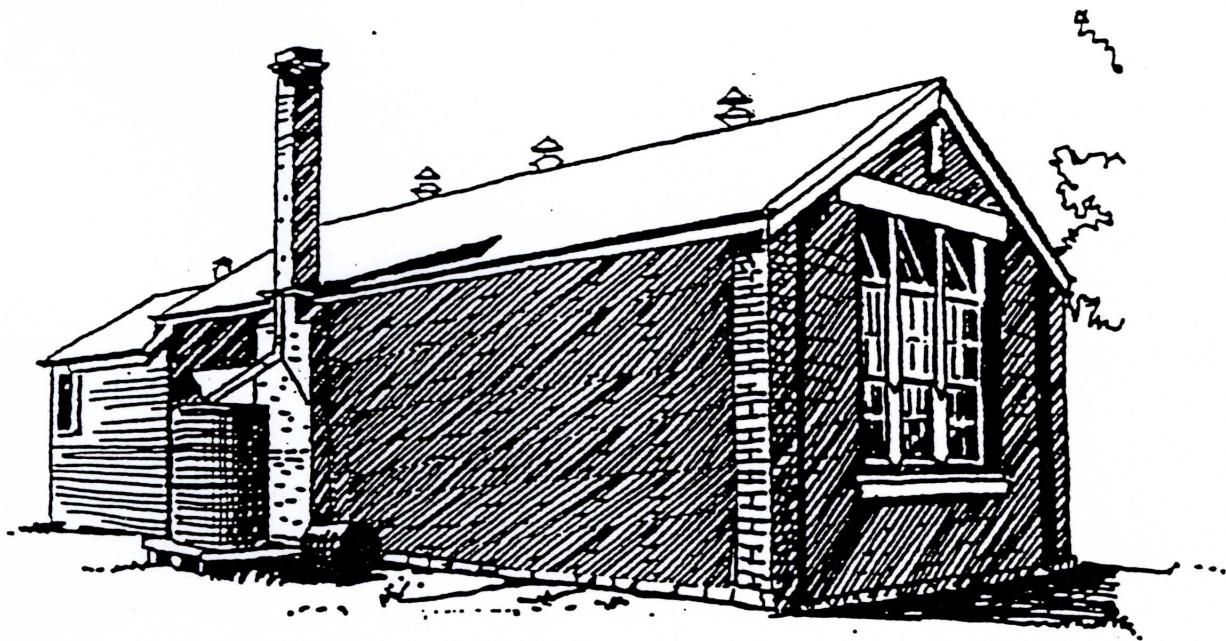
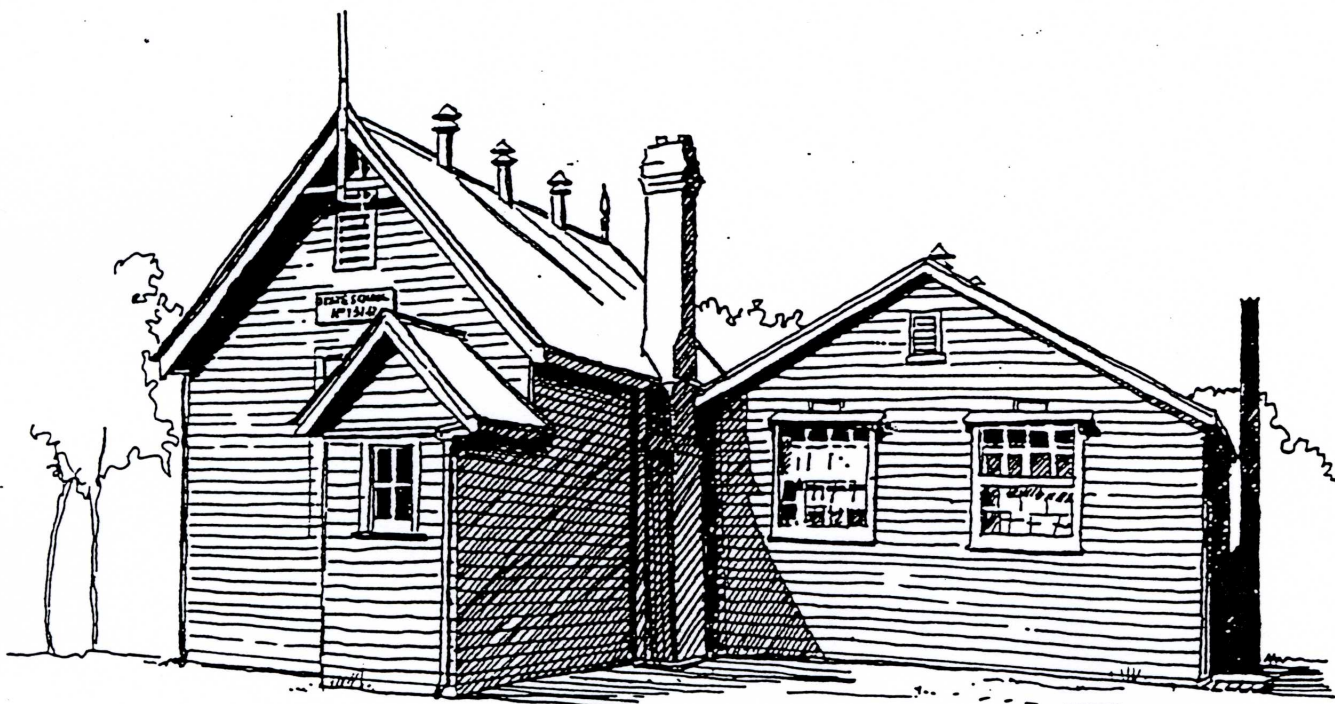


