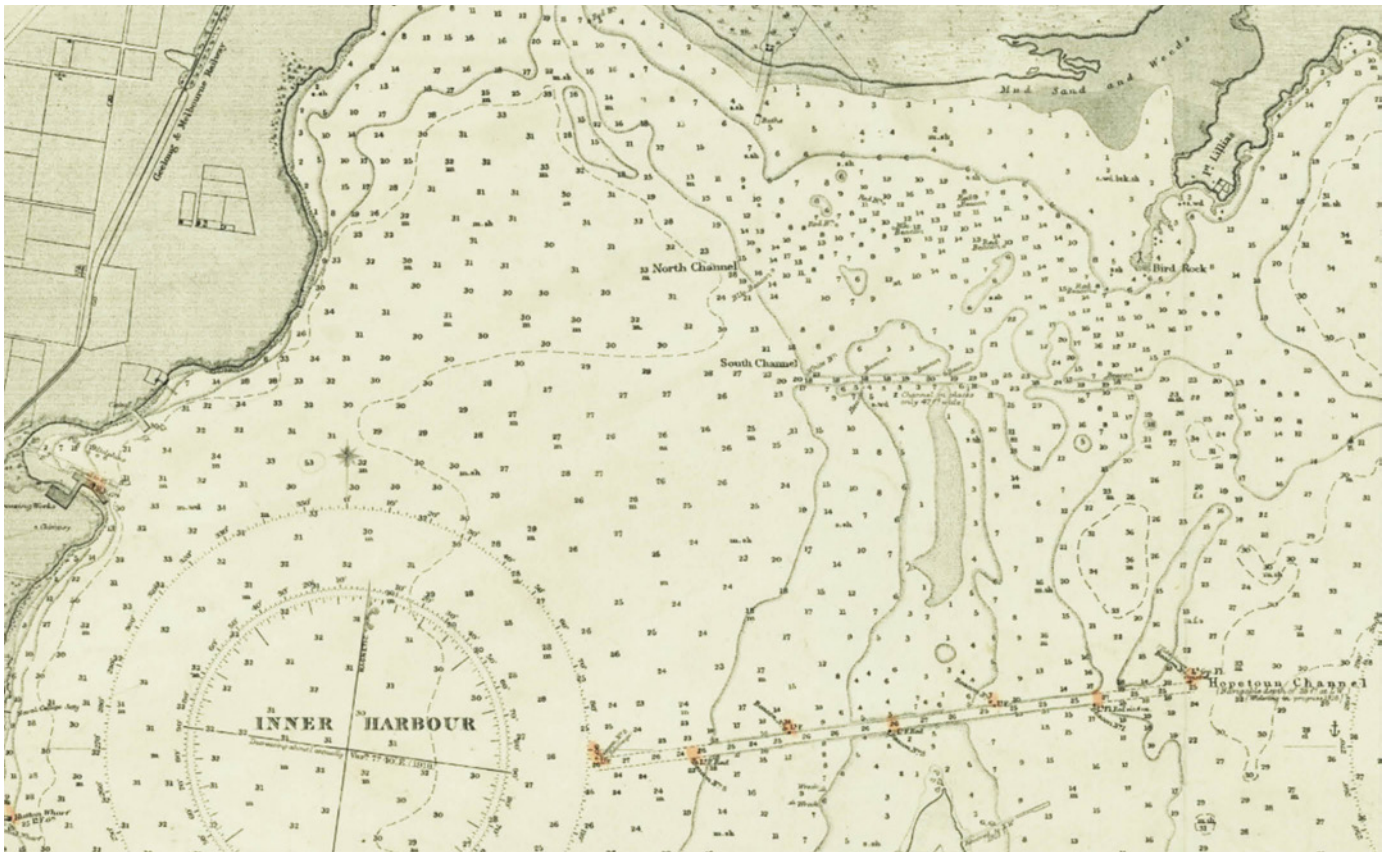


Figure 3.156: H.L. Cox (assisted by T. Bouchier & P.H. McHugh), Survey of Geelong Harbour 1864 updated in 1892, 1905 & 1914 showing North, South, & Hopetoun Channels (the tip of Point Henry is shown at the bottom of the map). Source: VPRS 8168/P5, Sydney plan, item MCS 77, Public Record Office Victoria.



Figure 3.157: J. Macfarlane, 'Opening of the Hopetoun Channel, Corio Bay', 1894. Source: *Illustrated Australian News*, 1894, accession IAN 01/02/94 State Library of Victoria.

The work of the Committee paid off and in March 1861 it proudly announced the completion of the South Channel:

We have this month the pleasurable task of announcing the completion of the greatest harbour improvement ever attempted in this part of the world. There is now a channel with 18 feet at low water leading from the outer into the Inner Harbour of Geelong. The channel is short, and perfectly straight, and although only one chain wide, will, so soon as it is buoyed, be available for the admission of the largest class of merchantmen frequenting our port. The dredges will be continued at work until the channel shall be two chains wide, but as it may be made available immediately, we are justified in saying that, so far as regards the present requirements of commerce, the work is completed, and there is now no obstacle to the initiation of a direct trade in first class ships between England and this port. The advantages of this improvement will become fully apparent when next wool season comes round, but it is to be hoped that there is sufficient enterprise left alive, to take an earlier advantage of access to a harbor which is now unquestionably the finest in Victoria, and which gives access to markets second only to that of the metropolis. The traders of Ballarat and the other western and north-western centres of trade, will, upon the opening of the railway, be enabled to have their goods hoisted from the ships hold and passed into the trucks that are to carry them by the shortest line of land carriage to the nearest point to their own door.¹³¹⁰

The South Channel (along with the North Channel) was shown in a map of the Geelong Harbour in 1864 by Commander H.L. Cox, assisted by T. Bourchier, Master, R.N. and P.H. McHugh (Figure 3.155).

Owing to drifting sand, the South Channel constantly silted up and became unsafe.¹³¹¹ In 1878, Sir John Coode, Cornish engineer, was appointed by the Victorian Government to survey Corio Bay to determine the best course of action for the channel. He recommended the excavation and dredging of the existing Boat Channel, providing a length of cut of 3600 yards and a depth at low water for a width of 132 feet of '20 feet at the sides to 22 feet 6 inches in the centre'¹³¹² (Figure 3.156). Cutting of the new channel commenced in 1881¹³¹³ but twelve years were to transpire before it was completed. The dredging was carried out by two dredges – *Alligator* and *John Nimmo* – and the steam tug, *George Rennie* (as a tender to the *Alligator*). The master of the *Alligator* was J.S Harris (who had 11 employees under him). J.H. Silke was master of the *John Nimmo* and A.R. Rennie master of the *George Rennie*. He employed 6 crew.¹³¹⁴ Finally, at a cost of £80,000, the new channel was opened on 20 December 1893 and named in honour of Lord Hopetoun (Victorian Governor) who formally declared it open at an official ceremony on the *Hygeia* in Corio Bay¹³¹⁵ (Figure 3.157).

Deeper and wider channels were dredged in the second half of the 20th century.¹³¹⁶

PASSENGER STEAMERS

While the wharfs and channels provided opportunities for the transportation of cargo to overseas markets, they also enabled a regular and reliable mode of passenger transport for commuters to Melbourne, interstate and beyond. They also soon provided regular bay services to nearby marine resorts including Clifton Springs, Portarlington and St. Leonards. From the early 1840s, steamers from Melbourne berthed at Queen's Wharf until the construction of the Steampacket Wharf in 1850. Those steamers to frequent the Geelong port included the *Aphrasia*, *Vesta*, *Keera*, *Courier*, *Excelsior*, *Geelong*, *Edina*, *Hygeia* and *Ozone*.¹³¹⁷

Evidence of the significant contribution these vessels made to the Geelong transport system in the 19th and early 20th centuries is almost lost. Aphrasia Street in Newtown and Keera Street in Geelong are a subtle reminder of the service of these steamers.¹³¹⁸

The first steamer engaged in providing a regular bay service between Geelong and Melbourne was the *Aphrasia*. It was built in Sydney in 1840 for the Port Phillip Steam Navigation Company.¹³¹⁹ The maiden voyage from Melbourne was anticipated for June 1841, as reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:



Figure 3.158: *Edina*, Melbourne, c.1865-70. Source: accession H3999 State Library of Victoria.

The establishment of a Steam communication with the neighbouring settlements will undoubtedly mark the commencement of a new era in the destinies of this township. Admirably adapted as it is for becoming the centre of traffic in the finest district in the Southern Hemisphere, the numerous visitants who will then have opportunity of seeing the beauties and advantages of its situation, will soon rescue it from the obscurity into which it has been thrown by the mad infatuation which has prevailed in favour of Melbourne.

... We are informed that this beautiful boat (*Aphrasia*) is to make her maiden trip, or rather trial, on the 24th instant, the Queen's birth-day; she is to ply all that day round the port with a select party on board. She is intended for the Port Phillip trade, and is commanded by Captain Lawler. She is expected to sail for Melbourne on the 1st of June. She possesses splendid accommodation for passengers; her cabins are most elaborately and even splendidly fitted up, particularly the state cabin, in the fitting up of which nearly £1000 have been expended. This fine vessel, which is a beautiful model of naval architecture, reflects great credit on the builder, Mr. Lowe.¹³²⁰

In 1852, the newly-formed Geelong Steam Navigation Company acquired the Keera that had been made by R. Stephenson and Co., of Newcastle, in 1851.¹³²¹ It was claimed as 'undoubtedly one of the finest crew steamers afloat' and in December 1852 it was put to a trial trip 'over the bar, and round the shipping at Point Henry.'¹³²²

Physical evidence survives of two other early bay steamers: *Edina* and *Ozone*. At 11 St. Leonard's Parade, St. Leonard's a portion of the existing dwelling is reputedly a former cabin of the S.S. *Edina* and known



Figure 3.159: Captain William Forbes, 1899. Source: *The Australasian*, 24 June 1899, p.27.

as 'Edina cottage'.¹³²³ One of the longest serving steam vessels in the world, the *Edina* (Figure 3.158) was built by Barclay, Curle and Co. on the Clyde River, Glasgow, Scotland, in 1853 for the Leith, Hull and Hamburg Steam Pack Company.¹³²⁴ It was requisitioned by the Admiralty in 1855 to carry stores and horses to the Black Sea during the Crimean War.¹³²⁵ At the conclusion of the war, the *Edina* was worked on the trade routes in the United Kingdom and Mediterranean before being acquired in 1861 and used as a blockade runner for the American Civil War, carrying cotton from the Confederate states.¹³²⁶ In 1863, the *Edina* was purchased by Stephen Henty in western Victoria and later used to carry gold prospectors between Victoria and New Zealand. Used in the coastal trade along the Queensland coast for Howard Smith following a refit in 1870, the *Edina* returned to Victoria and commenced the Melbourne-Geelong trade as a cargo and passenger vessel.¹³²⁷ In 1917, the *Edina* was refitted, altering its appearance with a new mast, funnel, bridge and promenade deck. The vessel continued in serve until 1938 when it was renamed *Dinah* and used as a lighter until 1958.¹³²⁸

The long-serving captain of the *Edina* for 36 years at the time of the refit in 1917 was Captain William Chalmers Forbes (1852-1936)¹³²⁹ (Figure 3.159). Born at Leslie, Fife, Scotland, Forbes came from a seafaring family and in 1868 he served a two year apprenticeship in the North Sea on the *Geordie* brig.¹³³⁰ In 1873, Forbes came to Australia on the *Loch Katrine* and joined the schooner *Sybil* that traded between Port Phillip and the Clarence River.¹³³¹ Forbes joined the *Edina* in 1880 and was made captain from 1882, a position he held until his retirement in March 1920.¹³³² His enduring fondness for the *Edina* was able to continue into his retirement as in 1917 the *Geelong Advertiser* reported:

To Captain Forbes, the skipper, when the old decking and fittings were removed, it was like parting with his old ship. But the captain intends to keep a substantial memento, and he has bought the old social cabin which used to stand on the upper deck. This he is going to remove to his farm between Portarlington and St. Leonards. With some other old fittings from the ship, he intends to fix up the cabin as it used to be on the *Edina* to remind him of old days.¹³³³

After his retirement in 1921, W.C. Forbes took over the 5-acre fisherman residence license of his brother, A.M. Forbes, which he had held since 1913.¹³³⁴ The allotment was situated on the Indented Head foreshore, adjoining Batman Park. By October 1921, Forbes had erected a six-roomed dwelling, presumably from the former cabin of the *Edina*.¹³³⁵ Forbes' dwelling was featured in the *Weekly Times* in 1935, the panelled walls with banks of small rectangular windows reflecting the earlier portion of the *Edina* (Figure 3.160).

'Edina cottage' (Figure 3.161) was relocated to 11 St. Leonards Parade, St. Leonards in 1951 following Miss Shirley Fletcher's purchase of the vacant site from the Estate of William Hamilton Gerrand in 1950.¹³³⁶ It survives today as a legacy of the highly significant and enduring service of the *S.S. Edina*.

Now almost totally lost, the paddle steamer *Ozone* was hulked at Indented Head as a breakwater in 1925 by W.C. Forbes as part of a local syndicate that had acquired the vessel from Melbourne.¹³³⁷ Forbes was an inaugural member of the Batman Park Committee of Management at this time and the need for a breakwater at Half Moon Bay, Indented Head, was considered essential by the Committee for safe harbourage.¹³³⁸ The *Ozone* was built in Glasgow, Scotland in 1886, and it was sailed to Australia via the Mediterranean Sea.¹³³⁹ Painted green and white with bright orange funnels and lit at night by electric light, the 'Ozone' had three decks with a dining room, a ladies saloon and several bars.¹³⁴⁰ Upon arrival in Melbourne in



Figure 3.160: 'Edina Cottage', Indented Head, 1935. Source: *Weekly Times*, 31 August 1935, p.36.



Figure 3.161: 'Edina Cottage', 11 St. Leonards Parade, St. Leonards, 1996. Source: 'Bellarine Heritage Study'.

1886, the *Illustrated Australian News* gave the following glowing description of the new steamer:

Not a few prominent citizens have summer residences at Queenscliff, Sorrento, Portsea, Mornington, or other places on the shores of the harbour [Port Phillip Bay], and they find the change from the dust and bustle of the city as efficacious as a tour in Tasmania, while it may be indulged in frequently at little expense. A notable indication of the popularity of these trips is the arrival of the grand new excursion steamer the *Ozone*, which has a speed of 17 miles per hour. This vessel greatly reduces the time occupied in the water journey, and gives increased opportunity for the passengers to enjoy themselves on land.¹³⁴¹

Retired in 1918, the steamer formed a notable landmark as a breakwater off the foreshore at Batman Park from 1925 (Figure 9.87). Only remnants of the paddle wheel survive. Further homage to the *Ozone* was also paid the naming of Ozone Street at St. Leonards and Ozone Road (as part of



Figure 3.162: Howard Smith Company Ltd, Geelong waterfront, 1913. Source: *News of the Week*, 26 June 1913, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

the Barwon Heads Estate in 1891 – see Figure 6.231) at Barwon Heads, in 1906.

SHIPPING AGENTS

Integral to the successful operations at Geelong's port from the 1840s and throughout the early 20th century was shipping agents. These companies were responsible for managing cargo and passengers for ship owners, managers and others associated with the shipping industry. Some of the earliest in Geelong included Charles Ruffle (from 1841), Captain Thomas Ogilvie (from 1853), H. Fitchett (from 1854), William Howard Smith and Sons (from 1854), and Thomas J. Parker (representing J.D. Parker and Co.) (from 1853).¹³⁴²

Two of the most enduring firms doing business in Geelong were W.H. Smith and Sons, and Huddart Parker and Company:

W.H. SMITH AND SONS¹³⁴³

The founder of this company was William Howard Smith (1814-1890) who was born at Yarmouth, Norfolk, England, the son of Ormond Smith, a mariner, ship-owner and mail contractor of Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Holland. Howard Smith later studied navigation and qualified as a master, becoming a partner in his father's firm at the age of 21 and was given command of the steamship, *Adonis*. In 1854, at the height of the Victorian goldrush, Smith emigrated to Melbourne with his wife, Agnes. He acquired the *Express* with S.P.O Skinner and began a regular trade

between Melbourne and Geelong. Thomas James Parker was appointed the agent in Geelong and in 1861 Parker purchased Smith's share of the business. After a short return to England, Smith commenced working the intercolonial trade but he subsequently established a partnership with L.J.L. Burke in the Newcastle coal trade. Smith purchased his former firm outright in the mid-1860s and in the late 1870s three of his sons had taken charge of the Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane offices. In 1883, the firm became a limited liability company known as Howard Smith and Sons Ltd.

With the completion of reclamation works on the east side of the Moorabool pier in 1883, Howard Smith and Sons acquired yards on the eastern approach to the pier. It was situated on the north-east corner of Moorabool Street and Eastern Beach Road (then known as Victoria Terrace). It was also in 1883 when the company moved from its offices on the west side of Moorabool Street (near the corner of Western Beach Road)¹³⁴⁴ to a 'very handsomely fitted up' office on the north-west corner of Moorabool and Corio Streets.¹³⁴⁵ The office formed part of a newly-built complex of three buildings.¹³⁴⁶

Following Howard Smith's death in 1890, the company was reorganised and controlled by four sons: Edmund, Walter, Harold and Ormond. Melbourne-based Walter Sydney Howard Smith had charge of the Geelong operations (that were situated in Market Square) until his retirement as a director in 1911.¹³⁴⁷ In 1913, the firm constructed new offices on the foreshore at its yards at the eastern approach to the Moorabool Street pier¹³⁴⁸ (Figure 3.162).

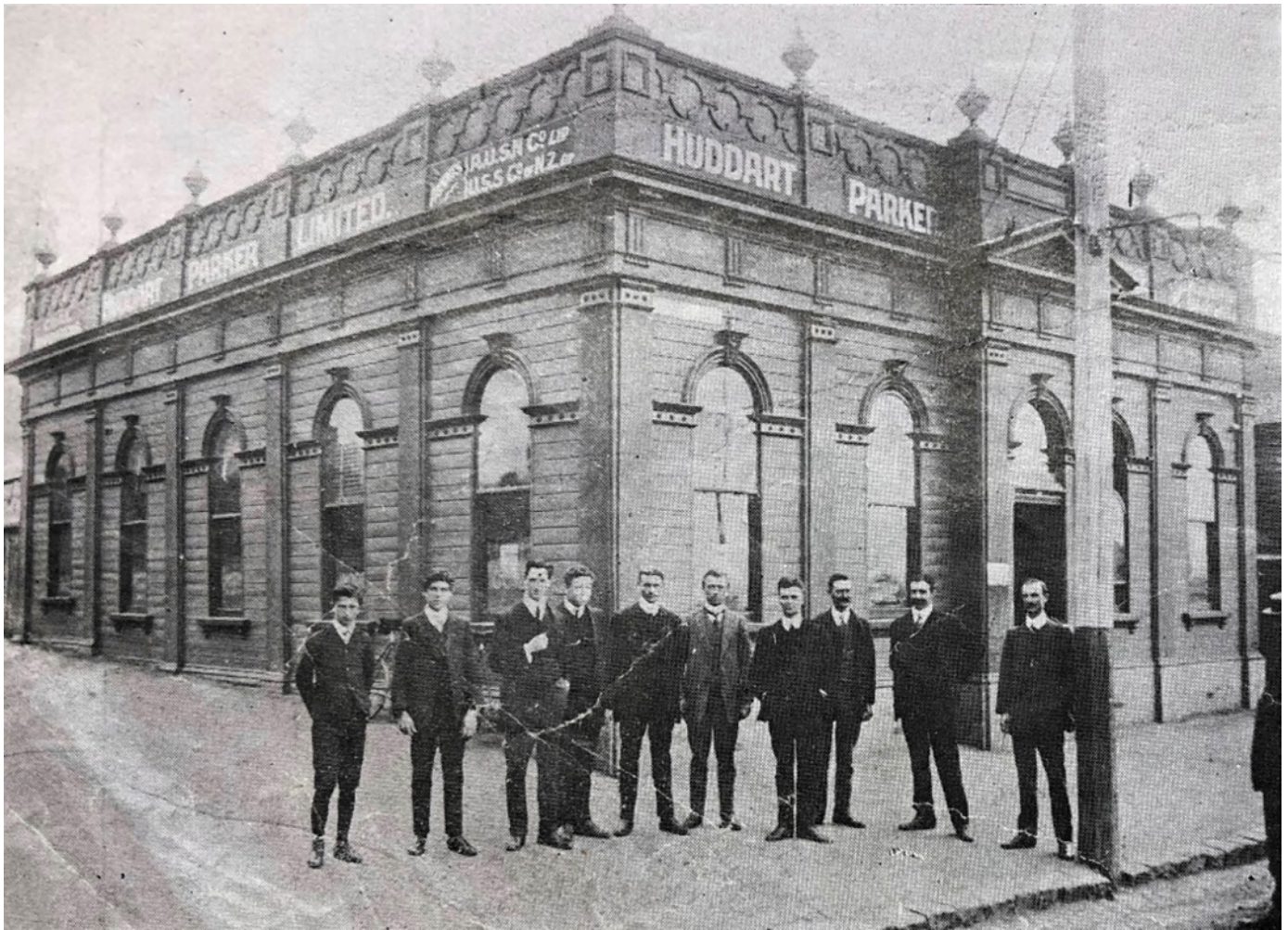


Figure 3.163: Huddart Parker & Co., Geelong waterfront, 1912. Source: *News of the Week*, 22 February 1912, p.16, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

With the redevelopment of the Geelong waterfront in 2000, the W.H. Smith and Co. offices and buildings were demolished. No physical evidence of this enduring shipping agency in Geelong survives.

