

YALLOURN YEAR BY YEAR 1930



The first sod in the Victorian Government's ambitious scheme to generate electricity at Yallourn was turned more than a century ago (sometime around 1920); and for the next six decades the unique township of Yallourn 'took root, prospered, bloomed, withered and died'....

***"Yallourn was swallowed by the coal mine it was built to serve" ...
'The Herald Sun' May 2016.***

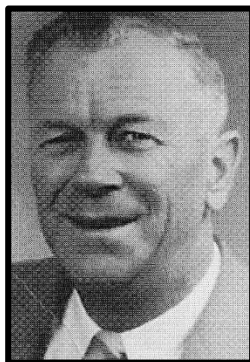
In this history series for the Virtual Yallourn website, various years in the life of the Yallourn have been researched and posted on the website. The monthly news items, listed below, attempt to highlight some of the stories, about the township and its residents that made the local and national newspapers during 1930.



1930

JANUARY: Delegates to the 10th Annual Education Conference of the Federated State School Teachers' Association visited Yallourn. The group travelled by chartered train for the outing.

FEBRUARY: The Yallourn Band is quite a story in the town's history; and, in that era, it went from 'strength to strength.' Following the departure of Mr McMahon in late 1929, Mr C. J. Turner, previously of Stawell, was appointed as the Bandmaster at Yallourn. Mr Turner (better known as Charlie) made an immediate impact; and a story about his inspiring leadership of the band can be read on this website.



Charlie Turner 1900-1973

Charlie Turner was once described by the Latrobe Express newspaper as 'Mr Music'; and his devotion to the Yallourn Band, and the town's various musical group productions was 'second to none.' Charlie arrived in Yallourn in 1930; and for the next four decades gave willingly and freely to the social and cultural activities of the township. The following extract was posted on the Virtual Yallourn website regarding the passing of Charlie Turner...

"When Charlie Turner died in 1973, a composite band of players from all over Gippsland played outside the church, and so many were unable to get into the church, that the service was broadcast to those waiting outside to pay their last tribute to a fine gentleman and an outstanding musician."



Charlie Turner and the Yallourn Band in later years.

MARCH: Mr George Dickson-Brown, of the Yallourn Hotel, offered to donate an expensive silver cup to the premiership team of the Central Gippsland Football Association.



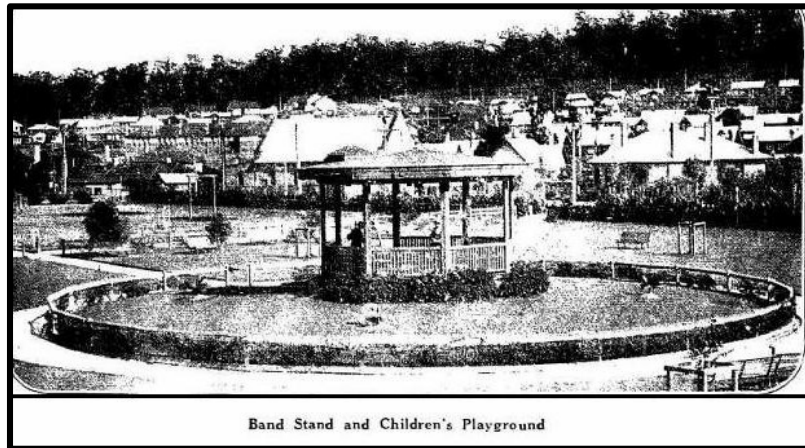
This is one of the earliest photographs of the Yallourn Hotel; and is probably the same which was published in the 'Weekly Times' on April 19th, 1930. The hotel cost £32,745 (pounds) which equates to \$2.70 million in 2021. The stunning building dominated the landscape and was the talk of the district when it opened. Photographs of the splendid interior of the hotel can be found on this website.

Also in March 1930, this wonderful photograph of a group of local children was published in an article entitled 'The Spirit of Yallourn'. The story was written by Norman McCance and was part of a special feature in 'The Argus Camera Supplement'. The caption's text is re-printed below.



