

PL O D E S S A Y :



The Criterion was a Wonthaggi newspaper that began in 1911 and finished in 1913 after it was overtaken by the *Powlett Express* and *The Sentinel*. It was published by William Henry Davis and printed at a 'Union Shop by Union Labour' at the corner of Murray and McKenzie Streets. Subscription to the first paper dedicated to Wonthaggi cost 1s3d per quarter or 5s yearly.

The Criterion was a paper always on the side of the workers, union members and Laborites. Often, on the front page, was a cartoon depicting debauched 'anti-Laborites' dressed in flash suits, sporting top hats, smoking fat cigars, hardly able to look past their

enormous stomachs. They would invariably be saying stupid things about workers or Labor party members. Aside from these Dobbs cartoons, there was very little in *The Criterion* that was not about the goings on in and around Wonthaggi.

Each week reports from different shire meetings were meticulously written up. In this 7 September 1912 issue, for instance, the San Remo Hall Committee applied to the Woolamai Shire Council to change the closing



hour of it's dances from 4am to 3am! The debate was lively. The disgusted dancers argued that, "It would have the effect of turning dancers into the un-sheltered road at times of darkness and heavy rains." The journalist reporting the debate wrote

that it would be up to the Shire Council to "exercise the wisdom of Solomon, but no chance of pleasing everyone."

The Borough Council news was reported fortnightly for the Council met only twice a month. There were regular reports of football and turf news. Plenty of information filled the pages such as the cost of sending a letter (1d for an ordinary letter sent within Victoria in 1912). In fact, the cost of postage took up a whole column in this issue. There was an-

other column dedicated to the service times of the Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Salvation Army, Roman Catholic and Christadelphian churches.

Of course, there were many column inches dedicated to the Hospital. In this issue the Committee was still pushing the government to get the hospital built. The issue hinged at that point on whom the government would appoint to sit on the committee if early authority was promised. Also, the 'ladies' were concerned that the money they had raised from the Hospital Ball had not been handled properly. As always happens, everyone was accusing everyone, but some of the men were trying to turn it into a joke that was no laughing matter according to the ladies.

There was a long column reporting the "first class exhibition of pictures, smart, clean and attractive vaudeville programmes" at the new Wonthaggi Theatre on Graham Street: "Miss Arlie is a neat & finished artiste. Her singing at the piano and vivacity won her enthusiastic admiration. Mr Arthur Douglas is a sound Scotch comedian. The Two Waldorfs are clever equilibrists and pantomimists who performed almost impossible feats."

One news item said that, "The new bridge over Bass River is now open for traffic and is proving a great convenience to the public."

Looking at these old papers that the Volunteers are in the process of cataloguing and preserving, brings the past to the present in such a vivid way. Perhaps the most fascinating aspect of the paper is its advertisements, whole pages of them: Beard Bros. Wholesale & Retail Butchers; Wonthaggi Timber & Hardware ('building allotments in the town given away to those who build through the company. T.S.Reilly, manager'); Ridgway for Teeth ('5 yr's London, 3yr's American, 2 yr's Continental experience. Absolutely painless extractions!'); Monobel explosive powders for miners. One little Lost & Found notice: "Lost, stolen or strayed, one iron grey pony mare about 14 hands & one iron grey buggy horse. Finally, a report on how the horse is coming back into favour over the car.

The Week's News.

WONTHAGGI.
The secretary of the Wonthaggi Hospital (Mr. M. Mitchell) reports for the week ending 4th inst. :-Patients admitted during the week, 4; discharged, 6; remaining, 11. The matron desires to acknowledge with thanks the following gift :-Mrs. Ray Hollins, Kilcunda, 15 doz. eggs.

J. Polkinghorne, Graham-street.
Mr. B. Duffy, the newly-appointed electrician for the borough, arrived in Wonthaggi on Monday, and took up his duties. Mr. Duffy was present at the council meeting on Monday evening, and answered several questions relating to electric lighting.

J. Polkinghorne, Furnishing.
Mr. Harold Strickland will commence his duties as Town Clerk for the Borough of Wonthaggi on Monday next.

J. Polkinghorne, Undertaker.
The residence of Mr. Thomas Longmire, in Merrin-crescent, was destroyed by fire on Monday evening. The occupants were away from home at the time. The origin of the fire has not yet been discovered.

J. Polkinghorne, Graham-street.
Mr. G. R. Abrahamson left Wonthaggi yesterday on a short business trip to Ballarat, Creswick, Ararat, and other Western district towns. Mr. Abrahamson will return to Wonthaggi by the end of next week.

J. Polkinghorne, Furnishing.
At the last meeting of the Powlett branch of the V.C.M.A., the president, Mr. H. McCulloch, stated that the branch disbursed over £600 in assisting members through sickness and accidents. He expressed his gratification at the formation of Special Benefit and Relief Fund by the branch.

J. Polkinghorne, Undertaker.

DALYSTON.
A meeting of the Powlett River Agricultural Pastoral and Horticultural Society will be held in the Mechanics' Hall, Dalyston, on Wednesday next, 11th inst. A good attendance is requested, as important business will be transacted.

NORTH WONTHAGGI.
A euchre party and dance was held in the Edgarton Hall on Monday evening. Despite the very inclement weather, those who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and danced until the small hours of the morning.

The North Wonthaggi hall committee are inviting applications for the position of hall caretaker. Applications stating the qualifications of the applicants must be in the hands of the secretary, Mr. W. C. Simcox, Graham-street, Wonthaggi, not later than Saturday, September 14th.

GRANTVILLE.
Mr. James Smith, the hon. secretary and the committee are receiving encouraging reports in connection with the forthcoming concert and ball to be held in the Mechanics' Hall, Grantville, on Wednesday, September 25th. We regret very much having erroneously stated in our last that the function was fixed for September 18th.