HUDDART PARKER AND COMPANY

Captain Peter Huddart (1818-1904) was born at Gosforth, Cumberland, England and joined the British Merchant Service in c.1840.¹³⁴⁹ He was awarded his Master's Certificate of Service as a carpenter mate and master in 1852,¹³⁵⁰ and he made his way to Geelong where he established a shipbroking and corn agency in Yarra Street. He soon added coal transportation to his shipping business.¹³⁵¹ Peter Huddart was joined in the business in 1861 and by his nephew, James Huddart, later forming a business in Ballarat before returning to Geelong with the importation of coal and export of produce at Geelong.¹³⁵²

In 1876, James Huddart joined Messrs Parker, Traill and Webb to form the firm of Huddart Parker and Company,

coal importers and merchants.¹³⁵³ James Huddart was appointed manager and was based in Melbourne.¹³⁵⁴ Thomas James Parker had arrived in Geelong in 1853 presenting the firm of D. and J. Parker, warehousemen of London. Settling in Geelong, he erected an iron store in Little Malop Street that he had brought out from England and commenced business as an importer.¹³⁵⁵ In 1854, he became the Geelong agent for the steamer *Express* that was under the command of Captain William Howard Smith.¹³⁵⁶ Parker was joined at Geelong in 1855 by John Traill as chief officer of the *Express Steamer Agency*.¹³⁵⁷ In 1861, Parker bought out Howard Smith's share of the business and in 1867 after the death of Skinner, the remaining share was purchased jointly by Traill and Captain Webb.¹³⁵⁸ The fleet of Huddart Parker and Co. changed with technology, bringing about a relocation of the firm's head office from Geelong to Melbourne. As outlined in *The Argus*:

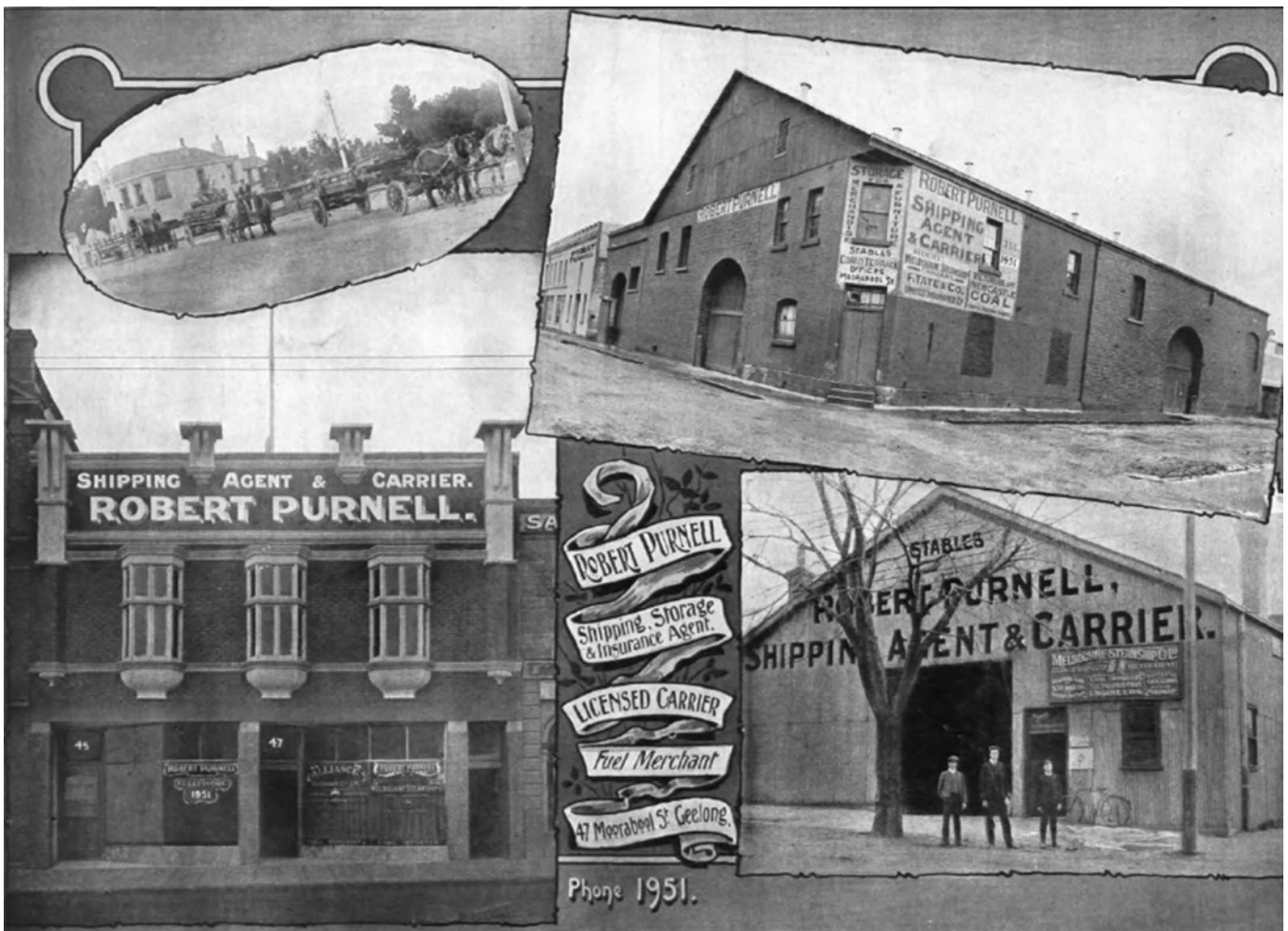


Figure 3.164: Robert Purnell Shipping Agent & Carrier Offices & Buildings, c.1918. Source: *Geelong for Business Health Pleasure*, G.A. List, Geelong, 1918.

The first fleet owned by the firm consisted almost entirely of sailing vessels. They included the *Olivia Davies*, the *Medea*, and the *Queen Emma*, and later the *Conference* and the *Frederica*. On taking over the business of a Melbourne coal importer named Morley, the firm removed its head office from Geelong to Melbourne, and largely extended its operations. This was a period of great Colonial expansion and also a rapid increase in the number of steamers. The firm acquired the *Nemesis*, an iron screw steamer of 1,393 tons gross, built in 1880, and she was followed by the *Lindus* and the *Wendouree*. In 1882 the partners decided to enter the Sydney trade, and increasing business soon demanded the addition of the *Burrumbeet* and the *Corangamite* to the fleet.¹³⁵⁹

In 1889, Huddart Parker and Company was listed as a limited company.¹³⁶⁰ It was during this year when the firm relocated its Geelong office from Moorabool Street (south of Dennys Lascelles woolstore at the south-

west corner of Moorabool and Brougham Streets)¹³⁶¹ to the newly reclaimed land on the west side of Moorabool Street, at the approach to the Moorabool pier (Figure 3.163). Designed by the local architect, A.J. Derrick,¹³⁶² the substantial development was described in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Extensive improvements are now being made to the reclaimed land on the west side of Moorabool-street, near the steamboat wharf, which has been procured under lease by Messrs Huddart, Parker and Co., owners of the international fleet of steam colliers and passenger boats, as well as the bay pleasure steamers. A long row of weatherboard buildings has been erected immediately behind the goods storage shed at the entrance to the wharf to be fitted up as a storeroom, four-stalled stable with loose boxes, a feed room, dray shed, a shed for housing the steamers' discharging gear, and a workshop for stevedores and carpenters. Preparations have also been made for the erection of

a handsome suite of offices for the firm's staff of clerks, a manager's room, stationery room, lavatories, and a weighbridge.¹³⁶³

No direct physical associations with Huddart Parker and Company of the 19th century remain in Geelong. The company's offices and site were transformed as part of the waterfront redevelopment in recent times. There are tenuous associations with the original portion of 'Clounoulty' at 27 Retreat Road, Newtown, built in c.1860 for Peter Huddart (who lived there in the 1860s until 1870);¹³⁶⁴ and with 'Duncan's Place', 3 Pevensey Street, Geelong, built in 1860-61 for Morris Jacobs, draper and sold to John Traill in 1872-73.¹³⁶⁵ As manager of the Geelong operations of Huddart Parker and Company, Traill lived there until 1887.¹³⁶⁶

ROBERT PURNELL

A notable inclusion on the shipping agency scene in the early 20th century was Robert Purnell (1855-1937).¹³⁶⁷ He was born at Chilwell, Newtown to William and Margaret (nee Lamb) Purnell. William Purnell was a successful early builder in Geelong and he was to be joined by his other sons, William and Alexander carpenters, with another son, Frederick, becoming an architect.¹³⁶⁸ Robert Purnell attended Flinders School before being employed in the warehouse of C. Andrews, draper and M.L.A.¹³⁶⁹ In c.1881, he was appointed clerk to the Western Stage Company, a position he held for several years before being appointed manager.¹³⁷⁰ In 1897, he established his own shipping and carrying business in Brougham Street (then known as Corio Terrace) until he built a commodious and distinctive Art Nouveau-inspired two storey building at 47 Moorabool Street in 1912¹³⁷¹ (Figure 3.164). He also held warehouses and stables, and a site at the railway wood yard for the transporting of Newcastle coal.¹³⁷²

Throughout his life, Purnell contributed much to community life. He was a local Councillor with the Geelong City Council between 1915 and 1931, serving as Mayor between 1923-24.¹³⁷³ It was during his Mayoralty that Purnell, along with Dr Frederick Moreton, was able to use his influence in the formation of the Geelong Town Planning Association, and he was a key figure in the City's tree planting scheme (see Theme 7). Purnell was elected a Member of the Legislative Assembly in the Victorian Parliament in 1917, holding his seat until 1920 when he was defeated.¹³⁷⁴ He also held several other prominent positions, including President of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce in 1911-12, chairman of the Geelong Harbor Trust between 1920 and 1933, and President of the Geelong branches of the Protestant Federation and Anti-Liquor League, a consequence of his adherence

to the Baptist Church where he was a member of the Aberdeen Street congregation and one-time President of the Baptist Union of Victoria. He died in 1937.¹³⁷⁵

While Purnell's business continued throughout the 20th century, morphing into Purnell's World Wide Travel Agency,¹³⁷⁶ his office built in 1912 at 47 Moorabool Street was demolished in 1988 to make way for the Bay City Plaza shopping complex development (see Theme 6). However, associations with Robert Purnell are physically manifested in his former family home, 'Myrtleholme' at 10 Hermitage Road, Newtown.¹³⁷⁷

GEELONG SHIPPING AGENTS AND WHEAT SHIPPERS' ASSOCIATION

In 1928, the Geelong Shipping Agents and Wheat Shippers' Association was formed. Its objects were 'to obtain uniformity in the handling of ships calling at Geelong, to foresee and settle any possible disputes arising in connection with the handling of vessels, and to assist in improving the facilities of the Port of Geelong.'¹³⁷⁸ The inaugural chairman was Gilbert Edward England (c.1866-1930), employee and later manager of Huddart, Parker and Company for 50 years.¹³⁷⁹ He built 'Comara' at 303 Shannon Avenue, Newtown, in 1910 although he sold this property in 1913 and relocated to 45 Retreat Road, Newtown (his residence also being called 'Comara').¹³⁸⁰

RIPPLESIDE SHIPBUILDING WORKSHOPS

EARLY YEARS

In 1905 following the formation of the Geelong Harbor Trust, the bayside property at Fisherman's Gully known as "Ripple Side" was acquired as a site for shipbuilding workshops (see Theme 6 for details on "Ripple Side"). The site was considered the only place 'suitable for the erection of a dock', given its foreshore location in a deep valley.¹³⁸¹ The acquisition also included Hutton's wharf (built in 1854-55 by the auctioneer, J.B. Hutton – see Theme 6). In its first Report in 1907, the Harbor Trust gave details on the progress of works completed, and those pending:

At 'Rippleside', North Geelong, workshops are being provided which will ultimately be placed on a reclamation forming part of a line of permanent berthage, where also a slip will be constructed for the repairing of floating plant. Suitable machinery was purchased from the Phoenix Foundry Co., Ltd., when their establishment discontinued operations.¹³⁸²

By 1912, £2,793 had been spent on the construction of buildings and installation of equipment for the repair



Figure 3.165: Rippleside Shipbuilding Workshops, 1919. Source: *News of the Week*, 6 March 1919, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

of dredges and other work.¹³⁸³ In 1914, a cargo shed on the Moorabool Street pier was relocated to the Rippleside workshops for storage and shelter for horses and trucks.¹³⁸⁴ This shed appears to have had a semi-circular roof and was situated at the approach to the Moorabool pier prior to its relocation to the Rippleside foreshore¹³⁸⁵ (Figure 3.165).

Further improvements were made in the ensuing years, the substantial extent of the complex was given in the *Geelong Advertiser* in 1923:

Here is to be found a complete plant for the execution of all floating repairs to the Harbor Trust property, as well as for the manufacture of the ironwork required for the maintenance of wharves, while work is even turned out for the roads. Should any of the Harbor Trust craft need attention, the Rippleside establishment will provide it. If a pier requires touching up, Rippleside will do it. There is little limit to what Rippleside can turn out in the way of ironwork requisites – although some jobs that could have been done have to be left undone because of the stern limitations of possible expenditure. At the present moment, one of the jobs being turned out is the provision of 36 long iron bolts for the Yarra street wharf.

The carpentry and joinery work is also done at Rippleside, but not now by the Trust. The carpentry and joinery workshops are let to the firm of Higgs and Benoit.

Boilermaking work is one of the activities at Rippleside, and all boiler repairs in connection with the Trust, from "Sparrovale" to Sims, Cooper's, is carried out by the Rippleside plant, including what is required on the tug, the dredges, the steam hoppers, and the launches.

In the blacksmith's shop at the present moment one may see giant pins that were manufactured some little time ago for the dredge buckets, and there is now an ample stock in hand. In the blacksmith's shop is to be seen a 3-roller machine for bending the plates for boilers. From a flat sheet a plate up to 12 feet long by 6 feet wide can be bent out in cylindrical form. There are planing machines, drilling machines; large power lathes – three of them, and on one of which a piece of metal up to six tons has been turned; there is a bolt-screwing machine; an emery grinding wheel, three drilling machines; a pipe screwing machine for putting threads on wrought iron pipes; a shaping machine for persuading pieces of metal into any shape desired; and a punching machine and shearing machine in connection with the boiler-making plant. There is also that wonderful instrument, the steam hammer – not a Nasmyth (although there are examples of the firm's products in the workshops) but one made by Davis and Primrose, of Leith, Scotland. Some of the repairs carried out are of the most delicate order – in fact, "surgical operations" in iron and steel.

In course of construction is a new slip. The bottoms of the Trust barges have not been seen for a year or two, and they require attention. When the new slip is completed, what are called cradles will be run on rails right under the water, and the barge floating on to the top of these, the whole outfit will then be wound up by steam winch until the barge is on the slip out of the water, and in a position in which the examiners and repairers can get underneath her.

... The Trust's twin-screw dredge, the *Thomas Bent*, is undergoing a complete overhaul at Rippleside just now. The job is one of some magnitude. For four years this dredge was loaned to the Melbourne Harbor Trust, and did good work for that body. It will take a week or two to get it ready for commission again. The vessel needs a good deal of paint, and the ironwork generally requires toning up. The *Thomas Bent* is what is known as a bucket dredge, and is an immensely powerful machine for the purpose. It can dredge to a depth of 35 feet – which is quite sufficient for Geelong ...

At the works may be observed a number of Priestman grabs. These are used when the hoppers (one of which is propelled by steam) are transformed into dredges. The hoppers often dredge about the vicinity of the piers, and can get down to a depth of 35 feet.

A number of iron buoys that are in use were made at the Rippleside works, where repairs to those are also effected. The workshops are under the charge of Mr. H.J. Richardson.¹³⁸⁶



Figure 3.166: Official opening of new Rippleside Workshops by Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners, April 1955. Source: *Annual Report of the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners, 1955*, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

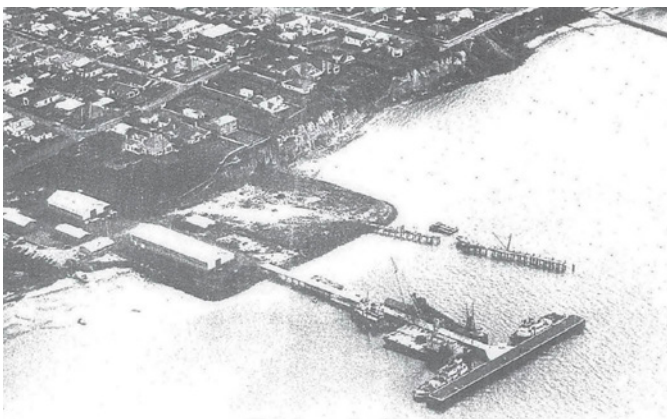


Figure 3.167: Aerial view of Rippleside Workshops showing reclaimed area & new pier, c.1956. Source: *Annual Report of the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners, 1956*, GRS 1058, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

The expansive machinery, equipment and facilities at the Rippleside workshops had resulted from the Geelong Harbor Trust's desire from 1920 to establish a 'large and profitable industry of ship-building.'¹³⁸⁷ Geelong already had a history of boat builders, including W.E. Curnow (who in 1876 built the schooner *Miranda*, for James Huddart, claimed to have been the largest craft built in Geelong in the 19th century)¹³⁸⁸ Clement Blunt, James Sinclair and Peter Tait.¹³⁸⁹ In the 1910s, the Harbor Trust had leased its facilities to shipbuilders including A.B. Gibson of Melbourne in 1918 for the refitting of the hulk, *Malaita*.¹³⁹⁰ The work was completed at the Rippleside workshops by H.B. Flack and Co.¹³⁹¹

In 1920, the Harbor Trust announced Messrs. Higgs had intended to take up shipbuilding at the Trust's workshops, with the former "Ripple Side" to also be occupied by the shipbuilders.¹³⁹² Edward Higgs (c.1848-1928) had arrived in Devonport, Tasmania, from Pimlico, London, in 1866 where he was apprenticed to the shipwright, John Drake.¹³⁹³ Establishing his own successful boat-building business, he was later joined by his sons, including Ernest Edward Higgs (1874-1964). They expanded the business of Messrs.

Higgs and Sons to Victoria in 1919 with the building of a ship at Port Albert.¹³⁹⁴ At Ripplside, Messrs. Higgs had completed their first commission in 1922. A schooner for the Lorne Saw Mills Company, it was the first of its kind to be built in Geelong at a cost of £5000.¹³⁹⁵ Ernest Higgs remained a boat builder in Geelong following his father's return to Tasmania. He later established a workshop at Chilwell where he built a new motor launch for the Geelong Harbor Trust in 1937.¹³⁹⁶

IMPROVEMENTS OF THE WORKSHOPS IN THE 1950S

The postwar years led to an expansion of the Ripplside Workshops by the Harbor Trust. In 1952 work commenced on 'filling in the sea', involving northward land reclamations.¹³⁹⁷ In 1954, new workshops, marine store, office and amenities buildings and a crane shed were almost complete and major plant that had been purchased for installation included an overhead crane (from Noyes Brothers), turret lath (from Ward), air compressor (from Atlas) a milling machine (from Cincinnati) and mobile cranes (from Fowler).¹³⁹⁸ A new pier had been built measuring 304 feet in length by 22 feet in width. It was to form a breakwater for the reclaimed site.¹³⁹⁹ Further land reclamations were in progress. The purpose of these improvements was to meet 'a long-standing need in the port for more effective maintenance and general economy, particularly in relation to the many units of floating plant owned and operated by the Trust.'¹⁴⁰⁰ At a cost of £160,000, the new workshops and pier were officially opened in April 1955 by the Geelong Harbor Trust Commissioners¹⁴⁰¹ (Figures 3.166-167).

In 2014, construction commenced on a major apartment and marine development in the northern part of the former Harbor Trust workshops site.¹⁴⁰²

In addition to the Harbor Trust workshops site, boat building continued elsewhere in the 20th century, particularly on the Western Beach foreshore to the west of Cunningham pier. There during World War Two Ernest Higgs and his brother completed and launched landing craft built at the Ford Factory. Nearby in the 1950s Lew Marine commenced boat building at the former Geelong Nautical Centre previously established for housing paddleboats and a speedboat for pleasure rides at Eastern Beach. Evidence of the Lew Marine boat building operations survives in the gabled shed and slipway.¹⁴⁰³



Figure 3.168: Miss Howard (photographer), Geelong Sailors' Rest Workers' Committee, 1907. Standing (from left to right): Mr. Clements, Mr. R.J. Moore (secretary), Mr. W. Robin, Miss Fagg, Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Harvey, Mrs S. Newbury. Seated (middle row, from left to right): Miss E. Robin, Miss Kitchen, Miss Berryman, Miss Clements, Mrs. Robin, Mrs Ponting. Seated (front row, from left to right): Miss Potter, Miss H. Robin, Miss E Fagg. Source: *News of the Week*, 18 April 1907, p.15, GRS 2121/1, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

SAILORS' REST

On 1 February 1895, a Sailors' Rest was opened in rooms at Bethel, Corio Street, Geelong 'to extent a brotherly welcome to "those who do business in great waters".'¹⁴⁰⁴ Proceedings had been opened by R.C. Clement in the presence of the Mayor, F.H. Richardson, who declared the Geelong Sailors' Rest open.¹⁴⁰⁵ The rooms were to be made available for all seamen from 6.30 to 10 each evening.¹⁴⁰⁶ Non-conformist churches, including the Baptists and Methodists, and other charitable organisations including the Young Women's Christian Association (Y.W.C.A.) assisted with the ongoing mission, given the strong affiliation of these organisations with the temperance movement and importance of Christianity.¹⁴⁰⁷ This began the Sailors' Rest in Geelong, an organisation that originated from the formation of a Sailors' Society in London in 1817.¹⁴⁰⁸ The Sailors' Rest at Geelong provided welfare for visiting seamen by offering opportunities for recreation, including the playing of games, reading, entertainment, songs and food, all underpinned by a Christian ethic.¹⁴⁰⁹ In 1899, the Sailors' Rest relocated to the Liverpool London and Globe Insurance Company building at 51 Moorabool Street.¹⁴¹⁰ This building was used in an illustrated flyer for the Geelong Sailors' Rest in c.1904.