Caption text: Some particularly bright examples of childhood at Yallourn They live in a model community centre in the healthiest of townships among the hills; and the Electricity Commission extends its paternal interest in their welfare to the provision of paddling pool and playgrounds

APRIL: In April 1930, the 'Weekly Times' published a photograph of the bandstand and children's playground at Yallourn. The gardens were a central feature of the town; and, in time, became the envy of other communities. The gardens were part of the 'vision splendid' and fundamental to the notions of Ebenezer Howard's regarding a 'model township.'



In April 1930, nominated representatives from Yallourn attended a meeting of the Central Gippsland R.A.C.V. which was held at the Morwell Mechanics Hall. The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the proposed increase in the tax on petroleum. Mr W. Dowd, a resident of Yallourn, was listed as the organization's Honourary Secretary. It is believed that he was the 'same Mr Dowd' who was a founding member of the Yallourn Bowling Club.

MAY: Little information was supplied with this unusual photograph when it appeared in the 'Weekly Times' in May 1930. The photo was part of a pictorial page and referred to Mr O'Brien's farm at Yallourn. Can any reader kindly assist with any facts about the O'Brien family? Thank you.



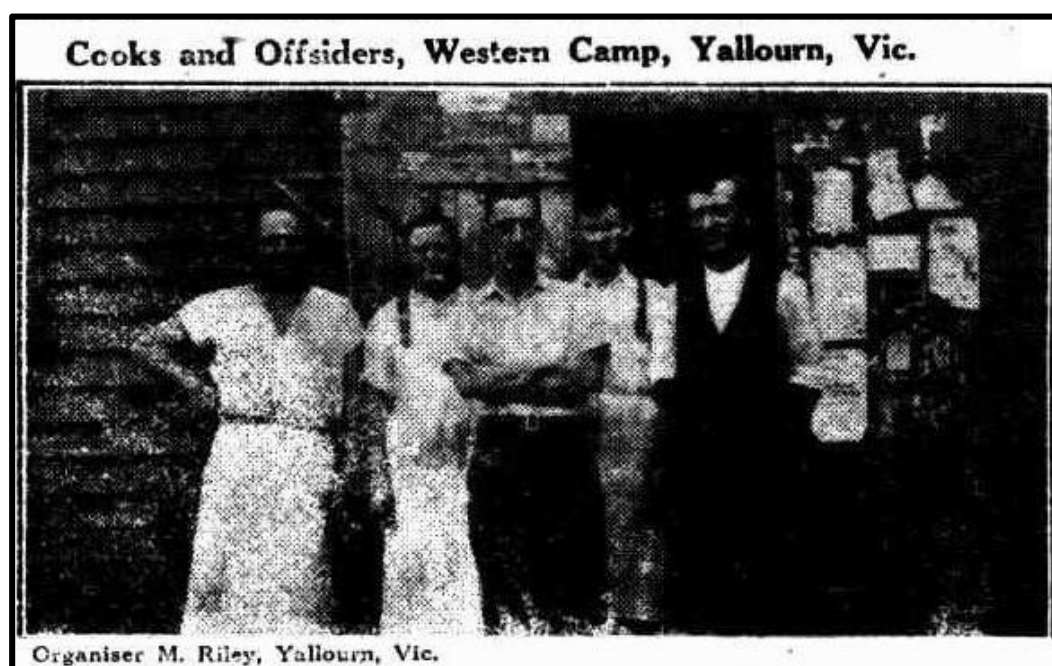
Also in May that year, Jim Garvin, formerly of Bendigo, received warm praise for his prowess in rifle shooting. Mr Garvin brought great honour to the town with a long list of impressive victories in that sport. A tribute to Jim Garvin can be found on this website.



Jim Garvin in 1943.

The photograph below shows members of the kitchen staff of the West Camp at Yallourn in May 1930. Life in the camps at Yallourn was very challenging and...

“As can be imagined, life in the camps during the depths of winter and the height of summer would have been taxing. The nature of the work, in the early years of the Yallourn Project, was onerous...”
Source: Virtual Yallourn website.



Source: 'Australian Worker' May 21st 1930, Page: 11

One of the most significant photographs in the history of the Yallourn Football Club was published in the 'Weekly Times' in 1930. This YFC team photograph is historically important as it lists the players who represented the club in that era. The game was against Warragul and the photo included some of the most notable sporting personalities of the town in those early years.