CORNISHTOWN & PRENTICE FREEHOLD REUNION

1873 - 1998



CORNISHTOWN 802



PRENTICE FREEHOLD 1314

PRICE \$5.00

INTRODUCTION

The committee of the Cornishtown Prentice Freehold 125 years celebration trust that you enjoy the articles in this book. Access to Local History is very important and identifies the character of the Pioneers who chose this district to work and live.

The History of Cornishtown was published for its centenary in 1973 the book has now gone out of print and further information and photographs have come to light from Prentice Freehold area.

We acknowledge and thank the people who have provided their thoughts and photographs for this publication.

Very fortunate in obtaining the assistance of Nell Begley and Rex Fuge who edited this book.

Vincent Shelley

Chairman

CORNISHTOWN

The small hamlet of Cornishtown lies midway between Chiltern and Rutherglen in North-east Victoria.

Cornishtown is situated on the rich Indigo gold lead. It was settled in 1859 twelve months after John Conness and Edward Morgan found payable gold on the Indigo, two miles from Chiltern.

Cornishtown takes its name from the many families of Cornish origin who had flocked to the area. Celtic families were leaving their homeland because of the decline of the tin mining industry and were emigrating to America and Australia. Many found their way to the new goldfields of Victoria.

Private schools provided the first education in Cornishtown for those who could afford the cost.

A Common School, No.802 Cornishtown, was opened on the first of July 1865 with an attendance of 29 pupils. It was a small building measuring 28 feet by 14 feet which was described as unsuitable.

With the introduction of the State School system in 1872 a new brick building was built on the rise on land donated by Charles Kiereth. This school was also known as Cornishtown No. 802.

A large population of Chinese emigrants lived in the area with a street of shops, a large camp and a Joss House.

The villages of Mt. Pleasant to the north and Christmastown and Durham to the south also added to the large population of the area.

The discovery of the Devonshire Gold Lead in October 1859 by Matthews and Party and Maiden's Reef at Cornishtown that produced gold weighing 105 ounces drew miners and businessmen and women to the area like a magnet.

By 1860 over 13 thousand ounces of gold had been mined from Cornishtown and Christmastown.