Underpinning the success of the Geelong Sailors' Rest was its Workers' Committee. Members of the committee advocated the underlying temperance and non-Conformist Christian principles. In 1907, the Committee was photographed at its Moorabool Street rooms (Figure 3.168):

As early as 1901, the Committee sought to have its own building constructed.¹⁴¹¹ A fund was established and negotiations commenced with the Government authorities for a piece of land on the Geelong waterfront. In May 1910, the *Geelong Advertiser* gave an outline of the proposal:

As a result of Mr. Plain, M.L.A.'s efforts, a site has now been definitely fixed for a new Sailors' Rest. The Premier (Mr. Murray), on his last visit, gave the rest authorities the choice of a block facing the beach, or one in Moorabool-street. The Superintending and Workers' Committees held a combined meeting, and it was unanimously decided to gratefully accept Mr. Murray's offer of the block having a frontage to Moorabool-street of about 50ft., with a depth of 100 ft. The land is part of the Customs Reserve, and commences at a point about 50ft. from the corner of Victoria-terrace [Eastern Beach Road] It is probably that provision will be made in the new building for caretaker's quarters, so that the Rest may be kept open all day, as well as in the evenings. The committee are in hope that someone will come forward and set the ball rolling for a building fund by a substantial donation. Many promises of support have been already received.¹⁴¹²

A design for a building on the anticipated site was prepared by Geelong architects, Seeley, King and Everett in 1910.¹⁴¹³ The domestic-like structure was to feature a hipped roof with widow's walk, with a centrally-located entrance portico on the Moorabool Street frontage.¹⁴¹⁴

By 1911, the site at the north-west corner of the Customs Reserve was approved. Percy Everett had redesigned the proposed building¹⁴¹⁵ that has been claimed as 'probably the most important institutional building erected in Geelong at the turn of the century.'¹⁴¹⁶ The two storey building – built as a memorial to King Edward VII - boasted a corner tower surmounted by a domical roof and flagpole, the Free styled brick and render edifice being detailed with Art Nouveau decorations on a nautical theme.¹⁴¹⁷ Of equal innovation was the use of reinforced concrete raft foundations due to the soft ground, the first in Victoria.¹⁴¹⁸

Tenders for the new Sailors' Rest building were first called in 1911, the estimated cost being £1100.¹⁴¹⁹ A contract was accepted from Dew Brothers and Ebbels in September



Figure 3.169: Sailors' Rest building, 3 Moorabool Street, 1913. Source: *News of the Week*, 4 December 1913, p.23, GRS 2009/02296/024, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

1911.¹⁴²⁰ On 3 February 1912, the foundation stone was laid at an official ceremony by the Premier, John Murray in the presence of the Mayor of Geelong, Members of Parliament, several clergymen and other prominent citizens.¹⁴²¹ The building (Figure 3.169) was officially opened on 9 November 1912 in the presence of 200 guests and was described in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

It is well designed as it is substantial. The entrance hall offers a warm welcome to the wandering sailor. On the ground floor is a cosy room for the committee, nicely furnished by the present, Mr. J.H. McPhillimy; a bathroom with hand basin and plunge in white enamel; and part of the caretaker's quarters. On the second floor directly in front of the landing is a reading room with stylish fireplace, casement windows, a new bagatelle table donated by the Ladies' Guild, a polished bookcase given by Miss Emily Mercer, and containing the nucleus of a library of maritime works and plenty of table space for reading and writing. To the south of it is the concert room supplied with a piano and ample seating accommodation. A folding wooden partition may be swung back and music and reading rooms



Figure 3.170: Sailors' Rest building, 3 Moorabool Street, c.1940, showing globe sign above the parapet on north (left) facade. Source: VPRS 10516/P3, Unit 11, Public Record Office Victoria.

thrown into a spacious entertainment hall. On this floor there is also a refreshment buffet so conspicuous that there will be no excuse for any tar leaving hungry. A popular feature will be the flat roof accessible by a ladder. It covers the full expanse of the building, is electrically lighted, and commands a fine view of Corio Bay and the beaches. When fitted with seats and laid out in palms and pot plants it will be an ideal summer evening retreat. The furnishing of the Rest is not complete yet, but Saturday's inspection suggested several donations. Dr. A.S. Grimwade donated two tables for the reading room and Mr. B. McKinnon gave a large framed photo of the late King Edward to grace the main hall. The garden, only trimmed over three weeks ago, already has a vigorous English grass lawn.¹⁴²²

By the time of the opening of the Sailors' Rest, the organisation had joined with the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, an interdenominational Protestant group.¹⁴²³

In 1921, possibly in order to combat the attraction of sailors to local hotels, the Rev. T. Worsley Maguire suggested the erection of a large electric sign over the Sailors' Rest building. He 'claimed that if the men knew there was a Sailors' Rest in Geelong, they would make it their first port of call on land.'¹⁴²⁴ The Committee had previously proposed 'a large wire netting sign similar to that over Dalgety's Stores,' but had shelved due to a lack of funds.¹⁴²⁵ Notwithstanding the dire financial position, the Mayor of Geelong (Alderman Hitchcock) pressed on with the idea and had T. Brown, Superintendent of the electric services, to prepare a design. He also had it approved by G.G. Jobbins, Engineer-in-charge.¹⁴²⁶ It was anticipated that the sign would be operational within a month as the President of the Sailors' Rest, J.H. McPhillimy, had guaranteed its cost.¹⁴²⁷ However, five years elapsed before the sign (Figure 3.170) was installed and turned on:



Figure 3.171: Point Henry Signal Station, 2015. Source: David Rowe.

A very interesting function took place last evening at King Edward VII Sailors' Rest. Members of the executive met officially to turn on an electric sign recently erected on the roof of the Rest by the Melbourne Electric Supply Company. The sign will flash out across the harbour the words "Sailors' Rest," directing the sailors to this popular haven ... The turning on of the electric current took place at 8 p.m. by a representative of the Electric Supply Company. Following this ceremony members present inspected from the wharves and it was considered a great success.¹⁴²⁸

POINT HENRY SIGNAL STATION

Until the early 20th century, shipping traffic in the bays and coastline of the Greater Geelong area was uncontrolled and self-regulated.¹⁴²⁹ An improvement was subsequently made with the installation of temporary signal stations at the Moorabool and Portarlington piers. The custodian of the latter 'was housed in a diminutive structure on the Portarlington Pier, with a telephone, binoculars, signals flags and a flagstaff.'¹⁴³⁰

In order to provide safe, secure and regulated shipping traffic, the Geelong Harbor Trust acquired a plot of land at Point Henry in the late 1930s on which to construct a signal station. The local architect, Norman Schefferle, was engaged to design the structure¹⁴³¹. Built in 1939, *The Argus* gave an insight into the pending commencement of the signal station in October 1940:

Designed to give more adequate control of shipping traffic entering and leaving the Port of Geelong through the Wilson Spit and Hopetoun channels, the signal station erected by Geelong Harbour Trust on

the bluff at Point Henry will come into operation on November 7. A signal-man will be on duty continuously throughout the year. In addition to controlling traffic he will receive and transmit messages and supply information to masters and agents. A powerful searchlight will be used for transmitting messages by day in the international code, while a smaller light will be used for night signalling in Morse code. After berthing, vessels will communicate with the signal station by telephone. The station number is 3838. When the station is in operation, the temporary port control centre, at the harbourmaster's office on Moorabool Pier and on Portarlington Pier will cease to function.¹⁴³²

Constructed of cream brick, the vertically-composed Modern Functionalist designed signal station (Figure 3.171) comprised a top deck (from which flags could be hoisted) below which was signal room with a fireplace, desk and a mercury barometer.¹⁴³³ It lead out to the curved, flat-roofed signalling platform that boasted a 24 inch signal light with a Morse shutter having a range of 10 miles.¹⁴³⁴ It was manufactured at Croydon, England, at a cost of £200.¹⁴³⁵ The viewing platform also included a brass telescope. Below the signalling platform was a lunch room. A landing outside this room accommodated a washbasin. On the ground floor was a garage, battery room, emergency generator room, and a toilet under the stairs. Lighting the stairwell were portal windows.¹⁴³⁶

A continuous watch was kept at the Point Henry signal station for 52 years from November 1940 until 1993.¹⁴³⁷ In addition, the signalmen monitored the movement of the floating plant of the Harbor Trust, fishermen, and yachts, and provided weather observations. The station was a hub of communication between ships and the various shore authorities.¹⁴³⁸ Radio and telephone communication were later installed. Early signalmen at Point Henry were 'Mac' Macdonald' and 'Tug' Wilson.¹⁴³⁹ They were replaced in 1963 by Fred Burns and John 'Biscuit' Huntley.¹⁴⁴⁰ Andy Cowley commenced as a relief signalman in 1964. He was the last signalman to staff the signal station, his final shift being overnight on 31 January 1993.¹⁴⁴¹

While no longer in operation, the former signal station still exists at Point Henry.

3.6 AVIATION

TOWARDS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AVIATION INDUSTRY IN GREATER GEELONG

In 1903, the Wright brothers in the United States of America were the first to successfully fly a motorised plane when they flew their 120 foot Kitty Hawk on a 12 second flight at North Carolina.¹⁴⁴² In 1908 from a meadow outside Paris, Leon Delagrangé was the first passenger for a flight piloted by the Frenchman, Henri Farman.¹⁴⁴³ These landmark aeronautical events provoked a strong interest in air transport around the world. In 1911, the first aeroplane flew over Geelong and attracted considerable attention. The New Zealander, J.J. Hammond, who had arrived at Altona near Melbourne a week earlier, had unpacked his 'No. 10' Bristol biplane, and on 10 February 1911 he flew to Geelong and landed at the Showgrounds at Breakwater¹⁴⁴⁴ (Figure 3.172). The unique event – and the reaction by the community – was romantically detailed in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

All went well aloft, and before 6.30 a.m. he was mystifying drowsy householders at North Geelong with the aggravated bee-buzz of his seven-cylindered Gnome motor. A few farmers in milking sheds beheld him, with open mouths, swish hundreds of feet overhead citywards, and the first big knot of spectators was approached at the Corporation Yards, where auctioneers and buyers had wondered for some minutes at the strange din, never contemplating the sensation of an aeroplane visit. When the machine forced itself on their notice bids went by the board, and everybody cheered lustily at the graceful object overhead. Turning eastwards over Church-street Hammond brought out dozens of curious people from Geelong West clad in night attire, and then wheeled again towards the Western Baths. Cutting off the corner at Cannon Hill [Western Beach] he was for a few seconds over water, and coming in behind the baths was heartily welcomed by the early brigade of morning swimmers. From the piers cheers went up from shipping and workmen, and were acknowledged from aloft with a wave of the hand. Manoeuvring eastwards the bi-plane, now at an altitude of 1500 ft., appeared to pass almost directly over the electric works smoke stack, and then followed the beach reserves as far as Swanston-street, to receive another hearty bathers' welcome there. When miles off Hammond had selected the flats around South Geelong as a desirable spot to land, and from the sea end of Swanston-street he turned south to make the descent. Once more over the populated area, the machine with its booming continuous whirr was waking late sleepers; but few

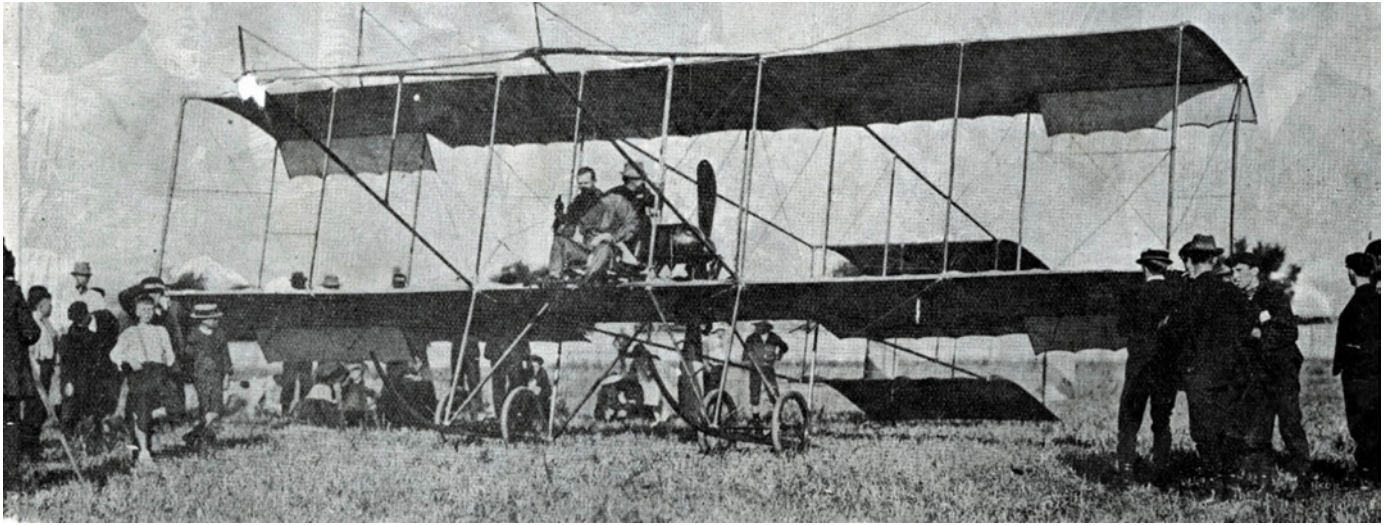


Figure 3.172: Mr Hammond, aviator, being greeted at the showgrounds, 1911. Source: *News of the Week*, 23 February 1911, p.18, GRS 2295/052, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

divined the cause, and thus missed the inspiring sight. Only a mere handful of people were out of doors to send a feeble but well-meant cheer up to the airman, who swerved more to the west before making his final choice for the run down. The Show Grounds looked the most favourable spot, and he could not have chosen better.¹⁴⁴⁵

BELMONT COMMON AERODROME

The pioneer of aviation in Geelong was the New Zealander, Charles Daniel Pratt (1892-1968)¹⁴⁴⁶ (Figure 3.173). He was one of seven children to Justin Percival Pratt (a carpenter) and Elizabeth Margaretta Pellatt (formerly of Folkstone, Kent, England).¹⁴⁴⁷ With his brother, Alfred Joseph (1894-1963), Charles enlisted as militia members of the Heretonga branch of the Wellington Mounted Rifles.¹⁴⁴⁸ In 1910, Charles was employed as grocer's clerk for Ernest Sutherland in Nagaoi before taking up the same position with H. Anderson at Helensville. Both Charles and Alfred enlisted to serve in World War One.¹⁴⁴⁹ With Alfred, he spent time at Gallipoli where Alfred was soon injured and repatriated back to New Zealand.¹⁴⁵⁰ As an accomplished horseman and skilled motorcycle mechanic and rider, Charles was subsequently attached to the New Zealand Light Horse in Palestine as a signaller.¹⁴⁵¹ Promoted to Lance-Corporal, Pratt accompanied the New Zealand and Australian Light Horse from Palestine to Syria as a motorcycle despatch rider.¹⁴⁵² In December 19017, he joined the Royal Flying Corps and given his high aptitude, he was appointed a certified instructor.

Following the end of the war in 1919, Pratt purchased four surplus aeroplanes in Egypt to be shipped to New Zealand where he proposed to commence an aviation business.¹⁴⁵³



Figure 3.173: Charles Pratt as an Officer in the Royal Flying Corps, Egypt, 1918. Source: K. O'Reilly, *Charles Pratt of Belmont Common*, p.5 (with permission).



Figure 3.174: Charles Pratt & others with bi-plane, c.1920s.
Source: accession H2016.96/97 State Library of Victoria.

Signed on as a crew member of the *Cooee* to accompany his purchase home, the route included a stop-over at Melbourne where there was a shipping strike. The delay caused Pratt to assemble one of his planes at the wharf.¹⁴⁵⁴ Pratt then began flying in earnest and in 1920 proposed to establish an aviation company at the Belmont Common with Captain Leslie Clarke, formerly of the Royal Flying Corps¹⁴⁵⁵ (Figure 3.174). The *Geelong Advertiser* gave the following report:

Messrs. Pratt and Clarke have definitely decided to establish their aerodrome and works in Geelong. At present a company is in process of formation, and particulars will be definitely announced later. The balance of Lieut. Pratt's machines has now arrived from Sydney, and are in course of construction at the Gordon College workshops. There will be four machines for the present. The one which did such a successful flying during the summer season is still on the Belmont Common; one is being assembled, and the other two are being taken from the cases for assembly. There will now be two De Havillands, one of the latest type Avros, and a "pup," in addition to half a dozen spare engines. Business travelling will be the main occupation during the winter months, but with the coming of the finer weather the pleasure trips will start again.¹⁴⁵⁶

The *Geelong Advertiser* article indicated that Pratt had established connections with the Gordon Technical College, with its Principal, George King, realising the benefits of training students in aeronautical engineering. Pratt's brother, Percival Justin Pratt (1888-1968) had also been appointed to supervise the students.¹⁴⁵⁷ In 1924, the *Geelong Advertiser* claimed that from the Gordon College workshop, the Pratt brothers were 'the first to construct an aeroplane in Australia.'¹⁴⁵⁸ Percy Pratt later

claimed that he had built the first commercial aeroplane in Australia.¹⁴⁵⁹

In addition to supervising the construction of aeroplanes, Charles Pratt operated a charter business while the brothers also ran the Geelong Flying School. In 1922, R. Mawson became the first student to qualify with his pilot's certificate as part of the joint venture of Pratt and the Gordon Technical College.¹⁴⁶⁰ It was also in 1922 when Charles Pratt visited Rainbow in the Wimmera where he met the local mechanic, George MacKenzie (1896-1984).¹⁴⁶¹ MacKenzie had joined the Point Cook Flying School in 1918 but his training was cut short due to his Germanic heritage.¹⁴⁶² He maintained contact with Graham Carey, formerly of the Flying School who operated the Melbourne Air Service. He supplied the instruments and an engine for Mackenzie's own aeroplane which he built in a hay shed at Pella, near Rainbow.¹⁴⁶³ While the first test flight in 1921 proved unsuccessful (the test pilot, Captain Whittingham crashing it into Mallee scrub), it was during repairs when Charles Pratt came to Rainbow.¹⁴⁶⁴ Mackenzie was offered employment as a mechanic with the Pratt Brothers at the Belmont Common and was later promoted to chief engineer.¹⁴⁶⁵ He was later to open a motor garage repair business at the corner of High and Sommers Street, Belmont.¹⁴⁶⁶

In c.1923, Charles and Percy Pratt were also joined by their brother Frank (Leonard Frank) Pratt and following pilot training, he became part of the Geelong Flying School.¹⁴⁶⁷ The Aircraft Manufacturing and Supply Company of Australia was established by the Pratt Brothers in 1924 and headed by Percy. He was reported in the *Geelong Advertiser* at this time:

Mr. P.J. Pratt is thoroughly convinced that aircraft for Australia should be designed and built in Australia to suit our conditions, owing to the wide range of flying conditions in the various parts of Australia, also the many different purposes which aircraft can advantageously be made use of. Therefore he is now setting up an aircraft manufacturing industry in Geelong. His objects in establishing the industry are to manufacture aircraft, recondition aircraft, and stock aircraft materials, both for military and civil aviation in Australia. The present time Pratt Bros. have a D.H.9 240 h.p. Siddeley Puma engine which has been reconditioned for the Department of Defence.¹⁴⁶⁸

The school, charter business and workshops were accommodated in gabled hangars in the north-west corner of the Belmont Common, near the intersection of High Street and Barwon Heads Road (Figure 3.175).

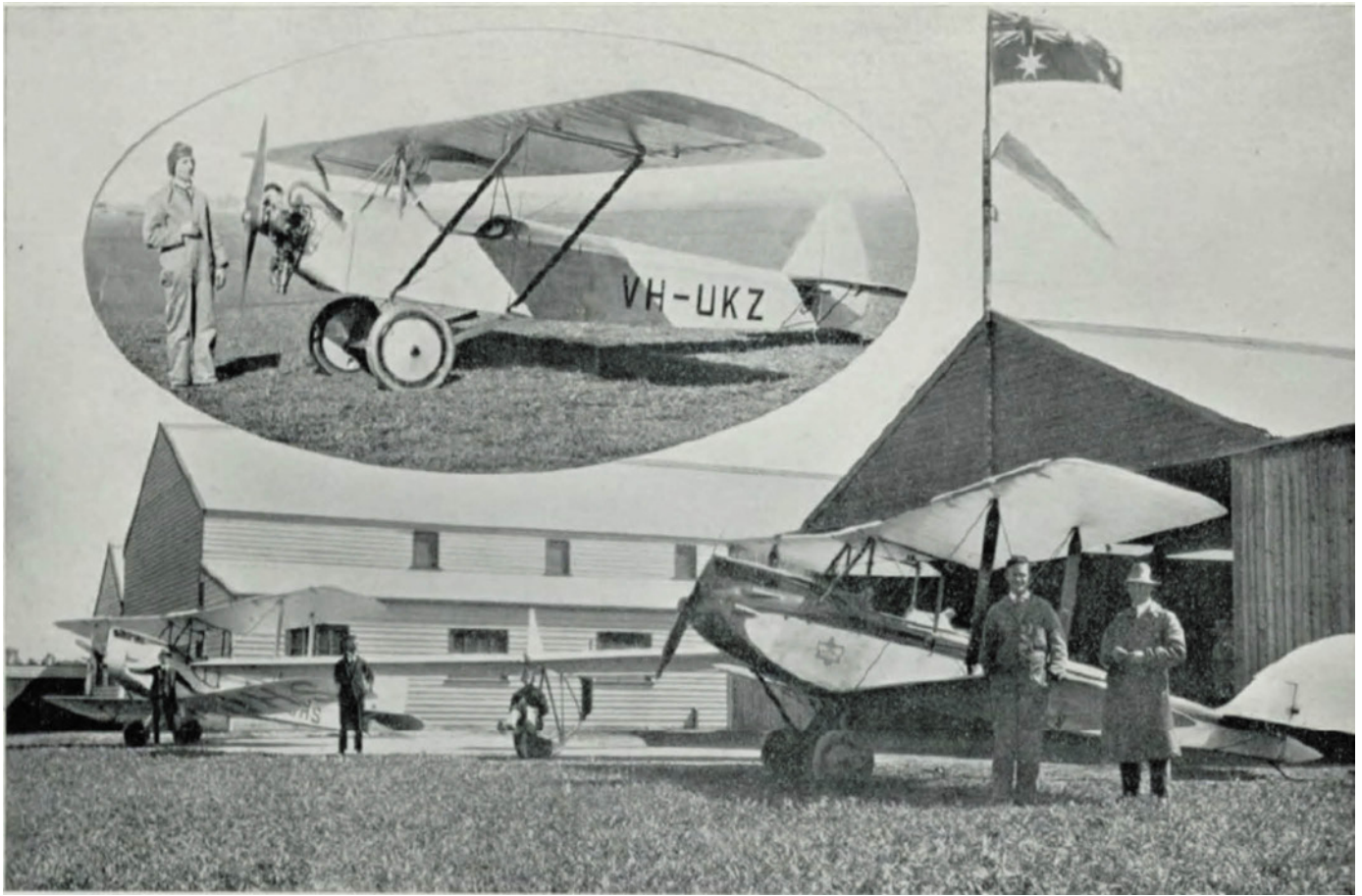


Figure 3.175: Belmont Aerodrome, c.1930. Source: *Geelong Its Advantages & Opportunities*, 1930.



