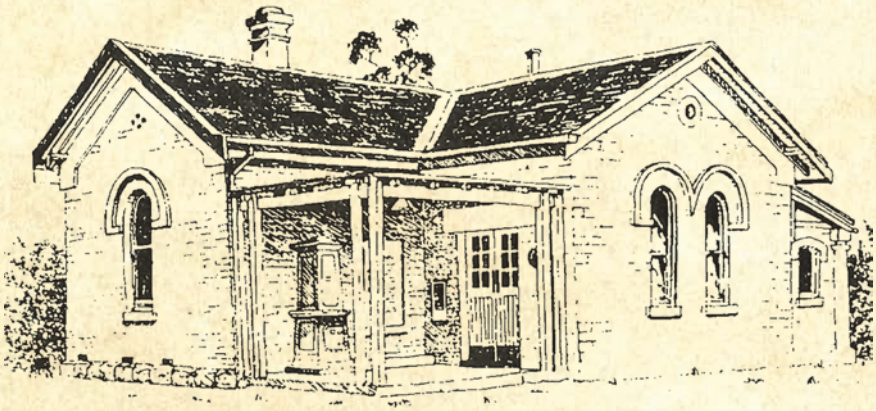
MORNINGTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC



Corner Main Street and Esplanade, Mornington 3931

NEWSLETTER

Nov 2026

Newsletter No. 313

REGISTERED CHARITY
acnc.gov.au/charityregister

President's Report

Open weekend. Over the two days of the Seniors Week/History Week, we had over 100 visitors plus children. The free entry possibly had something to do with it, but as a gesture to our community, we felt we should be generous. Some visitors were generous back with donations or their comments. Comments are welcome as they are nearly always very complimentary. This is a reward to us as volunteers, knowing that our time is appreciated.

In this newsletter, I have given most of the space over to the work done by our new member and committee member Stuart Moore. (Many of you will have met Stuart as our Leslie Moorhead Guest Speaker on Matthew Flinders). These three items highlighted are in our collection. Stuart is loving learning about the items we have in the Museum and he has contributed ideas to many other aspects of our work. I could say that he has fitted in like an old glove.

You will see that we have not had any new members for some time. Can I ask you to keep your antennae out for anyone you think might like to join. No prior experience of history is needed, just an interest in finding out things, and at the same time, joining us if they are looking for company and friendship.

Also, some of us have overlooked to pay the annual membership. If you are uncertain if you have paid or not, please give Dawn a call and she would be able to check up for you. **dawnfisher@live.com.au** or **0429 868 844**.

We will be open on the days between Christmas and New Year (27th - 30th). If you can help us, please let one of our committee know you would like to be on with them. It is between 1pm and 4pm.

Our next bus trip will be to Coal Creek in west Gippsland. It is many years since we last visited . It is an example of a small township set in the late 1800s - early 1900s. Many of the buildings have been brought in from other places to show genuine places which existed. In this day of such fast change, a chance to reminisce for us will be a pleasant change. See the details in the centrefold.

Diane White

Committee Membership 2026/7

President: Diane White
Vice President: Barbara Burris
Secretary: Dawn Fisher
Treasurer: Colin Fisher

Committee Members

Edna Lowe
Val Wilson
Joy Cullen
Ian Stevenson
Anne Watkins
Stuart Moore

Vintage Peninsula Cordial Bottle

The Peninsula Cordial Company was a prominent local soft drink manufacturer and distributor based in Frankston, Victoria. Operating from the mid 1940's to the mid 1970's, it holds a nostalgic place in the history of the Mornington Peninsula.



The company distributed its fizzy flavoured soft drinks in embossed, heavy glass bottles (both clear and amber variations) with standard metal crown seals. The company experienced its peak popularity during the 1960s and early 1970s.

For much of its history, the manufacturing plant was located on the corner of Beach and Petrie Streets in Frankston. As the business grew and the urban landscape of Frankston changed, the factory relocated further inland to Kookaburra Street.

