

This is Part 4 of Deans Marsh Community Stories where the 1940s and 1950s events are showcased, and important community decisions are taken; where the town adapts to the challenges of World War 2, where the community, after much soul-searching and decades of effort, makes the decision to **give** the Hall and Oval to the Winchelsea Shire Council, when SEC electricity arrives in town, and Deans Marsh has its first **Back To**.

1940s

27. 1940. Park Minutes April 27 '**Basketball Club** given permission to use the grounds.' [Likely this was women's basketball – as the later name 'netball' was not used in Victoria until 1970s, and the men of the district were probably busy with football. It is not clear either where the teams played – it could have been on ground close to the hall where the skate park now is. That site is where an early tennis court was situated.¹



1940 At its December 20 meeting the Park Committee decided to go ahead with the construction of the refreshment rooms [believed to be what is now the Cricket Club rooms] at a cost of £ 27.7.2.

28. 1941 **Deans Marsh Progress Association** was established in 1941, and ran until 1971. The DMPA met every Monday evening and was governed by a committee of 12 including 6 office bearers. The early work of the DMPA focused on the state of the roads and other infrastructure in the district, and also in lobbying the state government hard to try to improve telephone services via the Post Master General [PMG]³ and to speed up the introduction of State Electricity Commission [SEC] power to the area.⁴ This later lobbying continued until 1956 when that power arrived.

¹ Shirley Leak August 2019 for the 1950s, and for the 1960s and 1970s, Fran Watts interview May 2020.

² Deans Marsh Ladies basketball [netball] team circa 1930s. Used with permission of Fran Permezel. Her mother Evelyn Hunt is second from the right in the back row.

³ See for example DMPA Minutes February 28 1947

⁴ DMPA Minutes May 26 1946

1942 Hall Committee AGM April 6th notes that the old Hall block has been sold price not recorded but title details given as Vol. 1993 Folio 39846. Later Minutes of December 11 list the title as Subdivision B of Allotment 25 Bambra with the same volume and folio numbers.

1943 Park Minutes May 4 record that the Deeds of Park to be placed in Commercial Bank.⁵

1943 October 16 Park Minutes note that Mr McKay was renting his old land back for grazing at a cost of £1.1.0 per year.

1944 Hall Committee meeting May 2 members C Smith, W Hannan, G Hunt, H. McKay, W. Atkins, D. McDonald, R. Clissold, G. Bennett, G. Dunse, S. Herr, C. Clissold.

June 6 meeting: Hall has paid caretakers and had had since at least 1932. Miss J Clissold reappointed at £12 per annum paid quarterly. Charges for use of the Hall: 15 shillings for ½ night, 25 shilling for full night.

1944 Community formal functions held for returning local armed service members. The first Welcome Home Events planning committee held a meeting on April 26 1944.

Originally conceived by the Deans Marsh Progress Association, organisation of the Welcome Home events was passed to the Hall committee as it was felt such celebrations should be a 'whole of community' enterprise. The meeting decided there should be one big function: a social evening and sports day and Returned Service people should receive Certificates of Appreciation from the community. Later it was agreed that travel rugs would also be given to returning service members.⁶

29. 1944 **Marjorie Lawrence visits Deans Marsh** on November 2 1944 and she sent a charming telegram to DMPA President thanking him for organising the visit.⁷

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After the reading of the minutes at this meeting Mr Hannan asked the Secretary to read a telegram addressed to Mr Hannan from Mrs Marjorie Lawrence. The telegram read as follows. 3 Nov 1944. Councilor, William Hannan Deans Marsh. My husband and I wish to express to you and to all the people of Deans Marsh our heartfelt thanks for the warm & affectionate welcome that you gave to us yesterday. We will never forget it. Love to all. Marjorie Lawrence.

⁵ Perhaps this referred to the Colac branch. Deans Marsh had a bank but it was a National Bank.

⁶ Hall Minutes 25.10.45

⁷ DMPA Minutes 1944 Minute Book p.72

30. 1945 New Years Eve Dance organised by Hall Committee and [CWA] Younger Set as a fundraiser for the Hall.

