

# LEARMONTH & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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High Street. Learmonth

## NEWSLETTER

### February 2010

Published Quarterly

## Camp Hotel

Mr Hedrick was an early settler in Learmonth, purchasing a block of land at the 1859 town lots sale. In 1860 he was a storekeeper selling groceries, paints, ironmongery and merchandise, and by the end of 1861 he had completed a new store to be used as a grain and produce store.

He next applied to build extensive additions to his dwelling house, and apparently noticing the town of Learmonth was rapidly developing he also applied for a hotel license.

This was the beginning of the Camp Hotel and in 1863 Matthew Ryan who had previously been licensee of the Golden Well Hotel at Dowling Forest, became the first licensee.

In the same year Mr Hedrick died and Matthew Ryan purchased the hotel and continued the business. The Ryan family decided not to continue with the store and by May 1864, James Oddie & Co held a Sale By Auction of goods at the store of the Late Mr Hedrick. It is interesting to note the variety of goods that Learmonth residents were able to purchase.

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Groceries, Oilman's Stores, etc (in small quantities for private families), comprising coffee, black and orange pe-  
koe tea, biscuits, chocolate and cocoa, jams, salad oils,  
pickles, sauces, sugar, cheese, oatmeal, currants, candles,  
starch, lemon and orange peel, raisins, spices, lollies,  
etc etc.

### GROCER'S UTENSILS

Such as platform scales and weights, canisters, scoops, measures, ornamental bottles and show tins etc.

SADDLERY AND IRONMONGERY also, an excellent assortment of HOUSEHOLD FURNITURE, comprising rocking and other chairs, folding sofa, tables, large pier glass, chiffonier, pictures, books, cutlery, delph, culinary utensils, etc.

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A fire occurred at the Camp Hotel on 6<sup>th</sup> Sep 1900. Fortunately only the stable was destroyed.

Members of the Ryan family held the licensee until 1907. A James Ackers or Aikers was licensee from 1907 – 1910, followed by John Doolan until 1913.

In March that year the license was transferred to George Ashmore. Later, in July a J P Wilson claimed £48/10/- from John Doolan as commission for introducing George Ashmore as a prospective purchaser for the hotel. A private sale had followed which had incensed Mr Wilson. A court hearing was held, but owing to Ashmore being unable to attend owing to illness, the case was adjourned.

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Some tough characters visited the Learmonth hotels. Following is a report from the 8<sup>th</sup> July Argus, 1908.

## A FORMIDABLE PAIR

George A Garvie and his brother Robert, two men residing in Learmonth, on Tuesday paid the penalty for a fracas in which they joined on the 25<sup>th</sup> of last month. On the afternoon of that date Constable Hart was informed that the two brothers had created a disturbance at the Balmoral Hotel, about a mile from Learmonth and the people there were afraid for their lives. On arriving at the place he found the two brothers had been fighting, George having repeatedly knocked his brother down. Hart advised them to leave the place, and John Whateley supplemented his advice.

In return Whateley was assaulted by George Garvie who struck him on the mouth, felling him to the floor. Hart next received the attention of the couple. One of them threw him into the corner of the room then lay across his neck nearly choking him, while the other proceeded to knock him about. Hart extricated himself, but the attack was renewed when he experienced another bad time of it, and wisely withdrew for the time being. The Garvies left some time later and drove to the Camp Hotel Learmonth where Hart made another attempt to apprehend them, but they got away, leaving their vehicle behind them. He reported the matter, and warrants were issued for the arrest of the two men. Constables Hart, Hevey of Miners Rest and Harnetts of Waubra subsequently took them.

Powerfully built fellows with 50-inch chests, they were charged £5 each for the first offence and £1 each for the second.

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In Oct of the same year, the license was transferred to Ada McKenzie of the Stag Hotel, 1914 to Evelyn Webb and 1915 – 1916 to William Stewart when it was delicensed and demolished.

The late Arthur Goad remembered attending with his father, the sale of the Camp Hotel furnishings. They purchased a single bed for Arthur who in later years did not know of its whereabouts. He also suggested that doors from the hotel were probably put into some Learmonth homes.