Figure 3.176: Group photograph at the Geelong Flying School, c.1920s. Source: accession H2016.297/17 State Library of Victoria.

In late 1927 with Lieutenant Ray Parer's aeroplane service in New Guinea proving so successful and the need for addition planes given the opening of gold fields,¹⁴⁶⁹ Charles Pratt provided a charter service between the coast at Salamona and the goldfields.¹⁴⁷⁰ He was joined by Frank Pratt as mechanic until Frank contracted malaria in 1928 and the brothers returned to Geelong.¹⁴⁷¹ Meanwhile, Percy Pratt had established a gliding business at the Belmont Common which caused a falling out with Charles, their differences irreconcilable.¹⁴⁷²

In 1929 from their return from New Guinea, Charles and Frank formed C.D. and L.F Pratt Pty Ltd 'for the encouragement and development of aeronautics.'¹⁴⁷³ Frank went into the motorcycle business in 1933, with Percy continuing the Aircraft Manufacturing and Supply Company. Charles Pratt continued to operate his Flying School at Belmont (Figure 3.176). One of his more notable pupils during this period was John (Jack) Evan Price (1911-1941).¹⁴⁷⁴

At Belmont, the value of the Pratt Brothers aerodrome was outlined in 1938 by the E.C. Johnston, Controller of Civil Aviation to the Geelong Harbor Trust (who owned the land):

The Commissioners of the [Harbor] Trust doubtless realise the advantages to the residents of Geelong of a suitable aerodrome being available, and it is hoped the Trust will continue to permit a portion of Belmont Common to be used for aerodrome purposes. In this connection might I refer to a reported statement of Mr. Robert Purnell, Chairman of Geelong Harbor Trust, at a meeting of the Geelong Chamber of Commerce on 8th April 1929, that the area of Belmont Common had been reserved permanently as an aerodrome.¹⁴⁷⁵

Percy Pratt continued his gliding business at the Belmont aerodrome and during World War Two he established the Australian Air League to school cadets in all aspects of flying training.¹⁴⁷⁶ Having lived in a room at the his workshop at the Belmont Common, Pratt sold the remainder of his business during the war and retired to St. Leonards and later to Batesford, before returning home to New Zealand where he died in 1968.¹⁴⁷⁷

Charles Pratt had relocated his flying school to Essendon in 1938. An avid photographer, he also purchased a model K Cine camera with three lenses from Harringtons. Since he commenced flying in Geelong, Pratt had taken a unique collection of 'Airspy' aerial photographs of the Geelong and surrounding areas, often flying the original aerial photographer, William Hansom of 'Airspy' on professional shoots.¹⁴⁷⁸ This he continued until the 1960s. While no physical legacy of the Pratt Brothers' flying school and workshops at the Belmont Common survive, Charles Pratt's large collection of aerial photographs from

the 1920s until the 1960s are a highly significant legacy of his extraordinary contribution to aviation in Geelong and beyond.

SUBURBAN AIRPORTS

LOVELY BANKS

An airport was opened at Lovely Banks south of Elcho Road (west side of the Bacchus Marsh Road) before May 1950.¹⁴⁷⁹ It appears that the site was then owned by Hugh Emmerson, a greyhound trainer.¹⁴⁸⁰ He sold it to Jack Ellis and Stan Vandewiel in 1968 who established the Pilot Makers Ellis Flying School.¹⁴⁸¹ The runway was graded and the aerodrome operated as a training ground and for aircraft maintenance in its initial years.¹⁴⁸² It also provided fuelling facilities. Later, the aerodrome was used for business flights, with East Coast providing travel to Sydney.¹⁴⁸³ Return flights were at times more precarious, for the plane would land on a paddock that is now Corio Village Shopping Centre if the wind was blowing from the wrong direction. Sky driving was also part of the activities at the site.¹⁴⁸⁴ By the early 1980s, the aerodrome was no longer in use, the aircraft facility having been disbanded (Figure 3.177), possibly with the further development of Avalon Airport and as a consequence of the severe air space restrictions and instrument approach system limitations.¹⁴⁸⁵

GROVEDALE

In 1966, allotment H of section 12 on the west side of the Torquay Road (now Surf Coast Highway) comprising the farmland of James Rainford was purchased by Leslie Mahon, local aviator, and his wife.¹⁴⁸⁶ It served the Geelong community as an airport until the major residential development known as Armstrong Creek commenced in 2013 (see Theme 6).

BARWON HEADS AIRPORT

In c.1978, the Geelong Aero Club acquired the former Connewarre Presbyterian Church and site at 1401-1409 Barwon Heads Road. The Federation Carpenter Gothic styled church building had been built in 1915 (although two acres of land had been temporarily reserved by the Presbyterian Church as early as 1861). The Barwon Heads Airport continues to function to the present day.¹⁴⁸⁷

AVALON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

In 1949, the owner of Avalon Homestead, Richard Austin, sold 2,400 acres of his Avalon Homestead sheep grazing property to the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation for use as a jet test field and assembly plant.¹⁴⁸⁸ In 1987, the Government Aircraft factories were partially privatised,



Figure 3.177: Abandoned air traffic control tower, Lovely Banks airport, 1999. Source: David Rowe.

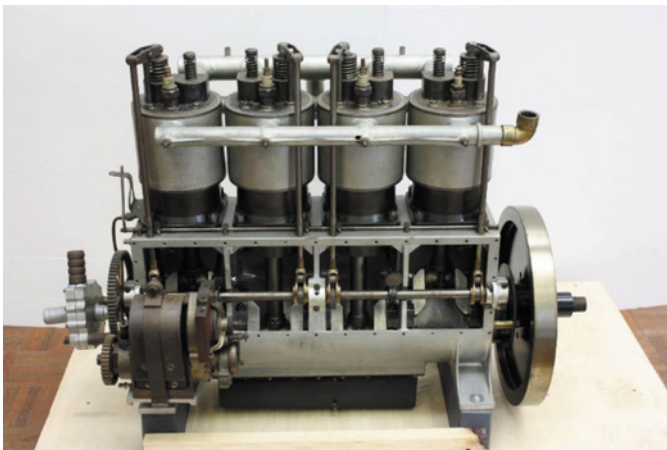


Figure 3.178: Wright Model 'A' aero engine previously owned by Hans Anderson of Geelong. Source: Item ST 20914 Museums Victoria.

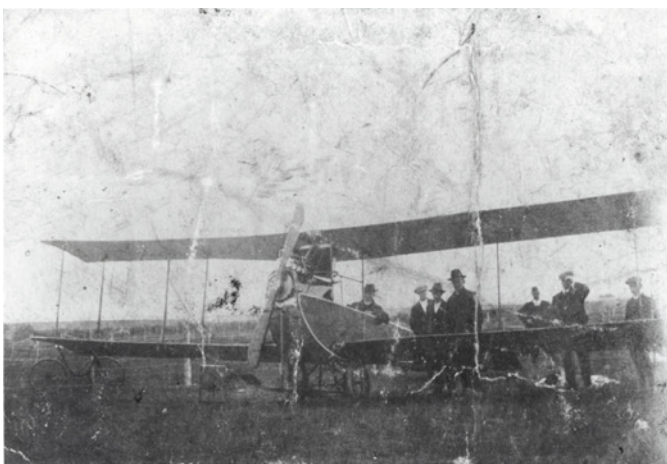


Figure 3.179: Hans Anderson (seated in cockpit) & a group of six men, probably at the Belmont Common, c.1916. Source: Item MM 107177 Museums Victoria.

with operations being taken over by Aerospace Technologies Australia.¹⁴⁸⁹ By 31 December 1997, the airport was completely owned by Linfox Transport (Aust.) Pty Ltd.¹⁴⁹⁰ Air shows were held at Avalon from around this time.

Although the first schedule passenger flights from Avalon began in February 1995 and operated by Hazelton Airlines, the service was discontinued due to a lack of patronage.¹⁴⁹¹ In 2004, Avalon airport became a terminus for Jetstar and from 2010 Tiger Airways (although the latter ceased operating from Avalon a year later).¹⁴⁹² In 2012, it was announced that Avalon was to become Victoria's second international airport terminal. It was not until December 2018 when the international terminal was opened.¹⁴⁹³

WRIGHT MODEL 'A' AERO ENGINE

While no planes, machinery or other equipment are known to survive from the Pratt brothers in Geelong, Museums Victoria holds a four cylinder vertical water-cooled aero engine (Figure 3.178) designed by Orville Wright in c.1906 that has associations with Geelong.¹⁴⁹⁴ It was built under licence by Bariquand et Marré, a Parisian engineering firm in c.1908-09.¹⁴⁹⁵ A modification was made to the valve and cam design, much to the displeasure of Wilbur Wright who supervised the manufacture of the engine in France. According to Museums Victoria, 'this is the engine from the only Wright biplane imported into Australia.'¹⁴⁹⁶ Known as the Wright Model 'A', it was imported by Lawrence Arthur Adamson from Europe in October 1909.¹⁴⁹⁷ Named 'The Stella', the engine was used by Colin Defries 'to achieve the first powered flight in Australia' from Victoria Park Racecourse, Sydney.¹⁴⁹⁸ In 1915, Hans Christian Anderson, a Danish-born motor garage proprietor of Geelong purchased an Avro-Type bi-plane from John Duigan (which he had built at Ivanhoe) and fitted it with the Wright Model 'A' aero engine previously owned by Colin Defries.¹⁴⁹⁹ Anderson had established a motor car garage in Geelong several years earlier but became insolvent in 1909 due to 'dullness in trade.'¹⁵⁰⁰ By 1915, he had re-established his motor car garage in Myers Street before relocating to 249 Moorabool Street by 1920 and to 256 Moorabool Street by 1926.¹⁵⁰¹ An avid aviator, Anderson was well-known to Charles Pratt who was a visitor to the Anderson residence.¹⁵⁰² Anderson appears to have kept his plane at the Belmont Common as it was from there where he made several flights in his plane before crashing it at Lovely Banks¹⁵⁰³ (Figure 3.179). Following the crash, Anderson's Model 'A' engine languished in a Geelong garage for many years before being donated to Museums Victoria in 1975.¹⁵⁰⁴

3.7 POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH SERVICES

THE FIRST ORGANISED COMMUNICATION SERVICES IN GREATER GEELONG

Organised and recognised communication between communities in Greater Geelong stems back many thousands of years. Clans of the Traditional Owners of Greater Geelong, the Wadawurrung, and other Language Groups who visited the area communicated through their Bihar, a highly respected member and official messenger (postman) of each Clan.¹⁵⁰⁵

EUROPEAN POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH SERVICES IN GREATER GEELONG

POSTAL SERVICES

The establishment of postal and telegraph services throughout Greater Geelong from the early 19th century was essential to the ongoing development of towns and rural centres. At the beginning of 1839, a year after a township plan for Geelong had been prepared, tenders were advertised for a regular mail service between Melbourne and Geelong.¹⁵⁰⁶ Delays ensued due to the cost of the service, and James Raymond, Postmaster General of the General Post Office in Sydney wrote to Captain Lonsdale in Melbourne seeking out 'what prospect the Government may have of the postage on letters to that settlement defraying the expenditure.'¹⁵⁰⁷ In March 1839, an informal mail service between Geelong and Melbourne was established.¹⁵⁰⁸

It was not until 6 March 1840 when the mail service was formalised by the New South Wales Government.¹⁵⁰⁹ The *Port Phillip Gazette* had announced a few weeks earlier that:

The mail will be despatched from the Post Office here every Friday morning, and will return on Sunday evening. The Clerk of the Bench at Geelong has been appointed Postmaster for that town.¹⁵¹⁰

While Alfred J. Eyre had replaced Henry Hesketh as Clerk of the Bench in October in 1839, the first official postmaster appointed for Geelong was the local Police Constable, Patrick McKeever (1809-1870), and not as might have been expected, the Clerk of the Bench.¹⁵¹¹ He combined the role as postmaster with his policing responsibilities from a post office established in Barwon Terrace, South Geelong.¹⁵¹² By 1840, a second post office outlet had been established in the offices of P.W. Welch and Co., merchants, Malop Street, 'North' Geelong, with Welch's clerk acting as unofficial postmaster.¹⁵¹³

By May 1841, the official post office had relocated to 'Fyans street, nearly opposite Mr Langhorn's building' in South Geelong.¹⁵¹⁴

Geelong's first postmaster, Patrick McKeever, resigned in June 1841.¹⁵¹⁵ He was born in Omah, Fermanagh, Ireland, the son of John and Bridget (nee Hands) McKeever. In 1827, he enlisted in the 4th (King's Own) Regiment, his first posting being to Tynemouth Castle, Northumberland. After commissions at Edinburgh Castle and at Glasgow, Cavan and Dublin in Ireland, and Stockport, Chester and Bicester in England, he was posted aboard the convict ship William Glen Anderson in 1831.¹⁵¹⁶ He arrived at Hobart, Tasmania with 166 convicts in November of that year.¹⁵¹⁷ He remained in Tasmania until he was posted to Norfolk Island and Moreton Bay (where he was batman for Captain Foster Fyans – see Theme 7). In 1837, McKeever was discharged from New South Wales and took up a position as one of the first constables at Geelong under the charge of Fyans. In addition to his duties as constable and postmaster, he was the Inspector of Distilleries and of Slaughterhouses.¹⁵¹⁸ McKeever resigned from the police and public service in 1847 and took over the license of the Retreat Inn, South Geelong.¹⁵¹⁹ McKeever's time as publican was cut short due to ill-health and he returned to England in December 1847 with his wife, Sarah, and daughter, Mary.¹⁵²⁰ McKeever and family returned to Geelong in 1848 where he took up the license of the Petrel Hotel at Ashby (Geelong West).¹⁵²¹ He died at his residence at Western Beach, Geelong in 1870 at the age of 61.¹⁵²²

Alfred Eyre was appointed postmaster of the Geelong Post Office in place of McKeever in 1841.¹⁵²³ In July of that year, he had the post office relocated to Corio Street, 'North Corio' (Geelong), in 'the north end of Mr. Shaen's Stores'¹⁵²⁴ (this might have been when the post office outlet in Welch's offices closed). Eyre was already overtaxed with his duties as Clerk of Courts and appointed Benjamin Shaen as his assistant.¹⁵²⁵ Shaen was manager of Henry Ward Mason's store in Corio Street.¹⁵²⁶ When Eyre sought permission to resign as postmaster in November 1841, he had recommended Shaen take over the role.¹⁵²⁷ However Shaen relinquished his management of Mason's store in January 1842 and in March of that year, Eyre's other postal assistant, William Turner, was appointed to the role instead.¹⁵²⁸

When Turner resigned in August 1842 to return to England,¹⁵²⁹ James Harrison, recently-appointed Editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* (see later subsection), became the postmaster.¹⁵³⁰ The post office was relocated to Yarra Street, in the building 'formerly occupied by Miss Fulloon's school from 1841.'¹⁵³¹ The post office moved next door



Figure 3.180: Pillar Box, Hitchcock Avenue, Barwon Heads, 2002. Source: David Rowe.

to a 'new stone building' in 1844.¹⁵³² For a brief period between 1847 and 1848, the local merchant, William Roope of Little Malop Street, acted as postmaster.¹⁵³³

In June 1856, William Thacker was appointed postmaster and served at Geelong until 1869.¹⁵³⁴ He was postmaster when the Clerk of Works, Henry Ginn, called tenders for improvements to the post office in 1850,¹⁵³⁵ possibly when the post office had moved to 'a small wooden cottage' opposite the Royal Theatre in Malop Street.¹⁵³⁶ By 1854, the post office had relocated to Peter and James Donnelly's timber auction rooms at the corner of Little Malop and Union Streets (later the Newmarket Hotel).¹⁵³⁷

POSTAL SERVICES AND POST OFFICES IN GREATER GEELONG

OVERVIEW

The postal service kept pace with population growth¹⁵³⁸ in Greater Geelong. Throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, over 60 post offices were opened (see Appendix 3.3 for a list of all known post offices that opened in Greater Geelong).¹⁵³⁹ Several of these outlets reflected the population growth and elevated status of some outlining centres such as Anakie (opened 1858), Batesford (opened 1856), Bellarine (opened 1855), Fyansford (opened 1859), Leopold (opened 1858), Moolap (opened 1864), Portarlington (opened 1863) and St. Leonards (opened 1860).¹⁵⁴⁰ The opening of the different railway lines also influenced the location and establishment of some post office such as those that opened at railway stations at Marshall (Connewarre) (c.1910) (replacing a more substantial timber post office at the junction of the Barwon Heads Road built in 1873),¹⁵⁴¹ Drysdale (c.1910), and Marcus Hill (1890). Others were created to meet specific demand such as the Geelong Cricket Ground Post Office (1933-1940) and the Ocean Grove Military Post Office (20 November 1939-19 December 1939) (see Theme 7 for further details).¹⁵⁴²

Of this substantial number of post offices that served Greater Geelong, only four 19th and early 20th century buildings still exist: former Geelong Post Office; Geelong West Post Office, former Portarlington Post Office; and the former Drysdale Post Office.¹⁵⁴³ The Geelong West Post Office is the sole surviving building that continues to serve its original post office purpose.

PILLAR BOXES

An economical method of servicing the suburbs and outer areas was the installation of cast iron post office letter receiving pillars. These cylindrical hollow iron structures were to become distinctive throughout the suburban streetscapes and some rural areas given their bright red paintwork. The earliest appear to have been commissioned in 1866, with John Anderson appointed to manufacture and erect 33 iron letter-receiving pillars' at different locations, presumably across Melbourne.¹⁵⁴⁴ The first pillars in Greater Geelong came in 1870 when it was announced that they were to be placed on the Fyansford Road 'near the building formerly known as the Travellers' Hotel;' at the corner of Aphrasia Street and Shannon Avenue, Newtown; at the corner of Ryrrie and



Figure 3.181: Geelong Post Office, fronting Ryrie Street, n.d. [c.1860]. Source: GRS 1231/2 Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

Yarra Streets, Geelong; at the corner of Malop and Fitzroy Streets, Geelong; and at the corner of Myers and Bellerine Streets, Geelong.¹⁵⁴⁵ The patterns and manufacture for the local pillars were prepared by Messrs. Humble and Co. of the Vulcan Foundry, Geelong.¹⁵⁴⁶ By 1922, 45 pillar boxes had been installed throughout the city and suburbs.¹⁵⁴⁷ Only two survive in 2019: one at the north-east corner of Swanston Street and Alexandra Avenue, the other in Hitchcock Avenue, Barwon Heads (Figure 3.180).

GEELONG POST OFFICE

In May 1853, the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* declared that an imperative necessity was 'a Post Office adequate to the property discharge of an increased business, and an additional number of clerks.'¹⁵⁴⁸ The existing building at the corner of Little Malop and Union Streets was considered too small.¹⁵⁴⁹ Recommendations of a site for a new Post Office were given by the Geelong Town Council to the Victorian Government. Three locations were provided: land occupied by the watch house at the corner of Corio and Moorabool-streets; north side of Malop street (Between Clare and Gheringhap Streets); and the south side of Malop Street, at the corner of Gheringhap Street. Although Council initially suggested the watchhouse site, the decision was reconsidered and a recommendation was put to the Government that a site at the corner of Ryrie and Gheringhap Streets be approved.¹⁵⁵⁰ This site had formed part of the original 49 acre reserve for ornamental gardens (Johnstone Park) between Ryrie Street and

Brougham Plan, and Gheringhap Street and Latrobe Terrace.¹⁵⁵¹ While the choice of site might have been strategic in being nearby the site of the proposed Geelong Town Hall on the Johnstone Park reserve, in viewing distance to the Geelong railway terminus then under construction and on the main route west to the goldfields, not all were convinced that this was the most ideal location for a post office. *The Argus* called Geelong locals 'our grumbling friends' in relation to the petitioning for and 'central location' of a post office.¹⁵⁵² Yet, the *Geelong Advertiser* declared that the post office could have filled 'the unsightly gap in Moorabool-street' at Market Square, quipping that its proposed location – and that of the Town Hall – were 'to be built in some out-of-the-way corners, nobody knows exactly where.'¹⁵⁵³

By late 1854, a design had been prepared for a single storey post office by the Colonial Engineer's Office.¹⁵⁵⁴ This was a time of notable change within the public service as from 1 January 1854 the Colonial Architect's office had merged with the Colonial Engineer's Office, and some public works were postponed until the arrival of the new Governor, Sir Charles Hotham.¹⁵⁵⁵ After taking office, Hotham retrenched several departmental officers in an effort to reduce government expenditure.¹⁵⁵⁶ Hotham also suspended public works in June of 1855, and on 1 January 1856 the Public Works Department was created, headed by Charles Pasley, Commissioner.¹⁵⁵⁷ The designer of the first purpose-built post office at Geelong is unclear, but the Palladian composition with its raised, parapeted central wing and arcaded entrance loggia, and flanking

hipped bays, expressed the hallmarks of the work of J.J. Clark, departmental draftsman, who had prepared a design for Geelong' first Supreme Court in Myers Street and a new Custom House in Brougham Street, simultaneous to the preparation of the design of the post office (see Theme 7).