1945-6 WELCOME HOME DINNER and concerts held for returning service people.

1946 July 5 Park Committee gave Deans Marsh Tennis Club permission to build a tennis court at the south west corner of the reserve.

1946 November 30 Park Minutes note that the Soldiers Memorial Gate was to be erected at the Park. Cost £33.5.5 in part donated by the Welcome Home Committee. That amount in today's money is \$2,388.40.

1946 The Deans Marsh Cricket Club re-formed after the war, and following and the next 10 years is often referred to as the 'Golden Era' of cricket in Deans Marsh. From 1946 to 1955 Deans Marsh fielded 'A' and 'B' teams in the Polwarth Association. During this period the 'A' team The Invincibles won five premierships, were runners up twice and the 'B' team was runner up on three occasions, twice to the 'A' team, as there was only one Division.⁸

1947 Assistance to the Tennis Club sought from the Park Committee who advised that they could not assist financially but would host a public meeting in order to raise funds for the tennis club.⁹

31. 1947 Hall Minutes January 7 **RSL Sub Branch**¹⁰ were charged 6/- for use of the Hall for their smoker – social event.

1947 Throughout the later years of the 1940s the Deans Marsh Football Club played in the Polwarth League with teams from Apollo Bay, Lorne, Birregurra, Forrest and Winchelsea. Play was suspended from 1941 to 1946 due to World War 2, and consequent absence of many men on military service.

1947 DMPA Minutes include the text of a letter asking community members with telephones to only make their evening calls between 7 and 9pm 'so that the Postmaster can have his dinner'.¹¹

1947 Hall Committee Minutes of October 14 note the need to rebuild the fence between the Hall and the Park: actual costs £4.12.6.

32. 1947 Hall Committee Minutes notes that the **Table Tennis Association** has hired the Hall for 7/6 per night for the 1947 season. It is not clear from the Minutes but the booking may have been on a weekly basis.¹²

⁸ *The Croaker* Volume 8 No 1 p.2

⁹ Park Minutes November 15 1947

¹⁰ Was this Deans Marsh Diggers Association? Please let me know if so – or not.

¹¹ DMPA Minutes p.114

¹² Actually table tennis or ping pong had been 'all the rage' in Deans Marsh since 1903 according to Ron Millard's *Bambra –Boonah* p.18, and remains a passion: see 1980s and following, see Part 6 of this Timeline.

1948 Hall Minutes of October 19 note that the bylaws do not allow the Hall to be used for meetings of a religious nature.

1949 Hall Minutes May 24 notes the first recorded a discussion of a possible change of ownership of the Hall and Park from its community Trustees to the Winchelsea Shire Council. Colin Smith supported such a move at February 28 Hall Committee meeting as did public meeting held on May 22 1950.

Park Committee Minutes March 30 record its first discussion about trying to get Winchelsea Shire to take ownership of the reserve. The matter is referred to its AGM to be held on April 20 1949.

Park Minutes May 7 note that a public meeting is to be held to discuss the Reserve ownership issue.

1950s

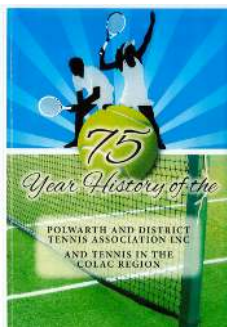
Football: Throughout the 1950s until 1958 the Deans Marsh Football Club played in the Polwarth League: the other teams competing were Apollo Bay Lorne Birregurra, Colac Imperials, Forrest and Winchelsea. Colin Smith was the Deans Marsh representative on the Polwarth League administrative committee. The Polwarth League ran until 1970.

1950 January 16th At the ASC committee meeting it was agreed that the Secretary would arrange for both a Bookmakers' permit and also a permit to run the spinning wheel. The Committee also decided to insure against rain on the day.

1950 Park Minutes of February 20th note that the Soldiers Memorial Gate had been erected. Park Minutes of November 13 suggests the gates were to be formally opened on November 30 'if possible'.

