

DAYBORO DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY Feb 2010

February 1, 2010 Politics and Council Editor

Est. 2004

PINE RIVERS HERITAGE MUSEUM:

There will be exhibition entitled "Dayboro, the first 100 years" taking place from 26th March to 16th May 2010 – from the arrival of John McKenzie in 1866 to the closure of the Butter Factory in 1965.

WANTED

Do you have any special treasure stashed away that could possibly be used in the display? Items will be displayed in the glass showcases so they will not be able to be touched by visitors to the display. Please give me a ring if you can help.

HISTORICAL DAYBORO: This was the theme chosen by the Dayboro District Progress Assn. for their 2010 calendar. Our Society was asked to submit a number of photographs so they could make the selections for the calendar.

The February photograph is the 1931 flood, the highest flood recorded in the district, [see April 2009 Grapevine].



Skerman Brothers Blacksmiths c 1901

The January photograph was Skerman Bros. Blacksmiths c. 1901 (reproduced at right). Frederick John Skerman Jnr. was the 5th and John Hope Skerman the 8th of 16 children of Frederick John Skerman and Alice Darlington who came to live at Harrison's Pocket in 1868, which property is now under the waters of Lake Samsonvale. Fred and Jack

Skerman established "Skerman Bros." blacksmiths c. 1901 in Terrors Creek. Jack remained until c. 1903, moving to Maleny with 2 other brothers and later managing the Maleny Co-op. The business became "F.J. Skerman, Coach Builder & General Smith". Fred conducted this business until c. 1912. He married Etta May Bulgin on 27 Dec 1905 and they had six children. Fred Skerman was a committee member of the Terrors Creek Presbyterian Church. The church purchased his house in Lacey's Creek Road for use as a manse. This house still stands today situated just before the Ambulance Centre. The blacksmiths was situated in McKenzie Street on a site now occupied by the brick house next to Dayboro Medical Centre.

The Skermans had an interesting history. The source of this information is the memoirs of Percival James Skerman, the 6th child.

31 Mar 1866 The clipper ship "Netherby" left East Indian Dock, London with 303 passengers bound for Moreton Bay, calling at Plymouth to take on the remaining passengers. Boarding at Plymouth were 12 members of the Skerman family – John and Maria, daughter Caroline, her husband William Skerman and their daughter Lucy, son Frederick, his wife Alice and their infant daughter Alice, daughter Maria and her husband Hope Martin, and their unmarried children William, Ann and Walter. Their nephew Alfred Darlington was also on board. All their foundry equipment was taken aboard with their personal effects.

13 Apr The "Netherby" left Plymouth, her course being around the Cape of Good Hope around Tasmania and up the east coast of Australia.

22 Apr 4 year old Lucy died from convulsions and was buried at sea.

14 Jul Shortly after 7.15 p.m. the "Netherby" ran aground at King Island and was wrecked. 3 unsuccessful attempts were made to lower a lifeboat. Passengers manned the pumps but before long the lee side between decks was under water. The women and children collected in the fore cabin and saloon. During the night, a pinnace, a large lifeboat with a sail at each end, was attempted to be put overboard but was stove against the ship's side and torn adrift, the men barely escaping with their lives.

15 Jul At daybreak the lifeboat went to find a landing place. A line was eventually made fast to one of the rocks and they commenced landing the passengers with the 2 lifeboats. This was finally accomplished by 3 p.m. with no loss of life. Attention then turned to the landing of provisions.

16 Jul 6 passengers volunteered to walk to the lighthouse on the northern part of King Island. For 4 days attempts were made to save provisions and luggage.

20 Jul Captain and 5 crew left for the lighthouse.

21 Jul Mr. Hickmott arrived from the lighthouse with a letter stating that Captain Owens had arrived the previous evening, that the land party had reached the lighthouse some hours previous and 4 of the party had already left in a lighthouse boat for Melbourne.

23 Jul Mr. Hickmott left with 117 single passengers for the lighthouse. An hour later a steamer was seen. Captain Owens went in the lifeboat to give directions. At 11 a.m. H.M.S. "Victoria" anchored about $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the wreck. Two boats were lowered and a commencement made to embark the passengers. During the day another steamer arrived. The embarkation continued to 4 p.m. and just before dark the two steamers got under way leaving Captain Owens and 22 passengers and crew, 5 of whom were ladies.

24 Jul The "Netherby" finally broke up.

25 Jul H.M.S. "Victoria" rescued the remaining castaways, 11 days after the shipwreck.

H.M.S. "Victoria" and "Pharis" transported the ship's company to Williamstown where transport was ready to take them to the Melbourne Exhibition Buildings for refuge. The Victorian Government provided food and at a benefit concert 1,000 pounds was subscribed. This provided a change of clothes and a pair of blankets for each family.

6 Aug The "City of Melbourne" arrived in Brisbane with the "Netherby" passengers.

Skermans had intended setting up a foundry in Brisbane but all their possessions were lost in the shipwreck. On arrival they were accommodated at the Immigration depot for 1 week. The Queensland Government gave John Skerman, his son Frederick and son-in-law Hope Martin work on the road to Toowong Cemetery at 15 shillings per week without rations. In 1868 John Skerman and his oldest son Frederick selected adjoining properties at Harrison's Pocket. William Skerman married Hannah Thomson. He became a schoolteacher and taught at Mt. Samson and Kobble Creek schools. Ann Skerman married Frederick Michael and they farmed at Samsonvale. Walter Skerman married Helena Hay and farmed at Terrors Creek. Skermans inter-married with a number of other local families (Protheroe, Strain, Salisbury to name a few). Family members have also paid the supreme sacrifice in wartime – William Michael, son of Frederick Michael & Ann Skerman K.I.A. Warneton, Nord-Pas-de-Calais, France 31 Jul 1917; Alan Chester Skerman, son of Walter Skerman K.I.A. Ypres, West Flanders, Belgium 20 Sep 1917; Verdun Victor Skerman, son of John Hope Skerman K.I.A. El Alamein 14 Sep 1941.