Before international mega branded companies completely dominated the market, local cordial factories were an essential part of Australian daily life. Peninsula Cordials operated a highly popular home delivery service across the Mornington Peninsula.

A delivery driver would drop off wooden or plastic crates filled with a colourful assortment of flavoured carbonated soft drinks directly to residential doorsteps each week and collect the empty bottles to be washed and refilled.

During the 1960s, the company transitioned from fully embossed glass to the distinctive Applied Ceramic Label (ACL) style. These labels, often called "Pyro" labels, baked a distinct red-and-white porcelain like paint directly onto the face of the clear glass bottle. The bold "PC" logo inside a red oval shape became a familiar visual landmark in Mornington Peninsula households. The markings on the base of this bottle indicates that it was manufactured in 1974.

Faced with intense competition from corporate multinational soft drink brands and the rise of supermarkets, smaller independent bottling works struggled to survive. The Peninsula Cordial Company sadly closed its doors permanently in the mid-1970s.

These bottles can still be found in hidden places around the Peninsula including the occasional find on local beaches as visitors to the beach used to stick the bottles in the sand to keep them cool, only to lose them when the tide rose.

MORNINGTON & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

Dates for Your Diary 2026/27

Website: www.morningtondistricthistory.org.au

Follow us on Facebook Museum Phone (03) 5976 3203

Visitors warmly welcomed. Why not bring along a friend and introduce them to the Historical Society? The more the merrier. Come and join us.

Tuesday 10th November
10.30am - Entry by donation
Coffee Morning

Old Post Office Museum

We shall share the information on items from our collection, in drawers or behind closed doors in cupboards.

Thursday 19th November 8.45am
BUS TRIP to COAL CREEK

Departing from the car park at the rear of Aldi, Waterloo Place. Cost of tour $35pp. Contact Edna on 0409 795 119 to book. Bank details below to pay.

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Please book as soon as possible to make sure we have the numbers. Lunch will be at your own cost a the Korumburra Pub. Home about 4.

Friday 4th December 12.00 noon
Members Christmas Luncheon

Old Post Office Museum

Please bring a plate of Christmas fare to share. Our raffle will be drawn afterwards.

Tuesday 26th January 2027
Australia Day

The Museum will be open between 1 and 4 pm

Tuesday 9th February
10.30am - $10
Coffee Morning

St. Marks Community Room,
Cnr. Waterloo Place and Barkly Streets.

Speaker to be confirmed.

DIGITAL NEWSLETTER

We are wondering whether you have given any thought to receiving the Newsletter in digital form via email? The one advantage is that it will be in glorious colour. If you would like to partake of this, could you please email Dawn to let her know dawnfisher@live.com.au

MORNINGTON MAZDA

We thank Mornington Mazda for agreeing to be our sponsor.

G. SALTER & Co Weighing Scales

This cast iron weighing scale was manufactured by G. Salter and Co in the town of West Bromwich, Staffordshire England in the 1890's.



You can see the makers name at the base of the scale. The company logo features a Staffordshire knot signifying unity and an arrow representing the regions rich metalworking heritage. The 'S' in the centre of the knot stands for Salter.

This particular scale has an early production number '131' at the top right of the scale. This number dates the scales manufacture between 1890 to 1891.



The plaque in the centre of the scale highlights the 'The Australasian Automatic Weighing Machine Co. Ltd.' who imported and distributed these coin-operated public cast-iron weighing scales throughout Australia and New Zealand. They were installed at Railway Stations, Post Offices, Ferry Wharves and public arcades where people paid a penny to check their weight.





The Scale's original dial would have appeared similar to the image on the left. The measurements were in Stones and Pounds. The original dial also displayed average weights for Men and Women and average weights by age for Boys and Girls.