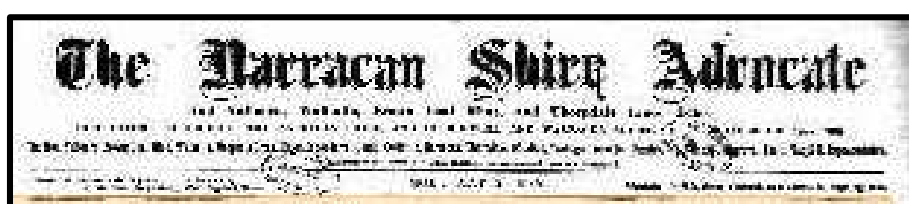


Caption Text: YALLOURN TEAM (Winners) - Back row (left to right): H. Brewer (President), A. Hutton, H. Culph, H. Barr, K. Sheppard, G. O'Brien, J. Riches, P. O'Neill, S. Benson (Secretary). Centre: G. Quirk, S. Comber, C. Hayes, C. Scott (Captain), M. Crawford, L. Kennedy, J. Brooks. Front: E. Comber, B. Guy, B. Crawford, Brookes, A. James.

Source: 'Weekly Times' May 10th 1930. Page: 37

Further to the above entry, regarding the clash between Yallourn and Warragul, the details of the opening round of the 1930 Central Gippsland Football League were published in a newspaper known as the 'Narracan Shire Advocate and Yallourn Brown Coal Mine, Walhalla and Thorpdale Lines Echo'. (The newspaper was published from 1923 until 1943).

The article is informative; and shows that the CGFL was a seven team competition that season. The extract also sheds some light on the: (i) Moe-Yallourn Junior Association and (ii) the Trafalgar and District Association. From its earliest days, Yallourn was always an enthusiastic football (and sporting) town with plenty of players and an impressive list of voluntary and willing committee members.



Football.

CENTRAL GIPPSLAND ASSOCIATION.

The opening matches take place to-morrow (Saturday), and are as follow :—

Warragul v. Yallourn.

Drouin v. Moe.

Nar-nar-goona v. Trafalgar.

Yarragon a bye.

In a scratch match, held last Saturday, on the Moe ground, several of the "old hands"—Milne, Dodd, Feltscheer, O'Shea and Baird, in particular—showed form.

JUNIOR ASSOCIATIONS.

A new association, known as "The Moe-Yallourn Junior Association," and embracing the Moe, Brown Coal Mine, Yallourn, and Morwell Bridge Clubs, has sprung into being—this as a result of the poor prospect of the District Association being re-formed. Mr H. Coombs (Moe) has been appointed hon. secretary.

The Trafalgar and District Association (comprising The Meadows, Yarragon, Thorpdale and The Rovers) has since been formed. Matches commence on May 10.

JUNE: The Department of Public Works called for tenders to construct a new Junior School at Yallourn State School (4085).

"Complaints of Overcrowding...Complaints by the committee of the Yallourn State School that the present buildings are overcrowded, and that many children have fainted in the infants' school in hot weather, are being inquired into by officers of the Education Department. Cases of overcrowding were frequently brought under notice..." Source: 'Argus' 20th March 1930. Page: 13



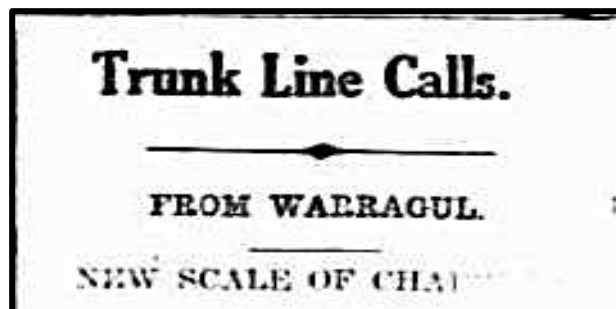
The Yallourn State School 4085 in later years.

In June 1930, the 'Australian Worker' carried this photograph of the 'ultra – modern all electric' Yallourn Hospital.



Source: 'Australian Worker' 25 June 25th 1930. Page: 10.

JULY: New rates of charges for telephone calls, on the various trunk lines throughout Gippsland, were introduced. A phone call from Warragul to Yallourn was either four pence or five pence (depending upon the time of day at which the phone call was made). For younger readers, a trunk line call was one connected to another phone, via an operator, at a local switchboard.