Given the departmental turmoil, a contract was approved in April 1855 for the construction of part of the new post office only, comprising a raised central bay and an east wing. It was awarded to W.C. Cornish and Co. at a cost of £8200 and it was built of Barrabool stone.¹⁵⁵⁸ The new post office opened on 28 December 1855, with the furniture and material from the previous building being relocated to the new premises that evening.¹⁵⁵⁹

In June 1856, Charles Pasley called tenders for the 'second wing' of the post office.¹⁵⁶⁰ The contract was let to Cowenden and Gray at a cost of £2900.¹⁵⁶¹ Building works were completed and postal operations had commenced in April 1857, with one Melbourne citizen declaring:

... on a recent visit [to Geelong] we had the pleasure of seeing the very handsome and commodious Post Office [Figure 3.181] now erected in Geelong, and we have pleasure in testifying that the clerks there were most civil and attentive; were ready not only to weigh letters, but to give every information in their power.¹⁵⁶²

The first postmaster of the purpose-built building was the existing incumbent, William Thacker (1816-1875). He was born at Leeds, Yorkshire, England, the son of William Thacker, a printer, and Hannah (nee Cope) Thacker. In 1842, the year William Thacker junior married Miss Sarah Annie Birkwood Taylor at Leeds Parish Church, Yorkshire, he emigrated to Australia with his wife.¹⁵⁶³ He was appointed a collector and shipping reporter for the *Port Phillip Gazette and Settlers' Journal* until 1846 when he took up a position as a junior clerk in the Melbourne Post Office.¹⁵⁶⁴ In 1848, Thacker was promoted to postmaster at Geelong.¹⁵⁶⁵ It was there where three of his four children were born: Sherwood (1850), unnamed female (died aged 7 weeks, 1852) and Birkwood (1859).¹⁵⁶⁶ In 1859, William Thacker's brother, Henry, (1826-1908), also emigrated from Yorkshire to be with his brother.¹⁵⁶⁷ In Geelong, Henry followed his father in the printing business, establishing a printery in Ryrie Street (see Theme 5). Both Thacker brothers were involved in the Methodist Church, their father having been a local preacher for many years.¹⁵⁶⁸ William Thacker also became a local preacher in Geelong, as well as a class leader of the Sunday School.¹⁵⁶⁹ In 1865, William Thacker and his family returned to England for a holiday. The high regard paid to Thacker on his pending departure was outlined in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

During all these years Mr Thacker has discharged the duties of his office in a manner that has gained him the general esteem of all classes. We have had a great deal to do with the Post-office. The letters sent and received by us during Mr Thacker's reign must be numbered by tens of thousands, the newspapers by hundreds of thousands, yet, we are not aware that even one single letter or paper ever went astray or was unduly delayed in delivery through any fault in the Geelong office. As to letters, our experience is entirely favorable, not only to the Geelong office but to all others in the colony. Where irregularities have occurred and been traced, they have in variably been found to be the result of defective address, insufficient stamps, or other carelessness on the part of the sender or his messenger. But we are wandering from Mr Thacker, to whose ability and courtesy in the discharge of his onerous duties we can testify on the strength of seventeen years' experience. We trust that he will not be allowed to depart, though it may only be for a time, without some little token of remembrance from his Geelong friends, both public and private.¹⁵⁷⁰

Thacker returned to his position as postmaster at Geelong until 1869 when he was transferred to Ballarat.¹⁵⁷¹ His departure was precipitated by the amalgamation of the Post Office and Electric Telegraph in March 1869.¹⁵⁷² The *Geelong Advertiser* was not impressed with the amalgamation:

This embodying the telegraph station with the post-office is another slight which our representatives ought not to allow to be passed on Geelong, as there can be no doubt either of the offices is quite as much as any one man can superintend.¹⁵⁷³

Thacker's successor was Samuel Vivian, a Telegraph Officer stationmaster since 1854.¹⁵⁷⁴

SECOND POST OFFICE BUILDING

By the 1880s, the high regard earlier paid to the post office building had evaporated. The Victorian gold rushes and the boom years of the 1880s had brought the construction of 'very handsome and exceptionally commodious Post and Telegraph offices' at Bendigo, Maryborough, Horsham, Stawell, Warrnambool, Queenscliff and elsewhere.¹⁵⁷⁵ Geelong, as the State's major regional city, had been left behind. Even the new post and telegraph office that was built in 1886 in Geelong West, was considered superior, the Mayor of Geelong lamenting at the laying of the foundation stone of the Geelong West building that 'in Geelong proper they had no public buildings of which they could be at all proud' and that he 'hoped that some money would soon be

granted them in Geelong, for the purpose of a post office at least.¹⁵⁷⁶ Further criticism of the Geelong edifice was extolled by the *Geelong Advertiser*:

For years complaints have been made of the wretched, ugly structure at the corner of Ryrie and Gheringhap streets which has accommodated the post and telegraph office employees to a certain degree, and aggravated the public. From time to time alterations and additions of a very trivial description have been effected, but whilst satisfying the public spasmodically the main cause of complaint has been left unremedied, thus continuing the same sources of annoyance as in days of yore. The existing building is a low squat structure, built of freestone, altogether inadequately supplied with ventilating appliances, and somewhat deficient in the matter of affording light to persons compelled to pass the hours of daylight within its frowsy, forbidding walls. The business, both in the postal and telegraphic branches, has gradually increased for many years, and in importance the offices in Geelong may safely be reckoned to be, if not in the first at least in the second rank, under the circumstances entitled to receive due attention from the Government.¹⁵⁷⁷

Civic agitation for the construction of a new post office was led by the Mayor, Henry Meakin, in 1887. A year later in 1888 a site meeting was held with the Postmaster-General who agreed that 'Geelong warranted a new post office and that his department would select a site for a new post office' but that he could make no commitments.¹⁵⁷⁸ In April 1888, John Henry Marsden, Public Works Department, met Mayor Meakin and Messrs Donaghy and Andrews M.L.A.s in relation to a new post and telegraph office building, the meeting being reported in the *Geelong Advertiser*:

Mr Marsden considered the present site of the offices referred to was an excellent one for the new premises, and submitted the details of the sketch plans for the proposed structure, which is to be a two-storey building, made of Geelong bricks, cement on the outside. It is to have two frontages, one facing Ryrie-street and the other facing Gheringhap-street, and above the corner a clock tower is to be made a conspicuous ornament. The upper storey of the new building is probably intended to be utilised for a Telephone Exchange, and for the post and telegraph masters' quarters. The sketch of the proposed structure, together with the details, were approved of, and it was stated that plans would be immediately prepared and submitted to the Hon. The Postmaster-General.¹⁵⁷⁹

J.H. Marsden (1844-1913) had joined the Victorian Public Works Department in 1872 and throughout his career he was responsible for various public works design in Western Victoria as well as 'some of the most important State buildings in the metropolis', with the Geelong Post Office being one of his more noteworthy designs.¹⁵⁸⁰

Marsden's scheme was to provide for one of the largest regional post offices in Victoria. Designed in a flamboyant Late Victorian Boom style with influences of French Second Empire (Figure 3.182), the building was to become a local landmark. On the ground floor (Figure 3.183), a posting arcade (flanked by public lobbies) was to provide entry to a large central mail room. On the east side was to be a private delivery and stamp branch room, stairhall, lobby and electric telegraph room in the north-east corner. On the west side was to be the private entrance for the postmaster, together with private living quarters (dining room, kitchen, larder and scullery). To the north of the mail room was to be a lobby, postmaster's room and messenger's waiting room. First floor spaces (Figure 3.184) flanked a central lantern light to the mail room below. On the south side was to be a Lands and Survey office and Lands Board Room while to the east was proposed public offices with a telephone exchange in the north-east corner. On the west side was the remainder of the private quarters of the postmaster, including drawing room, four bedrooms, servant's room and bathroom. To the north was the night operator's bedroom (with a bathroom), day operator's retiring room and a storeroom. Given the steeply sloping topography of the site, the design allowed for a basement at the north end, within which were to be housed the letter carrier's room, a lobby, stair hall, wash house, battery room and female retiring room.

The contract for the new building was awarded to David Kinnaird at a cost of £17,850 in September 1889.¹⁵⁸¹ The Corio Brick and Tile Company were contracted to supply the bricks.¹⁵⁸² L. Ryan of the Union Club Hotel purchased the old post office for removal, the building 'rapidly disappearing' by October 1889. The stone was transported to 240-242 Malop Street where it was used to build two dwellings designed by Joseph Watts.¹⁵⁸³

On 12 February 1890, the Governor of Victoria, Lord Hopetoun, laid the foundation stone for the proposed commodious edifice. The ceremony was attended by 3,500 people who witnessed the burying of a time capsule.¹⁵⁸⁴ Temporary postal services had been relocated to the former skating rink in Little Malop Street. Postal operations commenced in the new building on 27 April 1891.¹⁵⁸⁵



Figure 3.182: J.H. Marsden, Post and Telegraph Office Geelong, Front Elevation, 1889. Source: NAA: B3712, drawer 66, folder 10, part 1, National Archives of Australia.

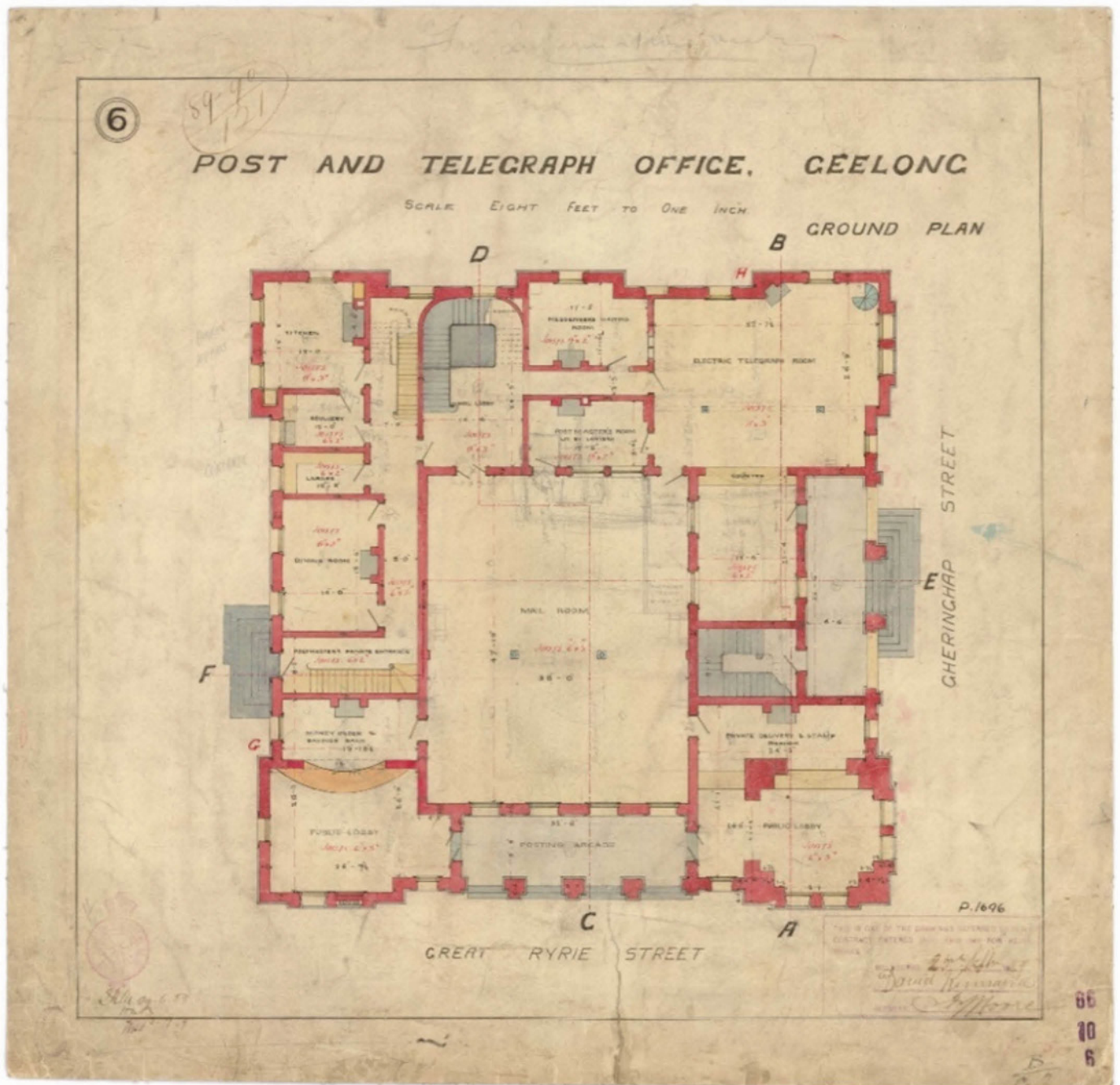


Figure 3.183: J.H. Marsden, Post and Telegraph Office Geelong, Ground Plan, 1889. Source: NAA: B3712, drawer 66, folder 10, part 1-2, National Archives of Australia.

It was not until 1911 when the post office tower was embellished with its intended clock. The lack of a clock at the time of the opening of the building was a cause for much consternation. Funded by public subscription as a memorial to the late King Edward VII, a King's Memorial Clock Committee had formed to realise the installation. Manufactured by Benson and CO., England, the clock (Figures 3.185-186) was activated by Alderman H.A. Austin, chairman of the Memorial Clock Committee at

an official ceremony on 22 December 1911.¹⁵⁸⁶ The Post Office was then finally complete (Figure 3.187).

In 1901, responsibilities for the Post Office were transferred from State Victorian control to the newly-created Commonwealth Government, and in particular, the Commonwealth Postmaster-General. At this time, the fledgling Commonwealth bureaucracy amounted to 1400 public servants with all the official files of the Prime Minister kept in one black bag.¹⁵⁸⁷

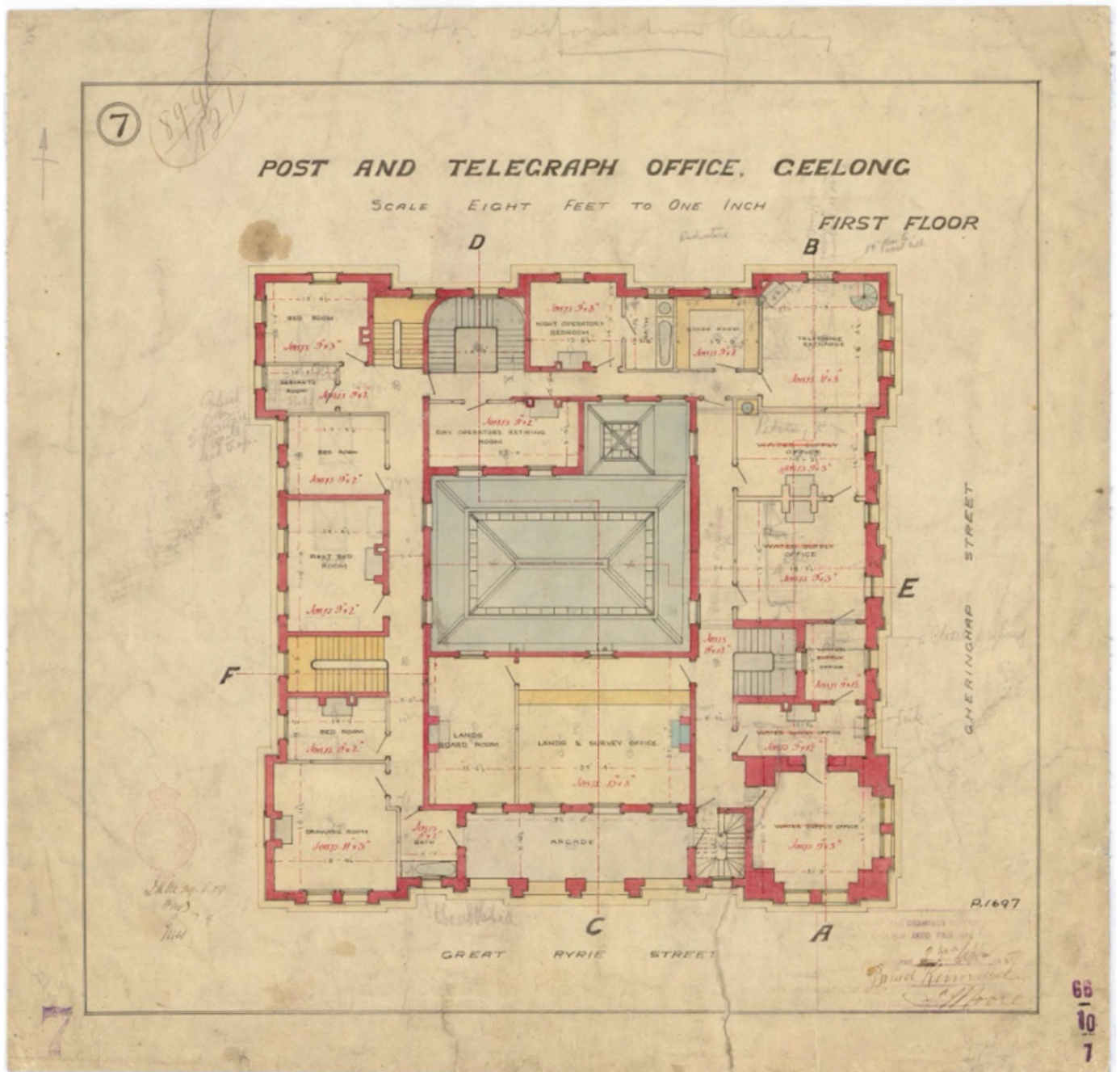


Figure 3.184: J.H. Marsden, Post and Telegraph Office Geelong, First Floor Plan, 1889. Source: NAA: B3712, drawer 66, folder 10, part 2-2, National Archives of Australia.

A major improvement in the operations of the post and telegraph service at the Geelong Post Office came in July 1911, when a new automatic telephone exchange was activated, replacing the outdated existing system (see following subsection for further details).

The Post Office continued to function for its original purpose until 1994 when the Victorian Government sold it to the City of Greater Geelong on a \$670,000 interest-free loan.¹⁵⁸⁸ Australia Post relocated to a shop in the Market Square Shopping complex, Moorabool Street. In 2018, consideration was given by the Council to sell the building.

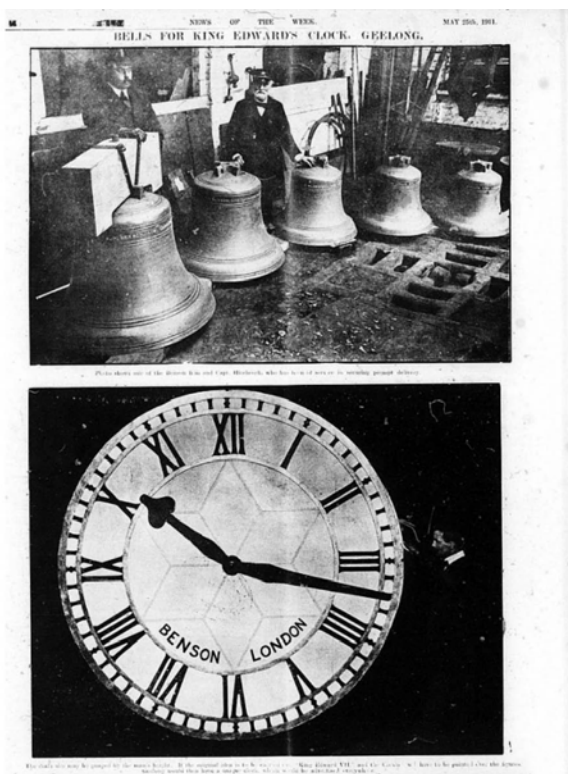


Figure 3.185: Bells and clock face for the proposed King Edward VII Memorial Clock, 1911. Source: *News of the Week*, 25 May 1911, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

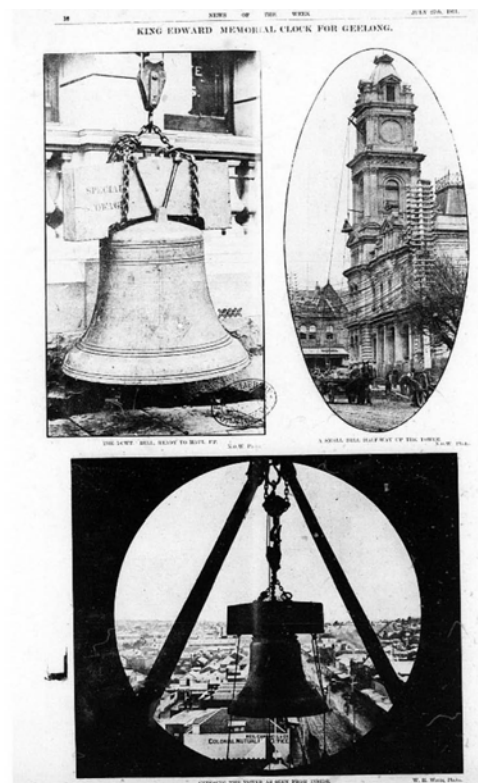


Figure 3.186: Bell, Post Office & bell installation, 1911. Source: *News of the Week*, 25 May 1911, GRS 2121, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.187: Geelong Post Office, after 1911. Source: accession H90.25/16 State Library of Victoria.

