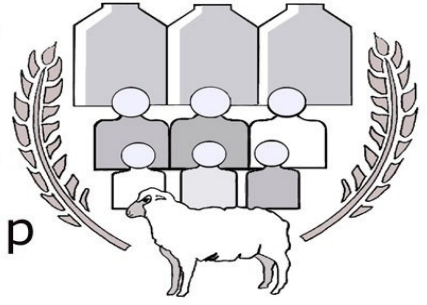


BRIM

Active

Community Group
NEWSLETTER



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BLASTS FROM THE PAST EDITION 2

HISTORICAL ARTICLES

POSTMISTRESS EARNED 1 SHILLING A WEEK IN 1894!

(From The local newspaper 1972)

Many hundred of thousands (and possibly even a million or two letters) and other postal articles have passed through the pigeon holes of the Lah Post Office (right), which shut forever on New Years Eve after 78 years of community service.

And throughout that long period, the service has been given by the members of just one family—the Fergusons— who are now coming to Warracknabeal to live in retirement.

Mr. Alexander (Sandy) Ferguson and his wife Catherine (below) have handled the Post Office work over the past 14 years.

The story of the previous 64 years makes interesting reading and began in April 1894 when Mr and Mrs W. Ferguson Senior, arrived in Lah with their two small daughters. The temperature that day was 104 degrees F.

Mr Ferguson had to leave his family at Lah for the day while he went on a ballast train, the furniture did not arrive until later in the day.



Mrs Ferguson was in charge of the station and Post Office, her wage being one shilling a week, with rent free. About 1916 it was increased to one pound. When Mr Ferguson retired from the railways, the Post Office was moved to the present site. Mrs Ferguson was still the postmistress until her death in 1958. She was the oldest Postmistress around at that time. Since then the Post Office was conducted by her son and daughter-in-law Mr and Mrs A. (Sandy) Ferguson until their recent retirement.

History of the Brim General Store

The Brim General Store has been an iconic and steadfast part of the Brim Community for more than 130 years. Locals have depended on the store for services provided, products supplied and the great sense of community that has always been at the heart of the Brim General Store.

Initially opened in 1891 by Mr. James King, who moved from Minyip to Brim, the store was then taken on by W.P Lamshed who owned the business from 1900 until he sold it in 1908. Brought by Cliff and George Dixon, it remained under their management for 55 years, until it was again sold, with John Marshman running the store in 1963 and his brother Ken taking over in 1964. During 1969, community concern grew as to how the general store would remain open, with many ideas brought forward, including discussions of perhaps a co-operative type venture to take on and run the store. This never came to be and in October that same year, the store was again sold, this time to Noel Scherger. Noel ran the store for 4 more years, until 1973.

It was around this time that a young Wavell and Shirley McPherson came forward, with the bold aspiration to take on ownership of the Brim General Store and run it as their family business.

On September 3rd 1973, they opened the doors as WG & SF McPherson, Brim General Store.

With the initial guidance of Syd Marshman, (father to John and Ken), Wavell and Shirley soon took the business from its humble beginnings, to offering more services and products to the community. Soon after taking on the general store, they took over the Mobil Agency from Keith McLennan and incorporated that into their growing business. In 1977 they joined as a CRT agricultural and rural supplies group member, later also becoming a Hi-Fert Superphosphate agency in 1984, providing local farmers with their seasonal cropping and farming needs and further growing the services offered by the general store. Mr. McPherson recalls his first year of sales for the chemical Treflan, "First season, we only sold 3 tins. The following season, we sold 110."



In conjunction with the growing farm chemical sales, Wavell became an agent for grain marketers AWB. A grain storage facility was built on the family's farming enterprise, which is managed and operated by Wavell and Shirley's eldest son Mark McPherson and wife Karen.

In 1992, Wavell and Shirley's youngest son Christopher began working in the family business.



The Brim General Store not only supplied the local community with farming needs, but also daily milk and grocery needs, as well as a banking facility of which they still operate and provide for their customers today. In 1994, WG & SF McPherson took on and combined the local Brim Post Office into the general store facility, allowing the community access to Australia Post services

Left: Mobil agency,

Continued next page.

In 1995, WG & SF McPherson gained their full AgSafe accreditation and proceeded to expand the business again, building a new chemical storage shed facility. This also saw the need to expand their staffing team, as both the general store and rural sales business was ever-growing.