The Origins of an Antique Chair



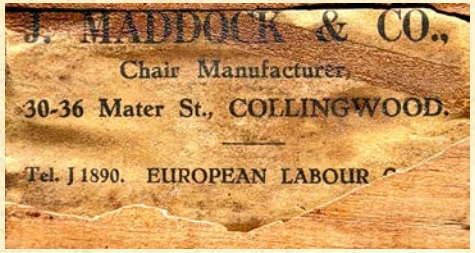
The design and label on the underside of this chair enables us to trace its origins and when this antique chair was made.

The label indicates that the chair is a piece of early 20th Century Australian furniture manufactured by J. Maddock & Co. in Collingwood, Melbourne. Collingwood was the heart of Melbourne's timber, boot, and textile manufacturing trade, packed with small, multi-story factories and workshops during the late Victorian and Edwardian period.

The chair belongs to a highly popular style known as an Australian "Pressed- Back" Cottage or Kitchen Chair. The distinctive floral, leafy pattern scrolling across the top rail is not hand-carved. Rather, it was created using a steam-heated steel roller that mechanically pressed the design directly into the softened timber under intense pressure. The flowing, vines and leaf motifs are indicative of the Art Nouveau period which was popular during the period 1895 to 1915.

The frame borrows heavily from the classic American and English Windsor chair designs, featuring round spindles (vertical bars) supporting the back, and sturdy turned legs joined by functional stretchers.

These chairs were typically crafted from local timbers like Australian Blackwood or imported timbers like English Oak and Pine.



The label indicates the telephone number as "Tel. J 1890". The single letter prefix "J" was for the Johnston telephone exchange, which served Collingwood and Abbotsford from 1924. On 18 December 1928, a devastating fire broke out at the J. Maddock & Co. chair factory on Mater Street. The blaze completely destroyed the wood turning machinery, large stocks of seasoned timber, and thousands of partially manufactured wooden chairs. Because the Mater Street premises were gutted, the company did not rebuild on-site. Instead, in early 1929 they permanently moved their manufacturing operations to a new facility in the nearby suburb of Clifton Hill. With the move, J. Maddock and Co ceased to use the phone number J1890 as they had moved to a different exchange.

Because of the chair's factory address, telephone number format and the date of the fire, the chair can be confidently dated to the period 1924 to 1928.

A historically significant part of the label on the chair is the text "EUROPEAN LABOUR". Following the economic depression of the 1890s, local European furniture makers and trade unions campaigned heavily against Chinese immigrants who had successfully established competitive, low-cost furniture workshops in Melbourne (predominantly around Little Bourke Street and Carlton).

The Victorian government passed 'The 1896 Factories and Shops Act' which were laws requiring all furniture manufactured in the state to be permanently stamped or labelled specifying the race of the craftsmen. Furniture had to be marked as "Chinese Labour", "European Labour Only", or "European & Other Labour". This was designed to encourage a racially motivated consumer to boycott Chinese made goods. These stamping regulations remained active in Victoria until they were finally abolished in 1963.

While thousands of these chairs were made for ordinary Australian households, finding one with its original paper manufacturer's label intact on the underside is incredibly rare. Most labels peeled off, wore away, or were painted over during the last century.

Historical records confirm that J. Maddock & Co. supplied solid wooden chairs, and traditional furniture to organisations like the Victorian Government.

It's therefore likely that this chair was manufactured and shipped to the old Mornington Post Office during the period 1924 to 1928.



We offer our respect to the First Peoples. The members of the Boon Warrung/ Bunurong, past, present and future, the custodians of this land and waters.

Thank you to Chris Crewther MP for printing this newsletter.

Thanks to the Mornington Peninsula Shire for their support.

Mornington & District Historical Society Inc. A00041916W
ABN 7515 1057 105 - PO Box 71 Mornington 3931
Museum: Corner Main Street and Esplanade
Open 1.00 - 4.00pm Saturdays or by appointment.
Donations to the Historical Society of $2 or more are tax deductible.

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