**The society is looking for any photos pertaining to the people or places in the Learmonth & district, that can be added into the Historic Walk book, which is to be published before June 2010**

## Descendants of Matthew Ryan & Ann (Nancy) Quinnane

**1. Matthew Ryan**, son of **Patrick Ryan** and **Ann**, was born circa 1830 in Co Tipperary, Ireland, died on 1 Dec 1866 in Learmonth, Victoria at age 36, and was buried on 4 Dec 1866 in Dowling Forest Cemetery. The cause of his death was Aneurismal tumor pressing on trachea causing asphyxia. Noted events in his life were:

- He worked as a Publican from 1863 to 1866 in Learmonth, Victoria. Matthew owned the Camp Hotel in Learmonth which was situated in High street, Learmonth, his wife Ann (Nancy) became the owner after Matthew's death on the 1st December 1866, it was later taken over by Anastasia Ryan, their daughter.

Matthew married **Ann Quinnane**, daughter of **John Quinnane** and **Mary Fogarty**. Ann was born on 6 Jun 1830 in Upperchurch, Tipperary, Ireland, died on 4 Sep 1901 in Learmonth, Victoria at age 71, and was buried on 6 Sep 1901 in the Dowling Forest Cemetery. The cause of her death was Congestion of lungs & cardiac failure.

Noted events in her life were: • She worked as a Publican from 1866 to 1901 in Learmonth, Victoria. Nancy (Ann) Ryan ran the "Camp Hotel" in Learmonth.

- Her obituary was published in the Ballarat Newspaper in Sep 1901 in Ballarat, Victoria. On Wednesday morning at the Camp hotel, Learmonth, another of the old identities of the district passed away in the person of Mrs McAuley, relict (by a second marriage) of the late Archibald McAuley, also mother of Cr M. Ryan, of Ballaratshire, and Mrs Clanchy (wife of Mr M. Clanchy, head teacher of Learmonth, State school. The deceased has resided in the Camp hotel for the passed 38 years, and formerly resided in the original Junction hotel, on the Ballarat to Learmonth main road. She was widely known and highly respected, being of a kindly and obliging disposition, and scrupulously upright in all her business transactions. The members of the family in addition to those named are Mr P. Ryan, farmer, Miners Rest; Mrs Slattery, wife of Mr J. Slattery, farmer, Bald Hills; and Miss A. Ryan, the eldest daughter, who resided with her mother in the hotel. The eldest son (John) was accidentally killed at Broken Hill some seven years ago. The deceased's remains will be interred in the Dowling Forest Cemetery to-day at two o'clock.

Children from this marriage were:

+ **2 F i. Anastasia Ryan** was born circa 1855 in Ballarat, Victoria, was baptised on 16 Sep 1855 in St Alipius Church, Ballarat East, Victoria, died on 5 Aug 1931 at the residence of her brother, Matthew Ryan, Learmonth, Victoria at age 76, and was buried on 6 Aug 1931 in Dowling Forest Cemetery.

+ **3 M ii. John Ryan** was born on 7 Sep 1857 in Dowling Forest, Victoria, died in Apr 1894 in Broken Hill, New South Wales at age 36, and was buried on 20 Apr 1894 in Dowling Forest Cemetery.

+ **4 M iii. Patrick Ryan** was born in 1860 in Daylesford, Victoria, died on 23 Feb 1941 in Learmonth, Victoria at age 81, and was buried on 24 Feb 1941 in Learmonth Cemetery.

+ **5 F iv. Mary Elizabeth Ryan** was born on 11 Dec 1861 in Dowling Forest, Victoria, died on 14 Jul 1936 at her residence "Heyfield Park", Bald Hills, Victoria at age 74, and was buried on 16 Jul 1936 in Creswick Cemetery.

+ **6 M v. Edmund (Edward) Ryan** was born on 24 Jul 1863 in Learmonth, Victoria, died on 31 May 1946 in Ballarat, Victoria at age 82, and was buried in 1946 in Learmonth Cemetery.