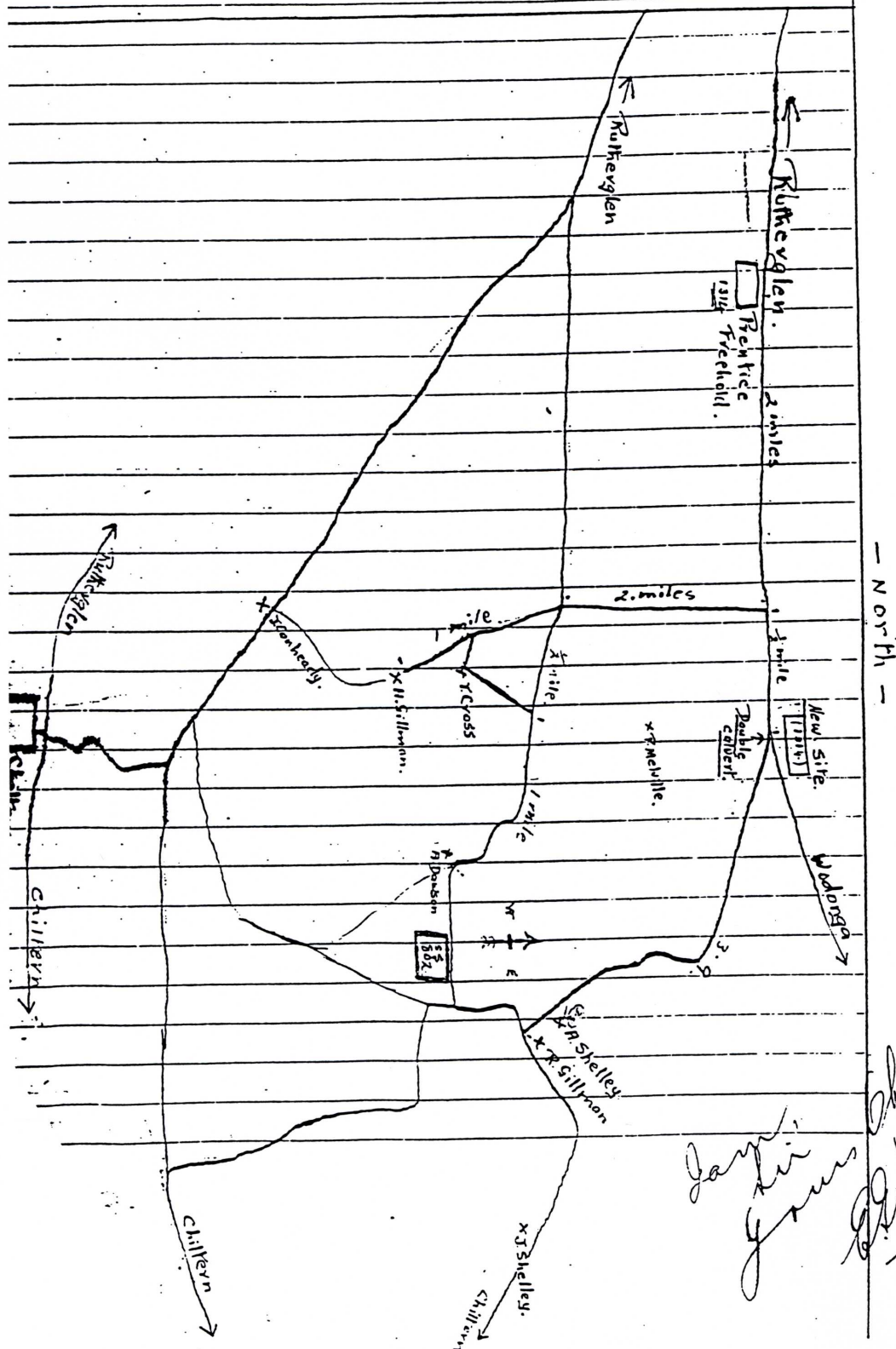
Cornishtown today is a rural area close to the Chiltern Regional Park. The landscape still bears evidence of the gold mining era with its many residue dumps.

Cornishtown still retains its 125 year old school which is now a public hall. Other facilities include a recreation ground and a rural fire brigade building.

Rex Fuge

2. Condition: Brick building is rather sunless and cold and needs minor repairs.
Wooden building is in excellent condition.

⑦ Practically all the roads are formed and metalled.



HEAD TEACHERS OF CONISHTOWN SCHOOL

NO.802

Thomas B. Richardson	1865 – 1866
Patrick A. McLaughlin	1866 – 1868
James Corry	1868 – 1894
James Tipping	1895 – 1898
George B. Bennett	1899 – 1903
William Crane	1904 – 1909
James Croskell	1910 – 1918
James F. Rice	1918 – 1922
Daisy Miller	1923 – 1925
Maxwell Saltmarsh	1926 – 1934
Edward Swanton	1934 – 1937
Myra Fealy	1938
Alan Cleaves	1939 – 1944
David Harrison	1944 – 1948
John Cregan	1948 – 1951
William Foster	1951
Leslie Stone	1951 – 1956
Julia Curtain	1956 – 1957

Cornishtown Young Farmers' Club

ANNUAL FIELD DAY 1942

PROGRAMME:

1. Rye Grasses	....	....	....	Desmond Shelley
2. Sheep's Burnet	....	....	....	Martin Shelley
3. Subterranean Clover	....	....	....	Jack Cross
4. Clovers and Similar Plants—				
(a) Perennials	....	....	....	Alan Bromley
(b) True Clovers	....	....	....	Jack Cross
(c) Medicks	....	....	....	Rita Melville
5. Canary Grasses—				
(a) Kinds of Canary Grasses	....	....	....	Shirley Gillman
(b) Phalaris Tuberosa	....	....	....	Rita Melville
(c) Annual Canary Grass	....	....	....	Maureen Shelley
6. Trees—				
(a) Seed Saving	....	....	....	Percy Melville
(b) } Sowing Seeds	....	....	....	Kevin Curtain
(c) }				Claire Shelley
(d) } Potting up Seedlings	....	....	....	Desmond Shelley
(e) }				Claire Shelley

Interval of 10 Minutes

7. Superphosphate	....	....	....	Martin Shelley
8. Copper				
(a) Mining and Milling	....	....	....	Alan Bromley
(b) Blast Furnace Smelting	....	....	....	Shirley Gillman
(c) The Converters	....	....	....	Martin Shelley
(d) The Tank House	....	....	....	Rita Melville
(e) Copper Sulphate	....	....	....	Keith Melville
(f) Uses of Copper	....	....	....	Maureen Shelley
9. Wimmera Rye Grass Seed and Super	....	....	....	Rita Melville
10. Milk Testing	....	....	....	Shirley Gillman
11. Paint—				
(a) Finishes	....	....	....	Martin Shelley
(b) Pigments	....	....	....	Alan Bromley
(c) Liquids or Binders	....	....	....	Maureen Shelley
(d) How Paint is Made	....	....	....	Keith Melville
12. Sulphate of Ammonia	....	....	....	Jack Cross
13. Collecting Plants	....	....	....	Maureen Shelley
				Rita Melville
14. Eucalyptus Trees	....	....	....	Shirley Gillman
15. Secretary's Report				

Afternoon Tea

C. P. MELVILLE, Chairman, Advisory Committee

A. W. CLEAVES, Head Teacher

SHIRLEY GILLMAN, Y.F.C. Secretary

Price: 6d.

SUN PRINT, RUTHERGLEN

CORNISHTOWN CIVIC CENTRE

After the Cornishtown School closed on the 15th March 1957, a public meeting was convened by the local Young Farmers Club, this being held on 20th June 1958 with the view of purchasing the building as a Hall. A Committee of Management was formed with the following members:—

President, Phillip Curtain.

Vice-President, Lionel Gillman.

Secretary, Rex Fuge.

Jim Nesbitt, Miss Claire Shelley, Basil Fuge, Alan Shelley.

Through the help of our Member of Parliament Mr. A. K. Bradbury, it was decided at a meeting on the 10th March 1959, to purchase the School building for £200, on condition the land be made into a Re-

creation Reserve. This was gazetted in September 1959, and to be known as the Cornishtown Civic Centre.

The Young Farmers Club donated £60 and the remaining £140 to be collected by a canvas of the district. Functions such as Dances, Euchre Parties, and Street Stalls were held to raise this £124 which had been loaned by district residents, £16 had been donated; the debt was finalised on 17th August, 1960.

Electricity was connected to the Civic Centre in September 1965 with a Switching on Ceremony for district residents. In 1966 the front steps were renewed, and in 1969 a grant was obtained to re-fence the Centre, and painted inside and out in 1970.

OFFICE BEARERS OF CORNISHTOWN HALL

1958	President	Phillip Curtain	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1961	President	Lionel Gillman	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1963	President	Maureen Shelley	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1966	President	Keith Melville	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1972	President	Vincent Shelley	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1981	President	Keith Melville	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1987	President	Graeme Howey	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1990	President	William Slattery	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1996	President	Jan Sellar	Secretary	Rex Fuge
1998	President	Vincent Shelley	Secretary	Rex Fuge

CORNISHTOWN SCHOOLDAY RECOLLECTIONS

In October 1954 I went to Cornishtown School to ask Head Teacher Les Stone if my son Jim Begley could go to school there till end of year. I had second son Ron with me and he asked how old he was, I said 4 and Les said send him too. My sister Sheila Phillips (Ohlin) who was then living at Emu Plains had one son Tony who was 5 so he was ready for school too.

