



Mountain Grand Monbulk c.1929

Spring 2017

## EARLY DAYS OF THE MOUNTAIN GRAND

An early owner of the Mountain Grand was Bill Thompson, who was sometimes known to serve afternoon teas down by the creek. He then leased the Mountain Grand to Mr and Mrs Hone then the three Dowling sisters. Mr and Mrs George Russell from Wandin leased the business from Mr Thompson from 1932 to 1934 and in this time built up a good trade serving afternoon teas to locals and day-trippers.

In 1934 Steve and Lucia Skepper bought the freehold of the Mountain Grand, and it remained in the family until 1988. The Skeppers built up and expanded a thriving establishment fondly remembered by many local people.

Life was very busy for the Skepper family, opening from 7.30am to 10pm seven days a week. It was a mixed business, newsagency and cafe with seating for approximately one hundred people. Afternoon teas, three course meals and catering for wedding receptions were all part of life at the Mountain Grand during its heyday.



The Skeppers inside Mountain Grand Cafe 1930s

Fresh fruit and vegetables were brought from the Victoria Market every Saturday morning. Ice cream was delivered from Stevenson's Ice Cream Factory which was on Monbulk Road, Belgrave. Milk, measured out from a large can was delivered by Mr Cavey using his

horse and cart. Bread was delivered from LeJuge's bakery in The Patch. Meat was bought from Les McAllister's butcher shop in Monbulk's main street and delivered by Jack Dennison who had a large basket over his arm as he rode his horse to do the deliveries. The Mountain Grand was a booking office for Green and Delaney Cars, and then later, US Buslines.

During the 1930s accommodation in Monbulk was very hard to find. When the SEC announced electricity was coming to Monbulk in 1936, accommodation had to be provided for their workers. Skepper's built a bungalow at the back of the business and enclosed two large verandahs providing accommodation for twelve men. For a time the family also had three permanent boarders who ate their evening meal with the family. The borders were Mr Fenwick, Mr Sinclair and Claude Poole, who worked for Andersons up the road.

On Christmas Eve all joined in a celebration at the Mountain Grand. Wireless sets were a popular form of home entertainment and on Melbourne Cup day people and day-trippers would fill the shop to listen to the race broadcast.



Mountain Grand 1930s

Monbulk Historial Society has published a new book!

## Monbulk's Hunger for History

A collection of family recipes and stories dating back to early settlement through the ages.

Monbulk Historical Society is proud to announce the launch of its latest book "Monbulk's Hunger for History".

This 62 page book has lots of tasty family recipes handed down from generation to generation together with family stories dating from early settlement through to the many cultures we have in Monbulk today.

"Monbulk's Hunger for History" will be available for sale from the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2017 at "Snapshots of Monbulk" at the Monbulk RSL.

Copies are \$20.00 each and will also be available at the Monbulk Hub or direct from Monbulk Historical Society. All proceeds from sales of the book help support MHS' ongoing work.



# "SNAPSHOTS OF MONBULK"

presented by

**MONBULK HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**at Monbulk RSL  
Main Road Monbulk  
Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> September  
10.30am - 4.00pm**

- Photo & big screen display
- 80 years of Memorabilia display
- Entertainment by "The Trinkets"
- Sausage Sizzle by Rotary Club of Monbulk & District (gold coin donation proceeds to Legacy)
- Devonshire Tea by CWA Monbulk Lady Nighthawks (gold coin donation)
- Entry - \$2.00 donation (12 years & under free)

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