+ **7 F vi. Ann Ryan** was born in 1865 in Learmonth, Victoria and died in 1866 in .

Learmonth. Victoria at age 1. Buried at Dowling Forest Cemetery.

**8 M vii. Matthew John Ryan** was born in 1867 in Learmonth. Victoria, died on 22 Apr 1954 at his residence "Meadow Bank". Learmonth. Victoria at age 87, and was buried on 23 Apr 1954 in Learmonth Cemetery.

**BALLARAT COURIER NEWSPAPER - 23rd APRIL 1954 - DEATH NOTICES**

**RYAN** - On April 22, at his residence "Meadow Bank," Learmonth. Matthew John, loved husband of the late Margaret Agnes, and loving father of Matthew, Veronica, Kathleen (dec), Patrick, Joseph, John and William. Aged 87 years.

Loved father of Joseph, father-in-law of Gertrude, loved grandfather of Helen, Paul, Peter and Margaret.

**BALLARAT COURIER NEWSPAPER - 23rd APRIL 1954 - FUNERAL NOTICE**

**RYAN** - Requiem mass for the repose of the soul of the late Mr Matthew John Ryan will be celebrated at St Joseph's Church, Learmonth, this morning at 10 o'clock. The funeral will leave the church at the conclusion of Mass for the Learmonth Cemetery.

The Learmonth ANA, Branch 75, Learmonth Bowling Club, Ballarat & District Racing Association, Ballarat Miners' Turf Club and the Burrumbeet Park Racing Club all had a funeral notice in for Matthew Ryan.

**OBITUARY NOTICE — WAS SHIRE COUNCILLOR FOR 55 YEARS**

**A long and honorable career which exemplified the best in citizenship ended yesterday when ex-Cr. Matthew J. Ryan died suddenly at his home "Meadow Bank," Learmonth, at the age of 87 years.**

Widely known and esteemed in Ballarat and District, Mr Ryan was in every sense an exceptional citizen who gave the greater part of his life to the service of the public. His kindly, wise and happy personality won him countless friends. This was expressed in the title of "father" affectionately conferred on him as patriarch of his district.

**Mr Ryan's outstanding service was a member of the Ballarat Shire Council for more than 55 years, which closely approached a municipal record. He was elected to the council in 1897 and retired a year ago.**

He was president of the shire eight times, and his outstanding service was recognised recently when a plaque recording it was placed in the council chambers at Learmonth.

Mr Ryan was born at Learmonth, where his parents conducted the former Camp Hotel, and spent his whole life in the district. During his long life he was associated with many public and sporting movements. A keen footballer in his younger days, he played with the Ballarat Club more than 60 years ago, when it was captained by Col. A. M. Greenfield.

He was at that time the only country representative in the team.

**RACING INTERESTS** - One of his greatest interests was in horse racing, and he was associated with the various district clubs for 50 years. Mr Ryan was president of the Miners' Turf Club, Creswick, Bungaree and Burrumbeet, and Windermere Racing Clubs. He was also a member of the Ballarat District Racing Association for many years. Another interest was bowls. He was president of the Learmonth Bowling Club, of which he was a playing member for half a century. Mr Ryan was a founding member of the Advance Learmonth League, and also a member and ex-president of the Learmonth branch of the ANA.

Mr Ryan leaves a family of five sons and a daughter, all of whom live in the Learmonth district. The funeral will leave for the Learmonth cemetery to-day after Requiem Mass at St Joseph's Church, Learmonth. **Continued next page.**

Noted events in his life were:

- He worked as a Ballarat Shire President & Councillor from 1897 to 1953 in Ballarat Shire Offices, High St. Learmonth, Victoria. Matthew was first elected a member of the Ballarat Shire Council on the 30th August 1897, and he remained a councillor until 1953 when he retired. There are photos and a plaque commemorating Matthew still hanging in the Old Shire Hall at Learmonth.

Matthew married **Margaret Agnes Sheahan**, daughter of **Patrick Sheahan** and **Ellen Maher**, in 1894 in Victoria.