For younger readers, this photograph shows a telephone operator (with headphones) at the control room at the Yallourn Power Station in 1927.

Source: State Library of Victoria. Reference No: H2009. 18/599

AUGUST: Members of the Workers' Educational Association travelled by train from Flinders Street to Yallourn for a specially conducted tour. The number of groups/associations that visited Yallourn, in that era, was considerable and an important strategy in winning the 'hearts and minds' of the public (i.e. Victorian taxpayers) for the on-going project at Yallourn.

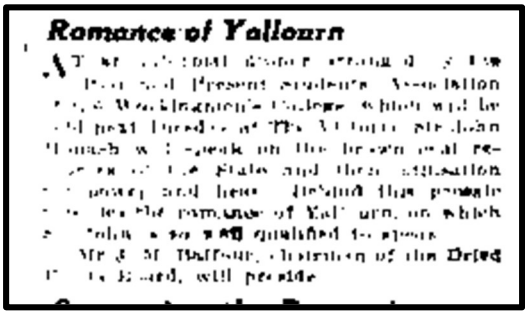
SEPTEMBER: Yallourn Bowling Club presented its Annual Report for the year ending 30th June 1930. On the day, of that inaugural report, the club had more than 60 financial members. The report was most positive; and it was apparent that the first twelve months of the club's existence had been successful. The Honourary Secretary, Mr V.A. Colvin stated...

"In submitting the annual report for the 12 months ended 30th June, 1930, your executive considers that the first year's activities of the Club to be most satisfactory in all respects. The introduction of bowling to Yallourn proved to be most popular and much pleasure was derived by the members, both on their own green and in association with many outside clubs, during the season."

Source: 'Morwell Advertiser' 19th September 1930. Page: 3

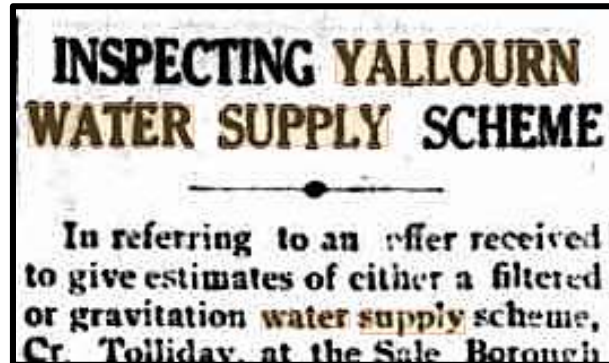


'Romance of Yallourn'... In September 1930, Sir John Monash spoke at the Workingmen's College; and his address centred upon was the importance of the brown coal mine at Yallourn.