Jim had already been going to school at Wodonga. I remember that first day for the boys at Cornishtown. On taking them into the schoolroom Les assured me they'd be right. When I got to the door I ran to the car outside the gate and when I opened the car door there they were "all 3 of them". I told them they had to stay so Tony turned on the tears, then Ron and this was too much for Jim so he joined in. Then it was back into Les. I got away next time, but at 1.30pm. Les Stone rang and said the boys have had enough "come and get them". Another day teacher rang and said they had set off for home. Jim's story was he told Ron and Tony to stay there as he was going home, "as if they'd stay without him." (It was a 3 mile walk).

NELL BEGLEY
(OHLIN)

Once a year the Bachelor and Spinsters ball would be held at the school. They had to have it all cleaned up before the Methodist Minister and his flock arrived on the Sunday morning. The men still cleaning up from Saturday night - pushing the empty beer barrel across the porch would greet them.

Mrs. Kierath and I put on the Christmas concert, she was a very good pianist, and the school would be packed out for this concert.

We were sitting in the school house kitchen and could hear this little voice help, help we looked out and a big brown snake was chasing Shane along the back verandah, we sure moved!

Shane would go to school with Les of a morning and sit up there in one of the desks and draw with his pic pics (pencils) he call them.

He also got lost at Cornishtown and the district was out looking for him, they found his footprints in the mud of Mrs. Kierath's dam and the big collie dog had obviously shepherded him out of the water. Bill Curtain found him it was nearly dark and he said

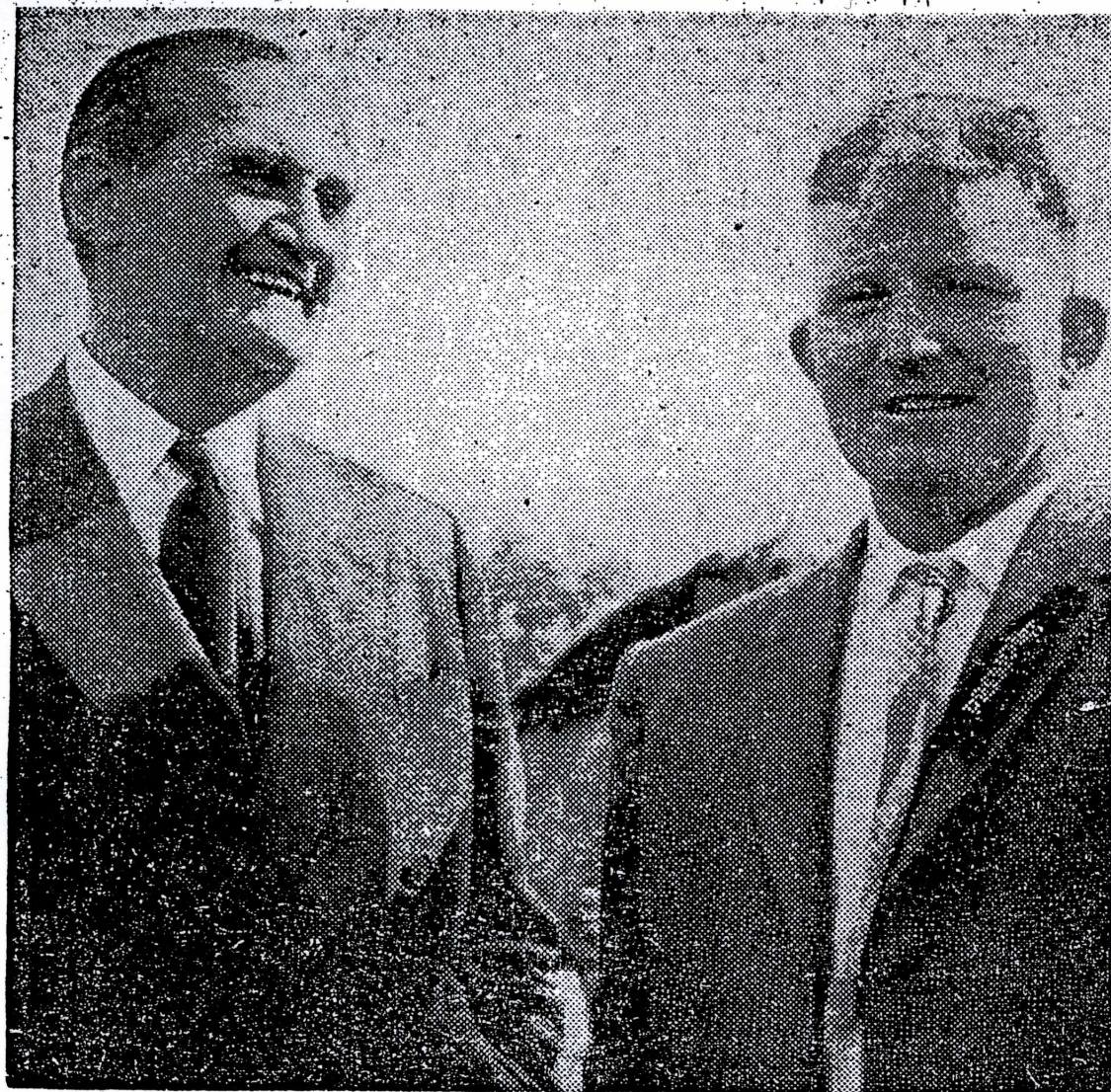
"hello Bill"

