

## PLOD ESSAY:

### THE POWER HOUSE – WONTHAGGI by John McLean

The whistle blows once more to say  
Wonthaggi's spirits, here to stay  
As years ago from boilers strong  
Its home – to the Powerhouse did belong.

In Summer's heat, and winter's chill,  
The stokers of the Power House still  
In our memories, have ever been  
As they keep the boilers up to steam.

From the power of steam 270 pounds  
To turn the generators round  
Wonthaggi Mines and Township, too,  
Were things to see with a brighter view.

Electricity we take now in our stride  
From magnetic fields it does abide  
Like God's power, veiled from sight  
But in what blessing when there's always  
light.

The mines depended on the unseen volts  
That sometimes gave the men mighty jolts.  
But the amps that made the motors strong  
Turned the wheels that marches Wonthaggi  
on.

Power Stations have a tale to tell  
Sometimes things didn't go well  
The amps go up and the volts go down  
Can make the operator seem a clown.

Maybe it's steam or sync that's out  
But awful things can come about  
When volts and amps and sync play up  
And circuit breakers blow their top.

The Power House weathered all its bosses,  
'Til the S.E.C. came across us.  
The big shut-down was sad in ways  
But leaves History, for all our days.

Don Mis Concrete carries on  
In the Power House shell, forlorn,  
Where alternators spun their tune  
To give Wonthaggi Town its boom.

The Age we live in here today  
Owes its comfort to men in the fray  
In days now gone and long hours worked  
And women with no time to shirk.

We honour, too, the women folk  
The struggle it was no joke,  
As men around the mines did roam,  
They were the Power House in the home.

**John McLean's ballad of the Wonthaggi Power House will serve as the PLOD ESSAY this month.**

**I was involved with a major family event on the 5<sup>th</sup> of February when our son, Julian, had his wedding at Eagle's Nest (during a fateful lull in the weather) and reception in our house and garden (marque and band meant none of our 100 guests heeded rain). I have yet to recover. Please forgive me. An essay marking the beginnings of the Borough Council one hundred years ago will feature next month.**

**- C. Landon 7<sup>th</sup> February 2011**