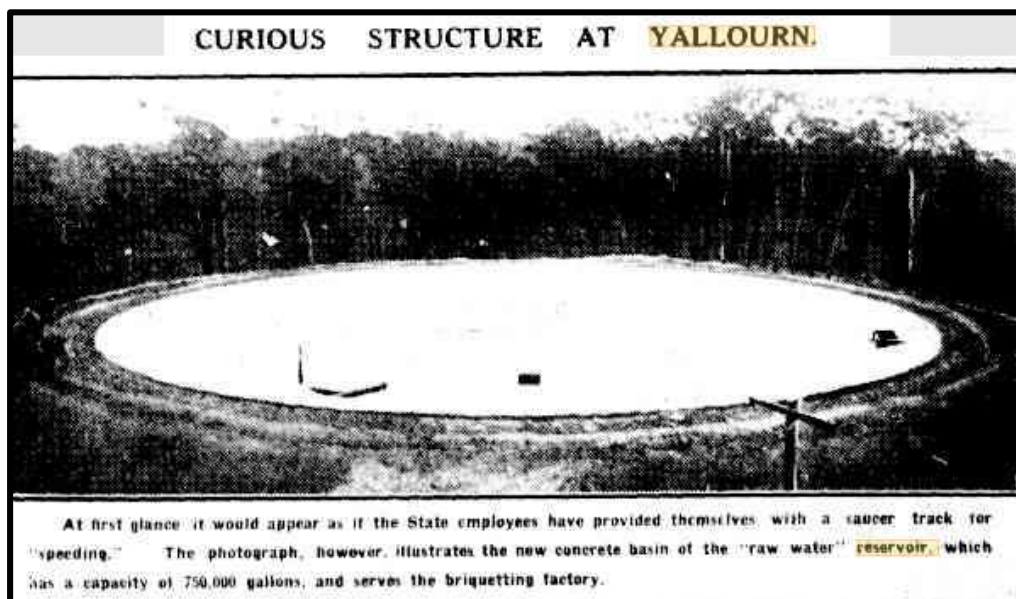


Text: Romance of Yallourn: At a memorial dinner, arranged by the Past and Present Students' Association of the Workingmen's College, which will be held next Tuesday ...Sir John Monash will speak on the brown coal resources of the State and their utilisation for power and heat. Behind this prosaic title lies the romance of Yallourn, on which Sir John is so well qualified to speak. Source: 'The Herald' September 5th 1930 Page: 4

OCTOBER: The Yallourn water supply was setting new standards in the provision of potable/filtered water for domestic and business purposes. Members the Sale Council visited Yallourn to inspect the installation(s) and operation of the town's reservoir and infrastructure (eg purification system) with the aim to improve the circulation of water in Sale.



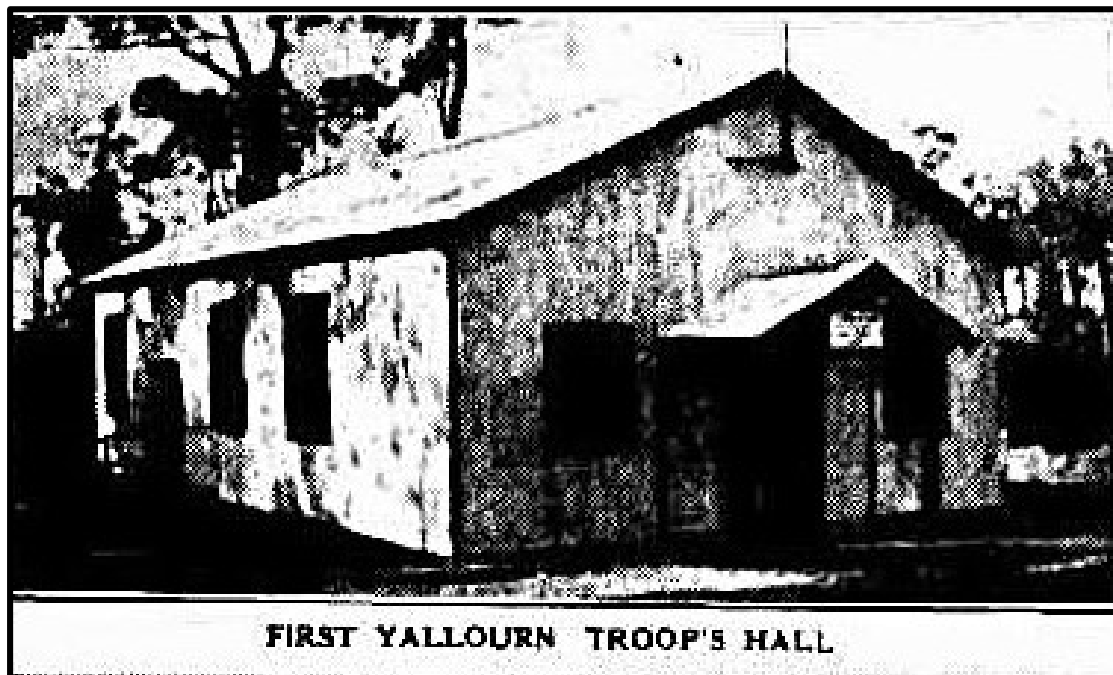
Note: The purification of drinking water was an issue of prime importance at Yallourn because of the high levels of airborne coal dust. The photograph below of the Yallourn reservoir was taken in 1924.



Caption text: CURIOUS STRUCTURE AT YALLOURN - At first glance it would appear as if the State employes have provided themselves with a saucer track for 'speeding.' The photograph, however, illustrates the new concrete basin of the 'raw water' reservoir which has a capacity of 750,000 gallons, and serves the briquetting factory.