Les hated snakes, we had one in the school and the playground. Then, when the children were on their way home, they would tear back to school please Sir a snake on the road, Les would have to get a shovel and go and kill it. For a city man killing snakes was quite traumatic.

When the district Inspector came for the day, Les would shut the house gate to the school because he wouldn't let Shane go while the District Inspector was there. This child screaming at the gate must have been getting on the District Inspector's nerves, he said to Les what's wrong with that child, Les explained he usually came to school, well for goodness sake let him come.

Pam Stone

MELVILLE FAMILY.



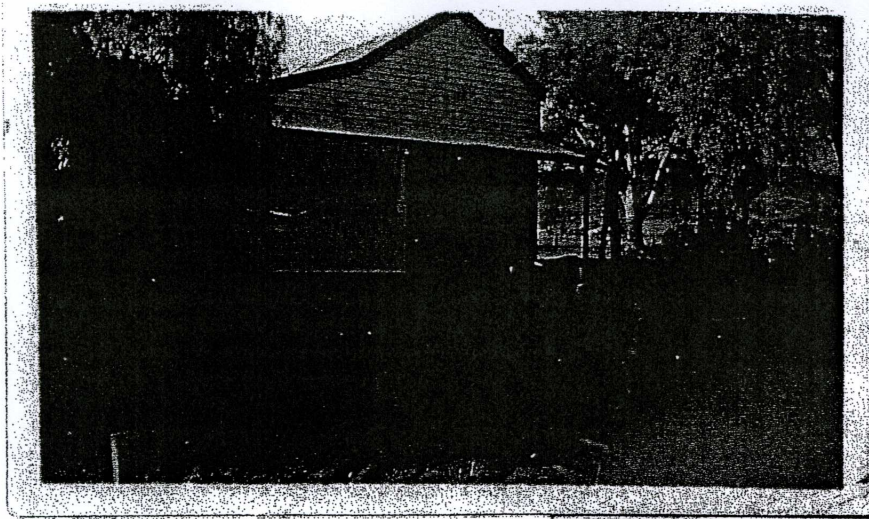
JOHN M^CEWEN

KEITH MELVILLE.



JULIA CURTAIN

HELEN KIERATH



CORNISH TOWN
SCHOOL HOUSE

SHANE STONE -



SHANE STONE - SNAKE AROUND
NECK, THAT BILL CURTAIN SHOT AFTER
IT CHASED HIM AROUND VERANDA. →



SHANE STONE
IN HIS SPECIAL
CAR.

Cornishtown Young Farmers' Club

ANNUAL FIELD DAY 1942

PROGRAMME:

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------|------|------|-----------------|
| 1. Rye Grasses | .... | .... | .... | Desmond Shelley |
| 2. Sheep's Burnet | .... | .... | .... | Martin Shelley |
| 3. Subterranean Clover | .... | .... | .... | Jack Cross |
| 4. Clovers and Similar Plants— | | | | |
| (a) Perennials | .... | .... | .... | Alan Bromley |
| (b) True Clovers | .... | .... | .... | Jack Cross |
| (c) Medicks | .... | .... | .... | Rita Melville |
| 5. Canary Grasses— | | | | |
| (a) Kinds of Canary Grasses | .... | .... | .... | Shirley Gillman |
| (b) Phalaris Tuberosa | ... | .... | .... | Rita Melville |
| (c) Annual Canary Grass | .... | .... | .... | Maureen Shelley |
| 6. Trees— | | | | |
| (a) Seed Saving | .... | .... | .... | Percy Melville |
| (b) } Sowing Seeds | .... | .... | .... | Kevin Curtain |
| (c) } | | | | Claire Shelley |
| (d) } Potting up Seedlings | .... | .... | .... | Desmond Shelley |
| (e) } | | | | Claire Shelley |