Over the past 50 years of servicing the local district, the Brim General Store has employed 30 local staff, 7 of which are still current employees today. Many will remember the wonderful and friendly staff who have served the checkout at McPhersons; Wendy Cook who worked in the store from May 1976 for seven years, with Wavell and Shirley's daughter Sharon McPherson and Julie and Keith McLean assisting on occasions, prior to Sonia Martin commencing in 1983 for eight years, followed short term by Julie Fisher, before Maureen Crisp took on a full time position for twelve years. After Maureen's retirement 2001, her position was filled by Jenny Mitchell, Jill Vaughan and Kaye Muller, who all worked part time across the week. Leonie Atkin, Rachel Thomson and Alishia Garlick have also been valued members of in-store staff in recent years. In 1997 Bev Appledore took on accounts management for the business, a role that she fulfilled until her retirement in 2019.

Wavell and Shirley recall with fond emotion the way the Brim Community rallied with support of their family and business during their late daughter Sharon's illness. "Everybody was just marvelous, the way they all helped us with the shop." Mrs. McPherson said. Many locals took on various roles within the business as needed over several years, with Mr. McPherson saying "We were gone one week out of every three. But the shop kept running. Our friends and our neighbors, they all helped us. We would not have been able to do it without their help."

The chemical shed was initially managed by Wavell, before he was joined by eldest son Mark, prior to Mark taking on the family farming enterprise, along with Ian Gebert, prior to youngest son Chris taking on the role, as well as later providing agronomic advice to the local farming clients. Cameron Drage then came on board from 2001 until 2004, before taking on a part time role again in 2008. Others to work within the chemical yard have been Tim Waterman, Sonia Phelan and Cameron Bardell . A 'Saturday morning man' has been occasionally called upon at times. Over the years this has included Shane Wardle, Colin Appledore, Andrew King, Stewart Boyd, Doug Mitchell, as well as Josh McPherson and Ricky Gregor.

Current staff in the General Store today are postal manager Marian Jones, since 2006, with sales assistant Chris Smith, since 2008 and sales assistant Nadine Jenkinson, since 2021.

Current staff in the chemical shed and yard are sales assistant Alan Smith, since 2009 and sales assistant Jack Seebom, since 2021.

Wavell and Shirley's son and daughter in law, Chris and Colleen McPherson both work with them in the business, with Chris as managing director and Colleen as business manager. Chris has worked alongside Wavell since 1992, providing agronomy advice, Goldacres boom and parts knowledge, as well as seasonal farm planning to their clients. Chris has also taken on roles with both the State CRT Council and is current Chairman of the National CRT Council.



Left: The original General Store after it was closed.

Right: west side of the original General Store with newer sheds in the background.



Colleen has worked for the business since 2002, initially working as an agronomist, then a marketing and sales manager, until taking on the role of business manager in 2019.

Wavell and Shirley have continued to dedicate themselves and their General Store business to the local community across the past 50 years, as was made evident in 2010 by building a second chemical storage shed and again in 2018, in building their new store premises (below).



The wonderful new store (left), built beside the existing General Store building on Swann Street, provided the community with an ultimate one-stop-shop, catering to their customers' needs with everything from cattle tags to

coffee. Seeing the opportunity to create a lasting legacy within his community, Mr. McPherson said "The community has been wonderful to Shirley and me, to our family and it is important to us that we give something back. I think we have done that in building this new shop, which will provide a wonderful service to the local community for many years to come."

In 1998, the Brim General Store was nominated in the Powercor Wimmera Business Achievement Awards and from the 120 nominations was chosen to receive the Special Judges Award, for outstanding service and dedication to the local community. Judges were noted as stating that the award was "A tribute to the dedication of this family and the support of the surrounding community."

In 2018 WG & SF McPherson was awarded the CRT State Business Partner of the Year and also the National Business Partner of the Year. A prestigious recognition for a family business that all began with a small town general store and 3 tins of Treflan. In 2020 the business was awarded the Southern Region CRT Independent of the Year. Another huge accomplishment for the business and recognition of the many efforts put into the business by Wavell, Shirley and all their staff.

Today, the WG & SF McPherson Brim General Store is renowned as an iconic and integral agribusiness and community hub within the local district. Through their business, Wavell and Shirley support many local sporting clubs, community organizations and town projects.

Today the store not only caters to locals for all their daily needs, but also to the many traveling tourists, looking for a lovely coffee and cake break. With local fresh bakery goods sold daily, a welcoming giftware range, convenience groceries and the Australia Post and banking outlet, there is not much that cannot be found or done when visiting the Brim General Store.

For local farmers, having access to agronomic advice, knowledge of local markets, a wide range of stocked products and free chemical delivery services are just some of the many advantages of working with the team at WG & SF McPherson.

