



# Roundabout

Newsletter No. 4

Winter 2015

## Connell's Cake Shop

Prior to 1980 the section of Main Street Monbulk that now contains Woolworths Supermarket and car park, was the site of the Catholic Church, Gray's butcher shop and Connell's Cake shop. After leaving the Air Force Charlie Connell who came from Belgrave, worked and trained with

to The Dandenongs with some making their visits to Monbulk's Cake shop a part of each trip to the hills. Cream sponges, vanilla slices and particularly the fresh fruit pies were among the popular purchases after the pies and sausage rolls. Nathania Springs cafe, then a popular tourist



Connell's Cake Shop

George Parkhurst, the previous owner of the bakery. Jessie and Charlie Connell bought the business in 1960 beginning many years of hard work and long hours as the shop was open 7 days a week. The Monbulk schools would leave their lunch orders each morning to be collected later and the Football Club and R.S.L. would place advance orders for their "Pie Nights." Local families had their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday, engagement and wedding cakes made and decorated by Charlie. On Sundays there were many visitors

destination, was also a satisfied customer of the fruit pies produced in the old wood fired oven. Two apprentices did their training at the bakery with Charlie over the years, Fred Steele and Nelson Michelson. In earlier times, the butcher and baker made their deliveries by horse and cart but the "horse paddock" nearby remained for many years after this, being very convenient for the youngsters who rode their horse to town to collect family shopping. There are still people around today who remember with nostalgia the

Do you enjoy learning about the people and places that led to our community being what it is today? Has your family played a part in the history of the District? If your interest is in research, contributing your family's history or sharing the history of others, we need and welcome your help. You can participate in various ways depending on your time, interests and skills. If so please become a member of Monbulk Historical Society and join us in collecting, documenting and preserving our local history.

Contact details:  
Monbulk Historical Society Inc.  
PO Box 98  
Monbulk Vic 3793  
email: [explore@monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au](mailto:explore@monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au)  
[www.monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au](http://www.monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au)

aroma from the bakery as they queued up for a hot pie or sausage roll or maybe a vanilla slice. Jess Connell recalled the introduction of decimal currency in 1966. Additions had to be made manually so the items purchased were listed and priced on the back of the paper bags, enabling customers to check their change. People were not confident dealing with the new currency units for some time.

In spite of the long hours, it seemed a simpler way of life. Connell's Cake Shop and George Grays butcher shop were demolished in 1979 also the very large "Pink Pearl" rhododendron that grew beside the bakery, these made way for the new

supermarket.

The Catholic Church had already burnt down and the horse paddock had become redundant so it was the end of an era for this part of Monbulk. Jess and Charlie Connell then restarted their bakery in new premises further up Main Street but after a couple of years Charlie's health deteriorated and the bakery was sold to Charlie's former apprentice Nelson Michelson. The business then became "Tim's Pies" and remained with Nelson for about 20 years until he sold to Belinda and Matthew Rice who had formerly worked with Nelson's brother Max for 5 years. Thus the tradition of the bakery owner selling to his apprentice continued.

## MHS Recent Projects

The Society has been working with the Monbulk RSL in making a display of profiles of the World War One Diggers from Monbulk and surrounding area. The display can now be seen lining the walls of the Monbulk RSL together with several framed photos of families connected with these Diggers. You can also see these profiles and the story of Jeannie Gunn and her commitment to our local Diggers on the new RSL website: <http://www.monbulkrsl.org.au/>

Please  
don't  
miss.....

Monbulk History Chat  
at the Monbulk RSL  
30th May 2015  
10.30am - 1.00pm

Come and enjoy  
a chat and catch  
up with friends  
of yesteryear.

Devonshire tea  
provided  
Entry \$2.00  
donation

Memories,  
Recollecting  
& fun

Photo  
Display

Presented by Monbulk Historical Society Inc.  
[explore@monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au](mailto:explore@monbulkhistoricalsociety.org.au)