GEELONG WEST POST & TELEGRAPH OFFICE

Until 1886, the extent of the postal service in Geelong West were letter-receiving pillar boxes at the nearby Geelong Railway Station (installed in 1878) and in Pakington Street (installed in 1884).¹⁵⁸⁹ The need for a post and telegraph office was put to Government authorities and in August 1883 the *Geelong Advertiser* noted that 'substantial promises' had been given for the construction of the building.¹⁵⁹⁰ By April 1884 a site in Pakington Street was mooted,¹⁵⁹¹ and a meeting with the Chief Secretary Graham Berry, confirmed the desire of the Geelong West Borough Council that the new building should be erected at the south-east corner of Pakington and Hope Streets.¹⁵⁹² This land had been owned by the late Mr Conley.¹⁵⁹³

By February 1885, the Post and Telegraph Department had approved plans for the new building.¹⁵⁹⁴ The single storey brick post office with attached postmaster's residence was designed by G.B.H. Austin of the Public Works Department¹⁵⁹⁵ (Figure 3.188). The distinctive Flemish gables to the principal (Pakington Street) and secondary (Hope Street) elevations became key features of the post office and court house designs of the Public Works Department in the late 1880s and early 1890s.¹⁵⁹⁶ A corner porch was proposed to lead into a lobby,

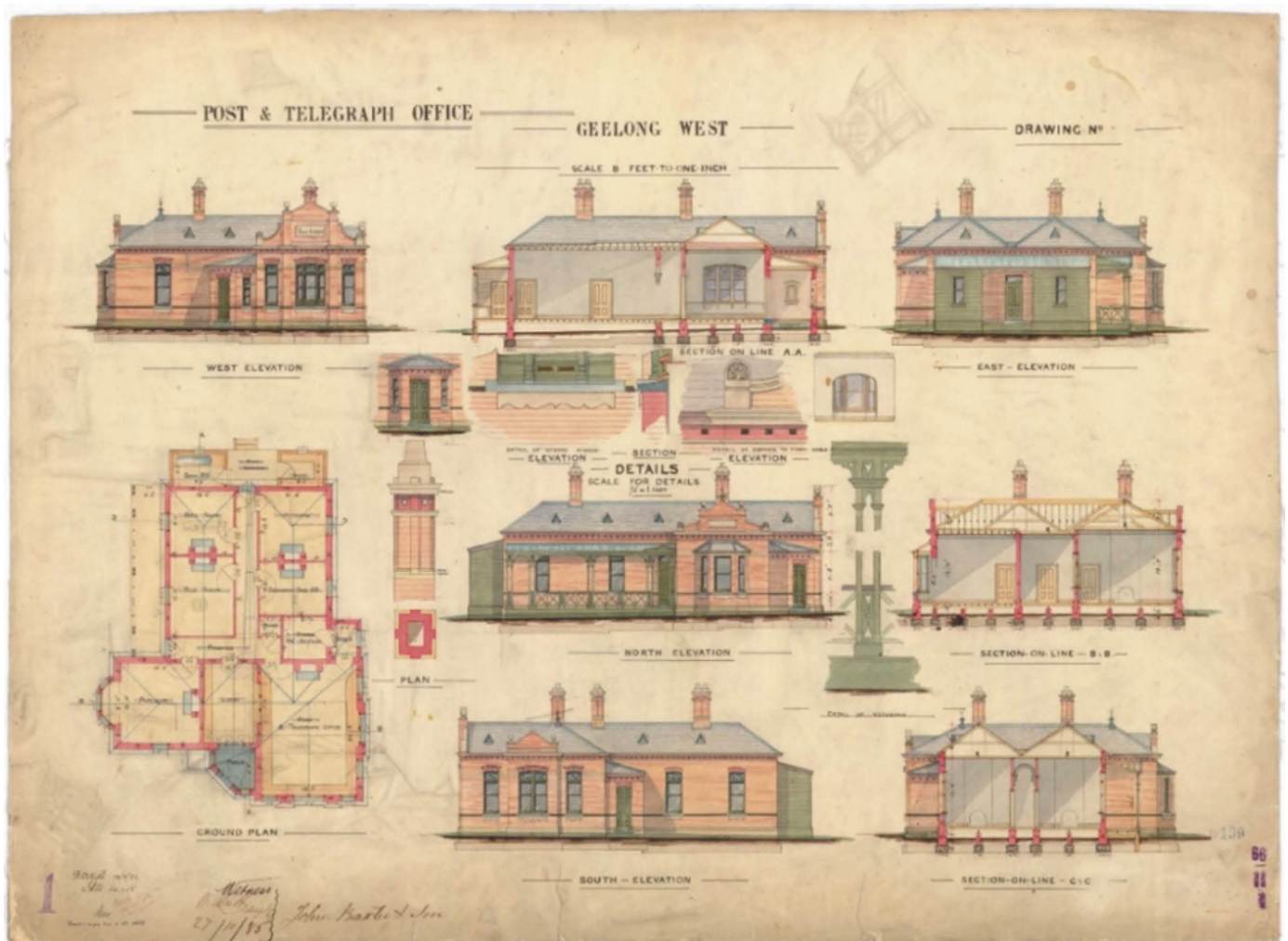


Figure 3.188: G.B.H. Austin, Post & Telegraph Office Geelong West, Floor Plan, Elevations, Sections & Details, 1885. Source: NAA: B3712, drawer 66, folder 11, National Archives of Australia.

providing access to the post and telegraph office (and battery stores) at the front. A door opening was also to lead into the private quarters of the postmaster including a parlour, two bedrooms, servant's bedroom and kitchen, with a skillion wing at the rear to accommodate a bathroom, store and verandah.

In October 1885, a contract was accepted by Messrs J. Baxter and Sons for the construction of the post and telegraph office at a cost of £1,595.¹⁵⁹⁷ In the presence of a large crowd, the Chief Secretary, Graham Berry, laid the foundation stone on 20 January 1886. The proposed building was described as 'a neat brick structure, with white facings, and a parapet in front.'¹⁵⁹⁸ The works were under the supervision of J. Davey.¹⁵⁹⁹ The building (Figure 3.189) opened for business later in 1886.

The first person appointed to head the Geelong West Post Office appears to have been Miss Sophia Cole (1856- 1936).¹⁶⁰⁰ Born at Gardiner to George and Emma (nee Leak) Cole, Sophia Cole had previously been postmistress at Lismore and Cobden.¹⁶⁰¹ Cole's tenure was to be brief as she married John Walter Beckwith in Melbourne in 1888.¹⁶⁰² However, Cole's appointment illustrated the desire of the Post Office and Telegraph Department to employ women in its workforce, similar to the Railways Department.



Figure 3.189: Geelong West Post & Telegraph Office, Pakington Street, 1917. Source: accession H89.105/96 State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3.190: Portarlington Post Office, c.1917-30. Source: accession H89.105/189 State Library of Victoria.

PORTARLINGTON POST OFFICE

In 1859, the Bellarine Farmer's Association lobbied the Secretary to the General Post Office for the establishment of a post office at Portarlington.¹⁶⁰³ The Department had however already selected a location at East Bellarine, much to the dismay of the Association given that the new post office would be less than three miles from the existing facility at Drysdale.¹⁶⁰⁴

It was not until 1868 when the first Post Office opened in Portarlington with John Calhoun appointed the first postmaster.¹⁶⁰⁵ He was the owner of the Bayview Hotel and store.¹⁶⁰⁶

Initial preparation was made for a new post and telegraph office in 1887 when the Board of Land and Works excised a site from the market square reserve.¹⁶⁰⁷ A commodious post and telegraph office with attached quarters was designed by G.B.H. Austin of the Public Works Department in late 1887.¹⁶⁰⁸ Austin had previously

designed the Geelong West Post and Telegraph Office, and while the composition for the Portarlington building was different, it showed the consistent idiosyncrasies in the Flemish gables and other details of the architectural branch of the Department. Tenders were called in February 1888 and a contract was awarded to Messrs. Gross and McClure of Williamstown at a cost of approximately £1500.¹⁶⁰⁹

The impending construction of the new edifice was proudly declared to provide 'the first public building in the whole shire.'¹⁶¹⁰ The importance of the occasion was not lost on the Portarlington Town Improvement Association which organised 'the largest public gathering ever held in the shire' for the laying of the foundation by the Hon. J.F. Levien. on 28 September 1888.¹⁶¹¹ In addition to Members of Parliament and local councillors, nearly 700 children from the Portarlington, Paywit, Murradoc, St. Leonards, Moolap, Drysdale and East Bellarine Schools participated in the event.¹⁶¹² A description of the proposed building was given at this time:

The new public building is to be of dark-colored bricks, with white brick facings, the whole structure to rest on a concrete foundation. It will be a single-storey building, and whilst providing post and telegraph offices, it will comprise a sitting room, two bedrooms, kitchen, etc. The new offices will have a frontage of 40ft to Newcombe-street by a depth of 47ft along the main road leading to the jetty, commanding a foremost view of the seaway entrance to the township, and close to the Free Library and the weighbridge.¹⁶¹³

Community pride in the proposed post office soon turned sour once the walls were built. In November 1888, the Portarlington Town and District Improvement Association was able to gauge of more accurate appreciation that the building would have when complete and it found that the walls 'would not be high enough to give the structure anything but a miserable, dwarfed, and insignificant appearance, quite unworthy of our rapidly growing town.'¹⁶¹⁴ The Association's concerns found favour with the Department and the walls were subsequently raised 2-3 feet 'and ornamented to some extent.'¹⁶¹⁵ The floor was also raised an additional two feet.¹⁶¹⁶ Finishing touches were made for the completion of the building (Figure 3.190) in early April 1889.¹⁶¹⁷

The first permanent head of the Portarlington Post and Telegraph Office was Miss Emma Deane.¹⁶¹⁸ She appears to have emigrated to Melbourne from London on the *Chimborazo* in 1882 and in 1883 was appointed as a postmistress to the Department of Postmaster-General.¹⁶¹⁹ By 1888, Emma Deane was postmistress at the Yarraville Post Office.¹⁶²⁰ Miss Deane's tenure at Portarlington lasted

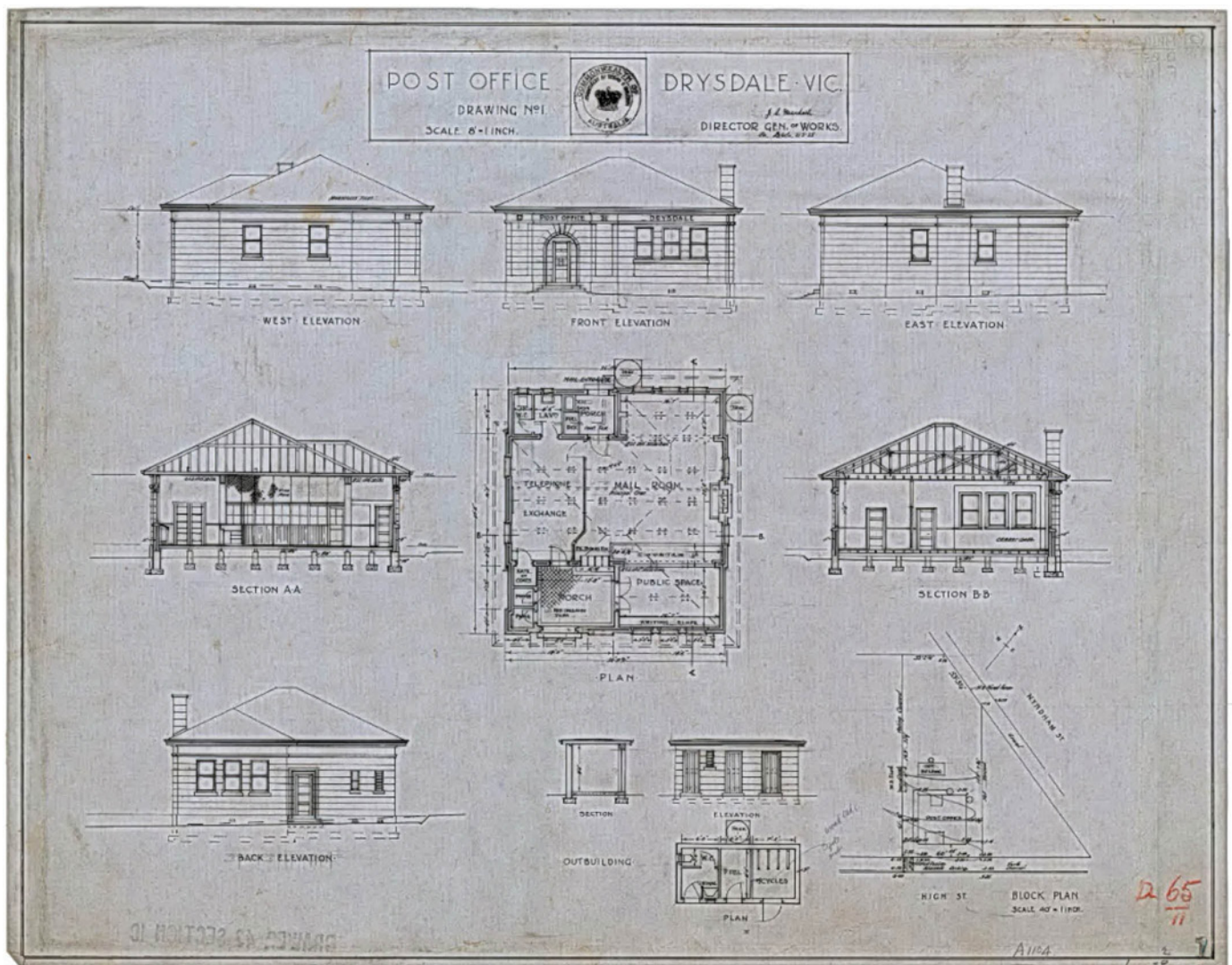


Figure 3.191: J.S. Murdoch, Post Office Drysdale, Details Drawing, 1925. Source: NAA: B3712, drawer 65, folder 11, National Archives of Australia.

until c.1891 when she was appointed acting postmistress at Rutherglen and was later permanently appointed to that position.¹⁶²¹

DRYSDALE POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE

The first post office at Drysdale opened in 1855 and was known as Bellarine.¹⁶²² The inaugural postmaster was A.W. Bailey.¹⁶²³ Following his death in 1859, postal responsibilities were taken over by his brother in law, Samuel Eades.¹⁶²⁴ Samuel's wife, Ann, was postmistress for much of 1862 before Samuel returned to the role in December of that year.¹⁶²⁵ By 1868, Eades had been replaced by J.P. Burrows.¹⁶²⁶ In 1872, the name of the post office was changed to Drysdale and Charles Brazier had been appointed postmaster.¹⁶²⁷ With the opening of the Geelong to Queenscliff Railway line, a telegraph

station opened at the Drysdale Railway Station in 1879.¹⁶²⁸ Noticeably distant from the township centre, the Postmaster-General was petitioned to fund a new building in a more central location.¹⁶²⁹ Approval was subsequently granted and by June of that year 'good progress' was being made on the new weatherboard Post and Telegraph Office in High Street.¹⁶³⁰ Opening in August 1882, the *Geelong Advertiser* gave a glowing report:

The new Post and Telegraph Offices here were opened last week, and prove great conveniences. Not only is the building another fixture in the township, but the facilities offered for business people are largely taken advantage of.¹⁶³¹



Figure 3.192: Opening of the Drysdale Post Office, 9 February 1926. Source: Image 308 Bellarine Historical Society.

Miss Esther Conboy had been appointed postmistress for the newly-completed building.¹⁶³²

In 1900 the people of Drysdale complained of the inadequacy of the post and telegraph office building, and the need for a new facility.¹⁶³³ As an interim measure, it was suggested that the Colonial Bank building at the corner of High Street and Murradoc Road might be rented from the bank authorities.¹⁶³⁴ This did not transpire until 1907 when the bank relinquished its premises for the post and telegraph office and relocated into 'one of the rooms of the Shire Hall.'¹⁶³⁵

During the ensuing years there was further agitation for a new, purpose-built post office building. The Commonwealth Government did not secure land at the corner of High and Collins Streets and Clifton Springs Road until 1924.¹⁶³⁶ A concept for a modestly scaled, hipped roofed rendered brick building had been prepared by 1925.¹⁶³⁷ Signed by D.W. Crawford, Supervising Architect of the Central Office of the Public Works Branch of the Department of Works and Railways on behalf of J.S. Murdoch, Director-General of Works, the scheme showed all the hallmarks of Murdoch's 'modern Renaissance' design repertoire used for many post offices and telephone exchanges across the country.¹⁶³⁸ This included the deliberate austere character accentuated by stripped Classical detailing in the entrance portico (with flanking vestigial pilaster and simple keystone in the arched opening), roundel motifs in the eaves and smooth-rusticated walls (Figure 3.191).

Tenders for the construction of the post and telegraph office building were called in June 1925.¹⁶³⁹ In August 1925, a contract was accepted from J. Smith of Meredith

for the construction of the building at a cost of £2,223/2/6.¹⁶⁴⁰ The building was completed by early 1926 and was officially opened by J.H. Lister, M.H.R. on 9 February of that year¹⁶⁴¹ (Figure 3.192).

Mrs Susan Bridget Curtain (c.1873-1949) was the first postmistress in charge of the new post and telegraph office.¹⁶⁴² She had held the position since 1912 at the previous post office (save for a period in 1918 as relieving postmistress at Birregurra).¹⁶⁴³ Born in Sale, Victoria, to Michael and Julia (nee Joyce) Coffey, Susan Curtain had married the Mounted Police Constable, John Thomas Curtain, in 1896.¹⁶⁴⁴ They were stationed at Birregurra in 1897 where their daughter was born.¹⁶⁴⁵ John Curtain died at the Raywood Police Station, Sale, in December 1897, aged 32 years.¹⁶⁴⁶ This tragic event forced Susan Curtain to re-enter the workforce. She remained as postmistress at Drysdale until November 1926 when she left to take up relieving work in Melbourne.¹⁶⁴⁷

TELEGRAPH, TELEPHONE AND INTERNET

ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH

THE EARLY YEARS

In 1854, the Victorian Legislative Council passed the Electric Telegraphs Bill to allow the installation of the electric telegraph in Victoria and therefore further open up communications throughout Greater Geelong and beyond. Rules and regulations concerning the operation of and fees for the telegraph were subsequently passed by the Victorian Parliament in 1855 and 1856.¹⁶⁴⁸ Samuel W. McGowan was appointed Superintendent of the Electric Telegraph, being stationed in Melbourne. The construction of the Geelong to Melbourne Railway line from 1853 gave impetus for the laying out of the telegraph line between Melbourne and Geelong to be parallel with the railway.¹⁶⁴⁹ On 5 December 1854, communication between Melbourne and Geelong was first established following the construction of 50 miles of telegraph line between the two towns and via Williamstown.¹⁶⁵⁰ On 30 January 1855, communication with Queenscliff and Geelong was made after the building of 20 miles of line.¹⁶⁵¹

In Geelong, further infrastructure was established throughout 1854. As reported in the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer*:

The work is now being proceeded with extraordinary rapidity, and the contractor promises to have it finished by [10 August 1854]. A flag staff will in a short time be erected near to the hospital, and the time ball, indicating P.M., will rise and fall at the correct time. These matters will be a great boon to the inhabitants

of Geelong, and they will, no doubt, appreciated anything to further their interests.¹⁶⁵²

In December 1854, electric communications commenced in temporary accommodation, being the 'little wooden house behind the Custom House' – the original bureau for the coast waiter despatched from Sydney to Geelong in 1838 and now in the Geelong Botanic Gardens (see Theme 7).¹⁶⁵³ The instrument adopted by the Superintendent to transmit and receive messages was the Morse's Recording Telegraph. He described it as follows:

The key is simply a small horizontal brass lever, about four inches in length, having near its centre a blunt point, below which is placed a similar point called the anvil. The lever is maintained in a slightly raised position by means of a spring, so that, upon moderately pressing the ivory knob attached to the end of the lever, the two points are brought into contact; upon removing the pressure the spring instantly raised the lever to its former position. By the use of this portion of the apparatus the main circuit between each office is completed or broken at pleasure – one termination of the main wire being attached to the lever itself, and the other to the anvil, it follows that when the two points are apart the current passing on the main wire is interrupted, and when the contact is made, by pressing them together, the circuit is once more completed. By thus interrupting and completing the circuit at certain intervals, and making contacts of varied duration, letters, words, and sentences are formed by the aid of the relay and the register, with its fillet of recording paper.¹⁶⁵⁴

A more humorous account of the Morse Telegraph machine was given by the *Geelong Advertiser and Intelligencer* which declared it to be a 'wonderous machine' and 'well worthy of a visit':

The telegraph speaks "yaaap, yap, y'p, yaap, y'p, y'p," goes the metal tongue, which means that Melbourne is talking to Williamstown: "yap, yap, y'p, y'p, yaap," Williamstown is replying to Melbourne; "yap, yap, yap," again goes the clapper. "It is lunch time, we'll be back at half-past one," "yap, yap, yap," "wait a minute, I have a question to ask," and so on. Operators who are very experienced, can repeat the message from the sound alone, but to avoid the possibility of the telegraph retracting its statements, it actually writes them at the same instant that the clapper tongue goes on yap, yapping! The replies are impressed on a strip of stout paper that is drawn through a certain arrangement of small cylinders, and comes out impressed with a series of dots and lines of various lengths, from which hieroglyphics, the operator reads

off fluently the exact words of the message! It is the greatest invention of the age.¹⁶⁵⁵

Although the Telegraph Station had opened in the original custom house in December 1854, tenders had been called earlier in August of that year for the construction of a telegraph station at Geelong, a contract for the work was not advertised in the *Victoria Government Gazette*.¹⁶⁵⁶ However, by April 1855, a new telegraph station had been erected on a reserved site at the south-east corner of McKillop and Bellerine Streets, being described as follows:

A substantial brick building with square tower for a flag staff, has been lately completed as the Geelong Electric Telegraph Station. The building itself is unexceptionable, but the situation is too far from the centre of business to be long tolerated by the people of Geelong. The electric telegraph itself has hitherto worked to admiration.¹⁶⁵⁷

The isolated situation of such an important communication hub for the Geelong township caused its removal to a more centralised location in the newly-built post office at the corner of Gheringhap and Ryrie Street in July 1857.¹⁶⁵⁸ The brick telegraph station at the corner of McKillop and Bellerine Streets was demolished and later replaced with the Haimes Memorial Homes (see Theme 8).

PERMANENT TELEGRAPH STATION

The relocation of the telegraph station to the post office was only to be a temporary measure. Tenders were called for the construction of the building in October 1857.¹⁶⁵⁹ Patterson and Belle were awarded the contract in November of that year at a cost of £2,038.¹⁶⁶⁰ The single storey hipped roofed building was constructed of Barrabool stone and featured a central tower surmounted by a time ball (Figure 3.193). The designer responsible for the Georgian building is conjectural. Early drawings of the proposed structure were included in a book of drawings by Henry Ginn, Colonial Architect until April 1853.¹⁶⁶¹ Royal assent had not been given for the *Act of Electric Telegraphs* until November 1854, after Ginn's resignation from the Department. The building to be constructed in Ryrie Street was also not approved until 1857. Draftsman working the Department in 1857 included J.J. Clark (who had designed the supreme court and custom house buildings, and possibly the post office), William Davidson and Samuel Merrett.¹⁶⁶² It is possible that one of these staff added to a book of drawings first commenced by Ginn.