1951 November 13 Park Minutes note it leases the tennis court to the DMTC for 1 guinea [1 pound and 1 shilling] per annum.¹³

This period saw one of the Tennis Club's most popular periods – several teams of both seniors and juniors played in the Polwarth Tennis Association, and DMT club fundraising contributed a lot to community facilities such as the Memorial Park. The history of the Tennis Association was written first in 1988 and again in 2000.



¹³ By way of comparison the DMFC was charged at a percentage of the crowd takings; not clear how if at all the Cricket Club was charged.

The Association is still going strong.¹⁴

33. 1951-2 Ownership of the Hall was passed formally from the community Trustees to the Winchelsea Shire Council some time in 1951. Several public meetings were held to discuss this issue, as were meetings of the Hall and Park Committees. It would seem that the financial burden of maintaining and improving the facilities had weighed too heavily for too long on the shoulders of those on both the Hall and Park Committees.

1951 Park Minutes record that a public meeting was held on July 23, which was 'called for the purpose of electing a Committee of Management'. Although the Council took ownership of the land, it appears that community efforts to fund raise to insure, maintain and improvement the Hall and Park continued thereafter. Winchelsea Shire Council seems to have contributed little to the maintenance and improvement of Deans Marsh community assets; key responsibilities remained with the community itself.

By November 4 1952 the transfer of the land had been completed and the Shire called a meeting to elect a local Committee of Management. As records of the Hall show the local Committee continued to be responsible for many maintenance issues including pest control and insurance.¹⁵

1952 ***Geelong Advertiser and Colac Herald***: check media see clippings from both about Winchelsea Shire taking over the Hall which are undated but are held in community archives kept at the Cottage.

Sandra Dempsey a long time Hall committee member and Chair notes that, even after the land and hall was transferred to Winchelsea Shire, up until 1994 when Surf Coast Shire Council was formed from the merger of Barrabool and Winchelsea Shires, all funding for the Hall oval and community events was raised directly from the community – as it had been since the 19th century.¹⁶

34. Dances at the Hall every Saturday fortnight 1950s. **The Younger Set** organised these. The CWA Younger Set seems to have become active in the late 1940s post-War period.¹⁷ The Younger Set: from 1940s and especially in the 1950s the YS organised regular dances at the Hall as well as a range of other activities for younger people. These dances were held - at least for a time - on every second Saturday night; the dances finished at midnight with no alcohol served or allowed.¹⁸

¹⁴ <https://www.facebook.com/PDTATENNIS> and <http://polwarthanddistricttennisassociation.com/about-us>

¹⁵ In relation to insurance, the Hall Committee continued to pay its own until June 1966 when the WSC agreed to pay. See Deans Marsh Community Archives Item 22.

¹⁶ Sandra Dempsey interview August 13 2019

¹⁷ Shirley Leak interview 5.8.2019

¹⁸ Frank Watts video interview 2006 first five minutes

35. **Deans Marsh Fire Brigade:** when the Bambra and Deans Marsh Brigades merged in the early 1950s, the Brigade met bi-monthly at the Hall for many years until their newest Shed was built in the mid 2010s.¹⁹

36. **Ladies Badminton** was played inside the Hall.²⁰

1952 DMPA Minutes note a request to Winchelsea Shire Council for the Shire to build public conveniences in Deans Marsh²¹; and that a letter was received from Deans Marsh School thanking the DMPA for the construction of the footpath between the School and Store.²²

37. 1953 While the Hall Committee Minutes of June 1 refer but only in passing to **possible local Coronation Day** celebrations on June 2, the same Minutes contain an extended discussion and full details of a broom purchase for 15/- and the donation of 25 pickets by Mr McMillan.

1953-4 Park Minutes reflect how, despite ownership having passed to the Shire Council, the committee was still much engaged in fundraising for things like the Publican's Booth, seeking state government grants, and maintenance issues – working bees continue to be strong feature of the work of committee members.