Another important photograph, in the history of the township, appeared in the 'Herald' in October in 1930. It is one of the earliest known photos of the original Yallourn Scout Hall. The first Yallourn scouting group was formed in 1924 under the leadership of Reverend Dicker.

Until the hall (shown below) was constructed, the first meetings were held at St John's Hall; and two known scoutmasters at Yallourn, in that period (ie 1930's), were Mr McGowan and Mr S. G. Sutton.



FIRST YALLOURN TROOP'S HALL

Source: 'Herald' October 29th, 1930. Page: 11

NOVEMBER: A program of sporting events was held at the Brown Coal Mine on Saturday, 15th November. The proceedings featured wood chopping and greyhound racing. Bookmakers and sideshows attended the gala day. The available prize money for some events can be seen in the advertisement below...

**Greyhounds. Greyhounds
Greyhounds
Rabbits. Rabbits. Rabbits**

Sports Meeting
—Will be held at—
BROWN COAL MINE

Saturday, Nov. 15th
Commencing at 2 p.m. Sharp.

PROGRAMME :
**HANDICAP UNDERHAND WOOD
CHOP, 14in. logs. First £4.
Second £1. Nom 3/, accept. 1/**

**Speed Coursing (Greyhounds)
COAL MINE STAKE, for all age
dogs. Distance about 200 yds.
Sweepstake of 5/ each, with £2
added. Second dog 20 per cent. of
Stake.**

DECEMBER: In December, a Baby Show was conducted under the auspices of Yallourn and Brown Coal Mine Benevolent and Distress Committee. From what can be gleaned, the YBCB&D Committee was most active in those years; and held frequent activities to raise funds for this those local families in need.

Mr A.D. Angrave (not to be confused with Mr H. Angove of the Yallourn Fire Brigade) was the energetic secretary / organizer of the committee and the Reverend A.A. Bennett (the Vicar at St John's Church) was the President.

Gippsland's Bonny Babies
GIPPSLAND admits quite candidly and modestly that Australia's best babies are reared in the country districts, and "particularly in Gippsland." To prove this contention "for all time," mothers of Gippsland have been asked to prepare their children for the champion Gippsland baby show which will be held at Yallourn on the afternoon of Friday, December 19. The show is being held under the auspices of the Yallourn and B.C.M. Benevolent and Distress committee, and the entrants will be judged by a Collins Street specialist. Children up to the age of seven are eligible, and 12 prizes will be presented to the winners of the different classes.
In the evening, when the children are in bed, Gippsland's matrons and girls will have a chance to compete in a beautiful ankle competition. Until then, Gippsland is delaying a further claim that its ankles are also the best in Australia.

Source: 'Herald' December 9th, 1930. Page: 6

The front page news in December 1930 was that Dr Andrew, the Health Officer at Yallourn, reported on the incidence(s) of whooping cough and chicken pox at the Brown Coal Mine settlement. The fact that there were no cases of pneumonia or gastro-enteritis at the BCM was positive news for the local community.

As is well documented, Dr James Moore Andrew arrived in Yallourn in 1925; and thus began one of the great stories of Yallourn. His forty years of tireless and dedicated service, to the people of Yallourn and the district, saw him awarded an MBE in 1972.

HEALTH OFFICER'S REPORT.
Dr. Andrew, Health Officer at Yallourn, reported:—
At the Brown Coal Mine, whooping cough is raging and there is scarcely a family that has missed a case. Chicken pox has occurred in an adult and two children in one family. In the case of the whooping cough, there are more young children affected now, with more severity than was reported last month. Two cases had to be admitted to hospital. No cases of pneumonia occurred for this month.
Up to date, there have been no cases of gastro-enteritis on the area. The weather so far has been mild—not hot—so that there has been little opportunity for its development.

Source: 'The Narracan Shire Advocate and Yallourn Brown Coal Mine, Walhalla and Thorpdale Lines Echo' December 12th 1930. Page: 1

CAN YOU ADD TO THE HISTORY OF YALLOURN?

The above item was researched and written for the Virtual Yallourn website by Roger Spaul and presented by Julie George with the aim of fostering further interest in the history of Yallourn. It is hoped that readers may be able to add information regarding an event or a person mentioned in the articles.

Please contact Julie if you have memorabilia or photographs related to the above. Thank you help in building the history file of Virtual Yallourn.