Opening in 1858, the first stationmaster of the permanent Geelong Telegraph Station (Figure 3.194) was William Hill James (1802-1861).¹⁶⁶³ Born at Falmouth, Cornwall, England, he had arrived in South Australia by 1845 as he

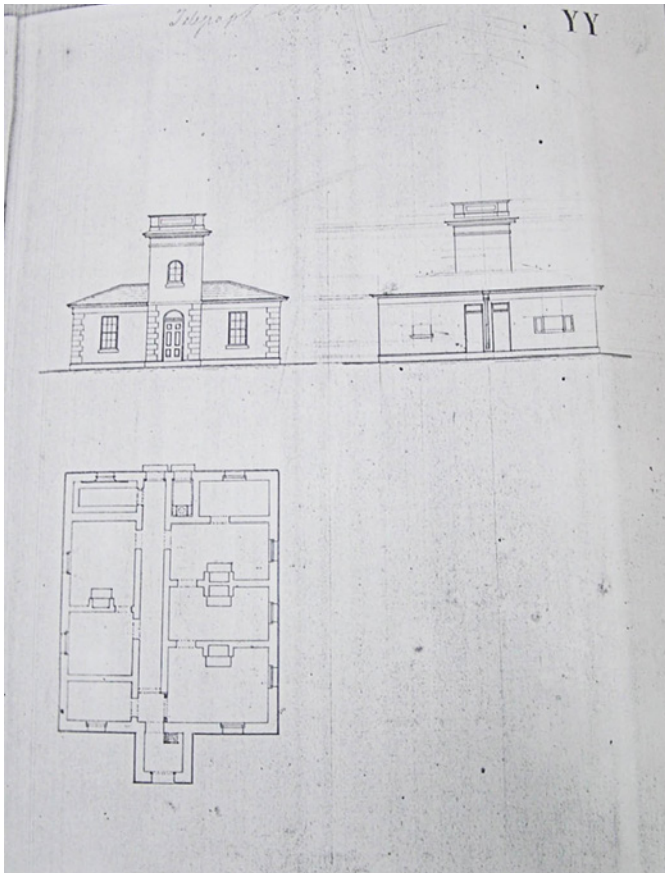


Figure 3.193: Geelong Telegraph Station, Floor Plan & Elevation Drawings, c.1857. Source: Book of Plans by Clerk of Works, Henry Ginn, VPRS 4107/P1 Unit 1, Public Record Office Victoria.

was reported as inventing 'the rapid transmission of letters and light dispatches through tubular passages.'¹⁶⁶⁴ He was first appointed by the Governor in 1853 and took up his position at Geelong on 21 September 1854.¹⁶⁶⁵ In 1861, James' life was cut short, and the *Geelong Advertiser* gave the following obituary:

He was early initiated into an acquaintance with mining details; and subsequently for ten years he filled the post of mineral surveyor of the Mining Company of Ireland.

Upon his arrival in Adelaide, he received a similar appointment in connection with the South Australian Mining Association, and in the Assay and Mint Offices established there shortly after the discovery of gold in Victoria, he took a prominent part during the whole period of their existence.

In this colony, also, he held the situation of gold assayer to the government, until it was abolished in 1854; and it was under his directions that the furnaces were constructed, which have since been bricked up in the present Survey Department.

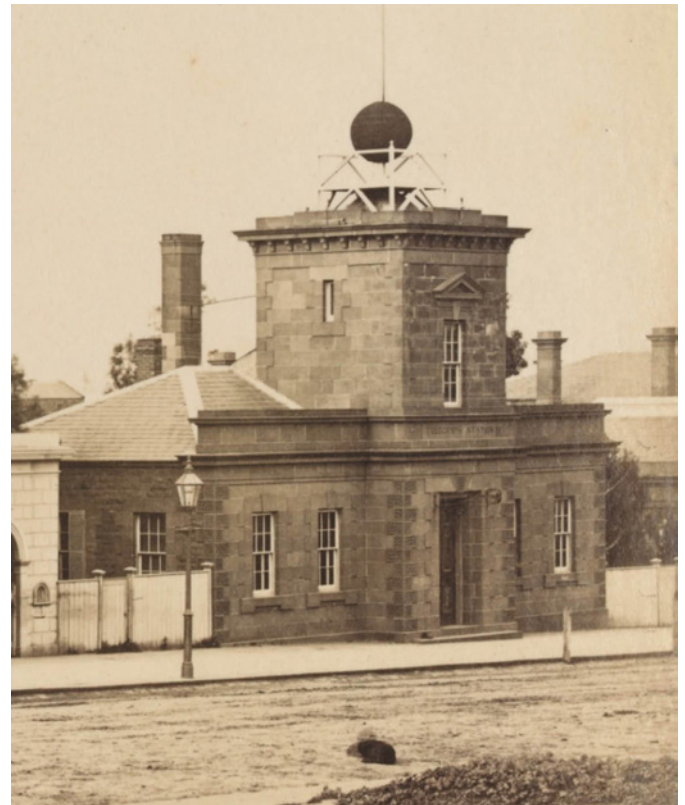


Figure 3.194: F. Kruger, Geelong Telegraph Station, Ryrie Street, c.1882. Source: accession H39614.52, State Library of Victoria.

During all these later years of active and unwearied effort, working ungrudgingly for twelve to fourteen hours a day, we can bear testimony to his courteousness and his willingness to advance the public interests. He leaves a large family, some of whom are yet in infancy, to regret his loss. His last days were peaceful, and his end was unmarked by pain.¹⁶⁶⁶

James Fisher had been appointed Telegraph Operator, with Augustus Smith, Junior Assistant.¹⁶⁶⁷

Some telegraph operators combined the role as postmaster at smaller offices from 1861. This brought out efficiencies and the system was continued throughout Victoria from this time. As outlined in the *Report on the Affairs of the Post Office Department*:

There can be little doubt that this has been attended with benefit to the public, for besides being on the whole a measure of economy it has had the advantage of placing the duties of postmasters in the hands of an officer wholly and exclusively in the service of the Government, and has led to the extension of the Money Order System to places where it would not otherwise have been commenced for some time.¹⁶⁶⁸

The success of the combined system led to the formal amalgamation of the departments of the Post Office and Electric Telegraph in 1869.¹⁶⁶⁹ From this time, the responsibilities of the telegraph office rested with the postmaster however at Geelong the first appointment under the new regime was Samuel Vivian, a Telegraph Officer (see earlier subsection).

Following the opening of the new post and telegraph office in 1891, the old telegraph station was no longer used for its original purpose. It was subsequently leased to other government departments¹⁶⁷⁰ and has been lately managed by Working Heritage Inc., a non-profit organisation that manages heritage places on Crown Land.¹⁶⁷¹

Other telegraph branch offices continued to operate in Geelong. In 1886, a telegraph was fitted up in the front offices of the Exhibition Hall, Market Square.¹⁶⁷² It was also in 1886 when another branch telegraph was installed at the Geelong Sale Yards, Weddell Road, North Geelong.¹⁶⁷³ A third branch telegraph office was established in 1890 in the grandstand of the Geelong Cricket and Football Club, Corio Oval, Eastern Park.¹⁶⁷⁴ This service was a great advantage compared to the special cabs previously despatched to convey messages to the Telegraph Office in Ryrie Street from which scores were relayed to Melbourne. The new installation at Corio Oval at during the football season in June 1890 as reported by the *Geelong Advertiser*:

The convenience of the extension line was fully experienced on Saturday, and was well appreciated by the public. A couple of operators and several attendants were kept busily employed during the two hours the football match lasted, and a very large number of telegrams were despatched. The wires have been extended to the football enclosure, on the condition that the club guarantee a sum of £5 every time an operator is sent from the office in Ryrie-street to the office at the oval, and all receipts above that sum are taken by the telegraphic department.¹⁶⁷⁵

The advent of telephone technology brought about the end of the branch telegraph services in subsequent years.

THE TELEPHONE

BEGINNINGS OF THE TELEPHONE IN VICTORIA BY W.J. THOMAS

On 10 February 1869, the *Geelong Advertiser* and *Intelligencer* reported that Mr W.J. Thomas was to give a lecture that evening on the 'Electric Telegraph', and given Thomas' 'known acquaintance with the subject, an instructive evening may be anticipated.'¹⁶⁷⁶ This was one of several lectures to be given by Thomas, second Clerk and Warehouse-keeper for the Customs Department at Geelong, whose particular interests were astronomy, electricity and magnetism and their practical application, and the working of the electric telegraph.¹⁶⁷⁷ With the patent for the telephone in March 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell of Boston, U.S.A.,¹⁶⁷⁸ Thomas took an immediate scientific and practical interest. In mid-1877, following a review of the *American Scientific Journals*, Thomas commenced experimenting with the telephone based on Bell's theories and drawings,¹⁶⁷⁹ the outcomes to have a dramatic impact on telephonic communications not only in Geelong, but State-wide.

In August 1877, the *Geelong Advertiser* announced (via the Melbourne correspondent of the *Warrnambool standard*) that the telegraph department was making trials 'of the newly invented telephone.'¹⁶⁸⁰ However, apart from reference to overseas installations (such as at least five telephones being in operation in New York),¹⁶⁸¹ it was not until 27 December 1877 when the *Geelong Advertiser* declared that W.J. Thomas had succeeded 'in constructing a telephone on Professor Bell's principle.'¹⁶⁸² The article further stated that the telephone worked 'admirably, voices and selections of music having been distinctly heard at the distance of half a mile.'¹⁶⁸³ A more fulsome account of Thomas's extraordinary achievement was given on 28 December 1877 when the *Geelong Advertiser* stated:

We believe that Mr W.J. Thomas deserves the credit of having been the first to introduce the telephone into Victoria. At any rate, no mention has ever hitherto been made of the new instrument being either used or experimented on in the colony. In his spare moments at his house in Skene-street, during the past month, Mr Thomas has constructed a very simple-looking instrument. It is a small box, 7 in. long, 3 in. broad, and 2 in. deep, having at one end a bell-shaped mouth and at the other end two binding screws for connecting with the line wire. Inside of the box there are four permanent horseshoe magnets, and connected with their north poles there is a short piece of iron, very thin, soft, and good. Around this piece of iron there is a coil of exceedingly fine copper wire insulated by



Figure 3.195: W.J. Thomas, telephone device, 1878. Source: Marco Laudani, Australian Historic Telephone Society.

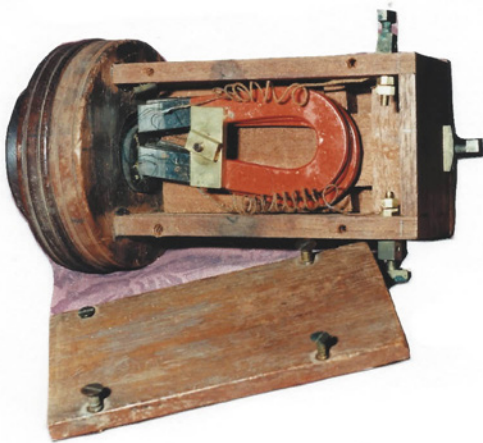


Figure 3.196: W.J. Thomas, telephone device, 1878. Source: Marco Laudani, Australian Historic Telephone Society.

a covering of silk, the coil being three-eighths of an inch in width and an inch in diameter, and the two ends of the wire lead back to the binding screws, the latter being connected with the line and earth wires respectively. In front of the small electric magnets, within the coil and at the least possible distance, is the most important part of the apparatus – the diaphragm – which is of extremely thin iron about as thick as the finest writing paper, and this is fixed to the instrument with washers of lead. The box, with lid screwed down, is thus complete, there being adjusting screws, springs, and other minor details which have suggested themselves to Mr Thomas during the construction of the instrument. Of course, there is an instrument exactly similar at each end of the wire. In sending messages the instrument is lifted to the mouth, and the speaker uses it as one would use a speaking-trumpet, and in receiving messages the

listener has to place the second instrument to his or her ear. The contrivance is in every way of a very simple character. Yesterday afternoon a trial of the telephone was made, and the result was eminently satisfactory. A wire, three-quarters of a mile in length, was run from Mr Thomas' house, thence through an orchard, winding over the fruit trees to a summer house about 30 yards or 40 yards from the main building. Conversations were carried out on between different persons in each room; the words could be distinctly heard, and the voice of each person easily identified ... Mr Thomas deserves to be complemented on his success, and yesterday's experiment will no doubt lead to further tests of the wonderful powers of the telephone. In fact, we may state that already negotiations have been entered into with the view of having the telephone fixed on the telegraph line between Geelong and Queenscliff, for the purpose of testing the capabilities of the instrument.¹⁶⁸⁴

Henry Sutton, a music seller in Ballarat, constructed a telephone at the same time as W.J. Thomas in late 1877.¹⁶⁸⁵ While his first phone transmitted sounds it was not as 'perfect as the maker wished' and so he began the construction of another.¹⁶⁸⁶ Thomas's experiments in Geelong therefore suggest that he was the first to introduce a locally-made telephone communication in Victoria. In February 1878 he arranged a 'novel and interesting entertainment' by running a single telephone wire from his residence at the south-east corner of Skene and George Streets (now demolished) 'along various fences at the back of different properties' to the parlour of his neighbour, John Cochrane Brownhill at 131 Skene Street (this dwelling exists in an altered state today).¹⁶⁸⁷ The earth connections at each end were the water taps of the dwellings. A circuit was established to allow the telephone to be handed to various people in different parts of the room, the messages and replies being 'heard with remarkable distinctness' and a lady sang "The Irish Emigrant" with piano accompaniment, the 'effect through the telephone' being 'excellent.'¹⁶⁸⁸

Aside from providing novel entertainment, the real value of Thomas' invention was to provide a clear and reliable communication for official, commercial and private purposes. On 31 December 1877, the first long distance telephone communication came from Thomas' experimentation with a line between the Telegraph Office, Geelong, and that in Melbourne, connected at looping lines at the Werribee Railway Station.¹⁶⁸⁹ The Melbourne Telegraph telephoned 'a series of "cooey"s'.¹⁶⁹⁰ Ten days later on 9 January 1878, similar experimental telephone connections were made from Geelong to Queenscliff, with Mr Dod at the Queenscliff office of the Telegraph

Department singing "Genevieve" with W. Upton singing a reply at Geelong being "Yankee Doodle".¹⁶⁹¹ Similar experimentation between Geelong and Ballarat occurred on 26 February 1878.¹⁶⁹²

The contribution of William Jackson Thomas to Greater Geelong, and more broadly, Victoria, is manifested in the telephone system still in use today. Historically, several of his instruments, including the telephone used during tests in early 1878, now form part of the collection of the Telstra museum (Figures 3.195-196).

William Jackson Thomas (1820-1909) was born in Swansea, Glamorgan, Wales, the son of William and Susannah (nee Jackson) Thomas.¹⁶⁹³ He came to Victoria in 1838 with his parents and three younger sisters, his father being appointed Protector of Aborigines in Port Phillip.¹⁶⁹⁴ In Victoria, W.J. Thomas took up farming at Dandenong and in the Westernport district, and also assisted with his father's farm at Coburg.¹⁶⁹⁵ He subsequently surveyed the source of the Yarra River with E.J. Walpole.¹⁶⁹⁶ In 1847, Thomas was appointed First Clerk in the 'In-door Department' of the Customs Department at Geelong.¹⁶⁹⁷ and in 1848 he married Miss Sarah Truckle Dredge and they were to have eight children.¹⁶⁹⁸ They first lived at 4 Moorabool Street opposite the Christ Church School House before relocating to a cottage in Skene Street, Newtown.¹⁶⁹⁹ In 1853, the Thomas family relocated to Brunswick where W.J. Thomas worked as a 'customs agent'.¹⁷⁰⁰ The Thomas family returned to Geelong in 1861 and took occupation of a dwelling in Skene Street owned by Charles Rowand, engineer (see earlier subsection).¹⁷⁰¹ At this time, W.J. Thomas again took up a position as Warehouse Keeper with the Customs Department.¹⁷⁰² By 1873, Thomas had built his own home at the south-east corner of Skene and George Streets.¹⁷⁰³ It was from this location where he developed his interests in the telephone, and first constructed and experimented its potential.¹⁷⁰⁴ Following his landmark experimental telephonic achievements, he lectured widely, both in Geelong and at the Ballarat School of Mines.¹⁷⁰⁵

On his retirement in 1887, Thomas was honoured with a public testimonial at the Geelong Mechanics' Institute, it being declared that:

In all scientific matters Mr Thomas had taken a foremost part locally, and he had given his assistance without expecting fee or reward for instruction to the people in astronomy, electricity, and other matters, alike to the people acquainted with them as well as others. ... Mr Thomas's surety of manner, and promptness in rendering intellectual aid in every way, had endeared him to the people of the town and suburbs.¹⁷⁰⁶

Thomas and his family retired to 'Wenvoe', Canterbury Road, Balwyn where W.J. Thomas died on 26 March 1909, leaving behind an extraordinary legacy of the telephone to Victoria.¹⁷⁰⁷

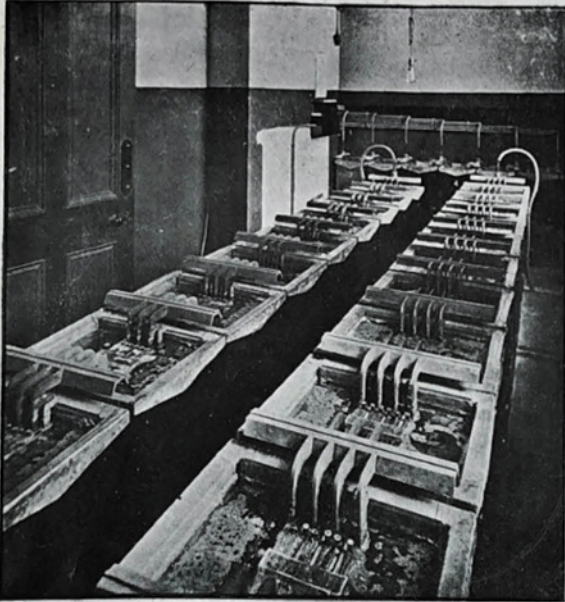
EARLY TELEPHONE SERVICE IN GREATER GEELONG

The experiments by William Thomas and Henry Sutton were progenitors to formalised and regulated telephone services throughout Victoria. Private lines were initially established, with one of the first in Geelong proposed in 1882 between the Corio Tannery 'near the beach' and the Australian Tannery at Marshall.¹⁷⁰⁸ In 1883, there were seven telephones operating in Geelong, with one line being established for Dr Reid between his surgery in Malop Street and his private residence in Chilwell.¹⁷⁰⁹ A year later in 1884, the grocers, J. and A. Price connected their stores in Malop Street, Geelong and Pakington Street, Geelong West, the 'necessary telegraph posts' being erected in June of that year.¹⁷¹⁰

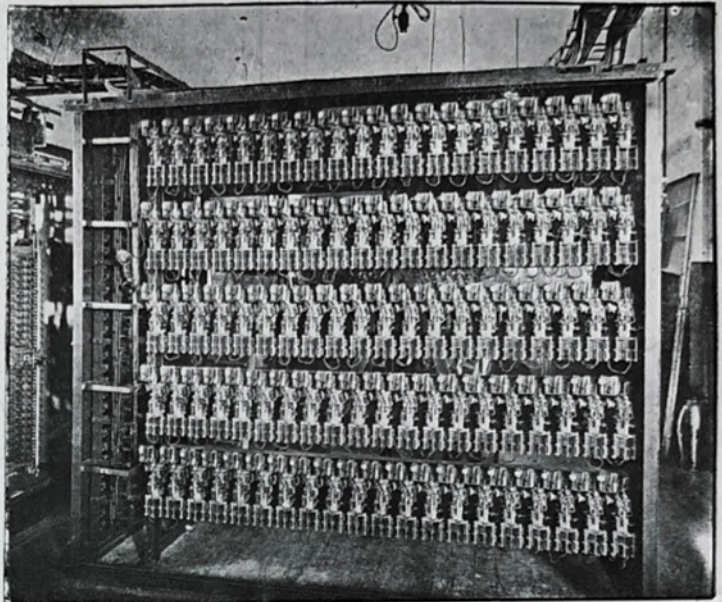
Officially, the Post office and Telegraph Department began its own telephone service in Melbourne in 1880. It constructed its first telephone exchange for Messrs. Sands and McDougall 'for the private use of the firm'.¹⁷¹¹ In 1883, an amendment of the Post Office Statute was passed in the Victorian Parliament which regulated the telephone system by giving authority to the Postmaster-General alone 'for constructing, granting leases of, or otherwise providing for the public use of lines for telegraphic or telephonic purposes'.¹⁷¹² In Geelong in 1886, the Post Office and Telegraph Department would not support the establishment of a telephone exchange without the pledges of £10 each of 50 subscribers.¹⁷¹³ In September 1888, the Geelong Telephone Exchange was officially opened with 33 subscribers. The *Geelong Advertiser* gave the following report:

Yesterday morning the Telephone Exchange in Geelong was opened by Mr Smibert, Deputy Postmaster-General. The only ceremony observed was that arranged for by Mr Smibert himself, and was confined to the ringing up of each subscriber, and informing them that the telephone wires were in working order and ready for use from and after nine o'clock yesterday morning. It was expected, that some formalities would be observed on the occasion, to mark the important event of a general introduction of the telephonic system into the town of Geelong. The expectation was not realised, for the Government officers were not instructed to arrange for any formal opening, and subscribers towards the system had not made any special effort to publicly recognise, the novel

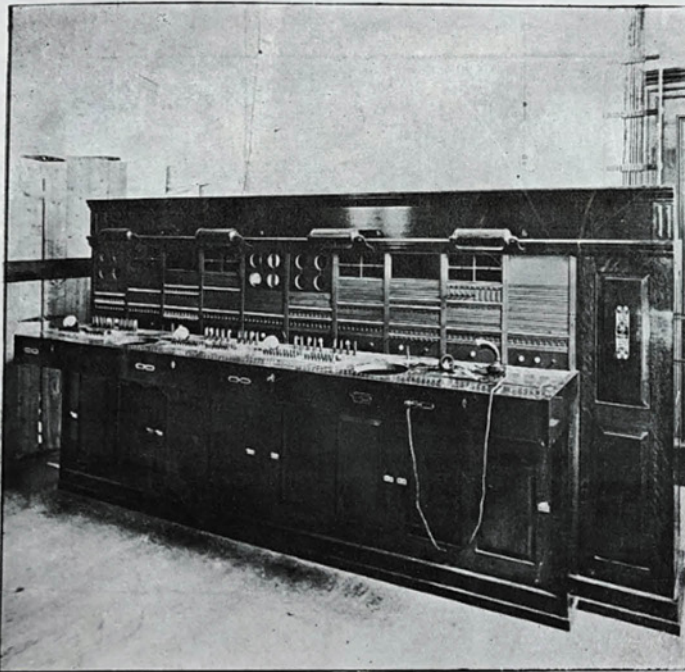
GEELONG AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE SYSTEM.