1954. August 10 Park Committee Minutes note that the Secretary was instructed to write to the DMFC 'pointing out that the practice of kicking football on Sunday morning in the vicinity of the church [unspecified but most likely the Methodist church] during church is to stop or further action will be taken.'

38. 1954 November 9 Park Minutes note that a charge of 3/- per night or 10/- per week will be made for **those camping on the Reserve**.

1954 November 16 Letter to the Hall Committee from the SEC notes that a supply of electricity will be arriving 'in due course'.²³

1950s Ladies basketball continued.²⁴

1953 June 26 The Minutes of the AGM of the Athletics Sports Club noted that its next meeting should be in September that year, in order to begin organising for the Sports Day in 1954.²⁵ However it appears the ASC was suffering from declining attendance, as there are no further entries in the Minute Book until 1956.

¹⁹ Neville Bennett Brigade Treasurer phone interview April 2020

²⁰ Shirley Leak interview 5.8.2019

²¹ No luck with the shire - DMPA goes it alone. Ref DMPA Minutes October 31

²² DMPA Minutes May 30 1952

²³ Deans Marsh Community Archives Item 22

²⁴ Shirley Leak interview 5.8.2019

²⁵ ASC Minutes book page 129

1956 Park Minutes note the Committee's decision to inform the **Deans Marsh Brigade** that there was no land on the park suitable for the construction of a fire station and that in the Committee's view it was too far from the township.²⁶

1956 The Deans Marsh Cricket Club: from 1956 to 1968 Deans Marsh fielded the one senior team. Colin Smith retired after the 1956/57 grand final loss to Winchelsea. Colin had played for Deans Marsh since the twenties but continued his commitment to the club until his death in 1988. He was president of the club for 53 years and a Life Member of the Club.

1956 May 18th The ASC Minutes books notes that the financial assets of the club were to be divided between the Hall and Park Committees which each received £38.²⁷

1957 At the DMPA AGM on June 27 there was considerable discussion about closing the DMPA down. This discussion may have occurred once SEC power was achieved for the district – a key campaign by the DMPA - but committee decided unanimously to keep going.

1957-8 Final football match of the Deans Marsh Football Club was played on their home ground at the Oval at the end of the 1957 season. Its demise resulted from a lack of players – with the coming of new technologies to the farming sector much less labour was required and thus fewer young men lived and worked in community.²⁸

The DMFC's last season was played in 1957. The club closed 1958 at short notice, and only after membership medallions for 1958 had been made.



²⁶ Park Minutes p.186

²⁷ Was it in this period 1953-6, with the decline of the ASC that the annual sports day – a Deans Marsh event since 1890 - transformed from athletics to horse-focused events and became the Gymkhana?

²⁸ Millard R *Tales of Old Deans Marsh* 2000, 2006 p. 12



The lack of players and the resulting financial difficulties meant the club was forced to close and withdraw from the Polwarth Football League in early 1958, after that year's club membership and medallions and tickets had been printed.²⁹ The Clubrooms then fell into disrepair until their restoration by the Deans Marsh community with a lot of help from Heritage Victoria in the 2000s.³⁰

1958 January 4 Hall closed for at least a day after 'an incident with a community member' the nature of which is unspecified.

39. 1958 May 1 A **Special Meeting of the DMPA was held to discuss the possibilities of getting a town and district water supply system.** A subcommittee was formed and it was agreed to consult water engineers about feasibility and likely costs.³¹ The sub-committee did engage Gutteridge Haskins and Davey Consulting Engineers of Richmond.³² Exploration of this idea including a test bore continued until 1968 when it was decided – with no help forthcoming from either the Winchelsea Shire or the Victoria government – that such a project would be both too expensive and not comprehensive enough in terms of availability to all in the community.

40. 1958 May 20 Park Minutes note that the **Polwarth Football League was to be advised that the Deans Marsh ground was available for matches at the rate of £3 per match and 10% of the gate takings.** Park Minutes show

²⁹ Thanks to Shirley Leak for the photos of the last year's membership cards and the 1958 medallion; her extensive archive is held at Winchelsea Historical Society

³⁰ see below 2003.