WG & SF McPherson celebrated 50 years of business in the Brim General Store, inviting past and present clients to an all day event, held in the store between 10am and 4pm on Monday September 4th, 2023.

THE OLD GENERAL STORE



Left: During the last days of the old General Store being in operation with Wavell McPherson behind the counter serving Annie Erhardt.



Right: 1963 and 64 managers of the store John and Ken Marshman at John's 80th birthday.



The Original Brim General store—GoingGoing and (below) gone! (a carpark will be built on the site of the store).

Right: The current owners and managers of the store—the McPherson family from left Colleen, Wavell, Shirley and Christopher McPherson.



DEBUTANT BALL OCTOBER 10TH 1945



A Debutant Ball was held in the Brim Memorial Hall in October 1945. Liston's orchestra provided excellent music, and the supper was quite a lavish one. The verdict of those present was that the ball was the most successful held in the Brim Hall for many years.

The Ball was called the Victory Ball and the pianist was Mrs. N West

The Debs were presented to Mr. and Mrs. Keith Dodgshun of Hopetoun.

Mr Dodgshun was a member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly from 1938 to 1955 and represented the Ouyen and Rainbow electorates for the Country Party.

(From old newspaper articles)

The debutants pictured above with their partners names in brackets are:

From Back Left: Betty Altman (Percy Smith), Betty Keam (Jack Stanford).

Second Back Row: Dawn Hart (Murray Keam), Win Quick (Lance Altman), Dorothy Porker (Ian Hinch), Margaret King (Bob Thewlis).

Front Row of Debs: Jean Hunter (Ron Porker), Norma Rogers (Jack Hood), Beverley Woodward (Ian McIntyre), Peg Hood (Frank Thompson).

Centre of this Row: Mrs. D. Quick (Trainer)

Front Row: Flower girls Yvonne Wardle Rhonice Wardle

ELECTRICITY FOR BRIM

An interesting request was made in the shire council on Friday in a letter from Mr. R. M. Dixon of Brim, asking the council's approval to a scheme to supply electric current to the business premises of Dixon Bros. and also his own dwelling.

He also offered to supply current to street lights for Brim, at a cost of 7pounds 10 shillings per light per annum, the council to supply poles, cost of cable, wiring etc.

The council agreed on the motion of Councillors Wardle and E. Hewitt to the scheme being approved subject to the satisfaction of the shire engineer, but the matter of the street lights was held over for further consideration.

85th birthday for Mr. R. J. Dixon

Many hearty congratulations will be extended to Mr. R. J. Dixon of Brim who celebrates his 85th birthday today (Friday). Mr. Dixon is hale and hearty, and wonderfully fit considering his age, and the hope is expressed that he will see many more years of happiness.

Mr. Dixon was born at Cheshire (England) seven miles from Manchester on June 10th 1853 and was only a little over 5years of age when he left England. He can remember a number of incidents even in those far off days, one in particular being a visit to the Manchester show with his father, also a big railway accident which occurred very close to his home.

It was a big party on the ship which brought Mr Dixon to Australia, nine Dixons being on board the 'White Star Liner,' the largest vessel afloat in those days excepting the 'Great Eastern.' This ship only touched in Melbourne and from there to Adelaide they journeyed in a little coastal steamer arriving in Adelaide in November 1858.

The little steamer 'Havala,' which took them to Adelaide was wrecked off Portland Bay just one year afterwards in November 1859, with much loss of life.

Mr. Dixon's father had two brothers and a sister in South Australia where they had arrived about two years earlier. They were 27 miles south of Adelaide and as there were no trains in those days the women in Mr. Dixons party travelled in bullock drays and the men had to walk. It was a pretty rough trip, says Mr. Dixon. Mr Dixon will be a colonist of 80 years. He is one of the oldest residents of Brim, and he and his family are amongst the best-known and most highly respected residents in the district.

SPORT

'Off with the old and on with the new,' to misquote.

Brim Recreation Ground presented quite a lively scene on Saturday afternoon when more than 30 men indulged in cricket practice and the tennis courts were also occupied by ladies and men. The afternoon was ideal for these games.

The new pavilion is nearing completion to sporting bodies and a building worthy of much larger places than Brim. (*Pictured on page 10*)

More items from newspapers from the period between 1930 and 1942.

Unfortunately no specific dates are recorded on the items.

PRESENTATION to Mrs. H Whatman

On Saturday night, during the interval at a dance, Mr. R.M. Dixon, president of the hall committee, presented to Mrs. H. Whatman a case of silver spoons and forks as a mark of appreciation from the hall committee for the music she had provided free of charge at the Saturday night dances during last winter.