Interval of 10 Minutes

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|-----------------|
| 7. Superphosphate | | | | Martin Shelley |
| 8. Copper | | | | |
| (a) Mining and Milling | | | | Alan Bromley |
| (b) Blast Furnace Smelting | | | | Shirley Gillman |
| (c) The Converters | | | | Martin Shelley |
| (d) The Tank House | ... | | | Rita Melville |
| (e) Copper Sulphate | | | | Keith Melville |
| (f) Uses of Copper | | | | Maureen Shelley |
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| (d) How Paint is Made | | | | Keith Melville |
| 12. Sulphate of Ammonia | | | | Jack Cross |
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| 14. Eucalyptus Trees | | | | Shirley Gillman |
| 15. Secretary's Report | | | | |

Afternoon Tea

C. R. MELVILLE, Chairman, Advisory Committee

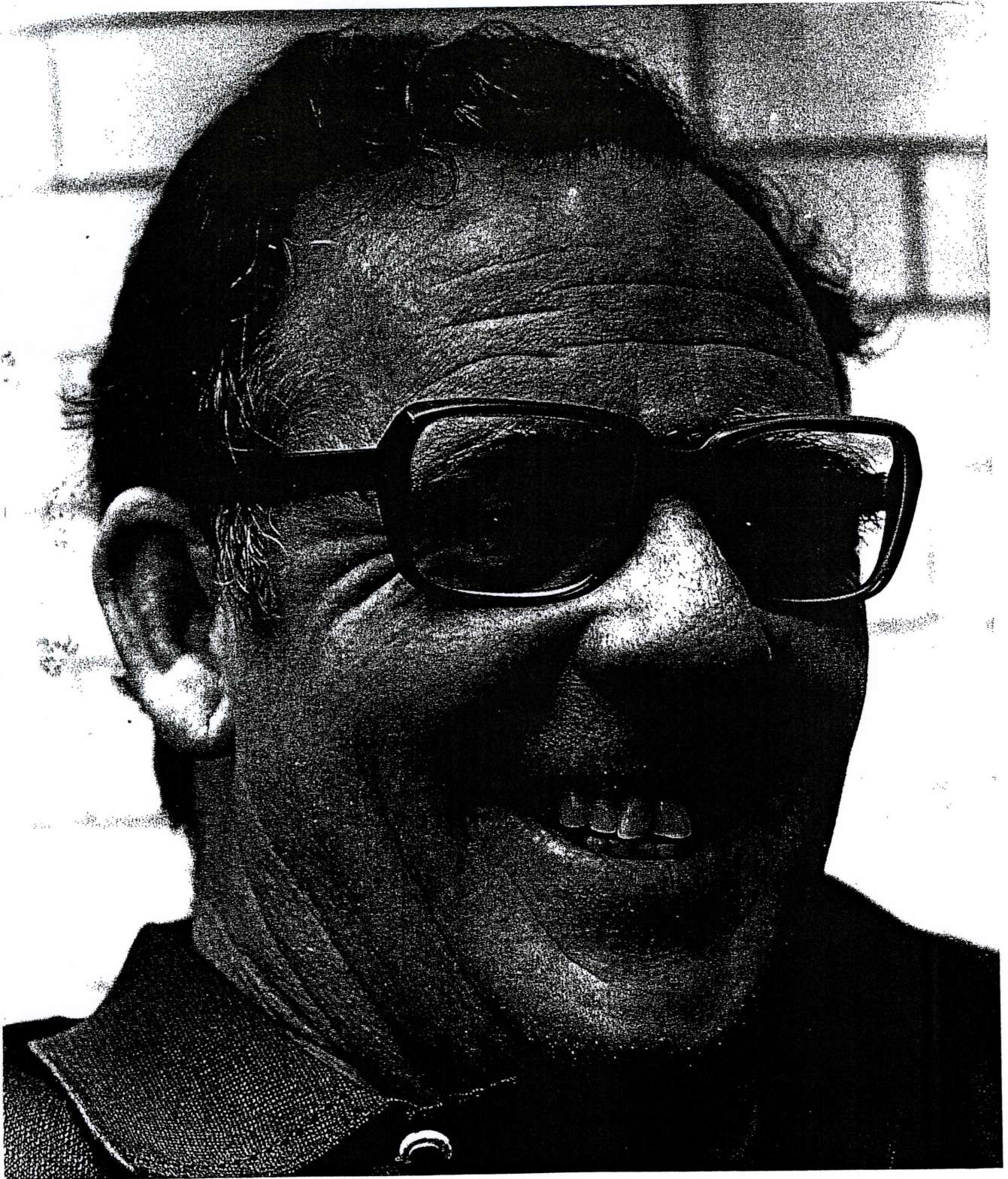
A. W. CLEAVES, Head Teacher

SHIRLEY GILLMAN, Y.F.C. Secretary

Price: 6d.

SUN PRINT, RUTHERGLEN

LES STONE
TERCHER
CORNISHTOWN
1951-56



My days at Cornishtown State School No.802

Written by.....Bill Steele

I have very clear and treasured memories of my school days at Cornishtown state school over forty five years ago, and the events that led up to me becoming a student at that small country school.

It was early in 1952 and our family moved from Melbourne to stay with my grandmother Agnes Cregan at her farm at Christmastown. We moved to a warmer climate on the advice of our family doctor to improve the health of my younger sister and myself, and it was only to be a temporary move. After settling in to our new rural life style, the thought of going to school was the furthestmost thing from my mind, however mum definitely had different ideas. She certainly knew that her somewhat shy son had an aversion to school life, as she had remembered the remark I had made after my first day a year earlier, at the East Doncaster State School when I said "I've been to school, now that's over with lets get on with something else". My mother soon informed me, "have I got news for you, there's a lot more than just one day in your school life!"

The day came to enrol for grade two at Cornishtown and off we set. My mother on her brother Leo's bike and myself on my brand new Malvern Star recently purchased in Rutherglen for the express purpose of transporting me to and from school.

I don't remember much about the day I enrolled, except that Les Stone seemed okay and everything appeared small and not too overpowering. My first day to day recollections were of riding my bike down Christmastown road along that stretch of road behind Fuges, during the winter months there were at least three places where large sheets of water would completely cover the road and my feet would get soaked trying to peddle through all of them.