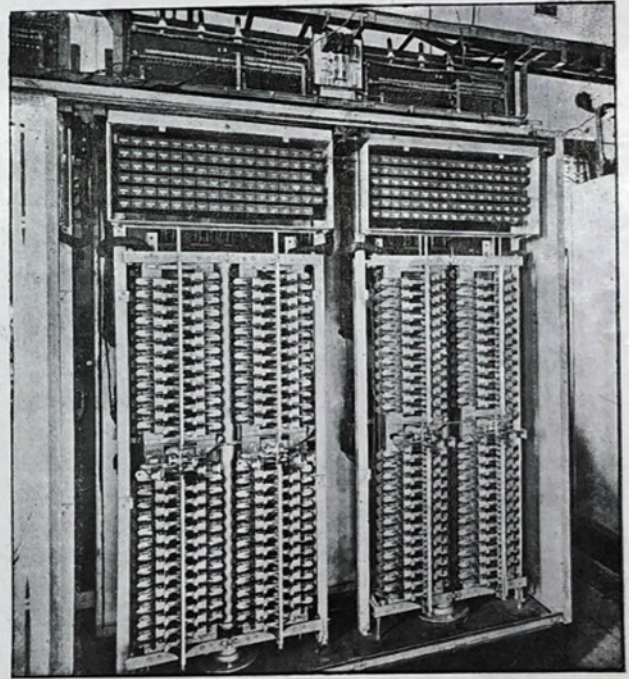
THE ACCUMULATORS (31 LARGE CELLS.)



1st SELECTORS



TOLL BOARD.



PRIMARY LINE SWITCHBOARD.

"N.O.W." photos.

Figure 3.197: Accumulators, selectors, toll board & primary line switchboard comprising automatic telephone exchange, Geelong, 1912. Source: *News of the Week*, 13 June 1912, p.13, GRS 2121/3, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.

departure from the ordinary method of conducting business in this town. For some years past telephonic communication has existed in Geelong, but it has been confined to four or five firms having offices in town, and connected with their manufacturing departments on the banks of the Barwon river, so that the actual use of the telephone is not a novelty, although in its extended form it has a bearing which commands more than passing notice.¹⁷¹⁴

The first subscribers included some of the oldest and well-established firms, including the Western Stage Company, Gheringhap Street; George Hague and Co., the woolbrokers (Strachan, Murray, Shannon and Co. and Dennys, Lascelles, Austin and Co.), Corio Terrace; H.F. Richardson, Exhibition Exchange, Moorabool Street; Bright and Hitchcocks, Moorabool street; Humble and Nicholson, Little Malop Street; Donaghy and Son, Pakington Street, Geelong West; and Huddle, Parker and Co., Moorabool Street.¹⁷¹⁵

The only known physical evidence today of Geelong's original telephone exchange are some of the interiors in the former Geelong Post Office at the corner of Ryrie and Gheringhap Street.

GEELONG AUTOMATIC TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

In 1896, John Hesketh, had previously been an Electrical Engineer in Blackpool, England,¹⁷¹⁶ was appointed by the Queensland Colonial Government to organise the telegraph and telephone department in that state.¹⁷¹⁷ In 1905, Hesketh travelled overseas to study the latest telephone systems.¹⁷¹⁸ The majority of the systems he experienced were of the modest common battery manual type which he recommended but he also concluded that interest should not be lost in the automatic system.¹⁷¹⁹

In 1906, Hesketh was appointed Chief Electrical Engineer to the Commonwealth Postmaster-General's Department. In this position, he transformed the telegraph and telephone systems throughout the country.¹⁷²⁰ In his role, Hesketh was responsible for the installation of the automatic telephone exchange in the Geelong Post Office, the first in Australia and the earliest in the southern hemisphere.¹⁷²¹

In January 1911, the Postmaster-General's Department called tenders for a new switchboard service to meet the growing demands of telephone communications in Geelong.¹⁷²² Tenders for three types of exchange were sought: branding multiple magneto lamp-signalling switchboard; full automatic; and a semi-automatic switchboard.¹⁷²³ In March of that year, Hesketh declared that while final settlement on an automatic exchange for



Figure 3.198: Installation staff standing in Ryrie Street, Geelong Automatic Telephone Exchange, 1912. Source: GRS, 2009/1846/107, Geelong Heritage Centre collection.



Figure 3.199: Former Telephone Exchange, 50 Gheringhap Street, 2005. Source: David Rowe.

Geelong had not been reached, he intimated that if such an automated service was decided upon an order would be placed with an American automatic company.¹⁷²⁴ By September 1911, it had been decided that an automatic telephone exchange would be installed in Geelong.¹⁷²⁵ On the day of the opening of the exchange (Figure 3.197) on 6 July 1912 by Mr Thomas in place of Mr Fraser, Postmaster-General (who was ill), with Mr Oxenhan, General Secretary of the postal Department and Mr Bright, Deputy Postmaster-General,¹⁷²⁶ the *Geelong Advertiser* gave the following report on the newest technological installation:

The new service is known as the Strowger system which has only lately been installed at Epsom in England, the first place in the British Isles to have the automatic exchange. Geelong will be the first south of the line



Figure 3.200: 50th Anniversary Plaque commemorating the First Automatic Telephone Exchange in Australia. Source: Geelong Heritage Centre collection (prior to re-installation on the Ryrie Street façade of the former Post Office).

[southern hemisphere]. The patent is in the hands of Automatic Telephones, Limited, Chicago, and to bring it to its present stage of almost human ingenuity and perfection 20 years of study and experiment have been needed. Nothing could be nearer human; to see it work and grasp what it does makes it look supernatural. It is so ingenious as to almost beggar complete description. In the big telephone room at the Geelong Post-office are a series of iron and glass cabinets filled with neat devices wonderfully delicate of construction but remarkably accurate. These are linked up with a maze of wires, charged with current generated by a 10 h.p. motor, which feeds a series of storage batteries. The force of this current will give a very powerful system clear and resonant.¹⁷²⁷

The installation of the telephone exchange was a major feat and involved 22 installation staff, including technicians from the United States of America (Figure 3.198).

After 27 years of occupying the first floor of the Geelong Post Office, the automatic telephone exchange was transferred to a new purpose-built building next door at 50 Gheringhap Street. The three storey, face cream brick, interwar Stripped Classical styled building (Figure 3.199) had been designed by Commonwealth Department of Works and Railways under the leadership of Edwin Hubert Henderson, Director-General of Works, and Horace John Mackennal, State Works Director for Victoria.¹⁷²⁸ Costing £15,000, the building was constructed by the local builders, J.C. Taylor and Sons.¹⁷²⁹ In November 1939,

the Electrical Engineer and Construction Co. Pty Ltd of Burnley, Victoria, was accepted as the successful tenderer to supply and install the main switchboard in the new Exchange.¹⁷³⁰ This exchange building remained under Government ownership until 1993.

The significance of the first automatic telephone exchange in the southern hemisphere was not to be forgotten. On 6 July 1962, the Federal Minister for Shipping and Transport, Hubert F. Opperman, unveiled a commemorative plaque at the Post Office to mark the 50th anniversary¹⁷³¹ (Figure 3.200). In later years, the plaque was removed from the Gheringhap Street façade of the Post Office and was recently reinstated in 2018.

The third (and existing) automated telephone exchange in Geelong came in late 1964 when a new communications centre was completed at 19 Little Ryrie Street at a cost of £210,000.¹⁷³²

MOBILE PHONE AND THE INTERNET

On 23 February 1987, the Minister for Communications, Michael Duffy, made the first official call using an analogue mobile phone.¹⁷³³ These mobile hand-held devices dramatically transformed telephonic communication throughout the world from the late 20th century, with calls able to be in any location where connection to the mobile network could be made. According to the Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association in 2019:

Today there are more than 20 million mobile phone services in Australia. A decade and a half ago there were 635,000 mobile phones in Australia.

Today mobile services in operation as a proportion of the Australian population is nearly 100%. Fifteen years ago fewer than 4% of people had one.

In 2006, there were 10.2 billion text messages sent in Australia. In 1987 there were none. Seven years ago when text messaging started there were only 642 million sent in 2000-01.

The direct contribution the mobile phone industry makes to the Australian economy is \$5.8 billion in 2006, according to Access Economics. However, its indirect or spillover impact on the broader Gross Domestic Product is estimated to be \$6.4 billion – greater than the direct economic impact. Access says mobile telecommunications “punches above its weight” because of its ability to drive productivity gains throughout the Australian economy.¹⁷³⁴

Aside from the mobile devices, physical evidence of mobile phone communication throughout Geelong is the mobile phone towers connecting calls to the network.

It was also in the late 20th century, and particularly from 1989 when permanent internet access was made available to universities through the Australian Academic and Research Network (AARNet).¹⁷³⁵ The network provided the delivery of data, voice and facsimile services.¹⁷³⁶ Public use was pioneered by Pegasus Networks in Bryon Bay, New South Wales, at this time.¹⁷³⁷ In 1995, the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee (now known as Universities Australia, a private company whose members comprise 39 Australian Universities) transferred its commercial customers, associated assets and management of interstate and international links to Telstra.¹⁷³⁸ Having acquisition of all of the infrastructure, this comprise the more mainstream beginning of the internet in Australia. Internet Access Providers (IAPs) and Internet Service Providers (ISPs) were subsequently established as commercial entities to connect its customers to the network.¹⁷³⁹ Traditional telephone copper wires initially provided the physical connection (first known as ADSL) until cable, fibre, satellite and wireless technologies were subsequently introduced. In 2010, the Federal Government established the National Broadband Network.¹⁷⁴⁰ This involved the roll out of fibre optic cables across the country to junctions (nodes) in the network, from which users were connected by existing copper wire networks. The provision of the internet dramatically transformed the communication throughout Australia, including in Greater Geelong, providing accessibility to information previously unavailable and opening up opportunities for social network platforms. At the forefront of the new technological age for communication was Deakin University in Geelong, the first Australian University to specialise in distance education (see Theme 8 for further details).¹⁷⁴¹



Figure 3.201: *Geelong Advertiser* Office, Malop Street, c.1860. Source: accession H21482 State Library of Victoria.

3.8 NEWSPAPER PRODUCTION

Essential to communications throughout the City of Greater Geelong from the beginnings of European colonisation has been newspapers. The dissemination of information about events, politics, births, deaths and marriages, real estate, businesses (including advertising), sport and world events was made possible by the 52 news sheets established in the Geelong district between 1840 and 2016. Appendix 3.4 provides a list of these newspapers and journals.

The earliest newspaper was the *Geelong Advertiser*, established in 1840. While no early buildings associated with the newspaper survive, it remains the longest-running newspaper. At 80 Little Malop Street, is the former headquarters of another early newspaper, the *Geelong Times*, established as the *Evening Times* in 1871. This newspaper no longer exists. The following gives a brief overview of the contributions and locations of the *Geelong Advertiser* and the *Geelong Times* in Geelong.

THE GEELONG ADVERTISER

In a building in Malop street, Geelong, near Swanston Street, the first issue of the *Geelong Advertiser* was published on 21 November 1840.¹⁷⁴² The proprietor was John Pascoe Fawkner (1792-1869) of London who had come to Tasmania as a boy in 1801 following his father's conviction of receiving stolen goods and being sentenced to 14 years transportation.¹⁷⁴³ Fawkner was one of the earliest European pioneers to colonise Victoria,

permanently settling at Hobson's Bay in October 1835.¹⁷⁴⁴ In addition to hotel keeping and a range of other business interests, it was at Hobson's Bay where Fawcner began his newspaper publishing empire with the release of the *Melbourne Advertiser* in January 1838.¹⁷⁴⁵ At Geelong, Pascoe appointed his relative, William Watkins, as printer and publisher but this was not to endure (he being replaced by John H. Scamble by June 1841).¹⁷⁴⁶

The first editor of the *Geelong Advertiser* was James Harrison (1816-1893), journalist, early Geelong postmaster, scientist and inventor (including refrigeration – see Theme 9). He was born at Bonhill, Dumbartonshire, Scotland, the son of William (a salmon fisherman) and Margaret (nee McGregor) Harrison.¹⁷⁴⁷ He was apprenticed as a printer at an early age, during which time he became self-taught in Gaelic, and undertook evening classes at Anderson's 'University' which gave instruction for sons of mechanics and tradesmen.¹⁷⁴⁸ After attending the Glasgow Mechanics' Institution during his employment with Edward Khull, topographical printer, he went to London and worked at Valpey's printer and publishing business. He emigrated to Sydney in 1837 and was employed by the printer, James Tegg.¹⁷⁴⁹ He later was appointed foreman for the *Monitor* and was then employed by the *Sydney Morning Herald*. Harrison relocated to Melbourne in 1839 and was employed as a compositor for J.P. Fawcner's *Port Phillip Patriot*, later becoming editor and general factotum.¹⁷⁵⁰ In 1840, Fawcner suggested Harrison establish a newspaper at Geelong. By 1842, Harrison had become the proprietor of the newspaper and retained the role of editor.¹⁷⁵¹ His newspaper was the first to break the news of the discovery of gold at Clunes in 1851. The following year, 1852, Harrison took into partnership his brother, Daniel Harrison, publisher of the *Intelligencer* from 1849.¹⁷⁵² The partnership was dissolved in 1861 when James Harrison became insolvent due to his refrigeration experiments. The *Geelong Advertiser* business was sold to Alfred Douglass and Joseph De Little but Harrison remained as editor until 1865.¹⁷⁵³ By this time, Alfred Douglass was sole proprietor of the newspaper under the name of Alfred Douglass and Company. Harrison, meanwhile, established the *Register* newspaper which he sold to Graham Berry, M.L.A. and Alfred Douglass.¹⁷⁵⁴ This partnership included ownership of the *Geelong Advertiser* (during which time Berry was briefly editor) until it was dissolved in 1880 and Douglass again became sole proprietor.¹⁷⁵⁵

From 1842 until 2019, the *Geelong Advertiser* office has had numerous relocations. By September 1842, Harrison

had relocated the *Advertiser* office to Yarra Street, in the building previously occupied from 1841 by Miss Fulloon's school.¹⁷⁵⁶ In 1844, the post office moved next door to a 'new stone building' and the *Advertiser* may have followed.¹⁷⁵⁷ Following Harrison's relinquishment of post office duties, the newspaper office was moved to Clare Street in 1850 where it remained until 1853.¹⁷⁵⁸ By 1855, the newspaper had relocated to a commodious stone classical building in Malop Street (Figure 3.201) until 1866 when the business was moved to a more modest two storey building in Malop street.¹⁷⁵⁹ The next move was to a single storey classical building in Moorabool Street, where operations remained until 1889.¹⁷⁶⁰ At this time, the *Advertiser* engaged the local architect, Joseph Watts, to design a two storey Victorian Boom Classical styled building in Little Malop Street, opposite Market Square.¹⁷⁶¹ In 1928 to a design by the architects, Laird and Buchan, the façade of this building was 'rebuilt' as part of a major extension of the building on the east side, taking in the corner of Little Malop and Union Streets.¹⁷⁶² At this time, Ramsay B. Cook was Chairman of Directors.¹⁷⁶³ In April 1960, a new office was opened in Ryrie Street and the *Advertiser* remained there until January 2019 when the business moved to a new office at 126 Little Malop Street.¹⁷⁶⁴ The *Geelong Advertiser* is Victoria's oldest morning newspaper.¹⁷⁶⁵

GEELONG TIMES

In 1871, Benjamin Hoare (1842-1932), a journalist from Buckinghamshire, England, joined a co-operative venture in the establishment of the *Geelong Evening Times* newspaper.¹⁷⁶⁶ Horatio Rowcroft was initially editor and manager until co-operative membership fell away and a partnership was formed in 1877 between Hoare, William Bell and Mrs Ann Knight, mother in law of Hoare.¹⁷⁶⁷ The newspaper commenced in an office in Claire Street¹⁷⁶⁸ although by 1888 it was situated in Malop Street, opposite the Union Club Hotel.¹⁷⁶⁹ The newspaper business moved in new premises in 1889 in Ryrie Street.¹⁷⁷⁰

Benjamin Hoare had joined the *Portland Chronicle* at the young age of 15 years.¹⁷⁷¹ This began his journalistic career that continued at the *Hamilton Spectator* in 1861 and the *Adelaide Advertiser* from 1865.¹⁷⁷² At Geelong, Hoare and his business partner, William Bell, in an effort to compete with their rival, Graham Berry at the *Geelong Advertiser*, converted the *Evening Times* into a morning paper known as the *Geelong Times*.¹⁷⁷³ Tension between Hoare and Bell, and Berry increased 20 years later when Hoare and Bell escaped a libel suite brought on by Graham Berry and David Syme following a negative



Figure 3.202: C. Fox, Geelong Times Office, 80 Lt Malop Street, 1936. Source: accession H19362 State Library of Victoria.



Figure 3.203: Former Geelong Times Office, 80 Lt Malop Street, 2005. Source: David Rowe.

editorial in the *Geelong Times*.¹⁷⁷⁴ In 1887, a more lengthy court battle ensued between Hoare, Ann Knight and their previous business partner, William Bell (Bell's son, James had taken his part in the business in 1886) over a partnership dispute and the sale of the business.¹⁷⁷⁵ Mrs Knight was a shareholder having funded Hoare's part in the establishment of the newspaper business, and while initially benefiting from weekly dividends, she does not appear to have taken any active journalistic part in the business.¹⁷⁷⁶ The stress of the legal proceedings may have contributed to her death in October 1887. The original court decision that found William Bell acting improperly as a trustee was lost an appeal of the Full Court in 1887.¹⁷⁷⁷ Further court orders in relation to the proceeds of the sale of the business were issued in June and October 1888.¹⁷⁷⁸

From this time, the *Geelong Times* was continued by James Bell until 1909 when it was sold to B.L. Hickie and others.¹⁷⁷⁹ Hickie was appointed managing director and editor. In 1914, the *Geelong Times* relocated into a purpose-built publishing office it had built at 80 Little Malop Street.¹⁷⁸⁰ The Two storey Federation Free style brick building (Figures 3.202-203) had been designed by the local architects, Laird and Buchan, and built by William Murphy.¹⁷⁸¹ While the *Geelong Times* closed in 1923, the building at 80 Little Malop Street survives as the only built legacy of early newspaper publishing in Geelong.

3.9 WIRELESS RADIOS

Wireless radio services provided broadcasts to the Greater Geelong community from the early 20th century. The earliest was the 3GL Radio Station, first owned by the *Geelong Advertiser*, commenced broadcasting on 3 December 1930.¹⁷⁸² It was the second country station created in Victoria. The inaugural manager (and a director) of the station was E.J. Haynes who came to Geelong to establish the station.¹⁷⁸³ The studio was at the premises of A. Leslie, Sutton (director of the station) at the National Mutual building, corner of Malop and Moorabool Street, with the transmitter and administration being at the *Geelong Advertiser* office in Little Malop Street.¹⁷⁸⁴ The studio was relocated to the Commercial Bank building in Moorabool Street (near Little Malop Street).¹⁷⁸⁵

A significant increase in aerial power from 100 to 500 watts brought significant expansion to the radio station in 1938.¹⁷⁸⁶ Owned by this time by Geelong Broadcasters Pty Ltd, *The Argus* gave an outline of the developments:

An area of land has been purchased at Grovedale for a new transmission station. This station will be four and a half miles from the city, and will be connected with the studio by land lines. The transmitter will be of the latest type, and the tubular steel aerial will be 185ft. high. The company has also acquired a two-story building in James street for a new studio and general office accommodation.¹⁷⁸⁷

The new operations commenced in September 1938.¹⁷⁸⁸ In 1990, the AM service was replaced with a new FM band, the station known as K Rock which continues to operate to the current day. The transmitter is currently located at Murradoc Hill on the Bellarine Peninsula.¹⁷⁸⁹

The transmitter facilities are shared with three other radio stations: 93.9 Bay FM, 94.7 The Pulse and 96.3 Rhema FM. Bay FM first went to air on 10 December 1989 and studios were established at the former Corio Distillery in Lowe Street, Corio (see Theme 5).¹⁷⁹⁰ The station changed its name to Bay 93.9 in 2015. From 2018, the radio studios were in Moorabool Street.¹⁷⁹¹

On 1 May 1988, fulltime broadcasting of 3YYA (You Yangs Radio) commenced as a community radio station.¹⁷⁹² In 1996, the name was changed to Geelong Radio and in June 2001 to 94.7 The Pulse when a change in frequency was mandated. Initially located in studios in Shorts Place, Geelong, the current studios at 68-70 Little Ryrie Street were built by volunteers with hand-made mudbricks as part of upgrades to an existing building in 1992.¹⁷⁹³

Another radio station went to air on 1 September 1994: 96three FM (then known as Rhema FM).¹⁷⁹⁴ Still operating today, it is an incorporated, non-profit, non-denominational Christian community radio station that broadcasts throughout the Geelong region, with studios at Grovedale.¹⁷⁹⁵

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- 1056 See *Electoral Rolls, 1917-1920*, Ancestry online, *op.cit.*, and *Geelong Advertiser* 9 February 1920, p.4 which stated that 'During the past week Mrs. Glossop, who has been in charge of the Marshall railway station and post office for nearly three years, left to take up a similar position at Mossiface [Gippsland].'
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