In the course of his remarks, Mr. Dixon said Mrs. Whatman had given her services gratuitously and the music she had provided had been greatly enjoyed, and on behalf of the committee and dancers, he desired to sincerely thank her for her great assistance.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CLUB

Last week's meeting took the form of a Guy Fawkes day celebration, the club meeting taking place at Mr Arthur Hood's, where a large bonfire had been prepared, and fireworks of all kinds were discharged.

During the games which followed in the light of the fire, an unfortunate incident occurred when Mr Tom Turner fell and injured his knee so badly that he had to receive medical attention and has since been made an inmate of the Warracknabeal and District Hospital.

BRIM STATE SCHOOL

Our Brim Correspondent writes:- It is now some months since the district health officer inspected and condemned the local school as a building badly ventilated, ill-lighted and generally unsuitable for its purpose, particularly from the viewpoint of the health of the scholars, which is surely a serious matter.

Following this report by the health officer, the school committee, with the assistance of the district State member, Mr A. L. Bussau M,L.A. has been constantly in touch with the Education Department, endeavouring to have rectified the serious causes for complaint, but so unsatisfactory have the replies from the department been, that on Saturday night last at the meeting of about 40 parents it was resolved to draw up a petition to be signed by parents and members of the Mother's Club, requesting the Department to take steps to immediately improve the school building and if no satisfaction is obtained, to ask the parents to keep their children away from school for one week as a protest against unfair treatment.

BIRTHDAY PARTY

On Saturday afternoon a number of children and their mothers were entertained at a birthday party in the hall by Mrs. Harrop, the occasion being Peggy's birthday.

Games were played by the children until about 5 o'clock when they sat down to heavily laden tables of all manner of dainty edibles, and decorated with beautiful flowers.

After the candles had been lit and the cake cut, the children sang "Happy Birthday." Jean Eaton, in a neat speech, thanked Mrs. Harrop and Peggy for the party and said she was sure they had all enjoyed themselves.

Mrs. Harrop responding said she was pleased they had enjoyed themselves as she also had done. Peggy thanked the children for their birthday gifts.

SCHOOL DAYS



Angip North School 1934 *Back row* :Keith Quick, Jack Graetz, Vernon Crocker, Clarry Hinch.
Middle row: Elvie Quick, Dulcie Schilling, Hilda Quick, Mavis Boehm, Lorna Quick.
Front Row: Mervyn Johns, Ian Hinch, Max Crocker and Max Quick.



Brim East School 1962 *Left to right*: Peter Martin, Phillip Harrop, Geoffrey Holland, Robert Harrop, Shirley Taylor, Wayne Harrop, John Addinsall, Lindsay Martin, Dianne Holland, Joy Liersch, Beverley Appledore, Colin Appledore, Beth Taylor, Graham Liersch and Ann Liersch.

HISTORY OF THE BRIM TENNIS CLUB

Brim Tennis Club was formed on 12/08/1898 with J.B. King as President. The first courts were in Simpson Street, Brim.

In 1902 the club disbanded due to drought, but revived in 1913.

New courts were laid in 1926 on the Recreation Reserve. The club hired out their pavilion to the Golf Club from 1930-39 and also the basketball club (netball).

In 1939 a third court was laid and in 1962 the dirt courts were remade and covered with asphalt.

Three new courts were laid in 1981 next to the new sports complex, which were opened in 1982. In 1984, lights were installed. These courts have been resurfaced twice over recent years, the last in 2022 when the surrounds were also upgraded.

Brim played in Beulah and district Association between 1928-46, the Bangerang and District Association in 1948 and the Warracknabeal and District Association from 1960.

The club has won 8 premierships in the four associations collectively. In the Warracknabeal and District Association they won four—in 1961-62, 1969-70, 1970-71 and 1972-73. Brim currently play in the Dimboola and District Tennis Association. Their last Premiership was in 2023-24.



Above: The original Brim Tennis pavilion built at the recreation reserve. This photo is displayed in the Brim Memorial Hall



**1954-55 BRIM
PREMIERSHIP
TENNIS TEAM**

Back: B. Khann,
K. Hunter.

Centre: G. Schaeche
P. Brick, R. Catron, J
Marshman, J. Church,
J. Crisp.

Front: S. Lemke,
S. Rogers, E. Burgess
A. McDougall, I.
Witney, L. Schaeche,
E. Parsons

Sitting: K.
Marshman, P.
Blackman.

**PHOTO FROM THE
BRIM TENNIS CLUB
CENTENARY BOOK**