

BYGONE DAYS: Geelong - 100 years ago

Week 7: February 13th to February 19th, 1923

Geelong radio began in an enthusiastic manner, with the preliminary meeting of the Presbyterian Guild Radio Club being held at the Guild Clubrooms in Myers Street.

"About 30 wireless enthusiasts were in attendance and were greatly interested in the exhibition of wireless apparatus made completely by amateurs. There were three tables loaded with exhibits including; valve sets, crystal sets, condensers, tuners, transformers, 'phones, batteries etc, etc. Calls and messages were received during the evening from all parts of the Commonwealth."

The Club's intention was to install a three-valve set. Classes would soon be conducted in both theory and practical subjects.



1



2

Source: Museums Victoria Collections

Geelong City Council wrote to the Harbour Trust asking the Commissioners to take 'no further steps' in selling their land on the Eastern Foreshore, until they had heard objections from the Council.

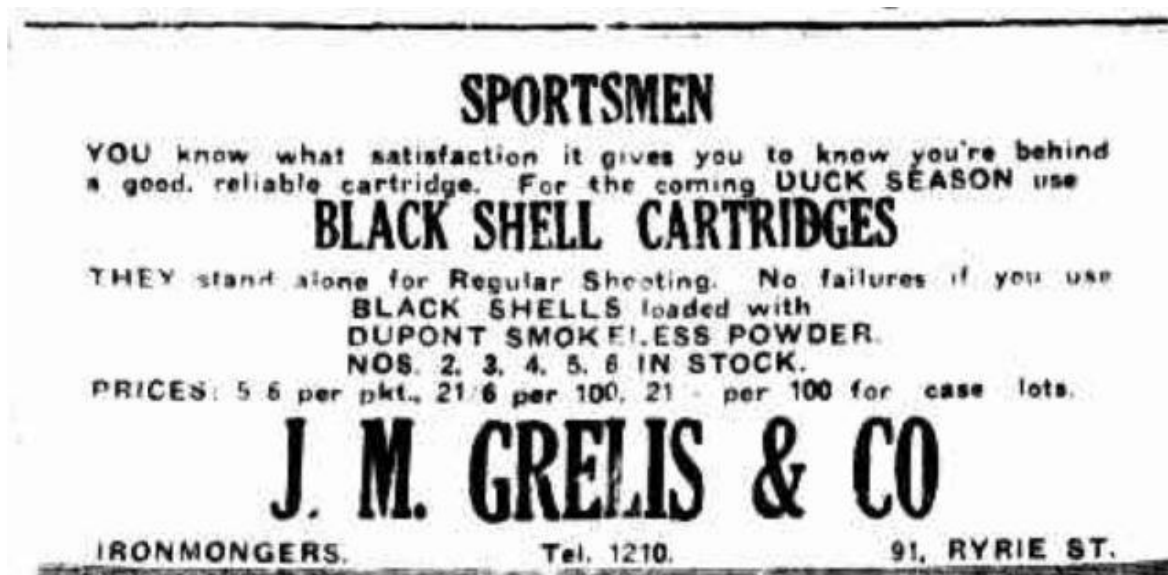
"The Harbour Trust has power to sell the land, which is part of its assets and which, filled in, would make suitable building sites. The council does not desire the view of the bay, gained from the Eastern Park, to be obstructed by any buildings on the slope between the park and the shore."

Large numbers of 'motor parties' left or passed through Geelong to visit their favoured duck shooting sites.

"A big contingent went to the Connewarre Lakes and to the mouth of the Barwon. Others sought sport in the waters around Avalon and beyond, where they expected to get good bags this morning."

There were reports of large numbers of teal ducks, but some shooters ran 'foul' of the law.

"At the City Court tomorrow four charges are to be heard against men who, it is alleged, were caught with birds in their possession some days ago."



An advertisement on February 14th, one day before the opening of Duck Season.

Geelong's Court was in action again with a very serious charge being heard. Mr Justice Schutt presided over the Criminal Court where one of the most important trials was to be conducted. Two cases of murder were to be tried. The former Licensee of the Elaine Hotel, Mr Henry Gray, was charged with murder of Mr Michael Fahey on December 27th, 1922. Another, separate murder trial was of a young woman from Sparrowdale, 6 miles from Geelong, at modern day Marshalltown.

In the trial of the Elaine Licensee of the Railway Hotel, the prosecutor, Mr J A Gurner outline the case. My Gray pleaded "Not guilty".

"Michael Fahey was a man of 42 years. He was a labourer, and a man of violent habits while under the influence of liquor. On the day in question, he had visited the hotel in the morning, and remained about the place all day. He became abusive, and used vile language, and on going out of the hotel, the door was locked after him. He then went round the back of the building and tried to get in. Gray got a revolver, and showed it to Fahey who said he did not care about the gun. He left and went to a store keeper in the vicinity named Stalker, who tried to pacify him. He then came back to the hotel, and later a heavy bang was heard on the vestibule door. Julie Stow had stated that she had seen someone inside the vestibule swinging an axe. Later, an attack had been made on the kitchen door, but the axe handle had broken after some panels had been knocked in. The head of the axe was found in the kitchen. Gray had come alone with a revolver and fired a shot at the deceased, who received the bullet in the left lung. As Fahey still came on, Gray fired a second shot, from the effects of which, Faye had died."

Justice Schutt summed up by saying that Fahey was killed while Gray was defending himself and his wife. His life was in danger by a man who had a grudge against him and that man was armed with an axe.

"After a short retirement the jury returned a verdict of not guilty on either the charge of murder or manslaughter."

A young 18 years old girl was charged with murdering her baby on December 17th. Defending the young lady, her barrister, Mr J P Doyle said:

"Giving birth to her child in rather sordid conditions and having no woman or friend near her at the time to alleviate her pain, the girl was easy prey to the frenzy which doctors stated often accompany the birth of a first child."

When questioned, the young woman said she just remembered having a baby, but not what followed.

"The jury returned a verdict of not guilty on the ground that at the time of the girl was temporarily insane. The judge, Mr Justice Schutt, ordered the girl to be detained at the Geelong Gaol during the Governor's pleasure."

Other cases were of a former storeman at the city Post Office and another man who was a marine collector. Both were to answer the charge of larceny of 816 lbs of copper and bronze wire which belonged to the Post-master General.

Another trial was of a young man was charged with larceny of a saddle and shop-breaking at Birregurra.

All were found guilty as charged.

Rumours were circulating that the Harbour Trust Commissioners had arrived at an agreement with the Australian Phosphate Company regarding a site at North Shore.

"This following on Mr W. C. Hill's visit to Geelong, as a representative of the company, lent colour to the belief that the protracted negotiations between the Trust and the company had at last come to an end."

Secretary of the Harbour Trust, Mr. J.H. Grey said there was no agreement arrived at.

A plea for more children's playgrounds, to the City of Geelong West's Council, was made by the City's Health Officer, Dr. F.J. Newman. He suggested somewhere between Britannia Street, Church Street and West Melbourne Road should be reserved for parks and playgrounds.

" 50 years from now, posterity will bless you if you make this provision"

He concluded that:

"... the curse of all large cities and centres of population was overcrowding of buildings. It kept the children on the streets and in the alleys. These were the only places where they could play."

References:

All quotations and advertisements in the weekly accounts are sourced from articles published in the Geelong Advertiser during the designated week, unless acknowledged otherwise. Photographs are acknowledged below or in the text.

1 Museums Victoria Collections <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/items/409813>

2 Osborne, M. (2013) Radio comes of age in Australia - broadcasting 1922-1930 in Museums Victoria Collections <https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/articles/12666>