³¹ DMPA Minutes May 29 1958 see inside front cover archive book 3 undated.

³² The firm is still going now operating from 575 Collins Street Melbourne and internationally <https://www.ghd.com/en/about-us/history.aspx>

that Winchelsea FC did use the Deans Marsh ground for several matches that year.³³

1958 July There was no longer a Deans Marsh delegate on the Polwarth League committee; teams competing by that period included Winchelsea, Forrest, Coragulac, Beeac, Apollo Bay, Lorne, Birregurra and Queenscliff.

1958 At their September and November meetings, the Hall Committee again investigated borrowing money to built extension to the Hall and provide new jarrah flooring. It is worth noting that although the Hall and grounds were now owned by the Winchelsea Shire, the community committee was still raising money for improvements and maintenance, and paying insurance premiums.³⁴

AS FROM JANUARY 1st., 1956, THE FOLLOWING CHARGES
FOR HIRE OF THE PUBLIC HALL WILL OPERATE:---

½ Night, Main Hall	£ 1	15	0
Full night, Main Hall	£ 3	0	0

MEETINGS:----

Supper or Ladies Room.	7	6	
Main Hall,(night meetings).	12	6	
Main Hall,(daytime meetings).	5	0	
C.W.A.. .(daytime meetings).	2	0	
Younger Set.	2	0	
Private Benefit (Weddings,etc.),(daytime). £1	10	0	
Use of Crockery.			5/0

ALL CROCKERY MUST BE WASHED AND REPLACED IN THE
CUPBOARD, BY HIRER, AFTER EACH ENTERTAINMENT.

B R E A K A G E S .

Special attention is drawn to all persons hiring the
hall, that ALL BREAKAGES OF CROCKERY MUST be
replaced or paid for.

.....

PATRONS PLEASE NOTE:- You are expected to pay the
hire of the hall, when booking. We also request that you
leave the Hall as tidy as possible, to facilitate the
work of the Caretaker.

Thank you.

G. Smith. . . . President
D. McDonald.. . Secretary

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³³ August 1960 p.202

³⁴ Hall Committee Minutes September 2 and 26 and November 3 and 17.

³⁵ Screen shot of inside the Hall Minute book red Archive 3 showing charges from 1956

41. 1959 April 3-4 **Back To Deans Marsh.**³⁶ The event seems to have been held in conjunction with what appears to be the first Gymkhana, organised by former members of the Athletics and Sports Committee.³⁷



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³⁶ Hall Minutes March 1 1959
³⁷ Park Minutes 13.3.59
³⁸ News clippings pasted into the Hall Minute Book 1959.

After these big combined Deans Marsh events the Hall balance sheets looked pretty healthy:

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BALANCE SHEET

BACK TO DEAN'S MARSH CELEBRATIONS - - - - APRIL 3RD & 4TH 1959

RECEIPTS	£	s	d	EXPENDITURE	£	s	d
GATE	198	-	-	PUBLIC RISK INSURANCE	3	-	-
BALL	129	16	-	GEELONG ADVERTISER	6	11	-
DANCE (SAT. NIGHT)	76	4	-	COLAC HERALD	9	3	-
DONATIONS	107	15	8	HULM - CAKES	5	16	-
SPINNING WHEEL	189	16	-	LORNE FISHERMEN'S CO-OP.	24	6	-
SAVELOY STALL	27	-	-	GAZZARD'S RADIO (PUBLIC ADDRESS)	6	-	-
LADIES' TWO STALLS	117	18	9	3 C.S. BROADCAST	21	-	-
POST ENTRIES	4	2	-	S. V. RAU (Goods for Spinning Wheel etc.,)	99	14	6
SPONSORS FOR THE BALL	25	4	-	T. V. DRINKS	20	15	6
SALE OF GOODS LEFT OVER	38	-	-	ANGLIS - SAVELOTS	6	11	3
MINIATURE TRAIN	3	-	-	STEWART BROS., (FRUIT)	10	14	-
TENDER FOR BOOTH	17	10	-	HIRE OF PARK #1: ELECTRICITY #2	3	-	-
				CLISSOLD'S GARAGE -(Bird Cages)	2	15	6
				SHONE & CO. (LOLIES)	16	16	8
				PITKETHLY & SONS (Bread & Rolls)	17	5	-
				ELEMENTS (PER MR. G. SMITH)	2	10	-
				REGAL ICE CREAM	8	5	10
				DONATION TO PARISH HALL	1	1	-
				OUTSTANDING ACCOUNTS	5	-	-
				MUSIC #12 (Ball) #8 (Dance)	20	-	-
				PRIZE MONEY FOR GIBBERANA	8	4	-
				REFUND AFTERNOON TEA FOR MARCHING GIRLS	1	16	-
				STATIONERY, POSTAGE, ETC.,	7	10	11
				TOTAL EXPENDITURE	307	17	2
				BALANCE	626	9	3
	934	6	5		934	6	5