Margaret was born in 1871 in Coghills Creek, Victoria, died in 1912 in Learmonth, Victoria at age 41, and was buried in 1912 in Learmonth Cemetery.



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FROM THE PAST

This letter, from Nancy Abbott of Rock Vale, Learmonth appeared in the Argus newspaper on 17th July, 1930, following a request from a journalist if any reader knew where Weatherboard Hill was. "I read in the Argus in June that you wondered how many children in Victoria knew about Weatherboard Hill. I go to that school. I ride my pony every day. I live two and a half miles from the Weatherboard hill. There are 23 going to our school..When I started school Miss Garner was our teacher, and this year we have Mr wild, so we are not taught any sewing. i am 9 years old".

## Learmonth Community Project 2010

Members of the Learmonth Community have been discussing a number of Arts and Wellbeing initiatives to enhance the Learmonth Community and return the focus to the Lake. We wish to draw on community strengths and areas where significant “investment” has already been made and which are complimentary to the current activities of the town of Learmonth. Five areas of focus integral to our vision involve Arts, Music, Foreshore environment and a Community Garden with reference to our historical and recreational roots. This is entirely consistent with the pre-existing plans and focus of the Ballarat region.

Arts: A community arts project which will help the town refocus on the Lake area and the foreshore. A “Flotilla” sculpture project on Lake Learmonth has been suggested to be made in conjunction with “artists in residence”, the local community and anyone else who is interested. The sculptures may be made out of found objects, iron or wood and engineered accordingly. They could be painted and decorated involving the community directly. ‘

Foreshore and Recreation: Projects which will build on the historical strength of the Lake, adding to the existing sporting focus of Learmonth and recreating interest in flora and fauna and wider community activities eg: possible permanent ponds, small islands and extensive plantings, swimming, boating, fishing, walking, cycling and reflective areas, seating and BBQ’s. It could be designed so that if the Lake fills the areas will remain and the historic uses still viable.

Music: Projects which will support and utilize the many talented local musicians, showcasing soloist skills and new compositions. One idea is for composers to draw inspiration from local landmarks, such as the Lake, to develop and arrange a piece of music which we envisage the local symphony orchestra members could perform in some of our beautiful local venues.

Community Garden: Our vision is for the Learmonth Community Garden to be a socially inclusive place where people can connect through gardening, exchange ideas and pass on skills. It would be a place that would be inclusive of all ages and abilities and be a community space for gatherings/events (music, picnics). It may include an orchard, sensory garden, hothouse for plant propagation

History: To embed our vision in context with the historical aspects of the town, ideas for these projects would develop alongside the work of the Historical Society eg: utilising resources, collating and sharing of local stories.

Please note everyone is invited to a PUBLIC FORUM at 7pm on MONDAY 22nd FEBRUARY 2010 at Learmonth P.S. A Steering Committee will be appointed and we will give feedback from a meeting with council regarding grant applications.

For more information you can contact: Liz Charles on 53432554

**LEARMONTH & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.**

**Meetings:** Every third Tuesday of the month. 8pm

**Where:** The Old Shire Hall  
High Street  
Learmonth.

**Time:** 8 pm

**2010 Dates**

**16th February**

**16th March**

**20th April**

**18th May**

**15th June**

**July AGM to be advised.**

**17th August**

**21st September**

**19th October**

**16th November. Ladies please bring a plate.**

**No meeting in December or January**

**Membership**

Single \$15.00 — Family \$20.00

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS FOR 2009\10**

**President:** Desley Beechey. Ph 5343 2318

**Vice President:** Ruth Nelson.

**Secretary:** Lois Keating. Ph 5338 4361 or email  
[davidandlois@ncable.net.au](mailto:davidandlois@ncable.net.au)

**Treasurer:** David Spenceley. Ph 5338 4361 or 0417  
539247 email [david252@ncable.net.au](mailto:david252@ncable.net.au)

**Research:** Bill Loader Ph 5334 6330 or  
Claudette Crick. Ph 5343 2302

The Learmonth & District Historical Society would sincerely like to thank the office of Joe Helper, MLA, for the printing of this newsletter.