

THE MONBULK POSTAL SERVICE

Early in 1893 the first selectors arrived in the "Dandenong Forest Village Settlement". Records show that by February 1894 there were 74 approved applicants but by the middle of 1895 only 62 remained. Of these, 42 were married and children numbered 77. The Dandenong Forest Village Settlement State School started in 1897 but was renamed with the opening of the Monbulk Post Office in 1898. Prior to this, mail in Monbulk was despatched via a Loose Bag system which was operated under the care of Mrs R T Godfrey.

The original town of Monbulk was opposite the present Primary School and for many years had just three shops to serve its residents. There was Bert Nation's General Store, the Drapery Store which also sold confectionery and the Post Office, Store and newsagency run by sisters Ann and Sarah Siddle. The store owners' residences were behind their shops.



Monbulk Post and Telephone Office 1913

Records show that David Moore's nieces, Ann and Sarah Siddle, owned land in the Main Road about 1907 and by 1909 they were paying Fern Tree Gully rates for a house and store where Sarah operated her store and newsagency. By 1913 a larger room was added and the Post Office was transferred to the Main Road and Ann Siddle became Postmistress.

It is not clear from the records but a change of management of the Post Office may have occurred in 1918 as it was suggested that a returned soldier should have the position. Three years later, in 1921, Miss Ann Siddle is recorded as

Although Monbulk Post Office opened on May 19th 1898, and despite multiple letters to the Postal Department requesting a postmaster be appointed, it was not documented until at least 1902 that David Moore was the Postmaster at Monbulk. He operating from his two roomed home that had a small Post Office on the side built by Steve Burne in Moores Road.

During the years 1902 to 1905 daily deliveries, Monday to Saturday, of mail came from Wandin South Post Office to Monbulk and back to Wandin South by horse and coach, earning the mail contractor, Robert Nation of Wandin South, £10 per annum. From 1905-1908 the mail route was delivered by rail to Belgrave Railway Station, then known as Monbulk

Railway Station, via the Upper Fern Tree Gully to Gembrook line. It was collected from there by Robert Nation for delivery to Monbulk.

By 1908 Monbulk Post Office also had telegraph and telephone facilities however the revenue for each service did not rise above £7 in any of the three years of record. David Moore continued to be listed as Postmaster at Monbulk until 1911 and in 1912 Ebenezer Clarkeson is recorded as Postmaster.

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Monbulk Post and Telephone Office c.1915

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acting postmistress while the nominal Postmaster was on leave.

The Post Office, store and newsagency on the corner of Main Road and Old Patch Road (Baynes Park Road), was run by Ann and Sarah Siddle for about 30 years. During these years Miss Artso, a Japanese lady worked in the Post Office with Ann Siddle. From July 1944 Monbulk Post Office became a full time service office and in 1945 Ann Siddle is again recorded as Postmistress.

Over the next thirteen years there were several new postmasters. December 1946 H. R. Hunt became Postmaster and was succeeded in June 1947 by Hedley Richard Thomas who remained at the office until September 1958 when Francis Crawford was appointed. This was a short appointment for, in August 1959, William Gustav Volkmer became Postmaster and remained in the position for over twenty years until November 1979 when he was succeeded by Johannes Teggelove.

Monbulk Post Office was raised to official status in October 1980 and moved to new premises at 57-59 Main Road, Monbulk. The first official Postmaster appointed to the new office was Robert Dowling who held the position for some years.

If you have any information on the Monbulk Post Office history to continue this story, Monbulk Historical Society would love to hear it.

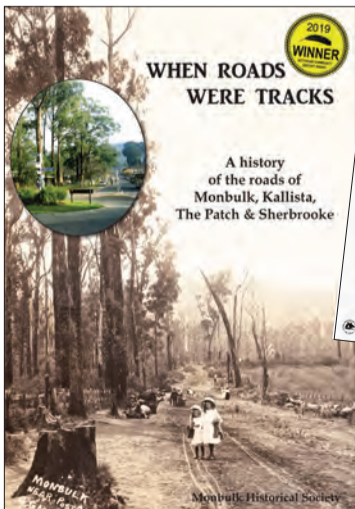


Monbulk Post Office 1968

Monbulk Historical Society wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year

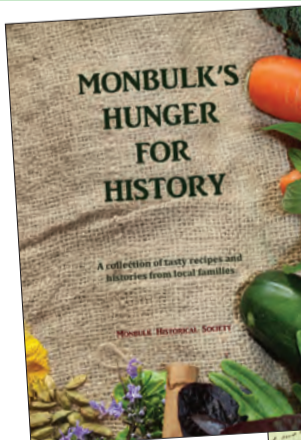


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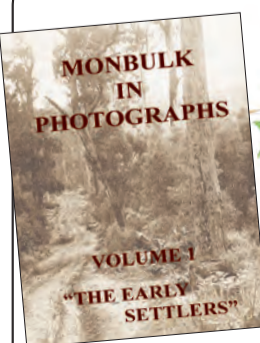
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