H.F. Richardson, Geelong. £2-2-
G. Crease. p & W. Colac £1-6/-

Late ad Geelong advertiser £1-10-
Total now £629-4-1

DONATIONS IN CASH

J. HANGAN	2	0	0
W. FARQUHARSON	2	-	-
NATIONAL TIRE CO,	1	1	-
J. G. JOERSTONE	2	2	-
ROY BILSON'S	1	1	-
ELDER SMITH	2	2	-
EXCLUSION BUTTER FACTORY	2	2	-
N.U.I.C.O.P	10	-	-
A.P.P.U	5	-	-
AUSTRAL HOTEL	1	-	-
EDGAR TREWIN	2	2	-
C. W. A. (DEAN'S MARSH)	20	-	-
D. ROSCHE	10	-	-
L. WALTER	10	-	-
A. WALTER	8	14	-
G. WALTER	4	-	-
G. ATKINS	5	-	-

DONATIONS IN CASH

O. MOUNJOY	2	-	-
L. MOUNJOY	1	-	-
H. MARTIN, COLAC	1	-	-
A. MILLARD	2	-	-
ALED. CLISSOLD	2	-	-
MRS. ALED. CLISSOLD	1	-	-
E. HAMPSHIRE & L. SCHROETER 10/-	1	-	-
(INSURANCE)	1	1	-
W. STOWART	2	-	-
DALGETY & CO	5	5	-
P. LAWRENCE (NEW YORK)	5	-	-
ALISTER MAXWELL	4	-	-
Mrs. A. Hennessey £ 1- -	107	15	-

SPONSORS FOR BROADCAST BALL: DONATION OF £2-2-0 each

H.S. & D.G. CLISSOLD	GRAY'S STORES
S. V. RAU	QUINTON'S PAINT MACHINERY
LESTER HOWARD	FAIRBANKS AUTO CO.
CHAPMAN BROS.?	W. H. PARKER
D. PITKETHLY & SONS	FASHION CENTER
H. STEPHENS	CHARLES STEWART & CO

DONATIONS IN KIND

J. SWAIN FLUORESCENT LIGHT
G. SMITH FLUORESCENT LIGHT
W. HANNAM NEW DOOR
PRIZES FOR SPINNING WHEEL:
P. TRIGG 4 BUDGETIGARS
E. McLOUGHLIN 2 BIRDCAGES
GEELONG & CRESSY TRADING CO CUP & SAUCER
HENRY JACOBS PAIR STOCKINGS
BRIGHT & HITCHCOCK'S ORDER FOR £1-1-0
MRS LESTER HOWARD PRIZE FOR STAR OF BALL
MRS. HANNAM CHILDREN'S PRIZE FOR PROCESSION
MRS. BERRY " " " "
MRS. GEORGE ATKINS " " " "
MR. G. SMITH " " " "

MR. T. BERRY DUPLICATING CIRCULARS AND TICKETS

COLAC DAIRYING CO. BUTTER & CHEESE

E. Hampshire. 2 Chrome Water Taps.
W. Atkins. New Tank Stand.