I have clear memories when riding down Christmastown road to school and how I would stop and look at the Eastern Rosellas, green parrots, and Robin Red Breasts, and would give a full report at show and tell in class. Looking back now, day to day school life at Cornishtown was simple and uncomplicated. Les Stone had to teach sixteen students at that time. I

remember the six grades were organised in rows across the room and Les appeared to control the whole operation very successfully, and he always took time to conduct one on one teaching with a student that may have had a problem.

Of the sixteen students attending at the time, five were from the Den Gillman family, there was also Peter Dawson, Jim Grace, Gordon Owen, various Shelly's and others. A few of the Gillman children arrived every day on horses and they tied them up under the peppercorn trees. I think most of the others came on bikes as I did.

At play times and lunch times there were small gatherings of three or four age groups that stuck together because the school population was so small. I remember games of marbles or alleys played over the top of bull ant nests because this was the only non grassed areas in the playground. You had to fire your marbles while trying to avoid being bitten.

We had school sports, and I remember travelling up to the Albury show grounds to compete against other schools. There were Friday afternoons when all students were called out of class for gardening duty around Les Stones Education Department house. What really stands out in my mind were at least two occasions when Les's wife Pam rushed over to the schoolroom to inform him that their son Shane, who was about two years old at that time had climbed over the gate or fence and was missing. Classes on both occasions were immediately abandoned and the whole school population was sent off in different directions to find young Shane. Little did any of us realise then that this young child would grow up and become The Chief Minister of the Northern Territory .

My mother's family the Cregan's like all the older established families in the district have had a strong connection with the Cornishtown school over many generations. The Cregan's could claim however that one of the schools former students my mother's brother Frank was appointed as a head teacher at his former school from 1948 to 1951.the only Cornishtown student to ever do so.

In this complicated world we now live in with computer's, mobile phones, faxes etc, it seems hard to imagine that this brief time in my life at the Cornishtown state school all those year's ago with it's simple way of life ever happened

My eight months in that schoolroom over forty five year's ago was a unique period in my life and I feel I was privileged to have experienced it, and I will always have treasured memories , as some of my best school days ever, if not the best

Bill Steele.